

COIN COLLECTIONS AND COIN HOARDS FROM BULGARIA
'STOP FORGERY'
(CCCHBulg. SF)

Studies on counterfeits of ancient coins

COUNTERFEITS OF ROMAN AND
BYZANTINE GOLD COINS
Revealing the secret of how they are made



By
Ilya S. Prokopov

Sofia 2015

COUNTERFEITS OF ROMAN AND BYZANTINE GOLD COINS

Revealing the secret of how they are made

This book introduces a series presenting contemporary dies for making ancient coins that are discovered and identified as such. I'd like to begin with a synopsis of the current knowledge about the evolution of coinage counterfeit since the European Renaissance. Additionally, I also offer a summary discussion of the principal works and authors contributing to the subject of forgers and counterfeits.

The origin of modern forgery of ancient objects and coinage can be traced back to early Renaissance Italy. However, the master artisans, sculptors and engravers of the period considered such endeavors commonplace, and within the frame of the then-current codices. Virtually all known authors of counterfeit items were employees of the contemporary heads of state and Church primates. Regardless of their title - princes or governors, priests or cardinals – state heads were fully authorized to sanction the copies and imitations produced by the artisans. Many of those works considered today as forgery, were a real state of the art back in the old days. Antiquity's rich heritage and keen interest in art inspired rulers and wealthy noble families for the tradition of collecting cultural values. The example set by the state leaders, collectors for the sake of pleasure or vainglory, was enthusiastically followed by those deficient in rank but rich in resources. Determined to promote their social standing, they emulated their sovereigns' behavior, and started investing in valuables. Thus, gradually, a trend emerged and a market was created. The demand generated deficit, and thus hunger for more artifacts. Key role in the study of this particularly interesting period of Italy's history Giorgio Vasari's writings¹.

Among the first masters with flare to the Antiquity were many of the prominent names in the fine arts. One of them was Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455). He was a big talent in the field of sculpture and design, and created valuable copies of ancient Roman medallions. To this end he

¹ <http://members.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariLives.html>

CATALOGUE⁶⁴:

ROME

1. VESPASIAN 80? Couple of nickel dies for AV Aureus.

Obv. IMP CAES VESP AVG P M COS IIII, laureate head right.

Rev. NEP RED, Neptune standing left, foot on globe, holding acrostolium & sceptre.

RIC II, p. 20, No 46

Specific features: Flaking of the obverse die at the periphery to 11h.; Horizontal scratch on the obverse to 3h.; Point below the globe in ex., on the reverse. Both coin dies were intensively used. This is indicated by the highly worn out surface. Such marks are clearly visible on photo No.1. They are on Vespasian's head and around Neptune's figure. On the reverse die - Neptune's upright posture with his foot on the globe and holding acrostolium.



No.1

⁶⁴ The photographs were made in several ways with different light sources to see more details on the nickel dies.



No.2



No.3



No.4



No.5

2. BALBINUS Obverse nickel die for Double-Denarius (Antoninianus) or AV Aureus.

Obv. IMP CAES D CAEL BALBINVS AVG, radiate bust right.

Specific features: Positive vertical line at 12 h crossing letter E; Two parallel positive lines of 3h. crossing letter C. See No.7.



No.6



No.7



No.118

42. **Michael IV the Paphlagonian.** 1034-1041. Couple of nickel dies for AV Histamenon Nomisma. Constantinople mint.

Obv. + IhS XIS REX REGNANTInm, Facing bust of Christ Pantokrator.

Rev. + mIX AH L bASILEUS Rm, Crowned facing bust of Michael, wearing loros, holding labarum and globus cruciger; manus Dei to upper left.

DOC 1

Mirror image of Christ with nimbus on the histamenon nomisma of Michael IV obverse die.



No.119

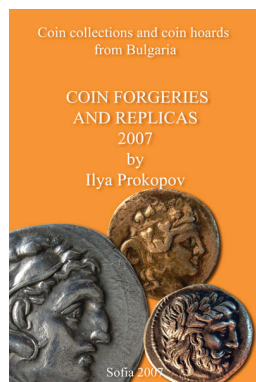
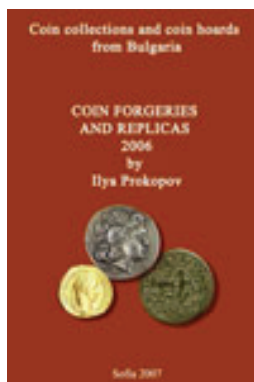
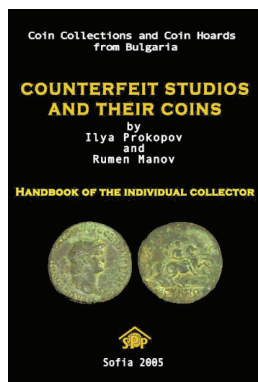
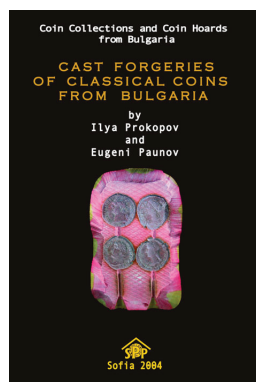
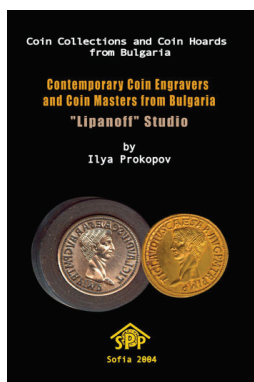
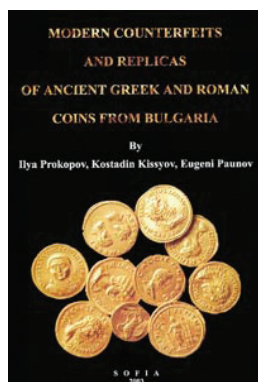


No.120



No.121

OUR OTHER TITLES OF THE COIN FORGERY SERIES



MORE INFO AT
<http://sp-p.net>