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NICHOLAS J. MOLINARI

ἵς Ἀχελωίου: THE «SINEW» COINAGE OF NEAPOLIS
AND ITS NEIGHBORS, c. 296 TO 240 BC

«...the sinews of silver-eddying Acheloios,
to the water...the name Acheloios...and the sinews...is the
...each...»

-*Derveni Papyrus, Column XXIII, 11–16*¹

Introduction

For a period of about sixty years a very strange combination of letters, ΙΣ, appeared on many coins from six different issuing authorities in the region of Campania and Samnium: Neapolis, Cales, Aesernia, Compulteria, Suessa Aurunca, and Phistelia. These letters have perplexed scholars for hundreds of years, and, although there are elements of truth in some interpretations, none are completely satisfying. Fiorelli, writing in 1846, suggested ΙΣ referred to the Isolympic games, and that different cities would employ the emblem when their athletes won². Some, beginning perhaps with Garrucci³, have suggested it is an abbreviation of the name of a magistrate, and we do indeed find it used that way in Thurium. Cavedoni suggested it refers to a conventional currency of the region, in which the groups issuing the coins were part of a monetary confederation, and that ΙΣ is an abbreviation of something like ἰσὸρρόπος («equally balanced»), ἰσότημος («equal in value»), and ἰσόνομος («equal money»), which reflects the uniformity of the laws that govern the minting of coinage⁴. Sambon recognized that there was some monetary alliance among Neapolis and its neighboring cities, but he suggested ΙΣ must refer to a coiner in charge of these emissions⁵. More recently, Taliercio Mensitieri suggested ΙΣ refers to a mint workshop, basing her opinion on the fact that the appearance of ΙΣ throughout Campanian and related coinages shows no meaningful usage in terms of the many sequential marks that do fit into an overall scheme, and also because of the fact that ΙΣ is unlike engraver's initials or magisterial marks⁶. Rutter, in *HN Italy*³, noted the phenomenon but offered no explanation other than that it was evidence of some «close co-operation

¹ Trans. LAKS – MOST 1997.

² FIORELLI 1846, p. 44–6.

³ GARRUCCI 1885, p. 83.

⁴ CAVEDONI 1850, p. 197.

⁵ SAMBON 1913, p. 190.

⁶ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1987, p. 161–178.

in minting, possibly using a centralized system⁷.» Gabrici likewise suggested the same⁸, and Taylor has more-or-less adopted this view⁹. Finally, Dr. Sisci and I, in *ΠΟΤΑΜΙΚΟΝ*, suggested that ΙΣ refers to «sinews¹⁰,» as in the «sinews of Acheloios,» and this was meaningful because, just as the rivers of the world are the «sinews of Acheloios,» so the different cities within that particular region have a common, regional bond. In this sense, ΙΣ operated as a fraternal badge directly connected to the iconography¹¹.



Fig. 1: Enlargement of a Neapolitan silver didrachm (21mm, 7.21 g, 11h) featuring ΙΣ below Acheloios. Unpublished variety. CNG, The Coin Shop, item no. 979726. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC.

In this essay, I'd like to explore the idea that ΙΣ operated as the ideological insignia of a region bound by common interests – political, economic, but most importantly religious and militaristic – and that this need for unity amongst a plurality of cities makes perfect sense in the time period after the start of the Third Samnite War. In this respect, I suggest ΙΣ was initially employed as a rallying sign in response to the Samnite invasions, and later came to represent distinct cultural identity during a time when Rome became a superpower. In addition, I'll provide a catalog of the types featuring ΙΣ, and narrow down the dating of a few Neapolitan and Caletan issues to the start of the 3rd century BC.

⁷ RUTTER 2001, p. 58. See also LIPPI 2002, p. 21–47.

⁸ GABRICI 1900, p. 652.

⁹ TAYLOR 2022, p. 106-8.

¹⁰ LSJ: *s.v.* ἴς, «sinew, tendon,» but also «strength.» Cf. SLATER 1969. Likely both meanings overlapped in antiquity since the concepts are related—for Acheloios is the strength of rivers (per Pindar, *P.Oxy* II (1899) 64, schol. of Ammonius on *Il.* 21.195) and the rivers are his sinews (per *P. Derveni* XXIII *et al.*). For further discussion, see D'ALESSIO 2004, p. 23-4; MOLINARI – SISCO 2016, p. 61, 92-95; MOLINARI 2018, p. 5; and especially MOLINARI 2022a, p. 6, 8, 55-6, 60, 66, 109, 126-8, 135, 148, 154, 156, 173-4, 176-8, 182, 187, 192, 197.

¹¹ MOLINARI – SISCO 2016, p. 61, 96, 160. Isler refers to the common iconography of the region as a «coat of arms.» ISLER 1970, p. 88.

The Coins

According to most dating schemes, ΙΣ coins first emerge around the turn of the 4th to 3rd century BC at Neapolis and Cales¹². At Neapolis, we find it first on bronze issues of the latter portion of Taliercio Phase IIa, which is a group consisting of full units, and which she dates to the period of c. 317/310 to 270 BC. On these issues, above Acheloios on the reverse, we find a graphic symbol – e.g. a dolphin, bird, Helios, kerykeion, *etc.* – used as some sort of control device indicating the individual series within the phase. The very first issues featuring ΙΣ below Acheloios have a rose, hippocampus, astragalos, lyre, or bucrania above. All but the very first in the series, featuring the rose, have no other letters, but the initial rose series does (*Fig. 2*). The rose on the reverse has E and Π on either side, and below the belly of Acheloios we find an AP monogram – hence potentially evidence of series indicators, officina marks, and signatures in addition to the ΙΣ.



Fig. 2 and 3: Neapolitan bronze unit (15 mm, 4,92 g), MSP I, no. 273. Image courtesy of Den of Antiquity, item no. 360876505527 / Neapolitan bronze 1/3 unit (15 mm, 2,29 g), MSP I, no. 290. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, item no. Y 20243.

Series IIc, consisting of 1/3 units, is similar – the dating ranges from c. 317/310 to 270 BC and we find ΙΣ on the reverse in the latter portion of issues, indicating continuity with the larger full units (*Fig. 3*). In this case the ΙΣ always appears alone on the reverse, though combinations of monograms and letters or symbols and letters will appear on the obverse.

During Phase III of the bronze series at Neapolis ΙΣ suddenly becomes increasingly prevalent, with all but fourteen varieties showing the device (of 70)¹³. The full units here are said to date over a somewhat lengthy period, from 270 to 250 BC¹⁴. On the obverse we find a consistent rotation of letters indicating numbers in a series (*Fig. 4 and 5*). The aberrations in this series (e.g. the varieties with P on the obverse have no ΙΣ on the reverse), according to Taliercio, are presumably parallel emergency issues from a separate mint operation, which we can determine from style and constitution¹⁵.

¹² For the dating of Neapolitan bronze coinage, see TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1986. For Cales, see MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 167–187, in which they realign certain issues based on parallels at Neapolis.

¹³ MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 227–242.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1987, p. 173-5.

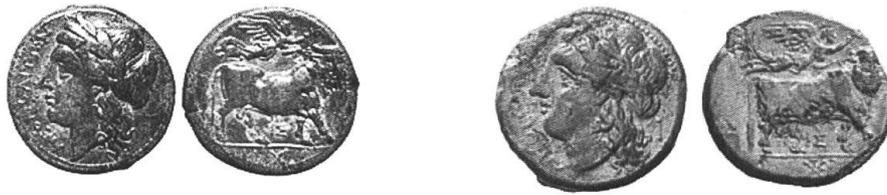


Fig. 4 and 5: Neapolitan bronze unit (18 mm, 6,77 g), MSP I, no. 328. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France (Armand Valton 21) / Neapolitan bronze unit (20 mm, 4,63 g), MSP I, no. 350. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica, Auction P, lot 1013.

Silver emissions featuring $\text{I}\Sigma$, both didrachms and drachms, mostly align to the very same periods and feature similar characteristics. The didrachms that feature $\text{I}\Sigma$ begin *c.* 300 BC and it appears on two varieties – on the obverse we find either two monograms (SAMBON 1913, no. 486) or a letter and a monogram (SAMBON 1913, no. 487), then, on subsequent issues, we find it paired first with two letters and then a series of symbols on the obverse (*Fig. 6*)¹⁶. Similarly, on the drachms, which date *c.* 272 to 240 BC and are contemporaneous with many of the $\text{I}\Sigma$ coins from other cities, we find $\text{I}\Sigma$ paired with either a symbol or letter on the obverse (*Fig. 7*). On series after 250 BC, $\text{I}\Sigma$ seems to completely disappear from the corpus of Neapolitan coinage.



Fig. 6 and 7: Neapolitan silver didrachm (7,32 g), Sambon 1913, no. 519. Image courtesy of Stack's New York Sale (2011), lot 3 / Neapolitan silver drachm (3,57 g), unpublished. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, 66, lot 67.

At Cales, which lies to the north of Neapolis, $\text{I}\Sigma$ appears on bronze coinage at the end of Group Ib¹⁷, which, as a larger group, dates from *c.* 317 to 280 BC, thus aligning with the earliest Neapolitan issues (*Fig. 8*). Interestingly, $\text{I}\Sigma$ is markedly absent from any of the later phases, precisely when it becomes so popular at Neapolis and begins to be employed at Suessa, Comulterria, Aesernia, and Phistelia.

At Comulterria, which is east of Cales, we find $\text{I}\Sigma$ employed on the reverse in the middle of a bronze series dating *c.* 272 to 250 BC (*Fig. 9*). The earlier issues have either nothing below the belly of Acheloius, a retrograde K, an M, or an N. There are never additional symbols on the reverse.

¹⁶ SAMBON 1913, no. 501 and related specimens.

¹⁷ MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 168.



Fig. 8 and Fig. 9: Caletan bronze unit (7,03 g), MSP I, no. 151. Image courtesy of Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung GmbH, Auction 147, lot 1074 / Computertian bronze unit (5,99 g), MSP I, no. 177. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 59, lot 1531.

At Aesernia, north of Computertia, ΙΣ appears in the middle of a series of bronze coinage thought to date c. 260 to 240 BC, thus mostly coinciding with Neapolis Phase IIIa coinage (*Fig. 10*). On earlier issues nothing appears below the belly of Acheloios, whereas on later issues we find A, N, or T.

At Suessa, northwest of Cales, we again find ΙΣ in the middle of a series of bronze coinage that dates roughly 270 to 240 BC (*Fig. 11*). Here at Suessa, based on an analysis of obverse dies, it appears that the ΙΣ occurs in the interim of a repeating series of letters, namely, M, N, and Π.



Fig. 10 and Fig. 11: Aesernian bronze unit (6,60 g), MSP I, no. 67. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Luynes 22 / Suessan bronze unit (19 mm, 7,21 g), MSP I, no. 426. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Fonds Général 541.

Finally, at Phistelia, we know of two bronze units of the same type that feature ΙΣ below Acheloios' belly. On the obverse a strange inscription appears: ΣΤΑΙΩΝΤ, and the equally strange reverse inscription reads ΟΙΜΤΛΑΙΣ¹⁸. These are said to date to about the same time as the other ΙΣ coins, c. 265 to 240 BC. Unfortunately, with only two specimens known to exist, we cannot determine much from the Phistelian evidence.

Clearly, with the exception of the very earliest issues from Neapolis and Cales, which we might provisionally date to the first decades of the 3rd century BC, the

¹⁸ CAMPANA 2007, p. 233–264

vast majority of these issues appear between 270 and 240 BC. Thus we have a roughly sixty-year period in which these letters occur, with six municipalities employing the design, and four different denominations. We find ΙΣ combined with other letters (series marks or perhaps mintmarks in the case of some letter combinations), monograms, or symbols. Furthermore, ΙΣ always appears on the reverse with Acheloios, never the obverse and never on any other coinage from any of these mints. Because its appearance is so unconventional, one must ask: What does ΙΣ mean?

Earlier Interpretations of ΙΣ and their Shortcomings

ΙΣ as a Magistrate's Mark, Mint Official's Abbreviation, or Engraver's Sign

Garrucci seems to be the first to argue that ΙΣ was a magistrate's mark, though he offered no actual argument in his 1885 work *Le monete dell'Italia antica*¹⁹. We know now that ΙΣ was probably used as a magistrate mark in Thurium on a stater (HN Italy³ no. 1783) dating to the second half of the 5th century, c. 443 to 400 BC. There, ΙΣ appears occasionally on the bowl of Athena's helmet, and Rutter connects this to an earlier issue (HN Italy³ no. 1781) that had the magistrate's name in full, as ΙΣΤΟΠΟΣ. Thus, there is indeed some numismatic precedent for suggesting a magistrate's initials. However, despite its use at Thurium, there are good reasons not to assign that meaning to the ΙΣ on the coinage of Neapolis and its neighbors. First, some sixteen of the Neapolitan bronze issues alone appear with monograms rather than dual-letter combinations, and these likely do signify magistrates, mint officials, or engravers (*Fig. 12 and 13*).



Fig. 12 and 13: Neapolitan bronze unit (4,07 g) featuring LE monogram before Apollo, MSP I, no. 276. Image from Sambon 1913, no. 637 / Neapolitan 1/3 bronze unit (13 mm, 2,25 g), featuring monogram before Apollo, MSP I, no. 293. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Fonds Général 375.

If we look at the silver issues, we find that engraver's initials or magistrate names are usually lengthy abbreviations that appear on the obverse (*e.g.*, ΔΙΟΦΑΝΟΥΣ, ΣΤΑ..., ΑΡΤΕΜΙ..., ΠΑΡΜΕ..., ΧΑΡΙΑΕ..., ΓΝΑΙΟΥ, ΕΥ-ΛΟΥ, *etc.*)²⁰. In both cases, the bronze and silver, we shouldn't include ΙΣ, since it only ever appears on the

¹⁹ GARRUCCI 1885, p. 83.

²⁰ SAMBON 1913, p. 182.

reverse²¹. Although there are dual-letter combinations that appear in silver and bronze on the obverse, such as BI, DI, *etc.*, when we come to the individual whose name (presumably) began with ΙΣ, we do not find ΙΣ but instead the monogram Ι-Σ. In my estimation, the extra «-» was added precisely to differentiate it from the use of ΙΣ on the reverses of contemporaneous issues.

The second, and most important, reason to dismiss the magistrate/official/engraver hypothesis is because the time span is simply too long: if we accept the *latest* dating to the start of the 3rd century, that is still sixty years of appearance and would surely extend beyond the working life of a magistrate or other official²². On top of this, we have the problem of other municipalities also employing the device – thus, unless we posit Neapolis as the mint for all of these coins, or that every mint had an official whose name could be represented by ΙΣ (implausible), or that Mr. ΙΣ was a sort of super-magistrate in charge of the alignment of various inter-communal economic initiatives over a sixty-year period (extremely unlikely), it couldn't have been a single individual²³.

The most important argument against an engraver in particular, however, surely comes down to style. We can look at the style of different examples and see that they are clearly from the hand of different artists (*Fig. 14* and *Fig. 15*):



Fig. 14 and *Fig. 15*: Bronze unit of Neapolis (15 mm, 4,06 g), MSP I, no. 274. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. FG 397 / Bronze unit of Neapolis, MSP I, no. 338. Image courtesy of ACR E-Auction no. 8, lot 9.

Note, in particular, the muscles on Acheloios' front right leg are radically different in style, as is the face. Likewise, on the obverse, the rendering of the hair at the base of Apollo's neck is completely different.

ΙΣ as Indicative of Close Minting Cooperation

More recent theories have been more cautious – they are more accurate but also less substantial. For instance, Lippi suggested ΙΣ is a sort of control mark, noting that it appears in some cases among the sequence of letters A, BI, and E, then A, B, Γ, and Δ²⁴. However, the real purpose of his essay was to redate a particular segment of coinage, among which we find some of the ΙΣ issues; he was not fo-

²¹ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1987, p. 174.

²² MARCHETTI 1986, p. 443–68.

²³ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1987, p. 170.

²⁴ LIPPI 2002, but he is mostly concerned with a very narrow period of c. 4 years.

cusing exclusively on the meaning of IΣ outside of the fact that it occurs within a sequence during a period of a few years. Indeed, the periods in which those other letters occur is very short compared to the entire corpus of IΣ coinage, and so it seems to be a mistake to attribute it *strictly* as a control mark when the only semblance of its operating this way is from a small selection of dates, and that study does not consider its use for other cities or the full parameters of the dating scheme. Hence, Taliercio Mensitieri found no ultimate regularity amongst the employment of IΣ, and concluded that it does not signify a specific series or sequence, and thus it does not appear to be a control mark, properly speaking²⁵.

IΣ as a Mint Workshop

Instead of a control mark, Taliercio Mensitieri suggests that IΣ might refer to a specific workshop within a Neapolitan mint. It is unclear from her analysis if she thinks this workshop struck coins for the other IΣ cities, or if those other cities simply copied the workshop mark²⁶. In any case, in terms of the interruption in the appearance of IΣ during Phase IIIa, which, again, only fourteen specimens of seventy do not feature it, she suggests that these other issues were struck at a parallel workshop presumably as emergency issues, which is perhaps supported by the emergency Cales-Neapolis overstrikes that appear at this time²⁷. Taliercio Mensitieri also points to other letters and letter combinations (notably M, and MI) which appear at Neapolis and Nola, suggesting they too might refer to mint workshops. But reading Taliercio Mensitieri's essay it is clear that «mint workshop» was the most plausible resolution based on the current understanding – she certainly does not appear fully convinced herself. Hence, as she points out, while we can understand on some level that these marks are indicative of an organized and interconnected structure, we cannot verify their meaning objectively²⁸ unless we have «historical, literary, and epigraphic sources that reveal the juridical administrative structures²⁹.»

Working against the theory of a mint workshop is the fact that the appearance of IΣ across all mints is wildly inconsistent – approximately sixty years, four denominations, and six different municipalities, without any clear structure or shared dies linking the cities³⁰. If IΣ was a single mint workshop, why would it be responsible for so much production compared to the others throughout the second quarter of the 3rd century? Also, why would the IΣ workshop issue so many different denominations – didrachms, drachms, full bronze units and one-third units? Additionally, it seems strange that the first issues from Neapolis and Cales,

²⁵ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1987, *passim*.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 170–171.

²⁷ *e.g.* SAMBON 1913, no. 696.

²⁸ TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 1987, p. 177.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 167, note 19. Translation mine.

³⁰ Although the early use of mintmarks and officina or workshop marks is regarded as inconsistent during the earliest times (see DE CALLATAÏ 2012; LORBER – KOVACS 1997), in this case I would argue that such irregularity at so many cities simultaneously works against the theory of a workshop.

which appear to start at the same time, would employ a mintmark whereas no other mintmarks appear (from what we can determine) on any of the issues that appear in close proximity. Another point – why does it indicate part of a sequence in some cases? Finally, and most importantly: excluding the inaugural issues (MSP I, nos. 318–322) and some P obverse issues (MSP I, nos. 379–381, 383), there are still three varieties in Phase IIIa that do not feature ΙΣ: MSP I, no. 346 (ΟΣ below Acheloios); MSP I, no. 362 (Π below Acheloios); and, MSP I, no. 368 (Χ below Acheloios). Are they all from different workshops, and if so, why do they not all use a mintmark to identify the workshop? For we know ΟΣ and Χ cannot be workshops under the Taliercio Mensitieri scheme since they appear with ΙΣ (for ΟΣ, *cf. e.g.* MSP I, nos. 326, 329, 331, 332, 341, 342, *etc.*, for Χ, *cf.* MSP I, no. 351). Thus, the mint workshop theory has too many problems, and even if ΙΣ were indicative of a workshop, that does not preclude it having a deeper, religious meaning. One would think that arguably the most fanatical issuers of coins featuring Acheloios in all of antiquity, rivaled only by the mint of Gelas, might deliberately choose a mint mark that was deeply significant.

Historical Background

Examining the historical context of these series will surely be beneficial for uncovering the meaning of ΙΣ, if indeed there is one beyond some type of administrative regulatory function. Unfortunately for us, the period in which all of the ΙΣ coinage was issued offers relatively few ancient accounts³¹. Still, we have important events before these issues begin in the second half of the 4th century that can help us. The most important regional forces were the Campanians, Romans, and Samnites, and the interactions of these groups impacted the cities issuing ΙΣ coinage for at least a century. Indeed, the Samnite League initially included virtually all of Campania, but due to some of the Samnites' «menacing» behaviors, Capua broke off and joined Rome through a *foedus aequum*, and later, in 338, Capua, Cumae, and Suessa (all Campani cities) received Roman citizenship (though without the right to vote)³². As Taylor recounts, the granting of Roman citizenship was essentially a declaration of war between Rome and the remaining members of the Samnite League, with Nola and Neapolis caught in the middle³³. Despite being part of the Samnite League, Neapolis had seemingly good, longstanding relations with Rome, and it was not until Rome began to consolidate power throughout Falerii and then Cumae that Neapolis began to strengthen its walls³⁴.

This brings us to the infamous *foedus aequum* between Rome and Neapolis in 327/6 BC. Although the sources do not provide a perfectly consistent narrative, it seems that, as tensions between Rome and Neapolis began to escalate after 338, so were the internal tensions among the Neapolitans reaching a fever-pitch³⁵,

³¹ TAYLOR 2022, p. 126.

³² *ibid.*, p. 113.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 114.

³⁵ Taylor reproduces the evidence: Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 8.22.7, 8.22.8–10, 8.23, 25–6; Dionysios, *Ρωμαϊκή Αρχαιολογία* 15.5.1–15.6.5, 15.7.3–5, and 15.8.3–5.

somewhat divided between the old city group at Palaeopolis and the new group emerging at Neapolis³⁶. The Palaeopolitans, according to Livy, made many acts of aggression against Rome, and Rome sent ambassadors to put a stop to it³⁷. Dionysios tells us that the *hoi chariestatoi* of Neapolis were leaning toward aligning with Rome, likely to avoid a vicious conflict³⁸. The internal struggles and potential underlying motivations of the pro-Roman and pro-Samnite groups within Neapolis and Palaeopolis are discussed in depth by Taylor, who suggests the upper classes, who were perhaps growing tired of the Cumaean refugees, decided ultimately to side with Rome despite the lower classes wanting to maintain close ties with the Samnites³⁹. The end result was a rather intense moment in history: now surrounded by Romans *and* Samnites, Dionysios records that the Neapolitans could not reach agreement at the council (mostly controlled by pro-Roman Greek aristocrats) concerning Rome's demands, and the vote was taken to the assembly, mostly composed of Campani in favor of the Samnite cause⁴⁰. With Rome rejected and soldiers mounting on either side (some 6000 Samnites stationed at Palaeopolis alone)⁴¹, two leading men of the city, Charilaos and Nymphios, decided the best option would be to side with Rome, and thus they deceived the Samnite groups, ultimately leading to a Samnite defeat. Shortly after the *foedus Neapolitanum* was established (a *foedus aequum* or treaty of equals), and thenceforth Neapolis had a fairly prosperous and peaceful co-existence with Rome⁴².

About a generation after the *foedus Neapolitanum*, at the turn of the century, we begin to see ΙΣ. Although we know little about Neapolis and the other ΙΣ cities during the next half century, there are some key events to keep in mind. Suessa, whose original inhabitants were Aurunci, was taken by force by the Romans in 313 BC⁴³. The significance of the use of force – which we'll see repeated with other cities – is that, although now a colony with many settlers, the native inhabitants were surely not totally enthusiastic about Roman expansion and this is a key fact to keep in mind, especially since the Romans were requiring soldiers or tributes from the colonies⁴⁴. Another key event: The Third Samnite War begins in 298 BC after the Samnites threatened the Roman fetials and Rome subsequently declared war⁴⁵. This war shaped the interactions of various groups throughout the decade, and many of the ΙΣ cities were involved. For instance, Cales, whose original inhabitants were Ausonians defeated by the Romans back in 334 BC (becoming the first Latin colony in Campania)⁴⁶, was raided and nearly razed by the Samnites in 296 BC, along with other unnamed Campanian cities⁴⁷. The Samnites also raided

³⁶ TAYLOR 2022, p. 114.

³⁷ Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 8.22.7

³⁸ Dionysios, *Ρωμαϊκή Αρχαιολογία* 15.5.1–15.6.5.

³⁹ TAYLOR 2022, p.118–20.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² *ibid.*, 122; See also Chapter 8 of that work.

⁴³ Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 9.28.7.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 35.16.8.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 10.11.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 8.16.13-4.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 10.20.2-3.

Aesernia in 295 BC⁴⁸, and in the same year Livy informs us that Campanians were fighting alongside Romans – some 1000 Campanian troops⁴⁹. Also from Livy, the Samnites intended to raid Campanian territory later in 294 BC, but their attack was thwarted⁵⁰. From c. 293–290 the Romans (presumably still in conjunction with troops from its colonies) systematically destroyed the remaining Samnite strongholds as the war ultimately came to an end, with the Samnites finally defeated in 290 BC by Manius Curius Dentatus and Publius Cornelius Rufinus⁵¹. Compulteria, originally a Samnite stronghold located near the upper Volturnus, was seemingly under Roman influence by the end of the Pyrrhic Wars (280 to 275 BC)⁵², so perhaps not instrumental in the Samnite Wars but surely by the First Punic War. Later, Aesernia, in northern Samnium, was taken *by force* by the Romans and became a Latin colony in 263 BC⁵³. As for Phistelia, we know nothing of it aside from its coinage, but presumably they, too, had come under the domain of Rome by the second quarter or the 3rd century BC or shortly thereafter⁵⁴.

Based on these events, I propose (and will justify in subsequent sections) that the inauguration of the earliest examples from Neapolis and Cales (including Neapolitan silver issues) would fit nicely within the period of the Third Samnite War, 299 to 290 BC, right after the raid of Cales and the other Campanian territories. It is right around this time that we know these groups were united in response to a common enemy. As intimated in the introduction, I believe the use of Ἴς served as a rallying sign for the peoples of the region – they must band together to fight the more belligerent Samnite groups, forming a united core amongst many constituents: Ausones, Greeks, some Campani and perhaps even some Samnites aligned with the Roman cause, a One/Many relation just like the mythos of their beloved Acheloius and his sinews. The remaining issues, from Neapolis (Phase IIIa), Aesernia, Compulteria, Suessa, and Phistelia, I believe date to the periods largely agreed upon in the numismatic literature, c. 270 to 240 BC. Here it now served the purpose of recognizing the underlying unity of the various cultural identities in the region in the new world of Roman dominance, and this is justified because, as much as these groups may have been relieved of the imminent Samnite threat thanks to Rome, there would still be bad blood from past transgressions when these areas were taken by force (and hence a need to exhibit cultural autonomy). In all cases the Ἴς issues may have been specifically minted to pay troops for service, a clear way to indicate the special status of an issue distinct from the various mints' normal outputs. But to really justify this interpretation we need to see why the «sinews» of Acheloius is deeply meaningful to the various cultures inhabiting the Italian peninsula.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 10.31.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 10.26.14.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 10.32.1-2.

⁵¹ Eutropius, *Breviarium Historiae Romanae* 2.9.3.

⁵² MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 188.

⁵³ Livy, *Epit.* 15 (lost); Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History* 1.8.

⁵⁴ RUTTER 2001, p. 72.

*Acheloios and His Sinews***Literature**

The earliest written record that characterizes the rivers of the world as the «sinews of Acheloios» dates to approximately 350 BC – in the *Derveni Papyrus*, thus about a generation or so before the coins in question were issued. Although the authorship of *P. Derveni* is contested, it is clearly a philosophical commentary on an earlier Orphic poem and contains an important theology. In the manuscript, Acheloios «stands out as the only physical operation in a series of creative acts stemming from Zeus' μήντις,⁵⁵» in which case the waters of the world are given the name Acheloios, and, making the obvious extrapolation from what is available, it is the rivers that are his sinews. Below is the column.

P. Derveni 23 (ed. LAKS – MOST):

τοῦτο τὸ ἔπος πα[ρα]γωγὸν πεπόηται καὶ το[ῖς] μὲν
πολλοῖς ἄδηλόν ἐστιν, τοῖς δὲ ὀρθῶς γινώσκουσιν
εὐδηλον ὅτι «Ὠκεανός» ἐστὶν ὁ ἀήρ, ἀήρ δὲ Ζεὺς.
οὐκ οὐκ «ἐμήσατο» τὸν Ζᾶνα ἕτερος Ζεὺς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς
αὐτῷ «σθένος μέγα». οἱ δ' οὐ γινώσκοντες τὸν
Ὠκεανὸν ποταμὸν δοκοῦσιν εἶναι ὅτι «εὐρὸν ῥέοντα»
_____ προσέθηκεν. – ὁ δὲ σημαίνει τὴν αὐτοῦ γνώμην
ἐν τοῖς λεγομέν[ο]ις καὶ νομιζομένοις ῥήμασι.
καὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀν[θ]ρώπων τοὺς μέγα δυνατ[οῦ]ντας
_____ «μεγάλους» φασὶ «ῥυῆναι». τὸ δ' ἐχόμενον·
_____ «ἴνας δ' ἐγκατ[έ]λεξ' Ἀχελῶϊου ἀργυ[ρ]οδίγε[ω]».
τῷ[ι] ὕδα[τι] ὄλ[ος] τίθη[σι] Ἀχελῶϊον ὄνομα. ὅ[τι] δὲ
τα[ρ]δίνα[ς] ἐγκαταλ[έ]ξαι ἐστ[ί]θε ἐγκατῶ[σ]αι·
τὴν [γ]ὰρ []των αυ[τ]]...
ἐκασ[τ]]δε βουλ[]
ε.υ[]οντε[]

This verse has been made misleading and it is unclear to the many, but to those who understand correctly it is quite clear that Ocean is the air and the air is Zeus. It is not the case that one Zeus contrived another Zeus but the same one (contrived) for himself great strength. But those who do not understand think that Ocean is a river because he added «broadly flowing.» But he indicates his intention in current and customary expressions. For they say that the very powerful among men «flowed great». And the next verse,
«...the sinews of silver-eddy Acheloios.»
to the water...the name Acheloios...and the sinews...is the
...each...⁵⁶

⁵⁵ D'ALESSIO 2004, p. 23.

⁵⁶ Trans. LAKS – MOST 1997.

The idea of Acheloios as all water has early, Homeric roots. In the earliest versions of the *Iliad* Acheloios, not Okeanos, is the source of all the world's water⁵⁷, including even the sea, and, in addition to *P. Derveni*, this same description is found in the later *Oxyrhyncus Papyrus*:]νας[ἐ]γκατέλεξα / Ἀχελωίου ἀργυροδνεω ἐξ οὗ πᾶσα θάλασσα⁵⁸. Depending on one's selection criteria, Acheloios is equated with water (or discussed in such a way that it implies he is water) in dozens of accounts ranging from Homer to the *Scholia on Euripides*⁵⁹. We are fortunate that, like the *Derveni* author, some other ancient writers decided to elaborate on this claim. Ephorus, also writing in the mid 4th century BC, is the oldest of these. He tells us that Acheloios is a name used for all rivers: Ἐφορος δ' ἐν β [φησι] τὸ ἐν Δωδώνη μα- ντεῖον σχεδὸν ἐν ἅπασι τοῖς χρησιμοῖς προστάττειν Ἀχελώϊω θύειν, ὅθεν τοὺς Ἑλληνας

⁵⁷ *Il.* 21.190-199, *sans* 195 (ed. Megakleides), *cf. Scholia in Iliadem* 21.195b1-20 (ed. ERBSE).

⁵⁸ *P. Oxy* 221, Column VIII-IX (ed. ERBSE).

⁵⁹ *Il.* 21.190-199, *sans* 195 (ed. Megakleides); *Il.* 21.190-199 (ed. Zenodotus), *cf. cod. Genev. Graec.* 44, s. XIII, a² (ed. ERBSE); Sophokles *Fr.* 4 = *Fr.* 5 (ed. RADT); perhaps also *Fr.* 271 = Strabo, *Geography* 6, 2, 4 = Hesychius λ 1432 (ed. RADT); Euripides, *Andromache* 163-168 (ed. DIGGLE), *Bacchae* 616-626 (ed. DIGGLE); Achaeus, *Athens* 4.9, *TrGF* 20 F 9 = Athenaeus of Naucratis, *The Deipnosophists* 11.10, 427d; Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 381 (ed. HENDERSON), *Rooster fr.* 365 PCG 3.2:205 = *Fragment* 351 (ed. EDMONDS), *Fragment* 6 (ed. MEINEKE); Ephorus, *F* 20a (ed. JACOBY), *F* 20b (ed. JACOBY) = *Schol. Hom. Il.* Φ 195 (*P. OX* II 221 col. IX 21); *P. Derveni* Column XXIII (ed. LAKS – MOST); *Carmina Convivialia Fr.* 34c.1-11 (ed. PAGE = *P. Ber.* Inv. 13270 and song PMG 917); Virgil, *Georgics* 1.1-11 (ed. GREENOUGH); perhaps Artemidorus Daldianus, *Onirocriticon* 2.38. 21-17 (ed. PACK); Ammonius, *P. Oxy* 221, Column VIII-IX = *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.194a.1-6 (ed. ERBSE) = *cod. Townl.* (Brit. Mus. Burney 88) a1; *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.195.1-197.2 (ed. ERBSE) = *P. Oxy* 221, Column VIII-IX; *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.195a1.1-5 (ed. ERBSE) = *cod. Ven. Graec.* 822, s. X and *cod. Genev. Graec.* 44, s. XIII, a¹; Didymus, *Tragic Diction Fr.* 2b (ed. KASTER); Servius, *In Vergilii Georgicis commentarii*, Liber I, I.Ad v. 8 (ed. THILO – HAGEN); Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 5.18.1-12 (ed. KASTER); Orus, *Orthographia* F e *cod. Salvatore r & v* 281r, 1-5 (ed. RABE); perhaps Hermias, *In Platonis Phaedrum scholia* 1.34.18-20 (ed. LUCARINI – MORESCHINI); Hesychius, *Lexicon* A.8841.1-2 (ed. LATTE); Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De thematibus Asia-Europe Europe*, 8.17-23 (ed. DE BOOR); Eustathius, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* 1.553.14-21, 1.793.4-7, 3.491.21-25, 4.483.11-484.26, 4.962.2-964.10 (ed. VAN DER VALK); Marcus Musurus, *Etymologicum Magnum* 26.30-35 (ed. GAISFORD); *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.194.1-21 (ed. HEYNE); *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.194.1-10 (ed. ERBSE) = *cod. Ven. Graec.* 822, s. X and *cod. Genev. Graec.* 44, s. XIII = *Genevensi gr.* 44, 21.194.1-7 (ed. NICOLE); *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.195.1-2 = *scholia recentiora Theodori Meliteniotis e cod. Genevensi gr.* 44 (ed. NICOLE); *Scholia in Iliadem* 24.616.1-9 (ed. HEYNE); *Scholia in Iliadem* 24.616b.1-16 (ed. ERBSE) = *cod. Ven. Graec.* 822, s. X = *Scholia in Iliadem* 24.616 *cod. Townl.* (Brit. Mus. Burney 88) b (ed. ERBSE); *Scholia in Persas Hypothesis* 869.1 (ed. DINDORF); *Scholia in Persas (scholia vetera et recentiora Thomae Magistri et Demetrii Triclinii) Scholion-gloss hypothesis* 869.1-2 (ed. MASSA POSITANO) = 868.4-5 (ed. DINDORF); *Scholia in Persas Hypothesis* 871.1-2 (ed. DÄHNHARDT) = *e cod. Mediceo* 32.9; *Argumentum in margine et glossae interlineariae ad Persas (glossae recentiores)* 871.1-4 (ed. DÄHNHARDT) = *e codd. Vindob.* 197; *Palatino* 18; *Guelferbyitano* 88; *Lipsiensi rep.* I.4.43; *Cantabrigiensi* 1; *Vita-argumentum-scholion sch Andr* 167.3-6 (ed. SCHWARTZ); *Scholia in Euripides Andromacham* 167.6-7 (ed. DINDORF). For the full transcripts of each of these entries, with provisional translations, see the Draft 3.0 version of the *Corpus Literatum, Epigraphicum, et Iconographicum Acheloium*, available via the author's academia.edu account.

πάν[τ]α [...] ποταμὸν νομίζειν Ἀχελῷον⁶⁰. In Eusebius' copy of Porphyry he likewise claims that Acheloios presides over all fresh water⁶¹. Didymus, in his *Tragic Diction*, discusses how Acheloios is honored because all rivers are addressed with his name⁶². Macrobius is one of the best ancient sources, first for his extensive commentary and second because he provides important fragments concerning the equating of Acheloios and water⁶³. The Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, writing in the 10th century, informs us that Acheloios is the name Homer uses for sweet water, rivers, and anything that flows⁶⁴. Two separate Homeric scholia also discuss the royal epithet of Acheloios and how this is indicative of his power over all water, one even claiming that this is why so many rivers have the name, Acheloios⁶⁵. Finally, there are six separate accounts in Eustathius that attest to the notion of the rivers of the world being the «sinews of Acheloios.» In the first two he draws an analogy of sorts between Acheloios and his rivers and Mt. Ida and the many mountains (folds of Olympus) of the world⁶⁶. Four of his other passages reiterate the notion that Acheloios is water as such (and thus inseparable from the water of any particular river)⁶⁷. In short, there is plenty of literary evidence that demonstrates Acheloios was equated with water and individual rivers were seen as his sinews.

Art

There are numerous pieces of ancient art featuring Acheloios in the form of a man-faced bull that express the same idea, namely, that the rivers of the world are the sinews of Acheloios, and this is particularly true of Etruscan and Campanian art. To digress momentarily: we know that all the man-faced bulls featured in this region are Acheloios because there are numerous pieces of contemporaneous art that feature Herakles fighting Acheloios in the form of a man-faced bull, and these are found all throughout the ancient world, especially in Magna Graecia and Sicily (*e.g. Fig. 16 through Fig. 19*). This is clear proof of the fact that the peoples of Magna Graecia and Sicily were well aware of the myth and the iconography was codified by the early 6th century BC⁶⁸.

⁶⁰ *Schol. Hom. Il.* Φ 195 (*P. Oxy II* 221 col. IX 21).

⁶¹ *Praeparatio Evangelica* 22.1–23.1 (ed. MRAS).

⁶² *Tragic Diction*, Fr 2a (ed. KASTER).

⁶³ *Saturnalia* 5.18.1–12 (ed. KASTER).

⁶⁴ *De thematibus Asia-Europe* Europe, 8.17–23 (ed. DE BOOR).

⁶⁵ *Scholia in Iliadem* 12.27a1.1–3 (ed. ERBSE) = *col. Townl.* 12.27a1; *Scholia in Iliadem* 21.194a.1–6 (ed. ERBSE) = *cod. Townl.* (Brit. Mus. Burney 88) a¹.

⁶⁶ *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* 1.553.14–21, 1.793.4–7 (ed. VAN DER VALK).

⁶⁷ *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* 3.491.21–25, 4.483.11–484.26, 4.962.2–964.10 (ed. VAN DER VALK); *Commentarium in Dionysii periegetae orbis descriptionem* 431.1–91 (ed. MÜLLER).

⁶⁸ ISLER 1970, *passim*.

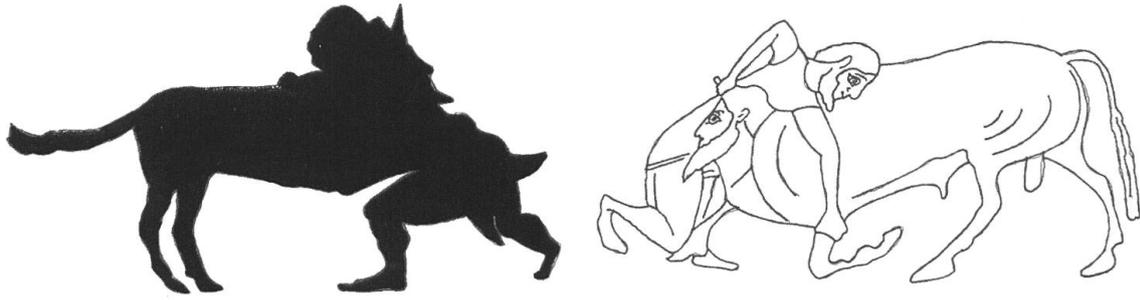


Fig. 16 and Fig. 17: Etruscan vase from Saturnia, c. 500 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 59 = ISLER 1981, no. 229. Author's drawing. / Attic terracotta neck amphora discovered in Sicily, 570 to 560 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 67 = ISLER 1981, no. 214. Author's drawing.

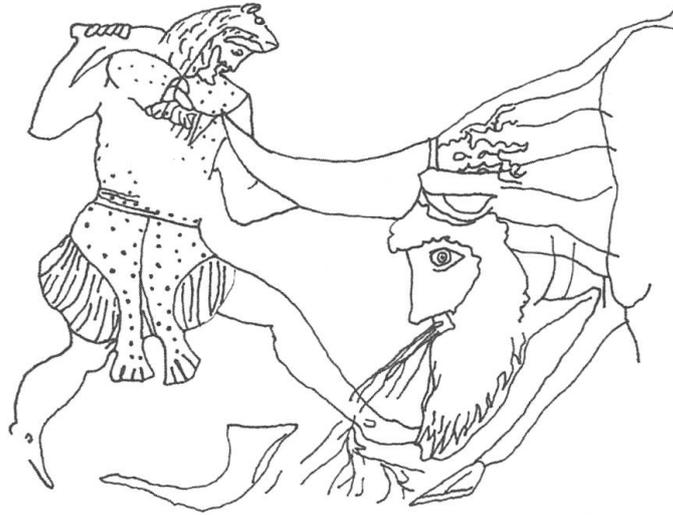


Fig. 18: Attic column crater discovered in Agrigento, 460 to 450 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 88 = ISLER 1981, no. 218; Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. no. G 365. Author's drawing.



Fig. 19: Attic terracotta fragment discovered at Vulci, c. 470 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 87 = ISLER 1981, no. 217 (Herakles appears on the other side of the vase). Author's drawing.

There are also plenty of Attic reliefs that feature Acheloios accompanied not by Herakles but his daughters, the nymphs – in this case, too, it is clearly Acheloios⁶⁹. Indeed, Isler's main argument was that the identification of Acheloios as a man-faced bull was so self-evident that he is almost never labeled with his name⁷⁰, and the times he is, it is usually some variation from the man-faced bull or (slightly earlier) man-faced bull-centaur norm: Acheloios Peplophoros (a man wearing a woman's dress)⁷¹; Acheloios Causantion (body of a man with a bearded, horned head)⁷²; a beardless man-faced bull on an Etruscan mirror⁷³; Acheloios in the form of a bearded man (relief from New Phaleron, Attica)⁷⁴; and Acheloios in the form of Triton on an Attic vase found in Vervetari, c. 590 BC⁷⁵.

There are also plenty of indigenous representations of Herakles and Acheloios in addition to the imported examples: an Etruscan tripod adornment and a sculpture dating to the late 6th century (Fig. 20 and 21); another sculpture from the mid 5th century, and a helmet fitting from the first half of the 5th century (Fig. 22 and 23). Other examples that do not feature Herakles still clearly indicate Acheloios in other ways: on a belt buckle we find Acheloios missing a horn, and on mirrors we find him situated as an ultimate, chthonic deity (Fig. 24 and 25), reminiscent of the Homeric and *Derveni* passages.

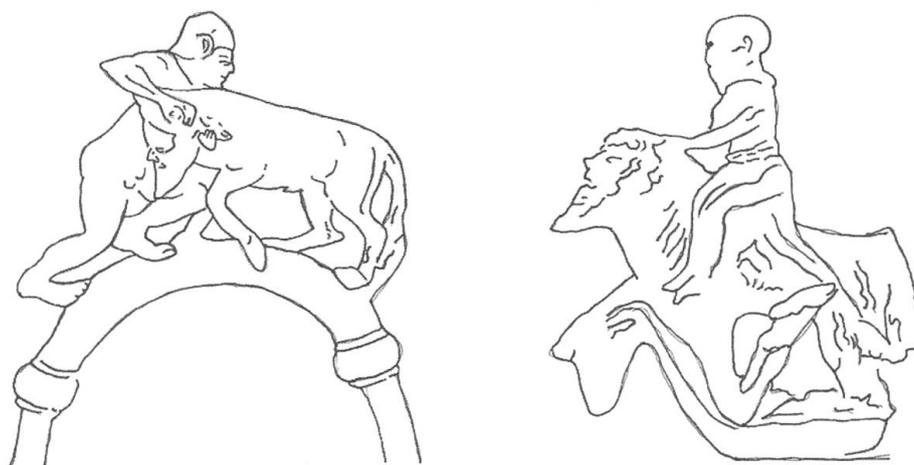


Fig. 20 and 21: Etruscan bronze ornamental sculpture (on tripod) from Vulci, 510 to 500 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 198 = ISLER 1981, no. 236; The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, inv. no. III 486. Author's drawing / Etruscan bronze sculpture, 2nd quarter of the 5th century BC, ISLER 1981, no. 238.; Princeton University Art Museum, inv. no. 2015-6765. Author's drawing.

⁶⁹ ISLER 1970, no. 1–39.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p.11.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, no. 264 = ISLER 1981, no. 77.

⁷² *ibid.*, no. 326a; BnF Luynes no. 516. HN Italy³ no. 1491.

⁷³ *ibid.*, no. 273.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, no. 37.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, no. 84 = ISLER 1981, no. 245. British Museum, London, inv. no. E 437.

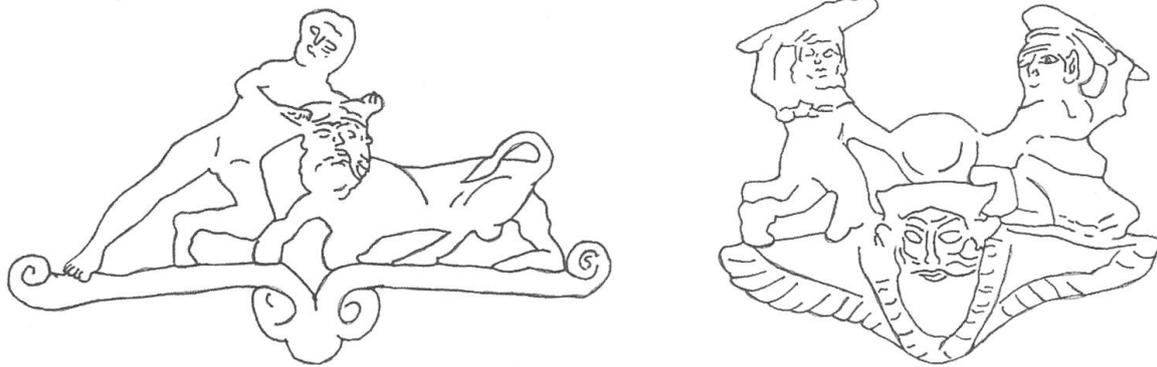


Fig. 22 and 23: Etruscan bronze sculpture, mid 5th century BC, ISLER 1981, no. 240; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. no. H 229. Author's drawing / Etruscan bronze applique discovered in Vulci, 500 to 450 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 206 = ISLER 1981, no. 142; Louvre, Paris, Cabinet Medailles, inv. no. 579. Author's drawing.



Fig. 24 and Fig. 25: Etruscan bronze plaque (belt buckle?), c. 480 BC, perhaps from Vulci, ISLER 1970, no. 283. Author's drawing based on the original from GALLI 1916, Fig. 16 / Etruscan bronze mirror discovered in Palestrine, 310 to 290 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 278 = ISLER 1981, no. 118. Drawing by Cameron Fritts.

These are by no means isolated examples. Indeed, there are many examples in Etruscan and Campanian (or Italian) art that clearly indicate the figure is Acheloiios⁷⁶, which allows us to easily recognized that the Etruscans, Campanians, and

⁷⁶ Some additional examples: Early 5th-century sarcophagus lids each with a mask of Acheloiios between two Sirens (ISLER 1970, nos. 45 and 48); the early 5th-century Attic terracotta found at Vulci that labels the man-faced bull as «Achel» (ISLER 1970, no. 87); mid 4th-century Campanian vase that features Acheloiios with nymphs and a Siren (ISLER 1970, no. 91); a 5th-century Latin kernos that features a head of Acheloiios between two nymphs (from the Pomezia Pratica Di Mare, Museo Archeologico Lavinium); an

other Italic peoples used the form of the man-faced bull to represent Acheloios because he is present in all local water sources – the iconography is clear and unambiguous⁷⁷.

While some have maintained that man-faced bulls on coinage outside of Akarnania are «local river gods,» this argument is usually based on the false presupposition that Acheloios is simply a «Greek river god from Akarnania,» which is demonstrably false⁷⁸. The earliest literary evidence of Acheloios that mentions a geographic location is not even in mainland Greece but instead Asia Minor⁷⁹, and there are several other ancient «Acheloios» rivers in antiquity⁸⁰, supporting

Etruscan sculptural font that features Acheloios, erotes, and a «Herakles knot» (ISLER 1970, no. 95); some late 5th-century Italic antefixes that feature Acheloios with a broken horn (ISLER 1970, no. 142, no. 143b, and no. 143c); a late 4th-century Roman corner tile in which the beard operates as a water spout, much like Sophokles' description (from the Museo arch. dell'aud. parco d. musica, Roma); 6th- to 5th-century Locrian arulas featuring Herakles wrestling Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 166-67); a late 4th-century Sicilian plaque that features Herakles clubbing Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 168); early 4th-century Locrian clay reliefs that feature Acheloios and the three nymphs (ISLER 1970, no. 174-75, and ISLER 1981, no. 207); the aforementioned 5th-century Etruscan bronze sculptures that feature Herakles fighting Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 198; ISLER 1981, no. 238; ISLER 1970, no. 200; ISLER 1981, no. 240); the aforementioned Etruscan helmet fittings featuring Herakles and another figure attacking Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 205; ISLER 1970, no. 206); the Etruscan belt buckle with mask of Acheloios featuring a broken horn (ISLER 1970, no. 283); a mid 4th-century Etruscan mirror featuring a beardless Acheloios attacked by Herakles and labeled *Aklae* (ISLER 1970, no. 273); an early 4th-century Etruscan mirror that features Acheloios as the ultimate, chthonic basis upon which the gods reside (ISLER 1970, no. 277); an Etruscan bronze mirror from the late 4th, early 3rd century that features a mask of Acheloios beneath Psyche and Eros (ISLER 1970, no. 278); a c. 7th- to 5th-century Etruscan gold necklace featuring a mask of Acheloios and heads of Sirens (Louvre, Département des Antiquités grecques, étrusques et romaines, inv. no. Bj 578); two early 5th-century Etruscan gold necklaces with heads of Acheloios paired with Sirens (ISLER 1970, no. 284-85); a 4th-century Etruscan gold diadem leaf featuring Herakles subduing Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 290); an early 5th-century Etruscan scarab that features Herakles wrestling Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 293); an early 5th-century Etruscan scarab featuring Herakles grabbing Acheloios by the horn (ISLER 1970, no. 294); a 3rd-century Italo-Hellenistic gem featuring Herakles battling Acheloios (ISLER 1970, no. 295); a 4th-century Etruscan scarab featuring Acheloios and a nymph, with Herakles' club before (ISLER 1970, no. 301).

⁷⁷ See ISLER 1970, no. 63 for an analysis of the artistic influences on Campanian antefixes from Etruscan types.

⁷⁸ BOUFFIER 2013, p. 52.

⁷⁹ Homer, *Il.* 24.616.

⁸⁰ Aside from Mt. Siplyos (Smyrna) and Akarnania, we have the following: the Acheloios of Achaia (e.g. Strabo, *Geographica* 8.3.12-14, ed. MEINEKE); the Acheloios of Arkadia (e.g. Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio* 8.38.9.3-10.7, ed. SPIRO; Pseudo-Zonaras *Letter A*, A.360.22-26, ed. TITTMANN); the Acheloios of Bulgaria (e.g. Georgius Monarchus, *Chronicon breve lib* 1-6, 110.1137.25-33, ed. DE BOOR); the Acheloios of Lamia, Thessaly (e.g. Strabo, *Geographica* 9.5.10.1-25, ed. MEINEKE), the Acheloios of the Strymonian Sea (Aeschylus, *Persians* 864–870, ed. PAGE); the Acheloios of the Peloponnese (Eustathius, *Commentarium in Dionysii periegetae orbis descriptionem* 431.1-91, ed. MÜLLER); the Acheloios of Mykonos (SEG 25:845, presumably a stream).

the claims of the aforementioned ancient authors. Local river gods also have a distinct place in ancient iconography as horned human heads, usually beardless (cf. *Fig. 26* through *Fig. 29*).



Fig. 26 and *27*: Silver drachm (4,20 g) and tetradrachm (28 mm, 16,71 g) from Katane featuring Amenanos and Acheloiolos of the Amenanos, respectively.

Note that the smaller denomination features the youthful river god, Amenanos.

Fig. 26 courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 125, lot 275;

Fig. 27 courtesy of Roma 6, lot 393.



Fig. 28 and *29*: Silver tetradrachms of Gela featuring Gelas and Acheloiolos of the Gelas, respectively. *Fig. 28* courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich,

Auction 72, lot 310 (16,89 g); *Fig. 29* courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC,

Triton XXII, 114 (24 mm, 17,31 g).



Fig. 30: Silver litra (0,62 g) from Panormos, c. 410 to 405 BC, featuring on the obverse Oreto and on the reverse Acheloiolos of the Oreto.

Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 67, lot 314.

On various coins from Panormos we even find on one side a youthful river god, Oreto, and on the other, the man-faced bull – Acheloios of the Oreto, or Acheloios Oreto (*Fig. 30*)⁸¹. Perhaps the best piece of evidence, however, comes from the words of the ancients themselves – Socrates, when sitting at a shrine to Acheloios on the banks of a river of a different name (the Ilisos) is able to identify that the beautiful place is sacred to Acheloios «judging from the figurines and statues,» and statues from that area are still extant and feature Acheloios as a man-faced bull (*e.g. Fig. 31*)⁸². Clearly, if the man-faced bull represented simply individual local rivers (like the Ilisos), he would not have been able to make that judgment.

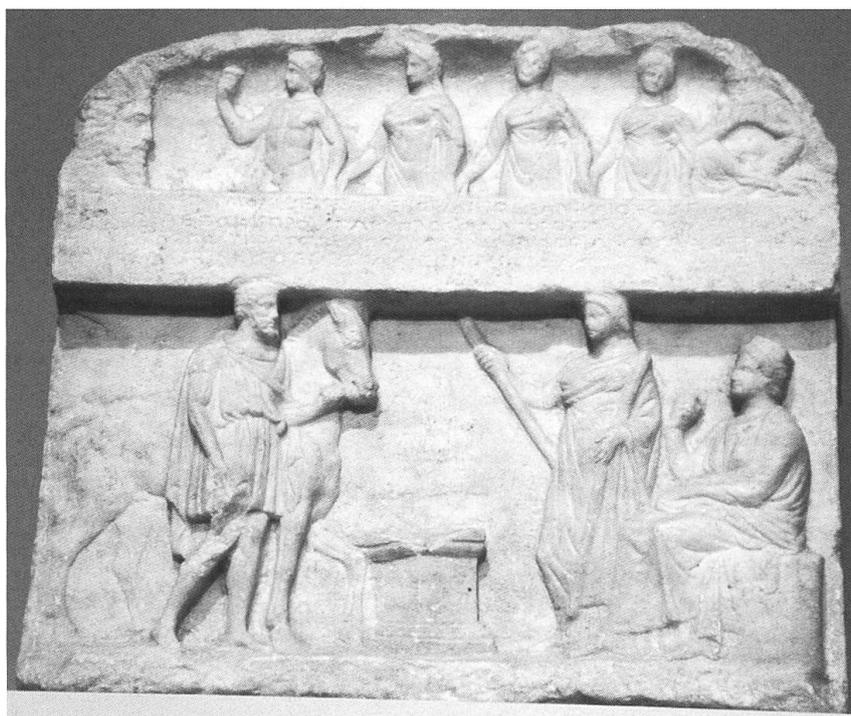


Fig. 31: Marble relief from Athens, Agrai, on the Ilisos, 350 to 340 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 16. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. no. Sk 709.

Image courtesy of Dr. Gary Todd.

⁸¹ ISLER 1970, p. 85.

⁸² Cf. ISLER 1970, no. 35 (Ilisos, c. 325 BC), no. 30 (New Phaleron, 410 to 400 BC), and no. 34 (Agrai, c. 325 to 300 BC), in addition to the many examples from nearby Piraeus. Coupled with the literary and cultic evidence related to Acheloios all throughout the ancient world, Dr. Sisci and I made the case that man-faced bulls on ancient coinage are local embodiments of Acheloios – thus at Neapolis we see Acheloios of the Sebethos, or Acheloios Sebethos, since Acheloios is inseparable from his sinews and operates as their underlying strength. This argument countered the second argument from the «local river god» school, which pointed to inscriptions that appeared to name certain man-faced bulls at Gela (Gela), Agyrion (Palagkaios), Paphos? (Bokaros), and Bruttium (Traies). However, these appear to be locative epithets and do not work against the identification of the iconography as Acheloios – since he *is* water – and we

In any case, in Etruria we witness a multiplicity of man-faced bulls on various objects, reflective of this very notion that such creatures represent the sinews of Acheloios, *assuming his form*⁸³, and this provides an important background for assessing the later tradition of Campania and its neighbors. For instance, on an Etruscan sarcophagus from Veii we find two man-faced bulls as base supports⁸⁴; on an Etruscan black-figure vase we find four man-faced bulls in procession⁸⁵; on the Lampodario di Cortana we find sixteen man-faced bulls paired with sirens and satyrs⁸⁶; numerous pairs of situla⁸⁷ and stamnos⁸⁸ handles feature heads of Acheloios; there is a west Greek vessel handle featuring a youth holding the tails of two man-faced bulls⁸⁹; a tripod fragment, found in the Acropolis, features a group of deities standing on a foundation supported by two man-faced bull protomes⁹⁰; various pieces of gold jewelry feature multiple Acheloios heads as pendants, sometimes interspersed with Sirens – some are Ionian, indicating the style of depiction is not exclusively Etruscan⁹¹. In all these cases it is clear that the use of man-faced bull iconography in multiples on single pieces of art is to express the very idea that these figures are sinews of Acheloios – inseparable from him because he is water. Hence, when we see multiple examples of Acheloios heads all together, this is not meant to represent distinct rivers isolated from Acheloios, but that all of these rivers are *of* Acheloios, hence they all share the same form.

There is one gem that is particularly important for the present considerations. Although it does not feature multiple heads of Acheloios, it still seems to exhibit the notion of Acheloios and his sinews in one piece of art. It is a Greco-Roman cornelian gem, uncertain date though I suggest in the third quarter of the fourth century. The iconography of the forepart with head facing is extremely rare, similar only to two Neapolitan coins issued c. 350 to 326 BC (but closer to 326 BC), MSP I, no. 222 and MSP I, no. 223 (*Fig. 32*). The gem features a mountain or hill on the left side with a sanctuary or temple on top (*Fig. 33*)⁹². To the right, emerging from the area where Acheloios' back meets the hill, is a branch. Below the branch

know that in antiquity the epithet alone could appear and yet still the general god was not obscured; hence, as we explained in MSP I, at Tauromenia, we find a coin from the mid 4th century labeled «Archagetas», for Apollo Archagetas, and anyone viewing the iconography would know that it is still Apollo. See MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 91-6.

⁸³ For the idea of 'assuming the form of Acheloios,' see MOLINARI 2020, *passim*; MOLINARI 2022a, 168-70.

⁸⁴ ISLER 1970, no. 44.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, no. 66.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, no. 239.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, no. 229–231.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, no. 248–263.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, no. 178.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, no. 234.

⁹¹ Louvre, Département des Antiquités grecques, étrusques et romaines, inv. no. Bj 107; ISLER 1970, no. 279, and nos. 284–286. Much later the notion of «sinews of Acheloios» is reflected in art outside of Etruria: the Zeugma mosaic contains a border with two heads of Acheloios on either side; the Porta Maggiore Basilica features two Acheloios heads surrounding a man and centaur, and a coin from Assorus, Sicily, features two Acheloios bulls side-by-side, reflecting Acheloios as he is embodied in the two local rivers.

⁹² ISLER 1970, no. 306. REINACH 1895, Taf. 121, no. 46.

we find the forepart of a reclined Acheloios. Below Acheloios, we find the most interesting thing: three rivers intermingling into one large river (like tributaries):



Fig. 32: Neapolitan bronze 1/4 unit (3,31 g), MSP I, no. 223. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 64, lot 1992.



Fig. 33: Early Greco-Roman gem, c. 320 BC.
 Author's drawing based on the original from REINACH 1895, Taf. 121, no. 46.

This gem nicely captures the overall worldview of Acheloios in relation to the ancient cosmography associated with the cult during the time period of our investigation. The mountain is presumably Mt. Olympus, the branch situates Acheloios in the world of the here and now by separating him from Olympus, and the waters of the earth are blended together and returning to a single, powerful source – Acheloios, who, as Pindar tells us, nourishes the plants of the earth: «Formerly, the power [ἰς] of Acheloös, Europa's spring, and the streams of the Melas nourished the most melodious reed⁹³.»

There are two other types of artifacts that I think are especially important concerning the notion of sinews because they relate to battle in particular, and this will serve as a good segue back into the discussion of Neapolitan and related coinage. The first are small bronze appliques made in Etruria (*Fig. 34*) that were

⁹³ From *P.Oxy* II (1899) 64, schol. of Ammonius on *Il.* 21.195.

affixed to helmets. From what we can determine based on the only extant specimen (*Fig. 35*)⁹⁴, two appliques were applied to each helmet, exhibiting this very notion of sinews in an Italic battle context.

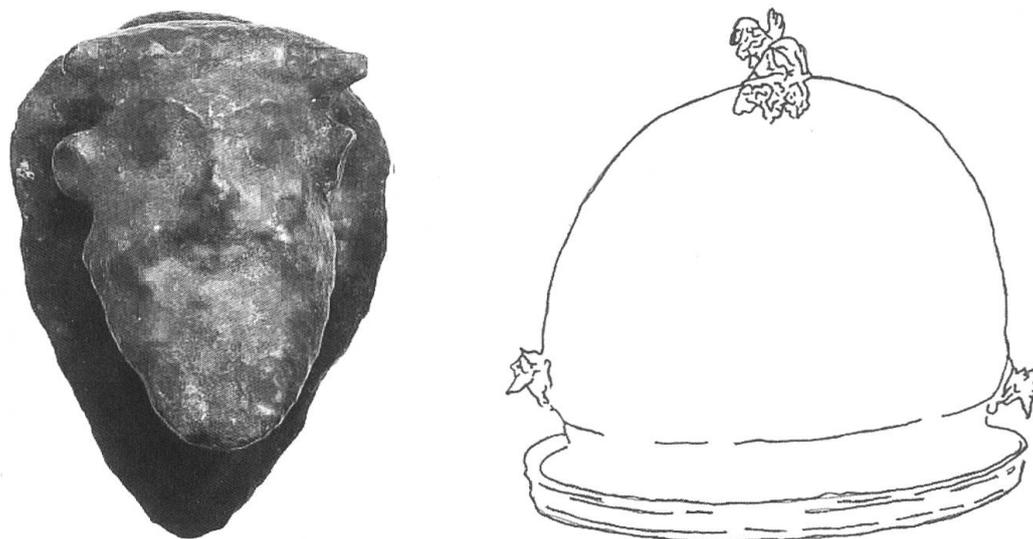


Fig. 34 and 35: Etruscan bronze applique, 1st half of the 5th century BC. Image courtesy of Artemide eLive 22, lot 1037 / Etruscan bronze helmet with Acheloios appliques discovered in Vulci at the Tomba del Guerriero, 500 to 450 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 225. Author's drawing.

The second type of artifact worthy of special note are votive shields featuring the heads of Acheloios at the center, and these are found in tombs (*Fig. 36*)⁹⁵. The deep basin may have been used to pour water in a final ablution ritual, and clearly associate Acheloios with the protection of the individual warrior both in this life and in the next⁹⁶. The reason these artifacts are significant is because they reinforce both the personal dimension to Acheloios and the warrior culture of the Italian peninsula, which is a longstanding affiliation⁹⁷. It is Acheloios, with whom one assimilates in cult,⁹⁸ that protects the warrior both in this world and

⁹⁴ But see HOFFMANN 1971, p. 189, who claims there are many. Perhaps he was referring to the appliques and not the helmets, since Isler found no others.

⁹⁵ ISLER 1970, p. 55-9, 114-5, nos. 183-197; JANNOT 1974, p. 780-782; MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 52.

⁹⁶ DELLA SETA 1922, p. 232.

⁹⁷ MOLINARI – SISI 2016, Chapter 2, for the role of mercenaries as exponents of the iconography of the man-faced bull from East to West.

⁹⁸ MOLINARI 2020, *passim*. See also MOLINARI 2018 for Herakles as the paradigmatic example of an individual assimilating with Acheloios to achieve apotheosis. Euthymos of Lokri, who drowned in a river and was thereby deified was later represented as a beardless man-faced bull (ISLER 1970, no. 177; MOLINARI – SISI 2016, 96), exhibiting this notion of assimilating with Acheloios.

in the journey to the beyond, hence two Acheloios heads on a helmet is both an apotropaic device and symbolizes the notion of assimilation with the god (that is, just as rivers assume the form of Acheloios, so an individual, who is mostly composed of water, assimilates as well). Indeed, this connection between Acheloios and warriors is exhibited on the distribution of the iconography on coinage as well. In many cases Campanian mercenaries, presumably left to their own devices after service to the various Sicilian or Carthaginian rulers, began to mint coins featuring Acheloios of the local water source (*e.g.*, the Kersini, the Sileraioi, and the Mamar, *Fig. 37 through 39*)⁹⁹. Some have even maintained that the Roman legionary standard for the greater Campanian region was Acheloios in the form of a man-faced bull, despite the fact that Pliny calls the figure a Minotaur¹⁰⁰. In any case, it is upon this backdrop – the notion of the sinews of Acheloios and the relation of that cultic belief to the warrior culture of Italy – that we can now present a new interpretation of ΙΣ on the coinage of Neapolis and its neighbors.



Fig. 36: Etruscan bronze shield ornament from Tarquinia, *c.* 520 to 510 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 189; ISLER 1981, no. 125; JANNOT 1974, Fig. 18; Musei Vaticani, Vaticano, inv. no. 12625. Author's drawing.

⁹⁹ MOLINARI - SISI 2016, p. 146-48, 154-56.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. ALFOLDI 1952, p. 188, no. 1; DOWNEY 1995, p. 29.



Fig. 37, Fig. 38, and Fig. 39: Bronze unit (21 mm, 7,51 g) of the Kersini featuring Acheloios of the Halykos paired with Herakles, c. 350 BC, MSP I, no. 41. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, eAuction 327, lot 329 / Bronze unit (19 mm, 7,15 g) of the Sileraioi featuring Acheloios Silaros of the Himera paired with a warrior, c. 350 BC, MSP I, no. 56. Image courtesy of Bertolami Fine Arts, Roma, eAuction 77, lot 854 / Bronze unit (15 mm, 5,47 g) of the Mamar featuring Acheloios of the Himera paired with a nymph, MSP I, no. 42. Image courtesy of Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung GmbH, Auction 237, Session I, Lot 1133.

The Theory

Given the forgoing analysis, it is time to restate the central claims of this essay. I propose that religious devotion to Acheloios, particularly as he is manifested in his many sinews, is the perfect ideological basis for promoting regional solidarity in the shifting, somewhat chaotic environment of 3rd century BC Italy, an area occupied by many different indigenous and colonizing groups that *all* seemingly exhibit some affiliation with Acheloios, who was deeply entrenched in the area. Furthermore, there is no better propagandistic vehicle for its delivery than coinage, especially if such issues were used to pay troops now called upon for battle. At first, around 296 BC, based on the details we find in Livy, it seems to have become necessary to express this regional solidarity even more concretely than using a common iconography, and hence the adoption of ΙΣ emphasized the One-out-of-Many dimension that would solidify them throughout the coming decade as they fought the raiding Samnites and then turned to subduing the remaining Samnite strongholds. This theory is perfectly consistent with the agreed-upon dating schemes for Neapolis, and consistent with the revised dating scheme for Cales that Dr. Sisci and I advocated in MSP I, a scheme which we argued closely mirrored the Neapolitans¹⁰¹. Thus, in the face of these new challenges, just as the rivers of the world are all sinews (ἵς) of Acheloios, and, relatedly, Acheloios is the underlying strength (ἵς) of all rivers, so the cities unite as particulars sharing a deeper, regional bond, one that transcended individual cultures (Ausones, Aurunci, Campani, Samnites, Greeks, Etruscans, and Latins), because only by coming together could they unleash the autochthonic strength emerging from their common soil.

The silver types appear to have been issued continuously from that time on (c. 296 BC), again probably to pay soldiers. Indeed, we know Campanian and other Italic soldiers faced the Epirotes between 280 and 275 BC¹⁰². Epiros is of course

¹⁰¹ MOLINARI – SISI 2016, p. 167-9.

¹⁰² TAYLOR 2022, p. 129; Orosius, *History against the Pagans* 4.3.4-5; Livy, *Epit.* 12, 15.

home to Dodona, where Ephorus tells us that Acheloios was observed in virtually all oracular pronouncements¹⁰³. Given this fact, the greater-Campanian claim of allegiance to Acheloios, who is invoked in ritual practices to produce desired outcomes in struggles¹⁰⁴, would have been particularly important when facing a group whose homeland was such an integral part of the Acheloios tradition. And, in fact, on some issues from the Epirote region we find the same phenomenon as exhibited in Akarnania, in which the local magistrate is seemingly depicted as assuming the form of Acheloios in order to appeal to the gods (cf. *Fig. 40* to *Fig. 41*)¹⁰⁵.



Fig. 40 and *41*: Bronze unit (17 mm, 4.56 g) from Ambrakia featuring a Local Magistrate (ΣΩ...?) assuming the form of Acheloios, MSP I, no. 489. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 76, lot 347 / Bronze unit (19 mm, 5.20 g) from Ambrakia featuring Acheloios of the Aracthos as a bearded man-faced bull, MSP I, no. 485. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 98, lot 27.

Thus, the rationale for maintaining the use of ΙΣ in the face of a campaign emerging from one of the oldest cultic centers for Acheloios in the entire Mediterranean, is not to be overlooked. With the continued cultic devotion to Acheloios, evident from the coins, the Neapolitans and their neighbors could counteract any religious sway that might have otherwise taken away their strength and power, as the invocation calls for: κὲ ἀφέλεσθε αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν κὲ τὴν ἀλκὴν¹⁰⁶.

The second phase of bronze «sinew» coinage seems to peak during the period of *c.* 270 to 240 BC, largely but not exclusively during the First Punic War. It is during this time that I believe it became a more widely recognized symbol of regional identity distinct from Rome, which would have been important to the many soldiers from the region that were now being forced to help their former conquerors. From what we can derive from the written testimonies, the Campanians (and presumably the Latin colonies in Samnium) were employed by Rome throughout the 3rd century BC: they were used during the aforementioned Pyrrhic Wars¹⁰⁷, 280-

¹⁰³ Ephoros FGrH 70 F 20 (Fragment 27); for the interpretation of Plato, see MOLINARI 2022a, Chapter 12.

¹⁰⁴ MOLINARI 2020, *passim*.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ From a Cypriot prayer tablet (ed. AUDOLLENT *DT* 22) that asks for the strength of one's adversaries to be taken away. The practitioner «assumes the form of Acheloios» (Ἀχελμορφῶθ) in adjuring the gods.

¹⁰⁷ TAYLOR 2022, p. 129; Orosius, *History against the Pagans* 4.3.4-5; Livy, *Epit.* 12, 15.

275 BC; the Neapolitans provided naval support during the First Punic War¹⁰⁸, 264 to 241 BC; and, thousands of Campanian troops are counted among the Romans by Polybius for the last quarter of the 3rd century¹⁰⁹. It is during the First Punic War, in which the bulk of the bronze coinages are issued, that we have evidence from Livy that describes the relationship between Rome and its tributaries and I think sheds light on the forced nature of military compliance:

Livy 35.16.8:

...from the people of Rhegion and Neapolis and Tarentum we demand they owe [i.e. ships] in accordance with the treaty from the time they came under our sovereignty, with one unbroken continuity of right, always recognized, never interrupted¹¹⁰.

Thus, despite the peaceful relationship Rome shared with these communities, the power dynamic was evident to everyone, and at least some constituents in the area remained sympathetic to the plight of the Samnites and their own ancestors: the Aurunci, Ausones, Campani, Etruscans, and Greeks. Indeed, later in the Second Punic War Polybius informs us that some of the Campanian cities welcomed Hannibal¹¹¹, a clear indication that, at least for some, allegiance to Rome was not based on anything other than practical necessity (and the tributes were presumably seen as burdensome). Clearly, the relationship was one of subjugation, which many begrudgingly accepted, and we can imagine that similar declarations like the one to Rhegion, Neapolis, and Taras were issued to other groups in the IΣ contingent. It is with this background, asking conquered peoples to fight for Rome, that there was an ideological need for expressing cultural identity and regional solidarity in its difference from the collective Roman obligations, and using a common iconography and message – ἵς Ἀχελώϊου – would be particularly appropriate. It would help the soldier to recognize that he is fighting for his brother beside him with the support of *their* god, not simply for Rome. It would help the local townspeople in all of these cities appreciate their culture and the values shared among neighbors despite now being a colony or having to make tribute to a greater power. But perhaps, most importantly, it would help each individual, insofar as we are all composed of water, find relief from the geo-political fluctuations in the all-encompassing *sinu Acheloiō*.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, p. 130.

¹⁰⁹ BARONOWSKI 1993, p. 181–202, for a comprehensive overview of Roman military forces in 225 BC.

¹¹⁰ Trans. TAYLOR 2022.

¹¹¹ Polybius, 3.118.

Abstract

The ancient coinages of Neapolis and its neighbors are known for including many interesting symbols, letter combinations, and monograms. While many of these numismatic devices have been convincingly explained in previous literature, there is one letter combination that continues to elude researchers: ΙΣ. This paper will explore past attempts to explain the meaning of ΙΣ and their respective shortcomings. Then, using numismatic, archaeological, literary, and epigraphic evidence, it will argue that ΙΣ is a word meaning «sinew,» and thus collectively signifying «the sinews of Acheloios.» With this interpretation, I argue that ΙΣ paired with Acheloios iconography operated as a regional badge that aligned the Neapolitans and Caletans under a deeply-rooted religious banner, one that symbolized many constituents forming one cohesive group at the start of the Third Samnite war (c. 296 BC), and continued on through the mid 3rd century, now incorporating many other cities, as a way to symbolize the region's distinct cultural identity vis-à-vis Roman expansion. The paper will also provide a corpus of the ΙΣ types and narrow the dating of the earliest Neapolitan and Caletan issues that feature ΙΣ to the first decade of the 3rd century BC.

Zusammenfassung

Die antiken Münzen von Neapolis und seinen Nachbarn sind dafür bekannt, dass sie viele interessante Symbole, Buchstabenkombinationen und Monogramme zeigen. Während viele dieser Beizeichen in der bisherigen Literatur überzeugend erklärt wurden, gibt es eine Buchstabenkombination, die sich den Forschern weiterhin entzieht: ΙΣ. In diesem Beitrag werden frühere Versuche, die Bedeutung von ΙΣ zu erklären, und ihre jeweiligen Unzulänglichkeiten untersucht. Anhand numismatischer, archäologischer, literarischer und epigraphischer Belege wird argumentiert, dass ΙΣ ein Wort ist, das sich mit «Stärke» oder «Kraft» übersetzen lässt und somit kollektiv «die Stärke von Acheloios» bezeichnet. Mit dieser Interpretation argumentiere ich, dass ΙΣ in Verbindung mit der Acheloios-Ikono-graphie als regionales Zeichen fungierte. Dieses sollte die Neapolitaner und Kaletaner unter einem tief verwurzelten religiösen Banner vereinen, das zu Beginn des Dritten Samnitischen Krieges (c. 296 v. Chr.) für viele Aspekte stand, um eine zusammenhängende Gruppe zu bilden. Es wurde bis in die Mitte des 3. Jahrhunderts weitergeführt und schloss nun viele andere Städte mitein, um die besondere kulturelle Identität dieser Region gegenüber der römischen Expansion zu symbolisieren. Die Arbeit beinhaltet auch einen Korpus der ΙΣ-Typen und grenzt die Datierung der frühesten neapolitanischen und kaletanischen Ausgaben, die ΙΣ aufweisen, auf das erste Jahrzehnt des 3. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. ein.

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Catalog of the Sinew Coins

Cales:

AE Unit, 6,95–7,62 g, c. 296 to 270 BC¹¹²

TYPE 1: Head of Apollo to left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs, CALENO before / Acheloios of the Savo as a man-faced bull to right, lyre above.

1.1: Club / ΙΣ below, CALENO in ex. MSP I, no. 148.

1.2: Club / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 49.

1.3: Phrygian helmet / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 150.

1.4: Dolphin / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 151 (*Fig. 8*).

Neapolis:

AE Unit, 3,49–4,92 g, c. 296 to 270 BC¹¹³

TYPE 2: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in triple clusters, ΝΕΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ before / Acheloios of the Sebethos as a man-faced bull to right, symbol above.

2.1: AP monogram / Flower above between the letters E–Π, AP monogram below bull, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 273 (*Fig. 2*)

2.2: BI / Hippocampus above, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 274 (*Fig. 14*).

2.3: B / Astragalus above, ΙΣ below bull. MSP I, no. 275.

2.4: LE monogram / Lyre above, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 276 (*Fig. 12*).

2.5: Uncertain symbol (?) / Bucrania above, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 277.

AE One-Third Unit, 2,16–2,29 g, c. 296 to 270 BC¹¹⁴

TYPE 3: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs / Forepart of Acheloios of the Sebethos as a man-faced bull to right, ΝΕΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ above

3.1: Star with 8 rays behind, A in right field / ΙΣ in field. MSP I, no. 290 (*Fig. 3*).

3.2a: Monogram before, A behind / As last. MSP I, no. 291.

3.2b: As last / As last, but Omicron instead of Omega in reverse inscription, ΙΣ probably off-flan. MSP I, no. 292.

3.3: Monogram before, Λ behind / ΙΣ in field. MSP I, no. 293 (*Fig. 13*).

3.4: Unclear symbol or letter before, uncertain letter behind (Π?) / As last. MSP I, no. 294.

¹¹² RUTTER 2001, c. 265 to 240 BC / SAMBON 1913, 280 to 268 BC.

¹¹³ RUTTER 2001, 300 to 275 BC / SAMBON 1913, 320 to 280 BC.

¹¹⁴ SAMBON 1913, 270 to 250 BC.

AR Didrachms, 6,26–7,44g, *c.* 296 to 241¹¹⁵

TYPE 4: Head of Parthenope to left, symbol behind / Acheloios of the Sebethos as a man-faced bull to right, crowned by Parthenope-Nike,¹¹⁶ NEOΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ in ex.

- 4.1: Victory, ΓX below neck / ΙΣ below bull. SAMBON 1913, no. 501.
- 4.2: Trident / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 502.
- 4.3: Hippocampus / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 503a.
- 4.4: Pegasus oriented to left (?) / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 503b.
- 4.5: Eagle / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 504.
- 4.6: Lightning bolt / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 505.
- 4.7: Lyre / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 506.
- 4.8: Heron / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 507.
- 4.9: Pallas Promarchos / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 508a.
- 4.10: Female with patera and cornucopia / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 508b.
- 4.11: Pallas, lance on shoulder, X below neck / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 509.
- 4.12: Poppy / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 510.
- 4.13: Grain ear / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 511.
- 4.14: Star with eight rays / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 512.
- 4.15: Helios facing / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 513.
- 4.16: Wing / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 514.
- 4.17: Small terme / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 515.
- 4.18: Torch / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 516.
- 4.19: Tripod / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 517.
- 4.20: Trophy / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 518.
- 4.21: Thrysos / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 519 (*Fig. 6*).
- 4.22: Pentagram / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 520.
- 4.23: Plough / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 521.
- 4.24: Cornucopia / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 522.
- 4.25: Dolphin / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 523.
- 4.26: Lion / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 524.
- 4.27: Artemis / As last (*Fig. 1*).

AR Drachms, 3,14–3,58g, *c.* 275 to 250¹¹⁷

TYPE 5: Head of Parthenope to left, symbol or letter behind / Acheloios of the Sebethos as a man-faced bull to right, crowned by Parthenope-Nike, ΝΕΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ in ex.

- 5.1: Dolphin / ΙΣ below bull. SAMBON 1913, no. 540.
- 5.2: Stork / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 541.

¹¹⁵ RUTTER 2001, 275 to 250 BC / SAMBON 1913, 300 to 241 BC.

¹¹⁶ For the syncretism of Nike and Parthenope at Neapolis, see MOLINARI 2022b.

¹¹⁷ RUTTER 2001, 275 to 250 BC / SAMBON 1913, 272 to 250 BC.

- 5.3: Grain ear / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 542.
- 5.4: Cornucopia / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 543.
- 5.5: Trophy / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 544.
- 5.6: No symbol / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 545.
- 5.7: Trident / As last. CNG 66, lot 67 (*Fig. 7*).
- 5.8: A / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 546.
- 5.9: B / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 546.
- 5.10: Δ / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 546.
- 5.11: E / As last. SAMBON 1913, no. 546.

AE Unit, 3,1–7,06g, c. 270 to 250 BC¹¹⁸

TYPE 6: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs, ΝΕΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ before, control letter behind / Acheloius of the Sebethos as a man-faced bull crowned by Parthenope-Nike.

- 6.1: B / ΙΣ below bull, M-monogram in ex. MSP I, no. 323.
- 6.2: As last / E below bull, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 324.
- 6.3: As last / ΟΣ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 326.
- 6.4: As last / ΙΣ below bull, X-monogram in ex. MSP I, no. 327.
- 6.5: Γ / As last. MSP I, no. 328 (*Fig. 4*).
- 6.6: As last / ΟΣ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 329.
- 6.7: Δ / ΙΣ below, ΒΩ in ex. MSP I, no. 330.
- 6.8: As last / ΟΣ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 331.
- 6.9: As last / ΙΣ below, ΟΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 332.
- 6.10: E / MB monogram (or ME?) below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 333.
- 6.11: Z / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 334.
- 6.12: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 335.
- 6.13: H / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 336.
- 6.14: As last / ΙΣ below, Σ-mono in ex. MSP I, no. 337.
- 6.15: As last / Σ-mono below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 338 (*Fig. 15*).
- 6.16: H or B (?) in field / Σ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 339.
- 6.17: H / X-mono below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 340.
- 6.18: As last / ΟΣ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 341.
- 6.19: As last / ΙΣ below, ΟΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 342.
- 6.20: Θ / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 343.
- 6.21: As last / ΙΣ below, X-mono in ex. MSP I, no. 344.
- 6.22: As last / ΟΣ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 345.
- 6.23: As last / ΙΣ below, ΟΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 347.
- 6.24: I / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 348.
- 6.25: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 349.
- 6.26: As last / ΙΣ below, X-mono in ex. MSP I, no. 350 (*Fig. 5*).
- 6.27: As last / ΙΣ below, X in ex. MSP I, no. 351.
- 6.28: As last / ΙΣ-mono below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 352.

¹¹⁸ RUTTER 2001, 275 to 250 BC / SAMBON 1913, 270 to 240 BC.

- 6.29: As last / OΣ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 353.
- 6.30: As last / ΙΣ below, OΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 354.
- 6.31: K / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 355.
- 6.32: K (retro) / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 356.
- 6.33: As last / BΞ below, ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 357.
- 6.34: As last / ΙΣ below, Ξ E in ex. MSP I, no. 358.
- 6.35: Λ / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 359.
- 6.36: As last / ΙΣ below, XE in ex. MSP I, no. 360.
- 6.37: M / ΙΣ below, XE in ex. MSP I, no. 361.
- 6.38: N / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 363.
- 6.39: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 364.
- 6.40: As last / ΙΣ below, XE in ex. MSP I, no. 365.
- 6.41: Ξ / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 366.
- 6.42: As last / ΙΣ below, X-mono in ex. MSP I, no. 367.
- 6.43: As last / ΙΣ below, XE in ex. MSP I, no. 369.
- 6.44: As last / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 370.
- 6.45: O / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 371.
- 6.46: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 372.
- 6.47: As last / ΙΣ below, X-mono and ΣΠ in ex. MSP I, no. 373.
- 6.48: As last / ΙΣ below, XE in ex. MSP I, no. 374.
- 6.49: Π / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 375.
- 6.50: P / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 377.
- 6.51: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 378.
- 6.52: Σ / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 384.
- 6.53: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 385.
- 6.54: Σ (retro) / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 386.
- 6.55: T / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 387.
- 6.56: As last / ΙΣ in ex. MSP I, no. 388.

Aesernia:

AE Unit, 5,82–6,60 g, c. 260 to 240 BC¹¹⁹

TYPE 7: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs, symbol behind / Acheloiios of the Voltumnus as a man-faced bull standing to right, crowned by victorious nymph, AISERNINO or variant in ex.

- 7.1: Shield / ΙΣ below, AISERNINO in ex. MSP I, no. 67 (*Fig. 10*).
- 7.2: As last / As last but ASERNINO in ex. MSP I, no. 68.
- 7.3: As last / As last but AISERNINOM in ex. MSP I, no. 69.
- 7.4: Lyre / As last but ASERNINO in ex. MSP I, no. 70.

¹¹⁹ RUTTER 2001, 263 to 240 BC / SAMBON 1913, 280 to 268 BC.

Compulteria:

AE Unit, 3,99–5,99 g, c. 272 to 250 BC¹²⁰

TYPE 8: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs, usually letter behind, KUPELTERNUM (in Oscan) before / Acheloios of the Voltumnus as a man-faced bull standing to right, crowned by victorious nymph

8.1: No letter / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 175.

8.2: K (retro) / As last. MSP I, no. 176.

8.3: O / As last. MSP I, no. 177 (*Fig. 9*).

AE Unit, no recorded weights, c. 268 to 240 BC¹²¹

TYPE 9: As last, but KUPELTERNUM (in Oscan) moved to reverse ex.

9.1: O / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 180.

Suessa Aurunca:

AE Unit, 5,89–7,21 g, c. 270 to 240 BC¹²²

TYPE 10: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs, SVESANO before, letter behind / Acheloios of the Liris as a man-faced bull standing to right, crowned by victorious nymph

10.1: K / ΙΣ below. MSP I, no. 421.

10.2: N / As last. MSP I, no. 426 (*Fig. 11*).

10.3: T / As last. MSP I, no. 427.

Phistelia:

AE Unit, 4,12–4,89 g¹²³, c. 270 to 240 BC(?)

TYPE 11: Head of Apollo facing left, wearing laurel wreath with leaves in opposing pairs, ΣΤΛΙΩΝΤ before / Acheloios (of the Oimtlais?) as a man-faced bull standing to right, crowned by victorious nymph, OIMTLAIS in exergue.

11.1: No letter / ΙΣ below. CAMPANA 1996, no. 16.1.

¹²⁰ RUTTER 2001, 265 to 240 BC / SAMBON 1913, 268 to 240 BC.

¹²¹ RUTTER 2001, 265 to 240 BC / SAMBON 1913, 268 to 240 BC.

¹²² RUTTER 2001, 265 to 240 BC / SAMBON 1913, 260 to 240 BC.

¹²³ CAMPANA 1996.

Abbreviations

- MSP I N.J. MOLINARI – N. SISCI. ΠΟΤΑΜΙΚΟΝ: Sinews of Acheloios. A Comprehensive Catalog of the Bronze Coinage of the Man-Faced Bull, with Essays on Origin and Identity (Oxford 2016).

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List of Figures

- Fig. 1: Neapolitan silver didrachm (21mm, 7.21 g, 11h) featuring ΙΣ below Ache-loios. Unpublished variety. CNG, The Coin Shop, item no. 979726. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC (www.cngcoins.com).
- Fig. 2: Neapolitan bronze unit (15 mm, 4.92 g), MSP I no. 273. Image courtesy of Den of Antiquity, Cambridge, UK, eBay item no. 360876505527.
- Fig. 3: Neapolitan bronze 1/3 unit (15 mm, 2.29 g), MSP I no. 290. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, item no. Y 20243.
- Fig. 4: Neapolitan bronze unit (18 mm, 6.77 g), MSP I no. 328. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, Armand Valton 21.
- Fig. 5: Neapolitan bronze unit (20 mm, 4.63 g), MSP I no. 350. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG (www.arsclassica.com), Zurich, Auction P, lot 1013.
- Fig. 6: Neapolitan silver didrachm (7.32 g), SAMBON 1913, no. 519. Image courtesy of Stack's (www.stacksbowers.com) New York Sale (2011), lot 3.
- Fig. 7: Neapolitan silver drachm (3.57 g), unpublished. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 66, lot 67.
- Fig. 8: Caletan bronze unit (7.03 g), MSP I no. 151. Image courtesy of Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung GmbH (www.gmcoinar.de), Auction 147, lot 1074.
- Fig. 9: Compulterian bronze unit (5.99 g), MSP I no. 177. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 59, lot 1531.
- Fig. 10: Aesernian bronze unit (6.60 g), MSP I no. 67. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Luynes 22
- Fig. 11: Suessan bronze unit (19 mm, 7.21 g), MSP I no. 426. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Fonds Général 541.
- Fig. 12: Neapolitan bronze unit (4.07g), MSP I no. 276. Image from SAMBON 1913, no. 637.
- Fig. 13: Neapolitan bronze 1/3 unit (13 mm, 2.25 g), MSP I no. 293. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Fonds Général 375.
- Fig. 14: Neapolitan bronze unit (15 mm, 4.06 g), MSP I no. 724. Image courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, inv. no. Fonds Général 397

- Fig. 15: Neapolitan bronze unit, MSP I, no. 338. Image courtesy of ACR E-Auction no. 8, lot 9.
- Fig. 16: Etruscan vase from Saturnia, *c.* 500 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 59 = ISLER 1981, no. 229. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 17: Attic terracotta neck amphora discovered in Sicily, 570 to 560 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 67 = ISLER 1981, no. 214. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 18: Attic column krater discovered in Agrigento, 460 to 450 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 88 = ISLER 1981, no. 218. Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. no. G 365. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 19: Attic terracotta fragment discovered at Vulci, *c.* 470 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 87 = ISLER 1981, no. 217. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 20: Etruscan bronze ornamental sculpture (on tripod) from Vulci, 510 to 500 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 198 = ISLER 1981, no. 236. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, inv. no. III 486. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 21: Etruscan bronze sculpture, 2nd quarter of the 5th century BC, ISLER 1981, no. 238. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 22: Etruscan bronze sculpture, mid 5th century BC, ISLER 1981, no. 240. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. no. H 229. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 23: Etruscan bronze applique discovered in Vulci, 500 to 450 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 206 = ISLER 1981, no. 142. Louvre, Paris, Cabinet Medailles, inv. no. 579. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 24: Etruscan bronze plaque (belt buckle?), *c.* 480 BC, perhaps from Vulci, ISLER 1970, no. 283. Author's drawing based on the original from Galli 1916, Fig. 16.
- Fig. 25: Etruscan bronze mirror discovered in Palestrine, 310 to 290 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 278 = ISLER 1981, no. 118. Drawing by Cameron Fritts.
- Fig. 26: Silver drachm (4,20 g) from Katane featuring Amenanos. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 125, lot 275.
- Fig. 27: Silver tetradrachm (28 mm, 16,71 g) from Katane featuring Acheloios of the Amenanos. Image courtesy of Roma Numismatics (www.romanumismatics.com), Auction 6, lot 393.
- Fig. 28: Silver tetradrachm (16,89 g) of Gela featuring Gelas. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 72, lot 310.

- Fig. 29: Silver tetradrachm (24mm, 17,31 g) of Gela featuring Acheloios of the Gelas. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Triton XXII, 114.
- Fig. 30: Silver litra (0,62g) from Panormos, c. 410 to 405 BC. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 67, lot 314.
- Fig. 31: Marble relief from Athens, Agrai, on the Ilisos, 350 to 340 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 16. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung, inv. no. Sk 709. Image courtesy of Dr. Gary Todd.
- Fig. 32: Neapolitan bronze 1/4 unit (3,31g), MSP I no. 223. Image courtesy of Numismatica Ars Classica NAC AG, Zurich, Auction 64, lot 1992.
- Fig. 33: Early Greco-Roman gem, c. 320 BC. Author's drawing based on the original from Reinach 1895, Taf. 121, no. 46.
- Fig. 34: Etruscan bronze applique, 1st half of the 5th century BC. Image courtesy of Artemide (www.artemideaste.com) eLive 22, lot 1037.
- Fig. 35: Etruscan bronze helmet with Acheloios appliques discovered in Vulci at the Tomba del Guerriero, 500 to 450 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 225. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 36: Etruscan bronze shield ornament from Tarquinia, c. 520 to 510 BC, ISLER 1970, no. 189 = ISLER 1981, no. 125. Musei Vaticani, Vaticano, inv. no. 12625. Author's drawing.
- Fig. 37: Bronze unit (21 mm, 7,51 g) of the Kersini, c. 350 BC, MSP I, no. 41. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, eAuction 327, lot 329.
- Fig. 38: Bronze unit (19mm, 7,15g) of the Sileraioi, c. 350 BC, MSP I, no. 56. Image courtesy of Bertolami Fine Arts (bertolamifineart.bidinside.com), Roma, eAuction 77, lot 854.
- Fig. 39: Bronze unit (15 mm, 5,47g) of the Mamar, MSP I, no. 42. Image courtesy of Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung GmbH, Auction 237, Session I, Lot 1133.
- Fig. 40: Bronze unit (17 mm, 4,56g) from Ambrakia, MSP I, no. 489. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 76, lot 347.
- Fig. 41: Bronze unit (19 mm, 5,20g) from Ambrakia, MSP I, no. 485. Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, LLC, Auction 98, lot 27.

