

Gaius (Caligula)

Most of the specimens of Gaius (Caligula) in the Capitoline Museums are part of the “sottosuolo urbano” assemblage (see Table 30). In addition to these finds, it was possible to isolate other coins in the collection coming from excavations or randomly found in the city of Rome, for a total of 218 coins, all of bronze. The analysis of these specimens provides interesting evidence on the coin loss in the city of Rome.

Table 30 – Gaius: specimens of the Capitoline Museums

Provenance	No. of items
SSU 2	144
C.A.	16
Excavation	25
C.A. or Excavation	33
Total	218

These coins of Caligula reflect the mint production, where coins of AD 39-40 are scarcer than those of 37-8 and 40-41. “Vesta” asses mostly belong to the AD 37-38 issue and are less common in later years. The number of dated (122)¹²⁷ and undated (96)¹²⁸ specimens does not differ greatly, but the abundant *Agrippa* coinage, which also seems to have had a key role in the coin circulation outside Italy,¹²⁹ outnumbers all the other issues.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Of these only 99 can be assigned to a precise date.

¹²⁸ RIC I² 55 (1); RIC I² 56 (1); RIC I² 57 (4); RIC I² 58 (90).

¹²⁹ RIC I², p. 11 and pp. 104-105.

¹³⁰ On *Agrippa* asses see NICOLS 1974; VON KAENEL 1987, 152; KLEIN-VON KAENEL 1999, 82. These asses are the most common find among the coins of Caligula in Italian sites as well: 404 specimens out

Asses are the most common denomination in the assemblage of the Capitoline Museums, followed by quadrantes, dupondii and sestertii.

Among the dated specimens, AD 37-38 asses are the most numerous, followed by AD 40-41 quadrantes.¹³¹ This trend is also to be observed in the finds from the Tiber¹³² and is probably due to large issues being minted in those years.

The proportion of denominations from other sites within the city of Rome and central Italy is very similar, albeit the actual number of pieces varies greatly (see chart 4).

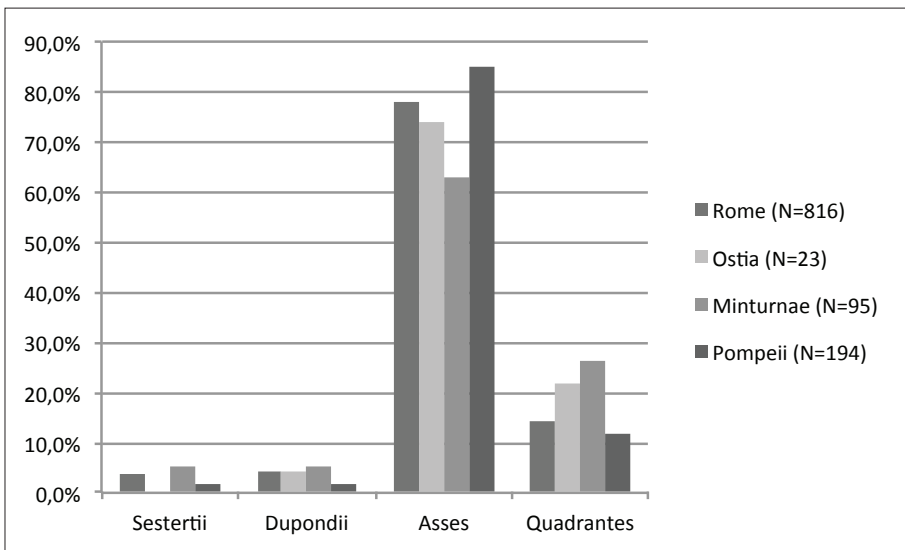


Chart 4 – Gaius: percentage comparison of coin denominations from different sites. The specimens in the Capitoline Museums show a similar percentage compared to those found in the city of Rome; hence, they are here considered together

of 816 (50,7%) from Rome other than the Capitoline Museums: REECE 1982 (with 14 pieces); KOENIG 1988 (with 296 coins); ROVELLI 1985 (1); ROVELLI 1990 (1 specimen); MOLINARI 1995 (2 coins); 10 out of 23 (43,5%) from Ostia (SPAGNOLI 2007); 34 out of 95 (35,8%) from Minturnae (BEN-DOR 1935; FRIER-PARKER 1970; METCALF 1974; HOUGHTALIN 1985; GIOVE 1998); 135 out of 194 (69,6%) from Pompeii (STORIE DA UN'ERUZIONE; TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 2005; RANUCCI 2008; GIOVE 2013; HOBBS 2013; PARDINI TESI).

¹³¹ On Caligula's quadrantes see BARRETT 1998 and WOODS 2010, whose interpretations must be regarded with caution.

¹³² KING 1975, 57, 61-62; KOENIG 1988, 26.

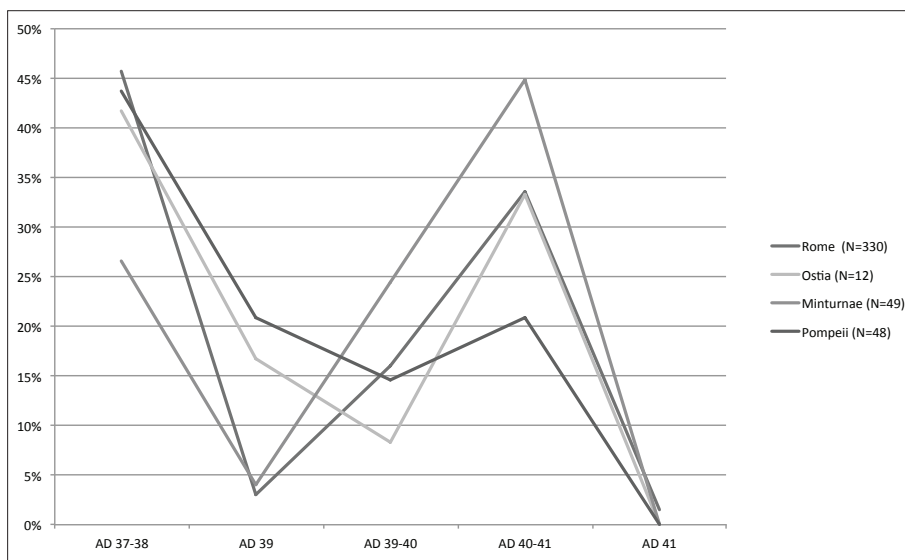


Chart 5 – Gaius: percentage comparison of dated coins from different sites

Table 31 – Gaius: Rome, dated bronze coins

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Qd	RIC I ²
AD 37/38	8	2	141	-	S: 32 (2 Kn), 33 (2Kn), 37 (4Kn); Dp: 34 (2Kn); As: 35 (10+34Kn+1R= 45), 38 (30+62Kn+2M+2R= 96)
AD 39	-	-	-	10	Qd: 39 (2+4Kn+4R= 10)
AD 39/40	6	1	25	21	S: 40 (1), 44 (2Kn), 46 (3Kn); Dp: 42 (1Kn); As: 43 (2+11Kn= 13), 47 (1+11Kn=12); Qd: 45 (13+8Kn= 21)
AD 40/41	3	2	44	62	S: 51 (2Kn), 53 (1); Dp: 49 (2Kn) As: 50 (4+21Kn+1R= 26), 54 (3+2R+13Kn= 18) Qd: 52 (32+24-Kn+3M+3R= 62)
AD 41	-	-	-	5	Qd: RIC I 41 (1+4Kn= 5) ¹
Total	17	5	210	98	330

I Five other pieces have been found in the Tiber; see King 1975, 84

(legenda: without any letter = Capitoline Collection; Kn = KOENIG 1988; M = MOLINARI 1995; R = REECE 1982)

Table 32 – Gaius, Ostia,¹³³ dated bronze coins

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Qd	RIC I ²
AD 37/38	0	0	5	-	As: 35 (3), 38 (2)
AD 39	-	-	-	2	Qd: 39 (2)
AD 39/40	0	0	0	1	Qd: 45 (1)
AD 40/41	0	0	2	2	As: 50 (2); Qd: 52 (2)
AD 41	-	-	-	0	-
Total	0	0	7	5	12

Table 33 – Gaius: Minturnae, dated bronze coins

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Qd	RIC I ²
AD 37/38	2	0	11	-	S: 36 (1BD+ 1FP= 2); As: 35 (1FP), 38 (1BD+4FP+1M+4G= 10)
AD 39	-	-	-	2	Qd: 39 (1M+1G= 2)
AD 39/40	1	0	4	7	S: 40 (1FP= 1); As: 43 (2BD+1FP= 3), 47 (1FP); Qd: 45 (1FP+1M+1H+4G= 7)
AD 40/41	0	2	8	12	Dp: 49 (2FP); As: 50 (5FP+1H= 6), 54 (1FP+1H= 2) Qd: 52 (4FP+2M+5H+1G= 12)
AD 41	-	-	-	0	-
Total	3	2	23	21	49

(legenda: BD = BEN-DOR 1935; FP = FRIER-PARKER 1970; M = METCALF 1974; H = HOUGHTALIN 1985; G = GIOVE 1998)

Table 34 – Gaius: Pompeii,¹³⁴ dated bronze coins

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Qd	RIC I ²
AD 37/38	1	1	19	-	S: 32 (1G); Dp: 34 (1C); As: 35 (1C+2G+1CO+1H= 5), 38 (2TM+8G+1CO+3H= 14)
AD 39	-	-	-	10	Qd: 39 (1C+7G+2H= 10)
AD 39/40	2	0	3	2	S: 46 (1G+1P= 2); As: 43 (1C), 47 (1C+1G= 2); Qd: 45 (1C+1G= 2)
AD 40/41	0	0	3	7	As: 50 (1CO+1TM+1H= 3) Qd: 52 (4C+1R+1G+1H= 7)
AD 41	-	-	-	0	-
Total	3	1	25	19	48

(legenda: CO = CASTIELLO-OLIVIERO 1997; TM = TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 2005; C = CANTILENA 2008; R = RANUCCI 2008; G = GIOVE 2013; H = HOBBS 2013; P = PARDINI TESI)

¹³³ Undated: RIC I² 56 (1); RIC I² 58 (10).

¹³⁴ The coins from the Thermopolium assemblage (CASTIELLO-OLIVIERO 1997 and GIOVE 2013, 203-105) have not been kept separate from the *Regio* I material, due to the small number of dated specimens of Gaius in this find.

These sites also show a similar trend when dated coins are taken into account (see chart 5). Two peaks are in evidence, one in AD 37-38 and one in AD 40-41, even if more or less the whole reign is covered. Their similar behaviour, apart from being possibly influenced by mint output, may also indicate a uniform area of circulation. This becomes clear when looking at the finds from the northern provinces: there are almost no dated coins of Caligula other than the AD 37-38 issues.¹³⁵ It may be the case that these coins reached the northern frontiers during the military campaigns of AD 39-40,¹³⁶ for which perhaps earlier issues were used.¹³⁷

Consequences of Gaius' *damnatio memoriae* have been observed on coins by several scholars.¹³⁸ As far as the material from the Capitoline collection is concerned, there are no clear signs of mutilation of the portrait,¹³⁹ and it is difficult to notice traces of erasures in the legends, because the pieces are often very badly preserved.¹⁴⁰ One specimen from the "sottosuolo" assemblage shows traces of overstriking.¹⁴¹ Countermarked coins of Gaius are often found on the *limes*,¹⁴² whereas only a few asses are known from Rome,¹⁴³ underlining once more a different pattern of circulation between these two areas. In the Capitoline collection there are four countermarked specimens.¹⁴⁴ For two fairly preserved coins (inv. nos 13856, 13866) the provenance is not certain: they could either come from the Stanzani collection or from the Commissione Archeologica assemblage. They both belong to the Agrippa series and bear Claudian countermarks of Germanic origin on the reverse.¹⁴⁵ The other two coins (inv. nos 16921, 16967), an Agrippa as and a dupondius (RIC I² 57),

¹³⁵ See Vindonissa (KRAAY 1962, 109-112); Novaesium (CHANTRAINE 1982, 137-143); Augusta Raurica (PETER 2001, 291); Albaniana (KEMMERS 2004, 22-25); Aventicum (VON KAENEL 1972).

¹³⁶ As a general reference to Caligula's northern military campaigns see BARRETT 1989, 125-139.

¹³⁷ See WIGG 1997 on coin supply to the Roman army in the frontiers. Against the hypothesis of army payments in bronze in the early empire see WOLTERS 2000-2001.

¹³⁸ MARTINI 1980; KOENIG 1988, 32-33; BARRETT 1999; WOLTERS 1999, 144-162; SAVIO 2009, 105-111. According to *Cassius Dio* (60, 22, 3) the bronze coinage was melted down and the metal was used to make statues of Mnester, Messalina's favourite. For a more general discussion of the *damnatio memoriae* on coins see HOSTEIN 2004.

¹³⁹ See WOLTERS 1999, fig. no. 75.

¹⁴⁰ The initial part of the obverse legend may have been erased on the as Musei Capitolini inv. no. 16865 (RIC I² 38).

¹⁴¹ Musei Capitolini inv. no. 16879 (RIC I² 35).

¹⁴² See for example HAHN 1976, 109-112 and KEMMERS 2004, 24.

¹⁴³ Countermarked coins of Caligula were found in the Tiber as well; see KOENIG 1988, 28-30.

¹⁴⁴ Two more coins (Musei Capitolini inv. nos 17589 and 17590) bear the later XLII engraved marks; on the interpretation of this numeral see ASOLATI 2012.

¹⁴⁵ Musei Capitolini inv. no. 13856 "TI CA" (MARTINI 2003, no. 58); inv. no. 13866 "ICIN" var. of "TCINP" ? (GIARD 1970, 56).

come from the “sottosuolo” material and are badly worn out. The first piece bears a non clearly identifiable countermark, while the second one has NCAPR, perhaps of Italic origin.¹⁴⁶ Although the Capitoline collection cannot provide reliable evidence for the circulation of coins of Gaius bearing Germanic countermarks, the finds from the Tiber, where a few specimens have been found,¹⁴⁷ show that they randomly reached Rome.

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¹⁴⁶ “NCAP[R]”; on this countermark see MARTINI 2003, no. 60 and PARDINI 2009; see also Lanna in this volume.

¹⁴⁷ KOENIG 1988, 29-30; two dupondii and one as bear countermarks MARTINI 2003, nos 51 and 54.