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Nothing to do with Aristodemus"? 1: Cumaean Coinage and the Late Archaic Diana from Lake Nemi

It is generally accepted that a late Archaic bronze head from Diana's Arician sanctuary at Lake Nemi was part of a triple statue of the goddess as depicted on the late Republican coinage of P. Accoleius Lariscolus. The *triformis* aspect of Diana in Roman culture has long been suspected to derive from Cumae. Historical sources attest that Aricia and Cumae were in contact very early: Aristodemus Malacus of Cumae conquered Etruscan forces at Aricia in 504 BCE (Livy 2.14.5-9 and DH *Rom. Antiq.* 7.5-6), a victory that was instrumental in enabling his *coup d'état* over the Cumaean aristocracy upon his return. But to date there has been no confirmation of the contact between Cumae and Aricia from the archaeological sources. This paper proposes to identify a first material link between Aristodemus and Aricia: early Cumaean coinage depicts the same late Archaic bronze head of Diana as that found at Lake Nemi and on the late Republican coinage.

Coins that bear an "enigmatic female head," variously identified as an eponymous nymph or the Sibyl of Cumae, will be the focus of my argument, especially six coins in the series Rutter identifies as belonging to Period 2, the second earliest issue. Although for these coins Rutter notes the head's stylistic affinities to late Archaic Greek art, he looks to Syracusan coinage in postulating a date ca. 470-460/55. In asserting that the start of Cumaean coinage was ca. 475, he argues against Sambon's theory (1907) that it began during Aristodemus' reign. The chronological scheme for Cumaean coinage must again be revised if Aristodemus did in fact mint coinage from the proceeds of the rich spoils Aristodemus took at Aricia and from confiscation of the property of the Cumaean aristocracy he killed in order to facilitate payments to his followers.

The identification has further ramifications, both for Roman religion and for the early history of Latium. First, Pairault's conclusion that the triple statue represents Greek Hecate, not a native Latin Trivia, is confirmed (Pairault 1969: 464-465). Additionally, we must consider if this identification establishes the date of Diana's arrival as *dea triformis* at Lake Nemi. DH relates that Aristodemus "paid his vows to the gods" upon his return from Aricia (*Rom. Antiq.* 7.7.3). Did he also set up the triple statue of the goddess in the Arician Grove? Or did the Latins set up the triple statue later to honor their benefactor's goddess, who had now become their own? An inscription cited by Cato (Priscian (*Inst. Gramm.* 4.21= Cato, *Orig.* 2, fr. 21 Jordan) indicates that they had dedicated a portion of this grove as a LVCVS DIANIVS at about the same time as the Battle of Aricia (certainly prior to 495 BCE, as Gjerstad (1970) has shown). Their act is generally considered to have been preparatory to the imminent threat from the Etruscans; but could it have been *post factum*, i.e. after the goddess' favor had been secured?

1. N. K. Rutter, *Campanian Coinages. 475-380 B.C.* Edinburgh, 1979, p. 10.