FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OCRE – A major new tool for Roman numismatics

Today, in collaboration with New York University's Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, the ANS launches a major new tool to aid in the identification, research and cataloging of the coins of the ancient world.

OCRE (Online Coins of the Roman Empire) is an attempt to present, in an easily searchable form, all the varieties of the coinage issued by the emperors of ancient Rome. Phase 1, which is launched today, covers the coinage of the first emperors, from Augustus to Hadrian (27 BC – AD 138).

The site presents a basic description of each published variety based on the ANS' collection catalogue (MANTIS). Each of these type descriptions is linked to specimens present in the ANS collection and, where available, to images. Searches are made straightforward through a series of facets, presented in a way that will already be familiar to users of other ANS search tools.

Traditional searches of familiar numismatic categories such as obverse and reverse legends and types are provided, in the hope that OCRE will provide an identification tool useful to collectors, dealers, curators and field archaeologists. Subject searches have also been provided to allow more general researchers to find personifications, deities and portraits.

“OCRE is yet another example of the way that the ANS is both presenting numismatic material to those knowledgeable in the field, as well as expanding the accessibility of numismatic material to broader audiences”, notes ANS Executive Director Ute Wartenberg Kagan. “Building on years of curatorial work to catalogue our coins, we hope that our new web-based tools will make that work available to as broad an audience as possible, in as flexible a way as possible”.

ANS database developer Ethan Gruber, who built OCRE, explains how it has been designed from the beginning to use a Linked Data approach to deliver added functionality: “OCRE is built on Numishare, an open source suite of applications for managing and publishing numismatic collections on the web. The underlying data model of the collection is the Numismatic Description Standard (NUDS), a linked data-influenced XML ontology for coins. NUDS enables the linking of coin types in OCRE to numismatic concepts represented on Nomisma.org as well as linking to web resources that describe physical specimens, such as those in the ANS’ own collection. Data about these specimens—images, weights, findspots—can be extracted for statistical and geographic analyses in OCRE.”
A key element in the design has also been to link other stable resources describing the ancient world, such as Pleiades project for ancient geography.

OCRE project manager and Roman specialist, Gilles Bransbourg describes the advance that is heralded by OCRE: “OCRE is a leap forward for numismatists, historians and archaeologists alike. Until now, any research into Roman imperial coinage had to rely on paper-based catalogues, online auctions or the very few collections available online. OCRE offers a single, central online catalogue that allows users to view, download and organize digitized information covering the entire history of the Roman imperial coinage. The attraction of OCRE is that it is built as an open system. Any significant public or private collection may now link to OCRE and make its coins available to the wider public. Coin types will be connected to a growing number of examples from an ever-expanding number of sources. The digitized availability of relevant information like weights, modules, materials, legends, images, issuers, mints, location of find, and finally pictures, opens vast fields of research in many different directions and will hopefully inspire other areas in numismatics and beyond.”

**ADDRESSES**

**OCRE**: [http://numismatics.org/ocre](http://numismatics.org/ocre)

*Other ANS research tools:*

- **MANTIS** (the collection database): [http://numismatics.org/search](http://numismatics.org/search)
- **DONUM** (the library catalogue): [http://donum.numismatics.org/](http://donum.numismatics.org/)

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The American Numismatic Society, organized in 1858 and incorporated in 1865 in New York State, operates as a research museum under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is recognized as a publicly supported organization under section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) as confirmed on November 1, 1970.

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