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# A Bronze Septimius Severus at Saitta, Issued by Charikles An Avatar or Acolyte for the Moon-God Men? In Memory of Eugene Numa Lane\*

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Fig. 1. Saitta, Lydia. Medallion issued by Charikles for Septimius Severus. Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri, acc. no. 2004.5.

The Museum of Art and Archaeology owns one of the earliest egregiously large coins minted by Greek cities in the Roman Empire, a great bronze, issued for the Roman emperor Septimius Severus (193–211 C.E.) by the magistrate Sos. Charikles (Fig. 1). Some of these medallion-size coins may have been struck to commemorate imperial visits or the celebration of Games. Some proclaimed an alliance between two cities; such Alliance issues may be labeled *Omonoia* (Concord). Other coins boasted of a city's prestige, as in the case of a Metropolis, designated as the administrative head of a region. Similarly, some cities had sought and fulfilled the privilege of *Neokoria*, maintaining an imperial cult, prestigious and flattering to both parties, for qualified cities. The coins, in these cases, usually bear the title *Neokoros* (the city as temple "warden"), occasionally even *Neokoros* for the second or third time. When cities put on Games, the coins with Agonistic motifs often proclaim the name of the Games, *Alexandria*, *Pythia*, *Severa*, or the like. *Metropoleis*, of course, are often so called in monumental epigraphy or historical texts as well. The coin presented here, one of the largest of the Severan period and issued at Saitta, a city in Lydia (Fig. 2), seems, however, to fit none of these categories.



Fig. 2. Map of Asia Minor. Adapted from E. Lane, *Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis II, The Coins and Gems* (Leiden, 1975).

Saitta, Lydia. Septimius Severus. Medallion issued by Sos. Charikles.  
 Æ 45 mm, 51.04 g, axis<sup>↑</sup>. Weinberg Fund (acc. no. 2004.5)

Obverse: Laureate bust of the emperor Septimius Severus with military cloak over armor, seen as from behind, facing right.

Legend: AVT KAI Λ CΕ[Π] | CΕOVHPOC ΠE

“Aut(okrator) Kai(sar) L(ucius) Se[p](timius) Severus Pe(rtinax)”

Reverse: The moon-god Men holding a scepter in his left hand standing right facing the Lydian Mother, probably as we know her, Cybele. Cybele is seated on a backless throne. At her feet, her lion with upraised right paw, also facing left; at Men’s feet a small clothed figure, perhaps stretching out his left hand toward the lion. The small figure seems to be related to Men as the lion is related to Cybele.

Legend: ΕΠΙ COC XA P[IKΛE] | OVC APX A † B; in exergue: CAITTHNΩ / N

“(This coin) of the Saittans (was minted) in the archonship of Charikles, chief archon for the second time.”

Bibliography: *Museum Magazine, Museum of Art and Archaeology* 45 (Fall 2004) p. 11, figs. 3 and 3a; “Recent Acquisitions,” *Muse* 36–38 (2002–2004) p. 94.



Fig. 3. Saitta, Lydia. Medallion issued by Andronicus for Septimius Severus from the same pair of dies as Figure 4. Münzkabinett, Winterthur, G 3889. Photos courtesy of the Münzkabinett.

In its size—slightly larger than any of the other comparable coins from Saitta—as well as in its choice of serious religious subjects for the reverse, the Missouri medallion resembles a few of the coins issued at Bizya for Philip I (244–249), or the large issue of agonistic coins, marked *Alexandria Pythia*, struck for Caracalla (211–217) at Philippopolis in Thrace, which are slightly smaller.<sup>1</sup> Just over the border, in western Phrygia, the mint of Temenothyrae issued one, also slightly smaller, for Valerian (253–260) and Gallienus (253–268), and Bagis in Lydia struck an alliance coin of comparable size for Gallienus, this one with Men and Tyche.<sup>2</sup> All these are commonly listed as medallions, but only because, always excepting the coins of Ptolemaic Egypt, they are too large, too difficult to strike, and too irregularly issued for ordinary currency. The Missouri coin and comparable ones also issued at Saitta by a magistrate named Andronicus are very uncommon indeed. The Andronicus coins, which are slightly smaller than the Missouri Charikles, are now known not only in a specimen at Winterthur (formerly in Fr. Imhoof-Blumer's collection) (Fig. 3),<sup>3</sup> but also in one struck from the same dies as the Winterthur coin and now at the American Numismatic Society (Fig. 4).<sup>4</sup> Somewhat later, rather different, and issued by Charikles, the Missouri coin is so far unique.



Fig. 4. Saitta, Lydia. Medallion issued by Andronicus for Septimius Severus. American Numismatic Society, 1973.191.14. Image courtesy The American Numismatic Society.

First, although it is impossible to assign a precise date to the Missouri coin, the Winterthur and American Numismatic Society ones (Figs. 3 and 4)—issued by Andronicus and with a reverse so similar to the Missouri Charikles—both show Septimius Severus in a formal portrait style and wearing scale armor with an aegis and also a gorgoneion. They must be very early in the emperor's reign, because Andronicus also issued coins for Clodius Albinus, who was briefly Septimius's Caesar (193–195).<sup>5</sup> The magistrate Charikles of the Missouri coin, on the other hand, signed one for Julia Domna, Septimius's wife (Fig. 5), two (known to me) for Caracalla (co-Augustus 198–212, sole emperor 212–217), and one for Geta (co-emperor 209–211).<sup>6</sup> The Caracalla Charikles issues are dated after 198 but before ca. 205, since Caracalla's portrait is



Fig. 5. Saitta, Lydia. Medallion issued by Charikles for Julia Domna. Münzkabinett, Winterthur, G 3893. Photos courtesy of the Münzkabinett.

wearing a laurel wreath, and he is shown as no longer a child, although without the beard present on issues signed by the magistrate Attalianus.<sup>7</sup>

On the Missouri Charikles (Fig. 1), the obverse legend and the portrait type are unexceptional. The large area at the engraver's disposal on the earlier Andronicus coins (Figs. 3 and 4) had permitted much attention to detail, especially in the better-preserved breastplate showing the aegis and gorgoneion. On the Missouri coin, the engraver chose instead to make the head expressive of character through Hellenistic, plastic exaggeration of the emperor's features and a deep-set eye. The reverse of the Missouri Charikles, on the other hand, is highly interesting. Its legend is nearly complete, lacking



Fig. 6. Saitta, Lydia. Bronze coin showing the young Men, called Axiottenos. Private collection, Germany. Photo: Micha Bachteler, *Klassische Münzen*, University of Tübingen.

only the letters IKLE of the magistrate's name, and like the Andronicus issues, it shows the moon-god Men standing to right, facing Cybele (or possibly the Anatolian Mother by some other name). Here the deities are not labeled. Just as she might have been called Cybele regionally, so Men himself might have been called Men Axiottenos. On the coin shown in Figure 6, a youthful Men, named here Axiottenos, wears a star-studded Phrygian bonnet, as well as his moon crescent.<sup>8</sup> On the Missouri, Winterthur, and American Numismatic Society coins (Figs. 1, 3, and 4), Men's stance and proportions are those of Greco-Roman art, and he is dressed as Hellenized Lydians might have preferred, just as the museum's own statuette shows him (Fig. 7).<sup>9</sup> Cybele also is normal, since this is not the only place where she lacks her wooden throne back. Notice that the lion by her right foot seems to lift his paw heraldically.<sup>10</sup>

In some details on the reverse, however, Missouri's larger, somewhat later Sos. Charikles issue differs from the Andronicus issues. First, let us regret that the substance of the exchange between the two deities in the middle of the reverse of the Missouri coin is lost; although it is easy to imagine a patera for one of them, we cannot vouch for or even suspect a pine cone in Men's right hand. Certainly, his scepter has a knob,



Fig. 7. Statuette of the moon-god Men. Roman, bronze. Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri, acc. no. 83.68. Photo: Jeffrey Wilcox.

like that of any Greek god. Cybele here wears a polos, just as her Iron-Age Phrygian ancestress does at Boghazköy, and, again, her lion raises its right forepaw. On this coin, that gesture seems to relate the lion to the inexplicable small figure at the bottom of Men's scepter (Fig. 8). Although felines commonly raise a foreleg heraldically, here it seems a significant "social" gesture. As Eugene Lane's articles in this journal show



Fig. 8. Detail of Figure 1, showing the small figure and the lion at the feet of the god Men and the Lydian Mother.

perhaps more plainly than any other, most Asian art from the Near and Middle East is unlike the Greco-Roman tradition in abjuring the treatment of space, body, and the human language of gesture. In the Greco-Roman tradition, it really matters that Men's cloak, falling loose from his shoulders, follows the rhythm of his stance, both on the large coins and the museum's statuette (Fig. 7). To show how a god stands is part of his characterization. The *horror vacui* of a Sabazios hand is the extreme antithesis of the Greco-Roman tradition.<sup>11</sup> The surface of such hands is crowded with attributes of Sabazios, each of which is a sign of some cult trait, all of which are shown almost as pictographs, at any scale, and frontal.

Lacking the actual clasping of the deities' hands, the behavior of their other selves at their feet should help to explain them. The lion can stand in for Cybele; it is hers. If this is right, the alien words "avatar" and "acolyte" do not seem much amiss. The small figure and the lion echo the evident cordiality of Men and the Mother (not always called Cybele). It seems inadvisable to resort more than necessary to the non-Greek origins of Cybele and Men, at a date when she is fully naturalized at the Rome mint and given that Men, too, at Saitta is divested of all his Phrygian cult paraphernalia, in contrast to images from other cities (Fig. 9).<sup>12</sup> Despite all our efforts, however, and microscope photographs, we could only ascertain that the little figure beside Men's scepter is not standing on any animal.<sup>13</sup> It is impossible, too, to make the traces that extend to Cybele's toe into a bull or



Fig. 9. Antioch, Pisidia. Bronze coin issued for Geta, one of a set issued for Septimius Severus, Julia Domna, and their sons, ca. 209–211. Private collection. Photo courtesy of the author.

a bucranium, although Gallienus's Alliance issue of the city of Bagis with Temenothyrae, just to the east, shows Men with his foot on a bull's head.<sup>14</sup> One thinks, the little figure surely had feet? If so, they are not discernible. Whether he held up his right arm, and the protrusion between it and the lion's leg is his own hand or the lion's paw, I cannot tell. It is most striking indeed that the small figure is as devoid of attributes as a Telesphoros at Pergamon.<sup>15</sup> If he were regarded as like Telesphoros, he could perhaps be called an "acolyte." The crux of the question is that none of the other coins, none of the inscriptions whose find spot still is almost all we know about Saitta, suggests what aspect or attribute of Men would reach out to the lion aspect of the Anatolian Mother.<sup>16</sup> Lane suggested that she was regarded as his mother, since a Μητὸς τεκοῦσα shown similarly is mentioned in some of those inscriptions, but he did not insist on it, since "mother goddesses notoriously do not have offspring." Besides, she was called Mater Deum (Mother of the Gods) all over the empire, and calling Men her τέκνον need not have been taken literally.

The difficulty is aggravated by the Severan date, when syncretisms were rife. Pursuing such a notion, besides, would do nothing to explain the little figure at Men's feet, strikingly absent from the Andronicus issues in Winterthur and the American Numismatic Society. The language used to exalt Men, "one god in the heavens, the great heavenly Men, the great power of immortal god,"<sup>17</sup> seems perfectly consistent with the universalizing exaltation of third-century evocations of deity, an observation that warns against contriving scenarios for the lion and the small figure, whose head has no details, not even a hint of a Phrygian cap like Men's own.

The largest Alliance coins<sup>18</sup> do resemble Missouri's Charikles coin issued for Septimius Severus at Saitta, although they are more like Caracalla's with the Pergamene triad.<sup>19</sup> Some of the Alliance coins have a portrait of the emperor strikingly similar to the Saitta issues, although they are not from the same die,<sup>20</sup> and they often show two deities side-by-side or joining hands on the reverse; not all such are labeled OMONOIA. The Saitta Men and Cybele coins, however, do not name a sister city or clearly imply one by showing an image like the Artemis Ephesia. Saitta, besides, is not known ever to have issued Alliance coins or been named in alliance by another mint. If any extra-Saittan association is intended, epigraphic evidence suggests that it may be the association of Men, most commonly mentioned at Saitta, with the Mother, Cybele, most commonly mentioned in inscriptions elsewhere in Lydia.<sup>21</sup>

We need a complete general excavation of Saitta, yielding a clearer picture of its general culture and economy, since the inscriptions at hand are preponderantly votive, at least overtly.<sup>22</sup> It may have been prosperous without having a large mint (the small-denomination coinage is not huge) or schools, for example, of its own, relying on Sardis for all such higher amenities.



## Notes

\*First, I owe my very knowledge of the god named Men to Eugene Lane, from the year we shared at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. To pretend that I can add anything to his work or that of other specialists in the evidence for this cult would be impudent. Second, for all his help, I thank my friend Dr. Benton Kidd, Associate Curator of Ancient Art, Museum of Art and Archaeology. I would also like to thank Lars Rutten and Curtis Clay for their comments. For photographs, and permission to reproduce them, I thank the American Numismatic Society, the Münzkabinett, Winterthur, and a private collector in Germany, who generously had his coin re-photographed for publication here. He is also one of many who for nearly a decade have discussed Lydian and Phrygian coins with me, sharing bibliography and images from their own collections.

1. For some that are among the largest, see I. Varbanov, *Greek Imperial Coins* (Engl.) III (Bourgas, 2007) p. 169, nos. 1472–1473, but others similarly inscribed are nearly as large (ibid., pp. 157–172).
2. For Temenothyrae (at over 40 mm), see *British Museum Catalogue of Greek Coins (BMC)*, B. V. Head, *Phrygia* (London, 1906) p. 415, no. 34, pl. XLVIII, 6. Also, at [http://www.mfa.org/collections/search\\_art.asp?recview=true&id=264453](http://www.mfa.org/collections/search_art.asp?recview=true&id=264453) (26 August 2009) (though only 37 mm) and [http://www.mfa.org/collections/search\\_art.asp?recview=true&id=262854](http://www.mfa.org/collections/search_art.asp?recview=true&id=262854) (26 August 2009); for Bagis (ca. 39 mm), see ibid., *BMC, Lydia* (London, 1901) p. 41, no. 54, pl. XLI, 1, where Men faces Tyche and his foot is on a bull's head, and also at <http://www.acsearch.info/record.html?id=69736> (26 August 2009), where Men's foot is on a helmet.
3. Saitta, Lydia. Septimius Severus. Medallion issued by Andronicus. Æ 46.3 mm, 51.589 g, axis ↘ (Münzkabinett, Winterthur G 3889)

Obverse: Septimius Severus, laureate, bust in scale armor, with an aegis on his right shoulder and a gorgoneion on his chest. Legend: AVT KAI•Λ•CЄΠ• | CEOVHPOC ΠЄPTI

Reverse: The god Men standing right in Phrygian bonnet, wearing a short chiton (double girt) and a cloak, crescent moon on his shoulders, holding a pine cone in his right hand, and leaning on a scepter in his left. He faces Cybele enthroned to right, a patera in her right hand, her left elbow on a tympanum, her lion (with forepaw raised) at her right foot. Her headdress is not a polos, but whether it is a mural crown is quite unclear. Legend: ЄΠI ANΔPONEI | KOV Δ | [uncertain traces]; in exergue CAITTHNΩN / APX•A•

Bibliography: “Griechische Stadtmünzen aus römischer Zeit,” *Antike Kleinkunst in Winterthur*, exh. cat. (Winterthur, 1964) p. 63, no. 434, pl. 23; E. Lane, *Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis II, The Coins and Gems* (Leiden, 1975) p. 38, Saitta 10, pl. XV.

For the description and legend, see also Fr. Imhoof-Blumer, “Antike griechische Münzen,” *Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau* (= *Revue suisse de numismatique*) 19 (1913) p. 56, no. 161, which, according to the 1964 Winterthur exhibition catalogue entry, has “the same reverse die but used a different obverse die.” Identical punctuation and word divisions and the fuller spelling, Perti-, rather than the usual Per-, for Pertinax, as well as the very distinctive markings that have survived wear, convince me that the obverse as well as the reverse die match Winterthur G 3889. I have not been able to confirm that Imhoof-Blumer's specimen, or any like it, is in Berlin. For the lighter weight given by Imhoof-Blumer for his coin, compare now the American Numismatic Society coin (see below n. 4).

4. Saitta, Lydia. Septimius Severus. Medallion issued by Andronicus. Æ 43 mm, 40.74 g, axis ↓ (American Numismatic Society 1973.191.14)

Obverse: Septimius Severus, laureate, bust to right.

Legend: AVT•KAI•Λ•CEΠ• | CEOVHP[OC ΠEPTI]

Reverse: The god Men, with scepter and pine cone, standing before Cybele, seated on throne, with tympanum. Legend: EΠ[I A]NΔPONEI | K OV•Δ | IO[uncertain letter traces, but a lambda or a delta possible, then] € or C and ΦA; in exergue CAITTHNQN / APX•A• (preserving more than the Winterthur specimen; see n. 3 above).

Restored bracketed letters are taken from Imhoof-Blumer's reading of the legends on his own coin (possibly a Berlin one that matches G 3889 in Winterthur) as published in *Revue suisse de numismatique* 19 (1913) p. 56, no. 161. R. Münsterberg's *Die Beamtennamen auf den griechischen Münzen* (Vienna, 1911–1927; reprint 1985) p. 146 (conveniently consulted on line at <http://snible.org/coins/library/muensterberg/> [26 August 2009]) does not list additional names or titles for Andronicus. Cf., however, the Julia Domna medallion, signed by Andronicus with (as reported) quite uncertain further names (Peus Nachfolger, Auction 366 [29 October 2000] Lot 726). The preservation of Δ | IO on this Julia Domna medallion suggests that if the reverse legends were preserved, they would agree with the Winterthur and American Numismatic Society Andronicus medallions for Septimius. The American Numismatic Society medallion (Fig. 4) preserves some details of the reverse more clearly than does the Winterthur specimen (Fig. 3), for example in Cybele's throne and her lion, besides preserving several additional letters.

5. One of these is the Æ 29 (some specimens smaller), which has a nude Aphrodite, with a diving dolphin to her left and Eros standing right holding a torch to her right. F. Imhoof-Blumer, *Lydische Stadtmünzen* (Geneva and Leipzig, 1897) p. 129, no. 7.
6. Signed by Charikles at Saitta:
  - (a) For Julia Domna (Fig. 5), see Æ 37 mm, Winterthur G 3893, with Charikles' name complete. Reverse: Caracalla in armor and cloak riding on horseback at a gallop, to right, brandishing a spear raised in his right hand; below the horse's forelegs, a bound kneeling barbarian in a tall cap. The use of Caracalla on horseback as the conqueror suggests that this Charikles set of large bronzes centers on his being co-Augustus and his brother Geta now being Caesar. See also *Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau* (= *Revue suisse de numismatique*) 14 (1908) p. 16 (128) no. 1; available online (but not illustrated) at <http://www.archive.org/details/schweizerischenu1415schwuoft> (26 August 2009).
  - (b) For Septimius Severus, now the large coin presented here (Fig. 1).
  - (c) For Caracalla, see Æ 39 mm, *Münzen und Medaillen*, Basel, Auktion 41, 18–19 June, 1970, no. 432, pl. 25; Baldwin's/Markov/Münzen und Medaillen, N.Y., Sale XI (January 11, 2006) listed in *Zeitschrift für Numismatik* 12 (1885) p. 338, no. 3, whence Münsterberg, *Beamtennamen*, p. 146 (provided with links to and from B. V. Head, digital *Historia Numorum*, by Ed Snible, <http://snible.org/coins/library/muensterberg/lydia.html> and <http://snible.org/coins/hn/lydia.html> [26 August 2009]); the bust type is like that of Septimius on the Missouri Charikles coin.
  - (d) For Geta, Classical Numismatic Group, Inc. (CNG), Auction 136, Lot 145 <http://www.acsearch.info/record.html?id=262171> or <http://www.cngcoins.com/Coin.aspx?CoinID=81821> (26 August 2009).

The Julia Domna, the Septimius, and the Caracalla just cited preclude assigning a Charikles issue to Elagabalus (218–222). Therefore, we can now assign to no later than Caracalla not only the British Museum semi-autonomous *Hiera Synkletos* coins but also the coins with a

- reverse of Aphrodite in her temple (a subject more familiar from the magistrate Andronicus's coins for Clodius Albinus), already tentatively given to Caracalla by Münsterberg. For the *Hiera Synkletos* coins, see British Museum, *BMC, Lydia*, p. 215, nos. 20 and 21; for the Aphrodite type, *ibid.*, p. 221, nos. 50 and 51 (not illustrated). Because the portraits of the cousins Caracalla and Elagabalus (the Antonini) when idealized may so resemble each other, the magistrate's name rather than the imperial portrait type is now a sound basis for attribution. Even coins issued at Saitta signed by the magistrate Attalianus, such as the Caracalla (with a beard) with Zeus Lydios reverse (Peus Nachfolger, Auction 366, 29 October 2000, no. 727) need not be assigned to Elagabalus, since their obverse legends are the same as the Charikles issues for Caracalla at Saitta.
7. The large *Synkletos* issue in the British Museum (*BMC, Lydia*, pl. XXIII, 4), also signed by Attalianus, ought also to be reconsidered, because as an issue of Attalianus it would date to Caracalla's reign—a little later than the Charikles coins—when (unlike the idealized youth on the *Synkletos* issue) the young emperor had a beard.
  8. AE 21 mm. Axiotta is evidently a toponym. See Maria Paz de Hoz, *Die lydischen Kulte im Lichte der griechischen Inschriften* (Bonn, 1999) p. 403, and P. Herrmann and Hasan Malay, *New Documents from Lydia* (Vienna, 2007) p. 76. Only Saitta labels its Men "Axiottenos," although he is so-called in inscriptions from nearby sites. The river god on the reverse of this coin is the Hermos. On other coins, the River Hyllos is named. See the map in Paz de Hoz, *Lydischen Kulte*, p. 403 and the discussion of the epithet on p. 39 for the concentration of Axiottenos inscriptions around Saitta. The type used for Axiottenos may also be used for the senate (*Synkletos*) of Saitta, or for Dionysos.
  9. Eugene Lane, "Two Portrayals of the Moon-God Men," *Muse* 18 (1984) p. 58, fig. 5, and "A Men Miscellany: Three New Objects Concerned with the Moon-God Men," *Muse* 31–32 (1997–1998) p. 90, fig. 1.
  10. The most obvious explanation of Cybele's lion having both forepaws on the ground is its being virtually a throne support for the enthroned cult statue, possibly that recorded in the Metroön in the Athenian Agora and, if so, dating from the fifth century B.C.E. (J. J. Pollitt, *The Art of Ancient Greece, Sources and Documents* [Cambridge, 1990] p. 67, citing Arrian, *Periplus Maris Euxini*, 9, R. Hercher and A. Eberhard eds., *Scripta Minora* [Leipzig, 1885]). The frontal seated goddess, evidently a cult statue, is easily recognizable in all sizes and degrees of competence all over the Greco-Roman world. Wherever not too broken, her throne has small lions instead of front legs. It is tempting (but probably not permissible) to think of Neolithic females seated on cats, although the Mother of the Gods, Cybele in the Empire period, is seen riding her lion sidesaddle almost as often as in the enthroned image that we have here. She also usually carries her tympanum. On some dies of the Greek East with Cybele enthroned, the lion does raise its forepaw heraldically, as at Saitta. These include young Julia Domna's, issued by Andronicus at Saitta (Peus Nachfolger, Auction 366, October 2000, no. 726, weighing 32.73 g), but the most beautiful examples are the silver cistophori for Hadrian and Sabina struck at Smyrna (W. E. Metcalf, *The Cistophori of Hadrian, American Numismatic Society Numismatic Studies* 15 [1980] pp. 34–35, nos. 33 and 34, pls. 10–11, cat. 161–176).
  11. See Eugene Lane, "A Syncretistic Statuette," *Muse* 8 (1974) p. 35, fig. 35 and also the Sabazios hand in the Louvre, AO 4409, a votive object thought to have come from Baalbek (A. Malraux, *Le Musée imaginaire I* [Paris, 1952] pl. 196). Also, see the plaque (formerly in the British Museum) actually inscribed with a dedication to Men (Lane, "Two Portrayals," p. 60, fig. 8).
  12. Antioch, Pisidia, AE 33 mm, 23.61 g. Geta's name ending in ae on this die is unusual. He is shown laureate, and the issue is thus datable to ca. 209–211. This coin is one of a set issued

for Septimius, Julia Domna, and their sons, all of which have similar reverse dies, showing a cult statue. For the same die-pair, see *Sylloge Numorum Graecorum, Deutschland, Sammlung von Aulock 12, Pisidia* (Berlin, 1964) pl. 161, no. 1492. The cult image on the coins of Pisidian Antioch show the god Men with bucranium, cock, pine cone, scepter, and often a Nike, where the god looks much less humanized than the Saitta Men and Mother. See G. F. Hill, *BMC, Lycia, Pamphylia, and Pisidia* (London, 1897) p. 180, no. 21, for Septimius; p. 181, no. 32, for Julia Domna (a better image, including the obverse, is D. R. Sear, *Greek Imperial Coins and Their Values: The Local Coinage of the Roman Empire* [London, 1982] p. 227, no. 2424); and p. 187, no. 70, for Gordian III, illustrated on pl. XXXI, nos. 6, 8, and 17, respectively. Henry Clay Lindgren owned fine large specimens issued for Septimius Severus, Julia Domna, and Geta. See H. C. Lindgren and F. Kovacs, *Ancient Bronze Coins of Asia Minor and the Levant* (San Mateo, Calif., 1985) pl. 43, nos. 1204, 1209, and 1218. For the same cult image, see *Sylloge Numorum Graecorum, Deutschland, Sammlung von Aulock 12*, pl. 161, nos. 4924, 4928, 4933, and 4942. On line, there are several good specimens of this image at <http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/greece/pisidia/antioch/t.html> (26 August 2009). (I would not call the post that sometimes supports the outstretched hand of the cult image holding something heavy a “cippus,” a word that some catalogues often use.) At Pisidian Antioch, E. Gazda, University of Michigan, has now excavated the sanctuary of Men Askaenos: [http://sitemaker.umich.edu/late-antiquity/pisidian\\_antioch](http://sitemaker.umich.edu/late-antiquity/pisidian_antioch) (26 August 2009). The frontal cult image of Men, although especially well illustrated on the coins of Pisidian Antioch, is also common on coins of neighboring regions.

13. Paz de Hoz, *Lydischen Kulte*, p. 38, says, “the still generally accepted theory ties the root of the name Men with the Asia Minor name of the moon god, specifically the Hittite moon god Arma.” Lane, she said, had favored the relation of Men’s iconography and epithets to Mithras with certain Scythian elements. If his name is Hittite, or proto-Hittite, we still could not justify assuming that he had an animal “vehicle” or suggest that his small alter ego needed to have one. Even at Yazilikaya itself, a mile and a half from Boghazköy, and in the porch of the *bit hilani*, as the Assyrians called a building type they regarded as “Hittite,” in the Palace of Kaparu at Tell Halaf, the figures that have animal “vehicles” are manifestly major gods, at Yazilikaya brandishing all their attributes. See Henri Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient*, 5th edition (New Haven and London, 1996) p. 226, figs. 260–261 (Yazilikaya); pp. 288–293, figs. 337 and 341 (Tell Halaf).
14. Peter Robert Franke and Margaret Karola Nollé, *Die Homonoia-Münzen Kleinasiens*, vol. I (Saarbrücken, 1997) p. 17, nos. 91–92, pl. 11; Head, *BMC Lydia*, p. 41, no. 54, pl. XLI, 1.
15. Popular as he is, we really know almost as little about Telesphoros as about Men’s small attendant. The best-balanced account of his cult (he has practically no mythology) is still, in my opinion, Warwick Wroth’s nineteenth-century article “Telesphoros,” in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 3 (1882) pp. 283–300. According to Wroth (p. 287, n. 1), the first appearance of Telesphoros on a coin (and thus datable) is on a small Pergamene bronze of Hadrian, although the cult was older. A little more recent, but more difficult, is the article, s.v. Telesphoros I, in W. H. Roscher, ed., *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. V (Leipzig, 1916–1924) cols. 309–326. For some good images, see the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. VII, 1 (Zurich and Munich, 1994) pp. 870–878 and VII, 2, pp. 602–605, especially nos. 24 and 84. The discussion of Telesphoros there is short, not because he is unimportant, but because he is cultic rather than mythological. Studies of Asklepios contain less about Telesphoros himself. He was not, of course, an “avatar” of Asklepios—and this is not the place to consider Asklepios himself as a “son” or (we might

- say) an avatar of the older cult of Apollo as a Healer (*iatros*). Also, we cannot be sure that “acolyte” would be quite right for Telesphoros; as Wroth insists, we would need to know more in particular about him. It is possible, however, that the small figure with Men might in the Severan period have been characterized similarly to Telesphoros, however that was.
16. It is as if the inscriptions and the coins represent divergent cultural assumptions. Lane, in notes made for this coin when it was acquired, remarked, “Saitta was enough of a Greek city to have its population divided into tribes, conventionally named after thoroughly Greek divinities, Apollo, Asclepius, Dionysus, and Herakles. We know this from stone steps of a theater, which reserved seating for one tribe or another.” (See Frank Kolb, *Sitzstufeninschriften aus dem Stadion von Saitta, Epigraphica Anatolica* 15 [Bonn, 1990]). The same Greek civic character is evinced by Saitta’s *Synkletos* (senate) coins.
  17. In the same memorandum, Lane observed that Paz de Hoz, *Lydischen Kulte*, p. 234, had speculated that, given the prevalence of Men in the inscriptions, Men at this time might have encompassed all the city’s male divinities, and he cited this line in evidence. For that matter, however, by then they might have regarded Cybele as embracing all the matron goddesses. In a couple of generations, Sol would prevail and subsume. As Lane added, however, “all this gets us no closer to knowing who the little guy at Men’s feet is.”
  18. In the time of Septimius Severus, a 40–45 mm diameter is as large as Asia Minor Alliance coins are known to have been. The coins of Thyatira with Pergamon show how handsome they can be (Franke and Nollé, *Homonoia Münzen*, p. 222, no. 2297, pl. 98). These are not, however, the only large and handsome coins. A full and inclusive study of all the Roman Provincial medallion coins needs to be undertaken, but such a subject far exceeds the scope of this article.
  19. See above, n. 6 (c). See also J. Jurukova, *Die Münzprägung von Bizye* (Berlin, 1981) p. 71, no. 129, pl. 20 = Varbanov, *Greek Imperial Coins* (Engl.) II, p. 129, no. 1507, with a much elaborated Pergamene triad and the still more elaborate Alexandrian group, *ibid.*, p. 133, no. 1546.
  20. Considering that die engravers with their small tool kits traveled on roads and rivers, it is not surprising that we see regional stylistic communality. When, however, we are dealing with coins most of which exceed 40 mm in diameter, the actual number of dies used is drastically reduced. Well-established relationships that geography itself suggests seem, however, to be borne out by the technical and stylistic character of the coins.
  21. See the map, Paz de Hoz, *Lydischen Kulte*, p. 403, where the incidence of inscriptions for Men and the Mother at Saitta, compared with other cities, is shown graphically by the relative sizes of their triangles.
  22. P. Hermann and H. Malay, in their discussion of the long confession inscription from Kollyda, consider the evidence that the sacrileges in question may be such as we would take to a civil court. They suggest that the religious establishment is acting in lieu of established civic structures to resolve legal differences (*New Documents from Lydia, Ergänzungsbände zu den Tituli Asiae Minoris*, no. 24 [Vienna, 2007] no. 84, pp. 110–113). One can only wonder whether the preponderance of confessions of shortcomings, of disobediences, of acceptance of punishments, then of healing, all addressed to one Men or another, may be understandable in this way. If so, however, the coins tell no such tale.

## About the Authors

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