

Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis

Curator of Middle Eastern coins
Departement: Coins and Medals
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Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis is responsible for the British Museum's collection of pre-Islamic Iranian coins (from the third century BC until the middle of the seventh century AD), which includes both Parthian period and Sasanian coins. She also looks after coins of the Islamic world beginning with the Umayyad and Abbasid period and including coins of the Samanid and Buyid, Seljuk, Mamluk, Ayubid and Fatimid, Ilkhanid and Timurid, Safavid and Qajar dynasties.

She was involved in The Sasanian Coin Project, a collaborative project with the National Museum of Iran in Tehran, which is now successfully completed. The result is a two-volume Sylloge of Sasanian coins of the third to seventh centuries AD.

Vesta Curtis is Joint Director of the International Parthian Coin Project, The Sylloge Nummorum Parthicorum (SNP), and Joint Editor of the SNP series. This multi-institutional project will record Parthian coins of the third century BC to the third century AD in London, Vienna, Tehran, Paris, Berlin, and the American Numismatic Society, New York. The British Museum team, headed by V.S. Curtis, will produce two of the nine volumes, including Volume 2: Coins of Mithradates II (121-90 BC).

Current projects

The Parthian Coin Project (Sylloge Nummorum Parthicorum)

Previous projects

The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia Exhibition, Mumbai (2013-2014)

The Sasanian Coin Project (2000-2012)

Splendour of Isfahan : coins from Iran (2009)

Iran before Islam: religion and propaganda, AD 224-651, (2006)

The Cyrus Cylinder Exhibition, National Museum of Iran, Tehran (2010-2011)

Wise men from the east. Zoroastrian traditions in Persia and beyond (Room 69a: 2013-2014)

External fellowships/ honorary positions/ membership of professional bodies

Joint Director and Joint Editor of the Parthian Coin Project, *Sylloge Nummorum Parthiorum* (SNP) with Dr Michael Alram (Austrian Academy of Sciences and Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

Member of the Academic Committee, Iran Heritage Foundation (IHF)

Honorary Director, British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS)

Recent publications

V.S. Curtis, *Kingship and Religion in Ancient Persia* (K.R.Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai, 2017)

E. Errington and V.S. Curtis, *From Persia to Punjab. Exploring ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan*, (Mumbai, 2014)

V.S. Curtis, M. E. Askari and E.J.Pendleton, *Sasanian Coins in the National Museum of Iran, Volume 1: Ardashir I- Hormizd IV*, Royal Numismatic Society Special Publication (London, 2010)

V.S. Curtis, M. E. Askari and E.J. Pendleton *A Sylloge of Sasanian Coins in the National Museum of Iran (Muzeh Melli Iran), Tehran. Volume 2: Khusrau II – Yazdgard III*, (London 2012)

V.S. Curtis, *From Persepolis to the Punjab : Exploring ancient Afghanistan and Pakistan*, with E. Errington (British Museum Press 2007, 2011)

V.S. Curtis, *The Rise Of Islam*, with S. Stewart (eds.), (London, New York, I.B.Tauris, 2009)

V.S. Curtis, *Persian Love Poetry*, with S. Canby, (London, British Museum Press, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2013)

V.S. Curtis, E.J.Pendleton, M.Alram & T. Daryaee (eds), *The Parthian and Sasanian Empires. Adaptation and Expansion* (Oxford & Philadelphia, 2016)

V.S. Curtis and S. Stewart (eds), *The Rise of Islam*, (London, New York, I.B. Tauris, 2009)

V.S Curtis and S. Stewart (eds), *The Sasanian Era*, (London, New York, I.B. Tauris, 2008)

V.S. Curtis and S. Stewart (eds), *The Age of the Parthians*, (London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 2007)

V.S. Curtis and S. Stewart (eds), *Birth of the Persian Empire*, (London and New York, I.B. Tauris 2005)

V.S. Curtis, *Persian Myths* (London, British Museum Press, 1993, 1996, 2000, 2005, 2006, 2009)

V.S. Curtis, R. Hillenbrand and J.M. Rodgers (eds.), *The Archaeology of Ancient Persia* (I.B Tauris, London 1997)

V.S.Curtis, 'The Parthian haute-couture at Palmyra', in T. Long and A. Højen Sørensen (eds), *Positions and Professions in Palmyra* (Danish Academy, 2017), pp.52-67

V.S.Curtis, 'Parthian coins: kingship and divine glory', in P.Wick and M. Zehnder (eds), *The Parthian Empire and its Religions. Studies in the Dynamics of Religious Diversity*, Pietas 5, Gutenberg, 2012, pp. 68-81

V.S. Curtis, 'Fascination with the past: Ancient Persia on the coins and banknotes of Iran', in S. Bhandare and S.Garg (eds), *Felicitas. Essays in Numismatics, Epigraphy & History in Honour of Joe Cribb*, 2011, pp. 81-99

V.S. Curtis, 'The Frataraka Coins of Persis; Bridging the Gap between Achaemenid and Sasanian Persia', in J. Curtis and S.J. Simpson(eds),*The World of Achaemenid Persia* (London and New York, I.B. Tauris, 2010) pp. 379-394

V.S. Curtis, 'The British and archaeology in nineteenth-century Persia', in E. Errington and V. S Curtis, *From Persepolis to the Punjab: Exploring ancient Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan* (British Museum Press 2007) pp. 166-178

V.S. Curtis, 'Religious Iconography on Ancient Iranian Coins', in J. Cribb and G. Herrmann (eds), *After Alexander: Central Asia before Islam*, (The British Academy, Oxford University Press, 2007) pp.413-434

V.S. Curtis, 'The Iranian revival', in V.S. Curtis and S. Stewart (eds.), *The Age of the Parthians* (London, New York, I.B.Tauris, 2007) pp. 1-25

V.S. Curtis, 'The legacy of ancient Persia', in J. Curtis and N. Tallis (eds), *Forgotten Empire. The World of Ancient Persia* (London, The British Museum Press, 2005) pp. 250-7