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BELGISCH TIJDSCHRIFT VOOR
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COINAGE OF THE ROMAN PROVINCES BEFORE PROVINCIAL COINAGE: THE RICHARD B. WITSCHONKE COLLECTION – VIRTUAL CONFERENCE, MARCH 23–25, 2021 – PREFACE

IN LATE MARCH 2021 the American Numismatic Society (ANS) and the Ph.D. Program in History at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (GC-CUNY), co-sponsored a three-day conference ‘*Coinage of the Roman Provinces before Provincial Coinage: The Richard B. Witschonke Collection*’. While the ongoing pandemic required the event to be virtual, the gathering embodied all the warmth, curiosity, and conviviality that made ‘Rick’ Witschonke so beloved in our numismatic communities. It was attended by over 350 students, scholars, and coin enthusiasts representing over 30 nationalities. The conference was a celebration and reflection on the importance of the roughly 4,000 coins of the early Roman Provinces from the R.B. Witschonke Collection, now part of the ANS collection, mainly dating from the 2nd and 1st century BCE. We warmly thank Pierre Petit, President of the Royal Numismatic Society of Belgium, François de Callataÿ and Jan Moens, Members of the Editorial Board of its *Revue belge de Numismatique et de Sigillographie*, for their support in publishing a selection of papers presented at this conference, here more fully developed and expanded by the respective authors. This volume is best read as a companion publication to the catalogue of the collection, which itself contains additional essays focused on each region and coinage.^[1] The papers in this volume are therefore organized according to the geographical criteria adopted there, while also using the catalogue’s numbering.

Like the conference itself, the following articles address the curious nature of Roman monetary policy in the early stages of the development of Rome’s dominion over the Mediterranean world, *viz.*, the fact that the Romans conquered and ruled most of it without imposing their own coinage on the conquered. As argued in this volume, this element was typical of the Romans’ pragmatic attitude to imperialism and their tendency to retain any existing forms of effective organization in newly conquered territories.

The contribution of the Roman Provincial Coinage (*RPC*) series offers an incomparable tool for the study of the coinages issued in the Roman provinces and client kingdoms from the second half of the 1st century BCE onward, but it does not include the local production in those regions in the preceding decades. Together with the aforementioned *Catalogue*, this volume represents a prologue to the *RPC* series, a sort of *RPC* ‘Zero’. While exhibiting an extraordinary variety in appearance and weight, the coinages explored in the following pages illustrate the gradual transition from distinct to compatible monetary systems in the Mediterranean basin and offer a unique overview of the diverse ways in which its monetary systems responded to the Roman conquest and the related necessity of interconnectivity in the 2nd and early 1st century BCE.

^[1] L.F. CARBONE *et al.*, *Local Coinages in the Roman World, second century BC – first century AD: A Catalogue of the Richard B. Witschonke Collection of Coins in the Early Roman Provinces*, 2 vol., New York: American Numismatic Society, 2024.

These coinages have long interested numismatists and historians alike, but this volume brings a much-needed fresh perspective on the material and the current state of our knowledge.

Almost forty years ago, Michael Crawford's *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic* (1985)^[2] set the broader context of debate about the nature of the coinage and money used throughout the Mediterranean as it fell under Roman power, which was further developed in *The Coinage of the Roman World in the Late Republic* (1987),^[3] edited by Michael Crawford & Andrew Burnett.

In more recent years, other studies have highlighted the Roman impact on the monetary systems of Eastern provinces beginning in the 2nd century BCE. François de Callataÿ has published several important contributions in which he detailed the idea of local coinages struck for the Romans, even if not always in their name, the so-called 'Greek Coinages for the Romans.'^[4] In 2021, Richard Ashton & Nathan Badoud edited an important collection of studies on coinages in the early Roman Greek East, bridging together coinages issued in different provinces.^[5]

In the last decade, the gradual adaptation of Celtic and Celtiberian coinages to the Roman monetary system has been the subject of several important contributions.^[6] Among others, Pere Pau Ripollès has dedicated decades of forward-looking study of the coinage of the Iberian peninsula under Roman dominion.^[7]

Despite the quality and quantity of these contributions, this volume of collected essays (and the catalogue accompanying it) represents the first study in almost forty years to bridge East and West and show how new discoveries and methodologies have changed the state of our knowledge. The number, quality, and thematic interconnections of the essays included in this volume are a testament to the scientific progress in the field and to the goodwill of the scholars who came together back in 2021 to honor a much-missed friend and colleague, Rick Witschonke.

There is still much work to be done, but these papers represent a big step in the right direction.

LUCIA F. CARBONE (ANS) & LIV M. YARROW (GC-CUNY)

[2] M.H. CRAWFORD, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic: Italy and the Mediterranean Economy*, Oxford, 1985.

[3] M.H. CRAWFORD & A. BURNETT, *The Coinage of the Roman World in the Late Republic: Proceedings of a Colloquium held at the British Museum in September 1985*, Oxford, 1987.

[4] See e.g. F. DE CALLATAÿ, this volume, p. 3-22 and the bibliography provided there.

[5] R.H.J. ASHTON & N. BADOUD (eds.), *Graecia capta? Rome et les monnayages du monde égéen (II^e-I^{er} s. av. J.-C.)*, Basel, 2021.

[6] See e.g. S. MARTIN, this volume, p. 56-88 and the bibliography provided there.

[7] See e.g. P.P. RIPOLLÈS, this volume, p. 23-55 and the bibliography provided there.

THE END OF THE UNCIA AT THE ROMAN MINT

Abstract – The last three decades of the second century BCE saw a fashion among Roman republican moneyers for striking very small bronze denominations. This article revisits all these issues holistically in light of the appearance of previously unknown types, changes to our understanding of relative and absolute chronology, as well as metrology and die links. The fashion is contextualized in terms of contemporary political events, especially a growing popularist rhetoric and factionalism in Roman domestic politics, but also in terms of broader hunger for small change and trends within the Roman mint itself.

Historical Overview

MONETARY HISTORIANS have grappled again and again with the ‘big problem of small change’, namely the scarcity and depreciation of smallest denominations within a monetary system.^[1] This study revisits a relatively narrow period of time during the Roman Republic in which the Roman mint showed a marked interest in producing very small denominations, considering the patterns in these issues and the metrology of known specimens, focusing on the uncia ($\frac{1}{12}$ as) after 146 BCE.^[2] I limit myself to the Roman mint, but this chapter should be read in tandem with that of Clive Stannard and others in this volume who also discuss small bronzes in circulation in Italy and hunger for small change. This fresh look at patterns in the issuing of small change by the Roman mint is in part necessitated by the recent improvements to our relative and absolute dating of the republican coin series, as well as the discovery of previously unpublished bronzes.^[3]

Around 141 BCE bronze striking began again at the Roman mint after a hiatus of perhaps five years. The reintroduction of bronze issues at this point has long been correlated with the retariffing of the denarius.^[4] Table 1 summarizes all bronze issues between 141 and 84 BCE and indicates which denominations were struck by whom and in what year.^[5] Dates that differ from Craw-

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[1] Sargent & Velde 2002 is the classic work of this title; for the Roman Republic, start with Stannard 2018.

[2] The text of this paper was largely finalized before the important publication of Campana 2023; I take comfort on how often we agree on interpretations even as we have worked separately on the material, and have revised my text to indicate points of overlap.

[3] On dating, Molinari 2016 and Lockyear 2018 are most important; occasionally I’ve also been influenced by Mattingly 2004. On new bronzes, Russo 1998 and others cited below.

[4] See Bransbourg 2011 & 2013 for both traditional views on retariffing and valuation of the bronze, as well as his own proposals.

[5] Cf. Stannard 2018, table 1 that looks at patterns of emissions by denomination using specimens with recorded weights in Barfeldt’s manuscript as proxy for production. Ideally, we would be able to compare these numbers by those in Schaefer’s archive and then compare both to die counts of the issue. That said, overall the basic pattern of striking he reconstructs must be correct: “large numbers of asses produced annually until 146 [...] the *quadrans* then replaces the *as* as the commonest denomination struck [...] and then from c. 112 onwards when bronze is struck the *as* is the most common denomination.”

ford's chronology are noted. The relative chronology is more reliable (and more meaningful in the context of this discussion) than the absolute one; most apparent gaps in minting may be only illusions caused by uncertainties regarding dating. Of the first six moneyers to experiment with issuing bronze on the new weight standard, only one, Gellius, did so in any significant amount, and even his coinage could not be described as particularly voluminous. The preferred denominations from the next four decades are the semis (issued in at least 22 out of 40 years) and the quadrans (at least 25 out of 40 years). The 130s BCE show some interest in the production of the sextans and the middle part of the decade shows a modicum of interest in the uncia. Just after 120 BCE the uncia grows increasingly popular, even as the sextans has all but disappeared. This fashion for unciae likely culminates c. 105-104 BCE with the production of both unciae and semunciae and then the denomination promptly disappears forever. The as becomes the preferred denomination from c. 103 BCE and even when fractional coinage is brought back c. 93 BCE for a final encore at the mint, it never goes below the sextans and then with the drop to the semiuncial standard the quadrans becomes the smallest standard denomination.

Year	1	1/2	1/3	1/4	1/6	1/12	1/24	Moneyers	Notes
141								Titinius	Many imitations known
140								Valerius Flaccus	
139									
138								Renius, Gellius	
137								Sextus Pompeius, Tiberius Veturius	
136								L. Antestius Gragulus, C. Servilius	
135								C. Curiatius, L. Trebanius, C. Minucius Augurinus	Date follows Molinari 2016
134								Tiberius Minucius, C. Aburius Geminus, C. Numitorius	Date follows Molinari 2016
133								P. Calpurnius, L. Minucius, M. Fabrinus	Date follows Molinari 2016
132								M. Aburius Geminus, P. Maenius Antias, Q. Caecilius Metellus	Date follows Molinari 2016
131								M. Marcius, M. Acilius, M. Vargunteius	Date follows Molinari 2016
130								Cn. Domitius, C. Cassius, TQ	Date follows Molinari 2016
129								Sex. Julius Caesar, L. Caecilius Metellus, [elephant head]	
128								L. Opimius	Mattingly: date 127, Crawford: 131

Year	1	1/2	1/3	1/4	1/6	1/12	1/24	Moneyers	Notes
127								C. Servilius Vatia, M. Caecilius Metellus, Q. Fabius Maximus	Mattingly: 125
126									
125								C. Caecilius Metellus Caprarius, Mn. Acilius Balbus	
124								Q. Fabius Labeo	
123								C. Porcius Cato, M. Fannius	
122								Q. Minucius Rufus	
121								C. Plautius, Cn. Papirius Carbo	
120									
119								M. Cippius	Date follows Lock-year 2018 (approx.)
118-115									
114								C. Fonteius, P. Licinius Nerva	Mattingly: Fonteius in 112 and Nerva in 110
113								L. Marcius Philippus	
112								Cn. Cornelius Blasio	
111								Q. Curtius, M. Silanus, Cn. Domitius	Date follows Lock-year 2018 (approx.)
110-109									
108								L. Flaminius Cilo, ^[6] Q. Lutatius Cerco	Mattingly: Cerco in 107 and Cilo in 106; Crawford: 109 or 108
107									
106							[7]	C. Sulpicius, L. Memmius Gal.	Mattingly: 103
105								L. Hostilius Tubulus, L. Thorius Balbus, L. Appulius Saturninus	See below for dating issues
104								M. Herennius	Date follows Lock-year 2018 (approx.)
103									
102								C. Fabius	
101									

^[6] Russo 1998 reports a semis of this moneyer.

^[7] Numismatica Ars Classica, auction 61 (10/V/2011), lot 1153, sold as part of the Richard B. Witschonke collection, once identified as an uncia of Sulpicius, has now been reclassified by Stannard as the produce of a Campanian pseudo-mint and I'm inclined to agree. I thank McCabe for drawing this to my attention.

Year	1	1/2	1/3	1/4	1/6	1/12	1/24	Moneys	Notes
100								P. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus	
99-94									
93								L. Pomponius Molo	Mattingly: 93, Crawford: uncertain, but suggested 97
92								[Hammer]	Mattingly: 91, Crawford: late 90s
91								LPDAP and Anonymous, D. Iunius Silanus	
90								C. Vibius Pansa, L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, Q. Titius	
89								L. Titurius Sabinus	
88								C. Marcius Censorinus, Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Clodianus	
87								L. Rubrius Dossenus	
86								Anonymous, C. Gargonius Ogul[nius] M. Ver[gilius]	
85								C. Gargonius Ogul[nius] M. Ver[gilius]	
84							[8]	C. Licinius Macer, L. Livius Salinator C. Cassius L.f.Longinus	

Table 1 – Bronze issues between 141 and 84 BCE

The working hypothesis of this paper is that striking fractional bronzes, especially the very smallest denominations, was not a practical or economically driven decision by the state or any particular moneyer, but rather an attempt to be *seen* to be fulfilling the duties of this office in a way that was beneficial to the public. In other words, the issuing of small change was a popular, if not practical, policy.^[9] This would make akin to other, apparently impractical, but

[8] Stannard series 184a (one known specimen: Berlin 28693) and 184b (two known specimens: Copenhagen; ex Anders Collection) both are 17 mm and signed MACER with a single dot seemingly indicating they are unciae. These are likely a product of another pseudo-mint, perhaps of the 40s BCE. I am indebted to Clive Stannard for our private correspondence on these and other coins; the speculation on dating is my own.

[9] Campana 2023 explores different potential motivations for a money to strike small denominations. On p. 29 he suggests the impulse might be conservative – a means of honoring an ancestor and restoring a past practice, but on p. 31 he concludes his article by drawing a connection between the issues of Herennius and other popular, unofficial issues. While this author emphasizes more the latter position, it need not be at odds with the desire to honor ancestors and other traditional Roman values.

highly visible innovations, of the Roman mint and Roman moneyers in this period, namely serration and control-marks. Control-marks do at times correspond to die identification, but there is no one-standard system, rather each moneyer seems to demonstrate their own creativity and the creation of their control-mark ‘strategy’. The peak of control-mark complexity and application is in the period c. 91–81 BCE. Serration peaks in roughly the same period and seems to have been intended to discourage counterfeiting and clipping (for all it did nothing to stop the former and there is little to no evidence the latter was a common ancient phenomenon).^[10] What control-marks, serration, and proliferation of fractional bronzes have in common is that they can visibly demonstrate the moneyer’s fulfillment of his duties. That is not to say they address the same concerns: small fractional bronzes communicate an interest in the money supply for everyday small transactions, whereas control-marks and serration communicate that the moneyer is taking extra-precautions to guarantee the silver.

Both literary and material evidence suggest anxiety over the authenticity of coins and the ability of the state to regulate coin production, two issues that go hand in hand. Much of the conversation in literature centers on the figure of Gratidianus, yet while the nature of his currency reforms or regulations are much disputed, the political capital he gained from being *seen* to act is not.^[11] Gratidianus was part of the Marian–Cinnan regime, but Sulla also introduced currency reforms during his dictatorship.^[12] Similarly, we know from the work of Clive Stannard and others the great hunger for small change in Italy and beyond in the late Republic. Stannard described the ‘purse’ hoard from the drain of the republican bath at Pompeii as ‘life-changing’ in that it is certainly our best evidence for what denominations *might* have been useful in everyday life at the end of the Republic. In this hoard, most specimens fall into the 1.5 to 3 grams ballpark, and anything much over five grams is an outlier (fig. 1). Stannard thinks that this purse was swept down the drain (literally!) c. 70 BCE.^[13] The vast majority of this hoard is made up of coins from the pseudo-mint at Pompeii, only about 10% are official Roman coins and these span the years 214–130 BCE, whereas about 15% are quadrantes imitating Rome – the type typically called *RRC* 339/4. The hoard is not our only evidence for the hunger for small change, the desirability of even very old Roman coins and

[10] Cf. Witschonke 2012 for discussion of control-marks and their potential utility for tracking batches of coins. While utility is possible, the variation in systems suggests that control-marks, like serration, are predominantly intended to advertise the care the individual moneyer took in the production of the coinage and thus are likely to have been intended to raise confidence in the monetary supply, an on-going issue in this period; see Carbone & Yarrow 2020, esp. table 7, and Yarrow 2021a, p. 45–46.

[11] Cic. *Off.* 3.80; Plin. *NH* 33.132; Cic. *Leg.* 3.36; Plin. *NH* 34.27 with Verboven 1994 and Heinrichs 2008, cf. Bransbourg 2013, and esp. Sharpless, Yarrow & Lockyear *forthcoming*.

[12] On Sulla’s currency reforms: Julius Paullus, *Opiniones* 5.25.1; Lo Cascio 2008, p. 161.

[13] Stannard & Frey-Kupper 2008; Stannard & Carbone 2013; Stannard 2019.

the willingness to imitate the Roman coins to feed that need, but it is a primary illustration of all these points. Understanding this hunger helps us understand why it might be attractive to a moneyer to put time and resources into producing a small, practically useless, issue of small bronze denominations.

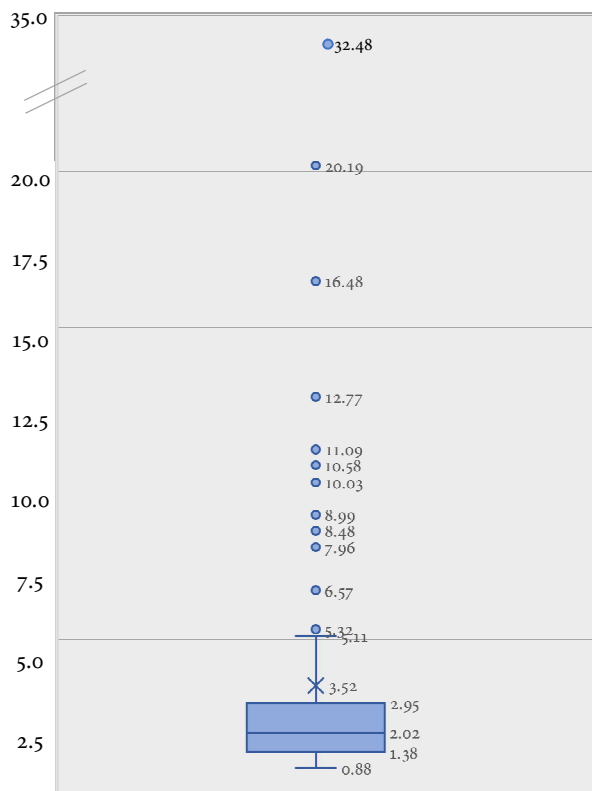


Fig. 1 – Weights (in g) of 90 bronze specimens of diverse mints as reported by Stannard 2019

Unciae of the 130s BCE



Fig. 2 – RRC 241/6, ANS 2015.20.2029, ex RBW collection (enlargements @ 200%)

Prior to these unciae, the last known unciae to be made by the Roman mint were produced from the early- to mid-140s by the college of moneyers comprised of M. Atilius Serranus (pr. of 152 BCE), Q. Marcius Libo, and L. Sem-

pronius Pitio (*RRC* 214–216).^[14] I have identified only 21 extant unciae with known weights from the 130s BCE. To do so I relied first on *CRRO* and the Schaefer Archive and the kindness of personal correspondents, particularly Manfred Fischer. These 21 specimens were produced by seven different moneyers. It appears that two whole colleges decided to have every moneyer issue unciae and then C. Aburius alone of his college did the same. The latter may have also been instrumental in influencing M. Aburius' choice (or the reverse could also be true).^[15]

<i>RRC</i> ^[16]	Count	Moneyer	Date ^[17]
240/6	2	C. Curiatius Trigemini	135 BCE (certainly before 131/130 based on Banzi hoard)
[241/6]	7	L. Trebanius (fig. 2)	same
242/5	1	C. Minucius Augurinus	same
244/5	3	C. Aburius	134 BCE (certainly before 131/130 based on Banzi hoard)
249/4	6	P. Maenius	132
250/3	1	M. Aburius	132
[256/5]	1	Q. Metellus	132 ^[18]

Table 2 – Known Unciae of the 130s

^[14] See now Campana 2023; he focuses on the Sempronius Pitio series (*RRC* 216) for which now both an uncia and a semuncia are known. He affirms (and I concur) that *RRC* 214, 215, 216 were all likely struck in the same year by a college of moneyers; at present unciae are known in the names of all three moneyers, but no semunciae have yet come to light for *RRC* 214 or 215. Mattingly's relative chronology of moneyers suggests that these issues could be as late as 145, whereas Crawford placed these issues in 148 on the basis of the *CHRR* 137. Note that there is now a uncia known for *RRC* 217 (Russo 1998, p. 147), but these unciae almost certainly date to c. 150 or 149 based on overstrikes of this issue by coinage of Andiscus, striking as Philip VI of Macedon (de Callatay 2018, p. 41).

^[15] We have insufficient evidence to speculate on the familial relationship between the two men. Crawford thought Gaius might be related to the legate of 171 BCE (Liv. 42.35.7) and Marcus to the praetor of 176 BCE (Liv. 41.14–15). The gens Aburia is well-attesting in epigraphic evidence from the Republican period in Etruria, especially Cerveteri and Tarquinia, but also is known at Assisi and post-Sullan Pompeii.

^[16] Square brackets indicate a number created to reflect Crawford's numbering, but a type not in Crawford.

^[17] Following Molinari 2016.

^[18] While Molinari 2016 would put M. Acilius (*RRC* 255) and M. Vargunteius (*RRC* 257) a year later in 131, I'm inclined to see these two men as coordinating their issues to Q. Metellus (*RRC* 256) based on numerous similarities between the three. They likely represent a college and should all be assigned the same year of office. I would not be surprised in the years to come if unciae issued by one or both came to light. A Manius Acilius issues asses at Panormus as quaestor some time in the second century BCE with his name in a wreath on the reverse (*SNG ANS* 599, *SNG Copenhagen* 1037).

The weights of these known specimens are highly erratic, and the median weight 2.79 g is a little heavy for an uncial standard as it would assume a Roman pound of just over 400 g (fig. 3). However, these little coins would have been able to easily circulate in the same context as those from the Pompeian purse hoard.

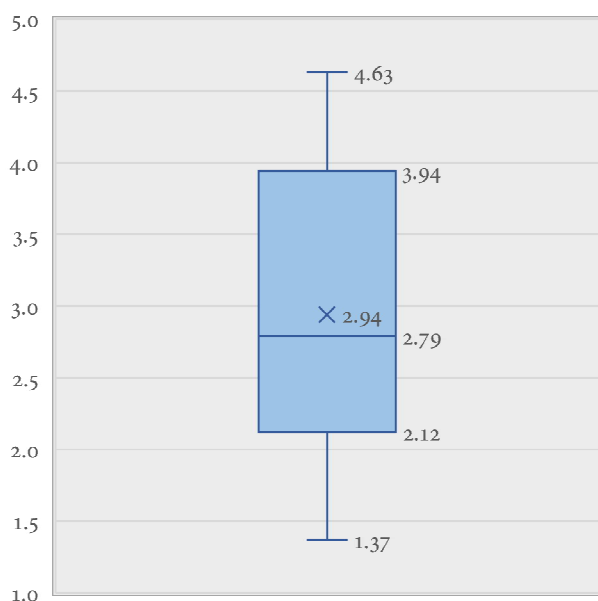


Fig. 3 – Weight distribution (in g) of 21 unciae from the 130s

As far as we can tell from this handful of specimens, just a few dies were used to make these issues, as die links are common where we have multiple specimens: *e.g.* for *RRC* 249/4 we have six examples struck by at least three reverse dies.^[19]

Six of the seven issues have the same basic design: helmeted Roma right with pellet behind for obverse and prow right with moneyer's name above and pellet before for reverse. The standout exception is the thus far unique uncial of Q. Metellus, known from two different photographs and once in Ravenna, but whose present location is a mystery.^[20] The obverse preserves the head of

[19] Die identification is based on Richard Schaefer's archive as digitized by the American Numismatic Society: http://numismatics.org/archives/ark:/53695/schaefer.rrdp.b11#schaefer.rrdp.b11_0158

[20] Bahrdfeldt 1897, pl. 1.23 and P&P Santamaria Auction (Rome), 24/II/1958, the Count Brunacci Collection. Crawford in *RRC* vol. 1, p. 550, no. 71 says that there is a second modern imitation in Berlin, but as of March 2024 no such coin was found in cabinet no. 16, tray 36 with the rest of the *RRC* 256 specimens. Crawford could not find the Ravenna specimen in 1971, but on the basis of Bahrdfeldt's plate condemned it as tooled; I see no such evidence, but without the specimen in hand it can be impossible to tell.

Roma with a pellet behind, but the reverse has a very clear oak leaf wreath surrounding the legend, Q•MEE, with the ME and the TE in ligature. The change in reverse design is a major innovation and it becomes the most common uncia reverse design for all future issues. The next bronze coin type with a wreathed reverse in the republican series, however, comes just five years later with the unusual quadrans of L. Opimius (*RRC* 253/1). It is not always as clear as in these photographs that the wreath is an oak wreath.

The moneyer and his family are well known. We assume that the moneyer is the son of Macedonicus and future consul of 123 BCE. He is also likely to have been active as curule aedile before 129 BCE in Thessaly securing grain for the city of Rome and he served as an officer under his father in Nearer Spain in the late 140s.^[21] It is possible the oak wreath represents a *corona civica* awarded to the young patrician,^[22] but the style of the coin is surely inspired by the prevalence of wreaths on Sicilian bronzes, including those struck by Romans on the island in the period 190/170–130/120 BCE, such as the NASO series.^[23] Most of these have laurel wreaths, but late fourth- and early third-century oak wreaths are not unknown on Sicilian bronzes.^[24] Oak crowns are strongly associated with Zeus as worshipped at Dodona and Zeus appears crowned in oak on the coinage of the kings of Epirus.^[25] Pyrrhus struck small bronzes at Syracuse with his name encircled with an oak wreath.^[26] Oak-wreathed names as coin reverses are also common, of course, on many silver issues of the second-century BCE Hellenistic East, mostly imitating issues of the late Antigonid dynasty.^[27] Most likely, the reverse type of Metellus' uncia was thus suggested by the wide usage of the motif on coinages of the period.^[28] It would have seemed both familiar and appropriate for a small bronze, especially for a young moneyer whose career had already taken him to both Spain and Thessaly and points in between, and whose father had defeated a pretender to the Antigonid throne.

[21] *DPRR* 1635. Garnsey & Rathbone 1985.

[22] Cf. Plin., *NH* 16.5 on the nature of this military award. Nearly all the scholarship on the *corona civica* focuses on its imperial meanings rather than republican origins. Alföldi 1952 writes most extensively on the evolution and nuance of the symbolism at the end of the Republic, but is less useful for second-century BCE interpretations.

[23] Frey-Kupper 2013, esp. p. 262–265 on dating.

[24] Cf. *SNG ANS* 1396, Syracusan fourth democracy.

[25] Piccinini 2016.

[26] *SNG ANS* 843; I think the Roman *corona civica* tradition and the Greek Zeus as savior in an oak-crown tradition may have merged in antiquity perhaps already in the second century BCE, but this is speculative and needs further investigation: cf. Schleiermacher 1990; Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli Inv.-Nr. 5054; *RRC* 304/1, 350A/1, 353/1.

[27] Cf. *ANS* 1944.100.14041. Oak-wreath reverses are known much earlier as well: *SNG ANS* 1944.100.18807 (Alexander I bronze); *SNG ANS* 2008.2.19 (Leucas c. 400 BCE bronze).

[28] Rowan 2016 on entanglements of Roman and 'provincial' imagery and ideas in this period.

I suggested in the previous section that making small bronzes might be politically popular. Can we go further and see these unciae of the 130s as tied up with the political tensions of the day, most famously Tiberius Gracchus' agrarian legislation, the problems it was attempting to solve, and the violence that followed? I would say there is a strong probability. C. Curiatius Trigemini is likely the same man or close kin of the C. Curiatius who, as tribune of the plebs in 138 BCE urged the consuls to relieve grain prices (a deeply popular act) and even imprisoned those same consuls for refusing to allow exemptions from the military levy.^[29] His likely colleague in the moneyership, C. Minucius Augurinus, uses his coins to celebrate ancestral actions to relieve a famine.^[30] And we've already seen Metellus' actions to secure the city's grain supply. Of the others, Trebanius, Maenius, and the Aburii, we have no historical crumbs to suggest their political inclinations or strategies for advancement.

It would be remiss to leave this section without noting that the end of the 130s also saw the issuing by C. Cassius Longinus (*RRC* 266; cos. 124) of two unprecedented denominations the *dodrans*, three-fourths of an as, or nine uncia, and the *bes*, two-thirds of an as, or eight uncia. He used these new denominations to celebrate a connection to the gods Vulcan and Father Liber.^[31] The choice of Father Liber echoes his representation of *Libertas* on the reverse of his denarius.^[32] The connection between Vulcan, Liber, and the theme of freedom on the coins of Cassius may derive from the story of Dionysus bringing Hephaestus back to Mount Olympus to release Hera from her bonds.^[33] Neither denomination caught on, but it does show both the ability and interest in experimentation with the bronze coinage, esp. by politicians eager to present themselves as men of the people.^[34]

[29] Val. Max. 3.7.3; cf. Liv. *Per.* 55 on grain; Cic. *Leg.* 3.20; Liv. *Oxy. Per.* 55 on levy. The sources do not attest to his office but the actions seem only possible for a tribune, on this I follow *MRR*, see *DPRR* 1577.

[30] Yarrow 2017.

[31] We only know the names of these denominations thanks to Varro *LL* 5.172, but even he finds them rather obscure.

[32] Arena 2020 cautions us about too direct an association of the god Liber with political conceptions of *libertas* in the late Republic; she draws on ample literary texts to show the god more closely associated with fertility.

[33] Paus. 1.20.3; see Yarrow 2021a, p. 237, n. 101 for further discussion and references to earlier scholarship.

[34] *RRC* 263/2, the only other known *dodrans* in the republican series, comes later in the relative chronology, so Molinari 2016 confirming Mattingly 2004. The Schaefer archive, binder 11, p. 302, has photographs of two anonymous unciae with a shield in a wreath on the reverse (cf. *RRC* 263/1) and a shorted haired beardless head on the obverse.

Unciae of the 110s BCE

<i>RRC</i> ^[35]	Count	Moneyer(s)	Approximate Date ^[36]
289/5	5	M. Cipius	Perhaps 119 BCE, earlier in sequence than Crawford allowed (115 or 114)
290/6	3	C. Fonteius	114 or 113, Mattingly would move to 112
[292/5]	1	P. Licinius Nerva	113 or 112, Mattingly would move to 110
293/3	2	L. Marcus Philippus	113 or 112, Mattingly would move to 110
285/7	6	Q. Curtius M. Silanus Cn. Domitius	Perhaps 111 BCE, later in sequence than Crawford allowed (116 or 115) ^[37]

Table 3 – Known Unciae of the 110s BCE

The relative chronology of the coinage of this period has been improved by Lockyear's recent work, but this has not yet been worked into any of the lists of the colleges of moneyers assigned to specific years in this decade. Thus, for now, we can say with relative confidence that Cipius' issue comes first among these unciae and that the joint issue of Curtius, Silanus, and Domitius is later in the sequence. Still, all five issues are likely in the same decade and perhaps even within five years of each other. The relative chronology of the middle three is not certain, but we can certainly be confident they were all made within a year or three of each other.

When taken as group these unciae seem to have all been made at a higher weight standard than the unciae of the 130s (fig. 4). The numbers of known specimens are small and both groups have a great deal of variation, but the pattern still seems significant.

^[35] Square brackets indicate a number created to reflect Crawford's numbering, but a type not in Crawford.

^[36] Following Lockyear 2018.

^[37] The date is complicated from a prosopographical perspective. If M. Silanus is the consul of 109 who is believed to be praetor in 112 and tribune of the plebs c. 124/123, what does that mean for the likely timing of a moneyership? See *DPRR* 885 for sources. Likewise, the career of Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus causes confusion: can the same man have led the colony to Narbo, served as moneyer, been tribune of the plebs in c. 104 and then reached the consulship in 96 and censorship in 92, dead c. 89? Possible, but messy, see *DPRR* 1763. It is also curious that Domitius is the one with his name on the obverse alone which might be considered the more prestige position, whereas Silanus, who seems to be significantly older if the men are correctly identified, is relegated to the reverse.

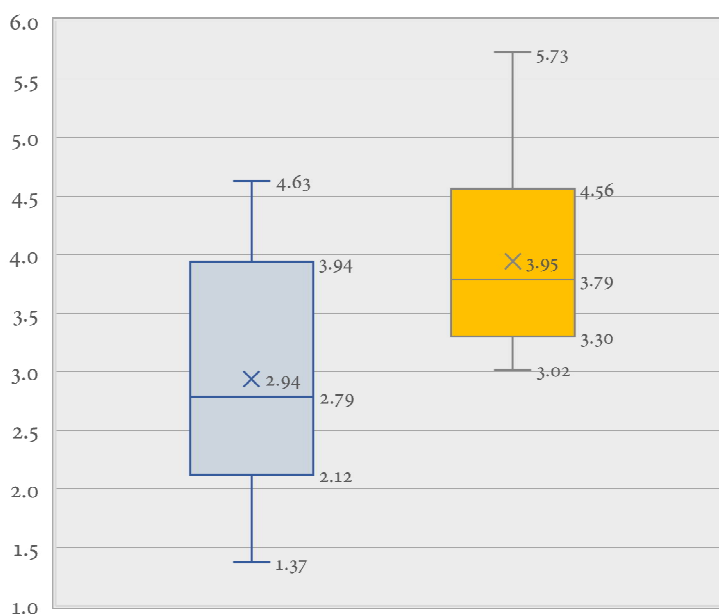


Fig. 4 – Weights (in g) of unciae from the 130s (■; 21 specimens) and the 110s (■; 16 specimens with known weight) compared

Cipius

Cipius and his family are not otherwise attested as Roman officeholders, but one Cipius was immortalized in Lucilius' *Satires* in this very decade. Lucilius was well-known to have populated his works with the men of his own day, often public figures just below the senatorial rank.^[38] Lucilius Cipius is nicknamed *Monsieur-Snore-Shooo* and his catch-phrase, "I am not asleep for *everyone*" [wink-wink-nudge-nudge, just for my wife's lover], becomes proverbial in Latin for turning a 'blind eye' to illicit activity, echoed in Cicero, Ovid, Seneca, Festus and more.^[39] Cicero's quoting of the proverb as from Cipius, not Lucilius, helps re-enforce the idea that the man might have been a historical personage of the preceding generation. Crawford is skeptical of any connection and leaves the question open, but I am inclined with Syme to see some connection between the moneyer, this literary Cipius, the widely diffused Campanian bronzeware with the stamp of P. Cipius Polybius, and perhaps also the tribe from Caere from the same period known from the funerary inscriptions primarily of their freedmen.^[40] Serving in the office of moneyership may

[38] Cf. Granius the *praeco*, on whom and for context see Bond 2016, p. 21–58.

[39] For discussion of proverb see Tracy 1976; the nickname is *Pararhenchon*, rendered in Latin but deriving from Greek and literally translates something like 'one who snores nearby'.

[40] Syme 1964, p. 115.

have been an attempt to raise the family's profile from a primarily mercantile one to one with greater political standing and dignity.

Whoever this Cipius might have been, as moneyer he used the rudder of Fortuna as a secondary symbol on his rather iconographically conservative Roma|Victory-in-a-biga denarii and on the rest of his equally conservative bronze coinage, excepting the uncia. This uncia breaks all conventions of the denomination with the Roman republican coin series. The obverse is Hercules, and the reverse is a rudder with the moneyer's name, ROMA, and a denomination mark. The rudder is typically associated with Fortuna as a goddess as well as with the sea, and through the sea with trade. For the Romans, Hercules and fortune could be invoked together in casual speech and exclamations of surprise, "By Hercules, Fortune has it that [...]"; for all they aren't found combined seriously in Latin literature until Seneca's philosophic dramas.^[41] Their association with commerce and with each other may have been heightened by both having prominent ancient cult sites in the Forum Boarium, Rome's riverside mercantile center.^[42] Hercules and Fortuna are also found juxtaposed on much later pseudo-autonomous provincial coinages and some Italic tokens.^[43] All of this is to say, that the type is not inappropriate for the status of the type of man Syme took this moneyer to be. From the numismatic perspective the key point is that even a moneyer who made very conservative choices in most design elements, feels free to break with all conventions on the uncia and instead chooses highly personal types. I am also suggesting that the resurrection of the denomination after more than a decade out of production at the Roman mint was also a personal, political choice, one that required changes to the mint operation.^[44]

Fontei

The *gens* Fonteia had supplied a number of praetors in the mid-second century and clearly retained senatorial status through the first century, as we know of a vestal virgin and of an augur from this family, as well as one serving as a legate. The moneyer of RRC 290 is likely the brother or cousin of the M. Fonteius whom Cicero defended and from which speech most of our historical understanding of the family derives.^[45] This is the first known moneyer in the

[41] Cf. [Quint.] *min. Dec.* 321.11: *Bene hercule Fortuna quod ...*

[42] Fest. 242.66-67, cf. Juv. *Sat.* 14.90. Cf. Haselberger *et al.* 2002 and Zaccagnino 2019 with references to earlier scholarship.

[43] RPC I 2875 (Cidrama, Caria); RPC IV.2 1507 (Silandus), 8376 (Alia, Phrygia); RPC VI 11018 and RPC VII.1 796C (Synnada, Phrygia); RPC VII.2 73551 (Callatis, Moesia); Rostowzew 1903, no. 2533 and Rostowzew & Prou 1900, no. 372.

[44] Campana 2023, p. 29 also believes that such issues must have been the choice of the moneyer, not the Senate or other political entity.

[45] On the speech Dyck 2012 is the best treatment on the difficult issues around the dating and historical context of this speech.

family, but three other members of the *gens* held this same office over time.^[46] The denarii of the *gens* celebrate the Dioscuri as they are associated with the Dei Penates Publici (three times),^[47] Veiovis (possibly as assimilated to Apollo),^[48] Dionysiac imagery, Concordia, Mars, the exploits of a military tribune in the *gens*, Villa Publica, and the new man T. Didius as imperator. All these types require more explanation that scholars have yet satisfactorily generated.^[49] The iconography of these later denarii suggests a *gens* with popular leanings and in good standing under the Cinnan regime.

The bronze of *RRC* 290 reintroduces the striking of the as after a break of some fifteen years or so. Only 15 of these asses are known (struck from at least 4 obverse and 7 reverse dies), but the quality of the die carving is remarkable.^[50] The as has an anchor as a secondary symbol before the prow, probably echoing the ship of the denarius reverse, but otherwise, the bronze denominations, at least as through sextans, are completely conventional in type. The unciae look like the type was designed to be used on a denarius that was never struck. Roma on the obverse has the same helmet shape and style of carving as any Roma on any denarius. The reverse composition likewise puts the moneyer's name under the horses' hooves and ROMA in the exergue. Was this a prototype carved for a denarius but then re-purposed for the uncia as a time-saving device? It 'restores' Roma to the obverse of the denomination after Cippius' experimentation but looks nothing like her earlier representation on this denomination. The whole of the obverse is wreathed, a not-unknown choice at the moment, but a rare one. Likewise, the god in the quadriga on the reverse is Mars, another choice without many precedents. Crawford suggests that the obverse of this is borrowed from Cippius' denarius, and I concur that they are carved in the same style and likely by the same hand, but it seems to me that the moneyer is thinking about *RRC* 232/1 (138 BCE) for his overall inspiration, perhaps doing so was intended to honor a marital or maternal connection with the Cn. Gellius, who struck that issue in the previous generation.

Nerva

There is little doubt that P. Licinius Nerva wanted to position himself as one of the *populares*.^[51] His denarius with the voting bridges is one of the most

[46] *RRC* 307, 353, 429 (55 or 54).

[47] Farney 2007, p. 256-259; note *RRC* 290/1 and 307/1 together were influential in Crawford's identification of the beardless Janiform head as the Dioscuri on the earlier quadrigati; I am convinced by Molinari 2014 that this is incorrect.

[48] Yarrow 2021a, p. 146, but a subject I hope to return to in future work.

[49] Discussed in Yarrow 2021a *passim*, but there is still value in Hamilton 1955.

[50] Cf. Paris REP-11463.

[51] He is famous in part for starting the second Sicilian slave uprising in 104 BCE as praetor (or pro-praetor) when he implemented a senatorial order to free enslaved peoples who originated as free peoples in states allied to Rome and then when his implementation went wrong trying to pull back the release order, see DPRR 1760 for sources.

illustrated coins of the Republic. We know from literary attestations that the introduction of the voting bridges, like the secret ballot, and other voting protections were considered ‘popular’ and a key issue of politics in this decade. Marius himself is said to have narrowed the bridges as tribune in 117 BCE.^[52] No as or sextans is known from the bronze, but I would not rule out that these may still come to light. Only one uncia is now known.^[53]

The reverse uses an exergue space for ROMA and puts a denomination mark in the upper portion of the field. The small-necked Roma on the obverse is not hugely dissimilar from other representations of Roma on the denarii of this time or the Roma of Fonteius’ uncia. The moneyer’s name is on the obverse running upward with the letters facing outward before the face. The quadruped on the reverse is clearly hooved and bounding with a short tail; it may have horns or longer ears and a shaggy coat. Russo called the animal an antelope and this identification was accepted by Witschonke. I think it likely to be the same as the animal found on the majority of the quadrantes of this issue (*RRC* 292/4a). However, the use of the quadrans’ secondary symbol as a guide to the uncia type is complicated by the fact that the type seems to have been used as a model for imitation quadrantes much like *RRC* 339/4.^[54] This hypothesis is based on the crude style of light weight specimens, but also the observed weight differences in the 35 known specimens (fig. 5a and 5b).^[55]

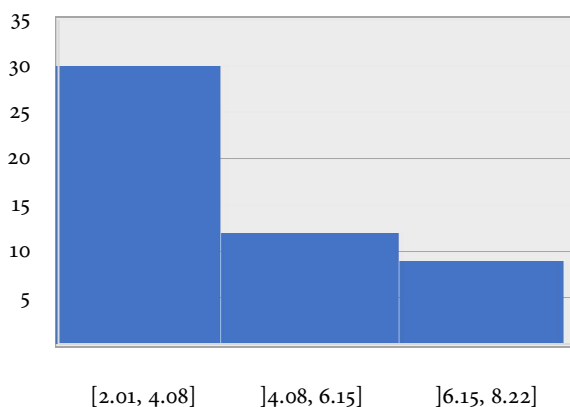


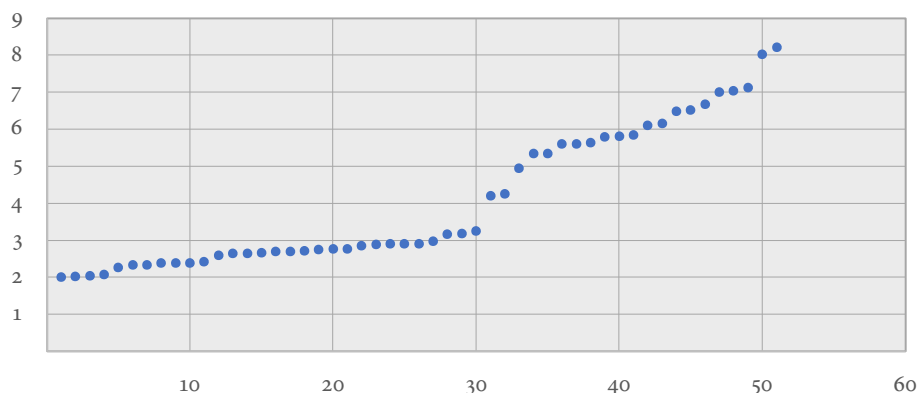
Fig. 5a – Weights (in g) of 51 known *RRC* 292/4a specimens – histogram

[52] Yarrow 2021a, p. 192–197.

[53] *Numismatica Ars Classica*, auction 61 (10/V/2011), lot 1126, sold as part of the Richard B. Witschonke collection; first published in Russo 1998, pl. 21, no. 92.

[54] McCabe has found a close stylistic match between an LPDAP and a 339/4 specimen (#1227–1230) and this offers a way forward for distinguishing the very rare genuine 339/4s from the imitations <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ahala_rome/7393844500>.

[55] Crawford created the type 292/4b quadrans with a bird on the reverse, of which there are two known specimens; the Capitoline specimen weighs 2.69 g and the Manfred Fischer collection specimen weighs 2.12 g. I think this sub-type is likely not a product of the Roman mint at all, but rather of a pseudo-mint producing imitations in antiquity.



*Fig. 5b – Weights (in g) of 51 known RRC 292/4a specimens –
scattered plot showing two distinct groups of weights*

Nerva's as has a dancing female in a long robe which she lifts away from her feet, and sometimes appears slightly bent over – perhaps a maenad? If that identification is correct then the quadruped might be an animal associated with Dionysus, but this is far from certain. The triens has no secondary symbol to offer us a further clue.

Philippus

L. Marcius Philippus, like most of his branch of the Philippi, was both ambitious and successful as a politician, and thus we know far more about his career than for most moneyers.^[56] After this moneyership, he ran for the office of military tribune c. 106 BCE and was rejected, but then c. 104 BCE he was elected as tribune of the plebs. Cicero, an arch-optimatus, characterizes his actions thus:

“When in service to the Republic, a man must make it his first care that everyone shall have what belongs to him and that private citizens suffer no invasion of their property rights by act of the state. It was a pernicious act that Philippus proposed when in his tribuneship he introduced his agrarian bill. However, when his law was rejected, he took his defeat with good grace and displayed extraordinary moderation, for all his agenda had been deeply populist and especially evil was his assertion that ‘there were not in the state two thousand people who owned any property.’ That speech deserves unqualified condemnation, for it favored an equal distribution of property; and what more ruinous policy than that could be conceived?”^[57]

^[56] The Marcii are a remarkably thoroughly studied family: Syme 2016; Hölkeskamp 2015 with references to his earlier work. I draw on the latter a great deal in Yarrow 2021a, p. 64–69.

^[57] Cic. *Off.* 2.73; adapted from the Loeb translation; see Dyck 1996, p. 464.

We can also note that when serving as consul on the eve of the Social War, Philippus first sided with Drusus before reversing course.^[58] He seems to have had a talent for surviving. He struck his own uncle Ap. Claudius Pulcher off the Senate rolls in 86 BCE for being a supporter of Sulla, but then sided with Sulla on his return and went on to become one of the most influential men in the post-Sullan Senate.^[59] Plutarch says that when pleading on behalf of Pompey he even said that there was nothing surprising in a Philip loving an 'Alexander'.^[60] Philippus was certainly interested in his own career advancement and seems to have shifted from the *populares* to the *optimates* as it suited his career.

He struck a denarius with the head of Philip V of Macedon as a pun for his own cognomen on the obverse and with a famous statue of his ancestor, Tremulus, on the reverse. For the bronze he seems to have only struck the quadrans and the uncia, no other denominations. The quadrans is an ordinary Hercules and prow design with a rooster atop the prow.^[61] When we map the weights of the known quadrans we find a suspicious pattern of some very underweight and the die groupings corresponding to weight groupings (fig. 6). The obverses of the heavier specimens also tend to have faces with finer sharper features and thin necks. With so few specimens it is hard to be certain, but it does seem likely that some of the lighter weight specimens may be imitations.

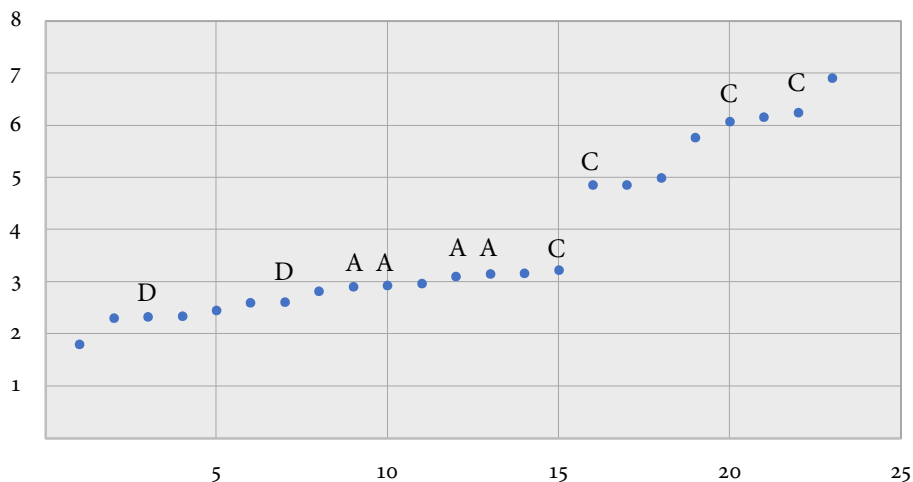


Fig. 6 – Weights (in g) of 23 RRC 293/2 with Schaefer's reverse die names labelled

[58] Cic. *De Or.* 1.24; 2.220 and 2.255; 3.2; *Prov. Cons.* 21; Val. Max. 6.2.2; 9.5.2; Quintil. *Inst. Or.* 6.3.81; 11.1.37; Flor. 2.5.8–9; *Auct. Vir. Ill.* 66.9 and 66.12–13; Cic. *Leg.* 2.31; *Com.* 1, fr. 24, with Ascon. 69c; Val. Max. 9.5.2.

[59] See most famously Sallust's 'Speech of Philippus', one of the longest fragments of the lost *Histories*.

[60] Plut. *Pomp.* 2.2.

[61] For the symbolism of the rooster, see Yarrow 2021b, p. 31–33.

The uncia is only known from two specimens both of which are in Paris; they are struck by different dies. They weight 3.54 g and 4.39 g – much more than some of the lightest of the quadrantes specimens! The obverse has Saturn with a falx behind. This is the very first appearance on Roman coins of this god on any denomination other than the semis, a curious choice. It seems to usher in a minor fashion for depicting Saturn. It is next used by L. Memmius Gallus (*RRC* 313) for the obverse of his denarius with the head unusually left-facing c. 106 BCE.^[62] Saturninus uses Saturn in a fast quadriga (*RRC* 317/2-3), before the god seems to be ‘reclaimed’ by Saturninus’ enemy Caepio, but given our present understanding of the chronology of these issues, there is no likely connection to this later point of popular discourse.^[63]

Philippus’ uncia also unusually displays a dog. As I’ve argued elsewhere, the most common symbolism associated with the dog on coins and related media is to evoke *fides* or loyalty.^[64] I can think of no means of connecting obverse and reserve and consider the choices puzzling, especially given the deeply personal meaning of the denarius types chosen.^[65] The ‘logic’ of the design and basic layout is very close to the choices made by Nerva: moneyer’s name on obverse facing out, animal on reverse with denomination mark above and ROMA in exergue.

Curtius, Domitius, Silanus

At the end of the decade a college of moneyers came to office that was committed to creating a united series that represented the cohesion of the college rather than the interests and ambitions of the individuals. Needless to say, this was not the norm for Roman coinage. I would suggest that the advertising of collegiality was a political statement by the individuals in question and likely meant to communicate a wider position on the importance of shared power in office in the republican form of government (table 4). We know from Cicero that the founding of Narbo was considered ‘popular’. Collegiality among moneyers certainly has a high point in the 110s BCE and then returns under the Cinna regime.^[66] No evidence is seen of it under the Sullan constitution and it only reappears as that constitution weakens and only at political turning

[62] Friedman 2001 proposed that the rare instances of Roma facing left on the obverse of republican coinage might have political significance; I remain agnostic. Memmius’ choice of a left facing deity for the obverse must have been coordinated with his fellow moneyers, L. Corneliu Asiaticus (*RRC* 311; cos. 83) and C. Sulpiciu Galba (*RRC* 312; son of the man exiled in 109 BCE?), who also chose to use the same obverse orientation.

[63] Wylene 2014, a self-published note, is useful here.

[64] Cf. Yarrow 2015.

[65] Saturn was syncretized with Cronos and both with Anubis who is often associated with a dog (cf. Plut. *Mor.* 368F), but not the Maltese breed depicted here. I highly doubt such a connection was intended.

[66] Collegiality in republican office holding has been discussed throughout Beck *et al.* 2011.

points: in reaction to the census of 70 that final truly enfranchised the Italians and also the aftermath of the Catilinarian conspiracy and then after the crossing of the Rubicon. Correlation is not causation, of course, but the pattern is suggestive. Remember also that collegiality, like *libertas* and other social values, is not a value that is the exclusive domain of one political faction, they are concepts that all claim to uphold, but through different means and with different priorities.

Moneyers	Crawford dates	Alternate dates
L. Licinius Crassus + Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus + <i>et al.</i> [Narbo Issue] ^[67]	118	115 - Mattingly
Q. Mar(cius?) + C. F? + L. R?	118 or 117	117 – Mattingly
M. Calidius + Q. Metellus (Nepos or Numidicus?) + Cn. Fulvius	117 or 116	116 – Mattingly
Q. Curtius + M. Silanus + Cn. Domitius	[116 or 115]	114 – Mattingly; Lockyear 2018: “later in sequence”
Ap. Claudius + T. Mal(?) + Q. Urbinius	[111 or 110]	105 – Mattingly; Lockyear 2018: “later in sequence”
C. Publicius Malleolus + A. Postumius Albinus + L. Metellus	Late 90s	91 – Mattingly
C. Gargonius + M. Vergi(l/n)ius Ogulnius?	86	
C. Cassius + L. Salinator + but not with C. Licinius Macer	84	
P. Crepusius + C. Mamilius Limetanus + L. Censorinus + also struck separately	82	
Q. Fufius Calenus + P. Mucius Saevola Cordus + missing third colleague?	70 [Hollstein concurs]	69 – Hersh and Walker
Paullus Aemilius Lepidus + L. Scribonius Libo + missing third colleague?	62 [Hersh and Walker, Hollstein concur]	63 – Mattingly
D. Iunius Brutus Albinus + C. Vibius Pansa + missing third colleague?	48	

Table 4 – Republican moneyers signing coinage as a college

The triumviri of the late 110s, Q. Curtius, M. Silanus, and Cn. Domitius, struck together denarii and then all bronze denominations excluding the as (and semuncia). The bronze series is notable for being the first to forego the prow completely which had been the standard reverse design for the as and its fractions since c. 225 BCE. They preserved the traditional gods of the obverse, but put on the reverse a symbol associated with that god (table 5).

^[67] Narbo is included here for context but the moneyers may not be moneyers at all but rather those authorized to found the colony; moreover, the dating of the issue is tied to the dating of the colony, a contentious issue (Cf. Carbone & Yarrow 2019).

Denomination	Obverse Deity	Reverse Symbol
Semis	Saturn ^[68]	Falx (a hooked agricultural tool) ^[69]
Triens	Minerva	Aegis
Quadrans	Hercules	Bow, Club, Arrow
Sextans	Mercury	Winged Caduceus
Uncia	Apollo (note: <i>not</i> Roma)	Lyre

Table 5 – Designs used on RRC 285

Cipius and Philippus had both previously already abandoned Roma on obverse of the uncia, but this break from Roma seems even more obvious in the context of the series as a whole. The moneyers knew the god of the uncia *should* be Roma, and they set her aside in favor of Apollo. While Apollo on the late republican coinage is a topic beyond this paper's scope, it has been argued that Apollo was the god of the Marians, but a straight partisan reading of the god as symbol of a faction is clearly too simple.^[70] Suffice to say that Apollo grows in popularity on the coinage from this point onwards. Apollo had not been on the obverse of a Roman coin since the late third century BCE, but from this point forward, will regularly appear on the obverse of the denarius and other silver denominations – there, too, occupying a position formerly reserved for Roma. Apollo largely (but not completely) disappears from the coinage after Sulla's return, reappearing with greater regularity from 49 BCE onwards. As far as we can tell, the moneyers had no written rules, only precedence.

^[68] Many thought the god of the Semis was Jupiter (Babelon, Mattingly, Haeberlin, Grueber), this type is critical for correcting that view (cf. Belloni). The Janus before Saturn on the coins is likely to derive from how Romans conceptualized the pre-history of Italy over which first Janus ruled and then Saturn, *e.g.* Vergil *Aen.* 8. 350ff. and 7. 180. Given the similarity between the god of semis and the god of the victoriatu, we must ask how we know the god of the victoriatu is Jupiter, similarly the god on the obverse of RRC 311/1. I thank K. Friedman for raising these points and references in our correspondence on the topic.

^[69] Crawford calls this a *harpa*, but a *harpa* describes the type of hooked weapon used by Perseus which has a very different iconography.

^[70] See Yarrow 2021a, p. 146 with references to early bibliography.

A last flourishing of the uncia (and semuncia revival), c. 105–104 BCE?

RRC ^[71]	Count	Moneyer(s)	Approximate Date ^[72]
305/1	2(?) unciae	Q. Lutatius Cerco, quaestor	Crawford: 109 or 108; Mattingly: 107
note: <i>not</i> [312/5] ^[73]	Campanian bronze piece	C. Sulpicius Galba ^[74]	Crawford: 106; Mattingly: 103
[317/4]	3 (?) unciae	L. Appulius Saturninus	
316/2 and [3]	1 uncia 1 semuncia	L. Thorius Balbus	Crawford: 105; Mattingly: 102
315/1 and 2	44 unciae 3 semunciae	L. Hostilius Tubulus	Crawford: 105; Mattingly: 102
308/4	17 unciae 1 semuncia	M. Herennius	Crawford: 108 or 107; Mattingly: 104; Lockyear 2018 demonstrates this is later in sequence than Crawford allowed, thus I prefer 104

Table 6 – Known unciae of the 100s BCE

The chronology continues to be messy. Saturninus' well-documented career should help us narrow down the possibilities. Crawford placed his moneyership in 104, but that is Saturninus' quaestorship, when we know he was in charge of Ostia and the shipments up the Tiber, especially of grain.^[75] Mattingly suggested 102 or 101 between his two tribunates, but this seems a step backward on the cursus. Hence, I lean towards 105, barring new physical evidence.^[76] Only a handful of years at most separated the issue of Curtius, Domitius, and Silanus from that of Cerco, then another short break followed by another four issues which probably only span 2 to 4 years. This includes a little flurry of late semunciae issues, a denomination that had not been struck since the early 140s and never in large numbers.^[77]

This whole republican phenomenon of striking unciae and semunciae had ended before 100 BCE with the issuing of the *senatus consultum ultimum* and

^[71] Square brackets indicate a number created to reflect Crawford's numbering, but a type not in Crawford.

^[72] Following Lockyear 2018.

^[73] See n. 7 above.

^[74] While the Campanian bronze piece is signed by a C. Sulpicius Galba, this is unlikely to be the same individual as the moneyer issuing RRC 312.

^[75] Diod. 36.12.1, cf. Cic. *Har.* 43 and *Sest.* 39.

^[76] In Yarrow 2021a, p. 26, fig. 1.17, I followed Mattingly 2004 for dating; this now seems to me far less likely.

^[77] In private correspondence Andrew McCabe reports that he has seen the Vatican semuncia specimen and believe its attribution to the RRC 160 dolphin series is correct.

the murder of Saturninus.^[78] These years were the height of Marius' power (consul in 107, and then again elected *in absentia* 104–100), the migrations of the Teutones and Cimbri, and deep anger over the Roman defeat at the Battle of Arausio (105 BCE) because of the refusal of the consul Caepio, a patrician, to cooperate with Mallus, his co-consul and a new man.^[79] That is to say nothing of the crises building around the grain supply of the city and the need to alleviate urban hunger.

Cerco stands out from the rest of this group but *may* provide a useful link between preceding groups of uncia-strikers and this final group. He seems to have struck earlier than the others and as quaestor – no other quaestor is known to have struck unciae. There are said to be two specimens, but I've only seen photographs of the one in Copenhagen.^[80] The style of the obverse closely imitates the obverse of his denarius and the reverse also copies the oak wreath of the denarius reverse, replacing the ship with the moneyer's name. I cannot detect ROMA anywhere on the reverse but it might have been below the wreath and now obscured or off flan. The weight as recorded by Crawford is 4.38 g. Both Schaefer and Crawford thought the Copenhagen specimen *might* have been altered in some way.

Many subsequent moneyers striking bronze in this period have remarkably familiar names. There is no need to recount the relationship between Saturninus and Marius or the lengths to which Saturninus would go as one of the *populares*.^[81] Herennius' early career is not known but he must have gained a great deal of popularity as he was elected consul as a new man in 93 BCE defeating Philippus, the candidate of the *nobiles* (the same Philippus as discussed above!). L. Thorius Balbus is thought to be the same man who claimed to adhere to Epicurean philosophy, but, if so, he missed the mark by agreeing to serve as Metellus Pius' legate in the campaign against Sertorius and then being defeated and killed at Consabura.^[82] Thus, while he is known from our literary records, we cannot say much about his likely political inclinations or strategies.

Finally, out of the four moneyers who decided to strike unciae in this tumultuous period, the only one for whom we cannot construct some sort of story from the contemporary texts is Tubulus, who is perhaps numismatically the most interesting and the most radical. He seems to have foregone striking any silver or even larger bronzes and only produced unciae in large quantities. Of the others, only Herennius seems to have struck unciae in any significant

[78] Osgood 2016 provides thoughtful context over the *longue durée*.

[79] Santangelo 2016 gives a clear narrative focused on Marius.

[80] The second known specimen was published by Capranesi 1853 from his own collection with a drawing (pl. 4, no. 5) and a reported weight of 4.15 g.

[81] Potter 2009, p. 110–114 give a short sensible overview of domestic politics; for a deeper analysis of the constitutional issues at play in these years, see Flower 2010, p. 80–96, but esp. 87–90.

[82] On philosophy: Cic. *Fin.* 2.63–5; on death: Plut. *Sert.* 12.3.

volume. I would suggest that Tubulus and his coinage have left us his account of how he wanted to be remembered. Table 7 illustrates the patterns in the design choices of these four ‘small change’ moneyers.^[83]

Moneyer	Obverse(s)	Reverse(s)	Other denominations
Q. Lutatius Cerco (quaestor)	U: Roma in feathered helmet with stars	U: abbreviated name (horizontal) [with denomination mark?] in oak wreath that ties at bottom	denarii
L. Appulius Saturninus ^[84]	U: Roma in Attic helmet denomination mark behind	U: abbreviated name (horizontal) with denomination mark below in (oak?) wreath that ties at top	denarii (control-marked)
L. Thorius Balbus	U: Roma in Attic helmet denomination mark behind SU: God(dess?) wearing oak leaf crown, hair long, and necklace, behind (denomination?) symbol	U: abbreviated name (horizontal) with denomination mark below in (oak?) wreath SU: abbreviated name (horizontal) with (denomination?) symbol below in (oak?) wreath, ROMA below wreath that ties at bottom	denarii (control-marked)
L. Hostilius Tubulus	U: Roma in Attic helmet denomination mark behind SU: Artemis with bow and quiver at shoulder, backwards sigma (Σ) behind	U: abbreviated name (vertical) in oak wreath, ROMA (horizontal) below wreath that ties at bottom SU: abbreviated name (vertical) in (oak?) wreath, ROMA (horizontal) below wreath that ties at bottom	none
M. Herennius	U: Roma in Attic helmet denomination mark behind SU: Artemis with bow and quiver at shoulder	U: double cornucopia with ROMA above or below, some also have moneyer's name SU: single cornucopia with ROMA below	denarii (control-marked) semis, quadrans

*Table 7 – The last moneyers to issue (sem)unciae and their choices
(U = uncia – SU = semuncia)*

^[83] For more of the author's views on a possible reconstruction of the semuncia revival, see <https://livyarrow.org/2024/09/03/speculative-reconstruction/>

^[84] Crawford in *RRC* reported Saturninus' uncia as a fake on p. 551, n. 83, whereas Russo 1998, pl. 21-95 accepts it as genuine, as did Babelon Appuleia 5 and Sydenham 581a.

Metrology and more

This last flourishing of the uncia shows a general trend to produce a heavier, less well-regulated coin compared with the earlier two periods (fig. 7).

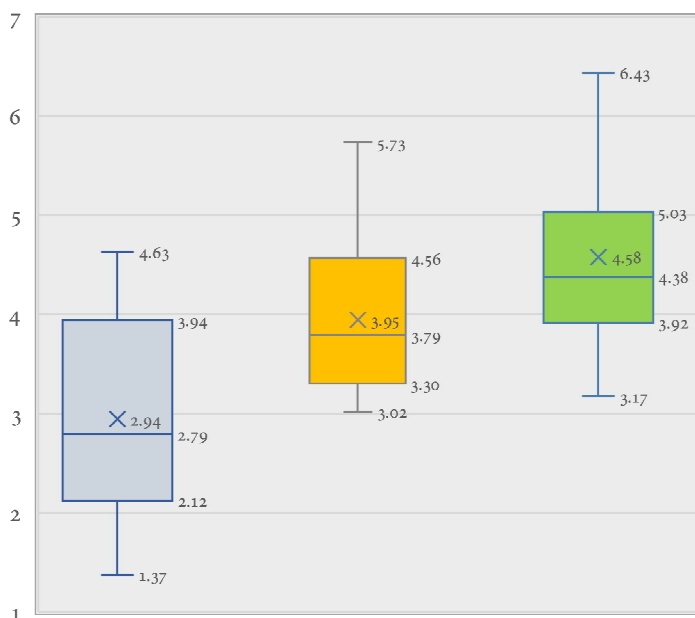


Fig. 7 – Weights (in g) of respectively 21, 16 and 56 known unciae compared

Obviously this picture is dominated by the greater efforts of Tubulus and Herennius. If we remove the Thorius (3.38 g) and Saturninus (3.06, 3.05, and 2.30 g) specimens which are on the lighter end and disaggregate Tubulus from Herennius, we see a slightly different picture (fig. 8), one that shows a more consistent ‘floor’ for the lower end of weights but still a higher mean and median weight.

Finds of unciae are rare, as is any information about the location of those finds, but Riccio in 1846 does tell us that he knew of two of Herennius’ unciae for the area around Luceria. Likewise, the new unciae of the Pitio series also came to light in the Puglia region.^[85] What that indicates, I do not hazard a guess, but further find data would certainly be welcome.

Next steps

To fully tell the story of small change at the Roman mint, it needs to be joined up to the end of the bronze issues. As Stannard has commented: “Quite what objective lay behind the semuncial asses of 91–84, accompanied by some se-

^[85] Campana 2023, p. 26, n. 4.

misses and very few smaller coins, is not clear.”^[86] I think the motivations for striking these seemingly impractical denominations in such small numbers must share a motivation with the fashion for unciae and semunciae in the late second century BCE. We are seeing a variety of minting ‘innovations’ that are likely based on the ideals of the moneyers and political climate of the day, even if they were widely ineffectual in execution. I suggest that we understand innovation and experimentation with bronze as similar to the widely erratic and ineffectual experimentations on silver, namely serration and control-marks, and perhaps even marking some SC issues. I am also suggesting that the inspiration for such haphazard minting of small change may have come from an awareness of the production of small change by other mints and that phenomenon drove some moneyers to experiment with the creation of official coinages to meet the same need. This is far from proven but the material certainly warrants further consideration.

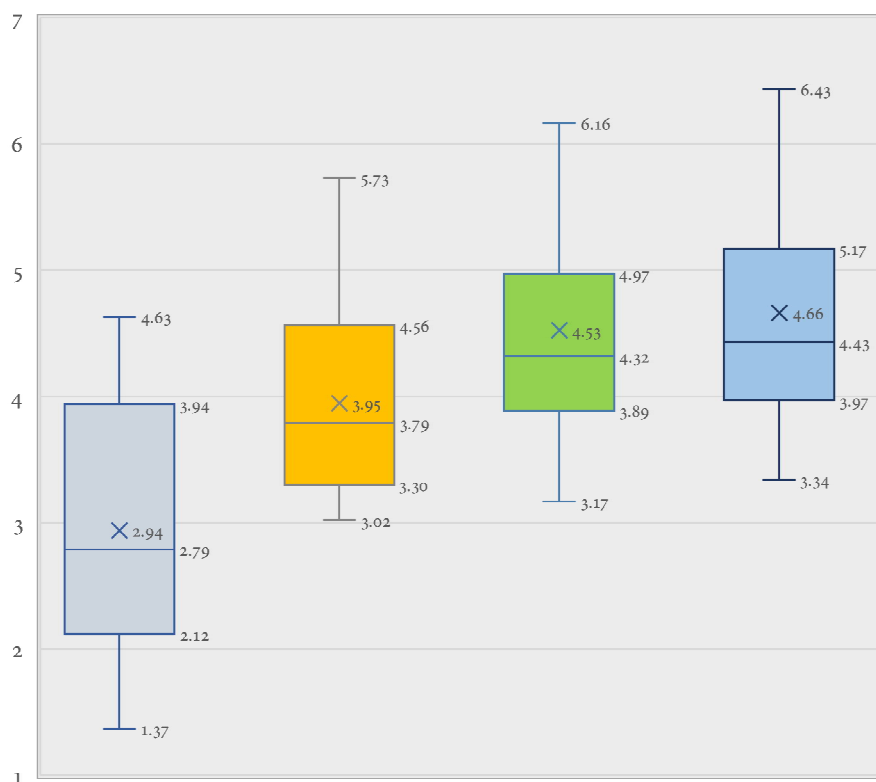


Fig. 8 – Weights (in g) of respectively 21, 16, 35 and 21 known unciae compared, separating out RRC 315 and 308

^[86] Stannard 2018, p. 105.

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