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THE SPARTIA EXPEDITION II ENVIRONMENT AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS



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Cover: Megalo Karvounari seen from the northeast. Courtesy of the 32nd Ephorate for
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The Coin Finds

Tuukka Talvio

During the field work in 2004 to 2007 a total of 24 coins were found by the Thesprotia Expedition: six of them during intensive field survey and 18 during trial excavations. Another 25 coins were found during the excavations of the Greek Archaeological Service at the sites Darda and Sevasto, to which members of the Thesprotia Expedition were given publication rights. 37 of these coins were made available for study and they constitute the numismatic find material on which this chapter is based.¹

Most of the 37 coins are local Hellenistic bronze coins from Epirus and the neighbouring regions, but there is also a coin of Bithynia from Asia Minor and another – with the portrait of Cleopatra – from Alexandria. Six of the coins are Roman. Among them are a Republican denarius and a base silver antoninianus of Aurelian (270-274). Many of the coins are unfortunately badly preserved, and ten of them are so corroded that they have not been identified.

The largest find group consists of eighteen coins from the site of Agios Donatos (PS 25), which is an Early Hellenistic fortress, inside of which a Roman villa was built in the first century BC. Almost all the coins from PS 25 are Hellenistic and date from the early third to the first century, but there is also a coin from the fourth century BC and a Roman as or dupondius from 180-183 AD.

The second largest group comes from Darda, a site identified as a Middle and Late Roman farmstead. Originally the number of coins found at Darda was given as seventeen, but owing to problems with the conservation, only four coins have been identified so far, dating from the 270s to 330 AD. Four unidentified coins have also been available, some of them possibly also from the Constantinian period or later.

There are eight coins from Pano Pigadi of Sevasto (PS 15), from the excavation of a Hellenistic house, which probably is part of a village of that period. Seven of them have been identified, six dating from the third to the first century BC.

From the excavation of another Late Classical to Early Hellenistic house (PS 29), which also might be part of a small village, there is a coin of the Molossoi, dating from the fourth century BC. It is one of the two coins from the fourth century BC in the find material, the other being a coin of Korkyra from PS 25.

The two coins from the Late Roman basilica of Zervochori (E 5) are both so corroded that they have not been identified. There should also be two other coins from this site, but as they are not among the conserved material, their condition is probably very poor.

¹ The 37 coins include only the ones seen by the present writer. As will be noted in the commentary on the finds from Darda, the number of coins found there was originally given as 17; however, only 8 of them have been conserved and 4 of these are so corroded that they have not been identified. Likewise there should be 4 coins from (E 5) but only two are available, both of them unidentifiable. All illustrations are by the author and prepared for publication by Esko Tikkala.

Catalogue

Macedonia



1. Obv. Head of Athena wearing Corinthian helmet r. Rev. Pan erecting a trophy. Cf. SNG Cop. 1205-9. 3.79 g. The identification is based on photos taken before conservation (the reverse motif is now unrecognizable).
Sevasto (3847).
Reign of Antigonos Gonatas, 277-239 BC.

Illyria

Apollonia



2. Obv. Laureate head of Apollo I.; behind two monograms, other details not visible. Rev. ΑΠΟΛΛΩ ΝΙΑΤΑΝ; obelisk of Apollo Agyieus; all in wreath. Cf. SNG München 321; SNG Cop. 409 (same monograms). 8.03 g, 0°. PS 25, G4, Loc. 1, P. 3 (3831).
End of the fourth / beginning of the third to middle of the first century BC.



3. Obv. Head of Artemis wearing stephane I., behind head ΟΝΟΜΟΚΛΗΣ. Rev. ΑΠΟΛΛΩ ΝΙΑΤΑΝ (only partly visible); tripod; all in wreath. Cf. SNG Cop. 407. For the dating see SNG Cop. München 326. 16.47 g, 270°. PS 25, G4, Loc. 1, P. 3 (3839).
End of the fourth / beginning of the third to middle of the first century BC.

Epirus²

Ambracia



4. Obv. Laureate head of Apollo r. Rev. Α Μ Β Ρ; Zeus with aegis and thunderbolt, on l. monogram. Cf. SNG Cop. 31; for the monogram see SNG Evelpidis 1772. 5.11 g, 315°. PS 25, G1, Loc. 1, P. 3 (3832).
End of the fourth / beginning of the third to first century BC.



5. Obv. Radiate head of Apollo r. Rev. Α Μ Β Ρ; Zeus with aegis and thunderbolt. Cf. SNG Cop. 32-4. 3.99 g, 45°. PS 25, G4, Loc. 1, P. 3 (3836).
End of the fourth / beginning of the third to first century BC.

² I am grateful to Efterpi Ralli of the Numismatic Museum in Athens for helping me with the chronology of this series.



6. Ambracia? Obv. Badly corroded (head of Heracles?). Rev. sitting male figure (Apollo holding bow?) l. Cf. SNG Cop. 30, BMC 15-17. PS 25, G1, Loc. 1, P. 3 (3833). End of the fourth / beginning of the third to first century BC.



7. Obv. Laureate and veiled head of Dione l. Rev. A M B P; obelisk of Apollo Agyieus; all in wreath. Cf. SNG München 510-11; Franke 1961, pp. 323, 329, pl. 67. 4.72 g, 90°. Sevasto (3848). Third to first century BC.



8. As last but Dione's head r. 4.16 g, 180°. Cf. SNG Cop. 23. Sevasto (3849). Third to first century BC.



9. As last but rev. badly corroded. 3.34 g, 0°. Sevasto (3850). Third to first century BC.



10. Ambracia? Obv. Laureate head of Apollo r.? Rev. as above? Cf. Franke 1961, pp. 323, 329, pl. 67; SNG 24 (head l.). 4.97 g, 180°. Sevasto (3846). Third to first century BC.



11. Ambracia? Obv. Helmeted head r., rev. as above? Worn and corroded. 4.28 g, 180°. Sevasto (3851). Third to first century BC.

Buthrotum



12. Obv. [NERO CLAVDI]VS CAES[AR]; laureate head r. Rev. EX CON • D [C C I B³]; bust of Aesculapius r., in front, staff. Cf. RPC 1411. 4.85, 270°. PS 25, D, Loc. 1, P. 1 (3876). Reign of Nero, 54-68

Cassope



13. Obv. Uncertain inscription (ΑΠΟΛΛΑ?); head of Dionysus wearing ivy-wreath r. Rev. ΚΑΣΣΩ ΠΙΑΙΩΝ; amphora; all within wreath (the wreath and the lower part of the text barely discernible). Unusual style. Cf. SNG München 538; SNG Cop. 48. 4.43, 270°. PS 25, A2, Loc. 10, P. 3 (3829). C. 215-195 BC?

³ Colonia Campestris Iulia Buthrotum.

Molossoi



14. Obv. ΜΟΛΟΣΣΩΝ (mostly illegible) around the rim of a round shield on which thunderbolt. Rev. Thunderbolt within wreath (indistinct). Franke 1961, p. 101, pl. 9-11; SNG München 539. 3.60 g. PS 29, A4, Loc. 1, P. 1 (3830). C. 360-330/325 BC.

League of the Epirotes



15. Obv. Head of Artemis wearing stephane r. Rev. ΑΠΕΙ ΡΩΤΑΝ; spearhead; all in wreath. Franke 1961, pp. 209 ff, pl. 42; cf. SNG München 585-90. 7,81 g, 225°. PS 25, A5, Loc. 6, P. 4 (3828). 233/2-168 BC.



16. Obv. Head of Zeus wearing oak-wreath l. Rev. ΑΠΕΙ ΡΩΤΑΝ; thunderbolt; all in wreath. Franke 1961, pp. 225 ff, pl. 45-52; cf. SNG München 593-5. 6,41 g, 45°. Sevasto (3845). 148 to second half of the first century BC.



17. Rev. as last, obv. badly corroded. 6.38 g, 45°. PS 25, A2, Loc. 18, P. 5 (3825). 148 to second half of the first century BC.

Corcyra



18. Obv. Κ Ο; volute crater. Rev. Σ Ω; bunch of grapes. Cf. SNG Cop. 165; SNG München 656. 4.84 g, 0°. PS 25, A2, Loc. 9, P. 3 (3854). Fourth century BC.



Corcyra?

19. Obv. wholly obliterated. Rev. forepart of galley r., traces of inscription. Cf. SNG München 677-84. 7.78 g. PS 25, G4, Loc. 1, P. 2 (3835). Roman dominion, c. 229-48 BC?

Bithynia



20. Obv. Head of Dionysus wearing ivy-wreath r. Rev. [Β]ΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ [ΠΡ]ΟΥΣΙΟΥ; centaur Chiron playing lyre r., on r. monogram ΛΦ. Cf. SNG Cop. 640. 6.71 g, 0°. PS 25, A2, Loc. 9, P. 1 (3826). Reign of Prusias II, c. 183-149 BC.

Egypt

Alexandria



21. Obv. Bust of Kleopatra diademed r. Rev. ΚΛΕΟΠΑΤΡΑΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΣΣΗΣ (partly illegible); eagle l. on thunderbolt, on l. double cornucopiae, on r. M. Weiser 1995, 184; cf. SNG Cop. 422-4. 10.14 g, 180°. PS 25, A2, Loc. 16, P. 3 (3827). Reign of Kleopatra VII, 50-31 BC.

Rome

Republic



22. Denarius. Obv. Head of Ceres wreathed with corn r.; the inscription before the head (C MEMMI C F) obliterated. Rev. C MEMMIVS (only partly readable) on r., on l., IMPERATOR. A captive with hands tied behind back kneeling at the foot of a trophy. RRC 427/1. 2.44 g, 0°. The coin is heavily corroded and looks like bronze: a plated forgery that has lost its silver coating?⁴ PS 25, A2, Loc. 6, P. 2 (3840). C. Memmi C. f., 56 BC.

Empire



23. Dupondius or as.⁵ Obv. CRISPINA AVGVSTA; draped bust r. Rev. [IVNO LV]C[INA] S C; Juno, veiled and draped, standing l., holding patera and sceptre. RIC III, 680. 10.06 g, 315°. PS 25, A1-2, Loc. 2, P. 3 (3838). Crispina, 180-183?

24. Post-reform antoninianus. Obv. IMP C AVRELIANVS AVG; radiate and cuirassed bust r. Rev. SOLI INVICTO; Sol standing l. between two captives, r. hand raised and l. hand holding globe, treading down one of the captives, on l. star; mint-mark illegible but letters XX visible in the exergue. This variety of the Soli invicto type with a star has been assigned to Ticinum and dated to 274 (Göbl 1993, 'Synchronabelle'). Weight and die axis not recorded. Not illustrated. Darda (2800). Aurelian, 270-275

⁴ I wish to thank Michel Amandry of Paris and Carmen Arnold-Biucchi of Cambridge, Mass., for their comments on this coin.

⁵ Dupondii originally had a golden colour, being struck in brass (orichalcum), while asses were struck in copper. This coin has a thick green patina which prevents the identification of the metal.

25. AE 3. Obv. [D N] VAL LICIN LICINI[VS NOB C]; laureate bust wearing imperial mantle and holding mappa, globe and sceptre, l. Rev. IOVI CONSERVATORI; Jupiter standing l., chlamys across l. shoulder, holding Victory on globe; other details indistinct. Possibly RIC VII, Cyzicus 11, dated to 317-320. 1.78 g, 0°. Not illustrated.
Darda (3023).
Licinius II, caesar 317-324.

26. AE 3. Obv. CONSTAN TINVS AVG (mostly illegible); laureate head r. Rev. D N CONSTANTINI [MAX AVG]; VOT XX within wreath; mint mark illegible. This issue has been dated to 318-324 (RIC VII, p. 58). 2.38 g, 0°. Not illustrated.
Darda (2813).
Constantine I, 307-337.

27. AE 3. Obv. CONSTAN TINVS AVG; laureate head r. Rev. PROVIDEN TIAE AVGG; camp gate with two turrets. This issue has been dated to 324-330 (RIC VII, p. 49). Mint mark, weight and die axis not recorded. Not illustrated.
Darda (2855).
Constantine I, 307-337.

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