



Volume 31

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Front cover: Photo of the Alexander tetradrachm, no. 68 (see article of Lloyd Taylor Fig 1 page 52)



NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC

President's Report

With COVID-19 now endemic, the Association has not been able to hold a conference because of the upsurge this year of the virus Australia-wide, but nevertheless the NAA has continued to function with an upgraded website and the publication of this double volume JNAA31, which is available for free download at the NAA website. We plan to hold a conference next year in Adelaide, 19 – 20th October 2023, hosted by the Numismatic Society of South Australia.

I am delighted to announce the award of the Ray Jewell Silver Medal to our Managing Editor, Associate Professor Gillan Davis for his services to the NAA, and his numismatic work both in Australia and overseas for which he has an international reputation. Congratulations Gil from all of us.

The NAA continues to enjoy sponsorship at a sustainable level, with Noble Numismatics (Gold), Coinworks, Downies (Silver), Coins & Collectables Victoria, Drake Sterling, Mowbray Collectables, Sterling & Currency and Vintage Coins & Banknotes (Bronze) all contributing to ensure the Association's continued success. Membership is being maintained, and with the contributions by sponsors and members, the Association can function in these difficult times.

The NAA now has a new Secretary, Bridget McClean, and a new address in Nunawading, Victoria. This is convenient as the NAA is incorporated in Victoria. Much time has been spent changing bank signatories and updating Consumer Affairs Victoria; nothing happens quickly these days!

The Numismatic Association of Australia now has a functioning PayPal account linked to president@numismatics.org.au. This is very convenient for payments coming from overseas and avoids most international bank fees. Like with banking, setting up a PayPal account is not a five-minute exercise, but well worthwhile.

I am impressed with the considerable work our Managing Editor Gil Davis has put into this volume notwithstanding his being extraordinarily busy transferring between universities and setting up new programmes at the Australian Catholic University. Also, I am grateful to Barrie Newman for his on-going work in getting the journal set up and printed, taking on the tasks of both layout and copy editor.

Council continues to meet by ZOOM, hosted by David Galt at Mowbray Collectables.

Finally, the Association cannot function without the dedication of its secretary and its treasurer (Lyn Bloom); thank you both Bridget and Lyn.

Professor Walter R. Bloom

President, NAA

www.numismatics.org.au

3rd August 2022

Editor's note

This volume has been a long time in the making. Usually, an issue is based around the NAA annual conference, but COVID-19 made that impossible. More importantly, as the peak body for numismatics in the country, we are focussed on making each volume wide ranging, interesting and impactful. So, we waited on the completion of a couple of key contributions and have brought out a combined two-year issue which I have dubbed 'the professors' volume' on account of the academic attainment of most of the authors. I trust you will agree that the results justify the decision, because here we offer a splendid collection of eleven articles on an eclectic range of topics with some of the best numismatic analysis and writing I have read. Personally, I have learnt a lot, and I expect that you will too. The collection is rounded out by an obituary by NAA stalwart Peter Lane of the late Maurice B Keain, a real character on the Australian scene.

There are two articles on Australian topics. Vincent Verheyen offers a forensic scrutiny of 'proofs' and 'specimens' from the Melbourne and Perth mints issued in just two years, 1955 and 1956 and seeks to differentiate between them. Walter Bloom provides an interesting study of Western Australian numismatic medallions and badges with an emphasis on the Castellorizian Brotherhood which represented the émigrés from that Greek island.

Lloyd Taylor gives us a Hellenistic trilogy which is a tour de force in numismatic analysis. He starts with a brief but compelling argument correcting one of Hersh's additions to Price's Alexander typology showing that it was already in the corpus. Next, he reattributes Macedonian imperial coinage attributed to Berytos to Byblos. Finally, he shows that an issue of tetradrachms struck in the name of Philip III was in fact a posthumous issue of Seleukos.

There are four articles on a Roman theme:

- Bruce Marshall moves us into the turbulent period of the late Roman Republic with a study of 'labels' on a small number of denarii which he contends fed into the contemporary political discourse.
- Graeme Stephens and John McDonald offer us something unusual and valuable. They document and analyse an unpublished hoard of fourth and fifth centuries AD Roman coins and local imitations from Sri Lanka.
- Andrew Chugg explores the veracity of commemorative medallions of Antinous, paramour of the emperor Hadrian who was deified after his death in the Nile, arguing that there are ways of distinguishing between genuine and fake examples.
- John Melville-Jones offers us a magnificent work listing the names of Roman coins as used by the Romans themselves and sometimes just by modern numismatists.

Written in John's inimitable style, this is an invaluable reference for collectors, students and scholars.

The next article by Emy Kim and Cristiana Zaccagnino takes us into the fascinating world of a numismatic collection of some 600 Greek and Roman coins housed at Queen's University in Canada that is being used in teaching and research. They show just how valuable coins can be when treated as artefacts used to inform historical and scientific understanding. This represents a welcome trend in modern scholarship to integrate numismatics into cross-disciplinary studies.

Finally, we publish a long autobiographical article by Maria Caltabiano. This is justified by the profound impact which she has made on numismatics in a lifetime as professor of numismatics at the University of Messina in Sicily. Along the way, she describes many of her projects with a particularly fascinating exposition of an example of iconic programmatic minting in late fifth century BC Kamarina in the period of the 'signing masters' – some of the most exquisite ancient coinage ever struck. Sadly, we tend not to know enough about numismatics in early Europe, and this article goes some way towards filling the gap.

I sincerely thank the many diligent anonymous reviewers who have done so much to improve the papers. Likewise, I thank the members of the editorial board who stand ready and willing to help when called upon, and John Melville-Jones who happily proofreads the articles. Above all, I pay tribute to Barrie Newman without whose tireless efforts across the years, these volumes would not see the light of day.

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Articles must comprise original research on numismatic material including but not limited to Australasian numismatics (coins, tokens, medals, banknotes) or ancient or mediaeval numismatics. Manuscripts can be emailed to any member of the Editorial Board in your area of research, along with a copy to the Managing Editor.

My life's work: numismatics at the University of Messina (Sicily)

Maria Caccamo Caltabiano

Abstract

This article gives a personal account of the career and achievements of one of the world's leading numismatists, Maria Caccamo Caltabiano. She was 29 years old, married and with two girls, when she was assigned to the teaching of Greek and Roman numismatics at the University of Messina. This came after her doctoral research into Greek Federal coinages. She went on to research the Greek monetary lexicon from precurrency to currency and organise the 1st Seminar of Studies on Greek and Latin Technical Lexicons (Messina 1990). Her DRACMA Project, realised with the collaboration of the Numismatic Museum of Athens, the Archaeological Museum of Cyprus and the Sicilian Archaeological Museum of Agrigento, was supported by the European Union (Raphael Program 1996-1998). This Project resulted in many significant outputs. In 2000, together with professors of numismatics at the universities of Bologna, Genoa and Milan, she promoted the project: 'Imagery and power: for an iconographic monetary lexicon,' and studied monetary types as a real language through the Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae (LIN). She also created the collection: Semata e Signa. Studi di Iconografia Monetale and is working on the Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae Classicae et Mediae Aetatis. In the iconography of a mint, Maria presumes the existence of an 'iconic programme' and a 'semantic system' which can be reconstructed by numismatists, demonstrated in this paper by the example of the 'Iconographic numismatic romance of Hipparis and Kamarina.' In 2015, Maria and the other numismatists at Messina organised the highly successful XV International Numismatic Congress (Taormina). Part of the reason for organising the conference was to make numismatics more accessible to scholars who work in other areas.



Introduction

When I was a child, I spent the summer months in the area of S. Alfio in the province of Catania (Sicily). There I heard stories about numerous villagers who had emigrated to Australia where they found work and comfort for their families. Perhaps it is no coincidence that a synthesis of my university activity as a numismatics teacher at the University of Messina has ‘emigrated’ to Australia, where it has found a cordial welcome and great generosity. For this I am grateful first of all to Professor John Melville-Jones: his weighty volumes of *Testimonia Numaria*, prominently displayed in the library of the Department of Ancient Sciences of the University of Messina, have always aroused in me the greatest admiration. It is to him I owe the invitation to recall my long experience as a numismatics teacher. I also thank the Managing Editor of the *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia*, Associate Professor Gil Davis, for his careful reading and editing of my work and his valuable recommendations.

1. The first Chair of Numismatics in Italy

In 1967, Consolo Langher entered a lecture hall in the University of Messina, and informed us that she had won the first numismatics tenure competition in Greek and Roman Numismatics held by an Italian university. I was a third year student, studying classical literature, and the joy with which my teacher made that communication still remains in my memory.¹ Other winners of the competition included Laura Breglia from the La Sapienza University of Rome and Attilio Stazio from the Federico II University of Naples.

The thesis that I later completed was dedicated to the coinage of the Greek confederation of the Arcadians. This formed part of a wider scientific project in which Professor Consolo Langher intended to demonstrate how Greek federalism had found expression in the coins minted on behalf of the whole community;² today we would say of the entire nation, not only on behalf of the citizens of a single city, as had occurred in Athens or Corinth. After my graduation, she insisted that I participate in the competition to become an Assistant to the Chair of Numismatics. The study of numismatics was still absent from the vast majority of both ancient and modern scientific studies, and my supervisor after winning tenure as a professor of Greek History in 1970, went on to teach this discipline. So the seeds had been planted that led to the teaching of numismatics at this university in its own right, rather than just a minor adjunct to other subjects.

The role of Professor of Numismatics at the University of Messina was next taken on by Giacomo Manganaro. A graduate of Ancient History at the University of Catania, he had enriched his cultural preparation in a multidisciplinary way at European universities and research centres. He arrived to teach his classes with a bag full of books, and photocopies of articles from scholars he had known personally, some of whom he invited to give lectures at this University. This included an invitation to Herbert Cahn, the author of *Die Münzen der Sizilischen Stadt Naxos*, Basel 1944, which led to a conference on Solon's timocratic reforms. I investigated this topic in advance and was able to discuss it with him, laying the foundations for a friendship that has been fundamental to my numismatic career.

Having won the competition for Professore Ordinario (a full professorship, with tenure until retirement) in 1974, Professor Manganaro was invited to take the position of Chair of Greek History at the University of Catania. Following this, my faculty then decided

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- 1 For Professor Consolo Langher's academic career, see De Sensi Sestito G. 2010, 'Il profilo scientifico di Sebastiana Nerina Consolo Langher', in M. Caccamo Caltabiano and E. Santagati (eds), *Tyrannis, Basileia, Imperium. Forme prassi e simboli del potere politico nel mondo greco e romano. Giornate seminarili in onore di S. Nerina Consolo Langher (Pelorias 18)*, Messina, pp. 17-31, and M. Caccamo Caltabiano 2010, 'Sebastiana Nerina Consolo Langher studiosa di Numismatica, in the same publication, pp. 33-43.
 - 2 Caltabiano M. 1969-70, *Documenti numismatici e storia del koinon arcade dalle origini al V sec. a.C.*, 'Helikon' 9-10, pp. 423-459.

to assign the teaching of Greek and Roman numismatics to me. I was 29 years old, married, with two girls aged three and one. In my first year of teaching I taught a course on metallographic methods and analysis of coins, a topic on which I was collecting material. I also supervised a student who wrote a thesis on a numismatic topic. Later I became passionate about the economic history of money and my students began to grow in number. They found it particularly interesting, and would fill the lecture hall when I started explaining numismatic iconography. At the same time, another experience had important repercussions on the number of my students. At the Interdisciplinary Regional Museum of Messina, there was an exhibition of coins from the collection of the old Peloritano Civic Museum (founded in 1806) and the Messina-born collector Giuseppe Grosso Cacopardo (1789-1858). Due to work on the expansion and refurbishment of the museum, the coins had been removed from their cases and kept in a safe. But when this was moved without taking into account of its contents, almost all the remaining coins became separated from their inventory numbers and fell to the bottom. Wanting to give my students some practical experience, I asked permission of the museum's management to identify the coins during weekly lessons. For three consecutive years, my students identified the coins and reallocated their inventory numbers. Following that experience, which was interrupted after the appointment of a numismatic officer at the Museum, numerous degree theses were dedicated by my students to Sicilian and ancient Greek coinage and iconographic themes, and some of them are now university professors of numismatics.

2. The focus on the iconography of the coins



In 1975 Salvatore Calderone, Professor of Roman History, and at that time also Director of my Department, suggested that I study the silver staters of Locri depicting ROMA seated and armed, crowned by PISTIS standing in front of her (the two characters

being identified by their legends). Scholars had wondered if the *Pistis* celebrated by the coin was the *Fides* (Faith) of Rome towards the city of Locri or vice versa. According to Calderone, this doubt was resolved by the syntax of the image: Rome crowned by *Pistis* was equivalent to the phrase 'Rome is *pisté*' (Rome is faithful - subject, copula and nominal predicate) using an iconographic syntax similar to that of verbal languages.³ In the same year I participated in a conference in Naples dedicated to the city of Cyme in Campania. I had observed that on its own coinage, from the early fifth century BC, the city had used the KYMAION legend in the plural genitive (a coin 'of the Cymaeans') with the exception of three cases in which the legend was only KYME, coupled respectively with a female head, a shell, or a helmeted head. The anonymous lexicographer of the *Etymologicum Magnum* recalled how the name of the city of Cyme was derived *apò enkýmonos gynaikós*, 'from a pregnant woman'. On the Cumaean coinage both the issuing city and the shell accompanying it on the reverse were indicated by the KYME legend, since shells are a frequent symbolic attribute of mother deities. But KYME was also defined as a helmeted female head. This is generally interpreted as the head of Athena, but it corresponds better to the Amazon Cyme, the eponymous founder of this homonymous city of Aeolis, whose inhabitants had taken part in the founding of the Campanian city.

Tradition traced the foundation of numerous cities, especially in Asia Minor, to the Amazons, mythical warriors supposed to have their origin on the southern coast of the Black Sea, who organised themselves into a kingdom of women ruled by a queen. In Southern Italy we also find traces of sagas in which the Amazons play the role of eponymous heroines. The Amazon Cleta, mother of Caulon, the mythical founder of Caulonia, came to Italy according to the myth and founded a city of the same name, over which she herself reigned. Her royal power was passed onto women who in turn would take the name of Kleta. Although there has not been any other report of an Amazon Cyme as the founder of the city of Campania, the anonymous lexicographer of the *Etymologicum Magnum* specifies that the name Cyme is derived from a *basilissa* who ruled the city of the same name.⁴

I learned from this that the examination of the monetary types of a mint could not be limited to a single iconography but, when possible, had to be extended to the entire chronological span of its activity to understand its cultural unity and the kind of iconic language expressed in its coinage. In the same year 1979 Cecilia, my third child, was born, so my life was busy on many fronts.

3 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1978, 'Nota sulla moneta locrese Zeus/Roma e Pistis', in E. Livrea e G. A. Privitera (Eds), *Studi A. Ardizzoni*, Roma, pp. 101-116.

4 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1979, KYME ENKYMON. *Riflessioni storiche sulla tipologia, simbologia e cronologia della monetazione cumana*, Archivio Storico Messinese – Società Messinese di Storia Patria, pp. 19-56.

Another two decades passed before I got to experience the extraordinary methodological skills of the scholars of the London Warburg Institute, to study the monetary lexicon with Paola Radici Colace, and above all, to collaborate from 1990 to 1998 with the editorial staff of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae* of Basel in the iconographic examination of 44 subjects (Cities, Rivers, *Virtutes* ...) represented on coins,⁵ which strengthened my opinions regarding the structural analogy between spoken and iconic languages. This analogy was able to provide a scientific method for the reading of monetary images by making use of the analytical categories already used and tested in the study of verbal languages.

3. The direct approach to coins and coin collections

In my first teaching years, my numismatic studies were mainly concerned with the history of the discipline and the study of money as an historical source. But thanks to the generous aid of some collectors (in particular the pro-tempore Rector of the University of Messina, Professor Salvatore Pugliatti, a distinguished jurist) and the heads of several museums in Southern Italy, in 1977 I published a monographic study on the coins of the Petelia mint, a city in Southern Italy.⁶ According to previous studies, the city had minted coins in two different chronological periods (280-216 BC; 204-89 BC). Thanks to the careful examination of literary sources, monetary types, secondary symbols and signs of value, I instead deduced that there would have been no break in the issues. The people's party of Petelia had minted money in the years of the Second Punic War in support of the Carthaginian Hannibal Barca, who wished to hinder the expansion of Rome in Southern Italy. In fact, the Petelian popular party had standardised its weight standard to match Hannibal's coinage, also adopting some of its monetary types, while the city's *optimates* had found refuge in Rome.

However, I only felt the sensation of having become a 'true' numismatist when, in order to study the coinage of ancient Messina located on the Sicilian promontory of Capo Peloro, I reconstructed, through the collection of specimens and the study and sequencing of issues of coinage, the coin series that had been minted by the city from the

5 Caccamo Caltabiano M.1990, in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC)*, V, Zürich-München, s.vv. *Himera, Hipparis, Hyele, Hypsas, Kamarina, Kaulos*, pp. 424-425, 432-433, 553-554, 948-949, 973-974; Eadem 1992, in *LIMC* VI, Zürich-München, s.vv. *Knepeleos, Koinoboulion, Krimisos, Kyamosoros, Leucaspis, Liparis, Lissos, Longanos, Messana*, pp. 85, 88-89, 135-137, 150, 273-274, 290-291, 292, 558; Eadem 1994, *LIMC* VII, Zürich-München, s.vv. *Orethos, Palankaios, Patron, Pelorias, Pheraimon, Pistis, Rheon, Sagras, Satyra I, Sepeithos, Sibyllae, Sosipolis II, Symaitchos, Taras, Terias, Terina, Tharragoras, Tyras*, pp. 77, 149-150, 203, 287-288, 371, 412-413, 635, 650, 701-702, 730, 753-757, 799-780, 892-893, 909; Eadem 1998, *LIMC* VIII, Zürich-Düsseldorf, s.vv. *Akis, Diokaisareia I, Iokastos, Iustitia, Lakydon, Leukippos II, Makestos, Morsynos, Narbis, Sebethis, Tyras*, pp. 152, 515-516, 562, 658, 661-663, 768, 776, 803, 867, 1089-1090.

6 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1976, 'La monetazione annibalica di Petelia', *Numismatica e Antichità Classiche* 5, pp. 85-101, and M. Caltabiano 1977, 'Una città del Sud tra Roma e Annibale. La monetazione di Petelia', *Kleio* 2 (Palermo), Studi Storici a cura di S. Calderone, Palermo.

5th - 3rd century B.C. To start the document collection, I again had the help of Herbert Cahn who offered me the opportunity to consult the rich library of his company *Münzen und Medaillen* in Basel. There I consulted many hundreds of price lists and auction catalogues and photographed or photocopied illustrations of the coins that interested me. For the preparation of this monetary corpus, I also received funding from the University of Messina and the Ministry of Education, University and Scientific Research of Italy (MIUR) which allowed me to visit the most important museums that held coins of ancient Messana. This correct and almost complete collection of data was confirmed by a comparison with those present in the *General Catalog* of the American Numismatic Society of New York where I became friendly with the head of this section, Dr Carmen Arnold Biocchi. Having completed my work, on the advice of Herbert Cahn, I presented the manuscript to the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Berlin, which accepted it for printing as the 13th volume of the prestigious *Münzen und Medaillen* series, 1993.⁷ A year later my monograph on the coinage of Messana (dedicated to my husband Carlo Caccamo and our now four children, Daniela, Gaia, Cecilia and Davide) won the XIII International Prize for Numismatic Literature awarded by the Commission des Numismates Professionels. The University of Messina then opened a competition for a post of Professore Ordinario of Numismatics and I, already an Associate Professor, won the competition, becoming a full professor of the discipline I had been teaching since 1974. So it can be seen that although numismatics is a subject that is not often taught to a high level in universities, when it is taken seriously, it can provide a satisfactory career.

In 1997, I was able, thanks to the collaboration of two students, Dr. Emilia Oteri and Dr. Benedetto Carroccio, to publish the corpus of coins issued in Syracuse in the name of Hiero II and the main members of his family.⁸ The Sicilian *basileus* (king) had ruled Syracuse in the years between 269 and 215 BC. The coinage, in consideration of the peculiarity of its types and the plurality of weight standards adopted, highlighted the historical and political role of Sicily in the third century B.C. as a privileged interlocutor of numerous Hellenistic kingdoms, and especially of Ptolemaic Egypt. Inspired by a dynastic ideology, the coinage consisted of issues that were hierarchically issued in the name of the *basileus* (octodrachms), of the *basilissa* (queen - tradrachms), of the son destined to succeed his father (didrachms) together with lower denominations struck in the name of the Syracusans themselves and bearing signs of value. This Syracusan experience significantly anticipated the emperor / senate diarchic monetary system of the Roman imperial age, but above all confirmed the Sicilian origin of the Roman monetary system proposed by me, on the occasion of the International Numismatic

7 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1993a, 'La monetazione di Messana, con le emissioni di Rhegion dell'età della tirannide', *Antike Münzen und Geschnittene Steine* XIII, Berlin-New York.

8 Caccamo Caltabiano M., Carroccio B., Oteri E. 1997, *La monetazione 'regale' di Ierone II, della sua famiglia e dei Siracusani*, Messina (Pelorias 2).

Conference in Brussels in 1991, after the discovery in Sicily of a small hoard containing the first Roman aurei with the type Mars / eagle on thunderbolt.⁹

4. The Greek monetary lexicon: the words that ‘tell’ the phenomena of the coins

Collaboration with the philologist Paola Radici Colace enabled me to learn more about the nature of the Greek monetary lexicon. We had been fellow students at the University of Messina, and she had become an Assistant to the Chair of Greek and Latin Philology. With Paola, I often discussed the meaning of Greek terms useful for the interpretation of monetary phenomena, until we eventually decided to study the *peri nomismaton* together, the section that the lexicographer Pollux had dedicated to monetary terminology in the eighth book of his *Onomasticon*. The outcome of that experience was ten works published between 1979 and 1990, subsequently collected in the volume: *From the precurrency to currency. Greek monetary lexicon between semantics and ideology* (Pisa 1992).¹⁰ We analysed the movement from precurrency to currency, and the highly social and conventional character of money, starting from the language, in a Mediterranean dimension that from Greek society had expanded to confront oriental reality, in particular Persian, and its later contact with the Roman world. While the silver *stater* in Greece had kept the same name as when, in the premonetary phase, it was still a metal weight, its counterpart in Sicily had been called a *nomos*, the term that identified it as a ‘law’, promulgating the eminently trustworthy nature that the currency had assumed on the island, which provided a heterogeneous environment characterised by frequent colonial flows.

In the same period we organised the 1st Seminar of Studies on Greek and Latin Technical Lexicons (Messina, 8-10 March 1990) at the Accademia Peloritana dei Pericolanti di Messina.¹¹ We were connected on a national level with Professor Giuseppe Nenci, Director of the Seminary of Classical Philology and History of the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa and with Professors S. Alessandrì and M. Lombardo of the Department of Ancient Sciences of Lecce for the implementation of a project to promote the *Greek and Latin Technical Lexicon*. The project was funded by the Italian Ministry of Public Education (MPI) and subsequently by the newly-founded Italian Ministry of University

9 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1993b, ‘Il tesoretto di oro marziale da Agrigento 1987 e le origini del sistema denario romano’, in *Actes XI Congrès International de Numismatique. Bruxelles 1991, Louvain La Neuve*, pp. 109-116, and Caccamo Caltabiano M. 2018, ‘Giacomo Manganaro, “Grandseigneur der sizilischen Numismatik”, e l’introduzione del denarius romano’, in *SIKELIA/SICILIA. Convegno di Studi in memoria di Giacomo Manganaro*, Catania 24.XI.2017, *Mediterraneo Antico XXI*, 1-2, pp. 195-209.

10 Caccamo Caltabiano M.- Radici Colace P. 1992, *Dalla premoneta alla moneta. Lessico monetale greco tra semantica e ideologia*, Pisa.

11 Caccamo Caltabiano M. - Radici Colace P. 1991, *Lessici tecnici greci e latini*, Atti del I Seminario di Studi sui Lessici Tecnici Greci e Latini (Messina, 8-10 marzo 1990), suppl. ‘Atti Accademia Peloritana dei Pericolanti’.

and Scientific and Technological Research (Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica, or MURST).

5. The DRACMA Project (1996-1998)¹²

An experience that proved to be fundamental for the enlargement of our research group and for the acquisition of computer knowledge – still not very widespread in those years – was the promotion and realisation of the DRACMA Project (*Diffusion and Research on Ancient Coinage of the Mediterranean Area*) over a three-year period from 1996 to 1998. The project was initiated by me in my role as Chair of Greek and Roman Numismatics of the University of Messina with a team of 11 young numismatists from Messina and Reggio Calabria, in collaboration with three Museums: the Numismatic Museum of Athens (Director Dr I. Touratsoglou, Vice-director Dr. H. Psoma, and Dr D. Tsangari), the Archaeological Museum of Cyprus (Curator Dr P. Flourentzos) and the Sicilian Archaeological Museum of Agrigento (Superintendent Dr G. Fiorentini, Director G. Castellana). The project was supported by the European Union, in the context of the Raphael Program for the triennium 1996-1998, which offered financial aid to initiatives that promoted a wider appreciation of the cultural heritage of European museums. In 1996 the *DRACMA Project* was the only European project relating to monetary documents to be approved out of 147 different projects, and among a total of 485 altogether that were presented to Brussels. A quarter of the total cost was financed by the community's funds with the remaining percentage obtained independently from existing resources or through sponsors. This showed that the study of ancient monetary history could be relevant to the study of more recent monetary history.

Among the outputs of this innovative project was the work: *The ancient Greek coin, means of meeting and exchange between peoples, economies, cultures and religions in the Mediterranean Sea*, written in Italian, English and Greek by the numismatists of the University of Messina in collaboration with Greek and Cypriot partners. The work was published on CD-Rom between 1999 and 2004, in collaboration with SEED Edizioni Informatiche of Messina. In this work we considered all the most important and meaningful aspects of ancient Greek coinage. The topics were: politics (issuing authorities and monetary legends, political regimes and wealth distribution, decrees, alliances); technical features (metals, mines, production; mints); economics (monetary systems, economic areas, real value and fiduciary value, monetary markets, banks); art (typology, styles, fashion, iconographies); religion (major deities, minor deities, cults, myths); history (numismatics, names of the coins, what came before coins?, the invention of coins, the spread of coinage). It also presented a summary of the issues of the main cities of Sicily and the examination of various iconographies of Sicilian coins,

12 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 2000, 'The DRACMA PROJECT. La moneta antica: documento storico e bene culturale', in *Beni Culturali e Nuove Tecnologie*, in Atti IV Congresso Internazionale (Torino 1999), Roma, pp. 136-142.

finding confirmation in ancient jewellery, or in archaeological documents. The work ended with a list of the following items: cities and rulers, museums, glossary, curiosities and bibliography. It was a good example of the way in which students of numismatics can produce material that is important for improving the study of other subjects which normally do not venture into this area.

Another production of which we were proud was purely numismatic. It was the first volume produced in Italy for the famous *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* series; it described the Greek coins kept at the Regional Archaeological Museum of Agrigento. It was published in 1999 with the authorisation of the British Academy and the patronage of the International Numismatic Commission and the European Commission's Raphael Program 1996-1998, and funded by the Regione Siciliana. Eleven young numismatists worked on this volume under my direction.

The exhibition: *Meetings among peoples and cultures in the Mediterranean. Myths and Cultus of the Straits of Messina in Ancient Coins*, was also an element of the DRACMA Project. This exhibition aimed to illustrate, through Greek and Roman coin iconography and comparison with other archaeological documents, the most meaningful and characteristic myths of the area around the Straits of Messina (Scylla and Charybdis; the Scythe of Cronus and the port of Zancle – the first name of Messina; the oxen of the sun; the giant and the giantess; Glaucus and Colapesce), originating at different times and in different ways from various peoples of the Mediterranean area. Through the iconographic and narrative evidence provided by the monetary documents it was easy to attract public attention to the myths, traditions and other cultural aspects of the area of the straits. This made clear both the importance of the geographical position of the strait of Messina and its role as a liaison point between the eastern and western Mediterranean. Again, numismatics could be used to improve and refine our understanding of historical or cultural topics. A combination of this exhibition and a number of scientific seminars also introduced people who might have had no previous interest in humanistic studies to numismatic documents.

6. The coordination of the PhD in Archaeological and Historical Sciences (1994 to 2016)

My appointment from 1994 to 2016 as Coordinator of the PhD in Archaeological and Historical Sciences, which was created from a consortium of archaeologists, numismatists and historians of the Sicilian Universities of Messina, Catania and Palermo, stimulated in me a greater interest in archaeological documents, drew my attention to the importance of multidisciplinary in our research and, once again, focused on the need to communicate antiquities to the general public in a clear, understandable and engaging way. Hence my request to all PhD students (many of whom now work at Italian and foreign universities) to communicate the results of their research in a

suitable way, not only using computerised methods but taking into account, as far as possible, of the level of knowledge and likely interests of the possible audiences.

7. Participation in the XII International Numismatic Congress Berlin (1997)

The results of the research carried out for the DRACMA project were presented in 1997 at the International Numismatic Congress in Berlin.¹³ For the first time in an international context I also drew attention to the strong analogy existing between verbal language and iconic language (a language communicated through images) of money.¹⁴

I insisted on the importance of a more general reading of the iconic elements present on the coins, which also took into account their use in documents of a non-monetary nature. I was inspired by the extensive and continued presence on Sicilian coins of the type of the quadriga driven by a charioteer, represented both walking and galloping, traditionally interpreted by scholars as relating to tyrannical governments or the victories achieved by cities during the Olympic Games. In my opinion the theme of the chariot race in the classical age had undergone a process of democratisation made possible by its belonging to the more general and 'superclass' sphere of the sacred. This iconographic theme, in fact, was present both in the funerary field and on the reliefs of temples, and was also used on objects of the minor arts, from ex-votos to the decoration of the edges of the basins (*louteria*) intended for religious washing rituals. Furthermore, on Sicilian coins, the *quadrigae* appeared to be driven both by male charioteers and by persons easily recognisable as women: on the tetradrachms of Selinus by the divine brothers Artemis and Apollo, on those of Aitna and Camarina by the goddess Athena; to Enna, Segesta and Syracuse by the goddess Demeter; in Messana a carriage drawn by two mules, at first with a male driver, came to be guided by the personification of the City, identified by her name. Then in particular, both at Syracuse and at Leontini, beneath the moving *quadriga* a running lion appeared, which not only represented the speaking symbol of the city of Leontini but was first of all a distinctive attribute of Apollo, the solar divinity, whose full splendour and great power it symbolised. The racing chariots presented on the coins could therefore only be symbolising the 'race of life', imitating that of divinity. Only under these conditions could the iconic theme of the chariot or *quadriga* race be presented over time by any type of political government, from aristocratic to tyrannical and from democratic to monarchical.

8. The *Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae*

The realisation of the DRACMA project was rewarded by my colleagues with my appointment as Director of the Department of Ancient Sciences (1998-2004), which

13 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1997, 'The DRACMA Project', in B. Kluge & B. Weisser (eds), *Akten XII Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress Berlin* [2000] I, pp. 43-45.

14 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 1997, 'Immagini/parole: il lessico iconografico monetale', in B. Kluge & B. Weisser (eds), *Akten XII Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress Berlin* [2000], I, pp. 179-184.

enabled me to introduce numismatic matters into some subjects to which it might formerly have been considered irrelevant. This function facilitated some subsequent scientific initiatives. In 2000, together with the professors of Numismatics of the University of Bologna (Professor Emanuela Cocchi Ercolani), of Genoa (Professor Rossella Pera), and of Milan (Professor Lucia Travaini), I promoted the research project entitled: *Imagery and power: for an iconographic monetary lexicon*. The project was co-financed by the Italian Ministry of University and Scientific and Technological Research (MURST), which has now been renamed as the Ministry of Instruction, University and Research (MIUR). At the end of the first two years of the investigations, the research group clearly understood the cognitive potential inherent in understanding the meaning of monetary images. To achieve the goal of using coins or other forms of money as true historical documents, it was necessary to study the monetary types in their entirety as a real language through the creation of an iconographic lexicon of ancient and mediaeval money. With this aim we organised the conference: ‘The iconic tradition as a historical source. The role of numismatics in iconography studies. Study meeting of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae*’ (University of Messina 6th-8th March 2003).¹⁵

A new grant of MIUR co-financing (2003-2004) made a second international congress possible. This was entitled: ‘The Imagery of Power and the Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae’, which ended with a conference organised in Genoa from 10th-12 November, 2005. We called the Acts of this second meeting that were published: *The meaning of images. Numismatics, Art, Philology, History*, to highlight how a multidisciplinary scientific approach was necessary for the understanding of monetary images.¹⁶

In March 2005, thanks to a proposal made by my colleague Giovanni Gorini, Professor of Numismatics at the University of Padua, the LIN project received the patronage of the Commission Internationale de Numismatique, then chaired by Dr Michel Amandry, Director of the Cabinet des Médailles of Paris. The project was also supported by numismatist Professor Carmen Arnold Biocchi of Harvard University, Boston, who was appointed Advisor for the creation of the LIN. Later, in 2009, the project also obtained the patronage of the prestigious Italian Accademia dei Lincei, following the proposal of the numismatist Dr Ermanno Arslan, Direttore del Museo Archeologico di Milano

15 Caccamo Caltabiano M., Castrizio D., Puglisi M. (eds) 2004, ‘La tradizione iconica come fonte storica. Il ruolo della Numismatica negli studi di Iconografia’, *Atti del Primo incontro di studio del Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae* (Messina, 6-8 Marzo 2003), *Semata e Signa* n. 1, Reggio Calabria 2004. See also Travaini L. – Bolis A. (eds) 2004, ‘L’immaginario e il potere nell’iconografia monetale. Dossier di lavoro del seminario di studi, Milano 11 marzo 2004’, *Società Numismatica Italiana, Collana di Numismatica e Scienze Affini* nr. 5, Milano.

16 Pera Rossella (ed.) 2005, *L’Immaginario del potere. Studi di iconografia monetale*, Roma; Pera Rossella (ed.) 2012, ‘Il significato delle immagini. Numismatica, Arte, Filologia, Storia’, *Atti del Secondo Incontro Internazionale di Studio del Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae* (Genova, 10-12 Novembre 2005), Roma.

(1975-2003), Sovrintendente del Castello Sforzesco e direttore delle Civiche Raccolte d'Arte di Milano (2003-2005), together with the archaeologist Professor Antonino Di Vita, an academician and a leader among the major Italian archaeologists of the twentieth century.

9. The *LIN* project

With the *LIN* we intend to reconstruct 'the history of the coin type', or the 'stratigraphic representation' of its meaning, which strips bare the structure of iconic language and, using a multidisciplinary method, retrieves the relationship between the images and the realities which they represent, and between the images and the cultural context in which they are used.

Defining their meaning in this way means referring to the entire history of these images, and following the course of their development in the widest possible areas. It will not be sufficient to look at the documents sector by sector, or to analyse either those of an individual geographical area or those of a brief period; in the field of coin iconography, which is that of political power and the ruling authority, we have the advantage that the themes and meanings of the iconography and symbolism remain unchanged for very long periods, projected well beyond the ancient classical period and with roots in a clearly more distant past. Knowledge of them will help us understand the cultural heritage of the ancient and mediaeval world in the contemporary world.

Compared with the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, the *LIN* aims to engage in the collection and study not only of mythological characters but of all subjects (historical characters, animals, plants and inanimate objects), which form the vast iconographic heritage of coins, and which often become a substantial part of complex scenes depicted on archaeological documents. All the studies conducted in recent years by our research group on coin types of the Greek, Roman and mediaeval ages, have had the character of real sample surveys, or 'excavation essays' to probe a cultural context that has so far not been extensively investigated, but which is very complex and multifaceted. An attempt was made to differentiate the investigations within the three macro categories of characters – mythical and historical, animals and *res* (Latin for flora, naval matters and other objects) – to better understand the rules and criteria of this particular visual communication. This has already made it possible to verify the consistency of the iconographic choices of the issuing authority with what was already known from literary sources, but at the same time to highlight historical phenomena not yet investigated. The research group has organised congresses and seminars whose *Proceedings* have been published, and the *LIN* method has already been experimented with good results both through monographic surveys and in numerous graduate and doctoral thesis works. The collection *Semata e Signa. Studi di Iconografia Monetale* has been created to bring together methodological studies and seminar meetings,

preparatory to collecting studies and seminar meetings of a methodological nature as a preliminary to the creation of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae*: at present the publication of Volume XI of the series *Semata e Signa* is imminent.

Finally, the *LIN* initiative aims to create a highly educational opportunity for young researchers who in the future will themselves not only contribute to and ensure the continuity of studies in numismatics, but also promote its valorisation and integration with the knowledge of coin documents which are part of the common cultural heritage. They will hopefully put an end to the dichotomy whereby immense coin collections are conserved in the major museums of the world, and in Italy especially, yet there is extremely scarce knowledge and awareness of them, not only on the part of the public as a whole, but even among scholars of the ancient and mediaeval worlds.

Perhaps I would not have persevered – for almost thirty years – in my initial working hypothesis regarding the *LIN* method, if over time I had not attracted scholarly interest and received encouragement to continue this research from three scholars of great scientific and human stature: the numismatist Herbert Cahn of Basel (1915-2002), the historian Giuseppe Nenci (Scuola Normale di Pisa, 1924-1999) and the linguist Mario Alinei (1926-2018), the founder and editor of *Quaderni di Semantica*, a journal of theoretical and applied semantics (until 1997, President of *Atlas Linguarum Europae* at UNESCO). Meeting them was a real blessing for me, because I benefited greatly from their friendship and scholarly encouragement.

Generous companions in this work were also Professors Emanuela Ercolani and Anna Lina Morelli, Rossella Pera, Lucia Travaini, lecturers in numismatics respectively at the universities of Bologna, Genoa and Milan, later joined by Dr. Ermanno Arslan, whom I have already mentioned, to whom our request for patronage from the Accademia dei Lincei for the *LIN* is due, when he presented it together with the famous Sicilian archaeologist Professor Antonino Di Vita.

10. An iconic program in ancient coin production: the ‘romance’ of Hipparis and Kamarina

For the coin issuer, communicating ideologies and propaganda to the user was just as important as having money available for payments. To this end the issuer was forced to plan in advance both the quantity of metal and the denominations to mint, and the types to represent on the coins. This means that in our research we should look for the logical links connecting the various dies, presuming the existence of an ‘iconic programme’ and a ‘semantic system’ which can be reconstructed. I offer here an example.¹⁷

17 Caccamo Caltabiano M. 2011, ‘The importance of an “iconic program” in ancient coin production’, in *Quantifying monetary supplies in Greco-Roman times* (ed. F. de Callatay) Rome, Academia Belgica, 2008, pp. 199-211.

The coinage of Kamarina minted in Sicily in the period of the 'signing masters' has been dated by U. Westermark and K. Jenkins between 425 and 405 BC.¹⁸ I have tried to demonstrate the existence of an iconic programme regarding the story of the river Hipparis and the Nymph Kamarina, 'narrated' by the engravers in only four 'pictures', using eight obverse dies and six reverse dies.

On the first obverse we find the head of the young Hipparis, shown in profile facing left, with small horns visible above his headband. On the reverse the nymph Kamarina is sitting on a swan which is flying over the surface of the waters curved in small waves. The attractiveness of the nymph is underlined by her revealing clothing, which leaves her right breast uncovered; she displays a thoughtful attitude, the head in profile is slightly bent forward and a loose cloak billows behind her in the typical motif of the *velificatio* (Image nr. 1).

In the second picture Kamarina is seen transformed; her bust is completely naked; her legs are covered by the *himation*; her right arm is around the swan's neck and her left arm is raised up while she holds the hem of her veil (Image nr. 2). Kamarina's nudity is an essential part of the sexual attraction that she must exercise over the river god Hipparis.¹⁹ In the third picture the swan has come into greater contact with the waters of the river and a fish bends to the right of the nymph (Image nr. 3). The greatest transformation now regards Hipparis, who is depicted with his face almost head on, surrounded by a crown of curved waves and two grey mullet darting at his sides (Image nr. 3). In a third type the crown of waves is replaced by a beaded circle; the flowing locks of the river god radiate in coils from the sides of his face that shows the signs of greater maturity; Hipparis shows himself in all his beauty and youthful power (Image nr. 4).

In the last picture the nymph Kamarina has moved from the reverse to the obverse of the coin. She appears to be completely covered in a chiton with wide sleeves; around her are two or three darting fish.²⁰ On the reverse we find a young male head once more in profile, with small horns and locks curled on top of his head; he is identified by the legend IPPARIS alongside him (Image nr. 5).

I suggested that the four scenes symbolically represented not only the meeting and marriage between the river Hipparis and the nymph Kamarina, but also the generation of a son completely identical to his father. The last Hipparis, in fact, is not only the youngest figure, but is lacking the headband that connoted the head of the first Hipparis;

18 Westermark, U. and Jenkins, K. 1980, *The Coinage of Kamarina*, Royal Numismatic Society 9, London, pp. 57-71, 197-204 nn. 158-166. These scholars had considered the issue to be formed of three distinct series.

Our interpretation did not change the sequence of issues reconstructed by them.

19 Westermark and Jenkins 1980, pp. 61, 198-200 nn. 159-161 R/ 2.

20 Westermark and Jenkins 1980, pp. 64-65, 202-204 nn. 164-166 O/ 6-8.

this attribute – peculiar to priests and victorious athletes – emphasised the nature of Hipparis as a young man who has already proved his value (*areté*) (Image nr. 6).

If we re-read the iconographies of the didrachms as a group, we notice that the Hipparis with the athlete's headband is combined with the nymph Kamarina in a thoughtful pose, with her left hand raised, open and visible on the palm side (Image nr. 7). This gesture is typical of female figures found on vase painting between the late 5th and early 4th centuries BC and as noted by F. Garnier,²¹ is an expression of *disponibilité, acceptation, adhesion* (availability, acceptance, accession). It is sometimes, with this significance, found in representations of the Virgin Mary when the angel announces to her the birth of a divine Son (Image nr. 8). We can consequently define the first scene of the Kamarina didrachms, the one with Hipparis the athlete and Kamarina with her left hand seen from the palm side, like that of the Virgin of the Annunciation, in this way.

The second scene – in which the Nymph appears with her completely naked bust represents the 'unveiling' of Kamarina, in an attitude typical of the bride ready for marriage.²² The third scene corresponds to the nuptial union with the river god; this is alluded to by the presence of fish, sometimes traditionally employed as a phallic symbol.²³ The last scene, with Kamarina wearing a chiton and transferred from the reverse to the obverse of the coin, signs her transformation from bride (*Nymphe*) to mother of a new Hipparis. The young boy, unlike his father, and precisely because he is still too young, does not wear on his head the *taenia* of the winner.

Our reconstruction of the story of the river Hipparis and of the nymph Kamarina presupposes the existence of a coherent and self-contained iconic project, known to the engravers right from the beginning and developed in four pictures with the use of a limited number of dies, also in relation to the quantity of metal planned for the minting.

11. The LIN and the XV INC Taormina 2015

After this synthesis of my scientific and didactic experience in the field of numismatics, I would like to make special mention that the numismatists of Messina had the honour of organising the XV International Congress of Numismatics, held in Taormina from 21-25th September 2015.²⁴ In 2009 the task of proposing the candidacy of the University

21 Garnier F. 1982, *Le langage de l'image au moyen âge. Signification et symbolique*, Paris, p. 174: 'le oui du mariage, le oui de la Vierge au moment de l'Annonciation'.

22 Jucker I. 1966, s.v. *Schemata*, in *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica Classica e Orientale*, VII, Roma, p. 102.

23 Chevalier J. - Gheerbrant A., *Dictionnaire des symboles*, Milano 1986, s.v. *Pesce*, p. 205. In Sanskrit the god of Love is one who often 'has a fish as a symbol'. In Syriac religions the fish is an attribute of love's goddesses.

24 Here I had the pleasure of encountering Prof. John Melville Jones again, after our first meeting in Bordeaux in 1989. To his courtesy I owe the invitation to write an article concerning my experience as a numismatist, to be published in this interesting and important *Journal of the Numismatic Association of Australia*.

of Messina for the organisation of the International Numismatic Congress – which is held every six years – was given to me with the desire to strengthen the position of numismatics at Messina in the international context and with the view to realising the *LIN*. Unfortunately, our candidacy had to compete with that of the University of Padua represented by my colleague and friend Professor Giovanni Gorini. After an initial uncertainty due to our long friendship, I decided that our research group could do no less than face this test. During the 2009 XIV International Numismatic Congress held in Glasgow, after the vote of the members of the International Numismatic Council in favour of the University of Messina, the news that we had won was greeted by a shout of joy from 11 young numismatists from Messina who had presented nine papers and two posters at the conference. Subsequently, both the organisation of the Congress and the publication of the related *Proceedings* have been intense engagements and physically testing, but the result was very successful.

12. Post retirement

Since my retirement in October 2017, numismatics at the University of Messina has been taught by two of my former students: Daniele Castrizio, now a full professor and expert in both ancient and mediaeval numismatics, and by Mariangela Puglisi, Associate Professor of Greek and Roman Numismatics. Two other of our graduates, Professor Benedetto Carroccio, teaches numismatics in Calabria at the University of Cosenza and Dr. Grazia Salamone, archaeologist and numismatist, develops cultural projects and is responsible for the teaching of the cultural association DRACMa which turns its attention above all to the little ones to make them understand the importance of their own cultural heritage.

I continue working, with the hope to be able at least to make a useful input into the creation of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Numismaticae Classicae et Mediae Aetatis*, which like other projects that I have already mentioned, will help to make the subject of numismatics more accessible to scholars who work in other areas, which is the purpose of teaching with numismatics when it is not a predominant area of study.²⁵

25 On the general subject of the teaching of numismatics in Italy, see also G. Gorini, 'Conservatism and Innovation in the Numismatic Teaching in Italy', in R. Wolters and M. Zieger (eds), *Numismatik lehren in Europa. Beiträge der Internationalen Tagung vom 14. – 16. Mai 2015, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte*, Band 19, Vienna 2017, pp. 97-108.

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