

## TWO ROMAN COINS FROM ERZURUM

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### ÖZET

İnceleyeceğimiz iki sikke Erzurum'da Roma dönemine alt az kalıntı bulunması açısından oldukça önemlidir. İlk sikke Roma imparatoru Gordianus III, ikincisi ise, imparator Diocletianus'a aittir.

İmparator Gordianus III İ.S. 225'te doğmuştur. İmparatorlar Balbinus ve Pupianus tarafından "Caesar" ünvanı verilen Gordianus III, Balbinus ve Pupianus'un ölümünden sonra devlet muhafızları tarafından imparator ilan edilmiştir.

İmparatorluğu hakkında Afrika'daki ayaklanma ve Parth seferi gibi birkaç önemli olay dışında az şey bilinen Gordianus III, İ.S.244 yılında Mezopotamya'da Cirsesium yakınlarında ölmüştür.

Diğer İmparator ise, Roma'nın en önemli İmparatorlarından biri olan Diocletianus'tur. İ.S. 236 yılında Dalmasya'da doğan imparator Diocletianus, Numerian'ın ölümünden sonra askerler tarafından imparator ilan edilmiştir. "Tetrarchi" olarak adlandırılan dörtlü yönetimi kuran Diocletianus İ.S.316'da ölmüştür. Diocletianus döneminin en önemli olayı İmparatorun üç etap sonunda gerçekleştirdiği para reformudur. Bu para reformunu sonunda "follis" olarak adlandırılan yeni bir bronz para tedavüle çıkarılmıştır.

Her iki sikkede birim olarak "antoninianustur. İlk olarak imparator Karakalla tarafından İ.S.215'te tedavüle çıkarılan ve bu nedenle imparatorun ismi ile anılan bu para birimi başlangıçta saf gümüş iken sonraları ekonominin bozulması ile içerisindeki gümüş oranı azalmış ve sonunda İkinci sikkede olduğu gibi tamamen bakır sikkeye dönüşmüştür. Antoninianuslarda eğer sikkenin ön yüzünde bir imparator varsa imparatorun başında şua tacı, eğer kadın bulunursa alt kısımda bir hilal betimi yer alırdı.

Sikkelerin arka yüzlerinde yazan AEQVITAS ve CONCORDIA Roma sikkelerinde soyut kavramların insan şeklinde ifade edildiği birer personifikasyondur. Bunlardan AEQVITAS adalet, CONCORDIA ise, uyum anlamına gelmektedir.

Two coins that will be investigated are very important because there are few remains from the Roman Perion in Erzurum.

First coin belongs to emperor Gordianus III (Fig. 1), other coin belongs to emperor Diocletianus (Fig. 2).



Fig.1



Fig.2

Gordianus III (M. Antonius Gordianus) born about AD.225 was the grandson of Gordianus I and the nephew of Gordianus II.<sup>1</sup> He was given the title of “Caesar” by the joint emperors Balbinus and Pupianus and after their murders he was proclaimed “Augustus” by the praetorian guards.<sup>2</sup>

Little is known about his reign, one of the few recorded events of which was a rebellion in Africa.<sup>3</sup> Promptly suppressed in 240 AD. In 242 AD. Gordianus set off for the east to direct the Persian Campaign in person and his first actions were so successful that the enemy were compelled to evacuate Mesopotamia<sup>4</sup> but due to treachery on the part of the troops was undermined and Gordian was deposed and murdered near Circesium in Mesopotamia 244 AD.<sup>5</sup>

Titles and powers of emperor Gordianus from 238 AD. to AD.244.as follows :

Date A.D.	Tribunician Power	Imperial Acclamation	Consulship	Other Titles
238				CAESAR
	TR.P	IMP		AVGVSTVS
239	TR.P - TR.P II		COS	
240	TR.P II-III			PIVS FELIX
241	TR.P III-III		COS II	
242	TR.P IIII-V			
243	TR.P V-VI			
244	TR.P VI-VII			

Gordianus III received the tribunician power and July 238 AD. reverting to the custom of the early emperors received it annually and the date of its first confirmation.<sup>6</sup>

Obverse of this coin emperor Gordianus III bust, radiate and surrounding as legend had been reading **IMP.CAES.M.ANT.GORDIANVS.AVG**, reverse types Aequitas and surrounding reading **AEQVITAS.AVG**.

Second coin belonged to emperor Diocletianus:

One of the most important emperor in Roman Empire Diocletianus was born in Dalmatia about 236 AD.<sup>7</sup> After the death of Numerian he was proclaimed emperor by the troops.<sup>8</sup> He himself made Numerianus as joint emperor too. He instituted an administration of four persons called as tetrarchi. The empire would be administrated by two "augusti" and two "caesar". Constantine and Galerius were appointed as "caesars". The most important event which Diocletianus realized is the reform of coinage. He structed a new bronz coin, called as "Follis". Diocletian died in 316 AD.<sup>9</sup>

The details of Diocletianus reform of the coinage are rather obscure there have been many theories as to it's date and the exact nature of the changes made. It seems probable that the reform wasn't one decisive act but rather a series of changes covering about a decade.

This very important reform had made three step. The first step was taken in ca. 286 AD. with the introduction at aurei struck at 60 to the "libra" of gold an increase in weight of about 12 grains on the earlier coins which were struck at 70 to the libra.<sup>10</sup>

The second step was the introduction of the a silver coin of approximately the same fineness and weight as Hero's denarius.<sup>11</sup> Finally in 295 or 296 AD. a new bronz coin was instituted.<sup>12</sup>

The relative values of the denominations in Diocletianus new monetary system are by no means certain, but there are strong arguments in favour of the following relationship – mint marks were first used about the middle of third century but no begin with the practice was not general and right up to the time of Diocletianus reform the marks themselves are seldom self explanatory<sup>13</sup>

1 AV aureus = 24 AR denarii.

1 AR argenteus = 5AE folis

1AE folis = 5AE denarii

1AE antonianus = 1 past – reform radiate 2AE denarii.

The commonest forms of obverse legend belonged Diocletianus coins:

- |           |           |   |
|-----------|-----------|---|
| <b>A.</b> | <b>A.</b> | <b>IMP.DIOCLETIANVS.AVG</b>             |
| <b>B.</b> | <b>B.</b> | <b>IMP.DIOCLETIANVS.PF. AVG</b>         |
| <b>C.</b> | <b>C.</b> | <b>IMP.C.C.VAL.DIOCLETIANVS.P.F.AVG</b> |

Our coins obverse legend the same as no.C. Reverse legend of this coin had been writing **CONCORDIA MILITVM.**

Not only first coin but also, second coins as unit "Antoninianus". Antoninianus in 215 AD. Caracalla put into circulation a new coin the antoninianus named himself. The coin went from being solid silver (as first coin) plated copper to in the end being a solid copper coin<sup>14</sup> (as second coin). The antoninianus in line with the saying "bad money drives

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and good” was the cause of the denarius being taken out of circulation. On the obverse antoninianus if the design was an emperor then he wore radiate crowns over coins (as obverse types first and second coins). If the design was a lady of the imperial family then there would be a crescent below the bust.<sup>15</sup>

Both AEQVITAS and CONCORDIA as called personification.<sup>16</sup> Aequitas represented fair, dealing equity<sup>17</sup>, concordia represented harmony.<sup>18</sup>

As to transcription of these legends:

Obverse legend on first coin writing :

**IMP.CAES.M.ANT.GORDIANVS.AVG.**

IMP represented commander or general in a military sense, CAES a cognomen of the Julian family ( as in C.Julius Caesar) transferred to Augustus by adoption and also used by the Claudians. Gradually it began to be used as title denoting the heir to the throne CAESAR indicates to caesars.<sup>19</sup> M.ANT.GORDIANVS as Marcus Antonius Gordianus indicated name of emperor. AVG, the first emperor of Rome, Octavian was initially known by the title imperator Caesar, a name inherited from his adoptive father to Caesar in 27 BC. He was given the honorary title Augustus (augustus glorius) as a cognomen and was henceforth known as emperor Caesar Augustus.<sup>20</sup>

As to Diocletianus coin legend, obverse legend of this coin writing :

**IMP.C.C.VAL.DIOCLETIANVS.P.F.AVG.**

IMP meaning of this legend the same as first coins, C. meaning of the same as first coins CAESAR, C.VAL.DIOCLETIANVS, indicated name of emperor, P.F, perpetuus Felix permanent, this legend indicates piety of emperor.<sup>21</sup>

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## CATALOGUE

Technical abbreviations used in the catalogue are as follows :

<b>C.</b>	: Catalogue Number
<b>Obv.</b>	: Obverse
<b>Rev.</b>	: Reverse
<b>AR</b>	: Silver
<b>AE</b>	: Bronze
<b>Emp.</b>	: Emperor
<b>Ant.</b>	: Antoninianus
<b>r.</b>	: Right
<b>l.</b>	: Left
<b>Die Pos</b>	: Die Position
<b>Ref.</b>	: Reference
<b>Fig.</b>	: Figure

**C.1** Fig.1, Gordianus III 238 - 239 AD. Antiochia

Obv. : **IMP.CAES.M.ANT.GORDIANVS. AVG**  
Bust of emp., radiate dropped and cuirassed, r.

Rev. : **AEQVITAS AVG**  
Aequitas standing facing head l., holding scales in r.  
Hand and cornucopiae in l., altar in field l.

AR Ant, 3.51 gr., 21 mm., die pos. 6.

**Ref.** RIC IV, 3, 34, 177.

**C.2** Fig.2, Diocletianus, 284 – 305 AD., Cyzicus

Obv. : **IMP.C.C.VAL.DIOCLETIANVS.P.F.AVG**  
Bust of emp. radiate dropped r.

Rev. : **CONCORDIA MILITVM**  
Emp. Standing on l., receiving victory from Jupiter  
standing on r., each holds sceptre between them.

AE Ant, 20 mm., 4.56 gr., die pos. 12

**Ref.**, RIC V, 2, 253, 306; Tekin, 1994, p. 181, 752, 753.

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## **DİPNOTLAR**

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4. Gibbon, supra n.3, p.214 ; Akşit, supra n.1
5. Akşit, supra n.1, p. 114; Tekin, 1994, p. 62.
6. Akşit, supra n.1, p. 110.
7. Sear, supra n.2, p.290; Tekin, 1994, p. 62.
8. Akşit, supra n.1, p.208.
9. Akşit, supra n.1, p.219 – 221; Tekin, 1994, p. 62.
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13. Sear, supra no.2, p. 290 – 291.
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15. Atlan, supra n.12, p. 22; Tekin, 1994, p. 62; Tekin, Oğuz, Eski Çağda Para (1995) p. 20- 21; Keleş,Vedat, İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri'ndeki Septimius Severus Sikkeleri Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yayınlanmamış Y.L.Tezi (1998) p. 33; Tulay, A.S., Genel Numizmatik Sözlüğü (2001) p. 24.
16. Personification were the representations of abstract concepts in human form Roman coinage of the later republic and empire developed a well defined language for propaganda purposes. This made use of a number of personifications Intended to emphasize the virtues of the emperor and the blessing to be expected from his rule. These figures appear regularly an imperial coins issued at Rome and other mints which issued coins with Latin legends. Jones, J.M., Dictionary of Greek Coin (1964) p. 228; Tulay, supra n.15, p.160.
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18. Klawans, supra n.17, p. 45; Tekin, 1994, p. 52, Tulay, supra n.15, p. 56.
19. Grant, supra no.17, p. 257; Arslan, Melih - Öztürk, Jean, Roman Coins in the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations (1992) p. 150; Keleş, supra, no.15, p. 16.
20. Bosch, E., Eski Sikkeler Rehberi (1951) p. 44; Tekin, 1995, p. 16; Keleş, supra no.15, p. 15.
21. Tulay, supra no.15, p. 164.