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Jean-Marc Doyen, Jean-Patrick Duchemin, Panagiotis P. Iossif

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OF
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Proceedings of the International Conference
*A coin for the dead. Coins for the living.
Charon's obol: the end of a Myth?*

Edited by Jean-Marc DOYEN, Jean-Patrick DUCHEMIN
& Panagiotis P. IOSSIF

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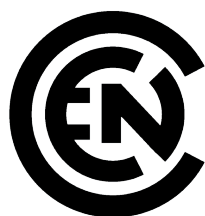
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Thanks to new methods of investigation, the field of funerary archaeology has developed significantly in the last years. Refined excavation, precise archiving of contextual data and pluri-disciplinary studies have led to the establishment of an archaeology of ritual. Far from only the gathering of material remains that burial excavation was once confined to, this discipline now considers two additional, essential things: biological anthropology and the study of taphonomic phenomena. The objects that were deposited in the tombs are then considered as part of the context in which the deceased was placed: in other words, they can inform us on funerary gestures.

Although the study of rites and gestures seems like an innovating field in archaeology, taking into account the data from the analysis of coins from funerary contexts has not yet followed this trend, despite the fact that this theme is undoubtedly at the heart of the renewal of funerary archaeology. The gesture of depositing one or more coins is indeed part of complex and various ritual sequences constituting the tomb.

The Athens Conference was an opportunity to attempt a new summary on this practice and on the integration of numismatic data within the funerary archaeology discourse. Organized around central questions of material aspects of the practice, of their place within ritual sequences, the ambition of this conference was to confront the state of our knowledge, methods and case studies in the Mediterranean between the 5th cent. BCE and the 12th cent. CE. Above all, the meeting was an opportunity for addressing questions that are common to archaeologists and numismatists as far as the protocol of the study of coins in funerary contexts is concerned.

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