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**Coins for the Gods, Coins for the Merchants –
Economy of the sacred compared to the economy of profane
(Athens – October 24-25, 2019)**

**Edited by Jean-Marc DOYEN, Luc SEVERS
& Francis DIEULAFAIT**

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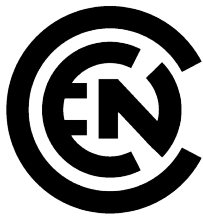
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Money has been a primary witness of our economic and social life. One tends to forget its role in the domain of the divine. This will not be a simple discussion of the representation of temples and the like on various coinages but, indeed, the very presence of these currencies found in places of worship. Coins found in sanctuaries can often be counted in their hundreds or thousands; how did these coins arrive in their final locations? Are they to be considered as offerings to the gods, payments to officials, payment for the purchase of offerings (think: ‘religious concession stands’) or simply the cost of entry into the sanctuary? But we must also ask: who are those paying and what is their social status? The purpose of this symposium is to examine the specific context of the discoveries of coins in sanctuaries. When examining this type of find, it is important to determine the reason for any coinage to be found in places of worship (human constructions, wells, fountains, lakes and rivers, sinkholes, etc.).

A coin may be an offering of sorts, a term certainly better in this context than *ex voto*, which signifies the *solutio* of a *votum*. In this case, written sources tell us of two categories of monetary offerings: *stips* and *iactatiostipis*. The question of how to archeologically interpret the number of discoveries is in fact also problematic: should we consider every coin found in a sanctuary as an offering? Speaking of offerings – what types of coins are given and can substitute objects, made specifically for this purpose, also be used? A similar symposium in Athens, held in November, 2017, and devoted to ‘Charron’s Obol’ demonstrated the interest of the researchers in the contextualization of monetary discoveries made in the Mediterranean basin. This present symposium entitled, ‘*Coins for the Gods, coins for the merchants – Economy of the sacred compared to the economy of the profane*’ will examine the same geographic area, namely the Mediterranean and its immediate environs. The period covered will begin in the 6th century BC and bring us to the present day.

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