

NEW ACCIDENTAL FINDS OF ROMAN COINS AROUND THE VILLAGE OF BERZOVIA (CARAŞ-SEVERIN COUNTY)

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In 2006, around the village of Berzovia, located upon the ancient site of the Roman fortress of the *IV Flavia Felix* legion, eight roman coins have fortuitously been discovered.

Marcus Antonius:

1. Obv. ANT·AVG / (III·VIR·R·P·C·), galley l.¹.
Rev. LEG (....), *aquila* between two standards, flying l, o.p.c.
Denarius, axis 12, heavily used, very good preservation, 3,27 g, 16-17 mm, RRC, p. 540-541, no. 544/13-39² (32-31 BC.).

Domitianus:

2. Obv. IMP CAES DOMIT AVG GERM P M TR P XI, laureate effigy l, o.p.c.
Rev. IMP XXI COS XVI CENS PPP³, Minerva advancing l, brandishing a javelin and holding a shield in l, o.p.c.
Denarius, axis 1, little used, very well preserved, 3,15 g, 18,3-19,5 mm, RIC II, p. 173, no. 166 (AD 92).

Traianus:

3. Obv. (IMP CAE)S NER TRAIANO OP(TIM)O (AVG GER DAC P M TR P COS VI P P), radial effigy l.
Rev. (SEN)ATVS P(OPVLVSQVE ROMANVS), in ex. FORT RED / S C, Fortuna seated r., holding rudder and cornucopia.
Dupondius, axis 6, little used, poorly preserved, 11,65 g, 25,55-26,55 mm, RIC II, p. 290, no. 653 (AD 114-117).

Hadrianus:

4. Obv. (I)MP (CAES DIVI) TRA PARTH F DIVI NER NEP TRAIANO HADRIANO AVG, draped and laureate bust l.

Rev. PONT MAX TR POT COS, în ex. FORT RED / S·C·, Fortuna seated r., holding rudder and cornucopia⁴.

Sestertius, axis 6, little used, well preserved, 26,1 g, 32,25-33,05 mm, RIC II, p. 406, no. 541a (AD 117).

Unidentified:

5. Obv. Legend illegible, effigy l.

Rev. Legend illegible, seated character? r?⁵

Dupondius⁶, axis 6?, heavily used, poorly preserved, 11,44 g, 27,5-29,05 mm.

6. Obv. (...)S(...)V(...), effigy l.

Rev. Illegible.

Aes, heavily used, poorly preserved, 3,9 g⁷, 24,2-27,7 mm.

7. Obv. Legend illegible, effigy l.

Rev. Illegible.

Copper coin, probably heavily used, poorly preserved, 3,57 g, 21,1-23 mm.

8. Obv. Illegible.

Rev. Illegible.

Copper coin, heavily used, poorly preserved, 3,76 g, 20-21 mm.

Except for coin no. 3, the others were all found in a private garden, more precisely behind the *principia*, near the earthen *vallum* or even upon it⁸.

The coin no. 4 is the first coin minted under the authority of Hadrianus to be found in this fortress and also the latest one⁹.

The earliest coin is the denarius issued by Marcus Antonius, which had been found close to the sestertius minted under Hadrian's reign. One should not consider its presence surprising; as such denarii had circulated until the end of the 2nd century AD.

Coin no. 3 was found some 4 kilometers east of the fortress, in an area known as *Colibi* (*Huts*), close to the *Coliba lui moș Aimun* (*Old Aimun's Hut*).

Nearby this location, a denarius issued by Tiberius had been found in July 2005¹⁰. Both these coins have been unearthed during the building of a dike along the Bârzava River.

Coins nos. 5–8 are much too used and poorly preserved as to be identified. While coins nos. 5–6 could at least be denominated, the other two are completely unidentifiable. They could be subdivisions of the aes or colonial coins, but also late issues from the 3rd century AD, in which case they would represent the first find of the kind within the perimeter of the fortress

The coins presented above enrich the list of numismatic finds from the area of Berzovia¹¹.

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NOTES

1. We used the terms of „right” and „left” as in heraldry, not those of the onlooker.
2. Given the illegibility of the legend, one can not mention the variant.
3. Because of the filling of the E letter in the stamping die, the word CENS appears as CFNS.
4. The figurate representation on the rev. of this coin is identical to that on the Traianus coin (no. 3).
5. The representations are vague on both sides. The effigy seems to belong to bearded emperor, possibly Hadrianus.
6. The coin had been denominated according to the size and alloy.
7. The weight is greatly reduced because of the heavy usage and poor preservation of the coin.
8. These coins have probably been found around *porta decumana*.
9. In May 2006, on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Banat archaeologists in Sânnicolau Mare, when presenting together with my colleague Alexandru Flutur the 2005 archaeological excavations from Berzovia and referring to the abandon of the fortress by the *IV Flavia Felix* legion, we stated that “no coin from Hadrianus had been found so far”. Such a coin had finally been discovered. The fact that it had been issued at the beginning of Hadrian’s reign (AD 117) supports the hypothesis of the abandonment of the fortress sometimes in his early years of reigning.

10. See Raoul-M. ȘEPTILICI, Angel TRUICAN, *Câteva monete romane imperiale descoperite întâmplător pe raza localității Berzovia, jud. Caraș-Severin*, (*Accidental Discovery of Roman Imperial Coins around the Village of Berzovia, Caras/Severin County*), in *Analele Banatului*, s.n., Arheologie-Istorie, XII-XIII, 2004-2005, Timișoara, 2005, p. 231-236, piesa nr.1.
11. This paper had been presented by its author under the title *Descoperiri fortuite de monete romane la Berzovia (jud. Caraș-Severin)*, / Fortuitous finds of Roman Coins at Berzovia, on the 21th Numismatical Symposium of the Numismatic Association of the Timiș Banat, Timișoara, October 15th 2006

ABBREVIATIONS

ex. – exergue

l. – (towards) left

Obv. – obverse

o.p.c. – outer pearled circle

r. – (towards) right.

Rev – reverse

RIC II – Harold MATTINGLY, Edward A. SYDENHAM, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. II, London, 1926.

RRC – M. H. Crawford – *Roman Republican Coinage* – vol. I-II – Cambridge, 1989.



1



2



3



4



Roman coins found in Berzovia (2006)

