

A REMARKABLE TETRADRACHM OF TIGRANES II STANDS OUT IN A RECENT AUCTION



16,15g, 27mm, 12h.

A magnificent new Tetradrachm of Tigranes II “the Great,” Kings of Armenia, bearing the inscription « ΔΗΜΟ » was sold at Auction XXIX, Roma Numismatics (09-11-2023, Lot 162).

The letter groups “ΔΗΜΟ” are prominently featured on coins issued by Tigranes II. In the latest catalogue, released in 2016¹, a substantial collection of 12 coins types bears the inscription “ΔΗΜΟ.”

This abbreviation omitting the flexional final letter leads us to a reading of the word δῆμος meaning ‘people, civic community’, which, in our opinion, can only refer to the city of Artaxata.

The group containing the inscription “ΔΗΜΟ” has two main features. First, the king named Tigranes always bears the royal title (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΤΙΓΡΑΝΟΥ), and never the imperial title (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΤΙΓΡΑΝΟΥ). Secondly, the tiara never includes the two eagles on either side of a star, but only a single star which can sometimes be interpreted as having the trail of a shooting star, and sometimes as a horn.

For more details, refer to : Roy Arakelian & Maxime Yevadian, “Study on the chronology of coinage issued by Tigranes II,” *Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 2023, 38/1, p. 21.



Examples of others coins of Tigranes II, with the legend “ΔΗΜΟ”

¹ ACCP = Franck Kovacs, *Armenian Coinage in the Classical Period*, Lancaster, Classical Numismatic Group, 2016.