Several years ago I published an article on Olbian “asses” in the collection of the National Museum in Cracow\(^1\). Since then, the Olbian set at the Cracow Museum has acquired more coins, including two “aes grave” to which these remarks are devoted\(^2\).

Both coins belong to what is termed second series “asses”\(^3\). The series is composed of three denominations, all bearing the legend APIX. The largest (weight ca. 115g, diameter ca. 70.0mm) has a gorgoneion for obverse and on the reverse a rendition of an eagle holding a dolphin in its claws\(^4\). Two smaller denominations,

weighing respectively ca. 25g and ca. 11.5g feature the same obverse and reverse types: a gorgoneion and a four-spoked wheel. According to P.O. Karyshkovskii, respective denominations are equivalent to an obol, 1/2 obol, and 1/8 obol. The pieces at the National Museum in Cracow exemplify the smaller denominations. One (Cat.1) may be considered a 1/2 obol, the other (Cat. 2) a 1/8 obol.

P.O. Karyshkovskii used stylistic analysis and archaeological evidence to date the production of the APIX series at ca. 3rd quarter of the 5th century B.C. He admitted deviation in this dating by ten years either way. An important observation, Karyshkovskii suggested that the coins described could remain in circulation until the 4th century B.C. Considering the style of the design, archaeological context of the finds with their number and distribution, number of issues, and not possibly accidental coincidence between the legend APIX and the inscription APIXO known from the dolphin pieces, perhaps we should widen slightly the period when the “as” series were produced to span the years from ca. 450 to 420/410 B.C.

5 Larger denominations: Karyshkovskii, “Asy,” Pls. VII, 8-9; Idem, Monetnoe delo, Pls. IV=B, 1-2 – IV C, 1-2; XXVII, 3-XXX; Zograph, Antichnye Money, Pl. XXXI, 2; SNG BM, Nos. 385-386; Frolova, Abramzon, GIM, Pls. 16, 2 – 18, 3; 20, 1, 5; smaller denomination: Karyshkovskii, “Asy,” Pls. VII, 10-12; Idem, Monetnoe delo, Pls. IV=B, 3-5 – IV C, 3-5; XXXI - XXXII; Zograph, Antichnye Money, Pl. XXXI, 3; Anokhin, Pl. II, 14; SNG BM, Nos. 387-389; SNG Stancomb 344-345; Frolova, Abramzon, GIM, Pls. 18, 4- 19, 20, 2-4, 21, 1-3.

6 Karyshkovskii, Money Ol’vii, p. 45; Idem, Monetnoe delo, pp. 157ff; there the older literature and, among other things, previous attempts at dating.


8 As finds of the APIX series are among the most common, cf. Karyshkovskii, Money Ol’vii, pp. 48f; Idem, Monetnoe delo, p. 222. This is indirect evidence of relatively large production of this series.


10 Incidentally, in an older work, P.O. Karyshkovskii suggested somewhat later dating (“Asy,”...
The legend APIX (APIXO on the dolphin pieces) is now interpreted as Ἀριχος – a proper name of Greek origin\(^{11}\). That Arichos who placed his name on “asses” in the group in question would have been the tyrant ruling Olbia, just like Pausanias and Eminakos, who are known from one series of “asses” and Olbian silver staters, respectively\(^{12}\). It seems a much less convincing theory that the name Arichos is non-Greek and belonged to a governor of the Scythian king Scyles as issuer of those “asses”\(^{13}\).

The smaller of the two coins at the National Museum in Cracow (Cat. 2) was purchased at a 1997 auction at the Warsaw Numismatic Center\(^{14}\). No more is known about its history.

By contrast, the other “as” (Cat.1) has an interesting history. The piece arrived at the Cracow Museum as one of 2600 ancient coins donated by Lech Kokociński\(^{15}\). In that number, there were 191 examples minted by Greek cities on the Black Sea north coast and by rulers of the Bosporan Kingdom\(^{16}\). Lech Kokociński, a long-time animator of the Polish numismatic movement, honorary chairman of the Polish Numismatic Society, unquestionably deserves to be called the most distinguished Polish antique coin collector in the second half of the 20th century. His antique coin collection, built painstakingly over years,
acquired several dozen pieces from the former collection of Ignacy Terlecki (1860-1916). The latter, a military physician at Kerch, Crimea, and a collector of coins and antiquities, went down in history as the builder of one of the foremost collections of antique coins from the north coast of the Black Sea. After his death, faced with a Bolshevik threat, his widow and children left Kerch in 1919, taking the collection with them. By rail to Sevastopol, by sea to Romania, and further by land, the Terlecki family reached Poland. Here they sold most of the collection by weight (Russian silver coins), some to the National Museum in Warsaw (antique coins) and to the National Bank (Polish gold coins). A small part of the assemblage stayed in the family’s hands and later found its way to Lech Kokociński’s collection eventually to be donated to the National Museum in Cracow. Incidentally, as early as 1908, the Cracow Museum had traded some artwork doubles with I. Terlecki for a set of antique art relics and coins (not necessarily minted in the Black Sea region). Curiously, that transaction included a now lost example of a large “as” denomination of the second series with gorgoneion on the obverse and eagle with dolphin on the reverse.

Many of the antique coins and artworks once belonging to I. Terlecki’s collection had come from finds. Unfortunately, not even the slightest evidence is available as to the site of the find of the piece now in the National Museum in Cracow collection. As it happens, second-series “asses” are among the most

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20 Bodzek, “Coins from Greek Cities”, p. 66; 68, Cat. 1; Idem, “Starożytne monety z północnych wybrzeży…,” p. 73; Moczulska, “Zabytki antyczne z północnych wybrzeży …,” p. 67.


22 That the described piece comes from a find is suggested by its poor state of preservation. I. Terlecki was careful in adding to his collection (cf. Szemiothowa, “Historia powstania…”,
common “aes grave” finds in Olbia itself, in settlements within the Olbian chora, and outside that polis. Also I. Terlecki’s “as” acquired in 1908 was recorded as having been discovered in a find “in Ol’via.”

CATALOGUE:
c. 2nd half of the 5th cent. BC
obv. Gorgoneion
rev. Wheel with four spokes; between spokes A P I X.
AE

1. 16.23g, 33.8mm; ii
Donated by L. Kokociński, 2002
Inv. No. MNK-VII-A-7241
SNG Cracow 38.

p. 341) and it may be supposed that in buying a coin from a fairly common issue, he would have gone for a well kept example. The case would have been different with pieces brought to him and sold cheaply by schastlivshchiki, lucky finders.

2.
14.36g; 31.6mm; vii
Purchased at Warszawskie Centrum Numizmatyczne, 1997
Inv. No. MNK-VII-A-6445
SNG Cracow 39.