

# NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

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# ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XV

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE  
SEKCJA NUMIZMATYCZNA  
KOMISJI ARCHEOLOGICZNEJ PAN  
ODDZIAŁ W KRAKOWIE

Kraków 2020

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Redakcja

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present volume XV of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne* to you. In accordance with the principles that we have adopted, our texts are published in the conference languages with English and Polish abstracts. The whole of the present volume can be found as PDF's on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>), as are previously published volumes of the journal. The website also contains general information about the journal as well as information for prospective authors and reviewers.

The Editors

## WOLFGANG R. FISCHER-BOSSERT

*Coins, Artists, and Tyrants. Syracuse in the Time of the Peloponnesian War*, Numismatic Studies 33, The American Numismatic Society, New York 2017, 371 pages, 27 plates; ISBN 978-0-89722-341-6

For over 100 years since its publication in 1913, the study by the Finnish numismatist Lauri O.Th. Tudeer has been a standard (and essentially the only such detailed) reference to the Syracusan coinage of the final decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> and the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>1</sup> Yet in 2017, as a result of a relatively straightforward project to provide an English translation of Tudeer's original work, all those interested in the coinage of Sicily received an excellent numismatic resource in the form of the presently reviewed volume. The work, published by the American Numismatic Society as part of the *Numismatic Studies* series (no. 33), offers a new study of the Syracusan coinage in the late 5<sup>th</sup>–early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, with an emended catalogue and including a translation of some major fragments of Tudeer's original work, a more elaborated account of his observations on the die links, and a biographical note on the author. Several scholars have made their contributions to the publication, most notably Wolfgang Fischer-Bossert (the main author) and Ute Wartenberg (editor-in-chief). Other essential contributions have been made by Tukka Talvio, the author of Tudeer's biography here, and Orla Mulholland, the translator of extensive fragments of Tudeer's original work.

The catalogue proper of the Syracusan coinage is preceded with a few introductory chapters which deal with the aspects crucial to its understanding and placement within the contexts of the political, economic, and social history, in particular as regards the chronology of the Syracusan issues of that period. W.R. Fischer-Bossert begins with a presentation of the historical background (Chap. 2, pp. 5–21), proceeding from the most important events from the history of Syracuse, basically from the suppression of the Etruscan piracy (around the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century BC) up until the end of the Syracusan-Carthaginian war in the 390s BC. Several events which are crucial to understanding the development of the Sicilian coinage are mentioned in this outline, as well as its general characteristics (not limited to Syracuse only). The next chapter is concerned with a short discussion of die links of the Syracusan coins of the Signing Artists period (Chap. 3, pp. 23–28). As based on Tudeer's fundamental observations in this area of research, Fischer-Bossert points to the shifts arising from the new findings on the die links and the dies

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<sup>1</sup> TUDEER 1913.

reworking within the framework of the three periods as defined by the Finnish scholar (I: 425–413; II: 413–399; III: 399–387, respectively). Altogether, two obverse and four reverse dies have been added to the body of Tudeer's work since the time of its original publication (p. 27). This chapter also features a graphical representation of the die links as broken down into the particular periods (Fig. 5). Incidentally, the diagram is incorrect in the dating of the second period. In turn, Chapter 4 provides a discussion of the inscriptions on the Syracusan coins from the period under consideration, with a particular emphasis on their evolution and the orthographic reform in the final decade of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (Chap. 4, pp. 29–40). This analysis is shown against the broader background of the coins from Sicily and beyond. In Chapter 5, W.R. Fischer-Bossert describes the problems of the imitation and remodelling of the coin images (Chap. 5, pp. 41–79) and defines such terms as “type”, “design”, and “composition”. Then he passes on to a fairly detailed analysis of the evolution of the images on the coins of Syracuse and their dissemination among the issues of the other Sicilian cities in the context of the Signing Artists chronology. On the basis of this analysis, W.R. Fischer-Bossert has proposed a more precise chronological sequence of the Syracusan issues and defined the features characteristic of each of the three periods as originally set down by Tudeer. In this chapter, the author's findings have been supported with evidence from various hoards, but a more thorough analysis of how the Syracusan coinage of the Signing Artists period is represented in the hoards and the resulting chronological consequences can be found in Chapter 6 (“Hoards”, pp. 81–99). The author describes the individual hoards and groups of hoards in brief texts, and follows it up with a listing of all the relevant hoards in tabular form. Summed up in a similar way are also the key results of the chronological investigation as based on an analysis of hoards details (p. 98, Fig. 75). W.R. Fischer-Bossert also delivers a verification of some views on the chronology and the arrangement of the coin issues in question as described in the numismatic literature of the past (pp. 101–113). More specifically, the author describes and then argues against several hypotheses, which would have arisen in connection with diverse interpretations of certain motifs used as main types or additional symbols in the Syracusan coinage, as well as R. Holloway's proposition on the existence of the two parallel workshops at Syracuse. The introduction part ends with a section on conclusions (pp. 115–117). To put it briefly, we could point out that W.R. Fischer-Bossert's broader analysis of the various aspects making up the arrangement and the specific sequencing of the Signing Artists issues can be considered as a kind of a set of guidelines for modern numismatists.

The principal part of the publication (and the most valuable to date) is the catalogue of the Syracusan issues from the Signing Artists period (pp. 119–196).

As a matter of fact, the entire introductory part serves the purpose of providing the reader with an insight before an analysis of this catalogue (let us note, the original Tudeer catalogue with some further important emendations). In total, it contains 130 items, including some letter-designated pieces (e.g. 113A). The details given for each piece are as follows: descriptions of the coin's obverse and reverse or their modification, number of the obverse and reverse die, along with a list of all the known existing pieces, including the relevant literature and possible comments with reference to the Tudeer catalogue. From no. 110 onwards, plated coins are specified as well. At the end, there are short descriptions of the pieces which could not have been included as part of the catalogue due to the lack of any illustration. As complementary material, lists of coin inscriptions and symbols/accessories are also added to the catalogue. We should not fail to mention the plates (27) with photographs of all the pieces which illustrate, basically, all the items given in the catalogue.

The following parts of the volume are authored by Tukki Talvio and Lauri Tudeer himself. The former scholar has contributed a biographical note on L. Tudeer (Chap. 10, pp. 197–199). In a brief and concise form, it represents the most significant facts of Tudeer's life and his numismatic career. The next two parts are comprised of Tudeer's foreword (pp. 201–202) and his original commentary from the publication of 1913 (pp. 203–293), both translated by Orla Mulholland. As I have noted before, the decision to include these translations turned out to be the beginning of the project which would eventually lead up to the publication of the present volume. On the other hand, the original text by Tudeer gives us an opportunity to confront his propositions with the above-mentioned commentary offered by W.R. Fischer-Bossert, which is based on the academic achievements of the last 100 years.

The volume is complemented with 26 pages of bibliography and an index of coin collections (comprising museum and private collections as well as auction catalogues), followed by a list of concordances between Tudeer's original publication and Fischer-Bossert's edition (pp. 351–355), indexes of modern figures and ancient authors, (non-monetary) inscriptions, mints and issuers, artists, as well as topic-based and hoards indexes. Apart from the previously mentioned plates, we should also take note of the very good quality of the coin photographs and the inclusion of numerous illustrations (also in plate form) within the text of the individual chapters.

To sum up, the readers are given this unique opportunity to acquaint themselves with a volume which is extraordinary in its overall quality of editorial preparation, expertise, and its solid foundation upon the latest achievements in numismatics, which shall continue to remain, for at least another 100 years, a reliable source of knowledge for all those who are interested in the legendary and magical Signing Artists period in the history of the Syracusan coinage. Furthermore, the idea of providing a translation of large fragments of Tudeer's work and presenting them in

the context of modern numismatics gives a new life to the relevance of his academic achievements and perpetuates his legacy.

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