



"Geld eint, Geld trennt" 2: Coinage, Regionalism and Identities

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Abstracts

Pierre-Yves Milcent, Université Toulouse

Metal hoarding practices, pre-monetary exchanges and cultural networks in the North-West of France (13th-5th c. BC)

In the North-West of France, dry land metal hoards dated to the Atlantic Late Bronze Age and the Atlantic Early Iron Age are very numerous (694 indexed). These contain a number of items estimated at about 60,000. These accumulations of metal, definitely buried in the ground, certainly represented an important value for the economies of the time. An indirect proof is the scarcity of metal objects in the habitats of the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age: this rarity indeed assumes that objects made of metal, once no longer useful for their designed purpose, were carefully collected, and not thrown away.

Rather than trying to answer the difficult question of "why one made these hoards?", my idea is to first answer the question of: "how one makes these hoards"? By asking this question, I have been able to observe that some metal deposits from the North-West of France were created in accordance with two very distinct logics and sequential in time. These two logics are also unique to this region related to Atlantic cultures and are not found, with some exceptions, in the East and South of France.

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During the Early Iron Age (800-450 BC), deposits from the North-West of France are mostly limited to the Armorican Massif. These consist of undamaged items in the shape of blades of socketed axes. These objects are special because they cannot be used and are therefore worthless as axe blades. They do not show any wear on their edge, nor handling traces. They were therefore cast as simulated axes. On the other hand, these pseudo-axes show traces of manipulation and circulation. Therefore, they were not made to be quickly put into hoards. My hypothesis is that these objects were circulating as an intermediary in exchanges and that they had a pre-monetary function. Deposits from the same time period (Early Iron Age) are known in other French regions; but, the logic of their assemblage is completely different as they consist mostly of fragmented female metallic ornaments. These deposits show that there were multiple ways of organizing the circulation and storage of metal.

Prior to the Atlantic Early Iron Age, during the Atlantic Late Bronze Age (1300-800 BC), the methods to form the hoards also appear different. In the North-West, hoards are made up of many various objects: weapons, ornaments, tools, ingots, etc. They often show signs of use; and, the longest ones of them are broken. There is evidence that these fragments had been circulating prior to being buried in a hoard. Therefore, they were not intended for a quick recasting. Other clues suggest that these hoards, from the Atlantic Late Bronze Age, fossilize objects intended to serve as intermediaries in pre-monetary exchanges. At the same time, in the East of France, metal deposits are composed of objects constituting personal equipment, sometimes male, sometimes female, or both. These hoards were therefore created according to different logics.

The manner of composition of these hoards, their chronology and geography will be central for my analysis. It will be a question, in particular, of determining in what way these hoards and their fossilized pre-monetary practices present similar characteristics, or not, to cultural networks identified in Gaul from other records of material culture.

John Creighton, University of Reading

Objects of adornment, self-identity and the evolution of social currencies in Iron Age Britain

In this paper I want to explore and play with ideas from a project examining the transition to the use of coinage in north-west Europe, and how that impacts on the nature of power, as well as personal and group identities. In Iron Age Britain few archaeologists examine both sides of this transition. Iron Age specialists refer to Celtic coinage as being primitive currencies, all about social payments; Roman archaeologists take for granted Roman coinage is akin to modern day cash in a commoditised economy, this divide mirrors the decades-old and somewhat sterile substantivist-formalist debate. However, how one transformed into the other, how people changed from societies where heirlooms and adornments were personified with histories of social transactions, to a commoditised society where even people are treated as objects and are for sale, is ignored.

This paper explores the applicability of some of the recent anthropological writings of authors such as David Graber, who attempted to come up with a 'social anthropology of value', which spanned this transition. His ideas have a strong material dimension, which is applicable to archaeological evidence, and also his writings are rich in anthropological case studies of encounters between colonial empires and societies who did not have currencies in the same way. One particular focus is on the use of objects of adornment as early money-like objects (think: baubles, bangles and beads).

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We will explore a little the evidence from torcs, brooches and glass bangles; alongside the development of coinage in Britain, and play with ideas from Graber's work and see where they take us.

Marleen K. Termeer, Leiden University

Coinage and regionalism in Italy during the Roman conquest

The Roman conquest of Italy in the third century BC was accompanied by a sharp rise in the number of mints active on the Italian peninsula beyond Magna Graecia. Many new mints were located in regions with no previous tradition of coinage production, including Latium itself. While in many cases, Roman expansion must somehow have triggered the production of these coinages, there is a striking regional variety in production techniques (cast bronze as opposed to struck silver and bronze) and weight standards. These differences are usually explained as a result of different, in some cases pre-coinage, regional traditions. In this paper, I explore the significance of this variability in terms of developing local, regional, and perhaps Roman identities.

To tackle this broad question, I will focus on two interrelated issues. First, I will consider the significance of local or regional practices in coinage production in a context of emergent Roman rule. Should we understand the variability in coinages as the result of pre-existing regional diversity, or did Roman expansion change the spectrum, whether through active Roman interference or not? Against this background, I will then further investigate the significance of these coinages in terms of identity, asking under what circumstances and by which agents the coinages were produced and used. Again, significant differences seem to exist between regional groups, offering interesting glimpses of the variable interaction between local and regional communities, and Rome.

Suzanne Frey-Kupper, University of Warwick

'...utuntur omnes uno genere nummorum?' From division to unity? Sicily and satellite islands.

From the late fifth century to the mid third centuries BC, coinage evolved separately in the western and eastern parts of Sicily reflecting the political situation, with the Punic Epicracy in the West and the areas of Syracuse or under Syracusan influence in the East. Interestingly, the effect of conflicts was a major stimulus for coinages to both interact and to some extent produce closed systems. The former applies especially to coins in precious metals, while bronze coins tend to be confined to the respective political area. Under Roman rule, the old political division of the island continues to be reflected in the coinage as part of the Roman administration with a quaestor based in either part of Sicily. This paper will discuss whether there was a shift to unification over time, and consider patterns of coin circulation in micro-regions, including those of satellite islands.

David Weidgenannt, Goethe University, Frankfurt

Shared Identities? Cooperative and Civic Coinages in Greek Federal States (5th - 1st Century BC)

Recent years have seen a growing interest in Greek federal states, their functioning, and institutions. Historical research has focused not only on the division of power between

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individual cities and federal institutions, but has also emphasized the central role of a common identity. Coins have played a decisive role in this context. Although the minting of common currencies was occasioned mostly by economic reasons, the iconography of the coins cannot be explained by these alone. As historians have highlighted, a shared iconographical repertoire can and should be interpreted as an expression of a shared identity.

In my paper, I aim to show that in some cases the picture is even more complex. Several cities (e.g. Megalopolis, Kleitor) from the fifth to the first century BC not only minted coins in the name of Greek koina, but also civic issues. This shows that one medium could express different identities at the same time. In a first step, I want to analyze the iconography of these coins and show how this iconography should be seen as an expression of local or regional identity. In a second step, I will then look at the different denominations minted and how far they circulated. Were certain denominations connected to specific images? Did they only circulate locally or can their impact be traced on a more (supra-)regional level? This will help to better understand both the distribution of coin types and thus of certain images, and the spatial range of identities.

Ulrike Wolf, Goethe University, Frankfurt

Coinage as a means of communication in Western Mediterranean c. 500–100 BC

I would like to give a short insight into the results of my dissertation¹, which analyses the communication aspects for early coinages in the Western Mediterranean (500 BC to 100 BC) from a long-term and supraregional perspective. To accomplish, I focused on the role of coin design by analysing the joint usage of images, taking into account various theoretical approaches, such as statistics, numismatics, archaeology, visual- and communication-theory or material culture studies². So the thesis interlinks in a way the two parts of the „Geld eint, Geld trennt“ meeting.

The western Mediterranean in the period researched in my thesis is in many ways appropriate for the focus of the conference: the long-term contacts between Phoenicians, Greeks, Etruscans, Iberians, Italian and Sicilian native groups lead to foundations of settlements of different kinds, particularly since the 8th century B.C.. These regional centres, with their different cultural backgrounds, interacted in various ways - from war and conquest, to trading and friendly support. Rome began to expand about 500 BC and destabilised the existing status quo in the process. This complex situation granted a unique opportunity to investigate if coinage is used for self-representation of groups or individuals, or to communicate power, dependences and alliances.

Identity in various sectors is a main motive for the deliberate choice of coin imagery in the investigated area. Without betraying too much – two results of my studies fit in the subject of the meeting in a particular way: First, there is a dichotomy of local and global networks, which is significant for the choice of the image on the coins. Second, the different messages on the coins can be subsumed under the term of “legitimation”.

¹ Die Entwicklung der Münze als Kommunikationsmittel im Kontext der Dynamik der Macht im westlichen Mittelmeerraum, ca. 500-100 v. Chr.

² e.g. Statistics, Numismatics, Archaeology, Visual- and Communication-Theory or Material Culture Studies.

Thomas G. Schattner, DAI Madrid

Blown up! Roman coins and their figurative representations as prototypes for Northern Hispanic funerary stele

For the Northern Hispanic regions in particular, the contact with Roman material culture led to the genesis of a whole series of new genres of artistic expression in the form of figuratively decorated monuments. The focus in this paper is on one particular group of these monuments, the funerary stelae. They take the form of large, perfectly round discs set on pillar-like bases. As their motifs are directly linked to the figurative designs on some coins, it is probable that the disc-shape may also be derived from the circular form of coins. These funerary stelae may be as large as two metres in diameter.

Johannes Nollé, DAI Munich

The Shaping Impact of Regional Traditions and Roman Province Borders on Asia Minor's Local Coinage During the Roman Empire

It is beyond dispute that the so-called Roman Provincial coins in particular convey polis identities. Nevertheless, this paper will comb through our evidence, whether or how other influences may have affected the minting of local money. From this point of view, technical needs and possibilities, regional impact, provincial requirements or traditions, as well as empire-wide events must be examined in more detail. Given the short time available, this discussion unfortunately has to be restricted to Asia Minor.

With reference to the focus of our meeting <Geld eint, Geld trennt> I think that I will be able to show that particularly during the Roman Empire the concept of local money that created and thus individualized local identities was exposed to broader factors of influence, which introduced supra-local and unifying aspects into this coinage. These should also be considered in all our discussions of such coins.

Jérémie Chamero, RGZM, Mainz

Civic and regional coinage at Elaia (Aiolis), port of Pergamum, and the construct of a common identity in Aiolis, Mysia and Lydia

Located on a bay where the Caicos flows to the Aegean Sea, the city of Elaia (Aiolis) assumed essential economic, military and communication functions for the city of Pergamum and the Attalid dynasts (263-133 BC) residing in the metropolis. Nevertheless, among the coin types struck at Elaia from the late 5th century BC to the early 2nd century AD one would search in vain any allusion to the strategic role of its port for the Aiolis and for Mysia. The Elaian silver and bronze coinage shows deities (Athena, Demeter) and symbols of its agricultural activities (olive, wheat grain) characterising the local i.e. civic identity of Elaia – without any reference to Pergamum or the Attalids. Contrasting with the situation observed in the Hellenistic period, Elaia took part to the production of a regional coinage from the early 2nd century AD onwards: combining common obverses (Athena, Hercules) with civic reverse types, this small change was struck in many Aiolian, Mysian and Lydian cities, where it circulated in large quantities as attested by the coin finds.

In the light of their long-harbored rivalries for prestige, one wonders that such a coinage brought big and small poleis on an equal level without highlighting their local and

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mythological past. A possible interpretation is to link this specific coinage with the Panhellenion set up by Hadrian and to consider it as an attempt to relieve quarrels of poleis by emphasising a common identity between regions, basing above all on the cult of Athena shared by most of the cities.

Hülya Vidin, Goethe University, Frankfurt

Coinage and identity in Caria in the transition from the Hellenistic to the Roman period. The case study of Alabanda.

Focussing on the political transitions from the Hellenistic to the Republic and into the Imperial period in Caria, I work on the question if and how coin iconographies changed and what these changes tell about the reaction of the polis. After all, coin iconography is assumed to offer insights in the way the citizen body of a polis wanted to position itself, express uniqueness and distinguish itself from other Poleis. Numismatic research on cultural, political and societal issues for this time for Caria is missing still. Furthermore, Caria shows a variety of cultural and ethnic groups which are not set into the numismatic context either. Therefore the coins need to be examined on questions of continuity, discontinuity, change and the introduction of new pictorial themes.

To illustrate the approach and research questions I deal with in my PhD thesis, I will focus on the coinage of Alabanda. The coinage of this polis, situated along the river Marsyas, is instructive about the political and religious changes introduced by Antiochus III. Not only can we deduce from the coins, that the name of the polis changed from Alabanda to Antiochia, but also the introduction of the cult of Apollo Isotimos. The coins are our sole surviving testimony showing these changes in politics and cult together, both constitutive elements of a polis.

In the reign of Claudius a new iconography of Apollo was introduced in the coinage, whose epithet Kissios, however, only appears for the first time in the legend of the coinage of Antonius Pius about a hundred years later. Why do the iconography and the epithet change only in the late Julio-Claudian dynasty? Is it a reaction to the increasing influence of the Roman Empire in the region or a conscious turn away by the polis citizens from the traditions introduced by Antiochus III?

Dario Calomino, University of Warwick

The Levant after Septimius Severus: regional patterns and local identities in the coinage of the oriental provinces

The production of bronze coinage in the imperial provinces was essentially a civic business. The diversity of behaviour among cities of the same region in scale, range of denominations and of coin designs suggests that there usually was no overall coordination. Rivalry between major centres of the same region also meant that civic pride often overrode regional identity. Yet, elements of regionalism can be found in the civic coinage of communities sharing the same ethnic and cultural background, especially if they were part of the same economic and monetary network. The 3rd century system of coin production largely based on networks of workshops linking coinages of different cities sometimes favoured uniformity of coin production in fabric, style and coin designs across one or more regions. Regionalism and civic identity were different facets of Roman provincial coinage, one not excluding the other.

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This paper will present an overview of the civic coinages in the provinces of the Levant after the administrative changes made by Septimius Severus, discussing regional patterns and local identities. It will first look at the three large regions in which Syria was divided, comparing the centralised pattern of coin production in Coele, hinging on the colonial mint of Antioch under Elagabalus, with that of Phoenice and Palestina, whose coinages flourished in this same period. It will then focus on the provinces of Arabia in the south and of Mesopotamia and Osroene in the North. In different ways, they both present elements of regionalism, the former also showing coinages of different cities linked to each other, the latter showing a consistent pattern of production across the coinages of Edessa, Carrhae, Nisibis and Singara, which all gained the status of Roman colonies in the Severan period.

Marguerite Spoerri, Oxford University

Presence and absence of imperial portrait on Roman provincial coins: some thoughts on local, regional and imperial policies

In the first three centuries AD, numerous cities of the Roman Eastern provinces continued to mint their own coins. These were mainly bronze coins, issued in the name of the Roman emperor or a member of the imperial family. Among them are however some coins that do not show the imperial portrait on the obverse. Instead, we have representations of local gods or heroes, personifications of the local city goddess, the Roman Senate or local political bodies (Boule and Demos). This talk will investigate the meaning of such coins and explore potential reasons on why the imperial portrait is missing.

Clare Rowan, University of Warwick

Tokens, coinage and identities in the city of Rome

In spite of their potential as a source, the thousands of Roman lead tokens that were uncovered during building work in the city of Rome during the nineteenth century have received little scholarly attention. And yet their imagery reveals a particular visual language used by those in the city to communicate and consolidate multiple identities – that of individuals, *collegia* or other associations, and the city as a whole. The images used have obvious parallels with Roman provincial coinage (e.g. the use of the emperor, deities, buildings, references to local festivals), but also have similarities with other media: gems, wall paintings, lamps and brick stamps. In the variety and type of imagery used on its tokens Rome appears to be unique; we might then begin to discern a specific ‘Roman’ civic (regional) identity, which we might set against the identities studied in other areas of the Roman Empire.

This paper presents some of the most fruitful examples from the assemblage, studied as part of the broader ERC project *Tokens Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Tokens that carry the legend GPRF (*Genio Populi Romani Feliciter*) and other images of ‘Rome’ will be presented, as well as several examples of tokens from *collegia* and named individuals. The materiality and form of tokens in Rome clearly take inspiration from local bronze coinage in the city (particularly *quadrantes*), just as tokens in other regions reveal a dialogue with local currency. Tokens, therefore, not only tell us much about overlapping identities in Rome, but also materially reveal the impact of everyday coinage on the consciousness of those who used it.

Denise Wilding, University of Warwick

The lead tokens of Graeco-Roman Egypt: A re-examination in the context of local and provincial identities

The leaden tokens of Graeco-Roman Egypt have been little studied in the past century, especially in terms of the role that they played in the everyday lives and identities of past communities. While previous work has noted a distinction between tokens of a 'local' character and those of more uniform types widespread across the province (Rostovtzeff and Prou 1900; Milne 1908), no study has attempted to explain the implications for this in terms of the identities of those who made and used them.

Therefore, this paper will examine the iconography and inscriptions on lead tokens from Graeco-Roman Egypt in order to ascertain how the imagery and legends depicted related to the communities that came into contact with them, both on a local and widespread scale. The fusion of Greek, Roman and Egyptian deities and motifs demonstrates a melting pot of religions and cultures, and consideration will be given as to how the iconography can represent the perspectives and agendas of different communities.

This shall be integrated into an analysis of findspots to establish how the distribution of the tokens across a variety of different archaeological contexts (temples, houses, rubbish dumps) demonstrates an embeddedness in everyday life, and to highlight how the distribution of certain types supports the distinction between tokens utilised on a regional and widespread scale. This will be explored through the case study of Oxyrhynchus which will highlight the extent to which the imagery of the tokens could be utilised and interpreted in terms of a local identity. In contrast, analysis of types found on multiple sites and which closely parallel types found on Alexandrian coins will consider how tokens also operated on a province-wide scale, and the implications this has for the identities of those who made and utilised them.

Johan van Heesch

Regionalism on the coinage of the Late Roman Empire

The coinage of the later Roman Empire is often thought of as being very standardized with an iconographic program determined by the central authorities. This contribution will not focus on the empire wide themes that are so common, but on the exceptional reverse types that allude to certain cities or regions, or those that refer to local deities.

One of the most curious series was minted in the early 4th century in Nicomedia, Antioch and Alexandria showing the heads of the local deities on the obverses. These will be presented in some detail with new evidence about their circulation. But occasionally we also find coin legends with geographical names on late Roman coins (or multiples) mentioning Boulogne, Carthage Constantinople, Daphne, London, Mainz, Rome, etc.

The coinage of the Ostrogoths with issues referring to Rome, Ravenna and Ticinum will also be included in this discussion.

Some of the questions that will be addressed are: did these types have a general meaning only, or were they actually struck with the intention to flatter, for example the local elites, the military involved or/and the populations? Did they also reflect a way Rome tried to cope with regionalism?

David Wigg-Wolf, RGK Frankfurt

Creating identities in the Northern Barbaricum

Roman coins were exported from the Empire to the north European *barbaricum* in large numbers, where they entered a new sphere of economic and social interactions. There they were also imitated in significant numbers. While silver coins remained in a primarily economic sphere of economic transactions, gold coins and their imitations were to a large extent removed from the monetary sphere, becoming objects of attire. They were frequently pierced so that they could be worn displaying the head of the emperor on the obverse. This contribution will assess the role of such coins as an expression of the identity of the peoples who inhabited the northern *barbaricum*, and what this tells us about the relationship between Rome and her northern neighbours.

Ruth Pliego, Seville University

Tracing the identity of the Germanic people through their coins: the case of the Visigoths

The coins issued by the Germanic peoples during Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages initially shared the same iconographic repertoire, borrowed from that used by Imperial Rome. The evolution undergone by these coins, however, reveals the development of characteristic features which were the basis of the coinage of the later Germanic kingdoms first, and the medieval states later. This work analyses the most prominent identity-related aspects, such as the typological, including the presence of references to historical events, the degree of *romanitas* claimed by each of these peoples, and their religious distinctiveness, as well as the extent to which these features responded to matters of political expediency. From the epigraphic point of view, these varied coin types provide interesting evidence that goes beyond the message conveyed by the pieces; questions such as the presence on the coin of mentions of the issuing authority – the king and other sources of political power, which can be made explicit, or not, on the coins – the interest of Merovingian France in including the name of the monetarii, and the inclusion the issuing city in Visigothic Spain. The coins of the latter provide an interesting perspective on the organization of space and the territorial distribution of mints. Considering that the issuing of coinage is a reflection of political elites, and assuming that gold coins would circulate chiefly only among the powerful, the existence and especially the circulation of bronze coins represent a completely different scenario, in which other social groups took part; the simultaneous circulation of coins in precious and base metals is not contradictory, but it seems unlikely that both spheres of exchange interacted on an everyday basis.

Martin Allen, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Coinage and National Identities in the British Isles, 1066-c. 1300

Between the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and the end of the thirteenth century the kings of England and the Anglo-Norman aristocracy took control of Wales and much of Ireland. The use of the English coinage spread further, becoming the dominant common currency of the whole of the British Isles by 1300. Scotland became part of this anglocentric 'Sterling Area', and this could be interpreted as one aspect of a general anglicization of Scottish government and culture, but Scotland was developing an increasingly independent sense of national identity at the same time as it became more anglicized. This paper will explore the apparent paradox.

