

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XVI

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE
SEKCJA NUMIZMATYCZNA
KOMISJI ARCHEOLOGICZNEJ PAN
ODDZIAŁ W KRAKOWIE

Kraków 2021

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Coins of the Ptolemaic Empire. Part I. Ptolemy I through Ptolemy IV. Volume 1: Precious Metal, Volume 2: Bronze, The American Numismatic Society, New York 2018, 625 and 205 pages, 76 and 46 plates; ISBN 978-0-89722-332-4

For over 100 years since the publication of *Ta Nomismata tou Kratous ton Ptolemaion* (Athens 1904–1908), this monumental work by Jannis N. Svoronos was the main and only complete reference for the Lagid coinage. Sadly, the passage of time and the progress of research has inexorably made this publication by the great Greek numismatist out of date. New findings of subsequent generations of researchers introduced corrections to the attribution and dating of various groups of Ptolemaic coins. It is worth recalling here the publications of O. Zervos, O. Mørkholm, N. Nicolaou, R. Martini, T. Faucher or J. Olivier and others. Most of them, however, were works covering detailed problems, individual issues, groups of coins, and at best some selected periods of the Ptolemaic coinage. To date, there has been no publication to comprehensively address this issue.

Among the researchers who have had a decisive influence on the development of knowledge about the Ptolemaic coinage in the last three decades is undoubtedly Catharine C. Lorber. She has been the author of many detailed, important articles and publisher of the Svoronos catalogue on the Internet, translated into English and including the dating and attribution corrections in the descriptive part. It is perhaps no wonder, therefore, that it is to Lorber that we owe a new, up-to-date, in terms of attribution and dating, and comprehensive project for the development of the Lagid coinage.

The first part (henceforth *CPE*), published in 2018, covers the coinage of the first four Ptolemaic rulers. It consists of two volumes, totalling 830 pages, devoted to coins made of precious metals (Volume 1) and bronze coins (Volume 2), respectively. According to the author herself, this and no other arrangement of the publication results from two reasons: on the one hand, it is because of the Ptolemy's reform of 272 BC there is no common system of metal and bronze emission control signs, which basically prevents the parallel sequences of both. On the other hand, it is easier to use the catalogue when determining individual Ptolemaic issues. The latter argument is fully justified on the working use of the publication.

The first volume, concerning the coinage of precious metals, is much more extensive. It has 628 pages and 75 tables and lists 972 monetary types (965 regular

types plus 7 added after the catalogue was closed; however, there are gaps in the main sequence of the catalogue). The second volume, devoted to bronze coinage, is a much smaller volume, comprising 205 pages and 46 tables. In total, 560 monetary types are included.

The first volume contains a broad introduction devoted to a short outline of the main directions of the policies of individual rulers, as well as a summary of the most important aspects of their minting activities. In the catalogue part, individual types are discussed chronologically in both volumes within mints or regions. The types are briefly described, and where necessary, the descriptions are preceded by the author's comment. Svoronos numbers are included in the catalogue. Relevant references have been made in both volumes where the precious ore and bronze issues are related.

In the case of both bullion and bronze coins, the Ptolemaic coinage begins with the issues minted in the times of Kleomenes and/or Ptolemy I as a satrap. Only one silver and three bronze issues were assigned to this first period. All were minted on behalf of Alexander the Great (Vol. 1, pp. 245, 1 and Vol. 2, pp. 1–3, B1–B3). The author discusses the attribution of all three bronze types extensively. Without going into a detailed discussion here, it is worth mentioning that in the case of the B2 issue, the head in a tiara or a Phrygian cap is considered by Lorber as a female image, which does not seem convincing. Then follows the discussion of the coinage of Ptolemy I as a satrap after the death of Alexander, and then as king, in the same arrangement, i.e. chronologically with mints (Vol. 1, pp. 247–310, nos. 2–275 and Vol 2, pp. 5–36, B4–B149). The following chapters are devoted to the reigns of Philadelphus (Vol. 1, pp. 311–392, nos. 276–731 and Vol. 2, pp. 41–81; B164–B355), Euergetes (Vol. 1, pp. 393–429, nos. 732–886 and Vol. 2, pp. 85–121; B358–B492), Philopator (Vol. 1, pp. 431–454, nos. 887–961 and Vol. 2, pp. 123–141; B493–B560) and unattributed tetradrachms (Ptolemy I–IV, Vol. 1, pp. 453–454, nos. 962–965). In addition to the aforementioned canonical reigns, the catalogue of bronze coins also includes issues attributed to two members of the royal family who never ascended the Ptolemaic throne. On pages 37–39 of the second volume (B150–B163), Lorber placed coins that could theoretically be linked to Ptolemy Keraunos. Leaving aside the legitimacy of such an attribution at this point, one can only wonder whether the Thracian and Macedonian coinage of Keraunos should be included in the catalogue of coins of the Ptolemaic empire? However, the inclusion of coins attributed to Ptolemy of Telmessos in the catalogue (pp. 83–84; B356–B357), who probably served as a Ptolemaic official, should be treated differently. Thus, the inclusion of the aforementioned coins in the Ptolemaic coinage is fully justified. In the context of the described distinguishing of the issue of Keraunos and Ptolemy of Telmessos, a certain inconsistency should be considered the lack of separation of the Magas coinage in the catalogue, but only its brief description in the part devoted to Ptolemy I

and Philadelphos (bullion coins Vol. 1, pp. 310, nos. 271–274 and pp. 389–391, nos. 713–726) and Ptolemy II (bronze coins Vol. 2, pp. 77–80; B343–B352).

Both volumes are supplemented by appendices, indexes and concordances with the work of Svoronos. A very important part of the publication is the list of hoards of Ptolemaic bullion coins (Vol. 1, pp. 457–512) and bronze coins (Vol. 2, pp. 141–164) as well as the lists of the other provenances of bullion coins (Vol. 1, pp. 513–514) and bronze (additional Bronze Provenances) (Vol. 2, pp. 165–176), constituting appendices. The catalogue of Ptolemaic hoards follows the *IGCH*,¹ *CH*² and *SC*³ pattern and contains basic information such as the place of discovery, date of hiding, contents, summary information on Ptolemaic coins, disposition and literature. A very important point is the reference to the *IGCH*, *CH* or *Egyptian Hoards (EH)*⁴ numbering. Another important element is the matching of coins contained in the hoards to *CPE* catalogue numbers. Hoards in the *CPE* are listed according to the geographical criterion: those from Egypt, Cyrenaica, Cyprus, Asia Minor / Turkey and the Aegean region, Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine, Persia, Afghanistan, South Russia, Thrace and the Balkans, Macedonia and Greece, Sicily, Italy, Africa, and hoards with an undefined provenance. The aforementioned division into regions of origin of hoards, as well as the names of these regions, are not uniform in both volumes. Within the designated regions, the hoards are listed chronologically.

In the light of the publication of the *EH* only a year earlier than the *CPE*, it is possible to reflect on the sense of re-listing the hoards in the reviewed publication. However, there are several arguments in favour of the solution adopted by Lorber: first, the list includes hoards not included in the *EH* (Vol. 1, p. 481, Commerce, 1995, p. 491, Ai Khanoum 1973, p. 494, Karatege Mevki and Akçakale 1958, pp. 494–495, Asia Minor c. 1950, p. 495, Asia Minor c. 1970, Manissa 1970, p. 498, Gordium 1961, Mektepinî, 1956 etc. and Vol. 2, p. 153, Commerce, 2013; p. 154, Karnak Temple; p. 157, Gortyna, p. 160, Morgantina 1959 and 1970; p. 161, Morgantina 1975, 1955 and 1956; p. 162, Morgantina 1971a (sanctuary of Aphrodite), 1971b (Sanctuary of Demeter) and 1958; pp. 163, Morgantina 1955–1956; Nervesa della Battaglia; pp. 164, Montebelluna; Pompei 1939; Port Grosvenor 1893); secondly, the next *CPE* volume or volumes will appear at a greater time distance from *EH* and will certainly contain new and previously unlisted hoards, and the consistency of the structure of individual volumes will be maintained; and thirdly, the mentioned hoard list is an important tool when using the catalogue part of the publication.

¹ THOMPSON, MØRKHOLM and KRAAY 1973.

² PRICE et AL 1975–2010.

³ HOUGHTON and LORBER 2002; HOUGHTON, LORBER and HOOVER 2008.

⁴ FAUCHER, MEADOWS and LORBER 2017.

In the case of the first volume, the second annex only contains an indication of the origin of the significant coins of Ptolemy I. These are items included in the hoards, single finds, and coins in specific museum collections. In the case of bronze coins, the second of the annexes is based to a large extent, but not exclusively, on the work by A. Cavagna (2015). From the reviewer's perspective, it is worth emphasizing the author's inclusion of M. Mielczarek's publication and finds from Poland and Northern, Central and Eastern Europe (cf. 170, B227-Józefka; 171, B282 Halych / Galič, Ukraine; 173, B368, Pobiedzisko). The provenances, however, were limited to precisely defined specimens.

Lorber also draws attention to the potentially different interpretations of such finds. Volume 1 is enriched with four indexes: remarkable types in gold and silver (pp. 585–587), remarkable denominations in gold and silver (pp. 588–590), remarkable inscriptions on gold and silver (pp. 590–593) and controls on gold and silver (pp. 593–618). The indexes for Volume 2 are limited to remarkable types in Bronze, remarkable inscriptions and controls. The bibliography compiled by the author for both volumes spans 74 pages and has been divided into numismatic and general works, with the former naturally predominating. The first group includes the most important publications concerning not only the monetary system or other aspects of the coinage of the first four Ptolemies, but also those relating to finds included in the appendices. The high-quality illustrations are an important part of both volumes and the author has tried to illustrate the vast majority of types.

In conclusion, anyone interested in Ptolemaic coinage has been provided with an indispensable tool in the form of a monumental publication containing an up-to-date, well-illustrated catalogue, a list of finds and a broad introduction. It can be assumed that the reviewed publication will serve numismatists, historians, archaeologists, and others at least as long as Svoronos' work has done. It should also be hoped that subsequent volumes of the *CPE* will be published relatively soon.

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