

CONCERNING A CORPUS OF ROMAN MONETARY DISCOVERIES INTRA ET EXTRA FINES IMPERII ROMANI REPERTAE¹

The utilization of monetary discoveries as historical sources is not a novelty. As early as the the last century many scientists made use on various occasions of monetary discoveries, in order to illustrate certain economic or political data.

At the beginning of this century, Adrien Blanchet collected and published the findings of Roman coins in Gaul. On their basis the author drew a number of conclusions in connection with the invasion of the Germanic tribes in Gaul.

During a series of lectures delivered in 1936 at the Collège de France, the same author added to the political conclusions those of an economic nature, thus enlarging and enriching with new viewpoints his former inferences.

More recent investigations completed further this point of view with the social one.

Recently in a thorough and original study synthetizing the importance of investigations on Roman numismatics for the history of the Empire and of the Roman world, Julien Guey pointed out how many new problems the science of numismatics could pose and even solve, if it would only get beyond narrow specialization. Consequently, in order to give more solidity to the history of the Empire, it is necessary to study monetary discoveries too.

There is no doubt whatever that for many researchers, the coin hoards discovered both within the Empire and outside it are an important historical source, a new category of historical documents which has not yet been sufficiently exploited.

The discoveries of coins in the Roman world (and in saying that we refer in the first place to the provinces and to the « barbarian » tribes outside the provinces), are actually documents of first-rate historical importance. As often as not, the presence of a treasure in the above-mentioned regions is only the final result of a long process of production and exchange, which slowly crystallized and sedimented, we should even say fossilized, and has come down to us in

¹ The present paper was written in answer to a letter dated October 4th, 1961, from Mr. C. H. V. Sutherland, Chairman of the International Commission of Numismatics who asked for supplementary explanations concerning the suggestions made by

the author in a memorandum *Per un Corpus di ripostigli di monete romane*, presented at the International Congress of Numismatics, in Rome, September 1961.

the form of a hoard. Therefore, behind such a discovery of coins, and particularly when these finds are numerous and repeated, we must imagine a whole economic process of production and exchange and then of repartition of the goods obtained through this exchange.

The quantity of coins preserved in the hoards which reached down to us as a whole, helps us to penetrate the social milieu of that time, especially in the provinces and outside the Empire, and to realize their economic force, as seen through the monetary treasures. The burying of a whole category of treasures at a certain date and in a certain region is a fact which along with other sources, may help us to establish certain elements of a historical nature (invasions, struggles, risings, etc.).

It is obvious that in order to follow this long process, rather difficult to realize, numerous efforts should be made, but the first thing to do will be to publish such hoards accompanied by a serious study.

For the brief reasons stated above, the necessity of publishing all the monetary discoveries made both inside the Empire and outside it appears clearly. And it is necessary to publish all these discoveries in a unitary work, with due criticism, in order to enable us to follow the various historical, military, economic phenomena as well as those concerning currency, etc., in their general development and with their regional aspects.

We deem it necessary to add certain details for making precise both the content of this publication and the time limits of the material it should include.

In respect to the first aspect, both coin hoards and isolated discoveries of coins should be taken into account and published. They all have their importance, of course differing from one case to another, and therefore they all must be published.

As for the second side — the time limits — we think that the work could begin with the very ancestors of the Roman coins — *aes grave* and *aes signatum*, about which we should not forget that they were found on the territory of Yugoslavia. As a lower limit, I think we could accept Anastasius reign, with which a new age — the Byzantine one — began.

An essential problem is that of the criteria according to which the coin finds should be published. This is particularly important as it is chiefly on these publication criteria that the future investigators will depend in using these documents for the explanation of the social and economic life of the population which left them.

The work ought to be carried on according to countries or regional groups of countries; representatives of each country should sign the material published, and answer for it. A preliminary discussion establishing as part of the *corpus* the place of the monetary discoveries, classified by countries and regions, could even lead to its separation into issues. Through this previous planning, the possibility could be offered for the various fascicles to be published as soon as they were ready.

In connection with the publishing criteria², the question arises what information and how much of it should be published concerning each discovery.

Of course, in the following we shall proceed from the situation — which I should call a lucky one — when the researcher went himself on the place of the discovery, and made himself acquainted with all details and the archeological surroundings in which the discovery was made, having thus only to publish the information which he possesses.

² In this respect the leading work might be that of H. Gebhart, K. Kraft, H. Kùthmann, P. R. Franke, K. Christ, *Bemerkungen zur kritischen Neuaufnahme der Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Deutschland*, published in the «Jahrbuch für

Numismatik und Geldgeschichte», 7, 1956, p. 11–71.

See also the plan of this work for Germany, in the pamphlet *Einführung in das Gesamtwerk*.

In this case, in our opinion, the regest which is to accompany the discovery should include:

1. A detailed topographical location proceeding from fixed points existing in nature and on the map.

2. The specification of the archaeological surroundings in which the discovery was made (Roman-Barbarian vicus, ancient town, graves, temples, sacred springs or wells, military camps, etc.).

3. The specification whether or not the coins discovered in the hoard were all purchased. In case some of the coins could not be purchased, this should be mentioned, as well as their approximate number.

4. A table ought to be given for each emperor, with the coins distributed nominally and by metals, together with an indication of the type of the most recent coins, with reference and dating according to Cohen and RIC.

5. A brief mention should be made of how much worn out are the coins, with special reference to the oldest and to the most recent ones.

6. A brief indication should be given of the eventual jewels or ornaments found together with the coins (the purpose of this being to help us to identify the possessor's nationality. In Dacia, for instance, Roman coins found together with Dacian ornaments show that their possessor was a native, a Dacian).

7. A brief description (and perhaps a reproduction) of the vessel in which the coins were found. Occasionally, very much like the jewels, it may help us to establish the ethnical origin of the former possessor of the hoard.

In the chapter «Bibliography» which is to follow immediately after the description, the first thing to mention should be the basic work where a detailed description of the hoard is to be found.

Any other possible mentions or references should be given only if such studies contain new elements, completing the above-mentioned basic study.

At the end of the work, an alphabetical index should group all localities with their present name. In case the name of a locality has changed in the meantime, this one being known in the literature under another name, the latter will be mentioned at the corresponding place, where the reader may learn the present name, to which reference should also be made.



Having thus surmounted the difficulties of this stage, it is up to us to establish the way in which the various monetary discoveries should be grouped as part of the work.

Theoretically, there are two possibilities: an alphabetical classification by modern localities, in which the name of the ancient locality should also be mentioned, when it is known; or a geographical grouping, by regions, zones and centres of the ancient times, that is a sort of *territoria*.

The first criterion, used in general repertories, has the disadvantage of *separating* the discoveries of the same region; therefore the research-worker must in his turn perform an amount of personal research: proceeding from the map, he must look for the various numbers indicated on it, in order to see what discoveries they concern. The operation is less advisable, being cumbersome and awkward.

The second criterion, the geographical one, proceeding from ancient territories, zones and centres, has the advantage of grouping together and displaying the whole lot of monetary

discoveries according to *geographical spaces*, which permits researchers to follow with relative ease the phenomena in which they are interested.

It is probable that the latter criterion will prove advisable for the *corpus* we are trying to outline.

Within the above framework the various monetary discoveries are to be classified according to the following criteria:

- a) coin hoards
- b) coins found in graves
- c) coins found in temples
- d) coins found at sacred springs or wells (*ex-voto*)
- e) coins found in various military camps, public buildings, etc.

The index at the end of the work will have the task of grouping together similar discoveries, by categories.



In order to allow the reader to be quickly informed on the structure of a treasure, we intend to propose that for each separate find, before recalling the technical data mentioned above, a regest should be given after the model used in the bibliography of Sawyer, A. Mc Mosser and Sidney P. Noe.

Practically, in order to exemplify a note which should answer to all the points established above, we give here an example concerning the hoard of imperial Roman coins discovered at Galicea Mare, in 1961, and which we recently studied.

For such cases in which the mint where the coin was struck can be established, it is desirable to mention it.

The problem of the maps which accompany each volume also deserves ample discussion. So far we must only mention that all coin discoveries will have to be located on the map with the same ordinal number they also bear within the corpus. Moreover, the map will have a number of explanations which will distinguish between the republican and imperial Roman coin hoards, the discoveries made in graves, temples, springs, camps, etc.

Later on, while working, a separation of the hoard by shorter epochs might possibly be reached, which would lead to a more complex explanation. It may become necessary to trace on the map the imperial *limes* in its historical evolution, so that the investigator may have the necessary elements in case he wants to study a problem thoroughly.

This corpus once published, either by fascicles or as a whole, would have to be kept in touch with recent discoveries, by a special column in one of the great numismatical periodicals of the world, similar to the *Année épigraphique*.



In this respect, the corpus of Roman coins is only a beginning. It must be followed by another corpus of the Greek, Celtic, Barbarian and other treasures discovered, and then by a corpus of the Byzantine coin hoards. Each of them having however its own characteristics, it will be necessary to work out other criteria for their publication.

It is probable that later on, scientists will find it necessary to work out the bases of future *corpora* for the feudal coins too.

For the time being however, we think that for the limited needs of the *corpus* of the discovered Roman coins, the International Numismatic Committee, through a smaller working commission, could lay the bases of this *corpus* and work them out for the publishing of criteria.

After the International Numismatic Committee and the working commission have managed to do it, a meeting should be conveyed of representatives from all countries, in order to discuss, approve and apply these criteria.

This working commission would also have to deal with the abbreviations for the various reviews that are going to be quoted and the *sigla* used for them. Also upon it is incumbent the task of deciding whether the Roman coins from the time of the republic ought to be classified according to Sydenham or BMC.

The Barbarian imitation of Roman coins, as well as the dies which reproduce them, when they are known, should be introduced into the *corpus* either *sub voce*, under the place of discovery, or in a special column, when there are several of them.

These are just a few remarks suggested by a superficial examination of this problem; and it is only a beginning. As soon as we shall investigate each aspect, this will form a problem in itself, with many facets to it, some general and some other local ones. Their gradual elucidation and the overcoming of all the difficulties which are certain to appear, will pave the way for this great work, which, we hope, will make an important contribution and mark a stride forward towards the knowledge of the social and economic life of the Roman and non-Roman world.

BUCUR MITREA

November 1, 1961

Galicea Mare, Oltenia Region

1961

Treasure: 800 AR II—III crie
Buried after the year 244

The treasure was discovered in 1961 during tillage, in the South-West of the village where the traces of an important Dacian-Roman settlement lie, attested by fragments of buildings, potsherds, etc. The treasure was found in a Roman earthen jug, from which only the lower part has been preserved. The find was studied on the spot and all the coins discovered were gathered and identified. There are 800 coins in all, out of which 503 denarii and 297 antonians. The hoard is preserved at the Craiova Regional Museum.

Repartition of coins by emperors:

Antoninus Pius	5 denarii
Marcus Aurelius . . .	4 denarii
Faustina II	2 denarii
Lucilla	1 denarius
Commodus	10 denarii
Septimius Severus . .	84 denarii
Julia Domna	36 denarii
Caracalla	44 denarii and 3 antonians
Plautilla	5 denarii
Geta	20 denarii
Macrinus	2 denarii
Diadumenianus . . .	1 denarius

Elagabalus	47 denarii and 8 antonians
Julia Soaemias . . .	9 denarii
Julia Maesa	20 denarii
Julia Paula	2 denarii
Aquilla Severa . . .	1 denarius
Severus Alexander .	83 denarii
Julia Mamaea . . .	13 denarii
Maximinus Thrax . .	41 denarii
Maximus	2 denarii
Gordianus I	1 denarius
Balbinus	1 denarius
Pupienus	1 denarius
Gordianus III . . .	65 denarii and 242 antonians
Philip the Arabian .	— — 43 antonians
Otacilia Severa . .	3 denarii
Philip Junior . . .	— — 1 antonian
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Total 503 denarii and 297 antonians	

Philip the Arabian's coins are of the Cohen² type, 54 (1 item), 55 (4 items), 80 (9), 102 (7), 113 (2) a. 244, 205 (4), 218 (1), 227 (4), and 240 (13).

Otacilia Severa: Cohen², 30 (1 item), 34 (1), and 5? (1).

Philip Junior, Cohen², 84 (1 item).