Summary: This article seeks to address the question how the Tetrarchic system of four rulers could be presented as legitimate in a society that had never seen this political constellation before. What were the different modes of presenting Tetrarchic rule and how did they help in making the new system acceptable? The article argues that new power structures needed to be formulated in familiar terms, not only for the rulers to legitimate their position, but also for the ruled to understand such new systems. As a result, imperial messages during the Tetrarchic period were strongly influenced by traditional modes of representation from earlier periods. Traditions which were inherent in specific media and locations were determining factors for the way in which a new political system could be presented. The result was a much less coherent ideological Tetrarchic message than is often assumed. The image of group identity was regularly lost in a more complex and messy mode of formulating power. The new and innovative aspects of a collegiate rule by four emperors was less important than linking the power of those rulers to what was traditionally expected of the portrayal of Roman emperorship.

Keywords: Roman Empire, Tetrarchy, Roman Imperial Ideology, Traditions

Introduction

At the end of the third century, the Roman Empire was ruled by four rulers for the first time in imperial history. This state of government between 293 and 306 is commonly known as the ‘Tetrarchy’.¹ The system with two Augusti and two

¹ The term ‘Tetrarchie’ for the system of joint rule by two Augusti and two Caesares created by Diocletian was introduced by Herrmann Schiller in the 1880s: see Schiller 1882, 520; 1887, 119; Vollmer 1991. Schiller was probably inspired by Luther’s Bible translation, in particular by his use of “Vierfürst” for the ‘Tetrarch’ Herodes Antipas. In Antiquity the terms Tetrarchy and Tetrarch referred to rulers of geographical areas or ethnic groups consisting of four parts, as for instance the rulers of Hellenistic Palestine: see e.g. Strab. 12.5.1; Ios. bell. Iud. 1.282, 578; Lk 3.1.

*Kontakt: Olivier Hekster, E-Mail: o.hekster@let.ru.nl
Caesares highlighted imperial hierarchies and intended succession. It was not an entirely new concept. Earlier, the Empire had been ruled by two emperors under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (161–169), Caracalla and Geta (209–211), Pupienus and Balbinus (238) and Valerian and Gallienus (253–260). Yet corporate rule of four men was a novelty. This article seeks to address the question how such a system of four rulers could be presented as legitimate in a society that had never seen this political constellation before.

The historical developments are well known. In 293, the Roman Augusti Diocletian and Maximian moved into unexplored territory by appointing Constantius and Galerius as their Caesares, thereby expanding their imperial college to an unprecedented number of four. In 305, Diocletian and Maximian abdicated and were replaced as Augusti by Galerius and Constantius, who in turn, appointed Severus and Maximinus Daia as the new Caesares. This Tetrarchic model remained virtually unchallenged until 306, when Constantius died and both Constantine and Maxentius laid claim to the imperial purple.²

A new political constellation asked for new modes of representation in the different media that were at Roman disposal. What were these different modes of presenting Tetrarchic rule and how did they help in making the new system acceptable? This article argues that new power structures needed to be formulated in familiar terms, not only for the rulers to legitimate their position, but also for the ruled to understand such new systems. New developments need to be connected to what different people expect, value and understand. Making use of traditional terms and ideas to present these innovations helped to conceptualize them. Once understood, the meaning of the term could shift, and then become firmly entrenched in its shifted meaning as commonly accepted knowledge.³

Roman society, of course, included different audiences with a multitude of expectations and traditions. There were medial and regional patterns that could differentiate wildly. These local and medial variations show a complex and at times even messy picture. Still, it is possible to trace overarching patterns in Tetrarchic representation. This article will argue that traditional notions play a much more prominent role in Tetrarchic representation than has been maintained so far. It suggests that rather than through an inflexible corporate image, the new political structure was presented through images of ‘double duality’, i.e. the representation of Tetrarchs as two pairs, and by continuous focus on one

---

² Seston 1946; Barnes 1982; Kolb 1987; Kuhoff 2001.
³ On this process: see Craig 1999. To successfully decode visual imagery, a certain amount of visual literacy was required: see Trimble 2017, 107. Presence, context, impact, and ritual are important aspects of such visual communication: see Wood 2014, 14–16; 2016, 19–23; Trimble 2017, 110–113 n. 12.
ruler, even when all four were presented together. After a brief introduction of the sources, this article explores, in three sections, the different modes in which the Tetrarchic system of rule could be represented. A fourth section places the evidence in a wider iconographical and iconological context.

Sources

The focus of this article lies on the different media disseminating contemporary messages of imperial ideology, that is: coinage, portraiture, inscriptions, local monuments, and panegyrics. The responsibility for the creation of imperial messages has been discussed in much detail before. In contrast to most discussions on imperial representation, this article does not so much discuss the agency of the media as it discusses the way in which the Tetrarchic system was presented ‘an sich’. We accept the theory that major changes in imperial representation, particularly on coins and in portraiture, reflect to some extent imperial initiative, but individual works cannot be regarded as messages from the top at face value. Whereas it is safe to assume that imperial coinage was controlled by the imperial centre, and that messages on coins can therefore be seen as expressions of how the emperors wanted to present themselves, this cannot be said for other sources. Indeed, statues were often dedicated by members of the local elite, and public buildings were almost exclusively sponsored by elites and their executive bodies. The line between the sender and the receiver of a message therefore becomes blurred. In order to overcome this issue this paper prefers to focus on the messages themselves instead of on its communicators.

With regard to panegyrics, a sole speech from 297 delivered at Trier to Constantius, survives as evidence for ways in which the new system could be praised in the presence of a Roman emperor. The speech can be considered to analyse

---

4 This suggests less emphasis on the concepts of concordia and similitudo that have been dominant in research so far: see Seston 1946; L’Orange 1965; Kolb 1987; Rees 1993; Kuhoff 2001; Rees 2002; Boschung – Eck 2006; Leadbetter 2009; Demandt – Goltz – Schlangen-Schöningen 2012.
5 Pollini 2012, 69–115; Hekster et al. 2015.
6 Coinage: Wallace-Hadrill 1986, 67; Noreña 2001, 147; Manders 2012, 32–33; Claes 2013, 21–26; Hekster 2015, 30–32. Portraiture: Fittschen 1971, 220–224; 2015; Zanker 2016, 55–63. Inscriptions: Corcoran 1996; Kuhoff 2001, 634–643. Monuments: Elsner 2007; Mayer 2013. Panegyric: Sabba 1984, 369–371; Mause 1994, 30–42; Braund 1998; Rees 2002, 23–25; Formisano 2008; Flower 2013, 35–44.
7 Howgge 1995, 70; Noreña 2001, 147; Rowan 2012, 19–23.
8 Paneg. VIII [IV]. The central topic of the speech is Constantius’ recovery of Britain: see Nixon – Saylor Rodgers 1994, 106–108; Rees 2002, 115–118.
how the panegyrist made efforts to accommodate the new system of four rulers whilst addressing only one of them at the time.9 Contrary to speeches praising the emperor, Tetrarchic coins and portraits have reached us in impressive numbers, making it possible to submit these to some quantification.10 As to coinage, a quantitative analysis allows us to place the examples mentioned below in the wider context of coinage produced under the Tetrarchs, and gives us some indication to what extent the discussed marks of ideology could have reached a wider audience.11 In terms of Tetrarchic portraiture, approximately 60 portraits have withstood the test of time.12 Unfortunately, these cannot be identified with specific members of the Tetrarchy with certainty.13 Some have recognized Diocletian in the Milan-Munich type or Constantius Chlorus in the Berlin-Copenhagen type but such identifications remain highly speculative.14 Fortunately, the portraits

---

9 Another speech from 298 was addressed to an official in Lyon or Autun: see Paneg. IX [V].
10 As has been done before for earlier imperial coinage: see Noreña 2011; Rowan 2012; Manders 2012. Whereas Noreña and Rowan based their quantification on coin hoards, this paper follows Manders’ method by using the RIC for quantifying Roman imperial coin types.
11 Concerning this ideological resonance, the standardization of imagery often visible on silver and base-metal coins is likely to have helped the Tetrarchs in emphasising the virtues and values with which they desired to be associated. This policy regarding coin types seems to be in line with other measures taken by Diocletian and the Tetrarchs to stabilize their Empire, such as the price edict and the administrative reforms. On the standardization of coin imagery under the Tetrarchy: see Sutherland 1967, 109–112; Weiser 2006, 211; Abdy 2012, 588.
12 Freestanding sculpture: LSA 245 f., 298, 336, 382, 296 f., 523, 681 f., 805 f., 836, 843–845, 848, 851, 853, 855, 859, 1027–1031, 1041–1043, 1045, 1047, 1051, 1055, 1116, 1196, 2354, 2425, 2542–2544, 2868. Reliefs and/or monuments: LSA 4, 439, 455 f., 840 f., 1004, 1006, 1008 f., 1118. For a list of portraits: see L’Orange 1984, 95–113; Prusac 2011, nos. 265–291.
13 Many have argued that the individual physiognomic features of the Tetrarchs’ portraits were deliberately suppressed in favor of a communal image which made the emperors almost indistinguishable from one another. Most of the sculptural depictions of the Tetrarchs would therefore not so much represent a particular emperor as they represent the office ‘an sich’: see Rees 1993, 189, 193; Baratte 1995, 70; Hekster 1999, 720. On Tetrarchic imagery in general: see Sydow 1969, 5–21, 103–147; L’Orange 1984, 3–36; Meischner 1986; Walden 1990; Rees 1993; Baratte 1995; Laubscher 1999; Kolb 2001, 32–34, 143–205; Bergmann 2007.
14 Portraits identified as Diocletian are: Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi, inv. no. 1914.242; Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, inv. no. 24; Munich, Residenz, inv. no. P1 225; Milan, Civiche Raccolte Archeologiche e Numismatiche, inv. no. A1158; and one that was preserved in Cairo, but is now lost, for which see L’Orange 1984, 96 f. Others have identified the portraits as Maximinus Thrax, as Maximian, or as Constantius Chlorus: see L’Orange 1984, 17–20, with references; Kleiner 1992, 401. Scholars generally agree on the identification of the following two portraits with Constantius Chlorus’ main type: Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, inv. no. 836; Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung, inv. no. SK 1663. Two portraits from Ostia, two from Rome, and one of unknown provenance might be replicas of the same type: Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. no. 1844; Rome, Museo Chiaramonti, inv. no. 511; Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg
that were found in monumental group displays provide a fuller picture of Tetrarchic representation and can be considered to analyse how the system of four was presented. The number of public monuments and imperial statue bases is limited, and what we have has mainly come down to us from the Eastern part of the Roman Empire. Lastly, imperial documents, such as edicts and the inscriptions of approximately five hundred milestones set up during the Tetrarchy, can, in addition to panegyrics and inscriptions, be considered to see how the Tetrarchic system was presented in text.

The Tradition of One?

Given the newness of the situation that arose when Diocletian and Maximian adopted Galerius and Constantius Chlorus as their Caesares, it is not surprising that our source material shows traces of experimentation. This is perhaps best attested from a speech of praise delivered to emperor Constantius at Trier in the spring of the year 297. Given the rule of four, praising imperial leadership required a subtle approach. The collegiate emperors met rarely, so it was unsurprising for the orator in 297 to face only one member of the imperial college. Consequently, he needed to carefully balance attention on the individual addressee with recognition of the collegiate government which that individual belonged to. In 297, the orator solved this by combining the traditional cosmological theme in

Glyptotek, inv. no. 2691; Rome, Museo Gregoriano Profano (in storage); Rome, Museo Torlonia, inv. no. 613, respectively. On Constantius Chlorus' portraits: see L'Orange 1984, 30 f.; Smith 1997, 184 f.; Bergmann 2007, 66.

15 For the suggestion that all four emperors came together in Milan in 303: see Barnes 1996, 544–546.

16 Orators strived to balance between literal and metaphysical forms of address; see Rees 2002. In the Dyarchic speeches of 289 (Paneg. X [II]) and 291 (Paneg. XI [III]), another strategy was to associate Diocletian and Maximian with their patron deities Jupiter and Hercules, thus underlining their ability to work together and complement each other. This finds best expression at Paneg. X [II].11.6: “For just as all useful things produced in the heavens or on land seem to come to pass for us though the agency of different divinities but nevertheless flow from the supreme creators, Jupiter, ruler of the heavens, and Hercules, pacifier of the Earth, so in all the most splendid exploits, even those carried out under the leadership of others, Diocletian makes the decisions, and you carry them out.” Given that association with Hercules and Jupiter was central in the Dyarchic speeches, the fact that they are employed only once in the speech of 297 (Paneg. VIII [IV].4.1) is noteworthy. For the use and evolution of Jupiter and Hercules on pre-Tetrarchic coinage: see Manders 2012, 102–115.
imperial praise with the number of four.\textsuperscript{17} At the outset of his speech, the orator claims that “all the most important things depend upon and rejoice in the number of your divinity”, subsequently mentioning the four elements, the four seasons, the fourfold division of the world, the four revolutions of the sky, the sun’s chariot with its four horses, and the four lights of the world.\textsuperscript{18} The Tetrarchy is presented by the orator “as a system without which the universe cannot function properly, and the essence of this government is seen to reside in its numerical configuration”\textsuperscript{19}. Even though the orator continues to praise Constantius’ victory over the usurpers Carausius and Allectus, he also attributes credit to the imperial collegiate as a whole, by formulating Constantius’ power over the sun and the sea within the cosmological framework set out at the start of the speech.\textsuperscript{20}

The same pattern can be discerned in messages that were spread in visual media; emphasis was put on one specific ruler, but, simultaneously, this particular emperor was placed within the broader framework of collegiate rule. The focus of the Arch of Galerius, set up by the city of Thessaloniki between 298 and 305, clearly lies on the \textit{Caesar} of the East: Galerius. The majority of the surviving panels covering the monument highlight his military \textit{virtus} by displaying Galerius in classical \textit{adventus} and \textit{adlocutio} scenes, or as fighting against enemies of the Romans.\textsuperscript{21} Notwithstanding this emphasis on Galerius, the images on the

\textsuperscript{17} To cite but a few examples of imperial rule praised in cosmological terms: Augustus was hailed as the sun (Hor. carm. saec. 4, 4,5); Nero was presented as the dawn (Sen. apocol. 4,1; Clem. 1,8,4–5); Domitian was said to outshine the stars (Stat. silv. 4,1.2–4); and even Trajan is recalled to drive out darkness (Dion. Chrys. 3,11).

\textsuperscript{18} Paneg. VIII [IV].4.2. Translated in Nixon – Saylor Rodgers 1994, 144.

\textsuperscript{19} Rees 2002, 113.

\textsuperscript{20} Paneg. VIII [IV].6,1–4, 7,2, 14,3–5, 19,2, with Rees 2002, 114–118.

\textsuperscript{21} Although one of the most informative and analyzed monument of the Tetrarchic period, the original octopyle triumphal arch in Thessaloniki is today only partially conserved. Two piers facing towards Galerius’ palace and a third lateral one on the same façade are marking the \textit{Egnatia} street in the center of modern Thessaloniki. Although these three surviving piers are still covered in relief panels, it has to be underlined that the majority of these panels are severely worn. All the reconstructions of the iconographic cycle on the arch have to necessarily deal with a significant fragmentary documentation. On the iconography: see Kinch 1890; Schönebeck 1937, 361–371; Vermeule 1968, 336–350; Laubscher 1975; Pond-Rothman 1977, 427–454. On the architecture: see Velenis 1974, 249–263. A similar problem of a partial lack of documentation exists also for other Tetrarchic monuments, e.g. the Five-Columns Monument in Rome, of which remains few more than the famous Decennalia base. For the Five-Column Monument, moreover, not only the iconography, but also the form and location of the monument themselves are still debated: see L’Orange 1938; Kähler 1964. Cf. Giuliani – Verduchi 1987, 148–216; Richardson 1992, 173 f.; Kleiner 1992, 413–417; Marlowe 2015, 240–263. The case of the so-called Arcus Novus in Rome, for which nothing of the structure survives \textit{in situ} and the reconstruction has to be based on literary sources and scattered evidences as the two famous pedestals in the Boboli Gardens in Florence, is even
Arch make specific allusions to the collegiate system. The duplication of the *clementia Augusti* scene, where supplicant barbarians prostrate themselves towards a seated Roman general, for example, has been interpreted as a method to glorify both Galerius and Diocletian. According to this interpretation, although the *Augustus* was not really present during the victorious military campaign against the Sassanid conducted by the *Caesar*, his symbolic presence in such a military scene would have been a means to convey the idea of a shared victory, fundamental within a logic of shared rule as the Tetrarchic one.

The solution adopted to insert Diocletian in this narrative presents some indicative elements of tradition. The presence of a single heroic protagonist in the traditional iconographies of military scenes, such as *adventus*, *adlocutio* or *clementia Augusti*, neatly corresponds to the traditional use of a Roman triumphal arch as a means of honouring and commemorating military victories of single generals. A traditional and immediately comprehensible scene was duplicated to convey the new message of shared victory.

In another panel on the Arch, Galerius and Diocletian are famously represented together: a sacrifice on an altar is performed by Galerius while his colleague, Diocletian, is among the audience assisting the ritual. Although Diocletian’s presence in the scene is highly significant, Galerius still emerges as the central figure of the narrative. In the relief, it is Galerius who performs the sacrifice. Significantly, when a similar sacrifice is depicted in Rome, on the Decennalia base, the representation of the ritual become more traditional, presenting a *capite velato* censor, instead of a military general in armour, performing the libation on the altar. The choice of these diverse modes to represent a similar theme – the emperor performing a sacrifice – may well indicate different expectations by viewers in Thessaloniki and in Rome.

A porphyry portrait of a Tetrarch with a laureate crown on his head from Felix Romuliana does the same (figs. 1a and 1b). It puts one emperor to the fore, yet skilfully captivates the collegiate rule of four by means of its headgear. In addition to three gems, it bears four small busts representing the four Tetrarchs, perhaps more problematic. On the Arcus Novus: see Colini 1935; Kähler 1936; Laubscher 1976; De Maria 1988, 197–203, 312–314; Kleiner 1992, 409–413; Torelli 1993, 101 f.

---

22 Pond-Rothman 1977, 437.
23 Based on the same consideration Elisabeth Marlowe has argued in favour of a probable commission of the Five-Column monument in the Roman Forum by the Senate which, as its recognized warden, would have been more interested to highlight the traditional Roman religion instead of the military glory of the *Caesar* of the East: see Marlowe 2015, 254 f.
24 Zaječar, National Museum, inv. no. 1477.
in their divine personae. The portrait was possibly part of a monumental statue group celebrating a military victory. As with the Arch of Galerius and the speech for Constantius, it would then once again place the victory of one emperor in the context of four-men rule.

Although it is difficult to measure the exact influence of the emperors on the messages spread in the media mentioned above, it is safe to assume that this mode of imperial representation, highlighting one particular emperor within the system of four, was a close reflection of how the emperors at least partially presented the new political constellation to their subjects. This tendency also finds expression in Tetrarchic coinage. The gradual third-century decentralization of coin production had the effect that under the Tetrarchy coins were produced from multiple centres of power. Each of these produced coin types in the names of all

25 Some have argued that the busts present the Tetrarchs in the guise of their divine protectors: Jupiter, Hercules, Sol, and Mars: see Kolb 1995, 30; Laubscher 1999, 244; Boschung 2006, 360. Though the association of Jupiter and Hercules with the emperors of the East and the West is well attested, an official association of the emperors with Sol and Mars remains questionable. The portrait seems to have been part of a group of at least two as becomes apparent from the remains of a hand attached to the back of the crown. The figure behind the Tetrarch, to which the hand belonged, was in all likelihood the goddess Victoria, and the group was thus probably meant to commemorate a military victory (perhaps Galerius’ victory over the Sassanid Persians in 298).

26 On this practice: see Sutherland 1967, 88; Weiser 2006, 209.

27 In 284 central coinage was produced at Lugdunum (modern Lyon), Ticinum (modern Pavia), Rome, Siscia (modern Sisak), Antakya, and Tripolis (modern Tripoli, Lebanon). By 301 the number of mints had – despite the closing of the Tripolis mint – more than doubled with the addition
four emperors. The coins in circulation showed the same reverse messages that highlighted the benefits of Tetrarchic imperial rule with alternating portraits. The general picture shows coins putting emphasis on one particular Augustus or Caesar. This may well have reflected local realities, where subjects were mainly confronted with a single person in authority. And yet, the practice of shared minting made sure that the sum of all these Tetrarchic emissions brought across an idea of an imperial college of four.

The Innovation of Four?

The clearest way to present the Tetrarchy, one could argue, would be to portray or mention its four members at the same time. Previous scholarship has emphasised the importance of the creation of an imperial group identity, which would suggest that the dominant model of putting forward the four rulers would be “en groupe”

of mints at Londinium, Augusta Treverorum (modern Trier), Aquileia, Carthage, Serdica (modern Sofia), Thessalonica, Heraclea (modern Marmara Ereğlisi), Nicomedia (modern Izmit), Cyzicus, and Alexandria: see Weiser 2006, 209.

When placing the types collected in the RIC next to each other for the period 284–306, it is quite interesting to find that types are quite evenly divided over all the Tetrarchs. Only for the Dyarchy the division is less balanced, in that the majority of coins were struck in the name of Diocletian. Whereas in the West this imbalance is less profound (54% of the coins struck in the name of Diocletian, 46% in that of Maximian), it is especially in the Eastern part of the Empire – Diocletian’s administrative unit – that the imbalance catches the eye (66% in Diocletian’s name, 34% in that of Maximian). From 293 to 306 the balance is to a great extent restored, although the issues for the Augusti slightly outnumber those of the Caesares during the first Tetrarchy. It should be noted, however, that this division of types does not automatically mean that a similar pattern existed for the actual distribution of coins. However, given that for the Western mints alone we have at least 400 different coin types for each emperor, we may assume that the emphasis on the college of four was well represented in the total coin output, even though a hoard analysis would probably find an imbalance in actual numbers by which types were distributed. On the imbalance in volume: see Sutherland 1967, 38.

This is neatly attested in, for example, the VOT/XX/SIC/XXX-bronzes from Trier (RIC VI Treveri 612–614b), the CONCORDIA AVGG-antoniani from Lugdunum (RIC V Diocletian 17, 354 f., 628, 678), and the PIETAS AVGG ET CAESS NN-aurei from Trier (RIC VI Treveri 72a–74b). All of these are rather small emissions within the entire Tetrarchic repertoire, but appeared with the names and portraits of all four members of the first Tetrarchic college on the obverse, thereby providing us with some clear insights in Tetrarchic minting practices.

The 2678 coin types the RIC lists for the period between 293 and 306 include 412 types that feature a depiction of the emperor on the reverse. Of these, 202 show a single emperor and most of the rest depict four emperors at sacrifice.
and through consistent and prescribed modes of representations. Do the different media show such consistency, or is it possible to discern differentiations in the way the imperial collegiate was presented as a corporate body?

One would at least expect such group identity in one of the more formal modes of presenting rule: imperial edicts, like the price edict and the currency edict. These were aimed at creating general legal standards for the Empire and were published by inscriptions set up in public spaces in various cities of the Empire. To some extent, the collegiate identity was emphasised. The edicts name all four Tetrarchic rulers with their full titles in the preamble. Yet there is also a strict hierarchical order determined by seniority in office: first the two Augusti Diocletian and Maximian, followed by the Caesares Constantius and Galerius. Like edicts, inscriptions of milestones also present the Tetrarchs as a collegium, but in detail, milestones show a more complex pattern, as examples from different areas of the Empire illustrate. Often the four emperors are presented together on one milestone according to their rank in the Tetrarchic hierarchy, sometimes, as for example on a late-antique milestone from Ain Schrabu (Numidia), the collegiate rule of the four emperors is even more highlighted by addressing them together as DDDDD(omini) NNNN(ostri).

In some particular cases it is possible to see from the archaeological record that milestones were arranged in groups, forming what Anne Kolb called a “Meilenstein-Wäldchen”. Although, then, the inscription of a particular milestone referred to only one emperor explicitly (either one of the Augusti or one of the Caesares), as a group they presented the imperial colleagues as a collegium of four.

Also within the frame of the same monument, at times, visual experimentation and differentiation was going on. Although the Arch of Galerius generally followed the traditional iconographical pattern of Roman arches presenting and

31 On Tetrarchic group identity: see Rees 1993.
32 For the best overview of Tetrarchic edicts: see Corcoran 1996. For imperial edicts as formal medium for presenting rule: see Hekster 2015, 84 f., 108.
33 For the price edict: see Lauffer 1971, 90. For the currency edict: see Erim – Reynolds – Crawford 1971.
34 For example CIL VIII 22548 (Auzia); CIL VIII 22554 (from Tipasa); CIL XVII 482 = CIL XIII 8941 (Avaricum); and AE 1968, 121 (Beneventum).
35 CIL VIII 10171 = CIL VIII 22286. The same formula is used in AE 1889, 24 and AE 1889, 30 from Olbia. Similar examples are provided by a milestones from the Strata Diocletiana in Syria: AE 1931, 104; AE 1931, 86 = AE 1931, 106, although other milestones from this frontier road use the more traditional form of addressing the two Augusti Diocletian and Maximian as dd(omini) nn(ostr) and Constantius and Galerius as nobb(iliissimis) CC(aesares), for which see for example AE 1931, 103.
36 Kolb 2004, 149.
37 See for example CIL VIII 10406–10409 (Ghelil, Numidia).
honouring a single ‘hero’, it also refers to the complete college of emperors. In one of the most iconic images on the Arch, the four emperors are actually displayed all together (fig. 2).

In the middle of the South pillar, the two Augusti appear enthroned between their standing Caesares at the centre of a harmonious kosmos symbolically represented by divine personifications. Another more subtle reference to the four Tetrarchs is probably recognizable on a panel interpreted as a depiction of Galerius receiving an embassy by a Persian delegation.\(^\text{38}\) In this scene, five Persian supplicants are kneeling towards Galerius, flanked by figures interpreted as his bodyguards, and Roma, at the other side of the panel, surrounded by four female figures identified as personifications of cities. As these personifications number four, Laubscher came up with the plausible suggestion that the four Tetrarchic capitals were represented here.\(^\text{39}\) All together, the monument’s visual messages seem to reveal some complexity. Formulated at the interplay of different agents, the monument needed to meet multiple expectations. As a result, Galerius is displayed on the Arch both as the typical victorious general leading the troops towards glory

\(^\text{38}\) Pond-Rothman 1977, 439 f.
\(^\text{39}\) Laubscher 1975, 52.
and as a Caesar part of an imperial college of four. Nevertheless, the Arch’s iconographical cycle seems to rather show adherence to traditional modes of representing a single leader than a shift towards symbolic allusions to the Tetrarchic college as new system of rule. Keeping in mind that it is possible to appreciate only a small percentage of the reliefs that originally covered the Arch, in the surviving scenes Galerius emerges as the absolute protagonist of honour and commemoration.

Also in other media, dedications to the collegiate system as a whole are more rarely attested than we would expect if corporate group identity was the main central message. The corpus of inscriptions does show that most statues were dedicated to only one of the Tetrarchs, and do not necessarily refer to the system of four as whole. Still, we are unable to reconstruct the precise display context of a large number of the statue bases that have withstood the test of time and this context could have heavily influenced the perception of a single statue, adding further important layers of meaning to it.

The so-called Tetrakionia (four-column monuments) can be seen as one of the few examples of which we know that all Tetrarchs appeared together in the same display environment. The Tetrakionia showed a group of four columns, each of which held a statue of one of the Tetrarchs. The Tetrakionia were mainly dedicated in North Africa and the Eastern part of the Empire, though we do have evidence for a similar kind of monument in Rome. One of the relief panels on the Arch of Constantine depicts five columns behind the Rostra of which four carry

\[\text{\textit{d\[evotus\] n\[umini\] m\[aiestati\]q\[ue\] eor\[um\]}}\]

At times, however, subtle strategies for broadcasting a collegiate message were implied nevertheless. An example of that can be found in the set-phrase \textit{d\[evotus\] n\[umini\] m\[aiestat\]q\[ue\] eor\[um\]} at times used rather than the correct singular formulation \textit{numini eius}. As persuasively pointed out by Werner Eck, this specific plural form stands for a dedication to the entire Tetrarchy: see Eck 2006. Nevertheless, the consistency of this strategy appears to be problematic. Cases as the single statue base founded in Thesprotia, in the village of Hagios Athanasios, dedicated to the \textit{numini eor\[um\]} clearly constituted an implicit tribute paid to all the co-regents: see Sironen 2009, 185 f. n. 1. Less obvious, on the other hand, are the divergent linguistic choices, as for instance attested in two inscriptions from Herod’s Promontory Palace in Caesarea Maritima. There, in a columnar base dedicated to Galerius by Aufidius Priscus, governor of Palaestina, refers to the \textit{numini eius}. But in a second identical columnar base from the very same context and dedicated by the same awarder to the other Caesar Constantius Chlorus, the pronoun is unexpectedly plural: see Lehmann – Holm 2000: 49 n. 14 and 17. Moreover, although this devotion “to their spirit and majesty” can be indicative of an urge to include all the Tetrarchy in the dedication, it is also noticeable that over a bit more than a hundred attested mentions of the imperial numen, the plural declination is attested only about ten times. More commonly statue bases dedicated to a single Tetrarch were surrounded by multiple bases dedicated to the colleagues, as in the case of the West Tetrapylon at Luxor temple.

The original context of more than the 20% of the almost 250 statue bases dedicated to or by a Tetrarch is unknown.
statues of the Tetrarchs. Finds from the Forum Romanum have convincingly been connected to the monument in question, allowing for a reconstruction of a monument in similar composition and style as the Tetrakonia in the East, except for the addition of a fifth column holding a statue of Jupiter. The depiction of the four Tetrarchs together with Jupiter is also present in the Tetrarchic complex at Luxor, where the South niche of the imperial cult chamber shows Jupiter in an imago clipeus between the four Tetrarchs (fig. 3).

An eagle holding a crown, once more a reference to Jupiter, presides over the scene. Although Diocletian’s role as senior Augustus is highlighted through his stance, dress, attributes, and relationship to Jupiter, it is the representation of the four rulers together that stands out as innovative iconography.

The reverses of the silver coinage struck all over the Empire after Diocletian’s currency reform present the only numismatic attestation of the Tetrarchs presented as a group of four in one single image (figs. 4a and 4b).

---

42 On their discovery and connection to the monument: see L’Orange 1938; Kähler 1964. On the Tetrarchic building activities on the Forum Romanum as an expression of Tetrarchic identity: see Kalas 2015, 30–45. On the so-called Decennalia base: see esp. Marlowe 2015, 253–258, with references.

43 McFadden 2015, 126–133.

44 This amounts to 188 of the 292 argenteus types, including RIC VI Treveri 100–133; Rome 10a–42b; Antioch 31–33b. Of further significance in Tetrarchic silver were the “camp gate”-types,
They were depicted as performing a sacrifice over a tripod in front of an enclosure that is likely to represent a military structure. The military context of this image was further emphasized by legends stressing either the valour of the military (VIRTVS MILITVM) or one of its achievements (VICTORIA SARMATICA). The message that these types thus seem to communicate is that the success of

which seem to have followed the “four at sacrifice” and likewise featured a military structure yet left out the sacrificing emperors: see Dumser 2006, 115 f.; Elkins 2013, 286–288. The fact that the imagery seems to have been an adaptation of Dyarchic imagery that showed Diocletian and Maximian at sacrifice makes it quite likely that the four Tetrarchs are depicted here. For a similar interpretation: see Rees 1993, 189; Weiser 2006, 212. For the suggestion that the depicted figures were simply soldiers: see Stevenson 1964, 875, 888. Besides not taking into account the Dyarchic precedents (see below), such an interpretation would also imply that in these coin types we have the first attestation in Roman imperial coinage of a sacrificial scene that only include the military. Given that they were first issued after the installation of the Tetrarchy, however, a reference to the new imperial college of four seems more likely.

Dumser 2006, 115. Like the image of the sacrificing emperor “in the open”, so too the emperor (or in some cases empress) at sacrifice in front of a building was a rather familiar image: see for example, RIC I² Gaius/Caligula 34, 44, 51. Given its compositional similarity to the Tetrarchic scene of the four emperors at sacrifice, the Severan image of a sacrificing ensemble in front of the temple of Vesta may have been a source of inspiration to the Tetrarchic mint-masters as well: RIC IV Septimius Severus 586–587A, 868, 892A-3; Caracalla 249 f., 271–272B; 392b–c, 594A–B, 607; V Postumus 9.

164 out of 188. On the appearance of military virtus in pre-Diocletianic third century coinage and how it was connected with that of the emperor himself: see Manders 2012, 177.
the imperial college of four was founded upon a combination of their *pietas* to the gods and the backing of their powerful army.\footnote{For a similar interpretation: see Dumser 2006, 115 n. 35.} This reverse image stresses the joint rule of four emperors by presenting them in a similar and hardly distinguishable appearance.\footnote{The hierarchy that is apparent elsewhere in Tetrarchic coinage seems of less significance here, although the obverse legend still emphasised the role of the depicted emperor within the imperial college.}

Since this is the only image in Tetrarchic coinage to show the entire college on one side of a coin, it cannot be considered to be representative for the entire numismatic corpus. Nevertheless, the image is dominant in silver denominations (fig. 5). Therefore, the innovation of a collegiate system of four was quite emphatically communicated to the receivers of silver coins. The imagery furthermore played upon a familiar iconographic depiction. The sacrificial scene featuring multiple emperors had been common during the third century, and the composition shows similarities with that of a Severan coin type that depicted a sacrifice in front of the temple of Vesta.\footnote{Multiple emperors sacrificing: RIC IV Septimius Severus 309, 814; Caracalla 452A–B; V Valerian 284 f.; Gallienus 446 f.; Tetricus I 204 f. Sacrifice and the temple of Vesta: RIC IV Septimius Severus 816A–B, 881; Caracalla 249 f., 270A–272B; a similar image appeared on an *aureus* of Postumus: RIC V Postumus 9. That such imagery was available to the Tetrarchic mint-masters also appears from gold multiples that show two Tetrarchs in similar fashion in front of the pediment of a temple: RIC VI Treveri 35, 617; Ticinum 1.}

\textbf{Fig. 5:} Reverse types of Tetrarchic silver after Diocletian’s currency reform based on RIC (n = 292)
Moreover, the imagery seems to build upon Dyarchic coin types, that depict Diocletian and Maximian in sacrificial fashion (figs. 6a and 6b).

Such a connection would enhance the likelihood that despite an apparent similitudo a hierarchy is visible in the sacrificial scene on the Tetrarchic silver coins. As a matter of fact, only two of the four are performing the sacrifice, most likely the two Augusti who had been depicted in such a fashion before. In addition, even on such small sized-objects as these argentei, the tripod makes sure the four emperors are neatly divided in two pairs. It is not too far-fetched to hypothesize that this image was meant to reflect the existing hierarchy within the Tetrarchy. On one side of the tripod Maximian and Constantius represented the Western administrative part of the Empire, whereas the opposing figures were meant to represent their Eastern equivalents Diocletian and Galerius. As with the shared minting practice this reverse was paired with the portrait of each of these emperors. The combination of obverse and reverse elucidated the depicted emperor’s place within this imperial hierarchy.

50 RIC V Diocletian 109–111, 466 f.; Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier, inv. no. 20570. Especially the composition of the latter – a gold medallion from the mint of Trier – suggests that it may well have served as a prototype for the argentei. The military attire (which is lacking on the bronze RIC-types), the positioning of both emperors and the tripod between them all point in this direction. Perhaps even more intriguing, however, is the rather exceptional structure in the background (an altar on the medallion; a fortress on the argentei), that give the scenes of the argentei and of the gold medallion a remarkable sense of depth.
It appears, then, that other than on silver coinage, portraying all four rulers as part of a collegiate body of rule was much rarer than is often maintained. The relatively few cases that we have discussed all appear to be experiments within a specific regional or medial context. These experiments seem not to have been widely followed up. Moreover, even in presentations of the Tetrarchs as a group there is often emphasis on one or two of the rulers. There was a variety of ways in which Roman rulers could be presented, none of them entirely straightforward. Presenting four rulers in conventional imagery posed representational problems.

**Double Duality**

When taking a closer look at some of the imagery discussed in the previous section, it becomes apparent that much of it in fact highlights the duality of the system. The reverses of the Tetrarchic silver coins in fact seem to show the pairing of the two *Augusti* with their respective *Caesar*, and not necessarily a system of four equal emperors. More importantly, the imagery may well have been a follow-up of coin types of Diocletian and Maximian, as mentioned above. In the scene of the four emperors on the Arch of Galerius, the main focus is likewise on the two enthroned *Augusti*, each accompanied by their *Caesar* on their respective left or right. The two *Augusti* also stand out in the painting of the four emperors in the South niche of the Tetrarchic complex at Luxor, as they are placed in the centre of the scene and are several centimetres taller than the two *Caesares*.51 The notion of shared power by two men was entirely traditional within Roman society. By presenting the rule of four as a combination of two pairs of men sharing power, precedent was implied. Through this ‘double duality’, Tetrarchic rule was formulated in traditional terms. Such double duality can be seen as an expansion upon the much-discussed Dyarchic practice to use Jupiter and Hercules as an indication of shared rule with an inherent hierarchy. Interestingly enough, though, this divine model was not modified, but simply ‘doubled’, when Constantius and Galerius joined the imperial college as *Caesares*.52

In addition to the above examples presenting two pairs of rulers, there are coins and medallions that emphasize the duality of the system at large in a similar manner. A gold medallion struck at Trier in 293–294 (figs. 7a and 7b) is of interest in this regard as it puts together the Tetrarchs in pairs facing one another.53

51 McFadden 2015, 128.
52 Kuhoff 2001, 41. On the Dyarchic practice: see Steinbock 2014, 54 f.
53 RIC VI Treveri 2. Cf. RIC VI Londinium 74–75; Treveri 144, 319, 373.
This medallion is a follow-up to a gold medallion from the same mint that was struck during the Dyarchy, which showed Diocletian and Maximian facing each other.\(^5^4\) This way of presenting dual rule was no novelty in Roman imperial coinage, and goes back to at least the dual rule of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus (and in some way to early representations of Gaius and Lucius).\(^5^5\) In addition to the gold medallions, five Tetrarchic bronze types issued from London and Trier, all with a standardized *Genius Populi Romani* reverse, display only two members of the imperial college on their obverses.\(^5^6\) Whereas the gold medallions showed the emperors facing, these bronzes presented them jugate.\(^5^7\) On

---

54 Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Trier, inv. no. 20570.
55 Gnecchi 1912, pl. 71, 2–6. Cf. RIC V Tetricus I 205; RIC IV Trajan Decius 32, 131. Obverse facing busts could also be found for Trebonianus Gallus and Volusian: see RIC IV Trebonianus Gallus 128. Of course, the notion of dual rule at Rome went back to the establishment of the consulate, yet the notion of representing joint imperial rule in coinage (other than by depicting two young princes as presumed successors) started later in the Empire.
56 RIC VI Londinium 74 f.; Treveri 144, 319, 373. On the Genius Populi Romani coins: see Callu 1960.
57 The fact that these bronzes were only struck in the West makes it tempting to link at least the earliest of them (RIC VI Treveri 144) to the jugate busts that appeared on coins of the British usurper Carausius (RIC V Carausius issuing for Diocletian/Maximian 1–2). Whereas Carausius had himself appear alongside Diocletian and Maximian, the Tetrarchic jugate obverse types showed the imperial college as designed by Diocletian himself.
these coins, the six members of the Tetrarchic colleges of the period 293 to 306 are presented in pairs, the composition of which is either based on administrative region (e.g. Western Augustus, Western Caesar) or hierarchical position (both Caesares, both Augusti). It is likely that these coins were to have most impact at the time of their distribution. Especially the issues for the new Caesares Severus and Maximinus Daia provides us with clues as to the timing and occasion of such issues: the moment that new members were included into the imperial college.

The same presentation of double duality we get from the speech of praise delivered at Trier in 297. The panegyrist cannot help but noticing that although the world is divided fourfold, it is so “by a double ocean”. Likewise, the four lights of the world are divided into the sun and the moon on the one hand, and the morning and evening star on the other. It seems that, for the orator, it was logical to explain the number of four as two pairs given the political situation at the time. There were, after all, two pairs of Augusti and Caesares.

The clearest attestation of double duality is perhaps the porphyry statue group, now built into the San Marco in Venice, though originally from Nicomedia or Thessaloniki (fig. 8a). The Venice group shows two pairs of figures in embrace. In each of these pairs the figure on the left can, from iconographic details, be identified as the Augustus. All four emperors are furthermore depicted with short-cropped hair, and are dressed in military guise (including a military cap, cuirass, and cloak), whilst holding a sword. The group must have originally been divided as it was built into a square column, hence further strengthening the duality of the system of rule. A similar pattern of presenting the four emperors is shown in the Vatican group (figs. 8b-1 and 8b-2). The Vatican group closely resembles the Venice group in that it shows two pairs of Tetrarchs in embrace. Instead of military caps and swords, however, the emperors of the Vatican group wear laurel wreaths and carry globes – signs of worldly dominion.

As with the Tetrarchic silver reverses, the Venice and Vatican group seem to have been a follow-up of a theme developed during the Dyarchy. This is at least

58 RIC VI Treveri 144 might be presenting Diocletian and Maximian. The emperor presented in front was likely to having been the senior in the Tetrarchic hierarchy. So Constantius was put in front of Galerius, whereas Severus’ bust was the frontal on the obverse he shared with Maximinus Daia: see RIC VI Treveri 373; Londinium 74 f.

59 Paneg. VIII [IV].4.2 with Flasar 1995.

60 It is possible to argue that in doing so, the orator even adds a geographical dimension to the imperial collegiate; Maximian and Constantius as the sun and the morning star in the West; Diocletian and Galerius as the moon and evening star in the East.

61 On the Venice group: see esp. Laubscher 1999; Niewöhner – Peschlow 2012.

62 The hierarchy of the Tetrarchic group is discussed in e.g. Kolb 2001, 146–151.

63 On the Vatican group: see esp. Kolb 2001, 151–153.
Fig. 8a: Porphyry statues of the Tetrarchs built into the San Marco, Venice
suggested by a recently published Diarchic relief from Nicomedia, which shows Diocletian and Maximian descending from their quadrigas, wearing paludamenta, and embracing each other in a similar manner as in the Tetrarchic groups. One of the two figures is placed slightly higher, suggesting that he can be identified as the senior emperor, and therefore as Diocletian. The Nicomedia relief shows that the Tetrarchy, as presented in the porphyry group portraits, was embedded in a Dyarchic framework, hence highlighting its inner duality.

In addition, monuments in Thebes and Gamzigrad (Felix Romuliana) focus on two out of four (or even six) rulers. For example, East to the earlier-mentioned South niche in the Tetrarchic complex at Luxor, frescoes showed a pair of enthroned emperors. It is likely that a similar pair stood to the West of the niche. This would effectively have separated the collegiate system of four into two pairs of two rulers. The pairing of rulers becomes even more apparent from the Tetrarchic pilasters which were found at Galerius’ palatial complex at Gamzigrad (Felix Romuliana). Each pilaster shows busts of six bearded men grouped in pairs of two within medallions of a military standard. The best-preserved pilaster (Pilaster B) depicts one pair dressed in toga and cloak, whereas the other two pairs wear paludamenta fastened with clasps (fig. 9). In all three medallions, the figure on the left is placed slightly higher than the figure on the right, and clasps of the figures on the left are additionally decorated with large gems. These iconographic features might suggest difference in rank, i.e. Augustus and Caesar. If so, it seems that the retired senior emperors are represented in the bottom medallion with the togate figures, whereas the other two medallions pair the current ruling Augusti with their respective Caesares. The less well-preserved Pilaster A changes the sequence and grouping of the figures so that, as far as it is possible to see from the remaining reliefs, the pairs are made up of figures holding the same offices and present pairs of two Augusti and two Caesares.

64 Emergency excavations conducted within the Çukurbağ Archaeological Project at the heart of Nicomedia, Diocletian’s administrative capital, have brought to light more than 30 relief panels of Proconnesian marble with strikingly preserved polychromy on them. These reliefs, together with numerous fragments of free-standing statues of gods, have been found in the context of a terraced imperial cult complex. The relief displaying Diocletian and Maximian in the act of embracing (length ca. 3 m, height ca. 1 m) has been interpreted as part of a broader scene of adventus: see Ağtürk 2018.
65 The imagery discussed here is derived from Deckers’ reconstructive drawings of it. Unfortunately, the actual fresco scene in this section is worn and difficult to read. Deckers’ drawings portray an enthroning scene remarkably similar to the one present on the North side of the South pillar of the Arch of Galerius; McFadden 2015, 126–133.
66 McFadden 2015, 112.
67 On the Tetrarchic pillars in Gamzigrad: see Srejović 1994.
68 Alternatively, one might consider pairs of Augusti, Caesares and senior Augusti.
Figs. 8b-1 and 8b-2: Porphyry statues of the Tetrarchs in the Biblioteca Apostolica
Fig. 9: Sandstone pilaster (B) from Felix Romuliana with images of the Tetrarchs
Despite sometimes being treated as wholly innovative, this particular way of presenting imperial rule (in pairs) built upon familiar aspects of imperial representation. The pairing of rulers with their potential successors in sculpture was in itself a common practice amongst the emperors of Rome to communicate their dynastic claims.\(^6^9\) Furthermore, imitating the style of the emperor’s portrait in those of his intended successor(s) was an additional strategy through which dynastic continuity was continuously expressed in the Roman Empire.\(^7^0\) Portraits of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, for example, stressed resemblance to their adopted father Antoninus Pius, who, in turn, had adopted the style of his adoptive father Hadrian.\(^7^1\) It seems that, in public group displays and in some of the coins and medallions struck between 293 and 306, Tetrarchic imagery was meant to evoke similar associations with their audiences.

**The Constraints of Tradition**

We started this article with the question how to present a new system of four emperors to a Roman society which was used to be ruled by one emperor only. Our survey of a variety of different sources suggests that representations of the Tetrarchic emperors as a group of four are much more rare than previous research has suggested, and only appear in specific types of media. In the speech of praise, for example, there were appropriate references available to accommodate the rule of four, such as the four elements, the four seasons, or the four horses of the sun’s chariot. Cosmological allusions served to present the audiences of the speech with well-known conventional metaphors, to make the system of four seem natural. Likewise, the two imperial decrees surviving through inscriptions explicitly present the emperors as a group. Yet, this does not imply a coherent ideological message, which was distributed throughout the Empire. The pattern was more complicated, with a variety of complimentary and occasionally even contradictory messages circulating in the Roman world. Thus, for milestones, and especially in imagery, emphasis was mainly on one or two rulers as part of the imperial collegium with occasional references to their place in the collegiate as a whole.

---

\(^6^9\) On such dynastic pairing in portraiture: see e.g. Boschung 2002, 180–198; Deppmeyer 2008, 81–98.

\(^7^0\) Known as “Bildnisangleichung”: see Massner 1982. Cf. Fejfer 2008, 271 f.; Hekster 2015, 170 f.

\(^7^1\) Hekster 2015, 81 f.
Even when all four Tetrarchic rulers were on display, they were often organized through ‘double duality’. In coins, statuary, reliefs, and paintings, the rulers were shown as two pairs, with iconographic features and stance highlighting hierarchies between Augustus and Caesar. This regular focus on one or two emperors, rather than on the imperial group, is in our view to be explained by the different political contexts in the Roman Empire: subjects were in practice almost only confronted with one or two specific emperors, who were in charge of the geographic area to which they were bound.

This relation between subjects and emperors is strongly connected to medial conventions, and expectations of both subjects and emperors, showing the constraints of imperial and medial traditions. The ways in which statues, coins, medallions, and reliefs had been used for imperial representation prior to the Tetrarchy and in their local contexts largely determined their usage during the Tetrarchy. Even stylistic criteria of imperial portraits, which in previous research are seen as an innovative approach of presenting the Tetrarchy, appear less dominant, because imperial portraiture during the Tetrarchic period largely followed the constraints of tradition set by earlier imperial art. Traditions which were inherent in specific media and locations were determining factors for the way in which a new political system could be presented. The result was a much less coherent ideological Tetrarchic message than is often assumed. The image of group identity was regularly lost in a more complex and messy mode of formulating power. The new and innovative aspects of a collegiate rule by four emperors was less important than linking the power of those rulers to what was traditionally expected of the portrayal of Roman emperorship.

Acknowledgments: This research is part of the NWO-funded project “Constraints and Traditions” (https://www.ru.nl/constraintsandtradition/). The authors are grateful to Nathalie de Haan, Eckhard Meyer-Zwiffelhofer, Neil McLynn and Danielle Slootjes for their comments on earlier drafts and to Cristian Gazdac and Bojan Popović for providing relevant images.
List of Figures

Fig. 1a, 1b: The cast of a porphyry head of a Tetrarch (possibly Galerius, height 34 cm) from Felix Romuliana, with detail of the laureate crown set in with busts (figure 1b). Oxford, Ashmolean Museum. Photo by Sam Heijnen.

Fig. 2: Relief of enthroned Tetrarchs on the Arch of Galerius, Thessaloniki. Public domain.

Fig. 3: South niche of the imperial cult chamber, Luxor. Photo by Olaf Tausch.

Fig. 4a, 4b: Argenteus (3.17 g), Ticinum AD 294, showing Diocletian on the obverse (legend: DIOCLETIANVS AVG) and the four emperors at sacrifice on the reverse (figure 4a; legend: VICTORIA SARMAT): RIC VI Ticinum 12a. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

Fig. 5: Reverse types of Tetrarchic silver after Diocletian's currency reform based on RIC (n = 292).

Fig. 6a, 6b: Antoninianus (4.12 g), Lugdunum AD 294, showing Maximian on the obverse (legend: IMP MAXIMIANVS AVG), and Diocletian and Maximian sacrificing over a tripod on the reverse (legend: VOTIS X): RIC V Diocletian 467. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

Fig. 7a, 7b: Gold multiple (54.45 g), Trier AD 293–294, showing the busts of Diocletian and Galerius on the obverse (legend: DIOCLETIANVS AVG ET MAXIMIANVS C), and the busts of Maximian and Constantius on the reverse (legend: MAXIMIANVS AVG ET CONSTANTIVS C): RIC VI Treveri 2. Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

Fig. 8a: Porphyry statues of the Tetrarchs built into the San Marco, Venice. Public domain.

Fig. 8b-1: Porphyry statues of the Tetrarchs in the Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican. D-DAI-ROM-5694.

Fig. 8b-2: Porphyry statues of the Tetrarchs in the Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican. D-DAI-ROM-5695.

Fig. 9: Sandstone pilaster (B) from Felix Romuliana with images of the Tetrarchs. Photo by Bojan Popović.

Bibliography

Abdy 2012: R. Abdy, Tetrarchy and the House of Constantine, in: W. Metcalf (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Coinage, Oxford 2012, 584–600.

Ağtürk 2018: T. Ş. Ağtürk, A New Tetrarchic Relief from Nicomedia. Embracing Emperors, AJA 122, 2018, 411–426.

Baratte 1995: F. Baratte, Observations sur le Portrait Romain à l’Epoque Tétrarchique, AntTard 3, 1995, 65–76.

Barnes 1982: T. D. Barnes, The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine, Cambridge (MA) 1982.

Barnes 1996: T. D. Barnes, Emperors, Panegyrics, Prefects, Provinces and Palaces (284–317), JRA 9, 1996, 532–552.

Bergmann 2007: M. Bergmann, Bildnisse der Tetrarchenzzeit, in: A. Demandt – J. Engemann (eds.), Konstantin der Grosse. Imperator Caesar Flavius Constantinus, Trier 2007, 58–73.

Boschung – Eck 2006: D. Boschung – W. Eck (eds.), Die Tetrarchie. Ein neues Regierungssystem und seine mediale Präsentation, Wiesbaden 2006.
Boschung 2002: D. Boschung, Gens Augusta. Untersuchungen zur Aufstellung, Wirkung und Bedeutung der Statuengruppen des julisch-claudischen Kaiserhauses, Mainz 2002.

Boschung 2006: D. Boschung, Die Tetrarchie als Botschaft der Bildmedien. Zur Visualisierung eines Herrschaftssystems, in: D. Boschung – W. Eck (eds.), Die Tetrarchie. Ein neues Regierungssystem und seine mediale Präsentation, Wiesbaden 2006, 349–380.

Braund 1998: S. M. Braund, Praise and Protreptic in Early Imperial Panegyric. Cicero, Seneca, Pliny, in: M. Whitby (ed.), The Propaganda of Power. The Role of Panegyric in Late Antiquity, Leiden 1998, 53–76.

Callu 1960: J.-P. Callu, Genio Populi Romani (295–316). Contribution à une Histoire Numismatique de la Tétrarchie, Paris 1960.

Claes 2013: L. Claes, Kinship and Coins. Ancestors and Family on Roman Imperial Coinage under the Principate, 2013.

Colini 1935: A. Colini, I frammenti di architettura e di reliev ri venuti presso la chiesa di S. Maria in Via Lata, Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia 11, 1935, 41–61.

Corcoran 1996: S. Corcoran, The Empire of the Tetrarchs. Imperial Pronouncements and Government, Oxford 1996.

Craig 1999: R. Craig, Communication Theory as a Field, Communication Theory 9, 1999, 119–161.

Demandt – Goltz – Schlange-Schöningen 2012: A. Demandt – A. Goltz – H. Schlange-Schöningen (eds.), Diokletian und die Tetrarchie. Aspekte einer Zeitenwende, Berlin 2012.

De Maria 1988: S. De Maria, Gli archi onorari di Roma e dell'Italia romana, Rome 1988.

Deppmayer 2008: K. Deppmeyer, Kaisergruppen von Vespasian bis Konstantin. Eine Untersuchung zu Aufstellungskontexten und Intentionen der statuarischen Präsentation kaiserlicher Familien, Hamburg 2008.

Dumser 2006: E. Dumser, The AETERNAE MEMORIAE Coinage of Maxentius. An Issue of Symbolic Intent, in: L. Haselberger – J. Humphrey (eds.), Imaging Ancient Rome. Documentation, Visualization, Imagination, Portsmouth 2006, 106–118.

Eck 2006: W. Eck, Das Herrschaftskonzept Diocletians im Spiegel öffentlicher Monumente, in: D. Boschung – W. Eck, Die Tetrarchie. Ein neues Regierungssystem und seine mediale Präsentation, Wiesbaden 2006, 323–347.

Elkins 2013: N. Elkins, A Note on Late Roman Art. The Provincial Origins of Camp Gate and Baldachin Iconography on the Late Imperial Coinage, AJN 25, 2013, 283–302.

Elsner 2007: J. Elsner, Roman Eyes. Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text, Princeton 2007.

Erm – Reynolds – Crawford 1971: K. Erm – J. Reynolds – M. Crawford, Diocletian’s Currency Reform. A New Inscription, JRS 61, 1971, 171–177.

Feijer 2008: J. Feijer, Roman Portraits in Context, Berlin 2008.

Fittschen 1971: K. Fittschen, Zum angeblichen Bildnis des Lucius Verus im Thermenmuseum, JDAI 86, 1971, 214–252.

Fittschen 2015: K. Fittschen, Methodological Approaches to the Dating and Identification of Roman Portraits, in: B. Borg (ed.), A Companion to Roman Art, Hoboken 2015, 52–70.

Flasar 1995: M. Flasar, Orbis Quadrifariam Duplici Discretus Oceano, in: D. Srejović (ed.), The Age of Tetrarchs, Belgrade 1995, 115–125.

Flower 2013: R. Flower, Emperors and Bishops in Late Roman Invective, Cambridge 2013.

Formisano 2008: M. Formisano, Speculum principis, speculum oratoris. Alcune considerazioni sui Panegyrici Latini come genere letterario, in: L. Castagna – C. Riboldi (eds.), Amicitiae templa serena. Vita e Pensiero, Milan 2008, 581–599.
Giuliani – Verduchi 1987: F. Giuliani – P. Verduchi, L'area centrale del Foro Romano, Florence 1987.

Gnecchi 1912: F. Gnecchi, I medaglioni romani, Milan 1912.

Hekster 1999: O. Hekster, The City of Rome in Late Imperial Ideology. The Tetrarchs, Maxentius, and Constantine, MediterrAnt 2, 1999, 717–748.

Hekster 2015: O. Hekster, Emperors and Ancestors. Roman Rulers and the Constraints of Tradition, Oxford 2015.

Hekster et al. 2015: O. Hekster – L. Claes – E. Manders – D. Slootjes – Y. Klaassen – N. de Haan, Nero's Ancestry and the Construction of Imperial Ideology in the Early Empire. A Methodological Case Study, Journal of Ancient History and Archaeology 1, 2015, 7–27.

Howgego 1995: C. Howgego, Ancient History from Coins, London 1995.

Kähler 1936: H. Kähler, Zwei Sockel eines Triumphbogens im Boboligarten zu Florenz, Berlin 1936.

Kähler 1964: H. Kähler, Das Fürsäulenendenkmal für die Tetrarchen auf dem Forum Romanum, Cologne 1964.

Kallas 2015: G. Kalas, The Restoration of the Roman Forum in Late Antiquity. Transforming Public Space, Austin 2015.

Kinch 1890: K. Kinch, L'arc de triomphe de Salonique, Paris 1890.

Kleiner 1992: D. Kleiner, Roman Sculpture, New Haven 1992.

Kolb 1987: F. Kolb, Diokletian und die erste Tetrarchie. Improvisation oder Experiment in der Organisation monarchischer Herrschaft, Berlin 1987.

Kolb 1995: F. Kolb, Chronologie und Ideologie der Tetrarchie, AntTard 3, 1995, 21–31.

Kolb 2001: F. Kolb, Herrscherideologie in der Spätantike, Berlin 2001.

Kolb 2004: A. Kolb, Römische Meilensteine. Stand der Forschung und Probleme, in: R. Frei-Stolba (ed.), Siedlung und Verkehr im römischen Reich, Bern 2004, 135–155.

Kuhoff 2001: W. Kuhoff, Diokletian und die Epoche der Tetrarchie. Das römische Reich zwischen Krisenbewältigung und Neuaufbau (284–313 n. Chr.), Frankfurt a. M. 2001.

Laubscher 1975: H. Laubscher, Der Reliefschmuck des Galeriusbogens in Thessaloniki, Berlin 1975.

Laubscher 1976: H. Laubscher, Arcus Novus und Arcus Claudii. Zwei Triumphbögen an der Vita Lata in Rom, Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-Historische Klasse 3, 1976, 63–108.

Laubscher 1999: H. Laubscher, Beobachtungen zu tetrarchischen Kaiserbildnissen aus Porphyry, JDAI 114, 1999, 207–252.

Lauffer 1971: S. Lauffer, Diokletians Preisedit, Berlin 1971.

Leadbetter 2009: B. Leadbetter, Galerius and the Will of Diocletian, London 2009.

Lehmann – Holum 2000: C. Lehmann – K. Holum, The Greek and Latin Inscriptions of Caesarea Maritima, Boston 2000.

L'Orange 1938: H. P. L'Orange, Ein tetrarchisches Ehrendenkmal auf dem Forum Romanum, MDAI(R) 53, 1938, 1–34.

L'Orange 1965: H. P. L'Orange, Art Forms and Civic Life in the Later Roman Empire, Princeton 1965.

L'Orange 1984: H. P. L'Orange, Das spätantike Herrscherbild von Diokletian bis zu den Konstantin-Söhnen, 284–361 n. Chr., Berlin 1984.

LSA = Last Statues of Antiquity: http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk (last accessed 29.10.2018).

Manders 2012: E. Manders, Coining Images of Power. Patterns in the Representation of Roman Emperors on Imperial Coinage, A.D. 193–284, Leiden 2012.
Marlowe 2015: E. Marlowe, The Multivalence of Memory. The Tetrarchs, the Senate, and the Vicennalia Monument in the Roman Forum, in: K. Galinsky – K. Lapatin (eds.), Cultural Memories in the Roman Empire, Los Angeles 2015, 240–262.
Massner 1982: A.-K. Massner, Bildnisangleichung. Untersuchungen zur Entstehungs- und Wirkungsgeschichte des Augustusporträts (43 v. Chr.–68 n. Chr.), Berlin 1982.
Mause 1994: M. Mause, Die Darstellung des Kaisers in der lateinischen Panegyrik, Stuttgart 1994.
Mayer 2013: E. Mayer, The Ancient Middle Classes. Urban Life and Aesthetics in the Roman Empire, 100 BCE–250 CE, Cambridge (MA), 2013.
McFadden 2015: S. McFadden, The Luxor Temple Paintings in Context. Roman Visual Culture in Late Antiquity, in: M. Jones – S. McFadden (eds.), Art of Empire. The Roman Frescoes and Imperial Cult Chamber in Luxor Temple, New Haven 2015, 105–133.
Meischner 1986: J. Meischner, Die Porträtkunst der ersten und zweiten Tetrarchie bis zur Alleinherrschaft Konstantins 293–324, AA 2, 1986, 223–250.
Niewöhner – Peschlow 2012: P. Niewöhner – U. Peschlow, Neues zu den Tetrarchenfiguren in Venedig und ihrer Aufstellung in Konstantinopel, MDAI(I) 62, 2012, 341–367.
Nixon – Saylor Rodgers 1994: C. Nixon – B. Saylor Rodgers, In Praise of Later Roman Emperors. The Panegyrici Latini. Introduction, Translation, and Historial Commentary, Berkeley 1994.
Noreña 2001: C. Noreña, The Communication of the Emperor’s Virtues, JRS 91, 2001, 146–168.
Noreña 2011: C. Noreña, Imperial Ideals in the Roman West. Representation, Circulation, Power, Cambridge 2011.
Pollini 2012: J. Pollini, From Republic to Empire. Rhetoric, Religion, and Power in the Visual Culture of Ancient Rome, Norman 2012.
Pond-Rothman 1977: M. Pond-Rothman, The Thematic Organization of the Panel Reliefs on the Arch of Galerius, AJA 81, 1977, 427–454.
Prusac 2011: M. Prusac, From Face to Face. Recarving of Roman Portraits and the Late-Antique Portrait Arts, Leiden 2011.
Rees 1993: R. D. Rees, Images and Image. A Re-Examination of Tetrarchic Iconography, G&R 40, 1993, 181–200.
Rees 2002: R. D. Rees, Layers of Loyalty in Latin Panegyric AD 289–307, Oxford 2002.
Richardson 1992: L. Richardson, A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome, Baltimore 1992.
Rowan 2012: C. Rowan, Under Divine Auspices. Divine Ideology and the Visualisation of Imperial Power in the Severan Period, Cambridge 2012.
Sabbah 1984: G. Sabbah, De la Rhétorique à la communication politique. Les Panégyriques Latins, BAGB 4, 1984, 363–388.
Schiller 1882: H. Schiller, Review of G. Morosi, Intorno al motive dell’abdicazione dell’imperatore Diocleziano, in: C. Bursian (ed.), Jahresberichte über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft, Berlin 1882, 519–522.
Schiller 1887: H. Schiller, Geschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit, II: Von Diokletian bis zum Tode Theodosius des Großen, Gotha 1887.
Schönebeck 1937: H.-U. von Schönebeck, Die zyklische Ordnung der Triumphalreliefs am Galeriusbogen in Saloniki, ByzZ 37, 1937, 361–371.
Seston 1946: W. Seston, Dioclétien et la Tétrarchie, Paris 1946.
Sironen 2009: E. Sironen, Some Notes on Inscriptions of Roman Date from Thesprotia, in: B. Forsén (ed.), Thesprotia Expedition, I: Towards a Regional History, Helsinki 2009, 185–196.
Smith 1997: R.R.R. Smith, The Public Image of Licinius I. Portrait Sculpture and Imperial
Ideology in the Early Fourth Century, JRS 87, 1997, 170–202.
Srejović 1994: D. Srejović, The Representations of Tetrarchs in Romuliana, AntTard 2, 1994,
143–152.
Steinbock 2014: B. Steinbock, Coin Types and Latin Panegyrics as Means of Imperial
Communication, in: N. T. Elkins – S. Krmnicek (eds.), Art in the Round. New Approaches to
Ancient Coin Iconography, Rahden 2014, 51–67.
Stevenson 1964: S. Stevenson, A Dictionary of Roman Coins, London 1964.
Sutherland 1967: H. Sutherland, The Roman Imperial Coinage. From Diocletian's Reform
(A.D. 295) to the Death of Maximinus (A.D. 313), London 1967.
Sydow 1969: W. von Sydow, Zur Kunstgeschichte des spätantiken Porträts im 4. Jahrhundert
n. Chr., Bonn 1969.
Torelli 1993: M. Torelli, s. v. Arcus Novus, in: E. Steiby (ed.), Lexicon topographicum urbis
Romae, Rome 1993, 101f.
Trimble 2017: J. Trimble, Communicating with Images in the Roman Empire, in: F. S. Naiden –
R.J.A. Talbert (eds.), Mercury's Wings. Exploring Modes of Communication in the Ancient
World, Oxford 2017, 106–127.
Velenis 1974: G. Velenis, Some Observations on the Original Form of the Rotunda in
Thessaloniki, Balkan Studies 15, 1974, 298–307.
Vermeule 1968: C. Vermeule, Roman Imperial Art in Greece and Asia Minor, Cambridge (MA)
1968.
Vollmer 1991: D. Vollmer, Tetrarchie. Bemerkungen zum Gebrauch eines antiken und modernen
Begriffes, Hermes 119, 1991, 435–449.
Walden 1990: C. Walden, The Tetrarchic Image, OJA 9, 1990, 221–235.
Wallace-Hadrill 1986: A. Wallace-Hadrill, Image and Authority in the Coinage of Augustus, JRS
76, 1986, 66–87.
Weiser 2006: W. Weiser, Mediale Präsentation auf Münzen und Medaillons, in:
D. Boschung – W. Eck (eds.), Die Tetrarchie. Ein neues Regierungssystem und seine
mediale Präsentation, Wiesbaden 2006, 205–228.
Wood 2014: J. Wood, Communication Mosaics. An Introduction to the Field of Communication,
Boston 2014.
Wood 2016: J. Wood, Interpersonal Communication. Everyday Encounters, Boston 2016.
Zanker 2016: P. Zanker, Roman Portraits. Sculptures in Stone or Bronze in the Collection of the
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 2016.