CHAPTER 19

THE ANCIENT COINAGES OF THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

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The minting of coins in the Iberian Peninsula spread gradually in from the mid-fifth century B.C. until the reign of the emperor Claudius. The first coinages were struck in the Greek colonies of Emporion and Rhode, but the first push toward the monetization of the Iberian Peninsula was motivated by outside factors, as a result of the huge volume of issues minted during the Second Punic War. With these precedents, and dominated by a monetized society like Rome, the use of coins among the natives extended widely during the second and first centuries B.C., when more than 160 mints were intermittently in operation. This activity continued, from the second half of the first century B.C., in the provincial issues minted by colonies and municipalities, but it ceased definitively during the reign of Claudius I.

The Land and Its People

The Iberian Peninsula was a territory inhabited by a remarkable variety of cultures with very different levels of social, political, and economic development, depending on whether they were located on the coast, where contacts with traders and navigators brought advances and innovations, or inland, where access was more difficult (Bendala 2004: 17–42).

Among the native groups that occupied the Iberian Peninsula we find, in the south and on the Mediterranean coast, a Late Bronze Age native people who evolved toward the Iberian culture, influenced by contacts with Greeks and Phoenicians

(Ruiz and Molinos: 1993; Iberos 1998: 23–49). Some of their populations reached significant urban development and were structured in stratified social hierarchies. They spoke a Pre-Indo-European language (Rodríguez Ramos 2004).

Inside the Iberian Peninsula, to the south of the Ebro River and in the eastern part of the Castillian plateaux, were the Celtiberians; some of their populations developed forms of urban organization, and the Greek influences arrived indirectly, through their contacts with the Iberians (Burillo 1998). Their language belonged to the Indo-European family (Villar 1995, 2000).

In the central and western part of Iberia lived peoples hardly affected by Mediterranean influence and with strong ties to their Late Bronze Age traditions. They only developed into urban models from the late Republican period (Martins 1997: 143–157; Keay 2001: 125–126).

The Phoenicians and Punics on the south coast and Greeks in the northeast basically formed the settled foreign population in the Iberian Peninsula, exerting a great impact on the natives until the arrival of the Romans, by the end of the third century B.C. The colonies they established, the emporiums they frequented, and the centers of natural resources became important points of contact with the native populations, through which an exchange of goods, services, and ideas took place.

The products the first navigators came to look for in Iberia were diverse, and of them silver was one of the most in demand (Aubet 1994: 241–246; Neville 2007: 135–158). The use of Spanish silver has been attested in a "hacksilber" hoard found in the east, the commercial intermediation of the Phoenicians being advocated by Stern (2001: 25), and also in Auriol coinages (France; Furtwängler 1978: 85–89). The silver was soon integrated in the commercial life of the most important populations of the Mediterranean coast, becoming another form of money.

The Issues of the Greek Colonies

The first coinages of the Iberian Peninsula were minted in the Phocean colony of Emporion, toward the second half of the fifth century B.C. (Villaronga 1997) or perhaps earlier, according to the chronology for the Auriol hoard (Furtwängler 2002: 102; Campo 2008: 19), in which some coins were minted in Emporion. They were characterized by their reduced weight, usually less than 1 g, and by the great diversity of types, following a model of minting similar to the one developed in Massalia; they are commonly denominated "fraccionarias ampuritanas" and lasted until the late fourth century B.C. (fig. 19.1).

Fig. 19.1

These coinages had a local purpose and use. From their fractional character and their dispersion, it can be deduced that these coinages had a wide base of users among Greeks and natives,

Fig. 19.2

Fig. 19.3

because their reduced value facilitated access to them by a large segment of the population.

Toward the end of the fourth century B.C., the Greek colony of Rhode, located about 18 km to the north of Emporion, initiated the minting of drachmas, with an average weight of 4.74 g, modifying the fractional monetary model used until then (fig. 19.2). As Villaronga (2000: 45 and 117) has proposed, this standard must have originated in the weight of "fraccionarias" and Massalia obols, of around 0.80 g. Rhode was, in addition, one of the first cities of the Iberian Peninsula to mint bronze coins, with a standard of 4.12 g (Villaronga 2000: 46), and many of them were overstruck on bronze coinages of Punic Sardinia, issued during the first half of the third century B.C. (Villaronga 1984a: 206; Campo 2005: 325).

Shortly after Rhode initiated the minting of drachmas, the colony of Emporion also struck them with an average weight of around 4.70 g and ceased the issue of "fraccionarias" pieces. This new phase of Emporion took place at the beginning of the third century B.C. and lasted discontinuously until the second half of the second century B.C.

The types that were chosen for the first Emporion drachmas (early third century B.C.; fig. 19.3) were the female head with grain stalks in hair, already used in drachmas of Rhode. The reverses show a Nike flying over a horse, which has suggested that the Carthaginians could have been involved in their manufacture, perhaps for the payment of mercenaries recruited in Gallia, where these coinages were widely imitated (Villaronga 2000; Sills 2003: 108–110).

In the later issues types show a greater Syracusan influence, with a female head, adorned with a stalk of grain in her hair and surrounded by three dolphins, on the obverse, and Pegasus with the legend ΕΜΠΟΡΙΤΩΝ on the reverse. This typological change has been related by Sills (2003: 101–102) to the period of wider circulation of Pegasi in Sicily (340–290 B.C.) and the fluent contacts between the island and Iberia, dating the change around 280–260 B.C., or by Villaronga (2000: 89–90) to the defeat of the Carthaginians in the First Punic War, around 241 B.C.

The First Iberian Coinages

The introduction of coinage among the Iberians was a delayed, slow, and territorially unequal process, since its use only progressively extended through time and space. The Iberian world knew coinage early (fifth–fourth centuries B.C.), because

coins arrived in the hands of the natives through trade activities and the Iberian mercenaries who fought in the wars between Greeks and Carthaginians in the central Mediterranean, at least from 480 B.C. (Herodotus 7.165; Diodorus 13.80.2).

Fig. 19.4

The first Iberian issues were struck in the city of Arse-Saguntum, presumably in the second half of the fourth century B.C., as part of the development of their political organization (Ripollès and Llorens 2002: 276–282). These coinages must be linked with a process of normativeness of their civic relations, during which important urban transformations and outstanding trade activities in their port took place (Aranegui 2004). With its coinages, Arse-Saguntum did no more than begin to formalize the use of silver bullion valued by weight (fig. 19.4). But this was merely precocious, since the beginning of a large number of native issues and an effective monetization only began in the late third century B.C.

The designs and the artistic style of the coins struck by Arse are framed within a Greek-Hellenistic cultural atmosphere and show typological ties with the cities of Massalia, Magna Grecia, and Sicily, areas with which Arse-Saguntum maintained trade contacts.

The Monetization of the Phoenicians and the Punics

The monetary model of the Phoenician-Punic people varied with respect to the Greek colonies, because instead of using silver fractions for their routinely low-level exchanges, they showed an initial preference for the bronze, as in Ebusus (fig. 19.5), from the second half of the fourth century B.C., and Gadir, in the first years of the third century B.C. (Alfaro 2001: 30). Silver was a product that these peoples came to look for from an early time, and it comprised one of the goods

Fig. 19.5

that were exchanged; nevertheless, when the Phoenician-Punic society began to articulate is monetary system, it was first based on bronze coins rather than silver ones. It seems obvious that these coinages were minted to cover local expenses. It is surprising that the Phoenician-Punic communities of Ebusus and the south of the Iberian Peninsula had not developed, previously or simultaneously, silver issues, perhaps due to the political and economic maturity of this society and to the fact that issues were intended for modest transactions in a local context, which would exclude military financing, for which the bronze coinages were not thought appropriate.

The Carthaginians and the Second Punic War

The natural evolution of the native societies toward monetization accelerated with the presence of the Carthaginians and the development of the Second Punic War.

The coin hoards of this period provide information on the type of coinages used to finance the war and the area of their circulation (Villaronga 1993: 21–36). The Carthaginians covered their military expenses largely with metals mined in Iberia. The silver currency, whose unit was the shekel (fig. 19.6), was coined on an initial weight standard of 7.20 g. In addition, gold coins were struck on electrum. The monetary system was completed with bronze issues for daily use (Villaronga 1994: 63–74).

On the other hand, the Romans financed their military expenses with a more varied set of currencies, but unlike the Carthaginians, they used local mints and designs. Most of the payments were made with drachmas from Emporion with the Pegasus type, with the head transformed on the reverse (fig. 19.7), which explains the huge volume of coins minted by the city in a short period of time (Villaronga 1984b; Marchetti 1978: 385).

Other coinages found in hoards buried during the years of the war are the Iberian imitations of Emporion drachmas and fractions and Massaliotan obols (Villaronga 1998a), some with recognizable place names in the legends. The Iberian

Fig. 19.6

Fig. 19.7

imitation drachmas were minted in a military context, and it is possible that they were struck with the intention of meeting some war expenses on the Roman side.

Other silver coinages that would be possible to relate in some way to the war, although they appeared in much more modest volume, were the Gallic issues "à la croix," those of Massalia, Hellenistic coins of diverse origin, and those of Ebusus, Gadir, Arse, and Saitabi; several bronze issues are also attributed to this period, such as those minted in Castulo, Obulco, and Gadir.

The financing of the war was the factor that contributed in a decisive way to the familiarization of coins and their use by the indigenous population. Nevertheless, coinage did not extend uniformly throughout the whole territory; hoard discoveries indicate that it was concentrated basically on the Mediterranean coastal strip and a little inland, as well as in the Guadalquivir valley. Carthaginian coinages were predominant in the south, those of the Romans in the northeast (Villaronga 1993: 21–36, 72–73).

The Roman Dominion

After the defeat of the Carthaginians, the Roman Senate decided to remain in the Iberian Peninsula in order to exploit its resources. The conquered part was divided into two provinces, Hispania Citerior and Hispania Ulterior, each under the command of a praetor, with power to intervene in local internal policies, which may have included the manufacture of coinages. Hispania Citerior over time included within its boundaries Gallaecians, Asturians, Cantabrians, Celtiberians, Vascons, towns of the Pyrenees, and Iberians; Hispania Ulterior included the Iberians of the southeast, Turdetanians, Lusitanians, Vetons, Punics, and peoples of the south of Portugal.

The Roman presence had important repercussions in the life of the natives of the Iberian Peninsula, because it generated a slow and complex process of assimilation and sociocultural exchanges and, simultaneously, a series of legal changes among the subject populations. The Roman dominion favored contacts between the different peninsular people; it integrated their productive economies with those of the Roman state, and during the second and first centuries B.C. contributed to the increase of coin use, because coins became more and more familiar objects. Among the reasons is that Roman society itself was in a process of important monetization. The Romans encouraged the urban organization and with it the tendency toward a monetized economy. The presence of the army, the arrival of colonists, craftsmen, and businessmen, all of them accustomed to and dependent on the use of coinages, contributed to this development. However, as a result of repeated remittances of booties to Rome in the first decades of the second century B.C. (Livy, 34.10.4–7; 34.46.2; 40.43.6) and of the shortage of the native issues, the monetization of the economy took more than

50 years to develop. A case in point is the rarity of the Second Punic War coinages in both stray finds and hoards dated during the first half of second century B.C. Roman coinages did not contribute either, at the outset, to the development of the monetization among the natives, since until the second half of the second century B.C. few Roman coins arrived in Spain (Ripollès 1982: 276–285).

Monetization as Effect of Civic Impetus

The native coinages were promoted by the city authorities, who could at that time define their characteristics, perceptible not only in the designs, but also in the scripts used on the legends.

The monetization of the Iberian Peninsula took place largely from within, from the issues minted by more than 160 populations (fig. 19.20), linked with the existence of economies in which payment and retail trade were usual and up to a certain point necessary, as was the case in mining zones (Castulo), rich agricultural territories (Obulco; fig. 19.8), harbor areas (e.g. Untikesken, Arse-Saguntum, Malaca, Gadir (fig. 19.9), and military establishments.

Although some silver issues may have been struck for strictly local purposes (*e.g.* Arse, Iltirta, Ausesken, Kese), a good part were minted in Celtiberian cities and the Pyrenean area (Sekobirikez, Arekorata, Turiazu, Bolskan; fig. 19.10). These more likely originated in a military context (to pay auxiliary troops: López Sánchez 2007), from the last third of the second century to the first decades of the first century B.C. (Otero 2002: 162; Gozalbes 2007: 141–173) rather than to cover Roman regular fiscal

Fig. 19.8

Fig. 19.9

Fig. 19.10

payments (Ñaco 2003: 215–222). It is clear, however, that these issues of silver were soon integrated in the stock of coinage in circulation.

The city coinages were used around all the Iberian Peninsula without any type of restriction, since the finds in the cities show issues coming from neighboring cities or from places that struck a huge volume (Ripolles 1982; Bost et al. 1987). To a lesser extent, we also found them in North Africa (Callegarin and Harrif 2000) and in Gallia (Py 2006: 665–689).

Metals and Denominations

During the second and first centuries B.C., coins in Spain were made of silver and bronze, except for imperial gold issues attributed to Patricia (*RIC* 50–153) and Caesaraugusta (*RIC* 26–49). The ternary bronze (copper, tin, and lead) was used by the cities of both provinces, as happened in the Mediterranean at this time (Craddock et al. 1980: 53–64); pure copper has also been recorded in Celtiberian mints, and an alloy of copper and lead was found in some issues of Castulo, Obulco, Ikalesken, and Kelin (Ripollès-Abascal 1995: 131–155; Parrado 1998; Chaves, Otero, and Gómez 2005: 487–496; fig. 19.20).

Fig. 19.20

The identification of the native bronze denominations is complex, because the Roman names of denominations were not suitable, due to the obvious variations of weight with respect to the Roman standard, presumably because native bronze coinages were intended for local circulation. However, at the outset, many issues were minted following a high weight average, around 20–24 g, and later those coinages centered around 19–13 g tended to be more common (Villaronga 1998b: 53–74; Mora 2006: 23–61).

The published data assure that the average quality of the metal minted was relatively high in second- to first-century B.C. silver coinages, although some mints located in the Castillian Meseta display more dispersed values and an average of slightly inferior quality, below 90% (Serafin 1998: 161–167; Parrado 1998: 52–69; Ripollès-Abascal 1995: 141). All silver coins were minted in the Citerior, and most of those struck in Hispania adopted the weight of the Roman denarius and probably had an equivalent value.

Some cities like Bolskan, Arekorata, Turiazu (fig. 19.10), or Sekobirikez minted quantities of denarii. Those that have been studied do not support the idea that they were struck to finance the Sertonian wars (80–72 B.C.), because by then most silver issues had already been coined, although it seems that they were extensively used in those years (Otero 2002: 162; Gozalbes 2007: 141–148). No city in Hispania Ulterior minted silver coinages, but the territory was supplied with silver coinages, native or Roman.

Designs

During the second–first centuries B.C., the native populations had quite an autonomous development, in which they adapted the concept of coinage to their idiosyncrasies. The native issues took on Greek-Hellenistic iconographical figures from diverse origins that by their repeated use became characteristic icons of a series of mints or regions (e.g., grain stalks, Hercules, sphinx, bull, rider; figs. 19.10, 19.12). The small number of connections of the designs and the ideology of the Hispanic coinages with the Roman cultural world can be explained by the autonomy the Hispanic communities enjoyed, since Rome did not yet have its own standardized iconography of cultural symbols (Keay 2001: 129).

Some characteristics of the designs allow us to establish differences in the monetary production of the two Hispanic provinces. In the cities of Hispania Citerior, the monetary types were characterized by being rather uniform, since for the bronze units and the silver denarii the male head on the obverse, and the horseman with spear, palm, or another object on the reverse, was preferred (figs. 19.10, 19.11). The obverse could represent the founding hero or a local divinity of the ethnic group, and the reverse could be adapted to fulfill values or beliefs of the elites of equestrian tradition, as Almagro (2005) has suggested.

Fig. 19.11

Fig. 19.12

On the bronze fractions, the designs were a little more varied, and they often identified the value of the denominations, as was the case of the horses for halves and the half Pegasus for quarters. The homogeneity of types and scripts suggests the desire to participate in a monetary circuit with recognizable and homologous pieces.

In the Ulterior province, however, there was a greater variety of designs, among which the horseman was occasional and quite a lot of types were linked with flora; the existence of a standardized system of fractions distinguished by designs is less evident.

The designs of Phoenician-Punic issues and those that were minted with Iberian and Latin legends reflected manifold facets of their identity. They alluded to their cults, like Hercules in Gadir (fig. 19.9), Seks, Asido, and Lascuta; Jupiter-Saturn in Carteia; Hephaestus-Vulcan and Helios-Sol in Malaca; and male and female local divinities in Castulo, Obulco, and Carmo. Such designs were numerous, as well as ones related to the economic resources of the cities (tunas in Gadir and Seks; grain stalks in Obulco, Ilipa (fig. 19.12), Ilse, Murtili, Laelia, Acinipo, and Carmo).

Legends

Another relevant characteristic of the ancient coinages of the Iberian Peninsula was the script they used. The development of the cultural features of the native societies that took place during the second–first centuries B.C., as a form of autonomy and

Fig. 19.13

self-representation of the elites, can also be detected in the epigraphy (Hoz 1995: 68), which reflects the diversity of existing peoples in Hispania, the Roman permission, and the encouragement of urban life.

Coin legends give evidence of diverse types of script. Foreign cultural groups used their own, such as Greek (figs. 19.2, 19.3, 19.7) and Punic (fig. 19.9). However, the native population used at least three types of scripts. The "Levantine Iberian" was used in the Iberian area (fig. 19.11), and it was employed inland to write the Celtiberian language (fig. 19.10; Villar 1995). The "Meridional Iberian" script was used in the southeastern half of the Peninsula (fig 19.8). Finally, the "Tartessian" or "South-Lusitanian" script, about which virtually nothing is known, is only recorded on the issues of Salacia (Portugal; fig. 19.13).

In addition, many native populations of the Hispania Ulterior used Latin script from the beginning, but in a restricted way and for official aims (e.g. place names; fig. 19.12); its use cannot be taken to demonstrate that a significant part of the population knew Latin, but rather that it was a specific package of Latin use, which could be defined as coinage literacy (Untermann 1995: 313–315).

The Impact of the Legal Promotions of the Cities

From the first century B.C., the establishment of Roman colonies and the legal promotion of indigenous cities, converted now into municipalities, constituted the beginning of a new stage in the monetary history of Hispania (Ripollès 2010). Their number was important, because under Pompey, Caesar, and Augustus, 23 colonies were created and up to 77 cities granted municipal statuts (Galsterer 1971; Abascal and Espinosa 1989: 59–67).

These foundations meant important changes in the sociopolitical geography of the Iberian Peninsula and allowed the indigenous elites and the newly established population to acquire Roman citizenship.

In the native promoted cities, the social and political changes affected, inter alia, urbanism, government magistracies, personal and place names, and coin designs. The founding of the colonies contributed to the diffusion of Italian-Roman signs of

identity and explains the disappearance of the indigenous cultural features in the surrounding areas, due to the Italian origin of the settled population.

New Designs for a New Society

The new political arrangement, legal changes granted to the cities, and new contingents of settled populations motivated a change in the designs of the coinages of the cities. They looked more and more Roman, as did other external signs of Hispanic society.

The new coin types had mostly a Roman content, because they were chosen by the elites of the promoted cities and because many were inspired by and copied from Roman issues. From Augustus on, the messages the coinages transmitted were in accordance with the new imperial ideology of legitimizing the emperor and his successors (Zanker 1992: 201–280; Keay 2001: 133); with these coin types, elites proclaimed their loyalty to the emperor and the new state.

Roman provincial issues showed on the obverse the portrait of the emperor and, in time and to a lesser extent, some members of his family. The date of portrait introduction in the coinages of Hispania is uncertain, and few of them can be dated with certainty before the 20s B.C. The generalization of the imperial portrait, usually wreathed, has raised the question of its obligatory nature, but several exceptions, like Carteia (colonia) and Emporiae (municipium; fig. 19.14), seem to indicate that the cities adopted it voluntarily.

The election of the imperial portrait for the obverses entailed that the cities only had the reverses to show designs with local meaning. For this side of the coin, several types were chosen, often adapted from Roman monetary designs.

Roman provincial coin designs often reflected the origin and the culture of the populations of both types of privileged cities of Hispania, the colonies (foreign people) and the municipalities (native settlers). At the outset, some municipalities maintained designs of their previous issues, minted in Republican times; most were replaced during the reign of Tiberius by others based on Roman coinages. The maintenance of the traditional designs suggests that these expressed for local identity and called attention to local history (Edmondson 2002: 55–56), as at Osca and Emporiae (fig. 19.14).

Fig. 19.14

In the colonies, the designs referred to another cultural horizon. In these designs, types with Roman symbolism and without connection to the previous indigenous iconography were used. They alluded to the origin of the settled population, in the case of the veterans by means of legionary standards (fig. 19.15); to the Roman ritual of colonization (fig. 19.16); to the symbols of the Roman religion; to the imperial cult, with the erection of altars and temples; and to dynastic themes (fig. 19.17), tuning in to the Roman issues, and influenced by the political context of the time (Wallace-Hadrill 1986: 66–73).

The iconographic difference between municipalities and colonies was not absolute, since in both types of cities similar designs were also used, such as wreaths (fig. 19.18) or bulls (fig. 19.19). The latter were depicted standing or walking (in Lepida also running) with or without pediment on the horns. This ornament, also known in Republican monetary iconography (*RRC* 455/4 author's version is correct) and in reliefs (Ara Pietatis, Boscoreale cup, altar of Domitius Ahenobarbus) as part of scenes of sacrifice (Ryberg 1955: 67–69, 117–118; Stilp 2001: 47–52), suggests that the bull had a religious meaning (e.g. Tarraco, Caesaraugusta, Graccurris, and Ercavica; fig. 19.19).

Fig. 19.15

Fig. 19.16

Fig. 19.17

Fig. 19.18

Fig. 19.19

Latin Prevailed

The promotion of native cities and the foundation of colonies accelerated the disappearance of non-Latin scripts from public display (Burnett 2002: 37–38). In the last years of the Republican period, a part of the society had already been Latinized, as can be seen from the reduction of the pre-Roman and bilingual epigraphic testimonies and the increase of Latin usage. Epitaphs and dedications used Latin, and very soon this practice became a Roman cultural act for natives, revealing the acceptance of the culture of the rulers and recognizing Latin as the prestige language (Edmondson 2002, 43).

In the privileged cities, the use of Latin is attested on official documents, and coin legends reinforced this dynamic, because in them Latin was always used, with the exceptions of Ebusus and Abdera (*RPC* I:124–125, 479–482), which also used Punic writing to indicate their place names, and of Saguntum, to which a rare issue in Greek is attributed (Ripollès and Llorens 2002: no. 412–415). In the domestic sphere, natives kept using pre-Latin scripts.

What the Legends Tell

The legends of Roman provincial coinages provide more information than the native issues struck during the Republican period, because they contain more words and more abbreviations (figs. 19.16, 19.19), following the late Republican

and imperial models (Burnett 2002: 37–38). The generalized adoption of the portrait of the emperor in the obverses made an identifying legend necessary. With Augustus, the imperial title on the coin legends was varied, and only became regularized over time, being more systematized during the reigns of Tiberius and Caligula.

Local information was displayed on the reverses. This was the most usual place for naming minting cities, with or without an indication of their legal status, as well as the names and magistracies of those in charge of the issue (mostly in the province of Tarraconensis); of these, the *IIviri* were most frequently recorded (figs. 19.16, 19.17). Quattuorviri, aediles, quaestores, and praefecti were also mentioned, although much less frequently. The reverse legends also identify divinities and allegorical figures represented in the designs and allow us to perceive the meaning and intention of the objects and monuments engraved.

Why the Cities Minted

The Roman provincial coinages of Hispania were struck only in bronze (from the reign of Tiberius, a few mints used copper for the asses and orichalcum for the dupondii and sestertii: for example, Caesaraugusta, Tarraco, Ilici, and Osca) and almost always in a discontinuous rhythm. These features, together with the fact that the most minted denominations were the asses and semisses, suggest that cities put in circulation a relatively modest amount of money, destined for local use and very useful for the payment of small-value exchanges.

At the beginning of the reign of Augustus, bronze coinage in circulation in Hispania was scarce and well worn, partially due to low coin production in the course of the preceding five decades, both Roman and native. The civic issues increased and refreshed the stock of bronze coinage. Finds of civic coinages suggest they fulfilled an important task in the monetization of Hispania, reaching in certain cities up to 85% of all bronze coinages in circulation (Bost et al. 1987: 45–51).

The provincial issues of Hispania are correlated with local motivations, but their total value in many cities did not exceed the most basic expenses of their administration, as they could be the wages of the *apparitores*, the cost of maintaining the public slaves, and the payment for public games (Lex Ursonensis 62). The precise reasons that led the cities to strike coins are difficult to identify, although it seems clear that they must be sought within the coins themselves and not in financial necessities of the Roman state. The causes for civic coinages must have been diverse, and some may have been concurrent, like financing services and public works; providing coinages for the daily retail trade through money changers; beneficent acts of money distribution; profiting from the minting issues; some type of commemoration or celebration; the prestige of having coinage; the opportunity to engage an engraver or a workshop. The provision of coinage to the army has also

been the function attributed to some mints (García-Bellido 2006a: 677–694). It is probable that the army settlements exerted a powerful attraction on the provincial coinages once these were coined, and could even prompt some issue by virtue of their benefit to the city or its citizens, because bronze coinage optimized the use of silver coins and favored its exchange.

The End of Civic Coinages

From the reigns of Caligula/Claudius I on, the coinages of the Roman cities of Hispania ceased. This end must be connected to the imperial context to which Hispania belonged and must be viewed from a wider perspective that includes the western part of the empire, which was immersed in a trend toward the unification of the Roman monetary system, in which the civic bronze coinages progressively were replaced by the imperial ones.

The end of the minting has been variously explained: political reasons, economic weakness of the cities, preference for imperial coinages (Grant 1946: 203 n. 3; Crawford 1985: 272; *RPC* I:18–19; Burnett 2002: 39; López Sánchez 2002: 213–236); none of these seems satisfactory by itself.

With the end of the Roman provincial coinages during the reign of Claudius I, one of the most important public symbols of the cities disappeared, concluding 500 years of civic coinages. Henceforth, all the coinages used in Hispania came from the imperial mints.

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Fig. 19.15. AE. As. Gemella Acci. Caligula (A.D. 37–41). (Cast in BM).
Fig. 19.16. AE. As. Caesaraugusta. Augustus. C. 15 B.C.–A.D. 14. Bibliothèque nationale de France, fg 532.
Fig. 19.17. AE. Dupondius. Caesaraugusta. Caligula (A.D. 37–41). Instituto Valencia de Don Juan 3037.
Fig. 19.18. AE. As. Segobriga. Tiberius (A.D. 14–37). Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid, 12592.
Fig. 19.19. AE. As. Graccurris. Tiberius (A.D. 14–37). British Museum 863.
Fig. 19.20. Civic mints in ancient Spain during the 4th–1st cents. B.C.

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