

NEW ASPECTS REGARDING THE CIRCULATION AND PRESENCE OF THE CALLATIAN COIN OF THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD IN THE CHORA AND IN AREAS OF THE LOCAL POPULATION

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In memory of Claudiu Munteanu (1979-2021)

Abstract

The author presents a number of 30 silver and bronze coins struck in the Callatis mint in the Hellenistic period. The specimens correspond to several monetary types as follows: Herakles (8), Dionysus/panther (1), Demeter (2), Apollo (2), Dionysus/wreath (7), Artemis (1) and Athena (9). The new information presented in the following pages comes from different environments and has been discovered in the last five decades. So far, in the scientific numismatic bibliography, on a few occasions, existing information on the circulation and especially the presence of Callatis monetary documents of the autonomous period in *chora* and beyond has been analyzed. The present approach, which at first glance seems unoriginal, in fact goes beyond the previous ones, especially as far as the *chora* is concerned, since the previous ones represented stages of knowledge synthesized at a given time, according to the information published on various occasions. Clearly, the few archaeological researches known for specific pre-Roman settlements in the Callatis' *chora* (with the exception of the systematic ones at Albești) have drastically limited the information baggage, depriving us of a real knowledge of the monetary realities in the area with the implicit consequences reflected on the numismatic evidence. In order to highlight the contrast with the previous situation known for *chora* and not only, we have brought through the new published pieces, important additions and clarifications regarding the presence of Callatis coins of Hellenistic period accompanying various goods in the specific movement of local and area trade along possible Istro-Pontic routes. The four drachms of the Herakles type discovered at Arsa may well constitute a small monetary hoard connected with the known stone fortification near the locality.

Key words: Callatis, coins, countermark, *chora*, circulation, monetary presence, Hellenistic period.

Introduction

The new information presented in the following pages comes from different environments and has been discovered over the last five decades. On the one hand, the increase in the profile of activities carried out by the authorities specialized in the protection of national movable heritage assets over the last decade has created the possibility of studying various categories of archaeological and numismatic artefacts¹. Another part, although they have come into the possession of various persons (without any

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¹ The article is a complement to other studies and articles that aim to make scientific use of the information on the discoveries made in Dobrudja; other than the official archaeological way, see Cociș 2011 253-260; Buzoianu, Bărbulescu 2011 459-468; Talmațchi 2018 81-125.

other specimens to indicate a private collection), have obviously been extracted unprofessionally from their in situ condition, a direct cause of their non-contextualization, often through agricultural works in the extravilan terrain of localities or they are the result of accidental discoveries in areas heavily affected by building developments. Last but not least, a few finds are published that were part of numismatic collections in Constanța, discovered in various circumstances, accumulated during the '90s and early 2000s², respectively coins brought to the museum by various owners of such objects that came into their possession occasionally and who wanted an expert evaluation. From the total number of coins processed from a scientific point of view, we considered that it was worthwhile to value those that met the most conditions of veracity of the findings.

CATALOG

CALLATIS

Herakles type

1. AR, drachma, ↑, 5.60 g, 18 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 1.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Spiked club, legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑ, bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 196; Stancomb 2000, pl. III, no. 62.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

2. AR, drachma, ↑, 5.40 g, 18 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 2.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Spiked club, legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑ, bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 196; Stancomb 2000, pl. III, no. 62.

Place of discovery: Vârtop (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

3. AR, drachma, ↑, 5.75 g, 19 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 3.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Spiked club, legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑ, bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 196; Stancomb 2000, pl. III, no. 62.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

4. AR, drachma, ↑, 5.55 g, 20 x 18 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 4.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Spiked club, legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑ, bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 196; Stancomb 2000, pl. III, no. 62.

Place of discovery: Costinești (Costinești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

5. AR, drachma, ↑, 4.74 g, 18 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 5.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Spiked club, legend (ΚΑΛΛΑ)Τ(ΙΑ), bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 196; Stancomb 2000, pl. III, no. 62.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

6. AR, drachma, ↑, 5.76 g, 18 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 6.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Spiked club, legend (ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑ), bow with *gorythos*.

² The coins with the numbers in the catalogue were part of the numismatic collection of Mr. Mihai Bogdan (president of the Numismatic Society of Constanta), who unfortunately passed away about a decade ago.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 196; Stancomb 2000, pl. III, no. 62.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

7. AR, drachma, ↑, 5.60 g, 18 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 7.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Monogram, spiked club, legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑ, bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 97, no. 197; Talmațchi 2011 735, pl. LIII, no. 14.

Place of discovery: Coroana (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

8. AR, hemidrachma, ↑, 2.48 g, 14 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 8.

Ob. Head of young Herakles, covered with lion's fur and facing right.

Rv. Monogram(?), spiked club, legend ΚΑΛΛΑ, bow with *gorythos*.

Reference: Pick 1898 98, no. 200- 203.

Numismatic collection of MINAC, inv. no. 81148.

Place of discovery: Limanu (Limanu commune, Constanța County), seized by Constanța Heritage Police, 2010.

Dionysus/panther type

9. AE, ↑, 6.27 g, 23 x 22 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 9.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus, wreathed with vine leaves, facing right.

Rv. Panther facing right, with thyrsos; above it monogram; under the panther the letter Θ; in exergue legend ΚΑΛΛΑ.

Reference: Pick 1898 100, no. 217; Stancomb 2000, pl. V, no. 88.

Place of discovery: Coroana (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

Demeter type

10. AE, ↑, 5.69 g, 21 × 19 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 10.

Ob. Head of Demeter with wreath of wheat ears, facing to the right.

Rv. Wreath of wheat ears; in the center abbreviated name of a magistrate ΔΙ; in the upper part of the monetary field the legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤ(Ι).

Reference: Pick 1898 101, no. 225; Mušmov 1912 23, no. 227; Stancomb 2000 pl. V, no. 89.

Place of discovery: Tuzla (Tuzla commune, Constanța County), found by chance before 1999.

11. AE, ↓, 5.70 g, 20 × 19.5 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 11.

Ob. Head of Demeter with a wreath of wheat ears, facing to the right; at center down of the coin field a circular countermark (6.5 mm), with eight-spoke wheel symbol.

Rv. Wreath of wheat ears; in the center abbreviated name of a magistrate ΔΙΟ; in the upper part of the monetary field the legend ΚΑΛΛΑΤ(Ι).

Reference: Knechtel 1908 30, no. 2; Poenaru Bordea 1968 107, no. 30; Stancomb 2000 pl. V, no. 89.

Place of discovery: Hagieni (Limanu commune, Constanța County), found before 1998, accidental discovery.

Apollo type

12. AE, ↗, 8.52 g, 24.5 x 23.8 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 12.

Ob. Head of Apollo, facing right, surmounted by a laurel wreath.

Rv. A tripod placed between two laurel branches, and to the left an ear of wheat; inscription in three lines: ΚΑΛΛΑ/ΤΙΑΝΩΝ; in exergue abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΠΟΛ(Λ).

Reference: Talmațchi 2001 129, no. 70.

Numismatic collection of MIA-ICEM Tulcea, inv. no. 52241.

Place of discovery: Agighiol (Valea Nucarilor commune, Tulcea County), 2000, acquisition, unknown conditions of discovery.

13. AE, ↓, 10.22 g, 26 x 25 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 13.

Ob. Head of Apollo, facing right, surmounted by a laurel wreath.

Rv. A tripod placed between two laurel branches, to the left an ear of wheat; inscription in three lines: ΚΑΛΛΑ/ΤΙΑΝΩΝ; in exergue abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΑΠΟΛ.

Reference: Pick 1898 102, no. 229; Stancomb 1996 155, no. 10; Price 1993, plate VII, no. 214; Stancomb 2000, plate IV, no. 69.

Place of discovery: Hagieni (Limanu commune, Constanța County); unknown conditions of discovery.

Dionysus/wreath type

14. AE, ↑, 6.27 g, 23 x 22 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 14.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription ΚΑΛΛΑ; in wreath abbreviated name of the magistrate ΠΟ/ΛΥ.

Reference: Pick 1898, no. 221; Price 1993 pl. VIII, no. 212; Stancomb 2000, pl. IV, no. 74.

Numismatic collection of MIA-ICEM Tulcea, inv. no 7049, seized by Police.

Place of discovery: Greci (Greci commune, Tulcea County).

15. AE, ↑, 5.57 g, 22.5 x 21.5 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 15.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription ΚΑΛΛΑ; in wreath abbreviated name of the magistrate ΠΟ/ΥΛΕ.

Reference: Stancomb 2000, pl. IV, nr. 75.

Numismatic collection of MIA-ICEM Tulcea, inv. no. 6891, seized by Police.

Place of discovery: Mihai Bravu (Mihai Bravu commune, Tulcea County).

16. AE, ↑, 4.95 g, 20 x 19 mm. Pl. 1, Fig. 16.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription (Κ)Α (Λ)ΛΑ; in wreath abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΕΥ.

Reference: Stancomb 2000, pl. IV, no. 83.

Place of discovery: Arsa (com. Albești, Constanța county), found by chance before 1994.

17. AE, ↑, 4.97 g, 20 x 19 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 17.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription ΚΑΛΛΑ; in wreath monetary magistrate monogram.

Reference: Ruzicka 1913 87, 222b; Stancomb 2000, pl. IV, no. 78-80.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), found by chance before 1994.

18. AE, ↑, 5.00 g; 21 x 20 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 18.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription ΚΑΛΛΑ; in wreath abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΕΠΙ.

Reference: Pick 1898 101, no. 220; Stancomb 2000, pl. IV, no. 76-78.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), found by chance before 1994.

19. AE, ↑, 6.40 g, 20 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 19.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription KAΛΛATI; in wreath monetary magistrate monogram.

Reference: Knechtel 1904 11, no. 2; Talmațchi 2003 191, no. 149.

Numismatic collection of MINAC, inv. no. 83248, donation.

Place of discovery: Vâlcelele (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

20. AE, ↑, 6.37 g, 22 x 21 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 20.

Ob. Head of young Dionysus with ivy wreath, facing right.

Rv. Ivy wreath; in the right field of the coin thyrsus; inscription KAΛΛA; in wreath abbreviated name of the magistrate A/ΘA.

Reference: SNG Cop., pl. 4, no. 178.

Place of discovery: Vâlcelele (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

Artemis type

21. AE, ↓, 3.05 g, 16 x 15.5 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 21.

Ob. Head of Artemis, facing right.

Rv. Inscription KAΛΛA; quiver; abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΓAY.

Reference: Ruzicka 1913 10, no. 251 a.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

Athena type

22. AE, ↓, 2.45 g, 15 x 12.5 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 22.

Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.

Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription KAΛΛA; bludgeon; abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΠPOM(A).

Reference: Pick 1898 104, no. 245; Mušmov 1912 25, no. 248; Ruzicka 1913 10, no. 243d.

Place of discovery: Costinești (Costinești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

23. AE, ↓, 2.55 g, 15 x 14 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 23.

Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.

Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription KAΛΛAT; bludgeon; abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΠPOMA.

Reference: Pick 1898 104, no. 245; Mušmov 1912 25, no. 248; Ruzicka 1913 10, no. 243d.

Place of discovery: Comana (Comana commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

24. AE, ←, 3.05 g, 14.5 x 13 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 24.

Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.

Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription KAΛΛA; bludgeon; magistrate monogram, probably unpublished (A and P in ligature).

Reference: Pick 1898 102, no. 234, but variant of the mark.

Place of discovery: Dulcești (23 August commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

25. AE, ←, 3.15 g, 15 x 14 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 25.

Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.

Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription KAΛΛA; bludgeon; magistrate monogram (A and I in ligature).

Reference: Pick 1898 102, no. 244; Talmațchi 2003 192, no. 180.

Place of discovery: Arsa (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

26. AE, ↓, 2.76 g, 14.5 x 13 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 26.
Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.
Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription O(?)KI; bludgeon; inscription KAΛΛΑ.
Reference: Moisil 1912 12, no. 26, but with a different variant of the magistrate's name OΛΥM.

Place of discovery: Cotu Văii (Albești commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

27. AE, ←, 3.38 g, 16.5 x 12.5 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 27.
Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.
Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription KAΛΛΑ; bludgeon; indecipherable monogram; probably ΔΙΟΝΥ.

Reference: Pick 1898 102, no. 234? or Stancomb 2000, pl. V, no. 101(?).

Numismatic collection of MINAC, inv. no. 80915.

Place of discovery: Gura Dobrogei (Cogealac commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

28. AE, ↓, 2.64 g, 16 x 14 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 28.
Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.
Rv. Wheat of ear; inscription KAΛΛΑ; bludgeon; abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΑΦ(?).

Reference: Clain 1939 360, no. 234 B.

Place of discovery: Pecineaga (Pecineaga commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

29. AE, →, 2.44 g, 14 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 29.
Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.
Rv. Wheat of ear (?); inscription (K)ΑΛ(ΛΑ); bludgeon; abbreviated name of the monetary magistrate ΠΟ(?).

Reference: Pick 1898 102, no. 234? or Knechtel 1915 11, no. 25.

Place of discovery: Moșneni (23 August commune, Constanța County), accidental discovery.

30. AE, ←, 2.63 g, 14.5 x 14 mm. Pl. 2, Fig. 30.
Ob. Head of Athena, wearing Corinthian helmet, facing right.
Rv. Bludgeon; inscription (KA)ΛΛΑ; above the bludgeon the letters A and I as a monogram.
Reference: Pick 1898 102, no. 234.

Numismatic collection of MIA-ICEAM Tulcea, inv. no. 6888.

Place of discovery: Mihai Bravu (Mihai Bravu commune, Tulcea County), seized by Police, accidental discovery.

Commentary

From a monetary point of view, the workshop at Callatis minted silver coins of various denominations of the Herakles type under the care of a local magistracy, starting with the middle or second part of the 4th century BC. (Preda 1969 14), and later produced bronze coins of several monetary types until the 1st century BC. For the 3rd century B.C., a decree is known that attests the presence of financial magistrates in the colony of Megarian origin (Avram, Bărbulescu 1992 167-170). These bronze coins, like the silver ones, started to circulate in the area of the polis and its immediate surroundings (on the individual lots of the Callatian citizens), and then penetrated the area of political and economic influence (*chora*) inhabited by Greeks and autochthonous population. This had a fortified aspect at Callatis, with strong defensive values. About two decades after the disappearance from the history of the Thracian king Lysimach, it is reported that there was a common boundary between the *chorae* of the colonies of Callatis and Tomis

(Pippidi, Berciu 1965 197). Also, the first epigraphic attestation of the Callatian *chora* appears in the first part of the Hellenistic era, more exactly in the 3rd century B.C., according to the text present on an honorary monument dedicated to a strategist (Avram 1999 437-438, no. 106). So, although the information on the presence of a rural territory is almost 200 years later than the theoretical date of the inauguration of the colony itself, we know that it had a continental character, with distinct natural boundaries (Alexandrescu 1995 130). It reached south up to Shabla (Bulgaria), to the west it was bounded by the present localities of Coroana, Cotu Văii and Comana, and to the north by Tuzla and the town of Techirghiol (Avram 1991 119).

The minting of a significant number of monetary types (also from a quantitative point of view) could only be explained by the necessity of their use in the context of a prosperous craft activity (Pippidi 1967a 51) and of a particularly active trade, also oriented towards the barbarian hinterland, especially the one located in the south-west of the Dobrudja area and north of the Danube in general (Pippidi 1967a 54). The colony of Dorian origin reached an economic and commercial peak in the 3rd-2nd centuries BC (especially in the first half of the last century), when all information points to the existence of political, economic and cultural relations with centers in the Pontic and Aegean-Mediterranean basin, before and after the conflict with Byzantium (Pippidi, Berciu 1965 239; Pippidi 1967a 51-54; Pippidi 1967b 159; Doruțiu-Boilă 1988 248; Talmațchi 1995 24).

The present article brings to light 30 Callatian silver and bronze coins of: Herakles, Dionysos/panther, Demeter, Apollo, Dionysus/wreath, Artemis and Athena types, mostly found in the Callatian *chora*. Most are the result of acquisitions, donations and confiscations that have entered the inventories of museums, or used to be in the possession of private individuals on an occasional basis, who have held them as mementos, etc., and which, once brought to the museum, have been the subject of expert appraisals. As a result, their manner of discovery can no longer be fully reconstructed. Most are brief accounts, sometimes with small accompanying details. Therefore, the new information comes from different environments, all outside the archaeological area³. And we are sure that many other important discoveries we may never be aware of will remain unknown to us, in private and even public collections.

So far, in the scientific numismatic bibliography, on a few occasions, existing information on the circulation and especially the presence of Callatian monetary documents of the autonomous period in the *chora* and beyond has been analyzed. The current approach, which at first sight seems unoriginal, in fact goes beyond the previous ones, especially concerning the *chora*, since the previous ones represented stages of knowledge synthesized at a given time, according to the information published on different occasions (in 2013 the number of Callatis coins of the autonomous period from the city and the territory of influence represented 36.5 % of the total amount of stray finds in Dobrudja, according to Munteanu 2013 363). Clearly, the few archaeological researches known for specific pre-Roman settlements in the Callatis *chora* (with the exception of the systematic ones at Albești) have drastically limited the information baggage, depriving us of a real knowledge of the monetary realities in the area with the implicit consequences reflected on the numismatic evidence.

The circulation and penetration of coinage from Callatis during the 4th-1st centuries BC can be traced in stages by geographical areas, in close correlation with the commercial directions developed by the colony in different chronological phases. What is noteworthy in the case of isolated finds is the prevalence of the spread of the bronze coins of the city,

³ See also the endeavors of some Romanian researchers in the last decade of scientific recovery of such relevant data for the pre-Roman history of the Istro-Pontic space through the publication of articles: Cociș 2011 253-260; Buzoianu, Bărbulescu 2011 459-468; Talmațchi 2018 81-125.

which have an overwhelming proportion if we look at the whole repertoire of finds. Coins issued by Callatis appear in Greek-autochthonous settlements more in the southern half, towards the south-western corner of Dobrudja, in the area of the Cadrilater, near Silistra (according to Poenaru Bordea 2004 63, no. 53; Talmațchi 2006 93, no. 19), which would suggest a possible commercial and economic direction of special interest for the Callatian polis in the 4th-1st centuries BC and along the Danube shore, they are much better highlighted than the center of the Moesian territory. In general, the archaeological context of the Callatis coins corresponds to the 2nd-1st centuries BC, when Histria can no longer play an important role in the exchanges with the local population. Also, in support of trade, the transition and leap at Callatis from silver to bronze coin production expressed the need to support the economic and commercial effort manifested in the territory of influence and beyond, in other increasingly distant resonant spaces. In addition, the creation of submultiples for silver coins that had a real impact even several hundred kilometers away.

The city of Callatis is the most economically, commercially and monetarily involved colony for the southern and south-western area of Dobrudja, with the end of the first half and the beginning of the second half of the 3rd century BC. And this situation will continue in the 2nd century and the first half of the 1st century BC, a period corresponding to the chronology of the monetary types discovered in the local environment. The penetration of Callatian bronze coins in these areas is due to the confidence enjoyed by the economy and the prosperous image of the city in the preferences of the locals. A series of analyses made on the circulation of autonomous Callatian coins in *chora* and other geographical areas have indicated a certain predilection of the appearance of finds along a possible trade line linking the Dorian colony to the south-western part of Dobrudja territory. Also, such monetary occurrences were overwhelmingly made near known local settlements, either as stray finds as at Satu Nou, Izvoarele, Canlia, Adâncata-Floriile etc. (Poenaru Bordea 2004 60, no. 9, 61, no. 23, 63, no. 50; Talmațchi 2006 94-95, no. 2, 98, no. 14, 106, no. 46, 112-113, no. 75), or in small or larger hoards such as those at Ion Corvin, Adamclisi and Șipotele (Poenaru Bordea 2004 61, no. 21; Talmațchi 2006 91, no. 13; Talmațchi 2017 540-545). As in the case of monetary pieces of Histrian origin, there is a possibility that the monetary flow oriented directly (or even directed for a specific chronological sequence) or indirectly (officially or unofficially through human circulation) towards the south-western corner of Dobrudja gravitated mainly around the important local tribal center of Adâncata (and its end, as an outlet, was near the trade ford of Silistra and in the Borcea area) (Talmațchi 2004 178). A proof of this is the relative density of points with Greek archaeological finds in the Borcea area, where we note the presence of warehouses used by merchants for the further transport of economic products coming from Callatis, through the territory of the local communities of Dobrudja. A series of archaeological finds are attested, marking the southern-Dobrudja trade route that followed the natural access valleys, linking the Callatis colony and some settlements in the Callatian territory to the barbarian area. The number of coins found in or near a settlement also depends on local factors such as the period of economic prosperity or decline, the existence of a possibly highly monetized environment, the state of insecurity or tranquility, whether they met all the requirements of the local authority etc.

Moreover, the overwhelming presence among the discoveries of the bronze denomination leaves open the option of their penetration into the purpose for which they were minted, within the wider framework of penetration and distribution in the local environment. Finally, two other areas, in the north-east and in the central part of the territory, where other small nominal concentrations of bronze can be identified, should be identified through the known discoveries. Economic and commercial relations know a continuous evolution against the background of the triggering of irreversible mutations that occur within local communities, due to repeated contacts. And the city of

Callatis had constant commercial relations with the autochthonous (Getae) and allogeneic (Scythian) populations, organized in different political-military structures. As usual, the motivation of the presence or circulation can be complex, if we think for example of the need for possession existing in the local elite (even for currency made of non-noble metals in Dobrudja or the extreme north-east of Thrace).

From the Callatian *chora*, the situation of the monetary discoveries in the area and surroundings of the phrourion type fortification at Albești is very well known (Poenaru Bordea 2004 59, no. 2; Talmațchi 2006 96, no. 4; Talmațchi 2009 83-103; Talmațchi 2018 81-125), which has also benefited from systematic excavations over the last five decades. It was built by the Callatians starting from the first half of the 4th century BC, on the site of a former autochthonous settlement (Rădulescu, Cheluță-Georgescu, Munteanu-Bărbulescu 1979 173; Rădulescu, Bărbulescu, Buzoianu 2000 172). With a deep defensive role, it experienced its last moments of existence at the end of the 3rd century BC (Bărbulescu, Buzoianu 2003 39) or in the 3rd-2nd centuries BC (Irimia 1993 163).

In addition, other monetary finds from the *chora* should be mentioned, such as: the hoard and isolated finds from Karon Limen (Poenaru Bordea 2004 61, no. 27; Talmațchi 2006 89, no. 5, 98, no. 16); the hoard and the isolated ones from Tuzla (Talmațchi 2006 94, no. 22, 116, no. 90); respectively the isolated discoveries from Eforie Sud (Talmațchi 2006 102, no. 32), Limanu (Talmațchi 2006 107, no. 50), Pecineaga (Talmațchi 2006 111, no. 68) and Schitu (Talmațchi 2006 113, no. 77).

In the present catalog, from the Callatian *chora*, there are a total of 25 specimens, of which 9 specimens discovered at Arsa of the Herakles (4), Dionysus/wreath (3), Athena (1) and Artemis (1) types; a specimen discovered at Comana of the Athena type; two specimens discovered at Coroana of the Herakles (1) and Dionysus/panther (1) types; two specimens discovered in Costinești of the Herakles and Athena types; a specimen discovered at Cotu Văii of the Athena type; an Athena-type specimen discovered at Dulcești; two specimens discovered at Hagieni of the Demeter and Apollo types; a Herakles-type specimen discovered at Limanu; an Athena-type specimen discovered at Moșneni; a specimen discovered in Pecineaga of the Athena type; a specimen discovered in Tuzla of the Demeter type; two specimens discovered at Vâlcelele of the Dionysus/wreath type and one specimen discovered at Vârtope of the Herakles type. In total, 13 points with discoveries corresponding to the same number of administrative localities are present in the Callatian *chora*. From outside of the Callatian *chora*, we note the discoveries from Gura Dobrogei from the Histrian *chora* (one specimen of the Athena type) and from Agighiol (one specimen of the Apollo type), Greci (one specimen of the Dionysus/wreath type) and Mihai Bravu (two specimens of the types Dionysus/wreath and Athena) from the north and north-west of the Istro-Pontic space, which also holds other finds of the same colony from the Hellenistic period. In total, 30 coins are published, of which 8 are silver and 22 are bronze. Regarding monetary types, we note the following situation: of the silver Herakles type, eight pieces; of the Dionysus /panther type one piece, of the Demeter type two pieces, of the Apollo type two pieces, of the Dionysus/wreath type seven pieces, of the Artemis type one piece and of the Athena type nine pieces. Of all the points with discoveries, the locality of Arsa stands out, where we record a total of nine specimens of Callatian silver and bronze coins. We consider with great probability the possibility of discovering the four drachmas of the Herakles type as a homogeneous group, a micro-hoard, in the area of the stone fortification.

Although we do not have archaeological information on the contexts of the finds, we can nevertheless integrate them into the already published information on these geographical and administrative areas. As mentioned above, most of the monetary finds come from the geographical area of the former Callatian *chora*.

Thus, fragments of Hellenistic pottery, handmade vessels and amphora handles stamped from Sinope come from near and inside Arsa (Gramatopol, Poenaru Bordea 1969 267, no. 1167; Irimia 1973 52-53; Avram 1988 290). A settlement with a distinct stone structure is also sighted north of the village.

Several burial complexes with a Hellenistic Greek inventory have been discovered in the area of Comana, dated to the first part of the second half of the 2nd century BC (Irimia 1983 72).

At Coroana a Hellenistic settlement is known from archaeological surveys and from unauthorized interventions, dated (based on the astynom-ies of the Amphora stamps) between the last decade of the 4th century BC and the first decades of the 2nd century BC. In the bibliography the following statement is made: “the lower limit of the settlement at Coroana certainly exceeds the lower limit of the settlement at Albești” (Buzoianu, Bărbulescu 2011 462).

On the southern shore of Lake Costinești, in the area of an open settlement, Hellenistic ceramic fragments (a kantharos) and a fragmentary Thasos amphora, dated to the late 4th century and during the 3rd century BC, were discovered in 1976. On the western side of the same lake an ancient settlement was discovered during 2005, from which several fragments of amphorae from Heraclea Pontica and Thasos were recovered (Irimia 2006 129-130). The Fishing Point (or Monastery) lies about 1 km north of the village of Schitu, where numerous ceramic fragments of stamped amphorae handles were reportedly discovered in the 1930s (Vulpe 1934 209). As having been discovered by chance at Costinești, at the same point “Pescărie”, on the occasion of a survey carried out in 2001, we note several Hellenistic ceramic fragments in the form of amphorae wrappings (from Pontic Heraclea, Thasos, Menda, Sinope, Rhodos, Cnidos. The dating of the pieces belongs to the second half of the 4th and 2nd century BC) (Buzoianu, Munteanu 2019 198).

Fragments of Hellenistic amphorae from Thasos, Heraclea, Rhodos and Sinope are known from accidental finds made in 1961 near Cotu Văii (Irimia 1973 52). A Hellenistic settlement has also been identified at the point “vineyard of Avram”, where other amphorae with stamps from Rhodos and Sinope have been discovered (Irimia 1980 89). During 1994 a fragment of a stamped amphora from Heraclea Pontica was discovered (Irimia 2006 130).

From the administrative area of Dulcești several incidental finds of Hellenistic archaeological material have been published over the years, among which we list luxury pottery, an amphora from Heraklea and several stamped handles (Gramatopol, Poenaru Bordea 1969 267, nos. 1175-1177; Irimia 1973 53, 56; Irimia 2006 130-131). Another amphora handle stamped Rhodos was also recovered later (Irimia 2006 130-131).

South of the village of Hagieni (about 700 m), traces of a Hellenistic settlement are known, with grey ceramic material dated to the 3rd-2nd centuries BC (fragments of plates, bowls, atypical), Greek luxury pottery (*kantharos*), fragments of Hellenistic *amphorae* (Thasos, Heraclea and Rhodos), and two km north-west, on an island, at the point “Cascaia”, a Hellenistic enclosure (of a fortified settlement), built in the opus graecum technique, was discovered. It is dated to the 3rd-1st centuries BC (Irimia 1973 50-52; Ionescu, Georgescu 1997 169, nos. 30-31).

The only piece from Moșneni comes from near the former State Agricultural Enterprise of the locality. Numerous Getic and Greek ceramic materials dated to the Hellenistic period are also known from the area, including amphorae handles stamped by Rhodos and Sinope, which would belong to a possible settlement (Irimia 1973 56-60; Irimia 1980 70). During 1994, three other stamped amphorae handles were discovered by chance, one of which is from Cnidos (Irimia 2006 133-134).

At Pecineaga, about 5 km northwest of the town, a rural Roman settlement is known, overlapping a pre-Roman one, as proved by various pottery materials discovered and dated to the 3rd century BC, such as amphora fragments from Rhodos, Cos and Sinope (Irimia 1980 102, no. 1). A second Hellenistic settlement is located only 1 km away in southeastern direction from the previous point, respectively 200 m from the Karachioi mound, which can be dated to the 4th-2nd centuries BC. On the ground surface there were traces of several dwellings with stone block foundations, and Hellenistic pottery in the form of plates, a ceramic bowl with black film and fragments of amphorae from Thasos, Sinope and Cos (Irimia 1980 102, no. 2).

From the “Tuzla Mica” point, not far from the “Tuzla Mare” bay, in the area of an open settlement, hand-worked and Hellenistic ceramic fragments (fragments of Sinope and Cos amphorae, as well as fragments of wheel-worked ash vessels) were recovered. In general, this material belongs to the 4th-3rd centuries BC (Slobozianu 1959 739; Irimia 1980 104-105, no. 17; Irimia 1991 116; Irimia 2006 144-145). At the point “Tuzla-Far”, in the area of the settlement of Stratonis Turris, several amphora handles stamped by Thasos, Heraclea Pontica, Sinope, Rhodos and Paros were discovered (Slobozianu 1959 735-740; Irimia 1991 114-115). Also, from the point “Tuzla Mare”, from the perimeter of an important settlement, come local and Greek ceramic fragments (kantharos), together with stamped amphorae handles from Amphipolis, Thasos and Sinope (Irimia 1991 116, see also note 48). Finally, from the point “Tuzla airport” comes a single stamped amphora handle from Sinope (Irimia 2006 145).

From outside the Callatian *chora* we have four coins of the Hellenistic period in the catalog. The discovery at Gura Dobrogei joins numerous other Getic and Hellenistic archaeological remains, among which we mention two Thasos-stamped handles dated to the last quarter of the 4th century BC (Irimia 2006 133). The Agighiol find comes from an area where many pre-Roman settlements are known. They are worth mentioning: the one discovered in 2011 on the eastern plateau of the Tulcea Valley, at approximately 150 m north of Agighiol⁴; then the one discovered in 2011 on the western plateau of the Tulcea Valley, at approximately 150 m north-west of Agighiol⁵; then the one located in the village's inner area on about 4.5 ha⁶; the one located 300 m west of the village, on the northern slope of Pietros hill⁷ and the one located 1.750 km from the village⁸. The discoveries at Greci and Mihai Bravu are made in areas that have no other archaeological and monetary remains attested for the Hellenistic period.

The western Pontic cities of Dobrudja experienced in their own mints the practice of countermarking in the second part of the autonomous period, more precisely in the Hellenistic period (Talmațchi 2008 155-188; Talmațchi 2011 549-571; Talmațchi 2019b 29-51). The catalogue contains only one coin subject to the mechanical process of countermarking, in correlation with the successive monetary reforms practiced in the West Pontic area. Namely the coin with no. 11 in the catalogue, of the Demeter type, which shows a

⁴ <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=agighiol-valea-nucarilor-tulcea-situl-arheologic-de-la-agighiol-platoul-de-est-al-vaii-tulcea-cod-sit-ran-161507.150> (accesat la 10.09.2022).

⁵ <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=agighiol-valea-nucarilor-tulcea-situl-arheologic-de-la-agighiol-platoul-de-vest-al-vaii-tulcea-cod-sit-ran-161507.149> (accesat la 10.09.2022).

⁶ <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=agighiol-valea-nucarilor-tulcea-situl-arheologic-de-la-agighiol-cod-sit-ran-161507.01>. (accesat la 10.09.2022).

⁷ <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=agighiol-valea-nucarilor-tulcea-asezarea-latene-de-la-agighiol-dealul-pietros-cod-sit-ran-161507.02> (accesat 10.09.2022).

⁸ <http://ran.cimec.ro/sel.asp?descript=agighiol-valea-nucarilor-tulcea-asezarea-latene-de-la-agighiol-1-750-km-de-localitate-cod-sit-ran-161507.10> (accesat 10.09.2022).

counter-mark, circular with a diameter of 6.5 mm, featuring an eight-spoked wheel. It is a common countermark present on this type of coins. What we would like to point out is the very small number of countermarked specimens in the catalogue (in fact only one), a consequence, we say, of the prevalence of the coins in the early discoveries of the *chora*. They circulated here at an earlier period than outside it, and as a result they did not get to be countermarked in the colony. Those that arrive in the 2nd-1st centuries BC in the barbarian hinterland are mostly countermarked (see the situation in the south-west of the Istro-Pontic area).

Conclusions

Numismatic evidence is important for describing how the coin is used, about the character and forms of manifestation of the coin in different major or minor situations. The publication of as many Callatis coin finds of the Hellenistic period from the Callatian *chora* as possible fills a relatively important gap, as there are an insignificant number of such finds. Compared to what is found at Callatis (which in any case does not have a brilliant record), the situation in the *chora* is much less well known, both in terms of points of finds and in terms of the extent of the number of coins and the frequency of certain monetary types. Of note is the increase towards doubling the number of known silver coins in the *chora*, in addition to those known in the Dorian colony. We remain of the opinion that only the lack of archaeological excavations in known settlements of the Hellenistic period prevents us from knowing a more truthful monetary reality, consistent for the period of the 4th-1st centuries BC. We can also observe a synchronization of the direction of penetration towards the western and southern limits of the *chora* and even further towards the Danube River, of the amphora products from the city, with the end of the 4th century BC and the first quarter of the 3rd century BC (Rădulescu, Bărbulescu, Buzoianu 1985 58, 65). Trade arteries were created and, consequently, a flow of commercial goods that would come to dominate trade from the south-west of the Dobrudja space to the north of the Danube in the 3rd-2nd centuries BC (Talmațchi 2016 446-447; Talmațchi 2019a 144).

As can be easily observed, in the analysis of the economic life in the local environment of *chora* and relatively further on, two fundamental coordinates are present: the monetary and the commercial, where the former has accompanied the latter in a major way. These were the main vectors, in a strictly economic sense. Also, outside the *chora*, the presence of quality coins or goods (of luxury pottery and amphorae) may also be due to the exchange of gifts, the payment of tribute in exchange for military protection, raids for plunder, marital relations, itinerant craftsmen etc.

Also, a problem for the coinage struck at Callatis in Hellenistic times is the lack of very narrow chronological landmarks. Therefore, in the absence of preventive or systematic archaeological research in the present points with finds in the catalogue, we can only corroborate them with broader dating during the 4th-1st centuries BC. And we rely on the rest of the known archaeological finds mentioned above. Trade brought about changes in local society and the sharing of values that underpinned cooperation with the Greek world. Callatian coins penetrated deep into the barbarian hinterland, causing profound changes and echoes, the most important consequence in the start and continuity of relations being trust in their quality and the accompanying products. And the obvious prosperity. Trade was one of the primary societal levers in the advancement of that civilization. And the benefits were exponential.

Like any historical source of great importance, coins should not be analyzed unilaterally, but they are of prime importance in the study of the links of Greek cities with the populations of *chora* and its surroundings, in establishing the stages of these relationships.

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Explicația planșelor / Explanation of the plates

Plates 1-2 – Coins struck at Callatis: nos. 1.-8. Herakles type, no. 9. Dionysus/panther type, nos. 10.-11. Demeter type, nos. 12.-20. Apollo type, no. 21. Artemis type, nos. 22.-30. Athena type.

Planșele 1-2 – Monede bătute la Callatis: nr. 1.-8. tipul Heracles, nr. 9. tipul Dionysos/panteră, nr. 10.-11. tipul Demetra, nr. 12.-20. tipul Apollo, nr. 21. tipul Artemis, nr. 22.-30. tipul Atena.



Plate 1



17.

18.



19.

20.

21.



22.



23.



24.



25.



26.



27.



28.



29.



30.



Plate 2

