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ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ΜΕΡΙΔΟΣ: Evidence for a coinage under the Antigonids¹

(Pl. XIII-XIV)

Résumé. — Cet article examine un didrachme rare issu au nom du premier district (= *meris*) de Macédoine, qui porte un bouclier macédonien au droit et une massue dans une couronne de chaîne au revers. La légende peu fréquente ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ΜΕΡΙΔΟΣ commence au droit et continue au revers de la monnaie. Nous soutenons que cette émission doit être datée à la fin du règne de Philippe V et non pas à la période de la domination romaine de Macédoine, comme il a été avancé par le passé (W. Schwabacher, *NC*^s 19, 1939, p. 2-3). Son iconographie et sa dénomination sont très bien placées dans le contexte du monnayage des derniers Antigonides. Cependant, l'argument décisif pour dater la monnaie est la présence du monogramme rare ΜΕ, qui apparaît également sur deux émissions de bronze émanant de la dernière période du règne de Philippe V. La frappe de cette émission durant la période des Antigonides offre un argument supplémentaire en faveur de l'hypothèse avancée par des historiens et des numismates, selon laquelle la division de Macédoine en quatre districts avait déjà été effectuée lors du règne des Antigonides sans constituer une innovation des Romains.

Abstract. — This article discusses a rare didrachm issued in the name of the first district (= *meris*) of Macedonia that bears a Macedonian shield on the obverse and a club within an oak-wreath on the reverse. The unusual inscription ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ΜΕΡΙΔΟΣ is divided between the obverse and the reverse of the coin. It is argued that this issue should be dated to the late years of Philip V's reign and not to the period of the Roman domination, as has been previously suggested (W. Schwabacher, *NC*^s 19, 1939, p. 2-3). Its iconographical types and its denomination are very well placed within the context of the late Antigonid coinage, but the decisive argument for its dating is the presence of the rare monogram ΜΕ, which is also found on two bronze issues dated to the last years of the reign of Philip V. The dating of this issue to the period of the Antigonids offers one more argument in favour of the hypothesis put forward by historians and numismatists that the division of Macedonia into four districts was already implemented during reign of the Antigonids and was not a Roman innovation.

The didrachm issue and the question of its dating

In this article we intend to discuss a rare didrachm in the name of the first *meris* (= district) of Macedonia with the following description (figs. 1-2):

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¹ Special thanks are due to Michel Amandry, but also to Dietrich Klose (Munich), Andy Meadows (London), Nikola Seldarov and Milica Seldarova (Skopje), Dimitra Tsangari (Athens), Ute Wartenberg (N. York) and Bernhard Weissner (Berlin), for providing access to numismatic material that was valuable for my research. To Dimitris Portolos I owe the reference to an old auction (see n. 4).

Obv.: MAKE-ΔΟΝΩΝ separated by a thunderbolt in the centre of a Macedonian shield; double linear circle around the centre; the rim of the shield is decorated with six crescents, an eight-rayed star in each; the crescents are separated by a pyramid of three pellets.

Rev.: Club with grip l. between the inscription: ΠΡΩΤΗΣ - ΜΕΠΙΔΟΣ, monogram ΜΕ below. All within oak-wreath tied l. Outside the wreath l., star.

Two specimens of this issue survive; the first is held in the numismatic collection of the National Library in Paris,² whereas the second appeared recently in an auction.³ The rarity of these coins and the fact that both surviving specimens were struck from the same pair of dies, indicate that we are dealing with a short-lived issue which, for some reason, was considered unsuccessful or unnecessary and was therefore abandoned. The Paris specimen was published in a short note by Schwabacher, who pointed out its rarity and noted its particularities.⁴ He considered the didrachm contemporary with the abundant tetradrachm issues of the first *meris* with the head of Artemis in the centre of a Macedonian shield on the obverse and a club and the inscription MAKE-ΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ in an oak-wreath on the reverse (fig. 11), which were dated by Gaebler to 158-150 BC,⁵ but nevertheless noted that « the appearance of this previously unknown denomination within such a large coinage is a strange phenomenon ».⁶

At the time of its first publication this coin could hardly be dated differently. The *opinio communis* of historians and numismatists alike accepted that the division of Macedonia into four administrative districts was one of the measures imposed by the Romans at the time of the settlement of 167 BC, after the fatal battle at Pydna and the abolishment of the Macedonian monarchy.⁷ Recent

2 Inventory n° 1973/1.80, H.S.; 7.82 g, 9h.

3 Classical Numismatic Group, Triton VIII, January 11th, 2005, lot n° 205; 7.70 g, 8h. Also see: www.coinarchives.com.

4 W. SCHWABACHER, *NC* 19, 1939, p. 2-3. At the time of its publication by Schwabacher the coin belonged to the collection of Prof. N. Petsalis in Athens. In 1954 it appeared in: *Monnaies et Médailles* XIII. Bâle (17-19 Juin 1954), n° 1159.

5 H. GAEBLER, *Die antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*, 3.1, Berlin, 1906, (hereafter cited as *AMNG* 3.1) p. 3-4, n° 53-61, pl. 2, n° 2-3. The chronology of the tetradrachms was discussed again by Chr. BOEHRINGER, *Zur Chronologie mittelhellenistischer Münzserien 220-160 v. Chr.*, Berlin, 1972, p. 113-116, who suggested that the striking of these issues began immediately after the battle of Pydna (168 BC) and continued until after the creation of the Roman province of Macedonia in 148 BC. His proposal has been further strengthened by I. PROKOPOV, *The Tetradrachms of the First Macedonian Region*, Sofia, 1994, p. 15-23 and especially p. 20-22, who has shown that coins with the same types continued to be produced down to the middle of the first century BC. A dating between 168/7-148 BC has been accepted by M. CRAWFORD, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic*, London, 1985, p. 129-131 and Y. TOURATSOGLOU, *The Coin Circulation in Ancient Macedonia*, Athens, 1993, p. 71.

6 SCHWABACHER, *op. cit.*, n. 4, p. 2.

7 This was the interpretation of the relevant passages in Livy (45.18.7, 45.29.5-9), Diodorus Siculus (31.8.7-8) and Strabo (7, frg. 47).

re-evaluation of the numismatic, epigraphic and literary evidence, however, has led to a different conclusion. The division of Macedonia into districts is shown to have existed since the time of Philip II and Alexander III. These were originally mentioned as recruitment areas of the Macedonian army, but they certainly performed political and financial functions by the time of Philip V. Geographically, they have been shown to coincide, to a large extent, with the Roman districts; the Romans therefore, used this pre-existing administrative structure in order to impose their dividing policy and prevent unification that could lead to an uprising of the Macedonians.⁸ Furthermore, it is highly probable that even the technical term *meris* goes back to the Macedonian kings. Tetradrachms with the head of Zeus on the obverse and Artemis on a bull (Tauropolos) and the inscription MAKEΔONΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ on the reverse (fig. 10), have been shown by hoard evidence to date prior to the battle of Pydna, although their precise dating has not yet been established.⁹ Since the issuing of coins in the name of the merides under the Antigonids should no longer be excluded a priori, we consider it appropriate to re-examine the date of the didrachms presented above and try to assess whether we should accept the conclusion of the first publisher and assign it to the period after the Roman settlement, or whether – as the Tauropolos issue – it should also be assigned to the period of the Antigonids.

Iconography

In our attempt to establish a chronology for the didrachms we shall consider their iconography and metrology, their legend and, finally, the symbol and monogram of the surviving specimens. The types chosen for this rare issue are the Macedonian shield with a thunderbolt and the inscription MAKEΔONΩΝ on the obverse, and a club and inscription – ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ΜΕΠΙΔΟΣ – within an oak-wreath on the reverse. The Macedonian shield was a common type on Macedonian issues since the time of Alexander III; it was introduced on his

8 M.B. HATZOPOULOS, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*, Athens, 1996 (Μελετήματα 22), p. 231-260 for a detailed discussion of this subject with relevant bibliography.

9 This issue was dated by GAEBLER (*AMNG* 3.1, p. 53, n° 154-55; 3.2, p. 6, n° 39) together with the Artemis/club issues, to 158-150 BC, whereas BOEHRINGER, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 113, has argued for a date in 167/6 BC. The discovery, however of the « Sitochoro » or Larissa hoard (*IGCH* 237) that included six specimens of the rare issue in an earlier context has led to a different conclusion. In his publication of the hoard M. PRICE, *The Larissa 1968 Hoard (IGCH 237)*, in: G. LE RIDER *et al.* (eds), *Kraay-Mørkholm Essays, Numismatic Studies in Memory of C. Kraay and O. Mørkholm*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1989, p. 237-8, 243, retained the traditional date of 168/7 BC for the issue and consequently dated the hoard to c.165 BC; his suggestion, however, has not met approval and the Tauropolos issue is now agreed to belong to the period of the last Antigonids. See: O. PICARD, *Les Romains et les émissions aux types d'Alexandre*, *Annali, Istituto Italiano di Numismatica*, 29, 1982, p. 246 ; TOURATSOGLOU, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 71 and the more detailed discussion in HATZOPOULOS, *op. cit.*, note 8, p. 250-53.

bronze coins with the helmet on the reverse,¹⁰ and continued to appear on similar issues of most Macedonian rulers down to the reign of Perseus.¹¹ On silver, the type appears for the first time on tetradrachms of Antigonos Gonatas with the head of Pan (in the centre of the shield),¹² an emblem that was replaced by the hero Perseus on coins of the same denomination struck by Philip V.¹³ The type of the shield was never applied on the silver coinage of Perseus. In addition to the regal issues, the Macedonian shield is encountered on the obverse of the “autonomous” silver (fig. 3) and bronze issues in the name of the Macedonian nation¹⁴ (fig. 4), the Amphaxians¹⁵ (fig. 5), and the Botteatae,¹⁶ that were all struck during the reigns of Philip V and Perseus. After the Roman occupation the shield with the head of Artemis in the centre was established as the main obverse type of the first and second district tetradrachm coinage¹⁷ (fig. 11), as well as on first century issues in the name of the Macedonians.¹⁸ From all the parallels mentioned above, the closest to our didrachm are certainly those of the tetrobols, diobols and bronzes in the name of the Macedonians, which were struck under the reign of Philip V. These are the only cases where the ethnic ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ is inscribed on the obverse in the centre of the shield as on the didrachms under discussion; the tetrobols and diobols bear the abbreviated form ΜΑΚΕ (fig. 3), whereas the bronzes bear the ethnic in the form of a monogram¹⁹ (fig. 4).

10 M. PRICE, *The Coinage in the name of Alexander the Great and Philip Arrhidaeus*, Zurich/London, 1991, n° 397ff.

11 Demetrios Poliorketes: H. GAEBLER, *Die antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*, 3.2, Berlin, 1935 (hereafter cited as *AMNG* 3.2), p. 189, n° 1, pl. 34, n° 13 (attributed to Demetrius II); *SNG Alpha Bank*, 962-969; *SNG München*, 1062-1072. Pyrrhos: *AMNG* 3.2, p. 185, n° 1-3, pl. 33, n° 22-24; *SNG Alpha Bank*, 970. Antigonos Gonatas: *AMNG* 3.2, p. 189, n° 15-16, pl. 34, n° 11-12; *SNG Alpha Bank*, 1001-1009; *SNG München*, 1114-1120. Philip V: A. MAMROTH, *Die Bronzemünzen des Königs Philippos V. von Makedonien*, *ZfN* 42, 1932, p. 228, n° 8-9, p. 238, n° 16-17; *SNG Alpha Bank*, 1067-1070, 1099-1102; *SNG München*, 1142-1145, 1169-1171. Perseus: *SNG Alpha Bank*, 1147-1148; *SNG München*, 1213-1218.

12 *AMNG*, 3.2, p. 185-186, n° 1-3, pl. 34, n° 1-3; *SNG Alpha Bank*, 983, 986-88; *SNG München*, 1074-78, 1080.

13 A. MAMROTH, *Die Silbermünzen des Königs Philippos V. von Makedonien*, *ZfN* 40, 1930, issues 2 and 3, pl. V, n° 3-6; *SNG Alpha Bank*, 1051-52; *SNG München*, 1125-27.

14 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 26-30, n° 1-21, pl. 1, n° 1-3, 5, 6, 8-9 (silver issues); p. 37, n° 64-69, pl. 1, n° 29-30 (bronze issues).

15 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 38, n° 72, pl. 7, n° 21; *SNG Ashmolean*, 3288 (tetradrachm); *AMNG* 3.1, p. 45, n° 111-114, pl. 7, n° 22-23 (bronze issues).

16 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 45-48, n° 115-130, pl. 12, n° 12-14 (silver issues); p. 51-52, n° 149-152, pl. 12, n° 15 (bronze issues).

17 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 53-61, n° 156-186, pl. 2, n° 2-4. Also see references in note 5.

18 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 62-64, n° 189-196a, pl. 2, n° 10-12 (dated to the time of the revolt of Andriskos, 149/8 BC). For the dating of these coins around 85/80 BC see: A. BURNETT, *CH* 7, 1985, p. 54-67, at p. 58. TOURATSOGLOU, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 72 and table IIa, places these issues between the end of the second century and the first quarter of the first century BC.

19 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 26-29, n° 1-13 (tetrobols), n° 14 (diobol), p. 45, n° 111-114 (bronzes with monogram).

The reverse type of the 'club and inscription surrounded by an oak-wreath' was introduced by Philip V (with the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ) on his second tetradrachm issue dated to c. 200 BC.²⁰ The didrachms under discussion, however, are stylistically much closer to his third issue that bears the same reverse type- and which has been dated just after Philip's monetary reform in c.187 BC²¹ (figs 6, 7). The same type is encountered on the tetradrachms (fig. 5) and bronze issues of the Amphaxians dated to the same period,²² as well as on certain bronzes in the name of the Macedonians.²³ During the reign of Perseus the type of the club within oak-wreath was restricted to the drachms, whereas it was replaced by the eagle and the harpa on the tetradrachms and the didrachms respectively.²⁴ The club was chosen once more as a reverse-type on the tetradrachms of the districts after the Roman conquest (fig. 11).

The iconography of the didrachms of the first *meris* therefore, shows a close affinity with motives that were introduced and frequently used during the late years of the reign of Philip V. It closely resembles the « autonomous » tetrobols of the Macedonians, the tetradrachms of the Amphaxians and the third silver issue in the name of Philip V, all dated just after his reform of c. 187 BC. Some of these motives were also applied on the coinage of the districts after the Roman occupation.

Denomination

Let us now turn to the denomination. The two coins weigh 7.82 and 7.70 g respectively, and there can be no doubt that they were didrachms on the attic weight standard.²⁵ When publishing the first coin in 1939, Schwabacher had

20 This issue was attributed by Gaebler (*AMNG* 3.2, p. 197, n° 1, pl. 2, n° 3) to the Pseudo-Philip Andriskos and dated to 149/8 BC. For its attribution to Philip V and its dating see: BOEHRINGER, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 107-111, 116-118. The club was used by the king as a coin type on a rare gold issue (*AMNG* 3.2, p. 189-190, n° 1, pl. 34, n° 14), but also as a personal emblem on a monument which commemorated his occupation of Lysimacheia in 202 BC: L. ROBERT, *Monument de Lysimacheia*, *Hellenica* X, p. 266-271, pl. 35.

21 The tetradrachms bear the head of Perseus in a Macedonian shield on the obverse, whereas the smaller denominations all bear the portrait of the king. MAMROTH, *ZfN* 40, 1930, p. 295-303. BOEHRINGER, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 102-104.

22 For references, see above note 15.

23 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 32-33, n° 32-33, pl. 1, n° 28; p. 34-35, n° 39-48, pl. 1, n° 25-26.

24 *AMNG* 3.2, p. 195, n° 1-3, pl. 35, n° 23-24, 26 (tetradrachms), p. 195, n° 4, pl. 35, n° 25 (didrachm), p. 196, n° 5, pl. 35, n° 27 (drachm). Also see: A. MAMROTH, *Die Silbermünzen des Königs Perseus*, *ZfN* 38, 1928, p. 1-28, pls 1-2.

25 Out of 45 intact didrachms of Philip V collected by MAMROTH (*ZfN* 40, 1930, p. 299-301), 39 weigh between 8 and 8.5 g, 5 weigh between 7.7 and 7.99 g, whereas one weighs 6.91 g. The two didrachms of Perseus that correspond to his full weight tetradrachms weigh 8.37 and 7.54 g (MAMROTH, *ZfN* 38, 1928, p. 22), whereas the later didrachms on the reduced attic standard weigh between 7.3-7.69 g. (MAMROTH, *ZfN* 38, 1928, p. 27). The weight of the first *meris* didrachms therefore seem to correspond with the didrachms of Philip V and the early issues of Perseus.

already noted that the appearance of one didrachm within a large tetradrachm issue was strange. Since then our knowledge of the function of the tetradrachm coinage of the first district has been considerably enlarged, due to numerous relative hoards that have been discovered mostly in the northern regions of Bulgaria and in Roumania.²⁶ The circulation pattern of this coinage shows beyond doubt that it was intended to serve as an export currency and was used as an exchange medium with the Thracians and the Dacians of the Danube region;²⁷ the popularity of the coinage in these northern regions was the reason for the production of local imitations.²⁸ Such a function is hardly compatible with the didrachm, a relatively small denomination intended mainly for internal circulation and not suitable for export.

The attic didrachm is a rare denomination that was introduced, as a fraction of the tetradrachm, by Alexander the Great²⁹ but was abandoned thereafter. It reappeared during the reign of Philip V and several didrachms of this sovereign, as well as very few of his son Perseus, have survived.³⁰ Unlike the tetradrachm coinage of the first *meris*, the silver coinage of the last two Antigonids was intended mainly for circulation within the Macedonian state. The tetradrachms, didrachms, drachms and hemidrachms in the name of the king, the tetrobols and diobols in the name of the Macedonian nation, the tetradrachms in the name of the Amphaxians, and the pentobols and 21/2 obols in the name of the Botteatae are usually found within the boundaries of the Macedonian state. In the period following the reform of Philip V in c. 187 BC monetary production in Macedonia was characterized by an outstanding variety of issuing authorities (the king, the nation, the districts, the cities and the

26 For hoards from Bulgaria see: *IGCH* 484-522, 894, 896, 897, 908, 921, 924, 926, 928; *CH* 4.61, *CH* 6.40, 44, 49; *CH* 7. 112, 123, 126; *CH* 9. 251, 255, 277, 278, 283. Numerous hoards from Bulgaria have been presented in detail and discussed by PROKOPOV, *op. cit.*, note 5. See also his article: Notes about the character of some large-scale coinages in the Thrace during IInd-Ist centuries BC in: *International Congress of Numismatics (11th, Brussels 1991)*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993, p. 173-180. For Roumania: *IGCH* 528, 623, 630, 637, 649, 675, 681, 895; *CH* 1.100, *CH* 3.68 (= *IGCH* 675), *CH* 5.48, *CH* 7.129, *CH* 8.493, *CH* 9.261, 262. For Turkey (Thrace): *IGCH* 893. For FYROM: E. PETROVA, A hoard of tetradrachms of the First Macedonian Meris, *Macedonian Numismatic Journal* 3, 1999, p. 35-44 (= *CH* 9.250). Two hoards have been discovered in Northern Greece: M. THOMPSON, A hoard from northern Greece, *MN* 12, 1966, p. 57-63 (= *IGCH* 481); Chr. GATZOLIS, Θεσαυρός αργυρών τετραδράχμων από τα Λεϊβήθρα Πιερίας 1995, *Αρχαιολογικά Ανάλεκτα Αθηνών*, 23-28, 1990-1995, p. 298-312 (= *CH* 9.249). Tetradrachms of the first *meris* occasionally also turn up in small numbers in hoards from Asia Minor: BOEHRINGER, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 180-182; *CH* 9.527, and the Black Sea region: *CH* 9.530.

27 For a different view concerning the import of coins in Dakia see: C. PREDA, Einige Betrachtungen über den Münzumlaufl im I. Jh. v.Chr. in Dakien, in: *Actes du 2e Symposium international des études thraciennes*, Komotini, 1997, p. 671-676.

28 PROKOPOV, *op. cit.*, note 5.

29 PRICE, *op. cit.*, note 10, pl. 121.

30 See note 25.

sanctuaries),³¹ iconographical types and denominations. And although it cannot be excluded that the surviving didrachm reflected an unsuccessful experiment to complement the early tetradrachm issues of the first district one needs to stress that the production of this denomination seems better placed in the context of the Antigonid coinage.

Legend, Monogram and symbol

Furthermore, the inscription ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ΜΕΡΙΔΟΣ, divided between the two sides of the coins, is unique. In all other cases of coins issued by the districts the legends read ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΣ, ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑΣ and ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗΣ, always omitting the word *meris*. As this issue was a short-lived experiment, so was its legend. Experimental forms of legends or iconographic varieties on coins usually occur on the earliest issues in a series, before the standardized form is established. Had a large number of tetradrachms already been struck, it would be unusual to find a more complete inscription on the smaller denomination. One could furthermore anticipate that the presence of the word *meris* would be necessary on an issue which occurred at a time when the public was not yet familiar with the technical term and that therefore this could be the first issue produced in the name of the districts.

The most decisive argument for the dating of the didrachms however, is the monogram. The symbol (a star outside the oak-wreath to the l.) does not offer conclusive evidence since it can be found, in the same position, both on silver issues of Philip V and Perseus signed by Zoilos,³² but also on an early tetradrachm issue of the first district.³³ But the monogram ΜΕ is rare (fig. 1a). It is absent from all the tetradrachm issues of the first district,³⁴ and can only be encountered on two contemporary bronze issues of Philip V. The first bears the radiate head of Helios on the obverse and a winged thunderbolt on the reverse³⁵ (figs 8, 8a); this issue includes varieties with one, two or, usually, three monograms, and has been dated to the last years of Philip's reign. The monogram on Philip's bronzes was described by Mamroth as monogram ΜΕ, but a closer inspection of several specimens of this variety has shown that it should actually be read monogram ΜΕ,³⁶ in other words that it is identical with the monogram on the didrachm of the first

31 For issues in the name of sanctuaries see: HATZOPOULOS, *op. cit.*, note 8, p. 255.

32 MAMROTH, *ZfN* 40, 1930, n° 24-25 (didrachms of Philip V), n° 31, 32 (drachms of Philip V); MAMROTH, *ZfN* 38, 1928, n° 10-14 (tetradrachms, didrachms and drachms of Perseus); on these issues also see: BOEHRINGER, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 102-104 (Philip V), and p. 100-102 (Perseus).

33 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 53-54, n° 156-158, pl. 2, n° 2; PROKOPOV, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 22, p. 84, B2.

34 *AMNG* 3.1, p. 53-60, n° 156-184; PROKOPOV, *op. cit.*, note 5, p. 84-172.

35 *AMNG* 3.2, p. 193, n° 25, pl. 35, n° 5. MAMROTH, *ZfN* 42, 1932, p. 244-49, has dated this issue (n° 24) to c. 183/2 BC.

36 Seven specimens of this variety have been taken into consideration: one in Munich (*SNG München* 1182), two in Paris (inv. n° 1475, 1478), one in Berlin (LÖBBECKE 1906, 12.65 g, 6h),

meris. The same monogram is encountered on another bronze issue of Philip V, of a smaller denomination, bearing the head of Herakles on the obverse and a harpa within an oak wreath on the reverse³⁷ (fig. 9). Identical monograms between regal and « autonomous » issues, but also between silver and bronze issues are very common during the late Antigonid period in Macedonia, a fact that indicates that the same magistrates were often involved in the striking of all these types of coinage.³⁸ A common monogram between a district issue in silver and two regal issues in bronze is therefore not surprising, and the fact that this monogram is not applied frequently indicates that all these issues were probably struck within a short period.

Conclusion

Having considered all the evidence presented above, we would like to summarize our argumentation briefly and put forward the proposal that the didrachm under discussion should not be dated, as has been suggested, to the period following the Roman settlement in 167 BC, but to the last years of Philip's reign. The iconographical motives are very well placed within the context of the coinage of Philip V, and the style of the engraving is comparable to the issues dated to the period after c. 187 BC, before which such an issue would, in any case, be hard to anticipate. Furthermore, both the denomination and the inscription are very irregular when compared to the Artemis' issues of the first district. But the decisive evidence that disconnects the didrachm from the tetradrachms of the Roman period is the rare monogram that also appears on two late bronze issues of Philip V.

The dating of the didrachm issue to the end of the reign of Philip V, or to the beginning of the reign of Perseus at the latest, adds valuable evidence to the proposal put forward by historians that the administrative districts in Macedo-

one in the Hersh collection (13.71 g, 12h) one in the Seldarov collection (N. SELDAROV, *Seldarov collection. Macedonia and Paeonia*, Skopje, 2003, n° 581) which derives from a hoard discovered in Isar-Marvinci (N. SELDAROV, *Hellenistic coin hoard from Isar-Marvinci, Macedonian Numismatic Journal* 2, 1996, p. 41, n° 3) and one in Classical Numismatic Group, mail bid, sale 60, 22nd May 2002, lot 373 (see: www.coinarchives.com.) All of them clearly bear the monogram M^{E} .

37 MAMROTH, *ZfN* 42, 1932, p. 246-247, n° 25 gives a list of varieties of this issue none of which bear the monogram I (image). The rare variety with this monogram is known from one specimen in the Seldarov collection: SELDAROV 2003, *op. cit.*, note 36, n° 588 which also derives from the Isar-Marvinci hoard: SELDAROV 1996, *op. cit.*, note 36, p. 41, n° 9).

38 To mention only one example, the very common monograms I , Δ and M^{E} are found on silver issues of Philip V (MAMROTH, *ZfN* 40, 1930, p. 296-303, n° 5, 7-8, 12-32) and Perseus (MAMROTH, *ZfN* 38, 1928, p. 16-22, n° 4-14), on tetrobols in the name of the Macedonians (*AMNG* 3.1, p. 26-29, n° 1-7, 10-12), on bronze coins of Philip V (Heracles/goats: MAMROTH, *ZfN* 42, 1932, p. 236, n° 14a,b) as well as on silver and bronze issues of the Amphaxians (*AMNG* 3.1, p. 38, n° 72 [silver], p. 39, n° 73 [bronze: Heracles/club]). They are nevertheless never found on coins of the districts after the Roman settlement.

nia were not a Roman creation, but already existed and had a political and financial function under the Antigonids. In this context the coinages of the Amphaxians and the Botteatae can be understood as parallel coinages of the second and third districts respectively.³⁹

Our knowledge concerning the geographical boundaries of the first district is based upon the concrete evidence of the literary sources that refer to the Roman settlement of 167 BC. It is described as the area comprising the territory between the Strymon and the Nestos with the addition of the land of the Bisaltians to the west of the Strymon and the possessions of Perseus to the east of the Nestos.⁴⁰ Whether these were the exact boundaries of the first district during the Antigonid period is a complicated and debated matter, especially concerning its eastern frontier, which coincided with the border of the Macedonian territory. Although Macedonian colonization of the area east of the Strymon undoubtedly began under Philip II, and although Macedonian interest in the region was constant, not less due to the presence of the prolific Pangaion mines near Amphipolis, recent research has shown that incorporation of this area into Macedonia was gradual and was not fully achieved before the last years of the Antigonids.⁴¹ An Antigonid coinage in the name of the first *meris* therefore, could be understood as an affirmation of Macedonian control in the area. The use of the somewhat strange administrative term *πρώτης μερίδος* instead of a geographical term, as in the case of the second and third districts, could be due to the fact that this area incorporated a mixed population of various origins that retained their identity.

39 HATZOPOULOS, *op. cit.*, note 8, p. 232-44, 256-57.

40 Livy 45.29.5-7; Diodorus Siculus 31.8.8. On the eastern frontier of the province of Macedonia see: L. LOUKOPOULOU, *Provinciae Macedoniae finis orientalis: The establishment of the eastern frontier* in: M.B. HATZOPOULOS, L.D. LOUKOPOULOU, *Two studies in ancient Macedonian topography*, Athens, 1987 (Μελετήματα 3), p. 61-100.

41 HATZOPOULOS, *op. cit.*, note 8, p. 181-189, esp. 184-189.

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1. Didrachm of the first *meris*. Paris, Cabinet des médailles, 1973/1.80, 7.82 g, 9h. (ex Petsalis collection).
2. Didrachm of the first *meris*. Classical Numismatic Group, Triton VIII, January 11th, 2005, lot no. 205; 7.70 g, 8h.
3. Tetrobol of the Macedonians. Athens, Alpha Bank collection 5697, 2.22 g, 1h (ex-Ghertsos collection).
4. Bronze of the Macedonians. Paris, Cabinet des médailles, 4.09 g, 5h.
5. Tetradrachm of the Amphaxians. Paris, Cabinet des médailles. 16.95 g.
6. Tetradrachm, Philip V, 3rd issue. Athens, Alpha Bank collection 9412. 16.92 g, 12h. *SNG Alpha Bank* 1052.
7. Drachm of Philip V, 3rd issue. Winterthur 1628.
8. Bronze of Philip V. Paris, Cabinet des médailles 1478.
9. Bronze of Philip V. Skopje, Seldarov collection, 7.43 g, 9h. *Seldarov collection. Macedonia and Paeonia*, Skopje, 2003, no. 588.

Planche XIV

10. Tetradrachm of the first *meris*. Leu 50/1990, 125 (=Leu 22/1979, 84), 16.82 g, 12h. Price, Larissa Hoard 213.
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