

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL IDENTITIES
IN ROMAN PHRYGIA
FROM THE SECOND CENTURY BC
TO THE THIRD CENTURY AD: THE CASE OF AMORIUM

Political and Cultural Identities

Researchers have been arguing for decades about the significance of typological analysis of the obverse and reverse of Roman coins. Regrettably, these studies have mainly been restricted to the interpretation of Roman Imperial coins, while the Roman Provincial coinages have been comparatively ignored. One of the pioneering works on the iconography of Imperial coinages was published in 1951 by numismatist C.H.V. Sutherland. He argued strongly that imperial coins were used as a means of political propaganda in order to shape public opinion according to the wishes of the issuing authority – the emperor¹. Despite the scholar's substantial contribution to the subject of numismatic iconography, Sutherland's study has been repeatedly undervalued, since it was considered to be a product of the ideology arising after the Second World War; a war that gave negative meaning to the word 'propaganda'. As early as 1956 A.H.M. Jones focused on the economic significance of coins and dismissed as trivial the possible ideological meaning of the obverse and reverse types². Jones's views found an ardent supporter in Michael Crawford³, who was a rising

¹ C.H.V. SUTHERLAND, *Coinage in Roman Imperial Policy*, London 1951.

² A.H.M. JONES, "Numismatics and history", in R.A.G. CARSON and C.H.V. SUTHERLAND (eds.), *Essays in Roman Coinage Presented to Harold Mattingly*, (reprinted in P.A. BRUNT (ed.), *The Roman Economy*, (1974), pp. 61–81.

³ M.H. CRAWFORD, "Roman imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion", in C.N.L. BROOKE, B.H.I.H. STEWART, J.G. POLLARD and T.R. VOLK (eds.), *Studies in Numismatic Method Presented to P. Grierson*, 1983, pp. 47–64.

economic historian in the late 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s. Crawford similarly attempted to reduce the ideological significance of coin types and, instead, focused on their financial (not their economic) importance. In the first instance he suggested that the recipients of these coins did not necessarily notice the variety of coin types or, at least, numismatic iconography was not noticed at the same extent as architectural monuments or other large buildings. Furthermore, Crawford suggested that when types happened to be noticed by their recipients, their interest focused on the obverse type rather than on the reverse type. The reason for such difference was the alleged ‘fact’ that the obverse represented the figure of the emperor as guarantor of the value of the coin, while at the same time its message legitimized the power of the ruler. The message inscribed on the obverse type persuaded the public that the coin had been issued legitimately and, consequently, its face value had to be accepted regardless of its real value. In addition, the symbolic meaning of the type persuaded the users of the coin to feel due respect for the authority depicted on it. As for the reverse types, Crawford dismissed them as of little importance and he argued that their presence on the coin should be considered as purely decorative.

Only in the 1980s was the iconographic significance of the Roman Imperial coinages evaluated in a more positive manner. In an article published in 1982 Barbara Levick suggested that both the pictorial and the verbal content of the issues had an audience among the recipients of the coins; yet, the emperor was the only individual to whom they were actually addressed. Thus, the coins were used not only to flatter the supreme ruler but also cultivated his benevolence, while the impact of their meaning on the rest of the people was rather secondary⁴. In 1986 both C.H.V. Sutherland⁵ and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill⁶ argued forcefully against the negative approaches that undermined for decades the significance of numismatic iconography. In their efforts,

⁴ B. LEVICK, “Propaganda and the imperial coinage”, *Antichthon*, 16 (1982), pp. 104–116.

⁵ C.H.V. SUTHERLAND, “Compliment or complement: Dr. Levick on Imperial coin types”, *NC*, 146 (1986), pp. 84–93.

⁶ A. WALLACE-HADRILL, “Image and authority in the coinage of Augustus”, *JRS*, 76 (1986), pp. 66–87.

these scholars achieved exceptional results. Specifically, Wallace–Hadrill focused on dissolving the dichotomy between ‘authority’ and ‘message’ when interpreting imperial types. Thus, he asserted that a) both obverse and reverse images represented images of authority, and b) both obverse and reverse images were value–laden, c) consequently, both images were persuasive, and d) both images were simultaneously economic and non–economic in purpose⁷. Whether the types proclaimed the political power of the issuing state or demonstrated the authority of the imperial image, they clearly succeeded in persuading the people about the existence of the legal and the charismatic powers of the ruler. Additionally, the coins themselves became part of the process of their self–legitimization and their acknowledgement as the legal means of transactions, since the symbols inscribed on them commanded the respect of the audience. Barbara Levick’s synthetic views at the end of 1990s did not challenge substantially existing beliefs on the significance of the imperial coin types. However, she did make an important suggestion in pointing out that some of the problems in connection with the exact purpose of imperial iconography and on the way it was received by the public might have been of semantic nature and due to the confusing meanings that modern words impose upon us⁸.

Despite the heated debate that has focused on the political meaning of the types of Roman imperial coinage, little attention has been paid to the political significance of the Provincial coins issued by the Graeco–Roman cities in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire. The few attempts to interpret the iconography of individual cities⁹ have not been followed, leaving the field open to speculation.

⁷ WALLACE–HADRILL, “Image and authority”, pp. 69–70.

⁸ B. LEVICK, “Messages on the Roman coinage: Types and inscriptions”, in G.M. PAUL and M. IERARDI (edd.), *Roman Coins and Public Life under the Empire*, E. Togo Salmon Papers II, Ann Arbor 1999, pp. 41–60.

⁹ Probably some of the best numismatic monographs on the coinages of Graeco–Roman cities are D.O.A. KLOSE, *Die Münzprägung von Smyrna in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Berlin 1987 and E.G.PAPAEFTHYMIU, *Édessa de Macédoine, étude historique et numismatique*, Athens 2002. Such studies, however, do not appeal to the general audience of ancient historians, due to their highly technical nature and in some cases their overspecialization.

One consequence of the decreasing interest in the iconographic analysis of civic issues is the general claims with ambiguous meaning found in numismatic handbooks. The following comment is an emblematic example of the state-of-the-art of the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century: “by contrast with the obverses, the reverses continued to be dominated by local themes and competing claims to status, although there was a clear tendency over the first three centuries AD towards greater variety, topicality and reference to the emperors”¹⁰. It is obvious that generalizations such as these cannot solve the problem of the multiplicity of local identities and of their depiction on civic coinages. Nevertheless, there has been at least one serious attempt to tackle the problems related to the complexity of the political situation in the eastern provinces of the Roman empire. In 1987 Kenneth Harl published a book devoted to the subject of civic coins and of their relevance to ‘Greek’ as well as ‘Roman’ politics¹¹. In fact, Harl attempted not only to explore in detail the political nature of civic issues but also to explain the nature of the Graeco–Roman culture in the eastern provinces. Yet, he was not concerned with the development of these identities throughout the Republican and Imperial eras; thus, he restricted his research to the period from AD 180 to AD 275, by which time “Greek and Roman elements fused with native ones to yield to the Greco–Roman–Oriental cultural mélange”¹².

Harl’s description of the eastern provincial culture as “Graeco–Roman” brings to mind the long standing debate with regard to romanisation – the cultural assimilation of the peoples conquered by the Romans. For the past two and a half decades, ancient historians have become increasingly preoccupied with studying the dynamics of romanisation in the regions surrounding the Mediterranean, a phenomenon that they have come to take as an undoubted cultural reality¹³. On the other hand, an alternative school of thought preferred

¹⁰ C. HOWGEGO, *Ancient History from Coins*, London/ New York 1996, p. 85.

¹¹ K.W. HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics in the Roman East AD 180–275*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1987.

¹² HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics*, p. 2.

¹³ C. ANDO, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2000; R. MACMULLEN, *Changes in the Roman Empire*,

to emphasize on the continuity of the Greek cultural traditions, which continued to flourish under the aegis of Rome's political power in the eastern provinces of the empire. The latter studies acknowledge the important fact that Greek was the predominant language in the east and that Greek civic institutions provided administrative tools for the organization of the individual cities, while at the same time the religious beliefs of the citizens were mainly based on the Greek mythological tradition¹⁴. The different emphasis placed by scholars on either the romanisation or the hellenisation of the eastern Roman provinces may have its roots in specific debates that emerged for the first time in the historiography of the twentieth century. In an attempt to establish a direct continuity between the ancient and modern worlds, modern historians have tried to prove that the existence of modern nations had originated in the ancient Greek or Roman antiquity. For example, Anthony Smith has suggested that the ancient *ethnos*, whose basis was in the cultural similarities shared by the Greek people rather than in their kinship or blood ties, ultimately resulted in the development of modern nationalism and in the formation of a nation-state. These cultural similarities, thus, combined with the idea of a common origin – as related in the widespread myth of Greek descent from Deukalion and Pyrrha – created a sense of unified historical community with shared

Princeton 1990, pp. 56–66 and 291–295; R. MACMULLEN, *Romanization in the Time of Augustus*, New Haven/London 2000; P. FREEMAN, “Romanization and Roman material culture”, *JRA*, 6 (1993), pp. 438–445; M.C. HOFF and S.I. ROTROFF (eds.), *The Romanization of Athens: A Proceedings of an International Conference Held at Lincoln, Nebraska, April 1996*, Oxford 1997.

¹⁴ G.W. BOWERSOCK, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire*, Oxford 1969; E.L. BOWIE, “Hellenes and Hellenism in writers of the early Second Sophistic”, in S. SAID (ed.), *ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΣ: Quelques jalons pour une histoire de l'identité grecque*, Leiden 1991, pp. 183–204; C.P. JONES, *Plutarch and Rome*, Oxford 1971, pp. 31–39; C.P. JONES, *The Roman World of Dio Chrysostom*, Cambridge Mass. 1978, pp. 124–131; B. FORTE, *Rome and the Romans as the Greeks Saw Them*, Rome 1972; R. BROWNING, “Greeks and others from antiquity to the renaissance”, in R. BROWNING (ed.), *History, Language and Literacy in the Byzantine World*, II, Northampton 1989, pp. 1–26; G. WOOLF, “Becoming Roman, staying Greek: Culture, identity and the civilizing process in the Roman East”, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 40 (1994), pp. 115–143; S. SWAIN, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World, AD 50–250*, Oxford 1996.

feelings and values¹⁵. No scholar has, so far, attempted to synthesize and combine the two contrasting views on the processes of romanization vs. hellenization, simply because the Roman and Hellenic cultures have always been treated as if they represented two completely different ethnic groups. Consequently, the debate continues to divide the academic community, whose members sometime seem to forget the crucial fact that both the 'Hellenic' and the 'Roman' cultures existed within the borders of one vast empire and were not necessarily two entirely different ethnicities opposing one another. In addition, the existence of 'other' peoples (e.g. in the Near East) who continued to follow their own customs, spoke their own language and worshipped their own Gods without attempting to break the political bonds that tied them to the central government (though an important factor) has been hardly taken into the proper account in the debate¹⁶. Furthermore, the evidence shows that 'Hellenic', 'Roman' and 'Other' cultures eventually became so difficult to distinguish that modern attempts to do so often seem to run against common sense. It seems that, after several centuries of Roman occupation the empire resembled a large cultural melting pot and as such it certainly included aspects of all the different traditions of its inhabitants. A few recent studies indicate that, instead of being preoccupied solely with the futile distinction of Greek vs Roman identities, we should focus on the study of the political, social and cultural identities that developed over the centuries within the empire¹⁷.

Despite the apparent futility of the debate on romanization vs.

¹⁵ A. SMITH, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford 1986; A. Smith, *National Identity*, London 1991.

¹⁶ Fergus Millar has properly described the identity of colonies in the eastern provinces as Greco-Roman, thus avoiding some of the perils of ambiguous definitions of Greek and Roman culture. F. MILLAR, "The Roman Coloniae of the Near East: A Study of Cultural Relations", in H. SOLIN and M. KAJAVA (eds.), *Roman Eastern Policy and Other Studies in Roman History*, Finland 1990, pp. 7–58; F. MILLAR, "The Greek city in the Roman period", in M.H. HANSEN (ed.), *The Ancient Greek City-State*, Copenhagen 1993, pp. 232–261; F. MILLAR, "«Civitates liberae», «coloniae» and provincial governors under the empire, in *MediterrAnt*, 2.1 (1999), pp. 95–113

¹⁷ For a full critique on the subject see C. KATSARI, "Money and proto-national identities in the Greco-Roman cities of the first and the second centuries AD", *National Identities*, 8.1 (2006), pp. 1–20 and D. MATTINGLY, *An Imperial Possession: The Story of Britain in the Roman Empire*, London 2006.

hellenization of the eastern provinces, it has certainly affected the work of contemporary numismatics, who managed to yield some positive results. Two of the most important advocates of the idea of romanisation of the Mediterranean – Michael Crawford and Andrew Burnett – have correctly suggested that the eastern civic coinages minted during the Republican and Imperial period should not be treated together with the Classical and Hellenistic Greek currencies but rather should be studied as part of the Roman monetary system¹⁸. In 1992 the first volume of the *Roman Provincial Coinage*, which included the coins from the Julio–Claudian period, was published. The second volume published in 1999 included the coins issued at the time of the Flavian emperors¹⁹, while the third will cover the coins of the Antonine period²⁰. This research project has given numismatists and economists alike the opportunity to obtain a thorough view of the entire Roman monetary system and its various currencies. Meanwhile, Amandry has explored further the differences between the ‘Hellenic’ and ‘Roman’ with a series of studies on the issuing authorities of the coinage of the Roman colony of Corinth, in which he strongly supported the current theories on the romanization of the Greek cities²¹. Almost a decade later, Jack Kroll followed in Amandry’s footsteps and published a short treatise on the Athenian coinage as an index of romanization in Roman Greece²². In this article, he suggested that most of the bronze currencies minted by

¹⁸ M.H. CRAWFORD, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic*, London 1980; A.M. BURNETT and M.H. CRAWFORD (eds.), *The Coinage of the Roman World in the Late Republic*, Oxford 1987.

¹⁹ A. BURNETT, M. AMANDRY and P.P. RIPOLLES, (eds.), *Roman Provincial Coinage, From the Death of Caesar to the Death of Vitellius, I*, London/ Paris 1992; A. BURNETT, M. AMANDRY, I. CARRADICE, *Roman Provincial Coinage: From Vespasian to Domitian (AD 69–96), II*, London /Paris 1999.

²⁰ The third volume will be published imminently.

²¹ M. AMANDRY, *Le monnayage des duovirs corinthiennes*, BCH Supplement 15, Paris 1988; M. AMANDRY, “Le monnayage en bronze de Bibulus, Atratinus et Capito, une tentative de romanisation en Orient!”, *JNR*, 65 (1986), pp. 73–85; 66 (1987), pp. 101–112; 69 (1990), pp. 65–96.

²² J.H. KROLL, “Coinage as an index of romanization”, in M.C. HOFF and S.I. ROTROFF (eds.), *The Romanization of Athens: Proceedings of an International Conference held at Lincoln, Nebraska (April 1996)*, Oxbow Monograph 94, Oxford 1997, pp. 136–150.

the Greek cities had shifted from the traditional obol/ chalkous Greek bronze system to the Roman one based on the *as*, while the Greek silver currencies had disappeared and had been replaced by the Roman *denarius*. Although Kroll managed to prove that the civic monetary standards in the province of Achaëa eventually resembled those of Rome, he was not able to confirm the simultaneous romanization of the types used, especially the ones on the obverse of the coins. Furthermore, Kroll failed to explain why the adoption of the Roman monetary standards should be considered predominately as an indicator of the cultural influence of ‘Romans’ on ‘Greeks’, since such currency reforms aimed mainly at facilitating the exchange of commodities in the integrated markets.

Assertions such as the above focus mainly on the development of cultural phenomena based on the existence of two different (or diametrically opposed) ethnicities: the Roman and the Greek ones. The problem with this approach is the fact that the ‘Hellenic’ and ‘Roman’ cultural characteristics tended to merge from a very early time, as early as the Roman Republic. Consequently, our views of the process of annexation of the provinces by Rome could become distorted. On the other hand, political factors have not been taken adequately into account, despite the fact that coins represent first and foremost political identities. In reality, the theories by Wallace–Hadrill and other researchers on the political meaning of the imperial coinage could be applied successfully to the interpretation of the political meaning of the civic coinages. By doing this, we might avoid the dangers involved in definitions such as ‘Roman’ vs. ‘Greek’ identities, and, at the same time, we might make sense of the existence of ‘other’ identities that may have emerged in the process or may have survived the annexation of Greece and Asia Minor²³. After all, we cannot ignore the fact that currencies serve primarily economic and political purposes, while the cultural aspects of currencies are secondary and certainly play a less significant role. Even if the ‘Greek’ cities were no longer politically independent,

²³ For a more comprehensive treatise on the subject see C. KATSARI and S. MITCHELL, “The Roman colonies of the Greek East: Questions of state and civic identity”, *Athenaeum*, 95 (2007), forthcoming.

they still enjoyed administrative freedom, and, in several cases, this led them to consider themselves ‘free’.

Civic and State Identities in Graeco–Roman Phrygia

In this section, I wish to present a case study of the civic/political identities of Amorium, a medium sized city in the region of Phrygia – on the Anatolian plateau – from the time of its annexation to the Roman State during the first century BC until the closure of its mint probably sometime during the reign of Gallienus in the middle of the third century AD. The catalogue of the coins from the mint of Amorium, which is due to be published in 2007²⁴, will help us understand the mechanisms of the development of civic identities in the eastern provinces under the influence of the central Roman State. To begin this process first we need to distinguish between those civic types that can be found also on Roman Imperial coins – thus conveying messages related to the authority of the central government – and those types with representations of the political and religious institutions of the city of Amorium – which conveyed messages related to its distinct civic identity. After distinguishing the themes in the three categories of a) ‘state’, b) ‘civic’ and c) civic/state we can, then, proceed to analyze the coins statistically, so to illustrate more clearly the tendencies that dominated the ideology of local politicians/ administrators in different periods. After all, it was the elite of the city that decided how to represent mainstream political ideas and what type of government to adopt under the auspices of the central Roman State. The urban ruling class, whose political, religious and cultural roots stretched back to the period of the Greek city–states, still entertained its illusions of independence. This belief, in turn, was fostered by successive Roman emperors, simply because the polis functioned as the chief agent of imperial local administration²⁵.

It seems that the region of Phrygia was annexed by the Romans sometime during the first century BC, at which point Amorium became

²⁴ See C. KATSARI and C.S. LIGHTFOOT, *The Amorium Mint and the Coin Finds, Amorium Reports IV*, New York 2007, forthcoming.

²⁵ HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics*, p.3.

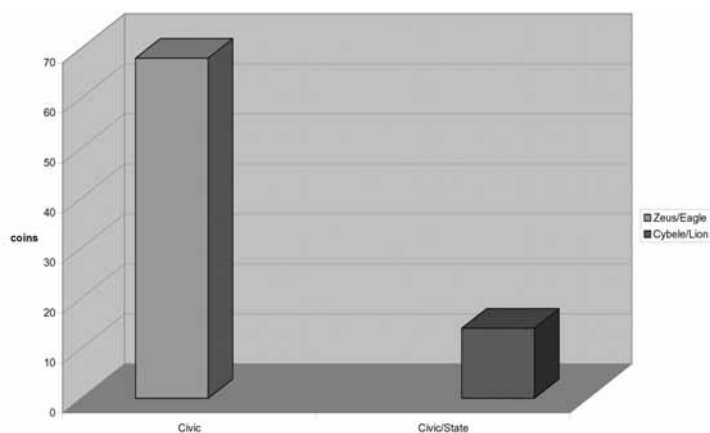
one of the first Greco–Phrygian cities to establish its own mint and strike its own coins. In fact, the local members of the upper class, who were probably responsible for the choice of both obverse and reverse types, chose themes whose origins may be traced in the political tradition of the Hellenistic kingdoms, as well as in local Phrygian myths. The entire mint output was restricted to the production of two denominations that bore different types. The larger and more abundant denomination shows on the obverse a seated Zeus, which resembles similar types issued both during the lifetime and after the death of Alexander the Great, while on the reverse it shows an eagle²⁶. Despite the obvious symbolic connection between Zeus and the eagle – a connection that points towards the Hellenistic past of the region – a particular detail is not traceable in any known Hellenistic iconography: the eagle stands on a thunderbolt and carries a *caduceus*. Usually, the *caduceus* is one of the symbols of the god Hermes. However, on the coins of Amorium, it is connected with the cult of Zeus for reasons that remain obscure because of the lack of relevant archaeological and epigraphic evidence. We may only conjecture that this particular type referred to a local Phrygian myth. The smaller denomination that was minted during the Republican period shows a recurrence of similar civic representations: the obverse presents the turreted head of the city–goddess, a type that occurs often during the Hellenistic period in a number of cities, while the reverse presents a lion²⁷. Specifically, the lion was the symbol of the goddess Cybele, whose cult not only had a prominent role in the religious practices of western and northwestern Asia Minor, but also played a fundamental part in the religious and cultural life of the inhabitants of Caria, Lydia, Phrygia, and Galatia. The most famous Phrygian shrine of Cybele was located at Pessinus, not far from the city of Amorium. The shrine was well known in the Hellenistic period but acquired additional political and religious significance in 204 BC when its most holy object (a black stone) was transferred to Rome. Probably as a consequence of the respect that the Romans paid to the Phrygian Mother of the Gods her cult remained strong during

²⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. A1–A71.

²⁷ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. B1–B14.

the Roman period throughout Asia Minor, while her image continued to appear frequently on civic coinages²⁸. Often on civic coins the image of Meter is shown with the turreted crown of the Roman city deity, suggesting that the goddess supported and protected the city²⁹, as might have been the case with Amorium. Even if we assume that the themes of the smaller denominations was somewhat affected by the political ideology of the central Roman State, the overwhelming majority of the Amorian coins clearly shows the continuous influence of civic ideology. In *Chart 1*, we can clearly see that the number of coins in circulation with civic themes exceeded by far the number of coins that combined themes related to the civic identity of the city with others related to the ideology of the central Roman administration. Also, these latter few coins belonged to a smaller denomination; therefore, their significance would have been inferior, at least in the eyes of the mint-masters, if not also in the eyes of the people who used them.

Chart 1 – Republican Period. Themes on obverse and reverse types



²⁸ S. MITCHELL, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor*, vol. 2, Oxford 1993, pp. 21–2.

²⁹ For example, at Erythrai F. GRAF, *Nordionische Kulte. Religionsgeschichtliche und epigraphische Untersuchungen zu den Kulturen von Chios, Erythrai, Klazomenai und Phocaiia*, Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana 21, Rome 1985, p. 388; for examples from Phrygia, Lydia, and Caria, see H. GRILLOT, *Le culte de Cybèle, mere des dieux, à Rome et dans l'empire romain*, Paris 1912, pp. 360–1.

A radical change in the thematic iconography of the coins of Amorium occurred during the reign of Augustus. For the first time, the portraits of the Roman emperor Augustus, combined with the religious symbol of a lituus and with the inscription *CEBACTOC*, appeared on all of the obverses without exception³⁰. This tradition continued also during the reigns of the following Julio–Claudian emperors: a) the bare head of Caligula was accompanied by the inscription *ΓΑΙΟC ΚΑΙCΑΡ*³¹, b) the laureate head of his uncle, Claudius, appeared with the inscription *ΤΙ ΚΛΑΥΔΙΟC ΓΕΡΜΑΝΙΚΟC ΚΑΙCΑΡ*³², while c) the laureate head of Nero was surrounded by the inscription *ΝΕΡΩΝΑ ΚΑΙCΑΡΑ*³³. The imperial portrait undoubtedly enhanced the face value of the bronze coinage of this small city and ensured its legality. As Epictetus wrote: “just as it is not open to the banker or the greengrocer to reject the value of Caesar’s coin, but he is obliged, whether he likes it or not, when you offer it, to hand it over for what he has for sale in exchange for it, so it is with the soul...”³⁴. The only definite characteristic that pointed to the identity of the people of the city of Amorium, since they were the issuing authorities, was the appearance of the *ethnikon* *ΑΜΟΠΙΑΝΟΙ* on the obverse of the coins issued during the reign of Nero. It is not clear whether the appearance of the imperial portrait was due to an increase in the power of the central government or not. The annexation of the regions of Asia Minor was already completed by 63 BC, when the suicide of Mithridates marked the fall of Pontus and Bithynia in the hands of the Romans. It is interesting to note that the depiction of the portrait of the ruler on the obverse of the coins was hardly a well established tradition during the Roman Republic; rather, its origins may be found in the issues of the Hellenistic kings. In fact, the head of the living Julius Caesar was the first one to appear on Roman coinage as late as 44 BC, and it was a decisive step on the road to monarchical symbolism³⁵. Thus, the

³⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. C1–C56.

³¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. D1–D25.

³² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. E1–E26.

³³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. F1–F23.

³⁴ Arrian, *Discourses of Epictetus* 3.3.3–4 and 4.5.

³⁵ S. WEINSTOCK, *Divus Julius*, ???? 1971, p. 275.

adoption of the portrait of the Roman emperor by the people of Amorium may have been more acceptable to them than to the people of Rome, since, in the provinces, the image of the emperor symbolized the power of a central authority that was seen as both benevolent and charismatic by his subjects, similarly to the way the power held by the Hellenistic kings who had run this part of the world after the death of Alexander the Great had been seen in the previous centuries.

On the other hand, the influence of the Roman State was neither in contradiction with the legitimacy of the civic authorities or with the representation of the civic identity of the Amorians, as it is clearly shown by the reverse of almost all of the Julio–Claudian coins. During the reign of Augustus, the predominant theme of the reverse of the coins was that of an eagle standing on a thunderbolt and carrying a caduceus. A variation of this type shows the eagle standing on an ox–bone, rather than on the traditional thunderbolt, a unique symbolism that probably had its origins in local myths since we do not encounter it on coins from other parts of the empire³⁶. An exception is a coin issued probably during the reign of Augustus, which depicts members of the imperial family and specifically the successors to the throne, Gaius and Lucius Caesars³⁷, while a second coin depicts the head of Augustus accompanied by the inscription CEBACTOC on both the obverse and the reverse types³⁸. The eagle on the thunderbolt or ox–bone bearing the caduceus, the symbol of Zeus Amorianos³⁹, continued to appear also on the coins issued during the reign of Caligula⁴⁰, Claudius⁴¹ and Nero⁴². During the reigns of Claudius⁴³ and Nero⁴⁴, there was also a revival of the theme of the enthroned Zeus

³⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. C1–C37 and possibly C47.

³⁷ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. C41.

³⁸ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. C53.

³⁹ An inscription bearing the name of Zeus accompanied by the epithet Amorianos was seen by Stephen Mitchell in the Afyon Archaeological Museum in 1977. It remains unpublished.

⁴⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. D1–D25.

⁴¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. E1–E20.

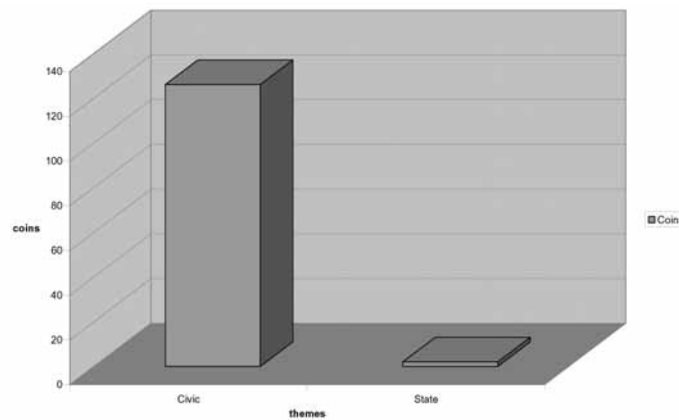
⁴² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. F1–F17.

⁴³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. E21–E26.

⁴⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. F18–F23.

holding a thunderbolt and a scepter on the reverse of a few coins. The appearance of this particular theme can only reinforce our views on the mechanisms of representation of civic identity on the coins of Amorium. The divine protector of the city, Zeus Amorianos, guaranteed the value of the coin and advertised the ‘fama’ of the citizens⁴⁵. The value and the legality of the coins was, then, further guaranteed by the members of the elite who were responsible for minting the local coinage and whose names – such as Cato, Pedon, Alexandros etc. – appeared regularly on the reverse. *Chart 2* shows clearly how Amorium’s civic identity was significantly enhanced on the reverse of the Julio–Claudian coins. Almost in all cases, the magistrates of the city seemed to have preferred to use types that immediately reminded the citizens of the most important aspects of the civic cult. If these coins were used also by inhabitants of neighboring cities, as it was normal practice, the civic pride of the Amorians would have been obviously advertised also outside their limited territory and would have added strength to their patriotic feelings.

Chart 2 – *Julio–Claudian coins. Reverse themes*



⁴⁵ For the advertisement of the fame of the Graeco–Roman cities see, HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics*, p. 5.

During the Flavian period, only minor changes on the obverse themes of the civic coins occurred. For example, the laureate head of the emperor Vespasian dominated the obverse types of the coins issued during his reign⁴⁶, when the majority of the issues was produced. By the time of the Flavians, the emperor was accepted by his subjects as a charismatic ruler who possessed gifts or talents that were deemed essential for the well being of ordinary people⁴⁷. Again as a charismatic ruler, the emperor was supposed to hold certain virtues, or supernatural qualities that allowed him to strengthen his legitimate position and to prove that he was indispensable for the existence of the empire. The personifications of these virtues (*clementia, iustitia, pietas*, etc.) are, thus, usually represented on coins, although they do not occur on the civic coinage of Amorium. Bearing in mind the fact that the *imperator* possessed a divine power beyond the reach of the human, the personifications of the virtues were supposed to identify the various aspects of the use of such power by the emperor, who was perceived almost as being able to grant his people with everything they needed. Thus, only the one man who was considered morally fit to rule could do so, and only virtue in the moral sense, neither power nor wealth or fortune, could elevate men above the level of the human⁴⁸. The power of the charismatic ruler is acknowledged in the coins by the dominating presence of his portrait on the obverse types. There is only one known exception: a pseudo-autonomous coin that bears the helmeted bust of Rome and has been dated to the years AD 69–96⁴⁹. Still, even this pseudo-autonomous coin advertised on the obverse type the worship of the goddess Roma, which was a well established part of the imperial cult⁵⁰; this was especially the case of Phrygia, where at least fifteen cities, including Amorium, Laodicea and Synnada, issued coins

⁴⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. G1–G50.

⁴⁷ A. WALLACE-HADRILL, “The Emperor and his Virtues”, *Historia*, 30 (1981), p. 298.

⁴⁸ WALLACE-HADRILL, *ibid.*, p.315 and 319

⁴⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. H1.

⁵⁰ S.R. MELLOR, *ΘΕΑ ΡΩΜΗ. The Worship of the Goddess Roma in the Greek World*, Göttingen 1975.

depicting the *Thea Romē*⁵¹. The civic authorities' intention to flatter the central government and to advertise their alliance (*symmachia*) with the supreme *polis*, the metropolis of Rome, can be clearly deduced from the reverse type of the same coin, on which we can see two clasped hands surrounded by the inscription ΠΩΜΑΙΩΝ Π-ΡΟΣ ΑΜΟΠΙ⁵². The loyalty of the Amorians towards Rome could not have been confirmed with more powerful symbols and the fact that the obverse type does not bear the imperial portrait did not subtract anything from the clarity of their message.

During the difficult transition from the Julio–Claudian dynasty to the Flavian dynasty, a civil war broke out after the death of Nero; it is likely that the cities had to take parts. Despite the tumultuous political situation, only a few changes seem to have taken place on the reverse of the coins, not only of Roman, but also of provincial, mints. In Amorium, for instance, the traditional reverse types with the eagle⁵³ or the enthroned Zeus⁵⁴ continued to appear, although new types also occurred, in particular the representation of a tetrastyle temple with a flaming altar inside⁵⁵ and a distyle temple with the cult statue of a seated Zeus holding a thunderbolt and a scepter visible in the interior⁵⁶. It is highly probable that the depictions of both the tetrastyle and the distyle temples referred to the local cult of Zeus Amorianos, the protector of the city of Amorium. In fact, if this was so, then the representation of the temple of Zeus did not need to be too detailed or to show an accurate depiction of an actual building, as was normally the case with most architectural images on coins⁵⁷. If the tetrastyle temple also

⁵¹ For Laodicea, see *BMC Phrygia* 298, nos. 121–123; *SNG Copenhagen* 544; for Synnada, see *BMC Phrygia* 398, no. 31; *SNG von Aulock*, no. 3980.

⁵² W. LESCHHORN, “Die kaiserzeitliche Münzprägung in Phrygien. Stand der Arbeiten und Probleme der Forschung,” in J. NOLLÉ, B. OVERBECK, and P. WEISS (eds.), *Nomismata: Internationales Kolloquium zur kaiserzeitlichen Münzprägung Kleinasiens*, 27–30. April 1994, München, Milan 1997, p. 55.

⁵³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. G38–G50.

⁵⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. G17–G31.

⁵⁵ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. G1–G16.

⁵⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. G32–G37.

⁵⁷ M.J. PRICE and B.I. TRELL, *Coins and their Cities. Architecture on the Ancient Coins of Greece, Rome, and Palestine*, London 1977, pp. 18–29; T. DREW–BEAR,

referred to the cult of Zeus Amorianos, then all of the reverse types represented themes relevant to the local civic cult of Zeus and none of them, apart from the pseudo-autonomous coin of the Flavian era, bore any notion of the State identity. Thus, the coins from the reign of Vespasian are an example of perfect harmony of representations combining State themes on the obverse types with civic themes of the reverse types. On the whole, the civil war that preceded the transition from the Julio-Claudian to the Flavian dynasties does not seem to have altered in any significant way either the minting habits of the citizens of Amorium or their preferences with regard to the choice of civic, as well as state, themes.

A long interval without production of civic issues took place between the reign of Vespasian and the reign of Hadrian. As a consequence, we are not able to evaluate in detail whether there was a smooth or a haphazard transition in the representation of civic and State themes on the coinage of Amorium once the Flavian dynasty gave its place to the Antonines. There is only one exception, a unique coin from the reign of Hadrian showing on the obverse the bust of Antinoos and on the reverse a naked Herakles with a lion-skin over his arm and leaning on his club⁵⁸. It may be argued that the magistrates used this imagery to assimilate the emperor's handsome lover with the brave, young demi-god (*hemitheos*). It is equally plausible, however, that the cult of Herakles was already popular in the region and that his representation could have only enhanced the civic pride of Amorium's citizens, as happened in other cities of Asia Minor⁵⁹. This issue, which

"Representations of Temples on the Greek Imperial Coinage," *ANSMusN*, 19 (1974), pp. 27-63; P.V. HILL, "The Monuments and Buildings of Rome on the Coins of the Early Severans, AD 193-217," in *Essays Presented to H. Sutherland*, London 1979, pp. 58-64; P.H. HILL, "Buildings and Monuments of Rome in Flavian Coins", *NAC*, 8 (1979), pp. 203-33; P.H. HILL, "Buildings and Monuments on Augustus' Coins, c. 40 BC-AD 14", *NAC*, 9 (1980), pp. 197-218; P.H. HILL, "Buildings and Monuments of Rome on Coin Types, AD 14-69," *NC*, 143 (1983), pp. 81-94; P.H. HILL, "Buildings and Monuments of Rome on the Coins of the Second Century AD 96-192 (Part I)", *NC*, 144 (1984), pp. 34-51.

⁵⁸ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. I1.

⁵⁹ H.C. VON MOSCH, "Die Antinoos-Medaillons von Bithynion-Klaudiopolis," *SRN*, 80 (2001), pp. 109-126.

was designed to commemorate the emperor's lover, should not be considered representative of the type of thematic choices that the civic authorities would have made, if they decided to produce more coins. Rather, the coins produced during the reigns of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, at which time the city of Amorium issued a wide range of them with both civic and State themes, provide a more representative sample. We should mention, however, that a single issue also appeared during the reign of Commodus, though its output must have been quite small – only one specimen survives today⁶⁰. On the obverse, it shows the head of the emperor Commodus, while, on the reverse, it depicts the goddess Tyche with rudder and cornucopia standing to the left; both themes were clearly related to State ideology.

On the obverse of the coins produced during the reigns of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, we can see the laureate bust of the emperor Antoninus Pius⁶¹, the bust of his wife Faustina the Elder⁶², and/or the bare-headed bust of Marcus Aurelius as Caesar⁶³. In view of the large number of pseudo-autonomous issues produced probably during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, it is not surprising that the head of Marcus Aurelius as emperor does not appear on any of the obverses. The most common obverse types on these issues are a) the head of Apollo with a lyre⁶⁴ and b) the bust of Sarapis⁶⁵. It is almost certain that the coins with the head of Apollo referred to an established local shrine of the god; an unpublished inscription, coming from the territory of Amorium, has confirmed the existence of a local temple dedicated to Apollo⁶⁶. On the other hand, the cult of Sarapis was not indigenous to the region of Phrygia; it arrived there and, in particular, in the city of Amorium, during the Roman period. Nevertheless, the adoption of the cult by the Romans went through several stages and it became part of

⁶⁰KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no.O1.

⁶¹KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. J1–J11.

⁶²KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. M1–M5.

⁶³KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. L1–L12.

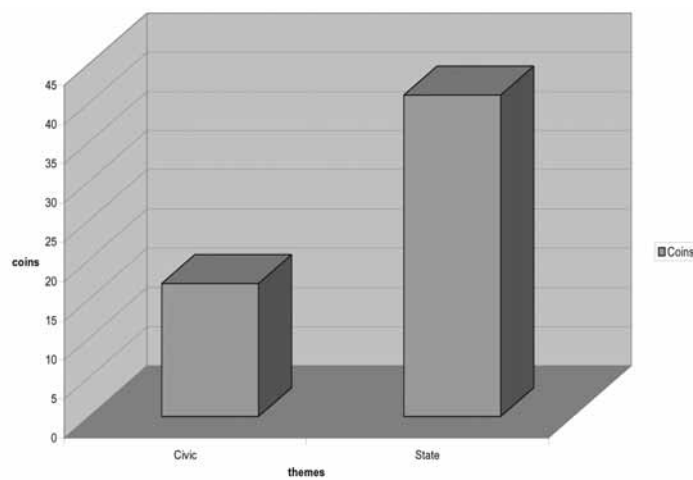
⁶⁴KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K1–K17.

⁶⁵KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K18–K33.

⁶⁶The inscription was recorded by Stephen Mitchell at Afyon Museum in 1977.

the official imperial ideology at the time of Vespasian⁶⁷, even before it became popular in the provinces. By the reigns of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, Amorium seem to have complied with the unwritten guidelines dictated by imperial ideology and produced coins bearing on the obverse type the bust of Sarapis and on the reverse the goddess Isis holding a *sistrum* and *situla*⁶⁸. Subsequently, Marcus Aurelius produced a series of imperial coins that on the reverse showed an Egyptianising temple enclosing a statue of Hermes–Toth⁶⁹. Marcus Aurelius also issued coins on the reverse of which his wife, Faustina the Younger, and Isis were shown together⁷⁰. Since by then Isis and Sarapis had become the divine equivalent of the *augustus* and *augusta*, the cult could no longer be ignored by the civic authorities of Amorium, so they used these gods as themes for the types of their ‘pseudoautonomous’ coins. *Chart 3* shows the changing balance between civic and state themes, as they appear on the obverses of the Antonine coins.

Chart 3 – Antonine period. Obverse themes



⁶⁷ S.A. TAKÁCS, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World*, Leiden 1995, pp. 97–99.

⁶⁸ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K18–K31.

⁶⁹ W. WEBER, *Ein Hermes Tempel des Kaiser Marcus*, Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Heidelberg 1910.

⁷⁰ *RIC III*, p.351, nos. 1725–1726.

For their part, the civic authorities continued to issue the still popular themes of the cult of Zeus Amorianos⁷¹, but, at the same time, they also favoured entirely new themes for the reverses of the coins with the imperial portrait on the obverse. The common themes on the reverse types are: *a*) a two winged Nemesis holding a palm branch and situla⁷², similar to a type found on a series of coins issued by the mint of Smyrna on a regular basis between the reigns of Nero and Gallienus⁷³ (it has already been suggested elsewhere that the appearance of the two Nemeses in Roman iconography referred to a cult celebrated in the Nemeseion of Smyrna)⁷⁴; *b*) Asclepius and Hygeia⁷⁵, a type that probably referred to either the cult of Asclepius at Pergamum⁷⁶ or indicated the existence of a local cult; *c*) two female figures, the first of which holds with rudder and corn-ears, while the second holds patera and rudder⁷⁷; *d*) Tyche holding a rudder and cornucopia⁷⁸; *e*) Rhea holding Zeus as an infant⁷⁹, a theme clearly related to the cult of Zeus Amorianos; *f*) Dionysus with a satyr and panther⁸⁰; and *g*) a winged victory holding a palm branch and wreath⁸¹. Apart from the representation of the winged victory, which was a clearly imperial type, the rest of the themes probably have had local or civic origins. The only theme that is ambiguous, since it seems to have implied either the existence of a local civic cult or followed the directives of the State

⁷¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. L1–L8 (tetrastyle temple with the cult statue of Zeus Amorianos)

⁷² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. J1–J3

⁷³ G.A. CELLINI, “Tyche e Nemesei nelle monete di Smirne,” *Miscellanea Greca e Romana*, 18 (1994), pp. 89–103, esp. p. 95.

⁷⁴ R. FLEISCHER, “Eine neue Darstellung der doppelten Nemesis von Smyrna,” in M.B. DE BOER and T.A. ELDRIDGE (eds.), *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren*, Leiden 1978, pp. 392–6; KLOSE, *Die Münzprägung von Smyrna*, pp. 28–30.

⁷⁵ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. J4–J7.

⁷⁶ Pausanias 2.26.9.

⁷⁷ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. J8–J10

⁷⁸ KATSARI *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. J11 and O1. Elsewhere, during the Severan period the representation of the cult statue of Tyche and a temple clearly imply the existence of a local cult.

⁷⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. L9–L10.

⁸⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. L11–L12.

⁸¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. M1–M5.

ideology, is the representation of Dionysus on the reverse of the coins. In fact, during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, the iconography of Dionysus returning triumphant from India, which is common especially on marble sarcophagi, was very popular in Roman art⁸². Consequently, we may assume that these Dionysiac processions were related to imperial triumphs and victories⁸³. Despite a possible connection of the triumphant god with the victorious emperor, the association of Dionysus, Pan, and the satyr with the rich soil and the production of wine in the region surrounding the city of Amorium could also indicate some local influences. In addition, the reverse types of the ‘pseudo-autonomous’ coins seem to have been equally varied in themes. Specifically, we find *a*) the goddess Demeter holding poppies and long corn ears, while she is resting on a staff⁸⁴; *b*) the cult statue of Artemis Ephesia⁸⁵; *c*) the goddess Isis holding sistrum and situla⁸⁶; and *d*) Herakles holding his club⁸⁷. Apart from the representation of goddess Isis, which shows a direct impact of the imperial ideology, the rest of the cults (Demeter, Artemis Ephesia and Herakles) were probably of local origin. In *Chart 4*, the reverse themes of the coins are divided into three distinct groups: civic, state and civic/state. The civic/state group includes the coins on which the contemporary imperial ideology seems to have merged with the cultural and political identities of the city of Amorium. As we can see, the civic identity remained predominant on the reverse types, while State ideology was gaining ground in comparison to the previous period. However, during the Antonine era it is possible to see a gradual *mélange* of civic and state identities in a combination that had become, by then, inextricable.

The significant changes in the choice of obverse and reverse themes on the coins of Amorium during the Antonine period deserve

⁸² R. TURCAN, *The Cults of the Roman Empire*, English translation by A. Neville, Oxford 1996, p. 313; R. TURCAN, *Les sarcophages romains à représentations dionysiques*, BEFAR 210, Paris 1966, pp. 374–75 and 460–7.

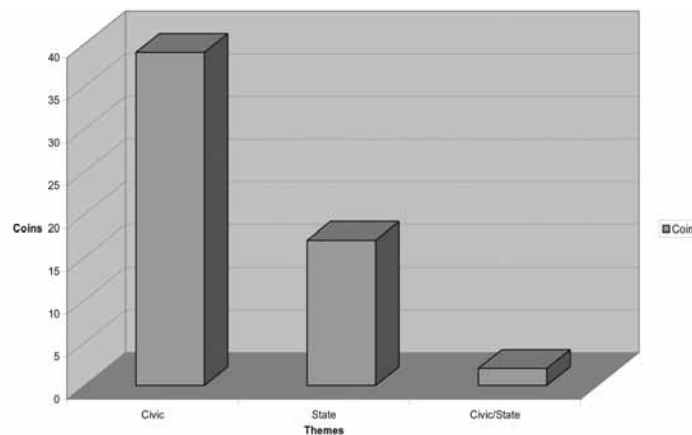
⁸³ HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics*, p. 80.

⁸⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K1–K5.

⁸⁵ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K6–K17.

⁸⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K18–K31.

⁸⁷ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. K32–K33.

Chart 4 – *Antonine period. Reverse themes*

some explanation. We should bear in mind that, for the first time during the Flavian era and the reign of Trajan, the civic elites of the eastern provinces seem to have started promoting a Greek renaissance of cultural activities that peaked during the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius and continued also later during the early third century AD. This renaissance led to a flourishing of Greek letters and rhetoric, a successful development of the Second Sophistic, and a turn towards the classical tradition of the graeco-roman cities. Nevertheless, the love for everything classical did not necessarily imply that there were attempts to undermine the political control of the central imperial authorities. In fact, the admiration for Greece's pre-hellenistic past had also a Roman dimension and was equally successful in attracting the attention of the emperors. Specifically, Hadrian showed repeatedly his concern for the welfare of Greek cities and systematically attempted to intervene in local politics both as an administrator and as a benefactor, especially in the city of Athens. His interest in the classical tradition went as far as founding the Panhellenion, an entirely new organization of Greek cities that promoted the idea of Panhellenic concord within the structure of the Roman empire. The function of the Panhellenion was not exclusively ceremonial; the organization also occasionally interfered with civic administration. Membership in this prestigious

organization was allowed only to those cities that provided proof of their ethnic kinship with the people of Greece proper, thus asserting their cultural superiority. Such a claim emerged clearly in the case of the Phrygian city of Synnada, which actively promoted ties with Hadrianic Greece in the 130s, in order to join the Panhellenion⁸⁸. We cannot exclude the possibility that the city of Amorium might have followed similar trends; even so, it does not seem to have taken action to the same extent of the neighboring city of Synnada. The change of themes on the obverse of Amorium's coins and the inclusion of civic types, which promoted the local 'hellenic' traditions, can only be explained in the context of the Second Sophistic and the attempts of the emperors to promote the 'classical Greek' past of the cities in the eastern provinces. On the other hand, the increase of the State themes on the reverse of the same coins could only indicate an increasing attempt by the civic magistrates to identify themselves with the central authorities and advertise the connections of their city with Rome. The ambiguous civic/state types could point towards the same direction and could confirm that, by the middle of the second century AD, it became increasingly difficult to distinguish between the patriotic feeling an inhabitant of the provinces would have for his own city and the pride he would feel for being part of the Roman empire.

Even if the Antonine period finished with the death of Commodus, the fact that we have a large number of pseudo-autonomous coins dating from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to the reign of Geta does not allow us to divide these coins in two separate groups. Consequently, the following group includes all the issues produced in the mint of Amorium during the reigns of Marcus

⁸⁸ For more information on the Panhellenion see A.J. SPAWFORTH and S. WALKER, "The world of the Panhellenion, I: Athens and Eleusis", *JRS*, 75 (1985), pp. 78–104; A.J.S. SPAWFORTH and S. WALKER, "The world of the Panhellenion, II: three Dorian cities", *JRS*, 76 (1986), pp. 88–105; S. ALCOCK, *Graecia Capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece*, Cambridge 1993, pp. 166–8; C.P. JONES, "The Panhellenion", *Chiron*, 26 (1996), pp. 29–56; SWAIN, *Hellenism and Empire*, pp. 75–6; S. MITCHELL, "The Greek city in the Roman world— the case of Pontus and Bithynia", in X. ΠΕΛΕΚΤΑΗ κ.α. (εκδ.), *Πρακτικά του Η Συνεδρίου Ελληνικής και Λατινικής, αθήνα 3–9 Οκτ. 1982*, Athens 1984, pp. 120–133, esp. p. 131. Also for the attempts of Synnada to join it see ???, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta*, p. 114.

Aurelius, Commodus, Septimius Severus and Caracalla. As we have already observed on the obverse types of previous periods, we continue to find regularly the portrait of the emperors or of members of the imperial family. Nevertheless, an incredibly large number of pseudo-autonoma has been minted from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to the reign of Caracalla and could (at least in theory) change the picture we have had so far with regard to the predominance of the State identity on the obverses. First of all, we can notice a common representation of the bust of the local parliament (*boule*)⁸⁹ and the assembly (*demos*)⁹⁰, which represent the political institutions of the city. Even though the *boule* (council) and the *demos* (assembly) do not indicate the existence of a civic political autonomy⁹¹, we cannot deny the fact that their presence makes a strong statement in favor of the power of civic identities. Only a handful of coins depicted local cults such as Herakles⁹², Hermes⁹³, the head of Zeus⁹⁴, while the head of Sol on a unique coin⁹⁵ once more referred to the imperial ideology of the time. Nevertheless, in the *Chart 5* we can see clearly that the existence of pseudo-autonoma did not diminish the power of the ideology of the State. For instance, we find that some coins showed the head of the Senate on the obverse⁹⁶, a theme that first appeared on eastern civic coinages as early as the 2nd century BC⁹⁷. Despite the fact that its political power was greatly reduced over the centuries, the Senate remained an inherent part of the Roman administration and was celebrated as *hiera*, especially on coins issued after the 2nd century AD⁹⁸.

⁸⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N3–N18.

⁹⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N19–N23.

⁹¹ This subject has already been discussed in A. JOHNSTON, “The so-called ‘pseudo-autonomous’ Greek Imperials,” *ANSMusN*, 30 (1985), pp. 89–112.

⁹² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. U42–U47.

⁹³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. U48.

⁹⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. U51–U52.

⁹⁵ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. U50.

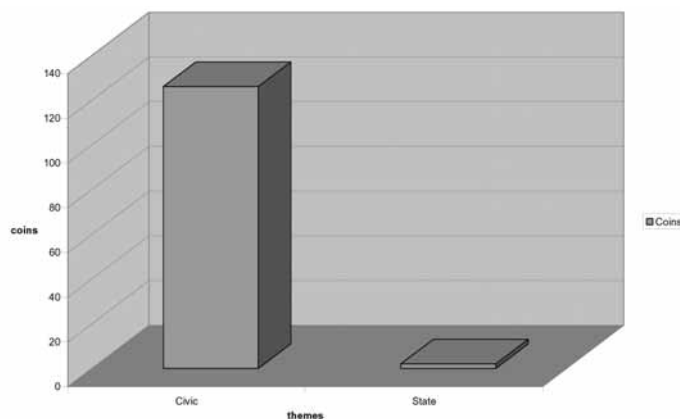
⁹⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N1–N2.

⁹⁷ For a comprehensive list of the *Synkletos* coins, see G. FORNI, *IEPA e ΘEOΣ CYNKAHTOC. Un capitolo dimenticato nella storia del senato romano*, Memorie della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rome 1953, pp. 49 ff.

⁹⁸ FORNI, *IEPA e ΘEOΣ CYNKAHTOC*, pp. 53–8, 163–8.

However, the majority of the pseudo-autonomous coins presented on their obverse the bust of *Thea Rome*⁹⁹. In Phrygia, the goddess *Thea Romē* is depicted wearing a Corinthian helmet and carrying an aegis on the obverse, while the symbolic handshake visible on the obverse represented the concord and political partnership that existed between Rome and individual cities. The representations of the images of Rome seem to have multiplied at the end of the 2nd century AD¹⁰⁰, when Rome came to be regarded as the supreme and uncontested *polis* presiding over the other *poleis* of the Roman world. In this way, the ‘official’ Roman ideology, as it appeared on Roman imperial coinage, was adjusted to needs of the expression of the ideology of the Graeco-Roman *poleis* in the eastern provinces¹⁰¹.

Chart 5 – Marcus Aurelius - Caracalla period. Obverse types



⁹⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. U1–U41.

¹⁰⁰ HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics*, p. 73.

¹⁰¹ For the imperial cult and the goddess Roma, see C. FAYER, *Il culto della dea Roma. Origine e diffusione nell'impero*, Pescara 1976; for the representation of Rome on Roman imperial coinage and its typology, see N. MÉTHY, “Les références à Rome dans le monnayage du Haut-Empire: iconographie et idéologie,” in B. KLUGE and B. WEISSER (eds.), *Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress, Berlin 1997*, vol. 1, Berlin 2000, pp. 575–96.

On the reverse types of the coins issued from the reign of Marcus Aurelius until the reign of Caracalla, we can see an incredibly varied iconography that owes its origins either to the current imperial ideology or to local myths. Most of the reverse types of the ‘pseudo-autonomous’ coins depict two hands clasped, surrounded by the inscription AMOPIANΩN, thus reminding the citizens of the alliance of their city with the metropolis of the empire¹⁰². Undoubtedly these coins should be placed in the civic/state category of themes, since they indicated the pride of the citizens for their alliance with Rome. Equally ambiguous remains the presence of the goddess Demeter, who may have indicated the existence of a local cult or the attributes of the empress Julia Domna, on the reverse of pseudo-autonomous coins¹⁰³. Also, during the Severan period, the cult of Herakles may have been associated with the imperial house and thus may have been represented on the obverse of the coins¹⁰⁴. After all, Herakles has always been identified with the archetypal cultural hero and benevolent ruler, who imposed civic order, cleared the country of wild beasts, conquered barbaric lands, and spread Greek civilisation¹⁰⁵. In this light, during the Roman Empire the association of the hero Herakles with the Roman emperor (especially Caracalla) would have justified the claim of the ruler to the throne and the acknowledgement of his legitimacy by his subjects. Another theme that could perplex numismatists is the appearance of one (rather than two) Nemesis on the reverse of the pseudo-autonomous coins¹⁰⁶. Similar types of Nemesis, holding a bridle, wreath, purse, or *sistrum*, have been found on imperial coins, mainly *denarii* and *cistophori*, issued by the eastern mints and could indicate the influence of the State on the civic coinage of Amorium¹⁰⁷. A very small number of less ambiguous themes appear on the reverses.

¹⁰² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. U1–U41 and U48–U49.

¹⁰³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N13–N17.

¹⁰⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N18.

¹⁰⁵ HARL, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics*, p. 78.

¹⁰⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N23.

¹⁰⁷ B. LICHOCKA, “Julius Caesar and Roman imperial coins with Nemesis,” in B. KLUGE and B. WEISSER (eds.), *XII Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress, Berlin 1997*, vol. 1, Berlin 2000, pp. 554–8, esp. p. 558.

These were the old civic symbol of the eagle¹⁰⁸, the river-god Knepelaos (a river that probably lay very close to the city of Amorium)¹⁰⁹, the local goddess Athena¹¹⁰, the god Apollo¹¹¹, the god Asclepius¹¹², the Half moon and Star (that probably symbolized the empress Julia Domna)¹¹³ and a winged Victory standing on a globe, a probable reminder to the citizens of the imperial victories¹¹⁴.

The reverse of the coins bearing the imperial portrait on the obverse presents similar problems. There is a large number of coins that advertised the civic identity and was also part of the imperial ideology as this was presented on the official coinage of the period. For example, the appearance of the goddess Tyche, holding rudder or cornucopia, or her statue within a temple¹¹⁵, or the image of Dionysus¹¹⁶ could have either advertised the State ideology or referred to local civic identities¹¹⁷. A confusing image of either Athena or Rome holding phiale and spear¹¹⁸ could have led the ancient inhabitants and lead modern researchers to the same baffling conclusion. The goddesses Aphrodite, Demeter and Cybele on the reverse of coins that bore the portrait of Julia Domna on the obverse could be interpreted both as attributes of the empress or as signs of a local cult¹¹⁹. Of course, some of the civic themes continued the long tradition that had been established during

¹⁰⁸ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. U42–U47.

¹⁰⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N6–N12, U51–U52.

¹¹⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N3–N5.

¹¹¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. N19.

¹¹² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. N20.

¹¹³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. U50.

¹¹⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. N1–N2.

¹¹⁵ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. P5–P6, Q4–Q9, R26–R27.

¹¹⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. S33–S36, T14, T16–T18

¹¹⁷ For the representation of Tyche on both imperial and provincial coinages see, KLOSE, *Die Münzprägung von Smyrna*, p. 34. For the association of Tyche with the fortune of the emperor see C. DE RANIERI, “*Providentia deorum*: Investitura divina e charisma della dinastia nella propaganda iniziale di Commodo,” *NAC*, 26 (1997), pp. 311–37, esp. p. 314; J.–M. ALONSO–N’NEZ, “Die Ideologie der Virtus und der Fortuna bei Florus im Lichte der Inschriften und Münzen,” *BJ*, 186 (1986), pp. 291–8.

¹¹⁸ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. P7–P9, R18, R42.

¹¹⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. Q11 and Q12–Q15 and Q16–Q17; also R39, T9–T12.

previous reigns: *a*) Zeus seated on throne holding a thunderbolt and a long scepter¹²⁰; *b*) the temple of Zeus Amorianos¹²¹; *c*) the name of the magistrate who was responsible for the production of the coins within a wreath¹²²; *d*) the cult statue of Artemis Ephesia¹²³; *e*) Rhea holding infant Zeus¹²⁴; *f*) Asclepius¹²⁵; *g*) the river-god Knepeleos¹²⁶; and *h*) Apollo and Artemis¹²⁷. On the other hand, we can see that a large number of coins unambiguously advertised the identity of the State and the glory of the emperor and his family. The legionary eagle standing on an altar between military standards¹²⁸; or the image of the emperor riding a horse and holding a spear (or sceptre)¹²⁹; or in quadriga holding victory and sceptre¹³⁰; the image of the hemitheos Herakles¹³¹; the image of Rome¹³²; a Nemesis¹³³; and a winged Nike¹³⁴ are some of the most unmistakable examples of imperial ideology. *Chart 6* shows the balance between civic and State themes and the increasing predominance of types that advertised both imperial and civic ideologies. For the first time in the history of the coinage of Amorium, the identities of the central State and of the city became inextricably entangled and dominated the reverse of the majority of the types. The number of coins bearing explicitly civic themes continued to be larger than the number of coins representing explicitly State themes. However, we cannot ignore the fact that, by then, the citizens of Phrygia may have been more willing to identify themselves not with their native city but with Rome.

¹²⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. Q23–Q24, S1–S27, T15.

¹²¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. Q25–Q28, R33–R34, S37–S38.

¹²² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. Q29 and R47–R49.

¹²³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. Q30.

¹²⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. R28–R32, S28–S30.

¹²⁵ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. R35.

¹²⁶ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. R40.

¹²⁷ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. T19–T21.

¹²⁸ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. P1–P2, Q1–Q3, R19–R24, T1–T2.

¹²⁹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. P3–P4.

¹³⁰ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. R1–R2.

¹³¹ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. Q22, R4–R13, R43–R45.

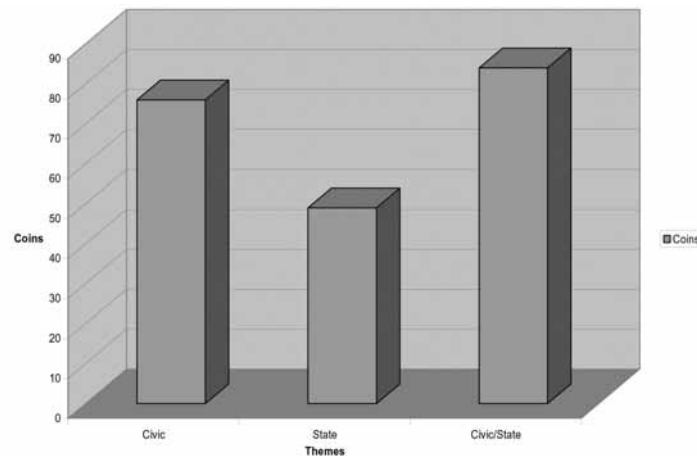
¹³² KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. R14–R17.

¹³³ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. R36–R38, T4–T8.

¹³⁴ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. nos. R41, R46

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL IDENTITIES IN ROMAN PHRYGIA

Chart 6 – *M. Aurelius to Caracalla. Reverse themes*



The introduction of new themes that combined elements of civic and State identities in the coinage of Amorium should be interpreted in the light of the contemporary political situation in the Roman empire at the end of the second century and at the beginning of the third century AD. First of all, we cannot help but notice that the value of Roman citizenship as a local status indicator had started to decline, mainly because the majority of the inhabitants, by then, had managed to acquire Roman citizenship. The new state of affairs was confirmed by an edict issued by Caracalla in 212–213 AD – the so-called ‘Antonine Constitution’ – through which all free-born provincials became Roman citizens¹³⁵. The patriotic feelings the citizens would have felt towards their city during the previous centuries, thus, subsided in front of the emergence of an all-powerful State ideology that represented the sentiments of the majority of the population. Consequently, in the coins issued at the end of the second century or at the beginning of the third century AD, we should look for signs of the decline of the influence of civic identities, as is demonstrated by the analysis of civic coinages. This decline, however, was not restricted to the representations of civic/ local iconography. Despite the fact that, until the third century AD, the prestige of the Greek city in

¹³⁵ K. BURASELIS, *I Theia Dorea*, Athens 1989.

the Roman eastern provinces provided a focus for the economic and political actions of its inhabitants, both archaeologists and epigraphists have attested numerous changes in the attitude and in the ideology of the population of the region during the early third century AD. For example, the decrease in number of honorary inscriptions could indicate an indifference by the wealthy members of the society towards benefactions and the construction of large public buildings, while, at the same time, private houses became larger and lavishly decorated. Eventually, the welfare and/ or the fame of the city took second place in the hearts and minds of the citizens, who now looked up to Rome and to the central imperial administration for inspiration, political guidance and protection¹³⁶. One of the main consequences of this shift in favor of imperial ideology was a gradual decline in the local production of coins throughout the eastern provinces – a production that had started as early as the archaic period and, in some cases, had continued unabated until the middle of the third century AD. In fact, after the death of Caracalla, no new coins were produced by the city of Amorium, apart from a single issue that appeared during the reign of Gallienus¹³⁷. This issue on the obverse shows the radiate portrait of the emperor Gallienus and on the reverse the emperor riding a horse. By then, the production of smaller denominations had been almost entirely undertaken by the centralized imperial mints, leaving little room to the cities for inventing their own types or for minting their own coins¹³⁸.

Concluding Remarks

Ever since the Hellenistic period, the Greek, and later the Greco–Roman, cities had issued their own bronze coinages for both ideological and financial reasons. In this article, I have attempted to chart the development of civic ideologies in the Phrygian cities of the

¹³⁶ J.H.W.G LIEBESCHUETZ, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, Oxford 2001.

¹³⁷ KATSARI, *The Amorium Mint*, cat. no. U1.

¹³⁸ C. KATSARI, “The organisation of Roman mints during the third century AD: the view from the eastern provinces”, *Classics Ireland*, 10 (2003), pp. 27–53.

Greco–Roman empire and the continuous reinvention of civic political identities. It seems that the local magistrates of Amorium were fully aware of the political situation that placed Rome in the center of the world and their city within a network of other urban centers, a position which was of great help to the effective administration of the empire. Consequently, the iconography of civic coins demonstrated the dual loyalty of the local authorities, firstly towards their native city and secondly towards the central administration, or vice-versa. Amorium issued its own coins for the first time during the Republican period, when the political landscape remained hazy and local patriotism prevailed. Under these circumstances, the magistrates chose types that would have enhanced the fame of their city in the region of Phrygia and beyond, while, at the same time, they clarified the fact that they did not underplay their dependence from the Roman administration in the west. The transition from the Republic to the Empire during the Augustan period was followed by the minting of civic coins on which the imperial portrait prevailed on the obverse, while local/ civic themes could be seen on the reverse. The same situation continued throughout the first century AD, despite the fact that the change from the Julio–Claudian to the Flavian dynasty did not occur peacefully. The most radical changes in respect to the iconography of civic issues took place during the second century AD, when the Greco–roman cities started to promote their classical traditions and chose topics that would link their history with the history of the ancient Greeks. It seems that the emperors actively promoted this movement and eventually the State ideology also changed in a way that acknowledged Greece’s illustrious past. During this time a fusion of civic and state themes appeared on both provincial and imperial coinages, a change that became even more common at the end of the second century and the beginning of the third century AD. By that time the State ideology became the focus of local politics and influenced heavily the identity of Amorium and its citizens. Thus, the local magistrates issued coins representing themes that would flatter the emperor, would acknowledge the status of Rome as a metropolis and would place firmly their city on the forefront of the political stage of the Roman empire.

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