

REVUE BELGE
DE
NUMISMATIQUE
ET DE SIGILLOGRAPHIE

CLI - 2005

BELGISCH TIJDSCHRIFT
VOOR
NUMISMATIEK
EN ZEGELKUNDE

BRUXELLES - BRUSSEL

REVUE BELGE
DE
NUMISMATIQUE

ET DE SIGILLOGRAPHIE

BELGISCH TIJDSCHRIFT
VOOR NUMISMATIEK EN ZEGELKUNDE

PUBLIÉE
SOUS LE HAUT PATRONAGE
DE S. M. LE ROI
PAR LA
SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE
DE NUMISMATIQUE DE BELGIQUE

UITGEGEVEN
ONDER DE HOGE BESCHERMING
VAN Z. M. DE KONING
DOOR HET
KONINKLIJK BELGISCH
GENOOTSCHAP VOOR NUMISMATIEK

Directeurs

FRANÇOIS DE CALLATAÿ, JOHAN VAN HEESCH,
GHISLAINE MOUCHARTE, Raf VAN LAERE

CLI - 2005

BRUXELLES

BRUSSEL

- SM — Schweizer Münzblätter
 SMSR — Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni
 SNR — Revue suisse de Numismatique
 TM — Trésors monétaires
 VN — Vie numismatique
 WN — Wiadomości Numizmatyczne
 Z/N — Zeitschrift für Numismatik

MARIA BEATRIZ BORBA FLORENZANO (*)

COINS AND RELIGION
 REPRESENTATIONS OF DEMETER AND OF
 KORE/PERSEPHONE ON SICILIAN GREEK COINS

Our intention in this article (**) is to try to understand why Demeter and Kore/Persephone (1), whose cults are so widely registered in Greek Sicily through literary and archaeological data, are on the other hand, so little represented on the various coins from the different Siceliot towns. We intend to enrich the possibilities of the interpretation of coin types, demonstrating that the combination « existence of a cult / coin type » is not a rule that can be mechanically employed in the study of Greek monetary iconography. Moreover it is our purpose to show that the image of these deities on coins was used especially during Agathocles' rule and the period of Roman rule as a means of expressing a common identity among the several Siceliot towns. First of all, we shall analyze the literary and the archaeological evidence concerning the cult of these

(*) Maria Beatriz Borba Florenzano, Universidade de São Paulo, Museu de Arqueologia e Etnologia, Av. Prof. Almeida Prado, 1466, Cidade Universitária, BR-05508-070 São Paulo SP.

E-mail: Beatriz Florenzano <lflorenza@usp.br>.

(**) This paper has benefited from comments and suggestions made by my colleagues Maria Crislina N. Kormikiari and Elaine F.V. Hirata whom I thank here. I extend my thanks also to Prof. Keith Rutter from the University of Edinburgh who had the patience of correcting my English and giving valuable advice concerning many topics in this article. The survey in the catalogues for this research was made while I was a visiting scholar in the Center for Old World Archaeology and Art (Brown University) in 1994. I thank R. Winkes and R.R. Holloway for receiving me there. A first version of this paper was presented in the XIIIth International Numismatic Congress in Madrid (September, 2003).

(1) We shall deal in this text with the two deities at the same time since it is very difficult to distinguish one from the other in our main source, the coins. We shall see further how on the coins these deities attributes are always the same and how even their full representation can be practically identical with variation only in the inscription. Nevertheless, the debate about their cult in Sicily, if independent or combined or still about the predominance of one deity over the other exists and is relevant. Cf. for instance, G. ZUNTZ, *Persephone: Three Essays on Religion and Thought in Magna Graecia*, Oxford, 1971, p. 70 *et passim*; M. BELL, *Terracottas. Morgantina Studies*, I, Princeton, 1991, believes that only Persephone was worshipped in Morgantina (*passim*); R.R. HOLLOWAY, *The Archaeology of Ancient Sicily*, London, 1991, believes that in Gela, the terracotta busts are of both deities (p. 59), whereas, for B. PACE, *Arte e Civiltà nella Sicilia Antica*, Roma, 1946, vol. 2, ch. II, these same busts represent Demeter, with very few exceptions.

Two Goddesses in ancient Sicily and in the last part of the text we present a review of their images on Siceliot coinage.

I. The nature of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's religion in ancient Sicily

When one focuses the history of Greek colonization in Sicily it is not difficult to verify the importance of Kore/Persephone and of Demeter in the religious context and in the development of cults and rituals in general. As a matter of fact, literary and material sources concerning their cult in the island are abundant, and the fact that theirs was one of the most important religions in Greek Sicily is not disputed⁽²⁾.

As far as written sources go, Demeter's cult was introduced in Sicily already in the Archaic period, right after the foundation of the Greek colonies. According to Herodotus, our principal testimony:

« The ancestor of this Gelo, who first settled in Gela, was a native of the island of Telos... In course of time his descendants became the high priests of the gods who dwell below — an office which they held continually from the time that Telines, one of Gelo's ancestors, obtained it in the way which I will now mention. Certain citizens of Gela, worsted in a sedition, had found refuge in Mactorium, a town situated on the heights above Gela. Telines reinstated these men, without any human help, solely by means of the sacred rites of these deities. From whom he received them, or how he himself acquired them, I cannot say; but certain it is that relying on their power he brought the exiles back. For this his reward was to be the office of high-priest of those gods for himself and his seed for ever » (VII, 153)⁽³⁾.

The written evidence dated from the fifth⁽⁴⁾ to the first centuries suggests that, since its introduction, this cult was widely spread throughout the island. Pindar, our oldest text on the subject, asserts in the first

(2) For an over-all view of the written and material sources concerning the cult of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone, see especially F. LENORMANT, *Ceres*, in C. DAREMBERG and M.E. SAGLIO, *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, vol. III, p. 1021-1078 and S. ANGELL, A. BESCHI, *Demeter*, in *LIMC*, vol. IV/1, p. 844-908 and more recently V. HINZ, *Der Kult von Demeter und Kore auf Sizilien und in der Magna Graecia*, Wiesbaden, 1998.

(3) According to R. VAN COMPERNOLLE, *Les Déinomenides et le culte de Déméter et Koré à Gela. Sources littéraires et découvertes archéologiques*, in *Hommages à Waldemar Déonna* (Collection Latomus, 28), Bruxelles, 1957, p. 475 there are no doubts that the « gods who dwell below » mentioned by Herodotus in Gela are Demeter and Kore/Persephone.

(4) All the dates in this article are B.C. unless otherwise stated.

half of the fifth century that Zeus gave Sicily to Persephone (*Nemeian Odes* I, 13) and in the *Pythian Odes* he mentions that Akragas was the « seat » of Persephone (XII, 2). A fragment attributed to Timaeus (fourth-third centuries), preserved by Plutarch (*Nicias*, 1, 2; Frag. Jacoby 102), confirms this special devotion of Sicily to Persephone.

However, it is in the work of Diodorus Siculus (first century AD) that we find the most complete testimony on this subject. First of all, we are informed by Diodorus that the person responsible for the introduction of the cult of the Two Goddesses in Syracuse, was Gelon, the tyrant of Gela, who dedicated twin temples to the goddesses near the Fountain of Kyane in celebration of his victory over the Carthaginians at Himera in 480 (XI, 26,7). Diodorus tells us too that, because of an old and enduring tradition, Sicily was dedicated to the Two Goddesses. He tells of the tradition that in the vicinity of Enna (the island's geographical center) Kore had been taken by Hades. Diodorus states also that Hades, having taken the girl, penetrated the Underworld through a fissure opened for that purpose near Syracuse and exactly in that place appeared the fountain that was called Kyane (Diodorus V, 4). This was the reason why the Syracusans, every year, held solemn festivals near the fountain. Still according to Diodorus Heracles created these festivals at his arrival in Syracuse after his exploits around the island (IV, 23, 4-5). Concerning the cult to these deities Diodorus writes:

« And the inhabitants of Sicily, since by reason of the intimate relationship of Demeter and Kore with them they were the first to share in the corn after its discovery, instituted to each one of the goddesses sacrifices and festive gatherings, which they named after them, and by the time chosen for these made acknowledgement of the gifts which had been conferred upon them. In the case of Kore, for instance, they established the celebration of her return at about the time when the fruit of the corn was found to come to maturity, and they celebrate this sacrifice and festive gathering with such strictness of observance and such zeal as we should reasonably expect those men to show who are returning thanks for having been selected before all mankind for the greatest possible gift; but in the case of Demeter they preferred that time for the sacrifice when the sowing of the corn is first begun, and for a period of ten days they hold a festive gathering which bears the name of this goddess and is most magnificent by reason of the brilliance of their preparation for it, while in the observance of it they imitate the ancient manner of life. And it is their custom during these days to indulge in coarse language (*aiskhrologein*) as they associate one with another, the reason being that by such coarseness the goddess, grieved though she was at the Rape of Kore, burst into laughter ». (V, 4, 5-7)

Therefore, following the written sources, it seems fair to affirm that the first formulation of the cult to Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone occurred in Gela. Later on, it was adopted in Syracuse, and thanks to this

town's political influence in Sicily, it was widely diffused throughout the island⁽⁵⁾.

Still according to these sources, Gelon's role would have been decisive for the consolidation of the cult throughout Sicily: it was indeed during the first half of the fifth century that the belief that the Two Goddesses were protectresses of the whole island was reinforced (cf. Pindar just mentioned above). It is generally accepted that the pan-Siceliot character of the religion of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone, which was a very important feature of the period just before the Roman conquest and later on during Roman rule, was already outlined at this time.

By the middle of the fourth century, when the Corinthian general Timoleon was getting ready to come to Sicily to help the Syracusans against the Carthaginians, the priestess of Persephone in Corinth dreamt that the Two Goddesses were preparing themselves to travel with the expedition (Plutarch, *Tim.*, 8). As a confirmation of their presence, « a torch, like one of those which are carried in the procession of the Mysteries », appeared to protect and to show the way to the ships (see also Diodorus, XVI, 66, 3-5). From that moment on, it is assumed that the cult of the Two Goddesses was strengthened, since Timoleon's presence in Sicily for ten years would have been a decisive contribution to its consolidation throughout the island.

Ancient texts also reveal how on some occasions, Siceliot political leaders became involved in the cult of the Two Goddesses. Plutarch tells us, for instance, how Callippus, who was planning to murder Dion, tyrant of Syracuse, was forced to take the « great oath » in the temple of Demeter and Persephone, just to prove that he was not conspiring (*Dion*, 56). The same procedure is remembered by Diodorus Siculus in his description of the occasion when Agathocles took the oath, also in the sacred precinct of the Two Goddesses, « swearing that he would undertake nothing against democracy » (XIX, 5, 4-5). On the other hand, Agathocles, by the end of the fourth century, as well as Pyrrhus in the first half of the following century, used Persephone's image as a coin type, expressing a political power which they intended to extend throughout the whole is-

(5) The introduction of the cult through Gela and then its adoption in Syracuse, although repeatedly referred to in the bibliography is not accepted without resistance by all authors. L. White for instance in *Demeter's Sicilian Cult as a Political Instrument*, in *GRBS*, 1964/4, p. 261-279, believes that the cult could have been introduced by Megara Hyblaea (founded before Gela) since in Selinous, its colony, the cult is very ancient according to the archaeological remains. Brelich, on the other hand, believes that the passage in Herodotus is not transparent concerning these details and that the insistence on the ancient tradition which registers details of the cult in Syracuse, speaks in favour of its independence in this town. See in this matter *La religione greca in Sicilia*, in *Kokalos*, X-XI, 1964-1965, p. 33-54. We believe this debate does not concern directly our subject so we chose not to go further with it here. We shall analyze the archaeological data later on in this article.

land. In the case of Agathocles, the African episode is full of details showing his involvement with Demeter (Diodorus XX, 7, 1-4)⁽⁶⁾.

The written evidence about Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone is indeed so rich that it enables us also to reproduce the different traditions concerning Kore's seizure by Hades. Diodorus (V, 2, 5), as mentioned already, (and also Plutarch, *Tim.*, 8 and Cicero, *Verr.*, II, 4, 107-108) tells us that this had taken place in Enna, the geographical center of the island, while Aelian affirms that it happened in Syracuse (*Nat.* 10, 40). This tradition persisted throughout antiquity, together with the account presented by the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, according to which Kore had been taken away in the vicinity of Eleusis in Attica⁽⁷⁾.

The identification of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone with Sicily as a whole was very strong later on, during the Roman conquest and following domination. At this period, it seems that the sanctuaries of the goddesses were privileged as sites of asylum during the fight against the Romans and for that reason they were especially destroyed (end of third century). This is the case with the well-documented sanctuaries of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in Morgantina and in Akragas⁽⁸⁾. Later on, under Roman rule, the cult of these deities was stimulated, or at least very much disseminated throughout Sicily, assuming very diversified features as, for example, the syncretism with North African deities⁽⁹⁾. Cicero's *Verrines*, are, in so many passages, a testimony to the importance of the religion of Ceres and Libera in Sicily at the time of the Roman conquest. He describes Enna as the place of the seizure of Kore and also mentions that during the festivals held near the fountain of Kyane in Syracuse the participation of men and of women was accepted (*Verr.* II, 4, 107). Cicero also describes the position of the twiff temples of the Two Goddesses in Syracuse as well as the colossal statue of Demeter in Enna. This last one was, according to Cicero, so big that Verres was unable to carry it away and had to be satisfied with the smaller sculpture of Victory held by the goddess (*Verr.* II, 4, 110).

Many scholars have studied all this mass of written evidence. But, it was Ciaceri's work on the cults and myths of Ancient Sicily — published between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries — that inaugurated a strong tradition of studies on the cult of

(6) Cf. M.B. BORBA FLORENZANO, *Political Propaganda in Agathocles' Coins*, in T. HACKENS and Gh. MOUCHARTE (eds.) *Proceedings of the XIth International Numismatic Congress*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1993, p. 72 ff.

(7) H.P. FOLEY (ed.), *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Translation, Commentary and Interpretative Essays, Princeton University Press, 1994, p. 99-100.

(8) WHITE, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 1964, p. 277. See also C. ZOPPI, *Gli edifici arcaici del santuario delle divinità chionie di Agrigento. Problemi di cronologia e di architettura*, Alessandria, Ed. dell' Orso, 2001, who concludes that the cult activities in this place end already in the first half of the third century.

(9) See, for instance, G.S. GASPARRO, *Misteri e Culti di Demetra*, Roma, 1986.

the Two Goddesses⁽¹⁰⁾. This tradition established some fixed points that are often repeated by scholars; sometimes they are reformulated critically but most often they are taken for granted uncritically.

First, it is admitted that the development of the cult of these deities in Sicily followed an independent path if compared with the one in continental Greece. Taking into account Ciaceri's position, Brelich argues convincingly that all the religious history of Greek Sicily starts in a period in which Greek religion in general was still under construction and that Siceliot poleis, in this context, made a contribution of their own⁽¹¹⁾. Later on, new trends from Greece were incorporated in the typical Siceliot developments, following the tendency of creation of a common Greek religious core. The fact that the religion of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in Sicily did not comprehend the Mysteries and did not have an eschatological character — common features of Demeter's religion in Greece — at least until the middle of the fourth century is a strong example of this tendency.

Second, it is worth noting that, since Ciaceri, the religion of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in Sicily is characterized — in a consensual manner in all the bibliography — as a popular (of the common people) religion. It has been often assumed that the widespread diffusion of the cult of these deities in Sicily and also its popularity were due mainly to the fact that at their arrival in the island, the Greeks found very well established cults dedicated to feminine deities of the earth and of fertility⁽¹²⁾. Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's cult would have reinforced these already established cults and helped in their diffusion. On the other hand, it is understood that the colonizers, having abandoned their homelands in search of new ways of survival, had great hopes for the crops and so these cults were intended to propitiate this new situation. Although this understanding of the cult is commonplace, Brelich believes that its main features in Sicily, such as the way in which the forces of nature were perceived, or the constitution of a double entity, mother and daughter, or furthermore the ways the ritual were carried on and the types of sanctuaries used, prove that Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's cult was here mainly a hellenic cult and not an indigenous one⁽¹³⁾.

The popular character of this cult has been explained in several other ways. Ciaceri, for instance, states that « Demeter's cult had a plebeian-

(10) See especially E. CIACERI, *Culti e miti nella storia della antica Sicilia*, Catania, F. Battiato ed., 1911 (esp. p. 187-214) and ID., *Contributo alla storia dei culti dell'antica Sicilia*, in *ASNSP*, 1894.

(11) BRELICH, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 37 ff.

(12) CIACERI, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 1911, p. 187 and L. POLACCO, *I culti di Demetra e Koré a Siracusa*, in *NAC*, XV, 1986, p. 26 ff.

(13) BRELICH, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 48.

democratic character, which is clear in Herodotus' passage on the sedition in Gela » (p. 194). In Diodorus' description of the Syracusan festivals (V, 4-5), Ciaceri emphasizes the fact that the gatherings lasted ten days, lots of noise was made and it was considered licit to *aiskhrologēin* (utter obscenities) (p. 195). It has been suggested that the popularity of this cult in Sicily was a local distinctive feature not to be found elsewhere in the Greek world. The participation of men and women in the Syracusan festivals (as in Cicero and Diodorus, mentioned above) is also considered to be an indication of the popularity of the cult, making these *thesmophoric* festivals very different from those held at Athens. There, only married women from citizen families could participate. We know from Herodotus (II, 171) and from Aristophanes (*Thesmophoriazusae*) that the participation in the *thesmophoria* was also intended to legitimate these women's position in Athenian society. On the other hand, it seems that in Catania, at the old sanctuary of Demeter, only virgin women were allowed (Cicero, *Verr.* 4, 99). Even so, it is generally accepted that the cult of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in Sicily had a special 'popularity' unlike their cult in other places of the Greek world. This argument is very clear in many studies on the cult of these goddesses by a considerable number of scholars, from Ciaceri to Brelich and others such as Hirata, White, Polacco, Xella, Zuntz, to mention some of them⁽¹⁴⁾.

Another aspect of the popularity of these deities among Siceliots concerns the involvement of several rulers with their cult in periods of political crisis as already mentioned⁽¹⁵⁾. Herodotus' account quoted above is usually taken to prove Telos' sensibility towards popular aims, when using the goddesses' sacra to maintain political power for himself and his descendants. The episode concerning Timoleon's expedition to Sicily⁽¹⁶⁾ or the tradition which repeats that the inhabitants of Syracuse put themselves under the protection of the Two Goddesses through the « great oath » against the political menace of generals and/or tyrants, are both interpreted as forms of manipulation of the these deities' cult in order to secure political power. Another episode indicating political use of the cult concerns Agathocles' expeditions to North Africa and to South Italy⁽¹⁷⁾.

(14) E. HIRATA, *Os prótomos femininos de Gela: especificidade e função no quadro da coroplastia siciliota*, PhD Monograph, University of São Paulo, 1986; ID., *Poder político e religião: a documentação arqueológica no estudo das sociedades antigas*, in *Revista de Arqueologia, SAB*, vol. 8/2, 1994/1995, p. 387-399; P. XELLA, *Sulla introduzione del culto di Demetra e Koré a Cartagine*, in *SMSR*, 40 (1-2), 1969, p. 215-228; ZUNTZ, *op. cit.* (n. 1), *passim*.

(15) CIACERI, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 1911, p. 190 and 196; WHITE, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 1964, p. 267 *et passim*; M.B. BORBA FLORENZANO, *op. cit.* (n. 6).

(16) WHITE, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 1964.

(17) FLORENZANO, *op. cit.* (n. 6), p. 72 and M. CACCAMO CALTABIANO, *Le monete di Metaponto e l'influenza di Agatocle*, in *Pour Denyse: Divertissements Numismatiques*, Bern, 2004, p. 34.

It seems evident that the political use of a cult is made only when it is deeply rooted among the population — a fact that would necessarily mean its great 'popularity' (18). In effect, according to Connor, leaders probably knew how to articulate community values and emergent consensus using cults in order to reduce the distance between themselves and the population (19). It is accepted that the nature of Greek colonization in Sicily and the island's historical experience created the background for all these specific political situations that particularly favoured the political use of the cult of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone.

As a matter of fact, the isolation of the settlers in an island, always exposed to external ambitions as the Carthaginian menace in the Archaic and the Classical periods and the Roman assaults during the Hellenistic period, promoted the appearance of specific political structures in which different poleis necessarily kept a certain unity in order to defend themselves and maintain their integrity and independence. The physical defence of the settlements in this area and of the colonized lands and the preservation of self-government depended, many times — paradoxically — on the action of the tyrants who assumed power in the name of a community. If, on the one side, the tyrants were often successful in preserving the Greekness of the colonies against external enemies, on the other, they violated all the rules common to the independent city-states, by holding power despotically and by interfering in the basic concept of citizenship, that is, breaking the relationship of the citizen with his landed property. As is known, it was a common practice among the tyrants to promote considerable population displacements in order to put an end to any opposition to their power. In this context, the majority of scholars have associated political manipulation of the cult of the Two Goddesses by tyrants such as Gelon, Timoleon, Agathocles and others with the *popularity* these deities had among the Greek or hellenized population of the island. At the same time, it seems reasonable to conclude from the written evidence that, maybe, this *popularity* of the goddesses had something to do with the need for creating an identity among all these different people that were put to live together in one or other town by the tyrants. The religion of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone would work, thus, as an aggregating element, since their cult was common to a substantial contingent of Siceliot.

Approaching literary evidence through a more critical lens we soon realize that the importance that Sicily acquired much later, during the Roman period, as grain supplier to Rome consolidated a tradition in which the island was seen as the granary of the ancient Mediterranean. Therefore the identity of the island with the two great deities, promoters

(18) HIRATA, *op. cit.* (n. 14), 1994-5, p. 50.

(19) W.R. CONNOR, *Tribes, Festivals and Processions. Civic Ceremonial and Political Manipulation in Archaic Greece*, in *JHS*, 107, 1987, p. 50.

of the earth's fertility and specifically promoters of wheat production, was also strengthened in tradition. It is worth remembering at this point that Demeter was, during all of Greek antiquity, be it in Syracuse, be it in Greece proper, known as «*sitō*» and her main attribute was the grain ear (20). Considering this position held by Sicily during the Roman period, it is important to measure how much of our perception of the diffusion of the cult of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in the Greek period is influenced by literary evidence produced at a later period. That is the case for Diodorus Siculus (first century AD) and of Cicero's *Verrines* (first century AD). Even though both authors wrote after the Greek period in Sicily, they are fundamental evidence used by modern historians in their reconstruction of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's religion in Greek Sicily.

On the other hand, I believe that archaeological evidence could outline new contours to the framework traditionally established by written sources: some of the old arguments could be reinforced and others could be attenuated. As will be seen in the following, the interpretation of material data can be a great challenge to the specialist but even so, it is fair to say that this evidence allows us to cast light upon some very specific points, such as the intensity and the reach of the cult's diffusion in Sicily; the main periods of development and the transformations that occurred in these periods; the main centres of cult. Taking into account this kind of evidence one can complete and add detail to the information offered by the literary sources, which could thus be better adjusted. As Zuntz already noted in the 1970s:

« On looking at the actual evidence from writers, coins, and inscriptions one may well feel struck by its scantiness, especially for the pre-Roman period. The validity of the generalizing statements in Diodorus and Cicero has to be tested by the archaeological material, and in particular the terracottas; and this material stands in need of careful interpretation » (21).

Focusing attention on the distribution of sanctuaries, big and small, and on the volume and shape of the offerings to the Two Goddesses in Sicily, the first thing we notice is that their cult spread in the central plateau, always controlled by Syracuse, and in the southern and eastern parts of the island. Northern and western Sicily never knew the quantity of sanctuaries as that found, for instance, in Gela or in its colony Akragas and in other nearby sites (Bitalemi, Predio Sola, Monte S. Mauro di Caltagirone and so many other small localities). In this area, the cult of the Two Goddesses is attested from the second generation of settlers on, i.e. from the second half of the seventh century (22). In the second half of the

(20) CIACERI, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 1911, p. 195-196; LENORMANT, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 1035.

(21) ZUNTZ, *op. cit.* (n. 1), p. 75, n. 2.

(22) Orlandini, commentary to BRELICH, *op. cit.* (n. 5), p. 57 and WHITE, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 1964, p. 262.

sixth century this was already a very vigorous cult, not only in this region, but also on the eastern coast of the island, an area under Syracusan control: the proliferation of humble sanctuaries in the chora of many poleis and the diffusion of ex-votos, specially terracotta figurines, testify to an intensification of the cult in this period⁽²³⁾. The Late Daedalic head of Demeter found at Laganello in the vicinity of Syracuse is another element of this context. An extra-urban sanctuary dedicated to Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone, rich in votive material was excavated in Eloro, small town a few kilometers south of Syracuse and it is dated from the sixth century on⁽²⁴⁾. In Selinous, the westernmost Greek colony of Sicily, founded by Megara Hyblaea, an archaic (eighth century) cult to Demeter is also attested in the Malophoros sanctuary⁽²⁵⁾.

All these data are very important because they imply that Gelon did not promote at the beginning of the fifth century the intensification of the cult but, on the contrary, he took advantage of its great diffusion for political purposes. According to Hinz, the uniformity attested in the archaeological material from southern and eastern Sicily has no relationship to a direct political action. It is, with much more probability, a phenomenon specific to this area not repeated in other places such as the Greek colonies in Southern Italy. In Sicily it seems that the nature of Demeter as not only protectress of agriculture but as provider of civilization (based on the culture of grains and in the polis) was especially strong⁽²⁶⁾.

Material evidence from the end of the Archaic period and from the fifth century, reveals the cult's stability and a few traces of *monumentalization* in some of the urban sanctuaries. From the middle of the fifth century we observe a remarkable increase of offerings, feminine terracotta figurines carrying a piglet⁽²⁷⁾. A change occurs also in the position of some sanctuaries introduced in this period, such as the one at Syracuse, which instead of being situated in the Western part of the town, directed to the chora, was built in the residential area of the urban centre. This is an important feature because it shows how the cult had at this point a social function in the urban area of this polis, which was in this period affected by population movements promoted by the tyrants. Material data in this case reinforces information collected in literary sources. But, it does not mean that there had been a democratization or popularization of the cult. Hinz, for example, analyzing the pattern of the offerings,

(23) V. HINZ, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 239.

(24) F. COARELLI and M. TORELLI, *Guida Archeologica. Sicilia*. Bari, Laterza, 1984, p. 287.

(25) L. WHITE, *Post Classical Cult of Malophoros at Selinus*, in *AJA*, 71, 1967, p. 336.

(26) P. LÉVÈQUE and L. SECHAN, *Les grandes divinités de la Grèce*, Paris, 1990, p. 150; HINZ, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 240.

(27) HINZ, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 241.

concludes that in Syracuse the rites were performed only by « citizen » women just as in Athens and that Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's cult contributed to the formation of a sense of belonging and of identity among those from the elites who were transferred from other localities⁽²⁸⁾. This interpretation contradicts, in the main, and as far as the fifth century goes, Cicero's and Diodorus' testimonies regarding the unrestricted access of everyone to the cult of the Two Goddesses, and therefore, weakens the claim of great *popularity* of the cult.

The beginning of the fourth century witnesses a considerable increase in the cult of the Two Goddesses, specially during the tyrannies of Dionysus I and Dion: new sanctuaries were established in the area controlled by Syracuse⁽²⁹⁾ and offerings to the Two Goddesses were scattered throughout eastern Sicily. This picture is in a way different from our literary sources since it diminishes the role played by Timoleon's expedition in the diffusion of the cult, from 344 to 334. According to Hinz's systematization of the archaeological data regarding Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's cult in Sicily, the coming of Timoleon and his presence in the island for ten years, worked in a context already given by the end of the fifth century, helping the development of three main religious tendencies in the southern and eastern areas. These tendencies can be summarized as follows: 1) a marked development of the cult in the private sphere; 2) the prevalence of Persephone's cult over Demeter's — meaning a priority given to chthonic and after life rites; 3) the *monumentalization* of sanctuaries at crossroads. These features were consolidated from the middle of the fourth century on and they characterize the later development of the Two Goddesses' cult in Sicily⁽³⁰⁾. *I would suggest that the official function of these deities as representatives of Sicily as a whole stems from the consolidation of these features. This information is fundamental for our understanding of these deities' representation on coins as we shall see later.*

Still according to Hinz, an important change in the cult of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone occurs from the end of the third century: no remains of offerings are registered and the small sanctuaries are, for the most part, abandoned. Whereas the written sources indicate that the cult of the Two Goddesses was flourishing at this point, archaeological data allow us to say that it continued only in very specific cases. This is the period of the Roman conquest of Sicily, which was undoubtedly responsible for a good part of these changes⁽³¹⁾.

(28) *Ibidem*, p. 241.

(29) Such as Enna and Morgantina which later on would be important poles of attraction of the cult.

(30) HINZ, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 242.

(31) See also ZOPPI, *op. cit.* (n. 8) and in the same direction V. HINZ and I. ROMEO, *Sacelli arcaici senza peristasi nella Sicilia greca*, in *Xenia*, 17, 1989, p. 5-54.

Let us turn now to the coins and their images and try to understand the meaning of the depiction of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone as coin types.

II. The cult of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in Sicily and the coins

The traditional methodology in the study of Greek monetary iconography assumes as a general rule that the deities chosen to appear as coin types are strictly those that are worshipped locally, being most of the time the main deity. The mechanical relationship between monetary images and the cult presence is generally taken for granted by most scholars. There are, as is well known, many famous examples not worth going through here⁽³²⁾. Studies concerning smaller mints about which we have no written information or that we know of only through one or another inscription, or even through the actual coins follow the same principle. This is the case of the Greek colonies in Sicily and of many indigenous or Punic localities in the island: many sites have not been located physically, yet we know about their existence through one or another written reference and/or through a few coins struck in their name⁽³³⁾. Even so, much has been asserted about the presence of a cult or about its nature based mainly on coin types. Ciaceri's works (1894 and 1911) which, as already mentioned, are the starting point for all modern studies concerning myths, cults and religion in Sicily, are greatly based on coins as a primary source: when there are coins bearing the image of a certain deity, Ciaceri presupposes the existence of the cult in the issuing spot. Take for instance the case of Dionysus: since his head or one of Silenos is depicted on coins issued by several localities in Sicily, Ciaceri assumes that his cult is important throughout the island⁽³⁴⁾. Conversely, when the image of a deity is rarely depicted as a coin type, as in the case

(32) We can mention one example just to illustrate our point. L. POLACCO, *op. cit.* (n. 12), p. 28 lists the archaeological evidence concerning the cult of the Two Goddesses in Syracuse. Among them we can read that « Monete: l'immagine di Demetra o di Kore, o di ambedue, è frequentissima nella monetazione siracusana di varie età e ne attesta appunto, anche in sede politica, l'importanza e la diffusione del culto ». There are no chronological commentaries and coins are mentioned in a very imprecise manner as an irrefutable proof of the existence of the cult. Other archaeological and literary evidence referring to these goddesses creates the context for interpreting a variety of female images as Demeter or Kore, in a circular argument.

(33) See, for instance, the examples given by L. BERNABÒ BREA, *Che cosa conosciamo dei centri indigeni che hanno coniato moneta prima dell'età timoleonica*, in *Le emissioni dei centri sicili fino all'epoca di Timoleonte e i loro rapporti con la monetazione delle colonie greche di Sicilia. Atti del IV Convegno del Centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici. Napoli 9-14 aprile, 1973*, Roma, 1975, p. 3-52.

(34) CIACERI, *op. cit.* (n. 10), 1894, p. 50-53.

of Hera, Ciaceri assumes that her cult was insignificant⁽³⁵⁾. If the mechanical relationship between coin iconography and religious cult can throw light on many aspects of the imagery chosen as types especially in the case of well known series, on the other hand, this model may not apply to series issued by small mints which are less documented and otherwise unknown. It is our view that this approach, which requires a study case by case, neglects the potentialities of an analysis of broader spatial and chronological scope such as the one we intend to carry out here.

The example we are studying deals with the image of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone on coins of ancient Greek Sicily. In the case of Sicilian monetary issues (either Greek or Greek influenced) bearing representations of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone, the relationship between the existence of cult and the presence of image is very atypical if seen through the traditional lens. In view of all the archaeological and literary evidence, which attests a widespread cult in the island from the end of the archaic period, we should expect that coins bearing the images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone would be also numerous and varied. However, astonishing as it may seem, this is not the case. A systematic survey of all images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone on coins issued in Sicily from the beginning of coinage at the end of the sixth century to the Roman period indicates that although worshipped in the island these deities were not widely represented on coins. The presence of the cult is not, in this case, a good reason to justify the use of their images as coin types. How can we explain this? The first answer that occurs is that as coins are the product of official acts, popular chthonic deities (as we saw above) were not suitable to represent issuing authorities. Nevertheless, this is not a satisfactory explanation, because, as we also saw above, there were in Sicily from archaic times several governments that were specifically engaged in promoting the cult of these deities. We believe, indeed, that the picture drawn by archaeological and literary sources points to new possibilities regarding the meaning of the choice of one or another image as coin type and to intriguing nuances regarding religious cults.

Departing from these reflexions, we proceeded to a systematic survey in the main catalogues of all identifiable images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone on Sicilian coins⁽³⁶⁾. We considered as chronological bound-

(35) *Ibidem*, p. 12 where we read: « Dalle poche testimonianze arrivate sino a noi pare che il culto di Hera non abbia tenuto un posto assai importante nella religione delle antiche città di Sicilia. Il fatto che solo nelle monete di due città compare l'immagine della dea, basta per sé stesso a dare fede a tale opinione ».

(36) At the beginning, we listed in our survey all Punic coins with images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone but at the end we did not include them in our study. These coins are related to the introduction of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's cult in Carthage and also to the late adoption of coinage by the Carthaginians/Punics and for these reasons they present specific nuances that deserve a separate study (XELLA, *op.*

aries the beginning of the sixth century (that is the inauguration of coinage in Sicily) and the second century, when Roman domination was already well established. Related to the fertility of the earth, to agriculture and at the same time to the underworld — death and the regeneration of life — Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone have as main and distinguishing attributes grain ears, grains and torches. Secondary or occasional attributes, do appear in the iconography of the Two Goddesses throughout the Mediterranean: the narcissus, the rooster, the snake, the pomegranate, the piglet, the bull, the cornucopia, baskets and other attributes related to specific cult localities⁽³⁷⁾. Among these occasional attributes, the piglet connected to the thesmophoric rites and the bull directly related to the sacrifices performed by Heracles at the Kyane are frequent in the iconography of the Two Goddesses in Sicily. The piglet appears in an endless quantity of terracotta figurines dated from the fifth century on and the bull may be seen as attribute of the goddesses in many reliefs and on coins as we shall see further on. In our survey we have considered all feminine representations either bearing or associated with bulls, grains, grain ears or torches. On the other hand, we also took into consideration these last attributes — torches, grains and grain ears — when represented individually, as main types or as secondary types and as symbols.

The evidence⁽³⁸⁾

1. From the end of the sixth century to the arrival of Timoleon (approx. 520 to 344 BC)

During the whole of this period our survey revealed a profusion of representations of grains and of grain ears either isolated as main types, or as symbols beside a main type and still as secondary type (Gela: *SNG ANS*, 4/100 (fig. 1), de Hirsch 404 and Gabrici p. 133, 18; Leontini: *SNG ANS* 4/200-213 (fig. 2), 5/1344, Calciati III, p. 77-79, 1-4, *SNG Cop* 372; Himera: *SNG ANS* 4/167-168 (fig. 3) and 164; Segesta: *SNG ANS* 4/642 and 636 — 7 (fig. 4); Morgantina: *Erim* p. 69; Syracuse: 4/

cit. (n. 14), 1989, with specific bibliography and also Diodorus, XIV, 77, 4-5). Last but not least, scholars are not sure about the identification of these images as Demeter or as Kore.

(37) LENORMANT, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 1066-1072 and DE ANGELI and BESCII, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 1988, p. 889 ff.

(38) A list of the catalogues used in this survey and of their abbreviations is available at the end of the text. In the presentation of the evidence, the references are usually to a selection of coins and preferably to a *SNG* volume, which is — I believe — more accessible in most academic libraries.

319ff., 472 ff., 198 ff., 207 ff., 219 ff., 288-289, 403; Camarina, PCG, 14.28; Messana: *SNG ANS* 4/372, 377, 378; Selinus: *SNG ANS* 4/697).

On the coinages of only three mints — Enna, Segesta and Syracuse — Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone appears in the same iconographical scheme even though with different attributes and in different styles. The goddess is represented in full body, riding a quadriga and holding a grain ear or a torch instead of a whip:

- In Enna, on the obverse of a silver litra dated c. 450-440. On the reverse of this same coin, Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone appears standing, facing and bearing a torch in the right hand, over an altar (Jenkins, 1975, p. 77-83, pl. IV a-c) (fig. 5)⁽³⁹⁾
- In Segesta, on the reverse of a silver tetradrachm dated c. 454-425 (Jenkins, 1975, pl. IV F)
- In Syracuse, with torch instead of grain ear, on the reverse of a silver tetradrachm dated c. 410 (Tudeer, 51, R30).

Syracusan coinage in this period presents a female head that would become famous and re-used by Syracusan mint and much copied by Punic/Carthaginian mints and also by small indigenous centres of the Sicilian hinterland. Recognized since antiquity as artistically unique, this head, was signed by one of the 'signing masters', Euainetos (c. 400-390) and is crowned by a corn-wreath (*SNG ANS* 5/361 ff)⁽⁴⁰⁾. Owing to this detail, many authors recognized here the representation of Kore so much worshipped in Syracuse⁽⁴¹⁾. This interpretation was helped by the fact that the same image always crowned by grain ears was adopted in Punic coinage at the same time the cult of Demeter was introduced in Carthage (*SNG ANS* 4/540-543, for example)⁽⁴²⁾. But, if we look more closely at the coinage of Syracuse in this period, as a whole, we will determine that the great majority of female heads is not crowned by grain ears nor has any other attribute which might link them to Demeter's and/or Kore/Per-

(39) It must be remarked that this image of a female figure sacrificing beside an altar has been also interpreted as the eponymous nymph of Enna. See L. LACROIX, *Monnaies et colonisation dans l'Occident grec* (Mémoire de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres, Sciences Morales et Politiques), Bruxelles, 1965, p. 125, n. 8. The same can be said about Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone riding a chariot holding torch or grain ear: in Messina the same female figure is identified with the nymph Messana. See M. CACCAMO CALTABIANO, *Miti e Culti dello Stretto nelle Monete Antiche (fine VI-inizio III sec. a.C.)*, Messina, 2000, p. 25 See below, p. 22 and n. 55.

(40) See on this matter G.K. JENKINS, *Ancient Greek Coins*, London, 2004 (1990), p. 106-107 and S. GARBAFFO, *Il rilievo monetale tra il VI e il IV secolo a.C.*, in G.P. CARRATELLI et al., *Sikanie. Storia e civiltà della Sicilia Greca*, Milan, Istituto Veneto di Arti Grafiche, 1985, p. 261-276.

(41) See, for instance, H.A. CAHN et al., *Anlikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig. Grossgriechenland und Sizilien*, Basel, 1988, n. 460, n. 480. See also JENKINS, *op. cit.* (n. 40), n. 293, where the head is not identified with Arethusa's head due to the presence of the corn-wreath.

(42) Cf. note 36.

sephone. In fact, they have been interpreted as Arethusa's head instead. We believe it is much more reasonable to accept that even the heads crowned with grain ears are Arethusa's and not Demeter's and/or Kore/Persephone's. We will come back to this point later on.

There are two more female heads on Syracusan coins of this period which are often identified with Kore/Persephone. Both are dated to the very end of the fifth century. The first one has the hair fastened up and is crowned by ears of grain (*SNG ANS* 5/273 and 274 — the last one signed by Phrygillos). The other one is a magnificent head by an anonymous artist also with a wreath of corn ears and long hair 'cascading' down the neck (Tudeer, 66) ⁽⁴³⁾.

This same iconographical scheme is seen on a silver tetradrachm of this period, attributed to the Morgantina mint. This is a copy of the Syracusan coin type, which is completed with the characteristic dolphins swimming around the female head (c. 360-350 — Erim, p. 70. pl. I/3-4). Admitting this coin to be minted in the first half of the fourth century BC, Erim hesitates between interpreting the female head either as Persephone or as Sikelia.

In the first half of the fourth century, before the arrival of Timoleon, Nakona and Entella, two small Sikel centres, issued under the authority of Campanian mercenaries, some bronze coins with the representation of a youthful female head crowned with grain ears and with long and loose hair, much in the manner of the Syracusan head just mentioned (Tudeer 66). This image has been interpreted as Persephone (*SNG ANS* 5/1326 and Calciati I, p. 325, 3-4). The youthfulness of the head is probably based on the long and loose hair, a convention of young females' representation for the Greeks (fig. 6).

Dating to the same period, there is also a small silver litra of Morgantina, with a female head on the obverse, with the hair fastened but with many loose locks falling over the neck. A grain ear appears as a symbol (Erim, p. 71, pl. I/6). Many authors, including Erim, believe this is an image of Persephone, whereas others believe this could be Artemis or even Apollo. The chronology is not clear either. According to Erim this coin could have been minted just before the arrival of Timoleon ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

(43) It is worth noting that in the case of these two heads the hesitation in identifying them with either Arethusa or Persephone or still with just a « female head » is very clear in the catalogues and in the bibliography in general. Jenkins, for instance, in the text describes the head as of Persephone but in the legend of the coin's image as just « head ». JENKINS, *op. cit.* (n. 40), p. 96 and 98.

(44) Cf. K. ERIM, *La zecca di Morgantina*, in *Le emissioni dei centri siculi fino all'epoca di Timoleonte e i loro rapporti con la monelazione delle colonie greche di Sicilia*. *Atti del IV Convegno del Centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici*. Napoli 9-14 aprile, 1973, Rome, 1975, p. 71 for the presentation of the discussion concerning this coin.



1. Gela. *AR* tetradrachm. 415-405 BC
Obv. Quadriga. Ex. Wheat ear; Rev. Man-headed bull. Barley corn. *SNG ANS* 4/100
2. Leontinoi. *AR* tetradrachm
Obv. Quadriga; Rev. Lion's head. Barley corns. *SNG ANS* 4/200
3. Himera. *AR* tetradrachm. 472-409 BC
Obv. Quadriga; Rev. Nymph Himera. Satyr. Barley corn. *SNG ANS* 4/167
4. Segesta. *AR* didrachm
Obv. Hound. Barley corn; Rev. Nymph Segesta. *SNG ANS* 4/637
5. Enna. *AR* litra. 450-440 BC
Obv. Quadriga driven by Demeter or Kore/Persephone (?) holding sheaf of grain ears; Rev. Demeter (or nymph?). Jenkins, 1975, pl. 4, a (x 2)
6. Entella. *AE*. c. 344 BC
Obv. Persephone; Rev. Pegasus. F. Sternberg, XXIV, nov. 1994, t. 4

2. From the period of Timoleon to the beginning of Agathocles' tyranny (344-317 BC)

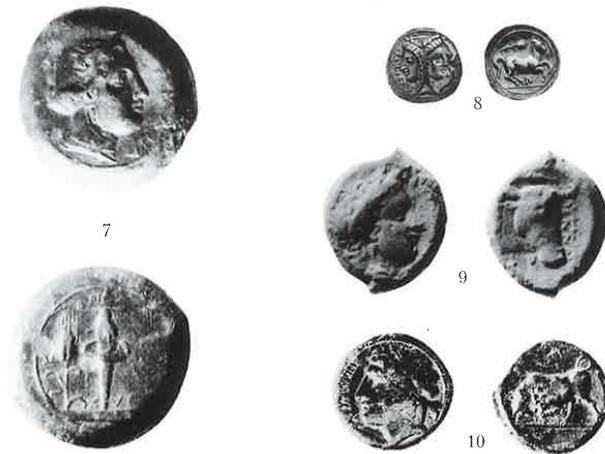
The arrival of Timoleon in Sicily marks, traditionally, the greatest diffusion of the Two Goddesses' cult throughout the island. Also, this period witnessed the issuing of coins by many towns that were liberated by Timoleon including small indigenous centres. It must be remembered, nevertheless, that, as was said above, the archaeological evidence testifies to a much earlier process of diffusion of these deities' cult. Thus it is more reasonable to assert that this process was merely reinforced by Timoleon's arrival.

Our survey revealed the depiction of grains and of grain ears — either in the main or in a secondary position — still on some coins minted by the Greek cities or by indigenous centers (see, for instance, Camarina: SNG ANS 3/1232, de Hirsch 332 and 333; Morgantina: de Hirsch 497; Gela: SNG ANS 5/1332, de Hirsch, 410). The grain ear as main type is found on Iaitia's coins and on the coinage in the name of the 'Symmachia' (45) (fig. 7) This last case is very interesting because a torch with one grain ear at each side composes the reverse type of several coins. On the obverse, these coins present several different images: Eleutherian Zeus (Calciati II, p. 445, 11); Apollo (Calciati II, p. 445, 14) and a female head, crowned with grain ears, identified by the inscription ΣΙΚΕΛΙΑ (Calciati II, p. 445, 12 and 13) (46).

In Syracuse, the mint continues to issue coins with the female head sometimes crowned by the grain ears in the Euainetos model, only that now they are in bronze (SNG ANS 5/526). Besides these coins, there is a small silver denomination with a janiform female head (SNG ANS 5/516-18 and 5/1183) (fig. 8) together with different symbols, among them the grain ear. This janiform head can be associated with the Demeter described in the written sources as having protected Timoleon during his trip from Corinth to Sicily if we consider that bi-frontality is usually related to guardian deities. From the Syracusan mint in this period come also some bronze coins with a female head with the hair knotted in a ponytail usually identified as Persephone (SNG ANS 5/530-532).

(45) For Iaitia see R. CALCIATI, *Corpus Nummorum Siculorum. La monetazione di bronzo*, II, Milan, 1983-1987, p. 343, 1 and SNG ANS 5/1343. Concerning the « Symmachia » most scholars believe that this was an alliance of indigenous towns dated to the period of Timoleon's rule in Sicily. We do not know where these coins were actually minted: Naster in the *Catalogue de la Collection Lucien de Hirsch* presents Alaca as a probable spot while Bernabò Brea (*op. cit.* [n. 33], p. 3) accepts Herbita as a probable mint. According to Bernabò Brea (*op. cit.* [n. 33], p. 24), Kale Acte and Amestratos were part of this Symmachia.

(46) Who this Sikelia is difficult to know. Head (*Historia Numorum*, p. 126) assumes that she is a local nymph whereas R.J.A. Wilson in his article for Sikelia in the *LIMC* (vol VII/1, p. 759-761), believes that it is the personification of the island of Sicily. On a coinage for an alliance of towns this last interpretation would indeed make sense.



7. 'Symmachikon'
Obv. Sikelia; Rev. Torch between two grain stalks. E. CAMMARATA, *Da Dioniso a Timoleonte*, Modica, 1984, tav. VIII/81
8. Syracuse. AR two-litres. 344-317 BC
Obv. Janiform head of Demeter; Rev. Horse. Barley ear. SNG ANS 5/518
9. Enna. AE. c. 340 BC
Obv. Demeter or Kore/Persephone; Rev. Bull's head. Above barley corn. SNG ANS 3/1163
10. Abacaenum. AE. c. 330 BC
Obv. Demeter or Kore/Persephone; Rev. Bull butting. SNG ANS 5/1295

In Enna, the survey revealed three different kinds of female heads crowned by grain ears always on the obverse of bronze coins. These images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone always have short hair (or tied up above the neck?). On the reverses, these coins present bulls, goats and grains, torch or grain ears (SNG ANS 3/1335; Calciati III, p. 234, 4) (fig. 9). On one of these coins we can read beside the female head ... AMATHP (Calciati III, p. 231, 1).

A head of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone can also be identified on a bronze coin from Gela, three-quarters facing, with long and loose hair, crowned by grain ears (Jenkins 1970, 549-550). Other female heads may be identified as Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone on the bronze coinage of four indigenous centers: Abacaenum (Calciati I, p. 73, 4 and SNG ANS 5, 1295) (fig. 10), Hadrano (Calciati III, p. 160-161, 8), Herbita (Calciati I, p. 87, 1) and Centuripa (SNG ANS 3/1305-6 and Gabrici, p. 125, 9, tv. III, 9). On this last coin the head follows Euainetos' model.



11. Syracuse. \mathcal{A} tetradrachm. Agathocles. 310-305 BC
Obv. Demeter or Kore/Persephone; Rev. Quadriga. *SNG ANS* 5/642
12. Syracuse. \mathcal{A} tetradrachm. Agathocles. 305-295 BC
Obv. Kore. KOPΑΣ Rev. Nike erecting trophy. Triskeles. C. Gulbenkian, 332
13. Syracuse. \mathcal{A} 'octobol'. Pyrrhus. 276-274 BC
Obv. Persephone; Rev. Athena. *Glendining Lockett Coll.*, IV, 1501

3. From the Agathoclean period to the beginning of Hiero's II rule (317-270 BC)

In this period, coins with the images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone come mainly from the mint of Syracuse. Only one coin from outside Syracuse has the image of Persephone: it is a bronze coin from Acragas, which bears the name of the tyrant Phintias and is dated to 287-279 BC (de Hirsch 304).

On the other hand, the Syracusan mint under Agathocles' rule continues to issue coins with Arethusa's head with tied up hair and crowned by grain ears (*SNG ANS* 5/632-643) (fig. 11). Under Agathocles and also under Hicetas, Syracuse issued gold and bronze coins with a female head with hair either short or tied up in a 'chignon', crowned by grain ears (as in *SNG ANS* 5/572-596, 561-571, 776-781 and 707). Several of these heads present behind the neck a cornucopia or a torch as symbols. The identification with Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone is assumed — in all but one of these issues — due to the presence, on the reverse, of a butting bull with a club, type easily associated with Heracles and with the festivals and sacrifices in honour of the Two Goddesses held yearly at the Kyane fountain.

At the end of his rule, Agathocles issued an electrum coin in which the forepart of the butting bull on the obverse is associated with a grain ear on the reverse (*SNG ANS* 5/1393).

Still another model of female head identified with Kore is used on Agathocles' silver and bronze coins (AE: *SNG ANS* 5/755-775; AR: 5/664-681). This youthful head with long and loose hair and crowned with grain ears is very similar to the female head identified with Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone used on coins of some indigenous centres in the preceding period and with the Syracusan coin from the period of the 'signing masters' mentioned above (Tudeer, 66) ⁽⁴⁷⁾. These images have also an undeniable similarity to the standard representation of Apollo and of Persephone on South Italian coins of the same period ⁽⁴⁸⁾. Agathocles' silver coin bears the inscription KOPΑΣ which leaves no doubt about who is represented (fig. 12).

The same model of female head is employed on three different silver and bronze denominations struck by Pyrrhus during his campaign in Sicily (*SNG ANS* 5/753 and 5/836-841; de Hirsch 1188-89) (fig. 13) ⁽⁴⁹⁾ and on a silver coin of the 'fourth democracy' — 289-287 BC (*SNG ANS* 5/754) (fig. 14) and on coins of Hicetas. Pyrrhus also used the image of an enthroned Demeter on a bronze coin reverse which has on the obverse the head of the young Persephone crowned by grain ears (*SNG ANS* 5/836-841; de Hirsch 1191) ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

4. From Hiero's II rule to the end of the Second Punic War (270-201 BC)

During this period Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone is repeatedly represented with long and loose hair crowned with grain ears on the coins of Syracuse (*SNG ANS* 5/864) (fig. 15), Acragas (*SNG ANS* 3/1143) and of Tyndaris (Calciati I, p. 80, 12). On coins of Syracuse (*SNG ANS* 5/1016) and of Centuripa (*SNG ANS* 3/1322) Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone is also represented with short (or tied up?) hair, also crowned with grain ears. In Centuripa it is rather a draped bust, which is linked to a plough represented on the reverse. Finally, in Enna, we registered on a bronze denomination a female figure standing, facing and bearing a torch in one of her hands (*SNG ANS* 3/1336).

(47) As in Herbita and Hadrano in period n. 3 and in Entella and Nakona just before Timoleon's arrival.

(48) See for instance *SNG Cop* 1195 and 1221 ff. for Metapontum; *SNG Cop* 1804 for Croton.

(49) Cf. M.B. BORBA FLORENZANO, *The Coinage of Pyrrhus in Sicily: Evidence of a Political Project*, in T. HACKENS *et al.* (eds.) *The Age of Pyrrhus* (Archeologia Transatlantica, 11), Providence/Louvain-la-Neuve, 1992, p. 207-223.

(50) FLORENZANO, 1992, *op. cit.* (n. 49), p. 210.



15. Syracuse. *AV* decadrachm. Hieron II. 274-216 BC
Obv. Persephone; Rev. Biga. *SNG ANS* 5/864
16. ΣΙΚΕΛΙΩΤΑΝ *R* eight litrae. 214-213 BC
Obv. Demeter or Kore/Persephone; Rev. Quadriga. *SNG ANS* 5/1168

Even though Punic coins are not our concern in this paper, it is worth noting that there is in this period a substantial number of denominations probably minted in Panormus, bearing the image of what has been sometimes interpreted as Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone.

Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone appear also on coins struck under the name of ΣΙΚΕΛΙΩΤΑΝ dated most probably to 214-213 BC⁽⁵¹⁾. The precise spot of issue of these coins is not known, but historical considerations make it possible to affirm that they were the expression of a federation of Sikel towns allied to Syracuse during the Second Punic War. The female head on these coins has short hair or is veiled, and always crowned with grain ears (Erim pl. III/5, 6 and *SNG ANS* 5/1168) (fig. 16)⁽⁵²⁾.

5. The Roman Period (II-I centuries BC)

During the Roman period, the silver coins produced and/or in circulation in Sicily were those struck under Roman authority. Nevertheless, the vacuum created by the disappearance of Syracusan political hegemony allowed small centres to start striking bronze denominations, which were in some way related to the Roman silver system⁽⁵³⁾. In this completely new context images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone are employed as coin types by several mints: Acrae (*SNG Cop* 9), Catania (*SNG Cop* 206), Enna (Calciati III, p. 240, 15-14 and p. 237, 11; *SNG Evelop.* 481), Aetna

(51) Cf. A. STAZIO, *Monetazione ed economia monetale*, in G. PUGLIESE CARRATELLI (ed.), *Sikanie. Storia e Civiltà della Sicilia Greca*, Milan, Istituto Veneto di Arti Grafiche, 1985, p. 118.

(52) E. Sjoqvist based on an interpretation of the monogram TM believes that these coins were minted in Morgantina. Most scholars including Erim who have studied the mint of Morgantina in detail do not accept this hypothesis. See *The ΣΙΚΕΛΙΩΤΑΝ Coinage*, in *ANSMN*, 9, 1960, p. 53.

(53) Cf. M.H. CRAWFORD, *The Romans in Sicily, in Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic*, London, 1985, p. 113.

(*SNG ANS* 3/1162-65) (fig. 17), Syracuse (*SNG ANS* 5/1096 and 1090; Calciati II, p. 430, 232), Menaenum (*SNG ANS*, 4/290), Gela (Jenkins 1970, 559 — group XIVb), Leontini (*SNG ANS* 4/275, 274, 277), Megara Hyblaea (Calciati III, p. 43, 2), Tyndaris (Calciati I, p. 82, 22). Iconographical schemes depicting Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone multiply: not only the head of the deity is represented in a variety of ways (long or short hair, veiled, radiated) but she is also depicted in full body, three-quarters facing, bearing torch, grain ears or sceptre. Besides that, the symbolism related to the Two Goddesses is enriched: torches and grain ears are represented in a profusion of ways (crossed torches as in Menaenum for instance) and also common are attributes such as cornucopias, ploughs, and grain measures. Scenes as the representation of the rape of Kore and Triptolemos depicted on his chariot complete the repertoire of images associated with these deities. On many coins the presence of the Two Goddesses is reinforced by the representation of one on the obverse and the other on the reverse (as in Enna and Acrae).

On the other hand, our survey revealed in this period also a proximity of these two deities with the Dioskuroi (as in Tyndaris) and with Isis and Sarapis (as in Syracuse and in Catania) who appear on coins many times associated with attributes typical of the Two Goddesses: the grain, grain ears and torches.

III. Commentary

The survey of the images of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone on Sicilian coins gives rise to several considerations regarding the main tendencies of the adoption of these images as coin types, that can be summarized as follows: 1. The prevalence of symbols such as grains and grain ears in a first stage; 2. The beginning of the depiction of the head of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in a few mints only from the first half of the fourth century BC on, in southern and eastern Sicily; 3. The use of the monetary imagery of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone by some tyrants as part of a political project of unifying Sicily under a monarchy of Hellenistic type; 4. The proliferation of coin types relating to Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone especially on smaller denominations from smaller centres including legendary scenes, in the decades following the Roman conquest.

Let us start with the first tendency. At the beginning of Greek coinage in Sicily, by the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the fifth, when the cult of Demeter and or Kore/Persephone is very well attested in the island by literary and archaeological evidence, the images of the Two Goddesses appear only sporadically in three mints and linked explicitly to the main symbol of Greek aristocracy in the colonies, the quadri-

ga. In compensation, from this moment, grains and grain ears — both strong elements of the Two Goddesses' symbolism — are disseminated throughout the whole of Sicilian coinage. This feature is constant throughout the 'Greek' period in Sicily. In fact, we verified that the image of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone is not consolidated as 'typical' or 'characteristic' of a specific moment or of a specific mint, not even of Syracuse or Enna. These are images, which compete disadvantageously with the representation of other deities, nymphs, river personifications, and eponymous heroes, and also with Zeus, Athena, Heracles, Apollo and Artemis. Admitting that « Coins reflect exactly the specific character of the political organization of the Greek world », as M. Lacroix puts it⁽⁵⁴⁾ we can conclude that Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone constituted a sacred entity that was superior to the boundaries of the small Greek city-estates, and precisely because of that was not suitable as an emblem of any of them even if the cult was very intense. Coinage was a polis institution, thus it should be limited to the polis. This must have been the case in Greek Sicily too, even though we all know that the typical polis structure in Sicily was frequently violated by the population displacements promoted by many tyrants. It should be remembered in this context that the sanctuaries of Demeter (and Kore/Persephone) are also found throughout Greece in urban and in rural areas, indicating that this was a very important deity worshipped wherever the growth of grains was practiced. According to Cole, even though Demeter was seldom the main deity of a polis, her cult was very scattered due mainly to the difficulties of wheat storage that, differently from wine and oil, easily decomposes depending on climatic conditions⁽⁵⁵⁾.

If, on one hand, we can affirm that the religion of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone worked as an element that fostered the integration of the different populations forced to live together and if we can also say that the cult of the Two Goddesses served in the construction of an identity for the new 'elites' that were fashioned in this manner, on the other hand we are not able to confirm that the monetary imagery of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone was used to encourage such behavior.

(54) Cf. L. LACROIX, *Les types des monnaies grecques*, in J.-M. DENTZER, Ph. GAUTHIER and T. HACKENS (eds), *La numismatique antique. Problèmes et Méthodes*, Louvain-Nancy, 1975, p. 154.

(55) S.G. COLE, *Demeter in City and Countryside*, in S. ALCOCK and R. OSBORNE, *Placing the Gods. Sanctuaries and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994, p. 200-201.



17. Aetna. Æ. Roman rule

Obv. Demeter or Kore/Persephone; Rev. Cornucopia. *SNG ANS* 4/637

18. Messana. Æ. Second half of the 4th century

Obv. Nymph Pelorias; Rev. Warrior. *SNG ANS* 4/394

Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone was an entity that belonged to all Greek colonizers in their new and often hostile environment. These deities meant to them even more than protection for agriculture. In the Greek conception, this entity stood for the strengthening of a civilization whose main characteristics were the cultivation of cereals and a city-estate kind of life. The dissemination of symbols connected to agriculture such as grains and grain ears indicates the broad scope of these beliefs and also the need to support the success of the planting of civilization through a very well defined symbolism. Thus we believe that the far-reaching diffusion of these symbols in the early phases of Sicilian coinage is not necessarily a sign of the existence of a specific local cult of the Two Goddesses.

This can also explain why Arethusa is depicted crowned by grain ears on the coinage of Syracuse: we are here dealing with a relationship constructed between a nymph who is emblematic of Syracuse on one side and a divinity of agriculture and civilization on the other. Our survey also revealed that other nymphs or sacred entities typically emblematic of specific sites were represented disguised as Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone. This is the case of Pelorias, for instance, the personification of the Peloritan promontory of Messana. This nymph is depicted on the coinage of Messana from the end of the fifth century on, crowned with grain ears, following the model of the Syracusan Arethusa signed by Euainetos⁽⁵⁶⁾ or the Persephone model characteristic of the Agathoclean coinage of Syracuse. Just as Agathocles' Persephone, which has the inscription ΚΟΡΑΣ, so in Messana this female head is depicted with the inscription ΠΕΛΟΡΙΑΣ (*SNG ANS*, 4/394) (fig. 18). On the other hand, during the fifth century, also in Messana, the personification of the town — the nymph Messana — is depicted riding a mule biga and instead of a whip she has a palm leaf or a torch⁽⁵⁷⁾ following an iconographical scheme used to represent Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in Sicily also

(56) M. CACCAMO CALTABIANO, *op. cit.* (n. 39), p. 27.

(57) CACCAMO CALTABIANO, *op. cit.* (n. 39), p. 25. These coins are from 425 BC and the author believes that this deity is a fertility deity, since she appears related to attributes such as grain ears.

in the fifth century (if we accept the identification of the charioteer of Enna, Segesta and Syracuse as Demeter and or Kore/Persephone)⁽⁵⁸⁾. It must be remembered that no other female deity appears riding alone a chariot, except for Athena or Nike. Likewise, the female head on the Morgantina coins depicted in the Euainetos model, should be interpreted as Sikelia and not as Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone: she too is an entity marking a strong relationship to the general notion of a civilization founded on the cultivation of cereals.

I would argue that the first female heads that can be identified with Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone with certainty are those depicted on bronze coins from Entella and from Nakona dated to the years just before the arrival of Timoleon. As the archaeological evidence points out, the first half of the fourth century witnessed a great diffusion of the cult of the Two Goddesses. From this moment on representations of these deities are more frequent on coins, symptomatically from the indigenous centres and from Punic sites. If we follow the traditional interpretation we could easily ascribe this incidence of images of the Two Goddesses on indigenous coins to a hypothetical autochthonous substratum of primitive beliefs in chthonic entities. However it is known that the adoption of coinage by a non-Greek population is much more complicated and has deeper implications. We can argue that adopting coinage involves new ways of thinking, of accounting and new kinds of relationships between people. It was not simply a matter of starting to use a new object. Iconographical schemes that were copied had to have a meaning that was adequate to the adoption of coinage. As Greek deities of a very general scope Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone were suitable to this goal.

Agathocles, Hicetas, and Pyrrhus understood very well the comprehensive nature of these goddesses and exactly because of this, they used the symbolism of the Two Goddesses in direct connection with their own names. As a matter of fact, coins with the images of one of the goddesses that were struck by these rulers have many times the inscription of their names alone or associated with the title 'basileus' indicating their pretension to establish a monarchy of Hellenistic type in Sicily. Even an obscure tyrant as Phintias used on his coinage the image of Persephone with the inscription 'basileos Phintia' (de Hirsch 304, Gabrici, p. 118, *BMC*, p. 20, 135). It seems fair to affirm that the political use of the imagery of the Two Goddesses on coins started with Timoleon. But this use was only formalized with Agathocles, a little later in the fourth century. We can consider this as a crucial moment: Persephone associated to the triskeles⁽⁵⁹⁾, emblem of Sicily as a whole which appears now with

(58) See above, period 1, the coinages of Enna, Segesta and Syracuse.

(59) The triskeles is a design that certainly deserves more research. As far as this survey went, it appears for the first time on Sicilian Greek coinage in the first half of the fourth century, during the so-called third Syracusan democracy. See in this matter

regularity on the coinage of the island, becomes an instrument of the pan-Siceliot pretensions of this ruler. Pyrrhus — and those who came after him as well — used coinage as an essential component of their economy and of their symbolism as Hellenistic kings. In this context, the use of the image of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone was a specific Siceliot adaptation of the typically Hellenistic monetary imagery, which had as basic nucleus the images of Zeus, Athena, Nike and Heracles. Considering numismatic aspects it is certain that Agathocles inaugurated a period of explicit political propaganda in Western Greece. Although the political use of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone's cult is attested in Sicily since the fifth century, it must be said that coinage participates in this 'manipulation' only from the Hellenistic period onwards.

The period of Roman rule in Sicily testifies to a spread of the imagery of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone in small bronze denominations from many smaller mints with varied types. This diffusion occurs mainly during the second century or from 212 on, as the main catalogues like to point out. As was mentioned above, Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone are depicted in several different styles and manners and in association with the Dioskuroi, with Triptolemos (a reference to the Eleusinian tradition) or related to Isis.

It must be remembered that the diffusion of the image of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone on coins does not match a similar movement in archaeological data. Many smaller sanctuaries during the period of Roman rule were abandoned and there is a drastic reduction of offerings to the Two Goddesses⁽⁶⁰⁾. All these coins were of little value and were probably struck by local authorities even though many of them bear the name of Roman officials. They are loosely dated in the catalogues: 'period of Roman rule'. But, we still can ask if they were produced in the second or in the first century BC or during Augustus' rule. We also could ask if the variety of types and mints using the image of Demeter and/or Kore/Persephone during this period is related to a wider diffusion of the cult, like the one verified at the beginning of the fourth century when sanctuaries dedicated to the Two Goddesses and offerings proliferated. The answer would hardly be in the affirmative.

R.R. HOLLOWAY, *The Bronze Coinage of the Third Syracusan Democracy*, in *AJN*, 16-17, 1969-1970, p. 129-142. We are not able to affirm if on this coinage it was already a symbol of Sicily as the 'triangular' island, the meaning that the triskeles had, as is well known, during the Roman period. I believe it was Agathocles the first one to give a 'territorial' meaning to the triskeles.

(60) HINZ, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 243.

Numismatic Sources

a) Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum

- Germany (Munich) - SNG München Part 5: Sicily.
 Denmark (Copenhaguen) - SNG Cop. Sicily, parts I and II.
 U.S.A. (New York) - SNG ANS Parts 3 to 5: Sicily I to III.
 Greece (R. Evelpidis) - SNG Parts I and II.

b) Other Catalogues and articles of reference

- J. BABELON, *Catalogue de la Collection de Luynes, I, Sicile et Italie*, Paris, 1924.
 A. BERTINO, *Le emissioni monetale di Abaceno*, in *Le emissioni dei centri siculi fino all'epoca di Timoleonte e i loro rapporti con la monetazione delle colonie greche di Sicilia. Atti del IV Convegno del Centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici. Napoli 9-14 aprile, 1973*, Roma, 1975, p. 105-132.
 M. CACCAMO CALTABIANO, *La monetazione di Messina con le emissioni di Rhegion dell'età della tirannide (AMUGS, XIII)*, Berlin, 1993.
 —, *Miti e Culti dello Stretto nelle Monete Antiche (fine VI-inizi III sec. a.C.)*, Messina, 2000.
 R. CALCIATI, *Corpus Nummorum Siculorum. La monetazione di bronzo, I-III*, Milan, 1983-1987.
 K. ERIM, *La zecca di Morgantina*, in *Le emissioni dei centri siculi fino all'epoca di Timoleonte e i loro rapporti con la monetazione delle colonie greche di Sicilia. Atti del IV Convegno del Centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici. Napoli 9-14 aprile, 1973*, Roma, 1975, p. 66-76.
 E. GABRIGI, *La monetazione del bronzo nella Sicilia Antica*, Bologna, 1969 (1927).
 S.W. GROSE, *Catalogue of the McClean Collection of Greek Coins, I*, Cambridge, 1923.
 B.V. HEAD, *Historia Numorum*, London, 1959.
 —, *Guide to the Principal Coins of the Greeks*, London, 1959 (1932).
 R.R. HOLLOWAY, *La monetazione di Aggrion, Aluntion, Entella, Hipana, Nakone, Stieta*, in *Le emissioni dei centri siculi fino all'epoca di Timoleonte e i loro rapporti con la monetazione delle colonie greche di Sicilia. Atti del IV Convegno del Centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici. Napoli 9-14 aprile, 1973*, Roma, 1975, p. 133-156.
 G.K. JENKINS, *The Coinages of Enna, Galaria, Piakos, Imachara, Kephaloidion and Longane*, in *Le emissioni dei centri siculi fino all'epoca di Timoleonte e i loro rapporti con la monetazione delle colonie greche di Sicilia. Atti del IV Convegno del Centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici. Napoli 9-14 aprile, 1973*, Roma, 1975, p. 77-104.
 G.K. JENKINS, *The Coinage of Gela*, Berlin, 1970.
 G.K. JENKINS, M. CASTRO HIPOLITO, *A Catalogue of the Calouste Gulbenkian Collection of Greek Coins*, Lisbon, 1971, Vol 1.
 G. MACDONALD, *Catalogue of Greek Coins in the Hunterian Collection. I*, Glasgow, 1923.
 L. MILDENBERG, S. HURTER, *The Arthur S. Dewing Collection of Greek Coins*, New York, 1985.
 A. MINI, *Monete Antiche di Bronzo della Zecca di Siracusa*, Palermo, 1977.
 —, *Monete di Bronzo della Sicilia Antica*, Palermo, 1979.
 P. NASTER, *La collection Lucien de Hirsch*, Brussels, 1959.
 R.S. POOLE (ed.), *A Catalogue of Greek Coins in the British Museum, Sicily*, Bologna, 1963 (1871).
 S. POZZI, *Catalogue des monnaies grecques de la collection de feu le prof. S. Pozzi*, Lucern, 1921.
 L. TUDEER, *Die Tetrachmenprägung von Syrakus in der Periode der signierenden Künstler*, Berlin, 1957 (1913).