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978-0-521-09133-6 - Studies in Numismatic Method: Presented to Philip Grierson

Edited by C. N. L. Brooke, B. H. I. H. Stewart, J. G. Pollard and T. R. Volk

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Studies in Numismatic Method

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presented to
PHILIP GRIERSON

edited by
C. N. L. BROOKE, B. H. I. H. STEWART,
J. G. POLLARD *and* T. R. VOLK

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Acknowledgements

The initiative for a volume to celebrate the scholarship of Philip Grierson came from Christopher Brooke and Ian Stewart. Our share of the work has been as follows. Day-to-day editorial responsibility was undertaken at the Department of Coins and Medals, Fitzwilliam Museum, by Graham Pollard and T. R. Volk; and at every stage the four editors have discussed the development of the book. Individually they have been responsible for the brief appreciation (Brooke and Stewart) and the bibliography (Pollard) of the honorand.

The editors are grateful to the contributors for their ready collaboration and patient support; to the University Press for undertaking the publication of a demanding volume; and to the Fitzwilliam Museum not only for permission to illustrate from the University's cabinet, but also for aid and support to the editors.

The assistance of students in the Department of Coins and Medals and of others, Countess Antonini, Miss K. M. Brayshaw, Mr T. W. Gallant, Miss E. R. Mullett, Miss S. K. L. Parker, Frl. R. Sturm, and Mrs B. F. Whiting, principally in the drafting of English translations, is willingly acknowledged, as is the secretarial help of Mrs S. N. L. Lorimer and Mrs H. C. Scotney, Fitzwilliam Museum, and the skilful advice of Mrs E. L. Wetton and Miss A. E. M. Johnston, Cambridge University Press.

The editors' greatest debt is, however, to Philip Grierson himself, not only as the inspiration for the book, but for much practical help and advice. With the contributors, they hope that this volume will be accepted as a small token of gratitude and affection to a great scholar and dear friend.

C. N. L. BROOKE J. G. POLLARD
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Abbreviations

<i>ANS-MN</i>	<i>American Numismatic Society, Museum Notes</i>
<i>BNJ</i>	<i>British Numismatic Journal</i>
<i>BCEN</i>	<i>Bulletin du Cercle d'Études Numismatiques</i>
<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
<i>BSFN</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société Française de Numismatique</i>
<i>DAN</i>	<i>Dark Age numismatics</i> (reprints of 29 articles by Philip Grierson, 1979. See Bibliography no. 15)
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JMP</i>	<i>Jaarboek voor Munt- en Penningkunde</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>LMN</i>	<i>Late medieval numismatics</i> (reprints of 22 articles by Philip Grierson, 1979. See Bibliography no. 16)
<i>MA</i>	<i>Le Moyen Âge</i>
<i>NC</i>	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
<i>NCirc</i>	<i>Spink's Numismatic Circular</i>
<i>NZ</i>	<i>Numismatische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>RBén</i>	<i>Revue Bénédictine</i>
<i>RBNS</i>	<i>Revue Belge de Numismatique et de Sigillographie</i>
<i>RBPH</i>	<i>Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire</i>
<i>RIN</i>	<i>Rivista Italiana di Numismatica</i>
<i>RN</i>	<i>Revue Numismatique</i>
<i>SEER</i>	<i>Slavonic and East European Review</i>
<i>SSAM</i>	<i>Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto</i>
<i>THS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>ZfN</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Numismatik</i>

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Philip Grierson's contribution to numismatics

In 1960 there appeared in the *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* an article entitled 'The monetary reforms of 'Abd Al-Malik: their metrological basis and their financial repercussions' (Bibliography, no. 116). Many years before, Henri Pirenne had propounded his celebrated hypothesis about the history of early medieval trade and civilisation, one of whose central themes and pillars was the survival of gold coinage in the West until the early ninth century. For Pirenne its disappearance was the last act in the decline and fall of Rome in the West, and its cause the depredations of Islam. Through all the smoke raised by the ensuing debate 'The monetary reforms of 'Abd Al-Malik' shines like a gleam of pure flame. It shows that the caliph's reforms caused a shift in the relative value of silver and gold in Islam at exactly the right moment at the turn of the seventh and eighth centuries to explain the flight of silver to the West and of gold to the East, and so resolved the puzzle of the rise of silver currency in western Europe in the century which followed. 'Obviously this cannot be the whole explanation of so complex and far-reaching a phenomenon as the establishment of the silver monometallism that endured for five centuries in western Christendom, but it must have been a major factor in it' (no. 116, 264). Whatever place the caliph ultimately comes to hold in the economic history of the West, the article on his reforms will remain a fundamental contribution to the problem; and who but Philip Grierson could have commanded the range of learning, the mastery of history and numismatics, the confidence and the daring to see the economy of West and East as a whole, and study their relations, without taking to the wings of fantasy which have seduced some other workers in the field? Yet his range is much wider than this. The main centre of his work lies in the coinage of Byzantium and the West, and its historical context, from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries. He has gone further back, into Roman coinage and counterfeiting; he has travelled further afield, into anthropology and the basic nature of money, into economic and chemical analysis. He can show the historians how little they understood of coins, on any showing a fundamental historical source; and he can show the numismatists how little they know of the world from which their coins come.

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Philip Grierson is a native of southern Ireland who came to this country first as a schoolboy and a student; originally destined for a medical career, he arrived in Cambridge with a taste for reading history already formed, and immediately transferred his allegiance. In recent years his adventures in metrology and his wide reading in science fiction are the fruit of his early interest in science; but his interests steadily shifted, down to the early 1940s, in directions very much of his own choosing. He has often expressed his warmth of feeling for those who taught or guided him – Z. N. Brooke, C. W. Previt -Orton, and the eminent Belgian scholar, F.-L. Ganshof; but their influence has never been fundamental. ‘To my own surprise and everybody else’s,’ he modestly claims, ‘I won the Lightfoot scholarship in 1931’ (no. 206) and this embarked him on his first career, as an ecclesiastical historian. His early research lay in the history of Flanders, first its ecclesiastical history – hence papers on the abbots and relics of Ghent and Bruges, on Grimbold of St Bertin, and on early libraries, and his important edition of the annals of St Peter’s Ghent and of Saint-Amand (no. 1); then its social and economic history too, as appears in his paper on the relations of England and Flanders (nos. 38, 171). On a side-wind, a visit to Russia in 1932 led to an interest which blossomed in his bibliography of recent books on Soviet Russia in 1943 (no. 2). The most decisive shift in interest came soon after; for he made his debut as a numismatist in 1945, first as a modest collector, then, very soon, as a student of coins: ‘It took another piece of happenstance to turn them into my major field of research’ – a lecture in Belgium in 1947 on ‘the relevance of numismatic evidence for determining the chronology of the transition from antiquity to the middle ages’ led rapidly to his appointment (1948) to the Chair of Numismatics in Brussels, a part-time post he held until 1981 (no. 206, pp. 41–42). It is a sobering thought for those of us who have worked a single furrow for two or three decades that in 1948 the paper on the Caliph ‘Abd Al-Malik, with the immense range of learning it reveals, was only a dozen years away.

Through all these shifts there remained some strong threads of continuity: in his relation to his parents, to whom he was always closely devoted; in his service to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, to which he came as an undergraduate in 1929, of which he has been a Fellow since 1935, and which has been since then, without a break, his home. He has served it as Director of Studies in History, as Librarian, and as President – and over and above all, as a symbol of continuity in the resident fellowship of the College. It is against this background of *stabilitas* that we view the extension of his research to Byzantium and Islam, of his friendships to Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, Poland, America and elsewhere; and his travels to many parts of Europe and North America – and in imagination, perhaps, to the moon.

His services to history have been large, to numismatics unique. In Cambridge he has lectured in medieval history from 1938 till his retirement in 1978; he was University Assistant Lecturer in History 1938–45, Lecturer, 1945–59, Reader in Medieval Numismatics, 1959–71, Professor of Numismatics, 1971–8; and beyond the normal call of duty in teaching and examining and serving his Faculty, he has been, *inter alia*, a Syndic of the University Library for many years, latterly Chairman of the Syndicate, in which r le he presided over the affairs of one of the world’s greatest libraries, and both Honorary

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Keeper of Coins and a Syndic of the Fitzwilliam Museum. In the Museum his own collection resides, and for its comfort the University has provided the Grierson Study Room, which will form in future years one of the world's principal centres of numismatic research. In other ways he has fostered the interests of the Museum and supported the growth of its specialist library. Outside Cambridge he has been Professor at Brussels 1948–81, Advisor in Byzantine Numismatics at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., since 1955, Literary Director of the Royal Historical Society, 1945–55, as well as many more temporary or purely honorific appointments: Ford's Lecturer at Oxford, 1956–7, medallist of the Royal Numismatic Society (1958) and the American Numismatic Society (1963), President of the R.N.S., 1961–6, Honorary Vice-President since 1978, member, corresponding or honorary, of the International Numismatic Commission of the Société Suisse de Numismatique, the Swedish Numismatic Society, the Medieval Academy of America, the American Numismatic Society, the Société Royale de Numismatique de Belge, the Istituto Siciliano di Studi Byzantini e Neellenici; F.S.A. since 1949, Litt.D. since 1971. Finally, he holds honorary doctorates of Ghent (1958) and Leeds (1978); and he is a Corresponding Fellow of the Belgian Academy and a Fellow of the British Academy (1958).

Philip Grierson is that rare combination, a great collector who is also a great scholar. After he became Advisor to Dumbarton Oaks, he gave up collecting Byzantine coins on his own account, and a large part of his Byzantine collection went there. This apart, he has spent a high proportion of his time and energy over the last thirty-five years in acquiring European and related coins from the fifth to the early sixteenth centuries, with the exception of the British Isles. The collection is probably the most important of its kind in existence today. In range, quality and balance the Grierson Collection is remarkable, and reflects the personal achievement of its collector; these qualities are unthinkable, indeed, save in a scholar's personal collection. One warmly hopes that in due course it will be published; and a catalogue of the Grierson Collection will provide in itself a manual of medieval numismatics, and a contribution to medieval studies of the first rank.

It has been said of him, with pardonable exaggeration, that as befits the Life Fellow of a Cambridge College, he rarely allows a year to pass without subscribing his name to thirty-nine articles. In sober truth the number of his articles on numismatic subjects is legion, and in recent years there has been a remarkable swelling in his books. Yet he still contributes articles from time to time of general historical interest, and throughout his teaching career in Cambridge made notable sallies, especially into the theme of medieval Europe and the wider world, looking out far beyond the Caliphate. He is a voracious reader of everything save conventional literature, and something of a polymath, with a good working knowledge of mathematics, statistics, methods of metallurgical analysis, and a range of languages which have enabled him to master the literature of a subject which has generally been pursued on local or national lines. He is uniquely equipped for the task he has undertaken, a thorough-going reappraisal of medieval coinage.

As Professor in Brussels, he has been since 1948 concerned not only to provide a

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general introduction to numismatics, but to study and teach the general implications of coinage for the historian, and the methods of the subject. These fields of enquiry have blossomed in a series of lectures, opening with his inaugural at Brussels, in three numismatic bibliographies, and in two general books, both showing a panorama of large areas of the history of coinage from different viewpoints. In his Presidential Addresses to the R.N.S. (nos. **131**, **142**, **145**, **155**, **161**) and in his Stenton Lecture at Reading (no. **19**) the study of weights and measures was set on a new foundation, and many earlier doctrines weighed in his balance and found wanting. The Presidentials also contain some of his contributions to general numismatic theory, on hoards and finds and coin wear; and he has written elsewhere on the manufacture of coins, and entered joyfully into the arguments on the output of mints. His work on metrology and metallurgical analysis is fundamental. It is not only in technical studies of measures that he has made fundamental contributions to economic history: his papers on the nature of commerce in the Dark Ages and the social function of money in early Anglo-Saxon England have set all students of these themes on new paths (nos. **108**, **119**); the basic structure of Byzantine political history has benefited from his study of the tombs and obits of the emperors (no. **132**); a characteristic contribution to a recent *Settimana* at Spoleto surveys the symbolism of charters as well as coins *nell'alto medioevo* (no. **199**); he has opened a new world in a study of the effects of fresh supplies of bullion on European coinage and economy in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (no. **177**).

In recent years there has been a major impetus to the study of Byzantine numismatics for which he has been largely responsible. Three of the five volumes of the Dumbarton Oaks Catalogue, published or projected, are his alone, and he has had a major part in the others. He has written on many corners of Byzantine numismatic history, and a substantial handbook on Byzantine coinage has just been published.

His main interest in Western coinage has been in the early Middle Ages. Among his most important publications are a series of articles on the coinage of Charlemagne and the gold *solidi* of Louis the Pious, on the St Martin's Hoard from Canterbury, the Albertini Tablets, and on gold in China, on Anglo-Saxon shillings, on the mancus; he is at present working on a general book on early medieval coins. His contributions to the later medieval period have been more scattered, yet often of great importance. Thus in two papers, on Pegolotti's book of exchange rates (no. **99**) and on coins in the Cely Papers (no. **168**), he has clarified vital documentary evidence for the international circulation and value of money. Even the Venetian gold ducat has won prestige from his pen. The full sweep of the subject is brilliantly illuminated in his *Monnaies du moyen âge* (no. **13**).

Equally characteristic of the man are his history of his College in the *Victoria History of Cambridgeshire* (no. **107**), and his memoirs of Z. N. Brooke and H. T. Deas in the *Caian* (nos. **41**, **180**), personal testimony to his more parochial friendships and the warmth of his loyalties. For if one had to list briefly his most striking qualities, one might easily say – simplicity and warmth. There is some paradox in this, for great men are never wholly simple. Grierson's friends and colleagues have often delighted in his minor foibles, in his occasional brusqueness or joyous outbursts of candour, in his occasional admission

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to harmless vanity. Yet at a deeper level the candour is an expression of exceptional integrity – he never resents criticism, and he will listen with equal attention to young and old, research student and professor – and in personal dealings constantly softened by a mellowing sensitivity and warmth; he is a man of many friends. No doubt the scholarly achievement of the last thirty years involved an immense concentration of effort, and economical use of time; all this has meant a restriction on his social life; yet it is hard for his friends to discern. In earlier days his rooms were one of the main social centres of the College, where undergraduates of all disciplines gathered to listen to his records and to read his books; in more recent years they have often met him on the squash court, and even his colleagues incapable of squash can bear witness to the stream of exhausted young Caians who have shown that his vigour in the squash court remained unabated into his seventies. For many of his friends, two settings are especially associated with him: in Hall and Combination Room at Caius, where he was President from 1966 to 1976, giving freely of his time and gifts in looking after his own and his colleagues' guests; and as speaker and participant in numerous meetings of learned societies and international conferences. He has greatly enjoyed and benefited from his contact with scholars from many lands. He is a generous host, and enjoys entertaining and being entertained; yet this is characteristically united with a strong puritan streak which makes him spartan and austere when on his own, and censorious of other men's extravagance. The financing of his great collection is a mystery beyond the comprehension of economics; suffice it to say that he is very strict in his standards of academic and commercial probity; but equally addicted to the doctrine that money should work as hard as he does – he never likes modern coins to lie idle, or medieval ones uncommented. He is as much at home in an aeroplane as in his modest suite of rooms in College; and this helps to explain how he has come to buy coins in so many foreign sale rooms, how many friends he has among the curators and the conoscianti of the world, how often his friends who cross his path are delighted to find traces in distant parts of his reputation for generosity and learning.

His modesty and enthusiasm have greatly helped him to advance his subject. His approach is concrete, and he is sceptical of large generalisations: 'It is the same way in which a scholar who is also a yachtsman may know that particular voyages ascribed to earlier sailors... could never have been undertaken, either because they were beyond the sailing capacity of such ships as then existed or would have been rendered impossible by prevailing winds or currents whose existence is not apparent from modern maps. Inspired guesses induced by this rather concrete approach have given me as much pleasure as anything else in my studies...' – and he went on to cite his observation that the number of small gold pieces in the Sutton Hoo ship treasure, 37 coins and 3 blanks, equalled exactly the number of the forty oarsmen needed to row the boat and so may have been designed to provide a passage for each to the underworld (no. 206, 47; see nos. 176, 187). Thus he sometimes takes more pride in his minor brilliancies than in his major works; and it is this combination of modesty and enthusiasm which helps to explain how deeply conversations with younger numismatists – especially those who have been in Cambridge in his teaching years – have fructified the work of a younger generation, many of whom are contributors to this volume.

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Thus, indirectly, he has made important contributions to British numismatics and to Britain he has dedicated a scatter of his articles and studies; and the *Sylloge* of early British and Anglo-Saxon coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum (no. **8**), which set the pattern for the British Academy's *Sylloge* project, is one of his most remarkable achievements. For the rest, he has left Britain to his colleagues; but among the numismatists of Continental Europe, of the east and west, he is a unique phenomenon. Numismatists in other fields have equalled his technical contributions to one series; but no one has shown equal mastery of the monetary, economic, historical and technical aspects of the subject combined in a single view. Nor is it easy to think of anyone who has had such a wide and perceptive grasp of the whole subject outside his specialist period. His small *Numismatics* (no. **12**) has an admirable, concise survey of non-European coinage; he has a good working knowledge of Greek, Roman, Islamic and modern European and world-wide coinage. His comparative knowledge is without rival, and this extra perspective infuses all his work. It is the combination of collector, numismatist and historian which explains the special character of his achievement. This book reflects the width of his interests, and is drawn from a small selection of his many friends; it concentrates on aspects of numismatic method, which has been one of his most characteristic concerns. In it we try to express, in the currency appropriate to friends and disciples, our homage.

Note: This brief study is based on personal knowledge and is a small token of a deep admiration and affection. We are also indebted to notes provided by Philip Grierson himself, to the interview with him printed in *The Caian*, 1978, 33–55 (no. **206**: the quotations on xi, xii, xv, above are from *The Caian* nos. 34, 41–42, 47), and to the help of several colleagues and friends, especially J. G. Pollard and T. R. Volk. Quotations from his own work are cited by the number in the Bibliography in bold type.

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF PHILIP GRIERSON

This bibliography ignores reviews and a few ephemeral publications, and has the materials arranged in three groups, of books, pamphlets, and articles. The order is that of the printed date of publication. The place of publication for books is London unless otherwise indicated. The periodicals which are cited on three or more occasions are shown with abbreviated titles.

BOOKS

1937

- 1 *Les annales de Saint-Pierre de Gand et de Saint-Amand* (Commission royale d'histoire de Belgique), Brussels

1943

- 2 *Books on Soviet Russia, 1917–1942. A bibliography and a guide to reading*, London (reprinted, Twickenham, 1969)

1952

- 3 F. L. Ganshof, *Feudalism*, translated by Philip Grierson, Foreword by Sir F. M. Stenton, F.B.A., London (2nd edition, New York 1961)
- 4 C. W. Previt -Orton, *The shorter Cambridge medieval history*, edited by Philip Grierson, 2 vols., Cambridge

1954

- 5 *Coins and medals. A select bibliography* (Historical Association, Helps for Students of History 56)
- 6 Herbert E. Ives, *The Venetian gold ducat and its imitations*, edited and annotated by Philip Grierson (*Numismatic Notes and Monographs* 128), New York (published 1955)

1956

- 7 *Studies in Italian medieval history presented to Miss E. M. Jamison*, edited by Philip Grierson and John Ward Perkins (*Papers of the British School at Rome* XXIV)

1958

- 8 *Sylloge of coins of the British Isles. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Part i. Ancient British and Anglo-Saxon coins*

1966

- 9 *Bibliographie numismatique* (Cercle d' tudes Numismatiques, *Travaux* II), Brussels (see also no. 17)

1968

- 10 *Catalogue of the Byzantine coins in the Dumbarton Oaks and in the Whittemore Collection*, vol. II, Parts i and ii, *Phocas to Theodosius III, 602–717*, Washington, D.C.

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Introduction

The range of his learning, his searching curiosity, his flair for setting numismatic problems in their wider context have given Philip Grierson's contributions to numismatic method a particular significance. The contributors to this volume were, therefore, invited to submit papers which, whatever the details of the topic, would illustrate numismatic method and we are most grateful to them for the way in which they have responded. The papers are placed in the broad chronological order of the coinage discussed, beginning with the earliest issues of the Greek world and continuing to the close of the Middle Ages. The approaches which they illustrate include coining technology, the choice of types, the interpretation of find evidence, and the correlation of coins themselves with contemporary documents. The resulting volume does not pretend to be a complete exposition of the methods available to the student, but it is hoped that it will have a special usefulness in demonstrating current directions and techniques in the study of coinage. Perhaps the one general conclusion which the collection allows is the value of combining more than one method for the solution of a problem – a fitting tribute to the scholar to whom this volume is dedicated.

The methods and technology of coin production provide one of the principal means for answering such basic questions as when and where a coinage was produced, and in what quantity. For many series the evidence of production is limited to what can be inferred from the specimens that survive. Spufford, however, is able to reconstruct from contemporary account books the organisation of Netherlandish mints during the fifteenth century. While strictly appropriate to the circumstances of late medieval coins and to mints organised along 'factory' lines, incidental details, such as the provision of dies, are relevant to coining at other periods. Indeed, in the absence of mint documents, it is the study of dies that often best informs a discussion of chronology, mint attribution, and size of issue. Such were the methods for manufacturing most ancient and medieval coins that the products of particular dies can usually be identified by close comparison of the surviving specimens. From die assemblages of two Hellenistic series, one large, the other of lesser importance, Mørkholm notes how individual dies could under certain

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circumstances be held available over relatively long periods. Such extended die-life suggests that flexibility may be required in determining the relative date of die-linked coins. Shared dies among coins of two issues in the Carolingian series are noted, too, by Lafaurie and Bernareggi, and the question is put whether such linkages, which occur through one face only, may be evidence for use in each case of a single mint. This would require a revised interpretation of the various town-names, the characteristic type of both series and otherwise taken as mint signatures. Establishing the number of dies employed in a coinage is also a more efficient means of calculating the size of issue than simply counting the coins that chance to survive. So, Berghaus suggests that a controversial imperial issue of Duisburg, though known from only eight specimens, may have been a relatively substantial coinage. This belies its supposedly commemorative function. On the other hand, recognition of die identities among coins comprising a single hoard leads Lallemand to infer the limited currency rôle of a particular denomination.

Die studies are not, however, always appropriate, either from the poor condition of the coins or from the disproportionate labour in the collection and analysis of the material. In these cases, inferences from fabric, the facture of the uncoined blank, the composition of the metal, and the weight of the struck coin, are especially useful. Detailed study of the fabrics and especially of the metrology of the Crete/Cyrenaica bronze series under the Roman Republic and early Empire, in conjunction with other arguments, enables Buttrey not only to demonstrate the denominational system, but to suggest the relative chronology of the constituent issues. The stylistic homogeneity shown by some of the dies in this series, here not supported by shared usage, is gainsaid as evidence for centralised minting by the use of flans of a fabric distinctive to each part of this sometime joint province. Flan size is also shown by Buttrey to be on occasion a more reliable indicator of denomination than the very variable weights registered for particular issues. Variations in the weights of the several Carolingian gold coinages contained in the Ilanz hoard are considered by Bernareggi to indicate the acceptability, in certain circumstances, of a metrological range even among coins of precious metal. Scientific assays of their gold content are, however, lacking. The imprecision of non-destructive metal analysis is brought out by Metcalf in his study of the Merovingian silver coinage. Beyond any 'economic' inferences, the method is potentially useful as a chronological control and as evidence for the use of distinguishable metal sources. How the 'state' might enhance the face-value of a coinage by the use of alloyed metal and of differential weights and the effects of these on circulation are considered by Suchodolski, interpreting the Carolingian documents that also serve as the basis for Lafaurie's study. Finally, a particular class of fabric, the recognition of which is of special importance in studies of coin circulation, comprises re-used earlier issues. For Buttrey, the appearance of cut coins in the Cyrenaica provides a striking parallel with contemporary practice in the western provinces of the Roman Empire following Augustus' reform of the metropolitan coinage, while Morrisson demonstrates the methods and circumstances by which countermarked coins of the early Roman Empire were accommodated to the currency of sixth-century North Africa and Italy.

Apart from its immediate physical characteristics, a coin's most easily distinguishable

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features are its types – designs and inscriptions. The first requirement is, therefore, a correct reading. Berghaus bases his close examination of the Duisburg issue on a study of the individual dies. Types, their local associations, their continuity from earlier issues, and their imitation of the contemporary metropolitan coinage, are one of the principal means by which Buttrey is able to impose order on the apparently inchoate material that comprises the Crete/Cyrenaica coinage. In addition to confirming the evidence of circulation and metrology for the denominations and chronology of the series, analysis of the coin types distinguishes the issues intended for each half of the joint province. The typology and occasion of imitation in general is considered by Stewart in a detailed account of the influence of Scottish types on Continental coinage, and the particular example of imitation of English sterling in northern Germany is noted by Hatz. On the other hand the danger of over-refinement in assessing the smallest features of types, such as privy-marks, is emphasised by Blunt in demonstrating from contemporary mint indentures and the surviving coins that in the English medieval series such marks cannot be rigidly related, as previously proposed, to the periodic trials of the Pyx. On occasion, however, varieties and even changes of main type have undoubtedly an administrative purpose, as Carson notes for the Roman imperial series and Lafaurie and Dolley infer for the early Middle Ages.

The significance of types, especially those of ancient coins, has long attracted scholarly attention and controversy. The limited perception of the Roman imperial currency by its contemporary users is argued by Crawford. After surveying the notices and appreciations of coins and other material remains given by ancient authors, he concludes that the only important element in a type was to identify the issuing authority. Price re-considers the nature of the authority whose types and inscriptions appear on the earliest Greek coins, suggesting their personal rather than official or state character. For Bernareggi, however, the significance of the legends on the Carolingian gold coins in the Ilanz hoard is straight-forwardly political, though he doubts their rôle as currency. Finally, the many ‘signatures’ that occur on a particular Norman series of the second half of the eleventh century are identified by Dumas, not as the names of moneyers, but as those of ducal officers effectively usurping the right of coinage.

One of the numismatist’s principal tools is the study of coin finds. Various classes of find are therefore either the object of specific studies or a point of departure for other contributions. Price emphasises the need to consider the whole archaeological context in which finds of coins are made. The value of single-finds in describing the area of a coinage’s circulation is argued by Buttrey and Morrisson, the former inferring from the narrow circulation of bronze the attribution of the Crete/Cyrenaica series. The value of hoards not only in providing a chronological framework for undated issues, but also in determining the structure and articulation of given series is illustrated by Carson from the favourable circumstance of a relatively large number of hoards from a single century. In particular, they serve to distinguish substantive coinages from the secondary, often commemorative, issues of the Roman series and to authenticate the regular coins from the irregular. Carson’s reflections on possible monetary, rather than violent, reasons for depositing individual hoards provide a useful introduction to Lallemand’s study

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comparing the composition of hoards concealed in Belgium during the last quarter of the fourth century AD with the occurrence of contemporary coins among Belgian site-finds. Another concentration of finds, mainly hoards, from a closely defined geographical area enables Hatz to identify trade and tribute payments as alternative reasons for the arrival of considerable numbers of English coins in Schleswig-Holstein between the eighth and fourteenth centuries. Hoards also define the problems posed by the Norman series whose legends are studied by Dumas, both by dating them and by providing an indication of the size of issue. Other hoards are remarkable for being limited largely, or exclusively, to single issues, a characteristic of periods in which the currency was subject to demonetisation or withdrawals. Lafaurie adduces the restricted composition of Carolingian hoards to explain the currency regulations fragmentarily preserved in ninth-century documents, while Dolley interprets the disappearance of periodic recoinage in England as the outcome of Ælfred's monetary policy. Single hoards are the subject of papers by Bernareggi and Hendy. The Ilanz gold hoard, studied by the former, is one of those exceptional finds which has provided us with a good sample of a coinage otherwise virtually unknown. The apparently random number (786) of coins in Hendy's late Byzantine hoard from Bulgaria proves to be an independently documented sum of money concealed on an identifiable occasion, an exceptional conjunction of circumstances for a coin hoard. Similar precision regarding the date of withdrawal, as well as some of the circumstances surrounding their acquisition, is, however, obtained in respect of Archibald's so-called 'paper' hoards, although these payments, booked by a Scottish agent in the Netherlands at the end of the fifteenth century, are markedly different in composition from the few contemporary gold coin hoards known from the same area.

An aid largely denied the ancient numismatist comprises contemporary documents treating of coinage, either directly, as mint-records, or more broadly, as currency ordinances and notarial instruments. The information contained in such documents not otherwise to be inferred from the coins themselves may often supplement the material evidence or be explained by it. In yet other cases, the documents describe the social and economic background against which the function and behaviour of particular series or issues can best be understood. The late medieval French documents studied by Cockshaw illustrate the universal phenomenon of forgery, both for private gain and as unlicensed issues. In each case those responsible for the irregularity were either officers or workmen of properly constituted mints, but the product of their frauds, if it survives, cannot now be distinguished from the regular coinage. The important rôle of mint officials in the production of 'forgeries' in the Carolingian empire is also inferred by Lafaurie, partly from the surviving ordinances, but also from the move to centralised control of minting attested independently by the die-links. Similarly, his re-interpretation of the same documents in the light of hoard evidence reveals a chronological framework for the ninth-century imperial coinage. The various ways in which classes of documentary evidence can be related to the numismatic material are discussed by Bisson in a detailed analysis of the sources for coinage at Barcelona in the early thirteenth century. Not only does the written record supply a coinage now wholly lacking from the numismatic corpus, but it documents public, or market, reaction to changes in the king's coining standard.

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The wider context necessary for a proper understanding of coinage is again revealed by Spufford's study of mints in the Netherlands. Beyond the details of coin manufacture, the documents provide indications of the place of mint officers and contractors both in the royal administration and in local society. An understanding of contemporary social structure is crucial, too, to Price's discussion of the very origins of coined money. Here, however, inferences have to be made from anthropological sources rather than documents. Social organisation and documentary evidence are finally combined by Cipolla in his demonstration from late medieval Genoa of how the study of coinage by itself must provide a partial account only of economic transactions.