

A HOARD OF SILVER COINS OF AQUILEIA AND TRIESTE FROM THE SECOND HALF OF THE 13TH CENTURY FOUND NEAR THE VILLAGE OF NJIVICA (SLOVENIA)

A hoard from the vicinity of Češnjica near Kropa was published in 2016 in Numizmatičke vijesti 58/69. After this publication, a private collector from Kranj decided to take another look at the area of the discovery. In April 2017 he discovered another seven Aquileian and Trieste silver coins, and then donated the coins to the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia (further NMS). A visit to the site established that the site of discovery corresponded to the previously known location of the hoard. During field survey and discussion with the collector, data was uncovered about yet another related nearby find from the vicinity of Njivica (Besnica). The latter find was discovered with a metal detector in 1985, and the finder sold the coins to a collector in Gorenjska/Upper Carniola, who still possesses them today - the find would seem to have been completely preserved.

The coins were scattered over a square meter or two and probably represent the contents of the purse of a traveller, who lost or concealed it along the old road that led from Friuli through Carniola to Carinthia. The find is composed of eleven coins of the Aquileian patriarchs Berthold (Bertoldo; 1218–1251) and Gregory (Gregorio; 1251–1269), and nine Trieste coins of the bishops Volrico (Volrico de Portis da Cividale; 1233–1254), Arlongo (Arlongo de Voitsberg; 1254–1280), and an anonymous minting (Civitas; 1254–1257). The purse would have been lost after 1269.

Key words: Kranjska/Carniola, Češnjica pri Kropi, Njivica pri Besnici, hoard, 13th century, analysis

In April 2017, a private collector from Kranj decided to revisit the terrain at „Na kmetih” in the village of Češnjica near Kropa, where a hoard of silver coins of the Aquileian type from the 13th century had been discovered in 2007. The find was published in *Numizmatičke vijesti*, 69, 2016 (A. Šemrov, ‘Nalaz akvilejskih i tršćanskih srebrnjaka iz druge polovice 13. stoljeća u okolici Češnjice kod Krope’, 113–121). The finder brought the new coins (three coins of the Aquileian patriarch Gregory [Gregorio; 1251–1269] and four silver coins of Arlongo [Arlongo de Voitsberg; 1254–1280]) to the Numismatic Cabinet of the NMS and donated them to the collection of medieval coins. It was established after field survey of the site that the „new” coins were in fact truly a part of the hoard of silver coins from Aquileia and Trieste discovered in 2007. During further questioning, the author succeeded in learning that in long-ago 1985, a hoard of „thin and fragile” silver coins had been found, to the northwest of Češnjica near Kropa near the village of Njivica. With the aid of the collector and the son of the finder, I was able to get in contact with the present owner of these coins, who had purchased them from the finder soon after discovery. The exact location of the find from the vicinity of Njivica was also established, in the inaccessible area called „V štukih”. The find contained eleven coins of the Aquileian patriarchs Berthold (Bertoldo; 1218–1251) and Gregory (Gregorio; 1251–1269), and nine coins from Trieste of the bishops Volrico (Volrico de

Portis da Cividale; 1233–1254), Arlongo (*Arlongo de Voitsberga*; 1254–1280), and an anonymous minting (*Civitas*; 1254–1257).

In light of the repressive Slovenian legal regulations applying to the archaeological heritage, the private owner of the find at first was extremely reserved, and only after the establishment of mutual trust between him and the staff member of the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia was he prepared to offer any information about the coin find, and eventually to allow the coins to be published in light of their major historical importance. The find, as noted above, is privately owned.

This find of silver coins contains one coin of the Aquileian patriarch Berthold (*Bertoldo*; 1218–1251), ten coins of the patriarch Gregory (*Gregorio*; 1251–1269), a silver coin of the Trieste bishop Volrico (*Volrico de Portis da Cividale*; 1233–1254), six silver coins of bishop Arlongo (*Arlongo de Voitsberg*; 1254–1280), and two silver coins of anonymous minting (*Civitas*; 1254–1257). The coins were mostly very well preserved, some fragmentary, and they had not been very long in circulation, and hence the *piccoli* were more poorly preserved (Ber. 1975, types 23 and 24). The discovered coins are typical examples of the coinage that was in circulation in the second half of the 13th century in Carniola, as is also represented by other contemporary individual or hoard finds from this region.¹

Two mints were represented in the find. Most of the coins (55 %) were minted in Aquileia for the Patriarchate, while the remaining 45 % of the silver coins were minted in Trieste for their bishops. In this find, a monetary variety is reflected in the coinage of five minters, despite a numerically poorer purse, which is greater than in the finds from Češnjica and Kranj, where only three (Češnjica near Kropa) or four (Kranj) minters predominate. In comparison with the other two finds, the ratio between the mints was as follows: Kranj (Aquileia 75.29 %, Trieste 24.71 %) and Češnjica (Aquileia 45.16 %, Trieste 54.84 %). Kranj stands out in terms of its proportions, while the percentage representation was reversed for the find from near Češnjica.

The approximately equal numerical representation of the coins among the mints shows that the owner was travelling through an area where coins of the Aquileian type were in circulation. The chronological span of the minting indicates that the coins were contemporary in the monetary circulation, as the earlier coins were probably not gathered by the owner, but rather had been received as change for payment or in trade. Given such considerations, the find from Njivica would be closer to the find from Kranj than to the find from Češnjica, which was more uniform chronologically.

The find is similar to the purses found in Kranj during archaeological excavations in the Main Square (then Tito Square) in July 1965 (Šemrov 2015, 103 with the relevant literature) and on the fallow land Na kmetih near Češnjica near Kropa in June 2007 (Šemrov 2016). These finds, which contain coins of the Aquileian type, are also divided between the Aquileia and Trieste mints, and were buried after 1269.

¹ Unpublished. Data about the finds and sites of discovery are kept in the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum of Slovenia and were the basis for the doctoral dissertation of A. Šemrov. A publication is being prepared where the medieval coins from Slovenia will be published.

Table showing the finds from Njivica – V štukih, Kranj, and Češnjica near Kropa – Na kmetih.

<i>Aquileia</i>	Njivica near Besnica, 1985	Kranj, 1965	Češnjica near Kropa, 2007.	<i>Trieste</i>
Bertoldo, Ber. 16	1			
Gregorio, Ber. 17	3	5		
Gregorio, Ber. 18		11	2	
Gregorio, Ber. 19		4	3	
Gregorio, Ber. 21		28	4	
Gregorio, Ber. 22	3	15	5	
Gregorio, Ber. 23	3			
Gregorio, Ber. 24	1			
Gregorio, Ber. – (imitation)		1		
	1	2		Volrico, Ber. VA
		1		Volrico, Ber. VM
		1		Volrico, Ber. VS
	2	4	3	Anonimus, Ber. T
	5	4	2	Arlongo, Ber. AA
		1		Arlongo, Ber. AR
	1	8	12	Arlongo, Ber. AL
Σ	20	85	31	Σ

The loss or burial of the purse of silver denars and piccolos from Njivica, Češnjica, and Kranj can be placed in the period of the death of Duke Ulrich III Spanheim (1256–1269) and the beginning of the reign of the Czech King Ottokar II Přemysl of Bohemia (1269/1270–1276) in Carniola. The finds were discovered in the region under the direct control of Duke Ulrich and his administration (Kranj) and on the land of the estates of the Counts of Ortenburg (Njivica near Besnica and Češnjica near Kropa), where the Spanheim dukes were recognized as the provincial lords (*Komac* 2006, 258). The vicinity of the finds from Njivica and Češnjica was also the site of one of the more important Ortenburg centers in Gorenjska/Upper Carniola, the castle of Waldenberg above the village of Lipnica near Radovljica (*Kos* 2005, 245).

The documented finds of individual discoveries of silver coins (denarii or piccoli) of the Aquileian type from agrarian and urban surroundings are rare in Carniola (despite frequent systematic surveys), and hence in the study of the monetary circulation it is necessary to depend on hoard finds. This is also undoubtedly a result of the fact that at individual archaeological excavations it was possible to note the neglect and hence extremely poor documentation of coin finds (*Kos* 1997, 98).

Unfortunately it is not possible to establish in detail the reasons for the burial or loss of the finds. The discussed hoards and the find from Češnjica near Kropa were discovered in the vicinity of or along the transverse route Tržič – Bistrica pri Tržiču – Kovor – Podnart – Poljšica – Njivica – Prevoje – Selška dolina and further into Friuli (*Jarc* 2004,

36). The Carniolan find can also be linked to this aforementioned route, since it later had a crossroads with the Karavanke road in the town of Kranj (*Kosi* 1998, 253–259).

According to the above, the find can be connected with the origin of the owner, while the loss of the coins can be connected to the turbulent political events of that time.

Catalogue

Ecclesiastic authority				
Archdiocese				
Aquileia				
Bertold (1218-1251)				
*1	Denarius	n.y.	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 16
Gregory (1251-1269)				
*2	Denarius	n.y. (1252)	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 17
*3	Denarius	n.y. (1252)	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 17a
*4	Denarius	n.y. (1252)	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 17b
*5 -				
*7	Denarius	n.y. (ca. 1269)	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 22
*8 -				
*10	Piccolo	n.y.	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 23
*11	Piccolo	n.y.	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 24d
Bishopric				
Trst/Triest/Trieste				
Volrico de Portis da Cividale (1233-1254)				
*12	Denarius	n.y.	Trieste	Ber. 1995, VA
Anonimus (1254-1257)				
*13 -				
*14	Denarius	n.y.	Trieste	Ber. 1995, T
Arlongo de Voitsberg (1254-1280)				
*15 -				
*19	Denarius	n.y.	Trieste	Ber. 1995, AA
*20	Denarius	n.y.	Trieste	Ber. 1995, AL



Fig. 1. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 2. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 3. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 4. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 5. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 6. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 7. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 8. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 9. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 10. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 11. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 12. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 13. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 14. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 15. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 16. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 17. Obverse and reverse



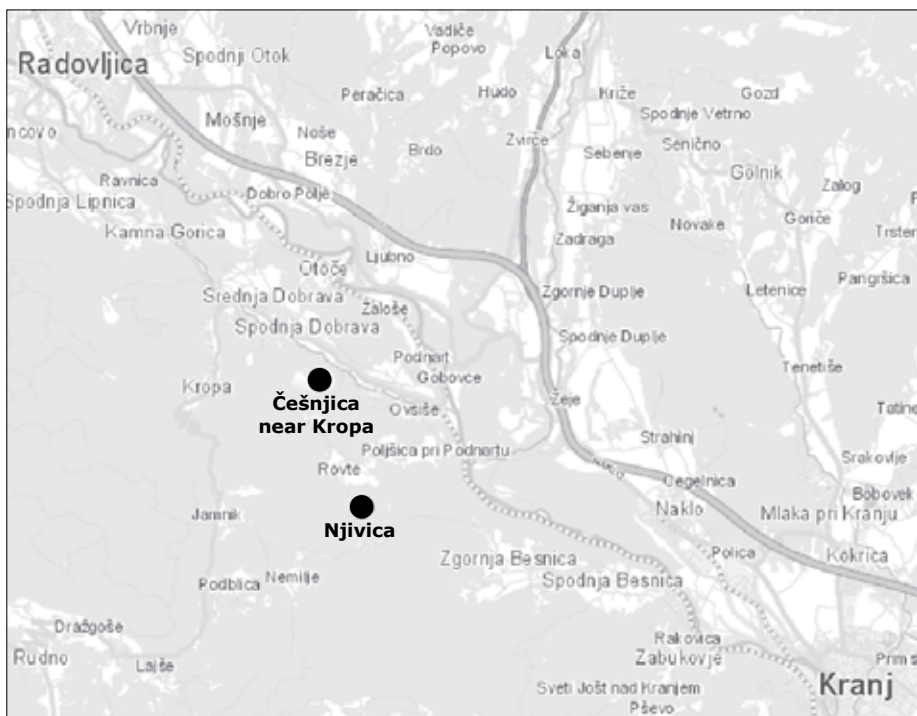
Fig. 18. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 19. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 20. Obverse and reverse



Map showing the finds from Njivica and Češnjica near Kropa

- 1 Leg. av.: BERTO - LDVS•P•; Leg. rv.: +•CIVITAS•AQVILEGIA•. W.: 1,01 g. Φ = 20,5 mm. Axis: 3.
- 2 Fragmentary. Leg. obv.: GREGORI' - ELECTVS; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS AQVILEGIA; Type: Lily. W.: 0,87 g. Dim.: 19 x 20 mm. Axis: 10.
- 3 Fragmentary, double strike. Leg. obv.: •GREGORI'• - •ELECTVS•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS AQVILEGIA; Type: Lily. W.: 0,88 g. Dim.: 20 x 19 mm. Axis: 10.
- 4 Fragmentary. Leg. obv.: •GREGORI'• - •ELECTVS•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS AQVILEGIA; Type: Lily. W.: 0,72 g. Dim.: 18,5 x 20 mm. Axis: 8.
- 5 Leg. obv.: GREGO - RIV'•PA•; Leg. rev.: •AQVI - LEGIA•; Type: Eagle l.; above, a dot left and right of the head. W.: 1,06 g. Dim.: 20 x 20,5 mm. Axis: 7.
- 6 Leg. obv.: GREGO - RIV'•PA•; Leg. rev.: •AQVI - LEGIA•; Type: Eagle l.; above, a dot left and right of the head. W.: 1,05 g. Φ = 20 mm. Axis: 5.
- 7 Leg. obv.: •GREGO - •RIV'•PA•; Leg. rev.: •AQVI - LEGIA•; Type: Eagle l.; above, a dot left and right of the head. W.: 1,01 g. Dim.: 20,5 x 20 mm. Axis: 11.
- 8 Leg. obv.: +GREGORI'•PATI; Leg. rev.: +AQVILEGIA; Type: Lily. W.: 0,23 g. Dim.: 11,5 x 11 mm. Axis: 4.
- 9 Fragmentary. Leg. obv.: +GR[EGO]RI PATI; Leg. rev.: +AQVI[LE]GIA; Type: Lily. W.: 0,22 g. Dim.: 12 x 11 mm. Axis: 1.
- 10 Leg. obv.: +GREGORI'•PATI; Leg. rev.: +AQVILEGIA; Type: Lily. W.: 0,13 g. Dim.: 9,5 x 11 mm. Axis: 8.
- 11 Leg. obv.: +GREGORI'•PATI; Leg. rev.: AQ - LE - GI - A*. W.: 0,2 g. Dim.: 11,5 x 10,5 mm. Axis: 9.
- 12 Fragmentary. Leg. obv.: VOLRI - CVS EP•; Leg. rev.: +•CIVITAS•TERGE'•TVM•. W.: 0,8 g. Dim.: 20,5 x 18 mm. Axis: 2.
- 13 Fragmentary. Leg. obv.: •SANTVS• - •IVSTVS•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM. W.: 0,76 g. Dim.: 195 x 20,5 mm. Axis: 9.
- 14 Fragmentary. Leg. obv.: •SANTVS• - •IVSTVS•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM. W.: 0,74 g. Dim.: 19 x 20,5 mm. Axis: 9.
- 15 Leg. obv.: •ARLON - GVS•EP•; Leg. rev.: +•CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM•. T.: 1,24 g. Dim.: 20,5 x 20 mm. Axis: 5.
- 16 Leg. obv.: •ARLON - GVS•EP•; Leg. rev.: +•CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM•. W.: 1,03 g. Φ = 20,5 mm. Axis: 12.
- 17 Leg. obv.: •ARLON - GVS•E•P•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM. W.: 0,98 g. Φ = 20,5 mm. Axis: 5.
- 18 Leg. obv.: •ARLON - GVS•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM•. W.: 0,96 g. Φ = 20 mm. Axis: 3.
- 19 Leg. obv.: •ARLON - GVS•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM. W.: 0,83 g. Dim.: 21 x 20,5 mm. Axis: 6.
- 20 Leg. obv.: •ARLON• - GVS•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITAS TERGE'•TVM; Type: Supine crescent moon with a star, with a dot in the center; a dot below the star. W.: 1,05 g. Φ = 20,5 mm. Axis: 11.

ADDITION – Češnjica near Kropa (2017)

Ecclesiastic authority				
Archdiocese				
Aquileia				
Gregory (1251-1269)				
*1 -				
*3	Denarius	n.y. (ca. 1269)	Aquileia	Ber. 1975, 22
Bishopric				
Trst/Triest/Trieste				
Arlongo de Voitsberg (1254-1280)				
*4 -				
*7	Denarius	n.y.	Trieste	Ber. 1995, AL

A new coin hoard in the vicinity of Češnjica near Kropa



Fig. 1. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 2. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 3. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 4. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 5. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 6. Obverse and reverse



Fig. 7. Obverse and reverse

- 1 LJ 0088029. Leg. obv.: •GRĒGO• - RIV'•PA•; Leg. rev.: •AQVI - LEGIA•; Type: Eagle l.; above, a dot left and right of the head. W.: 0,97 g. Φ = 20 mm. Axis: 2.
- 2 LJ 0088034. Leg. obv.: •GRĒGO - RIV'•PA•; Leg. rev.: •AQVI - LEGIA•; Type: Eagle l.; above, a dot left and right of the head. W.: 0,87 g. Φ = 20 mm. Axis: 12.
- 3 LJ 0088028. Leg. obv.: GRĒGO - RIV'•PA•; Leg. rev.: •AQVI - LEGIA•; Type: Eagle l.; above, a dot left and right of the head. W.: 0,82 g. Dim.: 19,5 x 19 mm. Axis: 3.
- 4 LJ 0088032. Leg. obv.: •ARLON• - GV•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITA• TERGE-
•TVM; Type: Supine crescent moon with a star, with a dot in the center. W.: 1,15 g. Φ = 19,5 mm. Axis: 1.
- 5 LJ 0088033. Dvojni kov. Leg. obv.: •ARLON• - GV•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITA• TERGE-
•TVM; Type: Supine crescent moon with a star. W.: 1,15 g. Φ = 20 mm. Axis: 6.
- 6 LJ 0088031. Leg. obv.: •ARLON• - •GV•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITA• TERGE-
•TVM; Type: Supine crescent moon with a star. W.: 1,13 g. Φ = 20,5 mm. Axis: 4.
- 7 LJ 0088030. Leg. obv.: •ARLON• - •GV•EP•; Leg. rev.: +CIVITA• TERGE-
•TVM; Type: Supine crescent moon with a star. W.: 0,96 g. Dim.: 19,5 x 20 mm. Axis: 6.

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