

Numismatic *Refashioning* and Public Dialogue in Trajan's Imperial Coinage

This paper offers an analysis of selected examples of Trajan's imperial coinage to demonstrate the links between his numismatic project and both his political program and other forms of commemoration, including architectural and literary depictions. I argue that these Trajanic coins produce an active form of commemoration of various historical events from the princeps' reign that also participates in a dialogue with other forms of his self-representation. While the lack of evidence for the process of designing the coin types and the volume of coinage have led scholars to downplay the impact that imperial numismatic production could have had as a component of the emperor's self-representation (v., e.g., Duncan-Jones 2005 and Butcher 2005), Wallace-Hadrill (1986) and Noreña (2003) have argued that the emperors Augustus and Vespasian, respectively, utilized numismatic decorative schemes in tandem with other aspects of their imperial representation. Furthermore, this paper builds upon recent studies by Beckmann (2009) and Noreña (2011) that have demonstrated a correlation between Trajan's imperial coinage and other aspects of his commemorative program.

After a brief discussion of the evidence for the design of imperial coinage and its reception by its intended audience, this analysis unfolds in three parts: First, that the alterations made to the Republican restorations during Trajan's reign point directly to the fact that the users' comprehension of the coin's defining message is pivotal in their redesign. Second, that Trajan's imperial coinage does convey political and cultural messages connected to representations in other areas of his commemorative programs, such as the Arch of Benevento and Trajan's Column. Third, that the timing of the coins' production and their figurative depictions encourage an active commemoration of the events or projects depicted. As such, this numismatic

Finally, I draw these three facets of the argument together into an analysis of the figural depictions that celebrate Trajan's bridge over the Danube in order to show how the links between these various forms of commemoration reveals a dialogue between Trajan's representative programs. As a result, this study sheds new light on the form and content of commemoration employed in Trajan's imperial coinage and how these numismatic messages spread more broadly than the fixed architectural programs that they depicted.

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