

# NUMISMATICA E ANTICHITÀ CLASSICHE



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## THE ATZERITIS HOARD FROM KEA 1987\*

The numismatic history of Kea and its cities presents a number of problems<sup>1)</sup>. One of the chief difficulties is the lack of sufficiently well dated closed groups containing coins from Kea. This applies also to the Archaic period, but in the later periods it is a major problem. The limited circulation of its bronze coins, together with Kea's insignificant political influence, resulted in few of its coins occurring in large hoards outside of the island. Isolated excavation finds include five bronze coins of Ioulis, one from Delos<sup>2)</sup>, one from Pella<sup>3)</sup>, and the others from the Athenian Agora, and ten bronze coins of the Keans, most of them from the Agora at Athens<sup>4)</sup> and two from the Sanctuary of Poseidon on Tinos<sup>5)</sup>. From the Agora of Athens too come three more coins of Koresia and four of Karthaia. In all twenty four cases they were stray finds and not from coin groups that might reflect contacts between Kea and other regions.

Most of the coins from other cities that have been found on Kea do not come from well dated excavation levels. This situation appeared to have

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<sup>1)</sup> CH. PAPAGEORGIADOU-BANIS, *The coinage of Kea*, in the press.

<sup>2)</sup> Cf. *BMC*, 69-70; T. HACKENS, «Les monnaies» in P. Bruneau et al., *L'îlot de la maison des comédiens*, Paris 1970, 397, pl. 67.

<sup>3)</sup> From the excavations of the 17th Ephorate of Classical Archaeology; it belongs to a very rare type of which only three examples are known.

<sup>4)</sup> Cf. *BMC*, 1-11; two of them were found in the fill over the southern section of the drain south of the Roman bath, which was destroyed at the end of the 2nd/beginning of 1st c. BC. On this, see F.S. KLEINER, *The Agora Excavations and Athenian Bronze Coinage 200-86 BC*, «Hesperia» 45, 1976, 19 and R.S. YOUNG, *An Industrial District of Ancient Athens*, «Hesperia» 20, 1951, 263, where it is attributed to Karthaia. For the finds from the Athenian Agora, see J.H. KROLL, *The Athenian Agora*. Volume XXVI. *The Greek Coins*, American School of Classical Studies at Athens 1993, 251-252.

<sup>5)</sup> Cf. *BMC*, 1, 4; They came from the Sanctuary of Poseidon, from 2nd/1st c. levels. R. ETIENNE, *Ténos et les Cyclades du milieu du IV<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.C. au milieu du III<sup>e</sup> s. après J.C.*, *BEFAR* 263, 1, 12, Paris 1990, 498, nos. 67, 68, pl. 156.

changed when in 1987 a small hoard found at Atzeritis, near Karthaia, was handed over to the Archaeological Service. Unfortunately much important evidence had been destroyed by the finder, Mr. A. Mykoniatis, who seems also to have contaminated the contents of the hoard in an effort to get rid of other coins which he had found elsewhere. According to his statement, Mykoniatis had found fourteen bronze Kea and three silver Athenian coins, only two of which he handed in, inside a small vase, probably a lacrimarium or unguentarium, to judge from his description, which he broke, thus depriving us of a relative chronology based on its typology.

It is clear, however, in spite of Mykoniatis's statement, that the two Athenian coins, which date to the 4th c. BC<sup>6)</sup>, could not possibly have come from the same hoard, and that they most probably belonged to another hoard found by him on a different occasion. If this is the case, then the actual Atzeritis hoard would have consisted only of coins from Kea.

## CATALOGUE

### *Koinon of the Keans*

		<i>Obv. Aristaeus r.</i>		
		<i>Rev. Sirius l.</i>		
1.	4.74	(1)	16	<i>Obv. Aristaeus with floral crown.</i>
2.	4.46	(1)	16	<i>Obv. Different rendering. Rev. KEI</i>
3.	3.61	(11)	14	Similar. Possibly by the same cutter. KEI between the rays of Sirius.
4.	3.41	(12)	14	Similar.
5.	3.52	(4)	14	Similar.
6.	3.57	(11)	15	Similar. Same <i>Rev.</i>
7.	4.61	(11)	15	Same.
8.	3.88	(2)	15	Same <i>Obv.</i>
9.	4.17	(10)	16	Same <i>Rev.</i> as 7.
10.	3.40	(12)	16	Similar.
11.	4.37	(7)	15	<i>Obv. Aristaeus with radiate hair.</i> <i>Rev. K EI.</i>
12.	4.63	(8)	15	Similar.

<sup>6)</sup> They are a drachm of 4,23 g. and a triobol of 1,97 g.: cf. J.H. KROLL, *The Athenian Agora*. Volume XXVI. *The Greek Coins*, American School of Classical Studies at Athens 1993, 20, nos 17 and 19, pl. 2 and 3, dated to 390-295 B.C. It should also be pointed out that Mykoniatis, together with these coins, also handed over a Byzantine trachy of the late 12th/early 13th c. like M.F. HENDY, *Coinage and Money under the Byzantine Empire 1081-1261*, *Dumbarton Oaks Studies XII*, Harvard 1969, 218, pl. 24, nos. 1-9, type I, weighing 2,89 g.

*Karthaia*

*Obv.* Aristaeus r.  
*Rev.* Sirius l.; K A  
 P

13. 4.06 (7) 16

*Obv.* Aristaeus r.  
*Rev.* 8-rays star. Between the rays KAP

14. 2.58 (12) 12

The coins inscribed with the ethnic ΚΕΙΩΝ form the largest group in the hoard in terms of percentage. Different issues can be distinguished, covering a representative spectrum of the total of this series, which essentially forms the main bulk of the coinage minted by the Keans.

This production is in fact characterised by the use of a principal numismatic type, Aristaeus/Sirius, in which individual issues can be distinguished according to differences in the treatment of the obverse type, and which constitutes the basic fraction. The same principles that governed the issues of the cities of Kea were also followed here<sup>7)</sup>.

It is this almost identical repetition of the same type, which suggests that the numismatic activity of the Keans, dated by excavation and stylistic evidence to the 2nd c. BC<sup>8)</sup>, consisted in a concentrated production of coins that was restricted to a limited period of time.

Many other aspects of Kean minting elude us, however<sup>9)</sup>, such as the identity of the authority that issued the coins. The fact also that they were inscribed with the ethnic ΚΕΙΩΝ, in contrast to the coinage of the other cities, and based on well-known parallels from other mints, should be considered to indicate the existence of a political body representing all the Keans and possessing the authority and right to mint its own coins. That such a common organisation of Keans existed may be deduced from various indications, but there is no specific evidence for the actual form of the political regime. It should probably be thought of as being some sort of confederacy, regardless of whatever may have been its individual peculiarities.

<sup>7)</sup> The absence of diacritical emblems and an adherence to a basic fraction, which was rarely supplemented by others of lower denominations.

<sup>8)</sup> The very few coins from the excavations mentioned above in notes 4 and 5 are very important for dating the minting activities of the Koinon.

<sup>9)</sup> For the whole question of the Koinon, see CH. PAPAGEORGIADOU-BANIS, *Koinon of the Keians? The Numismatic Evidence*, «RBN» CXXXIX (1993), 9-16.

The second, smaller group in the hoard was that of Karthaia.

It is noteworthy that out of a total of eight different series struck by Karthaia, many of which are very important, only two coins were found in the Atzeritis hoard, and both of them date to the latest issues of that city. One of them (no. 13) belongs to a series from which two other coins have survived, making three in all, while the second (no. 14) belongs to a unique series of fractions from Karthaia<sup>10)</sup>.

No. 13 is especially interesting, since it is very rare and depicts the types of the Keans, but is inscribed with the letters KAP, confirming the existence of an intermediate type which combined elements of both mints, and thus also confirming that the mint of the Koinon was situated at Karthaia<sup>11)</sup>.

The Atzeritis hoard does not throw much direct light on the chronological problems of the Kean mints, but even with its limited composition we can form certain conclusions.

The low denomination of the coins suggests that they had not been hidden because of their value, but formed part of the regular body of coins that was in circulation at a particular period and was in current use when for some reason their owner «lost» them. That they were all minted in the same years is further confirmed by the similar degree of wear they exhibit. The composition of the hoard may therefore be assumed to reflect the circulation of the local currency on Kea at one particular time. Consequently, the finding of the latest Karthaian issues together with coins of the Keans in the same hoard also gives an indication of their date.

We believe that the last Karthaian coins, which were also the models for the first Kean issues, continued to circulate alongside the latter for as long as their state of wear allowed, until they were replaced entirely by the coins of the Koinon, which continued to be struck for the rest of the 2nd century BC<sup>12)</sup>.

The Atzeritis hoard falls within the general context of the Kean numismatic circulation, to judge from the isolated pieces of evidence that have come to light.

<sup>10)</sup> Similar series, with the same iconographic types and denominations, were also struck by the other cities, Koresia and Ioulis, as well as by the Koinon.

<sup>11)</sup> This hypothesis is further supported by the existence of common obverse type die impressions among these very few coins of Karthaia and the Koinon.

<sup>12)</sup> CH. PAPAGEORGIADOU-BANIS, *Koinon of the Keians? The Numismatic Evidence*, «RBN» CXXXIX (1993), 9-16. For a different view, see G. REGER, M. RISSE, *Coinage and Federation*, in J.F. CHERRY, J.L. DAVIS, E. MANTZOURANI, *Landscape Archaeology as Long-Term History: Northern Keos in the Cycladic Islands* (Monumenta Archaeologica 16), Los Angeles 1991.



In theory, the greater part of Kean commerce must have been transacted using the coins of other cities. The economy of the island was closely bound up with, if not totally dependent on, the neighbouring regions and the occasional obligatory or otherwise alliances and suzerainties<sup>13</sup>. Any large internal transactions must also have been reckoned on the basis of the strong currencies of the period. Unfortunately the inscriptions recording the revenues and offerings received by the sanctuaries give the amounts in drachms but do not specify the metric system used.

Equally problematic and inadequate is the evidence for circulation of the currency. Surface surveys and excavations to date have produced very few coins minted in other cities. They include a bronze coin from Mykonos dating between the 3rd and 1st centuries BC, which was a surface find from the north of the island<sup>14</sup>, five Athenian coins, among which were the two already mentioned that were handed in by Mykoniatis, a bronze coin<sup>15</sup> dating to about 25 BC, found in the Ayia Eirene excavations, a second bronze coin, also dating to the 1st c. BC<sup>16</sup>, found by the Ephor of Antiquities K. Tsakos on the shore between Koresia and Vourkari, and a third one of the same type, which came from the acropolis at Poiessa. A bronze coin of Cassander (306-297 BC)<sup>17</sup> was found in the Ayia Eirene excavations, but most of them were Ptolemaic: two from the Karthaia district, four at Koresia, one at Ioulis and the rest at Ayia Eirene<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> In the Archaic period the circulation of the Aiginetic coinage, not only in the Cyclades, but over a wider area, is unquestionable, but later on Kea came within the political sphere of influence of Athens, and probably of Eretria, the Macedonians and Ptolemies, Rhodes and inevitably the Romans.

<sup>14</sup> J.F. CHERRY, J.L. DAVIS, E. MANTZOURANI, *Landscape Archaeology as Long-Term History: Northern Keos in the Cycladic Islands* (Monumenta Archaeologica 16), Los Angeles 1991, especially E. MANTZOURANI, *Appendix I: Coins and Commentary*, Ch. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. J. KROLL, *Two Hoards of First Century B.C. Athenian Bronze Coins*, «ΑΔ» 27, 1972, A' (1973), 118, nos. 657-689, Pl. 39, 12-16.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. F. KLEINER, *The Agora Excavations and Athenian Bronze Coinage 200-86 B.C.*, «Hesperia» 45, 1976, 45, nos. 31-33, Pl. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. SNG Cop, 1142-1153.

<sup>18</sup> Of these:

- One is mentioned by P. GRAINDOR, *Fouilles de Karthaia*, «BCH» 29, 1905, 351-352, without any further information that might identify it with the existing ones.
- One, again from Karthaia, is of Ptolemy II similar to I.N. SVORONOS, *Tà νομίσματα τοῦ κράτους τῶν Πτολεμαίων*, Athens 1904 (henceforth *Ptolemaiioi*), no. 617, Pl. II, 32, which was published by Varoucha, «Συμβολὴ εἰς τὸν Χρεμωνίδειον Πόλεμον», «ΑΕ» 1953-1954 (1961) 329. The same coin is also

The large number of Ptolemaic coins is due partly to the economic strength of the Ptolemies and partly to the installation of a naval base on Kea at Koresia<sup>19)</sup> as well as to the continuous movements of the Ptolemaic fleet in the area during the Chremonidian War<sup>20)</sup>.

#### COINS FROM FOREIGN MINTS ON KEA

	ATHENS	MYKONOS	CASSANDER	PTOLEMIES
KARTHAIA	2 AR (4th B.C.)			2
IOULIS				1
KORESIA	1 AE (1st B.C.)	1 AE (1st B.C.)		4
AG. EIRINI	1 AE (25 B.C.)		306-297	6
POIESSA	1 AE (1st B.C.)			
KEA				1
TOTAL	5	1	1	14

mentioned by R.S. BAGNALL, *The Administration of the Ptolemaic Possessions outside Egypt*, Leiden 1976, 204.

- Two of Ptolemy II similar to Svoronos, *Ptolemaioi*, no. 576, Pl. XIII, 19-22, came from the cleaning of the Mouzakis building on the Koresia acropolis.
- One of Ptolemy I or II, similar to Svoronos, *Ptolemaioi*, nos. 269-288, Pl. X, 1-10, was found in the excavations at Ayia Eirene.
- A similar one was also found at Koresia, in 1984, by W. Hoepfner, architect of the DAI.
- One of Ptolemy II was found at Ioulis in 1964 by the custodian of antiquities, El. Lepouras.
- One of Ptolemy II came from a surface survey in northern Kea, near Vourkari, in the Koresia district: E. MANTZOURANI, in J.F. CHERRY, J.L. DAVIS, E. MANTZOURANI, *Landscape Archaeology as Long-Term History: Northern Keos in the Cycladic Islands* (Monumenta Archaeologica 16), Los Angeles 1991.
- One other, probably of Euergetes, was bought by J.L. CASKEY on the island, and
- at least five more, very worn, came from Ayia Eirene.

<sup>19)</sup> J.F. CHERRY and J.L. DAVIS have recently returned to this identification: *The Ptolemaic base at Koressos*, «BSA» 86, 1991, 9-28. They also give a synoptic table of the Ptolemaic coins found on Kea, but mention only five of them.

<sup>20)</sup> For the circulation of Ptolemaic coins, particularly those of Ptolemy II, see E. VAROUCCHA-CHRISTODOULOPOULOU, Πτολεμαϊκὰ νομίσματα στην κυρίως Ελλάδα,



It seems in a general way that, regardless of time periods, the circulation of foreign coins on Kea was concentrated in two main centres: the sanctuaries at Karthaia, where not only the faithful congregated, but also merchants travelling in the area; and Koresia which, due to its key position on the sea routes, was an indispensable port of call for ships sailing along the Attic coast and to the Cyclades<sup>21)</sup>.

Αρχεῖον τοῦ Θρακικοῦ Λαογραφικοῦ καὶ Γλωσσικοῦ Θησαυροῦ, Αθήνα 1941, 668-679, and eadem, Συμβολὴ εἰς τὸν Χρεμωνίδειον Πόλεμον, «ΑΕ» 1953-1954 (1961)<sup>2</sup>, 321-349. See also T. Hackens, *A propos de la circulation monétaire dans le Péloponnèse au III<sup>e</sup> s. av. J.-C.*, in *Antidoron Peremans*, 82-90. For the currency policy of the Ptolemies generally, TH. R. MARTIN, *Sovereignty and Coinage in Classical Greece*, Princeton 1985, 225.

<sup>21)</sup> It is indicative that during the Archaic period coins of Koresia, but not of the other cities, are found overstruck on Aiginetic coins and viceversa.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14

