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Vidracco, Braone, and San Lorenzo

Recruitment or *dilectio*?

Abstract

This paper is a study of three solidus hoards located at strategic passages through the Italian Alps. It is argued that the hoards are connected to barbarian mercenaries in Roman service. The hoards are analysed and compared to historical sources and solidus hoards from Scandinavia. It is argued that it may be possible to distinguish between hoards that contain solidi used to pay for barbarian recruits and hoards that are proof of *dilectio*, bonus payments. In the latter case, it is argued that freshly minted solidi from northern Italy are more likely to represent *dilectio* than older and imported coins.*

Keywords: solidi, *dilectio*, Late Roman empire, Po valley, alpine pass, barbarian mercenaries

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From the early 5th century to the early 7th century AD, Romans, Visigoths, Burgundians, Ostrogoths, Byzantines, Franks, and Lombards took turns at ruling over the Po valley in northern Italy. Any serious attempt at gaining control of this region for a longer period required soldiers who could monitor the Alpine passes, see *Fig. 1*. The soldiers had to be recruited and paid for. Who were these soldiers? How were they paid? Did they ever go back home again? These questions indicate that the political history of Late Antiquity and the

Early Middle Ages is inextricably linked to the study of Roman infrastructure, the Late Roman army, and above all, the monetary system of Italy in the 5th and 6th centuries AD.¹ The latter included an upper stratum, where solidi, gold coins, were used to pay soldier's wages. The solidi were very substantial monetary units and could not easily be exchanged on minor commodity markets. Solidi were therefore often hoarded, and exchange in the circulation process was more infrequent than that of silver or bronze coins.

It is certain that Roman warlords hired various groups of warriors from Barbaricum, that is, the world beyond the Roman frontier, to work in northern Italy in return for solidi.² The barbarians were recruited with the promise of payments and at times they could be awarded an additional bonus payment, a *dilectio*. The relationship between Romans and barbarian mercenaries cannot be ascertained in any detail without corresponding archaeological evidence in the form of recorded solidus hoards. The latter have to contain specific types of solidi linking various areas of Barbaricum to Italy to allow for a reasonable degree of certainty as to whether a solidus hoard should be considered evidence of recruitment or of *dilectio*. In this paper, we shall attempt to identify various types of payments preserved in recorded solidus hoards. Our hypothesis is that hoards that contain freshly struck coins from northern Italy are more likely to represent evidence of *dilectio* rather than hoards consisting of a wide variety of older and imported solidi.

Scandinavia is the one single area in Barbaricum that has a vast number of recorded solidi from the late 5th century and

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¹ Fischer 2017; 2019a.

² Asolati 1996 suggests a correlation between the records of salaries from Byzantine North Africa and the number of solidi in early to mid-6th-century hoards of northern Italy, regarding them as evidence of salaries.

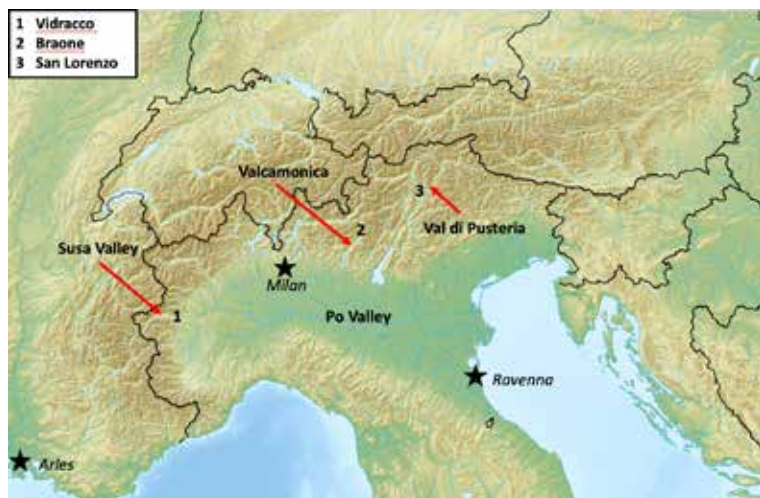


Fig. 1. Map of the Alps and the Po valley. Vidracco, Braone, and San Lorenzo are listed as nos. 1–3 respectively.

early 6th century that connect this region to Italy. The recent discovery of the Como hoard of 1,000 solidi (*terminus post quem* [tpq] AD 472) is an important addition to this material.³ There is a sharp contrast between the abundance of die-linked solidus finds in Italy and Scandinavia on the one hand and the areas directly north and east of the Alps on the other. The latter that are essentially void of any late 5th-century solidi.⁴ The numismatic evidence of die-linked coins connecting solidus hoards recovered in northern Italy and Scandinavia has been explained in terms of direct payments of solidi to barbarian mercenary units.⁵ This is supported by the fact that

recruitment of mercenaries in Late Antiquity is known from law codes, chronicles, and hagiographic accounts of saints' lives.⁶

The terms “die-identical” and “die-link” designate anything from a minimal pair of two different coins struck by the very same die on at least one side of a coin, to a long series of coins produced with the same tools. In this paper, for the sake of clarity, “die-identical” designates coins that share both the same obverse and reverse, whereas a “die-link” designates either a reverse or obverse shared by at least two coins. To differentiate the levels of connectedness amongst die-identical or die-linked coins, we refer to die-identical coins found in the same hoard as “internal die-identities”, while die-identities or die-links connecting different hoards are referred to as “external die-identities” or “external die-links”. In short, many solidi found in Italy have been struck with exactly the same tools as the solidi

found in Scandinavia. They have been kept together for some time and then they were separated as the coins were put into circulation. The circulation process was however uneven. The hoards in Italy and Scandinavia are compositions of older and newer solidi, suggesting that older coins arrived in Scandinavia at the same time as newer coins. A major problem with the comparative material from Scandinavia, however, is that it is not possible to ascertain how many people left certain regions of Scandinavia to serve within the Empire. Nor can we tell exactly when they left. There is only certainty about when and where they were paid if they also returned home and buried at least a part of the payment. There is strong evidence, however, that some barbarian retinues returned home to Scandinavia and then went back to the Empire with solidi that had been paid for previous services, as in the case of the Udovice solidus pendants from Serbia, now transformed into personal ornaments.⁷

³ Facchinetti 2019.

⁴ The unusually rich Scandinavian solidus material was recognized in the late 19th century by two of the founders of modern archaeology, Hans Hildebrand (1882), and Oscar Montelius (1895). Early 20th-century studies include Stjerna 1905a; 1905b; Janse 1922; Bolin 1926; Stenberger 1933; Breitenstein 1944. Post-World War II studies include Werner 1949; Klindt-Jensen 1957; Fagerlie 1967; Herschend 1980; Westermarck 1980; 1983; Kyhlberg 1986; Kromann 1990. In the 21st century, works include Horsnaes 2002; 2009; 2010; 2012; 2013; Fischer 2008; Fischer *et al.* 2011. The first numismatic publications to explicitly demonstrate die-links connecting solidus hoards in Scandinavia and Italy to each other are those of Fischer 2014; 2017; 2019a; Fischer & Lind 2015; Fischer & López Sánchez 2016. In the Italian material, Svante Fischer has conducted die-link studies of the two hoards from Casa delle Vestali and the Esquiline in Rome, the Zeccone hoard near Pavia, and the San Mamiliano hoard in Tuscany, see Fischer 2014, tables 2–3; 2019a, table 1. For a comparison with the rest of Europe and the Mediterranean where there is no record of a corresponding solidus material, see the catalogues of Hobbs 2006; Depcyrot 2009a–c; Fischer & López Sánchez 2016, table 1.

⁵ Among international scholars, Grierson & Mays 1992 recognized the mercenary background for Scandinavian solidus finds with a reference to Kyhlberg 1986. Meanwhile, John P.C. Kent frequently used the Swedish material kept at the Royal Coin Cabinet in Stockholm for the *Roman*

Imperial Coinage (RIC) vol. X. In fact, several plate coins, that is, coins used to illustrate specific types, are Swedish-find coins but this was not always indicated by Kent.

⁶ See for instance *Codex Theodosianus*, VII 13, 19 (pay from the treasury also in *Codex Theodosianus* VII, 13, 16–17; *Novellae Valentiniani*, III, VI, 2–3; *Novellae Maioriani*, III—though this is more about protecting the military from tax collectors).

⁷ See Fischer 2008: the solidus pendants from Udovice include a specimen for Libius Severus, RIC X 2718, a type frequent on Öland and in Italy but extremely rare in the Balkans. The gold filigree tubular pendants were made in a South Scandinavian workshop.

It is not known how the transfer of solidi from the imperial mint to the barbarian mercenaries was organized, nor is it clear how such arrangements were ever represented in the official propaganda and public records of the Late Roman state apparatus and Germanic successor kingdoms—was it all presented as *dilectio*, that is, a sort of voluntary bonus when the ruler was pleased with his army? Note there that the Roman ruler portrayed on the solidi could have been uninformed of the newly struck issues or even opposed to their distribution, as they could have been considered counterfeit or illegitimate. Originally, the Late Roman government had a very structured approach to the transportation of gold as shown by 4th-century written sources.⁸ This must have been a quite complicated matter that required reliable and experienced personnel, as government gold transports would have been highly classified military operations. This rigorous system gradually broke down during the first half of the 5th century. In late 402, the western emperor Honorius chose to relocate from Milan to the more secure Ravenna on the Po estuary. This was caused by the arrival of the Goths in Italy. They were definitely barbarians in Roman military service—their king Alaric was *magister militum per Illyricum* and nominally under the command of the senior eastern emperor Arcadius. But they were not loyal to Honorius and he did not wish to employ them—on the contrary. Honorius must have experienced substantial problems of asserting control over the central Po valley and the Alpine passes to the north of Milan. As shown by a *novella* from 403 in the *Codex Theodosianus*, Honorius soon authorized provincials in northern Italy to raise private militias to hunt down renegade army units of deserters.⁹ This may well have had implications for his later transfer to Rome in 404 and subsequent return to Ravenna soon after.

The new law of Honorius probably stands in relation to the hoards of Gravisca (174 solidi, *tpq* 395) and Parma (265 solidi, *tpq* 395) which would have been hidden away by wealthy aristocrats during a period of crisis.¹⁰ The two hoards cannot readily be attributed to military units which would often receive payments where recently issued, die-linked solidi were mixed with older worn issues, resulting in a mix of internal die-identities for younger coins and external die-identities for older coins. The Gravisca hoard in particular consists of extremely well-preserved solidi that have seen very little circulation. But the two hoards share one important feature—the final coins belong to Honorius' last regular issues from the Milan mint, *Roman Imperial Coinage* (*RIC*) vol. X, no. 1206,

which cannot be more precisely dated than *c.* 395–402.¹¹ It thus seems that the upper stratum of the Italian nobility had begun a process of hoarding shortly after the death of Theodosius I in 394 up to the time for Honorius' move from Milan to Ravenna in 402. But these two hoards were obviously removed from circulation before any solidi from the subsequent massive solidus output from Ravenna could reach the hoard owners. By contrast, the slightly later Carpignano hoard from Pavia (13 solidi, four tremisses, and jewellery, *tpq* *c.* 402), San Lazzaro (6 solidi, *tpq* *c.* 405) and the Tiber hoard from Rome (69 solidi, *tpq* *c.* 405), could perhaps indicate that the new laws and the new output of solidi from Ravenna and Rome after 404 had changed the patterns of circulation and hoarding. The Tiber hoard consists of 59 fresh issues for Arcadius and Honorius from Ravenna and Rome but only ten from the preceding issues struck in Milan.¹² Unfortunately, the smaller hoards provide less tangible evidence: the San Lazzaro hoard has four solidi from Milan and one each from Rome and Ravenna. The Carpignano hoard consists of three solidi from Milan and eight solidi and four tremisses from Ravenna, but none from Rome.

Further laws regulating the problematic matter of hiring and paying soldiers were issued in 443 and 444 under Valentinian III.¹³ Leading nobles and landowners now had to provide recruits but also pay for them according to their rank. There is similar legislation in a lost *novella* issued by Majorian in the period 456–461.¹⁴ Nothing in these emergency laws states if the recruits had to be Roman subjects or barbarians, nor is there any mention of what to do with barbarian troops once they had been paid or when a given military campaign had been terminated. By the late 5th century, there is even less

¹¹ A final coin in a coin hoard is the coin that can be said to have been struck last of all coins the hoard, it offers the *terminus post quem* (*tpq*), that is to say, the coin that provide the earliest certain date after which the coin hoard could have been assembled. A case in point: Leo I (457–474) and Anthemius (467–472) were co-rulers for more than five years. But if we find coins for both rulers struck from 468 and onwards in the same hoard (as happens to the case in several hoards), the coins for Anthemius are the final coins because minting in his name ceased with his death in 472, whereas coins for Leo I were struck both before and after the death of Anthemius, e.g. *RIC* X 630 that were produced in *c.* 468–473. This means that Leo's coins issued up to 473 only provide the *terminus ad quem*, a possible but uncertain date. Given the fact that most of the solidus hoards discussed in this article are mixed assemblages of solidi from several contemporaneous mints, both the final coin *tpq* and the coin providing the *terminus ad quem* are sometime hard to date. This is the case as many pseudo-imperial issues from Italy often imitate earlier Constantinopolitan official issues and continue to do so even after the ruler in question had died and his official issues were no longer produced.

¹² For Carpignano, see Patroni 1911; Degraasi 1941; Peroni 1967, 101–103; *RIC* X, cvii. For the Tiber hoard, see Balbi de Caro 1987; *RIC* X, cix. For San Lazzaro, see *RIC* X, cx.

¹³ *Novellae Valentiniani* III, IX.

¹⁴ *Novellae Maioriani*, VIII.

⁸ Van Heesch 2006.

⁹ *Codex Theodosianus* VIII, 18, 14.

¹⁰ For Gravisca, see Torelli 1970; *RIC* X, xcix; Gambacorta 2009. For Parma, see Bermond Montanari 1962; *RIC* X, cvii.

certainty in regard to the increasingly fragile system in which barbarian troops were paid with specific issues of solidi. Suffice to say that there were many different private military contractors of various kinds looking for mercenaries.¹⁵

It seems most likely that a successful crossing of the Alps in the quest for solidi was a collective endeavour, preferably under the leadership of an experienced officer. Two anachronistic parallels may be in place. First, the 1984 discovery of the so-called “Theodul Pass mercenary” shows the dangers of crossing the Alpine passes by oneself. The man who died in c. AD 1610 was carrying a purse of coins struck in various mints in northern Italy, while also wearing a pistol and a rapier manufactured in Solingen, Germany. He probably died alone while crossing the Theodul Pass from Aosta to Zermatt because the preserved skeletal material and the retrieved objects suggest that no one was there to either help or rob him.¹⁶ Second, some two centuries later, the Russian general Alexander Suvorov had to go through extraordinary lengths to move his troops in 1799–1800 across the Swiss highlands in winter without major losses. We can thus be certain that a successful round trip to Italy involved many aspects that could potentially malfunction and put the entire barbarian mercenary retinue in jeopardy.

While it is conceivable that a Roman patron or warlord might think that an advance payment could be counterproductive, from a barbarian perspective it was certainly not. Barbarian mercenaries engaged in a very risky business. It is likely that barbarian mercenaries would have desired assurances prior to any undertaking because chances were that their Roman patron could die or suddenly disappear from the scene if things went wrong. Worse, it could also be possible that there never was any money at all—promises of a forthcoming *dilectio* could prove to be empty talk. Given these fears, it follows that barbarians probably preferred advance payments upon entry precisely at the Alpine transit points.¹⁷

Given the Roman reluctance to pay barbarian mercenaries before anything had been accomplished, the advance payment upon arrival at an Alpine transit point was probably subject to bargain and negotiations. The bargaining power would presumably stand in explicit relation to the number of troops, proof of skills and discipline and available equipment displayed by the incoming barbarian retinue *vis-à-vis* the de-

tachment sent to receive and escort the barbarian troops to a base camp prior to a military campaign. Similarly, a barbarian unit that had experienced severe losses during service in Italy may have had difficulties in receiving payment at the expiration of a contract given the shortage of manpower necessary to extract Roman gold from an imperial emissary or warlord. Such a decimated barbarian retinue could potentially become desperate and resort to plunder and the taking of hostages within the Empire. Alternately, they could just pretend to go home through an Alpine pass, only to stop and hide in order to ambush another military unit that was returning back to base with a payment.

It cannot be excluded that the barbarian troops were told one story when paid by whoever happened to pay them and that the rest of Roman society may have received very different information; a *dilectio* could thus be a matter of interpretation. In any case, there seems to be no reference in the iconography of the solidi themselves that would have been deliberately introduced in order to please the foreign troops, with the possible exception of the solidus coinage of Majorian, Anthemius, and Olybrius.¹⁸ This situation may well have changed after 476. Odoacer and Theoderic had no direct interest to cater to the aesthetic preferences of barbarian mercenaries although both appear to have been dependent on foreign recruits at different times. Rather, the iconography of solidi issued in Italy after 476 is best described as one of unimaginative conformism. There is even reason to suspect that

¹⁵ Mathisen 2019 is the most recent study with an emphasis on the Late Roman private militias and mercenary units.

¹⁶ Tabernero & Gianazza 2014.

¹⁷ There are several sources that could indicate advance payments to barbarians in the 5th century. Orosius *Historia adversus paganos*, VII 43, 3 and 6 mentions Athaulf, while VII, 43, 13 mentions Vallia. In the 6th century, Gregory of Tours, *Decem Libri Historiarum*, VI, 42, VIII, 18 discusses an advance payment in solidi from Maurice to Childebert II.

¹⁸ Issued in 456–461, the solidi of Majorian depict the cuirassed and helmeted emperor in full profile carrying a shield with a Christogram on the obverse. While there is a small possibility that the issues struck for Majorian have been inspired by the iconography of some quite rare issues celebrating Honorius' thirteenth consulate and thirtieth vota in 422 (*RIC* X 1330–1332, frequency rate R4–R3), and Valentinian III (*RIC* X 2017, frequency rate R4) the latter types have yet to be found in recorded solidus hoards in Italy and should be regarded as very isolated and unusual cases. In fact, the only recorded specimen in a hoard is a *RIC* X 1331 in the Patching hoard (Abdy 2013, no. 6). Another major objection to a theory of a direct influence from two such rare and specific types for Honorius and Valentinian III for all issues for the later emperor Majorian is that none of these unusual types ever show the emperor in full profile but have full frontal portraits. Rather it seems that Majorian was the only fifth century emperor in the West to have a full helmeted profile with a large Christogram on the shield on a wide range of different solidus issues—more than thirty years after the rare issues of Honorius were struck. Following Anthemius' first consulate in 467, the reverse of the solidi depicts two standing emperors dressed as soldiers showing the alliance between the Anthemius and the senior emperor Leo I. The reverse side of solidi struck by Olybrius in 472–473 depict a lone cross surrounded by the legend SALVS MVNDI, a distinct break with previous iconographic tradition that is difficult to explain (Facchinetti 2019). One interpretation is that Olybrius wanted to show his religious conviction, evident during his time in Constantinople and that this may have influenced the choice of the reverse motif. It is equally possible that the more common reverse with a cross on all semisses and tremisses may have influenced the choice.

many of the Ostrogothic dies used at the Rome mint may well have been cut by Constantinopolitan die-cutters given their high artistic quality.¹⁹

An episode in Eugippius' *Vita Severini* suggests that a detachment of Roman soldiers sent from their garrison in Batavis (current Passau, Bavaria) to Italy to collect their *extremum stipendium*, that is, an outstanding payment, were reported as missing or killed in action shortly afterwards. It seems that they were paid in Italy but subsequently attacked by barbarians on their way back, although the exact circumstances are not clear.²⁰ Regardless of what happened, we can be reasonably certain that the troop detachment from Batavis would have chosen to enter Italy via the Valcamonica if the payment was to be extracted from Milan. If the payment was to be collected in Ravenna the unit would have chosen the Plöckner Pass and then the coastal route once out of Noricum. No solidi have so far been discovered at Batavis.²¹ The fort and settlement were supposedly later overrun by an invading army under the Thuringian king Hunumund in 476.

¹⁹ Fagerlie 1967; Fischer & López Sánchez 2016. For the most recent typologies of Ostrogothic coinage, see Arslan 1989; 1994; Metlich & Arslan 2004. An early study is that of Kraus 1928.

²⁰ Eugippius, *Vita Severini*, 20, 1. XX. "Per idem tempus, quo Romanum constabat imperium, multorum milites oppidorum pro custodia limitis publicis stipendiis alebantur. Qua consuetudine desinente simul militares turmae sunt deletae cum limite, Batavino utcumque numero perdurante. Ex quo perrexerant quidam ad Italiam extremum stipendium commilitonibus allaturi, quos in itinere peremptos a barbaris nullus agnoverat. Quadam ergo die, dum in sua cellula sanctus legeret Severinus, subito clauso codice cum magno coepit lacrimare suspirio. Astantes iubet ad fluvium properanter excurrere, quem in illa hora humano firmabat cruore respergi, statimque nuntiatum est corpora praefatorum militum fluminis impetu ad terram fuisse delata." "So long as the Roman dominion lasted, soldiers were maintained in many towns at the public expense to guard the boundary wall. When this custom ceased, the squadrons of soldiers and the boundary wall were blotted out together. The troop at Batavis, however, held out. Some soldiers of this troop had gone to Italy to fetch the final pay to their comrades, and no one knew that the barbarians had slain them on the way. One day, as Saint Severinus was reading in his cell, he suddenly closed the book and began to sigh greatly and to weep. He ordered the bystanders to run out with haste to the river, which he declared was in that hour besprinkled with human blood; and straightway word was brought that the bodies of the soldiers mentioned above had been brought to land by the current of the river." English translation of Eugippius by George Washington Robinson, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1914.

²¹ Dembski 1982. The absence of recorded solidi in the fort of Batavis is perhaps not surprising, but it should be mentioned that solidus finds in such Late Roman fortifications do exist—a hoard of 13 solidi with the final coin for Justinian was discovered in 1882 by Castel Verruca, Doss Trento, and a solidus for Honorius in Vireux-Molhain, Ardennes department (Lémant 1985). In Barbaricum, one can mention solidus finds in the Ôlandic ringforts of Bårby Borg (Justin I) and Sandby Borg (two solidi for Valentinian III), and in the immediate vicinity of the ringforts of Eketorp and Ismantorp (both Leo I), see Fagerlie 1967; Fischer 2019a; 2019b.

Towards a fusion of archaeology, numismatic data, and Late Roman history

The new emergency laws of the 5th century gave entrepreneurial noblemen and warlords *carte blanche* to recruit private armies to conduct local campaigns in northern Italy whenever necessary. Kleptocracy had been introduced by imperial decree. There was now a legal precedent that allowed men of means and consequence to hire barbarian mercenaries to execute dirty jobs if this was deemed an expedient solution. Given the evidence from Roman law, it is quite problematic from a numismatic perspective to attribute the many western solidus issues in the name of eastern emperors. They could have been struck by many different imperial functionaries or warlords in the Roman west, and the new coins could have been offered to troops under the guise of a *dilectio*.²² A particularly burning question is why such solidi are so frequent in archaeological contexts in Scandinavia but not elsewhere outside Italy.

The distribution pattern of solidi in Italy and Western Europe is very much conditioned by chronology. Solidi struck in Italy did not circulate for longer periods in these regions after the Roman Empire state apparatus ceased to function effectively there, nor were there opportunities to trade for solidi to any greater extent in the various barbarian successor kingdoms. The only area in the Western Europe, where there was both a continuous domestic production and an influx of solidi from Constantinople is Italy. It is very tempting to suggest that many of these western issues were struck by competing semi-independent warlords in Italy while the genuine eastern solidi were shipped to the legitimate emperors as subsidies from Constantinople.²³ Still, the Italian hoards are very different from each other; many hoards display greater similarities in terms of typology with Scandinavian hoards that may be anywhere from a decade younger or older in terms of composition periods or deposition dates. It is precisely this strong connection to the Italian material that makes the recorded solidus Scandinavian hoards so useful as a comparative backdrop. The integration of numismatic data with the written sources of Late Antiquity requires the evaluation of clusters of coin hoards as contextual historical evidence.²⁴

The best place to follow the money leaving Italy for Scandinavia is precisely where "the barbarian gold haemorrhage"

²² Depeyrot 1986a; 1986b discusses the possibility of independent warlords in Gaul issuing solidi in the name of Valentinian III, Majorian, and Libius Severus. See also Fischer 2019a.

²³ Fischer & López Sánchez 2016.

²⁴ For important discussions on how to study comparative hoarding horizons, see Gorini 1986 on the San Lorenzo hoard; Arslan 1987 on the Braone hoard; Asolati 1996 on the Nerviano hoard; Arslan & Viglietti 2008 on the Pava hoard.

Table 1. The composition of the Vidracco, Braone, and San Lorenzo solidus hoards. The orange colour denotes gold coinage struck in the West, the red colour denotes gold coinage struck in Constantinople. AV = Gold; AR = Silver.

Emperor	De facto ruler	Coin	Type	Chronology	Mint	Vidracco	Braone	San Lorenzo	Total
Leo I	Leo I	Solidus	RIC X 605	c. 462–466	Constantinople	1	1	1	3
Leo I	Leo I	Solidus	RIC X 630	c. 468–473	Constantinople		2	2	4
Basiliscus	Basiliscus	Solidus	RIC X 1003	c. 475–476	Constantinople			1	1
Basiliscus	Julius Nepos?	Solidus	RIC X 3313	c. 475–476	Milan	4			4
Zeno	Odoacer?	Solidus	RIC X 3201	c. 476–490	Milan		1		1
Zeno	Zeno	Solidus	RIC X 910	c. 476–491	Constantinople		1	1	2
Zeno	Zeno	Solidus	RIC X 930	c. 476–491	Constantinople		1	3	4
Anastasius	Anastasius	Solidus	MIB 4	c. 492–507	Constantinople		1	1	2
Anastasius	Anastasius	Solidus	MIB 7	c. 507–518	Constantinople		1		1
Anastasius	Theoderic	Solidus	MIB 9	c. 507–518	Rome		1		1
Anastasius	Theoderic	Tremissis	Arslan 1989, AV 18	c. 507–518	Rome			3	3
Justin	Justin	Solidus	MIB 3/DOC 2f	c. 522–527	Constantinople			1	1
Justin	Theoderic/Athalaric	Tremissis	MIB 25/AR 37-38	c. 518–527	Rome			6	6
Justinian	Justinian	Solidus	MIB	c. 527–540	Constantinople			1	1
Justinian	Athalaric/Theodahat	Tremissis	Arslan 1989, AV 29	c. 527–540	Rome			2	2
Total						5	9	22	36

was channelled through very narrow passages in the Alps.²⁵ It can be shown both from the *Notitia Dignitatum* and archaeological surveys that there was a Roman military presence in the Alpine passes of northern Italy well into the 5th century, even if it consisted mainly of minor units composed of *gentes*, recruited barbarians.²⁶ We have chosen three reasonably well-documented solidus hoards as our point of departure: Vidracco in Piedmont, Braone in Lombardy, and San Lorenzo near Sebato in Trentino-Alto Adige, see Table 1, Fig. 1. The solidus hoards have been deposited on transit points located at key intersections of major communication routes. Vidracco lies on the road from Turin into the Val di Susa across the Alpine corridor which connects the western Po valley in Italy to Sapaudia and the upper Rhône valley in Gaul. The Vidracco hoard is currently kept at the Museo dell'antichità in Turin. Braone lies in Valcamonica, a valley that leads directly north-east to Raetia from Milan. The Braone hoard is currently kept in Museo Archeologico Nazionale della Valle Camonica di Cividate Camuno. San Lorenzo is located in the Val di Pusteria which leads east and north from Italy into Noricum. The San Lorenzo hoard is currently kept in the Museo Mansio

Sebatum. The deposition range of the solidus hoards extends from 476 to 540, that is, from the deposition of the last emperor resident in the West to the demise of the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy. While the San Lorenzo hoard was discovered in a Roman *mansio* (road hostel) in 1938 and published soon afterwards, Vidracco and Braone were discovered during roadworks in 1955 and 1956 respectively and only published many years later.²⁷

Table 1 lists all coins in the three hoards according to their chronology and types. Most of the solidi and tremisses are of very common types with the exception of the four western solidi RIC X 3313 in the Vidracco hoard and the single western issue RIC X 3233 for Zeno in the Braone hoard. One eastern specimen for Zeno, RIC X 910 in the Braone hoard shares an obverse-reverse die-link with a specimen in the Vienna Coin Cabinet. The latter may come from the Gernetto hoard discovered in 1818 near Milan.²⁸ The eastern solidi in Table 1 are a representative sample of the main peaks in the solidus production in the Constantinople mint during the period 462–540. In this, the eastern material corresponds to Thorde-

²⁵ The phrase “barbarian gold haemorrhage” is derived from the work of Guest 2008. For an early survey of the road network in the Eastern Alps, see Cartellieri 1926. See Harl 2014 for a recent study of the Hochtor sanctuary and Glockner route. The study of Metcalf 1988 compares the money transfer across the Alps of the Ostrogothic kingdom with that of the Carolingian era.

²⁶ For a detailed survey and catalogue of military equipment on key sites in the Eastern Alps in relation to the *Notitia Dignitatum*, see Zagermann 2014.

²⁷ For the San Lorenzo hoard, see Ulrich-Bansa 1939; RIC X, cx. For the Vidracco hoard, see Pautasso 1972; RIC X, cxv; Arslan 1998; Demeglio 2003; Fischer 2019a. For the Braone hoard, see Arslan 1987; RIC X, xcii; Facchinetti & Solano 2014.

²⁸ The Vienna coin has the inv. no. RÖ 30210. For a discussion of the Gernetto provenance of solidi in the Vienna Coin Cabinet, see Prohászka 2009; RIC X, cxviii. Another coin, inv. no. RÖ 29792, Romulus Augustus, RIC X 3418, is definitely from the Gernetto hoard, matching an 1820 illustration.

man's Law which states that hoards generally reflect the total output of coins that were issued of each respective type.²⁹

How do the three solidus hoards relate to specific historical events? Are they evidence of recruitment or *dilectio*? Do these sums of solidi represent payments at key transit points upon the arrival and subsequent enlistment of barbarian troops? Or should they be understood as *dilectio*, later bonus payments to the troops guarding the transit points of hostile neighbours (presumably Burgundians in the case of Vidracco, perhaps Alamanni in the case of Braone, and the Franks in the case of San Lorenzo)? Can one hypothesize that they were specific tributes to persuade potentially rebellious troops to leave Italy from there, while under the strict supervision of a reliable escorting military unit? To understand the historical circumstances in which the three solidus hoards were connected to the recruitment of barbarian troops that would have arrived and departed from Alpine transit points, one must attempt to integrate each hoard into a possible payment scenario.

Vidracco—the site and the sources

Vidracco is located at the eastern end of the Val di Susa where the valley floor opens up to the larger Po valley, see *Fig. 1*. The main part of the Susa valley extends east from Turin for c. 50 kilometres before splitting up into two separate valleys at the town of Segusio (the current Susa). At the end of the valley is the Mont Cenis Pass. The valley floor is cut in half by the Dora Riparia river, a tributary of the Po. Over the course of history, some famous warlords have crossed through the valley while many more unrecognized soldiers have been posted to guard its entry and exit points.

It has been suggested that the passage was used by Hannibal in 218 BC. Julius Caesar, who crossed into Gaul through the valley in 61 and 58 BC, claimed that the border between Gallia Cisalpina and Gallia Transalpina was somewhere in the middle of the valley by the *mansio* of Ad Fines near Ocelum, the current Drubaglio di Avigliana.³⁰ In 15 BC Segusio, at the western end of the valley, became the provincial capital. Cottius, a Romanized Sugusian chief erected a triumphal arch there to Augustus in 8 BC. The province became fully Roman under Nero in AD 64.³¹

The first record of a payment to a Roman state servant with the task of keeping the Susa valley dates to the civil war between Clodius Albinus, who ruled over Gaul and Septimius Severus who controlled Italy in AD 194–197. A certain procurator C. Iulius Pacatianus was given the task to guard the passage in

return for a payment of 200,000 sesterii.³² Soon thereafter, Septimius Severus' army crossed into Gaul and defeated Clodius Albinus at the battle of Lugdunum in 197. In the early 3rd century, the town of Segusio was wealthy enough to have an amphitheatre constructed. The later incursion of the Alamanni in 260 may have affected the valley given that most recorded coin hoards there have issues struck by Gallienus (253–268) as the final coin. Constantine I used the passage in 311–312 on his way from Gaul to confront his rival Maxentius in Italy. The Susa valley had once again become an extremely important pass by the mid-5th century. The great problem for the Burgundians who had settled on the other side of the Alps in 443 was Segusio. From there one can go north or west—a matter of a moment's thought for a warlord attacking from Italy: for a Burgundian it meant the difference between guarding the descent from one or the other pass, located c. 150 km apart. Any sensible warlord on the western perimeter of the Alps would want to control that one Italian town.

Vidracco—the solidi

The Vidracco hoard consists of five solidi, see *Tables 1–2*. There is one very common solidus for Leo I and four highly unusual and die-identical issues for Basiliscus from Milan, giving the hoard a disproportional ratio of internal die-links. There are currently five different obverse types of solidi in the name of Basiliscus known to have been struck in Italy: *RIC X* 3301–3302 (these two types share the same obverse die), 3304, 3309, 3311–3313. In the *RIC X*, John P.C. Kent attributes four types 3301–3302, 3304 and 3309 to the first reign of Julius Nepos, arguably the last legitimate Roman emperor in Italy. These solidi were supposedly struck in the autumn of 475. Only 3301–3302 can be identified as the work of the same die-cutter, and the reverse mintmark “RM” of 3302 indicates that both may have been produced in Rome. No. 3304 is attributed by the *RIC X* to Ravenna, while 3309 is attributed to Milan, as are 3312–3313 (see *Figs. 2a–b, 3a–b*). Specimens of the types 3301–3302, 3304 and 3309 are kept in the main museum coin collections of Milan, Ravenna, and Turin, but this need not be an indication of either origin or deposition patterns, as the museum coin collections in question have been augmented with acquisitions from beyond the immediate vicinity with no further details in regard to their origin.³³

Julius Nepos' many different issues of solidi are very hard to date and order in one single meaningful pattern. Solidi in his name were struck in Milan, Ravenna, Rome, and Arles. There is no consensus on how long he reigned or from where.

²⁹ Thordeman 1948.

³⁰ C. Julius Caesar, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* I, 10.

³¹ Artru 2013, 243.

³² Artru 2013, 243.

³³ See Ercolani Cocchi 1983; *RIC X*, 435–437.



Figs. 2a–b. Solidus in the name of Basiliscus. Milan mint. RIC X 3312, Helgö hoard. Photographs courtesy of the Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm.



Figs. 3a–b. Solidus in the name of Basiliscus. Milan mint. RIC X 3313, San Mamiliano hoard. Photographs from Arslan 2015.

Similarly, it is not known when Julius Nepos ceased to issue solidi in his own name, nor the related issues for Basiliscus and Zeno. Kent argued in the *RIC X* that there are two phases in which Nepos issued solidi from northern Italy, before and after the reign of Romulus Augustus (475–476), even up to 480.³⁴ This hypothesis cannot be proven given the current evidence. Nothing prevents several different actors in Italy from striking issues in the name of Basiliscus and Zeno in 476–477 with dies produced in the same workshop that also produced dies for Julius Nepos in 474–475, without ever having to involve Julius Nepos himself.

Table 2 lists all western issues for Basiliscus found in properly recorded hoards. The criteria for the inclusion in Table 2 are simple: the hoard has to include western issues in the name of Basiliscus, and an entry in the seriation must have at least two separate matches among the hoards, with the exception of the western issues for Basiliscus. Imitations, mainly from Gaul, have been excluded as entries but are included in the sums. Table 2 shows that the general distribution pattern of the coin types is clear—the hoards are all located in northern Italy and Scandinavia, namely in Vidracco (*tpq* 476), San Mamiliano, Tuscany (*tpq* 477), Zeccone, Lombardy (*tpq* 476), and Soldatergård, Bornholm (*tpq* 491).³⁵ As the type *RIC X* 3313 is very rare, Vidracco is obviously close to a main recipient of this issue, see Figs. 3a–b. The other type 3302 is only attested in San Mamiliano, while 3312 is only attested in Helgö and Zeccone, see Figs. 2a–b. These other issues need not stand in a distinct relation to the *RIC X* 3313 type or the payments surrounding the issue although this is very likely. Besides Vidracco, all other recorded hoards that contain the solidus types *RIC X* 3312 and 3313 also contain official issues for Julius Nepos.

The least complicated hypothesis regarding the payment scenario for the Vidracco hoard is that Julius Nepos, Orestes, or Odoacer (that is, whoever was in charge in Milan and Pavia in 475–477) paid a military unit to guard the roads along the valley floor to ensure that the Burgundians did not re-enter the Po valley unnoticed through Val di Susa. However it seems unlikely that the unit stayed there for a longer period as there are no later solidi in the hoard, and neither historical records nor archaeological remains in support of such a scenario. These western issues in the name of Basiliscus seem related to the notion of a *dilectio*—the coins in the Vidracco hoard were probably issued by a warlord in northern Italy who felt the need to maintain control by rewarding key military units, while also pretending to be a loyal adherent of a new emperor in Constantinople with whom he had very little contact.

The comparative numismatic evidence from Gaul

Up until the appointment of Julius Nepos as emperor in 474, the Burgundians had been firm supporters of the Empire. Gundobad, the nephew and successor of Ricimer as *magister militum praesentalis*, had personally appointed Glycerius as emperor in 473.³⁶ With the arrival in Italy of Julius Nepos, backed by Constantinopolitan troops, Gundobad left the peninsula for Gaul, although the only narrative account of his departure is to be found in the later *Chronicle* of Romuald of Salerno.³⁷ His presence in the Rhône valley shortly after seems to be attested in a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris.³⁸ Sidonius also reveals that Gundobad's uncle, Chilperic, refused to accept the jurisdiction of Nepos, and regarded those who did as potential traitors.³⁹ The Gibichungs, that is, the Burgun-

³⁴ *RIC X*, 204.

³⁵ For San Mamiliano a Sovana, see Arslan 2015. For Zeccone, see Brambilla 1870; Peroni 1967; Vismara 1998; Fischer 2014; Fischer & Lind 2015. For Soldatergård, see Fagerlie 1967.

³⁶ John of Antioch, fragment 209 (2), Cassiod. *Chronicle* 1295 (= 473).

³⁷ Favrod 1997, 263–265.

³⁸ Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epist.* V, 7.

³⁹ Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epist.* V, 6 & 7.

Table 2. The composition of solidus hoards containing western issues of Basiliscus. The orange colour denotes gold coinage struck in the West, the red colour denotes gold coinage struck in Constantinople.

Coin type	Chronology	West	East	RJC X	Vidracco	San Mamiliano	Zeccone	Soldatergård	Helgö
Honorius	395–423	x				30		1	
Galla Placidia	424–425	x				1	1		
Valentinian III COMOB*	425–455	x				64		4	1
Valentinian III CONOB*	425–455		x			1			1
Theodosius II	408–450		x			54			10
Marcian	450–457		x			34	2		2
Leo I CONOB	457–473		x		1	133	8	8	7
Leo I COMOB	461–465	x				12	6		
Libius Severus	461–465	x				23		1	1
Anthemius	467–472	x				81	15	1	
Leo II/Zeno	474		x			1	2		
Julius Nepos	474–475	x				16	6	1	1
Romulus Augustus	475–476	x				12	6		
Zeno CONOB	474–491		x			2		5	5
Basiliscus COMOB	475–476	x		3302		2			
Basiliscus COMOB	475–476	x		3313	4	1	1	1	
Basiliscus COMOB	475–476	x		3312			1		1
Basiliscus CONOB	475–476		x	1002–1003		6			2
Basiliscus & Marcus	476		x	1022–1024		2		1	
Zeno COMOB	475–480	x					3	1	3
Anastasius CONOB	491–518		x					1	2
Anastasius COMOB	491–518	x						1	6

* Under the Constantinian and Valentinian emperors, the reverse side of solidi usually had a coin legend beginning with the two letters SM (sacra moneta, or imperial mint) followed by two letters indicating the specific mint, e.g. SMAQ (the imperial mint of Aquileia). Under Gratian (368–383) began the practice of adding the legend COM (an acronym for the comitatensian or imperial mint) and later the expanded legend COMOB (comitatensian obryzium, that is imperial gold) in the reverse exergue. In Constantinople this was changed to CONOB, and in Thessalonica to TESOB and THSOB. The remaining western mints would simply use COMOB with the addition of their respective acronyms, split up on each side of the reverse, e.g. M D (Milan), R V (Ravenna), R M (Rome) and A R (Arles).

dian royal dynasty, are also likely to have resented Nepos' subsequent negotiations with Euric, which led to the transfer of some of the territory they controlled into the hands of the Visigoths. In other words, although the Burgundians saw themselves as loyal servants of the Empire, they did not recognize Nepos, and after his fall they probably did not recognize Romulus Augustus as emperor.

Table 3 lists all recorded 5th-century solidus finds from southern and eastern Gaul, that is, Switzerland and all departments of France along the Swiss and Italian borders, including a good part of the Septimania and Provence.⁴⁰ Not included are tremisses and mixed 6th-century coin hoards. There has been no attempt at seriation of the material, because it speaks for itself. The absence of matching coin types in Table 3, save for a single find of a solidus in the name of Julius Nepos allows for an interpretation that the Burgundians were not receiving regular payments of the solidus types that were struck in

Milan and later hoarded in Italy and Scandinavia in the 460s to the 490s—in stark contrast to the evidence from northern Gaul, where the leading members of the Frankish élite apparently had access to such solidi. Unfortunately, it is impossible to reconstruct Burgundian politics between 474 and 490, but we do know from Sidonius Apollinaris that the Gibichung dynasty regarded supporters of Julius Nepos as potential traitors. The scarcity of Julius Nepos' coinage in southern and eastern Gaul is therefore not surprising.⁴¹ It would thus

⁴¹ By comparison, the recorded material of solidi from Scandinavia, Belgium, and Italy shows a very different picture, see Table 2. The Italian finds are the most numerous. There are 16 recorded solidi for Julius Nepos in the San Mamiliano hoard including rare issues from Arles (Arslan 2015, nos. 467–483), but only six in the Zeccone hoard (see Brambilla 1870, no. 11). The remaining five issues from the Zeccone hoard cannot be identified among the solidi kept at Musei Civici di Pavia (see Peroni 1967; Vismara 1998). There are four issues in the Esquiline hoard (Molinari 2001, nos. 6, 13–15). In Scandinavia, there are a total of twelve (Fagerlie 1967, nos. 171–182). Eight have been found in Sweden (three of which are from Kalmar County and Öland), and four in Denmark.

⁴⁰ Lafaurie & Pilet-Lemière 2006.

seem that the Burgundians did not hold the town of Susa. The problem was that whoever held Susa could overrun Sion or Grenoble, a very real threat of a two-pronged attack. This means that the simplest explanation for the Vidracco hoard is to regard it as *dilectio*, part of a direct payment to a unit sent out from Milan with orders to keep Burgundians out of Italy.

The aftermath—the Burgundian raid of 489–490

After Gundobad returned to the Rhône valley from northern Italy, the first information we have on relations between the Burgundians and Italy comes in the record of Gundobad's raid on Liguria, at some point in 489–490, when the Burgundian ruler took advantage of the war between Odoacer and the Ostrogothic king Theodoric to plunder the north-eastern provinces of the Italian peninsula, taking a large number of captives, though we only have the evidence for the aftermath. After his victory Theodoric negotiated the return of those captives: the negotiations carried out by Epiphanius of Pavia are described at length by Ennodius in his hagiographical life of the bishop.⁴² Although Ennodius praises Gundobad, it would seem that a good deal of ransom money was raised, presumably to reimburse those Burgundian troops who had taken slaves in the course of the raid. Which way the Burgundians went, we do not know, though since the raid was explicitly on Liguria it may well have been over the Mont Cenis massif or at the western end of the Alps.

The Burgundians had easy access to the St Bernard Pass since they controlled the Upper Rhône, but this could be too far east for a Ligurian raid. Unfortunately, we do not know how far south of the Durance the Burgundian territory stretched—we know that the Visigothic king Euric attacked Die sometime in the late 470s or early 480s. This could be regarded as a one-off raid, but it has also been interpreted as evidence of Visigothic conquest. If so, however, Euric is unlikely to have controlled Die for long. The surrounding neighbouring cities of Valence and Grenoble seem not to have passed out of Burgundian hands, and the same is probably true of Carpentras, Cavaillon Embrun, Gap, Orange, St-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, Sisteron, and Vaison, all of which were represented

at the Council of Epaon, along with Die, in 517.⁴³ We also know that Faustus of Riez was exiled from Riez: it is often argued that he was exiled by Euric, but this seems unlikely: more likely he was exiled by the Burgundians for having negotiated with Euric on the part of Julius Nepos in 474. All of which is to say that we do not actually know who controlled the passes nearest to the Mediterranean Sea. It would make sense to attribute the control to Gundobad, but this cannot be proven.

Four out of five solidi in Vidracco are die-linked to the hoards of San Mamiliano and Zeccone, see *Table 2*. This is not surprising, because the two latter hoards also contain by far the highest proportion of die-links to Scandinavia among the hoards deposited in Italy after 476.⁴⁴ This is where the link between Vidracco via San Mamiliano and Zeccone to the Soldategård hoard on Bornholm becomes interesting.⁴⁵ Why is the link to Bornholm rather than to areas in Scandinavia with many more die-links, notably Öland, Helgö, and Gotland? The Soldategård hoard differs from Helgö and Gotland in its composition because it includes a half-dozen western issues from Ravenna for Valentinian III, Libius Severus, and Leo I (c. 450–462) and a corresponding set of issues for Julius Nepos, Basiliscus, Zeno, and Anastasius issued in Milan and Rome (c. 474–492).⁴⁶ These solidi are more typical of San Mamiliano and Zeccone rather than later hoards from other parts of Scandinavia.

The Burgundian ethnogenesis and the relationship between the Burgundians and the people of Bornholm is by no means a clear-cut issue, just as the relationship between the Ostrogoths and the people of Gotland remains uncertain. The number of solidi found on Bornholm is intriguing, but there was no direct link between Bornholm and the Burgundians who were settled in the Rhône valley in the course of the 5th century. Nor are there any early 6th-century Burgundian solidus imitations recorded from Bornholm, in contrast to Gotland where Burgundian solidi are present in the Botes hoard, see below, *Tables 5a–b*.

The Burgundians in the Rhône valley had been living within or on the edge of the Roman Empire since the mid-4th century, when they are recorded as arriving in the Rhine valley, during the reign of Valentinian I.⁴⁷ And in so far as their origins can be traced, they originated in Bohemia. But already by the 8th century there was a tradition, recorded in the *Passio Sigismundi regis* 1, that they had come from Scandinavia. This, of course, was probably derived from Jordanes' claim that the

In Belgium, there are five in the Vedrin hoard (Lallemant 1965, nos. 45–49) and one in the Childeric grave in Tournai (Chiflet 1655; Fischer & Lind 2015, 5, fig. 2, no. 9). Both Vedrin and Tournai should be regarded as Frankish contexts in terms of political affiliation. The current distribution pattern of solidi for Julius Nepos shows that one could definitely have access to his coinage in northern Gaul—if one had the right connections.

⁴² Ennodius, *Vita Epiphanius*, 136–184.

⁴³ Halfond 2010, 125.

⁴⁴ Fischer 2019a.

⁴⁵ For general studies of Migration Period Bornholm, see Stjerna 1905b; Klindt-Jensen 1957; Adamsen 2009.

⁴⁶ Fagerlie 1967.

⁴⁷ Jerome, *Chronicle*, sub anno 373; Orosius, *Historia adversus paganos*, VII, 32, 11–12.

Table 3. *Solidus hoards in Eastern Gaul and Switzerland. The orange colour denotes gold coinage struck in the West, the red colour denotes gold coinage struck in Constantinople.*

Dép./Canton	Hoard/Find	Solidi	Mint	Chronology	Cat nr.	Final ruler
Switzerland, Basel	Basel-Kleinhüningen	1	Ravenna (RV) Imitation	425–455	121	Valentinian III
Switzerland, Zürich	Bassersdorf	1	Ravenna (RV)	425–455	123	Valentinian III
Switzerland, Graubünden	Chur	1	Constantinople	408–450	124	Theodosius II
Switzerland, Aargau	Endingen	1	COMOB	474–491	129	Zeno
Switzerland, Zürich	Obfelden	1	Imitation	491–518	135	Anastasius I
Ain (01)	Izenave	1	?	408–456	1.191.1	Majorian
Ain (01)	Jujurieux	1	Gaul	425–455	1.199	Valentinian III
Ain (01)	Ramasse	1	Rome (RM)	467–472	1.317.1	Anthemius
Ain (01)	Bellegarde-sur-Valserine	1	Trier (TR)	407–411	1.33.1	Constantine III
Ain (01)	Saint-Vulbas	1	Constantinople	395–455	1.390.1–2	Valentinian III
Bouches-du-Rhône (13)	Arles	1	Arles (AR)	395–423	13.4.1	Honorius
Bouches-du-Rhône (13)	Arles	1	Ravenna (RV)	425–455	13.4.2	Valentinian III
Bouches-du-Rhône (13)	Maillanne	1	?	383–408	13.52.1	Arcadius
Bouches-du-Rhône (13)	Stes-Maries-de-la Mer	1	Arles (AR)	455–456	13.96.1	Avitus
Côte-d'Or (21)	Chenôve	1	Ravenna (RV)	425–455	21.166.1	Valentinian III
Côte-d'Or (21)	Combertault	95	Arles (AR), Constantinople, Milan (MD), Ravenna (RV)	408–456	21.185.1	Avitus
Côte-d'Or (21)	Étormay	1	?	425–455	21.257.1	Valentinian III
Côte-d'Or (21)	Villy-le-Moutier	1	?	491–518	21.708.1	Anastasius I
Côte-d'Or (21)	Alise-Ste-Reine	1	?	491–518	21.8.2	Anastasius I
Doubs (25)	Besançon	1	Milan (MD)	395–423	25.56.1	Honorius
Drôme (26)	St-Paul-Trois-Châteaux	1	Ravenna (RV)	402–408	26.324.1	Honorius
Gard (30)	Fons	1	Milan (MD)	395–408	30.112.1	Arcadius
Gard (30)	Villeneuve-les-Avignon	1	Milan (MD)	393–423	30.351.1	Honorius
Herauld (34)	Poussan	1	Arles (AR)	395–423	34.213.1	Honorius
Isère (38)	Laffrey	1	Ravenna (RV)	402–423	38.203.1	Honorius
Isère (38)	St-Etienne-de-Crossey	30	Ravenna (RV)	402–423	38.383.1	Honorius
Jura (39)	Clairvaux-les-Lacs	1	Milan (MD)	393–423	39.154.1	Honorius
Alpes-de-Haute-Provence (04)	Castellane	34	Milan (MD)	393–408	4.39.1	Arcadius/Honorius
Haute-Loire (43)	Etables	1	Milan (MD)	393–423	43.91.1	Honorius
Ardèche (07)	Aubenas	1	Arles (AR)	455–456	7.19.1	Avitus
Saône-et-Loire (71)	St-Bonnet-de-Joux	1	?	491–518	71.394.1	Anastasius I
Saône-et-Loire (71)	Charbonnat	1	Milan (MD)	474–477	71.98.1	Julius Nepos
Savoie (73)	Arith	1	Ravenna (RV)	425–455	73.20.1	Valentinian III
Savoie (73)	Chanaz	1	Ravenna (RV)	402–423	73.73.1	Honorius
Savoie (73)	Aix-les-Bains	1	Constantinople	450–457	73.8.1	Marcian
Var (83)	Évenos	1	Ravenna (RV)	402–423	83.53.1	Honorius
Vaucluse (84)	Sarrians	1	Milan (MD)	393–423	84.122.1	Honorius
Vaucluse (84)	Visan	1	?	393–423	84.150.1	Honorius
Vaucluse (84)	Buoux	1	Ravenna (RV)	425–455	84.23.1	Valentinian III

Goths originated in Scandinavia. But Bornholm was already known as *Burgenda land* in the 9th century.⁴⁸ Our early medieval sources do not, however, state that the Burgundians came from the Baltic island.

Perhaps we should regard these affinities as conceptual distant second cousins, where an invented “*Verwandschaft*” could possibly have been part of the ethnogenesis of both Burgundians and Bornholmers.⁴⁹ If there indeed was such

⁴⁸ Favrod 1997, 38.

⁴⁹ For an in-depth discussion of the uncertain Burgundian ethnogenesis, see Wood 1990; 2004; Kaiser 2004; Escher 2005; 2006.



Figs. 4a–b. Solidus in the name of Zeno, Milan mint. RIC X 3233. Braone hoard. Su concessione del Ministero per i Beni e le attività Culturali.

a thing as a contemporary misconception that connected Burgundians and Bornholm to each other, it could have made sense for a warlord based in Milan or Pavia to keep his enemies close by hiring people from Bornholm to guard against a rival Burgundian warlord. In any case, the rare find of die-linked solidi on Bornholm is very strong evidence in favour of this view.

Braone—the site and the sources

Braone lies on a slope overlooking the valley floor in the Valcamonica some 8.8 km north of the Roman Civitas Camunorum, the current Cividate Camuno. It is located on the eastern side of the Oglio river along the Via Valeriana Sebina that extends in a south–north direction of the Valcamonica up to the Tonale Pass from which the road leads into Val di Sole.⁵⁰ From a northern perspective, the Valcamonica is important in that it leads straight into the very heartland of the Po valley, and thus to the major towns of Milan and Pavia. An invading army that manages to pass by Braone unscathed is faced with an array of opportunities and substantial freedom of movement—it can choose any direction once out of the Valcamonica, which is not the case with Vidracco in Val di Susa in the west or San Lorenzo in Val di Pusteria in the east.

Braone—the solidi

The surviving coins in the Braone hoard consists of nine solidi struck *c.* 462–507, see *Tables 1* and *4a–b*. The composition is superficially reminiscent of recorded solidus hoards in



Figs. 5a–d. Solidus in the name of Zeno, Milan mint. RIC X 3233 var. Die-linked issues from the Zecone hoard and Träskväller, Gotland. Photographs courtesy of the Musei Civici di Pavia and the Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm.

Pomerania, Helgö, Bornholm, and the early deposition phase on Gotland, with a larger share of more recent Constantinopolitan and Ostrogothic issues rather than older Western solidi, see *Tables 2* and *5a*.⁵¹ The initial study by Ermanno A. Arslan provided a first succinct summary of the hoard. Arslan correctly stressed that the actual context is unclear. The coins were not reported right away. We cannot be sure, therefore, that all finds were reported. It was later argued that the solidi had been found in a lead container in a grave of which there is no documentation.

A burial context seems quite unlikely, given the comparative evidence from northern Italy from which it can be deduced that burials are more likely to include precious metals related to clothing and religious beliefs rather than coinage.⁵² The use of a lead container seems perfectly normal given the comparative evidence from the solidus hoards of Zecone, Reggio-Emilia, and Nerviano in Italy and the Vedrin hoard in Belgium.⁵³ We are instead forced to compare the preserved solidi to a horizon of coin hoards in northern Italy in order to ascertain if the preserved solidi can be said to configure a reasonable composition, see *Table 4a*.

Table 4a shows that that the surviving coins in the Braone hoard resemble other hoards in terms of coin types, and therefore the surviving coins may be a representative sample of the entire hoard. The preserved coins in the Braone hoard could thus be indicative of the state of economic affairs in the early reign of Theoderic in Ravenna. Very little of the old western coinage from the period 395–476 was still circulating at the time for the deposition of the Braone and Gernetto hoards—hence the only western issue of Zeno in the Braone

⁵⁰ See Anati 1980 for a survey of the archaeological background of the Valcamonica.

⁵¹ The most similar recorded hoard is Kaggeholm 7:23 on Helgö, classified as hoard no. 6, “Lillön” by Fagerlie 1967.

⁵² See the catalogue of Bierbrauer 1975, where there is a distinct difference between the contents of hoards and grave goods.

⁵³ See Brambilla 1870; Degani 1959; Lallemand 1965.



Fig. 6. The San Lorenzo mansion. Plan courtesy of Museo Mansio Sebatum.



Fig. 7. San Lorenzo hoard. Photograph courtesy of Museo Mansio Sebatum.

hoard represents a conundrum, see *Figs. 4a–b*. The problem of attributing this issue in the name of Zeno to any ruler in Italy cannot be solved at present. It is evident that the same die-cutter who produced *RIC* X 3233 also produced *RIC* X 3601. Yet, the *RIC* X attributes the former to the second reign of Julius Nepos and the latter to Odoacer. There is simply no way of knowing this. From a wider perspective, one can point to the die-link between the Zecone hoard and a single find from Träskväller on Gotland for a related issue made by the same die-cutter, see *Figs. 5a–d*.⁵⁴ It should also be emphasized that solidi from the Milan mint covering the entire period *c.* 473–480 were assembled together in the Vedrin hoard which has a single eastern issue for Anastasius as its final coin.⁵⁵ The Braone hoard is a compilation, and as such does not seem related to a *dilectio* with a new issue of solidi. Nothing prevents the money to be a payment for recruited mercenaries, but this cannot be proven with the current evidence.

San Lorenzo—the site and the sources

San Lorenzo lies in the Val di Pusteria by the old Roman settlement of Sebatum. The valley extends from the Plöcken Pass in the south-east to the Brenner Pass in the north-west. The main road through the Val di Pusteria is not recorded in the *Tabula Peuteringiana*, but features in the *Itineraria Antonini Augusti*, a description of the road from Aquileia to Veld-

idena, presumably compiled under Emperor Caracalla.⁵⁶ At the Brenner Pass, the road links up with the northbound Via Claudia Augusta in Raetia II. The epigraphic evidence from Roman milestones suggests that the Val di Pusteria was part of the Ager Aguntorum. Two events regarding the town of Aguntum are known from two important sources dating to the 6th and 8th centuries, respectively.⁵⁷ The first event dates to the Byzantine general Narses' conquest of Italy from the Ostrogoths in 552–568. The 8th-century scholar Paul the Deacon writes that Bishop Vitalis after a conflict with Narses escaped to the Franks in the civitas of Aguntum.⁵⁸ Second, Venantius Fortunatus travelled the same route in 565.⁵⁹ It should be noted that Venantius Fortunatus claimed that he did not dwell in the Roman municipium but in a fortification overlooking the valley.

San Lorenzo—the solidi

The San Lorenzo hoard was discovered under the floor of a building within a Roman *mansio*, that is, a road hostel, see *Fig. 6*. The hoard consists of eleven solidi and eleven tremisses, see *Tables 1* and *4a*, and *Fig. 7*. A central feature of this hoard is that all solidi are East Roman whereas all tremisses are Ostrogothic. The combined evidence shows that the San Lorenzo hoard was presumably meant as a payment for a unit in Ostro-

⁵⁴ See also Kraus 1928, no. 8. This is a very similar specimen from the personal collection of Kraus, not listed in the *RIC* X.

⁵⁵ Lallemand 1965.

⁵⁶ Hofeneder 2011.

⁵⁷ Wolfram 2014.

⁵⁸ Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, 4.7.

⁵⁹ Venantius Fortunatus, *Opera Poetica*, 4, 64.



Figs. 8a–b. Solidus in the name of Justin, Botes hoard. Photographs courtesy of the Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm.

gothic service in c. 540. Its task would have been to patrol the valley floor between the Brenner Pass and the Plöcken Pass and prevent unwanted incursions. It cannot be excluded that the Frankish invasion of the Po valley in 539–540 and following incursions by Alemanni and Baiuvari is what could have forced the San Lorenzo hoard to be abandoned. One may note the relatively high proportion of older solidi in the San Lorenzo hoard. If one were to remove all tremisses, the hoard would not have looked out of place in a Gotlandic hoarding horizon.

A comparative seriation of hoards—northern Italy and Gotland

A major question in the analysis of the two 6th-century hoards deposited in the Alpine passes, the Braone and the San Lorenzo hoards, is how these hoards differ from those in Barbaricum, the mixed hoards on Gotland in particular. Table 4a is a seriation of coin types recorded in solidus hoards from northern Italy from the period 476 to 565, although by no means exhaustive.⁶⁰ Given the uncertainty of the 19th-century records of now-lost hoards, we do not always have the possibility to distinguish Ostrogothic from Constantinopolitan issues. The joint issues for Justin and Justinian have been classified under the heading of Justin. The point of the seriation is to illustrate a general development in the hoarding process in the period from 476 to 565. Note that in this type of seriation, coins are seen as artefacts with specific lifespans, not as mere coins from specific reigns.⁶¹ This means that the solidi should be seen according to their comparative longevity in the seriation, not in the order that they were produced.

The composition of the San Lorenzo hoard in particular shows that a definite turning point had been reached in northern Italy by 540, and the hoard thus fits neatly into a 6th-century horizon of increasingly mixed character. Solidi

were becoming rare and valuable, and the distribution of new issues of tremisses, siliquae, and bronze nummi was a way for the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy to get around the decreasing liquidity and declining tax revenues. The simplest solution was to withdraw older western solidi from circulation and recast them as new tremisses, presumably offering them to troops as *dilectio*, sneaking in lower denominations in the guise of a bonus.⁶² Another explanation for this process is that Theoderic and the Ostrogothic state apparatus (which was not the same thing as the old imperial state apparatus) were concerned about legitimacy and thus deliberately sought to replace the older western solidi issued by illegitimate usurpers with new issues, even if this was contrary to Roman legal tradition.⁶³

Table 5a is a seriation of coin types in hoards from Gotland.⁶⁴ The point of this seriation is to show the corresponding hoarding horizon in Barbaricum. Table 5a shows that the solidi from the later hoarding period in northern Italy in Table 4a are also part of the final phase of solidus hoarding on Gotland, the Rosvalds and Smiss hoards in particular. In the early part of the two horizons, the Övede hoard looks very similar to the Gernetto hoard with a part of older western solidi balanced by new issues for Anastasius. But there are major differences, too: Ostrogothic tremisses, silver, and bronze are absent on Gotland and in all of Scandinavia, too.⁶⁵ In addition, the Gotlandic material reveals something more—for a hoard on Gotland to include a solidus of Valentinian III or Marcian, it must also include solidi for Justin or Justinian, see Figs. 8a–b. This is a very peculiar feature that separates the much later horizon of Gotland from its neighbours in Scandinavia, especially

⁶² The corresponding values of the various denominations would be the following: 1 libra of gold (c. 235 g) = 72 solidi = 144 semisses = 216 tremisses = 1750 siliquae = 3500 ½ siliquae = 518400 nummi. One single solidus would thus amount to 2 semisses = 3 tremisses = 12 siliquae = 24 ½ siliquae = 3600 nummi. For a barbarian mercenary who would want to return home with his savings, the choice of denomination was obvious—an older solidus struck in Constantinople would be the best bet. As a rule, an older solidus from Constantinople had a higher gold content than more recently issued smaller denominations in gold from Italy. It is no surprise to see that there are thousands of worn solidi in Scandinavia but fewer than a half-dozen tremisses and semisses.

⁶³ Carlà 2010, 53.

⁶⁴ The data in Table 5a has been extrapolated from Fagerlie 1967 and Kyhlberg 1986, retaining the catalogue numbers of hoards from Fagerlie 1967. For a concordance to the SHM catalogue, see Table 5b. In addition, new finds of solidi and denarii from later rescue excavations have been added to Fagerlie hoards 130b, 137b, and 174.

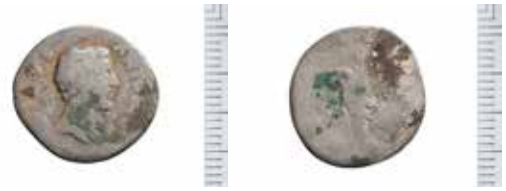
⁶⁵ The scarcity of tremisses in Scandinavia is also noticeable in the decontextualized inventories of museum collections in Sweden. There is one specimen for Leo I and three for Justin from a late 19th-century private collection in the Lund University Historical Museum, two specimens for Anastasius and one for Valentinian III in the Uppsala University Coin Cabinet, one specimen for Anastasius from a late 20th-century private collection in the Kalmar County Museum, and none in the Gotland County Museum.

⁶⁰ The data in Table 4a has been extrapolated from Bierbrauer 1975; Asolati 1996; Arslan 2005; Prohászka 2009. The catalogue numbers of Arslan 2005 have been retained. For a concordance, see Table 4b.

⁶¹ “The traits or attributes included in the seriation must depend on cultural aspects (rather than on function)”. Doran & Hudson 1975, 269.



Figs. 9a–b. Solidus in the name of Anastasius, Rome mint. MIB 9, Harkvie hoard. Photographs courtesy of the Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm.



Figs. 10a–b. Denarius for Antoninus Pius, Harkvie hoard. Photographs courtesy of the Royal Coin Cabinet, Stockholm.

Öland, where the mid-5th-century hoard of Stora Brunneby has an issue of Marcian as its final coin.⁶⁶ But a comparison with *Table 4a* shows that older eastern solidi have been included in the later hoards in Italy as well.⁶⁷

The seriation of coin types as artefacts in *Tables 4a* and *5a* lends support to the interpretation that in 6th century Italy and Gotland alike, older types of solidi from Constantinople were often considered more reliable than other forms of currency, including new forms of minted gold in smaller denominations. In short, barbarians wanted to be paid with old solidi, preferably of the most common Constantinopolitan types that they could easily recognize, notably those of Theodosius II and Leo I. Any warlord ruling the Po valley after 476 who embarked on a policy that included the minting of new coinage was thus taking a considerable risk—the new currency offered as *dilectio* could potentially be rejected by barbarian mercenaries under difficult circumstances. It is very likely that barbarian mercenaries may have reacted to the Ostrogothic monetary reform towards a more formal trimetallic economy by doing precisely the opposite of what the Ostrogoths intended—asking for and clinging to older Constantinopolitan solidi, even if worn, pierced, clipped, and underweight, while melting the freshly minted Ostrogothic tremisses that would not have had the corresponding value back in Barbaricum.

Table 5a suggests that Gotlandic mercenaries scoffed at the diminutive denominations of Ostrogothic silver coinage, given that substantial quantities of 1st- and 2nd-century Roman denarii were still in circulation on Gotland in the first half of the 6th century, as shown by the Harkvie hoard, see *Figs. 9a–b, 10a–b*. But this abundance of old denarii together with solidi seems to be a particularism unique to Gotland, as there is no similar hoarding pattern with the exception of the Childeric grave in Tournai from 481/482.⁶⁸ By comparison,

the Ostrogothic silver coinage can be found in 6th-century royal Frankish burials, notably in the grave of the Cologne princess from c. 540.⁶⁹

Conclusion

This interdisciplinary study offers three slightly different explanations for three different hoards—while they are all most likely military payments, the hoards must be related to different contingents that have been paid on separate occasions and for different reasons. It is not easy to distinguish between recruitment and *dilectio* in the later 6th-century material given that the composition of mixed 6th-century hoards in Italy differs from those in Barbaricum. It appears quite unlikely that the hoards in Italy would somehow be ritual or votive depositions, not least since there is no comparative evidence from Barbaricum to support such an interpretation. In regard to the question of combining two separate forms of evidence, it is clear that written sources and numismatic evidence seldom provide precise dates, rather the different sources must be employed to fill lacunae in a larger narrative.

In the first case, Vidracco, it is argued on the basis of the die-linked numismatic material that a mercenary unit with some sort of Scandinavian connection was posted in Val di Susa to keep Burgundians out of the western Po valley some-

⁶⁶ Fischer *et al.* 2011. This issue is a *RIC* X 508, die-linked to the Casa delle Vestali hoard in Rome, see Ungaro 1985; Fischer 2014.

⁶⁷ See Carlà 2010, 52.

⁶⁸ See Fischer & Lind 2015. There were c. 120 solidi and 300 denarii in the Childeric grave. By comparison, there are some 270 solidi and 8,000 denarii recorded on Gotland. The denarii on Gotland were imported in the 4th and 5th centuries via areas in present-day Poland and the Ukraine. While it has been argued that there also was an import of

older denarii from Barbaricum to Gaul in the 5th century, this remains an unsubstantiated claim. There are no comparable denarius hoards in Gaul from the 5th century. Most denarius finds from this period in Gaul are found in burials. The total sum of denarii in 5th-century burial contexts in Belgium, France, and the Netherlands remains relatively low compared to the thousands of graves which do not have denarii in them. These few denarii should perhaps be attributed to remaining coinage from the immediate area rather than a full-scale import. The most recent study on Gaul is Martin 2004, tab 5. Martin incorporates the earlier study of Van Hoof 1991. Martin 2004, 265–267, lists 13 graves in Belgium with a total of 13 denarii; 13 graves in the Netherlands with a total of 28 denarii; 16 graves in northern France with a total of 16 denarii. This brings the sum total to 42 graves with 60 denarii and many thousands of graves with no denarii compared to one royal grave with 300 denarii. For a comparative study on coins in burials in Barbaricum, see Bemmann 2005, which arrives at similar figures for the frequency of coinage in burials.

⁶⁹ Doppelfeld & Pirling 1966.

Table 4a. Seriation of coin types of solidus hoards from northern Italy, c. 476–565. The orange colour denotes gold coinage struck in the West, the red colour denotes gold coinage struck in Constantinople. The green colour denotes silver coinage. AV = Gold; AR = Silver. An "X" denotes that the coin type is present in the hoard.

Coin type	Chronology	West	East	Zeccone	Gernetto	Zinasco	Braone	Predello	Cervo di Dovera	Nerviano	San Lorenzo	Doss Trento	Maleco
See Table 4b				4089	3680	4090	3540	3870	3590	3850	8100	8150	4980
Galla Placidia	424–425			1									
Theodosius II	408–450		x		x	x							
Marcian	450–457		x	2	13	x						1	
Leo I COMOB	461–465	x		2									
Leo I CONOB	457–473		x	13	52	x	4	1		1	3	2	
Anthemius	467–472	x		15	1								
Leo II/Zeno	474		x	2									
Julius Nepos	474–475	x		6									
Romulus Augustus	475–476	x		4	3								
Basiliscus COMOB	475–476	x		2									
Basiliscus CONOB	475–476		x	1	11	x					1	2	
Zeno COMOB	475–480	x		3			1						
Zeno CONOB	474–491		x	1	44	x	1	1			4	2	
Anastasius COMOB	491–518	x			4+121?	x	2	12?	6				
Anastasius CONOB	491–518		x		121?	x	1	12?	2	1	1		x
Tremiss Anastasius	491–518	x	x					3		2	3		x
Justin COMOB	518–527	x						1?	2	14	1		x
Justin CONOB	518–527		x					1?	1	3			
Tremiss Justin	518–527	x	x								6		x
Tremiss Justinian	527–565	x	x								2		x
Justinian	527–565	x	x								1	7	x
AR Siliquae	491–565	x											250
Total				49 AV	273 AV	130 AV	9 AV	18 AV	11 AV	21 AV	22 AV	30 AV	12 AV
													250 AR

time around 476. But they were probably no longer around in 489/490, when the written sources claim that the Burgundians raided the area. Given that there are freshly struck, die-linked coins from northern Italy in the Vidracco hoard, it seems reasonable to associate these issues with a *dilectio*, where local rulers assured loyalty of troops while paying nominal homage to a distant emperor (see Tables 2 and 3). In the second case, Braone, it is argued that this is an early Ostrogothic payment of circulated solidi that were still at hand to a unit meant to control the Valcamonica in c. 510. The solidi look very similar to hoards from Helgö and Gotland (see Tables 3 and 5a), but there are currently no known die-links to Scandinavia. In the third case, San Lorenzo, it is argued that a hoard consisting of older Roman solidi and more recent Ostrogothic tremisses belonged to a unit patrolling the Val di Pusteria. The hoard may have been abandoned around 540 when the Franks assumed control over the valley, and Ostrogoths failed to regain control over the area. As shown in Table 4a, the combined evi-

dence from the hoards in the wider horizon of Braone and San Lorenzo suggests that there was a process in northern Italy by which earlier western pseudo-imperial issues struck prior to the arrival of Theoderic were withdrawn from circulation at a faster rate than solidi from Constantinople were coming in to replace them. This also means that it is more difficult to find strong evidence for *dilectio* in this material, and only Vidracco appears to be a certain case of a *dilectio* from a warlord ruling the Po valley.

The rulers of northern Italy in the 5th and 6th centuries were always in fear of running out of money and recruits to guard the various Alpine entry points of the Po valley. In the early 5th century, the wealthy land-owning élite was required to pay for new recruits and military campaigns when needed, but they were also allowed to raise private armies and hunt down renegade military units. This situation continued at least until the reign of Odoacer, c. 476–492. The *ad hoc* solution to an immediate political crisis had created a system re-

Table 5a. Seriation of coin types in solidus hoards from Gotland, c. 476–565. The orange colour denotes gold coinage struck in the West, the red colour denotes gold coinage struck in Constantinople. The blue colour denotes barbarous imitations in gold. The green colour denotes silver coinage. AV = Gold; AR = Silver.

Coin type	Chronology	West	East	Rosarve 1	Sigvards	Kaupe	Norrby	Övede	Norrkve	Harkvie	Vall	Prästbåtel	Bander	Rosarve 2	Botes	Smiss	Rovalds
See Table 5b				156b	136	147	177	135	153	130b	176	178	164	156a	137b	122	179
AR Denarius	1st–3rd century			15	28		1		1	5	9	1	4				
Arcadius	395–408	1													1		
Honorius	395–423	8			1			2							3	2	
Theodosius II	408–450		20		1	1		1	1				1	12			3
Valentinian III	425–455	7													4	3	
Valentinian III Gaul	425–455	2								1					1		
Marcian	450–457		8									1			4	3	
Majorian	456–461	4					1			1					2		
Leo I	457–473		33	1	1	2		1	3	4	1		2		18		
Libius Severus	461–465	1					1										
Anthemius	467–472	5			1			1	1	1					1		
Julius Nepos	474–475	1													1		
Basiliscus	475–476		2		1										1		
Zeno CONOB	474–491		16			1		1	2			1			8	1	2
Zeno COMOB	475–480	1													1		
Anastasius CONOB	491–518		26			1	1	4		1	1		2	10	5	1	
Anastasius COMOB	491–518	14						1	1	1	2	1			4	1	3
Anastasius Gaul	491–518	7								1	1		1		4		
Justin CONOB	518–527		5									1	1	1	2		
Justin COMOB	518–527	3										1			2		
Imitation	Post-395									1	1			1	4	3	
Justinian CONOB	527–565		7													7	
Justinian COMOB	527–565	2															2
Total		56	117	1 AV	5 AV	5 AV	1 AV	10 AV	7 AV	12 AV	8 AV	2 AV	7 AV	5 AV	83	25	11
				15 AR	28 AR		1 AR		1 AR	5 AR	9 AR	1 AR	4 AR				

Table 4b. Concordance to Table 4a.

3540	Braone, Brescia, Lombardy
3590	Cervo di Dotera, Campo Morone, Cremona, Lombardy
3680	Gernetto, Milan, Lombardy
3850	Nerviano, Milan, Lombardy
3870	Predello, Padenghe sul Garda, Brescia, Lombardy
4089	Zeccone, Pavia, Lombardy
4090	Zinasco, Pavia, Lombardy
4980	Lo Scopello, Malesco, Finero, Piedmont
8100	San Lorenzo di Pusteria, Sebato, Trento
8150	Verruca, Doss Trento, Trento

Table 5b. Concordance to Table 5a.

122	Smiss, Akebäck parish, Gotland, SHM 20214
128b	Norrby, Barlingbo parish, Gotland, SHM 10774
130	Harkvie, Björke parish, Gotland, SHM 31318
135	Övede, Eskelhem parish, Gotland, SHM 2747
136	Sigvards, Eskelhem parish, Gotland. Not acquired by the SHM
137b	Botes, Etelhem parish, Botes, Gotland, SHM 20802
147	Kaupe, Fröjel parish, Gotland, SHM 14672
153	Norrkve, Grötlingbo parish, Gotland SHM 31658
156b	Rosarve 1, Havdhem parish, Gotland, SHM 14486
156a	Rosarve 2, Havdhem parish, Gotland, SHM 11408
164	Bander, Mästerby parish, Gotland, SHM 31403
176	Hardings, Vall parish, Gotland, SHM 23080
178	Prästbåtel, Vänge parish, Gotland, SHM 4985
179	Rovalds, Vänge parish, Gotland, SHM 17405

sembling a mosaic of interlocked rival platforms of power. It was very difficult to control for any longer period, although some Roman noble families such as the Anicii proved to be remarkably adept at staying afloat in the high-stakes game, jumping from one collapsing platform to the other.⁷⁰ While the Ostrogoths brought a relative stability to the area which lasted at least until the mid-530s, they eventually proved unable to change the situation for good. Whenever the rulers of northern Italy either left the region to fight a war elsewhere or ran out of money and recruits, the delicate balance between the different platforms soon collapsed. Greedy neighbours across the Alps took due notice. Insolvent or inept rulers were thus soon replaced by new warlords and their retinues of barbarian warriors coming through the passes.

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⁷⁰ See Martyn 2006 for a discussion of Boethius' family, the Anicii.

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