

STEVEN BATTELLE

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This coin has been personally inspected and determined to be an authentic ancient coin .  
If deemed a forgery by the ACCS, IGC, NGC, or PCGS, it may be  
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Thrace, Apollonia Pontika, 450-400 BC AR Hemidrachm

Bo82547/U03157 3.1 Gm 15 mm

Obv: Facing head of Medusa Rev: Anchor; A to left, crayfish to right SNG BM Black Sea 160-1; cf. SNG Copenhagen 457

The Gorgon Medusa: Medusa was a monstrous female character whose gaze could turn people to stone. She was the most famous of the three Gorgon sisters along with Stheno, and Euryale, but was the only one subject to mortality. They were said to have brass hands, sharp fangs, impenetrable scales and living, venomous snakes as hair. The Gorgons and their other sisters the Graiae (and possibly the Hesperides), as well as their brother Ladon were the children of Phorcys and Ceto. Medusa was not born with her hideous appearance, but was at one time a beautiful and alluring woman. Her natural beauty came to the attention of Poseidon who seduced her in the temple of Athena. Upon discovery of the desecration of her temple, Athena punished Medusa by changing her appearance into a hideous form whose glance would turn all living creatures to stone. While Medusa was pregnant by Poseidon, she was beheaded in her sleep by the hero Perseus who was sent to fetch her head by King Polydectes of Seriphus. Perseus was aided in this quest by Athena and Hermes who supplied him with winged sandals, a cap of invisibility, a sickle, and a mirrored shield. The hero was able to accomplish his mission and avoid being turned to stone by gazing at Medusa's reflection on his shield. After the hero had severed her head, two offspring sprang forth: the winged horse Pegasus and the giant Chrysaor. The blood which dropped from the wound also produced the innumerable serpents that infest Africa. Perseus used Medusa's head, which, even in death, retained its petrifying power, to rescue Andromeda, kill Polydectes, and petrify the Titan Atlas. He later presented Medusa's head to Athena, who placed it on her aegis. Athena gave some of Medusa's magical blood to the physician Asclepius, which acted not only as a deadly poison, but also held the power to raise the dead.

