

SUBJECT

This paper deals with the coinage of the Western Roman Emperors in the 4th century A.D. from Honorius' reign till Flavius Romulus Augustulus' reign. This was the period of slow agony of the Western Roman Empire, and the time of barbarian invasions, when Christianity which has already become state religion becomes entirely official in the imperial representation as well¹. The aim of this paper was to present the main political slogans of the period which I analyzed through the most widespread communication technique of Antiquity, i.e. coinage. The legends and devices on the coins were the most effective tools of the current government to spread the ideas they officially represented in the area of the whole Empire. Its significance was realized early, and great emphasis was laid on its implementation. The government of the Western Roman Empire did not stop continuously reminding its inhabitants of the fact that peace and security is owing to the Emperor's personal, all-out care and his army that he leads successfully. Money coined in the Roman and other provincial mints told year by year the Emperor's deeds, aims and the government's slogans that were sometimes griveously illusory. The legends and devices of the coins made the subject remember the face of the Emperor as well as the ideas and strength of the Roman system. The strength and ideas of this Roman system rather changed during the crisis that occurred in the Western Roman Empire.

For my paper I used the coins of the period that I managed to access via the internet and different numismatic catalogues. This paper is divided into two chapters: in the first part I present the coining of the Western Roman Emperors through the different front and back sides of their coins. Thus, it is after all a catalogue of the coining of the period. The second part is about the imperial representation itself, in which I arranged the coingings of the Emperors on the basis of the main slogans of the period. The paper is complemented with numismatic tables which help in the overview.

This paper reflects only the results of the first phase of my information gathering, hereafter I would like to deal in detail with the survival of the pagan symbolism in the representation of the Christian Emperors of the late imperial period.

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¹ In my paper I use instead of the word propaganda which is more characteristic of the modern age the expression, representation which better fits the Antiquity