

Die Münzprägung von Pharsalos [Stella Lavva]

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Editors' Note

This entry is an addendum to the review which had appeared in SNR 82, 2003, pp. 147-157. While the points expressed there basically still stand, a hoard partly recorded since brought new evidence that called for some rearrangements.

Stella Lavva

Die Münzprägung von Pharsalos

Saarbrücker Studien zur Archäologie und alten Geschichte (Saarbrücken 2001)

ADDENDUM: REMNANTS OF A HOARD OF PHARSALIAN HEMIDRACHMS

In 1999 a hoard of Pharsalian hemidrachms was dispersed on the numismatic market, almost without record. It included a quantity of worn, older hemidrachms that were promptly sold in bulk. A remnant of the hoard, examined and photographed several years later, consisted almost exclusively of the hemidrachm variety with Athena's head left and a small letter A behind her neck (Lavva 160–162). Two of the older coins still remained, including one specimen with the letters TH visible behind Athena's neck (Lavva V54). Hemidrachms with such inscriptions, and the associated drachms, are sometimes described as the latest phase of Pharsalus' silver coinage. Yet there was a considerable difference in wear between this supposedly late hemidrachm and the many examples of the issue with the letter A behind Athena's neck. Clearly, the hemidrachms marked with the letter A represent an isolated emission produced somewhat later than the main Pharsalian silver series. These hemidrachms, together with the very rare obols of the same type and style (Lavva 162a), comprised the last silver issue of the mint.

A few of the best pieces from this hoard were sold to a London firm in spring 1999. In October of that year Polaroid photos of the London lot were supplied to B.C. Demetriadi for his records. Through his courtesy we are able to illustrate the London group in addition to the remnants photographed in 2004. In a letter of 25 October 2004 he reported that two very well preserved hemidrachms of the hemidrachm issue marked with the letter A were included in CH I, 27, though they were omitted from the hoard report. He estimated the date of this issue to fall «around the middle of the fourth century if not a little later».

CATALOGUE^{1*}

Obv. Helmeted head of Athena r., with hair rendered as pellets
Rev. Φ-AP (reading downward on r.) Horse head r., remnants of incuse fabric

Lava 31

1 Hoard remnant

Obv. Helmeted head of Athena r., tiny TH behind neck
Rev. Φ-A above horse head r., rest of legend below (off flan)

Lava V 54/R ?

2 Hoard remnant

Obv. Helmeted head of Athena l., A behind neck
Rev. Φ-A-P-ΣA Horse head r., three parallel bars on back of neck just above truncation

Lava 160 (V 74/R 92), erroneously given as V 74/R 93 in text

3 Hoard remnant
 4 Hoard remnant
 5 London lot
 6 London lot
 7 London lot
 8 London lot
 9 London lot

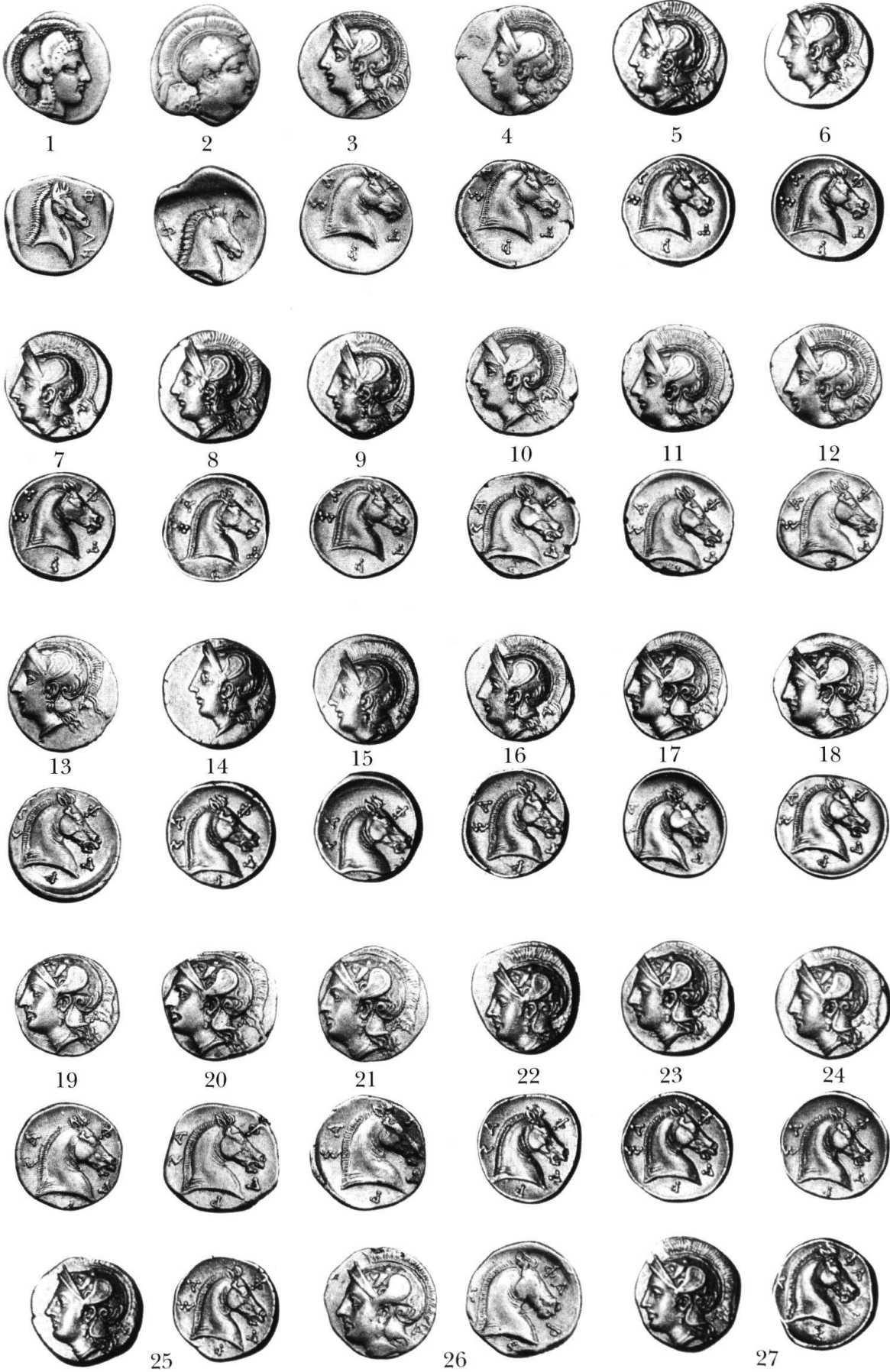
Obv. As last
Rev. As last

Lava – (V 75/R 93)

10 Freeman & Sear MBS 12, Oct. 2005, 121; 2.83 g.
 11 Freeman & Sear MBS 12, Oct. 2005, 122; 2.82 g.
 12 Hoard remnant
 13 Hoard remnant
 14 London lot
 15 London lot
 16 London lot

Obv. Head of Athena l. in crested Attic helmet ornamented with Scylla throwing rock;
 behind neck
Rev. Φ-A-P-ΣA Horse head r., three parallel bars on back of neck just above truncation

¹ * All the coins are illustrated on Pl. 18.



Lawa 161 (V 75/R 93)

- 17 Freeman & Sear MBS 11, Nov. 2004, 108; 2.83 g.
- 18 Freeman & Sear MBS 11, Nov. 2004, 109; 2.83 g.
- 19 Hoard remnant
- 20 Gemini II, Jan. 2006, 76; 2.87 g.
- 21 Hoard remnant
- 22 London lot
- 23 London lot
- 24 London lot
- 25 London lot

Obv. As last

Rev. ΦΑ-Ρ-Σ (retrograde)- Horse head r., two parallel bars on back of neck, just above truncation

Lawa 162 (V 75/R 94)

- 26 Hoard remnant
- 27 London lot

This small report supplements Stella Lawa's *Die Münzprägung von Pharsalos*, adding a fourth die combination to the three she recorded. More importantly, it corrects my review of her book in SNR 82, 2003, which on p. 155 proposed to reorder the silver emissions with letter controls, based on the sequence of letter-bearing bronzes. This approach was clearly misguided, as it resulted in placing the issue marked A in the very middle of the hemidrachm series. Lawa came much closer to the truth in listing it as the penultimate silver issue of Pharsalus.

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