

The coinage of *Iaitas* in the context of West Sicily

R. J. A. Wilson

S. FREY-KUPPER, *DIE ANTIKE FUNDMÜNZEN VOM MONTE IATO 1971–1990. EIN BEITRAG ZUR GELDGESCHICHTE WESTSIZILIENS* (Studia Ietina X.1–2; Éditions du Zèbre, Lausanne 2013). Pp. xvi + 522, 96 ills., 69 tables. ISBN 978-2-940351-16-9; pp. viii + 294 (= pp. 523-816), 23 maps, 11 tables, 65 pls. ISBN 978-2-940351-17-6.

Spectacularly situated on a mountain top 852 m above sea level, with stunning views especially to the south, Monte Iato has been the site of annual excavations by the Archäologisches Institut of the University of Zurich since 1971. They have yielded a wealth of information about this Sicilian hill-town (ancient *Iaitas*) which lies 40 km southwest of Palermo, and especially about its Late Hellenistic phase: the agora with its attendant stoas and temples, a pair of *bouleuteria*, the theatre and a number of houses, as well as parts of the city defences and necropoleis, have all been laid bare.¹ Like many towns in Sicily inconveniently situated on waterless hill-tops, it gradually went into decline during the Early Empire and never recovered, although some sort of activity continued in a few parts of the site down into the early 5th c. A.D. Although the quality of preservation has been compromised by early mediaeval occupation on top (the site was eventually destroyed and abandoned in 1246), Monte Iato, thanks to the efforts of the Swiss team over more than four decades, is one of the best-known of the many ancient hill-towns of inland Sicily, and the quantity and quality of the information that it has produced are comparable only to that from Morgantina.

The excavation results have been promptly published in annual reports, appearing in parallel in *Antike Kunst* and in *Sicilia Archeologica*, the latter generally being more generously illustrated than the former. Ten final monographs in the *Studia Ietina* series have been published, of which the book under review is the latest; earlier volumes have covered such topics as the sculptural decoration of the theatre, the stamped tiles, some of the buildings of the agora, and the architecture and decoration of a peristyle house, as well as separate treatments of *terra sigillata* and lamps.² There is much to be grateful for. To them is now added S. Frey-Kupper's magisterial two-volume study of the coins.

The volume of finds is not huge, but enough to allow for overall conclusions of significance. The 1425 coins yielded by the first 20 years of the excavations (1971-90)³ came mainly

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- 1 A useful summary can be found in H. P. Isler, *Monte Iato. Guida archeologica* (2nd. edn.; Palermo 2000), now naturally in need of revision after a further 15 seasons of excavation.
 - 2 The full series of *Studia Ietina* up to vol. IX is:
I: E. A. Ribì, C. Isler-Kerényi, P. Müller and H. Bloesch, *Die Stützfiguren des griechischen Theaters. Gestempelte Ziegel. Rezepte vom Monte Iato* (Eugen Rentsch Verlag; Zürich 1976);
II: H. P. Isler, *Der Tempel der Aphrodite. La ceramica proveniente dall'insediamento medievale: cenni e osseroazioni preliminari* (Eugen Rentsch Verlag; Zürich 1984);
III: H.-F. Daehn, *Die Gebäude an der Westseite der Agora von Iaitas* (Eugen Rentsch Verlag; Zürich 1991);
IV: R. B. Caflisch, *Die Firniskeramik von Monte Iato. Funde 1971-1982* (Eugen Rentsch Verlag; Zürich 1991);
V: S. Ritter-Lutz, *Die mittelalterliche Keramik mit Bleiglasur: Funde der Grabungen 1971-1980* (Eugen Rentsch Verlag; Zürich 1991);
VI: K. Dalcher, *Das Peristylhaus 1 von Iaitas: Architektur und Baugeschichte* (Archäologisches Institut; Zürich 1994);
VII: H. Brem, *Das Peristylhaus 1 von Iaitas: Wand- und Bodendekorationen* (Éditions Payot; Lausanne 2000);
VIII: B. Hedinger, *Die frühe Terra sigillata vom Monte Iato, Sizilien (Ausgrabungen 1971-1988) und frühkaizerzeitliche Fundkomplexe aus dem Peristylhaus 1* (Éditions Payot; Lausanne 2006);
IX: D. Käch, *Die Öllampen vom Monte Iato, Grabungskampagnen 1971-1992* (Éditions Payot; Lausanne 2006).
 - 3 It might be asked whether the conclusions might have been different had the study embraced a further (or a different) 20 years (1991-2010) of numismatic finds, but Frey-Kupper has carefully investigated the later finds and is convinced that the numismatic evidence emerging more recently

from the agora (407), peristyle house 1 (387) and theatre (337) (p. 10), but because 86 were illegible the study is based on 1339 coins (c.94% of the evidence). The research has taken its author over 30 years (1: xi), and the result is a *magnum opus* of over 600 densely-argued pages in which no aspect of these coins or their wider significance has been left unexplored. This is no mere listing of what has been found at the site: the coins are firmly set in their historical, iconographical, economic, social and (where appropriate) epigraphic context, for Frey-Kupper is constantly alive to the questions that each monetary issue raises. Following years of study of coinage elsewhere in W Sicily, she is able to place the numismatic finds from Monte Iato within their wider regional and supra-regional contexts. Although part of the comparanda is derived from published sources, it is clear that the author herself has personally studied many of the numismatic finds from elsewhere in W Sicily, a colossal amount of work. The subtitle is therefore significant: the monograph is not just about the numismatic finds from *Iaitas* but, in effect, a comprehensive *Geldgeschichte*, principally of the bronze coinage, in the W half of the island from the 5th c. B.C. onwards, and especially from the 3rd c. B.C. to the early 1st c. A.D. It is, in short, a real landmark in Sicilian numismatic studies of the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods. Only one other Sicilian site that spans the same time-scale, Morgantina, has seen monographic treatment of its coin finds.⁴

An introductory chapter on methodology and on Monte Iato and its coinage in general (3-12) is followed by a helpful summary of the stratigraphical contexts that have produced coins (13-59). Then comes the heart of the book, a diachronic assessment of the numismatic finds, divided up into 5 broad chronological periods, ranging from the 5th c. B.C. to the 4th c. A.D. (61-307). The next section concerns comparanda, from sites in W Sicily which either Frey-Kupper herself has studied or are drawn from detailed publications of colleagues: prominent here are the nearby hill-towns of Entella, Makella (Montagnola di Marineo) and Hippana (Monte [or Montagna] dei Cavalli), and, farther away, Halaesa (Tusa), as well as the Phoenicio-Punic settlements of Palermo and Solunto to the northeast, and Lilybaion (Marsala) to the southwest (309-56). Part II starts with the full coin list (359-465), followed by detailed consideration of the various different find-contexts in turn, where other small finds (pottery, lamps) are introduced when helpful to chronological discussion (467-521). Volume II (= Part III) comprises 6 appendices, including discussion of find-contexts, including hoards⁵ and other assemblages, across W Sicily, again divided into the same 5 broad periods (525-60); a listing of coins site by site, again divided up by period, with Morgantina and Camarina chosen as representatives of E Sicilian numismatic circulation (561-80); distribution maps of individual coin types (581-630); weights of individual coins by type in museum coin cabinets (633-63); and metal analyses (664-67). End-matter comprises summaries of the book in Italian and English, concordances, bibliography, and a very welcome and detailed index (791-816), the presence of which immeasurably improves the usefulness of the study as a work of reference.⁶ Throughout, the text of the two volumes is helpfully supplemented by coin photographs, maps, graphs and Tables of the highest quality, and the 65 plates of further photographs of the coins at the end of vol. 2 are excellently clear, another indispensable feature of top-rate numismatic studies.⁷

The principal aim of the study was to set each coin in its archaeological and historical context, which involved trying to suggest a mint as well as a chronology for each in turn. Although

only confirms the overall conclusions drawn from the sample studied here, except that more coins of the 5th c. B.C. have come from the post-1991 excavations in the west quarter (I: 7).

4 T. V. Buttrey *et al.*, *Morgantina Studies 2. The coins* (Princeton, NJ 1989); by contrast this dealt with approximately 10,000 coins.

5 A recent attempt to assess hoards across the whole of Sicily and to set them in what is interpreted as their likely historical context was published too late for Frey-Kupper to use: G. Manganaro, *Pace e guerra nella Sicilia tardo-ellenistica e romana (215 a.C. – 14 d.C.)* (Bonn 2012).

6 It has always puzzled me that this essential feature is missing in far too many Italian and other academic publications in recent years. No book or conference proceedings should be published without one. They take time to compile, but are indispensable.

7 I did not spot any serious typographic errors, but in the bibliography on 767 the journal for Isler's paper "La data di costruzione dell'agora ..." is missing: *MEFRA* needs inserting.

some mint-locations remain elusive and dating precision was often not possible (in some cases only a *terminus ante quem* at best can be offered), it is nevertheless clear that Frey-Kupper has succeeded triumphantly in her stated aim and set the study of the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman bronze coinage of Sicily on an entirely new footing.

Few coins date earlier than the Late Classical period. There are just 10 of the 5th c. B.C., then a break in the money supply after the Carthaginian destruction of the S-coast cities (including Akragas and Gela) in the last decade of that century. Probably to help ease problems with local supply of small change, *laitas* minted its first coins c.405/390, imitating Selinus (and Entella) models (Acheloos/ear of barley and laurel leaf). Sicilian Greek coins are slightly more numerous in the 390s, mainly Syracusan issues, reflecting Dionysius' campaigns in W Sicily.

By the mid-4th c., with Carthaginian control of large parts of W Sicily, Punic coinage comes to dominate, although the chronology and siting of the producing mints remain problematic.⁸ Some coin types seem from their distribution to be struck somewhere in NW Sicily, others were undoubtedly minted at Palermo. At this time surprisingly few coins from Carthage itself circulated, a fact that emphasizes the independent character of W Sicily as an autonomous region even though part of the Carthaginian *epikrateia*.⁹ Throughout the century between c.340 and 240 B.C., 88% of the coinage circulating at Monte Iato is Punic (the remaining 12% is Sicilian Greek); yet, interestingly, there are few other elements of the material culture that suggest much 'Punic' influence at *laitas*, as H. P. Isler, its principal excavator, already pointed out — unless the enigmatic building on the SW side of the agora (479) is indeed, by analogy with a structure near the summit at Monte Adranone, a Punic-style shrine.¹⁰

The period between the First and Second Punic Wars marks a phase of transition; particularly noteworthy is the near total absence of Siculo-Punic coins after 241 B.C., which must be the result of direct intervention by the new Roman authorities to remove Punic coinage completely from circulation. In the period after 211 B.C., down to 30 B.C., only 20% of the 563 coins were struck in Rome or elsewhere on the Italian peninsula: the rest are Sicilian bronze issues, once again underlining the individual identity of Sicily, numismatically as well as in so many other ways, as an autonomous province of Rome.¹¹ It is in the study of this 'Romano-Sicilian' bronze coinage that Frey-Kupper has perhaps made the greatest advances. E. Gabrici in his classic work¹² had to be content with dates as vague as "after 241 B.C." or "after 211 B.C." without further precision; M. Caccamo Caltabiano and others tried to place it all within a narrow time-frame of 20 or 30 years (211–190/180 B.C.);¹³ and M. H. Crawford suggested, on the basis of coin hoards, that maybe all dated to after the First Slave War and so started from the late 2nd c. B.C. onwards.¹⁴ Frey-Kupper has now demonstrated, however, that after a first brief production by Rome somewhere in (probably) E Sicily c.214/212 B.C., the main Romano-Sicilian production of

8 For a far-reaching overview of Punic coinage in this period with a Mediterranean-wide focus, see now the masterly paper by S. Frey-Kupper, "Coins and their use in the Punic Mediterranean: case studies from Carthage to Italy from the fourth to the first century BCE," in J. C. Quinn and N. C. Vella (edd.), *The Punic Mediterranean: identities and identification from Phoenician settlement to Roman rule* (Cambridge 2014) 76-112.

9 On this 'Siculo-Punic' coinage see also J. R. W. Prag, "Siculo-Punic coinage and Siculo-Punic interactions," *Bollettino di Archeologia on line, volume speciale 2008*, absent from Frey-Kupper's bibliography.

10 On the Mt. Adranone shrine, cf. R. J. A. Wilson in C. Smith (ed.), *CAH plates to volumes VII Part 2 and VIII. The rise of Rome to 133 BC. New edition* (Cambridge 2013) 180-81, no. 142, with earlier bibliography.

11 For a survey emphasizing the eclectic and idiosyncratic nature of Sicilian material culture in Hellenistic times (i.e., the Roman Republic period), see my contribution to J. Prag and J. Quinn (edd.), *The Hellenistic West* (Cambridge 2013) 79-119.

12 E. Gábrici, *La monetazione del bronzo nella Sicilia antica* (Palermo 1927) passim.

13 M. Caccamo Caltabiano, "Nuove prospettive dell'indagine sulla monetazione siciliana di 'età romana'," in ead., L. Campagna and A. Pinzone (edd.), *Nuove prospettive della ricerca sulla Sicilia nel III. sec. a.C. Archeologia, numismatica, storia* (Pelorias 11; Messina 2004) at 55-73.

14 M. Crawford, *Coinage and money under the Roman Republic* (London 1985) 115.

coins was struck somewhere in W Sicily between 190/170 and 130/120 B.C. At *Iaitas*, the largest group of coins circulating between those dates was not, however, Romano-Sicilian but issues from *Iaitas'* own mint, based on Romano-Sicilian coin-types but with the city ethnic IAITOY or IAITINQN added: for here, as elsewhere in the island, the establishment of city coinage as a means of providing bronze 'small change' was clearly sanctioned and encouraged by the Roman administration.

Also fascinating is Frey-Kupper's conclusion that the cessation of the regional Romano-Sicilian coinage was a direct consequence of the First Slave War, when it was replaced by new issues coming out of independent city mints, not only at *Iaitas*, but at Palermo, Solunto, Entella, Segesta, Thermae (Himeraeae), Akragas and Lilybaeum, to mention only the ones that enjoyed circulation at Monte Iato in this period, in however small a quantity. The decision to suspend the Romano-Sicilian regional coinage seems to represent a political reaction by Rome to the Slave War, a pragmatic attempt to give Sicilian communities more autonomy in the hope of quelling future unrest. The replacement at *Iaitas* of the original *bouleuterion* by a new and much larger one in the last quarter of the 2nd c. B.C. may also be evidence of a greater democratic involvement of its citizens in the running of the town. Civic mints generally chose locally popular gods as their coin types, but the use of the *triskeles*, on *Iaitas'* own coinage as well as elsewhere, shows pride in an emerging Sicilian identity as well. That Monte Iato was firmly within the orbit of Palermo at this period, as it had been during the Carthaginian *epikrateia*, is suggested above all by the high numbers of Palermitan civic coinage circulating in *Iaitas* between c.130 and 30 B.C., although these might be explicable simply by the greater volume of productivity of the Palermo mint and, consequently, by the more widespread circulation of its issues.

Little changed in the Early Imperial period. Of 76 coins that date to the 80 or so years between c.30 B.C. and A.D. 54, as many as 58 are Palermo civic issues, while a mere 13 come from the mint at Rome. Only after the suspension of civic mints (under Augustus at *Iaitas*, under Tiberius at Palermo) was Sicily brought fully into the Roman numismatic system.¹⁵ Monte Iato itself, however, suffered major destruction, probably due to an earthquake, in the second quarter of the 1st c. A.D., thereafter being only a shadow of its former self.

One area of controversy that has surrounded the archaeology of Monte Iato has been the high dating given by Isler to structures such as the theatre, with its *skene* decorated with sculptured maenads and satyrs, and peristyle house 1, its two-storey colonnaded court of superimposed Doric and Ionic orders and *opus signinum* floors in the surrounding rooms, all of which have been dated to the late 4th c. B.C. That would make Monte Iato — a remote town hardly at first sight in the forefront of artistic and architectural development — precociously early anywhere in the Mediterranean to display such features; a date of the 2nd c. B.C., at least for the main visible phases of these structures, seems more plausible, a period when many other Sicilian towns are now known to have been rebuilding their civic centres.¹⁶ The coinage unfortunately (through no fault of the author) has little to contribute to this debate. It comes as something of a disappointment to learn (9) that only 16% (277 coins) derive from well-defined archaeological contexts, the rest coming from superficial or disturbed contexts. Even among the 277, there are, of course, problems of residuality, omni-present on urban sites: most coins, whatever their date, in fact were found in the destruction layers of the Early Imperial period, layers that are dated to the second quarter of the 1st c. A.D. by the associated pottery, and not by coinage. The chronology of the coinage in this study is therefore largely numismatic, based on the evidence of the coins themselves and their relationship to hoards and other finds of the same issues in contexts elsewhere in W Sicily.

15 A. Burnett in id., M. Amandry and P. P. Ripollès, *Roman provincial coinage I* (London 1992) 165-81, with the *Supplement I* (1998) 13-14.

16 The high chronology has most recently been defended in the 2011 paper cited in n.7 above. I first suggested the lower dating in M. Henig (ed.), *Architecture and architectural sculpture in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1990) 75-76; it is followed by L. Campagna and E. Chiara Portale, among others: cf. Wilson (supra n.11) 107-8, n.74 for full references.

As with all path-breaking books, Frey-Kupper has also defined the main questions for future research. Understandably, she stresses the need for still greater precision in chronology and mint attribution, and a better understanding of Sicily in its context, especially with regard to Punic coinage — a call that she has already partly answered.¹⁷ She identifies Romano-Sicilian coinage as worthy of more research, and we can look forward to further *precisazioni* from the die-study of these that she is currently undertaking. The comparison of the circulation of W Sicilian coinage with that of the E half of the island in the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods still remains to be written. It seems unlikely, however, that her hope (355) that the coinage of Heraclea Minoa, a city on the very border between Greek and Punic spheres of influence, where long-running excavations have been conducted since the 1950s, might yield interesting data will be realized: coins feature little in the recently published report on this site.¹⁸ The outline information there provided, however, is more than we have for some important Sicilian cities, such as 3rd-c. B.C. Selinus, from which there is virtually no published numismatic data at all.

Twenty-eight years ago M. H. Crawford observed:

One would suppose that the coinage of Sicily under Roman rule would be relatively straightforward ... yet in fact the picture is extraordinarily complex and extremely hard to work out ... The bronze coinage of Roman Sicily would require a monograph to do justice to its volume and diversity.¹⁹

S. Frey-Kupper's landmark study, of the highest quality, has now gone a long way towards filling this glaring void in our knowledge of Sicilian numismatics. All who care about the history and economy of ancient Sicily owe her and her publishers an enormous debt of gratitude.

roger.wilson@ubc.ca

Dept. of Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver

17 See the work cited *supra* n.8.

18 E. De Miro, *Heraclea Minoa. Mezzo secolo di ricerche* (Pisa-Rome 2014) = *Sicilia Antiqua* 9 (2012). Discussion of coins from the site occupies pp. 231-32, and 5 coins are illustrated (tav. CL on p. 409).

19 M. H. Crawford, "Sicily," in A. Burnett and M. H. Crawford (edd.), *The coinage of the Roman world in the Late Republic* (BAR S326; Oxford 1987) at 43.

An experimental study of linen *versus* metal armour

Margarita Gleba

GREGORY S. ALDRETE, SCOTT BARTELL and ALICIA ALDRETE, *RECONSTRUCTING ANCIENT LINEN BODY ARMOR: UNRAVELING THE LINOTHORAX MYSTERY* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD 2013). Pp. vii + 279, fig., colour pls. 8. ISBN 978-1-4214-0819-4 (cloth). \$29.95.

Armour made of linen is known in the Classical world at least since the time of the Homeric poems, yet few modern scholars have confronted the issue of how this type of military attire actually looked and functioned. Unlike other kinds of armour made of more durable materials such as metal, linen corselets have not survived in the archaeological record: they are known primarily¹ from written and iconographic sources. Another reason for the lacuna is "general skepticism as to whether any armor that uses cloth as a basic component can offer credible protection to its wearer" (1). The book under review, a result of a long-term Linothorax Project carried out by the authors, is a welcome and thorough reconsideration of the subject. It consists of an introduction, 8 chapters and a conclusion, followed by an Appendix with a database of 913 visual sources for Type IV Armor² (organised by type of object), a thorough bibliography, and a detailed index, as well as a good number of illustrations, including colour.

1 But see below for extant examples of *pteryges* and a greave from Roman contexts.

2 The authors adopt E. Jarva's typology (*Archaiologia on archaic Greek body armour* [Rovaniemi 1995]) in calling the linothorax "Type IV body armour".