

## BIBLIOGRAPHIES

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### MICHAEL F. HENDY – BYZANTINE HISTORIAN AND NUMISMATIST: BIOGRAPHY & BIBLIOGRAPHY.

**Abstract:** Michael F. Hendy was a noted Byzantine historian and numismatist who was active in the mid-to-late 20th century. Trained at the University of Oxford, and effectively mentored by noted historian and numismatist Philip Grierson, Hendy would publish three seminal works on Byzantine coinage, economy and fiscal administration. This article will provide a brief biography of Professor Hendy, along with a bibliography of his published works and reviews by other scholars of his work.

**Keywords:** *Byzantine Historian, Biography, Bibliography, 20th Century Historian, Numismatics, Ancient History, Byzantine Empire, Administrative History, Coinage.*

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**M**ichael F. Hendy, a respected Byzantine historian and numismatist, was born in Newhaven (Sussex) on 16 April 1942 and died at his home in Walmer, Deal (Kent) 13 May 2008 after a long, fruitful career spanning both sides of the Atlantic<sup>1</sup>. An early passion for collecting “all strange things” as a child would lead to development of keen observational powers and a passion for coins<sup>2</sup>. Upon beginning his college education Hendy’s tutor at Queen’s College, Oxford, John Prestwich would introduce him to the broad scope of the Byzantine world, defined traditionally from Diocletian to Constantine the Last. It would be on a field trip to the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge in 1962, while an undergraduate student at Oxford, that Hendy began his path as a numismatist. Hendy had gone to the Fitzwilliam Museum to look at their collection of Byzantine Coins. While there Hendy met noted historian and numismatist Philip Grierson, who was working with Dumbarton Oaks to catalogue their collection of Byzantine Coins. Hendy expressed such an interest in the coins minted in the Komnenian and Palaiologan periods that Grierson kept in touch with him afterwards, eventually recommending him for a junior fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks from 1965-1967<sup>3</sup>. This junior fellowship followed a seven month stay in 1964-1965 in Bulgaria, as a British Council Graduate Exchange Scholar, at the University of Sofia, where he studied Byzantine coin hoards of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries<sup>4</sup>. Using the knowledge from his stay in Bulgaria, Hendy not only classified and labelled Dumbarton Oaks coin holdings in the twelfth and thirteenth-century coinages, but also wrote and completed his first major work: *Coinage*

<sup>1</sup> MORRISSON 2008 1; OBITUARY 2008, 1. A full, brief, biography of Hendy’s life can be found in MORRISSON 2008.

<sup>2</sup> MORRISSON 2008, 1.

<sup>3</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 10; MORRISSON 2008, 1; OBITUARY 2008, 1.

<sup>4</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 10; MORRISSON 2008, 1.

and Money in the Byzantine Empire, 1081-1261<sup>5</sup>.

Hendy's first book was a ground-breaking publication in Byzantine history and numismatics which identified, for the first time, a decisive monetary reform by Alexios I Komnenos that replaced the debased coinage of the late eleventh century with a new system of coin denominations. These coins, headed by the *hyperpyron*, a nearly pure gold coin, restored international confidence the Imperial coinage following the monetary crisis of the late eleventh century<sup>6</sup>. Hendy's work allowed scholars for the first time to see an intelligible picture of these two centuries of Byzantine coinage, which had previously been seen as period of debasement, economic collapse, and monetary disintegration<sup>7</sup>.

Following his work at Dumbarton Oaks, Hendy completed a five year assistant curatorship (secured by Philip Grierson) in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge from 1967-1972. During his time in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Hendy published a series of articles on the relationship between coin production and fiscal administration, which laid the basis for his later magnum opus *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300-1450*<sup>8</sup>. In 1972, after leaving the Fitzwilliam Museum, Hendy moved to the University of Birmingham where from 1972-1978 he was the Curator of the Coin Collection in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. In 1978 Hendy moved to the University of Birmingham's Department of Medieval History to become a Lecturer in Numismatics, where he would stay until 1987 and also where he would meet his future wife Margaret (Meg) Alexiou<sup>9</sup>. During Hendy's period of time at the University of Birmingham he also travelled to Dumbarton Oaks frequently, working on the introduction to the fourth volume of the *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection* along with fieldwork on coin finds at the excavations at Aphrodisias, Saraçhane (St. Polyeuktos), and Kalenderhane in Istanbul, and Kourion in Cyprus<sup>10</sup>. Hendy's relationship with Dumbarton Oaks continued with his appointment as Associate Advisor in Numismatics from 1979-1985, an appointment which Philip Grierson considered ill-advised since Hendy had never displayed much interest in Dumbarton Oaks coin collection<sup>11</sup>.

Based on the research conducted at the University of Birmingham, and at Dumbarton Oaks, during this period, Hendy would write his magnum opus, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300-1450*. Published in 1985 to universal acclaim this massive work, more a collection of three major studies than a seamless monograph, looked at the history of Byzantine coinage, the role of money in the Byzantine economy, a geographic comparison of conditions in-between the Balkans and Anatolia, and a significant excursus on fiscal & economic conditions in the seventh

<sup>5</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 10; MORRISSON 2008, 1.

<sup>6</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 12; MORRISSON 2008, 1-2; OBITUARY 2008, 2.

<sup>7</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 12; HENDY 1970, 31-52; MORRISSON 2008, 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> MORRISSON 2008, 2; See the bibliography below for the articles.

<sup>9</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 12; MORRISSON 2008, 2 & 3; OBITUARY 2008, 2.

<sup>10</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 16-17; MORRISSON 2008, 3. While the excavations at these sites were completed during the 1970's and early 1980's, publications of the findings were, in the case of Kalenderhane and Kourion, considerably delayed until 2007.

<sup>11</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 17; MORRISSON 2008, 3.

century. Even after three decades this work remains one of the required works of reference needed by a Byzantine historian looking at administrative or economic history<sup>12</sup>.

In 1987 Hendy took voluntary severance from the University of Birmingham, due to discouragement with their promotions policy, and moved to the United States, where he followed Meg Alexiou. From 1987-1988 Hendy was a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, where three new articles were written for inclusion in the publication of his papers in the Variorum Collected Studies series as *The Economy, Fiscal Administration and Coinage of Byzantium*<sup>13</sup>. After a break in relations with Dumbarton Oaks from 1985-1992 Hendy would return there in 1993, thanks to the efforts of the then-Director of Byzantine Studies Henry Maguire, to complete work on the long gestating fourth volume in the *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*. Hendy completed work on the volume in 1994, but publication would not occur until 1999<sup>14</sup>. However, despite Hendy's distinguished credentials, he was never able to find a full-time academic position in the United States. In 1994 Hendy returned to the United Kingdom to settle at Walmer in Kent, where he would live until his death in 2008.

Following the publication of *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection (1081-1261)* in 1999 Hendy's writing output virtually stopped. In 2002 he published his final synthesis on the nature and relationship between Byzantine fiscal administration and its coinage in *Roma Fra Oriente E Occidente (Settimane de Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi Sull'Alto Medioevo XLIX)* as "East and West: The Transformation of Late Roman Financial Structures"<sup>15</sup>. Hendy's final publications prior to his death were his contributions to the published volumes on the excavations at Kalenderhane in Istanbul, and Kourion on Cyprus<sup>16</sup>.

While his bibliography of publications is relatively slim, Hendy was one of the great Byzantine numismatists of the mid-late twentieth century, ranking alongside Philip Grierson, William Metcalf, and Cecile Morrison in terms of impact on the field. Hendy's three major book-length publications remain, to this day, essential works in Byzantine history and numismatics, while his articles remain as insightful and thought provoking as ever.

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<sup>12</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 17; HENDY 1985; MORRISSON 2008, 3.

<sup>13</sup> HENDY 1989; MORRISSON 2008 3; OBITUARY 2008 3.

<sup>14</sup> GRIERSON 2014, 17; HENDY 1999; MORRISSON 2008, 3-4.

<sup>15</sup> HENDY 2002, 1307. Unfortunately, Hendy's articles published since the 1989 Variorum volume have never been collected together and published. As a result, some of them are rather hard to obtain.

<sup>16</sup> HENDY 2007a, 175-276; HENDY 2007b, 400-421.

<sup>17</sup> The following bibliographic listings have been compiled from research in Hendy's citations of his own work within his articles and books, OCLC WorldCat, JSTOR and the *Année Philologique*. Reviews of Hendy's monographs by other scholars have been included as well.

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<sup>18</sup> TREADGOLD 1987; TREADGOLD 2010. Dr. Treadgold's review of *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy*, entitled *Numismatics and the Ripening of Byzantine Studies*, was never published due to *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi* ceasing publication shortly before the review was to appear. References to this review article appear in a few of Dr. Treadgold's publications, but the article itself has never formally been published.



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