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A Study of the Syracusan Coins from the Ottilia Buerger Collection

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from the Ottilia Buerger Collection

Kelly Swett
May 26, 1993

IRTLUHC.

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
History of Scholarship	2
History.	7
Iconography.	12
Style.	18
Conclusion	26
Endnotes	27
Catalogue.	32
Glossary	56
Maps	58
Bibliography	60
Plates	63

Introduction

The study of Syracusan numismatics is illustrated through the examination of thirteen coins from the Sicilian city in the Ottilia Buerger Collection of Lawrence University. The coins range in date from the fifth to the third century B.C. Although their major function was economic, the Syracusan coins have continually been the objects of admiration and study even from ancient times. In the past, studies of Syracusan coins have usually been limited to one topic, and, in general, style has rarely been discussed. This analysis of the Syracusan coins, in contrast, discusses and illustrates the importance of four interrelated areas: the history of scholarship on Syracusan coins, the relationship of the coins to historical developments, the iconography of the coins, and changes in their style over time. As a whole, it will provide an integrated approach for a more complete understanding of the Syracusan coins.

History of Scholarship

An examination of the literature on Syracusan coins provides an understanding of the direction of research devoted to these coins. The study of Syracusan numismatics seriously commenced in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This research has taken many directions: historical, stylistic, iconographic, economic, and numismatic. Many people, both collectors and numismatists, have specifically studied the Syracusan coins because of their beauty and excellent workmanship, though only the scholars whose works were major contributions to the field will be examined here.

In 1874, Barclay Head published a comprehensive article on the chronology of the coins of Syracuse.¹ He based his chronology on similarities in the coins' iconography, on association of the coins with historical events cited from ancient sources, and on changes in their weight and epigraphy. Prior to his research, the study of ancient coins was limited to first-hand observation of coins or to information conveyed in line drawings. He became the first to use photographs in addition to personal observation of coins.² In 1876, Head's classification was summarized in the format used by the British Museum in its catalogue of coins, the Syracusan section of which was written by Head.³ In this classification, Head divided the coins into six general stylistic periods: Archaic (late sixth century to 479 B.C.), Transitional

(479 to 412 B.C.), Finest (412 to 345 B.C.), early Decline (345 to 275 B.C.), late Decline (275 to 212 B.C.), and Roman Dominion (from 212 B.C.).⁴ These categories were then subdivided into the reigns of specific rulers. Head listed the coins, but did not comment on any specific issues. In 1887, Head included the Syracusan coins in the first edition of his invaluable text of numismatic research, Historia Numorum, which encompassed the history of coins from all of the Greek world in a chronological sequence according to geographical regions.⁵ He presented general descriptions, but little stylistic analysis.

In 1892, A. J. Evans completed a book focusing on many issues concerning the fifth century dekadrachms.⁶ He critically analyzed their styles, especially in an effort to differentiate specific artists' styles and to attribute unsigned coins to certain artists. He based his chronological sequence on these stylistic nuances and changes in the lettering and spelling of the legends of the coins.

In 1903, G. F. Hill presented a broader study of the coins of Sicily, with Syracuse as its focus due to its importance for the island and the importance of its coinage for Sicilian coinage.⁷ In addition to his slight change of Head's date from 306 B.C. to 304 B.C. for Agathokles' assumption of the title of king, Hill compiled previously stated knowledge of the coins of Sicily, using Head, Evans and others as resources, resulting in a resource for a general study of Sicilian coins. As a result of Hill's further

research on the Sicilian coins, he modified the Sicilian section of Head's second edition of Historia Numorum in 1911.⁸ Among the changes he made were to begin the major period of signed coinage at 413 B.C. rather than 405 B.C., as Head had stated, and to start the coinage of Hieron II at 274 B.C. not 275 B.C., as Head had done. In addition, Hill dated the electrum coinage to the reign of Dion (357-354 B.C.) rather than to the time of Timoleon (345-338/7 B.C.).

The next major study in Syracusan numismatics was E. Boehringer's Die Münzen von Syrakus, an extensive stylistic examination of the Syracusan coins from 530 to 435 B.C.⁹ His stylistic categories differed from those of Head, by dividing Head's "Archaic" and "Transitional" styles into six groups, which correspond generally to the standard periods in Greek art: early Archaic (530-510 B.C.), ripe Archaic (510-485 B.C.), late Archaic with decline (485-479 B.C.), Severe (474-450 B.C.), early Classical (450-439 B.C.), and ripe Classical (439-435 B.C.) styles. These groups were then further separated into series, based on factors such as spelling and depth of the stamped imprint. His work has become a standard for comparative examination and identification of Syracusan coins of this period.

In 1930, Albert Gallatin established a die series for the dekadrachms of the late fifth century by Euainetos.¹⁰ This series is based on comparative identification of both the obverse and reverse dies to establish the connections between them. His

sequence is still used as a reference work for identification of these coins.

Charles Seltman, in his handbook on Greek coins, proposed an earlier, alternative chronology from previous scholars for the electrum coinage.¹¹ He dated the coins to the reign of Dionysius, on the basis of the influence of Thebes with its introduction of electrum and also similar iconography to that of other coins of the period. In addition, his dates for other Syracusan coins not included in the Buerger Collection were also earlier than these in both previous and later works on the subject. He attributed these changes to recent numismatic developments but does not describe them.¹²

In 1941, J. H. Jongkees wrote a detailed description of the dekadrachms of the artist Kimon in catalogue form.¹³ He presented a critical account of the relative chronology, based on die interlinking. In addition, Jongkees established an absolute chronology for the Kimonian coins, which he related to the historical event of the Syracusan and Athenian battle of 413 B.C. He discussed Kimon, Euainetos and the other engravers and their stylistic similarities and differences for the purpose of interrelating and dating the coins. This book differed from that by Gallatin because he not only developed the chronological sequence based on dies but also discussed style.

G. K. Jenkins presented a later chronology for the electrum coinage than Head, Hill, or Seltman.¹⁴ Jenkins, who assigned the electrum coins to the reign of Agathokles (317-289 B.C.), utilized

his hoard studies, which established comparative evidence for this dating of the coins.

Within the context of general books about Greek art, Gisela Richter devoted a whole chapter to coins, of which the majority are from Syracuse.¹⁵ She demonstrated that the coins were stylistically similar to sculpture in other media and exemplify the stylistic periods which characterize Greek art.

As this brief summary of the literature on Syracusan coins demonstrates, research has ranged from works on specific coins or artists to more general overviews of the Syracusan coins. Although a general consensus on the chronology of Syracusan coins has been established, research continues to be done to provide more evidence for further clarification of the dates, for example, for the late fifth century dekadrachms.

History

The Syracusan coins correlate with the city's history by illustrating important themes or commemorating events chosen for representation by the government. In the past the coins were directly associated with historical events, although now, due to greater accessibility of coins through casts and photographs, and, in general, the greater volume of coins now known which can be analyzed, some of these direct correlations have been reexamined. The questionable connections will be discussed and dates will tentatively be given.

Syracuse did not start minting until more than two hundred years after its founding as a Corinthian colony in 734/3 B.C.¹⁶ It was one of the latest cities in Sicily to begin its coinage, which would then become very influential throughout Sicily and the Greek world.

In the late sixth and early fifth centuries, Syracuse was ruled by an aristocracy, the Gamoroi, until their defeat by the tyrant Gelon in 485 B.C. They utilized the quadriga as a civic symbol alluding to their equestrian interests. During the reign of Gelon (485-478 B.C.), the composition of the quadriga was modified to include Nike crowning the horses. This addition, probably a reference to Gelon's Olympic victory in 488 B.C., is illustrated on the earliest coin in the Buerger Collection (coin no. 1).¹⁷

After the strong military reigns of Gelon and his brother,

Hieron I, the weak rule by their successor/brother, Thrasybulus, gave way to a democratic government which was initiated by a Syracusan group assisted by other Sicilian forces from Akragas, Himera, Gela, and Selinus.¹⁸ Smaller denominations, exemplified by the litra with the female head and sepia (no. 2), reflect one category of the monetary system and economy that continued during this new democratic period. The litra represented the economic realm of the Sicels, the indigenous people of Sicily, rather than that of the Greeks, whose influence was seen in the larger denominations. The litra was probably used for trade, rather than for paying mercenaries or for prizes, as the larger denominations of tetradrachm or dekadrachm had been.¹⁹

In the middle of the fifth century numerous treaties were made that divided Sicily into two factions, one headed by Syracuse and the other by Athens. After this, many battles were fought that rarely altered the status quo, until 416 B.C. when the western Sicilian cities of Segesta and Selinus resumed their conflict. Syracuse came to the aid of Selinus while Athens sent troops for Segesta. By 414 B.C., Athens focused on Syracuse, supported by numerous Sicilian cities in addition to Corinth and Sparta. Finally, in 413 B.C., Syracuse crushed Athens, which had sent a massive armada to attack the Sicilian city. The Syracusan victory, a major defeat for Athens, is perhaps alluded to on large commemorative coins, the dekadrachms (nos. 4, 5, 6). The connection between these coins and the victory was proposed

because of the unusually large size of the coins, although now, due to more research, the two coins with the military equipment in their exergues are thought to be later.

In the aftermath of this great victory, Syracuse continued its democratic government in a slightly altered form, yet was afflicted with many internal conflicts as individuals, particularly the young Dionysius, vied for power. Meanwhile, in 410 B.C., Selinus resumed its conflict with Segesta, which this time asked Carthage for assistance. Carthage quickly defeated Selinus, and began its campaign to conquer more of Sicily, including Akragas, Gela, and Kamarina. The ambitious military politician Dionysius helped to settle a peace treaty with the Carthaginians to avoid the invasion of Syracuse in 406 B.C., an event which was possibly commemorated by another series of dekadrachms (nos. 5, 6). This agreement placed Dionysius in a strategic position to seize control of Syracuse and return it to tyranny.

Dionysius led a revival in both the military and culture of Syracuse, which made it one of the greatest cities in the Greek world. In addition to his conquests throughout Sicily and into southern Italy, he battled Carthage in four wars over control of Sicily. This continuous struggle is probably artistically referred to in a depiction of Herakles wrestling the Nemean Lion on a hundred litrae, dating 400 - 370 B.C. (no. 7).²⁰ This representation would allow Dionysius to compare himself to the hero Herakles, while Carthage is represented by the lion.

The middle of the fourth century was characterized predominantly by two rulers, Dion and Dionysius II, vying for control of Syracuse and the ultimate decline of Syracuse because of this conflict. In 345 B.C., the Corinthian Timoleon was sent to aid Syracuse and, ultimately, revitalized the city and many others in Sicily. In 317 B.C., after an oligarchical period after the reign of Timoleon, Agathokles arose as the next great tyrant of Syracuse. Agathokles, resuming warfare with Carthage, established himself as a powerful ruler known throughout the Hellenistic Mediterranean. As illustrated by the next coins from the collection, he displayed his power on coins through the use of the triskeles as a specific symbol for his power over Sicily (nos. 8, 9),²¹ and the placement of his name and title on the coinage (nos. 9, 12). Agathokles was the first Syracusan ruler to use these methods as outward symbols of his domination. The placement of Agathokles' name on the coinage demonstrates a drastic change from the traditional use of the legend, 'of the Syracusans', on the coins (nos. 9, 12). In addition, Agathokles took on the title of king and used it on his coins, in imitation of Hellenistic rulers elsewhere in the Mediterranean,²² whose coin types he also imitated (nos. 8, 12).

In 269 B.C., after twenty years of turmoil about successors and governmental control following the time of Agathokles, Hieron II secured power for the next fifty-four years. Although Hieron came to power as a result of his military force, he had a peaceful

reign, while concentrating on his own personal enrichment. He exemplified the Hellenistic type of monarchical propaganda through the use of the title of king and portraiture of his family on his coins (no. 13). Portraiture was used as a method of publicizing the rulers and their familial connections.

Syracusan history is characterized by strong tyrants like Gelon, Dionysius, Agathokles and Hieron II, along with a brief interlude of democracy. Reflections of this history, especially the military conquests, can be seen on the obverses and reverses of the coins. While the earlier coins are concerned primarily with references to victory in general terms, the change of attitude of the rulers can be seen in the later coins of Agathokles and Hieron II, who refer to or represent themselves on the coins. Further, the transition of Syracusan coins from illustrating civic and religious concerns to personal references marks the transition of Syracuse from a Greek city-state to a Hellenistic kingdom.

Iconography

The iconography of the Syracusan coinage in the Ottilia Buerger Collection has three significant themes: prominent patron deities of Syracuse, symbols or attributes of gods significant to Syracuse, and references to victories.

The heads, usually on the obverse, represent the patron gods and goddesses of ancient Syracuse: Artemis, Apollo, Athena, Persephone, and Arethusa; one of the Hellenistic coins depicts a mortal, Queen Philistis. Artemis had played an important role for Syracuse from its founding by the Corinthians in 734/3 B.C., when Ortygia, the island where Syracuse was first established, was consecrated to her (Diodorus Siculus V. 3. 5).²³ She remained a revered figure, as can be seen in her epithet, *ΣΩΤΕΙΡΑ*, savior or deliverer, on an electrum coin of the late fourth and early third centuries (no. 10). Artemis' twin, Apollo, was also highly revered by Syracuse, which erected a temple to Apollo in the early sixth century and maintained it through the centuries. He continued in importance, as exemplified in his appearance on coins of the fourth and third centuries (nos. 8, 10, 11). Athena, who also had a temple dedicated to her in the early fifth century on Ortygia, is represented on a coin, the type of which was borrowed from the coin of Alexander the Great (no. 12). Persephone, specifically identified as Kore in the legend of a tetradrachm of

Agathokles (no. 9), was widely worshipped with her mother Demeter in Syracuse and in all of Sicily, as attested by their many sanctuaries and votives. Persephone, as the goddess associated with crops and the changing of seasons, was important to Sicily, which had an economy that was primarily agricultural.

Arethusa has a legendary connection with Syracuse (Pausanias V.7.2). A nymph of Elis in the Peloponnese, she was pursued by the river god, Alpheios. To escape him, she withdrew under the sea, finally emerging at Syracuse. She was transplanted as the fresh water nymph on the island of Ortygia. She is specifically identified by the legend on the Kimonian tetradrachm with the facing head (no. 4). Other heads on the Syracusan coins are also now generally identified as representations of Arethusa (nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7),²⁴ yet none is conclusively identified. The dolphins encircling most of the heads perhaps refer to her spring's location on the island, which is surrounded by the sea. Labelled representations of Arethusa in other media are later than the coins and therefore do not help in the identification of the heads on the coins.²⁵

Other scholars have variously identified the heads as Nike, Artemis, Persephone, and Cyane, a nymph from a spring in the outskirts of Syracuse (Diodorus Siculus V.4.1). Any of these identifications are possible due to the lack of evidence, although the three coins from Syracuse that are labelled Arethusa (no. 4), Kore (Persephone) (no. 9), and Soteira (Artemis) (no. 10) do provide bases for comparison. On these coins, Arethusa is

depicted with a headband and dolphins flowing through her hair, Persephone has an ear of corn intertwined in her hair, and Artemis has a quiver and bow beside her head. Four coins do have heads with some sort of hairband and dolphins encircling the head (nos. 1, 3, 5, 6). Two coins which do not have the dolphins do have similar compositions to coins with the dolphins, and therefore could also be identified as Arethusa (nos. 2, 7). The identification of the head as Nike is possible, but unsubstantiated, because she is usually depicted on coins in a full body view with wings or in association with a chariot.²⁶ While these other coins do not have a bow represented, Artemis is also an option because she was highly revered in Syracuse and is also represented with her hair pulled back, as seen on the electrum coin (no. 10).²⁷ Due to the comparative evidence of the labelled coins, Arethusa seems to be the most likely identification, because her probable identifying features of hairband and dolphins are present, while the attributes of Nike, wings, and Artemis, the bow, are not.

The female head on the dekadrachm attributed to Euainetos (no. 6), sometimes identified as Arethusa, has also been identified as either Persephone²⁸ or Cyane.²⁹ These two identifications are based on her hairpiece, composed of either water reeds or grain. If the plant is to be identified as grain, then the arrangement of the hair resembles that of the later coin with Persephone and the ear of corn in her hair (no. 9). The great importance of

Persephone to Syracuse has already been discussed. The other interpretation of the plant as a water reed supports the identification of the heads as either Arethusa or Cyane.³⁰ The reeds refer to the water environment of both the nymphs. There is less evidence for Cyane, due to the fact that there are no known heads on coins or other media specifically identified as this nymph. Her cult was important because of its association with Persephone the two sometimes combined as Persephone-Cyane.³¹ Although there is more comparative evidence to identify this head as Persephone or Cyane than for the other non-labelled coins, this head does have the dolphins encircling it and is similar to the previous heads usually thought to be Arethusa; therefore, this head should also be viewed in the same way, as most probably representing the Syracusan nymph, Arethusa.

The next iconographic category is that of symbols or attributes of the gods. Two examples of this group are the gold stater with the feathered lightning bolt of Zeus (no. 12) and the electrum coin with the tripod, an attribute of Apollo (no. 11). In reference to the thunderbolt, Zeus was revered in Syracuse, where a temple was dedicated to him. More importantly, though, this coin was a type copied from a coin of Alexander the Great in an attempt to associate Agathokles with Alexander, two strong military leaders. In the example of the tripod, a representation of Apollo occurs on the obverse of the coin, giving a double reference to Apollo.

The third iconographic theme refers to victories. The earliest supposed representation of a Syracusan victory, in this case an Olympic victory, is the quadriga with Nike crowning horses on the tetradrachm of Gelon (no. 1).³² Although the quadriga apparently began as a depiction of the aristocracy's enjoyment of horses and possibly of their equestrian victories, the quadriga with the addition of the Nike soon became accepted as the generic symbol of the military victory. Whatever the year or battle, the quadriga was suitable and appropriate for the victorious occasion (nos. 3, 5, 6, 13). One example of a proposed reference to a specific victory regards the dekadrachms of the late fifth century (nos. 5, 6). The reverses depict military equipment in the exergue and the word "prizes" on some coins (no. 5) along with the traditional iconography of the quadriga. The exact interpretation of this word and its relation to the military equipment is still unknown. Numismatists long associated the prizes with the booty awarded at the Assinarian games commemorating the Syracusan victory over Athenians in 413 B.C.³³ Later dates for these coins are now given which span a range of time down to the early fourth century. An alternative date of 405 B.C. or later could allow these coins to commemorate the victory of Dionysius.³⁴

Another representation of victory on a tetradrachm of the late fourth century illustrates Nike crowning a trophy which is composed of military equipment (no. 9). This depiction also seems more directly related to military victories, specifically those by

Agathokles in Sicily and at Carthage, because the booty is actually represented, as it may be in the dekadrachms. Some scholars also interpret other compositions as signifying particular accomplishments, the struggle between Herakles and the Nemean Lion, for example, representing the Syracusan and Carthaginian forces symbolic of Greek over barbarian (no. 7).³⁵

The iconography of each of the coins symbolizes the important aspects which Syracuse or its ruler wanted to promote at that time, whether it be in relation to a victory or to a god. The most common combination of the head and the quadriga couples both of these elements into one coin, which could refer to many occasions. Syracusan iconography is similar to that on other Greek coinage with its reference to locally important gods, while specifically the victorious reference of the quadriga, begun at Syracuse, is fairly isolated to Sicily. The wide influence in the Greek world of two of the representations of Arethusa is unusual due to the fact that she is a nymph strictly localized to Syracuse.

Style

The Syracusan coins are unusual in the fact that they reflect the changing styles of the times, responding to even slight nuances of change in style, and closely parallel Greek art in other media not only in Magna Graecia but also on the mainland. They follow the stylistic changes through the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods, rather than remaining with a set style.

The earliest coin in the collection, a tetradrachm from 485-479 B.C. (no. 1), exemplifies the Archaic style prevalent between 660 B.C. and 480 B.C.³⁶ The Archaic style on this coin is characterized by the profile view of the composition and its linear detail. On the obverse, another important component of the Archaic style is illustrated in the bearded charioteer and horses of the quadriga, whose bodies are divided into discrete parts by emphasizing the patterns and forms of the bodies. The reverse head has the distinct almond eye, segmented hair, and smile characteristic of the Archaic style. In these respects it resembles a typical late Archaic statue, such as the kore from Chios on the Athenian Acropolis.³⁷

The litra of 474-450 B.C. (no. 2) illustrates the early Classical or Severe style prevalent between 480 and 450 B.C.³⁸ The Severe style of the head of the coin is more simplified and naturalistic than that of the Archaic style, yet it still retains

some Archaic characteristics, specifically the almond eye and the delineated hair. The head on the obverse of the coin shows a more sculptured face, a fleshy quality. The full, closed lips are less defined between the lips and the surrounding facial area than in the Archaic style. The eye still has the Archaic oval shape, but it curves near the edges into the surface of the face, while the eye is surrounded by a characteristic ridge. The hair is still wig-like, distinctly divided into a linear pattern. The heavy jaw is smoothly sculpted into the neck. These characteristics of the head compare closely with those of the enthroned goddess of Tarentum,³⁹ a Severe style sculpture probably made by an artist from Southern Italy. The sepia on the reverse is naturalistic in the modelling of the body and smooth, free-flowing form of the legs. The smooth transitions between the appendages give the creature's skin a continuous surface. Overall, the compositions are simplified, with smooth, subtle transitions between different parts of the forms, unifying them into a whole.

From the next period, a tetradrachm dating to 450-439 B.C. (no. 3) exemplifies the high Classical style which is typical of the period between 450 B.C. and 400 B.C.⁴⁰ This Classical style reflects a less linear, more naturalistic, and idealized approach to the representation of figures. Modelling and a concern with light and shade create a sculptural quality, even on the generally flat coins. The obverse of the tetradrachm represents a quadriga in which the horses have naturalistic musculature. The smooth

forms of the charioteer's body are revealed through his clinging drapery. The head on the reverse has an eye seen in a profile view, rather than the typical Archaic almond shape depicted in profile as though from a frontal view. The brow is chiseled in a ridge above the eye. The hair, although elaborately arranged in an unusual hairstyle, has naturalistic strands that are restrained in their position. The facial expression is calm and composed. These characteristics of the head on the coin are stylistically similar to those of the heads from the Parthenon frieze.⁴¹

Four coins in the collection (nos. 4, 5, 6, 7) exemplify the next phase of the Classical period, often called the Rich style, which extends from the late fifth century to the early fourth century.⁴² The coins, whose depictions are energized, finely worked, and elegant, are similar stylistically to works of the vase painters of this period, specifically the Athenians like the Meidias painter.⁴³ The faces on the obverses are idealized and calm, with a fleshy, soft modelling. The heads have a high forehead, straight nose, and distant gaze in the detailed eye. Minute details figure prominently in every aspect of the composition, from the curls of the hair to the delicate earring. The hair is in a complex arrangement with intricate and elaborate curls. No longer in the steady trot of the Archaic period, the quadrigas on the reverses are in an energized, racing form with the horses rearing on their hind legs. The charioteers lean forward, arms stretched toward the horses. Perspective, also

developed in this period, can be seen in the angles of the quadriga's wheels. Through the utilization of the three-quarter view, depth is suggested, even in the small, relatively flat relief of the coins. All four horses can be seen now, not just the one depicted as closest to the viewer, as in the tetradrachm of the Archaic style (no. 1). The wrestling match between Herakles and the Nemean Lion of the one hundred litrae (no. 7) emphasizes the sculptural representation of intense strength through the increased physical height of the relief of the reverse.

It was in the period of the Rich style that Syracusan coins were first signed by the artists. The attribution of the unsigned coins to the famous artists - Kimon, Euainetos, and others - is problematic. Although their styles are quite similar, specific traits distinguish them from one another.

Both Kimon, possibly from Athens, and Euainetos, whose origins are unknown, worked in Syracuse and elsewhere in Sicily from approximately the 420s to after the turn of the century; therefore, through contact, the artists share many compositional elements, especially in the later period of both their careers. Euainetos' career in signed coinage seems to have begun earlier than that of Kimon, as attested by evidence of Euainetos' work in other Sicilian cities at an earlier date. Minted late in both artists' careers, the hundred litrae with Herakles and the Nemean Lion (no. 7) illustrates the problem of attribution, because both Euainetos and Kimon signed coins with this image.

Kimón is known for quiet, controlled compositions, evident in a dekadrachm from the Buerger collection (no. 5), attributed to him due to stylistic and compositional similarities with his signed works. On the dekadrachm, details characteristic of his work include the curve at the tip of the nose and the small uplift at the corner of the mouth. The hair is tightly controlled in an intricate, restrained arrangement. The face seems fleshy, although taut over the eye. The tetradrachm attributed to Kimón (no. 4) illustrates similar characteristics, although in a frontal view instead of the usual profile. The frontal view of Arethusa emphasizes the large, detailed eyes with a faraway gaze. The hair through which the dolphins now swim radiates in all directions. Although many specific elements differ in the two coins, similar stylistic elements like the fleshy modelling of the chin and forehead, upward curve of the mouth and the modelling around the nose identify the style as that of Kimón. On both coins, a thick headband holds back the hair, of which a few strands are strategically allowed to escape from its hold. The headband is also the place where Kimón signs his name.

In contrast to Kimón's highly controlled style, Euainetos has majestic, energized compositions. On the dekadrachm attributed to Euainetos (no. 6), the female head exhibits an aloof forward gaze and the lid of the eye curves down near the bridge of the nose. The head by Euainetos has a long straight nose, while Kimón's nose has a curve at the top of the brow and slight curve at the tip.

In addition, Euainetos used energized curls which bring the composition upward, while on Kimon's dekadrachm the hair is more restrained in a tighter arrangement. On the head attributed to Euainetos, every strand of hair is deliberately and strategically placed to enhance the vibrancy of the composition, which overflows the edge of the coin.

The late fourth and early third century Syracusan coins (nos. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) are representative of a transitional style between the High Classical and the Hellenistic styles. Overall the coins are conservative in subject matter. The style is reminiscent of the High Classical coins in the straight profiles, yet there is a new fleshiness and an emotional, sensitive quality which makes the faces more individualized, expressive, and less aloof. The hair has a soft, impressionistic quality. More modelling is utilized to fill out the features in a more naturalistic manner. These characteristics are similar to those found in the works of the fourth century sculptor, Praxiteles, who is known for the gentle, sensitive quality of his sculpture.⁴⁴ On the gold drachm with Apollo and biga from 317-310 B.C. (no. 8), the head on the obverse has a fleshy forehead and area around the eyes, with an open mouth giving an emotional or more individual quality to the face. The head of Apollo with its furrowed brow, gazing eyes, and open mouth has similar characteristics to late fourth century portraits of Alexander the Great.⁴⁵ Similar features are seen in the head of Athena on the gold stater (no.

12) and the heads of Apollo on the electrum coins (nos. 10, 11), which all date to the late fourth and early third centuries. The head of Artemis on the reverse of an electrum coin (no. 10) exemplifies a transitional style with its combination of a straight classical forehead and distinct ridge above the eye with a large, detailed eye, which gives an expressive, emotional quality to the head.

Two coins in the collection exemplify characteristics of the Hellenistic period (ca. 330 to 31 B.C.).⁴⁶ First, the tetradrachm with Persephone (no. 9) has a nude representation of Nike. Second, the sixteen litrae with Queen Philistis (no. 13) utilizes portraiture for its direct representation of the ruler or ruler's family for propagandistic purposes. Another Hellenistic characteristic of this coin is the expanded range of movement into space as seen by the developed use of perspective for the representation of the quadriga.

The Nike on the tetradrachm of 310-304 B.C. (no. 9) differs from any of the earlier victories (nos. 1 or 6) because she is nude. Until the late Classical period when Praxiteles popularized the female nude with his sculpture, the Aphrodite of Knidos from approximately 340 B.C.,⁴⁷ the female in Greek art was always clothed in some way. This reverse of the nude Nike therefore illustrates a type which is then prominent in the Hellenistic period.

On the obverse of the sixteen litrae (no. 13), Queen

Philistis, the wife of Hieron II, is represented in a generalized female portrait type with the inscription of her name. She has a chiseled profile with great detail given to the large eye. The drapery over her head folds according to the contour of her head and hair underneath it, which exemplifies a Hellenistic trait of naturalism. The reverse depicts the quadriga with highly developed perspective. The wheels of the chariot are parallel and angle in the same direction. This quadriga can be compared with the Classical chariots (nos. 5, 6), which illustrate a not fully developed form of perspective, with one wheel in three quarter view and the other in profile.

The coins of Syracuse therefore illustrate the styles of the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods. The coins parallel Greek sculpture and vase painting and therefore illustrate their close stylistic relationship to other media. This continual transition of style is unusual for coins, which do not continually follow the varying nuances of style but remain with set styles and types for long periods of time, as exemplified by the coins of Athens and Corinth.

Conclusion

The examination of the Syracusan coins through the analysis of scholarship, history, iconography, and style allows different perspectives to be viewed. The review of the history of scholarship illustrated that the scope of research was limited to either very general discussion of Syracusan coins or else very specific studies done on one topic. It also showed that there are still questions remaining on some aspects of the chronology. The discussion of the coins and their relationship to Syracusan history demonstrated how the coins exemplify the change of Syracuse from a Greek city-state to a Hellenistic kingdom. The section on iconography revealed that there are three general themes: gods, references to gods, and victories. Two types, the head of Arethusa and the quadriga, had a long life in Syracusan iconography. In addition, the quadriga was influential in Sicily, while the head of Arethusa was influential throughout the Greek world. Finally, the stylistic analysis of the coins demonstrated the close relationship that Syracusan coins, unlike those from other cities, have with other media and that they correlate with the major stylistic categories of Greek art. These areas provide different approaches to research and together illustrate a comprehensive view of these coins. This study has integrated previous knowledge with new research providing broader conclusions for a more thorough understanding of the Syracusan coins from the

Endnotes

- ¹ B.V. Head, "On the Chronological Sequence of the Coins of Syracuse," Numismatic Chronicle (1874) 1-80.
- ² I. Carradice and M. Price, Coinage in the Greek World (London 1988) 12.
- ³ R. Stuart Poole, B. V. Head, and P. Gardner, A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum - Sicily (London 1876).
- ⁴ Poole, vi.
- ⁵ B. V. Head, Historia Numorum - A Manuel of Greek Numismatics (Oxford 1887).
- ⁶ A. J. Evans, Syracusan Medallions (London 1892).
- ⁷ G. F. Hill, Coins of Ancient Sicily (Oxford 1903).
- ⁸ B. V. Head, Historia Numorum- A Manuel of Greek Numismatics² (Oxford 1911, Chicago reprint 1967) xv; the Sicilian section, 115-191.
- ⁹ E. Boehringer, Die Münzen von Syrakus (Berlin 1929).
- ¹⁰ A. Gallatin, Syracusan Dekadrachms of the Euainetos Type (Cambridge 1930).
- ¹¹ C. Seltman, Greek Coins² (London 1955, London reprint 1960) 187-8.
- ¹² Seltman, v.
- ¹³ J. H. Jongkees, The Kimonian Dekadrachms (Utrecht 1941).
- ¹⁴ G. K. Jenkins, "Electrum Coinage at Syracuse," Essays in Greek

- Coinage Presented to Stanley Robinson, C. Kraay and G. K. Jenkins, eds. (Oxford 1968) 145-162.
- 15 G. Richter, A Handbook of Greek Art (New York 1959) 243-250.
 - 16 Head, Historia Numorum, 171; C. Kraay and M. Hirmer, Greek Coins (New York 1966) 288.
 - 17 C. Kraay, Archaic and Classical Greek Coins (Berkeley 1976) 210; Head, 172.
 - 18 M. Finley, Ancient Sicily (New York 1968) 59.
 - 19 Carradice and Price, 68.
 - 20 Seltman, 128; G. K. Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins² (London 1990) 107; Kraay, 232.
 - 21 Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins, 144; Head, Historia Numorum, 181.
 - 22 R. R. R. Smith, Hellenistic Royal Portraits (Oxford 1988) 13.
 - 23 B. D. Wescoat, ed., Syracuse - the Fairest Greek City (Rome 1989) 18.
 - 24 The individual coin numbers are given below. After each number the sources are cited that identify the female head on the respective coin as Arethusa:
 - 1 Kraay and Hirmer, 289; Carradice and Price, 66.
 - 2 Kraay and Hirmer, 290.
 - 3 Kraay and Hirmer, 290.
 - 5 Kraay and Hirmer, 292; Hill, 98; Head, Historia Numorum, 176; Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins, 106.
 - 6 Kraay and Hirmer, 291.

- 7 Kraay and Hirmer, 291; Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins, 107; Hill, 111; Carradice and Price, 68.
- 25 H. Cahn, "Arethousa," Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae, vol. II (Zurich 1984) 582-4. LIMC identifies a tetradrachm from 495 B.C. and a dekadrachm from 480/479 B.C. as depictions of Arethusa, but they are not specifically labelled.
- 26 A. Moustaka, A. Goulaki-Voutira, and U. Grote, "Nike," Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae, vol. VI (Zurich 1992) 850-904. In LIMC, Nike is depicted on two coins that have only her head, yet one shows the tip of a wing (fig. 727) while the other has the legend of NIKA, specifically identifying her (fig. 730).
- 27 L. Kahil and N. Icard, "Artemis," Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae, vol. II (Zurich 1984) 618-753. Artemis is usually portrayed with her attribute the bow, although many of the coins which LIMC identifies as possibly being Artemis depict just a head. Many of the heads exhibit no attributes or legends specifically identifying them as Artemis.
- 28 Head, Historia Numorum, 176; Hill, 99.
- 29 White, Donald. "The Morris Coin - A Masterpiece of Euaenetus," Expedition. Bulletin of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia 27 (1986) 18.
- 30 White, 18.
- 31 White, 19.
- 32 Kraay, 210; Head, Historia Numorum, 172.
- 33 Kraay, 223; Head, Historia Numorum, 177.

- 34 Kraay and Hirmer, 288.
- 35 Seltman, 128; Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins, 107; Kraay, 232.
- 36 The characteristics of the Archaic Style are listed in B. S. Ridgway, The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture (Princeton, NJ 1977) 12-14; J. Hurwit, The Art and Culture of Early Greece, 1100-480 B.C. (Ithaca 1985) 18-31.
- 37 G. M. A. Richter, Korai: Archaic Greek Maidens (London 1968) no. 123, figs. 394-397.
- 38 For a summary of the Severe Style see B. S. Ridgway, The Severe Style in Greek Sculpture (Princeton, NJ 1970) 8-11.
- 39 E. Langlotz, Ancient Greek Sculpture of South Italy and Sicily (New York 1965), pls. 50-51.
- 40 For further discussion and description of the Classical Style see B. S. Ridgway, Fifth Century Styles in Greek Sculpture (Princeton, NJ 1981) 12-14.
- 41 Ridgway, Fifth Century Styles, pl. 46.
- 42 The Rich Style is defined briefly in Ridgway, Fifth Century Styles, xviii; also discussed as the style of 'the later fifth century', in J. J. Pollitt, Art and Experience in Classical Greece (Cambridge 1972) 111-135.
- 43 For an example of the work of the Meidias painter see Pollitt, Classical Greece, 124, fig. 55.
- 44 G. Richter, A Handbook of Greek Art (New York 1959) 129-134, figs. 185-188, 191-192.
- 45 The so-called Azara herm is assumed to be a Roman copy of a

fourth century portrait of Alexander by the artist Lysippos.

J. J. Pollitt, Art in the Hellenistic Age (Cambridge 1986) 21,
fig. 7.

46 A general overview of the styles of the Hellenistic period is
given in Pollitt, Hellenistic Age.

47 Pollitt, Classical Greece, 158, 160, figs. 67-68.

Catalogue

no. 1

AR Tetradrachm 485-479 B.C. (acc. no. 91.029)

Ob. Quadriga r., Nike crowning horses

Rv. Σ VRAKO Σ ION: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa surrounded
by four dolphins

↓ 17.33 g.

Purchased from Edward Gans, Jan. 1959

This coin demonstrates the development of two themes that became commonplace in Syracusan coinage. The obverse depicts a quadriga with Nike crowning the horses in victory. The representation of the quadriga is thought originally to have depicted the favorite pastime of the Syracusan aristocracy, the Gamoroi, who bred horses and sent chariots to compete under their names in the Olympic games.

The composition on the reverse has its origin in the earliest Syracusan reverse type of a simple square pattern. In later coins, a small female head then emerged from the center of the square. The next development of the reverse resulted in the square being replaced by an enlarged head surrounded by dolphins, which still continue the geometrical shape of the square.

The coin is dated to the first quarter of the fifth century due to its Archaic style. More specifically, numismatists hypothesize that the coin was minted between 485 B.C. and 479 B.C. through its relation to certain historical events. After the tyrant Gelon seized Syracuse in 485 B.C., the Nike crowning the horses was

introduced, probably in commemoration of his past Olympic victory in 488 B. C.¹ In addition, under the current dating of Syracusan coins, this type of tetradrachm is placed prior to the famous dekadrachms of 479 B. C. through style and die studies.

¹ C. Kraay, Archaic and Classical Greek Art (Berkeley 1976)

210; B. Head, Historia Numorum- A Manual of Greek Numismatics²
(Oxford 1911, Chicago reprint 1967) 172.

no. 2

AR Litra 474-450 B.C. (acc. no. 91.030)

Ob. Head of Arethusa r.

Rv. Σ VRA: Syracuse; sepia

↘ 0.76 g.

Purchased from Bank Leu, June 1, 1972

Dating between 474 and 450 B.C., this coin was minted during the beginning of sixty years of democracy in Syracuse. This form of government was a drastic change from the past tyranny under Gelon.

On the obverse is Arethusa, while the reverse depicts a sepia, a type of cuttlefish, probably referring to the rich sea life of the harbor at Syracuse. The reverse design for this native Sicel-based currency differs from the common chariot representation used for the Syracusan coins of Greek monetary system based upon the drachm. The litra is the standard denomination of the native Sicel currency and is equivalent to one fifth the value of the drachm. The variation in design might be related to the coin's origin from a different monetary system and also to its function as a smaller denomination.

Both the obverse and reverse are depicted in the Severe style, which is characterized by smoother transitions and more naturalistic representations than in the Archaic style (no. 1).

no. 3

AR Tetradrachm 450-439 B.C. (acc. no. 91.031)

Ob. Quadriga r., above Nike flying, crowning horses

Rv. $\Sigma\text{YPAK}[\text{o}]\text{\textasciitilde}\text{o}[\text{N}]$: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa,
surrounded by four dolphins

* 17.42 g

Purchased from Seaby's Oct. 12, 1972

This coin, depicting the traditional victorious chariot and Arethusa (no. 1), dates between 450 and 439 B.C. due to its rendering in a high Classical style (450-400 B.C.). This more naturalistic and less linear style utilizes modelling, which creates areas of light and shade as exemplified in the musculature of the horses on the obverse.

Arethusa has an unusual hair style, with her hair wrapped four times with a thin cord. The encircling dolphins are not so rigidly restrained by the original geometric form which established their arrangement as those in the Archaic coin (no. 1).

no. 4

AR Tetradrachm 412-400 B.C. (no acc. no.)

Ob. ΑΡΕ[00ΣΑ]: Arethusa; facing head of Arethusa

Rv. ΣΥΡΑΚΟ[ΣΙΩΝ]: of the Syracusans; quadriga; ear of barley
in exergue

[This coin was recently purchased by Miss Buerger and has not yet
been transferred to Lawrence University]

This coin, attributed to the artist Kimon, demonstrates a new, frontal rendering of Arethusa. Great detail is given to the eyes, which are large and clearly defined. Her hair, no longer in a bun, flows freely around her face. The headband in most compositions bears the name of the artist. The dolphins pass through her hair, as though swimming in waves.

On the reverse, the quadriga is portrayed in racing form. The item just below the hooves of the horses probably represents a racing post that has been knocked down during the race. The charioteer turns his head back for a glance at the competition. These elements add a realistic touch to the traditional depiction of the racing chariot, as exemplified in the chariots of no. 5 or no. 6 in the same period. The Nike is in a standing position, which is a modification of her usual flying position. In the exergue, the ear of barley probably represents the agricultural prosperity of the island.

The traditional view places this coin in association with the Syracusan victory over the Athenian troops in 413 B.C., a date

once also thought for nos. 5 and 6, although now refuted because of more research.

This coin is one of the most influential coins of the ancient world because of its new, yet well developed facing composition on the obverse. Probably influenced by this coin, similar facing female heads can be seen on coins from all parts of the Mediterranean, from Larissa to Tarsus. Although the coin did not circulate widely, its range of influence was vast, undoubtedly due to aesthetics rather than economics.

no. 5

AR Dekadrachm 405-400 B.C. (acc. no. 91.033)

Ob. ΣΥΡΑΚΟΙΣΙΩ: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa, l., with band and net holding hair, surrounded by four dolphins

Rv. Victorious quadriga l.; thorax, helmet, shield and greaves in exergue; below, ΑΘΛΑ : prizes

✓ 43.15 g.

Purchased from Bank Leu Oct. 26, 1973. Ex Pennisi Collection, Acireale, Sicily

This unsigned coin is attributed to the master engraver Kimon. His individual classical style is seen in specific details: a downward gaze, a small uplift at the corner of the lips, a curve at the tip of the nose, a tight composition of facial features, and an organized control over the hair.

The reverse, as in the dekadrachm no. 6, depicts a racing quadriga with military equipment in the exergue. The position of the horses' heads is even more varied, showing their strength and energy. The charioteer and the front horse cross the beaded outline of the coin and seem to break free of the framing constraints. The composition has smooth modelling and intricate details which result in a delicate approach.

Military equipment, consisting of a thorax, greaves, shield and a helmet, is placed in the exergue along with the word "prizes", which possibly refers to the awards of captured Athenian weapons given at Assinarian Games, which commemorated the Syracusan defeat of Athenian troops in 413 B.C. As a result of further research on

the chronology, the coin is dated to 405 B.C., which may celebrate the prevention by Dionysius of a Carthaginian attack on Syracuse.¹

¹ C. Kraay, Archaic and Classical Greek Coins (Berkeley 1976) 223-224.

no. 6

AR Dekadrachm 400-370 B.C. (acc. no. 91.032)

Ob. ΣΥΡΑΚ[ΟΞΙΩΝ]: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa, crowned with reeds, surrounded by four dolphins, dot below chin l.

Rv. Victorious quadriga l.; thorax, helmet, shield and greaves in exergue

W 43.16 g.

Purchased from Stacks, July 5, 1969

This coin, unsigned yet attributed to the artist Euainetos, has an obverse mark of a dot. The dot, with unknown significance, has been interpreted in three different ways: as a symbol of an assistant, the mark of a specific section of a mint which copied the Euainetos original, or a representation for the second decade of minting this Euainetos type of coin.¹

The Arethusa is rendered in the Rich style. Her face is delicately modelled, with great attention devoted to the eye. Minute details are seen in the strands of hair and the dangling earring. Her quiet yet majestic composure is reflective of the classical approach to expression in this period. Specific characteristic traits of Euainetos include: the straight nose, the lid of the eye curved down near the bridge of the nose, and energized curls of hair which bring the composition upward.

The reverse, a composition tense with energy, is a Classical rendering of the quadriga type. The modelled horses reveal curves in their bodies and legs which reflect the Classical, naturalistic

representation of the body. The horses are no longer in direct profile, but in three-quarter view, as are the two wheels of the quadriga, utilizing the techniques of foreshortening developed in the last quarter of the fifth century.² The horses are rearing on their hind legs, with only one horse touching the ground line. The heads of the horses are turned in various directions, demonstrating great movement. With one arm extended and holding a whip, the charioteer is hunched over in racing form.

¹ A. Gallatin, Syracusan Dekadrachms of the Euainetos Type (Cambridge 1930) 10, 12.

² C. C. Vermeule, "Chariot Groups in Fifth Century Greek Sculpture". Journal of Hellenic Studies 75 (1955) 104.

no. 7

AU 100 Litrae, Dionysius I 400-370 B.C. (acc. no. 91.034)

Ob. Head of Arethusa l., pellet behind neck.

Double struck.

Rv. Young nude Herakles kneeling r., strangling Nemean Lion

↗ 5.80 g.

Purchased from Malter Auction Mar. 20, 1975. Ex Santa Barbara
Museum of Art, 56

Dionysius I, the tyrant of Syracuse between 405 and 367 B.C., had a reign marked by almost continual warfare, especially with the Carthaginians. His large denominations, especially in gold like this coin equal to two silver dekadrachms, were minted largely for the purpose of paying mercenaries in his frequent battles. The coin is dated to 400-370 B.C. for economic and political reasons. Economically, gold was first minted in Syracuse around the turn of the century, thanks to its abundance resulting from conquests. Politically, Syracuse conquered Carthage in 396 B.C. and also in 392 B.C., which may have given Dionysius a reason for this coin's reverse composition of a struggle.¹

This coin probably refers to Dionysius' military campaigns and his struggles with Carthage. On the reverse, Herakles wrestling the lion symbolizes victory, specifically Greek over barbarian; by referring directly to this famous deed, Dionysius equated himself with Herakles and Carthage with the evil lion. This motif and

composition could have been influenced by the earlier and contemporary representations of Herakles from Heraclea in Magna Graecia.²

The obverse depicts the head of Arethusa. Her hair is bound in a net, with strands flowing out of the top in gentle waves. This coin has the same composition as coins by Euainetos and Kimon, but, like nos. 5 and 6, does not bear the signature of either artist. The coin has a pellet mark, which possibly stands for an issue mark.³

The Rich style of the reverse has a naturalistic manner emphasizing the muscular structure, especially in the torsos of both the lion and Herakles. The two huddled masses curve to the circular edge of the coin with their rounded backs, which gives the coin the energy and strength of the struggle yet the control and harmony of the Classical style.

The coin is double struck, its design has been pressed into the metal twice, thus, thereby leaving the images on the obverse and reverse blurred and not defined.

¹ C. Seltman, Greek Coins² (London 1955, London reprint 1960) 128;
G. K. Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins² (London 1990) 107;
C. Kraay, Archaic and Classical Greek Coins (Berkeley 1976)
232.

² R. R. Holloway, Art and Coinage in Magna Graecia (Bellinzona
1978) 56.

³ Kraay, 232.

no. 8

AU Drachm, Agathokles 317-310 B.C. (acc. no. 91.036)

Ob. Head of Apollo l.

Rv. [ΣΥΡΑ]ΚΟΣΙΛΛΗΝ : of the Syracusans; biga in full gallop r.;
below, triskeles

↓ 4.29 g.

Purchased from Abner Kreisberg, Oct. 14, 1971

Agathokles, the tyrant of Syracuse from 317 B.C. to 289 B.C., borrowed this composition from a coin of the Macedonian Philip II, who produced one of the most important coins from the middle fourth century. Agathokles used this imitation to establish an international currency immediately recognizable by its established type.¹

Apollo, depicted on the obverse, was also important in his own right as a god who was highly revered by Syracuse. A temple of Apollo was erected in the early sixth century and maintained through many centuries.

Agathokles' coin differs from Philip's coin in one respect, the placement of the legend for Syracuse on the reverse, along with the triskeles, Agathokles' personal symbol.² This coin is dated early in the reign of Agathokles, commencing in 317 B.C., when the triskeles appears on his coins as an identifying mark.

This coin of the late fourth century style is expressive, while still retaining some idealized qualities from the Classical fifth century. The Apollo has an overall idealized face, yet also illustrates an emotional quality shown in his furrowed brow, small

pouting mouth, and large sorrowful eye. In the reverse composition, the charioteer's arm is lifted high, giving the whole figure an upward movement. Through the use of perspective, the horses, seen in a three quarter view, are rearing in unison, seeming to take flight from the very short ground line.

¹ J. G. Milne, Greek Coinage (Oxford 1931) 94.

² B. Head, Historia Numorum - a Manuel of Greek Numismatics² (Oxford 1911, Chicago reprint 1967) 181; G. K. Jenkins, Ancient Greek Coins² (London 1990) 144.

no. 9

AR Tetradrachm, Agathokles 310-304 B.C. (acc. no. 91.037)

Ob. ΚΟΡΑΞ : of the maiden; head of Persephone crowned with corn leaves r.

Rv. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕ[ΟΞ] : of Agathokles; Nike erecting trophy r.; in the field r., triskeles, monogram: Α

↗ 17.09 g.

Purchased from Bank Leu, June 1, 1972

This coin refers to the Syracusan cult of Persephone and the victorious military accomplishments of Agathokles. Persephone, on the obverse, the goddess associated with crops and the changing of seasons, was important to Sicily, whose major resource was agriculture. She wears her hair flowing around her neck with corn intertwined through her hair. The common legend of Syracuse was replaced by ΚΟΡΑΞ, another name for Persephone.

The reverse commemorates Agathokles' victories in Sicily and at Carthage. Nike erects a trophy with its military equipment of thorax, greaves, and shield, as she nails with a hammer. The Nike is depicted as nude, which is common in the Hellenistic period. Agathokles also has many personal references, along with the Nike on the reverse. The addition of his name on the coin dates this coin between 310 and 304 B. C.¹ The triskeles refers to his dominance of the island. The monogram probably stands for Antandros, Agathokles' brother.²

¹ B. Head, Historia Numorum- a Manuel of Greek Numismatics²
(Oxford 1911, Chicago reprint 1967) 180.

² Head, 182.

no. 10

Electrum 100 Litrae, Agathokles 310-289 B.C. (acc. no. 91.038)

Ob. $\Sigma\text{ΥΡΑΚΟΣ} \mid \Lambda\text{N}$: of the Syracusans; laureate head of Apollo
with long hair l.; behind, bow

Rv. $\Sigma \text{NTEI} \text{PA}$: savior; head of Artemis r., at her shoulder
a quiver; behind, bow

← 6.99 g.

Purchased at Münzen und Medaillen Auction, Oct. 7, 1982.

This coin depicts two chief deities of Syracuse, the brother and sister, Apollo and Artemis. On the obverse, Apollo, highly revered in Syracuse, wears the laurel wreath with his long hair flowing down his neck. Lying behind his neck, a miniature bow, one of his attributes, is possibly an issue mark.¹

On the reverse, Artemis is referred to in the legend as 'deliverer' or 'savior'. Artemis, who had the entire island of Ortygia consecrated to her, was important to Syracuse from its beginning as a city.² She was associated with hunting, growth, and springs. Two of her attributes, the quiver and bow, are depicted on the left side of the coin.

Numismatists disagree about this coin's date, which ranges from the time of Dionysius to the time of Agathokles. A date after 310 B.C., during the time of Agathokles, seems most probable due to comparative studies of similar electrum types with hoard evidence.³

- ¹ G. K. Jenkins, "Electrum Coinage at Syracuse," Essays in Greek Coinage: Presented to Stanley Robinson, C. Kraay and G. K. Jenkins, eds. (Oxford 1968) 148.
- ² B. D. Wescoat, ed., Syracuse - The Fairest Greek City (Rome 1989) 18.
- ³ Jenkins, 153.

no. 11

Electrum 50 Litrae, Agathokles 310-289 B.C. (acc. no. 91.039)

Ob. Laureate head of Apollo l.; behind, bow

Rv. ΣΥΡΑΚ[ΟΞΙΩΝ] : of the Syracusans; tripod

✓ 3.66 g.

Purchased at Münzen und Medaillen Auction, July 11, 1978

This coin is in the same series of electrum coins as no. 10, and there are similar dating problems. The date of 310-289 B.C. is determined by comparative hoard analysis, although it still remains inconclusive.¹ The obverse depicts Apollo, who is a venerated god at Syracuse, and on the reverse is Apollo's attribute, the tripod. When minted, this coin was not placed properly, with the result that the left part of the coin with the remainder of the legend was not printed.

¹ G. K. Jenkins, "Electrum Coinage at Syracuse," Essays in Greek Coinage: Presented to Stanley Robinson, C. Kraay and G. K. Jenkins, eds. (Oxford 1968) 149-151.

no. 12

AU Stater, Agathokles 304-289 B.C. (acc. no. 91.035)

Ob. Head of Athena wearing Corinthian helmet r.

Rv. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΣ[Ε] ΒΑΣΙΛΕΟΣ : of Agathokles king; feathered
thunderbolt; below, monogram Ε

→ 5.77 g.

Purchased at Bank Leu Auction, May 8, 1979. Ex Bank Leu Auction
22, no. 40

This coin copies the stater minted in the 330s and 320s by Alexander the Great, who conquered the Persian empire through ambitious military campaigns. Associating himself with Alexander in this direct reference, Agathokles refers to his own position as an aggressive military leader with his victories over the Carthaginians and throughout Sicily and southern Italy.

Athena, on the obverse, was honored at Syracuse by a temple dedicated to her in the early fifth century on Ortygia. This representation of Athena is similar to that of earlier Syracusan coins, which were influenced by Corinthian coinage. The Syracusans asked Corinth, their mother-city, to assist in restoring order in 345 B. C. This regeneration brought in large amounts of Corinthian coinage, which the Syracusans copied after it had become widely used in the city. Although Athena has importance in Syracuse by her own right, her depiction on the copied stater probably refers to her position as one of Corinth's most important deities and as a main type on their coinage. For

Alexander, her depiction possibly alludes to the Corinthian League of which he was general.¹

The reverse depicts a feathered thunderbolt, possibly to reflect the power of Zeus. The inscription consists of Agathokles' name and his title of king, which he declared in 304 B.C. This is the first royal title taken by a Syracusan ruler, who was influenced by the Hellenistic precedent of using the title set by the ruler Antigonos in 306 B.C.² A monogram, with unknown significance, lies underneath the bottom inscription.

¹ I. Carradice and M. Price, Coinage in the Greek World (London 1988) 107.

² B. Head, Historia Numorum - a Manuel of Greek Numismatics² (Oxford 1911, Chicago reprint 1967) 182.

no. 13

AR 16 Litrae, Hieron II 269-216 B.C. (acc. no. 91.040)
Ob. Veiled head of Queen Philistis; behind, flaming torch
Rv. ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑΣ ΦΙΛΙΣΤΙΔ[ΟΣ]: of Queen Philistis;
Victory in quadriga; beneath the horses' legs, E
13.27 g.

Purchased from Edward Gans, Mar. 1959

Hieron II ruled over a peaceful period in Syracusan history. In 269 B.C., he took the title of king and used it on documents and portraits, and he and his wife wore the royal diadem. Heiron II frequently depicted his wife, Queen Philistis, on his coinage.

This representation of Philistis has prototypes in three different politically important sources. First, Philistis wears a veil, similar to the one that is worn by the goddess Demeter.¹ A depiction of Demeter, wearing a corn wreath and veil, on a Delphian coin minted in the 340s closely resembles that of Philistis, and was possibly a prototype for this coin. The depiction of Philistis as Demeter illustrates the connection between the current ruler and the ever-important goddess, Demeter. Second, this type of depiction of a female relation was developed in the previous Syracusan reign of Pyrrhus, when he depicted his mother in this manner, which could have influenced the coinage of Hieron. Third, Philistis' depiction resembles that of Arsinoe II, the wife of Ptolemy II, who was deified after her death in 270 B.C. and placed on coins of the monarchy. While two of the

previous rulers of Syracuse had marital associations with Ptolemy's line, Hieron associated himself with Ptolemy through imitation with this coin type and also through alteration of the Syracusan weight standard to that of the Ptolemaic coin standard.²

The obverse is typical of Hellenistic art, which now encompasses portraiture, specifically that of the rulers. This must be considered a portrait of Queen Philistis because her name is on the reverse, although the image is general and ideal. Another Hellenistic characteristic is that the drapery rests naturalistically over her head and hair.

The reverse depicts a racing quadriga reminiscent of the reverses of the great late fifth century Syracusan coins (nos. 4, 5, 6), from an era of great cultural flourishing of Syracuse. This Hellenistic composition shows a greater understanding of perspective, which was still being worked out in the Classical compositions.

The date of this coin is determined by the inscription on the reverse, which names Philistis as queen, thereby implying Hieron as king; therefore, the coin must date from Hieron's reign, 269 to 216 B.C.

¹ B. D. Wescoat, ed., Syracuse - the Fairest Greek City (Rome 1989) 97.

² C. Seltman, Greek Coins² (London 1955, London reprint 1960) 248.

Glossary

AR - the numismatic abbreviation for silver, argentum in Latin

AU - or AV - the numismatic abbreviation for gold, aurum in Latin

Biga - a chariot pulled by two horses

Dekadrachm - ten-drachm coin

Die - an engraved piece of metal used in the production of coins;
one piece was placed face up while another, face down, was
driven into a soft piece of metal between the two

Drachm - a standard of unit for Greek coins in silver weighing
approximately four grams

Electrum - an alloy composed of silver and gold

Epigraphy - the study of inscriptions

Exergue - an area, usually divided by a physical line, below the
main design of a coin

Field - the flat, blank area surrounding the images or letters on
a coin

Greaves - a piece of military equipment used to protect the lower
leg

Hoard - a group of two or more coins found together, useful in
analyzing the relationships between coins

Inscription - the letters or words written horizontally in
straight rows in the field of a coin

Legend - the letters or words that follow the curved edge of
the coin

Litra - the standard of the Sicel-based currency equal to one fifth the value of a drachm

Nemean Lion - the first of the ten labors of Herakles, who needed to obtain the hide of this lion with impenetrable skin, ultimately by strangling the beast

Nike - the Greek goddess of victory

Numismatics - the study of coins

Obverse - the front of the coin, usually thought to display the most important image

Quadriga - a chariot pulled by four horses

Reverse - the back, or opposite of the obverse, of a coin

Sepia - a type of cuttle-fish

Sicel - the name of the people who lived in Sicily before the Greek colonists arrived

Stater - a monetary standard initiated by the Ionian Greeks; minted in electrum (approximately fourteen grams), then in silver (eleven grams) or gold (eight grams)

Tetradrachm - a four-drachm coin

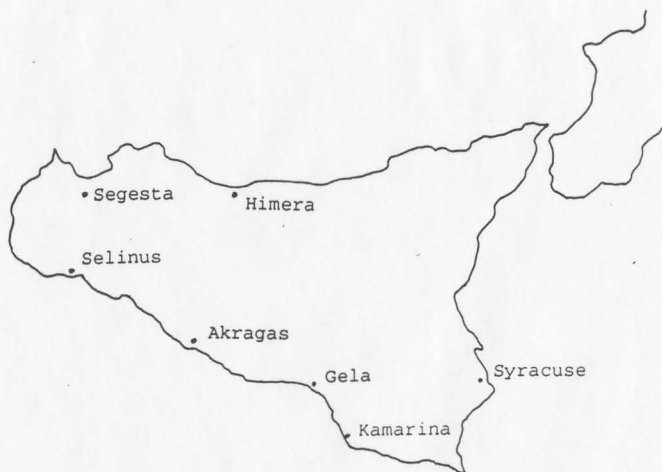
Thorax - a breast-plate

Triskeles - a symbol with three legs attached at a hip, as in a rotating wheel, traditionally associated with Sicily and other three-sided islands.

MAP OF THE GREEK WORLD



Map of Sicily



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Plates



no. 1

485-479 B.C.

AR Tetradrachm

Ob. Quadriga r., Nike crowning horses

Rv. Σ VRAKΩ Σ ION : of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa surrounded
by four dolphins





no. 2

474-450 B.C.

AR Litra

Ob. Head of Arethusa r.

Rv. ξ VRA: Syracuse; sepia





no. 3

450-439 B.C.

AR Tetradrachm

Ob. Quadriga r., above Nike flying, crowning horses

Rv. ΣΥΡΑΚ[Ο]ΣΙΩ[Ν]: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa,
surrounded by four dolphins





no. 4

412-400 B.C.

AR Tetradrachm

Ob. ΑΡΕ[ΘΟΞΑ]: Arethusa; facing head of Arethusa

Rv. ΞΥΡΑΚΟ[ΞΙΩΝ]: of the Syracusans; quadriga; ear of barley
in exergue





no. 5

405-400 B.C.

AR Dekadrachm

Ob. ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΝ: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa, l., with band and net holding hair, surrounded by four dolphins

Rv. Victorious quadriga l.; thorax, helmet, shield and greaves in exergue; below, ΑΘΛΑ : prizes





no. 6

400-370 B.C.

AR Dekadrachm

Ob. ΣΥΡΑΚ[ΟΣΙΔΝ]: of the Syracusans; head of Arethusa, crowned with reeds, surrounded by four dolphins, dot below chin l.

Rv. Victorious quadriga l.; thorax, helmet, shield and greaves in exergue





no. 7

400-370 B.C.

AU 100 litrae

Ob. Head of Arethusa l., pellet behind neck.

Double struck.

Rv. Young nude Herakles kneeling r. strangling Nemean Lion





no. 8

317-310 B.C.

AU Drachm

Ob. Head of Apollo l.

Rv. [ΞΥΡΑ]ΚΟΞΙΩΝ : of the Syracusans; biga in full gallop r.;
below, triskeles





no. 9

310-304 B.C.

AR Tetradrachm

Ob. ΚΟΡΑΣ : of the maiden; head of Persephone crowned with corn leaves r.

Rv. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕ[ΟΣ] : of Agathokles; Nike erecting trophy r.; in the field r., triskeles, monogram: Α





no. 10

310-289 B.C.

Electrum 100 Litrae

Ob. $\Sigma\Upsilon\text{ΡΑΚΟ}\Sigma\text{Ι}\Lambda\text{Ν}$: of the Syracusans; laureate head of Apollo
with long hair l.; behind, bow

Rv. $\Sigma\Lambda\text{ΤΕΙ}\text{ΡΑ}$: 'savior'; head of Artemis r., at her shoulder a
quiver; behind, bow





no. 11

310-289 B.C.

Electrum 50 Litrae

Ob. Laureate head of Apollo l.; behind, bow

RV. ΕΥΡΑΚ[ΟΞΙΩΝ] : of the Syracusans; tripod





no. 12

304-289 B.C.

AU Stater

Ob. Athena head wearing Corinthian helmet r.

Rv. ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ : of Agathokles king; feathered lightning; below, monogram Ε





no. 13

269-216 B.C.

AR 16 Litrae

Ob. Veiled head of Queen Philistis; behind, flaming torch

Rv. ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΑΣ ΦΙΛΙΣΤΙΔ[ΟΣ] : of Queen Philistis; Victory in quadriga; beneath the horses' legs, E

