



Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of  
the Republic of Serbia  
Institute of Archaeology Belgrade  
Archaeological Park Viminacium

**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

**INTERNATIONAL NUMISMATIC SYMPOSIUM  
CIRCULATION OF THE ANTIQUE  
COINS IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE**

Viminacium, Serbia,  
September 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> 2017





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**Dario Calomino*****Bithynian coins in the Balkans in the late Severan Age: new thoughts on an old problem***

This paper will address the still unresolved problem of interpreting the exceptional military movements of civic coins in the late Severan period from Bithynia to the Balkan peninsula. In 1975, Michael Crawford interpreted the ‘surprising domination’ of the coins of Nicaea of Bithynia during the reigns of Severus Alexander and Gordian III in the Balkans ‘in terms of Imperial use of this coinage’. His general view of civic coinages becoming a form of additional taxation imposed by the Empire in the Severan Age, perhaps ‘to meet expenses occasioned by the presence of the Roman troops’, has been largely questioned in more recent studies. According to Chris Howgego, ‘the movement from Nicaea to the Balkans is readily explained as part of a general pattern of contact across the Bosphorus and requires no special explanation’. Yet, the incredibly large number of Bithynian and chiefly Nicaean coins of Severus Alexander found in modern Serbia during the last twenty years, especially at Viminacium, has provided a much more reliable sample of materials to consider, which allows new thoughts on this topic. Owing to the recent publications on the necropolis of Više grbalja and to the coins found in the territories of ancient Moesia Superior, new light has been shed on the scale of this phenomenon and on its specific relevance to the monetary economy of this region. This paper will re-consider this phenomenon against the wider background of the civic coinages of Severus Alexander in other Balkan regions and in Bithynia itself, looking in particular at the geographical distribution of coin finds and at the categories of coins that were involved, and trying to reassess its significance also in relation to the presence of the army.

**Mirjana Vojvoda, Adam N. Crnobrnja*****Circulation of Coinage from the Bithynian Mint of Nicaea at the Territory of Present-day Serbia***

During the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, at the Danubian and Balkan provinces and within monetary circulation, many different circumstances led to mass appearance of bronze coins minted in Nicaea. This especially refers to the third and the fourth decade, actually the reign of the emperors Alexander Severus and Gordian III. This massive introduction of Nicaea coinage in the monetary circulation of the Danubian and Balkan provinces was initiated due to the lack

of small bronze nominal of senate emissions. This was possibly the main reason for opening a mint of provincial coinage in Viminacium and later on also in Sarmizegetusa (Dacia). It can be noticed that after 239 and the beginning of minting in Viminacium, the Nicaea issues almost disappear from monetary circulation at the territories of Upper Moesia and Lower Pannonia. These provinces obviously had the greatest problem with the lack of coinage.

During the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, increased military movements along the Danubian limes and along the road that led from Viminacium to Naissus and further on over Thrace to Bosphorus, also led to an increased frequency of coinage from Bithynia. The greatest concentration of numismatic finds from Nicaea is connected to the Danube valley (Veliko Gradište, Viminacium, Belgrade, Zemun, Batajnica, Novi Banovci, Surduk, Beška, Vukovar, Osijek), pointing out to the importance of this fluvial road not only for trade, but also for military needs. On the other hand, the lower part of the Sava fluvial road also had great economic importance, most of all because of the position of Sirmium. Numerous coin finds, the Nicaea ones being among them, were discovered along this route (Ušće, Hrtkovci, Sremska Mitrovica and Banovo Polje).

### **István Vida**

#### ***Provincial limesfalsa in Pannonia***

Limesfalsa finds are quite common in Pannonia. Cast copies of Roman coins were made from the last decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC to the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. These are usually copies of Roman imperial coins. The phenomenon is well known from other provinces of the Roman Empire as well.

However, there is a small group of limesfalsa coins, which do not copy Roman coins, but Roman provincial issues. These coins – although several of these were sold on auctions – are mostly unfamiliar to researchers. There are 37 examples of such coins kept in the collection of the Hungarian National Museum. About ten coins are known from recent Serbian publications and approximately twenty further coins are known from auctions and private collections.

Many of the coins imitate Nicaean samples, which is to be expected, as those are the most common provincial coins in Pannonia. On the other hand, there are also coins from less frequent mints. It is hard to interpret why they were chosen for copying, as most of them are uncommon in the region. What puzzles most is the very high number of the copies of Tabae coins. Until now, the author was acquainted to 26 such coins. Most of them were copied from coins struck with the same pair of dies. The same die was used to mint most of the known

## SPONZORI SIMPOZIJUMA



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