

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XVII

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

Kraków 2022

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ISSN 1426-5435

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Szanowni Państwo,

oddajemy w Państwa ręce tom XVII *Notae Numismaticae – Zapisków Numizmatycznych*. Zgodnie z przyjętymi przez nas zasadami wszystkie teksty publikujemy w językach kongresowych, z angielskimi i polskimi abstraktami. Zawartość całego obecnego tomu oraz tomy archiwalne są zamieszczone w formie plików PDF na stronie internetowej Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>). Na stronie dostępne są ponadto wszelkie informacje ogólne o czasopiśmie oraz instrukcje dla autorów i recenzentów.

Rok 2022 był wyjątkowy dla całego środowiska numizmatyków w Polsce. Pierwszy raz w historii naszego kraju, a ujmując rzecz szerzej – w krajach Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej – odbył się XVI Międzynarodowy Kongres Numizmatyczny, najważniejsze spotkanie numizmatyków z całego świata, organizowane co sześć lat pod auspicjami International Numismatic Council. Wybór Polski, jako miejsca organizacji Kongresu traktujemy jako wielkie wyróżnienie. Głównym organizatorem tego wydarzenia był Uniwersytet Warszawski, a w przygotowaniach uczestniczyły również Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, Polskie Towarzystwo Numizmatyczne, Narodowy Bank Polski oraz Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie. W tym ostatnim przypadku szczególnie zaangażowani w prace nad XVI INC byli pracownicy Gabinetu Numizmatycznego. Całością działań kierował profesor Aleksander Bursche z Wydziału Archeologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, pomysłodawca organizacji Kongresu w Polsce, którego wspierał Komitet Organizacyjny reprezentujący wszystkie najważniejsze polskie ośrodki numizmatyczne. Obrady kongresowe — które zgromadziły ponad 600 uczestników, czy to na miejscu w Warszawie, czy też w mniej licznych przypadkach, dzięki transmisji na żywo, w miejscach ich zamieszkania — uzupełniały liczne wydarzenia towarzyszące: wystawy, koncerty i spotkania.

Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie przygotowało z tej okazji specjalną wystawę: „Medal prywatnie. Medale w I Rzeczypospolitej (od XVI do XVIII wieku)”, której kuratorem była Agnieszka Smołucha-Sładkowska. Jednocześnie we współpracy z Uniwersytetem Jagiellońskim, krakowskim oddziałem Polskiego Towarzystwa Numizmatycznego, Królewską Biblioteką w Brukseli i Królewskim Towarzystwem Numizmatycznym w Belgii zorganizowano poprzedzającą właściwe obrady Kongresu międzynarodową sesję „Joachim Lelewel and Numismatics in the Nineteenth Century”. W ramach kongresu tradycyjnie opracowany został również Survey of Numismatic Research za lata 2014–2020, w prace nad którym aktywnie zaangażowani byli pracownicy Gabinetu Numizmatycznego: Jarosław Bodzek, Dorota Malarczyk i Barbara Zając. Co więcej, Gabinet Numizmatyczny Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie był silnie reprezentowany w obradach Kongresu, w czasie których wymienione powyżej osoby wygłosiły referaty. Kongres zakończył się wielkim sukcesem i stanowił znakomitą wizytówkę polskiej numizmatyki.

Redakcja

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present volume 17 of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne* to you. In accordance with the principles that we have adopted, our texts are published in the conference languages with English and Polish abstracts. The whole of the present volume can be found as PDF's on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>), as are previously published volumes of the journal. The website also contains general information about the journal as well as information for prospective authors and reviewers.

2022 was a special year for the entire numismatic community in Poland. It saw the XVI International Numismatic Congress being held in Warsaw, marking the first time that this most important meeting of numismatists from all over the world, organised every six years under the auspices of the International Numismatic Council, had been held in our country, or more generally in a country from Central and Eastern Europe. The choice of Poland as the venue for the Congress was a great honour. The main organiser of the event was the University of Warsaw, and also involved in its organisation were the National Museum in Warsaw, the Royal Castle in Warsaw, the Polish Numismatic Society, the National Bank of Poland, and the National Museum in Krakow. In this last case, the staff of the Museum's Numismatic Cabinet were particularly active in the work on the INC 2022. In charge of all activities was Professor Aleksander Bursche of the Faculty of Archaeology at the University of Warsaw, who was the driving force behind the organisation of the Congress in Poland, and who was supported in his role by the Organising Committee, representing all major Polish numismatic centres. The congress proceedings, which attracted more than 600 participants, either on-site in Warsaw or, in lesser numbers, thanks to live streaming, were complemented by a wide range of accompanying events, including exhibitions, concerts, and meetings.

The National Museum in Krakow organised a special exhibition for the occasion: "Private medal. Private medals in the 1st Republic of Poland (from the 16th to the 18th century)", curated by Agnieszka Smołucha-Sładkowska. At the same time, an international session on "Joachim Lelewel and Numismatics in the Nineteenth Century", preceding the Congress proper, was organised in cooperation with the Jagiellonian University, the Krakow Branch of the Polish Numismatic Society, the Royal Library of Brussels, and the Royal Numismatic Society of Belgium. As part of the Congress, the Survey of Numismatic Research for the years 2014–2020 was traditionally produced, with Jarosław Bodzek, Dorota Malarczyk and Barbara Zajac of the Numismatic Cabinet actively involved in its preparation. The Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum in Krakow was also strongly represented in the proceedings of the Congress, where the abovementioned staff delivered papers. The congress was a great success and a real showcase for Poland.

The Editors

JÍŘI MILITKÝ, LUBOŠ KRÁL

Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. Czech Republic. Vol. IV: The Luboš Král Collection. Egypt: Roman Provincial Coinage, National Museum, Prague 2021, 172 pages; ISBN 978-80-7036-687-5

The publication, created in 2021, is the culmination of many years of work by Luboš Král and a final collaboration with Jiří Militký, with the main goal of enabling the greater public to access the coins which form the private collection of the first mentioned co-author. The beginnings of the creation of the collection date back to 1990, when Luboš Král established cooperation between Prague and Kutná Hora in order to gain access to the coins forming the collection. The introduction to the publication also mentions an attempt by the National Museum in Prague to buy the collection, but it remained in private hands due to the lack of adequate financial resources. The numismatics forming the collection were acquired legally at domestic and foreign auctions. Due to the nature of the material collected, in many cases it is impossible to trace the exact history of a given object and the place of its original discovery, which significantly hinders any attempt at possible dating and association with a specific mint. Unfortunately, the material that ends up in auctions of this type was often acquired without proper documentation, with documentation impossible to produce due to the poor state of preservation or which had been lost. In such situations, the collector has been forced to make every effort to reconstruct, to the best of their ability, the path travelled by the object before it found its way into his collection.

The work in question is part of a well-known series of publications in numismatic circles: *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*, which was founded in 1930 on behalf of the British Academy. It was originally only intended to focus on coins from British territories, but very quickly its idea spread abroad. It is the collaboration with such a prominent publication series that enables authors to reach the widest possible audience. In addition, the authors' decision to produce the catalogue in English is a huge benefit. The trend towards the linguistic uniformity of similar publications which has been emerging in recent years, together with their simultaneous digitalization, means that the circle of possible recipients is only growing thanks to such easier access.

The point of creating this type of collection may not be clear to everyone, especially to those who are not very interested in numismatics on a daily basis. By collecting coins that represent an extensive chronological range, it is not only possible to reconstruct as accurately as possible the minting system itself in force in Roman Egypt, but also to understand how the system changed over many years. The catalogue enables the reader to see the differences that appear between successive issues, differences represented by bullion changes, iconographic shifts or alterations to the inscriptions used. In addition, popular denominations, their value, and their place in the minting system may change. The catalogue created from the collection is an excellent resource for those interested in the minting system of Egypt and those wishing to know more about the functioning of the provincial mint in order to find differences and similarities to the much more elaborated Roman mint. The aim of the created catalogue is to attempt to provide an overview of the mint system in force during Roman rule in Egypt from the time of Augustus until the final dissolution of provincial minting at the end of the 3rd century.

The publication begins, of course, with an introduction (pp. 7–8), which supplies a brief history of the collection itself and of the author, who is a long-standing member of the Czech Numismatic Society. The authors highlight the process of buying the coins that found their place in the collection and the risks involved in obtaining coins from domestic or foreign auctions. The collection in question eventually included 584 coins representing Egyptian provincial minting. The core of this collection consists of coins struck at the Alexandria mint. Two coins are from mints from two of Egyptian nomes: Oxyrhynchite (nom of Upper Egypt) and Nesite (nom of Lower Egypt). Moreover, 65% of all the coins collected date from the 3rd century, which coincides with the reign of Heliogabalus and the rulers of the First Tetrarchy. There are far fewer examples of coins from the reigns of other rulers. Some are represented by single specimens. The authors draw attention to the criterion which guided the creator of the catalogue in documenting the collection, which was the good state of preservation of the objects. This is an especially important criterion to determine at the outset, as a good state of preservation definitely facilitates further work with the material and its accurate documentation, especially when keeping photographic records.

The coins included in the catalogue have been very meticulously documented and described. The catalogue was equipped with 54 plates (pp. 10–116) with black and white photographs of all 584 coins (obverse and reverse) and 41 colour plates (pp. 119–162). The description of the finds is divided into two parts. The first part presents a description of the coins issued in Alexandria and the second a description of the coins from the norms. In both cases, the analysis is limited to a description of the obverse and reverse, the exact weight and size of the coin, and

a short bibliographical note enabling the comparison of individual coins with their counterparts in other publications. The description of the obverse and reverse consists of a brief description of the iconography and an attempt to read the inscription. All coins have been appropriately enlarged in the illustrations (1.2:1 scale), which makes it much easier to observe certain characteristics. The publication is, of course, accompanied by a bibliography and a description of any references to similar finds. Beginning on page 165, a list of all rulers, the denominations discussed, a description of the legends adorning the obverse and reverse and the types of representations visible on the reverse have been gathered in one place.

However, the most important aspect of the publication under review, and which needs to be discussed in more detail, is the merit of the material selected by the authors. The minting of Roman Egypt has not received as much attention from other researchers as the minting of other provinces or imperial minting. To date, the best publications collecting information on this type of coinage remain the publication *Roman Provincial Coinage* volume I with a special section on the minting of Alexandria¹ and the publication *The Roman Coins of Alexandria*.² It is a great pity that this subject has been neglected, especially given the unusual and unprecedented nature of Roman minting in Egypt. The mint responsible for issuing this type of coinage in the area was the mint in Alexandria, which produced coins from the reign of Augustus until the reign of Diocletian. The uniqueness of the Alexandrian coins is that they were intended exclusively for the local market. Already from the reign of the Ptolemaic Dynasty, Egypt had a closed monetary system.³ Persons entering the country were forced to use the local currency and those leaving were not allowed to take Egyptian coins with them. This system was extended during the Roman rule over Egypt. However, the question arises: why was it necessary to mint coins in the Egyptian province and why was there no uniformity in the minting system? The necessity of minting Egyptian coins was due to the huge contribution of Egypt itself to the economy of the empire, and minting coins exclusively for local needs guaranteed against inflation and the diminishing real value of money.⁴ When Octavian Augustus took over Egypt, he decided to leave the monetary system in force there, making only minor changes. The Egyptian monetary system was therefore based on the same denominations as in the time of the Ptolemies. The most important coin was the silver tetradrachm, which rivalled the Roman denarius in silver content, making it easier to exchange. In addition, this

¹ AMANDRY, BURNETT and RIPOLLÈS 1992: 688–714.

² CHRISTIANSEN 2004.

³ *Ibidem*: 40–46.

⁴ LACH 2015: 727–728.

denomination was divided into fractions minted from less valuable metals. Fractions that had also been known in the area since earlier times and referred to the Greek monetary systems, and thus these included drachms, obols, and diobols. In Roman Egypt, no coins were produced from gold or pure silver,⁵ the only exception being the gold Aureus minted at the Alexandrian mint during the reign of Septimius Severus, but these were not intended for the local market.⁶ Despite its remarkably interesting character of monetary production exclusively for the local market, for the same reason, conducting research on the minting of Roman Egypt poses many difficulties. The amount of mint production of a particular centre can be determined through coin finds in other areas, which are also evidence of exchange between centres. In a situation where coins cannot be transported outside a province, it can be more difficult to find the exact volume of production. However, as the study of Roman Egyptian coins can only be based on a small number of finds from the area, researchers dealing with the issue of Roman period minting should pay much more attention to coins of Egyptian provenance.

The value of this material not only lies in the uniqueness of the system of which it is a part, but also in the sheer artistic value of the coins resulting from the combination of typically Roman with local motifs.⁷ These interrelationships can be seen in the discussed collection of coins. All the inscriptions on the coins were written in Greek, i.e., the language used locally. However, this is an absolutely logical action of the issuer, who was aware of the fact that the final recipient of the applied messages was to be a local inhabitant. Moreover, the dates used, which can be seen on the coins, were also made according to the pattern used in Egyptian areas. However, local elements are intertwined with external elements. At first glance, the appearance of the coin fulfils all the requirements necessary to identify a coin as Roman. The obverse is provided with an image of the ruler or, in some cases, an image of a member of the imperial family (such as the representation of Livia on one of the two Augustus coins in the collection). The face is turned to the right, surrounded by an inscription acting as a description of the visible representation. The reverse, on the other hand, features any kind of representation or inscription chosen by the issuer. It is in this aspect that one can see the greatest influence of the local culture, religion and mythology, which is a conglomerate of Egyptian and Greek traditions which had developed since the Hellenistic period. On the reverse of Alexandrian coins there are representations referring to local beliefs and to the very location of the mint, as well as representations accompanying rulers such as

⁵ EADEM 2011: 91.

⁶ CHRISTIANSEN 2004: 46.

⁷ MILNE 1917: 177.

images of members of the imperial family. Examples of local deities include the use of an image of Isis (in ex. Hadrian: diobol AE24, no. 117, p. 30). There are also images of deities and demons known from Greek mythology such as Agathodaemos (in ex. Nero: tetradrachm AR, no. 15, p. 12), Dikaiosyne (in ex. Antoninus Pius: tetradrachm AR, no. 168, p. 40), Tyche (in ex. Hadrian: drachm AE35, no. 118, p. 30) and Nike (in ex. Claudius: obol AE19, no. 5, p. 10). Also clear is the presence of personifications of the city of Alexandria and the river Nile (in ex. Galba: tetradrachm AR, no. 39, p. 16; Commodus: tetradrachm, no. 193, p. 44). Coins minted in Nero's time show representations of Augustus, Tiberius, Octavia and Poppaea on the reverse (p. 16). However, the most prominent motif showing Greek-Egyptian fusion is the representation of Harpocrates (in ex. Traianus: drachm AE33, no. 72, p. 22) and the use of the image of Serapis on tetradrachms from the reign of Nero (p. 12) or the same representation on tetradrachms from the reign of Trajan (p. 24). The figures of Harpocrates and Serapis were the result of religious syncretism that appeared during the Hellenistic period.

In conclusion, it can certainly be said that the publication by Militký and Král, part of the *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*, is a valuable addition to a still growing series. Above all, it demonstrates the remarkable ability of its authors to efficiently compile and document numismatic material for the entire collection. Thanks to their interest in the subject and meticulous collection of material, a larger audience is able to gain an insight into the many years of work that resulted in this publication. However, it is not only the authors who deserve praise here. The publication, which focuses on such a niche subject as the minting of Roman Egypt, is a response to the frequent neglect of this issue by other researchers dealing with provincial minting. The publication, as well as the collection itself, will gain particular recognition from the amount of documented material that can accurately tell the story of Roman minting in Egypt. The inclusion in the collection of specimens representing all of the changes in minting from the reign of Augustus to the end of provincial minting, makes the publication a complete work.

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