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Σωκράτης: ὦ φίλε Πάν τε καὶ ἄλλοι ὅσοι τῇδε θεοί, δοίητέ μοι καλῶ γενέσθαι τ'ἀνδοθεν: ἔξωθεν δὲ ὅσα ἔχω, τοῖς ἐντὸς εἶναί μοι φίλια. πλούσιον δὲ νομίζοιμι τὸν σοφόν: τὸ δὲ χρυσοῦ πλῆθος εἴη μοι ὅσον μήτε φέρειν μήτε ἄγειν δύναιτο ἄλλος ἢ ὁ σώφρων.

ἔτ' ἄλλου του δεόμεθα, ὦ Φαῖδρε; ἐμοὶ μὲν γὰρ μετρίως ἡῦκται.

Φαῖδρος: καὶ ἐμοὶ ταῦτα συνεύχου: κοινὰ γὰρ τὰ τῶν φίλων.

-Plato, *Phaedrus* (closing prayer), 279b-c

An Introductory Note from the General Editor, with Recourse to Plato and Eukleidas



Eukleidas' Facing-Head Athena Tetradrachm, 405 BC¹

When Plato wrote the final prayer in the *Phaedrus* quoted on the previous page, he had recently returned from a tumultuous stay in Sicily. He went there to convince Dionysius I (the Elder) to reject his lifestyle of debauchery and turn to the philosophical life, essentially to become the first philosopher king. Dionysius did not heed Plato's advice, and neither did his son, Dionysius the Younger. In fact, there were times during Plato's several trips to the island that the philosopher was risking his own life to promote his idea of the just society. Plato's name was slandered, and members of the court tried to convince Dionysius that Plato was there to help overthrow the tyrant. At one point, Plato actually had to leave Syracuse and lodge with mercenaries, some of the most ruthless characters known in antiquity. Despite the mishaps, Plato's stay was not all bad, and evidently quite inspiring: For those of you unfamiliar with the *Phaedrus*, it is a dialogue that concerns Beauty in relation to the soul, and the role of love and wonder in the process of self-appropriation and acquisition of knowledge of ultimate reality, which for Plato go hand-in-hand. Throughout its pages, we are told a story of how Beauty is the only transcendental form we can glimpse here on earth, and it is through beatific vision that we are led, following Zeus and a procession of gods, to an even greater vision of the 'colorless, formless, and truly intangible οὐσία ὄντως οὐσα.' (247c) I find it interesting that, if we look at the numismatic context of Sicily when Plato visited, in the first quarter of the fourth century BC, we find that he was exposed to arguably the greatest numismatic masterpieces ever struck, ancient or modern. Is it any surprise, after viewing the work of artists like Kimon, Eukleidas, and Eumenes, featuring spectacular levels of craftsmanship, that Plato composed a dialogue concerning the very nature of Beauty in its relation to what he saw as the fundamental principle of human existence?

¹ Image courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group, Lancaster, PA, Inventory no. 896171.

While I do not expect the readers of *KOINON II* to immediately transcend to the world of forms when they read this volume, they are in for a real treat. I'm happy to write that the section on Greek coinage is the largest, with seven different essays. Leading us off is Rosanagh Mack, who presents a compelling case concerning the iconic influence for certain issues from Larisa, a fascinating area whose lovely coinage, like so many other areas, is not appreciated as much as it should be. Next, I was excited to have a submission from David MacDonald, who shares a brief but important essay about a family lineage in Apollonia, an area of special interest to him. The following essay by Phoenician specialist Martin Rowe presents his findings concerning an interesting iconic representation of Ba'al Arward. The next two essays are important, comprehensive studies by Lloyd Taylor, our Associate Editor: the first providing a comprehensive account of the Macedonian mint at Susa, and the second concerning the emergence of a dynastic emblem. Finally, we close the Greek section with an essay concerning the hunt for early provenances by John Voukelatos, nicely complementing his article in the last volume and hopefully inspiring other provenance hounds to participate with their own contributions. It is difficult to read any of these essays and not immediately recognize the inspired writing emerging from an authentic love of ancient coins.

The Roman section contains equally exciting contributions. Our first essay is by Tyler Holman and concerns a detailed study of the iconography of Veiovis and asks whether or not we find him on Republican denarii. Next, Phillip Davis, our resident expert in Republican coinage, offers an important note concerning the 'official' status of a denarius not catalogued in *RRC*. We end the Roman section with two essays by Shawn Caza, our other Associate Editor: the first is brief but important—it challenges some theories put forth concerning Constantinian bronzes from the Antioch excavations. The second is a substantial contribution that offers a comprehensive, erudite analysis of the FEL TEMP REPARATIO Falling Horseman varieties, and I'm thrilled to include it in this volume.

The final two sections present three interesting papers. In the Byzantine and related coinage section we have a new overview of the so-called Sirmium group by Dirk Faltin—an impressive and detailed study that is sure to become a standard overview for the types. In the Medieval section, we start with a new and interesting forensic approach to letterforms and a provisional classification system, developed by David Spenciner and his daughter, Marina Spenciner. This is a promising approach to numismatics and I'm delighted that *KOINON* is instrumental in its debut. Finally, we feature another excellent contribution from Andrei Bontas, who discusses the possibility of a *deniers tournois* issued by Louis X. Altogether, I was thrilled with the submissions for Volume II, which turned out to be even more than the inaugural issue. I think this reflects the need for a broad-based, international journal that encourages submissions from a wide-variety of perspectives, and bodes well for our future success.

There are various people to thank for helping make *KOINON II* a reality. First and foremost are Lloyd Taylor and Shawn Caza. Lloyd and Shawn's precision in numismatic studies, evident from their essays in this volume, also make them excellent editors, and without their close attention to detail this volume would not deliver on its high standard for excellence—especially with someone like me overseeing the operation. In all seriousness, *KOINON II* looks as nice as it does because of their efforts, and any errors that slipped through are the result of my own editorial shortcomings. Second, to all the members of the editorial advisory board: Thank you! Without your dedication to

the process and careful analysis of papers, the journal simply could not exist. On many occasions writers express sincere thanks to the anonymous readers, who have contributed to making their works significantly better. I would also like to thank David MacDonald, whom I constantly rely upon for guidance and a dose of common sense, and Tjaart de Beer, for his generous donation to the cause, which alleviated some of the financial burden of producing the journal (and made my wife particularly happy). Finally, our publisher, Archaeopress, for consistently delivering exceptional service and technical expertise, enabling this journal to reach a far greater audience than I could have ever imagined.

Before closing, I'd like to return to the *Phaedrus* and hopefully inspire more submission for *KOINON* III. One of the greatest things about ancient coins—and I think most readers will agree—is that they promote wonder (θάμβους in the *Phaedrus*). Wonder, it seems to me, is that basic element of human cognition that helps us transcend our little individual bubbles and experience the greater world and the other people who share it with us, collectively comprising the κοινόν. That is precisely how it operates in Plato's dialogue. For Plato, wonder is a natural response to beauty (as ἐκφανεστάτον), and it is partly through wonder that the soul orients itself back toward the οὐσία ὄντως οὐσα. So, in closing, I hope you will all embrace the experience of wonder that naturally stems from the beatific vision involved in the study of ancient coins. It need not be a masterpiece of Sicilian art, but a humble bronze that deserves the special attention which only you can provide. And, if in wondering about your coins you feel inspired to write something, *KOINON* and its editors are here to help, for κοινὰ γὰρ τὰ τῶν φίλων.

Vivat Achelous!

Nicholas J. Molinari, General Editor
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