



Argentum Romanorum sive Barbarorum

Permanences et évolution des usages monétaires
de l'argent du IV^e au VI^e siècle dans l'Occident romain

Tradition und Entwicklung im Gebrauch des Silbergeldes
im römischen Westen (4.-6. Jh.)



The fate of the silver coinage in Gaul during the 5th century AD: questions of production, circulation and use

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This paper wishes to focus on the production, circulation and function of silver coinage in the region of Gaul during the 5th century AD. First, the important evolutions in the production will be briefly sketched. Continuing the existing 4th century tradition, both the Gallic usurpers Eugenius (AD 392-394), Constantine III (AD 407-411) and Jovinus (AD 411-413) produced considerable quantities of silver coins at the mints of Trier, Lyon and Arles. The last “official” silver issues in the region were struck between AD 425 and 450 at Trier in name of Valentinian III and Theodosius II. Moreover, both the 4th and 5th century silver pieces were imitated locally on a limited scale. Secondly, the circulation and possible function of these late Roman silver coins and imitations will be discussed, based on an inventory of site finds. The spatial distribution of the finds across the region of Gaul and the specific archaeological contexts, consisting mainly of burials, is analyzed. Based on this material, the question on the nature of the silver coins will be discussed: Did these silver coins and their imitations still function as a monetary means for the local population, or not?

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