

# NUMISMATICĂ

## DACIAN IMITATIONS OF ROMAN REPUBLICAN DENARII

Twenty-five years have passed since the late Maria Chițescu's groundbreaking examination of Dacian imitations of Roman Republican denarii, *Numismatic Aspects of the History of the Dacian State*. Perhaps a reconsideration of these coins is in order, particularly since so many new specimens have appeared in the intervening years. Elsewhere<sup>1</sup>, I have discussed the broader issue of *all* “barbarous” imitations of Republican denarii, and attempted to formulate a system of classification; the present study is more narrowly focused on *Dacian* imitations, which constitute, in any case, a substantial majority of all good-silver imitations. These range from very faithful copies, barely distinguishable from their Republican prototypes, to wild, outlandish, sometimes dramatic, occasionally lovely “barbarous” interpretations of the Roman original, to remarkably crude depictions of “cartoon” Roma heads and stick-figure quadrigas that hardly merit the term “art” at all. They are in no sense “counterfeits”; their purpose was not to deceive or cheat the recipient, and in fact, the imitations often contain *more* silver by weight than their Republican models. Rather, they served to make up a shortfall, real or perceived, in the supply of circulating coinage in Dacia, much as local British imitations of Roman asses of Claudius made up a deficiency of coinage in First Century AD Britain.

The matter of Dacian imitations cannot be separated from the broader question of the circulation of Republican denarii in ancient Dacia. Coinage had long been known and used in Dacia, consisting largely of Macedonian and Thasian tetradrachms and imitations of them; drachms of Dyrrachium and Apollonia also circulated, primarily in Transylvania. As economic contact between the expanding Geto-Dacian world and the expanding Roman Republic intensified, perhaps as early as 100, more likely circa 75 BC, these Greek issues were almost entirely replaced by Roman Republican denarii. The date of the penetration of Republican denarii into Dacia has been subject to considerable controversy.<sup>2</sup> The problem is twofold. The question of the date of the *initial* entry, perhaps incidentally and in small quantities, I consider unanswerable, beyond the truism that it must post-date 211 BC, when the first denarii were struck. Hoard evidence is of no real

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<sup>1</sup> *The Celator* 18, 4, 2004, p. 6-16, and on my web site.

<sup>2</sup> The various lines of argument have been neatly summarized by Lockyear 1995, p. 86, and 1996, p. 165. I consider this discussion to be of secondary importance, and I will not attempt to recapitulate it here.

value here, since a hoarder may well gather coins many years after they began to circulate in a given region. K. Lockyear has demonstrated, by careful hoard analysis<sup>3</sup>, that Republican denarii began to arrive *in quantity* in Dacia in the mid-70's BC. As a glance at the catalogue below will show, this corresponds nicely with the date at which the prototypes of the most typical Dacian copies were struck. The imitations will of course have been struck somewhat later than the prototypes, since an indeterminate, but not negligible, time will be required for these to arrive in Dacia. A timeframe ranging from roughly 80 BC to 65 BC for the issue of the bulk of the imitations, with a second, smaller peak around 40-30 BC, will perhaps be not far from the mark<sup>4</sup>.

Massive numbers of apparently official Republican issues have been found in Romania – some 25,000 in documented hoards, an unknown but substantial number in undocumented finds – more than have been unearthed anywhere outside Italy itself. These hoards are found in all regions of modern Romania. M. H. Crawford has described this as “one of the most remarkable phenomena within the pattern of monetary circulation in antiquity”<sup>5</sup>. Large numbers of Republican denarii have been recovered from the Bulgarian side of the lower Danube basin also, and Crawford justly remarked that the Romanian and northern Bulgarian hoards “may be a single phenomenon”<sup>6</sup>. The Romanian hoards have been more thoroughly published and exhaustively studied however, despite the recent efforts of E. Paunov and I. Prokopov to rectify matters<sup>7</sup>, and this paper will primarily consider them. These hoards contain a mixture of official Republican coins and locally made imitations of them. Just what the proportions of that mixture are has been the subject of sometimes heated debate. Chițescu and other Romanian scholars argued that the proportion of locally produced coins was surprisingly high<sup>8</sup>, Crawford countered that it was quite low<sup>9</sup>. That *some* of these coins are imitations is beyond dispute, as evidenced by their non-Roman style and garbled legends. Most however, give every appearance of being normal products of Roman mints.

<sup>3</sup> Lockyear 1995, p. 85-96, and Lockyear 1996, p. 165-174.

<sup>4</sup> The Dacian predilection for Republican coins continued into Imperial times, decades (at least) after these coins had been largely replaced within the borders of Rome itself. A hoard of four dies found in Sarmizegetusa, published by Glodariu et al. in 1992, consisted of obverse dies for two Republican denarii and one of Tiberius. (The fourth die could not be identified.) This hoard was apparently hidden at the time of the Roman conquest in 106 AD; the dies were perhaps still in use at that time. I illustrate on my web site several examples of Dacian imitations of Julio-Claudian and Flavian originals. The former combine portraits of Germanicus and Tiberius with Republican or Augustan reverses; both obverses and reverses of the latter imitate Imperial types.

<sup>5</sup> Crawford 1977, p. 117.

<sup>6</sup> Crawford 1985.

<sup>7</sup> Paunov and Prokopov 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Chițescu 1981.

<sup>9</sup> Crawford 1977 and 1980.

Chițescu maintained, following Preda,<sup>10</sup> that this appearance was deceiving; that in fact, *most* of the Republican denarii found in Dacia were made there. She marshaled several lines of argument in defense of this counter-intuitive supposition. She pointed out the unparalleled find of a hoard of fourteen dies, unearthed at the Dacian fortress of Tilișca, Romania, in 1961. Of these, ten were recognizably derived from Republican prototypes; the remaining four were blank mistrials. None of the Tilișca dies is “barbarous”. Some are very faithful copies, slightly divergent from the prototypes; others are seemingly mechanically transferred from official coins. Crawford has identified an example of this latter phenomenon<sup>11</sup>, an apparent die match between the obverse of a coin in the Maccaresse hoard (Cr-382/1<sup>12</sup>, illustrated on pl. LXV of *Roman Republican Coinage*<sup>13</sup>), and one of the Tilișca dies. The Tilișca die would have produced a coin in shallower relief than the Maccaresse specimen however, from which Crawford concluded that the die was transferred from a worn original. Chițescu inferred from the Tilișca dies that this sort of faithful copying or mechanical transfer was widespread in Dacia. That seems too strong a statement though. The dies certainly demonstrate that both of these phenomena took place *to some extent*, but that is unquestioned.

Earlier, Chițescu had closely examined a hoard of 552 Republican denarii found in 1964 at Poroschia<sup>14</sup>. What is germane here is a group comprised of forty-nine very faithful local copies, present in multiple examples of the same dies. These are: L. Appuleius Saturninus, Cr-317/3a, 104 BC<sup>15</sup> (six examples); L. Proculus, Cr-379/2, 80 BC (twenty-three examples); C. Piso Frugi, Cr-408/1b, 67 BC (twelve examples); P. Clodius Turrinus, Cr-494/23, 42 BC (eight examples). The legend of the first type reads L. SATVRM rather than SATVRN; all four types are revealed as non-Roman by a close analysis of style. Chițescu considered these coins to be “typical” examples of a much larger phenomenon of faithful copying, but, precisely by their distinctiveness from the remainder of the hoard, they demonstrate the opposite. The presence of so many die-matched specimens of a handful of types surely indicates that those pieces had not traveled very far or very long from their place and time of origin. Their essentially unworn condition

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<sup>10</sup> Preda 1973

<sup>11</sup> Crawford 1980, p. 51.

<sup>12</sup> Cr = Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 1974. This is the only abbreviation used in the text of this study, other than the standard BC = Before Christ; AD = After Christ; g = grams; no(s). = number(s).

<sup>13</sup> Crawford 1974.

<sup>14</sup> Chițescu 1980, p. 53-70.

<sup>15</sup> The dates of issue of the Republican prototypes used here are those proposed by Crawford in *Roman Republican Coinage*, with this exception: certain dates between the 70's and 50's BC have been adjusted according to the dictates of the Mesagne Hoard, published by C. Hersh and A. Walker in 1984.

confirms this. In all of these particulars, these copies differ from the remainder of the hoard, which is comprised, excepting a few single specimen imitations, which I am disregarding for the sake of simplicity, of a quite “normal” selection of official Republican types. If additional copies are hiding amongst these, so faithfully copied as to be indistinguishable, one would expect them to be also present in multiple die-matched examples. In fact, however, while the “official” portion of the hoard contains several examples of common types, exactly as it ought to, these are all struck from different dies. There seem to be no die matches at all. In addition, the older coins in the hoard exhibit substantial wear, the newer coins much less wear, with a continuum represented between these extremes. Again, this is exactly how a “normal” hoard is expected to behave. Finally, although the Poroschia Hoard must have been buried after 39 BC, owing to a single denarius of Mark Antony and Octavian in it (Cr-528/3, struck in 39 BC), none of the other coins in the hoard are as old as the copies of Cr-494/23, and only a very few are nearly as old. This is noteworthy, but not surprising, if one imagines that *most* Republican denarii would require some years to find their way from Rome to the Balkans through a series of commercial transactions, but that an occasional piece might arrive in Dacia shortly after it was struck. Perhaps the coin of P. Clodius Turrinus was chosen as a prototype precisely because it was so shiny and new. At any rate, coins of that moneyer frequently served as models.

Another hoard that seems to reveal widespread and sophisticated copying of Republic denarii was found at Breaza, Romania in 1969. This consists in part of *cast* copies of Republican coins, accurate even to various bankers' marks on the originals. Crawford called these coins “horrible”<sup>16</sup>. The Breaza hoard is Augustan-era however, closing in 12 BC; none of the earlier Romanian hoards contain similarly cast coins. There is no reason to believe that Breaza is typical of these earlier hoards.

The last main argument that Chițescu advanced in support of the notion that a large percentage of Republican denarii found in Romania are actually of Dacian manufacture is perhaps the most telling. She analyzed the weight and diameter of the denarii in the Romanian hoards, and discovered that these coins are on average smaller and lighter than coins in hoards discovered outside of Romania<sup>17</sup>. She concluded that this difference is the result neither of chance fluctuation nor of wear due to long circulation, but indicates that the hoards are comprised largely of locally produced copies. The implication is that many or most of the Republican denarii in the Romanian hoards are struck from dies cast from official coins, and are smaller and lighter owing to the shrinkage entailed by a process of casting. I would suggest an alternate explanation for this phenomenon

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<sup>16</sup> Crawford 1980.

<sup>17</sup> Chițescu 1980, p. 49-51.

however: that shrewd Roman merchants systematically unloaded their smaller, lighter denarii on unsuspecting “barbarians”. The Dacians were quite indifferent to the precise weights of the coins they used; the imitations from one hoard recently unearthed in Transylvania range in weight from 3.04 g to 4.62 g<sup>18</sup>. There is every reason to believe they would have accepted slightly underweight official denarii without objecting, perhaps without even noticing.

More recently, Lockyear subjected a sample of coins from Romanian hoards and from museums in the United Kingdom to atomic absorption spectrometry<sup>19</sup>. The resulting data was then analyzed using advanced statistical techniques. He also concluded that a substantial proportion, perhaps as high as 36 %, of the pieces in the Romanian hoards sampled are locally-made copies. I am not qualified to critique Lockyear's results, nor do I mean to suggest either that his methodology is insufficiently rigorous or that his conclusions are less than entirely credible. Nonetheless, I find these conclusions unconvincing. Lockyear's sample is small, and nearly half the Romanian coins tested are from Breaza or Poroschia. Both of these are relatively rich in undoubted copies, detectable by other means, and neither can be regarded as typical of the Romanian hoards. I should be interested in seeing the results of a similar test and analysis applied to a larger sample from a “typical” Romania hoard. Perhaps only a comprehensive die study can answer this question conclusively.

Also unanswerable is the question of the *reason* for the massive influx of Republican denarii into ancient Dacia. Chițescu and other Romanian scholars maintained that this flood of coins was due in large part to the economic requirements of the Dacian proto-state under Burebista<sup>20</sup>. In this view, the coins were needed to fuel an expanding monetary economy and to pay Burebista's army. *Contra* this, Crawford suggested that the primary explanation for the influx was the requirements of a growing slave trade between Dacia and Rome, necessitated by the dearth of slaves in the Republic after the bloody destruction of Spartacus' slave army in 71 BC and Pompey's repression of piracy in 67 BC<sup>21</sup>. This fractious debate has generated more heat than light, and a thorough recapitulation is beyond the scope of this paper, but I might suggest that neither approach is without problems. The very existence of a centralized Dacian proto-state or “empire” in the First Century BC is unproven, although there is little doubt that Burebista did hold a powerful position in Dacia, at least for a time<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> Davis Website 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Lockyear 1997.

<sup>20</sup> Chițescu 1981, p. 9-26.

<sup>21</sup> Crawford 1977 and 1985.

<sup>22</sup> A full discussion of what can be known of Burebista's career and “empire” is also beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that attempts to position Burebista as a virtual founder of modern Romania, such as Crișan's pseudo-“biography” of 1978, are more the products of Cold War era political tensions than they are of a realistic assessment of the scant references to

Crawford's slave-trade alternative, like most single cause explanations of complex phenomena, seems overly simple and pat, although he defended it by a convincing discussion of the sheer magnitude of that trade. Lockyear has suggested a subtler possibility, that we can see the coins as "one expression of competition between and within polities ... a symbol of power"<sup>23</sup>. This jibes, perhaps *too* nicely, with currently fashionable notions about the function of coinage in ancient *Celtic* society. My intent here is to focus on the coins themselves, specifically those that were without doubt produced locally in Dacia, in the hope that this may shed some light on these various and vexed questions<sup>24</sup>.

To this point, I have used the terms "copies" and "imitations" more or less interchangeably. Chițescu however employed these as technical terms to distinguish between two broad classes of locally produced denarii. Her terminology remains useful, although not entirely without problems, and will be utilized in the remainder of this paper<sup>25</sup>. I have attempted to summarize briefly Chițescu's distinction, although she nowhere defined the terms in just this way. Her own discussion of them is both more nuanced and occasionally less consistent. (The last is perhaps an artifact of the English translation of Chițescu's Romanian original.) The first term, "monetary copies", describes coins which accurately, though often imperfectly, reproduce the types and legends of the Republican prototype<sup>26</sup>. The second term, "monetary imitations", describes coins which diverge more radically from the prototype<sup>27</sup>; the engraving of the types ranges from sketchy<sup>28</sup>, to quite stylized, to art that can only be called "barbarous"; such

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Burebista in the ancient sources.

<sup>23</sup> Lockyear 2004, p. 70.

<sup>24</sup> The reader may well wonder on what basis the coins illustrated and discussed here were determined to have been produced in Dacia. That *some* imitations of Republican denarii were produced elsewhere, most notably by the Celtic Eravisci in Pannonia, is well known. The Eraviscan coins form a compact, easily recognizable group however. It is regrettable that the find spots of many imitations appearing in trade cannot be determined, but where that information *is* available, almost without exception it points to modern Romania or northern Bulgaria. That, coupled with the enormous numbers of official denarii found in these regions, generally leads the author to describe an unknown imitation as Dacian with some confidence. That an occasional piece may thus be wrongly attributed cannot be denied, but I consider the general approach to be unassailable, and superior to the "Celtic" appellation often used in trade.

<sup>25</sup> To avoid employing the cumbersome term "copies and imitations" whenever I discuss the Dacian coinage as a whole, I will continue to use "imitations" to refer to the entirety. I mean to do so in such a way that the context makes the meaning clear.

<sup>26</sup> Chițescu 1981, p. 47-48.

<sup>27</sup> Chițescu 1981, p. 47-48.

<sup>28</sup> "Sketchy", as I use it, describes a coin in which the design is rendered in a simplified fashion, with many details lost, and only the broadest outlines remaining; "stylized" indicates a coin in which the engraver attempted to accurately render the design of the prototype, but diverged from it to a greater or lesser extent; "barbarous" describes a wide range of outlandish renditions of the original design, sometimes of genuine vigor and originality, sometimes merely crude, but never close to the original.type.

details as the number of horses' legs are often incorrect; the inscriptions range from blundered but recognizable renditions of the legend of the prototype, to abstract, utterly meaningless pseudo-language such as VIVIVI. Chițescu assumed, correctly in my view, that copies and imitations were struck contemporaneously with each other; to paraphrase, one did not "evolve" from the other. This distinction between "copies" and "imitations" is clear enough at the extremes, but not without some ambiguity as one moves away from them. At any rate, these terms cannot be understood through descriptions alone.

Earlier investigation of coinage in Dacia has been largely economic in nature. The phenomenon of copying has been noted, but its significance discussed mostly in general terms. I propose to turn this on its head, and examine particular Dacian imitations from a *numismatic* perspective. One of my purposes in this paper is to present a large number of photographs of Dacian coins, something hitherto available only in Chițescu's long out of print study<sup>29</sup>. The first two plates are primarily devoted to various copies and imitations of the coins of two Republican moneyers, C. Naevius Balbus and Q. Antonius Balbus. The remaining plates offer Dacian adaptations of various other Republican prototypes. A discussion of these examples follows, at the conclusion of which I will return to some general considerations.

Perhaps the most frequent Republican prototype employed by the Dacian moneyers is a serrate denarius struck by the Roman moneyer C. Naevius Balbus in 79 BC, Cr-382/1. Nos. 1-20 illustrate this type. The obverse portrays a head of Venus facing right, wearing a diadem; behind her is the inscription SC (*senatus consultum*). A variable control letter is sometimes found in front of her. The reverse depicts Victory driving a triga right; in the exergue is the inscription C NAE BALB (the AE and AL are both ligate). A variable control number or control letter is sometimes found above the horses. This is a common Republican coin, struck in large numbers, and its prevalence as a model is unsurprising.

No. 1 illustrates an official Roman coin. No. 2 is a remarkably close copy; so close as to be virtually indistinguishable from the prototype, were it not for the fact that it was found alongside multiple examples of these same dies, in a hoard that also contained less perfect copies of other Republican types, also present in multiple examples<sup>30</sup>. The style, legend and control number are perfectly rendered. At the other extreme, nos. 6-12 are unmistakably imitations, diverging from the prototype in various ways and to differing degrees. No. 6 is sketchy,

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<sup>29</sup> A note on the plates: I have endeavored to include a wide range of copies and imitations, both to illustrate particular points in the text and to demonstrate something of the breadth of the Dacian coinage. The photos are hardly exhaustive though, even of the coins presently known to me. Many more are presented on my web site. I hope eventually to produce a comprehensive *catalogue* of this remarkable coinage.

<sup>30</sup> Davis Website 2004.

with no legends at all other than the remains of SC on the obverse. No. 7 is stylized, and the wheel on the triga would never roll; the obverse SC is lacking; the reverse legend below the exergal line is mostly off the flan, but it also has a blundered, inappropriate legend *above* the line. No. 8 is slightly stylized; the S in SC is retrograde; the reverse legend is somewhat blundered, but largely correct. No. 9 is quite stylized, but the legends are essentially correct. The obverse of no. 10 is “barbarous”, or nearly so, with S in SC retrograde; the reverse is stylized, with an utterly blundered, meaningless legend. No. 11 is quite stylized, nearly “barbarous”; the legends are very badly blundered, yet recognizable. Both sides of no. 12 are “barbarous”; the SC is correct but crude, while the reverse legend is blundered and meaningless, nearly abstract, and placed both above and below the curved exergal line. Nos. 11 and 12 are the only coins among these examples in which the leftmost horse in the triga, relative to Victory, does *not* look back towards her, as it does on the prototype. Nos. 10-12 are the only pieces illustrated which are not serrate, as is the prototype.

Thus far I have discussed pieces that are clearly copies or imitations. Nos. 3-5, however, are less easily classified. The style of both obverse and reverse of no. 3 closely approximates the official prototype, faintly stylized; the reverse legend is unfortunately not on the flan, but the control number CXXXIII is plausible and correctly rendered. This coin is in no sense “barbarous”, but it unmistakably is *not* the product of the mint of Rome. No. 4 also closely copies the prototype, again faintly stylized. The legends are correct, but the reverse legend is partly missing due to a partially flat strike, and is badly placed on the die, running downhill relative to the exergal line. No. 4 is quite different in style to no. 3, but the Republican prototype itself exhibits a disconcerting range of style. No. 5 is again a close copy, with largely correct legends and reverse control number CCVIII, but for the conspicuous fact that the head of Venus faces *left*. This reversal is a not unusual feature of Dacian coins, the result of a naive die-cutter not realizing that he must engrave the die in mirror image to what he desires to appear on the coin. Oddly though, although the S in SC is also retrograde, the C reads correctly.

I classify nos. 3-5 all as copies, but none so nearly duplicates the original as does no. 2. The point is that a *judgment* needs to be made, and another viewer of the same coins might decide differently. In particular, the left-facing Venus on no. 5 might well be enough to cause another researcher to deem it an imitation. There are further complications. Many imitations incorrectly pair obverse and reverse types. The general phenomenon will be discussed below, but some aspects are germane here. This sort of improper pairing causes no difficulties of classification, if the coin in question can be classed as an imitation on other grounds, as in nos. 14-20. The reverse of no. 14 imitates a denarius of P. Furius Crassipes of 84 BC, Cr-356/1, and depicts a curule chair. Both sides



are quite stylized; the obverse SC is crude; the reverse exergual legend, which should read CRASSIPES, is blundered but recognizable. The obverse of no. 15 is a remarkable “barbarous” invention: a small head of Venus, clearly derived from that of Cr-382/1, atop a large celestial globe. Behind Venus is CS; before her are traces of a meaningless and inappropriate legend. The crude, “barbarous” reverse, derived from a prototype of C. Norbanus, Cr-357/1b, issued in 83 BC, is perhaps anticlimactic after the originality of the obverse design.

Nos. 16-20 all depict the triga of C. Naevius Balbus on the reverse, paired with various obverses, none of them the appropriate head of Venus. One of my working assumptions in this paper is that the Dacian die cutters always had a particular model or models at hand. I have seen no evidence of a process in which imitations are themselves imitated, as is typical of some *Celtic* imitations of Macedonian types. A corollary to this is that the prototype can generally be recognized, even if the imitation at first sight appears to be a “generic” Roma head or quadriga. A careful comparison of such details as the position of the horses’ legs, the angle of the driver’s body, or the remnants of meaning in a garbled inscription, usually is fruitful. Sometimes however, the identification of the prototype will defeat our best efforts. The obverse of no. 16 is one such case. It depicts a stylized head of Roma facing right, but yields no clues that might allow a further identification. The reverse is again a stylized triga, with a crude but plausible control number  $\perp X$ ; any legend in the exergue is off the flan.

The obverse of no. 17 is a stylized head of Ceres, imitating Cr-378/1, struck by C. Marius Capito in 81 BC. The legend is much abbreviated and meaningless, but the control number XXXIII is plausible. The reverse triga is stylized; the reverse legend is blundered but recognizable; the control number CAX is meaningless. Both sides of no. 18 are quite stylized, nearly “barbarous”; the obverse *may* imitate a denarius struck by Cn. Gellius in 138 BC, Cr-232/1, if one can accept that the “scroll” above and behind the head of Roma is an attempt to render the laurel-wreath of the original. The reverse features a “flying” Victory; the legend is blundered but barely recognizable. The obverse of no. 19 depicts a head of Mars facing right, probably imitating a type struck by Sex. Julius Caesar in 129 BC, Cr-258/1, although other prototypes are possible. The reverse biga is stylized; the legend is blundered but recognizable. The obverse of no. 20 is among the most visually appealing of all imitations. The “barbarous” jugate heads are perhaps those of Honos and Virtus, imitating an issue struck by Q. Fufius Calenus and Mucius Cordus, Cr-403/1, in 68 BC, although there are other possibilities. The reverse triga is quite stylized, with a badly blundered legend, perhaps barely recognizable. Chitescu illustrated another example of these dies, from the Salasul de Sus Hoard, found in 1957 in Hunedoara County in Transylvania<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Chitescu 1981, pl. X, 191.

Nos. 14-20 are all easily classed as imitations on stylistic grounds. What, though, are we to make of no. 13? The obverse closely copies the obverse of C. Naevius Balbus, and is not far outside the stylistic boundaries of the original, perhaps betrayed as a copy by a modest “thickening” of detail. The SC appears to be correct. The reverse copies, fairly closely, a denarius struck by Q. Antonius Balbus. The reverse is somewhat stylized; the legend somewhat blundered but easily recognizable. I classify this coin as an imitation, but it might well merit classification as a copy were the types properly paired. A further distinction such as “hybrid copy” might solve the immediate problem, but begs a more basic question. The copy/imitation dichotomy is undeniably useful as a means of *sorting*, but does it reveal anything more basic about the coins themselves, or about the people who struck them? Were “copies” produced in a particular time and place, and “imitations” in another time or another place? Answers to these questions might shed some considerable light on the singular phenomenon of Dacian coinage. Before revisiting them, it may be helpful to examine the Dacian renditions of the denarii of another Roman moneyer, the aforementioned Q. Antonius Balbus.

The official serrate denarii struck by Q. Antonius Balbus in 83-2 BC, Cr-364/1, are also quite common, and very frequently serve as a model, so we are again able to examine quite a range of copies and imitations. The obverse portrays a laureate head of Jupiter facing right; SC is inscribed behind his head, and a variable control letter sometimes appears before or beneath it. The reverse depicts Victory, holding a wreath and palm branch, driving a quadriga right; in the exergue is the legend Q ANTO BALB / PR, with ANTO and AL ligate. A variable control letter sometimes appears below the horses. The first example, no. 22 in the catalogue, was part of the same hoard as no. 2, and like it, was present in multiple die-matched examples. The style of the obverse is very close to that of the prototype, virtually flawless; the reverse is slightly stylized, and the reverse legend in the exergue is blundered but recognizable. I have no explanation for the curious legend *above* the exergual line. Nos. 23-25 form a very interesting die-linked series of copies. Both sides of no. 23 are faintly stylized, the reverse a bit more so. The reverse legend is correct, and the control letter N is appropriate. No. 24 repeats the same obverse die, but introduces a new reverse die, with control letter X. This die very closely mimics the prototype, and its legend is impeccable. No. 25 repeats the dies of no. 24, but an attempt has been made to re-engrave Jupiter’s beard. A hypothetical sequence might be: the dies of no. 23 were employed until the reverse die was no longer usable, and it was replaced with the reverse die of no. 24. Both nos. 23 and 24 are serrate, as is the prototype. Then, after a period of striking using the dies of no. 24, perhaps these dies were stored, long enough to deteriorate. Eventually they were returned to service, and the obverse was re-engraved with the new beard of no. 25. This scenario incidentally explains why no. 25 is not serrate, since the prototype was no longer at hand.

This die sequence is valuable, because it allows us to associate nos. 23-25 with each other with a great degree of confidence. The identification of other sequences like this, perhaps longer ones, would represent substantial progress towards an understanding of this coinage, but unfortunately, such sequences have not yet been recognized.

Nos. 26-29 are all classed as copies, although all diverge to some degree from the prototype. Perhaps the blundered, although recognizable, reverse legends of nos. 26-27, or the retrograde S in SC on no. 28, would persuade other observers to class these as imitations. This uncertainty again demonstrates that the copy/imitation dichotomy may be an attempt to impose on the coins an order that is not truly present. The distinction between these pieces and nos. 30-31, which I class as imitations, is not great. These last two form a die-matched pair, interesting in that no. 30 is serrate, while no. 31 has a smooth edge. They, and no. 32, are part of the same Romanian hoard. There were three examples of the dies of nos. 30-31 in the hoard, of which *only* no. 30 is serrate, and two examples of the dies of no. 32. All these coins, and other imitations in the hoard, exhibit a similar amount of wear from circulation. It is reasonable to surmise that they were not only *found* together, but were *made* at the same time, in the same workshop.

Nos. 33-34 form another die-linked pair, sharing an obverse die. No. 33 is part of a Transylvanian hoard; the origin of no. 34 is not known. No. 35 is noteworthy in that the “quadriga” on the reverse is drawn by only three horses. Nos. 36-39 are all imitations, in which an obverse of Q. Antonius Balbus is matched with a reverse from another Republican issue. No. 36, from the same hoard as nos. 30-32, copies a reverse of Ti. Claudius Nero, Cr-383/1, struck in 79 BC. It is another example of a coin that might well be classed as a copy, were the obverse and reverse properly paired. The obverse of no. 39 depicts a beardless youth, so the identification of Jupiter as the prototype may seem surprising. The lack of a beard can be explained as the result of a worn or mis-struck model. Everything else fits perfectly, including the “knobs” at the ends of the laurel wreath, diagnostic of 364/1. Worth mentioning is the resemblance between many aspects of the obverse of no. 39 and that of no. 29, which *does* depict a properly bearded Jupiter, including even the T control letter under the chin of the deity portrayed. Nos. 40-41 are examples of a *reverse* of Q. Antonius Balbus paired with an *obverse* of another moneyer, L. Julius Bursio and Mn. Fonteius respectively.

Nos. 42-57 are copies of issues of other Republican moneyers; nos. 58-120 are imitations.<sup>32</sup> There are a handful of partial exceptions or special cases, which will be noted. My discussion of Dacian imitations of the coins of the

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<sup>32</sup> I have selected the coins to be illustrated in part for aesthetic reasons, and to show the diversity of this coinage. In practice, this means that imitations of Roma heads and bigas or quadrigas are perhaps under-represented on the plates, in favor of a wider range of types. I have also to some extent avoided illustrating pieces whose prototype cannot be determined with confidence.

preceding two moneyers will clarify my methodology. I will comment on the remaining illustrations to clarify particular points; in many cases, the coins illustrated will speak for themselves. The plates are ordered by the dates of the Republican prototypes. The identity of these prototypes can be obtained from the catalogue at the end of this paper.

Nos. 42, 43 and 50 are from the same hoard as nos. 2 and 22. Nos. 43 and 50 were also present in multiple examples. In this, they resemble the copies from the Poroschia Hoard, which they also resemble in style and fabric. It may be useful to describe these pieces as copies of "Poroschia-type".

Nos. 44 and 45 form an interesting pair. At first glance, they appear to be struck from the same dies, but closer consideration will show that this is not the case. The two sets of dies are surely the products of the same hand however. It is also noteworthy that both coins exhibit flan cracks. Such cracks are unusual on Dacian coins, and the cracks on these are perhaps further evidence that the two coins were struck at the same place and time. While the fabric of Dacian imitations is in some ways quite crude, with double striking and areas of flat strike typical, in other ways the Dacian moneyers exhibit surprising technical prowess. The relative lack of striking cracks is one example of this. Another is the dearth of brockages. Brockages of *official* Republican denarii are frequently encountered, but no. 48 is the only brockage of a Dacian imitation of which I am aware.

No. 49 is especially interesting in that both obverse and reverse were mechanically transferred from official Republican coins. Chițescu suggested that this process could account for a large percentage of the Republican denarii found in modern Romania. I have discussed my disagreement with this above, but in the present case there can be no question. Not only are the obverse and reverse dies improperly matched, but both dies were apparently modified *after* the basic transfer was achieved. This can be seen on the obverse by the odd pellet before the neck of Roma, as though in continuation of her necklace, and, much more dramatically in the reverse, where a border of dots has been added outside the wreath. On the prototype, the wreath suffices for a border; the Dacian die-cutter seems to have believed that a "proper" coin required a proper border, and improved on the original by adding one. No. 56 is another remarkable example of this transfer process. Both sides clearly show the edge of the original coin which was pressed into the softened metal of the transfer die. The reverse thus incorporates the serrate edge of the C. Naevius Balbus host coin as part of the "design" of the copy. Other examples of mechanical transfer are the *obverses* of nos. 101 and 102. These are paired with newly created reverse dies, improbably both imitating an original of L. Papius. Both obverses display the softness expected of a transfer process, as do both sides of no. 56, a phenomenon that is *not* evident on no. 49.

Nos. 50-51 are copies of denarii struck by Ti. Claudius Nero in 79 BC; nos. 93-98 are imitations of the same moneyer. Again, this dichotomy is in part

subjective. The stylistic difference between, for example, no. 51 and nos. 93-94 is not great. I consider no. 51 to be the more successful rendering of the original, but evidently, all three were *attempts* at faithful reproduction. Nos. 93 and 94 bear a remarkable resemblance to *each other*, extending even to the nearly identical control numbers and similarly garbled reverse legend. There can be no doubt that these are the products of the same workshop; it is also likely that nos. 95-98 are *not* products of that workshop.

Some imitations are so crude or so “barbarous” as to appear to be “anomalous”, although I no longer wish to use that term in a technical sense, as I have elsewhere<sup>33</sup>. I had considered it likely that these “anomalous” pieces were *not* Dacian. No. 64 had seemed to be one such coin – an utterly degraded Roma head, all jaw and spikes, with the rudder below the biga on the prototype of M. Cippius misunderstood as a fish – until I encountered its close cousin in the obverse of no. 65. This was one of only twenty imitations in a large hoard of otherwise official pieces, found in Transylvania in 2005<sup>34</sup>, well within the confines of the Dacian proto-state. Most of these imitations were “typical” Dacian productions. There seems no reason to assume that no. 65 was “accidentally” associated with them. The reverse of no. 68 is another instance of a die so outlandish and impenetrable that it can only be described as a new creation, but paired with an “unremarkable” Roma head obverse. The obverse of no. 70, from the same hoard as no. 65, is one last example – the jugate Dei Penates seem to share a single head !

On occasion, the Dacian engravers demonstrate an awareness of Republican coins beyond the model immediately at hand. No. 81 is an example of this unexpected phenomenon. This coin imitates, with reasonable fidelity, an original of Mn. Fonteius of 85 BC, accurate even to the monogram below the chin of Apollo. The engraver apparently also had in mind a type struck by L. Julius Bursio in the same year. The male head on this coin is actually a composite deity, combining attributes of Apollo, Mercury, and Neptune; the last is represented by a trident behind the head. The engraver of no. 81 has noticed the similarity between the two heads in question (the same Roman engraver produced multiple dies for each issue), and, perhaps unsure whether Neptune’s trident was simply missing on his model, added it behind Apollo’s head on his version. No. 107 presents another example of this. The obverse is unambiguously revealed as an imitation of the Liberty bust of a coin of L. Farsuleius Mensor by the correct SC MENSOR legend before the bust, yet the same bust is adorned by Apollo’s laurel-wreath and long curls, and thus is associated with the reverse horseman of

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<sup>33</sup> Davis 2004, and on my web site.

<sup>34</sup> This is one of three hoards represented in the plates. The copies of “Poroschia-type” have been noted in the text, and the plates include examples of each type. Imitations from the other two hoards are identified in the catalogue as “Transylvania”, of which the present coin is one, and “Near Bucharest”. The imitations from these latter two hoards are not all illustrated here. These will be published in full at a later date.

L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, which is paired with a head of Apollo on the prototype.

As noted above, in the discussion of nos. 16-20, a basic assumption underlying my approach to Dacian numismatics is that in all, or virtually all, cases, the Dacian moneyer had at hand an actual Republican denarius that he attempted to reproduce. I have seen no evidence for a process of “copies of copies”, with ever increasing degradation of the original types and legends, such as unquestionably did take place with various Celtic imitations of Macedonian types. No. 82 presents another example of a coin, the reverse of which has eluded my effort to identify the prototype. The obverse of this coin faithfully reproduces the prototype of Mn. Fonteius, and would be classed as a copy were it paired with the proper reverse. The actual reverse though is quite another matter. Crude and “barbarous”, with a meaningless legend, it evidently depicts a facing figure of Hercules, carrying his club, lion-skin slung over his shoulder. There are a handful of possible Republican models for this, but none are without difficulties. Typologically, Cr-494/38, struck by C. Vibius Varus in 42 BC, is perhaps most plausible, but the Transylvanian hoard of which no. 82 is a part terminates in 37 BC. Five years seems hardly enough time for the prototype to travel from Rome to Dacia and for the imitation not only to be struck, but to circulate to the degree evident on no. 82. Might the prototype in actuality be the standing Herakles from the reverse of a Thasos tetradrachm, reproduced in miniature on a denarius?

Nos. 85 and 103 are noteworthy in that both are die duplicates of pieces illustrated in Chițescu’s study<sup>35</sup>, as is no. 20, noted above. This might not seem unexpected, as her plates include photographs of 116 imitations<sup>36</sup>, in addition to multiple examples of the Poroschia copies. A *smaller* sample of Eraviscan imitations of Republican denarii would be *expected* to yield examples of most or all of the Eraviscan dies, as demonstrated by R. Freeman in his study of a hoard of 44 Eraviscan coins<sup>37</sup>. Dacian imitations behave differently however. I have amassed a database of nearly 500 Dacian, or most likely Dacian, imitations, probably the largest ever assembled. This database must represent a significant percentage of *all* Dacian coins now residing in museums or in private collections. Of these 500-odd coins, fewer than 10 % are now known to me in multiple examples, fewer still in *die-linked* series. This is nothing short of astonishing, and not susceptible to easy explanation. A colleague has suggested that the database, substantial though it is, is still insufficient for a greater number of matches to be expected. Perhaps, but the analogy of the Eraviscan imitations suggests otherwise. I know of no real parallel to this state of affairs, where a large number of dies is represented by a relatively small population of surviving specimens. One might suggest that faulty

<sup>35</sup> Chițescu 1981, pl. VIII, 112 and pl. VII, 24, respectively.

<sup>36</sup> Regrettably, these plates include, without distinction, illustrations of Eraviscan and other Pannonian imitations which are, beyond any doubt, *not* Dacian.

<sup>37</sup> Freeman 1998.

die-making techniques led to the relatively rapid failure of the dies, but I find this proposition unconvincing. The dilemma is central to an understanding of Dacian coinage, but for now, insoluble.

A coin series can be described and analyzed using two sorts of criteria. These can be characterized as *material aspects*, such as weight, metal composition, fabric, and quality of strike, and *content*, primarily type and legend. What can be said about Dacian imitations in light of these criteria ?

The theoretical weight of the denarius of the Late Republic is 3.86 g<sup>38</sup>, the actual average weight slightly less. The average weight of the 118 imitations in the catalogue of this paper is 3.66 g – tolerably close to the Republican norm<sup>39</sup>. A closer look reveals a rather different picture though. The weight of the official coins seldom exceeds 4.10 g or is less than 3.60 g. The imitations in the catalogue display considerably more fluctuation. The weight of 16 pieces is greater than 4.10 g; that of 39 pieces is less than 3.50 g. The weight of the copies is not much more consistent than that of the imitations, although copies are less often dramatically *overweight*. One might suppose that Poroschia-type copies, being truest to the prototype in style, would also be struck to a more consistent standard, close to the Republican, but that proves not to be the case. The 49 copies in the hoard average 3.47 g, with a range from 3.01 g-4.26 g. These findings significantly undermine the notion that a substantial portion of the coins in the Romanian hoards are locally made copies. Were that the case, one would expect them to exhibit the same wide fluctuation in weight as do the coins which unquestionably *were* struck locally. They do not; on the contrary, they fall within a narrow range of weights, albeit on average somewhat light. As discussed above, I believe this last fact can be explained in other ways. The Poroschia copies, while very faithful to their prototypes, can all be detected by a close examination of style, whereas the remainder of the hoard appears to be impeccably Republican. If these pieces are also copies, they can only have been made through a transfer process from official coins.

In principle, detailed knowledge of the metallic composition of denarii from Romanian hoards could greatly assist in answering the question of their origin. As discussed above, Lockyear has attempted to attain this<sup>40</sup>, with results that seem to me to be inconclusive. I should like to see a straightforward test performed, perhaps comparing the composition of the Poroschia copies with the composition of the coins in the remainder of the hoard. If such a test revealed no significant difference between the copies and all, or a substantial portion of, the apparently official coins in the hoard, I would consider the case for local production nearly

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<sup>38</sup> Crawford 1974, p. 594.

<sup>39</sup> The imitations in the catalogue were selected for reasons other than weight, but the sample chosen is sufficiently large and diverse to yield significant results. The author is aware of some pieces exceeding 5 g in weight. Those *were* deliberately excluded.

<sup>40</sup> Lockyear 1997.

to have been made.

Chițescu maintained that the diameter of Dacian imitations is slightly, but consistently smaller than that of genuine Republican pieces<sup>41</sup>. My own investigation does not bear this out. In general, the fabric of Dacian imitations resembles that of the Republican prototypes, with the major proviso that they far more frequently exhibit such flaws as impartial strike and lack of centering. I have discussed the fabric of Dacian imitations in the context of nos. 44 and 45, above. As a rule, copies are more technically proficient than are imitations. To an extent, the coins in the plates do not fully reflect the myriad technical challenges only imperfectly solved by the Dacian moneyers, as I have, for the most part, selected coins without these problems, so as to better illustrate the types. Many more examples, showing the full range of imperfections, can be found on my web site<sup>42</sup>, as can some examples of imitations with extremely large, spread flans which are *not* typical of this coinage.

The content of Dacian imitations, inscriptions and imagery, is complex and often opaque. Generally, as has been discussed in detail above, the legends are attempts to reproduce the legend of the prototype, sometimes with perfect accuracy, other times misunderstood and blundered. At the other extreme, some coins lack any inscription, or bear only pseudo-legends such as VVVV on the reverse of no. 66. There is a curious middle ground however, represented on the plates by nos. 58 and 118. It is easy to see IAMN in the exergue of no. 58 as an attempt at ROMA, but what can NOKEN above the exergual line possibly mean? It bears no resemblance at all to the proper L ANTES (NTE are ligate) of the prototype of L. Antestius Gragulus. It is tempting to see in this a name, whether of a tribe or an individual. Precisely this *does* occur on the Eraviscan imitations, many of which bear legends such as RAVISCI or other unmistakable variations of the tribal name. A few Eraviscan coins bear inscriptions that may name individuals. Might NOKEN and legends like it be similar renditions? There is precedent for this notion. Chițescu pointed out that earlier scholars had attempted to extract names of chieftains from legends of this sort, without convincing success<sup>43</sup>. To date, my own efforts have been no more fruitful, but it need not follow that the undertaking is quixotic. Consider another example, no. 118. This is an imitation of an original struck by P. Clodius Turrinus in 42 BC. Both fabric and style of the imitation are quite refined; the obverse die in particular is the work of an artist of real vigor and originality. The prototype has no obverse legend; the reverse legend reads P CLODIVS to the right of Diana, M F to her left, with nothing below the exergual line. The obverse of the imitation bears, to either side of the head of Apollo, a long, complex legend, replete with retrograde and

<sup>41</sup> Chițescu 1981, p. 49.

<sup>42</sup> Davis Website 2004.

<sup>43</sup> Chițescu 1981, p. 53.



upside down letters, yet seemingly purposeful; the reverse legend reproduces that of the model with reasonable fidelity, but “improves” on it by continuing into the exergue. It is difficult *not* to conclude that these legends represent an attempt to convey meaning. The last example to be discussed here, no. 110, is perhaps the strangest of all. The obverse is again of marvelous style, but is otherwise unexceptional. The reverse, which imitates a coin struck by M. Volteius in 75 BC, is another matter. It replaces in the exergue the proper M VOLTEI M F with an astonishing M CAESAR. If this is indeed a reference to the Dictator, what can the intention be? Perhaps it *is* merely a remarkable coincidence.

An entire paper could fruitfully be devoted to a discussion of the nuances of Dacian style. I have remarked on style as it pertains to particular coins, but for the most part, my intention is to allow the illustrations to speak for themselves. It remains to treat briefly the *choice* of types to imitate. H. Wells has pointed to the frequent occurrence of reverse types having to do with horsemanship in one form or another, mounted Dioscuri, bigas and quadrigas and the like<sup>44</sup>. He considered that this reflects a memory of an earlier Geto-Dacian coinage tradition, the imitation of tetradrachms of Philip II of Macedonia, with their rider reverses. I regard this as unprovable, and not fully supported by the evidence. Equine types of all sorts are very typical of the Republican coinage of all periods; the imitations reflect this ubiquity<sup>45</sup>. The Dacian engravers surely lacked understanding of the *meaning* of some of their models, which sometimes eludes us as well. This did not seem to matter. Nor did a proper matching of obverse and reverse matter very much, as a glance at the catalogue will demonstrate. One would dearly like to know whether this mismatching is due to choice or indifference by the Dacian engraver, imitating whatever model was at hand and which suited his fancy, or to the whim of the mint worker assigned to actually strike the coins, selecting from a sort of die bucket<sup>46</sup>. This is unanswerable, perhaps forever.

Mint workers of course require a mint, something we have yet to touch on. Chițescu, who considered the imitations to be a true national coinage, states that “These coins were struck ... in the official mints of the state, which could have at their disposal a large quantity of metal, engravers, and skilled workers and by no means only in small workshops, limited in character and owned by private persons or tribal unions.”<sup>47</sup>. This may be rather too strongly put, since neither material remains of, nor ancient literary references to, such an “official” mint have survived. The Tilișca dies, and a few other dies like them, are the only physical evidence that remains of Dacian minting authority and practice, apart from the coins themselves. The Poroschia-type copies are so well and so

<sup>44</sup> Wells, undated, but subsequent to 1980.

<sup>45</sup> As noted, equine types are perhaps under-represented in the plates of this paper.

<sup>46</sup> Or, might engraver and “striker” be the same person?

<sup>47</sup> Chițescu 1981, p. 59.

consistently made, despite the vagaries of their weights, that they at least do not argue *against* the existence of a central Dacian mint. However, I see no reason why a high level of technical accomplishment *necessarily* implies control by a central authority. That the surviving imitations exhibit such a wide range of style, fabric and type selection, and that so many imitations fall short of the high Poroschia technical standard, argue against the existence of single mint. I find it inconceivable that, for example, nos. 2, 8 and 15 were all struck at the same mint, at the same time. It is generally agreed that all, or virtually all, of the imitations were struck within a fairly narrow period, roughly 90 BC to 30 BC at the outermost limits, and that most were struck in a much *more* constrained period between 80 BC and 40 BC. This is reinforced by the fact that all imitations, from the most polished to the most crude, draw from a common pool of prototypes such as the coins of C. Naevius Balbus. If nos. 2, 8 and 15 were struck at approximately the same time, it follows with near certainty that they were *not* struck at the same place. This of course implies the existence of multiple minting centers, although it does not eliminate the possibility that a central authority was directly responsible for the production of the most technically accomplished copies, while retaining a measure of indirect authority over a network of local workshops, of varying proficiency, which fashioned the remainder. The crudest imitations were perhaps produced on a very small scale, for local use only, in a kind of cottage industry.

I began the investigation of Dacian imitations with confidence that careful study of surviving specimens would enable us to discern patterns not noticed before, and that ultimately the production of a comprehensive *catalogue* of this coinage would be feasible. That goal is unchanged, but progress has been intermittent and slow. By definition, if *all* extant imitations were recorded, a catalogue would be merely a matter of compilation and arrangement. The dizzying multiplication of dies, represented by relatively few surviving specimens, has been utterly unexpected. Some interim conclusions are nonetheless possible. On present evidence, the notion that a substantial proportion of the Republican denarii found in Romania and northern Bulgaria were in actuality produced there cannot be maintained. On the contrary, the “common sense” position that the bulk of these coins were struck in Rome and exported to Dacia seems correct. Perhaps as many as 10 % of the coins in the Romanian and Bulgarian hoards are local products; most of these are easily detectible on stylistic grounds. They were presumably struck to make up a shortfall in the supply of official Republican denarii. Nor can the coins be used as evidence for the coalescence of a centralized Dacian state under Burebista. Such a state may indeed have existed, at least in embryonic form, but the imitations give little indication of control by a central authority. It is noteworthy that the imitations from the hoards labeled “Near Bucharest” and “Transylvania” in the catalogue exhibit no overlap of dies from one to the other,

although the first of these does reveal a fair number of *internal* die matches. This indicates that not only were the imitations *struck* in de-centralized workshops, but that they did not circulate terribly far from the places they were made. In short, the imitations deserve study in their own right, as a fascinating and little-known corner of ancient numismatics, but they cannot be made to support the historical burden that has sometimes been placed on them.

PHILLIP DAVIS

CATALOGUE AND KEY TO PLATES<sup>48</sup>

	Class and Prototype	Cr	Date	Wt	Find Spot	Prove- nance
1	Denarius of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.84		A.C.
2	Copy of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.70		A.C.
3	Copy of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.68		A.C.
4	Copy of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.84		A.C.
5	Copy of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.80		A.C.
6	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.51		A.C.
7	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.91		P.A.C.
8	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.48		P.A.C.
9	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	2.46		A.C.
10	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	4.83		A.C.
11	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	4.44		P.A.C.
12	Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	382/1	79	3.83	Transylvania	A.C.
13	Obv. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus Rev. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	382/1 364/1	79 83-2	3.69		A.C.
14	Obv. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus Rev. Imitation of P. Furius Crasipes	382/1 356/1	79 84	3.62		A.C.
15	Obv. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus Rev. Imitation of C. Norbanus	382/1 357/1	79 83	3.46		P.A.C.
16	Obv. Imitation of ? Rev. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	? 382/1	? 79	3.76		P.A.C.

<sup>48</sup> The following abbreviations have been used in this catalogue: Obv. = obverse, Rev. = reverse; Cr = Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 1974; Wt = weight in grams; A.C. = Author's Collection, P.A.C. = Private American Collection. The date listed is that of the Republican prototype; the Dacian copies and imitations will have been struck subsequent to that date. Find spots, where known at all, are listed with the greatest precision possible. Dates are all B.C.

17	Obv. Imitation of C. Marius Capito Rev. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	378/1 382/1	81 79	3.62		P.A.C.
18	Obv. Imitation of Cn. Gellius? Rev. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	232/1? 382/1	138 79	3.32		A.C.
19	Obv. Imitation of Sex. Julius Caesar Rev. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	258/1 382/1	129 79	3.26	Near Bucharest	A.C.
20	Obv. Imitation of Q. Fufius Calenus & Mucius Cordus Rev. Imitation of C. Naevius Balbus	403/1 382/1	68 79	3.58	Near Bucharest	A.C.
21	Denarius of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.90		A.C.
22	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.60		A.C.
23	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.85		A.C.
24	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.62		Lanz 106, 10, 11/01
25	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	4.33		A.C.
26	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	4.79		P.A.C.
27	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.52		P.A.C.
28	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.40		A.C.
29	Copy of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	4.02		A.C.
30	Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	2.96	Near Bucharest	A.C.
31	Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.63	Near Bucharest	A.C.
32	Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.40	Near Bucharest	A.C.
33	Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	4.62	Transylvania	A.C.
34	Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.78	Transylvania	A.C.
35	Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	364/1	83-2	3.37		P.A.C.
36	Obv. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus Rev. Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	364/1 383/1	83-2 79	4.05	Near Bucharest	A.C.
37	Obv. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus Rev. Imitation of ?	364/1 ?	83-2 ?	3.48		P.A.C.
38	Obv. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus Rev. Imitation of Pub. Crepusius	364/1 361/1	83-2 82	3.70		P.A.C.
39	Obv. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus Rev. Imitation of Gar. Ogyl, Ver	364/1 350/A2	83-2 86	3.14		A.C.
40	Obv. Imitation of L. Julius Bursio Rev. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	352/1 364/1	85 83-2	3.11		A.C.
41	Obv. Imitation of Mn. Fonteius Rev. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus	353/2 364/1	85 83-2	3.60		A.C.

42	Copy of Anonymous	287/1	115-14	3.40		A.C.
43	Copy of C. Coelius Calvus	318/1	104	3.73		A.C.
44	Copy of Q. Titius	341/2	90	3.49		P.A.C.
45	Copy of Q. Titius	341/2	90	3.45	Lanz 102, 19, 5/01	
46	Copy of Pub. Crepusius	361/1	82	3.64		A.C.
47	Copy of C. Mamilius Limetanus	362/1	82	3.29		A.C.
48	Copy of C. Mamilius Limetanus (Brockage)	362/1	82	3.71		A.C.
49	Obv. Copy of M. Lucilius Rufus Rev. Copy of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius	324/1 374/1	101 81	3.99		A.C.
50	Copy of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	3.85		A.C.
51	Copy of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	3.83		P.A.C.
52	Copy of P. Satriena	388/1	77	3.45		A.C.
53	Copy of C. Piso Frugi	408/1	61	3.67	Dobrudja	A.C.
54	Copy of C. Piso Frugi	408/1	61	3.70		P.A.C.
55	Copy of M. Plaetorius Cestianus	405/5	57	3.82		A.C.
56	Obv. Copy of Q. Pomponius Musa Rev. Copy of C. Naevius Balbus	410/5 382/1	56 79	4.05		P.A.C.
57	Copy of C. Servilius	423/1	53	3.58		A.C.
58	Imitation of L. Antestius Gragulus	238/1	136	3.63		A.C.
59	Imitation, Various Prototypes, earliest biga Cr-238/1	?	136	3.04	Transylvania	A.C.
60	Imitation of C. Curiatius Trigemini?	240/1?	135	3.04		A.C.
61	Imitation of Q. Minucius Rufus	277/1	122	4.41		A.C.
62	Imitation of Q. Curtius	285/2	116	3.59		A.C.
63	Imitation of M. Cippius?	289/1?	115-14	4.15	Romania	A.C.
64	Obv. Imitation of ? Rev. Imitation of M. Cippius	? 289/1	? 115-14	3.42		A.C.
65	Imitation of ?	?	115-14	4.04	Transylvania	A.C.
66	Obv. Imitation of P. Nerva Rev. Imitation of M. Cippius	292/1 289/1	113 115-14	3.75		A.C.
67	Imitation of P. Laeca	301/1	110-09	4.21	Near Bucharest	A.C.
68	Imitation of P. Laeca ?	301/1?	110-09	3.54		A.C.
69	Imitation of L. Flamininus Chilo	302/1	109-08	3.46	Near Sarmize- getusa	A.C.

70	Obv. Imitation of P. Sulpicius Galba Rev. Imitation of T. Minucius Augurinus (?)	312/1 243/1?	108 134	3.28	Transylvania	A.C.
71	Imitation of Lucius Appuleius Saturninus	317/3	104	3.83		A.C.
72	Obv. Imitation of Lucius Appuleius Saturninus or C. Coelius Calvus Rev. Imitation of Anonymous	317/3 or 318/1 287/1	104 115-14	3.56	Near Bucharest	A.C.
73	Imitation of Q. Thermus	319/1	103	3.95		A.C.
74	Obv. Imitation of D. Silanus Rev. Imitation of L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus and Q. Servilius Caepio	337/3 330/1	91 100	3.23		A.C.
75	Imitation of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi	340/1	90	3.33	Transylvania	A.C.
76	Imitation of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi	340/1	90	4.42		A.C.
77	Imitation of C. Vibius Pansa	342/4	90	3.51		A.C.
78	Imitation of C. Vibius Pansa	342/4	90	4.80		A.C.
79	Imitation of C. Vibius Pansa	342/5	90	3.15		P.A.C.
80	Obv. Imitation of L. Julius Bursio Rev. Imitation of C. Coelius Calvus?	352/1 318/1?	85 104	3.26	Near Bucharest	A.C.
81	Imitation of Mn. Fonteius	353/1	85	3.49	Near Bucharest	A.C.
82	Obv. Copy of Mn. Fonteius Rev. Imitation of Uncertain Prototype	353/1 ?	85 ?	3.64	Transylvania	A.C.
83	Obv. Imitation of ? Rev. Imitation of Mn. Fonteius	? 353/1	? 85	3.99		P.A.C.
84	Obv. Imitation of C. Norbanus Rev. Imitation of ?	357/1 ?	83 ?	3.96		P.A.C.
85	Obv. Imitation of C. Vibius Pansa Rev. Imitation of C. Norbanus	342/ 357/1	90 83	3.45		A.C.
86	Obv. Imitation of L. Julius Bursio Rev. Imitation of C. Norbanus	352/1 357/1	85 83	3.76		A.C.
87	Imitation of Pub. Crepusius	361/1	82	4.52		A.C.
88	Obv. Imitation of Pub. Crepusius Rev. Imitation of Cr-282/, Various Moneyers	361/1 282/	82 118	4.62		A.C.
89	Obv. Copy of Q. Titius Rev. Copy of C. Mamilius Limetanus	341/2 362/1	90 82	3.89	Dobrudja	A.C.
90	Obv. Imitation of ? Rev. Imitation of C. Mamilius Limetanus	? 362/1	? 82	3.17		A.C.
91	Obv. Imitation of Q. Antonius Balbus Rev. Imitation of L. Censorinus	364/1 363/1	83-2 82	3.77		Lanz 97, 29, 5/00
92	Obv. Imitation of ? Rev. Imitation of A. Postumius Albinus	? 372/2	? 81	4.28	Transylvania	A.C.

93	Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	4.26		P.A.C.
94	Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	3.79		A.C.
95	Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	3.95		A.C.
96	Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	3.75	Near Bucharest	A.C.
97	Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	383/1	79	3.75	Near Bucharest	A.C.
98	Obv. Imitation of L. Thorius Balbus Rev. Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	316/1 383/1	105 79	3.78		P.A.C.
99	Obv. Imitation of C. Norbanus Rev. Imitation of Ti. Claudius Nero	357/1 383/1	83 79	3.76	Near Bucharest	A.C.
100	Imitation of L. Papius	384/1	79	3.70		A.C.
101	Obv. Copy of L. Sulla Rev. Imitation of L. Papius	375/2 384/1	81 79	2.88	Near Bucharest	A.C.
102	Obv. Copy of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi Rev. Imitation of L. Papius	340/1 384/1	90 79	3.53		A.C.
103	Imitation of L. Rutilius Flaccus	387/1	77	3.63		P.A.C.
104	Obv. Imitation of L. Rutilius Flaccus Rev. Imitation of C. Mamilius Limetanus	387/1 362/1	77 82	4.18		A.C.
105	Obv. Imitation of L. Julius Bursio Rev. Imitation of P. Satrienus	352/1 388/1	85 77	3.42		P.A.C.
106	Obv. Imitation of ? Rev. Imitation of P. Satrienus	? 388/1	? 77	3.75		Lanz 109, 30. 5/02
107	Obv. Imitation of L. Farsuleius Mensor Rev. Imitation of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi	392/1 340/1	76 90	4.02		A.C.
108	Obv. Imitation of M. Volteius Rev. Imitation of Q. Titius	385/2 341/	75 90	3.65		A.C.
109	Obv. Imitation of L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi Rev. Imitation of M. Volteius	340/1 385/1	90 75	3.64		P.A.C.
110	Obv. Imitation of Cn. Lentulus Rev. Imitation of M. Volteius	393/1 385/1	76-5 75	3.38		P.A.C.
111	Obv. Imitation of C. Fonteius Rev. Imitation of Q. Cassius Longinus	290/1 386/1	114-13 75	4.26	Near Bucharest	A.C.
112	Obv. Imitation of L. Rustius Rev. Imitation of P. Satrienus	389/1 388/1	74 77	4.06		A.C.
113	Obv. Imitation of M. Baebius Tampilus Rev. Imitation of Q. Fufius Calenus and Mucius Cordus	238/1 403/1	137 68	3.84		A.C.
114	Obv. Imitation of C. Piso Frugi Rev. Imitation of Q. Thermus	408/1 319/1	61 103	3.41		A.C.

115	Obv. Imitation of L. Censorinus Rev. Imitation of M. Junius Brutus	363/1 433/1	82 54	3.42		P.A.C.
116	Imitation of Julius Caesar	443/1	49	3.19		P.A.C.
117	Imitation of C. Considius Paetus	465/1	46	3.73	Dobrudja	A.C.
118	Imitation of P. Clodius Turrinus	494/23	42	3.28	Dobrudja	A.C.
119	Obv. Imitation of P. Clodius Turrinus Rev. Imitation of Julius Caesar	494/23 468/1	42 47	3.42		P.A.C.
120	Obv. Imitation of C. Memmius Rev. Imitation of P. Clodius Turrinus	427/1 494/23	56 42	3.21		P.A.C.

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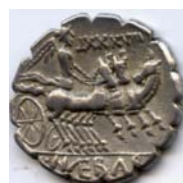
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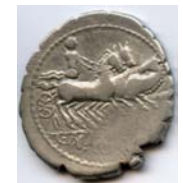
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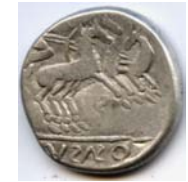
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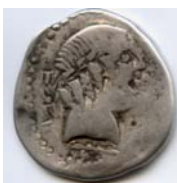
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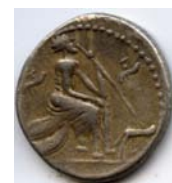
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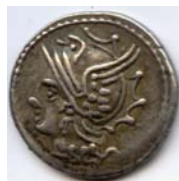
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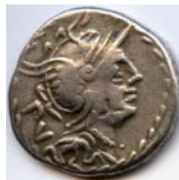
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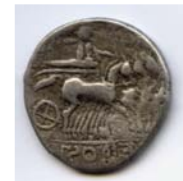
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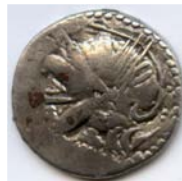
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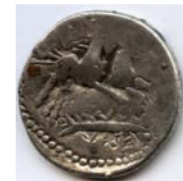
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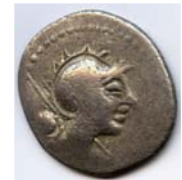
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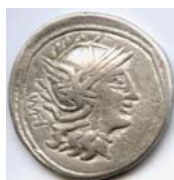
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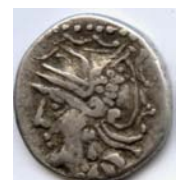
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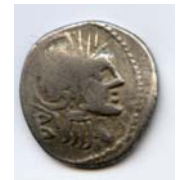
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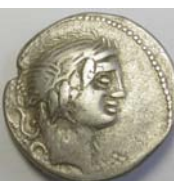
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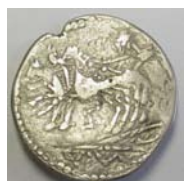
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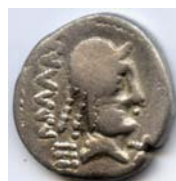
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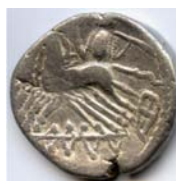
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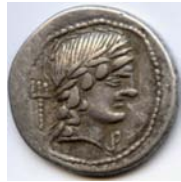
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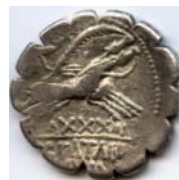
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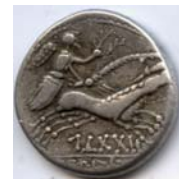
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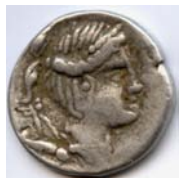
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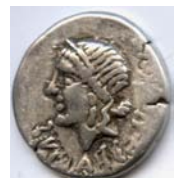
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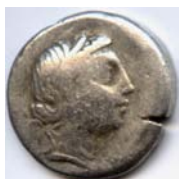
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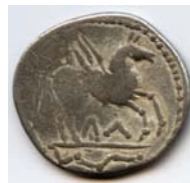
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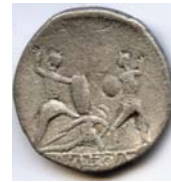
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### IMITAȚII DACICE ALE UNOR DINARI ROMANI REPUBLICANI

#### REZUMAT

Cu 25 de ani în urmă Maria Chițescu publica inovatorul său studiu asupra imitațiilor dacice ale unor dinari romani republicani. Dat fiind faptul că multe alte exemplare similare au apărut în anii care au trecut de atunci, considerăm necesară o nouă analiză a acestor monede. Chestiunea imitațiilor dacice este strâns legată de aspectul general al circulației dinarilor republicani în Dacia. Momentul introducerii dinarilor republicani pe teritoriul Daciei a stârnit foarte multe controverse. În urma unor analize aprofundate ale unor tezaure, K. Lockyear a demonstrat că dinarii republicani au început să sosească în cantități considerabile în Dacia la mijlocul deceniului al șaptelea a. Chr. În aceeași perioadă au apărut și primele imitații dacice ale dinarilor republicani. Propunem cu aproximație două perioade în care cele mai multe imitații au fost puse în circulație: între 80 și 65 a. Chr. și 40-30 a. Chr.

În România au fost găsite numeroase imitații dacice ale dinarilor republicani, aproximativ 25.000 în tezaure publicate și, cu siguranță, extrem de multe în descoperiri nepublicate. Cifra lor o depășește pe cea a imitațiilor descoperite oriunde în afara Italiei. Tezaurele românești conțin atât dinari republicani veritabili cât și imitații locale, iar raportul dintre aceste categorii a stârnit controverse. Într-adevăr, unele dintre monede sunt evident imitații, după cum ne-o dovedește stilul lor diferit de cel roman și legenda falsificată. Marea majoritate a monedelor însă pare să fie produsul monetăriilor romane. Chițescu a susținut că piesele doar *par* a fi veritabile și că de fapt majoritatea dinarilor republicani găsiți în Dacia au fost produși local. Ea prezenta cazul unui tezaur descoperit în cetatea dacică de la Tilișca în 1961, care conținea 14 matrițe, dintre care 10

reprezentau prototipuri republicane, iar celelalte 4 erau rebuturi. Anterior, Chițescu analizase un tezaur de 552 dinari republicani găsit în 1964 la Poroschia, dintre care 49 erau copii locale fidele. Alt tezaur, care subliniază cât de răspândite și de sofisticate erau imitațiile dinarilor republicani, a fost găsit la Breaza, în 1969. O parte dintre monede erau copii turnate, care conțineau inclusiv însemnele unor bancheri.

Chițescu a mai adus un argument considerabil pentru a susține ipoteza că marea majoritate a dinarilor republicani găsiți în România sunt de fapt copii locale. Ea a analizat greutatea și diametrul dinarilor din tezaurele descoperite în România și a constatat că monedele sunt mai mici și mai ușoare decât cele din tezaure din afara României. Chițescu a conchis astfel că tezaurele românești conțineau în mare parte copii locale. Propunem totuși o altă explicație pentru acest fapt. Abilii negustori romani scăpau de dinarii mai mici și mai ușori în schimburile cu barbarii neștiutori. Dacii nu erau atenți la greutatea monedelor pe care le utilizau și acceptau dinari mai ușori, fără a protesta sau chiar fără a observa.

Recent, Lockyear a supus câteva monede din tezaure găsite pe teritoriul României, precum și din muzee din Marea Britanie unei analize de spectrometrie a absorbției atomilor. El a ajuns la concluzia că până la 36 % dintre monedele românești erau copii locale. Consider însă că rezultatele sunt neconcludente, întrucât Lockyear a analizat puține piese din tezaurele din România, iar aproape jumătate dintre acestea proveneau din tezaurele de la Breaza și Poroschia. Ar fi interesant de văzut ce rezultate s-ar obține dintr-o analiză similară făcută pe mai multe monede provenind dintr-un tezaur "tipic" românesc.

La fel de controversat este și motivul pentru care dinarii republicani au fost introduși în număr atât de mare în Dacia. Chițescu și alți cercetători au pus fluxul masiv de dinari pe seama nevoilor economice ale statului lui Burebista. Conducătorul dac avea nevoie de bani pentru a-și alimenta economia și armata. Crawford sugerează însă că ar fi existat un comerț înfloritor cu sclavi între Dacia și Roma și că acestuia i se datorează cantitatea mare de dinari republicani ajunși pe teritoriul Daciei. Considerăm că ambele explicații sunt discutabile, analizarea mai atentă a monedelor, în special a celor care sunt în mod clar copii locale, putând oferi răspunsuri la aceste întrebări spinoase.

Dacă în trecut cercetările numismatice au fost dominate de latura economică, ne propunem o abordare pur numismatică și deci un studiu al monedelor în sine. Unele imitații sunt atât de "barbare" încât le considerăm anomalii care nu au fost produse în Dacia. Pornim de la ipoteza fundamentală că cel care crea copiile locale avea în toate (sau în aproape toate) cazurile un dinar veritabil în față, pe care încerca să îl reproducă. Nu am remarcat să fi existat la monedele dacice un proces de copiere a copiilor și de continuă degradare a calității monedelor, cum s-a întâmplat cu unele copii celtice ale unor monede macedoniene. Dacii care creau imitațiile locale cunoșteau foarte bine dinarii republicani veritabili.

Imitațiile dacice sunt foarte asemănătoare prototipurilor romane, însă ele sunt destul de frecvent imprimate parțial sau nu sunt bătute central. În cazul copiilor, conținutul monedelor (imaginile și inscripțiile) este adesea complex și opac. Mai mult, legenda imitației reproduce perfect legenda monedei veritabile, însă ea este uneori greșit înțeleasă și transpusă. În extremis, unele copii nu au nici o inscripție sau poartă o pseudo-legendă.

O concluzie a analizei noastre este că ipoteza potrivit căreia o mare parte a dinarilor republicani găsiți în România sunt imitații locale este lipsită de fundament. Mult mai normal ni se pare ca aceste monede să fi fost bătute la Roma și să fi ajuns apoi în Dacia. Este posibil ca sub 10 % din monedele din tezaurele găsite în România să fie într-adevăr imitații locale, create pentru a acoperi o lipsă în fluxul de dinari republicani. În opinia noastră, prezența imitațiilor nu dovedește existența unui stat dacic centralizat sub Burebista în care se creau controlat copii ale dinarilor republicani. Copiile erau bătute în mici ateliere disparate și circulau pe o arie extrem de restrânsă, ele neputând constitui fundamentul unor teorii extrem de ample și uneori deplasate. Prin urmare, imitațiile dacice merită a fi studiate "per se", ca un element fascinant și încă prea puțin cunoscut.