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ATHENS OR PHLIUS?

Miriam S. Balmuth

In 1962, when a catalogue of the archaic coins of Athens in the *Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University*¹ was first undertaken, the earliest specimen of the group (Fig. 1) appeared to be a *Wappenmünze* corresponding to Seltman's Group D and resembling most closely the coin from Athens to which Seltman had given the number 74². The weight of the Fogg coin, however, was 6,27 grams and remained so

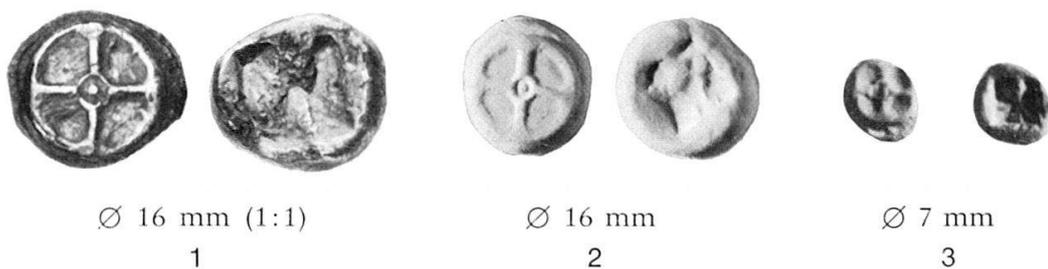
¹ I am grateful to G. M. A. Hanfmann for permission to publish the coin from the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass. 1916. 69.85, which is silver and measures 16 mm in diameter, and also to E. S. G. Robinson for bringing my attention to the design of the hub. Thanks are also due to R. Sokolov for his persistence in weighing the coin.

² C. T. Seltman, *Athens, its History and Coinage before the Persian Invasion*, Cambridge 1924, 163. Subsequent references to Seltman are to this book.

≡ H 66/790
1
Hg.

after several incredulous weighings. Shortly thereafter, it was disclosed that the coin in Athens (Fig. 2) weighed 6,54 grams and not 8,46 as published³. Further investigation turned up another coin of the same type in Copenhagen (Fig. 3), weighing 1,078 grams, one sixth the weight of the Fogg and Athens coins and therefore part of the same weight standard⁴.

The wheel on all three coins has a raised hub within a circular depression; the reverses, rather indeterminate, do not show the clearly diagonal divisions associated with *Wappenmünzen*. The three coins, while similar in type to a group of *Wappenmünzen*, differ in the specific shape of the wheel; the ill-defined reverse; and, most important, the weight. It is the purpose of this note to propose that these criteria, when taken together, can only point to Peloponnesian Phlius as the source of the coins.



Pausanias⁵ mentions the existence of a sacred omphalos at Phlius which was considered, with what Head calls «unaccountable ignorance of distances» to be the center of the Peloponnesus, and the wheel hub with a raised pellet appears on later coins of Phlius where it has been explained as a reference to the omphalos⁶. Such an interpretation of the type is not unjustified in view of the appearance of a similar device on the coins of Delphi⁷. The only other wheel with the same kind of hub is known from an issue of small electrum which Seltman included among the *Wappenmünzen* fractions, but which actually comes from Samos⁸. Since Pausanias⁹ wrote that a body of immigrants went from Phlius to Samos in the seventh century; and a connection between Pythagoras and a sixth century Phliasian tyrant, Leon, has been documented by Cicero¹⁰ and Diogenes Laertius¹¹; the similarity of type need not be fortuitous. Whatever the significance of the wheel, whether it be solar,

³ R. J. Hopper of Sheffield University has graciously sent information on the actual weight of the coin in Athens which has since been confirmed through the Assistant Keeper M. Oikonomides, to whom I am additionally indebted for new photographs. The Athens coin is also 16 mm in diameter.

⁴ SNG 14 Royal Coll., Danish Nat. Museum, 1944, No. 6. O. Mørholm kindly reweighed the coin which is about 7 mm in diameter. The weight standards referred to assume as an Attic-Euboic stater a tetradrachm of about $17 \pm$ grams, and as an Aeginetic stater a didrachm of about $12,6 \pm$ grams. Since an obol is one sixth of a drachm, the Copenhagen wheel can be considered an obol of the Aeginetic system.

⁵ Paus. 2, 13, 3.

⁶ HN 409.

⁷ BMC, Central Greece, Pl. IV, No. 4.

⁸ BMC, Central Greece, p. 106, No. 4 = BMC, Ionia, p. 14, No. 67. Seltman, Pl. XIV, P 254 A 202. Cf. the review of Seltman by E. S. G. Robinson in NC 1924, 329–341, especially 338.

⁹ Paus. 2, 3, 1–2.

¹⁰ Cic. Tusc. 5, 8.

¹¹ Diog. Laert. 1, 12; 8, 1 and 8.

geographical, heraldic, or umbilical in origin¹², the peculiar hub of the coins in question seems to have been found only in issues from Phlius and Samos. There is, moreover, an early period in the history of Phlius to which coinage is not assigned, and which a wheel/incuse of Aeginetic weight would satisfy¹³.

Weight standard is usually the single most decisive factor in determining site or ambit of issue, and in this case, the Aeginetic weight of the three coins offers the most convincing argument for a Peloponnesian origin. Seltman tried to verify Aristotle's statement¹⁴, that Solon changed the standard so that it was greater than the Pheidonian, by arguing that the amphora type was minted in both standards and therefore minted by Solon. He was never able, however, to prove his attribution of the heavy amphora type as Athenian¹⁵ and the fact remains that all coins that fit Seltman's definition of *Wappenmünzen* are Attic-Euboic in weight, although his concept that they refer to specific coats of arms can no longer be accepted¹⁶.

The chronology of early Athenian coinage is the source of a growing literature of a controversial nature¹⁷. The attributions of modern scholars are hindered by the ambiguity of the ancient literary references, nor is there any agreement from investigations of the coins themselves, since the examination of style and fabric seem further to complicate the question. The main problems that emerge, however, are the date of the institution of Athenian coinage and the sequence of the earliest issues.

The latest discussions have concentrated on the owl issues without agreement on the dates of the earlier incuse coinage. A restudy of the *Wappenmünzen* is both necessary and timely in the light of their place as the earliest issues from Athens and the immediate predecessors of the first owls. It is the hope of the writer that this note will bring to the attention of collectors and keepers who may have examples of the same, an issue, the type and weight of which are at variance with their putative attributions.

¹² Seltman sought to show that they were coats-of-arms of aristocratic Athenian families, the type of the wheel possibly derived from a solar disk; but cf. Robinson, loc. cit. supra n. 8; L. Lacroix, «Les 'blasons' des villes grecques», *Etudes d'archéologie classique* 1 (1958) 89–115; and R. J. Hopper, «A Note on Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, 665–70», *CQ* 10:2 (1960) 242–247.

¹³ HN 409.

¹⁴ Aristot. *Athen. Pol.* 10.

¹⁵ Cf. Robinson, loc. cit. supra n. 8 and J. Jongkees, *Notes on the Coinage of Athens*, *Mnemosyne* 1944, 82.

¹⁶ One exception, the triskeles with Aeginetic type reverse, was considered Phliasian by Six, Babelon, and Head in his second edition, and Athenian by Seltman and, most recently, Naster. It is neither Attic-Euboic nor Aeginetic in weight.

¹⁷ The problem in early Athenian coinage is to propose a chronology that will satisfy the conflicting evidence from the ancient texts, the style of the dies, and the conclusions from hoards. The textual aspects have been most thoroughly treated by Jongkees, loc. cit. supra n. 15 and K. Kraft, *Zur Übersetzung und Interpretation von Aristoteles, Athenaiion politeia*, Kap. 10, *JNG* 10, 1960, 21–46. It is worth noting, however, that Aristotle, in the *Politics* (1257a), says that the earliest coins had a mark of value (*πρόσου*), a statement that does not correspond to the material at hand. F. Jacoby in *FGrHist II Supp.* (Leiden 1954) 459 has aptly remarked that Aristotle wrote not as a numismatist but as a philosopher interested in first causes and metaphysical questions. The style of the coins has been amply discussed by H. A. Cahn in *Museum Helveticum* 3, 1946, 133–143. Since E. S. G. Robinson's redating of the earliest Lydian coins (*Coins of the Ephesian Artemision Reconsidered*, *Journ. of Hellenic Studies* 71, 1951, 156–167) however, there has begun a new trend in dating considerations of early European silver, starting with C. Kraay, *The Archaic Owls of Athens: Classification and Chronology*, *NC* 1956, 43–68. Cf. also W. P. Wallace, *The Early Coinages of Athens and Euboea*, *NC* 1962, 23–42 and Kraay's reply in the same issue 417–423.

Le Fogg Art Museum de l'Université de Harvard détient une pièce qui se trouve être un spécimen des plus anciennes monnaies du type héraldique. Cette pièce a été classée par Seltman dans son groupe D. Elle ressemble étrangement à celle d'Athènes, n° 74 de Seltman.

Le poids de notre pièce toutefois est de 6,27 g. On a découvert récemment que la pièce, conservée à Athènes, ne pesait pas 8,46 g mais 6,54 g. Une troisième pièce de ce type a été repérée à Copenhague. Elle pèse 1,078 g, c'est-à-dire le sixième de celles du Fogg Art Museum et d'Athènes. Ces trois pièces dérivent d'un même étalon monétaire. Elles sont ornées d'une roue à quatre rayons, avec moyeu. Le revers est indéchiffrable. Etudiant la forme de la roue, le revers indéterminé et le poids, l'auteur arrive à la conclusion que ces pièces sont originaires du Péloponnèse. Pausanias signale un omphalos sacré à Phlius et c'est pour cette raison que les numismates ont attribué à cette ville certaines pièces ornées d'une roue avec une boule dans le moyeu. Nos trois pièces ont également le centre du moyeu bombé en forme de demi-sphère. C'est une des raisons pour laquelle l'auteur propose d'attribuer, non à Athènes, mais à Phlius les trois monnaies qu'elle étudie.

Le poids de ces trois pièces, qui est celui d'Egine, apporte lui aussi un argument d'importance pour leur attribution au Péloponnèse.

En conclusion, l'auteur propose de réétudier la chronologie des premières pièces d'Athènes. Une nouvelle étude des monnaies «héraldiques» est souhaitable. Elles semblent être les premières frappes d'Athènes et précéder immédiatement les premières «chouettes».

C. M.

DER DENAR DES P. SEPVLLIVS MACER MIT CAESAR IMP — ☆

Zur Auswertung der Münzquellen der Geschichte des Jahres 44 v. Chr.

Andreas Alföldi

5. Beitrag ¹

Wie wir es gesehen haben, nannte sich Caesar auf seinen Prägungen nach dem Mißlingen der Königsproklamation nicht mehr *dictator* mit der beigegebenen Zahl jenes höchsten Jahresbeamten, sondern einstweilen nur *imperator*. Dieser Titel war damals bei republikanischen Führerpersönlichkeiten noch gangbar; aber wir konnten doch schon beobachten, wie die ihm beigegebenen Symbole bald einen monarchischen Klang annahmen. Zuerst wurden zwar der Augurstab und das Opferschälchen mit dem Imperatortitel verbunden, Sinnbilder also, welche die sakrale Grundlage der höchsten Autorität des spätrepublikanischen Staatsleiters vor Augen stellen ². Dem gleichen Zweck dient gleich danach noch die Hinzufügung von *P(ontifex) M(aximus)* zu *IM(perator)*.

¹ Die vorhergehenden Beiträge sind erschienen in Jb. Bern. Hist. Mus. 41–42, 1961–1962, (1963) 275 ff. SM 13, 1963, 29 ff.; 14, 1964, 65 ff.; 15, 1965, 29 ff.

² Vgl. darüber J. Bayet, Les sacerdoces romains et la pré-divinisation impériale, Bull. de la classe d. lettres, Acad. R. de Belgique 5ème sér. 41, 1955, fasc. 7–9, 453 ff.