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# Imperial coinage and representation of Iulia Cornelia Salonina (253-268 AD)

## Moneda imperial y representación de Julia Cornelia Salonina (253-268 d. C.)

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### Abstract

We have little information about Iulia Cornelia Salonina because of the scant attention she received from classical authors, among whom Aurelius Victor, Zonaras, and the *Historia Augusta* mention her. However, we know that she was the wife of Gallienus, who ruled between 253 and 268, and that is why we have her presence in numismatic and epigraphic sources. Considering the importance of coinage as a medium for the distribution of the imperial image, this study presents the main characteristics of the typology of the imperial coinage of Salonina. To carry it out, approximately 105,000 coins from the *domus Licinia Augusta* present in 121 coin hoards of the Roman Empire have been analysed, following the methodology of researchers such as Duncan-Jones, Noreña, and Rowan. The content is divided into an introduction; a section that collects the information that we can obtain of Salonina through literary sources and epigraphy, as well as the current literature in this regard; a main section that includes the study of its coinage; and finally, the conclusions. As a result, we determine that there are clear differences between the periods 253-259 and 260-268, where she was more associated with traditional divinities in the first case and with messages linked to the imperial family, her virtues, and the divinities in the second. Also, this analysis allows us to reconsider some of the statements made by Cesano, De Blois, Ferrari, or Geiger to advance our knowledge of the imperial representation of this *Augusta*.

**Keywords.** Salonina; Numismatics; roman imperial power; diffusion of messages; third century AD; coin hoards.

### Resumen

Actualmente contamos con escasa información acerca de Julia Cornelia Salonina, fruto de la poca atención que recibió por parte de los autores clásicos, de entre quienes le mencionan Aurelio Víctor, Zonaras o la *Historia Augusta*. No obstante, sabemos que fue mujer de Galieno, quien gobernó entre los años 253 y 268, por lo que contamos con su presencia en fuentes numismáticas y epigráficas. Habida cuenta de la importancia que tenía la moneda como soporte de difusión de la imagen imperial, en este trabajo se presentan las características de la tipología de las amonedaciones imperiales de Salonina. Para llevarlo a cabo se han analizado alrededor de 105000 monedas de la *domus Licinia Augusta* presentes en 121 tesoros del Imperio, siguiendo la metodología de investigadores como Duncan-Jones, Noreña o Rowan. El contenido que presentamos se divide en: una introducción; un análisis de la información de Salonina que proporcionan las fuentes literarias y epigráficas, así como un estado de la cuestión; el estudio de sus amonedaciones; y, finalmente, las conclusiones. Fruto de ello, podemos determinar que existen claras diferencias entre la tipología de los períodos 253-259 y 260-268, donde se le asoció principalmente con divinidades tradicionales en el primer caso y con mensajes vinculados a la familia imperial, virtudes y divinidades en el segundo. Además, gracias a este análisis se pueden reconsiderar algunas de las afirmaciones hechas por Cesano, De Blois, Ferrari o Geiger en aras de avanzar en el conocimiento de la representación imperial de esta *Augusta*.

**Palabras clave.** Salonina; Numismática; poder imperial romano; difusión de mensajes; siglo III d. C.; ocultaciones monetales.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Iulia Cornelia Salonina (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1499; *PLRE* 799; Kienast, 2017: 212) was the wife of the emperor Gallienus, who reigned from 253 to 259 AD with his father, Valerian, and from 260 to 268 in his own right. We have little information about Salonina as she was not widely discussed by classical authors. Consequently, we do not know her birthdate or details of her childhood, but we can assume that she was in her tenth year of marriage when Gallienus achieved imperial power (Eckhel, 1797: 418-420; 1828: 418-420; Cohen, 1885: 495; Minaud, 2012: 267). However, considering the portrait and approximate age of Valerian II when he was designated *Caesar*, Salonina could have been married to Gallienus when she was around 18 to 20 years old, so she could have been born between 220 and 230 (Geiger, 2015: 76). Despite her scarcity in literary sources, the representation of this empress on the coinage is normal in both quantity and typology when compared to that of the Severan Empresses (Rowan, 2011: 246).

As coinage was one of the most important vehicles for spreading imperial images (Levick 1982; Sutherland, 1983; Wallace-Hadrill, 1986; Howgego, 1995: 62-85; Hekster, 2003; Metcalf, 2010: 141; Noreña, 2011; Manders, 2012; De Blois, 2019: 18-19), our objective is to analyse the coinage of Salonina to outline the main characteristics of her public image during the joint and sole reigns of Gallienus. To achieve this, and after an examination of the epigraphic evidence for the titles she held, we will follow the methodology applied by Duncan-Jones (1994), Noreña (2001; 2011), and Rowan (2011; 2012) together with the typological classification of Manders (2012: 41-48). Through this approach to the study of the coin hoards, we aim to advance our knowledge of how the imperial image was spread to the population of the empire.

As we shall see, after considering more than 14,500 imperial coins of Salonina from 121 coin hoards<sup>1</sup> (Fig. 1), the image of this empress was, overall, that of a typical Roman empress of the third century.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless,

there are aspects that are exclusive to Salonina, such as her greater presence during the period 253-259 and the complete change in typology after the deaths of Saloninus and Valerian II.

## 2. SALONINA IN LITERARY SOURCES, EPIGRAPHY, AND ITS LITERATURE

The scarce references to Salonina in classical texts concentrated on her marriage to Gallienus shared with Pipa, daughter of a German chief (Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 33.6; Estrada San Juan, 2022); her close relationship with Plotinus and philosophical knowledge (Porph. *Plot.* 12), which led the historiography to consider that she was born in the eastern part of the Empire (Halfmann, 2005: 229); and her near murder during the siege of Milan on 268 (Zonaras, 12.25). She is also mentioned in *Historia Augusta* as having been responsible for the name of one of her children: Saloninus (*Hist. Aug. Gall.* 21.3). As a result of these references, it is considered that during her childhood she received a good education that focused on Greek and philosophy, but that during her relations with the Imperial house she had little political influence (Bleckmann, 2002: 312-313; Geiger, 2015: 293).

Because of the scarcity of references, the number of studies dedicated to her is notoriously low compared with those of other *Augustae*. We do not have a monograph on Salonina yet, but she has entries in the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1499) and the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (*PLRE* 799), and her coinage is collected in the classical numismatic catalogues, such as that of Cohen (1885: 490-515) and *The Roman Imperial Coinage* (Webb, 1927: 107-115, 192-200). As a result of her presence in numismatic catalogues, she was studied by Cesano (1951) and Ferrari (1975), in a monograph of Gallienus by De Blois (1976), more recently by Crnobrnja (2007), and, finally, by Klukzec (2018). In relation to epigraphy rather than numismatics, Salonina was studied as part of the *domus Licinia Augusta* by Sirano (2003) and in several works of Serrano Ordozgoiti (2020a; 2020b; 2021a; 2021b; 2021c). Moreover, Callu (2000) included Salonina in his study of the title Pia Felix, Bleckmann (2002) in his work about the empresses of the Severan dynasty and the *soldatenkaiser* period, Geiger (2015) in his study of Gallienus, there are some references to her *damnatio memoriae* in Varner's work (2001: 211), and she is included in the analysis of Gallienus' reign made by Magdalena Anda (2022).

In summary, our information about this empress derives mostly from the evidence of epigraphy and numismatics. As our analysis will concentrate mostly

1. Cited at the end of this work (supplementary data).

2. As can be seen through the map of the location of the analysed coin hoards, there is a greater presence of coins from the western part of the Empire. This is largely due to the systematization of coin hoards publications through collections such as *Trésors Monétaires*, *Coin Hoards from Roman Britain*, *Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Deutschland*, *Österreich* or *Slowenien* among others, something that does not happen in places like the north of Africa, a large part of Italy or the entire area surrounding the Aegean Sea. Furthermore, we must consider the presence of provincial coinage in the eastern part of the Empire and the existence of coinage from the Gallic Empire, which also causes some gaps in the geographical distribution. However, we have tried to collect a sufficiently high number of coins to alleviate this distribution problem and get closer to the image distributed from the central mints. Finally, we must draw attention that although there is a greater presence of treasures in some places, such as Hispania, this is not

indicative of a greater quantity of coins in that area as can be clearly seen in the low density of treasures analysed in Moesia, where is the Reka-Devnia treasure.



Figure 1: Location of the coin hoards considered for the analysis

on her coinage, it is useful to outline here how she was depicted in the epigraphy. She always appeared as *Augusta*,<sup>3</sup> in most cases as *coniuge* or *uxor* of Gallienus,<sup>4</sup> in a smaller number as *sanctissima*,<sup>5</sup> and in some depictions as *Mater Augustorum*,<sup>6</sup> *Mater Castrorum*,<sup>7</sup> and even as *Mater Castrorum, Senatus ac Patriae*.<sup>8</sup> Taking this into consideration along with the widespread use of these titles, we can assume that she had an important role in the distribution of the image of the imperial family, at least through the inscriptions. Also, although these appear in a relatively small number of examples, she held the titles of *Mater Castrorum*, as did Faustina II, Iulia Domna, Iulia Mamaea and Iulia Maesa (Kettenhofen, 1979: 145); *Mater Augustorum* as the mother of Saloninus and Valerian II, and as Soemias

before her (Kienast, 2004: 175; Nadolny, 2016: 122; Conesa Navarro, 2019: 204), and even *Mater Senatus et Patriae*, a title held by Iulia Domna and Iulia Mamaea (*CIL* VIII 2564; *CIL* VIII 18052; Kettenhofen, 1979: 145; Okoń, 2018: 143-144, 146). This indicates that she wanted to highlight her role as the wife of the emperor and mother of the princes. She also showed her eminent position in relation to the army, the Senate, and the entire empire, and in relation to her association with divinities she appeared as *sanctissima*.

A further step in the study of the epigraphy of this empress and that of the entire imperial family was taken by Serrano Ordozgoiti. He noted that in Hispania, the *domus Licinia Augusta* was less well represented than in other provinces, and that in this case, Gallienus and Valerian were more widely represented than the other members of the imperial family (Serrano, 2021a: 222-223). In Africa, Salonina constituted 11% of the total inscriptions relating to the family (Serrano, 2020a: 93, 102), and in Italy, she had a notorious presence (Serrano, 2021b: 26-27), where Gallienus was portrayed as a great *patronus*, for example at Falerii Novi (Serrano, 2021c: 19).

### 3. THE IMAGE OF SALONINA IN IMPERIAL COINAGE

The first step before analysing the image present in the coinage of Salonina is to look at some brief aspects of the main characteristics of the coins of her dynasty. Although it is not our intention to discuss

3. *CIL* III, 875 and 1550; *CIL* V, 857; *CIL* VI, 1111, 2809, 2840; *CIL* VIII, 10620; *CIL* IX, 6938; *CIL* X, 5053, 8097; *CIL* XI, 3577; *CIL* XII, 93; *CIL* XIV, 5335; *AE* 1912, 105; *AE* 1940, 80; *AE* 2009, 1083; *ILAFr*, 356, and 615.

4. *CIL* II, 2200; *CIL* III, 3022 and 10206; *CIL* V, 2111, 7246 and 7879; *CIL* VI, 1111; *CIL* VIII, 24077; *CIL* X, 3836 and 4557; *CIL* XI, 3092; *CIL* XII, 171; *AE* 1950, 208; *AE* 1990, 405; *AE* 2003, 348; *AE* 2006, 176; *AE* 2014, 1482; *IRT*, 50 and 927; *ILAFr*, 566.

5. *CIL* V, 7879; *CIL* VI, 1107, 1110 and 40705; *CIL* IX, 4961; *CIL* XI, 3089, 3092 and 3577; *CIL* X, 5828; *AE* 1982, 272; *AE* 2000, 528; *ILAFr* 356.

6. *CIL* VI, 1111; *CIL* IX, 6938; *AE* 1951, 38; *AE* 2010, 1008; *AE* 2012, 1563.

7. *CIL* VI, 1111; *CIL* XI, 3091; *AE* 2003, 348; *AE* 2012, 1563.

8. *CIL* V, 857.

here the difficulties in establishing a precise chronology of the governments of Valerian and Gallienus, it can be affirmed, as Göbl argues, that the representation of Salonina and Mariniana –Valerian’s deceased wife– began at the same time, coinciding with the appointment in 253 of Gallienus as *Augustus* (Göbl, 2000: 57). Concerning which denominations were produced with her portrait and where they were minted, we can state that these coins were produced in Rome, *Viminacium*, *Colonia Agrippinensium*, *Mediolanum*, *Siscia*, *Cyzicus*, Antioch and Samosata (Göbl, 2000: 73, 96, 99, 100, 118, 122, 127, 132), much more precise data than those provided by Webb (1927: 108-115, 192-200), who only indicated that coins with the effigy of Salonina were minted in Rome, *Lugdunum*, *Mediolanum*, *Siscia* and Asia. Regarding the denominations of the coins of Salonina, we should point out that, according to Webb (1927: 108-115, 192-200), the period of joint rule had a greater variety, since in the eastern mints, Lyon, Rome and Milan, gold and radiate coins were minted, as well as bronze coins in the cases of Asia and the capital of the Empire. During the sole reign of Gallienus, the minting of precious metals was reduced, as it only took place in Rome, together with bronze coinage and *antoniniani*, the latter being the only one used in the rest of the mints.

In addition to these imperial mints, there were also the provincial ones, although they are not the object of analysis in this work.<sup>9</sup> In this regard, the number of mints which produced coins with Salonina obverses during the reign of Valerian and Gallienus amounts to ninety-six, according to data from *The Roman Provincial Coinage*.<sup>10</sup> Of these mints, all of them eastern, detailed studies are available for some of them, such as Lacedaemon (Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann, 1978), Argos (Flament & Marchetti, 2011), Thessaloniki (Touratsoglou, 1988), and Nicopolis (Calomino, 2011), as well as more modest studies of related issues (Bellinger, 1956; Johnston, 1997).

In any case and taking Nicopolis as an example of the characteristics that a provincial mint of this historical moment could have, as it has an excellent and very detailed study, Calomino, (2011: 282) explains that the coinage of the *Domus Licinia Augusta* of this mint was particularly high, as a sort of final flourishing before its closure. Moreover, the Greek provinces had a similar development (e.g. Athens, Argos or Sparta among others), which is evidence of an opening of certain mints or of the increase in production of others as a consequence of the context, characterised by Gallienus’

journey to Athens and the preparation of the defences against the attack of the Goths. The same researcher (Calomino, 2011: 282-283) indicates that the peak of production occurred during the period 264-267 AD, and due to their characteristics as emergency coins they were made in bronze and of poor manufacture. Even so, everything seems to indicate, according to Calomino, that we are dealing with a coin production that required the coordination of local and central authorities, something derived from the inclusion of value marks in the coinage of several mints (Calomino, 2011: 282-283). As if this were not enough to observe the differences with the imperial coinage, among the coins of Nicopolis, the most abundant reverses of Salonina are those featuring Hephaestus with tongs and hammer, as well as a boar and a dog facing each other (Calomino, 2011: 284), something that bears no relation to what can be seen in the imperial coinage. Moreover, another aspect that reinforces this differentiation is the inclusion of the title *XPYCOFONH*, «of gold», in the legend of the coinage of Salonina in some Ionian and Lydian mints, which is not present on the imperial coins (Eckhel, 1828: 420).

Returning to imperial coinage, it can be seen that, as in epigraphy, Salonina was an essential element in the distribution of imperial image. However, the only complete study of the coinage of Salonina was conducted by Lukas De Blois (1976) in his analysis of Gallienus’ conception of emperorship. Based on the *RIC*, he argued that Salonina followed the steps of her husband’s peace propaganda and, therefore, there is a strong presence of images of blessings, peace, and prosperity, on 3/34 of the *antoniniani* minted in Rome, 6/16 from Milan, and 4/16 from Asia during the sole reign of Gallienus (De Blois, 1976: 123).

Along with this typological analysis, Cesano (1951: 106) stated that Salonina’s coinage was one of the most minted for an *Augusta*, along with that of Faustina and Iulia Domna, an observation to which we shall later return. Also, the same researcher argued, based on Cohen’s catalogue, that coin production with the image of Salonina represented 10% of Gallienus’ coinage. Curiously, the same percentage of the presence of Salonina as we find in the African inscriptions. In addition, Cesano divided the coinage of Salonina into two separate groups: that of feminine typology –Juno, Vesta, Venus, *Concordia*, or *Fecunditas*– and that of hybrid typology. Regarding typological characteristics, De Blois argued that there was a strong presence of Diana and Apollo as a result of the connection between Augustus and Gallienus, and that this was caused by the intense veneration of Diana on Pannonia and in north-eastern Italy (De Blois, 1976: 163-164). He also proposed that Salonina was associated with Luna, not only because she was depicted on a crescent, but also because several of her coins included the legend *LVNA LVCIFERA* (De Blois, 1976: 166). Together with Cesano and De Blois, Ferrari conducted a typological analysis of the coinage of Salonina in 1975, based on Cohen’s catalogue. She noted the strong presence

9. About the differences in the representation of the imperial family on imperial and provincial coinage –which is why only the former have been studied here– *vid.* Horster (2013).

10. <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/search/browse?q=salonina>  
The tenth volume of *The Roman Provincial Coinage* by E. Metcalf, which catalogues provincial coinage between Valerian and Diocletian, is not yet published but is available online.

of personalities such as *Pax*, *Pietas*, and *Abundantia*, as well as masculine virtues such as *Providentia* and *Indulgentia*. She also argued that her presence on the battlefield was shown on types with the legend FORTVNA REDVX (Ferrari, 1975: 240-243). Finally, Geiger (2015: 294-299) included some notes about the coinage of Salonina before and after 260, based on Göbl (2000), drawing conclusions similar to those of De Blois.

However, one of the most well-studied aspects of the coin production of Salonina is the existence of types with the legend AVG IN PACE and their possible relation to the apparent Christianity of the empress (Fig. 2: a).<sup>11</sup> On the reverse, they represent the empress seated with a palm in a remarkably similar way to that of representations of *Pax* (Fig. 2: b). Although researchers including De Blois (1976: 155) have stated that this type could have played a role in the distribution of images of peace, recent works such as that of Cronobrnja (2007) point in another direction. Basing his thesis on a single coin preserved in Belgrade Museum, he points out that it claims the Christian religion of Salonina, due to the presence of crosses over the sceptre. Although he declares himself to be cautious about this, Cronobrnja asserts that is a well-known type in the coin hoards of the reign of Gallienus. Other researchers have also performed analyses of this type. For example, Cesano (1951: 116-121) concluded that even though the image that it contains is related to the personification of *Pax*, the legend is purely Christian. Ferrari, on the other hand, postulated that it was improbable that Salonina was Christian because this was not shown in later Christian literary sources (Ferrari, 1975: 247-248), idea that is present in later studies (Sage, 1983: 149).

Nevertheless, despite the aforementioned studies, we have no further analyses of the coinage of Salonina. Consequently, to confirm some of these statements, we must examine how the coins of this empress were distributed. To do so, we follow the methodology of Noreña (2001; 2011), Rowan (2011; 2012), and Duncan-Jones (1994) since is one of the best ways to measure the relative frequency of different coin types,<sup>12</sup> differentiate between common and commemorative issues and get closer to the perception that the population could have. Furthermore, by applying Manders' classification of types, we can quickly observe how Salonina conceived her power (Manders, 2012: 41-48). This combined methodology allows us to conduct a simple statistical analysis and determine whether there is some originality in the coinage of this empress.

Considering a sample size of more than 105,000 coins from 121 coin hoards, in which more than 14,500



Figure 2: Reverse of radiate of Salonina with the legend AVGSTA IN PACE (a) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. 1613655337), and reverse of denarius of Pupienus depicting the personification of *Pax* (b) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. 1613177765)

coins correspond to Salonina, we can attempt to outline her conception of power. First, during the joint reign of Gallienus and Valerian, the *Augusta*'s coins constituted more than 18% of the minted coins, whereas during the sole reign of Gallienus, they constituted less than 12% of the coins, from a total of 39,032 coins of the whole family from 253 to 259, and from 63,251 coins during the sole reign of Gallienus.<sup>13</sup>

This first step shows us how the presence of Salonina in the imperial image was distributed through coins: whereas in the period 253-259 Salonina had a little more than the average presence of a Roman empress, as Rowan stated in 2011 for the Severan dynasty of around 17-18% (Rowan, 2011: 246), during the sole reign of Gallienus she was depicted on proportionally fewer coins, descending to less than 12% of the total. To understand the importance –or otherwise– of her presence during the first period, it should be added that Valerian's coinage comprised 42.7% of the coins minted during this period; that of Gallienus, 28.8%, that of Saloninus, slightly more than 4%; and that of Valerian II, approximately 6.6%.

The first striking feature of the coins of Salonina is that more than 75% of them have divine associations in the typology of the period from 253 to 259 (Fig. 3). In total, 60% of this kind of coins were dedicated to Juno *Regina*, almost 24% to Venus, 6% to Dea Segetia<sup>14</sup> and 4% to Vesta, in addition to very few references to Jupiter and the piety of the empress. Despite the presence of Segetia and brief references to Jupiter, this divine association of Salonina during this period is typical for a

11. *RIC* V/1, p. 197, n. 57-60.

12. As Noreña explains (2011: 29), this methodology has advantages over the calculation of the frequency of coin types by die studies or even the analysis of the major numismatic collections.

13. The difference between the total number of coins analysed and those from which the results are obtained is because the bronze and gold coins in the hoards do not constitute a sufficiently large number to carry out a statistical analysis. For this reason, a study is made here of the radiate coinage, which is undoubtedly the most abundant of all the members of the imperial family in the hoards analysed.

14. Regarding *Dea Segetia* *vid.* Kucklez (2018) and Nony (1982).

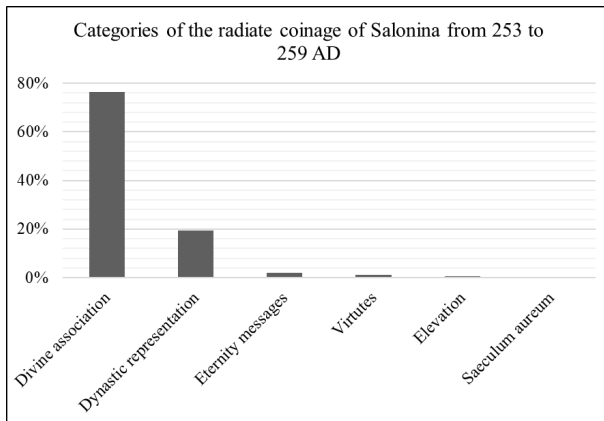


Figure 3: Categories of the *antoniniani* of Salonina from 253 to 259 AD (n = 7,317)

Roman empress, and is composed of feminine divinities (Rowan, 2011). Juno is depicted as *Regina* (Fig. 4: a) and *Victrix* on 93.7% and 6.23% respectively, so it could be linked not only to the condition of *matrona* of the empress, but also to the Etruscan-Picene origins of the *gens Egnatia* (Magdalena Anda, 2022: 124-128).<sup>15</sup> About Venus, is associated with titles such as *Victrix* (49.8%), *Felix* (48.9%), and *Genetrix* (1.2%), giving her a military role, on the one hand, and a maternal one on the other, since she is depicted with a child when she is accompanied with the epithet *Felix* (Fig. 4: b).<sup>16</sup>

The second most frequent category correspond to her dynastic representation, appearing on almost 20% of Salonina's total coins from this period. Specifically, this category is composed, at little more than 60%, by references to her *pietas*, nearly 20% of the *concordia* between Salonina and Gallienus, and in the same percentage publicising the *fecunditas* of the empress. At first sight –and as occurs with Venus *Felix* coins–, these could not be messages associated to a dynastic message, but we should observe their typology to understand what kind of message are portraying. First, and considering

the complex meaning of *pietas* (Charlesworth, 1943: 1; Wagenvoort, 1980; Noreña, 2011: 71-77; Sánchez-Conde & Blázquez-Cerrato, 2022: 172-173), if we look at its typology, we can observe that most of these coins include the image of Salonina with three children (Fig. 5: a),<sup>17</sup> so we can understand this as a part of her coinage directed to highlight her dynastic dimensions (Geiger, 2015: 298). Secondly, the *fecunditas* of the empress is distributed thanks to the image of Salonina with two children (Fig. 5: b).<sup>18</sup> Lastly, the *concordia* between *Augusti* is highlighted by the image of Gallienus and Salonina clasping hands (Fig. 5: c).<sup>19</sup> For this reason, the portrayal of a strong dynasty ascends to almost 20% of the total coins. Finally, 3% of her coins refer to the *felicitas* that the new imperial family provided for Rome, 2% of images are dedicated to the *aeternitas* of Rome, and 1% are associated with the consecration of Valerian II.

Overall, the spread of images of Salonina on her coinage during the period 253-259 was clear: they portray an empress deeply interested in religion, especially in deities such as Juno or Venus, but with some reference to her status as mother, thanks to the representation of children on the coins dedicated to Venus and her *pietas* or *fecunditas*.

However, the types associated with Salonina after the capture of Valerian and the deaths of Valerian II and Saloninus changed significantly (Fig. 6). At the same time, as we noted before, her presence on imperial coinage decreased from 18% during the joint reign of Gallienus to less than 12% during the sole reign of her husband.

With a brief look at her categories in the period 260-268 we can see an evident change in the representation of Salonina. The substantial divine association of the previous period moves aside to allow a stronger dynastic representation on 35% of the coins, followed by a reflection of her virtues on slightly more than 20% of them. However, more than 40% of her coins depict a divine association. The divinities of this period



Figure 4: Radiate of Salonina depicting Juno *Regina*. (© The Trustees of the British Museum (a), n. 1983,0101,830.1) and Venus *Felix* (b) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. 1983,0101,733.1). Not to scale

15. About the origins of Juno Regina and her connection with Etruria *vid.* Hänninen, 1999.

16. *RIC V/1*, p. 108, n. 7. Although the *RIC* describes Venus accompanied by a captive, is a child.

17. *RIC V/1*, p. 111, n. 35.

18. *RIC V/1*, p. 111, n. 26 and p. 114, n. 57.

19. *RIC V/1*, p. 114, n. 63.

differ from those of the previous phase: whereas from 253 to 259 there were mostly representations of Juno and Venus, from 260 to 268, the coinage of Salonina was focused on Juno, Vesta, and Venus. This three-part divine association connected the titles *Regina* and *Conservatrix* (Fig. 7: a) with Juno, whereas in the first period this divinity appeared as *Regina* and *Victrix*. Venus, the other goddess present during the whole reign, remains with the titles *Felix*, *Genetrix*, and *Victrix* and with a similar typology but her presence changes depending on different epithets. As *Victrix* (Fig. 7: b), Venus is present in almost 60% times, as *Genetrix* on 32%, and as *Felix* on little more than 8%, so there is a slight change to a more militaristic image. Vesta, on the contrary, experienced a strong development in the last period and appeared as *Felix*, always with sceptre and *patera* (Fig. 7: c).<sup>20</sup> Ceres and Diana, during the phase from 260 to 268, had an anecdotal presence, with fewer than 50 specimens throughout all the studied coins. Another striking difference between the two periods is the total absence of Dea Segetia during the sole reign of Gallienus.

The dynastic representation on the coinage of this period is interesting, as it was developed after the death of her sons and the capture of Valerian. This category of coins is composed of references to her *fecunditas*, the *concordia* of the imperial family, and coins with the legend AVG IN PACE. Almost 90% of the types related to the dynasty commemorate the *fecunditas* of the empress, depicting the personification of this virtue accompanied, in half of the cases, by one child (Fig. 8: a)<sup>21</sup>, perhaps as a guarantee of the continuity of the dynasty, thanks to the birth of Marinianus (Bleckmann, 2002: 316). Secondly, the famous coins that had been related to the supposed Christianity of Salonina (Fig. 8: b) represent only 7% of the dynastic coins of Salonina –as they contain the image of the empress–, from the period 260-268: 2.4% of the total coins of that phase, and 1.18% from the total number of coins of Salonina that have been analysed. These percentages allow us to reconsider the «great knowledge» and the presence of this type on this empress' coinage defended by Cronobrnja (2007). Finally, in only 4% of cases, the *concordia* between *Augusti* are presented but with an evident change on typology. Whereas on the first period this concept was highlighted thanks to the depiction of Gallienus and Salonina clasping hands, during 260-268 the only type associated to *Concordia* is the depiction of her personification, seated, and with *cornucopiae* (Fig. 8: c)<sup>22</sup>, allowing us to confirm the assertion of Geiger (2015: 296) that the distribution of images of princeps and empress altogether were only presented on the joint reign of Gallienus.

20. *RIC* V/1, p. 198, n. 69.

21. *RIC* V/1, p. 192, n. 5-6.

22. *RIC* V/1, p. 192, n. 2 and p. 198, n. 71-72.



Figure 5: Reverses of radiate coinage of Salonina with references to *Pietas* (a), *Fecunditas* (b) and *Concordia* (c) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. R.763, 1983,0101,757.1 and 1983,0101,876.1 respectively). Not to scale

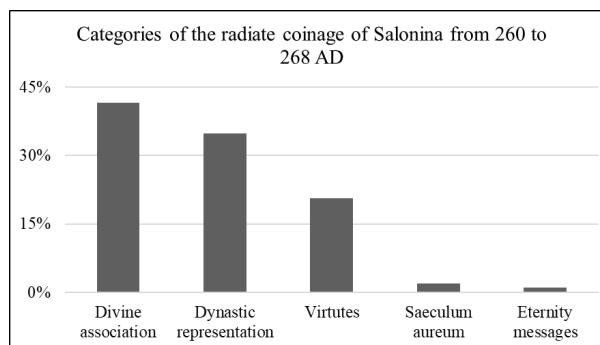


Figure 6: Categories of *antoniniani* of Salonina from 260 to 268 AD (n= 7,016)



Figure 7: Reverses of radiate coinage of Salonina with references to Juno *Conservatrix* (a), Venus *Victrix* (b), and Vesta (c) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. R.1694, R.928 and 1933,0202.132 respectively). Not to scale



Figure 8: Radiate reverses of Salonina depicting *Fecunditas* (a), *Concordia* (b) and herself (c) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. 1867,0101.1926, 1844,0425.2523 and R.1674 respectively). Not to scale

The virtues of Salonina reflected in the sole reign of her husband are composed of *pudicitia* and, in a much smaller percentage of cases, *pietas*. *Aequitas*, *indulgentia*, and *providentia* have a merely anecdotal presence. If we look at the previous period, we can observe how *pudicitia* and *pietas* changed positions. While the piety of Salonina was the most noticeable virtue depicted during the joint reign of Valerian and Gallienus, related to her dynastic representation, modesty becomes the most important virtue during the sole reign of her



Figure 9: Reverses of *antoniniani* of Salonina with the image of *Pudicitia* (a) and *Pietas* (b) (© The Trustees of the British Museum, n. R.933 and 1961,0805.285 respectively). Not to scale

husband (Fig. 9: a). In addition, all the types related to Salonina's *pietas* are associated during the second period not with the imperial family, but with her piety towards the gods, as the personification of virtue is presented next to an altar, sometimes veiled and usually with a box of perfumes (Fig. 9: b)<sup>23</sup>. Moreover, regarding the virtues presented on the coinage of Salonina, Balbuza (2019: 15) states that *liberalitas* was «the theme of imperial coins minted in the second half of the third century» for her, although there is not a single specimen in the more than 14,500 coins analysed. This is an eloquent example of the difference between commemorative and frequent coinage and supports the methodology of studying coin hoards.

From this analysis of the coinage of Salonina, thanks to the study of coin hoards, we can conclude that there is a striking difference between the periods 253-259 and 260-268 AD: during the first period, Salonina was depicted as a Roman empress who was deeply associated with the divinities, but after the capture of Valerian and the death of both princes, her image changed significantly to that of an empress much less associated with goddesses but with a far greater emphasis on her virtues and dynastic association. This was because the imperial family did not have the potential longevity and security that the two *Caesares* could provide during the sole reign of Gallienus. Paradoxically, the number of dynastic messages increased when the *domus Licinia Augusta* decreased. This was because, as Horster stated (2007: 297), even if emperors did not have a dynasty to emphasize, they used symbolic elements to depict themselves «as guarantors of all civil and military aspects of the Roman Empire». In addition, the strong presence and broad portrayal of traditional gods and goddesses during the period from 253 to 259 could be related to the maintenance of the *pax deorum*.

Another difference between the periods was the decrease in the presence of Salonina on the minted coins. This contrast indicates that there was a stronger intention to show a powerful family during the joint reign of Valerian and Gallienus than during the later sole reign. Thus, we can see how the presence of

members of the imperial family was not fortuitous but selected, as the comparison of the presence of Salonina with other cases of imperial women shows. For example, during the reign of Philip the Arab the minted coinage of Herennia Etruscilla constituted 10% of the total coinage of the family –18,233 coins–, and her two sons, Herennius Etruscus and Philippus II, were 5% and 15% respectively, whereas during the principate of Heliogabalus the presence of the imperial women was higher. We found that, from the analysed coins minted from 218-222 –11,238–, Iulia Maesa constituted 19% of the total, Iulia Soaemias almost 7%, Iulia Paula a little more than 3.5%, and Aquilia Severa less than 1%. Remarkably, around 30% of coinage had a feminine effigy. What can be seen in these examples is not only the presence of different members of the imperial family, but also the fact that this presence could change because of their position, the decision of the emperor, or external circumstances. This is probably why Salonina was presented under the reign of Valerian more as a religious woman from a strong dynasty, and shown less under her husband's sole reign, but as a woman who could serve as an *exemplum* for Roman women more widely.

Moreover, thanks to the present analysis, we can call into question some of the statements made in the earlier scholarship. First, the coinage of Salonina had a spread of images that were more divine and dynastic, depending on the period, than the peace propaganda defended by De Blois (1976: 123). Cesano stated that her coinage was numerous (1951:106), which should be reconsidered. Although it is true that Salonina had a strong presence during the period 253 to 259, it was not as strong from 260 to 268. In addition, if we compare her percentages to those of other women, as we have seen, we find even greater differences. Yes, her coinage was numerous, but it was in fact an average percentage, or even less than average, for Roman *Augustae* (Rowan, 2011).

Another statement that should be reconsidered, if not refuted, is the supposedly strong presence of Diana and the connection to Luna on the coinage of Salonina, as De Blois defended (1976: 163-164, 166). As we have seen, the presence of Diana only occurs in two specimens of all the coins studied here and Luna does not appear, either with or without the LVNA LVCIFERA legend. Of course, Salonina was presented on a crescent on the *antoniniani* as the counterpart of the radiate crown of the emperors, something that De Blois recognises, so this cannot be considered as a connection with goddess Luna but as a result of the development of the radiate coinage during third century AD.

Ferrari also made some statements that should be reconsidered. *Abundantia* only appears once during the whole period of the coinage of Salonina, *Pax* on two occasions, and the personification of *Pietas* does not have the strong presence that this researcher asserted (Ferrari, 1975: 240-243). The personifications of *Providentia* and *Indulgentia* have four specimens

23. *RIC V/1*, p. 193, n. 21-22; p. 198, n. 64 and p. 199, n. 78-79.



and one specimen respectively throughout all the coins studied, so it occurs with the same frequency as with *Abundantia* and *Pax*. In addition, Ferrari (1975: 240-243) suggested the presence on the battlefield of Salonina due to types with the legend FORTVNA REDVX. However, and regardless of whether this legend showed the emperor's safe return to the capital, although her presence in military camps is noticeable thanks to references in literary sources, the types with that legend only appears six times in more than 14,500 coins studied. Despite that, there are other coin types that should be considered in relation to her connection with the army, such as the six coins bearing the legend FIDES MILITVM from the period 260-268, the 1,062 coins with the legend VENVS VICTRIX –on which the goddess is depicted with helmet and spear–, or the four references to the VICTORIA AVG in the period 260-268, which were pointed out by Geiger (2015: 294).

Finally, regarding the most studied aspect of this empress' coinage, the types with the legend AVG IN PACE, it must be noted that all of them contained the same image and were developed during the sole reign of Gallienus. As we have noted before, the quantity of these coins is low –1.18% of the total coins studied– so it was not a priority in the representation of her image.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Through the analysis of a considerable number of coin hoards, we can demonstrate some characteristics of the coinage of Salonina that are not present in numismatic catalogues such as Cohen's or *RIC*. We can conclude that Salonina played a significant role in the distribution of imperial images of the *domus Licinia Augusta*, even more so if we consider that she was the only living *Augusta* of that dynasty, since Mariniana was already dead when Valerian attained imperial power. However, it must be said that this role was dependent on the context: whereas the presence of Salonina through coinage was stronger during the joint reign of Valerian and Gallienus, it was less clear during the sole reign of the latter. In addition, there were some differences in the typology, and we can see how she was associated with traditional feminine divinities during the first period, while her virtues, divine association, and especially the dynastic messages were portrayed more during the second period. This can be attributed to the search for stability of the *pax deorum* and a decrease in the number of members of the imperial family respectively. Finally, these conclusions allow us to question some of the statements made in the previous scholarship, and to minimise her supposed connection with peace messages, her high presence on the coinage, and her possible Christianity as suggested by the typology associated with the legend AVG IN PACE.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

- AE*: (1889-2016). *L'Année Épigraphique*, Paris.
- CHRB*: (1975–). *Coin Hoards from Roman Britain*. London: British Museum Press.
- CIL*: (1863–). *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, consilio et auctoritate Academiae litterarum regiae Borussicae editum*, Berlin.
- FMRD*: (1970–). *Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Deutschland*. Berlin: Verlag Gebr. Mann.
- FMRL*: (1972–). *Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit im Großherzogtum Luxemburg*. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern.
- FMRÖ*: (1976–). *Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Österreich*. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- FMRSlow*: (1980–). *Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Slowenien*. Berlin: Verlag Gebr. Mann.
- IL Afr*: (1852-1937). *Inscriptions latines d'Afrique*. Paris.
- IRT*: Roueche, C., Bodard, G., Vagionakis, I. & Barron, C. (Eds.). (2022). *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania 2021*. The Society for Libyan Studies. <https://irt2021.inslib.kcl.ac.uk>
- PIR<sup>2</sup>*: Roag, E., Stein, A. & Petersen, L. (Eds.). (1933-1970). *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- PLRE*: Jones, A. H. M., Martindale, J. R. & Morris, J. (1971-1992). *Prosopographia of the Later Roman Empire. Vols. I-III*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- RIC*: (1924–). *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. London: Spink.
- RMRVe*: (2006–). *Ritrovamenti Monetali di età Romana nel Veneto*. Padua: Editoriale Programma.
- TM*: (1979–). *Trésors Monétaires*. Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

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## SUPPLEMENTARY DATA

List of coin hoards considered for the analysis:

We present here both a table with the main data of the hoards used for the analysis and their reference. For reasons of space only the total number of coins in each hoard, the date of the last coin, the number of coins from the governments of Valerian and Gallienus and how many of them belong to Salonina have been listed:

Name of hoard	N.º of total coins	Terminus post quem	No. of coins of Domus Licinia Augusta	No. of coins of Salonina
Aldbourne	4,780	275 AD	630	61
Aldeia das Dez	270	270 AD	208	31
Algara, Bermaño	77	259 AD	12	0
Allonnes II	3,814	275 AD	672	58
Almenara	31	266 AD	21	1
Altafulla I	230	265 AD	131	12
Altafulla II	16	257 AD	1	0
Apetlon I	359	268 AD	219	44
Appleshaw	3,052	296 AD	363	36
Arjona	50	Post. 270 AD	16	2
Bath	1,807	284 AD	255	19
Bâtiment E (V), Goebblange	2,769	282 AD	862	93
Bazarnes	447	285 AD	108	8
Benicató	16	257 AD	3	0
Blackmoor	29,802	324 AD	1,436	195
Borba (or in its region)	268	274 AD	142	11
Bowcombe	472	282 AD	72	6
Braithwell	1,332	282 AD	99	3
Breamore A	5,48	282 AD	647	61
Breamore B	399	Post. 285 AD	39	3
Burmerange	300	283 AD	191	20
C/ Roc Chabás	86	270 AD	50	2
Cabrera III	967	257 AD	14	2

Name of hoard	N.º of total coins	<i>Terminus post quem</i>	No. of coins of <i>Domus Licinia Augusta</i>	No. of coins of Salonina
Cadeby II	1,653	274 AD	306	23
Çanakkale	3,044	284 AD	871	31
Castro de O Castelo	11	270 AD	2	0
Cerro de La Encantada	205	282 AD	58	5
Chaves I	212	283 AD	97	10
Child's Ercall	2,897	282 AD	349	44
Clamerey	1,550	268 AD	661	198
Clunia I, IV and V	122	285 AD	16	0
Coleby	7,7767	282 AD	1,015	101
Colonne	3,620	298 AD	896	99
Conimbriga B	56	271 AD	26	2
Conimbriga D	29	270 AD	20	2
Cortijo de Acevedo	790	274 AD	16	1
Cravent	4,401	268 AD	1,385	239
Crowmarsh	337	260 AD	141	34
Cunetio	54,951	274 AD	24,295	4,045
Dalheim-Riciacus	471	275 AD	306	51
D'Eula	62	259 AD	4	1
Dorchester	20,749	268 AD	851	110
Drax	411	276 AD	45	5
E. Mersea	657	271 AD	120	10
Eauze	28,054	268 AD	13,702	1,918
Ethy	1,095	275 AD	95	4
Ettelbruck	1,981	297 AD	190	19
Falerone	7,591	268 AD	6,686	1,167
Fineshade	262	268 AD	82	13
Foz do rio Arade	19	268 AD	16	1
Fragas do Piago	2,820	276 AD	1,769	175
Frampton	511	282 AD	43	6
Freiria II	22	274 AD	6	0
Gilmorton	1,255	Post. 285 AD	153	18
Gloucester	15,376	284 AD	21	3
Grandas de Salime	31	270 AD	16	3
Great Chessells	134	275 AD	23	1
Haydere	2,330	268 AD	17	0
Hotel Loews, Monte-Carlo	4	258 AD	2	0
Jimena de la Frontera	29,850	268 AD	27,687	3,887
Jimena de la Frontera II	13	270 AD	9	1
Juromenha	17	270 AD	11	1
Kirkby	304	296 AD	40	2
Kirton-in-Lindsey	875	270 AD	49	4
Knaresborough	283	282 AD	36	1
Krog	2,290	260 AD	608	85

Name of hoard	N.º of total coins	<i>Terminus post quem</i>	No. of coins of <i>Domus Licinia Augusta</i>	No. of coins of Salonina
La Grosse Haie	5,456	268 AD	197	28
Langley with Hardley	2,043	282 AD	222	22
Langtoft I	976	285 AD	66	6
Lava	450	275 AD	38	0
Les Alqueries	122	265 AD	103	24
Lisboa (or in its region)	84	274 AD	46	17
M1 Motorway	435	270 AD	68	10
Mainz Erthalstraße	1,872	268 AD	38	3
Maiorga	63	275 AD	32	4
Maltby	3,496	282 AD	524	43
Maravielle	1,745	285 AD	6	4
Market Deeping	2,869	275 AD	507	68
Martos	72	270 AD	32	2
Mas D'Aragó	53	261 AD	35	6
Minster	3,235	296 AD	296	20
Mokronog	223	285 AD	59	7
Monkton Farleigh	3,466	284 AD	502	47
Monte do Cavaleiro	88	282 AD	34	2
Morgat-en-Crozon	1,545	274 AD	475	37
Much Wenlock	2,591	285 AD	293	36
München-Lochhausen	1,675	284 AD	5	0
Nomansland	1,907	275 AD	80	13
Normanby	47,912	296 AD	6,043	421
North de Portugal II	26	268 AD	16	2
Numão	45	306 AD	25	1
Olivier's Orchard	6,123	275 AD	1,290	135
Porto Carro	2,249	Post. 285 AD	520	21
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando	15	270 AD	11	1
Reguengo	750	274 AD	421	48
Rocquencourt	4,913	266 AD	1,004	141
Sampão	377	Post. 285 AD	26	2
São Cucufate I	16	270 AD	8	0
São Cucufate II	122	270 AD	67	9
Scharzenacker	4,811	266 AD	603	95
Serra do Condão	14	260 AD	5	2

Name of hoard	N.º of total coins	<i>Terminus post quem</i>	No. of coins of <i>Domus Licinia Augusta</i>	No. of coins of Salonina
Sierra Pitillos	251	274 AD	139	13
Sintra	13	270 AD	12	0
St. Stefan	339	284 AD	27	5
Stevenage	2,579	268 AD	973	177
Stogursey	1,141	276 AD	109	6
Tarragona 1888	105	268 AD	47	5
Tattershall Thorpe	5,074	282 AD	426	48
Terra Chá or Castro de Rey	12	270 AD	11	1
Trier Kutzbachstraße	2,487	303 AD	10	0
Tunisie	133	260 AD	1	0
Upton	303	274 AD	27	0
Valhascos I	461	262 AD	241	25
Vetschau	747	258 AD	1	0
Vila Caiz	54	274 AD	24	2
Vilauba	47	259 AD	3	0
Villoldo	4	270 AD	2	0
Wareham I	1,569	275 AD	271	51
Wickham Market	1,588	275 AD	428	41
Wortley	81	268 AD	34	1
Yate	732	Post, 285 AD	93	3
Total	440,068	-	105,508	14,643

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