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## Power of Beast: The Capitoline Wolf as an Element in the Construction of Roman Identity

*Moc bestii: wilczyca kapitołińska jako element konstrukcji tożsamości rzymskiej*

### ABSTRACT

One of the important hashtags of the modern perception of the history of Ancient Rome is the Capitoline Wolf. The article develops the issue of the iconography of the plot about the miraculous rescue of Romulus and Remus based on the analysis of numismatic sources. Since coins are a complex source, it has been established that the magistrates of the Greek cities of the eastern provinces of the Roman state placed the Capitoline Wolf and twins on exchange coins. If it was a question of minting in veteran colonies, then the legend on such coins provides us with the name of the settlement. It is also important that in the semi-autonomous minting of cities, local elites combined the Capitoline Wolf with the figures of local deities, the personification of the demos or important local socio-political phenomena. Thus, this image became an important part of the identity of the population of the 2nd–3rd centuries AD. Such coins were not issued for decades,

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but given that most cities minted coins for a very short time, the presence of coins with a Lupa Capitolina among the issues is important. It is interesting that it was during this period that very archaic myths were revived in coinage.

**Key words:** ancient history, Roman myths, Capitoline Wolf, numismatics, roman province Asia, coinage

#### STRESZCZENIE

Jednym z ważnych hashtagów współczesnej percepcji historii starożytnego Rzymu jest Wilczyca Kapitolinińska. Artykuł rozwija kwestię ikonografii fabuły o cudownym ocaleniu Romulusa i Remusa na podstawie analizy źródeł numizmatycznych. Ponieważ monety są złożonym źródłem, ustalono, że urzędnicy miast greckich wschodnich prowincji państwa rzymskiego umieszczali Wilczycę Kapitolinińską i bliźnięta na monetach wymiennych. Jeśli chodziło o bicie w koloniach weteranów, to legenda na takich monetach dostarcza nam nazwy osady. Ważne jest również to, że w półautonomicznym bicie miast lokalne elity łączyły Wilczycę Kapitolinińską z postaciami lokalnych bóstw, personifikacją demosa lub ważnymi lokalnymi zjawiskami społeczno-politycznymi. W ten sposób obraz ten stał się ważną częścią tożsamości ludności II–III w. n.e. Takie monety nie były wydawane przez dziesięciolecia, ale biorąc pod uwagę, że większość miast biła monety przez bardzo krótki czas, obecność monet z Lupa Capitolina wśród emisji jest ważna. Ciekawe, że to właśnie w tym okresie bardzo archaiczne mity odżyły w mennictwie.

**Słowa kluczowe:** historia starożytna, mity rzymskie, Wilczyca Kapitolinińska, numizmatyka, prowincja rzymska w Azji, mennictwo

History is always associated with significant events, figures and symbols. Symbols are secret signs of mutual agreement between generations and codes of access to information. In one way or another, any society has created a language of symbols for local communities and large empires. Symbols of power and successful historical projects became the heritage of next generations, who tried to repeat the success or take credit for the history of success. A symbol is a visual substitute for a word, an idea, a concept, and universal symbols can combine all three of these categories.

It is difficult to explain why but symbolic language, like explaining something through myth or parable, is used by people in cases where ordinary language is not enough. As E. Wipszycka rightly points out, myths told some important truths about gods and the world that could not be told otherwise than through myth<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, the desire to deepen one's roots to the maximum depth and prove the right to exist through antiquity was practiced in these times. Roman thinkers searched for the origins of Rome under the walls of Troy, and European philosophers sought the basis for the self-identification of medieval peoples within the ruins of Rome. Rome itself was looking for symbols to build

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<sup>1</sup> E. Wipszycka, *O starożytności polemicznie*, Warszawa 1994, p. 33.

the identity of a citizen of the city and the state, and then these symbols became symbols of Rome for us. James Boyd White spoke about the ability of symbols to create a collective identity for the audience in the theory of constructive discourse<sup>2</sup>. From the point of view of a modern person, the history of the Roman state is associated with an aggressive policy of conquest, domination and the imposition of new cultural practices and symbols. The list of these symbols may vary from country to country, but there are certain constant elements-symbols. For example, for a modern person, knowing the meaning of the abbreviation SPQR, the phrases Pax Romana, Imperium Romanum, ROMA AETERNA, and knowing a few Latin maxims that have long been slogans of advertising companies automatically gives one the right to be called an educated person and consider oneself to be in touch with the high culture of antiquity. Famous and recognizable symbols of ancient Rome in modern culture include various weapons and military armor, the Colosseum, gladiators, inscriptions in classical Latin and even the writing font Times New Roman!

One of the most prominent symbols is an eagle with outstretched wings and the Capitoline Wolf. An analysis of iconographic sources suggests that the eagle as a symbol of power had been known even before the beginning of the Roman presence not only on the Apennine Peninsula but also in the Mediterranean, while the Capitoline Wolf is a rather interesting object of study. Usually, Roman history shows examples of the spread of mythological stories and religious practices from east to west, but the example of the Capitoline Wolf is one of the few examples of a myth coming from west to east. Why is this interesting? Because in one way or another, Romanization or 'Romanization' took place in the region as a practice of voluntary adoption of Roman spiritual values, and it is important for historians and cultural studies to trace exactly what symbols and signs of this were considered significant and acceptable. Right now, in case of war in Ukraine and occupation, elements of ancient coins iconography and phrases can show the ways in which Roman identity was imposed in a Greek or non-Roman environment.

It is a well-known fact that for the history of ancient Greece and Rome, mythology remains one of the most important sources of reconstruction of the beginnings. And one of the key episodes of Roman history is the childhood of Romulus and Remus and the story of the Capitoline Wolf. Later, from a purely dictionarial appearance, the Capitoline Wolf takes on the form of a well-established and well-known bronze statue known as Lupa Capitolina. This image, along with the abbreviation SPQR in a bay

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<sup>2</sup> J. Boyd White, *Heracles' Bow: Essays on the Rhetoric and Poetics of the Law*, Madison 1985, p. 37.

wreath, can be found most often in the visual sources of contemporary mass culture. But how did this visualization come about and what do ancient sources tell us about the statue?

Guided by the words of Livy: 'The traditions of what happened before the foundation of the City or whilst it was being built, are more fitted to adorn the creations of the poet than the authentic records of the historian, and I have no intention of establishing either their truth or their falsity', we only briefly mention that Pliny the Elder says '...A group in bronze was afterwards erected to consecrate the remembrance of this miraculous event, as, through the agency of Attus Navius the augur, the tree itself had passed spontaneously from its original locality'. (Plin. Nat. 15.20) Cicero also mentions 'You remember, of course, that in the consulship of Cotta and Torquatus a large number of objects on the Capitol were struck by lightning...even the statue of Romulus, the founder of Rome, was struck-you remember that it was a gilt statue on the Capitol of a baby being given suck from the udders of a Wolf' (Cic. In Catilinam 3.19.) The same event is mentioned by him in De Divinatione, 'The statue of the infant Romulus, you observe, was struck by a thunderbolt' (Cic., De div. 2.47).

Leaving aside the discussion about the history of creation and the original appearance of the well-known statue of the Capitoline Wolf, numismatic sources show a fairly consistent iconography of the myth of the childhood of the founders of Rome. The plots of archaic myths in coinage have been analyzed in a number of previous publications<sup>3</sup>. Agata Kluczek,

<sup>3</sup> M.I. Stefanakis, N.P.M. Konstantinidi, *Associating the image with the myth on ancient cretan coins: Three case-studies*, "Fortunatae" 2020, 32, pp. 757–785; J.A. Ostrowski, *Personifications of rivers in Greek and Roman art*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Prace Archeologiczne" 1991, 964, 47; idem *Personifications of Countries and Cities as a Symbol of Victory in Greek and Roman Art*, in: *Griechenland und Rom. Vergleichende Untersuchungen zu Entwicklungstendenzen und -höhepunkten der antiken Geschichte, Kunst und Literatur*, ed. E.G. Schmidt, Tbilissi–Erlangen–Jena 1996, pp. 264–272; *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces*, eds. C. Howgego, V. Heuchert, A. Burnett, Oxford–New York 2005; *Myth and Coinage. Representations, Symbolisms and Interpretations from the Greek Mythology*, Athens 2011; E. Manders, *Coining Images of Power. Patterns in the Representation of Roman Emperors on Imperial Coinage A.D. 193–284*, Leiden–Boston–Tokyo 2012; K. Balbuza *The Idea of aeternitas of State, City and Emperor in Augustan Poetry*, "Klio" 2014, 96, 1, pp. 49–66; eadem, *Personifikacja Aeternitas na monetach rzymskich propagujących ideę wieczności cesarza*, "Studia Europaea Gnesnensia" 2013, 8, pp. 7–27; eadem, *Roma Aeterna i inne wątki "wieczne" w mennictwie rzymskim okresu kryzysu III wieku. Znaczenie ideologiczne*, in: *Rzymski Zachód*, ed. M. Pawlak, Kraków 2017, pp. 75–86; O. Tekin, *River-Gods in Cilicia in the Light of Numismatic Evidence*, in: *La Cilicie : espaces et pouvoirs locaux (IIe millénaire av. J.-C. – IVe siècle ap. J.-C.)*. Actes de la Table Ronde d'Istanbul, 2–5 novembre 1999, eds. E. Jean, A.M. Dinçol, S. Durugönül, Istanbul 2001, pp. 519–551 (*Varia Anatolica*, 13); <https://www.persee.fr/doc/>

who has repeatedly studied the issue of mythical subjects in Roman coinage<sup>4</sup>, recently published extensive article 'Krajobraz początków Rzymu. Uwagi o wyobrażeniach na rzymskich monetach Landscape of the Origins of Rome. Notes on the Iconography of Roman Coins'<sup>5</sup>. However, the purpose of this study is to analyze the use of the Capitoline Wolf in the construction of the Roman identity of the population outside the borders of the Eternal City. It is important to recall that the coins contained not only a picture, but the very combination of a picture and a legend that provided space for preserving one's identity or adopting elements of identity from outside. In the context of the imposition of the identity of the conquering state on the occupied territories, the analysis of ancient examples of changing symbols and meanings is extremely relevant. This will be the focus of the proposed article.

In general, the coin types are also divided into two groups: images of only a walking Capitoline Wolf or her with twins under her belly. As a result, the iconography of the coins cannot be used in any way to answer the question of what the statue looked like. The earliest depiction of this image is on a bronze asiatic (AE As) from Panormos, Sicily, ca 120 BC P. Terentius, magistrate. Laureate and bearded head of Janus; I above / P. TE, Capitoline Wolf standing right, head reversed, suckling the twins Romulus and Remus<sup>6</sup>. A coin from Apamea, Bithynia, is dated to about 27 BC. The issue of the coin was initiated by Appius Claudius Pulcher, proconsul; C. Cassius C.f., duovir. AP PVLCHER PRO COS, bare head of Appius Claudius Pulcher right / C CASSIVS C F II VIR F C AVG DI F S C C R and thanks to the composition with a wolf standing right, and the twins Romulus and Remus feeding on its teats, we know about the activities of these officials<sup>7</sup>.

The second subject, where a wolf walking to the side with breasts engorged after giving birth clearly depicted, appears in the 77 BC P. Satrienus coinage. On one side is the helmeted head of Mars to the right. On the other side is the legend 'ROMA' above, Capitoline Wolf walking left;

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anatv\_1013-9559\_2001\_act\_13\_1\_1006 [access: 26.12.2024]; A. Baukova, "Unseen God" or "Giver of Wealth"? Image of Hades on Ancient Coins, *"Archeologia"* 2024, 3, pp. 40–53.

<sup>4</sup> A.A. Kluczek, *Ex nummis historia. Szkice o obrazach numizmatycznych w badaniach nad dziejami starożytnego Rzymu*, Katowice 2021; eadem, *Primordia Romana. Mityczna przeszłość Rzymu i pamięć o niej w rzymskich numizmatach zakłeta*, Katowice 2019.

<sup>5</sup> A.A. Kluczek, *Krajobraz początków Rzymu. Uwagi o wyobrażeniach na rzymskich monetach*, *"Res Historica"* 2024, 57, pp. 27–54.

<sup>6</sup> *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, USA, The Collection of the American Numismatic Society*, New York, 1977 [hereinafter: SNG ANS], p. 603.

<sup>7</sup> A. Burnett et al., *Roman Provincial Coinage I: From the death of Caesar to the death of Vitellius (44 BC-AD 69)*, London 1992 [hereinafter: RPC I], p. 2009.

P SATRIE-NVS in two lines below. On the coins with the bust of Augustus and the legend IMP AVGVST DIVI F from Ilerda, Spain or with the bust of Emperor Trajan, the Capitoline Wolf is moving to the side. A variant of this subject is a coin from Cyzicus with a bust of Commodus, where a wolf is walking to the left, carrying her young in her mouth<sup>8</sup>.

One would expect that the Roman state, or the rulers represented by this state, would instill significant values in its citizens through propaganda, including imbuing desired qualities in higher-grade coins. Instead, the Capitoline Wolf can be seen more often on small denominations that served local markets. Examples of gold and silver coins of various denominations are all the more valuable. The quintessence of this statement is the complex composition of the reverse of the aureus, which was stolen by Titus as then Caesar in Rome, struck under Vespasian, AD 77–78. The reverse of the coin bears the legend COS VI beneath goddess Roma, holding spear, seated right on shields, right leg drawn back and resting on helmet, two ravens or eagles flying towards her to left and right, she-wolf with twins at foot right<sup>9</sup>. Subsequently, Domitian in 77–78 AD minted aureus with legend CAESAR AVG F DOMITIANVS, / COS V above she-wolf suckling infants Romulus and Remus, boat in exergue<sup>10</sup>. A similar composition and an almost identical legend are found on a silver denarius with a bust of the emperor. The next is a silver denarius with a bust of Antoninus Pius, dated 140 AD. The legend indicates the status of the emperor ANTONINVS AVG PIVS PP, / TR POT COS III, and a she-wolf standing right in a cave, with the twins Romulus and Remus feeding on its teats. The same composition is on AE Sestertius of the same emperor.

It is interesting that the Capitoline Wolf and the twins Romulus and Remus were primarily part of the Roman identity in the Roman colonies in the eastern part of the state. Most often we can see this plot on the coins of the colony of Antioch, Pisidia. Such coins always include a bust of the emperor on one side, accompanied by a corresponding legend, and a well-established composition with the Capitoline Wolf looking caringly towards the children. The name of the colony is inscribed in different ways by the issuers: at the time of Marcus Aurelius, it was ANTIOCHEAE COLONIAE<sup>11</sup>,

<sup>8</sup> H. Lindgren, *Lindgren III: Ancient Greek Bronze Coins from the Lindgren Collection*, Quarryville 1993, p. 246.

<sup>9</sup> C.H.V. Sutherland, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. 1, *From 39 BC to AD 69*, London 1984 [hereinafter: RIC I], p. 954.

<sup>10</sup> X.E. Calicó, *The Roman Avrei*, vol. 1, *From the Republic to Pertinax*, 196 BC–193 AD, Barcelona 2003, p. 820.

<sup>11</sup> *A catalogue of the Greek coins in the British Museum: Catalogue of the Greek coins of Lycia, Pamphylia and Pisidia*, London 1897 [hereinafter: BMC], p. 8.



COL CAES ANTIOCH at the time of Caracalla or Geta<sup>12</sup>, CAES ANTIOCH COL SR at the time of Gordian III<sup>13</sup>. In order to understand the significance of this fact, it is important to emphasize that the city began minting coins only at the end of the first century BC and the iconography of the coins was mainly based on the figures of the Phrygian Mên, the goddess Tyche, and Nike. In the time of Marcus Aurelius, the Capitoline Wolf appeared, but coinage reached its peak in the Commodus period, the reign of the Severan dynasty, especially in the reign of Claudius II. However, coins with the latter's bust were now consistently bearing a composition of a Vexillum between two standards or an eagle, i.e. Roman symbols of a different type.

During the reign of Emperor Vespasian, a colony was built for veterans of the VIII Augusta legion and it was named Colonia Flavia Pacis Deultensium. Obviously, coinage was not one of the foundations of the colony's existence, but this process began under Emperor Trajan. However, the really large issues occurred during the reign of Emperor Macrinus. During his less than one year of rule in 217–218, 35 coins were minted in Deultum, a good half of which had themes on local topics of Asclepius and Hygieia, as the city was the center of these cults. The second part was devoted to the construction of the image of the emperor and the state he represented. The inclusion of the story of the Capitoline Wolf helped with this. At the same time, the legend for the colony's name was developed – COL FL PAC DEULT. In the coinage of Emperor Macrinus<sup>14</sup>, Diadumenian<sup>15</sup>, on coins with the bust of Julia Mamaea<sup>16</sup>, Maximinus I<sup>17</sup>, Gordian III<sup>18</sup>, Otacilia Severa<sup>19</sup>, we see the use of a stable die, that is, we can talk about a well-established composition and developed minting canons.

When in 6 BCE Augustus made Lystra a colony under the name of Colonia Iulia Felix Gemina, small and very sporadic coinage was also produced here. Mostly their themes were based on typically Roman subjects with figures of Minerva, Ceres, a colonist ploughing left with two

<sup>12</sup> *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, France, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles*, vol. 3, *Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, Galatia*, Paris 1994 [hereinafter: SNG France III], p. 1168.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 1196.

<sup>14</sup> I. Varbanov, *Greek Imperial Coins And Their Values*, vol. 3, *Thrace (from Perinthus to Trajanopolis), Chersonesos Thraciae, Insula Thraciae, Macedonia*, Bourgas 2007, p. 2159.

<sup>15</sup> *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, Bulgaria, The Bobokov Bros. Collection, Thrace & Moesia Inferior*, vol. 1, *Deultum*, Sofia 2005, pp. 214–216.

<sup>16</sup> Н. Мушмов, *Античните монети на Балканския полуостров и монетите на българските царе*, София 1912, p. 3615.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 3636.

<sup>18</sup> I. Varbanov, *op. cit.*, p. 2871.

<sup>19</sup> BMC, p. 28.

oxen and a single issue with a bust of Marcus Aurelius (AD 139–161) with the legend COL AVG E LVSTRA showing a Capitoline Wolf standing right, feeding the twins Romulus and Remus<sup>20</sup>. Such an important city as Nikopolis ad Istrum also honored the emperors Commodus<sup>21</sup> and Septimius Severus<sup>22</sup> by placing on the reverse side of their coins the busts of the Capitoline Wolf and twins. This iconography was also adopted in Philippopolis in Thrace<sup>23</sup>.

Another example the Capitoline Wolf in the coinage of the colony Nicaeae Claudiopoli (Cilicia, modern day Mut) with the busts of Severus Alexander<sup>24</sup> and Maximinus I and the legend NINIC COL CLAVΔIOPOL<sup>25</sup>. Important details are noted in the legend of silvered antoninianus minted in Sisak (Siscia) in the time of Probus. Near the Capitoline Wolf right suckling twins is the legend AETERNITAS AVG<sup>26</sup>. Another one contains the same composition and the legend ORIGINI AVG<sup>27</sup>.

How far east could the Capitoline Wolf have 'moved'? It is obvious that such a large commercial and administrative center as Alexandria had developed concepts and models of monetary policy, but even here this image appears twice. The Capitoline Wolf, accompanied by twins, appears on a copper tetradrachm with a bust of Marcus Aurelius as Caesar. The coin is dated to Year 14, i.e. 150–151 AD, and has a rather substantial weight of 14.14g and a diameter of 23mm. M AVPHAIC KAICAP, bare-headed, draped bust right / ΛI&Delta above she-wolf standing right, head turned back, suckling the twins Romulus and Remus<sup>28</sup>. The second appearance of this scene is on a bilon tetradrachm with a bust of Septimius Severus dated to year 14 (AD 234–235). 23.01mm, 13.12 g. The legend calls the ruler A KAI MAP AVP CEV AΛEXANΔPOC E, and on the reverse of the coin is Capitoline Wolf, feeding the twins, horizontal palm branch above. Date ΛΙΑ in exergue<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> H. von Aulock, *Münzen und Städte Lykaoniens*, Tübingen 1976, p. 518.

<sup>21</sup> I. Varbanov, *op. cit.*, p. 2205.

<sup>22</sup> B. Pick, *Die antiken Münzen von Dacien und Moesien, Die antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*, vol. 1/1, *Dacia and Moesia*, Berlin 1898, p. 1408 var.

<sup>23</sup> I. Varbanov, *op. cit.*, p. 1119.

<sup>24</sup> R. Ziegler, *Münzen Kilikiens aus kleineren deutschen Sammlungen*, Munich 1988, p. 325.

<sup>25</sup> *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, France, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Médailles*, vol. 2, *Cilicia*, Paris 1993, p. 791.

<sup>26</sup> RIC I, p. 639 var.

<sup>27</sup> H. Cohen, *Description historique des monnaies frappées sous l'Empire Romain*, vol. 6, *Macrianus to Diocletian & Maximianus*, Paris 1886, p. 393.

<sup>28</sup> J. Milne, *A Catalogue of the Alexandrian Coins in the Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford 1933, p. 2082.

<sup>29</sup> G. Dattari, *Numi Augg. Alexandrini*, Cairo 1901, p. 4418.



The composition is found furthest to the east in the coinage of Laodikeia in Syria during the reign of Macrinus. Laureate head of emperor right with legend IMP C M OP SEVE MACRINO / ROMAE FEL, she-wolf feeding the twins Romulus and Remus<sup>30</sup>. On the coin with the bust of Otacilia Severa (AD 244–249) from Damascus, Syria is located legend COL DAMA METR, and near she-wolf with the twins suckling on her teats before a vexillum inscribed LEG VI F; head of ram right below<sup>31</sup>.

However, the most important thing to analyse is the coinage of colonies and cities in the Roman province of Asia, as it was a significant region for the formation of Roman identity as such. It was under the walls of Troy that the history of Rome began, and within the walls of the cities of the region, and through coinage, a new mythical component of Roman identity was created. In general, the province was not a region where veterans' colonies were organized and there was no significant layer of military personnel for whom military themes or the display of Roman symbols would be extremely important. However, the province was a territory of economically important objects, a place of recreation and pilgrimage for representatives of the Roman elites, and therefore the cultural heritage of common history was a way of propaganda and the struggle for privilege. Another important aspect is that the cities of the province had a long and developed practice of coinage and a system of local markets that required bargaining power. These were the prerequisites for using the story of Romulus and Remus' childhood for their own purposes.

First of all, let us consider the minting of the colony near Alexandria Troas. Strabo says that in his time Alexandreia continued to exist, and became a large place; at present it has received a Roman colony, and is reckoned among celebrated cities (Strab. 13.1.26). The city had a long history of minting, but it is noteworthy that Colonia Alexandria Augusta Troas, unlike other colonies, minted semi-autonomous coins with the constant composition CO (ALEX) TRO, Turreted and draped bust of Tyche right; CO AV on vexillum to left during the second – third centuries AD. On the other side of the coin could be an image of the emperor in armor an eagle with open wings, a horse, etc. It is important that the 200–268 period is dated to the issues with the composition COL AVG TRO, she-wolf and the twins<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> BMC, p. 97.

<sup>31</sup> BMC, p. 25.

<sup>32</sup> I.A. Carradice, *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, Great Britain VI, Corpus Christi College Cambridge, The Lewis Collection II: The Greek Imperial Coins*, Oxford 1992, p. 1324.

on the reverse. A similar composition adorns the coins with busts of the emperors Septimius Severus<sup>33</sup>, Valerian I<sup>34</sup> and Gallienus<sup>35</sup>.

The elites of other cities in the province of Asia did not stand aside. Since the Capitoline Wolf was a sign of Roman reality, it is quite understandable that this composition could also be used to emphasize the importance of Ephesus' right to build temples for the worship of emperors or to establish cults of members of the imperial family. It is important that the theme of the neokorate was usually illustrated through images of Tyche, an important local deity or the temples themselves, and a coin with her bust and the legend ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ Β ΝΕΟ-ΚΟΡΩΝ, surrounded by a Capitoline Wolf standing right, sucking the twins was minted in Ephesus<sup>36</sup>. The right of neokorate was noted by the magistrates of Philadelphia in Lydia on semi-autonomous coins of the Severian dynasty with the personification of a demos<sup>37</sup> and the sacred senate<sup>38</sup>. The same composition is on a coin of the third century AD from Hierapolis in Phrygia. Local traditions are conveyed through the figure of Apollo Lairbenos, and the national ideology through the Capitoline Wolf, Romulus and Remus and the legend ΙΕΡΑΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ<sup>39</sup>. The magistrates of such important economic centers as Thyateira in Lydia and Hierapolis in Phrygia chose the twins composition as one of the options for decorating coins with busts of Severus Alexander<sup>40</sup> and Otacilia Severa<sup>41</sup>.

Finally, we should mention the appearance of the Capitoline Wolf on the coins of Parium (Parion) in Mysia. Located on the border between Mysia and Troad on the one hand and Galatia on the other, this city did not leave a significant and long tradition of coinage. All the more important is the fact that several series of coins were minted in Parium (Parion), mostly depicting the Capitoline Wolf. All of them had busts of emperors from the late second and early third centuries AD – Commodus, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Alexander Severus, and Valerian II. So, we can say that

<sup>33</sup> *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum. The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals. Danish National Museum*, vol. 20, Troas, Copenhagen 1945 [hereinafter: SNG Cop.], p. 140.

<sup>34</sup> BMC, p. 184.

<sup>35</sup> SNG Cop., pp. 200–201.

<sup>36</sup> S. Karwiese, *Die Münzprägung von Ephesos. I. Die Anfänge: Die ältesten Prägungen und der Beginn der Münzprägung überhaupt*, Cologne–Weimar 1995, p. 423.

<sup>37</sup> SNG Cop., p. 361.

<sup>38</sup> D. Kurth, *Greek and Roman Provincial Coins – Lydia*, Istanbul 2020, p. 104.

<sup>39</sup> *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum Deutschland: Sammlung von Aulock*, vol. 1, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Mysia, Troas, Aiolis, Lesbos, Ionia, Berlin 1957 [hereinafter: SNG von Aulock], p. 3628.

<sup>40</sup> BMC, p. 128.

<sup>41</sup> H. Lindgren, *op. cit.*, p. 974.

during their reign there was a well-established practice of choosing subjects. However, it is thanks to the minting of the Parium (Parion) that we have an image of the wife of Emperor Aemilianus, Cornelia Supera. This emperor ruled for 4 months in 253 AD and very little is known about his wife. She was born in the province of Africa and probably married there. For 9 months in 253, she bore the title of Augusta, given to her by her husband.

The fact that the Capitoline Wolf was clearly understood as a symbol of Rome is confirmed by the minting of the usurper emperor Carausius. During his reign (AD 286–293), silver denarii with his bust and the legend IMP CARAVSIVS PF AVG were minted in London. On the other side of the coin, the image of a Capitoline Wolf and twins was complemented by the eloquent legend RENOVAT ROMAN<sup>42</sup>.

The pinnacle of how elites accepted ideas and told stories, created a common identity, is the semis from the iconic city of Ilion, Troas with the laureate head of Hadrian's right with the legend AVT KAIC TPAIANOC AΔPIANOC. On the other side is the ethnicon IAI-EQN and a complex and rich composition. Aeneas walking right, looking left, wearing cuirass and boots, leading Ascanius, wearing Phrygian cap and chiton and holding pedum, by hand and carrying his father Anchises, mantled and holding container, on his left arm. In exergue, she-wolf standing left, head turned back, suckling twins<sup>43</sup>.

A coin from Tralles, Lydia, Time of Valerian I, 253–260 AD, can also be considered as a victory for the Roman model of worldview. On the one hand, it shows the personification of Demos as unbearded, youthful, bare head of Demos right with legend IEPOC ΔHMOC / TPAΛΛIAN-Ω-N, Capitoline Wola in tradition pose<sup>44</sup>. Why is this a victory? Because the Greek model of worldview, based on the tandem of personification of the demos and emphasis on local identity, organically integrates the plot of the archaic history of the beginnings of Rome, and this Roman history becomes part of the worldview of the communities. Since the local mints of the cities of the Roman province of Asia fell into decline in the second half of the third century AD, it is not possible to trace further transformation.

Unlike other symbols of local identities, the Capitoline Wolf survived the decline of provincial local minting and is found in the decoration of coins of central mints in the second half of the 3rd–4th centuries. Interestingly, from the point of view of modernity, the AE antoninianus

<sup>42</sup> H. Mattingly, E.A. Sydenham, P. Webb, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. 5, part 2, *Probus to Amandus*, London 1933, p. 571.

<sup>43</sup> SNG von Aulock, p. 1533.

<sup>44</sup> D. Kurth, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

of Claudius II, Rome or Milan is the basis of Roman identity, as it contains a combination of the she-wolf, twins and mintmark SPQR.

The analyzed coins do not contain significant landscape details beyond the figure of the Capitoline Wolf and twins. It can be assumed that the reason for this was the limited area of the coin surface and the insignificance of these details for the consumer. On the other hand, the coins of the province of Asia rarely featured extensive mythological subjects, with the exception of coins depicting the court of Paris. Other complex plot compositions reflected events contemporary to the magistrates, such as the perpetuation of the emperor's achievements, confirmation of the right of neocorate, etc. Coins with the story of the Capitoline Wolf cannot be seen solely as an example of demonstrating the history of the beginning of Rome. For the majority of the population of the Roman state outside Rome, this story was of little importance, as most of the money users had never seen Rome. The person who made the coinage and was responsible for the iconography itself was also unlikely to have come from the Eternal City. However, the appearance of the Capitoline Wolf in the local minting of change coinage is indicative of important ethno-cultural processes.

It should be emphasized that in the case of minting in the colonies, the Capitoline Wolf plot was introduced from outside, was a kind of 'longing' for the homeland and was aimed at the population with Roman roots. In the case of the appearance of the Capitoline Wolf and twins on coins of Greek cities in combination with ethnicon, we can speak of the so-called self-romanticization or emphasis on a common mythical past. Thus, the subject under study was used sporadically, did not become dominant in the coinage of the eastern part of the empire and was one of the numerous decoration options, but the wide geography of the discovered coins indicates the spread of common cultural models and ways of reconciliation with the past. Interestingly, during the Second Sophistic, the coinage of the cities of the Roman provinces in Anatolia saw a significant increase in the use of very archaic deities and their visualizations. An example of this is the appearance on coins of Artemis Anahita, Cora, and local deities. The Capitoline Wolf was also a chronologically and mentally distant symbol, but the frequency of its use in the sources is clearly increasing over time. A geographical comparison of the finds indicates that the Capitoline Wolf is present on coins from the borderlands and important cultural and economic centers of the Roman Empire. On the coins of the rather remote eastern borders of the empire (for example, Iconium in Lycaonia or Antioch in Pisidia), local craftsmen diligently carved even images of the so-called Ficus Ruminalis (Ruminal fig tree). Strangely enough, it was the visual symbol, not the SPQR phrase, that served as the basis for the formation of the imperial presence. Interestingly, the personification

of Rome, the goddess Roma, did not 'catch on' and was unsuitable for building a common intellectual and ideological space of Roman identity. Coins were a complex medium, so the main meanings were invested in both the image and the inscription around it. That is why, without this analysis, it would be impossible to imagine how the Capitoline Wolf has become one of the hashtags of Roman heritage and the personification of Rome. The Capitoline Wolf is used in Romania and Moldova as a symbol of the Latin origin of its inhabitants, even in medieval Lviv it was common practice to decorate the palaces of magnates with statues of the Capitoline Wolf. The practice of creating the context of antiquity in museum exhibitions or in the visual design of printed materials by including an image the Capitoline Wolf sculpture may be an additional key to answering the question of the functions of her image in the history of Roman and European worldviews.



1. Panormos, Sicily. ca 120 BC. AE As. P. Terentius, magistrate. Laureate and bearded head of Janus; I above / P. TE, the she-wolf standing right, head turned back, feeding the twins Romulus and Remus. SNG ANS 603, BMC 11; SNG Cop 1050.



2. Apamea, Bithynia, AE19 Chalkous, Time of Augustus. 27 BC. 3 g. Appius Claudius Pulcher, proconsul; C. Cassius C.f., duovir. AP PVLCHER PRO COS, bare head of Appius Claudius Pulcher right / C CASSIVS C F II VIR F C AVG D I F S C C R, the she-wolf standing right, with the twins Romulus and Remus suckling on its teats. RPC I 2009.





3. Commodus AE23 of Cyzicus, Mysia. AD 184–190. AY KAI AYP KOMMOΔOC, laureate, draped and cuirassed bust right. / KYZIKHNQN, the she-wolf walking left, carrying her young in her mouth. H. Lindgren, *op. cit.*, p. 246.



4. AV Aureus, Rome, struck under Vespasian, AD 77–78. 18 mm, 7.34 g. T CAESAR IMP VESPASIANVS, laureate head right. / COS VI beneath Roma, holding spear, seated right on shields, right leg drawn back and resting on a helmet, two ravens or eagles flying towards her to left and right, the she-wolf with twins at foot right. RIC I 954 (Vespasian).



5. Domitian AV Aureus. 77–78 AD. CAESAR AVG F DOMITIANVS, laureate head right / COS V above the she-wolf with infants Romulus & Remus suckling on its breasts, boat in exergue. Calico 820.





6. Marcus Aurelius AE18 of Antioch, Pisidia. AD 161–180. 2.9 g. CAESAR AVRELIVS, bare and draped bust right. / ANTIOCHEAE COLONIAE, the she-wolf standing right, feeding the twins Romulus and Remus. BMC 8.



7. Geta, AE32 of Antioch, Pisidia. 23.8g. IMP CAES P SEPT GETA AVG, laureate head right / CAES ANTIOCH COL, S R, the she-wolf standing right, the twins Romulus and Remus feeding on her breasts. SNG France III, 1168.



8. Macrinus, AE24 of Deultum, Thrace. AD 217–218. IMP M OPEL SEV MACRINVS AV, radiate, cuirassed bust right. / COL FL PAC DEVL T, the she-wolf standing right, with the twins Romulus and Remus sucking on her breasts. I. Varbanov, *op. cit.*, p. 2159.



9. Marcus Aurelius, AE16 of Lystra, Lycaonia. 4.4 g. AD 139–161. CAESAR AVRELIVS, bare head right / COL AVG E LVSTRA, the she-wolf standing right, with the twins Romulus and Remus sucking on her breasts. H. von Aulock, *op. cit.*, p. 518.



10. Probus AE Antoninianus. Siscia, 280 AD. IMP C PROBUS P F AVG, radiate, cuirassed bust right / ORIGINI AVG, the she-wolf standing right, feeding Romulus and Remus. Mintmark XXIT. Cohen 394.



11. Macrinus AE 28mm of Laodikeia in Syria. IMP C M OP SEVE MACRINO, laureate head right / ROMAE FEL, the she-wolf feeding the twins Romulus and Remus. BMC 97.



12. Alexandria Troas. Civic Issue. c2nd–3rd Century AD. AE 20mm. CO ALEX TR CO AV, Turreted and draped bust of Tyche right; vexillum behind / COL AVG TROA, the wolf and twins. SNG Cop 104.



13. Septimius Severus, AE21 of Ephesos, Ionia. AD 193–211. 4.95 g. ΑΥΤ Κ Λ CΕ CΕΟΥΗΡΟC, laureate head right. / ΕΦΕCΙΩΝ Β-ΝΕΟΚΟΡΩΝ, the she-wolf standing right, feeding the twins Romulus and Remus. Karwiese 423c.



14. Philadelphia, Lydia, AE27, semi-autonomous. AD 193–250. ΙΕΡΑ CΥΝΚΛΗΤΟC, bare-headed, draped bust of the Senate left / ΦΛ ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΕΩΝ Ε ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ, the she-wolf standing left, head turned back, Romulus and Remus suckling on her teats. D. Kurth, *op. cit.*, p. 104.





15. Hierapolis, Phrygia. AE23. semi-autonomous, 3rd c. AD. ΛΑΙΡΒΗΝΟC, radiate, draped bust of Apollo Laërtes right, uncertain countermark / ΙΕΡΑΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ, the she-wolf standing left, the twins Romulus and Remus feeding on her milk. SNG von Aulock 3628.



16. Hadrian AE 21mm, Semis of Ilion, Troas, 117–138 AD. ΑΥΤ ΚΑΙC ΤΡΑΙΑΝΟC ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟC, laureate head of Hadrian right / ΙΑΙ-ΕΩΝ, Aeneas walking right, looking left, wearing cuirass and boots, leading Ascanius, wearing Phrygian cap and chiton and holding pedum, by the hand and carrying his father Anchises, mantled and holding a container, on his left arm. In the exergue, the she-wolf standing left, head turned back, in the process of feeding Romulus and Remus. SNG von Aulock 1533.



17. Tralles, Lydia. AE22, Time of Valerian I, 253–260 AD. 3.76 gm. ΙΕΡΟC ΔΗΜΟC, un-bearded, youthful, bare head of Demos right/ ΤΡΑΛΛΙΑΝΩΝ (below.), the she-wolf standing right, head turned back, feeding Romulus und Remus. D. Kurth, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

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