

## INTRODUCTION

War has always been an expensive enterprise for cities and rulers as, from as early as the classical period, it has not been cheap to pay for mercenaries. The war could be seen as a “growth” machine generating money which, in a second phase, could be used to fuel the everyday exchanges and, later on, to remunerate military operations.

It is a general consensus that soldiers wanted to be paid in “fresh money” but when quantifications are used to estimate the sizes of a given coinage, we come to realize that most of the issues were either limited or insufficient for sustaining an army over a longer period of time, as numerous studies by François de Callataÿ, Frédérique Duyrat and Panagiotis Iossif showed.<sup>1</sup> But armies were paid in various ways; epigraphic and literary sources offer precious hints on how coins and mercenaries were related and that the soldiers were not only paid in precious metal coinages, but also received allowances in bronze coins (*opsonion* and *siteresion*) and, of course, in kind (*siteresion*?).<sup>2</sup> An important

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1. Among the numerous works, see: F. DE CALLATAÿ 2009, “Armies poorly paid in coins (the Anabasis of the Ten-Thousands) and coins for soldiers poorly transformed by the markets (the Hellenistic Thasian-type tetradrachms) in Ancient Greece”, *RBN* 155, 51-70; F. DE CALLATAÿ 2012, “Royal Hellenistic Coinages: From Alexander to Mithridates”, in W. Metcalf (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage*, Oxford, 2012, 175-190. F. DUYPAT 2016, *Wealth and Warfare: The Archaeology of Money in Ancient Syria*, New York; P. IOSSIF 2015, “Who’s wealthier? An estimation of the annual coin production of the Seleucids and the Ptolemies”, *RBN* 161, 233-272. P.P. IOSSIF and C.C. LORBER 2021, “Monetary Policies, Coin Production, and Currency Supply in the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires”, in S. von Reden, C. Fischer-Bovet (eds), *Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires: the Role of Local Elites and Populations*, Cambridge, 191-230; P.P. IOSSIF and C.T. GERRITSEN 2021, “Alexander II Zabinas in Damascus: A Numismatic Reading of the Evidence”, *RBN* 166, 19-62.

2. S. PSOMA 2009, “*Tas sitarchias kai tous misthous* ([Arist.], *Oec.* 1351B. Bronze currencies and cash-allowances in Mainland Greece, Thrace and the Kingdom of Macedonia”, *RBN* 155, 3-38; P.P. IOSSIF 2016, “Using site finds as basis for statistical analyses of the Seleucid numismatic production and circulation. An introduction to the method”, in F. Duyrat and C. Grandjean (eds), *Les monnaies des fouilles du monde grec (VIe – Ier s. a. C.). Apports, Approches et Méthodes*, Bordeaux, 263-296. For the use of bronzes by Roman imperial armies, see the very useful overview by D. WIGG-WOLF 2014, “Coin supply and the Roman army revisited: coin finds and military finance in the late-first and second centuries AD”, in M. Reddé (ed.), *De l’or pour les braves! Soldes, armées et circulation monétaire dans le monde romain*, Bordeaux, 161-179.

part of their expected benefits was booty, although this remains difficult to quantify based on the available evidence.

Despite the general consensus relating the issues of coins with military activities, little (or no) information is known on the practicalities of the payments while various questions arise: how were the resources raised by cities and rulers in order to fund their armies? Who decided the salary of the army or was this part of an ad hoc negotiation? And what were the practicalities for the payment of mercenary soldiers? Were they paid in large denominations of precious metal and how were those coins exchanged with smaller issues that could be used in local markets? Were they paid before or after the campaign? Did they receive an advance before and the rest after the (successful) campaign? Where did they receive these payments and did the usual or “military” mints operate to cover their needs? Did they receive a *misthos* in bronze when affected in garrison activities, as recent studies proposed? And how did the soldiers act when not engaged by an army, often far away from their motherlands? Did the issuing authorities try to keep them calm and satisfied or did they find excuses not to pay what they promised? Do we have testimonies of rebellions and mutinies related to such circumstances? And how about local economies? can we trace back the impact of the military payments in local economies? And what effects the presence of an army had in the market?

These are only some of the questions that are addressed in the volume on the numismatic aspects and the direct connection between coinage and army through time and space. The aim is to investigate the prolific use of the coinage for military needs through time, starting from the Classical city, moving to the Hellenistic period, and through the passage of the Roman Empire arriving to the Gallo-roman Emperors of the third century A.D.

The eight papers in this volume cover various aspects of the questions addressed above without, though, to answer them all. The phenomenon of the military payment, the salaries of the armies and the mercenaries are so complex and our sources, especially for the Classical and Hellenistic periods, are so poor that all need to be considered under various angles and methods. The Roman world, especially the Imperial coinages and the way they were used to pay the armies, offer a good starting point to any study of the phenomenon in Antiquity. The present volume serves in many respects as a complement of the 2014 book under the direction of Michel Reddé, *De l'or pour les braves! Soldes, armées et circulation monétaire dans le monde romain*, Bordeaux. In the papers of the

present volume, the approach of the phenomenon is both theoretical and practical. **Selene Psoma** collects literary evidence, mainly from Thucydides and Xenophon referring to military payments. This literary approach is backed by a number of coinages of the Classical period related to payments of this type and she identifies as such those from Boeotia and Chalcis, Athens and its 5th c. BC League, Corinth and its colonies, Perdiccas II, the Chalcidian League, Acanthus, the cities of Acarnania, Arcadia, the Phocians, Sicyon, Phlius, Samos, Mytilene, Chios and Lampsacus, the ΣΥΝ coinage, the satrap Phranabazus at Cyzicus, the 4th c. BC coinages on the Chian standard and the Molossians.

**Charlotte Van Regenmortel** discusses the question of the relation between armies roaming the ancient Mediterranean and their dependence on hired soldiers. For these soldiers, money was the most important incentive to enlist and continue to serve and was also the only reason for their loyalty. The growing presence of these troops culminated during the Wars of the Diadochs, the author questions whether the presence of these soldiers and their pay led to the emergence of a market for military labour on which the price of military wages was set. It does so by analysing whether we see the mechanisms associated with both internal and external labour markets in the context of military employment in the Successor armies, and argues that the specific conditions of service allowed for the price of military labour to be driven upwards in line with heightened demand.

The following paper leaves the Greek world and approaches the coinage of the Gauls. **Christian Lauwers** focuses on the Gallic mercenaries. Ancient annalists record several episodes involving Gallic mercenaries. It seems that the involvement of these mercenaries was the reason for the first coins that circulated in central and northern Gaul in the third century BC. Received as payment by warriors in a warlike context, the Gallic imitations and adaptations of these gold coins continued to serve mainly warlike purposes. **Stéphane Martin** also addresses the question of the use of coins in Gaul but from a different perspective: that of the *De bello Gallico* and the impact Caesar's campaigns had on the monetary history of one of the richest provinces of the Empire-to-be. He examines the impact of military operations in the second half of the 1st c. BC Gaul. By focusing on large silver coin hoards, he associates them with the payment for Gallic soldiers and addresses their economic significance in the province. Through an interesting methodological approach, Martin proposes a quantification of the levels of monetization and wealth distribution in Gaul.

The next section of the book, the most extended, concerns the connection between payment, coinage and the armies in the Roman world. **Fleur Kemmers** analyses the modes and means of pay for Rome's citizen army from the time of the introduction of the *denarius* in the middle of the Second Punic War until the Social War. The author argues that neither the rhythms and volumes of coin output, nor the distribution of coin finds and coin hoards support the theory of an annual pay in freshly minted Roman coins. Instead, she proposes a model where the payment of legionaries is done only upon their discharge in Italy, with locally produced pocket money distributed whilst in the field. **Cruces Blázquez Cerrato** and **Marta Gómez Barreiro** visit Iberia and its production the pre- and -Claudian periods. The closing of the provincial mints in the middle of the first century AD brought some important changes in the Western provinces. The so-called "copies" of the Roman official coin constituted a significant resource that contributed to the reduction of coin scarcity. The authors focus on the case of the Caesaraugusta mint (Zaragoza) and observe the existence of coins with similar neglected manufacturing during the rules of Tiberius and Caligula, which could mark the beginning of the "copies" phenomenon that would later become generalized, and also arrive at the conclusion that the mint of Caesaraugusta played an important role in the organization of the Roman army and the payment of the troops.

**Liesbeth Claes** discusses the relationship between the Severan emperors and their soldiers. By combining evidence from imperial coins of hoards and honorary inscriptions by the military, the author analyses how the Severans and the soldiers stationed at the northern borders of Germania Inferior and Superior entered into a dialogue with each other concluding that specific messages from imperial coin programmes could be replicated by military votive dedications. In the last paper, **Charikleia Papageorgiadou** examines the *assaria* and double *assaria* minted in Patrai under Caracalla and displaying the same types. These issues are related to the emperor's campaign in Parthia and it seems that Patrai served as an operational base for the Roman army.

In the concluding section, **Peter van Alfen** offers a general and broad overview of the topic and the possible future research questions. Future evidence might change our understanding of the payment of the soldiers, especially under the Classical and Hellenistic period. Inscriptions and papyri could elucidate the use of salaries and payments by soldiers while the even-more sophisticated analyses of individual issues or an analysis of the wider numismatic production of a region, an era or an issuing authority might shed more light on the complex

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social and economic phenomenon represented by the payment of these soldiers always *strapped for cash*.

Some of these papers were presented in a round table organised by the editors of this volume in the in the 19th International Congress of Classical Archaeology in May 2018 on the topic “Archaeology and Economy in the Ancient World” that took place in Cologne and Bonn. They were duly updated to cover the gap between the time they were first presented and the new data that appeared in the meantime.

Following a substantial delay mostly due to the pandemics, the present volume is now part of the MEΛETHMATA series of the Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation. The editors would like to thank the editorial committee of the MEΛETHMATA series, the director of the Institute of Historical Research, Dr. Nikolaos Papazarkadas, Eirini Kalogridou for the artistic design and layout, and Vasilis Fylaktopoulos for the volume’s cover. They would also like to thank the librarians, Sofia Saroglidou and Dimitra Regli, for their administrative support and Vassiliki Moschou (University of Patras), who devoted a significant part of her internship at the Museum of Cycladic Art contributing to the editorial work of this volume.

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