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# Bulletin du Cercle d'études numismatiques

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## Sommaire

2

### Notes on the gold coinage of Aemilian

by Hadrien Rambach

# Notes on the gold coinage of Aemilian

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**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to establish a corpus of gold coinage for the Roman emperor Aemilian (AD 253). Most of the examples traced, materially or in antiquarian literature, are forgeries, which has promoted a study of ancient coin counterfeiting in the Renaissance. The provenance of known specimens has encouraged the study of important sixteenth to eighteenth century collections, as well as a reflection on the provenance of archaeological objects.

**Résumé :** Cet article vise à établir un corpus du monnayage d'or de l'empereur romain Émilien (253 apr. J-C). La plupart des monnaies retrouvées, matériellement ou dans la littérature moderne, s'avèrent être des faux – ce qui a amené à traiter de la contrefaçon des monnaies antiques à la Renaissance. La provenance des exemplaires connus a conduit à l'étude d'importantes collections du XVI<sup>ème</sup> au XVIII<sup>ème</sup> siècles, et à une réflexion sur la provenance des objets archéologiques.

## INTRODUCTION

In the words of Joseph Addison, “the intrinsic value of an old coin does not consist in its metal, but its erudition.”<sup>1</sup> This article is devoted to an emperor about whom not much is known, and most of which is known from coins: Aemilian.<sup>2</sup> “The reign of Aemilian is one of the most obscure episodes in the dark third century of our era,” wrote Harold Mattingly;<sup>3</sup> the existence of Cornelia Supera Augusta, and the almost-certain fact that she was Aemilian’s wife, are attested only by numismatics, which cannot but remind us of the verses of Johannes Sambucus in 1564, “Those [the coins] in bronze testify of those who lived in a golden age, / and they instruct on many facts that books do not tell about.”<sup>4</sup> After a brief presentation of the man and his reign, and a global summary of his coinage – both Imperial and Provincial – his gold coinage and its mysteries will be examined, such as the possible existence of double-aurei. This study will then be followed by a corpus of all recorded examples, both genuine and fake<sup>5</sup> – giving the opportunity to examine the fate of some famous, but understudied, antiquarian collections.

## A VERY SHORT REIGN

The first eight months of AD 253 witnessed an exceptionally high number of emperors and co-regents: Trebonianus Gallus, Volusian, Aemilian, Silbannacus, Uranius Antoninus, Valerian and Gallienus. Of these, Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus had one of the shortest reigns, and the information available on him is both scarce and contradictory (figs 1-3).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

scale. 2 : 1

Fig. 1 – Bust of Aemilian, illustration from STRADA 1553, p. 134. After an antoninianus with the reverse-legend VIRTVS AVG. RIC 1949, p. 196, no. 22.

Fig. 2 – Bust of Aemilian, illustration from GOLTZIUS 1557, pl. XLVIII. After an antoninianus. Photograph © Dr.ssa Raffaella Carmen Vancheri, Biblioteca universitaria di Genova.

Fig. 3 – Bust of Aemilian, drawing by Pirro Ligorio (1513-1583). MS Ja.II.9 (vol. 22), folio 117 recto (photo by Sarah Cox - 17 November 2015 © Archivio di Stato di Torino).

1. ADDISON 1726, p. 13; quoted in GIARD 1980, p. 237.
2. I am grateful to Jean Guillemain for telling me that an early interest in Aemilian was expressed by the 'Académie du duc d'Aumont' (the duke was the model for La Bruyère's character Diognète, and on this academy see SCHNAPPER 1988, p. 151 and 270-271; SARMANT 2003, p. 82-84), for which Adrien Auzout (1622-1691) was supposed to have studied the history of Trebonianus Gallus – Volusian – Aemilian, based on inscriptions and coins. Claude-François Ménéstrier's 1694 *Factum justificatif*, p. 14, suggests that Auzout actually accomplished this work, though it has not been preserved.
3. MATTINGLY 1935, p. 55. His choice of the word 'obscure' is inspired by the lapidary judgment of Eutropius: "Aemilianus was little distinguished by birth, and less distinguished by his reign, in the third month of which he was cut off." ("Aemilianus obscurissime natus obscurius imperavit ac tertio mense extinctus est."). For a general presentation of the Roman coinage in the third century, see EHLING 2008 and BLAND 2012, and for the period in general, see SOTGIU 1975, HÜTTNER 2008 and ALFÖLDY 2015.
4. "Aerea teftantur fuerint quibus aurea fecit, / Multorumque monent quae tacere libri" (quoted in CALLATAÏ 2014a, p. 284). No gold coins seem to have been struck in her name.
5. I have used interchangeably the words fakes and forgeries in this essay, despite the nuances that can be found between those terms: "fakes (real things, but deceptively improved to make them more interesting to the collector) / forgeries (things made totally new as deceptions)" (WATSON 2013, p. 59).
6. Eutropius, *Breviarium historiae Romanae*, Book 9.
7. Ioannis Antiocheni *Fragmenta quae supersunt omnia*, Serguei Mariev (ed.), *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* XLVII, Berlin 2008, Frag. 174, p. 330-331.

It seems that he was born on the island of Djerba (Tunisia); he has been described as a Moor (*Epitome de Caesaribus* 31.1-2) and a Libyan (Zonaras 12.21); his wife Gaia Cornelia Supera was of African origin too. It is uncertain whether he was born about AD 207 or AD 213: according to the *Epitome de Caesaribus* he died aged 47 (therefore he was born c. AD 207), but his age at his death was 40 according to the *Synopsis Sathas* (and therefore born c. AD 213). It is not clear whether he came from a powerful family or not: Eutropius asserts that Aemilian did not come from a significant family,<sup>6</sup> but John of Antioch instead wrote that Aemilian had used the prestige of his ancestors to claim imperial power.<sup>7</sup> Mattingly believed that the victory against Gallus and Volusian could be dated to late March 253, and Aemilian's death to late June 253,<sup>8</sup> but the exact dates of his reign remain subject to debate (they were probably from July-September, AD 253).<sup>9</sup> Despite many uncertainties, it is worth summarizing the events that led to his accession to the throne.<sup>10</sup>

Aemilian had been a commander in *Moesia inferior*, south of the Danube, where he oversaw the legions.<sup>11</sup> During the summer of AD 253, under the joint reign of Trebonianus Gallus and his son Volusian (AD 251-253), he decided no longer to pay a *tributum* and led his troops to unexpected victories against the "Scythian invaders", the Goths. Aemilian was the successor of Gallus in *Moesia* where, after breaking the Gothic invasion led by the king Cniva, he directed a punitive expedition north of the Danube. Fighting the Goths was most important, considering they had defeated and killed Trajan Decius and Herennius Etruscus in AD 251 in the same province. His armies gained much wealth in the process. He then marched into Italy, along the Flaminian Way. The co-emperors faced him at Terni, in southern Umbria, and Aemilian was victorious: the emperors retreated but their own guard killed them at the nearby city of *Forum Flaminii*. It seems that both sides attacked with relatively few men. Thomas Banchich rightly observed that the number of men at Aemilian's disposal by then was probably limited; he could not have stripped *Moesia* of soldiers, and was therefore unlikely to have the troop strength necessary to conquer Rome.

Despite the initial reluctance expressed by the Senate, and perhaps without even actually entering Rome,<sup>12</sup> Aemilian was recognized as the new emperor, apparently promising to leave the realm to the senators and to act as their general. When he heard of Aemilian's elevation, Publius Licinius Valerianus – who was commander of the Roman legions "beyond the Alps" in Raetia –

decided to move towards Italy and fight for the imperial power. But the two armies did not fight each other, as Aemilian's men understood they were outnumbered and chose to support Valerian instead: the new emperor was killed after a very short reign. The defeat and execution occurred on a bridge thereafter named *Pons Sanguinarius* – 'the sanguinary bridge', a place described by the *Epitome de Caesaribus* as between Otricoli and Narnia (on the Via Flaminia, half way between Spoleto and Rome).<sup>13</sup>

The dates of Aemilian's reign remain uncertain. A *terminus ante-quem* is provided by the Alexandrian coinage which is entirely dated L B' (2<sup>nd</sup> year), which indicates that the authorities in Egypt only learned that Aemilian was emperor on the 29 August AD 253 or later (otherwise they would have started to issue coins with the date L A', 1<sup>st</sup> year); considering that the news would have probably taken four to five weeks to arrive, this suggests a mid- or late-July start for the reign.<sup>14</sup> And a *terminus ante-quem* can be found in an inscription from Gemellae (Numidia) referring to Valerian Augustus (and therefore after the fall of Aemilian), which is dated 22 October AD 253,<sup>15</sup> which suggests a September end for the reign.

#### THE SILVER AND BRONZE COINAGE OF AEMILIAN

Coins in the name, and with the likeness, of Aemilian were struck in Eastern Serbia (Viminacium in *Moesia Superior*<sup>16</sup>), in Northern Turkey (Kemer / *Parium*,<sup>17</sup> Samsun / *Amisus*<sup>18</sup>), in Central Turkey (Ipsos / *Iulia*<sup>19</sup>, Antioch of Pisidia<sup>20</sup>), and in Southern Turkey (Side,<sup>21</sup> Yumurtalık / *Aegeae*<sup>22</sup>), and in Egypt (Alexandria<sup>23</sup>). Of these mints, the quantities issued (or at least the survival rates) vary greatly, from the very rare Side mint to the rather common Antioch and Alexandria.<sup>24</sup>

It must be noted here that the iconography of the provincial coins of Aemilian is quite distinct from his imperial issues: in addition to the local personifications (*Alexandria standing*, *Dacia standing* – sometimes replaced by *Pax*, *Moesia standing* – sometimes replaced by *Pax*), there is found a large variety of animals (*Capricorn*, *eagle*), architectural types (*temple*, *triumphal arch*, *city-gate with Alexander (?) and bull*), gods (*Apollo* – both standing and walking, *Asclepius*, *Dionysus*, *Helios*, *Serapis*, *Zeus* – both seated and in bust), goddesses (*Artemis with stag*, *Athena* – both advancing, seated and standing, *Nike*, *Omonoia*, *Tyche*), and various other types (*crown on table*, *vexillum with eagle and standards*, *genius standing*, *Eros standing with statue of Hermes*).<sup>25</sup>

8. MATTINGLY 1946, p. 37.
9. The "Chronographer of 354" specifies 88 days; the commonly given length of three months comes from various sources (Eutropius, Aurelius Victor, Orosius, Jordanes and Jerome), while others give four months (Zonaras, *Synopsis Sathas* and John of Antioch) – and Symeon only states the figure of two months. These figures may begin from the acclamation in *Moesia*, in which case the actual reign would have been very short indeed (it has been estimated that the march to the battle with Trebonianus Gallus and his son Volusian may have taken up to two months).
10. This biography relies almost entirely on BANCHICH 2002, in which all the sources are given, but HOSTEIN 2016 provides an even more complete bibliography. So little being known about him, Aemilian is barely named in MÓCSY 1974, p. 205. On the end of the reign of Aemilian, and the accession of Valerian, see GLAS 2014.
11. See POULTER 1997 for a map of *Moesia Inferior*.
12. At Aemilian's death, Uranius Antoninus claimed to be emperor (in Syria), Valerian claimed to be emperor (in Northern Italy), and it seems that Silbannacus claimed to be emperor (in Rome). See ESTIOT 1996; HOSTEIN 2016.
13. *Epitome De Caesaribus*, sometimes attributed to Sextus Aurelius Victor, translated by Thomas M. Banchich, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Buffalo NY 2009, 31.2: "But Aemilianus, in his fourth month, was defeated near Spoletium or a bridge which is said to have taken its name from his destruction of the Sanguinari, between Oriculum and Narnia, positioned in the middle of the area between Spoletium and the city Rome. He was, moreover, a Moor by race, warlike yet not reckless."
14. DOYEN 1989, p. 24, noted the existence of a papyrus dated Mesore – year 1, i.e. between 25 July and 28 August AD 253, with the name of Aemilian as emperor.
15. CIL VIII, 2482 = 17976. DOYEN 1989, p. 24, noted the existence of a papyrus dated Phaophi – year 2, i.e. between 28 September and 27 October AD 253, with the name of Aemilian as emperor (see LORIOT 1997, p. 59).
16. RPC, p. 67, nos 84-91. Eight types, with a total of 105 specimens listed (81 specimens for one type only). Other coins issued in the name of "Provincia Dacia" (Romania) were probably also struck in Viminacium: *Ibid.*, p. 71-72, nos 112-115. Four types, with a total of 26 specimens listed (16 specimens for one type only).
17. *Ibid.*, p. 177, nos 374-379. Six types, with a total of 24 specimens listed.



Despite the recent study for the series *Roman Provincial Coinage*, several questions about the provincial coinage of Aemilian remain. In particular, considering that Aemilian reigned for such a short period, and that he himself never went south of Rome, why and how could he have struck such a varied and significant coinage in provinces as distant as Egypt?

Regarding the Western coinage, Harold Mattingly was correct when he wrote “the great majority of the coins of this short reign seem to show one style and fabric, which, from comparison with earlier issues of Gallus and later issues of Valerian, can only be that of Rome.”<sup>26</sup> Indeed, Valerian’s base in Italy was in Milan, which may explain why this mint issued no coins in Aemilian’s name.<sup>27</sup> Excluding small variations in detail or legend, thirteen reverse types of *antoniniani* are recorded for the Rome mint, and eleven in bronze (mostly *sestertii* but also a few *asses* and *dupondii*).

Though his distinction of two separate issues among Aemilian’s Roman coinage is debatable, Mattingly’s commentary on his coin-types remains relevant. “The first issue of Aemilian gives prominence to the ‘Pius Felix’ of his obverse title, as if to focus attention at once on his goodness and his felicity. The reverses are devoted mainly to the gods of the army, which Aemilian brought with him – Apollo, Diana, Hercules, Mars. As some balance to this strong infusion of the religion of the armies and the provinces comes *Roma Aeterna*, the goddess of the eternal city, holding the immortal bird, the phoenix. ‘Paci Aug.’ promises peace as the immediate fruits of the bold stroke of arms. In the second issue the coinage conforms much more closely to the normal usages of the mint. Jupiter is the preserver of the Emperor, Mars brings peace, the Emperor is the hope of the nation, he bears the titles of *Empire* and is its general as well as its chief priest, he has the Victory and Valour that inspire great achievements.”<sup>28</sup>



Fig. 4

Fig. 4 – Unpublished billon coin of Aemilian from a Balkan mint (Viminacium?), 22 mm diameter, 3.79 g; 6 o'clock (photo © CGB.fr, mail-bid “Monnaies 26”, 22 June 2006, lot 398).

scale 1.5 : 1

18. *Ibid.*, p. 257, nos 1227-1233. Seven types, with a total of 19 specimens listed.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 202, nos 893-895. Three types, with a total of 22 specimens listed.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 266, nos 1298-1302. Five types, with a total of 37 specimens listed.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 244, nos 1162-1166. Five types, with a total of 11 specimens listed.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 294-295, nos 1461-1463. Three types, with a total of 16 specimens listed.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 409-410, nos 2326-2333. Eight types, with a total of 69 specimens listed, produced during a very short timespan in September 253.
24. *RIC IV/3*, p. 190, hypothesized that Uranius Antoninus may have already been established at Emesa when Aemilian was in power in the West, explaining the absence of coinage in his name. DOYEN 1989, p. 25, observed that Aemilian also had control over Sardinia and Dalmatia, although no specific coinage can be attributed to these regions.
25. The Roman Provincial coinage reflects the importance of local deities to their cities; see OXFORD 2005, especially p. 2-4 and 49.
26. *RIC IV/3*, p. 190. Mattingly then added: “The rare *Antoniniani* that are not Roman are probably to be assigned to a Balkan mint – the name of which it seems hopeless to try to guess” (p. 190) and “the little issues of this mint provide some points of interest – the full name of the Emperor, *M AEMILIVS AEMILIANVS*, the curious spelling *PAXS* for *Pax*, the winged *Nemesi* as a type of *Victory*, and *Hercules* as a type of *Virtus*” (p. 193). The possibility that this could be the mint of Viminacium was discussed – inconclusively – in DOYEN 1989, p. 23. Jean-Marc Doyen has kindly informed me of a – previously unpublished – coin from this series, sold in Paris: CGB.fr, mail-bid “Monnaies 26”, 22 June 2006, lot 398. This billon coin, 22 mm diameter and 3.79 g, with a 6 o'clock die-axis, depicts the radiate bust of Aemilian with the legend *IMP M AEMIL AEMILIANVS P F AVG*, and Diana standing with her bow and the legend *DIAN VICT* (fig. 4).
27. See MATTINGLY 1946, p. 37.
28. *RIC IV/3*, p. 192-193. On the question of ‘first issue’, see discussion below.
29. Despite its size, the Venèra hoard is not useful for the study of Aemilian (cf. GIARD 1995). A broader study of coin hoards has been made in DOYEN (forthcoming), with nearly 400 hoard-specimens of Aemilian (though with slightly different figures). Doyen’s figures assign the following categorization of the main reverse types: Mars 23.4%, Hercules 12.7%, Diana 12.4%, *Victoria* 11.5%, Apollo 10.9%, *Votis Decennialibus* 0.3%.

Hoards are the most precious source of knowledge about a coinage to learn about an emperor's rule, but few hoards contain coins of Aemilian, and the quantities found are small. Only 215 coins of Aemilian were found in the five relevant ones, representing a paltry 0.18 % of the contents of these finds.<sup>29</sup> To date, when reconstructing the life of this emperor, the numismatic evidence is not especially helpful, and it would be invaluable to discover an Italian hoard and not just those from far-away Northern territories. With the evidence available at the time, Mattingly made the interesting note that the small number of coins of Aemilian found in the Dorchester hoard "...seems to fit one month [of reign] rather than three."<sup>30</sup>

It should also be noted that Aemilian's Roman coinage is far scarcer than that of Pertinax (who ruled for 3 months), and even than that of Florian (who may have ruled for three months). But the quantity of bronze and silver coins of Aemilian (both provincial and imperial) is larger than might have been expected for a very short reign – which suggests that it may not have been that short.<sup>31</sup>

Hoards	Dates	No. of coins (total)	No. of Aemilian coins, in bronze and silver
Eauze (Gers, France)	Buried c. AD 261. Excavated in 1985	28 000	104 (0.37%)
Dorchester (Dorset, England)	Buried c. AD 260. Excavated in 1936	22 000	50 (0.23%)
Rue (Somme, France)	Buried c. AD 261. Excavated in 1988	6 300	41 (0.65%)
Cunetio (Wiltshire, England)	Buried c. AD 274. Excavated in 1978	55 000	18 (0.03%)
Landebeäron (Côtes-du-Nord, France)	Excavated in 1964	5 000	2 (0.04%)

30. MATTINGLY 1946, p. 44.

31. This is not the only instance: commenting on the surprising mint output of Marius (AD 271), who may have only reigned for a few days, Richard Grossman once commented: "*Marius and his entire army must have spent the whole time striking coins*" (quoted in *The E-Sylum*, vol. 18#28, 12 July 2015). According to POLFER 1999, "*The literary sources all agree on the fact that Marius reigned only for two days before being killed and replaced by Victorinus. But the coinage of Marius shows that he must have stayed in power for a somewhat longer period, not however exceeding 12 weeks.*"

32. BEAUVAIS 1767, vol. II, p. 26: "*Ses médailles sont O, en or & en argent*". According to his own abbreviation system, "*O, signifie que la tête dont il est question, ne se trouve point en tel métal ou en tel module*" (BEAUVAIS 1767, vol I, p. xvi). It seems surprising that silver coins could not be found at the time, so Beauvais was surely prone to exaggeration.

33. It must be noted that no example has been metallurgically tested, though it would be interesting to confirm that it contains 98-99 % pure gold, like the coinage of Aemilian's predecessor, unlike the coinage of his successor Valerian who had strongly debased it (BLAND 2012, p. 522, who refers to MORRISSON 1985). A recent essay by Roger Bland is valuable on this point, for replacing the gold coinage of Aemilian in context: "...there was a decline in the average weight of the aureus, from 7.30 g under Commodus to less than half of that, 3.37 g, under Aemilian," and "...while at the start of the period, individual aurei were struck at a consistent weight, individual pieces show growing variability and this becomes marked from the reign of Severus Alexander" (BLAND 2017, p. 129). With such varying weights, "...at some point between 218 and 253, it seems that the fixed relationship between gold and silver (and, by extension, bronze) denominations must have broken down and gold coins must have circulated as bullion," which means that the weight relationship between aurei and double-aurei "...would not be relevant, since every piece, laureate or radiate, would have been worth its weight in gold and denominations would largely have lost their significance" (BLAND 2017, p. 132).

34. In 1603, Giacomo Alvisé Cornaro expressed to Vincenzo I Gonzaga his desire to acquire, in Padua, a head of Aemilian from Bembo's collection (ASM AG, MS b. 1535, f. III, fol. 506-507).

35. BLAND 2013, p. 263 and p. 276. It is interesting to remember the estimates that c. 50 reverse dies were used per year under the reign of Trajan, and 14 to 17 under the reign of Postumus (BLAND 2012, p. 523).

36. MATTINGLY 1946, p. 37.

## THE AUREI OF AEMILIAN

In his eighteenth-century manual for collectors, giving rarities and price-estimates, Guillaume Beauvais wrote of Aemilian that *'his coins cannot be found in gold or silver.'*<sup>32</sup> This article is devoted to them, so they *can* obviously be found, but with the greatest difficulty.<sup>33</sup> The rarity of these coins is such that we have not limited ourselves to a study of the actual surviving specimens, but have searched the antiquarian literature for references to gold coins of Aemilian. This has borne fruit, with early provenances found for some of the known specimens. But we have also been faced with ambiguous documents: for example, in the collection of Pietro Bembo (1470-1547), was a "head of Aemilian", presumably a bust or a coin, and made of unknown material.<sup>34</sup>

As was noted by Roger Bland, *"It has long been known that Roman gold coins of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD are very scarce both as single finds and in hoards. As a result, it is normally assumed that very few*

*gold coins [were] struck during this period. However, a new die-study of the coinage of Philip I and family (AD 244-249) shows that in that reign the production of dies and therefore of coins was at a similar level to that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, when finds are very much more numerous. [...] R. Reece suggested to the author that the scarcity of finds of 3<sup>rd</sup>-century gold coins may not mean that fewer coins were produced but rather that fewer coins were lost because the State was more efficient at recovering and reminting them."*<sup>35</sup>

Though few, and despite their worn condition, the surviving *aurei* of Aemilian confirm Harold Mattingly's statement that the mint in Rome (from Trajan Decius to Aemilian) was striking *"in a fine and vigorous style."*<sup>36</sup>

The obverse of all the coins displays the draped and cuirassed bust of the emperor facing right, with two different legends. And various legends can be found on the known reverses (not all authentic), as summarized below.

IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	<i>Imperator Aemilianus Pius Felix Augustus</i>	The Emperor Aemilian, pious and <i>felix</i> Augustus
IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	<i>Imperator Caesar Aemilianus Pius Felix Augustus</i>	The Caesar Emperor Aemilian, pious and <i>felix</i> Augustus
APOL CONSERVAT	<i>Apollini conservatori</i> (or <i>Apollo conservator</i> )	To Apollo protector (or: Apollo protector)
DIANAE VICTRI	<i>Dianae Victrici</i>	To the victorious Diana
ERCVL VICTORI	<i>Herculi Victori</i>	To the victorious Hercules
MARTI PACIF	<i>Marti Pacifero</i>	To Mars, who brings peace
VICTORIA AVG	<i>Victoria Augusti</i>	The Victory of the Augustus

37. RIC IV/3, p. 192.

38. See MATTINGLY 1946, p. 44; CHRISTOL 1976, p. 88-90; PERASSI 2009, p. 68. Iula interprets the legend DIANÆ VICTRI as a wish for victory: in mythology, she was the goddess of hunting who gave the power over Lazio, to the priest who sacrificed the most beautiful heifer, rather than to the Sabine who had hunted it (IULA 2012, p. 38; after Livy, *History of Rome*, I.45). The *aureus* reverse with Apollo, the actual existence of which remains to be confirmed, would show "Apollo the preserver" (BANDURI 1718, p. 93, noted that Aemilian was the first to use this reverse legend, which he says was used to protect the Roman people from the plague).

39. PERASSI 2009, p. 69. The *Mediolanum*/Milan mint was only founded by Valerian, c. AD 259-260 (BLAND 2012, p. 529).

40. RIC IV/3, p. 192.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

42. GATALETA 1998, p. 35, indicates the existence of two examples of the VOTIS DECENNALIBVS *antoninianus*.

43. I suggest the hypothesis that both Mattingly and Doyen were mistaken. As discussed with Roger Bland (private email): "...by and large, changes in obverse legend generally do indicate a new emission." But considering the low survival-rate of Aemilian's coins, it may well be that the reverses only known with the second obverse legend were also struck with the first one too, examples of which remain undiscovered. Doyen could list only 479 *antoniniani* from hoards: there are several unique coins of Aemilian, and I see no reason to exclude the possibility that all reverses were struck with both obverse types. Moreover, the justification of the separation of Aemilian's coinage into three issues of six types each (corresponding to six *officinae*) seems rather weak if one considers that the rare VOTIS DECENNALIBVS type adds a seventh type to the two first issues. And, should one assume that the same logic applies to *sestertii*, the logic fails because the types RIC 43, RIC 44, and RIC 49-50 do not fit into Doyen's system. In fact, though mules do exist, the use of "hybrids" to justify the classification is too simple: for example, 1 % of a series of 1238 coins of Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian found in hoards would be hybrids (DOYEN *forthcoming*), and this number seems quite high for mistakes. In the case of Aemilian, who only reigned for a few weeks, it may be wiser to admit that the chronology of the strikes is uncertain.

### GENUINE GOLD COINS OF AEMILIAN

	Obverse		Reverse		Census
	Legend	Description	Legend	Description	
<b>Type aureus-1</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with laurel wreath	DIANAE VICTRI	Diana standing, almost facing but her head to the left, a bow in her left hand, an arrow in the right	1 specimen
<b>Type aureus-2</b>	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with laurel wreath	DIANAE VICTRI	Diana standing, almost facing but her head to the left, a bow in her left hand, an arrow in the right	2 specimens
<b>Type aureus-3</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with laurel wreath	ERCVL VICTORI	Hercules standing to right, holding a bow in his left hand – on whose arm hangs the lionskin, resting his right hand on a bow	1 specimen

### FORGERIES (OR SUPPOSED FORGERIES) OF GOLD COINS OF AEMILIAN

	Obverse		Reverse		Census	Commentary
	Legend	Description	Legend	Description		
<b>Type aureus-4</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with laurel wreath	APOL CONSERVAT	Apollo standing to left, holding a branch downwards, resting his left arm on a lyre which is set on a rock	1 specimen	pre-2008 forgery
<b>Type aureus-5</b>	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	Draped (and cuirassed ?) bust to right, with laurel wreath	VOTIS DECENNALIBVS	Legend within a laurel-wreath	not attested	fictitious (?)
<b>Type binio-1</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	DIANAE VICTRI	Diana standing, almost facing but her head to the left, a bow in her left hand, an arrow in the right	1 specimen	forgery
<b>Type binio-2</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	VICTORIA AVG	Victory advancing to left, a palm under her left arm, a wreath in her raised right hand	several specimens	pre-1800 forgery
<b>Type binio-3</b>	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	APOL CONSERVAT	Apollo standing to left, holding a branch downwards, resting his left arm on a lyre which is set on a rock	1 lost specimen	pre-1612 forgery (?)
<b>Type binio-4</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	APOLL CONSERVAT	Apollo standing to left, holding a branch downwards, resting his left arm on a lyre which is set on a rock	several specimens	pre-1815 forgery
<b>Type binio-5</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	APOLLO CONSERVAT	Apollo standing to left, holding a branch downwards, resting his left arm on a lyre which is set on a rock	2 specimens (of which 1 melted)	pre-1579 forgery
<b>Type binio-6</b>	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	ERCVL VICTORI	Hercules standing to right, holding a bow in his left hand – on whose arm hangs the lionskin, resting his right hand on a bow	1 lost specimen	pre-1685 forgery (?)
<b>Type binio-7</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	Cuirassed and draped bust to right, with radiate crown	MARTI PACIF	Mars marching to left, holding a branch upwards, a spear and a shield in his left hand	1 specimen	pre-1722 forgery



Commenting on the monetary themes of the precious-metal issues of Aemilian, Mattingly wrote "...the reverses are devoted mainly to the gods of the army, which Aemilian brought with him – Apollo, Diana, Hercules, Mars. There is an unusual flavor both in the epithets of some of the deities and in their selection, and it is safe to see, in Diana and Hercules, if not in the others, native cults of Illyricum under Roman names."<sup>37</sup> The only gold coin-types whose authenticity is securely confirmed are those depicting Diana and Hercules, both of whom are "givers of victory". These types are consistent with an issue struck in a time of crisis: Aemilian probably knew that, as soon as he was raised to the purple in Rome, Valerian would try to defeat him.<sup>38</sup> "It seems that the employees of the Mint of Rome, even in the very limited time during which Aemilian was in power, did not limit themselves to an anonymous and insipid figurative repertoire, which could be valid for every emperor, focused on the depiction of generic abstractions such as the victory over enemies, the peace, the health, the pietas, or the hope, but introduced iconographical novelties – more or less meaningful – which can be the signs of an ideological vision of the imperial power of Aemilian."<sup>39</sup>

Harold Mattingly, in *RIC* 1949, distinguished two issues,<sup>40</sup> based on their obverse legend, and then two subcategories of the second issue, based on the reverse types. Later, Mattingly reversed his original chronological order of these issues:<sup>41</sup> the coins with the obverse legend IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG would pre-date those with the legend IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG. But he had to include several 'mules', some known (the *aurei* IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG /

DIANAE VICTRI) and some only reported (the *denarius* IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG / VOTIS DECENNALIBVS (fig. 17).<sup>42</sup> In his 1989 PhD-thesis, Jean-Marc Doyen agreed with Mattingly and separated these three emissions: first with CAESar, then without CAESar but with the same reverses, and then with new reverses. But both an *aureus* (our type A-2) and an *antoninianus* (*RIC* type 19) were qualified of "hybrids":<sup>43</sup> the *aureus* type A-2 would have been struck before the types A-1 and A-3.

The presence of *aurei* in the first issue makes sense: Aemilian had to strike gold coins from the beginning to pay for his support.<sup>44</sup> Why these coins are so rare is probably due to a combination of factors. The emperor reigned briefly; no hoard of the period was found; and a *damnatio memoriae* was issued against him after his execution: John of Antioch indicated that Aemilian "disappeared from mankind" and indeed several stone-inscriptions have been erased.<sup>45</sup> Despite the brief time that Aemilian's celators had to engrave dies after his election, "Aemilian's Diana types, unlike those of Gallienus, are of a quality comparable to those of Augustus. They must have been cut by artisans more accomplished than their contemporaries who cut Gallienus' and Valerian's huntress types."<sup>46</sup> Diana, found on the types A-1 and A-2, was not a very frequent coin-type during the Empire:<sup>47</sup> with Aemilian, this type is very meaningful, because several inscriptions attest that – in Dacia and Moesia notably – Diana Augusta had become a goddess on par with *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus*, a god worshipped by equestrian cohort commanders.<sup>48</sup>

44. Because of the short reign of Aemilian, I have not attempted to date precisely these gold issues, nor even to order them chronologically. In the absence of significant hoards, I have decided not to discuss the question of chronology within the coinage of Aemilian.
45. The Senate in Rome had declared Aemilian public enemy ('*hostis publicus*'), see DOYEN 1989, p. 23 and Eric Varner observed that "no sculpted portrait of [Aemilian and Cornelia Supera] have been identified with certainty" (VARNER 2004, p.209). Doyen suggests that the total of Aemilian's gold coinage may have remained in the city of Rome, and that it would have been melted down after the arrival of Valerian (DOYEN forthcoming). It has already been noted that no defaced *aurei* are known, suggesting that when a late Emperor was subject to a *damnatio memoriae*, his gold coins were melted down. (see HOSTEIN 2004, p. 224) Slashed *aurei*, such as the Agrippina mentioned by Hostein, or the Augustus *aureus* sold in CNG's e-sale 168, are more likely to have been test-cut (so-called 'bankers marks') than defaced intentionally; these are commonly found with Indian imitations of Tiberius (on the subject, also see BM 2016).
46. JENTOFT-NILSEN 1985, p. 174. Gallienus seems to have struck coins in Diana's name all along (shared reign and sole reign). The comparison of the quality of the die-engraving should take into account the place of strike: Augustus and Aemilian struck in Rome, while the coins of Gallienus with Diana were predominantly minted in Milan (Rome mint: *RIC* V/1, p. 146, nos 174-175; Milan mint: *RIC* V/1, p. 98, no. 380 and p. 172, no. 473).
47. This type of representation of Diana is listed in SCHMIDT-DICK 2002, p. 42, type f1A/07, and recorded on coins of Hadrian, Faustina Junior, Marcus Aurelius and Aemilian. The huntress was depicted under Hadrian (AD 117-138) and Antoninus Pius (AD 138-161), but principally under Augustus (27 BC – AD 14) and Gallienus (AD 260-268), who had begun co-ruling in AD 253 with his father Valerian. It might be hypothesized that this iconography was suggested to him by their predecessor Aemilian.
48. BIRLEY 1978, p. 1536.



Fig. 17



Fig. 17 – Denarius with VOTIS DECENNALIBVS on the reverse, supposedly a modern cast of a genuine ancient coin. Formerly in the collection of Raffaele Benedetti.

scale 1.5 : 1



Despite the quasi-certainty that Aemilian's gold coins were struck in Rome, Diana would have had a special significance for the army he had left in Moesia, and these coins may belong to an issue distributed as a reward to the men who had accompanied him from the Danube to Rome.<sup>49</sup> Claudia Perassi commented on this type: "...the goddess is represented with a short dress – to the knee – and boots, whilst grasping an arrow in the right hand and the quiver in the left. Therefore, she is celebrated in her aspect of huntress, and not like previously on the aurei and denarii of Gordian III in her function of bringer of light thanks to the long straight torch which she holds in her hands."<sup>50</sup> (fig. 5). Marit Jentoft-Nilsen noted that "...the type has some parallels with the Diana Sicilia coins: no quiver, the three-part tunic, bow in left hand, hunting boots, and similar stance. Contrarily, though, her gaze is to the left, and she holds in her right hand a downturned arrow,"<sup>51</sup> and compared the pose of the goddess to an early imperial bronze statuette in the museum in Lyon (figs 6-8).<sup>52</sup> She then added: "I suggest that an actual large-scale sculpture may have served as the prototype for the bronze statuette and Aemilian's Diana type". This is the most common reverse type, if it can be said with three known specimens. They are of two different reverse-dies, a fact which suggests that the mint output was not insignificant.<sup>53</sup> Antoniniani with a similar reverse exist.<sup>54</sup>

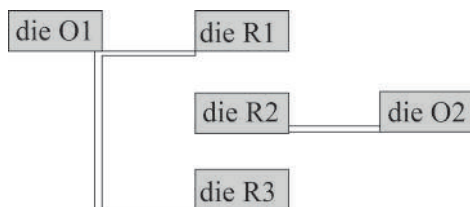


Fig. 6



Fig. 5

Fig. 5 – Example A-2b. Aureus with Diana on the reverse, after restoration. 3.21 g. Swiss private collection, formerly in the collections of Hyman Montagu, Consul Weber and Viscount de Sartiges. Photograph © H.J. Rambach.

Fig. 6 – 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD bronze statuette of Diana. Musée gallo-romain, Lyon, inv. Br. 32. 168 mm high, 825 g. Engraving from COMARMOND 1855-1857, pl. 7.

scale 1.5 : 1

49. Special issues, struck to pay the new Emperor's support, are common occurrences (see BASTIEN 1990 for the later period). It must be reminded here that Didius Julianus promised 250 aurei per man to the Praetorian Guard when he was elected (see RAMBACH 2010, p. 36-37).
50. PERASSI 2009, p. 68.
51. JENTOFT-NILSEN 1985, p. 174-175.
52. Bronze, 168 mm high, stand 85 mm diameter and 27 mm high, 825 g, formerly in the collection of Alexis-François Artaud (acquired by the city of Lyon in 1835, *Lyon Arch. Mun.* R 2/3). Publ.: COMARMOND 1855-1857, p. 223-224, no. 84; BOUCHER TASSINARI 1976, p. 38-40, no. 32. This statuette was found in 1813-14 in Lyon, near the amphitheatre "des trois Gaules" at the site of an abandoned bronze-maker's shop. I am grateful to François Planet for observing that although the burial could date from any time between the early Empire and Clodius Albinus, the likelihood is a dating during the siege of Septimius Severus (AD 197).
53. It remains difficult to produce a proper numismatic study of these gold emissions, because of the minuscule number of surviving specimens (none with a find-spot). The number of specimens in existence is too small to attempt a calculation of the mint output, though we can identify two obverse dies and three reverse dies (the die O.1 is shared by the types A-1 and A-3) which indicates issues of not insignificant sizes, struck simultaneously. The two examples of type A-2 are of shared dies. It is worth remembering that Andrew Burnett, in his corpus of 23 aurei of Allectus, could only find two coins linked by obverse-die and 2 by reverse-die, which highlights the difficulties of die-studies with too-few surviving coins and indicates that the aurei of Allectus were struck in much higher numbers than their surviving numbers suggest (see BURNETT 1984) though as noted by Roger Bland: "Because those short-lived rulers died of sudden deaths it is also likely that the dies engraved in their names would not have been used to the end of their natural lives" (BLAND 2013, p. 263).
54. COHEN 1892, p. 288, no. 10; *RIC IV/3*, p. 194, no. 2b.
55. PERASSI 2009, p. 68.
56. COHEN 1892, p. 288, no. 13; *RIC IV/3*, p. 194, no. 3b.
57. This type of representation of Hercules is listed in SCHMIDT-DICK 2011, p. 122-123, type II.3.01, and recorded on coins of Antoninus Pius, Commodus, Septimius Severus and Aemilian. Jean Tristan quoted – in relation to this type – an inscription supposedly found in the baths of Antoninus: DNC. AEMILIANOFORTISSIMO / PRINCIPI. / HERCVLI CONSERVATORI

Reverse	Obverse legend	Aur.	Ant.	Ses.	Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3
<b>APOL CONSERVAT with Apollo standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 1</i>				Rome
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	---	<i>RIC 43</i>	hybrid		
<b>DIANAE VICTRI with Diana standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	<i>RIC 2a</i>	<i>RIC 2b</i>				Rome
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	<i>RIC note</i>	---		hybrid		
<b>ERCVL VICTORI with Hercules standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	<i>RIC 3a</i>	<i>RIC 3b</i>				Rome
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	---	<i>RIC 43</i>	hybrid		
<b>IOVI CONSERVAT with Jupiter standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 4</i>			Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 14</i>	<i>RIC 45-46</i>	Rome		
<b>MARTI PACIF with Mars advancing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 5</i>			Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 15</i>		Rome		
<b>MARTI PROPVGT with Mars standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 6</i>				Rome
<b>P M TR P I P P with Aemilian standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 7</i>			Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 16-18</i>	<i>RIC 47</i>	Rome		
<b>PACI AVG with Pax standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 8</i>	<i>RIC 37</i>			Rome
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 19</i>	<i>RIC 48</i>	hybrid		
<b>ROMAE AETERN with Roma standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 9</i>	<i>RIC 38</i>			Rome
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	---	<i>RIC 49-50</i>	hybrid		
<b>SPES PVBLICA with Spes advancing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 10</i>	<i>RIC 39</i>		Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 20</i>	<i>RIC 51</i>	Rome		
<b>VICTORIA AVG with Victory advancing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 11</i>	<i>RIC 40</i>		Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 21</i>	<i>RIC 52</i>	Rome		
<b>VIRTVS AVG with Virtus standing</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 12</i>	<i>RIC 41</i>		Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<i>RIC 22</i>	<i>RIC 53</i>	Rome		
<b>VOTIS DECENNALIBVS in a wreath</b>	IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG	---	<i>RIC 13</i>	<i>RIC 42</i>		Rome	
	IMP CAES AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---		<i>RIC 54</i>	Rome		

(after DOYEN forthcoming)

#### AEMILIAN COINS STRUCK IN VIMINACIUM

Reverse	Obverse legend	Aur.	Ant.	Ses.
<b>APOL CONSERVAT with Apollo standing</b>	IMP M AEMIL AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	Doyen	---
<b>PAXS AVG with Pax running</b>	IMP M AEMIL AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<b>RIC 23</b>	---
<b>VICTORIA AVG with Nemesis standing</b>	IMP M AEMIL AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<b>RIC 25</b>	---
<b>VICTORIA AVG with Victory advancing</b>	IMP M AEMIL AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<b>RIC 24</b>	---
<b>VIRTVS AVG with Hercules standing</b>	IMP M AEMIL AEMILIANVS P F AVG	---	<b>RIC 26</b>	---

On the type A-3, Hercules, "...contrarily [to Diana], is depicted fully nude, and holds the lion's skin and the bow in his left hand, whilst the right one holds the club towards the ground. For this type too, the nearest precedents were aurei and denarii of Gordian III which also depict Hercules at rest, titling him with the legend *VIRTVTI AVGVSTI*."<sup>55</sup> Antoniniani with a similar reverse exist,<sup>56</sup> and similar to the Diana type, Hercules seems quite significant for Aemilian.<sup>57</sup> With that of Diana, this is the only confirmed genuine aureus-type of Aemilian.<sup>58</sup>

I would also like to include in my corpus another type of aureus, A-5, which is undocumented but plausible. In 1886, a silver coin with a bust laureate, that is a denarius, was reported with such a reverse.<sup>59</sup> It is a known practice in third-century Rome to have struck aurei and then denarii with the same dies, for small commemorative issues, therefore if such a denarius did exist, the existence of such aurei would be possible.<sup>60</sup>

L. / VIRIUS PAVLINVS V.C. COMES / DOMESTICORVM PRAEF. VRB. / D. N. M. Q. EIVS (TRISTAN DE ST AMANT 1644, p. 680) but he was ill-advised to do so, as it was a Ligorian forgery (HENZEN 1966, p. 59, no. 757).

58. Mionnet expressed doubts regarding the authenticity of this type (MIONNET 1815, p. 266, valued it at Fr 1,200 "en la supposant antique"), and his opinion was later repeated (AKERMAN 1834, p. 9: "Doubts have been entertained as to the authenticity of this type in gold"). The only specimen known seems genuine, as it shares its obverse die with the coin A-1a. John Kent commented on this exceptional rarity that this is "an unusual legend, illustrating the silent 'H' in Latin" (KENT & HIRMER 1978, p. 313). And Curtis Clay noticed that the final "I" seems to lack space, as if added after being omitted at first. CALICO 2003, no. 3379, is illustrated with a drawing, but the author has had a recurrent practice of illustrating fictitious coins – sometimes based on genuine specimens in other metals (Curtis Clay kindly gave me examples for the reign of Macrinus, where denarii are used to illustrate aurei, and he noticed that such a break in the obverse legend AEMILIANVS PIVS would unlikely occur on either aurei or antoniniani).

59. This coin in billon was pointed out by the expert-dealer Jean-Henry Hoffmann (BELFORT 1884, p. 134, no. 31). Sight unseen, Mattingly did not believe in the authenticity of the denarius (RIC IV/3, p. 196, note), but a coin offered on eBay in February 2005 (seemingly a cast and therefore a modern fake) has a convincing style (and may therefore have been made from a genuine unknown specimen): 19 mm diameter, 2.53 g, acquired by Raffaele Benedetti in February 2005 (from Belleair Coins – Florida) and sold with the rest of his collection in 2015 (fig. 17, p. 9).

60. It must be noted here that there is an aureus of Philip I with the legend VOTIS DECENNALIBVS, known in a single example (with no pre-2011 provenance). See BLAND 2014, type 46. One find alone could justify the existence of this type for Aemilian.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

Fig. 7 – 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD bronze statuette of Diana. Musée gallo-romain, Lyon, inv. Br. 32. 168 mm high, 825 g., photograph © J.-M. Degueule.

Fig. 8 – 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD bronze statuette of Diana. Musée gallo-romain, Lyon, inv. Br. 32. 168 mm high, 825 g., photograph © J.-M. Degueule.



Antiquarian sources describe gold coins of Aemilian with both a laureate head, and a radiate head; might there exist heavy *aurei* of Aemilian?<sup>61</sup> Both his predecessor Trebonianus Gallus,<sup>62</sup> and his successor Valerian,<sup>63</sup> did strike "a heavier gold piece with radiate head."<sup>64</sup> Considering these emperors, who reigned just before and just after him, struck *biniones* / double-*aurei*, it cannot be ruled out that Aemilian also struck specimens of this denomination.<sup>65</sup> At present, no genuine gold coin of Aemilian with a radiate bust and a heavier weight has been located.

Forgeries of the type B-3 by Carl Wilhelm Becker have been attested since 1815,<sup>66</sup> but again no genuine specimen has been located,<sup>67</sup> although numismatic literature tells us of a (now lost) example that predates Becker.<sup>68</sup> The type B-4 is the most commonly described one. It bears the legend APOLLO CONSERVAT (with two Ls). This legend could be genuine,<sup>69</sup> and spelling variants are known to exist on Roman coins, but Becker created such a forgery,<sup>70</sup> and since no specimen is attested before his time it is likely that no such coin ever existed (figs 9-10). Finally, a very early source signaled the existence of the type B-5 but it is now lost,<sup>71</sup> and the legend APOLLO CONSERVAT is surprising,<sup>72</sup> so in the absence of a known example it must also be assumed that no such coin was ever struck in antiquity.

follow *denarius* (WOYTEK 2009). Since the creation of the *dupondius* under Nero (with a value of two *asses*), the radiate crown was the sign of a double-value, and double-*sestertii*, double-*denarii* and double-*aurei* were struck from the 240s onward.

65. Usual questions, such as whether *biniones* would have been struck with broader flans, or whether they would show a finer style, are unlikely to apply in the context of Aemilian, whose rule was too short to have many dies engraved. It would have made sense, if there was a need to strike higher gold denominations, to use existing dies (obverses of *antoniniani*, reverses of *aurei* and *antoniniani*).

66. MIONNET 1815, p. 266, had already listed the coin (with the legend APOLLO CONSERVAT) noting that fake dies existed – which gives a date for the Becker forgeries. Becker was trying as early as 1824 to sell his dies to Vienna (HILL 1924/5, p. 23), but when he failed he went on to fashion several more. He died in 1830, and the dies are now in the museum in Berlin. Forgers' dies are naturally a most useful tool for the detection of forgeries: the Paris coin cabinet preserves those of Cavino, and those of Saint-Urbain are in Vienna. The Becker fake *binio* of Aemilian with Apollo was itself copied c.1955/60 by Peter Rosa (1926-1990): ref. SAYLES 2001, p. 165, no. 194. Raffaele Benedetti used to have a modern forgery (gilded white metal, 19/20mm diameter, 1.92 g) with the legend IMP AEMILIANVS PIVS FEL AVG (and radiate bust) and the legend APOLLO CONSERVAT (only 1 L).

67. Roger Bland has confirmed the fact, already noted by Hyman Montagu, that the specimen listed by Cohen (in the British Museum) is a forgery by Becker. Is Calicó right to suggest that there is no authentic specimen of this type (CALICÓ 2003, p. 601, no. 3377)? In the absence of any attested genuine specimen, all coins similar to this type must indeed be assumed to be forgeries: to quote the words of Hill, "The Antipater cannot be an original because no original of its type seems ever to have existed" (HILL 1924, p. 52, note 7).

68. It is noteworthy that, in his 1625 portrait of Nicolaas Rockox, the engraver Lucas Vorsterman illustrated six coins, one of which is a spurious consecration-strike of Marcus Aurelius: the engraver has garbled the legend with an incorrect dative (DIVO MARCO ANTONIO PIO), and has added a non-existing radiate crown. Such mistakes in the Late Renaissance cannot but evoke the radiate crown of the false *biniones* of Aemilian, and the improper legend APOLLO CONSERVAT. The six coins were added by Vorsterman to the original painted portrait of 1621 by Van Dyck – now in the Hermitage museum. See BERGHAUS 1991, p. 170.



Fig. 9a



Fig. 9c



Fig. 9b



Fig. 9d

Fig. 9 – Original steel dies by Becker for the fake double-*aureus* with Victory on the reverse. Münzkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, inv. nr. 1911/191-18246162 (obverse) and 18246163 (reverse). Photos © Reinhard Saczewski.

scale 1.5 : 1

61. Mattingly had already estimated these heavy *aurei* to have been worth 40 *antoniniani*, against 25 for the normal ones (i.e. a ratio of 1.6). The creation of the so-called double-*denarii* and double-*aurei* has been studied by Roger Bland, who gave average weights of 3.6 and 5.74 g for the gold issue – which confirms the ratio of 1:6 (BLAND 1996, p. 72).

62. CALICÓ 2003, pp. 592-595, nos 3325/3329/3331-3333/3335-3340/3343/3345-3346 (Gallus).

63. *Ibid.*, pp. 596-600, nos 3348/3353-3357/3360/3362-3365/3368/3373/3375 (Volusian); *Ibid.*, pp. 605-612, nos 3402/3412/3414/3416/3437 (Valerian).

64. MATTINGLY 1946, p. 44-45. These are simply called *aurei radiati* by DOYEN (*forthcoming*) – contrasted with *aurei laureati*, rather than *biniones* or double-*aurei*. Strictly speaking this last denomination is incorrect too, as *aureus* is an adjective that should



Fig. 10a



Fig. 10c



Fig. 10b



Fig. 10d



Fig. 11

Fig. 10 – Original steel dies by Becker for the fake double-aureus with Apollo on the reverse. Münzkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, inv. nr. 1911/191-18246160 (obverse) and 18246161 (reverse). Photos © Reinhard Saczewski.

Fig. 11 – Antoninianus of Aemilian with the legend APOLL CONSERVAT and Apollo seated. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. RÖ 37000. 3.95 g.

scale 1.5 : 1

2004, lot 3148). This infrequent type of Apollo seated had appeared under Caracalla in AD 214-215, after the emperor's visit to the temple of *Apollo Grannus* in Faimingen (near *Raetia* in Germany), and his consultation of the oracle of Apollo at Claros (near Colophon in Ionia): it can also be found on the bronze coinage of Colophon (see ROWAN 2012, p. 115-129). In the same years, Caracalla also issued coins depicting Apollo in long garb, holding a branch and spear, and coins depicting Apollo standing with a branch and lyre – similar to Aemilian's (*RIC* IV/3, type 1). This is not the only scarce type found on Aemilian's coinage with precedents: Hercules standing, with lionskin and bow and mass, could be found on an emission of Septimius Severus of AD 196-198, with the legend *HERCVLI DEFENS*, when Hercules *defensor* was meant to protect him against the menace that Clodius Albinus represented (see ROWAN 2012, p. 45-47).

70. Becker's original dies were sold by his widow to the Saalburg Museum (in Bad Homburg vor der Höhe), and then transferred in 1911 to the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum (Berlin – later renamed Bode-Museum); see: HILL 1924/5, p. 37. The steel dies for the types B-2 and B-4 are preserved: Münzkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, accession. no. 1911/191, online catalogue nos 18246160 (B-4 obverse), 18246162 (B-2 obverse), 18246161 (B-4 reverse) and 18246163 (B-2 reverse). Concerning Becker, it should be noted that there is a large group of Becker forgeries in gold at the Royal Netherlands Academy (see HAAK 1964, p. 20 sqq.)

71. HULSIUS 1603, p. 87, no. 43, described this type in gold, but illustrated a silver coin with the legend *APOLL CONSERVAT*.

72. One should expect the legend to be the dative *Apollini conservatori*, meaning "to Apollo protector", in which case, the legend *APOLLO CONSERVAT* should suffice to distinguish a non-ancient forgery; but a grammatical mistake of declination might have passed unnoticed: the comment by Joseph de Bimard la Bâtie-Montsaléon is worth bearing in mind: "it even appears, from this list [by Goltz in 1563] that there were then no prince nor great lord who did not fancy owning medals, though there were still several who could not even read" (JOBERT 1739, p. xii; quoted in CALLATAÿ 2014b, p. 179). In fact, whilst a dedicatory dative is the most frequently found on coins, this could be an example of the 'nominative of appellation' – identifying the person/item depicted (with thanks to Pierre Assenmaker and Curtis Clay for their opinions): therefore, the possible existence of a coin of Aemilian with the legend *APOLLO CONSERVAT* cannot be fully rejected.

73. CALICÓ 2003, nos 3377-3381.



## CONCLUSION

Aemilian's rare gold coins have not yet been specifically studied. Xavier Calicó had listed five different *aurei* in 2003,<sup>73</sup> but I could identify six 'potential' types and 12 varieties (for a total of 16 examples). I use the word 'potential' because it may be true that double-*aurei* (or *biniones*) were struck, but no genuine example has yet been found. The types with Apollo standing and Mars advancing are not known to have ever been struck in antiquity: at present, based on the examples known, only the types with Diana standing and Hercules standing are genuine.

The fact that all four known genuine coins are worn (one being even pierced in Antiquity) suggests long usage – despite the *damnatio memoriae*. We are therefore forced to reconsider the circulation of his coinage; had they all remained in the capital city, they would likely have been melted down when Valerian arrived in power. It is as a result of the broader circulation of these four examples we are therefore aware of Aemilian's gold coinage. But this raises another question. All the types that are attested in gold show romanised Illyricum cults, which makes sense with *donativæ* issues meant to pay the soldiers that came with Aemilian from Moesia, but as they never reached Rome were the coins actually struck there or somewhere else?

Whilst the find of a single additional example would naturally increase the known number of coins by 25 % (!), our understanding of the mint's output still relies on very few elements, and this could well change in the future.<sup>74</sup> It is to be hoped that some of the *biniones* attested in early literature will reappear, or that some new specimens will be found, in order to confirm whether they are indeed forgeries or not. Should any coin appear on the market, or be found in a museum's reserve, the following corpus should help in identifying it – and possibly recognizing its provenance.

## APPENDIX 1: A CORPUS OF AEMILIAN GOLD COINS

### Specimen A-1a (fig. 12)

3.35g ; 1 ; 19.9 mm.

Vienna Imperial Collection (now Kunsthistorisches Museum, *inv. RÖ 18771* before 1754).

Bibl.: FOY VAILLANT 1692, vol. II, p. 353-354 (without indication of collection but purportedly this coin);<sup>75</sup> NUMISMATA 1754, p. xvi (this coin); ECKHEL 1779, p. 361, no. 5 (this coin);<sup>76</sup> ECKHEL 1797, p. 372 (this coin); COHEN 1892, p. 288, no. 9 (this coin); RIC 1949, p. 194, no. 2a (this coin).

### Specimen A-2a (fig. 13)

3.81g ; 6 ; 19/20 mm.

Museo Archeologico di Firenze, *inv. 35720/1*.<sup>77</sup>

Formerly in the Medici collection. Though unattested before 1718, this coin may well have been a Medici property for long before that.<sup>78</sup>

Bibl.: BANDURI 1718, p. 93<sup>79</sup>; RAMBACH 2018.



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

Fig. 12 – Example A-1a. Aureus with Diana on the reverse. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, *inv. RÖ 18771*. 3.35 g.

Fig. 13 – Example A-2a. Aureus with Diana on the reverse. Museo Archeologico di Firenze, *inv. 35720/1*, from the Medici collection, 3.81 g.

74. In this context, any new coin – whatever its provenance might be – would be extremely important to publish. On this subject, see below: "On the false coins of Aemilian, and provenances".
75. Jean Foy Vaillant had written in 1674 that he had not been able to examine any specimen in gold (FOY VAILLANT 1674, p. 160), but listed one with Diana on the reverse in 1692.
76. The comment in NUMISMATA 1754 "Ut apud Vaillant" translates as 'as after Vaillant' which is not clear. It could possibly mean 'as Vaillant read it' because it develops the legend into DIANAE VICTRICI, or 'as the coin found in Vaillant' if the coin described by Vaillant was not the one in Vienna.
77. Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici was the last heir of the family, and the Grandduchy passed to the House of Lorraine, but by a signed agreement of 1737 the jewels, coins, paintings, were to remain indefinitely in Florence. In 1738, the inventory drafted by Antonio Cocchi contained some 100 544 coins and medals, but only 42 492 coins could be found by Pelli in 1778 (there is a suspicion that poorly preserved examples were melted down to issue new coins). A new inventory was done in 1841 by Arcangelo Michele Migliarini, with precise examples (and references to Pelli). When Rome became the new Kingdom's capital city, in 1870, the collections were dispersed among several museums.
78. The provenance of Medici coins is usually not traceable, and it cannot be known whether they were acquired by Pietro de' Medici (1416-1469) or his son Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-1492), by Cosimo I de' Medici (1519-1574) or his children Francesco I de' Medici (1541-1587), Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici (1544-1562) and Lucrezia de' Medici (1545-1561), by Cardinal Leopoldo I de' Medici (1617-1675) or by Grandduke Cosimo III de' Medici (1642-1723). The subject of the Medici as numismatists deserves a separate study (references can be found in: POLLARD 1987; FUSCO CORTI 2006, p. 411-412; GÁLDY 2009, p. 5, 66, 80, 193; GÁLDY 2010, p. 160; CATALLI FUDA 2014).
79. The coin is also listed in PELLI 1787, vol. VII, 2, p. 21, cabinet IX, tray L, no. 1, new inv. nr. Imperiali 5654. Not listed in BIANCHINI 1726, who lists only coins of Aemilian in common metal (folio 68v and 101r).
80. This coin was formerly pierced at 12:00 (part of the LI in AEMILIANVS on the obverse and the goddess's right foot were missing), but the hole was filled between 1896 and 1909, and the field smoothed in front of the emperor's mouth. The practice of piercing is typical of the third century AD. Large quantities of pierced aurei have been found in Ukraine/Poland; for example, those of Philip I, but Roger Bland has correctly noticed that

scale 1.5 : 1



## Specimen A-2b (figs 5 and 14)

Plugged,<sup>80</sup> 3.22g ; 6 ; 20 mm.

Swiss private collection. From the collection of Hyman Montagu (1844-1895),<sup>81</sup> sold: Rollin & Feuarden (Paris), auction, 20-28 April 1896, lot 608, Fr 980, to Louis Hamburger & James Belmonte (Adolph Hess Nachfolger); later in the collection of Consul Eduard Friedrich Weber (1830-1907); sold: Jacob Hirsch (Munich), auction XXIV, 10 May 1909, lot 2252, Marks 1300, where bought by Viscount Louis de Sartiges (1859-1924)<sup>82</sup>; sold: J. Hirsch & L. Naville – Ars Classica (Lucern), auction XVIII, 10 October 1938, lot 425, SFr. 670 to Ratto.<sup>83</sup>

Bibl.: MONTAGU 1897, p. 85, no. 124 (this coin);  
SARTIGES 1910, no. 352 (this coin);  
RIC 1949, p. 196, note (this coin);  
JENTOFT-NILSEN 1985, pp. 174-175, pl. XIV-70 (this coin);  
CALICÓ 2003, p. 601, no. 3378 (this coin).

## Specimen A-3a (fig. 15)

3.1g ; 6 ; 19 mm.

British Museum (*inv.* 1864,1128.127)<sup>84</sup>, donated in 1864 by Edward Wigan (1823-1871).<sup>85</sup>

Bibl.: COHEN 1892, p. 288, no. 12 (this coin);  
RIC 1949, p. 194, no. 3a (this coin);  
KENT HIRMER 1978, p. 313, no. 477 (this coin);  
CALICÓ 2003, p. 601, no. 3379.



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

Fig. 14 – Example A-2b. Aureus with Diana on the reverse. Swiss private collection, formerly in the collections of Hyman Montagu, Consul Weber and Viscount de Sartiges. Photograph from 1897.

Fig. 15 – Example A-3a. Aureus with Hercules on the reverse. British Museum, *inv.* 1864,1128.127. 3.1 g.

many have also been found in Great Britain/Ireland (see BLAND 2014, p. 99-100). This example confirms the remark by Aleksander Bursche and Tomasz Wiecek that "The perforation is almost always above the head or bust of the emperor (sometimes, slightly to the side), which shows it was made from the obverse face, something which was of particular relevance in coins with reversed axes. Perforations positioned differently than above the head of the emperor and double opposite perforations may be suspected of being post-medieval" (BURSCHE & WIECEK 2010, p. 194). On pierced coin, see the pioneering work CALLU 1990, and – more recently – BURSCHE 2013.

81. For biographies of several such important collectors, see the present author's post-scripts to the catalogues Numismatica Ars Classica 91 (May 2016) and 99 (May 2017).
82. I am grateful to Alan Walker for informing me that Sartiges had left a bid of 1500+ Marks, whilst Henry Chapman had bid 1235 Marks.
83. I am not certain whether this was Rodolfo Ratto (1866-1949) or his son Mario Ratto (1906-1990). The underbidder was Jacob Hirsch (1874-1955).
84. No earlier provenance is known for this specimen, but the coin was unlikely to be a new find – considering that the type is known to Mionnet before 1815 and that no other specimen has been located.
85. It is very likely that this coin was part of the collection of Prosper Dupré (1771-1866), bought en-bloc by Wigan.

scale 1.5 : 1

## APPENDIX 2: A CORPUS OF FORGED AEMILIAN GOLD COINS

### Specimen A-4a (fig. 16)

Modern (possibly Bulgarian) forgery: the style of this unique specimen is clearly neither ancient nor Renaissance.<sup>86</sup>

3.68g ; - ; -.

Private collection. Unsuccessfully offered for sale with La Galerie Numismatique (New York), auction XI, 13 January 2008, lot 90.

Bibl.: unpublished.

BANDURI 1718, p. 93, listed the existence of a laureate gold coin with this type and the legend APOLLO CONSERVAT, but he may have been deceived by the picture in HULSIUS 1603, p. 87.

### Specimen B-1a (fig. 18)

Supposed forgery of unknown date.<sup>87</sup>

7.21g ; 6 ; 20.5 mm.

Hermitage State Museum, Saint Petersburg (inv. no. OH-A-A3-2878), of unknown provenance.

Bibl.: unpublished.

### Specimen B-2a<sup>88</sup>

Possibly a forgery by Carl Wilhelm Becker (1772-1830).<sup>89</sup>

Weight and die axis unknown.

Now lost. Formerly in the collection of Heinrich Christian Ludwig Schellhaß, Freiherr von Schellersheim (1752-1836) before 1800, acquired in 1825 or 1827 by the Rothschild bank in Frankfurt.<sup>90</sup>

Bibl.: SCHELLERSHEIM 1800, p. 127 (this coin);  
COHEN 1892, p. 292, no. 54 (this coin);  
RIC 1949, p. 195, note 11 (this coin);  
CALICÓ 2003, p. 601, no. 3381 (this coin).

### Specimen B-2b (fig. 19)

Forgery by Carl Wilhelm Becker (1772-1830).

5.64g ; 6 ; 20 mm.

Hermitage State Museum, Saint Petersburg (inv. no. OH-A-A3-2828), of unknown provenance.

Bibl.: HILL 1925, p. 17, pl. XII, no. 216.

86. According to the website ForgeryNetwork.com, where it is listed as item 6872 (last accessed: 24 September 2014), this piece would be by Slavey Petrov (b. 1951) – about whom see DEMETRIADI 1999.
87. The late Vladimir Momchilovich Brabich (d. 2000) was the first to classify this coin as a forgery. This specimen is worn, but this is no guarantee of authenticity – as proven by the Becker forgery in the British Museum (here listed as specimen B-4b). It is interesting to illustrate two specimens of gold forgeries by Becker: their different die axes, but especially their different flan shapes, and the different levels of wear, show how much care Becker devoted to making credible forgeries. The coin is especially heavy, 25 % above the theoretical weight of a *binio*, but this is not a sufficient proof of falseness. The fact that the reverse die is different from the two known for *aurei* is neither in favor of the coin being genuine nor a proof that it is fake. It has not been possible to see it in person, but the style does not seem to be satisfactory, and it is therefore classified here as a forgery.
88. There are no pictures available of the examples B-2\*, B-5\* and B-5\*\*, all of which are believed to be / to have been forgeries.
89. This specimen was published as early as 1800, and may therefore have been genuine, as this would be the only attested pre-1800 forgery by Carl Wilhelm Becker (1772-1830) – who did fake this type: legend has it that Becker started making fakes after being cheated himself, supposedly in 1806 (HILL 1924, p. 13-14). His eldest daughter stated that he had already started “to make drawings of ancient coins and to cut dies” while apprenticing with a wine merchant in Bordeaux (before 1795), and Hill somehow dismissed this possibility, but the coin published in 1800 suggests she may have been correct.
90. The present author is currently writing, with Bernhard Woytek, an article on the collection of Heinrich Christian Ludwig Schellhaß, Freiherr von Schellersheim (1752-1836), who owned a gold coin depicting the cuirassed and draped bust of Aemilian to the right, with radiate crown, and Victory advancing to the left, a palm under her left arm, a wreath in her raised right hand (here my specimen B-2a). The coin is well-published, with its own number in Cohen and a note in RIC. But it actually seems to have never been seen since 1800. Whether or not a forgery, this piece did exist and should still be preserved somewhere.



Fig. 16



Fig. 19



Fig. 18



Fig. 16 – Example A-4a. Forgery of an aureus with Apollo on the reverse. La Galerie Numismatique (New York), auction XI, 13 January 2008, lot 90. 3.68 g.

Fig. 18 – Example B-1a. Forgery of double-aureus with Diana on the reverse. Hermitage State Museum, Saint Petersburg, inv. nr. OH-A-A3-2878. 7.21 g. Photograph by Alexander Lavrentyev © The State Hermitage Museum.

Fig. 19 – Example B-2b. Forgery by Becker of a double-aureus with Victory on the reverse. Hermitage State Museum, Saint Petersburg, inv. nr. OH-A-A3-2828. 5.64 g. Photograph by Alexander Lavrentyev © The State Hermitage Museum.

scale 1.5 : 1

## Specimen B-3a (fig. 20)

Possibly not genuine.

Weight and die-axis unknown.

Now lost. Formerly in the collection of Charles III de Croÿ, fourth Duke of Aerschot (1560-1612), Prince of Chimay and of the Holy Roman Empire,<sup>91</sup> which was published in 1615.<sup>92</sup> Supposedly acquired in 1623 by Jean de Lauson (1584-1666).<sup>93</sup>

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of July of an uncertain year, the entire collection of the late Duke was offered at auction in Brussels. It contained some 2000 paintings, 18000 coins,<sup>94</sup> 6000 volumes of which there were numerous manuscripts, as well as silverware, engraved gems, tapestries, furniture, etc.<sup>95</sup> Some idea of the importance of this collection is given by the fact that the Duke once acquired *en-bloc*, for 12 000 *scudi* (that is, 1460 ounces of fine gold), the entire collection formed by Dionigi Ottaviano Sada.<sup>96</sup> The auction – advertised in print<sup>97</sup> – does not seem to have taken place or, at least, to have been successful at attracting a buyer for the whole. Nicolaas Rockox (1560-1640), who was mayor of Antwerp nine times between 1603 and 1625,<sup>98</sup> requested by the Duke's heirs to oversee the sales,<sup>99</sup> asked the celebrated antiquarian Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580-1637) whether an auction in Paris could be an option.<sup>100</sup> Peiresc replied that finding a buyer for the whole seemed difficult, and that the collection should be exhibited and split into parts. Rockox's friend, the painter Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) agreed to bring the coins to Paris, where he arrived on 24 May 1623. The bronze coins were examined by Jean Tristan de Saint-Amand (1595-1656)<sup>101</sup> and Jean-Baptiste Haultin (c. 1580-1640).<sup>102</sup> They were only interested in the 58 large bronzes, but Rockox had valued them too high and they offered a third less.<sup>103</sup> Instead, it is Jean de Lauson de Livé (1584-1666) who acquired the coins<sup>104</sup> for 6,000 *livres*.<sup>105</sup>

Bibl.: BIE 1615, p. 136-137, pl. XLIII (this coin);<sup>106</sup>  
PANEL 1748, p. 71 (this coin).



Fig. 20

Fig. 20 – Example B-3a. Supposed forgery of a double-aureus with Apollo on the reverse. From the collection of the Duke of Croÿ and Aerschot (1560-1612). Engraving from BIE 1615, pl. XLIII.

scale 1.5 : 1

91. In his *Syntagma de bibliothecis*, Justus Lipsius called the Duke "Lucullus Belgicus" (i.e. the Belgian Lucullus – a reference to the immense booty collected by the Roman Republican politician). The content of his collection fluctuated greatly. For example, when Peiresc visited the Duke in July 1606, Peiresc offered him a gold coin of Iohannes (423-425), but the Duke gave him every gold and silver coin of the old French kings which he owned, as well as some sixty Greek coins (see COTTE 1996, p. 559). The duke himself wrote on 1 January 1601 a manuscript catalog, entitled *Brief receuilx et extraits concernans les hystoires romaines, médailles, et antiquités avec aucuns inventoires d'ycelles; le tout escry, faict et receuilli par Charles, syre et duc de Croy et d'Arschot*, and it was still preserved in 1842 in the archives of the Beaumont castle (see *Rev. de la num. belge*, vol. I, 1842/44, p. 238; *Biographie nationale de Belgique*, vol. 4, Brussels 1873, p. 544-552; p. 550; SERRURE 1880, p. xvi-xvii). Though it might provide an even earlier *terminus post quem* for the coin of Aemilian, the present author did not attempt to access this inventory (possibly now in the Chantilly or Chimay castles, according to information kindly provided by Pierre-Jean Niebes).

92. The original edition of the catalog contained translations by Andres Schott of notes by Antonio Agustin, the 1654 edition included notes by Albert Rubens, the 1700 edition was commented on by Lorenz Beger, and the 1738 edition was completed by Sigebert Havercamp. As previously noted (BERGHAUS 1991, p. 169), and explained inside the text (fol. b ii recto), the book BIE 1615 does not only contain the Duke's collection, but also some others from Rockox's – indicated with an asterisk (circa 30 more coins were added by Rockox to the 1627 edition, and 180 more to the 1654 edition: see SERRURE 1880, p. xviii.). In fact, no asterisk can be found in the text, but there are some lozenges [diamond shapes] in the rather confusing plates (e.g. Galba with HISPANIA on the reverse, p. 27, pl. 10, where this sign indicates links to an obverse and a reverse which are, in fact, never found together – cf. CALICÓ 2003, no. 481a). There is no such sign next to the drawing of the Aemilianus, which can then be assumed to have belonged to the Duke.

93. A member of Parliament in Paris since 1613, responsible for the Canadian 'Company of 100 Associates' since 1627, acting in 1651-1657 as Governor of New-France – where he owned vast land, including the islands of Montreal (resold in 1640 for 150,000 *livres*) and Orléans, Lauson (also spelt Lauzon) had owned one of the best libraries in Paris. See BONNAFÉ 1884, p. 164-166. The fate of his collection is apparently unknown. During his years in Canada, he was known for being greedy;

might he have bought these coins as speculation, and resold them (in an undocumented transaction)?

94. This figure is quite like that of Peiresc's, who died with a collection of at least 17392 coins.
95. See BONNAFÉ & RUELENS 1885; BABELON 1901, col. 128. Several letters from and to Peiresc refer to this episode, see ROOSES & RUELENS 1900. The manuscript PEIRESC The Hague (*non vidi*) also contains information on the role he played in this transaction. For more details on the relationships between Peiresc and the Duke, see CALLATAY 2017, p. 60-61.
96. See MISSERE FONTANA 2009, p. 246 note 68, p. 298-299, p. 309.
97. Paris, BnF, fonds Dupuy, n. 488.
98. Rockox's own gold coins were acquired by Gaston d'Orléans (1608-1660) and therefore became part of the French Royal collection. See SCHELLER 1978, BERGHAUS 1991, VAN DE VELDE 1992.
99. Considering that the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of de Bie's catalogue (Antwerp 1627) is dedicated to the late Duke's nephew, Prince Alexandre de Ligne-Arenberg de Chimay (1590-1629), it is possible that it was he who inherited the coins.

100. Rubens' arrival in Paris, with the coins, is confirmed in a letter from Peiresc to Rockox, sent from Paris, 25 May 1623 (published in ROOSES & RUELENS 1900, no. CCCXXX, p. 175-177). A few coins were given as gifts (bribes?), but it is not known which ones or to whom (letter from Peiresc to Rubens, sent from Paris, 14 July 1623, published in ROOSES & RUELENS 1900, no. CCCXL, p. 196-201). Considering how formal Peiresc's purchase of 65 *livres* worth of coins was, it must be assumed that none of these gifts were hugely valuable, considering that a *livre* was about 1 gram of gold (therefore the melt value of an Aemilian double-aureus would have been 6 *livres*). If Lauson had reneged on his promise of purchase, Rubens had the idea of selling the imperial bronze and silver coins separately (see letter from Peiresc to Rubens, sent from Paris, 20 July 1623, published in ROOSES & RUELENS 1900, no. CCCXLI, p. 201-207). All this confirms that, when Peiresc wrote to Rockox from Paris on 26 February 1622, "On m'a dit que vous avez augmenté vostre cabinet au double de ce qu'il estoit lorsque j'eus le bien de le veoir, et que vous avez la disposition de celui de feu M. le duc d'Arschot" (ROOSES & RUELENS 1898, p. 339-340), the doubling in size of Rockox's collection is unrelated from his charge of disposing of the late Duke's collection.



## Specimen B-4a (fig. 21)

Forgery by Carl Wilhelm Becker (1772-1830).

4.25g ; 8 ; 19 mm.

British Museum (*inv. no. 1853,0512.246*), acquired via Harry Osborn Cureton at the sale of the collection of Pierre Justin Sabatier (1792-1869) by Leigh, Sotheby & Co. (London), auction, 25-30 April 1853, lot 412, £24.0.0.

It may be hypothesized that this example was the specimen formerly in the collection of the Hungarian Count Michael A. Wiczay / Mihály Viczay (1756-1831).<sup>107</sup>

The exceptional quality of this fake is to be noticed, with refined details such as edge imperfections, irregular wear, scratches, earthy deposits, : it is no surprise that Becker forgeries have cheated collectors and even experts.<sup>108</sup>

Bibl.: SABATIER 1852, p. 96, no. 2825 (this coin);<sup>109</sup>

COHEN 1892, p. 288, no. 4 (this coin);

HILL 1925, p. 17, pl. XII, no. 215;

RIC 1949, p. 194, note 1 (this coin).

## Specimen B-4b (fig. 22)

Forgery by Carl Wilhelm Becker (1772-1830), first identified by Sir John Evans.

4.36 g ; 6 ; -.

University College Oxford (*without inventory number*), to whom bequeathed by Horace Waddington (1830-1930); on loan to the Ashmolean Museum.<sup>110</sup>

Bibl.: unpublished.



Fig. 21



Fig. 22

Fig. 21 – Example B-4a. Forgery by Becker of a double-aureus with Apollo on the reverse. British Museum, *inv. nr. 1853,0512.246*. 4.25 g.

Fig. 22 – Example B-4b. Forgery by Becker of a double-aureus with Apollo on the reverse. University College, Oxford – on loan to the Ashmolean Museum. 4.36 g.

scale 1.5 : 1

101. Like Rockox's, Saint-Amant's coins were acquired by Gaston d'Orléans (1608-1660) and later entered the French Royal collection. On Gaston, see GATULLE 2012.

102. The fate of Haultin's collection has not been studied yet, but it has been noted that some fifty manuscripts of his were acquired by John Moore, bishop of Ely (1646-1714). Some are now in the Cambridge University Library, and some in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (e.g. Ms. Lat. 10605). Haultin may have been interested in the coins for himself, or for the King's library. The letters by Peiresc, in which he italianizes it as "Altino", gives an indication on the pronunciation of the name.

103. Letter from Peiresc to Rubens, 30 June and 7 July 1623, published in ROOSES & RUELENS 1900, no. CCCXXXVIII, p. 191-193.

104. A contract summarised that: "*monsr Rubens a convenu avec monsr le président de Lauson qu'il laissera en cette ville de Paris toutes les médailles d'or et les grecques tant de cuivre que d'argent, et ensemble les consulaires et quelques médaillons mis avec lesdites médailles grecques grandes [...] ledit sr Président sera en son choix de prendre toutes lesdites médailles au pris contenu audict bordereau revenant à la somme de six mille livres*" (quoted in ROOSES & RUELENS 1900, p. 176). Of these, on 24 June 1623, Peiresc bought back 28 coins for 65 *livres*. The redaction of this document suggests that the Arscho collection may have contained more coins than those brought to Paris. Actually, considering that the coins of Rubens "*sera mis dans un coffret bien cloz, fermé et scellé*" ('shall be placed into a well-closed box/cabinet, closed and sealed'), it is difficult to imagine that this group could have been as large as 18,000 coins.

105. The *livre* was a money of account, not an actual coin. In the 1620s, one *écu d'or* = 3,25 *livres*, and it weighed 3.376 grams of 95.8 % pure gold (thanks to Arnaud Clairand for this information). So, 6000 *livres* were equivalent to 210.5 ounces of fine gold.

106. Though this book is traditionally listed under "De Bie", whose name appear on the title page, Jacques de Bie (1581-c.1640) was in fact only the engraver – after drawings by Wenceslas Cobergher (1560-1634). Indeed, on 1 June 1609, Peiresc wrote in a letter that Cobergher was working on a catalogue of the collection of gold coins (Paris, B.n.F., shelfmark "Manuscrits français 9534"). The text itself is anonymous, and has been attributed to Rockox (see BERGHAUS 1991, p. 169), but letters by and to Peiresc inform us that the text was – in fact – written by Jean Hemelær (1580-1655). Despite the early start by Cobergher, it is in the Duke's will, dated 2 January 1611, that he requested the writing and publishing of his coin collection catalog

(REIFFENBERG 1845, p. 304). Only the gold was cataloged, but the silver and bronze coins should have been published too, as well as the works of art (see SERRURE 1880, p. xvii, p. xix). A remarkable discovery was done by François de Callatay: an entire volume of drawings by Cobergher, accompanied by a volume of explanatory text (see CALLATAY 2017, p. 60). Entitled *Observations de medallie antiche*, 1598-1604, and preserved at the Royal Library of Belgium (ms. 2052 and ms. 5575), this work contains 7 drawings of coin-reverses of Aemilian (fol. 104), but the text (fol. 184), which lists only 5 types, indicates that they are all in bronze. Louis Savot in 1627 wrote that "*L'Aemilianus est rare en tous metaux, mais moins en argent qu'aux autres: Il est plus estimé en cuivre moyen que grand*" (SAVOT 1627, p. 386), but did not explicitly refer to the existence of gold coins of this emperor. It must be presumed that he had seen a copy of the 1615 catalog, as no earlier reference to a specimen in gold with the effigy of Aemilian is known.

107. Wiczay 1814, vol. 2, p. 88, no. 465: "*Imp. aemilianvs pivs fel. avg. Prot. rad. sm.)( apoll. conservat. Apollo nudus dm. stans d. ramum lauri demittit, s. lyram ponit*". The catalogue of his 7,568 coins, prepared by Felice Caronni, was published in 2 volumes in 1814. And his almost 18,000 coins were sold to the Paris dealer Rollin in 1835, who dispersed them between private collectors, the Vienna Museum, and the Paris coin cabinet that notably acquired 203 Roman *aurei* (see BODENSTEIN 2015, p. 255; SARMANT 1994, p. 305, who refers to the manuscript catalog drafted in 1836 and preserved in Paris, Arch. Nat., F17 3468; and SZENTESI 2005).

108. We must remind here that several (Greek and Roman) coins in the Paris cabinet were at first – mistakenly – classified as Becker forgeries, before being identified as genuine coins – many decades later: see ROTHCHILD 2016, p. 221, notes 14-15.

109. Mistakenly described as having an "unpublished legend".

110. The Ashmolean Museum also possesses a specimen in white metal.

111. On Francesco Mezzabarba Birago, see MISSERE FONTANA 2000.

112. This coin was not listed in the 1674 first edition, nor in the 1694 edition.

113. The coin is not illustrated in CAYLUS 1766.

### Specimen B-5a (fig. 23)

Supposedly a forgery.

No picture available, weight and die-axis unknown.

Melted down, after being stolen in 1831 from the Cabinet des Médailles Paris, where it was before 1718.

Bibl.: OCCO 1579, p. 319 (supposedly this coin);  
BIRAGO 1683, p. 461 (supposedly this coin);<sup>111</sup>  
BANDURI 1718, p. 93 (this coin);  
FOY VAILLANT 1743, p. 340 (this coin);<sup>112</sup>  
MIONNET 1815, p. 266 (supposedly this coin);<sup>113</sup>  
COHEN 1863, no. 545 (this coin).

### Specimen B-5b

Supposedly a forgery.

No picture available, weight and die-axis unknown.

Now lost. Formerly in the collection of Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692-1779), given to the Marquise Anna Camilla Grimaldi (d. 1746), then sold to the king of Naples, and finally stolen or illegally sold between 1758 and 1870. Supposedly the same as the coin in the collection of Brownlow Henry George Cecil, 4<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Exeter (1849-1898); sold, Christie, Manson & Woods (London), 7 March 1899, lot 66 (sold £1.0.0 to "Rome").

Bibl.: FORRER 1899, p. 13, no. 8 (this coin);  
RIC 1949, p. 194, note 1 (this coin).

In a letter from 1754, the Livornese dealer Bayardi listed 143 Roman gold coins that the king of Naples, Charles VII (r. 1734-1759) had just acquired for the price of 4050 Neapolitan ducats:<sup>114</sup> "You will also notice that I placed the Aemilian amongst the unpublished ones and amongst the unusual ones, marked with +s, because it can only be found in the Royal Museum in Paris, though its authenticity is dubious. This medal was bought by the Sir Knight Alessandro Albano and paid profusely for, and then given to the aforesaid dame..."<sup>115</sup>

The collection had been formed by Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692-1779), and offered to Marquise Anna Camilla Grimaldi (d. 1746).<sup>116</sup> No precise description is available of this gold Aemilian, for which Albano had "generously paid".<sup>117</sup> Today, the coin cabinet of the National Museum in Naples contains no gold coin of Aemilian,<sup>118</sup> but when the Albani Aemilian disappeared from the Farnese collection in Capodimonte is uncertain: the curator of the coins, the abbot Mattia Zarrilli (1729-1804), was accused of having sold many pieces,<sup>119</sup> and other items were stolen during the invasions that followed the revolution of 1799.<sup>120</sup>

This coin – "the rarest amongst [the Albani-Grimaldi gold coins] which is an Aemilian in gold" according to Winckelmann<sup>121</sup> – was believed in 1754 to be unique, but for one other specimen in the French royal collection.<sup>122</sup> The only Aemilian in gold which the Paris museum is reported to have ever owned is our coin B-5a.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, it can be supposed that the coin from Naples is the same as the coin in the collection of the Marquess of Exeter (1849-1898), which has not reappeared since the auction at Christie's, over a century ago.

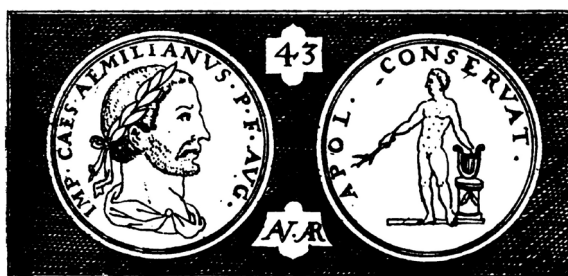


Fig. 23

scale 1.5 : 1

Fig. 23 – Example B-5a (?). Supposed forgery of a coin with Apollo on the reverse. Illustration from HULSIUS 1603, p. 87.

114. Letter to the king, written by Bayardi and sent on 1 March 1754, preserved: *Carte Farnesiane*, fascio 1052; published: DOCUMENTI 1879, p. 225-227. The rarities given by the dealer in his list are those indicated "dall'esperto Giobert": in his revision of Louis Jobert's seminal book, Joseph de Bimard la Bâtie-Montsaléon listed Aemilian in gold (rarity RRRR = "unique, or known in very small number"), in silver (rarity R = "uncommon") and in bronze (rarity RRR = "very rare and frequently missing – even from the greatest cabinets"): JOBERT 1739, vol. II, p. 402. Unfortunately, Bimard gave no details on the location of this unique (or these very few) Aemilian in gold. Otherwise, both in Jobert's original work and in Bimard's edition, Aemilian is only referred to in the context of forgeries, with bronze coins of other emperors re-engraved with his name and likeness.

115. DOCUMENTI 1879, p. xii: "Osserverà pure che è posto l'Emiliano si tra le inedite che tra le singolari onde segnata col +s, perchè unicamente si trova nel Regio Museo di Parigi, ma si dubita della verità di essa. Detta medaglia fu comprata dal S.r Cav. Alessandro Albano e pagata profusamente, poi donata alla suddetta dama".

116. In c.1743, Baron von Stosch wrote to the Earl of Carlisle that the Marquise was acquiring anything available in Italy in the field of intaglios, cameos, and ancient silver coins, and noted that Albani had offered her the celebrated cameo of Phocion by Pyrgoteles (SCARISBRICK 1987, p. 104). The marquise had married Marco Antonio Gozzadini in 1723, but she had separated in 1739 after a scandalous court case, and she was a lover of the cardinal, as witnessed by Charles de Brosses in 1739-40 (BROSSES 1836, vol. II, p. 224-225).

117. DOCUMENTI 1879, p. xii.

118. The coin was already missing at the time of FIORELLI 1870.

119. CANTILENAPOZZI 1981, p. 365 (*non vidi*).

120. 1250 more 'medals' were stolen, and acquired by the dramatist Karl Friedrich Benkowitz (1764-1807), but there was no Aemilian among the 40 to 50 pounds (about 20 kilos) of coins that Benkowitz purchased in Naples in March 1803 and carried back to Germany with the assistance of Count von Hardenberg (BENKOWITZ 1806, pp. 262-263), which were then cataloged by Domenico Sestini (SESTINI 1809). Despite plans that the Berlin coin cabinet would get the coins (as reported in the *Neue Leipziger Literaturzeitung*, 15 February 1806, col. 124), the collection was acquired by Henrich Karl Ernst von Köhler (1765-1838) in St. Petersburg (FRIEDLÄNDER 1868, p. 11).

121. See his July 1758 letter sent from Rome to Giovanni Ludovico Bianconi: "S.M. ha accresciuto il Museo colla compra delle Medaglie dell'Imp. Rom. in oro, raccolto dall'Emin. Alessandro Albano e regalate alla Marchesa Grimaldi sua amica, dopo cui morte per mezzo d'un Mercante di Livorno è unita colla Farnesiana. Il Re l'ha pagata 4050 Ducati Napolitani. Consiste di 143 Med. e la piu rara è un Emiliano, s'intende, in oro". Published: REHM 1952, p. 388-391, letter 223; CALLATAÏ 2007, p. 562-563 and p. 595-596; and see also JUSTI 1956, p. 412.

122. The passage is not explicit, but it is probably the antiquity of the Paris coin which is doubted – rather than that of the Naples one.

123. The coin is not illustrated in CAYLUS 1766.

## Specimen B-5c

Supposedly a forgery.<sup>124</sup>

No picture available, weight and die-axis unknown.

Now lost. From the collection of Princess Elisabeth-Charlotte von Wittelsbach (1652-1722) before 1709;<sup>125</sup> possibly acquired in 1706 or earlier from Jeanne-Baptiste d'Albert de Luynes, Countess di Verua (1670-1736);<sup>126</sup> given by her grandson in 1751 to the Abbaye of Sainte-Geneviève; confiscated in 1793 for the Cabinet des Médailles.<sup>127</sup>

Princess Palatine, also known as Liselotte von der Pfalz, was the spouse of Duke Philippe I d'Orléans – the younger brother of the French “Sun King”. She was a prolific letter writer, and some of her numismatic acquisitions are documented in this way.<sup>128</sup> Her coins and gems were inherited by her son the Regent (1674-1723),<sup>129</sup> and then summarily published in 1727, to encourage purchase-offers, but the collection was bought en-bloc by her grandson Louis III d'Orléans (1703-1752).<sup>130</sup>

His collections were given in 1751 to the Abbaye of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris,<sup>131</sup> where he had retreated in 1730, and into whose cabinet the coins were merged, and then were transferred to the Cabinet des Médailles during the Revolution, on 13 May 1793.<sup>132</sup> The Cabinet des Médailles should have had 2 examples (B-5\* and B-5\*\*\*)<sup>133</sup>.

Bibl.: BANDURI 1718, p. 93 (this coin);<sup>134</sup>  
ANON. 1727, p. 26 (this coin);  
GROS DE BOZE 1738, p. 96;  
MONGEZ 1783, folio 341 (this coin).

124. This coin is listed in 1718, so it cannot be a Becker forgery, and it cannot be the type B-4.

125. She wrote to her half-sister in January 170, « J'ai maintenant un cabinet de médailles d'or, une véritable suite de tous les empereurs depuis Jules César jusqu'à Héraclius. Rien n'y manque. » (quoted in CHEVY 2011, p. 21; several such letters are quoted in KOLLNIG 1987, p. 44-84).

126. In addition to Queen Christina of Sweden (1626-1689), whose coins are alas not studied in CRISTINA 2003, the early eighteenth century counted two notable female coin collectors: “Madame”, and the Countess de Verrue. Madame's collection was actually started with the purchase – at gold weight (!) – of 160 Roman gold coins (or 260 – her own letters contradict themselves) from the Countess. Considering that Madame's will – dated 21 August 1706 – mentions her coin cabinet, the purchase predates this date. The countess had fled Italy in 1700, bringing with her several of the gifts she had received – among which were ancient coins (see VAN DER CRUYSSSE 1986; VIALARDI DI SANDIGLIANO 2008). Regarding the collection of the Countess de Verrue, it is interesting to note that her silver coins (c. 1,000) and bronze coins (c. 5,700) were bought for about 10,000 livres in 1713 by Sir Andrew Fontaine (1676-1753) (see CALLATAÏ 2015, p. 297, who found the information in letters from the Abbot François de Camps and Antoine Galland). A letter from the latter, dated 26 June 1714, confirms that a great number of her coins had previously been part of the cabinet of her lover, Vittorio Amedeo II (1666-1732), King of Sicily, who gave it to her. In January 1709, Madame's collection amounted to 410 coins, which means that the 160/260 coins bought from the Countess de Verrue amounted to approximately 39/ 63 % of the whole, so the possibility that the Aemilian aureus came from her is quite high.

127. It is thanks notably to the effort of the Abbot Leblond that the coin cabinet of Sainte-Geneviève was transferred on 13 May 1793 to the national cabinet. It is known that some duplicate gold coins from the Sainte-Geneviève collection were exchanged – for example, with James Millingen in 1816 (BODENSTEIN 2015, p. 252: BnF CdM 7 ACM, inv. Mss. 72 f. 116). This practice, added to the theft of 1831, strongly depleted the aurei holdings of the Cabinet. It has not been possible to examine the inventory of 2,867 gold coins in the Paris cabinet done by Henry Cohen (given to Chabouillet on 24 January 1874, inv. Ms. 25, see AMANDRY 1980, p. 12), though doing this would determine whether this coin was already missing by then.

128. For example, on 14 June 1715, she wrote: “Ce matin, entre huit et neuf heures, comme je me lavais les mains, mon fils est venu dans ma chambre et m'a fait un très-beau présent. Il m'a donné dix-sept médailles antiques d'or, aussi belles que si elles sortaient de la Monnaie. Elles ont été trouvées auprès de Modène, comme vous avez pu le lire dans les Gazettes de Hollande; il les a fait secrètement venir de Rome. Cette attention de sa part m'a fait le plus grand plaisir, non tant pour la valeur du présent que pour l'attention” (BRUNET 1855, vol. I, p. 169). The Princess refers to one of at least three large aurei hoards found near Modena (Emilia Region), some 80 kilograms of Roman Republican gold coins found in 1714 in Brescello (*Brixellum*). Except for a few coins acquired by collectors such as the Orléans, most coins were melted down.

129. She was also the daughter of Elector Karl II (1651-1685), and inherited the collections begun by her ancestor the Elector Otto-Heinrich (1502-1559), but her cousin Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg (1620-1688) obtained the family's c. 12,000 coins in the 1670s (including the aureus of Aemilian no. B-6a), so she started to build her own collection after her husband's death in 1701. Three manuscript catalogs of the 959 gold coins in Madame's collection, of which 815 are Roman, possibly done by Charles-César Baudelot de Dairval, are preserved (Paris, B.n.F., Cab. des Méd., inv. Γ 73 M = 8-RES MS-12 pour le Haut Empire, inv. Γ 73 N = 8-RES MS-13 pour le Bas Empire, inv. 06-789); see AMANDRY 2006. The present author has accessed the volume Γ 73 M, in which the coin is indeed listed.

130. On Louis d'Orléans, see GORDIEN 2002 (*non vidi*). He also bought the gem collection of Pierre Crozat in 1741, and his total collection of c. 1500 engraved gems was sold in 1787 to Tsarina Catherine II of Russia, for more than 46,000 rubles (1,950 ounces of fine gold), and they remain in the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg (see KAGAN NEVEROV 2001, p. 34-35). The previous year, the empress had acquired the collection of 300+ ancient sculptures from John Lyde-Brown for a much higher £23,000 = 144,000 rubles, and – by comparison – the cost of Paul I's gifts of jewels for 1797-1799 totaled 2,839,697 rubles (see RUSSIA 1926, p. 11). Another interesting comparison is the collection of Baron Philipp von Stosch. At his death in 1757, his coins were valued at 10,000 scudi and his gems at 24,000 scudi (more than 2,900 ounces of fine gold). His 3,444 gems were then acquired in 1765 by King Frederick of Prussia, for a seemingly much lower price – paid in annuity (supposedly 12,000 Reichsthaler = 510 ounces of pure gold, or 30,000 ducat = 1,460 ounces), but the later figures are uncertain as the heir and the executor of the estate were both keen on tax evasion and complex negotiations (I am grateful to Ulf Hansson for his advice on this matter).



## Specimen B-6a (fig. 24)

Possibly not genuine.

Weight and die-axis unknown.

Now lost. Formerly in the Palatinate collection of the Elector Karl II (1651-1685); acquired by Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg (1620-1688); and in the Imperial cabinet in Berlin until 1863/1872.<sup>135</sup>

Bibl.: BEGER 1685, pp. 339-340, no. LXVIII (this coin);  
BANDURI 1718, p. 93 (this coin).

## Specimen B-7a (fig. 25)

Forgery, attributable to a counterfeiter named Nicolo Cocornier (or Cogornier),<sup>136</sup> according to a manuscript from 1722.<sup>137</sup> The quality of this coin is such, that it may be a genuine coin of another emperor, restruck or tooled.

8.30 g ; 1 ; 22.7 mm.

Vienna Imperial Collection (now Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. FA 4331), since its acquisition in 1727 from the Carthusian collection in Rome, where it had been since 1722.<sup>138</sup>

Bibl.: NUMISMATA 1754, p. xvi (this coin);  
ECKHEL 1779, p. 361, no. 12 (this coin);  
COHEN 1892, p. 289, no. 21 (this coin);  
RIC 1949, p. 195, no. 5a (this coin);  
CALICÓ 2003, p. 601, no. 3380.<sup>139</sup>



Fig. 24



Fig. 25

Fig. 24 – Example B-6a. Supposed forgery of a double-aureus with Hercules on the reverse. From the collection of Karl II Elector Palatine (1651-1685). Engraving from BEGER 1685, p. 339.

Fig. 25 – Example B-7a. Pre-1722 forgery of an aureus with Mars on the reverse. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. FA 4331. 8.30 g.

scale 1.5 : 1

131. A donation was made to the “abbaye royale de Sainte-Geneviève”, of the Orléans medals and engraved gems, on 14 and 20 December 1751. At his death, the new Duke bought back the engraved gems, but left the coins to the abbey. See LALLEMAND 1909; AMANDRY 2006. The abbey has now become the Lycée Henri IV.

132. The manuscript catalogue of Madame by Andreas Morel (MOREL 1686) did not list any gold Aemilian, but the coin was clearly indicated in both BANDURI 1718 and ANON. 1727. The coin is listed again in GROS DE BOZE 1738 and in MONGEZ 1783 (on which see SARMANT 1994, p. 212-213). But there is no written record of it entering the national collections, and its current location is unknown.

133. The Orléans Aemilian, though possibly considered to be a duplicate, was not one of the Greek and Roman coins given in 1809 to Napoleon to be set into snuffboxes (see RÉMUSAT 1809; SARMANT 1994, p. 258-259). There were three *aurei* from the Sainte-Geneviève cabinet: a Titus (ref. CALICÓ 2003, no. 751), a Trajan (ref. CALICÓ 2003, no. 1037) and a Septimius Severus (ref. CALICÓ 2003, no. 2578). And there was a Constantine the Great, from the Pellerin collection. I am grateful to Julien Olivier for providing me with a copy of RÉMUSAT 1809.

134. Dom Anselmo Banduri (1671-1743), who was established in Paris in 1702, dedicated his *Bibliotheca nummaria sive auctorum qui de re nummaria scriptserunt* (Hamburg 1719) to Madame, though she could not read Latin, and it must be assumed that he knew her and the contents of her collection personally. He should therefore be trusted when he wrote in 1718 that the French king had a binio of Aemilian of type B-5, distinct from that of Madame: he listed 3 specimens (the coin in the collection of “the dowager regent, the reigning duke’s mother”, the coin in the King’s collection, and the coin described by Birago in 1683 which – in fact – is supposedly the same as the royal example). Such book dedications could be very remunerative: when Baudelot de Dairval dedicated his *Histoire de Ptolémée Aulètes* (Paris 1698) to Madame, she offered him for 200 *livres* worth of gold coins (see SARMANT 2003, p. 95).

135. The coin was listed in the pre-1770, 1810 and c.1818 inventories as genuine. Moritz Pinder – though acknowledging the existence of one gold coin of Aemilian – chose to list a silver coin in his 1851 catalogue of noteworthy coins in the collection, which suggests that he knew the gold coin to be false. Julius Friedländer condemned the coin as a forgery in his 1863 notes. It no longer appears in the 1872 inventory, which suggests that the coin had disappeared by then: whether sold, melted down or stolen is unknown. The coin cannot be found today in the forgery collection of the museum, and no cast survives of it either. I am grateful to Karsten Dahmen for his help and research in the Berlin inventories.

136. The Prince de Ligne, in a letter written in Italian from 22 April 1702, spelt his name “Nicolas Cochornier” (ASNo, FMC, IV, 19/679, quoted in MISSERE FONTANA 2012, p. 251).

137. FICORONI 1722, p. 19, on which see: SPIER & KAGAN 2000, especially p. 84-85, note 93. While the provenance of this *aureus* in Vienna is certain, its authorship is not: Ficoroni attributes the *aurei* of Aemilian, Matidia and Pupienus to Cocornier, but the latter two are in fact by Ferdinand de Saint-Urbain (1654/8-1738), on whom see: PINK 1933, note 111, who believed that the forger was his son Claude Augustin de Saint-Urbain (1703-1761), and SPIER & KAGAN 2000, p. 86, note 120.

138. The Carthusian order, also known as the Order of Saint Bruno, [and widely known today for their cordial *Chartreuse*] owned a collection of coins in their charterhouse in Rome, which was acquired by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI in 1727 (supposedly for the huge sum of 12,200 *scudi* – 1485 ounces of fine gold) and now remains in Vienna. It was recognized that most coins in the Carthusian collection were forgeries, almost as soon as they arrived in Vienna in 1729. (I am grateful to Klaus Vondrovec for drawing my attention to BERGMANN 1854 and BERGMANN 1856.) The fact that Joseph Eckhel did not list this coin in his *opus magnum* is a clear indication that the coin had already been classified as a forgery.

139. CALICÓ 2003, no. 3380, is illustrated with a drawing – possibly after an *antoninianus* as the type exists in this denomination (ref. COHEN 1892, no. 22; RIC IV/3, no. 5b).

### APPENDIX 3: ON THE FALSE COINS OF AEMILIAN, AND PROVENANCES

While the mid- to late-twentieth century numismatic market saw multiple hoard discoveries and therefore a rising supply (not necessarily reflected in demand), Renaissance Europe was a different world. A Medici would complain in 1455 that finding coins for sale in Rome has become difficult because of the high demand.<sup>140</sup> The recent abundance of ancient coins on the market should not make us forget how rare they used to be. Exceedingly wealthy and well-connected passionate collectors of the fifteenth-century had very small collections: the future Pope Paul II (Cardinal Pietro Barbo, 1417-1471) only owned 97 ancient gold coins in 1467, whilst Piero *il Gottoso* de' Medici (1416-1469) in 1464 had just 100 of them.<sup>141</sup>

*"The Roman antiquary Augusto Jandolo once remarked in conversation with a collector: 'The shortage of genuine pieces necessarily leads to their imitation.'"*<sup>142</sup> Forgery has always flourished in markets in which supply is scarce – that is when prices rise too high or when there is nothing on offer.<sup>143</sup> Forgers were already active in the early Renaissance, as was noticed in Pietro Barbo's 1457 inventory<sup>144</sup>, though the inventories such as Pietro Barbo's barely valued coins above the metal content. Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455) himself counterfeited ancient coins, according to Vasari.<sup>145</sup> Of course, *"All those sophistications are only practiced and realised for rare medals, and not for common ones, because they would not be worth either the expense or the time that would have to be devoted."*<sup>146</sup> Over 60% of the coins illustrated by Fulvio in 1517 are not genuine...<sup>147</sup>

As early as March 1401, Duke Jean de Berry (1340-1416), the celebrated commanditor of various important illuminated manuscripts, bought gold pieces from a Parisian dealer named Michiel de Paxi (possibly related to the medallist Matteo de' Pasti): some of these are clearly medals in the modern acception of the term<sup>148</sup>, but some were obviously intended to pass as genuine Roman coins<sup>149</sup>.



Fig. 26

scale 1.5 : 1

Fig. 26 – Forgery of an aureus of Brutus, from the collection of King George III (1738-1820). British Museum, inv. no. G3,RIG.11, given by King George IV in 1825. 7.36 g.

In 1555, Enea Vico devoted a book-chapter to "frauds" and the techniques used to make modern medals pass as ancient ones.<sup>150</sup> Numerous examples can be given of antiquarian references to fake coins. In an interesting example, Grand-Duke Francesco de' Medici was encouraged to buy an *"aureus"* of Didius Julianus – which was sold as the modern work of Andra Cambi said 'il Bombarda' (therefore not fraudulently): *"not only would it serve to supply a rare coin until an authentic example became available, but also it would be useful in detecting modern forgeries. Ercole Basso added that it was struck from an antique coin and cost three scudi, a modest sum in relation to the market price of most ancient coins and even some modern copies"*.<sup>151</sup> As John Cunnally has observed, *"The French physician and collector Antoine Le Pois confesses in his Discours sur les medailles of 1579 that he once paid four écus of gold for a bronze medal of Scipio Africanus, so eager was he to have a relic of the hero, even though he knew very well that it was a modern forgery"*.<sup>152</sup> It seems impossible to know whether the piece, described as *"item unum illorum quatuor numismatum falsificatum Volusiani Imperatoris"* in the 1457 catalogue of Pietro Barbo's coin-collection, had been acquired as ancient or modern.<sup>153</sup> Some collectors could possibly have adopted the same attitude for a gold coin of Aemilian, and therefore the coins that are today considered to be forgeries may not have been sold as genuine ancient items when they were made. The question of coin forgeries and coin imitations in the Renaissance has already been thoroughly examined by eminent scholars such as Giard, Burnett and Callataÿ,<sup>154</sup> who tried to explain to the modern reader the way in which the Renaissance man did not understand the concept of true and false in our terms.

A lacuna today remains an inventory of all known contemporary sources with a list of forgeries – such as Ficoroni's denunciation in 1722 of Cocornier's false *aurei*, or – earlier – the bitter comments by Andreas Morell in 1702.<sup>155</sup> A well-known case of an old fake is that of the EID MAR Brutus struck in gold, of which King George III owned a specimen (fig. 26). But the gold coinage of Aemilian is unusual in its number of varieties, almost none of which are genuine. Since the Renaissance, the rarity of these coins has rendered them exciting targets for collectors, which led early forgers to create the coins that could not be found on the market (and were consequently valuable). Similarly, no ancient engraved gems are known to depict the emperor, only a few neoclassical intaglios (figs 27-30)<sup>156</sup>. As the maxim goes, *Mundus vult decipi*, 'the world wants to be deceived.'

140. Letter sent on 13 March 1455 by Carlo de' Medici to his brother Giovanni (Florence, Archivio di Stato, M. A. P., fil. 9, 135), noted in CALLATAÿ 2014a, p. 271, n. 10. A comparable letter was sent on 19 May 1507 by Giorgio da Negroponte to Isabella d'Este (Mantova, Archivio di Stato, Archivio Gonzaga, ser. E. xxv. 3, busta 857).

141. MÜNTZ 1879, p. 141.

142. SCHÜLLER 1960, p. 140. The question must be asked about the source of inspiration of the forgers: considering that fake Aemilian *aurei* are not too dissimilar to genuine ones, and considering that ancient ones are too rare for the forgers to have ever seen any, what was it they copied? In this case, the answer seems obvious: genuine coins of Aemilian in base metal. The use of genuine ancient coins as inspiration for all'antica creations is well attested; for example, Jacopo Strada (1507-1588) gave coins to his restorers as models to recarve his busts (see JANSEN 1987). Strada described two silver coins of Aemilian (*Diaskeuê*, vol. 7, p. 2152), and these are reproduced in 4 drawings in his *Magnum ac Novum Opus* (vol. 22).

143. Forgeries are well attested in antiquarian literature. For example, in his diary, recalling a visit in 1701 to the Earl of Pembroke, Ralph Thoresby wrote that he saw *"a strange variety of counterfeits, in some the metal genuine, but inscription false; in others, one side of the medal genuine, the other counterfeit; in others, one part of the metal right, the other side soldered to it wrong; with a medal of the two famous Paduan brothers"* (quoted in SCOTT 2003, p. 43). Thoresby's opinion is noteworthy: *"the two famous Paduan brothers, whose counterfeits are not only hard to be distinguished from the originals, but to be preferred to bad ones, though genuine."*

144. MÜNTZ 1879, p. 142: *"... forged with the addition of Greek coins"* (fol. 123 v°), *"one of these three silver coins is fake"* (fol. 122 v°).

145. GIARD 1974, p. 194.

146. SAVOT 1627, p. 309; quoted in GIARD 1980, p. 231. On Louis Savot, see RAMBACH 2005, RAMBACH 2008 and RAMBACH 2012.

147. CALLATAÿ 2014b, p. 179.

148. On these, see SIMONIS 1901 and POLLARD 2007, notably p. XIX.

149. GUIFFREY 1894, p. 70-73.

150. VICO 1555, p. 61-67: *"Delle fraudi che si fanno intorno alle medaglie moderne per farle parere antiche, e delle patine diverse di colori"*; noted in BRESLER 2002, p. 141.





Fig. 27



Fig. 28



Fig. 29



Fig. 30

Fig. 27 – Impression in red wax of a lost sardonyx intaglio by Johann Lorenz Natter (1705-1763), 22 x 16 mm, executed c.1740/50 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Bessborough – later in the collection of the Dukes of Marlborough. Published: BOARDMAN 2009a, no. 461-39.

Fig. 28 – Mould in pale green glass of a neoclassical carved gem, 27 x 22 mm, made pre-1834 by Pietro Paoletti. Original gem lost. Museo di Roma, inv. 29870. Published: PIRZIO BIROLI STEFANELLI 2007, no. III.255. Photo © Comune di Roma – Sovrintendenza Beni Culturali – Museo di Roma.

Fig. 29 – Impression in white plaster of a neoclassical (chalcedony?) intaglio, 23 x 19 mm, already reproduced pre-1791 by James Tassie. Original gem lost. Photograph from Cades, *Auswahl Bonn* cl. 13 III 31 414, by Jutta Schubert, Akademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn. Published: ZWIERLEIN-DIEHL 2011, fig. 24.

Fig. 30 – Drawing of a Roman third-century AD intaglio in sard. Intaglio: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 81.6.190. Drawing: KING 1873, "Probably commemorating the Gothic Victory of Æmilian".

151.MCCRORY 1987, p. 117; noted in BRESLER 2002, p. 147 and in CALLATAÿ 2002. CALLATAÿ 2014b, p. 180, n. 20. This attitude reminds one of the letter in which Lorenzo de'Medici wrote "when something [i.e. an engraved gem] is good, even if it is modern, we should not let it go" (RAMBACH 2011, p. 140).

152.CUNNALLY 2004, p. 234.

153.MÜNTZ 1879, p. 270; noted in BRESLER 2002, p. 145.

154.GIARD 1974; GIARD 1985; BURNETT 1992; SPIER KAGAN 2000; MISSERE FONTANA 2012; CALLATAÿ 2014a; CALLATAÿ 2014b. I must note here the collection of Giuseppe Magnavacca (1639-1724), dedicated to forgeries only (MISSERE FONTANA 2012, p. 252).

155.Letter from Andreas Morell to the Prince de Ligne, 18 May 1702 - Paris, BnF, Manuscrits, Nouvelles acquisitions latines 389. Quoted in: CALLATAÿ 2016, p. 375-376, n. 46

156.The sard intaglio of 15mm published by King may be genuine (though unlikely), but the identification of the subject remains doubtful (KING 1873). In fact, King himself admitted that it was uncertain, his hypothesis being based on the presence of the stag (a possible reminder of Aemilian's coins with Diana) and the crowning (with a radiate crown). The gem belonged to King, and now resides in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: it is still considered ancient but the subject is now understood to be two *Nikai* crowning a warrior – possibly Ares (RICHTER 1956, p. 73, no. 299).

scale 3 : 1



The existence of such early forgeries, and the ingenuity of the forgers who sometimes – already during the Renaissance – used to strike on genuine ancient flans, makes scholarly assessments complex. As Jean-Baptiste Giard wrote of the century-old fakes: “*It remains to find these fakes, but who will identify them? How to prove that a coin deserves the name of a Renaissance forgery?*”<sup>157</sup> And in the case of Aemilian, the scholar is faced not only with the question of forgeries (copies of real coins) but also with the question of invention (the creation of non-existing fantasy coins). It would simplify the scholar’s task to be able to say – considering the many early forgeries of Aemilian coins, and the absence of finds in archaeological context – that there never was a gold coinage of Aemilian.

“*For every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong.*”<sup>158</sup> The main difficulty the present writer encountered in writing this article – due to the many forgeries and the absence of finds in an archaeological context – has been not to condemn every specimen. “*It is indeed an error to collect a forgery, but it is a sin to stamp a genuine piece with the seal of falsehood.*”<sup>159</sup> Of course, I had to consider the possibility that the coins in Florence, London, Vienna and a private collection were modern, but I saw no reason to condemn them because none of the usual signs of forgery – edge-shape, strength of strike, nature of wear, style, weight, – could be found on any of these four examples.<sup>160</sup>

There is little – if any – doubt that the silver and gold coins of Aemilian were struck in Rome. However, the main hoards containing his coins were found in Northern France and England, although Aemilian is not known to have ever been away from Moesia and Italy during his short reign. Further research is necessary into where the few genuine *aurei* were found. If we were to follow strictly the wishes of some archaeologists – never to publish objects without provenance, as a consequence of the absence of documented finds for the gold coinage of Aemilian, we would remain ignorant about an entire coinage.<sup>161</sup> All known examples of Aemilian *aurei* have an early provenance (that is, they have been in collections for centuries) but no find-spot. Should a new Aemilian *aureus* appear, whether or not it has a provenance, it would be very significant (and most likely a new reverse type). An academic who refuses to study such a coin because of the absence of a findspot would condemn his/her ‘politically correct’ publication to being incomplete from a scientific point of view, and therefore unscholarly.

157.GIARD 1974, p. 195.

158.MENCKEN 1917.

159.HOVING 1968, p. 241, quoting Max Friedlander, which may actually be apochryphal. Probably the source is: “*Es ist ein Kunstfehler, eine falsche Skulptur als echt zu akzeptieren, aber es ist eine Sünde, eine echte Skulptur als falsch zu bezeichnen*” (quote from Martin Lerner in FELTEN 2009, p. 101). Hoving also quotes the painter Max Liebermann: “*Thank God for all those art historians who make it their business to root out fakes. They make it easier for all my bad paintings to be attributed to forgers*” (p. 75). Indeed, poor style is not always proof of forgery, since no artist ever (including coin-engravers) only created masterpieces. This recalls another quote, by Arthur Upham Pope in 1936: “*a serious danger [is] that, made over-cautious by the threat of forgeries, we may condemn genuine objects. The object that is rejected by a scholar or official of standing is generally relegated to the decorative trade [he was writing about Islamic pottery] where it is likely soon permanently to disappear. Thus the world may be deprived of some great work of art and historians of some decisive document*” (WATSON 2004, p. 527). Being overly-critical leads to resemble those who affirmed that Sanskrit was an idiom « *fabriqué de toutes pièces par des faussaires, en vue de surprendre la bonne foi de l'Europe* » (LUBAC 1952, p. 112). It is the responsibility of the scholar to denounce fakes, but also to publicize genuine artifacts.

160.The Abbot Geinoz published in 1740 his well-known apophthegm: “*With the books without the medals, one shall know much and one shall know well, while with the medals without the books, one shall know little and one shall know badly*” (GEINOZ 1740, p. 280; quoted in MOMIGLIANO 1950). But written sources must be treated with caution too, as we are reminded by the work of Piero Ligorio. Unfortunately, the present writer did not have the opportunity to examine the examples in Florence and St. Petersburg, but had to rely on photographs. I take advantage of this to comment on a letter written by Joseph Eckhel to Esprit Cousinéry on 21 February 1797 (first published in NICOLET-PIERRE 1987, p. 208). The text, in French, reads : “*Je me suis toujours restreint à étudier les médailles qui ont été publiées par d'autres. Rarement un grand collecteur est un grand savant, les recherches et les correspondances continuelles lui ôtant le temps pour approfondir sa science. Par cette raison j'ai resserré mes recherches à la place où je suis, et je m'y suis trouvé fort bien.* » Its meaning is not completely clear – Eckhel after all was Austrian. A free translation of what seems at first the meaning would be: “*I have never wanted to study medals that were not previously published*

*by others. Rarely is a great collector also a great scholar, since the pursuit of new specimens and the related correspondence deprive him of the time needed to deepen his knowledge. For this reason, I have always based my research on the place in which I am, and found this to be a very satisfactory way to proceed.*” And this seems to be confirmed by his added remark: “*... il y a des questions dont la décision ne tient pas de l'avantage d'avoir été sur les lieux*”, i.e. “*there are some questions, to which the solution does not depend on having been on the spot*” (i.e. they can be studied from the distance – one’s desk). But this is not satisfactory, considering the low esteem in which Eckhel held his predecessors’ work (NICOLET-PIERRE 1987, p. 200), and indeed, in the sixth volume of his *Doctrina numorum*, Eckhel had accused Mediobarbus’ catalogue of Roman imperial coins of being filled with errors on every page: “*I can attest myself that when I first attempted to put Roman imperial coins in the correct sequence and to explain their types, so began to consult Mediobarbus' catalogue before its unreliability had become clear to me, I found myself entangled in snares on all sides, from which I was unable to extricate myself until I made the decision to spurn the descriptions of that fallacious author, and to instead accord belief and authority only to coins that I had seen myself in the Imperial collection, or that had been published by authors whom I knew to be reliable*” (ECKHEL 1796, p. [XII], translation from the Latin by Curtis Clay). And this recalls his words in the introduction to the *Doctrina*: “*To undertake such a work as this, one needs not only a lot of free time, but access to both an excellent collection of coins and an excellent library of the relevant books. Without access to a coin collection, one will be forced to rely on published authorities, but it is common knowledge how erroneous such authorities can be*” (ECKHEL 1792, p. [XIII], translation from the Latin by Curtis Clay). In the letter quoted above, Eckhel must therefore have confused the English meaning of “*to restrain*” (“*to prevent from*”) with the French “*se restreindre*” (“*to limit oneself to*”): “*I always stopped myself from studying coins that had been published by others [and that I had not been able to examine myself].*”

161.In December 2004, the Executive Committee of the Governing Board of the Archaeological Institute of America revised their policy on the publication of recently acquired antiquities. Consequently, “*As a publication of the Archaeological Institute of America, the American Journal of Archaeology will not serve for the announcement or initial scholarly presentation of any object in a private or public collection acquired after December 30, 1973, unless its existence is documented before that date, or it was legally exported from the country of origin. An exception may be made if, in the view of the Editor, the aim of*

The belief that artifacts without a known provenance originate from recent illegal excavations and smuggling, often results in the unfortunate assumption that all artifacts with an old provenance can be identified – is a profound misunderstanding of the history of collections and of archival research.<sup>162</sup> Many thousands of ancient coins, gems, marble fragments, bronzes, terracottas, have been out of the ground for several centuries, but their monetary value was low enough that no precise descriptions or drawings were ever made. For example, the collection of 168 Roman gold coins belonging to the Abbott Gian Matteo Pertusati was sold in one uncatalogued group on 7 September 1756 to Don Carlo Trivulzio, and therefore cannot be traced.<sup>163</sup>

It is not always true that high-value items are necessarily traceable. First, the price of many artefacts has increased sharply, so that what is costly today may not have been seventy or one hundred years ago. But it must also be remembered that artefacts are not always recorded – however important they may be: to use one prominently known example, the huge Koh-i-Noor diamond is firmly documented only since the late 1740s, though it may have already been suggested in a 1561 publication, and therefore it would be a great mistake to assume that the first description followed swiftly after its excavation – in the same way that the first known appearance of a coin may be long after its discovery. It would equally be mistaken to think that coins are frequently resold: for example, a very rare *aureus* of Septimius Severus with the facing Medusa has not reappeared since its 'Belfort' sale in 1888.<sup>164</sup> Therefore, unless the previous sale was documented, one or several centuries ago, a coin that appears without background could have been in private hands for a very long time indeed.

*publication is to emphasize the loss of archaeological context. Reviews of exhibitions, catalogues, or publications that do not follow these guidelines should state that the exhibition or publication in question includes material without known archaeological findspot."*

162. In the words of Arthur A. Houghton III, "...the absence of evidence isn't evidence of absence" (HOUGHTON 2016, p. 68). For an example of how little we know about antiquarian collections, even not very old ones, we can use the collection of Henry Cohen. It is well known that Cohen – the celebrated author of the *Description des monnaies frappées sous l'Empire romain* – was born into a wealthy family, and that a sudden change in fortune in 1859 forced him to become an employee of the Paris cabinet (AMANDRY 1980, p. 10). He had a coin collection, but its content is unknown; how and precisely when he sold it is also unknown. This proves that any coin sold in Paris (supposedly) in 1859 and after could have this prestigious provenance, but we may never know for sure. It is a typo in Kolbe & Fanning's auction catalogue of 13 January 2018, lot 45, that suggests a sale of 439 unillustrated lots of Cohen's Roman coins by Rollin & Feuarent on 12-13 May 1885: the sale on that date was the collection of Henri Colin.

163. SEREGNI 1927, p. 165; CASTELLOTTI 1991, p. 68; RAMBACH 2017. When the abbot had died, the 1738 post-mortem inventory contained imprecise descriptions such as "Ninety imperial medals in gold, with a few Republican; weight 13 ounces and 14 denars; estimated 1500 Lire" (CASTELLOTTI 1991, p. 70: "*Medaglie imperatorie d'oro con alcune consolari N°.90: peso on. 13 d. 14; si stimano L.1500*").

164. This also applies to the 'fine arts': for example, a stunning painting by Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun depicting Lord Nelson's lover *Emma Hamilton as Ariadne*, has remained in the same family since its sale by Christie's in 1809.

Unquestionably, items with a provenance, and preferably a find-spot, will always be richer in meaning (and actually more valuable to collectors), but a blanket refusal to take into account artifacts without a find-spot seems poor research ethics. Ricardo Elia, of Boston University, exemplified this stance when he wrote that, because the Goulandris collection of Cycladic antiquities had no secure provenances, "...archaeologically speaking, it had no meaning. Because these objects had been looted, no one could have any real idea which island they had come from, what age they were, what their function was, what their relationship was to one another, whether they had been painted over in antiquity, and so on."<sup>165</sup> But, even without a find-spot, ancient objects can be dated, later restorations or repaintings detected, etc.<sup>166</sup> Whilst giving the impression they are protecting heritage,<sup>167</sup> such archaeologists sidestep difficult questions: they save themselves the trouble of being in a position where they must actually understand objects (for example, as in this article: to determine whether the *binio* in the Hermitage is authentic), and prefer to hide safely behind archaeological contexts. In his concluding-speech of the XV<sup>th</sup> Numismatic Congress, Michael Alram (vice-president of the Austrian Academy of Sciences) reminded the International Numismatic Committee and all those attending that it would be a loss of knowledge to refuse to publish any items. Though most coins are known through multiple examples, numismatics occasionally must rely on very few specimens. Were it not for two coins only, the existence of emperor Domitianus II would not be known: in such extreme cases, no example can be ignored. Recent political events, and the accompanying destruction in Afghanistan, Syria, etc., prove that looting must be fought, but even more that artefacts must be published – as their survival is not always guaranteed. The illustrious Sir John Boardman wrote, "*Objects cannot be "tainted" or "illicit", but only be so described by scholars who do not understand them, or by legislators. Objects are testaments of antiquity, whether handled by a thief or scholar; their integrity must be respected and their safety assured.*"<sup>168</sup>

165. A 1993 book review for *Archaeology magazine*, quoted in WATSON TODESCHINI 2007, p. 112-113. Though her article is often relevant, some recent comments by Elizabeth Marlow have been striking: "I am concerned with the harmful consequences of scholars and curators studying, publishing, and teaching antiquities that lack a secure archaeological find-spot, regardless of whether or not they were recently on the market. [...] These policies [such as the UNESCO convention] seek to address the problem of looting, not the hermeneutic problem of attempting to generate knowledge about the ancient world by relying on uncontextualized objects that we can only presume are ancient" (MARLOWE 2016, p. 218-219). Notwithstanding the fact that excavations can be tampered with in order to find recent forgeries, as was the case with the Abbot Vella in 18th-century Sicily (on which see FRELLER 2001, p. 86), this is once more an instance by an American archaeologist admitting that she is not knowledgeable enough to determine an artifact's authenticity and this is the reason behind her insistence on requiring findspots.

166. Outside information, such as findspots, are valuable elements for better understanding, but 'la science des médailles' does not necessarily need them to understand coins.

167. Several "source" countries, where ancient artifacts are found, have strict legislation in which the finders are not indemnified in any way, which obviously does not encourage them to report their finds. An example is the so-called Corsica hoard: Sylviane Estiot has estimated the entire hoard to have contained over 1200 Roman gold coins, including several multiples, and a massive dish, which suggests the hoard would have weighed some 10 kilos. By itself, the title of a famous 1993 article by Colin Renfrew ("Collectors are the real looters"), is indicative of the regrettable shortsightedness of its author, who does not even pay attention to the intrinsic value of objects. Rather than selling it on the black market, risking imprisonment, the finders could have melted down the Corsica hoard, and sold the homemade ingots almost risk-free for two or three hundred thousand euros. Such laws lead to the destruction of artifacts, and not to their preservation as claimed by some archaeologists. In order for precious-metal artefacts to survive, a requirement is *materiam superabat opus*, that the historical or artistic value be much higher than that of the material used. Strict laws forbidding the ownership (and – more to the point – the sale) of antiquities, by reducing their (black-market) values, encourages their destruction by melting down. Professor Renfrew showed great naivety, or worse, bad faith, when

he wrote that "...upwards of 70 % of archaeological objects that come onto the market [...] are without any indication of provenance [...]. The clear implication is that they have only recently entered circulation and are probably stolen, looted, or fake" (BRODIE & RENFREW 2005, p. 347). A high proportion of the antiquities that appear at auction are consigned by dealers, who naturally prefer not to give their sources because they very often reveal their profit; one example may suffice: it might well have hurt the sale of an object at Christie's in December 2008 if the buyer had been aware that the item (that fetched \$75,000 hammer price) had been auctioned in Switzerland in June 2008 for the small sum of SFr. 450. It is the corollary of such false scholarship – and its lack of logic – that led journalists in 2017 to report that ISIS did not destroy some antiquities in Mosul because of their commercial potential, and to blame, in the same reports, the antiquities market for acquiring such items; though nobody sensible would recommend dealing with ISIS, these journalists actually stated that collectors are the only reason why these antiquities were not annihilated in the first place.

168. BOARDMAN 2009b, p. 117. Sir John has been vehemently criticized by some – such as Neil Brodie – for having both published items that had not been found in scientific archaeological excavation, and for publicly denouncing the weakness of their position – for example, at the so-called 'Illicit Antiquities Research Centre' (Cambridge). It remains noteworthy that none of his critics are scholars of equal stature. As a conclusion to these footnotes, and in defense of systems such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme, I must cite the title of the remarkable article MURGIA ROBERTS WISEMAN 2014: "*What have metal-detectorists ever done for us? Discovering bronze age gold in England and Wales*".



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Fig. 31 – Map of the Western Roman empire, showing the mints in which provincial silver and bronze coins were struck for Aemilian. Kindly done by Jean-Patrick Duchemin, after the information provided by the website “RPC online”.

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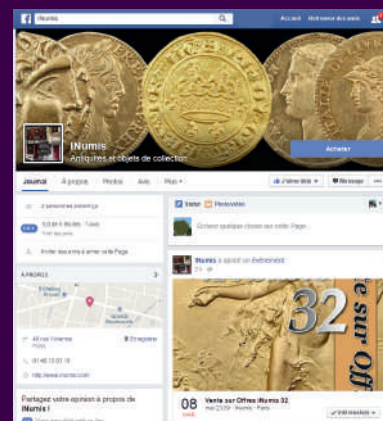


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**Tetradrachm, Athens, ca. 500-480 BC**  
head of Athena to the right/AOE; owl standing right, in left field: olive-twig



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