business opportunities. Social capital literature has emphasized the importance of informal networks. The unstable or weak ties formed through membership in some collegia may have served as possible conduits to networks that may not have otherwise overlapped. The reputation mechanism of the ancient collegia, however, may not have been any more effective than the less formal networks. Not only did collegia by no means replace those networks, especially in smaller cities and villages, but inter-member and member-association relationships were impacted by those networks in complex ways.

This chapter in no way exhausts all the possible scenarios concerning the working of the Roman associations as social networks. I hope, however, that it has sufficiently demonstrated the complexity of the factors that may have impacted the internal workings of the association, intra-association relationships, and the relationships between the association and other networks or institutions, so that we may exercise caution when interpreting the association's efficiency in reducing transaction costs.

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118 For the value of weak ties, see the seminal article by Granovetter (1973: 1360–1380). See recently, Easley and Kleinberg (2010), especially chapter 3. See also Hollern's chapter in this volume.

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CHAPTER II

Currency and Control: Mint Workers in the Later Roman Empire

Sarah Bond

Following their meeting at Milan in 325, Constantine remained in control of the Roman Empire in the west, while Licinius oversaw the east. Although they were ostensibly partners, the rivalry between them visibly continued in a number of spheres, including their coinage reforms. In his earlier struggle to be recognized as Augustus in the west, Constantine had advertised his legitimacy by introducing a new gold coin called the solidus. For his part, Licinius had rejected Constantine's solidus and struggled to sustain the minting of the heavier aureus. This 'valorised' solidus would eventually emerge as the standard within the empire; however, it could not be fully implemented in the east until after the defeat of Licinius in 324. It is within the broader context of both emperors' patent attempts to ensure the supply, authority, and legitimacy of their imperial coinage that we must consider legislation that dictated the status of imperial mint workers known as monetarii. It was probably Licinius who sent a rescript dated to 21 July 337 to the Bithynians declaring that the monetarii were to maintain a lowly status into perpetuity; moreover, he barred them from attaining the dignities of the equestrian order. The
equestrian grades of perfectissimatus and egregius in particular carried with them special exemptions from munera, and could thus be used to escape curial duties—an increasingly pervasive problem in the fourth century. The rescript indicates that minters were already considered as having a degraded status by 327, but that this status was not altogether debilitating or base. Though barred from the equestrian orders, freeborn Bithynian monetarii perhaps served as curials, suggesting that mint workers could achieve a degree of wealth and civic prominence.

An ostensible reason for limiting the dignities available to minters was to tie them to their positions in the imperial mint; however, an additional reason for overseeing them carefully became evident only a few years later, when Constantine cited the imperial monetarii in his pronouncements on counterfeiting. In 321, the emperor alleged that imperial minters were engaged in clandestine minting of money. He attempted to stop the practice through threats directed at the counterfeiters and by proffering incentives for informers. The measures imply that some minters illegally benefitted from their close proximity to the imperial stores of gold, silver, and bronze, the law may have additionally served as a public strategy to restore confidence in the quality of the currency and hence boost consumer confidence. Positions in the mint did provide a unique opportunity for theft, coin shaving (wherein an individual debased the coin’s value by filing the metal down), and stealing official dies to be used externally, but the move also unambiguously asserted Constantine’s control over the coinage. Over the course of the fourth century, regulation of the status, prospects, and even conjugal rights of these imperial minters only intensified; however, little modern work has explored the reasons for the changing status of Roman mint workers. This investigation into the legislation concerning monetarii will attempt to show how Roman law was employed to construct imperial legitimacy. It will also posit that the legislation in the fourth century signals a legal shift in the use of legislation and status to secure labour in state workshops during the later empire. As I will argue, legal manipulation of the status of minters served both to systematize a fixed caste of corporally vulnerable workers to staff imperial mints and, more broadly, to affirm legally the emperor’s legitimate right to control coining. Moreover, I hope to demonstrate that the degraded status that accompanied service in some compulsory trades in the later empire did not necessarily inhibit workers from attaining prestige.

Outline and Scope

Mint workers produced the most visible medium of imperial propaganda circulated within the Roman Empire: coinage. Since the term 'propaganda' is itself a loaded term, this article will use a definition similarly utilized by other classical numismatists in order to evaluate coinage as a tool of propaganda: The deliberate attempt to influence public opinion through the transmission of ideas and values for a specific purpose, not through violence or bribery. As I will assert, mint workers were an integral though often overlooked part of numismatic propaganda. Studies of the art and material culture of antiquity often divorce the artwork from the artisans in analyses of visual propaganda. Consequently, studies of Roman art generally treat the artisans separately. In the same manner that the role of the viewer in imperial communiqué has recently been emphasized, I would like to suggest that we must also reflect on the carefully constructed personas of the state-employed artisans themselves. This article aims to illustrate how the legally controlled status of the artisans who crafted Roman coins served to reinforce the message of legitimacy, stability, and continuity that Roman coinage itself intended to advertise.

A few guidelines in terms of subject, scope, and evidence are necessary before embarking on this overview of Roman imperial minters. First, imperial (that is state-produced) coinage was not the only currency available to Romans in the early empire, but there was expansive circulation of this imperial coinage. In the Republic and early Roman Empire, there was a rather laid-back

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10 Regarding the widespread monetization in the early empire, see Konkel and Tomin (2008 127–155). Note von Reden's caveat (2010: 90) that widespread monetization does not prove there was market integration.
attitude at Rome towards coinage in the provinces.\textsuperscript{11} Provincial mints struck coins for local use, which often circulated alongside other forms of coinage, such as the spinaets possibly used as entrance tickets redeemable for services in brothels. In terms of the location of the mint and working conditions within it, the evidence is fragmented and diffuse. Recreations of the working conditions of the moneta itself must rely to a large extent on textual sources and depictions on coins. For instance, Statius' reference to the ore thrust in a crackling fire to mint coins and Firmicus Maternus' mention of blazing furnaces employed to melt down metal give us some idea of the atmosphere on the workshop floor.\textsuperscript{12} Although decidedly later, the Byzantine writer Nicholas Mesarites remarked upon John Komnenos' failed usurpation in 1201 that the workers in the mint at Constantinople were sweaty, with blackened clothing and feet from labouring night and day to control the gold supply — though this scene may also be a nod to the human greed attached to money.\textsuperscript{13} Rather than evaluating the conditions within the mint itself, the primary focus of this chapter will remain on a more textually attested topic: the shifting status, associations, and legal regulation of Roman mint workers from the late Republic to AD 565, and how these shifts reflect the anxieties of an empire.\textsuperscript{14}

The act of minting itself advertised the power and legitimacy of an individual, but the deed alone meant little unless the people trusted and circulated these coins. In the same way that Alexander's coins had become the model for consistent metal content in the Hellenistic period, it was important for Roman emperors to evoke and maintain trust in their coinage.\textsuperscript{15} Emperors or claimants to imperial power needed to establish and then uphold the reputation of their coin. As I will argue, one way to cultivate this reputation was through publicized control of the status of the mint workers themselves. In the Republic, coinage was centralized in the city of Rome, and the surviving records do not indicate the status of the minters. However, under Julius Caesar, servile minters began to be utilized: men directly tied to the master for whom they minted, and corporally vulnerable to physical abuse or even death as a penalty for fraud or pilfering. The early empire saw the regularized use of a mix of freedmen and servile labour organized into familiae monetariae within mint workshops called officinae, but, as I will discuss, the status of mint workers in the later empire is often unclear. Beyond their status, the actions of mint workers could also have an impact upon imperial policy; it was an uprising of minters under Aurelian that prompted shifts in monetary policy and closer oversight of the minters. As emperors increasingly hoarded and secured gold and silver to ensure quick accessibility, mobile minting escalated, and new hierarchies among the mints developed. By the early fourth century, imperial minters had become so integral to securing the coinage minted for administrative purposes, to pay soldiers, and to repay debts, that laws were enacted to immobilize these workers both legally and socially. The existence of legal evidence of attempts to prevent the elevation of mint workers tends to refute the lowly status assigned these workers by modern scholars.\textsuperscript{16} While this may seem to be an argumentum ex silentio, these laws appear to be reactive to mint workers gaining a degree of social and political prominence. An ignoble status and marriage restrictions were used to define a class of minters who — while technically stigmatized with a demeaned status — would acquire prestige from their proximity to the emperor and the exemptions they received as part of their office.

The Mint from the Republic to the Principate

In the Republic, Rome's mint was located near the temple of Juno Moneta, which stood upon the rocky arx of the Capitoline Hill.\textsuperscript{17} The temple occupied a potent and symbolic space; it looked out over the Roman Forum, allowing shoppers and merchants to gaze up from the Forum and, with a glance, be reminded of the institutional and divine protection over their coinage.\textsuperscript{18} Livy notes the dedication of the temple by Marcus Furius Camillus in 344 BC, and it is possible that the association of the temple of Moneta with the guardianship of standards of measurement extended back to the mid fourth century.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11} Metcalf (2006: 40–41).
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Stat. Silv. 3.3.103–105; Firm. Mat., Err. prof. rel. 28.6. Also note Luc., i.380.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Heisenberg (1907: 32.25–26); Morrisson (2002: 56).\textsuperscript{14} Klose (2006) notes the static nature of the process up to the sixteenth century and remarks that ancient coins were typically struck rather than cast.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} See Le Rider (2007).
  \item \textsuperscript{16} See Jones (1970: 83), who notes (without supporting evidence) that the monetae had always been imperial slaves. Jones believed that mint workers and others in compulsory labour trades were 'essentially slaves'.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} Liv., 6.2.13; Coarelli (1994: 23–55).
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Littlewood (2006: 56), remarks, 'Moneta's guardianship of Roman coinage was an encouragement for Roman moneys to use coinage ...': CIL VI 362 = ILS 3108. For the sources and worship of Juno Moneta in general, see Jean Haudry (2003). The idea of Republican coinage as a monument is suggested by Andrew Meadows and Jonathan Williams (2001: 48).
  \item \textsuperscript{19} Livy's dating (in 7.28) of 344 BC is at odds with Valerius Maximus (i.8.5), who records the dedication as occurring after the seizure of Veii in 396 BC by Marcus Furius Camillus.
\end{itemize}
Between 320 and 280 BC, Rome began to produce more coinage, with minting becoming further regularized after 225. Overseen by administrators called *triumviri monetales*, mint workers were organized into an *officina* of artisans similar to the Greek *sveurigion* or *ergasterion*. Livy’s reference to the *officina Monetae* may suggest that this workshop organization was employed from early on, but it could also be an anachronism based on the organization in the late first century BC, when he wrote his history. The use of organizing units called *officinae* (‘workshops’) would endure into Late Antiquity.

Oversight of a mint was an important duty, a point underscored in Plutarch’s remark that Sulla entrusted Lucullus to perform duties of the highest significance, ‘for instance, the oversight of the mint’. In the Republic, minor magistrates called *triumviri* (or *tresviri*) *monetales* oversaw the mint and often fulfilled the office as an early part of the *cursus honorum*, but later inscriptions suggest that the workshop floor itself was probably supervised by *officinatores* who monitored the *officinae*. In respect to the number of workshops within the mint, beginning in 130 BC, early control marks start appearing on coins that use Latin letters to indicate various obverse and reverse dies. These designate the ways in which the dies were employed rather than the organization of the Republican mint itself; however, Michael Crawford has demonstrated that when these dies are plotted out, it can be reasonably asserted that at first, just one workshop used multiple anvils to produce coinage, since each die is directly or indirectly linked. Two workshops probably alternated years in the late second century BC, shifting between preparing the issues and actually minting coins, and later, two workshops produced the coinage simultaneously. Because we lack any mint records, we possess very little knowledge about the number of men in each *officina* or the status of the workers within them during the Republic, but it can be assumed from later references that they were not at

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21 Liv., 6:20:3.
22 Plut., Luc. 2:5: διὸ καὶ ἡ περὶ τὸ νόμισμα αρχηγεῖσθαι.
23 The six boards of minor magistrates were known collectively as the *vigintiosexviri* by the late Republic. Cic., *Leg.* 3.3.6 notes that holding one of these positions was a precursor to holding the quasestips, then ushered in a man to a senatorial career. The *officinatores monetae* are cited in a number of later, imperial era inscriptions (*CIL* VI 43: 298; 1145 and 8464), though *officinae* were normally overseen by foremen termed *officinatores*, as was the case in the Roman brick industry.

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CURRENCY AND CONTROL

this point *servi*, though their status in the eyes of the senatorial elite does not appear to have been distinguished. Cicero exemplifies this elitist view when he notes the vulgar and illiberal nature of any artisan who worked in an *officina*. However, among the Roman populace not serving as senators or from elite landed families (that is to say, most people within the city), they were probably regarded as perfectly respectable men chosen from among the artisan class engaged in a service that benefitted the *res publica*.

It would appear that just as Caesar’s wife had to be above reproach, so too did his coinage. With the ascension of Caesar to a position of power, the status of the workers within the Roman mint shifted. In the wake of the honors bestowed on him after his victory at Munda in early 45 BC, Julius Caesar installed his own slaves as supervisors of the imperial mint, probably in order to provide him with more direct control over the coinage. He was certainly not the first to perceive the value of having servile staffers operating the state mint. In classical Athens, public slaves called *demosoi* performed many duties for the public, including the minting of coins. An advantage of using slaves rather than citizens in the Roman mint was their high degree of corporal vulnerability; they could more easily be beaten for stealing or debasing coins. This vulnerability of slaves is illustrated by the legislation regarding counterfeit coinage. Promulgated around 81 BC, Sulla’s *lex Cornelia de falsis* had supplied a legal basis for future anti-counterfeit legislation, stipulating banishment for free men caught making silver coinage, but death for slaves.

It should be kept in mind that while servile mint workers could more easily be beaten for criminal offenses, this does not mean that they were financially incapacitated. Even servile officials could acquire wealth. The imperial cash tellers, called *dispensatores*, provided a notable example; while usually servile in status, they could, and did, accrue vast wealth.

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26 Cic., *De Off.* 1.159: Opificesque onnus in sovrida arte versantur; nec enim quicquam ingenium habeant potest officina.
28 Suet., *Jul.* 76.3.
29 *An Athenian decree (SEG XXVI 72) of 375/4 BC indicates that testers who checked for counterfeit coinage were to be paid from the same moneys set aside to pay the state mint workers. See Stroud (1976: 157–188).*
30 *Dig.* 48.8.8. Grierson (1956: 244). Later, this would be modified to impose exile on *hostes*, and either sentencing to the mines or crucifixion for *homicidi*.
31 *Dispensatores* could themselves own slaves. See *CIL* VI 5397 = *ILS* 1544. Plin., *HN* 33.145 (iii), notes that a *dispensator* of Hispania Citerior owned the largest known silver plate.
high demand that one slave in the early empire is said to have paid a million sesterces for the privilege. Proximity to money and to the imperial house was apparently worth the price.

In the early empire, Rome's mint continued to be the main producer of imperial coinage. Between AD 70 and the early second century, the mint was relocated near the Flavian Amphitheatre, on the Caelian hill. Inscriptions dating to AD 115 found near San Clemente suggest a range of mint positions predominantly filled by freedmen and slaves. Although the mint as a whole was overseen by an equestrian procurator monetae under the supervision of the emperor's a rationibus at the time, the highest official listed on these dedicatory inscriptions is a freedman optio et exactor auri argentii et aeris named Felix, who was assisted by another freedman optio named Albus, along with 9 other servile assistants. Below the optio in the Trajanic inscriptions were 16 freedmen officinatores who served as overseers of the officinae, 17 freedmen signatores, 16 freedmen and slaves who served as suppistores that probably placed the flans on the anvils so that they could be struck, and 38 intermixed slaves and freedmen malliatores who hammered the coins. Other persons variously employed by mints were nummularii, who served as moneychangers, but in this context probably checked and bagged coins—men who were probably close in status to the officinatores— and the conductores flaturae. In addition to a recognizable hierarchy, the inscriptions also illustrate ties to certain deities, as did most voluntary associations. Deductions address Apollo, Fortuna Augusta, Hercules, Victoria, and the genius familiae monetalis. Finally, the use of the word 'familia' for the voluntary association of the minters mirrors the terminology employed to encompass many state enterprises; there were the familia aquarum, familia publicanorum, and familia vectigalis. Although it cannot be deduced from the use of the organizing term familia alone, Caesar's shift to employing slaves within the mint appears to have persisted to some degree in the early empire; an inscription from Lugdunum commemorates an aequator monetae named Nobilis, who was a slave of the emperor Tiberius. Collectively, the epigraphic evidence demonstrates a great degree of specialization, a recognizable hierarchy, and a strong associative element at work among the mint workers.

Many ambiguities remain in regard to the mint staff, including the estimated number of workers in each officina. Due to the difficulty in quantifying the amount of coins circulating at any one time, attempts to calculate the mint staff based upon die issues are similarly hindered by large error margins during the various phases of minting. Likewise, the number of mint workers per officina and the aggregate number per mint cannot be deduced from the number of dies in use. Therefore, estimates must rely on the inscriptions of the mint workers. It appears that close to 100 people worked in the Trajanic mint in the administrative and minting areas alone, but, as Philip Grierson and Melinda Mays point out, there must have been almost as many staff additionally involved in melting, refining, and then preparing the blanks. This leads us to estimate around 200 mint workers employed at each of the mints at Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch during the Later Empire. However, an elite group of minters began to form at this time, shadowing the movements of the emperor as he travelled throughout the Mediterranean.

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32 Suet., Otho 5.2.
33 Vagi (1999: 133), proposes that this may have occurred early on in Domitian’s reign, since a large series of duoviri and asses with the Moneta Augusit on them were issued from AD 84 until his death in September of AD 96. Howgego (1995: 27) suggests that it was moved after the fire of AD 86.
34 CIL VI 42–44. For the familia monetalis, see also CIL VI 239. See Mommersen (1887: 30–39; Lafaurie (1972: 267–271). CIL VI 298 = ILS 8696 (Rome) refers to the association of the mint workers as the familia monetaria.
36 For the role of the signatores and a fuller explanation of the jobs of each worker listed in the inscription, see Woytek (2013). These freedmen would seem to refute Jones' (1966: 164–165) assertion that monetari during the Principate and thereafter were all 'public slaves.'
37 CIL VI 8463 (Rome) commemorates a nummularius officinar monetae. Also note CIL VI 8461 and 8463 (Rome). For other imperial freedmen who acted as nummularii see CIL XI 7963 (Sarmizegetusa). CIL VI 8455 from 115 AD, notes the mancipius that oversaw the officinae in charge of the flaturae argentarum, while CIL VI 791 mentions the conductores flaturae argentariae monetae Caesaris.

38 For the religious nature of most voluntary associations, often in conjunction with funereal and convivial activities, see Liu (2009: 247–278).
39 CIL XI 920 = ILS 1639. The aequator monetae probably tested the accuracy of the weight of the blanks. See Weaver (1972: 116–117). For a list of other administrative and industrial departments filled by imperial freedmen, see Weaver (1972: 7).
41 Grierson and Mays (1992: 51).
42 Grierson and Mays (1992: 51).
Minters in the Later Empire

In his commentary On the Agrarian Law, Cicero noted that during the Republic, Romans had originally established colonies as ‘bulwarks of empire’; however, the later empire utilized new bulwarks: armies and imperial mints.\(^{43}\) Whereas minting in the early Roman Empire had been more centralized and focused on the city of Rome, the mid-third century gave rise to an increased diffusion of mints, due particularly to the increasing realization that monetae needed to be close at hand in order to pay the soldiers so pivotal to maintaining imperial support during the third century.\(^{44}\) After all, Septimius Severus’ last words had been, ‘Be harmonious, pay the soldiers, and scorn all other men.’\(^{45}\) Moreover, loyalty was a necessary element that came at a premium at this time. As I will now discuss, mint workers were central to the functioning of the state. Consequently, they had to be given both carrot and stick: rewards for staying loyal, combined with a robust threat for deviating from it. Rebellious associations of minters that did reject the emperor or who supported a usurper could pay a heavy price, but could also serve as catalysts for reforms to the minting system. Ultimately, attempts to ensure and to advertise the stability of the coinage culminated in the use of legal statutes and an ignoble status—also attached to other artisans such as weavers, purple dye workers, and muleteers—in order to prescribe and preserve classes of imperial minters confined to their trade and tied almost permanently in service to the emperor.

The mid-third century crisis had an impact on every sector of society, political, social, and economic.\(^{46}\) Debased coinage was a significant problem that the emperor Aurelian attempted to address, and meeting with resistance, it seems. As had been the case in the Republic and the early Principate, emperors still heavily depended upon the mint at Rome for coinage during this period of flux.\(^{47}\) This reliance on the Rome mint empowered those who worked within the city’s moneta, and perhaps provides a partial explanation for the actions of the emboldened mint workers who revolted during the reign of Aurelian in

\(^{271}\) It seems that the mint workers in Rome had greatly debased the coinage for their own profit under the aegis of the mint’s rationalis, Felicitissimus. Following Aurelian’s challenge to the mint’s overseer, the rationalis incited the mint workers to rebel. One can only hypothesize that these mint workers might have become accustomed to the illicit perks that Felicitissimus had allowed. When these came under threat, he invoked the evidently strong patronage bonds between himself and the mint workers to full effect. Felicitissimus died early on in the melee, but the mint workers gained support from disaffected followers in the form of senators and others who perhaps had not supported Aurelian’s accession in AD 270.\(^{48}\) The Historia Augusta reported 7,000 dead as a result of the insurrection (a large and suspect number of fatalities), but the impact went well beyond the human toll and might have served as a caveat for future emperors.

The so-called bellum monetarium (war of the minters’) appears to have been a worrisome civil outburst, one that forced Aurelian to take action. Clearly, imperial control over mints and associations of mint workers needed to be tightened. Immediate precautions came in the form of a mass execution of many involved in the uprising, including senators, and the closing of the Roman mint. Aurelian disbanded the twelve officinae of the mint, but in fact took some pardoned minters on campaign with him in the Balkans. The immediate fire had perhaps been stamped out, but the long-term smouldering still had to be addressed. The mint at Rome was reopened in 273 and, along with Milan’s, began to produce a reformed Antoninianus called the aurelianus by modern scholars, a radiate silvered coin.\(^{50}\) Following his movement of the boundary of Dacia to the southern banks of the Danube, Aurelian put a mint at the new capital, Serdica, and after his reconquest of the Gallic Empire in 274, he closed the mints at Trier and Cologne. Although Aurelian died before all of his reforms were in place, the mint workers’ rebellion perhaps served as a pivotal example to him and, consequently, to later emperors, that these workers had to be carefully overseen if emperors were to be successful in galvanizing their own power and publicizing a secure coinage.

In many ways, Aurelian emerges as a model for Diocletian, who also undertook coinage reforms. Around 294, Diocletian imposed a new organization

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\(^{43}\) Cic., Leg. agr. 2.73: propagacula imperii.


\(^{45}\) Dio Cass., 77.15.1: οἱ κοινοετεῖς, τῶν στρατιωτῶν πλουτίζεται, τῶν δὲ λαῶν πάντων καταφορφίζεται.

\(^{46}\) Not all scholars agree that the collective events of the third century should be termed a crisis. See Witschel (1999), and Linck-Houtz (2007).

\(^{47}\) Malalas 12.30, who was himself an Antiochene, situated the revolt in Antioch rather than in Rome. See Peachin (1985).

\(^{48}\) The author of the Historia Augusta gives a thorough yet (as is the case with the HA generally) altogether specious account of the revolt via a letter from Aurelian to his adopted father (Aurel. 38.2–4). Other accounts: Au. Vict., 35.6; Eut., 9.14.1; Ps. Au. Vict., Epit. 35.4. Also note: Polenius Silvius 148. See Conway (2006); Watson (1999: 50–53).


\(^{50}\) Zos., 161.3: ἀσυγχρόνα νόμον. Canacalla had originally introduced the so-called antoninianus.
of local minting.\textsuperscript{51} Whereas local mints had always quite regularly produced coinage for the city or province, the debasement of the coinage was such that the tetrarch felt he needed to close all the local mints and replace them with fourteen imperial mints that would supply standardized coins to the empire as needed. Mints were separated into static \textit{monetae publicae} that continued to be run by an equestrian \textit{procurator monetae} with various \textit{praepositii} who assisted him and the mobile \textit{moneta comitagens} that shadowed the emperor's movements.\textsuperscript{52} These reforms embodied the ideals of organization, control, and cohesion that were the foundation of the tetrarchic system. Following Diocletian, probably in the early fourth century, the \textit{comes sacrarum lartitionum} was additionally established to oversee mints and mines.\textsuperscript{53} Like many imperial workers, the \textit{monetae} became increasingly regulated players within the confines of the Dcminate.

At many junctures in Late Antiquity, usurpers and conquerors set up mints that required \textit{monetae}. The act of founding a mint asserted the legitimacy of an imperial claimant, but was a functional move as well, creating coinage to pay the troops in particular.\textsuperscript{54} The usurper Carausius is a telling example. In 286, he established five mints, using London as the flagship. In regard to the staff, P.J. Casey has posited that minters may have travelled from mint to mint, and argues that the coinage was so angularly cut and poorly minted that Carausius probably had to hire local sealstone cutters and intaglio artisans to produce the dies.\textsuperscript{55} If no previous mint existed and they were not already employing their own traveling \textit{officina} of minters, it is probably that imperial usurpers in particular often had to court local jewellery makers and metallurgists. Since many mints lay dormant for periods of time (with the exception of the especially integral ones, such as Rome's), it is probable that minters frequently worked sporadically. Following the closing of the London mint in 324, for instance, the British minters probably returned to their livelihoods making and selling jewellery or other metal products; the London mint would only be briefly reopened again in the fourth century, under Magnus Maximus, from 383–388. Artisan metallurgists and jewellery makers easily transitioned to being minters, thus providing a valuable skill to potential usurers.

Disbanding a mint altogether was perhaps one way to control minters, but another method was simply to revoke the elite privilege to mint precious metals. As was glimpsed in the revolt under Aurelian, rebellious minters could sever the indispensable bond between emperor and mint. The fourth-century minters in the city of Cyzicus again demonstrate this fact. In the fourth century, this city was the capital within the diocese of Asia and home to an imperial mint.\textsuperscript{56} This is supported by a description from the reign of Julian in the early fifth century by the ecclesiastical historian Sozomen, who remarked that Christian imperial textile workers and coin minters constituted a sizeable portion of the population there.\textsuperscript{57} The historian further noted that these two groups were given special dispensation by the emperor to live with their wives and families in Cyzicus—in other words, to work on a cottage system of production—provided that they gave clothing to the soldiers and coinage to the fiscus. This allowance is important to keep in mind in regard to what happened in 365, whenProcopius (later cast by Ammianus and others as a pretender to the throne) seized the city. Procopius acquired the imperial mint in the city and ultimately minted coins in Constantinople, Heraclea, and Nicomedia as well. Although Valens put down the revolt in 366, the Cyzicus mint would be chastised, relegated to producing base metal coinage by the sweeping monetary reforms that Valens was to undertake.

As the fourth century progressed, control over minters appears to have reflected less apprehension over whether they would revolt and greater concern with coin tampering. As the permanent mints in cities like Cyzicus were consigned to producing non-precious coinage under Valentinian I and Valens in 368, the comitatensis mint increasingly minted the precious metals silver and gold. This mint was organized into 10 departments denoted by the Greek numerals A to 1.\textsuperscript{58} The \textit{Theodosian Code} preserves the reasoning behind the monetary reforms, particularly noting that they were meant to stop the fraud committed by members of the \textit{fargitiones, procuratores} (escorts), and \textit{alletores} (tax collectors).\textsuperscript{59} Whether real or imagined, coin tampering was a concern in

\begin{itemize}
\item[53] Jones (1964: 427–428).
\item[54] Whether true or not, the Historia Augusta's \textit{Vita Trijnta Tyranorum} cites the founding of a mint as a preliminary action taken by many mid-third century imperial claimants, including the Isauria's \textit{archiprætæ} Trebellianus (26) and the Gallic Victoria (31). See Ando (2000: 215–228), who notes that, 'The beliefs that legitimate emperors ought to oversee the mints and that their faces ought to appear on their coins reinforced each other through long association' (221).
\item[55] Casey (1994: 61).
\item[56] Around AD 297, Diocletian had begun to reorganize the province of Asia, with the city of Cyzicus becoming the capital of the Hellespontus province. Although the city was probably displeased at Constantine's later choice of Byzantium as his \textit{nova Roma}, it remained integral to the late empire.
\item[57] Sozomen, \textit{Hist. eccl}. 5:35.
\end{itemize}
the public psyche as well. Written in the 360s, the anonymous treatise De rebuis bellicis had in fact suggested a number of countermeasures to check some of the state’s rampant civil, military, and fiscal problems—for instance, advising that opifices monetae (‘workers of the mint’) should perhaps be placed on their own island in order to preserve, in part, the integritas of the service. As Noel Lenski has noted, Valens’ reforms did indeed isolate moneyers in gold and silver to a traveling island—one guarded by the emperor himself. Moreover, coinage studies reveal that, with a certain Midas touch, wherever the emperor was, there tended to be an increase in the precious coinage. These comitatensian minters appear to have been more highly regarded than the local monetarii in urban mints. A law of 384 outlines the comitatensian departments concerned with coinage; two dealt with gold: the scrinium aureae masse, overseen by a primicerius and secundarius with two duenarii, four centenarii, and four messengers, and the scrinium auri ad responsam. The first oversaw the bullion and the second the coins and gold exchanged through the mints in each diocese. They employed a staff of aurifices specierum (goldsmiths), aurifices solidorum (minters of gold coins), and sculptores et ceteri artifices (engravers and other craftsmen). The attention to bureaucratic minutiae here is noteworthy, and it has been pointed out that there seems to have been no room for mobility except in cases of seniority or death. Members of the comitatensian mint in particular were meant to be viewed by all as fixed, permanent, and secure entities—much like the coinage itself.

In one of his many expressive metaphors, Augustine of Hippo remarked that while the monetarii of Christ was man, the Roman emperor had to rely heavily on his minters:

Caesar, my brothers, did not make the coinage; the monetarii make it . . . it is commanded to the artisans, [Caesar] issues his commands to his servants. His image was stamped on the coinage; on the coinage is the image of Caesar. And nevertheless he asks what others have minted; that man puts it in his treasury; that man will not have it refused to him.

Control radiated from the emperor himself, but depended upon trustworthy workers in the mint as guarantors of his power. As such, these minters received tax exemptions for their service to the emperor, but, by the early fourth century, they also accepted a nominal stigma of disrepute. The purpose and the effects of this ignoble status on Roman minters tell us a great deal about disrepute in the later empire and its uses in defining and restraining workers that were viewed as essential to the economic stability of an increasingly unstable Roman state.

Ignobility and Control in the Fourth Century

The security of gold and silver was of the utmost importance in the later empire, which was the principal reason for the increasing micromanagement of these metals. Legislative control extended even to the details of transporting the coinage on the cursus publicus; statutes declared that each wagon was to have two palatine officials and three slaves guarding it. Control also tightened within the mint. From the third century onwards, mint marks indicate the escalating effort to denote not only the place, but also the specific workshop, from whence each coin came. As suggested earlier, the laws concerning coinage could function to advertise legitimacy. Likewise, the degraded status of mint workers served to bond pivotal artisans to imperial service. The use of degraded status to lock in essential workers was part of broader commercial trends in Late Antiquity aimed at securing the state workforce; similarly, purple fish dye workers were prevented from achieving high status and their own status became hereditary. Whereas legal stigmas of disrepute and the deprivation of honour had previously been used in the Republic and early Roman Empire to marginalize moral threats to the socio-political order and to condemn criminals, in Late Antiquity, imperial lawmakers increasingly withheld civic honours and assigned a degraded status in order to secure vital workers in state corpora. Thus, being an imperial monetarius in the later empire could be a double-edged sword: job security, tax exemptions, and status from imperial service on the one hand, but legal disrepute and social restrictions on the other.

63 Cod. Just. 12.23.7.7.
64 Kelly (2004: 42).
65 August., Serm. 90.10: Caesar, fratres mei, non fecit nummum: monetarii faciunt; artificibus iabetur, sui ministri impetravit. Imago exprimebat in nummum: in nummum est imago Caesaris. Et tamen quod aliud impreserunt quaeratur: ille thesaurizat, ille non alius sibi negari.
67 Carson (1956: 226) dates the more developed system of officina marking that occurred in the later empire to no earlier than the reign of Philip (244–249).
68 These workers were called munilegati. See Cod. Theod. 9.45.3: 10.20.5 and Iud. 12.15–17.
The deprivation of civic offices was a common tool of control employed in the Republic to marginalize persons viewed as threats to the integrity of Roman civic life. The *Tabula Heracleensis*, which probably transmits the *lex Iulia municipalis* of 45 BC, had banned a number of persons deemed disreputable from attaining civic office: funeral workers, criers, gladiators, pimps, and prostitutes, to name a few. However, from the fourth century on, legal disrepute increasingly established social ceilings, delineated hierarchy, and maintained the state's ability to inflict corporal punishment on certain workers. The aforementioned decree of Licinius from AD 317, which noted rather ambiguously that *monetarii* were to remain in their current lowly status and that certain titles could not be extended to them, is just one example of this trend. The law, which effectively created a class of minters with corporal vulnerability, was the precursor to more intense efforts to stop counterfeit coinage. The emperor particularly targeted counterfeiters minted by imperial *monetarii* by promulgating new laws stipulating that imperial minters producing *adulterina moneta* (adulterated money) be handed over to authorities and tortured into giving up their co-conspirators, while estate owners and other household members could also be found guilty of abetting counterfeiters more generally. As with other occupations, the minters were part of Constantine's litigious, extensive, and invasive articulation of the socio-legal order.

Oversight of minters extended into their personal life in the late fourth century. In 380, marriage restrictions were placed on *monetarii*; they could wed women of a particular status group, whereas women of higher status who chose to marry them lost their position. Moreover, the daughters of *monetarii* could only marry men within the trade. The minters became part of the larger movement towards compulsory trades, a movement that included weavers and purple dye makers, to name a few. We should perhaps not overly lament the hard lives of these workers in service to the state. In 440, all *corporati* were in fact exempted from military service. The employment was steady, and by the early fifth century, a loophole existed for *corporati* within the *Comitatenses largentium*, workers who already derived status from a close proximity to the emperor. These workers could leave the service if they found suitable replacements and received the emperor's consent, although their property and family would remain tied to the state. A hierarchy indeed persisted among minters, with elevated prestige attached to those who served the comitatensis mint within the *Comitatus*, but the benefits of attaining a mint position hint that they were not as socially degraded as the law codes might lead us to believe.

There is strong evidence that the mint and, by extension, the mint masters continued to play a local role. The head of the mint remained a recognizable (if sometimes notorious) figure in the civic life of late antique cities such as Alexandria. This can be gleaned from an episode of 363 recounted by Ammianus Marcellinus, wherein Dracountius, a notably Christian *praepositus monetae* of Alexandria, was killed by a pagan mob and dragged through the streets. Two other officials died at the hands of the mob, but Dracountius stood accused for his removal of an altar from the mint. It is possible that minters still sacrificed to Juno Moneta and pledged to mint coins in loyalty to both the goddess and the emperor, just as the Senate vowed service to the emperor at the *Altar of Victory*. Like Victory, Juno Moneta symbolized the stability and prosperity of the empire, but *monetae* themselves could also bring prestige to a community. Consequently, local mint masters like Dracountius could become visible imperial figures within the cities that minted coin in the late empire.

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69 *CIL* ii 593 = *ILS* 6085 = *PIRA* ii no. 13; Crawford (1996: 335–91, no. 24).


72 *Cod. Theod.* 10.20.10 = *Cod. Just.* 11.8.7.

73 Free-born women who married weavers became bound to the lowly condition of their husbands in *Cod. Theod.* 10.20.3 = *Cod. Just.* 11.8.3 (356). Purple dye makers were denied civic honours and confined to lowly status in *Cod. Theod.* 10.20.14 = *Cod. Just.* 11.8.11 (424); *Cod. Theod.* 10.20.17 = *Cod. Just.* 11.8.15 (429).

74 In *Nov. Val.* 5, Valentinian I declared that they would only be responsible for urban guard duty at walls and gates.


76 *Amm. Marc.* 2.31.9. See *PIRE* i. 271 D. (1). Peachin (1987: 248–249) has convincingly argued that here Ammianus errs, in all likelihood, in respect to nomenclature by calling *Dracountius a praepositus* rather than a *procurator monetae*. He further notes that Ammianus (14.9.7) similarly errs in calling the head of the Tyrian purple dye works a *praepositus Tyrii texturii* rather than the correct term, *procurator*.

77 This controversy closely resembles the conflict over the removal of the *Altar of Victory* from *Curia Iulia* in 357 by Constantius—"a political and social debacle that would erupt again just a few years later, thanks in large part to the persistence of the bishop Ambrose. It has been proposed that the altar in Alexandria was dedicated to Juno Moneta; just as the Altar of Victory was tied to the emperor, an altar of Juno Moneta was also closely linked to loyalty to the emperor. See Hinn (1997: 88).

78 The *Statue of Victory* was placed in the newly completed *Curia Iulia* by Octavian in 29 BC. See Dio 51.22.2.
Minters in the Middle Ages

Despite the accompanying limits on occupational and conjugal liberties, mint positions appear to have gained prestige and become increasingly attractive in the later eastern empire, due not only to the office's exemption from military service and compensation, but perhaps also to its proximity to the emperor and the opportunity to pocket some of the precious metals that minters frequently handled. Yet, as in the empire itself, the fractures between east and west were becoming increasingly apparent within the imperial mint organization.

In a pivotal article on coinage in the Latin west in the early medieval period, Michael Hendy indicated the significant shift from federal to private spheres that occurred between the state weighting of coin in the Roman Empire and the private weighting of coin in the early Middle Ages. Whereas in the east, a great amount of central control was still exerted over the status and organization of minters (though the number of palatine mints was itself decreasing), in many of the smaller kingdoms in the west, the central secular power did not maintain a monopoly on producing coinage.

The Ostrogothic and then Lombard conquests of Italy had greatly disrupted minting, and increasingly, Gothic, Vandal, and Frankish coinages also came into circulation—often attempting to use the iconography of Roman coinage to give them prestige. Amid these lapses in oversight came the resurrection of the private moneymongers within these new 'barbarian' kingdoms. When Theodoric acquired power over Spain, Cassiodorus lamented about the moneymen who had abandoned state duties to go out and strike coins for private individuals. Now private artisans with highly marketable skills, they began to gain prestige, particularly in the early Frankish kingdom under Merovingian rule. The elevated social stature of the private medieval minter would endure in Western Europe well into the Middle Ages, while in the Byzantine Empire, state minters tied to their corpora continued to strike coins in service of the emperor.

Conclusion

In his sixth century *Christian Topography*, Cosmas Indicopleustes argued for the unending, transcending power of the Roman Empire. To Cosmas, the ubiquity of, uniformity of, and trust in Roman coinage were a visible sign that God favoured the Romans: 'I refer to the fact that it is with their coinage all the nations carry on trade from one extremity of the earth to the other.' Six centuries earlier, Julius Caesar had understood that the imperial *moneta* was indeed a barometer for the health and *exitimatio* of an administration when he placed his own slaves in the Roman mint. However, this *exitimatio* diminished with the growth of mints on the frontiers, which were established to respond to the demand for readily available coinage to pay the troops, an ability that helped to secure an imperial claimant’s success. This diffusion of mints during the third-century crisis weakened the government's centralized control over minting and in part enabled events such as the minters’ rebellion under Aurelian. In an attempt to reassert authority, limit counterfeiting, and stabilize the coinage, the status of mint workers became more tightly controlled in the fourth century. This was a move commensurate with the anxieties of the emperor over both the reliability of the coinage and his own reputation. Nevertheless, despite escalating checks on their status, marriage opportunities, and outlets for honour, imperial minters still acquired a certain level of prestige. This came in part from their close proximity to the emperor—particularly in the case of the comitatenses minters in the later fourth century—but perhaps also from the opportunity to pilfer or debase coins. As part of the state corporati system of the later empire, minters reflect the changing ideas about commerce and labour in the later empire, but also demonstrate that an ignoble status did not always marginalize professionals.

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79 Cod. Iust. 11.8.16 = Res. 54.16.16 notes that no one could be enrolled in a state association without going through the proper procedure for acceptance. Illegal workers were denied the salary, whipped, and exiled from the province. This salary was probably given to all state corporations. The date of the rescript is unknown, but it is also included in the Byzantine Basilica from the ninth century. See Heimbach (1850: 140). See Sabatino Lopez (1949: 89–90); Papagianini (2002: 1084).

80 At some point, the minting of gold was transferred from Rome, where the Ostrogoths had minted, to the northern Italian city of Ravenna. From here, we have a document from 572 mentioning a *monetarius auri* Marini, *P. Dipl. 120 = P. Ital. 90, P.L.R.E., X, Ioannes 76*, see Hendy (1985: 200).


82 Grierson and Blackburn (1986: 98).

83 Harl (1996: 190–191). In the later sixth century, the *solidus* was minted at the palatine mints of Constantinople and Thessalonica.

84 Cass., Var. 5.39.8: *Monetarius autem, quos specialiter in usum publicum constat inventos, in privatorum didicimus transisse compendium, qua praesumptione sublata pro virum qualitate functionibus publicis applicentur.*

85 See Lopez (1953: 1–43). For example, Gregory of Tours, *Glor. conf.* 105 notes a monetarius urbis who had a chapel constructed for S. Crescentia.