



13<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Warwick University Campus – Oculus Building OC0.01

## Coins and Visual Media: Influences, Connections and Intersections

Scholarly research on coin iconography has traditionally focused on the study of the origin and evolution of coin types, and on comparing the use of iconographic models or patterns across the coinages of different geographical areas or in different periods. More recent approaches have shifted their focus from the study of coins designs to the analysis of their relation with and impact on potential audiences of coin users, looking at imagery targeting specific categories of recipients (e.g. soldiers) through certain channels and within a given archaeological context (cf. O. Hekster, 'Coins and messages: audience targeting on coins of different denominations', in *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power*, Amsterdam 2003; N. Elkins, 'Coins, contexts and an iconographic approach for the 21st century', in *Coins in Context I*, Mainz 2009), and at the relation between 'issuer' and 'user' in the selection of coin designs (cf. F. de Callatay, P. Iossif and R. Veymiers (eds.), *Typoi. Greek and Roman Coins seen through their Images*, Liège 2018).

A field of research that is still under-investigated is the study of coin imagery in relation with other visual media. Coins were part of a broader world of communication media that sometimes used the same visual language as a result of shared iconographic sources and models of representation, or also to convey shared messages of identity and affiliation (cf. N. Elkins and S. Krmnicek (eds.), *Art in the Round. New Approaches to Ancient Coin Iconography*, Rahden 2014).

This interdisciplinary colloquium aims to gather contributions from scholars specialised in the study of different cultures (Greek, Celtic, Roman, Ancient Near East, Mediaeval) to compare examples of visual culture adopted on coins with imagery used on other media, both on monumental objects (sculpture, relief and architectural decoration) and on small objects of public as well as of private use (silverware, terracotta lamps, tiles, amphorae, tokens). The research questions addressed in the colloquium will try to gain a better insight into the processes of development and transformation of coin imagery and into the dynamics of transfer and re-adaptation of patterns of visual representation from coins to other media, and vice-versa. Special emphasis will be given to interdisciplinary case studies on the reuse of the same pattern in different socio-cultural contexts (e.g. Celtic and Roman, Roman and Persian, pagan and Christian) and in different periods (e.g. ancient and mediaeval), also looking at examples of later reception of classical models (e.g. Renaissance studies).

This event is generously sponsored by the **Warwick Humanities Research Centre Fund** and by the **Warwick Connecting Cultures Group**.

This colloquium is organised by Dr Dario Calomino, Research Fellow in the Department of Classics and Ancient History, as the Warwick Coin Day 2019. This event is generously sponsored by the **Warwick Humanities Research Centre Fund** and by the **Warwick Connecting Cultures Group**.

## Conference Programme

**10:00 am**

**Dr Dario Calomino**

**Department of Classics and Ancient History, Warwick University**

**Welcome and introduction**

## Royal and Imperial Imagery between the Near East and the Roman World

**10:15 am**

**Dr Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis**

**Curator of Middle Eastern Coins, Departments of Coins and Medals, British Museum**

*The Ancient Persian Kings: Royal Titles, Crowns and Divine Imagery*

From the Achaemenid period until the end of the Sasanian period, the ancient kings of Iran used an imagery that emphasised divine support, and titles that were indicative of the king's position in his realm and the region.

While Parthian coins use specific titles at certain times, they do not mention the personal name of the ruler, nor do they always give a date. But written cuneiform tablets from Mesopotamia provide a date that correlates to the titles used in the documents and on coins. This helps us to date coins of particularly the reign of Mithradates II (122/1 – 90/1 BC). From the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC onwards, Parthian kings included divine symbols and symbols of victory on their coins. This imagery appears also on other media, including Parthian-period reliefs. In the following Sasanian period, the Persian kings mention on their coins their personal name and, in addition, wear a crown that is unique to each king. The crown and the personal name enable us to identify kings shown on Sasanian rock-reliefs, silver plates and stucco.

**10:50 am**

**David Swan**

**PhD Candidate, Department of Classics and Ancient History, Warwick University**

*The Love of the Monstrous: How Celtic Coin Iconography Encouraged the Import of Classical Monsters to Britain*

This paper explores how Celtic coinage encouraged the introduction of classical monstrosities into Britain in the form of non-coin material objects.

In the latter half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, a great many mythological creatures, such as griffins, sphinxes and images of Victory appeared on Celtic coinage for the first time in Britain. The change has been associated with British authorities spending their youth in Rome as hostages. However, the British coinage had always closely modelled Gallic coinage, reflecting a cross-Channel development in iconographic styles.

This change in turn resulted in the arrival of certain imports to Britain. The Lexdon Tumulus, an Iron Age burial, contained many imported objects echoing the classical monster imagery of the contemporary coins. This paper suggests that the development of classicised iconography on the coinage in Gaul caused a similar development in Britain, which encouraged the import of objects that depicted such unusual creatures.

**11:25 am**

**Dr Richard Hobbs**

**Weston Curator of Roman Britain, Departments of Britain, Europe and Prehistory, British Museum**

*Coins, Kingship and Gold and Silver Plate in Rome and Persia*

This paper will discuss the relationship between precious metal coins and gold and silver plate manufactured in the late Roman and Byzantine periods and how these are interlinked with similar material produced in the Sasanian empire and beyond (for example under successor 'barbarian' peoples). It will explore the imagery, particularly of kingship, that appears on this class of material culture and how this is related to iconography of coinage produced at this time.

**12:00pm**

**Lunch Break**

**'Functional' Imagery in Greece and Rome's Everyday Life**

**1:30 pm**

**Prof Mariangela Puglisi**

**Associate Professor in Classical Numismatics, University of Messina**

*Public and Private Iconography: Differences and Analogies between Coinages and Instrumentum Domesticum in Greek Sicily*

Coin iconography usually reflects the culture, the religion and the political ideologies of the issuing authority. This paper will try to detect to what extent the iconographic choices characterising coin imagery rooted in the local visual culture and intersected with other media in the private sphere. It will investigate whether some coin designs featuring on objects of daily use, especially the stamps on *instrumentum domesticum* (inscribed tools, mainly tiles and amphorae), were borrowed by the manufacturers and used as personal emblems expressing the identity of local workshops, or were adopted as part of the official imagery designed by the issuing authority, to which they had to conform. The investigation will focus on the broad Greek period in Sicily (c. 480-31 BC), which has not received much attention so far with regards to the study of visual culture in the domestic sphere.

**2:05 pm**

**Prof Clare Rowan**

**Department of Classics and Ancient History, Warwick University**

*A Community of Images? Coins, Tokens and Everyday Objects in the Roman Empire*

This paper focuses on tokens of the Roman Empire in Italy, objects that were created by both emperors and local groups to facilitate exchange and distribution. The images carried on these tokens is at times inspired by Roman imperial coinage, but it is also clear that tokens were often the forerunners of imperial imagery, presenting, for example, imperial Liberalitas and the figure of Youth well before these concepts appear on imperial coinage. But tokens in Italy also interacted with a broader array of imagery, found on gems, lamps, wall paintings, stamps and other everyday items. Although scholarship frequently dismisses such representations as having been chosen with little intention and with little effect, as something simply 'taken from a pattern book', the frequent

repetition of particular types of images must have shaped Roman consciousness and identities. This paper raises what the effects of this 'community of images' might have had in terms of forming a Roman 'society'.

## **Sacred and Ceremonial Visual Language in the Roman East**

**2:40 pm**

**Prof Zahra Newby**

**Department of Classics and Ancient History, Warwick University**

*Celebrating Festivals in the Public Imagery of Perge in Pamphylia*

This paper will explore the overlaps between imagery in the public monuments of Perge, such as the theatre, colonnaded street and nymphaea, with that on its civic coinage, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. The aim of this contribution is to consider what influences there might have been between these two groups of imagery, and the ways they can inform our understanding of Perge's religious and festival life under the Roman Empire.

**3:15 pm**

**Coffee Break**

**3:40 pm**

**Dr Marguerite Spoerri Butcher**

**Research Fellow, Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford**

*Miletus and the Sanctuary of Didyma: Coin Iconography, Architecture and Epigraphy*

Coins, reliefs and inscriptions are visual media that served different purposes and targeted their audiences in different ways. However, they are often directly related to each other, as it is only when they are analysed together that their significance can be fully understood. This will be exemplified here through a series of coins issued in Miletus under Septimius Severus and during the joint reign of Pupienus and Balbinus, showing an enigmatic scene representing the cult statue of Apollo Didymeus within his temple, surrounded by two figures carrying torches.

## **The Aftermath and Reception of Rome**

**4:15 pm**

**Dr Rory Naismith**

**Lecturer, King's College London**

*Imago et Nomen: Representations of Authority and Early Medieval Coinage*

In the centuries after the collapse of the western Roman Empire, coinage was marked by a fascinating interplay of visual elements as rulers and manufacturers reconfigured the relationship between power and currency. These related closely to contemporary manuscripts, sculpture, seals and other media, especially those which were produced for elite consumption. A variety of images was deployed in these cases, carefully tailored to different audiences. Some images harked back to Roman imperial tradition, and the solidity and prestige that went with it, or were charged with

Christian religious meaning. Innovation and stability could both project power. Crucially, images on coins often – though not always – were accompanied by text, which could in itself be treated as a kind of image, or interact with the iconography of coins in subtle ways. The roles of text and image reflect the strengths and limitations of early medieval currency, and its relationship to how power was imagined and projected more widely.

**4:50 pm**

**Dr Andrew Burnett**

**Honorary Professor, Institute of Archaeology, UCL**

*Coins on Buildings of Quattrocento Lombardy*

Italian artists, as well as scholars like Valla or Politian, began to take a serious interest in coins in the Quattrocento. Some remarkable examples come from two buildings in northern Italy, the Certosa di Pavia and the Cappella Colleoni in Bergamo (in the Lombardy region). This paper will examine the ways in which coin imagery and its significance were received and reinterpreted as part of the broader process of revival in the classical past that characterised the Italian Renaissance.

**5.30 pm**

**Prof Kevin Butcher**

**Department of Classics and Ancient History, Warwick University**

**Concluding Remarks and Discussion**