

Two coins from the north of Galați County

by Sorin Langu, Cristian Onel

Abstract The authors describe 2 coins from the surroundings of Tecuci town, Galați county. We presume that are coins from Queen Christina of Sweden, but there is the possibility that the two coins to be a Moldovian issue, so called „Dabija forgeries”.

Key words: skilling, Cristina a Suediei, Dabija Vodă

In the context of Romanian numismatics the coins issued by Moldova in the seventeenth century, represents a special chapter. The international political situation, with the climax the siege of Vienna-1683, was leading to the numerous borders configurations and a lot of strategies with monetary influences. Many such hoards dated during this period are discovered, the large number of coins, originals and imitations, being attributed to Moldovan mint, reopened by Istrate Dabija¹ ((1661-1665), the reason being that the amount of petty money.²

AE. Skilling; Moldova?, Suedia?; 0,49 g; 15 mm. Private collection.		
AE. Skilling; Moldova?, Suedia?; 0,58 g; 14 mm; Private collection.		

¹ O. Iiescu, *The History Of Coins In Romania (cca. 1500 B.C. ó 2000 AD) Chronology ó Bibliography ó Glossary*, Bucharest, 2002, p.48

² M. Du u, *Un depozit de ilingi din vremea lui Dabija descoperit în judetul Gala i*, șBSNRö, 144-145, 1996-1997, p.143-144, coins assumed to be counterfeit were discovered in Croatia, I. Mirk, *Forgeries Of Polish Coins From The Zagreb Archaeological Museum Numismatic Collection*, ðVAMZö, 3.S., XXXV 215-237, 2002, p.220

The first coin was discovered in the area of the military airport in Tecuci, and the second in the village of Poiana, Nicorești commune, both during the 1970s. They are minted uncentered,³ on the first, you can see traces of the next coin, and the second currency is chipped. The year is not visible in either situation due to the advanced state of uncentered and wear.

They are among the few isolated coins of this kind in Moldova⁴ published, usually attention being focused on the hoards.⁵ In Galati County these finds are not unheard of, in the same area being found hoards at Tecuci⁶ and Podoleni⁷ while a hoard was discovered in the County, without further details.⁸ Monetary hoards from this period are numerous and are both accumulation as well as for circulation,⁹ but is difficult to have a clear separation of the issuers due to the lack of publication of all important treasures, Moldovian minting counterfeits and Polish-Swedish counterfeiting.

Octavian Iliescu believes, relying more on documentary sources, that the monetary issues are minted in Moldova at the late XVII century.¹⁰ These issues of currency began during Istrate Dabija and Alexandru Iliăș and continued by Gheorghe Duca and are part of a general phenomenon of imitation, in Wallachia, at Snagov, being a monetary mint.¹¹ This opinion has not been contradicted for 50 years, meanwhile being published many hoards with 'șalăi de la Dabija Vodă' (coins from Dabija Voda). In Romanian Banknotes and Coins¹², a well-known catalogue, are presented more coins as 'Moldovan imitations' of Queen Christina's coins without providing other details. Foreign literature works on the same idea, Swedish coins

³ Uncentered striking is not surprising in the period under discussion, the internet, on various sites for collectors or auctions, is full of photos with Swedish coins issued in Riga and minted uncentered, <http://coins.ee/riia-solidus-1621-gustav-ii-adolf-1611-1632-3>, accessed on 08.12.2014, <http://www.coinpeople.com/index.php/topic/25857-looking-for-more-information-on-these-17th-century-coins/>, accessed on 08.12.2014, <http://www.omnicoin.com/country/Sweden?sort=year&page=2>, accesat pe 08.12.2014. Other coins are minted uncentered, see the hoard from Cupcui, *Corpus Nummorum Moldaviae*, V.1, ediderunt **Viorel M. Butnariu**, Chi in u, 2014, p.71-73 nr.318,319,349,354, 357, 373,376, 390,400, 403, interesting is that these Polish coins were issued at Riga.

⁴ At Suceava, Baia and Piatra Neam were discovered and published similar coins, **O.Iliescu**, *șSolidi Valachici Vulgo Dumniczeö*, șSCNö, III, 1960, p.319-320

⁵ **V.Butnariu**, *Tezaurul de la Ungureni. Prolegomene la circula ia ilingului în Moldova*, öAIIÖ, 46, 2009, p.412-414, for the finds from Valachia, **K. Pârvan**, *șFalsuri Dabijaö descoperite în Bucure ti*, öCABö, VI, 2005, p. 336, 346, for the finds from Dobroudja, **G.Custurea**, *Descoperirile monetare de la Ester óTârgu or (jud. Constan a)*, öPonticaö, 43, 2011, p.475

⁶ over 15000 copper coins, **C.Ilie**, **M.Nicu**, *Note privind tezaurul monetare descoperite în zona Tecuci*, öDanubiusö, XXII, 2004, p.170

⁷ over 1700 copper coins *Ibidem*

⁸ 105 coins, originals and öimitationsö **M.Du u**, *Un depozit de ilingi*, p.141-146

⁹ **V. Butnariu**, *Tezaurul de la Ungureni*, p. 412-414

¹⁰ **O.Iliescu**, *șSolidi Valachici...*, p.314-317

¹¹ **D. Rosetti**, *Urmele unei monet rii de la Snagov cu resturi de ilingi falsifica i*, öBSNRö, 81-82,1933-1934, p. 20; **Idem**, *Monet ria clandestin de la Snagov*, CNA, 11, 1935, pp.512-513; **Idem**, *B n ria de la Snagov*, BSNR, 83-96, 1935-1942, pp.50-52

¹² **G.Buzdugan**, **O.Luchian**, **C.Opreescu**, *Monede i bancnote române ti*, Bucure ti, 1977, p.94-97

catalogue¹³ presenting more counterfeit coins, issues of Sweden in Riga, as coming from Suceava. This idea has been repeated by H.E.Skold, former Ambassador of Sweden in Bucharest.¹⁴ In recent years there is a tint of the question: not all currencies are considered to be 'Dabija forgeries'.

Katusha Pârvan thinks it's possible that some 'Dabija forgeries' may come from other mints, but studying the great hoards can clear up the problem.¹⁵ Analyzing shillings emitted during Queen Christina from the great hoard of Iași, L. Munteanu, concludes on the basis of numerous sources including the catalogue of Fedorov,¹⁶ that the coins are originals and not imitations.¹⁷ Furthermore, V.Butnariu is advancing the idea that these coins, counterfeits, were made by Polish occupation troops, and have even been manufactured during the campaigns of 1686 and 1691.¹⁸

Under these conditions, the degree of wear and their inscriptions,¹⁹ we believe that the coins presented by us are, most likely, originals, minting in other workshops than the classic ones (mobile workshops) cannot ruin their legitimacy.

¹³ Ahlström, B., Almer, Y., Jonsson, K., *Svenska besättningsmynt 1561-1878*, Stockholm, p.202-205

¹⁴ H.E.Skold, *Activitatea monetariei de la Suceava în timpul lui Dabija-Vod*, *öCNö*, VI, 1990, p.189-213

¹⁵ K. Pârvan, *ş Falsuri Dabijaö*, p.336, 346

¹⁶ D. Fedorov, *Monety Pribaltiki XIII-XVIII stojetil opredelitelø monet*, Tallin, 1966

¹⁷ L.Munteanu in *The Great Medieval Coin Hoard of Ia i*, edited by V.Mih ilescu-Bârliba, Ia i, 2006, p.501

¹⁸ V.Butnariu, *Tezaurul de la Ungureni*, p.424, the Polish market was invaded by millions of shillings issued at Elbing and Riga, particularly, it seems, to destabilize the Polish economy, what has happened, *ibidem*, p.417

¹⁹ Hans-Jürgen Ulonska, Lars O. Lagerqvist, Torbjörn Sundquist, *Nytt från falskmyntarverkstaden i Suceava (Suczawa)*, *öSvensk Numismatisk Tidskriftö*, 2013, 1, p.10-12 There are five ways to distinguish the false from the original coins. The coins presented by us does not fall into any category but there is the possibility that the extent of wear to hide the clues necessary to enclose into one category or another.