

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XX

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE
SEKCJA NUMIZMATYCZNA
KOMISJI ARCHEOLOGICZNEJ PAN
ODDZIAŁ W KRAKOWIE

Kraków 2025

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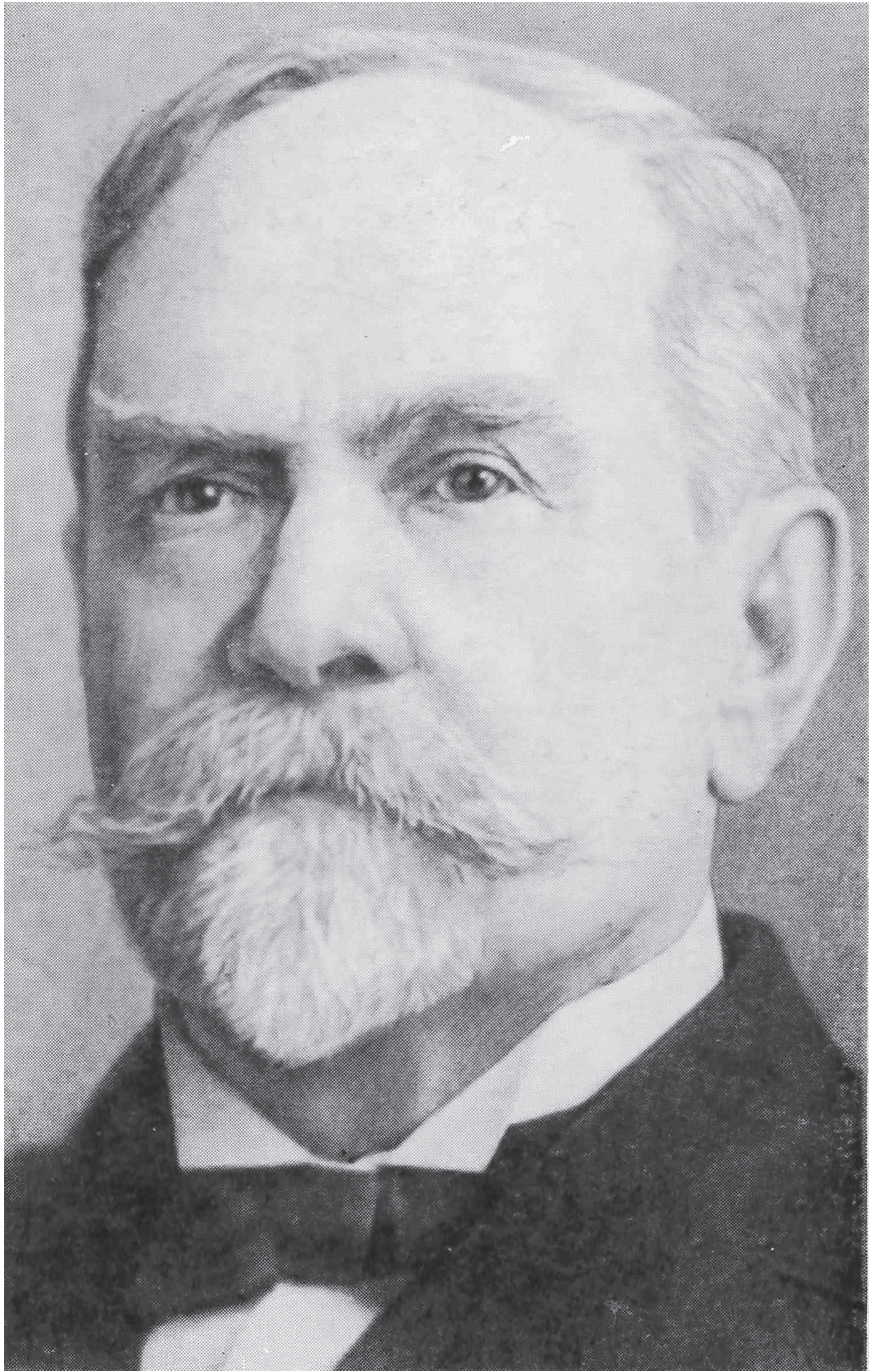
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Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925). Fot. Archiwum Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie
Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925). Photo: Archives of the National Museum in Krakow

Szanowni Państwo,

oddajemy w Państwa ręce tom XX *Notae Numismaticae – Zapisków Numizmatycznych*. Zgodnie z przyjętymi przez nas zasadami wszystkie teksty publikujemy w językach kongresowych, z angielskimi i polskimi abstraktami. Zawartość obecnego tomu oraz tomy archiwalne są zamieszczone w formie plików PDF na stronie internetowej Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>). Na stronie dostępne są ponadto wszelkie informacje ogólne o czasopiśmie oraz instrukcje dla autorów i recenzentów.

Sto lat temu 27 grudnia 1925 roku zmarł w Atenach Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925), człowiek o niezwykłym życiorysie, oddany Ojczyźnie patriota, weteran Powstania Styczniowego, emigrant, a jednocześnie filhellen i honorowy obywatel Grecji. Jego zasługi na polu walki z rosyjskim zaborcą, emigracyjna tułaczka i wkład w budowę Państwa Greckiego są dosyć dobrze znane, głównie dzięki spisany przez niego samego pamiętnikom przechowywanym w Bibliotece Jagiellońskiej w Krakowie, w części wydanych drukiem w 1971 roku pod tytułem *Z Tajgi pod Akropol*. Dzięki publikacjom polskich i greckich archeologów znane są również dokonania Mineyki na polu archeologii, a w szczególności jego udział w badaniach na terenie położonego w Epirze słynnego sanktuarium Zeusa w Dodonie.

Zygmunt Mineyko interesował się również numizmatyką i nie były to zainteresowania powierzchowne. Spod jego pióra wyszło – niestety nigdy nieopublikowane – dzieło poświęcone jak sam pisał „objawom numizmatyki”. Rękopis tej pracy przechowywany obecnie we Lwowie, w dawnych zbiorach Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, pozwala uznać ją za bardzo nowoczesne i wyprzedzające swe czasy opracowanie. Zygmunt Mineyko jest również ściśle powiązany z historią zbiorów numizmatycznych Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie. W latach 1924 i 1926 do zbiorów krakowskiego Muzeum Narodowego trafiło w dwóch transzach prawie sto antycznych monet подарowanych przez Stanisława Mineykę (1875–1924), syna Zygmunta. Choć formalnie ofiarodawcą był Stanisław najprawdopodobniej inspiratorem daru był jego ojciec, który z powodzeniem realizował ideę wzbogacania polskich instytucji naukowych i muzeów zespołami starożytnych monet. Dary takie zostały lub miały zostać przekazane Muzeum Narodowemu w Warszawie, Uniwersytetowi Wileńskiemu, Uniwersytetowi Jagiellońskiemu oraz jak wspomniano Muzeum Narodowemu w Krakowie. Niniejszy tom naszego czasopisma pragniemy dedykować pamięci Zygmunta i Stanisława Mineyków.

Redakcja

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present you with volume 20 of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne*. As is our policy, we publish all texts in the congress languages, with English and Polish abstracts. The contents of current volume and archive numbers are available as PDF files on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>). The website also provides all general information about the journal, along with guidelines for authors and reviewers.

One hundred years ago, on 27 December 1925, Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925) died in Athens. He was a man with an extraordinary life story, a devoted patriot, a veteran of the January Uprising, an emigrant, and at the same time a philhellene and honorary citizen of Greece. His achievements in the fight against the Russian invader, his wanderings as an emigrant, and his contribution to the building of the Greek state are quite well known, mainly thanks to his memoirs, stored in the Jagiellonian Library in Krakow, some of which were published in 1971 under the title *Z Tajgi pod Akropol* (From the Taiga to the Acropolis). Thanks to publications by Polish and Greek archaeologists, Mineyko's achievements in the field of archaeology are also well known, in particular his participation in research at the famous sanctuary of Zeus in Dodona, located in Epirus.

Zygmunt Mineyko was also interested in numismatics, and this interest was far from superficial. He wrote a work devoted to what he called “the manifestations of numismatics”, which, unfortunately, was never published. The manuscript of this work, currently stored in Lviv, in the former collections of the Ossoliński National Institute, allows us to consider it a very modern and ahead-of-its-time study. Zygmunt Mineyko is also closely associated with the history of the numismatic collections of the National Museum in Krakow. In 1924 and 1926, almost a hundred ancient coins donated by Stanisław Mineyko (1875–1924), Zygmunt's son, were added in two tranches to the collection of the National Museum in Krakow. Although Stanisław was formally the donor, it was most likely his father who inspired the donation, as he had successfully implemented the idea of enriching Polish scientific institutions and museums with collections of ancient coins. Such donations were or were to be donated to the National Museum in Warsaw, Vilnius University, the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, and, as mentioned, the National Museum in Krakow. We would like to dedicate this volume to the memory of Zygmunt and Stanisław Mineyko.

The Editors

PIERLUIGI DEBERNARDI

Roman Republican Silver Coins. Vol. 1: Beginnings – 200 BC,
Artemide Aste s.r.l., San Marino 2024, 315 pages; ISBN 978-88-946576-6-1

Pierluigi Debernardi holds a degree in electronic engineering from the Politecnico di Torino, awarded in 1987. He is currently a Senior Researcher at the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR), Italy's National Research Council, which undertakes public research in collaboration with academic institutions. His work on Vertical Cavity Surface Emitting Lasers (VCSELs), micrometer-scale semiconductor devices integral to contemporary automotive and mobile technologies, has achieved international recognition. In this field, he has authored approximately 200 scientific publications. Alongside his engineering research, Debernardi has cultivated a sustained scholarly interest in Roman Republican numismatics for over two decades. His primary focus lies in coinage issued during the Second Punic War, although his studies also encompass other significant series from the mid-2nd century BC and the issues attributed to the Crepusius triumvirate. He has published or co-published nearly 40 articles in esteemed numismatic journals, where he applies his technical proficiency to enhance the methodological rigor of numismatic research.¹

This is the first of two volumes of *Roman Republican Silver Coins* published by San Marino's auction house Artemide Aste.² It contains all silver issues of Roman Republic from the beginning of its coinage to the year 200 BC. Volume 2. comprises silver coins minted between 150 BC and 30 BC and it was published in 2025 by the same publisher, but with a different author – Lorenzo Moretti. This subdivision is understandable, and justified due to a long pause in Roman Republican silver coinage which appeared after the Second Punic War.³ It should be said that such cooperation between numismatic auction houses and researchers is highly valuable for both parties and brings significant benefits to the study of ancient coinage and our understanding of it.

In the introduction to *Roman Republican Silver Coins*, vol. 1 Debernardi begins by addressing the longstanding question of Rome's comparatively late and

¹ Debernardi's profile on ResearchGate site: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Pierluigi-Debernardi> and on the Academia: <https://polito.academia.edu/PierluigiDebernardi> (accessed on 21 April 2026).

² Artemide Aste s.r.l. is an auction house mostly specialized in Roman Republic and *Magna Graecia* coinage.

³ DEBERNARDI 2021.

large-scale adoption of coinage, a phenomenon that, as he notes, finds parallels in Sparta, yet stands in marked contrast to the monetary developments of the *poleis* of *Magna Graecia*. The renewed issuance of silver coinage occurred in the mid-2nd century BC, coinciding with Rome's emergence as a Mediterranean superpower. From that point onward, coin production intensified to such an extent that the denarius evolved into a universal medium of exchange within the Roman world for more than four centuries. Debernardi's study is grounded in the examination of approximately 24,000 specimens including didrachms, quadrigati, victoriati, sestertii and denarii. A scale of analysis made possible through the collaboration of numerous individuals and institutions. Of particular importance was the assistance of Richard Schaefer, who generously provided access to his photographic archive of Roman Republican coins prior to its public release on the American Numismatic Society's Roman Republican Die Project⁴ platform. Debernardi introduces an innovative rarity index, calculated on the basis of the number of obverse and reverse dies in conjunction with the total number of known specimens, the resulting value being divided by two. This proposed ratio appears to be particularly well suited to the study of Roman Republican coinage, offering a potentially refined metric for assessing relative rarity within the series. Nevertheless, its effective application presupposes extensive die studies and the systematic quantification of a vast corpus of specimens, tasks that remain both methodologically demanding and time-intensive. In the second volume, Moretti elected not to adopt Debernardi's approach, opting instead for a more traditional methodology based on the straightforward enumeration of surviving specimens.

The most compelling section of the introductory chapter is "The Heavy and Light Denarius: The Only RR Silver Units" (pp. 3–6). In this part, the author introduces a novel approach to the study of the earliest Roman silver coinage, advocating for a departure from the traditional framework established by Michael H. Crawford in his *Roman Republican Coinage*. Debernardi convincingly argues, following the interpretations of Elio Lo Cascio⁵ and Patrick Marchetti,⁶ that the first Roman silver issues were not based on the drachma standard, but rather on a decimal system analogous to that prevailing in South Italy and Sicily from the late 4th to the 3rd century BC. To substantiate this claim, he cites examples such as the *nummus dekalitron* and the ten *litrai* coins. Debernardi argues, on linguistic, epigraphic, and metrological grounds, that in the 4th century BC the term *denarius* could only have referred to a silver coin weighing six scruples, known as a *didrachm* which, however, was unrelated to the *drachma* standard. From this observation, the author draws

⁴ <https://numismatics.org/rddp/> (accessed on 21 April 2026).

⁵ LO CASCIO 1980–1981.

⁶ MARCHETTI 2017.

a straightforward conclusion – the *denarius* familiar to us represents a subsequent, reduced form of this original denomination. This hypothesis is highly intriguing and undoubtedly merits further rigorous investigation in future research.

The following section discusses the catalogue nomenclature and introduces an entirely new system for managing fractions, distinct from that developed by Crawford. Although this new approach is somewhat complex, it demonstrates internal coherence and logical consistency. Debernardi also describes full methodology of the catalogue, including studying of thousands of die-links, qualification used for dissolving problem of early series denarii. He also introduces the Die-per-Legion ratio (DpL), defined as the proportion between the number of dies and the number of legions for each year. This appears to be a novel, well-conceived, and potentially valuable tool for achieving more precise chronological assessments of early Roman denarii of the *bigati* type.

The final section of the introductory chapter presents concluding observations on the numismatic framework of the Second Punic War. The author underscores the relationship between the fiduciary nature, now well established,⁷ of Roman bronze coinage, the debasement of its weight standard, and the introduction of the *bigati*, which were fully aligned with the sextantal weight standard.

In the subsequent section of the publication, Debernardi presents the coin catalogue. Building upon the theoretical framework outlined in the introductory chapter, the author proposes an entirely new classification and nomenclature of the coinage. Chronologically, the sequence includes: E-types – early denarii (replacing the traditional attribution to didrachms); Q-types – *quadrigati* (previously identified as didrachms featuring a quadriga on the obverse); A-types – Apulian *quadrigati*; V-types – *victoriati*; and B-types – *denarii bigati*. As an appendix, the author includes imitative denarii from Baetica as well as adulterated issues from the Early Roman Republic series. The catalogue is thoughtfully structured and elegantly produced. The final appendix, “Adulterations in the Early Silver Coinage of the Roman Republic” (pp. 228–240), warrants particular attention. The author conducted an extensive study encompassing over 3,700 specimens, including *quadrigati*, *victoriati* and *bigati*, analysing their silver composition and the degree of weight debasement. Debernardi provides a comprehensive overview of plated coins and instances of adulteration,⁸ followed by a detailed examination of each category of plated and debased early Roman (especially those of the Second Punic War era) silver coinage. This appendix represents one of the most valuable and methodologically thorough contributions to the study of this subject in recent years.

⁷ MCCABE 2013.

⁸ Author deliberately avoids the “counterfeit” term to distinct forgeries from plated or debased coins produced by the Roman State.

The photographs included in the catalogue are of exceptional quality, presented in full color and with accurate proportional ratios. Essential details of the coins are enlarged and juxtaposed in comparative tables or integrated alongside the main images. Each chapter of the catalogue is prefaced by a concise introduction that contextualizes and analyses the respective category under consideration. The volume concludes with an extensive series of illustrative plates, followed by a systematically arranged summary table and a comprehensive bibliography, which collectively enhance the scholarly utility and completeness of the work.

In conclusion, this catalogue constitutes a highly valuable contribution, not only for collectors, as noted by the author in the introduction (p. 1) but also for scholars and researchers engaged in the study of (not only!) early Roman numismatics. Several newly formulated hypotheses presented in the volume have the potential to contribute significantly to previous scholarship, not only within the field of numismatics but also to the broader study of Roman economic history. The author of this work should be congratulated for it is the culmination of many years of research and painstaking work. Debernardi's next contributions to the study of Roman numismatics will be highly anticipated!

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