

## MONEY, LAW AND EXCHANGE: COINAGE IN THE GREEK POLIS

IT has long been recognised that money is both a reality and an ideology. Yet the interaction between the two, the extent to which all-purpose money, in ancient Greece first realised in the use of coinage, brings about particular ideologies of value and exchange, while at the same time being framed by them, rarely comes into focus.<sup>1</sup> Like literacy, money has frequently been taken as a culturally independent cause for particular effects both at the social and economic as well as the ideological level.<sup>2</sup> In this paper I wish to complicate the story of monetization by relating its ideological superstructure in the Greek polis to the particular institutions in which it circulated.

The following argument is therefore bifocal. On the one hand, I look historically at the development and use of pre-monetary currencies and early coinage in order to draw attention to the wide spectrum of institutions in which coinage was used in late archaic poleis, side by side with other tokens of value and media of exchange. This, I hope, will suggest that money does not by nature signify anything particular—economic relationships, egalitarianism, the market, etc.—but is symbolised by its repeated usage in particular institutions. On the other, I shall look at the construction of meanings of money and the problems that arose politically from the fact that all-purpose money was the standard of value and medium of exchange in very different exchange contexts. The texts I shall be discussing work implicitly towards stable meanings of money by setting a limit to the potential indifference of exchange contexts caused by the underdetermination of money as a signifier.<sup>3</sup> Warfare, religion, politics, market exchange and trade were all activities in which coinage was used. It required intimate cultural knowledge to understand the similarity and difference of their institutions and to recognise the different function and meanings of money within them. The proper use of money became thus an index for distinguishing insiders and outsiders both at a political and a metaphorical level.

Kurke, Seaford, Steiner and others have provided excellent analyses of the conflicts and tensions arising from monetary exchange in sixth and fifth-century literature.<sup>4</sup> The following paper is much indebted to their work, yet it also aims to argue in a different direction. Seaford and Kurke regard coinage as developing independently of, and opposed to, traditional forms of aristocratic wealth. As a result they see a fundamental difference between the social consequences of exchange based on coinage on the one hand and on gift exchange on the other.

<sup>1</sup> A sustained attempt to differentiate between phenomenology and ideologies of money is T. Crump, *The phenomenon of money* (London 1980); see also K. Hart, 'Heads or tails? Two sides of the coin', *Man* 21 (1986), 637-56. The following modern works are referred to in this paper by author's name alone: J. Ebert (ed.), *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an gymnischen und hippischen Agonen*. Abhandlungen der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Phil.-hist.Kl. 63 pt. 2 (Leipzig 1972); H. van Effenterre & F. Ruzé (eds.), *Nomima. Recueil d'inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l'archaïsme grec*. Collection de l'école française de Rome 188. Vol. I. (Rome 1994); C. Howgego, *Ancient history from coins* (London 1995); R. Koerner (ed.), *Inchriftliche Gesetzestexte der frühen griechischen Polis* (Cologne 1993); C. Kraay, *Archaic and classical Greek coins* (Berkeley 1976); L. Kurke, 'Herodotus and the language of metals', *Helios* 22 (1995), 36-64; R. Seaford, *Reciprocity and ritual* (Oxford 1994); F. Sokolowski (ed.), *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1969); D.T. Steiner, *The tyrant's writ* (Princeton 1994); S. von Reden, *Exchange in ancient Greece* (London 1995).

<sup>2</sup> For similar observations on literacy, R. Thomas, *Oral tradition and written record* (Cambridge 1989), ch. 1; P. Cartledge, 'Literacy in the Spartan oligarchy' *JHS* 98 (1978), 25-37; for a sustained anthropological argument against the cultural independence of monetization see M. Bloch and J. Parry (eds.), *Money and the morality of exchange* (Cambridge 1989); the study by S.D. Gottein, *A Mediterranean society*, Vol. I (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1967) provides fascinating further evidence.

<sup>3</sup> I. Kopytoff 'The cultural biography of things: commoditisation as process', in A. Appadurai (ed.), *The social life of things* (Cambridge 1986) 64-91.

<sup>4</sup> See note 1; less persuasively, M. Shell, *The economy of literature* (Baltimore 1978); R.W. Müller, *Geld und Geist* (Frankfurt 1977); P.N. Ure, *The origin of tyranny* (Cambridge 1922).

Thus Kurke writes,

coinage represents a tremendous threat to a stable hierarchy of aristocrats and others, in which the aristocrats maintain a monopoly on precious metals and other prestige goods. With the introduction of coinage looms the prospect of indiscriminate distribution, exchange between strangers that subverts the ranked spheres of exchange-goods operative in a gift-exchange culture.<sup>5</sup>

And Seaford:

the articulation of the citizen body in numerical terms [under Solon]...bestows on the abstraction of number a social significance, tending to replace birth and charisma in the determination of status, that is unparalleled in Homer but manifest also in the development of commodity exchange and of money at the expense of gift exchange.<sup>6</sup>

Although both authors are right in drawing out the impact of money on systems of social evaluation, they preclude *a priori* the possibility that coinage developed within the system it subsequently transformed. Kurke argues that the polemics against coinage are the expression of a split 'along class lines' from Theognis to Aristotle.<sup>7</sup> It is, however, unlikely that class lines fossilised between the sixth and the fourth centuries, and that they were the same in, for example, sixth-century Athens and fifth-century Crete.

There is little which suggests that the use of coinage was championed by a particular social group throughout the Greek world. The processes of transformation taking place in late archaic poleis are complex and varied. Who controlled the poleis which, in the texts of archaic laws, 'prennent la parole' (Detienne) in order to restrict the transgressions of their own highest magistrates is a question that cannot be answered by one generalising statement.<sup>8</sup> Just as 'the polis' cannot be identified with the same social group in every instance, the coinages issued or used by those poleis cannot be associated with one particular political movement. Clearly, the literary conceptualisations of coinage are polemical but, as I hope can be demonstrated below, coinage was not used only by poleis which contained a strong element of an anti-elitist 'middling tradition'<sup>9</sup>, nor indeed by those who identified themselves in law with 'the polis'. Instead of treating problematizations of coinage in Greek literature as expressions of aristocratic resistance to a levelling medium of exchange, I propose to read them, more generally, as manifestations of systems of social evaluation in flux.

<sup>5</sup> Kurke, 42.

<sup>6</sup> Seaford, 199.

<sup>7</sup> Kurke, 42; see also ead., 'Kapêleia and deceit', *AJP* 110 (1989) 535-44.

<sup>8</sup> R. Thomas, 'Written in stone? Liberty, equality, orality and the codification of law', *BICS* 40 (1995) 59-90 with discussion and further literature; see also K.-J. Hölkeskamp, 'Tempel, Agora und Alphabet. Die Entstehungsbedingungen von Gesetzgebung in der archaischen Polis', in H.-J. Gehrke, *Rechtskodifizierung und soziale Normen im interkulturellen Vergleich* (Tübingen 1994) 135-64; M. Detienne, 'L'écriture et ses nouveaux objets intellectuels en Grèce' in *id.*, (ed.), *Les savoirs de l'écriture en Grèce ancienne* (Lille 1988) 7-26.

<sup>9</sup> The idea of a 'middling tradition' emerging from the 8th/7th century BC and creating the conditions for democracy to develop has been redeveloped by I. Morris, 'The strong principle of equality and the archaic origins of Greek democracy', in C. Hedrick & J. Ober (eds.), *Democracy ancient and modern* (Princeton 1996). It should be noted that Morris' argument is quite different from both P. Spahn, *Mittelschicht und Polisbildung* (Frankfurt 1977) and C. Meier, *The discovery of Greek politics* (Cambridge/Mass. 1990, German orig. 1980). While for Spahn *hoi mesoi* are a socio-political class, and for Meier an heterogenous, educated opposition to the elite (29 ff.), for Morris 'to meson was not a class but an ideological construct, allowing all citizens to locate themselves in the middle' (40, cf. 22, with n.13).

## I. THE ORIGINS OF COINAGE — AGAIN

The origins of coinage have been discussed since antiquity. Economic explanations were favoured for a long time, and have ancient authority. Thus Herodotus implies, and Aristotle states explicitly, that coinage was introduced in order to facilitate trade and retail trade.<sup>10</sup> Laum focused on religious functions of money and took those as the origin of coinage.<sup>11</sup> Will, taking Laum's research further, argued that coinage was introduced at a time of transition as a response to the crises of political legitimacy in the seventh and sixth centuries. Coinage was the means by which a new type of ruler enforced his power and re-established political order at a time of political and religious disruption.<sup>12</sup> Cook looked at the origins of coinage in Asia Minor and suggested that it was the necessity of paying Greek mercenaries which brought about the first coins.<sup>13</sup> Recent approaches based on anthropological models concentrate on the interface of social and economic modes of exchange. Thus Price has suggested that coinage was in Greece at first a means by which political, military and juridical office was rewarded; it combined the traditions of seals and personal badges as symbols of authority on the one hand and gifts of precious metal for political and juridical office on the other.<sup>14</sup> The great number of possible explanations, none of which are wholly satisfactory, has made scholars abandon the question of the primary function of the first coinages. This may best be illustrated by the most recent textbook that simply states that we know nothing of the function of the earliest coinage.<sup>15</sup>

Dating the introduction of coinage has been equally difficult. While some ancient traditions suggest that coins were used in Greece as early as the first half of the seventh century, the earliest coins of Asia Minor, which preceded the Greek ones, are now dated to a period between the middle of the seventh and shortly before the sixth century. The most reasonable inference from this chronological approach is that coinage was introduced in Greece not before the middle of the sixth century. The relative size and number of coin hoards suggest, moreover, that coinage was widespread in the Greek world not earlier than the beginning of the fifth.<sup>16</sup> If this

<sup>10</sup> Hdt.1.94; Arist. *EN* 1133a17-20. Among modern scholars see esp. Ure (n.4). More recent works allow for a short prelude of non-economic functions, but still think that the decisive stimulus for the increase and spread of coinage was trade; see esp. C. Kraay, 'The archaic owls of Athens: classification and chronology,' *NC* 16 (1956) 63; C.G. Starr, *The economic and social growth of early Greece* (New York 1977) 108-17. See, by contrast, M.M. Austin and P. Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and social history of ancient Greece* (London 1977) 56-8, which is based on É. Will, 'Fonctions de la monnaie dans les cités grecques de l'époque classique', in J.M. Dentzer, Ph. Gauthier and T. Hackens (eds.), *Numismatique antique: problèmes et méthodes* (Nancy 1975) 233-46.

<sup>11</sup> B. Laum, *Heiliges Geld* (Munich 1924) 8-126.

<sup>12</sup> É. Will 'Réflexions et hypothèses sur les origines du monnayage,' *RN* 17 (1955) 5-23, esp. 17 f.; *Korinthiaka: recherches sur l'histoire et la civilisation de Corinthe des origines aux guerres médiques* (Paris 1955) 497 ff.

<sup>13</sup> R.M. Cook, 'Speculations on the origins of coinage,' *Historia* 7 (1958) 257-62, esp. 261.

<sup>14</sup> M. Price, 'Thoughts on the beginnings of coinage', in C. Brooke et al. (eds.), *Studies in numismatic method presented to Philip Grierson* (Cambridge 1983) 1-10, esp. 6 f.

<sup>15</sup> Howgego, 3.

<sup>16</sup> K. Rutter argues compellingly that despite evidence of coinage in the sixth century BC, massive spread and use of it is attested numismatically not before the early fifth; see 'Early coinage and the influence of the Athenian state', in B. Cunliffe, *Coinage and society in Britain and Gaul: some current problems* (London 1981) 1-9. Most authoritative now is J.H. Kroll and N.M. Waggoner, 'Dating the earliest coins of Athens, Corinth and Aegina', *AJA* 88 (1984) 76-91, who argue that the first electrum coins were issued before 560 BC, the gold and silver coins struck under Croesus in the 550s, and the first Aeginetan coins about 550 BC. Further arguments in Howgego, 6 ff. with Bammer, 'A peripteros of the Geometric period in the Artemisium of Ephesus', *AS* 40 (1990, 137-60, and against: L. Weidauer, *Probleme der frühen Elektronprägung* (Fribourg 1975). For the beginning of coinage in Greece not earlier than the second quarter of the sixth century BC, see Kraay, 43 ff.; R.R. Holloway, 'The date of the first Greek coins: some arguments from style and hoards', *RBN* 130 (1981) 5-18; I. Carradice and M. Price, *Coinage in the Greek world* (London 1988) 20-8. The high chronology based on literary evidence is still maintained by D. Kagan, 'The dates of the earliest coins', *AJA* 86 (1982), 343-60. An extreme view in the opposite direction has been

was indeed the case, much of sympotic lyric, as well as the elegies ascribed to Solon, were composed before the introduction of coinage. It is time to take the diffuse picture of the date and function of the 'first coinage' as evidence in itself and wonder whether the problems may lie in our desperate search for origins rather than in the lack of information available. The earliest known hoard contains coins with and without a type, as well as bullion lumps of electrum cut to a weight standard. The fact, moreover, that in one instance a piece with a type is struck with the same punch as a typeless nugget, renders it unlikely that coins proper 'replaced' pre-monetary currencies.<sup>17</sup>

The polis gradually created the conditions which are necessary for modern definitions of coinage. For example, if coins are defined as 'pieces of metal issued by state authority', we must bear in mind that state authority is only developing in the period of the first coins.<sup>18</sup> If coinage is taken as 'a universal equivalent used as a medium of exchange', it should be noted that the conditions for universal conventions were only emerging in the sixth century.<sup>19</sup> It has been argued by other scholars that the development of coinage was dependent on the development of the polis. Thus Howgego writes,

The explanation [for the rapid spread of coinage] is rather to be found in the receptive ground provided by the radical transformation of the polis in the sixth century BC. The interaction of economic, social and political changes were complex. The spread of coinage may itself be seen both as caused by such changes, and also as an agent in the process.<sup>20</sup>

He emphasises the growth of the market as a place for political, judicial, social, religious and economic activities, the decline of aristocratic patronage in favour of civic relationships based on a constitution as well as interregional trade, ties between mother cities and colonies and connections with the hellenized areas of the Persian Empire. He argues, with Will, that the development of coinage was one aspect of a more fundamental tendency to establish conventional norms which could be enforced. Yet Howgego only glosses the process of transition from pre-monetary currencies to coinage. Although he briefly mentions the use of silver in the administration of Athens before coinage (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 8.3), his remarks on proto-money refer almost exclusively to epic.<sup>21</sup>

Legal inscriptions of the late archaic period offer some insight into the social practice of payment both before and after the 'introduction' of coinage. In the earliest extant written laws, precious metal vessels serve as *epitimia* or *apoina*. In a Cretan law dated to the late seventh/early sixth centuries, penalties fixed for certain offences are 5 and 100 *lebêtes* (*ICret*

advanced by M. Vickers, 'Early Greek coinage: a reassessment', *NC* 45 (1985) 108-28, who dates the earliest coins from Ephesus to 550, the Athenian *Wappenmünzen* to the late sixth and the first 'owls' to some time between 479 and 462 BC; his arguments are inconclusive.

<sup>17</sup> S. Karwiese, 'The Artemisium coin hoard and the first electrum coins of Ephesus,' *RBN* 137 (1991) 1-28, esp. 9 f.

<sup>18</sup> I have argued in von Reden, 176-81, that sixth-century political poetry betrays a very unstable concept of state authority, and that in Athens the development of coinage needs to be considered in the light of the increasing stabilization of state authority in the sixth century BC. For the definition of coinage, cf. L. Gernet, 'Value in Greek myth' (1948), in R.L. Gordon (ed.), *Myth, religion and society* (Cambridge 1980) 111-46, esp. 111.

<sup>19</sup> For this definition see Seaford, 199. The large variety of different weight standards of coinages which were in existence during the sixth and fifth centuries BC, and the frequency with which they were altered according to new political constellations, especially in the early period of coinage, show the problems of creating a 'universal equivalent' in political communities with low political integration. For a convenient overview of weight standards see Kraay, Appendix I.

<sup>20</sup> Howgego, 16.

<sup>21</sup> Howgego, 6 ff., 12 f. For coinage as a means of fixing and stabilising value see also R.W. Wallace, 'The origins of electrum coinage', *AJA* 91 (1987) 385-97, esp. 395 ff.

IV 1).<sup>22</sup> Another very fragmentary inscription from the sixth century mentions blood-money of 1 *tripous* (*ICret* IV 8<sub>a-d</sub>).<sup>23</sup> From Lyttos in Crete a penalty of 100 *lebêtes* is imposed on any *kosmos* or *apokosmos* who hosts a foreigner (*SEG* XXXV 991).<sup>24</sup>

The convention of assessing penalties in precious metal vessels seems to have persisted into a time when payment in bullion and coinage had become widespread. In a third-century BC inscription from Knossos penalties are expressed both in monetary units (*statêres*) and in numbers of *lebêtes*.<sup>25</sup> There seems to have been a development in the cities of Crete from payment in *lebêtes/tripoda* to bullion and coinage. The majority of penalties preserved from the Gortynian town law (now dated to about 450 BC) are expressed in units of *drachmai* and *statêres*, and there is no reason to doubt that these were paid in coinage: Aeginetan coins circulated widely before Cretan cities had their own coinage.<sup>26</sup> A similar case is a temple law from Axos dated to a time when Axos had no coinage of its own.<sup>27</sup> A priest who took more sacrificial meat than appointed had to return double the amount and pay a penalty of 1 *statêr*. As in Gortyn, payment must have been due in foreign coinage or in bullion. An interesting document for the transition from payment in bullion to coinage is, finally, a law from Eretria (*IG* XII, 9, 1273.1274).<sup>28</sup> The inscription, which is dated to about 525 BC, is again very fragmentary, but in two sections it refers to penalties of ‘δέκα στατêρας’, and payment to be made in ‘χρέματα δόκιμα’ (1,3). The first Eretrian coinage, however, is dated to not earlier than about 500 BC. Two possibilities have been suggested: either penalties were paid in foreign currency which had to be approved by Eretrian officials (thus *chremata dokima*), or *statêr* was used as a standard of weight, and *chremata* were simply ‘goods’ which had to be of ‘approved quality’ (thus *dokima*).<sup>29</sup> Whatever interpretation is adopted, the inscription shows that payments in precious metal objects, bullion, foreign coins or civic coinage were not a matter of ideological distinction.

The evidence from Greece and the Aegean is paralleled by some evidence from the Black Sea region. A sixth/fifth-century inscription from Olbia, written on a skyphos, mentions the sum

<sup>22</sup> Koerner, no. 116; see also M. Gagarin, ‘The organisation of the Gortyn law code’, *GRBS* 23 (1982) 129-46, esp. 136. *Lebêtes* are typical objects of banquet equipment and may be seen in connection with the Near Eastern links of the ‘elitist tradition’ which Morris (n.9) identifies.

<sup>23</sup> For date and discussion see Guarducci, *ICret*. Vol. IV *ad loc.*; Koerner, no. 118.

<sup>24</sup> Koerner, no. 87; van Effenterre and Ruzé, no. I.12

<sup>25</sup> *ICret* I, VIII, 5. It has been argued that *lebêtes* stands here not for the actual vessel but as a name for the Aeginetan *drachmê* piece (de Sanctis in *Monumenti antichi editi per cura del Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* 18 (1907) 302 ff.; cf. L.H. Jeffery, *The local scripts of archaic Greece* (Oxford<sup>2</sup>1990) 313). This is, however, unlikely as no issue of an Aeginetan drachma carries a *lebêtes* as its mark.

<sup>26</sup> *ICret* IV 72 *passim*. The first Cretan coinage was struck in Gortyn and Phaestus sometime between 450-425 BC. Until the middle of the fifth century a not insubstantial amount of Aeginetan coinage circulated on the island: G. Le Rider, *Monnaies Crétoises du V<sup>e</sup> au I<sup>er</sup> siècle av.J.-C.* (Paris 1966) 166; Kraay, 50. R.F. Willetts, *The law code of Gortyn* (Berlin 1967) 8-9 dating (with no authority) the beginnings of coinage to the beginning of the 5th century, argues that the town law of Gortyn was a direct result of an increasing interest of the Cretan aristocracy in trade: ‘Gortyn was the first of the Cretan cities to have a coinage. The introduction of Cretan coinage antedates, so far as present knowledge goes, the publication of the Gortyn Code by roughly one generation. There thus appears to be a marked connection between trade, coinage and written law’ (9). There is, however, no reason to make trade a condition for the influx of coinage into Cretan society.

<sup>27</sup> *ICret* II 9 (fifth cent.). For the date of the inscription see Jeffery (n.22) 316. For the absence of coinage in Axos before 380-70; see Le Rider (n.23) 197.

<sup>28</sup> Koerner, no. 72-73; van Effenterre and Ruzé, no. 91.

<sup>29</sup> For the former van Effenterre and Ruzé, 331; for the latter F. Cairns, ‘*Chremata dokima*: *IG* XII, 9, 1273.1274 and the early coinage of Eretria’, *ZPE* 54 (1984) 145-55, esp. 154.

of 11 arrow heads paid as penalty.<sup>30</sup> Large amounts of arrow heads which cannot have served any military purpose have been found in the hinterland of Olbia. These objects are likely to have been related to some weight standard, as a stone found in the same region and carrying the relief of an arrow head suggests.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, they are now regarded as some kind of currency of the Greek colonies rather than of the Scythian tribes.<sup>32</sup> In the same area vast numbers of cast coins stamped with either arrow heads or dolphins are attested.<sup>33</sup> Graves and other archaeological contexts suggest that this coinage was in use from the middle of the sixth to the fourth centuries BC. Their intrinsic value is low and their main function is thought to have been local exchange and to serve as 'Charon's obol'. Whether this coinage stands in the same tradition as the arrow heads mentioned in the skyphos-inscription is not certain; significant is, however, that there was an interdependence of the symbolism of pre-monetary precious objects, used within a system of social justice, and coinage.

Evidence and interpretation of the much discussed *obeloi*, found in tombs and sanctuaries mainly of the eighth and seventh centuries BC, is more difficult. However, a brief look at this material may be instructive, as it points to the social context in which media of exchange circulated. It also illustrates the interpenetration of different exchange contexts before the use of a universal medium of exchange.

The earliest specimens known are three bronze *obeloi* found in a Geometric I grave in Palaepaphos, Cyprus. One of them carries the inscription *Opheltas* ('the spit of Opheltas').<sup>34</sup> The spits are found in close proximity to one large and three small bronze bowls as well as to a bronze tripod. Quality and quantity of the tomb gifts point to a grave of high social status.<sup>35</sup> In Greece, the earliest iron spits in tombs are found in Crete and date to the tenth century BC. Further examples are ninth and eighth-century finds again from Crete, a ninth-century one from Lefkandi, and three eighth-century ones from Argos. As in Cyprus, all find contexts point to the burial rituals of a warrior elite.<sup>36</sup> Iron *obeloi* dedicated to a sanctuary, or left as remnants of animal sacrifices nearby, are also found all over Greece. The most famous find is that of the Argive Heraion, probably dedicated some time in the sixth century BC. Considerable numbers of spits were also found in or nearby the Hestiatorion in Perachora (probably sixth century BC), the Apollo sanctuary at Delphi, the Apollo temple at Halieis (seventh century BC), that of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, the Heraion of Samos (c. 600 BC), the sanctuary of Hera and Zeus at Olympia, and those of Zeus at Dodone and Nemea (late sixth and early fifth centuries BC).<sup>37</sup>

Whether *obeloi* were indeed a limited purpose medium of exchange is hard to tell. It is

<sup>30</sup> Published in B.N. Grakov, *Istorija, archeologija i etnographica Srednej Azii* (Moscow 1968) (*non vidi*; see K. Golenko, 'Literaturüberblick der griechischen Numismatik—Nördliches Schwarzmeergebiet', *Chiron* 5 (1975) 497 ff. No 164). For the following see E. Schönert-Geiss, 'Bemerkungen zu den prämonetären Geldformen und zu den Anfängen der Münzprägung' *Klio* 79 (1987) 406-42, esp. 413, who also gives a paraphrase of the text.

<sup>31</sup> B.N. Grakov, 'Noch einmal zum Pfeilgeld', *VDI* 3 (1971) 125-27 (with Engl. summary).

<sup>32</sup> H.B. Wells, 'The arrow-money of Thrace and southern Russia', *SAN* 9 (1978) (1) 6-9 and (2) 24-6. Cf. Schönert-Geiss (n.27) 412-3.

<sup>33</sup> W. Stancomb, 'Arrowheads, dolphins and cast coins in the Black Sea region', *Classical Numismatic Review* 18 (1993) 5; A.N. Zograph, *Ancient coinage*. British Archaeological Reports Suppl. Ser. 33 (London 1977) 188-93; A.J. Graham, 'Greek and Roman settlements on the Black Sea coast: historical background' in G.R. Tsetschkladze (ed.), *Greek and Roman settlements on the Black Sea coast* (Washington 1994) 4-10, with discussion and further bibliography.

<sup>34</sup> V. Karageorghis, *Palaphos-Skales. An Iron Age cemetery in Cyprus* (Konstanz 1983) tomb 49, finds 16-18; pp. 59-61 and appendix IV; see also id., *CRAI* (1980) 49, pp. 135-6, figs. 11 and 12.

<sup>35</sup> Karageorghis (n.34) 372.

<sup>36</sup> For an overview with further literature see I. Strøm, 'Obeloi of pre- or proto-monetary value in Greek sanctuaries' in T. Linders and B. Alroth, *Economics of cult in the ancient world*, *Boreas* 21 (Uppsala 1992) 41-51.

<sup>37</sup> I am following again the recent summary and discussion by Strøm (n.36).

striking that many *obeloi* are found in sets of 6, 12 and 18, occasionally 3 or 5.<sup>38</sup> Yet attempts to prove that they were a 'proto-money' lack persuasive arguments.<sup>39</sup> There is no indication that *obeloi* circulated in a clearly defined area in which their value was standardised and granted by higher authority.<sup>40</sup> The argument that they were produced to a weight standard or in standard sizes is inconclusive, given that corrosion and damage renders the reconstruction of individual *obeloi* more than difficult.<sup>41</sup> The fact that they were found in sets of certain numbers may suggest that they were conventionally used and dedicated in sets, but it is no indication that they were part of a denomination system.

What these spits do suggest, however, is that countable objects of no intrinsic value were valued as objects of social and religious celebrations among an elite. Perhaps a connection with banquet traditions can be inferred from the fact that they seem to have been interred together with other equipment related to this tradition. Not only do the find contexts of spits in tombs suggest this connection, but temple inventories, too, seem to have listed sets of *obeliskoi* together with *lebêtes*, cups, *klinai*, craters, etc.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, it is significant that they seem to have circulated in more than one institutionalised context of exchange: sacrificial meals, ceremonial dedications, banquets and burials. To regard them as proto-money clearly goes too far, if the concept of money is understood in any restricted sense. Yet they can serve as evidence of countable objects that were used by an elite for rendering social and religious obligations.

Much has been written on so-called primitive money. Yet descriptions tend to concentrate on the range of objects that circulated before all-purpose money in the form of coinage was introduced. Less attention has been paid to the fact that such monies represent attempts to render value quantifiable and socially negotiable. The standardisation of measures may be dated back to the first half of the seventh century BC, and the fact that reforms of measure, weight and coinage are often confused in later traditions shows the connection made between value, weight and number.<sup>43</sup> But the development had been in progress before the seventh century. Not only do we find in Homer the value of armour, slaves, prizes and women expressed in units of cattle but, much more interestingly, Achilles raises the problem of whether the value of his life can be compared to a certain quantity of precious objects.<sup>44</sup> The desire to assess value, to use standard units of value, and to render value comparable sprang from much wider concerns than trade and commercial exchange. If, then, coinage was the final stage of an increasing tendency to render value comparable, quantifiable and measurable, we should seek the context of the development of coinage more generally in institutions where value needed to be measured, quantified and compared. In the following section I shall focus on the use of coinage in institutions other than the market in order to highlight the extent to which coinage as a standard

<sup>38</sup> Strøm (n.36); see also P. Courbin 'Obéloi d'Argolide et d'ailleurs' in R. Hägg (ed.), *The Greek renaissance of the 8th century BC. Tradition and innovation* (Athens 1983) 149-56; A. Furtwängler, 'Zur Deutung der Obeloi im Lichte Samischer Neufunde' in A. Cahn & E. Simon (eds.), *Tainia. Roland Hampe zum 70. Geburtstag* (Mainz 1980) 81-98; U. Kron 'Zum Hypogäum von Paestum', *JDI* 86 (1971) 131-44.

<sup>39</sup> See esp. P. Courbin, 'Dans la Grèce archaïque. Valeur comparée du fer et de l'argent lors l'introduction de monnayage', *Annales E.S.C.* 14 (1959) 209-33; Strøm (n.36); Courbin (n.38); Kron (n.38) with further references. Against, Furtwängler (n.38).

<sup>40</sup> Furtwängler (n.38) 89.

<sup>41</sup> See Furtwängler (n.38) against Courbin (nn. 38 and 39).

<sup>42</sup> Strøm (n.36) 42, 48; for a list of banquet equipment including *obeliskoi*, see the fourth-century inscription from Chostia in Boeotia (*BCH* 62 (1938) 149 ff.); cf. R.A. Tomlinson, 'Two notes on possible hestiatoria', *BSA* 75 (1980) 221 ff. I do not find the two sixth-century examples Strøm cites convincing evidence.

<sup>43</sup> P.J. Rhodes, *A Commentary on the Athenaiôn Politeia* (Oxford 1980) 165 and *Ath. Pol.* 10.4.

<sup>44</sup> Hom. *Il.* 9.632-8; cf. von Reden, 18-24.

of value was symbolised by civic relationships, while at the same time circulating as a medium of exchange in the interregional economy of commercial exchange.

## II. COINAGE AND THE VALUE OF THE CITIZEN

(1) *Law, agora and temple.* Historians of law have emphasised that early written law is predominantly concerned with legal procedure and the regulation of concrete offences rather than with the establishment of a new kind of justice.<sup>45</sup> Already in Homer a murderer is said to have the option of paying *poinë* or *apoina* instead of leaving the country, and an adulterer must pay recompense (*moichagria*) to the injured party.<sup>46</sup> Yet early written law betrays an attempt to fix rules and thus also to fix the amount of penalties to be paid. The emergence of legal inscriptions is therefore significant above all from a political perspective in that it represents new modes of political interaction, communication and exchange. The politics lying behind the codification of law is notoriously difficult to reconstruct. Is the writing down and publication of legal rules and procedures part of the process by which poleis constituted themselves as city states, or was the polis as an abstract authority a pre-condition for the various phenomena which archaic legal inscriptions attest?<sup>47</sup> To what extent was it the purpose of written laws to create a more egalitarian political process and to guarantee to a wider group of people formal legal procedures?<sup>48</sup> By what social conflicts was this process set in motion and by whom was it controlled? These questions have to be kept in mind when the monetization of penalty payments in the archaic polis is considered.

In the earliest extant law (Dreros, late seventh century BC), 'the polis' (πόλι) prescribes that a *kosmos* who iterates office within a period of ten years 'shall owe double the amount' (ὀπῆλεν διπλεῖ) and shall lose his right to office.<sup>49</sup> 'Opheilein' is the word used regularly in later legal inscriptions when a (monetary) penalty is involved. More problematic is the way the amount of payment is defined. Does *diplei* refer to another law, not preserved, in which a particular sum was stated?<sup>50</sup> There is, however, no indication that the law was part of a longer code. More likely is the possibility which Ehrenberg suggested when rendering 'opêlen diplei' rather freely as 'the *kosmos* shall himself be liable to fines double the amount of those inflicted by him as a judge'.<sup>51</sup> As in the law of Axos which we mentioned earlier (*ICret* II 9), a multiple of the damage inflicted is to be paid as recompense.

<sup>45</sup> Thomas (n.8) emphasises in particular the oral tradition that lies behind the written laws: 'We ... cannot understand the full significance of early written law in Greece without grasping the oral background: for example, the extent of oral communication, of customary or oral law, the role of those early officials called *mnemones* and therefore of sheer memory in legal procedures' (p.61); similarly K.-J. Hölkeskamp, 'Written law in archaic Greece', *PCPS* 38 (1992) 87-117, esp. 89 ff. *contra*: M. Gagarin, *Early Greek law* (Berkeley 1986) 1 ff.

<sup>46</sup> Hom. *Il.* 9.632-38; cf. the trial scene on the shield of Achilles: 18.498-500; *Od.* 8. 32; R.F. Willetts, *Aristocratic society in ancient Crete* (London 1955) 86, sees in the term *moichagria* a special term for recompense in cases of private tort. Compare *ICret* IV 72 II, 2-45.

<sup>47</sup> See Hölkeskamp (n.8), and further A. Snodgrass, 'Interaction by design. The Greek city state', in C. Renfrew and J.F. Cherry (eds.), *Peer polity interaction and sociopolitical change* (Cambridge 1986) 47-58; I. Morris, 'The early polis as state' in J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *City and country in the ancient world* (London 1991) 25-58.

<sup>48</sup> The most sustained argument against this view has been offered by Thomas (n.8); see also S. Stoddart and J. Whitley, 'The social context of literacy in archaic Greece and Etruria' *Antiquity* 62 (1988) 761-72, with focus on Crete.

<sup>49</sup> *M/L* 2; Koerner, no 91; cf. *id.*, 'Beamtenvergehen und deren Bestrafung nach frühen griechischen Inschriften', *Klio* 69 (1987) 450-98, esp. 451 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Thus P.J. Rhodes in a personal communication.

<sup>51</sup> V. Ehrenberg, 'An early source of polis-constitution', *CQ* 37 (1943) 14-18, esp. 14. See also Hölkeskamp (n.8) 136, and *SEG* 28.103.39-41 for a parallel example.



Similar evidence comes from other archaic laws. In a *rhetra* from Elis (c. 475 BC) the highest magistrate and the *basileis* are imposed a penalty of 10 *minae* each, to be paid to the Olympian Zeus, if they do not attribute certain rights to Patrias the scribe (*IvOl* 2).<sup>52</sup> The *hellanodikas* is made responsible for collecting this penalty, while the *damiorgia* are obliged to accord the rights neglected; and they have to pay the *diplon* to the *mastoi* if they, too, fail to do so.<sup>53</sup> A sixth-century law from Gortyn prescribes penalties if a *kosmos* repeats office within three years, a *gnômon* within ten years and a *xenios* within five years. Penalties for these offences were assessed in a certain number of *lebêtes* (*ICret* IV 14<sub>g-p</sub>).<sup>54</sup> The same fragment contains a penalty of 50 *lebêtes* for an offence which is not preserved.<sup>55</sup> Better preserved is an inscription from fifth-century Erythrai.<sup>56</sup> Here it is stated that the offices of *grammateus* and *tamias* are not to be iterated, and that two offices may not be held at once. Breach of the law is punished with curse, *atimia* and 100 *statêres* (κατάρρητόν τε αὐτὸν εἶναι καὶ ἄτιμον καὶ ὀφείλεν αὐτὸν ἑκατὸν στατήρας). Similar evidence emerges from homicide law. Quite in line with the Homeric idea of *apoina* is a law from sixth-century Gortyn where *poinë* is fixed at one *tripous*.<sup>57</sup> Another late sixth-century inscription from Sicily (Monte San Mauro di Caltagirone, near Gela) mentions penalties imposed on the murderer (*phoneus*) of 1, 2 and 3 *talanta* as well as perhaps 1 *statêr*.<sup>58</sup>

No difference in the means of payment seems to have been made in secular and sacred institutions. Penalties, tithes and other dues were inflicted on both priests and worshippers, and they were extracted partly or wholly in the form of *agalmata*, bullion weight or coinage. Dedications, moreover, recorded in *drachmai* or *obeloi*, refer indistinguishably to either coinage or weight and attest to the widespread use of, and interchangeability between, coins and precious metal bars or objects in the archaic temple economy.<sup>59</sup> The intimate link between political government and the temple in archaic political, legislative and economic practice renders it unsurprising that they adopted the same medium of exchange. Laws were fixed to temple walls or kept inside the sanctuary; the *rhetrai* of Elis were written on bronze tablets vowed to the temple of Zeus in Olympia, and the agrarian law of Naupaktos was not only vowed to Apollo but penalties had to be paid to the god as *agalmata* (*ML* 13; see also *ML* 17). The law of Dreros concludes with a list of those who ‘swear the oath’, probably every year (*ML* 2). The fact that both temples and political government adopted coinage for their most obligatory payments must make us think more carefully about the claim that money was espoused by the middling tradition in opposition to the elite whose ‘authority lay outside these middling communities, in an inter-polis aristocracy which had privileged links to the gods, the heroes and the East’.<sup>60</sup> The differentiation of politics, identified with the agora and *boulê*, from

<sup>52</sup> The reading of the text is controversial, see for discussion Koerner, no 37; van Effenterre and Ruzé, no 23.

<sup>53</sup> Koerner (n.49) 475-6; *id.*, ‘Vier frühe Verträge zwischen Gemeinwesen und Privatleuten auf griechischen Inschriften’, *Klio* 63 (1981) 179-206, esp. 193; Hölkeskamp (n.8) 150.

<sup>54</sup> Koerner, no 121; van Effenterre and Ruzé, no 82.

<sup>55</sup> See also *ICret* IV 78, 4 ff. See for both Willetts (n.46) 105 f.; Gagarin (n.45) 135; Koerner (n.49) 455-7, 478-9; Hölkeskamp (n.8) 150.

<sup>56</sup> *IvEr* I.1; see also Pleket, in his review *Gnomon* 47 (1975) 565; Koerner (n.49) 460-62; Koerner, nos. 74, 75.

<sup>57</sup> *ICret* IV 8<sub>a-d</sub>; cf. Koerner, no 118.

<sup>58</sup> *SEG* IV. 64; cf. Koerner, no. 86.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 4 A/B; I<sup>3</sup> 138 (both Athens); A.E. Raubitschek, ‘Another drachma dedication’, *YCS* 11 (1950) 295 f. (Athens); H. Payne, *Perachora* I (1940, no 1; p.257 (Perachora); I<sup>3</sup> 250; (Paiania); *IvOl* 5 (Olympia); *CID* I 9 (Delphi); *IG* XII 5, 593 (Ioulis/Keos); *ICret* II 9 (Axos). Further examples in Sokolowski, index s.v. *drachmê*, *statêr*, *obolos*, *argurion*.

<sup>60</sup> Kurke (unpublished) quoting Morris (n.9) 21.

the temple happened subsequently, and never completely, and was caused among other things by the very practice of fixing laws in writing.<sup>61</sup>

It is important to note, finally, that in the majority of extant laws punishment is imposed on priests, the highest magistrates, or judges. Despite the fact that in principle monetary penalties could accrue to any citizen, the surviving body of evidence suggests that it was above all the elite holding political and religious office who had to be able to afford substantial monetary penalties. It was, moreover, the same class of people who according to these laws were able to pay penalties in the form of traditionally high-class objects such as *lebêtes*, tripods and precious metal bars, and who had to make payments in the form of coinage. The picture emerging is thus similar to that established in the case of literacy in early law where, too, it has been observed that there was gradual transition, rather than a revolutionary change, from oral to written communication.<sup>62</sup>

(2) *Marriage*. Much less is known about the regulation of marriage in the late archaic cities and the transfers of valuables involved in it. Yet numerous anthropological examples draw our attention to matrimonial exchange as an important occasion where coins and precious metal objects changed hands, and where the amounts given and received were carefully evaluated in monetary terms.<sup>63</sup> The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* imply that traditionally large amounts of gifts were exchanged at the wedding, and that their size and number made symbolic statements about the power of the bride's father's family, the groom, or the value of the bride herself.<sup>64</sup> Little is known about the development of matrimonial exchanges between Homer and the classical period. An historical tradition has it that Solon imposed restrictions on matrimonial gifts: Plutarch reports that in all marriages (other than those to an heiress) Solon prohibited trousseaus (*phernai*); the bride was to bring with her three *himatia*, household equipment of little monetary value (μικροῦ νομισματοῦ ἄξια), and nothing else (Plut. *Sol* 20.4). There is no doubt that throughout the classical period a dowry (*proix*) could be of considerable monetary value and was usually paid in cash. In the case of wealthy Athenian families dowries ranged between 500 dr and 2 talents. From *Is* 11.40 can be inferred that receiving 2000 dr as a dowry was not

<sup>61</sup> Most recently Hölkeskamp (n.8), cf. Detienne (n.8); Gagarin (n.8) 130 ff. For the continuous penetration of political activity with sacred ritual well into the classical period see W.R. Connor, 'Sacred and secular: *hiera* and *hosia* in the classical Athenian concept of the state', *AncSoc* 19 (1988) 161-88.

<sup>62</sup> Thomas (n.8) 69 ff. Attention should be drawn here also (a) to the sympotic context in which the constitutional ideas of Solon on the one hand and the laws of Charondas on the other were expressed: G. Camessa, 'Aux origines de la codification écrite des lois en Grèce' in M. Detienne (ed.), *Les savoirs de l'écriture en Grèce ancienne* (Lille 1988) 130-55; L. Piccirilly, "'Nomoi" cantati et "nomoi" scritti', *Civiltà classica et cristiana* 2 (1981) 7-14; and (b) to the exclusively elite context in which the scribe Spensithios was employed and paid a *misthos* of 20 *drachmai* (coins or bullion) in Crete (c. 500 BC); cf. L.F. Jeffery and A. Morpurgo-Davies, *Kadmos* 9 (1970) esp. p. 137; H. van Effenterre, 'Le contrat de travail du scribe Spensithios', *BCH* 97 (1973) 31-46; for the social context see Stoddard and Whitley (n.48) 766; and, perhaps slightly overstated, W. Eder, 'The political significance of the codification of law in archaic societies', in K.A. Raaflaub, *Social struggles in archaic Rome* (Berkeley 1986) 262-300.

<sup>63</sup> Particularly useful for the question of money use in matrimonial payments is J.L. Camaroff (ed.), *The meaning of marriage payments* (Cambridge 1980); see esp. the articles by D. Parkin, 'Kind bridewealth and hard cash: inventing a structure', 197-218, and D.B. Rheubottom, 'Dowry and wedding in Yugoslav Macedonia', 221-31; fascinating material is also extant for Egypt under Persian rule, where high-value (foreign) coins became part of the dowry in Egyptian families long before taxation and market exchange were monetized; see E. Lüddeckens, *Ägyptische Eheverträge* (Wiesbaden 1960); P.W. Pestman, *Marriage and matrimonial property in ancient Egypt* (Leiden 1961).

<sup>64</sup> The evidence was first collected by M.I. Finley, *The world of Odysseus* (Harmondsworth<sup>2</sup> 1974); cf. *id.*, 'Marriage, sale and gift in the Homeric world' in *id.*, *Economy and society in ancient Greece* (London 1981) 233-45. See more recently A.L. di Lello-Finuoli, 'Donne e matrimonio nella Grecia arcaica', *SMEA* 25 (1984) 275-302; J. Modrzejewski, *La structure juridique du mariage grec* (Athens 1981); see also I. Morris, 'The use and abuse of Homer', *CA* 5 (1986) 81-129, von Reden, 49-57 with further literature.

regarded as adequate for someone belonging to the liturgy paying class.<sup>65</sup> Dotal *apotimēmata* suggest, moreover, that it was prestigious to pay sums that not everybody held ready in hand. There is no indication, finally, that large dowries were irreconcilable with the democratic ideology of Athens.

If we believe in the authenticity of the Solonic law, which does not seem to be at issue in the cases of the sumptuary legislation in general<sup>66</sup>, the control of the size of *phernai* must be reconciled with the unrestricted size of *proikes* in the classical period. Gernet once argued that *phernai* must have referred to the conspicuous economy of aristocratic families transferring among themselves valuables of limited availability at the occasion of *rites de passage* to demonstrate their power and privilege. *Proikes*, by contrast, consisted of money and were symbolic of civic wealth and thus unaffected by the sumptuary legislation.<sup>67</sup> Based on less prejudiced argument is di Lello-Finuoli's suggestion that the main historical transformation was that from *hedna* to *proix*, while *pherna* referred in both the archaic and the classical period to the personal 'trousseau' which the wife, rather than her husband, received from her father.<sup>68</sup> Di Lello-Finuoli suggests, furthermore, that the items of the *pherna* could be included in the estimation of the *proix* and were then expressed in terms of their monetary value. Here may lie also the significance of the Solonian law in our present context. Rather than being evidence for a distinction between aristocratic and civic kinds of wealth, it suggests that the value of the *pherna* was already by the sixth century assessed in monetary terms. Matrimonial transactions were clearly cash affairs in the classical period, and there is some indication that they were involved in the transformation of payments made in the form of valuable objects to monetary tokens and coinage.

(3) *Athletic contests and the competition for military excellence.* The political significance of athletic contests in the late sixth and early fifth-century polis can hardly be underestimated. Not only were there the four great games of the *periodos* (Olympia, Delphi, Nemea and Isthmia) but in addition there had been established a large number of local games in which citizens and foreigners competed against each other.<sup>69</sup> The distinction between local and panhellenic

<sup>65</sup> D. Schaps, *Economic rights of women in ancient Greece* (Edinburgh 1979) esp. 130. His lists in appendix II, however, seem to me to rely on too literal a reading of statements on dowry sizes in oratory and New Comedy.

<sup>66</sup> The authenticity of Solonian laws is always doubtful. Because of the reference to *nomisma* in this particular prescription, its dating to the beginning of the sixth century BC is questionable. There is no reason, however, to doubt its sixth-century origin, given that it seems to be not unparalleled in the late archaic period, cf. Seaford, 74-8. For further discussion see E. Ruschenbusch, *Solonos Nomoi*. Historia Einzelschrift 9 (Wiesbaden 1966), and R. Stroud, *The Axones and Kyrbeis of Solon and Drakon* (Berkeley 1979).

<sup>67</sup> L. Gernet, 'Mots de lexicologie juridique', *Ann.Inst.Ph.O.* 5 (1937) 391-8; Schaps (n.65) 104 assumes that jewellery, clothes and household equipment were not part of the *proix* in classical Athens.

<sup>68</sup> Di Lello-Finuoli (n.64) 293 f; Morris (n.64) 108 f.

<sup>69</sup> Research on ancient athletic contests takes two directions. The one focuses mainly on the history of disciplines, conditions of training, etc. The other concentrates on the meaning and function of athletic competition in religion and politics. Only the latter interests us here. See esp. H.W. Pleket, 'Games, prizes, athletes and ideology', *Stadion* 1 (1975) 49-89, and *id.*, 'Zur Soziologie des antiken Sports', *Medelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 36 (1974) 57-87; (also for earlier literature), D.G. Kyle, 'Solon and Athens', *AncW* 9 (1984) 91-105; *id.*, 'The Panathenaic games: sacred and civic athletics', in J. Neils (ed.), *Goddess and polis. The Panathenaic festival in ancient Athens* (Princeton 1992) 71-101; L. Kurke, 'The economy of *kudos*', in C. Dougherty and L. Kurke, *Cultural poetics in archaic Greece* (Cambridge 1993) 131-63. See also W. Rudolph, 'Zu den Formen des Berufssportes zur Zeit der Poliskrise', in E.C. Welskopf, *Hellenische Poleis* Vol. III (Berlin 1974) 1472-83; D.C. Young, *The Olympic myth of Greek amateur athletics* (Chicago 1984). Both of the latter engage in the rather anachronistic question of whether ancient athletics were amateur or professional sports. Local games were mostly open for citizens and foreigners; we hear, however, of games in Hellenistic Asia Minor which were open to citizens only. See Pleket, 56. The evidence for the relatively minor significance of the Olympic games in the eighth and seventh century is discussed by A. Hönle, *Olympia in der Politik der griechischen Staatenwelt (von 776 bis zum Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts)*, (Diss. Tübingen 1967).

contests coincided with the distinction between sacred crown games (*agônes hieroi kai stephanitai*) and what may be called money games (*agônes thematikoi* or *arguritai, chrêmatai, hêmitalantiaioi*). Although the terminology is postclassical, it referred to the traditional distinction between the games of the *periodos* where wreaths only were awarded and local games where athletes competed for valuable prizes (*themata* or *chrêmata*).<sup>70</sup> In some cases these valuables were related to the area where the festival was held. For example, at the Eleusinia, a festival in honour of Demeter, prizes were measured out in barley, at the Panathenaia athletes received amphorai of olive oil, at the Theoxenia in Pellene victors were rewarded with special cloaks for which the town was famous, and the Heraia of Argos took pride in the prizes of bronze shields.<sup>71</sup> Other *athla* seem to have been related to specific competitions.<sup>72</sup> Most commonly, however, bronze and silver containers, tripods as well as coinage, were given as rewards in late archaic local games. Again an overlap between precious metal objects and coinage can be observed.

On the one hand there are precious metal vessels such as the early fifth-century bronze *lebes* from Cyme carrying the inscription 'ἐπὶ τοῖς Ὀνομάστο τῷ Φειδιλέῳ ἄθλοισ ἐθέθεν' ('I was offered at the games of Onomastus son of Pheidileos').<sup>73</sup> A considerable number of containers awarded as *athla* either in athletic competitions, funerary games or for military excellence is extant.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, there are coinages which may have been issued specifically as prizes for athletic competition. Thus there is an early fifth-century stater from Metapontum with the inscription 'Ἀχελοῖο ἄθλον' and from fifth/fourth-century Syracuse comes an outstandingly beautiful series of dekadrachms with the inscription *athla*.<sup>75</sup> Some scholars even have seen a connection between the Athenian *Wappenmünzen* and the Panathenaic games. The festival was inaugurated shortly before this first Athenian coinage was issued, and arguably its iconography may be linked to different contests.<sup>76</sup> Finally, one should mention that tyrants and kings used coinage to commemorate their own athletic victories. Thus, for example, Anaxilas celebrated his Olympian mule car victories of 484 or 480 BC on his coinage at Rhegium and Zankle-Messana.<sup>77</sup>

The most explicit evidence for the mixing of coinage, precious metal objects, and (ceramic)

<sup>70</sup> Ath. 12. 522 c; cf. *RE*, Bd I.1 (1893) s.v. 'agones' 836-66, esp. 847-9; Rudolph (n.69) 1477 f.; Pleket, 'Games' (n.69) 57.

<sup>71</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 2311; Pind. *Nem.* 10.39-48; Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 7.51; *Nem.* 10.27; Poll. VII.67. Cf. Ebert, 55; Pleket, 57; *RE* Bd. II.4 (1896) s.v. 'athlon' 2058-63.

<sup>72</sup> *RE* s.v. 'athlon' (n.71), 2060 still most comprehensive.

<sup>73</sup> London, British Museum, Jeffery (n.25) 238, no. 8; Amandry, *BCH* 95 (1971) 618, no. XI.

<sup>74</sup> For an overview see P. Amandry, *BCH* 95 (1971) 602-26, and E. Vanderpool, 'Three prize vases', *AD* 24.1 (1971) 1-5. Prizes for victory in games on the one hand, and *athla* awarded for excellence in warfare on the other can hardly be distinguished in the evidence. This is not accidental but points to the lasting interdependence of warfare, funerary games, and other athletic contests (cf. Arist. *Ath.Pol.* 58.1; Lys. II. 80, Plat. *Men.* 249b). Some objects with an *athla* inscription explicitly mention that they had been awarded for excellence in warfare, others are more ambivalent.

<sup>75</sup> P. Noe, 'The coinage of Metapontum', *NM* 47 (1931) 4-8, no. 311; Jeffery (n.?) 254, 260, no. 13. For the Olympian dedication see M.N. Tod, 'Epigraphical notes on Greek coinage' *NC* 7 (1947) 1 ff.; for the *athla* series see esp. the recent discussion by W. Fischer-Bossert, 'ATHLA', *AA* (1992) 39-60, with further literature. Fischer-Bossert himself regards this coinage as being issued to pay mercenaries under Dionysius I. Against this interpretation can be held the outstanding beauty of this coinage, and the fact that it is not found in hoards outside Sicily; see also A. Gallatin, *Syracusan Dekadrachms of the Euainetos type* (Cambridge 1930).

<sup>76</sup> N. Yalouris, 'Athena als Herrin der Pferde', *MH* 7 (1950) 52-55, esp. 53 f. with further evidence. Against Yalouris, however, Kroll and Waggoner (n.16) n. 42, who note the absence of any *Nikê*, which was the most typical athletic symbol found on coins, in the series. The evidence is inconclusive. Probably a more complex story lies behind the iconography.

<sup>77</sup> Howgego, 63 and pl. 14.

vessels as prizes in local contests is the prize list from the Panathenaia dated to c. 370 (*IG II<sup>2</sup> 2311*).<sup>78</sup> The inscription states that gold and silver crowns of a specified weight and various sums of money were awarded to the winners in musical competitions (1-22); money and bulls for sacrifice were given to the victors in the pyrrhic dance, torch race, boat race and the competition in manly excellence (71-4). To winners in athletic contests specified numbers of prize amphoras were awarded (24-57). Although this inscription shows that in Athens the most prestigious prize was amphoras filled with oil, rather than money, it nevertheless indicates that coinage had a place in local games.

In the pan-hellenic crown games, athletes competed for olive or laurel wreaths rather than for coinage. Back at home, however, they could expect considerable material and monetary rewards. We know that from the sixth century onwards victors were honoured in their poleis with *prohedria*, *sitêsis*, crowns, statues, and precious objects. In a sixth-century inscription from Sybaris the Olympic victor Kleombrotus vows a statue worth a tenth of his prize (*dekaton*) to Athena.<sup>79</sup> Xenophanes, moreover, criticises the exaggerated expenditure and honours conferred by the cities on their Olympic victors: *sitêsis*, *prohedria* and *keimêlia*, (Xenoph. 21 B 2 [DK]). He does not specify the nature of *keimêlia* but they were quite probably of the same kind as the treasure of which Kleombrotos spent a tenth for an offering to Athena.

Plutarch associates with the archonship of Solon prizes for Olympic victors of 500 dr, and for Isthmian victors 100 dr (*Sol.* 23.3). Diogenes Laertius reports that Solon limited the rewards to athletes by allowing 500 dr for each Olympic victor, 100 for each Isthmian and lesser amounts for other victors (I.55). Whether these figures are rightly attributed to the time of Solon, and whether it was indeed Solon who altered public rewards for Athenian victors is questionable. It is significant, however, that the amount of the civic award to victors was a matter of conflict at some time. Diogenes Laertius adds to his report:

ἀπειρόκαλον γὰρ τὸ ἐξαιρεῖν τὰς τούτων τιμὰς, ἀλλὰ μόνων ἐκείνων τῶν ἐν πολέμοις τελευτησάντων, ὧν καὶ τοῦς υἱοὺς δημοσίᾳ τρέφεσθαι καὶ παιδεύεσθαι.

It was in bad taste, [Solon] urged, to increase the rewards of these victors, and to ignore the exclusive claims of those who had fallen in battle, whose sons ought, moreover, to be maintained and educated on public expense (I.55).

The rewards for athletic victors are compared here with the costs of the maintenance of orphans, which in the fifth century were an outstanding symbol of Athens' civic generosity and imperial power.<sup>80</sup> The two kinds of state expenditure seem to have been conflicting monetary payments in the symbolic economy of the fifth-century polis.

Kurke has well described the ritual by which the athlete dedicated his *kudos*, the power which made him win the contest, to the polis by dedicating his victory crown to a local god or hero. This was necessary because his outstanding success and status were potentially dangerous to the polis.<sup>81</sup> Yet in exchange for the sacrifice of *kudos*, the city offered him its greatest honours: a procession, a statue, public meals, front seats in the theatre and its own coinage. The

<sup>78</sup> See re-edition and commentary by Johnston, *ABSA* 82 (1987) 125-30.

<sup>79</sup> Ebert, 252-4, with full bibliography.

<sup>80</sup> The link is most obvious in the Periclean Funeral Oration; for which N. Loraux, *The invention of Athens* (Princeton 1986; French orig. 1980). It can also be inferred from the ritual of producing all orphans brought up at state expense before the audience at the Great Dionysia; for which S. Goldhill, 'The Great Dionysia and civic ideology', in J.J. Winkler and F. Zeitlin (eds.), *Nothing to do with Dionysos?* (Princeton 1990) 98-129, esp. 104 f. with Isocr. 8.82 and Schol. *Ar. Ach.* 504; Aesch. 3. 154.

<sup>81</sup> Kurke (n.69) 138 ff. with Diod. Sic. 13. 82.7-8; for the sometimes problematic status difference between victor and citizenry see *ead.*, *The traffic in praise* (Ithaca and London 1991) esp. 218 ff.

potential tension between civic and aristocratic values, between political competition and heroism, was dissolved by the exchange of heroic and civic symbols. In Athens, athletic victory became increasingly ambivalent under democracy. Nevertheless, the nature of the conflict suggests that it was a civic space which was contested.

There was in principle no ideological conflict between the award of crowns and that of monetary prizes. The same athletes participated both in the games of the *periodos* and in money games; some games had the status of crown games but nevertheless awarded valuables together with crowns to their victors; and there was no shame attached to mentioning monetary or other valuable prizes, even if one had won crowns in the *periodos*.<sup>82</sup> Given their local rather than panhellenic character, it is not surprising, however, that value prizes came to be regarded as of inferior status to sacred crowns. In a Hellenistic inscription a victor in the four-horse chariot race lists all crowns he had won at the games of the *periodos* and in the end refers to the prizes at games which had offered 'only' *themata* ([θ]έματα κείτο μόνον).<sup>83</sup> Coinage in particular seems to have symbolised the local meaning of contest and prize. The local meaning of coinage is indicated most clearly in the development of the *Theoxenia* at Pellene. In classical times the games had sacred status and thus more than local significance. Prizes were wreaths and cloaks. Yet at some time in the Hellenistic period the games lost their sacred status and the cloaks were replaced by cash prizes. As Pleket observes, 'the example of the *Theoxenia* shows that when an *agôn* lost its international, sacred status in the Hellenistic-Roman period, its prizes tended to become monetary.'<sup>84</sup> An anecdote preserved by Athenaeus in which Croton (or Sybaris) offered huge cash sums to athletes in an attempt to sabotage the Olympic games, thus clearly implied some irony (*Ath.* XII, 522c).

The development of ancient athletes from competitors for *kudos* to professional sportsmen trained with the money of, and winning for, their patrons changed the meaning of monetary awards probably as early as the fourth century BC. While at first intended to serve as an honour which a city bestowed on its victors, monetary payments could indeed be represented as fees or even bribes. Thus the runner Dicon, it was told, won many victories in the games of the *periodos*; yet whereas his later victories were won for the glory of Syracuse, the first he won in 392 BC was celebrated in Caulonia. For a bribe (ἐπὶ χρήματα), the story goes, Dicon had changed citizenship.<sup>85</sup> In the Hellenistic period the honours of public meals and front seats were often substituted by cash prizes, and then referred to as *misthoi* or *opsônia*. It is also from later periods that stories originate of victors selling their prizes and public honours to other citizens.<sup>86</sup> It is quite likely that, under the changed social and economic conditions of athletic contests in the Hellenistic period, the rituals surrounding athletic competition lost their former meaning. During the late archaic and classical period, however, commercial attitudes to prizes and civic rewards, despite being monetary, seem hardly to have been the norm.

Secular and sacred law, the temple, marriage, athletic contests and citizen armies were all institutions in which monetary tokens, precious metal objects and coinage circulated as a means of ascribing status, honouring the gods, and compensating for the damage of political and religious paraphernalia. To this must be added in the fifth century the large array of political

<sup>82</sup> In an inscription of the late sixth century an athlete mentions all his victories in local games and in Nemea; Ebert, no 10; cf. Pind. *Nem.* 10.39 ff. See also Pleket, 'Games' (n.69) 57.

<sup>83</sup> Ebert, 247-50, no 81 (after 244/5 AD).

<sup>84</sup> Pleket, 'Games' (n.69) 61, n. 49; for the *Theoxenia* and its prizes see Ebert, no. 10, 55.

<sup>85</sup> Paus. 6.3.11. In fact, all Caulonians were made Syracusan citizens under Dionysius; see Rudolph (n.69) 1480. Most such stories about bribery among athletes belong to the Hellenistic period; cf. Rudolph, *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Pleket, 'Soziologie' (n.69) 70; for *opsônia* see K.F. Dörner, *Der Erlaß des Statthalters von Asia Minor Paulus Fabius Persicus* (Greifswald 1935) 39; Plin. *Ep.* 10, 118 f.; *IvOl* 56.

payments, liturgies, jury pay and assembly pay in democratic Athens, the origin and development of which have too frequently been discussed to receive special treatment in this paper.<sup>87</sup> Coinage seems to have played an important part in the process by which these contexts of exchange developed into civic institutions. Issued by public authority and distributed by the elites who controlled the institutions of the early polis, coinage became increasingly symbolic of the public political character of the institutions in which it was used. There is no reason to construct an opposition between coinage on the one hand and pre-monetary tokens such as bullion, precious metal objects and *agalmata* traditionally valued by their use in aristocratic social and religious contexts of exchange on the other.<sup>88</sup> It was, rather, the increasing tension between civic and interregional relationships, between public and private space, the transformation of concepts of 'self' and status, combined with the function of coinage as both a standard of value and medium exchange, which rendered money a problematic signifier.

### III. COINAGE AND THE MORAL ECONOMY OF THE POLIS

The meaning of money as a civic standard of value and public means of fulfilling civic obligations was constantly threatened by its function as an impersonal measure of things and medium of exchange circulating in the sphere of private commercial exchange. The particular problem of money in the Greek polis lay in the fact that it could be used both in transactions involving commodities (including prisoners of war, slaves and prostitutes) and those involving the status of free citizens. This potentially called into question the singularity of, and hierarchies between, people of free status in contrast to the total exchangeability of objects and slaves. It also unsettled the boundary between local identity and foreign relations.<sup>89</sup> In this final section, I shall turn to the ideological constraints of money-use created by the ethical frame of the polis and the uneasy fit of coinage with honour, the body and 'self', which were part of that frame.

The most complex discussion of money, exchange and systems of social evaluation can be found in Herodotus. That Herodotus is above all a guide to the concerns of his own society needs no further mention. As Hartog has argued influentially, Herodotus' narratives are not faithful renditions of the customs of foreign people; rather in reporting the different and often grotesque habits of others, the ethnographer inscribes himself and his own culture into his text, thereby acting upon his own culture in an ordering and normative way.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>87</sup> See for public spending J.K. Davies, *Athenian propertied families* (Oxford 1976) xvii ff; D. Whitehead, 'Competitive outlay and community profit. *Philotimia* in classical Athens', *CetM* 34 (1983) 55-74; von Reden, 79-104; for political pay M.M. Markle, 'Jury pay and assembly pay at Athens', in P. Cartledge and D. Harvey, *Crux: Studies presented to G.E.M. de Ste Croix on his 75th birthday* (Exeter 1985) 289-326, also for older bibliography; add P. Schmitt-Pantel, *Le cité au banquet* (Rome 1992) and P. Millett 'Patronage and its avoidance' in A. Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in ancient Society* (London 1989) 15-47.

<sup>88</sup> See on the latter Gernet (n.18).

<sup>89</sup> Kopytoff (n.3); von Reden, 105 ff. for a similar ambivalence of the *agora*. Seaford, 223, emphasises more strongly the paradoxical capacity of money to create both order and disorder. As a universal equivalent, money relates the variety of goods to a single measure and thus, as law, creates order and coherence. Yet as an abstraction of things, a convention with no use in itself, it creates disorder because no limit is set to its accumulation. This observation goes back to the early modern metallist/anti-metallist controversy which was not least based on Aristotle (see further K. Hart, 'Heads or tails? Two sides of the coin', *Man* 21 (1986) 637-56). While it does explain Aristotle's ethical double bind about money, I do not find it particular helpful as an explanation for the problems raised in the texts I am discussing here.

<sup>90</sup> F. Hartog, *The mirror of Herodotus* (California 1988, French orig. Paris 1980). L. Kurke 'Tyrants and transgression: Darius and Amasis' (forthcoming) puts it succinctly: 'when the narrative is explicit about others, it is in some sense also about the "same"—the Greeks who are both producers and consumers of Herodotus' *logoi*. This is not simply because the Greeks can only imagine the "other" in terms of categories they know ... but also because,

Herodotus' discussions of monetary exchange take on particular significance in light of the overriding importance attached to exchange and reciprocity in his text. As Gould has argued, Herodotus' perception of history relied on a perception of the world which was geographically, socially and metaphysically ordered by exchange.<sup>91</sup> Not only do terms of giving and dedicating occur no less than six hundred times in the course of his narrative, but gifts and objects of exchange constitute essential links between humans, gods and events. Thus they become indispensable elements of historical causation. Gould argues, furthermore, that gift and reciprocity provide what he calls the logic of Herodotus' narrative: his insistence on objects and monuments 'worthy to be seen' was linked to the belief that memorials and *anathema* not simply commemorated but represented people. Human ties and obligations, as well as the corruption of them, lived on in the gaze on the monuments that were left behind.

Gould's argument ties in well with Kurke's proposition that metal objects and coinage were symbolic of the moral character of people in archaic texts. She argues that the opposition between coinage and metals framed 'a contested field for the conceptualization of self' from the *Theognidea* onwards. Herodotus represented both a positive and a negative image of coinage in his narratives. On the one hand there was the traditional system in which coinage figured as a negative *sêma* associated with anti-aristocratic qualities, and on the other there was a non-aristocratic opposition in which coinage was accepted as a positive means of valorizing the self.<sup>92</sup> As I argued above, I find little evidence for coinage dividing the aristocracy from its opponents; but Kurke's argument that coinage is a *problematic* metaphor of self and status, in conflict with the traditional imagery of gold and silver races, is compelling. It demonstrates that more is at stake when Herodotus turns to coinage.<sup>93</sup>

With this in mind, attention is drawn to a series of Herodotean narratives all involving coinage, women and the monumentalisation of human status or 'self'. The Lydians were the first, according to Herodotus, who used gold and silver coinage, and were retail traders (*kapêloi*, I.94).<sup>94</sup> It was also here that Herodotus observed that the daughters of the *dêmos* prostituted themselves in order to collect money for their dowries (*phernai*, 1.93).

Herodotus tells this detail within the description of the single *thôma* in Lydia which he finds worth mentioning:

θώματα δὲ γῆ ἢ Λυδία ἐς συγγραφὴν οὐ μάλα ἔχει, οἷά τε καὶ ἄλλη χώρα, παρέξ τοῦ ἐκ τοῦ  
Τμώλου καταφερομένου ψήγματος. ἐν δὲ ἔργον πολλὸν μέγιστον παρέχεται χωρὶς τῶν τε

whatever tales Greeks tell, it is the tensions and contestations of fifth-century polis society that are played out through them, even if only by a dream logic or compression, condensation, and inversion. Or, if we prefer to put it in terms of Herodotus as author of his text...we might say that, like every historian, Herodotus' perception and representation of key issues are shaped by the prevailing concerns of his era. Thus Herodotus cannot fail to see struggles like the struggles in the polis as the author of events, even when his gaze is fixed on Lydians or Persians or Egyptians.'

<sup>91</sup> J. Gould, *Give and take in Herodotus*. Myres Memorial Lecture (Oxford 1991); cf. *id.*, *Herodotus* (London 1989) 110 ff.

<sup>92</sup> Kurke, 45, 49, 50 ff.

<sup>93</sup> Kurke (n.1) appeared when this paper was in progress; I apologize for overlaps. As I can only agree with much of what Kurke says, her paper should be consulted for further discussion of some of the following.

<sup>94</sup> From a numismatic perspective, the Lydian origin of coinage is not ascertainable; see Howgego, 1-4. The Artemesium hoard contains coins which were issued both in Lydia and in Ionian cities and neither of them can be said to be earlier than the other. Moreover, the stories of the Lydian invention of coinage invariably refer to the gold and silver coinage of Croesus which (a) postdates the electrum coinage and (b), if identical with the so-called croeseids, cannot clearly be attributed to the time of Croesus (c. 561-547). Carradice suggests that the earliest known issues were contemporary with the early Greek coinages; see I. Carradice, 'The "regal" coinage of the Persian empire', in *id.* (ed.), *Coinage and administration in the Athenian and Persian empires*, BAR I.S.343 (Oxford 1987) 73-107; cf. Wallace (n.1) and *id.*, 'The production and exchange of early Anatolian electrum coinage', *REA* 91 (1989) 87-95.



Αἰγυπτίων ἔργων καὶ τῶν Βαβυλωνίων· ἔστι αὐτόθι ἼΑλυάττεω τοῦ Κροίσου πατρός σῆμα, τοῦ ἢ κρηπὶς μὲν ἐστὶ λίθων μεγάλων, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο σῆμα χῶμα γῆς. ἐξεργάσαντο δὲ μιν οἱ ἀγοραῖοι ἄνθρωποι καὶ οἱ χειρῶνακτες καὶ αἱ ἐνεργαζόμεναι παιδίσκαι. οὖροι δὲ πέντε ἔδοντες ἐπι καὶ ἐς ἐμὲ ἦσαν ἐπὶ τοῦ σήματος ἄνω, καὶ σφί γράμματα ἐνεκεκόλαπτο τὰ ἕκαστοι ἐξεργάσαντο, καὶ ἐφαίνετο μετρούμενον τὸ τῶν παιδισκῶν ἔργον ἔδον μέγιστον.

There are in Lydia not many marvellous things for me to tell of, in comparison with other countries, except the gold dust that comes down from Tmolus. But there is one building to be seen which is more notable than any, except those of Egypt and Babylon. There is in Lydia the tomb of Alyattes the father of Croesus, the base of which is made of great stones and the rest of it of mounded earth. It was built by the people of the market, the craftsmen and the prostitutes. There remained till my time five cornerstones set on the top of the tomb, and on these was inscribed the record of the work done by each; and the record showed that the prostitute's share of the work was the largest.

The largest part of the base, then, was financed by the prostitutes, among whom were the daughters of the Lydian *dêmos*. Prostitution in the Greek polis was an act in which citizen daughters were not allowed to engage, as Herodotus mentions at this point (1.94); it belonged to the private economy of commercial exchange in which advantage was taken of others, as in retail trade. The Lydians were thus not just from an economic point of view *kapêloi*, but their social relationships, too, were valorized by *kapêleia*. In Lydia there was from a Greek perspective complete confusion of spheres of exchange: not only were their daughters forced to sell themselves as prostitutes, and were dowries composed from the money of the market, this money also paid for the most noteworthy monument of Lydia.<sup>95</sup> Yet the tomb of Alyattes was in further respects a monument of Lydian politics.

The total lack of distinction between spheres of exchange made sense against the background of a political system which, in the eyes of Greeks, was marked in general by corrupted sexual relationships, corrupted political relationships and corrupted lines of succession.

Lydia was the birthplace of Gyges, the paradigmatic tyrant. There was a persistent tradition which associated the origins of coinage with Gyges and tyranny in general. In Greek cities, too, coinage was thought to have been introduced under the reign of tyrants.<sup>96</sup> Scholars have gone some way to make sense of the connection. Shell and, more recently, Seaford have drawn attention to the ring of Gyges which, as Plato tells us, could make Gyges invisible and by this faculty gave him absolute power. The signet ring of Gyges, both Shell and Seaford argue, referred to a kind of power that was typical of both tyranny and coinage. Both powers were 'invisible', uncontrollable, self-referential and thus absolute.<sup>97</sup> Steiner has observed that in Herodotus' description of tyrants' reigns coins (and seals) play an ambiguous role. 'They simultaneously shore up despotic power, and undermine its authority; they both shield and

<sup>95</sup> The Lydian habit was in fact the direct inversion of Greek habits: the deflection of matrimonial payments into the commercial sphere was morally objectionable and became a topos in oratory and comedy aiming to unmask the bad citizen. See von Reden, 'The commodification of symbols: reciprocity and its perversions in Menander' in C. Gill, N. Postlethwaite and R. Seaford, *Reciprocity in ancient Greece* (Oxford forthcoming).

<sup>96</sup> Achil., fr. 19 (W); Hippias *FGH* 6 F 6; Poll. 9. 83; Hdt. 1.94. Coinage and tyranny in Greece: Ephor. *FGH* 70 F 115 and 176; Poll. 9.83; *Et. Mag.* s.v. *obeliskos*; see also Thuc. I. 13. See also Shell (n.3) 11-62, Steiner, 159-63, Seaford, 220-32.

<sup>97</sup> Shell (n.4) 14 ff; Seaford, 224 f. with Plat. *Rep.* 359-60. The link between money and invisible power is overestimated in Shell's argument. As Kurke has shown, money could be used visibly (i.e. as a visible acknowledgment of social positions), as well as invisibly (Kurke (n.80) 225-39); conversely, the distinction between *phanera ousia* and *ousia aphanês*, which was important in Greek politics and law, did not so much refer to real property as opposed to money, but rather to the distinction between property owned in the form of possessions and that owned in the form of claims; cf. L. Gernet, 'Things visible and things invisible', in *id.*, *The anthropology of ancient Greece* (Baltimore 1981, French orig. Paris 1968); Seaford is more careful, relating the invisibility of the tyrant's power and that of coinage to the idea that both are derived from an unseen and therefore mysterious source (Seaford, 225).

protect the tyrant, and provide the rebel with potent weapons to attack the regime. Both emerge as symbols of legitimacy, and as secondary representations of the true sovereignty that a tyrant necessarily lacks.<sup>98</sup> For example, Darius displays his power by striking coins from the purest gold. Aryandes, a governor of Egypt during the reign of Darius, aimed to rival him by striking a coinage of the purest silver. Darius' self-identification with the power of coinage is seen when he regards Aryandes' attempt as a rebellion to his regime and has him executed (4.166). The coin that Polycrates of Samos strikes is also representative of his nature. He uses a gilded lead coinage in order to bribe the Spartan army to withdraw from the siege. Herodotus, although incredulous, mentions the story because it somewhat confirms his information that Polycrates met his death because he was deceived by a fake treasure (3.56 and 121-3). As Polycrates, so Darius is deceived by the promise of coin. Opening the tomb of Nitocris which was inscribed that anyone in need might open it to take as much money as he liked, he finds nothing but a corpse (1.187). Oriental tyrants are deceived by the same deceptive signs which underlie their illegitimate regimes. Steiner comments that in the Greek view tyranny was a mere representation of true kingship, a counterfeit. The tyrant chose those means of exhibiting his power which belonged to the realm of representation and deputation, which replaced a living voice with writing, the king's person with a seal and the true gold of monarchy with coin.<sup>99</sup>

Yet such stories were written in a dialogue with the polis. They reflect political concerns which were more immediate than the relationship of tyranny and kingship. The image of the tyrant in Herodotus embodied in the 5th century the danger of *hubris* and the violation of an entire array of relations and restrictions on which the civilised life of the polis was thought to rest.<sup>100</sup> Coinage was not only the instrument with which the tyrant subverted monarchical, or in the Greek context, aristocratic rule. As has often been emphasised, the tyrant was an outsider within the polis, politically because he exercised despotic rule over a political community and metaphorically because he transgressed the confines of human relationships. His position gave him unlimited freedom, unlimited power, unlimited sexual freedom and thus also the licence to confuse orders of exchange.<sup>101</sup> The cross-cutting between sexual, political and monetary relationships is crucial for understanding the association of tyranny with coinage, and *vice versa*.

Gernet pointed out that tyranny was associated most strongly with perverted marriage relationships. The origin of tyranny in Corinth was the breakdown of the marriage system; Pisistratus married twice and refrained from having a proper sexual relationship with one of them; Dionysius the Elder maintained a system of total endogamy, and so on.<sup>102</sup> In Herodotus, too, tyrants and eastern monarchs are frequently characterised by being unable to establish proper relationships with women. Kandaules urges Gyges to see his wife naked (1.12), Cambyses sleeps with his sister (3.31), Periander maintains a relationship with his wife after her death (5.92), and Xerxes wants to obtain his brother's wife in exchange for his daughter (9.101). As Gernet puts it, such practices represent a 'blockage of exchange' both between generations and between families.

A similar blockage of exchange takes place when tyrants use coinage. Thucydides argues that tyrants, in contrast to cities, use their revenues to stabilise their own power (I.13.1 and 17).

<sup>98</sup> Steiner, 195.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 163

<sup>100</sup> Hartog (n.89) 325 f. Kurke's (n.89) retrojection of Herodotean problematizations of tyranny to the sixth century seems to me unpersuasive.

<sup>101</sup> Hartog (n.89); see also J.F. McGlew, *Tyranny and political culture in ancient Greece* (Ithaca and London 1993) 26.

<sup>102</sup> L. Gernet, 'Marriages of Tyrants', in *id.*, *The anthropology of ancient Greece* (Baltimore 1981, French orig. Paris 1968) 289-302, esp. 292-5.

Like their marriages, their wealth was introverted or even incestuous.<sup>103</sup> Money was for them a medium that did not maintain the power of the community or create lasting social relationships of civic friendship. By contrast, the good citizen both in aristocratic and democratic constructions of the polis was munificent, ‘spending money not on himself but on the common good’.<sup>104</sup> The tyrant, though engaging extensively in public expenditure<sup>105</sup>, did not integrate himself thereby into the community. Tyrants, ancient authors have argued against our numismatic evidence, issue their own coinages and control the mint.<sup>106</sup> Monetary expenditure thereby loses its function as a politically symbolic act. If we consider that the stamp of the coin was a sign of ownership and a guarantee for its redeemability by the issuing authority, coinage puts not only the concrete, but also the symbolic economy at the mercy of the issuing authority.<sup>107</sup> While payments of civic coinage put citizens under the patronage of the city, payments made in a tyrant’s coinage made their wealth and status a function of the tyrant’s private economy.

It is within this context that the prostitution of the Lydian daughters, their getting married with money earned in commercial exchange, and the erection of a monument memorising above all women, prostitutes and marketeers was noteworthy to Herodotus. As the Lydians recognised different orders of exchange among themselves, their use of money was not comparable with that of the Greek. The normative character of this dramatisation of otherness is evident from the eventual fate of the Lydians.

More than one estranging practice is also implied in the story about Cheops. When the king ran short of money for the work on his pyramid, he sent his daughter to a brothel in order to prostitute herself for money. ‘This she actually did’, Herodotus continues,

ἰδίῃ δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν διανοηθῆναι μνημῆιον καταλιπέσθαι, καὶ τοῦ ἐσίοντος πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐκάστου δεέσθαι ὅπως ἂν αὐτῇ ἓνα λίθον [ἐν τοῖσι ἐργοῖσι] δωρέοιτο. ἐκ τούτων δὲ τῶν λίθων ἔφασαν τὴν πυραμίδα οἰκοδομηθῆναι τὴν ἐν μέσῳ τῶν τριῶν ἐστηκυῖαν, ἔμπροσθε τῆς μεγάλης πυραμίδος.

but with the intention of leaving something to be remembered after her death, she asked each of her customers to give her as a present a block of stone for her building. And of these stones, they say, was built the middle pyramid of the three which stand in front of the great one. (2. 126)

In this story money, the honour of the human body and stones are all objects of exchange in a continuous process of exchange. Cheops sacrifices what for a Greek could only mean the honour of the body of his daughter for money which he then uses to preserve the honour of his own body after death in the form of a pyramid in stone. His daughter, conversely, interrupts this cycle by not only selling her body for money, as was required of her, but also giving it in exchange for stones which—as Cheops himself demonstrates—create a more adequate *sēma* of her

<sup>103</sup> Seaford, too, notes an analogy of endogamy/incest and monetary investments of the tyrant; yet in line with his general conceptualisation of money, he applies the analogy to the phenomenon of money as a whole, rather than to a particular use of money associated with tyranny (Seaford, 217-8).

<sup>104</sup> Arist. *EN* 1122b20-1123a5; for the difference between aristocratic and democratic ideas about public spending see Davies (n.84), Whitehead (n.84), Kurke (n.80), 218-24, Seaford, 194-99, and also von Reden, 79-89.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Kurke (n.80) 218 ff.

<sup>106</sup> The only coin type directly associated with a tyrant is that of Anaxilas’ mule cart, commemorating his victory at Olympia in 484 or 480 (cf. above n.77), and even in this case the coins refer to being property of the cities (*Messenion*’ or *Rheginon*’) rather than of the tyrant.

<sup>107</sup> See Wallace (n.21) 393 ff.; Wallace writes, ‘Coinage represented a quite simple discovery, that the guarantee of redeemability by the state was a means of stabilizing value of precious metal. This was a discovery of enormous consequences for later economic and political history. In seventh-century Anatolia it was intended to solve only the particular problem posed by the special nature of electrum alloy’ (p. 397). Wallace is, however, reluctant to concede social and internal political consequences to the stabilization of the value of precious metal by the state.

after death. These gifts eventually restore her honour in the form of a monument, and even raise her memory above that of a man. As in the preceding case, the story dramatises the lack of boundaries between spheres of exchange. Money, potentially destroying these spheres, is eliminated from the long-term order where the human body is to be exchanged for a lasting monument independent of state authority.

Thus we need to go back to the story of Darius' coinage. Herodotus reports, as already mentioned, that Darius wanted to leave behind as his monument a coinage made of the purest gold (4.166). Not the fact that Darius strikes such a coinage, nor that he wishes to be identified with pure gold, but the fact that he wishes coinage to become his monument (*mnēmosunon*) after death is unusual.<sup>108</sup> It is, moreover, significant that the monument of coinage is erected by the very ruler who was called *kapēlos* (retail trader) by his subjects.<sup>109</sup> Darius thus associates himself with the same standard of value with which he is associated negatively by his subjects. Both Darius and his monument reflect the corrupt practices of his rule.

The system is completely subverted by the prostitute Rhodopis. Herodotus, explaining the pyramids, finds the one next to Cheops' wrongly ascribed to the Thracian prostitute Rhodopis:

Ῥοδώπις δὲ ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπῆκετο Ξάνθεω τοῦ Σαμίου κομίσαντος, ἀπικομένη δὲ κατ' ἐργασίην ἐλύθη χρημάτων μεγάλων ὑπὸ ἀνδρὸς Μυτιληναίου Χαράξου τοῦ Σκαμανδρονύμου παιδός, ἀδελφεοῦ δὲ Σαπφούς τῆς μουσοποιοῦ. οὕτω δὴ ἡ Ῥοδώπις ἐλευθερώθη, καὶ κατέμεινέ τε ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ κάρτα ἐπαφρόδιτος γενομένη μεγάλα ἐκτήσατο χρήματα ὡς [ἀν] εἶναι Ῥοδώπιν, ἅταρ οὐκ ὡς γε ἐς πυραμίδα τοιαύτην ἐξικέσθαι. τῆς γὰρ τὴν δεκάτην τῶν χρημάτων ἰδέσθαι ἔστι ἔτι καὶ ἐς τὸδε παντὶ τῷ βουλομένῳ, οὐδὲν δεῖ μεγάλα οἱ χρήματα ἀναθεῖναι. ἐπεθύμησε γὰρ Ῥοδώπις μνημῖον ἑωυτῆς ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι καταλιπέσθαι, ποίημα ποιησαμένη τοῦτο τὸ μὴ τυγχάνει ἄλλω ἐξευρημένον καὶ ἀνακείμενον ἐν ἱρῷ, τοῦτο ἀναθεῖναι ἐς Δελφοὺς μνημόσυνον ἑωυτῆς. τῆς ὦν δεκάτης τῶν χρημάτων ποιησαμένη ὀβελοὺς βουπόρους πολλοὺς σιδηρέους, ὅσον ἐνεχώρει ἡ δεκάτη οἱ, ἀπέπεμπε ἐς Δελφοὺς· οἱ καὶ νῦν ἔτι συννεύονται ὀπισθε μὲν τοῦ βωμοῦ τῶν Χίοι ἀνέθεσαν, ἀντίον δὲ αὐτοῦ τοῦ νηοῦ. φιλέουσι δὲ κως ἐν τῇ Ναυκράτι ἐπαφρόδιτοι γίνεσθαι ἐταῖραι. τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ αὕτη, τῆς πέρι λέγεται ὅδε ὁ λόγος, οὕτω δὴ τι κλεινὴ ἐγένετο ὡς καὶ οἱ πάντες Ἕλληνας Ῥοδώπιος τὸ οὐνομα ἐξέμαθον·

Rhodopis was brought to Egypt by Xanthes of Samos, and she came for her profession being freed for a great sum of money by Charaxus of Mytilene, son of Scamandronymus and brother of Sappho the poet. Thus Rhodopis was set free and stayed in Egypt where she grew wealthy enough for a woman of her profession, as her charms became well known, but not for the building of such a pyramid. Seeing that to this day anyone who wishes may know what was the tenth part of her money, she cannot be credited with great wealth. For Rhodopis desired to leave a memorial of herself in Greece by having something made which no one else had contrived and dedicated in a temple; and she dedicated this at Delphi to preserve her memory. So she spent the tenth part of her money on the making of a great number of iron ox-spits, as many as the tithe would pay for, and sent them to Delphi. These lie in a heap to this day behind the altar set up by the Chians and in front of the shrine itself. It seems that the prostitutes of Naucratis understand the art of charming, for the woman of whom this story is told became so famous that all Greeks knew the name of Rhodopis. (2.135)

Given the large number of surviving specimens, *obeloi* must have been well known as dedications in shrines and temples.<sup>110</sup> There is also some indication that they referred to an archaic high-class social context connected, perhaps, with the near Eastern banquet tradition. The Thracian freedwoman thus betrays hilarious ignorance when dedicating something 'no one

<sup>108</sup> For the image of Darius as a physical monument see Kurke, 54, and Hdt. 1.185.1; 1.186.1; 2.110.1; 2.121.1; 2.148.1; 4.81.6; 7.24.

<sup>109</sup> Hdt. 3.89. 3; cf. Kurke, 54-5.

<sup>110</sup> See above, and A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II*. Vol II (Leiden 1988), *ad loc.* Strøm (n.36) observes a concentration of *obelos* dedications in sanctuaries of Apollo, Athena and Hera.

had contrived and dedicated in a temple' before. What is more, she purchases this high-class *agalma* with the money she herself had earned in prostitution. Poignancy is added to the story in that these earnings had in fact more than ordinary meaning in the life cycle of Rhodopis. For she owed her freedom to this very income her body had earned. Moreover, it was again her sexual charm (*epaphrodisia*) which allowed her to amass wealth to such an extent that she could commemorate herself. And indeed she succeeded in creating a lasting memorial of herself: her dedication was so odd that it 'charmed' (*epaphroditoi*) all Greeks to the present day. Thus in the end the monument of Rhodopis was a monument of her true nature. And so great was her fame that in Egypt even a pyramid was, however falsely, associated with her name.

If this story was largely amusing, another one was more threatening. Again in the Egyptian *logos* Herodotus recounts that during the reign of Aschys money was so short and trade so bad that a law was passed which allowed a man to borrow money on the security of the mummy of his father (II.136). Herodotus understood the funeral industry of Egypt about as little as we do today. For him it looked as if monetary claims were attached to the body of a family member. Thus the substance of the story is similar to that of Cheops: although in this case it is not the female body which crosses the boundary between spheres of exchange, it is nevertheless a family member whose value is diverted into the commercial sphere of exchange. Significantly, the emergency measure was adopted because of a shortage of money in trade. In Greece, even in those poleis where loans could be taken on the security of the human body, there is no indication that it could be taken on the security of the body of a dead family member.

In spite of the pervading practice in law, politics and ritual to put a monetary value on the status of a citizen, and in spite of the practice of ransoming prisoners of war with sums of money, in the Greek polis coinage was not used as a medium for which either the body or the honour of a citizen could be exchanged. Yet the possibility threatened, as Herodotus' stories indicate. The same fear surfaces in accounts about people who are reduced to coins as a form of humiliation. After the battle of Thermopylae, Herodotus tells us, the Thebans were branded with the royal mark of the Persian king (7.233). Herodotus himself keeps silence about the possibility of making free Greeks property of the Persians by stamping them like coins with a mark of ownership. Yet Steiner has drawn attention to the similarity of this with another story which is more explicit. Plutarch reports that in the Peloponnesian War the Samians punished Athenian captives by branding their foreheads with the sign of the owl. This was done, he writes, in retaliation for the disgrace the Athenians had inflicted earlier on the Samian prisoners of war whom they had branded with the sign of the *samaina*, which was the design of a Samian coin (Plut. *Per.* 26.4).<sup>111</sup> The perversion of this treatment does not only lie in the fact that captives are stamped like coins, which marked them as property of others, but also that they are stamped with the emblem of their own coinage, which marked them as their own medium of exchange.

The fear, and at the same time expressed possibility, of associating human status with money as a medium of exchange stems from an ideological distinction between two spheres of exchange. The mythological tradition of associating the quality of humans with metals, the political tradition of paying recompense and ransoms in the form of precious metal objects, monetary tokens and coinage, and the use of coins as awards and prizes created a link between the symbolic economy of status and the commercial economy of priced objects. The concern

<sup>111</sup> Steiner, 165. For the *samaina* see E.S.G. Robinson, 'A hoard of archaic coins from Anatolia', *NC* 1 (1961) 107. This coin belongs, as Robinson argues, to a series which was struck by Samian refugees from Persia while they occupied Zankle (494 BC); cf. *id.*, 'Rhegion, Zankle-Messene and the Samians', *JHS* 66 (1946) 13. The rather rare coinage nevertheless made an impression: see *Suda* s.v. *polugrammatos*.

with the habits of 'others' who exchanged the body of free people, especially women, in commercial spheres of exchange, thereby revealing their status as non-Greeks, betrays a moral economy of the polis that lies beyond money and coinage.

The overriding power of polis institutions to determine money uses and distinguish their meaning becomes nowhere more evident than in a text that was written when Greek poleis had lost their political autonomy, and interest had shifted to other regions of the Mediterranean. In Book II of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Oikonomika*, written some time in the last quarter of the fourth century,<sup>112</sup> a series of stories are assembled which contain strategies of money-making (πόρος χρημάτων) at times of financial crisis. The author keeps a critical distance from these ruses, leaving them in the narrative context in which he received them, but there is no indication that he morally condemned them:

οὐδὲ γὰρ ταύτην τὴν ἱστορίαν ἀχρεῖον ὑπολαμβάνομεν εἶναι. ἔστι γὰρ ὅτε τούτων ἐφαρμόσει  
τι οἷς ἂν αὐτὸς πραγματεύη.

I don't think that the results of my enquiry are entirely useless; for there are some cases of the following which will suit the enterprises someone might deal in (1346a29 f.).

There is, to begin with, a fundamental difference between the *Oikonomika* and the *Poroi* of Xenophon which was written within the ethical frame of the polis. While Xenophon gave advice *in propria persona* to his fellow citizens, the Aristotelian tales are reports about others: satraps, tyrants, kings, generals, sometimes cities. Xenophon carefully avoids suggesting making money from other citizens. Instead he recommends increased exploitation of the mines, trading with foreigners, and cashing in on metics and visitors who came to the city.

It is the ethical boundary of the polis which the people of the Aristotelian stories transgress.<sup>113</sup> One group of measures involves the manipulation of coinage and credit. Thus, for example, Dionysius of Syracuse minted a coinage of tin at the equivalent of silver, and on another occasion he minted 1 *drachmê* of silver bullion into 1 *didrachmê* coin (II.2.20). This story exposes the power of the issuing authority to manipulate the wealth of its subjects and the arbitrariness of conventional value. It also raises the possibility of separating the function of coinage as an internal standard of value from its function as an external means of exchange, as in foreign exchange coins were normally valued according to their precious metal content. What makes Dionysius' economically quite rational move morally objectionable is the fact that he uses his absolute position of power to make himself the sole beneficiary of his action.<sup>114</sup> Another series of stories describes rulers making money from the value of religious and political prerogatives. Lygdamis of Naxos sold to the exiled citizens the right of putting their names on offerings (II. 2).<sup>115</sup> Mausolus charged 1 dr. for the right of passing a dead soldier's body through the city gates (14), and Hippias sold to Athenians public space (4). These forms of money making are outrageous, though economically effective, because Lygdamis, Hippias and Mausolus do not respect the exclusion of certain valuables from the economy of commercial exchange.

<sup>112</sup> B.A. van Groningen and A. Wartelle, *Aristote: Economique*. Ed. Budé (Paris 1968), date the second book to a time after the death of Alexander but before the proclamation of Macedon and Egypt as kingdoms (306-5 BC). For an even later dating see D. Forabosci, 'Archaeologica della cultura economica', in B. Virgilio (ed.), *Studi ellenistici* (Pisa 1984) 75 ff.

<sup>113</sup> Van Groningen and Wartelle (n.112) 53 f., note the moral discrepancy between the content of the stories and the Aristotelian discussion of exchange in *NE* 1120a3-1138b13, but do not attempt to explain it.

<sup>114</sup> See further II.2. 20, 29, 39. Themocrates of Athens also mints a lead coinage, but he also made merchants accept it as silver, and later exchange back for it (23).

<sup>115</sup> See also *Oik.* II.2. 13, 15, 20, 25, 29, 31, 32, 33, 41.

An interesting group of tales are, finally, those where rulers take advantage of attempts to escape or subvert the rituals of civic exchange. The ruse which a, notably, Macedonian satrap of Caria applied in order to gain money for the administration of his satrapy lay in using the ignorance of the Carians of the symbolic power of civic political ritual:

Φιλόξενός τις Μακεδῶν Καρίας σατραπεύων δεηθείς χρημάτων Διονύσια ἔφασκε μέλλειν ἄγειν, καὶ χορογὰς προέγραψε τῶν Καρῶν τοὺς εὐπορωτάτους, καὶ προσέταττεν αὐτοῖς ἅ δεῖ παρασκευάζειν. ὁρῶν δ' αὐτοὺς δυσχεραίνοντας, ὑποπέμπων τινὰς ἡρώτα, τί βούλονται δόντες ἀπαλλαγῆναι τῆς λειτουργίας, οἱ δὲ πολλῶ πλέον ἢ ὅσον φοντο ἀναλώσειν ἔφασαν δώσειν τοῦ μὴ ὀχλείσθαι καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων ἀπεῖναι. ὁ δὲ παρὰ τούτων λαβὼν ὃ ἐδίδοσαν ἑτέρους κατέγραψεν, ἕως ἔλαβε παρὰ τούτων ἅ ἐβούλετο καὶ προσῆν παρ' ἑκάστοις.

A Macedonian named Philoxenus, who was governor of Caria, being in need of funds proclaimed that he intended to celebrate the festival of Dionysus. The wealthiest inhabitants were selected to provide the choruses, and were informed what they were expected to furnish. Noticing their disinclination, Philoxenus sent to them privately and asked what they would give to be relieved of their duty. They told him they were prepared to pay a much larger sum than they expected to spend <on the choruses> in order to avoid the trouble and the interruption of their private business. Philoxenus accepted their offers and proceeded to enrol a second levy. These also paid; and at last he received what he desired from each company (1351b35-1352a9).

In this instance, Philoxenos first creates artificially a public sphere of 'civic' exchange (i.e. the celebration of a festival) and then diverts its money into the administration of his satrapy. Moreover, what he proclaims first as a public exchange in the interest of the collective 'citizen body' of the Carians he turns into a private deal between the wealthiest inhabitants and himself. Philoxenus cleverly uses his power, and the ignorance of the Carians of civic rituals (such as the *chorégia*) to connect what in a polis were different spheres of exchange. The plot works on the multiple confusion between public and private spheres of exchange and their unusual and, within the moral economy of a polis, illicit connection of them by both the people of Caria and their governor.<sup>116</sup>

The stories of the *Oikonomika* have in common that they contain practices which transgress the boundaries of the moral economy of a polis. Either it is external rulers, or people outside polis society, or indeed bad citizens themselves who are in the position to make money for immediate purposes. The very existence of these anecdotes shows that the people who constructed them were aware of the economic loss created by the constraints of a moral economy. They reveal an awareness of the ambivalence of coinage which on the one hand, as a standard of value, maintained meanings and functions exclusive to a closed community and on the other was a universal medium of exchange outside the moral system of such communities. Conversely, the fact that token coinages were relatively uncommon, unless in small denominations and in times of emergency, shows that poleis, though ideologically inclined to self-sufficiency, were reluctant to separate the internal standard of value from external commercial exchange. The paradoxical nature of coinage thus reflects the paradoxical nature of the polis, which developed at the cross-roads of civic relationships and foreign exchange.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Hippias, too, accepts money from those who wish to avoid their liturgical duties (2) and Dionysius manages to make the citizens of Syracuse come forth with the property they had tried to hide in order to avoid a contribution (20).

<sup>117</sup> I would like to thank Paul Cartledge, Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp, Christopher Howgego, Sally Humphreys, Nino Luraghi, Robin Osborne, Ute Wartenberg and the readers and Editor of *JHS* for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of this paper. Many thanks also to Leslie Kurke who sent me copies of her work in progress.