A HOARD OF LYCIAN STATERS IN FETHİYE MUSEUM

MELİH ARSLAN*

The hoard consists of 19 silver staters of an unidentifiable Lycian dynast. As such they represent an important group of examples from the early coinage of Lycia. The hoard was acquired by Fethiye Museum in 1992 after it was confiscated by the police during an operation against antiquities' smugglers. This group of coins may have belonged to a larger hoard that was quickly dispersed after discovery. So, for example, another group of 5 similar coins was also acquired by Fethiye Museum as a result of the same operation.

The study of Lycian coinage was initiated by Sir Charles Fellows in 1855, but the first comprehensive work on this subject was compiled by Ernest Babelon and published in his *Traité* during the early part of this century. However, despite increasing interest in the early history, language and inscriptions of Lycia over the past 40 years, there remain many lacunae in our knowledge of its coinage. Finds such as the present hoard thus provide an important source of new information.

The present coins are all of the same type, although it is clear that they come from different dies. The coins also display a marked variation in weight; for example, the heaviest is 9.40 g., while the lightest weighs only 6.71 g. On the obverse they depict a snuffling boar and on the reverse a tortoise. They are thus attributable to the second series of Lycian dynastic issues, as first established by Babelon. In the British Museum Catalogue Hill

---

* My thanks go first and foremost to Ali Dervişağaoğlu, who brought the hoard to my attention. I am also greatly indebted to Özgen Acar and Chris Lightfoot who, in different ways, provided much help during the writing of this article. The photographs from casts were expertly taken by Behiç Günel.


dated this series to c. 500-460 BC, but von Aulock later gave it a timespan extending as far as c. 440 BC³.

These coins are not commonly found in western collections; the Cabinet des Medailles in Paris contains only 2 examples, the British Museum has 4, the von Aulock collection another 4, while a single example has been published from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts¹. Likewise, the type rarely appears in known hoards; for example, in the rightly famous Elmah Hoard, containing more than 970 Lycian issues, only one example of this type has been identified⁵. Auction catalogues very infrequently offer examples for sale; an important group, comprising 5 examples, were presented in the Lanz Sale in Munich in 1994, while a single example was recently offered for sale by the Classical Numismatic Group⁶. In effect, this means that the Fethiye Museum collections contain by far the largest number of known coins of this type for, in addition to the present hoard and the other small group of 5 examples already noted, the museum also has a number of such coins that were acquired separately⁷. However, this hoard of 19 coins is a very significant addition to our knowledge, since it not only represents the largest single find of this type but it also allows us to study it in more detail.

Within the second series the boar on the obverse generally faces right, but on a few examples the animal faces left. amongst the present hoard one example of the latter type is to be found (cat. no. 5). The hoard may also be divided into two sections as follows:- cat. nos. 1-7 would appear to be early issues within the series, for all come from different dies and weigh over 9.00 g., while the remaining coins, cat. nos. 8-19, are generally lighter and were

³ BMC Lycia, p. 4, nos. 17-21; SNG von Aulock, nos. 4072-4074.
⁵ CH VIII, no. 48. The coin is presently to be found in the collections of William Kock, Jeffrey Spier and Jonathan H. Kagan; inv. no. 826, weight 9.26 g., axis 8h. This information was obtained from the archives assembled by Özgen Acar, who as a researcher and journalist first revealed the story of the Elmah Hoard to the general public.
⁷ The collections of Fethiye Museum were studied in 1991-92 by Melih Arslan, Richard Ashton, John Casey and A. Tolga Tek. The publication of the full catalogue is in preparation, but a number of separate studies pertaining to hoards within the collections have already been published.
struck from the same obverse and reverse dies. This group, despite the worn appearance of the coins, would seem to come later in the series when the size of the tortoise on the incuse reverse had become smaller and was placed more centrally.

It is unfortunate that we known nothing of the nature of the deposition or discovery of the hoard to aid us with its dating. However, the Elmah Hoard, which is dated to c. 465-460 BC, contains a large number of Lycian staters with a triskeles on the reverse, a type which is placed after the second series. This evidence would suggest that the second series must date to the first quarter of the fifth century BC and that it does not continue, as proposed by von Aulock, until c. 440 BC.
DYNASTIS OF LYCIA, uncertain dynast, 480-460 B.C.

Obv. Snuffling boar r.
Rev. Tortoise; dotted border; square incuse
1 - 9.10 g.; 19 mm.; 12h. Traité 138; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4072.
2 - 9.16 g.; 19 mm.; 3h. Traité 138; BMC 18; SNG von Aulock 4072.
3 - 9.26 g.; 20 mm.; 12h. Traité 138; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4072; Lanz 213.
4 - 9.35 g.; 19 mm.; 5h. Traité 138; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4072; Lanz 213.

Obv. Snuffling boar l.
Rev. Tortoise; dotted border; square incuse
5 - 9.40 g.; 20 mm.; 11h. BMC 20; SNG von Aulock 4071; Pozzi 2743; Lanz 212.
6 - 9.27 g.; 19 mm.; 5h. BMC 18; SNG von Aulock 4072; Lanz 213.
7 - 9.27 g.; 20 mm.; 12h. BMC 18; SNG von Aulock 4072.
8 - 8.61 g.; 20 mm.; 1h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
9 - 7.72 g.; 19 mm.; 4h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
10 - 8.01 g.; 19 mm.; 5h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
11 - 8.36 g.; 20 mm.; 1h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
12 - 8.36 g.; 20 mm.; 3h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
13 - 7.65 g.; 19 mm.; 2h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
14 - 8.30 g.; 20 mm.; 2h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
15 -  7.47 g.; 19 mm.; 3h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
16 -  7.16 g.; 19 mm.; 1h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
17 -  8.70 g.; 19 mm.; 2h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
18 -  9.15 g.; 20 mm.; 2h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
19 -  6.71 g.; 19 mm.; 5h. Traité 137; BMC 17; SNG von Aulock 4073; Lanz 214.
Melih Arslan