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Minting in Ephesus: economics and self-promotion in the Early Imperial Period

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This article seeks to sketch the contribution numismatics has played in the study of Ephesus in a time of profound social and political change from Augustus' early principate (29 BCE) to the end of Hadrian's reign (138 CE). Both Augustus and Hadrian were concerned about the currency available in Asia Minor and instigated large issues of cistophori, some of which were minted in Ephesus.¹ Asia Minor became economically prosperous during this period and Ephesus was its unofficial capital.² This economic growth saw Ephesus transformed with continual building works and an influx of immigrants from disparate parts of the Empire.³ The silver cistophori that were minted in Ephesus bear types that reveal something of the nature of the relationship between the emperors and their subjects. Since the cistophori were for use only within Asia Minor (it was a 'closed economic system' much like Egypt), Augustus and his officials undoubtedly saw the potential to tailor a message to this specific audience.⁴ The pictorial propaganda on this coinage, especially on the reverse, undergoes development from the Augustan issues through the Claudian issue to those of Hadrian, with the presence of Artemis growing with each numismatic step. When we turn to the bronze civic coinage minted by Ephesus for use in the city and its territory, the pictorial language and attending inscriptions shift in focus from the relationship with the Emperor to proclaiming Ephesian prestige in Asia Minor. The civic coinage became a propaganda vehicle for the city in its rivalry with other cities in Asia Minor.

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- 1 For overview of coinage of Asia under Augustus: A.M. Barnett, M. Amandry, P.P. Ripollès (1998) *Roman Provincial Coinage* (RPC) Vol.1, London: 363-522; Under Hadrian: W. E. Metcalf (1980) *The Cistophori of Hadrian*, Numismatic Studies 15, New York.
 - 2 P. Bruun (2002) 'Coins and the Roman Imperial Government'. In: G.M. Paul & M Ierardi (eds.) *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire*, 4th ed. (orig. 1999) Ann Arbor: 19-40; G. M. Rodgers (1991) *The Sacred Identity of Ephesos: Foundation Myths of a Roman City*, London and New York: 14-16
 - 3 J.R. Patterson (1991) 'Settlement, city and elite in Samnium and Lycia'. In: J. Rich & A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.) *City and Country in the Ancient World*, London and New York: 147-168; Cf. Dio Chrysostom praised Ephesus, among others, for aspiring to gain honour and listed public building as an indicator of this, *Discourse*, 40.10-11.
 - 4 F.S Kleiner (1972) 'The Dated Cistophori of Ephesus', *MNANS* Vol. 18: 17-32 (see 30-32); A. Burnett (1987) *Coinage in the Roman World*, London: 41-42; Bruun (2002): 26-29.

The contribution that numismatics has played in studying Ephesus in the early imperial era can only be briefly summarised here. The focus will be on assessing the impact of numismatics by sampling the use of this evidence by historians in two key areas: imperial policy and local Ephesian politics. The first part of the article will discuss the minting and economic policies in Asia Minor of Augustus, Claudius and Hadrian and the role played by the mint in Ephesus. The second part of the article will focus on the civic coins minted in Ephesus and how they promoted the city's aspirations to be the province's economic and religious centre.

The Cistophori and Augustus' Economic Programme

Ephesus had a long history of minting coins, and in Roman times played a role in the minting policy of the Roman administration.⁵ While some gold was struck in Asia Minor, it appears that Ephesus principally struck silver cistophori.⁶ The cistophorus had its origins in the Pergamene kingdom in the 2nd century BCE. F. S. Kleiner and S. Noe argued that the cistophorus came into being after Eumenes II defeated the marauding Galatians in 167 BCE.⁷ Many cities awarded Eumenes II extensive honours for saving them from the barbarians. Eumenes II claimed descent from the deities Dionysius and Heracles and these were an obvious choice of coin types.⁸ The cista mystica, featuring grapes and ivy leaves, were allusions to Dionysus (see Fig. 1), while the club and pelt referred to Heracles.

It was at this time that the weight standard changed from the Attic to a new cistophoric standard.⁹ This change is harder to explain but suffice to say that the cistophorus was intended to be a silver tetradrachm of about 12.60grams.¹⁰ After Ephesus and Pergamon were organised into the province of Asia Minor under Republican Rome in 133 BCE, they continued to mint on the cistophorus standard.¹¹ Antony in turn struck cistophori in two series in 39 BCE at Ephesus.¹² After the defeat of Antony, Octavian quickly began minting coinage in Asia Minor.¹³ Although absolute assurance is not possible, it appears that Octavian struck a large series of cistophori in 28 BCE at Ephesus with the title '*libertatis p(opuli) R(omani) vindex*' and a Pax on the reverse (Fig.2; Sutherland 1970 10a,

5 RPC 1: 431; Kleiner, 17-18; A. R. Bellinger (1979, orig. 1956) 'Greek Mints under the Roman Empire'. In: R. A. G. Carson & C.H.V. Sutherland (eds.) *Essays in Roman Coinage presented to Harold Mattingly*, Aalen: 137-148.

6 RPC 1: 431.

7 F. S. Kleiner & S. Noe (1977) *The Early Cistophoric Coinage*, New York: 16-17.

8 *ibid.*: 17.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*: 17.

11 Bruun (2002): 26-28; Burnett (1987): 41.

12 RPC 1:377.

13 *ibid.*

c. 28 BCE).¹⁴ However there is good evidence for assigning to the Ephesian mint a large series of cistophori struck from 27 BCE until about 20 BCE. This group (Sutherland's Group VI) contains die linked types indicating the continuity of the coinage.¹⁵ The types on the reverses include capricorn, corn-ears, and a garlanded altar decorated with deer. The imagery of the garlanded altar suggests that it represents the altar of Artemis, who was regularly portrayed with a deer standing either side of her (Fig.3; RIC 1 479/482, c. 25-20 BCE).¹⁶

C.H.V. Sutherland argued that the Augustan cistophori constituted a large coinage for the time: '[F]rom the examples which still survive 355 obverse dies can be recognized – enough to have produced some four million coins (equivalent in value to twelve million denarii) at a conservative estimate.'¹⁷ The role of numismatics is crucial here as Alfred Bellinger explains: '[Augustus had a series of plans] involving a number of mints and showing, *for the first time*, [my italics] an imperial conception of the monetary needs of the Roman world. Greek mints were used to produce unmistakably Roman coins, many were allowed or encouraged to continue the issuing of their own types and an intermediate class appeared...'¹⁸ A. M. Woodward suggested, based on the types, that mints at Chios, Pergamon and Ephesus were operational.¹⁹ Although the amount of coin production at each mint is impossible to estimate, Sutherland's approximation is useful in that it shows that each mint was minting a large number



Fig. 1. Cista Mystica, obv. from 2nd Century BCE.



Fig. 2. Cistophorus with Augustus, obv. & Pax, rev.



Fig. 3. Augustus, obv. & altar, rev.

14 Sutherland (1976) *The Emperor and the Coinage: Julio-Claudian Studies*, London: 54.

15 Sutherland (1970) *The Cistophori of Augustus*, London: 29-33; 125-127.

16 Sutherland (1976): 54.

17 *Ibid.*: 26.

18 Bellinger (1979): 140.

19 A. M. Woodward, 'The Cistophoric Series and Its Place in the Roman Coinage'. In: R. A. G. Carson & C.H.V. Sutherland (eds.), *Essays in Roman Coinage presented to Harold Mattingly*, Germany: 149-173.

of coins. Some scholars have wondered whether Augustus had the authority to order minting in the senatorial province of Asia Minor, but Sutherland has argued convincingly that Augustus was able, through the mechanisms he established, to order the issue of coinage as he saw fit; and importantly, through his agents, to provide guidelines for the devices on the coins of each mint.²⁰ What Augustus had ‘brilliantly’ achieved, according to Kenneth Harl, was ‘a set of interlocking currencies – imperial, provincial, and civic – that welded together the fiscal and commercial life of the Mediterranean world.’²¹ Harl explains that cistophori were the link between the imperial Roman denarii and the local bronze coinages crucial for the payment of taxes.²² The large issues of cistophori minted by Augustus (with only a small top-up by Claudius) served the province for nearly 150 years before Hadrian minted another large series of issues.²³

The importance of this wealth of information about the fiscal policy and finances of Asia Minor has been largely overlooked by historians.²⁴ At the 1994 symposium on Ephesus, whose papers are collected in *Ephesos: Metropolis of Asia* (1995),²⁵ no numismatists are represented among the archaeologists nor is the numismatic evidence for the economic life of Ephesus discussed.²⁶ Similarly, Beate Dignas, in her otherwise comprehensive work *Economy of the Sacred in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor* (2002), overlooks the work of numismatists, relying almost entirely on inscriptions.²⁷ This neglect is unfortunate since a combined study of the coinage of Ephesus and the inscriptions that

20 Sutherland (1976) discussing Grant’s question ‘by what authority, judicially speaking, did he [Augustus] thus coin silver in the senatorial province of Asia?’: 27.

21 K. W. Harl (1997) ‘Greek Imperial Coins in the Economic Life of the Roman East’. In: J. Nollé, B. Overbeck, and P. Weiss (eds.), *Internationales Kolloquium zur kaiserzeitlichen, Münzprägung Kleinasiens* (1994 Munich, Germany), Milan: 223-229 (quote p. 223).

22 Harl (1997): 223; Also see K. Hopkins’ (1980) discussion of the economic sophistication of Asia Minor, ‘Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire (200 B.C. – A.D. 400)’, *JRS*, Vol. 70: 101-125; Also C. Howgego’s (1992) remarks on the payment of taxes in Egypt are pertinent as the economies of Asia Minor and Egypt were highly monetised, ‘The Supply and Use of Money in the Roman World 200 B.C. to A.D. 300’, *JRS*, Vol. 82: 1-31 (see p. 23).

23 Harl (1997): 223.

24 As early as 1940 Sutherland furnished a persuasive apologetic for the use of coins by historians, “The historical evidence yielded by the coins of Greece and Rome is abundant, concise, essentially practical, and easily assimilated,” ‘The Historical Evidence of Greek and Roman Coins’, *Greece and Rome*, Vol. IX. 26: 65-80 (quote p. 65).

25 H. Koester (ed.) (1995) *Ephesos: Metropolis of Asia – An Interdisciplinary Approach to its Archaeology, Religion, and Culture*, Pennsylvania.

26 This is particularly evident in L. M. White’s (1995) paper, ‘Urban Development and Social Change in Imperial Ephesos’, whose task was to “depict the panorama of change in Roman Ephesos through the media of archaeology and social history”. In: Koester (ed.), *Ephesos: Metropolis of Asia: 27-70* (quote p.28); Cf. Mireille Corbier (1991) in her more general discussion of the relationship between cities, their territories and taxation in the Roman Empire also overlooks numismatics, ‘City, territory and taxation’, *City and Country in the Ancient World*: 211-239.

27 B. Dignas (2002) *Economy of the Sacred in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor*, Oxford.

record the amounts expended on buildings works could provide data for the finances behind Ephesus' building boom.²⁸

The Cistophori and the Promotion of Augustus' Image

Did Augustus and his successors use imperial coinage for propaganda purposes? The usefulness of the word 'propaganda' in describing Roman Imperial iconography has been keenly discussed.²⁹ In 1982 Barbara Levick challenged the conventional idea that the types gave insight into how the Emperor himself wanted to be viewed by his subjects.³⁰ She argued that it was the imperial officials in charge of minting who made the decisions about types, so it is better to see the types as offering symbols of respect to the Emperor. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1986) conceded that the Emperor did not oversee the minting processes personally, but argued that Levick's suggestion robs the types of their persuasive function and disconnects them from what is obviously an imperial policy of persuasion through monumental sculpture and public rituals.³¹ Levick (1999) responded to Wallace-Hadrill's criticism by moving away from any firm assertion about the role of the types concluding:

The lack of resolution between conflicting views on the question of coins and publicity may be instructive... [the men who engaged in the struggle for power] would have been able to say what the types and legends 'meant.' But they might not have wished to be too clear about what it meant to have one's head on a coin, where one's peers stood in relation to that, or whether designs were intended to sway public opinion.³²

This seems to miss Wallace-Hadrill's point, which is backed by rather persuasive evidence, that Augustus selected the types on his coinage to promote certain messages about his new form of administration.³³ It is not that Augustus was informing the public

28 A. Zuiderhoek (2005) 'The Icing on the Cake: Benefactors, economics, and public building in Roman Asia Minor'. In: S. Mitchell & C. Katsari (eds.), *Patterns in the Economy of Roman Asia Minor*, Wales: 167-186.

29 G. G. Belloni (1974) was sceptical about coins as propaganda 'Significati storico-politici delle figurazioni e delle scritte delle monete da Augusto a Traiano', *ANRW* Vol. II, 1: 997-1144; But A. Wallace-Hadrill (1981) argued for coins as imperial propaganda, 'The Emperor and His Virtues', *Historia* Vol. 30: 298-323; B. Levick (1982) argued for a reappraisal of the function of coin types, 'Propaganda and the Imperial Coinage', *Antichthon*, Vol. 16: 104-16; C. H. V. Sutherland (1983) raised doubt about the use of the English word 'propaganda' in 'The Purpose of Roman Imperial Coin Types' *Rev. Num.* 6e série Tome 25: 73-82; cf. F. Millar (1984), 'State and Subject: the Impact of Monarchy'. In: F. Millar & E. Segal (eds.) *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, Oxford & New York: 37-60.

30 For a summary of Levick's (1982) argument see A. Wallace-Hadrill (1986), 'Image and Authority in the Coinage of Augustus' *JRS* 76: 66-87.

31 Wallace-Hadrill (1986): 68.

32 Levick (2002, org. 1999) 'Messages on the Roman Coinage: Types and Inscriptions'. In: *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire*: 41-60 (quote p.58).

33 Wallace-Hadrill (1986) concludes his study of Augustan coinage saying, "What emerges as the central feature of autocracy is the urge to monopolize all symbols of authority": 85.



Fig. 4. Mark Antony, obv. & Cista Mystica, rev.

shrewd and adroit means to another end, namely, the formation of public opinion on matters of Imperial policy.³⁴ This surely is the essence of the English word ‘propaganda,’ – ‘information... used to promote a political cause or point of view,’ and best describes Augustus’ self-promotion strategy.³⁵

Wallace-Hadrill observed that ‘Octavian’s victory at Actium brought in its wake a momentous change in the physical appearance of Roman coinage...’³⁶ It is the stark change in types used on the cistophori that provide an indication that Augustus had some influence in the selection of types. These types define Augustus’ image over and against that of his rival Antony (Fig.4).³⁷ While there is some possibility that Augustus may have left the decision of the types to his agents, his ‘hands on’ approach to shaping his image as *princeps* lends credence to the idea that he intervened in the minting process.³⁸ The types used on the coins point to a crafting of a certain message to the Asian populace. As already mentioned, enormous numbers of coins were minted, and it seems that Ephesus was the first to mint coin with Augustus’ head on the obverse and Pax with a wreath on the reverse (Fig.2). The message on the reverse is plain enough: Augustus has brought peace where Antony brought civil war. While there was experimentation elsewhere with the head of Augustus on the reverse, this first issue of cistophori establishes this pattern of types in Asia Minor.³⁹ Issues most likely struck at Ephesus bear reverses with capricorn, corn-ears and the altar of Artemis. The bunched corn-ears speak of prosperity. The capricorn was Augustus’ natal star sign and is being used as a

34 (1940): 76.

35 *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (2006), Oxford.

36 Wallace-Hadrill (1986): 70.

37 Sutherland (1976): 26; Wallace-Hadrill (1986): 76.

38 As to doubt about the control of minting in the provinces see K. W. Harl (1987) *Civic Coins and Civic Politics in the Roman East: A.D. 180-275*, Berkeley: 18; However, Werner Eck (2011) makes it very clear that Augustus was intensely involved in shaping his image, see especially chapter 14, *The Age of Augustus*. Trans. D. L. Schneider, Malden, MA: 142-143; Cf. R. A. Kearsley (2011) ‘The Imperial Image of Augustus and His *Auctoritas* in Rome’, *Ancient History: Resources for Teachers* Vol. 38.1: 89-106; E. S. Gruen (2005) ‘Augustus and the Making of the Principate’. In: K. Galinsky (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Cambridge, UK: 13-32; D. Sailor (2006) ‘Dirty Linen, Fabrication, and the Authorities of Livy and Augustus’, *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 136.2: 329-388.

39 Wallace-Hadrill (1986): 71.

about his authority since they knew this already, nor was he persuading them from one course to another; rather, Augustus was promoting a view of himself that was best for his subjects. Sutherland sums up this tactic nicely, ‘For the Romans, it was not only an end in itself, as an economic necessity in a unified world: it was also a

personal badge.⁴⁰ In Pergamon, coins were struck with Augustus' other personal badge, the sphinx. It is fascinating, however, that the types are not confined to the Emperor but include types referring to Asia Minor. From the mint at Ephesus coins depict the altar of Artemis and from Pergamum the temple of Commune Asiae (Fig.5; RPC1 2219/2).⁴¹

The conclusion that can be drawn is that Augustus was anxious not only to promote himself in a very personal way as the issuing authority, but he wanted also to show his willingness to recognise the civic identity of his subjects. Yet this concession was limited. The Roman architectural imagery that appeared on certain cistophori was a reflection of Augustus' personal victories (these were most likely minted in Pergamum).⁴² In particular, the Arch of Augustus in Rome, which commemorated the battle of Actium, appeared as a type (Sutherland, Group VII. 446a-478a).⁴³ In sum, all the new Augustan types entirely replaced the Hellenic *cista mystica* type which had been minted on Antony's coinage throughout Asia (Fig.4).⁴⁴ It seems that Augustus, right from the first, was sending the message that he was now *the* authority in Asia Minor.



Fig. 5 Augustus, obv. & Commune Asiae temple, rev.



Fig. 7. Hadrian, obv. & Artemis, rev.



Fig. 6. Claudius, obv. & Artemis in temple, rev.



Fig. 8. Hadrian, obv. & Artemis with deer.

40 Wallace-Hadrill (1986): 76.

41 Sutherland (1976): 26.

42 Sutherland (1970): 102-104.

43 Sutherland's Grp VII (1970) included the Arch of Augustus, the Mars Ultor and the temple of Commune Asiae. Sutherland was able to show that these types were minted together through die links: 33-37; 102-104. The temple of Mars Ultor (Rome) was erected at Augustus' own expense on his private land as a fulfilment of a vow he made before the battle of Philippi where he defeated the assassins of Caesar; Eck: 142-143;

44 Sutherland (1970): 113.

The iconography of Artemis on the cistophori saw a development from Augustus to Hadrian. As has already been mentioned, the altar of Artemis appears on the cistophori issued by Augustus. This is only indicated by the deer on the facade. Whether this is a deliberate choice by Augustus or his representative is unclear. But when Claudius minted his cistophori, Artemis herself makes an appearance (Fig.6; RPC 1 2222/1, 41-54 CE).

It is under Hadrian however, that Asian themes predominate on the cistophori.⁴⁵ The cistophori from Ephesus predominantly feature either Artemis on her own or Artemis flanked by two deer (Fig.7&8).

Only on the coins minted at Ephesus does the city name appear regularly.⁴⁶ The appearance of Artemis and other deities reflects Hadrian's concern to recognise the importance of the province's indigenous cults. There was some tension between the cities in Asia Minor because they were vying for recognition and honours. It appears that Hadrian's answer was to recognise the various deities while forming a cohesive identity for the Greek cities through the establishment of the Panhellenion in Athens after his eastern tour.⁴⁷ Through this strategy, which appears to include the selection of coin types, Hadrian was attempting to control inter-city rivalry. However, the cities were utilising all means, including using coins as propaganda vehicles, to proclaim their virtues and honours against their rivals. It appears that Ephesus took full advantage of its minting privilege to promote itself on the provincial coinage issued with the authority of the Emperor.

The Local Civic Coinage of Ephesus

The work of numismatists has been used to demonstrate that the Ephesians designed civic coins to promote their claim to honour over that of other cities.⁴⁸ After Octavian's defeat of Antony in 31 BCE, the Koinon of Asia (or the Assembly of Imperial Cults) quickly requested permission to establish a cult in Pergamon for Octavian.⁴⁹ The cult was dedicated to Rome and Augustus, which set a precedent for further cults. In 26 CE permission was granted for another cult, one for the Senate and Tiberius. Eleven cities, including Ephesus, competed for the honour. Competition was intense because

45 Metcalf (1980): 127.

46 *Ibid.*

47 *Ibid.*: 128.

48 S. J. Friesen (1993) utilises the work of B. Pick (1906) 'Die Neokorien von Ephesos' in *Corolla Numismatica: Essays in Honour of Barclay V. Head*, London: 234-44; And Josef Keil (1919) "Die erste Kaiserveokorie von Ephesos," *Numismatische Zeitschrift* N. F. 12: 115-120, *Twice Neokoros: Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family*, Leiden: 53.

49 *Ibid.*: 7.

the honour would bring great economic and social benefits.⁵⁰ Pergamon was ruled out because it already had the cult of Augustus, and so was Ephesus as it was the custodian of the main provincial cult of Artemis.⁵¹ Smyrna won the right and issued coins proclaiming, ‘Hallowed Sebaste [and] Senate; [coin] of the Smyrnians’.⁵² ‘Sebaste’ was the direct translation of Augustus into Greek.⁵³

During the reign of Domitian (81-96 CE), the Ephesians too won the honour to have the Cult of the Sebastoi. Before this, in about 65/66 CE, they had declared on a civic coin: ‘of the neokorate Ephesians’ (RPC 1:438 nos. 2628, 2627).⁵⁴ This is the first ever reference to the *neokoreia* on a coin.⁵⁵ *Neokoros* normally referred to the temple warden (from the Greek verb ‘to serve’ or ‘tend’), but here they were extending the word to mean the city as the warden or guardian of a cult.⁵⁶ This could be referring to the city as the neokorate of Artemis, but Barbara Burrell argues that the temple image does not appear to be that of Artemis.⁵⁷ She suggests that the word ‘neokoros’ used on the coins refers only to the Cult of the Sebastoi and not to the temple of Artemis.⁵⁸ She proposes that the temple was for the cult of Nero, although this is far from certain. In 68 CE Nero was declared a public enemy and his cult condemned; this coin should therefore date to the short period in which Ephesus was the *neokoros* of this emperor’s cult. Without doubt, however, the Cult of the Sebastoi was established under Domitian, and this seemed to include not only Domitian but all the emperors of the Flavian dynasty.⁵⁹ Scholars had thought that after the establishment of the Cult of the Sebastoi, Ephesus started calling itself “twice neokoros” on its coinage (RPC 2: 165 nos F 1064, F 1065, RPC 1: 433).⁶⁰ But Burrell, utilising the work of Barnett and Klose, confirms that these coins had been recut in modern times in an effort to make obscure coins more valuable.⁶¹ They are therefore useless in shedding light on the Ephesian coinage under Domitian. There is, however, evidence that the Ephesians were still using the title “neokoros” under Trajan

50 *Ibid.*: 18.

51 B. Burrell (2003) *Neokoroi: Greek Cities and Roman Emperors*, Leiden: 60.

52 Friesen: 20.

53 *Ibid.*: 2-3.

54 *Ibid.*: 53.

55 Burrell: 60.

56 Keil’s conclusion, Friesen: 53.

57 Burrell: 60-61.

58 *Ibid.*

59 Flavian dynasty – Vespasian (69 CE- 79 CE) and his two sons Titus (69 CE-81 CE) & Domitian. *Ibid.*: 61.

60 Friesen: 56.

61 Burrell: 65; Burrell cites Burnett (1999) ‘Buildings and Monuments on Roman Coins’: 140-141 & D. Klose (1997) ‘Münz-oder Gruselkabinett?’ In: Nollé, Overbeck & Weiss (eds.), *Internationales Kolloquium*: 253-264 (see 257 & 261 f.note 3).

(98 CE – 117 CE).⁶² At this same time, Pergamon also started using the word *neokoros* to refer to itself.⁶³ After Pergamon received a second provincial cult from Trajan, the city came to be described as, ‘the council and the people of the first and second neokorate of the Pergamenes.’⁶⁴ Similarly, Ephesus declared itself ‘twice *neokoros*’ on its coinage when it received a second provincial cult under Hadrian (117-138 CE).⁶⁵ One coin has two temples facing each other, serving as the symbol of the neokoria, with the inscription ‘Ephesus twice *neokoros*’ and dates from sometime after 128-129 CE.⁶⁶ It is clear that the Ephesians were using their coinage to declare their honour and prestige among the rival claims of other provincial cities. Augustus had used coinage for promotion of his image; so too the Ephesians used their civic coinage for propaganda purposes.

This article has sought to describe the impact of numismatic studies on the study of Ephesus in the early imperial period. It is evident that numismatics has an important role to play in understanding Ephesus as an economic centre and in its evolving identity as a leading city in Asia Minor. The work of numismatists in understanding the economy of Asia Minor has been largely overlooked, and this is unfortunate because the role of coinage in the economic life of Ephesus was crucial. In particular, it is demonstrable that Augustus, subsequent emperors, and Ephesus itself, exploited its economic and propaganda potential to the full.

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62 Burrell: 66.

63 Inscription during Trajan’s reign, Friesen: 58.

64 My translation of the inscription *AvP* 8, 1.395, *Ibid*.

65 Burrell: 69.

66 [ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ] ΔΙC [NE]ΩΚΟΡΩΝ’, Paris 684; Burrell: 69.