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Ancient Roman Colonial Coins in Renaissance Europe

PLATES 51–60

DAMIANO ACCIARINO*

Thanks to the gradual advancements of antiquarian erudition that brought together different academic disciplines, scholars from all over Europe were able to comprehend the ancient Roman colony and the specific coin type associated with this institution. The study of the Roman colony was a cultural process that had a strong impact on sixteenth-century intellectual life leaving its mark on epistolary exchanges and influencing both numismatic scholarship and contemporary artworks. The Renaissance interest in Roman colonial coinage fully embraced the spirit of humanistic antiquarianism, showing how numismatists interacted with the multiform cultural experiences of the time.

INTRODUCTION

Ancient Roman colonial coins¹ emerged as one of the most interesting antiquarian topics debated by scholars during the Renaissance. The understanding of this numismatic type developed only after years of confrontation, meditation, and sedimentation of thought. It evolved from a complex cultural system and the conjunction of several different areas of study, which ultimately generated a chain of repercussions for sixteenth-century intellectual life.

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¹ During the Renaissance, ancient coins were classified according to their territory of origin and of circulation, which permitted sixteenth-century humanists to comprehend the

Initially, scholars only took up a renewed interest in the Roman colony as an institution, but, soon after, evidence was found that pointed to the existence of local public treasuries ordering specific monetary policies. This important discovery established a first connection with the numismatic findings circulating among collectors and scholars. But the real tie between colonial institutions and money gradually came about throughout the years, growing hand in hand with the advancements of antiquarian studies that opened new doors to the comprehension of ancient history. Thanks to this collaboration, a new awareness slowly developed over decades, and, within the extensive, confused, and incomplete numismatic corpora of the time a new numismatic type was identified: the colonial coin.

Many scholars from Italy, Spain, Germany, France, and the Netherlands contributed to the general cultural progress from which numismatics often benefited, influencing the advancement of the debate on colonial coinage, assembling multidisciplinary data and information and cross-referencing sources from various fields—i.e. archaeology, philology, history, geography, juridical studies, zoology, iconography, and mythology.

In this context that embraced more than one century, the theoretical formulation of antiquarian erudition emerged, placing empirical evidence at the center of research. The antiquarian method tried to associate every single statement to a corresponding source as a witness of time and real proof of past life. Its application was different for each humanist according to his personal vision; but, from this multiform picture, it is possible to grasp a common spirit of investigation, the sum of all experiences through which Renaissance culture as a whole flourished in sixteenth-century Europe.

THE FIRST STUDIES OF ROMAN COLONIES

The first Renaissance humanist to deal with Roman colonies was Flavio Biondo (1392–1464), whose *Roma Triumphans* reconstructed the administrative apparatus of ancient Rome.² Here, he dedicated a few pages to the *coloniae*, particularly to the *origo deducendarum coloniarum* and to the *colonorum praemia iugerum*, where general aspects tied to the structure and functioning of this institution were described.

Biondo indicated the strategic role of colonies in the foreign policy of Republican Rome, illustrating how colonies founded by Roman citizens acted as a defensive instrument (*contra suspicionem periculi*) for the mother-city and, at the same time, served as an outpost for territorial expansion (*propugnacula*).³

function of their local economic and coinage policy and to identify new iconographic types representing the institutions themselves; see Caro 1957–1961: II 374, 109–111; see also Davis 2012. Today, colonial coins are known as provincial coins: see Woytek 2012: 329–330; Ripollès 2012: 362–366; *RPC* I: 14–17 and 36–37; Wallace-Hadrill 1986.

² Other authors who have treated institutional antiquarianism without dealing with colonies include Pomponio Leto (1515) and Raffaele Maffei (1559).

³ Biondo 1503: III, 64–65

Biondo seized one of the most important points of the issue, i.e. the rite of allotting land: the ridge-and-furrow that the colonist was able to trace with two yoked oxen and a plow during the course of one day's work corresponded to the boundary of their landholding (*quantum unius diei labore duo boves arare*).⁴

This is the first time that oxen and plow are mentioned in relation to colonies, but only as a rural element. In the following decades, however, the pair "oxen-plow" will represent the crucial knot for the advancement of the entire colonial debate tied to urban founding.

In illustrating how laws (*iura*) and institutions (*instituta*) were set up, the humanist also identified the cultural interdependence between the mother-city and the colonies, which included the transmission of customs and traditions in order to recreate political and social entities in its image (*effigies populi Romani*). Biondo's scholarship influenced subsequent antiquarians who added new information to the topic.

The Neapolitan scholar Alessandro Alessandri (1461–1523), in his *Genialium dierum libri* (1522), tried to distinguish Roman institutions—mainly *colonia* and *municipia*—and identify the various types of colonies (*coloniarius genera*).⁵

The twelve *Commentarii reipublicae Romanae in exteris provinciis* (1551) by the Austrian humanist Wolfgang Laz (1514–1565), dedicated a few pages to the colonies in order to distinguish them from other urban structures of Roman society and to put some order to the differing terminology (*romanae, latinae, Augustales, veteranorum*) used by the ancient sources.⁶

The humanist who brought a substantial change to the debate on the nature of Roman colonies was Alessandro Sardi (1520–1588) from Ferrara. Thanks to his work, *De moribus et ritibus gentium libri III* (1557), Sardi became the first scholar to describe the ritual of Roman colonial foundation involving the demarcation of the sacred boundary (*pomerium*) by a priest plowing with a yoked ox and cow (*tauro dextra, vacca sinistra iunctis*).⁷ Sardi's discussion of colonies blends and contaminates various unspecified sources traceable to Macrobius, Servius, Festus, and Varro.⁸ It was Varro's *De lingua latina*, however, that played a key role in the development of Sardi's thought, because this was the only text that explicitly connected the foundation ritual to colonies. However, as in the case of his predecessors, Sardi was not yet able to discern the link between colonial rituals and numismatic iconography, even though his antiquarian interests went beyond

4 Biondo 1503: III, 64–65

5 Alessandri 1522: IV 10, 202.

6 Laz 1551: XII 2, 891.

7 It should be pointed out that the Latin words *bos* (ox) and *taurus* (bull) were used indiscriminately to indicate the male bovine in the ancient sources for colonial foundation. This ambivalence was received and continued by Renaissance scholars.

8 Sardi 1557: II [1], 75–76. Cf. Macrobius *Saturn.* V.19.13; Serv. ed. Estienne, 389; Thilo and Hagen 1961: V.755.3; Plut. *Vit. Rom.* 10–11; Fest. ed. Lindsay, 270–272; Forcellini 1858–1879: s.v. *Primigenius sulcus*; Varr. *LL*, V. 143–146.

the study of texts. In 1579 he published his *Liber de nummis* (1579), a booklet on the weights and names of ancient coins.⁹

The construction of a complex antiquarian system on colonial rituals—including the use of both archeological and literary evidence—soon after led to a new focus on coins and colonies.¹⁰

COLONIES AND COINS

During the second half of the sixteenth century, humanists started to analyze systematically the Roman state in relation to its laws. The first significant monographs written on Roman civilization in this period displayed a substantial growth and a new maturity in erudite scholarship. The work that marked a clear change was the *Reipublicae Romanae commentariorum libri* (1558) by Onofrio Panvinio (1529–1568), an antiquarian monk from Verona. An entire section, entitled *De iure coloniarum*, was dedicated to the juridical mechanisms of the colonies. Among the various aspects examined, a list of judiciary powers and roles were explicitly compared for the first time.¹¹ Panvinio established that the colonies were structured as city-states reflecting Roman institutions, customs, and judiciary system (*populi Romani imaginem referebant*). There were magistrates who looked after the safety and security of the city, the infrastructure and census, and the public treasury (*aerarij publici curam*). This last aspect represented a major innovation: the institutional layout of the colony included the administration of money. Panvinio did not offer evidence or explain how the treasury was organized, but by assigning this function to the colonial administration, he suggested that the colonies had their own identities and their own monetary systems. As a consequence, a link was made between Roman colonies and coins.

The studies of numismatists and ancient coin collectors, who identified different varieties of coin types and questioned their meaning, confirmed Panvinio's views. In his *Discorso sopra le medaglie degli antichi* (1558), Enea Vico (1523–1567), an engraver and numismatist from Parma, noticed the stylistic variety of coins (“tanta diversità di cogni nelle medaglie”), suggesting the activity of more than one authorized mint (“in più d’una zecca [...] si stampassero”).¹² The use of *De ase et partibus eius* (1514) by the French scholar Guillaume Budé (1467–1540)¹³ shows that Vico considered metrological aspects in his numismatic studies, allowing him to examine in detail and from a different perspective the iconographic aspects of coins.

9 Sardi 1579.

10 The general interest in colonies during the mid-sixteenth century can be also perceived through the epistulary exchange of the time. See Carbonell (1991: 158–161) and Sigonio (1732–1737: VI, 996–997).

11 Panvinio 1558: III, 683.

12 Vico 1558: 50.

13 Budé, Ass., IV, 311.

Only through this crossing over of spheres was it possible to understand how ancient Roman coin production, metrology, and iconography were all part of a whole. Budé was the first to identify the factors that led to the comprehension of a specific colonial coinage policy, including the decentralization of mints that marked their own coins independently from the central authority. This insight may have generated in careful scholars, such as Vico, an awareness that coin minting (and therefore its iconography) was subject to geographical, cultural, and historical variables.

GEOGRAPHY AND NUMISMATICS

Between 1554 and 1560, ancient geographical texts were used extensively in the study of Roman colonies. The most important of these were the *Itinerarium Antonini*,¹⁴ a register that mapped cities located near the Roman imperial road network, and the *Liber Coloniarum*, attributed to Frontinus, that described the subdivision of Italian territory under the Julio-Claudian emperors.¹⁵ Both texts provided a rich source of data for ancient geographical locations and toponyms. The epistolary exchanges of the sixteenth century illustrate the wide interest of these two works.¹⁶

The Spanish humanist and Catholic bishop Antonio Agustín (1516–1586) used these texts to identify city names that could be connected to the various *elementa linguarum*¹⁷ found on ancient coins (mostly naming places of origin or dedication) and thence decode the coin legends. It was a natural consequence that, among the toponyms present on the coins, the names of colonies were to be discovered. The observation of coins bearing names associated with the ancient geographical texts and linked to data on institutional mechanisms assisted in their identification and decodification.

In a letter to the Spanish scholar and historian Jerónimo Zurita (1512–1580) dated April 1557, Agustín specifically defined the colonial coin type and its iconography, starting from considerations and interpretations tied to the names of locations (“de medallas de las nombres de lugares”).¹⁸ Agustín’s words are the

14 In the first half of the sixteenth century, the *Itinerarium* was printed in three editions. Achille Maffei delegated Gabriel Faerno to produce a new version of the precious manuscript in his possession, as mentioned by Pantagato in a letter to Onofrio Panvinio dated 21 May 1558 (see Soler i Nicolau 2000: 195–197).

15 There were two sixteenth-century editions of the *Liber Coloniarum*: a French one by Adrien Turnèbe (1554) and another anonymous Roman version (1560). See Front. *Col.*¹ and *Col.*².

16 See, for example, the letters of Antonio Agustín, Carlo Sigonio, and Vincenzo Borghini: Carbonell 1991: 115–121 and 175–181; Sigonio 1732–1737: VI, 1013; Carrara 2008: 367; Dati 1743: IV 4, 140 and 164.

17 This Latin expression indicating the coin legends is taken from an undated letter of Carl Lange to Fulvio Orsini. See Nolhac 1887: 438–440.

18 Carbonell 1991: 115–121.

first evidence that he recognized the existence of a specific colonial coin type (“en las mas de las Colonias”). He stated that the typical imagery of colonial coins involved a pair of oxen pulling a plow (“dos bueyes unidos arando con el que lleva el aradro, cino sono toro y vaca”), representing the ritual tracing of the sacred boundary of a new city (“para denotar que eran Colonias, pues se guardava en su primera fundacion la orden que se tuvo en lo de Roma”), as reported by Varro (“come dize Varron”). Agustín anticipated the conclusions that other scholars, like Sigonio, reached later.

THE CIRCULATION OF A CONCEPT

After a long cultural process that lasted decades and reached maturity only at the end of the 1550s, the colonial coin type was also defined by Carlo Sigonio in his work *De antiquo iure Italiae*, printed in Venice in 1560. In this antiquarian juridical treatise he dedicated a large section to colonies (*de coloniis*).¹⁹ He declared that the explicit symbols representing colonies were oxen/cows (*tauro et vacca iunctis urbi condendae locum circumarasse*), the plow (*aratro coloniae deductionem*), and military standards (*signis militaribus*) (Pl. 51, 1–3). To support his statement Sigonio employed numismatic evidence (*in nummis veteribus demonstrari*). It is unclear if this development evolved from exposure to the views of Agustín, or if they were reached in parallel and independently.²⁰

The effects of this progress were soon to appear. During the same year, Enea Vico, in his *Ex libris XXIII commentariorum in vetera Imperatorum Romanorum numismata*, openly recalled what Sigonio had brought to light and considered this new perception from a purely numismatic viewpoint.²¹ Vico, for his part, gave a central role to ancient coins, as they represented a “monument” (*monumentum*), witnessing concrete historical dynamics, in which the coin was the leading element.²²

The method pursued by Vico in analyzing sources and his strong antiquarian interests, in this case, were most likely influenced by Sigonio’s work. In fact, he declared that he used Sigonio as a model and Vico identified him as the author of the perspective that he adopted (*de quibus omnibus apud Sigonium*).²³

¹⁹ Sigonio 1560: II 2, 63–64.

²⁰ It would be interesting to explore the unpublished letters of Carlo Sigonio and Antonio Agustín from 1556 to 1557. In these letters there may be tangible evidence of this circulation of ideas. A certain cultural affinity may have derived from Sigonio’s collaboration with Agustín on the Spanish edition of Festus, completed during those years. The synergy between the two scholars is well known. Sigonio and Agustín wrote to the same addressees and belonged to the same circle as they shared similar antiquarian interests. See the letter to Fulvio Orsini, dated 20 August 1573, included in ms. BAM G. 271 inf. ff. 34–35.

²¹ Vico 1560: 108–110.

²² Vico 1548: 1.–2.: Augustus, tav. 3–4; 3.: Tiberius, tav. 1.

²³ Vico 1560: 111–112. Totally different was the experience of another epigone of Sigonio, Giovanni Andrea Gilio, in the appendix of his *Due dialogi*, entitled “Discorso sopra la Città,

A MISSED AWARENESS

In order to gain an overall picture of the entire colonial discussion and to understand the series of factors that contributed to the growth of the antiquarian perspective in Renaissance scholarship, it is useful to consider the works of other scholars who did not or could not take account of the advancements in understanding colonial coinage up to this point.

The *Commentariorum vetustorum numismatum specimen exile* (1558) by Wolfgang Laz described and explained a selection of coins belonging to the imperial collection in Vienna. In interpreting coins of Augustus depicting a single bull (Pl. 51, 4–5),²⁴ he referred to the sacrificial symbolism of the auspices, including those related to the founding of colonies,²⁵ but made no concrete connections between the numismatic evidence and ancient colonial institutions.²⁶ From this it emerges that the awareness of the foundation ritual was still not sufficient to understand the entire cultural mechanism behind the ritual itself because it was not contextualized in its original institutional framework. Likewise, without the support of a wide range of numismatic examples, it was impossible to reconstruct the iconographic type of an ancient institution.²⁷

Different and significant is the case of Sebastiano Erizzo (1525–1585), a Venetian humanist and rival of Enea Vico in numismatic theories.²⁸ In his *Discorsi sopra le medaglie antiche* (1559), he identified the colonial coin type, but was unable to offer a detailed interpretation of it.²⁹ He gave the iconography only a general rural

l'Urbe, Colonia, Municipio etc." (Gilio 1564: 133–135). The *Colonia* section omitted all the numismatic references. This lack of information was brought to light by Carlo Sigonio himself, in a letter of September 1564 addressed to Onofrio Panvinio, in which he seemed willing to amend Gilio's errors in a specific publication (Sigonio 1732–1737: 1020).

24 The iconography of the single bull on colonial coins has a complex sedimentation that can be reconstructed through the Renaissance sources: Alessandri 1522: 218; Valeriano (1556: 27) considered the type of *BMC* 17, pl. XV, 9; Cartari (1556) applied Alessandri's observations to the iconographic field; Vico 1558: 44; and the late metrological treatise by the German scholar Matthäus Host written in 1580 (I. II. 1–2, 58; I. III. 32, 112; III. III. 1, 443–449); see also Ligorio (2010: 124) and the 1557 letter of Agustín published by Carbonell (1991: 116), where it is stated by both authors that the bull alone symbolized the Roman *municipium* in contrast with the colonial oxen. A different opinion was expressed years later by Agustín (1587: 250–257).

25 Laz 1558: 27.

26 For the *Auspitia coloniarum*, see Laz 1558: 27. The coin under discussion is *RIC* 167a, an issue of the Roman Imperial mint at Lugdunum and not a colonial coin.

27 Nevertheless Laz (1588: *praef.*), in composing his greatest numismatic work never published, claims to have studied the entire Palatine collection made up of thousands of specimens. In the introduction to this small treatise, he boasts that he studied a corpus of 700,000 ancient coins.

28 See Palumbo Fossati 1984 and Bodon 1997.

29 Erizzo 1559, 126–127; see also *BMC* 53.

meaning, affirming that the ox symbolized cultivation (“il bove [...] ci dichiara lo studio dell’arare”).³⁰ Considering the methodological framework already provided by Agustín, Sigonio, and Vico, it could be said that Erizzo underestimated the question of interpretation. Nevertheless, he managed to decode the legend COL as an abbreviation of *colonia*, but was incapable of reconstructing an historical and cultural context.

A similar approach can be found in the *Hyeroglyphica* (1556) written by Giovanni Pierio Valeriano (1477–1558). This work represented the broadest ancient iconographic collection accessible to scholars and artists in the mid-sixteenth century. In his inventory, Valeriano included ancient coins with oxen and plow types (Pl. 51, 6–7).³¹ He underlined the agricultural symbolism (*nimirum arationis partes procuratas, et rei frumentariae commoda*) noted by various scholars (*coniectores*), but never connected this to colonies or colonial institutions. This limitation reflects the vision of an entire antiquarian season.³²

Two reverses (Pl. 51, 8–9) mentioned by Valeriano feature all the characteristics that were identified a few years later by those scholars that connected their sources to the function of ancient institutions.³³ He almost certainly had the literary sources available to reach the same conclusions that were reached by a later group of antiquarians. In describing the plow, Valeriano indicated the path toward a contextualized iconographic interpretation. He attributed to this instrument sacred allusions ascribed to rituals of power and religion, capturing a symbolic importance that was not only agricultural but also connected to rituals used to found (*in condendis*) as well as destroy (*delendis*) cities.³⁴ This awareness of the function of the plow in founding might have permitted him to discover the missing link between the ongoing colonial discussion and the coins.

30 The tie between the plow and agriculture lies in the erudite studies of the sixteenth century. An ideal archetype of this interpretation can be identified in the *De rerum inventoribus* of Polidoro Virgili (1470–1555). See Virgili 1596: III 2.

31 Valeriano 1556: 26–27.

32 The passage appears to be the main source of the interpretation given by Sebastiano Erizzo on the same iconography: the meaningful link becomes clear especially in the lexical calque, “ci dichiara [...] i comodi dei frumenti”/ *et rei frumentariae commoda declarat*.

33 1: .BMC 209; 2.: Crawford 378–1c.

34 Valeriano 1556: 354. The interpretation of the plow as an instrument of foundation could be found in the section *Urbibus aratrum circumducere quid sit* of the *Antiquarum lectionum commentarii* of Ludovico Ricchieri (1469–1525) (Ricchieri 1517, XIV, 5) and in *De consolibus Romanorum* of Johann Speißmeister (1473–1529) (Speißmeister 1553: 128 a).

THE IMPACT OF COLONIAL COINS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

From the 1560s and with the advancements achieved by earlier antiquarian experience, Renaissance scholars openly considered colonial coins as an autonomous numismatic type, easily recognized and originating from defined cultural dynamics interdependent on the functioning of ancient institutions.³⁵ In these decades, throughout all of Europe, many numismatic works dedicated specific sections to colonial coinage.

The Flemish antiquarian Hubert Goltz (1526–1583) included colonial coins in several treatises, starting with his *C. Iulius Caesar siue Historiae imperatorum Caesarumque Romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae*, first issued in 1563 and then in 1571, and the *Fastos magistratum et triumphorum Romanorum ab vrbe condita ad Augusti obitum ex antiquis tam numismatum quam marmorum monumentis restitutos*, published in 1566. Both works illustrated this coinage, but no clear definition was yet formulated. A detailed analysis of the type was carried out in Goltz's subsequent work, *Caesar Augustus siue Historiae imperatorum Caesarumque Romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* (1574). Here the description and explanation of typical colonial iconography was explicated through many engravings (Pls. 51–52, 10–13).

Goltz's overview of colonies and coins continued in his subsequent work, *Historia urbium et populorum Graecae ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* (1576), which included coins from Sicily and Magna Graecia. At the end of this treatise, he made a brief exposition on the function of ancient institutions in relation to the coin types. Under the influence of Sigonio, he repeated that the Roman colony was always founded with oxen and plow under a military banner (*deductis sub vexillo in agros Colonis aratro urbem et agrum tauro et vacca iunctis*). He further added the innovation that colonies were founded with the same rite both under the Roman Republic and the Empire. This assertion was based on his observation

³⁵ Evidence of this phenomenon can be found in a letter of Antonio Agustín to Fulvio Orsini, dated 20 August 1573, to which a list of colonial coins with images and explanatory notes was attached (ms. BAM G. 271 inf. ff. 34–36). In 1567, Agustín described Goltz's numismatic work as a work for beginners in an epistolary exchange with Onofrio Panvinio (Andrés 1804: LIV, 378–379), but he changed his opinion of the Flemish scholar many times. For example, in Book 4 of *Diálogos de medallas* (1587), Agustín criticized him for having only an indirect knowledge of ancient sources and also for falsifying types in illustrations and explanations (Agustín 1587: 132. See also Stenhouse 2009: 49–51 and Napolitano 2012: 177–188). However, in Book 9 he states that the works of Goltz were a great example of antiquarian erudition, very well illustrated (Agustín 1587: 466). The first statement (Book 4) matches what was said in his 1573 letter to Orsini. Retrospectively, Agustín revised his opinion, perhaps even in relation to the development of Goltz's antiquarian studies that had to be recognized by the Spanish scholar. In the end, Antonio Agustín seems to have rehabilitated his colleague.

of the numismatic material (*in veterum numismatibus tam consularibus quam imperatorijs*).³⁶

Goltz's work also brought developments in colonial nomenclature. In the *Thesaurus rei antiquariae huberrimus* (1579), he dedicated two entire sections to the naming of colonies in light of numismatic types and inscriptions. The first of these was entitled, *Coloniarum municipiorumque romanorum nomina et epitheta*³⁷ and the second, *Nomina propria eorum qui in magistratu aliquo fuerunt, quae in numismatibus romanorum et coloniarum spectantur et leguntur*.³⁸

It is clear that by the end of the 1570s, Roman colonial coins had become easily recognizable and widely known among Renaissance scholars. In 1577, Fulvio Orsini (1529–1600), a famous scholar living in Rome in the service of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, published his *Familiae Romanae quae reperiuntur in antiquis numismatibus*. In this antiquarian work that retraced the history of Roman families through coins,³⁹ he did not offer a special section on colonial coins. Orsini did, however, include three colonial pieces from his own collection and briefly discussed their iconography (Pls. 52–53, 14–16).⁴⁰

In the *Discours sur les medalles* (1579), a treatise by the French humanist Antoine Le Pois (1525–1578), there is an entire section specifically dedicated to colonial coins.⁴¹ The description of the iconography follows the usual pattern: a plow pulled by oxen (“d’une charruë trainee par deux bœufs”) and driven by a priest (“au derrier desquels estoit le Sacerdote”) who traces the furrow of the new city (“faisant la limitation de la place”) under the supervision of the magistrates (“suyvant l’ordonnance des Duumvirs ou Triumvirs”).

Le Pois refers to a colonial type of L. Munatius Plancus from Lyons (ancient Lugdunum) which has not yet surfaced in the numismatic corpus available today, but traces of it are found in Hubert Goltz's works (Pl. 54, 17).⁴² He chose this colonial coin instead of others, perhaps because Le Pois had an interest in connecting a French city to an ancient Roman foundation. Similar expedients were later utilized in other antiquarian treatises in a more structured way.

³⁶ Goltz 1576: 204.

³⁷ Goltz 1579: Chapter 18.

³⁸ Goltz 1579: Chapter 20.

³⁹ Nollac 1889: XIX, 28–29: (1571) and XX, 29–30 (1574).

⁴⁰ Orsini 1577: 56. In a letter dated 20 August 1573, Antonio Agustín sent him a list of illustrations of the colonial coin type in Figure 11. The coins illustrated by Orsini may have been taken from this list.

⁴¹ Le Pois 1579: 18 v.

⁴² Le Pois (1579: 2–4) lists among his forerunners Andrea Fulvio, Enea Vico, Sebastiano Erizzo, Costanzo Landi, Jacopo Strada, Gabriel Symeoni, János Zsámboky, Hubert Goltz, Guillaume Du Choull, and Wolfgang Laz. The connection to Goltz (1566: 194) encourages us to suspect that the Lyons coin was one of the falsifications for which the Flemish scholar was famous.

In Adolph Occo's (1524–1606) catalogue, *Impp. Romanorum numismata* (1579), only one coin is mentioned as an example of the *coloniae deductae*.⁴³ Occo was an important German physician, numismatist, and antiquarian renowned throughout Europe for his trips to Italy and his contacts with scholars and prestigious collectors of antiquities.⁴⁴

Due to the brevity of this work, explanations were reduced and no comparisons of sources and iconographic analyses were made. He just mentioned briefly the typical colonial elements (*Signum cohortis sive vexillum, aquila legionaria, aratrum, decempeda*). The coin described is noteworthy: it is openly indicated as a colonial founding coin but it does not depict the usual iconography of oxen; however, other symbols representing colonies (the banner, the plow, the *pertica*, the eagle) are depicted, perhaps directly inspired by the ones represented in Goltz's works (Pl. 54, 18).

Research concerning colonial coins continued, showing developments and reinterpretations of studies and sources already utilized. This was the case of the *Antiquitatum Romanarum libri* by the German scholar Johann Roszfeld (1550–1626), published for the first time in 1583 and subsequently expanded in 1613 by the Scottish scholar Thomas Dempster (1579–1625). In his *editio princeps*, Roszfeld broadly described the colonial type and reconnected it to the rite of foundation. He described the usual imagery of colonial coins (*vexillum, aquilam, aratrum decempedam, sive perticam agri mensoriam, tertius sacerdotem agentem iugum boum*) and named the works of Goltz as his main sources. He also mentioned those typical objects of colonial founding that Goltz and Occo depicted (Pl. 54, 19–20).⁴⁵

Further details were included in the addenda to Dempster's edition. In contrast with Roszfeld, who mentioned only Goltz, the Scottish scholar looked further back to the work of Sigonio, declaring that it was necessary to offer a more extended description of the function of colonies (*descriptio videretur maximopere esse necessaria*), without which the numismatic aspects would have not been altogether clear.⁴⁶

THE *LIBRI DELLE MEDAGLIE* BY PIRRO LIGORIO

The *Libri delle Medaglie* of the Neapolitan scholar Pirro Ligorio (1514–1583), part of the 30-volume *Libri dell'Antichità* written between 1550 and 1583, encapsulate the history of colonial coinage during the Renaissance.⁴⁷ This numismatic treatise,

43 Occo 1579: 10

44 Carbonell: 451. It is very probable that Occo was directly in contact with Fulvio Orsini and that he came into contact with the numismatic collection of the Farnese and of Antonio Agustín. Missere Fontana (2009: 305) describes the work of Occo as the "greatest attempt to write a numismatic corpus that revives the sixteenth century."

45 Roszfeld 1583: 311–312.

46 Dempster 1613: 746 (X 22).

47 Ligorio 2010: Introduction. The *Libri delle Medaglie* remained unpublished, even

compared to other contemporary works, had the greatest number of colonial coin illustrations in terms of iconographic variety. Thus, it would be interesting to know what other contemporary numismatic works Ligorio might have had access to for enriching his knowledge and to what extent his acquaintance with contemporary antiquarians influenced the composition of his work.⁴⁸ The fact that the *Libri delle Medaglie* only circulated as a manuscript may have reduced its impact on the numismatic culture of the time. It nevertheless reflects the sedimentation of views developed over the course of a decade and, therefore, is deserving of great attention in the context of Renaissance scholarship.

His first description of colonial coins relates to the iconographic representation of the equipment involved in founding a colony. This is founded directly upon Sigonio's antiquarian scholarship and to Goltz's numismatic texts, in which these coin types are broadly represented (Pl. 54, 21).⁴⁹ This is followed by the description of coin series depicting yoked oxen during the foundation ritual. The coins were initially attributed to different colonies without explanation, but later Ligorio discussed the reverse side of the coins following the paradigm of his sources.⁵⁰

Ligorio also used a new method to interpret the colonial coin: beyond the representation of the ox/cow, he proposed the reading of the acronym C·C·A on issues now known to have come from Caesaraugusta as a colonial inscription (*Colonia Cercanita Augusta*). He deduced that the first C stood for *colonia* on the basis of the colonial iconography and the legend naming the *duumviri* (Pl. 54, 22).

Other interesting contributions by Ligorio emerged when he identified additional types employed by colonies.⁵¹ He interpreted, for example, a colonial coin minted by the city of Troas as honoring the Trojan origins of Rome (Pl. 54, 23). The legend COL permitted him first to identify the coin as a colonial issue since this was already recognized by Sebastiano Erizzo as the abbreviation for *colonia*. Ligorio then recognized the reverse type of the wolf and twins as a tribute to the birth of Rome and a celebration of the mythological origin of its people in Troy. The colony thus represented a concrete extension of Rome and the coin clearly presented the relationship between the founding city and colony.

though the manuscript was ready for printing from 1567, but there is evidence that the author was still working on it in 1581. This treatise on colonial coins never reached Rome; see Carbonell 1991: 560 (22 March 1567) and Wickersham Crawford 1913: 583 (12 October 1566); see also BAM G.: 271 inf. ff. 34–36: (20 August 1573).

48 Ligorio 2010: X–XI. In addition to his own collection (also sold to the Farnese family), he consulted the Estense collection in Ferrara and the texts of Enea Vico.

49 Ligorio 2010: 16

50 Ligorio 2010: 134.

51 Ligorio 2010: 227 and 435.

Two other colonial medallions of Troas connected to Rome's Trojan origins show on the reverse side a hexastyle temple (Pl. 55, 24) and an eagle with an ox between its claws. These coins were struck under Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in the second century AD, but before Ligorio, no Renaissance scholar had connected their types to colonies.⁵² He furthermore distinguished the hexastyle temple as a specifically colonial element but did not offer evidence to support this view. One may hypothesize that it had to do with those temples that were built in the first circle of the city where sacrifices took place.⁵³

The most curious of his colonial examples is represented in a drawing of a coin that is not documented in modern catalogues (Pl. 55, 25). It depicts a female figure riding a bull—a design found on the provincial coinage of Amphipolis in Thrace and representing the local goddess Artemis Tauropolos or Artemis Tauridea (Pl. 55, 26). Perhaps Ligorio came across an example of the Amphipolis series when preparing the drawing.⁵⁴ If the Greek legends of the coin were worn, this might have encouraged him to invent a colonial legend (COL·IVL·CORINTHVS) based on the use of the bull/ox as the central iconographic element.⁵⁵

COLONIAL COINS IN FLORENCE: VINCENZIO BORGHINI AND GIORGIO VASARI

The Florentine scholar Vincenzo Borghini (1515–1580) explored the matter of colonies in the first book of his *Discorsi sopra l'origine di Firenze*, published posthumously in 1584. In order to gain a greater understanding of the origins of Florence, and more precisely of its foundation as a Roman colony, Borghini opened a long discussion in which he carefully explained the political mechanisms behind the colonial institution. This was divided into three parts (4. De' Municipi, e Colonie Romane; 5. Delle Colonie Latine; 6. Delle Colonie Militari) and, for size and completeness, it is the richest treatise on colonies written in the sixteenth century.⁵⁶

The second volume of the *Discorsi sopra l'origine di Firenze* (1585) included a section dedicated to the coinage of Florence (“Della moneta fiorentina”) that also dealt with colonial coins. Within this extensive section, Borghini considered monetary organization a central issue, without which important turning points in the history of Florence could not be understood. He questioned the economic function that may have been connected to the colonial institution and addressed one of the original problems concerning colonial coins: whether or not they were tied to the treasury of the colony, which would imply an autonomous monetary policy. Borghini left the question unanswered, even though he considered that the

⁵² Ligorio 2010: 435.

⁵³ Plut. *Vit. Rom.* 10–11.

⁵⁴ *RPC I*, 1635 (Amphipolis).

⁵⁵ This was a frequent practice even among the most rigorous antiquarians. See below.

⁵⁶ Borghini 1584: 367–455.

coins could have been an effective colonial currency with a general circulation (“che potevano servire per spendere”).⁵⁷

Borghini also mentioned a colonial coin apparently minted for the foundation of Florence with the legend COL. FLOR,⁵⁸ reinforcing the identification of the city as an original Roman colony. Borghini had not actually seen this coin (“io non ne ho vedute”), but he learned of its existence from his friend Panvinio whom he considered a reliable source (“per l’autorità dell’uomo si debbe credere”). The information was obtained through an epistolary exchange between the two humanists about twenty years before the publication of the *Discorsi*. Today it is possible to read only Borghini’s reply of 18 February 1566, in which he requested further information about the coin and noted that it depicted the image of Hercules, a supposed ancient symbol of the city (“il sigillo pubblico della città è Ercole”).⁵⁹

The question of authenticity opened a debate between Florence and Rome in which other scholars participated. Borghini probably consulted his erudite friends for additional evidence to support Panvinio’s report and to reinforce its credibility. A letter of Fulvio Orsini to the great Florentine philologist Piero Vettori (1489–1585), dated 27 July 1574, expressed skepticism regarding the coin.⁶⁰ Orsini further declared in the letter that no such Florentine colonial coin existed (“né credo si trovi tal moneta”) and impugned Panvinio’s reliability (“soleva ben spesso dire delle bugie”).⁶¹

57 Borghini 1585: 151–152.

58 Borghini 1585: 151–152.

59 Dati 1745: 66–68.

60 Nolhac 1889: XX, 29–30. It was no coincidence that Vettori, among all the scholar friends of Borghini, asked Orsini for an explanation of this coin. Along with his other antiquarian and numismatic interests, Vettori dealt with colonial coinage in his *Variae Lectiones* (XXXV, 23) on Greek cities. The coins discussed are SNG ANS 1366 (Veleia) and SNG Cop. 729 (Massalia). He explained the colonial origin of these two Greek cities, which both produced coins depicting a lion (*In argenteo nummo Veliensium imago leonis impressa est [...] In aversa itidem parte nummorum, quos cudebant Massilienses, leonem sculptum vidi*). He then discussed the literary sources treating the foundation of these Greek colonies. In recognizing analogous iconographic elements and connecting them with the colonial origin of the two cities found in the literary sources (*Velienses et Massilienses e Phocidae oriundi erant*), Vettori concluded that similar types corresponded to a similar institutions (*Tuebantur igitur illi patrium institutum, ut mos erat omnium coloniarum*). This methodology was derived from the study of Roman colonial coins, which employed iconography related to specific rituals and institutions generally attributed to the mother-city. For Vettori’s methodology see Drusi 2012: 15–38.

61 It can be said that the fame and authority of Panvinio were differently regarded: Ottavio Pantagato’s epistolary complains of Panvinio’s sloppiness (Soler i Nicolau 2000) while Fulvio Orsini, writing to Antonio Agustín on 12 October 1566, derogatorily refers to Panvinio as a “carrot planter” (Wickersham Crawford 1913: 583–584).

Although Borghini was not able to confirm the existence of the Florentine colonial coin, it is conceivable that a coin of Caesarea Maritima as a Roman colony under the emperor Hadrian (AD 117–113) could have been mistaken by Renaissance scholars as Florentine issues (Pl. 55, 27).⁶² The legend refers to the city as COL·FL·AVG (*Colonia Flavia Augusta*), but it is easy to see how a worn specimen could have led to the misreading of the inscription as COL FLO (*Colonia Florentia*). The presence of Hadrian's image could have increased the confusion, because he was portrayed wearing a beard and a laurel wreath to express his identity as a philosopher emperor. These same iconographic features were also commonly associated with images of Hercules. The oxen and plow reverse added the final piece to make the coin perfectly compatible with Borghini's antiquarian needs.

A prototype of a colonial coin with similar characteristics (Pl. 55, 28) can be found in a drawing in another book by Borghini, stored at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence (ms. Antonori 143).⁶³ This work included a wide range of colonial specimens, many with faithful illustrations, all drawn by Borghini himself.⁶⁴ Thus he may have had reason to put faith in the information given to him by Panvinio, in consideration of his personal experience.

Borghini's meditations became useful in a controversy with Girolamo Mei (1519–1594), a Florentine scholar living in Rome, that took place during the years 1566 and 1567. Mei disputed Borghini's idea that Florence had a Roman colonial origin.⁶⁵ In the end Borghini prevailed in the debate despite his mistaken colonial coin.

The whole issue of the founding of Florence probably grew out of the studies for the iconographic program devised by Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) to decorate the vault of the Palazzo Vecchio in 1563–1565. In both Vasari's preparatory cardboard sketch and in the painting (Pls. 55, 29–30 and 59, 45),⁶⁶ the figurative repertoire adopted (oxen with plow that trace the furrow delimiting the *pomerium*) is inextricably connected to the research on colonies. The years in which the debate on colonies reached a turning point (1557–1560) represent a cultural *terminus post quem*, in which the role of numismatic studies emerged as an essential source.

62 The types are as Sofaer, pl. 24, 26; Kadman (Caesarea) 27; Rosenberger 24.

63 See Scorza 1987; Belloni and Drusi 2002.

64 BMLF, ms. Antonori 143, c. 22 r. I am grateful to Rik Scorza for providing the image.

65 On this matter, Eliana Carrara has written extensively already (Carrara 2008: 317–380). However, the foundation of Florence as a Roman colony was established by Onofrio Panvinio in his *Commentariorum reipublicae romanae libri* (1558) on the authority of Frontinus. This was called into question by Girolamo Mei in the dispute with Borghini: Carrara 2008: 358–396; Panvinio 1558: II, 741.

66 The preparatory cardboard draft can be found at the Harvard Art Museum, placement n. 1932.157 B. I am grateful to Isabella Donadio for providing the image.

Vasari himself talked about this iconography in a letter to Cosimo I de' Medici dated 3 March 1563,⁶⁷ and in his later treatise, *Ragionamento*, published posthumously in 1588, in which he explained the meaning of his work to Duke Francesco I, son of Cosimo.⁶⁸ In both texts, Vasari used the same terminology that derived from the colonial coinage debate (*segnio—insegna—primo cerchio*). What emerges is that the painted imagery was the product of a cultural sedimentation of the colonial discussion that intersected different disciplines and became an expression of the “rebirth of antiquity” in modern times.

COLONIAL COINS IN THE *DIÁLOGOS DE MEDALLAS* OF ANTONIO AGUSTÍN AND ITS REPERCUSSIONS

As a last step to reconstruct all facets of the colonial coinage discussion, the *Diálogos de medallas* of Antonio Agustín must be considered. Published for the first time in Spain in 1587 after 30 years of numismatic studies,⁶⁹ it is perhaps the most important and detailed work on the subject written in the sixteenth century.⁷⁰

Colonial coins were specifically treated in Book 6, starting with the interpretation of a piece thought to be from the African city Leptis Magna, but which is actually an issue of the Iberian city of Lepida-Celsa (Pl. 57, 31). The Spanish humanist entered in the heart of the debate on this coin type, touching on both iconographic aspects and those tied to institutional mechanisms.⁷¹

This coin was recognized as colonial, first through the obverse legend COL·VIC·IVL·LEP· (“que quieren dezir Colonia Victrix Iulia Leptis”) and then through its design representing a man driving two oxen with a plow (“dos bueyes y un hombre detras”). From the legend, Agustín was able to resolve the acronym C·V·I. as an abbreviation of COL·VIC·IVL, just as Ligorio did with C·C·A.

He also tried to interpret the bovine iconography,⁷² demonstrating great originality: for example, when he specified the bovine gender during the colonial founding ritual (“en la medalla el uno ha de ser buey y el otro vaca”), he enriched this notion with details, which were based on neither sources nor archeological evidence. He claimed that the shape of the horns of the ox/cow was linked to gender: inward for the female and outward for the male (“Los de la vaca son como los cuernos de la luna, [...] los de toros y bueyes salen ma a fuera”).⁷³

67 Frey 1934: I, 722–731. The images are described synthetically: it is possible to find a polysemic connotation in the word *segnio* that can refer either to the banner (*vexillum*) or to the boundary (*terminus*), as witnessed also by the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* (1612) and serving as a reliable parameter for the literary use of this word VAC 1612, 781.

68 Vasari 1588: 172–173.

69 Carbonell 1991: passim.

70 See Stenhouse 2009: 49–66.

71 Agustín 1587, 226.

72 Agustín 1587: 226.

73 Agustín 1587: 273.

The zoological distinction of ox from cow through horn shape may have derived from the antiquarian culture of the period but also from new scientific publications issued throughout the sixteenth century. On the one hand, Agustín could have been inspired by the Latin grammarian Festus. In his *De verborum significatione*, which Agustín edited himself in 1559, Festus reported that bovines had horns that extend in different directions (*Et patuli boves, quorum cornua in diversum supra † modum patent*).⁷⁴ On the other hand, Renaissance zoological treatises also classified bovine gender according to horn shape. Many examples can be adduced, but the most relevant are the *De differentiis animalium* (1551) of the English scholar Edward Wotton (1492–1555), where the question of classification is discussed in detail, and the four-volume *Historia animalium* (1551) written by the Swiss humanist Conrad Gesner (1516–1565). Both works treated the shape of the horns as a trait related to gender,⁷⁵ but they do not fully agree with Agustín.

Gesner's treatise is notable for its many illustrations. Curiously enough, in the pictures of the ox and cow (Pl. 57, 32–33), the horns could fit the description given in Agustín's *Diálogos*:⁷⁶ the horns of the male curve outward while those of the female curve slightly inward. However, there is no proof that Agustín's statement was derived from this illustration, even though it seems to be the only iconographic model to support his view.

There are no signs of this particular iconography in the numismatic treatises of the time, not even in the *Diálogos*, since the illustrations end at Book 4. However, in the translation made by Dionigi Ottaviano Sada in 1592, this detail of horn shape was faithfully included in the drawing of a coin of Caesaraugusta following the description in the text, even though it is not present on the original coin (Pl. 58, 34–35).⁷⁷

In two other translations of the same work—an anonymous Italian version dated 1592⁷⁸ and a Latin one by Agustín's secretary, Andreas Schott (1552–1629), dated 1617—this treatment of the horns was not carried through in the accompanying drawings. The illustrations in Agustín's original work were placed at the end of every section, while those of all three translations were created *ex novo*.⁷⁹ In the anonymous Italian and Schott's Latin versions, the illustrations were placed at the beginning or at the end of the treatises, and the relation between image and description was not immediately clear. On the contrary, the images in Sada's translation followed one by one the corresponding text descriptions for ease of reference. Probably, the omission of the iconographic detail of the horns in the

74 Fest. (ed. Agustín), 383.

75 Wotton 1551: 72–73; Gesner 1551: 27 and 104.

76 Gesner 1551: 24–25.

77 Agustín 1592a: 208; *RPC I*, 305.

78 The translator is thought to be thought to have been Alfonse Chacon. Missere Fontana 2009: 61–72.

79 Missere Fontana 2009: 61–72.

other two editions was due to the disposition of the images in the text: when it was necessary to create a link between word and image, the collaboration between translator and illustrator was better controlled, as emerges from Plate 57, 36–38.⁸⁰

Not all colonial coins with oxen and plow illustrated in the Italian translation of Sada distinguished two different horn types, reinforcing the hypothesis that the iconography of this work was extremely faithful to Agustín's description in the text, and the adoption of different horns for the colonial coins was not a free choice of the illustrator but the consequence of a specific textual situation (Pls. 58–59, 39–42).⁸¹

This treatment of horns deriving from the study of colonial coins evolved into a tradition of its own in contemporary figurative art, as indicated by the frescos of the Founding of Rome cycle at Palazzo Magnani in Bologna painted by the Carracci brothers from ca. 1589 to 1592 (Pl. 60, 46). In the scene with the motto *In urbe robur et labor*, where Romulus uses the plow to trace the furrow delimiting the *pomerium*,⁸² the two oxen are depicted with two different types of horns—one with an inward-curving shape in the foreground, representing the female, the other in the background with an outward-curving shape, representing the male (Pl. 59, 43). The archetype could have been taken directly from the Spanish *Diálogos* of 1587. However, considering the low circulation of this work (only 60 copies were published in Tarragona),⁸³ it is possible that the fresco found its model in Sada's version, where the differences in the bovine gender are also indicated by horn shape.

One must also consider that the coins used as examples for this Italian edition belonged to the collection of the Bolognese antiquarian Lelio Pasqualini (1549–1606), who moved to Rome as canon of Santa Maria Maggiore. He retained close relations with his city of origin and with its artistic environment, including the Carracci brothers, whom he included among his closest friends.⁸⁴ Notes in the manuscript of the Vatican Library Barb. Lat. 2113 prove that Pasqualini knew very well the original work of Agustín, as he was also author of the appendix of Sada's translation.⁸⁵ In light of this, he may have contributed to the Carracci brothers' conceptions of the iconographic program of the Palazzo Magnani, where the influence of a numismatist appears almost certain to justify the imagery.⁸⁶

80 Agustín 1592b: Tables 69–70; Agustín 1617: Table 16.

81 Agustín 1592a: 215 and 238.

82 On the fresco in general see Vitali 2011; Bettin 2009; Emiliani 2000; Stanzani 2000; Rubinstein 1979.

83 Missere Fontana 2009, 61; see also Stenhouse 2009, 50–51.

84 Missere Fontana 2009, 72.

85 Missere Fontana 2009, 72.

86 However, Giovanni Pietro Bellori and Carlo Cesare Malvasia, two art historians of the seventeenth century originating from the area of Bologna, do not mention a possible relation between Pasqualini and the Carracci brothers. Even the most recent studies do not mention consultants called to contribute ideas for the decorations, following the order of

It was confirmed that the main source for the Carracci brothers was the Italian version of the *Vitae Parallelae* of Plutarch translated by Battista Alessandro Jaconello in 1492,⁸⁷ in which Romulus traced the furrow of the city of Rome with a plow pulled by two oxen whose horn shapes are not specified.⁸⁸ The classical source does not fully explain the imagery, which, at this point, could have derived from the development of the debate between institutions and numismatics, in particular colonial studies.

As already seen in the case of Florence, the theme of this fresco could also find an ideal correspondence in the *Historia Bononiensis*⁸⁹ of Sigonio, published for the first time between 1571 and 1574, in which it was stated that Bologna was a Roman colony (*eodemque tempore Bononiam colonia deducta*).⁹⁰ Thus the depiction of the founding rite of Rome becomes a concrete reference to the shared identity of colony and mother-city. The fact that Bologna had Roman origins also justified the use of this iconographic theme that, echoing Biondo, made the colony in the image and a likeness of Rome.⁹¹

The detail regarding the shape of the horns took on a life of its own in a fresco depicting an episode of the *Storia di Coriolano* (sixteenth–seventeenth century) painted by an apprentice of the Carracci brothers, Lucio Massari (1569–1633), in the Palazzo Bonfiglioli Rossi in Bologna. In the scene with the motto *Vincuntur praelio Volsci*, two bovines with horns of different shapes (curving inward on the left and outward on the right) are depicted from behind (Pl. 59, 44).⁹² This feature could be identified as the sex-linked trait used to distinguish the ox from the cow. The fact that here it is represented outside a colonial context, may show the free-standing life of this iconographic element.

Lastly, one could see further repercussions of this cultural dynamic in Bologna, but in a different context. In 1621, when the extensive zoological treatise, *De quadrupedibus bisulcis*, was published by the naturalist and scholar Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522–1605), the horns as a trait for distinguishing gender returned in a very curious way.⁹³ Aldrovandi, in describing the differences of the

Lorenzo Magnani. Nevertheless, if the detail of the horns does carry a humanist thought, it would be necessary to identify its palingenesis in the discussion of Roman colonies and colonial coins. See Bellori 1672; Malvasia 1678; Rubinstein 1979. Samuel Vitali, who recently completed a detailed analysis of the frescos in Palazzo Magnani, does not recognize a precise model for the painting, connecting it only with an image of Neptune leading a plow in Vincenzo Cartari's iconographic repertoire. He defines it only as a "figurative option" and not as a "programmatic choice" (Vitali 2011: 140–143).

87 Stanzani 2000: 21–25.

88 Jaconello 1537: 27–28.

89 The editorial history of the work, and the controversies with the local inquisition, are narrated by Paolo Prodi (1959).

90 Sigonio 1732–1737; *Hist. Bon.*, III, 18.

91 Stanzani 2000: 21.

92 Negro and Pirondini 1995: I, 236.

93 Aldrovandi 1621: 36–37.

horns between male and female bovines, affirmed that the horns of cows can be recognized by their inward curve, recalling a rising moon (*et uno flexu conspicua, cuiusmodi fere sunt novae lunae cornua*). This expression, as seen before, apparently does not derive from previous zoological publications, but evokes the words Agustín used to distinguish the gender of cows in his numismatic work (“Los de la vaca son como los cuernos de la luna”). This situation shows how this detail continued its history beyond numismatics into other disciplines; and probably it could indicate the vitality of a cultural environment that shared information and readings, constructing the antiquarian narrative through a strong multidisciplinary approach.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it is possible to say that Roman colonial coins during the Renaissance period were identified according to two criteria: their legends and their iconography. The legend had to have the inscription COL or at least the abbreviation C—sometimes an acronym as in the case of C·V·I (*Colonia Victrix Iulia*) or C·C·A (*Colonia Cercanita Augusta*)—and the name of the magistrates; during the Roman Empire, the names of the emperors and the names of their families were also engraved.

With regard to the imagery, the first element that acted as a distinguishing element was the oxen with plow and the priest delimiting the *pomerium*. The second element was the depiction of military banners, the eagle of the legion, the plow and the agrimensorian *pertica*. Further unconventional imagery was also identified by Pirro Ligorio.

Without the reconstruction of the relation between colonies and public treasury established by Onofrio Panvinio, it probably would have been more difficult to connect colonial institutions to coins. However, the revolutionary turning point for the study of colonies that opened the doors to the numismatic world was the critical analysis of the passage on urban founding of Varro’s *De lingua latina*. Those who gave impulse to the new interpretation of this work were Antonio Agustín, Carlo Sigonio, and Enea Vico, who, most probably, were in contact with one another. Sigonio offered a more structured contribution in juridical antiquarian studies, consolidating the connection between coinage and institutions; Vico provided a broad representation of coins confident in the views of Sigonio, who saw the colony as an independent entity, but submitted to specific mechanisms; Agustín found confirmation of these phenomena starting from the geographical sphere.

All of this pushed forward research and a renewed understanding of the sources, which also created an intersection of viewpoints, emerging remarkably from the use of geographical texts, like the *Liber coloniarum* attributed to Frontinus and the anonymous *Itinerarium Antonini*.

Once the relation between oxen, plow, and colonies was established the entire

iconographic system that had developed previously around these elements had to be reconsidered. The new antiquarian knowledge modified the earlier accepted views of scholars like Valeriano and Erizzo.

In the cases of Vasari and the Carracci brothers it is clear that their projects would have not been possible without decades of sedimentation of scholarly and antiquarian views on the subject. For the decoration of Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, it emerges that the entire figurative arrangement derived from the studies on colonies—especially the detail of the plow delimiting the territory of the first city. In fact, it did not have to do with just an ordinary city, but with a colony regulated by its own mechanisms with its own specific characteristics. All of this is well outlined in the experience of Vincenzo Borghini.

An inverse path is made for the Palazzo Magnani in Bologna, where it was the theme (The Founding of Rome) that evoked a colonial context, in virtue of the fact that the colony wanted to reproduce the layout and image of the mother-city. Thus Bologna, identified as a Roman colony by Sigonio, became a tacit reference point for the entire cycle.

Lastly, that the iconography of colonial coins, particularly the ones with oxen, could have been influenced by zoological reasoning is an appealing assumption. From an anatomical detail (the shape of the horns), unexpected pathways of circulation of culture (theoretical and figurative) could have perhaps been opened, starting from the Spanish work of Antonio Agustín and its Latin and Italian translations (especially that of Sada and Pasqualini), to the frescos in the Palazzo Bonfiglioli in Bologna and the work of Ulisse Aldrovandi.

From this cultural journey of European numismatics during the Renaissance, it emerges that a series of dynamics were activated thanks to the progressive growth of antiquarian studies, modifying throughout the decades the perspectives of humanists on the subject; even underground flows can be denoted, which sometimes contributed, only dimly, to broaden the possibilities of a critical interpretation of the past.

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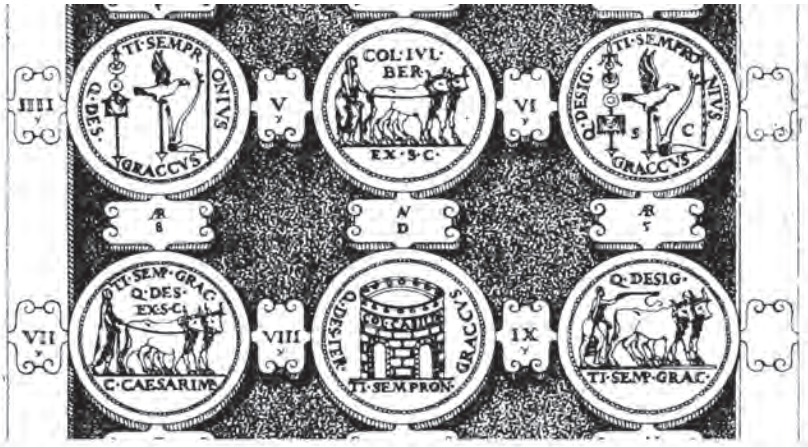


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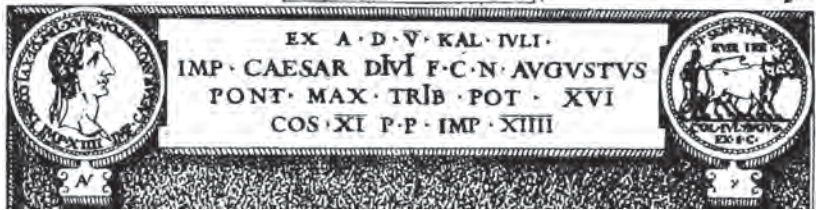


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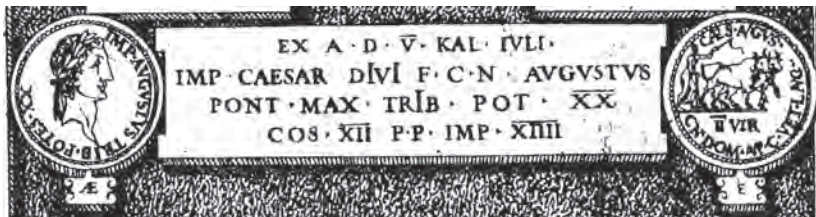
Ancient Roman Colonial Coins in Renaissance Europe



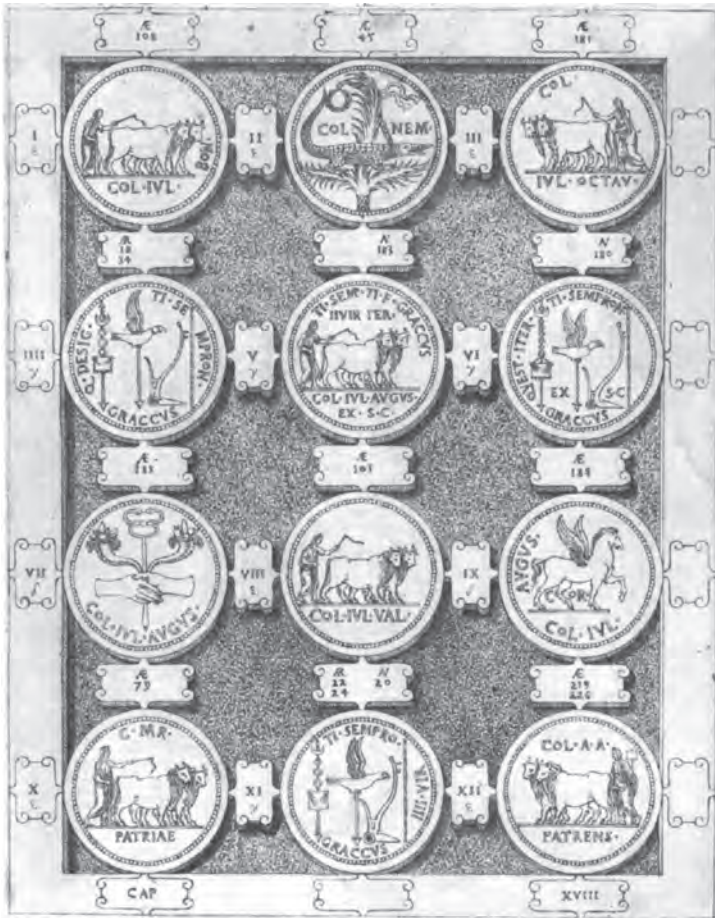
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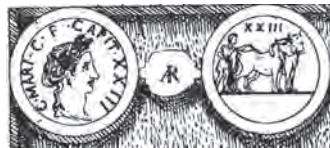
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Ancient Roman Colonial Coins in Renaissance Europe



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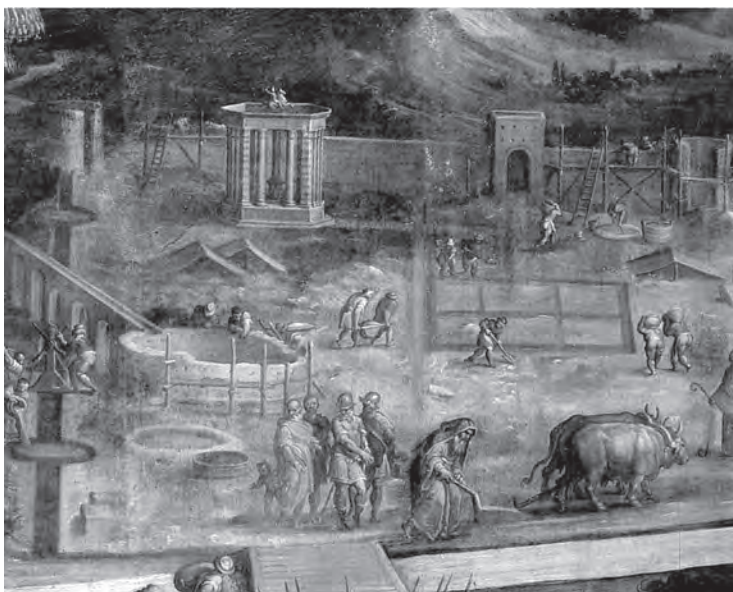
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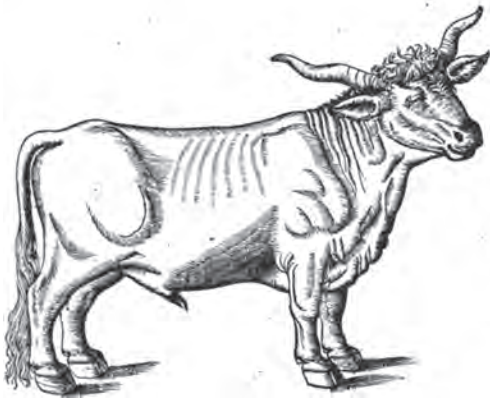
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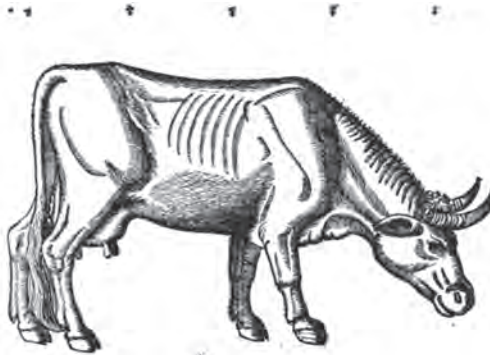
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De Quadrupedibus
DE BOVE SIMVL IN GENERE ET
VACCA VETERINA

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Bos & Vacca A. Lib. I. 25
Petrus Plinius, Naturalis Historia, lib. I. cap. 25. De Quadrupedibus, de vacca, de bove. Petrus Plinius, Naturalis Historia, lib. I. cap. 25. De Quadrupedibus, de vacca, de bove.

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