

# STELLAR SYMBOLS ON ANCIENT GREEK COINS (I)

ELENI ROVITHIS-LIVANIOU<sup>1</sup>, FLORA ROVITHIS<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dept. of Astrophysics-Astronomy & Mechanics, Faculty of Physics, Athens University,  
Panepistimiopolis, Zografos 157 84, Athens, Greece  
E-mail: elivan@phys.uoa.gr

<sup>2</sup>Elementary Schools, Agia Barbara, Athens, Greece  
E-mail: florov11@yahoo.gr

**Abstract.** We present and describe some ancient Greek coins with astronomical symbols like the Sun, the crescent Moon, the stars, etc. limited to these representing on their obverse sides the main Greek gods/goddesses. Besides, information about the place they were found, or the city in which they were issued, as well as the estimated time is also given.

**Key words:** ancient Greek coins – ancient Greek cities – ancient Greek colonies – myths.

## 1. PROLOGUE

The big and developed cities of ancient Greece were in reality countries. So, each one of them had its own coins, as well as its own *numismatic unit*, which defined the various coins value. In ancient Athens for example *numismatic unit* was the silver drachma, ἡ ἀργυρά δραχμή, consisting of **6** obolus or obols, ὀβολούς or ὀβελούς. The latter were sticks of metals used as currency as early as 1100 BC, but these which will be presented here have the form of almost circular coins, as those used today.

The name of *drachma* comes from the Greek verb δράττω=*grasp*, since it was supposed that somebody can hold **6 obols** with his handful. Besides, there were *didrachma* and *tetra-drachma* having **2** and **4** times the drachma's value, respectively. The former, i.e. didrachmon, δίδραχμον, was also called stater, στατήρ. *Obols* had small value, although there were coins with even smaller, as well as with bigger like diobols, διώβολα, and tetrobols, τετράβολα, i.e. coins with **2** and **4** times the obol's value.

Bigger numismatic units were *mna*, μνᾶ, and *talanton*, τάλαντον, which were also used as **units of weight** as happened in antiquity. *Mna*'s name comes very probably from the Semitic *mina* and was consisted of **100 drachmae**, while *talanton* contained **60 mnae**.

In Aristotle's time, (384–322 BC), *mna* was called *Attica mna*, while before Solon's epoch, (630–570 BC), *commercial* or *market mna*. Besides, both *mna* and *talanton* had

different weights in the various *cities-countries* according to their *numismatic system*. In the *Aigenian numismatic system* for example *mna* weighted **637** g, while in the *Evoic* **873** g. The bigger units like *mna* and *talanton*, although not used in everyday life because of their big weight are also mentioned in the Bible. Both were used by the Jews, too; although they had different value than the Greek ones. A *Jew talanton* for example was equal to **100 Jew mnae** and each *mna* contained **60 shekels, siglos**. The latter was the Jew's *numismatic unit* and weighted about **12** g, while it was also used by many other East countries.

A specific *icon* on a coin of an ancient city was in most cases characterised it. For this it was called the «*λαλοῦν σύμβολον*», i.e. the «*talking symbol*» of the city. For example the symbol of the island of Ρόδος, *Rhodes*, was a *rose*, because the Greek word *ρόδον* means *rose*. Similarly, the symbol of the island of Μῆλος, *Melos*, was an *apple*, as in the Greek language the word *μήλον* denotes the *apple* and so on for other cities. Other symbols often used in the beginning were the heads of gods, or goddess, who considered protecting or naming a city. Such is for example the head of the goddess Athena, Ἀθηνᾶ, after which the city of Athens, Ἀθήνα, was named. Besides, themes from the Greek Mythology were also used very often. On the other hand, only after Alexander's the Great death the faces of some well-known *kings* were presented on ancient coins.

In a previous very short paper, (Rovithis-Livaniou and Rovithis 2010), a few ancient coins with astronomical symbols were presented. We shall continue showing and describing such coins more systematically starting from the Greek ones. According to their presentations on observe, we have divided them into main as well as into sub-categories, which will be described in 3 parts. In the present first part we shall be limited to the coins on which the main gods are shown on their observe sides.

## 2. THE GOD ZEUS AND THE GODDESS HERA

According to the Greek Mythology, king of the Olympian gods was Δίας *Dias* or Ζεύς *Zeus*, who was married to Ἥρα, *Hera*. So, it was natural these two gods to be presented in the coins of many ancient cities, with *Zeus* to be more often used.



Fig. 1 – a: Coin from Apulia, (300–225) BC, Eagle and crescent Moon; b: Coin from Campania, Head of Zeus and 2 stars behind / Eagle with open wings and stars below wings; c: Coin of (85–65) BC from Pharnakeia, Pontos, Eagle on thunderbolt, star, monogram and ΦΑΡΝΑΚΕΙΩΝ; d: Coin of (215–205) BC, Brettii, Bruttium<sup>[1]</sup>, eagle, cornucopia, star and BPET-TIAN in Greek.

In Figs. 1, 2, 3 *Zeus* is the main subject of observe combined with various other subjects on reverse sides of the coins. Actually, *Zeus*'s head is usually seen on observe either *laureate*, or *corned*, being *Ammon-Zeus*; so, we do not repeat it in legends limited only to the reverse side's descriptions.



Fig. 2 – a-b: Tetra-drachmae of king Philip II<sup>[2]</sup>, (323–315) BC, Horse with warrior & crescent or star below and ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ & ΑΡ; c: Coin from Panormon, Sicily, Horse with a star above; d: Coin of (217-213) BC from Apulia, Horse galloping left, star above and monogram; e: Coin of 4th century BC from Adramytteion, Mysia<sup>[3]</sup>, Horse and horseman, 8-rays star

It is worthwhile to add that many other similar to the above coins shown in Fig. 1 was minted by other cities, too. Besides, in Fig. 2, *Zeus*' head is combined with a horse with or without warrior with a *star* or a *crescent Moon* above or even below the horse. Furthermore, in Figs. 3 a, b, c *Zeus*' head is combined with *Zeus*, *Artemis* and *Nike*, respectively, while in Fig. 3d *Zeus* is presented as *Ammon* with a *star* on reverse.



Fig. 3 – a: Coin from Neopaphos, Cyprus, Zeus standing holding sceptre and ears corn, star above; b: Artemis driving galloping and 2 stars above; c: Electron coin of (377–326) BC from Mytilene, Lesbos, Bust of winged Nike and 2 stars above; d: Coin from Thymbra, Troas<sup>[4]</sup>, 4th century BC; Bearded and horned head of Ammon Zeus / 8-rays star and Θ-Y between 3 rays.

Moreover, in Fig. 4 we can see *Zeus* on reverse seating on his throne and holding his sceptre and his lovely bird *eagle*, while on observe Hercules head with lion's skin is shown.



Fig. 4 – Coins of Philip II and Alexander the Great; observe: Hercules with lion's head; reverse: Zeus seating on his throne holding sceptre and his eagle; moreover a: Drachma of (323–317) BC, crescent above Α and ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ; b: Coin of (310–275) BC, star above cone and ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡ[ΟΥ]; c: Tetra-drachma of (300–290) BC and ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ; d: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ & head of Helios and KY.

Finally, *Zeus'* and *Hera's* heads are represented on one coin from Kromna, where a *star* is also appeared behind *Hera's* neck, (Fig. 5, a). In the rest coins of Fig. 5 *Hera's* head is shown on observe; so, in legends only the reverses are described.



Fig. 5 – a: Silver drachma from Kromna, Paphlagonia<sup>[5]</sup>, (340–300) BC, Head of Hera with decorated crown, star behind her neck & legend ΚΡΩΜΝΑ in Greek; b: Coin from Panormon, Sicily, Cow with the Sun shining above; c: Cow with the Sun shining above, (380–340) BC; d: Coin of (210–200) BC from Venusia, 3 crescent Moons with star within each.

### 3. THE GODS HELIOS/SUN AND APOLLO

As is known, ancients had deified the Sun, Moon, planets etc. Originally god *Helios* was identified with our Sun, as *ἥλιος* is the Greek word for *sun*. God-*Helios* does not belong to the *δωδεκάθεον*, *dodekatheon*, i.e. the **12** main *Olympian* gods; the word originating from the Greek words δώδεκα=twelve and θεός=god. Even so, we have included god *Helios* here together with *Apollo*, because the later took his place as the god of light.



Fig. 6 – a: Coin from Calabria, 334/333 BC, thunderbolt back to back and letters ΑΛ-ΕΞ<sup>[6]</sup>; b: Coin from Kranae, Laconia, Peloponnesus, grape cluster & crayfish below and ΚΡΑΝ; c: Copper coin of (300–270/260) BC from Clitoris, Arcadia, Peloponnesus, Κ, Α and Η grouping ΚΑΗ for city's name; d: Stater of (460–400) BC from Kyzikos, Mysia, Asia Minor, Naked Helios kneeling right and holding 2 horses prancing left and right, tuna down.

God *Helios* is usually represented on observe side of the coins with a *radiated* human face either profile or enface, and combined with various themes, as seen in Figs. 6, 7 and 8. So, although not a usual stellar symbol, like *sun/star* or *Moon*, appeared in these coins, we have included them because of the radiated face symbolism; and continue doing so even when this face is not radiated anymore. In all these coins, only the legends of their reverse sides are described, since on observe the radiated or not *Helios* face is shown.



Fig. 7 – a: Coin 3rd-2nd century BC from Soloi-Pompeiopolis, Cilikia<sup>[7]</sup>; Athena & Greek legend ΣΟΛΕΩΝ; b: Coin of (221–179) BC, Phillip III, Thunderbolt & monogram and ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ III within oak wreath; c: Coin of (204–89) BC from Bruttium; Tripod and T-A; d: Coin from Myrina, Lesbos, 2nd–1st century BC; Amphora MY ΠΙ.



Fig. 8 – a: Coin from Soloi, Athena (holding statue of Nike) and Greek legend ΣΟΛΕΩΝ; b: Coin of 1st century BC from Halikarnassos, Karia<sup>[8]</sup>; c and d: Silver drachmas of (170–150) BC from Rhodes.

On the other hand, in Fig. 9 the changes in his presentation are obvious.



Fig. 9 – a and b: Silver drachmas of 1st century BC from Halikarnassos, Karia, a: Head of Athena with helmet, ΑΛΙΚΑΡΝΑΚΕΩΝ, Μ-ΟΧΧΟC; b: Head of Athena with helmet, ΜΕΛΑΝΤΑΣ / ΑΛΙΚΑΡΝΑΚΕΩΝ; c: Coin from the island of Kos, (199–166) BC, Club and bow in a bow case, ΚΩΙ above and ΚΛΕΥΧΙΟ between club and bow case; d: Pseudo-Rhodian drachma of 171 BC from Macedonia Rose stem and ΑΜΕΙΝΙΑ[Ω]Ν.

The *radiated* face of god *Helios* is shown on the reverse sides of some coins, without being their main subject; and even on observes as *counter-mark*, (Fig. 10).



Fig.10 – a: Stater of Phillip II, (323–317) BC, Helmet Athena's head / Winged Nike standing, radiated head of god-Helios, Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ; b: Silver di-drachma of around 250 BC from Sinope, Paphlagonia, Turreted head of the nymph Sinope and countermark radiated head of god Helios / Poseidon sitting on throne holding dolphin & trident, laureate head of Poseidon and Greek letters [ΣΙ-Ν] Ο/Β; c: Tetra-drachma from Abydos, Mysia, head of Artemis with bow and quiver over her shoulder / Eagle with spread wings and star and radiated head of god Helios; d: Coin of 138/7 from Athens, new style of tetra-drachma, Helmet head of goddess Athena / Owl & Α/ΓΛ/ΑΥ and ΣΦ/ΕΧΕ in Greek.



When Apollo got god Helios position, this happens on the coins, too:



Fig. 11 a: Coin of (350-250) BC from Gambrion, Mysia, Laureate head of Apollo & countermark: tripod / 12 rays star, Greek letters Γ Α Μ between rays, denoting city's name; b: Coin from Gambrion, Mysia, 4th-3rd century BC, Star with eight long and eight short rays;  
c: Gold coin of Phillip II, Apollo & carriage with two horses, star below, ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ in Greek down; d: Silver coin of Phillip II, Apollo & horse with god-Helios below, ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ in Greek above;  
e: Triobol of 280 BC from Calabria, Eagle, 2 amphorae with stars above, ΝΙΚΑ in Greek.

So, a lot of coins with Apollo's head on their obverse side are found. The only difference between those of god Helios, which also distinguish them, is that Apollo's head is usually presented laureate and not radiated, but with a stellar symbol on reverse. For example, in some gold or silver coins issued by the king Phillip II of Macedonia, (359–336) BC, i.e. Alexander's the Great father, we can see god Apollo on obverse and a star or the sun under a carriage or a horse, Fig. 11. The Greek word ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ i.e. that the coin was minted by Phillip is also seen. Besides, as Apollo was the god of light and music it is natural to be combined either with a stellar symbol – sun/star – or with his kithara. Thus, except the coins shown so far, in some others with laureate head of Apollo on obverse, we can see various combinations on reverse, as in Fig. 12 for example.



Fig. 12 – a: Laureate head of Apollo /Apollo's kithara & Greek legend ΑΥΚΙΩΝ and Α-Ν and star;  
b, c and d: Coins from Miletus, Ionia<sup>[9]</sup>, Apollo/lion combination with the sun/star above.

The coins shown in Fig. 12 b, c and d are from the city of Miletus. And since the symbol of this city was *lion*, the head of god *Apollo* is combined with a *lion*, and the *sun*, or a *star* shining above. We notice that *Apollo*'s head, as well as lion's look either at left or at right, and they are not all the same. Besides, there are various legends written in Greek and denoting magistrate's name like ΑΛΚΙΩΝ, or ΒΙΩΝ as seen in Fig. 12, but also many others like: ΘΕΟΓΝΗΤΟΣ, ΣΚΥΘΗ[Σ], ΒΡΕΜΩΝ, ΣΙΜΟΣ, ΕΥΠΟΛΙΣ, ΠΡΩΞΕΝΟΣ, ΠΥΘΩ[Ν], ΑΥΝΑΙΟΣ, ΘΑΡΣΑΓΟΡΑΣ etc. where the letter in brackets is missing. Moreover, *Apollo* in ancient Greek coins is found to be combined with other gods or ordinary people, as well as with animals others than the lion (Fig. 13).



Fig. 13 – a: Apollo's head /Homer and a star, Smyrna, Ionia, 2nd – 1st century BC; b: Coin of 4th century BC from Kebren, Troas; Ram's head with a star below / Apollo's head; c: Coin from Gambrion, Mysia, 4th – 3rd century BC, Bull, star above and ΓΑΜ for the city's name; d: Obol from Salapia, Apulia, (225–210) BC, Horse, star above and ΣΑΛΑΠ[ΠΙΩΝ] in Greek for the city's name.

Furthermore, there are many coins from Kios, or Cius at Troas, where the head of god *Apollo* appears on observe and the prow of a ship with a *star* above. In these coins magistrate's name is written in Greek. Thus, except the two names seen in Fig. 14, there are many others, like: *BAK-XEYΣ*, *Σ-ΩΣΑΝ-ΔΡΟΣ*, *ΑΘΗΝΟ-ΔΩΡΟΣ*, *ΠΟΣΕΙ-ΔΩΝΕΙΟΣ*, *ΣΩΣΙ-ΓΕΝΗΣ*, *ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ*, etc.



Fig. 14 – a and b: Stater and drachma, respectively, from Cius, Troas, (350–300) BC, Apollo's head / Prow of ship and star; a: ΝΙΚΑΞ in Greek; b: ΝΙΚΑΞ in Greek; c: Obol, of (225–200) BC from Brutium, Horse looking left, with star (or pentagram) below; d: Obol of (225-210) from Salapia, Apulia, Horse, star above and ΣΑΛΑ in Greek; e: Coin from Gambrion, 4th – 3rd century BC, Bull and star.

Finally, it is worthwhile to mention that such a presentation like the radiated head of god-*Helios* and now *Apollo* is found in some coins dated the 3rd century AD, like these of Figs. 15.



Fig. 15 – a: Coin of 3rd century AD from Amorion, Phrygia<sup>[10]</sup>, star inside crescent Moon, i.e. the Pontiak Royal symbol, and ΑΜΟΡΙΑΝΩΝ in Greek; b and c: Coins of (244–249) AD from Hierapolis, Phrygia, time of Philip I<sup>[11]</sup>; b: Head of god-Helios and ΑΑΙΡ-ΒΗΝΟC / Male god in military uniform and legend; c: Head of god-Helios and ΙΕΡΟΠΟΛ-ΕΙΤ-ΩΝ in Greek / Hygeia-Kybele seated holding patera feeding serpent; d: Coin of (200–270) AD from Peltai, Greek legend ΠΕ/ΤΗ/ΝΩΝ in wreath.

#### 4. THE GODDESSES ATHENA, APHRODITE, ARTEMIS AND DEMETER

The *helmed* head of goddess Ἀθηνᾶ *Athena* is found on observe side of many ancient coins. Besides, it seems that on the coins of various ancient cities a *star on* or *out*

a god's *helmet*, or *behind* his head was rather common. As regards goddess *Athena*, in the coins of Athens but also of some other cities, she is usually presented with her lovely bird *owl* on reverse accompanied almost always by a *crescent Moon* or a *star*. This does not mean that the goddess is not found combined with other animals, but a *stellar symbol* is always present; even *Athena's* shield is sometimes decorated with a *star*. All these are shown in Figs. 16, 17, 18 and 19, where in legends only the reverse sides of the coins are described as all observes – except Fig. 16d – are presenting *Athena's* helmeted head.



Fig. 16 – a: Silver stater from Corinth, Athena-Pegasus, (345–307) BC; b: Coin of the 180/170 BC from Chersonesos, Athena-Pallas and Griffin; c: Coin from Sigion, Troas, 4th century BC; Doubled bodied owl, crescent Moon and Greek letters ΣΙΓΓΕ; d: Silver tetra-drachmae of Phillip V, 220 BC; Bearded head of Phillip V or Zeus / Athena's shield decorated with star, Greek legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ.



Fig. 17 – a: Silver tetradrachm from Athens, after 393 B, Crescent Moon & Greek letters ΑΘΕ; b: Coin from Sigion, Troas, (355–334) BC, Owl, crescent Moon & the city's name ΣΙΓΓΕ in Greek; c: Coin of (265–240) BC from Campania, Cock and star and legend CAIATINO.



Fig. 18 – a: Obol of (330–300) BC from Itanos, Crete, 8-rays star, pallet at centre; b: Coin of (400–300) BC from Kolone, Troas; 9-rays star, pallet at centre, ΚΟΛΟΝΑΙΩΝ among the rays; c: Coin of (287–278) BC from Lokroi, Bruttium, Persephone seated left, cradling poppy and stars; d: Coin of (133–48) BC from Akmonia, Phrygia, Eagle with open wings alighting from thunderbolt between 2 stars and ΜΗΝΟΔΟΤΟΣ & ΣΙΑΛΩΝ in Greek.



Fig. 19 – a: Tetra-drachma of 160 BC from Ilion, Troas; Athena standing right, star, owl at her feet and ΑΘΗΝΑΣ in front – ΙΛΙΑΔΟΣ behind and ΠΕΩΤΟΚΛΕΙΔΟΥ (magistrate's name) below; b: Coin of (150–125) BC from Priene, Ionia, Owl standing right on amphora, star at its right side and ivy leaf at its left, Greek letters form the words ΠΙΠΙ-Η[ΝΗ] and ΑΧΙΑΛΕΙ/ΔΗΣ; c: Coin of (225–200) BC from Teate, Apulia; Owl, star, five pellets and city's name ΤΙΑΤΙ, in Greek.



Stellar symbols are found on the coins where other goddesses are presented, too.



Fig. 20 – a: Silver drachma from Karia, (465–449) BC, Lion's head / Head of Aphrodite and star; b: Stater of 350 BC from Orthagoria, Macedonia, Head of goddess Artemis / OPΘAΓO-PEΩN and crested Macedonian helmet with cheek flaps surmounted by star; c: Coin of 2nd century BC from Croton, Cicily, Head of Persephone / KPO around 3 crescents.



Fig. 21 – a: Coin of 300 BC from Uranopolis, Macedonia, 8-rays star with pellet at centre / Aphrodite Urania seated on globe and holding sceptre & OYPANIAΩ-ΠIOAEΩΣ in Greek; b: Coin from Tenedos, 400 BC, Artemis's head / Double-axe, star on left, grape on right, Greek letters T E; c: Coin from Kardia, Thrace, Demeter or Persephone / Lion with star below, KAPΔIA.

## 5. THE GODS POSEIDON, HERMES AND ARES

The sea god *Poseidon* is usually shown holding his trident. In the coin of Fig. 22 a god's head is presented laureate and bear and crowed by Nike, while his trident appears behind his neck. On the other hand, in a coin from Aenus, the head of god *Hermes* is shown on observe, and a goat with a *crescent Moon* on reverse, while the Greek letters AIN I indicate the city's name: Aίvoς, *Aenus*, (Fig. 22 b). Although a big number of coins with these two gods exist, they do not present any *stellar symbol*.



Fig. 22 – a: Coin of 215 BC from Brundisium, Calabria, Head of Poseidon, Nike and trident behind / Youth on dolphin holding wreath-bearing Nike and kithara, legend BR-VN and star; b: Coin from Aenus, Thrace, Hermes' head and goat with crescent Moon, and AIN I in Greek.

As regards god *Ares*, he is shown in the coins of some cities at Pontus combined with a *star* inside a *crescent Moon*, i.e. the *Pontiac royal symbol* (Fig. 23).



Fig. 23 a and b: Coins from Chabakta, Pontos, (100–85) and (85–65) BC, respectively, star inside crescent Moon and XABA K / KT in Greek; c: Coin from Amisos, Pontos, (85–65) BC, sheath, star inside crescent Moon, monogram and Greek letters AMI-ΣΟΥ.

## 6. GODS AND DIOSKOUROI'S CAPS WITH STARS

According to the Greek Mythology *Dioskouroi*, as their name denotes, were sons of *Dias*, (Dios = Dias' and kouroi = sons). Following the myth<sup>[11]</sup>, the artists represent them or only their *caps*, *pillei*, with *star* above each.



Fig. 24 – a: Silver hemi-drachma of (175–168) BC from Laconia, Peloponnesus, Head of Zeus / Caps of Dioskouroi and monograms ΛΑ - ΘΕ; b: Coin of 2nd century BC from Adramyteion, Mysia, Head of Apollo / Dioskouroi's caps between cornucopia and ΑΔΡΑ-ΜΥ/ΤΗ-ΝΩΝ in Greek; c: Coin of 154/3 from Athens, Head of Athena / Owl and caps of; d: Coin of (133–48) BC from Akmonia, Phrygia; Eagle with open wings, Dioskouroi caps with stars above and Greek legend.

## 7. DISCUSSION

Here, we presented in a systematic way ancient Greek coins where some astronomical symbols appeared. Especially these coins showing the main gods or goddesses on their obverse sides combined with various subjects, but always having a stellar symbol. So, we've seen coins made by various metals, and having various values. All of them were really very elegant and considered as small *pieces of art*, because of their fine and rich decoration.

As mentioned in the Prologue, each city-country had its own numismatic system, and its own coins; but as it is natural there were equivalencies among them. Similarly, during Roman times *mina* could have a weight of 16, 18, 20 or 24 ounces, where the heavier one was equivalent to 2 Roman *litres* and to one Athenian market *mina*. On the other hand, some gold or silver coins were of universal use, because of the great value of their metal. Such coins were for example the silver didrachma of Athens, or the golden *φιλίππειοι*, *pilippeioi*, of Macedonia, where the name comes from King Phillip II.

Moreover, although we can understand and explain the use of some of the symbols

on the coins of the ancient Greek cities and colonies, like gods, mythological persons, animals, fruits, objects etc., it is not clear the use of sun/star or other stellar symbols on them. The answer to the question: "Were they used for simple decorated purposes, or did they have any deeper meaning and reason?" is neither easy nor simple. Especially, when the sun/star looks more like a flower having a star-flower form, or when it appears below. Because, it is natural the scene with a domestic animal and the sun above and possibly describes every day's life; or it may have a specific symbolism, like the horses of the Macedonian king Phillip II, or like the Pontiac Royal symbol. It is also explained when the animal belongs to the Zodiac. But, what is the meaning of the sun/star, or even the crescent Moon, below an animal as it was shown in some of the coins?

Many other coins similar to these presented here were found in various Greek cities or their colonies both in Magna Grecia (Italy, Sicily) as well as at Asia Minor and Pontus at the Black sea coasts. Because, when people moved out from their μητρόπολις, *metropolis*, i.e. their mother-city, to establish a colony they realized that they belong to the *same race* with it, and tried to keep their *own language* and *customs* to show they were different from their neighbours. As it is impossible to present all these coins in a paper we restricted to the presentation of the ancient coins showing gods from the Greek dodektheon combined with a *stellar symbol*. On the other hand, there are coins presenting *semi-gods, nymphs, satyrs, heroes, or objects* on one side and a stellar symbol, or a combination of it, on the other. Here, we presented some coins with the semi-gods *Hercules* and *Dioskouroi*, but for cases when this was not the main subject. Similarly, there are other similar coins, but from the Roman period. All these, being out of the scope of the present communication will be the theme of Part II and Part III, respectively.

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Karipidis@e-istoria.com (various subjects in Greek language).

## APPENDIX

Short general information and mainly some geographical ones is given here, for quick and easy localization of the places where Greek colonies had been established in antiquity.

- [1] **Bruttium:** So it was named in antiquity the Calabria in southern Italy.
- [2] **Phillip II:** He was King of Macedonia and Alexander's the Great father. His race horses won at the Olympic Games of 356 BC. For this reason, he issued coins showing a horse with or without warrior, as well as a carriage, like these presented here, or included in Rezantsi treasure at Bulgaria.
- [3] **Mysia:** N-W part of Asia Minor, E to Troas at Propontis.
- [4] **Troas:** N-W part of Asia Minor, at Heliispond.
- [5] **Paphlagonia:** The centre of North part of Asia Minor at the Black Sea coast.
- [6] **ΑΛ-ΕΞ:** stands for *ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΝΕΟΙΤΟΑΕΜΟΣ*, known as the Molossian.
- [7] **Cilikia:** S-E part of Asia Minor, opposite to Cyprus.
- [8] **Karia:** S-W part of interior Asia Minor, (far from the coast).
- [9] **Ionian:** Central part of W coasts of Asia Minor.
- [10] **Phrygia:** Central part of Asia Minor.
- [11] **Philip I:** Roman Emperor, (244–249) AD, known as Philip the *Arabic*. According to some he was the first Roman Emperor who became Christian.
- [12] **Dioskouroi's myth:** They were *Dias* and the queen's of Sparta, *Leda*'s sons. (*Zeus* achieved his plane, to have a sexual intercourse with *Leda*, transformed to a swan). *Dioskouroi* had taken part to many exploits and travelled to various parts of the main Greece as well as to Greek colonies. They had also taken part to the *Argonaut* expedition, where they managed to save *Argo*; then, lights appeared above their caps, (pillei), and the *Argonauts* thought they were *stars* sent by *Zeus*. Thus, *Dioskouroi* are presented wearing always their caps with *stars* above.

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