

Warwick Numismatic Day 2024 – Coinage and the State: an Interdisciplinary Workshop on Coinage, Money & Economy

organised in conjunction with the

Money and Medals Network Training Day

9-10 May 2024

Ancient Numismatics, the study of ancient coinage, is one of Warwick's Classics Department's research strengths. The Department is an international hub in numismatics with three staff members, experts in the field, embedding their research in the wider context of Ancient History, Classical Archaeology and Ancient Economy.

The *Warwick Numismatic Day* has been an annual event since 2010, assembling specialists, including young researchers and students, as well as members of a wider audience, such as collectors, to share and discuss papers around topics on ancient Numismatics <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/research/interests/numismatics/numismaticday/>. Following the success of the 2023 Numismatics Day dedicated to imitations of ancient coins and their functions, this year's workshop saw the return of the 12th Numismatic Day focused on coinage and the state. <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/research/money-and-medals/events/may>

WARWICK NUMISMATICS DAY
10 MAY 2024

COINAGE AND THE STATE

An Interdisciplinary Workshop on
Coinage, Money & Economy



In 2024, the Warwick Numismatics Days was once again combined with the training workshop offered by the Money & Medals Network (MMN), a museum network with over 240 members. This integration made organizing the Numismatics Day alongside the second MMN Training Day at the Department seamless. Campbell Orchard, a PhD student researching the mint of Tarsus, and the MMN officer will provide a separate report on the event.

Prof. Dr. Bernhard Woytek contributed as the Visiting Speaker with keynote talks to both events. He is the Deputy Head of Classical Studies at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna and a lecturer at the University of Vienna. Recently appointed as Professor and Head of the Department at the Institut für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte, his tenure begins this autumn. Woytek is the author of two significant monographs in Roman numismatics: *Arma et Nummi* on the Roman Republican coinage and monetary history from 49-42 BC (published in 2003), and a two-volume reference work on the imperial coinage of Emperor Trajan (published in 2010).¹ Dr. Woytek is also an expert in metal analysis and a member of the scientific board of Kevin Butcher's ERC RACOM Project.

The Numismatic Day (10 May)

The concept of coinage in relation to the state encompasses the creation and circulation of money by official minting authorities. Unlike imitation coins, which are produced to resemble genuine coins but lack official sanction, state-issued coinage is a formal tool of economic policy and governance. The production and regulation of coinage by the state aimed to ensure a standardised and trusted medium of exchange, essential for economic stability and growth. Nevertheless, some coinage likely circulated without direct state endorsement, especially in regions or periods where the control of states was weaker. In many instances, states tolerated or even encouraged the use of supplementary coinages to address shortages or specific local needs, ensuring the smooth functioning of economic activities. The theme of the 2024 Numismatics Day examined the role of states and questioned the definition of "the state" or state-like entities such as the those of people in Gaul, providing both examples and developments of state-issued coinage, as well as many instances of foreign, old, or even token-made currency circulating. The main question, therefore, was how involved states were in issuing currency, and even if a state was involved at all, considering that many modern notions of statecraft and nationhood evolved in the late 19th century.

The day began with Bernhard Woytek's keynote paper titled "Julius Caesar and the Transformation of Roman Coinage". Woytek's presentation delved into the significant changes in Roman coinage during Julius Caesar's era, particularly the Civil War coinage issued by the travelling mints after the Senate had fled Caesar and Rome for Greece.

Following this, Kevin Butcher from Warwick presented "Concepts of Territorial Currency", discussing the development and implications of territorial currencies in ancient economies. He examined how various regions and states managed their monetary systems, providing a comprehensive overview of the economic landscape and how concepts of money could change. He also talked about how long currency could last in circulation and whether or not it was officially driven by the state or by individuals, showing off coins with long histories of circulation that had been punched to advertise new businesses as they continued to circulate. Butcher even discussed case studies of Roman coinage, which was still used thousands of years after the empire had left Britain.

¹ For his wider research and research output we refer to the visiting speaker application sent to HRC in April.

After a break for lunch, the afternoon session, chaired by Clare Rowan, began with Simon Glenn from the British Museum presenting on "Coinage and a 'Minor' Hellenistic State: The Case of Bactria". Glenn's paper shed light on the unique coinage of Bactria, emphasising its significance in the broader context of Hellenistic numismatics and the problems with previous scholarship in arranging and understanding this extensive and unique coinage, and how it has previously been interpreted to engage with its audience.

Next, John Creighton from the University of Reading presented "The Projection of States onto Iron Age Coinage and Alternative Ways of Thinking about Early Money and the Origins of the State." Creighton examined how early states used coinage to project their identities and proposed new frameworks for understanding the origins of money and state formation. In particular, Creighton challenged the notions of nationhood and statecraft to showcase that areas outside Rome's sphere of influence had their own ways of standardising currency through trade and communication with neighbouring communities.

Clare Rowan from Warwick then presented "Economy and Exchange Beyond the State: Female Token Issuers in Rome and Ostia", exploring the economic roles of women through the issuance of tokens. This paper highlighted the contributions of women to economic exchanges beyond formal state structures, showcasing the token as an alternative para-numismatic item for driving local trade and acting as a localised form of currency outside of that issued by official mints. These tokens were often made of lead and mould cast, with many surviving, presumably from instances where people did not use the token, like a modern voucher, before it expired.

The late afternoon session, chaired by Suzanne Frey-Kupper, featured George Green from Lincoln College, Oxford presenting his paper jointly prepared with Paul Stavrinou "Analysis of Axumite Gold Coins". Green provided an in-depth analysis of these coins, discussing their historical and cultural significance and the methodologies used in the study for determining the gold content of the coins and how the kingdom's currency developed between reigns.

Roger Bland, founder and former Head of the Portable Antiquities Scheme as well as former President of the Royal Numismatic Society from London, who is currently authoring the new volume of RIC, discussed the military nature of Gordian III's currency and how the mint responded to the needs of the army.

The day concluded with a final discussion that wrapped up the presentations and allowed for final thoughts and questions. Following this, Kevin Butcher and Eleni Papaefthymiou inaugurated the RACOM exhibition in the Antiquities Room, FAB 2.23. They set up the display to share the results of the ERC project with the University community and, in the coming months, with the wider public. This event also provided the perfect opportunity for Butcher and the Department to thank Eleni for her three years of dedicated work on the RACOM project and to offer her a farewell.



Eleni Papaefthymiou presenting the RACOM exhibition.

The Warwick Numismatics Day 2024 was attended by 30 participants in addition to the speakers (41 total). The event brought together scholars from Warwick, including members of the History Department, as well as representatives from other institutions such as Universidad Católica de Chile, Reading, and Oxford. Warwick students of all levels, primarily PhD students, attended, along with a postgraduate student from Freie Universität Berlin, a former Erasmus student from the MAT degree at Warwick, and a former Warwick MAT student from Cotswold Archaeology. After the event, Bernhard Woytek was available to discuss career opportunities outside the UK with students.

Overall, the event, widely shared over X/Twitter, was a significant and successful event of highest academic standard, for which the organisers were commended. It offered a platform for scholars to share research and insights on ancient coinage with students, heritage professionals, and enthusiasts. That the Warwick Numismatics Day could bring together so many distinguished academics in numismatics and metal analysis studies underscored the event's importance in advancing the field of numismatics.



Top row: George Green, Simon Glenn, John Creighton.

Middle: Paul Stavrinou, Bernhard Woytek, Kevin Butcher.

Bottom: Eleni Papaefthymiou.

Absent: Clare Rowan, Roger Bland, and the organisers who took the picture.

The Money and Medals Training Day (9 May)

The Money and Medals Network (MMN) Training Day on 9 May provided a comprehensive platform for numismatic enthusiasts, scholars, and professionals to engage in discussions and hands-on training. The event was structured to include informative sessions, practical workshops, and discussions on the latest research and exhibition challenges in numismatics. With experienced professionals leading the training sessions, participants gained practical knowledge and engaged in discussions on current issues and challenges in the field.

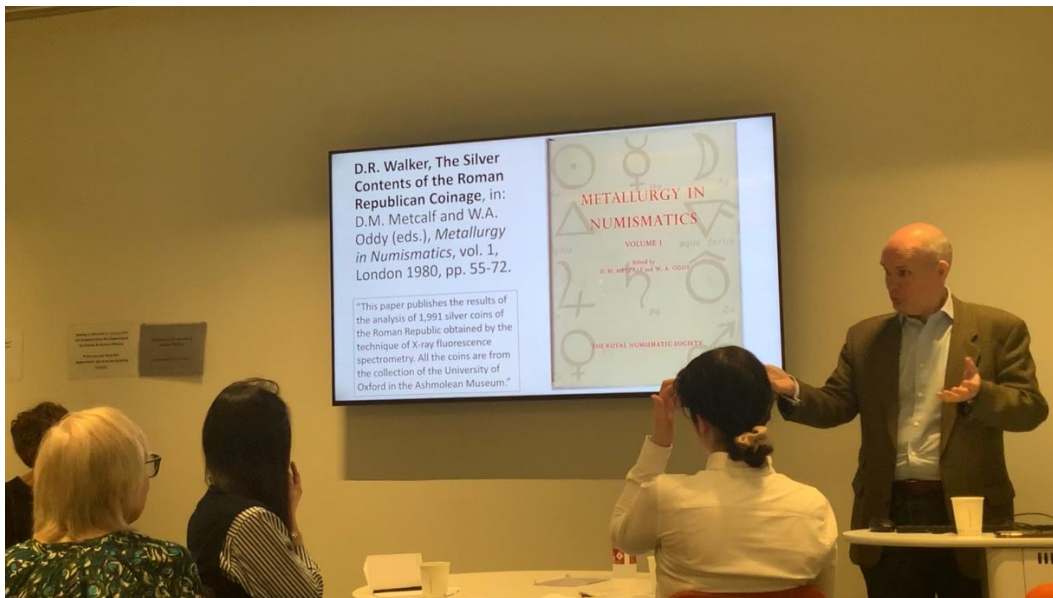
The MMN Training Day attracted a diverse audience consisting of 17 individuals from the museum sector and students. The event commenced with an opening talk by Campbell Orchard, the MMN Project Officer, and a welcome by Suzanne Frey-Kupper, the MMN' steering committee's chair. This session set the stage for the day's activities, providing participants with an overview of the network's recent developments and future plans and emphasising its commitment to advancing numismatic knowledge and skills.

Following the welcome session, Kevin Butcher led a discussion on "Metal Analysis: Methods and Purpose". This presentation delved into the various techniques used in analysing ancient coins, highlighting the significance of metallurgical studies in understanding the economic, political, and technological aspects of historical coinage. This session was particularly useful to heritage sector professionals, explaining metal degradation, the reason for inconsistent weights within types, and the differences between XRF analysis and the analysis of the heart metal succinctly.



Prof. Kevin Butcher presenting on 'Heart Metal'

After a lunch break, the afternoon session resumed with a captivating keynote paper by Bernhard Woytek from Vienna, titled "New Metallurgical Data for the Roman Silver Coinage of the 40s BC". Woytek presented groundbreaking findings from his recent research, offering new insights into the metallurgical composition of Roman silver coins and their implications for our understanding of Roman monetary policy and economy during the late Republic.



Bernhard Woytek presenting.

Participants then engaged in a training session on coin identification led by Suzanne Frey-Kupper, Bernhard Woytek, Kevin Butcher, and Campbell Orchard. This hands-on workshop provided practical skills essential for numismatists, curators, and collectors. Led by experienced professionals, the session covered techniques for identifying and cataloguing coins. There were different skill levels among the attendees. However, these were catered for by providing varying difficulty levels with different coin types. The session was well received.



Two PhD students working with a large coin assemblage.

The day concluded with a presentation by Kevin Butcher and Eleni Papaefthymiou on the RACOM exhibition. They discussed the challenges of displaying coins and disseminating numismatic research with the RACOM exhibition, showcasing many examples of what their research has added to the exhibition's narrative. This session highlighted the logistical and curatorial considerations in presenting numismatic collections to the public, emphasising the importance of effective communication and educational outreach.

Overall, the Warwick MMN training day was a resounding success. It offered a rich and varied program that catered to both theoretical and practical aspects of numismatics. The event underscored the importance of combining academic research with hands-on training to foster a comprehensive understanding of ancient coinage. Supported by the Royal Numismatic Society and the British Numismatic Society, the day provided valuable insights and skills to all participants, reinforcing the vibrant and collaborative spirit of the Numismatic community. The MMN has collected overwhelmingly positive feedback from the participants, highlighting how the event transformed the participant's understanding of the purpose of metal analysis and its impact on research results on the economies and politics of ancient states and how this can help to foster exhibitions and dissemination to the wider public.

We are grateful to HRC for its support, allowing the organisation of the Numismatic Day and enriching the MMN Training Day, funded by the Royal Numismatic Society and the British Numismatic Society, by Bernhard Woytek's keynote paper.



Suzanne Frey-Kupper and Campbell Orchard, 30 May 2024