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Some Unpublished Coins of Aelia Capitolina

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## SOME UNPUBLISHED COINS OF AELIA CAPITOLINA

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THIS note is concerned with several coins hitherto unpublished, as far as my present knowledge goes, which were struck in Aelia Capitolina by members of the family of the emperor Traianus Decius. All of them are in the Collection of the Museum of Jewish Antiquities of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

Three of them have the same *obverse* type: jugate busts of *Herennius*, radiate and *Hostilianus*, bare-headed, each wearing paludamentum, surrounded by border of dots. The inscription starts below on the left and reads AETRVSCV-SETQVINTVSCAESS (Aetruscus et Quintus Caesares). The jugate busts of the two sons of Traianus Decius are thus far recorded in Aelia in two instances: a) on a coin represented by a specimen in the British Museum<sup>1</sup> and one in the Cabinet de France,<sup>2</sup> and b) on a coin rather vaguely described by Vaillant<sup>3</sup> which possibly may be similar to the preceding.

The *reverse* of coin No. 1 (Fig. 1) shows a bust of Tyche, draped, wearing turreted crown; the inscription begins below on the left and reads [C]OLAE LK [A]PCOM — — — (AE, 11.74 gr., 26 mm, ↑).

<sup>1</sup> G. F. Hill, *Brit. Mus. Cat. Palestine*, 1914, p. 101, No. 107.

<sup>2</sup> F. de Saulcy, *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, 1874, p. 107, No. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by de Saulcy, *op. cit.*, p. 107, No. \*2.

This reverse type is known in Aelia from coins of Antoninus Pius,<sup>4</sup> Lucius Verus,<sup>5</sup> Aquilia Severa,<sup>6</sup> and on coins of the father of our princes, Traianus Decius,<sup>7</sup> and of their mother, Herennia Etruscilla.<sup>8</sup> Throughout other mints of Palestine the type is fairly common.

The *reverse* of coin No. 2 (Fig. 2) shows Tyche, wearing turreted crown and short chiton, standing l., r. foot raised on uncertain object, l. hand resting on spear or sceptre, r. extended holding human bust; on l., a legionary eagle r., on a shaft; behind the goddess, on a column, Nike l. crowning her. Inscription beginning below on the left, COL·AE L·KA — (AE, 14.32 gr., 26 mm, ↗).

This type of reverse appears in Aelia for the first time in the reign of Elagabalus<sup>9</sup> and seems to have been particularly popular under Traianus Decius. It is recorded on coins of Decius himself,<sup>10</sup> of his wife Herennia Etruscilla,<sup>11</sup> and of his son Hostilianus;<sup>12</sup> now, the series is completed by our coin bearing on the obverse the heads of both sons.

The *reverse* of coin No. 3 (Fig. 3) shows Hygieia seated l., placing r. hand over a serpent which rises up before her to feed from phiale which she holds in l. on her lap. Inscription beginning below on the left, COLAELKA — — — (AE, 13.52 gr., 24/6 mm, ↗).

This type is known in Aelia from a coin of Hostilianus.<sup>13</sup> Hygieia in a similar attitude is well attested for Tiberias where her connection with the Hot Springs is obvious. She

<sup>4</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–84, Nos. 6–10.

<sup>5</sup> De Saulcy, *op. cit.*, p. 95, No. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 98, No. 91.

<sup>7</sup> De Saulcy, *op. cit.*, p. 106, Nos. 4–6.

<sup>8</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 100, No. 103.

<sup>9</sup> De Saulcy, *op. cit.*, p. 102, No. 17.

<sup>10</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 99, Nos. 96–99.

<sup>11</sup> Baramki, in *QDAP*, Vol. VIII (1939), p. 78, Pl. XLI, No. 6.

<sup>12</sup> Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 101, Nos. 108, 109.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 102, No. 110.

further appears on coins of Caesarea and, together with Asclepius, at Neapolis Samariae.

Coin No. 4 (Fig. 4) shows the bust of *Herennia Etruscilla* r., hair fastened in long braid up back of head, surrounded by border of dots. Inscription beginning below on the left, HEREN[NIAETRV]SCILLA AVG (Herennia Etruscilla Augusta). Reverse: Two figures facing each other, between them an altar, on which both seem to be offering sacrifices. Border of dots. Inscription beginning below on the left, COLAEL — — — (AE, 13.43 gr., 25 mm, ↑).

The reverse type is so far unknown in Aelia, but judging by the analogy with a coin of Neapolis Samariae, which shows two Tychai sacrificing on an altar,<sup>14</sup> it may be assumed that the reverse of our coin represents a similar scene. It could, however, be assumed that the scene shows the emperor and one of his sons sacrificing on an altar, each of them wrapped in a toga. The bad state of preservation of the coin excludes any certainty with regard to details, and it is therefore difficult to decide which interpretation is correct.

The coins described above belong to the latest issues of Aelia Capitolina; no coins of Trebonianus Gallus nor Volusianus are recorded, and Valerianus was the last emperor who used this mint.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 70, No. 145.

