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## **Copies of ancient coins and inventions *all'antica* in the work of Jacopo Strada**

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# Copies of Ancient Coins and Inventions *all'antica* in the Work of Jacopo Strada\*

Volker Heenes

In memory of my friend and  
colleague Michael Matzke

**Zusammenfassung:** Jacopo Strada betont in seinem Werk *Epitome Thesauri antiquitatum* (Lyon 1553), dass man »die Münzen gut kennen müsse, um echte von zeitgenössischen Nachahmungen zu unterscheiden« (i.e. die Paduaner). Dies gelingt ihm selbst aber auch nicht immer. So finden sich in seinem Münzcorpus mit über 8.000 Münzen, dem *Magnum ac Novum Opus*, zahlreiche Nachahmungen antiker Münzen aus dem 16. Jahrhundert.

Diese finden sich aber nicht nur im Werk Stradas, sondern ebenfalls in den Werken anderer zeitgenössischer Antiquare, wie Enea Vico, Pirro Ligorio und Hubertus Goltzius. Darüber hinaus schafft Strada auch »neue« Münzen, die er in seinem Münzcorpus abbildet und denen er durch seine Münzbeschreibungen in der *Diaskeuè* eine vermeintlich gesicherte Authentizität verschafft.

In dem Beitrag werden einige dieser »neuen« Münzen und Paduaner vorgestellt, zugrundeliegende Quellen aufgezeigt und ihre Rezeption durch Zeitgenossen dokumentiert. Dadurch ergeben sich neue Einblicke in die Arbeits- und Vorgehensweise renaissancezeitlicher Antiquare.

**Schlagwörter:** Jacopo Strada <http://d-nb.info/gnd/118834320>, Giovanni da Cavino <http://d-nb.info/gnd/122755413>, Geschichte der Numismatik, Nachahmungen von Münzen, Antiquare der Renaissance

**Abstract:** In his work *Epitome Thesauri antiquitatum* (Lyon 1553), Strada emphasised the importance of thorough numismatic knowledge to distinguish original coins from modern imitations (i.e. »Paduans«). Nonetheless, he was often mistaken and his corpus of over 8,000 coins, the *Magnum ac Novum Opus*, includes numerous sixteenth-century imitations of ancient coins.

These imitations were also depicted in the works of his contemporaries, e.g. the antiquarians Enea Vico, Pirro Ligorio and Hubertus Goltzius. Strada also created »new« coins illustrated in the *MaNO* and seemingly authenticated by descriptions in the *Diaskeuè*.

My contribution presents a number of »new« coins and Paduans together with essential source material and their reception by Strada's contemporaries. Thereby, in-depth insight into methodology and approach of renaissance antiquarians is provided.

**Key Words:** Jacopo Strada, Giovanni da Cavino, history of numismatics, coin imitations, renaissance antiquarians.

Jacopo Strada (**fig. 1**) was born in Mantua (b. 1505–1515, d. 1588 in Vienna) as the son of aristocratic parents<sup>1</sup>. In Mantua, he was trained as goldsmith and painter and belonged to the circle of Giulio Romano<sup>2</sup>. His main interest lay in the field of ancient numismatics<sup>3</sup>. Giulio Romano owned a considerable coin collection stored in his house in Mantua which Strada frequently visited<sup>4</sup>. Back in the 1530s, Strada

\* My contribution was originally to be presented under the same title on 2 April 2020 at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in Philadelphia as part of the session »Renaissance Numismatics, Medals and Exonumia« which had to be cancelled due to the corona crisis.

<sup>1</sup> On Strada's date of birth, see Heenes 2010, pp. 296–297, note 4. Most recently and comprehensively, Jansen 2019, p. 48 on Strada's life and work.

<sup>2</sup> Jansen 2014, pp. 155–172; Jansen 2019, pp. 57–60.

<sup>3</sup> Weskie – Frosien-Leinz 1987, p. 35 with note 53.

<sup>4</sup> Jansen 2019, pp. 60–61.





Fig. 1: Titian, portrait of Jacopo Strada (KHM Wien)

sought to contact Roman antiquarians and collectors. Even then, he started to document inscriptions and coins.

By the 1540s, Strada must have had acquired a certain renown as an expert in antiquities, since from 1544 he worked as antiquarian for Johann Jakob Fugger (1516–1575). In 1546, he

temporarily settled in Nuremberg, working as painter and goldsmith. During this period, he started to collect material for his future numismatic writings. Fugger sponsored his studies by granting him funds for his journeys to France and Italy, where he visited coin collections and exchanged ideas with fellow antiquarians. In





Fig. 2: Title page of the *Epitome* (HAB Wolfenbüttel)

1553, before leaving for Rome to spend two years as Fugger's antiquities' scout, he published in Lyon the only printed book he ever authored.

This book was the *Epitome Thesauri Antiquitatum, hoc est Imp. Rom. Orientalium et Occidentalium Iconum, ex antiquis Numismatibus quàm fidelissimè deliniatarum. Ex Musaeo*

*Jacobi de Strada Mantuani Antiquarij (Epitome)* (fig. 2)<sup>5</sup>. The *Epitome* is a book of biographies

<sup>5</sup> Translation: Excerpt from the treasure of antiquities, i.e. the images of Roman emperors, eastern and western, drawn as faithfully as possible from ancient coins. From the museum of Jacopo da Strada, Mantuan Antiquarian.



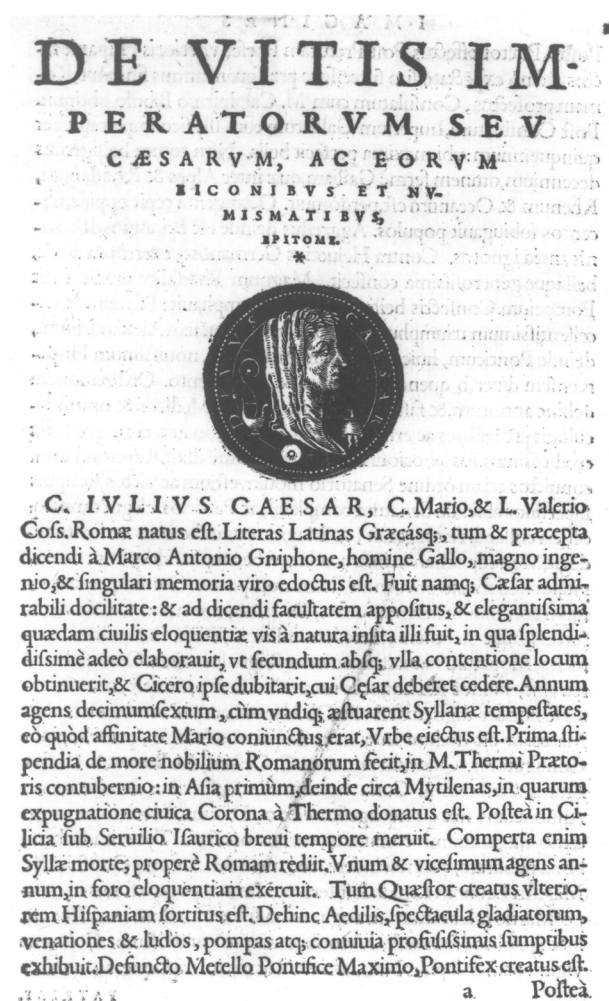


Fig. 3: Coin portrait of Caesar, *Epitome*, p. 1 (HAB Wolfenbüttel)

enriched with portraits of the Roman emperors from Julius Caesar to Charles V, including their relatives (fig. 3)<sup>6</sup>.

In addition, the *Epitome* contains short descriptions of several coin reverses<sup>7</sup>. These reverses remained without illustrations, since the conversion into woodcuts would have required a considerable amount of time and technical effort<sup>8</sup>. Strada took many of these reverse motifs<sup>9</sup> from the illustrations of his *MAGNUM AC NOVUM OPUS Continens descriptionem Vitæ imaginum, numismatum omnium tam Orientalium quam Occidentalium Imperatorum ac Tyrannorum, cum collegis coniugibus liberisque suis, usque ad Carolu(m) V. Imperatorem. A Iacobo de Strada Mantuano elaboratum. TOMUS PRIMUS. ANNO DOMINI MDL* (MaNO) (fig. 4)<sup>10</sup>. This thirty-volume

work is the subject of our research project at the Forschungszentrum Gotha<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Strada used the woodcuts of the emperors and their relatives once more in the *Fasti et triumphii*; Dekesel 1993, p. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Heenes 2003, p. 21; Peter 2016, p. 167.

<sup>8</sup> Lemburg-Ruppelt 2000, p. 115.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.; e.g. *Epitome*, pp. 13–14: temple of Janus Quadrifrons from *MaNO 4, fol. 237r*; p. 18: The mausoleum of Augustus, from *MaNO 5, fol. 213r* or pp. 62–63: the Palatium Nervæ from *MaNO 14, fol. 24r*. However, no genuine coins can be linked to the drawings mentioned.

<sup>10</sup> Translation: Important and new work, containing the description of the life, the images and of all coins of both the Western and Eastern emperors and of the tyrants (usurpers), with their co-regents, wives and children, up to Emperor Charles V. Elaborated by Jacobo de Strada from Mantua. First volume, 1550.

<sup>11</sup> DFG-Projekt [Jacopo Strada's Magnum ac Novum Opus: A Sixteenth-Century Numismatic Corpus](#).





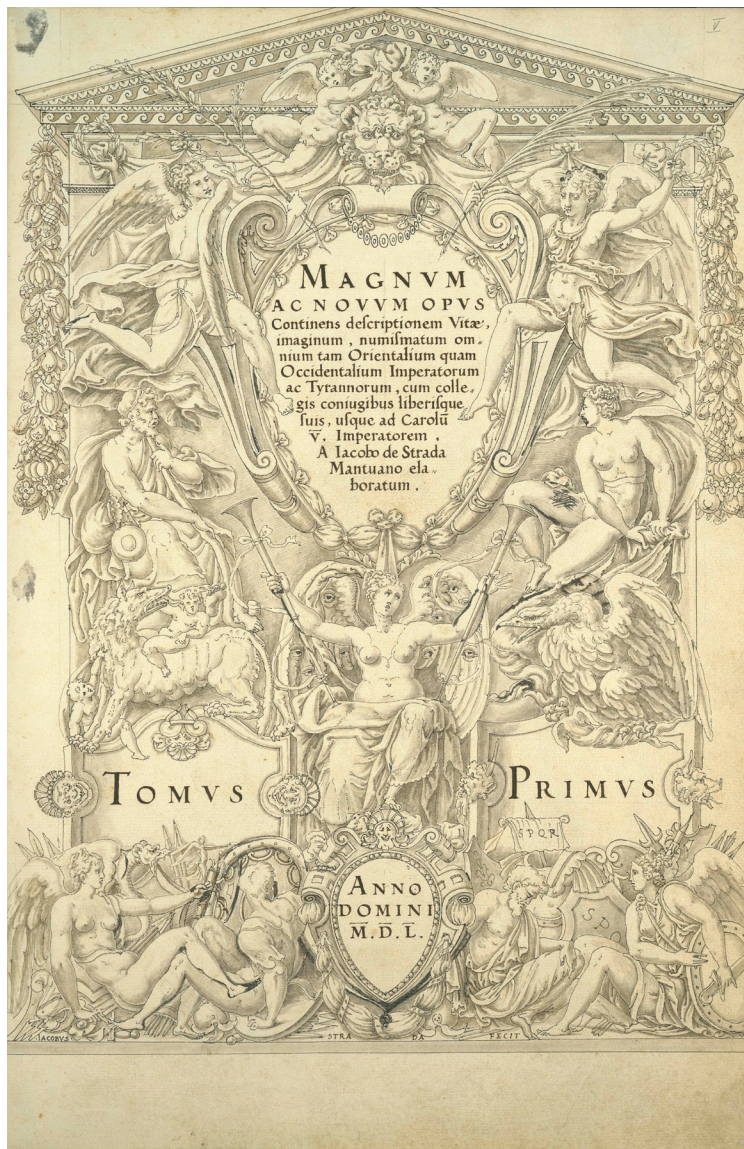


Fig. 4: Frontispiece of the *MaNO* 1 (FB Gotha)

The descriptions in the *Epitome* are so precise that the coins and contorniates mentioned can be identified<sup>12</sup>. Strada was the first to publish descriptions of coin reverses and thus made a considerable contribution to sixteenth-century numismatic research<sup>13</sup>. In addition, his comments provide information on many aspects of numismatics and antiquarian research: i.e. religion, ceremonies, architecture and Roman society. Strada's research on ancient monuments was based on the concept of the division of *antiquitates* into *sacrae*, *publicae*, *privatae* and *militares* as established by Marcus Terentius Varro<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. *Epitome*, p. 27: an aureus of Claudius with the Aqua Claudia (really the praetorian camp), [RIC I \(2\) Claudius 7](#); p. 56: a sesterce of Titus with the Colosseum, [RIC II,1 \(2\) Titus 185](#); p. 66: a sesterce of Trajan with the Circus Maximus, [RIC II,2 Trajan 571/MIR 175a](#); pp. 102–103: Ritus Ludorum Secularum Templum duobus colonis insistentis, [RIC IV Geta 132](#); p. 111: a contorniate of Elagabalus with the Temple of Sol Invictus, Gnecci 1912, vol. 3 p. 40 no. 6; p. 114: a denarius of Alexander Severus with the restored Colosseum, [RIC IV Alexander Severus 33](#); p. 129: a contorniate of Philippus Arabus with an amphitheatre (Colosseum), Gnecci 1912, vol. 2 p. 99, no. 12; p. 134: a sesterce of Vibius Trebonianus Gallus with the Temple of Juno Martialis, [RIC IV Trebonianus Gallus 54](#).

<sup>13</sup> Lemburg-Ruppelt 2000, p. 115.

<sup>14</sup> Heenes 2003, p. 21. On Varro's system, see Momigliano 1950, p. 289.



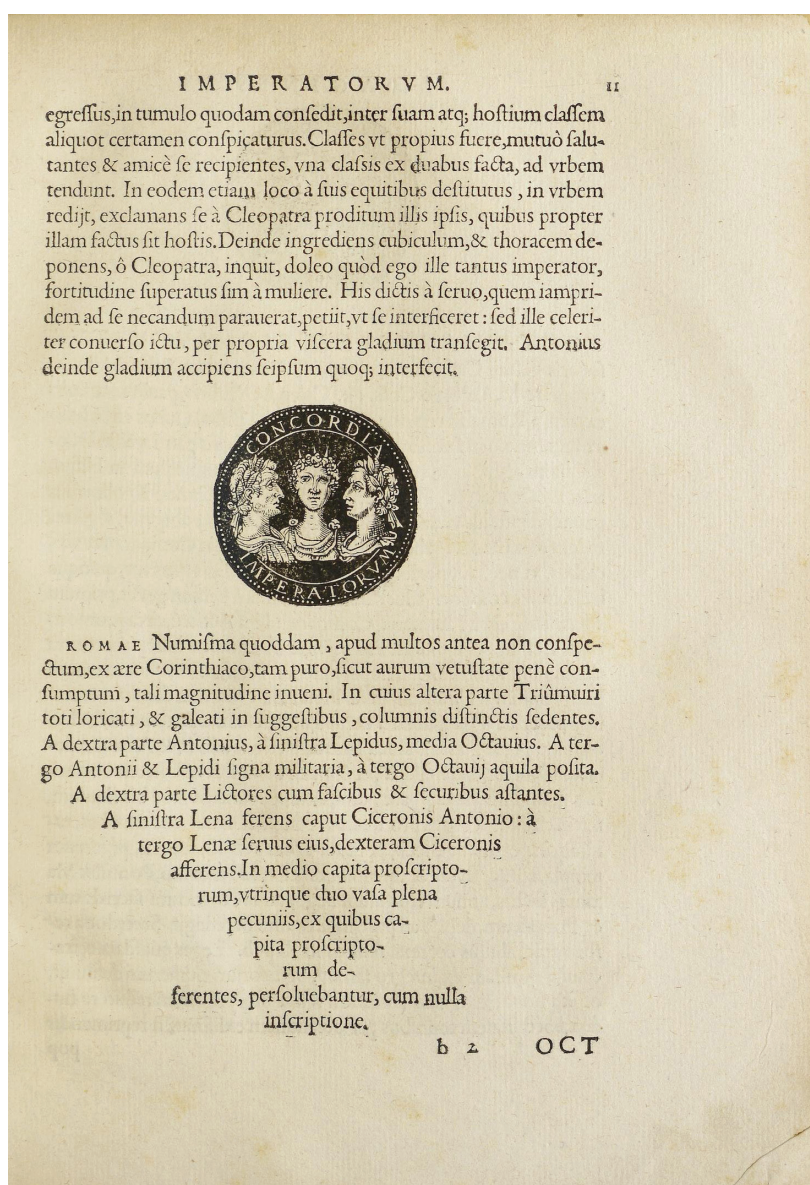


Fig. 5: Coin with the triumviri, *Epitome*, p. 11 (HAB Wolfenbüttel)

In the preface of the *Epitome* he wrote about the importance of in-depth knowledge of the coins to be able to distinguish genuine exemplars from contemporary imitations/fantasies<sup>15</sup>. He said that, in his days, coins existed that were made by »engravers who are as brilliant as they are excellent, [so] that they are comparable to the ancients, and who are too well-known to be named here. Therefore, one must take the greatest care to select the coins which have just been made in bas-relief by the [masters] who are particularly experienced, for their beauty and elegance«<sup>16</sup>. The names of these engravers

can be found in Enea Vico's *Discorsi sopra le medaglie*<sup>17</sup>: Giovanni da Cavino and his son; Vettore Gambello, Benvenuto Cellini, Alessandro Cesati called Greco, Leone Leoni from Arezzo, Iacopo da Trezzo and Federico Bonzagna from Parma. At the time, Federico Bonzagna was considered the most talented of these modern engravers<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> On the difference between the terms »imitations« and »fantasies«, see de Callatay 2014, pp. 269–291.

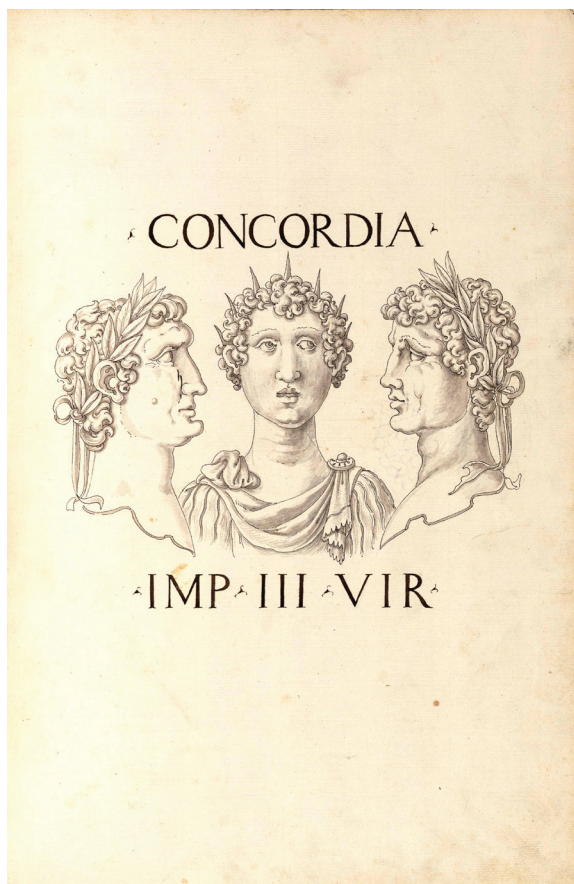
<sup>16</sup> *Epitome*, p. A 4r.

<sup>17</sup> *Discorsi*, p. 67; Missere 2013, p. 279; Matzke 2018, p. 98.

<sup>18</sup> Missere 2013, p. 280.







Figs 6a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 2, fols 3r–4r (FB Gotha)

Nonetheless, as will be shown below, even Strada did not always succeed in distinguishing modern creations from original ancient coins. He was also not averse to inventing coin motifs that he then included in his numismatic works. Here, I present three examples of illustrations from volumes 1 to 14 of the *MaNO*<sup>19</sup>.

### Strada's Creative Numismatics

The first example is a rather visually expressive coin, depicting the murder of Cicero. It is described in the *Epitome*, in which only its obverse is illustrated (fig. 5). Obverse and reverse are shown on a drawing in the *MaNO* (figs 6a and b)<sup>20</sup> and described in the *A<ureorum> A<rgenteorum> A<ereorum> NumismatΩn Antiquorum: ΔΙΑΣΚΕΥΗ. Hoc est, Chaldaeorum, Arabum, Libycorum, Græcorum, Hetruscorum, ac Macedoniae, Asiae, Syriae, Ægypti, Syculorum, Latinorum, seu Romanorum Regum, a*

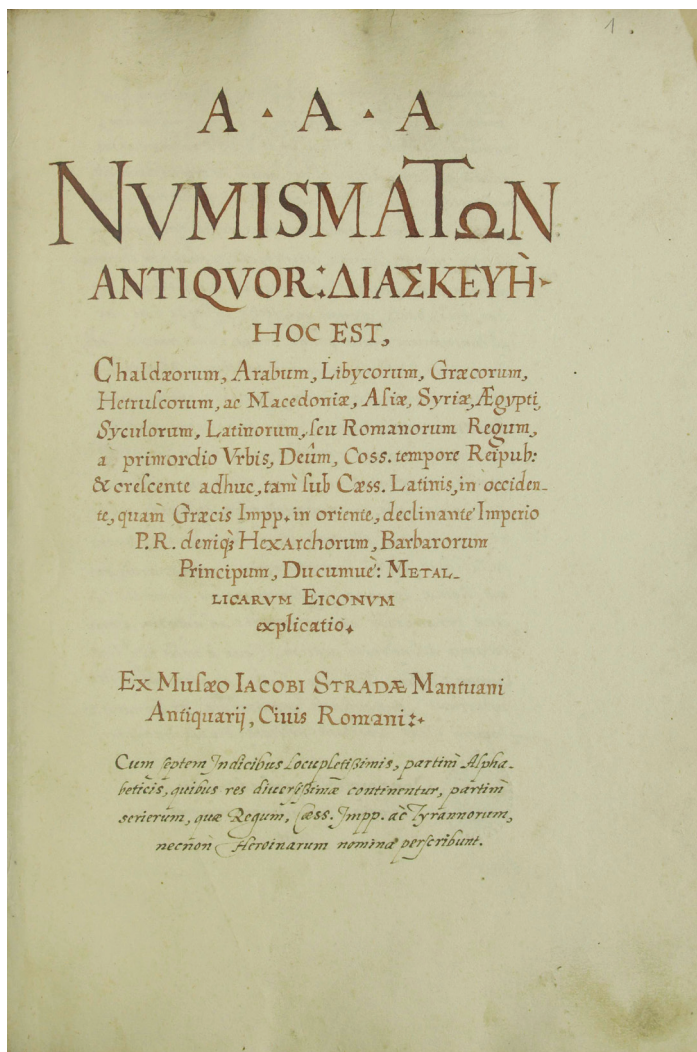
*primordio Urbis, Deûm, Coss. tempore Reipub: & crescente adhuc, tam sub Cæss. Latinis, in occidente, quam Græcis Imp. in oriente, declinante Imperio P.R. denique Hexarchorum, Barbarorum Principum, Ducumuè: METALLICARUM EICONUM explicatio. Ex Musæo IACOBI STRADÆ Mantuani Antiquarij, Civis Romani: Cum septem Indicibus Locupletissimis, partim Alphabeticis, quibus res diuersissimæ continentur, partim serierum, quæ Regum, Cæss. Imp. ac Tyrannorum, necnon Heroinarum nomina perscribunt (Diaskeuè) (fig. 7)*<sup>21</sup>. This eleven-

<sup>19</sup> Out of 3,764 drawings from the first 14 *MaNO* volumes, examined up to now, about two thirds could be matched with ancient models. About 18 Paduans have so far been identified.

<sup>20</sup> *MaNO* 2, fols 3r–4r.

<sup>21</sup> Translation: Description of ancient gold, silver and bronze coins, i.e. explanation of the coin images of the



Fig. 7: Frontispiece of the *Diaskeuê* 1 (UB Wien)

Figs 8a and b: Aureus of Septimius Severus, 1959.228.33 (ANS), original size and scale 2:1

volume manuscript of coin descriptions is a further subject of our research project. Strada states in the *Diaskeuê* that he saw this bronze coin at Giulio Romano's house in Mantua<sup>22</sup>, while in the *Epitome* he mentions Rome as the coin's home<sup>23</sup>. Unfortunately, no original coin model could be determined for the two drawings<sup>24</sup>. Strada used here a literary source as basis for the coin drawing, i. e. a reference to Livy. He described the proscriptions under the triumvirate of Octavian, Lepidus and Antonius, the aim of which was to avenge Caesar, and named the most famous victims<sup>25</sup>. Their portraits are depicted on the obverse of the coin. The reverse of an aureus minted for Sep-

Chaldeans, Arabs, Libyans, Greeks, Etruscans and Macedonians, Asians, Syrians, Egyptians, Sicilians, Latin and Roman kings from the foundation of the city, of the gods, the consuls at the time of the Roman Republic until today, both among the Latin emperors in the West and among the Greek emperors in the East and finally, when the empire of the Roman people perished, of the exarchs and of the princes and dukes of the barbarians. From the museum of the Mantuan antiquarian Jacopo Strada, Roman citizen. With seven very reliable indices, partly alphabetical, which contain the most diverse things, partly chronological, which describe the names of the kings, caesars, emperors and tyrants and also of heroes.

<sup>22</sup> On the description of the reverse, see *Diaskeuê* 2, fol. 123v, p. 72 no. 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Epitome*, p. 11.

<sup>24</sup> Here and on the following, see Lemburg-Ruppelt 2000, p. 117 with note 13.

<sup>25</sup> Livy, *Ab urbe condita liber CXX periocha*.







Fig. 9: Coin drawing, *MaNO 2*, fol. 4r (FB Gotha)

timius Severus might have been used as model (**figs 8a and b**). There, Julia Domna is depicted between Caracalla and Geta<sup>26</sup>.

Sometimes it is assumed that this dramatic scene (**fig. 9**) was based on models used in the paintings of the great decorative programmes of the time. Nonetheless, no corresponding models could be identified in the work of Giulio Romano<sup>27</sup> or in Rome<sup>28</sup>. Only for some individual motifs potential models could be discerned, as happened, for example, for the

presentation of Cicero's head by the legionary Laena. Such scenes exist on the Column of Trajan<sup>29</sup>, of which Strada probably made a

<sup>26</sup> [RIC IV Septimius Severus 175](#).

<sup>27</sup> Information by Massimo Bulgarelli, Venice.

<sup>28</sup> Information by Ingo Herklotz, Marburg, and Arnold Nesselrath, Rome.

<sup>29</sup> Information by Ingo Herklotz, Marburg; Cichorius-scenes XXIII und LXXI.







Fig. 10: Scene from Trajan's Column, cod. 9410, fol. 32v (ÖNB Wien)



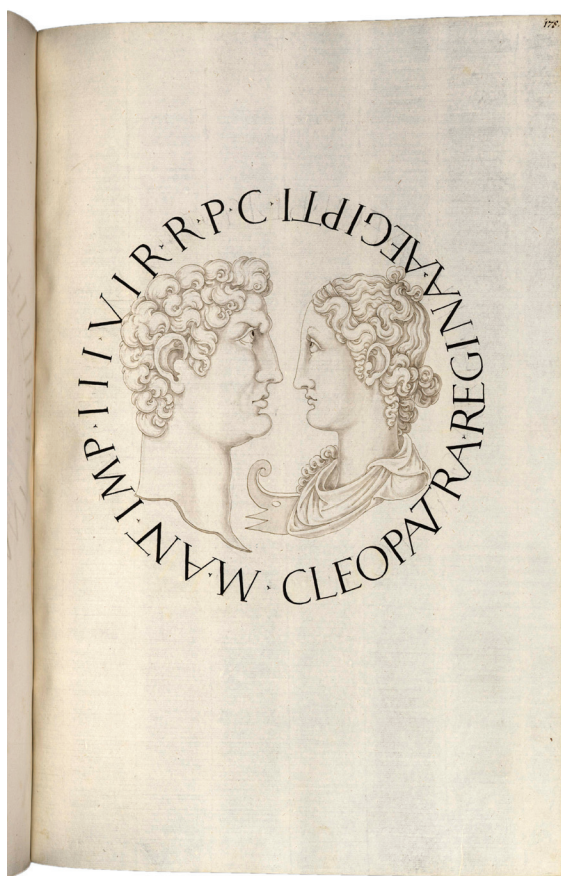
Fig. 11: »The Conversion of the Proconsul Sergius«  
of Giorgio Giulio Clovio, Louvre RF 3977 (© RMN)



Fig. 12: »Faith, Love and Hope«  
of Giorgio Giulio Clovio, Louvre RF 3978 (© RMN)







Figs 13a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 3, fols 178r–179r (FB Gotha)

copy (fig. 10)<sup>30</sup>. The trial scene, composed like a stage set, might instead have been modelled on miniature drawings by Giorgio Giulio Clovio (1498–1578)<sup>31</sup>, for example on the book illuminations entitled *The Conversion of Proconsul Sergius* (fig. 11) and *Faith, Love, Hope* (fig. 12). Since none of Strada's contemporaries illustrated this coin, i.e. neither Enea Vico, Hubertus Goltzius, Sebastiano Erizzo nor Pirro Ligorio, it is safe to assume that it was Strada's own invention.

Another one of Strada's very creative and peculiar inventions is a ship with a *prora* in the shape of an elephant's head (figs 13a and b)<sup>32</sup>. It can be found in the third volume of the *MaNO* which is dedicated to the coins of Marcus Antonius. Unfortunately, there is no description in the *Diaskeuè* nor could an exact ancient model be identified<sup>33</sup>. What led Strada to this invention – perhaps meant as an allusion to Cleopatra and the lost Egyptian fleet<sup>34</sup> or

simply the misinterpretation of a coin image – must remain without answer.

The third coin offers Strada's most interesting invention, accepted until the nineteenth century. It is a denarius with Augustus radiate but no legend on the obverse. On the reverse (fig. 14), the temple of Janus Quadrifrons is shown with the inscription PAX ORBIS TERRARVM IMP. PERPET. S. C. This coin is said to have been in Strada's own coin collection.

No such ancient coin ever existed. The model for this invention was probably a sestertius

<sup>30</sup> ÖNB shelfmark Cod. 9410; Jansen 2019, pp. 684–685; p. 860.

<sup>31</sup> Information by Arnold Nesselrath, Rome, and Timo Strauch, Census, Berlin.

<sup>32</sup> *MaNO* 3, fols 178r–179r.

<sup>33</sup> Information by Karsten Dahmen, Münzkabinett SMB, Berlin, and Michael Matzke, HMB, Basel.

<sup>34</sup> Plutarch, Antonius 68,1.





Fig. 14: Coin drawing, *MaNO* 4, fol. 237r (FB Gotha)

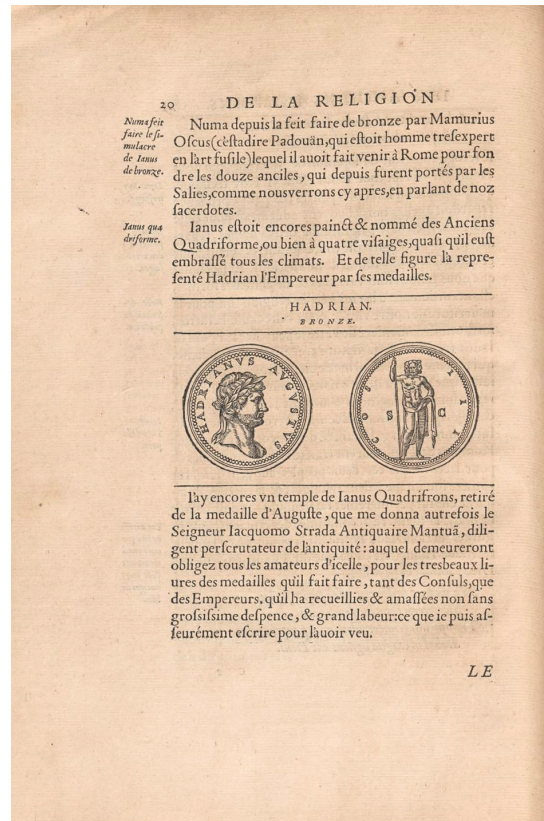


Fig. 15: Coin of Hadrian, *Discours*, p. 20 (BSB München)



Fig. 16: Coin drawing, *MaNO* 9, fol. 145r (FB Gotha)

of Hadrian, also depicted by Du Choul in his work *Discours della religion des ancien Romains*, on which Janus is depicted with three faces (fig. 15)<sup>35</sup>, although normally he is only shown with two. For the temple building, Strada borrowed parts of the illustration of the Temple of Janus on coins of Nero which he also depicted in the *MaNO* (fig. 16)<sup>36</sup>, e.g. the gate of the temple and the construction of the roof. Furthermore, the coin legend itself is an invention. It actually either refers to Christ or to an ideal Christian ruler<sup>37</sup>, since for the motif on the coin obverse – showing Augustus radiate, and therefore deified, as described in the *Diaskeuè* – a ›divus‹ legend would normally be expected<sup>38</sup>. Du Choul

<sup>35</sup> *Discours*, p. 20; RIC II Hadrian 62 (= [RIC II,3 \(2\) Hadrian 509-510](#)); RIC II Hadrian 662; (= [RIC II,3 \(2\) Hadrian 748](#)).

<sup>36</sup> *MaNO* 9, fol. 145r. (CensusID [10183804](#), [RIC Nero 323](#))

<sup>37</sup> Information by Michael Matzke, HMB, Basel.

<sup>38</sup> The previous [folio 236r in MaNO vol. 4](#) depicts the uncrowned Augustus accompanied by a divus legend.





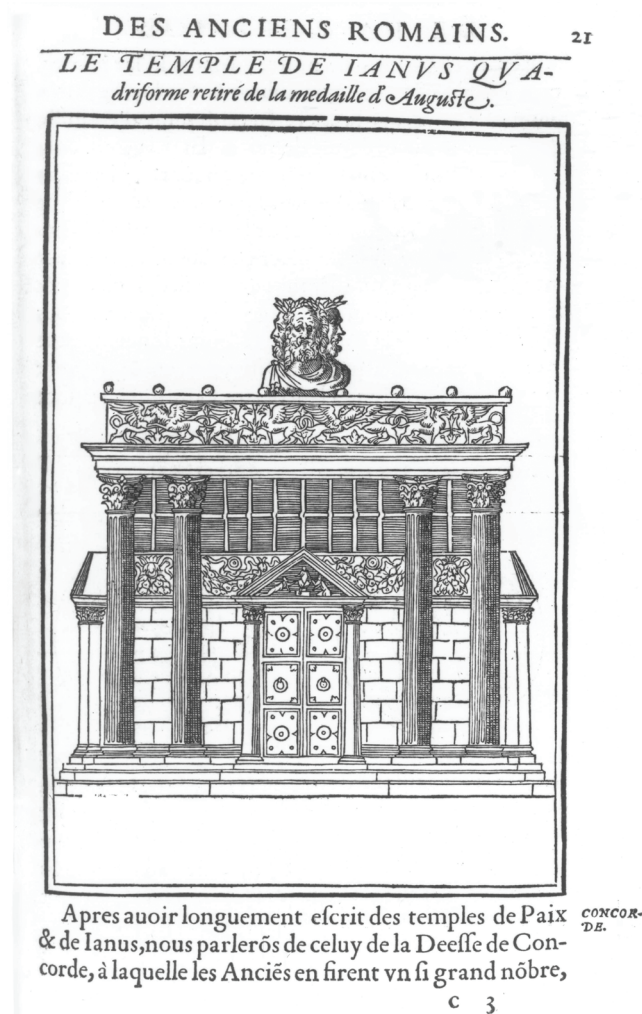


Fig. 17: Temple of Janus Quadrifrons, *Discours*, p. 21 (HAB Wolfenbüttel)

was Strada's only contemporary who illustrated this representation of the temple (**fig. 17**)<sup>39</sup> which, as he states, he had received from Strada (see **fig. 15**). Du Choul's work was later adopted by Louis XIV's and Napoleon I's coin engravers to commemorate successful peace treaties, i.e. the Peace of Rastatt in 1714 (**figs 18a and b**)<sup>40</sup> and the Peace of Pressburg (today Bratislava) of 1805 (**figs 19a and b**)<sup>41</sup>. When the peace treaty of Pressburg, negotiated by Francis I of Austria, was broken in 1809 and the French army remained victorious, Napoleon issued a coin with the motif of the Janus Temple. In this case, the temple was not shown with open doors, as had been customary in ancient Rome in times of war, but with broken doors (**figs 20a and b**) meant

to indicate a particularly violent breach of peace<sup>42</sup>.

In particular, the third example shows how much iconographic and numismatic knowledge Strada was able to use for his inventions. Therefore, he managed to design details that could not be found on ancient originals in such a way that they seemed authentic to his contemporaries (e.g. Du Choul).

Therefore, in the following section, selected exemplars of coin drawings from the first

<sup>39</sup> *Discours*, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup> Ohm 2014, pp. 81–83; Ohm 2015, p. 221; Darnis 2003, pp. 15–17; Stahl 2015, pp. 266–287.

<sup>41</sup> Zeitz – Zeitz 2003, p. 140 no. 63.

<sup>42</sup> Zeitz – Zeitz 2003, p. 187 no. 98.





Figs 18a and b: Medal of Jean Mauger, copper, W 56 (Stadtmuseum Rastatt)



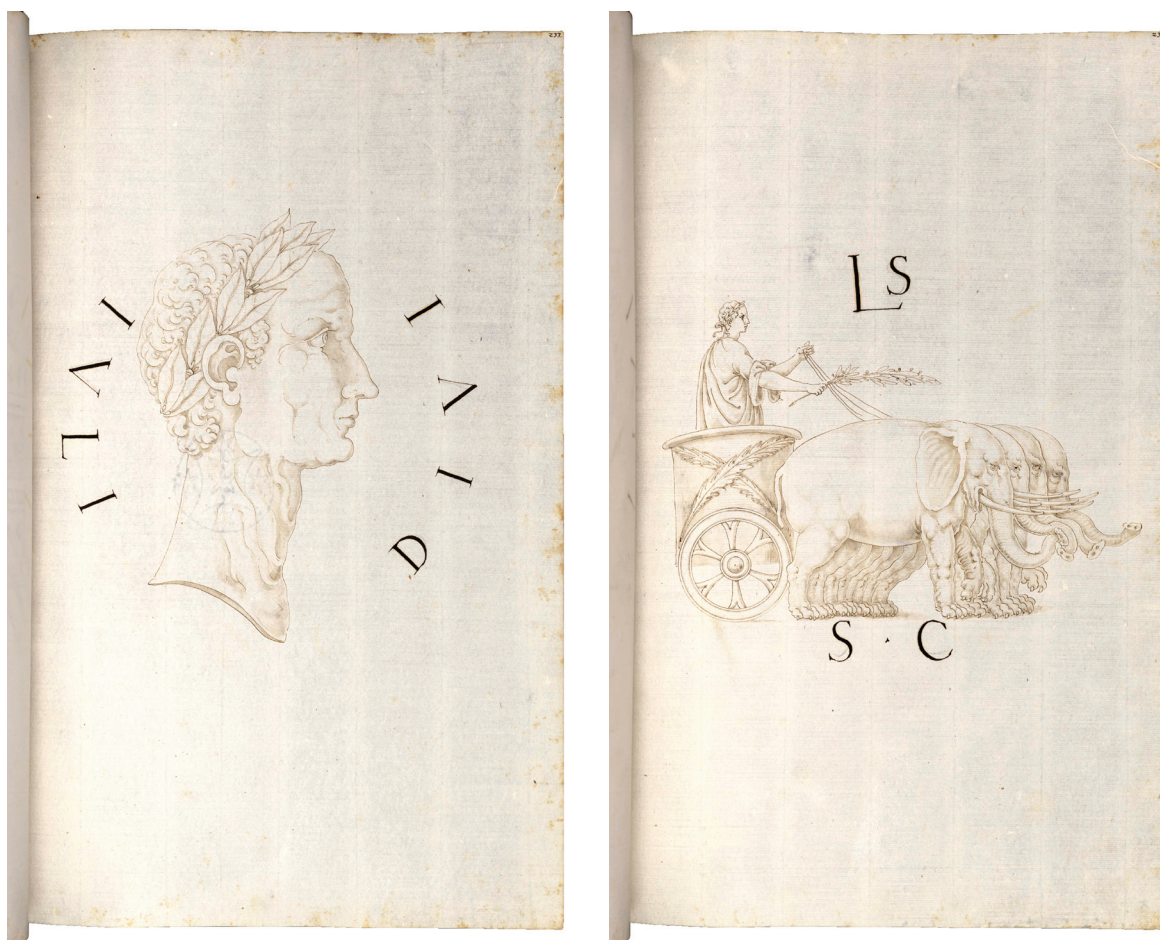
Figs 19a and b: Medal of Bertrand Andrieu, silver, MK 18639 (Landesmuseum Württemberg Stuttgart)



Figs 20a and b: Medal of Bertrand Andrieu and Nicolas-Guy-Antoine Brenet, bronze, MK 21117 (Landesmuseum Württemberg Stuttgart)





Figs 21a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 1, fols 233r–234r (FB Gotha)

Figs 22a and b: Invention by Giovanni da Cavino, Pad. 009 (BnF)

14 volumes of Strada's *MaNO* will be presented. These drawings were based on inventions by contemporary engravers who also used their talents to design coins after the antique that owed more to their imagination than to ancient originals.

### Creations by Cavino and his Contemporaries

To identify Cavino's and his contemporaries' inventions solely by the use of drawings is very

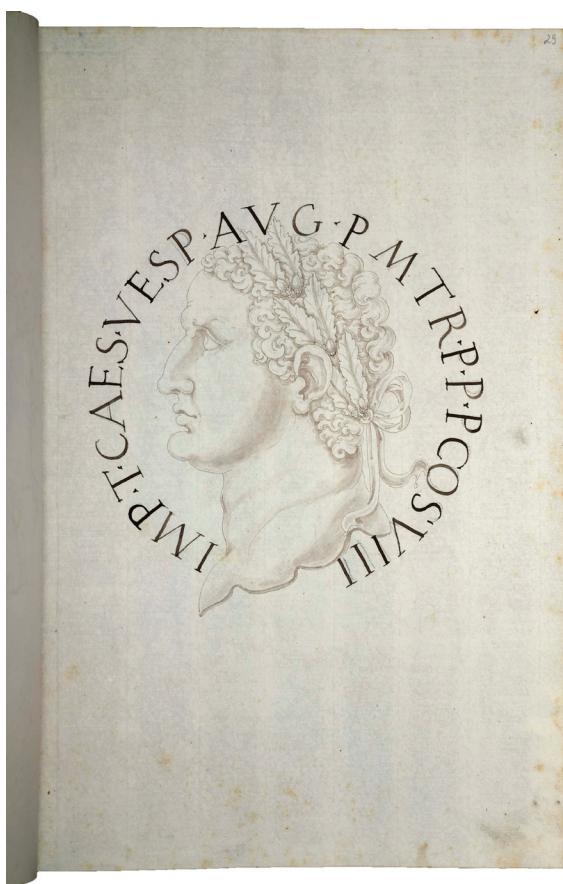
difficult. There only remains an identification based on inaccuracies in their presentation or on mistakes in the coin legends. An identification becomes impossible, if the model for the copy is an authentic coin and if the copy matches it. In this case, only the careful study of its condition, of the material and of the edges makes it possible to recognise whether it is a Paduan.

Inventions without direct ancient models can be found in the first volume of the *MaNO*, for example in the case of »Caesar riding the Elephant Quadriga« (figs 21a and b)<sup>43</sup>. Strada claimed to have seen this coin in the collection of Antonio Agustín<sup>44</sup>. This claim can how-

<sup>43</sup> *MaNO* 1, fols 233r–234r.

<sup>44</sup> *Diaskeuè* 2, fol. 88r, p. 1 Nr. 2; not illustrated in the *Dialogos*.





Figs 23a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 12, fols 29r–30r (FB Gotha)

ever not be confirmed, since Agustín's collection was looted and dispersed by Napoleonic troops in the early nineteenth century<sup>45</sup>. There is no matching illustration in his *Dialoghi intorno alle medaglie etc.* Rather, the coin seems to have been Cavino's invention (**figs 22a and b**) and is not depicted by other antiquarians<sup>46</sup>.

Volume 12 of the *MaNO* shows a coin with Titus, laureate and looking to the left, on the obverse and an Italia with mural crown sitting on a globe on the reverse (**figs 23a and b**)<sup>47</sup>. Unfortunately, there is no description in the *Diaskeuè*; therefore we do not know, in which collection Strada saw this coin. Its provenance would be of particular interest, since Klawans assumes that the coin is a modern forgery<sup>48</sup>. While the illustration in the *MaNO* proves its existence in the sixteenth century, only Sebastian Erizzo included its depiction in his *Discorso sopra le medaglie antiche etc.*

(**fig. 24**)<sup>49</sup>, in which it is shown with the same reverse legend ITALIA S C.

<sup>45</sup> Agustín bequeathed his coin collection to the Spanish king. It included 130 gold coins, 1400 coins in silver and 3871 in bronze. The bronze coins were taken to the coin cabinet at the monastery San Lorenzo de El Escorial. They were stolen by Napoleon's troops; their present location is unknown. In the original edition (*Dialogos*) only 292 coins are depicted on 52 pls. These coins probably came from Agustín's collection (information provided by Paloma Otero, Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid and Mariano Carbonell, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona).

<sup>46</sup> Klawans 1977, p. 21 no. 5: Obverse: Caesar laureate l.r., DIVI IVLI; Reverse: Caesar riding the elephant quadriga, LS SC. Most recently: Asolati 2018, pp. 138–139. A potential model for Cavino could have been an Egyptian bronze coin of Trajan (*RPC III*, 4667, 2). Information provided by U. Peter, BBAW, Berlin.

<sup>47</sup> *MaNO* 12, fols 29r–30r (CensusID [10198475](#) and [10213856](#)).

<sup>48</sup> Klawans 1977, p. 68 no. 7.

<sup>49</sup> *Discorso*, p. 194 (CensusID [10073510](#)).





## 194 DICHIARATIONE



LA MEDAGLIA di Tito, di bel metallo grande, con lettere tali. IMP. T. CAES. AVG. P. M. TR. P. P. P. COS. VIII. Ha per riuerso vna bellissima figura incoronata, sedente sopra il mondo, che ha nella destra vn' asta, & nella manca mano vn' corno di douicia, con lettere intorno, che dicono. ITALIA. & S. C. Questa medaglia fu battuta, per onorare questo Principe, & la figura dal riuerso è la Italia, che nel felice Imperio Romano ci si dimostra signora del Mondo.

Fig. 24: Medal of Titus, *Discorso*, p. 194 (UB Heidelberg)

A further invention by Cavino without any direct ancient model is a coin with Vespasian on the obverse and the Colosseum and the Meta Sudans on the reverse (**figs 25a and b**)<sup>50</sup>. He claimed to have seen it in Fugger's as well as Agustín's collections. Here, Cavino combined the obverses and reverses of several ancient models (obverse of the sesterce of Vespasian with the reverse of a sesterce of Domitian for his deified brother Titus (**figs 26a and b**)<sup>51</sup>. Strada described Vespasian on the obverse as »looking to the right« (**fig. 27**); in the same way he is also shown on the – probab-

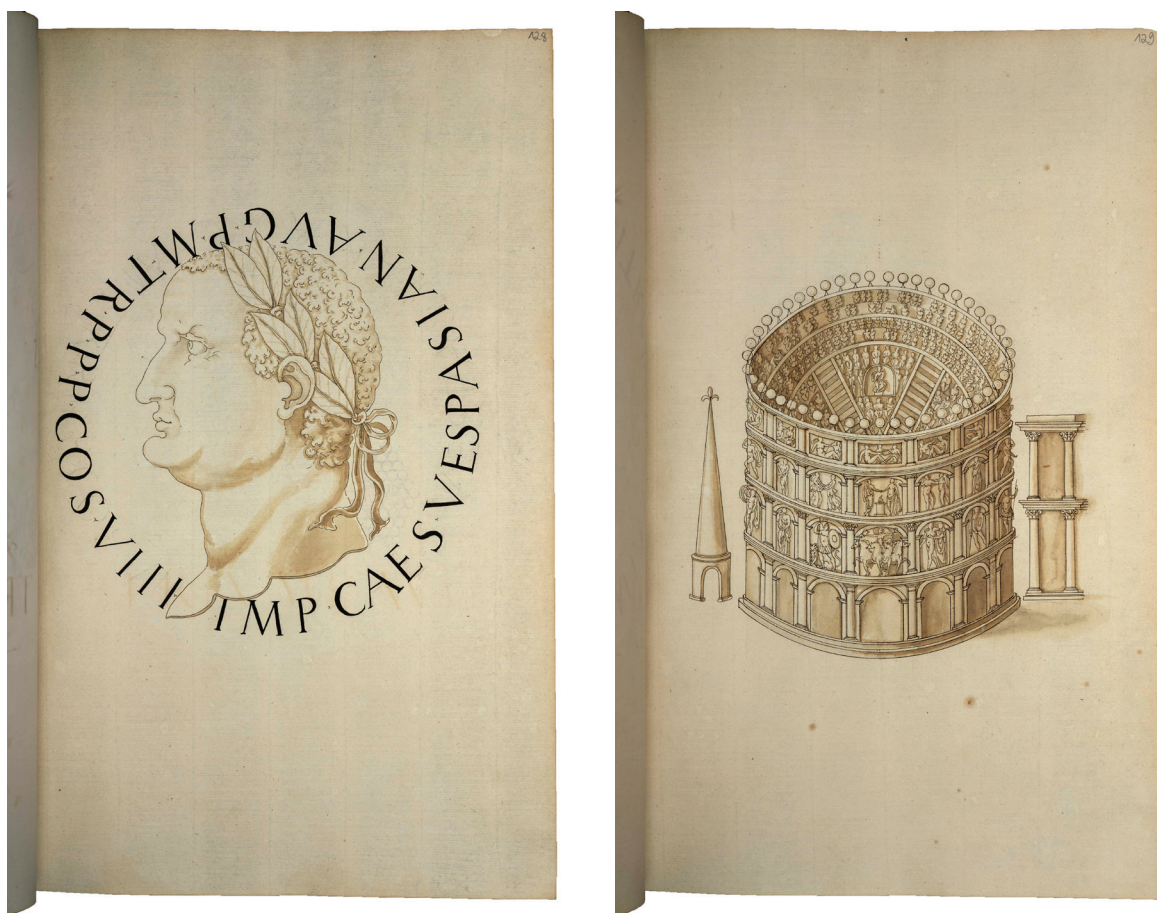
ly – original Paduan. There, the legend COS VII substitutes the inscription of COS VIII included in both drawing and description. Nonetheless, Strada presented Vespasian as »looking to the left«, identical to another Paduan based on a sesterce

<sup>50</sup> *Diaskeuè* 3, fol. 118r no. 4 (CensusID [10193997](#)) with *MaNO* 11, fol. 128r–129r (CensusID [10193992](#) and [10193995](#)); Klawans 1977, p. 64 no. 6, Colosseum with Meta Sudans.

<sup>51</sup> RIC II,1<sup>2</sup> Vespasian 194 (CensusID [10051539](#)); RIC II,1<sup>2</sup> Domitian 131 (CensusID [10066886](#)). Matzke 2018, pp. 144–145; p. 149.





Figs 25a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 11, fols 128r–129r (FB Gotha)

Figs 26a and b: Imitation by Giovanni da Cavino, 2013.821 (HMB Basel, Alwin Seiler)

of Titus (**figs 28a and b**)<sup>52</sup>. Apart from Strada, no other antiquarian reproduced this coin.

Cavino's imitation of Nero's Porta-Ostiensis coin is also found in the ninth volume of the *MaNO* (**figs 29a and b**)<sup>53</sup>. The fact that this coin

<sup>52</sup> See Matzke 2018, p. 148 no. I.51. Whether the left-facing Vespasian and the legend COS VIII is an independent type, so far unknown to scholars, or whether Strada made mistakes here, must remain open.

<sup>53</sup> *MaNO* 9, fol. 30r and fol. 31r; RIC I<sup>2</sup> Nero 179; Klawans 1977, p. 44 no. 2 (CensusID [10183794](#) and [10183797](#)).



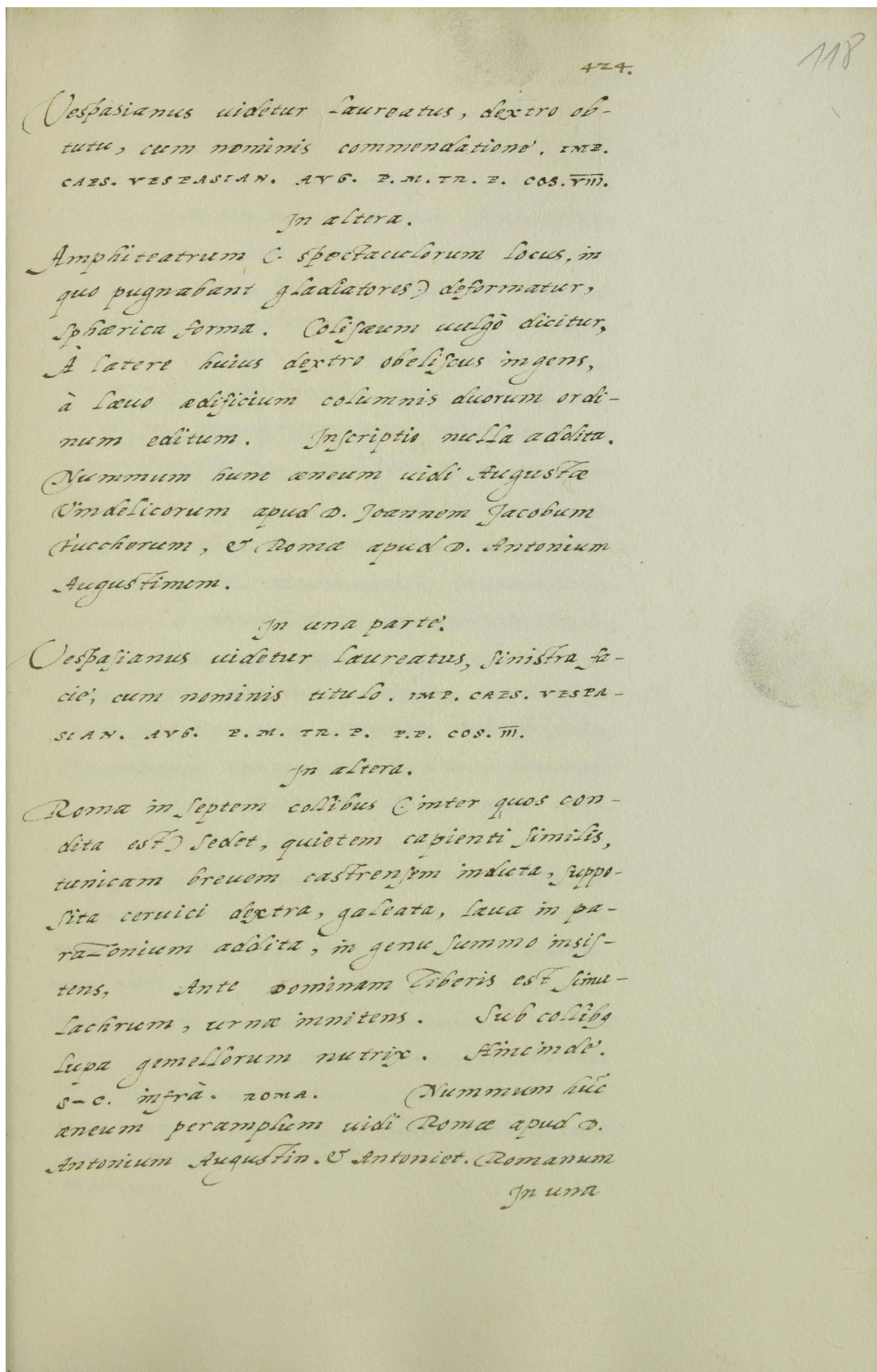


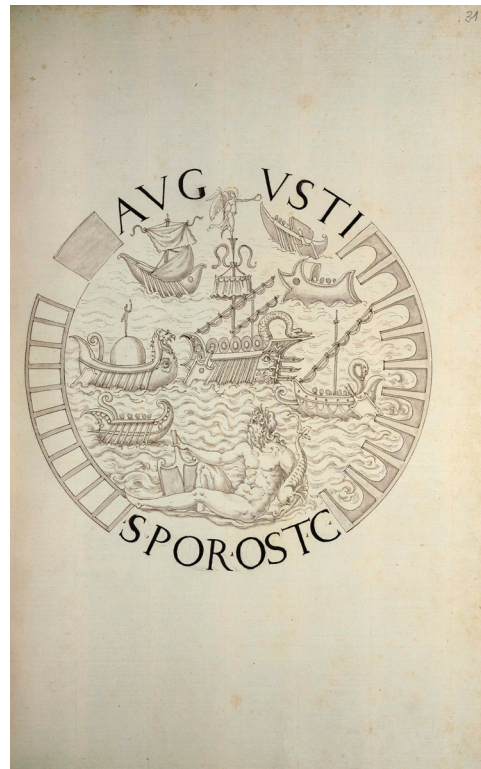
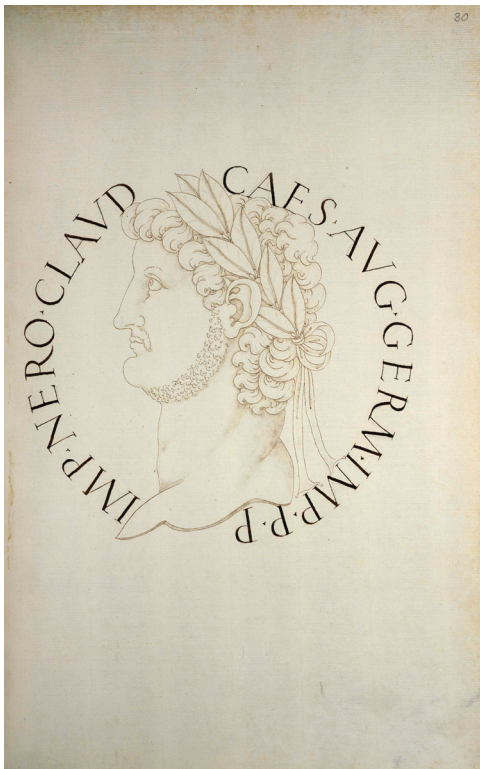
Fig. 27: Diaskeuè 3, Vespasiani Anea, fol. 118r, p. 424, no. 4 (UB Wien)







Figs 28a and b: Imitation by Giovanni da Cavino, FA 3817 (KHM Wien)



Figs 29a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 9, fols 30r–31r (FB Gotha)



Fig. 30: Imitation of Giovanni da Cavino, Klawans 1977, p. 45



Figs 31a and b: Coin drawings, *MaNO* 6, fols 19r–20r (FB Gotha)

was an imitation created by Cavino is evident by the row of shields on the ship in the coin's centre (**fig. 30**) which can only be found on this imitation. In the *Diaskeu *, Strada claimed to have this piece in his own collection<sup>54</sup>. His contemporaries however reproduced the ancient original<sup>55</sup>.

Another Paduan shows »Augustus among the Gods« (**figs 31a and b**)<sup>56</sup>. Strada depicted Augustus with a shield in his left hand and a sceptre in his right in addition to Terra with a sea monster and Oceanus with a dragon-like monster as shown on the imitation by Cavino (**figs 32a and b**)<sup>57</sup>. On the contorniate, dating to the fourth century AD (**figs 33a and b**)<sup>58</sup>, which probably served as model, Augustus holds a globe in his left hand and a spear in his right; Victoria holds a wreath in her raised right hand; a bovine is placed behind Terra and next to her appears a blossoming plant. A dolphin-like sea monster stands before Oceanus

with crab claws stuck in his hair, while a water plant can be seen behind his back. Vico and Ligorio (**figs 34a and b**) also depicted this Paduan, whereas Goltzius shows the original (**fig. 34c**)<sup>59</sup>.

For the final piece to be discussed here, Strada described the ancient originals in the *Diaskeu * in detail, while presenting a new, previously unknown version in the *MaNO*. The coin's ancient original shows »Honos« (to the left) and »Virtus« (to the right) looking at each other (**figs 35a, b and c**). »Honos« holds a cornucopia in his left hand and a sceptre in his right;

<sup>54</sup> *Diaskeu * 3, fol. 58r no. 2 (CensusID [10183790](#)).

<sup>55</sup> RIC I<sup>2</sup>, Nero 178 (CensusID [10052517](#)).

<sup>56</sup> *MaNO* 6, fols 19r–20r (CensusID's [10188083](#) and [10188086](#)).

<sup>57</sup> Klawans 1977, p. 24 no. 5.

<sup>58</sup> Alföldi 1976, p. 225.

<sup>59</sup> CensusID [10066347](#).







Figs 32a and b: Imitation by Giovanni da Cavino, FA 3775 (KHM Wien)



Figs 33a and b: Contorniate, RÖ 38575 (KHM Wien)

Figs 34a, b and c: Coin reverse of Augustus, *Omnium Caesarum* (HAB Wolfenbüttel); Contorniate, AST 21, p. 70 fol. 52r, nos 469–470: Coin reverses of Augustus, Collection of Andrea Loredan, MS Typ 411, fol. 75r (Harvard University – Houghton Library)

›Virtus‹ wears a helmet and military attire; the parazonium is in her right hand and a lance in her left. Her right foot rests on a helmet and the legend reads: HONOS ET VIRTVS S C<sup>60</sup>. The coin image is described in the *Diaskeue* in the same way<sup>61</sup>. Strada mentions Antonio Agustín

as the owner, whose collection – as mentioned above – was looted and dispersed by Napole-

<sup>60</sup> RIC II,1<sup>2</sup> Vitellius 113.

<sup>61</sup> *Diaskeué* 3, fol. 107v., p. 405, no. 4 (CensusID [10187204](#)).





Figs 35a, b and c: Sesterce of Vitellius (reverse), 1995.110.19 (ANS); Imitation by Giovanni da Cavino, 2013.806 (HMB Basel, Alwin Seiler); Coin reverses of Nero, *Omnium Caesarum* (HAB Wolfenbüttel)

onic troops in the early nineteenth century. In Agustín's original edition *Dialogos de medallas inscripciones etc.*, this coin was depicted exactly as described by Strada, i.e. identically to the ancient original<sup>62</sup>. Ligorio as well depicted it in this fashion<sup>63</sup>. On Cavino's imitation (fig. 35b)<sup>64</sup>, however, Honos places his right foot on a dolphin and Virtus her right foot on a turtle. Vico also reproduced the coin in accordance with the Paduan (fig. 35c)<sup>65</sup>, whereas Strada turned the dolphin into a helmet and the turtle into a globe (fig. 36a)<sup>66</sup>.

The model for Strada's depiction can be found today in the Vienna Coin Cabinet (fig. 36b). It originally came from the Tiepolo Collection. Senator Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo had acquired Sebastiano Erizzo's famous coin collection at the end of the seventeenth century; in 1821 it was sold to Emperor Francis I of Austria<sup>67</sup>. Thorough examination of this piece showed that it was much reworked – possibly even a cast<sup>68</sup> – and in all likelihood not an original<sup>69</sup>. Therefore, the drawing was certainly modelled on the piece from Erizzo's collection, with whom Strada was closely associated, as numerous owners' details in the *Diaskeuè* attest<sup>70</sup>. Unfortunately though, this coin is neither described nor illustrated in Erizzo's work *Discorso sopra le medaglie*<sup>71</sup>.

The obvious diversity between the description and illustration of this piece ought to be seen as evidence that the *Diaskeuè* does not contain coin descriptions that complement the

illustrations in the *MaNO*. Originally, this assumption had provided the foundation of our project and was based on Strada's statement in his book catalogue<sup>72</sup> and on his declaration

<sup>62</sup> The sesterce of Vitellus with Honos and Virtus illustrated therein (*Dialogos*, pl. E; RIC I<sup>2</sup> Vitellius 113, CensuSID [10187200](#)) matches Strada's description in der *Diaskeuè*, as well as the illustration in the Italian edition of 1592 (*Discorsi*, pl. 9). In the second Italian edition of 1592 (*Dialoghi*, p. 81) the illustrations are embedded in the text and the illustration matches Cavino's copy.

<sup>63</sup> AST 21, p. 183, fol. 134v.

<sup>64</sup> Klawans 1977, p. 58, no. 1; Matzke 2018, p. 143 no. I.47.

<sup>65</sup> *Le imagini*, fol. 36r (CensuSID [10035866](#)).

<sup>66</sup> *MaNO* 10, fol. 232r (CensuSID [10187213](#)). I would like to thank Jonathan Kagan, New York, for bringing this discrepancy to my attention.

<sup>67</sup> Asolati – Cattaneo 2019, pp. 133–134 no. 69 (Marco Callegari).

<sup>68</sup> Information by Michael Matzke, HMB, Basel.

<sup>69</sup> Information by Klaus Vondrovec, KHM, Wien.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, *Diaskeuè* 2, fol. 166v, p. 159, no. 108; fol. 182v, p. 192, no. 17; *Diaskeuè* 3, fol. 220r, p. 626, no. 5; fol. 220v, p. 627, no. 7; *Diaskeuè* 4, fol. 77v, p. 792, no. 6; fol. 105r, p. 847, no. 11.

<sup>71</sup> *Discorso*; the coin is not even included in the later editions of 1568, 1571 and 1585–1590.

<sup>72</sup> *Index sive catalogus librorum*; ÖNB Cod. 10101 fol. 1v: Alius liber de omnis generis ethnicis et antiquis numismatibus aureis, argenteis et aereis, quae passim in universo mundo inveniuntur, et ego magnis impensis et cura acquisivi, quae latine in XI voluminibus descripta sunt. Et hac numismata partim ipsemet et apud me habeo, sicuti fabricata et excusa sunt; partim ipsemet manu mea delineavi ex ipsis numismatibus veris passim estantibus apud antiquitatum studiosos et viros primarios. Suntque eorum quae descripta sunt novies mille; et inter haec multa peregrina, utpote latina, graeca, hetrusca, arabica et aphricana variis







Figs 36a and b: Coin drawing, MaNO 10, fol. 232r (FB Gotha); Sesterce of Vitellius (reverse), RÖ 6067 (KHM Wien)

in the preface to his commentary on Caesar<sup>73</sup>, in which he explained that the coin descriptions in the *Diaskeué* were meant to match the drawings after ancient coins in the *MaNO*.

This short summary shows that Strada – although he was aware of the problematic issue of modern creations after the antique – was not always able to distinguish between originals and imitations. To tell them apart would have required – in addition to a thorough autopsy and related methods of examining the material, presentation and legends – the use of an accepted reference work or catalogue. Unfortunately, at the time, no such work existed. Extensive research and a proper methodology of comparison, for which none of the prerequisites were yet available, would have been necessary. Strada's *Diaskeué* was a first attempt to compose such a work. Interestingly, it did not meet with the expected success, since the *Diaskeué* was never printed and only survived in two complete manuscript copies<sup>74</sup>. Thus the work

was only known to specialists, such as Adolfo Occo (1524–1606)<sup>75</sup>, as well as to the imperial librarian in Vienna, Peter Lambeck (1628–1680), or Charles Patin (1633–1693) whom Lambeck guided through the imperial library<sup>76</sup>. There-

characteribus et literis insignita, prius apud nos non visa et conspecta.

<sup>73</sup> *C. Iulii Caesaris, Dedicatoria: Missus sum ab hinc annis 20. in Italiam, Romam, Venetias ac alio ad numismata auro, argento, ac aere efformata, vetustateque insignia marmor comparanda, quae ego magna vi pecuniarum expensa Augustam, nobilissimis spolijs exuta Italia, advexi. Sunt inter ea quam plurima Imperatorum ac Imperatricum capita, multae insuper integrae marmoreae statuae, aliaque opera non minimi precij & pervetusta. Haec omnia quoque familiae Bavariae cesserunt. Verum nec illud silentio involuere possum, apud eundem Fuccarum absoluisse me mea ipsius manu 18. magna volumina numismatibus referta studiose delineatis ex archetypis suis aureis, argenteis ac aereis, in quorum sunt & ea numero quaecunque ego numismata uspiam terrarum totos hos annos 30. quos in hoc studium absumpsi, videre potui. Additae sunt autem singulis descriptiones Latinae non suppressis etiam dominorum suorum, apud quos mihi ea videre contigit, nominibus. Haec omnia coniecta in 11. magna volumina cum alijs meis maximis ac dictu incredibilibus laboribus Fuggerus suae Bibliothecae addiderat.*

<sup>74</sup> [University Library Vienna, shelf marks Ms III, 483 and Hs III 160898/1-11](#); Czech National Library Prague, shelfmarks Codd 1197–1207.

<sup>75</sup> The structure of Adolfo Occo's work *Imperatorum Romanorum* is strongly reminiscent of the systematic subdivision adopted by Strada in the *Diaskeué*; information provided by Jonathan Kagan (New York). For this work, see the PhD thesis of Gruber 2006, pp. 5–7.

<sup>76</sup> Jansen 2019, pp. 10–13.



fore, Strada never received the full scholarly recognition for his work by his fellow antiquarians.

In addition, there was a desire for completeness which was not only characteristic of Strada but also of the other so-called artists-antiquarians, such as Enea Vico, Pirro Ligorio and Hubertus Goltzius, who were led by this ambition to create reconstructions or imitations (inventions/fantasies)<sup>77</sup>. Consequently, Strada stated the following reasons for this type of invention in the preface to the first volume of *the SERIES Impm. Roman. ac Graecorum et Germanorum omnium a.C. Iulio.C.F.C.N. Caesare usque ad Maximilianvm II. Caes. P. F. Aug. una cum liberis patrimis atque matrimis ex a.a.a. numismatibus quam fidelissime delineatis: inservimus etiam iuxta tempora hexarchos et longobardor reges omnusque cum ipsorum elogiis breviter descripsimus. Tomus primus continet XII Caes. a C.IV.C.F.C.N. Caes. usq. ad Nervam Imp. Ex Musaeo. Iacobi de Stradae Mantuani Caess. Antiquarii Civis Romani*<sup>78</sup> – meant as a short synthesis of the *MaNO* and the *Diaskeu * and intended as a gift for rich patrons, in particular the emperor: »Nevertheless, in any case it is true that not all coins match all inscriptions, as I would prefer: the reason is that not all of them were discovered, although all of them were minted«<sup>79</sup>. Due to their knowledge of the material and iconography, these artists-antiquarians, i.e. the engravers Cavino, Cellini etc., were also able to create »inventions after the antique«. This kind of creativity contradicted the intention of the so-called humanist antiquarians, such as Antonio Agustin and Jean Matal, who wanted to explore antiquity in all its aspects entirely on the secure basis of authentic ancient monuments and literary sources<sup>80</sup>. Therefore, Agust n was suspicious of inventions by artist-antiquarians, as he expressed in the well-known statement in his work *Dialoghi intorno alle medaglie, iscrizioni et altri antichit *:

My friend Pirro Ligorio from Naples, a great antiquarian and painter, wrote over forty books [i.e. manuscripts] about coins, buildings and other things [...] without really mastering Latin, as did Hubertus Goltzius, Enea Vico, Jacopo Strada and others. Those who read their books might think that they read all the Latin and Greek books ever written. They took what they needed from others and they exactly drew with the pen what others described [...]»<sup>81</sup>.

The artist-antiquarians wanted to reconstruct the ancient world as it had been using their imagination and coin images. This development would come to its peak in 1561 with Pirro Ligorio's great plan of Rome (**figs 37a and b**) *Antequae urbis imago accuratissime ex veteribus monumenteis formata*, the buildings in which are exclusively based on coin images<sup>82</sup>.

Paduans and other *all'antica* medals remained extremely popular well into the eighteenth century. Until the end of the Ancien R gime, these coins presented outstanding objects for the knowledge, appropriation and moral-educative role they possessed, even though or precisely since they had no ancient origins. Although they began to be criticized as

<sup>77</sup> Further details: Missere 2013, pp. 279–281.

<sup>78</sup> Translation: Series of all emperors of the Romans, Greeks and Germans from Gaius Julius Caesar, son of Gaius and grandson of Gaius, up to Maximilian II, Caesar, the pious and happy Augustus, together with the children, whose father and mother are still alive, from bronze, silver and gold coins: We have also classified all the exarchs and kings of the Lombards in accordance with the times. We have briefly described these together with their own inscriptions. The first volume contains the twelve Caesars from Gaius Julius, son of Gaius and grandson of Gaius, to Emperor Nerva. From the museum of the Mantuan Jacopo Strada, antiquarian of the emperor and Roman citizen (CensusID [10082563](#)).

<sup>79</sup> [Series fol. 1v](#).

<sup>80</sup> See the detailed discussion in Heuser 2003, pp. 88–103.

<sup>81</sup> *Dialoghi* p. 117.

<sup>82</sup> Most recently: Long 2018, pp. 137–138.





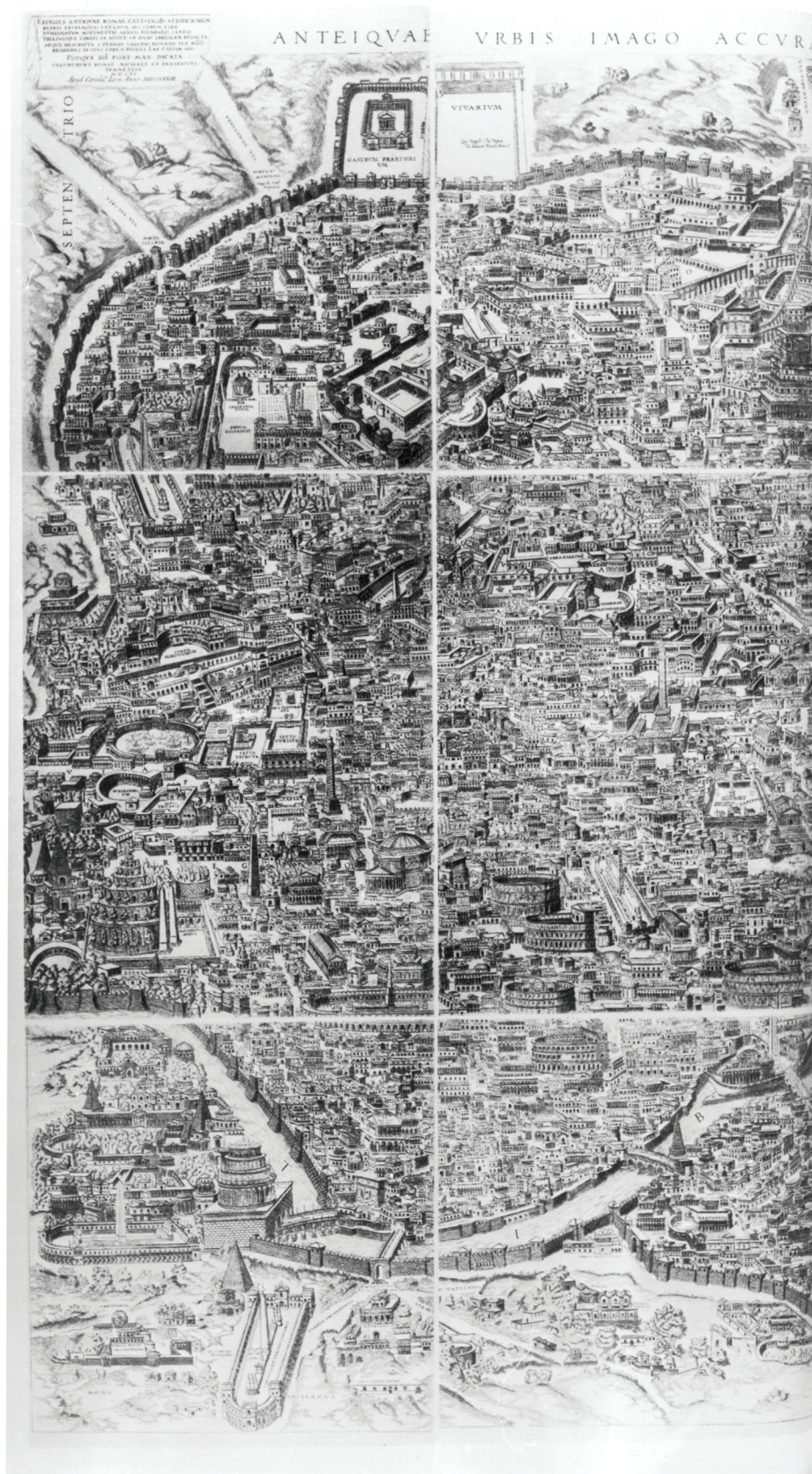


Fig. 37a: Pirro Ligorio, *Antiquae urbis imago accuratissime ex veteribus monumentis formata*, Rome [Tramezino] 1561 facsimile print (HAB Wolfenbüttel)





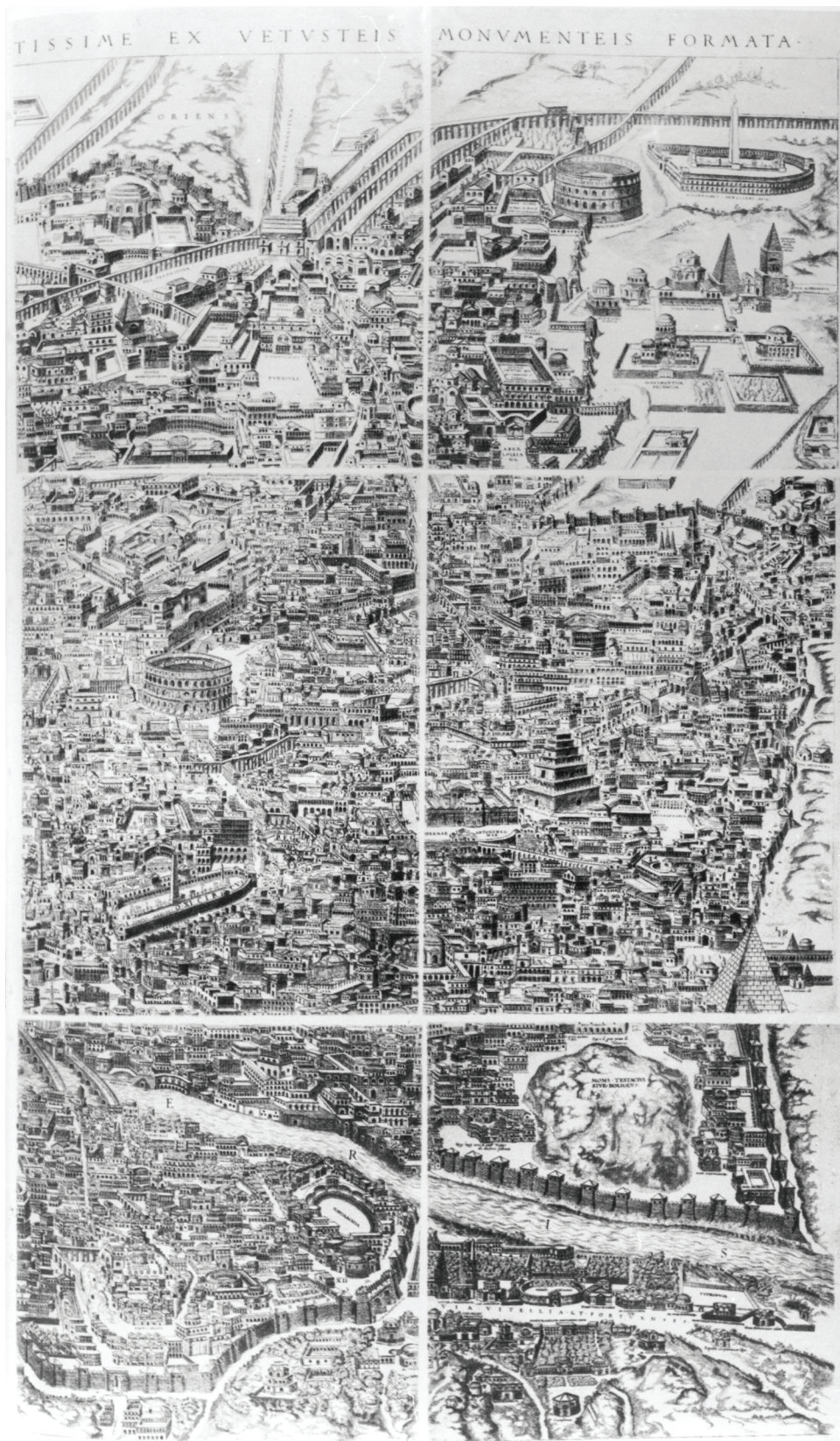


Fig. 37b: Pirro Ligorio, *Antiquae urbis imago accuratissime ex veteribus monumenteis formata*, Rome [Tramezino] 1561 facsimile print (HAB Wolfenbüttel)



copies by scholars by the end of the sixteenth century, they would not be rejected as forgeries until the nineteenth century<sup>83</sup>.

Translation: Andrea M. Gáldy

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C. Iulii Caesaris (Jacopo Strada)

C. Iulii Caesaris rerum gestarum commentarii XIV ... omnia collatis antiquis manuscriptis exemplaribus, quae passim in Italia, Gallia & Germania invenire potuimus, doctè, accurate & emendatè restituta cum doctiss. annotationibus Henrici Glareani, Fulvio Orsini Romani, Francisci Hotomani, I.C. Aldi Manutii, P.F.; Ex Musaeo et impensis Iacobi Stradae Mantuani, S.C.M. Antiquarij, et civis Romani, Frankfurt/M. [Strada/Rab] 1575

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Diaskeuè (Jacopo Strada)

A<ureorum> A<rgenteorum> A<ereorum> Numismatōn Antiquorum: ΔΙΑΣΚΕΥΗ. Hoc est, Chaldaeorum, Arabum, Libycorum, Græcorum, Hetruscorum, ac Macedoniae, Asiae, Syriae, Ægypti, Syculorum, Latinorum, seu Romanorum Regum, a primordio Urbis, Deûm, Coss. tempore Reipub: & crescente adhuc, tam sub Cæss. Latinis, in occidente, quam Græcis Imp. in oriente, declinante Imperio P.R. denique Hexarchorum, Barbarorum Principum, Ducum: METALLICARVM EICONVM explicatio. Ex Musæo IACOBI STRADÆ Mantuani Antiquarij, Civis Romani: Cum septem Indicibus Locupletissimis, partim Alphabeticis, quibus res diuersissimæ continentur, partim serierum, quæ Regum, Cæss. Imp. ac Tyrannorum, necnon Heroinarum nomina perscribunt.

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Discours (Guillaume du Choul)

Discours de la religion des anciens Romains, escript par noble seigneur Guillaume du Choul, conseiller du roy, & bailly des montaignes du dauphiné, et illustré d'un grand nombre de medailles, & de plu-

<sup>83</sup> Burkart 2018, p. 25. In his [letter of 29 January 1695](#) to Nicolas Thoinard (1629–1706), Andreas Morell (1646–1703) criticized Strada's imitations. The invented coin of Vespasian, mentioned in the letter, is included in *MaNO* 11, fols [22r–23r](#). Information provided by F. de Callataÿ, KBR, Brussels.





sieurs belles figures retirées des marbres antiques, qui se treuvent à Rome, & par nostre Gaule, Lyon [Rouille] 1556. (Dekesel – Berghaus 1997, D 5; CensuID [63759](#)). This edition is available at Kunsthistorisches Institut Florenz ([KHI](#))

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MAGNUM AC NOVVM OPVS Continens descriptionem Vitae imaginum, numismatum omnium tam Orientalium quam Occidentalium Imperatorum ac Tyrannorum, cum collegis coniugibus liberisque suis, usque ad Carolu(m) V. Imperatorem. A Iacobo de Strada Mantuano elaboratum. TOMVS PRIMVS. ANNO DOMINI MDL; Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, shelfmark Chart A 2175, digitally accessible under <https://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/ufb/servlets/solr/ufb2?qry=Strada> (CensuID [10163382](#)). All coin drawings of the *MaNO*, for which an original

could be identified, will be entered into the database of the »Census of Antique Works of Art and Architecture Known in the Renaissance« (<http://www.census.de>)

#### Omnium Caesarum (Enea Vico)

Omnium Caesarum verissimae imagines ex antiquis numismatis desumptae. Additae per brevi cuiusque vitae descriptions ac diligenti eorum, quae reriri poterunt numismatum, aversae partis delineation. Libro Primo. Editio altera. Aeneas Vicus Parmigiano, Venice [Zantano] 1554. (Dekesel – Berghaus 1997, V 19). This edition is available at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=ien.35552000251214&view=1up&seq=5>

#### Series (Jacopo Strada)

SERIES Imp. Roman. ac Graecorum et Germanorum omnium a.C. Iulio.C.F.C.N. Caesare usque ad Maximilianum II. Caes. P. F. Aug. una cum liberis patrimis atque matrimis ex a.a.a. numismatibus quam fidelissime delineatis: inservimus etiam iuxta tempora hexarchos et longobardos reges omnisque cum ipsorum elogiis breviter descripsimus. Tomus primus continet XII Caes. a C.IV.C.F.C.N. Caes. usq. ad Nervam Imp. Ex Musaeo. Iacobi de Stradae Mantuani Caess. Antiquarii Civis Romani; Forschungsbibliothek Gotha, shelfmark Chart. A 1243a. Link: [https://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/ufb/receive/ufb\\_cbu\\_00011034?derivate=ufb\\_derivate\\_00010192](https://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/ufb/receive/ufb_cbu_00011034?derivate=ufb_derivate_00010192) (CensuID [10082563](#))

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