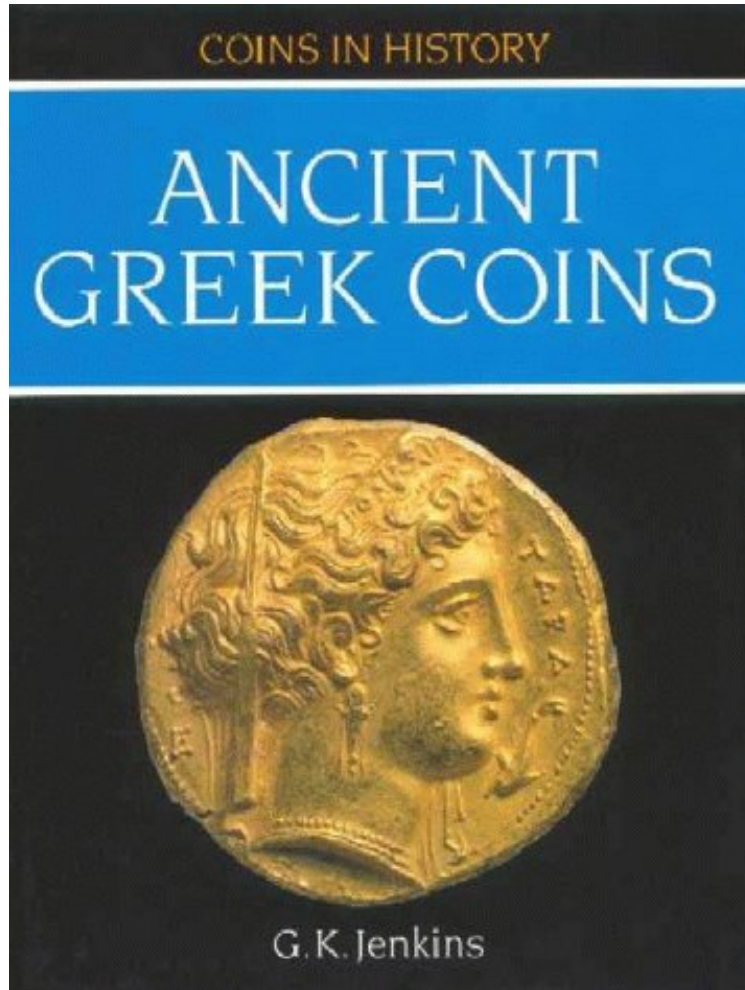


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## Ancient Greek Coins (Coins in History)

*Kenneth Jenkins*

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**Kenneth Jenkins : Ancient Greek Coins (Coins in History)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ancient Greek Coins (Coins in History):

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The Treasure of Ancient Greek Coins By Dr. Miguel A. Faria This is a magnificent book and a great resource for numismatists and ancient coin collectors. This is just the introductory tome for the initiate to learn the basics of Numismatics, as well as reacquaint the amateur historian with ancient Greek and Hellenistic history. G.K. Jenkins is an eminent numismatist, formerly Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum, and collectors of ancient coins can learn a great deal from his singular knowledge and wisdom of these treasured objects. Jenkin's cataloging of gold and electrum staters of ancient Carthage -- the Zeugitania series of coins -- consecutive groups depending on date of coinage, gold weight, and die strike series is a great accomplishment in the art and science of Numismatics. These coins are beautiful treasures to ancient coin collectors. They depict on the obverse the head of the goddess Tanit wearing an elaborate necklace with multiple pendants, and triple drop earrings; the reverse has inscribed a magnificent horse standing majestically. We learn for

example that much knowledge was gained from the excavations of the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus and the foundations of the temples built in the area by the fabulously rich King Croesus of Lydia. Both Herodotus and the archaeological evidence agree the first coins were minted in Lydia in the region of Ionia about 700 B.C. The earliest Greek coins were stamped with a punch mark, the characteristic reverse of most archaic Greek coins. At first coins were of high value, and the original stater was an electrum coin weighing 14 to 16 grams. Electrum occurs naturally in the silt of the the Paktalos river that flows through Sardis, the ancient capital of Lydia. The stream loaded with this metal, a mixture of gold and silver, was dredged with sheepskin that may have given rise to the legend of the Golden Fleece and the tales of King Midas, the avaricious and legendary monarch whose touch converted everything to gold. Electrum and later gold and silver staters quickly gained currency with Greek merchants and soldiers. Xenophon relates that mercenaries were paid one stater per month by their employers. He should know best of all, as he participated, led, and wrote about the historic march of the 10,000 in his book the Anabasis. Eventually, smaller coins were needed for change and conducting smaller transactions. The smaller electrum hektes (or hektes) coins weighting about 2.5 grams were coined in the Island of Lesbos and in Kyzikos, Phokaia, and other islands and coast of Ionia. Lesbos minted hektes with artistic and fanciful obverses, and from the beginning, the reverse also had figures, rather than a punch mark. The age of hektes lasted about 200 years, until the 4th century B.C. Silver coins were also developed and were depicted with more civic emblems. Perhaps to coin collectors the most practical knowledge, besides the superb description of coins (with excellent black and white and color photography), is the narrative on die sequences. Ancient coin sequence based on the study of dies used in producing the obverse and reverse of coins and their wear help establish successive connections to establish the origin of a coin. Another method used in this endeavor is the paramount study of coin hoards. This book has excellent descriptions and succinct explanations on these two essential methods of determining the origin of coins. This book is highly recommended to numismatists and coin collectors, particularly those with an interest in ancient Greek and Hellenic coins. Dr. Miguel a. Faria, Jr., is the author of *Cuba in Revolution -- Escape from a Lost Paradise* (2002). He has written numerous articles on Graeco-Roman history and book reviews posted at or at his website [haciendapublishingdotcom](http://haciendapublishingdotcom).