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IN KOMMISSION BEI HARRASSOWITZ VERLAG

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THE NUMISMATIC INTERESTS OF LAEVINUS TORRENTIUS (1525–1595), ONE OF THE FOREMOST HUMANISTS OF HIS TIME

Laevinus Torrentius (1525–1595) was one of the foremost humanists of his time. Called the »prince of poets« or »the Christian Horace« by his friends,² he achieved fame as the editor of Suetonius and Horace.³ Well connected with Rome, where he spent several years in his youth, and with the antiquarians, he developed a serious (although interrupted) interest in ancient numismatics.

It turns out that the Royal Library of Belgium holds a rich archive of material relating to this prominent figure. Not only do we possess the detailed inventory of his vast library amounting to more than 1,700 vol-

umes (RLB, Ms. 3974–3975) – very unusual for the 16th century – but we are even more fortunate to have an inventory, made after his death, of his coin collection (RLB, Ms. 6269).⁴ Furthermore, we also have: a bound volume containing copies of more than 1,200 letters sent by Torrentius during the years 1583–1595 (RLB, Ms. 15704); a contemporary copy of the original deed by which he donated some of his properties to the Jesuits in Leuven (RLB, Ms. 16590, fol. 11);⁵ the manuscript of his commentary on Suetonius (RLB, Ms. 3526); and several books which once belonged to his library;⁶ and finally, several sketchbooks of Latin

1 I am much indebted to my distinguished colleague at the Royal Library of Belgium, Michiel Verweij, who revised the English translation of the quoted Latin passages.

2 His *Poemata sacra* were first published by Plantin in 1572, and were republished many times in enlarged editions (1575, 1579 and 1594). See Victor Brants: *Un évêque lettré au XVI^e siècle: Laevinus Torrentius*, in: *Mélanges Camille de Borman*, ed. by Guillaume Simenon et al., Liège 1919, p. 209–220, and Jeanine De Landsheer: *Laevinus Torrentius: auctor et fautor litterarum*, in: *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Zuid-nederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis* 47 (1997), p. 131–147.

3 The first edition of his commentary on Suetonius was printed by Plantin in 1578 (*C. Suetonii Tranquilli XII. Caesares commentarii*, Antwerp, Ex officinae Christophori Plantini, 1578; a new edition with the original text was published in 1592). The edition of the *Ars poetica* of Horatius was apparently ready in 1583, but was only published in 1608, after his death, by Balthasar Moretus. We should also note that his nephew and protégé Jean Lievens (Johannes Livinienus) has his place in the history of scholarship,

being considered the father of the *apparatus criticus* (see Luigi Battezzato: *Renaissance philology: Johannes Livinienus (1546–1599) and the birth of the apparatus criticus*, in: *History of scholarship. A selection of papers from the seminar on the history of scholarship held annually at the Warburg Institute*, ed. by John Ligota and Jean-Louis Quantin, London 2006, p. 75–112).

4 Another example from the Low Countries is Nicolaas Rockox (1560–1640), for whom we still have the illustrated catalogue of his collection, as well as a record of the numismatic books he bought through Plantin.

5 This document was bought by Charles Van Hulthem in the sale of the Comtesse d'Yve (Brussels, November 1820 – probably no. 6250: *Recueil de pièces relatives à l'Université de Louvain; affaires avec les Jésuites et autres collèges de l'Université*, 2to. petit in-folio).

6 See Renaud Adam: *Un incunable de la bibliothèque de Liévin Torrentius (1525–1595) retrouvé* (Bruxelles, Bibliothèque Royale, Réserve Précieuse, INC B 1192), in: *Bulletin de la Société Royale Le Vieux-Liège* 298–299 (2002), p. 335–337.

inscriptions copied in Rome by Nicolaus Florentius of Haarlem, and given by him to Torrentius (RLB, Ms. 4347–4349 and 4350).⁷

Born in Ghent on March 8th, 1525 as Lievin Van der Beke («Beke» in Flemish has the same meaning as «beck» in English: a creek or brook, hence «Torrentius»), Torrentius studied in Leuven (1540–1545) at the highly regarded *Collegium Trilingue*, founded in 1518 by Hieronymus Busleyden, with Erasmus very much as its inspiration, where students learned Latin, Greek and Hebrew. There he published his first poems at the age of seventeen.⁸ He then moved to Italy, passing through Paris and Padova on the way, and was appointed Doctor of Law at the University of Bologna in February 1552. He lived in Rome from March 1552 to January 1557, where he was readily accepted into humanist circles. He became friends with, among others: Lorenzo Gambara (ca. 1495–1585), Basilio Zanchi (ca. 1501–1558), Gabriello Faerno (1510–1561), Paolo Manuzio (1512–1574), Guglielmo Sirleto (1514–1585), Antonio Agustín (1516–1586), Marc-Antoine de Muret (1526–1585), Fulvio Orsini (1529–1600), Antonio Caraffa (1538–1591) and Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584).⁹

In 1557, he was offered by the Liège Prince-Bishop Robert de Berghes the position of Archdeacon of Brabant and Canon of the Cathedral of Saint-Lambert, which he accepted. In 1565, he asked Lambert Lombard, the famous painter and architect (who is also considered to be «the father of Belgian numismatics»), and who had hosted the young Goltzius for two years in Liège (1544–1546),¹⁰ to build a new house for him, designed and decorated according to his wishes (fig. 3).¹¹ Appointed as General Vicar of the Principality in 1575, Torrentius had from this point on very little time for *otium*. Appointed by the new Prince-Bishop as his representative to the Pope, he went back three times to Rome.¹² When the Bishop of Antwerp



1 Portrait of Laevinus Torrentius by Gisbertus Vaenius

died in 1576, Don Juan of Austria approached Torrentius to replace him. But times were troubled after the Spanish fury in November 1576 and, as a consequence, the embracing by the city of the Calvinist faith. Torrentius finally left Liège in April 1587, after being officially consecrated as the second Bishop of Antwerp eighteen months earlier, on September 10th,

7 Ginette Vagenheim: Un épisode inédit dans la genèse de l'épigraphie latine à la Renaissance: la collection d'inscriptions romaines de Nicolaus Florentius de Haarlem dans les manuscrits de Laevinus Torrentius à la Bibliothèque Royale de Bruxelles (Ms. 4347–50), in: *In Monte Artium* 1 (2008), p. 153–183.

8 See Léopold Dupont: Humanisme et croisade: Torrentius et les Turcs, in: *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 50.2 (1972), p. 447–458.

9 On his Roman friends, see Jozef Ijsewijn: Laevinus Torrentius, humanist en dichter, in: *Laevinus Torrentius. Tweede bisschop van Antwerpen. Tentoonstelling in de Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Kathedraal te Antwerpen*, ed. by Jacques Van Damme, Antwerp/Leuven 1995, p. 11–21.

10 François de Callatay: Lambert Lombard (1505/1506–1566) et les monnaies antiques, in: *Liège au XVIème siècle. Art et culture autour de Lambert Lombard*, ed. by Dominique Allard, Liège (forthcoming).

11 On this, see Pierre Colman et al.: *Hôtel Torrentius. Architecture pour Architecture*. Lambert Lombard 1565–Charles Vandenhove 1981, Brussels 1982, and Jeanine De Landtsheer: *Laevinus Torrentius (1525–1595): humanist en bisschop*, in: *De Brabantse Folklore* 292 (1996), p. 13. The main room was decorated with motifs taken from classical antiquity.

12 Jeanine De Landtsheer: *Laevinus Torrentius, vicaris van het bisdom Luik, en de pauselijke nuntiatur*, in: *Trajecta* 4 (1995), p. 300–315.



2 Portrait of Laevinus Torrentius on a medal by Jacques Jonghelinck

1585. He was 62 years old, and he served in this position until he was chosen as Archbishop of the Low Countries at the end of 1594. He never actually enjoyed this final recognition, since he passed away on April 26th, 1595, before being installed. Not long before he died, Torrentius donated much of his property to the Jesuits in Leuven, including his library and his art collections, as well as a large sum of money.¹³

Torrentius is pictured in several surviving portraits:¹⁴ two paintings (an anonymous one in the church of St. Jacques, Antwerp, 1595, and another one painted by Adriaen Thomasz Key [1544–1590], Provinciaal Museum Sterckshof, Antwerp, 1588); two prints (Philip Galle [1537–1612], Antwerp, 1572 and Gisbertus Vaenius [1562–1628] [fig. 1], the younger brother of Otto); and one medal, by Jacques Jonghelinck (1530–1606) [fig. 2].¹⁵

13 On his life, see: Alphonse Roersch: Torrentius, in: *Biographie nationale* 25 (1932), col. 462–475; Jules Hoyoux: La famille de Torrentius, in: *Latomus* 114 (Hommages à Marie Delcourt) (1970), p. 361–367; Marie-Juliette Marinus: Laevinus Torrentius als tweede bisschop van Antwerpen (1587–1595), *Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor LSK van België, Klasse der Letteren*, no. 31, Brussels 1989; *Tentoonstelling in de Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Kathedraal te Antwerpen*, ed. by J. Van Damme, Antwerp/Leuven, 1995, p. 61–85.

14 See Stefan Grieten: Portretten van Laevinus Torrentius. Historische, iconografische en inhoudelijke aspecten, in: *Laevinus Torrentius. Tweede bisschop van Antwerpen. Tentoonstelling in de Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Kathedraal te Antwerpen*, ed. by Jacques Van Damme, Antwerp/Leuven 1995, p. 101–105. Other painted portraits known to have existed are no longer extant.

15 Luc Smolderen: Jacques Jonghelinck. Sculpteur, médailleur

I. TORRENTIUS THE ANTIQUARIAN

Abraham Ortelius and Jean Vivianus, recording their journey through the Low Countries in 1584, have left a vivid description of the city of Liège and, especially, of the house of Laevinus Torrentius as the embodiment of a refined humanism: »What to say of the crowded libraries, the paintings, and statues, both by modern artists and from Antiquity; this is why you have in that sole city [Liège] what you may find at great pain, travelling in the various parts of the world. Sufficient proof of this is given by the beautiful house that Laevinus Torrentius, a remarkable man, and the prince of lyrical poetry of our century, has built at his own expense, aided by the fact that this house is entirely open to that direction which provides most health, he organized every single part of it in such a suitable way (in this you can recognize the gifted hand of Lambert Lombard, formerly a well-known painter and philosopher in Liège) and he provided such a suitable decoration for each room that the result simply cannot be surpassed and that you could not wish for more space. But above all, he honours it the most himself by his benevolence for the students of letters and by his outstanding collections of books and manuscripts, by his ancient bronze sculptures, by his vases inscribed all around by hieroglyphs, in a quantity we have never seen before. Ancient coins, to say the truth, he has in such quantity and of such a rarity (you recognize this well-known expression among the students of this kind) that Italy could envy him: indeed, we think it would not be easy to find elsewhere more names of Roman *gentes*«. ¹⁶

As with others, his Roman stay as a young man much influenced Torrentius' tastes. Remembering his Roman years in a piece of late correspondence, he

et graveur de sceaux (1530–1606), Louvain-la-Neuve 1996 (*Numismatica Lovaniensia* 15), p. 402–404, no. E15 and pl. 87.

16 Abraham Ortelius and Jean Vivianus: *Itinerarium per nonnullas Galliae Belgicae partes*, Antwerp, Plantin, 1584: »Quid refertissimas dicamus bibliothecas, picturas, statuas, easque vel huius memoriae artificum, vel antiquas: ita ut in hac sola urbe videre contingat, quae magno vix labore in diversis orbis terrarum partibus peregrinando reperias. Cuius quidem rei vel solae fidem faciant, pulchrae illae aedes quas Dn. Laevinus Torrentius vir eximius, et nostro hoc saeculo Lyrici princeps carminis, suo sumptu extruxit, in quibus, ut loco ab omni ea parte aperto, quae ad salubritatem requiritur, adiutus: ita singulas earum partes congrue disponendo (ut in eo Lamberti Lombardi pictoris quondam et philosophi celeberrimi inter Eburones, felicem in architectura manum agnoscas), singulisque sua aptando ornamenta, est adsequutus, ut his amoenius nihil esse possit, nec quamvis non ita amplo in spa-



3 Hotel Torrentius at Liège by Lambert Lombard

tio laxitatem desideres. Sed has praecipue honestat ipse, comitate erga litterarum studiosos singulari et insigni bibliotheca librorum etiam manuscriptorum, aereis praeterea imaginibus antiquis, ac vasis figuris hieroglyphicis circumquaque insignitis, eius capacitatis qualia nunquam antea videramus. Numismata vero antiqua ea habet tum copia, tum raritate (vocabulum inter eius rei studiosos notum agnoscis) quibus ipsa invidere possit Italia: nec enim alibi plura Romanarum gentium facile reperiri posse nomina existimamus.

17 Marie Delcourt, Jean Hoyoux (ed.): Laevinus Torrentius. Correspondance, in: Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège, 3 vol. (1: Période liégeoise, 1583–1587; 2: Période anversoise, 1587–1589; 3: Période anversoise, 1590–1595), Liège 1950–1954, vol. 2, 1953, no. 564 (1589): »[...] quod quae vir ille maximus Romae me adolescentente habebat omnia videram, imo et ipsius exemplo antiquarius esse coeperim ac tandem eo studio sic profecerim ut nummorum veterum aliarumque antiquitatum cum multitudine tum excellentia ac raritate in hac tota provincia cedam nemini, [...]».

18 Charles de Langhe to Fulvio Orsini, February 1573: »Cum nuper istinc revertens Torrentius noster retulisset mihi vidisse se iam particulam tuarum in vetera Romana Numismata interpretationum, dici non potest quanto gaudio me aspersionem, qui iam diu desideraveram huiusmodi quid a viro aliquo eccellente praestari [...] Cumque rem istam arduam, ut dixi esse iudicarem, Torren-

states that: »because I had seen all that this extraordinary man [*nb*: Antonio Agustín] had in his collection while I was in Rome as a young man, I followed his example and started to become an antiquarian myself, and I pursued this kind of study in such a way that I deferred to no one in the field of ancient coins and other antiquities, neither for their quantity and quality, nor for their rarity«. ¹⁷

A letter written in 1573 to Fulvio Orsini, from his dear friend Charles de Langhe, is explicit about Torrentius' coin collection: »When Torrentius, sometime after he returned from Rome, informed me that he had already seen a part of your commentary on ancient Roman coins, I can't say how much it gladdened me, since I have long desired such a thing by a man of superior talent ... And since I think this is a difficult task, I advised Torrentius, before he finally came back here to us, not only to exhort and to pray that you should pursue and achieve this most difficult enterprise, but also that he should help you. You will see that he has not a small collection of these ancient coins ... I insisted that he should describe them all and send the inventory to you. I added to it the few coins from my collection that Torrentius does not possess, if I could add something myself, and I am pleased I could, otherwise my Itius would have been left unrecorded«. ¹⁸ Indeed, in his *Familiae Romanae*, Orsini

tium, priusque hinc ad nos iam ultimum rediret monui non hortandum modo orandum te ut difficillimum istud institutum prosequeres perficeresque, verum etiam adiuvandum. Habere ipsum nummorum veterum non exiguum thesaurum videbis, [...], auctorque ei fui ut suos omnes describeret, eamque indicem ad te perferret. Adieci et e pauculis meis eos quos Torrentius non habet, si forte quid et ipse conferre possim, id quod evenisse gaudeo, nam ali qui Itius meus incognitus iaceret« (see Pierre de Nolhac: *La bibliothèque de Fulvio Orsini. Contribution à l'histoire des collections d'Italie et à l'étude de la Renaissance*, Paris 1887, p. 438–439). In another and often quoted letter to Orsini, Charles de Langhe accuses the Germans to »buy everything at huge prices without discernment, to fight each other on the size (of their collections), without any respect for the beauty, the fabric, the rarity of the historical interest«. See *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, Ms. 4103, fol. 116–117 [15 April 1573]: »Germani nos perdunt qui promiscue omnia immenso pretio mercantur: numero enim inter se contendunt, non ab elegantia, artificio, raritate, historia examinant«; see Nolhac 1887, p. 439, note 1; Richard Cooper: *Collectors of Coins and Numismatic Scholarship in Early Renaissance France*, in: *Medals and Coins from Budé to Mommsen*, ed. by Michael Crawford et al., London 1990, p. 18 and John Cunnally: *Images of the Illustrious. The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance*, Princeton 1999, p. 46 and 163, notes 23–24.

explicitly refers to Charles de Langhe as the owner of a denarius of L. Itius.¹⁹

Much later, in 1587, at a time when Torrentius was too busy to pursue his antiquarian hobbies, we have a letter to Orsini which throws an interesting light on Torrentius' numismatic interest: »I renew our old habit of corresponding at the suggestion of Franciscus Oranus, who, after a long stay in Liège with his parents and relatives (during all of which time I maintained cordial relations with him), is going back to Rome, and asked me to write letters to my patrons and friends there to rekindle these relationships; I do so with pleasure, both as a duty, and to be in touch with those whose benevolence I have experienced. That is why you are among the first of them; I have broken the silence, and I could not fail to write to ask you first to welcome Oranus for my sake, although he deserves to be welcomed for his own virtues; and also to ask that, if you find something in the antiquarian sphere that you think would amuse me, you communicate it to me without delay. I would be all the more pleased if you would do this, since I sorely miss our times together, to the point where I often do not know

where I should turn; I would not be able to endure my pain if I were not comforted sometimes by the Muses. Indeed, the *res antiquaria* is completely frozen here now, since trade has ceased, the roads being everywhere unsafe due to the exactions of the soldiers and the ferocity of the brigands. For that reason nothing has been added to my collection for a long time. I hear that you have abandoned to your (numismatic) studies after the misfortune you experienced [*nb*: the entire coin collection of Orsini was stolen in 1582, on this see Nolhac 1887 [note 18], p. 35], but I do not believe this rumour. Does the fact that you no longer have any coins make you less learned? Even now, you still have them in your memory. Moreover, this field of study is multiple and various: for myself, I do not prefer an ancient coin, however rare and well-preserved it is, to an ancient inscription, which can give one even more pleasure and knowledge. Not to mention all the fragments of the ancient authors rescued from oblivion; if any of them should appear, dear Fulvio, I pray you to send me a copy. And I will be pleased if I can do something in return.«²⁰ Here Torrentius appears as a true *curioso*, in the same vein as his model and friend

19 Fulvio Orsini: *Familiae romanae quae reperiuntur in antiquis numismatibus ab Urbe condita ad tempora divi Augusti ex Bibliotheca Fulvi Ursini, Adjunctis familiis III ex libro Antoni Augustini*, ep. Llerdensis, Rome 1577, p. 112: »Itiae gentis unus tantum denarius reperitur, atque is quidem a L. Itio signatum ut opinor, ad quem Horatii extat ode xxix lib. i inscripta ad L. Itium: sic in vetustissimis codicibus pro Iccium scriptum reperiri admonuit me vir eruditissimus, idemque humanissimus Carolus Langius qui denarii hujus exemplum ad me Leodio perhumaniter misit« (»there is only one denarius of the gens Itia, which I think was struck by L. Itius, the one from Horace's Ode I, 29. The very learned and suave Carolus Langius informed me that Itius is the reading in very old manuscripts for Iccius. Langius very kindly sent a copy of this coin to me in Liège«). The *denarii* of L. Itius, although not common (less than 10 obverse dies in Michael Crawford: *Roman Republican Coinage*, Cambridge 1974, p. 252, no. 209), are no longer considered as very rare (as exemplified by such a denarius which sold for \$100 on Ebay in April 2011 – item 330551011945). The Coin Cabinet of the Royal Library of Belgium acquired one specimen, without provenance, from Charles Dupriez in November 1922 (Inv. II 12493). And the same Charles de Langhe, in another letter to Orsini some time before, when Torrentius was still in Rome, confessed that he eagerly awaited his friend's return from Rome (since Torrentius had promised him literally »mountains of gold«), like a new spouse awaits her husband, and that in the meanwhile he is cultivating his garden and reviewing his numismatic collection (»Ceperam in manus Suetonium quem conabar expolire nonnihilo et detergere, [...] Ego deinceps cum valetudine luctor, et vale libris dicio, hortulum meum colo, et subinde numismatiola mea revideo, quibus augendis hic posthac ut dixi nulla spes. Torrentius aureos montes promittit,

itaque reditum illius non secus ac peregre absentem nova sponsa maritum, exspecto« (Nolhac 1887 [note 16], p. 440).

20 Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 15704 (Epistolae Laevini Torrentii, fol. 6 r–v): »Veterem nostram scribendi consuetudinem ut reducerem, effecit vir clarissimus Franciscus Oranus, qui post diutinam Leodij apud cognatos atque affines suos mansionem, quo toto tempore familiariter eo usus sum, Romam rediens, a me petiit ut ad patronos atque amicos quos illic habeo memoriae excitandae causa, literas ei traderem, quod feci sane perlubenter, tum officii causa, tum ut eosdem quorum ego benevolentiam expertus sum, ipsi quoque adiungerem. Cum itaque tu inter primos occurreres, rupi silentium neque omittere potui quin scriberem rogaremque primum ut Oranum quanquam suis virtutibus coli dignissimum, meo nomine arctius complectaris, deinde ut si quid in re antiquaria sit quo me oblectari posse putes, id communicare nobis non graveris. Tanto maiorem enim inde percipiam voluptatem quanto magis haec me tempora nostra contrastant ut saepe nesciam quo me vertam, dolorem non laturus nisi solatium aliquod a Musis interdum accederet. Nam res antiquaria nunc hic prorsus friget postquam militari licencia ac latronum immanitate obsessis ubique itineribus cessant commercia. Itaque multo iam tempore nihil solitae meae suppellectili accrevit. Audio quidem te studium istud post infortunium quod tulisti propemodum abiecis, sed ego famae fidem non habeo. Quid enim ideone [before correction we read »idonei«] quod nulla possides numismata factus es indoctior; mente nunc ea et memoria adhuc possides. Deinde multiplex et varia haec scientia est, neque nummum ego veterem quantumvis rarum atque integrum malim quam antiquam inscriptionem aliquam unde fere maior et iucunditas et utilitas existit. Omitto veterum auctorum eruta tenebris fragmenta quorum omnium si quid incidat obsecro, mi Fulvi, ut eius fiat mihi copia.

Agustín, for whom the real purpose of collecting coins was to reconstruct ancient history through reliable documents. The hierarchy here is very clear: first literary sources, if any could be still discovered, then inscriptions with historical content, and last coins.

Despite his many responsibilities, Torrentius' interest in antiquarianism never totally ceased, as exemplified by letters sent to Andreas Schottus, who was then in Spain. On December 5th, 1587, he expresses his nostalgia for the time he spent in Rome 35 years previously (1552), when he enjoyed the friendship of Ottavio Pantagato (1494–1567), Basilio Zanchi (ca. 1501–1558), Gabrielo Faerno (1510–1561) and Jean Metellus (1520–1597), the only one then still alive. He also urges Schottus to send him whatever he can find published by Antonio Agustín, whose memory Torrentius cherishes, and by whom he has seen nothing except the commentary Agustín wrote on Fulvio Orsini's book about Roman families.²¹ On August 30th, 1588, he proposes that Schottus should translate into Latin the *Dialoghi* of Agustín, to be published by Ortelius.²² On January 30th, 1589, thanking Schottus for sending the books by Agustín, he goes on to say that, as a young man in Rome, he had wanted to emulate this great man, forming a collection of ancient

coins and antiquities that could not be surpassed, either in quantity, quality, or rarity.²³

In his Latin edition of the *Dialoghi* of Agustín, which finally appeared in 1612, Andreas Schottus added a twelfth dialogue entitled *De prisca religione Diisque gentium*. This added section is an imaginary discussion, set in Antwerp in 1597, in which, as a token of friendship, Abraham Ortelius and Schottus himself, also joined by the then deputy mayor Nicolaas Rockox (1560–1640), pay a visit to Torrentius (actually then deceased for two years) to discuss the original dialogues of Agustín.²⁴

2. THE NUMISMATIC LIBRARY OF TORRENTIUS

The Royal Library of Belgium holds the manuscript inventory of Torrentius' library (Ms. 3974–3975: *Catalogus librorum R[everendissimi]mi D[omini] Laevini Torrentii Episcopi Antwerpiensis*), which has been fully translated and commented upon by Marcus De Schepper and Jeanine De Landtsheer.²⁵ We also possess several books which come from his library, with his mark of property, generally written on the front page.²⁶

Referam gratias si quid contra praestare potero. Vale, Torrentii ut ille tui memor. VI. Kal. Sept. A C.MDXXCIII. Leodio. « Five more letters sent by Torrentius to Orsini are kept at the Vaticana (*Vat.* 4105, f. 51 [Liège, November 14th, 1573], f. 49 [Liège, January 2nd, 1574], f. 53 [Brussels, April 23rd, 1577]; *Vat.* 4103, f. 58 [Liège, October 10th, 1581], f. 96 [Liège, September 6th, 1583] – see Nollhac 1887 [note 18], 58, note 1).

21 Delcourt, Hoyoux (note 17), vol. 2, 1953, no. 359 (Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 15704, fol.185), p. 125–126: «Si tamen ante precatus te fuero ut ad me deferri ea omnia cures quae vel penes te servas vel aliis commisisti, facies enim rem mihi longe gratissimam, majorem etiam initurus gratiam si quid a viro illo summo omnino Antonio Augustino, cujus sancta mihi memoria est, addideris. Cum ante annos XXXV adolescens primum venissem Romam, per Octavum Pantagatum, Basilium Zanchium, Gabrielem Faernum, quique solus adhuc superset, Joannem Metellum in amicitiam ejus admissus sum. ... Nam praeter antiqua illa quae Romae scripsit nihil vidi, eo excepto commentario quem de familiis Romanorum suo Antiquorum numismatum libro Fulvius Ursinus adjunxit».

22 *Ibid.*, no. 480 (Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 15704, fol. 240v), p. 314–316.

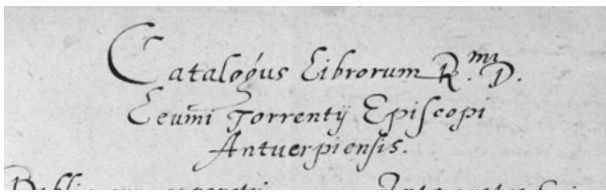
23 *Ibid.*, no. 564 (Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 15704, fol. 272), p. 444: «Et propter tanti viri memoriam animo excitatam meo magnas habeo gratias. Delectavit me praeterea quod de Numismatum Hispaniae libello scribis, tanto equidem magis quod quae vir ille maximus Romae me adolescente habebat omnia videram imo et ipsius exemplo antiquarius esse coeperim, ac tandem

eo in studio sic profecerim et nummorum veterum aliarumque antiquitatum cum multitudine tum excellentia ac raritate in hac tota provincia cedam nemini, ne Laurinis quidem fratribus quos patronos habebat Goltsius cessurus, si, quod optarem, adhuc viverent.»

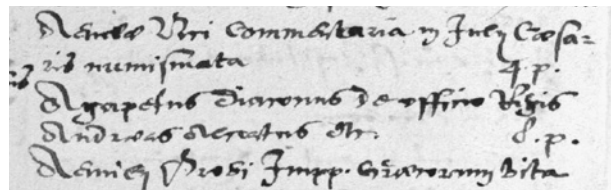
24 See Jeanine De Landtsheer: Torrentius' literaire activiteiten in het prinsbisdom Luik en in de Nederlanden, in: Laevinus Torrentius. Tweede bisschop van Antwerpen. Tentoonstelling in de Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Kathedraal te Antwerpen, ed. by J. Van Damme, Antwerp/Leuven 1995, p. 31. Torrentius had married Rockox and Adriana Perez on September 5th, 1589 in the cathedral of Antwerp.

25 See Marcus De Schepper, Jeanine De Landtsheer: De bibliotheek van Laevinus Torrentius, tweede bisschop van Antwerpen (1525–1595), in: *De Gulden Passer* 82 (2004), p. 7–87. See also Jeanine De Landtsheer: The library of bishop Laevinus Torrentius: a mirror of otium and negotium, in: *Les humanistes et leur bibliothèque: actes du colloque international, Bruxelles, 26–28 août 1999*, ed. by Raphaël De Smet, Paris/Leuven 2002, p. 176–191 and the two articles of Léopold Dupont: Note sur le catalogue manuscrit de la bibliothèque de Torrentius, in: *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique – Archief- en Bibliotheekwezen in België* 43 (1972 = 1972a), p. 579–587 and Léopold Dupont: La bibliothèque de Torrentius: les livres d'un prélat humaniste du XVI^e siècle sur l'empire ottoman, in: *De Gulden Passer* 50 (1972 = 1972b), p. 100–123.

26 See De Schepper, De Landtsheer 2004 (note 25), p. 36, no. 294 and Adam 2002 (note 6).



4 Catalogue of Torrentius' library, Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 3974–3975



5 *Aeneae Vici Commentaria in Iulii Caesaris numismata*, 4^o, p. Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 3974–3975, fol. 16b

It was a truly impressive library, with at least 1,732 volumes (1,611 entries). In the inventory, the books are organized first by language, then by topic, then by alphabetical order of the authors, but – contrary to what we are used to – by first names instead of surnames. Not surprisingly, most of the books are in Latin (81%) and Greek (14%). The main categories are: religion (23.5%), law (12.5%), history (19.5%), philosophy and sciences (18%), and language and literature (21.5%).

Dispersed through languages and categories, one finds nearly the full set of books on numismatics available at the time. For each of them, the table below (Table 1) gives the original page on the inventory, its current number as determined by De Schepper and De Landtsheer, the full description (in italics) including the format and the type of binding («p» is for «pergamena», «c. n.» is for «corius niger» [black leather] and «c. r.» is for «corius ruber» [red leather]) followed by the actual description of the book. As no dates are given for the books, it is not possible to determine which edition was present in the library if a book had been published more than once before 1595.²⁷

They are nearly all there: Guillaume Budé (1467–1540), Andrea Fulvio (ca. 1470–1527), Georges Agricola (1494–1555), Jacopo de Strada (1507–1588), Wolfgang Lazius (1514–1565), Antonio Agustín (1516–1586), Enea Vico (1523–1567), Sebastiano Erizzo (1525–1585), Hubert Goltzius (1526–1583) and Fulvio Orsini (1529–1600).

The few missing ones are: Johann Hüttich (c. 1488–1544 – *Imperatorum romanorum libellus. Una cum imaginibus ad vivam effigiem expressis*, Strasbourg, Wolfgang Köpfel, 1525); Guillaume Roville (or Rouillé) (1518?–1589 – *Promptuarium iconum insignorum a saeculo hominum*, Lyon, 1553 and its several translations published the same year); Antoine Le Pois

(1525–1578 – *Discours sur les medalles et graveures antiques*, Paris, Mamert Patisson, 1579); and Adolf Occo (1524–1606 – *Imp. romanorum numismata a Pompeio Magno ad Heraclium*, Antwerp, Christophe Plantin, 1579). It is likely that the absence of the *Libellus* of Huttich and the *Promptuarium* of Roville²⁸ are no accident, since they are corrupted by much fantasy (more than 80% of the engraved portraits are fictitious), so these books were of no real value for a true and learned *curioso*, as Torrentius. The absence of Le Pois and Occo, both published in 1579, are best explained by the fact that, at this time, Torrentius was too busy with his developing career and, as he complained in his correspondence, he had no more time for antiquarianism.

More surprising is the absence of some books by: Enea Vico (*Le imagini con tutti i riversi trovati e le vite de gli imperatori tratte dale medaglie e dale historie de gli antichi*, Venice, 1548 and *Le imagine delle donne Auguste intagliate in istampa di rame*, Venice, Vincenzo Valgristo, 1557); Jacopo de Strada (*Epitome thesauri antiquitatum*, 1553 [French ed. in 1553 and n. Latin ed. in 1557]); Abraham Ortelius (*Deorum dearumque capita ex vetustis numismatibus in gratiam antiquitatis studiosorum effigiata et edita*, Antwerp, 1573); and Fulvio Orsini (*Familiae romanae quae reperiuntur in antiquis numismatibus ab urbe condita ad temproa divi Augusti*, Rome, Francesco Tramezzini, 1577).

We do not know for sure when and where Torrentius bought his books. We are only informed that he acquired «en bloc» the library of his much beloved friend Charles de Langhe after his death in 1573. It is also likely that, as was the case for Justus Lipsius and Fulvio Orsini, Torrentius purchased some books through Abraham Ortelius, who conducted intensive business at the Frankfurt book fair every year, and was eager to provide this kind of service to his friends.

27 On the numismatic library, see Victor Tourneur: *La collection Laevinus Torrentius. Un cabinet de médailles en Belgique au XVIe siècle*, in: *Revue belge de Numismatique* 70 (1914), p. 300–301.

28 The publisher Roville is quoted by Torrentius in his correspondence, see Delcourt, Hoyoux (note 17), vol. 2, 1953, no. 564 (Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 15704, fol. 272), p. 445.

Table 1 List of numismatic books of the Torrentius' library

 VARI TRACTATUS

- 9b, no. 294: »Ant[oni] Augustini bibliotheca, 4°, p« (= [Antonii Augustini], Bibliotheca manuscripta Graeca [& Bibliotheca manuscripta Latina & Bibliopothecae mixtae], Tarragona, Philippus Mey, 1587 – this book (with the following dedication on the title page: «Reverend[issi]mo D[omino] Laevino Torrentio Antverpiensium Episcopo And. Schottus Antwerp lib. mer. D. misit Antverpiam») belongs now to the RLB (VB 12.125 HSS).
- 13a, no. 427: »De Asse, f°, c. r.« (= Guillaume Budé, De asse et partibus eius, Paris, Josse Bade, 1514).
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HISTORICI PROFANI

- 16b, no. 548: »Aeneae Vici Commentaria in Iulii Caesaris numismata, 4°, p« (= Enea Vico, Ex libris XXIII commentariorum in vetera imperatorum romanorum numismata, Venise, 1560).
- 16b, no. 560: »Antonii Augustini familiae Romanae ex antiquis numismatibus, f°, p« (= Antonio Agustín, Familiae Romanae quae reperiuntur in antiquis numismatibus ex bibl[iotheca] Fulvii Ursini adiunctis XXX ex libro Antonii Augustini, Rome, Tramezzini, 1577).
- 17a, no. 581: »Caesarum imagines ex antiquis numismatibus desumptae, 4°, c. r.« (= Enea Vico, Caesarum imagines verissimae ex antiquis numismatibus desumptae, Rome, 1554).
- 18a, no. 639a: »Huberti Goltzii Fasti magistratum et Triumphorum Romanorum« (= Hubert Goltzius, Fastos magistratum et triumphorum Romanorum ab urbe condita ad Augusti obitum ex antiquis tam numismatum quam marmorum monumentis resitutos, Bruges, 1566).
- 18a, no. 639b: »Catalogus consulum a Tiberio ad Iustinianum Caesar Augustus, f°, p« (= Hubert Goltzius, Caesar Augustus sive historiae imperatorum Caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae, Bruges, Hubert Goltzius, 1574).
- 18a, no. 640: »Eiusdem Historia tribuum et populorum Graeciae et Siciliae, f°, c. r.« (= Hubert Goltzius, Graecia sive historiae urbium et populorum Graeciae ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae, Bruges, Hubert Goltzius, 1576).
- 18a, no. 644a: »Huberti Goltzii Historiae Imp[er]atorum Romanorum ex numismatibus antiquis restituta« (= Hubert Goltzius, Viviae omnium fere imperatorum imagines, a C. Iulio Caes. usque ad Carolum V. et Ferdinandum eius fratrem, Antwerp, Egidius Coppens, 1557).
- 18a, no. 644b: »Vita Iulii Caesaris et res gestae, f°, p« (= Hubert Goltzius, C. Julius Caesar sive historiae imperatorum Caesarumque Romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae, Bruges, 1563 [1562]).
- 18a, no. 620: »Imagines et elogia virorum illustrium et eruditorum ex lapidibus antiquis et numismatibus expressa cum anno[tat]ionibus, f°« (= Fulvio Orsini, Imagines et elogia virorum illustrium et eruditor. ex lapidibus antiquis et numismatib. expressa cum annotationib., Rome, Antonio Lafreri, 1570).
- 19a, no. 647: »Iacobi de Strada, Imagines Imperatorum, 4°, c. n.« (= Jacopo de Strada, Imperatorum romanorum omnium orientalium et occidentalium verissimae imagines ex antiquis numismatis quam fidelissime delineatae, Zürich, Andreas Gessner, 1559).
- 19a, no. 652: »Imperatorum imagines, f°, c. n.« (= Andrea Fulvio, Illustrium imagines. Imperatorum vultus ex antiquis numismatibus expressi, Rome, Jacopo Mazzocchi, 1517).
- 21a, no. 753: »Eiusdem Commentaria Reip[ublicae] Romanae in externis provinciis bello acquisitis constitutae, f°, c. n.« (= Wolfgang Lazius, Commentariorum vetustorum numismatum maximi scilicet operis, Wien, Michael Zimmerman, 1558).
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PHILOSOPHI

- 24a, no. 873: »Georgius Agricola, De re metallica, f°, c. r.« (= Georg Agricola, De re metallica, Bâle, 1557).
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MATHEMATICI

- 26b, no. 945: »Georgius Agricola, De mensuribus et ponderibus, f°, c. n.« (= Georgius Agricola, De Mensuris & ponderibus, Basel, 1550).
-

ITALICI

- 39b, no. 1508: »Anto[nius] Augustinus, De nummis antiquis Ital[ice], 4°, p« (likely to be the Italian edition of the Dialogos = Antonio Agustín, Dialoghi Intorno alle Medaglie, 1592).
- 39b, no. 1511: »Discorsi di Enea Vico sopra le Medaglie de gli antichi, 4°, p« (= Enea Vico, Discorsi di M. Enea Vico parmigiano, sopra le medaglie de gli antichi divisi in due libri, Venise, Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, 1555 [2nd ed. in 1558]).
- 39b, no. 1515: »Discorsi di Sebastiano Erizzo sopra le medaglie antiche, 8°, p« (= Sebastiano Erizzo, Discorso di M. Sebastiano Erizzo, sopra le medaglie antiche, Venise, Giovanni Varisco, 1559 [2nd ed. in 1568; 3rd in 1571]).
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HISPANICI

- 39b, no. 1527: »Libro de medallas Ant[onii] Aug[ustini], 4°, p« (= Antonio Agustín, Dialogos de medallas, inscripciones y otras antigüedades ex bibliotheca Ant. Augustini Archiepiscopi Tarraconem, Felipe Mey, 1587).
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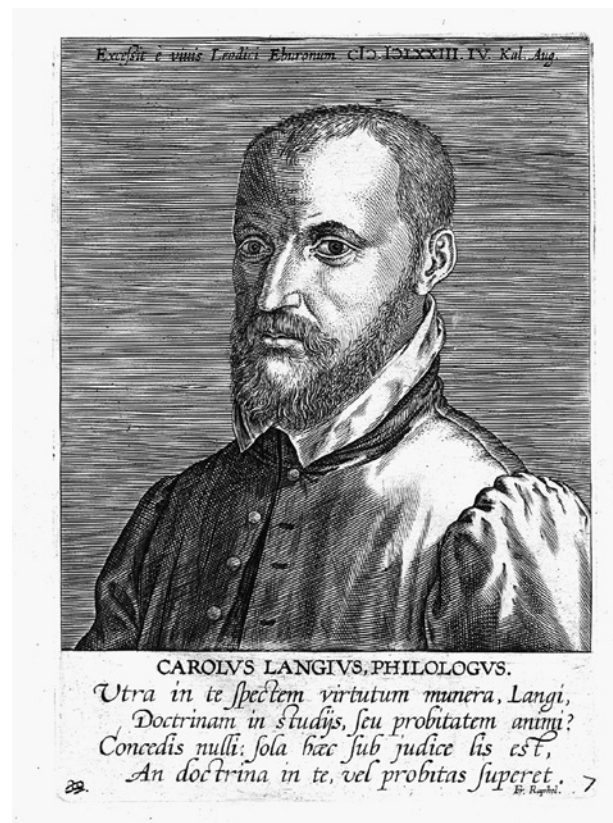
3. THE COIN COLLECTION OF TORRENTIUS

Torrentius, »archidiaconus Brabantiae«, is one of the six coin collectors of Liège noted by Goltzius in his *Caesar sive historiae*.²⁹ He comes in second place, after Robert de Berghes, the Bishop of the city, but before Arnholdus a Wachtendonck (canonicus S. Bartholomei), Philibertus Ursinius (canonicus), Domenicus Lamponius (Brugensis, episcopo Leodiensi ab epistolis) and Lambertus Lombardus (philosophus & pictor). The fact that Torrentius, then 33 years old (Goltzius visited Liège in 1558), comes before figures of greater *auctoritas*, such as Lambert Lombard (53 years old), is probably indicative of the scale of the collection he had already formed.

There can be no doubt that the bulk of his collection was formed in Rome in the mid-1550s, and it is very likely that he focused from the beginning on Roman coins, in order to illustrate his commentary on Suetonius. At that time, he wanted to emulate Antonio Agustín, collecting antiquities in such a way as to be bettered by no one.³⁰

We do not know when Torrentius ceased actively buying coins. We do know that he bought the entire collection of his friend Charles de Langhe after he died in 1573 (he paid 400 gold ecus for the whole: books, manuscripts and coins).³¹ And moving from Liège to Antwerp, he declared himself happy that his coin collection was not taken by road bandits.³² But he wrote to Orsini that, if he found a buyer, he would sell his coin collection.³³

We know that Torrentius himself made a list of his coin collection, which he sent in 1573 to Fulvio Orsini, but that list has so far failed to reappear. What we do have is the inventory written in 1595, the year of his death, by the Jesuits of Leuven (RLB, Ms. 6269). Entitled *Series Arciarum et Numismatum totiusque rei antiquaria, hoc libro content Collegio Lovaniensi Socie-*



6 Engraving of Charles de Langhe, c. 1610

tatis Jesu olim relicta a Reverendissimo episcopo Antverpiensi D. Laevino Torrentio. Anno 1595, this inventory was bought by Charles Van Hulthem in 1832 at the sale of the library of Jean-François Vande Velde,³⁴ professor in theology and librarian of the University, and then acquired by the Belgian government for its national library. It opens with a physical description of the 8 wooden cabinets (*arcae*) in which coins were kept, along with other small antiquities.

The coins are organized by metal and, for Roman bronze coins, by denomination. As a rule (and in con-

29 Hubert Goltzius: *C. Julius Caesar, sive historiae imperatorum Caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restituta*, Bruges 1562.

30 Agustín was well known for his passion for coins, which was mocked in 1577 by a certain Latino in a (lost) short satirical writing. Irritated, Agustín ceased to write to his Roman friends for two years (see Nalhac 1887 [note 18], p. 61). The inventory of his collection still exists in Tarragona (see F. Mateu y Llopis: *Un inventario numismático del siglo XVI*, in: *Boletín Arqueológico 40* (1929–1932), p. 75–86 – *non vidi*).

31 Nalhac 1887 (note 18), p. 58, n. 3.

32 See Hoyoux, Delcourt (note 17), vol. 2, 1953, p. 297, lines 9–10 (May 30th 1587) quoted by Ijsewijn 1995 (note 9), p. 19.

33 See Hoyoux, Delcourt (note 17), vol. 2, 1953, p. 564 (»Si

emptorem invenero, vendam non invitus«), on this, see Robert-Walter Scheller: *Nicolaas Rockox als oudheidkundige*, Antwerp 1978, p. 65, n. 111.

34 See: *Catalogue des livres rares et précieux, au nombre de 14435 lots, de la bibliothèque de feu Monsieur Jean-François Vande Velde, en son vivant docteur et professeur en théologie, dernier président du grand collège et bibliothécaire de l'Université de Louvain, rédigé d'après le catalogue manuscrit du défunt, par feu Mr. P.-F. de Goesin-Verhaeghe, Imprimeur de l'Université de Gand, Ghent 1832, no. 1532: Index numismatum aureorum, argenteorum, aereorum totiusque rei antiquariae DD. Laevini Torrentii, epi Antverpiensis; item variae antiquitates nimirum, annuli, cochlearia, marmorea et gemmae, corneoli lapides cum fig., statuae, etc.*

Table 2 The content of the eight wooden cabinets of Torrentius

<p>First cabinet: ancient silver coins (12 trays)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 566 Roman Republican coins – 92 Greek coins (fol. 34r–39v)
<p>Second cabinet (covered by black leather): the most precious coins (14 trays)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 75 Roman gold coins (4 Republican, 71 imperial) + 7 various gold coins – 6 Greek gold coins (fol. 46r) – 196 Roman imperial silver coins
<p>Third cabinet: imperial silver coins (10 trays)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 270 imperial silver coins – 6 modern medals
<p>Fourth cabinet: bronze coins (17 trays)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 46 large Roman bronze coins – 79 small Roman bronze coins – 57 medium Roman bronze coins – 55 Greek bronze coins (fol. 88r–91r) – 17 ancient rings and various small antiquities
<p>Fifth cabinet: Roman bronze coins with portraits of emperors and empresses (8 trays) (lacuna in the inventory for the first 5 or 6 trays: Roman bronze coins with portraits of emperors or empresses)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 17 large bronze coins with portraits of emperors; 52 large bronze coins with portraits of empresses
<p>Sixth cabinet: bronzes of lesser quality (7 trays of 24 units each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 7 modern medals – 139 Roman bronze coins of various denominations
<p>Seventh cabinet: engraved gems (5 trays)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 126 engraved gems
<p>Eighth cabinet: empty travel cabinet in the shape of a book (10 trays) (note: an image of such a wooden cabinet in the shape of a book is placed on the table before Abraham Gorlaeus on the frontispiece of his <i>Dactyliotheca</i>).</p>

trast to modern practice) each entry first describes the reverse type, then the obverse.

Even though it is significantly smaller than the coin collections of Charles III of Croÿ, duke of Arschot (1560–1612),³⁵ Abraham Gorlaeus (1549–1609),³⁶

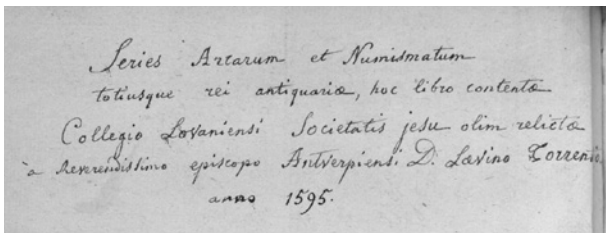
35 Ca. 18,000 coins (see Charles Ruelens: Rubens et le médailleur de Charles de Croÿ, in: *Bulletin-Rubens* 2 [1885], p. 215 [Paris, BnF, sale of the estate of Charles III of Croÿ]; Scheller 1978 [note 33], p. 63, note 71). The Duke of Arschot was the owner of the collection formed in Rome by Dionigi Ottaviano Sada, the publisher of the Italian edition of Agustín (Federica Missere Fontana: *Testimoni parlanti: le monete antiche a Roma tra Cinquecento e Seicento*, Roma 2009, p. 298).

36 See Joannes Henricus Hessels: *Abrahami Ortelii (geographi Antverpiensis) et virorum eruditorum ad eundem et ad Jacobum Colium Ortelianum (Abraham Ortelii sororis filium) epistulae cum aliquot aliis epistulis et tractatibus quibusdam ab utroque collectis (1524–1628) ex autographis mandante ecclesia Londino-*

and Josef Scaliger (1540–1609),³⁷ this is a very large coin collection for the time, containing ca. 1,500–1,700 Roman (including 75 in gold), and more than 150 Greek coins. It compares favorably with what we know from Jacob Cools (1563–1628), the nephew of

Batava, Cambridge 1887, no. 325, p. 763–764: 630 gold coins, 7,400 silver coins, more than 2,000 bronze coins and many duplicates. See also Sandra Langereis: *De verzameling munten, gemmen en schelpen van Gorlaeus*, in: *Schatten in Delft*, ed. by Ellinor Bergvelt, Zwolle 2002, p. 91–99; Liliane Wellens-De Donder: *Médailleurs et numismates de la Renaissance aux Pays-Bas*, Brussels 1959, p. 157, and Hildegard Van de Velde: *Uitegelezen en uitmuntend bevonden. Rockox, een geïnofmeerde numismaat*, in: *Rockox'huys vol-geboekt. De bibliotheek van de Antwerpse burgemeester-en Kunstverzamelaar Nicolaas Rockox (1560–1640)*, Antwerp 2005, p. 92 (13,260 coins). The collection was sold to Charles I, King of England.

37 Van de Velde 2005 (note 36), p. 92 (29,000 coins).



7 Inventory of the coin collection of Torrentius, Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 6269

Ortelius (hence his humanist name: Colius Ortelianus), about other famous Flemish coin collections: Abraham Ortelius (1,925 coins in 1597), Colius Ortelianus himself (1,129 coins in 1603),³⁸ and Nicolaas Rockox, the mayor of Antwerp (1,082 coins in 1614 and at least 1,129 before 1640 [744 in silver and 385 in bronze] when he died).³⁹ Charles de Langhe wrote to Fulvio Orsini in 1573: »You will see that he has a not small collection of these ancient coins«. Indeed Torrentius' holdings could compete with the coin collection of Orsini himself (70 gold coins, ca. 1,900 silver coins and ca. 500 bronze coins). As noted by Ortelius and Vivianus in 1584 (»indeed, we think it would not be easy to find elsewhere more names of Roman *gentes*«), his series of Roman Republican *denarii* appears particularly strong (566 coins). This comes as no surprise, since Torrentius was making use of his *denarii* for his edition of Suetonius.⁴⁰

Also impressive, even if well behind the Roman coins, is the number of Greek coins, since these rarely appear in any quantity in 16th cent. collections. With 6 gold, 92 silver, and 55 bronze coins, Torrentius' collection of Greek coins exceeds that of most serious collectors of his time. Difficult to acquire in Rome, Greek coins mainly entered Italy through Venice. It comes as no surprise then that the Loredan collection, formed in Venice prior 1550, is abnormally rich in

38 These numbers are given by Colius Ortelianus, who annotated a copy kept in Cambridge of Adolf Occo: *Imperatorum Romanorum numismata*, Antwerp, Plantin, 1579 (see Cambridge, UL, Adv. D, 3.22 (or Ms. Oo.IV.35).

39 See Nicolaas Rockox: *Index antiquarum statuarum et numismatum clarissimi domini Nicolai Rockoxii equitis et VIII consulis*, without date or location, 71 p. (Den Haag, Museum Meermanno-Weestrianum, Mss. 7A18). Rockox was married by Torrentius himself on September 5th, 1589; we are unaware of the number of gold coins which had already been sold at that time to Gaston d'Orléans (and must now be kept by the BnF).

40 For a denarius of C. Thermus (fol. 20), see p. 8 of the commentary; for a denarius of Sulla and Pomponius Rufus (fol. 11),



8 Portrait of Abraham Gorlaeus (detail), printed in his *Dactyliotheca*

these series: out of 1,220 coins, 476 (39%) are Greek (279 struck by cities and leagues and 197 struck by kings).⁴¹

For the Low Countries, the coin collection of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1522–1592), who had a long stay in Constantinople as the ambassador of the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, is likely to have also been rich in Greek coins. We know that he regularly sent antiquities, including ancient coins, to his

see p. 11; for the denarius with CLEMENTIAE CAESARIS (fol. 15v), see p. 51 (see Tourneur 1914 [note 27], p. 317, no. 2).

41 See John Cunnally: *Irritamenta: Numismatic Treasure of a Venetian Collector* (forthcoming – I am grateful to Ute Wartenberg for having communicated the manuscript of this superb work). Conversely, proportions of Roman Republican coins (138 = 11.3%) as well as Imperial coins (566 = 46.4%) are lower than elsewhere observed. It is interesting to mention in this context the letter sent to Fulvio Orsini by Antonio Agustín on October 1st, 1561, where he is describing the coin collection of Andrea Loredan of Venice (Ant. Augustini archirp. Tarrac. *Opera Omnia*, Lucca, 1765–1774, t. VII, 245 – quoted by Nolhac 1887 [note 18], p. 61).

Table 3 A geographical summary of the Greek coins in the collections of Torrentius and Charles of Lorraine

Area	Torrentius	Charles of Lorraine
Iberian and Celtic	5	67
South Italy and Sicily	32	18
Continental Greece	38	44 (7 + 37 Dyrrachium)
Asia Minor	12	9
Syria and further East	4	20
Egypt and Africa	9	22
Undetermined	51	25
Total	151	205

master Ferdinand.⁴² We are also informed that he built and kept for himself a coin collection which amazed Andreas Schottus when he saw it in Paris in 1578, but no details survive.⁴³

To stay in the same area, but two centuries later, the coin collection formed by Charles of Lorraine, who ruled the Low Countries on behalf of his step-daughter, the Empress Maria Theresa, contained 5,640 Roman coins, but only 205 Greek (including an unpublished hoard of silver coins of Dyrrhachium). A full list of Torrentius' identified Greek coins is given in Annex 1, while Table 3 gives a summary by areas of the contents for these two collections of the Low Countries.

Differences between the two seem to illustrate how different it was to build a collection of Greek coins in Rome in the 1550s versus the Low Countries in the 1770s. Torrentius never collected Iberian or Celtic coins. The only coins he did possess for this area were silver coins of Massalia. Two centuries later, at a time when one's national history was more of a consideration, Charles of Lorraine was more inclined to collect local issues. On the other hand, Torrentius' coverage of South Italy and Sicily, as well as continental Greece, seems excellent by the standards of the time, even if Sicily is only represented by Syracusan coins (which is

also the case for Charles of Lorraine). Not surprisingly, coins from further East (Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt) are rare, being very difficult to acquire in Rome in the mid 16th century.

In the manuscript, Greek silver coins are listed in alphabetical order in the following sequence: a) leagues and cities (fol. 34r–37v: »Graecorum numismata arg. Populorum et Civitatum«), b) kings and illustrious persons (fol. 37r–38v: »Numismata graeca regum et clarorum virorum«), c) »anonymous« (fol. 39r: »Numismata anonyma argentea«), and d) coins with legends in other languages (fol. 39v: »Nummis arg. Peregr. Inscip.«). The author never provides specific identification of the coins himself, and his descriptions are often too rough to allow identification. So, no coin is described as »from Athens« for example, and it is likely that some descriptions are misleading.⁴⁴ It should be noted that two Renaissance fantasies portraying Atreus and Sophocles found their way into the trays with the Greek bronzes. All in all, this inventory offers a vivid glimpse of how less well-known and studied Greek coins were, as compared with Roman.

The fate of this large coin collection long remained a mystery. It was kept for two centuries by the Jesuits in Leuven, until the order itself was suppressed in 1773. As discovered by Victor Tourneur, it then passed

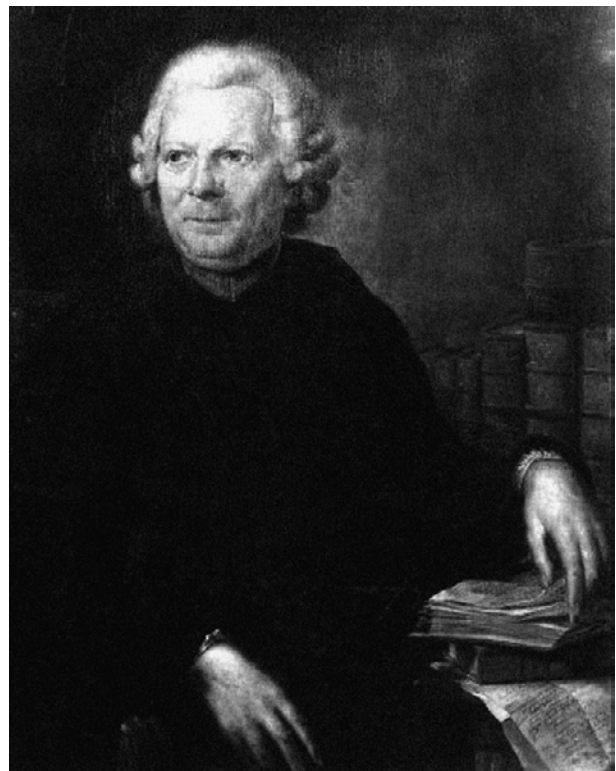
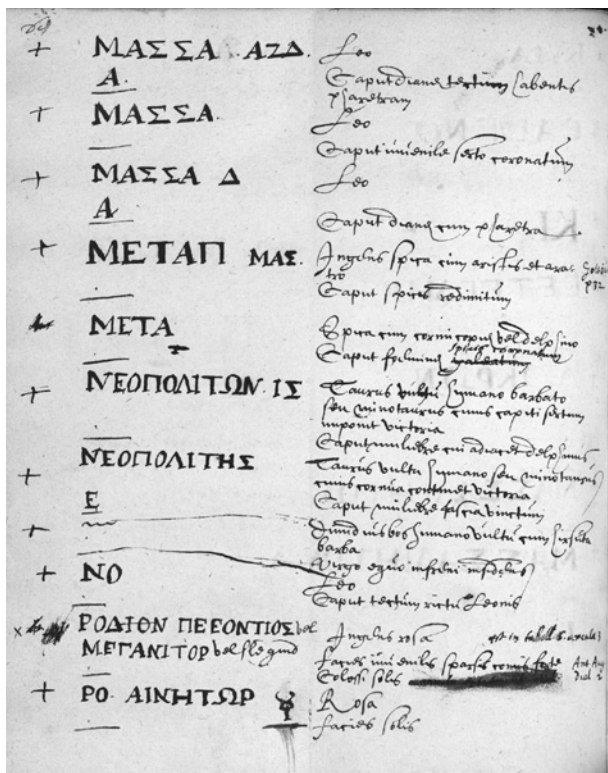
42 Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq: *Legationis Turcicae epistolae*, Frankfurt 1595, vol. 4, p. 404.

43 Andreas Schottus: *De vita et moribus imperatorum*, Antwerp, ex officina Pantini, 1579, p. 6 (dedicatory epistle to Busbecq with reference in his library of »monumenta rarissima, numismata, et inscriptiones« – I am grateful to Gwendolyne Denhaene for this information).

44 Misleading descriptions remained common even much later for Greek coins. For example, a bronze coin of Amisos of the types »head of Ares/sword in its scabbard« is described as »Caput Palladis vel Martis galeatum; Columna, supra quam statua« in the sale of Charles of Lorraine (no. 98).

45 Pierre-François Goesin-Verhaeghe: *Catalogue d'une collec-*

tion choisie de médailles antiques grecques et romaines en or, en argent et en bronze, de plusieurs modules, et d'une collection de médailles et monnaies modernes des trois métaux ... délaissées par feu M. l'abbé Ghesquière, Gent (collection of father Ghesquière), Ghent 1812: »La collection de Médailles et Monnaies, dont on offre ici le Catalogue au Public, était dans le plus grand désordre; il fallut tout débrouiller, tout réunir, et ce n'est qu'avec la plus pénible attention que je suis parvenu à y mettre de l'ensemble et à en présenter une suite digne de pouvoir passer dans la possession d'un Amateur éclairé«. Alphonse de Witte had a copy of this sale with the realized prices (see Pierre Bordeaux: *Lettres de la fin du XVIIIe siècle relatives à la collection de l'abbé Ghesquière*, in: *Revue belge de Numismatique* 61 [1905], p. 461).



9 Inventory of the coin collection of Torrentius: Greek coins, Royal Library of Belgium, Ms. 6269, 34v

10 Portrait of Joseph-Hippolyte Ghesquière by Willem Jacob Herreyns

at some point into the (indelicate) hands of Father Joseph Hippolyte Ghesquière (1731–1802), a Jesuit himself, and the leader of the Bollandists. Torrentius' coin collection was ultimately sold on July 6th, 1812 in Ghent, ten years after Ghesquière's death. Indeed, the sale catalogue was written by Pieter-Frans de Goesin-Verhaeghe, who describes the difficulties he faced in putting the collection, which was then a terrible mess, in order. His catalogue allows us to easily recognize the coin collection formed two and a half centuries previously by Torrentius.⁴⁵

Father Ghesquière who, incidentally, wrote the sale catalogue of the coin collection of Charles of Lorraine,⁴⁶ was a good scholar with a bad reputation.⁴⁷ He was investigated for concealment after the suppression

of the order. In private correspondence kept at the Royal Academy of Belgium, Crumpipen states that Ghesquière was crafty, boisterous and flattering, by far the »most perceptive, nimble and dangerous of the Jesuits«.⁴⁸ It is less a question of whether he fraudulently put his hands on the Torrentius collection, but rather a question of when. He may have acted very soon after the suppression, or after 1785. Indeed, elected on May 16th, 1781 as a member of the young *Académie impériale et royale de Bruxelles* (at last, after several unsuccessful attempts), father Ghesquière was one of the three academicians charged on September 24th, 1785 to publish the coin collections confiscated from the Jesuits, and left in the custody of the perpetual secretary of the Academy.⁴⁹ He states himself that

46 Georges Cumont: Quelques renseignements relatifs à la collection numismatique de Charles de Lorraine et liste des personnes auxquelles, après sa mort, furent envoyés le catalogue de sa collection, in: *Annales de la Société d'Archéologie de Bruxelles. Mémoires, rapports et documents* 12 (1898), p. 247–255.

47 On Ghesquière, see now Olivier Damme: Ghesquière, Joseph Hippolyte, in: *L'Académie impériale et royale de Bruxelles. Ses académiciens et leurs réseaux intellectuels au XVIIIe siècle*, ed. by Hervé Hasquin, Brussels 2009, p. 218–223, also Constant-P.

Serrure: Notice sur le cabinet monétaire de S. A. le Prince de Ligne, Gand 1847, p. 48–51.

48 Damme 2009 (note 47), p. 219.

49 See Paul Bonenfant: Les médailles des Jésuites des Pays-Bas autrichiens confisquées par l'État en 1773, in: *Revue belge de Numismatique* 76 (1924), p. 169–170. An inventory of coins and antiquities confiscated to the Jesuits of Leuven is kept at the Kathedraalarchief of Antwerp (CE 35/6, cover 2) – see Van Damme 1995 (note 17), p. 117, cat. no. 33.

he started to collect coins in 1774, right after the suppression of the order.⁵⁰ This chronology fits with the date given in 1789 when, while Ghesquière was trying to sell some valuable gold coins, it is reported that he had formed a collection 14 years previously.⁵¹

The sale took place on July 6th, 1812 in Ghent, the place where Torrentius was born. There, at least 3,952 Roman coins (no. 1–3,951bis) and 459 Greek coins (no. 3952–4411) were dispersed. A great number of these (but apparently not primarily ancient coins) were bought by Charles Van Hulthem, and from him

passed in 1843 into the ephemeral coin cabinet formed by the Prince de Ligne.⁵² This collection was subsequently dispersed, and, despite some efforts, I am unable to trace for sure the current location of any Greek coin which was once passionately studied by Laevinus Torrentius in his wonderful house in Liège.⁵³

Illustrations:

Figs. 1, 6, 8: The author. – Figs. 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10: Royal Library of Belgium. – Fig. 3: Colman et al. 1982.

ANNEX 1 GREEK COINS IN THE TORRENTIUS COLLECTION

Massalia (5)	5 AR (35r, 5–6; 35v, 1–3)
<i>South Italy (24)</i>	
Brettii	4 AE (88v, 9; 89r, 1–3)
Cales	1 AR (35r, 2)
Heraclea	1 AR (37v, 1)
Metapontum	3 AR (34r, 2; 35v, 4–5)
Neapolis	2 AR (35v, 6–7)
Rhegion	1 AE (90r, 5)
Suessa Aurunca	1 AE (90r, 8)
Tarent	4 AR (36r, 5–8)
Terina	1 AR (36r, 9)
Thurium	2 AR (34r, 3–4)
Velia	4 AR (36r, 10; 36v, 1–3)
<i>Sicily (7)</i>	
Syracuse	1 AU (46r, 6); 5 AR (36r, 1–3; 37r, 5 [Agathocles]); 2 AE (88v, 1 [Aghatocles]; 89v, 6 [Hieron])
<i>Thrace (6)</i>	
Istros	1 AR (34v, 6)
Maroneia	1 AE (90r, 1)
Thasos	1 AR (37v, 2 [Late Hellenistic tetradrachm])
Lysimachus	1 AR (37v, 5); 1 AE (88r, 2)
Koson	1 AU (46r, 3)
<i>Macedonia (12)</i>	
Olynth	1 AE (90r, 2)
Thessaloniki	1 AE (89v, 5)
Philip II	1 AU (46r, 1); 2 AR (38v, 2–3)

50 Joseph-Hippolyte Ghesquière: Dissertation de M. l'abbé Ghesquière sur les différents genres de médailles antiques, Brussels 1779, p. 9.

51 Journal de Paris, Wednesday 15th of April 1789, no. 105, p. 477: «Un avis imprimé que l'on vient, Messieurs, de m'envoyer de Bruxelles, m'apprend que M. l'Abbé Ghesquière, Membre de l'Académie de cette Ville, est déterminé à vendre sa belle Collection de Livres rares & de Médailles Grecques, Romaines & Gauloises, des trois métaux & de tous les modules. Le prix de cette Collection, que le Propriétaire s'est occupé à former depuis 14 ans, a été évalué par des Connoisseurs à mille louis d'or. En attendant que l'Abbé Ghesquière ait fait imprimer la liste des Pièces les plus

rare, il offre de céder aux Amateurs trois beaux médaillons d'or» (text published by Bordeaux 1905 [note 45], p. 461).

52 Serrure 1847 (note 47), p. 51 and 74.

53 This is an intentional admiring echo of the study by Victor Tourneur, which ends with the sentence: «Ainsi disparurent les *numismatiola* que Charles De Langue et Liévin Vander Beke avaient réunis avec tant d'amour, au temps où ils dissertaient doctement sur l'antiquité à l'ombre des gloriettes parfumées du fameux jardin des bords de la Meuse que Juste Lipse lui-même leur avait envié». On Langius and Torrentius, see Félix Van Hulst: Charles de Langhe et Liévin Vanderbecke, in: Revue de Liège 1 (1844), p. 433–457 and 2 (1844), p. 217–233.

Alexander the Great	1 AU (46r, 2); 3 AR (37r, 1–2–3)
Antigonos Doson	1 AR (37r, 4)
Philip V	1 AR (38v, 4)
Makedon First meris	1 AR (37v, 6)
<hr/>	
<i>Thessaly (1)</i>	
Thessalian league	1 AR (37r, 6)
<hr/>	
<i>Epirus (5)</i>	
Dyrrachium	3 AR (37r, 10; 38r, 1–2); 1 AE (89r, 4)
Epirotean League	1 AR (34r, 2)
<hr/>	
<i>Aetolia (2)</i>	
Aetolian League	2 AR (34r, 1 and 10)
<hr/>	
<i>Lokris (2)</i>	
Lokris Opuntia	1 AR (35r, 4 [quarter stater]); 1 AE (89v, 7)
<hr/>	
<i>Boeotia (4)</i>	
Boeotian League	1 AR (34v, 1)
Thebes	2 AE (89v, 1–2)
Thespieae	1 AE (89v, 3)
<hr/>	
<i>Euboia (2)</i>	
Chalcis	2 AR (36v, 4–5)
<hr/>	
<i>Attica (2)</i>	
Athens	1 AR (34r, 3)
Aegina	1 AR (39r, 1)
<hr/>	
<i>Peloponnesus (2)</i>	
Corinth	1 AR (34r, 9)
Sicyon	1 AR (36r, 4)
<hr/>	
<i>Bithynia (3)</i>	
Prusias	1 AR (38r, 7); 1 AE (90r, 4)
Nicomedes III	1 AR (38r, 3 [GOR]).
<hr/>	
<i>Aiolis (3)</i>	
Kyme	1 AR (34v, 7)
Myrina	1 AR (37v, 7); 1 AE (88r, 3)
<hr/>	
<i>Ionia (2)</i>	
Ephesus	1 AR (38v, 1)
Kolophon	1 AE (89v, 9)
<hr/>	
<i>Caria (2)</i>	
Rhodes	2 AR (35v, 10–11)
<hr/>	
<i>Pamphylia (1)</i>	
Aspendos	1 AR (35r, 3)
<hr/>	
<i>Cappadocia (1)</i>	
Ariarathes	1 AR (37r, 8)
<hr/>	
<i>Syria (2)</i>	
Antioch	2 AR (88v, 6 and 8)
<hr/>	
<i>Seleucids (1)</i>	
Antiochos VII	1 AE (88v, 3)
<hr/>	
<i>Judaea (1)</i>	
Shekel	1 AR (39v, 1)
<hr/>	
<i>Egypt (6)</i>	
Ptolemies	3 AR (38r, 4–5–6); 2 AE (88r, 4; 90r, 3)

Cleopatra	1 AE (88r, 1)
<i>Carthage (4)</i>	
Punic tetradrachm	4 AR (39r, 4; 39v, 2 and 4–5)
<i>Modern fantasies (1)</i>	
Atreus	1 AE (88v, 4)
Sophocles Koiôn	1 AE (90r, 7)
<i>Undetermined (52)</i>	
34r, 4–8; 34v, 5; 35r, 1; 35v, 8–9; 37r, 6–7 and 9; 37v, 3–4; 38v, 5; 39r, 2–3 and 5–8; 39v, 6; 46r, 4–5; 88v, 2, 5 and 7; 89r, 5–6; 89v, 4, 8; 90r, 2 and 6; 90v, 1–7; 91r, 1–12	
NB: 39v, 3 (Roman Republican quadrigatus)	

ANNEX II GREEK COINS OF THE COLLECTION OF CHARLES OF LORRAINE

5640 Roman: 788 Republican, 108 Imperial gold, 3013 Imperial silver and 1731 Imperial bronze)
 160 Greek: 3 AU (n° 1–3), 56 AR (n° 4–59) and 101 AE (n° 60–160)

Remi	3 AE (n° 152–154)
Celtic bronzes	42 AE (n° 150 and 151)
Iberian coins	5 AR (n° 41–45); 3 AE (n° 124–126)
Massalia	6 AR (n° 47–52); 3 AE (n° 131–133)
Nemausus	1 AR (n° 53)
Brettii	1 AE (n° 107)
Cales	1 AE (n° 120)
Centurippae	1 AE (n° 127)
Mamertini	1 AE (n° 130)
Neapolis	2 AE (n° 135–136)
Thurium	1 AR (n° 54)
Syracuse	11 AE (n° 90–96, 138–139, 141–142)
Odessos	1 AE (n° 137)
Philip II	2 AU (n° 1–2)
Alexander the Great	1 AU (n° 3)
Dyrhachium	37 AR (n° 4–40: likely to be a part of an unpublished hoard)
Lokris	1 AE (n° 129)
Athens	1 AE (n° 106)
Corinth	1 AR (n° 55: »Caput muliebre galeatum; Pegasus volans«)
Amisos	1 AE (n° 98: »Caput Palladis vel Martis galeatum; Columna, supra quam statua; in area luna crescens & astrum«)
Abbaitii	1 AE (n° 134)
Cyzicus	1 AE (n° 128)
Smyrna	5 AE (n° 143–147 [Roman Provincial])
Amyntas	1 AE (n° 97)
Antioch	7 AE (n° 99–105)
Sidon	1 AE (n° 140)
Seleucids	12 AE (n° 78–89)
Ptolemies	18 AE (n° 60–77)
Juba	1 AR (n° 46)
Roman provincial	3 AE (n° 148–149)
+ 25 undetermined coins in poor condition (<i>post scriptum</i>)	