

## THE ICONOGRAPHIC CHOICES OF THE MINUCII AUGURINI: RE-READING RRC 242 AND 243

**Abstract:** The coinage of the Minucii Augurini (RRC 242 and 243) has received extensive scholarly commentary (Crawford 1974, 273-6; Wiseman 1996; Evans 2011; Elkins 2015, 21-2), but a holistic comparative approach to the iconography of these two types leads to new conclusions regarding likely compositional prototypes in other media, the motivations behind the design choice, and the attributes and identification of the figures. All this helps explain compositional variations between the two coin types that previous scholars have found problematic. A wide range of comparative evidence is used including glass paste intaglios, Etruscan tomb decoration, relief depictions and archaeological finds of priestly implements, further coin imagery, and literary testimony, especially Plut. *Mor.* 89F.

**Keywords:** *Roman republican coinage, numismatic iconography, gens Minucii, priestly implements, monumentality, glass paste intaglios*

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**T**wo members of the Augurini branch of the Minucii, perhaps brothers, chose as their basic coin design a column with a figure standing at the top, flanked by two other standing figures (RRC 242/1 and 243/1; figs 1-2).<sup>1</sup> On both designs, two large ears of grain also flank the column. The types are remarkable in the republican coin series for being the first to represent an architectural monument and the first explicit commemoration of the moneyer's ancestors. The order of creation and dates of production are disputed. That of Tiberius (243/1) is less detailed, and considered earlier by Mattingly (133 BC) and later by Crawford (134 BC). By contrast, that of Gaius (242/1) is more detailed, and placed one year earlier than Tiberius' issue by Crawford (135 BC), whereas Mattingly hypothesizes it is five years later than Tiberius' (128 BC).<sup>2</sup> I am agnostic on which of these arrangements is to be preferred and feel it safer for the historian to consider the types together in the socio-political climate of the late 130s and early 120s, rather than attempt to connect either to a specific year and its events.

For some time now scholars have confidently connected the basic design shared by both coin types with L. Minucius, a probably legendary figure of the late fifth century known from Livy, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Pliny for his role in the Maelius incident.<sup>3</sup> The nuances of the literary narratives have been spelled out well by other scholars, and need not be rehashed here.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The research for this article was made possible through a PSC-CUNY grant and the topic grew out of projects previously funded by the same body. It is dedicated to S. Daniel Ackerman: *quae fuit igitur umquam in ullo homine tanta constantia? Constantiam dico; nescio an melius patientiam possim dicere* (Cic. *Lig.* 26).

<sup>2</sup> Mattingly 2004, 208, 214.

<sup>3</sup> Dion. Hal. RA 12.4; Livy 4.16; Plin. *NH* 18.15, 24.21. The testimony is contradictory.

<sup>4</sup> RRC, i.273-276; Wiseman 1996; Evans 2011; Elkins 2015, 21-22 offers an even-handed synthesis



Fig. 1 - RRC 242/1, Yale University Art Gallery 2001.87.664, Public Domain



Fig. 2 - RRC 243/1, Yale University Art Gallery 2001.87.665, Public Domain

Instead, I question how we read the imagery on the coins themselves, and then how those readings are connected to any literary testimony. Comparative iconography allows for a new identification of at least one of the figures and a shift in our understanding of the social context and intentions behind the type.

The best precedents for both the reverse composition on both types and details emphasized in relationship to the column on Gaius's type come from Roman and Etruscan funerary imagery. The overall compositional grouping has significant parallels among republican intaglios, many of which are glass pastes. The form of the architectural setting as rendered by Gaius finds no one single iconographic parallel, but shares numerous points with Etruscan monuments. The attributes held by each of the three figures are intended to help us clearly identify each man as a separate, historical member of the *gens* Minucii. These attributes, like the

of earlier scholarship.

superimposed large ears of wheat, should not necessarily be read as literal parts of the monument itself, but instead part of the numismatic vocabulary intended to help the viewer understand the significance of the type as a whole.

## COMPOSITIONAL GROUPING, LESSONS FROM GLASS PASTE INTAGLIOS

The compositional grouping of this coin, two figures at a column, is unusual in numismatics but would have been familiar to ancient viewers from numerous intaglios with similar designs. Most of the intaglios relevant to this discussion are glass pastes. Glass pastes are in essence 'fake' gems. Every time they are discussed in Pliny's *Natural History*, there is an anxiety over how to distinguish the imitation from the real object.<sup>5</sup> The theme is recurrent, and, in that recurrence, Pliny reflects the anxieties of his peers over the cooption of markers of elite status and the possibility

<sup>5</sup> Plin. *NH*, 37.22, 26, 33, 37, 44, cf. 37.10 and 36.67.



that members of the elite be fooled into acquiring a 'fake' through lack of knowledge. The special knowledge that his encyclopedia offers his elite readership thus becomes in and of itself a marker of status. However, for the purposes of the historian, glass paste intaglios offer a unique insight into the tastes and choices of Romans who had reason to possess a signet ring, a marker and guarantor of their identity, but not the wealth to afford an actual gem. Such glass paste intaglios could be produced relatively quickly and cheaply and thus could even have been distributed among clients or employees or any other group wishing to promote a shared identity.<sup>6</sup> In his history of rings, Pliny claims that in the distant past Roman senators used rings of simple iron, but now slaves gild their iron rings in gold. The suggestion is that having elite status means the ability to discern the difference between gilt and gold, as well as to value authentic restraint over aspirations of wealth. He then goes on to connect the use of signet rings with money lending, saying the connection is "proved by the custom of the lower classes, among whom even at the present day a ring is whipped out when a contract is being made".<sup>7</sup> He is in essence claiming that an elite practice, the signet ring, has been co-opted by the lower classes and applied for base purposes. His elite prejudices, both in this passage and all those advising how to identify fake gems, let us see how our surviving glass pastes, especially those known from multiple types, may give some insight into the tastes and allegiances of those below the elite level of society.

Scholars discussing the Roman republican coin series have long connected literary testimony about the signet rings of leading generals, such as Sulla and Pompey, to the designs shown on their coinage and that of their partisans.<sup>8</sup> There is nothing particularly new in connecting gems to coins and vice versa. The very fact that we have such surviving literary testimony regarding the choice of image and the associated meaning for the signet rings of Rome's leading men suggests that these images were readily recognizable among the Roman elite and perhaps even beyond. Harriet Flower has even suggested that Bocchus took the inspiration for his monumental sculptural group erected on the Capitoline in 91 BCE from Sulla's signet ring design, the miniature proceeding the major monument, rather than the reverse as has usually been assumed.<sup>9</sup>

Before the 130s and often over the next decade or so, the reverses on types of the denarii were fairly consistent, first the Dioscuri on horseback, then Victory in a biga and finally any god or goddess in a biga or quadriga. The earliest two denarii to break with these typical reverse designs all display types that are well known from multiple gems.<sup>10</sup> It

is also likely that same subject matter, the discovery of the wolf and twins and an oath-swearing scene may have been represented in monumental form in the city.<sup>11</sup> It is thus not surprising that the third such design departure and the first to incorporate monumental architecture into a coin type would also draw on precedents from the intaglio tradition.

The closest intaglio parallel is very close indeed. On this glass paste two togate figures face each other; the right hand figure holds a large *lituus* (fig. 3; Thorvaldsen I1103). There may be traces of an articulated column between the two figures, but it is impossible to be certain what marks are flaws in the glass or part of the original design because of the poor execution of the specimen and its present state of preservation. It is difficult not to associate this paste with the Minucii Augurini because of the close connection to the coin types. The soapy character strongly suggests that this glass paste was mold-made, thus that it is like to have been just one of a series of reproductions of an engraved original. Images of standing figures holding a *lituus* are extremely rare on ancient intaglios, making it unlikely that this was a general type produced to appeal to any Roman consumer shopping for a budget signet ring, but rather a specific commission.<sup>12</sup>



Fig. 3 - Thorvaldsen I1103, Public Domain

There are also glass paste intaglios which show figures flanking a central column. A particularly strong visual parallel has a man and woman standing in what appears to be an attitude of grief (fig. 4; Thorvaldsen I933). The male figure has his right knee slightly bent as if his foot were slightly

include AGDS Vienna 1098; Furtwängler 1896, no. 1135 (now lost?) and 1136 (Berlin); Vollenweider 1979, no. 90 (Geneva); Henig/Scarbrick/Whiting 1994, no. 136; see Yarrow 2015, 347-350 for discussion and references to earlier scholarship. RRC 235/1, Faustulus' discovery of the wolf and twins, also shares a subject well known from gems: Furtwängler 1896, no. 4381-4382, 4392, 9639; Munich 1456-1464, Göttingen 339-341; Metropolitan (NY) 17.194.36 and 17.194.37.

<sup>11</sup> Livy 10.23 for the wolf and twins monument near the *figus Rominalis* and Kuttner 1995, 124-125, cf. Serv. ad. Aen. 8.641 for a statue group depicting an oath swearing scene on the *via sacra*.

<sup>12</sup> A Berlin onyx has a single togate man holding a *lituus* (Furtwängler 1896, no. 870), the only such type I know.

<sup>6</sup> Perhaps the strongest connection between a well-known family of *negotiores*, a republican coin type, and widely surviving glass paste type can be made between the Crepereii, RRC 399/1 and the following glass pastes: British Museum 1814.0704.1919; 1814.0704.2366; 1814.0704.2356; 1923, 0401.141; 1923, 0401.142; 1923.0401.143; and Metropolitan Museum 17.194.28. Precious gem intaglios of the same type are also known: Ashmolean AN1892.155, Thorvaldsen I630 (both cornelian); and Metropolitan Museum 81.6.17 (sard).

<sup>7</sup> Plin. NH, 33.6.

<sup>8</sup> Plut. Mar. 10 (cf. 32), Sull. 3 (cf. 6); Val. Max. 8.14.4; Plin. NH 37.8; Dio 42.18.3; RRC 359/1, 359/2, 426/1, and 426/3.

<sup>9</sup> Flower 2006, 113.

<sup>10</sup> RRC 234/1, the oath-swearing scene, revives RRC 28 and 29; known gems

raised. Both male and female figure rest their chins on their left hands, their heads slightly bowed. There are also glass pastes with two seated figures flanking a column.<sup>13</sup> Again both male and female figure raise one hand to their face. The hand is held right before the figures mouth and the other arm is bent and rests in the lap. The column rests on a high base that comes to the seated figure's knees and has at the top an indistinct object, perhaps a cinerary urn. The chairs, especially that of the male figure, are typical of chairs seen in Etruscan funerary contexts and similar to the famous *sedilia Corsini* found at Rome underneath the Capella Corsini in S. Giovanni in Laterano, now in the Museum Galleria Nazionale, Palazzo Corsini.<sup>14</sup>

Glass pastes with an individual mourner facing columnar grave stele are also known, and seem related to yet distinct from, gems which show a heroically nude warrior mourning at column usually holding a cinerary urn.<sup>15</sup> The warrior is often identified as Achilles by catalogues and usually has his back to the column. Likewise, there is an intaglio with two heroically nude bearded men at a columnar grave stele atop a four-step base, one man rests his foot on the steps; early catalogues wanted to identify this as Hercules' absolution from the murder of Iphitus by Deiphobus, son



Fig. 4 - Thorvaldsen 1933, Public Domain

of Hippolytus, of Amyclea.<sup>16</sup> Columns are regular features

<sup>13</sup> BM 1814,0704.2374; Philadelphia, University Art Museum no. 29-128-1236, an image is available at <http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/objekt/201977>. At present, the British Museum does not provide stable urls for objects in its collection, but images can be retrieved through the online collection search by entering the inventory number: [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/search.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the cinerary urn in the shape of a man seated on a chair: BM 1847,1127.1 and the rock cut chairs in the 'tomb of the Shields and Chairs' in the Banditaccia necropolis in Cerveteri (Caere).

<sup>15</sup> Thorvaldsen 1931 and 1932, cf. BM 1814,0704.2838 and an unpublished Tassie, Beazley Archive ref. no. 3156.

<sup>16</sup> BM 1859,0301.114 (unillustrated); Hertz Sale 1856, cat. no. 1961

on intaglios accompanying standing figures of gods as they were represented by famous statues, as a prop to which Psyche binds Eros, and as a means of evoking the setting for a Bacchic, heroic, or pastoral scene. Often columns are depicted as objects of contemplation of philosophers, artists, Muses, and other thinkers. All these typical compositions on intaglios have to greater or lesser degrees influenced the mourning scenes found on republican glass pastes, but it is the mourning scenes in particular which I argue had the greatest influence on the compositional grouping on the coins of the Minucii.

## ARCHITECTURAL SETTING

The main difference between the types of Gaius and Tiberius is the degree of detail and emphasis given to the architectural setting in which the figures appear. Gaius takes significant care to emphasize the statue bases, column base and shaft, column capital, bell, and lions. Tiberius treats the first three of these in a much more cursory fashion and leaves off completely the last two elements. The intentions behind each design and the instructions given to the die cutters can only be surmised by the comparison of multiple well-preserved specimens. This is particularly true when attempting to establish details at the edges of coin types where specimens may be more worn, the edges cracked, or the die struck off the flan.

Figures 5-6 are line drawings reproducing the lower portion of the column and the statue bases as they have been observed on specimens of Gaius' type in trade.<sup>17</sup> The same features may be observed by the comparison of multiple specimens held by public institutions.<sup>18</sup> The statue bases break into the circular frame as if only the top edge and side facing the column could be viewed through a porthole window. On both bases, the edge facing the column is represented as slightly concave and both visible edges are rendered with a double line border, as if echoing further structural details. The statue bases are of the same height as the top of column base and the foreparts of the lions seem to emerge from the column base, their paws resting on the column bases. By contrast, Tiberius' type indicates that the figures are part of a monumental statue grouping by the ground line on which they stand intersecting the column base at about its midpoint (fig. 2). Typically, denarii used a single line as the 'ground line' of the composition; this line also separated the type design from the exergue and any legend placed there. While the broken ground line of Tiberius' type is a small detail, it is unusual enough to clearly indicate the intention to depict an architectural setting.<sup>19</sup>

(unillustrated).

<sup>17</sup> ACR Auctions 16 (17 June 2015), lot 363; Numismatik Naumann 2 (7 April 2013), lot 180.

<sup>18</sup> The connection of the left-hand statue base to the dotted border may be observed on Harvard 1990.18. The connection of the right-hand statue base to the dotted border is visible on Berlin 18201349. The intersection of the bottom of the column base and the dotted border is visible on BM 1855,0213.8. Images of all these specimens are also available through the CRRO database.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. other coin types which forego the traditional exergue line, RRC 290/1 depicting a ship, RRC 292/1 depicting the use of voting bridges, 293/1 depicting a statue on a base. The only other coin in the republican series to have this type of staged base line also seems to have to statues flanking a central monument, RRC 438/1. Images of all these types are available through the CRRO database.



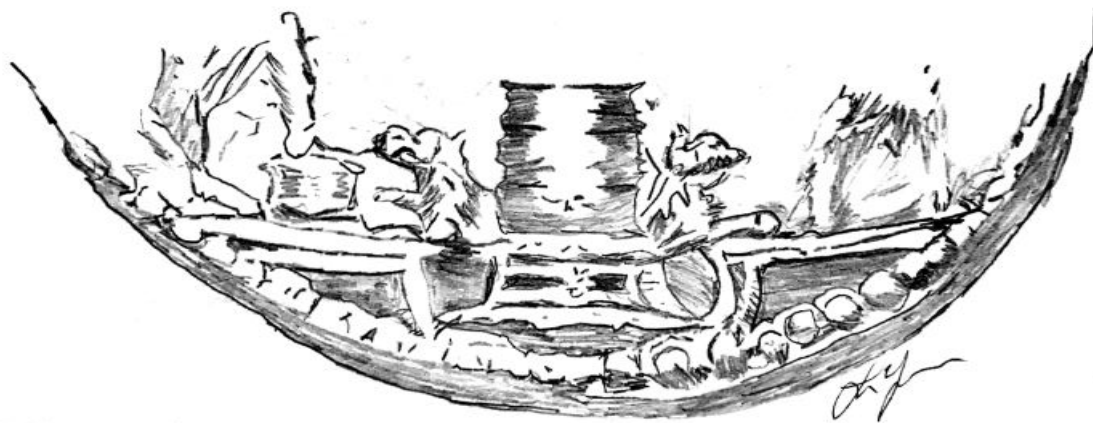


Fig. 5 - Original drawing by the author after ACR Auctions 16 (17 June 2015), lot 363, all rights reserved



Fig. 6 - Original drawing by author after Numismatik Naumann 2 (7 April 2013), lot 180, all rights reserved

The form of the column shaft has seemed too many commentators to be the most problematic part of the design. On Tiberius' type the shaft appears to be made up of tapered drums with rounded edges, whereas on Gaius' type, the effect of each drum being a separate distinct element is heightened by the inclusion of a spacer mark between each drum, as if the column was banded in some way. It is possible these are simply attempts at depicting the weathering of the soft stone used for an archaic monument. For a comparison one might consider the weathering of the Doric tufa column drums on the south side of the forum at Pompeii (fig. 7). The drum brakes create a horizontal banding effect which would be even stronger had the stone not been originally protected by stucco.

I would also argue that this type of articulated shaft was visually expected by the Roman viewer in representations of ancient honorific columns. Two of the bronze coin types of C. Marcius Censorinus show a similarly articulated column which is believed to be a victory monument erected to honor C. Marcius Rutilius for his victory in 356 BC near Ostia.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, gem engravers used a stack of round edged

<sup>20</sup> Livy 7.17; RRC 346/3 and 4. The articulation of the column drums is visible on some specimens illustrated in the CRRO database, but it is most clearly seen on specimens in trade: CNG e-auction 374 (11 May 2016),

cubes to represent rustic columns or rocky outcroppings. A carnelian in the Getty has a warrior arming before a such crude column rendered as if it were made of a stack of boulders with a head on top. This specimen combines elements well known from other common Italic gem types.<sup>21</sup> Typically the warrior with a raised foot stands before a column, whereas the pile of rocks surmounted by a head is a

lot 475 (RRC 346/4); NAC 70 (16 May 2013), lot 113 (RRC 346/4); CNG e-auction 191 (9 July 2008), lot 212 (RRC 346/3). We can be confident that RRC 346/4 is intended to represent a harbor scene based on parallels in Roman wall painting. There are numerous examples of harbor scenes with two ships shown traveling in different directions so that the prow of one and the aplustre are juxtaposed one against the other; the best preserved examples being the fresco from the temple of Isis (CASSON 1971, 144 n. 15 with fig. 133) and another from the house of the Vettii, both from Pompeii. Likewise, Roman wall painting also confirms that ship prows viewed through arches is another typical means of representing a Roman harbor as seen on RRC 346/3, cf. Naples, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 8603, from VI Insula Occidentalis. Other Roman frescoes depicting port scenes confirm that honorific columns were a regular part of the harbor landscape: Naples, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 9514, from Stabiae, inv. no. 9484 from Pompeii, and another now in Palazzo Massimo, from Villa Farnesina, Trastevere, Rome. This last landscape shows in the far distance a single honorific column topped by Victory, just like Censorinus' coins. Given that scene as a whole is interpreted as a river scene giving way to a port, it is tempting to take this as a representation of Ostia.

<sup>21</sup> SPIER 1992, 87, no. 199. Getty inv. 82.AN.162.56.



**Fig. 7** - Photochrom print c. 1900 in the collection of the United States Library of Congress, reproduction no. LC-DIG-ppmsc-06582, now in the Public Domain



**Fig. 8** - 'tomba dei letti funebri' from the Populonia necropolis at San Cerbone, photographs by Roger Ulrich, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

common element in depictions of the shepherd's discovery of the wolf and twins. A similar 'spiral' element on a glass paste in Berlin has also been interpreted as a rocky outcropping.<sup>22</sup> And likewise the same type of column shaft can be seen on an unpublished Tassie in the Beazley Archive; however, in this case the woman leaning on the column has a hairstyle typical of the high empire.<sup>23</sup> Still, we do have actual extant columns from an Etruscan funerary context which have been carved with horizontal bands, namely those still visible in the 'tomba dei letti funebri' from the Populonia necropolis at San Cerbone (fig. 8); this connection with Etruscan funerary

<sup>22</sup> Furtwängler 1896, no. 9865.

<sup>23</sup> Beazley reference no. 1230.

architecture will become even more explicit as we come to the remaining elements of the architectural setting below. I would emphasize that these four points of comparison – typical weathering patterns, column on the latter asses of C. Marcius Censorinus, conventions of contemporary intaglio iconography, and carved banding on columns in Etruscan tombs – are not alternative explanations for the column types found on the coinage of the two Minucii, but rather, alongside this coinage, evidence for how a contemporary Roman viewer would anticipate an archaic columnar monument should appear.

The column capital has long been described as





Fig. 9 - 'tomba dei rilievi' from the Banditaccia necropolis at Cerveteri, photograph by Roberto Ferrari, CC BY-SA 2.0

Aeolic and compared to surviving Etruscan capitals. This may be misleading as the Aeolic architectural order is more typically used to refer to early styles developed in the eastern Mediterranean. Typically, the Aeolic capitals from the eastern Mediterranean have a palmette between the two volutes, whereas the Etruscan capitals have a more triangular geometric pattern between the volutes. For comparison with the coins of the Augurini, the best Etruscan parallels are the pillar capitals in the 'tomba dei rilievi' from the Banditaccia necropolis at Cerveteri (fig. 9); the engraved columns on the cinerary urn thought to be in the form of an Etruscan house now in the archaeological museum in Florence; and the pillar capital on the front bedpost at the head of the bed on both of the 'Sarcophagi of the Spouses'.<sup>24</sup> One might also compare the strong tapering effect and dramatic capital of the single support column in the 'tomba dei capitelli', also from Banditaccia, although this capital has double volutes (fig. 10). The capital is rendered on a much smaller scale with far less attention to detail on Tiberius' type than on Gaius'. On most surviving specimens of RRC 243/1, it is only slightly taller than the column drums and is created by three small lines starting together at the top of the last drum and spreading out to the width of the top of the capital. On very few specimens is it possible to detect a curving of the outer two lines in a manner that might be taken to represent volutes.<sup>25</sup> At very least we can say that it was not important to Tiberius' die engraver to show the capital in detail.

It is also instructive to consider the treatment of the capitals on the columns of the temple of Jupiter Libertas as depicted on RRC 391/2 (fig. 11). The two capitals are rendered with four curved lines, the outer two lightly S-curved, the inner two back-to-back C-curves. What was the die cutter's intent? Surely not to represent any of the classical Greek

<sup>24</sup> For the urn, see BOËTHIUS/LING/RASMUSSEN 1978: 86 with fig. 81. The sarcophagi were also found in the Banditaccia necropolis, Cerveteri; one is now in the Museo Nazionale di Villa Giulia, Rome, the other in the Louvre, Paris (Campana Collection 1863 Cp 5194). The comparisons to the urn and the 'tomba dei rilievi' are already made by RICHARDSON 1953, 108.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. BM 2002,0102.881; Muenster M 1943.



Fig. 10 - 'tomba dei capitelli' from the Banditaccia necropolis at Cerveteri, digital image placed into the Public Domain by an anonymous photographer, 'Lucius'

orders. The visual effect is almost something like a lotus, papyrus, or palm capital as are found in Ptolemaic Egypt, but that was hardly likely to be the goal. Instead, it is more plausible to suggest the engraver was attempting to suggest the antiquity of the foundation of the temple by using a design evocative of the double volute.<sup>26</sup> The engraver has clearly attempted to emphasize the archaizing style of the cult images, showing them full frontal and with Libertas in the *orans* position, elbows close into the torso and hand and fore-arms outstretched.<sup>27</sup>

From the capital on Gaius' type hang what have been widely interpreted as bells. The only other plausible suggestion has been that they are decorative elements akin to the hooks on either side of the ionic capital which serves

<sup>26</sup> Said to have been vowed by a Ti. Sempronius Gracchus as plebeian aedile in 246 BC; CLARK 2007, 58-9.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the statue of a goddess represented on a painted terracotta plaque from Cerveteri, now in the Louvre (Alinari 22791).





Fig. 11 - RRC 391/2, private collection, image courtesy of Andrew McCabe

as a base for a bronze statuette of a philosopher.<sup>28</sup> This loose parallel is rather apt: this decorative domestic object was most likely the top of a lamp stand and the hooks designed to hold two lamps, but could have just as easily held two tintinnabula. Some of the more elaborate tintinnabula found in Pompeii incorporated both lamp and bells and apotropaic figures.<sup>29</sup> We have only a little tantalizing testimony on the significance of bells in Roman society. Perhaps the most relevant is Suetonius' report of Augustus' actions in response to an oracular dream (Aug. 91.2).

*Being in the habit of making constant visits to the temple of Jupiter the Thunderer, which he had founded on the Capitol, he dreamed that Jupiter Capitolinus complained that his worshippers were being taken from him, and that he answered that he had placed the Thunderer hard by to be his doorkeeper; and accordingly he presently festooned the gable of the temple with bells, because these commonly hung at house-doors. (Loeb translation)*

Augustus' concern to appear always correct in his religious behavior is well-known. The hanging of these bells on the temple cannot have been meant to diminish it, but instead to mimic a ritually acceptable domestic practice in the public sphere of worship. We may sometimes focus too much on the famous ithyphallic wind chimes of Pompeii and thus overlook the other evidence from the city that bells could be used to repel the unwanted and attract the good in a personal religious context.<sup>30</sup>

More commonly the bells depicted on the coin type of Gaius are associated with a passage in Pliny derived from Varro purporting to describe the tomb of Lars Porsenna.<sup>31</sup>

*For it is appropriate to call 'Italian,' as well as 'Etruscan,' the labyrinth made by King Porsena of Etruria to serve as his tomb, with the result at the same time that even the vanity of foreign kings is surpassed by those of Italy. But since irresponsible story-telling here exceeds all bounds, I shall in describing the building make use of the very words of Marcus Varro himself: 'He is buried close to the city of Clusium, in a place where he has left a square monument built of squared blocks of stone, each side being 300 feet long and 50 feet high. Inside this square pedestal there is a tangled labyrinth, which no one must enter without a ball of thread if he is to find his way out. On this square pedestal stand five pyramids, four at the corners and one at the centre, each of them being 75 feet broad at the base and 150 feet high. They taper in such a manner that on top of the whole group there rests a single bronze disk together with a conical cupola, from which hang bells fastened with chains: when these are set in motion by the wind, their sound carries to a great distance, as was formerly the case at Dodona. On this disk stand four more pyramids, each 100 feet high, and above these, on a single platform, five more.' The height of these last pyramids was a detail that Varro was ashamed to add to his account; but the Etruscan stories relate that it was equal to that of the whole work up to their level, insane folly as it was to have courted fame by spending for the benefit of none and to have exhausted furthermore the resources of a kingdom; and the result, after all, was more honour for the designer than for the sponsor.*

This should not be taken as good evidence for the general use of bells in Etruscan funerary contexts--the surviving archaeological evidence suggests no such connection--but it does suggest Varro did find bells associated with grandiose archaic monuments in his antiquarian researches.<sup>32</sup> We would likely not be incorrect

<sup>28</sup> RICHARDSON 1953, 108; Metropolitan Museum no. 10.231.1.

<sup>29</sup> Naples National Archaeological Museum no. 1260.

<sup>30</sup> ALLISON 1997, 395 for two bells found with religious figures and a necklace with amulets in a cupboard on a second story; cf. HUSKINSON 2013, 171 where *tintinnabula* are discussed as if all were phallic.

<sup>31</sup> NH 36.19; BOËTHIUS/LING/RASMUSSEN 1978, 99; RYKWERT 1998, 364.

<sup>32</sup> So-called *tintinnabula* from Etruscan tombs in the Po valley in the shape of sacrificial axes would be better described as pendants, as they are found with jewelry assemblies in female tombs: both well-known specimens were found in the Arsenal necropolis, Bologna; one in bronze is incised with friezes showing women working wool (Bologna 26245), the other is made of a lattice of bronze with amber inset like stain glass (Bologna 25375). There is a bronze Etruscan cinerary urn in the shape of a house in the Princeton University Art Museum which has surviving small rings for hanging pendants all around the



in assigning them an apotropaic function, similar to those found in domestic contexts.<sup>33</sup>

Like bells, but far more common, lions were also widely used as apotropaic symbols, especially in funerary contexts. The image of two lions with their paws on a base looking out from either side of a column is a hallmark of early eastern Mediterranean art, the most famous being the lion gate at Mycenae, but also known from the Phrygian rock cut tomb, Aslan Taş, and various gems.<sup>34</sup> Lions are widely present in early Etruscan art, but the best parallels for thinking about the lions on the base of Gaius' coin are those which are used as part of the base designs of larger funerary monuments, as if they were themselves holding up the monument. Examples include the Settimello cippus now in Florence, said to be from the area of Fiesole, a similar base in the Museo Bardini in Florence, and another cippus in the Chiusi museum.<sup>35</sup> All of these have four lions carved predominantly in relief but whose heads emerge from each of the top four corners rendered in the round. There is also a surviving Etruscan funerary cippus that has protome lion heads emerging from under a pillow-like squashed sphere.<sup>36</sup>

That the Romans themselves considered lions to be typical of archaic funerary monuments is clear from the testimony of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1.87.2):

*Some say also that the stone lion which stood in the principal part of the Forum near the rostra was placed over the body of Faustulus, who was buried by those who found him in the place where he fell. (Loeb Translation)*

This is likely to be the same monument identified by the Pseudo-Arco's commentary on Horace *Epode* 16.13-14 as the tomb of Romulus near the Rostra with two lions and corresponding to what we know as the Volcanal.<sup>37</sup> As a point of comparison with the Minucian coin types, it is particularly noteworthy that this religious complex adjoining the *comitium* and containing the *lapis niger* also had a monumental column thought to have held a statue as a major element in the sanctuary.<sup>38</sup>

### THE FIGURES AND THEIR ATTRIBUTES

As emphasized above, we can safely assert that all three figures represented on these coin types are intended to represent statues based on the care taken to represent them on statue bases on both types. I believe that all of

edges of its roof (1999-70); such earlier objects may have inspired the belief among the Romans in the importance of bells in sacred architecture.

<sup>33</sup> There is also a suggestion in Plautus that bells could be associated with Roman sacrificial practices, but this is not attested elsewhere and if we take it literally we may be missing joke that turns on some lost piece of cultural knowledge: Plaut. *Pseud.* 332-5; cf. FISHWICK 1991, 504-5 for the possible use of a bell in the Imperial cult. Other literary testimony suggests bells were utilitarian objects associate with animals or signaling that the hot baths were ready: Martial 14.163 with LEARY 2016, 224; Pet. *Satyr.* 47.8; Apul. *Meta.* 10.18; cf. ALLISON 1997, 320 for animal bells.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. BM 1872,0315.1 (Ialysus, 1400-1200 BCE).

<sup>35</sup> Settimello cippus: BROWN 1960, pl. 48F; Bardini inv. no 62 with HUS 1956, pl. 6 figs. 1-2; Chiusi inv. no. 2306 with LEVI 1935, 147, fig. 17.

<sup>36</sup> CAMPANA 2001, 115, no. 11 with earlier bibliography.

<sup>37</sup> *Plerique aiunt in Rostris Romulum sepultum esse et in memoriam huius rei leones duos ibi fuisse, sicut hodieque in sepulchris videmus*; COARELLI 1999.

<sup>38</sup> See the reconstruction originally published by COARELLI 1985, 175 and now widely illustrated, cf. HUMM 2005, fig. 14.

those statues commemorate members of the *gens* Minucii. The first key attribute shared by all three figures is the toga. The toga is the appropriate garb of the Roman citizen and is used to identify figures as such on the Roman republican coin series.<sup>39</sup> By contrast, male gods are represented either in draped heroic nudity or armor, with only one exception, where the effect of the clothed male god is used to represent an archaic-style cult statue.<sup>40</sup>

The identification of the right-hand figure holding a *lituus*, the priestly implement used to identify an augur, is undisputed. This is the first plebeian augur, M. Mincius Faesus, from whom the moneyer's family derives their cognomen, Augurinus.<sup>41</sup> The *lituus* becomes a common indication of status on late coinage, both on its own and placed in the hands of the augur.<sup>42</sup>

The identification of the other two figures is more contentious. Beginning with figure atop the column, there are two key attributes besides the toga just discussed, namely the column itself and the staff held in the right hand. In agreement with Wiseman and earlier scholars, the best identification is with L. Minucius, an individual of the late fifth century known for his role in the Maelius incident. The literary sources directly associate the column with this individual and to separate the column from the honoree named in these sources seems unnecessarily complex. That said, Evans is correct that the staff requires some further explanation.<sup>43</sup>

A staff must be differentiated from a scepter. In Roman art, scepters symbolizing human authority do not touch the ground, but typically rest on the shoulder, just as a lictor holds the fasces. Scepters are the provenance of gods, kings, and *probably* triumphators.<sup>44</sup> They certainly symbolize dominion.<sup>45</sup> As such, outside certain very limited ritual contexts, Roman magistrates do not hold them.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Examples of the toga as the attribute of the citizen: 292/1 (voters); 301/1 (recipient of *provocatio*); 330/1 (L. Calpurnius Caesonius and Q. Servilius Caepio as quaestors in 100 BC); 334/1 (Numa); 351/1 (L. Crionius and M. Fannius as plebeian aediles); 367/4 and 5 (Sulla); 372/1 (legendary sacrificer of the heifer at the temple of Diana); 372/2 (likely Postumus Albinus, pr. 180); 392/1 (Romulus, see YARROW, *forthcoming*); 404/1 (an urban praetor, YARROW *forthcoming*); 413/1 (voter, perhaps specifically L. Cassius Longinus Ravilla in 113 BC); 415/1 (L. Aemilius Paullus); 419/2 (M. Lepidus, cos. 187); 426/1 (Sulla); 433/1 (L. Brutus and attendants); 437/2-4 (L. Calvus); 438/1 (uncertain); 439/1 (M. Marcellus cos. 222); 533/2 (M. Antonius); 540/2 (Julius Caesar). Other cases may exist. I highlight these instances where the toga seems a key part of the design iconography.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Jupiter in fast quadriga on the early silver (28-34, 42) and its later imitators (221/1, 227/1, 238/1, 241/1, 248/1, 271/1, 273/1, 276/1, 279/1, 285/2, 311/1, 325/1, 350A/1), as well as representations of a standing Jupiter (296/1, 445/1). Even the personification of the genius of the Roman people appears draped in heroic nudity (329/1, 397/1), as do the Lares Praestites (298/1). The only certain togate representation of a god on the republican coin series is the cult statue of Jupiter Libertas on 391/2 (fig. 11).

<sup>41</sup> Livy 10.9; MRR I.172-173 with Wiseman 1996, 61-64.

<sup>42</sup> As KOORTBOJIAN 2013, 61-2 succinctly argues the *lituus* should not necessarily be read as part of the literal representation of a scene or monument, but instead only part of the symbolic language.

<sup>43</sup> See nn. 2 and 3 above.

<sup>44</sup> BRAUND 1984, 28 and 34.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. RRC 393/1; 398/1; 435/1 and many more types.

<sup>46</sup> It is hard to demonstrate a negative, but I would point out that in both Polybius (29.27.5) and Pliny (34.10), the stick used to draw a circle around Antiochus Epiphanes, is explicitly in the magistrate's hand by chance. RRC 404/1 shows a togate figure in a slow biga holding a scepter labelled IVDEX with a large ear of corn; the best interpretation of this type is a celebration of the roles of the *praetor urbanus*, especially his appearance at the games of

Divine scepters, and sometimes spears for war gods, rest on the ground but invariably extend above the head.<sup>47</sup> The staff was predominantly a rustic or lower status attribute in Roman iconography. Togate figures that hold staffs that touch the ground are rare in Roman art, but we do have two on the inner reliefs of the Ara Pacis. One follows behind the procession of six Vestals and another stands next to the lictor at the head of the procession of sacrificial animals. Both figures are identified as *calatores*, priestly attendants who are typically the freedmen of the priests whom they attend.<sup>48</sup> More commonly in Roman art the staff is an attribute of the rustic who is rarely represented in a toga. From the numismatic repertoire, we might compare Faustus leaning on his staff at the discovering of the wolf and twins, a form of representation derived from the typical republican representation of the shepherd, a type exceptionally popular on republican intaglios.<sup>49</sup>

By contrast, in Etruscan art the staff was regularly a symbol of high social status. Among the painted terracotta slabs from the 'Campana' tomb in Caere now in the Louvre, one panel depicts two older men seated on curule chairs facing each other. Both are balding, but the left-hand figure is also depicted with grey hair. He holds a staff of about shoulder height and appears to be advising the other man, who bows his head slightly resting his chin on his closed hand. Another panel from the same provenance and also now in the Louvre depicts a long haired man also seated on a curule chair, likewise holding a staff of the same height.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, on the front panel of the sarcophagus of Ramtha Vishnai, her husband, Arnth Tetnies holds a walking stick and is followed by attendants carrying attributes of his high office.<sup>51</sup> In the 'tomba dei rilievi' from the Banditaccia necropolis at Caere (Cerveteri) a walking stick is prominently displayed on the pilaster to right of the central niche, along with other attributes of aristocratic life (fig. 9). The dating of all these examples is contentious, but estimates for the Campana slabs are usually late sixth century BC and Ramtha Vishnai's sarcophagus is often placed in the late fourth.

Taken together with the rusticated form of the column, its volute capital, and the lions, the staff of the figure on top of the column seems just another element designed to evoke

Apollo; cf. Versnel 1970, 130-131 with YARROW *forthcoming*. The only type of rod or stick regularly associated with magistrates is the *vindicata* used in manumission ceremonies, PERRY 2013, 60-61.

<sup>47</sup> See examples cited in n. 41. Notably, once again the single exception is the cult statue of Jupiter Libertas on 391/2 (fig. 11). Among the control marks of Papius (RRC 384/1) the scepter is paired with a radiate crown very similar to that worn by Jupiter on 391/2: BM 2002,0102.3557; Fitzwilliam CM.YG.824-R. RRC 296/1 may be considered the exception that proves the rule; on all dies Jupiter's scepter rises above his head, but the die engravers had difficulty deciding the height of Juno and Minerva's scepters, clearly wanting them to be lower than Jupiter's but still as high as possible. The result is a good amount of variation.

<sup>48</sup> HOLLIDAY 1990, 552-3; TELLEGEN-COUPERUS 2011, 21.

<sup>49</sup> RRC 235/1, cf. Thorvaldsen I1139, I1140, I1143, I1148. The popularity of this subject matter may be partially explained through a bon mot from Pliny: "It was also in the forum that there was the picture of the 'Old Shepherd with his Staff', about which the Teuton envoy when asked what he thought was the value of it said that he would rather not have even the living original as a gift!" (NH 35.8). In fresco, consider the shepherd from the frieze in the tomb of the Statilii (north side) or the landscape from the villa of Agrippa Postumus at Boscotrecase now in the Naples Archaeological Museum.

<sup>50</sup> BONFANTE WARREN 1971, pl. 66, fig. 11.

<sup>51</sup> ROWLAND 2008, fig. 3 and corresponding discussion.

an older archaic, Etruscan style, which Romans of the late second century associated with foundational monuments, such as the Volcanal. This seems completely appropriate for a monument which the surviving literary testimony associates with events of the fifth century.

This brings us to the third and most controversial figure in the compositional group, the left-hand figure with objects in his hands and one foot raised on another object. My contention is that the objects in this individual's hands are intended to be a knife and patera, symbols of the Roman priesthood, like the lituus symbolizes the augurship. I thus reject the traditional reading of his attributes as loaves of bread and modius. While Juvenal may have immortalized Roman popular politics as *panem et circenses* (10.81, 'bread and circuses'), in fact we have no evidence for the direct distribution of bread in the republican period; the question is always one of access to the grain itself. These so-called loaves have been a red herring in the decoding of this coin type for some time.

The Roman ritual knife typically has a flat top edge with a very wide blade either somewhat triangular or semicircular in design. The priest used the knife to draw a line down the spine the victim as part of the dedication of the animal to the god(s) prior to its slaying by an attendant.<sup>52</sup> Ritual knives have been found in archaeological contexts and are regularly depicted on coins and in other Roman artistic media. Of the surviving sacrificial knives with this shape, the most famous is perhaps the bronze knife with lion headed handle said to have been found in Corseul, France, now in the British Museum.<sup>53</sup> However, many others are also known from finds at Narona, Aufidena, Bolsena and elsewhere.<sup>54</sup> Two specimens from Aufidena are illustrated for comparison with the coins (fig. 12). The same distinctive knife shape also appears in both depictions of rituals and as an element in the artistic display of collections of priestly symbols.<sup>55</sup> Of the latter category, the clearest example is the cornice of the Temple of Vespasian, dedicated by Domitian (c. 80-87 CE) now on display in the Tabularium at the Capitoline Museum in Rome, but is also found on the frieze from Caecilius Lucundus' lararium from Pompeii paired with a patera on the far right of the earthquake scene. The same knife shape is also depicted on an Imperial funerary stele of a freedmen identifying himself as a *cultrarius*.<sup>56</sup>

This style of knife conforms well to the observed shape of the object held in the right hand of the left hand figure on both Gaius and Tiberius' coinage. On Gaius' coinage the die engraver emphasizes the straight back of the knife which

<sup>52</sup> Serv. *Verg. Aen.* 12.173, with HAHN 1999: 29-31.

<sup>53</sup> BM 1941,0321.1.

<sup>54</sup> Iron knife with bird handle from Narona (Evans 1883, 77, pl. II); bronze and iron knives from Aufidena (MARIANI 1901, 369-370, figs. 87 and 88); from Bolsena (GABRICI 1906, 236); and a bronze and bone knife in the Ashmolean (AN 1932.437, on display, from the Sambon collection).

<sup>55</sup> For this type of knife in ritual scenes, cf. the knife of the *victimarius* accompanying the sheep on inner north relief of the Ara Pacis or the knife held by one of the attendants on the altar to Diana thought to come from Rome or Nemi (Carlsberg Glyptotek inv. No. 858). For its symbolic use, cf. *CIL* VI, 244 = EDR140637 (photographs available via EAGLE).

<sup>56</sup> Found at Capua, *CIL* X, 3984 (cf. 3987 for other *cultrar(i)i*); an image is available through the EDSC database (EDCS-18000369). This later use as an occupational symbol may help us understand the symbolism of a small violet glass paste published in the Wyndham Francis Cook collection, SMITH/HUTTON 1908, no. 194 identified therein as "razor (?)".





Fig. 12 - Images originally published in MARIANI 1901, 369-70 as figs. 87 and 88, now in the Public Domain

connects to the handle. The apex of the curve of the blade is held directly above the center of the patera which is always represented resting in the cupped left hand of the figure.<sup>57</sup> On Tiberius' coinage the knife has a much more triangular shape and is held a 45 degree angle to the rim of the patera with the apex of knife appearing to just touch the rim of the dish.<sup>58</sup>

What we see on the coins of the Minucii is the beginning of what will become a common numismatic convention for representing Roman priesthoods. The knife as priestly implement on Roman coinage first appears in a symbolic context as part of Papius' control mark system (RRC 384/1). In fact, it appears twice: once as a large triangular blade paired with a ladle and once as a smaller daggerlike object paired with a patera.<sup>59</sup> A long thin knife is found on the aedilician coinage of P. Galba (RRC 406/1) and the small daggerlike knife and patera appear again on a small issue of M. Piso Frugi (RRC 418). Priestly implements, especially the axe, are closely associated with the coinage of Julius Caesar after 49 BC.<sup>60</sup> However, the knife does not appear on the coinage again until Brutus' issue of 43/2 BC. The knife on Brutus' issue varies from die to die but often widens and curves outward to the right; this is most obvious on specimens of the aureus.<sup>61</sup> By the imperial period the variation dies down with the large triangular blade much

preferred in numismatic designs.<sup>62</sup>

Why would the Minucii Augurini in the late second century BC be celebrating a Roman priesthood? I believe the answer is to be found in a legendary ancestor, the *Pontifex Maximus*, Spurius Minucius.

This individual is only named once in our surviving literary sources, but that one instance characterizes him as an enforcer of austere Roman morals. Plutarch writes the following in his essay on 'How to Profit by One's Enemies' (*Mor.* 89F):

*Postumia's ready laughter and overbold talk in men's company put her under unjust suspicion, that she was tried for unchastity. She was found innocent of the charge, but in dismissing her the Pontifex Maximus, Spurius Minucius, reminded her that the language she used should have no less dignity than her life.*

In Plutarch we have the name, but no hint at the chronological setting of this moralizing exempla. Livy situates the events in 420 BC, but leaves out any mention of a Minucius (4.44.11):

*In this same year Postumia, a Vestal virgin, had to answer a charge of unchastity. Though innocent, she had given grounds for suspicion through her gay attire and unmaidenly freedom of manner. After she had been remanded and finally acquitted, the Pontifex Maximus, in the name of the whole college of priests, ordered her to abstain from frivolity and to study sanctity rather than smartness in her appearance.*

Gaius' and Tiberius' coin type suggests that the *gens Minucii*, especially the Augurini branch, promoted

<sup>62</sup> RIC 1<sup>st</sup> Augustus 369, 16 BCE: reverse shows priest at altar with a patera and a *victimarius* with the knife and bull; RIC 2 Hadrian 199 and RIC 3 Antoninus Pius 30, 31, 39, 46, 56, 57, 424 and many more similar reverse designs throughout his reign and that of his successors; not, however, RIC 2 Trajan 789 which is a restored type of RRC 406/1.

<sup>57</sup> These features can be ascertained on most well preserved specimens; they are perhaps clearest on BM 1867,0101.1310, other particularly clear specimens for these features include ANS 1941.131.65; NAC 40 (16 May 2007) lot 430; CNG e-auction 163 (25 April 2007) lot 214; Lanz 146 (25 May 2009) lot 293.

<sup>58</sup> Again these fine details are observable on well preserved specimens, including Heritage Auctions 2012 April World & Ancient Coins C1CF Signature Auction, lot 23248; NAC 40 (16 May 2007) lot 431; CNG mail bid 79 (17 September 2008) lot 857.

<sup>59</sup> With ladle: BM 1843,0116.857 and 2002,0102.3535; with patera: ANS 1941.131.190 and BM 2002,0102.3497. Papius' series also uses other paired priestly instruments as symbols, cf. apex and ladle (BM R.8478 and Fitzwilliam CM.RR.445-R) and wreath and lituus (BM 2002,0102.3470 and BM 1843,0116.871).

<sup>60</sup> RRC 443/1, 452/1 and 2, 456/1, 466/1, 480/6.

<sup>61</sup> RRC 500/6 and 7, cf. BM 2002,0102.4775.



Fig. 13 - RRC 245/1, Yale University Art Gallery 2005.6.191, Public Domain

the idea that they descended not only from a mid-fifth century Patrician who was instrumental both in suppressing Maelius' usurpation of authority and simultaneously feeding the urban plebs, but also another mid-fifth century Patrician who was famous for his enforcement of traditional Roman morals as Pontifex Maximus.

This explanation requires also rejection of the interpretation of the object under the left-hand figure's foot as a *modius*. This is unproblematic. First, there is too much variation between Gaius' and Tiberius' representation of the object under this figure's foot for it to be particularly symbolically important. Secondly, on neither type does the object bear particular resemblance to our other surviving undisputed representations of *modii*. The closest in date is RRC 245/1 from 134 BC which displays a *modius* behind the head of Roma on the obverse (fig. 13). This shares many features with the *modii* found regularly on imperial coinage, but most definitively the three feet, generally *modii* gently taper bottom to top and are often shown with bands and handles.<sup>63</sup> Instead of focusing on the object, it is more enlightening to consider the 'one foot raised' sculptural pose itself. The pose is a conventional heroic pose of Hellenistic Art and was wildly applied in royal portraiture.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, it is a pose common on intaglios for the popular motif of a warrior putting on greaves before a column.<sup>65</sup> The raise foot says more about the artistic models of the coin design, than about the identity of the figure depicted.

### THE SUPERIMPOSITION OF TWO WHEAT-EARS

The final iconographic element of the reverse designs of Gaius and Tiberius requires far less discussion than the rest. Ears of wheat appear as a supplementary design element distinct from the main subject from nearly the very beginning of coinage at Rome, and an ear of wheat seems to be a special designation for coinage struck in Sicily during the

Second Punic War.<sup>66</sup> RRC 245/1 (fig. 13), already discussed in relationship to the *modius*, provides an important contemporary use of two ears of coin inserted into the reverse field as a means of symbolizing the familial connection to the grain supply. That the ears are intended on the coinage of the Minucii as symbolic of grain distributions, not part of the monumental program, can be inferred by the continued employment of two ears of grain on even more explicit types later in the series.<sup>67</sup> Most importantly the wheat-ears remind us that numismatic iconography is not pictorial, but symbolic in character. The Roman viewer was comfortable reading a juxtaposition of images as a single holistic message without mistaking it as literal representation of a physical reality.<sup>68</sup> Leaving aside our photo documentary mindset is critical for our ability to interpret Roman imagery, particular numismatic iconography.

### SEEING THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

Having taken apart the reverse images and reviewed so much possible comparative iconography, how can we get back to the whole and does that whole look much different than where we started?

The types remain revolutionary in their early use of architecture on the coinage, but that now seems less likely to have been visually surprising to the Roman viewer based on prevalence of parallel intaglio imagery. The composition would have strongly evoked archaic, even Etruscan, funerary imagery for the Roman viewer, something venerable and perhaps even partly inexplicable like the Volcanal. Yet, at the same time it incorporates heroic body language common in contemporary Hellenistic art. Gaius and Tiberius were certainly drawing on a positive narrative of L. Minucius as a model for the conservative resolution of grain crises, but they were equally interested in putting into context their ancestor, the first plebeian Augur, by means of a much

<sup>63</sup> Cf. RIC I<sup>2</sup> Claudius 84.

<sup>64</sup> MASSÉGLIA 2015, 234-235; RIDGWAY 2001, 108.

<sup>65</sup> Unpublished Tassies in the Beazley reference numbers 3137, 3139, 3140, 3141.

<sup>66</sup> RRC 13/1 and 2; for Sicily, RRC 40, 42, 68, 69, 72, 77. Cf.

<sup>67</sup> RRC 330/1, 351/1, cf. 426/4; other possible uses of ears of wheat to represent the city's grain supply include 357/1 and 404/1.

<sup>68</sup> This is the same point argued by KOORTBOJIAN 2013, 61-2 with regard to the *lituus* and cited above in n. 41.



older claim to religious and moral authority in the person of Spurius Minucius, the severe Pontifex Maximus in the Postumia story. The coin types claim a long history of the family's balancing act between meeting the desires of the Roman plebs and fulfilling the values of the Roman elite. The types also serve as important reminders that there is more to Later Republican politics than the city's grain supply. Religious authority and the status conveyed by such authority were equally important to the Augurini in the preparation of their designs.

More broadly, this study demonstrates the value of evaluating coin iconography in light of the widest possible range of other surviving material. Intaglios and literary sources are amongst the most useful points of comparison, but these must be used with a sensitivity to material and genre. A mold-made glass paste provides a very different type of evidence than a hand-carved precious gem-stone. Antiquarian authors and moralizing rhetoricians share much with historiography. Nevertheless, in all these cases, the intended audience has a significant impact on the form in which the historical evidence reaches us. Moreover, coin types cannot be fully understood without recourse to the full corpus of surviving visual material from antiquity, and coin types ought not to be interpreted without recourse to the broadest possible consideration of surviving specimens. This paper would not have been possible without the efforts of scholars and coin enthusiasts to digitize and make accessible the republican coin series. The specimen is the surviving artifact, but the type is the intention of moneyer and die engraver which we can, as historians, hope to recover and contextualize.

## FIGURES

**Fig. 1.** RRC 242/1, Yale University Art Gallery 2001.87.664, Public Domain.

**Fig. 2.** RRC 243/1, Yale University Art Gallery 2001.87.665, Public Domain.

**Fig. 3.** Thorvaldsen I1103, Public Domain.

**Fig. 4.** Thorvaldsen I933, Public Domain.

**Fig. 5.** Original drawing after ACR Auctions 16 (17 June 2015), lot 363 by the author, all rights reserved.

**Fig. 6.** Original drawing after Numismatik Naumann 2 (7 April 2013), lot 180 by author, all rights reserved.

**Fig. 7.** Photochrom print c. 1900 in the collection of the United States Library of Congress, reproduction no. LC-DIG-ppmsc-06582, now in the Public Domain.

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**Fig. 9.** Photograph by Roberto Ferrari, CC BY-SA 2.0.

**Fig. 10.** Image placed into the Public Domain by anonymous photographer, 'Lucius'.

**Fig. 11.** RRC 391/2, private collection, image courtesy of Andrew McCabe.

**Fig. 12.** Images originally published in MARIANI 1901, 369-70 as figs. 87 and 88, now in the Public Domain.

**Fig. 13.** RRC 245/1, Yale University Art Gallery 2005.6.191.

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