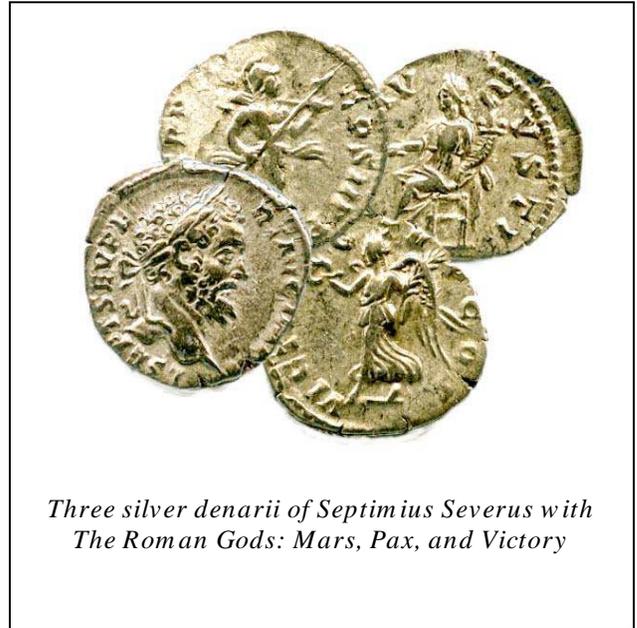


War & Peace in Ancient Rome: *The Roman Gods of Battle* A Set of Three Silver Coins



*Three silver denarii of Septimius Severus with
The Roman Gods: Mars, Pax, and Victory*

This remarkable collection features silver coins bearing the likenesses of three of the most important gods of war and peace: Mars, Pax, and Victoria.

The history of Rome is the history of war: The annihilation of Carthage. Brutus stabbing Caesar in the back. The defeat of Marc Antony and Cleopatra at Actium. Constantine's vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. The final fall of the city of Rome in 476.

With warfare being such an integral part of the society, it is not surprising that the Roman deities associated with the various aspects of warfare were among the most important in the Roman pantheon, much more so than their Greek counterparts. This remarkable collection features silver coins bearing the likenesses of three of the most important:

Mars, God of War

The husband of Venus and, according to legend, the illegitimate father of Romulus and Remus, the twins who founded the city of Rome. Left to die as babies, they were suckled by a mother wolf, who raised them. The most important god to the army, Mars gave his name to the Campus Martius, the field on the Tiber where soldiers trained, and to the month of March, when hostilities generally resumed after the winter.

Pax, Goddess of Peace

Not as popular as Mars, especially for an Empire whose economy depended on war, but often prayed to by those of a less martial temperament. Pax worship was at its pinnacle during the reign of Caesar Augustus, and the *Pax Romana* of his reign was unprecedented in its scope and duration.

Victoria, Goddess of Victory

The Roman equivalent of the Greek goddess Nike, and like her the charioteer of Jove. Victoria was one of the most popular goddesses in the pantheon, with her own temple on Palatine Hill. When her statue was removed by the emperor Gratianus in 382 CE—long after Constantine the Great established Rome as a Christian Empire—the people rioted. Interestingly, after the conversion to Christianity, Victoria grew wings and began to resemble an angel.

These three genuine silver ancient Roman coins are from the reign of Septimius Severus, a famed general. Coinage was not just money but a propaganda tool, which emperors used to promote their positions and interests. The obverse shows a portrait of the emperor. Reverses generally depict religious and military scenes. The *denarius* was the most important currency in the Western world for centuries, the backbone of the economy; one denarius was the daily wage for a soldier in the army.

Silver Denarii of Septimius Severus



Mars



Pax



Nike

Ruler	Septimius Severus
Year of issue	193-211AD
Country	Rome
Material	Silver
Weight	2.2-3.4 g
Diameter	16.5-19.5 mm
Obverse	Portrait and legend
Reverse	Various personifications or military themes

All coins in each set are protected in an archival capsule and beautifully displayed in a mahogany-like box. The box set is accompanied with a story card, certificate of authenticity, and a black gift box.

Image shows typical coins, not to scale; *grade may vary somewhat from image.*