



DIMITAR DRAGANOV

THE COINAGE  
OF  
DEULTUM

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## INTRODUCTION

Some thirty cities in Thrace and Moesia Inferior struck bronze coins during the Roman Imperial period. Among them, Deultum was the only Roman colony to have issued its own currency. This fact alone is sufficient to stir strong interest in its coins and history.

Classical historians know the name of the colony mainly because Deultum's coins appeared in public and private collections in Europe as early as the 17<sup>th</sup> c. (and likely earlier).<sup>1</sup>

The bibliographic study of Å. Schönert-Geiss<sup>2</sup> contains an almost complete list of publications that describe or comment upon Deultum's coins. In 1973, J. Jurukova's monograph on Deultum's coinage appeared.<sup>3</sup> Despite its weaknesses and mistakes, this study was the first attempt to draw a more complete picture of Deultum's coinage, based on a considerable part of the numismatic material available, then.<sup>4</sup>

In 2005, the publication of the Bobokov brothers' numismatic collection began within the framework of the international *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* project. The first volume presented the world's largest collection of coins struck at Deultum (2010 specimens).<sup>5</sup> Thus, a huge volume of new material was introduced into scholarly circulation. It contains more than 120 new coin types and variants, as well as a large number of new dies for types already known. Thanks to this publication, a new and complete study of Deultum's coinage became possible.

To complete such a study, the foundation provided by the Bobokov brothers' collection was supplemented with specimens from other museums and private collections, as well as with coins from auction catalogues and Internet sites. In total, some 4500 coins were analysed, but only the dies absent from the Bobokov brothers' collection have been added to the present catalogue.<sup>6</sup> To help readers, the coins published in *SNG Bulgaria*, Vol. 1, have been included in the new catalogue using the *SNG* catalogue numbers, while new specimens are indicated by letters following the number (e.g. 802a, 1058a, 1058b, 1315a, 1315b, etc.).

The present book represents a standard study of a city coinage. It includes a die study with discussion of chronology, types, denominations, legends, countermarks, forgeries, and circulation. The conclusions drawn from the study of the new numismatic material radically differ from those of earlier treatments of Deultum's coinage.

The numbers of obverse and reverse dies, as well as die links, are reported for the first time; shared reverse dies between emperors and their relatives are identified; the number of issues for each emperor and his relatives as well as the chronology of each issue are also determined.

Reverse dies are grouped by iconographic types. Thus, all dies depicting the emperor are grouped in "Imperial" types (Rev.1–16). These are followed by the types of "Priest with two oxen ploughing the colony's borders" (Rev.17–23), "ox head" (Rev.24–39), "Genius of the colony" (Rev.40–49), etc. This arrangement of the material allows for the appearance and the development of all iconographic types to be traced, as well as for the charting of typological changes from emperor to emperor. Several new obverse and reverse types and variants are described for the first time, as well as new die combinations. Here, for the first time, the few known ancient forgeries of Deultum's coins are published.

The book is lavishly illustrated. The illustrations are all presented in 1:1 scale with enlargements in 2:1 scale. All 181 obverse and 674 reverse dies are illustrated with colour photographs, as well as the

<sup>1</sup> Vaillant 1697, 144–156; Eckhel 1779, 67–68, Nos. 1–12; Stevenson 1889, 320–321; Svoronos 1890, 103–104

<sup>2</sup> Schönert-Geiss 1999, pp. 733–759, Nos. 4076–4232

<sup>3</sup> Jurukova 1973

<sup>4</sup> See reviews of the study: Naster 1975, 173; Amandry 1983, 239–241, and also: *SNG Italia* VI/3, 8. The book of Jurukova is missing a die- and die-links study. There are many inaccuracies concerning coin inscriptions and descriptions of the designs. The major flaw is in the illustrations: a very small number of obverse dies is illustrated; illustrations of the same reverse dies were reused for several different emperors. This way of presentation makes it impossible to determine the respective specimens for the illustrated obverse, and especially reverse dies.

<sup>5</sup> *SNG Bulgaria*, Vol. 1

<sup>6</sup> Some additional well-preserved specimens are also included in the catalogue.

die-links for each member of the respective imperial family (*Chapter II*). All reverse dies are illustrated separately (*Chapter III*). All specimens in the catalogue are also illustrated. The extensive illustrations allow the reader to verify the author's conclusions, and will hopefully serve as the basis for future study of this rich material.

**Acknowledgements.** The realisation of this study became possible in large part thanks to the extensive Bobokov brothers' collection of Deultum's coins, which is of enormous value to scholars. It is well-known that every serious study of a city's coinage needs a sufficient volume of numismatic material. Scholars usually collect the latter (photographs and metrological data) for at least several years, from numerous museums around the world. Obviously, it would be an enormous advantage if we had large collections of coins of every ancient city. Therefore, the Bobokov brothers' idea of creating basic collections of coins of the cities in Thrace and Moesia Inferior is of huge scholarly interest and should be highly appreciated.

I am very grateful to Prof. Michel Amandry (Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) for sharing his thoughts on the image of Deultum's city fountain and the reuse of some reverse dies. I owe a great debt to Ann Johnston (Paris-Cambridge) for her detailed comments upon the chapters concerning denominations and the organisation of Deultum's coinage, as well as for other suggestions and advice. I am also grateful to Dr. Volker Heuchert (Heberden Coin Room, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) for his practical advice on producing the catalogue for *SNG Bulgaria*, Vol. 1.

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