

DAVID R. SEAR

Certificate of Authenticity

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This coin has been personally inspected and authenticated by

Issued to: Jens Georg Feierabend

On: February 13, 2023

David R. Sear

State: Roman Empire

Ruler: Hadrian (AD 117-138)

Denomination: orichalcum sestertius

Mint: Rome

Date: circa AD 130-33

Weight: 24.90 grams

Maximum Diameter: 31.55 millimeters

Die Axis: ↑

Obverse: HADRIVS AVG COS III P P, bare-headed and draped bust of Hadrian right.

Reverse: AEGYPTOS (around, above) S C (in exergue), Aegyptios reclining left, holding sistrum and resting on basket of fruit, ibis standing right on low column at her feet.

References: RIC 1595 and pl. 123; BMCRE 1692; Strack 707; Cohen 110; Hill (*The Undated Coins of Rome, A.D. 98-148*) 643; Sear (*Roman Coins & their Values II*) 3572 variant (bust laureate).

Grade: good F

Historical & Numismatic Note: Publius Aelius Hadrianus was born in AD 76 of a family that lived in the Spanish city of Italica. His father died when he was only nine and he entered the childless household of the future emperor Trajan, who also came from Italica. In AD 100, he married Vibia Sabina, the daughter of Trajan's niece Matidia. It thus seemed that he had been marked out for the imperial succession, though no formal adoption ever took place. Great mystery surrounds the circumstances of his accession, which took place in the East. News of Trajan's sudden death in Cilicia was withheld for several days during which time the Empress Plotina announced that her dying husband had confided to her in secret his desire to adopt Hadrian as his heir. No one wished to challenge the word of the highly respected imperial consort and a somewhat reluctant Senate followed the army in ratifying the new emperor's accession. Hadrian had a keen interest in experiencing first hand the diverse peoples and places of his vast Empire. Accordingly, during the two decades of his reign he undertook three great journeys, in which he visited almost every province over which he ruled. Many of his coin types relate to these imperial tours making the coinage of this reign one of the largest and most diverse in the entire Roman imperial series. This orichalcum (brass) sestertius, worth one-quarter of the silver denarius, is from the final decade of the reign and has a reverse type honoring the province of Egypt. The emperor had visited this region in AD 130-31, a stay that was marred by the death of his favorite Antinoüs who drowned in the Nile. This province had a special status and was governed by a member of the equestrian class on behalf of the emperor, who regarded the land of the Nile as his private estate over which he ruled as the successor of the pharaohs. The personification of the province holds the sistrum (rattle) of Isis and the sacred bird, the ibis, perches on a column at her feet.

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