



175 JAAR KONINKLIJK  
BELGISCH GENOOTSCHAP  
VOOR NUMISMATIEK

175 ANS SOCIÉTÉ ROYALE  
DE NUMISMATIQUE  
DE BELGIQUE

**COLLOQUIUM  
BELGIAN NUMISMATICS  
IN PERSPECTIVE**

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**Jan MOENS (ed.)**

**DOCENDO DISCIMUS: THE HISTORY OF  
NUMISMATIC EDUCATION IN BELGIUM AND  
SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**A**T PRESENT, THERE ARE FIVE COURSES FOCUSING on numismatics which are part of an academic curriculum: one in Gent and two both in Leuven and in Louvain-la-Neuve. In addition, numismatics is integrated in a course at the *Université libre de Bruxelles*. Furthermore, providing numismatic courses is one of the objectives of two numismatic societies, established in Liège and in Diest respectively.

It is clear that our future historians, art historians, archaeologists, classicists and even economists should be instructed into the science of numismatics, since it gives them broader insights in economic processes, artistic developments, political relations, and in the power of minting. However, as will become clear in this paper, it took a long time to organise these numismatic courses. Besides, their preservation needs to be constantly defended as they are not compulsory and need to attract a minimum number of students. The curators of the Coin Cabinet of the Royal Library in Brussels and the members of the Royal Numismatic Society of Belgium (the Society in the following) have played an active role in establishing and defending these courses even until today.

**SOURCES**

The *Revue belge de numismatique [et de sigillographie]* (RBN in the following) was the starting point for this research. From the establishment of the [Royal] Numismatic Society of Belgium in 1842 onwards, the journal has been publishing, apart from scientific articles, a lot of additional data. For

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instance, the journal provided the full minutes of every Society meeting. Especially for the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, each topic discussed at the general meeting (*l'assemblée générale*) and the regular meetings (*les assemblées ordinaires*) has been recorded. As such, all the speeches given by the presidents of the Society, in which we can read their numismatic ambitions, actual deeds and wishes for the future, have been published. As a result, the *RBN* has become a very valuable source offering from time to time a glimpse of the ambitions and efforts of the presidents to promote and teach numismatic courses. Furthermore and again especially in the earlier period, the *RBN* records all kinds of related numismatic news, such as announcements of auctions, monetary news from abroad and book reviews dealing with coinage or the economy. These sections are very helpful in finding the recordings of numismatic courses, their lectures and contents. Finally, each deceased member who had held an office in the Society or published in the *RBN* received a necrology in the journal. These short bio-bibliographies were very useful for writing this article.

Besides the *RBN*, the archives of universities provide the official *curricula*, and subsequently, the documentation of the numismatic courses taught at their faculties. Information can also be found in several *Festschriften*, which often include full bio-bibliographies of lecturers and their research units. Recently, the current president of the Society, Johan van Heesch, has written an article which gives an overview of the numismatic courses in the Low Countries.<sup>[1]</sup> Moreover, I was lucky to receive a draft of the forthcoming book on the *History of the Royal Library* in Brussels, to which François de Callataÿ is contributing. For obvious reasons, this article has extensively drawn from the two aforementioned manuscripts.

#### THE BEGINNING: THE COIN CABINET, THE SOCIETY AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL AMBITIONS

The numismatic education in Belgium starts with the [Royal] Numismatic Society of Belgium (*Société [Royale] de Numismatique de Belgique*), founded in 1842. The board of the Society consisted of seven members. The presidency of the Society was offered to J. Lelewel, an erudite scholar. L.-J. Louis became the Society's secretary, and G. Goddons its treasurer.

Other members were R. Chalon, the later president of the Society; L. De Coster, a passionate coin collector and mayor of Heverlee; Ch. Piot, a fierce and erudite contributor to the *RBN* and later one of its editors; and Constant-Philippe Serrure (1805-1872).

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[1] J. van Heesch *forthcoming*.

Fig. 1



The latter was appointed professor at the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts at the University of Gent in 1836, some years before the creation of the Society. Several sources record that he owned an enormous collection of coins and medals.<sup>[2]</sup> Subsequently, he frequently published about coins, especially on medieval coinage from Western Europe.<sup>[3]</sup> Many scholars highly regard his numismatic works and praise him for having used his numismatic knowledge to solve historical problems.<sup>[4]</sup> There is no evidence that Serrure integrated numismatics in his courses, but one can easily imagine that he took some of his coins and

medals to his classes on Belgian and medieval history, which he taught from 1835 until 1864 and 1871 respectively.<sup>[5]</sup> The university itself also possessed a coin collection, 'De Bast'. This collection dated back to the private collection of canon Martin-Jean De Bast (1753-1825), which was bought by king William I of the United Netherlands and donated to the University of Gent. Yet, private conflicts with other professors at the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, in particular with the former keeper of the collection, Prof. J. Roulez, probably meant that Serrure, if he had ever wanted to use coins in his history courses, could not draw from this collection.<sup>[6]</sup> However, in those days, it was quite common for students – and others – to pay a home visit to a professor in order to study his antiquarian art collection. This means that Serrure could have been the first informal teacher of numismatics in Belgium. Obviously, this is just a very tentative supposition.

[2] Versnaeyen 1873, p. 121-123; De Ceuleneer 1914-1920, p. 251-265.

[3] Most of his numismatic articles, all written in Dutch, were published in the journal *Vaderlandsch Museum voor Nederduitsche letterkunde, oudheid en geschiedenis*, of which Serrure was the founder and editor. His articles in the *RBN* all date from before the first edition of that journal. His last *RBN* article on a *Jeton d'Edmond, baron de Bocholt et Vreye*, was published in French in *RBN* VII (1851), p. 26-27, pl. III. Serrure was member of several societies promoting Flemish linguistics and he was the first professor to instruct *un cours de littérature flamande* (KB 29/VII/1857); Dannieu (2016). As in his necrology some remarks are made about his choice to write in Dutch and on the stubbornness of the Society's members not to read his Dutch articles, it is tempting to suggest that Serrure – who managed to publish one article in Dutch in the very early days of the *RBN* – had a (linguistic) dispute with the editors of the *RBN*. See also the article of van Heesch in this volume on the tense relationship between Serrure and Louis De Coster.

[4] Versnaeyen 1873, p. 121-123; De Ceuleneer 1914-1920, p. 260: « *les monnaies pour lui devaient servir à éclairer les faits historiques.* »

[5] KB 5/XII/1835 & 19/VIII/1871; *Gent University Archives file 4H2\_00185*.

[6] Verboven 2004, p. 179 and n. 41.

Not long after its creation, it became clear that the Society nurtured the ambition to gain scientific acknowledgement and impact in Belgium. In the earliest volumes of the *RBN*, this ambition became clearly visible when other institutions in Europe began to organise numismatic courses. The first record of these academic aspirations dates from 1860, when Charles Piot congratulates the former director of the museum of Genève, F. Soret, for teaching a course in numismatics to the students of the *Académie de Genève*:<sup>[7]</sup>

« *Nous apprenons, avec plaisir, que notre savant collaborateur, M. F. Soret (ancien directeur du musée à Genève), sur les vives instances qui lui ont été faites, a consenti à donner, cet hiver, un cours de numismatique aux élèves de l'Académie de Genève.* »

Piot further states that the Society considers it as a moral duty to reeducate the youth by teaching them the science of numismatics. He states that as a result, they would not spend their money on betting at the horse races and on actresses:

« *Dans nos collèges de jésuites, où se trouvent la plupart des jeunes gens riches, des jeunes gens destinés à ne rien faire, si de semblables cours étaient donnés, il en sortirait un certain nombre de jeunes numismates qui, plus tard, emploieraient [sic] à acheter et à réunir des médailles, une partie de l'argent qu'ils auraient dépensé à faire courir des chevaux ou à entretenir des actrices. La chose a donc aussi son côté moral.* »

A similar statement by Renier Chalon, then president of the Society, is recorded in the *RBN* of 1869, when in Châlons-sur-Marne a numismatic seminar dealing with Antiquity and the Middle Ages was organised. Chalon explicitly stated that the Society wished « *que l'exemple donné à Châlons trouvera des imitateurs* » and continued with the note that « *Il y a longtemps que la Revue de la numismatique belge a exprimé le vœu de voir introduire dans les collèges l'enseignement de la numismatique.* »<sup>[8]</sup> Yet, in the decades to come, nothing happened regarding these ambitions. In 1894, the dream of numismatic education was still alive, as the *RBN* editor Alphonse de Witte wrote in a short note with a subtle envious undertone about the ambitions of M. Théodore Reinach to teach an optional course on Greek numismatics at the Sorbonne. He wished him good luck with « *sa courageuse initiative couronnée* ». <sup>[9]</sup>

In 1910, the Society hosted the *Congrès international de Numismatique de Bruxelles*, during which seven objectives for the future were formulated by the participants; they were published in the *RBN*. Besides some international agreements on the use of numismatic jargon and methods, the objectives contain several initiatives for the promotion of the science of numismatics,

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[7] Piot 1860, p. 425.

[8] Chalon 1869, p. 253.

[9] de Witte 1894, p. 288.

Fig. 2



both nationally and internationally. The fourth objective explicitly states that the science of numismatics has to be integrated in higher education, not only as part of a broader course, but also as a separate course which should elaborate on all the aspects of the science of numismatics and sigillography. The objective continues with the recommendation that coin curators need to receive a proper higher education, so that they would be capable to deal with their field of study and able to teach about coinage and medals.<sup>[10]</sup>

« IV. — Le Congrès émet le vœu que l'enseignement de la numismatique et de la sigillographie soit inscrit partout parmi les matières de l'enseignement supérieur, d'abord, dans l'intérêt de la science elle-même, et ensuite, dans le but de former des conservateurs capables de gérer et de classer les collections numismatiques et sigillographiques, ainsi que d'en publier les catalogues. »

After the Congress, things eventually started to change with Frédéric Alvin and Victor Tourneur, who became members of the Society in 1901 and 1910 respectively. The young Alvin (1864-1949) had made a rapid career at the Royal Library of Belgium under the auspices of his uncle Louis-Joseph Alvin, then chief curator of the Royal Library in Brussels. After having been co-curator of the Coin Cabinet for almost ten years, he became its head curator in 1902, a post he held until 1919. In 1912, he developed the first numismatic course in Belgium, which he taught until 1946 when he was already in his eighties.<sup>[11]</sup> This course was integrated in one of the curricula of the *Institut Supérieur d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie de Bruxelles*. The course seems to have been very ambitious as it dealt with the entire *histoire des médailles, des monnaies et de glyptique*. The course, which was adapted and underwent several name changes over time, would eventually run until 2009. It was taught successively by the following lecturers: M. Hoc, T. Hackens, G. Moucharte, J. van Heesch, and F. de Callataÿ.<sup>[12]</sup>

Fig. 3



Tourneur (1878-1967) had a PhD in Classical Philology of the University of Liège and received his candidature in Roman philology at the same university. He soon became a driving force in the Society, first as the co-curator of Alvin, whom he subsequently succeeded as curator of the Coin Cabinet in 1919. He enjoyed fame in national and international numismatic circles publishing many articles, especially on the coinage in Belgian history.<sup>[13]</sup>

<sup>[10]</sup> de Witte & Tourneur 1910, p. 419-420.

<sup>[11]</sup> Baillon 1949, p. 163-164; de Callataÿ 1999A, p. 14.

<sup>[12]</sup> ISHAAB 2003, p. 92; J. van Heesch *forthcoming*.

<sup>[13]</sup> Hoc 1967, p. 265-268; de Callataÿ 1999B, p. 331-332. His publication list contains almost 350 titles.

In 1912, he became the secretary of the Society. This officer had the honour and duty to give a formal speech on the workings of the Society at its general meeting. His speech of 1912 can be seen as a plea to give numismatics a more important role in academia and science. He referred to some efforts of the board members of the Society to call the attention of the minister of Science and Arts, Prosper Pouillet of the Catholic Party, to whom they had complained that there was not a single representative for numismatics in the official commissions of science and arts:

« *Votre bureau s'est efforcé de défendre vos intérêts moraux, en attirant l'attention de M. le Ministre des Sciences et des Arts sur l'absence dans les commissions officielles, depuis quelque temps, de tout représentant des sciences numismatiques.* »

Tourneur seems to have been determined to meet the objectives of the International Numismatic Congress of 1910, as he continued his speech by stating that among the members of the Society competent candidates needed to step forward and take up these tasks.<sup>[14]</sup>

Not much later, in 1919, Victor Tourneur himself began to teach numismatic courses at the *Institut des Hautes-Études de Belgique de Bruxelles*. This institute was linked to the former *Université Nouvelle de Bruxelles*, which after World War I was incorporated in the current *Université libre de Bruxelles*. In contrast to Alvin's courses, those of Tourneur were advertised in the *RBN*, demonstrating how important Tourneur perceived the teaching of numismatics and its promotion. Every year from 1919 onwards, he addressed a new topic related to the coinage of Belgium and its former historical regions.<sup>[15]</sup> Course announcements can be found in the *RBN* for 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923 and 1926.

Source <i>RBN</i>	Year	Course topic
1920, p. 211	1919	Belgian coinage from the 'beginning' until the 16 <sup>th</sup> century
1920, p. 211	1920	Belgian coinage 2 <sup>nd</sup> half of 16 <sup>th</sup> century
1921, p. 212	1921	Belgian coinage of the 17 <sup>th</sup> of 18 <sup>th</sup> century
1922, p. 228-229	1922	Coinage of the Carolingian dynasty
1923, p. 237	1923	Coinage at the end of the Carolingian dynasty until Philips the Good
1926, p. 10	1926	First hour: Sigillography of the Duchy of Brabant Second hour: The coinage of Liège

*Table 1 – Courses by Victor Tourneur as advertised in the RBN*

<sup>[14]</sup> Tourneur & de Jonghe 1912, p. 379.

<sup>[15]</sup> See n. 13.

The years 1924 and 1925 are missing, but it is not unlikely that the courses of those years continued the historical contents of the module with classes on the coinage of the later Dukes of Burgundy. All courses seem to have run for 15 weeks, and were always taught on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. In the announcements, it was explicitly stated that Tourneur projected images to illustrate his classes, which must have been a novelty in the field of education.

In 1926, sigillography was also included in Tourneurs' course scheme. His wife, Mariette Nicodème-Tourneur (1899-1969) was the lecturer. She had a PhD in Philosophy and Arts (*Université de Liège*) and was an *attachée* of the Royal Archive of Belgium. She became *membre correspondant* of the Society in 1923, and a full member in 1936. She was specialist in the science of seals. Among her long list of publications is the *Bibliographie générale de la Sigillographie* (1933), which is still a seminal in the field of seals.<sup>[16]</sup> In addition, she had close contacts with the *Institut archéologique liégeois* which was inaugurated in 1913. In the *RBN* she has published many *faits divers*, reporting in particular the news around the art of seals.<sup>[17]</sup> Mrs. Nicodème must have been the first female teacher in the science of numismatics in Belgium, or more precisely, that of sigillography.

During the same period, the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *RBN* published several lists of universities which had incorporated numismatic courses in their curricula. For example, in the *RBN* of 1913, Alfonse de Witte provides us with the following list for German universities:

« Voici, d'après la Frankfurter Münzzeitung, les universités qui, en Allemagne, cet hiver, donneront des cours de numismatique : Berlin, professeur le Dr Regling – Bonn, professeur le Dr Heinrich Willers – Breslau, professeur le Dr Ferdinand Friedenburg – Jena, professeur le Dr Behrendt Pick. Que l'on s'étonne après cela de voir le nombre des numismates d'Outre-Rhin s'accroître tous les jours. »<sup>[18]</sup>

In the same volume another list of German universities offering numismatic courses in the summer semester of 1913 is reported by Victor Tourneur, who also provides the topics of each course:

« Les cours de numismatique dans les universités allemandes pendant le semestre d'été 1913 :

Berlin – Kurt Regling : La monnaie grecque comme œuvre d'art ;  
 Breslau – Ferdinand Friedensburg : Introduction à la numismatique ;  
 Halle a/S – Oskar Leuze : Numismatique grecque et romaine ;  
 Jena – Behrendt Pick : Explication de monnaies choisies ;  
 Vienne – Wilhelm Kubitschek : Exercices numismatiques. »<sup>[19]</sup>

<sup>[16]</sup> Scufflaire 1969, p. 401-402.

<sup>[17]</sup> See, for instance, *RBN* 1924-5; 1927; 1935-9; 1947-8; 1950-8; 1960; 1963.

<sup>[18]</sup> de Witte 1913, p. 90.

<sup>[19]</sup> Tourneur 1913, p. 363.



It is unknown whether these announcements were meant to encourage Belgian numismatists to attend these courses abroad, but they certainly demonstrate the new feeling of pride the Belgian members of the Numismatic Society had in their science and its importance for academia. It fed their hope that, one day, the numismatic science would be incorporated into a university curriculum in Belgium.

Fig. 4



Alvin and Tourneur had paved the way for the incorporation of numismatics into university curricula, but the credits for institutionalizing the first academic course in numismatics went to Marcel Hoc (1890-1970). He was a young doctor in Philosophy and Arts, who in 1928 was appointed professor at the Catholic University of Leuven. A few years earlier, the young Marcel Hoc must have made a great impression on his peers at the Cabinet and the Society when he became *candidat bibliothécaire* at the

Royal Library in Brussels. In the *RBN* of 1922 – the year Marcel Hoc joined the Cabinet – the president of the Society, viscount Baudouin de Jonghe, wrote a unique testimony in which he predicted that Hoc would become one of the best numismatists of the country:

« *Au Cabinet des Médailles :*

*Par arrêté royal du 31 juillet dernier [1922], M. Marcel Hoc, docteur en philosophie et lettres, candidat bibliothécaire et ancien professeur d'histoire à l'Athénée royal de Verviers, a été attaché au Cabinet des Médailles. M. M. Hoc s'est fait remarquer jusqu'à présent par divers travaux bibliographiques exécutés avec savoir et méthode. Il vient de terminer un ouvrage sur Gaspar Gevartius, un des derniers humanistes des Pays-Bas. Si M. Hoc applique aux nouvelles études qui vont s'ouvrir pour lui les qualités précieuses dont il a fait preuve dans ses recherches antérieures, nul doute qu'il ne prenne bientôt rang parmi les meilleurs numismates du pays. »*<sup>[20]</sup>

And indeed he did, with the help of a generous donation from canon Edmond Remy, a professor in Roman philology at the University of Leuven and a great lover of coins.<sup>[21]</sup> Hoc's course can be seen as the basis for all numismatic courses at the Catholic University, in Leuven as well as in Louvain-la-Neuve.

<sup>[20]</sup> de Jonghe 1922, p. 228.

<sup>[21]</sup> It has been written that Remy was one of the first students attending Hoc's course and that several specimens of his ancient coin collection were used as didactic material; see Naster 1970, p. 7; Hackens 1987, pp. 220, 239.

## Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve

Initially, Marcel Hoc's course was called '*Numismatique*'. It covered ancient, medieval and modern numismatics. The course was enlisted in the curriculum for students in the *candidatus* phase (an equivalent for the BA degree) as an optional course of some 15 hours. Hoc combined his post as lecturer with his main job, first as co-curator, and later as head curator of the Coin Cabinet of the Royal Library in Brussels, a post he held until 1955. He was also professor in political economics and the history of economic doctrines at *L'Institut Supérieur de Commerce de Bruxelles* from 1925 until 1960.<sup>[22]</sup> In 1934, some years after its introduction, the title of Hoc's numismatic course was changed to '*Histoire économique y compris la numismatique et l'histoire de la monnaie*'. It became a 30 hour course, and had a syllabus, but unfortunately I have been unable to locate a copy. Five years later, just before the outbreak of the Second World War, the numismatic course got a counterpart taught in Dutch. After 1945, the course name changed regularly. In addition, its geographical and chronological scope shifted several times, by in- or excluding Celtic or Byzantine coinage.<sup>[23]</sup>



Fig. 5

After 1960, Marcel Hoc was succeeded by Paul Naster (1913-1998), a former assistant keeper of the Coin Cabinet in Brussels, who had become a full professor at Leuven University in 1952. Naster was a specialist in Greek numismatics, but his interests were much broader. He dealt with Roman, Celtic and medieval coinage, but also with Greek and Roman art, prehistoric and classical archaeology, the history of the Near East, Akkadian cuneiform script, the art of Ancient Egypt and much more.<sup>[24]</sup> Under his professorship, two numismatic courses were set up: one covering the antique world, and one medieval and modern times. Both were taught in Dutch and in French. The titles of these courses changed several times. After the definite split in 1968 into the universities of Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, Naster continued to teach his numismatic courses in Dutch in Leuven. He also supervised three PhD students during his career, Simone Scheers (°1943) being his best-known pupil.<sup>[25]</sup> After his retirement in 1983, she succeeded him as professor

[22] Tourneur 1928, p. 128; Remy 1962, p. 73-74; *Journée M. Hoc* [1971], p. 7-11; Hackens 1987, p. 220-245.

[23] Naster 1970, p. 6-7; Hackens 1987, pp. 221, 239-240.

[24] See also Scheers 1998, p. 223-225 for all his assignments.

[25] van Heesch & Scheers 2009, p. x; Hackens 1987, p. 240; de Callataÿ 2003, p. 269-271.

and took over the numismatic courses at Leuven University. Scheers is a world authority on Iron Age coinage, and until today, her doctoral thesis *Traité de numismatique celtique. La Gaule Belgique* remains the standard work for Celtic coinage in *Belgica*. During her lectureship, she combined the two existing numismatic courses, of which the first dealt with the coinages from Ancient Greece and Rome, and the second focused on Western Europe from the Iron Age to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>[26]</sup>

After her retirement in 2004, her former doctoral student, Johan van Heesch (1955) took over the course and continued to introduce students to the science of numismatics, including the author of this article. Today, at Leuven University, students can still choose to enroll in two numismatic courses, each of 30 hours. The first one is an *Introduction to Numismatics*, given at a BA level for four credits.<sup>[27]</sup> The second course, which is an MA course of six credits, covers *Greek and Roman Numismatics*.<sup>[28]</sup> By following some workshops in which coin finds from archeological excavations in Belgium (e.g. a Merovingian cemetery near Antwerp<sup>[29]</sup> and Roman countermarks from finds in Tongeren) are analysed, the students of this course learn how coinage can provide important contributions to historical research. Both courses are attended by a mixed audience of students who study history, classics, or archaeology. A visit to the Coin Cabinet in Brussels is incorporated in the study program of both courses.

A year before the split of the Leuven University, the university had already decided to entrust the numismatic courses in French to Tony Hackens (1939-1997)<sup>[30]</sup>, whereas Paul Naster would continue teaching those in Dutch. Hackens was a brilliant scholar, who became professor in Greek archeology at the same University.<sup>[31]</sup> After the official division of the Leuven University into a Dutch and French speaking university, he got the difficult task to build a new research group for numismatics at the *Université catholique de Louvain*.<sup>[32]</sup> Fortunately, this group was supported in 1975 by a generous donation from the sister of the late Marcel Hoc. This resulted in



Fig. 6

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] <http://onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be> (1) [29/VII/2016]

[28] <http://onderwijsaanbod.kuleuven.be> (2) [29/VII/2016]

[29] Mainly Roman coins found in the Merovingian cemetery of Broechem (Antwerp).

[30] Hackens 1987, p. 221; Marchetti & Moucharte 1997, p. III-XXI.

[31] Hackens already obtained his PhD at the age of 22.

[32] The chairmen of the French speaking university clearly had confidence in Hackens as he was immediately, in 1969, entrusted with the creation of a new course dealing with *l'histoire économique de l'Antiquité*.

the creation of a special association encouraging the study of numismatics. This association was named after Marcel Hoc *l'Association de numismatique Professeur Marcel Hoc pour l'encouragement et la recherche en numismatique*.<sup>[33]</sup> In 1979, the Faculty of Philosophy, Arts and Letters of the French speaking university moved to Louvain-la-Neuve ( $\pm 25$  km from Leuven). There, the numismatic section was baptized *Séminaire de numismatique Marcel Hoc*. Soon, the *Séminaire* became a major centre for numismatic studies in Belgium and, subsequently, in the world. It organized several numismatic conferences and was, and still is, known for its numismatic publications.<sup>[34]</sup> The best known series is the *Numismatica Lovaniensia* of which twenty volumes have been published so far.<sup>[35]</sup> The *Séminaire* is also the publisher of *Documents de travail* and *Études numismatiques*, both comprising five volumes. Louvain-la-Neuve also built up an impressive numismatic library, which included the former library of the Society, acquired by Hackens in 1971.<sup>[36]</sup> Under the auspices of Ghislaine Moucharte, one of the former directors of the *RBN*, this library still holds one of the finest numismatic series in Belgium, if not in Europe.

From 1971 onwards, Hubert Frère (1920-1999), a notary from Liège who held several positions at the Society, became the university lecturer of the course on numismatics of the Middle Ages and the Modern Period.<sup>[37]</sup> This course alternated each year with the course focused on the coinage from Antiquity. In 1997, professor Hackens, who by then was elected dean of the *Faculté de Philosophie, Arts et Lettres*, suddenly died at the age of 58. After his death, a new full-time professor was not appointed anymore, and accordingly, the *Séminaire* lost its director, and with him, its energetic drive. Two years later in 1999, Hubert Frère also died. Patrick Marchetti (°1949), a professor from Namur and one of his former doctoral students, succeeded Hackens as university lecturer of ancient numismatics, whereas the byzantinist scholar P. Yannopoulos was appointed as lecturer for the course of the late Frère. Two years later, a new course with several lecturers, such as P. Yannopoulos, J. Ghysens, and L. Smolderen, was organized. It dealt with various topics, such as Byzantine coinage, the coinage of Brabant and medals of Belgium.

[33] *Belgisch Staatsblad* 1975, 323, no. 628.

[34] Hackens 1987, p. 226-231, reproduces the program of the seminar.

[35] van Heesch *forthcoming*.

[36] The funds to buy the Society's library were provided by the university and Max Maréchal, a wealthy pharmacist and coin collector. Cf. Hackens 1987, p. 222. Until today, members of the Society are welcome to consult the arts' library of Louvain-la-Neuve free of charge.

[37] Hackens 1987, p. 221; Dengis 2000, avant-propos.

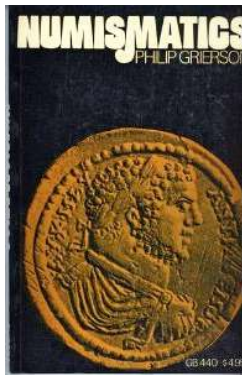
Fig. 7



In 2002, Johan van Heesch became the permanent lecturer for the MA-course on numismatics of the Middle Ages and the Modern Period, which has a study load of five credits.<sup>[38]</sup> In 2014, Charles Doyen (°1983) succeeded Marchetti after his retirement. He is now lecturer of the numismatic course of Antiquity, which is also taught at a MA level and has five credits.<sup>[39]</sup> Next to his lectureship, he leads the FNRS research project *Pondera Online*, dealing with metrology, an often forgotten aspect in the science of numismatics.

### Bruxelles/Brussel

Victor Tourneur, then already the chief curator of the Royal Library (1929-1943) and editor of the *RBN* (1919-1955), became a university lecturer at the *Université libre de Bruxelles* (ULB in the following) in 1931. In contrast to his former courses at *l'Institut des Hautes-Études de Belgique de Bruxelles*, which dealt with the various kinds of coinage in the history of Belgium and were discontinued after 1926, his ULB course was turned into a more general course on '*la Numismatique et l'Histoire de la Monnaie*'. Additionally, he lectured about '*l'Histoire de la Gravure en Médaille*'. Tourneur would teach both courses until 1948.<sup>[40]</sup> In 1971, Hackens had assembled the funds to buy the numismatic library of the Society, which at that time was kept at the University Library of the ULB. It is tentative to suggest that the Society's library had been transferred to that location by Tourneur when he became a university lecturer at the ULB. Unfortunately, I have not found any evidence to support this suggestion.<sup>[41]</sup>



After 18 years, Tourneur was succeeded by the English numismatist Philip Grierson (1910-2006), a specialist in European medieval coins and professor of numismatics at Cambridge.<sup>[42]</sup> Grierson held his professorship at the ULB between 1948 and 1981, and was the first lecturer in Belgium who published his notes in the small manual *Numismatics*. Naster reviewed it in the *RBN* of 1975, and wrote that this handbook was definitely based on a long experience, by which he most likely meant Grierson's courses and research. Apart from theoretical notions and definitions, the

[38] van Heesch 2013.

[39] Doyen (2015).

[40] Hoc 1967, p. 266; de Callataÿ 1999b, p. 332. In 1938, Tourneur was also invited to give some lectures at the *Collège de France* through the *Fondation Gustave Schlumberger*. Their contents were published as an article in the *RBN* XC (1938): 'Les rois de France de Philippe-Auguste à Philippe-le-Bel et la monnaie de Flandre.'

[41] See *supra* note 37.

[42] de Callataÿ & Devroey 2010, p. 146; Van Laere 2006.

manual covered the history of European coinage from the beginning until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

« *Cet ouvrage d'initiation est le résultat d'une longue expérience. Ce n'est qu'à ce compte que l'auteur est parvenu à condenser en moins de trente pages l'histoire monétaire de l'Europe depuis l'Antiquité grecque jusqu'au xx<sup>e</sup> siècle et en un espace environ égal celle de tout l'Orient (p. 9-71). Le reste, à savoir à peu près le double de ce nombre de pages (p. 72-192), est occupé par des notions, des définitions.* » P. NASTER

The book was published in 1975 by Oxford University Press.<sup>[43]</sup>



Fig. 9

After his retirement, Grierson was succeeded by Pierre Cockshaw (1938-2008), who at that time was curator of the Coin Cabinet at Brussels. His (numismatic) research concentrated on the Dukes of Burgundy and their coinage. His course was called '*Histoire de la Monnaie*' and focused on the production of coinage and monetary theories, which he applied primarily on medieval coinage and coinage of the Modern Period. The course consisted of 30 hours and was taught every two years. After his retirement, this specific numismatic course disappeared from the university's curriculum.<sup>[44]</sup>

Today at the ULB, numismatics is integrated into the MA course '*Questions d'histoire socio-économique de l'Antiquité*', thanks to the efforts of its lecturer, professor François de Callatay (°1961), chief curator of the Coin Cabinet and secretary of the International Numismatic Council. MA students in History can enroll in the course.<sup>[45]</sup>

At the same university, Dr. Jean-Marc Doyen (°1954) gives a numismatic training on a voluntary basis for future archaeologists. The training is spread over three half days. Recently, plans have been developed to incorporate a full course on numismatics in the curriculum of the ULB. It will be organized in collaboration with *l'Université Lille 3* under the auspices of Jean-Marc Doyen.

In 1969, following the example of the University of Leuven, the *Université libre de Bruxelles* was also split into a French and Dutch speaking one.

At the Dutch-speaking *Vrije Universiteit Brussel* (Free University of Brussels), Jean Baerten (°1936), who was first appointed at the *Université libre de Bruxelles*, taught numismatics until his retirement in 1996. Though he was professor in medieval history, his numismatic expertise not only focused

[43] Naster 1975, p. 166-167.

[44] de Callatay & Debusscher 2010, p. 34.

[45] van Heesch *forthcoming*; de Callatay (2016). Professor Didier Viviers, present chancellor of the ULB, had developed this course.

on (Belgian) medieval coinage, but he also published on economic laws and about the history and introduction of the Euro.<sup>[46]</sup>

His successor, Jean-Paul Peeters, continued to lecture about coinage and metrology of the Middle Ages and the Modern Period.

Around the same time, the papyrologist Wilfried Van Rengen (°1943) incorporated some classes on classical numismatics in his module about the various kinds of sources that can be used for research into the ancient world.<sup>[47]</sup>

## Gent

Although it is likely that professor Serrure had integrated some numismatic aspects in his courses at the University of Gent, there is no evidence to support this. We do know that the University of Gent had to wait some time before the first numismatic course could be organized. In 1928, when the first numismatic course at Leuven had started, the *RBN* mentioned that Victor Fris (1877-1925), a former professor in medieval history and head of the city archives of Gent, had always supported the idea to set up a numismatic course: « *Nous sommes heureux de féliciter l'Université de Louvain de cette réalisation. Il y a quelque vingt ans, feu Victor Fris avait énergiquement réclamé l'institution d'un cours analogue à l'Université de Gand.* »<sup>[48]</sup>

Fris, who had been head archivist of Gent during World War I and secretary of several historical societies, became a university lecturer in 1921 and later *professor extraordinarius*.<sup>[49]</sup> He taught courses about medieval sources, heuristics and source criticism.<sup>[50]</sup> Yet, it is unknown whether he included numismatics in one of these courses. After Fris' death in 1925, Henri E. De Sagher (1890-1940) continued the former's numismatic aspirations. De Sagher, who obtained his doctorate on a study about the Flemish textile industry in the Middle Ages, became professor at Gent in 1930.<sup>[51]</sup> In 1931, he lectured about medieval economy as successor to the famous professor Henri Pirenne. After the reorganization of the curricula in 1932-33 – only courses taught in Dutch were henceforth offered – the module was renamed into '*Economische Geschiedenis van de Middeleeuwen met inbegrip van de Numismatiek en Geschiedenis der Munt*'. Part of it dealt with numismatics. The course was taught every two years, and was optional for all students of the licentiate program (an equivalent of the current MA degree) of

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<sup>[46]</sup> Baerten (2016).

<sup>[47]</sup> van Heesch *forthcoming*.

<sup>[48]</sup> Tourneur 1928, p. 128.

<sup>[49]</sup> *KB 1/I/1921* and *KB 4/IV/1923*; *University Gent Archives file 4H2\_036890*; Van Werveke 1960, p. 198-201.

<sup>[50]</sup> Additionally, he was responsible for the auxiliary science palaeography of the Middle Ages, and he also taught a module on medieval diplomacy.

<sup>[51]</sup> *KB 4/III/1930*.

the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts at Gent. De Sagher put a lot of energy in this course, as every two years, he would add new results and findings of his own research to the syllabus.<sup>[52]</sup> Since at approximately the same time he also became curator of the coin collection 'De Bast', we may assume that he used specimens of the university's coin collection, either to support his teaching or as research material, which he also analysed in his course.<sup>[53]</sup> However, as he suddenly died in 1940, he could only give the course four times.<sup>[54]</sup>

Johannes (Hans) Van Werveke (1909-1974) continued the course until 1967, but he did not take over the curatorship of the coin collection 'De Bast'.<sup>[55]</sup> Ironically, Johannes Van Werveke was the son of Alfons Van Werveke, who was former assistant city archivist of Gent and lived in discord with Victor Fris.<sup>[56]</sup> From his father, Johannes Van Werveke had inherited a talent for working with quantitative data, in those times a novelty in the study of history.<sup>[57]</sup> He has done some unprecedented research, especially in the field of financial history and monetary studies, which he linked with living standards in medieval society.

Meanwhile, in 1948, the coin collection of the university came under the auspices of professor Pieter Lambrechts (1910-1974). Lambrechts was head of the Ancient History Seminar in Gent and excavator of the ancient site of Pessinus in Turkey (1963-1973). Although he did not publish anything about coinage or numismatics, he taught numismatics of Antiquity for more than 15 years. The arrival of Raymond Bogaert (1920-2009), who in 1962 began, at the age of 42, as a first class assistant at the Ancient History Seminar of Gent, was a great contribution for numismatic studies at Gent, both ancient and modern. Bogaert had written his doctoral thesis on Greek banking, and his subsequent books on the subject would make him a world authority in this field.<sup>[58]</sup> In 1967, Bogaert became the new lecturer in numismatics, a post he would hold for almost 20 years.<sup>[59]</sup> Remarkably, he did not include any banking history in his numismatic course. During these years, the uni-

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<sup>[52]</sup> Strubbe 1960, p. 237-244.

<sup>[53]</sup> Verboven 2004, p. 185-186.

<sup>[54]</sup> Strubbe 1960, p. 237-244. De Sagher died of exhaustion after his return to Belgium from France, where he had fled with his family for the invading German troops.

<sup>[55]</sup> His position as lecturer of this course was only officially ratified after the Second World War with the *KB* 28/XIII/1945. The curatorship of the coin collection 'De Bast' went to Van De Weerd, a professor in Ancient History and Archaeology. Cf. Verboven 2004, p. 186.

<sup>[56]</sup> Decavele & Vannieuwenhuyse 1983, p. 22. Apparently, Fris had fired Alfons Van Werveke when he became city archivist of Gent.

<sup>[57]</sup> In his doctorate, for instance, he was one of the first scholars to analyse the public finances of a big medieval city, Gent: Van Werveke 1931.

<sup>[58]</sup> Most renowned are: *Les origines antiques de la banque de dépôt* (1966) and *Banques et banquiers dans les cités grecques* (1968).

<sup>[59]</sup> Verboven 2007, p. XII-XIII.



versity coin collection 'De Bast' was still kept in Lambrechts' office at Blaudijnberg. In 1968, the medals and tokens, as well as the coinage of the Middle Ages and Modern Period, were transferred to the University Library. After Lambrechts' death, the ancient coins would follow.<sup>[60]</sup> It is unknown whether Bogaert illustrated his lectures with coin specimens of the university coin collection. In his archive box at the University Gent Archives some photocopies of ancient coins were stored, but these were not pictures of the 'De Bast' collection.<sup>[61]</sup>

Inspired by the revolutionary climate at the end of the 1960's, some changes in the course program of the Faculty of Philosophy and Arts were implemented around 1970-71. Moreover, with money of the Galileo Galilei award (*Premio Internazionale Galileo Galilei dei Rotary Italiani*) granted to prof. Charles Verlinden in 1971, the school of Medieval and Early Modern History at Gent could employ several extra researchers and lecturers.<sup>[62]</sup> Consequently, influenced by the former research of Van Werveke and his colleagues, a new lecture series was set up, dealing with financial history and the living standards in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age: (i)

Monetary history and metrology of the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, by A. Verhulst and W. Blockmans; (ii) Financial history and the history of accountancy in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period, by W. Prevenier; (iii) History of prices and economic cycles in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period, by J. Everaert. All these courses were optional for the licentiate students and were taught every two years.<sup>[63]</sup> Though all dealt with money in some way, only the one of Adriaan Verhulst (1929-2009) and Willem Blockmans (°1945) incorporated the study of coinage and gave an historical overview of its development. Students used a stenciled syllabus with illustrations and graphs. A visit to the university coin collection 'De Bast', which by then was kept at the University Library, was part of the program. Nowadays, these

Fig. 10

STRUKTUUR VAN DE CURSUS.

I. Inleidend hoofdstuk : Begripsomschrijving.

1. Benaming porsus.
2. Belang geschiedenis v.h. geld.
3. Geld : definitie en evolutie.
4. Mechanismen v.h. geld.
5. Munttechniek.

II. Hoofdstuk : Vroegge middeleeuwen.

1. Barbarerijken.
  1. Romeinse traditie.
  2. Vervaging staatsmonopolie.
  3. Britannië : ontwikkeling v.o. nieuw muntstelsel.
  4. Private muntslag onder de Merovingen.
  5. Muntmetalen.
  6. Munttypes.
  7. Muntcirculatie.
2. Karolingische herleving.
  1. Vorstelijk muntmonopolie.
  2. Munttypes.
  3. Feodalisering v.d. muntslag.
  4. Herstel koninklijke munt in Frankrijk.
  5. Muntoeloop van de 8e tot de 13e eeuw.

III. Hoofdstuk : Late middeleeuwen.

1. Terugkeer naar het bimetalisme.
  1. Herleving internationale handel.
  2. Grottere zilverstukken.
  3. Opnieuw aantuning van goud.
  4. Schommelingen in de waarde.
  5. Evolutie in Vlaanderen : koersaanpassingen.

[60] Verboven 2004, p. 186. After the death of prof. Lambrechts, some gold pieces that he had kept in a private safe at home were returned by his widow.

[61] *University Gent Archives* file 2013\_062\_079. It is unknown to what collection(s) these coins belonged.

[62] Koninckx <2016>.

[63] *University Gent Archives* Study Program Book 1972.

specific auxiliary courses no longer exist, but Michael Limberger and Erik Thoen teach an optional course for BA students on the financial and monetary history of the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period.<sup>[64]</sup>

For the course on classical numismatics, Bogaert remained the lecturer until his retirement in 1985. His successor was professor Johnny Devreker (°1943), who extended Bogaert's syllabus. During the period 1999-2004 he was faculty dean, and his numismatic course was taught by dr. Herbert Verreth (°1965). The latter also made a digital version of the syllabus, which is still available online. In 2004, professor Koenraad Verboven (°1968), an authority on the financial history of the Roman world, succeeded him. Verboven changed the course into '*Numismatics and Monetary History*', which he is still teaching today. The course is set up for Master students with 30 hours of in-house teaching in addition to 15 hours of exercises. Besides providing an historical numismatic overview, the course also deals with the history of credit and banking. Additionally, researchers from other universities are invited to present their (numismatic) projects. A visit to the university coin collection, and sometimes the Coin Cabinet in Brussels, is also part of the course. Usually, the classes are attended by around ten students, mainly historians and archaeologists. Non-native Dutch speakers have the opportunity to follow the course by writing six essays in English instead of in Dutch.<sup>[65]</sup> In addition, Gent University hosts an extensive library with numismatic literature, open to students, researchers and coin collectors.

## Epilogue

The ambition to teach about numismatics did also influence regional numismatic societies that started to organise numismatic courses. Until today, numismatic classes exist under the auspices of two regional numismatic societies: the *Cercle numismatique liégeois* and the *Diestse Studiekring voor Numismatiek* vzw. In 1987, the *Cercle de l'étude de la numismatique liégeoise* was founded and supported by H. Frère, the aforementioned university lecturer at Louvain-la-Neuve. It was a sub-institute of the *Cercle numismatique liégeois* and had to promote the study of the coinage of the Prince-Bishopric of Liège. For the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Cercle numismatique liégeois* in 1995, Frère organised the colloquium '*L'histoire par les monnaies*', which was accommodated by the University of Liège, and hosted almost 20 renowned speakers.<sup>[66]</sup> Until today, each month (with the exception of July and August), the *Cercle de l'étude* meets on the Monday after the regular society's meetings on Sunday.<sup>[67]</sup>

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[64] Limberger (2016).

[65] Verboven (2016).

[66] Frère 1996, p. 284; Dengis 2000, avant-propos.

[67] [www.cerclenumismatiqueliemois.com](http://www.cerclenumismatiqueliemois.com) [1/VIII/2016].

The *Diestse Studiekring voor Numismatiek vzw* started in 1994. Every year, the society organises four meetings with lectures dealing with various topics and a workshop centered around a specific numismatic subject. The society also offers the opportunity to expand one's knowledge of numismatics through a home study course (*Begeleid Individueel Studeren*), entitled 'Inleiding tot de Numismatiek'.<sup>[68]</sup> This course consists of four modules dealing with diverse topics, such as the science of numismatics, metrology, the history of coinage, and imitations and falsifications. In addition, students are also given practical exercises on how to determine, archive and conserve coins. After having submitted a final paper, each participant gets a certificate.<sup>[69]</sup> In 2018, two additional courses will be available: 'De Numismatiek van de Lage Landen' and 'Inleiding tot de Oosterse Numismatiek'. These courses are prepared in cooperation with members of the Belgian and the Dutch Royal Numismatic Societies, and with those of the Oriental Numismatic Society respectively.

### Recommendations for the future

Following the study of the organisation of Belgian numismatic education, I would like to suggest three recommendations for the future. These recommendations elaborate further on the fourth objective of the *Congrès international de Numismatique de Bruxelles* in 1910.

First of all, I plead for including coinage of Belgium and its former historical regions in university programs again. Nowadays, only one academic course dealing with the coinage of the Middle Ages and the (Early) Modern Period exists. As a consequence, the coinage of Belgium is almost completely neglected in the educational programs. In doing so, we would also continue the tradition started by Victor Tourneur almost 100 years ago.

Secondly, numismatics should be treated as more than merely a tool which helps sketching an historical overview. Coinage can be used directly as a source for historical processes, be they monetary, political, economic or cultural. In our courses, we may emphasise this aspect more. In addition, numismatics is also about studying coinage intrinsically and quantitatively. Therefore, it will be useful to include interdisciplinary aspects into numismatic courses, such as workshops dealing with metal analysis with non-destructive techniques, lessons on software for the creation and statistical exploitation of databases, and an introduction to die studies.<sup>[70]</sup> Only then will the science of numismatics receive the place it deserves into the university programs as a fully auxiliary science and will it form proper numismatists for the future.

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<sup>[68]</sup> [www.studiekring-numismatiek.be/cursussen.html](http://www.studiekring-numismatiek.be/cursussen.html) [1/VIII/2016].

<sup>[69]</sup> Patrick Pasmans, president of the *Diestse Studiekring voor Numismatiek*, was so kind as to provide me with this information personally.

<sup>[70]</sup> I thank Jan Moens for this suggestion.

Finally, the role of physical coin specimens as study material should not be neglected. My final recommendation is that, although we live in a digital age in which almost everything can be found on the internet, lecturers keep using actual coins in their numismatic courses, by using their university collections or by visiting the Coin Cabinet in Brussels. In Belgium, this Coin Cabinet hosts a collection of paramount importance, easily accessible to students thanks to its curators François de Callataÿ and Johan van Heesch.

I hope my recommendations will find their way into our modern numismatic courses, because, as Seneca has put it: *'It is by teaching that we shall learn'*.<sup>[71]</sup>

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<sup>[71]</sup> My own translation of *docendo discimus* by Seneca. With this quote from Seneca in our mind, we could also remember the advice of Charles Piot, one of the driving members of the Society, who has stated that by teaching people the science of numismatics, they will learn to spend their money well.

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## Illustrations

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