Unedierte und Seltene Münzen aus dem Griechischen Westen

Unpublished and Rare Coins from the Greek West

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In the year 709 BC, the Achaeans founded the colony of Sybaris in a most favorable commercial position in Lower Italy. In the 6th century it developed into the largest Greek city of this region. But catastrophes were not absent. First around 550 the city was destroyed, then more permanently in 510 by the neighboring city Kroton. In connection with Milet, Sybaris had already previously founded Poseidonia, Laos and Skidros on the western coast of Italy. Concerning the fate of the flourishing Greek city Poseidonia (— Paestum) in the following centuries, much is known until it became desolate in the imperial period due to malaria. The three large temples that still rise impressively in the formerly solitary coastal landscape today belong to the most impressive remains from the entire ancient period. With permanent settlement of the area, they would hardly have been preserved for us.

Of lesser significance were Skidros and Laos, both located further south in Lucania. From Skidros no coins are known to us; those from Laos are quite rare. Laos lay in the mouth area of the river of the same name, which is still marked on maps today as Fiume Lao or Laino[1]. When Sybaris was destroyed by Kroton in 510 BC, refugee inhabitants found shelter in Laos. They needed only to move across the narrow land bridge in a westerly direction from one sea to another, first upwards in the home river valley, then across a mountain ridge, while the way to the sea would have been 10—12 times as long. To these Sybarites living in Laos and Skidros, Herodotus VI, 21 makes the accusation that they had not shown the same participation as the Milesians showed at the capture of Sybaris when taking Milet. For in Milet the entire military-capable male population had cut off their hair and shown great mourning, since both cities were very friendly. Diodorus XIV 101 ff. reports of later battles.

The coins of these three cities, Sybaris, Poseidonia and Laos, show common representations, namely the bull that looks back in Sybaris, the one that looks forward in Poseidonia, and a bull with a human face looking back in Laos. On these coins of Laos there is frequently an oak tree in the field[2]. The extensive oak forests of the warlike region are mentioned by Horace, Carm. I 22, 13[3].

A view of the region is perhaps provided by its images in volume 8 of the work "Attraverso l'Italia" published by the Touring Club Italiano, Milan 1937. There (p. 116) it says: "a occidente sono brevi rapidi fiumi, come il Noce e il Lao." We see this river god formed in the manner of Acheloos depicted on a small, unfortunately broken coin of Laos that has been unknown until now.

[1] See *Carta d'Italia alla scala di* 1 : 500 000, Blatt 10.

[2] See e.g. Sylloge Cambridge II 1, 288, Auktionskatalog Coll. Lockett 1955, 259 and elsewhere.

[3] "Quale portentum neque militaris Daunias latis alit aesculetis."

Laos.

Nr. 1. Vs. bearded face from front with horns and ears in circle. Rs. an oak tree, as it appears on the larger silver coins, with which together the piece belongs to the archaic period of coinage. The oak tree on the base line, the lower cup in which the acorn sits, is hatched. 0.18 g, thus probably 1/4 Obol. Here I would like to connect from a later period, the 4th century, a very rare bronze coin.

Nr. 2. Vs. female head to left, before it ΛΑΙ (= ΛΑΙΝΩΝ), around it pearl circle. Rs. Crab to left, lifting right foot, before it crab, above the back wreath between MI - BI, which one interprets as the official name Vibius, see Head, h. n. p. 74/5. The crab also Syll. Cambridge II, 1, 289 and 290 (Bronze) to right, always both feet on the ground, from the 4th or 3rd century. A piece with the symbol of the crab is not known to me. Into the related larger city

Poseidonia

somewhat further north leads us the next small silver coin, Nr. 3. The head of the obverse can only be recognized with difficulty. When I acquired the piece, it was designated as a lion's head from the front and the piece placed according to Rhegion. But it is quite clearly a bull's head from the side, turned to the right. To recognize it, one must hold the piece from Poseidonia with the whole bull, Syll. Cambridge II 1, 435 alongside. I am therefore compelled to also depict this reverse here. The complete agreement of the head with our piece is evident. The reverse of our coin has the trident, the symbol of Poseidon, like Nr. 446 Syll. Cambr. II, 1. There also stands retrograde alongside ΠΟ, whereby the attribution is secured. The Vs. there probably has a Poseidon head, the weight amounts to 0.28 g, exactly double our piece, which weighs only 0.14 g and will probably be 1/4 Obol. Chronologically it should be placed around the year 400. Also the bull belongs to Poseidon and is explicable from the element of the god. We must turn back to the mother city

Sybaris

and first point to the important essay by L. Breglia, *le monete delle quattro Sibari* in the *Annali dell'Istituto di Numismatica* II pag. 9—26. Given the insurmountable abundance of Greek coinages, it is not surprising that new ones always turn up again, and the exact chronological ordering is difficult. Those to be depicted here should all stem from the 2nd city of Sybaris, thus belong to the time from 452 to 446 BC. Particularly noteworthy is the small piece that has two ravens next to each other on a base line on the reverse, Nr. 4. Corresponding with a bird at Breglia, Taf. I 6 and Sammlung de Luynes 563. There the bird is designated as a dove, the relationship with the raven in Laos is evident and therefore this is to be preferred. Vs. as usual on similar coinages, Poseidon to right. The inscription can just still be recognized as $\overline{\text{VΣ}}\overline{\text{BA}}$= ΣVBA. Rs. above the two ravens a circular formation, probably a phiale (bowl) as on similar pieces (Breglia Taf. I 7 two bowls). The weight amounts to 0.34 g, probably 1/8 Obol?

As *Nr. 5* should follow a piece that corresponds to that of Breglia, Taf. I 9. Vs. Poseidon with trident and chlamys to right, behind and indistinct traces of letters MVBA Rs. Bull on base line to r., above to r. flying Nike, 1 g, Diobol? cf. Syll. Copenhagen 1401, 1,23 g.

Nr. 6. ca. 452—446 BC. Diobol, 1,31 g, cf. Syll. Copenh. 1399, 116 g. Vs. Poseidon to r. in pearl circle, with chlamys over both arms, the r. arm raised with trident. Rs. Bull r. on

base line, the front feet are somewhat raised in stance, there are about 10 points clearly to be distinguished beneath it, as they otherwise appear under the base line, see e.g. Syll. Cambr. II, 1/2, Nr. 469 and 472 base line over point line, Nr. 60—63 and 441 double base line; Nr. 287 triple line, namely point line between 2 lines, likewise 437 and 442. The lower line is apparently slipped upward to the engraver. Double line also Annali II Taf. 1, 5. Above ΣVB retrograde. It is the type of Poseidonia, where the exiles from Sybaris had fled, and from where they probably brought it with them when they founded the 2nd city. With superficial consideration the corresponding pieces can easily be confused.

Corresponding to Breglia Taf. I 8 follow both numbers 7 and 8.

Nr. 7. Vs. Poseidon with double-sided chlamys to r., before it clearly MVBA downward, Rs. Bull r. on base line, above it MVBA retrograde, 1,15 g, Diobol.

Nr. 8. Vs. Poseidon and MVBA downward, Rs. Bull on point strip r., above it MVB retrograde, 1,26 g, Diobol, cf. de Luynes 540. In Syll. Copenh. 1397 is a piece from Sybaris with crab to l. to be seen, 2nd city, 1,10 g, Diobol. Subsequently 1398 with oak tree raised, 1,03 g, both designated with ΣϒΥ. I myself have published in Schweiz. Münzblätter 1956, Seite 45/6 two smaller pieces from Sybaris with oak tree incus. Syll. Copenh. 1399 and 1400 two pieces similar above 7 and 8.

As successor of Sybaris was founded 444 BC

Thurion (Thurioi)

at the river Krathis by the sea near the spring Θουρία, today Fonte del Fico, founded by Athens, laid out in quadratic form according to the plans of Hippodamos of Milet. Athena head and bull charging forward appear on the coins, which are preserved for us in large numbers. A peculiar piece, *Nr. 9*, came recently into my possession, which appears similar to Syll. Copenh. 1489/90, as well as Auktionskatalog Lockett, 1955, 410. Vs. Athena head r., sea snake on helmet, Rs. charging bull crowned by Nike, to r. on base line, under which ΘOYPIΩN is probably to be suspected. 1, 19 g, Diobol. Our piece differs throughout from the three others mentioned above, among other things also through the sea snake on the helmet cauldron, which is decorated with a wing on the piece of the Lockett collection, while in the Syll. Copenhagen a laurel wreath and a stone-hurling Skylla appear in its place.

Nr. 10. A small bronze from Thurioi 1,02 g. Vs. Bukranion in pearl circle with upward directed horns and narrow skull, between the horns 4 points, which are to be understood as ribbons, as also on both sides from the horns ribbons in the form of 3 points each hang down. Rs. three individual ears of grain in pearl circle, perhaps also left sheet. A similar bukranion is found Syll. Copenh. 1504/5, above designated with ΘOY, Vs. Athena head, 1513 a Demeter head with clear ear wreath, ears themselves I have not found in Thurioi, but the attribution does not seem doubtful to me.

Terina?

Nr. 11 and *12*: two small silver coins, 0,48 and 0,40 g. On both sides Nike running to left, raising the right arm, Rs. in circle and deepening. On the first piece from left perhaps remains of letters, ƎT downward?, probably *Terina*, unedited, 5th century.

The city lay on the west coast of Lower Italy, somewhat south of the aforementioned, and was a colony of Kroton in fertile plain.

There exists, as I hear, occasion for the supposition that numbers 4 and 5 (Sybaris) as well as 11 and 12 (Terina) stem from the same find as the small pieces from Metapont, Poseidonia and Sybaris already published in the Schweizer Münzblätter 1956. Other pieces of the same find came to Oxford into the Ashmolean Museum and will be published by C. M. Kraay in this number.

Nr. 13, 0,45 g, probably also Terina, unedited. Vs. Nymph head r., Rs. three circular arcs, probably value signs, as they appear similarly in Metapont, or in Venusia, see Syll. Copenh. 704 and 711, further in Kroton, Syll. Copenh. 1825. Concerning the coins of Terina see Regling, 66. Berliner Winckelmannsprogramm.

Tyndaris

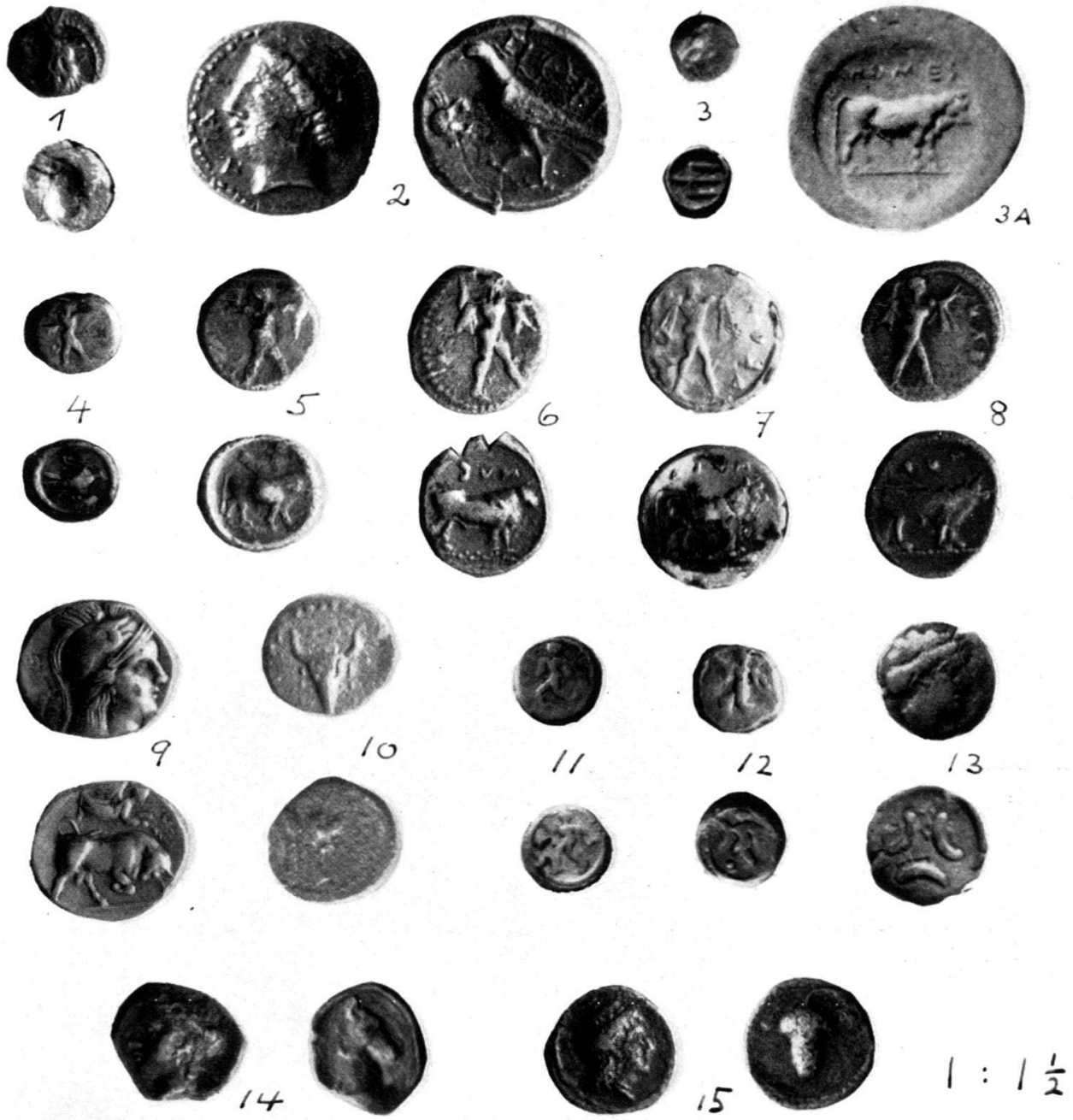
was founded on the north coast of Sicily in 396 BC by Dionysios the Elder with Messenian exiles. *Nr. 14*, 0,7 g. Vs. Head of Helena to l., Rs. Horse head r. The attribution to Tyndaris seems certain to me, cf. Syll. Copenh. 948/9, Coll. Luynes 1423 with quite similar Helena head to l., 0,72 g. On the coins of Tyndaris appears the head of Helena, the Dioskuren, the brothers of Helena, the sons of Tyndareos, the Messenians as founders claimed. (Head h. n. p. 189.) Also horse with two stars (sign of the Dioskuren) and horse head occur.

Thermai Himeraiai?

Nr. 15, 0,64 g, Litra. Herakles head with stephane, Rs. Bunch of grapes with two leaves, unedited. Cf. Herakles head de Luynes 984, two similar bunches of grapes next to each other de Luynes 416bis "indéterminée". Should our attribution be correct, then de Luynes 416bis would probably also belong to Thermai Himeraiai. What the puzzling inscription on the Rs. there means, however, is also unclear to me.

Concerning the location of these two Sicilian cities and their remains from antiquity cf. the work *Attraverso l'Italia*, volume IV Sicilia S. 86 and 98. We see there Abb. 113 the magnificent foundations of the temple erected about 480—475 in Doric style in Himera, Abb. 114 the interesting coast of Termini Imerese with projecting rocks, 115 a panorama of the city, whose hot springs have been used since antiquity until today, 135 on high rocks steeply falling to the sea the still famous sanctuary in Tyndaris, 136 significant remains from antiquity. Also remains of a strong city wall and of a Greek theater with magnificent view over the Gulf of Tyndaris are preserved.

All these sites so richly endowed by nature already offered an alluring goal for the settlers in early antiquity, who came from the eastern motherland and brought here to Western Greece the achievements of their culture, of which the coins still preserved to us convey a brilliant impression in many respects.



zeichnet, die Verwandtschaft mit der Krähe in Laos ist deutlich und daher diese vorzuziehen. Vs. wie sonst auf ähnlichen Geprägen, Poseidon nach rechts. Die Umschrift ist gerade noch zu erkennen als $\underline{\Sigma|\Sigma} = \Sigma\text{VBA}$. Rs. über den beiden Raben ein ringartiges Gebilde, wohl eine Phiale (Schale) wie auf ähnlichen Stücken (Breglia Taf. I 7 zwei Schalen). Das Gewicht beträgt 0,34 g, wohl ½ Obol?

Als *Nr. 5* soll ein Stück folgen, das dem von Breglia, Taf. I 9 entspricht. Vs. Poseidon mit Dreizack und Chlamys nach rechts, dahinter undeutliche Spuren von Buchsta-