

**TWO SIDES TO EVERY COIN:
AN ANALYSIS OF JULIO-CLAUDIAN WOMEN ON IMPERIAL ROMAN
COINAGE**

An Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

Two Sides to Every Coin:
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While Imperial Roman coinage is a highly studied topic by historians and archaeologists alike, there is still a major gap in this area with regard to the women who appear on it. Many studies have been done on individuals such as Livia, Agrippina the Younger, both Faustinae, and Julia Domna, but none have been completed in a comparative sense. This paper looks at the imperial coinage of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, who set the standards for the Principate period of ancient Rome, in order to determine the similarities and differences between each emperor's chosen depictions of their female family members.

Individual elements shown on these coins were analyzed for symbolic meanings that may shed light onto the specific purposes of each complete image. Following this analysis, Categories A-M were created to discuss elements that were often shown together and to examine how their

combination affected the overarching message being relayed. In doing this, four points of emphasis were identified: influence, dynasty, Ceres, and the imperial cult. Influence was the most common point of emphasis, as it merely functioned to depict a Julio-Claudian woman as important in her own right. Claudius was the most innovative emperor, creating the Ceres point of emphasis in which the common matronly role found on coinage was given a divine aspect, associating the women with the matron goddess of the harvest, Ceres. The dynastic point was solely associated with sisters and daughters, while the imperial cult point of emphasis used the priestess within the family to bolster worship of the imperial regime.

Overall, mothers were the most critical relationship for each emperor (except Augustus), following typical Roman familial custom. Wives were only eligible for minting if they were married to the Emperor during his reign and produced heirs to the throne, with the exception of Poppaea Sabina, who was minted without giving birth to a male. Five of the eleven women who were minted make up the majority of the depictions. The most notable of these women is Agrippina the Younger, who was illustrated on nineteen of the forty-seven coins in this assemblage. This is most likely due to her numerous roles within the imperial family (sister, wife, and mother) as well as her ambitious personality and Augustan lineage.

DEDICATION

To my Mom who gave me my love of research and to my Dad who gave me my love of history

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Thanks to my parents for their encouragement and to my quarantine buddies, James and Michael, for their patience and support. This schoolyear (2020-2021) was preceded by my cancer diagnosis and treatment as well as the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, both of which set an interesting tone for the time period in which this thesis was conceived and conducted. Therefore, the gratitude in this Acknowledgements page for my family and my boyfriend, the only people I have consistently seen in the past year, is particularly emphasized and perhaps more deeply heartfelt than it would have been in previous schoolyears.

The numismatic data analyzed for *Two Sides to Every Coin: An Analysis of Julio-Claudian Women on Imperial Roman Coinage* were provided by *Online Coins of the Roman Empire (OCRE)*, a joint project of the American Numismatic Society and the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University. The analyses depicted in *Two Sides to Every Coin: An Analysis of Julio-Claudian Women on Imperial Roman Coinage* were conducted in part by the American Numismatic Society, the Münzkabinett of the State Museum of Berlin, and the British Museum and were published in the *OCRE* database in April of 2017.

All other work conducted for the thesis was completed by the student independently.

Funding Sources

This project did not require any funding due to the fact that the numismatic data is open to the public online and the Texas A&M University Libraries have consistently gone above and beyond in their many services to meet student needs throughout the pandemic.

NOMENCLATURE

ANS	American Numismatic Society
BM	British Museum
MB	Münzkabinett Berlin
RIC I ²	Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume 1, 2 nd edition
Suet.	Suetonius, <i>Lives of the Caesars</i>
Tac.	Tacitus, <i>The Annals</i>

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INTRODUCTION

Roman coinage, seen in museums, books, and dusty boxes of collectors, is a prolific assemblage of artifacts that not only delights the imaginations of children and adults alike, but also provides a niche insight into the minds of Roman Emperors and their regimes. Much is known about the victories and failures of these rulers, but little has been discussed regarding the roles their mothers, sisters, and wives played in their lives and the lives of the Roman people, despite their prevalence in public imagery. As they say, there are two sides to every coin, and so far, only the Emperor's has been studied. It is time to flip over the coin.

The Principate Period

Rome began under a monarchical ruler, the mythical Romulus, and carried on that way for centuries. Eventually, the people learned to hate the monarchy, equating it with tyranny, and overthrew the regime in order to make room for their new Republic.¹ After decades of civil wars between senators in the first century BC, the Romans changed governing styles under the coercion of the future first emperor, Augustus. Because of Rome's distaste for monarchies, this new government could not be perceived as one. Thus, the Principate Period was formed, starting in 27 BC and ending with the rise of Diocletian and the Dominate Period in AD 284. In this era, Rome was ruled by an Emperor who masqueraded around as merely the *princeps*, or first citizen, of the Republic.² This new regime, though, was not as secure as it seemed to be. Augustus always made sure his heirs and leading generals were related to him by blood, marriage, and/or adoption so that none of them could pose a major threat of civil war.³ This threat was an

¹ Tac. 1.1.1.

² Grant 1975, 72.

³ Goodman 2012, 45.

imminent noose felt by every Julio-Claudian Emperor, leading to multiple executions and exiles of senators, soldiers, and their own family members.

The ‘Empress’ of Rome

Despite the fact that historians and the general public alike call the ruler of Rome during this period, ‘the Emperor,’ implying to modern dilettantes that his wife must be ‘the Empress,’ there were in fact no such titles and not even an official job for the consort of Rome’s most powerful man.⁴ Her power lay where every other Roman woman’s power lay: in her own personality, physical characteristics, legal possessions, and the social status of her husband.⁵ However, despite Rome’s undeniable patriarchal socio-political structure, there is evidence that (at least during the Principate period) the Empress helped define her husband’s power in the eye of the public as much as he defined hers.⁶ While the Emperor could determine her every move as he pleased, the manner in which she was depicted could either bolster or lessen his perceived and real powers in the political realm. Additionally, evidence of a heterarchy, a power dynamic which shifts depending on the people present, place, and circumstances at any given moment with less emphasis on strict traditionally defining roles such as gender, is highly present in the Principate Period since imperial women are often depicted with more grandeur than any man in Rome other than the Emperor and his designated male heirs.⁷

As part of the imperial family, the Empress must assert Roman ideals to the public. Her role, of course, emphasizes a model Roman marriage and matronly duties.⁸ The virtues most sought after would include fidelity, modesty, respectfulness, and the ability to bear and raise

⁴ Levick 2014, 31.

⁵ Levick 2014, 19-20; Goodman 2012, 192.

⁶ Harvey 2020, 160.

⁷ Harvey 2020, 157.

⁸ Levick 2014, 27.

good Roman children.⁹ As *princeps*, the Emperor could break old ways and make new ways of doing things to varying degrees. This meant that the stabilizing role that the Empress provided in her matronly characteristics (as emphasized to the public in her depictions) was necessary for less traditional Emperors.

The most important goal for a Roman Empress, however, was legitimizing the rule of her husband and the future rule of her son.¹⁰ This is seen in the use of the title ‘Augusta,’ the highest title a woman could have in imperial Rome, which was reserved for the mothers and future-mothers of Emperors.¹¹ While her virtues and motherly relationship to the Roman Empire created a sense of stability through dynastic continuity, other imperial women could lend a similar use of stability as well.¹² For instance, Augustus utilized the matrimony of his female family members and his newly-appointed senators to secure their steadfast support.¹³

The Julio-Claudian Dynasty

Gaius Octavius was born in 63 BC to C. Octavius and Atia, niece of C. Julius Caesar.¹⁴ A cunning teenager, he caught the eye and favor of his infamous great-uncle who posthumously adopted him so that he could inherit everything Caesar had built, including his political alliances and his name. Once Octavian (called Young Caesar at this point) extinguished his only lasting rival, M. Antonius, at Actium in 31 BC, he was free to direct Rome as he pleased.¹⁵ Three years later, the *Imperator* was granted the name Augustus by the senate, marking the beginning of his reign. In 23 BC, Augustus solidified the powers of the Emperor by receiving *imperium proconsulare maius*, power over places that were not directly under his control in official terms,

⁹ Goodman 2012, 193; Harvey 2020, 158.

¹⁰ Levick 2014, 29.

¹¹ Levick 2014, 35.

¹² Fantham et al. 1994, 313; Goodman 2012, 192.

¹³ Goodman 2012, 45.

¹⁴ Goodman 2012, 33; Grant 1975, 52.

¹⁵ Goodman 2012, 38; Grant 1975, 52-53; Suet. *Augustus* 8.

and *tribunicia potestas*, the right to veto official magistrate acts.¹⁶ In order to secure stability for the empire long after his own death, he adopted C. Caesar and L. Caesar, the two eldest sons of his daughter Iulia the Elder and most trusted advisor M. Vipsanius Agrippa. Unfortunately, both boys died in their early adulthood and Augustus was forced to look towards their younger brother, Agrippa Postumus, and his own stepson, Tiberius, to carry his burden (Figure A.1).¹⁷ Once Rome's first Emperor passed away in AD 14, the senate deified him for his unmatched services to the city.¹⁸

His stepson and successor, Tiberius, son of Livia and Ti. Claudius Nero, had spent over twenty years commanding armies in the name of Augustus before withdrawing to Rhodes in 6 BC, partially in frustration at the incompatibility and unfaithfulness of his wife and stepsister, Iulia the Elder.¹⁹ A decade later and in response to the death of Iulia's eldest sons, Augustus had coerced Tiberius into adopting his nephew Germanicus to be his heir alongside his own son from an earlier marriage, Drusus Caesar.²⁰ Once Augustus was gone and Tiberius had taken the throne, he assassinated Agrippa Postumus, who had been jailed by Augustus, solidifying his position.²¹ Additionally, he took advantage of Iulia's position as an exiled ex-wife and refused to send her food, starving her to death out of spite.²² Unlike his predecessor, Tiberius refused many of the honors and titles the senate offered and began to have a strained relationship with Livia, whose position had been augmented as mother of the Emperor, though not enough for the senate to overrule Tiberius's mandate against her deification after she died.²³ The Emperor's heirs,

¹⁶ Goodman 2012, 41; Grant 1975, 53; Suet. *Augustus* 27.

¹⁷ Goodman 2012, 42; 44; Grant 1975, 53-54; Suet. *Augustus* 64-65.

¹⁸ Goodman 2012, 48-49; Grant 1975, 54; Suet. *Augustus* 101.

¹⁹ Grant 1975, 83; Suet. *Tiberius* 12.

²⁰ Goodman 2012, 44, 48.

²¹ Suet. *Tiberius* 22.

²² Grant 1975, 79; Suet. *Augustus* 65; Tac. 1.53.1-2.

²³ Suet. *Tiberius* 50-51.

Germanicus Caesar and Drusus Caesar Ti. f., met the same fate as his stepfather's first choices and were replaced by Nero Caesar and Drusus Caesar, the elder sons of Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder (Figure A.2). Tiberius's misfortunes outranked Augustus's however, when his second set of heirs became suspect to conspiracies and he forced them to commit suicide.²⁴ His third and final set of heirs, Gaius 'Caligula', third and final son of Germanicus and the elder Agrippina, and his grandson Ti. Gemellus, accompanied Tiberius to Capri where he had retired in AD 26 and remained until his death in AD 37.²⁵ During his time there, his most trusted friend in Rome, L. Aelius Seianus, and his niece, Livilla plotted to overthrow him. Tiberius executed Seianus and imprisoned Livilla.²⁶ Rome's second Emperor was not remembered fondly and thus was not deified.

Caligula, meaning "little boots," was the nickname given to Agrippina the Elder's third son as a toddler by the soldiers under Germanicus's command for his miniature soldier outfit.²⁷ After his father died, he lived with his mother until she was exiled by Tiberius for allegedly attempting to poison the *princeps*.²⁸ Caligula moved in with his great-grandmother, Livia, until her death and ended up with his paternal grandmother, Antonia Minor, until Tiberius invited him to Capri (Figure A.3).²⁹ Tiberius may have eventually regretted this decision, however, as there were rumors that his heir smothered him with a pillow or slowly poisoned him.³⁰ Once the deed was done, Caligula forced Gemellus to commit suicide, just as Tiberius had done with Agrippa Postumus.³¹ The new Emperor became famous for spending lavishly on opulent events for the

²⁴ Goodman 2012, 50; Grant 1975, 84; Suet. *Tiberius* 39.

²⁵ Goodman 2012, 50, 53; Grant 1975, 84; Suet. *Tiberius* 43.

²⁶ Goodman 2012, 52; Suet. *Tiberius* 62, 64-65.

²⁷ Grant 1975, 108; Suet. *Caligula* 9.

²⁸ Suet. *Tiberius* 53.

²⁹ Suet. *Caligula* 10.

³⁰ Goodman 2012, 53; Suet. *Tiberius* 73.

³¹ Goodman 2012, 53; Grant 1975, 108.

people and enormous handouts for the soldiers, in part because he wanted to become so popular that they would view and treat him as a god.³² He was also infamous for allegedly committing incest with all three of his sisters, Agrippina the Younger, Iulia Livilla, and Iulia Drusilla, with special favor for the latter.³³ It was even said that Caligula left the entire empire to Drusilla in his will until she died, when he promptly deified her. Later, her husband, M. Lepidus (whom Caligula by now was treating as heir-apparent), headed a conspiracy against him in AD 39 and was executed while his other two sisters were exiled.³⁴ This plot, along with the successful one led by Cassius Chaerea in AD 41, was spurred on by the plethora of cruelties Caligula joyfully committed against his people, magistrates, and family.³⁵

At the time of Caligula's assassination, no heirs had been adopted or made apparent. It was because of this that Claudius, Caligula's paternal uncle and closest living male relative, became the first Emperor to gain the station by declaration of the army.³⁶ The reason this man survived the onslaught of his family and of wars on the frontiers while the rest of his adult male relatives had not is because he was born with a physical handicap and was thus assumed to be mentally handicapped as well, despite his scholarly nature.³⁷ Regardless of his disability and dismissal by his family, Claudius was one of the most successful Julio-Claudian emperors. He conquered Britain, a feat which no one had attempted since Julius Caesar almost a century prior, and reorganized the imperial bureaucracy to be more efficient.³⁸ Unfortunately for the nobles, the newest emperor did not lack the seemingly hereditary extreme paranoia of his predecessors. He executed several on multiple occasions on suspicion of a coup, though it seems he should have

³² Goodman 2012, 53; Suet. *Caligula* 17-22.

³³ Goodman 2012, 53; Suet. *Caligula* 24.

³⁴ Goodman 2012, 54; Grant 1975, 108-109; Suet. *Caligula* 24.

³⁵ Goodman 2012, 54; Grant 1975, 109; Suet. *Caligula* 26-36, 58.

³⁶ Suet. *Claudius* 10.

³⁷ Goodman 2012, 55; Suet. *Claudius* 2.

³⁸ Grant 1975, 126; Suet. *Claudius* 17.

been looking closer to home.³⁹ His wife, Valeria Messalina, who was the mother of his son and heir, Britannicus, attempted to raise her lover, C. Silius, into emperor-status by marrying him in AD 48, dissolving her marriage to Claudius. The real Emperor found out and executed everyone involved. The following year, he married his niece, Agrippina the Younger, who already had a son, L. Domitius Ahenobarbus. Agrippina then convinced Claudius to adopt her son, who became known as Nero (Figure A.4). However, this proved to be another misjudgment in selection of wives because in AD 54, Agrippina poisoned Claudius so that her son could rule.⁴⁰ Claudius's good deeds had not been forgotten though, and the senate named him a god.⁴¹

Agrippina the Younger got her wish and Nero's emperorship was finalized once he poisoned Britannicus in AD 55.⁴² Additionally, Agrippina was named priestess of *Divus Claudius* and was granted two lictors by the senate, an unprecedented status for any Roman woman.⁴³ In addition, Nero gave her great influence over himself and the Empire.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, Nero's behavior can be likened to that of his uncle Caligula, and he was considered a cruel and extremely (sexually) improper Emperor.⁴⁵ His mother eventually lost his favor and gained his hatred and distrust for her invasiveness in his affairs, resulting in Nero committing matricide in AD 59. Free to do as he pleased at last, he divorced his wife and stepsister, Claudia Octavia, executing her on blatantly false charges of adultery in AD 62 and marrying Poppaea Sabina the following year (Figure A.5).⁴⁶ Because of his leadership position and lack of humanity in recent acts, Nero was unjustly blamed when a significant portion of

³⁹ Suet. *Claudius* 29.

⁴⁰ Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 127; Suet. *Claudius* 26, 43-44.

⁴¹ Goodman 2012, 58; Suet. *Claudius* 45.

⁴² Goodman 2012, 58; Suet. *Nero* 33.

⁴³ Goodman 2012, 58.

⁴⁴ Suet. *Nero* 8.

⁴⁵ Suet. *Nero* 26-29.

⁴⁶ Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 149-150; Suet. *Nero* 34-35.

Rome burned down in AD 64.⁴⁷ Consequently, he was forced to debase the coinage in order to pay for the damages done.⁴⁸ Several conspiracies against him arose in the following years and he finally was forced to commit suicide in AD 68.⁴⁹ Thus ended the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

The Objective of Imagery on Roman Coins

Rebutting Mattingly's notorious analogy between ancient Roman coinage and 20th century newspapers, Howgego and Wolters specify that these pieces were meant to influence people's perceptions of events rather than notify them of their occurrence.⁵⁰ Because of this, contemporary official positions and the development of Roman imperial ideology, both of which have little direct literary evidence, can be explicitly analyzed through the depictions on their coinage.⁵¹ The word to describe these two concepts in iconography is propaganda, but Howgego notes that the use of it here is typically less in the sense of complete falsehoods and more in the sense of bolstering the idea of the Emperor and his political goals, although at times this may be no more than splitting hairs.⁵² He alone was the point of emphasis, making any other portraits in service to augmenting his own power, with the extension of this privilege becoming limited to members of the imperial household by the reign of Claudius.⁵³

As the point of emphasis, the Emperor's portrait is most often seen on imperial coinage, marking his dominance as *princeps* of Rome and making him easily recognizable to the common people.⁵⁴ Imperial portraiture as a whole was also necessary for informing and encouraging the imperial cult across Rome's holdings, as well as the idealized imagery of events occurring under

⁴⁷ Suet. *Nero* 38.

⁴⁸ Goodman 2012, 58-59.

⁴⁹ Goodman 2012, 61; Grant 1975, 150; Suet. *Nero* 49.

⁵⁰ Mattingly and Sydenham 1968, 20; Harvey 2020, 157; Howgego 1995, 62; Wolters 2012, 342.

⁵¹ Howgego 1995, 62, 77.

⁵² Burnett 1987, 66; Howgego 1995, 71.

⁵³ Burnett 1987, 75; Howgego 1995, 69.

⁵⁴ Burnett 1987, 68-69; Harvey 2020, 46.

their rule.⁵⁵ The deeds shown on imperial coins were often related to real and specific instances and the people connected to it in the illustrations were directly involved, male or female.⁵⁶

The style in which these items, whether person or circumstance, were molded largely depended on the overarching tensions towards or tolerance for the Emperor. During times of uncertainty, more traditional themes and propagandistic images appear on Rome's pocket change.⁵⁷ Conversely during times of stability, such as during the Julio-Claudian dynasty, unique innovations and more ambiguous messages turn up.⁵⁸ Either way, the minting of coins greatly expanded during the Principate, which speaks to the amount of control that was either necessary or wanted over public perception of contemporary events and the rulers of Rome compared to the time of the Republic.⁵⁹

The Creators of Imperial Roman Coinage Illustrations

The term imperial coinage (rather than provincial) specifically refers to the assemblages produced by the mints controlled directly by the Emperor in Rome and Lugdunum.⁶⁰ It is assumed, however, that the person on the obverse side of any imperial coin, whether that be the Emperor (as it most often was) or one of his family members, was the person most likely responsible for its minting, though it is unclear how much say a woman would have had.⁶¹ This does not mean, though, that this person was a part of every single step in the process. Scholars theorize that the Emperor would often be given a choice of several prepared options to pick from, although it is not completely out of the question that he would have been able to partake in

⁵⁵ Howgego 1995, 74.

⁵⁶ Balbuza 2019, 11, 20; Burnett 1987, 74.

⁵⁷ Bertolazzi 2019, 478; Burnett 1987, 71.

⁵⁸ Bertolazzi 2019, 482-483; Wolters 2012, 342.

⁵⁹ Wolters 2012, 342.

⁶⁰ Wolters 2012, 350.

⁶¹ Bertolazzi 2019, 483; Levick 2014, 36-37.

any aspect of minting he chose.⁶² If there is anything about this process historians can completely agree upon, it is that no matter who created, drew, or chose the imagery seen on Roman money, its purpose was to reflect the interests of the imperial regime.

In the early days of the Principate, coins often bore the names of both the Emperor and moneyer, a holdover from the days of the Republic. Despite the fact that the moneyer's name disappeared by 4 BC, the office (titled *Triumviri monetales*) continued to serve the imperial family until centuries later under the reign of Severus Alexander. This suggests that the men offering potential coin types to the Emperor were from this office, as there would have been no other known function for it.⁶³ No matter which office was producing options though, every single coin was under direct control of the Emperor and served his needs and decrees.

Influence of Numismatic Imagery on the Public

Regardless of who conceived the tiny details pressed into the faces of Rome's money, none of it would matter if the people in the streets never took the time to notice it. Remarkably, there is evidence that people did spend enough time observing the minters' work to comment on it every now and then, such as Jesus's acknowledgement of Caesar's portrait on a coin in Mark 12:15-16.⁶⁴ Naturally, a change of coin types was most likely to bring attention to those metal faces.⁶⁵

Even though historians agree on the idea that types were meant to sway the public, sometimes with a very specific point to make, there is no evidence that there were certain target audiences for any given coin.⁶⁶ As previously discussed, imperial rulers recognized

⁶² Burnett 1987, 70; Levick 2014, 37; Wolters 2012, 344.

⁶³ Howgego 1995, 69-70.

⁶⁴ Burnett 1987, 67-68.

⁶⁵ Wolters 2012, 346.

⁶⁶ Howgego 1995, 71-72.

representation as an ideological tool that could assert dynastic links and imperial ideals.⁶⁷ The flow of these messages can be strictly followed via the physical circulation of these coin types throughout the entire Roman Empire.⁶⁸ It is worth noting here that coins made of more precious metals were more prone to traveling farther than less valuable ones but were also much less likely to be in the hands or under the gaze of a common Roman laborer (Table C.1, Table C.2).⁶⁹

Whether depicted on an as or an aureus though, all numismatic depictions during the Julio-Claudian dynasty teach modern day learners about the shifts, real and ideological, between the Roman Republic and the Principate Period.⁷⁰ Part of what makes up imagery of any kind is the fact that all man-made objects reveal the maker's beliefs in some form or fashion, consciously or subconsciously.⁷¹ Because of the inherently intentional nature of minting coins, there is no doubt that the imperial regime was able to communicate consciously with its people and also subconsciously with people who would come after them.

Common Attributes on Julio-Claudian Coins

As Mattingly and Sydenham describe, Roman art was really just Italian culture shown in a Greek style, though this is not to say that Romans did not put their own twists on it.⁷² While Greek portraits were highly idealized, it is clear that Julio-Claudian portraits were more accurate depictions, though with some idealized traits.⁷³ For example, Augustus's portraits show no signs of aging despite his reign lasting multiple decades but there are real and distinct aspects to individual portraits that differentiate each emperor from the others, despite their familial

⁶⁷ Harvey 2020, 156; Levick 2014, 37-38.

⁶⁸ Motta 2015, 26.

⁶⁹ Wolters 2012, 345.

⁷⁰ Wolters 2012, 335.

⁷¹ Motta 2015, 25.

⁷² 1968, 20.

⁷³ Mattingly and Sydenham 1968, 21.

relations.⁷⁴ Realism began to appear under Nero, whose weight gain is made obvious, but he also started the tradition of adding more divine features.

Portraits of the Emperor almost always appear on the obverse side of the coin, mimicking the arrangement of Hellenistic monarchical coinage, and are surrounded by his name and titles.⁷⁵ While explicit legends often gave much needed direction for interpretation of the accompanying image, changes in the titles on a coin typically only existed to denote a new type rather than a new meaning.⁷⁶ Sometimes names and titles surround a large SC instead of a portrait, standing in for *Senatus Consulto* which meant the senate approved the coin. This form, which can only be found on coins minted in the city of Rome, first appeared on Augustus's pieces to promote his own rule as well as the introduction of new bronze coins.⁷⁷

The focus of this paper, however, is mostly on the reverses, rather than the obverses. While reverses were often utilized to determine the Emperor's top choice(s) as his heir, there is a plethora of types with reverses more creative than any numismatic evidence preceding them.⁷⁸ Reverse depictions can range anywhere from imperial family members to mythological creatures to achievements of the Emperor. No matter the details drawn though, all pictures were meant to legitimize the Emperor.⁷⁹

Imperial Women on Official Coinage

There is evidence that the more frequent depictions a woman has, the stronger influence she had over the Emperor and the Empire in general.⁸⁰ The women observed in this phenomenon, including Julia Domna of the Severan dynasty and Agrippina the Younger in the

⁷⁴ Burnett 1987, 73-74; Harvey 2020, 47-48.

⁷⁵ Mattingly and Sydenham 1968, 21; Wolters 2012, 340-341.

⁷⁶ Burnett 1987, 72; Howgego 1995, 75; Wolters 2012, 341.

⁷⁷ Wolters 2012, 339-340.

⁷⁸ Howgego 1995, 80-81; Mattingly and Sydenham 1968, 22; Wolters 2012, 341.

⁷⁹ Howgego 1995, 80-81.

⁸⁰ Bertolazzi 2019, 483.

Julio-Claudian dynasty, are historically known to have strong personalities and large ambitions, especially for their sons. Increasing illustrations of imperial women began around the time of Caligula as a familial autocracy became widely recognized and accepted in Rome and the old Republican values and façade lost their importance.⁸¹

In addition to the privilege of frequency, depictions of a woman alone (and not on the reverse of a coin with the Emperor's portrait) made her an authority figure in her own right.⁸² This occurrence allows researchers the opportunity to further their understanding of women's socio-political roles and how they are linked to imperial Rome's ideologies of power concerning family, gender, and royalty.⁸³ The role most often emphasized was motherhood. While motherhood allowed some social power over the next generation, motherhood of the Emperor or future Emperor gave her political power over the whole of the Empire. The male ruler was *Pater Patriae*, Father of the Fatherland, thus his birth-giver was naturally the mother of the homeland and all its inhabitants. Providing heirs to the throne provided stability to the Empire, lending her immense power.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Fantham et al. 1994, 313.

⁸² Harvey 2020, 159.

⁸³ Fantham et al. 1994, 308; Harvey 2020, 189.

⁸⁴ Bertolazzi 2019, 464; Harvey 2020, 163.

1. RECURRING ELEMENTS

All elements and individuals discussed in this paper have been identified by the experts at the sponsoring organizations of the *Online Coins of the Roman Empire* project, including but not limited to the American Numismatic Society, British Museum, and Münzkabinett Berlin.⁸⁵ Most of the individual elements found on Julio-Claudian coinage were repeated by successors and thus have been termed “Recurring Elements.” They may or may not be innovative additions to Roman imagery or in reference to women, but that is not the concern of this paper. This paper seeks to determine how the Julio-Claudians differ from each other rather than from the Republic, during which women were almost never coined (the first being M. Antonius’ wife, Fulvia, in 43 BC with sparse images of Livia, Octavia, and others following).⁸⁶ The elements found in this assemblage have been divided into poses, garb, and setting to make it easier to keep track of all of them. Garb includes not only clothing and headwear, but also items held by the subject as these aspects fit better in this category than the others. In this section, the depictions of these elements and their meanings will be detailed.

1.1 Pose

1.1.1 *Jugate Busts*

Not much scholarship can be found specifically on jugate busts appearing on coinage, but Davies describes similar gestures and body language of paired male and female statues as promoting a united front, although the woman is often placed in a slightly less powerful position.⁸⁷ Therefore, it is not surprising that the bust of Agrippina the Younger follows directly

⁸⁵ American Numismatic Society 2017.

⁸⁶ Bartman 1999, 2013; Harvey 2020, 18; Wood 1999, 32.

⁸⁷ Davies 2018, 253-236.

behind both Claudius' and Nero's. This imagery both accentuates her power and makes it secondary to the Emperors', subsequently increasing his own and demonstrating his control over his household. The instances of Agrippina's jugate busts with Nero (Figure 1.1) are particularly intriguing though because most portrayals of likened gender pairs represent a husband and wife, while a mother and son are represented on these coins. Furthermore, this imagery was minted in AD 55, two years after Nero's marriage to Claudius' daughter Claudia Octavia.⁸⁸ Both women could have equally legitimized his reign and yet his mother is the one that won out.



Figure 1.1: RIC I² Nero 6
Obverse: Jugate Busts of Nero and Agrippina II. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 55. Photo Courtesy of ANS.

1.1.2 Seated

One of the more prestigious poses seems to be sitting, especially in a straight-backed, regal manner as it was inspired by the seated imagery of personifications and deities.⁸⁹ Statues and other forms of art often depict seated women as being close-legged with arms drawn in towards the body. However, Tiberius' (Figure 1.2) and Claudius' coins of Livia always have her with open arms, often holding objects, and wide legs. These subtle differences are typically interpreted as more masculine and powerful aspects of the seated position.⁹⁰ This particular

⁸⁸ Grant 1975, 149; Suet. *Claudius* 27, *Nero* 7.

⁸⁹ Davies 2018, 194, 199.

⁹⁰ Davies 2018, 201-202.

position can be seen in depictions of priestesses, explaining Tiberius' depiction of Livia, while Claudius' references her after her deification, making the pose even more appropriate.⁹¹



Figure 1.2: RIC I² Tiberius 73
Reverse: Livia seated. As, mint of Rome, AD 15-16. Photo courtesy of MB.

1.1.3 Standing



Figure 1.3: RIC I² Caligula 33
Reverse: Agrippina II, Iulia Drusilla, and Iulia Livilla depicted as standing. Sestertius, mint of Rome, AD 37-38.
Photo courtesy of MB.

Unlike the seated position, the standing position does not have any inherent meaning in itself. Though similar to the seated position, meaning is greatly increased when analyzing arm positions and general body language. A few types have been distinguished among Roman statuary that can be recognized on the depictions of the assemblage at hand, though this does not necessarily indicate that these depictions were based on or referencing previously created statues.

⁹¹ Davies 2018, 199.

Caligula's illustrations of his sisters (Figure 1.3) and Claudius' of his mother strongly resemble the Ceres type with one arm low and the other high, often holding an object.⁹² The presence of an object both allows the designer to capitalize on the symbolic aspects available and increases the femininity of the figure by showing she is not gesturing as if making a speech, which would only be given by men.⁹³ Nero's depiction of Poppaea Sabina, on the other hand, conjures the Kore type, which is known for holding a patera in low arms. This type typically depicts priestesses, though not exclusively, making it a more pious and traditional stance for the Empress.⁹⁴

1.2 Garb

1.2.1 Draped Bust



Figure 1.4: RIC² Caligula 7
Reverse: Draped bust of Agrippina I. Aureus, mint of Lugdunum, AD 37-38. Photo courtesy of BM.

While it is not uncommon to see nude busts or portraits of emperors, every single bust of an imperial woman is draped. This includes Tiberius' depictions of Livia, Caligula's of Agrippina the Elder (Figure 1.4), Claudius' of Livia, Agrippina the Elder, Antonia Minor, Valeria Messalina, and Agrippina the Younger, and Nero's of Agrippina the Younger. The bust itself is meant to convey the likeness, typically somewhere between idealized and realistic, of the

⁹² Davies 2018, 186.

⁹³ Davies 2018, 188.

⁹⁴ Davies 2018, 189.

woman at hand. The drapery is meant to convey the woman's modesty and willingness to conform to society and Rome's patriarchal standards.⁹⁵ A more intriguing aspect of all these busts is their high chests and level eyes. A majority of portraits of women have their posture caved slightly and their eyes lowered as if lowering herself below the viewer or perhaps beneath other elements or individuals present in the image. However, while the drapery confines Julio-Claudian women to societal norms, the subtle body language speaks to their exalted positions.⁹⁶

1.2.2 Long Plait

Hairstyles were picked by women based on their age, social status, and public role, making the repeated imagery of a long plait on imperial coinage a particularly intriguing element. This braid is seemingly the most popular, if not the only, hairstyle depicted on the Julio-Claudian women who appear on imperial coinage. Long hair such as this had a particularly feminine aspect to it as length seems to be a major divider of gender in the Roman world. In fact, the Vestal Virgins cropped their hair, lending to the idea that length intimates the gender roles carried out by the wearer.⁹⁷ More remarkably, Bartman argues that the depictions of coiffures found in public imagery often represented real life.⁹⁸

Of course, this cannot fully be determined in the case of the Julio-Claudian braid, but aristocratic Romans did dress their hair in ways that simultaneously reflected their individuality and their willingness to conform to social norms. Individuality could be and was shown in the unique styles drawn up on their heads while the fact that they created elaborate hairdos in the first place played into societal expectations for women.⁹⁹ However, only one of these traditional

⁹⁵ Davies 2018, 81.

⁹⁶ Davies 2018, 96.

⁹⁷ Bartman 1999, 32.

⁹⁸ Bartman 2001, 1.

⁹⁹ Bartman 2001, 1, 5.

aspects is seen in the imagery at hand. The women have almost the exact same hairstyle, despite decades passing and the variety of relationships they had with the Emperor, thus completely lacking any sort of individuality in the form of hair. Yet despite the fact that their long plaits can hardly be called elaborate coiffures, their repetition on different busts within the family demonstrate some type of conformity, though perhaps not that of a typical aristocratic Roman.



Figure 1.5: RIC P² Claudius 92

Obverse: Bust of Antonia Minor with hair in long plait. Dupondius, mint of Rome, AD 41-50. Photo courtesy of MB.

Interestingly enough, this bland hairstyle was not emphasized until the reign of Claudius when displays of grandeur were becoming more accepted for the imperial family, and indeed expected. However, imagery on different media in the same period showed the same women with more complex and sophisticated costumes and coiffures, leading to the possibilities that either the die makers simply could not detail such hairdos, or did not have room to place them. The former is less convincing due to the detailing of other elements found on the same assemblage of coinage, but the latter may have more merit. Emphasizing hairstyles would have taken more space, leaving less for the actual face and legend. This may indicate that the Emperors' goal was to familiarize the faces and titles of their female family members more so than to create accurate depictions of their dress. Nevertheless, the long plait they wear still completes the job of noting their gender and subsequent roles.

As previously stated, this hairstyle was heavily used on the coinage of Claudius, specifically in images of his mother, Antonia Minor (Figure 1.5).

1.2.3 Shoulder Locks



Figure 1.6: RIC ² Nero 607
Reverse: Bust of Agrippina II with hair in long plait and two shoulder locks. Didrachm, mint of Caesarea in Cappadocia, AD 54-60. Photo courtesy of ANS.

The addition of curled locks of hair falling over the shoulder to the long plait actually begins with Caligula, predating the first bust without locks minted by Claudius. This style originates from Hellenistic queens and later became an attribute of Venus, lending it a royal and deified power.¹⁰⁰ The fact that Livia is only depicted with this style (in other media) after she was deified is almost enough to convince one of the complete divinity of this hairstyle.¹⁰¹ However, Bartman explains that this style may have been worn by aristocratic women in real life, though possibly because of the divine symbolism.¹⁰² The use of this style was likely connected to Augustus' emphasis of Venus as ancestor of the Julians via Virgil's *Aeneid*, and the building of a temple to Venus Genetrix.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Bartman 1999, 38; Bartman 2001, 22.

¹⁰¹ Bartman 1999, 20.

¹⁰² Bartman 2001, 22.

¹⁰³ Rose 1997, 11.

Within the Julio-Claudian dynasty in particular, evoking the imagery of Venus Genetrix would have been quite useful, if not necessary to propagate their power. Caligula and Nero depicted their mothers, Agrippina I and Agrippina II (Figure 1.6), in this hairstyle and Claudius depicted the mothers of his heirs, Valeria Messalina and Agrippina II, as well as Agrippina I.

1.2.4 Veil



Figure 1.7: RIC I² Nero 608

Reverse: Bust of Agrippina II wearing a veil. Didrachm, mint of Caesarea in Cappadocia, AD 54-60. Photo courtesy of ANS.

The veil was often a symbol of piety in imperial Rome due to its use by priestesses during religious rites and sacrifices. Tiberius depicted his mother, Livia, with a veil as the priestess of Augustus. Its meaning was also extended simply to traditionalism once the wearing of it became more normalized for non-priestesses in more secular situations, such as on these coins.¹⁰⁴ However, the presence of a veil did not always indicate a pious or modest nature; it could relate a general sense of respectability or even be the result of a mere fashion choice.¹⁰⁵ Nero showed his mother wearing one, perhaps more in the sense of traditionalism or respectability (Figure 1.7). While it is possible Agrippina was simply illustrated with one due to

¹⁰⁴ Bartman 1999, 44, 105; Harvey 2020, 184.

¹⁰⁵ Davies 2018, 69.

her choice of wear, it seems unlikely that the only image of the kind without specific reference to her priestess-status would be simply due to a whim while getting dressed.

1.2.5 Laurel Wreath



Figure 1.8: RIC P Augustus 404
Reverse: Laurel wreath above Iulia Augusti f. and two male relatives. Denarius, mint of Rome, 13 BC. Photo courtesy of BM.

Wreaths of any kind were Greek in origin and were generally used to emphasize divinity.¹⁰⁶ Romans traditionally used laurel wreaths for generals who had been proclaimed *imperator* by their soldiers, and it was often placed on the heads of emperors on their coinage, though they also were depicted bare-headed or with an oak wreath, also known as the *corona civica*, which indicated the wearer had saved the life of another Roman.¹⁰⁷ This may be due to a myth (or perhaps the myth followed the laurel wreath's appearance) that an eagle landed in Livia's lap shortly after her marriage to Augustus and presented her with a laurel sprig which she planted in a grove that later supplied laurel wreaths to all the Julio-Claudian rulers.¹⁰⁸ Whether this story was supposed to bear truth or act more as a parable for the triumphant nature of the reigning clan, it exhibits the mother's role of placing the laurel on the heads of her children, thus

¹⁰⁶ Bartman 1999, 42.

¹⁰⁷ Gellius *Attic Nights* 5.6.11-13; Harvey 2020, 174; Wolters 2012, 340.

¹⁰⁸ Pliny *The Natural History* 15.40.11-12.

deeming the women honored with such a headdress as influential matrons.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, it is intriguing that a symbol used in a military Triumph would be placed on a female head. This greatly emphasizes the wearer's influence on all aspects of Rome. The women included in this are Iulia (Figure 1.8) by her father, Augustus, and Agrippina II by her son. On the one hand, Iulia is pictured with two of her male relatives, giving the central wreath a more appropriate place, but on the other, Agrippina's wreath is rather a revelation.

1.2.6 *Patera*

Paterae (singular *patera*) are sacrificial bowls for pouring libations and were used during rituals.¹¹⁰ Therefore, their symbolism in regard to imperial women refers to their piety or *pietas*, and in some cases their position as a priestess. This is particularly true of Tiberius' depiction of Livia with this object after her placement as priestess of Divus Augustus. The emphasis on piety is more likely in the case of Nero's depiction Poppaea Sabina holding a patera (Figure 1.9).



Figure 1.9: RIC I² Nero 44

Reverse: Nero standing with Poppaea Sabina who is holding a patera in her right hand. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 64-65. Photo courtesy of ANS.

¹⁰⁹ Harvey 2020, 170.

¹¹⁰ Bartman 1999, 85-86, 105; Bendlin 2006.

1.2.7 Cornucopia

The imagery of a cornucopia has been linked to many Roman virtues and goddesses including *abundantia*, *concordia*, *securitas*, *fortuna*, *libera* and Ceres, the mother goddess of agriculture, as well as the Greek goddesses Euthenia and Demeter.¹¹¹ While these ideas and deities all reference slightly different things, they all have to do with longevity and providing a comfortable life. These ideals naturally fit with the configured image of the Empress because she provided the heirs that would keep the Empire safe in the future, looking past immediate struggles and preparing good things (and rulers) for the future, similar to *Fortuna*.



Figure 1.10: RIC ² Claudius 65

Reverse: Antonia Minor holding a cornucopia in her left hand. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 41-45. Photo courtesy of MB.

It is also possible that coins with the imagery of a cornucopia refer to specific *liberalitates*, or redistributions of food led by the members of the imperial family.¹¹² However, this is not likely for the Julio-Claudian dynasty as Claudius minted his grandmother Antonia Minor with one in AD 41-54, beginning four years after her death (Figure 1.10).¹¹³ Furthermore, the fact that the first mint of Nero's imagery of Poppaea Sabina with a cornucopia lasts from AD

¹¹¹ Bartman 1999, 93-94, 106-107, 137.

¹¹² Balbuza 2019, 9.

¹¹³ De la Bédoyère 2018, 167.

64-65 and the second edition occurred after her death nods at the symbolism of virtues and goddesses rather than *liberalitates*.

1.3 Setting

1.3.1 Triad



Figure 1.11: RIC I² Augustus 405

Reverse: Triad of Iulia Augusti f. and two male relatives. Denarius, mint of Rome, 13 BC. Photo courtesy of MB.

Augustus depicted a trio of Iulia with two male relatives (Figure 1.11), Caligula minted his three sisters together, and Claudius drew his heir Britannicus with his two sisters, speaking to a trend of creating triads of imperial family members. It has been suggested that the purpose of such trios was to project the strength of the reigning dynasty for producing so many possible heirs or producers of heirs in the face of relatively high death rates for young people at the time. Consequently, this also emphasized the groupings of those shown, in these cases their status as heirs, rather than their individual roles and personalities.¹¹⁴

1.3.2 Virtue Embodiment

While it is not uncommon to see imperial family members represented as virtues, this generally did not become widely popular until after the Julio-Claudian dynasty.¹¹⁵ However, that is not to say that the rulers at hand did not utilize this connection between illustrated ideologies

¹¹⁴ Bartman 1999, 79.

¹¹⁵ Howgego 1995, 80.

and their immediate family to prop up their own character.¹¹⁶ The virtues discussed here started out as just that, but by the time of the Julio-Claudians, they were often personified in their own right, making it easy to transplant these personified features onto real women in propagandistic art.



Figure 1.12: RIC P Claudius 66
Reverse: Antonia Minor embodying Constantia. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 41-45. Photo courtesy of MB.

Caligula was the first to use this template with his three sisters, Iulia Livilla, Iulia Drusilla, and Agrippina II, as *Fortuna*, *Concordia*, and *Securitas*, respectively. *Fortuna*, as one can surmise, was in charge of people's fortunes and divvied them up without favor. Due to the familial nature of an imperial regime, the imperial household's luck was that of the Empire as a whole and was treated as such.¹¹⁷ *Concordia* was often highlighted in times when internal stability was most sought after, such as through the construction of a temple by Camillus in 376 BC after the Gallic sack of Rome and its renovation by Tiberius, ensuring the strength of the Julio-Claudian dynasty after the death of its founder Augustus. *Concordia* became especially popular in imperial Rome due to the great instability in between governments.¹¹⁸ In conjunction with this motif was *Securitas*, or the personification of the security of the regime and thus the

¹¹⁶ Burnett 1987, 78.

¹¹⁷ McLeish 1996.

¹¹⁸ Bloch 2006.

general public. She was often depicted with a scepter, though this was not a distinct characteristic.¹¹⁹

Claudius followed this detailed precedent by personifying his grandmother, Antonia Minor as *Constantia* (Figure 1.12), or constancy and consistency, which was often also linked to *pietas* and “dutiful behavior.”¹²⁰

1.3.3 *Corn Ears*



Figure 1.13: RIC I² Nero 3
Obverse: Busts of Nero and Agrippina II with corn ear. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 54. Photo courtesy of BM.

The presence of corn ears (as grain is called by historians despite the fact that the “corn” thought of today was a phenomenon of the Americas) was strongly connected to the personified virtue of *Salus* which was made *Salus Augusta* under Augustus.¹²¹ This symbolism of well-being had its obvious purposes in the Principate Period when the fate of the nation relied on the life of a single man and his plans for it. Claudius depicted Livia holding one and Nero added one behind his jugate bust with Agrippina II (Figure 1.13).

¹¹⁹ Binder 2006.

¹²⁰ Maharam 2006.

¹²¹ Wardle 2006.

1.3.4 *Carpentum*

A *carpentum* was a two-wheeled cart with curtains that was often pulled by two mules.¹²² Priestesses and prominent ladies used one for ceremonial uses beginning in the Republic, creating a feminine gender for the seemingly unisex transport.¹²³ The story goes that the Senate granted the use of a *carpentum* (which was a privilege specific to the Vestal Virgins at the time) to the aristocratic women of Rome as a reward for donating their gold jewelry to fulfill Camillus' promise of an offering to Apollo for his guidance in defeating Veii in 396 BC after a long siege.¹²⁴



Figure 1.14: RIC P Caligula 55
Reverse: Ornamented *carpentum* with figures inside and outside. Sesterce, mint of Rome, AD 37-41. Photo courtesy of MB.

The use of this symbol by Tiberius for Livia and Caligula for Agrippina the Elder (Figure 1.14) portrays each woman's increased mobility and influence. The ability to use transportation such as this literally increased a woman's reach within Rome and subsequently her power over events occurring outside of her traditional domestic realm, making this imagery the perfect mix of traditional and powerful for a woman.¹²⁵

¹²² Sutherland 1987, 52.

¹²³ Hudson 2016, 218; Rose 1997, 28; Sutherland 1987, 52.

¹²⁴ Hudson 2016, 233-234.

¹²⁵ Hudson 2016, 218.

2. INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS

The elements described in this chapter are deemed “innovative” because they are seen in reference to women under the reign of a single emperor within the Julio-Claudian dynasty. This is not to say that elements in the previous chapter were not innovative or unique but rather that they had been used multiple times throughout the dynasty, thus they were deemed “recurring” elements. The “innovative” elements discussed here may have been previously used in reference to men or by other cultures, such as the Hellenes, but these were the first occurrences with women in the Principate Period that were not repeated in its first five emperors.

2.1 Tiberius

2.1.1 Scepter



Figure 2.1: RIC I² Tiberius 72
Reverse: Livia holding a scepter in her left hand. As, mint of Rome, AD 15-16. Photo courtesy of ANS.

Like other elements minted onto this assemblage, the scepter typically indicated royalty or divinity, and thus was sometimes used in sculptures of Iuno.¹²⁶ Additionally, the image of a scepter could sometimes be associated with *Salus* or *Securitas*.¹²⁷ Tiberius’ use of a scepter in the

¹²⁶ Bartman 1999, 105.

¹²⁷ Binder 2006; Wardle 2006.

hand of Livia, while acting as priestess of *Divus Augustus* (Figure 2.1), probably indicated royalty more than divinity and any allusion to personified virtues was likely a happy coincidence rather than purposeful manipulation of the image. This is because this element was minted on coins in AD 15-16, right after Livia was made priestess and emphasizing connections to the late imperial founder was more useful at the time than persuading the audience of their good character. Furthermore, Livia would not be deified for another few decades and the point of focus for Tiberius was the continuation of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, despite his lack of direct descent from the former emperor.

2.2 Claudius

2.2.1 *Crown of Corn Ears*



Figure 2.2: RIC I² Claudius 67

Obverse: Antonia Minor wearing a crown of corn ears. Reverse: Two long torches connected by a ribbon. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 41-45. Photo courtesy of MB.

As previously discussed in terms of wreaths, crowns were Greek in origin and were often linked with aspects of divinity.¹²⁸ Correspondingly in Roman culture, crowns of corn ears specifically referred to Ceres, the mother goddess of agriculture, and any wreaths of flora

¹²⁸ Bartman 1999, 46.

indicated an imperial wearer as a *genetrix* of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.¹²⁹ The women Claudius illustrated as such include Agrippina II and Antonia Minor (Figure 2.2).

2.2.2 Long Torch

The presence of a long torch was linked to the practices of traditional mysteries. During the initiation of *μυσται* in mysteries such as the ones at Eleusis and Pergamum, torches would be lit in the middle of the night to reveal the sacred cultic images of the central god(s). This ritual was adopted by the imperial cult practitioners, explaining the presence of torches in images referring to the imperial cult.¹³⁰ Claudius minted both Livia and Antonia Minor (Figure 2.2) with long torches, noting their important positions both as *Augustae* and priestesses of the imperial cult.

2.2.3 Ornamented Throne



Figure 2.3: RIC P² Claudius 101

Reverse: Livia seated on an ornamented throne. Dupondius, mint of Rome, AD 42-50. Photo courtesy of MB.

Bartman specifically describes the imagery of Livia on an ornamented throne (Figure 2.3) as “Jupiter-like.” This element was not completely out of the ordinary on coinage and the male-like pose was no different for Livia after she was deified.¹³¹ It seems that the male poses and

¹²⁹ Bartman 1999, 134; Wood 1988, 421.

¹³⁰ Pleket 1965, 342-344.

¹³¹ Bartman 1999, 48.

allusions to Jupiter lent their power and prestige to the deified matron and extended her *auctoritas* even after death. This is the only coin type with an ornamented throne seating an imperial woman within the dynasty, though it is not surprising that it would be made for the deified Livia.

2.3 Nero

2.3.1 Facing Busts



Figure 2.4: RIC I² Nero 1

\Obverse: Facing busts of Nero and Agrippina II. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 54. Photo courtesy of MB.

Nero's facing bust with Agrippina II depicted them as almost equal (Figure 2.4), an unprecedented occurrence for a woman.¹³² This shows Agrippina the Younger's intense sway over her son and the Empire as not even Livia had been granted this pose while she was living or after she was deified.¹³³ Furthermore, the fact that her titles are the ones surrounding the pair rather than the Emperor's is not to go unnoticed. While equality may have been intimated by the imagery, the dominant persona at the time of minting (AD 54) was marked by the addition of the legend.¹³⁴

¹³² Harvey 2020, 159.

¹³³ Bartman 1999, 112.

¹³⁴ Wood 1988, 421.

2.3.2 *Stephane*

Though it is difficult to see in the image due to centuries of wear, a *stephane* was a Greek crown which Nero placed on the head of Agrippina II in Figure 2.5. Like the crowns and wreaths of corn and laurel, it was worn by those wanting to create a divine aspect to their appearance, most notably found on Livia only after she was deified, though not in this assemblage.¹³⁵ The *stephane* also connected the wearer to Iuno and accentuated her matriarchal status.¹³⁶ By the reign of Nero, overtly Greek and royal iconography was no longer taboo, and one would expect them to be tools in his arsenal for bolstering his position.



*Figure 2.5: RIC P Nero 610
Reverse: Bust of Agrippina II wearing a stephane and veil. Drachma, mint of Caesarea in Cappadocia, AD 54-60.
Photo courtesy of ANS.*

¹³⁵ Bartman 1999, 46.

¹³⁶ Bartman 1999, 134.

3. CATEGORIES

Although this chapter does not introduce any new information regarding the meaning of specific elements, it does allow for the overall meanings of images as a whole to be discussed. Furthermore, the assigning of “categories” by the researcher to different images, whether they repeat or not, permits smoother consideration in subsequent chapters. Category letters were assigned based loosely on the order of appearance.

3.1 A: Laurel Wreath and Triad



*Figure 3.1: RIC P Augustus 404
Reverse: Category A. Denarius, mint of Rome, 13 BC. Photo courtesy of BM.*

Category A only occurred under the reign of Augustus in reference to his daughter Iulia (Figure 3.1). The pairing of a laurel wreath, given to *imperatores* for their Triumphs, with a triad of imperial people asserts the victorious and numbered stance of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. Despite the debate over who the males are (C. and L. Caesar or Augustus and Agrippa), Iulia is at the center, pulling the publicly influential males together. This category is perhaps the most explicit in demonstrating the key role imperial women played in the continuation and augmentation of the ruling dynasty.

3.2 B: Seated, Draped, Veiled, Patera, and Scepter

All of these elements, the seated position of the draped and veiled figure holding a *patera* and scepter, pointed to one thing: priesthood. The only woman depicted in this category, Livia (by Tiberius, Figure 3.2), was perhaps the only one who would be considered fit to be depicted with this specific combination of elements. Livia was made priestess of *Divus Augustus* immediately after his death and lived her life (both before and after attaining this public role) attending to the matters of her husband the Emperor.¹³⁷



Figure 3.2: RIC ^P Tiberius 72
Reverse: Category B. As, mint of Rome, AD 15-16. Photo courtesy of ANS.

3.3 C: Carpentum



Figure 3.3: RIC ^P Tiberius 50
Obverse: Category C. Sestertius, mint of Rome, AD 22-23. Photo courtesy of MB.

¹³⁷ Bartman 1999, 93.

Not much needs to be said of Category C since the element of the *carpentum* was fully discussed in 1.3.4. This increased mobility and influence was noted by Tiberius for Livia (Figure 3.3), Caligula for Agrippina I, and Claudius for Agrippina II.

3.4 D: Draped Bust with Shoulder Locks

3.4.1 D-1: Base

The draped bust accompanied with the plaited hairstyle and shoulder locks is not necessarily a complicated illustration. Both draping and shoulder locks would have been normal attire for women of this age and status to wear on public occasions. However, it must be mentioned that the draping, especially in the context of a piece of art, even on a coin, would make clear the woman's modesty and accepted role in Rome's patriarchal society, though their influence was noted by their proud chests and unabashed gazes. Additionally, the shoulder locks often also referred to Venus, the ancestral deity of the Julio-Claudians. Caligula's multiple mints of Agrippina the Elder in the D-1 fashion was a dignified and expected manner in which to note his ties to Augustus. This was echoed by Nero's coins of his own mother, Agrippina the Younger (Figure 3.4), and was extended to the wives of Claudius during his reign as a simple reference to the mothers of future emperors.



Figure 3.4: RIC P Claudius 103
Obverse: Category D-1. Sestertius, mint of Rome, AD 50-54. Photo courtesy of MB.

3.4.2 D-2: With a Crown of Corn Ears

The addition of a crown of corn ears to Claudius' depictions of his last wife, Agrippina II (Figure 3.5), augment the divine aspect of the image. By evoking *Ceres*, or the goddess of the harvest, Claudius brought the meaning of her direct descent from Augustus to the next level: she, as a Julio-Claudian, was the source of Rome's fruitfulness. As an autocrat, linking one's family lineage to the prosperity of one's country was all but necessary.



Figure 3.5: RIC ² Claudius 80
Reverse: Category D-2. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 50-54. Photo courtesy of BM.

3.4.3 D-3: With Facing Busts



Figure 3.6: RIC ² Nero 2
Obverse: Category D-3. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 54. Photo courtesy of MB.

The appearance of a draped bust with shoulder locks in a position facing the bust of the Emperor himself demonstrates the power Nero attributed to Agrippina the Younger (Figure 3.6).

As discussed in the D-1 section, this portrait of Agrippina by itself was not necessarily groundbreaking, nor was it entirely meaningful on its own, despite the faint references to Venus as *genetrix* of the imperial family. Rather the innovation came in the eye-to-eye set up of the Emperor with his mother. As previously mentioned, the body language of women was often lowered and caved in to show deference to others around her, especially men. However, in these two mints Agrippina looks directly at her son and it is her titles, not the emperor's, that surround them. At the time of these coins' production (AD 54), Agrippina was in charge.

3.4.4 D-4: With Facing Busts and Corn Ears



Figure 3.7: RIC P Nero 3
Obverse: Category D-4. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 54. Photo courtesy of BM.

The dominance Agrippina II holds in the D-3 image continues into the D-4 illustration as she maintains her level gaze on her son. However, this picture includes a corn ear behind Nero's bust, associating the pair with *salus*, or well-being. This depiction (Figure 3.7) told viewers to trust their new leaders.

3.4.5 D-5: With a Laurel Wreath

Substituting a laurel wreath for Claudius' crown of corn ears, Nero emphasized his mother's role in granting victory to himself and the Roman people. As this attribute was traditionally awarded to generals hailed as *imperator*, Agrippina was granted more masculine characteristics, such as being a champion of Roman interests in a more public sense. This idea

coupled with the draped bust with shoulder locks strongly recalled the intense and beneficial roles Livia played in Roman politics as she was said to have been given the laurel sprig that spawned the grove supplying laurel wreaths to all the Julio-Claudians.

3.5 E: Standing Triad Embodying Virtues

Caligula's Category E image of his sisters, Agrippina II, Iulia Drusilla, and Iulia Livilla (Figure 3.8), was meant to evoke the divine and stable nature of Julio-Claudian imperial rule. The grouping of the sisters into a triad and the virtues chosen (*Securitas*, *Concordia*, and *Fortuna*) highly emphasized the longevity and prosperity the family brought to Rome. The triad functioned to show that heirs and good qualities came from multiple places and (perhaps in a more subconscious sense) grouped the women together to act as a stronger united whole rather than lesser individuals in a patriarchal society. Furthermore, the standing pose, in this case recalling the statuary Ceres type, was a more powerful and divine set up for women than most standing poses. Through this body language and the personifications of security, harmony, and luck, Caligula bolstered the religious and political reputations of his siblings and by extension, himself.



Figure 3.8: RIC *F* Caligula 33
Reverse: Category E. Sestertius, mint of Rome, AD 37-38. Photo courtesy of MB.

3.6 F: Draped Bust with a Long Plait



Figure 3.9: RIC P Claudius 104
Obverse: Category F-1. Dupondius, mint of Rome, AD 41-50. Photo courtesy of MB.

3.6.1 F-1: Base

Similar to the D-1 category, the F-1 category has a draped bust and a long plait but lacks the Venus-like shoulder locks. These depictions of Antonia Minor by Claudius (Figure 3.9) simply served to be appropriate likenesses of his lineage.

3.6.2 F-2: With a Crown of Corn Ears

Claudius adorned Antonia Minor with a crown of corn ears on her draped and plaited bust four times (one of which is seen in Figure 3.10), allowing the Emperor to place his mother in the divine realm and connect her with Ceres, goddess of the harvest. In doing so, he almost implicated himself as the spawn of a goddess, or at least the offspring of someone who continually provided what was necessary.

3.7 G: Standing, Embodying a Virtue with a Cornucopia and a Long Torch

Claudius' two mints of Antonia Minor in a Category G image (Figure 3.10) were highly detailed. The standing pose of the Ceres type paired nicely with the embodiment of *Constantia* and the cornucopia. It both empowered her as a woman and lent the divine qualities necessary for becoming the image of a Roman ideal. Additionally, because the cornucopia symbolized abundance, it was the perfect element to pair with *Constantia*, as security of food was something

to be desired constantly. Finally, the presence of the long torch in Antonia's right hand referenced her position in the Julio-Claudian family. This symbol of religious rites within the imperial cult evoked her position as priestess of *Divus Augustus*, naming her an influential person in both the family and the Empire as a whole.



Figure 3.10: RIC ^P Claudius 65
 Obverse: Category F-2. Reverse: Category G. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 41-45. Photo courtesy of MB.

3.8 H: Long Torch



Figure 3.11: RIC ^P Claudius 68
 Reverse: Category H. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 41-45. Photo courtesy of Mannheim University.

The long torch was discussed in 2.2.2. Again, Claudius minted two coins of this category in reference to Antonia Minor as priestess of *Divus Augustus* (Figure 3.11).

3.9 I: Seated on a Throne and Draped with Corn, Scepter, Torch

Each of the elements in Category I spoke loudly towards divinity, especially in connection with the imperial cult. Not only did the only coin in this category (Figure 3.12) have

the legend “DIVA AVGVSTA,” which could only refer to Livia at the time, but also the body language of the seated position, the ornamented throne, the scepter, and the ear of corn were all references to the divine. While the ornamented throne leaned a bit more towards *Iupiter* and the corn leaned towards *Ceres* or *Salus*, the real element to pay attention to was the torch. The torch clearly indicated her link to the imperial cult as a priestess while she was alive and as a goddess after her death. Therefore, the ornamented throne suggested more regality and great importance as a deity and the corn hinted at her part in providing well-being to Rome rather than trying to directly deem her as a form of a previously established deity.



Figure 3.12: RIC I² Claudius 101
Reverse: Category I. Dupondius, mint of Rome, AD 42-50. Photo courtesy of MB.

3.10 J: Triad with a Cornucopia

Unfortunately, the only issue of Category J, RIC I² Claudius 124 (reverse), does not have a picture on *OCRE*. However, the database describes it as “Britannicus, head left, standing in between Octavia, left, holding his hand, and Antonia, right, holding cornucopia,” referring to his three children, Ti. Claudius Caes. Britannicus, Claudia Octavia, and Claudia Antonia, aged two, five, and thirteen, respectively.¹³⁸ *OCRE* dates the coin as AD 41-54, but seeing as the coin has the legend “OCTAVIA BRITANNICVS ANTONIA,” and the obverse has a portrait of Valeria

¹³⁸ American Numismatic Society 2017; De la Bédoyère 2018, 181, 182.

Messalina, the dates can be narrowed to AD 43-48 as Britannicus did not go by that name until Claudius' victory in Britain in AD 43 and it is unlikely that Claudius would have continued to produce public imagery of Messalina after her failed coup and subsequent execution in AD 48.¹³⁹

The imagery of Category J promoted the stability of the Julio-Claudian Empire with its candidate for future emperor and two candidates for producing heirs in the triad. Furthermore, it seems appropriate that the cornucopia was placed in the teenage hand of Claudia Antonia, instead of her kid sister's, even though the current empress was not her mother, because she was nearing an appropriate age for marriage and childbearing. The cornucopia was strongly linked to abundance, good fortune, and harvests and the presence of it in Claudia Antonia's hand clearly noted that, at the time of minting, she was the one that could be relied on to continue the good work of the Julio-Claudians.

3.11 K: Jugate Draped Bust



*Figure 3.13: RIC P Claudius 119
Category K. Cistophorus, mint of Ephesus, AD 50-51. Photo courtesy of the University of Vienna.*

As with the draped bust in D-1, this could have simply been normal dress, but it also could have been indicating a general sense of modesty and conforming to societal norms. However, this bust also has level eyes, showing the woman held some power. This was

¹³⁹ De la Bédoyère 2018, 34; Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 126-127; Suet. *Claudius* 17, 26.

simultaneously decreased and augmented by the fact that her bust is jugate with the Emperors'. Because she was paired with the Emperor, her authority was explained and expanded, however, she was clearly not the emperor's equal and had been placed behind him, almost being completely covered. Category K served to show Agrippina the Younger's (Figure 3.13) place in society: above most people, but still below the Emperor (both Claudius and Nero) like everyone else.

3.12 L: Draped and Veiled with a Stephane

Nero's depiction of Agrippina II in a Category L image (Figure 3.14) served to bolster her reputation as the pious matron of Rome. Because she is draped and veiled, her modesty was on display. However, this was slightly counteracted by her *στέφανος*, a sign of luxury that was often connected with divinity in Rome. Thus, this image was meant to emphasize her role as *Augusta*; her veil and drapery signified matronly qualities while her stephane heightened those qualities to extend over the Emperor and his empire.



Figure 3.14: RIC I² Nero 608

Reverse: Category L. Didrachm, mint of Caesarea in Cappadocia, AD 54-60. Photo courtesy of ANS.

3.13 M: Standing with a Patera and Cornucopia

Nero's standing Kore depictions of Poppaea Sabina holding a *patera* and cornucopia (Figure 3.15) suggested she had a role in public religion and good fortune. The Kore pose and *patera* were often shown in reference to priestesses though that was not always the case. In fact,

Poppaea Sabina did not hold a priesthood, thus this category tried to indicate that her piety and public role in Rome were indeed active and produced fruit (due to the cornucopia).



*Figure 3.15: RIC I² Nero 45
Reverse: Category M. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 64-65. Photo courtesy of BM.*

4. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In this chapter, the lives of the women depicted in this study are discussed in reference to the minting dates. Thus, the reasons for specific imagery may be revealed, whether they be in the interest of the subject herself or the reigning Emperor. The women are examined in roughly the same order they appear on imperial coinage; therefore, the overall line of events noted in this chapter may not be in a strict chronological order. However, the explanations in each woman's section should follow her lived experience more or less. Specific coins are referenced here, although the corresponding image does not accompany them unless they have not been featured in this paper before or were not available; this will minimize redundancy, since the image categories and their meanings were reviewed in depth in the previous chapter.

4.1 Iulia Augusti f.

Iulia the Elder was born in 39 BC to Augustus (then known as Octavian) and Scribonia, who were divorced shortly afterwards. At the age of fourteen, her father began his lifelong dynastic campaign for her by marrying her off to her first cousin, Marcellus.¹⁴⁰ However, this union was not fruitful, as it only lasted two years until Marcellus' premature death, leading to her second arranged marriage in 21 BC to Augustus' right hand man, M. Vipsanius Agrippa.¹⁴¹ Her union with Agrippa produced five children, the first two of which were Gaius and Lucius (born in 20 BC and 17 BC, respectively), who were adopted by the Emperor after the successful birth of the latter.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Bartman 1999, 215; Suet. *Augustus* 63.

¹⁴¹ Bartman 1999, 79; Grant 1975, 53; Suet. *Augustus* 63; Tac. 1.53.3; Wood 1999, 33.

¹⁴² Grant 1975, 53; Suet. *Augustus* 64; Rose 1997, 12.

This prompted the most prolific period of iconographic representations of Iulia (approximately 16-13 BC) in which she was often linked with themes of fertility and goddesses such as Aphrodite.¹⁴³ However, this popularity and her continued reproduction (giving birth to Agrippina the Elder, Iulia the Younger, and Agrippa Postumus) in this brief period is hardly reflected in the imperial coinage. The only hint is offered by two denarii, RIC I² Augustus 404 (Figure 3.1) and 405 (Figure 1.11), minted in 13 BC with a Category A image on the reverse of Iulia flanked by either her sons, Gaius and Lucius, or her husband and father. Despite the debate over who accompanies her image, either pairing largely emphasized Iulia's role in the imperial regime as a bridge of stability between the current ruler and future one. This evidence may seem measly compared to the abundance of images in other media or in the provinces; however, considering that no other living, identifiable woman was coined during the reign of Augustus, her two coins speak rather loudly for her father's reliance on her. Furthermore, it is possible that she appeared on other coinage that is unknown to historians as her likeness is notoriously difficult to identify, compared to other imperial women.

After the death of Agrippa, Augustus once again arranged for his only progeny to marry for the good of the dynasty. In 11 BC, Iulia and her stepbrother, Tiberius, were forced to marry and their life together was an unhappy and unproductive one.¹⁴⁴ It ended in an even worse manner, with the exposure of Iulia's affair with Iullus Antonius, son of M. Antonius, and her subsequent banishment to Pandateria in AD 2.¹⁴⁵ As the largest threat to Augustus' rule (explicitly betraying his well-known anti-adultery legislation and, quite literally, sleeping with

¹⁴³ Bartman 1999, 215; Rose 1997, 13-14.

¹⁴⁴ Grant 1975, 78; Suet. *Augustus* 63; Tac. 1.53.1.

¹⁴⁵ Grant 1975, 79; Suet. *Augustus* 65; Tac. 4.44.3.

the enemy, or rather his son), she could never be welcomed back into the inner family circle, and died of starvation while in exile upon the ascent and on the orders of Tiberius in AD 14.¹⁴⁶

4.2 Livia

Augustus' prominent wife lived a long life before the reign of her son, Tiberius, but those years will not be discussed until the next chapter. This chapter examines the context in which coins were minted and thus, her lack of imagery on imperial numismatics will not be covered here.

With the death and deification of her husband, the first Emperor of Rome, Livia was named priestess of the new *Divus Augustus* cult and given the privilege of a *carpentum* and an honorific *lictor*, just like the Vestal Virgins.¹⁴⁷ She also was posthumously adopted by Augustus and renamed *Iulia Augusta* (although for the purposes of clarity in this paper, she will always be referred to as Livia). Because of her unprecedented elevation as priestess, *Augusta*, daughter of Augustus, and mother of the current Emperor, Livia was illustrated in the Tiberan era more than any other and was often shown with themes of fertility goddesses such as Demeter and Isis.¹⁴⁸

Despite Livia's popularity and position, Tiberius prohibited her from several honors and from expanding Augustus' cult. Whether this was in fear of her growing *auctoritas* or due to a philosophical attitude of traditionalism, one may never know.¹⁴⁹ However, he did afford her the privilege of images on imperial coinage on two separate occasions, perhaps because it would have been conspicuous not to with the honors and titles she was already afforded. From AD 15-16, RIC I² Tiberius 71, 72 (Figure 3.2), and 73 (Figure 1.2) were minted as asses with a Category B depiction of Livia on the reverse, declaring her newfound priesthood. This image does not

¹⁴⁶ De la Bédoyère 2018, 33-34; Tac. 1.53.2; Wood 1999, 38-39.

¹⁴⁷ Bartman 1999, 93-94, 103.

¹⁴⁸ Bartman 1999, 102; Rose 1997, 23.

¹⁴⁹ Bartman 1999, 103, 109.

identify Livia, but provincial mints copied it and added her titles as a legend, making it clear who this woman was interpreted as.¹⁵⁰ Livia was minted again in AD 22-23 after recovering from a serious illness that had prompted Tiberius to rush to her bedside.¹⁵¹ Along with large celebrations, RIC I² Tiberius 50 (Figure 3.3) and 51 (Figure 4.1) were produced, containing a Category C image with her name on the obverse of the sestertii. As the first imperial coin with a Julio-Claudian woman on the obverse (though admittedly, her own person does not appear, only her name), it is appropriate that the illustration depicted her mobility and influence. Although this noted her importance in the Empire as a whole, it more importantly emphasized to contemporary viewers that Livia was indeed alive and well and carrying out her public duties.



Figure 4.1: RIC I² Tiberius 51

Obverse: Category C image for Livia. Sestertius, mint of Rome, AD 22-23. Photo courtesy of MB.

Livia died in AD 29, with no coins and little public iconography to indicate the event.¹⁵² Tiberius' uneasy relationship with his mother was a large factor in his refusal to deify her and his decision to annul her will.¹⁵³ However, Livia would not remain in the mortal realm forever. In AD 42, her grandson Claudius deified her to signal a return to Augustan values after the

¹⁵⁰ Bartman 1999, 103-105.

¹⁵¹ Sutherland 1987, 51-53; Tac. 3.64.

¹⁵² Bartman 1999, 122.

¹⁵³ Suet. *Tiberius* 51.

disastrous era of Caligula and to strengthen his own claim to the throne.¹⁵⁴ To announce this divine addition to the imperial cult, RIC I² Claudius 101 (Figure 3.12) was minted as a dupondius from AD 42-50 with a Category I picture of Livia.

4.3 Agrippina the Elder



Figure 4.2: RIC I² Caligula 8
Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina I. Denarius, mint of Lugdunum, AD 37-38. Photo courtesy of BM.

The first daughter of Iulia and Agrippa was born in 15 BC and married her one and only husband, Germanicus, grandson of Octavia, in AD 5.¹⁵⁵ The following two years produced Nero and Drusus Caesar, followed by Caligula (born Gaius) in AD 12, Agrippina the Younger and Iulia Drusilla in AD 15 and 16, and finally Iulia Livilla in AD 18.¹⁵⁶ The elder Agrippina lost her husband in the next year, allegedly to poisoning after a conflict with Cn. Calpurnius Piso.¹⁵⁷ This led to a palpable tension between herself and the Emperor, as she suspected Tiberius of being involved, and made it known. His own malice for Agrippina I was displayed in AD 29 when he exiled her to Pandateria for accusing him of trying to poison her. Furthermore, Suetonius recalled that she was beaten until she lost an eye, and her mouth was forced open so food could be shoved down her throat after she attempted to starve herself to death.¹⁵⁸ Finally in AD 33, she passed

¹⁵⁴ Bartman 1999, 95, 127-128; De la Bédoyère 2018, 184; Suet. *Claudius* 11.

¹⁵⁵ Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 308; Grant 1975, 53; Suet. *Augustus* 64; Rose 1997, 12-13.

¹⁵⁶ Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 309; De la Bédoyère 2018, 307; Rose 1997, 25.

¹⁵⁷ Wood 1999, 145.

¹⁵⁸ Suet. *Tiberius* 53.

away and Tiberius celebrated the event with a golden offering to Capitoline Jupiter.¹⁵⁹ Thus, her importance during the reign of Augustus was lacking and her relationship with Tiberius was poor at best, explaining a dearth of representations of her.



*Figure 4.3: RIC I² Caligula 13
Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina I. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 37-38. Photo courtesy of BM.*

However, upon the ascension of her son, Caligula, her reputation was repaired with new games on the anniversary of her death and the placement of her ashes in the Mausoleum of Augustus.¹⁶⁰ While he may or may not have done this out of sheer love for his mother, Caligula most certainly needed to distance himself from the unpopularity of Tiberius and to emphasize his direct descent from Augustus.¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, these actions were accompanied by the production of Category D-1 images on the reverses of aurei RIC I² Caligula 7 (Figure 1.4) and 13 (Figure 4.3), and denarii RIC I² Caligula 8 (Figure 4.2) and 14 (Figure 4.4). The shoulder locks seen here also appear in several of her portraits across different media, indicating that this element was most likely a part of her actual hairstyle, rather than a direct connection to Venus.¹⁶² Still, her regality and importance within the Julio-Claudian dynasty as mother of the reigning Emperor was emphasized in these depictions.

¹⁵⁹ De la Bédoyère 2018, 156.

¹⁶⁰ Bartman 1999, 122; De la Bédoyère 2018, 156.

¹⁶¹ Wood 1988, 410.

¹⁶² Wood 1988, 411-414.



Figure 4.4: RIC I² Caligula 14

Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina I. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 37-38. Photo courtesy of MB.

Perhaps the most astonishing development yet was minted throughout Caligula's reign of AD 37-41. The sestertius RIC I² Caligula 55 (Figure 1.14) contains a D-1 image of Agrippina the Elder on the obverse and a Category C illustration on the back with the legend, "SPQR MEMORIAE AGRIPPINAE," lending this coin the title of first to be completely dedicated to a woman on both sides, as well as first to depict an imperial family member without reference to the Emperor.¹⁶³ Additionally, this coin afforded the posthumous honor of a *carpentum* to Agrippina I, indicating that she held influence over the Empire while she was both living and dead due to her prominence in the family and, most importantly, as mother to the Emperor.



Figure 4.5: RIC I² Caligula 21

Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina I. Aureus, mint of Rome, AD 40. Photo courtesy of MB.

¹⁶³ Wood 1988, 410; Wood 1995, 458.

Caligula continued to maintain Agrippina the Elder's appearances on his reverses with the production of RIC I² Caligula 21 (Figure 4.5) and 22 (Figure 4.6), an aureus and denarius respectively that both show her in the same D-1 arrangement, though the shoulder locks can sometimes be difficult to make out due to wear. This was repeated in the following year, AD 41, with RIC I² Caligula 30, a denarius.



Figure 4.6: RIC I² Caligula 22
Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina I. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 40. Photo courtesy of BM.



Figure 4.7: RIC I² Claudius 102
Obverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina I. Sestertius, mint of Rome, AD 50-54. Photo courtesy of MB.

Interestingly, Caligula was not the only Julio-Claudian emperor to place Agrippina the Elder's image on a coin. After his marriage to Agrippina the Younger in AD 49, a running D-1 image of Agrippina the Elder on the obverse of a sestertius, RIC I² Claudius 102 (Figure 4.7), was minted in AD 50-54. This imagery was meant to lend more credibility to Agrippina the

Younger, whose immense influence was highly criticized.¹⁶⁴ This is the only coin depicting an imperial woman who was not the Emperor's grandmother, mother, wife, sister, or daughter, although Agrippina the Elder was Claudius' sister-in-law (through her marriage to his brother, Germanicus) and mother-in-law.

4.4 Iulia Drusilla

Drusilla was born in AD 16 to Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder and later married L. Cassius Longinus.¹⁶⁵ However, when her brother, Caligula, came to power, he forced her to divorce her husband so that she could marry someone more suitable for continuing the dynasty. M. Aemilius Lepidus was chosen and was assumed to be Caligula's heir apparent for some time.¹⁶⁶ This was due to Caligula's lack of children and male relatives and his affinity for his sisters, in particular Drusilla. Suetonius wrote that Caligula added his sisters' names (which include Iulia Drusilla, Iulia Livilla, and Agrippina the Younger) to oaths such as, "Nor shall I hold myself nor my children dearer than I hold Gaius and his sisters," making them the first women to be honored in public oaths. Furthermore, the sisters and their grandmother, Antonia Minor, were the first women to be given the full rights of honorary Vestal Virgins.¹⁶⁷ This favoritism, coupled with Caligula's highly unpopular and widely alarming rule, was the fuel for rumors of incest with all three sisters that spread even centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire, though the debate over their actuality continues.¹⁶⁸

In AD 37-38, Caligula depicted his sisters and identified them by name on the reverse of the sestertius, RIC I² Caligula 33 (Figure 3.8). This Category E image of Agrippina as *Securitas*,

¹⁶⁴ Wood 1988, 421.

¹⁶⁵ De la Bédoyère 2018, 307; Suet. *Caligula* 7, 24; Tac. 3.2.3, 6.15.1.

¹⁶⁶ Wood 1995, 459.

¹⁶⁷ Suet. *Caligula* 15; Wood 1995, 458-459.

¹⁶⁸ Wood 1995, 459.

Drusilla as *Concordia*, and Livilla as *Fortuna* was meant to reveal the divine stability of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. At this point, several men of the family had been murdered at the hands of their kin, and the transition between the death of one emperor to the established reign of another was a rather apprehensive time as there were sometimes two potential candidates. Thus, Caligula was emphasizing the benefits of stability in his rule via his three potentially procreative sisters. The intriguing aspects of this mint are that it is the first depiction of living women that also identifies them by name, and that the women were depicted wearing the Greek chiton and himation instead of the Roman stola.¹⁶⁹ The former indicates their augmented importance to Julio-Claudian rule; the latter displays the relaxation of Augustan propriety throughout the Empire.

Following this mint, Suetonius remarked that Caligula made Drusilla the heir to his property and to the Empire.¹⁷⁰ Suetonius most likely meant this to be a scandalous imperial mistake on the part of the despised Emperor; however, from a ruler's perspective, this could make sense. Drusilla's husband, Lepidus, was Caligula's heir presumptive and by leaving everything to his sister, her husband was more likely to be given the principate, thus keeping everything within the family and making any sons she might have in the future the obvious next choice for the throne. However, this unprecedented will would never be of any consequence as Drusilla suddenly died in AD 38. Caligula publicly mourned his sister and promptly deified her, making her the very first *Diva* in the imperial cult, although there is a curious lack of coinage exemplifying this landmark.¹⁷¹ This transition from mortal to immortal was likely not difficult for parishioners to take as she had been referred to as *Nea Charis*, *Homonoia*, *Pythia*, and

¹⁶⁹ Wood 1995, 458, 461.

¹⁷⁰ Suet. *Caligula* 24.

¹⁷¹ Bartman 1999, 122; Wood 1995, 458-459.

Persephone while she was living. Additionally, their mother was often depicted as Demeter in the provinces, so the divine transformation into Kore was not a stretch.¹⁷²

RIC I² Caligula 41 was minted in AD 39-40, with the exact same depiction from RIC I² Caligula 33. By becoming a *Diva*, Drusilla maintained her usefulness to Caligula's reign. This utility was lost after his assassination, though, and her cult lost its emphasis and popularity.

4.5 Iulia Livilla

The youngest of Agrippina I and Germanicus' children was born in AD 18 and married M. Vicinius.¹⁷³ Like Drusilla, she was honored by her brother with oaths and Vestal rights and dishonored by rumors. She too was minted on RIC I² Caligula 33 (Figure 3.8) in AD 37-38 and RIC I² Caligula 41 in AD 39-40, but she lost her place at court when Caligula banished her and their other remaining sister, Agrippina, for conspiring against him with M. Lepidus, the husband of their late sister, in AD 39.¹⁷⁴ With the rise of Claudius, the two sisters were recalled from exile. However, in AD 41, Livilla was banished again for having an affair with Seneca, and subsequently was starved to death.¹⁷⁵ Therefore, as an unimportant family member to Tiberius, a side note to Drusilla under the reign of Caligula, and under exile for the rule of Claudius, it is noteworthy she was coined at all.

4.6 Antonia Minor

Born to Octavia and M. Antonius in 36 BC, the younger Antonia went on to create a powerful dynastic match by marrying Drusus, son of Livia in 16 BC.¹⁷⁶ She gave birth to Germanicus, Livilla I (not the sister of Caligula discussed in the previous section), and Emperor

¹⁷² Wood 1995, 462.

¹⁷³ Rose 1997, 25; Suet. *Caligula* 7; Tac. 2.54.1, 6.15.1.

¹⁷⁴ Wood 1995, 460.

¹⁷⁵ Tac. 14.63.2.

¹⁷⁶ Wood 1999, 90, 143.

Claudius.¹⁷⁷ In 9 BC, her husband died, and in AD 19, her son Germanicus passed away suddenly under what her daughter-in-law would have called suspicious circumstances at best.¹⁷⁸ When her grandson Caligula was made emperor, he gave her all the honors that had been placed on Livia, including the title of *Augusta*, a priesthood in the imperial cult, and the rights of an honorary Vestal Virgin (which had also been bestowed on Caligula's sisters).¹⁷⁹ However, this merriment did not last long, and a rift came between Antonia and her grandson when he executed another one of her grandsons, Ti. Gemellus, to eliminate him as a competitor for power. When she died in AD 37, he gave her no honors, perhaps in part because she was not as propagandistically useful as his mother, who was directly descended from Augustus.¹⁸⁰

When her son Claudius took the throne, he emphasized her similarities with Livia. Through AD 41-45, he produced the aureus RIC I² Claudius 65 (Figure 3.10) and the denarius RIC I² Claudius 66 (Figure 1.12) with a Category F-2 image on the obverses and a Category G one on the reverse. The F-2 likenesses created a connection between the late Antonia and the goddess Ceres due to the crown of corn ears. According to Wood, this element is the first of its kind, displaying Claudius' creativity in propagandizing his plethora of female family members.¹⁸¹ The Category G images showed Antonia's role as a priestess in the imperial cult, and almost deified her as *Constantia*. This larger-than-life imagery was exactly what Claudius needed to augment his descent and justify his hastily given authority. During this same period, RIC I² Claudius 67 (Figure 2.2) and RIC I² Claudius 68 (Figure 3.11), an aureus and denarius, showed Antonia Minor in a Category F-2 illustration on the obverse again but with a Category H

¹⁷⁷ Goodman 2012, 56; Grant 1975, 126; Suet. *Claudius* 1; Wood 1999, 142.

¹⁷⁸ Wood 1999, 143, 145.

¹⁷⁹ De la Bédoyère 2018, 183; Suet. *Caligula* 15; Wood 1995, 458; Wood 1999, 148.

¹⁸⁰ Suet. *Caligula* 23; Wood 1999, 149.

¹⁸¹ Wood 1988, 421.

image on the reverse, this time solely emphasizing her role within the imperial cult. During the extended period of AD 41-50, Claudius depicted her on the obverse of the dupondii RIC I² Claudius 92 (Figure 1.5) and RIC I² Claudius 104 (Figure 3.9), merely making her likeness recognizable and emphasizing his lineage in a more subtle tone.

4.7 Valeria Messalina

Messalina was descended from Octavia on both her paternal and maternal sides and was born around AD 17-20.¹⁸² Sometime in AD 38 or 39, she married her cousin Claudius, gave birth to her daughter, Claudia Octavia, in AD 39 and to her son, Britannicus, in AD 41.¹⁸³ A matronly D-1 depiction on the obverse of RIC I² Claudius 124 and its slight reference to the Julio-Claudian *Venus genetrix* was well suited for celebrating the mother of a future emperor and the didrachm ran AD 43-48, from the time Claudius gained his major victory in Britain to Messalina's treasonous betrayal.

She and her lover, C. Silius, were married (creating a de facto divorce between Messalina and Claudius) in an attempt to seize power together. They were caught and executed.¹⁸⁴ While coups had been attempted before, none had been such a threat to the existence of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.¹⁸⁵ Perhaps Messalina believed she held more *auctoritas* because she could claim Julian lineage on both sides when Claudius could not, but the placement of a non-Julian male on the throne (C. Silius) would have toppled the regime and the propaganda of their superior rule that it was built on.¹⁸⁶ Messalina was the first empress to be the subject of a

¹⁸² Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 309.

¹⁸³ De la Bédoyère 2018, 177-178; Grant 1975, 127; Suet. *Claudius* 27.

¹⁸⁴ De la Bédoyère 2018, 34; Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 127; Suet. *Claudius* 26.

¹⁸⁵ De la Bédoyère 2018, 174.

¹⁸⁶ Wood 1992, 233.

damnatio memoriae and the general lack of material evidence of RIC I² Claudius 124 may be a result of that.¹⁸⁷

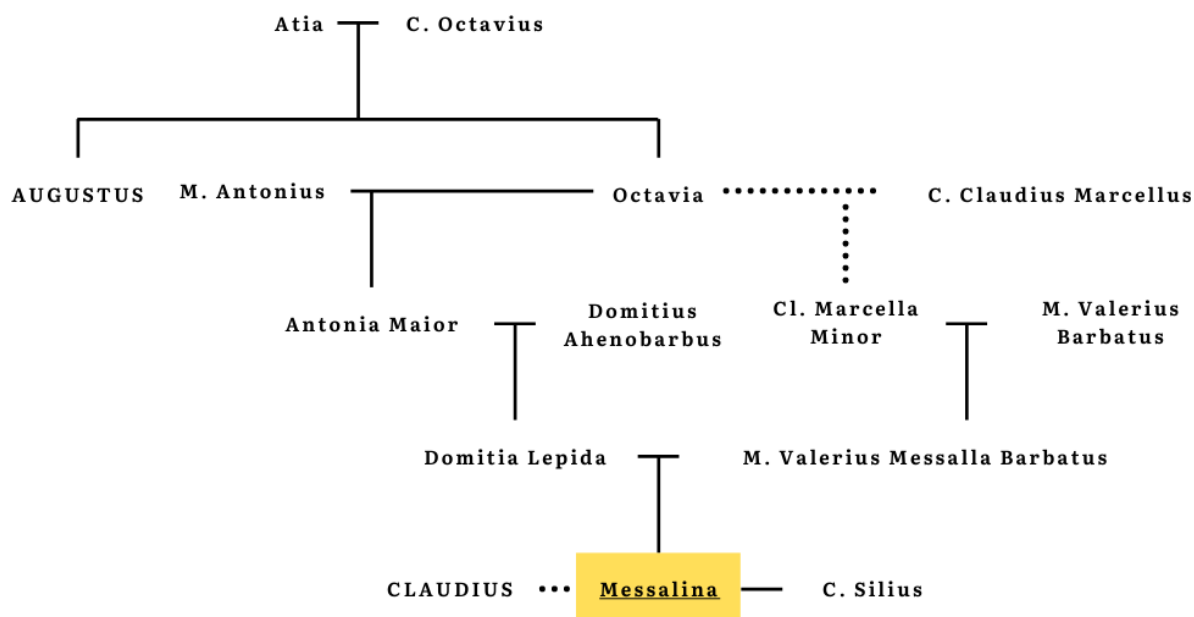


Figure 4.8: Messalina's Family Tree
Valeria Messalina was descended from Octavia on both sides of her family

4.8 Claudia Antonia

As the first daughter of the Emperor Claudius, Claudia Antonia held special privileges and responsibilities during his reign, despite the fact that her mother was Aelia Paetina and not Valeria Messalina.¹⁸⁸ In AD 43, at the age of about thirteen, Claudia Antonia married Cn. Pompeius Magnus, a descendant of Pompey the Great. During the time of their marriage, RIC I² Claudius 124 was minted on the reverse of which Claudia Antonia stood next to her half-siblings, Britannicus and Claudia Octavia, while holding a cornucopia. The purpose of this Category J illustration was to emphasize the strength of the dynasty under Claudius, and the placement of the cornucopia in her hand denoted her specific responsibilities to the Empire of

¹⁸⁷ De la Bédoyère 2018, 201.

¹⁸⁸ De la Bédoyère 2018, 181.

creating more Julio-Claudians that could take the throne in the future if need be. Claudia Antonia indeed carried out this duty in AD 48, but her husband had just been executed by her father on unsupported charges of treason due to Messalina's fear that rule would fall to her stepdaughter's family rather than her own after Claudius was gone. She was subsequently forced to marry Messalina's half-brother, Faustus Cornelius Sulla Felix.¹⁸⁹ Claudia Antonia was harassed on the subject of marriage again during the reign of Nero after he killed both of his previous wives, Claudia Octavia and Poppaea Sabina. She refused and he, unsurprisingly, had her killed too.¹⁹⁰

4.9 Claudia Octavia

Claudia Octavia was born in AD 39 to Valeria Messalina and the soon-to-be-Emperor Claudius.¹⁹¹ She too was depicted on RIC I² Claudius 124, though she did not hold the importance that Claudia Antonia did at the time, since she was not to marry until AD 53 when her stepmother, Agrippina the Younger, arranged her marriage to Nero, her stepbrother.¹⁹² After a few years, Nero began to obsess over his mistress, Poppaea Sabina, and eventually divorced, banished, and then murdered Claudia Octavia on false charges of adultery and infertility in AD 62.¹⁹³ Claudia Octavia's marriage late in her father's reign and Nero's preference for deferring to his mother at the beginning of his reign left little room for more coins to be minted with her face, despite her prevalent roles as the daughter and wife to two emperors.

4.10 Agrippina the Younger

Agrippina the Younger has the most imperial coins with her likeness of any Julio-Claudian woman by far. Her role as sister to Caligula, wife to Claudius, and mother to Nero

¹⁸⁹ De la Bédoyère 2018, 194; Suet. *Claudius* 27, 29.

¹⁹⁰ De la Bédoyère 2018, 265; Suet. *Nero* 35.

¹⁹¹ De la Bédoyère 2018, 178; Suet. *Claudius* 27.

¹⁹² Grant 1975, 149; Suet. *Claudius* 27, *Nero* 7.

¹⁹³ De la Bédoyère 2018, 260; Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 150; Suet. *Nero* 35; Wood 1999, 270.

played a large role in this fact, though not as big a role as her personal influence over the last two Emperors. Having been born in AD 15 to Germanicus and Agrippina the Elder, she was among the beloved and honored sisters of Caligula, gaining the honorary rights of a Vestal Virgin and having her name put in public oaths.¹⁹⁴ Agrippina married Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, a grandson of Octavia, in AD 28 and gave birth to her son Nero (born L. Domitius Ahenobarbus) in AD 37, at the beginning of her brother's reign.¹⁹⁵ The gossip of incest followed Agrippina as it did her other sisters, and she joined Livilla in banishment after their coup attempt in AD 39 with M. Lepidus. RIC I² Caligula 33 (Figure 3.8) and 41 contained her image along with her sisters as he projected the stability and superiority of his rule and his family, despite her banishment.



Figure 4.9: RIC I² Claudius 117

Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina II. Cistophorus, mint of Ephesus, AD 50-51. Photo courtesy of MB.

After the assassination of her brother, Claudius, her paternal uncle, called her and Livilla back from exile.¹⁹⁶ Upon the execution of his wife, Messalina, Agrippina presented herself as a candidate for empress and won out against a few other contenders. They were married in AD 49, and she began to persuade Claudius to adopt her son, Nero, as a second heir to the throne.¹⁹⁷ It

¹⁹⁴ Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 309; Suet. *Caligula* 7; Tac. 3.2.3.

¹⁹⁵ Grant 1975, 149; Tac. 4.53.2, 4.75.1; Wood 1995, 459.

¹⁹⁶ Grant 1975, 149.

¹⁹⁷ Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 127; Suet. *Claudius* 26.

did not take long before she got her wish, and she was named *Augusta* after the decision was made.¹⁹⁸ Thus began the stream of coins that gleamed her face.



Figure 4.10: RIC I² Claudius 75
Obverse: Category D-2 image of Agrippina II. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 50-54. Photo courtesy of BM.

RIC I² Claudius 117 (Figure 4.9), minted AD 50-51, contained a D-1 reverse, a standard for newly deemed *Augustae* at this point. At the same time, RIC I² Claudius 119 (Figure 3.13) was unique in that it depicted Claudius and Agrippina's busts in a jugate formation, declaring her second to none but the Emperor. For a longer period (AD 50-54), the denarii RIC I² Claudius 75 (Figure 4.10) and 81 (Figure 4.11) showed D-2 images of Agrippina on their obverses and reverses, respectively. This transformation into a matronly Ceres was copied on the reverse of the aureus RIC I² Claudius 80 (Figure 3.5) during the same time frame. Furthermore, Agrippina was allotted an entire sestertius, RIC I² Claudius 103 (Figure 3.4), to herself. The obverse carries the typical D-1 bust but the reverse honored her with a carpentum in a Category C image. If her influence had not been obvious by the hoard of coins beginning to be minted, then it sure was with the creation of this one.

After securing her son's position as a legitimate heir, Agrippina poisoned Claudius so that Nero could rule.¹⁹⁹ Many historians explain her reasoning as being for the good of her son,

¹⁹⁸ Suet. *Claudius* 43, *Nero* 7; Tac. 12.26.1.

¹⁹⁹ Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 127; Tac. 12.66.1-67.2.

but it should be noted that by becoming the mother of the reigning Emperor, Agrippina actually augmented her own status as well. Not only did she become mother of the Emperor, but she also became his co-regent for a time and was named priestess of the new *Divus Claudius* cult, acquiring two lictors, several titles, and the unprecedented privilege of attending senate meetings behind a screen.²⁰⁰



Figure 4.11: RIC I² Claudius 81

Reverse: Category D-2 image of Agrippina II. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 50-54. Photo courtesy of BM.

With these new responsibilities and elevated status came several coins. In AD 54 the aureus RIC I² Nero 1 (Figure 2.4) and the denarius RIC I² Nero 2 (Figure 3.6) had D-3 obverses, depicting Agrippina as a Venus-like matron in charge of her son and his property through their facing busts and her encircling titles. Accompanying this big kick-off was the aureus RIC I² Nero 3 (Figure 3.7) with a D-4 image of her that emphasized not only her control, but the *salus* and well-being it brought to those issues. These coins make up the group which present Agrippina as equal to or even higher than her son, the Emperor. All others have more traditional imagery in which the Emperor is always at least slightly above everyone else, including his mother.²⁰¹

RIC I² Nero 607 (Figure 1.6) and RIC I² Nero 611 (Figure 4.12), a didrachm and drachma, return to the typical arrangement of a D-1 image on the reverse of a coin, joined by the

²⁰⁰ Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 310; Grant 1975, 149; Tac. 13.2.3, 13.5.1.

²⁰¹ Sutherland 1987, 87.

bust of the Emperor on the obverse, continuing the matronly attributes in AD 54-60. At the same time, RIC I² Nero 608 (Figure 3.14) and RIC I² Nero 610 (Figure 2.5) follow a similar pattern but replace the D-1 picture with a Category L illustration. The veil and stephane depicted here worked to emphasize the modesty and propriety of the Empire's matron, who may have already come under fire once her ambitions were made clear. Additionally, this was the first (and only) instance of a diadem appearing on a Julio-Claudian woman on imperial coinage, though it had been done in other media before.²⁰² Also in the AD 54-60 group are the asses RIC I² Nero 609 and 612. The D-5 images added laurel wreaths to the matronly bust, indicating that victory stemmed from the *mater*. Most likely this was a form a favoritism by Nero for his mother, a link between Agrippina and Livia, the original imperial matron, and a show of his direct lineage from Augustus. In AD 55, Nero added a Category K picture to the mix on the reverse of the aureus RIC I² Nero 6 (Figure 1.1) and denarius RIC I² Nero 7 (. This repetition of the jugate form from the reign of Claudius may act as a counterbalance to all the coins in which Agrippina faces her son.



Figure 4.12: RIC I² Nero 611
 Reverse: Category D-1 image of Agrippina II. Drachma, mint of Caesarea in Cappadocia, AD 54-60. Photo courtesy of ANS.

²⁰² Wood 1988, 419.

Over the years, Nero began to grow tired of his rather overbearing mother and eventually assassinated her in AD 59 over her strong dislike of his affairs, particularly with a freedwoman named Acte.²⁰³ Thus ended Agrippina's decade-long influence over the Empire.



Figure 4.13: RIC I² Nero 7
Obverse: Category K image of Agrippina II and Nero. Denarius, mint of Rome, AD 55. Photo courtesy of Münzkabinett Wien.

4.11 Poppaea Sabina

Born in AD 30, Poppaea married her first husband, Rufrius Crispinus, in AD 44 and had a son by him.²⁰⁴ Her second marriage was to Otho in AD 58, during which time Nero came to prefer her over all his other mistresses, resulting in their marriage (after casting off Claudia Octavia) in AD 62.²⁰⁵ In the following year, Poppaea Sabina gave birth to their daughter Claudia, and Nero adored them both so much that he gave them each the title of *Augusta*.²⁰⁶ Nero's swooning began to diminish after their daughter's death four months later as he began to recognize his mother's ambitions in his wife. However, Poppaea became pregnant again in AD 64, and for the next year he minted RIC I² Nero 44 (Figure 1.9) and 45 (Figure 3.15), an aureus and denarius with Category M images on the reverses. Because of Poppaea's unpopularity (the

²⁰³ Goodman 2012, 58; Grant 1975, 149-150; Suet. Nero 34; Tac. 13.13.1.

²⁰⁴ Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 310; De la Bédoyère 2018, 248.

²⁰⁵ De la Bédoyère 2018, 248, 260; Grant 1975, 150; Suet. Nero 34.

²⁰⁶ De la Bédoyère 2018, 261.

people resented how Nero had treated his first wife in order to marry Poppaea), this illustration stood to convince Rome of Poppaea's propriety and status as empress. Their union was not to last long, though, as he reportedly kicked her and their unborn baby to death in a rage after she chided him for spending too much time at the races, although others say it may have been an accident.²⁰⁷ No matter why the deed was done, Nero greatly mourned Poppaea's death by deifying her, building a temple in her name, and placing her ashes in the Mausoleum of Augustus.²⁰⁸ Additionally, he minted the same image in AD 65-66 on the aureus RIC I² Nero 56 and the denarius RIC I² Nero 57, perhaps in remembrance of her, or perhaps it simply began minting before her death. Either way, the four coins allotted to Poppaea Sabina, a woman who was not of Julio-Claudian descent and had only been married to the Emperor, without producing heirs to the throne, for three years, were a great display of her influence over Nero and how he ruled his empire.

²⁰⁷ Akinboye and Efodzi 2017, 310; De la Bédoyère 2018, 37; Grant 1975, 150; Suet. *Nero* 34.

²⁰⁸ De la Bédoyère 2018, 265.

5. DISCUSSION

In the Discussion, an overview of the entire assemblage as well as the general developments that each emperor made is contemplated. The roles played by the women's relationships to the Emperors are investigated as indicators of how their presence on a coin, the sides and denominations used, and the points of emphasis made was determined. The functions and subsequent motivations of each Category are explored, followed by an inquiry of why five of the eleven women coined made up the vast majority of the depictions.

5.1 Relationships

Based on this assemblage as a whole, any woman who was the mother, sister, wife (after producing heirs), or daughter of the Emperor was in a position to be coined should it serve the Emperor's purposes. Claudius minted a coin with his grandmother, Livia, and another with his mother-in-law, Agrippina the Elder, which were the only instances of these relationships being represented. This is because Claudius had deified Livia in an attempt to augment his own ancestral line, as he was the first Emperor lacking a direct link to Augustus, and he further emphasized his new-found link to the founder through his wife, Agrippina the Younger, and her mother. It is also worth noting that any wives who came before an emperor's reign had no chance of being depicted, whether or not they produced possible heirs. Additionally, wives who were married to an emperor during their reign only had a shot at being minted if they had indeed produced heirs, especially if they lived past infancy. The exception to this rule is Nero's imagery of Poppaea Sabina, who birthed a girl that died at four months old. RIC I² Nero 44 (Figure 1.9), 45 (Figure 3.15), 56, and 57 were minted throughout the life of their daughter and after her death, as well as after Poppaea's own death.

Mothers have the highest rate of being coined, with an average of 6 coins per mother. Wives contemporary to their reign who were mothers to heirs average 2.2, sisters average 1.2, and daughters 0.8 (Figure 5.1). This both indicates the importance of these relationships to the Emperors and their influence with him and the Empire, as well as which relationships the Emperors thought would have the most sway over the Roman people. Based on these numbers, mothers were held in the highest esteem and would be able to sway public opinion about either the origins or characteristics of the Emperor as he was an extension of his mother and vice versa.

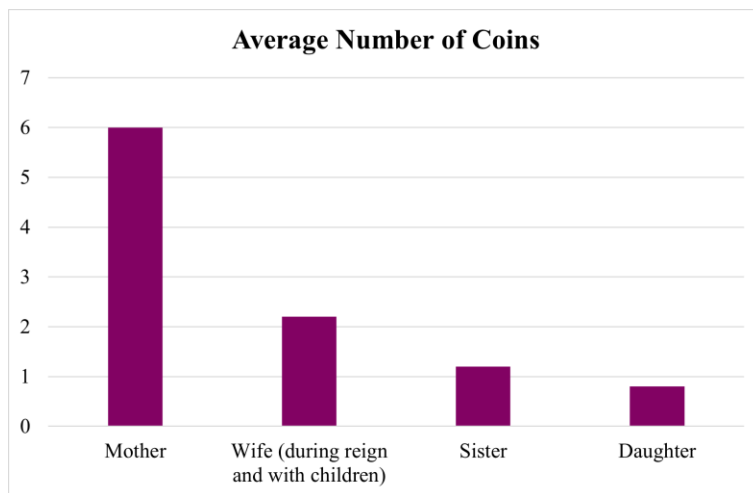


Figure 5.1: Average Number of Coins

Average number of coins based on the relationship a woman held to the Emperor spanning the entire dynasty

5.1.1 Summary of the Assemblage

Under the reign of Augustus came the first imperial coin holding the image of a Julio-Claudian woman (RIC I² Augustus 404 and 405, Figure 3.1 and Figure 1.11, respectively). Iulia is seen with either her sons or her father and husband; either pair highlighted her important connective role from current ruler to future ruler. Other than Iulia, Augustus neglected to coin any of the other women available to him. This was most likely because he still danced on the line of autocracy and republic, refusing to acknowledge the full extent of his role in Roman government as a means to avoid Julius Caesar's fate. Thus he avoided all references to monarchy and differentiated himself from M. Antonius, whom he had brutally attacked for supporting

women (namely Cleopatra VII) in public roles, which he characterized as the reason for Egypt's and Antonius' simultaneous downfall.²⁰⁹

Tiberius gave the first instances of female titles (RIC I² Tiberius 50 and 51, Figure 3.3 and Figure 4.1, respectively). It is also intriguing that he minted five coins for his mother as they were documented as having a rather rocky relationship during his reign, although her influence within the Roman elite may account for this. Furthermore, he was the first to coin his mother, which becomes a potent trend for the rest of the Julio-Claudians. For Tiberius in particular, this is crucial in that it indicated a heavy leaning towards dynastic and monarchical rule, completely flipping from the 'first citizen' front that Augustus put on.

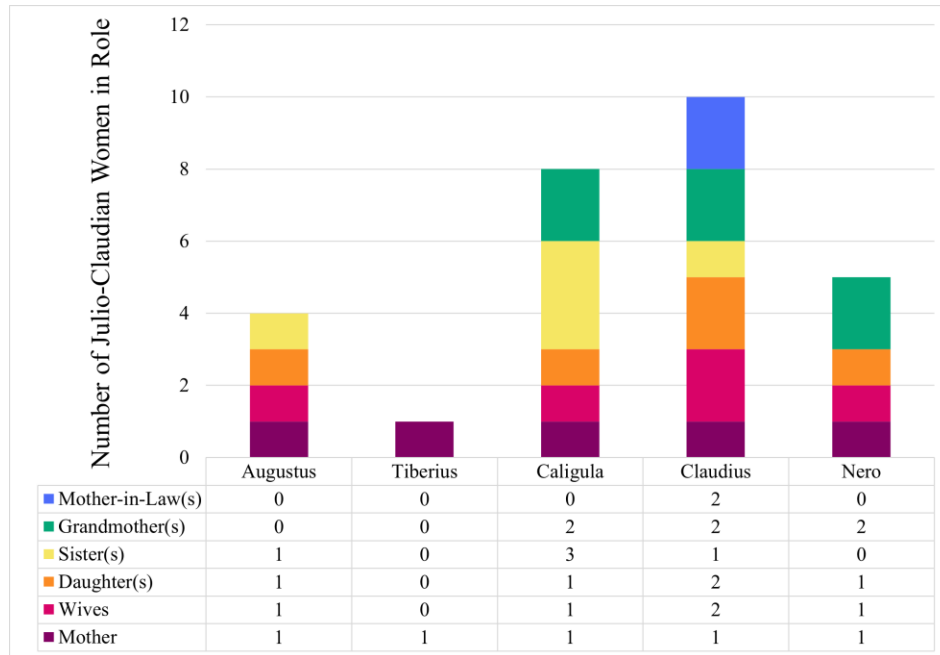
The reign of Caligula provided a general standardization of how women were depicted with the combination of both the image and titles of the subject appearing together. Therefore, no confusion of who was being put forward could exist. This innovation is interesting in that there was not only an increase in a dynastic nature with Tiberius, but also an increase in the esteem held for individual women in the roles they played. In some cases, this increased esteem was extended even further by their personalities and the effect of their interactions with the Emperor and his empire. Caligula also gave the first coinage to a non-living woman, his mother, Agrippina the Elder, who was his direct line to Augustus (RIC I² Caligula 7, 8, 13, and 14; Figure 1.4, Figure 4.2, Figure 4.3, and Figure 4.4, respectively). His use of the image, memory, and position of his deceased mother was unique in that he was able to mold the representations and therefore opinions of such aspects without having to worry about or influence how her future actions would affect them or himself. This is so useful, in fact, that Caligula expanded her

²⁰⁹ Wood 1999, 28.

authority by gifting her the honor of presiding over the first coin with absolutely no reference to the emperor (RIC I² Caligula 55, Figure 1.14).

Having been given the green light on such an honor by his predecessor, Claudius increased this number for his own mother, Antonia Minor, to four (RIC I² Claudius 65, 66, 67, and 68; Figure 3.11, respectively). He had the most relationships open for coining, but he went above and beyond by innovating the most. Not only did Claudius mint the only coins depicting a grandmother and a mother-in-law as discussed above, but he also introduced the coining of wives. His first wife (as emperor), Valeria Messalina, got the very first one of this nature (RIC I² Claudius 124), however, Agrippina the Younger, his second while in office, was minted on six (RIC I² Claudius 75, 80, 81, 103, 117, and 119; Figure 4.10, Figure 3.5, Figure 4.11, Figure 3.4, Figure 4.9, and Figure 3.13, respectively). The influence Agrippina held over Claudius and the Empire, even at this early stage, became quite clear when looking at these numbers. Her position was even further revealed in light of RIC I² Claudius 103, the only coin entirely dedicated to a wife. With this mint Agrippina's numbers outweigh even Claudius' own mother (seven to six).

Agrippina the Younger's *auctoritas* was expanded under Nero's rule; however, no new innovations with regard to her were made other than the innovative elements discussed in Chapter 2 (page 4138). Nero did break one 'rule' by minting Poppaea Sabina, who had not produced a male (or even a living, at the time of minting) heir, as discussed previously. Otherwise, Nero continued to take advantage of the dynastic influence of the women around him but did not diversify the imagery very much, nor the relationships that got coined. His coins rather strictly followed the historically documented obsessions in his life: first his mother, then his beloved Poppaea.



*Figure 5.2: Number of Julio-Claudian Women in Role
Number of women in each relevant relationship for each emperor*

Each emperor had a different range of opportunities available to him (see Figure 5.2). Tiberius had only one woman with a relevant relationship to him during the time of his rule (his mother, Livia), while Claudius had the most women surrounding him. This largely affected the number of coins depicting an imperial woman that each one mints, although it was not the only factor in determining this. For instance, Augustus had four Julio-Claudian women to choose from; yet he only gave two coins to one of those women, while Tiberius had only one relevant relationship and produced more than double the number of coins from his predecessor of this kind (see Figure 5.3). However, Claudius serves as a good example of an emperor who capitalized on the number of relationships available to him.

Despite the seemingly randomness of the number of relevant relationships for each emperor, there is a strong upward trend in the average number of coins per relevant relationship that each emperor mints (Figure 5.4). This trend coincides with the public direction towards monarchical rule that was historically documented and was seen by the elements used by each

emperor (further discussed below). Note that Tiberius is an outlier in this specific analysis due to the fact that he only had one relevant female relationship, thus throwing off the purpose of averaging these numbers to account for the range of opportunities for each ruler.

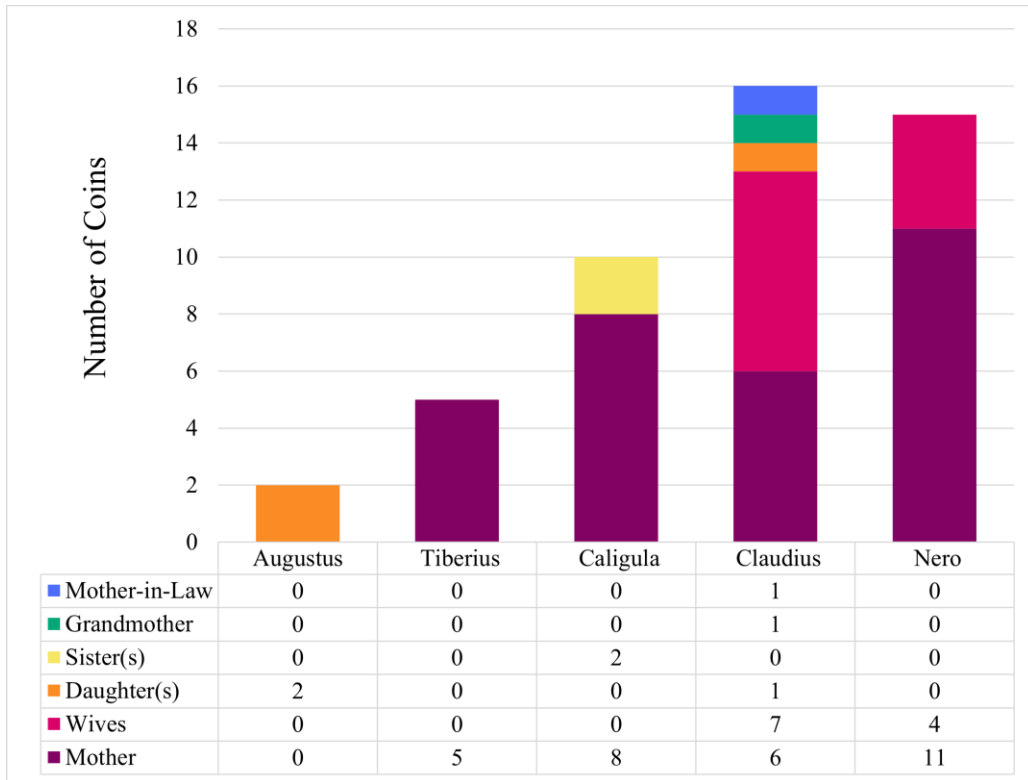


Figure 5.3: Number of Coins
Number of coins minted representing each relevant relationship for each emperor

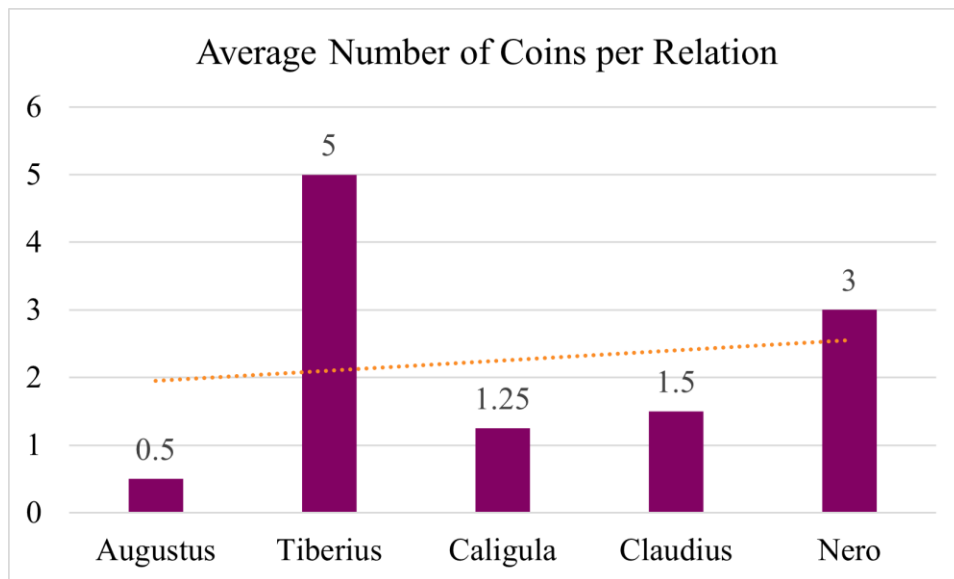


Figure 5.4: Average Number of Coins per Relation
Average number of coins minted per relevant female relationship for each emperor

5.1.2 *Women Not Coined*

A few groups of women were not coined, either because they technically no longer held a relationship with the Emperor (as with some wives) or because they simply were not considered important enough for coining. This includes all women married to emperors before their reigns and those married during their reign but without children, specifically males. Scribonia, mother of Iulia, falls into the former group as well as Vipsania, mother of Drusus II, and Aelia Paetina, mother of Claudia Antonia.²¹⁰ Wives during their principate include Livia Cornelia Orestilla and Lollia Paulina, both of whom were married to Caligula for extremely short periods of time, as well as Statilia Messalina who married Nero after Poppaea's demise.²¹¹

Augustus minted the lowest percentage of women available for him to coin out of all five emperors. Although he had four women available for illustrating, it is not surprising that he stayed away from a heavily dynastic representation of his family in general, as he worked diligently to keep the façade of a republic. His mother, Atia, would have been the least likely of the viable candidates to be coined, as she had passed away in 44 BC and had not held any particularly important roles in the Republic, other than being the niece of Julius Caesar and thus Augustus' doorway into the Principate.²¹² This may initially seem to be a rather compelling reason to coin Atia; however, Augustus preferred his back to remain knifeless and so made unyielding efforts to avoid likenesses between himself and the 'tyrant.' To viewers from the twenty-first century who know who Augustus' successor was, his wife Livia also appears to make an irresistible candidate for coining. However, throughout the majority of his rule Augustus highly preferred his own blood to succeed him, leaving the emphasis on Iulia rather

²¹⁰ De la Bédoyère 2018, 80, 177; Suet. *Augustus* 62-63, *Tiberius* 7, *Claudius* 27; Rose 1997, 29.

²¹¹ De la Bédoyère 2018, 265; Wood 1999, 215.

²¹² Suet. *Augustus* 4, 61.

than her stepmother. Despite Augustus' heavy leanings on Livia for guidance and advice on all matters, her importance to the Roman people, and thus the regime from a public standpoint, did not become clear until after Tiberius officially took control. Another such woman who lacked coinage after the beginning of the Principate was Augustus' sister, Octavia. She produced three children with C. Claudius Marcellus, one of which was Iulia's first husband, and two with M. Antonius, both of whom gave birth to crucial members of the imperial family.²¹³ Based on this evidence, she would have been particularly useful in the emphasis of dynastic stability; and yet, Augustus always made his preferred successor clear through his use of adoption and arranged marriages, meaning the minting of Octavia was unnecessary as long as he had several potential heirs to pick from. Furthermore, it is possible Octavia specifically made clear to him that she did not want to be a part of the political spotlight anymore after the death of her son, Marcellus in 23 BC, as she is historically known to have become somewhat of a recluse after this tragic event.²¹⁴

The two women Caligula neglected to mint are his last wife, Milonia Caesonia, and their daughter, Iulia Drusilla II. Their marriage had been a hasty one after she gave birth as he wanted to legitimize their daughter and show the people that he could produce his own heirs.²¹⁵ However, the female sex of the child might explain why neither of them were minted along with the fact that they were both assassinated along with Caligula not long afterwards in AD 41.²¹⁶ There may not have been enough time to create images, approve them, and actually use them in a mint before their early deaths. Additionally, an infant girl is not particularly useful in a propagandistic sense as she was not inherently valuable to the dynasty until she reached an age at

²¹³ Wood 1999, 30-31.

²¹⁴ Bartman 1999, 79; Wood 1999, 33.

²¹⁵ Suet. *Caligula* 25; Wood 1995, 460.

²¹⁶ De la Bédoyère 2018, 180.

which she could be married and bear children. Furthermore, infants of either gender were not necessarily emphasized in coinage because of the relatively high rate of infant mortality.

The only female related to Nero that could have made a strong case for being coined who did not receive that honor was his daughter, Claudia. She had been named *Augusta*, marking her as an exceptionally important female in the family, despite the fact that she was but an infant herself.²¹⁷ However, her premature death was a decisive factor in why she did not end up on his coinage, despite her subsequent deification by Nero.²¹⁸ Buried newborns were not useful in propagation of a dynasty.

5.2 Denominations

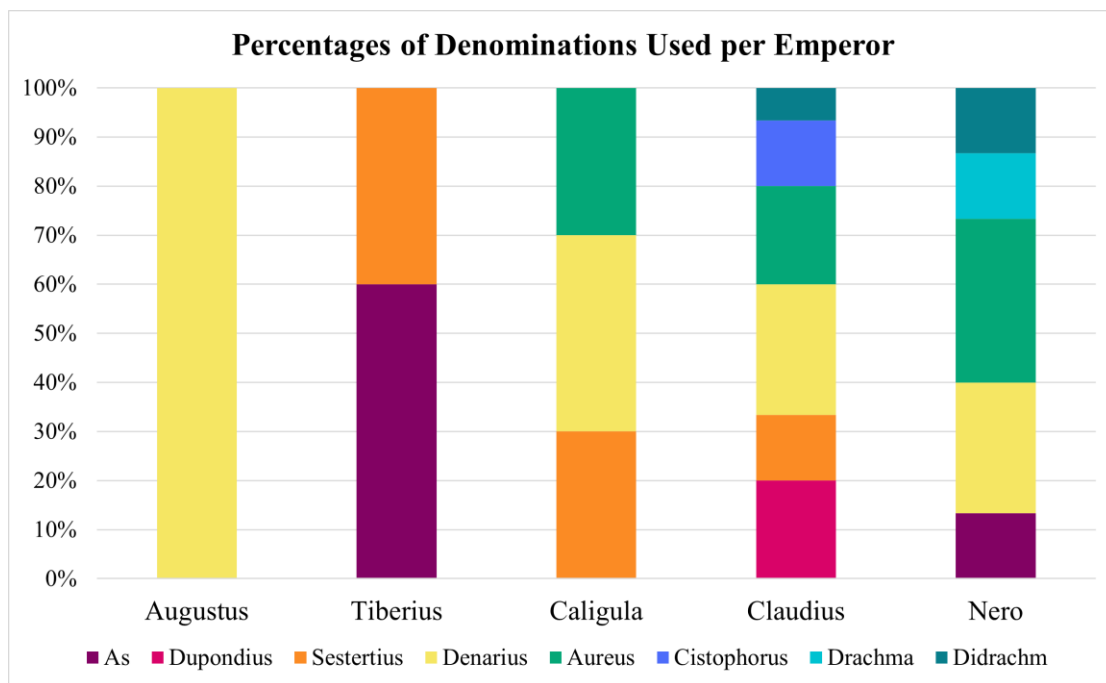


Figure 5.5: Denominations Used by Each Emperor
Percentages of coins of each denomination making up the female-oriented assemblage for each emperor

The Roman denominations in this study include the as, dupondius, sestertius, denarius, and aureus, from lowest value to highest value (see Appendix C). These coins were made of pure

²¹⁷ De la Bédoyère 2018, 261.

²¹⁸ De la Bédoyère 2018, 265.

gold, silver, copper, and other metals, which was the basis of their value. Typically, one denarius was equal to a day's wages and one as was equal to a loaf of bread or a cup of wine.²¹⁹ Thus, the denarius and anything of lower value was likely to pass through the hands of any given Roman. However, the aureus may have been more restricted in use to the upper classes of societies such as senators or nobles and equestrians. Therefore, the target audience for any given coin can be easily determined. Additionally, a few eastern denominations are included here: cistophorus, drachma, and didrachma. As a closed system by design, Roman denominations could show up in the eastern provinces, but were not very common. Therefore, emperors wanting to speak to audiences in the east needed to use their eastern mints to create eastern denominations.²²⁰

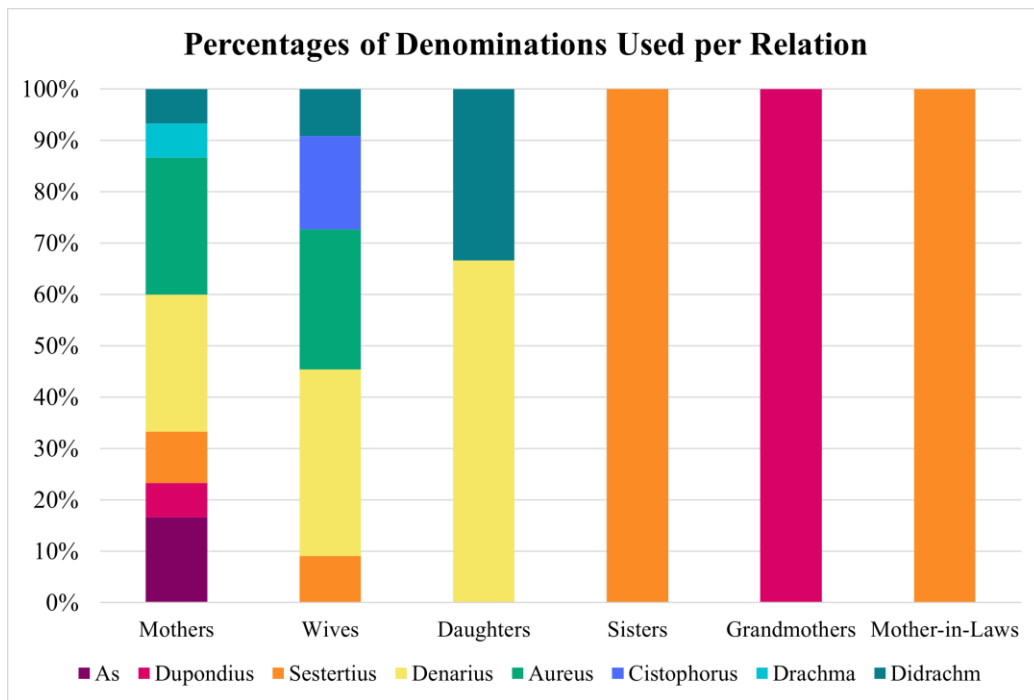


Figure 5.6: Percentages of Denominations per Relation
Denominations used for each relation throughout the Julio-Claudian dynasty

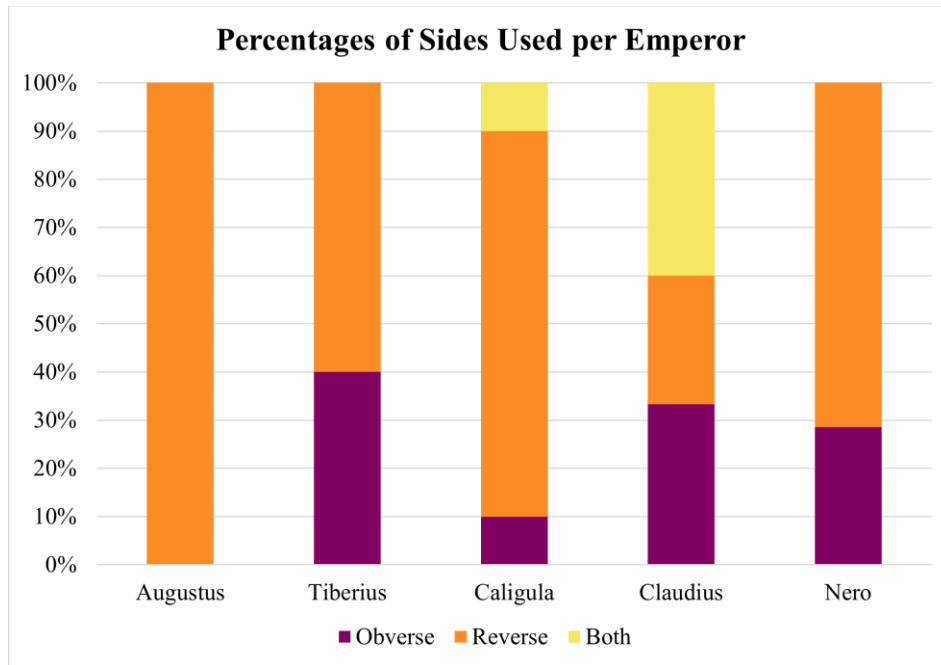
Claudius used the largest variety of denominations (Figure 5.5). This may be at least partially explained by his need to promote his legitimacy as the first Emperor to be proclaimed

²¹⁹ Wolters 2012, 336-337.

²²⁰ Carbone 2019, 193; Rowan 2019, 206-207.

by the army and the first one to lack a direct ancestral line to Augustus. It should also be noted that Claudius and Nero are the only ones to use eastern coinage, and thus were the only ones who felt the need to speak to the people living there. This may be due to an expansion of influence over Roman elites past the borders of the city of Rome or even Italy. These eastern coins only depicted mothers, a wife, and daughters, and therefore only the most crucial women were exposed to the east. Most of the images appeared on coins found in the activities of daily Roman life, thus speaking to Romans in general. Only mothers and wives were put onto aurei, noting them as the most influential women (Figure 5.6). This did not occur until the reign of Caligula, when monarchical trends were not as subtle or taboo.

5.3 Sides



*Figure 5.7: Percentages of Sides Used per Emperor
Coin sides used by each emperor for depicting Julio-Claudian women*

The reverse side of a coin was a typical spot to find depictions of anyone or anything that was not the Emperor himself. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the majority of depictions of Julio-Claudian women are found on the reverse throughout the entire dynasty (Figure 5.7). The

only Emperor that defied this trend was Claudius. Whether deliberately or by mere coincidence, Claudius not only minted the most women (though he also had the most opportunities), he also greatly expanded the denominations used as well as the use of the obverse and the entire coin. The obverse, or in some cases both sides of the same coin, lent a larger sense of gravity to those appearing on it, as discussed in the Introduction (page 20). Therefore, Claudius leaned heavily on the upward trend of monarchical elements and the lineage and stability that the women around him offered to his regime.

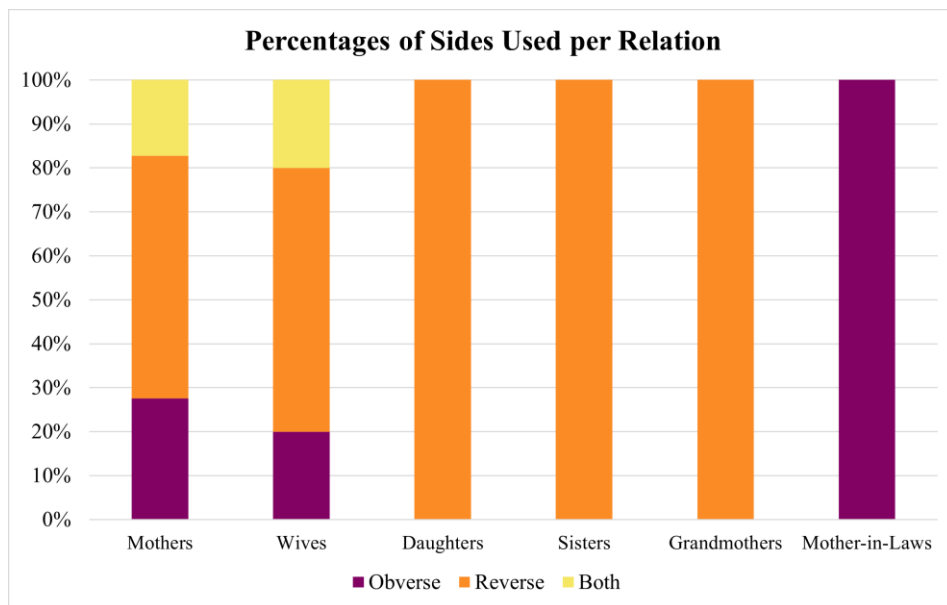


Figure 5.8: Percentages of Sides Used per Relation
Coin sides used for each relation by emperors throughout the Julio-Claudian dynasty

The women who appeared on obverses, or on the entire coin, were mothers and wives (Figure 5.8), which makes sense as they would have been the most meaningful relationships for an emperor, both personally and professionally. The most interesting aspect of this distribution is the fact that mothers and wives hold almost the same percentages of all three categories, despite the fact that mothers were generally highlighted more often and in more diverse ways than wives. This may indicate a limit to the consequence that should be placed on whether a specific image appears on the obverse, reverse, or both sides of a coin. Despite this limitation, it is indeed

worth mentioning that the only coin depicting a mother-in-law did so on the obverse of the coin, rather than the reverse. Claudius' obverse depiction of Agrippina the Elder here (RIC I² Claudius 102, Figure 4.7) is striking as it speaks loudly to the critical role Agrippina the Younger played in his court.

5.4 Category Use

Table 5.1: Points of Emphasis for Each Category

Category	Emphasis
A	Dynasty
B	Imperial Cult
C	Influence
D-1	Influence
D-2	Ceres
D-3	Influence
D-4	Influence
D-5	Influence
E	Dynasty
F-1	Influence
F-2	Ceres
G	Ceres
H	Imperial Cult
I	Imperial Cult
J	Dynasty
K	Influence
L	Imperial Cult
M	Influence

Four points of emphasis were identified by the researcher through the analysis of each Category. Wood previously noted that women in every Roman principate dynasty seem to be represented with *pietas*, the potential to produce heirs, or as various virtues.²²¹ The Julio-Claudian women are divided here into the points of emphasis of influence, imperial cult, dynasty, and Ceres (Table 5.1).

²²¹ Wood 1988, 409.

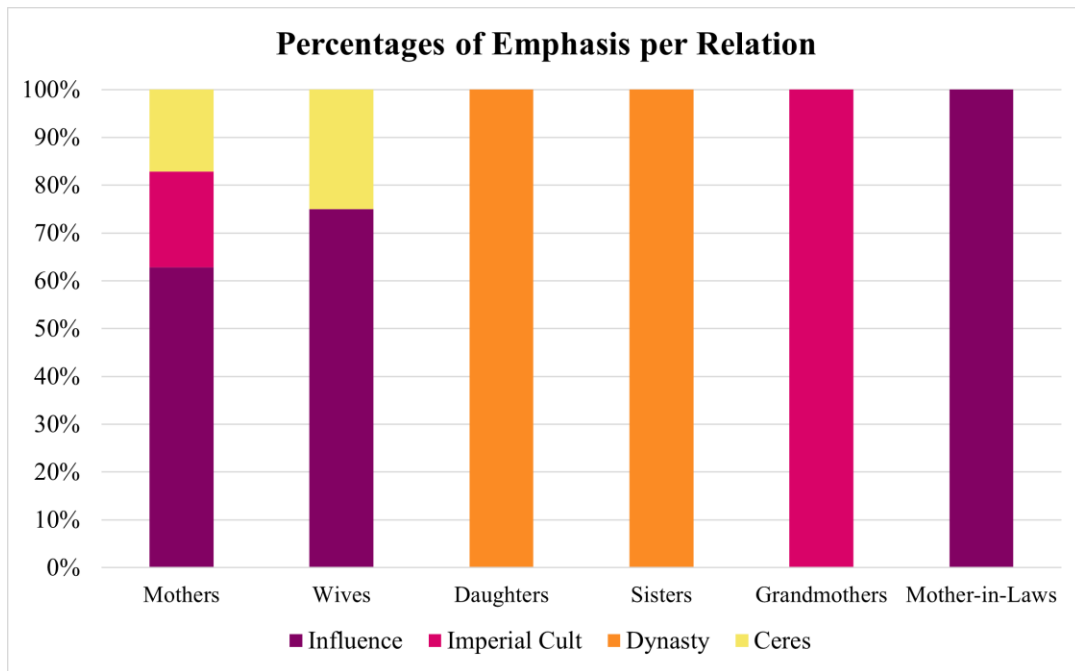
Influence is the catchall of images. Depictions that merely show the woman herself, though at times small elements appear, have been deemed influential because the main reason for the image is not to attach specific roles or purposes to the woman but to simply show her as an imperative figure within the Empire. She is referred to, whether in a simple bust, jugate position, or other pose, as someone irreplaceable to the Emperor and therefore to the dynasty. The only Category in this emphatic point that does not illustrate the actual woman is C, which depicts a carpentum. The carpentum is included because it is a symbol of mobility and influence in it of itself, thus attaching such qualities to the woman it is connected with.

The imperial cult emphasis is found in images of women who held priesthoods within the cult. This allows the Emperor to tout his mother's current public role as well as, in the case of Livia and Agrippina the Younger, her connection to the previous Emperor. The encouragement of imperial cult worship in these images served to expand the authority and godlike qualities of the current Emperor, through his familial connection to the *divi*. It also served to create a pious and proper image for the women who were depicted on the coins. Because mothers played an extremely formative role in their children's lives, the priorities they put forward were by nature extended to their children.²²² Thus, if the Emperor's mother was seen dedicating her life to worshiping the gods, even if they included her own family, the Emperor must have also been dedicating his life to worshiping the gods in some way as well, keeping his people safe.

Another way an emperor could persuade their people of the safety only he could provide was by putting forth his dynastic strength. By coining their daughters and sisters as being the progenitors of the Empire, emperors could guarantee that stability would be maintained during and after their principate. Only Tiberius and Nero declined to make this point, both of whom did

²²² De la Bédoyère 2018, 26.

not have daughters or sisters to fill this roll, making the trend of this point of emphasis with those two relations even more convincing (Figure 5.9).



*Figure 5.9: Percentages of Emphasis per Relation
Points of Emphasis made for each relation throughout the entire Julio-Claudian dynasty*

Ceres is the only point of emphasis used by a single emperor. The addition of a crown of corn ears by Claudius to his female portraits made her image more than just influential. The images in the influence point of emphasis at times contain an element here or there such as shoulder locks or a corn ear that may have had call backs to a divine being or some other underlying meaning. However, none of those elements were as intricately connected to the woman herself as her very own crown of corn ears. Furthermore, none were as obvious as this particular element in elevating the woman herself. By wearing a crown of corn ears, a diagnostic ornament for Ceres, matron goddess of the harvest, the woman was almost personified as her. The key word here is almost. Claudius was able to put his women so close to divinity because of his chronological distance from Augustus and the Republic. He utilized this newfound freedom to augment his own image by increasing the authority of his mother and of his wife, Agrippina

the Younger, who was also mother to an heir of the Empire. These women became larger than life, thus making Ceres its' own emphatic point as it also accentuated their roles as mother and producers of fruit for the Empire.

Thus, Claudius was the only user of the Ceres point, making him the most varied in coinage use (Figure 5.10). The relation with the most varied use is mothers. Both this emperor and this relation had the most opportunities available to them for varied points of emphasis though.

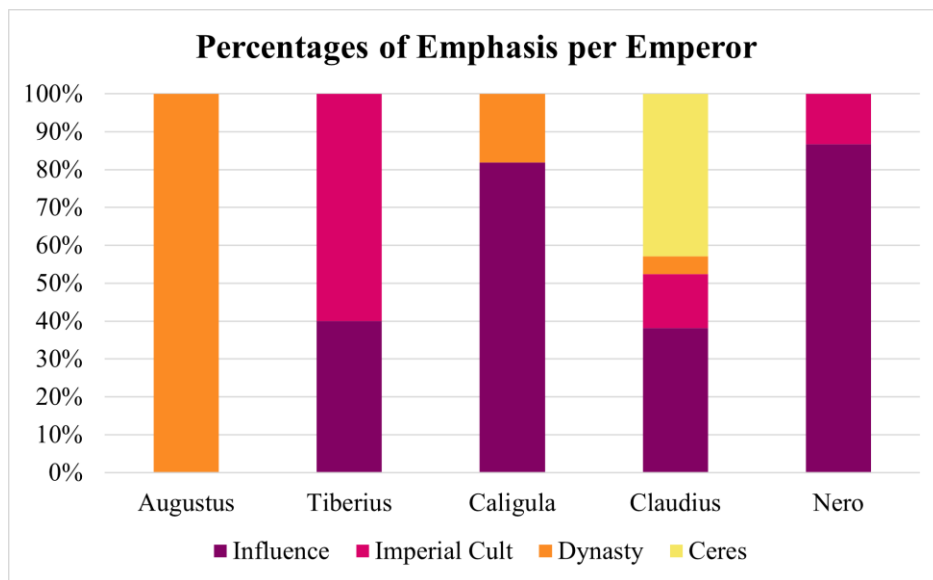


Figure 5.10: Percentages of Emphasis per Emperor
Points of emphasis made by each emperor

5.5 Most Significant Women

Out of the forty-seven coins in this assemblage, Agrippina the Younger holds images on nineteen of them (Figure 5.11). This is perhaps not as surprising when considering her roles as Caligula's sister, Claudius' wife, and Nero's mother. However, the sheer number can only be attributed to her historically ambitious personality, as there were plenty of sisters, wives, and mothers who were given significantly less numismatic depictions than Agrippina while she was in each role. Furthermore, the number of denominations afforded to Agrippina the Younger was

exceeded by no other, most notably in the fact that she alone got eastern coinage (Figure 5.12). Again, this may be in part because of her ambitious and therefore controversial personality that her image in particular needed to be manipulated or represented in specific manners to gain the trust and confidence of her subjects, as she and others knew she was not a mere female figure in the Emperor's familial support system.

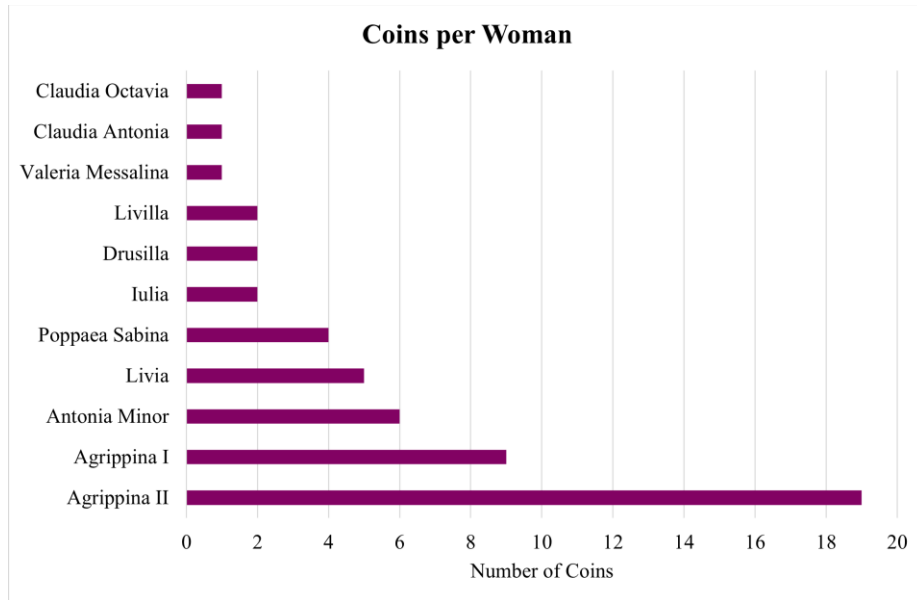


Figure 5.11: Coins per Woman

Numbers of coins each woman appears on (note that some coins are counted more than once as multiple women appear on them)

It should also be noted that five of the eleven women coined hold the vast majority of the depictions. Of those five, Agrippina the Elder and Poppaea Sabina were only given the influence point of emphasis as they were not connected with the imperial cult or directly to Claudius (knocking out any possibility of Ceres), and were not sisters or daughters to an emperor and thus could not be shown in a dynastic sense. Claudius' preference for taking full advantage of representing his female family members is most clearly shown by the lack of reverse depictions of his mother, Antonia Minor (Figure 5.13). Furthermore, Poppaea is included in the top five but was clearly not as important since she was solely shown on the reverse. This most likely was in

part due to her lack of children, the biggest factor in raising a woman's status. In fact, it is significant that Poppaea was included in this group at all because of her lack of heirs.

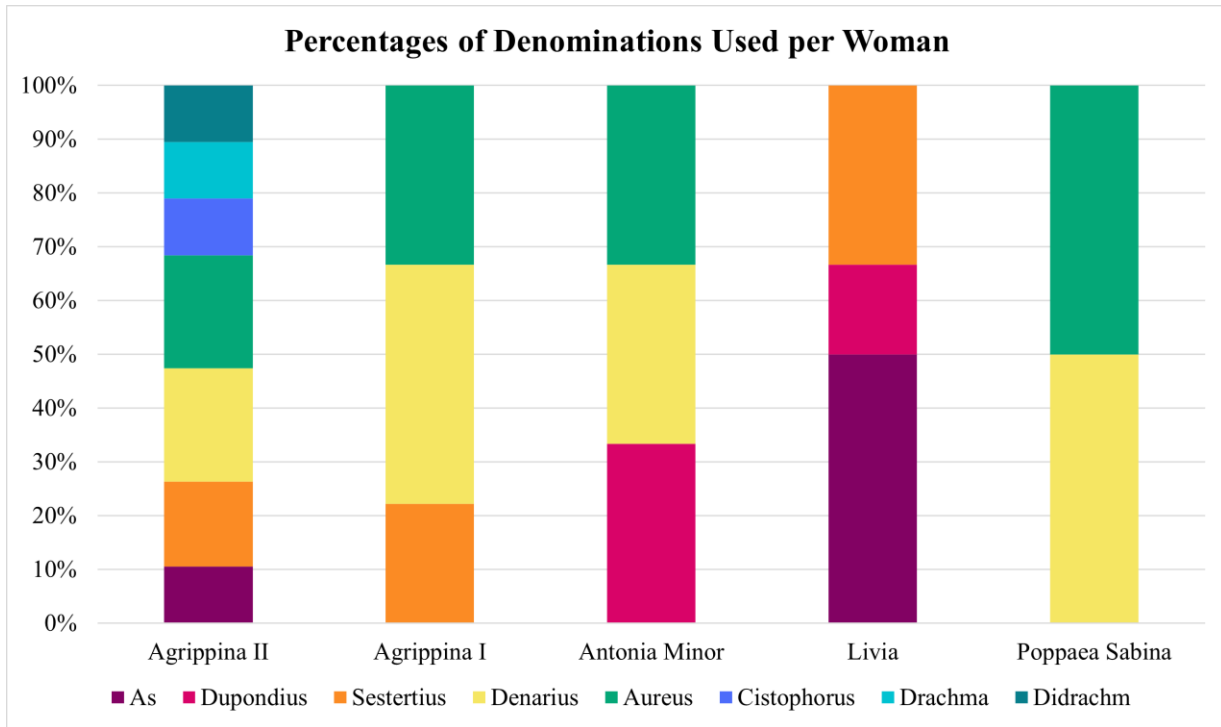


Figure 5.12: Percentages of Denominations Used per Woman
Denominations used to depict the five most coined women

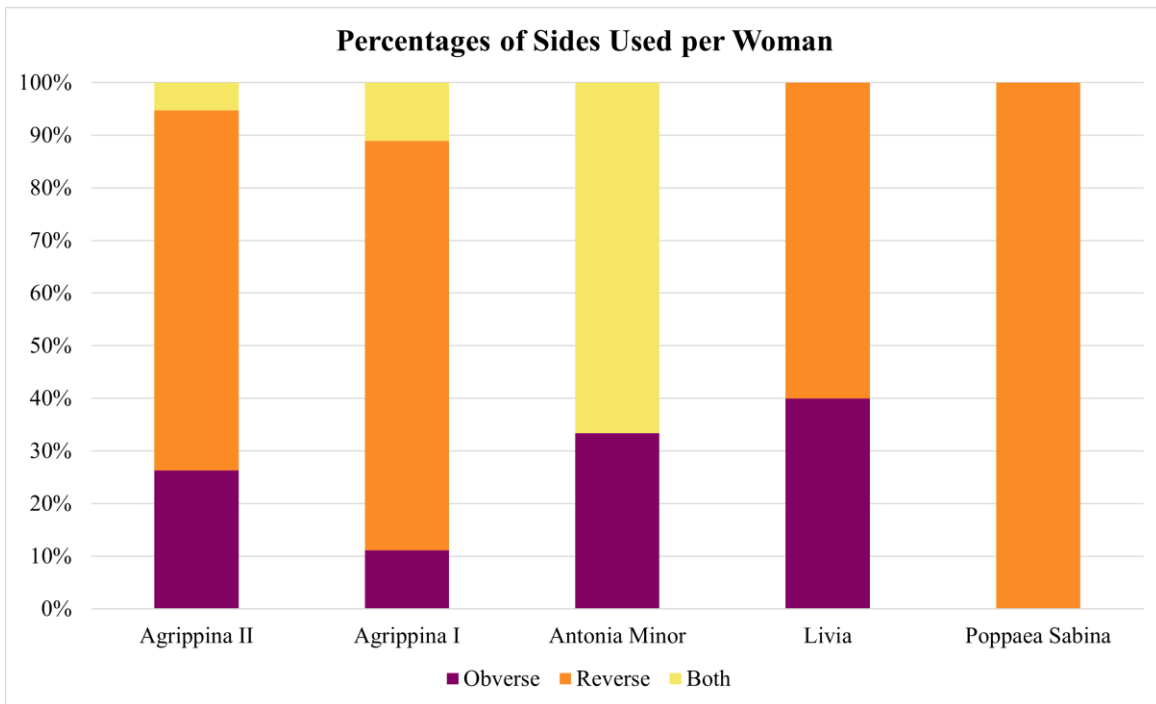


Figure 5.13: Percentages of Sides Used per Woman
Sides used to depict the five most coined women

CONCLUSION

This study used imperial coinage to discover the contemporaneous official positions regarding Julio-Claudian women in order to understand their roles within the regime. Because Roman women were meant to be a part of the domestic realm rather than the public one that men roamed in, the position of the Julio-Claudian women was unprecedented as their domestic realm included the Emperor who innately also included the public domain within his household. Therefore, these women, and the Emperors who ruled them, were forced to walk the line of tending to public and private affairs, which often were blurred together.

To begin understanding them through their imagery, each individual element, including their poses, garments, and settings, needed to be fleshed out for any and all symbolism it carried. By deconstructing these images and then putting the pieces back together with all their meanings behind them, the full effect of the depictions felt by an average contemporaneous Roman could be glimpsed. This was particularly important as the goal of this study was to understand how these women were meant to be portrayed and recreating the encultured viewpoint of Julio-Claudian subjects was critical.

In doing this, the emphasis on the Julio-Claudian women's influence on the Empire (through the Emperor), their significant roles in the imperial cult, crucial duties of furthering the dynasty, and bordering goddess-like matronhood was found. Each of these ideas follows the themes of motherhood and domestic care known to be important in Roman society. However, the interesting aspect of these ideas is how they are portrayed. For instance, the matrons of this family did not just take care of the living, they saw to the worship of their predecessors through the imperial cult. Julio-Claudian women were not just good mothers, they pushed the line of

what mortal mothers did by mothering both their children and the Empire itself, playing near the area that Ceres walked in. In fact, it was crucial that these women were shown as larger-than-life as the counterparts to their larger-than-life men who ruled the Empire. A mere man could not rule the Empire, only the Emperor could. Consequently, mere women could not produce heirs to the throne, only Julio-Claudian women could.

Thus these women were indeed influential whether it simply be through their personal connection to the Emperor or through acting in official capacities. Julio-Claudian women, having almost been a different breed according to their imagery, held the *auctoritas* needed to play these necessary roles. Birthing, raising, advising, and influencing the Emperor needed a particular kind of woman, and these coins indicate that they were surely advertised as such. The originator of image ideas is difficult to say, as it could have been almost anyone within the imperial circle; but the result in mind for this assemblage is made clear by what they depicted.

Choosing who was coined relied on a combination of who was in what roles, what their personalities were like, and what their lineage was. For example, Valeria Messalina got a single coin with Claudius' children on the reverse so that he could emphasize the strength of his dynasty, possibly indicating that Messalina only appeared here since she was the woman who happened to be wife of the Emperor at the time. Contrastingly, Agrippina the Younger got six coins from Claudius with more elevated elements indicating that her own personality may have played a role in either Claudius or herself (or perhaps another in the imperial circle) pushing for her to be coined because Messalina arguably did more of a service for Claudius by giving him a boy and a girl while Agrippina came with a single son from a previous marriage. However, consider that Messalina was descended from Octavia while Agrippina was descended from

Augustus himself. No matter the cause of the push to coin, there is no denying the importance of Julio-Claudian women to the dynasty and to the Empire.

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APPENDIX A: JULIO-CLAUDIAN FAMILY TREES

The Julio-Claudian dynasty was a complicated family tree with individuals who had several connections to one another. The trees of each Emperor have been created here so that their immediate female family members can be easily readable.

Note:

- Names of Emperors are CAPITALIZED.
- The name of the Emperor central to the tree is highlighted.
- Not all spouses are represented. Only those who bear note, typically those who were married during their reign and/or bore children, are present.
- Divorced spouses are connected by dotted lines and spouses married during the reign of the central Emperor are connected with a solid line.
- Not all children are represented. Only those who did not die in infancy and were recognized by the Emperor as his own are present.
- Names of women whose likenesses appear on the coinage of the Emperor central to the tree are underlined.
- Names of women who were granted the title Augusta during or before the reign of the central Emperor are *italicized*.
- Names of heirs are flagged with the number of the order of adoption.

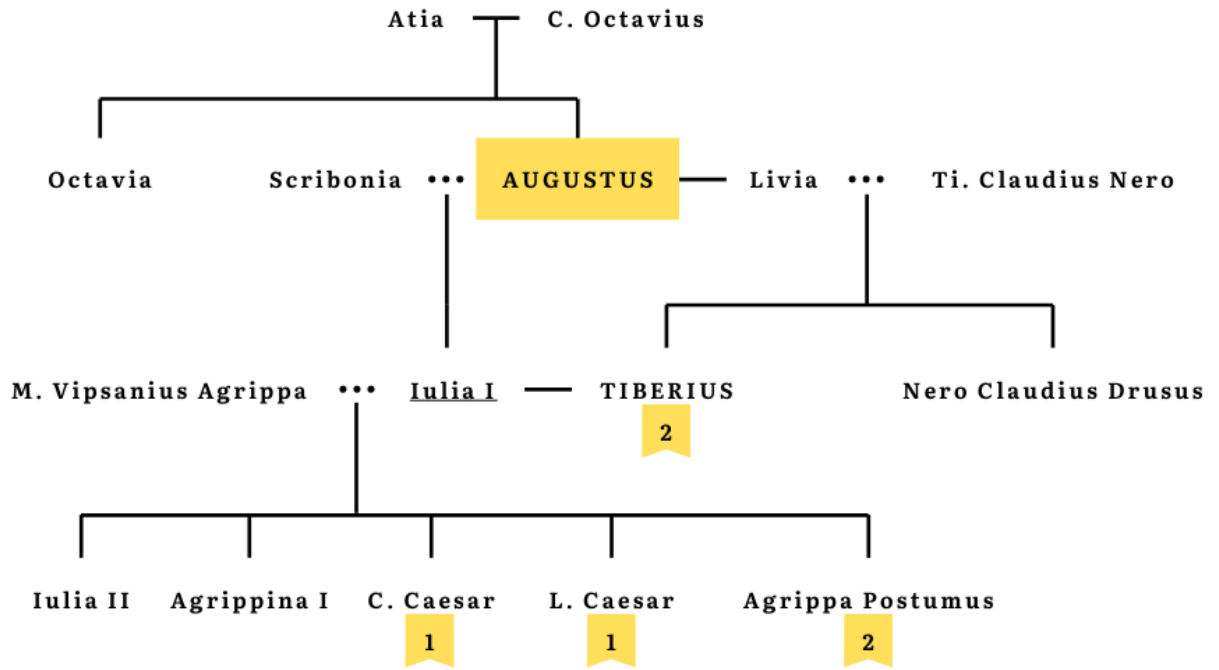


Figure A.1: Augustus' Family Tree

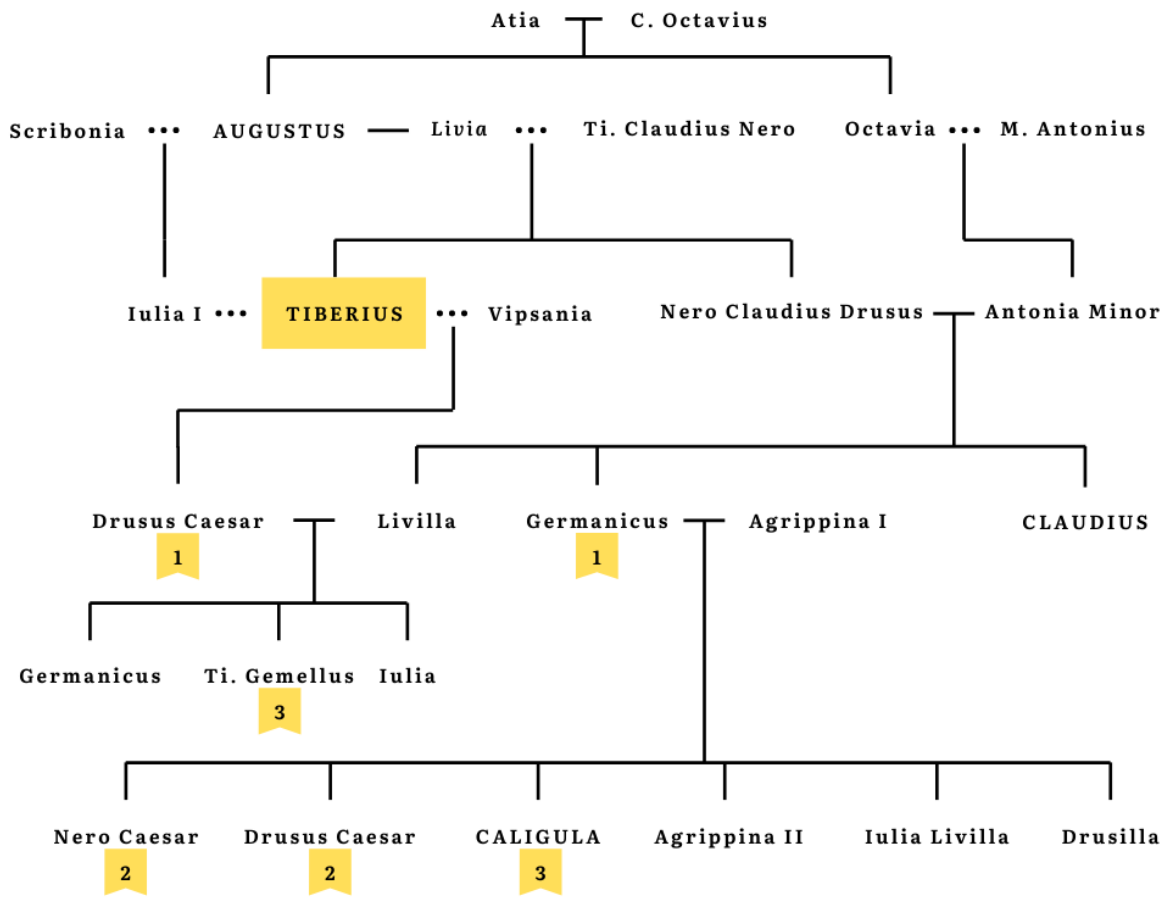


Figure A.2: Tiberius' Family Tree

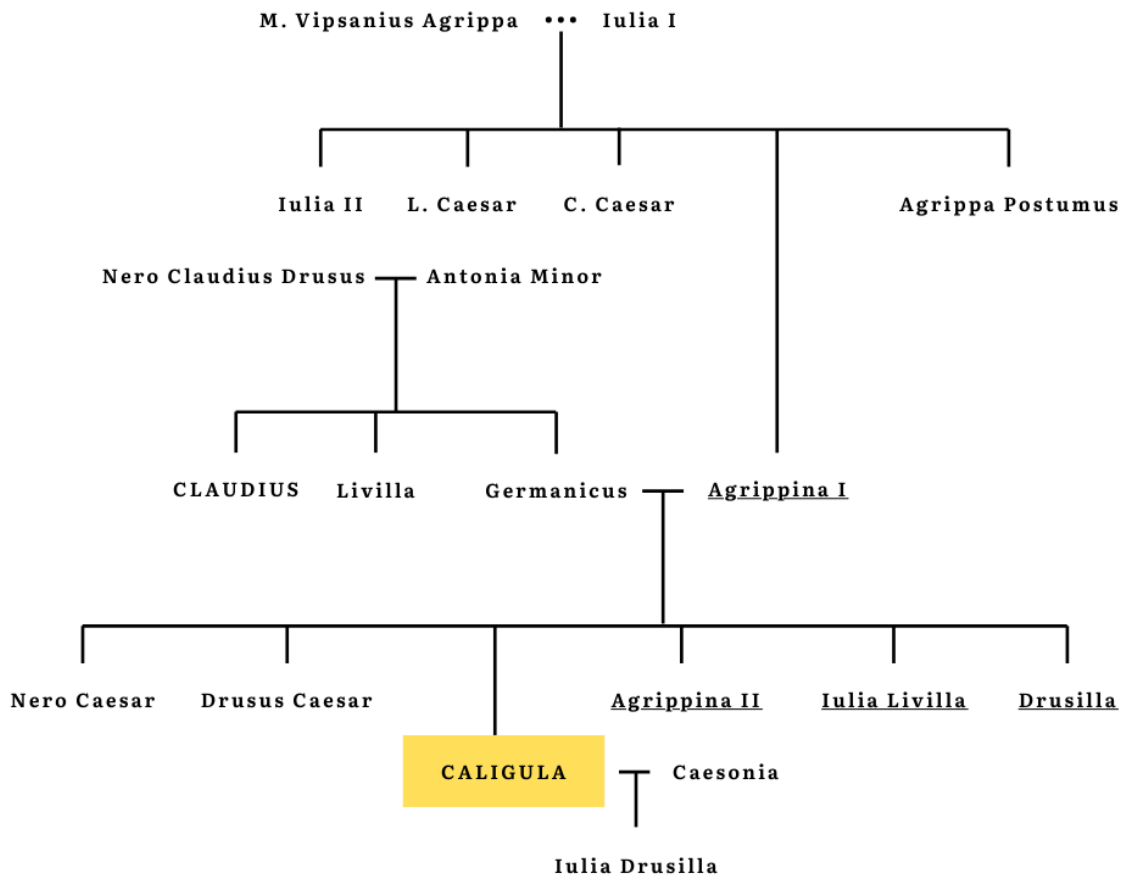


Figure A.3: Caligula's Family Tree

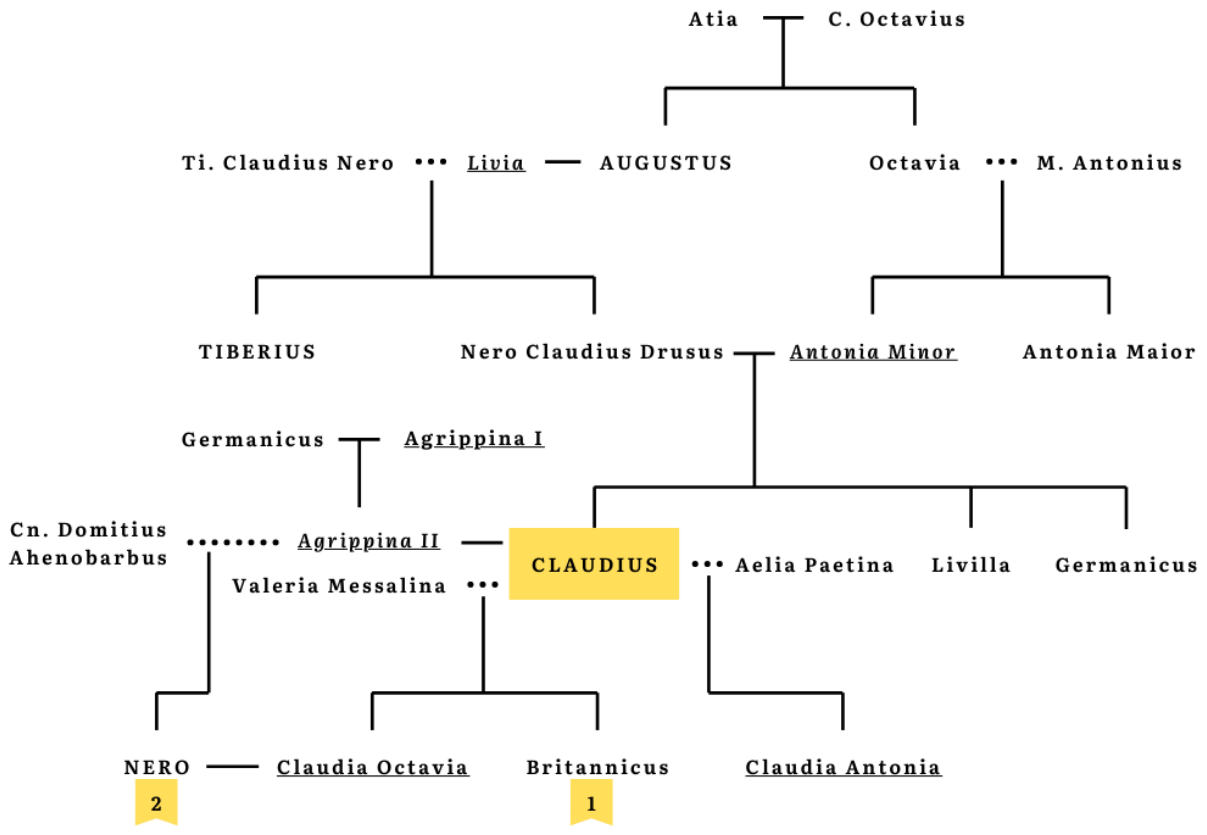


Figure A.4: Claudius' Family Tree

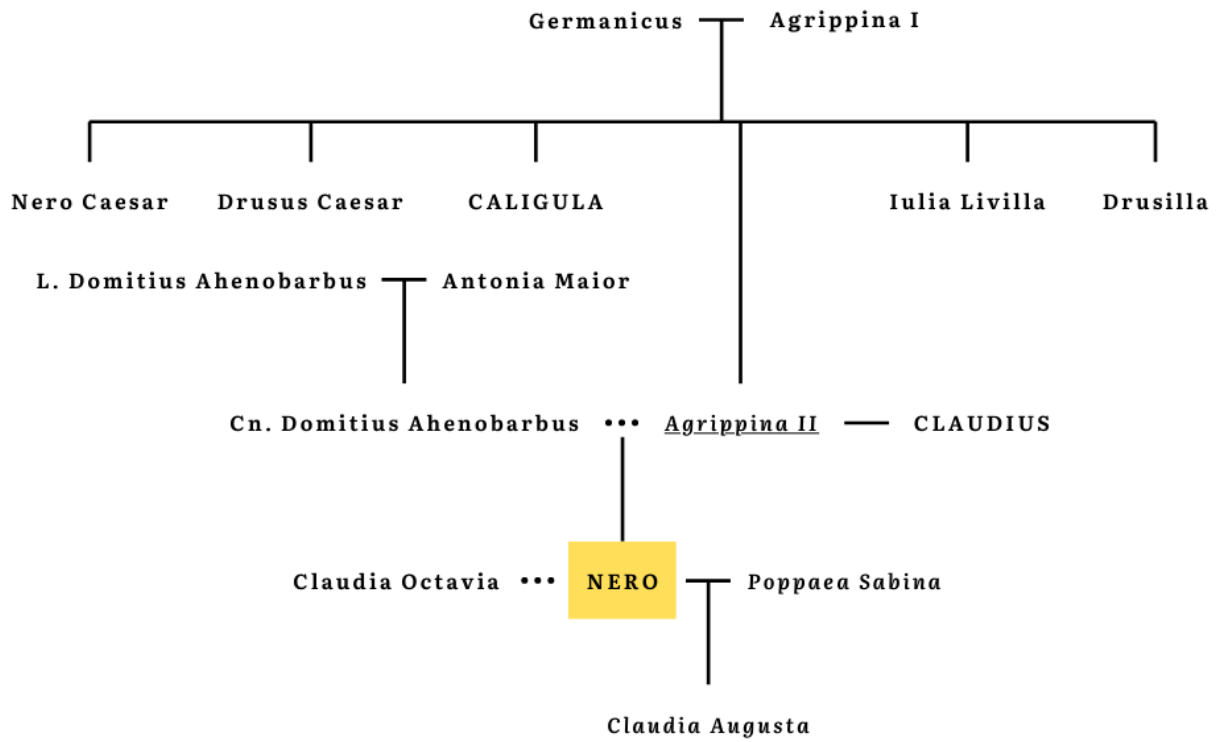


Figure A.5: Nero's Family Tree

APPENDIX B: HISTORICAL TIMELINE

A timeline of the major historical events regarding the Julio-Claudian family has been included for easy reference. This should help with understanding who was placed on coins when and the circumstances surrounding any particular type.

69 BC	Atia gives birth to Octavia
63 BC	Atia gives birth to C. Octavius
44 BC	Assassination of Julius Caesar; Posthumous adoption of C. Octavius Death of Atia
43 BC	Mint of Rome closes
42 BC	Livia gives birth to Tiberius
40 BC	Marriage of Octavia and M. Antonius to renew his alliance with Octavian
39 BC	Scribonia gives birth to Iulia the Elder
38 BC	Marriage of Octavian and Livia
36 BC	Octavia gives birth to Antonia Minor
35 BC	Octavian grants <i>sacrosanctitas</i> and other rights to Livia and Octavia
32 BC	Divorce of Octavia and M. Antonius
30 BC	Octavian defeats M. Antonius and Queen Cleopatra, becoming sole ruler of Rome Octavia raises the surviving children of Antonius (including those by Cleopatra)
27 BC	Senate names Octavian Augustus, marking the beginning of his reign as Emperor
25 BC	Marriage of Iulia the Elder and Marcellus, son of Octavia

- 23 BC Senate gives *imperium proconsulare maius* and *tribunicia potestas* to Augustus
 Death of Marcellus, husband of Iulia the Elder and son of Octavia
 Mint of Rome re-opens
- 21 BC Marriage of Iulia the Elder and M. Vipsanius Agrippa
- 20 BC Iulia the Elder gives birth to Gaius
- 17 BC Iulia the Elder gives birth to Lucius
 Augustus adopts Gaius and Lucius, sons of Iulia the Elder and Agrippa
- 16 BC Marriage of Antonia Minor and Drusus I
- 16-13 BC Iulia the Elder on campaign in the East with husband and children
- 15 BC Iulia the Elder gives birth to Agrippina I
 Mint of Lugdunum opens
- 14 BC Iulia the Elder gives birth to Iulia the Younger
- 13 BC Category A minted of Iulia the Elder (RIC I² Augustus 404, 405)
- 12 BC Death of M. Vipsanius Agrippa
 Iulia the Elder gives birth to Agrippa Postumus
 Tiberius forced to divorce Vipsania and marry Iulia the Elder
- 11 BC Death of Octavia
- 10 BC Antonia Minor gives birth to Claudius
- 9 BC Death of Nero Claudius Drusus, son of Livia
- 7 BC Livia builds the *Porticus Liviae* and shrine to *Concordia*
- 6 BC Tiberius withdraws to Rhodes
- 4 BC Mints of Rome and Lugdunum close
 Moneyers' names disappear from coinage

2 BC	Iulia's affairs are exposed; Tiberius divorces her; Augustus banishes her
AD 2	Death of L. Caesar
AD 4	Death of C. Caesar
	Tiberius adopts Germanicus
	Augustus adopts Tiberius and Agrippa Postumus
AD 5	Marriage of Agrippina the Elder and Germanicus
AD 6	Agrippina the Elder gives birth to Nero Caesar
AD 7	Agrippina the Elder gives birth to Drusus Caesar
AD 8	Iulia the Younger banished by Augustus for adultery
AD 12	Agrippina the Elder gives birth to Caligula
AD 14	Death and deification of Augustus; Livia becomes priestess and gains new honors
	Posthumous adoption of Livia by Augustus; renamed Iulia Augusta
	Ascension of Tiberius; assassination of Agrippa Postumus
	Death of Iulia the Elder in exile, starved by Tiberius
AD 15	Agrippina the Elder gives birth to Agrippina the Younger
AD 15-16	Category B minted of Livia (RIC I ² Tiberius 71, 72, 73)
AD 16	Agrippina the Elder gives birth to Iulia Drusilla
AD 18	Agrippina the Elder gives birth to Iulia Livilla
AD 19	Death of Germanicus
AD 22	Livia falls ill; Tiberius rushes to her side and throws games after her recovery
AD 22-23	Category C minted of Livia (RIC I ² Tiberius 50, 51)
AD 23	Death of Tiberius' heir, Drusus Caesar
AD 26	Tiberius retires to Capri; Caligula and Ti. Gemellus eventually join him

- AD 28 Marriage of Agrippina II and Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus
- AD 29 Death of Livia; Tiberius forbids her deification
Tiberius exiles Agrippina the Elder for accusing him of trying to poison her
- AD 30 Poppaea Sabina is born
Aelia Paetina gives birth to Claudia Antonia
- AD 31 Tiberius executes L. Aelius Seianus for treason; Livilla I punished
- AD 33 Death of Agrippina the Elder
- AD 37 Death of Antonia Minor
Death of Tiberius; ascension of Caligula
Caligula forces Ti. Gemellus to commit suicide
Caligula reforms the reputation of the late Agrippina the Elder
Caligula gives honors to Antonia Minor
Agrippina the Younger gives birth to L. Domitius Ahenobarbus
- AD 37-38 Category E minted of Drusilla, Livilla, and Agrippina II (RIC I² Caligula 33)
Category D-1 minted of Agrippina the Elder (RIC I² Caligula 7, 8, 13, 14)
- AD 37-41 Category C minted of Agrippina the Elder (RIC I² Caligula 55)
- AD 38 Death and deification of Iulia Drusilla; first Julio-Claudian female to be deified
Marriage of Valeria Messalina and Claudius
- AD 39 M. Lepidus is executed for treason; Agrippina II and Iulia Livilla are exiled
Valeria Messalina gives birth to Claudia Octavia
- AD 39-40 Category E minted of Drusilla, Livilla, and Agrippina II (RIC I² Caligula 41)
- AD 40 Category D-1 minted of Agrippina the Elder (RIC I² Caligula 21, 22)

- AD 41 Category D-1 minted of Agrippina the Elder (RIC I² Caligula 30)
 Assassination of Caligula, Caesonia and Iulia Drusilla by Cassius Chaerea
 Ascension of Claudius; first emperor to be declared by army
 Claudius banishes Iulia Livilla for treason
 Valeria Messalina gives birth to Britannicus
- AD 41-45 Category F-2 and G minted of Antonia Minor (RIC I² Claudius 65, 66)
 Category F-2 and H minted of Antonia Minor (RIC I² Claudius 67, 68)
- AD 41-50 Category F-1 minted of Antonia Minor (RIC I² Claudius 92, 104)
- AD 42 Claudius deifies Livia
- AD 42-50 Category I minted of Livia (RIC I² Claudius 101)
- AD 43 Claudius conquers Britain; son is styled Britannicus
 Marriage of Claudia Antonia and Cn. Pompeius Magnus
- AD 43-48 Category D-1 minted of Valeria Messalina (RIC I² Claudius 124)
 Category J minted of Claudia Octavia and Claudia Antonia (RIC I² Claudius 124)
- AD 44 Marriage of Poppaea Sabina and Rufrius Crispinus
- AD 48 Execution of Pompeius, husband of Claudia Antonia, on unsupported charges
 Marriage of Claudia Antonia and Faustus Sulla, half-brother of Messalina
 Claudia Antonia gives birth to Pompeius' son
 Execution of Valeria Messalina for adultery and sedition
- AD 49 Marriage of Claudius and Agrippina the Younger
- AD 50 Claudius adopts L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, who is renamed Nero
 Agrippina the Younger made *Augusta*

- AD 50-51 Category D-1 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Claudius 117)
 Category K minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Claudius 119)
- AD 50-54 Category D-2 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Claudius 75, 80, 81)
 Category C and D-1 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Claudius 103)
 Category D-1 minted of Agrippina the Elder (RIC I² Claudius 102)
- AD 53 Marriage of Nero and Claudia Octavia
- AD 54 Assassination of Claudius by Agrippina the Younger; ascension of Nero
 Deification of Claudius; Agrippina II becomes priestess and is given lictors
 Category D-3 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Nero 1, 2)
 Category D-4 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Nero 3)
- AD 54-60 Category D-1 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Nero 607, 611)
 Category L minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Nero 608, 610)
 Category D-5 minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Nero 609, 612)
- AD 55 Assassination of Britannicus by Nero
 Category K minted of Agrippina the Younger (RIC I² Nero 6, 7)
- AD 58 Marriage of Poppaea Sabina and Otho
- AD 59 Assassination of Agrippina the Younger by Nero
- AD 62 Nero divorces and executes Claudia Octavia on false charges of adultery
 Marriage of Nero and Poppaea Sabina
- AD 63 Poppaea Sabina gives birth to Claudia Augusta
 Death of Claudia Augusta at four months old
- AD 64 Rome catches fire and Nero is blamed by the people
 Coinage is debased to pay for repairs

- AD 64-65 Category M minted of Poppaea Sabina (RIC I² Nero 44, 45)
- AD 65 Nero murders Poppaea Sabina while she is pregnant in a rage
Deification of Poppaea Sabina
Nero murders Claudia Antonia for refusing to marry him
- AD 65-66 Multiple conspiracies against Nero
Category M minted of Poppaea Sabina (RIC I² Nero 56, 57)
- AD 68 Nero is forced to commit suicide; end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty

APPENDIX C: IMPERIAL ROMAN COINAGE SYSTEM

The imperial Roman coinage system started under the reign of Augustus and the prices remained relatively stable throughout the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

Table C.1: Relative Values of Roman Coinage

Aureus	Gold Quinarii	Denarii	Silver Quinarii	Sestertii	Dupondii	Asses	Semisses	Quadrantes
1	2	25	50	100	200	400	800	1600

Table C.2: Materials of Coin Denominations

Coin Denomination	Metal Material
Aureus	Gold
Denarius	Silver
Quinarius	Gold or Silver
Sestertius	Orichalcum
Dupondius	Orichalcum
As	Copper
Semis	Copper
Quadrans	Copper

APPENDIX D: ASSEMBLAGE LIST

This list is added here so that it may be easily referenced while reading this paper.

Categories, names, years, and denominations are mentioned often, and it may be difficult at times to keep them all straight. Therefore, in addition to the noted mint dates in the Appendix B timeline, this appendix clarifies the year, authority, RIC I² coin number, side, woman, category, and denomination of each coin in this assemblage for easy access.

Table D.1: List of Images in Assemblage

Dates	Authority	RIC I² Number	Side	Woman	Category	Denomination
13 BC	Augustus	404	Reverse	Iulia Augusti f.	A	Denarius
13 BC	Augustus	405	Reverse	Iulia Augusti f.	A	Denarius
AD 15-16	Tiberius	71	Reverse	Livia	B	As
AD 15-16	Tiberius	72	Reverse	Livia	B	As
AD 15-16	Tiberius	73	Reverse	Livia	B	As
AD 22-23	Tiberius	50	Obverse	Livia	C	Sestertius
AD 22-23	Tiberius	51	Obverse	Livia	C	Sestertius
AD 37-38	Caligula	7	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Aureus
AD 37-38	Caligula	8	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Denarius
AD 37-38	Caligula	13	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Aureus
AD 37-38	Caligula	14	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Denarius
AD 37-38	Caligula	33	Reverse	Agrippina II, Iulia Drusilla, Iulia Livilla	E	Sestertius
AD 37-41	Caligula	55	Obverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Sestertius
AD 37-41	Caligula	55	Reverse	Agrippina I	C	Sestertius
AD 39-40	Caligula	41	Reverse	Agrippina II, Iulia Drusilla, Iulia Livilla	E	Sestertius
AD 40	Caligula	21	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Aureus
AD 40	Caligula	22	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Denarius
AD 41	Caligula	30	Reverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Denarius
AD 41-45	Claudius	65	Obverse	Antonia Minor	F-2	Aureus
AD 41-45	Claudius	65	Reverse	Antonia Minor	G	Aureus
AD 41-45	Claudius	66	Obverse	Antonia Minor	F-2	Denarius
AD 41-45	Claudius	66	Reverse	Antonia Minor	G	Denarius

Table D.1: Continued

AD 41-45	Claudius	67	Obverse	Antonia Minor	F-2	Aureus
AD 41-45	Claudius	67	Reverse	Antonia Minor	H	Aureus
AD 41-45	Claudius	68	Obverse	Antonia Minor	F-2	Denarius
AD 41-45	Claudius	68	Reverse	Antonia Minor	H	Denarius
AD 41-50	Claudius	92	Obverse	Antonia Minor	F-1	Dupondius
AD 41-50	Claudius	104	Obverse	Antonia Minor	F-1	Dupondius
AD 42-50	Claudius	101	Reverse	Livia	I	Dupondius
AD 43-48	Claudius	124	Obverse	Valeria Messalina	D-1	Didrachm
AD 43-48	Claudius	124	Reverse	Claudia Octavia, Claudia Antonia	J	Didrachm
AD 50-51	Claudius	117	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-1	Cistophorus
AD 50-51	Claudius	119	Obverse	Agrippina II	K	Cistophorus
AD 50-54	Claudius	75	Obverse	Agrippina II	D-2	Denarius
AD 50-54	Claudius	80	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-2	Aureus
AD 50-54	Claudius	81	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-2	Denarius
AD 50-54	Claudius	102	Obverse	Agrippina I	D-1	Sestertius
AD 50-54	Claudius	103	Obverse	Agrippina II	D-1	Sestertius
AD 50-54	Claudius	103	Reverse	Agrippina II	C	Sestertius
AD 54	Nero	1	Obverse	Agrippina II	D-3	Aureus
AD 54	Nero	2	Obverse	Agrippina II	D-3	Denarius
AD 54	Nero	3	Obverse	Agrippina II	D-4	Aureus
AD 54-60	Nero	607	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-1	Didrachm
AD 54-60	Nero	608	Reverse	Agrippina II	L	Didrachm
AD 54-60	Nero	609	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-5	As
AD 54-60	Nero	610	Reverse	Agrippina II	L	Drachma
AD 54-60	Nero	611	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-1	Drachma
AD 54-60	Nero	612	Reverse	Agrippina II	D-5	As
AD 55	Nero	6	Reverse	Agrippina II	K	Aureus
AD 55	Nero	7	Reverse	Agrippina II	K	Denarius
AD 64-65	Nero	44	Reverse	Poppaea Sabina	M	Aureus
AD 64-65	Nero	45	Reverse	Poppaea Sabina	M	Denarius
AD 65-66	Nero	56	Reverse	Poppaea Sabina	M	Aureus
AD 65-66	Nero	57	Reverse	Poppaea Sabina	M	Denarius