

THE HANDBOOK OF GREEK COINAGE SERIES, VOLUME 7

**HANDBOOK  
OF  
COINS OF NORTHERN  
AND CENTRAL ANATOLIA**

PONTOS, PAPHLAGONIA, BITHYNIA, PHRYGIA,  
GALATIA, LYKAONIA, AND KAPPADOKIA  
(WITH KOLCHIS AND THE KIMMERIAN BOSPOROS)  
Fifth to First Centuries BC

By  
**Oliver D. Hoover**

*With a Foreword by  
François de Callatay*

*and a Series Preface by  
D. Scott VanHorn and Bradley R. Nelson*



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## FOREWORD

Oliver Hoover now provides us with the fifth volume of the *Handbook of Greek Coinage Series*. The rhythm has not slowed and the scientific level of what is primarily intended as a popular series for a large audience is amazingly high. Hoover's quest for material goes well beyond the gigantic and long useful publication of David Sear, *Greek Coins and Their Values* (London, 1978–1979). Not only have many new varieties surfaced since the late 1970s (due to the discoveries of metal detectorists, it is likely that the period 1980–2010 will appear as a golden age in the history of numismatics in terms of recovery) but Hoover also covers the relevant literature for each series on a much deeper level. This includes the most recent publications and occasionally even the unpublished knowledge of the best specialists in particular series.

The result nearly doubles the number of varieties recorded by Sear (i.e., for Paphlagonia: 83 instead of 49). It goes beyond the original aim to simply pave the way for the long awaited revision of B. V. Head's *Historia Nummorum* (London, 1887, second ed. 1911), for which Keith Rutter recently produced the volume dealing with Italy. With this concise encyclopedia, I would argue that most of the job will be done in terms of gathering information and giving it chronological and geographical attributions. Indeed, the standards of this *Handbook of Greek Coinages Series* are closer to those expected for the new *Historia Nummorum* than to those adopted by David Sear and are in line— at least not well below— with those used for Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover's *Comprehensive Catalog of Seleucid Coins* (Lancaster/London, 2003–2007).

Such an enterprise requires many choices and I can only congratulate Oliver Hoover for proceeding both with caution and with firmness: caution when he opts for an index of rarity instead of giving prices or for distributing bronze issues into denominations depending of their size/weight modules rather than giving them a supposed ancient value; firmness when confronted with conflicting theories, he often takes his responsibilities in a very pertinent way in my mind or when he consistently translates ancient names as much as they were in Greek; caution and firmness together when he resists to follow not enough argued chronologies. Examples are plenty: for Cappadocia, Mørkholm is preferred to Simonetta; for Pontic bronze civic issues, Callatay's dates are not taken for granted, etc.

A major choice was to define the area covered by this new volume which is without parallel. It opens with Bosphorus and Colchis—it makes sense indeed not to separate the two shores of Cimmerian Bosphorus—follows with what we used to call the minor Hellenistic kingdoms which flourished in northern and central Anatolia: Pontus, Paphlagonia, Bithynia and Cappadocia. The only choice we may regret is to have classified bronze issues in a decreasing order of denominations, irrelevant to their chronologies. Hence, for example, the four issues of Tieion (cat. nos. 602–605) are given in their exact reverse chronological order.

A special appeal of this new series is the inclusion of brief historical and numismatic introductions for each city or ruler. These texts summarize in a few paragraphs what we think we know, referring sometimes to a huge literature. Oliver Hoover is here at his best and the general reader may not perceive the amount of reading and expertise needed to produce these fine summaries, all the more since they are not without original hypotheses from the author himself. There is a clear will (never really attempted by similar preceding enterprises) to put coinages into historical perspective, often focusing on a link with military expenditures. His treatment of the bronzes of Prusias I and Prusias II is exemplary. Going

further than most editors, Hoover divides issues “on the basis of style, typology, shared monograms, and the frequent use of a later form of *pi* (Π) found on the tetradrachms of Prousius II.” In addition, he points to the fact that the supersized bronzes (denomination AA) struck under Prusias II are contemporaneous with similar experiments by the Seleukids (Antiochos IV, Demetrios I, and Timarchos) as well as by the Indo-Greek Menander I.

Another excellent author’s *parti pris* is to give all the possible relevant evidence, including some pieces which may be modern fakes (i.e., the unique stater of Laodike [cat. no. 328] and the possibly recut bronze of Sarbanissa [cat. no. 299]). Obviously, specialists may disagree or express nuances with some points here and there, but this remains extremely limited and does not affect at all the original purpose of the book: to provide an up-to-date and attractive *status quaestionis* for a range of coinages, which were for long—but are no more—slightly neglected by scholars and collectors compared to other areas.

I warmly congratulate the author for this outstanding achievement. After the completion of the full 13-volume series, he may ultimately appear as a distant heir of the great Joseph Hilarius Eckhel. I also congratulate the publisher, Classical Numismatic Group, for funding such an ambitious project and for its expected consequences in terms of broadening the audience for the little marvels that are Greek coins.

François de Callataÿ