

# Nero

The coins regarding emperor Nero's issues<sup>201</sup>, documented as certainly coming from Rome's urban area, amount to 199 specimens, and are distributed, according to their provenance, as follows:

**Table 41 – Nero: specimens of the Capitoline Museums**

Provenance	No. of items
SSU 2	102
C.A.	61
Excavation	28
C.A. or Excavation	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>

According to the denominations, they are distributed as follows:<sup>202</sup> 16 sestertii (8%),<sup>203</sup> 10 dupondii (5%), 119 asses (60%), 15 semisses (7%), 37 quadrantes<sup>204</sup>

<sup>201</sup> Regarding Nero's issues and their distribution, also in a provincial context, see DE LA HOZ MONTOYA 2002, 321-341 and DE LA HOZ MONTOYA 2004, 257-275.

<sup>202</sup> This computation includes 7 coins minted in the Gallic mint of Lugdunum; they amount to 1 sestertius (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 3262), 1 dupondius (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 3287) and 2 asses of AD 66 (Musei Capitolini inv. nos 3270 and 3283) and 3 asses of AD 66-67 (Musei Capitolini inv. nos 14152, 14153 and 14155).

<sup>203</sup> Among the sestertii, a remarking occurrence is that of an *uniface* piece, stroke only on the obverse (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 3266). These coins can be considered as early precursors of the latest medallions with no reverse design (SCHINDEL-WOYTEK 2011, 116-117).

<sup>204</sup> The quadrantes from the area of Rome recorded in the Capitoline collection are distributed as follows: 6 specimens coming from the C.A., 4 from excavation and 27 pieces regarding the findings called "Sottosuolo Urbano 2". However, in his essay on Nero's issues, D.W. MacDowall, analyzing in particular the production of quadrantes (see MACDOWALL 1979, 85), refers to a further core of finds,

(19%) e 2 denarii (1%).<sup>205</sup>

Only Nero's base metal denominations will be considered in this essay. The sample preserved in the Capitoline Museums has been integrated with other findings in base metal from the area of Rome<sup>206</sup> and then compared with the published finds from the sites of Ostia<sup>207</sup>, Minturnae<sup>208</sup>, Pompeii<sup>209</sup> and Paestum.<sup>210</sup> The golden and silver coins and the pieces generally referred to as "large or medium modulus" or "bronze" have been excluded from this lot.

The examined specimens are distributed as in Tables 42-46.

**Table 42 – Nero: finds from Rome**

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Sem	Qd	RIC I <sup>2</sup>
AD 62	-	-	2	-	1	<b>As:</b> 85 (1), 86 (1); <b>Qd:</b> 93 (1)
AD 63	1	1	-	-	-	<b>S:</b> 98 (1); <b>Dp:</b> 109 (1)
AD 64	7	4	3	14	11	<b>S:</b> 130 (1), 137 (2), 143 or 145 or 147 or 149 (1), 164 (1R), 167 (1), 168 (1); <b>Dp:</b> 196 or 198 (1), 198 (1M), 202 (2); <b>As:</b> 205 (1), 210 (1), 213 (1); <b>Sem:</b> 233 (2), 232-234 (1), 240 (1), 241 (1M), 247 (1), 228-247 (2), 228-247 (1), 231 or 233 or 237 or 241 or 243 or 247 (1), 233 or 237 or 243 (1), 233 or 237 or 241 or 243 or 247 (1), 237 or 241 (1), 241 or 246-247 (1) <b>Qd:</b> 253 (1), 255 (2), 253-255 (1R), 258 (3), 260 (4)

called "Tiber", in which he identifies 108 items that he says were kept in the Capitoline Coin Cabinet. Actually, all the items coming from the embankment of the urban stretch of the river are preserved in the Museo Nazionale Romano (see VON KAENEL 1984, 86-90). Therefore, MacDowall must have been deceived in wrongly ascribing this group of coins to the Capitoline collection. Similarly, the data that this scholar reports – regarding both the quadrantes coming from the Tiber, rescued at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and preserved in the Museo Nazionale Romano, and the quadrantes studied by C.E. King (KING 1975, 56-90, in particular 57 and 63-66 with catalogue at 86-87) also coming from the Tiber, but regarding works carried out around the 1960s and called "Rome" – differ from the data reported by King in the recapitulative charts of the materials, in particular Chart 1 (KING 1975, 57) and Chart 3 (KING 1975, 75).

<sup>205</sup> They are two silver coins struck in AD 64-65 (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 17846) and in AD 66-67 (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 3251).

<sup>206</sup> MOLINARI 1995, 123-124 and REECE 1982, 116-145.

<sup>207</sup> SPAGNOLI 2007, 286-288 and 339-342 (catalogue 286-313); out of a global amount of 28 coins, 7 denarii have been excluded.

<sup>208</sup> BEN-DOR 1935, 99; FRIER-PARKER 1970, 96-97 (out of a total amount of 26 published coins, 1 denarius has been excluded); METCALF 1974, 46; HOUGHTALIN 1985, 72; GIOVE 1998, 180-181.

<sup>209</sup> CASTIELLO-OLIVIERO 1997, 134-136; TALIERCIO MENSITIERI 2005, CANTILENA 2008, RANUCCI 2008, 169; GIOVE 2013, HOBBS 2013, 173-174 (an AE unit – RPC I 1273 – has been excluded), PARDINI TESI, 90.

<sup>210</sup> CANTILENA *et alii* 2003, 41.

AD 65	4	2	70	-	23	<b>S:</b> 273 (2), 274 (1R), 275 (1); <b>Dp:</b> 296 (1), 294 or 297 (1); <b>As:</b> 300 (1+1R=2), 306 (19+2M=21), 307 (2), 309 (4), 310 (1), 312 (32), 313 (5), 312 or 313 (1R), 314 (1), 306 or 347 (1); <b>Qd:</b> 317 (6), 317-318 (6), 317-318 var. (1), 319 (4), 320 (1), 319-320 (4), 322 (1)
AD 66	-	4	24	-	-	<b>Dp:</b> 341 (1), 345 (1), 517 (1), 522 (1); <b>As:</b> 347 (3), 348 (2), 349 (4), 351 (10), 352 (2), 351 or 368 (1), 532 or 533 or 535 (1), 543 (1)
AD 67	-	-	4	-	-	<b>As:</b> 368 (4)
AD 62-68	6	1	21	2	3	<b>S:</b> Janus type (1), Roma type (1+1Z = 2), illegible (3); <b>Dp:</b> nc (1); <b>As:</b> 543 or 605 (2), 544 or 606 (1), Victory with shield type (8), Janus type (1), illegible (8+1R=9); <b>Sem:</b> Roma type (1), Table type (1); <b>Qd:</b> Branch / Owl type (1), R/Branch type (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>208</b>

(legenda: without any letter from Capitoline Collection; R = REECE 1982; M = MOLINARI 1995; Z = ZAHLE 2008)

Table 43 – Nero: finds from Ostia

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Sem	Qd	RIC P
AD 64	1	-	-	1	1	<b>S:</b> 137 (1); <b>Sem:</b> 234 (1); <b>Qd:</b> 255 (1)
AD 65	1	-	5	-	2	<b>S:</b> 279 (1); <b>As:</b> 306 (1), 312 (4); <b>Qd:</b> 317 (2)
AD 66	-	-	2	-	-	<b>As:</b> 351 (2)
AD 62-68	1	-	5	2	-	<b>S:</b> illegible (1); <b>As:</b> 352 or 368 (1), AD 65-67 Janus type (1), AD 66-68 Victory with shield type (1), illegible (2); <b>Sem:</b> AD 64-66 (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>21</b>

Table 44 – Nero: finds from Minturnae

Chronology	S	Dp	As	Sem	Qd	RIC P
AD 64	1	1	-	3	1	<b>S:</b> 139 (1BD); <b>Dp:</b> 196 (1FP); <b>Sem:</b> 243 (1G), 247 (2G); <b>Qd:</b> 258 (1FP)
AD 65	1	5	20	-	5	<b>S:</b> 266 (1FP); <b>Dp:</b> 283 (2M), 285 (1H), 292 (1BD), 292 var. (1H); <b>As:</b> 300 (1G), 300 var. (1H), 300 or 306 (1G), 300 ff. (1G), 306 (1BD+1FP+1G=3), 309 (2FP), 312 (5FP+1H+2G=8), 312-313 var. (1FP+1M=2), 316 (1M) <b>Qd:</b> 317 (2G), 319 (2H), 322 (1M)
AD 66	2	1	6	-	-	<b>S:</b> 329 (1FP), 491 (1M); <b>Dp:</b> 519 var. (1FP); <b>As:</b> 347 (1FP), 348 (1H), 351 (2G), 352 (2FP);
AD 67	-	-	2	-	-	<b>As:</b> 368 (1FP+1G=2)

<b>AD 62-68</b>	-	1	7	-	1	<b>Dp:</b> Roma type (1FP); <b>As:</b> 313 or 352 (1FP), Janus type (4FP), illegible (2G); <b>Qd:</b> Owl type (1FP)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>57</b>

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

**Table 45 – Nero: finds from Pompeii<sup>211</sup>**

<b>Chronology</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Dp</b>	<b>As</b>	<b>Sem</b>	<b>Qd</b>	<b>RIC P<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>AD 62</b>	/	/	1	-	1	<b>As:</b> 85 (1G); <b>Qd:</b> 93 (1C)
<b>AD 63</b>	-	-	-	/	2	<b>Qd:</b> 126-128 (1G), 129 (1G)
<b>AD 64</b>	9	10	1	4	11	<b>S:</b> 135 (1C), 139 (1G), 143 (3G), 149 (1TM), 167 (1G), 170 (1G), 181 or 183 (1CO) <b>Dp:</b> 184 (1G), 185 (1G), 190 (2G), 192 (1G), 193 (1G), 196 (2G), 197 (1C), 203 (1G); <b>As:</b> 213-220 (1G); <b>Sem:</b> 228 (1G), 240 (1G), 241 (1G), 243 (1G); <b>Qd:</b> 249-250 (1G), 252 (3G), 254 (1G), 255 (1G), 251-256 (1TM), 258 (1C), 257-258 (1P), 262 (2G)
<b>AD 65</b>	20	13	105	-	1	<b>S:</b> 265 (3G), 266 (1CO+1G = 2), 267 (1G), 273 (1CO+1TM = 2), 274 (1G), 275 (2G), 276 (1TM), 279-282 (1TM), 441 (3G), 442 (1G), 443 (2G), AD 65: (1C) <b>Dp:</b> 283 (1G), 285 (1G), 287 (1G), 289 (1TM), 290 (1G), 292 (1G), 295 (1H), 296 (2G), 297 (1G), 445 (2G), 446 (1G) <b>As:</b> 300 (19G), 301 (5G), 304 (2C+3G = 5), 306 (2TM+2C+6G = 10), 304 or 306 (1G), 306-307 (1G), 306 ff. (2G), 312 (1TM+3C+46G = 50), 313 (1TM+7G = 8), 314 (1G), 312 or 314 (1TM), 312-316 (1TM), 471 (1G) <b>Qd:</b> 320 (1G)
<b>AD 66</b>	5	4	113	/	/	<b>S:</b> 323 (2G), 324 (1C), 329 (2G); <b>Dp:</b> 344 (2G), 519 (1G), 523 (1CO) <b>As:</b> 347 (1TM+1C+13G = 15), 348 (1CO+2G = 3), 347 ff. (15G), 351 (2CO+2C+48G+2H = 54), 352 (4C+13G = 17), 538 var. (1C), 540 (1G), 543 (4G), 544 (2G), Victory with shield type (1CO)
<b>AD 67</b>	3	2	5	/	/	<b>S:</b> see 356 (1C), 570 (1G), 590 (1G); <b>Dp:</b> 363 (1G), 601 (1R); <b>As:</b> 366 (1G), 368 (4G)

<sup>211</sup> 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 Nero's coins in this find.

AD 62-68	14	7	33	-	2	<b>S:</b> 95 ff. (1G), 162 or 177 (1CO), 390 ff. (1TM), Ostia type (3C), illegibile (4TM+2C+2G = 8); <b>Dp:</b> AD 66-67, Roma type (1CO), illegibile (6TM); <b>As:</b> 300 ff. (1TM+1G = 2), 304 ff. (1G), 304 or 352 (1C), 347 or 367 (1G), 351 or 368 (1G), AD 65-66 (3G), Victory with shield type (1TM+1C = 2), illegibile (7TM+6C+9G = 22); <b>Qd:</b> illegibile (1TM+1G = 2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>366</b>

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

Table 46 – Nero: finds from Paestum

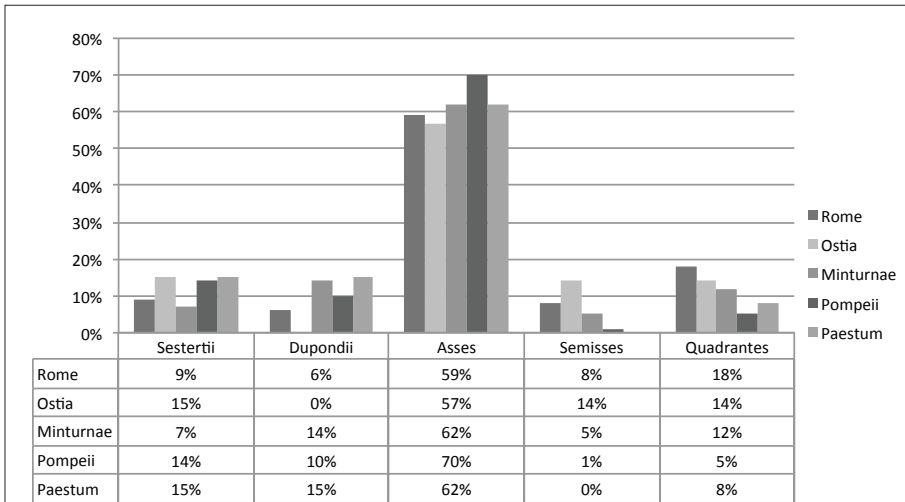
Chronology	S	Dp	As	Sem	Qd	RIC P <sup>2</sup>
AD 63	-	1	-	-	-	<b>Dp:</b> 114 (1)
AD 64	-	-	-	-	1	<b>Qd:</b> 258 (1)
AD 65	1	-	4	-	-	<b>S:</b> 277 (1); <b>As:</b> 306 (2), 312 (2);
AD 66	1	1	4	-	-	<b>S:</b> 323 (1); <b>Dp:</b> 522 (1); <b>As:</b> 347 (1), 352 (2); 543 (1)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>

Firstly, one has to remark that the chronology of Nero's bronze issues is confirmed by a votive foundation deposit from Pompeii, found in *Insula VIII, 7, 1-2*<sup>212</sup>, probably dating back to AD 63 or after Pompeii's AD 62 earthquake. In fact the most recent coins, among the 13 it contained, date back to AD 41 or 42-43.<sup>213</sup>

Secondly a preliminary examination has evidenced in all sites a massive presence of asses, the most represented denomination. Dupondii and semisses are, in general, the less represented denominations and, at Ostia (dupondii) and in Paestum (semi-sses), they are even lacking.

<sup>212</sup> See PARDINI TESI, 183.

<sup>213</sup> And not AD 41-50 or AD 41-54, as in PARDINI TESI, 183.



	Sestertii	Dupondii	Asses	Semisses	Quadrantes
Roma	18	12	124	16	38
Ostia	3	-	12	3	3
Minturnae	4	8	35	3	7
Pompeii	51	36	258	4	17
Paestum	2	2	8	-	1

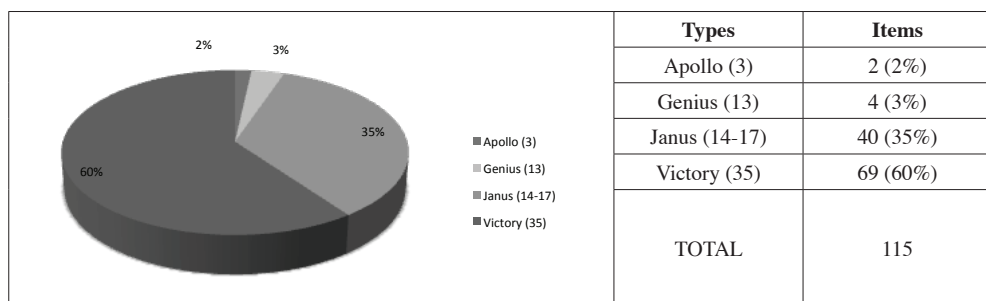
**Chart 9 – Nero: comparison of the denominations by find's site**

The overall picture outlined by the examination of the most frequently occurring types among the coins found in Rome is therefore not surprising; in particular, the types appearing on the asses, which is the most numerous denomination, are distributed as in chart 10:<sup>214</sup>

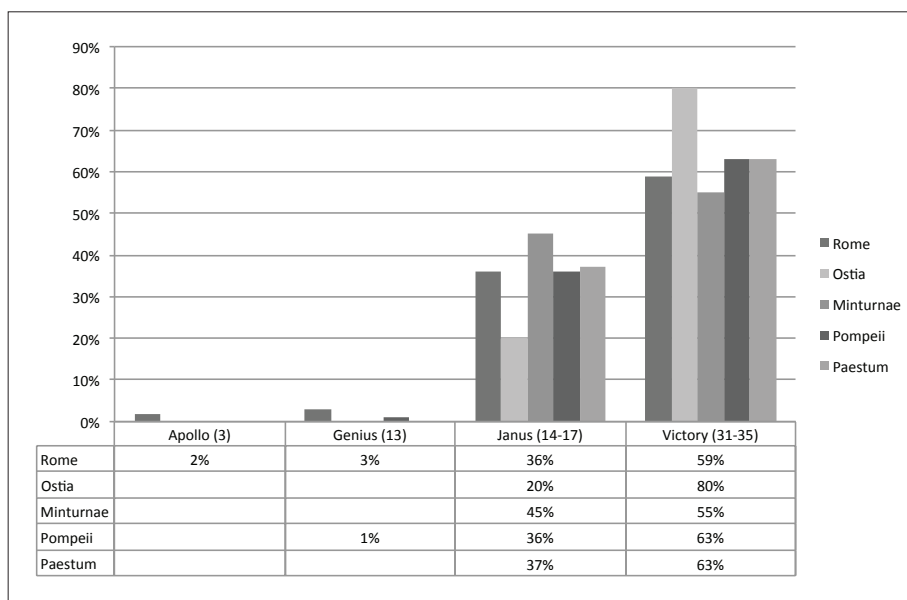
Such representations are actually the most recurrent also in the sites considered for the comparisons (chart 11) and they also reflect the frequency with which such pieces entered circulation, in particular from the 4<sup>th</sup> (AD 65) to the 6<sup>th</sup> issue (AD 67), for the mint of Rome.<sup>215</sup>

<sup>214</sup> The number in brackets next to the type indicates the number under which the types are classified in RIC I<sup>2</sup>, 156-157; such a computation does not include illegible items; Rome: out of a global amount of 124 asses, 9 asses have been excluded (Total = 115); Ostia: out of a global amount of 12 asses, 2 nc asses have been excluded (Total = 10); Minturnae: out of a global amount of 35 asses, 2 nc asses have been excluded (Total = 33); Pompeii: out of a global amount of 258 asses, 25 nc asses have been excluded (Total = 233); Paestum: all the 8 asses have been taken into account.

<sup>215</sup> The only mint considered in this short contribution: see *supra*.



**Chart 10- Nero: asses found in Rome, comparison by reverse type**



	Apollo (3)	Genius (13)	Janus (14-17)	Victory (31-35)
Rome	2	4	40	69
Ostia	-	-	2	8
Minturnae	-	-	15	18
Pompeii	-	2	84	147
Paestum	-	-	3	5

**Chart 11 – Nero: asses, comparison by sites and reverse type**

## THE NCAPR COUNTERMARK

When analyzing the age of Nero, however, the pieces with the NCAPR countermark have to be considered: the stamping of this countermark on bronze pieces of the early imperial age is usually referred to the age of emperor Claudius or to Nero's early reign, as substantiated by a find in the layers of the *Meta Sudans* belonging to a period earlier than AD 64-68.<sup>216</sup> In particular, in the Capitoline collections, these are coins of Tiberius (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 3164, inv. no. 13908 and inv. no. 13948) and Claudius (Musei Capitolini inv. no. 3220, no. 13967, inv. no. 13978, inv. no. 13979, inv. no. 13981, inv. no. 14011, inv. no. 14019 and inv. no. 17542). Recently, Rodolfo Martini, on the basis of his examination of a countermarked coin of the Flavian period in the Pangerl collection<sup>217</sup>, has put forward a new dating. Moreover, Martini suggested to read the letters NCAPR as “N(*ummu*?) C(*aesare*?) A(*ugusto*?) PR(*obatus*?)”, explaining the stamping of the countermark as a general form of control of the metal's quality by the issuing authority<sup>218</sup>. In the past, Kraay<sup>219</sup> had already examined a countermarked dupondius of Vespasian struck by the mint of Lugdunum in AD 72. However, the scholar also stated that this piece had been overstruck on a coin already bearing the NCAPR countermark.<sup>220</sup> Consequently, should the dupondius in the Pangerl Collection be authentic, it would be the first known Flavian piece bearing this countermark. Moreover, such a countermark would not be necessarily connected with a definite historical moment (the *Congiarium* of AD 57 or the monetary system reform of AD 63-64)<sup>221</sup> and with an official authority of Rome's mint, but it could have been applied in different occasions.

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<sup>216</sup> See PARDINI 2009, 244 and 233-260 for an updated bibliography.

<sup>217</sup> MARTINI 2003, 121 n. 60h; Pangerl Collection, Vespasian, dupondius minted at Lugdunum in AD 71.

<sup>218</sup> MARTINI 2003, 117-119.

<sup>219</sup> KRAAY 1956, 6.

<sup>220</sup> See also BLÁZQUEZ CERRATO 2002, 304.

<sup>221</sup> According to PARDINI 2009, 252: the countermark would have been stamped either “in un momento in cui a Roma non si conia più l'*aes* ormai dalla morte di Claudio [sic!]” or during “la riforma del 63-64”.