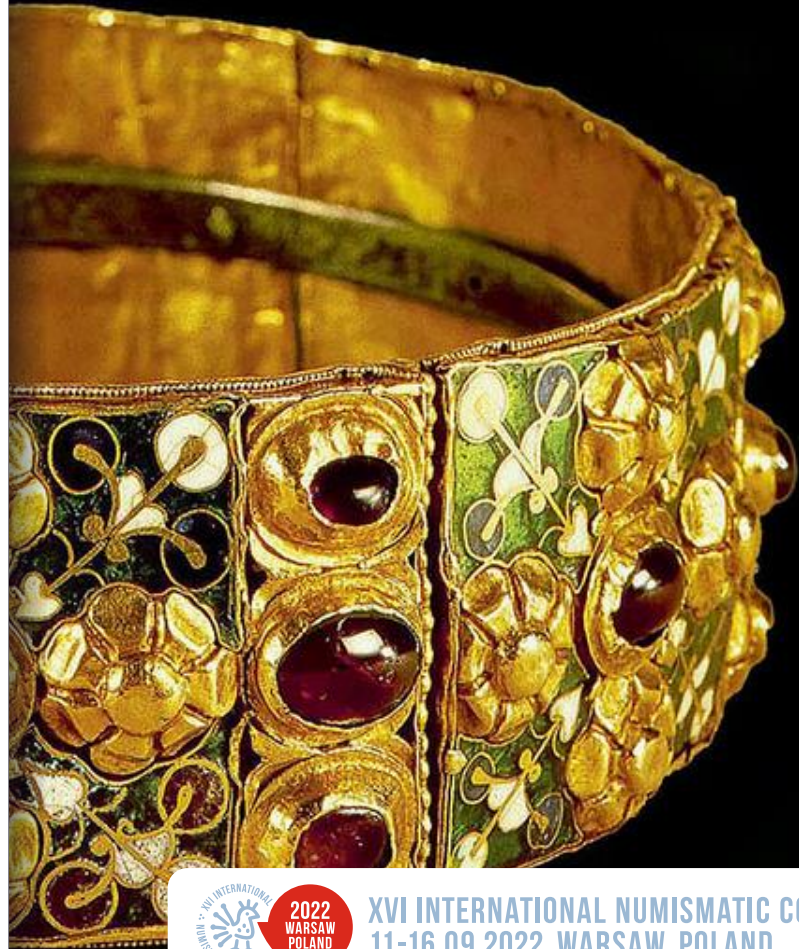


The coinage of the Kingdom of Italy from Louis II to Berengar II (855-961): a reappraisal

Luca Gianazza – <https://www.sibrium.org/>



XVI INTERNATIONAL NUMISMATIC CONGRESS
11-16.09.2022, WARSAW, POLAND

The Kingdom of Italy



Rulers of the Kingdom of Italy

| Kings or emperors | Nominal reign | Probable minting period |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Louis II (sole emperor) | 855–75 | 855–75 |
| Charles the Bald (emperor) | 875–7 | 876–7 |
| Carloman of Bavaria (king) | 877–9 | 877–9 |
| Charles the Fat (king) | 879–81 | 879–81 |
| (emperor) | 881–7 | 881–7 |
| Berengar I of Friuli (king) | 888–915 | 888–9 (first period) |
| Guy of Spoleto (king) | 889–91 | 889–91 |
| (emperor) | 891–4 | 891–4 |
| Arnulf of Carinthia (king) | 894–6 | 894, 895–6 |
| (emperor) | 896–9 | 896 |
| Lambert (emperor, alone from 894) | 892–8 | 894–5, 896–8 |
| Berengar I (king, restored) | — | 898–900 (second period) |
| Louis III the Blind (king) | 900–1 | 900–1 |
| (emperor) | 901–28 | 901–2 |
| Berengar I (king, again restored) | — | 902–15 (third period) |
| (emperor) | 915–24 | 915–24 |
| Rudolf II of Burgundy (king) | 923–33 | 923, 924–6 |
| Hugh of Arles (king) | | |
| (alone) | 926–31 | 926–31 |
| (with Lothaire II) | 931–47 | 931–47 |
| Lothaire (king, alone) | 947–50 | 947–50 |
| Berengar II (king, rival from 945) | 945–50 | |
| (with Adalbert) | 950–63 | 950–61 |
| Otto I (king) | 951–62 | 951–62 |
| (emperor) | 962–73 | 962–73 |

Why do we need a reappraisal?



publications obsolete
or insufficient to cover
all identified cases



inadequate
examination of coins
in private collections



lack of quantitative
analysis



dozens of new finds,
especially thanks to
the use of metal
detector

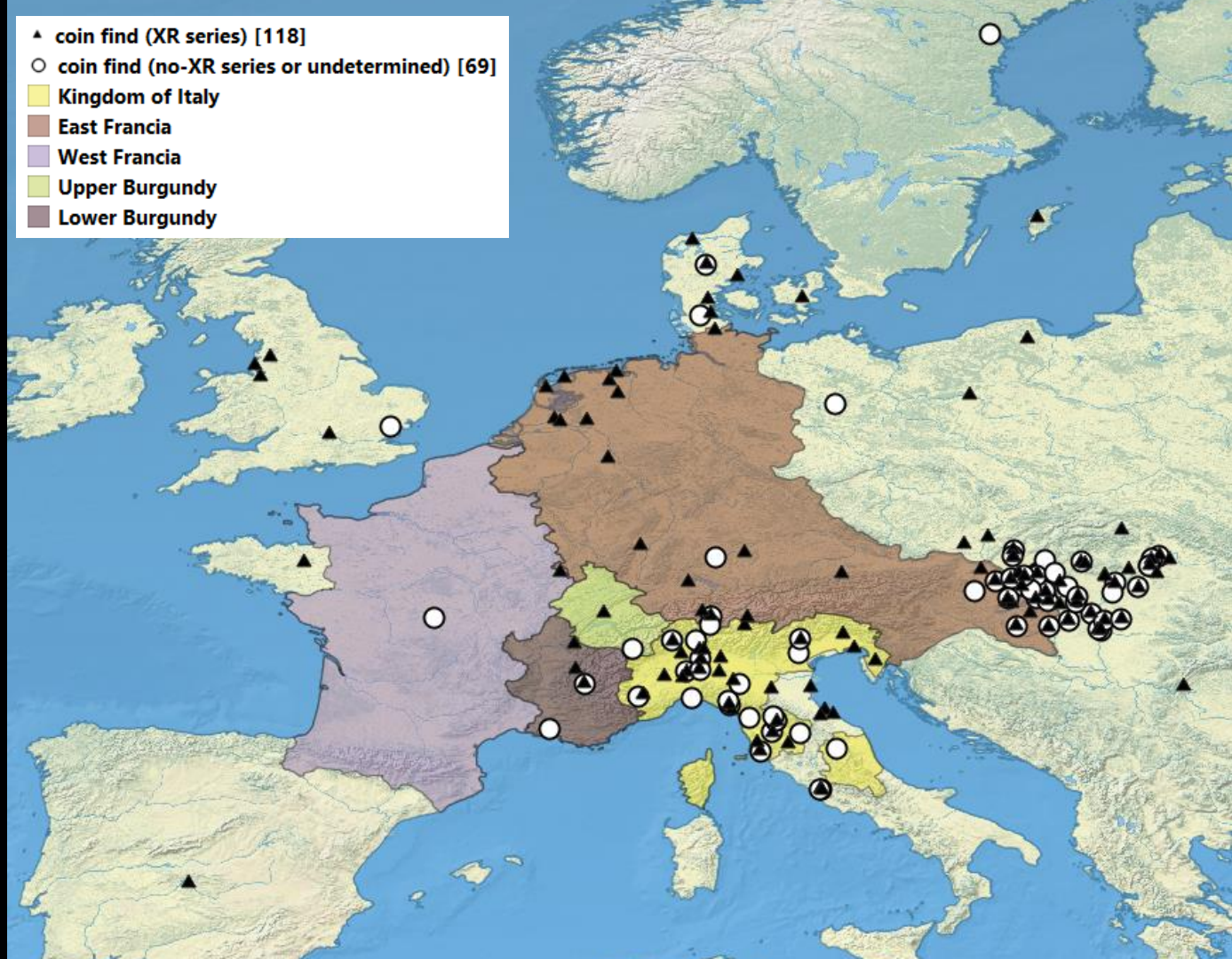
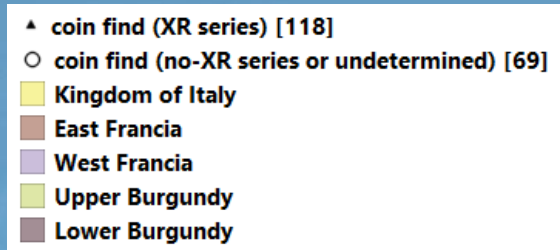


more accurate data on
weight, module and
context of the
archaeological
excavation



larger availability of
coin images of very
good quality

A local coinage
of supra-
regional
relevance



A wider project:
*The coinage of
the Regnum
Italiae from
Charlemagne to
Berengar II with
Adalbert of Italy
(773/4-961)*

4,150+
specimens

440+ finds

60+ public
collections

40+ private
collections

The legacy of Lothair I (840-55)

Coins with the mint name: Milan (a), Pavia (b), Treviso (c) and Venice (d)



a)



b)



c)



d)



The legacy of Lothair I (840-55)

Questionable attributions to Venice (a+b) or to an Italian mint (c)



a)



b)



c)



Louis II (855-75) and the series with the “tetrastyle temple”



Immobilized type, changing diameter



Louis II: 20/22 mm



Louis II: 24/26 mm



Carloman: 27/29 mm



Charles the Fat: 29/32 mm



Lambert: 28/32 mm



Lambert: 20/22 mm

“

*The problem of identifying the mints
responsible for the Christiana religio coins
has now been largely solved*

Ph. Grierson, *Medieval European Coinage* 1, 252

- Mint of MILAN
 - barred As and normal Bs
 - regular initial in the ruler's name (*Karolus, Carlemannus*; in 870s and 880s)
 - one or more arms of the cross ending in a spike (from 890s)

- Mint of PAVIA
 - unbarred As (Λ) and Bs in the form of a barred D (Ð)
 - initial aspirate in the ruler's name (*HCarolus, HCarlemannus*; in 870s and 880s)
 - Ps becoming Ds, ss often becoming Is (for Berengar I, issues on large flan)
 - flat, slightly splayed ends to the arms of the cross (from 890s)

- Mint of VENICE (from 902)
 - broad and slightly concave border

- Mint of VERONA
 - inscription BERE(or I)NKARIVS (for Berengar I)

- Mint of MODENA (for Louis III the Blind only)
 - other irregular coins which do not fit into the previous patterns



Stylistic differentiation under Louis II



Louis II (855-75)



Charles the Bald (875-7)



Carloman (877-9)



?

Carloman (877-9)

Charles the Fat as king (879-81)

Charles the Fat as emperor (881-7)



?



?

Charles the Fat as emperor (881-7)



Berengar I as king (888-915, first minting period)



?



Keys for the identification of styles A and B

Coins of Arnulf of Carinthia (894-6) occasionally proposing the name of the mint

STYLE A
=
MILAN



rev.: MEDIOLANVM CIVIS



MEDI(olanum)

STYLE B
=
PAVIA



rev.: IN PAVIA CIVITAS



PAPI(a)

Arnulf of Carinthia (894-6)



Louis III as emperor (901-2)



Berengar I as king (888-915)



rev.: MEDIOLANIVM



rev.: INPAPIACIVITAS

?



A breakdown with Berengar I as king (888-915): c. 905/10 (?)



rev.: MEDI | C | OLA



rev.: PA | PIA | CI



a)



b)



c)



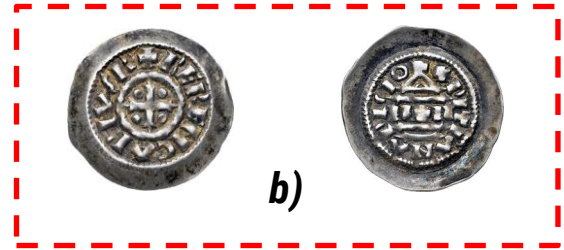
d)



e)



f)



894 November 21: Berengar I confirms to the bishop of **Mantua**, Eginulf, the charters that had been lost in a fire, the rights to specific taxes, and makes other concessions, including the *moneta publica* (**seu monetam publicam ipsius Mantuane civitatis nostro regali dono ibi perpetualiter habendam concedimus**)

905 January 9: Berengar I grants to the Church of **Treviso** two parts of the city's *teloneum* and port market, two parts of the *moneta publica* and the *teloneum* outside and inside the city that belonged to the royal fisc (**et duas portiones publicae monetae ad cameram nostri palatii olim pertinentes**)

913 April and 918 January: mentions of a **Gisemundus monetarius** in **Verona**

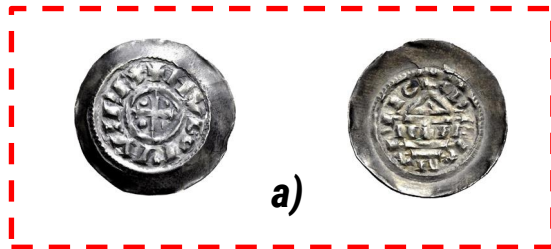
The coins in the name of Hugh of Arles (926-31, with Lothair II 931-47)



rev.: MEDI | OLA



rev.: PA | PIA



a)



b)



c)



d)



e)



f)



Continuity over time of new stylistic elements

Louis III (a), Berengar I (b) and Hugh (c)



a)



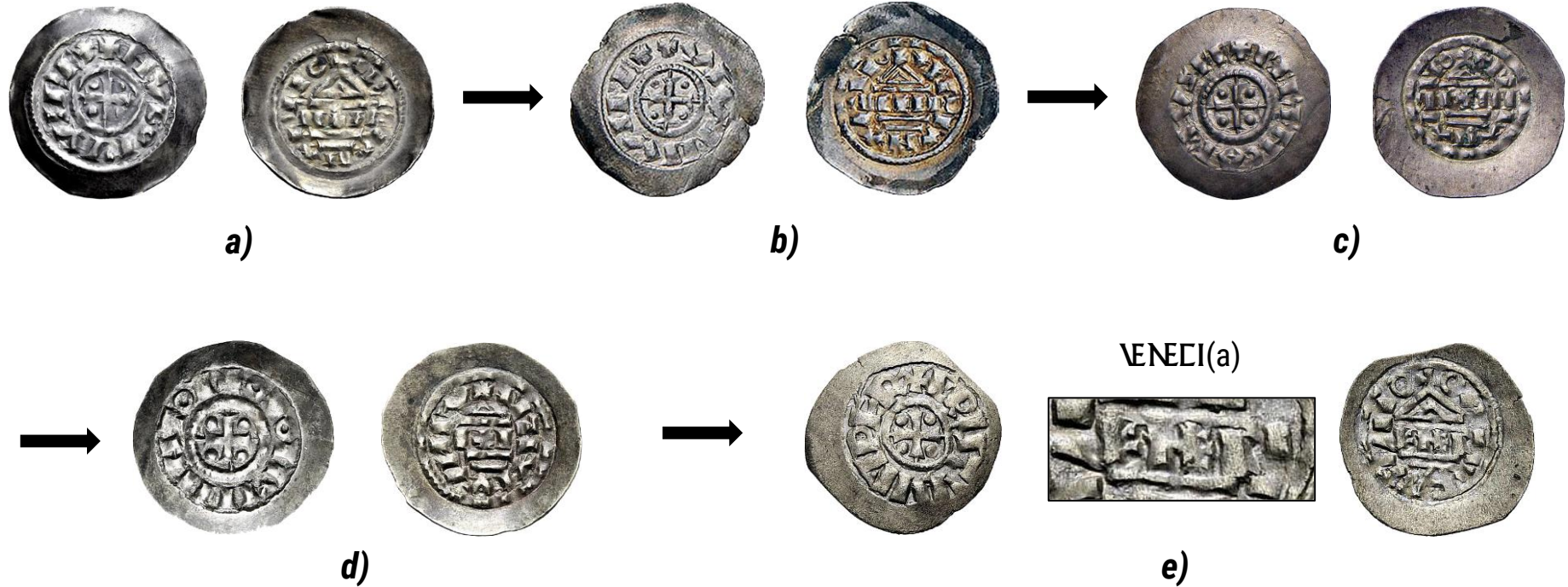
b)



c)

The mint of Venice

Hugh (a+b), Berengar II (c), in the name of Otto (d), with the name of Venice (e)



New types for the coins of Milan and Pavia: a change in the standard?

Hugh with Lothair II (a+b), Berengar II with Adalbert (c+d)



a)



b)



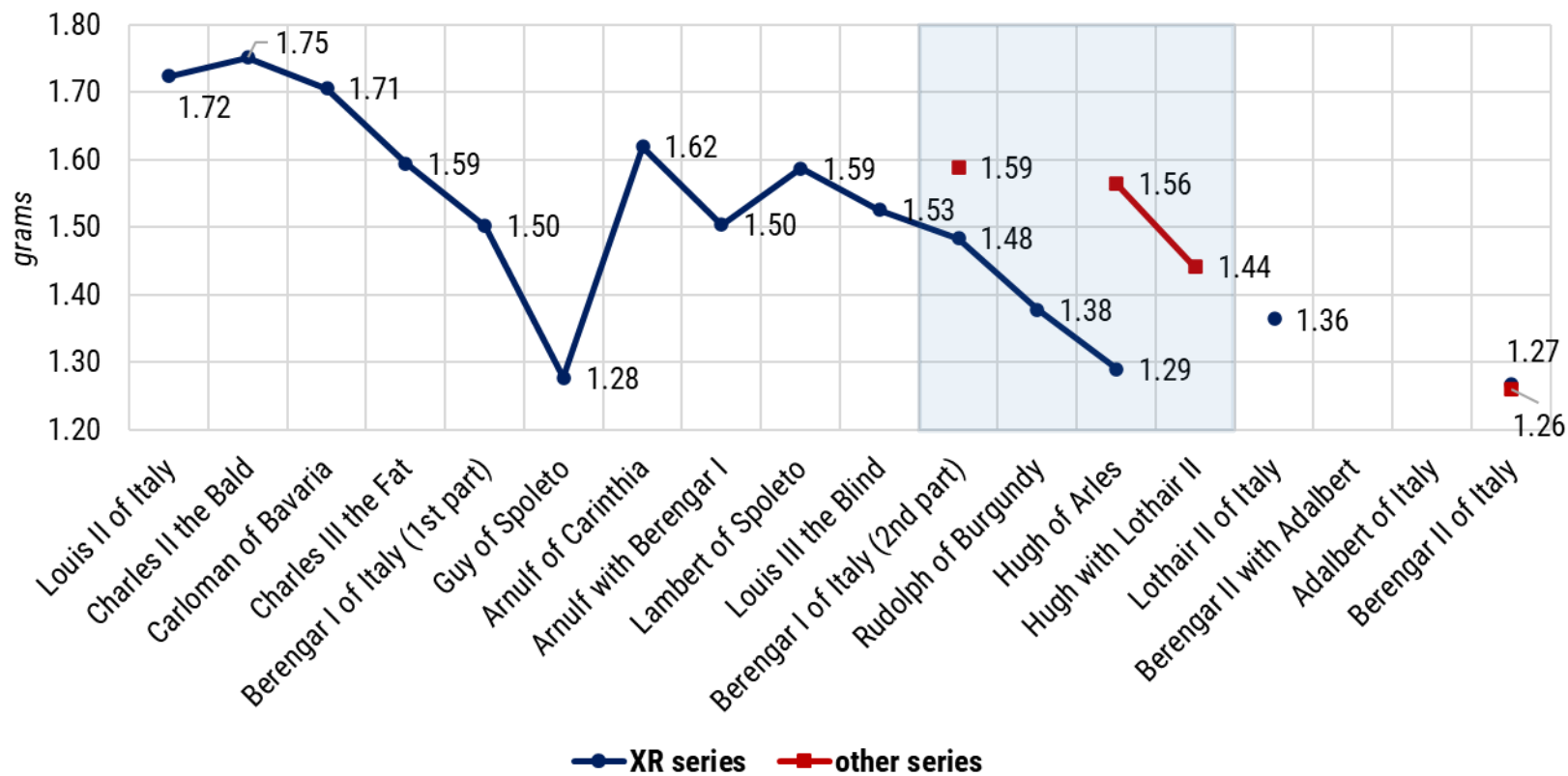
c)



d)



Average weight of coins (excl. chipped specimens)



945 May 27: Lothair II confirms to the Church of Mantua the right to mint coins and grants the citizens of **Mantua**, **Verona** and **Brescia** to agree on the weight and fineness of their money
(**Volumus tamen, ut secundum libitum et conventum civium predictarum urbium constet
atque permaneat mixtio argenti et ponderis quantitas**)



| <i>rulers</i> | | <i>mints</i> | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| | | Milan | Pavia | Verona | Lucca | XR series |
| Berengar I of Friuli | 888-924 | X | X | | | X |
| Rudolph of Burgundy | 922-33 | X | X | (?) | | |
| Hugh of Arles | 926-31 | X | X | | | X |
| Hugh with Lothair II | 931-47 | X | X | X | X | |
| Lothair II of Italy | 947-50 | X | X | X | | |
| Berengar II of Italy | 945-50 | | | X | | X |
| Berengar II with Adalbert | 950-61 | X | X | | | |
| Adalbert of Italy | 950-61 | | | X | | |

Wrapping up

1

Milan and Pavia represent the two main mints, equally productive, each with its own **stylistic peculiarities that have persisted over time**

2

Realistically other mints active in parallel, with significantly lower volumes, but their identification remains uncertain

- **Mantua, Treviso and Verona** the most plausible candidates. **Not Modena**, of which there is no evidence in documents
- **Venice** is likely to have resumed minting continuously under Louis III, if not already before

3

Break of the monetary uniformity (and unity?) under Berengar I, most probably c. 905/10

- **The change in type corresponds to a change in weight standards as well**
- Birth of **two distinct series**: mint names vs. XR, with **possible proliferation of mints (in the eastern regions** of the Kingdom of Italy: to be linked to the choices of Venice?)

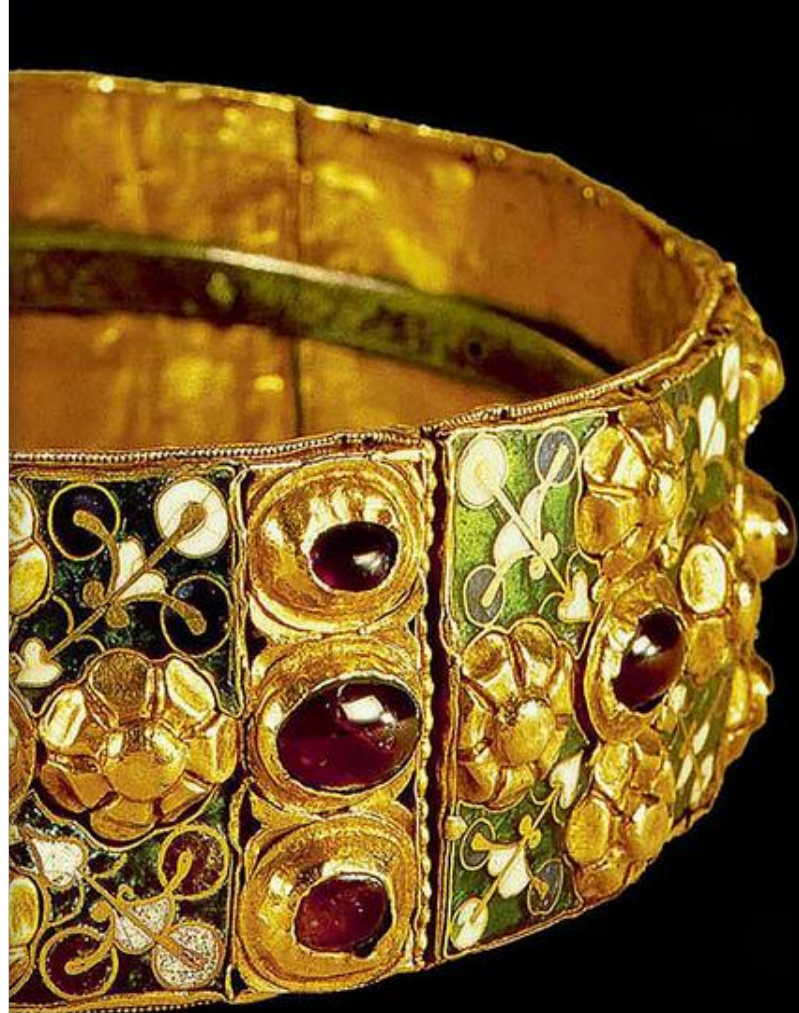
It all comes to an end...

*If you have any questions about this document,
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abstract

At the death of Lothair I (855), the denarii issued in the Kingdom of Italy stopped bearing the name of the mint of origin. They adopted the representation of a church in the form of a tetrastyle temple accompanied by the legend XPISTIANA RELIGIO, which would remain in exclusive use until 905/10 c., then progressively abandoned during the 10th century.

This situation determines many uncertainties in the classification of coins, further complicated by the homonyms among the kings of Italy in that period.

Thanks to the availability of a new set of coins from excavations, and a large group of specimens recently rediscovered in public and private collections, it is now possible to define a chronology of the coins of the Kingdom of Italy that is much more reliable than in the past, identifying precise stylistic and figurative peculiarities that allow establishing with greater accuracy their mint of origin.

