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Economic History from Roman site-finds

Neues zur Augster « Falschmünzerwerkstatt »

Coins are a very obvious source from which to write economic history. There are two main divisions in this source, one concerns the coins as struck, the other concerns the coins as used. The latter, which is the most carefully thought out method, and is therefore the most studied, has the most carefully thought out method, and is therefore the most studied.

(Zusammenfassung)

Eine 1761 im Areal der römischen Koloniestadt Augusta Rauricorum entdeckte sog. « Münzwerkstätte », an deren Stelle 2 Paare von « Münzfälscherformen » und eine einzelne Formhälfte (alle aus Blei!) zutage kamen, kann dank neueren Ausgrabungen innerhalb des Stadtgebiets genau lokalisiert und neu interpretiert werden.

Im weiteren wird die topographische Verteilung auch der übrigen Augster Fundstücke, die zur Herstellung von Münzen des 1.-3. Jahrh. dienten (Tonformen, gefunden im 19. Jahrh. sowie 1937 und 1957; eiserne Münzstempel von 1911 und 1961) besprochen und mit der Lage der Bronzegiessereien verglichen.

In this second aspect, for the attitude of the man in the Roman street to the austeritas was only fit subject matter for a historian if that attitude was just about to provide a rebellion. Thus the historian Tacitus is uninterested in how the man in the street used or regarded his money, and it is only in descriptions of low life, the life portrayed in the Satyricon of Petronius, or the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), that we hear about attitudes to actual coins. Our main source must therefore be the money lost and hoarded during the centuries of the Roman Empire, for this bears some relationship to the money which was actually in use, and so we are available to be lost or to be hoarded. This is archaeological material, and it needs the rules and precautions of archaeology to deal with it safely and to extract from it useful information. From the two possibilities, that is records and single finds, I shall leave hoards on one side for the moment. They have had more attention than their less sensational counterparts, and I have dealt normally with several points about them in a numerical way 1-4.

1. R. Becke, *Numerical aspects of Roman coin hoards in Britain*, in *Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 1, 1974.
2. R. Becke, *The Roman coin hoards in Great Britain*, in *Journal of Roman Studies*, vol. 1, 1974.
3. R. Becke, *The 'Normal' hoard*, in *Proceedings of the Royal Society on numismatics and coinage*, vol. 1, 1974.