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Cracow

**ANCIENT GREEK COINS FROM THE
COLLECTION OF EDMUND STARZEŃSKI***

In 1909 countess Bronisława Starzeńska presented the National Museum in Cracow with a collection of national memorabilia, objects of art, documents and numismatic items¹. The donation was made in the name of the countess Bronisława's late son. The objects included in the gift composed a part of the collection of the Museum of the Pokucie Region in Kołomyja. Both the museum and the collection were created by Edmund Starzeński, Bronisława's spouse, an admirer of arts and a patron of artists and men of letters. He used to maintain relations with many outstanding personages of his time and his estate Mogilnica hosted numerous guests belonging to artistic and literary circles².

Edmund Starzeński became interested in collecting as early as in 1861 and such items as national memorabilia, archivalia, "antiquities", objects of nature and ethnographic articles remained within the scope of his interests. His collection of antiquities included also archaeological artefacts from the area of Eastern Galicia. Starzeński himself undertook excavations on Mogilnica site in 1878³.

* I would like to dedicate this article to Professor Peter Berghaus, Ph.D. on the occasion of his 75th birthday.

¹ National Museum of Cracow: Book of Entries, No. 4169 and 4203: M. Gumowski, *Zbiory hr. Starzeńskiej*, *Wiadomości Numizmatyczno-Archeologiczne*, 11, 1909, p.204 f; *Sprawozdania Dyrekcji Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie za rok 1909*, Kraków 1910, p. 33 f.

² Adam Starzeński's, son of Edmund, letter to F. Kopera dated 06.05.1936, kept in the Main Department of Inventory of the National Museum in Cracow, entry number 170/36.

³ M. Siwak, *O zbiorach archeologicznych, numizmatycznych i archiwalnych w b. Muzeum Pokuckim im. Starzeńskich w Kołomyi*, Kołomyja 1901, p. 31. On Mogilnica see *Słownik geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego i innych krajów słowiańskich*, Vol. VI, 1885, p. 581; Statuette of Osiris was to be

In 1887 Edmund Starzeński moved to Kolomyja where he realised his long-present wish to make his collection accessible to “wider audience” and set up a private Museum of the Pokucie Region in 1892. The museum was located in the count’s villa and was divided in two parts: the library and the museum proper⁴. As the museum was visited rather infrequently, Edmund Starzeński assumed that it did not fulfil its functions and he gave the collection over to his sons ca. 1900. As it was mentioned above, in 1909 a part of the collection was presented to the National Museum in Cracow⁵.

Coins and medals constituted a considerable group among the presented objects. Their total number amounted to 2555 items⁶, consisting of 337 antique coins, including 88 Greek, 218 Roman and 31 Byzantine ones. Unfortunately, a precise reconstruction of Edmund Starzeński’s collection of ancient coins is a very difficult task at the moment. Works published on the collection of the Museum of the Pokucie Region cover only a part of the problem. In the case of the ancient coins information is very scarce, for example a note in the Reports of the Management of the National Museum in Cracow informs that Starzeński’s collection included “tetradrachms and staters of various Greek cities and Hellenistic diadochs”⁷. The collection of coins in the possession of the National Museum was subject to translocations during the period of the two world wars and that a part of the documentation on the collection presented by Bronisława Starzeńska has vanished. Therefore today, it is practically impossible to fully identify the coins from Edmund Starzeński’s collection among the items present in the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum in Cracow.

Consequently, a manuscript catalogue of coins from the collection of Edmund Starzeński preserved in the Czartoryski Library is an item of utmost importance⁸. The catalogue, made by the count himself, is divided into three parts. Each of them starts with a separate title page. The first part covers Polish, Lithuanian and Russian coins⁹.

found there, however, the finding cannot be connected with the excavations undertaken by Ed. Starzeński. G. Grimm, *Die Zeugnisse ägyptischer Religion und Kunstelemente in Römischen Deutschland*, Leiden 1969, p. 247, No. 167; M. Mielczarek, *Posążki bóstw egipskich z Podola i Pokucia. W sprawie wiarygodności dawnych informacji o figurkach antycznych z terenu Barbaricum*, *Archeologia* XXXVIII, 1987, p. 127.

⁴ Brochure of M. Siwak, *O zbiorach...* is the work presenting the broadest picture of the Museum of Pokucie Region and its history to 1900. However it describes only a part of the collection, while the second part of the publication announced by the author must have never been published. Also see B. Janusz, *Muzeum Huculskie w Kolomyji*, *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 14, 1903, pp. 274-275; idem, *Muzea lokalne w Galicji*, *Ziemia* 3, 1912, p. 77 f; idem, *Zniszczenie Muzeum Pokuckiego w Kolomyji*, *Gazeta Lwowska* 197, 20.08.1917, p. 5; Verax, *Co życie niesie. Uwagi*, *Głos Narodu*, 80, 05.04.1896, p. 4; T. Szydłowski, *Ruiny Polski*, Kraków 1919; E. Chwałewik, *Zbiory Polskie. Archiwa, Biblioteki, Gabinety, Galerie, Muzea i inne zbiory Pamiątek Przeszłości w Ojczyźnie i na Obczyźnie*, Vol. I, Warszawa-Kraków 1926 (reprint Cracow 1991), p. 167 (Kolomyja); see also M. Mielczarek, *Posążki ...*, p. 127.

⁵ However, the Museum of Pokucie Region was reanimated by the Society of Community School in Kolomyja. Nevertheless, subsequent history of the museum exceed the scope of the herein article. On the literature concerning the Museum of Pokucie Region see note 4.

⁶ Gumowski, *Zbiory...*, p. 204.

⁷ *Sprawozdanie Dyrekcji Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie za rok 1909*, Cracow 1910, p. 34.

⁸ Manuscript MNK 957 a,b,c.

⁹ Manuscript MNK 957 a.

Polish medals are described in the second part.¹⁰ For us, the most interesting part is part three assigned to foreign coins and medals¹¹. The cover page of that part of the catalogue informs us that in 1892 Edmund Starzeński's collection was incorporated into the Museum of the Pokucie Region. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Museum was active between the year 1892 and the year 1900 – the year of the count's death.



Spis monet i medalow
z zbioru megitnickiego, ca. r. 1887 w Tretompi
u. S. Maja 1892, wstaczone w Muzeum Pokuckiego.
Czesci III. Monety i medale obce.
1. Staro-greckie.
2. Staro-rymskie.
3. Dziejnych narodow lub krajow.

¹⁰ Manuscript MNK 957 b.

¹¹ Manuscript MNK 957 c.

Primarily, the commented part of the catalogue was to cover ancient Greek, ancient Roman items and coins of “various countries and lands”¹². Unfortunately, the manuscript is uncomplete and unfinished. Only six pages with a description of five Greek coins have survived. The description is preceded by the heading “Autonomic cities, countries and colonies”. Apart from a description of the obverse and the reverse sides of the coins, the catalogue assigns them to specific mints and defines their ore and nominal value. Moreover, weight, diameter and thickness of the coins is given. As a reference Edmund Starzeński quotes two sources: M. Hennin, *Manuel de Numismatique Ancienne*, Paris 1869 and J. G. Th. Grässe, *Handbuch der alten Numismatik*, Leipzig 1854¹³. In two cases: the Thasos coin and the stater minted by the Thessalian League, additional information was included on the fact that both items came from the local finds¹⁴. Descriptions of the coins are accompanied by drawings.

The data included in the catalogue give the grounds for a relatively precise definition of the coins. At the same time, these are the only coins from the collection of Edmund Starzeński which can be described precisely nowadays. We should hope that further examination and research into the archival materials will enable us to complete a full reconstruction of the ancient coins collection.

LIST OF THE ABBREVIATIONS

BMC Thessaly – P. Gardner, *A catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum. Thessaly to Aetolia*, London 1883

BMC Thrace – R. S. Poole, *A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum. The Tauric Chersonese, Sarmatia, Dacia, Moesia, Thrace, etc.*, London 1877

SNG Cop. – Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. *The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, Danish National Museum*, vol. II, *Thrace and Macedonia*, New Jersey 1982 (reprint)

SNG Delepierre – Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, *France. Bibliotheque Nationale. Collection Jean et Marie Delepierre*, Paris 1983

Catalogue – E. Starzeński, *Catalogue of Coins and Medals from the Mogilnica Collection, Incorporated to the Museum of the Pokucie Region on the 3rd of May 1892* (manuscript MNK 957 c)

¹² Manuscript MNK 957 c, p.1.

¹³ Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain access to the Hennin’s work.

¹⁴ For background and importance of the two findings see J. Bodzek, *Dwa nieznanne znaleziska monet greckich z Ukrainy* (forthcoming).

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THE CATALOGUE

1. Thrace, Thasos, after ca. 180 B.C. – I cent. B.C.

obverse: Head of young Dionisus;

reverse: Heracles standing with a club and lions' skin,

HPAKΛEΟΥΣ ΣΩTHPOΣ ΘAΣION

AR, tetradrachm, weight – 16,50 g, diameter – 30,0 mm;

SNG Cop 1039; BMC Thrace 72-73.

Found near Vyžnycja, Černivec'ka oblast', Ukraine¹⁵.

Bibliography: *Catalogue*, p. 6, No. 5; Bodzek, *Dwa nieznane...*, No. 2.



2. Thessaly, Thessalian League, ca. 180–27 B.C.

obverse: Head of Zeus crowned with oak r., behind ITAΛOY

reverse: Athena Itonia r., above ΔIOKΛH [Σ], in field ΘEΣΣA ΛΩN

AR, Stater, weight – 5,53 g, diameter 20,0 mm;

SNG Cop 227; BMC Thessaly No. 11.

Found near Horodenka, Ivano–Frankivs'ka oblast', Ukraine.

Bibliography: *Catalogue*, p. 5, No. 3; Bodzek, *Dwa nieznane...*, No. 1¹⁶.



¹⁵ I assumed the date of the beginning of the large Thasos tetradrachms minting after M. Thompson, *A Hoard from Thessaly*, ANS MN, 1, 1964, pp. 79–80; According to the research of G. Katarova, *Novi danii za datirovkata na tetradrakhmite na ostrov Tasos ot втори period na monesechneto mu i na frakiiskite tetradrakhmii od I v.pr.n.e.*, IAI 27, pp. 131–152, coins of the type as described should be dated on the second decade of I century B.C.; As the Thasos coins used to be imitated, and the imitations are often similar to the original, on the basis of the drawing given by E. Starzeński it could not be excluded that a barbarian imitation is being dealt with. The problem of imitation has been recently discussed by A. Saçianu, *Copies and Imitations of Thasian Tetradrachms*, (in:) Proceedings of the XIth International Numismatic Congress, Vol. I, Louvain-la-Neuve 1993, pp. 123–131; there older literature. As for now, efforts and attempts to identify the coin in the collection of the National Museum in Cracow has not been successful.

¹⁶ Date and description of the nominal value assumed after P. R. Franke, *Zur Chronologie der Strategen und der Münzprägung des Koinon der Thessaler*, SM 35, 1959, pp. 61–67; B. Helly, *Les Émissions monétaires de la Confédération Thessalienne (IIe–Ier s.av.J.–C.)*, (in:) Rythmes de la production monétaire de l'Antiquité à nos jours, Louvain-la-Neuve 1987, pp. 39–53 (there further bibliography, the coin has not been identified among the items of the collection of the National Museum in Cracow).

3. Thessaly, The Thessalian League, ca. 180 – 27 B.C.

obverse: Head of Zeus crowned with oak r.

reverse: Athena Itonia r., in field ΘΕΣΣΑ ΛΩΝ

AR, stater, weight – ? diameter – ?

Bibliography: *Catalogue*, p. 5, No. 4¹⁷.

4. Attica, Athens, ca. 480 – 404 B.C.

obverse: Athena's head wearing Attic helmet, decorated with olive leaves, eye en face;

reverse: Owl r., in field to l., spray of olive and crescent, in field to r. ΑΘΕ

AR, tetradrachm, weight – 13,75 g, diameter – 20,0 mm;

SNG Delepierre 1424 – 1459; SNG Cop.31–40.

Bibliography: *Catalogue*, p. 4, No. 1¹⁸.



5. Sicyonia, Sicyon, ca. 430/20 – 390/80 B.C. (Pl. I, 5)

obverse: Chimaera l., in field below ΣΕ

reverse: Flying dove r., All in olive-wreath.

AR, stater, weight – 11,55 g, diameter – 20,0 mm;

SNG Delepierre 1936; SNG Cop.31.

Bibliography: *Catalogue*, p. 4, No. 2¹⁹.



¹⁷ The data included in the *Catalogue* as well as lack of drawing does not allow for precise identification of the coin described. As for now, it has not been identified in the collection of the National Museum in Cracow.

¹⁸ The drawing of the described coin does not allow for a more precise date setting. Very low weight of the coin leads us to believe that it might be a forgery. Unfortunately, the described coin has not been identified among the items presented in the National Museum in Cracow.

¹⁹ I assumed the dating of the coin after C. M. Kraay, *Archaic and Classical Greek Coins*, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1976, p. 99 f. Also in this case I was not able to identify the described coin among the items in the collection of the National Museum.