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**Studia in honorem Iliæ Prokopov
sexagenario ab amicis et discipulis
dedicata**

Ediderunt:

EVGENI PAUNOV ET SVETOSLAVA FILIPOVA

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A TETRADRACHM WITH THE LEGEND ΘΠΑΚΩΝ OVERSTRUCK ON AN ATHENIAN STEPHANEPHOROS TETRADRACHM OF ΑΠΕΛΛΙΚΩΝ-ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ (88/7 BC) AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE THASIAN TYPE COINAGE¹

François DE CALLATAÏ

(Brussels)

Abstract

A Thasian type tetradrachm with the legend ΘΠΑΚΩΝ overstruck on an Athenian *stephanophoros* tetradrachm of ΑΠΕΛΛΙΚΩΝ-ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ (88/87 BC) has been recently sold and illustrated. We already had several Athenian overstruck tetradrachms but no one of such a late date. The new overstrike lowers the chronology by at least 20 years (not *ca.* 110 BC but after 88 BC). It is most likely now that the ΘΠΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms postdates the First Mithridatic War, with which it has thus no connection. As a consequence, the Prokopov Groups XII to XX were not struck between *c.*120/115 BC and *c.* 80/75, but more likely not before the 80s, leaving only Groups IX–XI for the three decades before the War (*ca.* 115 BC to 86 BC), despite the historical evidence we do have of campaigns undertaken during this period by Roman military forces against Thracian tribes. A die-study is provided for the 12 specimens with the letters ΘΠΑΚΩΝ. One also gives the reasons why it should be better not to read the name Aesillas, resolving a monogram which appears on some Thasian type tetradrachms.

To my dear friend Ilya, who has done so much to improve our knowledge of the Hellenistic coinages of Thrace and Macedonia, I am glad to offer a notice of an unpublished Thasian type tetradrachm with the legend ΘΠΑΚΩΝ.

This piece, recently sold by Gorny & Mosch 195, 7 March 2011, no. 8 – see *infra*, catalogue O2-R5b), has been overstruck on an Athenian *stephanophoros* tetradrachm.

1. The new overstrike



Fig. 1.

¹ The author wishes to express his warm thanks to Richard Witschonke for improving the English of his original paper.

Indeed, subsisting elements of the undertype allow a clear identification of its variety, which belongs to the issue ΑΠΕΛΛΙΚΩΝ / ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ (88/87 BC – Thompson 1961, p. 364–368, nos. 1131–1142), the last issue before ΒΑΣΙΛΕ ΜΙΘΡΑΔΑΤΗΣ / ΑΡΙΣΤΙΩΝ (87/86 BC). On the ΘΡΑΚΩΝ new piece, we can still read several letters on each side of the owl, and see the forepart of a griffin in the lower right field:

A () Θ E
 [A] Π () [E] Λ
 [ΛΙ] () [ΚΩ] Ν
 [ΓΟΡ] () forepart of the griffin



Fig. 2. Gorny 195, no. 8

Fig. 2a. Enlargement

Fig. 3. Thompson 1961, no. 1140e

This overstrike is not the only one we have for these Thasian type tetradrachms. Table 1 gives the catalogue of seven (including the new one) tetradrachms for which the precise issue of the Athenian undertype could be determined (arranged in chronological order – on this, see Callataÿ 2008, p. 41):

Table 1. Catalogue of Thasian type tetradrachms overstruck on dated Athenian *stephanephoroi*

1–126/125 BC: ΕΠΙΓΕΝΗ ΣΩΣΑΝΔΡΟΣ overstruck by a late imitation (16.13g–12h – see Lukanc 1996, n° 1202 and MacDonald 2003, n° 2).

2–126/125 BC: ΕΠΙΓΕΝΗ ΣΩΣΑΝΔΡΟΣ overstruck by a late imitation (16.26g–1h – see MacDonald 2003, n° 3).

3–125/124 BC: ΠΟΛΕΜΩΝ ΑΛΚΕΤΗΣ overstruck by a late imitation (same dies as n° 2) (16.66g–11h – see MacDonald 2003, n° 4).

4–124/123 BC: ΚΑΡΑΙΧ ΕΡΓΟΚΛΕ overstruck by a late imitation (see Lukanc 1996, n° 547 [same dies, close to Prokopov 2003, obv. DD17]) (16.62g–12h – see MacDonald 2003, n° 1).

5–123/122 BC: ΜΙΚΙΩΝ ΕΥΡΥΚΛΕ overstruck by a late imitation (Boljarino hoard IGCH 975) (16.20g – see Callataÿ & Prokopov 1995, p. 7, n° 15, pl. 2).

6–107/106 BC or 105/104 BC: ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΗΣ ΕΥΚΛΗΣ overstruck by a Thasian type tetradrachm (Prokopov 2006, group XIX or XX) (Popina hoard IGCH 930 – see Callataÿ and Prokopov 1994).

7–88/87 BC: ΑΠΕΛΛΙΚΩΝ ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ overstruck by a ΘΡΑΚΩΝ type tetradrachm (16.23g – see Gorny & Mosch, 195, 7 March 2011, no. 8 and this article).

Not surprisingly, most of the Athenian overstruck tetradrachms belong to the four issues which were heavily imported into Northern Greece and Thrace during the 120s BC (see Callataj 1991–1992 and Meadows 2002). We generally agree now that the Romans were responsible for this massive transfer of Athenian currency in order to pay their auxiliaries fighting in Macedonia, or further North against Thracian tribes.

2. Its consequences for the date of the Thasian type tetradrachms

The new overstrike (no. 7) comes well after all the others, some 20 years after the latest issue [ΗΕΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΗΣ ΕΥΚΛΗΣ] previously recorded). This fact has major consequences for the full sequence of Thasian type tetradrachms, in the same way as an overstrike of Maroneia on Mithridates proved to be decisive in lowering the dating of that series in a rather dramatic move (Callataj 1991).

As has been often discussed, there is no clear-cut iconographical distinction between the end of what could be described as Thasian tetradrachms (Groups I–VIII) and the start of what are called Thasian type tetradrachms (Groups XII–XX – see Callataj 2008 and Picard 2011, p. 299). Still, there is a metrological difference between Groups I–VIII and Groups XII–XX (with Groups IX–XI closer to Groups I–VIII – see Callataj 2008, p. 46).

As first noticed by Katzarova (1964, p. 141 and 152) the first issue of ΘΠΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms are linked with Thasian type tetradrachms:



Fig. 4. ΘΠΑΚΩΝ:
O2-R6a



Fig. 5. ΘΑΣΙΩΝ: Lanz, 114, 26 May 2003,
no. 82 (16.79g, 34mm, 11h)

These coins have been placed by Ilya Prokopov in his Group XIII, out of XX, roughly at midpoint of the full sequence (no. 974 and 977–979 out of 1861). Group XIII is tentatively dated about 110 BC (since ‘imitations’ of Thasian tetradrachms are supposed to start with Group XII in c. 120 BC). The new overstrike on Athens lowers the chronology by at least 20 years (not *ca.* 110 BC but after 88 BC). Although it is possible that a coin issue in Athens in 88/87 BC may have been overstruck as early as 86 BC in Macedonia, chances are much greater that the first issue of ΘΠΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms postdates the first Mithridatic War, with which it has thus no connection (the first Mithridatic War officially ends in Autumn 85 BC in Asia Minor, but there was no combat in continental Greece after 86 BC).

No group stands totally alone. Two Groups (XIII and XVII) are connected to another by only one die-link. The choice to start with Group XVII is entirely arbitrary, and starting with group XIII would be equally valid. Two blocks of groups appear very interconnected: Groups XIV–XV, XVIII and XVI on one hand; Groups XVI, XIX, XX and XII on the other.

The new overstrike makes it likely that all the Groups XII to XX were struck after the First Mithridatic War, leaving only Groups IX–XI for the three decades before the War (*ca.* 115 BC to 86 BC), despite the historical evidence we do have of campaigns undertaken during this period by Roman military forces against Thracian tribes (see the list conveniently given by Picard 2008, p. 489–493). The general consequence for the Thasian type coinage is indeed a new lowering of its chronology. These Groups XII–XX were not struck between *ca.* 120/115 BC and *ca.* 80/75, as previously maintained,² but more likely not before the 80s. They may not have lasted long, as indicated by the many die-links and, based on the current evidence, I don't see compelling reasons to lower the ending date to, say, 75–70 BC. It has to be noted that this low chronology was long ago proposed by Katzarova, who thought that all the first coinage of Thasian type tetradrachms (Prokopov, Groups XII–XX) were struck in 88–80 BC, in conjunction with the First Mithridatic War (Katzarova 1964; see also Poenaru-Bordea & Condrea 1972, p. 121–122 and Preda & Palincas 2004–2005, p. 85–86).

**Table 2. Proposed chronologies for the Thasian tetradrachms
(Prokopov Groups I–XX)**

	Prokopov 2006	Callataÿ 2008	Callataÿ 2012
Groups I–VIII	<i>ca.</i> 168/7–148 BC?	<i>ca.</i> 150–140 BC?	<i>ca.</i> 150–140 BC?
Groups IX–XI	<i>ca.</i> 168/7–148 BC?	<i>ca.</i> 120 BC?	?
Groups XII–XX	<i>ca.</i> 148–90/80 BC?	<i>ca.</i> 100–80 BC?	<i>ca.</i> 90–75 BC?

3. The ΘΠΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms

The ΘΠΑΚΩΝ coins have always been rare. Strack knew 5 specimens in 1912 (his list of 6 is in error since no. 3 and 6 are the same coin) and Ilya Prokopov himself gave a list of 6 in 2002. The short corpus given hereafter expands these numbers to 13 tetradrachms:

² Picard 2010, 181: “Entre le début de cette réactivation que le rapprochement avec les événements en Macédoine et les données – imprécises – des trésors, permettent de placer aux alentours de 120–115, et la fin de la production vers 80–70, ce monnayage connaît un énorme développement, comme l’atteste le nombre de coins de droit utilisés qui s’élève à 400 (à comparer aux 160 + 100 des deux séries successives de Macédoine)” ou 2011, 298: “On constate en revanche que les émissions reprennent avec une vigueur remarquable vers la fin du II^e siècle et se prolongent jusque dans les années 80–75”.

Die study of the ΘΡΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms

Issue 1 (ca. 80 BC?)

- O1 R1 a – Leu 79, 31 October 2000, no. 105 (16.60g–32/33mm–12h) = UBS 61, 14–16 Sept. 2004, no. 4248 = Freeman & Sear Fixed Price List 10, Spring 2005, 34 (16.59g, **fig. 6**) = Freeman & Sear, Manhattan sale II, 4 Jan. 2011, no. 35 – see Prokopov 2002, p. 87, no. 6 and Prokopov 2006, no. 977.3).



- O1 R1 b – Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 262, 17 August 2011, no. 10 (16.32g–11h).



- O1 R2 a – Sofia, National Museum of Archaeology, no. 4344 (16.80g–35mm – see Gerassimov 1956, pl. 11, no. 6; Youroukova 1976, p. 88, no. 146, pl. 19 [inv. no. 7433]; Prokopov 2002, p. 87, no. 2 [**fig. 7**] and 2006, no. 974).



- O1 R3 a – Nova Zagora, Padarevo hoard (16.09g–30/32mm–5h – see Katarova 1964, p. 145, no. 1; Rogalski 1981, p. 16; Prokopov 2002, p. 87, no. 3 [**fig. 8**] and 2006, no. 977.2, pl. 70).



b – Paris, BnF, 1975.2.54 coll. Henri Seyrig (16.55g–12h) = Münzhandlung Basel, 10, 15–16 march 1938, no. 168 (**fig. 9**: 16.55g „traces de surfrappe“ [sic but not visible]).



O1 R4 a – Lanz, 117, 24 Nov. 2003, no. 183 (**fig. 10**: 16.57g–11h).



O1 R5 a-Lanz, 121, 22 Nov. 2004, no. 160 (16.58g–11h) = Gorny & Mosch, 160, 9 Oct. 2007, no. 1032 (**fig. 11**: 16.59g; overstruck on a tetradrachm in the name of Aesillas – see Callataj 2008, p. 52).³



O2 R6 a-Sofia, ex coll. Vassil Avramov (see Strack 1912, pl. 1, n° 1 [**fig. 12**: not same dies, same coin]; Prokopov 2002, 87, no. 1 and 2006, pl. 70, no. 977).

³ The subsisting elements of the wreath fits well the general pattern of the laurel wreath found on the reverses of Aesillas tetradrachms (see Bauslaugh 2000). Conversely, they differ from the Athenian pattern (Thompson 1961).



b-Gorny & Mosch, 195, 7 March 2011, no. 8 (fig. 13: 16.23g).



Issue 2 (much later, ca. 28 BC?)

- O3 R7 a-London, BM, 252.2gr. (16.33g, 31mm – once in the Prokesch collection, then in Berlin, sold as duplicate in 1876; see Prokesch 1870, p. 267, pl. 12, no. 5 and 1872, p. 185, pl. 8, no. 1; Head 1881, p. 95, no. 7, pl. 53 [fig. 14]; Strack 1912, p. 1, no. 6) Muchmov 1912, no. 5777, pl. 38, n° 22; Youroukova 1976, p. 88, no. 147; Lukanc 1996, pl. 174, no. S47 (16.32g–12h – Allen 239); Prokopov 2002, p. 87, no. 4 and 2006, no. 979, pl. 70).



- O3 R8 a-Berlin, MK, coll. Fox (16.33g – see von Sallet 1888, p. 98 and pl. 3, no. 26 [fig. 15]).



- O3 R9 a-Gorny & Mosch, 115, 5 March 2002, no. 1017 (**fig. 16**: 15.94g–32/33mm) = CNG, 64, 24 Sept. 2003, no. 162 (16.93g [traces of an undetermined overstrike on the obverse] – see Prokopov 2002, p. 87, no. 5).



- O3 R10 a-Paris, BnF, no. 9668 (16.34g – see Muret & Chabouillet 1889, pl. 49, no. 9668 [**fig. 17**]).



The first comment prompted by this short die-study is to underline the paucity of evidence we are dealing with. We know only 3 obverse dies (each of them used with several reverses) with a great gap of time in the series, since the first two were indeed produced along with the normal Thasian type tetradrachm, possibly in the 80s BC (or not too long after this date), while the third and last obverse die clearly belongs to a much later period (with an variant and erroneous legend: ΗΠΑΚΛΕΟΥ instead of ΗΠΑΚΛΕΟΥΣ). Strictly speaking, this last obverse doesn't belong to the issues studied by I. Prokopov, but rather to the later ones discussed by I. Lukanc. We are thus left with 2 obverse dies out of 399 for the all Thasian type tetradrachms (ca. 0.5%).

Furthermore, this comment may be extended to the other two special issues of this coinage. These special issues are a) the one with the letters Q SVR (for Quintus Sura) in the inner left field on the reverse, which are roughly contemporaneous (Group XII) with the ΘΠΑΚΩΝ issue (Group XIII) and b) the issue with the legend ΚΟΤΥΟC ΧΑΡΑΚΤΗΡ, which comes much later despite the fact that it has been included as the last issue of the monograph of Ilya Prokopov (no. 1860).

To these issues, most scholars have added the Thasian type tetradrachms with a monogram in the inner left field on the reverse they read as ΑΙΣΥ, for Aesillas (Prokopov 2006, p. 311, monogram 21 or 21/1). I have never been convinced by this hypothesis. Difficulties are several: the name of Aesillas (which is unattested in Roman onomastic by the way) is spelled with and E, which one would expect to see translated into Greek as an epsilon (not as a iota; but even the iota is missing in the monogram). In addition, why would the name of Aesillas appear here

under the discreet form of a Greek monogram, while Quintus Sura and Aesillas himself were not afraid elsewhere to put their names on the coinage in Latin letters? Even the reading ΑΙΣΥ seems problematic, since what we really read are the letters ΑΣΤΥ. Despite the fact that these letters are clearly tempting (“the citadel”, reminiscent of the legend “in the camp” found on Siculo-Punic tetradrachms), I would refrain from building another theory on this reading.



Fig. 18. Lanz 123, 30 May 2005, no. 132



Fig. 19. Witschonke coll. (16.68g)

We should add that a tetradrachm with the monogram ΑΣΤΥ, but struck with an obverse of very different style (but still belonging to Group XII) has recently been auctioned:



Fig. 20. Lanz, 120, 18 May 2004, no. 95 (15.82g)

Table 4 gives for each of these rare issues, presented in the order they appear in Prokopov 2006, the number of obverse dies (and the number of known specimens), as well as the existence (or not) of a die-link with the regular Thasian type tetradrachms, and references in modern literature:

Table 4. Special issues of Thasian type tetradrachms

Issue	Reverses	Die-link	References
<i>In the 80s?</i>			
Monogram ΑΣΤΥ? (ca. 80 BC?)	9 (o = 6/ n = 18) ⁴	2 (AA2, AA6)	Prokopov 2006, nos. 570, 580–583, 591–592, 594–599
ΘΠΑΚΩΝ (ca. 80 BC?)	6 (o = 2/ n = 8)	1 (o2)	This article and Prokopov 2006, nos. 974 and 977–978
Q. Sura (ca. 87 BC)	4 (o = 2/ n = 5)	1 (DD1)	Callataj 1998 ⁵ and Prokopov 2006, nos. 1195–1197 and 1199–1200
<i>In the 30s–20s?</i>			
KOTYOC XAPAKTHP (ca. 30 BC?)	1 (o = 1/ n = 9)	?	Prokopov 2006, no. 1860 and Lukanc 1996, nos. 1924–1926
ΘΠΑΚΩΝ (ca. 30 BC?)	4 (o = 1/ n = 4)	?	Prokopov 2006, no. 979 and Lukanc 1996, no. S47

A second comment is that, considering the paucity of the available evidence, it would be hard to argue that these special issues were intended to play a large (or any) propagandistic role. Inserted into a sequence with which they share die-links, they appear as an ephemeral phenomenon, perhaps of greater interest to modern historians than to those who handled them in antiquity, who may simply not have noticed them.

This leads to a third comment: it is unlikely, to my mind, that these “special issues,” struck in the 80s(?), have to be attributed to different issuing authorities, in particular the shrine of Dionysos in the hands of the Odryses for the ΘΠΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms, as proposed by Bulgarian colleagues. Connections with the main sequence are too strong (same engravers and same weights) to disconnect these tiny issues (but things may have been different with the later issues dated in the 30s: the second group of ΘΠΑΚΩΝ tetradrachms and the KOTYOC XAPAKTHP coins).

Thasian type tetradrachms form a fascinating coinage, within which the ΘΠΑΚΩΝ issues are particularly interesting. We still do not know for sure by who and where these coins were struck, but we now know enough about the general

⁴ It is not the topic of this paper to discuss this variety in particular but my database contains ca. 35 coins with this monogram ΑΣΤΥ, while it lacks part of the evidence quoted by Prokopov. So the number of tetradrachms known for this variety must be as large as 40 at the very least.

⁵ See also Prokopov 2006, 159, nos. 1195–1197 and 1199–1200, pl. 84 (who ignores the coin from Brussels and cites twice the coin from Cambridge, but add two more coins from Gotha whose casts may be seen in Berlin [BBAW]). See also Picard 2008a, 478.

structure of the coinage and when they were issued, to safely discard some previous hypothesises. The spectrum of possibilities has been considerably refined, and this is largely due to the tireless efforts of Ilya Prokopov, who well deserves this Festschrift volume.

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**ТЕТРАДРАХМА С НАДПИС ΘΡΑΚΩΝ ПРЕПЕЧАТАНА ВЪРХУ АТИНСКА
ТЕТРАДРАХМА НА ΑΠΕΛΛΙΚΩΝ–ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ (88/87 г.) И ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯТА
ЗА ΜΟΝΕΤΟΣΕЧΕΝΕТО ОТ ΤΑΣΟΣКИ ΤΙΠ**

_____ (Резюме) _____

Франсоа дьо КАЛАТАЙ

Една тасоска тетрадрахма с надпис ΘΡΑΚΩΝ бе наскоро продадена на аукционен търг (Gorny & Mosch 195, 7.03.2011, no. 8). Ясно се забелязва, че тя е препечатана върху атинска тетрадрахма от „Нов стил“ на магистратите ΑΠΕΛΛΙΚΩΝ–ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ, точно датираща се в 88–87 г. пр. Хр. Макар че до този момент имаше няколко известни подобни препечатки върху Атина „Нов стил“, никоя от тях не е с толкова късна дата. Новата препечатка сваля датировката на серията с поне 20 години (не около 110 г., а след 88 г.)

Най-вероятно изглежда, че тетрадрахмите от типа ΘΡΑΚΩΝ са били отсечени след Първата Митридатова война и следователно – нямат връзка с нея. В следствие на това групи XII–XX на тасоското монетесечене според И. Прокопов (Prokоров 2006) трябва да бъдат предатирани. Те са били отсечени не около 120/115 и около 80/75 г., а по-вероятно не преди 80-те г. на I век пр. Хр., оставяйки по този начин само групи IX–XI в трите десетилетия преди тази война (около 115–86 г.). Това трябва да се направи, въпреки историческите данни за римски военни кампании срещу тракийските племена в този период.

Статията предлага подробно изследване на печатите (die-study) въз основа на 12 известни на автора екземпляра с надписа ΘΡΑΚΩΝ. Една от тях дава основания защо е по-приемливо да не търси името на квестора Езилас, като по този начин се разрешава въпроса за появата на този рядък монограм върху някои тасоски тетрадрахми.

