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M. Caccamo Caltabiano, L. Campagna, A. Pinzone (eds.),

Nuove prospettive della ricerca sulla Sicilia del III sec. a.C.
Archeologia, Numismatica, Storia. Atti dell'Incontro di Studio
(Messina 4-5 luglio 2002) Pelorias 11 (Soveria Mannelli 2004)

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Led by energetic rulers such as Agathocles and Hieron II, and tied to a network of international relations, Sicily was a bastion of Hellenism throughout the 3rd century BC. During its course Syracuse reached the apogee of her power, Carthage lost all her Sicilian possessions, and Rome ultimately gained control of the island that became her first overseas province. This dynamic period of prosperity, artistic achievement, warfare, and pivotal change, is the broad theme of the sixteen essays by historians, archaeologists, and numismatists (comprising the proceedings of a conference held at Messina in 2002) collected in this miscellaneous volume.

Three keynote papers by A. PINZONE (on the Sicilian *socii navales*), N. BONACASA (on the potential for archaeological research on Hellenistic Sicily), and M. CACCAMO CALTABIANO (on the methodology and results of recent work on the coinages of Sicily in the 3rd century BC), illustrate this interdisciplinary approach. In Pinzone's view Sicily was not extensively Romanized after the Roman conquest, despite an obligation to provide naval assistance to the Romans incurred by several Sicilian cities in the first two Punic Wars. Bonacasa highlights various seminal contributions to the study of Sicilian town planning, domestic and funerary architecture, and the visual arts between the late 4th and the late 3rd centuries BC, when the island was a recipient and a disseminator of multiple cultural influences, as well as a crucible of artistic activity, at the crossroads of the Mediterranean. Caccamo Caltabiano surveys a slew of numismatic studies (particularly by young scholars trained at the University of Messina, where she teaches), with emphasis on the coinage of Hieron II, the introduction of the *denarius*, and the municipal issues of Henna, which she proposes to date between 217-214 BC.

The rest of the volume is divided into three sections following the same three-pronged line of inquiry. Accordingly, S.N. CONSOLO LANGHER traces the evolution of the ideology of royal power and the establishment of a ruler's cult in Sicily from the reign of Agathocles to that of Hieronymus, while R. MARINO reviews the historiographic tradition on Pyrrhus' Sicilian expedition. A.M. PRESTIANNI GIALLOMBARDO's essay is focused upon the strengthening of city walls and the building of granaries by some cities in central and north-eastern Sicily during the reign of Hieron II, and on this king's generous provisions of grain to Rome. She regards these actions as defensive strategies aimed at protecting the island (and Syracuse in particular) from enemy attack in the face of an impending confrontation between Carthage and Rome. G. SFAMENI GASPARRO briefly examines the reception of oriental religious influences in eastern Sicily at the end of the 3rd century BC.

Five essays deal with topics of archaeological interest. M. BELL discusses the plan of a peristyle building in the agora of Morgantina, which he proposes to identify as a public bank that may have functioned as the local branch of an otherwise unattested royal bank between c. 250-211 BC. L. CAMPAGNA disagrees with Bell about the extent of direct patronage by Hieron II of towns in the periphery of the Syracusan kingdom, such as Morgantina. He focuses instead his analysis upon the architectural complexes at Syracuse (the temple of Zeus Olympios in the agora, and the buildings in the *Neapolis*) which have been ascribed to Hieron II. Campagna suggests that all these monuments were designed to confer legitimacy to the King's autocratic rule and to promote dynastic continuity. Ideological goals, including the desire to be seen as champions of Hellenic identity and civic values, may also have motivated Hieron II and his son Gelon to support Sicilian gymnasia, according to F. FERRUTI. C. PARISI PRESICCE and E.C. PORTALE link the construction of the largest known sacrificial altar at Syracuse and Hieron's dedications to Olympia and Lyndos to the establishment of a ruler's cult at home and to Hieron's interest in projecting Syracusan power and influence abroad.

Four numismatic studies (all by former students of professor Caccamo Caltabiano) complete the volume. A. CARBÈ expounds on the iconographic history of the horseman on the reverse of the large bronzes of Hieron II, a coin type which is also found on a bronze issue of Agathocles (310-304 BC). Carbè suggests that Hieron II deliberately chose it to associate the legitimacy of his monarchic rule to that of his predecessor. She also believes that the image of the horseman (which she proposes to identify as Gelon) may have recalled the iconography of the Dioscuri and hinted at the dual reign (beginning c. 227 BC) of Hieron II and his son. B. CARROCCIO'S is the only essay devoted to the coinages of Sicilian cities under Roman rule, which he (following M. Caccamo Caltabiano) dates between the late 3rd and the 2nd centuries BC both on iconographic grounds and because of the presence of value marks.

The last two papers deal with monetary circulation under Hieron II in Bruttium and Sicily. After reviewing the evidence from site finds at Castiglione di Paludi, Crotona, Capo Colonna, Strongoli, Oppido Mamertina, and Locri, D. CASTRIZIO points out that the bronzes with Head of Athena / Hippocamp minted under Dionysius I, and Hieronian bronzes with Head of Kore / IE Butting bull, comprise the largest groups of Syracusan coins that circulated in present-day Calabria. Since the bronzes with R/ IE Butting bull (which Castrizio, following B. Carroccio, dates to the beginning of Hieron II's rule) are found more abundantly in Calabria than in Sicily, he surmises that they were minted to provide pay to Syracusan forces serving with Hieron in Calabria under Pyrrhus, or during the first years of Hieron II's reign. His conclusions are echoed by M. PUGLISI, who briefly discusses the activity of the mints operating in Sicily under Hieron II before summarizing the evidence from Sicilian coin hoards and single finds (including both site finds and stray finds) dated between 276-215 BC. Her study shows that, while most hoards are concentrated in central and eastern Sicily and belong to the Second Punic War period, Hieronian bronze issues (especially the litras with Head of Poseidon / Trident) travelled widely across the island. Puglisi believes that these bronzes were essentially a military coinage. Both Castrizio and Puglisi use bar graphs to quantify

the finds of the Syracusan issues which they discuss. Puglisi also illustrates the distribution of Sicilians mints, hoards and finds of single coins from Hieron II's reign in a series of eight maps.

Regrettably, the editors have made no attempt to draw some general inferences from the papers presented in this volume, which would have been more user-friendly if all bibliographical references had been integrated, and if an analytical index had been provided. As a result, one will have to cross-reference several essays and comb through lengthy footnotes for items of interest. Moreover, there is considerable overlapping with essays by the same authors published in the proceedings of previous conferences. Thus, Pinzone's study takes up where he left off in 'La 'romanizzazione' della Sicilia occidentale in età repubblicana',¹ and Bonacasa's essay is an updated version of his essay 'Per una revisione della cultura figurativa ellenistica in Sicilia'.² Caccamo Caltabiano's review combines ideas and themes from her 'Identità e peculiarità dell'esperienza monetale siciliana'.³ S. Consolo Langher also builds her essay on an earlier study on 'Aspetti giuridici del potere regale in Sicilia. Diritto successorio, trasformazioni socio-culturali e agrarie e natura e ruolo della monarchia da Agatocle a Gerone II'.⁴ Lastly, G. Sfameni Gasparro's thesis on the arrival of oriental cults in Sicily in the 3rd century BC and Sicily's role as the intermediary «fra Oriente e Occidente» reiterates the conclusions of her previous work on 'Le attestazioni dei culti egiziani in Sicilia nei documenti monetali',⁵ without addressing the recent criticism of H. Mattingly, *Methodology and History in Third Century Sicilian Numismatics*.⁶

Much more disappointing, though, is the absence of any contributions from recent scholarship on southern and western Sicily, particularly on the Punic zone. This limits the scope of the book (regardless of its title) to the sphere of Syracusan and specifically Hieronian territorial and political control. For information on the results of archaeological and numismatic investigations on other areas of Sicily, readers will have to consult the reports published in the *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, *Antike Kunst*, the *Atti delle giornate internazionali di studi sull'area elima*, *Kokalos*, and *Sicilia Archeologica*.

¹ *Atti terze giornate internazionali di studi sull'area elima (Gibellina / Erice / Contessa Entellina, 23-26 ottobre 1997)*, I (Pisa-Gibellina 2000), pp. 849-878.

² M. BARRA BAGNASCO, E. DE MIRO, A. PINZONE (eds.), *Magna Grecia e Sicilia. Stato degli studi e prospettive di ricerca*, *Atti dell'Incontro di Studi Messina 2-4 dicembre 1996* (Soveria Mannelli 1999), pp. 259-273.

³ *Magna Grecia e Sicilia (supra, n. 2)*, esp. pp. 306-310; *Ead.*, *Dalla moneta locale alla provinciale? La Sicilia occidentale sotto il dominio romano*, in *Atti terze giornate internazionali di studi sull'area elima (supra)*, esp. pp. 202-207; *Ead.* – M. PUGLISI, *La funzione della moneta nella Sicilia antica*, in G. GORINI (ed.), *Ritrovamenti monetali nel mondo antico: problemi e metodi. Atti del Congresso Internazionale, Padova 31 marzo - 2 aprile 2000* (Monselice 2002), esp. pp. 38-42.

⁴ *Magna Grecia e Sicilia (supra, n. 2)*, pp. 331-349.

⁵ *La Sicilia tra l'Egitto e Roma: la monetazione siracusana dell'età di Ierone II*, M. CACCAMO CALTABIANO, ed., *Atti del Seminario Messina 2-4 dicembre 1993* (Messina 1995), pp. 80-149.

⁶ *SNR 79*, 2000, pp. 36-41.

However, despite these shortcomings, *Nuove prospettive* is a collection of essays well worth reading. Its contents encompass some of the key issues with which classical scholars have grappled in the last decade, and provide stimulating insight into one of the most complex centuries in the history of ancient Sicily.

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