

Katharina Martin, Martin Mulsow and Johannes Wienand (eds.), *Universitäre Münzsammlungen im deutschsprachigen Raum. Geschichte, Gegenwart und Zukunft*. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Verlage / Brill, 2025. ISBN 978-3-525-30608-6 (hardback), 978-3-666-30608-2 (E-book). 764 pp., 233 col. illus. €95 (hardback), and open access at <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/105033>

This impressive volume, edited by Katharina Martin, Martin Mulsow and Johannes Wienand, publishes a collection of essays dedicated to the history of numismatic collections at German speaking universities, their current relevance and future potential in terms of education, research and scientific importance. Despite the obvious importance of these collections, the topic has not been hitherto explored. They are significant not only from a historical perspective (some date to the seventeenth century), but also because their combined holdings amount approximatively to between 350,000 and 400,000 objects (Wienand, p. 27). As a point of comparison, the holdings of the largest public coin collection in Germany, the Münzkabinett of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, is estimated to contain roughly 540,000 objects.

After a foreword by Reinhard Wolters and an introduction by Wienand giving an overview of the topic ('Die Geschichte der universitären Münzsammlung im deutschsprachigen Raum - eine Annäherung'), twenty-four essays are dedicated to nineteen university collections, of which sixteen are located in Germany itself, two in Austria (Universities of Graz and Vienna), one in France (University of Strasbourg) and one in Hungary (Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest).

The inclusion of the last two might surprise, but the aim of this volume is to cover institutions in current or formerly German speaking regions. As it happens, the origins of the coin collection of the University of Strasbourg goes back to a time when the city had become part of the German Empire after the Franco-Prussian war and the institution had been refounded in 1872 under the name *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Universität*. On the other hand, the absence of Swiss institutions may also cause wonder, but this is due to the fact that former university collections such as the one known as the 'Amerbach-Kabinett' in Basel - originating in the collections of the Renaissance humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam - have been integrated into public institutions (in this case, the Historisches Museum, Basel). Furthermore, Swiss coin collections, though also used for teaching and research, were more often curated by museums, libraries or even monasteries rather than the universities themselves.

A final chapter by Bernhard Weisser and Wienand ('Materialität und Digitalität. Universitäre Münzsammlungen im Verbund mit dem

Münzkabinett Berlin') underlines the synergy derived from common digital projects intended to make numismatic holdings available online and embedding them in the semantic web. These are KENOM (Kooperative Erschließung und Nutzung der Objektdaten von Münzsammlungen: <https://www.kenom.de/index/>) and NUMiD (Netzwerk universitärer Münzsammlungen, <https://numid-verbund.de>, now integrated into the portal run by the Münzkabinett in Berlin, at <https://ikmk.net/home>). A final question (phrased as 'Quo vadis, deutsche Numismatik?', p. 724) underlines that digitisation, unlike printed publications, goes hand in hand with continuous curation and improvement of data, tasks requiring numismatic specialist knowledge. This also means that numismatics, as a discipline, has just started to unfold its future potential.

The broad scope of this volume offers a unique insight into the history of numismatic research and teaching across time, as these collections – unlike public or private ones – were primarily assembled for these purposes, usually aiming at a comprehensive coverage of coinages of all periods. One learns, for example, about Georg Wolfgang Wedel (1645–1721), a specialist in anatomy, botany, practical and theoretical medicine, as well as an alchemist, philologist and historian, who was a professor at Jena, one of the ten oldest universities in Germany. With his essay *De nummis gothicis*, Wedel pioneered, in 1686, a category of coins now known as 'Celtic' (Martin Muslow, 'Die gelehrte Münzsammlung der frühneuzeitlichen Universität. Das Beispiel Georg Wolfgang Wedel in Jena'). In Halle, in another example, the numismatic teaching of Johann Heinrich Schulze (1687–1744), professor in medicine and several other disciplines such as Greek, Arabic and classical antiquities, had a long-lasting impact on a student, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), who became the leading archaeologist and art historian of his time. Indeed, Schulze's lecture on 'Greek and Roman antiquities according to numismatics' (*Über die Müntz-Wissenschaft und die Daraus zu erläuternde Griechische und römische Alterthümer*, 1738) laid the foundations for Winckelmann's understanding and study of antique objects (coins), which he later applied to sculpture and Greek art (Stephan Lehman, 'Johann Heinrich Schulze, sein Münzkabinett und Winckelmann. Der Begründer der antiken Numismatik und Archäologie an der Universität Halle und seine Wirkung auf den Schüler').

Fascinating insights are also gained into such collections as those at Düsseldorf, Göttingen, Heidelberg, Münster and Tübingen, to name only a few. Cast collections, such as the one established by Konrad Kraft in the 1960s in Frankfurt (George C. Watson, 'Das Archiv Konrad Krafts an der Goethe-Universität. Genese, Systematik und Digitalisierung einer

numismatischen Abgusssammlung'), are also included in this analysis because these were and still are instrumental for numismatic research.

If Greek and Roman coins are the main focus of these collections, Islamic numismatics is nonetheless also represented at several universities, such as at Tübingen, with its specialised research centre (Forschungsstelle für Islamische Numismatik Tübingen, FINT), but also Göttingen and Jena.

This volume, written by established specialists, draws together a multiplicity of approaches, ranging from traditional historic studies to more innovative discussions of contemporary digital technologies. It offers insights into a fascinating cultural heritage and has relevance beyond the field of numismatics for anyone interested in museology, the history of collections and the study of antiquity more widely.

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