

A HYBRID FOURRÉE CARACALLA DENARIUS FROM ROMULA

BELDIANU Corneliu Bogdan Nicolae*

Abstract. *This material presents a denarius fourrée hybrid whose place of origin is Romula-Malva (Resca, Village Olt). The coin, which is most likely an official issue and not an antique counterfeit coin, finds an interesting analogy mentioned in the catalogue RIC IV i.*

Keywords: *Denarius, hybrid, fourrée, Severan era.*

From Romula¹, ancient capital of Dacia Malvensis (now Resca Village, Olt County) it comes² a fourré³ denarius that presenting a special numismatic interest.

Below the description of the coin:

Fourrée denarius: ↑; 2,41 g; 19,3 mm;

Obv: **ANTONINVS PIVS AVG**; beardless, laureate and draped bust right.

RIC IVi - ; BMC V - ; Roma 201-206 AD.

Rv: **FELICITAS PVBLICA**; Felicitas standing left, holding caduceus in right hand and cornucopia in left hand.

RIC IVi, no. 9; BMC V, p. 197, no. 220, Roma, 200-202 AD (Geta);

RIC IVi, no. 262, Roma 202 – 210 AD; no. 331 Roma, 210-211 AD (Septimiu Severus).

This coin has a specific obverse type for Caracalla denarius issued in Rome between 201-206 AD, but the reverse type occurs in denarii issued in Rome between 200-202 for his brother Geta and those issued, at the same city between 202-210 AD, for his father Septimius Severus.

Lack of execution errors, in terms of effigies and legends makes us ascribe an official character of this piece. Coin is most likely the result of a wrong combination of dies coins in the mint.

In the British catalogue RIC IV⁴ it is remembered another hybrid denarius from the L. A. Lawrence Collection with the following description:

Obv. **ANTONINVS PIVS AVG.**, laureate, draped r.

Rv. **FELICITAS PVBLICA**, Felicitas standing l., holding caduceus and cornucopiae.

In the absence of photos illustration for coin from Lawrence Collection we can not determine whether the two coins were struck using the same dies coins. But if identical dies were used for both coins (coin from Romula and coin from Lawrence Collection), we could talk about an unknown series of coins or a mini-series that resulted from an issuer mistake.

Of course, we can talk about two coins hybrid made with various dies in different times. We do not exclude the possibility that the coin in question is the work of ancient forger although our comparative study of the reverse of an official coin issued for Geta reveals similarities to the identity for legend and imperial effigy.

In terms of weight our currency, with only 2.41 g, is under the weight of the silver denarius issued for Caracalla (average about 3.20 g) and for Geta (average about 3.30 g)⁵. The difference is caused by the material from which it was executed core coin (bronze)⁶.

If we are dealing with a hybrid resulting from used wrong coins dies (a crossing between two different coins types) ,if overlapping years for obverse and for revers, it follows that coin from Romula was issued in Rome between 201-206 AD.

* Banking Officer, ING Bank N.V. Amsterdam, Romania, e-mail: beldianub@yahoo.com.

¹ C. M. Tăulea, *Romula-Malva*, București, 1994.

² The coin was purchased decades ago from a resident of the Resca village, currently is in a private collection in Bucharest.

³ For use a term or another in numismatics, in the case of coins made in different metal layers (usually a core of bronze silver-plated, but also gold fourrees exist as well). See Ion Donoiu, *Considerații privind două monede antice suberate*, in BSNR, no. 124-128, 1976-1980, pp. 71-74. We chose to use the french term "fourrée" for his naturalization in numismatic international language (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourrée>).

⁴ Harold Mattingly, Edward A. Sydenham, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. IV, part. I, London, 1936, p. 261.

⁵ For the average weight of Caracalla and Geta denarius issued were used and various information offered on the site: www.forumancientcoins.com (accessed June 15th 2014).

⁶ Copper (Cu), the main component of bronze, has atomic number 29 and standard atomic weight 63.546. Silver (Ag), with atomic number 47 and standard atomic weight: 107.8683, at the same size is harder than copper.



Plate description. Upper image: hybrid coin from Romula. Below in left: official obverse of denarius for Caracalla and in right: revers of the Geta's coins type "Felicitas Pvblica" (RIC IV, no. 9).

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