

THE EXCAVATION COINS OF MARONEIA: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

The excavations that began in Maroneia in the late 1960s by E. Pentazos brought to light a considerable number of Greek and Roman coins from several parts of the Hellenistic and Roman city.¹ The most important number comes from the theatre and the so-called ancient sanctuary, in an area named Kambana, the Southeastern part of the city, and from the urban section, in the areas of Palaiofigada, Kambana and Ochthos.²

The coins found in this urban area are mostly bronzes of Maroneia and Orthogoreia. The two gold coins, of Philip II and Lysimachos, were found in a house with mosaics and this is quite significant for the social and financial status of the owner. No coins were found as Charon's fee and no hoards have ever been excavated at the site.³

Foreign coins are concentrated in the Byzantine tower by the harbour in Hagios Charalambos, the ancient theatre and the so-called *Hieron*. The oldest coins come from the *Hieron*. In these areas and especially in the theatre an important number of foreign coins were found: during the Roman Period people were coming there from neighbouring cities to enjoy *monomachiai* and *kynegesia*.⁴ Of the eight (8) specimens of Topeiros, three (3) came from the theatre, a part of which was reserved for the citizens of Topeiros as the inscription ΤΟΠΕΙΡΟΥ on the third row of seats of the second *cunei* (κερκίς) of the *cavea* (κοίλον) reveals (fig. 1; *IThrAeg* 265).

As in all excavated sites, the majority of coins found in Maroneia are issues of that city. After Maroneia, the mint of Orthogoreia is represented with more than two hundred (200) bronze specimens and Abdera with sixty two (62) coins.⁵ All other cities are represented by a limited number of coins.

In Maroneia there are four (4) clearly distinguished chronological periods:

- I. The 5th c. BC, with a very restricted number of coins.
- II. The 4th c. BC, with mainly coins of Maroneia and Orthogoreia.

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The systematic study and publication of the excavation coins and all other numismatic material (surface and chance finds) from Maroneia and its *chora* and from the Classical city at the peninsula of Molyvoti was undertaken by the authors in collaboration with our colleague Donna Terzopoulou in summer 2005 and will be ready in 2008. It will be published as a volume of MEAETHMATA. The authors wish to thank D. Triantaphyllos, former director of the 19th Ephoreia and N. Kokkotaki, director of the Ephoreia as well as the excavators of the site M. Sarla-Pentazou and E. Anagnostopoulou-Chatzipolychroni for giving us the permission to study the surface and chance finds and the excavated material from Maroneia. Thanks are also due to K. Chryssanthaki-Nagle for giving us the permission to consult her unpublished thesis and to the archaeologist M. Tassaklaki for the electronic registration of all numismatic material from Maroneia and for having many times examined carefully with us coins. Pantelis Magoulas took the photographs of the coins.

¹ For the excavations in Maroneia see *IThrAeg* 335-38. For more details see the excavation reports and Anagnostopoulou-Chatzipolychroni 1987, 439-41; *eadem*, 633-42; *eadem*, forthcoming; Karadedos 1990, 265-314; Karadima 1997, 557-68; *eadem*, 1995, 487-96; Kokkotaki and Karadima 1993, 637-45; Tsimbidis-Pentazos 1972.

² See previous note and *IThrAeg* 337.

³ Some coins were found in the Hellenistic and Roman cemetery of Alke, but they do not seem to have functioned as Charon's fee. Coins 2291-2484 come from the Byzantine tower.

⁴ For these games in Maroneia see *IThrAeg* 331. For the excavations of the theatre see Pentazos 1990, 637-54; Lavvas and Karadedos 1990, 655-81; Karadedos and Karadima 2002a, 9-19; *eorundem*, 2002b, 21-33.

⁵ On the coinage of Orthogoreia: Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2004, 49-62.

III. The Hellenistic period, the 3rd c. BC, with some bronzes of Lysimachos, the Seleucids and Adaios and an impressive number of Maronetan issues, the 2nd and 1st centuries with coins of Maroneia and some specimens of cities of Mainland Greece and Asia Minor as well as bronzes of Philip V.

IV. The imperial period with Greek imperials of Maroneia and a restricted number of coins from Thrace and Macedonia, Roman coins and Late Roman issues.

Ad I

No archaic coins were found in the site of the ancient city. The earliest coins are a 5th c. fraction of Dikaia (Schönert-Geiss 1975, 13-29, n^o 1-57, pl. 2-3. Cf. Price 1977, 237-8) and a 5th c. drachm of Maroneia Schönert-Geiss group III. Both come from the *Hieron* (Schönert-Geiss 10-17).

Ad II

The bronze coins of the so-called Maroneia Group VII, represented by an important number of specimens of a single denomination, begun in the 4th c. BC.⁶ Style, iconography and system of control are shared by the contemporary silver groups IV, V, VI and VII (cf. Wartenberg 1992, 195-98). New varieties can now be added to the limited number of specimens listed by Schönert-Geiss. On the obverse is the forepart of a horse and on the reverse grapes, sometimes in a double or single linear square.⁷ During the next stage of development the initials of the magistrates' names were added on the reverse (ΠΟ, ΚΟ, Ξ);⁸ two parallel issues were struck: the letter Α and ΔΙΟ on the obverse and on the reverse the initials ΑΓ or ΓΑ (figs 2, 3, 4).⁹

A small group of coins bearing loose grapes on both obverse and reverse and the initials ΜΑΡΩ on the reverse (Schönert-Geiss 61-64) date to this same period. Four (4) specimens of these types were found in Maroneia and 24 more were part of a recently published hoard coming certainly from the area of the classical site of Maroneia (Terzian and van Steen 2003, 344-347). The 24 bronzes with grapes on obverse and reverse were found in a hoard together with group VII and IX bronzes. The so-called period IX with a head of Dionysus on the obverse and grapes on the reverse, is represented in Maroneia by more than hundred specimens. A date from the 4th c. rather than 100 years later, as was proposed by Schönert-Geiss (61-64), is also supported by the stylistic and iconographic similarity with the contemporary group VIII silver issues.¹⁰ The first issues of Group IX bear only the ethnic on the reverse. Initials of magistrates were added later and monograms towards the end of this group (fig. 5).

The importance of Orthagoreian bronzes, in two distinct denominations, at Maroneia has already been mentioned (fig. 6). There are more than 200 bronzes, which comprise more than 1/7 of the total number of coins of all periods. Both the style and the absence of any system of control, support a date in the 4th c. BC for the coinage of this city, that must definitely have been located in the area as the abundance of its bronzes in Abdera, Zone and especially in Maroneia suggests.¹¹ Orthagoreia is mentioned by Strabo as an eastern neighbour of Maroneia and by Pliny as its predecessor (Strabo 7a.1.48; Plin. *HN* 4.42-43). It seems to have been short-lived. This suggestion and the Macedonian links of its coinage is reminiscent of the city of Ouranoupolis, the Macedonian foundation of Alexarchos.¹²

⁶ Schönert-Geiss 33-35.

⁷ See *supra* n. 6.

⁸ For names beginning with ΠΟ in Maroneia see *IThrAeg* E141, Schönert-Geiss 494-98 (Πολυάρητος), *IThrAeg* E239, 212, TE 69 (Ποσειδώνιος), E224 (Πόσις), Schönert-Geiss 145-51, 164, 414-18 (Ποσιδειος), 83-85 (Ποσειδιππος), 454-59 (Πολύνικος). The name Κόρος occurs in Abdera (*IThrAeg* E70). Names beginning with Ξ occur in Maroneia's Onomastikon: Ξεναϊος (*IThrAeg* E238), Ξενοκρίτος (*IThrAeg* E212), Ξένων (*IThrAeg* E212) and Ξενοφών (*IThrAeg* E146).

⁹ Names beginning with the letters ΑΓ and ΓΑ are absent from the local Onomastikon but this is not of great importance. Names beginning with Δι and ΔΙΟ are extremely frequent in Maroneia as almost everywhere in the Greek world.

¹⁰ Schönert-Geiss 35-46. For a lower date for this group of silver see Lorber 1990, 65-67; Chryssanthaki-Nagle 64-66.

¹¹ For Abdera see Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2004, 49-62. For Zone: Galani-Krikou 1996, 63-78; *eadem*, 1997, 631-42. For the location of the city in Thrace; cf. Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2004, 49-62.

¹² Le Rider 1977, groupe IIC, n. 504-511, pl. 43; Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2004, 54. On Ouranoupolis see Hatzopoulos 1996, 201.

A very rare issue of Amphipolis, specimens of which are also known from Thasos was also found in Maroneia (Picard 1994, 207-14). The Heracles' head/ lion bronze coin was dated by O. Picard to the transitional period of the city's passage from autonomy to Macedonian control, between 357 and 354 BC. A slightly earlier date around 360 would also be possible (see Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming).

A number of 4th c. bronzes of Abdera and a few specimens from cities of Thrace, of Macedonia, such as Philippi and Ouranopolis, of Thessaly and Asia Minor date to this same period (fig. 7). The powerful king of Macedonia Philip II is represented by ten (10) bronzes and a gold coin.

Ad III

At the beginning of the Hellenistic period, the presence of royal Macedonian issues is also very limited: bronzes of Alexander III, some specimens of Kassandros, Demetrios Poliorketes and Antigonos Gonatas have been identified (figs 8, 9, 10). Contemporary Odrysian rulers are represented by a single coin of Skostokos (270-240 BC) and one of Seuthes III.¹³ More important are the thirty (30) bronzes of King Lysimachos (fig. 11). His royal foundation, Lysimacheia, is represented by three (3) bronzes. The four bronzes of Philetaerus of Pergamon date also from this same period.¹⁴

The presence of Seleucid coins has to be stressed: eighteen (18) bronzes of Antiochos II from the mint of Sardis (Houghton and Lorber 2002, 173). Bronze coins of this issue are also present in other parts of Thrace, such as Cabyle (106 coins) and Seuthopolis (1; Peter 176). Seven (7) unique *chalkoi* with elephant's heads on the obverse, an anchor on the reverse and the simple and most problematic legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ are also to be attributed to the Seleucids and have to be connected with military operations and Seleucid presence in the area.¹⁵

The coinage of Adaios, twenty (20) bronzes of all the known types (Peter 236-48) has already been connected with this same Seleucid presence. It seems likely that this mysterious ruler, with his Macedonian name and monetary types of various inspirations, was based at Cypsela and was put to death by a Ptolemaic official (see Pomp. Trog. 27; Telis *Περὶ φρυγῆς* 23.9; Ath. 9.4681 and Buraselis 1982, 122-23, 139).

The presence of twenty three (23) specimens, with a complicated monogram on the obverse and a wreath on the reverse needs also to be mentioned. Various attributions have already been proposed: Argilos, Maroneia or a presumed Agathokleia founded after the son of Lysimachos.¹⁶ These coins were certainly issued somewhere in Thrace; the monogram on the obverse refers probably to the name of an important military personality (Agathokles?), who was also their issuing authority (Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming). To the same period date the coins bearing a head of Zeus on the obverse, an eagle on a thunderbolt and monograms on the reverse. Eleven (11) specimens of these types were found in Maroneia. They show strong Ptolemaic influence and the reverse of the heaviest denomination is reminiscent of Macedonian silver and bronze coins minted in the name of Alexander III during his lifetime.¹⁷ The earlier attribution to an imaginary Paroreia is now to be abandoned and the presence of 11 specimens in Maroneia needs to be taken into consideration.¹⁸

The issuing authority of nine (9) bronze coins with a Macedonian helmet on the obverse and the letter Α in a wreath on the reverse remains obscure. It could also be connected with military in that

¹³ Peter 181 (Seuthes III) and 219 (Skostokos). See Gatzolis, Poullos and Terzopoulou, 176-87 in the present volume.

¹⁴ Westermark 1991, 147-59, spec. 152, pl. II, fig. 14. Westermark dates this issue to c. 215-early 2nd c. BC (end of 3rd-2nd c. BC, early part of Eumenes II's reign). One specimen in a hoard concealed in eastern Attica in the 260s (Lagos 1996, 272-77, in 273 n. 5) supports an earlier date.

¹⁵ Will 1979², 247-8. This presence is further illustrated by an epigram written for Apollonios of Babylon found in the later city of Plotinopolis (*IThraeg* E 465). See Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming.

¹⁶ Argilos: Postolakas 1872, 126. Maroneia: Liampi 1995, 47. Maroneia renamed Agathokleia: Chryssanthaki-Nagle 2005, 47-51.

¹⁷ See SNG Alpha 696-709, Alexander III bronzes. The smaller fraction (C) bears a thunderbolt as (in a different position) in SNG Alpha 710-711.

¹⁸ For an attribution to Pyrrhos see Liampi *apud* Destrooper-Georgiades 2001, 155, n. 9. On these coins see Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming.

same area (see Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming). The Ptolemaic occupation left few numismatic traces in Maroneia. Only three (3) bronzes of the Ptolemies were found.¹⁹

The issues mentioned above relate to the complicated historical background of that period. They remain limited in number compared to the huge number of Maronetan issues (more than 300 bronzes) of the spectacular VII/VIII group, previously dated to the first half of the 4th c. BC (figs 12, 13; Schönert-Geiss 52-61, nos 598-943). This date and the fact that some of these coins are of an alloy of silver and bronze led P.R. Franke to the assumption that they were an emergency issue for the war against Philip II (Franke 1997, 661-63). The war in question is not mentioned by relevant ancient sources and these coins seem to be issued over a long period of time, as O. Picard pointed out (Picard 2000, 15-23, spec. 19-20). The complicated system of control of successive issues, with monograms on the reverses and in the later series on the obverses too, suggests a more advanced date than the first half of the 4th c. BC, presumably the Hellenistic period (Wartenberg 1992, 195-98; Chryssanthaki-Nagle 73-74). That date is also supported by hoard evidence.²⁰ In the excavations at Maroneia, these coins are present in 3rd c. *strata* and a date during this century is quite logical. The form of the letter A of the legend in the latest issues suggests the end of the group sometime in the 2nd c. BC.²¹ The price of the gold wreath for G. Apustius in drachms of Alexander in a second century honorary decree of Abdera (*IThrAeg* E9) could be explained by the wide circulation of these coins, found in other cities of Aegean Thrace and in considerable numbers in inner Thrace.²²

The dramatic events that followed the end of Ptolemaic occupation at the end of the 3rd c. and Philip V's ambitions marked the beginning of the 2nd c. BC (*IThrAeg* 325-26). The Hestiaian "tetrolol" is undoubtedly connected with payments to mercenaries during the Macedonian Wars.²³ From this point of view, the presence of fourteen (14) bronzes of Philip V is significant (*IThrAeg* 325-26). The Attalid presence does not seem important, although the Attalid efforts to gain control of the area during the first half of the 2nd c. BC were mentioned by Polybius and Livy (*IThrAeg* 326). A number of contemporary specimens of Abdera (XII) and other cities in Thrace, such as Ainos and Thasos (fig. 14) also occur, together with a bronze struck in the name of the Macedonians just after Pydna and post 148 bronze issues of Macedonian cities, such as Pella, Thessaloniki and Amphipolis.²⁴ It is interesting to stress that the number of Maronetan issues present in the excavated material of Maroneia remains the most important but has diminished in number when compared to the previous periods: forty one (41) bronzes of Period X that were struck after Pydna, relate to the Roman campaigns in the North and the Mithridatic Wars (fig. 15).²⁵ Silver and bronze specimens of this group circulated in inner Thrace, together with the more important Thasian coinage of similar types and date issued also on the same purpose, payments to the Roman armies.²⁶

Ad IV

Nine (9) specimens of the late 1st BC-early 1st c. AD with civic types and twelve (12) with imperial portrait on the obverse, Roman provincial issues of Maroneia Period XI, were excavated in Maroneia (fig. 16).²⁷ From this same period there are also a bronze of the Koinon of the Macedonians (Liampi 1998, M68, Nero 54-68; *RPC* I 1614), five (5) coins of the Roman colony of Philippi (Kremydi-Sicilianou 2002, 63-84), two (2) specimens of Abdera, three (3) of Ainos, one (1) of Perinthos, (the capital of the *provincia*), one (1) of Hadrianoupolis, one (1) of Philippoupolis, one (1) of Anchialos and eight (8)

¹⁹ On the Ptolemaic occupation of Maroneia cf. *IThrAeg* 324-25.

²⁰ See previous note and *IGCH* 802 (Abdera IX and X, Maroneia: VII/VIII), 1999 Museum of Kavala (Orthagoria, Zone, Abdera VI, VIII, IX, Thasos).

²¹ See *IThrAeg* E168 where A occurs also with the horizontal line broken.

²² For Abdera, information from K. Chryssanthaki-Nagle. For Thrace see Schönert-Geiss 60-61.

²³ On "tetrolols" of Hestiaia see Psoma, forthcoming.

²⁴ MacKay 1968, 5-13, esp. 9-11. On the bronze issues of the Macedonian cities see Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming.

²⁵ On these coins Schönert-Geiss 976-1697. For the different dates proposed until now see *IThrAeg* 327 n. 6.

²⁶ On the coinage of Thasos see Prokopov 2006, 13-37 and Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming.

²⁷ Schönert-Geiss 1698-1743. On the dates for these issues proposed here see Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming.

from Topeiros. There are also some roman issues: the Roman Republic, Otto, Hadrian, M. Aurelius, Commodos, Getas, Iulia Mamaea, Gordianus III, Philip I, Gallienus, Claudius II, Victorinus, Quintillus, Aurelianus, Probus and Carus are all represented by a single coin each, while Maximianus Thrax with two coins (2). All specimens of the Tetrarchy and Late Roman issues are undoubtedly related to the establishment in Thrace of a common monetary system and to the sharing of the same obverse dies in the monetary issues of neighbouring cities (Kraft 1979, 13-21, 101, pl. 11.1-4; Chryssanthaki-Nagle 372 ff.).

The limited number of coins of periods IV and V illustrate well a decline in the city and a presumed isolation. The dramatic efforts of Maroneia not to be incorporated in the Macedonian kingdom marked the first part of the 2nd c. Maroneia was an ally and friend of the Romans from 167 (*IThrAeg* E168) but the *Via Egnatia* that was built some years later passed a long way from its territory (*IThrAeg* 137). The Pontic armies destroyed the cities that supported the Romans, as Maroneia that undoubtedly participated in various payments to their army with silver and bronze coins of Group X.²⁸ For this pro-Roman attitude Maroneia gained the *status* of *civitas libera et foederata* enjoying the *plenissima immunitas*, as we learn from a long decree of the city found in Samothrace (*IThrAeg* E180). This decree and the Hadrianic edict (*IThrAeg* E185) which mentions the passage, controlled by Maroneia, to the holy island of Samothrace of various *diplomarii*, explain the arrival of Roman coins.

The excavated numismatic material gave us the opportunity to reconsider, following others, the chronology of the bronze coinage of Maroneia proposed by Schönert-Geiss and to stress once more the importance of local currency. The impressive number of bronzes of Orthagoreia needs to be kept in mind in every discussion concerning its localisation. The limited number of royal and Roman issues illustrates the historical background of almost 9 centuries. The arrival of all other bronzes, those of the neighbouring Abdera included, reveals contacts and only contacts with the rest of the Greek world.²⁹

²⁸ Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming, based on de Callatay 1991, 213-26; see also *eiusdem* 1986, 220.

²⁹ See now Knapp and Mac Isaac 2005, 36-49 with all previous bibliography and Psoma, Karadima and Terzopoulou, forthcoming.

ABBREVIATIONS

Chryssanthaki-Nagle= Chryssanthaki-Nagle, K. 2007. *L'histoire monétaire d'Abdère en Thrace (VIe s. av. J.-Chr.-IIe s. ap. J.-Chr.)*. MELETEMATATA 51. Athènes.

Peter = U. Peter. 1997. *Die Münzen der thrakischen Dynasten (5.-3. Jahrhundert v. Chr). Hintergründe ihrer Prägung*. Berlin.

Schönert-Geiss= E. Schönert-Geiss. 1988. *Die Münzprägung von Maroneia*. Berlin.

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List of illustrated coins:

1. Topeiros, bronze, ANK 4374
2. Maroneia, bronze VII, ANK 220
3. Maroneia, bronze VII, ANK 5266
4. Maroneia, bronze VII, ANK 7597
5. Maroneia, bronze IX, ANK 5512
6. Orthagoreia, bronze, ANK 5275
7. Phalanna, bronze, ANK 4737
8. Alexander III, bronze, ANK 5901

9. Kassandros, bronze, ANK 5889
10. Antigonos Gonatas, bronze, ANK 5880
11. Lysimachos, bronze, ANK 7607
12. Maroneia VII-VIII, bronze, ANK 5481
13. Maroneia VII-VIII, bronze, ANK 6094
14. Thasos, bronze, ANK 7703
15. Maroneia X, bronze, ANK 6067
16. Maroneia XI, bronze, ANK 2250