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RESPUBLICA LIBERATA. THE COIN OF BRUTUS COMMEMORATING THE IDES OF MARCH IN THE EMBLEMATIC INTERPRETATION OF ALCIATUS[1]

ABSTRACT: The denarius of Marcus Junius Brutus, commemorating the Ides of March, can be placed among the coins most established in the collective imagination of ancient societies and, later, among those having the greatest impact on European humanism. One cannot point out another antique coin that refers directly to such a fateful historical event as the assassination of Julius Caesar. *Respublica liberata*, the work by Andreas Alciatus (1492–1550), printed in 1546, is outstanding among numerous, ancient and modern examples of the reception of Brutus's coin. Alciatus, a famous Milanese lawyer, composed his work in the innovative form of an emblematic study. Emblematics enjoyed great popularity throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Symbols and allegorical representations were used as a universal media for describing the world. The distinguishing representation of daggers and *pileus* – according to the general idea of emblems – had been separated by Alciatus from its historical context and given a universal and ageless meaning. In this manner, the writer made the ancient iconographical type the general symbol of the liberation of a state from the rule of a tyrant.

Emblems and numismatic inspirations

One of the most remarkable phenomena of early modern culture was the emblem book. Fourteenth-century humanists, particularly the proponents of Neo-Platonist ideas, were quick to recognize the potential offered by this com-

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Fig. 1. J.J. Boissard, Portrait of Andreas Alciatus, 1597–99

position of emblematic images and explanatory texts, unknown in earlier intellectual systems. The emblem came to be regarded as a universal medium, of use in describing the world with the help of symbols and allegorical images. The background from which the emblem book sprang began to take form back in the early fifteenth century when, in 1419, a Florentine, Christoforo de Buondelmonti discovered, on the island of Andros, the *Hieroglyphica,*[2] an extraordinary treatise by a fifth-century grammarian. In discussing Egyptian hieroglyphs Horapollo, as this author referred to himself, approached them as allegories and treated them not as characters used in writing but as graphic-symbolic emblems. The text discovered by Buondelmonti was a Greek copy of a lost original (possibly written in Coptic) by a certain Philippos.[3] When this work was brought to Italy, it at once drew the attention of local humanists. At first, the text circulated in the form of unauthorized copies and at last appeared in print in Venice in 1505. By the end of the sixteenth century the *Hieroglyphica* had been printed thirty or so times. Its first Latin translation was published quite soon, in 1517, translated by Filippo Fasanini, Bolognese professor, poet and orator.

The modern response to the hieroglyphic treatise of Horapollo was emblematics, which continued the tradition of the symbolic interpretation of graphic characters and rather than confine itself to authentic hieroglyphs or parahieroglyphs

[2] On hieroglyphs and the treatise of Horapollo, see, *e.g.* Pelc 1973, p. 9; Sokolski 2000, pp. 87–92; Russel 1986, pp. 227–243.

[3] See Krzywy 2002, p. XV.

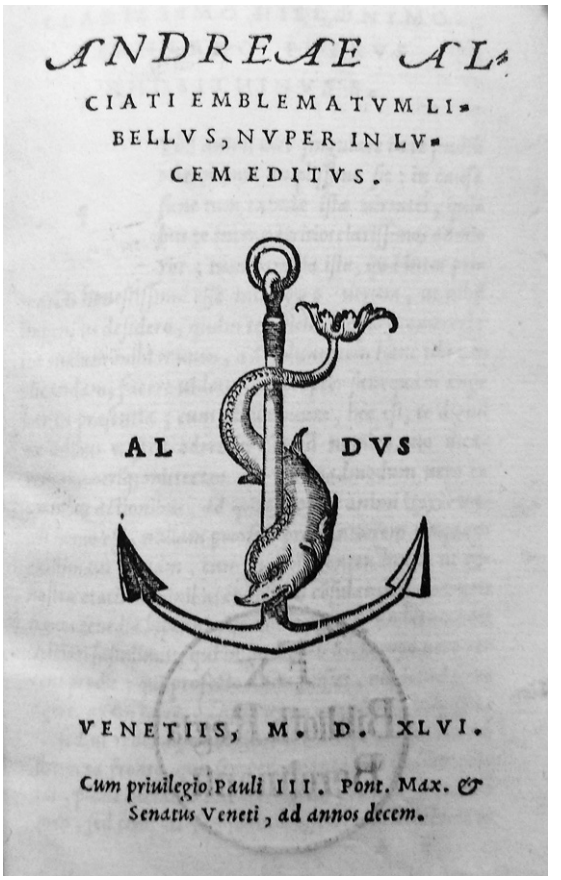

Fig. 2. *Emblematum libellus* title page of the heirs of Aldus edition, Venice 1546.

added substantially to their stock. Ever since Andreas Alciatus (1492–1550), (Fig. 1) published his collection in 1531, the popularity of emblems grew. Suffice to say that by the end of the seventeenth century 171 editions of his work were available.[4] The form established by the Italian jurist and poet, one combining a motto, a symbolic image and an epigram, would be adopted by other authors. Also adopted from Alciatus was his method of composing emblems and drawing inspiration from a variety of sources. Of these, definitely the foremost would be literature of classical antiquity and the Bible.[5] This does not mean, however,

[4] For a list of editions of emblems by Alciatus see, *e.g.* Green 1872; Praz 1964, pp. 248–252.

[5] Another notable source would be the extraordinary treatise *Phisiologus* dedicated to various, plants and minerals and their Christian symbolism.

that medieval and contemporary literature was ignored. Moreover, the extensive interests of Renaissance humanists and their fascination with classical antiquity encouraged the authors of emblems and their readers to turn their attention to material relics of that age. Their interest was especially in those works that carried explicit symbolic content or were carriers of some characteristic idea. It is not surprising, therefore, that in many of their works Alciatus, and his followers after him, drew on the images seen on ancient coins, Roman in particular, known to him at first hand. Many numismatic inspirations are evident mainly in the imagery of emblems created by Alciatus. Of these, arguably the most outstanding is the composition provided with the lemma: *Respublica liberata*, to be discussed at more length below.

This composition appears for the first time in the edition of emblems from 1546, printed in the office of the heirs of Aldo Manuzio (Fig. 2). This edition included 86 emblematic images not published before, something that is indicated from the first by its title: *Andreae Alciati emblematum libellus nuper in lucem editus*. The emblem under discussion is based on an ancient coin marked by a powerful ideological message issued by Marcus Junius Brutus after the assassination of Caesar.

The Marcus Junius Brutus denarius with the *EID MAR* legend

The denarius, struck in 43–42 BC by a military mint on the move with Marcus Junius Brutus in Asia Minor[6] (Fig. 3), is one of a small group of coins that came to occupy a lasting place in the collective imagination of the people of classical antiquity and, with time, greatly influenced European humanism. In fact, there may be no another antique coin associated so closely with an historical event and one as fraught with consequences as the assassination of Julius Caesar.

Fig. 3. L. Plaetorius Cestianus for M. Iunius Brutus, denarius. Asia Minor, 43–42 BC (photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

[6] RRC 508,3. See also: Lahusen 1989, pp. 17–18; *Brutus* 2010, catalogue no. 11, p. 114.

The obverse of this coin shows the bearded head of Brutus right and the legend BRVT IMP – L PLAET CEST. Next to the name of its issuer (L. Plaetorius Cestianus), the inscription gives the name of the tyrannicide and his authority of imperator granted to him by the adherents of the Republican faction. For a coin issued by a self-proclaimed liberator of the Roman people to display the portrait of a politician currently holding office was a bold move, especially in that the first Roman to use this propaganda measure, one typical for the rulers of the Hellenistic world, was none other than the hated Caesar, shortly before his death (his portrait accompanied by the provocative legend CAESAR DICT PERPETVO).[7] For Marcus Brutus to have his own likeness appear on the coin was not only a pragmatic step but, in a sense, a natural consequence of his own propaganda policy that he had been pursuing in his coinage since 54 BC. That year Brutus issued a series of denarii that had portraits of the founders of the Republic on both their faces: his ancestor, Lucius Junius Brutus, and Caius Servilius Ahala (Fig. 4).[8] Other coinage produced the same year carried the image of the head of Libertas, the personification of liberty[9] on the obverse, and the portrait of Lucius Brutus, consul for 509 BC, shown walking in a procession (Fig. 5).[10] It seems, therefore, that when he replaced Caesar's head with his own likeness Marcus Brutus wished to emphasize his connection to the ancient family of the liberators of the Roman people and the resulting moral imperative to oppose tyranny.[11]

Fig. 4. M. Iunius Brutus, denarius. Rome, 54 BC
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

The design on the reverse of the Brutus denarius commemorating the Ides of March, although it includes some universally known symbols, had no precedent in Roman Republican coinage. At the centre of the field is a *pileus* – the

[7] RRC 480; *cf.* Morawiecki 1983, pp. 18–25.
[8] RRC 433,2; Lahusen 1989, p. 17; *Brutus* 2010, catalogue no. 5, p. 112.
[9] Vollkommer 1988, pp. 278–284.
[10] RRC 433,1; *Brutus* 2010, catalogue no. 6, p. 113.
[11] Cf. Milczanowski 2008, pp. 129–138.

Fig. 5. M. Iunius Brutus, denarius. Rome, 54 BC
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

cap of a freedman[12] – between two daggers.[13] Below is the inscription EID MAR making the meaning of the image plain: by their act, the assassins of Caesar had restored liberty to the people of Rome. The *pileus* resembled in its shape the head covering of the Dioscuri and this is the origin ascribed to the cap in Roman numismatic iconography.[14] The oldest coins on which the *pileus* is shown as an attribute accompanying Libertas are the denarii (Figs. 6 and 7) issued by C. Cassius (126 BC)[15] and M. Porcius Laeca (125 BC).[16] On them Libertas is shown driving a quadriga, holding a *pileus* in her extended hand. Next, the cap of liberty as an attribute appears with the head of Libertas in denarii minted in 76 BC by C. Egnatius[17] and L. Farsuleius Mensor[18] (Figs. 8 and 9). On the other hand, the design of the two daggers pointing downward used in the composition on the Brutus denarius appear to be quite original. Possibly, it is a synthesis of sorts, and a distant echo of imagery displayed on the reverse of coins of Capua and Atella struck in 216 BC before the Battle of Cannae.[19] On them, two soldiers are shown holding up a sacrificial pig with one hand and grip of a dagger with the other.

As noted earlier, the Brutus coin commemorating the Ides of March fits a broader iconographic programme of coinage issued by the Republican faction in 43–42 BC that had antecedents in coins from 54 BC and the propaganda of Libertas as its overarching idea.[20] The *pileus* was also used freely in numismatic

[12] *Pilleus*, [in:] Pauly-Wissowa, cols. 1328–1330.

[13] Szubelak 2008, pp. 116–117.

[14] On the subject of the liberty cap in numismatic iconography see, Savio and Bagi 2005, pp. 587–597.

[15] RRC 266,1.

[16] RRC 270.

[17] RRC 391,3.

[18] RRC 392.

[19] *Cf.* Böhm 1997, pp. 21–22.

[20] Weisser 2010, pp. 51–63. See also, Morawiecki 2004a, pp. 121–129.

Fig. 6. C. Cassius, denarius. Rome, 126 BC
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

Fig. 7. M. Porcius Laeca, denarius. Rome, 125 BC
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

Fig. 8. C. Egnatius, denarius. Rome, 76 BC
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

Fig. 9. L. Farsuleius Mensor, denarius. Rome, 76 BC
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

iconography during the Imperial period, either as a motif on the model introduced by the Brutus denarius, in which case it occupied the centre of the reverse (as, for example, on the quadrantes of Caius from 40 AD)[21] or as an element of a new type of representation – Libertas standing with this attribute of liberty in her hand.

The idea of Libertas is especially prevalent in the coinage of the many contenders for the throne during the period of the civil war of 68 AD which erupted in the aftermath of Nero the tyrant's fall from power, after whose death, as Suetonius tells us *plebs pilleata tota urbe discurreret*.[22] It is not surprising, therefore, that the idea of Libertas was found useful not only by powerful commanders such as Vespasian, Vitellius (Fig. 10), or Galba,[23] but by other major players as well, such as Vindex in Gaul[24] or L. Clodius Macer in Africa[25] (Fig. 11). Particularly interesting is a series of denarii of Galba struck in the Tarraco mint in the spring of 68 AD[26] (Fig. 12), as an example of a deliberate reading of the republican significance of the coinage of Marcus Brutus and direct adoption of the design of his Ides of March coin. On the obverse of the coins of Galba is the head of the personification of liberty and the inscription LIBERTAS, on the reverse, two daggers pointing downward, with a *pileus* between them. At bottom is the inscription RESTITVTA, complementary to the obverse legend.

Fig. 10. Vitellius, denarius. Rome, 69 AD
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

We may well ponder whether Galba's decision as to the choice of this particular composition may have been guided by the universal recognition and awareness of its ideological significance by its users. It is conceivable that the denarii of Brutus, brought back by his former soldiers after the lost war, were kept for a long time in many a Roman household. Some role in the spread of the ico-

[21] RIC I², 52.
[22] Suet. Nero 57, 1. Cf. Kluczek 2008, p. 159, note 43.
[23] Walburg 2007/2008, pp. 113–115. Cf. Boruch 1996, p. 74 ff.
[24] RIC I², 20.
[25] RIC I², 57.
[26] RIC I², 24.

Fig. 11. L. Clodius Macer, denarius. Carthage (?), 68 AD
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

Fig. 12. Galba, denarius. Tarraco, 68–69 AD
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

nography of the Brutus coin must have been played also by its imitations and contaminations, surviving in other forms, *e.g.* the silver gem of a ring now in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, on which is displayed the head of Brutus left and, below it, a *pileus*, at left, a dagger (pointing upward), and at right, a snake, presumably – the symbol of *salus publica*.[27] According to L. Morawiecki, the description of the coin of Brutus handed down by Cassius Dio suggests that this author had seen one in person,[28] although it is equally easy to prove the opposite. Thus, for instance, M. H. Crawford notes that the name of Cassius – whom Dio mentions in his description of the Brutus coin – does not appear in the coin's legend – suggesting that his source was more likely to be a written life of Brutus or some chronicle.[29]

[27] Avisseau-Broustet 2008, no. 113, p. 215.
[28] Morawiecki 2004b, p. 103; *cf.* Kluczek 2008, p. 162.
[29] Crawford 1983, pp. 51–52.

The emblem of Alciatus inspired by the denarius commemorating the Ides of March is a complete composition. It consists of a lemma, in abbreviated form *Resp. liberata*, an image and an epigram. The graphic component of the emblem is composed by two upright daggers and above them, a broad-brimmed hat (Fig. 13). In the background is a landscape with a hill and buildings. The poem is in the form of an elegiac couplet and traditionally, in keeping with emblematic convention, refers to its companion image:

Caesaris exitio, ceu libertate recepta,
Haec ducibus Brutis cusa moneta fuit.
Ensiculi in primis, queis pileus insuper astat,
Qualem missa manu servitia accipiunt.[30]

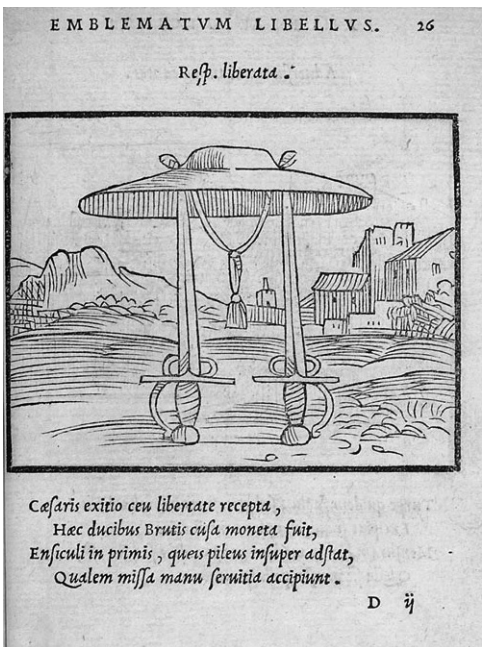

Fig. 13. *Resp. liberata*. Emblem edited in the office of Aldus heirs, Venice 1546.

[30] Citation from Alciato 1547, f. 26 r: When Caesar had been destroyed, as a sign of liberty regained, this coin was struck by the leaders, Brutus and his brother. In chief are daggers, beside which there also stands a cap, such as slaves receive when set free.

[The translations supplied by http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/alciato/emblem.php?id=A56a247]

In the main, the epigram describes the graphic image of the emblem and explains its origin. What is also important is that it alludes to a specific coin even if the image presented in the emblem is not a faithful reproduction of its obverse, only its loose imitation. A similar freedom when reference is made to numismatic motifs is observed also in other editions of the collection of emblems of Alciatus. All of them and this is highly significant, refer to the numismatic prototype but also propose a new substance which, even if universal, has been adapted to the modern age.

By the wording of his lemma the Milanese jurist turned the image of the two daggers and *pileus* into a universal symbol of liberation of a country from the power of a tyrant. Needless to say, his whole composition was based on reference to an historical fact and a concrete object. Nevertheless, it is worth addressing the text itself, especially, the historical figures it invokes. The 'Bruti' of the epigram most likely are Marcus Junius Brutus and Decimus Junius Brutus, Caesars officers, and eventually, one of the participants of the conspiracy which ended in the assassination of the dictator. It may be of interest that, in his epigram, Alciatus did not mention some better known instigators of the famous coup, not least, Caius Cassius Longinus. Definitely, the two Bruti are presented as exemplary heroes, the coin issued for them supplied a symbol which gained recognition as a universal symbol of the salvation of the fatherland. This universality makes us ponder also whether the motif taken from the Brutus coin has not been detached from the historical context which had contributed to its issue. Because we may well recall the legendary ancestor of Marcus Junius Brutus who had also distinguished himself for the Republic, namely, the progenitor of the family – Lucius Junius Brutus, who banished the last king of Rome, Tarquin the Proud. When writing of *ducibus Brutis* Alciatus may have had in mind the two most illustrious representatives of the family not concerned that they were anything but contemporaries. Thus, the answer as to which Bruti are indicated may be formulated from a purely historical perspective, which suggests Decimus Brutus, or from a symbolic perspective, which makes Lucius Brutus as a more attractive personage in this context.

Looking at the *Respublica liberata* emblem we may do well to reflect on what was the direct source used by Alciatus; the coin itself, which he could have seen, or even had in his possession, or a written source, which provided a description of this coin. The author of *Emblematum libellus* was known for his interest in ancient coins. Indeed, this curiosity was something he shared with many Renaissance humanists, who took an interest in all things classical; many built up their own numismatic collections.[31] Moreover, Alciatus engaged in a scholarly study of coins and made them the subject of his two works. In one of them, *Libellus de ponderibus et*

[31] Cunnally 1999, pp. 3–11, 34–51.

mensuris,[32] he focused on the question of their weight and value. In the other, *De re nummaria,* his primary concern was comparing the value of ancient coins with that of modern currency; this work remained long in manuscript form, and was published in print only in 1750.[33] These two dissertations dedicated to numismatic matters show that Alciatus had a good understanding of ancient coins. Numismatic motifs appear in other emblems forming his *Emblematum libellus*.[34] It is not to be discounted, therefore, that the Italian jurist had handled the denarius, the reverse of which provided him with the impulse to compose the *Respublica liberata* emblem. At the same time, we need to bear in mind that the coin was known also from written accounts which, next to describing its appearance, explained its ideological message and the intentions that guided its striking. As it turns out, these literary explanations are very close to the sense conferred by Alciatus.

The Ides of March coin of Marcus Junius Brutus had attracted interest even during antiquity. Not least, fuelled by Cassius Dio who drew attention in his *Roman History* to its ideological and symbolic dimension. This twice consul and historian reports that while on the march to Macedon and engaging in various political and military actions, Brutus issued the coin:

> *Βροῦτος μὲν ταῦτά τε ἔπρασσεν, καὶ ἐς τὰ νομίσματα ἃ ἐκόπτετο εἰκόνα τε αὑτοῦ καὶ πιλίον ξιφίδιά τε δύο ἐνετύπου, δηλῶν ἐκ τε τούτου καὶ διὰ τῶν γραμμάτων ὅτι τὴν πατρίδα μετὰ τοῦ Κασσίου ἠλευθερωκὼς εἴη.*[35]

It is easy to see that the full ideological significance of the coin is made plain by Dio in the brief passage just quoted. If this fragment was known to Alciatus, then the Milanese scholar, well versed in legal matters, took what was a ready formula and modified it only in one respect. He detached the image of the daggers and the *pileus* from an actual, unique historical context and gave it a universal, timeless expression consistent with the general idea of emblems. To achieve this he need not have had hands-on knowledge of the coin itself. Dio's work was quite well known at the time when the Milanese jurist was active. It had been published

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[32] Alciato 1532.

[33] Alciato 1750.

[34] To name only a few, emblems provided with lemmata are *Prudentes*, *Concordia*, *Virtuti fortuna comes*, *Princeps subditorum incolumitatem procurans*.

[35] Cass. Dio 47, 25. Brutus stamped upon the coins which were being minted his own likeness and a cap and two daggers, indicating by this and by the inscription that he and Cassius had liberated the fatherland.

[Translation supplied by: http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/47*.html]

in fragments, and translated into Italian in Venice in 1533.[36] Thus, Alciatus could have read Dio just as well in his mother tongue as in the Greek original. For he had a good command of the language of the ancient Hellenes, proving this not least by his translation of selected epigrams from the so-called *Planudean Anthology*.[37] Indeed, he even went on to incorporate some of these texts in his collection of emblems.[38]

To return to the sources on which Alciatus could have drawn, it is equally likely that, rather than turning directly to Dio, he used a modern text. After all, the ideological message conveyed by the denarius had attracted the interest not only of the ancients, but also of Renaissance scholars. One of them to turn his attention to the image of the two daggers and *pileus* was Angelo Poliziano. This prominent Italian philologist and poet dedicated to this representation *caput* 70 of his work, *Miscellanea*, addressing many different subjects.[39] The subject of this section – explaining the symbolism of numismatic design – is stated in its very title. Given that it contains details relevant to the context of the emblem of Alciatus this section is worth citing in full:

> *Cuius in Bruti nomismate symbolum sint pileus et pugiones*
>
> *Si quis nomisma Bruti reperiat ipsius caelatum imagine pretereaque pileo et duobus pugiunculis, ne diutius in explicanda ratione causaque laboret, legat historiarum Dionis librum XLVII. Nam ex his, inquit, Brutus significabat ab se et Cassio patriam liberatam. Sed enim pileum gestari ab his solitum, qui libertatem nacti, vulgatius manifestiusque quam ut sit autoritatibus confirmandum.*[40]

Thus, Angelo Poliziano not only had disseminated the description of the coin itself, but also the interpretation of its propaganda message. One, let us recall, that was already recognized during antiquity and drawn directly from Cassius Dio.

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[36] Cassius Dio 1533.

[37] Its edition, with translations by Alciatus, was published in Basel in 1529; Alciato 1529.

[38] Pelc 2002, p. 23.

[39] The *Miscellanea* of Poliziano first printed in 1489; Poliziano 1489.

[40] 'Should anyone stumble across the coin of Brutus which displays his likeness, a *pileus* and two daggers, not to labour long over its origin and explanation, let them read book 47 of History by Dio. His account is that, by so doing [*i.e.* having the coin minted], Brutus showed that he and Cassius had liberated the fatherland. For it is also customary for those who have been granted their freedom to show this by wearing a pileus; this is a matter so well known that I need not invoke the testimony of other authors.'

Consequently, Alciatus had at his disposal several sources to inspire his composition of the *Respublica liberata* emblem. That the account of Dio might not have been too well known in its original version and, more likely, was evident in second hand publications, is indicated by later editions of *Emblematum libellus* which carried an image different from the one stamped in the edition of Manuzio of 1546. The Venetian printer had used an illustration featuring a wide-brimmed hat between two daggers. This image is in concord with the text of the epigram and corresponds directly to the coin itself. Other printers, including the masters of the black art from *Officina Plantiniana*, seemed not to have cared to preserve this concord. Some examples of are well worth describing below.

The metamorphoses of the emblematic illustration

Four years after the Manuzio edition, the printing house of Mathias Bonhomme in Lyons published a complete edition of all the emblems (211 epigrams with 209 figures) with the *Respublica liberata* emblem among them[41] (Fig. 14). Similarly as in the Venetian edition, it is in three parts: lemma (this time, already in a developed form), the visual image and the epigram. The text was not changed; remaining fateful to the original version, but the visual component was altered completely, and depicted a sword, pointing upward, and over it, a biretta. This was contained on a coin, with an inscription in exergue BRVTI NOMISMA. This difference may be of interest, especially if we consider its written context. For the number of blades mentioned in the epigram is definitely plural (*ensiculi*). The lack of concord between the two components of the emblem becomes very clear, even without an awareness of the correct design on the coin mentioned in the emblem work. It is remarkable that the image in this particular form should have been accepted for print – especially as that Alciatus himself was involved in preparing this edition, which is confirmed by its full title (*Emblemata denuo ab ipso autore recognita ac, quae desiderabantur, imaginibus locupletata*). Perhaps, the author did not look into the content of the visual images selected by the publisher or he did not pay attention to have them in full concord with the poems. We have to recall that the primary role of the visual component of an emblem was that of a symbol, it did not have to be in concord with its graphic inspiration, if extant.[42] Thus, perhaps it is too much to expect of the author to have kept a rigorous watch to have his compositions, inspired by numismatic motifs, to follow closely the numismatic representations. It was enough for them to loosely resemble

[41] Alciato 1550, p. 163. This edition was repeated in 1551.

[42] In some editions the image does not correspond to the adjacent epigram, see Krzywy 2002, p. VIII.

Fig. 14. *Respublica liberata*. Emblem in M. Bonhomme edition, Lyons 1550.

their prototype and point to the ideological-symbolic message, also mentioned in the adjacent epigram, or the emblematic image of a single blade and a biretta may have been influenced by a fragment in the chronicles of Appian. Describing events taking place immediately after Caesar's assassination, the classical historian reported that one of the assassins bore a *pileus* on the end of a spear exhorting the people of Rome to restore the government of their forefathers and recalled the memory of Lucius Junius Brutus.[43]

A single sword and a biretta appear in other editions of Alciatus. An image of a sword, pointing upward, with the *pileus* beside it, to the left of the blade, was impressed in the Parisian edition in two languages (Latin-French) by the bookmaker and printer Jean Richer[44] (Fig. 15). The two elements (sword and *pileus*) are shown within what looks like an exergue, the impression of which is supported by the presence of the legend BRVTI NOMISMA. The same image was

[43] App. *Bel. civ.* 2, 119.

[44] Alciato 1584, pp. 207–208.

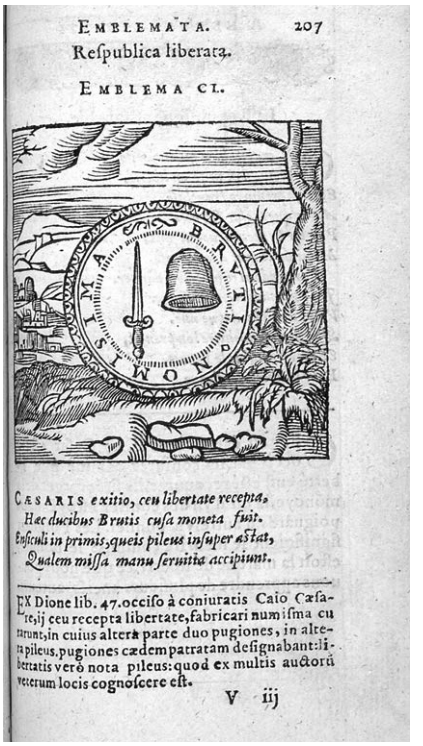
EMBLEMATA. 207
Reſpublica liberata.
EMBLEMA CI.
BRVTI NOMISMA
CÆSARIS exitio, ceu libertate recepta.
Hæc ducibus Brutis cuſa moneta fuit.
Enſiculi in primis, queis pileus inſuper aſtat,
Qualem miſſa manu ſeruitia accipiunt.
EX Dione lib. 47. occiſo à coniuratis Caio Cæſare, ij ceu recepta libertate, fabricari numiſma curarunt, in cuius altera parte duo pugiones, in altera pileus, pugiones cædem patratam deſignabant: libertatis verò nota pileus: quod ex multis auctorũ veterum locis cognoſcere eſt.
V iij

Fig. 15. Emblem edited in the Christopher Plantin printing house, Antwerp 1584.

used in an edition published in Leiden in 1591 by *Officina Plantiniana*.[45] What is noteworthy, in this case, is that this edition came with a commentary penned by Claude Mignault, something we will return to later in the discussion. A remarkable image, also different from the numismatic original, was included in a late, seventeenth-century edition published at Nájera. This edition was printed by Juan de Mongaston in 1615.[46] The graphic component of the emblem is a sword pointing downward, under it is a *pileus*. It is, as in earlier examples, placed within an exergue, with the legend BRUTI NOMISMA.[47]

These many departures from the original model of the antique coin may be surprising, considering the circumstances in which the medal of Lorenzino de Medici (Fig. 16) and of Henry II, king of France (Fig. 17) were issued, both relatively faithful in their rendition of the antique original. In any case, these two medals confirm that there was awareness in sixteenth-century Italy of the

[45] Alciato 1591, p. 180.
[46] Alciato 1615.
[47] Ibidem, f. 354v.

ideological message conveyed by the Brutus coin. In fact, seeking the origin of the emblem of Andreas Alciatus, it may be relevant to look to the first of the two named personages since Lorenzino de Medici, Florentine politician, playwright and adventurer, was one who, at least in his own opinion, had chosen the path of Brutus.[48] Lorenzino de Medici was the son of Pierfrancesco, a Florentine banker from the famous House of Medici, and was raised with the future dukes Alessandro and Cosimo de Medici. He murdered the former and attributed this deed to his desire to restore liberty to the fatherland. There was little resemblance between this assassination and the Ides of March conspiracy of Brutus and Cassius. For Lorenzino inveigled his relative by promising him a romantic rendezvous with his sister Laudomia, a known beauty, and then killed him. After this deed, he had to leave Florence. He fled first to Bologna, and next stayed in Turkey and then France. Finally, he found himself in Venice and there met with the same fate as the one he had meted out to his relative. Having taken power after the death of Alessandro, Cosimo hired assassins to kill Lorenzino and had him slain in 1548 in front of his lover's house. It is striking that the *Respublica liberata* emblem was published for the first time in 1546, that is, two years before the death of Lorenzino. The controversial Medici not only had issued a medal, but also published an oration in 1539, in a public defence of his act, where he referred to Marcus Brutus. This oration was circulated, known simply as *Apologia*, but did not appear in print.[49] Lorenzino's action must have caused a stir everywhere in Italy. Without fail, his attempt to justify the assassination and his reference to the Marcus Junius Brutus cannot have escaped notice. The fact that, shortly before his death, Lorenzino had been staying in Venice, where the new emblems of Alciatus appeared for the first time, may raise suspicion that this story contributed to the origin of the emblem. It is possible, therefore, that the composition of Alciatus alludes to the political discussion in the aftermath of the assassination of Duke Alessandro. Even so, the commentators of the *Book of Emblems* are silent on this subject and make no mention of the events contemporary to the Milanese jurist, focusing only on classical themes. To the above line of reasoning, we need to add also that a very similar medal was issued by King Henry II of France to advertise himself as Italy's liberator. This medal was an element of a propaganda policy to justify his military intervention in the Apennine Peninsula.

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[48] Many works were written about this figure, see, *e.g.* Martini 1882; Ferrai 1883, pp. 79–112, 1891, pp. 411–432; Storti 1907; Nulli 1933; Mazzucconi 1937; Fronda 1958; Bromfield 1972; Vannucci 1996; Russo 2006.

[49] On the other hand, several editions of this text saw the light of day in the twentieth century: *L'Apologia* 1916; *Aridosia* 1917; *Orazioni* 1957, pp. 133–185; *Apologia* 1991.

Fig. 16. Medal of Lorenzino de Medici. Italy, 1537
(photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

To return to our emblem, the fallacy of its graphic component did not escape the notice of the authors of commentaries to the work of Alciatus. There was a request for rectification included in the collection published in Lyons, penned by Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas (in Latin, Franciscus Sanctius Brocensis), Spanish philologist and humanist, professor at the University of Salamanca. This scholar objected to the single sword instead of two and a biretta instead of a *pileus*. In a terse commentary, de las Brozas referred the reader to the fragments from Dio and Poliziano already cited here. He also made it known that the original coin was in his possession and that the figure should be modified as follows:

> *Numisma ego domi habeo, sed pileum oblongum habet inter duos pugiones erectos*.[50] *Quare hic emendanda est pictura*.[51]

Let us note that de las Brozas is practically the only commentator to draw attention to the lack of compatibility of the image included in the book with the coin which had inspired its creation. The first commentator of the work of Alciatus, Claude Mignault mentioned earlier, explains that the inspiration for making the emblem had been provided by the coin itself and refers the reader to Cassius Dio, as did others, for example, Lorenzo Pignoria and Johann Thuilius.[52]

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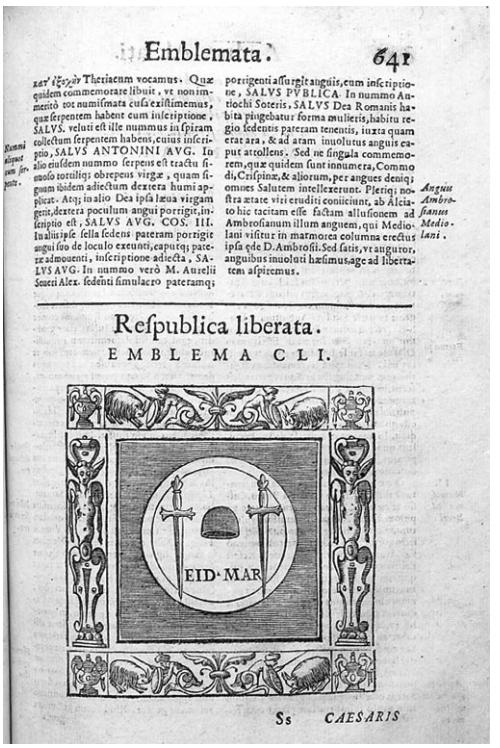
[50] This information is untrue. In reality, the Brutus coin displays two daggers pointing downward, rather than up. Perhaps the coin owned by de la Brozas was an incompetent forgery or, simply, he made a mistake in relying on his memory. Not to be discounted either is that he had in mind a quinarius issued for Brutus by Lucius Sestius (= RRC 502,3), its reverse was frequently read incorrectly in his day, of which we find an example in Fulvio Orsini's opus *Familiae Romanae* (cf. below).

[51] Brozas 1573, p. 432. 'I have the coin at home, but it represents an oblong pileus between two erect [upright, vertical] daggers. This is how the picture should be corrected'.

[52] Their comments were published in the edition printed in Padua in 1621 by Pietro Paolo Tozzi: Alciato 1621.

Fig. 17. Medal of Henry II, king of France (after I. de Bie, Paris 1636).

Perhaps, the comment made by the professor from Salamanca had the expected effect because in the edition printed in Padua in 1621, one that brought together comments contributed by several scholars, the image closely follows its


Emblemata. 641

κατ' ἐξοχὴν Theriacum vocamus. Quæ quidem commemorare libuit, vt non immeritò tot numismata cusa existimemus, quæ serpentem habent cum inscriptione, SALVS, veluti est ille nummus in spiram collectum serpentem habens, cuius inscriptio, SALVS ANTONINI AVG. In alio eiusdem nummo serpens est tractu sinuoso tortilisq; obrepens virgæ, quam ignum ibidem adiectum dextera humi applicat. Atq; in alio Dea ipsa læua virgam gerit, dextera poculum angui porrigit, inscriptio est, SALVS AVG. COS. III. In alio ipse sella sedens pateram porrigit angui suo de loculo exeunti, caputq; pateræ admouenti, inscriptione adiecta, SALVS AVG. In nummo verò M. Aurelii Severi Alex. sedenti simulacro pateramq; porrigenti assurgit anguis, cum inscriptione, SALVS PVBLICA. In nummo Antiochi Soteris, SALVS Dea Romanis habita pingebatur forma mulieris, habitu regio sedentis pateram tenentis, iuxta quam erat ara, & ad aram inuolutus anguis caput attollens. Sed ne singula commemorem, quæ quidem sunt innumera, Commodi, Crispinæ, & aliorum, per angues denique omnes Salutem intellexerunt. Plerique nostra ætate viri eruditi coniiciunt, ab Alciato hic taciturnè esse factam allusionem ad Ambrosianum illum anguem, qui Mediolani vsitatè in marmoreo columna erectus ipsa ede D. Ambrosii. Sed satis, vt arguitur, anguibus inuoluti hæsimus, age ad libertatem aspiremus.

Nummi aliquot cum serpente.

Anguis Ambrosianus Mediolani.

Respublica liberata.

EMBLEMA CLI.

Ss CAESARIS

Fig. 18. *Respublica liberata*. Emblem in the Paduan edition, 1621.

original[53] (Fig. 18); against the background of an exergue are shown two daggers pointing downward (in the Venice edition from 1546, pointing upward), and between them, a *pileus*; in the lower section is an element missing from earlier editions – the inscription EID MAR stating the time of the attempt on Caesar's life. Actually, this may also be the first time that the *pileus* made its appearance in the emblem as earlier its place is taken by hats quite different from the original, classical Greek and Roman form, which the printers had thought fit to provide: a biretta and a broad-brimmed hat reminiscent of a cardinal's hat. The image in the Padua edition is that of a rounded cap, slightly oblong in shape, without a peak, similar to the one seen on the statues of the Dioscuri on the Capitoline Hill in Rome.

The Brutus coin among hieroglyphs

All the commentators, regardless of their position on the representation in the emblematic image, focused in the main on the motif of the *pileus*. In addition, it is in this ancient headgear that they also discerned the main source of the symbolic content evoked by the emblem of Alciatus. The motif of swords tended to be overlooked altogether, or accorded very little space, with the remark that 'it is obvious that they indicate an assassination',[54] as was done in the very full commentary in the edition published in Padua. Attention was paid to the *pileus* also in treatises which collected various symbols. Worth singling out from this group is the highly popular *Hieroglyphica* of the Italian scholar Giovanni Pierio Valeriano.[55] Our choice is dictated on the one hand, by the popularity of this treatise, on the other, by the fact that in the chapter dedicated to the *pileus* reference is made also to the coin which had provided inspiration for the emblem of Andreas Alciatus.[56] At the same time, we find a reference to Valeriano in the edition of emblems published in Padua.[57] Thus, we have here a group of interconnected texts that were often linked with each other in past ages.

A discourse about the symbolism of the *pileus* opens book XL of the *Hieroglyphica* addressing *de iis quae per vestes aliquot significantur* ('those things

[53] Ibidem, p. 641.

[54] Ibidem, p. 642: *Pugio caedem patratam omnino significabat*.

[55] Its first edition was published in Basel in 1556: Valeriano 1556. The same year the treatise was printed in Florence. It went on to have several more editions and was translated into French (1576, 1615) and Italian (1602).

[56] Incidentally, Valeriano used to be private tutor to Alessandro de Medici and remained in touch with him until his death in 1537.

[57] Alciato 1621, p. 642.

which are signified by some garments'). Valeriano recognizes many different meanings that may be linked to the *pileus*. Without dwelling on them for long, it is worth naming at least a few to demonstrate the extent of the symbolism which is dealt with here. The list is *nobilitas* (nobility), *libertas* (liberty), *libertores patriae* (liberators of the fatherland), *servilis improbitas* (the villainy of the slaves), *triplex libertas* (triple liberty), *flamines* (priests), and *Hippocrates*. The coin issued by Brutus after the assassination of Caesar is addressed in the section on the liberators of the fatherland. Since in the same passage Valeriano names other coins with, as he argues, the same symbolic content, it is worth citing this fragment in its entirety:

> *Quod vero in alterius Bruti numismatis cernere est pugiones duos adiecto pileo. Dion ex hoc Brutum et Cassium patriae liberatores indicari dicit. Nam pugio caedem patratam omnino significat, pileus vero libertatem. In nummo quodam argenteo venerandae antiquitatis observavi feminea capita ab utroque latere singula, simplici quodam modo capillos collecta, in quo nihil aliud scriptum quam* LIBERTAS*. In nummo Ser. Galbae simulacrum est cum iaculo et pileo, cuius inscriptio est* LIBERTAS PUBLICA*. Eadem in Nervae nummis aliquot habentur. Apud historicos legas servos nonnumquam ad pileum vocatos, ut apud Livium XXIIII: Postero die servi ad pileum vocati, hoc est promissa concessave servis libertas*.[58]

The fact that the coin of Brutus was used as the first piece of evidence may confirm its popularity during the second half of the sixteenth century and the power of its symbolic-ideological message. The other coins used as examples are additional evidence on the use of the *pileus* as a symbol of liberty, and in this specific case, as a symbol of the liberators of the fatherland, something that Alciatus also used as a reference. Interestingly enough, Valeriano nevertheless did not invoke either the emblem of Alciatus or mention contemporary events associ-

[58] Valeriano 1556, f. 293 v. 'Since on the coins of the other Brutus two daggers and a *pileus* added to them can be seen, this led Dio to state that Brutus and Cassius claimed that they were the liberators of the fatherland. For, the dagger signifies all manner of crime committed, and the *pileus* – liberty. On an ancient silver coin I have seen women's heads, one on each side, with simply coiffed tresses. The only inscription on that coin was LIBERTAS. On the coin of Servius Galba is a likeness with a spear (*iaculum*) and a *pileus*, with inscription LIBERTAS PUBLICA. The same is seen on some coins of Nerva. One may read in some histories that slaves had been summoned to the *pileus* (*servos ad pileum vocatos*), as in Livy, book XXIV: *Postero die servi ad pileum vocati* (the following day the slaves were called up to the *pileus*), which means that the slaves were promised and given back their freedom.'

ated with Lorenzino de Medici. What Valeriano did was, firstly, to draw, as far as possible, on ancient sources to demonstrate the long tradition of the discussed symbols. Because of this in his *Hieroglyphica,* references to his age are rare.

The reason why Valeriano mentioned these other classical coins with the image of the *pileus*, other than to present a possibly broad array of exemplars, was the popularity of antiquarian studies. The second half of the sixteenth century was a time of increasing scholarly interest in classical numismatic objects. This is manifested, for instance, by two serious treatises – of Fulvio Orsini and Antonio Agustín. It is worth adding that both these authors were probably known to the publishers of Alciatus. In both treatises, we find a reproduction of the Brutus coin from the *Respublica liberata* emblem. It is not impossible, therefore, that these scholarly texts played a part in the ultimate reconciliation of the figure in the Paduan edition with its numismatic prototype.

Brutus and his coin in sixteenth-century numismatic literature

For centuries the denarius of Marcus Junius Brutus with the EID MAR legend attracted the lively interest of humanists, despite being among the rarest and, as such, one of the most sought after coins by museums and collectors. Its first depictions, the effect of familiarity with the authentic specimen rather than with the account of Dio, appeared parallel to the intensive development of numismatic literature during the second half of the sixteenth century. Also the greatly popular illustrated world histories, chronicles and collected lives of illustrious men, whose likenesses in woodcuts, more often as not, were drawn from the rich iconographic stock of classical portraiture on coins and medals, or were created based on the works of contemporary master medallists, could not fail to publish the portrait of the famous tyrannicide, usually showing him in a pair with C. Cassius Longinus. In this way the fictional portraits of the two conspirators shown in profile were paired in *Illustrium imagines*, the already famous work of Andrea Fulvio, published in Rome in 1517[59] (Fig. 19), and in the highly sought after imitations of this work by Johannes Huttich.[60] In two illustrated collections of lives by J. de Strada[61] and G. Rouille,[62] published in 1553, the portrait of Brutus was inspired by Valerio Belli's medal styled on antique artwork,[63] even if it had little in common with the portrait handed down by the original coins of the Republican party.

[59] Fulvio 1517.
[60] Huttich 1525, 1526a, 1526b, 1534.
[61] Strada 1553a, 1553b.
[62] Rouille 1553.
[63] Attwood 2003, vol. 1, no. 390, p. 223.

Fig. 19. Portrait of M. Iunius Brutus in A. Fulvio's *Illustrium imagines*, Rome 1517.

Woodcut portrait medals with a likeness of Brutus in profile were accompanied by fictitious exergue legends M. BRVTO or M. BRVTVS (Fig. 20).

Fig. 20. Coin-like portrait medallions of C. Cassius and M. Brutus in *Promptuarium* of G. Rouille, Lyons 1578.

Soon however, the first image of the Ides of March denarius was published, putting into circulation the authentic images and legends of that antique coin. In 1563, a monumental work[64] was published by Hubert Goltzius, a printer of

[64] Goltzius 1563.

sumptuous books on numismatic subjects who was active in Flanders, dedicated to the life and acts of Julius Caesar, illustrated with copperplate reproductions of obverses and reverses of many coins to illustrate different stages in the life of the dictator. Plates XXI–XXIII (Fig. 21), with the title *C. Iulii Caesaris percussores et coniurati*, presented the coins of Marcus Brutus and the republican party selected to explain the motto LIBERTAS REIPVBLICAE RESTITVTA, which was placed on the lower margin of the first of these plates. Therefore, among the images of coins we find the denarius from 54 BC with the head of Libertas on the obverse and the procession of the founder of the Republic, Lucius Brutus on the reverse. Nonetheless, the plate opens with the denarius with the EID MAR legend with, on its obverse, correctly rendered, both the legend accompanying the portrait and its position on the coin. In addition, the composition of the reverse given in the book, reproduces the original, with the only difference being that in the work of Goltzius the edges of the *pileus* are somewhat drawn out and curve outwards.

Fig. 21. Images of coins of M. Iunius Brutus engraved in *C. Iulius Caesar* of H. Goltz, Bruges 1563.

This characteristic feature of the *pileus* was reproduced, with some exaggeration even, several years later, in Fulvio Orsini's *Familiae Romanae*,[65] illustrated

[65] Orsini 1577.

with many copperplates showing Republican coins. Worth noting in particular in this work is not so much the image of the denarius with the EID MAR legend (Fig. 22), replicating the illustration in the book of Goltzius, but the representation of a quinarius issued for Brutus by Lucius Sestius[66] during the civil war, struck in the military mint on the move with their army (Fig. 23). If the reverse design, showing a priest's paraphernalia and legend Q CAEPIO BRVTVS PRO COS is rendered correctly, the reading of the obverse is not correct (Fig. 24): in place of the quaestorial chair, with a *modius* between its legs, Orsini represented two daggers pointing upward flanking a *pileus*. Imaginably, this incorrect reading of the classical coin resulted from the illegible condition of the available specimen (one of the rarest Republican coinage) rather than from the wish to put into scholarly circulation a second, spurious coin type commemorating the Ides of March.

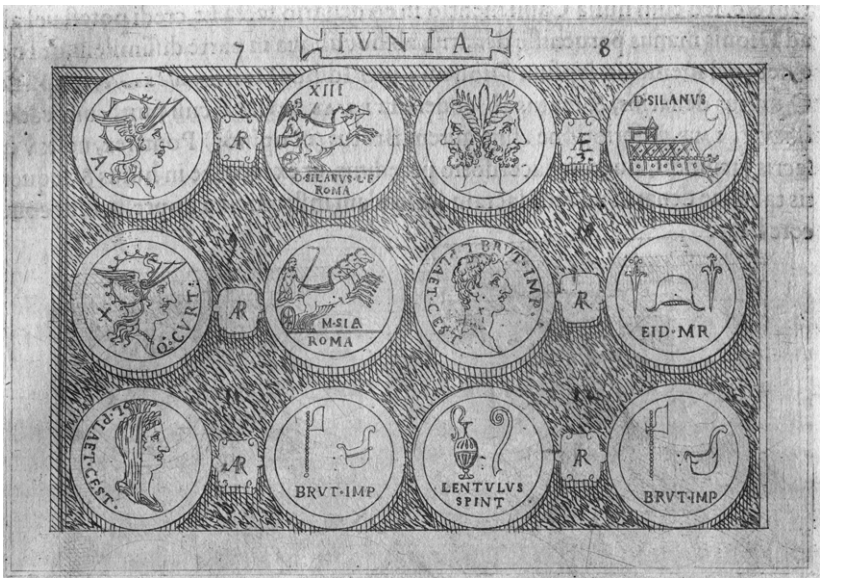


Fig. 22. Images of coins of M. Iunius Brutus in F. Orsini's *Familiae romanae*, Rome 1577.

A somewhat later representation of the Brutus denarius is seen in possibly the best known work of numismatic literature of the sixteenth century, published – at first in Spanish – by Antonio Agustín. Two parallel editions of this book appeared in Rome in 1592[67] and would have a strong impact on many generations of European humanists. In both editions (one illustrated with a set of woodcuts, the other

[66] RRC 502,3; Brutus 2010, catalogue no. 20, p. 117.

[67] Agustín 1592a, 1592b.

Fig. 23. L. Sestius for M. Iunius Brutus, quinarius. Military mint, 43–42 BC (photo Classical Numismatic Group, www.cngcoins.com).

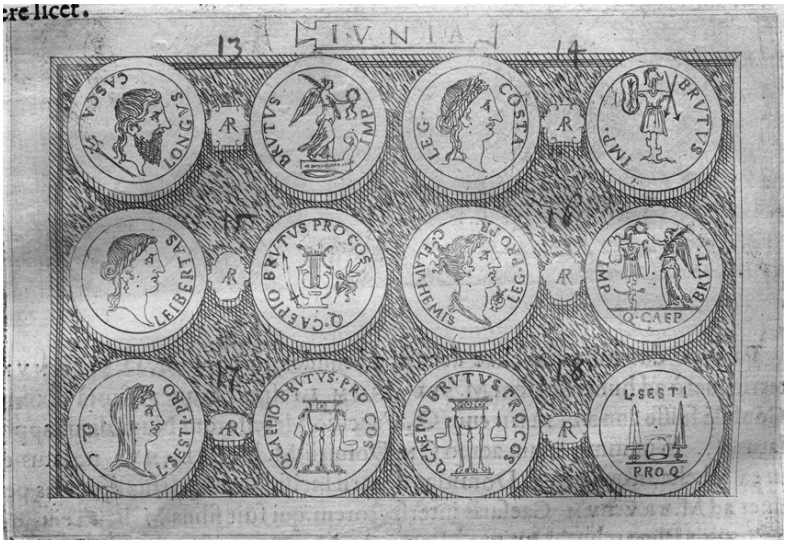


Fig. 24. Image of the coins of L. Sestius in *Familiae romanae* of Orsini.

with copperplates), we find the image of the obverse and the reverse of the coin with the legend EID MAR (Fig. 25), shown together with a denarius of Marcus Brutus from 54 BC commemorating his ancestor L. Junius Brutus, and C. Servilius Ahala. Nonetheless, we must recognize the richly illustrated section on the classical iconography of Libertas as the most valuable for the modern apprehension of Republican coinage. This part of Agustín's work is, in the main, a highly competent review of the evolution of the Roman personification of liberty, beginning with the coinage issued by Brutus from 54 BC through to the times of Caracalla (Fig. 26). It is worth adding that during the second half of the sixteenth century the representations of Libertas drawn from classical numismatic imagery were also added to the repertoire of illustrations used in antiquarian works. One noteworthy example is the copperplate from the work of A. Ortelius on deities of classical antiquity[68] with the head of Libertas right said to be *ex nummo argenteo Bruti*.

[68] Ortelius 1572.

Fig. 25. Image of the coin of M. Iunius Brutus in *Dialoghi* of A. Agustín, Rome 1592.

Fig. 26. Images of coins depicting *Libertas* in Agustín's *Dialoghi*.

The conclusion from the above analysis of sources may raise some eyebrows. It would appear that, for a long time, the emblematic tradition functioned next to and, apparently independent of, an equally lively numismatic-medallist tradition. The visual component of the emblem of Alciatus at first was obviously greatly at odds with the image displayed on the original coin and resembled it only loosely. During the same period, medals were being designed, modelled directly on the reverse design of the Brutus coin. Not to mention that the image of the denarius commemorating the Ides of March was published on several occasions during the second half of the sixteenth century, not least in the scholarly and the more popular dissertations of Orsini and Agustín. It seems, however, that the growing familiarity with the iconography of the Brutus coin resulting from the efforts of these two authors, and even earlier, of Lorenzino de Medici, did not affect the form

of the emblematic image, even if the latter possibly contributed to the idea of the emblem itself. Only Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas, in a comment published in 1573, insisted on having the image modified to make it correspond to its numismatic original. It is worth noting that the time when this happened was also when numismatic works by scholars from Italy and Spain were being published. Thus, this change of attitude must be part of a more general current in antiquarian studies of the late sixteenth century, when monuments of classical antiquity, both literary and material, started increasingly to be copied rather than – as was the case earlier – creatively imitated. This shift is perfectly illustrated by the case of the *Respublica liberata* emblem. In its earlier publications the visual image of this emblem resembles, with a varying degree of accuracy, the numismatic representation and only in later editions does it become a faithful reflection. Needless to say, this happened without affecting the symbolic message fundamental for the emblem.

Abbreviations

LIMC – *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, Vol. 4, Zürich–München 1988.
Pauly-Wissowa – *Paulys Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Vol. 40, Stuttgart–Weimar 1950.
RIC – *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, Vol. I^2, London 1984.
RRC – M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*^{6}, Cambridge 1995.

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1529 *Selecta epigrammata Graeca Latine versa ex septem Epigrammatum Graecorum libris. Accesserunt omnibus omnium prioribus editionibus ac versionibus plusquam quingenta Epigrammata recens versa ab Andrea Alciato, Ottomaro Luscinio ac Iano Cornario Zuiccauiensi*, Basileae 1529.
1532 *Libellus de ponderibus et mensuris. Item Budaei quaedam de eadem re, adhuc non uisa. Item Philippi Mela[n]rchthonis* [sic] *de ijsdem ad Germanor[um] usum, sententia. Alciati quoq[ue], et Philippi Mela[n]chthonis in laudem iuris ciuilis, orationes due¸ elegantissime*, Venetiis 1532.
1547 *Emblemata nunc Primus edita*, Venetiis 1547.
1550 *Emblemata […] denuo ab ipso autore recognita ac, quae desiderabantur, imaginibus locupletata. Acesserunt nova aliquot ab autore emblemata suis quoque eiconibus insignata*, Lugduni 1550.

1584 *Emblemata Latinogallica, una cum succinctis argumentis, quibus emblematis cuiusque sententia explicatur […]*, a Paris 1584.
1591 *Emblemata […] cum facili et compendiosa explicatione, qua obscura illustrantur, dubiaque omnia solvuntur, Claudium Minoem divionensem […]*, Lugduni Batavorum 1591.
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1526b *Imperatorum Romanorum libellus. Una cum imaginibus, ad vivam effigiem expressis*, Argentinae 1526.

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RESPUBLICA LIBERATA. MONETA BRUTUSA UPAMIĘTNIAJĄCA IDY MARCOWE W EMBLEMATYCZNEJ INTERPRETACJI ALCIATUSA

(Streszczenie)

Jednym z największych fenomenów kultury nowożytnej jest książka emblematyczna. XVI-wieczni humaniści, szczególnie zwolennicy idei neoplatońskich, szybko dostrzegli potencjał tkwiący w tej nowej, nieznanej wcześniejszym formacjom intelektualnym kompozycji słowno-wizualnej. Zaczęto ją traktować jako uniwersalne medium służące do opisu świata za pomocą symboli i przedstawień alegorycznych. Od kiedy Andreas Alciatus

(1492–1550) opublikował w 1531 r. swój zbiór *Emblematum libellus*, utwory tego rodzaju zaczęły cieszyć się nieustannie rosnącą popularnością. Zaproponowana przez włoskiego jurystę i poetę forma łącząca w sobie motto, symboliczną rycinę oraz epigram zaadaptowana została również przez innych twórców. Od Alciatusa przejęto także sposób tworzenia utworów emblematycznych, do których poszukiwano inspiracji w rozmaitych źródłach. Na pierwszy plan niewątpliwie wysuwa się tu literatura starożytna oraz Biblia. Nie lekceważono jednak i piśmiennictwa średniowiecznego oraz nowożytnego. Szerokie zainteresowania renesansowych humanistów i ich fascynacja antykiem kierowały uwagę twórców emblematów oraz ich odbiorców także ku zabytkom materialnym. Interesowano się zwłaszcza tym, co niosło ze sobą wyraźne treści symboliczne lub stanowiło nośnik jakiejś charakterystycznej idei. Nie może więc dziwić, że Alciatus oraz jego następcy wiele ze swoich utworów opierali na przedstawieniach widocznych na znanych im z autopsji lub opisów monetach starożytnych, zwłaszcza rzymskich. Liczne inspiracje numizmatyczne widoczne są przede wszystkim w części graficznej emblematów tworzonych przez Alciatusa. Na pierwszy plan wysuwa się tu szczególnie utwór opatrzony lemmatem *Respublica liberata*, po raz pierwszy opublikowany w 1546 r. Emblemat ten oparty został na odznaczającej się silnym przesłaniem ideologicznym antycznej monecie, którą Marek Juniusz Brutus wybił po zabójstwie Cezara.

Denar, wybity w 43–42 r. p.n.e. przez mennicę polową, wędrującą z armią Brutusa na terenie Azji Mniejszej, zaliczyć można do grupy monet najlepiej utrwalonych w zbiorowej wyobraźni społeczeństw antycznych, a później także najmocniej oddziałujących na europejski humanizm. Niełatwo bowiem wskazać antyczne monety, które w tak bezpośredni sposób odnoszą się do jednego z najbardziej brzemiennych w skutki wydarzeń historycznych, jakim był polityczny mord na Juliuszu Cezarze. Pole awersu monety zajmuje zwrócona w prawo głowa brodatego Brutusa, której towarzyszy legenda BRVT IMP – L PLAET CEST. Napis ten zawiera, oprócz imion emitenta (L. Plaetorius Cestianus), imię tyranobójcy oraz informację o uprawnieniach imperatorskich nadanych mu przez stronników z frakcji Republikanów. Umieszczenie portretu aktualnie urzędującego polityka na monecie oswobodziciela ludu rzymskiego stanowiło odważny krok zważywszy, że jako pierwszy spośród Rzymian, ów typowy dla władców świata hellenistycznego zabieg propagandowy zastosował tuż przed swoją śmiercią właśnie znienawidzony Cezar. W przypadku mennictwa Marka Brutusa, umieszczenie własnego wizerunku na monecie stanowiło nie tylko pragmatyczny krok o określonym oddziaływaniu politycznym, ale i w pewnym sensie naturalną konsekwencję własnej polityki propagandowej, prowadzonej na polu mennictwa począwszy od 54 r. p.n.e. Właśnie w tym roku Brutus wybił serię denarów, noszących po obu stronach wizerunki założycieli Republiki: swego przodka Marka Juniusa Brutusa oraz Gajusza Serviliusa Ahali. Monety drugiej emisji, wybite w tymże roku, przedstawiają głowę Libertas, personifikacji wolności na awersie oraz orszak Lucjusza Brutusa, konsula roku 509 p.n.e. Wydaje się więc, że intencją Marka Brutusa zastąpienia własnym wizerunkiem głowy Cezara było wskazanie na przynależność do starożytnego rodu oswobodzicieli ludu rzymskiego i wynikający z tego nakaz moralny walki z tyranią. Kompozycja rewersu denara Brutusa upamiętniającego Idy Marcowe, choć odwołuje się do powszechnie znanych symboli, nie znajduje precedensu w mennictwie republikańskim. Na środku pola wyobrażono *pileus* – czapkę wyzwoleń-

ców, umieszczoną pomiędzy dwoma sztyletami. Dołem pola biegnie legenda EID MAR, dobitnie objaśniająca znaczenie obrazu: swoim czynem zabójcy Cezara przywrócili wolność ludowi rzymskiemu. Moneta Marka Brutusa upamiętniająca Idy Marcowe wpisuje się zatem w szerszy program ikonograficzny emisji stronnictwa Republikanów w latach 43–42 p.n.e., którego nadrzędną ideą stała się propaganda Libertas.

Emblemat Alciatusa, zainspirowany monetą Brutusa, jest kompozycją kompletną. Zawiera lemmat, który przyjął skróconą postać: *Resp. liberata*, oraz rycinę i epigram. Element graficzny utworu wyobraża dwa sztylety skierowane ostrzami do góry, nad którymi znajduje się kapelusz o szerokim rondzie. Tło przedstawia zaś krajobraz ze wzgórzem i zabudowaniami. Zamieszczony u samego dołu wiersz ma postać dystychu elegijnego i tradycyjnie, zgodnie z emblematyczną konwencją, odnosi się do towarzyszącej mu ryciny: *Caesaris exitio, ceu libertate recepta, / Haec ducibus Brutis cusa moneta fuit. / Ensiculi in primis, queis pileus insuper astat, / Qualem missa manu servitia accipiunt*. Tworzący część tekstową epigram w zasadzie opisuje tylko rycinę oraz wyjaśnia genezę graficznego przedstawienia. Ważne jest także, że bezpośrednio przywołano konkretną monetę, choć rycina nie stanowi wiernej kopii jej awersu, a jedynie luźno go naśladuje. Ta swoboda w przywoływaniu motywów monetarnych jest widoczna zresztą i w innych wydaniach zbioru emblematów Alciatusa. Wszystkie one, co jest bardzo ważne, oprócz nawiązania do monetarnych pierwowzorów proponują nowe treści, choć uniwersalne, przystosowane do czasów nowożytnych. Mediolański prawnik poprzez formę lemmy uczynił wyobrażenie dwóch sztyletów oraz *pileusa* ogólnym symbolem wyzwolenia państwa spod władzy tyrana. Pamiętać przy tym należy, iż objaśnienie to ma rodowód antyczny i wzięte zostało bezpośrednio od Kasjusza Diona.

Analiza źródeł wskazuje wyraźnie, że przez długi czas tradycja emblematyczna funkcjonowała obok i jakby niezależnie od równie silnej tradycji numizmatyczno-medalierskiej. Rycina tworząca utwór Alciatusa początkowo wyraźnie odbiegała od wizerunku utrwalonego na starożytnej monecie i jedynie luźno do niego nawiązywała. W tym samym czasie wybijano medale, które bezpośrednio nawiązywały do kompozycji rewersu monety Brutusa, jak słynny medal Lorenzina de' Medici (1537). Pierwsze podobizny monety Brutusa, oparte na znajomości autentycznych egzemplarzy, a nie na przekazie Diona, pojawiły się wraz z intensywnym rozwojem literatury numizmatycznej, który nastąpił w drugiej połowie XVI w., w dziełach m.in. Huberta Goltziusa (1563), Fulvia Orsiniego (1577), czy Antonia Agustína (1592). Wydaje się jednak, że popularyzacja ikonografii „monety Brutusa" przez wspomnianych autorów, a jeszcze wcześniej przez Lorenzina de' Medici, nie wpłynęła na kształt emblematycznej ryciny. Ostatnia z przywołanych postaci mogła jednak wpłynąć na powstanie idei samego emblematu. Dopiero Francisco Sánchez de las Brozas w opublikowanym w 1573 r. komentarzu zaczął się domagać modyfikacji ryciny tak, by odpowiadała monetarnemu pierwowzorowi. Ta zmiana postawy łączyć się więc musi z ogólnym nurtem w badaniach antykwarycznych końca XVI w., kiedy starożytne zabytki, zarówno literackie, jak i materialne, były już raczej kopiowane, niż – jak wcześniej – twórczo naśladowane. Przemianę tę dobrze ilustruje przykład emblematu *Respublica liberata*. Tworząca go rycina we wcześniejszych wydaniach mniej bądź bardziej wyraźnie nawiązuje do przedstawienia monetarnego, podczas gdy w edycjach późniejszych wiernie je odzwierciedla. Oczywiście dzieje się to bez wpływu na podstawowy dla utworu przekaz symboliczny.

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