

РЕЦЕНЗІЇ / REVIEWS

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FORMATION AND EVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTERFEIT COINS

Review of the monograph: Boiko-Gagarin A. S. Coin counterfeiting in Central and Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times. Kyiv: "Ukrainian Academy of Heraldry, Trademark and Logo", 2017. 560 p.

СТАНОВЛЕННЯ ТА ЕВОЛЮЦІЙНИЙ РОЗВИТОК ФАЛЬШИВИХ МОНЕТ

Рецензія на монографію: Бойко-Гагарін А. С. Фальшивомонетництво в Центральній і Східній Європі в епоху Середньовіччя і раннього Нового часу. Київ: "Українська академія геральдики, товарного знака і логотипа", 2017. 560 с.

In 2017, a monograph *Coin counterfeiting in Central and Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times* by Andrii Boiko-Gagarin, Candidate of Historical Sciences (PhD), Numismatist and Museologist, was published. It was devoted to private counterfeiting of coins to the detriment of money circulation, which were characteristic of finds in Central and Eastern Europe in the middle of the 8th century and to the beginning of the 18th century.

From time immemorial, money counterfeiting was one of the types of easy earnings of social groups. It is believed that even the earliest coins invented by mankind were reflected in counterfeiting. The production of counterfeits gained momentum through the ages, kept pace with technical progress, and was a super lucrative business.

The history of counterfeit coins of the outlined period before the appearance of A. Boiko-Gagarin's monograph in the domestic historiography was not fully covered. The issues of money counterfeiting (the main types of coins, the role of counterfeits in the history of money circulation, technologies of their production, carried out using the latest accurate methods of physical measurements) have been studied quite sporadically in domestic and foreign numismatic scientific literature. This prompted the author to write a book, which aimed to draw the attention of numismatists, historians, archaeologists, museum workers and local historians to that non-trivial phenomenon of the past.

The novelty of A. Boiko-Gagarin's author's vision is that the book presents a complete classification of counterfeit coins in the circulation of Central and Eastern Europe, from antiquity to modern times in general: coins of private issuers entitled to coin regalia (imitation); counterfeits secretly made at the Mint; private "artisanal" counterfeits; application of false overprints; application of original overprints on counterfeit coins; false coins (p. 374).

For the first time the topography of finds of counterfeit coins is given in the book, the description of processes of their manufacture with application of modern, rather exact methods of physical researches is presented. The most common types of counterfeit coins in Eastern Europe are described. Based on the obtained conclusions and the depth of the aspect of counterfeiting, the author proposes a new and broader definition of the term *numismatics*. "Numismatics (from the Latin *nomisma* – coin) is the science that studies coins, treasures, collections, commodity-money relations and techniques of making coins, as well as artisanal counterfeiting of coins of that time" (p. 373).

A positive feature of A. Boiko-Gagarin's research, which can be traced throughout the text, is more than 600 illustrations describing the counterfeit coins of that time, as well as the presentation of a short terminological dictionary. Successfully selected rare (and sometimes unique) photographs of counterfeit coins complement the reader's idea of the formation and evolutionary development of counterfeiting.

The peer-reviewed monograph consists of an introduction, twenty-three chapters, research results, references, and appendices. The structure of the work looks quite logical and is determined by the main thematic chapters, which allow to fully reveal the topic, from the times of Kievan Rus to the era of Early Modern Times.

For understanding the topic of the study, the first section of the monograph *On the manufacture of counterfeit and fake coins* is of key importance, which outlines the chronological framework of the study (lower limit from the middle of the 8th century to the beginning of the 18th century) and features of this period. The author studied that counterfeit coins had been in Eastern Europe since the time of the Roman Empire. During that period in Eastern Europe, the mints were making the final transition to machine coin production, which significantly complicated counterfeiting, and, consequently, the very aspect of the activities of counterfeiters found other trends and features.

The source basis of A. Boiko-Gagarin's work is quite significant. Previously unpublished sources are introduced into scientific circulation, which allow opening a new page in the history of money circulation. The book is based on the study and research of counterfeit coins in private collections, judicial and administrative acts and other documents of the

time. The author's study of administrative acts stored in the archives gives a broad idea of investigative and judicial cases against counterfeiters. And also it allows establishing, what representatives of social strata were engaged in counterfeiting of coins, calling the real names of counterfeiters used at counterfeiting of technology.

The study of the following 18 thematically related sections of the monograph is of interest. Each chapter of the book is a logical continuation of the previous block. The material is presented on the basis of a problem-chronological approach, revealing information on counterfeiting of the most popular coins on the money market in the times of Kievan Rus to the era of Early Modern Times, which has not been sufficiently researched in domestic historiography. The book is written on the basis of the study and research of counterfeit coins of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; Kingdom of Poland, the Commonwealth; Bohemia (Czech Republic), Hungary, the Swedish occupation of the Baltic lands; Moldova and Transylvania; Holy Roman Empire; Prussia and Brandenburg-Prussia; Holland; Moscow Kingdom; Golden Horde; Crimean Khanate; Ottoman Empire; Teutonic Order in Prussia and Livonia; Scotland and the Venetian Republic; Spain. According to the historian's research, the dirhams and dinars of the Caliphate, European denarii, as well as hryvnias (ingots) were embodied in forgers' counterfeits.

According to the researcher's observations, coins counterfeiting of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is embodied from the earliest anepigraphic coins. The description of the well-known forgeries of denarii with the image of a spearhead with a cross and Gediminids' pillars belonging to the reign of Prince Vytautas (1392 – 1430), as well as images of a horseman belonging to the reign of Prince Casimir (1440 – 1492) is of great interest. The researcher noted the denarii and pól grosz, which could not escape the attention of counterfeiters, as the most popular in the money market during the reign of Alexander Jagiellon (1492 – 1506).

The scientist paid attention to the study of the so-called Belarusian numismatics of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In this section, devoted to the first coins of the principality, the author noted the study of the Belarusian numismatist Dmytro Huletskyi (published a copy of the counterfeit pól grosz of 1512). An interesting point of the study is the technique of making counterfeit coins, in particular, those made by one master, when there is one decoration style. Today they are stored in the museum of the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus (Minsk). Further we find interesting facts about counterfeit coins (trojak) of 1563 and their photos, which were found in the Brest region in Belarus.

Copper solids (coins of King of the Commonwealth Jan II Casimir (1648 – 1668) of Lithuanian minting), whose artisanal counterfeits filled the whole of Eastern Europe, researched by the historian, attract attention. The historian's assumption was quite interesting that the Polish coin had penetrated the territory of the Ukrainian historical lands of Lutsk and Volodymyr-Volynskyi since the end of the 14th century (imitating the denarii of Wladyslaw II Jagiello (1386 – 1434). The researcher analyzes a tendency in counterfeiting of Polish coins of larger denomination in those times: szostak, ort, coins equal to 4 groszs. Among the coins of Augustus III, copper coins – solids and groszs – also become prototypes for counterfeiting.

A. Boiko-Gagarin's explanation that the reason for the decline in the number of counterfeits in this period was the improvement of coin production technologies in the 18th century, when almost all mints were mastering the machine production of coins, seems quite reasonable.

The author paid considerable attention to the study of counterfeit coins of the Moscow Empire. On the basis of elaborated sources and national literature, the historian studied the oldest counterfeit coins of Ivan Mikhailovich, prince of Tver (1399 – 1425) and Moscow

coins of Prince Ivan III (1462 – 1505) and Tsar of Muscovy Ivan the Terrible (1533 – 1584). A. Boiko-Gagarin claims that by the end of the 1660s a wave of counterfeiting had literally flooded the Muscovy, and large sections of the population, from nobles to beggars, were engaged in counterfeiting coins.

Among the counterfeits of coins of the Crimean Khanate, the author was able to study examples that copy the most common original coins minted on behalf of the khans of the Giray dynasty. A. Boiko-Gagarin analyzes there a small number of counterfeit coins (made of silver) in circulation in comparison with European countries.

The section *Scotland and the Venetian Republic* is of interest, namely the archaeological finds that confirm the penetration of fake Venetian ducats on Ukrainian lands from Italy and neighboring lands. According to the research of A. Boiko-Gagarin, in the 15th – 16th centuries the Venetian gold coin played one of the dominant roles in monetary settlements in the Mediterranean. Venetian gold spread rapidly throughout the European continent and beyond.

Of particular interest is the section *Technologies of production of counterfeit coins*, which discusses the technologies and stages of production of counterfeit coins. The author shows the improvement of counterfeiting technologies, namely the introduction of machine technology of minting, which eliminated the possibility of counterfeiting small denomination coins.

A. Boiko-Gagarin examines the most severe punishments applied to counterfeiters in the Middle Ages and Modern Times in all European countries. Among the punishments, the most common ones were executions with previous torture and the confiscation of property. As the author explains, the most severe punishments and persecutions did not stop money counterfeiters; the production of counterfeit money kept pace with monetary reforms and technological progress. This once again confirms that the best way to combat counterfeiting of coins and tokens is to improve their quality and improve their means of protection.

The last part of the work, in our opinion, is the most original, because it is devoted to little-known topography aspects of the findings of counterfeit coins. It is interesting for us to find in the monograph a set of data on the areas of the greatest concentration of finds of counterfeit coins. The specifics of the researched types of counterfeits in different regions of Ukraine are determined. In Table 2, it was made assumptions about the localization of production of counterfeit coins, as well as the features of their findings.

A. Boiko-Gagarin managed to study the connection of numismatics with other sciences, in particular, with physics and chemistry (alchemy), metrology and statistics, economics and history of money circulation, art and fashion, as well as psychology (psychology of money). In particular, counterfeiters realized the dreams of alchemists – the transformation of base metal into “gold” and “silver” (p. 372).

We are impressed by the objective conclusions that meet the objectives of the study, reflect the scientific novelty of the work. In his conclusions, A. Boiko-Gagarin not only collected the final provisions presented by him in the sections, but also briefly, in the context of the whole topic, analyzed the evolution of private counterfeiting of coins to the detriment of money circulation, typical of finds in Central and Eastern Europe of the outlined period. He also quite aptly outlined promising areas for further research in the field of studying counterfeit coins of past eras. It is also commendable that the researcher proved to be a good stylist, which made his text interesting to read and transparent for evaluation.

One of the characteristic features of the peer-reviewed work is its content. The author proved that in accordance with the scientific task in the work, it was correctly defined the

subject and object, purpose and objectives of the study, substantiated its chronological boundaries. As it can be seen from the text of the monograph, due to the careful study of a huge array of counterfeit coins, a significant layer of new numismatic knowledge is introduced into scientific circulation. Gradually, taking into account the specifics of the historical moment, A. Boiko-Gagarin shows the influence of coins on the development of money circulation in Central and Eastern Europe during the middle of the 8th – early 18th centuries.

This scientific work is an independent, relevant, innovative work in its concept, which meets all modern requirements.

Undoubtedly, the book will be valuable not only for professional historians, archaeologists, museum workers, art critics, collectors, students, local historians, but above all (which, after all, the author expects) for the average readers who are not indifferent to the history of their native land. Moreover, A. Boiko-Gagarin not only reveals the historical facts, but also provides answers to some controversial topical issues of domestic numismatics. The detailed topography of the findings of counterfeit coins of the past presented in the author's work allows determining the potential centers of illegal coin production on the territory of modern Ukraine. And also it will contribute to their wider publication and study of this phenomenon. And, accordingly, it will be of interest not only to professionals but also to collectors and lovers of antiquity.

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