

LIVERPOOL STUDIES IN ANCIENT HISTORY



TOKENS IN
CLASSICAL ATHENS
AND BEYOND

EDITED BY *M.E. Gkikaki*

LIVERPOOL STUDIES IN ANCIENT HISTORY

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Tokens in Classical Athens and Beyond

EDITED BY
M.E. GKIKAKI

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Front cover images beginning from top right and working clockwise

- Clay token, cone shaped. On its flat oval face: hemispherical chalice/basin on foot, with decorated handles. 18 mm in length, 12 mm width and 10 mm height. Provenance: Upper City of Jerusalem, west of the Temple Mount. Dating: late first century CE. Photo credit: T. Rogovski. Cf. Farhi in this volume, object no. 1
- Clay token, circular shape, uniface. Herakles standing. Archaeological Museum of Palermo, inv. no. 65358, Ø 24.04 mm. Provenance: Termini Imerese | Dating: late first century BCE–first century CE (?). Cf. Crisà in this volume, cat. no. 8
- Lead token, circular shape, uniface. Nike standing. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. no. IL944, Ø 15.5 mm. Provenance: Athens, Ancient Agora, Great Drain South. Dating: Hellenistic, third to first centuries BCE. Cf. Schäfer in this volume, cat. no. B1 fig. 3. Photo credit: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations, photo: Gianni Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)
- Lead token, circular shape, uniface. Male head right, bald, wrinkled forehead, crooked nose and long beard, in the field left: VILI and in the field right: L (or N) G (all retrograde), VILI and L (or N) G (all retrograde). Ephesos Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 43/29/80. Ø 17 mm. Provenance: unknown. Dating: Roman Imperial period. Cf. Bulgurlu and Hazinedar in this volume, cat. no. 12, pl. 1
- Lead token, circular shape, uniface. *Hydria* between two cylindrical vessels, the one on the left sitting upright, the one on the right decorated on the surface and turned upside down, A–I–A–N in the four quarters of the field. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.112>. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. no. M 66, Ø 13 mm. Dating: fourth century BCE. Provenance: Athens, Pnyx. Cf. Russo in this volume, cat. no. AIA3(6). Photo credit: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations, photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)
- In the middle: lead token, circular shape. Side B: letter A with curved diagonal bars, countermarked with winged caduceus (*kerykeion*) in the field left. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorai1463>. Athens, Agora Museum, inv. no. IL1463, Ø 31 mm. Dating: fourth to first centuries BCE. Provenance: Athens, Ancient Agora. Cf. Gkikaki in this volume, figure 3.9. Photo credit: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations, photo: Gianni Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

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Abbreviations

AIO	Attic Inscriptions online, www.atticinscriptions.com/
ARV ²	J. Davidson Beazley, <i>Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> , 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963)
<i>AthPol</i>	<i>Athenaion Politeia</i>
<i>BMC Central Greece</i>	B.V. Head, <i>A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum: Central Greece (Locris, Phocis, Boeotia and Euboea)</i> (London: British Museum, 1884)
<i>BMC Thessaly to Aetolia</i>	B.V. Head, <i>A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum: Thessaly to Aetolia</i> (London: British Museum, 1883)
CIIP II	W. Ameling, H.M. Cotton, R. Daniel, W. Eck, B. Isaac, A. Kushnir-Stein, H. Misgav, J. Price, A. Yardeni et al. eds, <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae</i> , vol. II, <i>Caesarea and the Middle Coast, 1121–2160</i> (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011)
CNS	R. Calciati, <i>Corpus nummorum siculorum: la monetazione di bronzo</i> , 3 vols (Milan: Edizioni G.M., 1983–87)
FGrHist	Felix Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> (Berlin: Weidmann, 1923–)
HCG 4	O. Hoover, <i>Handbook of Coins of Northern and Central Greece: Achaia Phthiotis, Ainis, Magnesia, Malis, Oita, Perrhaibia, Thessaly, Akarnania, Aitolia, Lokris, Phokis, Boiotia, Euboea, Attica, Megaris, and Corinthia, Sixth to First Centuries BC</i> , The Handbook of Greek Coinage Series, vol. 4 (Lancaster: Classical Numismatic Group, 2014)

- I. Didyma* T. Wiegand and A. Rehm, *Didyma II: Die Inschriften* (Berlin: Mann Verlag, 1958)
- I. Eleusis* K. Clinton, *Eleusis: The Inscriptions on Stone: Documents of the Sanctuary of the Two Goddesses and Public Documents of the Deme*, 2 vols (Athens: Archaeological Society at Athens, 2005–08)
- I. Ephesos* H. Wankel, *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*, vols 1–8 (Bonn: Habelt Verlag, 1979–84)
- I. Iasos* W. Blümel, *Die Inschriften von Iasos* (Bonn: Habelt Verlag, 1985)
- Milet I 7* H. Knackfuss and C. Friedrich, *Der Südmarkt und die benachbarten Bauanlagen. Milet : Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen seit dem Jahre 1899 ; vol. I:7* (Berlin: Schoetz und Parrhysius, 1924)
- IG* *Inscriptiones Graecae* (Berlin: Academy, 1873–)
- IGCH* M. Thompson, O. Mørkholm and C.M. Kraay, *An Inventory of Greek Coin Hoards* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1973)
- L–M* A. Laks and G.W. Most, eds, *Early Greek Philosophy*, 9 vols, Loeb Classical Library 524–32 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016)
- LGPN* P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews, *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, 8 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987–2018), www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk
- LSJ* *Liddell, Scott, Jones Ancient Greek Lexicon*, <https://lsj.gr/wiki>
- PCG* R. Kassel, C. Austin and S. Schroeder, eds, *Poetae Comici Graeci*, 8 vols (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1983–2022)
- RPC I* A.M. Burnett, M. Amandry and P.P. Ripollès, *Roman Provincial Coinage*, vol. I, *From the Death of Caesar to the Death of Vitellius* (44 BC–AD 69) (London: British Museum/Paris: Société française de numismatique, 1992)

- RPC* III M. Amandry and A.M. Burnett, *Roman Provincial Coinage*, vol. III, *Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian (AD 96–138)* (London: British Museum/Paris: Société française de numismatique, 2017)
- RRC* M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 2 vols paginated continuously (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974)
- Schwartz E. Schwartz, ed., *Scholia in Euripidem*, 2 vols (Berlin, 1887–91)
- SEG* *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* online, <https://scholarlyeditions.brill.com/sego/>
- SNG ANS Sicily* *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum: The Collection of the American Numismatic Society*, Part 4, *Sicily II: Galaria-Styella* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1977)
- SNG Copenhagen Aetolia–Euboea* *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*, The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, Danish National Museum, Aetolia–Euboea (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1944)
- SNG Copenhagen North Africa* G.J. Jenkins, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*, The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals. Danish National Museum. North Africa, Syrtica-Mauretania (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1969)
- SNG Delepierre* *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, France, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles, Collection Jean et Marie Delepierre* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1983)
- SNG Glasgow* J. Goddard, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, The Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)
- SNG Greece vol. 4* S. Psōmá, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, Greece*, vol. 4.1, *Numismatic Museum, Athens: The Petros Z. Saroglos Collection: Use-Loan by the Club of the Officers of the Armed Forces, Macedonia* (Athens: Academy of Athens, 2005)
- SNG Greece vol. 6* D. Tsangari, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, Greece*, vol. 6, *The Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection From Thessaly to Euboea* (Athens: Academy of Athens, 2011)

SNG Greece vol. 7

V. Penna, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, Greece*, vol. 7, *The Kikpe Collection of Bronze Coins*, 1 (Athens: Academy of Athens, 2012)

TURS

M.I. Rostovtzeff, *Tesserarum Urbis Romae et Suburbi Plumbeorum Sylloge* (St Petersburg, Commissionaires de l'Académie impériale des sciences, 1903), Atlas of XII plates, https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/research/dept_projects/tcam/resources/

Online Sources

Athenian Agora Excavations, <https://agora.ascsa.net/>

British Museum, online catalogue, www.britishmuseum.org/collection

CoinArchives database of coins featured in numismatic auctions, www.coinarchives.com

Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=sale&sid=4713&cid=145245

Nomisma.org, <https://nomisma.org/>

Roman Provincial Coinage (RPC) online, <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/>

The Temple Mount Sifting Project (TMSP), <https://tmsifting.org/en/>

Token Specimens from the Ancient Mediterranean, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/>

Token Types of the Ancient Mediterranean, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/>

Preface

The idea for this volume arose from the Workshop ‘Tokens: The Athenian Legacy to the Modern World’, which took place in December 2019 at the British School at Athens as part of the project ‘Tokens and Their Cultural Biography in Athens from the Classical Age to the End of Antiquity’, carried out at the University of Warwick (2018–21, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, grant agreement No. 794080). This was a truly unique workshop, where scholars working on Athenian tokens and closely related areas met to exchange views, discuss established ideas and analyse fresh finds.

The realisation of the volume also owes a lot to my time (2016–18) as a research fellow at the ERC project ‘Token Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean’, with Associate Professor Clare Rowan as PI. I am very much indebted to Clare for providing an inspiring model to look upon, never-failing support, sharing common goals and most of all for believing in me. The Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Warwick has provided an excellent home for this research, and I am very grateful for that.

For generously sharing his advice and comments I am very grateful to Prof. John H. Kroll, whose life and research has been committed to the study of Athenian coins and tokens.

Publishing costs were covered by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie project budget and by the Institutional Research Support Fund, thanks to Prof. Zahra Newby’s support, for which I would like to thank her warmly.

In the aftermath of the Athenian workshop, ‘DAO, Blockchain and Cryptography: A Conversation with Quinn DuPont’ was published in *Warwick Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal* 7(3) (2020) (<https://doi.org/10.31273/eirj.v7i3.594>). To the papers presented at the workshop, two more were added – one focusing on new finds from first century BCE Athens and one focusing on Ephesian tesserae – to round up the discussion.

A very special thank you goes to Prof. John McK. Camp II, director of the Agora excavations, and to Sylvie Dumont (registrar) for hosting me at the Stoa of Attalos for long hours of research on the marvellous world of the Athenian tokens. I am equally grateful to the Department of Coins and

Medals of the British Museum and especially to Amelia Dowler and also to the Coin Cabinet of The Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and especially Prof. Bernhard Weisser for enabling my research on the important collections of Athenian tokens housed there. Many thanks go also to Klio Tsogka, Maria Liaska, Filia Pasadaki (Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City), and Grigoris Vafiadis (Ministry of Culture) for the kind treatment of my requests.

Graphic designer Matthias Demel (Germany) never complained and worked tirelessly for meeting the demands of the material depicted in this volume.

My thanks also go to Kieren Alexander Johns, who while at the final stages of his PhD did not hesitate to help me with preparing the manuscript. For editorial assistance I am very grateful to him as well to Dafni Demetriadi and Daria Russo. For seeing the volume into press, I would also like to thank Clare Litt, Senior Commissioning Editor at LUP, Sarah Davison, Senior Academic Production Editor at Carnegie Book Production and Lucy Frontani, Design and Production Manager at Carnegie Book Production.

Finally, I would like to thank all twelve authors not just for their chapters but also for contributing to the general thinking which lies behind this volume in manifold ways, and not least for their patience in a manner that exceeds what can be considered as normal.

Introduction

M.E. Gkikaki

1 Scope of the Volume and Structure

Tokens in Classical Athens and Beyond presents twelve papers of a two-day workshop, held at the British School at Athens on 16–17 December 2019.

The workshop and the proceedings publication form part of the ‘Tokens and Their Cultural Biography in Athens from the Classical Age to the End of Antiquity’ project, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action, which has received funding under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 794080 and carried out at the University of Warwick (2018–21). Additional funding was covered by the Institutional Research Support Fund of the University of Warwick. The project was hosted by the Department of Classics, which takes pride in a long-standing and continuous tradition not only in the study of Numismatics, but more particularly in the study of tokens after the successful completion of the five-year project ‘Token Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean’ (2016–21).

The present volume does not stand in isolation. Rather, it should be seen against the backdrop of two recent volumes, both dedicated to tokens: *Tokens: Culture, Connections, Communities*, Royal Numismatic Society Special Publication 57 (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2019) and *Tokens, Value and Identity: Exploring Monetiform Objects in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Brussels: Centre d’études numismatiques, 2021). In its own right, the volume has a lot to recommend it. It fits neatly into a gap of modern scholarship: no systematic discussion of the material has previously been undertaken, although tokens have been found by the hundreds in Athens and are catalogued in nineteenth-century publications (see below). Athenian tokens were signalled as a special category in Numismatics from an early date, and they were arranged in carefully considered categories: the small bronze tokens with diameters not larger than 8 mm and with designs or letters on both faces or a letter on one and a design on the other, the bronze

jurors' tokens with letters on at least one face, the lead tokens with their remarkable variety of types, the clay 'military' tokens inscribed with names, as well as the clay coin-shaped specimens. This categorisation was the result of successive publications by eminent scholars through the decades: Achilles Postolakas (1880 and 1884) on the small bronze tokens, Achilles Postolakas [Postolacca] (1866 and 1868), Arthur Engel (1884), J.N. Svoronos (1900) and Margaret Crosby (1964) on the lead ones, J.N. Svoronos (1898) and Alan L. Boegehold (1960 and 1995) on the bronze jurors' tokens, Crosby again (1964) on the clay ones, and J.H. Kroll and F.W. Mitchel's work on the 'military' tokens (1980). Nevertheless, discussion on these objects has fallen short over the last century and a half. This happened partly because, from the beginning, tokens caused a certain degree of perplexity, and partly because lead and clay tokens with a find context and in volume size enough to reach conclusions were presented for the first time as late as 1964.¹

Part I of the edited volume uses case studies as a starting point to consider the contribution of tokens to our understanding of social life, politics and public administration in Athens. Research is here supplemented by the examination of literary sources as well as other relevant material (**Finglass, Kierstead, Gkikaki, Russo**). Part II focuses on two major finds which attempt to revolutionise our knowledge on the functions of tokens (**Makrypodi, Kroll, Karra**). Two studies on iconography provide an outlook on Athenian tokens in the aftermath of the Classical period and are presented in Part III (**Schäfer, Mondello**). Part IV, with studies centred around Hellenistic Sicily, Early Roman Judaea and Roman Imperial Ephesos, engages with the question of function, this time from a comparative perspective and serve as a useful counterpoint for the Athens-specific chapters (**Crisà, Farhi, Geelmuyden Bulgurlu and Hazinedar Coşkun**).

As a response to the above signalled perplexity, the aim of this volume is to delineate a work frame for Athenian tokens. While the main geographic focus is Athens, the volume aspires to place tokens in an international context. On one hand, the archaeological record proves that from the Archaic and Classical periods and continuing into the Roman period, people across the Mediterranean resorted to tokens as a medium of registering pacts of hospitality and friendship. In the public domain, Athens seems to be the only state which issued tokens for authorising participation to the Jury Courts and the Assembly, for public payment and distribution of commodities and for access to festivals. Was Athens the paradigm that was later followed by other metropolises of the Mediterranean, or should the tokens of Sicily, Ephesos and Judaea (cases discussed in this volume) be attributed to other circumstances and unique to their specific contexts?

¹ Margaret Crosby's publication as Part II of *The Athenian Agora*, vol. 10.



Figure 0.1 The jigsaw clay tokens inscribed ΧΣΥΠΕΤΑΙΩΝ on one side; the other side was also inscribed across the irregular cutting. Pierced. National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 11235, Athens. Photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Another concern is the establishment of a methodology for the study of tokens. For the tribal tokens, Daria Russo employs procedures acknowledged in numismatics. The relationship of a token to a tribe can be established thanks to a legend with the name of the group or its eponymous hero, an explicit device, or both. Yoav Farhi works on the find context and the possible functions of the objects from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Martin Schäfer departs from the thorough study of iconography and the quest for prototypes in order to put forward a hypothesis on the roles Hellenistic tokens depicting Nike could have played in Hellenistic Athens.

In every case, study involves first-hand examination of the tokens concerned, archival research and a survey of existing literature. Indeed, for the purposes of the volume, pieces which were otherwise abandoned to obscurity were spotted and studied anew. A particular highlight of the present volume is the ΗΣΥΠΕΤΑΙΩΝ (ΧΣΥΠΕΤΑΙΩΝ) token which has not been viewed since the 1870s and is here discussed by James Kierstead after a fresh examination by the editor of this volume (Figure 0.1).² The examination confirmed that the token had once also been inscribed on

² First published by Koumanoudes (1879), with drawing. Finglass in this volume; Kierstead in this volume.

side B, along the irregular cutting. The extant traces of lettering do not permit a positive reconstruction, but it can be reasonably assumed that it bore the name of the tribe to which the deme of Xypete belonged. These jigsaw clay tokens were used for the allotment of offices to the demes. A total of five hundred tokens were at use, fifty per tribe, which were shared proportionally among the demes, analogous to each deme's representation in the Council (the so-called *bouleutic* quota), which in turn derived from the deme's size and population.

In the individual papers each token type is noted and recorded according to the universally acknowledged numismatic criteria: date (where known), types on each face, material, diameter, shape, weight, method of manufacture (where known), region and city of issue. They are accompanied by images and individual specimens of the type (including excavation contexts) noted. Auction catalogues were also consulted, using online databases (coinarchives.com). Particular attention is given to tokens with known provenance (excavation context and find-spot). The tokens found in and around the building complex of the Council House present a vivid example of this methodological approach. The types from the Council have a peculiar iconography which can be identified as state iconography: they bear distinctive legends (Δ-H and Π-E) and in total they are very different from all other tokens found in the rest of the Agora Square. The only 'tribol token' of the Athenian Agora comes from the area of the Council House (**Gkikaki**).

The majority of the Athenian tokens preserved today come from museum collections with no information on their provenance. Inevitably, our research focuses on the objects as such. Departing from the notion that each specimen is unique and that its materiality (material, manufacture, iconography, pierced or not, comparison of the same features to other tokens of the same type) preserves information on the function that it had once fulfilled, the authors interpret tokens in the frame of Athenian politics, administration and everyday life (**Russo**). Ready-made categorisations in terms of distinguishing between public/state and private issues have to be avoided, because the socio-political contexts from which these tokens derived were invariably more complex.

2 Defining Tokens by Function

Defining tokens constitutes an interpretative challenge, as was acknowledged in the first conference proceedings publication on tokens.³ On a fundamental level, tokens can be more or less abstract. The term *symbolon* (pl. *symbola*) derives from the verb *symbollein* (συμβάλλειν), which means 'to bring closer

³ Crisà, Gkikaki and Rowan 2019, 2–4.



Figure 0.2 Split knucklebones (*symbola*?), length: 37 mm. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. no. BI732. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

together'. Consequently, *symbolon* means something incomplete, which upon its inception had once been complete and it now tends to potential completeness, a process which may be understood as the purpose of all *symbola* (abstract or literally).⁴ Aristotle thankfully preserves metaphors of the term employed in the philosophical discourse of the fifth century BCE. In this context lies the reference to Empedocles' theory on the issue of *genesis*, the mechanisms leading to the generation of new organisms. Here each parent contributes only a *symbolon*, i.e. half complement of seeds or parts (**Finglass**).

A quick review of the content of this volume demonstrates that tokens have a great variety. In terms of materiality they can be classified in the four categories described above. Based on their materiality again they can also be separated in two distinct categories: the 'divided tokens', comprised of two joining halves, and the 'simple' or individual tokens.⁵ The first category is clearly attested in the literary sources, without these ever giving explicit evidence of the material they were made of (**Finglass**). A certain variety evidently existed, and even knucklebones were attested for that purpose (Figure 0.2).⁶ The clay tablets inscribed with the names of Athenian demes and tribes and cut along a jigsaw line so that each half can be joined only with its other corresponding part belong to this first category (**Kierstead**). On the other hand, the single tokens, often coin-shaped, are well attested among the material record of the Democracy in Classical Athens. They are made of bronze, clay or lead and they are stamped on one or both sides with designs, following a technique which resembles coin production. Both categories stand under the umbrella-term 'tokens', although the

⁴ Cf. Gauthier's (1972, 65–66) definition and Kroll and Mitchel's definition (1980, 93–94).

⁵ Usually tokens refer to a simple, individual token that people would recognise, and this acknowledgement is based on their possession of the 'matching half'.

⁶ Schol. Euripides, *Medea*, 611–13 (cf. Gauthier 1972, 66–67 with nn. 14–15 and Carè 2019, 162).

two categories are dramatically disparate when it comes to appearance, material and technique or production.

Therefore, a new methodological/interpretive parameter deserves our attention in the effort to better define tokens: purpose and function. First and foremost, tokens are related to narratives and practices of agreement, pact, accordance and friendship. This accordance is sealed by tokens, and concluding parties used tokens to sanction agreements. Accordance and agreements are evident in the narratives of friendship and hospitality on tokens inscribed in Celtiberian, Carthaginian and Etruscan and coming from the western Mediterranean (**Finglass**). Accordance on the level of the state and its internal affairs is no less evidenced by the jigsaw clay tokens from the Athenian Agora. They indicate that an agreement had been reached stipulating a certain balance of power between the influence exercised by the demes (the pre-existing ‘population and geographic entities’ of the Athenian state), on the one hand, and the ten tribes (newly founded, larger and overarching ‘populations and geographic entities’), on the other (**Kierstead**).

Furthermore, tokens serve the purpose of identification. The *symbola* of the Archaic narrations were divided in two, so that the bearers of each half could acknowledge a relationship with the bearer of the other, even if the bearers were not personally acquainted. The dialogue between Agorastocles and Hanno in Plautus’ *Poenulus* demonstrates their use in ‘hospitality agreements’ (**Finglass**). The word *xenos* (stranger who becomes friend after hospitality, ξένος) was highly relevant to the use of the term *symbolon* (σύμβολον) in Herodotus, Sophocles and Euripides (**Finglass**).

Tokens were a means for confirming identity and by that they were employed in both private and public contexts. The military tokens of late Classical and Hellenistic Athens demonstrate their use as a means of identifying and distinguishing one bearer from another in a public, official context, where misunderstandings could not be permitted (Figures 0.3 and 0.4).⁷ And it is because of this function that tokens entered the realm of public performances where citizen were not personally acquainted. They helped identify their bearer as the person authorised for a certain performance. Jurymen were identified by tokens, and by this same token were permitted to enter the court and take their seats. By the means of another token, the same jurymen were entitled to payment. Tokens sanction procedures, which assigned roles to persons. This may be considered as the second function for tokens. The split tokens shared between the two concluding parties in the story of the Milesian Glaucus, just like the tokens made by the Boule for the King of the Sidonians, served the immediate identification of their bearer (**Gkikaki**).

⁷ Kroll and Mitchel 1980.



Figure 0.3 Split clay tokens for the *peripolarchos* Xenokles of the deme of the Perithoidai. Published in Kroll and Mitchel 1980, 87–89, pl. 13a–b. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. nos. MC1245 and SS8080. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

This volume offers a fresh approach to the military identification tokens, which were first presented by J.H. Kroll and F.W. Mitchel in 1980. After a fruitful exchange of ideas between P.J. Finglass, J.H. Kroll and the editor, it has been established that the tokens inscribed with the name of the *peripolarchos* (the commander of the borders), Xenokles of the deme Perithoidai, were in fact split (Figure 0.3). One part was given out to the carrier, safeguarding his safe passage and confirming his identity upon arrival. One of the two tokens excavated in the Athenian Agora shows clear signs of having been attached to something – most likely a message or an object. In that case, the token guaranteed that what was consigned had not been tampered with. The Kleinias Decree describes such a function for the tokens which were prepared for the allies of the Athenian League. With these tokens, the allies had to seal the writing tablet on which the sum of the tribute was recorded (Gkikaki). Therefore, *symbola* were issued and employed with the express intention of preventing deceitful action. This is their third function.

Not all military tokens were split. The tokens for Pheidon from the deme of Thria, who was *hipparchos* (cavalry commander) of Lemnos (twenty-five specimens survive), the tokens for Nikoteles, the General on Samos, as well as the tokens for the *hipparchos* Antidoros from the deme of Thria (Figure 0.4) were coin-like, and they were not split. Nevertheless,



Figure 0.4 Black-glazed clay token bearing the inscription ‘Antidoros of Thria, *hipparchos*’ (ΑΝΤΙΔ[Ω]ΡΟΣ ΘΡΙΑ | ΙΠΠΙΑΡ). Published in Kroll and Mitchel 1980, 92–93, pl. 13f, g; *SEG* 30.114. Ø 42 mm diameter. National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 11179, Athens. Photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

the carrier should have been identified and the identification was probably made against a record kept by the authority. Therefore, the carrier’s half piece of information is compared to the authority’s other half, to see if it ‘fits’. The same practice applies for the tokens for the Assembly. The Convenors of the People (*syllogeis tou demou*), three from each tribe, would have checked the credentials/civic identity of the citizens arriving at the entrance to the Assembly against records kept by the city or their own knowledge of the tribesmen.

With this main function for confirming identity on the one hand and with the ambiguity between incomplete and complete on the other as starting points, the split tokens with the names of demes and tribes enabled apportionment procedures and random distributions (Kierstead). The lead tokens with the simple yet elusive inscriptions of tribal names might have been used for such random distributions or lotteries (Russo). Great distance separates the split clay tokens of the fifth century BCE and the lead, coin-like tokens of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. The missing links in the chain cannot be readily identified among the material of the Athenian Agora.

It cannot escape our attention that Sophocles in *Oedipus Rex* closely associates *symbola* with the term *xeinos* on the one hand and the term *citizen* on the other (Finglass). This interplay alerts us once more to the connections of the *symbola*, in both the private and the public spheres simultaneously. Oedipus considers himself to be a stranger who possesses some *symbolon* which sanctions his efforts to investigate the past, for only later did he become a citizen. But in fact things are very different: Oedipus possesses a *symbolon* which makes him a citizen by birth. He had always been citizen of Thebes. But what is the role of *symbola*? Their role is precisely to connect people who were strangers by means of friendship and hospitality, and to authorise a citizen in participating along with his fellow citizens in the government and administration.

3 Tokens and Coin Imagery

In Athens during the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods, tokens demonstrably borrow coin imagery. This relationship is not limited to only Athenian coin types, but it is also evidenced in the use of other cities' coin types in the Hellenistic and Roman period. It should be stated from the beginning that such tokens are not imitations of coins in lead, as can be judged by the manufacture of the design and overall appearance (Figure 0.5).

In the next paragraphs we will attempt to discuss the question as to whether the 'pseudo-coin' appearance of tokens was the result of a meaningful process, and whether the tokens acted as a model for coins rather than tokens borrowing from coins.

From the beginning, tokens were identified as a distinct category, and special care was taken to distinguish them from coins. For the bronze jurors' tokens – considered to be the earliest category (certainly antedating the lead and probably the clay specimens) – particular care was taken to craft the head of Athena in such a way that it should not be misunderstood as a coin. The goddess sports a distinctive helmet type and she is turned to the left, while the established coin type in the Athenian history was to have her turned to the right (Figure 0.6).



Figure 0.5 Uniface lead token with poppy head between two ears of wheat. Uniface, 13 mm. Archaeological Museum of the University of Göttingen, AS-Pb-085. Published in Gkikaki 2020, 132, cat. no. 55. Photo: Stephan Eckardt © Archäologisches Institut der Universität Göttingen

Figure 0.6 Bronze jurors' token, late fifth century BCE, diameter 27 mm. Obv. Athena head left wearing helmet with cheek pieces, rev. Sampi (Π) in square incuse. Cf. Svoronos 1923–26, 16, pl. 100. Excavated 1973, on the road leading from Kerameikos to Plato's Academy (Plataion Str. 30–32).



Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, inv. no. N921. Photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Figure 0.7 Uniface, lead token with myrtle sprays through the handles, 13 mm × 11 mm. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. no. PN M69. Published in Davidson and Thompson 1943, 106, cat. no. 8, Figure 8 on p. 107. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

Tokens and coins derive their iconography from a common source. During the Hellenistic period, the owl in various postures and the Panathenaic amphora were types commonly shared by tokens and coins. This shared imagery formed part of the repertory of state images used on a variety of media: tokens, coins, weights and measures, seals and others.⁸

Tokens with ‘coin iconography’ are easily understood as ones of state/official purpose. Among them, types inspired from the Myths of Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries (*kernos*, ear of wheat and poppy head, Tripotlemos in serpent car, mystic ring) stand prominently. This should not surprise us much because such types belong to the repertoire of state images par excellence. Nevertheless, future research will demonstrate their significance. This volume also contains an addition to the already known ‘Eleusinian’ token types: the piglet-on-mystic-staff type. This device refers to the the Eleusinian Mysteries, and is found on a lead token, paired with iconography relating to the mythical birth of the eponymous tribal hero (*Russo*). While there is an obvious connection between the Hippothontis tribe and Eleusis (Eleusis belonged to the territory of the Hippothontis tribe, Figure 4.2), there is more to investigate relating to the function of this token. Was it used for a religious/festival purpose? Were the issuers related in any way to the festival and the fair?⁹

It is not always possible to examine the issue of chronology for the iconography of these two distinct categories – coins and tokens – on account of the lacunose evidence. A systematic survey will probably prove that some designs make early appearances on tokens before becoming common types of Hellenistic coin issues. This is yet another piece of evidence for the role this object category played in the administration and the government. The *kernos* offers a vivid example. In the filling of Pnyx III, where reconstruction began ca. 346–22 BCE, the token with the lidded

⁸ Gkikaki 2020, 103–09.

⁹ Russo in this volume, type H2, presented by just one specimen kept in the Numismatic Museum, Athens. It was known to Svoronos, who misinterpreted the iconography.

kernos in Figure 0.7 proves that the type can antedate 346 BCE and that therefore the design of *kernos* makes a very early appearance on tokens. This is earlier than the earliest appearance of *kernos* on bronze coins dated to the early and mid-330s BCE.¹⁰

In the Roman period, tokens copy coinage, including both Athenian and Roman Imperial coinage. The Alexander type borrows from numismatic iconography of contemporary Asia Minor and this choice of subject may be due to the fabulous destiny of that man who was particularly admired in the Roman period. In particular, for Roman Athens, the civic elite took pride in a lineage ascending back to Alexander the Great (**Mondello**). The find-spots of the ‘Alexander tokens’ reveal the interplay between the public and private spheres. The majority of the specimens were found in the Stoa of Attalos, which at that time may have housed the offices of the Sacred Gerousia.¹¹ A few were also found in what seems to be a Roman House, but this could equally have been the meeting place of a club.¹²

4 Tokens and Value

That the tokens ever functioned as coins in the city of Athens is still open to debate and seems to be fuelled at times by new finds. Athenian economy and society were highly monetised, and even the smallest denominations were in circulation in the Agora to conduct everyday transactions. In the late fifth century BCE, at the end of the devastating Peloponnesian War, the Athenians commented scornfully on the ‘cunning bronzes’, the *subaerata*, which were state issued, probably on credit, to be later exchanged with silver ones of normal weight.¹³ But around that time – in the last decade of the fifth century BCE – the Athenians permitted the use of bronze for issuing jurors’ tokens.¹⁴ This earliest series features Athena’s head left with helmet with cheek coverings bound beneath the chin. It is of solid workmanship with diameters up to 25 mm, hammered flans and clearly defined incuses on the reverse (Figure 0.6).

The Athenians were notoriously reluctant with regard to fiduciary coinage and only as late as in the 340s BCE did they concede to coining bronze for the small denominations. Obviously, it was this change that brought about the beginning of use of lead for tokens. Lead was cheaper, could be effortlessly procured, and could be easily recycled because of its low melting point.

¹⁰ Kroll 1993, 41 no. 39 (symbol on the reverse of the bronze issue 39).

¹¹ Gkikaki 2023, 95–136.

¹² Gkikaki 2019.

¹³ Aristophanes, *Frogs* ll. 718–33, in particular 725–26, first presented 406/5 BCE.

¹⁴ Svoronos 1898; Kroll *per litteras* to the author and cf. Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. no. B1158 from a context of the fifth century BCE (Boegehold et al. 1995, 73).



Figure 0.8 Hoard of ten lead tokens from Well B1 in the Kerameikos, dated to the third quarter of the third century BCE. It contained nine tokens with money-values and one lettered token (letter Γ). Published in Braun 1970, 193, pl. 57,1. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Kerameikos. Photo: German Archaeological Institute © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

The discovery of tokens with numeric or monetary values reopens the question of tokens functioning as money (**Karra**). Of the nineteen tokens recovered from a room in the House Λ to the immediate south-east of the Acropolis, eleven bear verticals which denote either units or obols. The find context is one of consumption of food and one given the type of vessels found. It is precisely the tokens' connection to value which should be further explored and can potentially offer valuable conclusions to the question of whether tokens did ever function as money in some capacity.

In order properly to discuss this, there is the find in the Well B1 in Dipylon which should be examined first.¹⁵ This was a hoard of ten lead tokens dated to the middle of or the third quarter of the third century.¹⁶

¹⁵ Braun 1970, 193, pl. 57,1.

¹⁶ Chronology based on stamped amphora handles and ninety-two coins which were found together: Grace 1974.



Figure 0.9 The hoard of the armour tokens (IL1578 is not depicted). Published in Kroll 1977b, 141–46, pl. 40. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

Nine of them bear signs of money values and constitute a coherent group.¹⁷ These nine tokens can be grouped in five different ‘denominations’ or ‘values’. No. 1 bears the value of four drachms and three obols, nos. 2–5 bear the value of one drachm and one and a half obol, nos. 6–7 the value of three and a half obols and a quarter of an obol, no 8 one obol and a half and no. 9 two obols (Figure 0.8).

The precision with which these peculiar sums of money are recorded qualify these tokens for unique transactions. One can only speculate on the goods or services for which these vouchers would have been exchanged. Nevertheless, it is almost certain that the issuer of tokens was the same as the one who would have redeemed their value for a good or service.

The tokens from the south-east of the Acropolis are certainly later because their signs of value are quite simple and recorded in a rudimentary manner on the flans (*Karra*). They probably did not bear any direct relevance to money, but they were still redeemable against a particular good or service.

To the above discussed finds, three more can be added. This includes a mixed hoard of coins and tokens, dated to the 260s BCE or a little later. It contained ninety-two bronze coins, two silver ones and four uniface lead armour tokens and came from a shallow tile-lined shaft from a house in the south-west corner of the Agora. The deposit also contained pottery and other finds.¹⁸

There is also the well-known find of the eight armour tokens and one Nike token found along with the tablets from the cavalry archive (Figure 0.9).¹⁹ All nine tokens are lettered (they bear the letter A, B or Δ on side b).

The last hoard was made known to Svoronos but has only recently been published. It contains ninety-three lead tokens, which belong to just two different types. The majority (eighty-two specimens) bear an owl standing on an ear of wheat. The find was spotted very near the rural deme of Koropi in eastern Attica. It is believed that the tokens were to be exchanged in a grain distribution.²⁰

How is one to determine the ‘value’ of the tokens? On the one hand, they were made for unique transactions compared to coins, which were ‘universally’ exchanged. On the other hand, they were destined for specific individuals, or specially qualified groups, who were already well-versed in how to handle tokens. In the latter instance, this would fit into the broader

¹⁷ Of these ten tokens just one stands apart: it is a uniface lettered token, a jurors’ token of the Hellenistic period.

¹⁸ *IGCH* 157; Agora Deposit A 18:8, Kroll 1977b, 144; Bubelis 2010, 185 with n. 45.

¹⁹ Kroll 1977b; Schäfer 2019, 42–43 with Figures 3–11.

²⁰ Ralli 2009, 235–45.

understanding of tokens, of which ‘sharing a code’ may be acknowledged as a basic feature.²¹

The hoards discussed above have a distinctive feature in common. They are very homogeneous in terms of their composition with the exception of the nineteen tokens from the south-east to the Acropolis, of which eight did not bear any sign of value. The specimens contained complement each other and they seem to belong to the same issue/series. The armour tokens, the tokens with money values and the tokens with numeric values, the tokens with the ‘owl-on-an-ear-of-wheat’ and even the clay lettered tokens (for which it has been ascertained that they all derive from the same lot found on the Mouseion Hill: see **Makrypodī**) are all uniform in their respective hoards (contexts).

5 Tokens, Authority and Roles

In as much as the tokens with numeric or monetary values may be connected with the realm of money, they were also distinct from official coinage and ought to be considered as such. This observation relies on the unofficial, trivial designs of the tokens from the ‘Kerameikos hoard’ (Figure 0.8) and the tokens from the Makrygiannis plot (**Karra**). This can lead promptly to another significant question, namely: what relationship did tokens have to authority? To put it more simply, who was the issuing authority for tokens in Classical and Hellenistic Athens and elsewhere?

Tokens display a multivalent relationship to authority, operating on several levels – often simultaneously. An institution no less than the Delphic Oracle was the sanctioning authority for the tokens of the private agreement between the Spartan and the Milesian narrated by Herodotus (**Finglass**). The divine intervention grants particular power to tokens and enforces their acceptance by both parties. The story should not be treated as an isolated episode, but rather as a broad indication of and in acceptance with the critical weight of tokens.

While state authority and its attendant institutions is a prerequisite for money to develop and function in a society, tokens can come into being under any form of authority, including private individuals or groups of private individuals. This is partly because one of the main functions of tokens is that it authorises/empowers its carrier.²² In Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*, the king declares he is authorised to make an inquiry on Laios’ death because he has a token which connects him to the Thebans. Likewise,

²¹ Rowan 2019, 102.

²² Any authority can issue tokens, such as the state authority, but by entrusting the handling of these tokens to an individual or group this authority is transferred, and the persons or groups in question are empowered.

in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, Philoctetes is persuaded to follow Neoptolemus because he is convinced that the latter's token is genuine. In Herodotus' narration about the money that a Milesian had deposited with the Spartan Glaucus, the Milesians' sons are authorised to claim their father's money because of the tokens they showed to Glaucus (**Finglass**).

With the four different types of military tokens of fourth century BCE Athens, state couriers were authorised to bring a message to a commander. The tokens served as a passport and as a means of confirming their status and identity to the military commander on arrival. In all cases the military tokens are inscribed with the name of the military commander (cf. Figures 0.3 and 0.4).²³

The narratives above provide in some cases a public and in other cases a private setting for the functioning of tokens. Consequently, the authority established to claim something that one was entitled to could be either private or public. Sometimes, the borders between these spheres were less than clear. The military tokens bear no state insignia and they are inscribed with private names. Nevertheless, it is the authority exercised by commanders in their official capacity and the couriers' need to authenticate their state mission that qualify these tokens as state/official tokens. In Glaucus' story, tokens are exchanged between two private persons and the transaction assumes a private character. Nevertheless, this private transaction attracts general, public attention, not least because of the parties involved: two powerful states were involved, and the Oracle at Delphi was required to mediate the dispute. In short, the narrative uses this private transaction to illustrate the universal (i.e. public) importance of honesty.

In Classical and Hellenistic Athens, tokens helped authenticate Athenian citizens to their functions and duties and therefore to their civic roles. Half-tokens were worn around the necks of the men who had been appointed by lot to offices after the allotment procedure in the Theseion. This is the procedure reconstructed in an account of the jigsaw clay token inscribed with the demonym ΧΣΥΠΙΕΤΑΙΩΝ (**Kierstead**). This tentative reconstruction is indirectly corroborated by the account of the assumption of office by the allotted jury men, according to the *Athenaion Politeia*. In this, the jurors received a token upon entering the court in which they were to sit. The author of the *Athenaion Politeia* neither explains the purpose of this token nor does he describe it further than the accompanying adverb 'σύμβολον δη[μοσίᾳ]'. The token in question has been convincingly associated with the well-known issues of bronze lettered tokens which assigned jurors to seating areas in the courtroom.²⁴ The adverb should be translated simply as 'publicly', a meaning which encompasses 'at public

²³ Kroll and Mitchel 1980.

²⁴ Boegehold 1960.

expense', 'by public consent' or 'on public service', and can be extended to cover the undertaking of public duties.

Seating at the Courts, the Council, the Assembly meant a variety of roles and well-defined duties for the citizens, and compliance to collective identity and state authority. These public roles were collectively undertaken by the citizens who manned the civic bodies and enabled the functioning of the democratic institutions. Iconography chosen for the jurors' tokens borrows from state symbols and expresses the state's authority. Similar observations can be made for the iconography of the tokens used in the Council (**Gkikaki**), the Assembly (**Makrypodi**) and for the workings of the tribes (**Russo**).

6 Tokens and the Athenian Society through the Centuries

It is impossible to approach tokens in Athenian society and everyday practice without first engaging with the relevant notions and concepts in tragedy and philosophy. This is essential for understanding that in order to fulfil their role tokens were split in two, even if this is not immediately apparent. The 'hospitality' tokens of the ancient Mediterranean were split in two so that that the bearers of each half could acknowledge a relationship with the bearer of the other. Likewise, the Assembly tokens are compared against a record which authorised citizens to access the Assembly meeting.

It is a striking feature of ancient literature that authors consider in some detail the notion of forged tokens and their implications. Tokens were potentially disruptive media, as evidenced by Neoptolemus' deception of Philoctetes; the story the former invents is anything but the 'clear token' (σύμβολον σαφές) that Philoctetes naively believes. In this context, tokens emerge as 'anti-heroic' *symbola* and their employment questions the straightforward honesty which is normally attributed to epic heroes. The 'ideological background' described above focused on tokens that inevitably influenced perceptions and practices when tokens were introduced in the administrative procedures of the Athenian Democracy.

If we think of that the jigsaw clay tokens first introduced in the mid-fifth century BCE and of the jurors' lettered tokens of the late fifth century BCE as the earliest tokens known to be involved in the administration of Athens, then it becomes apparent that the beginnings of tokens in Athens coincide with various socio-political crises. The split clay tokens with the names of tribes and demes were introduced at the time immediately following Ephialtes' reforms, when Pericles began his political career becoming head of the state. What was at stake at the time was the participation of all male citizens regardless of social class and wealth. The split clay tokens helped avoid a severe state crisis which came about when the poorer demes began selling offices while the richer ones were eager to buy



Figure 0.10 Lead token, 17 mm, side A: female head right (personification of the Council or of *Demokratia*); side B: helmeted Athena, head left in round incuse. From context of fourth century BCE. Museum of the Ancient Agora, inv. no. IL1040. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/ Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Figure 0.11 Lead token, 13 mm, side A: cidada, POLYKLEITOS; side B: tripod, NIKAGORAS. Formerly in the collection of Archaïologiki Etaireia, Athens. Reproduced after Engel 1884, 18, cat. no. 169, pl. V

the offices offered in order to increase their influence. Once more, the lettered tokens formed a response to a crisis, this time after the oligarchic coup of 411 BCE. It is generally accepted that the seating by letter which was introduced in 410/9 BCE was a democratic measure which aimed at preventing conspirators from sitting together and manipulating discussions and democratic procedures, or even from shouting together en masse to drown out the orators. Although the athidographer Philochoros relates the practice of seating by letter to the Council (*FGrHist* 328 (Philochoros) F 140), the earliest extant lettered tokens are the ones of the Jury Courts from the late fifth century.

According to Margaret Crosby, ‘a quick review in the workings of the Athenian Democracy shows the need for some such objects (originally in vast numbers and in great variety) to be used either as entrance tickets to the Great Dionysia or as evidence of attendance at the assembly, the law courts, and probably the council’.²⁵ The declaration made by the eminent scholar in the seminal publication of the Athenian Agora excavation tokens (1964) has haunted scholarship ever since. In the subsequent decades, the view has prevailed that Athenian tokens are state tokens. Indeed, it appears increasingly certain that the carefully manufactured jurors’ tokens, which are preserved in relatively high numbers, were in fact issued by the state. In terms of purpose and function, the jurors’ tokens are very similar to the Assembly tokens. A true challenge for research constitutes the identification

²⁵ Crosby 1964, 77.

of the pay tokens, i.e. the tokens which were exchanged for the jurors' pay and the Assembly pay.

The iconography and functions of the tokens underwent important changes with the passing of centuries. The iconography mirrors the ideological upheavals and the concerns of the society at a given time. The female head representing the personification of *Demokratia* or of the Athenian Council can be considered as a token for a state function – although exactly which function remains open to speculation (Figure 0.10). However, not all tokens in Athens were state tokens. The unassuming designs of the Hellenistic period make plausible candidates for private issues (**Karra**). Were they issued in order to provide access to social events? Were the issuers groups or individuals? There were certainly the issues of individuals, who, in some official capacity, issued and distributed tokens. The lead token of Polykleitos and Nikagoras is an eloquent example of two magistrates issuing tokens for an official occasion and having their names along with the 'official stamps' of a tripod and a cicada on tokens (Figure 0.11). To the 'official stamps' of the Hellenistic period, the design of Nike may be added. A survey of Hellenistic Athenian tokens with Nike has proved that the design does not necessarily copy some sculpture in the round, but rather reflects original concepts especially prepared for tokens (**Schaefer**).

In Athens during the Roman Imperial period, private issues became proportionally more frequent. The state continued to run its affairs while keeping alive certain traditions of the Classical period. The iconography of the Roman period closely copies contemporary coin types probably as a means for sanctioning authority. Alexander the Great on Athenian tokens originates from collective concepts of the time on 'Hellenism' and at the same time expresses the ideological orientation of the Athenian elite (**Mondello**).

7 Model for Societies beyond Athens

Research has often considered that Athens served as the model for the tokens (*tesserae*) of the Roman world.²⁶ Nevertheless, it was the Roman *tesserae*, with their abundant and explicit inscriptions, which have shed light on the study of the Athenian tokens.²⁷ By means of analogy, the function of tokens as tickets for spectacles or vouchers for grain distributions were thought applicable also to Athens. While this approach has proved to have its merits, in this volume three new studies on the material of Hellenistic Sicily, Roman Jerusalem and Roman Ephesos have demonstrated the

²⁶ Rostovtzeff 1905, 9; Crosby 1964, 76.

²⁷ Rowan 2019, 102.

diversity of the parameters which prompted the use of tokens beyond Athens and probably independently from Athens. In each case, tokens were independently produced to serve the needs of local communities, although these local communities were inspired to some extent by their more prestigious neighbour(s). It is inevitable that the token-issuers in the two great centres of the later centuries, Rome and Ephesos, ‘borrowed’ from each other in terms of functions and iconography (**Geelmuyden Bulgurlu** and **Hazinedar Coşkun**).

Nonetheless, there are overarching patterns and numerous similarities. Tokens gave responses to a whole set of everyday circumstances and enabled access to social events. A person (often in an official capacity), a group of persons with common pursuits, or a civic body were the issuers. In any case, the event of distribution reinforced status and reputation. Tokens may have strengthened the bonds between group members and should have certainly enhanced the prestige of their issuers. The practice of sharing tokens bears reference to the common cultural background of the eastern Mediterranean. Therefore, a univocal definition of tokens in the Graeco-Roman World is possible, despite the local character (**Crisà**).

I

Symbola in Perception and Practice

Chapter 1

Tragic Tokens: Sophoclean *Symbola* in Context

P.J. Finglass

The commonplace *symbolon* makes a number of appearances in Greek tragedy. This paper begins by surveying the archaeological and literary evidence from Classical Greece for split *symbola* – that is, *symbola* divided in two such that the bearers of each half could acknowledge a relationship with the bearer of the other even if the bearers were personally unacquainted – and for the association between *symbola* and strangers/hospitality (*xenia*) both in Greece and across the Mediterranean. In the light of this material, the paper then focuses on two Sophoclean passages. First, *Philoctetes* 403–04, where Philoctetes tells Neoptolemus that, although a stranger (*xenos*), he has a *symbolon* of grief that matches his own, which thus permits him to recognise him as a fellow-sufferer at the hands of the other Greeks. But the tale told by Neoptolemus, which has elicited this response from Philoctetes, is false: his ‘token’ is a forgery, designed to match Philoctetes’ story in order to convince him of Neoptolemus’ good will. Second, *Oedipus the King* 219–23, where Oedipus tells the assembled Thebans that, although a stranger (*xenos*), he has a *symbolon* that connects him with them: he has been made a citizen, and thus has standing to investigate the killing of their long-dead king Laius. Yet the ‘token’ that connects him to the Theban people represents a profounder link than he realises: he is no mere adopted citizen, it will be discovered, but his people’s legitimate king, and both son and killer of the man whose killer he is now seeking. Both passages exploit ambiguities intrinsic to the *symbolon*, which is such a potentially fallible tool; this paper explores how that image evokes ideas of deception and ignorance bound up in this everyday, apparently unremarkable object.

I am most grateful to Dr Mairi Gkikaki for including me in the lively and stimulating Symbola conference in Athens in December 2019, for helpful comments and for giving me permission to report her rediscovery and re-examination of a token important for the argument of the present paper, and to Professor John H. Kroll for also reading the paper and giving me permission to report his crucial reassessment of some of the clay tokens which he co-published in 1980.

1 Philoctetes' Tokens of Grief

ἔχοντες, ὡς ἔοικε, σύμβολον σαφές
 λύπης πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὧ ξένοι, πεπλεύκατε,
 καί μοι προσάδεθ' ὥστε γινώσκειν ὅτι
 ταῦτ' ἐξ Ἀτρεϊδῶν ἔργα κὰξ Ὀδυσσέως.

[Possessing, as it seems, a clear token of grief, you have sailed to me, strangers, and the harmony of your song with mine is such that I recognise that these deeds come from the sons of Atreus and from Odysseus.]

Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 403–06

Philoctetes addresses Neoptolemus, who has recently arrived on the island of Lemnos, where Philoctetes was abandoned ten years ago by the Greek army on their way to Troy. Neoptolemus has just delivered a lying speech describing how the Greeks had dishonoured him when he arrived to join them there; upon demanding the armour and weapons of his dead father Achilles, he was informed that they now belonged to Odysseus, and as a result he has abandoned their cause and is sailing home. This story has been crafted to ensure that Philoctetes will find Neoptolemus sympathetic, see in him a fellow-sufferer at the hands of the Greeks, and trust him as a result. Neoptolemus plans to exploit that trust to bring Philoctetes, against his will, to Troy, which (the Greeks have been told in a prophecy) will not fall without Philoctetes' assistance. It is in response to Neoptolemus' tale that Philoctetes tells his interlocutors that, although they are ξένοι, 'strangers', to him, they have a σύμβολον, a 'token' or 'tally' of grief, which allows them to establish a relationship. As a consequence, when Neoptolemus subsequently announces his intention to depart (461–65), Philoctetes begs him to take him with him (468–503), which has been Neoptolemus' intended outcome all along.

What does Philoctetes mean by this 'token' of grief? With a question like this we naturally turn to the commentaries; and Jebb's detailed note does not disappoint.¹ He defines the phrase σύμβολον . . . λύπης as 'grief-token', that is

a token consisting in your grief . . . σύμβολα were tallies, sometimes consisting of dice . . . or knuckle-bones . . . sawn in two. A message or request, purporting to come from a friend at a distance, could thus be tested. The bearer was asked to produce the other half of the divided token.

¹ Jebb 1898², 72–73. Discussions in later commentaries are thinner.

He cites various passages to illustrate this, from Herodotus, Euripides, Plato, Plautus, Aelius Aristides, plus an inscription. The image is also treated in a more recent analysis of the play, which describes how the first part of the deception plan was completed when Philoctetes said that Neoptolemus and the chorus came as a symbolon of pain (403). A symbolon was a sign of friendship in the Classical period. Sophocles' metaphorical use of *xenia* as the friendship of damaged and injured people suggests that this operation will involve an abuse of fundamental values. This kind of transgression can be justified only by an extreme emergency.²

Elucidation of this passage requires more scope, however, than the necessarily limited scope of a commentary. This chapter therefore examines this reference to the *symbolon* more closely. It begins by considering the evidence, both literary and archaeological, for divided tokens, in Greece. Not all ancient tokens are in fact divided – in fact the great majority are not – and it is important to identify the evidence for this practice; I hope that this examination will be of more general use, since discussions of the issue by literary scholars often assume that divided tokens must always be at issue, when these are only a small subset of ancient tokens. It goes on to demonstrate the association of tokens, both divided and non-divided, with hospitality: a fundamental feature of tokens not just in Greece but across the ancient Mediterranean. Having established these foundations, the chapter proceeds to argue that the *Philoctetes* passage is indeed a reference to the specific concept of divided tokens, and analyses its significance, paying close attention to Philoctetes' vocative ξένοι, 'strangers', which, although ignored by commentators, turns out to be no mere filler. The chapter concludes with a further passage involving the *symbolon*, from *Oedipus the King*, where the meaning of the word has long been disputed; the previous discussion illuminates this particularly difficult occurrence of the word.

2 Divided Tokens: The Greek Evidence

The term σύμβολον represents a complex idea and the significance of individual instances of the word need to be weighed with care.³ As Kroll and Mitchel put it:

In its primary sense the word σύμβολον denoted an object comprised of two joining halves, each one kept by a separate party for identifying the bearer of the other half. The term was more generally applied to anything used for identification as well as to ordinary tokens of bronze, lead, and

² Daneš 2019, 560. McClure (2015) offers a recent analysis of tokens in tragedy.

³ For recent discussions, see Struck 2004, 78–94; Thomas 2020, 157–58.

clay employed as admission and seating tickets and as vouchers to be exchanged for pay, allotments of grain, and the like.⁴

Or, in Gauthier's words, in his monograph dedicated to the subject, a *symbolon* is 'un objet incomplet, qui doit être rapproché d'un autre pour prendre toute sa signification'.⁵ But, despite this primary sense, the word clearly could refer to a simple, individual token that people would recognise; of the hundreds of surviving tokens, almost none actually involves matching halves. What evidence do we in fact have, then, for divided tokens in the ancient Greek world?

Herodotus' story of Glaucus, who was entrusted with a sum of money by a stranger, provides one of the two earliest literary references to divided *symbola* (6.86.a.5–β.1):

σὺ δὴ μοι καὶ τὰ χρήματα δέξαι καὶ τάδε τὰ σύμβολα σῶζε λαβών· ὅς δ' ἂν ἔχων ταῦτα ἀπαιτήη, τούτῳ ἀποδοῦναι. ὁ μὲν δὴ ἀπὸ Μιλήτου ἦκων ξείνος τοσαῦτα ἔλεξε, Γλαῦκος δὲ ἐδέξατο τὴν παραθήκην ἐπὶ τῷ εἰρημένῳ λόγῳ. χρόνου δὲ πολλοῦ διεθόντος ἤλθον ἐς Σπάρτην τούτου τοῦ παραθεμένου τὰ χρήματα οἱ παῖδες, ἐλθόντες δὲ ἐς λόγους τῷ Γλαύκῳ καὶ ἀποδεικνύντες τὰ σύμβολα ἀπαίτεον τὰ χρήματα.

[You receive the money and take these tokens and look after them; and give the sum to whoever in possession of these tokens should ask for it. That was what the stranger who came from Miletus said, and Glaucus accepted the deposit on the stated terms. After a long time had passed the depositor's sons came to Sparta, met with Glaucus and, showing him the tokens, requested the return of the money.]

The mechanism of identification in this passage clearly involves divided *σύμβολα*, 'probably knuckle-bones, or tablets broken in two', according to the

⁴ Kroll and Mitchel 1980, 93–94. For the etymology, see Müri 1931; Struck 2004, 78. Other essays in this volume discuss different aspects of the use of tokens mentioned here: so, for identification, tokens enabling the apportionment of citizens to offices as well as the participation in the Athenian Council, Assembly and Courts (regulating seating, and exchanged for pay after attendance), see the chapters by Mairi Gkikaki, James Kierstead, John H. Kroll, and Stamatoula Makrypodī. Given the reference to 'seating tickets', above, it is worth noting that tokens were not used for entrance to the Athenian theatre (Roselli 2011, 82–84) and that tokens found in Mantinea from the late fifth century onwards seem to be connected with that city's democracy rather than with theatrical performances (Csapo and Wilson 2020, 514–17; for these tokens, see further Robinson 2011, 37–38).

⁵ Gauthier 1972, 65; cf. Crosby (1964, 77) on the distinction between *symbola tetmēmēna* and single objects.

latest commentators;⁶ Glaucus is given one set, the depositor retains the other, and the matching of the divided parts will confirm to Glaucus that anyone requesting the money has the authority to do so. We should also note the word ξείνος, which will be relevant later in our discussion: σύμβολα are an ideal means of confirming identity between strangers. The story goes on to explain how Glaucus denies knowledge of the arrangement, asks the Delphic oracle whether he can withhold the money and receives a critical response in reply; his punishment is clear, the narrator states, because he no longer has any surviving descendants (6.86.δ). The key offences here, deceit and theft, are manifested by the failure to act as agreed when the *symbola* were duly presented.

Perhaps earlier than Herodotus, however, and if later then certainly not by much, is the use of the idea in Empedocles, as cited by Aristotle (*On the Generation of Animals* 722b6–17):

ἔτι εἰ ἀπ’ ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως ἀπὸ πάντων ἀπέρχεται, δύο γίγνεται ζῶα· ἑκατέρου γὰρ ἅπαντα ἔξει. διὸ καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς ἔοικεν, εἶπερ οὕτω λεκτέον, μάλιστα λέγειν ὁμολογούμενα τοῦτω τῷ λόγῳ {τό γε τοσοῦτον, ἀλλ’ εἶπερ ἑτέρα πη, οὐ καλῶς· φησὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ ἄρρηνι καὶ τῷ θήλει οἷον σύμβολον ἐνεῖναι, ὅλον δ’ ἀπ’ οὐδετέρου ἀπιέναι [D171 L–M], ἀλλὰ διέσπασται μελέων φύσις, ἡ μὲν ἐν ἀνδρὸς . . . [D164 L–M] διὰ τί γὰρ τὰ θήλεα οὐ γεννᾷ ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶπερ ἀπὸ παντός τε ἀπέρχεται καὶ ἔχει ὑποδοχὴν; ἀλλ’ ὡς ἔοικεν ἢ οὐκ ἀπέρχεται ἀπὸ παντός ἢ οὕτως ὥσπερ ἐκεῖνος λέγει, οὐ ταῦτ’ ἀφ’ ἑκατέρου, διὸ καὶ δέονται τῆς ἀλλήλων συνουσίας.

[Further, if it comes equally from all of both parents, two animals are produced; for they will have every part of each parent. Therefore, if this is the right way to speak, Empedocles’ account seems the most consistent with it {just to this extent; but if a different way is right, his account is not good}. For he says that the male and the female contain as it were a tally, and that neither produces a whole, ‘But sundered is limbs’ nature, part in man’s . . .’ Otherwise, why do not the females generate from themselves, if in fact the seed comes from all the body and they have a receptacle? But, as it seems, it either does not come from all the body, or comes in the way that Empedocles says, not the same things from each parent, and this is why they need intercourse.]⁷

In the course of an argument against Democritus’ theory of *pangensis*, which ‘holds that the seed is drawn “from all the body”, in such a way that

⁶ Thus Hornblower and Pelling (2017, 206) noting that this ‘is one of the earliest literary attestations of such σύμβολα’, and citing Gauthier (1972, 67–68).

⁷ Translation from Balme (1992, 37), taken from *Oxford Scholarly Editions Online*. The curly brackets indicate a passage found in the manuscripts which modern editors believe was not written by Aristotle.

it contains all the bodily parts, drawn from the corresponding parts of the parent',⁸ Aristotle states that Empedocles 'proposed a form of *pangensis* that is marginally more satisfactory: each parent contributed not a whole complement of seeds or parts, as Democritus and others said, but only a half complement'.⁹ The details of the biological argument do not need to be pursued here; the key point is that Empedocles' metaphor relies on widespread familiarity with the concept of divided tokens.

The same concept lies behind a more famous passage, from Plato's *Symposium*. In a context where the different characters are explaining the nature of love, the comic playwright Aristophanes declares that each individual human being is but a *symbolon* of a person, and the two *symbola* need to come together to form the original whole (191d):

ἕκαστος οὖν ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπου σύμβολον, ἅτε τετμημένος ὥσπερ αἰ ψῆται, ἐξ ἑνὸς δύο· ζητεῖ δὴ αἰεὶ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος σύμβολον.

[Each of us, then, is a tally of a human being, having been sliced like flat-fish, two from one; and each person is always searching for the tally that belongs to them.]

In the words of one scholar, the metaphor is 'characterized by lack: a symbol has something missing, and this incompleteness begs to be resolved. The symbol rings with both lack and potential wholeness, something incomplete and something always potentially complete'.¹⁰ And again, the story makes sense only if this cutting of *symbola* was a recognised practice, familiar to anyone.

The metaphor recurs in another philosophical text, Aristotle's *Eudemian Ethics* (1.230b23–32):

τὸ δ' ἐναντίον τῷ ἐναντίῳ φίλον ὡς {τὸ} χρήσιμον· αὐτὸ γὰρ αὐτῷ τὸ ὅμοιον ἄχρηστον. διὸ δεσπότης δούλου δεῖται καὶ δούλος δεσπότου, καὶ γυνή καὶ ἀνὴρ ἀλλήλων, καὶ ἡδὺ καὶ ἐπιθυμητὸν τὸ ἐναντίον ὡς χρήσιμον, καὶ οὐχ ὡς ἐν τέλει ἀλλ' ὡς πρὸς τὸ τέλος. ὅταν γὰρ τύχη οὐ ἐπιθυμεῖ, ἐν τῷ τέλει μὲν ἐστίν, οὐκ ὀρέγεται δὲ τοῦ ἐναντίου, οἷον τὸ θερμὸν τοῦ ψυχροῦ καὶ τὸ ξηρὸν τοῦ ὑγροῦ. ἔστι δὲ πῶς καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἐναντίου φιλία τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ (φιλία)· ὀρέγεται γὰρ ἀλλήλων διὰ τὸ μέσον· ὡς σύμβολα γὰρ ὀρέγεται ἀλλήλων διὰ τὸ οὕτω γίνεσθαι ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἐν μέσον.

[On the score of utility, however, it is the contrary that is friends with the contrary. For what is like X is useless to X, and therefore master needs

⁸ De Ley 1978, 153.

⁹ Leitaο 2012, 274.

¹⁰ Struck 2004, 79.

slave and slave needs master and husband and wife need one another. A contrary is pleasant and desirable because it is useful—not as a constituent of the end, but as contributing towards it. When a thing has got what it desires, it has attained its end, and no longer has any appetite for its contrary: the hot does not want the cold nor the dry the wet. Yet in a manner love of the contrary is love of the good: the two are drawn to each other through the mean. They have an affinity like the matching parts of a tally, and when they come together they form a single intermediate entity.]¹¹

Though less famous than the *Symposium* passage, this discussion is along similar lines and testifies to the attraction of divided *symbola*: as Herman points out, ‘Such objects were so familiar in Athenian life that a series of complex philosophical ideas could be expressed by reference to them’.¹²

Finally, we find the idea referred to in a fragment of the fourth-century comic poet Eubulus (fr. 70 *PCG*):

†τί ποτ’ ἐστὶν† ἅπαντα διαπεπρισμένα
 ἤμισέ’ ἀκριβῶς ὡσπερεὶ τὰ σύμβολα

[. . . all things sawn in half, accurately, like tallies]

The fragment is brief and the context is unclear, but divided *symbola* are clearly at issue, and again used as a metaphor to describe something else. Here is yet another genre for which the fundamental concept of the divided token provides an apt metaphor.

Our evidence for divided tokens in Classical Greece is not limited to these literary texts. Three terracotta tokens, discovered in 1950 in a rubbish pit in the Athenian Agora, and dating to the third quarter of the fifth century BCE, had been cut in two; the cut was deliberate, effected in such a way as to provide a unique match between the two halves.¹³ In each case, we have only one half of the original complete token. The middle one has the word ‘Halimous’ painted on one side, the name of a coastal deme, and ‘Leo’ on the other, an abbreviation for the tribal name Leontis, which was evidently written before the cut, in such a way that the cut would split the name in half. The other two tokens also have tribal names, again split between the two halves of the token: Leo for Leontis again, and Ere for Erechtheis. As Lang notes, ‘It is clear that the cut through the middle of the tribal name was intended to leave that name legible on both halves and so to serve to bring the two halves together’.¹⁴ But on the other side instead

¹¹ Translation from Kenney (2011, 37), taken from *Oxford Scholarly Editions Online*.

¹² Herman 1987, 62.

¹³ Thompson 1951, 51–52. For these tokens, see further James Kierstead’s chapter in this volume and Figures 2.1 and 2.2.

¹⁴ Lang 1959, 81.

of a demonym these two tokens both have the letters ΠΟΛ (POL) painted on. This probably designates an office of πωλητής, as Lang argues, an official responsible for selling public contracts and confiscated property, of whom there were ten in the classical period, one for each tribe.¹⁵ The tribal name was written on the token before it was cut in two; then the name of one of the demes belonging to that tribe was written on one half of each of the tokens, whereas some, perhaps all, of the other halves of the tokens had the name of a magistracy written on them. Putting the tokens back together allowed a random distribution among the demes of the office or offices.¹⁶ Another such token-half, discovered at the Dipylon gate, also has a demonym name written on it (Xypetaion, denoting the deme of Xypete). In the original publication no tribal name was recorded on the other side.¹⁷ The token had not been seen since 1879 and was known only through the drawing published by Koumanoudes; but Dr Mairi Gkikaki recently rediscovered it in the depots of the National Archaeological Museum. Having examined it, she reports that a few traces of a name written across the cut can still be discerned, so the same mechanism seems to have been at work there too.¹⁸

Since these are the only surviving instances of such tokens, we may imagine that the particular apportionment process in which they were employed did not last long.¹⁹ Nevertheless, we have evidence that it was used, at least twice; and when dealing with evidence from the ancient world, that is often more than we could reasonably hope for. Moreover, these are not the only split tokens which have survived in the archaeological record. Two mid-fourth-century clay tokens, discovered in the Athenian Agora and stamped with the phrase ‘Xenokles of Perithoidai, Peripolarchos’ in the accusative (i.e. with the name and military rank of an Athenian commander), were evidently intended to be used by official state couriers on their way to bring a message to a commander outside the city (which is where the peripolarch would have been stationed, in charge of the ‘peripoloi’ or troops guarding the frontiers), serving as a passport on the way and as a means of confirming their status to the military commander on

¹⁵ Lang 1959, 82, 86.

¹⁶ Following Herman (1987, 62), Humphreys (2018, 2.744) declares that ‘these clay objects are recognition tokens and are not likely to have been used in allotment’, noting (n. 63) her agreement with Herman, but saying that he ‘goes too far in totally rejecting the association with demes, tribes, and office’. But this somewhat confused commentary does nothing to counter Lang’s convincing interpretation. See further Whitehead (1986, 250–86) and the detailed account of the dispute in Kierstead’s chapter.

¹⁷ Koumanoudes 1879, 237.

¹⁸ See Gkikaki’s introduction, pp. 3–4, and Kierstead’s chapter, p. 45.

¹⁹ Cf. Carawan 2016, 399 n. 33: ‘these rare artifacts probably represent a short-lived experiment with an office especially ripe for corruption’.

arrival.²⁰ Professor Kroll now points out (personal communication) that the tokens were clearly intended to be split: a third one belonging to the same series and now in the Bibliothèque nationale de France is actually split and only half survives, whereas the two from the Athenian Agora are divided in two diagonally in the same area where the now split token was divided. As Kroll says (personal communication), ‘they were made to be divided with one piece given out for secure identification of the carrier later’. In all three cases, the smaller piece intended to be broken off from the rest includes the first letter of Xenokles’ name and at least part of the second letter (whereas the word ‘Peripolarchos’ is not divided at all on one of the tokens): it may be significant that the commander’s name, the part of the text most obviously connected with identity and recognition, becomes whole again only once the two pieces of the token are brought back together.

Overall, then, the combination of literary and archaeological evidence indicates that the idea of split tokens was familiar and widespread in Classical Greece; and the Herodotus passage and the Xenokles tokens in particular demonstrate their use as a means of identifying one bearer to another in both private and public contexts.

3 Tokens and Strangers

I noted above that the word ξείνος was highly relevant to the use of the term σύμβολον in the passage of Herodotus. The association between *symbola* and hospitality/strangers will turn out to be important for understanding Sophocles’ use of the term too; but before we return to that, let us examine the evidence for the link more generally, a link prominent in the very subtitle of Gauthier’s classic book on *symbola*, namely *Les étrangers et la justice dans les cités grecques*.²¹

A clear example of the association is found in Euripides’ *Medea*, where Jason assures the title character (612–13):

ἔτοιμος ἀφθόνῳ δοῦναι χερὶ
ξένοις τε πέμπειν σύμβολ’, οἳ δράσουσί σ’ εὖ.

[I am ready to give with unstinting hand and to send tokens to
guest-friends, who will treat you well.]

²⁰ See Gkikaki’s introduction, p. 7, Figure 0.3; Kroll and Mitchel 1980, pl. 13a–c with 87–89, 94–96. For the *peripolarchos* and *peripoloi*, see Kozak 2013, 309–10.

²¹ Gauthier 1972; cf. Faraguna 2014, 176. In the Greek passages cited below, unlike the Herodotus passage referred to above, nothing suggests specifically *divided* tokens, even if many commentators assume that they are divided; the scenarios presupposed in all of them make sense with a normal, undivided token. That is why I did not cite them above; some of them are nevertheless regularly cited in lists of divided tokens, when in fact these need to be carefully distinguished.

Jason attempts to assuage Medea's anger at his decision to abandon her in favour of his new Corinthian bride, by offering tokens to enable her to obtain hospitality from his guest-friends.²² Like all Jason's assurances in this speech, though, the offer rings hollow: the responsibility for taking care of Medea's interests should lie with him alone, given all the assistance which he has derived from her; yet he is abandoning her and allowing her to be exiled from Corinth. Moreover, as the play makes clear, Medea need not rely on the promise of mere tokens given to her by a deceitful ex-husband; she can create her own networks and opportunities, persuading Aegeus to give her sanctuary in Athens. The offer underlines Jason's profound misreading of the situation, in terms of both his own responsibilities and the power relationship between the pair – and from our point of view, it relies on the ready recognition by an audience of *symbola* as a means of establishing the identity of a person to his or her *xenoi*.

Exactly the same idea, although in a real, public and civic context rather than a literary, private and personal one, underlies the following inscription from probably 378–376, where the Athenian people employ *symbola* in their relationship with a foreign friendly state (*IG* II² 141):

ποιησάσθω δὲ καὶ σύμβολα ἢ βολὴ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τὸν Σιδωνίων, ὅπως ἂν ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἀθηναίων εἰδῆ ἕάν τι πέμπῃ ὁ Σιδωνίων βασιλεὺς δεόμενος τῆς πόλεως, καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ Σιδωνίων εἰδῆ ὅταμ πέμπῃ τινὰ ὡς αὐτὸν ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἀθηναίων.

[Also the Council shall make tokens with the king of Sidon, so that the people of Athens shall know if the king of Sidon sends anything when in need of the city, and the king of Sidon shall know when the people of Athens send any one to him.]²³

The process envisaged by this inscription parallels the fourth-century clay tokens published by Kroll and Mitchel and mentioned above

²² The *scholia* – i.e. comments by ancient commentators surviving in the margins of manuscripts of the play – claim that these were divided tokens (Schwartz 2.175.27–32). But the *scholia* have no special authority in determining the sense of the words – they provide an interpretation, written at least two centuries after Euripides wrote the play, which we are not compelled to accept.

²³ Rhodes and Osborne 2003, 86–91 §21; their translation, www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/RO/21. For this text, see further Mairi Gkikaki's chapter in this volume. This is the inscription mentioned by Jebb in his commentary on the *Philoctetes* passage, as noted above. It is not surprising to see Jebb, a central figure in the foundation in 1886 of the British School at Athens (where the conference which produced this book was held), drawing on inscriptional evidence to elucidate a literary text in this way at a time when such an approach by literary scholars was scarcely commonplace.

(pp. 30–31).²⁴ So too these σύμβολα . . . πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα would identify their bearer to the King of Sidon, as would the tokens carried by his messengers. Two foreign peoples thus managed their alliance by means of these small but significant objects.

Returning to tragedy, the term *symbola* in the sense of ‘contracts’, ‘agreements’, a clear development of the basic sense ‘token’, is closely connected with strangers when the chorus of Aeschylus’ *Suppliant Women* sing (698–703):

φυλάσσοι τ’ εὖ τὰ τίμι’ ἀστοῖς
τὸ δάμιον, τὸ πτόλιν κρατύνει,
προμαθίς εὐκοινόμητις ἀρχά 700
ξένοισί τ’ εὐξυμβόλους,
πρὶν ἐξοπλίζειν Ἄρη,
δίκαας ἄτερ πημάτων διδοῖεν·

[And may the people, which rules the city,
protect well the citizens’ privileges,
a government acting with craft and foresight for the common good;
and to foreigners may they offer
painless justice under fair agreements
before arming the god of war.]²⁵

This chorus has come from Egypt to Argos to put themselves under the protection of that city as they flee from forced marriage with their cousins, who are pursuing them; as international refugees, they thus have an interest in a system that would assure ‘to foreigners . . . painless justice under fair agreements’. Though tokens as such are not at issue, the passage can still be adduced as evidence for the association between *symbola* and hospitality/strangers.

This association is attested beyond Classical Greece. In Plautus’ *Poenulus* the comparing of one token with another secures the recognition of one of the characters (1045–52):

Agorastocles: *siquidem Antidamai quaeris adoptaticium,* 1045
ego sum ipsus quem tu quaeris.
Hanno: hem! quid ego audio?
Agorastocles: Antidamae gnatum me esse.
Hanno: si ita est, **tesseram**
conferre si uis hospitem, eccam attuli.
Agorastocles: *agedum huc ostende. est par probe. nam habeo domi.*

²⁴ Kroll and Mitchel 1980, 94–96.

²⁵ Text and translation from Sommerstein (2008, 378–79). See further his note on 701, Sommerstein 2019, 281.

- Hanno: *o mi hospes, salve multum! nam mi tuos pater* 1050
patritus hercle hospes Antidamas fuit.
haec mi hospitalis tessera cum illo fuit.
- [Agorastocles: If you're looking for the adopted son of Antidamas,
I am the very man you're looking for.
- Hanno: Oh! What do I hear?
- Agorastocles: That I'm the son of Antidamas.
- Hanno: is the case and if you want to **compare**
your shard of hospitality, look, I've brought mine along.
(produces it)
- Agorastocles: Go on, show it to me. (inspecting it) **It's the proper**
counterpart: I have mine at home.
- Hanno: O my **guest-friend**, many greetings! Your father Antidamas
was my father's **guest-friend**.
I had this **shard of hospitality** with him.]²⁶

(Note *conferre*, where the *con-* prefix is doing the same duty as the *sym-* in *symbolon*.) Here we encounter an example of a divided token being used to establish a relationship of guest-friendship. The Latin term found in this passage, *tessera hospitalis*, was used in the title of the book *De tesseris hospitalitatis liber singularis* (1647), where the topic of tokens was first analysed in scholarly terms by the Catholic bishop Jacopus Philippus Tomasini (1595–1655) (**Figure 1.1**).²⁷ Hence the modern designation of this subset of *symbola*, whatever their origin, as *tesserae hospitales*.

Beyond the cultures of Greece and Rome, a recent study of the archaeological material has identified sixty-four surviving instances of *tesserae hospitales* from the western Mediterranean, particularly from Spain, mostly from the second and first centuries BCE; the languages found on them (in decreasing order of frequency) are Celtiberian, Latin, Etruscan and Greek (from the Roman period).²⁸ The oldest two, both from the mid-sixth century, are both Etruscan. Each involves an animal sculpted in relief on one side of the *tessera*, whereas the other side is flat and contains an inscription; the implication is that the object was meant to match up with a corresponding *tessera* to establish a relationship between the bearers, one of whom was likely to be a foreigner.²⁹ First, an Etruscan inscription, 'Araz Silqetas Spurianas' is carved on the back of half an ivory lion, from Rome; this is probably a personal name, perhaps also with a reference to

²⁶ Text and translation from De Melo (2011–12); taken from the digital Loeb Classical Library.

²⁷ Tomasini 1647; Crisà 2018.

²⁸ Beltrán Lloris et al. 2020.

²⁹ Beltrán Lloris et al. 2020, 490–91.

the city of Sulcis in Sardinia.³⁰ Second, in a tomb in the Sainte-Monique cemetery at Carthage, an Etruscan ivory plaque representing a hoofed mammal is inscribed ‘mi puinel karθazies vesφ+[---]na’, again probably a name, also with the person’s place of residence (Carthage).³¹ Six more sixth-century Etruscan *tesserae* have been recovered from Poggio Civitate in Tuscany, made of ivory, again in the shape of animals, and with what seem to be names written on the flat side of each.³²

This same format, an animal in relief on one side of the object, with an inscription on the other, flat, side, is characteristic of Latin and Celtiberian *tesserae* too. For example, among the Latin ones is a late third- or second-century bronze token from Trasacco near Rome in the shape of a ram’s head, inscribed on its flat side with text indicating a relationship of *hospitium* between two men: *T. Manlius T. f. | hospes | T. Staiodius N. f.*³³ The many Celtiberian examples also contain text referring to relationships of guest-friends.³⁴ In some of them the half-animal shape is replaced by a very complex join, as if to eliminate any possibility of forging a matching piece.³⁵

4 Back to Neoptolemus’ Token

Returning to the *Philoctetes* passage, we can see that there is no explicit reference to one *symbolon* matching another. Philoctetes says that Neoptolemus has come with a *symbolon* of grief, but does not add that he himself has a matching *symbolon*; we must ask, then, whether this is a case of a single token that involves no split, since, as we have seen, not every reference to *symbola* necessarily evokes divided tokens. However, the context makes the idea of division the more attractive option here. Philoctetes’ point is not simply that Neoptolemus has demonstrated that he is afflicted by grief (which is what the meaning would be if a single, undivided token was at issue); Philoctetes is not expressing disinterested compassion for the suffering of another person. Rather, Philoctetes’ point is that Neoptolemus’ tale of woe matches his; like Philoctetes, Neoptolemus too has been betrayed by the Greeks. The audience already knows that this was the purpose of Neoptolemus’ tale. His closing remarks $\acute{o} \delta' \text{ Ἀτρείδας στρυγῶν} | \acute{\epsilon}\mu\acute{o}\iota \theta' \acute{o}\mu\acute{o}\iota\omega\varsigma \kappa\alpha\acute{\iota} \theta\epsilon\omicron\iota\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\eta\iota \phi\acute{\iota}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ (‘May the person who hates the Atridae

³⁰ Camporeale 2016, 79–80; Naso 2017a, 1541; Luschi 2008, 141–46. For the archaeological context, see Diffendale et al. 2016, 19–20.

³¹ Naso 2017b, 1700–01; Dridi 2019, 148.

³² Beltrán Lloris et al. 2020, 490–91.

³³ Luschi 2008; also Beltrán Lloris et al. 2020, 494–95.

³⁴ Beltrán Lloris 2010; Simkin 2012, 100–02; Woudhuizen 2015; Lowe 2017; Beltrán and Jordán 2019, 275–79; Beltrán Lloris et al. 2020, 499–503.

³⁵ Beltrán Lloris et al. 2020, 500–01.

be my friend and the gods' equally', 389–90) put further emphasis on this point – such strong emphasis, indeed, that audience members might even question whether he is overplaying his hand. But the guileless Philoctetes accepts what he hears, and although his phrase *καί μοι προσάδεθ'* transposes this idea of unity onto a musical plane: just as their *symbola* fit together, so too their stories harmonise.

The attestation of divided tokens in an Athenian military context – first demonstrated by Kroll in this chapter (above, pp. 30–31) – may add another dimension to the symbolon here. The archaeological evidence cited above is from the mid-fourth century, and we must be wary about automatically retrojecting Athenian practices back into the late fifth. But *peripoloi* are mentioned in late fifth-century texts,³⁶ and although the office of the *peripolarch* is not, these troops at the frontier will have needed a commander, and he will have needed a method of receiving messages sent to him from Athens. If, then, the Athenians of the late fifth century were familiar with the use of tokens in the military sphere in this or some other context(s), the establishment of a relationship between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus by means of a metaphorical symbolon will have carried a significant irony in its evocation of this military practice. At a surface level this nexus between an abandoned, apparently useless warrior and a deserter from the army is the antithesis of the well-ordered military machine whose functioning the efficient transfer of *symbola* would have enabled. In fact, however, Neoptolemus is no deserter but a man instructed by his military superiors to present exactly this metaphorical symbolon to the target of his mission. And that target is someone on the fringes of an ongoing conflict, and to that extent like the *peripolarch*; except that the *peripolarch* exists on the margins as the leader of a group in order to further the aims of the state which sent him there, whereas Philoctetes has been abandoned on Lemnos on his own because he was viewed as useless, indeed a hindrance, to his army. Nevertheless, with both the *peripolarch* and with Philoctetes, the central authority communicates with and exerts control over far-flung members of the army by means of *symbola*.

A further relevant aspect of *symbola* here is their particular significance for *ξένοι*; as we have seen, this association was so fundamental that it is attested in many different ancient Mediterranean cultures. That apparently innocent word *ξένοι* now has a productive ambiguity: Neoptolemus and his soldiers were originally merely strangers to Philoctetes, but now, thanks to their matching, harmonising tales of grief, they have become 'guest-friends', people from afar who have discovered that they have a relationship

³⁶ Eupolis fr. 340.2 *PCG* 7 with Olson (2014: 47 *ad loc.*), Aristophanes, *Birds* 1177–78, Thucydides, *Historiae* 4.67.2 with Hornblower (1991–2008: 2.234–35 *ad loc.*, noting among other things their marginal status).

in common. But since Neoptolemus' tale is false, the relationship that Philoctetes feels is entirely illusory. It is characteristic of Sophocles that this simple vocative ξένοι turns out to be no mere filler but a word pregnant with meaning and fraught with irony.

It is natural to ask at this juncture whether forged tokens play a part in other ancient literary works. A passage in the Theognidean corpus (whether or not by the sixth-century poet Theognis of Megara himself) condemned unjust men, among whose offences was αἰσχρὰ κακοῖσ' ἔργοις σύμβολα θηκάμενοι (1150);³⁷ the reference seems to be to 'shameful contracts' rather than forged tokens, although the use of the same term for both these ideas indicates the close association between them, as already noted above on the passage from Aeschylus' *Suppliant Women*. For a forged token we must turn to Plautus' *The Two Bacchises*, where the slave Chrysalus makes up a story to his master Nicobulus that his son was wrongly accused of producing one in Ephesus (258–68):³⁸

Nicobulus:	<i>quid fecit?</i>	
Chrysalus:	quid non fecit? quin tu id me rogas?	
	primumdum in fitias ire coepit filio,	
	negare se debere tibi triobulum.	260
	continuo antiquom hospitem nostrum sibi	
	Mnesilochus aduocauit, Pelagonem senem;	
	eo praesente homini extemplo ostendit symbolum ,	
	quem tute dederas, ad eum ut ferret, filio.	
Nicobulus:	quid ubi ei ostendit symbolum ?	265
Chrysalus:	infit dicere	
	adulterinum et non eum esse symbolum .	
	quotque innocenti ei dixit contumelias!	
	adulterare eum aibat rebus ceteris.	

[Nicobulus: What has he done?

Chrysalus: What has he not done? Why don't you ask me that question? First he began to deny everything before your son,

to say that he doesn't owe you a farthing.

Mnesilochus immediately called on our longstanding friend, old Pelago, for help.

In his presence he promptly showed him the token, the one you yourself had given your son to bring to him.

Nicobulus: And when he showed him the token?

Chrysalus: He began to say

³⁷ Theognis 1150; cf. Gauthier (1972: 68).

³⁸ Text and translation from De Melo (2011–12); taken from the digital Loeb Classical Library.

it was a forgery and not that token.

And how many insults he heaped on this innocent chap!

He said he was a forger in other business affairs as well.]

As Jenkins notes, ‘Chrysalus – or Plautus – has inserted the story to make a thematic point: not all signs are to be trusted. Chrysalus turns out, in fact, to be a master of semiotic manipulation, an expert forger in a highly specialized sense’,³⁹ pointing to the forged letter which Chrysalus will subsequently dictate to another character for him to write. Similarly, in *Philoctetes* the metaphorical forged token proffered by Neoptolemus to Philoctetes is an element of, we might almost say symbolic of, a play where deceit is to the fore.

Symbola can be employed with the express intention of preventing deceitful action, as in the Kleinias decree (425/4 BCE or not long afterwards), which set out regulations for the payment of tribute from Athens’s Delian League allies. It opens as follows:

τῆ]μ βολὲν καὶ τὸς ἄρχ[οντας ἐν] τῆσι πόλεσι καὶ τὸς [ἐπισκό]πος ἐπιμέλεσθαι ὅπ[ρο]ς ἂν χρ]υλλέγεται ὁ φόρος κ[ατὰ τὸ ἔ]τος ἕκαστον καὶ ἀπά[γεται] Ἀθῆναζε· χρ]υμβολα δὲ π[οιέσα]σθαι πρὸς τὰς πόλεις ὅ[πο]ς ἂ]μ μὲ ἔχσῃ ἀδικεῖν τοῖς ἀ[πάγο]σι τὸμ φόρον· γράφασσα δ[ὲ ἐ] πόλις ἐς γραμματεῖον τὸ[μ φ]όρον, ὄντινα ἀποπέμπει, σεμεναμένε τοῖ συμβ[όλο]ι ἀποπεμπέτο Ἀθῆναζε· τὸς δὲ ἀπάγοντας ἀποδο[ναί] τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐν τῆ βολῆ ἀναγνῶναι ὄταμ[πε]ρ τὸν φόρον ἀποδιδῶσι.

[The Council and the officials in the cities [and the inspectors shall take care that the tribute is collected each year and brought to to Athens. Tokens shall be made for the cities so that it shall not be possible for those bringing the tribute to do wrong. The city shall write on a tablet the tribute which it is sending, and shall seal it with the token and send it to Athens; those bringing the tribute shall hand over the tablet in the council to be read when they hand over the tribute.]⁴⁰

Symbola (here used to imprint a seal rather than cut in half) are here envisioned as a means of upholding justice, of ensuring that the tribute paid by an Athenian ally is delivered in full without being subject to theft by its conveyer.⁴¹ Yet as we saw from our first example, in Herodotus, *symbola* were ironically fallible even in the hands of a man as famed for justice as Glaucus; Sophocles’ *Philoctetes*, too, shows on a metaphorical level how *symbola* can be employed to effect the most unjust of outcomes.

³⁹ Jenkins 2005, 383–84.

⁴⁰ Osborne and Rhodes 2017 §154; www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/OR/154.

⁴¹ Gkikaki in this volume.

5 Oedipus' Token

As a codicil, let us consider a second passage from Sophocles whose understanding depends on an appreciation of the real-life *symbolon*. In a long, formal speech from *Oedipus the King*, Oedipus asks the Theban people to tell him if they know who killed their former king Laius, whose unavenged death is causing the city to be afflicted by plague. But in the build-up to asking that question and to declaring the rewards for speaking out and the penalties for staying quiet, Oedipus establishes his right to make this formal proclamation, as follows (219–26):⁴²

ἀγὼ ξένος μὲν τοῦ λόγου τοῦδ' ἔξερῶ,	
ξένος δὲ τοῦπραχθέντος· οὐ γὰρ ἄν μακρὰν	220
ἴχνευον αὐτός, μὴ οὐκ ἔχων τι σύμβολον.	
νῦν δ', ὕστερος γὰρ ἄστος εἰς ἄστους τελεῶ,	
ὑμῖν προφωνῶ πᾶσι Καδμείοις τάδε·	
ὅστις ποθ' ὑμῶν Λαῖον τὸν Λαβδάκου	
κάποιδεν ἀνδρὸς ἐκ τίνος διώλετο,	225
τοῦτον κελεύω πάντα σημαίνειν ἐμοί·	

[I will speak to you as a **stranger** to this story, a **stranger** to the deed – for I would not be investigating far into the past on my own if I did not have some *symbolon*. As it is, since at a later date I am enrolled as a **citizen** among **citizens**, this is what I proclaim to you, to all the Cadmeians.]

What is this *symbolon*? People often have taken it to mean ‘clue’, something that Oedipus now has, and that is assisting him in his hunt for Laius’ killer. But what clue is meant? And what would be the relevance of referring to a clue in this context, where Oedipus is not talking about possible paths in the inquiry but establishing his right to make an inquiry at all? People have also taken it to refer to a clue that Oedipus would have obtained if he had previously (i.e. shortly after Laius’ death) pursued an investigation; if only Oedipus had been around at the time, he would have investigated and acquired at least some information. But as David Kovacs points out, ‘it seems both pointless and rhetorically counter-productive for [Oedipus] to disparage the Thebans’ intelligence by insisting that he would have been successful had he been in their shoes.’⁴³ These two explanations also involve arbitrarily assigning the word a sense – ‘clue’ – which is unparalleled, rarely a wise move in a difficult passage of any ancient author.

⁴² See further Finglass 2018, 239–42 *ad loc.*, referring to earlier literature on the passage; add Herold 1993.

⁴³ Kovacs 2007, 106–07; see also his translation, Kovacs 2020.

Crucial for our understanding of the word is its position between prominent, repeated instances of the words ξένος and ἄσπός. We might therefore infer that it is likely to be associated with them, an inference confirmed by the particular connections of the *symbolon* with *xenia* demonstrated above. Oedipus (in his view) may be a stranger to the story of Laius' death, but he does have an association with the city and people of Thebes, as a citizen, and also their king and saviour from the Sphinx. He feels a true sense of connection with the Theban people, and they feel a connection to him, as is clear from the opening scene. There the Theban people implore him to rescue them from the plague, certain in their knowledge that he knows how to save them and has the ability to effect their rescue; in the same scene, Oedipus demonstrates his profound compassion for his people, saying that he is prepared to go to any lengths to rescue them, something confirmed by his later actions, including attacking the prophet Tiresias when he seems unwilling to match the king's commitment. The fit between them, we might say, seems perfect. It is this relationship, conveyed by the metaphor of the *symbolon*, that gives him the legal standing to make a proclamation concerning the killing; this sense also seems presupposed by $\nu\upsilon\nu\ \delta'$ in 222, which contrasts with the preceding counterfactual supposition that Oedipus had no connection with the Thebans.

But as Tiresias will point out, Oedipus is wrong on both counts: 'he was no stranger to the deed, but its perpetrator, and so far from becoming a citizen of Thebes as a man, he was a Theban citizen, indeed a Theban prince, from the moment of his birth. Consequently, what seem mere preliminaries turn out to be fundamental misunderstandings that impede the entire inquiry'.⁴⁴ And these misunderstandings affect his use of the imagery of the *symbolon*. It turns out that Oedipus' token, his *symbolon*, matches all too well not just with the people of Thebes but with its murdered king; they fit together, disastrously, as father and son. (It hardly takes much effort to extend the metaphor to his relationship with Jocasta, where, in marrying his mother, he has found an appallingly close sexual fit.) The tokens which Athenians used to validate their political alliances and apportion their magistracies, and which people all across the Mediterranean used as a means of recognising their friends and allies, here metaphorically cause Oedipus to be recognised as his father's killer and cast him down from the highest political power, thanks to the link between him and another person, someone whom he had once regarded as a complete stranger, but with whom he in fact had all too perfect a match.

In *Philoctetes*, the metaphorical token is a weapon wielded by Neoptolemus to overmaster the trusting Philoctetes; in *Oedipus the King* it provides an image which Oedipus deploys without realising the full, awful extent of its

⁴⁴ Finglass 2018, 239–40.

applicability. In both plays, the metaphor reinforces the dominant theme of the work – deceit in the one, ignorance, late-learning and recognition of identity in the other – and in each the subtlety and power of the image can be understood only in the contemporary context of everyday Greek, and Mediterranean, life.

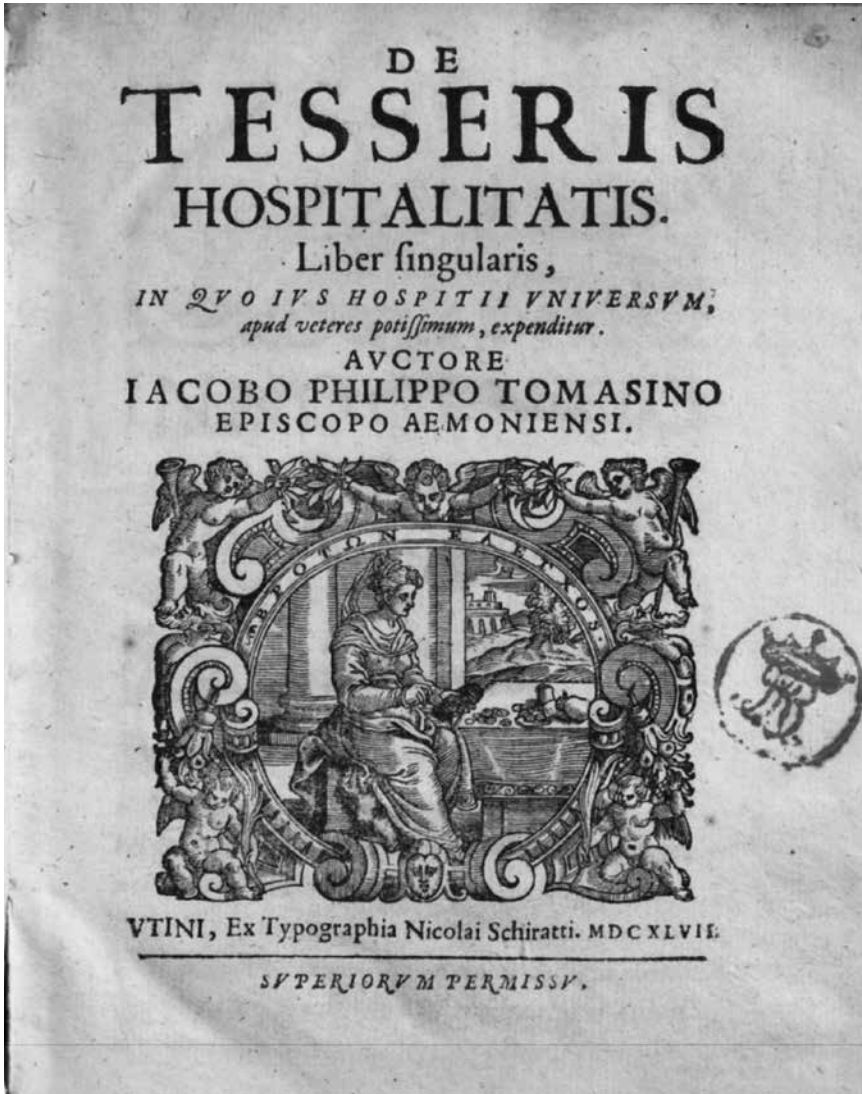


Figure 1.1 Title page of Tomasini 1647.
Image from Google Books, <https://books.google.gr/books?id=d9VVAAAcaAJ&printsec=frontcover>

Chapter 2

The Athenian Jigsaw Tokens

James Kierstead

In his report on the 1950 excavations in the Athenian Agora carried out by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Homer Thompson included the ‘three small terracotta plaques’ pictured in Figure 2.1, which were found in a pit behind the Stoa of Attalos.¹ These were each about 3 cm long and wide, and around 0.8 cm thick, of good ceramic fabric (similar to that of ‘contemporary official measures’), and showed (as E.S. Staveley would later note) ‘little sign of repeated use’.² Most strikingly, each of them had a single serrated or ‘jigsaw’ edge, suggesting that they each represented halves of larger rectangular tokens.

Thompson suggested that a similar terracotta plaque, which had been found in the excavations conducted by the Greek Archaeological Society at the Dipylon Gate and published by Stephanos A. Koumanoudes in 1879, was ‘another example of this same series’.³ This is pictured in Figure 2.2; it had a similar irregular cut along one edge, as well as similar lettering, at least on one side.⁴ The lettering on Koumanoudes’ token clearly reads ΧΣΥΠΕΤΑΙΩΝ (Ξυπεταίων, ‘Xypetian’), the demotic of the deme Xypete, and this should also lead us to place it in the same series as Thompson’s tokens. The middle piece in Figure 2.1, after all, clearly reads ΗΑΛΙΜ/ΟΣ (Ἁλιμοῦς or Halimous), the name of another deme.⁵

I am grateful to a number of people for helping with this paper: Patrick Finglass, Stephen Lambert, Julien Faguer, Matt Simonton, Simon Perris, Diana Burton, Peter Londey, Lynette Mitchell and, in particular, Mairi Gkikaki, Georgia Boundouraki and Daria Russo.

¹ Thompson 1951; Agora Museum nos. MC820, 821 and 822.

² Thompson 1951, 52; Staveley 1972, 70.

³ Thompson 1951, 51; Koumanoudes 1879, 237 (no. 6).

⁴ I am very grateful to Mairi Gkikaki for spotting and photographing this token at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (no. 11235). The token has to my knowledge previously been studied only through the drawing in Koumanoudes’ publication (as it is by Herman 1987, 62).

⁵ Note that the writing on Koumanoudes’ token also has an Attic feature, χσ for ξ, which almost certainly dates it to before the reforms of Eukleides in 403/2, after which

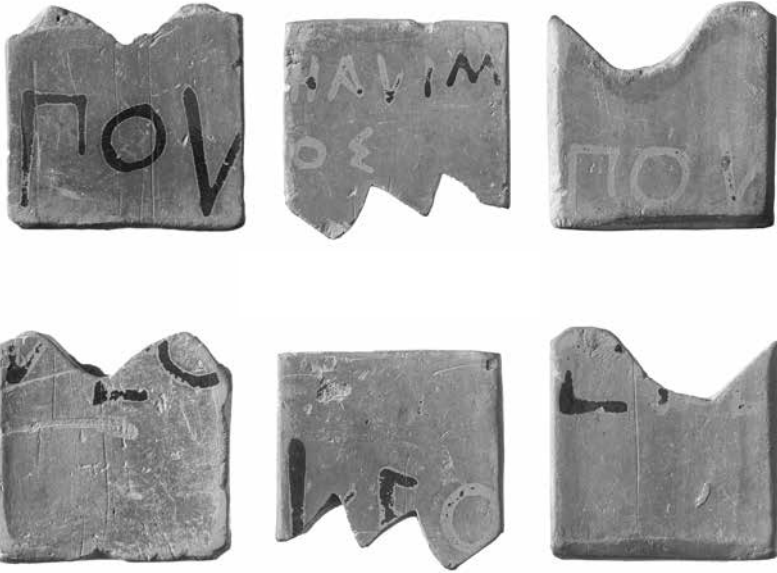


Figure 2.1 The clay tokens MC820, MC821, MC822, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora. Agora image 2008.19.0026 (LCT-29 a LCT-135), digitally remastered by Matthias Demel. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)



Figure 2.2 The jigsaw clay tokens inscribed ΧΣΥΠΕΤΑΙΩΝ on one side; the other side was also inscribed across the irregular cutting. Pierced. National Archaeological Museum, Athens, inv. no. 11235. Photo: M.E. Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

The other side of that token has ΛΕΟ written on it along the serrated edge (with only the upper half of the letters now showing), almost certainly an abbreviation of the tribal name Λεόντις (Leontis). That abbreviation also appears on the reverse of the first token. As for the third token, Thompson was confident enough to fill out the script on it as ‘Ere(chtheis)’.⁶ Gabriel Herman is not wrong in calling this reading of the letter traces ‘insecure’ in itself,⁷ but I believe Thompson was almost certainly right that ΕΡΕ, like ΛΕΟ, is an abbreviation of a tribal name – and that Koumanoudes’ token probably ‘bore the appropriate tribal name on its reverse: Kek(ropis), the paint of which may well have flaked’.⁸ I also believe that Thompson was right to suggest that ΠΟΛ (POL), which appears clearly on the obverse side of the first and third token, stands for πωλητής (*poletes*), ‘Seller’, an important financial magistracy.⁹

I believe all these things because I take what I will call the ‘standard theory’ about these tokens to be largely correct. According to the standard theory as it was developed by Mabel Lang, Eastland Staveley and David Whitehead, these tokens were involved in the process for allotting a set of minor magistracies mentioned in the Aristotelian treatise on the Athenian constitution ([Arist.] *Athenaion Politeia* 62.1).

In this contribution, I will first present an overview of the standard theory and of the allotment procedure these tokens were most likely a part of. I will then turn to why I think some more recent commentators (such as Herman and Sally Humphreys) have erred in rejecting the standard theory. Next, I will take up the question of when the procedure involving these tokens was in operation, and for how long. In the last section of the article, I will look at why the procedure was discontinued, what replaced it, and what all of this might tell us about the evolution of Athens’ democracy through the Classical period.

the Ionic alphabet came into official use. Thompson’s tokens also have Attic features (ο for ου in ἄλλυμος, Η as consonantal heta, the L-shaped or Attic lambda in ΛΕΟ).

⁶ Thompson 1951, 51.

⁷ Herman 1987, 62.

⁸ Thompson 1951, 51. Traces of paint now visible in the photograph of the reverse (Figure 2.2) and reported by Mairi Gkikaki, who ‘rediscovered’ and studied the piece, may now support Thompson’s suggestion.

⁹ Thompson 1951, 51; cf. also Lang 1959, 82. With regard to Koumanoudes’ token, see the fleck of paint circled in the second photograph in Figure 2.3, which suggests that there were letters on this side of the token, and which may have formed part of the letters ΚΕΚ.

The Standard Theory

Near the end of its overview of Athens' magistracies (50–62), the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia* comments:

αἱ δὲ κληρωταὶ ἀρχαὶ πρότερον μὲν ἦσαν αἱ μὲν μετ' ἑννέα ἀρχόντων ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς ὅλης κληρούμεναι, αἱ δ' ἐν Θησειῷ κληρούμεναι διηροῦντο εἰς τοὺς δήμους: ἐπειδὴ δ' ἐπώλουν οἱ δῆμοι, καὶ ταύτας ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς ὅλης κληροῦσι, πλὴν βουλευτῶν καὶ φρουρῶν: τούτους δ' εἰς τοὺς δήμους ἀποδιδάσσι. (62.1)

[Of the allotted offices, some were formerly allotted with the nine archons from the whole tribe, while others allotted in the Theseion were distributed among the demes. But, since the demes were selling their offices, these too they allot from the whole tribe, apart from the councillors and guards; these are devolved to the demes.]¹⁰

It is the selection of the more minor magistracies, which are said to have been 'allotted in the Theseion' and were at one point 'distributed among the demes', that Lang, in an article published in 1959, suggested that our tokens were involved in.¹¹

Lang also outlined a procedure involving the tokens that she thought both explained the writing on them and was consistent with the passage from the *Athenaion Politeia* above. Staveley in large part accepted Lang's model, but he also suggested a couple of alterations. What follows is my own amalgam of Lang's and Staveley's reconstructions of the procedure.¹²

At the beginning of the procedure, there must have been some number of tokens large enough to allow them to be 'distributed among the demes' in the way the *Athenaion Politeia* says they were. Five hundred is the most likely number (with fifty tokens for each of the ten tribes), since the Council of Five Hundred was divided among the demes on the basis of their bouletic quotas, and so five hundred tokens would have been easy to distribute among the demes on that same basis.¹³

Figure 2.3 illustrates a likely sequence of subsequent stages. First the names of the tribes were written across the middle of the tokens, with each of the ten tribes ending up with its name on fifty of the tokens. They were

¹⁰ Translation adapted from Rhodes 2017.

¹¹ Lang 1959.

¹² See Lang 1959, esp. 85–86; Staveley 1972, 70–72. Note that if our tokens were used to allot the more minor magistracies that were, according to *Athenaion Politeia*, selected in the Theseion, this rules out the possibility that ΠΙΟΑ stood for πολέμαρχος, since (as *AthPol* also notes) the nine archons were selected from whole tribes, which would have made the deme names on our tokens otiose; see Lang 1959, 87.

¹³ Lang 1959, 84; Staveley 1972, 70.

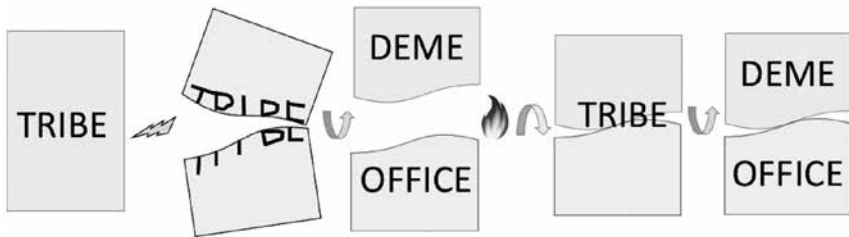


Figure 2.3 The course of one jigsaw token through the allotment procedure. Image by James Kierstead

then cut in half with an irregular jigsaw cut that divided the tribal names into two. Next the tokens were turned over so that the side which was still blank faced up; they were then thoroughly mixed around on a flat surface the way one would mix around the pieces of a puzzle on a tabletop.¹⁴

The next step was to paint the names of the offices being allotted on the bottom halves of the tokens, and the names of the demes on the top halves, with the number of top halves that were painted with the name of a particular deme corresponding to that deme's bouleutic quota.¹⁵ So HALIMOS, for example, would have had been written on three of the half-tokens (that deme's bouleutic quota being three) – and these three half-tokens would also have had half of the name of the tribe written along the cut on their other sides (and this could be checked by quickly flipping the half-tokens over). Note that the fact that the half-tokens had already been thoroughly mixed around would have made it impossible for even

¹⁴ The mixing phase is my own addition; neither Lang nor Staveley mentions one, but the individual half-tokens must have been moved around in order to introduce an element of unpredictability to the process. Otherwise, there would have been no point in dividing them in two in the first place. It is possible that the tokens were divided into tribal groups and then mixed around; this would have ensured both that demes were written on tokens corresponding to their tribes and that, when it came to offices held once each by the ten tribes, there was no chance of any tribe being allocated more than one of these positions.

¹⁵ Lang (1959, 85) has the deme names painted on before the tokens were cut in two; I follow Staveley (1972, 70) in having them added afterwards, since adding the deme- and office-names separately to isolated half-tokens would mean nobody could be sure which offices would be allotted to which demes before allotment day.

those painting the deme- and office-names on the tokens to predict which would be matched with which in advance.

The clay tokens would then have been fired. They were later taken out of the kiln and turned over so that the names of the demes and offices faced down and only the half-names of tribes were visible. The half-names, along with the jigsaw line of the edge, functioned as a guide as the half-tokens were pieced back together. Once all the half-tokens had found a partner, they were turned over one last time to reveal which demes would fill which offices that year.

So much for my amalgam of Lang's and Staveley's reconstructions. But a point made by David Whitehead should also be integrated into the standard theory. This is that it is probable that every token, not just a few, awarded someone a post.¹⁶

Lang and Staveley had both supposed that there would only have been fourteen or fifteen offices allotted in the Theseion per tribe, i.e. that there would have been somewhere between around 110 and 150 posts on offer in total during the above procedure.¹⁷ They also believed that only fourteen or fifteen of the tokens for each tribe would have had the name of an office painted on their reverse side. When the half-tokens were reunited, some demes would find their names paired with a blank half-token, meaning no office had been awarded them in that instance. One of the purposes of the allotment would thus have been to figure out which demes were allotted any offices at all that year, not simply which offices were awarded to which demes.¹⁸

Lang and Staveley, however, were both working with a much lower figure for magistracies in Athens than has since become the consensus.¹⁹ The lower figure was based on scepticism towards the *Athenaion Politeia's* report that there were 'up to seven hundred domestic' offices in Athens in the fifth century.²⁰ In 1985, though, M.H. Hansen reviewed the evidence and demonstrated that the *Athenaion Politeia's* estimate is probably not far off, and that there were very likely something just short of seven hundred domestic magistracies in the city.²¹ Unfortunately we cannot say exactly how many of these offices were allotted in the Theseion; but, given the sheer

¹⁶ Whitehead 1986, 278–86.

¹⁷ The exact figure depends on the precise combination of offices that is imagined as being allotted, and, in particular, on how many of them were boards of ten as opposed to boards of five (or of some other number). Lang (1959, 84) imagines 'at least eleven boards of ten' featuring alongside other magistracies (she mentions in n. 15 the εἰσαγωγεῖς and ὀδοποιοί).

¹⁸ Lang 1959, 86; Staveley 1972, 71; Whitehead 1986, 286.

¹⁹ Whitehead 1986, 278, 286.

²⁰ [Aristotle], *AthPol* 24.3: ἀρχαὶ δ' ἔνδημοι μὲν εἰς ἑπτακοσίους ἄνδρας.

²¹ Hansen 1980.

number of magistracies, it is not improbable that there were something in the region of five hundred posts up for grabs on allotment day. If we suppose that the Athenians arranged things so that there were exactly five hundred offices available, then there could well have been five hundred tokens at each year's allotment, every one of which had an office written on it; each deme would thus have been assured of being allocated at least one post.

Defending the Standard Theory

According to the standard theory, then, the tokens in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 were used in the allotment of minor magistracies in the Theseion. In the years since Whitehead's book, however, a few scholars have suggested that our tokens were private identification or recognition tokens.²² These would have been irregularly cut in half, like our jigsaw tokens, and then the two halves given to two different parties; a man could later identify himself to the other party by supplying the missing half.

Herman, who seems to have been the first to diverge from the standard theory, believes that our tokens had an exclusively private use, and served for 'identification between friends and dependants of *xenoi*', that is, 'guest-friends' – a type of relationship that could be passed down through generations. Perhaps these half-tokens, too, could be passed down from fathers to sons as a way of confirming a connection that had been forged between families in the past.²³

Humphreys has a slightly different view: while she does not think our tokens were used in allotments, and she agrees with Herman that they were identification tokens, she does think they had something to do with Athens' magistracies. For her, our half-tokens would have been given to men who had been allocated an office so that they could identify themselves when they went to take up their post. As Humphreys puts it, these tokens 'guaranteed that the candidate who turned up with the deme half had indeed been appointed by his deme to fill the office assigned to it'.²⁴

Let us look first at Herman's suggestion that, while 'HALIMOS and XSYETAION are deme names . . . LEO could be an abbreviation of a personal name', as could POL.²⁵ There are a number of problems with this. First, personal names do not seem to have been regularly abbreviated

²² Rocchi (2000, 101) rightly mentions our tokens in the context of allotment procedures in passing.

²³ Herman 1987, 62.

²⁴ Humphreys 2018, 2.744.

²⁵ Herman 1987, 62.

in Athens in official contexts. Abbreviated forms of personal names are regularly avoided in official inscriptions (in contrast with Roman practice); military tokens; jurors' tickets (*pinakia*); and even in ostracisms, where we might have expected them to be extremely tempting to semi-literate Athenians wanting to get rid of their least favourite politician.²⁶ Abbreviations of tribal names are not much more common; but there were only ten tribal names, and everyone knew them, which would have made abbreviated forms of them much easier to recognise than any given personal name, of which there were many.²⁷ There were (as we have seen) almost seven hundred magistracies, but most would also have been well known.²⁸

Second, although names beginning with 'Pol-' and 'Leo-' were not uncommon in Athens, what are the chances that two of the four jigsaw tokens that have been excavated both belonged to men with names beginning with 'Pol-'?²⁹ They could not have been the same man if LEO and ERE are indeed tribal names, since they would then have been from different tribes. If LEO stands for a personal name, we have the improbability of two of our tokens belonging to men with the same prefix in their names.

Third, although Herman is right that the reading ERE on the third token is not absolutely certain from the traces, it is highly likely. We can see enough of a middle horizontal to be sure the first letter is an 'E'; the tip of the hasta means the second letter must be an R or a K; and although only a few specks of black glaze are visible where the third letter was, their position and the two relatively pale strips at right angles make clear we are dealing with another 'E'. If this is not an abbreviation for Erechtheis (Figures 4.1 and 4.3), what are the chances that something looking very much like one (an abbreviated personal name, for instance) would turn up on one token at the same position as where the other two tokens have LEO (also very likely a tribal name)?³⁰

²⁶ For military tokens, see Kroll and Mitchel 1980. The norm of writing out full names on sherds involved in ostracisms was apparently so strong that citizens who ran out of space often insisted on adding the remaining letters elsewhere (e.g. above or below the previous letters); Sickinger 2017, 454.

²⁷ A few abbreviations of Athenian tribal names on tokens are noted by Svoronos (1900); see esp. 331 no. 149, pl. II,31 (ΔΕΩ), 330 no. 141 (ΕΡ), and 331 no. 146, pl. II, 28 (ΚΕΚ). See also Russo's paper in this volume.

²⁸ We do also have a few abbreviations of the names of magistracies on tokens; see again Svoronos 1900, esp. 332–38 (nos. 159–247), although there are no tokens with ΠΟΑ listed there.

²⁹ A search of the online *LGPN* turns up 386 names beginning with Πολ and 147 beginning with Λεο/ω; the volume dedicated to Attica contains 6,423 names in total.

³⁰ Besides, the Attic section of *LGPN* only records eleven instances of names

Fourth, if we accept (as I think we must) that these are tribal names, what would they be doing on identification tokens? Herman is right that Athenians used their demotics in business transactions, but how often do they mention their tribes? And in any case I do not know of any other private, divisible identification tokens from Athens that feature tribal names.³¹ If the standard theory is correct, these tribal names have a clear purpose. If we follow Herman, their presence will need to be explained further.

This last question – what is the purpose of the tribal names? – also causes problems for Humphreys’ version of the claim that these are recognition tokens, even though she rightly says that Herman ‘goes too far in totally rejecting the association with demes, tribes, and office’. If our tokens simply served to identify men who had been appointed as *poletai*, what need would there have been for these citizens’ tribal names to be added to the tokens?³²

That the standard theory has been met with scepticism in some quarters is to some extent understandable. After all, there is nothing on the tokens or in *Athenaion Politeia* 62.1 that explicitly connects the two pieces of evidence. Lang’s suggestion that our tokens were involved in the allotment of minor magistracies mentioned there is nothing more than a hypothesis; and the procedure I described in the first section of this paper is largely the product of speculation by modern scholars.

Nevertheless, I believe that the evidence as a whole makes the standard theory by far the most likely explanation for the purpose of our tokens. If they were not used in a procedure like the one described, it is difficult to account for all of the facts as we know them: the jigsaw cut, the office and deme names, and (above all) the tribal names. If the standard theory is right, all of these features are readily explicable.

All that is, but one. This is the hole through Koumanoudes’ token – the only small hole, we might say, in the standard theory. As the photographs in Figure 2.2 make clear, the hole passes ‘all the way through’ (as Koumanoudes put it) and space has been left for it between the letters Ω

beginning with EPE.

³¹ As opposed to the rather different tokens mentioned in n. 26, above.

³² Humphreys (2018, 2.745 n. 64) writes that ‘since the names of demes and offices were painted on the tokens before firing, the assignation of offices to demes was known in advance. It would not be Athenian practice to have a secret list of assignments known only to tribal officials and potters’. But if the names of the demes and offices were written onto the half-tokens after the jigsaw cuts had been made and the halves mixed up (as in the standard theory; see again Figure 2.3), it would not in fact have been clear to anybody which demes had been paired with which offices until the tokens were reassembled.

and N.³³ This is, then, a deliberate feature that was added at the time the token was made; it is not a result of accidental damage or of reuse in a later period. Why is it there?

Koumanoudes also thought that the hole's being 'completely unworn' ruled out the token ever having been worn on a string, but I am not so sure. In fact, I think that this possibility, mentioned by Herman, is the most likely explanation for the hole.³⁴ There is, after all, nothing to prevent us from accepting part of Humphreys' theory, and supposing that the tokens, after they were used to pair demes with offices, were eventually given to the men who had been appointed to those offices, who could then use them to prove their identity. At which point they might well have worn their half-token around their necks.

John H. Kroll has now suggested that the clay tokens inscribed with the name of Xenokles, the demotic Perithoides, and the title *peripolarchos*, which he had previously published with Fordyce W. Mitchel, were also separated and reconnected along a thin cut which passed through some of the lettering.³⁵ Kroll and Mitchel proposed that these and other similar tokens were used as 'passports' by military officers taking up their commands in distant theatres. The peripolarchs probably commanded garrisons near the boundaries of Attica and would probably need to identify themselves when they arrived. If Kroll and Mitchel are right, we now have a parallel for the use of reconnectable tokens for identification purposes by citizens taking up offices – although in our case the citizens were not travelling from the centre to peripheral garrisons to take up military commands but from demes to central institutions to take up civic magistracies.

But why does not one of Thompson's three tokens have a hole through it? It is impossible to say for sure, but it may be that 'Koumanoudes' token' represents a slightly later development in the system. Initially, the tokens were produced without holes, just for use in the allotment procedure. Then the demes started to give the men who had been selected for certain offices the relevant half-tokens before they headed into the city centre to take up their posts. Finally, once this became customary, it was decided to make it easier for men to carry their tokens by adding holes to them when they were made.³⁶

³³ Koumanoudes 1879, 237: the token has nothing on it besides the writing of the deme name and *μίαν τρύπαν διαπυρές*, 'a hole passing all the way through'.

³⁴ Herman 1987, 62.

³⁵ Kroll and Mitchel 1980, 86–89, pl. 13a–c; and see further Finglass's paper in this volume.

³⁶ That 'Koumanoudes' token' was part of a different batch of tokens is now supported by the photographs in Figure 2.2, which show that this token is different in a few minor

This scenario obviously depends upon these tokens having been in use for some time – at least long enough for the phases outlined above to have taken place. This brings us to the question of for how long our tokens were in use, and to chronological issues more generally.

Chronological Issues

When Thompson first published our tokens, he noted that they had been found with ‘a mass of broken pottery of the second half of the 5th century’; this, along with the letter-forms, led him to date the tokens to ‘near the middle of the 5th century’.³⁷ We could add the Attic orthographic features we noticed above, which also point to a fifth-century date.³⁸

Athenaion Politeia 62.1, for its part, says that it was ‘formerly’ (*proteron*) the case that some magistracies were allotted from whole tribes, while others were allotted in the Theseion. As Lang, Staveley and Whitehead all note, when the *Athenaion Politeia* looks back to what happened formerly in this way, it tends to be referring to the fifth century, before the great series of constitutional changes that occurred around the turn of the century.

Both our tokens and *Athenaion Politeia* 62.1, then, would seem to lead us to the conclusion that the allotment procedure described in the standard theory was operative in the fifth century. Whitehead, though, suggested that ‘the tiny number of *symbola* so far discovered, in an area so extensively and intensively excavated as the environs of the Agora’ points to ‘a very short period of use – perhaps even a single year’.³⁹ And Humphreys says something very similar: ‘since so few of these tokens have been found it is likely that they represent an experiment that lasted at most for a few years’.⁴⁰ But if our procedure fell out of use in the 360s (as we will see is likely, and as both these scholars accept), and only lasted at most a few years, would that not imply that our tokens must also have been produced in the 360s or 370s – even though the evidence we have just looked at would place them unambiguously in the previous century?⁴¹

ways – the way the letters are painted, for example, and the type of clay used. It is also thicker (11 mm) than the tokens from the Agora (MC820 and 822 are 8 mm, MC821 7 mm thick). The differences also reinforce the idea that these tokens changed slightly through time, which in turn bolsters the idea I will argue for in the next section – that our tokens were in use for more than only one or two years.

³⁷ Thompson 1951, 51–52.

³⁸ See above, n. 5.

³⁹ Whitehead 1986, 286.

⁴⁰ Humphreys 2018, 2.744.

⁴¹ Staveley 1972, 72 has the same problem.

Our procedure could have been introduced at some point in the fifth century and then fallen out of use, replaced by some other method of distributing the relevant offices among the demes by sortition – until this method, too, was supplanted by the introduction of allotment machines in the 360s. This is what Whitehead suggests happened.⁴² And, as he notes, both Lang and Staveley describe simpler forms of allotment (involving drawing beans or lots from a container) that could have been used both before the procedure involving our tokens was introduced, and after it was discontinued.⁴³

Presumably, though, the procedure involving our tokens was introduced for a reason: probably because first, it allowed posts to be allotted proportionally to demes in a single procedure (impossible using beans or lots), and second, the deme-names on the tokens made it more difficult (but still not impossible) for demes to sell the positions they had been awarded.⁴⁴ If that is right, how likely is it that the Athenians would have done away with the system only to go back to a previous procedure that had already been found wanting in these two regards?

As we have already seen, at some point even the procedure involving our tokens was deemed to have failed, and the Athenians stopped distributing all but a couple of their allotted offices among the demes; and in the 360s these offices began being allocated from whole tribes using allotment machines. I would submit that the most likely possibility is that these last two steps happened at the same time, and that the Athenians starting using allotment machines to allocate these magistracies at the point at which they retired the procedure involving our tokens.

In my view, then, some magistracies were distributed among the demes in allotments from some point in the early fifth century on (and possibly even from the years following the revolution of 508/7). At some date after that, perhaps sometime in the middle decades of the fifth century, the procedure utilising our tokens was introduced. This procedure then continued to be used uninterrupted until the 360s, when it was replaced by a new system that made use of allotment machines and did not take the demes' bouleutic quotas into account.

Before we finally come to the reasons we should believe that allotment machines were introduced in this context only in the 360s, we will need finally to address the claim that the small number of tokens that have been found rules out the kind of scenario I have in mind, with these tokens in use for several decades. Simply put, that few tokens have been found does not necessarily mean that there were few tokens produced. It does not even

⁴² Whitehead 1986, 286–87; Lang (1959, 85) is consistent with Whitehead's theory.

⁴³ Whitehead 1986, 286–87.

⁴⁴ Cf. Lang 1959, 85.

necessarily mean that only a few tokens have survived to our day, and that there are no more tokens beneath the streets of modern Athens, waiting to be uncovered by excavators in the future.

Whitehead, as we have seen, is sceptical that there are more tokens of our type to be found partly because of the small number that have been found so far ‘in an area so extensively and intensively excavated as the environs of the Agora’. But if our tokens were indeed involved in allotments in the Theseion, this is where we would surely expect surviving tokens of the same type to be concentrated.

The Theseion itself has not even been located with any level of certainty, let alone excavated. Most recent treatments place it north of the Acropolis, either just to the north, or somewhere within a triangle formed by the Roman Agora, the Library of Hadrian and the site of St Demetrius Katephoris church (now demolished).⁴⁵ The primary site at which our tokens were used, then, now probably finds itself beneath densely built-up areas of the modern city (such as Anafiotika) which have not been exhaustively excavated. That should temper any expectations that more tokens of our type would have been discovered by now if they were indeed (as I suggest) in use for more than a year or two.⁴⁶

We now finally turn to the evidence that the procedure based around our tokens was retired in the 360s, replaced with a new procedure that involved selecting officials from whole tribes using allotment machines. Whitehead connected this change with Kroll’s ‘Class III’ *pinakia* (allotment plates or tickets), introduced at some point between 370 and ca. 362 to allow allotment machines (*kleroteria*) to be employed in the selection of magistracies (as they had been employed from soon after 388 in the allocation of jurors to courts).⁴⁷ And a speech by Demosthenes from around 348 includes a reference to bronze identification tickets in allotting councillors, archons and other magistrates.⁴⁸

Whitehead does draw our attention to a few items of evidence that suggest that allotments continued in the Theseion into the 320s. These (as Whitehead himself eventually decides) really present us with no difficulty

⁴⁵ See e.g. Lippolis (2006, Figure 10) and Kroustalis (2018, 111), where the Theseion is placed just south of modern Lisiou Street.

⁴⁶ That the Theseion was almost certainly hundreds of metres (and perhaps as much as 1 kilometre, if it was near the site of St Demetrius Katephoris) removed from the classical Agora also means we should certainly not be surprised, as Whitehead was, that more of our tokens have not come to light there.

⁴⁷ Whitehead 1986, 288; Kroll 1972, 91–94.

⁴⁸ Demosthenes, *Against Boeotus I* 10. Note the speaker’s emphasis here on the importance of *pinakia* in identifying men appointed to certain offices – something our tokens also did, although the names and demotics on the *pinakia* were doubtless seen as an improvement on that front.

since by this point all the sortitive offices were probably allotted in the Theseion using allotment machines.⁴⁹ One of these items of evidence, though – a pair of deme decrees from Eleusis from 332/1 – does refer to ‘the *archairesiai* in the month of Metageitnion, when the demesmen meet in the Assembly in the Theseion’.⁵⁰ Does this imply that magistracies were still being distributed among the demes in this period? No – since the word ‘demesmen’ here indicates only that those men from the demes were present, not that the allotment they were present at took bouleutic quotas into account.

Sometime in the 360s, then, our procedure – which used jigsaw tokens to distribute offices proportionally among the demes – was replaced by one that employed allotment machines to draw officials randomly from whole tribes (and from the ten sections within them). Why was this change made?

Bribery, Inequality and Constitutional Change

Athenaion Politeia 62.1 tells us that the change was made ἐπειδὴ δ’ ἐπώλουν οἱ δῆμοι, a phrase often translated ‘because the demes began to sell their offices’.⁵¹ But although the imperfect ἐπώλουν may well be inchoative, it could also be iterative, giving us ‘since the demes kept on selling their offices’. That would make more sense, because one of the reasons our tokens seem to have been brought in is because demes were already selling posts they had been allotted.⁵² Ultimately, though, even the procedure involving our tokens was not successful in putting a stop to the selling of offices.

So, who exactly was selling what to whom? *Athenaion Politeia* 62.1 says that it was the demes doing the selling, so if that is true, we know who the sellers were.⁵³ What they were selling also seems clear: posts they had been allotted.⁵⁴ Who were the buyers? We can probably discount the possibility that the problem was demes selling the posts they had been allotted to

⁴⁹ As Whitehead (1986, 289) says, neither Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 13 nor the tribal decree of Aiantis which he mentions (Woodhead 1997, 130–31 no. 86) makes any mention of allocation by deme.

⁵⁰ *SEG* 28.103 ll. 27–28 with Whitehead (1986, 289–90), where he also points out that, even if this does refer to an allotment that distributed offices among demes, this could have been the allotment of the councillors or guards (which *AthPol* 62.1 tells us were always allotted by deme).

⁵¹ This is the translation given by Rhodes (see n. 10, above) and Rackham (1935 *ad loc.*); cf. e.g. also Bernabé (2005, *ad loc.*): ‘desde que los demos comenzaron a comprar las elecciones’.

⁵² Cf. above, p. 54; Lang 1959, 85.

⁵³ Bernabé’s ‘comprar’ (see n. 51, above) seems to be a slip.

⁵⁴ The posts were probably sold individually, since demes selling their entire quotas of posts to other demes would probably have been too obvious (although very small demes

individuals within their own demes – that is, that rich men in Acharnai, say, were paying to take up offices that the deme had been awarded, thus preventing them from being randomly allotted among volunteers from the deme. We cannot rule out this ever having taken place, but it is unlikely that this is the problem *Athenaion Politeia* 62.1 had in mind, and that our tokens were meant to mitigate. Our tokens when reunited made clear which *demes* were entitled to which offices – but how would that have been helpful in stopping demes selling the offices they had been awarded to specific individuals within their communities?

It seems clear, then, that demes were selling offices to other demes, and/or, perhaps, to wealthy individuals from other demes.⁵⁵ Why were the buyers buying? Probably not for ‘pride in being well-represented on magisterial boards’ (as Staveley suggests), because men who took up offices that they had no right to hold would hardly be keen to broadcast their real deme affiliation; nor would their demes be eager to broadcast the fact that they were now over-represented thanks to fraud.⁵⁶

The most likely reason demes would want to buy posts is to increase their influence on the political process; in other words, power. In buying particular offices, they could also gain more influence over a specific part of the administrative state. For instance, they could gain more control over what went on in the Agora by paying to place their men on the board of the *agoranomoi* (market overseers); and they could gain more control over the process by which land belonging to state-debtors was confiscated and re-sold, a process overseen by the *poletai*.⁵⁷

Why were some demes willing to cede some of their political influence by giving up posts they had been awarded? Obviously, since they were *selling* them rather than giving them away, it was because there was some

could perhaps have sold the one or two offices they had been awarded without raising too much suspicion).

⁵⁵ It may be significant here that use of allotment machines with *pinakia* with individuals’ names written on them would have made it harder for individual men to buy offices they were not entitled to. I note also that the only allegations of buying offices that I know of in the sources involve individuals buying them: Aeschines’ accusation that Timarchus obtained every one of his offices ‘not by the exercise of the lot or by direct election but by purchase in contravention of the laws’, οὐδεμίαν λαχῶν οὐδὲ χειροτονηθείς, ἀλλὰ πάσας παρὰ τοὺς νόμους πριάμενος (Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* 106); and Aeschines’ assertion that Demosthenes obtained a seat on the Council by bribery (Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 3).

⁵⁶ Staveley 1972, 50.

⁵⁷ As Humphreys (2018, 2.744–45) notes, it seems that friends of debtors who had their land confiscated would seek to buy it back as cheaply as possible, and in cases of this nature the *poletai* do not always appear to have held out for the highest possible price. It may have been quite useful, in other words, to have allies on the board of *poletai*.

amount of money that they saw as more valuable to them at that specific point in time than control over certain offices.⁵⁸ The idea that some demes may have felt more in need of money than others brings us to the topic of economic inequality among the demes.⁵⁹

This, fortunately, is an area in which there has been a good deal of research in the past few decades. All the same, the picture is a complex one. Roman Klapaukh and I found that the number of known liturgists (that is, men who were among the richest 1 per cent of Athenians) was more or less as you would expect it to be after controlling for deme population; that is, the larger demes had proportionally more super-rich citizens and the smaller demes proportionally fewer.⁶⁰

That, however, obviously does not mean that the demes were all roughly equal in terms of the total wealth of their members or in terms of their communal finances. Research on the demes in the past few decades has made abundantly clear that the demes engaged in a wide variety of different economic activities and strategies as communities or corporations, not excluding various modes of owning, leasing and selling land and property.⁶¹ That variety in itself strongly suggests that the demes would have experienced a variety of different trajectories and destinies in terms of their common holdings and finances.

For an example of the sort of variety I have in mind, consider tax receipts from non-demesmen. Taxation seems to have been one of the main ways that demes raised revenue, and men from outside the deme (both citizens from other demes and resident foreigners) were an important part of the equation when it came to revenues from taxes.⁶² Certain demes had significantly more metics than others; Whitehead found that around 40 per cent of the 366 metics whose deme of residence we know lived in just

⁵⁸ Staveley (1972, 50) can see reasons why demes would want to buy offices, but not why they would want to sell them. He appears to overlook simple lucre.

⁵⁹ Of course, some demes may have been more politically active than others and hence keener to trade money for offices, and that may also have played a role. Kierstead and Klapaukh (2018, 388–92) do find that certain demes (esp. Kydathenaion and Lower Paiania) are over-represented among known festival liturgists. But there does not seem to be much evidence that certain demes were strikingly more politically active than the norm in general.

⁶⁰ See again Kierstead and Klapaukh 2018.

⁶¹ On deme finances in general, see esp. Whitehead (1986, 149–75) and Ismard (2010, 281–330). On landed property managed by the demes, see Papazarkadas (2011). Lambert (1997) examines records of land-sales by corporate groups, including demes.

⁶² See e.g. Whitehead 1986, 150–58. The main tax here was the ἐγκτητικόν, levied on men from outside the deme who held land, and on metics who had been granted the right to own land.

two demes (Melite and Piraeus).⁶³ Some demes would simply have found it significantly easier to raise tax revenue from metics, and this in itself makes the proposition that some demes held more communal wealth than others very plausible.

Claire Taylor, in her examination of changes in Athens' political sociology from the fifth to the fourth centuries, finds that wealthy, politically active citizens were significantly more likely to come from demes that were only a couple of hours' walk from the city in the fifth century than in the fourth.⁶⁴ In the fifth century, in other words, a specifically urban wealth-elite also had an outsize presence in politics, something which was not the case in the century that followed.

I bring Taylor's findings up here because it strikes me as not impossible that the procedures used for allotting minor magistracies contributed to the change in Athens' political sociology that she describes. After all, Taylor's sample of 2,183 is composed of politically active citizens, which includes magistrates as well as proposers of decrees, orators and generals – and one of her sources for the magistrates are the magisterial *pinakia* studied by Kroll that we discussed above.⁶⁵

As we have seen, it seems likely that our tokens were brought in because the demes were already selling the offices they had been allotted. Our tokens may have mitigated the problem to some extent, but (again, as we have seen) they too were eventually deemed a failure and replaced in the 360s with a system involving *kleroteria*, after which point the demes were no longer taken into account in the allocation of offices. These magistracies were, instead, allotted 'from the whole tribe' (to use the phrasing of *AthPol* 62.1).

By removing the demes from the equation entirely, the Athenians made it impossible for poorer demes to sell offices that had been allocated to them – either to other demes or to wealthy individuals. This removed a form of cheating or corruption; but in making this change I would suggest that the Athenians were, as often, motivated by a concern for political equality. That is, they wanted to make sure that all citizens had an equal chance of holding one of the offices they were allotting, and by the 360s involving the demes in the allotment procedure seemed to be more of a hindrance than a help.

From the late archaic period on, Greek city-states made use of groups of men – associations, civic subdivisions and so on – in order (among other things) to disperse power and authority among the various stakeholders of the *polis*. Sometimes, as at Gortyn, groups (in this case the *phylai*, 'tribes')

⁶³ Whitehead 1986, 82: seventy-five metics in Melite, sixty-nine in Piraeus.

⁶⁴ Taylor 2007, 72–90, esp. 75–76.

⁶⁵ Taylor 2007, 73.

coincided roughly with great families, so that rotating the chief office of *kosmos* among the *phylai* prevented individual families from dominating the city's affairs.⁶⁶ At other times, as with the ten new *phylai* introduced by Kleisthenes around 508/7, groups were used partly as a way of creating random sub-sets of the citizenry from which offices could then be allotted and through which duties could be rotated (like, in the fifth century, the duty of presiding over Assembly meetings).⁶⁷

When Kleisthenes introduced a new system of demes as part of these same reforms, the demes must have seemed like a good example of associations that could be co-opted into the state to facilitate power-sharing among citizens. Hence, they were made the basis of allotments to the Council and to other sortitive magistracies. But although Kleisthenes may have drawn his map of the demes in a way that weakened pre-existing power structures in rural Attika, by the end of the fifth century at the latest, local differences between the demes had reasserted themselves.⁶⁸

And it is likely (as I suggested above) that the economic inequalities that this brought with it led to the problem of demes selling offices. The reforms we have been looking at – the introduction of our jigsaw tokens, and then of allotment machines – might even be viewed as very early and late instantiations of the same equalising spirit that lay behind the great series of reforms that were introduced in the later decades of the fifth and early decade of the fourth century, a series of reforms so significant that they have recently been characterised as making up a new Athenian constitution.⁶⁹ Though some of these reforms (like the introduction of a new body of 'law-makers' or *nomothetai*) were concerned with making the city's decision-making more consistent, others clearly expanded the category of citizens who were politically active. One example of a reform of this nature is the introduction of pay for attendance at Assembly meetings sometime in the 390s.

Both of the reforms we have looked at in this paper can similarly be seen as part of an attempt to expand the set of the politically active Athenians by making sure all citizens had an equal chance to hold one of the minor

⁶⁶ Here I follow the reconstruction of Grote 2016, 112–33.

⁶⁷ On the presidents of the Assembly in the fifth and fourth centuries, see Hansen 1991, 140–41.

⁶⁸ If we accept the reading of Knoepfler (2016, 147–211), *IG II³ 1*, 447 shows that the Athenians were still using the demes as a basis for the allocation of sacrificial meat in the Lycurgan period. It may be, then, that it was only (or especially) in the political sphere that the Athenians felt a need for reform to defend strict egalitarianism; when it came to religious rituals – the sharing of meat at a sacrifice, for example – there was no reason not to continue to use the demes as a basis of distribution.

⁶⁹ Carugati 2019.

magistracies. When our tokens were introduced – perhaps as early as the middle of the fifth century – they were part of an attempt at reducing the risk that demes would sell their offices to wealthy demes or individuals. Ironically enough, when our tokens were replaced in the 360s, this was also part of an attempt to deal with this form of corruption. The jigsaw tokens from the Athenian Agora were, then, a product of one of democratic Athenians’ defining endeavours: to solve the puzzle of political equality. They were also, in the end, one of the casualties of that same enterprise.

Chapter 3

The Council of Five Hundred and *Symbola* in Classical Athens

M.E. Gkikaki

It is widely accepted that Classical Athens is to be credited with the introduction of tokens (gr. *symbola*) in public administration. Accumulative evidence shows that tokens were used in the Council, the Jury Courts and the Assembly. While the bronze lettered tokens have been convincingly assigned to the Jury Courts and the clay lettered tokens have been plausibly connected to the workings of the Assembly, there is a dearth of evidence when it comes to the Council.¹ The aim of the present paper is to gather all relevant literary and material sources to demonstrate that the Council was an issuer of tokens on a much broader scale than we may have originally thought, with the Council probably issuing – or at least supervising the issue of – all public tokens in Classical Athens. The premises lay within the functions and the jurisdiction of the Council. The earliest testimony of the Council as issuer of tokens, the Kleinias' Decree, dated probably to 425/4 BCE (*IG I³ 34*), has passed almost unnoticed in this regard. Likewise, the lead tokens found in and around the Old Bouleuterion and the Tholos have up until now not been regarded as a coherent lot.

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¹ Jury Courts: Boegehold 1960; Boegehold et al. 1995; Kroll in this volume; Assembly: Makrypodis 2019; Kroll in this volume; Makrypodis in this volume.

Tokens in Athenian Foreign Policy of the Classical Period: Epigraphic Evidence

There exist two different decrees inscribed on stone which bear testimony of the connections between the Council and tokens. The first of the two is the famous and much discussed Kleinias Decree, of which a marble copy was set up on the Acropolis.² With this decree, special measures were announced to ensure that the tribute by the allies of the Delian League was paid and conveyed to Athens. *Symbola* are associated with two verbs. First, the infinitive ‘shall be made’ (π[οιέσα]σθαι, line 11), with the ‘Council’ as subject. Second, the verb ‘let the city seal [the writing tablet] with the token’ (σεμεναμένε, lines 15–16), meaning that the written records were sealed by the tokens.

[...] τὲ]μ β	5
ολὲν καὶ τὸς ἄρχ[οντας ἐν] τεῶ	
ι πόλεσι καὶ τὸς [ἐπισκό]πος ἐ	
πιμέλεσθαι ἡόπ[ος ἀν χσ]υλλέ	
γεται ἡο φόρος κ[ατὰ τὸ ἔ]τος ἡ	
έκαστον καὶ ἀπά[γεται] Ἀθένα	10
ζεχσύμβολα δὲ π[οιέσα]σθαι π	
ρὸς τὰς πόλες, ἡό[πος ἄ]μ μὲ ἔχσ	
εἰ ἀδικῆν τοῖς ἀ[πάγο]σι τὸμ φ	
όρον· γράφασσα δ[ὲ] ἡε] πόλις ἐς	
γραμματεῖον τὸ[μ φό]ρον, ἡόντιν' ἀν ἀποπέμπει, σεμε	15
ναμένε τοῖ συμβ[όλο]ι ἀποπεμπέτο Ἀθέναζε· τὸς δὲ ἀ	
πάγοντας ἀποδο[να]ι τὸ γραμματεῖον ἐν τεῖ βολεῖ ἀ	
ναγνῶνα ἡόταμ[πε]ρ τὸν φόρον ἀποδιδόσι· [...]	
 [[...] the	5
Council and the officials	
in the cities and the overseers	
shall manage that	
the tribute is collected each	
year and conveyed to Athens.	10
Tokens shall be made for the cities,	
so that it shall not be possible	
for those conveying the tribute to do	
wrong. Let the city write on	

² *IG* I³ 34; Attic Inscriptions Online, www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/AIUK42/5 with references. Concerning the date of the Kleinias Decree: *SEG* 60, 78. Parts of the stone are kept at the Epigraphic Museum in Athens and parts of the stone are kept at the British Museum in London.

a writing tablet the tribute which it is sending, and seal it with the token and send it to Athens; and those conveying it shall hand over the writing tablet in the Council to be read when they hand over the tribute. [...]³

Σεμέναντε derives from σημαίνω, -ομαι, which means seal, provide with a sign. The term σῆμα (*sema*) is of the same origin and signifies the sign, the token, the omen, the watchword.⁴ The above makes *sema* almost a synonym to *symbolon*. Therefore, it is possible that sealing was a function intrinsic to *symbola* (tokens). It is stipulated that ‘*symbola* will be made for the allied cities’ and with these *symbola* the cities will have to seal the written record of the amount paid which will accompany the tribute to Athens. This written record will be opened on delivery, read publicly and compared with the tribute received. Although the text does not say so, it is only reasonable to think that the *symbola* on the written record (tablet) will have to be checked for their authenticity by means of comparison with *symbola* or other records kept in the possession of the Council. The reading of the tablet before the Council must have been accompanied by the verification of the seal.⁵

These *symbola* were made for authentication. The purpose was to keep the tablet from being tampered with by persons entrusted with bringing the tribute by ship to Athens and to identify the senders of the tribute. They served also as a guarantee that the tribute was paid in full and conveyed to Athens as assessed and as it had been agreed. They guaranteed that the pact/agreement between the two parties – Athens and the ally – was respected, just like in the case of commercial contracts between cities and foreigners, which were also known under the same term but should not be confused with the *symbola*.⁶ Different sets of *symbola* should have been issued for each allied city.

For the Archaic and Classical periods it has already been assumed that tokens could be anything: any kind of object could serve as *symbola*.⁷ In the case of the tokens which authenticated the allies’ tribute to Athens, the *symbola* functioned as seals, and could therefore – quite probably – have looked like seals. Because of this function, which probably extended to their materiality, the *symbola* of the Kleinias Decree enabled multiple uses.

³ Translation by S. Lambert and P.J. Rhodes in Ancient Inscriptions online, www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGI3/34.

⁴ See <https://lsj.gr/wiki/σημαίνω> and <https://lsj.gr/wiki/σῆμα>. Cf. παράσημον (pl. παράσημα), the distinguishing mark, the emblem from <https://lsj.gr/wiki/παράσημον>.

⁵ Hill and Meritt 1944, 11.

⁶ Gauthier 1972; Finglass in this volume.

⁷ Finglass in this volume. This is evidenced in particular because of the metaphorical use of the term *symbolon* as well as the literary testimonia which speak of dice and knucklebones.

The second part of the Kleinias Decree demonstrates that particular importance was laid on the exact assessment of the payment and revenue management in general. The text goes on to show that the procedure was considered serious and regulated in detail. Legal processes were envisaged for anyone who was suspected of abusing the procedure.⁸ The Council was omnipotent in controlling the procedure and enforcing the measures for safeguarding it, so that it is only reasonable to believe that the ‘sealing tokens’ too were issued by the Council.

In the Neolithic period in the Near East, tokens also played an important role in protecting resources. Although they were not seals and they had plain forms of cones, spheres, discs, ovoids and cylinders – a total of twelve different shapes have been acknowledged – the clay tokens of the Neolithic Near East sealed clay envelopes, which in all likelihood represented debts, before being placed inside the envelopes. Denise Schmandt-Besserat suggests that the impressions on the sealed envelope allowed people to see quickly what was within. The Near Eastern tokens remained unchanged for several millennia between 9,000 and 3,500 BCE. They protected the content of the sealed envelopes and at the same time conveyed an array of information with different shapes and different sizes representing a variety of cereals and corresponding to different measures.⁹

The similarities of the Near Eastern tokens to the Athenian ones as described in the Kleinias Decree in terms of functions and materiality are striking and can potentially shed more light on the details of the procedure in Classical Athens. In both cases, tokens were used as seals in order to protect revenue or resources – cereals in the Near East, tribute in Athens. Furthermore, the analogy drawn with the Near Eastern tokens of the Neolithic period reveals that Athenian ‘sealing tokens’ were probably used for the purposes of accounting. The text of the Kleinias Decrees has been acknowledged as the earliest extant testimony for the financial responsibilities exercised by the Council.¹⁰ Given the Council’s prominent role in collecting revenues and controlling public expenditure, and the extensive financial duties exercised in every aspect of the public affairs, it would not be too far-fetched to think of the ‘sealing tokens’ as a public instrument closely related to the workings of the Council. For how long the practice continued is not known. The picture is further complicated by the lack of findings in the archaeological record related to the ‘sealing tokens’.

⁸ *IG I³* 34, ll. 19–76. Several lines are missing and the last approximately twenty lines are fragmentarily preserved.

⁹ Wilding and Rowan 2017; Schmandt-Besserat 2019, 11–17.

¹⁰ Rhodes 1972, 88–90 in connection to the tribute paid by the allies, and 88–134 for controlling revenue and expenditure in the army and the navy as well as religious life.

A generation later, in the honorific decree for Strato, the King of Sidon, *symbola* are employed again, this time for foreign affairs.¹¹ Lines 19–25 are of particular interest to the discussion of tokens.

And
let the Council also have tokens made
for the king of the Sidonians, so that 20
the People of Athens may know if the
king of the Sidonians sends anything when making
a request of the city, and the king of
the Sidonians may know whenever the people
of Athens sends anybody to him 25

As in the Kleinias Decree, the same verb is employed here, and the subject is the Council (‘ποιησάσθω δὲ καὶ σύμβολα ἢ βολή’, lines 18–19). Split *symbola* are at issue here, with the Council keeping one half and the king of the Sidonians the other.¹² These served to immediately identify the courtier, and they ensured the validity of the messages exchanged. Tokens appear once more in connection with the Council. The tokens in question could in fact have served also as seals.

The only split tokens we possess from Classical Athens are a set of four tokens dated to the third quarter of the fifth century BCE. These tokens certainly formed part of a much larger set used in the allotment procedure of the offices in the Theseion. They were small tablets of fired clay, inscribed on both faces and cut along an irregular jigsaw line. They were inscribed on one side with the abbreviated name of each of the ten tribes, then they were cut in two along the middle of this inscribed name and they were turned with the blank side facing up. The upper half was inscribed with the demotic name and the bottom half with the magistracies, which were to be allotted. Tokens were marked proportionally with the names of the demes corresponding to the demes’ bouletic quota, which meant that the size (population size) of the deme defined the number of councillors (*bouleutai*).¹³ The outcome of the allotment procedure was guaranteed by the irregular jigsaw cutting, which enabled unique matching. Unique should have been the matching also for the *symbola* exchanged between Athens and the King of Sidon: one set should have been kept by the Athenians and the other by the King of Sidon and the two sets could be compared for verification.

¹¹ IG II² 141. Attic Inscriptions online, www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/AIUK11/1, with references. The decree is dated to 394–386 BCE (AIO). The stone was found on the Acropolis and is now kept at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

¹² More on split *symbola*: Finglass in this volume.

¹³ Kierstead in this volume.

It is almost certain that similar split clay tokens were employed for the allotment of all the magisterial boards and not only the *Poletai*, the board of ten magistrates, which are abbreviated on two of the preserved tokens as POL. Since the allotment to all magisterial boards was a procedure supervised by the Council, it is only reasonable to believe that allotment by split tokens was a procedure employed by the Council for all the other magisterial boards too.¹⁴ Besides the *poletai*, there were the treasurers of Athena, the *astynomoi*, the *apodektai*, the *agoranomoi*, *metronomoi*, as well as the *hieropoioi epi ta ekthymata*, the *hieropoioi kat' eniauton* and the *athlothetai*, to mention only a few.¹⁵ The *Athenaion Politeia* refers to magistracies of the later fifth century BCE, by which time the apportionment of some magistracies among the demes had been abandoned in favour of apportionment by tribes. As such, it is doubtful that allotment by demes and split *symbola* had lasted that late.¹⁶

Four halves of split tokens have been preserved, the three just mentioned and another example known from the nineteenth century excavations at the Dipylon, an exceptionally low record in total. This is significant because it testifies that particular care was taken to dispose of the allotment utensils in a secure way so that the procedure could not be manipulated. In the Agora, the three tokens were thrown in what has been characterised as a rubbish pit, while the fourth token was thrown into a well, a common place to dispose of small objects.¹⁷ Another possibility is that more split clay tokens may be waiting to be found somewhere else in the city, such as the Theseion, a suggestion made by James Kierstead in this volume.

Material Evidence: The Athenian Council House and Its Tokens

The Council met regularly at a building specially designated for that purpose, the Original or Old Bouleuterion (Council House), which stood in the south-west corner of the Agora and was erected around 460 BCE. The south-west corner of the Agora was of particular political and administrative importance in the Classical Age. The Original or Old Bouleuterion was in use until the late fifth century, when the Metroon (State Archive)

¹⁴ Lang (1959, 87) comments that ‘The discovery of more tokens may prove or disprove it. Lower halves with abbreviated names of other boards comparable to the *poletai* would go far forward proving it’.

¹⁵ *AthPol*, chapters 42, 47–51, 54, 56, 60; Rhodes 1972; Hansen 1980, 151–56.

¹⁶ Kierstead in this volume.

¹⁷ For the find-spot of the three *Poletai* tokens: Thompson 1951, 51–52. For the find-spot of the ΧΣΥΠΙΕΤΑΙΩΝ token: Koumanoudes 1879, 237 no. 6. A number of lead armour tokens were also found in well, as published by Kroll (1977b), as well as the *Xenokles Perithoides* clay tokens published by Kroll and Mitchel (1980).

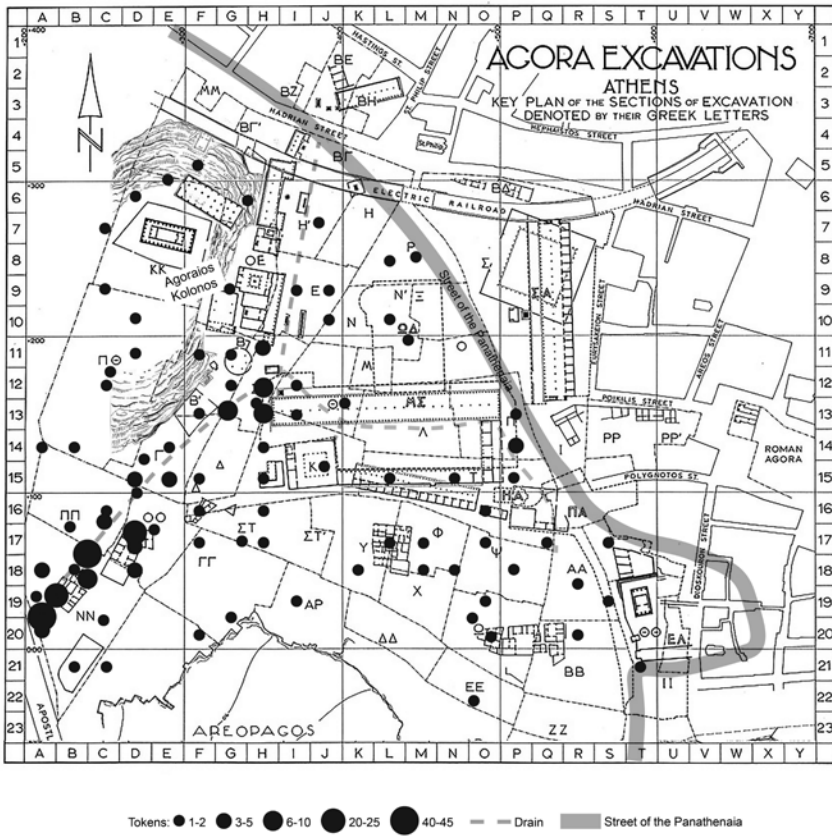


Figure 3.1 Find-spots of lead tokens in the Athenian Agora after a plan of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens: Agora Excavations, remastered by the graphic designer Matthias Demel

was established in its premises, and the New Bouleuterion was built to the immediate west of the first one. The Prytany House stood next to the Old Bouleuterion and to the south of it and was known as the Skias or Tholos, because of its round shape.¹⁸ A few metres to the east of the Tholos and the Old Bouleuterion, and aligned in a north–south direction, stood the Monument of the Ten Eponymous Heroes, where written public announcements were made. Tokens were excavated scattered in the area,

¹⁸ Rhodes 1972, 30–33; Travlos 1980, 191–95 s.v. Bouleuterion, 553–61 s.v. Tholos, 210–12 s.v. Eponymous Heroes, 352–56 s.v. Metroon in the Agora.

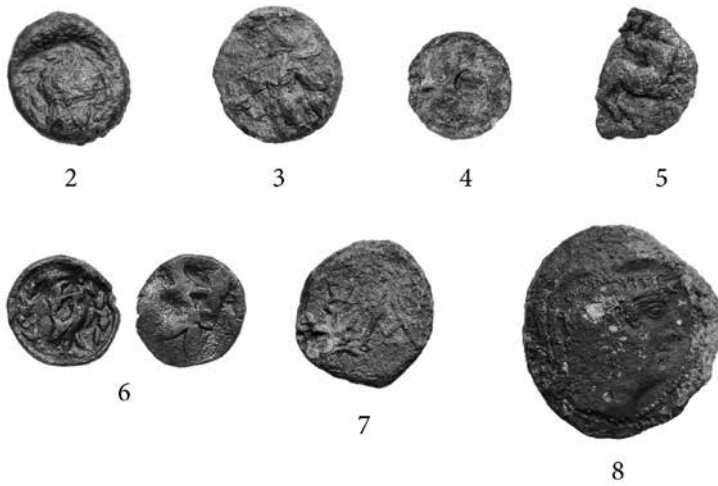


Figure 3.2 Uniface lead token, 15 mm. Agora, IL624. Tholos Trench D with material from the sixth and fifth centuries and occasionally as early as the third century. Layer III (Section Z #1251). Owl facing between two olive sprays. Crosby reports that the letters AΘE were barely visible on this specimen, but this was not confirmed by the author. Published: Crosby 1964, 100 (L144, pl. 24), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agoral144>. Another specimen (Agora IL821) of this type was found in the area of the Odeion of Agrippa (section ΩΔ #88 with dumped material)

Figure 3.3 Uniface lead token, 12 mm. Agora, IL615. Tholos (H 11), Late Roman context. Herakles dragging with his left hand a beast left, club over right shoulder, Letter Epsilon (E) retrograde in field left, Letter Pi (Π) should be assumed to have existed in field right. Published: Crosby 1964, 96 (L90, pl. 22), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agoral90>. Cf. Svoronos 1900, 335 (no. 192, pl. III,38) for a token of this type inscribed Π-E

Figure 3.4 Uniface lead token, 14 mm. Agora, IL1167. North-east of Tholos (H11), Panathenaic amphora, traces of letters to left (?) all in wreath (?). Published: Crosby 1964, 101 (L158, pl. 25)

Figure 3.5 Lead token, 13 mm. Agora, IL1163. North-east of Tholos (H11), Section Z #1753. Side A: a centaur galloping right with upraised right arm, side B: uncertain representation. Large chip, about one-third of whole missing. Published: Crosby 1964, 94 (L70, pl. 21), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agoral70>

Figure 3.6 Lead token, 16 mm. Agora, IL1134. Section B #947, Great Drain to the south of the Tholos. Side A: owl right in wreath, side B: cicada, three incuse dots as countermarks. Published: Crosby 1964, 94 (L73, pl. 21); Gkikaki 2021, 71 (no. 5), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agoral73>

Figure 3.7 Uniface lead token, 23 mm. Agora, IL54. Section Z #100, from context of third century CE in Great Drain (G13). Letter Alpha with ‘broken’ the horizontal bar and apices, winged *kerykeion* (caduceus) of the same size as the letter in the field left. Published: Crosby 1964, 87 (L7, pl. 19), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agoral7>

Figure 3.8 Lead token, 33 mm. Agora, IL57. Found in front of the Metroon. Side A: helmeted Athena head right (of the *stephanephoric* coin type). Side B: gamma with circular countermark (diameter 12 mm) of a kernos. Published: Crosby 1964, 88 (L18, pl. 19), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agoral18> (accessed 21 November 2021)

Figures 3.2–3.8: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Museum of the Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photos: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

delineated by the architectural remains of the above-described public buildings.

More tokens were excavated in the sand at the bottom of the Agora’s Great Drain. The course of the drain delineated the east façades of the Apollon Patroos Temple and the Metroon (i.e. the Old Bouleterion). It also delineated the eastern and southern sides of the Tholos, before turning to the south-west, where it was crossed by a bridge. It then passed along the south-eastern side of a rectangular building, the ‘Poros Building’, which has been interpreted as the State Prison.

Among the architectural remains of these buildings and the wider area of the south-west corner of the Classical Agora, a particularly heavy concentration of lead tokens has been excavated, for many of which it is only reasonable to believe that they were in some way associated with the functions of the Council of Five Hundred.

The token types (Figures 3.1–3.8) from the Council have a peculiar iconography which can be identified as state iconography. They bear distinctive legends (Δ-H and Π-E) and in total they are very different from all other tokens found in the rest of the Agora Square. The only ‘tribol token’ of the Athenian Agora comes from the area of the Council House. These tokens have several typological features in common. They are lead,

coin-shaped and – with the exception of **Figure 3.8** – they can be dated to the fourth century BCE (at the earliest). Furthermore, they all bear designs which can be characterised as official state designs: the owl, the ‘tribol-type and the Panathenaic amphora. The two lead lettered tokens (**Figures 3.7 and 3.8**) likewise relate to state functions.

Let us set aside for a moment the hypothesis put forward by Margaret Crosby that the lead lettered tokens can be considered as the Hellenistic successors of the fourth century BCE bronze lettered tokens, and that they assigned the jurors of the Hellenistic period to their seats in the courtroom by analogy of their bronze forerunners.¹⁹ Alan L. Boegehold had reached the conclusion for the use of the bronze lettered tokens in the courts based not only on the finds at the Athenian Agora, but also on the literary testimony of the atthidographer Philochoros, who preserved the information that the members of the Council began sitting by letter in 410/9 BCE.²⁰ This will not be the first instance that an equipment (objects) category can be attributed to the Jury Courts as well as to the Council. The other category is the bronze balls, some of them uninscribed and others inscribed with letters, which were used in the allotment machines (*kleroteria*).²¹ Of the nine bronze balls excavated in the Athenian Agora by the time Boegehold’s book was published (1995), six were found in the immediate vicinity of the Tholos and just two in the Square Peristyle, acknowledged as a fourth-century court, which stood on the place of the later Stoa of Attalos.²²

The passage of the fourth century BCE atthidographer Philochoros, referred to above, attests that ‘the Council was seated for the first time by letter in the year of the Eponymous Archon Glaukippos 410/9 BCE and that to the author’s day councillors continued to swear that they would sit in the letter to which they are allotted’.²³ The text reads that the councillors began ‘also’ to sit by letter, implying probably that the same procedure was applied elsewhere. Because the passage is just a fragment of a larger text it is not possible to say if the seating of the jurors (which is implied by the

¹⁹ Crosby 1964, 86. Crosby comments at the beginning of catalogue Section I.

²⁰ Boegehold et al. 1995, 71 and 155–56 source no. 73.

²¹ Boegehold et al. 1995, 65–66.

²² Boegehold et al. 1995, 66 cat. nos. BB2–BB7 found in the Tholos. Note also the find-spot of terracotta ball: Boegehold et al. 1995 cat. no. CB1. Boegehold et al. 1995, 66 cat. no. BB8 in the Ballot Deposit (a hoard of objects, all related to the jurors’ courts) and Boegehold et al. 1995, 66 cat. no. BB9, very near the north-west corner of the Square Peristyle (building of the early fourth century BCE, which housed the jurors’ courts). Kroll (in this volume) repudiates the use of lettered tokens for the seating of the members of the Council.

²³ *FGrHist* 328 (Philochoros) F 140; Boegehold et al 1995, 65 and 155–56 source no. 73: <φησι γάρ Φιλόχορος ἐπὶ Γλαυκίππου «καὶ ἡ βουλή κατὰ γράμμα τότε πρῶτον ἐκαθέζετο· καὶ ἔτι νῦν ὁμῶσιν ἀπ’ ἐκείνου καθεδεῖσθαι ἐν τῷ γράμματι οἱ ἄν λάωσιν.»>

Figure 3.9 Lead token, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL1463 31 mm. Side A: helmeted Athena head right (dull impression). Side B: letter A with curved diagonal bars, countermarked with winged *kerykeion* (caduceus) in the field left. Published: Crosby 1964, 88 (L17, pl. 19), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail1463>. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Museum of the Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photos: M.E. Gkikaki (side A) and Giannis Tzitzas (side B) © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D)



‘also’) refers to arrangement older than the year of the Archon Glaukippus and that the jurors sat by letter already before the councillors, or if it refers to arrangements of the fourth century BCE Jury Courts.

It is generally understood that it was the oligarchic coup of 411 BCE and the restoration of democracy soon afterwards that prompted the Athenians to take measures to protect their democratic procedures. The allotment of the councillors to seating areas by letters would have discouraged the creation of factions and the seating together of like-minded members who could conspire and shout down the speaker and therefore manipulate the outcome of the debate.²⁴

The architectural remains suggest that in the New Bouleuterion the councillors sat on wooden benches. Only in the late fourth or the early third century was a stone theatre-like structure installed with twelve rows which could accommodate more than five hundred, and which presumably also included a number of onlookers.²⁵ Wooden benches are also attested for the Assembly²⁶ and the recently discovered lot of clay lettered tokens showed that the participants in the Assembly sat by letter.²⁷ Therefore, the wooden benches were probably the kind of equipment ‘compatible’ with seating by letters.

Of the two lettered tokens, the one with the caduceus (**Figure 3.7**) should probably date to the second century BCE, when many letter cutters executed serifs and broken-bar Alphas. In my opinion, this Hellenistic lead lettered token must be examined together with another lead lettered

²⁴ Rhodes 1972, 192; Ostwald 1986, 321–22, 418–19; Tordoff 2017, 166–67 (n. 39).

²⁵ Thompson and Wycherley 1972, 30–34; Travlos 1980, 191 s.v. Bouleuterion.

²⁶ Aristophanes, *Ekklesiazousai* ll. 21, 86–87; Hansen 1976, 131.

²⁷ Makrypodis 2019; Kroll in this volume; Makrypodis in this volume.

token, this time countermarked with a caduceus. The token bears a dull impression of Athena's head left on side A, which fills the entire metal round. It was excavated on the north slope of the Areopagus (**Figure 3.9**).²⁸ Hellenistic lead lettered tokens bear often added symbols in the field, or they are countermarked by the same symbols. The symbols are consistent: caduceus,²⁹ kernos,³⁰ bunch of grapes,³¹ ear of wheat³² and an owl seating on a panathenaic amphora's belly.³³ The custom of adding a symbol should have begun already with the bronze jurors' tokens.³⁴ The meaning and the function of these 'added symbols' cannot be defined with any certainty. They could denote 'time stamps' for different sessions. But given the fact that the Council met very often – almost every day – the 'time stamps' seem highly improbable. It would be interesting to think that the caduceus was the typical design for the lettered tokens of the Council, given the symbolism of the design and its connections to the *probouleutic* role the Council had in preparing the legislative Agenda to be discussed in the Assembly. Another possibility is that the designs refer to the magistrate or the councillor who distributed the tokens, i.e. it was his personal identity badge. This latter possibility has a lot to recommend it. Token types of the Roman Imperial period are inscribed ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ (= ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΩΣ ΤΗΣ ΒΟΥΛΗΣ, meaning 'Of the secretary of the Council'), giving particular prominence to one of the members of the 'prytany' contingency.³⁵

The other token stamped with a letter bears the head of Athena on the other side, of a style very similar to the *stephanephoric* coinage of the city (**Figure 3.8**). This is a secure anchor point in order to date the type to the second century BCE. There has been a continuous dialogue between coin types and token types in Athens beginning with the bronze jurors' tokens of the fourth century BCE. William Bubelis argues that particular care was taken to distinguish the types and that in no occasion was a coin die used

²⁸ Crosby 1964, 88 L17 (IL1463). The date results from the style of head on the other face of the token, which closely copies the style of the *stephanephoric* coinage. By coincidence, it bears also the letter Alpha.

²⁹ Svoronos 1900, 324 (no. 37, pl. I,22, pl. I,31) and 325 (no. 69, pl. I,49).

³⁰ Crosby 1964, 87 L5, pl. 19 and 88 L18, pl. 19 (= Figure 3.8 in this paper), with countermark in the form of kernos.

³¹ Svoronos 1900, 325 (no. 70, pl. I,50).

³² Svoronos 1900, 325 (no. 66, pl. I,45).

³³ Svoronos 1900, 323 (no. 19, pl. I,10).

³⁴ Svoronos 1898, 65/20 (nos. 109–10, pl. ΣΤ' 1–2 with Kernos); 55/19 (nos. 107–08, pl. ΣΤ' 3–4 with owl); 56–57/20–21 (nos. 112–18, pl. ΣΤ' 5–10 with Bacchos ring); Boegehold et al. 1995, 76 (T36, pl. 12, Agora B1160) and Boegehold et al. 1995, 76 (T37, pl. 12, Agora B1161 with kernos); Boegehold et al. 1995, 76 (T38, pl. 12 with owl).

³⁵ More on these tokens: Gkikaki (forthcoming).

for tokens.³⁶ This may apply for the fourth century BCE, but the *stephanephoric* Athena Heads on the token of **Figure 3.8** expresses the need to lend authority to the procedure in which these tokens were used by means of their iconographic relevance to coinage.

Next to the above-mentioned lead lettered tokens, the type inscribed BOAH on one side and bearing a letter on the other can unequivocally be attributed to the seating arrangements of the Council and at the same time proves that the Council made use of lead lettered tokens at least for a period of time, although when exactly remains impossible to determine.³⁷ The writing BOAH – the employment of O instead of OY – suggests an early date, perhaps still in the late fifth or the early fourth century BCE.³⁸

Tokens for the Councillors' Pay

Two other tokens in the Tholos (**Figures 3.2 and 3.6**) bear the all-too-famous image of the Athenian owl. The type of the facing owl between two olive sprays 'borrows' the so-called triobol type of the fourth century BCE silver triobols.³⁹ Three obols was the jurors' pay, as introduced in 425 BCE, and this remained the same during the fourth century BCE.⁴⁰ The occurrence of tokens with the 'triobol type' – first spotted in collections – along with the testimony preserved in the *Athenaion Politeia* that the jurors received a token bearing the letter Gamma (Γ), a sign equivalent to the number 3, has led to the assumption that the triobol tokens were the tokens that were exchanged for jury service.⁴¹

The recovery of one such token in the Tholos trench and another one in the Great Drain to the south of the Tholos proves particularly puzzling. Were these voucher tokens intended for the councillors' pay? Attendance to the Council's meeting was compulsory and the contingent of the five hundred councillors remained unaltered for the entire councillor's year. Therefore, the use of pay tokens seems to have been redundant.

But if pay tokens were indeed used for safeguarding the attendance, would they have been the ones of the 'triobol type'? This is only possible if the design on the token was not necessarily linked to its function or if it was not so important as it was on a coin. When placed on tokens, the

³⁶ Note how much more distinct the Athena heads are on the bronze jurors' tokens (Boegehold et al. 1995) and the contemporary Athenian coinage (Flament 2007, 121–32).

³⁷ Engel 1884, 5 (no. 1, pl. I); Svoronos 1900, 333 (no. 172, pl. III,15); Kroll in this volume Figure 6.5.

³⁸ Kroll in this volume.

³⁹ Kroll 1993, 20–21 (no. 19); 25–26; 35–37 and 39 (nos. 35–37).

⁴⁰ *AthPol* 68.2; Loomis 1998, 15–16 and 26.

⁴¹ Kroll in this volume.

‘triobol type’ probably ‘lost’ its original significance. The ‘triobol type’ would have designated money, but not the value of three obols or the exchange with three obols. Only future research can prove the validity of this assumption because the fact remains that the councillors’ daily pay amounted to five obols, and that those serving as *prytaneis* received only an additional one obol daily (ration money, εἰς σίτησιν ὀβολός).⁴² Although these two arguments – the compulsory attendance and the daily stipend of five/six obols – seem to dissociate the triobol tokens from the Council, their find-spot still needs further assessment.

Tokens and Civic Administration

Despite all the known difficulties in the interpretation of tokens and the questions left open regarding their functions and roles, it can nevertheless be established that tokens were used in the city’s administration and in the three main Athenian institutions: the Council, the Assembly and the Jury Courts.

The Council had complex administrative duties which covered broad areas of Athenian public life: finance, the army and navy, religion. The Council worked together with several boards, which were either manned by the councillors themselves or were chosen by the councillors. One way or another, the Council stood higher in the hierarchy and kept a permanent eye on them, and through them exercised control over Athenian public life. Tokens may have been issued and distributed either by the Council directly or by the boards. Tokens for the Assembly are in fact closely related to the Council. For the Assembly tokens there exists substantial literary testimonia and a lot of clay lettered tokens have recently been assigned to the Assembly with persuasive arguments.⁴³ The Assembly tokens were issued and distributed by one such a board: the Convenors of the People (*syllogeis tou demou*).⁴⁴ They were a committee of thirty, three from each tribe, who were selected among the year’s councillors and administered the distribution of Assembly tokens. Valuable testimony of that is provided by the decree of the Aigeis tribe praising the three tribal representatives who served as Convenors of the People in 341/0 BCE.⁴⁵

Tokens for the Assembly assigned participants to seating areas. They ensured that the citizens who arrived at the entrances of the Assembly and were checked by tribes took random seats at the auditorium, so that the

⁴² Thucydides, *Historiae* 8.69.4; *AthPol* 62.2; Rhodes 1981, 691–92; Loomis 1998, 26.

⁴³ Makrypodi 2019, 34; Makrypodi in this volume; Kroll in this volume.

⁴⁴ Hansen 1991, 141–42.

⁴⁵ *IG II²* 1749 = *IG II³* 4, 76, ll. 78–80, tribal decree carved on a prytanic dedication; translation available on AIO, www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII2/1749. Cf. Kroll in this volume; Russo in this volume.

building of factions was impossible.⁴⁶ Furthermore, there are two more aspects which deserve particular mention regarding the role of tokens as state equipment in the workings of the Assembly. First, the tokens' role was to make sure that the necessary quorum was reached.⁴⁷ By distributing a prearranged number of six thousand lettered tokens it should have been possible to count, at a glance, the number of participants who had already entered and taken seats in the auditorium. The second point, which is related to the first, is that the distribution of tokens regulated the expenditure. This was of particular significance because the Assembly pay constituted one of the major items of the budget for the Athenian state: it amounted to fifty talents per year.⁴⁸ Only the first six thousand receivers of tokens would have received the daily stipend, to the disappointment of late comers.⁴⁹ In the opposite case, distribution of more than six thousand tokens would cause unnecessary increases in expenditure; keeping the number under control would have saved the state avoidable expense. Therefore, tokens played an important role in the logistics of the Assembly meetings and the related bookkeeping.⁵⁰ The importance of this is suggested by the critical turn that events took in 348 BCE, when financial difficulties and a shortage of money prevented the Jury Courts from meeting.⁵¹

With its executive committee – the fifty *prytaneis* – the Council would have the necessary authority for issuing tokens. The keys of the temple treasuries, where in essence the state money was kept, along with the state/public seal, were under the Council's jurisdiction.⁵² These were kept in the Tholos and were the responsibility of the *epistates*, who was picked by lot from among the *prytaneis* and had, in effect, supremacy over the whole state for a whole day.⁵³ There is evidence that there was not just one public seal, but the various boards of magistrates made use of their own seal.⁵⁴ It is no surprise that tokens found in and around the building

⁴⁶ Cf. the very informative analysis by Kroll in this volume.

⁴⁷ Assembly pay was introduced in order to motivate attendance: *AthPol* 41.3; Gauthier 1993, 232–50; Hansen 1991, 150.

⁴⁸ Hansen 1976, 133. Cf. Burke (1985, 253–55) and Rhodes (2013, 222–23) for measures of comparison.

⁴⁹ Aristophanes, *Ekklesiazousai* ll. 289–98 and 381–94.

⁵⁰ Argued in detail by Gkikaki (forthcoming).

⁵¹ Demosthenes, *Against Boeotus I* 17. For the financial crisis of the fourth century BCE, the inflation and the impact on wages, Gallo (1987, 19–63) paints a colourful picture.

⁵² For the dating of the state/public seal: Lewis 1955, 32–34; Olson 1996, 253–54.

⁵³ *AthPol* 44.1; Rhodes 1981, 531–32.

⁵⁴ Particularly revealing is the case of the token stamped with the same seal of seated Dionysos as the sealing found on two pots – probably measures and two lead weights (Crosby 1964, 95 L86, pl. 22, with references).



Figure 3.10 Lead uniface token, 15 mm, Agora IL647, this object depicted here (pocket H 12: 19). Panathenaic amphora, inscribed: Δ–Η in field lower left and lower right respectively, all enclosed in ivy wreath. Cf. the Lead uniface token, 14 mm, from a different die than Agora IL697 (filling H 12: 1). Published: Crosby 1964, 102 (L161, pl. 25), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail647>

Figure 3.11 Lead uniface token, 11 mm, Agora IL646 (pocket H 12: 19). Lidded kernos on ground line with wheat through each handle. Published Crosby 1964, 106 (L204, pl. 26), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail646>

Figure 3.12 Lead uniface token, 13 mm Agora IL671 (H 12: 19). Palmette. Published: Crosby 1964, 106 (L210, pl. 27), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail671>

Figure 3.13 Lead uniface token, 13 mm, Agora IL648 (H 12: 19). Rosette. Published: Crosby 1964, 107 (L219, pl. 27), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail648>

Figure 3.14. Lead uniface token, 17 mm, Agora IL1123 (H 12: 1). Ship prow left. Published: Crosby 1964, 107–08 (L224, pl. 27)

Figure 3.15 Lead uniface token, 16 mm, Agora IL1122 (H 12: 1). Thorax. Published: Crosby 1964, 108 (L227c, pl. 27)

Figures 3.10–3.15: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photos: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

complex related to the Council bear official state designs, i.e. the owl framed by two olive sprays in the so-called ‘triobol type’ (Figures 3.2 and 3.6a), the cicada (Figure 3.6b), the Panathenaic amphora inscribed Δ-H (Figure 3.10), the *kernos* (Figure 3.11) – they bear the designs of the public seals. The administering of the state seal is closely related to the functioning not only of the Council but also of the Metroon, the State Archive, which was established in the late fifth century BCE in the building complex of the Old Bouleuterion.⁵⁵ The state seal, the utensil for the Council’s administrative duties, inevitably connects to the sealing tokens of the Kleinias Decree and may potentially reveal more on the role and the functions of these tokens. This should remain speculative for the time being because of lack of concrete evidence.

To the catalogue compiled above, we may add tokens coming from two lots of the Great Drain, in the immediate vicinity of the Tholos and for which we have good reason to believe that they constitute refuse from the nearby complex of civic buildings – the Tholos, the New Bouleuterion and the State Archive (Metroon). That the two lots in fact belong together is proved by the type Crosby L161 (Figure 3.11), which was found in both the pocket H 12: 19 in the floor of the Great Drain (third to second century BCE context) and the filling H 12: 1 (context dated to the last quarter of the second century BCE).

The token with the amphora framed by the letters Δ-H left and right (Figure 3.10) has a lot to recommend it as a public token. The Panathenaic amphora has long been acknowledged as an Athenian state design found on a variety of media from early times and used on coinage as well as weights and measures.⁵⁶ In my opinion, the inscription Δ-H is self-evident. It refers to *Demosion* (ΔΗΜΟΣΙΟΝ, i.e. public), a well-attested term, and known to be combined with state designs, such as the owl. It is found on a variety of media such as ballots, roof-tiles, the dining equipment for the *prytaneis*, as well as weights and measures kept in the Tholos.⁵⁷ According to the most recent analysis on the subject, the meaning of the inscription is that the object is destined for use by the people and it is meant to distinguish this stamp from others, which are not state stamps.⁵⁸ Although the token type in question is the only case of a type inscribed Δ-H which has been excavated in the Agora, more are known from other contexts. Svoronos records five different types which bear the abbreviation Δ-H.⁵⁹ Svoronos thinks that

⁵⁵ Boegehold 1972, 23–30.

⁵⁶ Lang 1964, 5–8; Kroll 1993, 62 no. 76; Killen 2017, 96–97.

⁵⁷ Lang 1964, 14, 15 Figure 6 (dining equipment), 31, 32 Figure 35 (lead weight), 36 (official liquid measure), 37 (official dry measure); Killen 2017, 139–40 for an overview.

⁵⁸ Killen 2017, 139–40.

⁵⁹ Svoronos 1900, 339–40 nos. 259–63.

these refer to Demeter, but the abbreviation of personal names and gods' names would be quite unusual. All five types bear designs which refer to grain and therefore their association to public grain distributions seems very probable.⁶⁰ In that case, they stand in juxtaposition to similar types, some of them uninscribed but others with inscriptions, which have not been adequately explained and may refer to grain distributions of private initiative.⁶¹

The *kernos* is likewise an official design of the Athenian state (Figure 3.11).⁶² It is a vase of biconical shape, often lidded. Because of its connection to Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries, which were a source of pride for the Athenians, the *kernos* should have been a very prestigious symbol. It is found on coins, on the bronze jurors' tokens, and of course on lead tokens.⁶³ The variety of its representation in the last case is remarkable.⁶⁴ But a type almost identical to the *kernos* token of the Tholos and probably from the same die has been excavated on the Pnyx from a context of the fourth century, which proves that the Tholos specimen could date much earlier than the context it was excavated in.⁶⁵ In fact it comes from the construction fill of Pnyx III, where reconstruction began ca. 346–342 BCE, which proves that the *kernos* token type is contemporary, if not earlier, to the earliest occurrence on Athenian coinage.⁶⁶

The token with the palmette (Figure 3.12) and the token with the rosette (Figure 3.13) bear simple, universal designs, which could stand for every possible use or could represent an institution, a commission, a civic body or even a magistracy. They are enigmatic, despite their simplicity. As a result of these features they are both identified as typical designs of the early and middle Hellenistic period. These designs have not been recorded accompanied

⁶⁰ Svoronos 1900, 339 no. 259–60 Demeter head: ear of Grain inscribed Δ-H no. 261 Demeter head: horn of plenty inscribed Δ-H and no. 262 (uniface) plough inscribed Δ-H and 340 no. 263 with ant walking on two feet and carrying an agricultural tool, in the field *kernos*.

⁶¹ Crosby 1964 (90–92 L43–L56, pl. 20) publishes tokens for grain distribution inscribed EP and EPMI.

⁶² Killen 2017, 181–82.

⁶³ Kroll 1993, 30 n. 34 with *kernos* as an added symbol on one of the fifteen emission of the ELEUSI – coinage (ca. 350s – early or mid-330s BCE and Kroll 1993, 47 no. 61 third century BCE, undated) for the earliest occurrence of the *kernos* as a coin type. *Kernos* on the bronze jurors' tokens: Svoronos 1898, 56/20 no. 111, with reference (*Kernos* is the main type on side A) and Boegehold et al. 1995, 76 (T37, pl. 12). *Kernos* countermark on lead lettered token: Crosby 1964, 87 (L5, pl. 19) and *kernos* on lead tokens: Crosby 1964, 105–06 (L203–L205, pl. 26), with references.

⁶⁴ Gkikaki 2020, 107.

⁶⁵ Davidson and Thompson 1943, 106 (no. 8 (M69) with Figure on p. 107).

⁶⁶ Refer to n. 62, above.

by an inscription, and therefore every interpretation remains speculative to a degree. For all the significance it may have, it should be mentioned that the only lead token which has been excavated in Olynthos is a lead token with a palmette on one side and a spray with ivy leaves in incuse on the other.⁶⁷ It is more than probable that this token should have travelled from Athens. It can only remain speculative if the token travelled in fulfilment of some official function or the circumstances are purely coincidental.⁶⁸

Another token from the filling H 12: 1 bears a ship's prow (**Figure 3.14**). Likewise, tokens with a ship or ship's prow are not accompanied by inscriptions, a fact which renders their interpretation particularly challenging.⁶⁹ This is compounded by the fact that Classical Athens was notorious for its naval power and that the ship crews of that time were pro-democratic.⁷⁰ In the Hellenistic period the city's naval power had diminished, but there was inherent prestige in these representations which should have been particularly appealing to the entire population.⁷¹ It would not be too far off similarly to consider a public function for this token type.

In this category of public token, the type with the corselet is also perfectly at home (**Figure 3.15**). All we know of about tokens depicting pieces of armour point to the direction of tokens distributed centrally and fulfilling some public purpose.⁷²

If an alternative view of the tokens with the Panathenaic amphora and the *kernos* should be offered, then it is obvious that they both refer to festivals, and specifically those festivals in which the Council is well known to have played an important role. Both the Panathenaea and the Eleusinian Mysteries were state cults and were administered by the Council. The distribution of festival tokens would have meant the distribution of portions after the sacrifices, procedures which are attested epigraphically, and were managed by the boards of *hieropoioi*.⁷³

⁶⁷ Robinson 1941, 505 no. 2574, mentioned by Crosby (1964, 107 under L212).

⁶⁸ I wish to thank the archaeologist Dimitra Aktsele of the Ephorate of Chalkidike and Aghio Oros (*per litteras* 19 January 2022) for asserting that no more tokens have been excavated in Olynthos. That tokens could have travelled: see Geelmuyden Bulgurlu and Hazinedar Coşkun in this volume.

⁶⁹ More Hellenistic lead tokens with representations of ships: Crosby 1964, 93 L69, 107–08 L224. Cf. Crosby 1964, 128 C15, pl. 32 for clay tokens with a person seated on the forecastle of a ship's prow.

⁷⁰ Potts 2008, 87–92 and 95–103.

⁷¹ Loraux 1986, 87–88 on the prestige derived from the (lost) naval supremacy of Athens.

⁷² Kroll 1977b; Schäfer 2019.

⁷³ Rhodes 1972, 128–34. More on tokens for festivals in Hellenistic Athens: Gkikaki 2021.

The connections of the multiple token types presented above to the Boule cannot be properly justified without explaining that the Council was the principal administrator of the city's finances. The Council managed the *Doiekeisis*, the general fund in the financial administration of the Athenian *polis*. It provided the daily stipends for attendance in the Council and the jurors' courts and, at the same time – assisted by the Board of *Apodektai* (the receivers) – it received revenues from tribute collection (in the fifth century, at least) and from tax contracts and mine leasing later.⁷⁴ In the middle of the fourth century BCE, an important change in the city's financial administration took place: the Theoric Fund was created or (at least) reformed. This fund received all surplus revenue, until Demosthenes redirected surpluses to the Military Fund in 339/8 BCE. It was managed by a board, '*hoi epi to theorikon*', one of the many boards who worked closely with the Assembly and administered considerable sums of money. The Theoric fund is better known for the distribution of *theorika*, which enabled citizens to attend festivals, but literary sources credit the Theōric fund with all sorts of public works.⁷⁵ Scholarship has always considered the *theorika* to be distributions in cash, but tokens inscribed ΠΕ or ΠΕΝ, just as [Figure 3.3] presented above, provide probably valuable evidence that the distribution involved tokens.⁷⁶ The abbreviation may stand for *pentadrachmia*, the term for the distributions at the Great Dionysia, yet another major and costly festival which was administered by the Council.⁷⁷

To sum up, the Council employed tokens in order to carry out a certain amount of day to day business. The argumentation developed in this chapter on the sealing tokens attested in the Kleinias Decree, as well as the functions of the tokens for the Assembly meetings, show that tokens deserve a mention in Athenian fiscal policy of the Classical period. Although it is not possible to determine the function of each individual token, the cataloguing of the tokens excavated in and around the Council house has nevertheless demonstrated that the logistics as well as the accounts associated with Athenian public finance (public revenue and public expenditure) were administered by official tokens handled by the Boule.

⁷⁴ Rhodes 2013, 203–31 with references; Ober 2015, 492–522.

⁷⁵ Rhodes 1972, 104–07 and 235–40; Stroud 1998, 82.

⁷⁶ Gkikaki 2021, 60–62.

⁷⁷ Pentadrachmia: Hyperides, *Against Demosthenes*, 26; Dinarchus, *Against Demosthenes* 56; Valmin 1965, 191–92; Ste. Croix 1964, 191; Wilson 2008, 95 (nos. 34, 38). More tokens inscribed ΠΕ or ΠΕΝ: Svoronos 1900, 334–36 (nos. 181–228, pl. III, 30–52 and IV, 1–9).

Chapter 4

Lead Tokens and Athenian Tribes: Iconography and Contexts of Use

Daria Russo

Athenian tokens between the fourth century BCE and the third century CE covered several functions: the legend and/or the device link some of them to the tribes.¹ Ten territorial tribes were founded by Kleisthenes in 508/7 and named after ten heroes chosen by lot by the Delphic Pythia (*Athenaion Politeia* 21.2–6).² As time went by, this system underwent a number of modifications. In 201/0, the *Demetrias* and *Antigonis* tribes, founded in 307/6, were abolished; a few months later, the *Attalis* tribe was added. In 224/3, *Ptolemais* was created, joined in the 120s CE by *Hadrianis*.³

Tribal affiliation had a role during political activities *stricto sensu*, but also in different spheres of everyday life. Archaeology and epigraphy

I wish to thank the Numismatic Museum at Athens for allowing me to carry out an autopsy of AIA1(1–2), 2(1), O1, H1–3, take new pictures and publish them, and the Italian Archaeological School at Athens for their support in applying for this permission, as well as the Agora Excavations (and especially S. Dumont and C. Mauzy) for providing me with a good quality picture of H6. I am greatly indebted to M. Gkikaki for all her help and valuable insights and for her rare and infinite patience, J. Kierstead and J.H. Kroll for providing me with feedback and, together with S. Makrypodis and M.G. Rizzi, for allowing me to read their manuscripts before publication. None of them is responsible for remaining flaws. Dates are BCE, unless otherwise stated. The asterisks next to the catalogue numbers denote that the specimen is illustrated. Most of the types and the specimens can be identified in the Nomisma Database, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/>, which is deposited in Warwick's institutional repository as well as in the Nomisma.org repository. All data are encoded in NUDS EAD format, as generated by the open-source software Numishare, <https://github.com/ewg118/numishare>.

¹ Crosby 1964, esp. 77–78.

² On tribes and their functions in the Classical period, see e.g. Jones 1999, esp. chapters 5 and 6; Humphreys 2018, 2.721–65; on the eponymous heroes, see Kearns 1989, esp. 80–92; on their figurative representations (on tokens too), Kron 1976, *passim*.

³ See Jones 1987, 31–39, briefly outlining changes through centuries; for a date between 124 and 128 for the creation of the tribe *Hadrianis*, see Leone 2018, 329 with n. 36 and previous bibliography.

provide us with evidence, especially for the fifth and fourth centuries.⁴ This chapter provides the first systematic study of tribal tokens: it aims at discussing how lead tokens with legends and/or devices connecting them to tribes (from now on: tribal tokens) were used, and at understanding their role for the functioning of the *polis* of Athens and its subdivisions.⁵ I will try to redefine a corpus of tokens for which a tribal attribution is certain or very likely and afterwards discuss their uses, by bearing in mind that such objects might often be later than the centuries about which we are most well-informed.⁶

A Short Note on Previous Studies

In the nineteenth century, many scholars (such as A. Postolakas, A. Dumont, O. Benndorf and A. Engel) focused their attention on lead tokens, either those stored in the Numismatic Museum in Athens (constituting the biggest collection and also housing the collection of the Archaeological Society) or in several European museums, and noticed the connection of some types with tribes.⁷ When publishing a selection of tokens stored in the Numismatic Museum in 1900, Svoronos identified forty-six tokens which he could consider as tribal.⁸ A few new types were published by M. Crosby in 1964, together with their find-spots in the Athenian Agora excavation grid.⁹

While the connection of tokens with tribes was already established in the nineteenth century, understanding how they were employed has always been considered difficult. In the introduction to his catalogue, Postolakas reports the opinion of Count Anton von Prokesch-Osten concerning the use of Attic tokens as coinage produced by the demes and the tribes for a local use.¹⁰ Benndorf suggests that they were used in the Council, in the Lawcourts, in the Assembly, as theatre tickets and in public distributions carried out tribally.¹¹ Dumont hypothesises a cultic usage of some tokens

⁴ For a review of the epigraphic and archaeological documentation concerning tribes in the fifth and fourth centuries, see Russo 2022.

⁵ For clay jigsaw tokens bearing tribal names, see Kierstead in this volume.

⁶ All specimens I know whose pertinence to tribes is certain or highly likely are detailed in the table.

⁷ Postolacca 1866, *passim*; Postolacca 1868, *passim*; Dumont 1870, 75–77; Benndorf 1875, esp. 602–03; Engel 1884, 5–6.

⁸ Svoronos 1900, 328–32 cat. nos. 112–58.

⁹ Crosby 1964, 99 L133–34, pl. 24.

¹⁰ Postolacca (1868, 269–70) discusses tokens generally, but the idea is certainly based on the presence of types showing an explicit connection with civic subdivisions.

¹¹ Benndorf 1875, 604–05.

and a public one for others.¹² According to Crosby, tribal or deme tokens (i.e. ‘tokens naming tribes or demes’) could have been used in the Assembly, during festivals (such as the Great Dionysia) or for wheat distribution.¹³ In the Assembly and in the theatre, more specifically, tribal tokens were thought to show where to sit.¹⁴

Towards a Corpus of Tribal Tokens: Legends and Symbols

Kleisthenic Tribes:

Tribe *Erechtheis* (Figure 4.1)

E1: *Dionysos in a long chiton, standing left, with a kantharos in his right hand and a thyrsos in the left one, all in incuse/tripod with a small thyrsos on its left side; in the field right: EPEXΘ*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.139>.

1*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 2060, 17 mm, Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 139, pl. II 23. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.23>.

2*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3099a, 17 mm, Postolacca 1866, 351 no. 222 with pl. = Benndorf 1875, 617 no. 42 with pl. = Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 140.

3*. London, British Museum, B.8463 (CGR264975) 12 mm, 1.43 g, unpublished specimen.¹⁵ www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_B-8463.

E2: *EPEX|ΘEI|ΔΟΣ/-*.

*Athens, at the time kept in Spyridon Komnos’ private collection, approximately 20 mm. Postolacca 1868, 314 with commentary to no. 13 = Benndorf 1875, 601 no. I.1 and 617 no. 35 with pl.

¹² Dumont (1870, 77) believes P1 to be a product of the state, meant to point out that the tribe *Pandionis* was the prytanizing one, as he interprets the monogram on side B as a way to shorten ‘προέδρους’ (the magistrates chairing the sessions, in accusative case).

¹³ Crosby 1964, 78, 80.

¹⁴ See Crosby 1964, 78; see also Winkler (1990, 40–41) for the theatre; Stanton and Bicknell (1987, 85) for the Assembly. Pickard-Cambridge (1968, 271–72) includes tribal tokens among those likely to be theatre tickets, without further details.

¹⁵ The Collection of Roman and Athenian lead *tesserae* at the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum is under study by Clare Rowan and Mairi Gkikaki respectively.

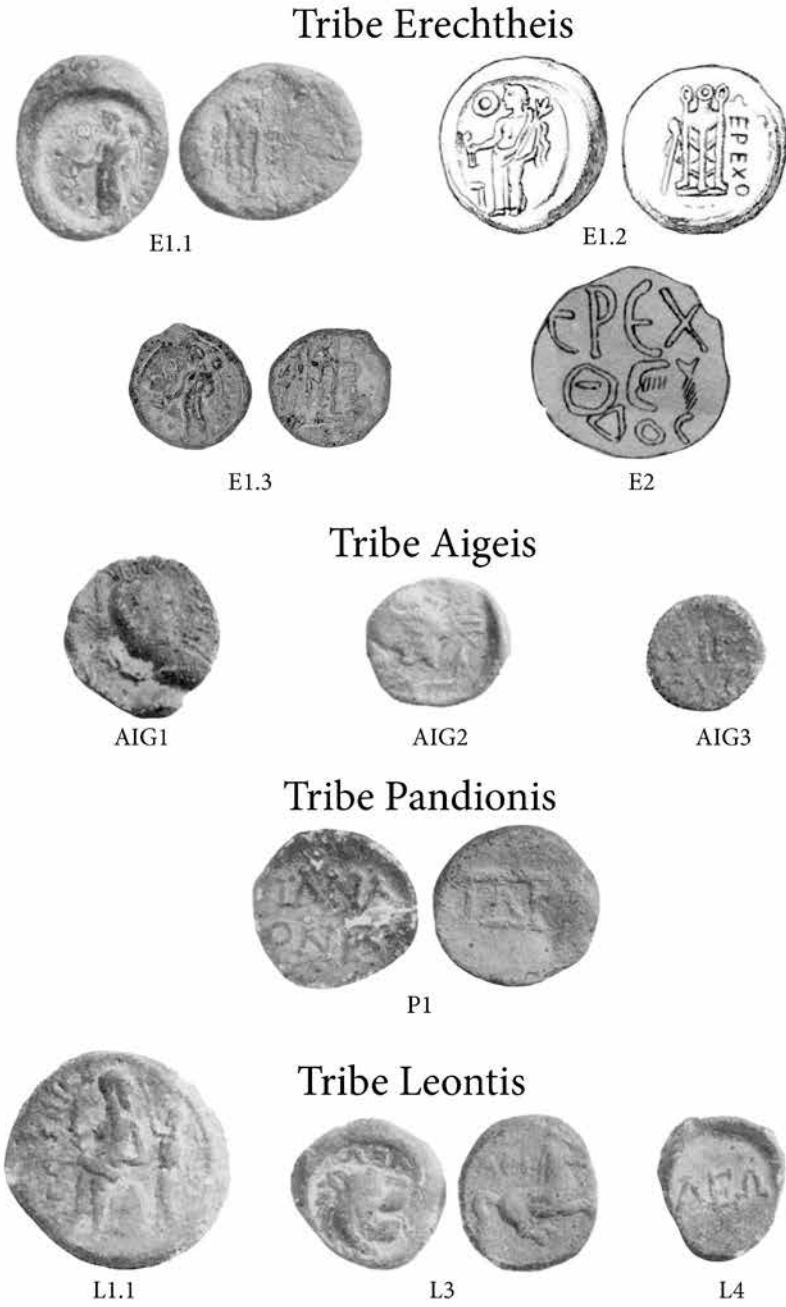


Figure 4.1 Tokens of the tribes *Erechtheis*, *Aigeis*, *Pandionis* and *Leontis*

Tribe *Aigeis* (Figure 4.1)

AIG1: *helmeted Athena's bust right; on the right: ΑΙΓΕΙΣ/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.118>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3094a, 16 mm, Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 118, pl. II 13. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.13>.

AIG2: *helmeted Athena's head right; below, a plough; on the right: ΑΙΓΕΙ[Σ]/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.119>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3946b, 14 mm, Postolacca 1868, 274 no. 100 = Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 119, pl. II 12. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.12>.

AIG3: *ΑΙΓ|ΕΥΣ, clipped edges/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.281>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 3091, 12 mm, Svoronos 1900, 342 no. 281, pl. IV 38. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.IV.no.38>.

Tribe *Pandionis* (Figure 4.1)

P1: *ΠΑΝΔ|<I>ΟΝΙΣ/monogram consisting of Π, Ρ, Δ*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.157>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3101, 17 mm, Postolacca 1866, 354 no. 282 with pl. = Benndorf 1875, 617 no. 38 with pl. = Svoronos 1900, 332 no. 157, pl. II 37. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.37>.

Tribe *Leontis* (Figure 4.1)

L1: *Bearded man (Leos?) sitting on a rock, towards left, with his head turned right, wearing a himation from his hips below, carrying a vase in his left hand. Next to him and crowning him, Nike in smaller size; on the left: ΔΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗ/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.103>.

1* Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3134*, 22 mm, Svoronos 1900, 327–28 no. 103, pl. III 1. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.III.no.1>.

2 Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3135*, 20 mm, Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 104.

3 Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3136*, 20 mm, Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 105.

Tribe Akamantis



AKA1

Tribe Oineis



O1

Tribe Kekropis



K1.1

Tribe Hippothontis



H1



H2



H3



H4.1



H4.2



H4.3



H5



H6

Figure 4.2 Tokens of the tribes *Akamantis*, *Oineis*, *Kekropis* and *Hippothontis*

- 4 Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3137*, 19 mm, Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 106.
- 5 Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 1522, 20 mm, Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 107.
- 6 Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 1538, 22 mm, Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 108.
- 7 Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 1558, 22 mm, Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 109.

L2: $\Lambda\epsilon\Omega$ *Lion right/Facing bearded head.*

Athens, Numismatic Museum, approximately 13–14 mm, Postolacca 1868, 276 no. 151 = Benndorf 1875, 602 no. IV.8.

L3: *Lion head right; above: $\Lambda\epsilon\Omega$ (retrograde), in incuse/a horse; above: API.*
<https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.148a>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 15 mm, Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 148a, pl. II 30.

L4: $\Lambda\epsilon\Omega$, *clipped edges/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.149>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3100c, 15 mm, Postolacca 1868, 325 no. 73 = Benndorf 1875, 602 no. IV.7 = Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 149, pl. II 31. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.31>.

Tribe *Akamantis* (Figure 4.2)

AKA1: *AKA, clipped edges/-*

*Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung, tray number: 19–116, 12 mm, 3.76 g, unpublished.¹⁶

Tribe *Oineis* (Figure 4.2)

O1: *Helmeted Oineus, standing frontal and naked, right arm hanging loosely, carrying a shield with his left hand; leaning on a spear; on the left: OINEΥΣ/-*.
<https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.289>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 1557, 15 mm, 2.16 g, Svoronos 1900, 343 no. 289, pl. IV 43. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.IV.no.43>.

¹⁶ The publication of the collection of the Athenian lead tokens at the Staatliche Münzsammlung, Munich is under preparation by M.E. Gkikaki.

Tribe *Kekropis* (Figure 4.2)

K1: *KEK, clipped edges/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.146>.

- 1* Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 2483, 14 mm, Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 146, pl. II 28. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.28>.
2. Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3100A, 14 mm, Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 147.

Tribe *Hippothontis* (Figure 4.2)

H1: *Token pierced on top at the centre. Mare right suckling child with an owl in field above and a kalathos on the right/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.143>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3099c, 24 mm, 14.12 g, Postolacca 1866, 353 no. 263 with pl. = Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 143, pl. II 24. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.24>.

H2: *Mare right suckling child/piglet-on- staff*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.144>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7566, 14.5 mm, 1.61 g, Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 144, pl. II 25. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.25>.

H3: *Mare right suckling child/stork (?) left, turning his head toward right, the whole in wreath*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.145>.

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, 2977, 15 mm, 1.33 g, Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 145, pl. II 26. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.26>.

H4: *IIII, clipped edges/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.142>.

1* Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3100a, 15 mm, Postolacca 1868, 303 (Aggiunte) no. 13 = Benndorf 1875, 602 no. VIII.10; Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 142, pl. II 27. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.27>.

2* London, British Museum, 1922, 0416.7 (CGR266331), ex Wilhelm Froehner Collection, 15 mm, 4.90 g. www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_1922-0416-7.

3* London, British Museum, 1922, 0416.9 (CGR266330), ex Wilhelm Froehner Collection, 14 mm, 3.84 g. www.britishmuseum.org/collection/search?keyword=1922,0416.9.

H5: *Mare right suckling child (?)*/. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agorall33>.

*Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL1415, 18 mm (stamp 11 mm), Crosby 1964, 99 L133, pl. 24. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail1415>.

H6: *Mare right suckling child, with an owl in field above and another symbol lower right*/-.

*Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL352, 15 mm, Crosby 1964, 99 L134, pl. 24.

Tribe *Aiantis* (Figure 4.3)

AIA1: *Ajax with helm, shield in his left hand and spear on the right shoulder, walking left; to the right: AIAΣ*/. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.277>.

1*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 743, 11 mm, 2.69 g, Svoronos 1900, 342 no. 277, pl. IV 36. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.IV.no.36>.

2*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7588 (faded inscription), 12 mm, 2.17 g, Postolacca 1868, 283 no. 289; Svoronos 1900, 342 no. 278, pl. IV 37. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.IV.no.37>.

AIA2: The same type as AIA1, but without inscription/-.

1*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, 2444, 14.5 mm, 2.30 g, Svoronos 1900, 342 no. 279.

2. Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 890, 14 mm, Svoronos 1900, 342 no. 280.

AIA3: *Hydria* between two cylindrical vessels, the one on the left set upright, the one on the right decorated on the surface and turned upside down, *A-I-A-N* in the four quarters of the field/-. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.112>.

1*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3091a, 14 mm, Engel 1884, 6 no. 12, pl. I = Svoronos 1900, 328 no. 112, pl. II 9. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.9>.

Tribe Aiantis



Tribe Antiochis



Tribe Ptolemais



Figure 4.3 Tokens of the tribes *Aiantis*, *Antiochis* and *Ptolemais*

2*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, NM 3092 (right part of the device is struck off flan), 13 mm, Postolacca 1866, 349 no. 172 with pl. = Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 113.

3. Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3093, 14 mm, Postolacca 1866, 349 no. 173¹⁷ = Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 114.
 - 4*. Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 667, 14 mm, Engel 1884, 6 no. 13, pl. I = Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 115.
 5. St. Petersburg. Rostovtzeff 1903, 311 no. 11; see Crosby 1964, 79 n. 12. Its present whereabouts unknown.
 - 6*. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, M 66, 13 mm, Davidson and Thompson 1943, 106 no. 6, pl. 48. From the Pnyx.
 7. New York, American Numismatic Society; see Crosby 1964, 79 no. 12. It has not been possible to verify that this piece is kept at the ANS.
 8. Dresden, Münzkabinett, Benndorf 1875, 614 no. 33. Lost in the Second World War.
 - 9*. Athens, at the time kept in a private collection, Benndorf 1875, 617 no. 40, pl.
 - 10*. Athens, Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection, 518, ex Meletopoulos Collection, 14 mm (corroded and broken), Gkikaki 2022, 28 no. 42. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/alphabank518>.
- AIA4: *A-IA left and right of Helios' neck, facing bust of Helios/Facing bust of Helios*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.117>.
- *Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 3111, 14 mm, Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 117, pl. II 11. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.11>.
- AIA5: *Kithara in a laurel wreath, around: AIANTI-OON/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/engel1884.11>.
- *Athens, Numismatic Museum, 20 mm, Engel 1884, 6 no. 11, pl. I. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/engel1884.pl.I.no.11>.

Tribe *Antiochis* (Figure 4.3)

- ANT1: *ANTIOXIS above facing owl, with lifted wings/-*. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.126>.
- 1* Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 823, 14 mm, Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 126, pl. II 17. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.17>.

¹⁷ Svoronos (1900) notes by mistake that it is identical to Postolacca 1866, 349 no. 175.

- 2 Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3097, 16 mm, Postolacca 1866, 342 no. 49 = Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 127.
- 3 Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3098a 15 mm (broken), Postolacca 1866, 342 no. 50 = Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 128.
- 4 Athens, Numismatic Museum, 3096 (illegible inscription), 17 mm, Postolacca 1866, 342 no. 48 = Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 129.

Post-Kleisthenic Tribe:

Tribe *Ptolemis* (Figure 4.3)

PT1: ΠΤΟ *in a laurel crown*/-

*Athens, Numismatic Museum, E. 622, 14 mm, Engel 1884, 6 no. 22, pl. I; Svoronos 1900, 332 no. 158, pl. II 38.

By taking Svoronos as a starting point, the corpus can be redefined by adding new specimens (e.g. newly found or newly interpreted as tribal) and removing those whose previous attribution cannot be supported following new iconographic or numismatic interpretations. The link between a token and a tribe can be established thanks to the legend, an explicit device, or both. The tribal name (or that of the eponymous, as in **AIG3**, **O1** and **AIA1**) is sometimes fully reported (**AIG1**, **P1**, **ANT1** and **E2**). The connection with tribes is relatively clear also in: **E1**, bearing the legend ΕΡΕΧΘ; in **AIG2**, bearing the letters ΑΙΡΕΙ; in **PT1**, with letters ΠΤΟ within a laurel crown; and in **AKA1**, **H4**, **K1** and **L2–4**, with the first three letters of the respective tribe's names (*Akamantis*, *Hippothonis*, *Kekropis* and *Leontis*).¹⁸ In **L2** and **L3**, the legend ΑΕΩ is paired with a device, a lion head or a lion, constituting a pun on the name of the tribe.¹⁹

The eponymous heroes, sometimes accompanied by a legend, are a particularly explicit device: **AIA1–2** show Ajax, represented as a warrior, with his very distinctive shield; a very similar token type represents Oineus (**O1**).²⁰ In **L1**, thanks to the legend ΑΕΩΣ ΝΙΚΗ, Leos and Nike

¹⁸ For the abbreviation ΑΕΩ as the abbreviation of the tribe *Leontis*, cf. the Athenian Agora clay tokens MC820 and MC821, dated to the fifth century (therefore featuring 'ΑΕΩ' in the pre-Euclidean alphabet) and used for lottery of magistrates; see Kierstead in this volume.

¹⁹ The same pun on the tribe's name can be found in an *anthippasia* relief from the Agora (I 7167). The interpretation of Svoronos (1900, 331 no. 150, pl. II 32: owl on lion/-) as a tribal token does not seem convincing, also because the lion is a common device on tokens known from a whole series of jurors' tokens (Svoronos 1923–26) as well as from Athenian tokens of the Roman period (Crosby 1964, 122 L326, pl. 30).

²⁰ Hippothon's representation was explicit enough not to need a legend, in contrast

can be recognised in the bearded seated figure bearing in his left hand a one-handled vase and in the small figure crowning him on the right.²¹ Svoronos interpreted the bearded figure as the personification of the *Demos*; nonetheless the use of the word ‘Λεώς’ to allude to this political personification seems uncustomary.²²

H1–3, 5–6’s sides A, uninscribed, represent a child suckled by a mare, clearly Hippothoon.²³ The eponymous heroes’ profiles are particularly heterogeneous: some – for instance, Kekrops and Erechtheus – were important kings; others were local heroes, like Oineus, or even non-Athenian ones, such as Ajax. On tribal decrees and on the east side of the Parthenon frieze, they are represented as ‘good citizens’, covered in *himation*, appearing as equals as tribes were supposed to be.²⁴ Such a flattened representation would not have been very suitable for a small object, whose iconography had to be distinctive. Therefore, at least some of the tokens recall such heroes’ individual profiles, and are thus particularly important iconographical sources: Oineus, for example, is very rarely represented,²⁵ while, if the identification is right, L1 would be the only known representation of Leos (except on monuments collectively and indistinguishably representing all the eponymous heroes, such as the Parthenon Frieze).²⁶

to the warrior figures on AIA1–2 and O1, which are similar to the one on tokens inscribed with PRY; see Svoronos (1900, 338 nos. 241–3, pl. IV 12) and on the token type see Crosby (1964, 109 L 243, pl. 28), of Roman date (probably third century CE) and probably representing Ares.

²¹ Gkikaki 2020, 128 commentary under no. 30. According to Svoronos (1900, 327–28 no. 103), he sits on a rock. If so, it is not possible to verify whether the rock is a reference to his cult place, whose identification is problematic. It is often thought to coincide with the *Leokorion*, which is known in the sources for being the cult place of his daughters; see Di Cesare (2014a, 1259–60) for a brief discussion of the sources and Camp (2020, 633–49) for new material of the tribe *Leontis* found in the north side of the Agora and feeding the debate.

²² For the personification of the *Demos* on tokens, see Gkikaki 2020, 97–98 and Gkikaki (forthcoming); for the use of the word λεώς, attic form of λαός see *LSJ*⁹ s.v. λαός

²³ Hyginus, *Fabulae* 187. H1 was pierced after manufacture, to be worn as a pendent.

²⁴ For a discussion concerning the identification of the eponymous heroes on the Parthenon frieze, see Neils 2001, 158–61; for pictures of the slabs depicting them, see Jenkins (1994, 77, 80–81). Two reliefs, possibly belonging to tribal decrees, might display a more individual representation of two eponymous heroes: Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung Sk 808, where a figure next to a horse is possibly Hippothoon, see Kron (1976, 186–87, 237–38, 280–81 (4) = H17), Lawton (1995, 145 no. 148); or Athens, National Museum 2949+2960, where Kekrops is portrayed with his serpentine tail, see also Kron (1976, 102, 237 n. 1155, 262 K 32); Lawton (1995, 140–41 no. 138).

²⁵ See Kron (1976, 189) for the attestations.

²⁶ For representations of Leos, see Kron 1976, 280.

On other types with two-letter legends, even when paired with official devices like the owl,²⁷ it is not possible to draw conclusions with any certainty.²⁸ Particularly problematic is a token type (Postolacca 1868, 271 no. 39: ΔE /female head) which has often been considered as tribal. Dumont and Benndorf tentatively interpreted the head as the personification of the tribe and that of the Council (*he Boule*) respectively, while Svoronos proposed Artemis.²⁹ Once again, the legend is too short to be conclusive either way and, given the uncertainties about the (badly preserved) female head on side B, I would hesitate to include this type among the certain or probable tribal ones.³⁰ I am also doubtful about Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 148, pl. II 29, with a monogram consisting of K, P, E of lunate form, in incuse, thought to shorten 'Kekropis', while it could abbreviate names starting with KRE (or KER).³¹

A few more types have proved to be not convincingly tribal. Svoronos 1900, 329 nos. 121–25 were all attributed to the *Antigonis* tribe, but the device on side A of no. 124 (an elephant walking right) seems to reflect that of the coins of another Hellenistic dynasty: the Seleucids, and not

²⁷ Deme tokens could certainly feature the owl as a device: e.g. Svoronos 1900, 332 nos. 153–55, pl. II 35, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.153>.

²⁸ This is the case of Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 120 (no device, just inscribed AN/-); Svoronos 1900, 330 nos. 130–32 (AN owl left, in oval incuse/beetle-or cicada, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.130>), for which see also Gkikaki (forthcoming); Svoronos 1900, 329 no. 116 (A-I owl right with a palm branch on its right/-); Svoronos 1900, 332 no. 156 (O-I one-handed vase/-). Such abbreviations could also shorten names of demes or magistrates and, if AN shortens a tribal name, it would be ambiguous, particularly in cases when tokens with such a legend were produced after the creation of the *Antigonis* tribe, i.e. 307/6. Not surprisingly, given this ambiguity, Crosby (1964, 93, 101) does not suggest a tribal identification for L66 or L156a–b, possibly or certainly marked with AI or AN. Also, Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 133 (owl right, A–N in the field right and left, T above/three torches) is ambiguous. For what concerns Svoronos (1900, 330 no. 141) (ϵ^p standing frontal Apollon *Lykeios*/-), the same letters (although not lunate and with a different layout), attested with a different device in a series of tokens (whose diameter is approximately the same as our specimen), are thought to abbreviate a personal name, possibly a magistrate's; see Crosby 1964, 90–92 L43–L56.

²⁹ Dumont 1870, 76 no. 13; Benndorf 1875, 602 no. 9; Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 151–52, pl. II 33–34. The head of the personified *Boule* is known on a few other token types: Svoronos 1900, 333 no. 173–76; Crosby 1964, 93 L67 (for the identification, see Gkikaki 2020, 98–99).

³⁰ Considerations on the legend can be extended to the uniface token published by Gkikaki (2020, 128 no. 30), which has ΔE of lunate form, in wreath. See also the ΔE legend in Svoronos (1900, 331 no. 152, pl. II 34), which is also of lunate form.

³¹ Monograms are common in the Hellenistic period; see Postolacca 1868, pl. K; Crosby 1964, 88–89 L23–36 pl. 19 for tokens; see de Callatay (2012) for coins, especially in royal mints.

the Antigonids.³² Likewise, nos. 121–23 were associated to the *Antigonis* tribe because of the A and the Athena whom Svoronos calls ‘Promachos, as that on Antigonos’ coins’. He probably refers to a series of coins issued by Antigonos Gonatas, most likely representing the Pellian cult statue of Athena Alkidemos, the Macedonian national goddess.³³ Tribe *Antigonis* was not founded in his honour, but in honour of Antigonos the One-Eyed; therefore, there is no need to attribute to such tokens any tribe-related significance.

No. 125, a uniface token, depicts an elephant carrying a tower on his back, with the letters A on the top part of the field and an E between its feet: as towers on elephants are certainly attested from Pyrrhos onwards,³⁴ the attribution is not convincing. Svoronos 1900, 330 nos. 136–38 were assigned to *Demetrias*: no. 137, with a helmet of *pilos-konos* type, a palm branch and the legend Δ–H, is more likely to be a public token, where the abbreviations are to be read ‘ΔΗΜΟΣΙΟΝ’ (*demosion*, meaning ‘of the state’).³⁵ Although Svoronos suggested it be read as ΔΗΜΗΤΡ[ΙΑΣ], the ligature on Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 136, pl. II 22 is not enough to recommend it as a tribal token; instead, it could stand for the name of a magistrate. A very tricky specimen is Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 134, whose side A represents the head of a man, interpreted as Attalos, thanks to the legend AT; nonetheless, the portrait is more likely to be of the late Republican period.³⁶ Not even Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 135 can be attributed to the *Attalis* tribe, as specimens of the same type from Agora contexts pre-date the creation of the tribe.³⁷ For Svoronos 1900, 332 nos. 153–55, he proposed two possibilities, either the tribe *Oineis* or to the deme *Oinoe*: he was certainly right in considering the latter more likely, given the legend OI-NO.³⁸

³² See Coşkun 2012, 65–66.

³³ According to Lorber (2018, 59), Athena Alkidemos occurs on coins of Antigonos Gonatas and Philip V, while the archaistic figure of Athena brandishing a spear represented on coins of Ptolemy I would be a more universal Athena, alluding to military achievements. The latter perhaps resembles more closely the figure on the above-mentioned tokens.

³⁴ Scullard 1974, 240–41.

³⁵ Schäfer 2019, 53 with n. 80; Gkikaki 2021, 64–65 with special reference to Crosby 1964, 102 L161. The same applies to Svoronos 1900, 330 no. 138 with the same type and just the letter Δ.

³⁶ Postolacca (1868, 276 no. 157) identified it as Julius Caesar; one must admit that the legend is puzzling.

³⁷ Crosby 1964, 89 L 27*b*–*c* from the deposit A18:8, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorai1832>; see also Kroll 1993, 302.

³⁸ See also Crosby 1964, 79 n. 12, 100 L147, 100 L157; Gkikaki 2021, 58 n. 18.

Dating and Find-Spots

Dating such objects is particularly difficult, as quite often they either lack excavation contexts or they come from much later contexts. The latter is the case of **H5** and **H6**, found in a sixth century CE context in the south-west area of the Agora (deposit D16:7) and in a Byzantine-era context north-west of the square (G3) respectively, therefore several centuries later than their initial production.³⁹ On the other hand, **AIA3(6)** comes from the filling of Pnyx III. Reconstruction of Pnyx III began ca. 346–42, which therefore is the *terminus ante quem* for type **AIA3**.⁴⁰ In **H2**, the piglet-on-staff motif closely recalls the iconography of the obverse of certain Athenian coin types, dated between the 350s and the early to mid-330s,⁴¹ which would provide us with a more solid chronological reference for this token too.⁴² Such specimens prove that tribal tokens were already in use around the mid-fourth century.

Manufacturing and palaeographic details may provide us with hints for dating such objects. When uniface and relatively small (with a diameter often around 12–14 mm), tribal tokens can typically be safely dated to the Hellenistic period (mostly third to second centuries), and perhaps even earlier in the fourth century.⁴³ For a few types (**H1**, **AIA5**, **E2** and **L1**), with a consistently bigger diameter (equal to or greater than 19–20 mm), we might perhaps exclude a fourth century or early Hellenistic date and think about a second- to first-century one, perhaps even slipping into the Roman period.⁴⁴ In the case of **E2**, such consideration would be supported both by the lunate letters (quite common in the Hellenistic period, specifically in the second century, as well as in the Roman)⁴⁵ and the spelling ΕΡΕΧΘΕΙΔΟΣ, increasingly attested after 330.⁴⁶ **H1**'s device is basically the same found in

³⁹ For the find contexts, consult the references under cat. no. **H5** and **H6** in this text.

⁴⁰ Crosby 1964, 83; see Lawall (2005, 50–53) for the chronological revision of the reconstruction of Pnyx III.

⁴¹ Kroll 1993, 30 and 40–41, varieties 38–40.

⁴² For the relationship between coins and tokens, see Bubelis 2010, 177–82 and Crisà, Gkikaki and Rowan 2019, 4–6.

⁴³ Crosby 1964, 76. Crosby (1964, 79 with n. 12) assigned several types to the Hellenistic period, namely AIG1–3; O1, ANT1, P1, E1; Crosby (1964, 85) also classified **H5** and **H6** in her section III, containing Hellenistic or earlier tokens.

⁴⁴ Crosby 1964, 76*b–c* assigns tokens of larger sizes either to the Roman or to the Late Hellenistic period.

⁴⁵ Guarducci 1967, 377.

⁴⁶ Threatte 1980, 1.374–76. The same considerations about the spelling apply to the legends in AIG1–2, whose diameters would make a dating in the Hellenistic period probable. Also, Crosby (1964, 79 with n. 12) believes that these types are Hellenistic.

H2–3, 5–6 (almost all the types of *Hippothontis*), suggesting therefore that it might have been used for a quite lengthy timespan.

By looking at our catalogue, one may note that the tribes created by Kleisthenes are all represented, while among the other five only a token of Ptolemais (**PT1**) is known. The creation of the tribe in 224/3 constitutes the *terminus post quem*. Therefore, **PT1** might be Hellenistic, when other post-Kleisthenic tribes were active. Probably the lack of tokens of the other post-Kleisthenic tribes might be either a result of chance survivals or as a result of difficulties in identifying tokens. As the *Hadrianis* tribe was introduced at a much later stage, the lack of evidence for it might be due to different factors (perhaps even a change in the praxis).

Contexts of Use

Tribal tokens were certainly used in more than one context, and different series might have served the same purpose. Specifying the tribal affiliation through a device and/or name would have been particularly important during events where many or all tribes took part (a consideration which also applies to demes, of which a few specimens are known), but it would have been suitable also for occasions involving only one tribe.⁴⁷ **AIA3(6)** comes from the filling of Pnyx III, which included material coming from nearby houses as well as sanctuaries.⁴⁸ **H5** and **H6** regrettably come from much later contexts. Nonetheless, some activities concerning tribal tokens might have centred in the Agora and its surroundings.

Types **H4**, **AKA1**, **K1** and **L4** have similarities in manufacture (diameters, same clipped flans, fabric) and are also characterised by three-letter abbreviations as well as the apices on the letter: they could belong to a series composed of a total of ten different types, one for each tribe. **AIG3** shares the same technical features, but the legend (the eponymous name) is not limited to the first three letters, instead it has the name written in full. This type also makes us aware of the possibility that the above-mentioned series might shorten eponymous names. The series certainly proves that tokens were used in at least some occasions where all tribes had a role. While we might suppose that other similar series existed, some types could have been self-standing, used when all tribes

⁴⁷ For deme tokens, see e.g. Svoronos 1900, 328 nos. 110–11, 332 nos. 153–55; see also the discussion in Crosby (1964, 79 with n. 12 and 89 no. L38). Although not immediately apparent by looking at the legend or the device, each different type of the series in Crosby (1964, 90–92 L43–L56) might have been used by a deme, according to her.

⁴⁸ See Lawall 2005, 52–53.

were simultaneously carrying out the same activities, although individually organised, or made for their internal use.

Some types reproduce state devices, like Athena in **AIG1–2** and the owl with lifted wings in **ANT1**.⁴⁹ Wreaths could have a state meaning as well.⁵⁰ In tribal tokens, they either enclose legends (**PT1**) or devices (as in **AIA5** or in the badly preserved side **B** of **H3**).⁵¹ Public symbols could also be included in the field, in smaller dimensions, as the owl in **H1** and **H6** and the *kalathos* in **H1**.⁵² The bearded head in **L2** is particularly interesting: from its description (as it is not pictured in any of its publications), it would seem to recall the eponymous hero (bearded in **L1**)⁵³ or, perhaps, the *Demos* (which was similarly represented).⁵⁴

That said, one should be inclined to explore, first of all, the possibility that they were employed by the main governmental bodies. Nonetheless, tribal tokens seem to have been unnecessary for councillors (*bouleutai*), who sat by letter (*kata gramma*) from 410/9 onwards,⁵⁵ in the lawcourts, for jurors, assigned by lot to the courts, where they most probably also sat by letter,⁵⁶ and, in normal circumstances, in the Assembly. As far as the last is concerned, a tribal decree, carved on a prytanic dedication of the year 341/0 (*IG II³* 4, 76, ll. 78–80), says that tokens were distributed by the

⁴⁹ See e.g. Svoronos 1900, 327 no. 99, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.99> for a similar representation of the owl on side B (a public token, as the legend ΔHMO on side A denotes); see Svoronos (1900, 332 no. 153–55) and Crosby (1964, 100 L147) for the owl on deme tokens. On Athena's head as a state device, see Killen (2017, 180–81) and for the owl with lifted wings, Killen 2017, 175. For various state devices, including Athena's head and the owl on Athenian tokens: Gkikaki 2020, 103–09.

⁵⁰ Gkikaki 2021, 62–63 also on deme names within wreaths. Some letters within a wreath on an Agora token (Agora IL1168) have been restored by Crosby (1964, 89 L 38, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail1168>) with EA/AOY representing a shortened form of a deme name (Elaious). Such deme specimens are quite similar to some tribal ones; see e.g. PT1.

⁵¹ According to Svoronos 1900, 331 no. 145, pl. II 26, 'the symbol within the wreath in H3 has been tentatively identified as a stork, although the image is badly worn and rather unclear'.

⁵² For the *kalathos* as an official symbol, see the stamp on weights in Lang 1964, 28 LW 27, pl. 6, 30 LW 48, pl. 8.

⁵³ Gkikaki 2020, 128 with commentary under no. 30.

⁵⁴ See p. 95 with n. 22, above.

⁵⁵ *FGrHist* 328 (Philochoros) F 140. Similarly, if tokens at p. 96 represent the personification of the *Boule* and letters ΔE are short for Leontis, their possible function within the organ is difficult to understand. While the use of pay tokens for councillors (*bouleutai*) is possible, there is no reason why a tribe should be mentioned.

⁵⁶ According to Boegehold et al. (1995, 71) the phrasing of Philochorus' passage (*FGrHist* 328 F 140) could suggest that jurors already sat by letter as early as 410/9. On dikastic tokens, see Kroll in this volume.

Convenors of the People (*syllogeis tou demou*), a board of thirty, three from each tribe.⁵⁷ It is probable that the *syllogeis* of each tribe checked their own *phyletai*'s (tribal members) credentials.⁵⁸ After the check, tribal affiliation had no role, since citizens normally did not sit by tribe.⁵⁹

There has been a short period in which a tribe (or at least part of it) sat close together, being chosen by lot for the charge of the *bema*, to preside over it (*προεδρεύω*), as a law reported by Aeschines (Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* 33–34) states.⁶⁰ Whatever seating praxis was followed in the rest of the auditorium, whatever tokens were in use at that time, only in this case the presence of a tribal name/device would not be surprising, if there were tokens regulating the right of a specific tribe to sit in front and distributed by the *syllogeis* of that single tribe.

It is perhaps unlikely that tokens were minted with the primary aim of being used for simple allotment procedures (such as the one for choosing the prytanizing tribe), but we cannot exclude that they could have been re-employed with such function. In any case, simpler objects, perhaps even sherds with handwritten tribal names in an urn, would have been suitable. Referring again to the Assembly, it is important to note that it did not

⁵⁷ For the identification of the people mentioned in *IG II³* 4, 76, ll. 78–80 with the *syllogeis* (known from other sources), see Busolt and Swoboda (1926, 994 n. 2); on the *syllogeis* in general, see Rizzi (2020). For the Assembly pay and the tokens related to that, see Kroll in this volume.

⁵⁸ See also Kroll in this volume; Gkikaki (forthcoming). According to Hansen (1985, 224), they worked as a thirty-member team.

⁵⁹ See e.g. Stanton and Bicknell 1987 for the hypothesis that people sat by tribes or even by *trittyes*. The assumption was mainly based on a passage of Xenophon (*Hellenica* 1.7.9) reporting that during the Arginousae trial in 406 the Assembly voted using two *hydriai* for each tribe. As we do not know where they were placed, this passage, referring to Pnyx I, before the introduction of *misthos* (remuneration for public service) and therefore of pay tokens, cannot prove tribal seating; see Hansen 1988, 53–54. It was also based on some fifth-century *trittys* markers (one of which, *IG I³* 1120, was found on the Pnyx), which served other functions (see e.g. Humphreys 2018, 2.767 with n. 133). Moretti (2019, 135) thinks that people could have sat by tribes during some specific procedures, such as the election of the *strategoï*; nonetheless, this seems unnecessary by looking at the recent reconstructions of the procedure (see Hansen 2004, 59–61), which varied over time. No doubt, when in the late 390s Aristophanes' *Ekklesiazousai* (ll. 290–97) was first presented, everyone was apparently free to choose where to sit. It seems that, at a certain point in the fourth century, the *syllogeis* handed clay tokens to their *phyletai* to distribute them in different sections of the *auditorium*. See Makrypodi 2019; Makrypodi in this volume; Kroll in this volume.

⁶⁰ Hansen 1988, 57; Moretti 2019, 136 (who takes into account the possibility that only part of the tribe sat in front). Based on Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 4 and Demosthenes, *Against Aristogiton* I 90 (although the latter source might be a forgery; see Harris 2018, 193–94), such a law was soon judged to be not very efficacious: Hansen 2014, 392 with 38; cf. also Kroll in this volume.

gather only on the Pnyx. It was almost certainly similarly organised in other venues, as far as compatible with the architectural setting. From the Lycurgan period onwards, the Theatre of Dionysos was used for assemblies more and more frequently.⁶¹

As noted above, some scholars have suggested that tribal tokens were used as tickets, or as seat identifiers, during the Great Dionysia.⁶² Nonetheless, besides the fact that no such tokens are reported to have come from the area, the use of tokens as theatre tickets is far from certain.⁶³ Also, the possibility that people sat according to the tribal division is not particularly solid.⁶⁴ Among the people awarded with *prohedria* were some boards of magistrates, selected by tribe,⁶⁵ and some tribally organised categories had reserved places (like ephebes and *bouleutai*),⁶⁶ but there is no way to know whether they were further divided into tribes. Tribal affiliation in such context was not likely to have been of great significance.

Differently, it should have often been important during feasts.⁶⁷ The practice of eating together with other tribe members was certainly not limited to the festivals, which we are most well-informed about, such as the Panathenaia and the Great Dionysia, during which (in the Classical period) it is known that *hestiatores*, liturgists appointed by tribes, sponsored tribal banquets.⁶⁸ It is attested in certain exceptional circumstances as

⁶¹ See Tozzi (2016, esp. 279–87).

⁶² See p. 85, with n. 14, above.

⁶³ See e.g. Roselli (2011, 82–83). Svoronos (1900, chapter Θ') indexed AIA1–2 and AIG3 in the category 'ὀνόματα δραμάτων', given the existence of homonymous plays (even if the Oineus of the Euripidean play was the king of Kalydon). Tokens referring to a play would be uncustomary: Gkikaki (2021, 61) notes that people did not go to the theatre to watch a single play. See also Roselli (2011, 83 with n. 82). On the other hand, according to Gkikaki (2021, 61–62), tokens were used to prove exemption from payment and that therefore they should be identified with the *theorika*.

⁶⁴ See Russo 2022, para. 4.4.

⁶⁵ See Henry 1983, 291.

⁶⁶ See e.g. Hesychius s.v. βουλευτικόν; Pickard-Cambridge 1968, 268–70.

⁶⁷ Lucianus, *Timon* 49 mentions the distribution of the *theorikon* in connection with a *phyle* (tribe). However, he has been considered mistaken by Tomassi (2011, 477), since, at least during the Great Panathenaia, such distribution was based on the affiliation to demes (as per Demosthenes, *Against Leochares* 37). If the *theorikon* was not paid in cash, according to Gkikaki (2021, 60–61), tokens with deme names could have had such a use.

⁶⁸ Athenaeus (V.185) refers generally to tribal feasts that had been established in antiquity but still practised in Athens at the time of his source (Erodidus of Babylon, second century); see Marchiori 2001, 454. For what concerns the *hestiatores*, see e.g. Wilson 2000, 24 with n. 60. At the Panathenaia, there might have been a feasting after the main sacrifice and a different, tribal one organised by the *hestiatores*, at another point of the programme; otherwise, as suggested by P. Schmitt Pantel (1992, 126–30),

well, such as in the case of the *epinikia* celebrated with the victims bought from the spoils of the cities plundered by Khares in 356, when feasts were carried out *kata phylas*.⁶⁹ While participation in feasts might have been quite spontaneous, without knowing the peculiarities of each specific event, its spatial setting and organisation, the way it was funded and organised, we cannot totally exclude that, sometimes, tokens were needed to check the affiliation of those who were entitled to take part.⁷⁰

Also, grain distribution is thought to have been carried out tribally. The main evidence for this is *IG II*³ 1, 899, dated to 274/3, where, for each tribe, there seems to have been a *sitones* (grain purchaser, who was also in charge of its distribution).⁷¹ The source for the use of tokens in this context is *I. Eleusis* 182, ll.12–14 (267/6), recording the honouring of the *grammateus* of the treasurer of the grain fund for his efficiency ‘in the providing of grain and the *ekklesiastika* given out for the grain’.⁷² The inscription is a decree of the soldiers stationed at Eleusis, who certainly got their food from the surroundings.⁷³ Tribal affiliation had a strong importance in military contexts. However, according to Oliver, by the early Hellenistic period the assignation of soldiers to garrison demes (as at Eleusis) was probably not made by following the traditional call-up methods.⁷⁴ In any case, using tribal tokens for grain distribution seems to have been unnecessary and excessively complicated in controlled contexts such as garrisons.⁷⁵

one needs to suppose that the meat assigned by the *polis* after the main sacrifice (and distributed to the demes *IG II*³ 1, 447, ll. 47–53, as testified for the Lesser Panathenaia) was consumed during tribal feasting, and the *hestiatores* provided everything but the meat. See Parker 2005, 267. For what concerns the Great Dionysia, Wilson (2008, 116) believes that feasting sponsored by the *hestiatores* were different from the main sacrificial meal, and were perhaps those held on the day of dithyrambic competitions.

⁶⁹ Schol. Demosthenes, *Third Olynthiac*, 31; cf. Bubelis 2016, 100.

⁷⁰ As is known, the liturgic organisation of the Classical period attested for the above-mentioned festivals is a fourth century phenomenon, while the Hellenistic period is characterised by euergetism; see Schmitt Pantel (1997). For a discussion concerning the use of tokens during banquets in this latter period, see Gkikaki 2020, 118–20.

⁷¹ *IG II*³ 1, 899 = *IG II*² 792 + the fragment Agora I 1904. See e.g. Crosby 1964, 80 n. 18.

⁷² *I. Eleusis* 182, ll.12–14: ‘περὶ τὴν τοῦ σίτου δόσιν καὶ τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν τῶν δίδομένων ἐπὶ τὸν σίτο[ν]’. See Crosby 1964, 78. For a discussion on the use of ἐκκλησιαστικόν for different kinds of tokens, see Kroll in this volume; conversely, see Fantasia (1998, 222 with n. 72, 223), arguing that the term does not refer to *symbolon* but rather to money; he also argues that the distribution could have simply been carried out by checking people’s credentials before handing them rations (e.g. by ticking their names on lists).

⁷³ Oliver 2007, 150.

⁷⁴ Oliver 2007, 178–79.

⁷⁵ The cavalry also had a grain supply (see *IG II*² 1264). As in the Hellenistic period

Concerning distributions to the whole people, we should consider that they would have been difficult to carry out in a single day, especially as they depended on the supply; there are not enough details to reconstruct the specifics of the procedure.⁷⁶ Tribal boards of officials (as the *sitonai*) are particularly numerous, spanning from those related to the army to sacred ones.⁷⁷ It is clear, nonetheless, that one should try to resist from the equation ‘tribal magistrates = tribal tokens’ when thinking about a payment or some other kind of distribution, and instead consider each case individually. In a tribal decree in honour of Phanodemos (ca. 330–327) the well-known athidographer in l. 3 one reads: ([- - -]υ[.] πεν[τα]κοσίου[ς] κ[- -]). While a likely possibility for restoring the text would be [τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ] πεν[τα]κοσίου[ς] (the Council of the Five Hundred), the reference to a quantity of *medimnoi* (μεδιμνο]υ[ς] πεν[τα]κοσίου[ς] κ[αὶ] (δισ)χιλίου[ς]) has also been suggested.⁷⁸ By retaining this latter restoration, we would have a reference to a donation of grain to the tribe and the people (or only to the tribe) made in a period of shortage.⁷⁹ A donation of grain to a single tribe would perhaps be compatible with the use of tribal tokens, but one must acknowledge that the inscription is very lacunose.

Indeed, it is worth focusing on specifically tribal activities, e.g. those which were peculiar to the individual tribes. Assemblies were the most important events (and probably not too frequent an occurrence), where different matters were discussed; they were often held in conjunction with festive events and rituals, such as – quite possibly – the sacrifice to the eponymous hero.⁸⁰ Tribal activities centred in tribal seats (i.e. the eponymous heroes’ shrines), which were scattered around different parts of Attica. Their location is not always known with certainty and, even when it is, their spatial articulation and therefore the exact way in which tribal activities were carried out is not always easy to reconstruct.⁸¹ They were shrines, originally designed to host cults and therefore not always adapted to host activities involving many participants: for this reason, spaces in the immediate vicinity might have been used by the tribes as well.⁸²

there were generally two hundred horsemen (except for a few occasions, when the number was brought to three hundred or even five hundred, about which see Bugh 1988, 186–91), using twelve different types of tokens would have been unneeded.

⁷⁶ Fantasia 1998, 220–21.

⁷⁷ See Jones 1987, 39–57.

⁷⁸ Bardani and Matthaïou 2010–13 (= *SEG* 63.98).

⁷⁹ Bardani and Matthaïou 2010–13 (= *SEG* 63.98), see also Lambert (AIO 870, www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/SEG/6398).

⁸⁰ See Jones (1999, 161–69) for their activities; see Russo (2020, 247 with nn. 15, 17) for the association of assemblies with other events.

⁸¹ See Russo 2022, para. 3.1 for a discussion on tribal seats.

⁸² Russo (2020, 249) for the case of the tribes based on the Acropolis.

There is no evidence for the existence of a *misthos* (remuneration) and, therefore, pay tokens would not be supported.⁸³ However, we might think that there were occasions needing some control, especially when the inclusion of non-members might have caused problems of some type (e.g. in the case of votes). People attending tribal assemblies might have numbered a few hundred in some situations.⁸⁴ The use of tokens to check affiliation might have been particularly needed in cases when the tribal shrine was located in places where a conspicuous number of non-*phyletai* had reason to come. For example, on the slopes of the Kolonos Agoraios, the *Eurysakeion*, the headquarters of the *Aiantis* tribe, was also a reference point for other groups.⁸⁵ Tribal *epimeletai* were chosen each year: they were in charge of summoning the Assembly and – we might suppose – also to check that those who attended were indeed all members.⁸⁶

We might wonder whether something can be inferred about such object's context of use by looking at those featuring devices other than the official symbols of the *polis* or tribal themes. Devices were codes, and therefore any symbol would have served the purpose for which tokens were needed, as far as the magistrate was able to recognise it.⁸⁷ No doubt, some could have merely served to distinguish different series and prevent fraud.⁸⁸ In the case of periodically recurring events, they indicated the specific occasion in which tokens were meant to be used: they were therefore, in a certain sense, 'time stamps'.⁸⁹ These observations could perhaps explain some designs on side B, such as the horse Arion (L3),⁹⁰ or perhaps the monogram on PI's side B, Helios on both sides of AIA4,⁹¹ as well as some symbols in smaller size, as perhaps the plough in AIG2 (which nonetheless somehow relates to the main device, as the tool was introduced by Athena).

⁸³ Russo 2020, 248.

⁸⁴ See Russo 2020, 248.

⁸⁵ For the other association using the *Eurysakeion*, see Jones 1999, 160 specifically on the *Ptolemais* tribe; similarly, see Humphreys 2018, 2.649 on the genos of the *Salaminioi*. Current excavations are feeding the debate on the exact location of the seat of the *Leontis* tribe; see p. 95 n. 21, above. If it was indeed located on the north side of the Agora, it might have had the same problems of the seat of *Aiantis*, in terms of being in a highly frequented part of the *asty*.

⁸⁶ Humphreys 2018, 2.745 with n. 67.

⁸⁷ See Bubelis 2010, 186–87.

⁸⁸ A similar function is that of countermarks (which are never attested on tribal tokens). On countermarks, see Crosby 1964, 83; Bubelis 2010, 190.

⁸⁹ Bubelis 2010, 186–87; Gkikaki 2021, 59 with n. 27.

⁹⁰ One might also wonder whether the horse could be a pun on the name of a magistrate, starting with API.

⁹¹ For Helios on tokens, see also Crosby 1964, 111 L 261, 119 L 313 and Gkikaki 2020, 129 no. 34.

Some tokens present a striking semantic coherence between the two sides. The piglet-on-staff (the mystic staff of the initiates, made of bound myrtle boughs) on **H2** also occurs on some Athenian coin types, thought to be ‘festival coinage’, with a role in the Eleusinian Mysteries (and not in the Eleusinia, given the iconography).⁹² One would be tempted to think that **H2** was used during a festival too, but the presence of this device on a token of *Hippothontis*, based in Eleusis, might also appear as a further reference to the tribe (as would also be the case if **L2**’s B-side represents Leos). One should never forget how the use of specific imagery could have also been a way to recall collective heritage and deeds.⁹³ Also, the clear reference to Dionysos on both sides of **E1** (Dionysos with *thyrsus* and *kantharos*/*thyrsus* and tripod) is unlikely to have been a coincidence, and perhaps points toward the use of the object during the Dionysia.⁹⁴ Even assuming that one of the sides was a time stamp, this does not mean that the choice of design was random and unrelated to the context of the token’s use.

It is, of course, not possible to find a meaning for all devices. Type **AIA3**’s one is particularly cryptic. It represents a *hydria* viewed in profile (with one horizontal lateral handle perhaps barely discernible),⁹⁵ depicted between two smaller cylindrical vessels, of which only the right one has diagonal and horizontal lines crossing its body, resembling a receptacle, not made of clay but of some other material (such as wicker).⁹⁶ The only other *hydria* known to be represented on tokens, depicted with a slightly different shape and being perhaps frontally pictured, has two sprays projecting from the mouth, interpreted as ears of wheat, for which it was probably connected with wheat distributions.⁹⁷ As noted, the fact that one of the specimens, **AIA3(6)**, was found in the filling of Pnyx III (which contained material from houses and sanctuaries) is not helpful, besides not allowing us to be sure that the object was used in the Assembly. In any case, since *hydriai* were used in non-domestic circumstances, such as rituals, political processes and

⁹² Kroll 1993, 27–28 and p. 98 with n. 41, above; cf. also Bremmer 2014, 17.

⁹³ For example, whatever function **L1** had, it refers to a victory, perhaps to one which already occurred. There are no hints at a specific victory and Nike has no attributes, allowing us to take into account the possibility that the victory is not necessarily an athletic or musical one, but also the award of a prize to the tribe or the *prytaneis* (see p. 107 n. 98, below), which which would be suitable for a type usable many times and in many different contexts.

⁹⁴ The device of **AIA5**, representing a *kithara* and therefore a possible reference to Apollon, can be interpreted as a reference to a festival, albeit being less straightforward than those on **E1**.

⁹⁵ A *hydria* had already been identified by Rostovtzeff (1903, 311 no. 11) in **AIA3(5)**.

⁹⁶ Perhaps not surprisingly, Davidson and Thompson (1943, 106 no. 6) call it a ‘*cista*’.

⁹⁷ Crosby 1964, 92 L 56a–d.

also awarded as prizes in various competitions,⁹⁸ our difficulties in finding a meaning should not prevent us from considering that this device was carefully chosen to hint at its context of use (whatever this may have been).

Conclusion

The category of tribal tokens, referring to those tokens for which a connection with tribes can be established thanks to the legend, the iconography, or both, comprises a relatively varied quantity of types. Tribal tokens were mostly used in the Hellenistic period. There is no clear evidence of their contexts of use, but it is likely that they were used both for collective activities (i.e. for activities involving the whole *polis*, according to its subdivisions) and for activities carried out by each tribe individually. Their role in collective activities was previously often suggested by the presence of tribal boards of officials, which are nonetheless not a sufficient proof, as the case of *syllogeis* exemplifies. Their use to indicate where people had to sit either in the Theatre of Dionysos or on the Pnyx can be excluded (unless, very tentatively, in the case of the short period of the presiding tribe); likewise, those sources concerning grain distribution do not generally seem to require their use. Some *polis* symbols and the presence of a series (probably originally featuring a type for each tribe) certainly support the role of tokens in collective events. The wide variety of festivals and feasts carried out in Athens possibly allows both the use of individual types and of ten types series. In any case, while former hypotheses (excluding that of Prokesch-Osten) were mostly focused on the collective dimensions of the activities requiring tribal tokens, their usage in individual tribes' activities can be taken into account.

Unfortunately, most symbols remain elusive, and hopefully new evidence will shed further light on this fascinating category of objects.

E1(1), P1, AIG1–3, L1(1), L3, L4, K1(1), H4(1), AIA3(1), AIA4, ANT1(1), PT1: from Svoronos; E1(2), AIA3(2): Postolacca 1866; AIA3(4), AIA5: Engel 1884; E2, AIA3(9): Benndorf 1875; AIA3(6): Ephorate of Antiquities

⁹⁸ E.g. for the *hydriai* as voting equipment, see Lopez-Rabatel 2019a, 36; for sortition, see Lopez-Rabatel 2019b, esp. 44–45; for other procedures, see e.g. the selections of the judges at the Great Dionysia: Wilson 2000, 99. By looking at tribal competitions, in *IG II²* 2311, l. 77, the *hydria* is the individual prize (i.e. for the runner arriving to the end) for the Panathenaic tribal torch race and perhaps also the prize in the competition of the *prytaniai*, awarded to the tribe which best served the interests of the state during the year, as suggested by Lawton (1995, 127–28 no. 97) based on an early fourth century dedication for the victory of the tribe *Kekropis* (Acropolis Museum 3367+2542+Epigraphic Museum 8024), where the vase is represented. The evidence for the competition dates to the fourth century; see Meritt and Traill (1974, 2) for details.

of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Mairi Gkikaki © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.); H5: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.); H6: Crosby 1964 © Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.); AKAI: © Staatliche Münzsammlung Munich. Photo: Mairi Gkikaki; E1(3), H4(2), H4(3): © The Trustees of the British Museum; O1, H1–3, AIA1(1–2), 2(1): © Numismatic Museum, Athens. Photo: Daria Russo © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.); AIA3(10): © The Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection. Unless otherwise stated, for the precise reference, see each entry in the catalogue.

II

New Finds, Embarking on Modern Interpretations

Chapter 5

Athenian Clay Tokens: New Types, New Series

Stamatoula Makrypodi

During the international conference ‘Tokens: Culture, Connections, Communities’, held at the University of Warwick, 8–10 June 2017, previously unpublished Athenian clay tokens from the Numismatic Museum of Athens were presented. The new data was published in 2019.¹ Only a few Athenian clay tokens were known prior to then. Some of them were published by J.N. Svoronos in 1905.² Twelve clay tokens from the Numismatic Museum of Athens Collections were published by K.M. Konstantopoulos in *Archaiologikon Deltion* (1930–31).³ M. Crosby published twenty-six clay tokens found in the Athenian Agora.⁴ A few clay tokens were published among the small objects from the Pnyx.⁵ Clay tokens stamped with the names of Athenian military commanders were published by J.H. Kroll and F.W. Mitchel in 1980.⁶ In 2017, the author’s research focused on two major groups of clay tokens handed into the museum, the first between 1928 and 1932, and the second in 2005. The entry of the first group in the museum’s registries coincides with Konstantopoulos’ publication in the *Archaiologikon Deltion* 1930–31, where, however, only twelve specimens were presented.

I wish to thank Dr Mairi Gkikaki for her kind invitation to speak at the ‘Tokens: The Athenian Legacy to the Modern World’ workshop, 16–17 December 2019, and for her helpful remarks and invaluable support. Thanks are also owed to John H. Kroll for sharing his manuscript ‘Lettered and other tokens in the Lawcourts and the Assembly of Athens’, as well as his thoughts and concerns in the context of this volume. I also thank Katerina Dimitriadi, for her critical reading of the English text.

¹ Makrypodi 2019, 27–39.

² Svoronos 1905, 323–28.

³ Konstantopoulos 1930–31, 30–37.

⁴ Crosby 1964, 124–30, pl. 31–32.

⁵ Davidson and Thompson 1943, 104–08.

⁶ Kroll and Mitchel 1980, 86–96.

Comparative examination of the aforementioned groups, the shared pictorial types, the similarity of the clay and the style of their representations led to the conclusion that these tokens are part of the same ensemble. As a result, the publication of 2019 yielded fifty-six clay tokens that more than tripled the total specimens that were known up to that point. The common characteristics of the tokens and the information in the publication of the *Archaiologikon Deltion* concerning their origin from the Hill of the Museion helped to attribute the entirety of the tokens to the same area. The place of origin, near the Hill of the Pnyx, in addition to the letters of the Greek alphabet that several tokens bear on one side indicating their use by a large body of citizens, led to the conclusion that they are tokens for the Assembly (*εκκλησιαστικά σύμβολα*).⁷ The paper published in 2019 aimed at identifying the origin of the tokens.⁸ Following their preliminary publication in 2019, the present paper presents all the clay lettered tokens that were accessioned by the Numismatic Museum in two phases, firstly in 1928–32 and secondly in 2005, in order to provide a comprehensive study of the complete series. The study of the dies and the shape and form of the letters of the tokens is expected to provide information concerning their production and dating. Observations on the material characteristics of the tokens will contribute to the understanding of their role in the context of the participation of the Athenian citizens in the Athenian Assembly. Clay tokens published by Svoronos in 1905⁹ and those found during the excavations of the Athenian Agora¹⁰ will be presented as parallels.

Clay Lettered Tokens

The clay lettered tokens included in the publication of 2019 can be categorised into seven series depending on the pictorial type on one side (wreath, human head bearing little wings, herm, dove, horse, rose and tripod).¹¹ In addition to them, we will present twenty-three new clay tokens bearing a pictorial type on one side and a letter of the Greek alphabet on the other (Table 5.1). The eight new types of tokens stated in bold have not been included in the publication of 2019.

⁷ Makrypodis 2019, 34 and 34 with n. 28.

⁸ Cf. the title of the paper: ‘Tokens Inside and Outside Excavation Contexts; seeking the Origin. Examples of Clay Tokens from the Collections of the Athens Numismatic Museum’.

⁹ Svoronos 1905.

¹⁰ Crosby 1964, 124–30, pls. 31–32.

¹¹ Makrypodis 2019, 38, Table 1.

Table 5.1 New clay tokens



Side A	Side B
Janiform head	B, beta (cat. nos. 1–5)
wreath	alpha in double lines (cat. no. 6)
	B, beta in double lines (cat. nos. 7–10)
	Γ, gamma retrograde or Π, pi (cat. nos. 11–12)
<i>Hippalectryon</i> (?)	Η , eta in the monogram form (cat. nos. 13–15)
Demeter standing	I, iota (cat. nos. 22–24)
human head bearing little wings	Σ, sigma or Μ, mu (cat. no. 31),
	Φ, phi (cat. nos. 32–35),
	Χ, chi (cat. nos. 36–38)
herm	Υ, upsilon (cat. nos. 45–48)
	Π , sampi in double lines (cat. nos. 39–44)
	Ξ, xi in double lines (cat. nos. 49–51)
sphinx	Ω, omega in double lines (cat. no. 52)
	Σ, sigma or Μ, mu in double lines (cat. no. 53)
dove	Ζ , zeta in double lines (cat. no. 16)
	Κ, kappa in double lines (cat. no. 17)
	Ο, omicron in double lines (cat. no. 18)
	Υ, upsilon in double lines (cat. nos. 19–21)
rose	Π, pi in double lines (cat. nos. 26–27)
horse	Ρ, rho retrograde in double lines (cat. no. 29–30)
	Ξ, xi in double lines (cat. nos. 28)
Maltese dog	Ξ, xi in double lines (cat. no. 25)
woman's head	Ψ, psi (cat. nos. 54–58)
kneeling figure 1	Ω, omega (cat. no. 59)
kneeling figure 2	Ω, omega in double lines (cat. no. 60)
tripod	Π , sampi in double lines (cat. no. 61–64)

Therefore, the number of the varieties is raised to fifteen. All the above tokens have many similarities with each other in terms of clay and iconographic representations. They can also be attributed to the same ensemble as those published in 2019. Finally, there is a token with an unspecified representation

(possibly a human figure raising or adorning a trophy) and the letter Xi (Ξ) on the other side (cat. no. 65). Its clay is light brown and bears dark grey sediments. It seems to have remained in a layer of ash. The same observations apply for token cat. no. 6 with wreath and letter Alpha (Α).

The Iconography of the Tokens: Imagery, Dies, Duplicates and Parallels

The assemblage of the clay tokens under examination is lacunose. This is evident by the absence of some letters of the Greek alphabet, as well as the different number of preserved examples of each series. Additionally, the tokens have not been cleared of sediments, and this is the reason why the distinction of details is quite difficult. Having all these difficulties in mind, we endeavour first to make some remarks concerning the iconography of the tokens, as well as some parallels of the images found on other clay, lead and bronze tokens, or other artefacts. Second, we will refer to the characteristics of the unidentified depicted figures that may lead to their identification and, possibly, to the use of different dies.

The die used for the Janiform head of cat. nos. 1–4 seems to have produced one more clay token included in the Svoronos publication (cat. no. 5).¹² A clay token from the Athenian Agora bears a Janiform head; however, it seems not to have been produced with the same die as the Janiform head on our tokens. Additionally, the token from the Agora bears a *kantharos* on the other side and not a letter of the Greek alphabet, as opposed to the tokens cat. nos. 1–5.¹³ The hybrid creature of cat. nos. 13–15 can possibly be interpreted as an *hippalectryon* (half-horse and half-rooster). The trunk of the figure is depicted frontally with open wings on both sides. We can see the horse's head on the right and the tail of the rooster on the left. On side A of cat. no. 13, the rooster's legs are clearly distinct.¹⁴ This representation seems to be without parallel on other clay, lead or bronze tokens. An additional feature that differentiates these tokens is the monogram of their side B. This consists of the two first letters of eta (H, HTA,  in the monogram form) with the crossbar of eta supplying a horizontal *hasta* (stroke) for tau (T) and a short vertical stroke attached to the horizontal, an addition necessary to distinguish the letter eta (H) from zeta ().¹⁵

¹² Svoronos 1905, 338 (cat. no. 75, pl. IX,1).

¹³ Crosby 1964, 127 (C7A, pl. 32). Janiform masks on lead tokens have been found in the Athenian Agora and have been published by Crosby (1964, 90–91 L44, pl. 20; 94 L79, pl. 22; 106 L208, pl. 27).

¹⁴ For the classification of such hybrid creatures in categories, cf. Killen 2018, 56.

¹⁵ The same monogram is used for Eta on certain other tokens and dikastic ballots/*psephoi*: Boegehold 1960, 395–98; Svoronos 1923–26, pl. 101.7.

Wreaths as those of **cat. nos. 6–12** are depicted on lead tokens of the Athenian Agora, and also on a number of small bronze tokens.¹⁶ A dove (**cat. no. 19**) combined with the letter upsilon (Υ) in double lines in Svoronos' publication may have been produced with the same die as **cat. nos. 16, 18, 20** and **21**. However, the partial impression of the die on those tokens does not allow any safe comparisons. The tripods depicted on tokens **cat. nos. 61–64** seem not to have any exact parallel. A tripod on a clay token in the collections of the Numismatic Museum of Athens published by Svoronos does not seem to bear any similarities with those mentioned before.¹⁷ There are representations of tripods on small bronze tokens,¹⁸ on lead tokens, as well as the image of Herakles stealing the Delphic tripod on a clay token.¹⁹ The lead token type with tripod accompanied by the inscription [EPEXΘ] (reading *Erechtheis*) and paired with Dionysos in full figure on the other side belongs to the special category of tribal tokens.²⁰

Besides the above-mentioned cases, some observations concerning particular varieties of tokens may be noticed. The series with the representation of a herm (right), a *kerykeion* (left field), and the sprays of a leafy bush (right field), provides the majority of examples. By comparing the best-preserved images (**cat. nos. 39, 48** and **51**), we can observe differences concerning the rendering of the branches and the distance between them. Additionally, the front side of the herm of **cat. no. 48** is rendered with a strong curvature, while the front face of **cat. no. 39** is formed with a straight line. It seems that two or even three different dies have been used for side A. Herms can be identified on small bronze and lead tokens.²¹

The human head of **cat. nos. 31–38** can hardly be identified. The description 'human head bearing little wings' derives from Konstantopoulos

¹⁶ Crosby 1964, 82 with n. 27, 87 (L1, L6, L9, L14, pl. 19), 88 (L16, L19, pl. 19), 89 (L36, L38, L41, pl. 19), 91 (L51, pl. 20), 94 (L73, pl. 21), 100 (L142 pl. 24), 101 (L158, pl. 25). Wreaths on lead tokens from the Athenian Agora usually enclose letters, inscriptions, objects or other representations. Cf. Gkikaki 2020, 98–99 and 104. Wreaths on small bronze tokens: Postolakas 1880, 10 no. 33, pl. A' 33 (the other side is Zeta (Ζ)); 14 no. 62, pl. B' 62 (the other side is A with a globule).

¹⁷ Svoronos 1905, 332 (cat. no. 47 pl. X,19). The diameter of that token (12 mm) is smaller than the tokens mentioned in this paper.

¹⁸ Potolakas 1884, 19–20, with no catalogue number and no image (paired with head of Athena on the other side).

¹⁹ Crosby 1964, 91 L 53a–c, pl. 20 and Crosby 1964, 127 C6, pl. 32.

²⁰ Russo in this volume, pp. 85–86, above and cat. nos. E1(1–3).

²¹ Postolakas 1884, 13–14 (cat. nos. 75 and 82, pl. 2), 15–16 (cat. nos. 88 and 94, pl. 2), 17–18 (cat. no. 96, pl. 2); Kroll 2015, 109 (cat. no. 1, pl. 1); Crosby 1964, 104–05 L193–L198, pl. 26.

in the publication of 1930–31.²² What has not been understood is that the representation expands on two levels; on the upper level there is a human head, whereas on the lower one there is a four-legged animal, which looks like a Maltese dog, as on **cat. no. 25**. It seems that the same die has been used for all the examples for side a. The best-preserved representations are those of **cat. nos. 31, 32, 33, 37 and 38**. The differences observed between **cat. nos. 34, 35 and 36** and the previous ones is more likely to be the result of damage of the die or of the token itself or a poor imprint of the die rather than a different die having been used. However, the use of a different die cannot be excluded: the imprint of the outline of the die is much closer to the back of the head in the **cat. no. 34** than that of the **cat. no. 38**.

Among the newly presented tokens, **cat. nos. 22–24** bear on side A the representation of the female figure standing in three-quarter view to the right, dressed in peplos and with a short mantle covering her head. She rests her right hand on a grounded sceptre and there are two ears of grain turned downwards in her left hand. This figure can be attributed to the goddess Demeter (or Kore).²³ Side A may have been produced with the same die, although **cat. no. 24a** is covered with sediments.

To produce the tokens bearing a woman's head on side A and the letter psi (Ψ) on side B (**cat. nos 54, 55, and 57**²⁴), the same die has been used for side A. The same die has been used for the letter psi on side B on both tokens. That of **cat. no. 56** is an exception, since different dies have been used in relation to the previous tokens, both for side A and for side B. The same dies as in **cat. no. 56** have been used for the token published by Svoronos in 1905 (**cat. no. 58**). A woman's head on a token from the Athenian Agora from a Roman context seems similar to the representation of **cat. no. 56**.²⁵ The latter bears the letter upsilon (Υ) on side B, whose style refers to that of the letter psi on **cat. nos. 54, 55 and 57**. Female heads on tokens have been interpreted as personifications of the Democracy or the Council.²⁶

²² Konstantopoulos 1930–31, 32 (Figure 3).

²³ Demeter in serpent car, perhaps carrying torch and grain, is represented on a lead token type of Roman date from the Athenian Agora: Crosby 1964, 110 (L245, pl. 28), 113 (L270, pl. 29) 117 (L301, pl. 30). For Demeter on clay tokens, see Crisà 2019, 65; Crisà 2021a, 33–55.

²⁴ On the top of the female head there is a small spherical–elliptical end that could be interpreted as a lampadion (cf. Gkikaki 2014, 83–84). In this case the token should be attributed to another die and to another series. Nevertheless, it is very likely that it is a simple bulge of the clay.

²⁵ Crosby 1964, 126–27 C5, pl. 31.

²⁶ Gkikaki 2020, 97–99 (with n. 30 Figure 4 on p. 99), 122 (cat. no. 2, pl. 13), 125 (cat. no. 13, pl. 13) has identified female heads on lead tokens as personification of the Council (Βουλή).

Different dies may be distinguished not only on the pictorial faces but also on the lettered ones. For example, the letter phi (Φ) is formed by an upright bar with two curves attached right and left. On **cat. nos. 32** and **34** the side curves are almost straight on the upper part and they turn downwards to oblique lines, while on **cat. nos. 33** and **35** the side curves are almost semicircular. The same remark may be made for the letter Psi (Ψ): on **cat. nos. 54, 55** and **57**, the two small strokes of the letter are slightly curved, while in the case of **cat. nos. 56** and **58** they are formed by straight lines. The two forms are known from Greek inscriptions as well.²⁷

The representation of the sphinx on the two tokens (**cat. nos. 52** and **53**) come from the same die. It is worth mentioning that the same die has been used to produce the sphinxes of the series with figurative scenes on both sides, a topic which will be discussed below. Stamps with the image of a sphinx were used in Athens for an official purpose, since they are found on lead tokens and on the bronze jurors' allotment plates (*dikastic pinakia*).²⁸

The Distinction of the Dies: Differences and Similarities

Even though our ensemble is a small sample of the tokens that had been produced for the same purpose and does not allow us to draw any safe conclusions, some of the observations mentioned above could be particularly evaluated.

Most of the images are produced from the same die. In several cases, the same die of the side A has been used in combination with different letters. In some cases, it is observed that the same die has been used to produce letters on tokens that belong to different series – that is, they bear a different pictorial type (e.g. **44** and **63**). It seems that each image was produced with all fifty different letters (alpha to sampi and alpha in double lines to sampi in double lines). The variations of the kneeling figure 1 (**59**) and kneeling figure 2 (**60**), the first combined with an omega (Ω) in simple lines and the second with an omega with double lines, may be interpreted as a method to create another series, of a total number of over fifty items, by modifying the figure's representation. The kneeling figure is depicted with one of the arms outstretched on **cat. no. 60**, while on **cat. no. 59** he has both arms lowered.

However, there are indices of use of different dies for the same pictorial or lettered type. This is the case in the instance of the herm and of the letters phi (Φ) and psi (Ψ). The need to change or replace the die should be considered in terms of duration or rate of production of the tokens.

²⁷ Guarducci 2008, 110.

²⁸ On lead tokens: Engel 1880, 18 (cat. no. 172, pl. V); Crosby 1964, 101 (L155, pl. 24). On bronze allotment plates: Kroll 1972, 48–49, 59.

J.H. Kroll argues that the production of the clay tokens was comparatively easy because of their material, suggesting that it was possible to produce them by the thousands only to be used forty times every year.²⁹

The first question that arises is the degree of strain that a single die could withstand. It is obvious that this degree could vary depending on whether the die in question was used for coins or for tokens. Naturally, a die used to imprint an image on a soft material, such as clay, could endure longer. However, an additional question arises, regarding the material from which the die itself was made.

As this is the first time that such a large assemblage of clay tokens is studied, we do not have the opportunity of comparison to reinforce our hypothesis concerning the possible replacement of the dies due to wear. There are examples showing the gradual wear of seal-stones based on their successive imprints on clay sealings which are documented in archives; however, they are not contemporary with our tokens.³⁰ Neither the duration of the production of this group of tokens, nor the exact number of the specimens of the group to which they belonged, is known.

We should also not overlook the different types of dies used to produce the pictorial types. Although the majority were produced with flat, wide, probably metal sealing surfaces, in five cases there are small, curved, oval sealing surfaces, probably derived from either a gem or metal finger ring.³¹ This is true in the case of the Janiform head (cat. nos. 1–5), of the *'Hippalectryon'* (cat. nos. 13–15), of the human head bearing little wings (cat. nos. 31–38) and that of the woman's head (cat. nos. 54–58). Also, Demeter was produced with an oval stamp (cat. nos. 22–24). It is not easy to say whether this diversification is due to a chronological difference, a change in the authorities issuing tokens, their being used differently or other reasons.

In the 2019 publication, in addition to the seven series of lettered tokens, two more were presented with pictorial types. The first one bears the head of Apollon on one side and a sphinx on the other (cat. no. 66), whereas the second bears a representation of a young man riding a deer on one side and Artemis driving a deer chariot on the other (cat. no. 67).³² The lot contains ten specimens of the type depicting Apollon/sphinx and these all come from the same pair of dies.

²⁹ Kroll in this volume, p. 145, below.

³⁰ The development of the damage of the dies through their imprints has been observed in large groups of clay sealings originating from archives with great durations, as for example the one of the House of the Seals on Delos: Auda and Boussac 1996, 520.

³¹ Cf. Crosby 1964, 126–27 C5, pl. 31.

³² Makrypodi 2019, 37 (cat. nos. 40–49 Figure 15 on p. 31 and cat. nos. 52–57 Figure 17 on p. 31).

In this essay we present a new series with the sphinx type on side A and the letters omega (Ω) or sigma (Σ)/mu (M) on side B. We can observe that the sphinx comes from the same die, both in the Apollon/sphinx series and in the sphinx/letters series. The choice of the same die to produce a new series of tokens may not be random. We could assume that the use of a common die might be a link between the two series.

The lot of tokens under consideration does not provide any other such examples nor do the tokens published by Svoronos. However, a separate clay token from under the north end of the Stoa of Attalos may reinforce our hypothesis. It bears a Janiform head with a bird between the two heads, whose tail serves as the beard of the male head.³³ It bears a *kantharos* on side B, while the Janiform head clay tokens of our group bear a letter. The dimensions of this token (18 mm × 14 mm) are almost identical in comparison with the tokens bearing Janiform heads of our group (diam. 17–18 mm). However, the conservation status of our token does not allow the comparison of the dies. Thus, the second example offers support for the existence of a connection between the lettered and the pictorial tokens; however, the specifics of this connection are difficult to define.

The Coherence and Homogeneity of the Material

In our 2019 publication we argued for the coherence of all clay tokens due to the similarities of the clay, the repetition of the iconographic types and their common origin.³⁴ It was suggested that the time when most of the material was handed in to the Numismatic Museum of Athens coincided with the excavation activity in Pnyx and the Athenian Agora in the 1930s.³⁵ The material was handed into the museum gradually, and the few examples included in the publication by Svoronos of 1905 document that they had come to light as early as the end of the nineteenth century.³⁶

Typically, lots of tokens or clay sealings are located in deposits (*apothetai*) where they were collected for counting and archiving purposes. The next step in the process was to dispose of them when they had fulfilled their role, or to collect them back and reuse them.³⁷ Therefore, it is highly likely that these clay tokens had been buried somewhere together. That they

³³ Crosby 1964, 127 (C7, pl. 32). The token was found in a context probably of the second half of the fourth century BCE.

³⁴ Makrypodi 2019, 33.

³⁵ Makrypodi 2019, 33; Kourouniotis 1910; Kourouniotes and Thompson 1932, 90–96.

³⁶ Makrypodi 2019, 38 Table 1; Svoronos 1905, 325 (cat. nos. 1–6, pl. IX, 2–7).

³⁷ It is the case of the clay tokens of Mantinea; cf. Svoronos 1900, 221; Robinson 2011, 37–38.

were gradually handed into the museum may have been a result of illegal excavation activity in the late nineteenth century. The excavation activity in Pnyx may have raised awareness among individuals who had acquired the tokens as collectors and who, knowing their origin, handed them over to the museum at some point later, between the years 1928 and 1932. A second possible scenario is the following: the ‘deposit’ had for some reason been disturbed due to severe weather conditions (e.g. heavy rainfall) and the scattered objects were gathered gradually and then handed in immediately or later to the museum.

The clay of the tokens is generally uniform, and the colour ranges from orange to brownish red. In some cases, a colour difference is the result of the different firing temperature. Also, some tokens have a porous surface and others a smoother one. This is a result of differences in the composition of the clay, the different firing temperature, the different processing of the surface before firing, or it can be the result of differences in the conditions where they were deposited for centuries and therefore differences in the preservation and the corrosion of the surface.

An additional trait that suggests the homogeneity of the ensemble is the form of the letters of the Greek alphabet they bear on side B. Although not all the letters of the alphabet are found in the tokens of this set, we can observe the following:

- All the letters are distinct for the purity of their lines and their simple, almost geometrical, appearance, which characterises the letters of the Greek alphabet from the end of the fifth century BCE onwards.
- A tetraskeles sigma (Σ) and the double consonants xi (Ξ) and psi (Ψ) are included.
- The form of the letter omega (Ω) maintains a sufficient height in its curved part, a characteristic of the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the fourth century BCE.

All these indicate the introduction of the Euclidean script as a *terminus post quem*. The Euclidean script was introduced to Athens in 404/3 BCE, although it seems that it had gradually prevailed in practice since 411 and generally since 406 BCE.³⁸

The existence of two different dies for the letter psi (Ψ) (*cat. nos.* 56, 58 and *cat. nos.* 54, 55, 57), the former with straight lines and the latter with slightly curved ones, documents the transition to the fourth century BCE, where letters increasingly presented curved forms as the fourth century

³⁸ Guarducci 2008, 110–14 concerning the form of letters and their dating; Guarducci 2008, 115–17 concerning the use of letters for numbering purposes. On this as related to tokens esp., see Guarducci 2008, 117.

progressed.³⁹ Moreover, the two forms of the letter phi (Φ) date back to the fourth century BCE; however, they may be subsequent.⁴⁰ It is noted that both psi (Ψ) and phi (Φ) are found on side B of the tokens that bear on side A imprints of small seals (gems or metal finger rings), which could have different dating.

The Interpretation of the Use: Tokens for the Assembly

As mentioned above, this new series adds new iconographic types. The identification of the representations has been neither easy nor definitive. Were the token designs chosen arbitrarily by the responsible magistrate, as Crosby thought, or did they have a particular identification and purpose?⁴¹ Svoronos identified specific lead tokens with particular tribes of Attica, based on the inscriptions they bore or the characteristic representations that referred to the myths of tribal heroes.⁴² However, our tokens lack inscriptions, and therefore reliable identifications are precluded. Human figures and human heads on tokens have been identified as personification of the *Demos* (Δῆμος), the *Boule* (Βουλή), or even Democracy (Δημοκρατία).⁴³

It is therefore very likely that our tokens were not intended for specific individuals, but possibly for groups of people. These groups could be the tribes. The entry of the citizens in the Assembly was done through the entrances of the Pnyx in tribes. The first six thousand incoming citizens received a token, possibly indicating where they would sit, and most likely this was given back at the end of the meeting. This would have ensured they would be paid the daily remuneration for their participation in the Assembly, as was established after the restoration of democratic government in 403 BCE. The six thousand citizens were necessary to ensure a quorum in the meeting of the *Demos*.⁴⁴ The rest of the citizens could participate sitting or standing in the back of the auditorium. J.H. Kroll considers that the unlettered tokens could be given to those who entered the Assembly after the number of six thousand citizens had been completed. He also believes that the unlettered tokens may represent a return to free seating.⁴⁵

³⁹ Guarducci 2008, 44.

⁴⁰ Kirchner 1948, 22 (Figure 48), 23 (Figure 50 for Φ and Ψ), 20 (Figure 44).

⁴¹ Crosby 1964, 81–82 with n. 25.

⁴² Svoronos 1900, 328–32 (cat. nos. 112–58 with pls.); Crosby 1964, 79 with n. 12; Russo in this volume.

⁴³ Gkikaki 2020, 97–99.

⁴⁴ Hansen 1999, 130, 147, 149–50.

⁴⁵ Kroll in this volume, p. 146, below.

The addition of the new series presented in this essay increases the number of series to fifteen, as stated below:

1. janiform head
2. wreath
3. *hippalectryon*
4. dove
5. Demeter
6. Maltese dog
7. rose
8. horse
9. human head with little wings
10. herm
11. sphinx
12. female head
13. kneeling figure 1
14. kneeling figure 2
15. tripod

As already mentioned, five of those series (1, 3, 5, 9 and 12) have different characteristics from the rest of the series, both in terms of the type of die used for their production and in terms of the dating of the letters they bear on side B.⁴⁶ If these five series are subtracted, the remaining number corresponds to the ten Athenian tribes. However, if the two series that depict kneeling figures (13 and 14) are to be considered as the same, then a different hypothesis for the use of these tokens emerges. Hansen has previously argued that the Pnyx auditorium was probably divided into nine sections, which would allow the votes cast to be counted by the nine *prohedroi* (πρόεδροι) after 403/2 BCE.⁴⁷ If this set is considered as a series of nine, then perhaps they were associated with the functioning of the Assembly.

Conclusions

As mentioned above, the most probable interpretation concerning the presented clay tokens is their use in the framework of the citizen participation in the Assembly. Therefore, they could be identified as the *symbola* (σύμβολα) mentioned by Aristophanes.⁴⁸ The information on finding them on the north-west slope of the Hill of the Muses, south-east of the Pnyx,

⁴⁶ Uniface clay tokens bearing just a representation on one side coming from Pnyx are dated by Kroll (in this volume, pp. 145–46, below) to the phase Pnyx II.

⁴⁷ Hansen 1977, 137; Hansen 1999, 140.

⁴⁸ Aristophanes, *Ekklesiazousai* ll. 289–97 (391 BCE).

advocates their origin from the area of the Pnyx. Our group of tokens has two major interpretive shortcomings: the absence of the excavation context and the fact that it is lacunose and does not include examples of all the letters of the Greek alphabet. Nevertheless, it allows us to draw some tentative conclusions.

The letters on one of their two sides probably indicated the specific place in which the citizens were seated on the Pnyx. The daily allowance of the citizens for their participation in the Assembly was introduced after the restoration of the democratic government in 403 BCE, and the dating of all the tokens in this period is confirmed by the form of the letters. The variety of types refers to the systematic and large-scale production and argues that they were intended for a large body of citizens. Some figures, as well as the symbols depicted on the other side of the tokens, may refer to the mythology and history of the city, the tribes or even to personifications of its civic institutions. If, despite the fragmentary nature of the group, we claim that we distinguish nine or ten different series of clay tokens, then these numbers are identical with the parts in which Pnyx was divided, or the number of Athenian tribes respectively.

However, there are some questions that remain difficult to answer. The lettered tokens were most likely used for the entry and indicated the seating places of the first six thousand incoming citizens at the Pnyx, possibly for the payment of their daily allowance after the end of the meeting, and perhaps as ballots when necessary. If the lettered tokens had this role, then what was the use of those bearing pictorial types on both sides? Even if we accept that the tokens with pictorial types were given to the citizens who entered late, after the required quorum had been filled, and were used for payment at a period when all participants were entitled to it,⁴⁹ the reason for the use of a die common in both categories of tokens (lettered and unlettered) remains unclear. This is the case of the sphinx, which exists in both categories, perhaps indicating a special link between them.

The significance of this link eludes us. Nevertheless, it seems that it was not accidental, but on the contrary very important. This is evidenced by the presence of Apollon, ancestor of the Ionians, on the other side of the token. Significantly, that the temple of Apollon Patroos was located in the Athenian Agora, surrounded by other public buildings. It is worth noting the numerical superiority of the preserved tokens belonging to the Apollon/sphinx series in comparison to the number of examples belonging to other series.⁵⁰ An additional issue is the separation of our group of tokens imposed by the two types of dies used for the pictorial types, metallic for most of the tokens, but gems or metal rings for five of the series presented. Therefore,

⁴⁹ Kroll in this volume.

⁵⁰ Makrypodi 2019, 38 Table 1.

we must distinguish more than one issue and possibly a small chronological difference dictated by the different kind of dies and perhaps later letters.

The chronology of the group of clay tokens under consideration is generally placed within the fourth century BCE. However, an exact chronology is problematic. Further research could contribute to a more specific chronology by focusing on the different types of seals, the presence or absence of letters, the different types of letters, the testimonies of the written sources,⁵¹ as well as the different characteristics in terms of the preservation of the tokens, which we mentioned above. The comparison with those of the clay tokens of the Agora coming from a dated excavation context confirms the above chronology. Most of the tokens of the Agora come from excavation layers of the fourth and the first half of the third centuries BCE. Those bearing impressions from flat and wide sealing surfaces are found in excavation layers that date generally to the fourth century BCE,⁵² while tokens with impressions from curved and oval sealing surfaces⁵³ are found in strata dating from the second quarter of the fourth century BCE to the beginning of the third century BCE, but also in Roman layers.⁵⁴ The parallel use of the two types of seals, those with a flat and wide sealing surface, and those with an oval and curved sealing surface, can be examined in the context of a more general observation concerning the public seals used in Athens. For official reasons, seals made of wood or metal were primarily used for this purpose, whereas gems and finger rings were used only on occasion.⁵⁵ The coexistence of the two types of sealing surfaces in the group of tokens from the Mouseion Hill may indicate a functional and not necessarily a chronological distinction. In my opinion, the following should be taken into account: the set of tokens under consideration was not a result of hoarding but a collection by the city, probably after the completion of a process that required the simultaneous use of tokens produced by different types of seals.

Everything mentioned above shows that the interpretation of all our tokens is quite complicated. Unfortunately, the only evidence we have is the material characteristics of the tokens, as their excavation context has been lost. This is a unique group of clay tokens related to the Pnyx, the entry of citizens to it, their payment and possibly their vote. The iconography of the tokens seems to have strong symbolism. Their production may not be limited to a single year of meetings of the Assembly, but to a wider period of time.

⁵¹ Kroll in this volume.

⁵² Crosby 1964, 126–29 (C4, C7, C10, C18, C20, pls. 31–32).

⁵³ Crosby 1964, 126 (C1, pl. 31), 130 (C23, pl. 32).

⁵⁴ Crosby 1964, 126–27 (C5, pl. 31).

⁵⁵ Boardman 2001, 190, 201, 237–38.

Catalogue

Recent study of the tokens at the Numismatic Museum of Athens has resulted in updating the measurements (diameters and axes). As a result, diameters and axes appear different from those in the original 2019 publication.

Side A: Janiform head.

Side B: Beta (Β).

1. NM 1911-1912/KB'(Π1), Ø 18 mm 12h.
2. NM 1928 (Vlasto's donation) (Π4), Ø 18 mm 5h.
3. NM 1929/2 (Π33), Ø 17 mm 10h
4. NM 1929/10 (Π41), Ø 18 mm 1h
5. Svoronos 1905, 338 cat. no. 75 pl. IX, 1, Ø 18 mm.

Side A: Wreath.

Side B: Alpha (Α) in double lines.

6. NM 1929/30 (Π61), Ø 18 mm 3h.

Side A: Wreath.

Side B: Beta (Β) in double lines.

7. NM 1929/31 (Π62), Ø 17 mm 9h. Makrypodi 2019, 38 cat. no. 58 fig. 18.
8. NM 215/2005, Ø 17 mm 2h. Makrypodi 2019, 38 cat. no. 59.
9. NM 226/2005, Ø 19 mm 7h. Makrypodi 2019, 38 cat. no. 60.
10. NM 242/2005, Ø 17 mm 7h. Makrypodi 2019, 38 cat. no. 61.

Side A: Wreath.

Side B: Gamma (Γ) retrograde or Pi (Π).

11. NM 251/2005, Ø 17 mm 9h.
12. NM 1929/32 (Π63), Ø 17 mm 9h. Makrypodi 2019, 38 cat. no. 62.

Side A: *Hippalectryon* (?).

Side B: Eta in the monogram form (Η).

13. NM 220/2005, Ø 16 mm 7h.
14. NM 1929/16 (Π47), Ø 15 mm 8h.
15. NM 1929/17 (Π48), Ø 15 mm 7h.

Side A: Dove right.

Side B: Zeta (Ζ) in double lines.

16. NM 1929/34 (Π65), Ø 17 mm 2h (or 8h). Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 32. fig. 21.

Side A: Dove right.

Side B: Kappa (Κ) in double lines.

17. NM 281/2005, Ø 18 mm 1h.

Side A: Dove right.

Side B: Omicron (Ο) in double lines.

18. NM H3/1931 (Π15), Ø 17 mm. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 36 cat. no. 3 fig. 9, the third seen from above; Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 28 fig. 11.

Side A: Dove right.

Side B: Upsilon (Υ) in double lines.

19. NM 8146, Ø 18 mm. Svoronos 1905, 325 cat. no. 3, pl. IX; Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 29.

20. NM 1929 H5 (Π 7), provenance: Lerakis, Ø 16 mm (min) 18 mm (max) 2h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 30 fig. 20.

21. NM 247/2005, Ø 16 mm 3h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 31.

Side A: Demeter standing.

Side B: Iota (Ι).

22. NM 1929/18 (Π49), Ø 15 mm 1h.

23. NM 1929/19 (Π50), Ø 17 mm (min) 18 mm (max) 12h.

24. NM 1929/20 (Π51), Ø 15 mm (min) 16 mm (max) 2h.

Side A: Maltese dog.

Side B: Xi (Ξ).

25. NM H5/1931 (Π17), Ø 19 mm 11h.

Side A: Rose.

Side B: Pi (Π) retrograde in double lines.

26. NM 1929/39 (Π70), Ø 17 mm 7h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 50 fig. 16.

27. NM 222/2005, Ø 17 mm 9h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 51.

Side A: Horse facing right with a bird on its back.

Side B: Xi (Ξ).

28. NM 268/2005, Ø 15 mm 12h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 39 fig. 25.

Side A: Horse facing right with a bird on its back.

Side B: Rho (Ρ) retrograde in double lines.

29. NM H2/1931 (Π14) Ø 17 mm 7h. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 36 cat. no. 1 fig. 9, the first seen from above. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 37 fig. 13.

30. NM 1929/33 (Π 64) Ø 18 mm 2h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 38 fig. 24. For Rho (Ρ) cf. Crosby 1964, 126 C4 pl. 31.

Side A: Human head right bearing little wings.

Side B: Sigma (Σ) or Mu (Μ).⁵⁶

31. NM 1930/KH (Lerakis 1929 B') (Π11), Ø 15 mm, 1h (if Mu) or 4h (if Sigma). Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 32 cat. no. δ fig. 3, the fourth seen from above; Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 20 fig. 9.

Side A: Human head right bearing little wings.

Side B: Phi (Φ).

32. NM 1929/22 (Π53), Ø 14 mm 11h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 21.

33. NM 1929/21 (Π52), Ø 14 mm (min) 16 mm (max) 12h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 22.

34. NM H7/1931 (Π19), Ø 13 mm (min) 15 mm (max) 9h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 23 fig. 10.

35. NM 1929 (Lerakis)/H5 (Π8), Ø 12 (min) 15 mm (max) 3h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 24.

Side A: Human head right bearing little wings.

Side B: Chi (Χ).

36. NM 1929/23 (Π54), Ø 14 mm 10h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 25 fig. 22.

37. NM 1929/24 (Π55), Ø 14 mm 2h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 26.

38. NM 243/2005, Ø 15 mm 12h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 27.

Side A: Herm right, bush with three branches in the field r., kerykeion in l. field.

Side B: Sampi in double lines (ΠΠ).

39. NM 1929/36 (Π67), Ø 17 mm 4h. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 32 cat. no. γ fig. 3, the third seen from above (this specimen); Makrypodi 2019, 35 cat. no. 7 fig. 7.

⁵⁶ Cf. the discussion in Boegehold 1960, 396.

40. NM 1929/35 (Π66), Ø 17 mm 3h. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 36 cat. no. 4, fig. 9, the fourth seen from above (this specimen); Makrypodi 2019, 35 cat. no. 8.
41. NM 1929/12 (Π43), Ø 17 mm 4h. Makrypodi 2019, 35 cat. no. 9.
42. NM 1932/KE'8 (Π27), Ø 17 mm (min) 19 mm (max) 5h. Makrypodi 2019, 35 cat. no. 10.
43. NM 1932/KE'7 (Π26), Ø 17 mm 4h. Makrypodi 2019, 35 cat. no. 11.
44. NM H4/1931 (Π16), Ø 18 mm 12h. Makrypodi 2019, 35 cat. no. 12.

Side A: Herm right, bush with three branches in the field r., kerykeion in l. field .

Side B: Upsilon (Υ).

45. NM H6/1931 (Π18), Ø 17 mm 10h. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 36 cat. no. 5 fig. 9, the fifth seen from above (this specimen); Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 13, fig. 8.
46. NM 1932/KE/5 (Π24), Ø 13 mm (min) 18 mm (max) 2h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 14.
47. NM 221/2005, (Ø 17 mm 2h). Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 15.
48. NM 234/2005, (Ø 18 mm 1h) Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 16.

Side A: Herm right, bush with three branches in the field r., kerykeion in l. field.

Side B: Xi in double lines (Ξ).

49. NM 1929/13 (Π44), Ø 18 mm 12h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 17.
50. NM 1929/14 (Π45), Ø 17 mm 11h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 18.
51. NM 1929/15 (Π46), Ø 18 mm 11h. Makrypodi 2019, 36 cat. no. 19, fig. 23.

Side A: Sphinx facing right.

Side B: Omega (Ω) in double lines.

52. NM 1930/KH' (Lerakis)/H5 (Π10), Ø 15 mm 11h. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 32 cat. no. β fig. 3 the second seen from above (this specimen).

Side a: Sphinx facing right.

Side b: Mu (Μ) in double lines.

53. NM 1932/4 (Π23), Ø 17 mm 6h.

Side A: Woman's head facing right.

Side B: Psi (Ψ).

54. NM 1929/25 (Π56), Ø 15 mm (min) 16 mm (max) 3h.
55. NM 1929/26 (Π 57), Ø 15 mm (min) 17 mm (max) 10h.
56. NM 1929/37 (Lerakis) (Π68), 15 mm (min) 17 mm (max) 9h.
57. NM 1929/38 (Lerakis) (Π69), 14 mm (min) 16 mm (max) 10h.
58. NM 8129, Ø 17 mm. Svoronos 1905, 325 cat. no. 5 pl. IX, 6.

Side A: Kneeling figure, possibly male, facing right.

Side B: Omega (Ω).

59. NM 1929/29 (Π60), Ø 13 mm (min) 14 mm (max) 12h.

Side A: Kneeling figure, possibly male, facing right.

Side B: Omega (Ω) in double lines.

60. NM 1930/KH'/Lerakis, H5 (Π12), Ø 9 mm (min) 14 mm (max) 8h.
Konstantopoulos (1930-31, 32,ε fig. 3, the fifth seen from above (this specimen).

Side A: Tripod.

Side B: Sampi (Π) in double lines.

61. H1/1931 (Π13), Ø 16 mm 9h. Konstantopoulos 1930-31, 36 cat. no. 7
fig. 9, the first seen from above; Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 33 fig. 12.
62. NM 1932/KE'/6 (Π25), Ø 16 mm 4h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 34.
63. NM 241/2005, Ø 15 mm 1h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 35.
64. NM 286/2005, Ø 17 mm 2h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat. no. 36.

Side A: Unidentified presentation (human figure raising or adorning a trophy?)

Side B: Xi (Ξ).

65. NM 284/2005, Ø 14 mm 11h .

Side A: Head of Apollon, facing right.

Side B: Sphinx facing right.

66. NM 1928/H5 (Vlasto's donation) (Π5), Ø 15 mm (min) 17 mm (max),
12h. Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat.no 40.

Side A: Young man riding a deer, facing right.

Side B: Artemis driving deer chariot, facing right.

67. NM 1929/40 (Π71), Ø 16 mm, 9h. Provenance: Tsamado's donation.
Makrypodi 2019, 37 cat.no 56.

Janniform head



Wreath



Figure 5.1 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

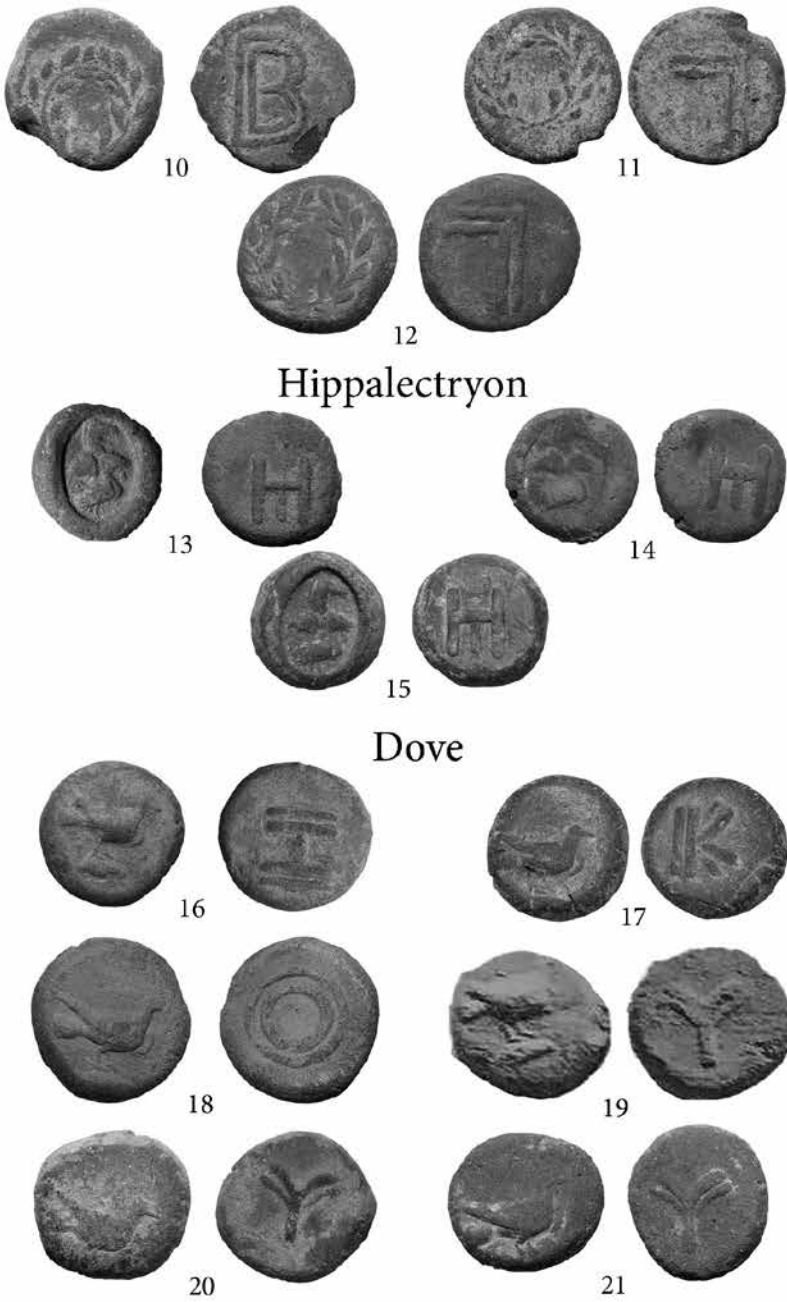
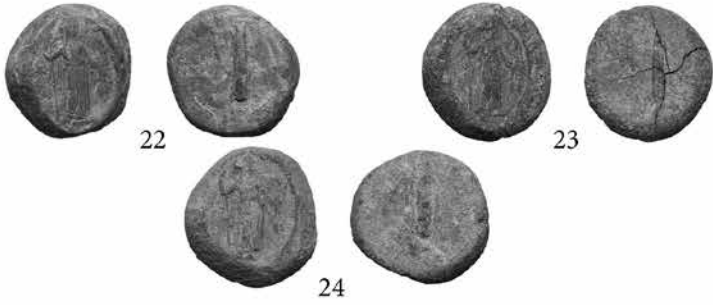


Figure 5.2 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

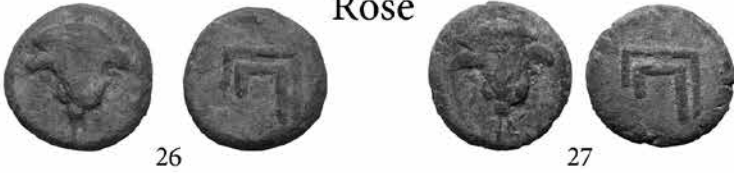
Demeter



Maltese Dog



Rose



Horse



Figure 5.3 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

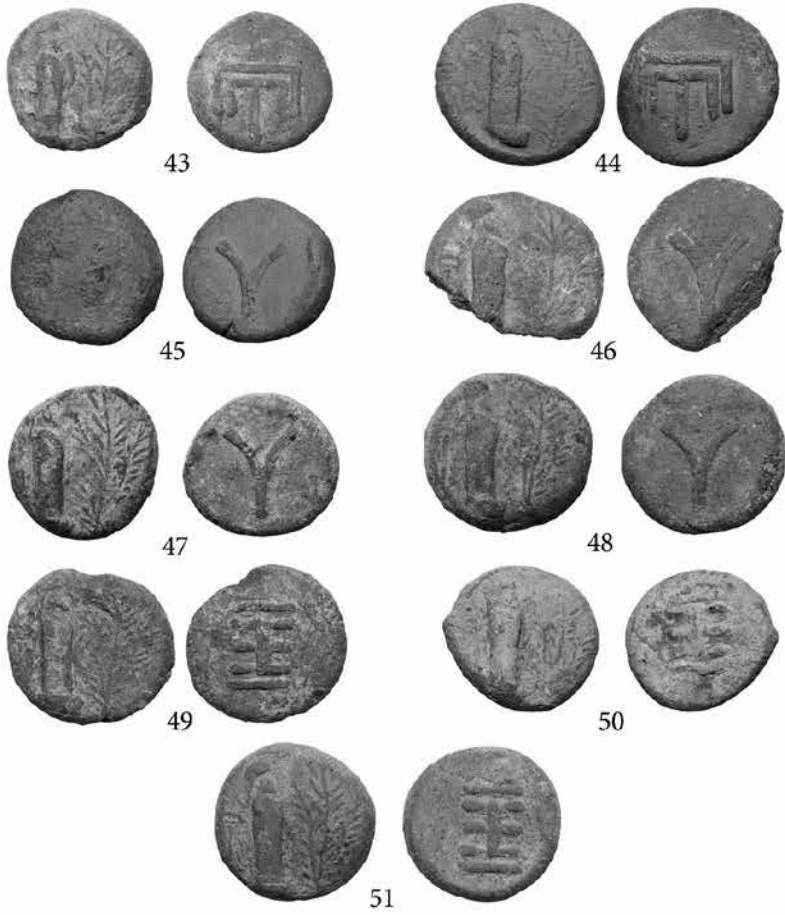
Human head bearing little wings



Herm with bush and *kerykeion*



Figure 5.4 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

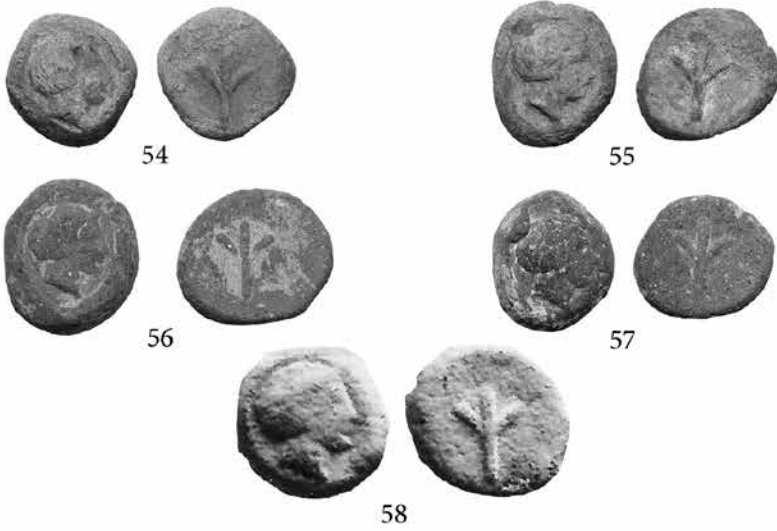


Sphinx



Figure 5.5 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

Woman's head



Kneeling figure



Tripod



Figure 5.6 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)



Figure 5.7 Numismatic Museum, Athens © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/
Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

Chapter 6

Lettered and Other Tokens in the Lawcourts and the Assembly of Athens

John H. Kroll

Of the seven or eight mentions of conventional, coin-like tokens in Athenian literature and inscriptions, all but two refer to tokens employed in the Athenian Assembly and Jury Courts. In the case of the lawcourt testimonia, procedures involving tokens in the fourth century are described in enough detail that Alan Boegehold was able to identify and discuss most of the tokens in question. There has been no comparable treatment of tokens connected with the Assembly, however, because hardly any criteria for identifying such tokens had been recognised until recently. The aim of this paper is to redress this imbalance insofar as the evidence of extant tokens and plausible conjecture allow. For convenience of reference, the relevant testimonia are labelled below as (a)-(f).¹

I. In the Athenian Lawcourts (*Dikasteria*)

Of all Athenian tokens, the most fully understood are those that were employed in the fourth century BCE for the seating of the jurors (*dikastai*) in the large Athenian *dikasteria*. Several courts, variously consisting of 200, 400 or 500 sworn jurors, were empanelled roughly 200 days a year.² As described in the Aristotelian *Athenaion Politeia*, written in the mid-320s BCE, each juror, once he had been selected by lot from the pool of eligible candidates from his tribe, was given a coloured staff and an acorn with a

The author gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Stamatoula Makrypodí for sharing her work on terracotta tokens and Mairi Gkikaki for invaluable editorial improvements.

¹ The remaining two Athenian testimonia attest to the use of tokens in the private sector: one refers to a *symbolon* obtainable from shopkeepers (Pollux 9.71, quoted from the Old Comedy poet Hermippos), the other to a *symbolon* purchased as a ticket to see a variety show (Theophrastos, *Characters* VI: 'The Shameless Man').

² A convenient introduction to the Athenian Jury Court system will be found in Hansen 1991, 178–224.

letter on it which indicated by colour and letter the courtroom to which he was assigned.

- (a) 'And when he comes into that court he receives an official token³ (*symbolon*) from the person selected by lot for this task'. (65.2)

Later,

- (b) When each juror casts his vote, he gives up his staff and receives a bronze *symbolon* with a triobol design,⁴ for when he hands it in he receives three obols. This is to ensure that all will vote, for no one can receive a *symbolon* without voting. (68.2)

Later still (69.2), we read that the jurors received their pay outside of the courts at the tribal entrance area where they were initially allotted.

The *Athenaion Politeia* mentions the receipt of two tokens, the first that the juror was given upon entering his assigned court (and that he surrendered with his coloured staff just before voting), and the second, with a type of a triobol coin (or the number three), to be exchanged for his stipend. While the purpose of the second token is clear enough, the purpose of the first one was not correctly understood until the 1950s when a number of bronze tokens stamped with letters was excavated in the Athenian Agora within and near to foundations that proved to belong to the Athenian lawcourts (the Square Peristyle). One such token was found in an enclosed deposit with several bronze ballots used in courtroom voting.⁵ Previously, such lettered tokens were assumed to have served as tickets for theatrical performances and Assembly meetings in the Theatre of Dionysos, their letters representing seating areas within the auditorium.⁶ Once Boegehold

³ The translation, 'official token', is that of Boegehold (1960, 393 and 1995, 207–08 source no. 249) and Rhodes (1984). The Greek is not so straightforward: the juror receives a σύμβολον δημοσίᾳ, 'a token officially', with the second word expressed as an adverb, not the adjective (δημόσιον) that one would expect. Understandably, Rhodes 1981, *ad loc.* finds this puzzling. But it may be worth noting that most of the word is missing from the *Athenaion Politeia* papyrus and is supplied by a quotation of the sentence in the scholia on Aristophanes, *Ploutos* 277. Trusting the scholia, successive editions of the Teubner text of the *Athenaion Politeia* print δη[μοσίᾳ], with most of the word in brackets.

⁴ Translation of Rhodes 1984, which is probably correct. The text states that it is a bronze *symbolon* with a Γ, i.e. a *gamma*, representing the number three, but it could just as well represent a three-obol coin.

⁵ For the find-spots of the Agora tokens and a plan of the Agora with the find-spots indicated, see Boegehold et al. 1995, 68 and Figure 4.

⁶ Svoronos 1898, 37–120. Svoronos' theory that the letters on the tokens corresponded to letters on marble slabs that he identified as theatre seats had already been refuted by

recognised that they were used in the lawcourts, the likelihood that their letters served for seating the jurors made excellent sense. As he explained, requiring the jurors to sit on benches in allotted, lettered sections reduced confusion in the seating of hundreds of men and in 410/09 had already become mandatory for the 500 members of the Athenian Council (*Boule*), primarily to protect against the disruptive behaviour of like-minded participants, who, if free to sit together in factions, could harass and drown out speakers they disliked.⁷

Approximately eighteen series of these tokens are known, all of bronze.⁸ The tokens of each series are stamped with one of the twenty-four letters of the Ionic/Attic alphabet (Α–Ω), to which was added the early Ionic letter *sampi* (Ϻ),⁹ to give twenty-five lettered sections. The tokens of each series are stamped on their obverse with a helmeted head of Athena (**Figure 6.1**) or some other symbol: in one series, a lion's head, in another, a design of four owls and the letters ΘΕ-ΣΜΟ-ΘΕ-ΤΩΝ, 'of the *Thesmothetai*', the Athenian magistrates who presided over the jury trials (**Figure 6.2**). Four series of bronze tokens are stamped with the same letter on both sides. The letter-forms and archaeological contexts in the Agora excavations show that the extant tokens date to the fourth century. The earliest reference to the handing out of (seating) tokens to jurors when they arrive at the lettered court to which they had been allotted (the courts also were also assigned letters) is

- (c) Aristophanes', *Ploutos* (388 BCE), lines 277–78: Now that you have been allotted to your letter to judge in the grave, go. Charon is handing out the *symbolon*.

The courts continued to function in the first half of the third century.¹⁰ As Boegehold observed, plain tokens of lead with a letter on one or both sides,

O. Broneer (1936), who recognised that the marble slabs were drainage covers of the theatre's gutter and the letters were used for positioning.

⁷ Boegehold 1960, 400–01; Boegehold 1995, 155–56 no. 73, citing Philochoros (late fourth/early third century BCE), *FGrHist* 328 F 140, with commentary: 'Philochoros says that in the archonship Glaukippos (410/9) the *Boule* was for the first time seated by letter (κατὰ γράμμα) and even now they swear an oath to sit in the letter to which they are allotted'. Below, pp. 147–52.

⁸ Boegehold's discussion and catalogue of the specimens from the Agora (1995, 68–76, pls. 9–12) need to be read along with the three folio-sized plates of Svoronos (1923–26, pls. 100–02), which illustrate plaster casts of 134 lettered tokens by series. In his original catalogue of almost all of these tokens, Svoronos (1898) lists all unillustrated duplicates with measurements along with the best specimens that he chose to illustrate.

⁹ Threatte 1980, 1.24.

¹⁰ Boegehold et al. 1995, 41–42.

of which there are many examples in various sizes and styles, probably replaced the bronze ones of the fourth century.

The second juror token mentioned in the *Athenaion Politeia* happens to be the most completely described token in all of ancient literature. Both its type (that of triobol or the letter/number three) and its material (bronze) are specified. Ironically, not a single specimen has come to light. But then, unlike seating tokens, such voucher tokens were less prone to be lost. Not only did they have a monetary value, but at the end of every court day each one had to be returned to the state for payment.

All tokens with an Athenian triobol device that have survived are of lead. Two are stamped on one side with types that are nearly identical to those on late fourth-century triobol coins¹¹ and could very well be later versions of the bronze token. The triobol devices on two other lead tokens (**Figure 6.3a and b**) reproduce the coin type less accurately; both tokens also have a section letter stamped on their reverse. With the curved sides and dot serifs of its delta, the second token is clearly Hellenistic.¹² The other, with an alpha of conventional shape, has an adjunct symbol of the Eleusinian vessel known as a kernos. Since both lead tokens are likely to be third-century successors of the jury tokens in bronze, they suggest that the two earlier types of tokens, one for seating, the other for payment, may have been combined into a single jurors' token after ca. 300 BCE.

II. In the Athenian Assembly (*Ekklesia*)

The employment of tokens in the large Athenian Assemblies is attested in two passages and may be referenced in a third.

(d) Aristophanes, *Ekklesiazousai* (*The Assemblywomen*), lines 290–97, 391 BCE.

CHORUS OF WOMEN DISGUISED AS MEN

Let's go to the Assembly, men! Because the *thesmothetes* has issued a warning that if anyone doesn't come good and early, when it's still dark . . . he won't give him his three obols

. . .

And when we've got our *symbola*, then we must make sure we sit close together,

¹¹ Svoronos 1900, 326 (no. 83, pl. II 4), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.83> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.4>; Crosby 1964, 100 (L144, pl. 24), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/agorall44> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/agorail624>.

¹² The alphas and delta on the lead armour tokens from an Agora well (Kroll 1977b, pl. 40; Schäfer 2019, Figures 2–6) have similar dot serifs and curved sides. Associated finds date these tokens to the middle or third quarter of the third century.

so that we can vote to approve all of the measures our women friends may need –

only, what am I saying? I should have said our *male* friends.

(trans. A.H. Sommerstein, adapted)

(e) *IG II³ 4, 76* (tr. AIO), 341/0 BCE. Decree of the tribe of Aigeis praising a committee of three tribal representatives who served as Convenors of the People (*syllogeis tou demou* = controllers of entry into the Assembly [Hansen 1991, 142]).

. . . since they well and justly managed the convening of the People and the distribution of the *symbola* . . .

(f) Another epigraphical passage relevant to Assembly payments and tokens occurs in a decree passed in 267/6 BCE by a detachment of Athenian soldiers stationed at Eleusis during the Chremonidean War (*I. Eleusis* 182 = *IG II² 1272* [tr. AIO]). The decree honors a certain Dion, who

. . . as secretary to the treasurer of the grain fund in the year of the archonship of Menekles (267/6), has made every effort concerning the giving of grain and of the *ekklesiastika* given for the grain (περί τήν τοῦ σίτου δόσιν καί τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν τῶν διδομένων ἐπί τὸν σίτο[v]).

Several commentators, including Svoronos and Crosby, have followed M.I. Rostovtzeff in identifying these *ekklesiastika* as voucher tokens.¹³ In disagreement, U. Fantasia points out that since the only other extant occurrences of the term *ekklesiastikon* (scholia on Aristophanes, *Knights* 51; and *I. Iasos* 20, lines 2 and 6) pertain to the actual stipend for Assembly attendance, the term in the inscription should be understood to refer not to tokens but to the indemnities or expenses incurred in the distribution of grain to the soldiers: ἐκκλησιαστικά (χρήματα) rather than ἐκκλησιαστικά (σύμβολα).¹⁴ But whether it refers to tokens or expenditures, the passage shows that ekklesiastic pay had become the state payment par excellence and a synonym for other public compensations. In as much as tokens were routinely employed in all such mass disbursements, the present passage, however translated, implies the existence of tokens for Assembly pay as late as the 260s.

Soon after the restoration of democratic government in 403 BCE, the Athenians introduced pay for Assembly attendance to ensure that a full quorum of six thousand voters would be present for voting on certain items of state business. Initially fixed at one obol, the amount had to be raised to two, and by 391 BCE, as we learn from the above passage in Aristophanes' *Ekklesiiazousai*, it had been increased to three. By the 320s, the rate had doubled to a drachma (six obols) for ordinary sessions, and a drachma and

¹³ Rostovtzeff 1905 28 with n. 2; Svoronos 1905, 344; Crosby 1964, 78.

¹⁴ Fantasia 1998, 222–23 with n. 72.

a half for major (*kyria*) sessions.¹⁵ Since these Assemblies with their required minimum of six thousand participants met about forty times a year, the tokens distributed at these meetings must have been the most familiar of all tokens issued by the Athenian state. Commentators on the *Ekklesiastousai* passage have reasonably assumed that the *symbolon* mentioned by the chorus must have been a voucher token, handed out to the first six thousand attendees to arrive and exchanged for their fee upon exiting when the Assembly was adjourned.

Mogens Hansen wondered whether some small lead tokens in the Athens Numismatic Museum could be such tokens.¹⁶ They are stamped on one side with a male head wearing a laurel crown and identified by the accompanying legend ΔΗΜ-ΟΣ as the personification of the Athenian *Demos* (Figure 6.4a and b). Attribution to the Assembly is attractive, but being small, of lead, and finely detailed, they are clearly Hellenistic in date and cannot be associated with the Assembly in the fourth century.¹⁷

Recently, in her study of the terracotta tokens in the Numismatic Museum of Athens, Stamatoula Makrypodi identified a substantial and far more intriguing class of tokens whose relevance to the fourth-century Assembly can hardly be doubted. As explained in her preliminary 2019 account,¹⁸ and now in her contribution to the present volume (above, pp. 111–36), nearly all of the sixty-five tokens of this type were found in 1929–31 on the north-west slope of the Mouseion Hill, the slope that descends towards the road that led from the Athenian Agora up to the Assembly place on the adjacent hill of the Pnyx. When brought to the Numismatic Museum, most of the tokens were said to have been picked up as surface finds. Because many of them are duplicates and all are similar in character, it is likely they came from a single deposit, having been lost or

¹⁵ *AthPol* 62.2.

¹⁶ Hansen 1987, 169 with n. 557, citing the tokens listed by Svoronos 1900, 327 (nos. 92–97, pl. II 40), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.92> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.40>. They are 12 mm in diameter and are stamped on the reverse with a gorgoneion, a symbol of Athena and of the Athenian People, to judge from its appearance on archaic Athenian coins and as a stamp denoting citizenry on allotment plates of fourth-century Athens; cf. Kroll 1972, 53–56.

¹⁷ A token with the same obverse (Svoronos 1900, 327 no. 98, pl. II 41, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.98> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.II.no.41>) has the reverse type of the three Graces, relating it to the democratic cult of *Demos* and the Graces, established after Athens's liberation from Macedonian control in 229 BCE; cf. Habicht 1997, 118.

¹⁸ Makrypodi 2019, 29–39.

buried together in antiquity even if they somehow had become exposed and scattered before discovery.

Most of them divide into fifteen lettered series, each token of which displays a common pictorial type on one side of the tokens and an alphabetic letter on the other. In these respects, the series are similar to the series of lettered bronze tokens used in the Athenian courts. In addition to the twenty-five letters that occur in each series of the dikastic tokens (twenty-four letters of the Attic alphabet plus the borrowed letter sampi [Ϻ]), the letters on the terracotta tokens continued for another twenty-five of the same letters represented in double lines for a total of fifty lettered designations altogether. As with the dikastic tokens, in the absence of any plausible alternative, the letters should represent seating sections, although in the case of the terracotta tokens, seating for a much larger number of persons, a circumstance that, even more than their recovery in proximity to the Pnyx, supports their identification with the Athenian Assembly.

Unlike the series of bronze dikastic tokens, most of which have a helmeted head of Athena as their pictorial type, the pictorial images that define each of the terracotta series are highly diverse, extending from simple, conventional symbols like a wreath or tripod (**Makrypodι Figures 5.1–2 and 6**) to such obscure, idiosyncratic representations as a stork or other long-billed bird with long legs standing on the rump of a horse (**Makrypodι Figure 5.3**) or a male-female Janiform head wearing a cap in the form of a lion's face (**Makrypodι Figure 5.1**). Since the pictorial designs of five of the fifteen lettered series were stamped from oval-shaped dies that were smaller than the dies used for the other series,¹⁹ we clearly have to do with two groups, with the less complete oval-die group probably being the earlier. As the more complete group is made up of ten series, it follows that the series were tribal series and that the tokens must date before 307/6 when the number of Athenian tribes was increased to twelve.

In his 1989 discussion of the use of wicker fences (*gerra*) to control the crowds of Assembly-goers that arrived at the Pnyx, Hansen imagined that the area below the staircase or staircases that led up to the auditorium was fenced off so that the thirty Convenors of the People could check the six

¹⁹ Makrypodι in this volume, pp. 118, 124. Five series were stamped with oval-shaped dies smaller than the diameter of the clay disk, causing the image to be surrounded by a sunken, incuse field: Janiform head (Makrypodι in this volume, nos. 1–5), hippalectryon? (Makrypodι nos. 13–15), Demeter standing (nos. 22–24), human head r. (mask?) bearing little wings (Makrypodι nos. 31–38), woman's head r. (Makrypodι nos. 54–58). Ten series stamped from wider dies that produced a flat field: wreath (Makrypodι nos. 6–12), dove (Makrypodι nos. 16–21), Maltese dog? (Makrypodι no. 25), rose (Makrypodι nos. 26–27), horse with bird on back (nos. 28–30), herm with bush and caduceus (Makrypodι nos. 39–51), sphinx (Makrypodι nos. 52–53), kneeling figure (Makrypodι nos. 59–60), tripod (Makrypodι nos. 61–64), unidentified (Makrypodι no. 65).

thousand citizens and hand out the tokens (see *testimonium (e)*, above) as the citizens passed through.²⁰ Hansen envisioned only one entrance from the fenced area to the stairs, but since there were three Convenors per tribe (originally probably one per each tribe's *trittys* or regional third),²¹ it stands to reason that for the effectiveness of the Convenors, who had to guarantee that admission was limited to *bona fide* citizens of their tribe, and for the convenience of the attendees themselves, each tribe ought to have had its own entrance. Accordingly, as each attendee was admitted through the entrance of his tribe, he drew or was handed a token that assigned him to one of fifty designated seating areas in the auditorium. As with the Athenian juries, Assembly-goers arrived at the entrances of their tribe but ended up seated in sections that were independent of tribal organisation.²²

Like the lettered tokens for the seating of jurors, the lettered Assembly tokens presupposed seating for a predetermined number of participants. In the case of the Assembly, the only number we know of was its legal quorum of six thousand, which, if used for the number of tokens, would mean that they were received by the first six hundred men to present themselves at each tribe's entrance. There being fifty sections, the allotted seating section would have accommodated one hundred and twenty citizens each. When the Assembly was adjourned and the tokens had to be turned in, they would have served a second function as vouchers for the receipt of the attendee's stipend.

In addition to these lettered tokens, the collected terracotta tokens picked up on the slope of the Hill of the Muses in 1929–31 contained two varieties of similarly sized tokens that, lacking letters, have pictorial images on both faces. Ten of them show a head of Apollon and on the other side a sphinx.²³ Six depict a youth riding a deer on one face and Artemis driving a deer chariot on the other.²⁴ The sphinx on the Apollon/sphinx tokens happens to have been stamped with the same sphinx die as used for a lettered series.²⁵ This sharing of dies between lettered and unlettered terracotta tokens has a

²⁰ Hansen 1989, 135.

²¹ As known from the demotics of the named Convenors honoured in the 341/0 inscription (above, *testimonium e*), representation by *trittys* had been abandoned by that time. The Convenors are first attested in a law of 375/4 pertaining to Athenian coinage (Rhodes and Osborne 2003, 114–15 §25, line 15).

²² In a number of discussions, Hansen (1987, 39–41; 1989, 161–62; 1991, 137–38) has consistently maintained that seating in the Assembly remained unrestricted for the whole of the fourth century. The opinion that he felt obliged to challenge was that the attendees sat in tribal groups. Allotted seating in lettered sections, however, would have been neither tribal nor unrestricted.

²³ Makrypodi 2019, 37 (nos. 40–49, Figure 15 on p. 31).

²⁴ Makrypodi 2019, 37 (nos. 52–57, Figure 17 on p. 31).

²⁵ Makrypodi in this volume, pp. 118–19 and 128–29 (nos. 52–53 and 66), above.

parallel of sorts in the pictorial type of Janiform head wearing a lion-head cap mentioned above as a series type on lettered tokens; the same curious head (although not from the same die) appears on a bifacial terracotta token from the Agora that shows a kernos on the reverse.²⁶

The existence of these double-image tokens alongside the lettered tokens is problematic, as is the absolute chronology of these and all of the other terracotta Assembly tokens in general. One thing we can say with some certainty, however, is that fourth-century Assembly tokens are recognisable from their material: fired clay, an inexpensive substance well-suited for tokens that had to be made literally by the thousands and yet were used on only forty occasions each year with types that continually needed to be changed to avoid falsification. By way of contrast, jurors' tokens, which were handed out and collected far more often – approximately every other day – in smaller numbers and in more confined, easily controlled spaces, were just as sensibly stamped on disks of bronze that allowed for continuous reuse.

In addition to the core finding of over five dozen specimens from the Hill of the Muses, a number of related terracotta tokens have been recovered in the excavations of the Assembly place on the Pnyx and within and near to the Agora square. Six of these excavated tokens are double-sided, bearing a pictorial image on one side and a letter in single or doubled lines on the other. These are: one from the Pnyx, with Eros figure moving r. holding staffs/K, glazed,²⁷ and five from the Agora, published by Crosby as C1 to C5 of her catalogue.²⁸ The 25 mm diameter of C4 is conspicuously larger than that of the other extant lettered terracotta tokens (15–18 mm), indicating that it belongs to a separate, probably earlier, phase of manufacture and use. C4 is of additional interest because it was excavated about halfway between the Agora square and the Assembly place on the Pnyx. Another token from another lettered terracotta series in the collection of the Numismatic Museum of Athens is illustrated by Svoronos.²⁹

Since these lettered tokens served to assign each participant to a seating section at the beginning of the meetings, their introduction should postdate the *Ekklesiiazousai* (391 BCE), in which the early arriving women, after receiving their *symbolon* for pay, were free to sit together and vote as a bloc. Such partisan grouping with its potential for disruption was precisely

²⁶ Crosby 1964, 127 (C7 'context probably of second half of the 4th century', pl. 32).

²⁷ Davidson and Thompson 1943, 108 no. 18 (T138), Figure 48, 18 on p. 107, from disturbed fill.

²⁸ Crosby 1964, 126 nos. C1 (standing figure/A, glazed), C2 (crab/K, glazed), C3 ('Uncertain solid, large design, possibly a thorax, frog or winged insect'/K in double lines, unglazed), C4 (rooster/retrograde P in double lines, unglazed), C5 (female head/Y, unglazed), pl. 31.

²⁹ Svoronos 1905, 325 (no. 1, pl. IX,2: pig?/Θ).

the kind of problem that seating ‘by letters’ was intended to eliminate. Because the earlier Assembly tokens served merely as vouchers for pay they would have lacked letters, like the two unglazed terracotta tokens that were excavated from the fill of the Pnyx III auditorium. Both were stamped on one side only. One shows the head of a bearded man, the other a Pegasus.³⁰ Since both were found in the construction fill of Pnyx III, with its greatly enlarged auditorium, begun in or shortly after 347,³¹ these earlier tokens clearly date to the time of Pnyx II (ca. 400–347). Accordingly, as this massive filling contained no tokens with letters, it is tempting to associate the introduction of lettered tokens with the completion of the enlarged third auditorium.

Although the contextual evidence for this association is admittedly slight, it could lend support to Hansen’s conjecture that the limitation of pay to the required six thousand may have been relaxed when the size of the Assembly place was increased.³² Even if seating by assigned sections was limited to the six thousand, standing room outside of the seating sections at the back and sides of the auditorium could have accommodated additional attendees for whom a different kind of token would be appropriate, tokens that lacked seating letters, like the problematic bifacial Apollon/sphinx and Artemis/youth and deer mentioned above. Or did these bifacial unlettered tokens represent a return to free seating after the complex experiment with assigned seating failed to justify its continuance? There is much here that must remain a matter of guesswork.

As the many Hellenistic decrees passed by the Assembly attest, the Ekklesia continued to meet as late as the first century BCE. For most of the third century, the Pnyx remained the site of the body’s regular meetings and was not replaced by the Theatre of Dionysos until the second century.³³ Even though reference (*f*) to *ekklesiastika* in 267/6 pertained to grain rations, it implies at a minimum that for pay for Assembly attendance continued well into the third century, doubtless through the established means of exchange with tokens. By that time the Assembly tokens were no longer made of terracotta, however, but like dikastic tokens originally of bronze, were continued on in lead. With the probable exception of the lead tokens depicting the labelled head of *Demos* (Figure 6.4a and b), the remaining Hellenistic unlettered lead tokens of Hellenistic date that may have been

³⁰ Davidson and Thompson 1943, 108 nos. 14 (T134) and 15 (T135) Figure 48, 14 and 15 on p. 107. Makrypodí (2019, 35 nos. 4–6 Figures 4–6 on p. 29) illustrates the bearded head token from the Pnyx with two other specimens of unknown provenance from the same die. Like the tokens from the Mouseion lot, all of these were unglazed.

³¹ Lawall 2005, 50–53.

³² Hansen 1987, 47.

³³ McDonald 1943, 57–59.

used in Assembly payments cannot be identified as such. Like most of their unlettered terracotta antecedents, their figural iconography was dictated by a need for constant variety and change and hence was devoid of visible clues that might allow us to recognise their association with a specific Athenian institution.³⁴

Addendum. In the Athenian Council (*Boule*)

As seating by lettered sections was evidently devised in 410/9 for the seating of the five hundred *bouleutai* (see above, n. 7), we should ask whether lettered tokens were employed in the organisation of this sizable legislative body as well. The artefactual evidence is limited: a single lead token in the Athens Numismatic Museum, first published in an 1884 drawing (**Figure 6.5a**) and later by Svoronos with a photograph of a plaster cast (**Figure 6.5b**).³⁵ The spelling BO-AH on the upper face would ordinarily date the token to the first half of the fourth century, after Athens' adoption of the Ionian alphabet in 403 but before the retention of omicron for the omicron-epsilon diphthong became extremely rare.³⁶ But this is a lead token and the use of lead may be an indicator of a later period, in which case the condensed spelling might have been dictated by the small size of the token. The seating letter on the other side was stamped partially off the edge of the token and was either an epsilon or a sampi, as Svoronos noted.³⁷ In either case, there

³⁴ For this reason, my earlier, tentative suggestion of connecting the very small Athenian tokens of bronze (wrongly called *kollyboi* by Svoronos) with the Assembly (Kroll 2015, 115) can remain no more than a mere possibility. The uniform size of these 6–8 mm diameter tokens implies public use, as opposed to instruments that were privately made and distributed. The scale of the extant lettered and unlettered types and type combinations is huge. Svoronos (1912, 130–60) lists 645 combinations, many involving categories that are problematic in themselves, such as some 82 monograms or pairs of different letters as types and a number of tokens with a different letter on each side. Consequently, like the Hellenistic tokens of lead, many of which were also stamped with monograms, the small bronze tokens probably served multiple purposes and institutions, including possible use in mass distributions or lotteries at festivals (Kroll 2015, 115, citing the many religious symbols, phalluses and all sorts of drinking and wine storage vessels depicted on these small tokens). This does not exclude the possibility that many or all may have served as tokens for Assembly pay, only that there is no particular visual or other hint that would support that interpretation.

³⁵ Engel 1884, 5 (no. 1, pl. I); Svoronos 1900, 333 (no. 172, pl. III 15), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.172> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/svoronos1900.pl.III.no.15>.

³⁶ Threatte 1980, 1.238–56.

³⁷ Since Émile Gilliéron, the draftsman of Engel's drawing, apparently assumed that the letter was an *epsilon* rotated 90 degrees to the right, he extended the vertical on the right to the bottom of the token. Svoronos' photo, on the other hand, seems to show that



Figure 6.1 Bronze Dikastic Token Series, nearly complete. Assembled from specimens from the National Numismatic Collections of Athens, London and Berlin as well as the excavations of the Athenian Agora and the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection. The plate was created by Mairi Gkikaki and the graphic designer Matthias Demel and was inspired by Svoronos 1923–26, pl. 101 and Boegehold 1960, pl. 87b. The diameters of the tokens range between 18 and 20 mm. Tokens lettered A to Δ: © Berlin, Münzkabinett (inv. nos. 0061240617031, 0061240617032, 0061240617033, 0061240617034, 0061240617035), E: The Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection



(inv. no. 501), H: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations (inv. no. B1132) © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.), K: © The Trustees of the British Museum (1920,0805.522), M: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations (inv. no. B1172) © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.), N-Ξ: © The Trustees of the British Museum (1920,0805.525 and 1845,0414.110 Harwood XVI), P: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations (inv. no. B1262) © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.), Σ-T: The Trustees of the British Museum (RPK E. 1 p. 14 και 1906,1108.4), sampi: Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations (inv. no. B1564) © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Figure 6.2 Partial Bronze Dikastic Token Series. Type of four owls arranged crosswise, inscribed ΘΕ-ΣΜΟ-ΘΕ-ΤΩΝ. Reproduced from Svoronos 1923–26, pl. 100, 42–46

is no reason to doubt that this token was one in a series of lettered tokens for randomly distributing *bouleutai*, like jurors, among lettered sections.

The question here becomes how often was this distribution performed? Unlike the voluntary and ever-changing membership from meeting to meeting in the courts and the Assembly, membership in the *Boule* was stable. All five hundred or (after 307/6) six hundred *bouleutai* served together for the full year, meeting almost every day, and may have sat in their same lettered sections if not for the entire year then at least during each prytany, one-tenth of the year. Such longer-term assigned seating may be implied in the use of the singular in the oath each *bouleutes* swore at the beginning of his annual tenure when he pledged ‘to sit in the letter to which he was allotted’ (ἐν τῷ γράμματι τῷ ἄν λάχῃσι). If so, the drawing of lettered tokens would have been infrequent, the series of needed tokens few and the

this vertical was actually shorter. Since Svoronos himself was familiar with character *sampi* from his previous study of lettered bronze tokens, he identified the incomplete letter as either an *epsilon* or a correctly oriented *sampi*. I have not seen the token, but my impression is that the photograph favours *sampi*, in which case this token could only have served for seating. In his 1900 publication of inscribed lead tokens, Svoronos (1900, 333 nos. 175–79, pl. III 16–20) included eight tokens with ΒΟΥΛΗ or ΒΟΥ in very small lettering. None has a section letter. All appear to be Hellenistic, as do a majority of the fifty one-sided tokens with the letters ΠΕΝ and thirty-six different types that Svoronos attributed also to the *Boule* of 500 (Svoronos 1900, 334–36 nos. 181–228, Pl. III, 30–52 and Pl. IV, 1–9) on the assumption that ΠΕΝ was an abbreviation of pentakosiōn (500, πεντακοσίων). But it is unlikely that all fifty of these tokens date before 307/6 BCE when the number of *bouleutai* was raised to six hundred; ΠΕΝ should be an abbreviation of some other word. Gkikaki (2021, 61) discusses the ΠΕΝ tokens and proposes that the legend should be interpreted as abbreviation of *pentedrachmia*.



Figure 6.3a Lead token, face a: owl right, framed by two olive sprays, face b: letter delta (slightly struck off flan) 12h. Figure 6.3b Lead token, face a: owl facing, framed by two olive sprays, pierced at 12 o'clock, face b: letter alpha with kernos between the two diagonal bars. Reproduced from C. Daremberg and E. Saglio, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, vol. 2, Part 1 (Paris: Hachette, 1892), 193, Figures 2413 and 2414 [s.v. Dikastai 186–200]. These two images were reproduced in J.E. Sandys, *Aristotle's Constitution of Athens: A Revised Text with an Introduction, Critical and Explanatory Notes, Testimonia and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1893), frontispiece



Figure 6.4a and b Lead tokens with *Demos* head as bearded and laureate facing right. Reproduced from Svoronos 1900, pl. II, 40 and 41



Figure 6.5a and b Lead token, 12 mm. Side a: BO|ΔΗ, side b: sampi [Ϝ]. Reproduced from Engel 1884, 5 (no. 1, pl. I) and from Svoronos 1900, 333 (no. 172, pl. III, 15)

survival of a single token from a century or more of token use for seating understandable.

The members of the *Boule* received a daily stipend. But for such a fixed body that met regularly, there was probably no need for tokens in the disbursement of pay.³⁸

³⁸ For more on tokens and the Athenian Council, cf. Gkikaki in this volume.

Chapter 7

The Lot of Lead Tokens from the Makrygianni Plot in Athens

Irini Karra

In memory of Dimitrios Pandermalis

Tokens (*symbola*), coin-like objects of no intrinsic value, made of lead, bronze or clay were used in Athens in the late Classical and Hellenistic period for the functions of the governmental bodies and the operation of public finance. Their area of function was particularly broad because they were employed for the selection of officials by lot, the allotment to seating areas in the courts and other governmental bodies, while they were also distributed to citizens either as vouchers to be exchanged for state pay for service in the Athenian Assembly, the Council of the Five Hundred and the Jury Courts or as admission tickets for entrance to the theatre, the free distribution of grain from the public grain distributions and other state allowances or gifts in kind. The Aristotelian Constitution of the Athenians, Aristophanes' works and a handful of passages of ancient authors constitute valuable sources of information for their employment for the purpose of the good functioning of democracy.¹

Since the nineteenth century, when with Achilles Postolakas' and J.N. Svoronos' pioneering publications and cataloguing of the material kept at the Numismatic Museum at Athens the earliest studies of the subject

I would like to extend a special thank you to the director of the Makrygiannis plot excavations, S. Eleftheratou, for her continual assistance and support. A particular debt of gratitude is owed to M. Gkikaki for inviting me to participate in this volume and for her much-appreciated ongoing support and advice. Thanks also due to J.H. Kroll for his valuable remarks; to the conservators A. Gaki and E. Govatsou for conserving the tokens; to J. Leonard for translating a first version of this text; to the photographer I. Miari; to the designer A. Nikas; to E. Ralli and to R. Jacob for advice and suggestions. Finally, I thank the anonymous reviewer.

¹ See Boegehold 1960; Crosby 1964, 76–82; Boegehold et al. 1995, 67–68; Gkikaki 2020, 91–93 and Kroll's paper in this volume.

began, our knowledge on tokens has significantly progressed. The rich material which came to light in the excavations of the Athenian Agora from the 1930s onwards, in many cases from well-documented public buildings, along with Margaret Crosby's publication in 1964, have further boosted research on tokens and have helped decode the questions of chronology and context of use.

Nevertheless, there still exist many aspects which remain obscure. The great range of types and the arbitrary selection of designs make it difficult to determine their exact use. While their employment in public life is well attested, it remains still under discussion as to what extent – if at all – they were also used privately and if they were ever employed as fiat money.

Under these circumstances, the important find of nineteen lead tokens of the late Hellenistic period in the Makrygiannis plot, to the immediate south-east of the Acropolis, with value marks on many of them, contributes to the question of the roles and functions of tokens in Classical and Hellenistic Athens.²

The Find

The lead tokens examined in this paper were discovered in 2000 during the archaeological excavation of the Makrygiannis plot, within the framework of the construction of the new Acropolis Museum.³ Excavations carried out at the site revealed an extensive section of the residential area of ancient Athens, with continuous use from the Classical era through to Late Antiquity (Figure 7.1).⁴ The organised urban planning of the area began in the later decades of the fifth century BCE and was laid out according to a system of city blocks defined by a dense road network. The architectural remains of houses of the Classical and Hellenistic periods were discovered along the streets.

All the tokens under discussion come from House Λ (Οικία Λ), from the phase of its operation at the end of the Hellenistic period. House Λ was constructed in the Classical period to the west of Road NMA II – an uphill street connecting the Makrygiannis area with the Sanctuary and Theatre of Dionysos and the South Slope of the Acropolis – to the south of Road

² General Ioannis Makrygiannis, who played an important role in the Hellenic Independence War (1821–31), owned land and residence in the area to the south-east foot of the Acropolis. In this area, known by the name 'Makrygiannis plot', archaeological excavations were carried out for the construction of the New Acropolis Museum at the plot's south and west section and the Acropolis Station of the Athens Metro at the east (Figure 7.1).

³ For the Makrygiannis plot excavations, see Eleftheratou 2006 and 2020.

⁴ Eleftheratou 2020, 53–57.

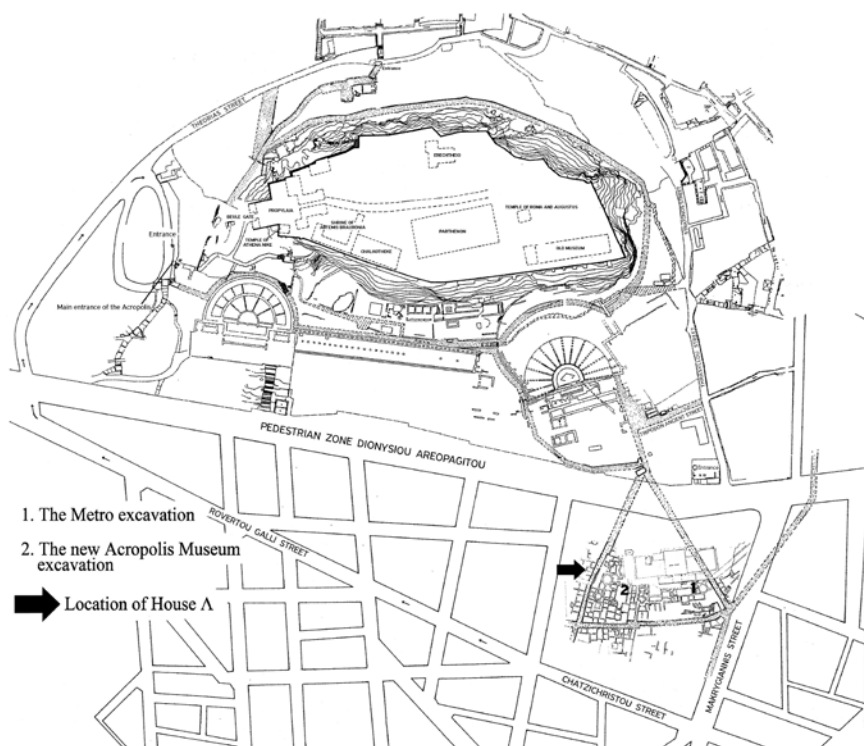


Figure 7.1 Topographical plan of the South Slope of the Acropolis. To the south the Makrygiannis plot excavations are visible © Acropolis Museum, 2019, S. Eleftheratou, A. Nikas

NMA VI and to the north of Road NMA V (Figure 7.2). It continued to be used in the Hellenistic period after remodelling and modification and was destroyed at the beginning of the first century BCE, probably during Sulla's siege in 86 BCE. Only its eastern part was revealed since it continues westward beyond the boundaries of the excavation. The excavation's limited extent, as well as the architectural remains' fragmentary preservation (a consequence of later construction interventions), do not allow us to fully restore its floor plan, nor even to determine its exact use.⁵ Belonging to the Hellenistic phase, parts of five rooms on the northern and eastern sides of House A were preserved – probably arranged around a courtyard, for the

⁵ In addition to the continuous construction interventions from the Roman era onwards, a large part of the house was destroyed by the mechanical excavator that opened the test trenches of the Third Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities (3rd EPKA) in the 1980s. For these test trenches, see Eleftheratou 2020, 27 (Figure 6).

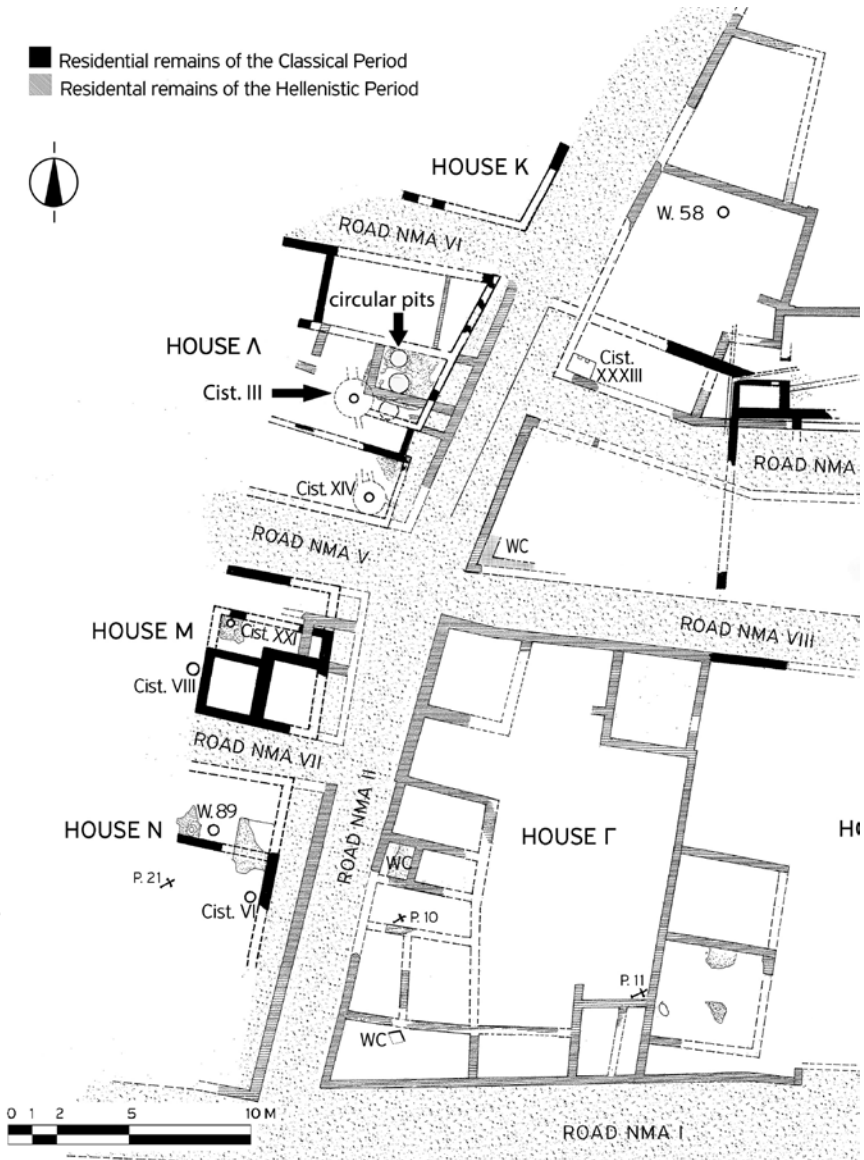


Figure 7.2 The area of the Makrygiannis plot in Classical and Hellenistic times, showing the location of House A, Cistern III, and the circular pits © Acropolis Museum, 2019, S. Eleftheratou, A. Nikas

existence of which there is little evidence – along with two cisterns, Cistern III and Cistern XIV, which were connected by an underground tunnel. In the second century BCE, the house was destroyed and reopened, probably with the same floor plan. In this last Hellenistic phase of its operation, in a room to the north-east of Cistern III, three circular pits were constructed, probably intended for holding large storage vessels, which would have been removed after the abandonment of the house in the beginning of the first century BCE (Figure 7.2).

Most tokens from House A come from the underground Cistern III (cat. nos. 1–9, 11–16, 19), with several more (cat. nos. 10, 17–18) from the northernmost of the three circular pits (Figure 7.2). Cistern III, from where the majority of the lead tokens originated, is an underground, bell-shaped reservoir with walls lined in hydraulic mortar. Its contents were extremely rich in ceramic vessels, iron objects, lead utensils, and several lamps and coins, most of which date to the end of the Hellenistic era. Only a few finds can be dated as late as the end of the first century BCE.⁶

The filling-in of the cistern is attributed to the cleaning-up of debris left over from the destruction caused by the Roman soldiers of Sulla in 86 BCE.⁷ The history of this ransacking is well known: in 87 BCE, the Athenians allied with Mithridates VI Eupator, the king of Pontus, in his war against Rome; after a month-long siege, Sulla's Roman forces finally managed to breach the walls of Athens in March 86 BCE, entering the city and plundering it. According to ancient writers, the losses in terms of both human lives and material destruction were enormous.⁸ After the catastrophe, the city's looted districts were gradually cleaned and the debris collected and dumped in convenient spots, mainly in wells and cisterns.⁹ These clean-up operations were a slow process, and in many cases the

⁶ For some of the finds from Cistern III, see Eleftheratou 2006, 36 (no. 46 trade amphora), 41 (no. 72 lead weight), 44 (no. 89 bronze coin of Athens of the series Kroll 1993, 74 no. 97, 87/6 BCE), 45 (no. 90 sesterce with the jugate heads of Marc Antony and Octavia, of the series *RPC I* no. 1470, 37–36 BCE), 84 (no. 207 lamp), 96 (nos. 247–50, an amphora, two funnels and a lagynos), 99 (nos. 264, 266 a beehive and an unguentarium), 109 (no. 297 lagynos), 111 (no. 309 kantharos), 112 (no. 313 round-mouth juglet), 113 (nos. 317–18 a lekythos and a biconical jug), 114 (nos. 320–24, five plates), 116 (nos. 330–31 two bowls with outturned rim) and 127 (no. 371 pyxis with lid).

⁷ Eleftheratou 2020, 57.

⁸ For the siege and the destruction of Athens by Sulla, see Habicht 1998, 387–409; Rogers 2021, 288–318. For the destruction of Athens by Sulla, as recorded in historical sources, see Plutarch, *Sulla* 13–14; Appian, *Μιθριδάτειος* (*Mithridatic Wars*) 30–39; Pausanias 1.20.5–7. Archaeological research has revealed abundant traces of destruction from the end of the Hellenistic era that can be attributed to the Romans' violent invasion of 86 BCE; see Rotroff 1997, 34–36.

⁹ Rotroff 1997, 35–36.

wreckage from the disastrous invasion lay virtually ‘undisturbed for many decades before its final disposal’.¹⁰ Susan Rotroff considers as ‘pure Sullan debris’ the deposits whose material dates from before 75 BCE, while ‘Sullan debris’ are those also containing later material.¹¹ The Cistern III deposit can be described as Sullan debris, even not a ‘pure’ one, as can be deduced from the pottery – typical of such debris – and from the twenty-five coins found inside: fifteen date to the late Hellenistic era (one bronze issue of the Thessalian League and fourteen Athenian bronze issues, including two of 87/86 BCE with Athena/Zeus hurling thunderbolt and a star between crescents at right – the royal emblem of Mithridates VI – and a small hoard consisting of three coins of the mid-80s to 70s BCE with head of Apollon/cicada), while six belong to the second half of the first century BCE (five Athenian bronze issues and one Roman Republican bronze). The remaining four are illegible.¹² A similar, thick layer of destruction, typical of the period associated with the destruction of Athens by Sulla’s troops, covered the three circular pits.

¹⁰ Rotroff 1997, 35–36. Rotroff (2014) discusses the Sullan debris of the Athenian Agora, while Vogeikoff (1993, 128–55; Vogeikoff-Brogan 2000) of the Acropolis South Slope.

¹¹ Rotroff 1997, 35–36; Rotroff 2014, 88.

¹² Of the twenty-five coins found among the contents of Cistern III, one is of the series Kroll 1993, 64–65 nos. 82–84 or Kroll 1993, 72–74 nos. 90–97 (head of Athena/Zeus hurling thunderbolt, ca. 190–183 BCE or 130–87/6 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 79 no. 108 (cicada/amphora, ca. 140–90 BCE); two of the series Kroll 1993, 75 no. 99 (head of Athena/two owls, ca. 130–90 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 79 no. 110 (head of Apollon/owl, ca. 130–90 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 74 nos. 95–96 (head of Athena/Zeus hurling thunderbolt, mid-90s to early 80s BCE); two of the series Kroll 1993, 74 no. 97 (head of Athena/Zeus hurling thunderbolt, at right a star between crescents, 87/86 BCE); one of Eleftheratou 2006, 44 no. 89); one small hoard consisting of three coins of the series Kroll 1993, 99 no. 131 (head of Apollon/cicada, mid-80s to 70s BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 94–97, nos. 115, 118–26 (head of Athena Parthenos/owl on amphora, 86–42 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 79–80 nos. 110–14 (head right (uncertain)/illegible, 130–90 BCE); one of the Thessalian League of the series Kroll 1993, 195 no. 540e (head of Apollon/Athena Itonia, 196 BCE to first century BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 101 no. 138 (head of Athena Parthenos/tripod, 42/1–39 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 102 no. 139 (Gorgoneion/Athena holding spear, 42/1–39 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 103 no. 142 (head of Dionysos/bust of Athena, 39–37 BCE); one dating to the Roman Republic from the series *RPC* I no. 1470 (heads of Mark Antony and Octavia/ship, 37–36 BCE); of Eleftheratou 2006, 45 no. 90); one of the series Kroll 1993, 103–04 no. 143 (head of Athena Parthenos/Apollon Delios, 36–33 BCE); one of the series Kroll 1993, 107 no. 150 (head of Demeter/poppy between two crossed wheat ears, mid-20s to 19 BCE); one that is quite worn but probably is Athenian and belongs to the first century BCE; and four others that are illegible. The coins were conserved by A. Gaki, for whose assistance I am very grateful.

Of the sixteen lead circle-shaped tokens recovered from the interior of Cistern III, token **cat. no. 19** was found first at a depth of -6.7 metres. About 70 cm lower, at a depth between -7.4 and -7.5 metres, there was a small hoard consisting of four tokens (**cat. nos. 3, 4, 8, 12**).¹³ A second hoard consisting of ten tokens (**cat. nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16**) was found just a few centimetres lower at a depth of -7.5 metres, while token **cat. no. 7** lay a little lower, at a depth between -7.62 and -7.85 metres. Nevertheless, their common characteristics and depositional circumstances allow us to consider them as originally belonging to a single group.

To the same group can be attributed the lead tokens found in the northernmost of the three circular pits in House Λ (**cat. nos. 10, 18**) and in the disturbed layer that covered this pit (**cat. no. 17**). We are led to this conclusion not only by the excavation data – they all come from House Λ and from layers dating to the late Hellenistic period – but mainly by the fact that token **cat. no. 10** from the circular pit is similar to, and perhaps derives from the same die as, token **cat. no. 9** from Cistern III. We can therefore infer that all these tokens are synchronous and would most likely have served the same purpose.

The tokens – all lead, uniface, with a diameter ranging from 10 mm to 14 mm – can be classified in two distinct categories. The first consists of tokens that – in addition to their other pictorial designs – exhibit a number of serifed verticals, which can be interpreted either as numeric symbols or as markers designating obols,¹⁴ while the second includes tokens that lack such a sign.

Tokens with Numeric or Monetary Signs

The largest sub-group within this category consists of tokens **cat. nos. 1–8** depicting a hare running right and two serifed verticals displayed at the top left that can be interpreted as numeric symbols or monetary value. In the latter case, they designate two obols. All these tokens come from the interior of Cistern III. They were issued in two variants. In the first (**cat. nos. 1–4**), no symbol is depicted below the body of the hare, while in the second (**cat. nos. 5–8**), an additional symbol appears below the hare – probably a flower or perhaps ears of wheat in a container. Otherwise, the tokens of

¹³ Measurements are taken from a fixed point, 75.8 m above sea level (0 m = 75.8 m above sea level). Cistern III was found at a depth of -5.73 m; however its upper part was not found as it had been destroyed by the mechanical excavator that opened the test trenches of the Third Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities (3rd EPKA) in the 1980s. For these test trenches, see Eleftheratou 2020, 27 (Figure 6).

¹⁴ Threatte 1980, 1.110–11.



Figure 7.3 Lead tokens with a hare running right; nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari



Figure 7.4 Lead tokens with a hare running right and an additional symbol below; nos. 5, 6, 7, 8 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari

both variants are identical and were most likely produced from the same die, which was probably reused after the necessary changes.

A possible parallel should be the hare, which has been tentatively identified on a lead token of Hellenistic date from the Athenian Agora excavations.¹⁵ There are no known examples of hares on Athenian coins.¹⁶

Tokens **cat. nos. 9 and 10** depict a bird to the right, holding in its beak a circular object with a dot in the centre, possibly a *phiale*. At the bottom right there is a wreath, while above the bird's head there probably appears a second letter (Α or Δ) and to the left three serifed verticals. As above, these can be interpreted either as numeric symbols or monetary value (in this instance, three obols). The two specimens are similar in their representations, but it is not clear whether they come from the same die.

A number of lead tokens of the Hellenistic period, with images of birds and letters above have been found in the Athenian Agora excavations. Two of these depict a swan and are inscribed with the letters AN, or possibly ΑΑ, above its back.¹⁷ Two more may depict herons and retain traces of a letter above.¹⁸ Another, struck on both sides, depicts an eagle, and is inscribed with the letter Ω behind its head.¹⁹ Although none of the above tokens exactly parallels *symbola cat. nos. 9 and 10*, they all have similar dimensions and consistently combine the image of a bird with one or two letters above. Only the tokens from the Makrygiannis plot, however, exhibit numbers.

Token **cat. no. 11** depicts a seated animal, possibly a hare or perhaps a mouse, playing the flute (*aulos*).²⁰ In the field at bottom right, four uneven verticals probably denote the number four or they designate four obols. The

¹⁵ Crosby 1964, 99 (L131, pl. 24). Crosby described it as a crouching animal, left, with long ears, perhaps a hare.

¹⁶ There is no known example for Athens in either Kroll (1993) or Thompson (1961). Among the coins of other cities, the hare is found on those from Messana, Sicily; in many cases it is depicted, as on the tokens from the Makrygiannis plot, running with a lively movement to the right.

¹⁷ Crosby 1964, 101 (L156 a, b, pl. 24). They come from late Hellenistic context and are very similar in size and appearance to the tokens inscribed EP; cf. Crosby 1964, 90–92 (L43–L56, pl. 20).

¹⁸ Crosby 1964, 98 (L117 a, b, pl. 23).

¹⁹ Crosby 1964, 94 (L71, pl. 21). It comes from late Hellenistic context. On the other side is depicted a winged animal, perhaps 'a winged horse or some kind of bird'.

²⁰ The long ears indicate a hare; however the creature's complete absence of a neck alludes to a rodent. Depictions of mice with musical instruments are known from small works of art. For relevant examples, see Toynbee 1973, 203–04 (Figure 100: a bronze figurine of a mouse or rat playing a trumpet); Classical Art Research Center, Gem 2909: a gem with a mouse playing the double flute on an altar between columns, www.carc.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?recordCount=40&start=0.



Figure 7.5 Lead tokens with a representation of a bird; nos. 9, 10
 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari

verticals are not straight as in the previous cases, and therefore they may not denote numbers but they may be some kind of (or part of) a design.

Mice – like hares – are not depicted on Athenian coins, but there are a few representations of them on tokens. A mouse holding a lyre is known from a comparable token, inscribed ΠΕΝ, from the Numismatic Museum. Standing on its hind legs, the animal faces right while playing the musical instrument (lyre) with its front legs.²¹ Svoronos associated all token types inscribed ΠΕΝ with the Council of the Five Hundred.²² Recently, Mairi Gkikaki has revisited Svoronos' view and interpreted the legend ΠΕΝ as the abbreviation of *pentedrachmia*, the charge attested for the Great Dionysia in the late fourth century BCE. Therefore, the ΠΕΝ tokens may relate to *theorika*, the state distributions for citizens to attend festivals.²³

Another lead token from the Stoa of Attalos is countermarked with a rooster holding a mouse by its tail.²⁴ Several lead tokens of the second and first centuries BCE from central Italy and Baetica depict on one side a mouse standing erect facing left with its paws on the lip of an oil-lamp.²⁵

²¹ Postolacca 1868, 286 (no. 373); Svoronos 1900, 335 (no. 197, pl. III, 42): 'Μῦς ἰστάμενος ἐπὶ τῶν ὀπισθίων ποδῶν πρὸς δεξ. καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐμπροσθίων φέρων καὶ ἀνακρούων λύραν' (a mouse standing on its hindlegs and with its front legs holding and playing a lyre).

²² Svoronos 1900, 335 (no. 197, pl. III, 42). See also Crosby (1964, 80), who suggests the inscription ΠΕΝ indicates such objects were 'suitable as pay-tokens for meetings of the *Boule* or possibly for members of the *Boule* at meetings of the Assembly or at the Great Dionysia, where the *bouleutai* sat in a separate section, the *bouleutikon*'.

²³ Gkikaki 2021, 60–62.

²⁴ Mylonas 1901, 122 (no. 11, pl. 7). The description reads: 'Rosette of five petals. Circular countermark, on which appears a rooster holding a mouse by the tail with its beak'.

²⁵ Stannard 2009, 1047 (no. 9–11, pl. I). On the other side appears a bearded, male



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Figure 7.6 Lead token depicting a hare or perhaps a mouse, playing the flute (aulos); no. 11 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari

Athenian *symbola* with monetary signs are extremely rare. The most characteristic known parallel is the find of nine lead tokens dated to the second half of the third century BCE (or later) and unearthed in 1965 in the Dipylon Well B1 in Kerameikos (Figure 0.8 in the introduction).²⁶ They are uniface, with unassuming designs including branches, ants and insects, and legends that designate monetary units: drachms and obols.

Two comparable lead tokens have also been found in the Athenian Agora, both in the Great Drain and both in late Hellenistic context.²⁷ One of the two was recovered from the Hellenistic filling in the Great Drain, which filled up shortly after 86 BCE but contained much earlier material.²⁸ They display the symbol for four-and-one-half obols with an illegible object visible above. Crosby believes that since the weights of these two tokens (6 and 7 grammes respectively), do not have the value of four-and-one-half obols, the numeric values would seem to refer to a sum of money.²⁹

Another lead token, this time of the Haller von Hallerstein Collection and dating to a period between the third and first centuries BCE, depicts a Panathenaic amphora with two strokes on the field, which may be interpreted either as numeric symbols or as markers designating two obols.³⁰ Its small size (12 mm), similar to the size of the tokens of the House Λ of the Makrygiannis plot, as well as the minuscule size of the strokes compared to

theatre mask facing right. For bronze figurines of mice attached to lamp lids, see Kiernan 2014, 601–26.

²⁶ Braun 1970, 193 (pl. 57.1); Grace 1974, 199.

²⁷ Crosby 1964, 89–90 (L 42 a–b, pl. 19).

²⁸ Crosby 1964, 135 (deposit A-B 19–20:1).

²⁹ Crosby 1964, 89–90 (L 42 a–b, pl. 19).

³⁰ Gkikaki 2020, 132–33 (no. 58, pl. 15).

the size of the design, make this, in the general idea, a close parallel to the tokens *cat. nos.* 1–11 of House Λ.

Tokens with No Numeric or Monetary Signs

Tokens *cat. nos.* 12–15 exhibit an insect, most likely a cicada, and do not bear any secondary symbol, letter or number. They are identical to each other and likely derive from the same die. Lead tokens exhibiting cicadas are known from the Athenian Agora excavations,³¹ while a token from Athens bearing a depiction of a cicada and the inscription O|A-Γ is associated by Svoronos and Engel with the market supervisors (*agoranomoi*).³² Crosby, however, considers this interpretation as uncertain.³³ Gkikaki has associated this and similar legends to the *agorastikon*, the fee paid for participating in a religious banquet.³⁴

In Athenian bronze coinage, the cicada comprised one of the most popular designs at the end of the second and early first centuries BCE.³⁵ It formed the main element of design during the early second century BCE, remaining as such until the era of the mid-80s to 70s BCE,³⁶ and it further continued as a secondary sign until the end of the first century BCE.³⁷ On stephanephoric silver coins, it can be seen as an issue symbol through the second century until the first half of the first century BCE.³⁸

The cicada falls easily into the category of official devices of the Athenian state. It symbolised Athenian autochthony, as the people of Athens, unaffected by the southerly expansion of the Dorians, were particularly proud of their indigenous character, born from their native soil much like the cicada. During the Archaic period, the Athenian aristocracy used to fasten their hair with gold pins in the form of a cicada, so it's a venerable

³¹ See Crosby 1964, 91 (L46, pl. 20), which belongs to a group of lead tokens of the second century BCE, bearing the inscription EP or EPMI, considered to have been used for grain distribution. Also Crosby 1964, 98 (L119–L122, pl. 23).

³² Svoronos 1900, 333 (no. 164, pl. III, 8); Engel 1884, 7 (no. 24, pl. I). For more tokens featuring cicadas, see Postolacca 1866, 347 (nos. 118–20); Postolacca 1868, 288 (nos. 419–21, pl. LII); Engel 1884, 18 (nos. 168, 169, 177, pl. V); Gkikaki 2018; Gkikaki 2020, 132 (no. 56, pl. 15); Gkikaki 2021 68, 71 (no. 7 with Figure) and 72 (no. 11 with Figure).

³³ Crosby 1964, 81 with n. 23.

³⁴ Gkikaki 2020, 118–20.

³⁵ Kroll 1993, 53–54.

³⁶ Kroll 1993, 65 (no. 85, pl. 8); 76 (no. 100, pl. 10); 79 (nos. 108–09, pl. 10); 80 (no. 113, pl. 10) and 99 (no. 131, pl. 12).

³⁷ Kroll 1993, 110 (no. 158, pl. 15).

³⁸ Thompson 1961, 50–52 (nos. 65–73, pl. 9); 170–72 (nos. 429–40, pl. 44); 386 (no. 1248, pl. 139).



Figure 7.7 Lead tokens bearing an insect, probably a cicada; nos. 12, 13, 14, 15 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari



16

Figure 7.8 Lead token with an insect, probably a scorpion, or perhaps an ant; no. 16 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari

symbol of the Athenian elite.³⁹ The revival of this symbol during the Hellenistic period, within the general context of the revival of antiquated symbols in the second century BCE, can be viewed as an expression of ‘the outbreak of sentimental nationalism which accompanied the Roman conquest of Greece’.⁴⁰

Token *cat. no.* 16 depicts a different insect, most probably a scorpion or perhaps an ant. The latter is known from several comparable types at the Numismatic Museum in Athens.⁴¹

³⁹ Thucydides *Historiae* 1.6.3; Aristophanes, *Knights* 1331.

⁴⁰ Kroll 1993, 53–54.

⁴¹ Postolakas 1884, 5–6 (no. 33a: double-sided token with a head of Pan on one side and A-Λ and an ant on the other); Postolakas 1884, 11–12 (no. 71: token with a fly on one side and an ant on the other, and no. 72: token with an ant on one side and a cicada [τέττιξ] on the other). Also Svoronos 1900, 340 (no. 263, pl. IV, 24: inscribed Δ-H), which, according to Gkikaki (2021, 64), refers to ΔΗΜΟΣΙΟΝ, meaning ‘public’.

Two tokens with a representation of an illegible object, perhaps a stylised bee crossed by a staff that seems to terminate in a *caduceus*, come from the northernmost circular pit in House Λ (**no. 18**) and the layer that covered it (**no. 17**). Above the ‘bee’ appears a star; below, the letter A. Although the two tokens are identical in many details, they seem not to derive from the same die. The bee was used as an emission symbol on the Athenian stephanephoric silver issue of the Zoilos-Euandros (110/9 BCE),⁴² while it also represented the preeminent coin type of Ephesus throughout its history.

Token **cat. no. 19** exhibits a jar with a high neck and a raised handle, flanked left and right by an ear of wheat and a poppy head with downwardly projecting stems that intersect below. The composite design of a vase flanked by an ear of wheat and poppy head is not found on any published lead tokens. Nevertheless, we find the two latter vegetal elements combined on Athenian lead tokens, some inscribed ΔA and ΔΔΔ, for which Albert Dumont suggests the restoration δαδ(οὔχος), meaning the torchbearer, thus associating them with Eleusis.⁴³ Likewise, on coinage, the poppy between ears of wheat is used as an emission symbol on the Athenian stephanephoric silver issue of the Lysandros-Oinophilos, the fourth or fifth issue after that of Mithradates-Aristion and on bronze issues of the first century BCE.⁴⁴ The combined ear of wheat and poppy head are the most characteristic symbols of Demeter and Persephone, although the jar seen on token **cat. no. 19** is not one of the ritual utensils associated with their cult.

Based on excavation finds and on comparable numismatic types, the tokens of the House Λ date to the late Hellenistic period. The tokens under discussion largely share a common iconographic focus, in so much as the majority depict various fauna. Tokens with numeric or monetary signs (**cat. nos. 1–11**) tend to depict small animals (hare or perhaps a mouse playing the flute) and birds, while tokens with no such signs (**cat. nos. 12–19**) depict insects (cicada, scorpion or ant, perhaps a bee) exclusively. The only exception to this iconographic homogeneity constitutes symbol **cat. no. 19**, which depicts a jar framed by an ear of wheat and a poppy head.

As a whole, the tokens discussed here stand apart from the majority of those excavated in the Athenian Agora not only because of the numeric signs but also because of the ‘unofficial’, almost casual, style of the designs.

⁴² Thompson 1961, 257–61 (nos. 709c–d, 713c–d, 714d–i, 715–21, pls. 76–77). For the dating, see Flament 2007, 151 (no. 55).

⁴³ Dumont 1870, 97; Crosby 1964, 107 (L213–15, pl. 27), 115 (L294, pl. 29); Postolacca 1866, 346 (nos. 106–12); Engel 1884, 18 (no. 175, pl. V) and 20 (no. 200, pl. VI); Svoronos 1900, 339 (no. 259, pl. K (IV), 22); Gkikaki 2020, 132 (no. 55).

⁴⁴ Thompson 1961, 374 (nos. 1179–86, pl. 132); For the dating, see Flament 2007, 150 (no. 83); Kroll 1993, 81–84. For the bronze issues, see Kroll 1993, 85 (no. 118, pl. 11, early 70s BCE), 100 (nos. 133–34, pl. 12, mid-80s–70s BCE) and 107 (no. 150, pl. 14, mid-20s–19 BCE). For the coin types: Kroll 1993, 100 (nos. 133–34).



17



18

Figure 7.9 Lead tokens with an illegible object, perhaps a stylised bee crossed by a staff; nos. 17, 18 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari



19

Figure 7.10 Lead token depicting a jar between a wheat ear and a poppy head; no. 19 © Acropolis Museum, 2019. Photo: Irini Miari

Tokens with numeric signs are known from the periphery of the Agora.⁴⁵ Just as in the case with coinage, they have been found in hoards and not isolated. It remains open to debate whether tokens with no numeric signs belong to the same context of function as those with numeric signs. This is not improbable as they have been found together.

Functions of the Tokens

The study of the rich and diverse material from the Athenian Agora Excavations has demonstrated that ‘the exact use of a particular token

⁴⁵ With the exception of the two pieces in the Great Drain of the Athenian Agora discussed above, which can be considered as fortuitous losses: Crosby 1964, 89–90 (L42 a–b, pl. 19).

is often impossible to determine'.⁴⁶ When types are accompanied by inscriptions, conclusions may be reached perhaps with more certainty, but such inscriptions usually consist of only one or two letters and can lead to a wide variety of readings.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the themes represented on tokens are not particularly telling, since they have been occasionally selected from a repertoire of subjects common in numismatic iconography or other public objects of the city, which needed to be stamped with a small design (e.g. standard weights and stamped amphora handles) and in only a few cases were their designs related to their use.⁴⁸ It is possible, however, that tokens depicting ears of wheat were associated with state-sponsored grain distributions,⁴⁹ while tokens bearing an owl image, a type depicted on silver triobols, could be exchanged for a three-obol payment and may have been used in Jurors' Courts as *dikastika* tokens.⁵⁰ In the case of the tokens from the Athenian Agora with a piece of armour on their obverse, their design clearly reflects their use, as they were intended for the acquisition of state-owned armour.⁵¹ Their discovery in the same well as a large collection of cavalry tablets further indicates that they 'might very well have been employed for the arming of cavalrymen'.⁵² Excavation data has also proved of crucial importance for the identification of bronze jurors' tokens initially identified as admission tickets both for entrance to the Assembly

⁴⁶ Crosby 1964, 76.

⁴⁷ Crosby 1964, 79. Even in cases where inscriptions are more explanatory, they may still be interpreted differently; for example, tokens inscribed with ΑΓ or ΑΓΟΡ were interpreted by Crosby (1964, 80–81) as receipts for tax payments and associated them with *agoranomoi*, the market officials. Crosby based her assumptions obviously on Athenian tokens inscribed *'Agoranomon'* ('of the Agoranomoi') in full and on the analogy of similarly inscribed tokens in Roman Egypt, corroborated by abundant papyrological records. For the *'Agoranomoi'* tokens of Roman Egypt revealing is the evidence gathered by Wilding (2020, 121–22). Gkikaki (2020, 118–20), based on Bubelis' epigraphic survey (2013), has argued that the abbreviations ΑΓ, ΑΓΟ, ΑΓΟΡ should be better interpreted as *'agorastika symbola'*, and that the tokens in question were exchanged for entrance to a sacrificial banquet after the participants had paid for it or contributed in other ways, in the form of a prescription.

⁴⁸ Crosby (1964, 81) comments that 'almost half of the designs which were used on the Hellenistic tokens from the Athenian Agora occur on contemporary Athenian coins'. According to Bubelis (2010, 181), 'tokens, coins, official seals and still other objects merely used slightly differing versions of common images that the state tended to use for a variety of official purposes'.

⁴⁹ Crosby 1964, 90; Ralli 2009.

⁵⁰ Crosby 1964, 81.

⁵¹ Kroll 1977b, 143.

⁵² Kroll 1977b, 146. According to Schäfer (2019, 55–56), the armour depicted on these tokens is not related necessarily to the cavalry and they could well have been destined for soldiers of the infantry or hoplites.

when summoned at the Theatre of Dionysos and to the Dionysia.⁵³ The unearthing of similar tokens in the Agora among the foundations of the Jurors' Courts, one of them in association with bronze ballots, proved these objects were not tickets for the entrance to the theatre, but bronze tokens used in Athenian Jurors' Courts.⁵⁴

With regard to the tokens from House A of the Makrygiannis plot, their designs offer little evidence for their interpretation. Some comprise common designs that have been also used on coins – all of the late Hellenistic period – while some have been depicted on tokens which may have served a variety of purposes. Nevertheless, their signalling with numbers, the excavation data and the specific contexts within which they were found offer us sufficient information to formulate some understanding of their use.

The legends on the nine tokens from Dipylon as well as on the two specimens excavated in the Great Drain in the Agora correspond to monetary units (drachms and obols).⁵⁵ The similarities of these tokens with those with numeric or monetary signs from House A of the Makrygiannis plot (*cat. nos.* 1–11) are clear: lead material, uniface, designs that do not belong to the realm of public repertoire and especially the numbers struck on the same side as the fauna species. However, in the tokens of the Makrygiannis plot, the particular sign for a monetary value (drachm, half- or quarter-obol) is absent and what we have is just serifed verticals, which could equally denote obols or numbers for any unit.⁵⁶ This suggests that the numeric denotation does not necessarily stand for a numismatic value.

There is still one possibly significant difference. For the types from Kerameikos and the Athenian Agora, the principal subject is the monetary values, which are placed in the centre and take up most of the flan, while in the material from the House A the exact opposite occurs: emphasis is given to the design, the numbers are cut small and, given the small size of the subject, they are hardly discernible. While for the types from Kerameikos and the Agora the principal information is the value marks, in the case of the types from House A of the Makrygiannis plot the numeric signs play only a supplementary role. It may be a difference not just in style but also in the function of these distinct lots of tokens. Nevertheless, the interval of more than a century which separates the find in Well B in the Dipylon and the find in the House A to the south-east of the Acropolis may well account for this difference.

⁵³ Svoronos 1898, 63–64.

⁵⁴ Thompson 1954, 58–59; Boegehold et al. 1995, 68.

⁵⁵ Braun 1970, 193 (pl. 57); Crosby 1964, 89–90 (L42a–b, pl. 19). Cf. Threatte 1980, 1.111–12.

⁵⁶ Threatte 1980, 1.110–11.

The *symbola* with monetary values from Kerameikos may be interpreted as receipts or exchange tokens to be exchanged with the equivalent sum, an interpretation which has been put forward by Crosby for the analogous types from the Agora.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, their marking with irregular sums, as well as their subject matter with designs that do not pertain to the official *symbola*, probably suggests that they were private and not public instruments.⁵⁸

Additional evidence concerning the framework of use of tokens from the House Λ is offered by the context in which they were found, particularly in relation to Cistern III from where most of them were recovered.

The contents of Cistern III with regard to ceramic vessels were impressive: *pithoi*, amphoras, kraters, cooking equipment, serving vessels, vessels for the consumption of food and drink, lamps, loom weights, and beehives altogether compose an extremely rich assemblage (**Figure 7.11**).⁵⁹ Among this abundant material there are vessels used for the measuring and selling of liquids and possibly solids.⁶⁰ Finally, in addition to the lead tokens, a lead weight completes the picture of an assemblage that could only with difficulty be described as purely domestic.⁶¹

The identification of the original function of a context – especially of a well – on the basis of the ceramics assemblages alone, is extremely uncertain.⁶² Nevertheless, the number as well as types of vessels from Cistern III suggest their provenance from a space destined for mass consumption and supply of food and drink, while the lead weight and the vessels for measuring and selling refer to commercial activity. It remains crucial to address the question whether the deposit derived from cleaning

⁵⁷ Crosby 1964, 81.

⁵⁸ Kroll 2019.

⁵⁹ Eleftheratou 2020, 57.

⁶⁰ Two of these are biconical jugs, one on Eleftheratou 2006, 113 (no. 318). Only a few examples of these vessels are known from Athens; see Rotroff 1997, 129–30, 297 (nos. 511–14, pl. 50). On Delos, similar vessels came to light in the ruins of a small tavern destroyed in 69 BCE; found in three pairs of fractional sizes, they are believed to have been measures for the sale of liquids, as well as perhaps solids; see Hadjidakis 1997, 296; Hadjidakis 2000, 122 (pl. 72); Hadjidakis 2017, 337 (no. 229). In addition to the biconical jugs, at least ten round-mouth juglets have also been found. One at Eleftheratou 2006, 112 (no. 313). These are vessels suitable for the measuring out of liquids and are thought to have served as unofficial measures; see Rotroff 2011, 702–04; Rotroff 1997, 133. For similar examples from Athens, see Rotroff 1997, 132–33, 299–301 (nos. 533–55, pls. 51, 52, Figures 39, 40).

⁶¹ For this conical lead weight, see Eleftheratou 2006, 41 (no. 72).

⁶² For an extensive discussion on this issue of interpretation, see Lynch 2016, where she examines the contents of Well 2:4 in the Athenian Agora, consisting of debris from the clean-up following Athens' sack by the Persians in 480 BCE, and discusses methodological problems involved in the research.



Figure 7.11 Pottery dumped in Cistern III © Acropolis Museum, Photo Archive

operations of the same place, or whether debris containing destroyed vessels from several locations with various functions were brought together and placed here. This would impact the interpretations as to whether the tokens found in the cistern relate to the lead weight and the vessels for measuring and selling goods. Nevertheless, the three circular pits intended for holding large vessels also indicate the storage and perhaps the supply of foodstuff and drink. Similar pits, holding amphoras, pithoi or marble containers sunk into the floor of rooms have been found in shops selling liquids or cereals, but their existence alone is not enough to identify a place as commercial.⁶³ However, a lead weight recovered from the circular pit where three lead tokens (*cat. nos. 10, 17–18*) were found provides an additional indication of commercial activity.⁶⁴

Based on the above, the *symbola* from the Makrygiannis plot make a probable candidate for *symbola* that functioned within a private context. This is a usage that has not previously been asserted; on the contrary, such interpretations have been contested in the case of Athens, especially in the Classical period.⁶⁵ Crosby, however, based on analogy, thought that Athenian tokens should have had similar uses with Roman *tesserae*, which ‘served a variety of purposes’, including their use as admission tickets for the theatre, baths, inns or ‘as small change used by individual merchants or shops’.⁶⁶ Ancient sources provide very fragmentary information for such a use. The comic playwright Hermippos refers to a token used in retail commerce:

‘I will get the token (symbolon) from the shopkeepers’ (*Hermippos Fragment 61 = Pollux, Onomastikon 9.70: παρὰ τῶν καπήλων λήψομαι τὸ σύμβολον*).

There is no mention, however, of the form this token had, much less how and especially for what purpose it was used.

If tokens from House A were indeed employed in private life, many additional questions may arise to which few answers can yet be offered. The main question is who issued them and why. Were they a kind of voucher, perhaps for the entrance to a specific place or to facilitate the process of providing a special category of goods or services? The provision of a specific quantity or a specific value of liquids, especially wine or foodstuff, would be a very tempting possibility, very suitable with the context within

⁶³ Karvonis 2008, 180–81.

⁶⁴ For this four-sided lead weight with a representation of a Panathenaic amphora and an inscription HMI-METPO, see Eleftheratou 2006, 40 (no. 70). Two conical lead weights were also found together, but it is uncertain whether they served as standard weights or had other uses.

⁶⁵ According to Bubelis (2010, 192), the *symbola* of Athens ‘developed as purely administrative devices’.

⁶⁶ Crosby 1964, 76.

which these tokens were found. The fact that the same value marks are constantly combined with the same design – two for hare, three for bird, four (?) for hare or mouse playing the flute – suggests that the pairings do not refer to quantities of different units, but of one and the same unit, may that be a particular good, service or indeed monetary value. However, this does then raise the question as to why there are two varieties for the hare type. Furthermore, the fact that the unit – whatever this unit is – is not represented on any of the *symbola* types with numeric values, makes it tempting to assume that it would be represented by the *symbola* types with no numeric values. Another possibility would be that these tokens were counters in a game whose details are unknown, as has been proposed for the Roman *tesserae* with numerals.⁶⁷

If, based on the similarities with the find of Kerameikos, we accept that the signs on tokens of House Λ represented monetary values, their employment as small denominations – a hypothesis accepted also by Crosby for Athenian tokens – would constitute an alternative, even particularly problematic interpretation.⁶⁸ The function of tokens as unofficial money is well attested in Rome, Byzantium and in medieval societies.⁶⁹ However, as W. Bubelis concluded, in Athens there had not existed the appropriate conditions that led to the transformation of the European charity tokens to fiat coinage.⁷⁰ In any case, such an interpretation cannot be ruled out, since unofficial money can be valid only in specific places and for specific transactions, as long as the user accepts the reliability of its issuing authority.

An interesting remark is that the *symbola* with numeric or monetary signs (cat. nos. 1–11) bear animal designs that do not appear on Athenian coinage, and they seem in general not to have been state-issued, while *symbola* without these signs (cat. nos. 12–19), and in particular the cicada type (cat. nos. 12–15), share common iconography with one of the most popular bronze coin types of the time. Could the latter types be *symbola* issued by the state and had thereafter acquired another function?⁷¹ It is unlikely that they may have been used for a different function from the tokens with numeric or monetary signs since they have been found together.

The matter remains open to discussion and this presentation does not aspire to put forward a definitive solution. Instead, it aims to lay out the

⁶⁷ For a comprehensive overview of the subject, see Küter 2019, 79–94.

⁶⁸ Crosby 1964, 76.

⁶⁹ Sheedy 2019, 19, with n. 10.

⁷⁰ Bubelis 2010, 183–86.

⁷¹ If this case applies, then it is of significance that all tokens with no numeric signs (cat. nos. 12–18, excluding cat. no. 19) depict insects, which should not be regarded as a coincidence.

premises for further research and discussion. Nevertheless, if the *symbola* from the Makrygiannis plot were not private but official issues destined perhaps to distribute goods in certain quantities to the citizenry, then what kind of building provided the material of Cistern III?

Catalogue

- 1–4. Hare running right; on the left, two serifed verticals. Uniface.
1. NMA 4647 (Figure 3), Ø 11 mm, 1.33 g. From Cistern III.
 2. NMA 4320 (Figure 3), Ø 12 mm, 1.67 g. From Cistern III.
 3. NMA 713 (Figure 3), Ø 11 mm, 0.81 g. From Cistern III.
 4. NMA 711 (Figure 3), Ø 12 mm, 1.55 g. From Cistern III.
- 5–8. Same as nos. 1–4, but symbol at bottom, possibly a flower or wheat ears in a container.
5. NMA 4646 (Figure 4), Ø 12 mm, 1.38 g. From Cistern III.
 6. NMA 4645 (Figure 4), Ø 12.5 mm, 1.22 g. From Cistern III.
 7. NMA 4317 (Figure 4), Ø 12 mm, 1.50 g. From Cistern III.
 8. NMA 710 (Figure 4), Ø 11 mm, 0.97 g. From Cistern III.
- 9–10. A bird pecking at a circular object with a dot in the centre, possibly a *phiale*; lower right, a wreath; above the bird's head, probably a letter (A or Δ). On the left, three serifed verticals. Uniface.
9. NMA 716 (Figure 5), Ø 14 mm, 1.04 g. From Cistern III.
 10. NMA 4318 (Figure 5), Ø 12 mm, 0.92 g. From the circular pit.
11. A hare or perhaps a mouse seated facing right, playing the flute (*aulos*). On the lower right, four uneven verticals. Uniface.
11. NMA 718 (Figure 6), Ø 12 mm, 1.10 g. From Cistern III.
- 12–15. Insect, probably a cicada. Uniface.
12. NMA 712 (Figure 7), Ø 10 mm, 1.20 g. From Cistern III.
 13. NMA 714 (Figure 7), Ø 13 mm, 1.07 g. From Cistern III.
 14. NMA 715 (Figure 7), Ø 12 mm, 1.06 g. From Cistern III.
 15. NMA 4648 (Figure 7), Ø 11 mm, 0.87 g. From Cistern III.
16. Insect, probably a scorpion or perhaps an ant. Uniface.
16. NMA 717 (Figure 8), Ø 12 mm, 1.14 g. From Cistern III.

- 17–18. An illegible object, perhaps a stylised bee crossed by a staff possibly terminating at left in a *caduceus*; above, a star; below, the letter Alpha (A). Uniface.
17. NMA 4321 (Figure 9), Ø 13 mm, 1.59 g. From the layer covering the circular pit.
18. NMA 4319 (Figure 9), Ø 12 mm, 1.02 g. From the circular pit.
19. A jar with a tall neck and raised handle, flanked by an ear of wheat (left) and a poppy head (right). Uniface.
19. NMA 709 (Figure 10), Ø 12 mm, 1.90 g. From Cistern III.

III

Athenian Tokens in the Aftermath of the Classical Period

Chapter 8

Nike on Hellenistic Lead Tokens from Athens: Iconography and Meaning

Martin Schäfer

Among the numerous types of Athenian tokens, the design of Nike is one of the most attractive and the most promising in terms of possible meanings. Nevertheless, it has not been studied adequately.

This study discusses the iconography of the type of Nike standing at rest and in a long garment on Hellenistic lead tokens from Athens. We will start by giving a brief account of the tokens, which are listed in a catalogue at the end of the text, here arranged according to *'Darstellungstyp'* (figure scheme), referring to the types of representation (A to E). After a brief summary of the nature of the goddess, we will attempt a comparison with the figure of the standing Nike on other artefact categories and will discuss the meaning of the iconography.

Athenian Tokens with Nike

Most of the tokens depicting a standing Nike are stored in the Numismatic Museum in Athens. The provenance of none of them is known. The only tokens with a known find-spot are the two from the Ancient Agora, now in the Agora Museum, which are also the only ones which have been published

I am most grateful to Mairi Gkikaki for the invitation to this workshop and for multiple support and constructive remarks. I would also like to express my gratitude to Director Prof. J. McK. Camp and especially to S. Dumont from the Agora Excavations and also to Director G. Kakavas and A. Nikolakopoulou, V. Stephanaki, E. Apostolou and G. Nikolaou from the Numismatic Museum, Athens. For the photographs of the pieces in the Numismatic Museum I am grateful to the photographer G. Mestousis; for those from the Agora Museum to K.-V. von Eickstedt; for those of the coins of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection in Athens, to the collection's curator, D. Tsangari. I also owe special thanks to Prof. E. Vikela for remarks on the text and to K. Papoutsis for technical support. Finally, I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for his valuable remarks. All dates used are BCE.



Figure 8.1a–b Cat. no. A 1, Lead token, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora IL1580. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: K.-V. von Eickstedt © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)

properly (A 1 and B 1, **Figures 8.1a–b, 8.3**).¹ Because of their importance, they will be presented first (others from recent excavations at the Agora will be published in the future),² followed by a small selection of tokens from the Numismatic Museum, and a token from the British Museum.

The first of the tokens in the Agora Museum shows a Nike, probably clad in a peplos (A 1, **Figure 8.1a–b**). The lower parts of her legs are not preserved. She is standing facing left, the right arm raised to the viewer's left, and the left arm lowered. In her right hand she holds an object, which is difficult to identify. The interpretations range from a trophy, as suggested by J.H. Kroll, to a small cult image.³ This token was found together with

¹ For another token in the Numismatic Museum at Athens the place of discovery is mentioned in a very general way (B2, **Figure 8.4**). Tokens which do not show the goddess standing calm but slightly moving, such as the example from the North Slope of the Acropolis (Agora IL722 in Crosby 1964, 89 L34, pl. 20) with the goddess moving right and the garment fluttering behind the legs, a type similar to representations on coins of Mithridates VI Eupator, are not considered in this study. For tokens which bear the inscription NIKE instead of a depiction of the goddess, see Crosby 1964, 79. One of these tokens shows a warrior on the obverse and another figure on the reverse, in Engel 1884, 16 (no. 138, pl. IV).

² These lead tokens Agora IL2181 and IL2194 and the clay token MC1232 with the depiction of Nike will be published by M. Gkikaki. Owing to the pandemic, it was not possible for me to get a publication permit for these. I am grateful to M. Gkikaki for informing me of the existence of these tokens and of A 2.

³ Kroll 1977b, 143 (no. 9, pl. 40); Schäfer 2019, 53–54, 57 (no. I.i **Figure 9** on p. 43).



Figure 8.2a–b Cat. no. A 2, Lead token, London, British Museum no. 1922, 0416.126 © The Trustees of the British Museum

eight others, which depict on one side a piece of defensive armour, either a helmet, corselet, shield or single greave, and on the other side a letter (alpha, gamma or delta). This group of tokens, published by Kroll in 1977 and known in scholarship as the ‘armour tokens’,⁴ was found in a well, three metres north of the so-called Crossroads Enclosure, a small sanctuary in the north-west corner of the ancient Agora.⁵ The set is dated by other finds – pottery and coins of Antigonos Gonatas – to the middle or third quarter of the third century. According to Kroll, the tokens were used by Athenian citizens who were provided with state-owned defensive armour, an interpretation which is widely accepted.⁶ Thus, the financial burden for the citizen soldiers in procuring military equipment was reduced by state support, which provided each man with helmet, corselet, shield and a pair of greaves. If these tokens were for cavalymen – as Kroll believes because of the inscribed lead tables and clay sealings from the cavalry archive found also in the well⁷ – or for infantry soldiers of the Athenian army, for instance,

⁴ Kroll 1977b, 141–46 (cat. nos. 1–9, pl. 40); Schäfer 2019, 41, 45–46, 49–57 (nos. I.a–I.i Figures 1–9 on pp. 42–43).

⁵ For the sanctuary and the well, see Shear 1973a, 126–34, 165–68, 176–79 (Figure 1, pls. 25–28, 36a–d, 39a–g); Shear 1973b, 360–69 (Figures 1–2, pls. 65–67); Camp 2010, 84–86 (Figures 51–53); Di Cesare 2014b, 978–79 (Figures 590–91); Rotroff and Lynch 2022 with further bibliography. For the ‘Crossroads Well’ (Agora Deposit J 5:1) and its contents, see also Monaco 2004, 28–32; Schäfer 2019, 41–45 (Figures 10–12).

⁶ E.g. Monaco 2004, 29–30; Di Cesare 2014b, 979 (with caution).

⁷ Kroll 1977b, 145–46. For those finds, see Shear 1973a, 176–79 (pl. 39a–g); Kroll 1977a; see also Schäfer 2019, 44–45.

hoplites – as I believe⁸ – is of little importance in this context. While the items depicted on side A indicate the armour given to the citizen soldiers, the letters on side B represent – according to Kroll – the different sizes of a weapon type. Remarkably, there is also a letter on side B of the token with the Nike, an A (A 1, Figure 8.1b). In contrast to the defensive equipment on the tokens, the figure of Nike (Figure 8.1a) is more difficult to explain. Should it represent a piece of armour which ‘does not lend itself to depiction in the small field of the token’ like a spear or a sword, rather than a military standard, as Kroll believes?⁹ Or could the figure symbolise a whole set of armour, as I have proposed elsewhere?¹⁰ Both proposals are not without problems. The first, because there are indeed coins which show a single offensive weapon, like a spear or a sword, and therefore prove the capability of the die-cutters in depicting those weapons.¹¹ If the second proposal is accepted, what is a whole set of armour: is it defensive armour, weaponry or some combination of the two? Until now, no token is known with the representation of offensive weapons except for a few with a bow or a quiver.¹²

The second token with a Nike from the Agora was found in the southern part of the Great Drain, in a disturbed late Hellenistic context (B 1, Figure 8.3). Another token with a greave was found essentially in the same disturbed context, along with a further token featuring the image of a griffin-like creature, which has not yet been adequately published.¹³ The

⁸ Schäfer 2019, 48, 55–56. Similarly, already D. Buitron Oliver and J. McK. Camp II in Ober and Hedrick 1993, 107 (Figures 16.12–18) (used ‘for the arming of irregulars, *thetes*’, not hoplites), although not excluding cavalrymen, Couvenhes 2007, 531 with n. 53.

⁹ Kroll 1977b, 143.

¹⁰ Schäfer 2019, 54.

¹¹ Examples on which are represented single weapons include a spearhead and a sword on the reverse of Macedonian bronze issues from around 300; see *SNG Greece* vol. 4, nos. 895–96.

¹² See Schäfer 2019, 46–47 and 57 (no. II.c Figure 16 on p. 47); 52–53 and 58 (no. IV.f Figure 31 on p. 53); 55–56 with further references.

¹³ For the token with a greave, Agora IL946 (C18:14.1), see Crosby 1964, 104 (L184, pl. 26); Schäfer 2019, 49, 57 (no. III.a Figure 17 on p. 49). The token with a griffin-like creature is catalogued by Crosby, but not depicted: Agora IL945 (C18:14.2) in Crosby 1964, 99 (L129c, pl. 23). For the context, deposit C18:14, see Crosby 1964, 135–36, and below, n. 91. The token with greave – Agora IL946 (see above) – was found one day later, on 7 August 1947, nearby in another part of the sand filling of C18:14 in the Great Drain South (C18:14.1; see archive card and notebook page 5675 of the Agora Excavations). Crosby (1964, 136) discusses the deposits. Another armour token, Agora IL903 (Crosby 1964, 108 L227a, pl. 27), obviously wrongly mentioning C19 as find-spot, with the same mistake repeated in Crosby (1964, 136), depicting a corselet, was, according to the archive card (see also notebook page 5638 [found on 30 July 1947]), found together with other lead tokens in the same part of sand filling (C18:14.2)



Figure 8.3 Cat. no. **B 1**, Lead token, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL944. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: K.-V. von Eickstedt © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

finding of the aforementioned piece (**A 1**) together with armour tokens leads to the possibility that **B 1** was also connected with armour tokens, because it was found nearby to the token depicting a greave.¹⁴ The token **B 1** (**Figure 8.3**) shows a different type of standing Nike than **A 1** (**Figure 8.1a**): the goddess is clad in a peplos, girdled below the breast, with *apoptygma*. The garment does not reveal the shape of her body underneath. She has her head lowered to the left, to the direction of the object which she holds with her right hand. The object is struck off flan. Of the two wings, the left is visible in full length, while the upper edge of the right wing appears to the right of her head and above her right shoulder. While her left arm is hanging down loosely, her right arm is bent on the elbow holding something. According to M. Crosby, the object is probably a wreath.¹⁵ Stylistically, the token is difficult to date, but because of the rendering of the figure it could belong to the third century or the first half of the second century.¹⁶

From the tokens with depictions of a standing Nike in the Numismatic Museum, about twenty are known from the articles of A. Postolakas,

as the Nike token **B 1**. Another token with corselet in relief, Agora IL988, comes also from C18:14, but from the 'bottom sand': Crosby 1964, 108 (L229, pl. 27); see also archive card and notebook page 7046 found on 4 August 1947.

¹⁴ This interpretation seems to me more likely compared to those who would connect it with the payments made to citizens for their participation in the Assembly (*Ekklesia*), as argued by D. Buitron Oliver and J. McK. Camp II in Ober and Hedrick (1993, 67–68 Figure 7.6), without further explanation. This payment was made to enable less well-off citizens to participate in the assembly, compensating the participants for the associated loss of income. Due to the lack of evidence, this interpretation remains purely hypothetical.

¹⁵ Crosby 1964, 96 (L93, pl. 22).

¹⁶ D. Buitron Oliver and J. McK. Camp II in Ober and Hedrick 1993, 68 Figure 7.6 (legend of the image): fourth century. The close similarity with the tokens, which are listed by Postolacca (1868 no. 235 (= **B 2**, Figure 4), nos. 236–39), was already noticed by Crosby (1964, 96 L93, pl. 22).



Figure 8.4 Cat. no. **B 2**, Lead token, Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7539. Photo by the author © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Figure 8.5 Cat. no. **B 3**, Lead token, Athens, Numismatic Museum, 672. Photo: G. Mestousis © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

J. N. Svoronos and A. Engel,¹⁷ but there are more, because of later additions of lead tokens to the Museum's collection. Unfortunately, it was not possible to study more than the few presented here. Therefore, they are only partly representative for the whole corpus of those tokens with a standing Nike.

¹⁷ Postolacca 1868, 271 no. 37; 279–80 nos. 231, 235 (= B 2), 236–39 (nearly similar with 235), 240 (maybe with wreath in the right), 241 (maybe with wreath in the right, holding palm branch in the left), 243 (sacrificing on altar), 244 (= D 1), 245 (similar type with 244), 245* (wreath in the raised right, palm branch in the left). Two tokens show Nike striding: 279 no. 225 (from Chalkis/Euboea), 280 no. 232, two others rushing: 280 nos. 229–30. Some others show Nike flying (see below with n. 27), another one kneeling (280 no. 233) and another one standing in a quadriga and holding a palm branch (280 no. 246). Engel 1884, 7 (no. 31, pl. I standing frontally); 15 (no. 130, pl. IV = B 3 no. 131, pl. IV frontal, with palm branch and inscription no. 132, pl. IV = C 1); a striding Nike: 15 (no. 129, pl. IV); a sitting Nike: 15 (no. 128, pl. IV). Svoronos 1900, 334 (nos. 188–89, pl. III 35 slightly striding); see below n. 23; 335 (no. 190, pl. III 36 = E 1) all with inscription. Nike together with the figure of a bearded man, perhaps the eponymous tribal hero Leos: Svoronos 1900, 327–28 nos. 103–09, pl. III 1; cf. Russo in this volume.

The first (**B 2, Figure 8.4**) shows a figure with the body in nearly frontal stance in an elaborate girdled peplos with *apoptygma* and with straight vertical folds covering her right, weight-bearing leg, whereas the free left leg appears in three-quarter view under the garment. The upper part of the right wing, which is hidden behind the back, is visible above the right shoulder. She holds an object in her right hand, which seems to be a wreath, and her head is in profile facing left. Perhaps the piece can be dated to the third century.¹⁸ According to Postolakas, there are four other tokens with a similar Nike.¹⁹ A second token (**B 3, Figure 8.5**) depicts a figure, clad again in a girdled peplos with *apoptygma*, whose upper body is once more nearly frontal. The free leg is only slightly drawn back in comparison to the figure mentioned previously. In her right hand there is again an upright wreath. The edge of the round field is visible on the upper left side of this token. On another, corroded, token (**D 1, Figure 8.8**), Nike faces left and clearly bends forward. Her right hand is extended downwards and to the left, towards a grounded vase with pronounced belly. With the left hand she holds presumably a palm branch or *tropaion*. The great size of the depicted wing is remarkable in relation to the body. A similar depiction is to be found on a token from the Agora.²⁰

A Nike facing right appears in the round field of another token (**C 1, Figures 8.6, 8.7a**), which is smaller than the others (which have a diameter from 1.32 cm up to 2 cm), because its diameter measures around 1.25 cm. Because of the severe corrosion, the winged figure is mainly visible in outline, and her attribute is also nearly unrecognisable: in her outstretched right hand she holds a wreath, which is not bound (**Figure 8.7a**). According to A. Engel, there was a cruciform feature on side **B (Figure 8.7b)**, which has now vanished.²¹

A token from Athens in the British Museum (**A 2, Figure 8.2a–b**) shows Nike with a tall, slim body standing in three-quarter view to the left. In her left hand she holds probably a wreath. On the reverse, the token features the letter gamma (Γ) with dotted serifs, a common feature of the letters of the amour tokens found in the well mentioned above. Because of this similarity of style to the letter and the similarity of the figure with that from **A 1 (Figure 8.1a–b)**, it is almost certain that the token in the British

¹⁸ The high position of the girdle above the waist, a common feature of female goddesses since the second half of the fourth century (see e.g. Meyer 1989, 291–92 (A 91, pl. 27,2); 291–92 (A 92, pl. 25,1); 296–97 (A 109, pl. 32,1); 303 (A 134, pl. 39,1); 312 (A 169, pl. 45,2)) and the general ‘Classical’ rendering of the figure could suggest a date before the second century BCE.

¹⁹ Postolacca 1868, 280 (nos. 236–39 not illustrated).

²⁰ Crosby 1964, 92 (L55, pl. 20 from deposit C18:14). The interpretation of the winged figure is uncertain (‘Tyche?’), as is the reading of the monogram.

²¹ Engel 1884, 15 (no. 132, pl. IV).



Figure 8.6 Cat. no. C 1, Lead token, Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7528a, side A. Photo: G. Mestousis © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

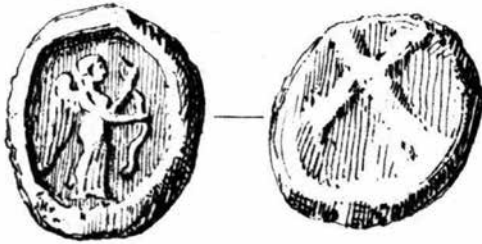


Figure 8.7a–b Cat. no. C 1, Lead token, sides A and B, Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7528a (reproduced after Engel 1884, pl. IV no. 132)



Figure 8.8 Cat. no. D 1, Lead token, Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7546. Photo: G. Mestousis © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

Museum (A 2, **Figure 8.2a–b**) belongs to the category of the ‘armour tokens’ and was commissioned at or around the same time and for a similar purpose. Therefore, a date in the middle or the third quarter of the third century can be assumed.

Interestingly, most of the figures of the goddess follow a more conservative, or Classical, mode of representation (**B 1, B 2, B 3, C 1, Figures 8.3–8.7a**),²² while only two, maybe both of the same die, correspond to a more contemporary, i.e. Hellenistic, form (**A 1, A 2, Figures 8.1a, 8.2a**).

Finally, let us briefly examine two tokens from the Numismatic Museum with other iconographic types of Nike which are accompanied by the inscription ΠΕ (PE) or [Π]ΕΝ (PEN). The first shows a Nike without wings standing facing right, with her right arm raised to decorate a *tropaion*, and

²² See pp. 198–99, below, with n. 83. This phenomenon can also be noticed in Hellenistic coin representations of Nike (see p. 196, below, with n. 66).



Figure 8.9 Cat. no. E 1, Lead token, Athens, Numismatic Museum, 952 (reproduction after Svoronos 1900, p. 335 no. 190, pl. IO' [III] 36)

the left lowered, perhaps holding a wreath, accompanied by the letters [Π]EN on the right (E 1, Figure 8.9).²³ The scene is reminiscent of the depiction of Nike on Early Hellenistic coins from Agathokles of Syracuse in memory of a victory over Carthage, on which the goddess nails or puts a helmet on a *tropaion*. In contrast to the token, Nike presents her (naked) chest in three-quarter view, raising the left hand and lowering the right.²⁴ Because of the archaeological evidence, it is possible that the scene on the coin is based on a sculptural synthesis, i.e. a dedication.²⁵ That the scene on the token may also depend on a model from the sculpture in the round cannot be ruled out either.

The second example with the inscription ΠE depicts a Nike flying to the left, holding an object in her outstretched hands, possibly – as on other unpublished tokens with the flying goddess – with a wreath,²⁶ a

²³ In the collection of the museum there are two more tokens with an upright Nike and inscription ΠEN (see Svoronos 1900, 334 nos. 188–89, pl. III, 35), but without *tropaion* and a quite different figure of Nike, walking to the left and holding a wreath with both hands. For a token with inscription ΠE and *tropaion*, but without Nike, see Svoronos 1900, 336 (no. 223, pl. IV, 5).

²⁴ See Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 24 (pl. VI, 6); Grote 1992, 891–92 (no. 631); 902 suggesting 310–304 as a likely date; Herzog 1996, 34–35; Gerring 2000, 68–70 (Figure 5); Lisle 2017, p. 21 (pl. 4,11). This mint presents this iconographic scheme for the first time in the extant material; see Grote 1992, 891–92, 902. A figural type of Nike closer to that of our token is represented at a *tropaion* on silver coins of Seleucos I Nikator; see Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 27–28 (pl. VII, 1); Houghton and Lorber, 2002, 1.71–73 (nos. 173–76, pl. 10); 1.77–78 (nos. 195–99, pl. 11); Mielczarek 2005, 53–55 (Figure 1); for similar mints of Seleucos I Nikator, see also Houghton and Lorber, 2002, 1.88–89 (nos. 226–28, pl. 13). For later Seleucid mints with variations of this composition, see Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 34–35 (pl. VIII, 2 and 4); Houghton and Lorber, 2002, 1.142–43 (nos. 388–90, not depicted), 158 (nos. 455–60, pls. 75–76) and 277 (nos. 776–78, pl. 83). For the goddess with *tropaion* on coins in general, see Stogias 2004, 73–77.

²⁵ See Grote 1992, 891–92 c, 902. For the motif of Nike at a *tropaion*, see also Gerring 2000, 68–70 (cat. nos. XI/14 and VII/1, XII/6 Figures 4, 68, 95).

²⁶ Athens, Numismatic Museum 3085a: unpublished. Other tokens depicting the flying goddess are also stored in the museum and listed by Postolacca (1868, 279 nos. 226–28; 280 no. 242).

figural motive which exists from earlier times in Greek art.²⁷ Svoronos, who first published a list of the token types inscribed ΠΕ (Pe) or ΠΕΝ (Pen), indicated that they may refer to the Council of the Five Hundred, since the legend may be an abbreviation for ΠΕΝΤΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ (*Pentakosioi*), i.e. Five Hundred.²⁸ If these tokens are indeed connected with the Boule, perhaps used for the compensation paid to each member, we would have a *terminus ante quem* for them, i.e. 307/6.²⁹ But this interpretation was questioned recently by M. Gkikaki, because this corporate body issued tokens inscribed ΒΟΛΗ or ΒΟΥΛΗ.³⁰ Also, in my opinion, the token in question should be dated later than the fourth century, maybe to the second–first centuries due to the stylistic characteristics of the figure of Nike decorating the *tropaion*. Therefore, the legend [Π]ΕΝ must have a different meaning. The legend was recently interpreted as the abbreviation of *Pentadrachmia*, i.e. five drachmai, which would strongly indicate that these tokens would be *Theorika*, or a means of payment for the participation of citizens in festivals.³¹ However, this token reveals, maybe with a cultic connotation,³² the military character of the goddess. In any case, the use of this piece in a state function is obvious. The same applies for the second example with the flying Nike, whose iconographic motif suggests a more peaceful context, perhaps in connection with games.

²⁷ For a depiction of flying Nike in metalwork, see Schwarzmeier 2018/19, 16 (Figure 14) from the late fifth/early fourth centuries.

²⁸ For other representations on tokens with ΠΕ/ΠΕΝ inscriptions, see Svoronos 1900, 334–36 nos. 181–228, pl. III 30–52, IV 1–9; Gkikaki 2020, 103, 108; Gkikaki 2022, 13–15 and 28 nos. 39–40.

²⁹ The Council was enlarged in this year when two new tribes (*phylai*) were added, increasing the membership from five hundred to six hundred (Crosby 1964, 79). After this year, the expression ΠΕΝΤΑΚΟΣΙΩΝ could not have been used. For tokens with this inscription in general, see Crosby 1964, 79 with n. 13, 80, 81–82, 83 and recently Gkikaki 2021, 58, 61. For the Council, see Rhodes 1972; Stockton 1990, 84–95. For the state pay to the councillors: Stockton 1990, 85 (only Classical period); Pritchard 2016, 57–60.

³⁰ Gkikaki 2021, 61 n. 25, p. 64. For the Council as issuer of tokens, see Gkikaki 2021, 65–67, as well as Gkikaki in this volume, 64–68 and 76–82.

³¹ Gkikaki 2021, 61. For the *pentadrachmia* tokens, see Gkikaki 2021, 60–62 with further references.

³² Goulaki-Voutira (1992, 850) interprets the scenes with Nike decorating *tropaia* as a cult act.

The Goddess in Athenian Ideology and Cult

To establish a framework for the interpretation of the function of the Nike tokens, let us consider the occurrence of Nike in Athenian politics, ideology and religion to better understand the possible meanings of the goddess on these objects.

Nike does not appear in literary sources before her first mention by Hesiod in his *Theogony* (ll. 383–84), where she is presented as the daughter of the Titan Pallas and Styx. In general, Nike was not regarded as granting but bearing victory.³³ Her role was not restricted to victory in war (often associated with the warlike deities Zeus and Athena), but also extended to that in sports and other peaceful contexts.³⁴ Therefore, it remains possible that, besides the military sector, some of the tokens may have been related with other aspects of Nike.

However, the religious meaning of Nike on our tokens seems to be limited. Created as a personification for victory, in the beginning Nike was not considered a religious figure.³⁵ On the Athenian Acropolis there was a cult of Athena Nike at least as early as the first half of the sixth century.³⁶ However, in Athens, the cult of Nike as an autonomous divine figure could perhaps already be demonstrated in the early fifth century by the so-called Decree of Themistocles from Troezen, where a sacrifice to Athena and Nike is mentioned, which should have been conducted before the Athenian ships left for the Battle of Salamis, although the historicity of this inscription is often doubted.³⁷ That there was indeed a special connection between Nike and this decisive naval victory is testified: the Greeks believed, according

³³ Bulle 1902, 306; Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 30.

³⁴ Iakovidou 2010, 31–32, 46, 332 (sports). In general, see Bulle 1902, 306–08.

³⁵ Thöne 1999, 58. Therefore, she was not worshipped as an independent deity in the Greek motherland, apart from in Magna Graecia and maybe also in the region of Elis, before – as some believe – the middle of the fourth century: Bernert 1937, 294; Scherf 2000, 907.

³⁶ For the cult on the Acropolis, see Mark 1993, 20–28, 31–35, 123–28; Scholl 2006, 37–41, who argues for a cult already in the seventh century; Kähler 2013, 31–37; Blok 2014, 104–06, 112–14, 118; Falaschi 2018, 75–76; Meyer 2017, 23–28; Leventi 2021, 79–80. For the sanctuary, see also Mark 1993; Schultz 2002, esp. 3–28. According to Iakovidou (2010, 47–48), the name ‘Nike’ did not constitute an epithet but attested the relative autonomy of this very goddess.

³⁷ See Mikalson (2016, 276–78) arguing against Nike as an independent deity. For the decree, see e.g. Meiggs and Lewis, 1969, 48–52, esp. 49 l. 39; *SEG* 46, 1996, 119 (no. 369) with earlier scholarship. As Falaschi (2018, 76–78) points out, from the later fifth century up to the Imperial period Athena, Nike on the Acropolis is sometimes called simply ‘Nike’. The existence of an early cult of Nike on the bastion of the Acropolis, which was later ‘overlapped’ by the cult of Athena, is taken into consideration by some scholars; see Falaschi 2018, 77 with n. 25.

to Herodotus, that they owed to Zeus and Nike – here called *πότνια Νίκη* – the victory over the Persian fleet at the Battle of Salamis and therefore their freedom.³⁸ This leaves no doubt that Nike was venerated then, at least in some parts of Greece, as an autonomous deity in the first half of the fifth century.³⁹ Some years later, in the time of Cimon, a statue, probably of Nike, was erected on the column of the victory monument at Marathon, from which only a small fragment has survived.⁴⁰ In summary, even though for Athens and Attica there seems to be no clear evidence for a cult of Nike as an autonomous goddess in the Archaic and Classical periods, the foundation was laid for Nike's particular importance in Attic art at the latest with the goddess's role at the Battle of Salamis. It is even possible that the figurative representation of the goddess already found its way into the official Athenian iconography in the aftermath of the Battle of Marathon, at Cimon's time.

The Goddess in Coinage

Coins and tokens may sometimes share common iconography. Not identical but similar designs can occasionally be found on Athenian tokens and Athenian coins alike in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. This iconographic similarity is a phenomenon which has neither been addressed nor explained adequately. Fact is that the owl, the *kernos*, as well as the Panathenaic amphora – to name but a few – are found on tokens as well as on coins. On no occasion were they produced by the same dies and it is equally possible that certain designs made their first appearance on tokens rather than on coins. This is the case of *kernos*, as shown by Gkikaki in the present volume.⁴¹

It is worth asking the question if Athenian coinage and other ancient Greek coinage had acted as a prototype for the type of standing Nike on

³⁸ Herodotus, *Historiae* 8.77.

³⁹ The majority of the scholars seem to be against a cult of Nike as autonomous deity, e.g. Gulaki 1981, 134; Thöne 1999, 58. Iakovidou (2010, 47) believes that Nike was worshipped as an autonomous deity only from the time of Alexander the Great.

⁴⁰ Pausanias 1.32.5. Vanderpool 1966, 99–100, 106, pl. 34f; Goulaki-Voutira 1992, 861 no. 127 ('Nike'). Vanderpool (1966, 106) considers 'perhaps a Nike preparing or crowning the trophy such as is sometimes represented on vases, reliefs, and coins'. Korres (2017, 172–73) supposes a figure of more than double life size, strongly striding like Athena on Panathenaic amphoras. For the architecture of the monument, see Korres 2017.

⁴¹ Gkikaki in this volume pp. 10–11, above. For the relationship between the devices on tokens with those on coins, see Gkikaki 2020, 103–08, esp. 108. For the mentioned symbols (owl, *kernos* and Panathenaic amphora) on tokens, see Gkikaki 2020, 104, 105–11; Gkikaki 2021, 60, 65, 66–67, 69.



Figure 8.10 Silver stater of Elis-Olympia, Reverse, Bibliothèque nationale de France, ark:/12148/btv1b8569579v (reproduction after Moustaka 2021, 203 Figure 3b)

the Athenian tokens. In general, the depiction of Nike is abundant not only in Greek sculpture and vase-painting, but also in minor arts, where she is often in motion.⁴² In coinage, the goddess was shown as an autonomous figure for the first time on early coins from Elis, namely from the first half of the fifth century, where she appears in an advanced form of the ‘*Knielaufschemata*’ (striding), holding a wreath, and obviously symbolises victory in the Olympic games.⁴³ Later in the same century, Nike appears for the first time on coins of Elis standing still.⁴⁴ Depicted here is one of these few coins from ca. 432 (Figure 8.10): the body in front view is dressed in a chiton and peplos, facing left and with the end of a hanging ribbon in her extended right hand and a palm branch in her raised left.⁴⁵ It should be noted that in this period the striding type of Nike was abandoned gradually in the coinage of Elis in favour of other postures – the seated (and only rarely the standing) Nike, which vanished shortly afterwards.⁴⁶ The goddess as a standing autonomous figure seems to be absent from coins of the Classical period from other cities in the Greek motherland, but also from other regions of the Hellenic world, with the exception of some Western

⁴² See in general Moustaka 1992; Goulaki-Voutira 1992; Grote 1992; Iakovidou 2010, 27–47, 460–61 and the contributions in Lagogianni-Georgarakou 2021. For depictions on coins, see Iakovidou 2010, 59–455, 462–72 and recently Moustaka 2021. For Hellenistic war monuments of Nike, see Brogan 1999.

⁴³ Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 3–4 (pl. I,1); Lacroix 1974, 13 (pl. I,1); see also Iakovidou 2010, 46–47, 321. For the meaning on these coins, where she is depicted only on the reverse, see Iakovidou 2010, 328–40, 467.

⁴⁴ Lacroix 1974, 13–14. For coins from Elis, see also Iakovidou 2010, 315–40; Hoover 2011, 72–96; Moustaka 2021, 199–204, 218.

⁴⁵ Moustaka 2021, 202 Figure 3b.

⁴⁶ Iakovidou 2010, 321–27.



Figure 8.11 Gold stater, Athens, Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection 2144, Reverse (courtesy of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection)

Greek mints.⁴⁷ To sum up, the figures of the goddess on our tokens could not have been influenced by images on Classical Greek coins.

In coinage, the earliest precursor of the type of figure which is similar to that of some tokens is the Nike on the gold staters of Alexander the Great which show Athena's head on the obverse. On the reverse of the coin Nike is depicted standing in three-quarter view facing left, holding a wreath in her outstretched right hand and a *stylis* upright with her left (**Figure 8.11**).⁴⁸ Therefore, the figure type of fully clothed Nike was first used by Alexander the Great for political propaganda on these gold staters.⁴⁹ However, the more precise interpretation of the figure on Alexander's coins is controversial:

⁴⁷ A similar figure on early coins from the Greek city of Terina in Calabria dating to the mid-fifth century is convincingly interpreted as the nymph Terina, adapted to Nike to symbolise 'victory': Caccamo Caltabiano 2018, 85–86, pl. X, 29. For the coins, see also Iakovidou 2010, 229, 237, esp. 246–52. On coins of other Western Greek cities, winged female figures of other types unmistakably represent Nike, depicted sometimes with an *aphlaston* (a ship's stern); see Iakovidou (2010, 183–84) nos. 2, 4, with Figures (city of Himera).

⁴⁸ Gold stater in Athens, Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection 2144: Stampolidis et al. 2017, 213 (no. 141 with Figure). For the gold mints of Alexander, see Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 21; Kaiser 1986, esp. 55 on the iconography of Nike; Price 1991, 29–30, 107–501 (pls. 1–17), including posthumous issues of different mints; Grote 1992, 890 (nos. 594–95, pl. 598), p. 902; Troxell 1997, 97–131, 153–54 (nos. 466–548, pls. 20–24); B. Weisser in Hansen et al., eds., 2009, 115 Figure 9; 299 cat. 135; Iakovidou 2010, 423–33, 468, 471; A. Nikolakopoulou in Kakavas and Tselekas, eds., 2020, 116–18 (nos. 60–64 with Figures).

⁴⁹ E.g. Grote 1992, 902. The Nike of the stater appears, together with Athena's head on the obverse, on a lead seal of official use (Berlin, private collection), which was stamped with a coin stamp of the Alexander gold stater of Magnesia ad Maeandrum;

according to A.R. Bellinger and M.A. Berlincourt, Nike was used by Alexander as a new ideological concept, symbolising not a particular victory but ‘the career of conquest that he set out for himself’.⁵⁰ Similarly, U. Grote sees this specific type of Nike as a symbol for Alexander’s general predisposition for victory, while M.J. Price interprets it as a visual allusion to the great victory over the Persians at Salamis in 480 BCE, symbolically offering Alexander, as head of the league of the Greek states, ‘the crown for new victories’.⁵¹ Slightly deviating from this opinion, C. Miedico believes she was a reference to Athens, celebrating the Athenians and Greeks, who constituted much of Alexander’s army, and that the *stylis* commemorated the historic Greek naval victory over the Persians at Salamis in 480.⁵² The reference to an actual historical naval victory from the time of Alexander can be excluded.⁵³

Others suggest that this figure on Alexander’s coins was a copy of a monument in Athens, perhaps a statue or statues of the goddess on the Acropolis dedicated by Alexander the Great on the occasion of his victory against the Illyrians in 336/5.⁵⁴ Indeed, a precursor of this type of Nike can be found on a Panathenaic prize amphora of the archon Pythodelos from 336/5, holding an *aphlaston* in the right hand and a *stylis* in the left.⁵⁵ Regardless of whether the figure type on Alexander’s staters was based on a particular statue dedication (maybe from Athens or elsewhere) or not, it was probably meant to be directed to his soldiers, who received these coins as pay-off.⁵⁶

see Krenzel and Sode 2005/06, 70 (no. I Figures 1–3), 71; Callataÿ 2010, 230, 255 E with Figure.

⁵⁰ Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 21.

⁵¹ Price 1991, 29–30; Grote 1992, 200.

⁵² Miedico 2010, 36.

⁵³ Price 1991, 30; Mørkholm 1991, 43–44; Miedico 2010, 36. Kaiser (1986, 45–46, 55–56) proposes that the attributes of the goddess could symbolise Alexander’s crossing of the Hellespont in 334, which seems rather unlikely. Price (1991, 30) argues convincingly against this. The Nike served possibly to indicate his victorious supremacy in general, i.e. not only on land but also on sea.

⁵⁴ See Thompson (1944, 177), who suggests also (209) that Alexander contributed to the restoration of the extant *Nikai*. Against the suggestion that the Nike on Alexander’s gold coins was a reflection of an assumed dedication of a statue by Alexander, see Eschbach 1986, 131. See also Mørkholm 1991, 44 and Schäfer 2019, 54 with further bibliography.

⁵⁵ See Thompson 1944, 177 (Figure 14); 205; Eschbach 1986, 111–12 (cat. 65 Figure 65); 130–31 (pl. 29,4).

⁵⁶ See e.g. Price 1982, 190; Briant 2018, 243. According to Zervos (1982, 173), the iconographic types on the gold staters ‘were chosen not so much or exclusively for their Panhellenic significance . . . but primarily for their personal reference to Alexander’. By contrast, some believe (Mørkholm 1991, 44; similarly, Gerring 2000, 71) that the

In the Hellenistic period, the iconographic types of Alexander's coins were universally recognised. That is the reason why – together with Athena on the obverse – the figure of standing Nike was common on the reverse of coins of the East, and especially popular on Seleucid mints starting from Seleucos I Nikator, mostly with wreath and/or palm branch,⁵⁷ but also on clay sealings from Seleucid cities.⁵⁸ It is suggested that the majority of these seals were from private persons, who were thus using official iconographic details for personal commercial affairs.⁵⁹

By contrast, this figure appears to be extremely rare in the coinage of the Greek motherland in the Hellenistic period. It does not exist on Athenian coins but it is known on the reverse of some Boeotian types. For instance, the drachms of the Boeotian League (dating approximately from 225 to 171 BCE) bear the image of standing Nike facing left holding a wreath in extended right hand and resting left hand on a grounded trident (**Figure 8.12**). The arms of the Nike of the Boeotian coinage, especially the left one, are positioned mostly in a different manner from those on our tokens.⁶⁰ Interestingly enough, a similar figure of Nike, again with a maritime reference, occurs on a western Greek gold ring with round bezel from around the second quarter of the third century (**Figure 8.13**).⁶¹ The

iconography was a homage to Athens, to assure Alexander's good relationships with this polis, the traditional main adversary of the Persian kingdom, in respect to his campaign against the Persians.

⁵⁷ Houghton and Lorber 2002, 1.5, 7, 18 (nos. 9 and 12, pl. 1); 1.27–28 (nos. 39–40, pl. 2); 1.32 (nos. 55–56, pl. 3); 1.35 (no. 66, pl. 4); 1.40–41 (no. 81, pl. 5); 1.42 (no. 86, pl. 5); 1.45 (nos. 92–93, pl. 5); 1.48 (no. 101, pl. 6); 1.52 (nos. 114–15, pl. 7); 1.62–63 (nos. 137–38, pl. 8); 1.68 (nos. 160–62, pl. 9); 1.75 (no. 183, pl. 10); 1.76 (no. 189, pl. 67); 1.79–80 (nos. 200–01, pl. 11); 1.87 (no. 219, pl. 12); 1.88 (no. 222, pl. 67); 1.99 (no. 258, pl. 15); 1.107 (nos. 291–92, pl. 16); 1.110 (no. 304, pl. 17). For mints of the Seleucid Dynasty with variations, see Houghton and Lorber 2002 and Houghton, Lorber and Hoover 2008. Notable examples of the Successors include a gold stater of Demetrios Poliorketes from 298 to 295 (Athens, Numismatic Museum: *SNG Greece* vol. 4, 897, pl. 46) and a coin of Seleucos II Kallinikos (245/4–225) with a palm branch instead of a *stylis* in the right hand of the goddess (Athens, KIKPE Collection: *SNG Greece* vol. 7, 1046, pl. 103). For the iconography of Nike on Seleucid coins, see also Erickson 2019, 29–32, 37, 43 (Figure 1.7), 127, 135, 136, 138, 139–40, 146, 169. For mints from other regions, see Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 38–40 (pl. VIII, 7, 9 and 10).

⁵⁸ Messina 2006, 19, esp. Figures 1c (a seal impression from Seleucia on the Tigris) and 3 (a seal impression from Uruk).

⁵⁹ Messina 2006, 22.

⁶⁰ *BMC Central Greece* 42–43, nos. 92–102 (pl. VI, 9–11); *SNG Copenhagen Aetolia–Euboea*, 385–94; *SNG Delepierre* 1323–27 (pl. 35); Athens, Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection: *SNG Greece* vol. 6, 843 (pl. 39). For Nike on Boeotian mints, see also Bellinger and Berlincourt 1962, 40–42 (pl. VIII 11–12).

⁶¹ Gerring 2000, 68, 70–71, 161 (cat. XII/7 Figure 96); Boardman 2001, 229 (Figure 245), 285.



Figure 8.12 Coin of the Boeotian League, Reverse, Athens, Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection 9018 (courtesy of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection)



Figure 8.13 Gold ring (reproduction after Boardman 2001, p. 229 Figure 245)

goddess is standing frontally in front of a *thymiaterion* and holds a trident or *stylis*. It should be noted here briefly that Nike, in a wide variety of figures, is one of the most popular iconographic themes on Hellenistic metal rings.⁶²

At first glance, more promising seems to be the connection with a figure of Nike on Athenian 'stephanephoric' coins.⁶³ On the reverse of the issue of Aphrodisios and Apolexis from 123/2 BCE, a standing Nike clad in a long garment serves as control mark at the right of the owl.⁶⁴ The body of the figure appears nearly frontal, the right leg being the weight-bearing leg, and the free left leg slightly moved to the side. The head is turned to the left, looking in the direction of a large wreath held with the right hand, whereas one of her wings appears on the right. The fact that the garment covers only the lower part of the body and leaves the upper naked, shows that this Nike represents a different figure type from that of our tokens and therefore cannot contribute much directly to our discussion.⁶⁵

⁶² Gerring 2000, 68, 130, see also 68–74, 88 (cat. VII/1, IX/28, X/5, XI/13–16, XII/5–6, XV/1, XVI/6–10, Vr/20 Figures. 4, 35, 68, 94–95, 116–17). Gerring (2000, 68, 74, 130) notices a dependency on coin images.

⁶³ Crosby 1964, 96 (L93, pl. 22).

⁶⁴ See Thompson 1961, 193–96 nos. 494–505b, pls. 50–51; see also 311–12, 557; Herzog 1996, 33–36.

⁶⁵ Herzog (1996, 35–36) sees the possibility that this type of Nike with naked upper body follows a prototype from round sculpture, either of Aphrodite or Nike. For other types of Nike on Athenian 'stephanephoric' coins, see Herzog 1996, 5–8, 134–37, with further references (striding Nike); Herzog 1996, 15–18, with further references

A certain conservatism in the artistic rendering of the figures of the goddess has recently been noted for the coinages since the time of Alexander the Great by A. Moustaka. She explains this with the official character of the coinages and the fact that they usually repeat the numismatic types of already known models.⁶⁶

The Goddess in Athenian State Art and Ideology

In the search for the origin of this type of Nike in Athenian art, the possibility of a larger iconographic tradition should perhaps be mentioned. The winged Nike standing, holding a wreath in her outstretched hand, was already known in the Archaic period, if the figure on a fragment of the tondo of a black-figure cup from around 500/490 from the Athenian Agora can indeed be interpreted as Nike, and not as another female divinity with wings, such as Iris, for example.⁶⁷ The figure holds the wreath in her left hand, while her chest is turned to the viewer.

From shortly before the mid-fifth century, Nike gained special importance in Athenian art, as apparently evidenced by the Nike on the right hand of the bronze statue of Athena Promachos, a work of Pheidias, which was erected on the Acropolis in commemoration of the Persian Wars.⁶⁸ In the second half of this century the Temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis with its balustrade and its multiple depictions of the goddess was constructed, although none of these depictions corresponds to the types on the tokens.⁶⁹ The same applies to the gold and ivory Nike of Pheidias' Athena Parthenos, which wore a gold wreath on her head and roused the special admiration of Pliny the Elder.⁷⁰ Although cult statues of Nike are not known from the Archaic and Classical periods, either in Athens or anywhere else,⁷¹ the representation of the goddess evidently formed an important part of some of Pheidias' most famous sculptural creations,

(hovering downwards); Herzog 1996, 19–22, with further references (directing/steering a quadriga).

⁶⁶ Moustaka 2021, 219.

⁶⁷ Athens, Agora Museum P 22986: *ABV*707 no. 594bis; Moore, Philippides and von Bothmer 1986, 315 (no. 1829, pl. 117); Moustaka 1992, 853 (no. 10, pl. 558).

⁶⁸ See Tsouli 2021, 69, with further bibliography.

⁶⁹ Schultz 2002, 92–210; Leventi 2021, 90–101 Figure 8–16. For the interpretation of the figures on the balustrade, see Thomsen 2018, 62–63, 65 (Figure 1). For the iconography of Nike in Athenian art from the middle of the fifth century, see Thomsen, 2018, 65–66 and the contributions in M. Lagogianni-Georgarakou, 2021.

⁷⁰ Plinius, *Historia Naturalis* 36.18. Mentioned also by Pausanias 1.24.7; Arrianus, *Epicteti Dissertationes* 2.8.20. See Goulaki-Voutira 1992, 868 (nos. 195–96); 899; Lapatin 2018, 49–52 (Figures 2b, 3, representations of Pheidias' Nike); Tsouli 2021, 69–74.

⁷¹ Goulaki-Voutira 1992, 899; Iakovidou 2010, 48. For the Archaic cult statue of Athena

namely the Athena Promachos and the cult statues of Athena Parthenos in Athens and of Zeus in Olympia.⁷²

On several occasions, other official statues of Nike in Athens and Attica were erected, which are only known from written sources. Apart from the possible statue of Nike already mentioned on the *tropaion* at Marathon, there are other recorded erections of statues in the Classical period.

At least eight golden statues of Nike, i.e. bronze statues covered with sheets of gold, were dedicated on the Acropolis sometime in the years around and after 434/3 on the occasion of different military victories, mostly naval battles. These works, which are known from inscriptions, could have been mostly melted down or rather were dismantled for their gold in the crisis of 407/6.⁷³ Of these, a single golden Nike was restored (or, less likely, newly erected) afterwards, in 374/3, which held a wreath in her outstretched right hand.⁷⁴ A bronze statue, dedicated by the Athenians on the Acropolis after the military triumph at Sphacteria in 425, is mentioned by Pausanias.⁷⁵ Due to the lack of iconographic information, the exact appearance of these statues is unknown – for example, if in motion or standing still,⁷⁶ in spite of the fact that accessories and attributes are mentioned in the inscriptions like headband, wreath, *aphlaston* or *stylis*.⁷⁷ In 334–330, Lycurgus reconstructed these figures of Nike, but their golden sheets were melted down at the beginning of the third century to mint gold coins for the tyrant Lachares, so that he could pay his mercenaries.⁷⁸ Another statue of the goddess is assumed by some scholars for the Acropolis, depicting Nike holding a garland in both hands, on top of a

Nike on the Acropolis, see Mark 1993, 20–28 (Figure 3); 34–35, 93–98, 123–25; Thomsen 2018, 62; Leventi 2021, 79–80.

⁷² Pausanias 5.11.1; see Goulaki-Voutira 1992, 868 (no. 205), 899; Lapatin, 2018, 52–53; Tsouli 2021, 74–77.

⁷³ Thompson 1944, esp. 173–77, 205–09. Thompson (1944, 176) refers first to a melting-down of the Nikai of the fifth century and afterwards (209) contradictory to a re-covering of these statues with gold ‘in the latter part of the fourth century, possibly by Alexander and certainly by Lycurgus’; see also Papazarkadas and Rossiou 2014–19, esp. pp. 57–58, 60 with further bibliography.

⁷⁴ Thompson 1944, 177, 209.

⁷⁵ Pausanias 4.36.6. Thompson 1944, 176, 209; S. Kansteiner and R. Krumeich, in Kansteiner et al., 2014, 453 no. 1204. Lösckke (1884, 96 n. 8) interpreted the Nike with *aphlaston* and sceptre besides an altar on an Attic red-figured *lekythos* (Berlin, Antikensammlung F 2211: *ARV*² 423 no. 125; Iakovidou 2010, 46; Beazley Archive Pottery Database no. 204670) as a votive statue, dedicated on occasion of a naval victory, as this statue mentioned by Pausanias.

⁷⁶ Thompson 1944, 176, 209.

⁷⁷ Thompson 1944, 193 (fillet), 194 (wreath); 201–3 (*aphlaston* and *stylis*).

⁷⁸ [Plutarch], *Vitae decem oratorum* 852b. Thompson (1944, 189–92 Figures 7–9) suggests as prototype the Nike of the Athena Parthenos in the Parthenon, therefore ‘floating quietly forward’ and discusses further possible models.

column on a ship's bow, as shown on a Panathenaic amphora from 332/1, and therefore interpreted as commemorating the naval victory against the Persian fleet at Salamis.⁷⁹ Besides sculptures in the round, for which we have only the mentioned indirect evidence, the goddess is also depicted on a few Attic document reliefs from the fourth century, standing in the outstretched hand of Athena.⁸⁰ Only in one case, a badly preserved honorary document relief of the phyle Erechtheis, does Nike appear as an autonomous figure, crowning a victorious *choregos*.⁸¹ The relief on a victory dedication by the prytany of Kekropis from about the second quarter of the fourth century again shows her separately and in front of Athena, only slightly smaller in size, apparently crowning a small male figure, who perhaps symbolises the *prytaneis*.⁸² In both cases, the stance recalls that of Nike on tokens **B 1–3** (Figures 8.3–8.5).

I have not been able to find any figure similar to one of our Nikes in existing statues, but influences can be detected from earlier sculpture. The figure of Nike on the token from the Numismatic Museum (**B 2**, Figure 8.4) and the figures on other tokens (**B 1**, Figure 8.3; **B 3**, Figure 8.5) also resemble Classical sculptural types in various ways.⁸³

As we have seen, the figures of Nike on the tokens presented here, which are only a small part of the whole corpus of tokens depicting this goddess and are therefore not fully representative, are quite different in their details and style. The overview of similar figures of Nike on coins points to the conclusion that the figural types of Nike on the tokens are not derived from a special type in coinage, because the figures show important differences. In contrast to the Nike from the Alexander coins (Figure 8.11), for example, on the tokens the wing on the left is minimised and only the small upper part is visible above the right shoulder (**B 1–3**,

⁷⁹ Miedico 2010, 36 Figure 3b. For the depiction on this vase of the archon Niketes (London, British Museum B 610), see Eschbach 1986, 138–39 cat. 69 Figures 72–73; 140–41, pl. 34,1–2.

⁸⁰ Meyer 1989, 285–86 (A 70, pl. 23,1); 287 (A 75, pl. 23,2); 292 (A 93, pl. 25,2); 296–97 (A 109, pl. 32,1); 301–02 (A 129, pl. 33,1); Lawton 1995, 40–41, 59, 96–97 no. 30, pl. 16; 127–26 no. 97, pl. 51; 130 no. 106, pl. 56; 139 no. 132, pl. 70; 151–52 no. 164, pl. 86. In one case she appears as charioteer: Lawton 1995, 134–35 no. 122, pl. 65.

⁸¹ Athens, Epigraphic Museum 7696 (third quarter of the fourth century): Meyer 1989, 119, 299–300 (A 122, pl. 37,1); Lawton 1995, 59, 137–38 (no. 128, pl. 68); *JG* II² 1147.

⁸² Athens, Acropolis Museum 3367 and 2542, Epigraphic Museum 8024: Meyer 1989, 54, 119; Lawton 1995, 29, 39, 59, 127–28 (no. 97, pl. 51,1–2); *JG* II² 1743; *JG* II³ 4, 23, pl. V. Whether another autonomous female figure on another victory (?) relief dedication (Athens, Epigraphic Museum 2802) could represent Nike remains doubtful: Lawton 1989, 59, 128–29 (no. 100, pl. 53).

⁸³ Similar clothing and stance are to be found on figures of major goddesses, amongst them Athena; see e.g. Daltrop and Bol 1983, 24–25 (Figure 61); Meyer 1989, 166–69, 244, 292 (A 93, pl. 25,2); 174, 275–76 (A 36, pl. 11,3); 297 (A 111, pl. 47,4); Baumer 1997, 71–73.

Figures 8.3–8.5). No sculpture seems to exist to serve as a model, as we have seen. Of course, it cannot be ruled out that the figures on some coins were inspired by statues that have been lost. The many statues of Nike in gold and other materials, which were dedicated on the Acropolis in the second half of the fifth and in the fourth centuries, mentioned above, prove the popularity of the goddess of victory as an iconographic subject in Classical Athenian sculpture in the round. Because of the fact that the Nike on the majority of the tokens shows drapery in a Classical form, adopting the stance and the garment which is known from figures of Athena and other goddesses in Classical Athenian sculpture, it seems possible, but not definitive, that sculptures in the round may have served as the model for the Nike at least on some of the tokens.

The Interpretation of the Tokens

As for the meaning of the figures of the standing Nike, the interpretation is still elusive. Only in one case, the token from the well in the Agora (**A 1, Figures 8.1a–b**), can the original context of its use be understood, because it belongs to the group of ‘armour tokens’. However, a similar function could be very probably also attributed to the one in the British Museum (**A 2, Figure 8.2a–b**) and possibly to another one from the Agora (**B 1, Figure 8.3**). The goddess here surely recalled military victory, but the exact exchange value of the token in comparison with other armour tokens is still under discussion. We may recall the two possibilities already mentioned – that the token depicting Nike was to be exchanged either for an offensive weapon or a whole set of armour.

The other presented tokens (**B 2–3, C 1, D 1, Figures 8.4–8.8**) may have served a different purpose. The type of Nike holding a wreath (**B 2–3, C 1, Figures 8.4–8.7a**) may be connected with games, because this object served also as a prize for agonistic victories.⁸⁴ But given the military character of Nike on coins of Alexander and the successors, a military character for Nike on those Athenian tokens seems more possible. This would entail that the tokens in question functioned for purposes of the military and would bring us to interpretations similar to the ones given to the find at the Crossroads Enclosure.

Nevertheless, every interpretation should be treated with caution. The iconography of tokens in general was rather dictated by the need for constant variety and change in order to act as a ‘ticket’ and therefore ‘code’ for different events and occasions. Therefore, the iconography is purposefully deprived of visible clues that might allow us to recognise their

⁸⁴ See Blech 1982; Syrkou 2017. For the wreath in connection with Nike, see Blech 1982, 177–81.

association with a specific Athenian institution or even function, as pointed out by John H. Kroll in this volume.⁸⁵

Conclusions

The importance of the tokens with standing Nike treated in this paper lies in the fact that they provide a new, previously neglected iconographic complex of this goddess in the Greek motherland in the Hellenistic period that is supplementary to those of coins, rings and sculpture. Obviously, the tokens with this goddess belong to different contexts of meaning: some are part of a system of state distribution of armour to citizens (A 1, almost certainly A 2, and perhaps B 1, Figures 8.1–8.3), while those with inscription ΠΕ(N) (e.g. E 1, Figure 8.9) maybe are *Theorika*, connected with festivals. It is possible that the other tokens belong to different contexts.⁸⁶ However, much as on Greek coins,⁸⁷ the Nike on the Athenian tokens was part of the political symbolism of the state. The goddess's political significance emerged in the Early Classical period, possibly originating in – or at least strengthened by – her decisive role in the Battle of Salamis.⁸⁸

The growing importance of the goddess to the Athenian state and its imagery was indicated by the statues in precious metal and marble, dedicated on the Acropolis in the fifth century, and perhaps already earlier by the marble statue on the Marathon *tropaion*. Likewise, Nike's presence in the city's consciousness is suggested by her presence in the hand of the statues of Athena Promachos and Athena Parthenos and on the parapet of the temple of Athena Nike, for the fourth century by the restoration or re-creation of the aforementioned golden Nikai and by the goddess's occurrence on the document reliefs. The public character of the goddess of victory is also obvious in her figures on the Panathenaic amphoras, continuing into the Hellenistic period.⁸⁹ In the final analysis, Nike was the

⁸⁵ Kroll in this volume p. 147, above.

⁸⁶ The use of an illustration on tokens from different contexts of meaning is not unusual, as Crosby (1964, 82) points out.

⁸⁷ Iakovidou 2010, 471.

⁸⁸ According to Smith (2011, 20) in the vase-painting of early Classical Athens, Nike 'begins to take on an allusively political role'. As a kind of forerunner concerning the political connotation could be considered the striding Nike of Kallimachos from the Acropolis from ca. 490, on which see Moustaka 1992, 853–54 (no. 23 with Figure); 896; Donos 2008, 288, 449, 521–23 (K 117 Figure 5); against a connection of this monument with a victory in battle and instead with a victory at games, see Thöne 1999, 18–20; see also Franssen 2011, esp. 161–63 (B 143, pl. 9). Dedications of statues representing Nike on the Acropolis began around 530 and show the goddess in motion; see Franssen 2011, 160–63.

⁸⁹ For Nike on Panathenaic amphoras of this period, often in motion, see e.g.

personification of the success and the power of the state, and possibly an expression of ‘Athenian national identity’ – connotations which are surely communicated also in the iconography of the tokens, regardless of their particular use. At the same time, the figure of the goddess on other objects could have been chosen as an iconographic theme by private individuals, and as we have seen in the case of the finger rings, the image of Nike retains a particular public significance.⁹⁰ Clearly, the slightly different types of the goddess standing calm and, at least sometimes, holding a wreath on the presented tokens are based on one or more Athenian iconographic models, proving that the Nike on the tokens is a genuine Athenian figure. The conservative rendering of some figures (**B 1**, **B 2**, **B 3**, **C 1**, **Figures 8.3–8.7a**) can be explained by this orientation towards Classical models.

Future publications of still unpublished tokens depicting the goddess could contribute towards a more complete picture of the iconographic variations of the figure, providing better clues for the interpretation of these tokens, and therefore could lead to a better understanding of their meaning and importance.

Catalogue

The measurements taken by the author are marked with *. If available, the find-spot is indicated. The description is presented as obverse/reverse. A blank reverse is indicated by –.

A 1 **Figure 8.1a–b**

Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL580. From the Ancient Agora, Crossroads Well (Agora deposit J 5:1). Ø 20 mm.

Nike standing left, holding an object in her right hand / A.

References: Kroll 1977b, 143–44 (no. 9, pl. 40,9); Schäfer 2019, 53–54, 57 (no. I.i Figure 9).

Eschbach 2017, 51, 155 (no. 4.046, pl. 42,4); 53, 163 (no. 4.066, pl. 50,1 A); 53 (with n. 424 Figure 8); 53, 163 (no. 4.067, pl. 50,4); 61–62; Streicher 2022, 89–91 (Figure 16); 107 (with n. 587); pp. 199–200; 212–13 (GrAth2); 231 (GRAthAk6); 247 (GrKori1). For the role of this figure on those vases, see Eschbach (2017, 69–70), who supposes it could be interpreted as the device of a particular workshop, which in my opinion doesn’t necessarily contradict the figure’s public connotation, since various figure types of Nike are commonly found as column figures in the whole fourth century; see also Tiverios 2007, 8, 10–11 with a different interpretation from that of Eschbach, emphasising that the statues chosen for the shield devices, and later, in the fourth century, for the columns, are an expression of political propaganda by the eponymous archons, although only until the beginning of this century. See also Tiverios 1996, 163, 170–71.

⁹⁰ Gerring 2000, 68. See also pp. 194–95, above (nn. 61–62).

A 2 **Figure 8.2a–b**

London, The British Museum, 1922, 0416.126 (donated by Spink & Son Ltd, previously in the collection of Wilhelm Froehner). Ø 15 mm.

Nike standing left, holding an object in her right hand / Γ.

References: Presented on the website of the British Museum (see www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_1922-0416-126), otherwise unpublished.

B 1 **Figure 8.3**

Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL944. From the Ancient Agora, Great Drain South (C18:14.2,⁹¹ disturbed late Hellenistic context). Ø* 15.5 mm.

Oval stamp. Nike standing left, head lowered / –.

References: Crosby 1964, 96 (L 93, pl. 22); Ober and Hedrick 1993, 67–68 (Figure 7.6) [D. Buitron-Oliver and J. McK. Camp II]('fourth century'); Schäfer 2019, 54, 58 (no. III.f Figure 32).

B 2 **Figure 8.4**

Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7539. Ø* 17 mm. Found in 1860 in Athens in a pit inside a house.

Token of oval shape. Nike standing left (corroded) in a round field, holding an object in her right hand, according to Postolakas a wreath / –.

References: Postolacca 1868, 280 (no. 235, pl. 52); Schäfer 2019, 54, 58 (no. IV.g Figure 33).

⁹¹ When checking the archive card together with the corresponding notebook page 5673 (from 6 August 1947) from the Agora Excavations with the help of Sylvie Dumont (Registrar of the Archive of the Agora Excavations), the mention of 'C19' as deposit by Crosby (1964, 96 L93, pl. 22) turned out to be wrong and 'C18:14.2' to be correct instead. The token Agora IL945 with a kind of griffin (see above, n. 13) was found according to the archive card also in Deposit C18:14.2.

B 3 **Figure 8.5**

Athens, Numismatic Museum, 672 (formerly in the collection of the Archaeological Society at Athens). Ø* 14.5 mm.

Nike standing left, holding a wreath in the raised right / –.

References: Engel 1884, 15 (no. 130, pl. IV).

C 1 **Figures 8.6, 8.7a–b**

Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7528a. Ø* 12.5 mm.

In a round field Nike standing right, holding an untied wreath / formerly cruciform feature.

References: Engel 1884, 15 (no. 132, pl. IV).

D 1 **Figure 8.8**

Athens, Numismatic Museum, 7546. Ø* 13.2 mm.

Nike standing left and extending the right hand towards a vase in front.

According to Postolakas, she holds a palm branch or a *tropaion* in the left, which cannot be verified because of the strong corrosion of the figure / –.

References: Postolacca 1868, 280 (no. 244, pl. 52); Benndorf 1875, 590 (no. 18, pl. 56); briefly mentioned also by Crosby (1964, 92 no. L55, pl. 20).

E 1 **Figure 8.9**

Athens, Numismatic Museum, 952. Ø 14 mm.

Nike standing right in front of a *tropaion*, on the right: [Π]EN / –.

References: Svoronos 1900, 335 (no. 190, pl. III 36).

Chapter 9

Alexander the Great on Lead: Notes on Some Tokens from Roman Imperial Athens

Cristian Mondello

The deeds and legend of Alexander the Great have notoriously had a strong attraction for both ancient and modern scholarship up to the present day. However, while the representation of the Macedonian king on coins and in literary sources has been the focus of a number of studies, the evidence from ancient tokens has yet to be properly addressed.

This paper focuses on a small group of Athenian tokens (*symbola*) from the Roman Imperial period depicting a male head with windblown hair which will be interpreted as Alexander the Great. The purpose of this contribution is to explore the meaning of these special ‘Alexanders’, whose previously neglected iconography highlights unseen components and intersections in the development of the Alexander’s imagery in the Graeco-Roman world. Also, these coin-like objects offer a first-hand insight into the appreciation of Alexander’s legend in Athenian society of the Roman Imperial period and encourage us to investigate the motivations of the contemporary authorities that were responsible for their production.

This contribution arises from ‘The Creation of Tokens in Late Antiquity: Religious “Tolerance” and “Intolerance” in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries AD’ project, which has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 840737. I wish to thank Mairi Gkikaki for strongly recommending the topic of this paper and for giving me useful suggestions that have greatly facilitated the advancement of my research. A particular debt of gratitude is owed to Clare Rowan (Warwick University), whose constant support represents to me an inexhaustible source of advice and ideas for exploring the mysterious world of ancient tokens. Other thanks are due to Karsten Dahmen (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin) for reading a draft of this contribution and giving suggestions. I also wish to thank the Ephorate of the Antiquities of the city of Athens for providing me with access to the material. Finally, special thanks to Sylvie Dumont and the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (ASCSA) for their kind availability and care in assisting me during my research visit at the Agora of Athens Museum housed in the Stoa of Attalos. All errors and conclusions in this paper remain mine. All dates are CE unless otherwise specified.

In the following pages, I will give an overview of the specimens belonging to this series (I.1) and a summary focusing on the find-spots of these pieces as well as the chronology proposed to date in modern scholarship (I.2). I will then conduct an iconographic and stylistic analysis of the development of Alexander-related coin iconography over the imperial period (II.1) in order to determine the prototypes used for the creation of the tokens in question (II.2). The typological connections allow new thoughts on the chronology of these pieces (III). Finally, a discussion of the potential purpose of these ‘Alexander’ *symbola* within Athenian society of the high empire will be addressed (IV) in light of the examined evidence.¹

I.1 The ‘Alexander’ Series on the Athenian Tokens

The Athenian Agora excavations have notoriously provided a large number of tokens from both the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and they have revealed Athens as the first city in the ancient Mediterranean to have minted, circulated and used tokens on a scale without precedent. Employed for a variety of purposes, these coin-like objects were continuously in use in Athens from the middle of the fourth century BCE up to the sack of the city by the Heruli in 267. After this date, neither tokens nor many other Athenian public institutions apparently survived.² Given the frequent absence of inscriptions, as well as the use of a common iconographic repertoire (including deities, heroes, animals, objects and various symbols), great efforts were made by modern scholarship in dating and providing an interpretation of these artefacts, which do not otherwise offer any certain clue to their specific use. It is well known that Margaret Crosby’s publication *The Athenian Agora*, vol. 10 (1964) remains the primary reference text for examining these objects. This study has provided a typological classification of tokens, sorted in chronological order (from the Classical period up to the Herulian destruction of Athens), addressing questions of authority, chronology and purpose.³

Among the subjects depicted on imperial Athenian *symbola* is a youthful male head, which occurs on a small but significant group of specimens. Currently part of the Museum collection of the Agora of Athens, this series

¹ In this paper, the ‘Alexander’ token specimens are indicated by their relevant catalogue number which is provided at the end of the contribution. Any other token specimens mentioned in this contribution are indicated by their relevant inventory number (Agora II). Reference to types is given by M. Crosby’s (1964) catalogue number (L).

² Crosby 1964, 76–85; Gkikaki 2019, 127. For Athenian public institutions, cf. Thompson 1959, 62–67.

³ Crosby 1964, 69–138. A new and complete study on the tokens of Hellenistic and Roman Athens is currently being undertaken by Mairi Gkikaki, University of Warwick.

includes nineteen pieces, all of small size, whose diameters vary between 17 and 20 mm, while their weight ranges from 4.04 to 7.80 g.

Three of the pieces (**cat. nos. 1–3, Pl. I, 1–2**) bear a male, mature and bearded bust right on one side, and a youthful head left on the other, which exhibits short flowing curls and head turned upwards.⁴ A very similar youthful head, facing left and looking upwards, is depicted on fifteen examples, whose reverses show a full-length draped female figure standing left, a rudder on her right, and often a crescent above her outstretched right hand at her left (**cat. nos. 4–18, Pl. I, 3–14**);⁵ in at least eight cases (**cat. nos. 5, 9–15, Pl. I, 4 and 8–14**), the female figure holds a cornucopia in her left hand and can be identified as Tyche. All the eighteen specimens considered so far share the same male youthful head facing left (Type 1). Although not accompanied by any legend, this type was identified by Crosby and Gkikaki as a portrait of Alexander the Great (hereafter this type will be labelled as ‘Alexander’).⁶ The absence of any attribute or inscription makes it necessary to demonstrate the correctness of this identification.

Finally, another type (Type 2) carrying a youthful head with short curls, but smaller in size and facing right, is depicted on a single lead token (**cat. no. 19, Pl. I, 15**), which is plain on the other side. Although considered as similar to some of the aforementioned youthful heads by Crosby and Gkikaki, the physiognomic and stylistic features of this second obverse type are slightly different compared to those of Type 1.⁷

I.2 The Find-Spots and Proposed Chronology

As with the other Athenian tokens excavated in the Agora, some of the considered specimens can be loosely dated through the excavation

⁴ As for the male, mature and bearded bust shown on one side of these token specimens, some details might suggest that they are two different figures: one (cat. no. 1) might represent Poseidon, according to Crosby 1964, L266; the other (cat. no. 3), which is wreathed or with hair gathered in a bun, could be identified as Dionysos or Zeus (Crosby 1964, L272), or as the personification of the *Demos* (Gkikaki 2019, 132, and cat. no. 88).

⁵ Of these, a specimen found on the Stoa of Attalos shop floors was published by Mylonas (1901, 119–22, pl. 7). The other fourteen pieces were published by Crosby 1964, 121, under the same catalogue number (L322) as they were either arranged by type or considered duplicates from the same dies.

⁶ Cf. Crosby 1964, 113 L266 (‘the head . . . is not unlike some Alexander heads’); Gkikaki, 2019, 130, 132, and cat. nos. 58 (Figure 16) and 88 (Figure 27).

⁷ Crosby 1964, 114 L275; Gkikaki 2019, 139 cat. no. 58. According to the relevant Agora card published in the ASCS Digital Collection, the portrait on this specimen represents Hermes or a female head, <http://agora.ascsa.net/id/agora/card/il-244-1>.

evidence, which provided the attack of the Heruli on Athens in 267 as a certain *terminus ante quem*.⁸ Three pieces were found on Kolonos Agoraios and its slopes (Figure 9.1). An example (cat. no. 1) was located while cleaning the bedrock at the lower slope of Kolonos Agoraios (E 12), near the Great Drain South. The other two pieces are from the area of the so-called ‘Roman House’: one (cat. no. 19) was found together with fifty-nine tokens in a small pit dug into the bedrock at the north-east corner of what has been named as Room II (D11:6);⁹ the other (cat. no. 3) was contained together with twenty-one tokens and nineteen coins inside a cistern 12 metres north-west of the house (D10:1). The cistern’s fill was the result of the Herulian destruction.¹⁰ Six specimens were excavated in the Stoa of Attalos and its immediate vicinity. Four of them (cat. nos. 5, 10, 16–17) are from the front of the Stoa (N–P 7–13), one (cat. no. 6) from the west of Stoa,¹¹ and another (cat. no. 18) was found along with about 150 tokens in piles resting on the floors of the fourth and fifth rooms of the Stoa in 1898 during the excavations of the Greek Archaeological Society.¹² As for the remaining tokens, an uninventoried specimen (cat. no. 2) is said to have been found in the south-western part of the Agora (H–K 13–15), a specimen (cat. no. 15) was picked up in an unspecified area of the Panathenaic Way,¹³ while a further eight pieces (cat. nos. 4, 7–9, 11–14) were located within different Late Roman fill contexts.¹⁴ Evidence shows that these pieces are rare and occasional finds, which were found scattered in Late Roman levels from different areas of

⁸ For the date of the Herulian destruction (267) as a *terminus ante quem*, see Crosby 1964, 115–16. In this paper, find-spots and deposits are indicated by the squares of the Agora grid. A reproduction of the Agora grid after Kroll 1993, pl. 36 is given here with the addition of the find-spots of the tokens discussed in Figure 9.1.

⁹ Gkikaki (2019, 130) has regarded Room II of the ‘Roman House’ as a ‘space providing controlled access’, as it is accessible through an antechamber (Room I) unlike the adjacent Room III. No pottery and no datable finds were recorded in the fill where the hoard of sixty tokens was uncovered. On the debated nature of the structure labelled as ‘Roman House’, see Crosby 1964, 137; Thompson and Wycherley 1972, 228; Gkikaki 2019, 129–30.

¹⁰ The latest coins found in the filled dump were two of Gallienus (253–68) and one of Posthumus (258–67). Another filled dump related to the Herulian destruction (D11:7), which contained eight tokens and twenty-two coins that run down into the reign of Probus (AD 276–82), was spotted in the stratum over the northern side of the house at Room I: Crosby 1964, 137.

¹¹ Agora IL528, <http://agora.ascsa.net/id/agora/object/il%20528>.

¹² On the tokens assemblage from the Stoa of Attalos, cf. also Gkikaki 2023, 95–136.

¹³ Agora IL1421, <http://agora.ascsa.net/id/agora/object/il%201421>.

¹⁴ Of these, Agora IL1096 (cat. no. 14) was contained in a deep gravel fill, west of Byzantine wall AB (fifth–sixth centuries), <http://agora.ascsa.net/id/agora/object/il%201096>.

the Athenian Agora. A *terminus ante quem* of 267 is possible for the eight tokens from the deposits of the ‘Roman House’ on Kolonos Agoraios and from the Stoa of Attalos, which were filled with the debris of the Herulian sack.

As for the chronology, Crosby placed the ‘Alexander’ tokens from Kolonos Agoraios and the uninventoried specimen from the south-western part of the Agora (i.e. **cat. nos. 1–3, and 19**) in ‘Section IV’ of her catalogue, which includes the tokens believed to belong to the broad period between Augustus and the sack of Athens by the Heruli (31 BCE–267).¹⁵ A more precise dating was proposed for the tokens found in and around the Stoa of Attalos (‘Section V’). Since they are from a context that is dated to the third century by coin and other artefact finds, Crosby regarded them as a special group of the third century, in current use when the Heruli sacked Athens in 267.¹⁶

Moreover, the ‘Alexander’ tokens are connected to other groups of Athenian lead *symbola*, which have been found in different deposits from both the Agora and Kolonos Agoraios. Indeed, the ‘Alexander’ pieces share common types and countermarks with other series, and all the groups in question include examples that are similar in terms of weight and diameter. The type of the bearded male head facing right, which occurs on one of the considered pieces (**cat. no. 1**), also appears on the ‘Poseidon bust’ series,¹⁷ the ‘Poseidon bust/Prow (?)’ series (**Figure 9.2**)¹⁸ and the ‘Athena/Poseidon’ series.¹⁹ The draped female figure standing left (‘Tyche’ type), which is attested on the majority of the ‘Alexander’ tokens (**cat. nos. 4–18**), is also attested on the ‘Athena head/Tyche’ series, two examples of which were found in the area of the Attalos Stoa (**Figure 9.3**).²⁰ According to Crosby, some of the pieces of the ‘Alexander/Tyche’ and ‘Athena head/Tyche’ groups may have been produced with the same stamps.²¹

¹⁵ In a note on the catalogue arrangement, Crosby herself warned that some Athenian tokens may have been misplaced because of the uncertainties in dating, especially those that may belong to the Augustan period: Crosby 1964, 85–86.

¹⁶ Crosby 1964, 115–17. However, not all the specimens included in the catalogue number L322 are from the area of the Stoa of Attalos, but the chronology of every single piece and its context were not discussed by Crosby case by case.

¹⁷ Agora IL257 (= Crosby 1964, 113 L265), from deposit D10:1.

¹⁸ Agora IL261 (= Crosby 1964, 113 L267), from deposit D11:6.

¹⁹ Thirteen examples are known of this type, ten of which are from in front of the Stoa (O–P 7–10) and three from deposit Q7:3. On these pieces, see Crosby 1964, 118, L309.

²⁰ Agora IL554, IL1088 (= Crosby 1964, 118 L308 a–b) respectively from in front of the Stoa (P 9–10) and from south of the Stoa (Q–R 12–15).

²¹ See Crosby 1964, 121 L322: ‘Note that stamp A (sc. that of L322) is also used as



ATHENIAN AGORA (CENTER) PLAN 2nd century A.D.
 DRAWN FOR A KROLL NUMISMATIC VOLUME BASED ON IF.O. 2557 (EXPANDED AND UPDATED) JANUARY 1992 R.C.ANDERSON
 DRAWN SCALE 1/500 PUBLISHED SCALE 1/2000 (FR.+0.250)

Figure 9.1 Plan of the Athenian Agora showing the find-spots of the tokens discussed in the text. After a plan of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens: Agora Excavations

Furthermore, at least three specimens belonging to the ‘Alexander’ series are countermarked. The countermark of a dolphin swimming right on one of the pieces (*cat. no. 19, Pl. I, 15*) is also attested on a number

reverse on L308. The impressions of stamp A are all much worn and the attributes far from certain’.



Figure 9.2 Lead token, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL261 (20 mm, 5.33 g). Published in Crosby 1964, L308a. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Figure 9.3 Lead token, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL554 (28 mm, 9.6 g). Published in Crosby 1964, L308a. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)



Figure 9.4 Lead token, Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL1086 (24 mm, 8.05 g). Published in Crosby 1964, L248. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

of specimens that belong to the ‘Poseidon bust’ series,²² the ‘Hermes bust’ series,²³ the ‘Athena bust’ series (**Figure 9.4**),²⁴ the ‘Athena head/*Boukranion*’ series²⁵ and the ‘Athena on ship’ series,²⁶ on which the dolphin

²² Agora IL257 (= Crosby, 1964, 113 L265).

²³ See the fifty examples that are from deposits D11:6, D11:7, and F12:4, from Kolonos Agoraios (A–F 9–15) and from the Southwest Area (B–C 16–17), of which only one may not have been countermarked: Crosby 1964, 112, L264.

²⁴ Agora IL1086 (= Crosby 1964, 110 L248), from Panathenaic Way (Q14).

²⁵ Crosby 1964, 110 L251a–e, including five examples from deposits D11:6, D10:1, and from Kolonos Agoraios (A–F 9–15).

²⁶ Crosby 1964, 111 L256a–b, whose two specimens are from D11:6.

is placed either at right or at left of the main design.²⁷ The countermark of snail and rabbit, which was added on two of the discussed pieces (**cat. nos. 5 and 10, Pl. I, 4 and 9**), is also found on some of the specimens of the ‘Athena/Theseus and the Minotaur’ series,²⁸ the ‘Athena/Tyche’ series (see **Figure 9.3**)²⁹ and the ‘Herakles and tripod’ series,³⁰ all from in front of Stoa and from deposit Q7:3. Given the sharing of common types and countermarks, it is necessary to investigate the background as well as the *real* nature of the relation between the ‘Alexander’ series and the associated other groups.

II.1 Alexander’s Iconography between Tokens, Coins, and Medallions during the Imperial Period

The identification of the youthful male head is not provided by a legend in either Type 1 or Type 2. As is well known, this issue not only applies to Athenian tokens, but also to many other similar male portraits that are found in ancient material culture, particularly in sculpture. A large number of individual heads, statues and busts, whose names were lost alongside the inscribed base they once stood on, share those physiognomic characteristics (i.e. beardless youthful head with flowing hair and front locks forming an *anastolé*) that scholars generally associate with Alexander, although they do not offer secure evidence for a positive identification.³¹ Therefore, one should be cautious in identifying these anonymous male heads, since the physiognomic features are not restricted to Alexander alone but are also applied to eponymous heroes of Greek cities (e.g. the eponymous hero of Kyzikos) and some personifications.³²

Recently, K. Martin has asserted that the personification of the *Demos* (‘people’ of a Greek *polis*) as it appears on bronze coins struck over the imperial period by Greek cities of Asia Minor (Lydia, Phrygia and Caria) was inspired by eponymous heroes, already well established on Attic reliefs

²⁷ A quite different dolphin countermark, 8 mm long and stamped in outline only, occurs on other three types; see Crosby 1964, 110 L252 (Athena head right/Three Graces), 114–15 L289 (Helmet?), 115 L291a–f (Lion’s head with tenon).

²⁸ Crosby 1964, 118 L306.

²⁹ Crosby 1964, 118 L308a–b.

³⁰ See Crosby’s catalogue number L317a–i, which includes nine examples showing three countermarks (a stork and a lizard, and a plump pitcher or an owl, in addition to that of snail and a rabbit): Crosby 1964, 120.

³¹ Dahmen 2007, 2. In sculpture, only the so-called ‘Azara herm’ can be safely identified as a portrait of Alexander thanks to the inscription engraved on its shaft (ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ ΜΑΚΕΔ: ‘Alexander, son of Philip, the Macedonian’); see Smith 1988, 60 and 155 no. 1, pl. 1; Stewart 1993, 42 and 423, Figures 45–46.

³² See von Fritze 1917, 15–18; *SNG* Glasgow no. 2009, pl. 141; Dahmen 2007, 2.



Figure 9.5 AE, Nikaia (181–84). 17 mm, 2.85 g (Berlin: Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen, inv. no. 18214440) © Münzkabinett der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

of the late Classical age, and heroic portraits of Alexander the Great.³³ According to this view, some of the anonymous beardless youthful heads that are depicted on these civic coinages, which sport a diadem, laurel wreath or long flowing locks, should be interpreted as personifications of the *Demos*. However, similar portrait-types are conveniently identified by the legend as Alexander on a larger sample of civic coins struck by different mints of Asia Minor, Syria Palaestina and Arabia (Nikaia, Apollonia Mordiaion, Abila, Kapitolias and Gerasa) from the first to the third centuries. These issues were a product of self-representation and identity of eastern Greek cities that proclaimed themselves as ‘Macedonian’ settlements, and they met the need to create a noble past (*eugeneia*) as part of the city’s present identity by including Alexander’s images in their iconographic propaganda.³⁴ Particularly, the type of Alexander diademed, which is often accompanied by the legend *ktistes* (‘founder’), is popular on provincial civic coinages throughout the Roman period, and is prominent compared to the type of Alexander wearing a *leonte* or an elephant’s scalp (Figure 9.5).³⁵

The close resemblance between these Alexander busts and those lacking any legend on imperial civic coinages of the Greek cities of the eastern provinces should bring into question any systematic interpretation of the anonymous male heads as the *Demos*, except for the issues of Blaundos, Dokimeion and Peltae, whose obverse portrait-type is identified as the *Demos* by the legend.³⁶ Even though the considered physiognomic features are quite common and applied to various subjects, neither the portraits

³³ Martin 2013, 10–61. Martin claims that the sex of the two personifications, the *Demos* and the *Boule*, whose iconography differed from city to city, was determined by grammar, so that the *Demos* was invariably male, and the *Boule* was feminine, while the two coin portraits taken together were the visual rendition of prescripts of public decrees of Greek cities (‘ὁ δῆμος καὶ ἡ βουλὴ’ followed by the city ethnic in the genitive): Martin 2013, 13–14.

³⁴ Dahmen 2007, 2–5 and 20.

³⁵ On the above-mentioned coins from the cities of Asia Minor, Syria Palaestina and Arabia, see Dahmen 2007, 24–25, 28–31, 126–27, 130–34.

³⁶ The legend reading ‘*Demos*’ accompanies a beardless youthful head with laurel wreath or long flowing locks on the imperial civic coinages of Blaundus in Lydia and Dokimeion in Phrygia, as well as the portrait of Alexander as Herakles wearing a lion’s scalp on the imperial civic issue of Peltae in Phrygia: Martin 2013, 59–60.

of heroes and *basileis*, nor any of the types of Alexander used on the civic coinages of the Greek cities of Asia Minor, is comparable with Type 1 attested on the Athenian tokens. Moreover, it is unlikely that the portrait of Type 1 is to be identified as the *Demos*. The personification of this civic institution occurs on the Athenian tokens only during the Hellenistic period, and the surviving *Demos* images are quite different from Type 1. On tokens, the *Demos* is evoked only by an inscription, or is depicted in the guise of a diademed, bearded, mature head to right – that is, one of the two guises with which *Demos* is generally represented on Roman provincial coinages – or as a male figure standing left crowning the personification of the *Boule* on his right.³⁷ Moreover, the *Demos* image constitutes a rare type, which apparently was not included in the iconographic repertoire of the tokens issued in the Roman period.³⁸

Although the youthful male head on Athenian tokens has been related to the busts of Alexander adopted on the civic issues of Asia Minor,³⁹ the anonymous portrait of Type 1 is closer to some of the types utilised over the third century on the provincial coinage of the *Koinon* of Macedonia. Inaugurated in the first century, this pseudo-autonomous bronze coinage almost totally replaced the emperor's bust with a variety of Alexander-related images from 218 to 246, according to Gaebler's sequence.⁴⁰

On the coins in question, obverses exclusively feature a large number of head and bust-types of Alexander (A–K, according to Gaebler's sequence) together with a legend giving Alexander's name (generally in the genitive form ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ), including among others the type of Alexander as Herakles wearing a lion's scalp (D and J), Alexander with a ram's horn

³⁷ For the *Demos* tokens, cf. Svoronos 1900, 326–27 (nos. 90–99, pl. II, 39–42); Martin 2013, 15–16. Also, the legend Ο ΔΕΜΟΣ following the name of a magistrate together with the depiction of an unclothed warrior (variously interpreted as Theseus, Perseus, Harmodios or even *Demos* himself) appear on the *stephanephoric* tetradrachms that were issued by Athens in 164–163 BCE, which are usually regarded as an 'exile mission' of Athenian citizens and an expression of protest against political conditions in the city: Martin 2013, 20–22.

³⁸ Even if one considers the mature and bearded bust shown on one side of piece Agora IL240 (cat. no. 3) as a depiction of the *Demos*, as proposed by Gkikaki 2019, 132, and cat. no. 88, it is difficult to believe that two images depicting the same figure – the *Demos* – were represented on both sides of the token.

³⁹ So Gkikaki 2019, 132 with n. 40.

⁴⁰ Gaebler's chronological sequence is based on die-links and the number of temple wardenships recorded on the coins of the *Koinon* of Macedonia (once or twice neocorate); see Gaebler 1906, and further additions in Gaebler 1935; Dahmen 2005. A parallel small civic coinage with dates of the Actian era and identical images was also struck by the provincial administrative capital of Beroia, where the assembly of the Macedonian League took place: Dahmen 2007, 31.

(G) and the king wearing an Attic helmet (E).⁴¹ Very similar to the Type 1 depicted on Athenian tokens is Alexander's beardless, youthful bust wearing a royal diadem, characterised by long hair and an expressive physiognomy (Types B-C) (Figures 9.6–9.7).⁴² In particular, both tokens and coins share the prominent feature of the windblown hair of the king, which appears to move in a breeze as the king rushes forward.⁴³ Similar expressive coiffures are only found in late Hellenistic ruler portraiture, as they occur on the portraits of Seleucid rulers (Alexander IV and Tryphon) and Mithradates VI of Pontus.⁴⁴ The feature of flame-like locks was applied to Alexander's iconography only from the third century onwards, as it appears for the first time on the Macedonian Koinon's coins; indeed, there are no earlier examples in existence.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Also the reverses, among agonistic and national Macedonian types, are related to Alexander and interestingly even to his mother Olympias, whose elaborated scenes are otherwise known from contemporary gold medallions and later Roman *contorniates*: Dahmen 2007, 31 and 138–41.

⁴² Types B and C featuring Alexander diademed with hair waving in the wind are quite common on the provincial coinage of the Macedonian Koinon. According to Gaebler's chronological sequence, Type B, showing Alexander's head facing right, occurs on all six series dating from 218 to 246, that is from the time of Elagabalus (218–22) to that of Philip the Arab (244–49). Less frequent is Type C showing a similar head of Alexander's facing left, which is attested on series III a (during the time of Elagabalus) and on series II (under the late reign of Severus Alexander: ca. 231–35).

⁴³ Unlike the types depicted on the provincial coinage of the Macedonian Koinon, the youthful male head represented on the Athenian *symbola* (Type 1) is bare and does not wear any diadem. The latter feature emphasises Alexander's royal rank on coin types. A youthful portrait of Alexander not diademed, which has been recognised as the first Alexander portrait on coins, is attested on a small issue of bronze units assigned to the city of Naukratis in Egypt (ca. 330 BCE), whose obverse shows the bare head of a young and beardless male with tousled hair accompanied by the Greek letters AAE below, while on the reverse is a head of a woman (presumably the city's main goddess) accompanied by the legend NAY, that is the abbreviated identification of the issuing city: Price 1981, 33 and 35 Figure 7; Stewart 1993, 166, 173, 433 no. 2 Figure 51. However, the rarity of this bronze series (currently documented by a single specimen) and the geographical and chronological gap make any direct connection between the portrait attested on the Naukratis issue and that of Type 1 occurring on Athenian tokens improbable.

⁴⁴ Smith 1988, 99, pl. 77.14; Fleischer 1991, 68–69; Dahmen 2007, 43; Martin 2013, 62.

⁴⁵ So Dahmen 2007, 43. An exception is represented by the tetradrachms issued in the name of Aesillas, the Roman *quaestor* of Macedonia (ca. 90–70 BCE), which combine the feature of the windblown hair with a 'baroque' bust of Alexander wearing a ram's horn that was inspired by late Hellenistic art: Callataÿ 1996; Callataÿ 1998, 113–17; Bauslaugh 2000. But only the tips of Alexander's hair are actually flying in the wind, while the strands on his neck and below his ears are rendered in natural waves



Figure 9.6 AE, Koinon of Macedonia, Time of Gordian (238–44) (Type B). 27 mm, 13.34 g. Image courtesy: Classical Numismatic Group, Inc., Electronic Auction 158, 14 February 2007, lot 176 © Classical Numismatic Group, Inc. (www.cngcoins.com/)



Figure 9.7 AE, Koinon of Macedonia, Time of Gordian (238–44) (Type C). 25 mm, 13.79 g. Image courtesy: Numismatik Naumann (formerly Gitbud & Naumann), Auction 36, 4 October 2015, lot 327 © Numismatik Naumann (<https://numismatik-naumann.com/>)

Interestingly, the feature of windblown hair applied to Alexander's iconography appears also on one of the three gold medallions from a hoard that surfaced in 1863 near Tarsos in ancient Cilicia.⁴⁶ In addition to the type of Alexander as Herakles with a lion's scalp and that of a bearded mature man with a diadem (probably to be identified as Alexander's father Philip II), the portrait on the third medallion (labelled 'Tarsos III')⁴⁷ shows Alexander wearing a diadem in his hair, which moves romantically in the wind. This type is similar to Types B and C adopted on the Koinon's coins,

and remain motionless. On this point, see Dahmen 2007, 98 n. 21: 'The portrait of Alexander on the coins of Aesillas differs in its flame-like locks and the fact that the hair at his temples does not follow this direction, but simply falls vertically'. The fluttering effect now performed by the lion's skin is very rarely found on some posthumous Alexanders of the Herakles type: Martin 2013, 62.

⁴⁶ The hoard from Tarsos was assembled during the third century and buried late in the reign of Gordian III or in that of Philip the Arab around 244. This chronology is suggested by the materials included inside the hoard, especially the coins: twenty-three Roman *aurei*, the majority of which come from the period 198–217. It was claimed that the hoard came from the superstructures of an ancient building in the plains around Tarsos, but actually very little is known about the find-spot or the archaeological context: De Longpérier 1868, 309; Noe 1937, 279 no. 1064; Dahmen 2008, 494–95 and *passim*.

⁴⁷ The gold medallion labelled as 'Tarsos III' is held in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Paris), inv. F 1672.



Figure 9.8 Gold medallion from the Aboukir hoard, Beroia (?), First half of the third century (Dressel A). 54 mm, 112.66 g (Berlin: Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen, inv. no. 18200006) © Münzkabinett der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin



which has led to a typological connection between these two groups, while Alexander's hair usually falls down along his neck on earlier numismatic representations.

Furthermore, the stylistic rendering of Alexander's physiognomy in 'pathetic' style,⁴⁸ as shown on Type 1 of the Athenian tokens – that is, with a head turned upward, gazing to heaven – occurs on both the *Koinon*'s coins and the Tarsos medallion. These same facial features are otherwise only known from a number of gold medallions from the hoard of Aboukir (Abu Qir).⁴⁹ Particularly, the diademed head of Alexander with ram's horn

⁴⁸ For this expression, cf. Dahmen 2008, 504 and 506.

⁴⁹ The hoard of Aboukir was probably buried at the beginning of the fourth century and then discovered in 1902. The assemblage of ancient gold from this hoard, which was quickly dispersed in trade, is believed to have included six hundred or more Roman *aurei* dating between the reigns of Severus Alexander (222–35) and Constantius I

facing left (Dressel A, F, G, from the same die), whose type is modelled on the famous portrait of Alexander introduced by Lysimachos for his royal coinage, share with the Tarsos medallion ('Tarsos III') and some of the Koinon's bronzes the same physiognomic features and drawing of the facial lines, including the area around the eyes and nose (**Figure 9.8**). The portrait on the Aboukir medallions also possesses exactly the same pose with a slightly tilted neck and elaborate front, although the windblown hair is not reproduced here.⁵⁰

The adoption of such facial features on Athenian tokens deserves attention. The stylistic rendering of the youthful male head of Type 1 not only identifies the subject as Alexander, but reflects some of the iconographic conventions (windblown hair, facial features in 'pathetic' style) applied to Alexander's physiognomy in the first half of the third century.

It is remarkable that the feature of Alexander's windblown hair occurs afterwards on the so-called '*contorniates*', namely bronze medallions with incised rims that were issued in the city of Rome from the mid-fourth to the fifth century AD, maybe to be distributed as gifts on New Year's Day. In particular, some of the obverse dies carrying the type of Alexander as *basileus* (i.e. Alexander, XIV–XVIII, XX, in Alföldi's catalogue) represent careful reproductions of the designs depicted on the third-century gold medallions and the Koinon's coins (**Figure 9.9**). On the other hand, die XIX features a much more static version with smooth but long hair, and a diadem positioned high on Alexander's head.⁵¹

(293–306), eighteen to twenty bars, and twenty Alexander medallions. No information is available on the character of its hiding place, and this has led some scholars to question its authenticity: e.g. Toynbee 1944, 69, n. 43. Against this view, see Dressel 1906, 72–85; Dressel 1909, 137–57; Dahmen 2008. On the hoard from Aboukir, see Eddé 1905; Dressel 1906; Vermeule 1982; Dahmen 2008, 494–97.

⁵⁰ On the Aboukir medallions, these facial features are also applied to the representation of Alexander with an Attic helmet combined with various bust types (Dressel B, H, I, from same die, and Dressel M, N), whose designs derive from late Hellenistic or early imperial prototypes: Dahmen 2008, 501–02. Scholars have generally assumed a close relationship between the bronze coinage of the Macedonian Koinon and the gold medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir in terms of place production and authority, since each of the aforementioned features are only found on these three groups. Such a relationship between the coin and medallic groups in question is also suggested by other similar obverse and reverse types and further details: Dressel 1906; Dahmen 2008, 505–09 and *passim*.

⁵¹ See Alföldi and Alföldi 1976, 13–18 and 168–69; Mittag 1999, 164–66, 277–78, pls. 1–3. In light of the numismatic materials in existence, K. Dahmen has regarded the feature of the windblown hair applied to Alexander's physiognomy as an invention of the early third century, which modernised already existing representations of the Macedonian king, and was still utilised on '*contorniate*' medallions in late antiquity: Dahmen 2007, 32 and 43. The windblown hair combined with the diademed head of



Figure 9.9 AE, Contorniate, Alexander, XIV (= Alföldi and Alföldi 1976, Kat.Nr. 538, Taf. 22, 5), 36 mm, 25.93 g (Madrid: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, MAN 2011/101/54) © Museo Arqueológico Nacional de Madrid

In addition to the bronze coins of the Macedonian Koinon, the medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir and the ‘*contorniate*’ medallions, the youthful head (Type 1) depicted on Athenian tokens thus provides a further precious piece of evidence illustrating the development of the portrait-type of Alexander, with hair flying in the wind on coins and coin-like objects.⁵² As will be explained below, the above identified typological and stylistic parallels provide a clue to determine the chronology as well as the models used for producing the ‘Alexander’ series.

Finally, a unique Athenian token (Type 2) (cat. no. 19, Pl. I, 15) shows a male head slightly turned upward to right, gazing to heaven, with short curls, which was interpreted as Alexander the Great.⁵³ A male head similar to Type 2 is found on some of the lead tokens issued at Ephesos during the imperial period, perhaps over the second and third centuries AD.⁵⁴ The Ephesian male head, usually wearing a ram’s horn, has been identified as Lysimachos

Alexander is depicted also on at least three other smaller medallions in gold and silver that were perhaps used as talismans, and whose production perhaps followed the example of the medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir; see Dahmen 2008, 496, 519 cat. nos. 5, 15, 16. On the meaning of the Alexander images on *contorniates*, see Sánchez Vendramini 2022.

⁵² A similar portrait-type showing the head of Alexander with a ram’s horn and flame-like hair is also attested on the obverse of a lead *tessera* that recently appeared in an auction sale, whose reverse bears the group of a lion and a human figure accompanied by the Greek legend ΑΛ[ΕΞΑΝ]-ΔΡΟΥ: Freeman & Sear, Mail Bid Sale 13, 25 August 2006, lot 526.

⁵³ Crosby 1964, 114 L275; Gkikaki 2019, 139 cat. no. 58.

⁵⁴ Gülbay and Kireç 2008. The portrait-type in question appears on five one-sided specimens (nos. 195, 197–200) and two double-sided pieces, whose reverses respectively carry the head of the type introduced by Lysimachos in incuse (no. 188) and the figure of Artemis Ephesia, that is the symbol of Ephesos itself (no. 196).

of Thrace, probably because of his resemblance to the types depicted on Lysimachos' coins.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the absence of Ammon's horn on the Athenian token makes it uncertain whether Type 2 should be regarded as an image of Alexander or even Lysimachos as Alexander. Furthermore, the end of the diadem on the back of his neck was misinterpreted by Crosby as a small snake or another lock of hair;⁵⁶ it instead reveals the royal rank of the subject. Since this iconographic detail is known from a number of portraits of Hellenistic rulers and *diadochoi* (e.g. Mithradates III, Mithradates VI of Pontus, Ariarathes IX of Cappadocia), it is not possible safely to identify the portrait of Type 2, although its proportions and facial structure are close to those of the male head on the Ephesian tokens.

II.2 Connecting Types and Patterns: A Macedonian Prototype?

The remarkable parallels between the 'Alexander' tokens and the groups including the bronze coinage of the Macedonian Koinon and the gold medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir raise the issue of the relationship between coins and medallions.

As seen above, the Koinon's coins date from 218 (the first year of the reign of Elagabalus) to 246 (the rule of Philip the Arab, 244–49), based on die combinations and the numbering of the neocorate (temple warden) title on the reverse. With regards to the gold medallions, the chronological information provided by analysing the Aboukir medallions on iconographic grounds suggests the period between 211–12 and 244–47 as their date of production, thus preceding the coins by about seven years.⁵⁷ The dating of the Tarsos pieces, whose imagery lacks any chronological reference, is less

⁵⁵ For this (not discussed) identification, see Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 35–36. However, the diademed male head with a ram's horn that was introduced without any legend on Lysimachos' tetradrachms in 297–281 BCE should be interpreted as a portrait of Alexander himself since it recalls Alexander's visit to the oracle at Siwah in 331 BCE, although it is tempting to see this image as Lysimachos' portrait and his own urgent need for legitimacy: Dahmen 2007, 119. Moreover, this same type-portrait with a ram's horn was reused even later by Ptolemaios, one of Lysimachos' sons, on bronze coins issued around 240 BCE: Hill 1923, 207–12 no. 3, pl. 9.4. The aforementioned Ephesian type is instead interpreted as Alexander the Great by Gkikaki 2019, 132. In general, the type of Alexander with a ram's horn is well documented after Lysimachos on coins and even on a few rare tokens: in addition to the specimen mentioned at footnote 52; see the lead *tessera* described by Rostovtzeff and Prou 1900, no. 664, pl. II.14.

⁵⁶ Crosby 1964, 114.

⁵⁷ Dahmen 2008, 497–99, 520 and *passim*. The start date of the production of the Aboukir medallions is indicated by the portrait of Caracalla depicted on three pieces (Dressel E, S and T), although a posthumous resurrection of this type after the reign of this emperor is possible as well.

certain; however, technical and iconographic similarities support the view that the medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir were produced over the same time frame, although it is unclear whether they are to be considered as a single series or two distinctive issues.⁵⁸ As for the historical background, both coins and medallions have been related to the agonistic festivals, games and competitions in honour of Alexander the Great (called 'Alexandreia'), which took place on an annual basis together with the imperial cult in Beroia, the provincial capital of the Macedonian Koinon.⁵⁹

In order to identify the relation between the 'Alexander' tokens and these objects, it is necessary to take into consideration the iconographic dependence between the Macedonian Koinon's coinage and the Tarsos and Aboukir medallions. While previous scholars assumed that the Aboukir medallions were the source for the Koinon's bronzes,⁶⁰ K. Dahmen has recently asserted that both coins and medallions were dependent on now lost prototypes from Macedonia: statue groups or paintings probably formed a common source of inspiration for both groups.⁶¹ Similar images

⁵⁸ Dressel 1906, 57–59 and 73 recognised the medallions from Tarsos and those from Aboukir as two major groups, which were produced in different times and by different engravers, but all within a single workshop – contra Dahmen (2008, 511–13), who argued that the Aboukir and Tarsos medallions should be considered as a single series struck at the same place and time, given their technical similarities and the close relationship between the reverse designs of Tarsos II and Dressel A. Nevertheless, the differences in diameter, weight and fineness between these gold medallions (see Peixoto Cabral, Alves and Hipólito 2000, 401–14; Dahmen 2008, 509–10) support the hypothesis that the medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir were produced as two distinct issues.

⁵⁹ Epigraphic evidence on these Alexander festivals of Beroia, especially from honorary and sepulchral inscriptions naming athletes and magistrates involved, is available from AD 229 onwards: Leschhorn 1998, 400–05; Burrell 2004, 195–96; Dahmen 2007, 33–34 and 136. Afterwards, these Alexander games were made 'isolympic' and took place every four years starting in AD 242–43, and a second time in AD 246–47: Gaebler 1906, 13, 22 nos. 795–801, 856, 871. Because of their close iconographic parallels with the Koinon's coinage, the gold medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir have also been related to Macedonia: Arnold-Biucchi 2006, 79; Dahmen 2008, 519–20. About their purpose, it has been generally argued that the gold medallions were distributed as prize money (the so-called *Niketeria*) to the victorious athletes in agonistic competitions; see e.g. Dressel 1906, 56; Leschhorn 1998, 405. Recently, Dahmen 2008, 517–22 has interpreted these gold medallions as gifts presented by the Agonothetes and Makedoniarchos to high-ranking visitors and officials.

⁶⁰ Dressel (1906, 60) considered the Koinon's coins as 'Volksausgaben' ('popular issues') of the rarer gold medallions, while Toynbee (1944, 71–73) interpreted them as copies after the design of the medallions. See also the less drastic position of Vermeule (1982, 70).

⁶¹ Dahmen 2008, 515–17, in particular 515: 'The representations of Alexander and the known veneration of a cult to Alexander the Great suggest that statues and paintings in existence at Beroia inspired the types of both medallions and coins'. This would not

of Alexander, as well as scenes related to his legend, appear again on Late Roman *contorniates*, including not only Alexander's bust with windblown hair but also other reverse scenes showing, for instance, Olympias on a kline or the king sitting on a chair and holding a shield decorated with the depiction of Achilles and Penthesileia.⁶² These similarities make it probable that some of the images put on *contorniates* had their origins in the same designs as the Koinon's bronzes and the gold medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir.⁶³

How should one assess the origin of the iconography of 'Alexander' on Athenian tokens in light of the third century coins and medallic imagery? Given the chronological distribution of both coins and medallions and their high quality, it is likely that the portrait-type on the Athenian tokens may originate from either the Koinon's bronzes or the gold medallion types. However, a dependence on both groups of materials as patterns might also be possible. Vice versa, it is unlikely that the Koinon's bronzes or the gold medallions were inspired by the Athenian tokens, due to the poor quality and workmanship of the latter – as usual for such class of objects – and their limited circulation. Also, it cannot be said with certainty that the designs on the tokens were inspired by now lost prototypes in sculpture, since there are no extant examples which depict Alexander's windblown hair apart from those found on coins.⁶⁴ Moreover, the typological and stylistic similarities of token specimens with the Koinon's bronzes and gold medallions are too tight to consider Type 1 depicted on the Athenian *symbola* as an original, autonomous or even earlier iconographic model.

In light of this, it could be argued that the portrait of Alexander on the Athenian tokens (Type 1) derived from an earlier Macedonian pattern, which should be identified with either the bronze coins of the Macedonian Koinon or the gold medallions, or even with both groups of artefacts. In terms of relative chronology, this evidence gives a *terminus post quem* of AD

exclude a gradual process of adoption of the Koinon's coins from the gold medallions, as the chronological sequence of the appearance of the shared motifs within the two groups might indicate.

⁶² Dahmen 2008, 514, Figures 7–10 and 523.

⁶³ See Toynbee 1944, 71–73; Dahmen 2007, 38 and 44. About the relationship between the medallions from Tarsos and Aboukir and the *contorniates*, see also Martin 2013, 65–66, who does not exclude the possibility that the *contorniates* served as a model for forging the Tarsos and Aboukir medallions, in case the hypothesis on the non-authenticity of the latter is accepted.

⁶⁴ On this point, see Dahmen (2007, 43), who supposed the feature of windblown hair found on coins was possibly added to Alexander's portrait during the Severan dynasty, when Alexander the Great formed a focus for rulers such as Caracalla, Elagabalus and Severus Alexander.

211–18 for the ‘Alexander’ tokens, whose production was probably later than that of the Koinon’s bronzes and the Aboukir and Tarsos medallions.⁶⁵

III Chronology and Archaeological Evidence

The evidence discussed above does not contradict the archaeological context data, which allows further considerations about the chronology of the ‘Alexander’ tokens (Type 1).

The sharing of certain common types and countermarks means that some of the ‘Alexander’ pieces found on Kolonos Agoraios and other deposits of the Agora are connected, inter alia, to the special group of tokens from the Stoa of Attalos and its vicinity, which have been dated by Crosby to the third century based on the excavation context, with 267 as a *terminus ante quem*. Indeed, the type of Poseidon on one ‘Alexander’ piece from Kolonos Agoraios (cat. no. 1) is also attested on thirteen *symbola* from in front of the Stoa (O–P 7–10) and three from deposit Q7:3;⁶⁶ the pieces of the Tyche/Alexander group (cat. nos. 4–18) share the Tyche type with two token specimens, both from in front of (P 9–10) and south of the Stoa (Q–R 12–15).⁶⁷ The countermark of snail and rabbit on two of the ‘Alexander’ specimens (cat. nos. 5 and 10), which were excavated in the area immediately in front of the Stoa (O–P 7–10), occurs also on some of the specimens belonging to three distinct series (‘Athena/Theseus and the Minotaur’, ‘Athena/Tyche’, and ‘Herakles and tripod’ series), all from in front of Stoa and from deposit Q7:3.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ However, given the uncertain dating of the Tarsos pieces as well as the controversy about the authenticity of both groups of gold medallions, the start date of the coinage of the Macedonian Koinon production (218) should be considered as a more reliable *terminus post quem* for the issue of ‘Alexander’ tokens. Should the authenticity of the gold medallions be confirmed, the *terminus post quem* to take into consideration for the start date of the ‘Alexander’ tokens issuing would more safely move to a slightly earlier date, that is 211–12.

⁶⁶ Cf. Crosby 1964, 118 L309. The deposit Q7:3 is a trench dug below the floor level against the foundations of the piers for the interior columns, whose fill contained, in addition to 230 tokens, metal fittings and fragments from the marble façade of the Stoa itself, sherds dating from the middle of the third century and 105 coins which run down into the reign of Gallienus (255–68). On this point, see Crosby 1964, 116: ‘The trench was presumably dug shortly after the attack on Athens by the Heruli in 267, probably to investigate the strength of the foundation in the process of building the Late Roman Fortification Wall’.

⁶⁷ Crosby 1964, 118 L308a–b.

⁶⁸ The dolphin countermark is not attested on the tokens from the Stoa of Attalos but is instead consistently found on specimens of three closely related deposits on Kolonos Agoraios (i.e. D10:1, D11:6 and D11:7), as shown by Crosby 1964, 112. Cf. also Gkikaki 2019, 130 and 132–34.

These connections make it possible to apply the *terminus ante quem* of 267 to the ‘Alexander’ series as a whole, which was determined by Crosby for the tokens from the Stoa of Attalos and its vicinity via the archaeological evidence. Interestingly, the iconographic analysis provided in this study gives a close *terminus post quem* for the ‘Alexander’ tokens and allows us to place the production of the series within a shorter time frame. By cross-referencing archaeological evidence and iconographic analysis, it can be argued that the ‘Alexander’ series of the Athenian *symbola* were struck from ca. 211–18 (i.e. after the start date of the Aboukir medallions and the Koinon’s coins production) and continued up to 267, remaining in production at the time of the sack of Athens. This relative chronology is to be ascribed not only to the six ‘Alexander’ specimens found in the area of Stoa of Attalos,⁶⁹ but also to the examples bearing the same male portrait from Kolonos Agoraios and other deposits of the Agora, some of which – as seen above – have been generically assigned by Crosby to the period between 31 BCE and 267.⁷⁰

IV Some Remarks about the Potential Function of the ‘Alexander’ Series

As for the purpose of the ‘Alexander’ tokens, all preserved examples are uninscribed and this makes it problematic to assign them to specific uses, as has often been noted regarding the majority of the Athenian *symbola*.⁷¹

The nature of the close relation between the ‘Alexander’ series and the series of tokens found in and around the Stoa of Attalos as well as on Kolonos Agoraios (including common morphological aspects as well as identical types and countermarks) needs a closer look. The countermarks hint that all closely interconnected tokens had a common background at least in terms of manufacture and distribution. As has already been stated,

⁶⁹ See above § I.2.

⁷⁰ One may wonder if this relative chronology can be also applied to the other token groups that are connected with the ‘Alexander’ series for sharing a few types (Poseidon bust, Tyche) and countermarks (the snail and rabbit countermarks as well as the dolphin one); see above, § I.2. Nevertheless, consideration should be given also to the possibility that common types and countermarks were adopted at different times on the various interconnected groups, thus revealing different dates for each series. However, a very long period does not appear very probable given the close typological and stylistic similarities between the groups in question. For instance, with regard to the Athenian tokens carrying the dolphin countermark, Gkikaki (2019, 132) has suggested a short period of time by considering how the countermark was applied to the token specimens, which is consistently placed to the right on the majority of the ‘Hermes bust’ pieces.

⁷¹ On this point, see Crosby 1964, 76–78. On the differences between Greek and Roman tokens in terms of appearance and purpose, see also Callataÿ 2010.

countermarks helped regulate and bring order to a complex system of token distribution in Athens and were the medium by which the authority behind the production confirmed the validity of the tokens.⁷² Special attention shall be paid to the fact that a second or more stamps and countermarks were commonly added on the Athenian tokens at different times. Traces of reuse, including a small, punched hole or a second stamp, are also found on some of the ‘Alexander’ pieces,⁷³ except for those bearing the dolphin countermark, as well as the snail and rabbit one (i.e. *cat. nos.* 5, 10, 19). This evidence of reuse might suggest a second or third use of the token, which probably returned to the source and was countermarked – after a first use and before the collection of the tokens back – in order to be distinguished from the original issue. The countermarking procedure would seem the natural one to follow for recurring events.⁷⁴

Besides the countermarks, morphological similarities as well as the sharing of common types support the view that all interconnected groups were issued from a single workshop maybe at different times, and were part of a single major series, a fact which implies the same function for all pieces associated with one another. This excludes the idea that the ‘Alexander’ series was produced as an autonomous issue with its own function. Also, the use of common types by different groups suggests there is no semantic link between obverse and reverse types on a single token, a phenomenon that is often attested even on later *contorniates*.⁷⁵ There is thus no meaning in the connection between Alexander’s head and the types of a male and bearded bust (Poseidon on *L 266*, *cat. no.* 1; Dionysos, Zeus or the *Demos* on *L 272*, *cat. no.* 3) and Tyche, which are also adopted by other groups of Athenian tokens.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that the portrait of Alexander constitutes an innovation within the multifaceted iconographic repertoire of Athenian tokens. Indeed, it does not appear on the token issues during the Hellenistic period, nor during the first two centuries of the imperial period. This also

⁷² Cf. Crosby 1964, 83; Gkikaki 2019, 132–34. Countermarks are also found on the Greek provincial coinages of the imperial period; see Howgego 1985, 7–11, and 13–14. On the countermark types occurring on the Athenian *symbola* see Crosby 1964, 83. On the dolphin countermark and its meaning, see Crosby 1964, 112; Gkikaki 2019, 132–34.

⁷³ A second stamp is visible on the reverse side of two specimens (*cat. nos.* 6–7); a small hole is punched through on two specimens (*cat. nos.* 12 and 14).

⁷⁴ So Crosby 1964, 116. One might assume that the addition of a small hole, generally punched in the centre or near the edge of the flan, was due to the need to authenticate the token within a short time frame, for example to allow admission or exit on the occasion of a single event. Traces of reuse are also attested on a number of *contorniates* in the shape of metal inserts as well as of graffiti, which were engraved at different times by different hands; cf. Mondello 2019.

⁷⁵ Alföldi 1943, *passim*; Mazzarino 1951, 126; Michelini Tocci 1965, 18–20.

applies to the Poseidon and Tyche types, which do not occur on tokens prior to the third century.⁷⁶ As outlined above, the Alexander's portrait of Type 1 was not invented by the token die-cutters, but it possibly derived from a Macedonian model. Interestingly, this portrait follows a long-standing iconographic tradition focusing on Alexander's royalty and his status as a great ruler and military leader, leaving only the subtle gaze to the sky as a symbol of divine inspiration. No images of Alexander as a divine figure and *theios aner* were selected for the production of the Athenian tokens, which was well-established and wide-ranging in the numismatic representations of the great conqueror since the Hellenistic period. The use of Alexander's image on tokens from the third century can partly be explained as adaptation of contemporary coin and medallion issues over the imperial period. But this choice may also have been connected to the very purpose of the tokens on which the Alexander image is displayed.

In terms of function, Crosby asserted that the third-century group of tokens found in and around the Stoa of Attalos ('Section V', L299–L331) – including six 'Alexander' pieces – served as entrance tickets to ephebic festivals, which were celebrated each year in Athens by the ephebes in honour of emperors, heroes and gods. Each of the types used would thus have alluded to a different event that took place within these festivities.⁷⁷ Given the archaeological context where tokens were found, Crosby also stated that the Stoa of Attalos was possibly the place where the tokens were distributed or brought back for re-stamping before another use.⁷⁸ Conversely, M. Gkikaki has recently connected the issuing of the tokens from the hoard on Kolonos Agoraios – including the two 'Alexander' specimens Agora IL240 and IL244 – with the distributions of money, foods and gifts in general as part of the politics of euergetism in Roman Imperial Athens. The types used, some of which commemorate divine forefathers

⁷⁶ However, an image of Tyche bearing attributes different from L322 might occur on a Hellenistic Athenian token, but the interpretation of the figure remains uncertain; cf. Crosby 1964, 92 L55.

⁷⁷ See Crosby 1964, 85–86, and 115–17, who regarded some of these types (Asklepios, Theseus and the Minotaur, Athena, Nike and Zeus) as directly referring to some of the ten games (i.e. Asklepeia, Theseia, Atheneia, Epinikia) mentioned in the latest known complete ephebic inscription of 262/3 or 266/7 (see *IG II²*, 2245); other depictions could instead be speaking symbols for the names of the *agonothetai*, who are considered as those responsible for the issue of the admission tickets; see Crosby 1964, 116–17.

⁷⁸ Although this hypothesis is tempting, there is no evidence to support the connection of the Stoa of Attalos with the organisation of the ephebic festivals, despite the fact that excavations in the area of the Stoa have brought to light numerous ephebic inscriptions; see Thompson and Wycherley 1972, 220. Also, the nature of the deposits in and around the Stoa, whose fillings are mostly debris of destruction, do not demonstrate that the Stoa was the place where the tokens were collected and distributed.

and historical ancestors (e.g. Hermes, Sarapis, poliade deity), would reflect the elite's concern to gain the praise of the citizenry and preserve their prestige.⁷⁹

What role did the 'Alexander' tokens play within the social context of third-century Athens? Is it possible to infer the purpose of these objects through their imagery?

There is no doubt that Alexander the Great had great prominence in the Greek world since the Hellenistic period. A cultic veneration of Alexander (and Hephaestion, revered as *theos paredros*, 'assistant deity') existed in Athens before 322 BCE,⁸⁰ and 'divine honours' were granted to the Macedonian king by the Athenians during his lifetime (324–323 BCE), after a formal debate in the Assembly.⁸¹ Afterwards, a divine cult to Alexander was also extensively consecrated by other Greek and Greek-Eastern communities over the imperial period, in particular under the Severans.

Given the parallels with the Macedonian Koinon's bronzes and the Tarsos and Aboukir medallions, both of which have been related to agonistic festivals of Beroia, it is tempting to suppose that the 'Alexander' tokens served as mementoes or admission tickets to festivals or *agones hieroi* that were held in Athens in honour of Alexander. However, no information is apparently available on the existence in Athens of such events for Alexander, although other 'Alexandria' and games were dedicated to the king in different areas of the Greek world besides Beroia. The small number of the 'Alexander' specimens⁸² and their connection to other series make it more probable that these pieces were used in broader Attic festivals together with the other associated tokens: in addition to the ephebic festivals, one might contemplate the Panathenaea, which were held up to the third century and incorporated religious festival and ceremony, athletic competitions and cultural events.⁸³ In one of these contexts, the image of Alexander may have been used as a model of a great ruler, conqueror and athlete par excellence, in line with his posthumous fame and the

⁷⁹ Gkikaki 2019, 134–36.

⁸⁰ A fragment of a Hyperides' speech (322 BCE) records that Alexander's cult in Athens included statues, altars and a temple: Hyperides, *Against Demosthenes* 5.32. According to Dixon (2014, 33), these structures were abandoned in the immediate aftermath of the Lamian War (323–322/19 BCE). Later legends report that Alexander was worshipped as 'Neos Dionysos' or an additional god to the twelve traditional gods of Athens; see Dreyer 2009, 230 with n. 95.

⁸¹ E.g. Habicht 1956, 28–36; Mikalson 1998, 46–47.

⁸² However, it cannot be excluded that the scarcity of duplicates showing the Alexander type might be due to the fact that the tokens were re-melted once used in order to employ again the lead for next issues, as has been proposed with regard to the lead specimens of Hellenistic period; see Crosby 1964, 78.

⁸³ On the Panathenaia the bibliography is huge. Cf. e.g. Shear 2012; Shear 2021.

socio-cultural and political impact his legacy had upon the late Hellenistic reigns and, afterwards, even upon the Roman empire.

An alternative scenario is also possible. As seen above, civic coinages of the Greek cities of Asia Minor played a role in the competition for obtaining imperial privileges (such as maintaining temples for the imperial cult and honorary titles) during the second and third centuries. Through a variety of Alexander-related images and legends, these cities of the eastern Roman provinces exploited Alexander's name and person in order to build and emphasise the importance and noble descent of a city claiming to have been founded by the famous conqueror.⁸⁴ Just like the advertising propaganda of the contemporary civic coinages of the Greek cities of Asia Minor, the issuing of the 'Alexander' tokens could be related to the ambitions of the Athenian elites for promoting their distinguished status in middle imperial Athens through a policy of euergetism. As with the tokens of the hoard from Kolonos Agoraios, the specimens with the portrait of the Macedonian king, which should be 'linked to the self-consciousness and self-portrayal of the elite',⁸⁵ might be regarded as exchange tokens for *donativa* made by Athenian magistracies and offices, whose imagery alluded to Athen's civic history and its divine and historical 'ancestors'.⁸⁶ The portrait of Alexander on tokens might have had a remarkable meaning in an era that saw the Barbarian invasions running throughout the Eastern provinces of the Roman empire, which culminated among other things in the Herulian destruction of Athens (267). In these vacillating political and military circumstances, the Athenian elites may even have selected the Alexander image on tokens for the valiant ruling and military ability of the Macedonian king, the image of whom would have risen as a Greco-Roman icon of patriotism and power against the enemy.⁸⁷

Unfortunately, although one or the other hypothesis is possible, there is insufficient evidence on which to base a choice. Also, the question of whether the 'Alexander' tokens were 'official' or private products, which is closely connected to their purpose as well as to those responsible for their manufacture, remains open.⁸⁸ Regardless, the addition of countermarks

⁸⁴ Dahmen 2007, 3–5.

⁸⁵ Gkikaki 2019, 136.

⁸⁶ The possibility that the images of Alexander the Great and Hermes on the tokens from Kolonos Agoraios may have constituted a reference to the divine ancestry of the *genos* of *Kerykes* (including the family of the *Claudii* of Melite), who managed the issue and distribution of the tokens of Kolonos Agoraios, is contemplated by Gkikaki 2019, 135–36. On the *genos* of *Kerykes*, cf. Clinton 2004.

⁸⁷ On the apotropaic meaning of Alexander and Trajan's images attested on later *contorniates* as icons of Greco-Roman patriotism against eastern barbarism, see Sánchez Vendramini 2022.

⁸⁸ On the matter of the 'official' or private nature of the Athenian tokens, see Crosby 1964, 77; Bubelis 2010.

and further stamps on these specimens suggest, in either of the hypotheses considered above, a complex system of token distribution and reuse in Roman Athens. In order to solve the mystery behind the production of these special ‘Alexanders’, there certainly is need for further discussion. In this author’s opinion, the relative chronology for the ‘Alexander’ series (ca. 211/18–267) determined in this study can help to rearrange the different series connected by common types and countermarks as well as to clarify the chronological sequence of the issue. Furthermore, although they have often been regarded as two different groups, the tokens from the Stoa of Attalos and its vicinity and those from Kolonos Agoraios should be considered as a whole, since the sharing of similar or even identical types and countermarks hint that they were part of a major issue of lead *symbola*. Based on these considerations, future research might be able to determine a more detailed dating to be applied to this issue of tokens as well as to shed light on the function as well as the authority behind their production.

Conclusions

The Athenian lead tokens carrying the portrait of Alexander the Great, which are part of the Museum collection of the Agora of Athens, constitute a small but remarkable series of coin-like objects that provide new evidence about the development of the Macedonian king’s iconography during the Roman Imperial period. No connection of these pieces with contexts or buildings is shown by the excavation contexts, since these artefacts are rare and occasional findings that were located together with other tokens and coins on Kolonos Agoraios, the Stoa of Attalos, as well as in Late Roman fill contexts excavated in other areas of Athens. Also, these specimens are connected to other series of lead tokens (e.g. the ‘Poseidon bust’, the ‘Athena/Poseidon’ and the ‘Athena head/Tyche’ series) in that they share common types and countermarks. The close morphological and typological parallels between different groups, which implies at least the same background of production, makes it probable that the ‘Alexander’ tokens were part of a larger issue of lead tokens which were issued for the same purpose.

In light of the evidence discussed above, the following points can be made:

- (1) Although all examples lack inscriptions identifying the depicted subject, the iconography employed on the ‘Alexander’ series (Type I) runs parallel to the diademed portrait of Alexander represented on the provincial coinage of the Macedonian Koinon (Types B and C) and on one of the three gold medallions from Tarsos (‘Tarsos III’). All these artefacts share the special characteristic of windblown hair of the king, which is not attested on any of Alexander’s earlier images

and can reasonably be considered as an invention of the early third century. Also, physiognomic features in ‘pathetic’ style provide links to the contemporary gold medallions from Aboukir and point out a close relationship with some of the conventions utilised in Macedonia for Alexander’s iconography over the third century.

- (2) The portrait of Type 2 attested on a single Athenian token features proportions and facial features that are close to the diademed male head with a ram’s horn (probably to be interpreted as Alexander) on some of the Ephesian lead tokens struck over the imperial period. However, the absence of the ram’s horn on the type of the Athenian piece makes any identification of Type 2 uncertain.
- (3) By cross-referencing archaeological context data and typological connections, it is likely that the ‘Alexander’ tokens (Type 1) were produced in period between ca. 211/18 and 267, that is after the start date of the gold medallions and the Koinon’s coins production and before the Herulian destruction of Athens (267).
- (4) While the Koinon’s bronzes and the Tarsos and Aboukir gold medallions were conceived in the context of the agonistic festivals for Alexander that were held in Beroia, the ‘Alexander’ tokens from Athens possibly served as mementoes or admission tickets on the occasion of one of the Attic festivals (such as the ephebic festivals, the Panathenaia etc.). Alternatively, they could be related to the *donativa* and the euergetic propaganda of the Athenian elites, as has been proposed for the tokens from the hoards found on Kolonos Agoraios.

Although further research is needed in order to clarify the authority behind the production as well as the exact sequence of the various interconnected series, Alexander’s images on Athenian lead tokens bear witness to the influence and appreciation of the legend of the Macedonian conqueror in third-century Athens. The ‘manipulation’ of Alexander’s images on the contemporary coins of the Greek cities of the eastern Roman provinces constitutes only part of a more general interest in the Macedonian king during the third century, especially under the reign of the Severan dynasty. Besides the numismatic sources, the figure of Alexander was at the heart of a flourishing literature focusing on the life and exploits of the Macedonian conqueror, which was inaugurated by the so-called *Alexander Romance* (whose original version in Greek dates back to the third century) and continued with a number of writings and translations in Latin over the fourth and fifth centuries AD (e.g. *Commonitorium Palladii*, *Collatio Alexandri et Dindimi*).⁸⁹ Devotion to Alexander, embodied by the agonistic festivals

⁸⁹ See e.g. Cracco Ruggini 1965; Boyle 1977; Stoneman 1991; Stoneman 2008.

at Beroia, was also expressed by the politics and personal choices of the Severan emperors who also partook in ‘Alexander-mania’.⁹⁰

The ‘Alexander’ tokens thus provide an unexpected glimpse into the reception of the Macedonian king into third century Athenian society. As coin-like objects, these artefacts precede by at least a century the Alexander-related images on *contorniates* and rare Roman bronze *tesserae* (the so-called ‘Asina’ tokens) originating from the fourth and fifth centuries CE in Rome.⁹¹ From a cultural perspective, these artefacts bear witness to the posthumous appreciation of Alexander as a symbol of a shared Greek cultural identity, which is still attested by the fashion of using *Alexandri effigies* as good luck symbols on everyday objects in the late antique East and West.⁹² The Athenian tokens thus enable us to trace not only a specific representation of the Macedonian king but also an unseen development of his cultural legend during the high Empire.

Catalogue

- 1 **Agora IL121** (= Crosby 1964, L266). Lead, Ø 20 mm, 7.46 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10, no. 1.**
- 2 **Uninventoried** (= Crosby 1964, L266). Lead, no recorded data
(Athens: Museum of Ancient Agora).
- 3 **Agora IL240** (= Crosby 1964, L272). Lead, Ø 17 mm, 5.34 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 2.**

⁹⁰ On the importance of Alexander as a model for the Severan dynasty, with particular reference to Caracalla who was curiously defined as *philalexandrotatos* (‘lover of Alexander’) by Dio Cassius (78.9.1), see Zecchini 1984; Espinosa 1990; Bancalari 2000. According to the *Historia Augusta*, Severus Alexander placed an image of Alexander the Great in his private *lararium maius* with those of Apollonius of Tyana, Christ, Abraham, Orpheus and others: *Historia Augusta, Vita Alexandri Severi* 29.2; 31.4–5. On the value of this tradition, see Settis 1972; Blázquez Martínez 1990; Mondello 2017.

⁹¹ As for the so-called ‘Asina’ tokens, some of the specimens in existence connect a portrait of Alexander as Herakles shown on the obverse to a reverse type carrying a donkey suckling a foal, which is sometimes accompanied by the legend *Asina* (‘she-donkey’); cf. Alföldi 1951a; Alföldi 1951b; Mondello 2020.

⁹² See *Historia Augusta, Tyranni Triginta* 14.2, with reference to the Macriani family in the fourth century Roman West. On this passage, see Mondello 2016, 129; Perassi 2017, 239–41. With regard to late antique Greek East, compare also a John Chrysostom passage, who condemns those Christians that ‘tie bronze coins of Alexander the Great around their head and feet’: John Chrysostom, *Ad illuminandos catechesis* 2, 5 (= *Patrologia Graeca*, 49, 240).

- 4 **Agora IL410** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 18 mm, 4.04 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 3.**
- 5 **Agora IL478** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 19 mm
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 4.**
- 6 **Agora IL528** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 19 mm, 4.85 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 5.**
- 7 **Agora IL538** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 20 mm, 6.32 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 6.**
- 8 **Agora IL539** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 17 mm, 4.62 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 7.**
- 9 **Agora IL543** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 17 mm, 5.36 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 8.**
- 10 **Agora IL576** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 19 mm (Athens:
Museum of the the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 9.**
- 11 **Agora IL592** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 18 mm, 4.32 g
(Athens: Museum of Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 10.**
- 12 **Agora IL629** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 19 mm, 5.51 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 11.**
- 13 **Agora IL1095** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 20 mm, 7.80 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 12.**
- 14 **Agora IL1096** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 18 mm, 6.19 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 13.**
- 15 **Agora IL1421** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, Ø 17 mm, 4.84 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 14.**
- 16 **Uninventoried** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, no recorded data
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora).
- 17 **Uninventoried** (= Crosby 1964, L322). Lead, no recorded data
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora).
- 18 **Uninventoried** (= Mylonas 1901, 119–22, pl. 7 = Crosby 1964,
L322). Lead, no recorded data (Athens: Numismatic Museum).
- 19 **Agora IL 244** (= Crosby 1964, L275). Lead, Ø 20 mm, 5.80 g
(Athens: Museum of the Ancient Agora). **Figure 9.10 no. 15.**

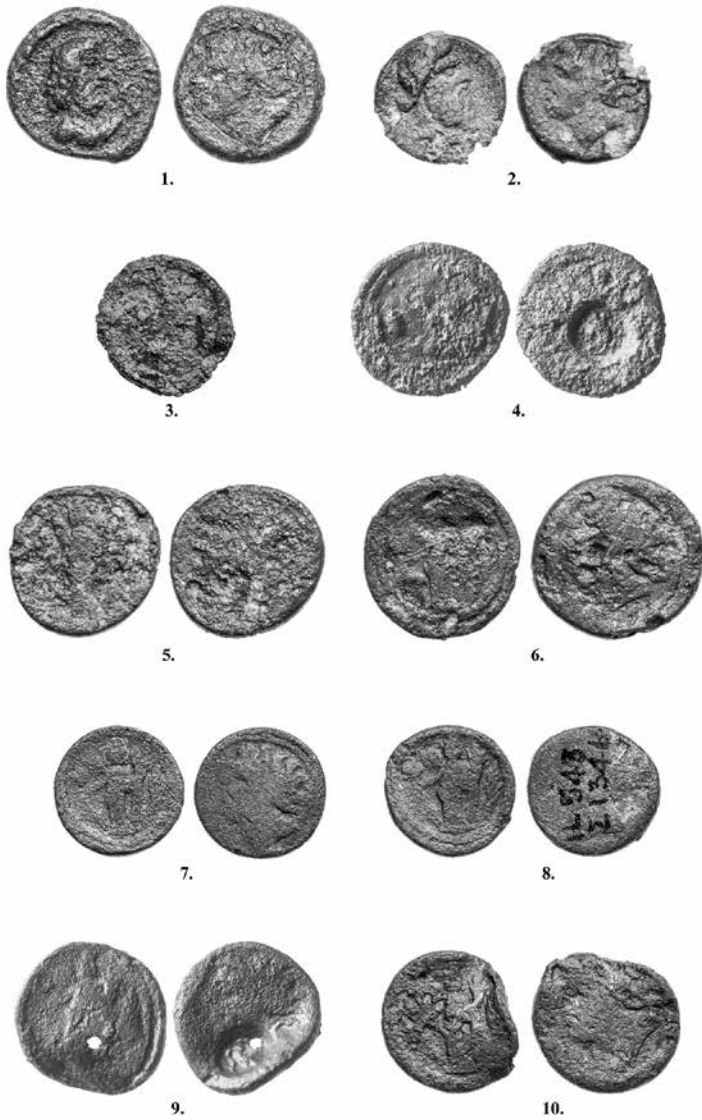


Figure 9.10 Lead tokens cat. nos. 1 and 2–11. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

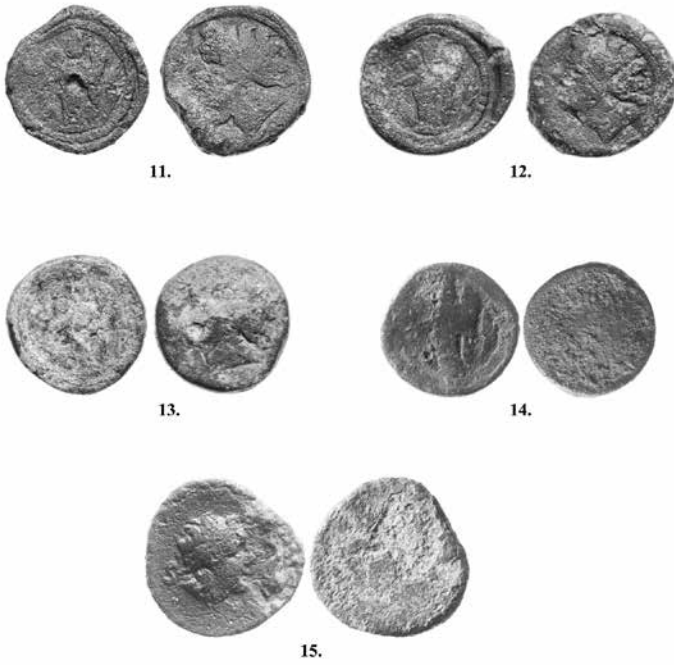


Figure 9.11 Lead tokens cat. nos. 12–15 and 19. Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora. Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.RE.D.)

IV

Comparative Studies

Chapter 10

New Hellenistic and Roman Clay Tokens from Sicily: Some Case Studies from the Museum of Palermo

Antonino Crisà

Sicily (Figure 10.1) has always aroused interest among scholars due to its complex culture, traditions and history, shaped by centuries of domination. The Greeks colonised Sicily from the late eighth century BCE, when the first colonisers founded new centres mostly in the eastern coastal areas, meeting previously settled local populations. The Romans conquered the island in the third century BCE, creating a new *Provincia Sicilia*. At that point, most of local *poleis* were still maintaining a certain independence and could issue coins with their ethnic names (in both Greek and Latin), revealing a series of types and symbols linked to their customs. Local communities thus kept a stratified set of civic and religious traditions alive. Tokens, which were locally produced, distributed and used, can offer vital information about this traditional ‘heritage’, which demonstrates some connections with the Greek world and Athenian legacy.¹

First, I am very grateful to Francesca Spatafora and Caterina Greco, former and current Directors of the Archaeological Museum of Palermo ‘Antonino Salinas’, for kindly allowing me to examine the tokens published here (authorisation prot. n. 0003179 of 22 July 2021; all token pictures are courtesy of the Archaeological Museum ‘A. Salinas’). Lucina Gandolfo also traced these finds in the museum’s storehouse. Costanza Polizzi was – as usual – very helpful in assisting me during my work at the ‘Salinas’ museum. ‘On-site’ investigations carried out in Palermo and further bibliographical research in London and Oxford were funded by the European Research Council (ERC) within the ‘Token Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean’ project (University of Warwick). This project received funding from the ERC under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 678042.

¹ Scholarship on the history of Sicily is substantial. In particular, on the Hellenistic and Roman periods we can mention: Bejor 1983, 345–74; Mansuelli 1985, 13–37; Prag 2009, 131–44; Prag 2010, 305–11; Soraci 2016. Regarding Sicilian numismatics in the

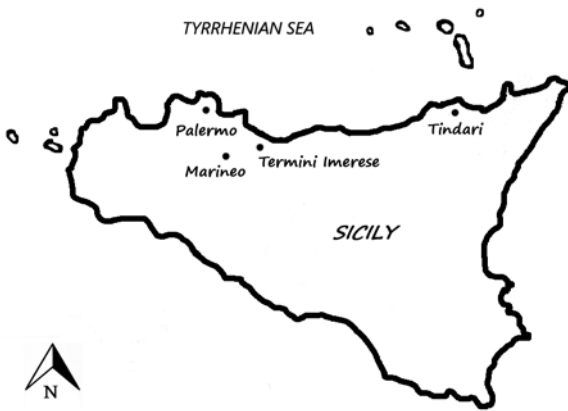


Figure 10.1 Map of Sicily showing main sites discussed here (by the author)

Can we propose a univocal definition of tokens in the Greek and Roman world? A unique explanation of the function and significance of these peculiar artefacts is impossible since their use depended strongly on the community or issuer producing them, and the context in which they were made. The variety of specimens found in archaeological excavations or preserved in European and overseas museums testifies to the significant diffusion of these artefacts in the ancient world. Generally called *symbola* by the Greeks and *tesserae* by the Romans, tokens were multi-shaped (mostly circular) objects which were fabricated for a local (or sometimes regional) distribution within a community of people. The person who received the token could benefit from privileges or exceptional rights of access to temples and other local buildings, be involved in festivals and local events, or obtain something ‘in exchange’. This process might mean the loss of the token if it was withdrawn by the other authority or person in charge of the event. For instance, substantial clay *tesserae* were produced and distributed among local groups for attending special banquets in Palmyra (Syria). The exchange of tokens was therefore essential to access to social events.²

The main scope of my contribution is to present selected results of recent research into token production in Sicily during the Hellenistic and early Roman periods, carried out at the University of Warwick. Investigations were performed within the ‘Token Communities in the Ancient

Hellenistic and Roman periods, see also Gabrici 1927; CMS; Caccamo Caltabiano 1997, 39–55; Carroccio 2004; Frey-Kupper 2006, 27–56; Guzzetta 2007, 185–98.

² For two up-to-date definitions of ancient tokens in the Greek and Roman periods, see Crisà, Gkikaki and Rowan 2019, 1–10; Crisà 2021b, 1–13. We benefit from a large scholarship on collections of tokens, and mention only a few case studies: Casariego, Cores and Pliego 1987 (Spain); Turcan 1987 (France); Overbeck 2001 (Milan); Güllbay and Kireç 2008 (Ephesus); Raja 2015, 165–86 (Palmyra).

Mediterranean' European Research Council (ERC) project between late 2016 and early 2019. In particular, I explored local museums in Sicily, assessing sets of finds from past collections or excavations. This essay sheds new light on a set of eight novel artefacts 're-discovered' at the Archaeological Museum of Palermo, which have been neglected by scholars until now. Tokens show a variety of iconographies, including the owl and Athena, Herakles, the caps of the Dioscuri and elephants. As artefacts they are therefore unique specimens to be contextualised within the broader framework of token production in Sicily and Greece.

I will first outline token production on the island, focusing on the historical and archaeological contexts and offering a brief outline of past scholarship on ancient tokens and its key results. I then assess these new finds, providing all documentary data on their provenance and acquisition. Where archaeological context is missing, a targeted analysis of the token's iconography and legends will provide a good range of information for examination. I will make some final, essential remarks on token production in Sicily and its links with the wider context, and, last but not least, all finds are properly described in a short catalogue which offers the following essential data: progressive find number, inventory number for the Palermo's museum, type, colour, shape, diameter, thickness, weight, state of preservation, provenance, dating, descriptions of the A and B sides, archival data and references (where available).

Current Scholarship on Tokens from Italy and Sicily

Essential (even though sometimes narrowly focused) contributions have examined token production in ancient Italy by assessing a variety of typologies and archaeological contexts which we briefly outline in this contribution. Undoubtedly, the main forerunners of those studies of Italian *tesserae* – the Latin word used for tokens – were F. de Ficoroni (1664–1747), the author of *I piombi antichi* (1740), and M.I. Rostovtzeff (1870–1952), who published the remarkable *Tesserae urbis Romae et suburbi plumbeae sylloge* (1903). Both contributions are essentially catalogues of *tesserae* whose find-spots are often irremediably lost. This also happened with the *spintriae*, or erotic tokens, kept at Italian museums (see, for instance, Milan), with the exception of a remarkable artefact found in a grave at *Mutina*-Modena. This exceptional discovery, which generated a sensation, allowed archaeologists to date the *spintria* accurately to the first half of the first century CE. We have, at the same time, other essential works on the so-called 'terracotta coins' ('monete di terracotta'), a typology of token which reproduces ancient coins of Magna Graecia, mostly found at Paestum within a well-documented archaeological context. On the whole, scholars have become

increasingly interested in token production on the Italian peninsula over the past few decades.³

What do we know about token production in ancient Sicily? Our knowledge is still relatively limited because we do not benefit from solid, long-standing scholarship. A very rare clay token was discovered at *Iaitas*-Monte Iato (San Cipriello, Palermo). The artefact, which can be dated between the fourth and second centuries BCE, shows a two-letter Greek inscription (ΔΑ) and Achelous, the god of waters, depicted as a bull with a human head. We should also mention the related production of very small objects called *cretulae* ('clay seals'), generally dated to the fourth century BCE. Antonino Salinas (1841–1914), archaeologist, numismatist and director of the Museum of Palermo published sets of *cretulae* discovered at Temple C in Selinunte. They show figures, heads, animals, objects and types of the Near East (four typologies) which can be related to the local economy of the temple, testifying to the offering or sealing of goods.⁴

Despite these sporadic contributions, the majority of tokens remain unpublished, and, as a consequence, unknown after their discovery within the island's archaeological sites or their acquisition by local museums. Thanks to recent investigations carried out in Sicilian museums, we have rediscovered some sets of tokens which certainly help fill the undeniable gaps in our knowledge of token production on the island. As previously mentioned, research has been carried out within the 'Token Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean' project, fully funded by the ERC at the University of Warwick. Due to the limited time span and the denial of permission to access some local Superintendency and museum storehouses, it has been possible to verify and explore only a narrow shortlist of Sicilian institutions. This has certainly had an impact on the final quantity of Greek/Hellenistic and Roman tokens traced, assessed and ultimately published, although some minor sets of artefacts are still under study and publication.⁵

At this stage – and for the record – it is essential to briefly outline those artefacts which have been already fully studied. First, thanks to focused investigations at the Archaeological Museum 'A. Salinas' of Palermo, we have identified a peculiar set of clay tokens originally discovered at *Makella*, an archaeological site at Marineo in the inner territories of the Palermo

³ Ficoroni 1740; Rostovtzeff 1903. On 'terracotta coins', see Mannino 1993, 207–42; Mannino 1998, 61–71.

⁴ Salinas 1883, 287–314; De Simone 2010, 23–33; Frey-Kupper 2013, 1.85 (regarding the clay token from Monte Iato). On the history of the Museum of Palermo, see also Moscati and Di Stefano 2006, 14–19; Crisà 2012, 10–11. Regarding Antonino Salinas acting in post-Unification Sicily, see Crisà 2018b.

⁵ Excluding this work, which collected contributions of the two-day conference held in Athens (December 2019), there are two major publications associated with the 'Token Communities' project: Crisà, Gkikaki, and Rowan 2019 and Crisà 2021b.



Figure 10.2 Roman *spintria* (coitus a tergo/numeral X) discovered at the Roman *villa* of Patti Marina (Messina) (Crisà 2020a, 643, Figure 6; courtesy of Superintendence of Messina)

province. These artefacts, which can be dated to the fourth century BCE, show a recurring iconography of a draped Demeter holding two torches searching for Persephone (Figure 10.15). Their production, use and final discharge might be linked to sacred local celebrations and rites in honour of the goddess. Second, a rare late first-century BCE clay token showing the caps of the Dioscuri, dug up in the late nineteenth century at Tindari, has been traced at the local Antiquarium. Since the artefact is highly relevant to this contribution, it will be discussed in more detail below (Figure 10.11). Third, a recent essay sheds new light on a unique first-century CE *spintria* (coitus a tergo/numeral X) (Figure 10.2) found in the archaeological excavations of the Roman *villa* at Patti (Messina), which has been neglected by scholars.⁶

Amongst the ancient ‘monetiform’ objects kept at the Museum of Palermo and still ignored by scholars, there is also a set of varied Hellenistic and Roman clay tokens recently and luckily traced to the institution’s storehouses. These novel finds need to be assessed in order to highlight the variety of iconographic types and any potential data on their provenance and acquisition.

Assessing New Finds: Context, Iconography and History of Collecting

This novel set of finds includes eight ancient tokens produced between the fourth century BCE and the first century CE. They are all made of reddish or orange clay and are mostly circular in shape. These tokens, which are currently preserved in the numismatic collections of the Museum of Palermo, are not exhibited in the usual rooms accessed by visitors. However, the museum has been under refurbishment since the late 2000s, and it is therefore possible that the tokens might be displayed in the near future.

⁶ On the clay token discovered in Tindari and showing two *pilei* of the Dioscuri see Crisà 2019, 63–77; Crisà 2020b, 47–55. Further references on tokens from Sicily: Crisà 2020a, 635–48 referring to *spintria* found in Patti Marina; Crisà 2021a, 33–56 on *Makella*’s tokens.



Figure 10.3 AR tetradrachm of Athens (353–294 BCE) (head of Athena with pi-style palmette/owl) (Ø 22 mm; 17.13 g) (source: *Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 451, 4 September 2019, lot no. 83*)

The first artefact to be examined (*cat. no. 1*) is a clay token which must be included in the so-called imitations of Athenian coins, studied by J.H. Kroll and already discovered in archaeological excavations. A similar lead specimen is also kept at the British Museum.⁷ It reproduces a ‘pi-style’ tetradrachm (ca. 353–294 BCE) (**Figure 10.3**);⁸ its name derives from the flower decoration clearly placed on Athena’s helmet, which is fully represented on side A of the token. Athena is looking right. Side B shows an owl standing and facing and the legend AΘE clearly refers to the Greek goddess. This artefact was originally one of a well-documented Athenian production of imitation coins roughly dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE; it is a direct connection between Sicily and Greece. The connection is testified in archival records, namely the *Giornale d’Entrata* (acquisition list), which reports that the artefact, properly identified as a ‘Greek terracotta coin’, was given to the museum by G. Fauci, a collector (or possibly an antiquities seller). He sold the artefact for fifteen Italian lira on 27 August 1907. It can be argued that Salinas approved the acquisition immediately for one important reason: the institution already owned other clay tokens, and the new, rare imitation of an Athenian tetradrachm would surely have enhanced the museum’s numismatic collection.

The next artefact is a well-preserved small orange clay token (*cat. no. 2*) which can be roughly dated to the third century BCE. It shows the bearded head of Zeus facing right on side A and a man-faced bull advancing to the right on side B. This represents Achelous, as pointed out

⁷ The lead Athenian imitation token currently preserved at the British Museum (inv. no. 1922,0416.132) can be viewed online (www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_1922-0416-132). I am grateful to Mairi Gkikaki for her suggestion about the imitation tokens. In particular, on ‘pi-style’ tetradrachms and imitation coins: Kroll (1993, 291) supposes one or two specimens might be modern imitations; Kroll (2011, 3–26).

⁸ Athens, AR, tetradrachm (ca. 353–294 BCE): Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena right showing a profile eye and a pi-style palmette; rev.: owl standing right with head facing; in the field, olive sprig and a small crescent; AΘE; *HCG* 4, n. 1632.



Figure 10.4 AR tetradrachm of Gela (fifth century BCE) (charioteer/Achelous) (Ø 25 mm; 17.21 g) (source: *Roma Numismatics Ltd, E-Sale 23, 9 January 2016, lot no. 30*)



Figure 10.5 Bronze coin of *Iaitas* (fourth–third centuries BCE) (Achelous/ grain ear) (Ø 12 mm; 1.12 g) (source: *Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 436, 23 January 2019, lot no. 68*)



Figure 10.6 Bronze coin of the Acarnanian League (third century BCE) (Zeus right/ Achelous) (Ø 23 mm; 7.7 g) (source: *Auctiones GmbH, eAuction 56, 18 June 2017, lot no. 20*)

Figure 10.7 AR half shekel of the Carthaginians (231–210 BCE) (head of Melqart/ elephant) (Ø 21 mm; 3.44 g) (source: *Sincona AG, Auction 17, 21 May 2014, lot no. 26*)



by the legend A(χελῶς?) placed in the lower field. The god was extensively venerated in Greece, Magna Graecia and Sicily. As a manifold river-god, Achelous often appears as a bull, an old-man-faced bull or in the form of a snake. Its multi-shaped iconography is testified on pottery containers, ornamental terracotta and coins. For instance, it is represented on some coins from the city of Gela (fifth century BCE) (**Figure 10.4**)⁹ and *Iaitas* (fourth–third centuries BCE) (**Figure 10.5**)¹⁰ in Sicily and Acarnania in Greece (third century BCE) (**Figure 10.6**).¹¹ There is no information regarding the provenance of our new clay token, and therefore we do not know exactly where it was originally produced or even acquired by the museum of Palermo. As a hypothesis, the artefact might have been made in central Sicily, as there are similar artefacts at Monte Iato and Gela showing Achelous.¹²

Amongst the Palermo Museum's artefacts there is an intriguing and well-documented set of three *tesserae* showing a recurring iconography and one-letter legend. Dating can be established between the second century and first century BCE. The first (**cat. no. 3**) has a large A (*alfa* or *aleph*?) filling most of side A, while side B shows a small elephant advancing left with a sedan chair. Of African or Indian origin, this peculiar animal is also testified in other clay/lead tokens and coins moving forward towards right or left. For example, a silver half shekel struck in northern Africa or Sicily in the late third century BCE (**Figure 10.7**)¹³ shows the head of Melqart and a big elephant advancing right on the reverse, which also displays the Punic letter A (*aleph*). The elephant is also represented on a well-known silver denarius of Julius Caesar (49 BCE) (**Figure 10.8**)¹⁴ and appears on various

⁹ Gela, AR, tetradrachm (ca. 480–475 BCE): obv.: standing charioteer holding reins and driving a quadriga right; above, Nike flying right; rev.: forepart of Achelous right; ΓΕΛΑΣ in the field; *SNG ANS Sicily*, n. 22.

¹⁰ *Iaitas*, Æ (ca. 220–160 BCE): obv.: Achelous standing right; rev.: grain ear and barely grain; *CNS*, 1.383 n. 1.

¹¹ *Acarnania*, Acarnanian League, Æ 23 (third century BCE): obv.: Laureate head of Zeus right; rev.: head of Achelous right; in the field, a monogram (Aε) behind and a small trident above; *BMC Thessaly to Aetolia*, n. 15.

¹² Regarding Achelous, see Graves 1992, 384–85 (107e), 552–53 (142a–d); Mussini 2002, 91–120; Di Giuseppe 2010, 69–90. The specimen of Monte Iato, previously mentioned, has been published in a book on numismatic finds from the site: Frey-Kupper 2013, 1.85.

¹³ The Carthaginian AR half shekel (231–210 BCE): obv.: head of Melqart left; rev.: elephant advancing right; Exg.: A (*aleph*); *SNG Copenhagen North Africa* 383.

¹⁴ Caesar, AR denarius, moving mint in Northern Italy (49–48 BCE): Obv.: Elephant advancing right, CAESAR; rev.: *Culullus, aspergillum* and axe with a wolf's head; *RRC* 443/1.



Figure 10.8 AR denarius of Caesar (49–48 BCE) (elephant/priestly implements) (Ø 17.5 mm; 3.49 g) (source: *Nomos AG, Obolos 17, 20 December 2020, lot no. 609*)



Figure 10.9 Lead *tessera* (ca. first century BCE–first century CE) (elephant/TO•RQ) (Ø 24 mm; 12.05 g) (source: *Bertolami Fine Arts, E-Auction 73, 14 September 2019, lot no. 1841*)

lead *tesserae* (Figure 10.9).¹⁵ A variety of types are reported by Rostovtzeff; it is essential to stress that some specimens have been found in Spain, of evident northern-African origin.¹⁶

The second token (cat. no. 4) (Table 10.1) is very similar to the previous one, but the elephant does not carry a sedan chair. The letter A is slightly visible and placed in the upper field, while the elephant advances right on a

¹⁵ Lead *tessera* (ca. first century BCE–first century CE): side A: elephant walking right; side B: TO•RQ. No reference is given in Rostovtzeff 1903.

¹⁶ Rostovtzeff 1903, 87, 437, 439–40, 443–44, 622–42; Casariego, Cores and Pliego 1987, 17, 1–3. For a similar ‘elephant’ type of Roman tokens, see also Rowan 2020, 114 nos. 46–47.



Figure 10.10 Lead tessera (ca. first century BCE–first century CE) (eagle/sphinx) (Ø 14 mm; 1.66 g) (source: Bertolami Fine Arts – ACR Auctions, E-Auction 73, 14 September 2019, lot no. 1833)

flat surface, represented by a line. Archival research helps us contextualise this specimen properly. The *Giornale d'Entrata* of the museum reports that the clay token ('*tessera di creta*') was bought by the Commission of Antiquities and Fine Arts travelling in the provinces of Messina, Catania and Syracuse in 1872. The exact place of purchase is unfortunately unknown. It was subsequently acquired by the museum on 22 March 1873.

Founded in 1827, the Commission was a special body which provided a variety of advices to the Bourbon government regarding the safeguarding of antiquities, fine art objects and excavation licences. Confirmed and kept after the downfall of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Italian Unification (1861), the body was finally abolished in 1875 following the national reform of archaeological safeguarding which introduced the General Direction of Antiquities and Fine Arts (Royal Decree of 28 March 1875 n. 24440). When the artefact was purchased and acquired, the President of the Commission was F. Ugdulena, in charge between 1873 and 1874, F.S. Cavallari was the Director of Antiquities of Sicily, on duty between 1864 and 1876 and A. Salinas was the Director of the Royal Museum (1873–75).¹⁷

There are some clear characteristics which equate the second token to the third (cat. no. 5) (Table 10.1). The colour of clay, which appears very depurated, is almost identical. The elephant is advancing right on the same flat surface depicted by two lines (height: 13.10, 13.30 mm; width: 18.60, 15.44 mm), and the legend A is of very similar dimensions (height: 4.66, 4.55 mm; width: 4.80, 4.97 mm). Both elephants are comparable as well. It can therefore be argued that both tokens were produced in the same context in Sicily. Both were probably acquired/bought from

¹⁷ For a general overview of the Commission of Antiquities and Fine Arts ('Commissione di Antichità e Belle Arti'), see Lo Iacono and Marconi 1997; Pelagatti 2001, 599–621; Crisà 2012, 6–7.

the same person and their acquisition at the museum was finalised at the same time (22 March 1873), as reported by the *Giornale d'Entrata* ('140 | 22. Marzo 1873 | Idem').

Table 10.1 Comparison of three clay tokens ('elephant type') preserved at the Palermo Museum 'A. Salinas'

Feature	Cat. no. 3 (inv. 69353)	Cat. no. 4 (inv. 65356)	Cat. no. 5 (inv. 69355)
clay	reddish	reddish	reddish
reverse	flat	smooth and blank	smooth and blank
shape	circular	oval	oval
legend	A (<i>aleph</i>) (12.42 mm × 15.66 mm)	A (<i>aleph/alpha</i>) (4.66 mm × 4.80 mm)	A (<i>aleph/alpha</i>) (4.55 mm × 4.97 mm)
diameter	22.91 mm	27.05 mm	25.86 mm
thickness	8.67 mm	4.39 mm	5.60 mm
weight	3.8 g	3.2 g	2.9 g

Another *tessera* (cat. no. 6), approximately datable to the first century BCE, shows a standing eagle, a Greek legend (ΘC) which is indecipherable – but potentially visible on both sides – and a quadruped type (maybe a lion?). The eagle is a common iconography on Hellenistic and Roman coins and *tesserae* (Figure 10.10) and symbolises Zeus/Jupiter.¹⁸ Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient archival data to assess the origin of this clay token. It can be inferred that it was acquired from the antiquarian market in Palermo in the late nineteenth century, even if it is impossible to understand its original context of production which may be Sicily, Rome or even Asia Minor.

In chronological order, the next artefact to be analysed is a token (cat. no. 7) with a very regular, circular shape. The small disk, which is approximately the same size as a Roman *sestertius* (36.61 mm), is grey, which is due to the nature of the clay used to stamp the token. Side A shows two stylised caps of the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, the sacred twin sons of Tyndareus and Leda. Each cap is formed by an ellipsis with a very stylised cross on the top, which represents a star, symbol of the Dioscuri themselves. Side B is blank and very smooth.

¹⁸ Lead *tessera* (ca. first century BCE–first century CE): side A: eagle standing right; side B: sphinx right. Rostovtzeff 1903, 37 n. 272.



Figure 10.11 Clay token discovered at the necropolis of Tindari in 1898 (caps of the Dioscuri/blank) (courtesy of the Superintendence of Messina) (Crisà 2019, 71)

Table 10.2 Comparison of clay tokens preserved at Tindari Antiquarium and Palermo Museum ‘A. Salinas’

Feature	Tindari	Palermo
clay	orange	grey
reverse	blank and smooth	blank and smooth
shape	circular	circular
diameter	34.59 mm	36.61 mm
weight	7.18 g	11.3 g
thickness	4.46 mm	6.19 mm
ellipse (left)	8.74 mm × 9 mm	11.18 mm × 17.97 mm
ellipse (right)	10 mm × 9 mm	10.40 mm × 17.52 mm
cross (left)	8.74 mm × 9 mm	8.13 mm × 6.84 mm
cross (right)	10 mm × 9 mm	9.01 mm × 9.24 mm

The successful ‘rediscovery’ of this find at the Archaeological Museum of Palermo is certainly remarkable. In fact, the token can be strikingly connected with another specimen, previously referred to in the introduction (Figure 10.11),¹⁹ which was discovered at Tindari in 1896 by A. Salinas while excavating the ancient Hellenistic and Roman necropolis on the land of Baron Domenico Sciacca della Scala (1846–1900) at Contrada Scrozzo (Figure 10.12). Previously transferred to the Museum of Syracuse in the early twentieth century and currently exhibited at the *Antiquarium* of Tindari, the token has been dated to the late first century BCE thanks to a cogent comparison with a coin of the local mint of *Tyndaris*.²⁰ The tokens are of similar dimensions (Table 10.2), although the clay colour is slightly different and the Palermo specimen’s caps are slightly bigger than those from Tindari. It can be inferred that the Palermo token was also produced and evidently left at *Tyndaris* in the same period. It may have been

¹⁹ Crisà 2019, 63–77; Crisà 2020b, 47–55.

²⁰ *Tyndaris*, Æ 44–36 BCE? (*Pilei* of the Dioscuri with highly stylised stars; obv.:



Figure 10.12
View of the necropolis
of *Tyndaris-Tindari* (by
the author) (Crisà 2019,
69)

acquired in the late nineteenth century when Salinas often visited Tindari's archaeological site and met Sciacca who could have donated the find to the museum. Further research might fully confirm this hypothesis if records are still preserved.

The last token to be discussed here is a small orange clay find (*cat. no.* 8), which can presumably be dated to the late first century BCE and first century CE. The obverse shows Herakles standing, a very recurring type in Sicilian coins. He is well-represented in the coinage of *Kephaloidion-Cefalù* until the late first century BCE (Figure 10.13)²¹ and also appears on some lead Roman *tesserae* (Figure 10.14).²² He is clearly identifiable on our token via the club and the lion skin. The surface of the reverse, which also preserves traces of a fingerprint, is slightly concave, and it is therefore possible that this artefact is a game piece instead of a *tessera*.

A remarkable tag found at the museum tells us that the artefact was discovered at Termini Imerese (Palermo), the ancient *Thermae*, in the area of the castle in November 1840 while excavating the new road ('*stradone*'). Built in the sixteenth century and reworked many times in the modern age, the castle, which overlooked Termini Imerese, was almost entirely destroyed by the Bourbon troops in 1860. G. Fiorelli described excavations performed there in 1876.²³ According to the antiquarian sources, the castle area was well known in the mid-nineteenth century for the presence of ancient ruins and buried antiquities. Archaeologists and amateurs often discovered

Rudder between D-D); Mini 1979, 445 n. 32; *CNS*, 1.83 n. 26; Villemur 2015, 439 n. 7.

²¹ *Kephaloidion*, Æ (late first century BCE) (Laureate head of Herakles right/ Herakles standing and facing, holding a club in his right hand and a lion skin in his left hand; KE-ΦA); *CNS*, 1.372 n. 12.

²² Lead *tessera* (ca. first century CE) (Herakles standing left, holding a club in his left hand and Telesphorus in his right hand/Euthenia (?) reclining left inside a distyle temple); Emmett 2001, n. 4461.

²³ Fiorelli 1877, 64–65.



Figure 10.13 Bronze coin of *Kephalaion* (late first century BCE) (Herakles/club and lion skin) (Ø 26 mm; 11.06 g) (source: *Bertolami Fine Arts – ACR Auctions, E-Auction 77, 1 December 2019, lot no. 304*)



Figure 10.14 Lead *tessera* (ca. first century AD) (Herakles standing/temple) (Ø 18 mm; 2.92 g) (source: *Roma Numismatics Ltd, E-Live Auction 3, 25 October 2018, lot no. 484*)

Greek and Roman artefacts (inscriptions, vases, pottery fragments, coins etc.). It can be argued that the token was found in local works performing excavations within a road construction site close to the castle: the artefact was luckily acquired by authorities (e.g. the local Intendency), sent to the Commission of Antiquities and Fine Arts and finally acquired by the museum. B. Romano can help us to contextualise the discovery. In fact, when mentioning a Greek stamp on a fragmentary terracotta handle

discovered in the area in his *Antichità termitane* (1838), the author described the castle as follows:²⁴

Quest'epigrafe è di un manico fittile di due in tre pollici di lunghezza trovato nella collina sottoposta al castello entro la città di Termini. In questa collina sorgeva parte dell'antica città ne' tempi sì greci come romani, ed ora alcuni ruderi, e qualche frantume di mattoni o tegoli antiche ne ridestano la memoria. (Romano 1838, 101)

Tokens in Context: Some Final Remarks

This section offers some concluding remarks on the novel finds rediscovered at the Palermo Museum, highlighting the limits and further potential of the research. While studying these artefacts, it has been clear that they are not connected to each other, except for two finds showing an elephant (*cat. nos.* 4–5). In fact, they represent a sort of *assemblage* of finds for three essential reasons. First, they do not come from the same or a well-defined archaeological context; as a consequence, their exact find-spots are often irremediably unknown. Second, they are too heterogeneous and do not have any connections in terms of dating, iconography (except for the above-mentioned set of 'elephant' tokens) or provenance. Third, their origins, whether assumed or known, are different, which implies their acquisition by the museum at different times and occasions which cannot be fully understood due to a lack of archival records.

Archival records have provided essential information on the acquisition of two clay *tesserae* in 1873 (*cat. nos.* 4–5). There is no precise data, since they do not report the exact place the finds were purchased in Sicily, but only the vast provinces of Catania, Messina and Syracuse. Nevertheless, it can be inferred that Salinas bought the artefacts from a local (still unknown) collector for a low price. The archaeologist Salinas, who was also a member of the Commission, used to travel around Sicily to track down inscriptions, vases, coins and other small finds to increase the collections of the Royal Museum of Palermo. He sometimes also persuaded collectors to donate finds. This was a very 'inexpensive' strategy, but otherwise, as an alternative, he purchased finds.²⁵

As already seen elsewhere, it is evident that archival research can reveal information about unknown collectors operating in post-Unification

²⁴ On the castle of Termini, see Romano 1838, 101–02; Amico 1855–59, 575–76; Fiorelli 1877, 64–65; Belvedere 2011, 470, 472. The labours of Herakles are also represented on first century BCE *tesserae* of Central Italy: Stannard 2015, 357–78.

²⁵ On Salinas and his excursions in post-Unification Sicily, see Spatafora and Gandolfo 2014, 28–30; Crisà 2018b, 34–36.

Sicily. In particular, G. Fauci, who offered or sold the Athenian imitation coin to the museum of Palermo in the early twentieth century, testifies to the essential role of collectors, donors and antiquities sellers in increasing the institution's collections. Salinas, director and in charge of rearranging the museum after Unification, was undoubtedly focused on enhancing the repertoire of coins and small finds. The artefact proposed by Fauci was evidently missing from the museum's collections; it could also demonstrate an undeniable link with Greek numismatics, and was immediately appealing to Salinas, who approved the acquisition and purchased the find.

How can we connect our novel and previously assessed Sicilian specimens with the broader context of Athens and the wider Greek world? Although they appear to be disconnected, these artefacts disclose contact points with a wider heritage. As a quick reference, we briefly mention a convincing link between Sicilian token production and the Punic/northern African world, represented by three tokens showing an elephant and the legend A (*aleph*). More importantly, the influence of a well-founded set of religious and civic traditions from Greece derives from the early stages of colonisation of Sicily in the eighth century BCE and continues towards the Hellenistic and early Roman period. It is essential to mention the set of clay tokens from *Makella*-Marineo showing Demeter with torches searching for Persephone (**Figure 10.15**). These finds, which presumably circulated in the small community, were probably used to access local events celebrating the cult of Demeter, largely widespread in the inner areas of Sicily. It can be inferred that these ceremonies were similar to the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries performed near Athens. Thus, *Makella's* artefacts are well-connected with traditions, cults and myths documented both in Greece and Sicily.²⁶

This connection is further demonstrated by the tokens from *Tyndaris*. The ancient Sicilian centre in the province of Messina, founded in 396 BCE by a group of colonists expelled from *Messana* on the behalf of Dionysius I of Syracuse, derived its name from Tyndareus. The cult of the Dioscuri, imported from the homeland of early founders, had been constantly practised at *Tyndaris* with a persistent veneration for the sacred twins. The clay tokens – together with various coins and a Roman mosaic at *insula* IV – demonstrate a long-standing continuity of, and ongoing approval for, old civic and religious traditions which are directly connected with Greece. In this regard, the iconography showing the two caps of the Dioscuri is also testified by a lead token discovered in the Agora of Athens (Agora IL812) (**Figure 10.16**).²⁷

²⁶ Crisà 2021a.

²⁷ The artefact discovered in Athens is a small lead token showing two caps of the Dioscuri with two stars above (Agora IL812) (Ø 12 mm); Crosby 1964, 92 (L59 pl. 21).



Figure 10.15 Clay token from *Makella-Marineo* (courtesy of the Archaeological Museum of Palermo, inv. no. 62783) (Crisà 2021a)



Figure 10.16 Lead token showing the Dioscuri's pilei on both sides, found in Athens, found in Athens, Museum of the Ancient Agora, IL812 (Ø 12 mm). Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens City, Ancient Agora, ASCSA: Agora Excavations. Photo: Giannis Tzitzas © Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Hellenic Organization of Cultural Resources Development (H.O.C.R.E.D.)



Last but not least, Athens and Sicily are also inter-connected by the clay reproduction of an Athenian tetradrachm preserved at the Archaeological Museum of Palermo. Such a specimen (whether an original or a modern reproduction remains unclear), sold by Fauci and purchased by the director, would certainly enhance the museum's collection. As a mere hypothesis, Salinas, who was a well-known expert in Greek and Sicilian numismatics, and also lived in Athens after the Italian Unification during an educational stay, could have used this artefact for teaching purposes. In fact, he taught archaeology and Classical numismatics at the University of Palermo and brought his students to the museum to show them artefacts including coins, vases and inscriptions.²⁸

Finally, such artefacts, including their symbolic, religious and civic iconography, offer essential points of comparison with Athenian token production as well as the imagery and the functions of Athenian tokens. These Sicilian specimens clearly demonstrate the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in daily life, disclosing (or not) a code of symbolism for obtaining rights or gaining access to special events. They also clearly represent the local identities of the small communities in Hellenistic and Roman Sicily. They offer a great deal of information on the history of collecting and museum studies in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Sicily.

Catalogue

Cat. nos. 1–5 are depicted in Figure 10.17; cat. nos. 6–8 are depicted in Figure 10.18.

1 | inv. no. 65357 | imitation of an Athenian tetradrachm, grey clay, circular shape | Ø 19.00 mm; 7.5 mm (thickness); 2.4 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture) | Provenance: Athens (?) | Dating: 353–295 BCE.

Side A: Head of Athena right (h.: 15.45 mm).

Side B: Standing and facing owl (h.: 13.43 mm; w.: 8.72 mm); in the left field AΘE (h.: 2.84 mm).

Records: *Giornale d'Entrata*: '7812 | 27. Agosto 1907 | Una moneta greca di terracotta | G. Fauci | N.º 3834 | Quantità degli oggetti: 1 | Importi: 15'.

Reference (comparanda): Kroll 1993, 291; Kroll 2011, 3–26.

²⁸ Columba 1915, 23; Pottino 1977, 1.429–32.

2 | inv. no. 69354 | *tessera*, orange clay, circular shape | Ø 26 mm; 8.5 mm (thickness); 5.7 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture) | Provenance: Sicily (central area?) | Dating: third century BCE (?).

Side A: Bearded head of Zeus right (h.: 22.92 mm; w.: 21.49 mm).

Side B: Achelous facing and advancing right (h.: 15.30 mm; w.: 22.97 mm); in the lower field A(χελῳός?) (h.: 4.13 mm).

3 | inv. no. 69353 | *tessera*, reddish clay, circular shape | Ø 23 mm; 9 mm (thickness); 3.8 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture; surface shows some white concretions) | Provenance: unknown (Sicily?) | Dating: second–first centuries BCE (?).

Side A: Standing elephant left carrying on a sedan chair on its back (h.: 17.68 mm; w.: 18.96 mm).

Side B: A (*aleph*) with stem extended towards left (h.: 12.42 mm; w.: 15.66 mm).

4 | inv. no. 65356 | *tessera*, reddish clay, oval shape | Ø 27 mm; 4 mm (thickness); 3.2 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture) | Provenance: Sicily (area of Catania, Messina, or Syracuse) | Dating: second–first centuries BCE.

Side A: Elephant advancing right on a flat surface on double groundline (h.: 13.10 mm; w.: 18.60 mm); small legible A (*alpha/aleph?*) in the upper field (h.: 4.66 mm; w.: 4.80 mm).

Side B: Blank (a late nineteenth-century museum's tag reports: 'R. MUSEO DI PALERMO: R(egistro) (d')E(ntrata) N.º 139').

Records: *Giornale d'Entrata*: '139 | 22. Marzo 1873 | Tessera di creta | Acquistato dalla Commissione di Antichità e Belle Arti nell'escursione fatta nelle Provincie di Messina, Catania, Siracusa nel 1872 | Nota della Commissione 22. Marzo 1873 | Dal Segretario della Comm(issio)ne | Alla Direzione del Museo?.

5 | inv. no. 69355 | *tessera*, reddish clay, oval shape | Ø 26 mm; 6 mm (thickness); 2.9 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture) | Provenance: Sicily (area of Catania, Messina, or Syracuse) | Dating: second–first centuries BCE (?).

Side A: Elephant advancing right on a flat surface, represented by a double line (h.: 13.30 mm; w.: 15.41 mm); A (*alpha/aleph?*) in the upper field (h.: 4.55 mm; w.: 4.97 mm).

Side B: Blank.

Records: *Giornale di Entrata*: '140 | 22. Marzo 1873 | Idem'.

6 | inv. no. 69352 | *tessera*, grey clay, circular shape | Ø 32 mm;
10 mm (thickness); 9.9 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture) |
Provenance: unknown (Sicily, Rome, or Asia Minor) | Dating: first
century BCE (?).

Side A: Eagle right showing unfolded wings (w.: 16.75 mm; h.: 22.07 mm);
in the left field ΘC (h.: 7 mm).

Side B: Quadruped (lion?) advancing left; in the upper field C, below
ΘC (?) (h.: 6.36 mm).

References (comparison): Rostovtzeff 1903, 37 n. 272.

7 | inv. no. 69351 | *tessera*, grey clay, circular shape | Ø 37 mm;
6 mm (thickness); 11.3 g | State of preservation: good (no fracture) |
Provenance: Tindari (Messina) | Dating: late first century BCE.

Side A: Two small, stylised caps of the Dioscuri, formed by two ellipses
(left: 11.18 mm × 17.97 mm; right: 10.40 mm × 17.52 mm) and two
crosses representing stars on the top (left: 8.13 mm × 6.84 mm; right:
9.01 mm × 8.24 mm).

Side B: Blank.

References: Crisà 2019, 63–77; Crisà 2020b, 47–55.

8 | inv. no. 65358 | *tessera* (or game piece?), orange clay, circular shape |
Ø 24 mm; 5 mm (thickness); 2.7 g | State of preservation: good (no
fracture) | Provenance: Termini Imerese | Dating: late first century
BCE–first century CE (?).

Side A: Herakles (h.: 19.62 mm; w.: 13.48 mm) standing, facing and
naked, holds a club in his right hand and lion skin (*leontè*) in his left
hand.

Side B: Blank and slightly concave with traces of a fingerprint.

Records: green tag reporting 'Trovato negli scavi di Termini nel nuovo
stradone del Castello in 9bre 1840'.



Figure 10.17 Clay tokens cat. nos. 1–5

2:1



6



7



8



Figure 10.18 Clay tokens cat. nos. 6–8

Chapter 11

A New Type of Roman-Period Clay Tokens from Jerusalem

Yoav Farhi

The following paper examines several clay objects which were recovered as stray finds in Jerusalem and should be dated to the early Roman period. They derive from a few different locations in and around the Temple Mount.

These mysterious objects, which might be defined as ‘tokens’, are almost unknown in research. Some bear Greek and Aramaic legends, some have only designs and some have both. There are several features which combine them into one group: their association to the Temple Mount, their material, their strange shape, especially the shape of their back side, which is conical, as well as their function in gift distributions and/or for secure identification of the courier of a message or even as a means of securing the validity of a precious package.

Most of the objects were scanned in 3D at the National Laboratory for Digital Documentation and Research at the Israel Antiquities Authority.¹ XRF scans and petrographic analysis were undertaken for several of the objects by Y. Goren from Ben Gurion University of the Negev (see below).² Such objects are extremely rare in the archaeological record, and this is the first time that such items are studied as a group and by using these advanced technologies.

I wish to thank H. Geva (of the Israel Exploration Society) and G. Barkay and Z. Dvira (of the Temple Mount Sifting Project) for their permission to study the objects from their projects. This study was supported by a grant from the Roger and Susan Hertog Center for the Archaeological Study of Jerusalem and Judah, based at the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I am grateful to M. Gkikaki for inviting me to take part in the conference and for editing this volume.

¹ See Karasik et. al 2014. We used a device of the company GoMeasure3D with an accuracy of 20 micron. The views that emphasise the pattern were rendered using the program DOR that was developed at Haifa University (Gilboa et. al. 2013). I wish to thank A. Karasik for scanning the objects and preparing the scans for publication.

² I wish to thank Y. Goren for his research and assistance.

Petrographic Study

The petrographic study attempted to disclose the technology and possible provenance of several of the objects presented above by analytical methods of material analysis. Due to the obvious restrictions resulting from the museological value of these delicate objects, the analyses were limited by the extraction of limited samples (if at all), hence, the results and conclusions are limited accordingly.

The study was planned to be made in three stages. In the first stage, the structural and technical aspects of the objects were examined based on surface microscopic observations under a stereomicroscope at 20× magnification and under a Dino-Lite Edge digital microscope. This was done in order to record minute details of the clay fabric, the seal impression, cord impressions if they exist, fingerprints and any other imprints. These examinations attempted to address some technical questions, such as the general composition of the fabric and the formation process.

Before sampling, non-destructive testing (NDT) of the element concentrations of the objects was performed to provide their chemical composition. Today, portable Energy Dispersive X-Ray Florescence (pXRF) devices provide fast on-site elemental analysis. We used a Thermo Fisher Scientific Niton Xl3t GOLDD+ pXRF, using an Ag anode 50 kV and 200 µA. Each object was scanned on different locations (front and back) using the ‘Mining’ filter. Each scan was 90 seconds in length, 30 seconds for each filter, to provide the full range of detectable elements (Mg-U, atomic numbers 12–92).

The pXRF screening was followed by minimally destructive testing (MDT) of sampled material for mineralogical and fabric analysis. Minute samples were extracted from the sealing by the peeling technique,³ and examined in thin sections under the petrographic microscope. In this method, a thin lamina, only a few millimetres thick, is taken from a broken facet of the sealing or from its reverse side under the stereomicroscope with the aid of a scalpel. The samples were set on circular glass microscope cover slips and dried on a hotplate at 60 °C. Then the slips with the samples were put in a small desiccator, where the samples were impregnated with low viscosity epoxy resin under vacuum conditions. After curing, the resulting pellet was used for the preparation of a standard thin-section and subjected to routine petrological examination under a polarising microscope (Motic Panthera-TEC POL) using ×40–×600 magnifications under plane-polarised light (PPL) and cross-polarised light (XPL), using the common ceramic petrography examination methods.⁴ This particular petrographic method

³ Goren, Finkelstein and Na’aman 2014, 11–12.

⁴ Quinn 2013.

has been chosen because it was used in all cases where clay seal impressions, namely *bullae*, were analysed for their mineralogical composition and possible geological origins. Therefore, an existing database of the clays used in the southern Levant to produce *bullae* was available. The pXRF results are summarised with the description of each item.

The Objects

Object No. 1

Object No. 1 (Figure 11.1) was found on a floor of a room dated to the first century CE, which was excavated in 1970 in the area known as the Upper City of Jerusalem, west of the Temple Mount.⁵ During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, this area was inhabited by upper-class Jewish families, who mostly served as priests in the Temple. The object is made of pink clay, covered with a dark patina. Its dimensions are 18 mm in length, 12 mm in width and 10 mm in height. No intrusive sampling was made. pXRF results may suggest that it is similar to Object No. 2 (below).

The design on its flat oval face includes a hemispherical chalice/basin on foot, with decorated handles,⁶ and possibly with a lid, and above it what seems to be three pomegranates. Two unclear objects, in a shape of small trees (?), are located on the left and right of the basin, next to its foot. The design, which combines a hemispherical chalice/basin on foot and pomegranates, specifically recalls the design on the shekel and half shekel silver coins struck by the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem during the First Jewish Revolt, between 66 and 70 CE (Figure 11.2). The hemispherical chalice or basin on Object No. 1 and on the coins, as well as on a gem from Masada (Figure 11.3), is of a non-classical shape familiar from the Roman period onward.⁷

The vessel on the coins of the First Jewish Revolt was identified as the Omer cup, one of the Temple utensils. This was a gold vessel used on the second day of Passover, when a measure of barley, representing the first fruits, was offered in the Jerusalem Temple. Earlier descriptions of this cup suggested it was related to drinking wine, but Romanoff argues that this is not a drinking chalice. It seems that this vessel is one of the two golden cultic chalices depicted in the Arch of Titus on a table carried by

⁵ The object was found in Area C, Locus 309, B. 6011. See Avigad 1983, 194 Figure 226.

⁶ It seems that the artist who made the seal chose to present the handles as facing, rather than in their original horizontal form, and thus the viewer will be able to recognise their spiral design. Similar handles with spiral designs appear, for example, on a first century BCE silver Skyphos (Rozenberg and Mevorah 2013, 66).

⁷ Gersht and Gendelman 2016, 158–60.

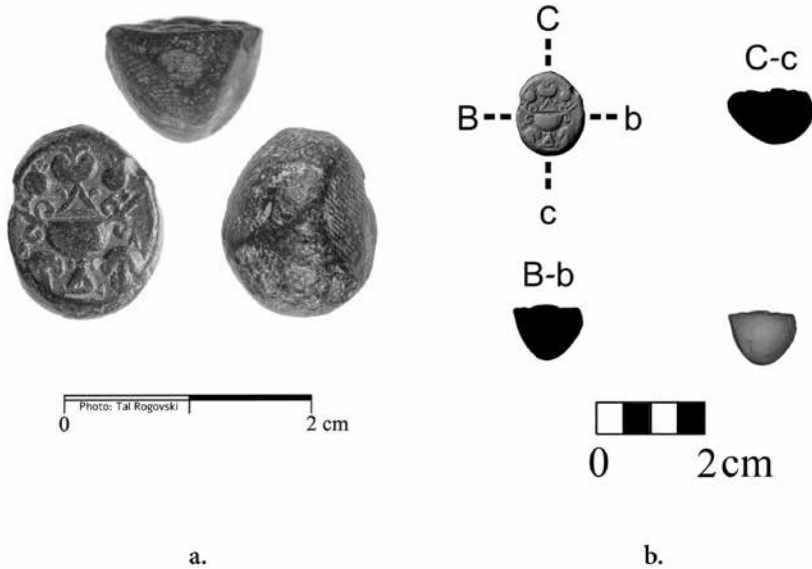


Figure 11.1 Object No. 1. Clay token of conical shape, stamped on its face with the design of a hemispherical chalice/basin on foot with decorated handles, three pomegranates above and two trees (?) framing the foot right and left; a. Photo: T. Rogovski; b. 3D scan: A. Karasik

the Roman soldiers as part of the booty taken by the Romans from the Jerusalem Temple.⁸

The pomegranates are well known as one of the main decorations of the Temple itself and are one of the main motifs in Jewish art of the Roman period.⁹ The pomegranate buds on the coins of the First Jewish Revolt have often been described as hanging on a sprig or branch.¹⁰ Deutsch, however, asserts that this symmetric object with a large pommel at its end more likely represents the staff of the High Priest.¹¹

This combination of a chalice/basin and pomegranates is a recognisably Jewish device, and thus belongs to the repertoire of Jewish art of the first century CE. Similar cups on high foot (such as the Greek *kantcharos*) are

⁸ Romanoff 1944, 21–25; Meshorer 2001, 117–18; Deutsch 2011, 363–64. For another suggestion regarding the possible use of the cup(s) which appear on the table in the Arch of Titus, see Fine et al. 2021, 27.

⁹ Meshorer 2001, 118–19.

¹⁰ Meshorer 2001, 118.

¹¹ See Deutsch 2011, 362–63.



Figure 11.2 Shekel and Half Shekel AR coins from the First Jewish Revolt with the depiction of a hemispherical chalice/basin on foot on one face and pomegranates on the other. Photo: CNG coins

Figure 11.2a AR 22.5 mm, 14.18 g, 11h (<https://www.cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=365357>)

Figure 11.2b AR 22 mm, 14.17 g, 11h (<https://www.cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=114732>)

Figure 11.2c AR 20 mm, 6.44 g (<https://www.cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=44786>)

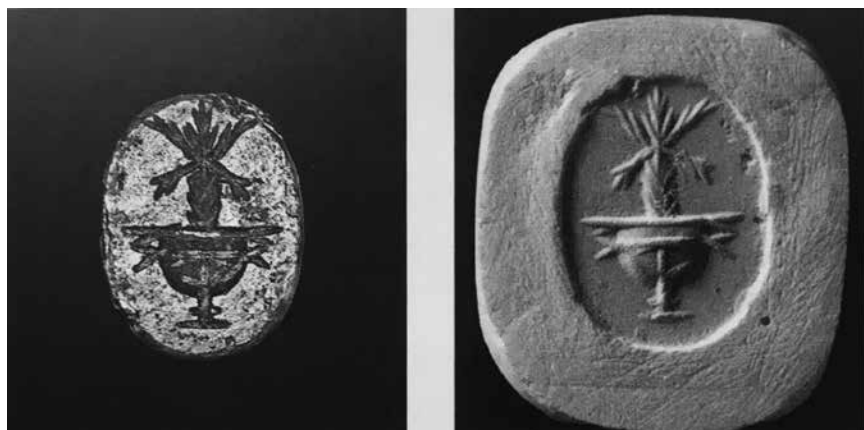


Figure 11.3 A gem from Masada with a hemispherical chalice/basin in intaglio (after Hershkovitz and Amorai-Stark 2007, 222)

attested on Ephesian *tesserae* of the second and third centuries CE.¹² The possible functions of these tokens have yet to be explored.

The triangular raised back of the token seems to bear the negative of a fabric which was used to hold it while it was made or possibly to which it was attached as some kind of a seal or receipt. It was recently suggested that clay sealings from the Iron Age II period (seventh–sixth centuries BCE) with a concave back covered with textile imprint, found in Jerusalem, were probably attached to sacks made of a fabric of coarse fibres containing *hacksilber* (irregularly cut silver pieces) or other precious metals, and related to the Temple treasury.¹³

It is thus possible that Object No. 1 was also used for the same function as the clay sealings from the Iron Age II period, possibly in the Temple treasury. If so, one can suggest some relation between the impressive design on the face of the object (a hemispherical chalice/basin on foot, decorated with three pomegranates) and the content of the sacks, e.g. silver coins of the First Jewish Revolt (decorated with a cup and three pomegranates) or the silver bullion used to strike these coins.

The discovery of this object in the Upper City of Jerusalem goes well with its decorations and suggests that it probably belonged to a priestly family and was therefore related to the Temple activity.

Object No. 2

Object No. 2 (Figure 11.4) was discovered a few years ago as part of the Temple Mount Sifting Project (TMSP).¹⁴ This token is some 12 mm in length, stamped on its face with an amphora surrounded by a Greek legend, all within a plain border (10 mm × 7 mm in diameter). The conical back is partly broken (see Figure 11.4b), with some remains of a fabric or a fingerprint still visible. The legend on the face reads ‘ΔΟΥΛΟΙΥ’ (Doulou), probably genitive of Δούλας or Δούλης (Doulês), a well-known personal name during the Roman period, especially in Cilicia, Macedonia and the

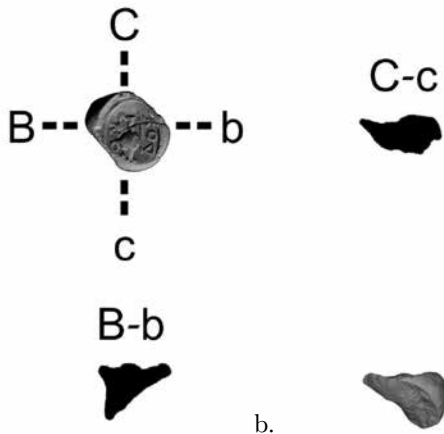
¹² Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 145–47 nos. 218–23; Bulgurlu and Hazinedar in this volume, cat. nos. 82 and 83.

¹³ Dvira and Barkay 2021.

¹⁴ The Temple Mount Sifting Project was created in order to save as many ancient artefacts as possible from thousands of tons of debris that were excavated and removed from the Temple Mount in 1999 without any archaeological supervision. The project also aims to conduct archaeological research on the finds in order to shed more light on the history of the Temple Mount: a place of significance to billions of people throughout the world. For the project, see Barkay and Dvira 2016. See also <https://tmsifting.org/en/>.



a.



b.

Figure 11.4 Object No. 2 (TMSP No. 55509). Clay token of conical shape (broken), stamped on its face with the design of an amphora; ΔΟΥ-ΛΟ[Υ]; a. Photos: TMSP; b. 3D scan

northern regions of the Black Sea,¹⁵ areas where Jews were settled already in the late Hellenistic–Early Roman periods.

The letters (2 mm high) are mostly perfectly preserved, what is only partially visible is the last upsilon, which was only partly impressed on the clay. The letters, except of the omicron, have serifs; the delta, lambda and upsilon are characterised by an apex on top (all three) and bottom (lambda and upsilon).¹⁶

The petrographic study revealed marly clay with sparse silt and some foraminifers (**Figure 11.5**). The pXRF results indicate the following general composition: silicon (Si): 23.8 per cent, calcium (Ca): 7.5 per cent, aluminium (Al): 5.5 per cent, potassium (K): 4.2 per cent, iron (Fe): 3.4 per cent and phosphor (P): 1.5 per cent. The relatively high potassium rate may indicate Illite as the clay mineral. The orange translucent particles in the silt may indicate apatite (as phosphor is high). Based on the analytical data, the provenance determination cannot be categorised. However, this sealing differs from Iron Age sealings found in Jerusalem, in that it was not made of terra rossa soil. It should be stated that the pXRF results of Object No. 1 demonstrate similar results including: Si: 24.4 per cent, Ca: 6.6 per cent, Al: 7 per cent, K: 4.7 per cent, Fe: 3.8 per cent and P: 0.7 per cent. These rather similar results may indicate some similarity in the clay mineralogy (although not necessarily a common source). The name on the token may be that of the man who donated goods, possibly to the temple, or it was the name of the man who was in charge of distribution.

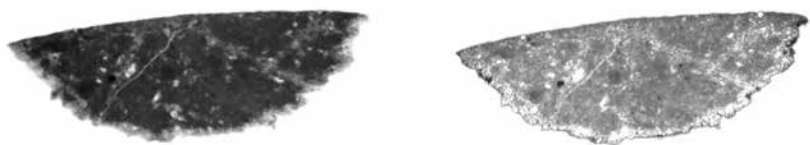


Figure 11.5 Object No. 2 in thin section. Left, PPL; right, XPL

This sealing was most probably made by a seal ring, maybe of a type similar to one which was recently found in Herodium, the site of Herod the Great's palace and burial place, and dated from the first century BCE

¹⁵ LGPN IV 2005, 111 s.v. Δούλας in Skythia and s.v. Δούλης in Macedonia; cf. LGPN V.B. 2013, 124 s.v. Δουλαῖς in Cilicia. I am grateful to L. Di Segni for her assistance in studying this token.

¹⁶ For similar serifs in Greek inscriptions of the Early Roman period from Judaea, see *CIIP* II: 844–47, No. 2123; Ecker and Zissu 2020, 572, Fig. 1.

to the middle of first century CE (Figures 11.6a–b).¹⁷ However, while the ring from Herodium is most likely the product of a local workshop, the one which was used to make the token from the Temple Mount seems to be of a non-local workshop. It seems that the shape and decorations of our token with amphora derive from non-local Jewish art of the early Roman period.

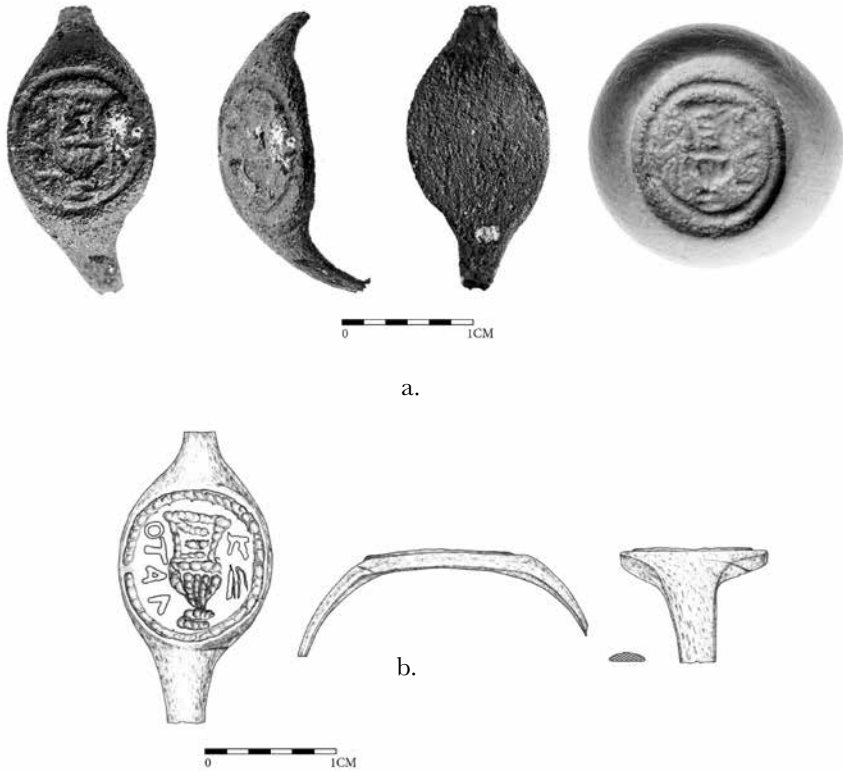


Figure 11.6 The seal ring from Herodium, with the design of a pyriform amphora; ΠΙ-ΛΑΤΟ (after Amoraï-Stark et al. 2018, 213, Figures 5–6); a. photos of the ring and seal imprint: T. Rogovski; b. drawing: J. Rodman

The shape of the amphora on our token is pyriform. It has a high neck, a rounded rim and an elongated body, rounded in its upper part and ending in a pointed spike. It has raised handles (above the mouth), which are attached to the top of its rounded body. This amphora is not a common one and seems as a hybrid, probably not presenting a realistic one. The idea

¹⁷ Amoraï-Stark et al. 2018.

was probably to show an amphora, most probably Rhodian (see below), as a general motif.

Various amphoras, none of which seems perfectly identical to the one on the token, were uncovered in Herodian period assemblages in Jerusalem and Judaea. Some bear ink inscriptions on the body of the vessel.¹⁸ Based on the vessel's inscriptions, it can be determined that the products they contained come from estates in the area of Brindisi and Campagna in Italy, as well as from the Greek Islands (Knidos, Chios, Rhodes) and from Spain. These products included wines of various types, honey, apples from Italy and pickled fish sauce (*garum*) from Spain.

The shape of the amphora on the token seems similar (only the handles are different) to an amphora type from Masada, dated to 27–19 BCE (Figure 11.7).¹⁹ The shape of both seems similar to earlier amphoras produced on Lesbos.²⁰

The raised handles of the amphora depicted on the token also appears similar to various Rhodian amphoras. The best example seems to be an amphora type from Bodrum, dated to the late third and early second centuries BCE (Figure 11.8). This amphora type has a broad geographic distribution, which includes the Eastern Mediterranean, the Aegean, Russia, France and Spain.²¹ A local-found parallel could be seen in one amphora found in the Upper City of Jerusalem (Figure 11.9) and dated to the mid-first century BCE.²²

To conclude, the amphora on our token seems to be a type of the early Roman period, dated mainly to the second half of the first century BCE. In the present case, and if the amphora depicted on the token is more than just a decorative motif, it might be significant. The origin of such amphoras was apparently Aegean, and this specific amphora seems to be from Rhodes and was probably used for wine. It is possible that this token was attached to a donation or something that was sent, possibly from abroad, to Jerusalem. Or perhaps the token served to receive an allotment of wine, and Doulas was the man in charge of giving it out to those who presented the token.

¹⁸ See e.g. Bar-Nathan 2002, 129–37; Bar-Nathan 2006, 307–57; Finkielsztejn 2006.

¹⁹ Bar-Nathan 2006, 320 no. 9.

²⁰ See e.g. Clinkenbeard 1986, 355 Figure 3.

²¹ Alpözen, Özdaş and Berkaya 1995, 92.

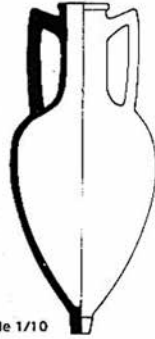
²² Finkielsztejn 2006, 170.



Fig. 93. Amphora M-AM4 (No. 9).

Figure 11.7 An amphora from Masada (after Bar-Nathan 2006, 320 [h. 83cm])

VI-3-9- Rhodian Amphoras



Scale 1/10

- Inventory no. : 2536
- Mouth diam. : 10.5 cm.
- Rim th. : 1.3 cm.
- Body diam. : 34.6 cm.
- Ht. : 8.15 cm.
- Wgt. : 12.2 kg.
- Capacity : 29 lt.
- Description : Sound; narrow mouth, slightly everted ring-shaped rim, long narrow neck, two long handles attached at the neck and shoulder, wide shoulder, ovoid conical body tapering from shoulder to a pointed base. Light brown clay. Partially concreted.
- Origin : Rhodes island.
- Distribution : Eastern Mediterranean, Aegean, Russia, France and Spain (Grace 1949:183).
- Princ. Content : Wine.
- Date range : End of the 3rd century and beginning of the 2nd century B.C. (Grace 1949: 186, fig.5; 1953: 119; 1963: 323, fig.1, fig.9; Alpözen 1975: 8, pl.2,fig.1; Sciollano - Sibella 1991:89; Doger 1992:90, r.88).



Figure 11.8 A Rhodian amphora from Bodrum (after Alpözen, Özdaş and Berkaya 1995, 92)

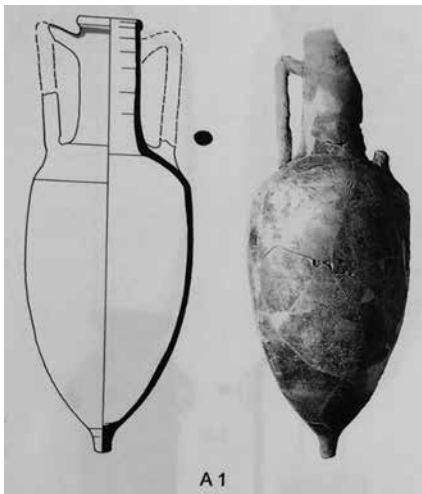


Figure 11.9 An amphora from Jerusalem (after Finkielsztejn 2006, 182, Fig. 6.3)

Object No. 3

Object No. 3 was discovered in 2011 in the excavations of the drainage tunnel of the first-century CE main street west of the Temple Mount. Another identical item is known from Jerusalem, now in a private collection. I did not have any access to these objects and my discussion here is based on what was published in the media (below).²³

It is 20 mm in diameter and has on its face a legend only (**Figure 11.10**). The legend is in Aramaic, the common language in Judaea during the Roman period, and includes six letters in two lines. The legend was deciphered by the excavators as 'דכנא/ליה', meaning 'pure to God', and it was suggested that it was used to mark products which were brought to the Temple and needed to be pure. However, there are other readings of this legend, which remains disputed.²⁴

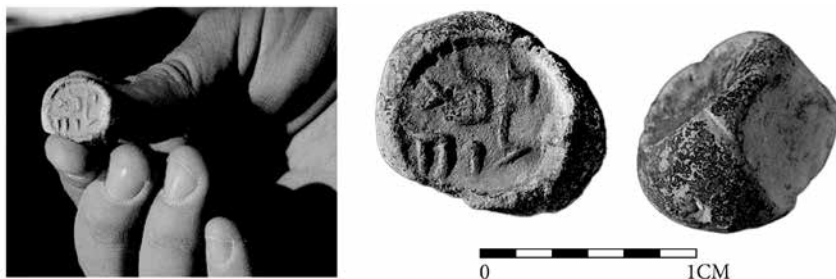


Fig. 11.10 Object No. 3. 'דכנא/ליה', meaning 'pure to God'.

Photos: Vladimir Naikhin

Object No. 4

Object No. 4 was discovered few years ago as part of the Temple Mount Sifting Project. It is 20 mm in width and oval in shape and has an unclear scene, possibly two figures facing in the centre, or one figure sacrificing in front of an altar (?). The triangular raised back of the token seems to bear, at least on one of its sides, the negative of what seems as a fabric which was used to hold it while it was made, or possibly to which it was attached as some kind of a seal or receipt (**Figure 11.11**).

²³ This object has not yet been fully published by the excavation team. I wish to thank E. Shukron for the permission to use the photos by V. Naikhin.

²⁴ Naeh 2012a; Naeh 2012b; Naeh 2015; Shveka 2015; Safrai 2017.

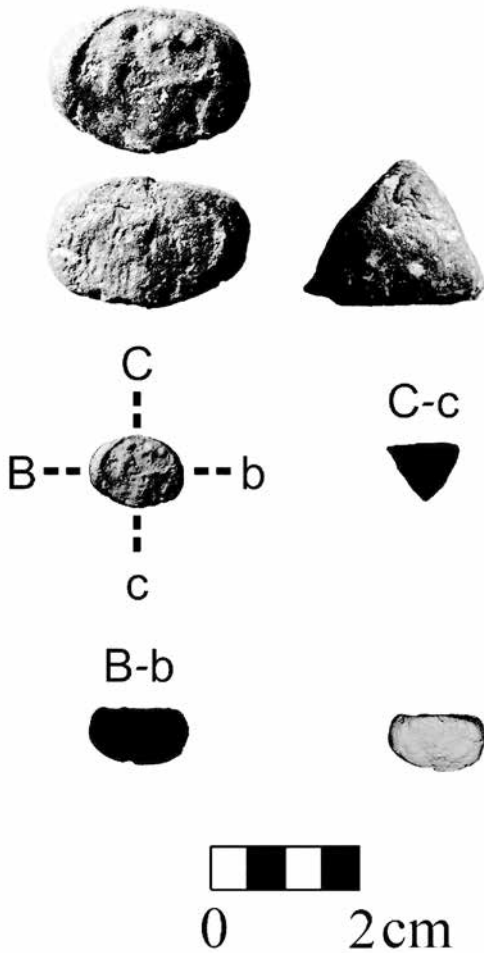


Fig. 11.11 Object No. 4. Clay token with unclear design (two figures facing in the centre, or one figure sacrificing in front of an altar); the triangular raised back bears traces of fabric once attached (TMSP No. 37148); a. Photo: TMSP; b. 3D scan

It is reasonable that this object was made by using a seal ring or gemstone. The use of figure(s) on this token suggests that it is a non-Jewish item, and thus it might be possible to date it to the second century CE or later, after Jerusalem was rebuilt by the emperor Hadrian as a Roman colony named *Colonia Aelia Capitolina*. The dark colour which covers this sealing or token as some kind of a slip and the pink colour of the clay beneath are similar to those of Object No. 1. This is different from Objects Nos. 2 and 3, which are made of a yellowish clay and have no coating. However, the petrographic study revealed that Object No. 4 is made of dark reddish-tan clay, rich in quartz silt and opaque minerals, and with some micritic calcite particles (Figure 11.12). According to the pXRF test, high iron (Fe) is

notable. Based on the analytical data, the provenance determination cannot be categorised. However, this sealing is similar to Iron Age sealings found in Jerusalem in that it was made of terra rossa soil. This is also reflected by the pXRF results where the following major element concentrations were revealed: Si: 23 per cent, Al: 12 per cent, Ca: 7.5 per cent, Fe: 9.6 per cent, K: 1.7 per cent and P: 0.4 per cent. As compared with Objects Nos. 1 and 2, the clay is very rich in iron and considerably poorer in potassium and phosphorus. As petrography suggests, it supports the attribution to terra rossa soil. Thus, the attribution of this object to the traditions typical to the Iron Age make its dating to the Roman period somewhat doubtful.

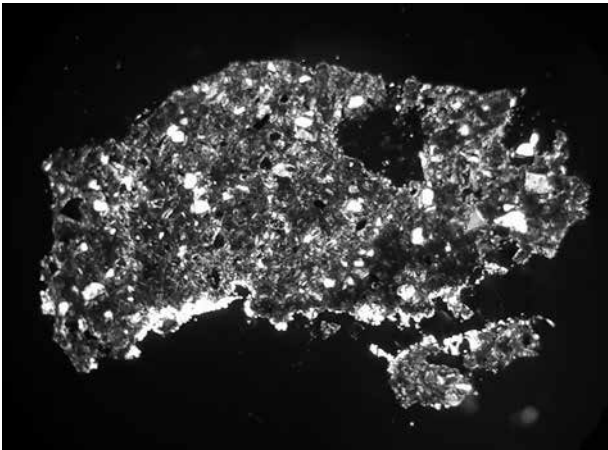


Figure 11.12 Object No. 4 in thin section, XPL

Closing Remarks

This group of tokens differs much in their dimensions and shape from other Hellenistic- and Roman-period clay tokens, and similar clay tokens are so far unknown to me from other cities in the Hellenistic–Roman world.

Their common characteristics – their extremely small size and their unique shape – raise questions about their function and how they were used. It is clear from their conical back that they could not have sealed a papyrus document. Some of them could have been possibly attached or affixed to another object such as a container, parcel or bundle, while others have no features suggestive of such a function. In any case, these unique objects cannot stand alone, and it is so far not clear how or for what these token-like objects were used, but some suggestions can be put forward.

The tokens from Jerusalem appear to be products of local production, as can be inferred from their manufacturing characteristics, material and appearance. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods, tokens were similarly locally produced across the Mediterranean. With this local character and

circulation, they serviced the various needs of the local communities in question.²⁵

The discovery of the objects presented here from in and around the Temple Mount suggests that they were connected to the temple activity in some way, either directly or indirectly. The objects from the Temple Mount contribute to the discussion of the question of the issuing authority: who was responsible for issuing them – a private person or a group of persons, or a person or persons in an official capacity? The find-spot of the first object in the area of the Upper City, west of the Temple Mount, evidences the roles played by tokens in the administration – broadly defined. Members of the elite who inhabited this area and administered the Temple should probably be credited with issuing and distribution. Tokens issued and distributed by the elite re-enforced its prestige and contributed to the creation of relationships among members of the elite or between the elite and its followers. Furthermore, tokens enabled the creation of particular communities within communities. This is probably the case with Object No. 2, with the design of an amphora. The Greek name ‘ΔΟΥΛΟΥ’, as well as the amphora design, betrays connections with the world of the eastern Mediterranean. It suggests the existence of a Greek-speaking community that forged bonds between its members through distribution and the marking of such occasions through the sharing of tokens, although this remains a hypothesis only. Tokens certainly advertised the prestige of the issuing authority, whether a central authority such as the Temple priests, or a defined community or even a private individual.

The issue of state tokens – issued by a central authority – is well attested in Athens of the late Classical period. It is well known that in Athens tokens facilitated the workings of the state.²⁶ More recent studies have shown that tokens in Athens were also issued on a private initiative.²⁷ Similarly, the use of signet rings for stamping tokens (here Objects Nos. 2 and 4) demonstrate that individuals issued tokens for certain occasions and therefore created communities and relationships with the recipients of these tokens. The same mixture of centrally and privately issued tokens is evidenced in Jerusalem, when considering tokens such as the one with the cup (No. 1) and the one possibly inscribed ‘pure to God’ (No. 3) as issued by a central authority. Additionally, the tokens presented here with the clear traces of having been attached to something (Nos. 1, 2, and possibly No. 4) indicate that tokens served to verify the identity of their carrier and for guaranteeing the integrity of a consignment or even the integrity of a message. Much

²⁵ Crisà in this volume.

²⁶ Crosby 1964, 77.

²⁷ Gkikaki (2020, 118–20) discusses the case of *symbola agorastika* in Hellenistic Athens. Karra in this volume discusses private and public tokens in Hellenistic Athens.

the same functions have been confirmed for Athens, where tokens sealed the tablets inscribed with the tribute paid to Athens by the members of the Delian League in the fifth century BCE.²⁸ In Hellenistic Athens, military tokens addressed to ‘Peripolarchos Xenokles’ have traces on their back side of having been attached to something, which could have been a message or a parcel.²⁹

It should be noted that the architecture of Herod the Great and his successors was greatly influenced by the Hellenistic–Roman world, with its Greek origins, and this is clearly evidence by the decorations of the Herodian Temple Mount in Jerusalem.³⁰ Thus, the Greek influence on Jerusalem during the late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods had many faces; the use of tokens in and around the Temple Mount, for administrative purposes, was probably one of them

It is hoped that this preliminary study of these so far unique objects from Roman Jerusalem will encourage the publication of similar objects from other cities in the ancient Mediterranean and will assist us in deciphering their use.

²⁸ The Kleinias Decree *IG I³ 34*; www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGI3/34; cf. Finglass in this volume and Gkikaki in this volume.

²⁹ The traces are visible on the back side of the token in the Agora Museum, inv. no. SS8080, published by Kroll and Mitchel (1980, 87 no. I.1, pl. 13a); cf. Finglass in this volume.

³⁰ See Peleg-Barkat 2017.

Chapter 12

A Group of Lead Tokens in the Ephesos Museum Collection

Vera Geelmuyden Bulgurlu

Tümay Hazinedar Coşkun

The Ephesos Archaeological Museum holds a substantial collection of lead tokens obtained through purchase or donation from villagers living in the area. Eighty-six have been chosen for this study on account of the designs they carry and their good state of preservation. With seven exceptions (*cat. nos.* 11, 18, 22, 23, 24, 28, 44), the tokens are uniface. Their average weight is 2.7 g; the smallest is 6 mm (*cat. no.* 34) while the largest are 20 mm in diameter (*cat. nos.* 25, 31, 45), with an average between 14 mm and 18 mm.

Iconography and Dating of the Ephesian Tokens

The prototypes of many of the designs may be found on contemporary civic issues of Ephesos as well as on contemporary Roman *tesserae*. Popular gods and goddesses of the Greek and Roman mythology are represented on thirty-one of them. Among these, Artemis is depicted on six (*cat. nos.* 28–34), Nike on three (*cat. nos.* 42–44) and the Three Graces on three (*cat. nos.* 35–37), all with slight variations.

We would like to thank Mairi Gkikaki, the editor of this volume, for her valuable advice and for inviting us to take part in this volume on tokens, in general an understudied subject among archaeologists in Turkey. A particular debt of gratitude goes to Clare Rowan (Warwick) for insightful suggestions. Thanks are also due to the Turkish Ministry of Culture and to the Director of the Ephesos Archaeological Museum Cengiz Topal for permission to carry out this research, to archaeologist Ramazan Çetin of the numismatic cabinet for his kind cooperation and to Melike Sümertaş, research assistant. Photographs are by Tümay Hazinedar Coşkun.

Artemis Ephesia, by far the most common type on Ephesian tokens, derives from similar representations on the contemporary civic issues, where the venerable cult statue features prominently as the emblem of the city.¹ The longevity of the design is particularly remarkable, since it appears with variations – Artemis Ephesia with no companions, with stags, with emperors, in a temple, between knucklebone players or other figures – under all emperors. The star and the crescent in the field left and right next to the cult statue's head (**cat. no. 30**) is first found on civic issues under Antoninus Pius (138–61) and appears again on civic issues of Faustina II (161–76) and Caracalla (197–217), and more consistently in the third century CE with Elagabal (218–22), Gordian III (238–44), Otacilia (244–49), Philippus II (247–49) and Decius (249–51).²

On **cat. no. 33**, Artemis stands between Androcles, the legendary founder of Ephesos, on her left and Tyche on her right, the whole beneath an arch, considered to be made of branches or to resemble a cave. A similar arch of branches is found on another Ephesian token type where Artemis is shown kneeling and bathing inside a semi-circular arch-like grotto surmounted by the figure of Aktaion with antlers.³ The closest type to our **cat. no. 33** may be found on a Trajan's issue.⁴ On the token **cat. no. 33**, the legend above the arch reads ΜΑΓΙ, while in the exergue ΤΙΜΙ. The numerous instances of personal names on Ephesian tokens permits the hypothesis that these two abbreviations may also refer to names. Possible candidates for the first may be Magidon, Magianos, Magios, Magisilbis, names attested in various cities in Asia Minor, or even Magiros, a name attested in fifth–sixth century CE Athens.⁵ The abbreviation in the exergue may be read either as Timiades or Timias.⁶ Still, these tentative readings do not solve the puzzle; none of the above suggested names is documented in the epigraphy of Ephesos.

Cat. no. 34 features Artemis Ephesia on side A and the Three Graces on B, a type well attested on contemporary Roman *tesserae*.⁷ There, they

¹ Karwiese 2016, 293–98.

² Karwiese 2016, 293. For the issues of Faustina with Artemis Ephesia with star and crescent, see Karwiese 2012, 83 no. 343, for the same type under Gordian III, see Karwiese 2012, 185 no. 849.

³ Dalzell 2021, 89 *cat. no. 5*.

⁴ RPC III, 2053, <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/3/2053>; Karwiese 2016, 76 with Figure (LN142/11b).

⁵ *LGNP* V.B. 2013, 267 s.v. Μαγιδων in Caria; *LGNP* V.C. 2018, 255 s.v. Μαγιανός in Galatia; *LGNP* V.C. 2013, 255, s.v. Μάγτος in Lycaonia, Eastern Phrygia and Pisidia; *LGNP* V.B. 2013, 255, s.v. Μαγισιλβίς in Pisidia; *LGNP* II 1994, 295, s.v. Μάγιρος in Athens.

⁶ *LGNP* V.B. 2013, 408, s.v. Τιμίας in Caria; *LGNP* V.B. 2013, 408, s.v. Τιμιάδης in Lycia.

⁷ Rostovtzeff and Prou 1900, 65–69, 169, 392–99.

are paired with the type of a 'Modius with ears of wheat' on the other side, and it has been suggested that these tokens were exchanged for grain.⁸

Besides Artemis, her attributes – the stag and the bee – are also depicted on tokens. The stag on **cat. nos. 59** and **60** is a particularly vivid image. **Cat. no. 59** features the stag to the left, while **cat. no. 60** features the stag to the right. Both variations are found on the civic issues throughout the first, second and third centuries CE.⁹ The types with a bee will be discussed further below in connection to the legend they carry.

Poseidon is found on two types (**cat. nos. 24** and **25**), the first of which is very similar to coin types of contemporary Ephesos as well as of cities from the rest of Asia Minor.¹⁰ In the Roman Provincial Coinage of Asia Minor, there exists accumulated evidence for a strong correlation between dates of earthquakes and cities which minted Poseidon types.¹¹ In particular, on the Ephesian provincial coinage the god is designated by the legend as 'Poseidon Asphalios', the protector against natural catastrophes.¹² Herakles (**cat. nos. 20–21**), Asclepius (**cat. no. 19**), Hekate (**cat. no. 41**), Tyche (**cat. nos. 33, 39, 40**) complete the divine repertory of images. The two different designs of Herakles bear no connections to the iconography of the same god on the contemporary civic issues of Ephesos.¹³ The type of the facing Medusa (**cat. nos. 15–18**) head is well attested on contemporary Roman *tesserae*.¹⁴

The type with the victorious horse, identified by the palm branch in its mouth (**cat. no. 61**), is a particularly eloquent image of equestrian events. The type of two gladiators facing each other (**cat. no. 27**) may relate to circus games and the related entertainment for the public. More types point in the same direction. The dog (**cat. no. 49**) or lion (**cat. nos. 52–56**) attacking a smaller animal, at all probability a hare, are eloquent images alluding to the spectacles staged at the circus. The type is paired with a massive, exotic animal – hippopotamus or rhinoceros – another image of the circus spectacles and public games (**cat. no. 56**).¹⁵ These images may have not only functioned as remembrance of a celebration for a passed

⁸ *TURS* 358–60 (with several specimens under these three types), pl. III, 57–58.

⁹ Karwiese 2016, 302.

¹⁰ Civic issues of Ephesos with Poseidon under Antoninus I Pius (138–61); Karwiese 2016, 106–07 with Figure (LN253).

¹¹ Güney 2015, 293–315.

¹² Karwiese 2016, 106 LN254.

¹³ Karwiese 2016, 301.

¹⁴ *TURS* 519 (pl. IV no. 27), 2634 (pl. VIII no. 39); Rostovtzeff and Prou 1900 118, 233, 236, 337, 577, 422i.

¹⁵ Cf. Rowan 2020, 98, 106–07.

event but, as the legend ‘dies venat(iones)’ on a Roman *tessera* of similar iconography may indicate, the tokens were actually used in circus games.¹⁶

In addition to those just discussed, other types refer to private individuals. The ingenious designs of the elephant emerging from a sea-shell (**cat. nos. 50–51**) and the chariot driven by a mouse (**cat. no. 57**) are well known from Roman gemstones and should be interpreted as the personal choice of the sponsors.¹⁷

Dating the Ephesian tokens presents some difficulty. There are no imperial portraits, very few of the inscribed names can be plausibly identified with persons known otherwise, and more or less the same types are repeated; however, by analogy to the types published by Gülbay and Kireç, it can be ascertained that the majority date to the second and third centuries CE.¹⁸

Text and Image on Ephesian Tokens

Thirty-four of the tokens are inscribed. Of those, eleven bear no design, just the inscription. Two tokens are inscribed with the ethnic or its derivatives: Artemis Ephesia on **cat. no. 31** bears the legend ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ, while Tyche/Fortuna on **cat. no. 40** bears the legend [ΕΦΕ]CΙΑC.

Cat. no. 32 is inscribed ΑΠΟΦ[ΟΡΗΤΟΝ], a term denoting presents which guests received at table to take home.¹⁹ The token may have been distributed at a celebration meal to be exchanged later for a gift but it is equally probable that tokens as such were distributed as gifts. A similar inscription, Α[ΠΟΦΟΡΗ]ΤΤΟΝ, is found on the circumference of type **cat. no. 36**, framing the image of the Three Graces. Charis (pl. Charites), the name of the Three Graces in Greek, is suggestive also for favour, thankfulness and gratitude, making the type an appropriate compliment for the legend.

The token inscribed ΒΟΥ and bearing the image of what seems a facing theatre mask of a male, bearded character (**cat. no. 80**) may have been used for entrance to the theatre by the members of the Council since the legend stands probably for the abbreviation of the Council (ΒΟΥΛΗ).

¹⁶ Rowan 2020, 98 with reference to *TURS* 578.

¹⁷ Roman *tesserae* with elephant emerging from sea-shell, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/TURS.s.3692>. For elephant emerging from a sea-shell, see Henig 1984, 243–47 as well as Dalzell 2021, 85 and 89–90 (**cat. nos. 8–10**). For mice driving a chariot in Roman art, see Kiernan 1984, 601–26.

¹⁸ Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 16.

¹⁹ According to *LSJ*, ἀποφόρητος, ον, carried away; τὰ ἄ. presents which guests received at table to take home, Athenaeus 6.229c, cf. Suetonius, *Caligula* 55, *Vespasianus* 19. Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 148 no. 224 token inscribed ΑΠΟΦΟΡΗΤΟΝ similar to **cat. no. 32**, and Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 110 no. 131 (side B), similar to **cat. no. 36**.

Of the three uniface tokens with the image of a bee (cat. nos. 70–72), cat. nos. 71 and 72 are inscribed ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΕΒΑΝΔΡ.²⁰ The uninscribed token with the bee image (cat. no. 70) is more like a fly resembling Diadumenian's issues (217/8), while the bee on cat. nos. 71 and 72 brings to mind the one of the Aquila Severa series (220/1).²¹ Cat. no. 65 bears a crab and the similar legend ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ to which the name [ΙΟΥΛ] may be added with safety on account of another specimen from Ephesos which preserves the legend in full.²² The legends abbreviate the magistrate's title, the Secretary of the Council (ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΟΣ ΒΟΥΛΕΣ, ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΩΣ ΒΟΥΛΗΣ) paired with the magistrate's name.²³ ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΕΒΑΝΔΡ may be plausibly identified with M. Antonios Aristeides Euandros, 'agoranomos and philosebastos', as attested on an inscription of the mid-second century CE.²⁴ 'ΙΟΥΛ' may be deciphered as Ioulianos or Iulianus in Latin, a popular name in Roman Asia Minor.²⁵ The secretary of the Council Iulianus may also be identified with a member of the Ephesian elite and in particular with one of the family of the Titi Flavii. Another member of this family may have also issued tokens.²⁶ Three persons known under the name Titus Flavius Iulianus are known from Ephesos. All three of them belonged to the same family, being probably father, son and grandson in direct line and all held highest administrative positions in civic life. The eldest of them flourished in the second half of the second century CE and based on the epigraphical record was priest of the imperial cult.²⁷

To this day, at least four more types bearing the legend ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ have been presented: herm (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ), eagle (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ), shrimp (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΛΟΥΠΙΑΝΟΥ) and Artemis huntress (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΙΟΥ).²⁸

²⁰ Cat. no. 72 comes probably from the same die but the inscription is far less clear. For bee on civic issues of Ephesos, see Karwiese 2016, 291. This bee is very close in terms of style to Karwiese 2016, 185 (under Aquilia Severa and 173–74 (LN625) for Diadumenian.

²¹ Karwiese 2016, 185 (LN703) for Aquilia Severa and 173–74 (LN625) for Diadumenian.

²² Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 97 no. 100.

²³ Gülbay and Kireç (2008, 42) read on the same types 'BOVO ΓΡΑ' and consider this to be a greeting, without explaining the meaning or giving references.

²⁴ Schulte 1994, 141 no. 4 and *LGPN* V.A. s.v. Εὔανδρος; *I. Ephesos* 921.

²⁵ *LGPN* V.A. (2010), s.v. Ιουλιανός 227–28.

²⁶ Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 150 no. 230, a token of Ephesos inscribed with the name Titus Flavius Iulianus Proklos.

²⁷ Kuhn 2014, 139–40; Frija 2012, 238 no. 128 (*SEG* 37.886; *SEG* 48.1376; *I. Ephesos* 674; *I. Ephesos* 674a; *I. Ephesos* 4342).

²⁸ Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 67 cat. no. 24 with a herm (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ); 86 cat. no. 69 with an eagle (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ); 149 no. 226 with a shrimp (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΛΟΥΠΙΑΝΟΥ); Boersema and Dalzell 2021, 24 no. 34 (ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΙΟΥ).

In Roman Imperial Athens, a token with the busts of Antoninus Pius on one side and Athena on the other reads ΒΟΥΛΗΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΩΣ ΠΑΜΜΙΝΟΥ,²⁹ while another with Hermes on one side and Sarapis on the other bears the inscription ΓΡΑΜ ΒΟΥΛ and [ΑΥ]Ρ ΒΑΣΣΟΥ shared on the two sides respectively.³⁰ Therefore, in both cities tokens were issued by the Secretary of the Council, who in his official capacity sponsored a banquet, a festival or something similar. The token may have been exchanged for some kind of gift or benefaction or simply to permit entrance to a particular occasion.

Cat. no. 11 is inscribed Τ ΦΛΑ | ΜΙΘΡΙ | ΔΑΤΟΥ on side a: (ΤΙΤΟΥ ΦΛΑΒΙΟΥ ΜΙΘΡΙΔΑΤΟΥ). Mithridates is mentioned on quite a few instances on the inscriptions of Ephesos but none of them seems to bear the praenomen/nomen combination Titus Flavius.³¹ Here again, as in the case of the secretary of the Council Iulianus referred to earlier, we may have a member of the illustrious family of the Titi Flavii.

Even more intriguing is the sign V on side b. It should be interpreted as a numeral. Numerals are well attested from a special category of Roman *tesserae* with either erotic scenes or portraits of the Roman Imperial family on one side and numerals on the other. According to the most probable theory, they functioned as counters of a game. Among the Roman bronze tokens with numerals, there is a particular sub-group with a male portrait and the inscription C(aius) MITREIVS L(ucii) F(ilius) MAG(ister) IVVENT(utis) (Gaius Mitreius, son of Lucius, *magister* of the youth) on one side. In each case, the names could refer to familiar and well-known persons of the civic elite, who would have sponsored the issue of these tokens.³²

On **cat. nos. 42, 43 and 44**, the Nike is depicted in full figure and in flight to the right, a palm branch on her left shoulder, her right arm outstretched holding out a wreath in her hand, her long wings reaching down to the edge of her robe. There are almost no exact parallels for the design and the style of Nike on the civic issues of Ephesos, where the goddess is usually depicted turned to the left. The closest parallels may be regarded as some issues of Iul. Cornelia Paula (220), Annia Faustina (221) and Iul. Maesa (218–24). If comparison with contemporary Ephesian coinage may be of significance, the tokens should be dated to the time of or after the medal-series of Ephesos which was instigated by the victory over

²⁹ Svoronos 1900, 334 no. 180, pl. III, 22. Cf. Svoronos 1900, 337 (nos. 230–32) as well as Crosby 1964, 112–13 commentary under L263 and L264.

³⁰ Svoronos 1900, 337 nos. 230–31, pl. III, 24–25.

³¹ *LGPN* V.A. 2010, s.v. Μιθριδάτης (317).

³² Küter 2019, 84 and 93.

the Parthians in 166 or later.³³ **Cat. nos. 42** and **44** are inscribed MV-ΩN on the circumference. The name ΜΥΩN is attested in Caria,³⁴ while the name ΜΥΩΝΙΑΔΗΣ is attested in Caria and Lycia as well as in Ionia and in particular in Magnesia and Priene, but not in Ephesos.³⁵

The legend MH-NO on the tokens with the basket bearer (**cat. no. 41**) may be better understood as the abbreviation of a name such as Μηνογένης, Μηνόκριτος, Μηνόδοτος, Μηνόδωρος, Μηνόφαντος, Μηνόφιλος, Μηνοφών for which multiple references are preserved on inscriptions of Roman Ephesos.³⁶

Other types on the tokens include typical mythical animals such as the griffin (**cat. nos. 77–78**), the capricorn (**cat. no. 73**) and the centaur (**cat. nos. 74–76**). The capricorn refers to the special symbol of Augustan propaganda.³⁷ It may well have been distributed at a festival in honour of the Emperor. The token with the centaur **cat. no. 76** is inscribed ΓΕΡ, abbreviation of ΓΕΡΟΥΣΙΑ, the Sacred Gerousia (the Council of the Elders). The design of the centaur playing the lyre signifies Chiron, the wise Centaur, and may be considered as suggestive of the particular role played by the Sacred Gerousia as guardian of the venerable civic traditions and as tutor of the youth. In Ephesos, the Sacred Gerousia was established before the end of the first century CE and revived by Hadrian when it gained its independence from the city authorities. In the second and third centuries CE, the Sacred Gerousia was responsible for fund management, either by lending considerable sums of money or as recipient of endowments. This body was also charged with the conduct of festivals of the Imperial cult.³⁸ Tokens struck under the name of the Gerousia bear evidence of the role played by the institution as distributor of gifts and benefactions as well as host and sponsor of festivals. Similar is the evidence from contemporary Athens, where token types bearing the designs of cult statues are inscribed as ‘Of the Sacred Gerousia’ and provide powerful evidence for the role that the Council of Elders played as issuer and distributor of participation tokens for festivals run under its auspices.³⁹ The Ephesian token of the Sacred Gerousia bears a countermark with the design of a stag. The countermarking

³³ Nolle, 2003, 459–84; Karwiese 2016, 119 (LN310).

³⁴ *LGPN* V.B. 2013, 307, s.v. Μύων.

³⁵ *LGPN* V.B. 2013, 307, s.v. Μύων (Caria) and 307–08, s.v. Μυωνίδης (Caria and Lycia); *LGPN* V.A. 2010, 328, s.v. Μυωνίδης (Ionia); *LGPN* I 1987, 323, s.v. Μύων (Kos and Samos); 323 s.v. Μυωνίδης (Rhodes).

³⁶ *LGPN* V.A. 2010, 302–03, s.v. Μηνογένης, 304, s.v. Μηνόδοτος, 304–06, s.v. Μηνόδωρος, 306, s.v. Μηνόκριτος, 306, s.v. Μηνοφάνης, 307–09, s.v. Μηνόφιλος, 309, s.v. Μηνοφών.

³⁷ Rowan 2018, 156–58.

³⁸ Oliver 1941, 21–27. See in particular the case of the Salutaris endowment (*I. Ephesos* 27) as analysed by Rogers 1991, 62–63.

³⁹ Crosby 1964, 118–19 (L244 and L310), dated third century CE; Gkikaki 2023, 95–136.

was probably placed upon attendance to the festival as a sign of authentication or validation. Athenian tokens of the Sacred Gerousia are similarly countermarked.

The uniface token **cat. no. 82**, with the depiction of a kantharos, the two-handled drinking cup typically associated with Dionysos, may also relate to a festive context. Uniface tokens with drinking cups are attested in the Athenian Agora. Their use in festivals is also based on speculation. One is very similar in shape to the kantharos on the Ephesian tokens and comes from a Late Hellenistic context.⁴⁰

Six bear single letters: letter B (C1 and C22b); letter N (C2 and C62), letter X (C3). C4 and C5 are inscribed with two letters, XB, in dotted circle, and come from the same stamp. The roles and functions of the lead lettered tokens in Ephesos and in Rome remain a puzzle.⁴¹

Few tokens preserved from Ephesos mention the name of *agoranomoi*. The token **cat. no. 10** inscribed STRATONEIKOY AGORANOMOY (CTPA|TONEIK|OYAGOP|ANOM, with an abbreviation attached to the letter M, designating the diphthong OY) constitutes a welcome addition.⁴² The token is particularly well-made with the legend placed neatly on the flan and surrounded by a dotted circle. It stands apart from the majority of the Ephesian tokens as a result of its quality. The token of the *agoranomos* Menippos, where the legend arranged also in four lines is encircled by a wreath, is of similar quality. The term *agoranomos* literally means ‘market inspector’. The *agoranomoi* were magistrates recruited from the civic elite. They regulated the prices at the agora, ensured the quality of the goods and the fairness of prices, guaranteed the weights and measures and secured the food supply, especially of grain and at reasonable prices. In the Roman period, the office was considered a liturgy and entailed a certain financial burden. The office is attested in numerous cities of the Roman empire.⁴³

Although the duties of the *agoranomoi* are sufficiently well-known, the functions of the related tokens remains yet to be elucidated. Tokens of Roman Egypt inscribed AFO are plausibly related to the *agoranomoi* partly based on evidence of texts preserved on papyri. Denise Wilding, who has recently studied the relevant evidence from Roman Egypt, concluded that

⁴⁰ Crosby 1964, 105 (L201). Cf. Another one which seems to be of Hellenistic date from a cistern containing the Herulian debris published by Crosby 1964, 105 L202 and Gkikaki 2019, 140 cat. no. 169 with Figure 23 on p. 133.

⁴¹ Two examples of lead lettered token types of Rome, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/TURS3446> and <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/TURS3507>. The authors wish to thank Clare Rowan for the suggestion.

⁴² Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 152 (no. 234b) is inscribed MENIPPOU AGORANOMOU.

⁴³ Weiß 2016, 274–76; Capdetrey and Hasenohr 2012, 13–34; Oliver 2012, 81–100.

the *agoranomoi* sponsored oil and grain distributions for the population, as well as banquets, and that access to all the above was permitted by means of the ΑΓΟ tokens.⁴⁴ Athenian tokens of the Roman period inscribed ΑΓΟΠΑΝΟΜΩΝ obviously relate to *agoranomoi* and their functions.⁴⁵

As it is well attested in inscriptions, in Ephesos the office of Agoranomos was held by members of the elite and constituted a typical post in the *cursus honorum*.⁴⁶ The *agoranomos* Stratoneikos of the lead token may be the same as the prytanis M. Stateilios Stratoneikos on an inscription fragment⁴⁷ or the prytanis Marcus Aurelius Stateilios Stratoneikos on an inscription dated to Elagabalus' reign (218–22),⁴⁸ or the prytanis from a list dated to the reign of Commodus (180–92).⁴⁹ A different person may be suggested by an inscription which records money contributions by the prytaneis in favour of the Gerosusia and the Kouretes, and lists G. Iulius Stratoneikos as one of the Kouretes, the religious association which played an important role in the cult of Artemis Ephesia.⁵⁰

Again, the prosopography of Roman Ephesos should provide evidence for the interpretation of the token inscribed ΔΑΜΑ (cat. no. 7). ΔΑΜΑ may be regarded as an abbreviation of a name such as Δαμάλης, Δαμάλιος, Δαμάνθης, Δαμάρης, Δαμαρίων, Δάμας, Δαμᾶς, Δαμασιανός, Δαμασίας, Δαμάσιος, Δαμάσιππος, Δαμασίστρατος, Δάμασος, Δαμάστης, Δαματριανός, Δαμάτριος.⁵¹ Of these names, Δαμᾶς has the most occurrences not only in Asia Minor in general but in the cities of Ionia (incl. Ephesos) in particular. One of them is the 'secretary of the people' T. Fab. Damas in Ephesos.⁵² However, it should not be ruled out that the person named on the token did not originate from Ephesos. Research on the prosopography of tokens has provided evidence on the networks and the mobility of members of the elite

⁴⁴ Wilding 2020.

⁴⁵ Svoronos 1900, 333 no. 165, pl. III, 9. While all the Hellenistic token types inscribed ΑΓ or ΑΓΟ or ΑΓΟΠ (Svoronos 1900, 332–33 nos. 159–65, pl. III, 4–8; Crosby 1964, 102 (L170, pl. 25) and 105 (L194, pl. 26) have been disassociated by Gkikaki (2020, 118–20) from the *agoranomoi*.

⁴⁶ *I. Ephesos* 558, *523, 645, 742, 847, 917, 919, 922, 923, 923a, 924a, 927a, 930–31, 934a–937a, 938, 962, 1061, 3014, 3059, 3070, 3144, 3493, 3854, 4343, 5102, 5105.

⁴⁷ *I. Ephesos* 476.

⁴⁸ *I. Ephesos* 625, 16–17.

⁴⁹ Just the cognomen Stratoneikos is preserved: *I. Ephesos* 1135A, line 13.

⁵⁰ *I. Ephesos* 47, 46 (dated to 180–92 CE). More inscriptions related to persons with the name Stratoneikos: *I. Ephesos* 907 line 14 and *I. Ephesos* 1121 lines 7–8, cf. *LGPV* V.A. (2010) s.v. Στρατόνικος 412–13 with occurrences of the name not only in Ephesos but all over Asia Minor.

⁵¹ *LGPV* V.A. 2010, 115 s.v. Δαμάλης, Δαμάλιος, Δαμάνθης, Δαμάρης, 115–16, s.v. Δαμαρίων, 116 s.v. Δάμας, Δαμᾶς, Δαμασιανός, Δαμασίας, Δαμάσιος, Δαμάσιππος, Δαμασίστρατος, Δάμασος, Δαμάστης, Δαματριανός, Δαμάτριος.

⁵² Schulte 1994, 181 no. 110; *I. Ephesos* 4336, 14

in the second and third centuries CE.⁵³ Therefore, a plausible suggestion would be the priest M. Ulpus Flavianus Damas attested on inscriptions from Didyma.⁵⁴

Festivals, Identity and Elite Self-Representation in Roman Ephesos

The members of the elite whose names are inscribed on tokens may have sponsored festivals as well as the distribution of grain and gifts on the occasion of festivals. They may have even instituted celebrations featuring ritualised parades and lotteries from which large numbers of citizens benefited. Both these elements – parade and lottery – were instituted by the famous endowment in AD 104 by Salutaris, a Roman equestrian, whose origins were Italian rather than in the Ephesian aristocracy.⁵⁵ Similarly, the Ephesian origins of the persons whose names are inscribed on tokens cannot be ascertained in each individual case. Future research along with the publication of more Ephesian types will shed more light on that aspect.

On the tokens, the names are found inscribed in different ways. There are examples with the *tria nomina* – praenomen, nomen and the Greek cognomen, others with just a Greek name (probably the cognomen) in full, others with the Greek name (cognomen) abbreviated or finally with the abbreviated Greek name accompanied by the name of the magistracy, suggesting that the persons in question were sufficiently well known also in their official capacity. It also indicates that the recipients of the distribution were, accordingly, well informed regarding the occasion and the initiator of the gift distribution or the sponsor of the festival. The abbreviated names should come as no surprise since it is a custom which conforms well to the code-function, which is pertinent to tokens. Tokens were made for a specific group and the message conveyed with the design and the legend was meant to be readily recognisable by the targeted user.⁵⁶ The sharing of the code by the users of the tokens and the participation in the events sponsored by the elite cultivated feelings of community and cohesion for the recipients of the gift distributions. In turn, the members of the elite were very much interested in gaining prestige and honour and enjoying the popularity of those groups of people among the broader local community of Ephesos. It remains to be discussed whether the difference in the nomenclature is of chronological significance. In any case, the insistence from the part of the members of the elite to be represented with just their Greek cognomen

⁵³ Kuhn 2014, 138, where evidence is provided for connections of the family of Claudii Paulini with Aphrodisias, Kibyra and Ephesos; Zuiderhoek 2017, 182–98.

⁵⁴ Frija 2012, 243 no. 173; *I. Didyma* 152; *I. Didyma* 279; *Milet* I 7, 230.

⁵⁵ *I. Ephesos* 27; Rogers 1991.

⁵⁶ Rowan 2019, 102.

betrays a preference and a tendency known from other cities of the Greek East under the Roman Empire.⁵⁷

A review of the honorific inscriptions of Roman Ephesos gives a good impression of the benefactions for which the members of the elite were honoured in return. Most prominent among them and on top of the lists of these benefactions stand the financing of public buildings but also the donations of respectable sums of money to the city or the procurement of wheat and its distribution to the populace at a reasonable price and the donation of oil for the city's gymnasia. Civic elite was particularly conscious in leaving a long remembrance of their wealth and munificence.⁵⁸ The distributed tokens with the benefactors' names on them could have only helped leave a longer remembrance of the elite's generosity.

The myths and gods of Ephesos constitute the most popular subject on the Ephesian tokens as well as on the civic coin issues. A parallel phenomenon has been observed for the imagery of Athenian tokens and coin issues in the Roman Imperial period: myths and heroes of the city's glorious past were revived and hereby placed emphasis on the city's high cultural achievements and defined Athenian identity against the backdrop of the Roman Empire.⁵⁹

The city which for centuries has been one of the great urban centres in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean and which boasted that its origins lay with Artemis' birth, the great patron goddess took particular interest in promoting its Greek heritage and searched to reassert its Greek identity against the changing environment of the Roman Empire. Artemis Ephesia and the goddess's particular attributes expressed the city's sacred identity and gave the incentives for both locals and foreigners to identify themselves with Ephesos as the city's past, i.e. the venerable symbols were integrated into the present in benefactions and festivals.⁶⁰ It is highly probable that Ephesian tokens and especially those bearing a sacred iconography were distributed on various occasions of the cult of Artemis Ephesia.

Ephesian tokens emphatically repeat the types of the contemporary civic coinage. In particular, the image of the Ephesian Artemis (*cat. nos.* 28–32), the design of the Ephesian Artemis and Androkles in the cave-like arch (*cat. no.* 33), Poseidon (*cat. nos.* 24–29) and many more types are citations of designs found in contemporary coinage. It is possible that the issuers of tokens adopted features of the official coinage to ensure that the tokens would be readily accepted and that the functions and the messages

⁵⁷ Fournier 2020, 233–55.

⁵⁸ Schulte 1994, 111–17; Zuiderhoek 2011, 185–95; Heller and van Nijf 2017.

⁵⁹ Gkikaki 2023, 95–136.

⁶⁰ Rogers 1991, 136–151.

easily communicated. Even so, the influence of the official coinage on the mentality of the token-users is evident.⁶¹

A further feature which connects Ephesian tokens to contemporary coinage is the custom of inscribing names of members of the elite both on Ephesian tokens and civic issues, although the same names have not (yet) been identified. Names, both of men and women, accompanied by their honorific titles, magistracies and priesthoods not only of men but also women are found on the contemporary coinage of Ephesos. The scholarship has agreed that the reasons behind the phenomenon was the glorification of the members of the civic elite and their families. The additions of these names on the reverses of the issues may have been occasioned by the assumption of civic office or the bestowing of honours from the part of the city.⁶²

Conclusion

Ephesian tokens were issued and used on a wide range of occasions, mostly in connection with institutions. The inscriptions reveal the *Demos*, the Council and the Gerousia as issuers and distributors of tokens, on condition that the legends ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ, ΒΟΥ ΓΡΑ and ΓΕΡ respectively are interpreted correctly. The institutional framework for tokens as well as private initiatives may be observed in both Ephesos and contemporary Athens.

The iconography suggests that the cult of Artemis Ephesia may have served as the occasion for dispensing them, a theory supported by the connections to members of the elite and by inscribed documents, most notably the Salutaris endowment. The legend – ΑΠΟΦ[ΟΡΗΤΟΝ] – may refer to such a connection. Members of the civic elite, often in some official capacity, were the initiators of such distributions. The distributed tokens served to promote prestige and power of distinguished members of the elite and preserve a longer remembrance of their actions.

List of Inscriptions on the Tokens

The numbers refer to the catalogue numbers at the end of this paper.

1. Letter Β.
2. Letter Ν in wreath.
3. Letter Χ.
4. Letters Χ Β, all in circle of dots.

⁶¹ Crisà, Gkikaki and Rowan 2019, 5.

⁶² Howgego 1985, 1–17; Weiss 2005, 57–68.

5. Letters X B, all in circle of dots.
6. Monogram, T, M, A, V, O, all in round incuse.⁶³
7. Δ A | MA.
8. Legend in three lines: A O | W A V | . N (letters of crude style).
9. Legend in three lines: IMGI | APAT | OY, all in circle of dots.
10. CTPA | TONEIK | OYAGOP | ANOM. The last letter bears an abbreviation designating OY.
11. Side A. Legend in three lines: T ΦΛΑ | ΜΙΘΡΙ | ΔΑΤΟΥ (TITOU ΦΛΑΒΙΟΥ ΜΙΘΡΙΔΑΤΟΥ). Side B: Numeral V.
12. VILI and L (or N) G (all retrograde).
19. Π in the field left, A in the field right.
22. Side A. Inscription on circumference: left A O, right Π I C ?
Side B: Letter B.
31. Side A. ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ on circumference.
32. ΑΠΟΦ | [ΟΡΗΤΟΝ].
33. Μ Α Γ Ι above arch, Τ Ι Μ Ι in exergue.
36. Around edge and cut off flan: Α[ΠΟΦΟΡΗ] – ΤΤΟΝ.
39. [ΕΥΕΛ]ΠΙΟΥ.
40. ΕΦΕ [C I A C].
41. Side A. ΜΗ-ΝΟ.
44. Side A. ΜΥ-ΩΝ on circumference.
48. Ι Κ Ο-ΧΑ Ι Ι.
49. Above ΑΙΩΝ, below ΤΟΥ on circumference.
58. Alpha (Α) above and Phi (Φ) below.
62. Side A. Letter Ν in the upper left field.
65. Side A. ΒΟΥ ΓΡΑ on circumference.
67. Side A. inscribed Ο Ο Λ above bird, C below, the design and the inscription in incuse.
71. ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΕΒΑΝΔΡ on circumference.

⁶³ The authors would like to thank W. Seibt for the reading.

72. PA B [.] [..]ΔP on circumference.
76. In the field left: ΓEP.
79. [B]OY left, and [ΓPA] right on circumference.
80. BOV.
86. VTNT on circumference.

Catalogue

The material of all tokens in the catalogue is lead.
The inventory numbers refer to the Museum of Ephesos.

I. Letters and Names.

1. 13 mm, 1.60 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 16/29/80.

Letter B.

Ref.: No exact parallels among the Ephesian Tokens.

Lettered tokens comprise a special category of Late Classical tokens of Athens. For late Classical lead lettered token with the letter B: Svoronos 1900, 323 (nos. 19–25, pl. I, 10–14), <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/svoronos1900.19> (accessed 14 November 2021; Crosby 1964, 87 L10 (IL974).

2. 12 mm, 2.00 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 19/9/86, purchase.

Letter N in wreath.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 155 no 242; Leu Numismatik AG, Web Auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lot 3253 www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3253.

3. 14 mm, 2.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 21/29/80.

Letter X.

Ref.: No exact parallels among the Ephesian Tokens. For the lead lettered tokens in general, see cat. nos. 1 and 2 above.

4. 15 mm, 3.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 35/29/80.

Letters X B, all in circle of dots.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 154 no. 241.

5. 15 mm, 2.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 39/29/80.

Letters X B, all in circle of dots.

Ref.: For parallels, see cat. no. 82, above.

6. 14 mm, 3.95 g, uniface, incusum.

Inv. No.: 7/17/85, purchase.

Monogram consisting of T, M, A, V, O, all in round incuse.

7. 13 mm, 1.40 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 12/52/80, purchase.

Δ A | M A.

No known parallels among Ephesian Tokens.

8. 18 mm, 3.65 g, uniface, crude letters.

Inv. No.: 7/29/80.

Three lines crude letters:

A O | W A V | H N.

Ref.: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021 Lot 3262, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3262 and Leu Numismatik Web Auction 15 Lot 1379, www.bidder.com/auctions/leu/browse?a=1553&l=1667167 (none of them is an exact parallel).

9. 16 mm, 2.75 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 152/42/81, donation.

Legend in three lines:

IMGI | APAT | OY, all in circle of dots.

Ref.: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021 Lot 3262, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3262 and Leu Numismatik web auction 15 Lot 1379, www.bidder.com/auctions/leu/browse?a=1553&l=1667167 (none of them is an exact parallel).

10. 17 mm, 2.35 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 3/29/80.

Legend in four lines, all in dotted circle.

CTPA | TONEIK | OYATOP | ANOM.

(The last letter bears an abbreviation designating OY).

Ref.: Cheynet 1999, 319 no. 2 (published, catalogued in the Byzantine lead seal collection); Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 152 (no. 234b inscribed ΜΕΝΗΠΠΟΥ ΑΓΟΡΑΝΟΜΟΥ).

11. 17 mm, 3.85 g Inv. No.: 32/29/80.

Side a: Legend in three lines: T ΦΛΑ | ΜΙΘΡΙ | ΔΑΤΟΥ (ΤΙΤΟΥ
ΦΛΑΒΙΟΥ ΜΙΘΡΙΔΑΤΟΥ).

Side b: Numeral V.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 150 (no. 230 the token is uniface and is inscribed with T ΦΛ | ΙΥΛΙΑ | ΝΟΥ ΠΡ | ΟΚΛΟΥ but the type of letters is very similar).

II. Heads.

12. 17 mm, 3.20 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 43/29/80.

Male, head right, bald, wrinkled forehead, crooked nose and long beard, inscribed VILI and L (or N) G (all retrograde).

No known parallels.

13. 17 mm, 3.25 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 17/9/86, purchase.

Male, beardless portrait with short hair, right (Antinous?).

Ref.: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lot 3154.

14. 14 mm, 2.20 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 6/20/85, purchase.

Male, bearded head right (wearing a cap?).

Ref.: No known exact parallels among the Ephesian Tokens. For a parallel among the Athenian lead tokens: Crosby 1964, 113 (L273 IL268 side B).

15. 16 mm, 2.40 g, uniface, oval, worn.

Inv. No.: 13/29/80.

Medusa head in high relief, garland below.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 141 (no. 209).

16. 16 mm, 2.90 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 9/17/85, purchase.

Medusa head

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 141 (no. 210).

17. 13 mm, 1.95 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 15/14/86, purchase.

Medusa head.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 141 (no. 210).

18. 14 mm, 1.70 g.

Inv. No.: 65/5/86, purchase.

Side A: Medusa head.

Side B: Bird.

Ref.: For the Medusa: see cat. nos. 14–16, above. For the bird: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 85 (no. 63).

III. Male Figures.

19. 16 mm, 2.85 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 12/9/86, purchase.

Asclepius leaning on staff, holding patera in extended right hand.

Inscription: Π left, Α right.

Ref.: Boersema and Dalzell 2021, 24 no. 31. Cf. the Athenian token of Roman date Crosby 1964, 95 (L85 IL1192).

20. 17 mm, 2.35 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 3/27/80, purchase.

Herakles (?), facing, club in right hand, pouch in the left.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 71 (no. 32).

21. 14 mm, 2.30 g, uniface. Worn.

Inv. No.: 15/31/84, purchase.

Herakles (?) standing, facing, stepping on small figure with right foot, brandishing club in right hand, inscribed with large M left, three more letters on the field right, the whole in incuse.

No known parallels.

22. 15 mm, 3.45 g.

Inv. No.: 75/9/85, purchase.

Side A: herm right on circular base.

Circular inscription: left A O, right Π I C ?

Side B: Letter B.

Ref.: No known parallels. For herms on Athenian tokens: Crosby 1964, 104–05 L193–L198, pl. 26. For lead lettered types among the Athenian tokens: Crosby 1964, 86–88 L1–L22, pls. 19–20.

23. 15 mm, 1.35 g.

Inv. No.: 81/6/86, purchase.

Side A: Mars standing left, resting right hand on grounded spear and left hand on grounded shield.

Side B: Venus semi-draped holding a lock of hair with her left hand and supporting a small, winged Victoria with her right hand, another small Victoria in the field left.

Ref.: For side A: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lots 3126–99 Lot 3104 (uniface), www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3104.

For side B: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lot 3130 (side B), www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3130.

24. 19 mm, 4.20 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 10/29/80, confiscated.

Poseidon left, resting raised left arm on grounded sceptre, holding something in extended right arm and raised right leg rested on rock, in field right one letter illegible and the letter Λ, all in round incuse.

Ref.: No known parallels among the Ephesian tokens.

25. 20 mm, 5.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 6/29/80, confiscated.

Poseidon right, trident in right hand, seated on large fish with flipper-like extensions on each side of its mouth.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 73 (no. 39).

26. 14 mm, 1.90 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 205/28/81, purchase.

Victorious athlete standing facing, head to left, holding wreath in his right hand and palm frond in his left.

Ref.: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lot 3156, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3156.

27. 13.5 mm, 0.95 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 30/29/80, confiscated.

Two gladiators standing facing one another.

Ref.: Classical Numismatic Group Electronic Auction 458 Auction date: 18 December 2019 Lot number: 564 (the second of the two which are included in the lot), <https://auctions.cngcoins.com/lots/view/4-80WKW/asia-minor-uncertain-1st-3rd-century-ad-lot-of-two-2-pb-tesserae> and www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=1591303|3345|564|5af8faa5986c52cddd6648c7aa4d671c.

IV. Female Figures.

28. 18 mm, 2.85 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 68/5/86, purchase.

Artemis Ephesia.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 122–30 (nos. 161–81, most of them are uniface or they are paired with some other design on the other side).

29. 14 mm, 1.50 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 25/9/86, purchase.

Artemis Ephesia, partially off flan.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 122–30 (nos. 161–81) (most of them are uniface or they are paired with some other design on the other side).

30. 18 mm, 2.85 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 7/4/80, purchase.

Artemis Ephesia, framed by rays of light, in field upper left star, in field upper right crescent.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 122–30 (nos. 161–81) with no exact parallels for the rays of light, the star and the crescent.

31. 20 mm, 3.50 g, uniface. Small hole due to corrosion.

Inv. No.: 29/29/80, confiscated.

Artemis Ephesia, inscribed around ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 124 (no. 166 reading ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ).

32. 15 mm, 1.50 g, uniface. Right edge broken off in parts, small piece broken off lower left edge.

Inv. No.: 26/29/80, confiscated.

Artemis Ephesia.

ΑΠΟΦ | [ΟΡΗΤΟΝ].

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 148 no. 224 side B inscribed

ΑΠΟΦΟΡΗΤΟΝ. Note the biga with chariot driver, all in dotted circle on side A of this type.

33. 19 mm, 2.60 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 18/22/86, purchase.

Inside a roofed edifice or arch of branches or a cave Artemis Ephesia in the middle framed by Androclos (left) and Tyche enthroned and holding cornucopia with her left arm, star between Artemis Ephesia and Tyche.

ΙΜ Α Γ Ι above arch, Τ Ι Μ Ι in exergue.

Ref.: No known parallels. Similar to the reverse of Trajan's issue RPC III, 2053, <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/3/2053>.

34. 6 mm, 4.05 g.

Inv. No.: 17/22/86, purchase.

Side A: Artemis Ephesia.

Side B: Three Graces in dotted circle.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 81–82 nos. 56–58.

Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lots 3126–99, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=sale&sid=4713&cid=145245 (uniface token with the Three Graces).

35. 17 mm, 3.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 4/27/80, purchase.

Three Graces.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 78–82 nos. 52–53 (one of the two sides);

82–83 nos. 55–58, 109–10 no. 131 (side B); Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lots 3126–3129 (uniface), www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=sale&sid=4713&cid=145245&pg=2&so=1&-search=&s=1 all from different stamps.

36. 13 mm, 2.35 g, uniface. Broken off on the upper edge.

Inv. No.: 12/29/80, confiscated.

Three Graces, inscribed around edge: letters at the left edge cut off flan, letters ΤΤΟΝ at the right edge partially cut off. The inscriptions should probably read Α[ΠΟΦΟΡΗ] – ΤΤΟΝ when complete. It should be considered the same as ΑΠΟΦΟΡΗΤΟΝ.

Ref.: For parallels of the design cf. no. 12 above. For other tokens inscribed ΑΠΟΦΟΡΗΤΟΝ cf. no. 11 above.

37. 13 mm, 3.35 g, uniface. Piece broken off at lower left edge. Worn.

Inv. No.: 37/29/80, confiscated.

Three Graces. On the right edge traces of the same inscription as no. 13.

Probably of the same stamp as no. 13 above.

Ref.: For parallels of the design cf. no. 12 above. For other tokens

inscribed ΑΠΟΦΟΡΗΤΟΝ cf. no. 11 above.

38. 17 mm, 2.35 g.

Inv. No.: 10/14/86, purchase.

Side A: Athena seated on a rock holding out right arm with Nike figurine standing on the palm of her right hand. The type copies a well-known coin type of Lysimachus.

Side B: Rosette within a rectangle.

Ref.: For side A: no known parallels among the Ephesian tokens. For side

B: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 116 no. 147.

39. 18 mm, 3.25 g, uniface. Alexandrian?

Inv. No.: 9/29/80, confiscated.

Fortuna (Tyche) standing, facing, cornucopia in left hand, in field right:

ΠΙΟΥ (field left corroded). It should probably read [ΕΥΕΛ]ΠΙΟΥ.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 76 no. 46 inscribed ΕΥΕΛΠΙΟΥ.

40. 16 mm, 2.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 5/29/80, confiscated.

Fortuna (Tyche) in chiton and himation holding cornucopia in left arm and pouring libation with right on altar, inscribed: [ΕΦΕ] C I A C.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 75–77 nos. 43–47 (none of them is an exact parallel).

41. 15.5 mm, 1.95 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 17/29/80, confiscated.

Hekate, inscribed MH-NO.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 77 nos. 48 and 49.

42. 14.5 mm, 1.65 g, uniface. Worn.

Inv. No.: 22/29/80, confiscated.

Nike (Victoria) striding right, presenting wreath in right hand and resting palm branch on left shoulder.

Ref.: For the type of Nike, see Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 59 no. 1 Side A, 62 no. 11, 63 no. 12; Crosby 1964, 89 L34 (IL722, side A of the Late Hellenistic period).

43. 16 mm, 3.55 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 14/9/86, purchase.

Nike (Victoria) striding right, presenting wreath in right hand and resting

palm branch on left shoulder. Traces of the legend MY-ΩN in the field left.

Ref.: For the type of Nike, see Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 59 (no. 1 Side A), 62 (no. 11) and 63 (no. 12); Crosby 1964, 89 L34 (IL722, side A, of the Late Hellenistic period).

44. 15 mm, 2.35 g.

Inv. No.: 197/28/81, purchase.

Side A: Nike (Victoria) striding right, presenting wreath in right hand and resting palm branch on left shoulder, inscribed MY-ΩN around edge

Side B: Right hand.

Ref.: The Nike type is well attested among Ephesian tokens: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 59 no. 1 Side A, 62 no. 11 and 63 no. 12; Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lot 3133, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=sale&sid=4713&cid=145245.

Cf. the Nike on the Athenian token Crosby 1964, 89 L34 (IL722, side A) of the Late Hellenistic period. Hand as a type is well attested on Roman tokens, e.g. *TURS* 237 no. 1990, <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/id/TURS1990>, and also on the small bronze tokens of Athens of Hellenistic date, e.g. Postolakas 1880, 22 nos. 99–101.

45. 20 mm, 3.80 g, uniface. Worn.

Inv. No.: 20/29/80, confiscated.

Standing figure (Selene ?) facing, dressed in long garment with polos on head and both hands raised. Inscription illegible.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 73 (no. 38 inscribed ΓΕΡ).

46. 15 mm, 2.35 g, uniface. Worn.

Inv. No.: 9/52/80, purchase.

Classical goddess holding unidentified item in extended right arm, resting left arm on grounded sceptre (Demeter, Hera?). Inscription illegible.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 73 (no. 37).

V. Animals of the Land and the Sea.

47. 13 mm, 1.45 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 19/22/86, purchase.

Bull, right.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 93–94 nos. 89–91. No. 90 is of the same stamp.

48. 18 mm, 4.65 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 46/29/80, confiscated.

Bull, right, on ground line, inscribed: I K O-XA I I.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 93–94 nos. 89–91, none is an exact parallel.

49. 19 mm, 4.75 g, uniface. Right edge broken off.

Inv. No.: 48/29/80.

Dog attacking stag or hare, all on even base, inscribed above around ΑΙΩΝΟ, below around ΤΟΥ.

Ref.: For lion with stag or hare see cat. no. 60 above.

50. 15 mm, 2.95 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 40/29/80, confiscated.

Elephant emerging from shell, all in incuse.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 74 no. 40 side A; Dalzell 2021, 89–90 cat. nos. 8, 9 side a, 10 side a. Cf. Roman *tesserae* with a similar type: Rowan 2020, 117 nos. 71–72.

51. 14,5 mm, 3.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 195/28/81, purchase.

Elephant emerging from shell.

Ref.: For parallels see cat. no. 50 above.

52. 15 mm, 1.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 4/29/80.

Lion catching a smaller animal, probably a hare, to right, on ground line, traces of inscription on circumference with letters cut half off-flan below.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 80 nos. 54–55 and 82 no. 58.

53. 16 mm, 2.75 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 8/29/80.

Lion catching a smaller animal, probably a hare, to right, on ground line

Ref.: For parallels see cat. no. 52 above.

54. 14 mm, 1.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 195/28/81, purchase.

Lion catching a smaller animal, probably a hare, to right, on ground line

Ref.: For parallels see cat. no. 52 above.

55. 14 mm, 2.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 4/42/86, purchase.

Lion catching a smaller animal probably a hare, to right, on ground line

Ref.: For parallels see cat. no. 52 above.

56. 14 mm, 3.25 g.

Inv. No.: 12/14/86, purchase.

Side A: Lion catching a smaller animal probably a hare, to right, on ground line.

Side B: Hippopotamus or rhinoceros.

Ref.: For side A see cat. no. 52 above. For side B: *TURS* 82 nos. 660–61 and 665, hippopotamus, cf. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/>

results?q=hippopotamus and 79–81 nos. 643–59, cf. <https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-types/results?q=rhinoceros> as well as Rowan 2020, 114–15 nos. 48–50.

57. 16.5 mm, 2.80 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 36/29/80.

Chariot driven by a mouse.

No known parallels among the Ephesian lead tokens.

58. 15 mm, 2.80 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 14/29/80.

Running rabbit, right, letters A (Α) above and Phi (Φ) below.

No known parallels among the Ephesian tokens. The tokens with kantharos in Gülbay & Kireç 2008, 145 (no. 219) is inscribed ΑΦ.

59. 15 mm, 2.20 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 41/29/80, confiscated.

Stag left, star in upper field, all in round incuse.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 104–06 nos. 116–21.

60. 16 mm, 2.75 g, uniface. Large piece of upper left edge broken off

Inv. No.: 27/29/80, confiscated.

Stag right, with big antlers and lowered head, on ground line. Traces of letters which are interrupted because of the breakage.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 104–06 nos. 116–21.

61. 16 mm, 2.25 g, uniface. Lower edge broken off.

Inv. No.: 126/1/81, purchase.

Horse galloping right with long palm branch in its mouth.

Ref.: British Museum, Department of Coins and Medals B.8639, www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_B-8639.

62. 17 mm, 3.70 g, uniface. Worn.

Inv. No.: 64/5/86, purchase.

An animal (?) turtle (?) Letter N in the upper left field. The whole in round incuse.

No known parallels.

63. 15 mm, 2.55 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 13/14/86, purchase.

Frog seen from above in round incuse.

Ref.: There is an almost exact parallel probably from the same die in the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection (inv. no. 517, ex. Meletopoulos).

Frogs are not unusual on Athenian tokens: Crosby 1964, 99 L128, pl. 23.

64. 14 mm, 3.15 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 31/29/80, confiscated.

Two fish one above the other facing opposite directions

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 107–09 nos. 125–29.

65. 15 mm, 1.60 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 9/45/80, purchase.

Crab, claws open, inscribed around: BOY ΓΡΑ [IOVA]. The type is slightly off flan, therefore part of the legend has been lost.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 97 no. 100, of the same die. It preserves the legend in full: BOV ΓΡΑ IOVA. Boersema and Dalzell 202, 24 no. 34 1 published a type depicting Artemis huntress right and inscribed BOV ΓΡΑ IOV.

VI. Birds

66. 13 mm, 2,65 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 6/27/80, purchase.

Bird right.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 85 no. 63.

67. 14 mm, 1.60 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 20/22/86, purchase.

Bird right on ground line, inscribed O O Λ above bird, C below, the design and the inscription in incuse.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 87 no. 69, not an exact parallel.

68. 14 mm, 3.10 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 23/29/80, confiscated.

Eagle right with head turned left.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 91 no 82. For parallels among Athenian tokens: Crosby 1964, 121–22 L325, pl. 30.

69. 18 mm, 2.15 g, uniface Athenian?

Inv. No.: 50/29/80, confiscated.

Eagle right with head turned left, holding wreath in beak.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 89 nos. 75 and 76, Crosby 1964, 121–22 L325, pl. 30.

VII. Insects

70. 15 mm, 2.00 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 202/28/81, purchase.

Bee, traces of inscription on circumference.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 100 (nos. 108 and 109a); 102 (no. 112a); 103 (no. 113), but none of them with an inscription. In online auctions, Ephesian tokens have appeared inscribed on one side, with a bee and the inscription ΚΗΡΙΑΙΣ ΩΔΕ ΠΡΟΣ ΠΑΛΥΡΙΝ around the edge and

on the other, a sitting stag facing left with head reverted and E-Φ across fields and the inscription CKOIII in exergue, e.g. Roma Numismatics Ltd. E-Sale 79 Lot 217, www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=1771691|4080|217|cfccd4130e1fce5d4b4e54efed02fd34. More on these types: www.tifcollection.com/a-magical-tessera.

A bee forms also the type of an Athenian token: Crosby 1964, 100 L138, pl. 30.

71. 14 mm, 2.90 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 14/14/86, purchase.

Bee, palm branch below, inscribed ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΕΥΑΝΔΡ.

Ref.: For parallels see cat. no. 65 above.

72. 15 mm, 3.35 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 4/17/85, purchase.

Bee, palm branch below, inscribed ΓΡΑ ΒΟΥ ΕΥΑΝΔΡ.

Of the same type but not of the same die as cat. no. 71.

Ref.: For parallels, see cat. no. 65 above.

VII. Mythological Creatures.

73. 19 mm, 2.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 63/5/86, purchase.

Capricorn, cornucopia above.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 93 no. 88 and 98 no. 103.

74. 13 mm, 1.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 5/27/80, purchase.

Centaur right.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 107 no. 124. For Centaur on Athenian lead tokens: Crosby 1964, 94 L70, pl. 21.

75. 14 mm, 3.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 42/29/80, confiscated.

Centaur Chiron playing lyre, right.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 107 nos. 122–24 (none of them is an exact parallel).

76. 23 mm, 5.60 g, uniface. Worn.

Inv. No.: 25/29/80, confiscated.

Centaur Chiron playing lyre to the left, in the field left: ΓΕΡ, abbreviation of ΓΕΡΟΥΣΙΑ countermark (stag?) in the field below.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 106 nos. 122–23 (none of them is an exact parallel).

77. 11 mm, 1 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 11/41/80, purchase.

Griffin right.

No known parallels.

78. 13 mm, 1.20 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 38/29/80, confiscated.

Griffin advancing right, with left front leg raised.

No known parallels. For parallels among the Athenian tokens: Crosby 1964, 99 L129, pl. 23.

VIII. Varia.

79. 15 mm, 2.20 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 19/29/80.

Aries head on altar, inscribed [B]OY in the field left.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 95 no. 95.

80. 16 mm, 3.75 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 7/45/80, purchase.

Mask of male bearded head facing, inscribed BOY in the field above
No known parallels.

81. 13 mm, 2.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 137/18/84, purchase.

Six-spoked wheel or rosette inscribed in lined circle.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 116–18 nos. 145–52.

82. 14 mm, 2.30 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 339/15/82, purchase.

Two-handled drinking cup on high foot (kantharos).

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 145–47 nos. 217–23. Athenian token from

Late Hellenistic context with kantharos: Crosby 1964, 105 L201, pl. 26.

Cf. also Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 16, 22–24 May 2021, Lot

3102, www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=4713&lot=3102 (side B).

83. 15 mm, 2.20 g, uniface, left edge broken off in two places.

Inv. No.: 9/41/80, purchase.

Kantharos.

For parallels, cf. cat. no. 82 above.

84. 13 mm, 1.70 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 10/41/80, purchase.

Basket of plenty, all in round incuse.

Ref.: Gülbay and Kireç 2008, 160 nos. 255–56.

85. 14 mm, 1.75 g, uniface.

Inv. No.: 11/29/80, purchase.

Basket of plenty among leafy branches, all in border of dots.

Ref.: For parallels see cat. no. 84 above.



Figure 12.2 Lead tokens of Roman Ephesos



Figure 12.3 Lead tokens of Roman Ephesos

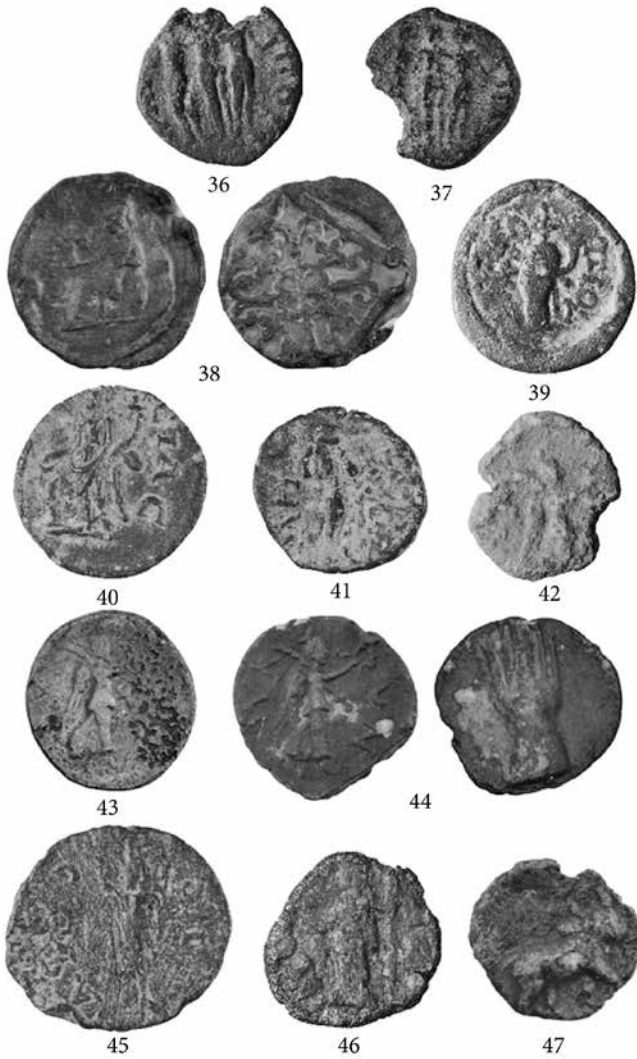


Figure 12.4 Lead tokens of Roman Ephesos

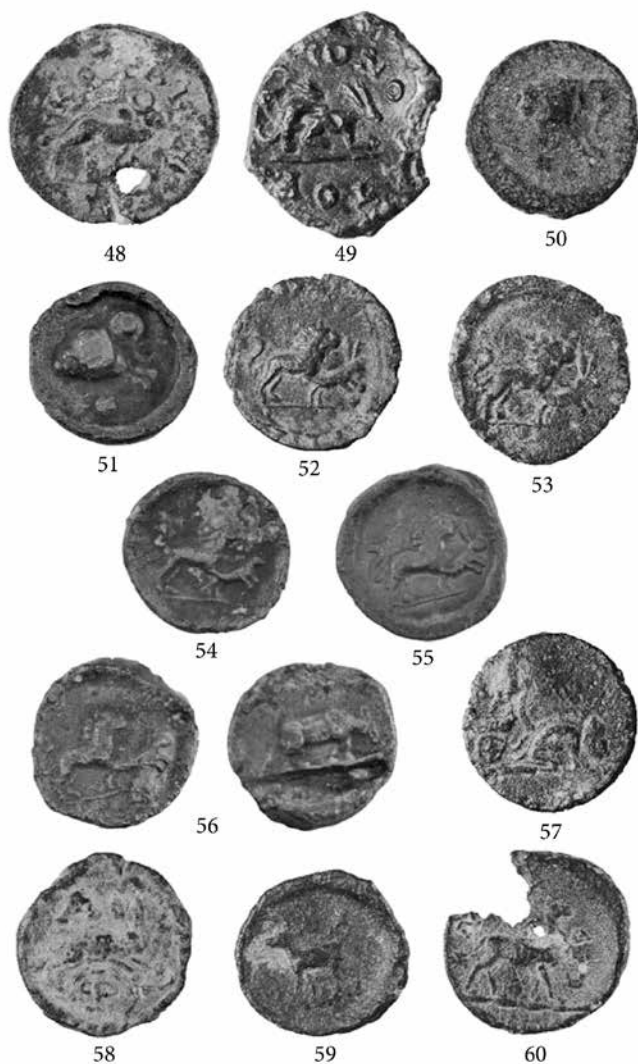


Figure 12.5 Lead tokens of Roman Ephesos



Figure 12.6 Lead tokens of Roman Ephesos

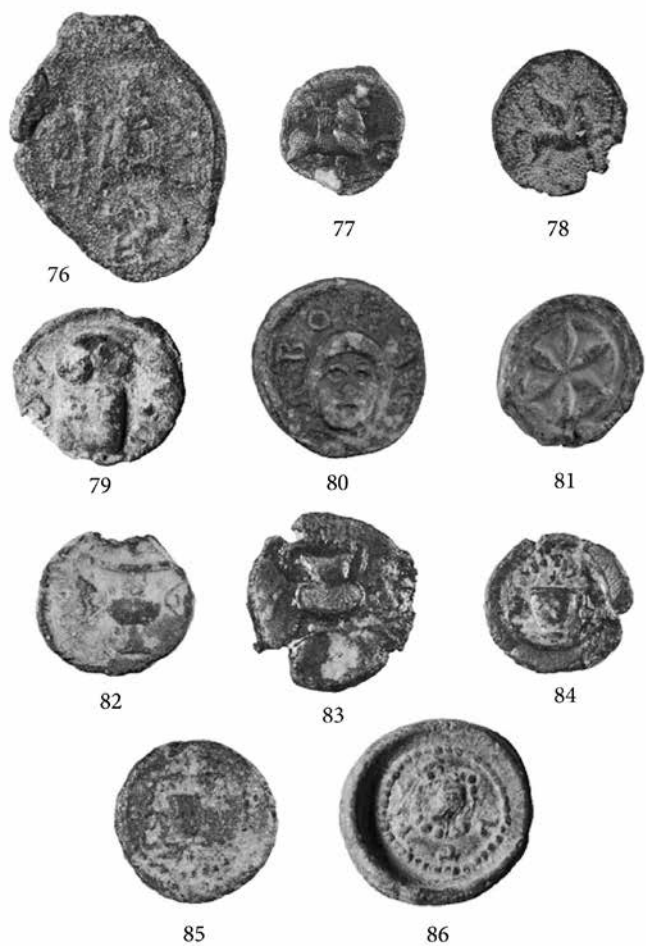


Figure 12.7 Lead tokens of Roman Ephesos

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