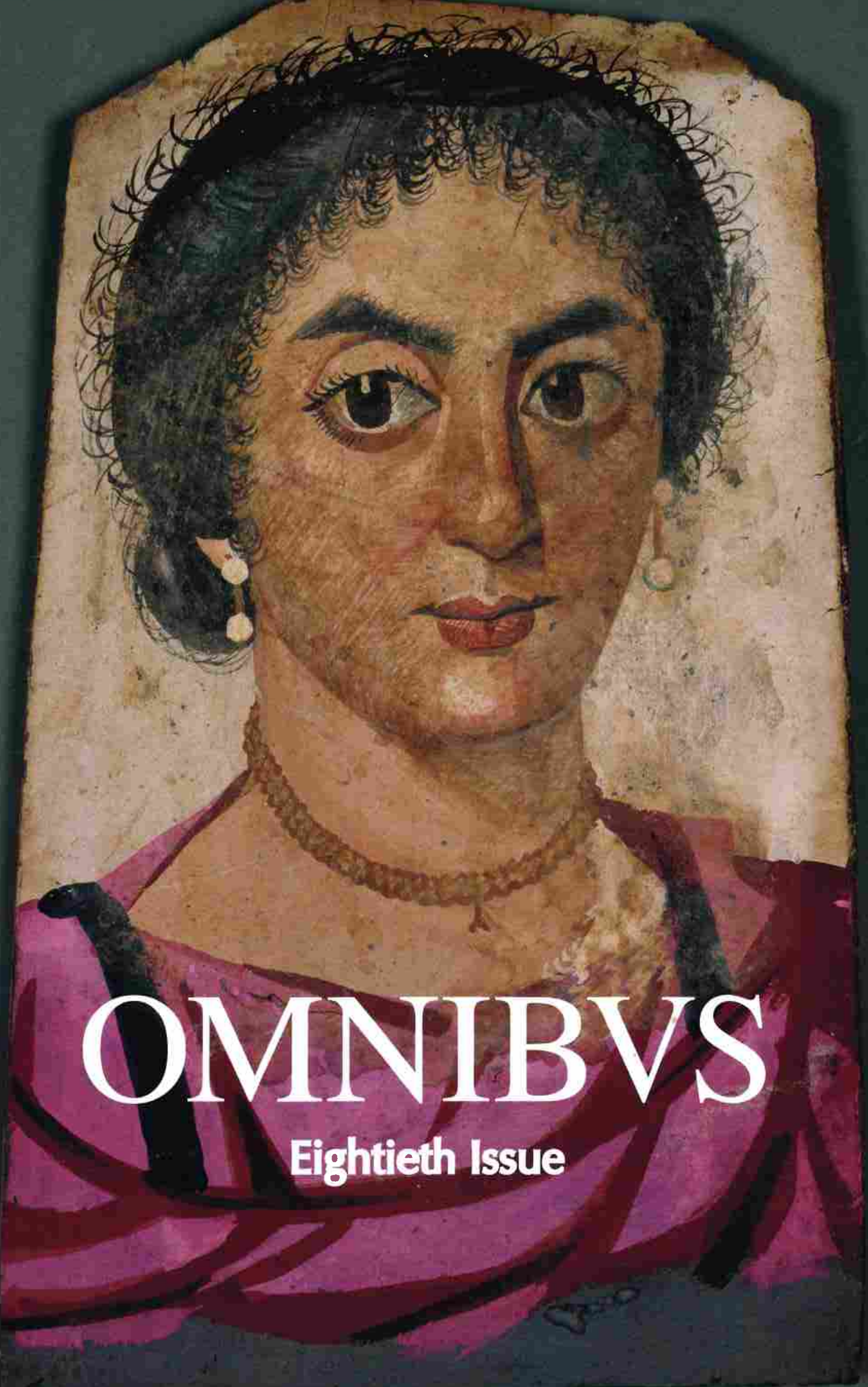

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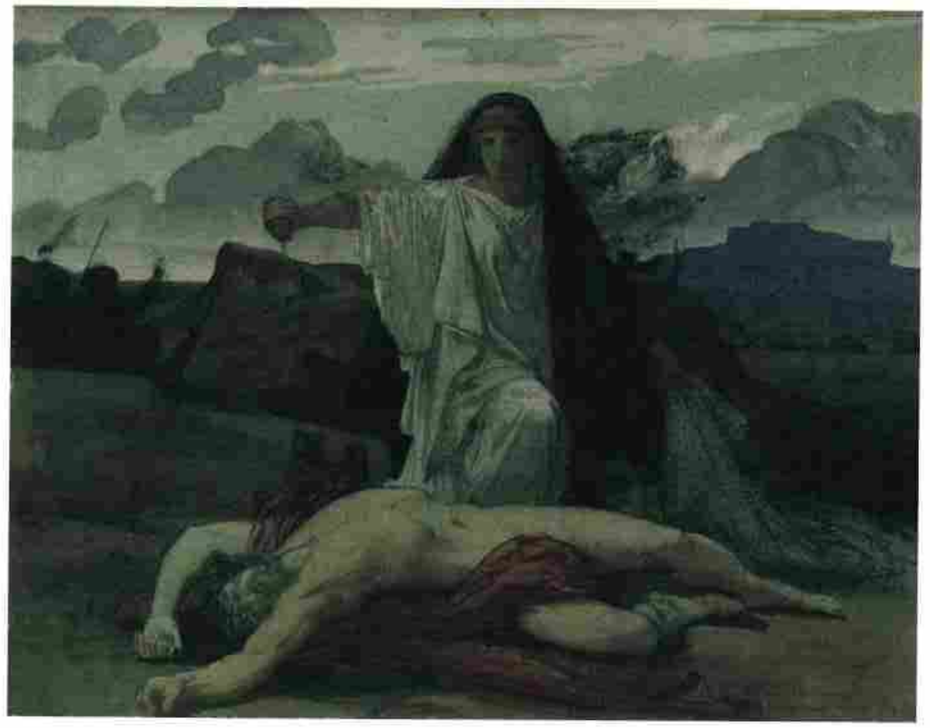

Antigone buries Polyneices in a painting by Jules-Eugène Lenepveu. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

in Beirut in 2014; subsequently it was renamed *Antigone of Shatila* and was performed again in Beirut in 2015, then touring to Europe in 2016. The same team of playwright and director was responsible for this play, Mohammad Al Attar and Omar Abu Saada. Again the women who took part had no experience of theatre, and Al Attar suggests in one interview that at first they could not see the point of theatre in their difficult lives. But in the event they responded to the play's concerns, especially to the very direct notion of the unburied family member, which many of the women had experienced themselves. Al Attar suggests that the women seized the play as an opportunity to mourn properly and, as he says, to give sadness the weight it deserves.

While the *Trojan Women* is often thought of as an unmitigated cry of pain, Sophocles' *Antigone* is usually recognised as a complex play which invites a range of responses; not everyone has always agreed that Antigone is in the right to oppose Theban law. Some reviews were quick to suggest that in the refugees' version, Creon stands in for the Syrian autocrat Assad, but Al Attar notes that the tyrant in the lives of Syrian women could be any man, not just the political despot. Some of the women even identified with Creon, while others found the most engaging characters to be Antigone's peace-loving sister Ismene, or her fiancé Haimon. Yet few women wanted to play these other characters – Antigone remained a compelling presence for them all, with several commentators remarking that the women found themselves in Antigone, a woman who emerges from the shadows and takes up resistance.

One aspect of Antigone was decisively rejected. Sophocles' Antigone pays the price for resistance and goes to her death, but not one of the women, Al Attar notes, wanted to die as a martyr or a sacrificial heroine. Instead, it was important that Antigone's story be repeated and thus shared. 'Before we were introduced to Antigone's story, we felt alone,' one woman is quoted as saying. 'Then we realized these tragedies keep happening throughout history and it gave us the courage to speak out. Together we feel stronger and more confident.'

Beyond Lebanon

Al Attar is very clear, in published interviews, that theatre is therapeutic for the participants because it offers an external reference point via which feelings can be understood, articulated, and shared; the inherent politics of theatre here give a voice to those who otherwise have none. This he explicitly takes as his goal for this kind of theatre. He is also well aware that this refugee theatre is political in other ways. The production was first seen in Beirut, as I said, but then moved to Marseille. In Marseille, Al Attar says, the audience was quite homogeneous, the 'white middle class' (he uses the English term even though he is giving an interview in French). Thus, he concludes, the performance was a kind of encounter between the north coast of the Mediterranean and the south; the spectators met the migrants before the journey, before they appeared in Europe as displaced victims of the long passage, or as drowned victims of the sea.

Again this production of *Antigone* was so successful and moving that a documentary was made about it. The documentary is called *We are not Princesses* and I was fortunate enough to see it at a screening in Oxford. It has been shown at several film festivals, and as with *Queens of Syria*, you can find trailers and other associated material online. It's a remarkable film, full of striking anecdotes about the women's original lives in Syria, about their lives as refugees, and about how the play came about. Although the subject matter is so sobering, the women laugh throughout the film – there is a running joke about the revolutionary implications of women smoking cigarettes, and someone says that Antigone would definitely have taken up smoking, as an act of defiance towards convention. Don't try this at home!

Some of the film reflects on how the women's exile has been partly liberating. One woman remarks that she used to be Ismene, but has now had to learn to stand up for herself. Another much older woman identifies more with Creon, searching for a way to bring order to chaos, and says that she could rule the world. Towards the end several women show resignation when they agree that they are not important – their lives were not important and their deaths will not be either. This is one point at which we might disagree with them – the figure of Antigone suggests across the centuries that people can be more important to others than they might initially recognise.

In future we may see more tragedies produced by migrants, or addressing issues associated with mass migration. The Greek dramas are flexible, welcoming, and are there for us to use, enjoy and learn from.

'Voices Unheard', the livestreamed discussion among participants in 'Queens of Syria', can be found at: https://howlround.com/happenings/voices-unheard-syria-trojan-women-summit-amman-jordan-washington-dc. You can read about the play in a variety of sources online, mainly newspaper reviews of performances or interviews with participants. You can watch a trailer for 'We are not Princesses', and learn more about the production of 'Antigone of Shatila', at https://www.openartfoundation.org/we-are-not-princesses.

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Lead tokens in Rome and Ostia

Clare Rowan

Tokens in clay, bronze, brass, and lead survive from all over the Roman world. Made by the imperial government, private individuals and associations, they can tell us much about local identities and culture. Here Clare Rowan discusses lead tokens found in the city of Rome and its port, Ostia.

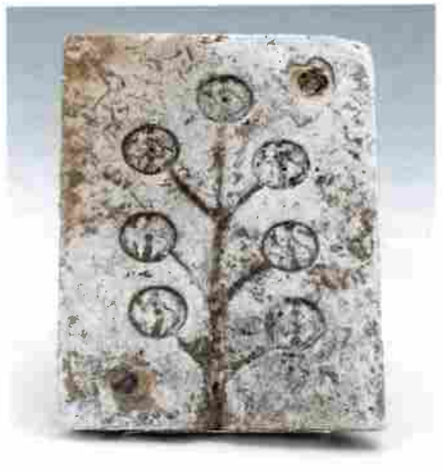
When Agrippa, Octavian's general and right-hand man, had responsibility for Rome's buildings and festivals in 33 B.C., he 'rained upon the heads of the people in the theatre tokens (*symbola*) that were good for money in one case, for clothes in another, and again for something else, and he also set out immense quantities of various wares for all comers and allowed the people to scramble for these things' – so Cassius Dio tells us (49.43.4).

Imagine what this scene would be like: at the end of an event Agrippa gets up and throws small coin-like objects into the crowd – if you can get hold of one of these tokens you get a prize! Unsurprisingly it seems this tradition caused a lot of mayhem – Seneca observed that the sensible man would leave the theatre at the moment such favours were brought in, since they simply were not worth the pain of being hit or getting into fights! (*Epistle* 74.7–8)

Unlike currency, which can be reused again and again to buy all sorts of items, tokens are coin-like objects used for one specific occasion (like the lottery described above), or for a specific context (e.g. as an access ticket to get into a particular event). Above all, we should connect tokens with distribution: the distribution of food, goods, and prizes during festivals, the distribution of wealth and goods from patrons to clients, distribution of food or entertainment between members of an association (*collegium*), or the distribution of goods and services between individuals in a small economy like a bath house.

How lead tokens were made

Lead tokens, which I am looking at in this piece, were made from marble moulds; we find these moulds in archaeological deposits across Rome and Ostia. This means that tokens were cast by multiple individuals in multiple locations: there was no central workshop. A mould half is shown above. You can see that the design has been etched into the marble, as well as channels to allow the molten lead to flow through. This mould would have been attached to another with the nails in the top right and lower left corners. This mould would have created tokens showing Fortuna holding a rudder and a cornucopia (horn of plenty). Given the way some of these tokens were used (thrown to crowds who then scrambled to grab them), Fortuna is a very apt goddess indeed!

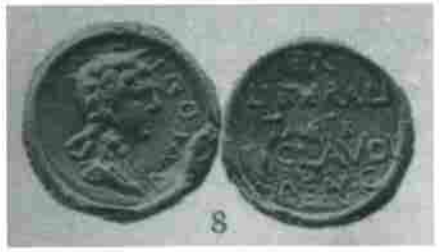


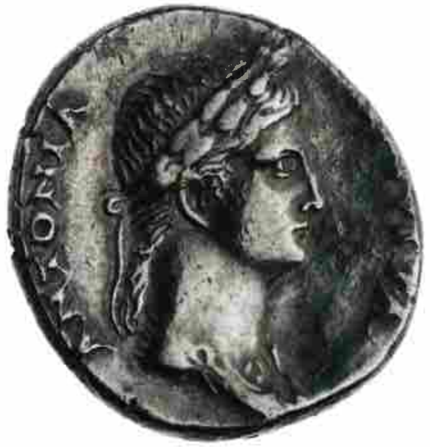
Stone mould for tokens, Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Transfer from the Alice Corinne McDaniel Collection, Department of the Classics, Harvard University. Accession no. 2008.118. Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College.

We also have moulds that were used to create tokens of different shapes (e.g. a mould half found on the Aventine Hill in Rome cast both square and circular tokens simultaneously: https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/romekircheriano7), and other moulds carried tokens of the same shape but with different designs and sizes (e.g. a specimen now in Paris cast small 'blank' tokens, larger tokens showing a dolphin, and a third type with a legend QA PIN ITIRO: https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/bnf.froehner.V.201). The different imagery, shapes, and sizes on one mould might represent different objects, value, or goods.

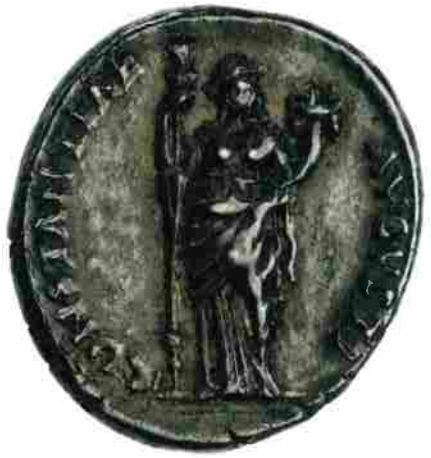
How tokens got their designs

Lead tokens in Rome name and show emperors, particularly from the Julio-Claudian period (27 B.C. – A.D. 68). Some tokens may have been created by the imperial government. Here is one such example. On one side we have a representation of Antonia the Younger, the daughter of Mark Antony and Octavia, and the mother of the emperor Claudius (see family tree on p.21). She died in A.D. 37. She is shown wearing a wreath of corn-ears, exactly the same way she is shown on imperial coinage (below). The corn-ears serve to associate Antonia with the goddess Ceres. On the other side we have a legend in

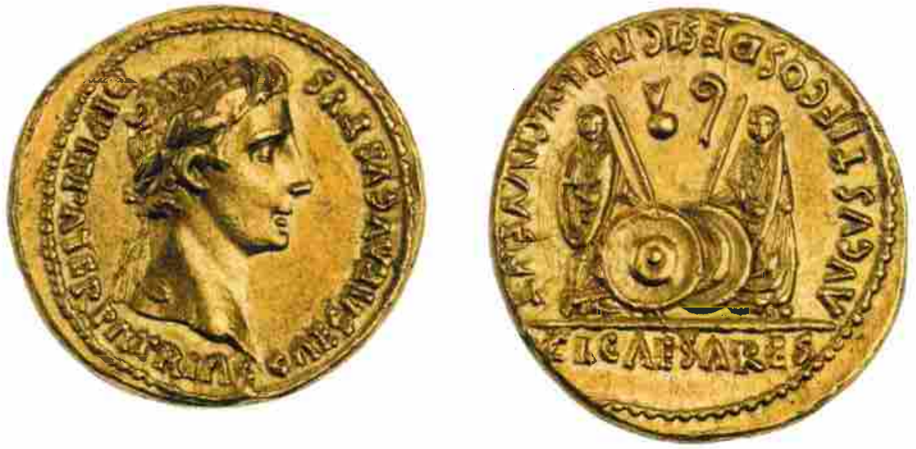




Denarius showing Antonia the Younger. This side portrays her as Ceres. American Numismatic Society.



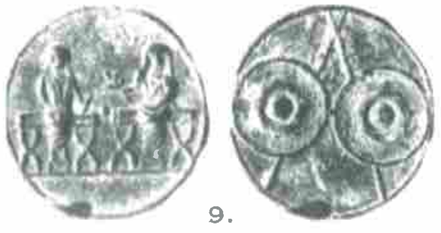
Denarius showing Antonia the Younger. This side portrays her as Constantia. American Numismatic Society.



Aureus showing Augustus on one side and Gaius and Lucius Caesar as leaders of the youth on the other. American Numismatic Society.

Latin that reads EX LIBERALITATE TI CLAVD CAE AVG, which tells us that this token comes from the Liberalitas (distribution ceremony) of the emperor Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus, the emperor Claudius. It is likely this piece was used to facilitate a distribution in honour of Antonia: someone was given a token such as this to be exchanged for something else. These distribution ceremonies, in which citizens received gifts from the emperor, were one method of demonstrating imperial generosity.

Another token, found in the Tiber in Rome, also has a design that bears similarities to coinage (below). On this token two young men sit side by side on curule chairs wearing togas. The togas also cover their heads, which was the norm during particular religious ceremonies. One carries a branch and the other an uncertain object. On the other side we find two shields and two spears. The entire design recalls the coin series struck towards the end of Augustus' reign showing Gaius and Lucius Caesar, Augustus' adopted sons, as the leaders of the youth (*principes iuventutis*). On the coin (top of centre and right hand column), a gold aureus, Gaius and Lucius are shown with the implements of their respective offices (a *simpulum* or ladle referring to Gaius' position as pontifex or priest and a *lituus* or curved staff referring to Lucius' position as augur), along with two shields and spears. The latter must be representations of the spears and shields voted to both young men by the equestrian order as recorded in Augustus' *Res Gestae* 14.1.

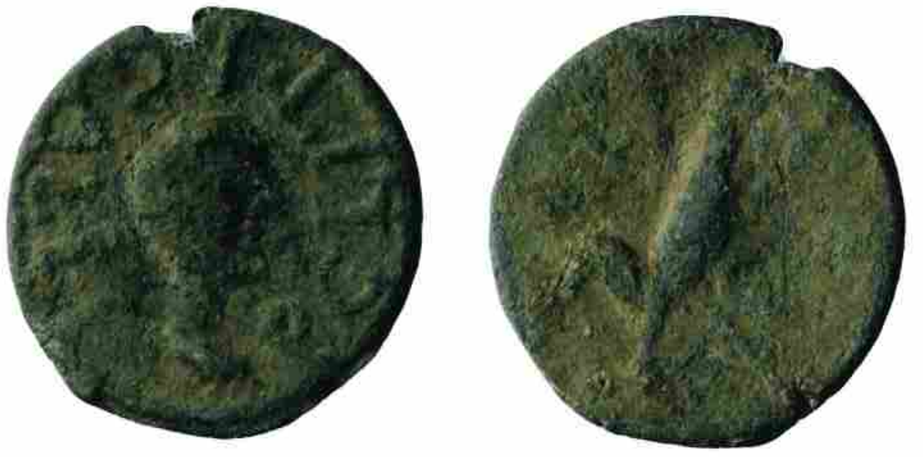


The figures on this token are probably Gaius and Lucius Caesar.

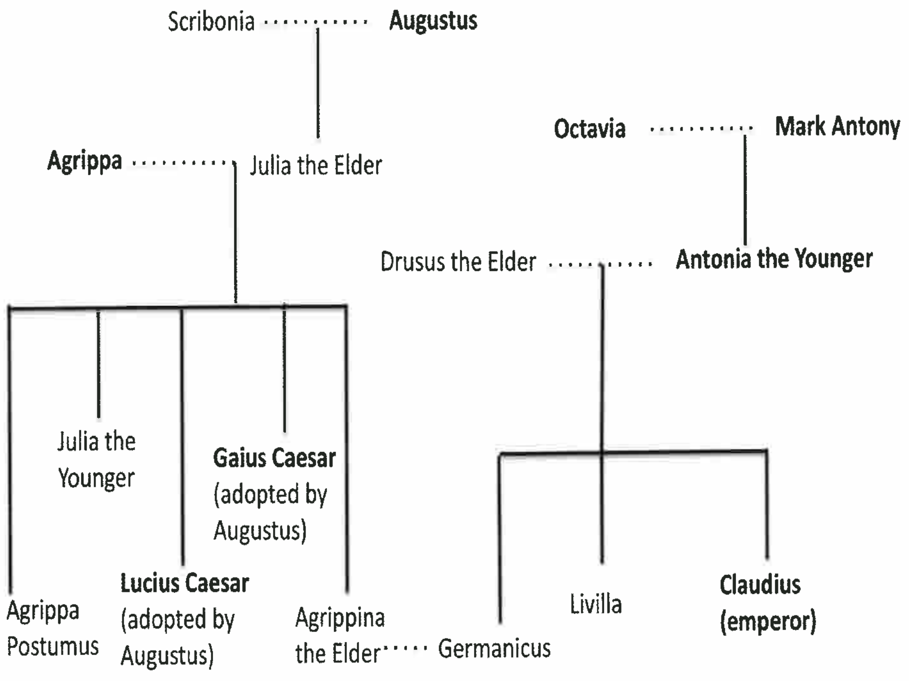
We do not know whether this token was issued by the imperial government or a private individual, but the imagery suggests that coinage formed the inspiration for the design of this piece (as with the token showing Antonia above). It seems that, yes, people did look at what was displayed on coinage. Other tokens carry expressions of well-wishes for the emperor; one wishes Hadrian the best (*feliciter*) on the anniversary of his accession to power (*dies imperii*), a day that saw well-wishes to the emperor and offerings for his continued health (https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/id/CIL.XV.2.995.2).

Tokens were used by different groups to control access to feasts and entertainment during festivals, or to distribute gifts on these occasions, including events connected to the imperial family. We might postulate (although we can never be certain) that the token showing Gaius and Lucius was used within such a context.

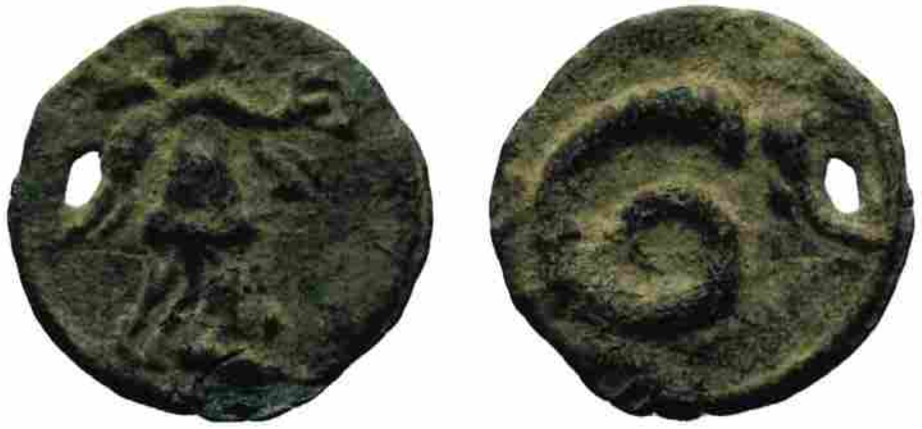
We also find coin-like designs on some of the privately issued lead tokens in Rome and Ostia. The token below looks very much like a coin: we have a portrait and a legend that goes around the edge of the piece, and further design on the other side. But the legend tells us that this token was issued by Publius Glitius Gallus (P GLITI GALLI), and we must presume that the portrait is also his. That this token portrays Gallus is confirmed when we look more closely at the other side: here we have a rooster carrying a palm branch and wreath, symbols of festivity and victory. The Latin word for rooster is... *gallus*! The image acts as a pun on Gallus' name. Numismatists, those who study money, call this a 'canting type', something that was relatively common on coins of the Republican period, when individual moneyers had control over the design of the coins issued during their period in office. As with most tokens, we cannot know the precise context of this piece, but one imagines that Gallus issued the token to be given to clients to exchange for goods or services during a particular celebration. The palm branch and wreath repeatedly occur on tokens used during the Saturnalia, alongside the chant IO SAT IO, an abbreviated form of the cry *Io Saturnalia* chanted during this particular Roman festival. The Saturnalia might thus also be the context of Gallus' token.



Lead token of Publius Glitius Gallus. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.



Family tree showing relationship between individuals mentioned in the text



Lead token showing Victory and an elephant coming out of a shell. © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

In addition to coinage, lead tokens draw from a wide repertoire of imagery including lamps and gems. One (above) shows the goddess Victory on one side with a wreath and palm branch and on the other side a very strange image indeed: an elephant coming out of a snail shell! This image is also found on Roman gems, so the image on the token might again represent the identity of the person responsible for the object (who had a seal or gem with this image), or the person responsible may just have simply liked the image. Many tokens carry designs that have a fun or festive nature, in keeping with their use during festivals. Again, one imagines the pieces were used to control access to particular goods or benefactions: one individual might have sponsored a feast and issued the tokens to different people as tickets. There is a good parallel for this practice: in the Syrian city of Palmyra, the clay tokens in use in the city were issued by priests as invitations to sacred banquets.

Gem engraved with an elephant emerging from a snail shell. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

How tokens were used

Lead tokens, token moulds, and the waste resulting from the casting of lead tokens have been found in shops in the theatre in Ostia and in a wine bar in the Baths of the Swimmer. This suggests that tokens were also used within small economies. We cannot now reconstruct precisely how they functioned in this context, but many merchants in the more modern period (e.g. in Britain in the seventeenth century) issued tokens to be used as small change in periods when official coinage was in short supply. The same may have been true in Roman antiquity, but tokens do not seem to have survived in high enough quantities to have functioned as an alternative currency. Instead, particularly for bath houses in Rome and Ostia, tokens may have been used within the internal economy of a particular establishment: those supplying the wine, food and other services within the bath house may have collected tokens from visitors to be redeemed to for wages at a later date. In this sense, tokens may have acted almost as a system of accounting.

Tokens had a wide variety of uses connected to distribution and the control of access to particular areas. They are a neglected source that helps us understand how different groups presented themselves and represented the imperial family. Moreover, they demonstrate how euergetism (gift-giving to the community by members of the elite) and benefaction was exercised in practice, the practicalities associated with the celebrations we read about in texts and inscriptions. The wide array of images and texts on tokens, used by different segments of the population of Rome and Ostia, also suggest a certain level of literacy in this region. The study of this category of material is just beginning; the tokens inevitably have much more to tell us.

If you are interested in finding out more about them then follow @ancient_tokens on twitter (questions welcome!), and further information is available at www.warwick.ac.uk/tokens. A database of ancient tokens is currently under construction and can be found at https://coins.warwick.ac.uk/token-specimens/.

Clare Rowan is an Associate Professor at the University of Warwick. She directs a project on tokens in the ancient Mediterranean. Her book From Caesar to Augustus (c. 49 B.C.–A.D. 14): using coins as sources *was published by Cambridge University Press last year.*

If you have enjoyed this...

Look out for Richard Alston's discussion of the contribution that recently discovered coins make to our understanding of Augustus and the consolidation of his rule in the next *Omnibus*.