

Ancient Greek Coins on Greek Banknotes

Vasso Penna

Out of circulation for centuries, ancient Greek coins have reappeared as decorative elements on modern Greek banknotes from the mid-19th century until 2002, when the Drachma was replaced by the Euro. In this paper, the symbolism of the depiction of ancient Greek coins on modern banknotes will be examined. The coins of gold, silver, bronze or billon became colored images “charged” with the value and potency of the past. Representations of a distant yet living past, the ancient Greek coins demonstrate their powerful influence, display the Greek mythical and historic times, and decipher the sentiments that shaped modern Greece.