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... 3 more!

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Index

Clive Stannard and Òscar Caldés Aquilué

New finds of the Spanish Italo-Baetic series from Minturnae, Zaragoza and Nîmes, including new issues, and possible implications for the pattern of trade.....7

Maria Jesús Aguilera Romojaro

Monedas de los otros herodianos.....19

Cruces Blázquez Cerrato y Juan Carlos Aguilar Gómez

La presencia de camélidos en la amonedación romana y su significado.....49

J. Ignacio San Vicente González de Aspuru, Alejandro García Álvarez-Busto, Iván Muñiz López, Covadonga Ibáñez Calzada y Noelia Fernández Calderón

Moneda y poder en la Asturias medieval: análisis del conjunto monetario recuperado en el castillo de Gauzón.....67

Eduardo Fuentes Ganzo

La moneda usual en la corona de Castilla ca. 1400: El Tesorillo de Riaño en el Museo de León105

Óscar Fernández Martín

Cizallas y rieles de real ingenio de la moneda de Segovia: Secretos y características125

Óscar Fernández Martín

Identificación de cecas en moneda de vellón de 1660 a 1664, a través de las marcas de dilatación, en las labras a Rodillo.....167

Ludovic Liétard

Au sujet d'une médaille émise pendant la révolution française pour célébrer l'abolition des privilèges189

Faiza Guesmi

Notre portefeuille peut contenir des objets muséaux : étude de cas du billet de banque tunisien197

News

Carlos Alajarín Cascales

Reseña “El funcionamiento de la moneda en la economía del siglo XII en León y Castilla”**219**

Pablo Rueda Rodríguez-Vila

LAS ACUÑACIONES ANÓNIMAS DE ALFONSO X. Estudio, catalogación y entalladores.....**221**

Carlos Alajarín Cascales

Reseña “Boato y tecnología. Cincuentines, centenes y escudo de a ocho. Las monedas especiales del Real Ingenio de Segovia”**225**

Carlos Alajarín Cascales

Reseña “Apuntes históricos sobre la circulación de la moneda en Cuba”**227**

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New finds of the Spanish Italo-Baetican series from Minturnae, Zaragoza and Nîmes, including new issues, and possible implications for the pattern of trade

Clive Stannard* and Òscar Caldés Aquilué**

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Abstract: There are few known find-spots outside Andalusia of the complex of the Latin-language *grandes plomos monetiformes* and the few bronze coins with Italo-Baetican types. Most were probably made in Corduba, c.80–50 BC; though a few issues, some with legends in local scripts, were made elsewhere; which raises questions about the nature and the area of activity of the group that made these issues. A number of *plomos* have been found at Minturnae in south Latium, the port used by the Italo-Baetican traders; we publish yet another example. In Spain, a few have been found along the Via Herculea; we publish a new bronze quadrans with a strigils and aryallos reverse, which was found during rescue excavations in Zaragoza, although in a layer much younger than the coin. From Nîmes, we publish a new issue with a strigils and aryallos reverse, struck in both lead and bronze. It is probably Spanish, rather than Italian. It may be a sign of the joint activities of Italo-Baetican traders from both Latium and Spain in south-west Gaul, perhaps in the context of the wine trade, after Pompeii lost, it seems, its direct involvement in this trade in 89 BC, following its revolt from Rome in the Social War

Keywords: Italo-Baetican series, Lead coinage, Hispania, Corduba, Minturnae, Caesar Augusta

1. Introduction

Amongst the very large variety of non-state coinages that characterize central Italy in the last two centuries BC are two complexes made by groups involved in maritime trade to Gaul and Spain, following the Roman conquest of *Hispania* in the Second Punic War. These traders worked through the ports of Pompeii and Minturnae, and the growing information we have of finds of their coins outside Italy is evidence of the direction and intensity of this trade.

We here publish new finds from Minturnae, Zaragoza and Nîmes of the coins of the Italo-Baetican group in Latium, who traded with *Hispania* through Minturnae in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, and who made the *grandes plomos monetiformes* in the 1st c. BC, almost certainly in Corduba. These include previous unknown issues. The coin from Zaragoza is of interest in relation to the nature and geographical spread of the activities of the group in *Hispania*. Yet another *plomo* from Minturnae adds to the evidence of the city's central trading role in the Western Mediterranean at this time. The two coins from Nîmes — probably from *Baetica* rather than from Latium — may point to joint activities by traders from these two places, probably in the context of the massive importation of Italian wines into South-west Gaul, after, it seems, Pompeii to have lost its trading role, following its defeat by Sulla in 89 BC, during the Social War.

2. Central Italian maritime trading groups in the last two centuries BC

2.1. Pompeii and the wine trade

The rich, very productive earth around Vesuvius was able to produce wine in much larger volumes than the local population could consume.¹ When Rome conquered the Punic Eparchy in western Sicily during the First Punic War, which ended in 241 BC, an important export market opened for Campanian wine, which Pompeii exploited.² Carthage itself compensated for its loss of Western Sicily and Sardinia by greatly developing the agricultural potential of its hinterland for export.³ Pompeii appears to have been one of its major partners. Punic amphorae are found in quantities in Pompeii.⁴ There were cultural influences as well: Andrew Wallace-Hadrill has drawn attention to the widespread use of *opus africanum* at Pompeii during the 3rd and 2nd centuries, which is far from having been a standard Italic building technique.⁵

While Pompeii's economy grew, its stock of Neapolitan bronze coins, which had been the common small change of Campania,⁶ was wasting away, and inadequate; Neapolis had stopped coining after c.225 BC. The need for small change was met by a 'pseudo-mint'⁷ that began imitating and mixing the coin types of Carthage, Ebusus, Massalia and Rome, perhaps from the 160s BC.⁸ A huge block of bronze coins was also brought from Ebusus, before Rome's destruction of Carthage in 146 BC.⁹

Pompeii's wine trade with Massalia and Gaul grew massively in the second c. BC: the discovery of a number of the pseudo-mint's coins around the Étang de Berre, immediately west of Marseille, suggests that there may have been a Pompeian entrepôt there, where wine was landed.¹⁰ Pompeii's golden age ended with its revolt with other of Rome's allies during the Social War, and its conquest by Sulla in 89 BC. Rome seems to have then suppressed Pompeii's wine trade, to the benefit of other trading cities, particularly Minturnae.¹¹ There are no other sure finds of Pompeii's coins outside Italy.¹²

2.2. Minturnae and the silver and lead of Hispania Ulterior

Minturnae was a Roman *colonia maritima* and riverport near the mouth of the ancient *Liris*—now the Garigliano—on the border between Latium and Campania. It was probably the first Italian city whose traders exploited the rich silver and lead resources of *Hispania Ulterior* after the Second Punic war. A group of Romans who used this port also made an extensive non-state coinage, which is characterized by the use of a unique set of coin types that is not used elsewhere. These are: a *furnacator*, that is, a stoker of hypocausts, most often with a shovel on his shoulder; a bath attendant, often carrying an *askos*; two strigils and an *aryballos* suspended from carrying ring; and Vulcan, with his tongs.¹³ This coinage also includes a number of other issues that do not share these types. Stannard calls these the Italo-Baetican issues, because they are found in two separate complexes, in two different places: Latium in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, and *Hispania Ulterior Baetica* in the 1st c.

¹ De Simone 2017.

² Bechtold Bechtold, Montana, and Randazzo 2018.

³ Pascual Berlanga and Ribera i Lacomba 2008, p. 413.

⁴ Bechtold 2007.

⁵ Wallace-Hadrill 2013, p. 39–40.

⁶ Stannard 2021, p. 264–268.

⁷ Pseudo-mints are a phenomenon of Central Italy in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC: the term means the systematic production over a period of time of coins imitating and mixing with the types of other cities.

⁸ 'Coinages of the maritime traders of Central Italy', in Stannard 2024 (forthcoming).

⁹ Frey-Kupper and Stannard 2018, p. 298–309.

¹⁰ 'Coinages of the maritime traders of Central Italy', in Stannard 2024 (forthcoming).; Stannard, Chevillon, and Sinner 2018; Stannard et al. 2015;

¹¹ Stannard and Chevillon 2021.

¹² Frey-Kupper and Stannard 2010.

¹³ Stannard 2020.

BC.¹⁴ The Italo-Baetican traders were distinct and separate from the Pompeians: the Italo-Baetican coins are almost unknown at Pompeii.

In Latium, the coins are bronze, some, it seems, made in or near Rome, and others in Minturnae itself, where there is also a large group of lead pieces, some of which were coins, because they carry uncial value-marks. The Italian Italo-Baetican complex dates from at least the 140/130s BC to 70/50 BC, with the higher date given by some Minturnae lead pieces with Italo-Baetican types in a purse from the Isla Pedrosa shipwreck off L'Estartit in Catalonia.¹⁵ These are the only coins of the Italian complex yet known from outside Italy, except for a single coin bought in Toulon in a block of local finds of Massaliot bronzes,¹⁶ and for a few coins of the massive 'Dionysus/panther' issue of the late 80s in Spain.¹⁷

The Roman exploitation of the silver and lead mines began with the ore bodies around Carthago Nova, and Minturnae involvement is shown by an issue of small lead pieces, which are common at Minturnae, and signed by FVRI, C·BAIBI, L·NVM, C·NVM and C·SAM/ IR; the *Furii*, *Baebii* and *Numisii* are amongst the epigraphically best-attested *gentes* in Carthago Nova, with interests in the lead trade.¹⁸ When the lead mines at Carthago Nova were exhausted, mining activities moved to the Sierra Morena in the interior, around Corduba and Castulo;¹⁹ here the *Samiarii* — the other *gens* that signed the Minturnae lead issue — gave their name to the *metallum Samiariense* mentioned by Pliny.²⁰ A group of large-module *grandes plomos monetiformes* that use the Italo-Baetican iconography was made in this area, probably at Corduba.²¹ The *plomos* date to c.90–49 BC.

The fact that the *furnacator* carries a shovel led to a mistaken idea that the *plomos* refer to mining, but an iconographical analysis of this type, as well as the fact that in Latium the *furnacator* is found in an area where there are no mines, shows that the *plomos* are not linked to the mines and mining, despite their being made in the mining areas of the Sierra Morena.²² Many of the *plomos* carry the legend, P·S, which García-Bellido has proposed reading as *publica societas*, which seems probable; she saw the *publica societas* as managing public property — primarily agricultural — that remained in the hands of the state or municipal authorities once public goods had been sold to private persons after Sulla.²³

3. Previous finds of plomos outside Andalusia

In Spain, very few *plomos* have been found outside Andalusia. Two are from near *Šaitabi* (the modern Xàtiva), where the *via Herculea*, leaving Corduba and Castulo in the *Baetis* valley, ran through the Cànyles Valley, north to *Valentia* and *Arse/Saguntum* and beyond: fig 1, 1, the unique specimen of the only *plomo* with an Italo-Baetican type — the strigils and *aryballos* — to use a North-Eastern Iberian legend is from excavations in the Iberian settlement of Cerro Lucena (Enguera,

¹⁴ 'Coinages of the maritime traders of Central Italy', in Stannard 2024 (forthcoming), with bibliography.

¹⁵ Vivar Lombarte 2016; Richard and Villaronga 1975; Stannard and Sinner 2014, pp. 171–174.

¹⁶ Stannard et al. 2015, p. 183–184, no. 11.

¹⁷ Stannard and Sinner 2016, 2014.

¹⁸ Stannard, Sinnwer and Ferrante 2019, p. 150–154; Orejas and Sánchez-Palencia 2002, p. 584, fig. 3.

¹⁹ It is significant that lead from the coastal mines was used to make some of the *plomos* made in the interior: Stannard, Sinner, and Ferrante 2019. For the mines of the interior: Stannard et al. 2021.

²⁰ *N.H.*: 165: '*nuper id conpertum in Baetica Samiariensi metallo, quod loctori solitum ± CC annuis, postquam oblitteratum erat, ± CCLV loctum est.*' Stannard et al. 2021, p. 58–59.

²¹ Stannard et al. 2021, p. 67, fig. 4, *PLO* 75, and p. 68–69.

²² As in Casariego, Cores, and Pliego 1987, the foundational monograph on which subsequent study of the *plomos* is based.

²³ García-Bellido 1986, p. 28–31.

València). No. 2, 2, was found in 1879 in a tomb between the villages of L'Énova and Manuel.²⁴ No. 3 is said to have been found in Catalonia.²⁵

Blázquez Cerrato and Barrios Rodríguez have surveyed finds of *plomos* with the type of a bull's head, sometime ornamented with ribbons (like *PLO* 43–55).²⁶ They identify a specimen with a blank reverse that was found in the 1930s during excavations at Cáceres el Viejo in Extremadura. They also discuss another *plomo* in the Museo de León, in the North-west; this has a boar right on one side, and on the other an uncertain image formed of low-relief lines, which they interpret as a bull's head facing, but there is nothing like it amongst the Italo-Baetican *plomos*, where the bull's head is always in relief.²⁷

The limited number of Italo-Baetican pieces so far known outside the upper Guadalquivir valley raises questions about the nature and area of activities of the Italo-Baetican group, and of the possible *publica societas*. The *plomos* usually use Latin, the language of the Corduban Italo-Roman elite, but we also have North-eastern Iberian on 1, which may have been made outside the valley. There is also a bronze coin with the *furnacator* type from the city of *Beuibum*/Salacia (Alcáser do Sal in Portugal), with a legend in an unknown paleohispanic southern script (fig. 3. 3).²⁸ If P·S does mean *publica societas*, then it may have been involved in managing public goods, not only around Corduba, but in other places as well.

Significantly, the only *plomos* found outside Spain are from Minturnae (4, 5 and 6), which testifies to the importance of its trade with *Uterior*, well into the 1st c. BC. The continuing ties between the Italo-Baetican group in Italy and the group in Corduba has implications for understanding who its members may have been. Corduba was a stronghold of the *optimates*; the owl-on-amphora reverse type of new style Athenian tetradrachms imitated on one of these *plomos*²⁹ probably alludes to Sulla's victory over Mithradates VI Eupator of Pontus in 84 BC; and on the basis, Stannard has suggested that, in Italy, the massive Dionysus/panther issue — by far the largest of the Italo-Baetican issues in Latium; he at present knows 478 specimens — was made by partisans of Sulla after his return from the East, perhaps for the use of troops.

²⁴ *PLO* 75; *PMHA*, p. 87; Caballero Infante 1880, p. 136–137.

²⁵ *PLO* 60; Villaronga 1993, 218, no. 19 = Subasta Aureo, 28 September 1993, lot 303.

²⁶ Blázquez Cerrato and Barrios Rodríguez 2022.

²⁷ Doménech-Belda and Sala-Sellés forthcoming publishes specimens of *PLO* 69–71 (*PMHA*, p. 22, nos. 6 and 6 bis), with the legend N·CALECI, found in late Sertorian forts on the Southeast coast of *Hispania Citerior*, at Tossal de la Cala (Benidorm, Alicante) and Peña de L'Àguila (Denia, Alicante), c. 72–70 BC. See also Rodríguez Gavilá 2017. *PLO* conjecturally included these series in the Italo-Baetican complex because no. 69 uses a head of Vulcan, but it is now clear that they are a separate group, in a military context towards the end of the Sertorian War.

²⁸ *PLO* 39 = Villaronga and Benages 2011, p. 168, no. 972.

²⁹ *PLO* 74; *PMHA* p. 19, 1, & pl. 31, 4.

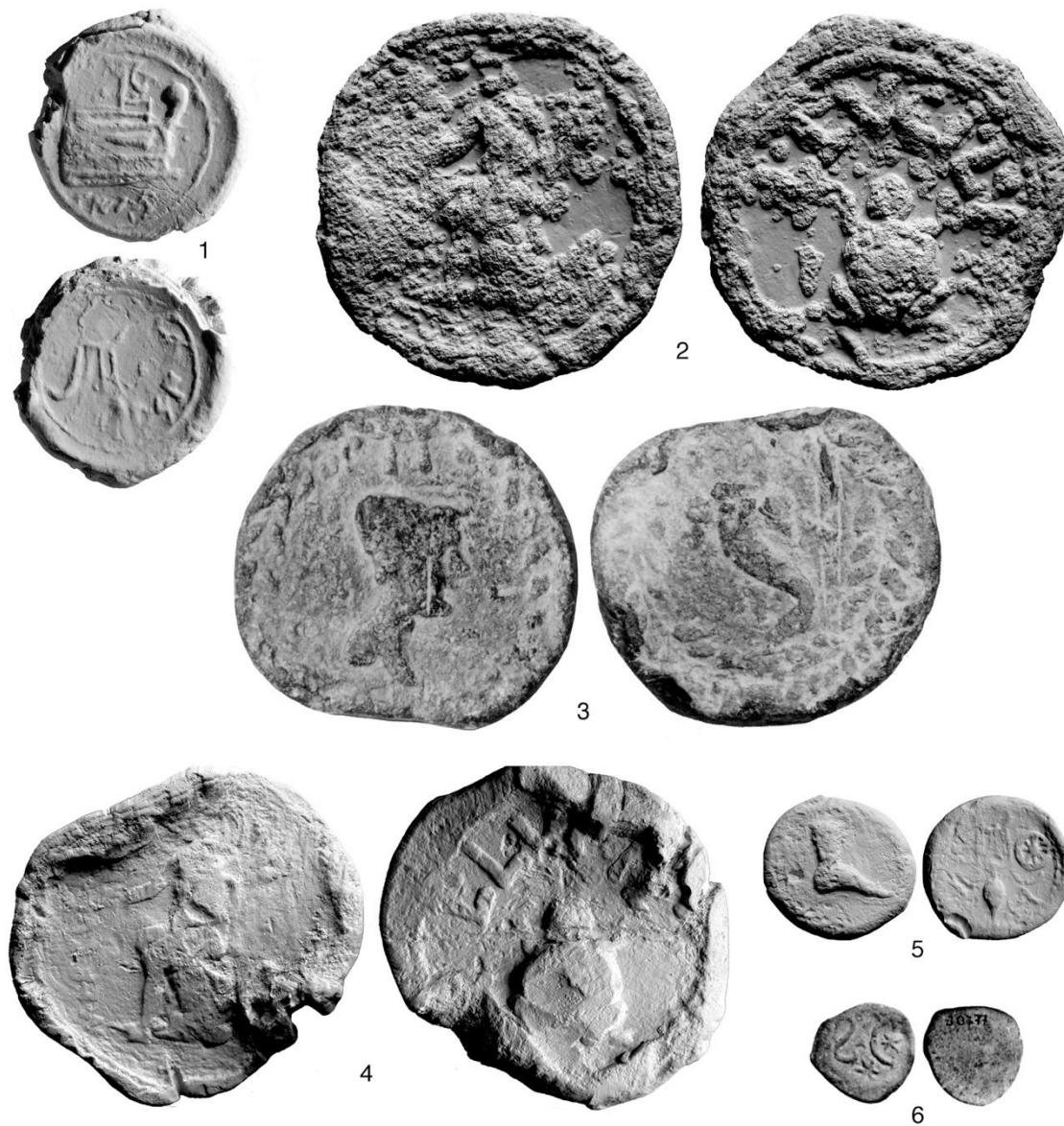


Fig. 1. Finds of plomos outside Andalusia

1. *PLO* 22, the unique specimen of the only *plomo* with an Italo-Baetican type — the strigils and *aryballos* — to use a North-Eastern Iberian legend. From excavations in from the Iberian settlement of Cerro Lucena (Enguera, València).³⁰
2. *PLO* 75. Found in 1879 in a tomb between the villages of L'Énova and Manuel.³¹
3. The only known specimen of *PLO* 60, said to have been found in Catalonia.³²
4. *PLO* 75, like 2 above, from the River Garigliano at Minturnae (Liri³³ 24.068).
5. *PLO* 16, from the River Garigliano at Minturnae (Liri 23.048).
6. A lead tessera of the large-scale mining company active in the Sierra Morena in the 1st c. BC, the *societas Castulonensis* or *Cordubensis*, from the River Garigliano at Minturnae.³⁴

³⁰ Stannard et al. 2017.

³¹ *PMHA*, p. 87; Caballero Infante 1880, pp. 136–137); now in the Biblioteca de la Universidad de València.

³² Villaronga 1993, 218, no. 19 = Subasta Aureo, 28 September 1993, lot 303.

³³ 'Liri' means Stannard's database of non-Roman coins from the River Garigliano at Minturnae. For the large number of coins from the Garigliano, see Stannard and Ranucci 2016, p. 158–161.

³⁴ Ruegg 1995, p. 129, fig. 4 = Overbeck 1998, p. 121, no. 14

4. New finds and new issues of the Italo-Baetican group

4.1. Another plomo from Minturnae

Fig. 2 is an *plomo* of the Spanish complex that appeared in an auction that included a very large group of struck lead pieces from Minturnae.³⁵ It is a specimen of *PLO* 37, from a different die to the one illustrated there. It dates to the 1st c. BC. This brings to four the *plomos* now known from Minturnae, and underlines the scale of the city's contacts with Baetica.

Obv. *Furnacator* walking left, a shovel on his shoulder; he carries an *askos* in his left hand.

Rev. Blank.

Pb 21 mm, 6.79 g; Liri 64.001



Fig. 2. The Baetican plomo from Minturnae - Real size and enlarged

4.2. A new bronze quadrans with strigils and aryballos from excavations in Zaragoza

4.2.1. The Archaeological context

Rescue excavations were recently carried out at Calle Cinco de Marzo, 10, in Zaragoza, the ancient *colonia Caesar Augusta*, before the construction of a residential building with underground parking. The company, Paleoymás, which carried out a large part of the archaeological intervention, found, cleaned, and provisionally identified the coin we discuss here.³⁶

Earlier excavations at number 8 of the street had unearthed a complex stratigraphy, of between the 1st c. AD and modern times.³⁷ There are buildings of the Flavian and Antonine periods, followed by abandonment during the 3rd c. AD.³⁸ Remains from the time of the Umayyad Caliphate of Córdoba (AH 316–421 = AD 929–1031) lie below a suburb of the Taifa of *Saraqusta*, and date to the 11th and 12th c. AD. Other, more extensive excavations in the nearby Paseo de la Independencia also brought to light remains of the Taifa and Christian periods, of about the 11th to the 13th c. AD.³⁹ Further Islamic structures in the area of the Teatro Municipal Miguel Fleta and of the Calle Diego Murillo are also part of what appears to have been a contemporary planned suburb (*arrabal*) (Gutiérrez González 2015, p. 216–217).⁴⁰

Nearly twenty years ago, a part of the city's Roman 2nd to 4th c. AD walls was excavated in area of the Calle de los Mártires;⁴¹ walls were also built around a suburb to the south-east, between the Ebro and Huerva rivers.⁴² The Calle Cinco de Marzo site is outside, but about 100 metres from, the

³⁵ Bertolami e-Live Auction 68, 16–18 March 2019, lot 576.

³⁶ The more than 100 coins found during the excavations have recently been published: Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023.

³⁷ Gutiérrez González 2006a.

³⁸ Gutiérrez González 2006a, p. 359–369.

³⁹ Gutiérrez González 2006b.

⁴⁰ Gutiérrez González 2015, p. 216–217.

⁴¹ Gutiérrez González 2011–2012.

⁴² See Galve Izquierdo 2018–2019.

3rd c. AD wall, which probably followed the wall of the time of Augustus on the Calle del Coso; this made it a good place for burials and small industry, away from the noise and pollution of the city proper. The first Roman strata, which probably date to between the late 1st c. BC and the second half of the 1st c. AD, include small metal-furnaces, and post-holes and basins sunk into the undersoil.⁴³ Some clay-bound stone walls belong to a period of intense urbanisation during the early 2nd c. AD; a street paved with large river-stones was then built, as were some domestic spaces, where the wall-paintings are extant, and there is a possible Roman sewer in the underlying soil, though it may be slightly earlier.⁴⁴ Two denarii of Severus Alexander in the ruins date a period of collapse and abandonment to around AD 225–250, a time of urban shrinkage or restructuring.⁴⁵ The area is then not occupied until Islamic times, when trenches, wells and latrines were sunk into the Roman layers.⁴⁶ There are a number of building phases between the 10th and 12th c. AD, the most important of which saw the construction, in the 11th c., of the suburb of Taifa times, when *Saraqusta* became an important capital city.⁴⁷

4.2.2. The Coin



Fig. 3. The new coin with Italo-Baetican types from Zaragoza, real size and enlarged, and Italo-Baetican bronze comparators, real size

Quadrans

Obv. Beardless male head right; perhaps letters before and something behind.

Rev. Two strigils and an *aryballos* hanging from a carrying-ring; AED down to left; : to right.

1. Æ 18 mm, 2.88 g, 90°. Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, no. 31.

The new coin (fig. 3, 1), which probably dates from the first c. BC, was found in the clay used to bond wall no. 36, which may be Islamic,⁴⁸ and if so at least ten centuries younger than the wall; this is however uncertain, since all the pottery found in the clay bonding is Roman. Despite conditions that made the use of a metal-detector almost impossible, over a hundred mainly Roman coins were also recovered from the site.⁴⁹

The *colonia Caesar Augusta*⁵⁰ was founded under Augustus, c.14 BC, in the context of his restructuring of the territory, probably while he was in the Iberia.⁵¹ Pliny (*N.H.* 3.24) mentions that the new city was on the same site as the earlier Iberian city, *Saltauie*, which struck coins c.120–72 BC.⁵² The coin might have arrived at any time, and there is no indication of any likely occasion.

⁴³ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 77.

⁴⁴ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 78.

⁴⁵ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 85.

⁴⁶ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 80.

⁴⁷ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 85.

⁴⁸ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 81.

⁴⁹ Caldés, Giménez and Laborda 2023, p. 76.

⁵⁰ Sometimes also mentioned as *Caesaraugusta*, see F. Beltrán Lloris 2014, pp. 135–137.

⁵¹ Abascal Palazón 2006, p. 74; M. Beltrán Lloris and Fatás Cabeza 1998, p. 8–10.

⁵² *MIB* 77/1–5.

The obverse head on fig. 3, **1** is of Iberian style, but corrosion has obliterated much of the image, making comparisons difficult; what can be seen, however, is compatible the style of *Ulterior Baetica* mints in the 1st c. BC. There are very few other bronze coins in the Spanish Italo-Baetican complex, but **2** is a relatively common *quadrans* from Alcalá del Río, with both the Vulcan and *furnacator* types, c.100–40 BC.⁵³ The Zaragosan *quadrans* probably dates to about the same time. Both must have had a monetary function, but it is not clear in which social unit they circulated; was it a city, or were they perhaps used as company money within the supposed *publica societas*? AED presumably stands for *aedile*, and the duties of the office in the cities of *Ulterior Baetica* during the empire included general supervision of public areas and activities, for example the baths, grain distribution, public markets, and games, duties that could have included management of the *publica societas*. A single aedile is reported from Cordoba,⁵⁴ but none of the *plomos* are signed as an aedile.

It is not certain where this coin was made. While it is possible, even probable, that it is from the upper Guadalquivir valley, like most Italo-Baetican issues, the obverse head is not stylistically similar to any of the *plomos* or associated bronze coins found there; that, and the fact that it was found in Zaragoza, may mean that it was minted somewhere in the middle Ebro valley; the title of aedile is found on some coins of the area in the 1st c. BC.⁵⁵ If so, this would add it to the few Italo-Baetican coins that are not part of the main group, like the coin with the macrophallic *furnacator* type and a bilingual legend from *Beuibum*/Salacia, c.100–40 BC (fig. 3. **3**),⁵⁶ and the coin with a North-eastern script legend from Cerro Lucena (fig. 1, **1**). This would have implications for understanding the nature and the area of activity of the Italo-Baetican group. We must hope that further discoveries will bring some clarity.

4.3. A new bronze and struck lead issue from Nîmes, with strigils and aryballos

Fig. 4, **1** and **2**, are a previously unknown issue, in both bronze and struck lead, which is particularly interesting, because having two specimens from the same place is more significant than a single, isolated find. No. **1** appeared in an on-line discussion of lead tesserae, where it was said to have been found in Nîmes.⁵⁷ No. **2** is reported to have been part in a group of coins from the Rappaz collection that was sold on line,⁵⁸ but, alas, we have not been able to trace the coin on the Internet, nor find any information about it. This includes its size; from the surfaces of the coin in the photographs, it seems to be small, and we illustrate it on the assumption that the heads on **1** and **2** are of about the same size; this would give a diameter of about 10 mm. On both pieces, much of the reverse image is off the flan, which suggests that the both reverse dies were made for larger format pieces that we do not yet know.

O. Rappaz lived in Nîmes, and assembled a large collection of coins from prospection finds from a wide swath of south-west France. It seems likely that the find-spot was also Nîmes or nearby, but with the caveat that a number of his coins came from the area of Montlaurès in the Narbonnaise.

⁵³ PLO 40 = MIB 214/12 ID 987699 = Villaronga and Benages 2011, p. 533, no. 2648; PMHA, p. 31, no. 22, also reports a unique lead specimen (PLO 41).

⁵⁴ Knapp 1983, p. 34.

⁵⁵ The legend AED, and the possibility of a few letters before the head, may link the coin to the issues minted between 44/42 and 36/35 BC in the *Colonia Lepida* (Celsa), specifically the *semissis* and *quadrans* (RPC 265–268).

⁵⁶ PLO 39 = MIB 166/1a ID 130714. The ethnic in an unknown paleohispanic southern script, and •A•.

⁵⁷ <http://www.forumfw.com/t1565p25-jeton-romain-de-plomb-appel-a-temoins>, accessed 1 January 2021.

⁵⁸ On the CMPT Numis website.



Fig. 4. A new issue in lead and bronze; the lead real size and enlarged, the bronze of uncertain size; 3 real size and 4 at 150%

Obv. Beardless male head right; border of dots.

Rev. An *aryballos* and a strigil tied together with a cord; the strigil hangs to left; all in a wreath.

1. Pb 14 mm, 150°.

2. $\text{Æ} \pm 10 \text{ mm? } 45^\circ$.

This new issue is not known from either the Italian or the Baetican complexes. The carefully engraved obverse and reverse dies are different in each case. In terms of style, the head on **1** looks Iberian, and the closest match seems to be Castulo, c.89-40 BC, (**3**).⁵⁹ The head on **2**, however, could equally well be Italian. The precise reverse image — a single strigil, rather than two strigils, tied with a cord to an *aryballos*, rather than two strigils hanging from a carrying ring — appears only on the Roman *quadrans*, RRC 234/2 of 137 BC (**4**), which is the single example of an Italo-Baetican type appearing on a state issue.

On balance, it is most likely that the issue was made in Spain in the second or third quarter of the 1st c. BC. However, no other of the *grandes plomos monetiformes* has an Iberian-style head, and it is possible that this issue, too, is from outside the main area where the *plomos* are found, around Corduba. The coins are less likely to have come from Italy.

The presence together in south-west France, and probably at Nîmes, of two examples of the same issue, of different metals and from different dies, raises the possibility that they arrived as the direct result of the activities of the Italo-Baetican traders, in the same way that the coins of the Pompeian pseudo-mint on the Étang de Berre show the presence of Pompeian wine-traders. Minturnae itself had an extensive wine trade, and, as we noted earlier, the direct involvement of Pompeii in the Vesuvian wine trade seems to have ended after the Social War. The relatively high numbers in the Liri Database of coins of the *Volcae Aricomici*, c.70–40 BC, and of central Italian overstrikes on these;⁶⁰ as well as of the Massaliot bronze ‘*taureaux passants*’, c.80–50 BC, which circulated mainly in western Languedoc,⁶¹ are a sign of frequent contacts of Minturnae traders with the area with the area, while these coins are absent at Pompeii.⁶²

The finds of *plomos* in Minturnae shows that ties between the groups that issued coins and *plomos* with the Italo-Baetican Iconography in Latium and in Baetica remained strong, and the new issue from Nîmes raises the possibility that both groups were involved in this trade. More finds may cast light on this hypothesis.

⁵⁹ MIB-57/5b ID 2174.

⁶⁰ DICOMON VLC-2677.

⁶¹ DICOMON PBM-60.

⁶² Chevillon, 2018; Stannard, 2021.

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