

INTRODUCTION

The history of the Numismatic Collection dates back to the founding of the Museum. In it, individual numismatic, separate chronological and thematic units were successively profiled. The Collection contains money from various historical periods, the largest part of which is made up of minted coins, whilst a smaller part is of paper money, medals and badges. The money was collected in various ways, most often through archaeological research at numerous sites in the town of Senj and its surroundings, then through donations and purchases. In the collected materials, we find original testimonies about ethnic, territorial, socio-economic, governing-administrative and political phenomena and changes in the areas of Senj and the surroundings, as well as the civilizational achievements in these areas. The content of the Collection is presented with an emphasis on individual local, thematic units, primarily on ancient coins that originated from sites in the Senj area, as well as Senj medals and badges depicting important dates from Senj's past.

ANCIENT MONEY

Throughout history, money follows man as a rare kind of product of preserved monumental heritage. Apart from being a means of payment, it is a significant historical document, a work of art, a cultural monument, an indicator of authentic data of everyday life, and economic and political circumstances during past historical periods.

With the Greek colonisation of the eastern and northern Mediterranean, especially southern Italy, from the 7th to the 4th century BC, and then the Ionian and Adriatic seas, with the establishment of the first Greek colonies on Croatia's coast (around 335 BC), trade increasingly grew stronger with the Illyrians in which money appears as a means of payment. Therefore, in the area of Senj from the beginning of the 3rd century BC, we can talk about the beginnings of the development of real trade and about the money that came into circulation as a means of payment. The Museum's holdings include Roman republican consular and family coins from the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, then from the Early, Middle and Late Roman Empire.

The Numismatic Collection of Senj Museum contains money originating from numerous localities in the town and its surroundings, from hoards and individual finds, as well as grave finds from ancient necropolises. Amongst the oldest preserved is a coin that originates from the area of North Africa from Carthage, Zeugitana, from the 3rd century BC from the site of the Kuk – Nehaj fortress, found in 1967. In 1970, a North African coin from Numidia from the 2nd century BC was found in the same location. It is a presented bronze coin of Micipsa (148-118 BC), a Numidian ruler from 118 BC, with the image of a bearded man on the obverse and a galloping horse on the reverse, which the Numidian kings minted in great quantities. Most of these coins were minted during the reign of Micipsa's father, King Masinissa (202–148 BC). It circulated throughout the Western Mediterranean, and it also penetrated into circulation in the area of the Roman province of Dalmatia, where in its northern part, primarily in the area of the Iapodes tribe, in Lika, along with the bronze coins of Carthage, it was concentrated together in hoards at the beginning of the 1st century AD, which is a unique phenomenon in the ancient world of that time.

Amongst the oldest is a coin from the city of Theate (Chieti), a quadrans from 217 BC found in 1964 in Senj at the site of the cathedral. The city of Chieti (Latin Theate) is the capital of the Italian province of Chieti in the Abruzzo region and lies in the hills above the Pescara River basin. The Romans occupied Theate in 305 BC. Roman republican money is represented by the denarius of Gaius Julius Caesar from 49 BC, found in the Štela-Senj locality, the town bathing area in 1964. Coins originate from the same site, continuously from the Early to the Late Empire.

MEDIAEVAL MONEY

Apart from the Roman period, the collection contains mediaeval coins, of which is a significant hoard of Aquileian denarii from the 15th century that circulated in the regions of the Croatian coast and Dalmatia. The hoard was discovered during the construction of a hospital in 1933. It contained the denarii of Antonio II Panciera, patriarch (1402 – 1411), with depictions of a helmet or halved coat of arms with stars and arms on the obverse and the eagle of Aquileia in a circle of beads on the reverse. The hoard also includes the denarii of Ludovico II di Teck (1412 – 1437) with depictions of the coat of

arms of the patriarch on a shield with an oblique chessboard on the obverse and the Virgin Mary with a halo sitting on the reverse.

MODERN AGE MONEY

A significant part of the modern Collection consists of Venetian money and money from the Habsburg Monarchy from the time of Maria Theresa to Franz Joseph I. The Collection also contains paper money from the countries that were part of the Habsburg Monarchy, as well as banknotes from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. One part is also from the time of the Independent State of Croatia. The numismatic collection is represented by an Austro-Hungarian banknote of 100 kronen with the date of issue of 2nd January 1912. It is characteristic of these banknotes that one side is in German and the other in Hungarian. It was designed by Josef Pfeiffer. These banknotes of 100, 50 and 10 kronen were used until the collapse of Austria-Hungary in 1918, as well as in the successor states for a short time. These are certified banknotes with a whole series of overprints and stamps that were used in countries even after 1918, including Croatia.

The 10 kuna banknote of the Independent State of Croatia with the date of issue of 30th August 1941 was designed by the famous Croatian academic painter Ljubo Babić and was printed in Zagreb. The banknote was printed in an olive green colour, but they are also known as the so-called “orange” specimens. The 1,000 kuna banknote (issued on 26th May 1941) in brown tones was also artistically designed by Ljubo Babić. On the face of the banknote is the image of a young Slavonian woman with a traditional hairstyle characteristic of the area of Đakovo and Vinkovci. At the time of its issue, this banknote represented the highest nominal value in circulation. Also presented is a 5,000 kuna banknote from 1943 and a second issue dated 1st September 1943. The banknote was artistically designed by the academic painter Vladimir Kirin, and it depicts the baptismal font of Prince Višeslav and folk costumes from Vrlika. The banknote abounds with traditional Croatian ornamentation. In Democratic Federal Yugoslavia in 1944, a series of banknotes was issued in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 dinars. Banknotes with the image of a Partisan were artistically designed by the academic painter Đorđe Andrejević Kun. The 10-dinar banknote of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was issued on 1st May 1955, with the image of a foundryman from the Zenica ironworks, and it was designed by Miodrag Petrović.

MEDALS AND BADGES

Part of the Collection of the Senj Town Museum consists of medals that speak of the time, culture and people to whom they are dedicated, marking important events, anniversaries and jubilees, most of which are presented here belong to the Austro-Hungarian period, from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century with the image of the Emperor Franz Joseph I. and other personalities. In the Collection, the medals from the thematic group that we associate with the history of Senj, such as the Constitution of the Town of Senj in 1872, the 400th anniversary of the Nehaj Fortress in 1558 – 1958, and the commemorative jubilee minting of 5 kuna in 1994, on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of printing of the Senj Glagolitic Missal with an inscription in the angular Glagolitic script, are of special significance. Below the nominal value is the historical Croatian coat of arms with squares that are laid out in such a way as to evoke Senj's famous Nehaj fortress. In this commemorative edition, the designer Damir Mataušić used an image with sea waves that symbolise the famous Senj bura wind. Apart from this circulating specimen, there is also a gold coin with the same design.

As far as saintly pilgrimage medals with depictions of saints are concerned, those with the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary predominate, and some of them were issued on the occasion of commemorating various anniversaries. Here, we highlight the miraculous medal and the medal with an image of the Holy Family.

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