

**Money on the Margins: Coinage, Forms and Strategies of Intercultural Commerce on the Black Sea Shore in the Classical and Hellenistic Eras**

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Generously funded by the Israel Science Foundation and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the conference brought together 28 scholars from 15 different countries to discuss various aspects of coinage and ancient trade in the Black Sea region in pre-Roman times. Aiming to explore this topic from an interdisciplinary (archaeological, numismatic and historical) perspective, the conference addressed a number of questions relevant not only to this specific region but to all areas where monetized societies deal with non-monetary neighbors: Were the non-Greeks really more hesitant than the Greeks to adopt coinage? Were there currencies that were used especially for trading with non-Greeks? Did Greek traders travel to the non-Greeks or the other way around? Did long-term relationships lead to the adoption of coinage by the non-Greeks? Papers presented at the conference offered rich empirical material and observations that stimulate further thought with regard to these problems.

The advent of monetary economies in the classical world was marked by the emergence of various pre-monetary objects dealt with in the papers by MARIA CACCAMO CALTABIANO (Messina) and MARIANGELA PUGLISI (Messina), VICTOR COJOCARU (Bucarest), GABRIEL TALMAȚCHI (Constanța) and DAVID SCHAPS (Ramat Gan). Appearing both in the Black Sea and in the Western Mediterranean, their shapes,

chronologies, and metrological standards, differ significantly, raising an important question as to whether these objects had similar functions in both regions, and what are the criteria to judge whether this or that object functioned as a means of exchange. SELENE PSOMA (Athens), basing herself on the epigraphic evidence, studied monetization patterns in the Pontus from a diachronic perspective.

Several papers (MARIA CACCAMO CALTABIANO (Messina) and MARIANGELA PUGLISI (Messina), BENEDETTO CARROCCIO (Messina), THIBAUT CASTELLI (Paris), Victor Cojocaru, VLADIMIR GORONCHAROVSKIY (St Petersburg), IGOR KHRAPUNOV (Simferopol), ULRIKE PETER (Berlin), ELENA STOLYARIK (New York)) in one way or the other explored connections between the colonies and the hinterland, as well as between the colonies and the native rulers, presenting material from the hinterland that suggests diverse roles and meanings of coins in specific historical contexts and situations that ranged from commercial exchange to expressions of political relationship and dependencies. The use of coins involved both monetary and non-monetary functions. Most of the coins found in the hinterland, however, seem to provide evidence of commercial relationships with the coastal Greek communities. An example of a currency serving specifically the purpose of foreign exchange is offered by the silver coinage of Istros, which, as shown by Gabriel Talmațchi, circulated widely but not in the city itself. This does not, of course, fully rule out the possibility of other factors responsible for such a distribution pattern.

The picture of regional monetary economies will always be incomplete without understanding the role the coinage played in various spheres of state finance such as taxes, fees, debts, public expenses, tribute, etc., discussed in the paper by FRANÇOIS DE CALLATAÏ (Brussels). Coins from archaeological contexts seem to be mute with regard to these questions, and, as far as the Black Sea area is concerned, the textual evidence here remains the principal source of information. Two key epigraphic testimonies

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from Classical and Hellenistic Olbia, the so-called honorific decrees of Kanobos and Protogenes, were specifically addressed in the papers of LIU JUN (Changchun) and SOFIA ANDREEV (Beer-Sheva).

The varying meaning of coins unmistakably comes to light in the uses of coins in burial contexts. Two papers presented at the conference by NIKITA KHRAPUNOV (Simferopol) and EMZAR KAKHIDZE (Batumi) discussed coin finds from the Greek and indigenous burial grounds in Georgia and Crimea where examples of regular coins come side by side with those used secondarily as jewelry or charms. Georgian material from the Pichvnari necropolis offers one of the earliest examples of a 'coin of the dead' which antedates the written evidence testifying to the 'Charon's obol' tradition in the Aegean. The use of large denominations, such as the electrum staters of Kyzikos and the silver drachms of Sinope, is another remarkable phenomenon demonstrated by the Pichvnari material.

One of the main aims of the conference was to bring together archaeologists and numismatists in order to get a better understanding of the empirical evidence known to each group. Several papers discussing the situation in the steppes and forest-steppes north and north-west of the Black Sea, as well as in Crimea and Georgia: IGOR BRUYAKO (Odessa), VLADIMIR STOLBA (Aarhus), STAS ZADNIKOV (Kharkiv), NIKITA KHRAPUNOV (Simferopol), EMZAR KAKHIDZE (Batumi); the speakers demonstrated that the cross-fertilization of approaches and the parallel study of different datasets can yield new and interesting results. The distribution of amphora finds on the Black Sea coast was analyzed in the paper by SHIMON EPSTEIN (Ramat Gan). Several papers by VASILICA LUNGU (Bucarest), MICHAEL ABRAMZON (Magnitogorsk), MARIANA MINKOVA (Stara Zagora), and EMANUEL PETAC (Bucarest), treated important hoards, stray finds and their interpretation, as well as coin production and imitations of specific local mints (HRISTINA IVANOVA (Berlin)).

Material presented at the conference demonstrated both geographical and chrono-

logical variation governed by specific positions in the landscape, local traditions, mechanisms of exchange, political contexts, and, last but not least, by the different nature of the foreigners with whom the Greeks had to deal (David Schaps). Some similarities could also be observed, though. This raises the important question of whether this situation renders the potential regional or general models meaningful. Along with this question, the conference's final discussion also addressed the question of data-sets. Papers presented clearly demonstrate that the sizes of the data-sets vary significantly from one region to another, which raises the questions of comparability and statistical reliability. Among the factors impacting these differences in the data-sets, sampling strategies play a key role. This aspect is inseparable from the question of how to handle the new market material appearing in large quantities and deriving from illicit metal detector surveys. Should this material be taken into account or ignored altogether because of ethical concerns? These questions were briefly touched upon in some of the papers (particularly that of Vladimir Stolba) but call for a broader discussion.

The same can be said for the questions discussed in the brilliant general overviews offered by Alain Bresson, François de Callataÿ and David Schaps. While ALAIN BRESSON (Chicago) focused on the role of the prestigious metals, David Schaps asked the question of why bronze was so important in the Black Sea area. The special role of the Pontic area in the general frame of monetization in the Greek world was discussed in depth by François de Callataÿ.

### **Conference Overview:**

#### *Keynote*

FRANÇOIS DE CALLATAÿ (Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium): Money at the margin: how to evaluate the role of coinages for intercultural trade? The case of the Black Sea.

#### *Session I: Northwest Pontic Area: Interpretation*

VICTOR COJOCARU (Bucarest, Romanian Academy of Sciences): Money on the Margins: Between the Numismatic Discovery

of the „Good Savage“ and the Emergence of a Common Greek-Barbaric Market in the North-Western Black Sea Area.

IGOR BRUYAKO (Odessa, Archaeological Museum): Properties of trade-economic relations within the North-West Black Sea Region in the antique time.

GABRIEL TALMATCHI (Constanța, Muzeul de Istorie Național și Arheologie) : Paths and ways of manifestation of the Greek autonomous coins from Histria, Callatis and Tomis in chora and the fortified settlements of the autochthonous population from the Dobrudjan space.

*Session II: Northwest Pontic Area: Significant Hoards*

THIBAUT CASTELLI (Paris, University Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense): The monetarisation of indigenous inhabitants from Dobruja: the Scythian kings and Moskon's Hellenistic royal coinages.

VASILICA LUNGU (Bucarest, Romanian Academy of Sciences): Revisiting the silver coins hoard at Orgame (on the west coast of the Black Sea).

MARIANA MINKOVA (Stara Zagora, Museum of History): Hellenistic coins and coin hoards from the Historical museum in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria.

EMANUEL PETAC (Bucarest, Romanian Academy of Sciences): About the Sarmizegetusa 1998 hoard and the chronology of Burebista campaign to the Black Sea.

*Session III: Dynastic Interactions*

ULRIKE PETER (Berlin, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften): Coins of the Odrisian dynasts – objects of communication.

ELENA STOLYARIK (New York, American Numismatic Society): Coin Finds and Monetary Interaction between the Scythian Kingdom of the Dobrudja and the Greek Cities of the West Pontic Region

*Session IV: Magna Graecia*

MIKHAIL ABRAMZON (Magnitogorsk, Nosov State Technical University): A hemidrahm from Akragas in the Kerch Museum: evidence for trade contacts of the Bosphorus with Sicily and Magna Graecia.

MARIA CACCAMO CALTABIANO / MARIANGELA PUGLISI (Messina, University of Messina (in absentia)): „Frontier Coinage“: the Sicilian experience.

BENEDETTO CARROCCIO (Messina, University of Messina (in absentia)): Magna Graecia Incuse Coins for Non-Greek Elites?

*Session V: Region of the Cimmerian Bosphorus*

VLADIMIR GORONCHAROVSKIY (St Petersburg, Russian Academy of Sciences): Coinage of Sindike in the Late 5th - Early 4th Centuries BCE.

IGOR KHRAPUNOV (Simferopol, Vernadsky Crimean Federal University): Economy and Trade Connections of Crimean Barbarians in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods.

NIKITA KHRAPUNOV (Simferopol, Vernadsky Crimean Federal University): Coin Finds in Crimean Cemeteries from the Late Roman Period as a Reflection of Contacts between the Local Barbarians and the Greco-Roman World.

*Session VI: Forest-steppe and Beyond*

STAS ZADNIKOV (Kharkiv, V. N. Karazin National University): Greek coins in the territory of the forest-steppe Scythia.

VLADIMIR STOLBA (Aarhus, Aarhus University): Greek coins in non-Greek contexts: Greek-Scythian trade in light of finds from the steppe and forest-steppe regions.

*Session VII: Epigraphy and Amphorae*

SOFIA ANDREEV (Beer-Sheva, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev): On the date of the Olbian decree in honour of Protogenes (IosPE I2 32).

LIU JUN (Changchun, Northeast Normal University): An Attempt at Adoption of a Silver Standard? One Possible Point of View on the „Kanobos Decree“ (IosPE I2 24).

SHIMON EPSTEIN (Ramat Gan, Bar-Ilan University): Eating and Drinking like Greeks: Why did so Many Greek Amphorae Go to the Northern Black Sea Coast?

*Session VIII: Traveling Coins*

HRISTINA IVANOVA (Berlin, Humboldt University): Imitations of Apollonia Pontike's Coinage Shaped by the Dynamics of an Apoikia's Relations.

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EMZAR KAKHIDZE (Batumi, Archaeological Museum): Classical period coins discovered at Pichvnari, eastern Black Sea area.

*Keynote*

ALAIN BRESSON (Chicago, University of Chicago): Gold and Silver in the Black Sea in the Classical period.

*Session IX: Monetization*

DAVID M. SCHAPS (Ramat Gan, Bar-Ilan University): Another Route for the Beginnings of Coinage.

SELENE PSOMA (Athens, University of Athens): Monetary Units and Monetization in the Black Sea through the Classical and the Hellenistic Periods.

*Session X: Summary*

ULRIKE PETER (Berlin, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften) / DAVID M. SCHAPS (Ramat Gan, Bar-Ilan University) / VLADIMIR STOLBA (Aarhus, Aarhus University): Panel Discussion

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