

Capricorn Image on Ancient Roman Coins

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Coins not just means of exchange, but also carriers of text and imagery messages, the ancient Roman coins contain a vast number of images of several heroic and mythical gods as well as, astronomical symbols and constellations' signs, these images act as messages that support both political publicity and art of that time. One of these images is still known nowadays: the Capricorn recognized in Greco-Roman mythology as the goat-fish hybrid. It is the tenth astrological sign in the zodiac between Archer (Sagittarius) and the water carrier (Aquarius). The Capricorn iconography was spread on coins and the popularity of this motif appears specially during the reign of Augustus, moreover the coins bearing this image have participated broadly to spread its iconography and the various meanings related to it. This is descriptive research aims to describe some patterns of the Capricorn images, and to emphasize the meanings and functions related to this image on the Ancient Roman coinage which dates from 90 BC. till 270 AD.

Introduction

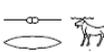
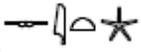
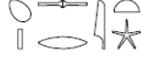
Coins are not only a form of payment, but also bearers of text and visual messages, public records and miniature state monuments. At the beginning, the themes of coin images in ancient Greco-Roman world depict the Olympian gods, as Athena the patron goddess of the city-states; also, in Rome the Capitoline traid (Jupiter, Juno, Minerva)¹, as well as other representations of mythical gods and zodiacal motifs. The concept of the zodiac to which Capricorn constellation belongs (interpreted: the horned goat)², is attested on Assyrian clay tablets dates to the 2nd millennium BC, then Astrology was introduced by the Greeks in Late Hellenistic and Roman periods; it became popular and significant throughout the Roman empire, although Egypt was its base³. All the Egyptian zodiacs include the well-known Greek zodiacal signs as: the astronomical ceiling of the temple of Esna which was built during the reign of Ptolemy III and IV (246-205 BC), it represents the combination between decans and zodiac signs, where the Capricorn appears there among other constellations taking the fish ending and front body of antelope (**plate.1a-1b**)⁴. Also, the astronomical ceiling of the second eastern Osirian Chapelle of Dendera which dates back to the 1st century BC represent the same motifs including the Capricorn with the front body of the goat and fish tail (where the Egyptians parallel with the sheep, *srt*) (**plate.2**)⁵.

From the first century AD, representations of zodiacs began to appear on coffin lids and private tombs, in addition to temple ceilings. The zodiac found in the inner chamber of the tomb of *P3-di-Wsir* located in Qaret el-Muzawwaqa in Dakhleh oasis which dates back to the Roman period is much more extraordinary⁶. The zodiac's style, like the rest of the tomb's decorating, is eclectic: conventional Egyptian representations coexist with Roman depictions⁷. The Capricorn is depicted in this tomb in the form of a unicorn goat-fish (**plate.3**)⁸. Another magnificent depiction of the Capricorn appears on the

wooden coffin of  *Htr* dates back to Roman period (125 AD) probably from Thebes but it is now lost, it represents the Zodiacal motifs including the Capricorn constellation which appears as a horned black goat with fish tail (**plate.4 a-b**)⁹.

The Origin of Capricorn Constellation.

The zodiac is a merged diagram of both Egyptian, Mesopotamian-Greek traditions and mythological believes, so it is probably, according to Belmonte was designed to be recognized by both Greeks and Egyptians¹⁰. The first evidence of the zodiac in an Egyptian context appears on an ostracon date to 250 BC and the combination of zodiac and decans began almost at the same time¹¹. The Egyptians identified the Capricorn, the goat-fish hybrid and symbol of the tenth constellation  with the designation of

the Egyptian decans:  *sr*,  *srt* or *sit* the Greek  ,  ,  *smd* the Greek  which means also "goat" or "sheep",  ,  *s3wy-srt* which means "flanked by the sheep", and  *p3-sb3-wty* which means "the unique star" and its Greek name ¹².

The 3rd cluster in all celestial diagrams of the monuments dates back to the New Kingdom and Greco-Roman period related to the three decans *srt* or *sit*, *smd* and *s3wy-sit* found in the region of the Capricorn as in: the water clock dates to the reign of Amenhotep III, and the astronomical ceiling of the Tomb of Senenmut at Deir el Bahary, in addition to the Osirienne chapel and the pronaos of Dendara related¹³.

The twelve zodiacal signs (Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces) and several associated animals transmitted from Mesopotamia the land of Sumer and Babylon to the classical Greek sky-map, the tenth zodiac sign Capricornus the more ancient constellation marking the winter solstice was associated with the Mesopotamian god Ea or Enki¹⁴. The goat-fish was first attested as a symbol of Ea on a Sumerian seal dates back to 2000BC¹⁵, it appears also on Babylon boundary stones dates to 1350 BC; Ea whom Capricornus was associated, is the beneficent god of earth and life, who resided in the deep water and always represented as a goat-fish (Capricornus) with ram's-head standard (**plate.5**)¹⁶, The zodiacal iconography of Ea represented on the Babylon boundary stones is almost exactly as on Dendara zodiac but, lacking the ram's standard on Dendera¹⁷.

1. Capricorn on Greco-Roman Mythology

Capricornus (*Αἰγόκερως*) the tenth astrological sign ¹⁸, lies in the zodiac between Archer  (Sagittarius) the ninth zodiac sign¹⁹, who was identified with the centaur Cheron after he had transferred to heavens his bow and arrow eternally pointed to Scorpius the eighth sign of the zodiac²⁰, and the eleventh sign the water carrier  (Aquarius)²¹, identified with Ganymede the beautiful young youth who is carried away by an eagle up and became the cupbearer of Zeus on Mount Olympus²², and when he died he was placed in the heavens as the constellation Aquarius for his faithful service²³. Capricorn is surrounded by several myths, some of them are Greek and the others are Roman after the Greek culture had been incorporated. One of the myths said that the god Pan the Greek god of flocks, shepherds, fields and of woods, helped Hermes to save Zeus during his struggle with Typhon²⁴, in order to flee the giant Typhon, god Pan leapt into the Nile River, where his head remained above the water's surface and became that of a goat, while his hindquarters transformed into the shape of a fish, resulting in the creation of the sea-goat or Capricorn, which was later placed in the heavens as the constellation of the same name²⁵.

According to Greek myths Typhon, a frightening monster, pursued the other gods all the way to Egypt, where they disguised themselves as animals to avoid him²⁶. The Greeks associated Typhon with the Egyptian god Seth²⁷, as in order to escape from Seth, Isis changed herself into a Sekhat-Hor cow and Horus into Abis bull²⁸. According to another myth Rhea the Titaness daughter who married her brother Cronos who swallowed his children at birth when Zeus (equated with Jupiter in Roman period) was born she decided to give him to a nymph, called Amaltheia who nurtured him with the milk of her goat, the goat's broken horn became the symbol of plenty (the Cornucopia) and when Zeus won over Cronos he put Amaltheia and her goat among the stars²⁹. In another version of the myth Amalthea was the goat that nursed Zeus while he was being hidden from his father in the cave on Crete, and as a reward the goat was placed in the heavens as the constellation Capricorn, one of her horns becoming the Cornucopia (horn of abundance) and her skin becoming the protection of Zeus³⁰. Amalthea was also said to be the mother of Capricorn, and the myth of Capricorn is linked to the positive image of the Cornucopia, whose power might be interpreted as a good omen for the image's owner³¹. When the Romans absorbed the Greek culture, they added that the Capricorn constellation was a gate of men through which the souls of the deceased passed to heaven³². Capricornus is also said to have fought against the Titans with Jupiter the lord of heaven whom the Greeks called Zeus³³.

2. Capricorn Images on Roman coins.

Belief in astrology's power to predict the future and the practice of horoscopes was widespread in the Rome and reaching its peak in the first and early second centuries AD. Astrologers also reached positions of eminence and influence at court³⁴. During the 1st century BC The image of the Capricorn on coinage began to be favorable by Roman people, as Capricorn Jupiter's helper, rose into the sky, he was perceived as a positive hybrid creature having the power to prevent evil or bad luck, so he might provide assistance in every- day life³⁵.

Patterns of Capricorn Coins During the Reign of Roman Republican

In the middle of the second century BC, Civil Wars and disagreements amongst Rome's ruling families began, and coin imagery became a reflection of the battles that led to Augustus' sole role in 30 BC³⁶. From then on, coin images are used to transfer messages supporting the ruling power and the art of that time. A little Capricorn is represented on two coins dates back to the 1st century BC, the Capricorn on these coins is argued: they could be symbols related to the moneyers inspired by the rulers, or countermarks. The first coin is a silver denarius minted in Rome, it dates back to the Roman Republican in 90 BC, minted by Pansa Caetronianus Gaius Vibius, who supported Julius Caesar in the civil war with Pompey and after Caesar's assassination, he became one of the leading supporters of the republic restoration and was elected Consul in 43 BC³⁷.

Doc.1. Silver denarius, minted in Rome by Pansa Caetronianus Gaius Vibius, Roman Republican,90 BC.

Observe represents a small image of the Capricorn with goat's head and hindquarters of a fish, behind the Capricorn is the head of the Greek god Apollo who was god of healing and medicine³⁸. He was born in Delos, son of Zeus (called Jupiter by Romans) and goddess Leto (called Latona by Romans)³⁹. Apollo is represented wearing the Laurel wreath one of the most popular types of wreathes, the laurel plant which was braided in wreaths was dedicated to god Apollo and Romans took it over from the Greek tradition, it is symbol of peace, eternity and victory⁴⁰, there is a Latin inscription behind the head of Apollo it reads PANSA; **reverse** depicts goddess Minerva known to Greeks as Athena, according to myths she was born completely formed and armed, coming out of Jupiter's head, the Romans privileged her as goddess of wisdom, art and intelligence, she was also goddess of soldiers in battles, represented with her helmet, shield, armor and spear⁴¹. She appears on the coin as a female charioteer driving quadriga at speed with prancing horses, holding spear and reins in left hand and the shield on right hand, the Latin inscription below reads C. VIBIVS (**plate.6**)⁴².

Doc.2. Silver denarius serratus, minted by L. Papius, Roman Republican, 79 BC.

The second coin where the Capricorn is depicted from Rome, is a silver denarius serratus a name derived from its serrated edges (saw-edge), it represents the bead and reel architectural motif, usually found in coinage⁴³. it represents a thin line beadlike elements alternate with cylinder-shaped ones, the coin dates back to the Roman Republican 79 BC, minted by L.Papius, **observe** represents the head of Juno Sospita who was called Hera by the Greeks; the Roman queen of heaven and one of the most important deities of the Roman pantheon, and a member of the Capitoline traid together with Jupiter and Minerva, as Jupiter was the king of heaven and guardian of males, Juno was the celestial queen and protectress of women⁴⁴. Juno is wearing a complete goatskin with two horns above her head, the countermark behind her head depicts a little hound and on **reverse** a Griffin is leaping to the right; the Griffin or Gryphon is a fabulous animal dwelling in the Rhiphaean mountains (located in the north of Europe) between the Hyperboreans and the one eyed Arimaspians guarding the gold of the north⁴⁵. The Griffin appears on the coin with the body of a lion, while the head and

wings were those of an eagle. Below the griffin a little image of Capricorn goat-fish appears leaping as same as the Griffin. The Latin inscription below reads L. Papius (plate.7)⁴⁶.

Capricorn on coins of the first Roman emperor Augustus (27BC- 14 AD).

Gaius Octavius (Augustus) was born on September 23rd, 63 BC, and when he was 18 when his uncle Julius Caesar declared him his chief heir and adopted son⁴⁷. During the Civil Wars young Octavius could easily use the image of the Capricorn for his political propaganda, as in 45 BC, Octavius, the future emperor Augustus, was eighteen years old when he visited with Agrippa the astrologer Theogenes in Apollonia during his retirement (Greek colony in Allyria, new Epirus)⁴⁸, Theogenes jumped up and threw himself after Augustus tried his fortune and from that time on he had such conviction in his destiny that he popularized his horoscope and minted a silver coin bearing the constellation sign Capricorn, which he was born under, Augustus later promoted Capricorn as his personal star sign, which he believed brought him luck⁴⁹.

According to Roman emperors' biographer, Suetonius, Augustus was born on September 23rd 63 BC, so he was born under the constellation sign Libra, not Capricorn and the sun was Libra on that day⁵⁰, this fact became a puzzling contradiction which sparked an academic debate that is still going on, several assumptions have arisen regarding this puzzle: Capricorn might be his moon sign or according to other opinions Capricorn might relate to the sky of January 16th, 27 BC when Octavius was declared "Augustus" (the illustrious one⁵¹) by Senate⁵². According to (Amelia, Carolina) the astrologer Theogenes persuaded Octavius that his zodiacal sign is the Capricorn as he considered that the Capricorn was the constellation in which the sun was on the 1st day of the Julian calendar, 1st of January 45 BC, which is different from his birth date according to the Republican calendar⁵³.

The first appearance of Capricorn on Augustan coinage occurred on observes of aurei (golden) and denarii (silver) of AEGVPTO CAPTA (Egypt captured), which dates back to 28-27BC⁵⁴. The Capricorn appears on these coins as a secondary motif after the victories in Egypt at the naval battle between the fleet of Octavius and the armada of Mark Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in 30 BC⁵⁵.

Doc.3. Silver denarius coin issued by Octavius, uncertain mint Ephesus? 28 BC.

Obverse represents a portrait bust of the victor Octavius with bare head, facing the right side with a little image of his emblem the goat-fish under his neck, the Latin inscription reads CAESAR DIVI F COS VI (Son of god Caesar Consul for the 6th time), on **reverse** an image of a crocodile with closed jaw personifying the conquered land (Egypt), the Latin inscription reads AEGVPTO CAPTA (plate.8)⁵⁶.

Doc.4. Golden aurei, issued by Augustus, uncertain mint Ephesus? 28 BC.

Obverse second coin from the series of AEGVPTO CAPTA, represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus with bare head, facing the right side with a little image of his emblem the goat-fish under his neck. The Latin inscription reads IMP CAESAR DIVI F AVGVST COS VII (emperor son of god Caesar revered Consul for the 7th time)⁵⁷, **reverse** represents a different motif from the two previous coins, an image of

hippopotamus also personifying the conquered land (Egypt). The Latin inscription reads AEGVPTO CAPTA (**plate.9**)⁵⁸.

Doc.5. Golden aurei, issued by Octavius, uncertain eastern mint. It dates back to early-mid January 27 BC.

Observe another coin from the series of AEGVPTO CAPTA, represents a portrait bust of the victor Octavius with bare head, facing the right side with a little image of his emblem the goat-fish under his neck, the Latin inscription reads CAESAR DIVI F COS VII (Son of god Caesar Consul for the 7th time), **reverse** similar to the aforementioned silver one, it represents an image of a crocodile with closed jaw personifying the conquered land (Egypt). The Latin inscription reads AEGVPTO CAPTA (**plate.10**)⁵⁹.

It is possible that Octavius choose the image of crocodile on the revers of the first two coins not only to personify the land of Egypt but, he also wanted to introduce himself to the Romans as the victor over an exotic enemy, as crocodiles were associated in Greek and Roman art with danger, as well as it signify the threat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra to Rome. So, the crocodile contributes to the idea that Octavius should be remembered not as the assassin of his co-consul, but as the Roman empire's savior⁶⁰. While on the third one he introduced himself as a victor over a new image, the hippopotamus which was regarded in Ancient Egypt as a dangerous and destructive animal and was therefore associated with the god Seth of evil⁶¹.

From 27 BC on, the Capricorn first appeared as a reverse motif occupying the entire field of the image, numerous pieces of coins bearing this motif comes from western Roman provinces, as well as on eastern ones especially on cistophorus (a Greek silver type of coin introduced in ancient Pergamon) of Pergamon and Ephesus (27 BC-20 BC)⁶². Pergamon/ Pergamum was the leading city of the Roman province of Asia, located on the Cacus River in Lydia (modern Asiatic Turkey)⁶³, a few miles inland from the Aegean Sea in the area of Mysia known as Teuthrania. When the Romans gave king Eumenes II (190 BC) authority of Mysia, Lydia, Phrygia and other districts, the importance of Pergamon grew. For a time, the city was Alexandria's adversary. It was also a major player in Roman commerce with its silver mine moreover it became the first site in the east for the imperial cult starting from 19 BC It was the seat of the Roman consul of Asia, but due to the city's compete with Ephesus the treasury for the province remained in Ephesus which is one of the leading cities in the province of Asia, located on the Ionian coast south of Smyrna⁶⁴.

Doc.6. Silver cistophorus minted in Pergamon, reign of Augustus, 27-26 BC.

Observe represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus with bare head, facing the right, one of the emblems of Augustus called the (Litiuus) is depicted in front of him; it is a crooked staff resembles the  *hk3* crook symbol of authority in ancient Egypt and one of the emblems of god Osiris⁶⁵. Litiuus is the most common priestly emblem found on Octavius/Augustus coins perhaps commemorating that he became an augur in late 43 BC one of the most significant priestly offices was that of an augur. In the province of Asia, the Litiuus found on majority of coins of these cities accompanying the portrait of Augustus.it symbolizes the duty of taking the military auspices, with

advice from augurs, as well as the appearance of the Litiuus in Augustus imagery reflects his role as a founder⁶⁶. The Latin inscription behind the head of Augustus reads IMP.CAESAR (Imperator which means a victory acclamation to a general) Imperator Caesar⁶⁷, **reverse** represents the Capricorn goat-fish symbol of Augustus turning the head to right side bearing the Cornucopia on back; all within the laurel wreath. The Capricorn appears on the reverse with the cornucopia, a horn of plenty, signifies fertility, abundance and food⁶⁸; which according to Greek myths it was said to have been created from the goat Amalthea who suckled the infant Zeus in the cave on Crete while hiding from his father Cronus⁶⁹. The circular laurel wreath braided leaves surround the whole image, a symbol of peace, rebirth eternity and victory. It Symbolize August's triumph, terrestrial and celestial power. The whole image of the Capricorn along with the cornucopia and the laurel wreath may indicate to the rebirth of a new world full of prosperity under the role of the victor Augustus. The Latin inscription below Capricorn reads AVGVSTVS, title of Augustus means the respected⁷⁰, (**plate. 11**)⁷¹.

Doc.7. Silver denarius uncertain mint, reign of Augustus,27 BC.

Observe represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus with laurate head, facing the right side, **reverse** represents the Capricorn goat-fish, with cornucopia rising from back and holding globe and rudder symbols of sovereign. The Latin inscription reads AVGVSTVS (**Plate.12**)⁷².

The globe, sphere or ball represents a significant concept in Greek and Roman art: the world. At the same time, it represents the globe of heaven and all stars, which are connected with destiny, according to Hellenistic belief and astrology, the globe is depicted here with the rudder symbol of directing the world, shipping and commerce⁷³. So, the entire image may indicate that the Roman emperor's good luck, which he directed to the advantage of the Roman empire, had already been set in the stars.

Doc.8. Silver denarius minted in Corduba, reign of Augustus,18-16 BC.

Observe represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus, facing the right side with bare head, **reverse** depicts another image of the Capricorn with the same motifs holding a globe attached to rudder with a cornucopia decorated with loose ends above its back appears on western provinces such as: minted in Corduba or Corduva, the provincial capital of the senatorial province of Colonia Patricia in Spain⁷⁴. This image combines symbols of world domination and the golden age of the Roman empire(**plate.13**)⁷⁵.

On the previous coins, Capricorn appears to have shown, through August's horoscope, that he would influence the world's (globe) future by directing its actions (rudder), and that there would be enormous wealth and abundance (cornucopia) as a result of his supervision⁷⁶. August's dominion over land and sea is symbolized by the Capricorn grasping a globe. Augustus, ruler of land and sea, is signified by the same Capricorn half goat, half fish⁷⁷.

Doc.9. Bronze coin, minted in Cyprus, reign of Augustus, 22 BC.

Observe represents August's zodiac sign the goat-fish Capricorn with a star above it. As it known that after the kill of Julius Caesar in 44 BC, a comet was appeared and 25

years later Augustus issued a coin where this event was shown⁷⁸, **reverse** represents the Scorpius the natal sign of Tiberius the successor of Augustus, who was born 16 November 42 BC. Greek Scorpius (Scorpion) it stung and causes the death of the hunter Orion, the gods placed him away in the heaven where he forms the constellation which bears his name⁷⁹, (Plate.14)⁸⁰.

Doc.10. Golden aureus minted in Pergamon, reign of Augustus,19-18 BC.

Observe represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus with bare head, facing the right side, the Latin inscription below reads AVGVSTVS, **reverse** represents the Capricorn goat-fish, linked with the Latin inscription reads SIGNIS RECEPTIS (plate.15)⁸¹.

On early Imperial coins a special place is taken by reverse motives and insignia with an accompanying Latin inscription SIGNIS RECEPTIS, indicating the return of previously seized military insignia, as the loss of military insignia represented the biggest shame for a legion. Such aurei commemorate the return of the battle standards previously captured by the Parthians in 53 BC, which occurred as a result of Augustus great diplomatic policy⁸². The image of the Capricorn in connection with the inscription SIGNIS RECEPTIS created a link between that success and the good luck offered to the emperor by his birth sign.

Doc.11. Silver denarius, minted in Colonia Patricia (Spain), reign of Augustus, 19-16 BC

Observe represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus with bare head, facing the right side, **reverse** represents the Capricorn goat-fish, below the naked god Zephyrus with a radiate crown and with an outstretched veil hovering over the Capricorn who is holding the ruder, with Latin inscription above reads AVGVSTVS (plate.16)⁸³. Zephyrus a Greek god personification of the west wind son of Astraeus and Eos, the whole image may symbolize to the Capricorn's (Augustus) rule to the Western provinces⁸⁴.

Doc.12. Silver denarius, minted by king Juba II, minted in Mauritania, 16 BC.

Observe represents Juba II king of Mauritania wears the lion's scalp above the head he resembles himself with Augustus, **reverse** represents the Capricorn goat-fish, with cornucopia rising from back and holding globe and rudder symbols of sovereign.

The image of Capricorn linked with the rudder, cornucopia (prosperity) and globe (world) extended to other rulers such as Juba II (50 BC to 23 AD) king of Mauritania, the son of the Numidian king Juba I, as after the conquest and division of the Numidian kingdom by the Romans, Juba arrived to Rome and educated in a Hellenistic-Roman way at the encouragement of Emperor Augustus. In 25 BC Augustus set him in Muritania as a client king and in 20 BC he married Cleopatra Selene the daughter of Cleopatra VII and Mark Antony⁸⁵. This coin represents Juba's embrace of Roman authority, a system in which he was enslaved and benefited (plate.17)⁸⁶.

Doc.13. Silver denarius, minted in Lugdunum, reign of Augustus, 12 BC.

Observe represents a portrait bust of the emperor Augustus with bare head, facing the right side, the Latin inscription below reads AVGVSTVS DIVI F (Augustus son of the

god⁸⁷), **reverse** represents the Capricorn goat-fish holding a globe, with Latin inscription below reads IMP XI (**plate.18**)⁸⁸.

This type of coin from Lugdunum the capital city of the province Gallia (Gaul), Now called Lyons, the city was the chief metropolis in Gaul, it was the center of the Imperial cult in 12 BC, where an altar was dedicated to Rome and Augustus there⁸⁹.

The function of the Capricorn on Augustus coins could have been based on its appearance as a hybrid of terrestrial animal and marine one, so it is well positioned to represent Augustus desire to pacify the sea and the land after the battle of Actium⁹⁰. The appearance of Capricorn here in these coins is also linked to the Egyptian myth of Osiris, who was rejuvenated in the sign Capricorn after the winter solstice. Following this perspective, it is evident that Osiris's rebirth can be linked to Augustus's revival of Roman supremacy through the aurea aetas (golden age), which is crucial to the emperor's propaganda⁹¹. The Capricorn was also the domain of Saturn and according to Roman mythology, the Roman god Saturn came to reside in Italy after his son Jupiter threw him out of heaven, and he became the ruler of the world in a golden age of happiness and abundance⁹², so Augustus reign was portrayed as a restoration of Saturn's golden age. Possibly each of these reasons was a factor in choosing Augustus the Capricorn to be his sign.

Patterns of Capricorn on coins of successors of Augustus

During the Roman Imperial period, the meaning of Capricorn figure expanded in new direction. For Augustus' successors, this goat-fish also became a broad emblem of a ruler's power.

Doc.14. Silver sesterius, reign of Tiberius, unknown province, 34-35 AD.

Observe represents two confronting goat-fish Capricorns in the middle of double oak wreath symbol of strength, endurance, attracts lightning and it was received by soldiers who saved the other Roman citizens⁹³. The Latin inscription in the middle reads OB CIVES SER (ob *cives servatos*- for having saved citizens around the coin DIVO AVGVSTUS (the defied Augustus⁹⁴), **reverse** Large S · C in the middle (*Senatus Consulto*-by decree of the senate of Rome) and around the coin CAESAR DIVI.AVGF (defied Caesar son of Augustus⁹⁵), (**plate.19**)⁹⁶.

Doc.15. Silver coin, reign of Tiberius, minted on Panormon (ancient Sicily, now Palermo) 34-35 AD.

Observe emperor Tiberius portrait bust facing the left side with a radiate crown or solar crown, as head of the Greek god Heleos personification of the sun⁹⁷, **reverse** the Capricorn goat-fish facing the right side with triskeles below (plate.19)⁹⁸; it is a word comes from the Greek word *ΤΡΙΣ* means three and *σκέλος* which means leg, referring to everything which contain three legs and it was also used as a solar symbol used in god's Apollos worship who was identified with the sun god (**plate.20**)⁹⁹.

Doc.16. Silver coin, reign of Nero, minted on Pergamon 54-68 AD.

Observe portrait bust facing the right side with bare head depicting emperor Nero who was adopted by emperor Claudius and become his successor¹⁰⁰, **reverse** the Capricorn goat-fish turning its head to the left side, with cornucopia symbol of prosperity rising

from the back. it is meant by the Capricorn here to remember and commemorate emperor Augustus the founder of Pergamon. Some of the colonies founded by Augustus remembered their founder by only means of symbols such as the Capricorn featured in almost of Pergamon's coins (**Plate.21**)¹⁰¹.

Doc.17. Silver denarius, Civil Wars, minted on Gaul, 68 AD.

Observe emperor Augustus portrait bust facing the right, with the litiuus depicted behind him, **reverse** the Capricorn goat-fish facing the right side with cornucopia and globe. The Latin inscription reads AVGVSTVS (**plate.22**)¹⁰².

During the Civil Wars that concluded in Nero's death, Augustus' legacy was greatly resurrected. In 68 AD, Gaul's revolt was aided by a great coinage imbued with a strong political element, based on republican symbols and ideas. In this context, Augustus' memorial was intended to announce the restoration of Julio-Claudian principles following Nero¹⁰³.

Doc.18. Silver denarius, minted by Vespasian, Roman empire69 AD.

Emperor Vespasian was the founder of the Flavian dynasty, he was able to restore the empire after the Civil War and continued by his sons: Titus (79-81 AD) and Domitian (81-96 AD)¹⁰⁴. Vespasian and Titus issued some coins representing the goat-fish Capricorn.

Observe portrait bust of emperor Vespasian facing the right side, with laurate head. the Latin inscription reads IMP CAESAR AVGVSTVS VESPASIANVS (the revered emperor Vespasian), **reverse** the Capricorn goat-fish facing the left side above the globe. The Latin inscription reads COS VII (Consul for 7th time) (**plate.23**)¹⁰⁵.

Doc.19. Silver denarius, minted by Titus, Roman empire, 79 AD.

The observe portrait bust of emperor Titus facing the right side, with laurate head. the Latin inscription reads IMP T CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVG (emperor Caesar Vespasian Augustus), **reverse** the Capricorn goat-fish facing the left side above the globe. The Latin inscription reads TR P VIII IMP XV COS VII P P (*Tribunicia Potestas*- one of the legal powers of the emperor XV, Consul 7th time, *Pater Patriae*-the father of the father land¹⁰⁶, (**Plate.24**)¹⁰⁷.

Doc.20. Silver denarius, minted by Titus, Roman empire, 80-81 AD.

The observe portrait bust of the defied emperor Vespasian facing the right side, with laurate head. the Latin inscription reads DIVVS AVGVSTS VESPASIANVS (the defied Vespasian Augustus), **reverse** Titus uses the symbols of Augustus in the denarius, which was probably issued in the occasion of the deification of his father Vespasian. two confronting Capricorns goat-fish above the globe with the shield of honor above. The Latin inscription inside the shield reads SC (*Senatus Consulto*-by decree of the senate of Rome¹⁰⁸) (**Plate.25**)¹⁰⁹.

Doc.21. Bronze coin, minted by Trajan, minted in city of Parium, 114-117 AD.

Observe portrait bust of emperor Trajan who became emperor from 98 to 117 AD, his father was a successful consul and governor of Syria and Asia, later emperor Nerva appointed Trajan as a governor in Germania in 96 AD, and he was adopted by Nerva

after his death Trajan was informed at Cologne by the young Hadrian that he now ruled the Roman world¹¹⁰. Emperor Trajan is depicted in this coin with laurel wreath upon the head, and a round countermark under his neck of a female bust, she may be his wife Plotina (?), who became empress from 98 to 117 BC, she was known for her modesty, dignity and virtue. After the death of Trajan in 117 AD in Cilicia she played an involved role in the adoption of Hadrian as a successor. After her death Hadrian dedicated to her two temples in the Forum of Trajan and in Nimes¹¹¹, **reverse** represents the goat-fish Capricorn lying upon a globe with a comet with eight rays, it may refer to the comet which appeared after the killing of Julius Caesar, as Augustus 25 years later after this event issued a coin to show the incident (**Plate.26**)¹¹².

Capricorn was set upon coins of colonies and provinces founded or re-founded by Augustus as a sort of commemoration. This coin is minted on Parium (nowadays Turkey), a city of Mysia, built by Parians, inhabitants of an island in the Egean sea, then it became a Roman colony, founded by Julius Caesar, and it took the name Julia; it also took the name Pariana Iulia Augusta when it was raised under Augustus¹¹³.

Doc.22. Silver quinarius coin (valued of half denarius), minted by Hadrian, minted in Rome, 125-128 AD.

Augustus's example was also an essential part of Hadrian's beliefs, he struck a coin depicting him with the Capricorn whom Augustus was traditionally assimilated.

Observe portrait bust of emperor Hadrian who became emperor from 117-138 AD, he was connected to the Imperial palace through the marriage of his grandfather a senator to the aunt of Trajan and his adoption was announced after the ninth, two days before the declaration of Trajan's death¹¹⁴. Hadrian is depicted with laurel wreath head facing the right side. The Latin inscription reads HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS (Hadrianus Augustus), **reverse** represents the half-goat and half-fish Capricorn facing left side (**Plate.27**)¹¹⁵.

Doc.23. Golden coin, minted by Septimius Severus, minted in Rome, 193 AD.

Observe portrait bust of emperor Septimius Severus (193-211 AD) the founder of the Severan dynasty (193-235 AD) which starts with him and ends with emperor Alexander Severus. Septimius is depicted with laurel wreath above the head. the Latin inscription reads IMP CAE.L.SEP SEV PERT AVG, **reverse** a legionary eagle stands between two small-unit standards upon which rises the forepart of two confronting Capricorns. The coin was struck to honor the Legion XIV (Gemina Martia Victrix). The emperor appears as an eagle symbol of power over the provincial name, as the eagle topped sceptre appears in triumphal imagery¹¹⁶. The Latin inscription reads LEG.XIII.GEM. M.V (**plate.28**)¹¹⁷.

Doc.24. Bronze coin, minted by Alexander Severus, Parium (Mysia), 222-235AD.

The observe portrait bust of Alexander Severus with laurel wreath above the head facing the right side. IMP CAES L SEV ALEXANDER, **reverse** represents a Capricorn with globe between its hooves and with cornucopia symbol of prosperity protruding from the back, the Capricorn fish tail differs here from other coins as it has six appendices while on other coins it appears with three. this coin represents one of the several coinages of different emperors which wanted to link themselves with Augustus,

through an orb symbol of the world, and cornucopia in association with Capricorn, symbols of the wealth and supreme power of the emperor (**plate.29**)¹¹⁸.

Doc.25. Silver coin, minted Philip I, Rome, 244-249AD.

Observe portrait bust with a radiant head of Philip I, who became emperor from 244-249AD, he was called also (Philip the Arab) as he was the son of a Arabian chieftain equities, Philip served in the army rising to the position of second in command of the Praetorian Guard (a unit of the Imperial Roman army), and emperor Gordian III named him Perfect in 243 AD then he became emperor by the aid of the troops of the army of Gordian in the east¹¹⁹. The Latin inscription reads IMP PHILIPPVS AVG, **reverse** represents goddess Tranquillitas, goddess of security, calmness and peace, who was the personification of Annona the Roman supply of corn¹²⁰. Annona was also personification of food supply in Roman period during the reign of Septimius Severus¹²¹. Tranquillitas is standing facing the left side, holding a scepter on the left hand, while on the right hand she holds a small Capricorn with goat head and fish tail which refers to the maritime transportation of Egypt's grain through the Mediterranean to Rome, the Latin inscription reads TRANQVILLITAS AVGG (**plate.30**)¹²².

Doc.26. Gold coin, minted by Victorinus, minted in Cologne (nowadays Germany-North Rhine¹²³), 269-271AD.

The observe represents laureate head of Victorinus, who took over control of Gaul when both Posthumus and Laelianus died and he was murdered in 270 AD¹²⁴, the Latin inscription reads IMP VICTORINVS P F AVG, **reverse** Jupiter standing with naked, facing left side, holding vertical scepter in right hand and thunderbolt in left on his left side an image of a Capricorn running toward him. Capricorn here is still reused as a symbol of legions closely connected with Augustus. This scene is also reminiscent of the Roman myth as Capricornus is said to have fought against the Titans with Jupiter the lord of heaven whom the Greeks called Zeus. The Latin inscription reads LEG XXX VLP VICT P F (**plate. 31**)¹²⁵.

Conclusion

Based on the above context several results can be concluded concerning the Capricorn image on Ancient Roman coins:

- Using a small image of Capricorn on the two patterns of coins dates back to the 1st century BC, could be interpreted as symbols related to the moneyers inspired by the rulers, or could be countermarks.
- The first appearance of Capricorn on Augustan coinage occurred as a secondary motif on observes of aurei (golden) and denarii (silver) of AEGVPTO CAPTA, which dates back to 28-27BC.
- From 27 BC on, the Capricorn first appeared as a reverse motif occupying the entire field of the image
- The function of the Capricorn on Augustus coins could have been based on its appearance as a hybrid of terrestrial animal and marine one, so it is well positioned to represent Augustus desire to pacify the sea and the land after the battle of Actium

- The appearance of Capricorn accompanied by a cornucopia, the globe and rudder definitely referred to the power of Augustus over the land and sea.
- The connection between the Capricorn and the god Osiris whether on Ancient Egyptian myths or with Saturn on Ancient Roman myths can be linked to Augustus's.
- It seems that Octavian began to use the image of the Capricorn for his political propaganda after the battle of Actium and the image spread widely during the beginning of his reign from 27 BC to 15 BC, after then the image began to recede slightly before the death of Augustus.
- During the Roman Imperial period and after the death of Augustus, the meaning of Capricorn figure expanded in several new directions. For Augustus' successors, this goat-fish also became a broad emblem of a ruler's power demonstrating how far the image has progressed from its initial meaning into an ornamental form fit the rulers as in the case of the previous Juba's coin, Tiberius, Vespasian, Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, Septimius Severus, Alexander Severus, Philip I and Victorinus. As well as in this period the Capricorn was also established as a cult sign of Augustus.
- The appearance of Capricorn in the hand of goddess Tranquillitas (Annona) in the coin of Philip I add a new meaning to the Capricorn through this period as it symbolizes to the maritime transportation of Egypt's grain through the Mediterranean to Rome (**Doc. no.24**).
- Moreover, the colonies founded by Augustus throughout the provinces had a specific bond with his historical person and legacy which lasted until the 3rd century, and some of them only commemorate their founder through emblems as the Capricorn, such as the coins of Trajan, Septimius Severus and Victorinus (**Doc.nos.21, 23, 26**).

Table.1.

The following table collects the main details related to Capricorn on coins according to the previous order in the text.

Doc. no.	Production place	Authority	material	Main scene	With emperor	With god	observe	Reverse
1	Rome	Pansa Caetronianus Gaius Vibius 90 BC	Silver	×	×	√	√	×
2	Rome	L.Papius 79 BC	Silver	×	×	√	×	√
3	Ephesus?	Octavius 28 BC	Silver	×	√	×	√	×
4	Ephesus?	Octavius 28 BC	Gold	×	√	×	√	×
5	Uncertain eastern province?	Augustus 27	Gold	×	√	×	√	×

Continued

6	Pergamon	Augustus 27-26 BC	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
7	Uncertain province	Augustus 27 BC	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
8	Corduba	Augustus 18-16 BC	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
9	Cyprus	Augustus 22 BC	Bronze	√	×	√	√	×
10	Pergamon	Augustus 19-18	Gold	√	√	×	×	√
11	Colonia Patricia (Spain)	Augustus 19-16 BC	Silver	√	√	√	×	√
12	Mauritania	King Juba II 16 BC	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
13	Lugdunum (Gaul)	Augustus 12 BC	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
14	Unknown?	Tiberius 34- 35 AD	Silver	√	×	×	√	×
15	Panormon (Sicily)	Tiberius 34- 35 AD	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
16	Pergamon	Nero 54-68 AD	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
17	Gaul	Civil Wars 68 AD	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
18	Rome	Vespasian 69AD	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
19	Rome	Titus 79 AD	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
20	Rome	Titus 80-81AD	Silver	√	√	×	√	×
21	Parium	Trajan 114-117 AD	Bronze	√	√	×	×	√
22	Rome	Hadrian 125-128 AD	Silver	√	√	×	×	√
23	Rome	Septimius Severus 193 AD	Gold	×	√	×	×	√
24	Parium	Alexander Severus 222-235 AD	Bronze	√	√	×	×	√
25	Rome	Philip I 244- 249 AD	Silver	×	√	√	×	√
26	Cologne	Victorinus 269-271 AD	Gold	×	√	√	×	√

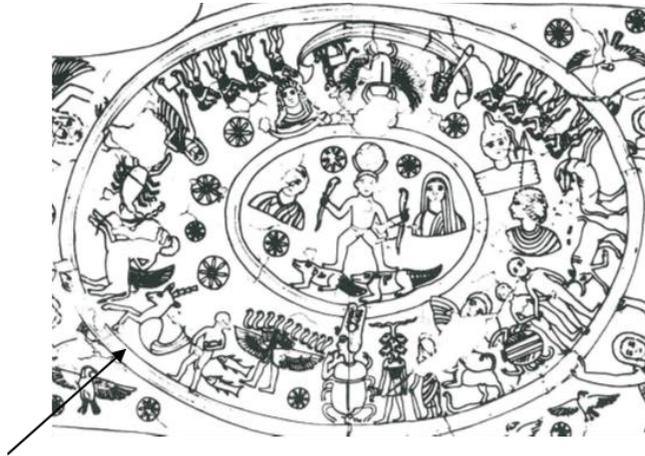


Plate.3. Tomb of *P3-di-Wsir*, Dakhleh Oasis.
J.Osing et al. (ed), *Denkmaler der Oase Dachla*, pl.41.

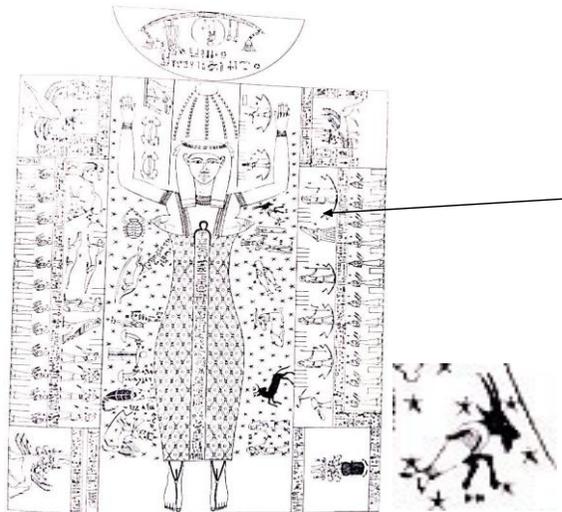


Plate.4a-b. Wooden coffin of *Htr*, Thebes.
O. Neugebauer., R.A. Parker., *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, III, pl.50.

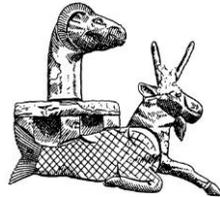


Plate.5. Capricorn on Babylon boundary stone.
Rogers, J.H., *JBAA*, Vol.108, no.1, fig.5.



Plate .6. Coin of Pansa, Capricorn with Greek god Apollo
<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/620176001>



Plate.7. Coin of L. Papius, Capricorn with goddess Juno Sospita.
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_R-8474.



Plate.8. Coin of Octavius and Capricorn
 Victoria, Gyori., "The Aurea Aetas and Octavianic/ Augustan Coinage", in: *OMINI*,
 no.8-11, 2014, fig.25.



Plate.9. Coin of Augustus with Capricorn.
 Gonzalez Gracia, A., "Capricornio y el Natalicio de Augusto", in: *Revista Numismatica Hecate*, no.1, 2014, fig.4.



plate.10. Coin of Octavius with Capricorn

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/535089001>



Plate.11. Coin of Augustus with Capricorn

B.Weiser, Roman Imperial Imagery of Time and Cosmos, fig.VII-2.



Plate.12. Coin of Augustus and Capricorn.

Augustus. *Silver Denarius of Augustus*, 3.68 g. n.d.

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Plate.13. Coin of Augustus and Capricorn.

Gonzalez Gracia, A., "Capricornio y el Natalicio de Augusto", in: *Revista Numismatica Hecate*, no.1, 2014, fig.1



Plate.14. Capricorn and Scorpios, Cyprus.
Gonzalez Gracia, A., "Capricornio y el Natalicio de Augusto", in: *Revista Numismatica Hecate*, no.1,



Plate.15. Coin of Augustus and Capricorn
Amelia, Carolina, *Zendo*, 21, p.1



Plate.16. Coin of Augustus and Capricorn with god Zephyrus
Victoria, Gyori., "The Aurea Aetas and Octavianic/Augustan Coinage", in: *OMINI*, no.8-11, 2014, fig.25.



Plate.17. Coin of Mauritanian king Juba II and Capricorn
B. Weiser, *Roman Imperial Imagery of Time and Cosmos*, fig.VII-6.



Plate.18. Coin of Augustus and Capricorn
Victoria, Gyori., "The Aurea Aetas and Octavianic/Augustan Coinage", in: *OMINI*,
no.8-11, 2014, fig.28.



Plate.19. Coin of Tiberius
Rovithis-Livaniou, Eleni, Flora Rovithis, "Astronomical Symbols on Coins of the
Roman Empire- PART I, 27 BC to 96 AD, in: *Romanian Astron.J.*, Vol.25, No.2,
fig.8.



Plate.20. Coin of Tiberius and Capricorn
Rovithis-Livaniou, Eleni, Flora Rovithis, "Astronomical Symbols on Coins of the
Roman Empire- PART I, 27 BC to 96 AD, in: *Romanian Astron.J.*, Vol.25, No.2,
fig.8.



Plate.21. Coin of Nero and Capricorn.
Andrew, Wallace-H., et al., "Augustus, First Emperor of Rome", in: *The Bulletin of
the Association for Roman Archaeology*, issue 23, fig.27.



Plate.22. Coin of Civil wars after Nero's death: Augustus and Capricorn.
Andrew, Wallace-H., et al., "Augustus, First Emperor of Rome", in: *The Bulletin of the Association for Roman Archaeology*, issue 23, fig.22.



Plate.23. Coin of Vespasian and Capricorn.
Rovithis-Livaniou, Eleni, Flora Rovithis, "Astronomical Symbols on Coins of the Roman Empire- PART I, 27 BC to 96 AD, in: *Romanian Astron.J.*, Vol.25, No.2, fig.15.



Plate.24. Coin of Titus and Capricorn
Rovithis-Livaniou, Eleni, Flora Rovithis, "Astronomical Symbols on Coins of the Roman Empire- PART I, 27 BC to 96 AD, in: *Romanian Astron.J.*, Vol.25, No.2, fig.15.



Plate.25. Coin of Titus and Capricorn
<https://www.arsclassicacoins.com/wp-content-nasecure/uploads/2020/06/2015-NAC-86.pdf>, fig.165.



Plate.26. Coin of Trajan and Capricorn.

B. Weiser, *Roman Imperial Imagery of Time and Cosmos*, fig.VII-7.



Plate.27. Coin of Hadrian and Capricorn.

Andrew, Wallace-H., et al., "Augustus, First Emperor of Rome", in: *The Bulletin of the Association for Roman Archaeology*, issue 23, fig.25.



Plate.28. Coin of Septimius Severus and Capricorn

Eleni-Rovithis, Flora-Rovithis, *Stellar Symbols on Ancient Coins of the Roman Empire part III: 193-235 AD*, in: *Romanian Astronomical Journal*, Vol.27, No.1, fig.5.



Plate.29. Coin of Alexander Severus and Capricorn.

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Plate.30. Coin of Philip I and Capricorn with goddess Tranquillitas (Annona)
Pool Burgos, Alejandro, *Mythological Animals in Roman Coinage*. English version
translated from Spanish, 2018, fig.17.



Plate.31. Coin of Victorinus and Capricorn with Jupiter
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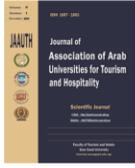
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تصوير برج الجدي على العملات الرومانية القديمة

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الملخص

العملات المعدنية ليست وسيلة للتبادل فقط، بل تعد أيضاً وسيلة لنقل الرسائل النصية والصور، حيث تحتوي العملات المعدنية التي تعود للعصر الروماني على عدد كبير من الصور الخاصة بالآلهة البطولية والأسطورية بالإضافة إلى الرموز الفلكية وأشكال الأبراج. لقد تم استخدام هذه الصور في هذا العصر كأداة دعم لكلٍ من الدعاية السياسية والفنية. أحد هذه الصور لا تزال معروفة حتى الآن وهي صورة برج الجدي المعروفة في الأساطير اليونانية والرومانية بالشكل المركب حيث يأخذ رأس الماعز وجسم السمكة. لقد اتخذ برج الجدي العلامة الفلكية العاشرة في دائرة الأبراج حيث يتوسط برج القوس والدلو، وانتشرت أيقونات برج الجدي على العملات المعدنية حيث ظهرت شعبية هذا الشكل خاصة في عهد الإمبراطور أغسطس. فضلاً عن ذلك، فإن العملات التي تحمل هذه الصورة قد شاركت بشكل واسع في نشر هذه الأيقونة والمعاني المختلفة المرتبطة بها. يهدف البحث إلى إعداد دراسة وصفية، لوصف بعض نماذج تصوير برج الجدي على العملات، بالإضافة إلى إلقاء الضوء على الوظيفة والمعاني المرتبطة بتصوير برج الجدي على العملات الرومانية القديمة خلال الفترة التاريخية ما بين 90 ق.م و270م.

معلومات المقالة

الكلمات المفتاحية

الجدي؛ الأبراج؛ الرومانية؛ العملات.

(JAAUTH)

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