

Michele Asolati and Domenico Luciano Moretti, *Coelitum sanctorum imagines nummi referabant*. Effigi di santi e immagini sacre sulla moneta tra medioevo ed età moderna, Edizioni D'Andrea, via Marcacci 20, 64026 Roseto degli Abruzzi (TE), ISBN: 978-88-98330-5-6, ISSN: 2785-5864 (2021). Reviewed by Julian Baker

The present volume represents a collection of essays which are chronologically, geographically, and thematically coherent. The relevance of the subject as such cannot be in called into doubt, but is evoked again by the two editors in their opening words: the introduction and development of saintly figures in the medieval (Italian) numismatic repertoire represent key stages in the emancipation from imperial monetary forms and the creation of new ones based on local identities and spiritualities (in themselves not always unproblematic), processes which are reflective of wider political transitions. The individual essays are all able to put their fingers on significant and poignant developments within the broader theme, resulting in executions which are diverse in scope but qualitatively occasionally mixed. The papers are all in Italian, accompanied by brief English and Italian summaries.

The "Edizioni D'Andrea", the brainchild of architect Alberto d'Andrea, have published an enormous number of books relating to the numismatics of ancient, medieval, and modern Italy in the past decade and a half. On this occasion, they have lent their services to the "Centro Studi Storico Archeologici del Gargano". The Gargano Promontory in present-day northern Puglia ("Apulia") is the site of a shrine to St. Michael dating back to late antiquity, and the host of the conference which gave rise to this publication (in the locality of Monte Sant'Angelo, province of Foggia, in 2019). It is therefore highly appropriate that the first two papers of this book should be dedicated to the subject matter of the Archangel:

Michele Asolati discusses an extraordinary series of rare late antique silver coins featuring an obverse winged saintly figure. Based on a database of specimens and finds, and relevant die links to other types -the latter in themselves not always easy to attribute and locate- he reconstructs Gepid coin issuance in its totality. The coins featuring the supposed Archangel are placed towards the end of the series and dated to the middle of the sixth century, perhaps in a period of transition to Lombard rule in the same North Balkan area. The coins may well constitute the first numismatic representation of St. Michael.

Domenico Luciano Moretti continues the theme through different subsequent medieval European coinages. In reality, the appearance of the saint occurs in three distinct regions and moments in time -the Lombard period in Italy and surrounding territories, Byzantine coinage and its offshoots in the middle and later periods, and later medieval central Europe, Italy and England. The author accompanies his presentation by rich documentation.

The deeply-felt local devotion to another saint is explored in the next paper by Raffaele Iula. St. Nicholas of Myra/Bari features on a limited number of mid-twelfth century copper coins issued for the Hauteville kings of Sicily. The author assembles the numismatic data meticulously (although he misses a trick or two by not illustrating them and discussing variations of types and dies), and draws important political conclusions regarding local culture and spirituality vis-à-vis central authority.

Valerio Moneta set himself the task of surveying the broad tendencies in the representation of saintly figures throughout medieval Italian monetary issuance. The same author had covered this topic much more extensively a decade ago in his monograph *Santi e Monete* (reviewed by Anna Gannon in NC, 2011, pp. 507-509). Again, a goldmine of numismatic and related data is offered, pertaining to Christ, the Virgin, John the Baptist, different Apostles, the Evangelists, saints who were respectively bishops (including popes) and/or martyrs, lay saints, regular clerical saints, angels and archangels. It becomes easily apparent how fundamental saints were to medieval Italian spirituality at all levels, and to the languages of images which contemporaries were surrounded by. This paper is too slight to offer much interpretation beside the detailed and accurate rendition of the facts.

The approach taken by the next contribution, by Andrea Saccocci, is quite different. The chronologically limited -though highly significant- fourteenth-century episodes when St. Prodocimo, the first bishop of Padua, is chosen as an iconographic device on the civic coinage of that city, is woven by the author into a tight picture of local spirituality, artistic production, and political legitimacy.

Also the next paper, by Lucio Taraborelli, deals with a confined late medieval period of local Italian coin production. Guardiagrele in Abruzzo was initially a mint at which the local Orsini lords produced a small quantity of bolognini for and in the name of King Ladislaus of Naples (1386-1414), bearing the bust of "Pope Leo" on the reverse. The author sets about trying to identify the latter and concludes that this figure represents not Leo I the Great, as is usually assumed, but Leo II, who was venerated in a particular manner by the Roman Orsini family placed at the helm of the local lordship of Manoppello.

Marcello Mignozzi's contribution on the Agnus Dei in Pugliese sculpture during Angevin times does not strictly speaking deal with a numismatic argument, although it is inspired by the rare agnells d'or of the early-fourteenth century kings of France.

Cristina Crisafulli offers a thoughtful analysis, placed in broad context, of the comings and goings of female saints on Italian coinage issues of the medieval and modern periods. In the light of Valerio Moneta's analysis of saints more generally (see above), and its heavy emphasis on Christ, the Apostles and Evangelists, and all the saints related in one way or another to the clergy, it had already been evident just how little scope there was for female saints in medieval coin iconography. After 1500, two developments resulted in a decisive increase in the latter, new familiarity with ancient iconographies as a result of discovery and enquiries and a sense of "collezionismo", and secondly the need for a new and inclusive spirituality in the age of Reformation and Counter-Reformation.

Also the final contribution, by Alberto d'Andrea, deals with the Early Modern period. The topic of the Annunciation was particularly dear to a line of Grand Dukes of Tuscany (as expressed through their artistic patronage in the city of Florence) during the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. The author gives an exhaustive list of coin issues in their names, with different iconographical variations.

The volume is concluded by a summary by Giovanni Gorini, Professor emeritus of the University of Padua.