

Eftimija Pavlovska

A Part of a Hoard of Tetrobols from the Numismatic Collection of the NBRM

UDK: 737.1(381)''-05/-04''

National Bank of Republic of Macedonia
Department for Numismatics
bul. Kuzman Josifovski b.b., Skopje
eftimijap@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: *This paper deals with twenty one coins - a part of a hoard, acquired by the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia. It consists of tetrobols issued by the Macedonian King Perdiccas II, the Chalcidian League and the town of Acanthus. Its age structure reveals that it belongs to the period of the second half of the 5th and the beginning of the 4th century BC.*

In 2002 the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia came into possession of a part of a hoard, said to originate from the vicinity of the town of Negotino, on the south of the country.¹ Unfortunately, the context of the find, as well as its exact quantity, remains unknown.

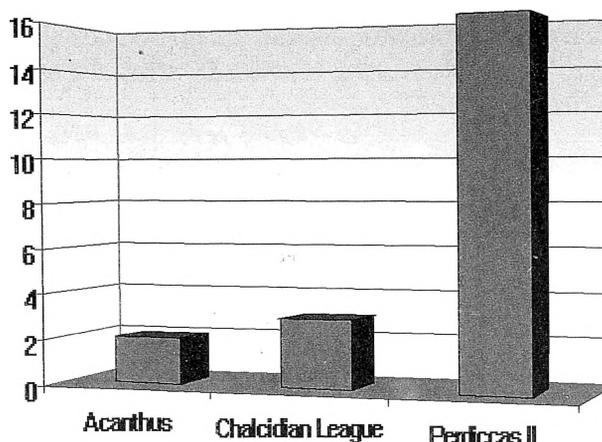
The hoard consists of twenty one coins, all of which are silver tetrobols. The most represented are the specimens minted by the Macedonian King Perdiccas II (454-413 BC) - one light and fifteen heavy tetrobols, while the rest are three tetrobols of the Chalcidian League (433/2-348 BC) and two of the town of Acanthus.²

Of particular interest are the coins issued by Perdiccas II, not only because they are the most numerous ones, but also because they rarely appear as hoarded wealth. From the coins attributed to this king, there is only one light tetrobol which belongs to the series I of light tetrobols (No. 1). Its weight of 1.8 g is below the average (2.18 g),³ due to its weariness. With regard to the heavy tetrobols, four belong to series I (Nos. 2-5), the most represented are the ones from the series II - six (Nos. 6-11), while the remaining five (Nos. 11-16) are issued in the period

¹ The information on the place of discovery was received from the dealer.

² The coins from this hoard have been registered under the Inventory Nos. 02/6/4-1 to 02/6/4-21.

³ D. Raymond, *Macedonian Regal Coinage to 413 B.C.*, New York, 1953, p. 24, states that this is the average weight of a light tetrobol.



of either series II or series III.⁴ The average weight of the heavy tetrobols in this hoard is 2.22g.⁵

As mentioned above, there are three tetrobols issued by the Chalcidian League, which was established in 432 BC and lasted until 348 BC. The establishment of the League was instigated by Perdiccas II, who persuaded the Chalcidians to leave their coastal settlements and regroup around the protected Olynthus. Thus, a league was created to serve as his ally in the battles against Athens and it existed up to 348 BC, when it was destroyed by Philip II.⁶ Its coins were minted in Olynthus, the leading town in the League. The average weight of the three tetrobols from this hoard (Nos. 17-19) is 2.13g.

The tetrobols issued by Acanthus (Nos. 20 and 21), a town founded as a colony of Andros and located on the stretch connecting the Akte promontory to the Chalcidice Peninsula, are the least frequent ones. The coins were minted in the town itself, and here their average weight is 2.33 g.

It should be pointed out that the heavy tetrobols issued by Perdiccas II and the coins of the Chalcidian League and Acanthus (in the period after 424 BC, as is the case here) were minted in the same weight standard.⁷

Apparently, the obverse and the reverse representations of both, heavy and light tetrobols of Perdiccas II and his father Alexander I are very similar - on the light

⁴ Ibid, pp. 19, 151. Raymond suggested that Perdiccas II used two monetary systems - a light and a heavy one, and with regard to that, she divides the light tetrobols into four series (I: 451/0-447/6, II: 446/5-438/7, III: 437/6-435/4, IV: 415/4-414/3), while the heavy ones into three (I: 445/4-438/7, II: 437/6-432/1, III: 431/0-425/4); N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *A History of Macedonia*. Vol. II, 550-336 B.C., Oxford, 1979, pp. 119-120. Hammond designates the light tetrobols as tetrobols of weight B, while the heavy ones as of weight C, accepting the Raymond's classification.

⁵ Ibid, p. 24. Heavy tetrobols analysed by Raymond have an average weight of 2.45g.

⁶ E. N. Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus: The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990, p. 142.

⁷ D. Raymond, op. cit., p. 23, terms the standard used by the Macedonian kings Alexander I and Perdiccas II "Thrace-Macedonian" or only "Macedonian"; Head (B. V. Head, *BMC: Macedonia, etc.*, London 1879 (reprint Bologna 1963), p. xxi), named the same standard Graeco-Asiatic, according to which an octodrachm weighs ca. 29.32 g; H. Gaebler, *Die Antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*. Band III, *Makedonia und Paionia*, Berlin, 1935, pp. 27, 85, 154, suggested that these kings used the Phoenician weight standard.

tetrobols there appear *Horse/Helmet within incuse square*, while on the heavy ones - *Mounted horseman/Forepart of lion within incuse square*. Yet, there are certain differences among them. On the light tetrobols these are particularly noticeable on the representation of the helmet on the reverse. On Perdiccas's coins, it only has protective parts for the neck and the cheeks, but not for the nose, as on Alexander's coins. Later, in the last years of Alexander's reign, the protective piece for the nose disappears and the difference is perceived in the absence of angularity of the helmet on Perdiccas' coins. Furthermore, the crest is affixed only at the top of the helmet, while at the back it hangs loosely. As opposed to that, on his father's coins it is closely attached and follows the line of the helmet. Additionally, in the last series of light tetrobols, letters from Perdiccas' name appear on the reverse, which is not the case with the previous three series, on which there are no symbols at all.⁸ The presence of letters is noted on some of Alexander's coins, too. On the obverse, either letter A or H appears, above or below the horse.⁹

Both rulers used identical obverse and reverse representations for the heavy tetrobols, too. However, towards the end of series I, Perdiccas introduced certain symbols (plant, flower, or dog) on the obverse that continued to be used in series II and III, which do not appear on Alexander's coins. The forepart of a lion on the reverse is represented with both forefeet on Perdiccas' tetrobols, and with just one on his father's ones. Of the reverse symbols, a caduceus appears occasionally (in series II). Sometimes the reverse image includes either the initial or few first letters of Perdiccas' name.¹⁰

In the course of his long reign, it seems that Perdiccas II minted only lower silver denominations. According to Hammond, his decision to mint only tetrobols and obols was probably due to the fact that he was faced with shortage of silver,¹¹ since, at the beginning of his rule, he was not in a position to control the mines of the Bisaltians in the vicinity of Lake Prasias, a territory lost after the death of his father Alexander I.¹² The silver supplies were probably provided by means of trade with the neighbouring Paeonian tribes.¹³ Yet, there has been supposed that he had access to the mines on the Macedonian side of the River Strymon - Mt. Dysoron, and equally, to the mines in the inland.¹⁴

As previously mentioned, he used two monetary standards - a light and a heavy one. He started minting light tetrobols, the weight of which corresponded to the Attic triobols. Actually, he continued his father's policy of cooperation with Athens, aimed at facilitation of the trade. These coins were issued both at the beginning and the end of his reign from 451/0 to 435/4 BC (the first three series) and from 415/4 to 414/3 BC. In the period from ca. 435/4 to 416/5 BC, the production of light tetrobols ceased and several years before that, from ca. 445/4 BC, he started minting heavy tetrobols. At the

⁸ D. Raymond, op. cit., pp. 152-154.

⁹ Ibid, pp. 110-111.

¹⁰ For more elaborate description on Perdiccas' coins see: Ibid, pp. 154-163. For those of Alexander I, see also pp. 82 and 127-128.

¹¹ N. G. L. Hammond, op. cit., p. 119.

¹² Ibid, p. 115.

¹³ Ibid, p. 119, mentions the Paeonians and the Atintani.

¹⁴ D. Raymond, op. cit., p. 150.

beginning these were issued along with the light tetrobols, up to 435/4 BC, and then as a sole denomination until 425/4 BC, all this suggesting that the Macedonian mint completely ceased to work probably in the period from 425 to 416 BC.¹⁵

The heavy tetrobols were intended for local trade with the Balkan tribes from the Thracio-Macedonian area, which is implied by their design. Namely, the obverse type present on the tetrobols was borrowed from the ones used earlier by the tribal alliance, while the reverse actually copies a regal Macedonian type.¹⁶ The presence of symbols such as plant, flower, caduceus or letters from the Perdiccas' name, corresponds with the tradition of the Thracio-Macedonian area.¹⁷

Even though we are talking about an incomplete hoard, it is of particular importance because of the quantity of the coins of Perdiccas II, which are very rare and mostly appear as single finds.

The Numismatic Collection of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia possesses additional eight light and two heavy tetrobols, as well as one obol.¹⁸ N. Šeldarov published three light tetrobols from his collection (the specimens were found at the sites of *Markov Grad* (village of Korešnica, Demir Kapija), *Gradište* (village of Drenovo, Kavadarci) and *Vardarski Rid* (Gevgelija), respectively),¹⁹ and one heavy tetrobol with unknown place of origin.²⁰ The Museum of Gevgelija holds only one light tetrobol discovered during the archaeological excavations at the site of *Vardarski Rid* (Gevgelija).²¹ There are information about single finds of tetrobols issued by Perdiccas II found in the vicinity of Berovo, at the village of Aldinci (Kruševo), *Vardarski Rid* (Gevgelija) and *Gradište* (village of Drenovo), where one light tetrobol is discovered.²²

However, this is not the only hoard containing tetrobols issued by Perdiccas II. Namely, at the beginning of 2003, the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia acquired a part of a hoard, said to be found in the vicinity of Štip, that includes four tetrobols (2 light and 2 heavy ones) issued by King Perdiccas II, three by the Chalcidian League and four by the town of Acanthus.²³ In its numismatic collection, Ohrid Bank treasures a part of a hoard with a similar structure, too - tetrobols of Alexander I (1 light one), Perdiccas II (1 light and 4 heavy ones),

¹⁵ See footnote 5.

¹⁶ D. Raymond, op. cit., p. 155.

¹⁷ N. G. L. Hammond, op. cit., p. 120.

¹⁸ Registered under the following inventory numbers: 00/5/1, 00/23/5, 00/46/2, 01/16/1, 02/1/55, 03/1/18-1, 03/1/18-2, 03/14/2 (the light ones); 02/1/48-1, 02/1/48-2 (the heavy ones) and 02/3/20-2 (the obol).

¹⁹ N. Šeldarov, *Makedonija i Pajonija, Kolekcija Šeldarov*, Skopje, 2003, nos. 352-354.

²⁰ *Ibid*, no. 355.

²¹ B. Husenovski, *Antičkite moneti od Vardarski Rid*, Gevgelija, 2004, no. 2.

²² V. Lilčić, *Coins and Mints in Macedonia*, Proceedings of the Symposium held in honor of 80th birthday and 50th anniversary of the scholarly and educational work of Ksente Bogoev, Member of the Macedonian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Skopje, 2001, p. 30. Except for the finds from the ancient town of Eudarist (*Gradište*, village of Drenovo), he does not give information on the exact number and type of tetrobols from the other sites.

²³ Registered under the following inventory numbers: 03/2/13-1 to 03/13-11.

Acanthus (7), Chalcidian League (1) and Mende (1). Its number amounts fifteen coins, while for the place of its origin it is said to be the area between the towns of Štip and Radoviš.²⁴

According to their composition, these two hoards correspond with the above-discussed one, which raises a suspicion about the possibility that we could be dealing with one and the same dispersed hoard. Yet, the gathered information about their different place of origin constrains the possibility to consider them as one hoard with certainty, which is the reason why this paper discusses the first one separately.

At the end, it should be pointed out once again that, the coins treated here represent only a part of a hoard, whose total quantity, content and context are not known. Therefore, it is impossible to determine more precisely the chronological limits of the hoard. Within the scope of the available data, it could be noted that the oldest issue dates back to 451/0-447/6 BC (No. 1) and that the coins of the period from 437/6 to 425/4 BC (Nos. 7-16) are the most numerous ones.

The presence of the coins of the Chalcidian League and the town of Acanthus as latest specimens in the hoard (the dating of the former being c. 427-c. 421 BC,²⁵ and of the later ones c. 424-380 BC),²⁶ allows for possibility to lower the date of its deposition eventually to 380 BC. However, if one accepts Head's opinion that the tetrobols of Acanthus were minted after 424 BC,²⁷ then the *terminus post quem* for its deposition is ca. 421 BC.

Abbreviations

R	Doris Raymond, <i>Macedonian Regal Coinage to 413 B.C.</i> , New York 1953
SNG Cop.	<i>Sylloge Numorum Graecorum, Danish National Museum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals</i> , Copenhagen 1942, Reprint 1982

²⁴ I am grateful to Mrs. D. Razmovska Bačevska for this information.

²⁵ *Sylloge Numorum Graecorum, Danish National Museum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals*, Copenhagen 1942, Reprint 1982, Nos. 236 - 237.

²⁶ *Ibid*, Nos. 16-18.

²⁷ B.V. Head, *BMC*: op. cit., p. 34.

CATALOGUE

N°	Wt/g	Diam./ mm	Die- axis	Metal	Obverse // Reverse	Reference
PERDICCAS II (454 -413 BC)						
<i>light tetrobol</i>						
451/0-447/6 BC						
1.	1.80	13.8	10	AR	Horse walking r., unattended; linear circle and exergual line // Helmet with neck and cheek pieces r., in single linear square; all within incuse square.	R 131-147
<i>heavy tetrobols</i>						
445/4-438/7 BC						
2.	2.18	16	5	AR	Mounted warrior-hunter r., wearing petasus and chlamys, horse walking; on exergual line, dotted circle // Forepart of lion r., both feet visible; edge of lion a line; all within incuse square.	R 181-188
3.	2.22	15.3	1	AR	As previous // As previous.	R 181-188
4.	2.14	16	3	AR	As previous // As previous.	R 181-188
5.	2.51	15	9	AR	As previous, but petasus at nape of neck // As previous.	R 177, 178, 180, 189-191
445/4-438/7 or 437/6-432/1 BC						
6.	2.18	15	9	AR	As n° 2 // As previous, but edge of lion dotted.	R 179, 193/ 195, 196, 220, 227
437/6-432/1 BC						
7.	2.13	15.5	6	AR	As previous // As n° 2, but straight caduceus above, pointed r.	R 203
8.	2.22	15	3	AR	As previous, but horse prancing; flowerless plant below horse//As n° 2.	R 212, 213, 218, 219, 229, 230, 233
9.	2.12	15	3	AR	As previous // As previous.	R 212, 213, 218, 219, 229, 230, 233
10.	2.49	15	8	AR	As previous // As previous, but Π above in r. corner.	R 210
11.	2.31	15.2	11	AR	As previous, but no symbol // As n° 6.	R 197, 221-223, 225, 226

437/6-432/1 or 431/0-425/4 BC						
12.	2.22	14.9	12	AR	As previous // As n° 2.	R 208, 224, 231, 232/ 241-244
13.	2.26	15.2	9	AR	As previous // As previous.	R 208, 224, 231, 232/ 241-244
14.	2.03	14.9	6	AR	As previous // As previous.	R 208, 224, 231, 232/ 241-244
15.	2.03	15.7	3	AR	As previous // As previous.	R 208, 224, 231, 232/ 241-244
16.	2.32	15.9	5	AR	As previous // As previous, but head of caduceus in upper l. corner.	R 215/234
CHALCIDIAN LEAGUE (433/2 - 348 BC)						
<i>tetrobols</i>						
432/1- c.430 BC						
17.	2.29	15	1	AR	Laureate head of Apollo r.; border of dots // X-A-Λ/KI[Δ]/[E]ΩN around lyre; the whole in incuse square.	SNG Cop., 235
c. 427- c.421 BC						
18.	1.98	16	7	AR	As previous, but type l.; behind Δ // X-A-Λ/KIΔ/E/ΩN around lyre; the whole in linear square, enclosed in incuse square.	SNG Cop., 236, 237
19.	2.14	14	5	AR	As previous // As previous.	SNG Cop., 236, 237
ACANTHUS						
<i>tetrobols</i>						
424-380 BC						
20.	2.28	15		AR	Forepart of bull kneeling l. on one knee, his head turned back; border or dots // Shallow quadripartite incuse square, granulated.	SNG Cop., 16-18 (variants)
21.	2.39	15.1		AR	As previous // As previous.	SNG Cop., 16-18 (variants)

