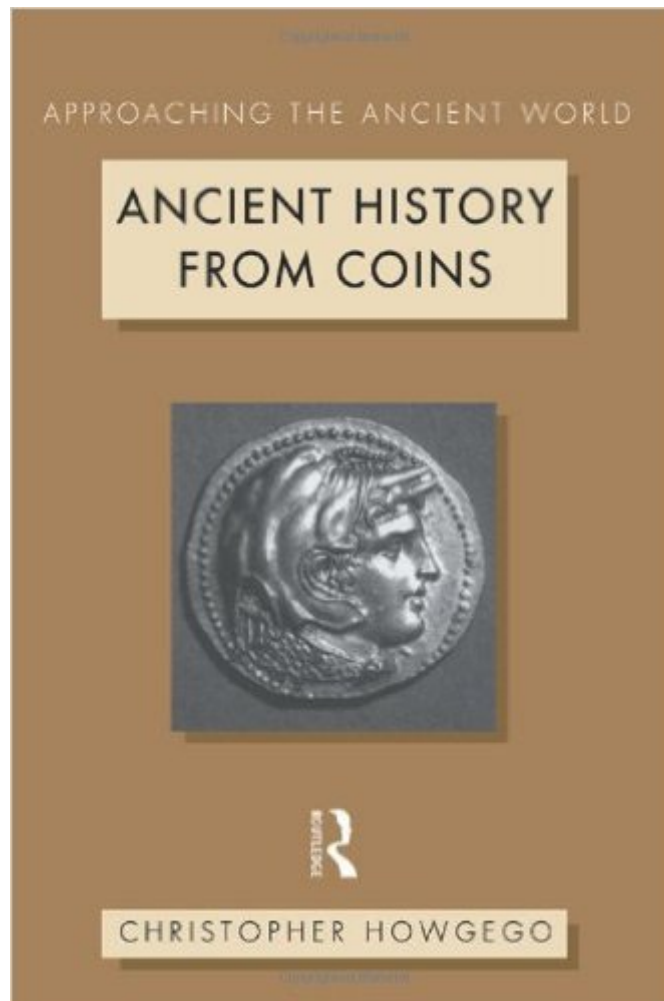


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Ancient History From Coins (Approaching The Ancient World)



Synopsis

Like other volumes in this series, *Ancient History from Coins* demystifies a specialism, introducing students (from first year upwards) to the techniques, methods, problems and advantages of using coins to do ancient history. Coins are a fertile source of information for the ancient historian; yet too often historians are uneasy about using them as evidence because of the special problems attaching to their interpretation. The world of numismatics is not always easy for the non-specialist to penetrate or understand with confidence. Dr Howgego describes and analyses the main contributions the study of coins can make to ancient history, showing through numerous examples how the character, patterns and behaviour of coinage bear on major historical themes. Topics range from state finance and economic policy to imperial domination and political propaganda through coins types. The period covered by the book is from the invention of coinage (ca 600BC) to AD 400.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The field of numismatics is one of the most specialized and isolated areas of historical scholarship, and as a result it is probably not used as much as it should be by historians. Coins have special problems associated with their interpretation, but this is true of every other kind of evidence we have (e.g., literary, epigraphic, archaeological). Christopher Howgego's book is intended to demystify the subject of ancient coins and narrow the unwelcome gap between numismatists and other kinds of historians. Howgego's approach is thematic and covers a 900-year period, and although he deals

with a wide range of ancient civilizations, he does not intend for his study to be comprehensive. It differs from similar books in providing a useful summary of modern numismatic research and outlining the major problems of using coins as a historical source. Howgego's book is one of the most useful available on the subject of numismatics and ancient history. The book is divided into six chapters that address various themes and problems associated with coins. The first ("Money") outlines the history of coinage and asks why having a system of coinage mattered to ancient societies. Chapter 2 ("Minting") addresses the production of coins and why they were used. Chapters 3 and 4 ("Empires" and "Politics") form the core of the book, showing how coinage related to broader ideas such as imperialism, power, and politics. Several case studies are used to illustrate the variety of coin use by different societies while developing the convincing central thesis that coins related very strongly to these themes in each of them.

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