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dedicata**

Ediderunt:

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THE BRONZE COINAGE OF LYCHNIDOS

[with 1 plate]

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Abstract

Lychnidos, ville illyrienne située sur le bord nord-est du lac d'Ochrid, occupait une position stratégique importante pour la défense du royaume de la Macédoine. Fortifiée par Philippe II après les invasions dévastatrices des Illyriens qui coûtèrent la vie à son frère, le roi Perdikkas III, elle est de nouveau citée par nos sources dans le contexte de la première guerre macédonienne contre Rome. On sait, d'après Tite-Live, qu'en 209 av. J. Chr. la garnison macédonienne de Lychnidos trahit Philippe V pour un certain Aeropos qui a permis une invasion des Dardaniens (Tite-Live 27.32.9–33.1). Philippe V reconquit sans doute la ville assez rapidement, pour la perdre définitivement après sa défaite contre Flamininus. Selon les termes du traité de 196 av. J.-C., Philippe se trouva dépourvue de tous ses possessions en dehors de la Macédoine propre et la ville de Lychnidos fut donnée à Pleuratos, roi des Illyriens, allié de romains (Polybe 18.47.12–13). Pendant la troisième guerre macédonienne, Lychnidos est cité comme base militaire des Romains (Tite-Live 43.21) et après la chute du royaume elle devint indépendante.

Durant la basse période hellénistique Lychnidos a produit une rare émission de bronzes portant la légende ΛΥΧΝΙΔΙΩΝ. Les types iconographiques – bouclier à l'avant et poupe de navire au revers – copient des tétrabolos au nom de Macédoniens et leur style est très proche des frappes macédoniennes. L'imitation de types macédoniens indique que les bronzes de Lychnidos furent émis pendant une période où la ville était sous contrôle macédonien et, d'après les sources littéraires citées ci-dessus, cette production n'a pu avoir eu lieu qu'avant le traité de 196 av. J. Chr. La datation du monnayage de Lychnidos avant 196, très naturelle en soi, n'a jamais été proposée jusqu'à maintenant en raison de la date communément acceptée pour les tétrabolos macédoniens: à la suite de Gaebler, il a toujours été admis que toutes les émissions autonomes de Macédoine furent émises après 185 av. J. Chr. Une série d'arguments qui sera présentée dans la publication du corpus de ce monnayage que prépare l'auteure de cet article conduit à dater les émissions macédoniennes bouclier/poupe et Ménade/poupe antérieurement à 196. Par conséquent la datation proposée pour le monnayage de Lychnidos est conforme au témoignage clair des sources littéraires.

La production d'un monnayage de bronze aux types macédoniens par une ville située dans une zone militaire à la périphérie de la Macédoine propre ne peut pas, à notre avis, être comprise comme un signe de son autonomie comme l'avait proposé Regling. D'après notre perception actuelle de la fonction du monnayage de bronze de la période hellénistique, on peut émettre l'hypothèse que cette émission a pu servir au paiement de la nourriture (*sitarchia*) des soldats de la garnison. En l'absence d'un monnayage de la cité à types personnels, on a choisi des types – du reste des types militaires – connus et familiers à leurs usagers.

The Illyrian city of Lychnidos¹ on the northeastern coast of the lake Lychnitis, was built on the edge of the fertile plain of Lychnis, on a bluff overlooking the homonymous lake at a defensible point. The city, densely populated

¹ On Lychnidos see: Regling 1925; Fluss 1927, col. 2111–2115. On archaeological evidence: Bitrakova-Grozdanova and Kuzman 1998, 3–16.

since ancient times, held a strategic position for the control of the route through the Lakelands and was one of the stations on the *Via Egnatia*. As has been brilliantly demonstrated by Nicolas Hammond, this route was of particular value to people moving from the Central Balkan area towards the Greek peninsula². Before the reign of Philip II the western frontier of Macedonia coincided with the mountainous range that separated Lynkos and Pelagonia from the lakes of Prespa. After the devastating invasions of Bardylis, in order to prevent future disasters and secure his kingdom, Philip lanced a war against the Illyrians and conquered the lands up to the lake Lychnitis. To quote Diodorus (16.8.1) «...μεγάλη παρατάξει νενικηκῶς τοὺς Ἰλλυριοὺς καὶ πάντας τοὺς μέχρι τῆς Λυχνίτιδος καλουμένης λίμνης κατοικοῦντας ὑπηκόους πεπονημένους...». A strong fortification to the north of Lychnidos on the hill of St Erasmos has been dated to the time of Philip and several other fortifications have been identified along this route.³ To the archaeological evidence one can add the testimony of Demosthenes (*First Philippic*, 48.5) according to whom Philip was known to have fortified cities amongst the Illyrians. The precise status of the conquered area between the lakes of Prespai and Lychnitis remains somewhat obscure. Whether it was fully incorporated into the kingdom or whether it remained a protective zone – some kind of barrier land- in which the Macedonians held military bases for purpose of defense cannot be definitely proven because of lack of decisive evidence.⁴ The strategic position of Lychnidos for the defense of the kingdom is further underlined during the events of the first Macedonian War. In 209 BC Philip V was engaged in operations against the Aitolians in the Peloponnese when he was informed that Lychnidos had been captured; before he could wage a war in Illyria the Dardanians had poured into Macedonia (Livy 27.32.9–33.1).

During the Hellenistic period Lychnidos produced a bronze issue with the following description:

Obv.: Macedonian shield with strobilos in the centre; double linear circle around center and singular around rim; the latter adorned with six crescents a pellet within; the crescents are separated by two pellets.

Rev.: Stern r., between the two lines of the inscription: ΛΥΧΝΙ-ΔΙΩΝ.

Some of the specimens bear a dolphin as a symbol on the reverse below the stern.

The first known specimen of this issue, held in the museum of Istanbul, was published with a detailed commentary by Kurt Regling in 1925.⁵ Since then another 17 coins have come to light and they are listed at the end of this article. Some have been published with photos, for others we only have references. For most of

² Hammond 1981, 205–208.

³ Hammond and Griffith 1979, 652–654.

⁴ See: Papazoglou 1988, 74–75; Hammond 1981, 213–214 has however suggested that these territories were annexed to the kingdom, and that Macedonians were planted in cities whose names were Macedonian, but the evidence is rather scarce. For a recent discussion of Hammond's proposal see: Lane Fox 2011, 344–345.

⁵ Regling 1925.

them we have a more or less precise find spot. Eight specimens come from the city itself and its surroundings (nos 2–4, 10, 13–16 in our list); one comes from Pogradec (no. 18) – an Albanian city on the south shore of the lake; four probably come from Pletvar, a small town just outside Prilep, the ancient Styberra (nos 5–8); one comes from the Illyrian Apollonia (no. 17) and one from Pella, the capital of the Macedonian kingdom (no. 11).

The iconographic types on the bronze issue of the Lychnidians are beyond any doubt copied from the silver coins of the Macedonians, usually called tetrobols⁶. Apart from the difference in the legend – ΛΥΧΝΙΔΙΩΝ on one issue ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ on the other – the iconographic but also the stylistic similarities are striking. There is only one minor variation on the obverse: on the Macedonian issues the crescents on the shield are separated by three pellets whereas on the bronzes of Lychnidos only by two. This detail and the slightly larger diameter of the bronze coins, indicate that the two issues could not have been produced from the same obverse dies.

Small cities with limited and sporadic mint output are known to have imitated coin types used by other minting authorities. Comparable, although earlier examples from Macedonia are those of Pydna and Methone, cities on the Pierian coast, very close to the heartland of the Macedonian kingdom. In the first half of the fourth century, Pydna produced a bronze issue with the types of Amyntas III and the legend ΠΥΔΝΑΙΩΝ. Although the reason behind this choice has not been fully understood, it is hard to escape the conclusion that it was struck during a period that Pydna – a Macedonian city with a history of rebellions⁷ – was aligned with Macedonian policy. This interpretation is furthermore confirmed by the switching from Macedonian to Athenian types, which must have occurred between ca. 360 BC when the city was taken over by Timotheos and 357 BC, the year of its capture by Philip.⁸ In a similar manner Methone reproduced on her bronzes the type of a lion grasping a spear known from the coins of Amyntas III and Perdikkas III.⁹ The Hellenistic issue of Lychnidos may be compared to the ones just mentioned. A small city on the borders of the kingdom, with no other monetary production, minted coins with Macedonian types during a short period; as at Pydna and Methone this could only have occurred during a period that the city was under Macedonian control.

Regling underlined the resemblance of the coins of Lychnidos to the Macedonian tetrobols and dated the former to the reign of Perseus; this was the natural consequence of accepting Gaebler's tentative chronology of the shield/stern tetrobols to the reign of the last Antigonid ruler.¹⁰ From the numismatic evidence Regling assumed that during the reign of Perseus Lychnidos was held by the Macedonians.¹¹ The argument however is a circular one and is not supported by the literary evidence.

⁶ Gaebler 1906, 30, nos 16–21, pl. 1, nos 8, 9.

⁷ For Pydna and sources on its history see: Hatzopoulos 1996, 466–467.

⁸ On the coinage of Pydna see: Tselekas 1996, 11–32.

⁹ Psoma 2002, 78–81.

¹⁰ Gaebler 1897, 176.

¹¹ Regling 1925, 264.

Apart from the passage of Diodoros that refers to the conquest of the area by Philip II, cited above, the first concrete reference to the city in literary sources is found in Livy. The Roman historian states that during the first Macedonian war, when Philip V was in the Peloponnese (209 BC) he was informed that "...one Aeropus by bribing the commander of the citadel and garrison had captured Lychnidos, was holding some villages of the Dassaretii and also stirring up the Dardani." (Livy, 27.32.9, Loeb translation). The king instantly reacted and started marching north. By the time he arrived in Thessaly "another messenger met him bringing news of greater inroad: that the Dardanians pouring into Macedonia were already holding Orestis and had come down to the Argestaeon plain" (Livy 27.33.1). Although he was delayed by warfare against the Romans and Attalos in mainland Greece and Euboia, in 207 BC Philip V "withdrew into his own kingdom in order to wage war against the Dardanians" (Livy 28.8.14). Although it is not directly mentioned there can be no doubt that Lychnidos was recaptured. The war ended with the treaty of Phoenice in 205 BC according to which Rome gained territories in Illyria, Antintania was annexed to Macedonia (Livy 29.12.13) and Philip kept the greater part of his Illyrian conquests.¹²

A passage of Polybios (5. 108.1–10) relating to the events of 217/6 BC, just before the outbreak of the war between Philip V and Rome, can also be of some relevance. The context is the following: Scerdelaidas, king of the Illyrians had betrayed his friendship with Philip V for the Aetolians and started attacking cities in Dassaretis. Immediately after "...ὁ γε Φίλιππος στρατεύσας ἀνεκτίησάτο μὲν τὰς προειρημένους πόλεις, κατελάβετο δὲ τῆς μὲν Δασσαρήτιδος Κρεώνιον καὶ Γεροῦντα, τῶν δὲ περὶ τὴν Λυχνιδίαν λίμνην Ἐγχελαῖνας, Κέρακα, Σατίωνα, Βοιούς, τῆς δὲ Καλοικίνων χώρας Βαντίαν, ἔτι δὲ τῶν καλουμένων Πισαντίνων Ὀργησσόν" (Polybios 5. 108.8). The προειρημένους πόλεις are mentioned a few lines above: Scerdelaidas had captured Pissaion in Pelagonia and taken over Antipatreia, Chrysondyon and Gertrus in Dassaretis (Polybios 5. 108.8). There is no reference to Lychnidos amongst the cities around the lake Lychnitis that were recaptured or conquered by Philip V and, given its strategic importance in the region, this can only mean that it had remained securely in the hands of the Macedonians and had not been challenged by the Illyrians. Therefore in 217/6 BC it must have already been garrisoned.

The Second Macedonian war started very shortly after the end of the first and after his fatal defeat at Kynoskephalai by Flamininus in 197 BC Philip lost all his possessions beyond Macedonia proper. Lychnis and Parthos were given to Pleuratos, king of the Illyrians and ally of Rome (Polybios 18. 47.12–13: ἔδωκαν δὲ καὶ Πλευράτῳ Λυχνίδα καὶ Πάρθον, οὗσας μὲν Ἰλλυρίδας, ὑπὸ Φίλιππον δὲ ταπτομένας). There is no evidence whatsoever that the city was re-conquered by the Macedonians after 197 BC. On the contrary there is direct evidence that, during the third Macedonian war, the city served as a base for the Romans. Livy (43.21) describing the campaigns of 169 BC writes: "Lucius Coelius, a Roman staff-officer was in charge of Illyricum; he had not dared to stir while the king was in those parts, but after his departure at last he attempted in the Penestian country to retake Uscana, and being driven back with many wounded by the Macedonian garrison which

¹² Walbank, 1967², 103.

was there, led his forces back to Lychnidos". It is clear from this passage that Lychnidos, whatever its state of dependence from Genthios, was in Roman hands¹³ and that the hypothesis put forward by Regling¹⁴ is contradicted by the evidence. This difficulty of dating the coins of Lychnidos to the reign of Perseus was also realized by Bitrakova-Grozdanova who left the question of its dating open.¹⁵

The most tenable hypothesis therefore, would be that the bronze coins of Lychnidos were struck sometime before 196 BC, when the area was under the control of Philip V and possessed a Macedonian garrison. This, however, is in full discordance with Gaebler's dating of the Macedonian coinage. According to the German numismatist the 'autonomous' coinage of the Macedonians was first issued in 185 BC, when Philip reopened the silver mines, as one of the measures to strengthen the economy of his kingdom that had been exhausted after successive wars (Livy 39.24). Gaebler related the opening of the mines to the 'autonomous' issues which he therefore dated after 185 BC.¹⁶ As for the shield/stern and the Maenad/stern issues, he tentatively dated them to the reign of Perseus, because they were lighter than the shield/helmet tetrobols, most issues of which can be securely dated to the end of Philip's reign through common monograms. Gaebler's dates, widely accepted and established amongst the academic community have never been re-examined. The famous passage of Livy however, on which this theory is based, makes no reference to coinage whatsoever and the dating of all 'autonomous' issues to the period after the second Macedonian war may, in our view, be revised.¹⁷ As far as the coinage of Lychnidos is concerned all difficulties in its dating disappear, once we accept that it could have been issued before 196 BC when the Macedonians controlled the city.

Furthermore, the function of the coinage of Lychnidos needs to be reconsidered. Why would a city on the border of the kingdom, which had never before issued coins, choose to produce a bronze issue with types identical to the Macedonian tetrobols? According to Regling, the king of Macedon, who had granted Macedonian cities and districts the right to coin as a sign of autonomy, granted the same right to the city of Lychnidos. However, two points need to be made. First, it is no longer certain that the issues in the name of the Macedonian cities (Thessalonike, Amphipolis, Pella) were struck before the Roman occupation¹⁸, and if this is correct, then we are left with the coinage in the name of the ethnos and the districts whose function needs further investigation. Second, even under Macedonian military control, there is no evidence that Lychnidos was integrated

¹³ Hammond, Walbank 1988, 521.

¹⁴ Regling 1925, 264.

¹⁵ Bitrakova-Grozdanova 1987, 192–193. Her hypothesis that the coinage of Lychnidos could perhaps date to the period after the battle of Pydna is untenable. At a period when all regal coinage was banned from circulation and had ended in a melting pot, the imitation of Macedonian types by a city which was no longer dependant of Macedonia is absurd.

¹⁶ This chronology was proposed in an article published by Gaebler 1897, 169–192, pl. 4.

¹⁷ This opinion shall be put forward in a monograph on the autonomous coinage of Macedonia which is under preparation by the author.

¹⁸ Kourembanas 2009. (unpublished PhD).

into the kingdom and under these circumstances to consider its coinage as a sign of 'autonomy' seems absurd.

Our perception of the function of bronze coinage has changed since Regling's time. Bronze coinage was certainly a medium of financing small scale financial activities within a limited region. In addition to this general statement, it is nowadays broadly accepted that during the Hellenistic period, bronze coins could have also been used for the payment of the *sitarchia*, soldiers' everyday expenses for food, a new practice which gradually replaced the distribution of grain¹⁹. This interpretation is valid for bronze royal issues, such as those in the name of Antigonos – which were found in large numbers, and perhaps even issued, in cities outside the kingdom that supported garrisons; it is also valid for sporadic and limited bronze issues, often bearing military types, that were produced in the name of cities or other, sometimes obscure, minting authorities. Seen under this perspective, the bronze coinage of Lychnidos could be explained by the need to provide the *sitarchia* for the Macedonian garrison that stationed in the city. In absence of an earlier coinage in their name, the Lychnidians reproduced the types of the Macedonian coinage to which the recipients were accustomed. The fact that the payment was made in a coinage in the name of the city and not in Macedonian coinage implies that the city provided the means for this issue. In other words instead of providing the nourishment for the soldiers, the city provided them the money with which to buy it themselves. This is, in our view, the way this short lived issue could be explained.

Out of the 13 coins with certain provenance two were securely found through excavations in the distant cities of Apollonia and Pella. Such a remote circulation is unusual for small scale bronze issues, but can be explained by the movement of troops. The coin from Apollonia was found in a grave and served as a Charron's obol. It could have reached this city during Philips' expeditions in Illyria, by a soldier who did not survive the campaign and was buried on the site. The unsuccessful siege of Apollonia in 211BC (Livy 26.25.3) could have been a possible occasion. The coin from Pella was found in the destruction layer of a house near the agora. This could have been brought there by a luckier soldier who managed to survive the wars and return to his homeland.

¹⁹ Psoma 2009, 3–38, with earlier bibliography.

*List of coins*²⁰

1	Istanbul Museum	16 mm	REGLING 1925, 255–264, pl. 24, 5.
2	Excavation of Gorni Saraj, Ohrid museum.		BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45.
3	Excavation of Gorni Saraj, Ohrid museum.		BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45.
4	Private collection in Ohrid (found by the lake), Ohrid museum.		BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45.
*5	NBRM 1999/17/2. From Pletvar (?).	3.28 g, 17 mm	BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45, pl. 1, no. 1; HRISTOVSKA 2002, no. 65; SELDAROV 2003, no. 93.
*6	NBRM 1999/18/2. From PletP Pletvar (?).	4.08 g, 16.1 mm	BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45, pl. 1, no. 2; HRISTOVSKA 2002, no. 66.
*7	NBRM 2000/14/1. From Pletvar (?).	3.92 g, 16.4 mm	BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45, pl. 1, no. 3; HRISTOVSKA 2002, no. 63.
*8	NBRM 2000/23/6. From Pletvar (?).	3.86 g, 15.8 mm	BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 46, pl. 1, no. 4; HRISTOVSKA 2002, no. 64.
9	Seldarov Collection. From Pletvar (?).	3.86 g, 15.8 mm	BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 45., pl. 1, no. 5; SELDAROV 2003, no. 94.
10	Ohrid Bank (OB 04/2/131),	4.53 g, 16 mm	SELDAROV 2003, no. 92; JOSIFOVSKI 2006, 32, 85, no. 34;
11	Pella Museum, AN 1977/4.	16 mm	<i>ADelt</i> 51–52 (1996–1997), 205, no. 32, pl. 60.
*12	CNG mbs 45 (1988), 300.	3.51 g.	
13	Ohrid Museum		<i>Ziva Antika</i> 23.2 (1973), 295–301; <i>Starinar</i> 22 (1974) 150; BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 1987, 193.
14	Ohrid Museum		<i>Ziva Antika</i> 23.2 (1973), 295–301; <i>Starinar</i> 22 (1974) 150; BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 1987, 193.

²⁰ Coins marked with asterix are illustrated below, photos courtesy of Ms. Eftimija Pavlovska, National Bank of Republic of Macedonia Skopje.

15	Ohrid Museum		<i>Ziva Antika</i> 23.2 (1973), 295–301; <i>Starinar</i> 22 (1974) 150; BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 1987, 193.
16	Ohrid Museum		<i>Ziva Antika</i> 23.2 (1973), 295–301; <i>Starinar</i> 22 (1974) 150; BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 1987, 193.
17	Bilis (Fier), Apollonia, (in a grave)		BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 43.
18.	Pogradec, Macedonia		BITRAKOVA-GROVDANOVA 2001, 43.

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Key to plate

1. Bronze coin of Lychnidos from Pletvar(?), NBRM, Skopje. Cat. no. 5.
2. Bronze coin of Lychnidos from Pletvar(?), NBRM, Skopje. Cat. no. 6.
3. Bronze coin of Lychnidos from Pletvar(?), NBRM, Skopje. Cat. no. 7.
4. Bronze coin of Lychnidos from Pletvar(?), NBRM, Skopje. Cat. no. 8.
5. Bronze coin of Lychnidos, ex CNG 45, 1988, no. 300. Cat. no. 12.
6. Silver tetrobol of the Macedonians, (2.03g). ANS, no. 1978.82.184.

БРОНЗОВОТО МОНЕТОСЕЧЕНЕ НА ЛИХНИД

(Резюме)

София КРЕМИДИ

Лихнид, древен илирийски град, разположен на североизточния бряг (днес град Охрид) на Охридското езеро, е заемал стратегическа позиция за отбраната на древна Македония. Укрепен от цар Филип II след опустошителното нашествие на илирите, които отнели живота на брат му – цар Пердика III, Лихнид се споменава отново в изворите по време на Първата македонска война срещу Римската република. Според Тит Ливий през 209 г. пр. Хр. Лихнид бил завладян от някой си Аероп, който подкупил войниците от гарнизона (Тит Ливий, XXVII, XXXII, 9 – XXXIII, 1). Цар Филип V бързо си възвърнал града в свое притежание, за да го загуби окончателно след поражението от Т. Квинкций Фламинин. Според условията на мирния договор от 196 г. Филип V трябва да се откаже от всички територии извън „стара Македония“ и да предостави Лихнид на Плеврат, цар на илирите и римски съюзник (Полибий, XVIII, 47. 12–13). По време на Третата македонска война, Лихнид е споменат като военна база на римляните (Тит Ливий, XLIII, 21), а след ликвидирането на македонското царство – става независим град.

През късната елинистическа епоха град Лихнид отсича една рядка монетна серия от бронз с легендата ΛΥΧΝΙΔΙΩΝ. Иконографският тип – македонски щит на аверса, и прора на кораб на реверса, имитира тетроболите с надпис ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ, а стила им е много близък до македонските емисии. Копирането на македонският тип показва, че бронзовите монети на Лихнид са били отсечени по време, когато градът е бил под македонски контрол според цитираните писмени извори, а монетосеченето трябва да е било реализирано именно преди 196 г. пр. Хр. Такова датироване на това монетосечене, всъщност съвсем естествено, досега не е било предложено, и е в синхрон с общо приетата датировка на македонските тетроболи. Следвайки Н. Gaebler, днес се счита за установено, че всички македонски автономни сечения (типа ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ) са били произведени след 185 г. Една цяла серия от аргументи, които ще бъдат представени в предстоящия корпус на това монетосечене (подготвяно от автора на тази статия), налагат предатирането на македонските емисии от типовете „щит/кърма на кораб“ и „глава на менада/кърма“ скоро преди 196 г. пр. Хр. Следователно, предложената нова датировка се явява като потвърждение на писмените извори.

Отсичането на бронзови монети с македонски типове от едни град, разположен в периферната зона на македонското царство, по мнението на автора, не може да бъде възприето като знак за неговата автономия, както Regling е предложил. Според настоящето гледище на автора, функцията на това елинистическо монетосечене е да служи за т. нар. „средства за прехрана“ (*sitarchia*) на войниците от македонския гарнизон. При отсъствие на характерни автономни градски монетни типове, избрани са типове с добре познат за потребителите му военен характер.

Plate 1



1



2



3



4



5



6

