

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

THE JOURNAL OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA



Volume 102 • No. 2

April 1998

degli Augustali across the street, a building generally accepted to be the seat of the Augustales, priests of the imperial cult. The physical connection between the two buildings and the presence of imperial sculptural groups in the "Basilica" support the portico's relationship to the Augustales and the imperial cult. It is further suggested that the "Basilica" was constructed in response to the growing popularity of the Augustales and of the imperial cult in Campania toward the middle of the first century A.D.

SESSION 5A: COLLOQUIUM: NEW INSIGHTS INTO THE TRANSITION FROM HACKSILBER TO COINAGE

SILVER FROM TEL DOR: *Ephraim Stern*, Hebrew University

The silver hoard at Tel Dor was discovered in the summer of 1996 in area D2 above the major harbor of the town on its south side. It had been uncovered in phase 7, which is dated according to Phoenician, Cypriot, and even Greek pottery to the late 11th or the start of the 10th century. The hoard was found in a clay jug and contained about 10 kg of pure silver, mostly in small pieces, along with some broken jewelry.

The silver was divided into roughly a dozen smaller parts, each of which had been weighed and placed in a small linen bag. The bag was closed and stamped by a bulla. It is interesting that all the bags had the same personal seal on the bulla and also that the stamp-seal must have been very old, i.e., it dated to the Middle Bronze Age II (17th–16th century). The excavators believe that the hoard was the property of a banker or a rich person who supplied the Phoenician ships that anchored there with all their necessities. The amount of silver is very large (approximating one sheqel at almost 11.5 g) and could have supplied a whole fleet.

The presentation also deals with Phoenician and biblical weights and their values.

THE TEL MIQNE-EKRON SILVER CACHES: THE ASSYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN CONNECTIONS: *S. Gitin* and *A. Golani*, W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research

Six caches containing over 259 silver ingots, hacksilber, and silver jewelry have been excavated at Tel Mique-Ekron. The caches or hoards are singularly important because they were found in sealed deposits in monumental buildings that were part of a well-defined town plan of one of the largest Iron Age cities excavated in Israel. This city can be dated to the seventh century on the basis of associated material culture finds, the newly discovered Ekron royal dedicatory inscription, and extra-biblical texts. The caches are securely dated to the last phase of the seventh century; the city was destroyed in 603 in the campaign of the Neo-Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar.

Ekron was one of five Philistine capital cities. In the seventh century, it became a vassal city-state of the Neo-

Assyrian empire, the economic policies of which stimulated the development at Ekron of one of the largest olive oil production centers in antiquity uncovered to date. As such, it was a major commercial component of Assyria's international exchange system in the eastern Mediterranean basin, far surpassing in scope and scale the earlier exchange system of Bronze Age palace economies. Silver, used as currency, played an important role in the development of the Neo-Assyrian empire and its economic interests. Silver continued to function as currency in the post-Assyrian period at Ekron, that is, in its final phase when Ekron and Philistia became part of the Egyptian sphere of influence.

THE IMPACT OF THE NATURAL SCIENCES ON STUDIES OF HACKSILBER AND EARLY SILVER COINAGE: *Sophie Stos-Gale* and *Noel Gale*, University of Oxford

Straightforward chemical analyses of the major and minor elements contained in ancient hacksilber and early Greek silver coins provide useful information about the purity of silver ingots and coins at the transition between hacksilber and coinage and, by inference, can add to our knowledge about the technology of silver production at that time. Also of considerable interest are the sources of silver used both for silver ingots and early silver coins. The most promising method of determining potential sources is the technique of comparative lead-isotope analysis of silver and silver ores. An outline of the scientific methods involved, including their advantages and limitations, is presented and illustrated by the interpretation of analyses of hacksilber from the Selinus hoard, Tel Mique, and the Shechem hoard.

THE MONETARY USE OF IRON SPITS AND WEIGHED SILVER IN PRE-COINAGE GREECE: *John H. Kroll*, University of Texas at Austin

Textual evidence is presented for the use of weighed silver in early sixth-century B.C. Athens, about a generation or two before the advent of Athenian coinage. Already by the time of Solon, silver was employed for the payment of fines and collection of other public revenues, for state expenditures, and for private lending and borrowing at interest.

The still earlier iron-spit currency of Archaic Greece is less well documented, but the archaeological and etymological evidence implies that its economic role and impact on later monetary usage were probably greater than is usually recognized. For instance, the Greek system of monetary notation goes back to the time when the primary monetary unit was the iron spit or obol, not its multiple, the drachma, which did not become a primary unit until silver currency was substituted for iron. In addition, it is clear that most dedications of iron spits in Archaic sanctuaries were monetary in nature, i.e., they were dedications of wealth, as opposed to dedications of utilitarian implements used in sacrificial ritual. Such display of wealth in iron suggests that iron spits must also have been em-