



Luciana Prati & Emanuela Ercolani

***Santarelli numismatic collection  
in the artistic and cultural  
institutions of Forli: Utilisation of  
a collection mainly coming from  
the territory in the context of the  
new archaeological museum***

*Proceedings of the ICOMON meetings held in Madrid, Spain, 1999.*

[Madrid]: Museo Casa de la Moneda, [2001]  
543 p. (Multilingual) pp.396-398

Downloaded from: [www.icomon.org](http://www.icomon.org)

## **Santarelli numismatic collection in the artistic and cultural institutions of Forlì: Utilisation of a collection mainly coming from the territory in the context of the new archaeological museum**

Luciana Prati

Direttore Istituti Artistici e Culturali, Forlì, Italia

Emanuela Ercolani

Docente Di Numismatica, Dipartimento di Storia Antica, Bologna, Italia

Of the two coin collections kept in the Istituti Culturali of Forlì, Collezione Santarelli is surely of lesser importance from the point of view of quality, rarity and conservation of pieces, but nevertheless it is extremely interesting, because one can correctly presume that it prevalently comes from the territory.

It is the Communal collection that Antonio Santarelli, excavations Museum's Director from 1875 on, ordered and increased with local pieces, whose findings were also recorded by Santarelli in his publications.<sup>148</sup>

The original arrangement disposed by Santarelli is no longer available, as, the old containers being in bad condition, the coins were taken away and kept elsewhere in a safe. Cataloguing pieces and confronting Santarelli's writings has shown that most of the coins of ancient age reflect local monetary circulation.

In 1978, I started studying this collection, which at that point was kept in paper envelopes, bearing indications «pluteo» or «vetrinetta», the pieces of furniture where coins were displayed until the Second World War.

In the upper plan of the «pluteo», in 1875, was stored the first bulk of the collection, the coins collected by Conte Ranieri Biscia of Forlì, other lesser legates and coins which Santarelli had acquired.<sup>149</sup> Unfortunately, the two parts were not kept apart.<sup>150</sup>

Only pieces coming from «compere, trovamenti o doni»,<sup>151</sup> acquired at a second point were separately kept in the lower part of the «pluteo».

In the «vetrinetta» was kept a hoard of republican denarii, that I could identify as the Gruzzolo di Pieve Quinta, hoarded about 42 BC, found in 1879, and acquired for the Museum by Santarelli.<sup>152</sup>

Through Santarelli's cataloguing, based on Fabretti, *Monete consolari del Museo di Torino*, it was possible to remark that the hoard is almost complete, save for 200 pieces.

Today, coins in Santarelli's collection dating from the ancient and medieval ages have this composition:

10	Non Roman		
176	Roman	Republican	Bronze
157	Roman	Republican	Victoriati, Denarii
641	Roman	Republican	Denarii, Hoard
2682	Roman	Imperial	Mostly Bronze
639	Byzantine, Medieval		Mostly Bronze

Among the archaeological finds from the territory, some of which go back to the prehistoric age, but without any continuity, these coins are one of the most continuous testimonies of its occupation and economy.

A built up area at the emplacement of Forum Livii (Forlì) was formed some years before the settling of the via Aemilia by the Romans in 178 B.C.

A *municipium* was deduced here after Bellum Sociale, in 89 B.C., but whilst, from the Augustan age till the later Empire and the barbaric age, various and significant archaeological findings from the town and the territory attest a prosperous situation, republican documentation is almost restricted to the funerary monument of Grasia<sup>153</sup> and coins in the Santarelli Collection are a precious document.<sup>154</sup>

Most of the bronze coins are in a poor state of conservation, thus indicating a lack of selection and suggesting a provenance mainly from the territory.

Some older pieces, bronze coins from Neapolis, Tarentum, and Ariminum show interesting concordance with the area of Ariminum, where land and sea routes arrived from Central and Southern Italy, and the Romans founded a colony in 269 BC as a starting point for their conquest of the northern territory up to the Po.<sup>155</sup>

The main group of coins belongs to roman issues. Reduced bronzes, *victoriati* and, above all, *denarii* spread in the region following Romanisation. The civil wars of the end of the Republic are reflected in three hoards, of which only Pieve Quinta still exists.

Imperial *aes* coinage is diffused in a consistent way<sup>156</sup> from Augustus, and even more with the following Julio Claudians, then it continues through the II century A.D., reaching a peak with the Antonines, following the expansion of rural settlement and demographic increase.

In the first half of the III century, the number of great *aes* pieces is still consistent, in the second half, inflation of the radiates shows clearly the general crisis of Empire, but continuity of settlement in Forlì and its territory is confirmed by a good presence of fractional coinage between the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., mostly in poor conditions of conservation.

Some anonymous Ostrogothic pieces of the VI century, together with byzantine pieces and two denarii of Berengarius I, King of Italy, from the beginning of the X century, confirm coin circulation documented in Ravenna<sup>157</sup> and Imola<sup>158</sup> and show continuity of settlement in the Middle Ages.

Displayed in the Archaeological Museum, together with other archaeological finds, those coins bear witness to the town's and territory's settlement and economic conditions, a specific section will be set to illustrate the hoard of Pieve Quinta, to hoarding phenomena and their historical significance for the territory.

---

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>148</sup> E. Ercolani Cocchi, «La collezione numismatica A.Santarelli di Forlì», in *Rivista Italiana di Numismatica*, LXXX, 1978, pp.251-253

<sup>149</sup> A.Santarelli, 'Delle più antiche e rare monete esistenti nel Museo Cittadino di Forlì', in *Relazione all'onorevole Giunta Municipale*, Forlì 1876, p.5.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibidem* pp.6-15

<sup>151</sup> Biblioteca Comunale di Forlì, Cartoni Santarelli, Busta n.3. Notizie relative al Medagliere, 1909

<sup>152</sup> A.Santarelli, *Notizia di un ripostiglio di denari consolari trovato a Pieve Quinta nel forlivese*, Forlì, 1879; M.L. Stoppioni, *Il ripostiglio di Pieve Quinta*, in *Bollettino di Numismatica*, 48-49, Anno 2007, Gennaio Dicembre, pp.7-192

<sup>153</sup> For a complete panorama of archaeological finds and a history of the town and its territory, see: *Storia di Forlì, vol.1, L'evo antico*, a cura di Giancarlo Susini, Bologna 1989.

<sup>154</sup> E.Ercolani Cocchi, «Storia monetaria del territorio forlivese», in *Storia di Forlì, vol.1, L'evo antico*, Bologna 1989, pp.209-228

<sup>155</sup> E.Ercolani Cocchi, «Gli elementi numismatici», in *Le radici del Titano. Materiali archeologici dal Santuario della «Tanaccia» a San Marino*, a cura di D.Giorgetti, Repubblica di San Marino, 1994, pp.48-72, 146-183; Eadem, «Monete e scambi nel territorio riminese in età repubblicana», in *Pro Populo Arimense, Epigraphica, Epigrafia e Antichità* n. 14, Faenza 1995. *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Rimini antica. Una repubblica fra terra e mare*, Rimini 1993, pp.399-410; Eadem, «Rinvenimenti numismatici e percorsi appenninici tra Cispadana e regioni centrali», in *Studi Romagnoli*, XLVI, 1995, Cesena 1998, pp.37-67

<sup>156</sup> E.Ercolani Cocchi, «Rinvenimenti numismatici nell'Emilia Nordoccidentale», in *Felix Temporis Reparation Atti del Convegno Archeologico Internazionale: Milano capitale dell'Impero Romano*, a cura di G. Sena Chiesa e E.A. Arslan, Milano, 1992, pp.343-356

<sup>157</sup> E.Ercolani Cocchi, *Imperi Romano e Bizantino, Regni barbarici in Italia attraverso le monete del Museo Nazionale di Ravenna. Catalogo e saggio introduttivo*. Faenza 1983; Eadem, «Moneta ed economia a Ravenna dal periodo longobardo all'inizio della dominazione veneziana, in Il gruzzolo di via Luca Longhi a Ravenna». *Città, monete e mercanti nel Medioevo*, a cura di Emanuela Ercolani Cocchi, Ravenna 1997; Eadem, «Note di circolazione monetaria in area emiliano romagnola e marchigiana», in *Local coins, foreign coins: Italy and Europe 11th-15th centuries*, The second Cambridge Numismatic Symposium, Cambridge 1997, a cura di Lucia Travaini, Milano 1999, pp.343-380.

<sup>158</sup> Emanuela Ercolani Cocchi, «La circolazione monetale fra tardo antico e alto medioevo: dagli scavi di Villa Clelia»; in *Studi Romagnoli*, XXIX, 1978, pp.367-399.