
IMITATIONS OF GREEK COINS IN THE GETIC
STATE
WITH CAPITAL HELIS (?) AT SBORYANOVO
DURING THE EARLY HELLENISTIC AGE

KAMEN DIMITROV

(S u m m a r y)

The Getic state considered had extensive contacts mainly with the Black Sea cities, evidenced by the imported pottery, the amphorae seals, the coin finds and the Greek inscription from the excavations of the capital Helis? The imitations of Greek coins, found in the site and on the whole supposed territory of the State are divided into three main classes:

I. Silver imitations of silver coins of the types of Philip II and Alexander the Great. The imitations of the first type have been struck probably near Byala — Borovo, district of Rousse, ca 295 BC. They followed originals from Amphipolis, 300-298 BC. The center apparently became a new capital of the State ca 250 after the destruction of Helis? by an earthquake. Another mint is probably to be located near Aydemir and Lambrinovo, district of Silistra. Both regions provides important hoards with imitations of the type of Philip II. The imitations of the type of “Alexander the Great” are few in number. They reprise issues of Babylon and Arados and originate probably from Asia Minor.

II. Bronze and silver-plated imitations of silver coins: tetradrachms and drachms of the type of Alexander the Great and drachms of Histria. They have been casted in clay moulds made out of original coins at Helis? Some of the imitations of the Histrian type were halved.

III. Bronze imitations of bronze coins of the types of Philip II and Alexander the Great. The sole imitation studied of that class is a hybrid, probably struck at the center near Byala ca 320- 310 BC.

The review of the hoards with original coins on the territory of the State indicates that the pieces were estimated by face value. The

issues of the type of Philip II have been used for payments to the population along the Danube like the Triballi and to communities in South Thrace. They contacted with Macedonia, where the silver “philips” represented the formal state currency and were exchanged at a overvalued rate to the “alexanders”.The latter served the contacts of the Getic state with the Black Sea cities. On its territory both types have been hoarded separately. The lack of original “philips” provoked the Getae to strike imitations in early time, the style, the controls and the weight strictly following those of the originals. The imitations of class II represented bronze and plated highly overevaluated tetradrachms and drachms,some of them halved. They were related probably with a period of a crisis during the war with Lysimachos in 294-292 BC. The imitation of class III underlines the popularity of Macedonian bronze coins among the Getae, represented in 10 hoards. Coins of different size and especially small- change issues are characteristic for a relatively- developed local market. Through internal contacts the Getic state received coins and adopted some monetary practices from Greece and Macedonia, suitable for the local needs. The State appeared to have been quite advanced in its development compared to the other barbaric communities.