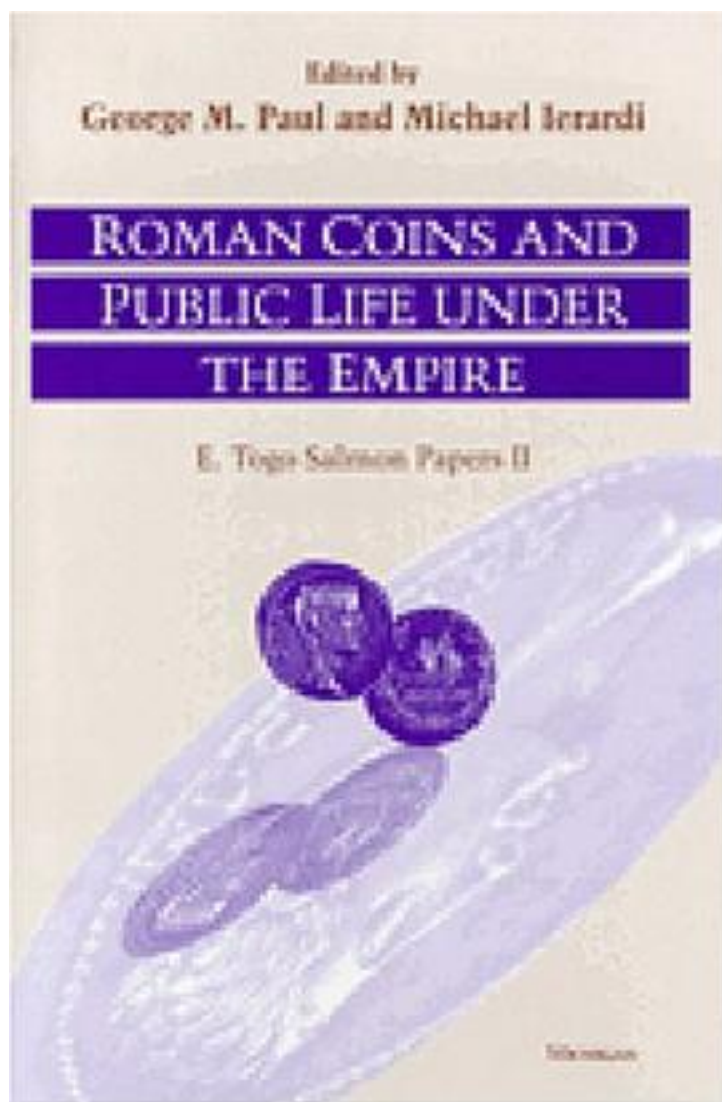


Roman Coins and Public Life Under the Empire



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Roman coins often shed light on Roman public life and society through the legends, portraits, and images they bear. The papers collected in this volume were originally presented at the Second E. Togo Salmon Conference on Roman Studies. The eight contributors are specialists in Roman coins or Roman history and in the relations between them. Coins are a unique source of information about the Roman world. In the case of the Roman Empire they were issued by or with the approval of the ruling power. The representations and legends they show therefore present an official view of contemporary affairs. The coins themselves, minted for official purposes such as paying the army, when studied carefully can help reconstruct official policies. They can also occasionally reveal what monuments now lost may have looked like. It is not infrequent to come across pleas that the ancient historian should make more frequent use of numismatic evidence. These essays make clear that efforts are being made both by numismatists and by historians to bring the two disciplines together. At the same time the papers reveal that the task is by no means a straightforward one. The survival of Roman coins is variable, and so attempts to reconstruct the size and distribution of issues calls for skilled and experienced analysis. This collection of papers provides evidence for the kind of deductions that the historian may make from Roman coins as well as the illustrations of the pitfalls that await the unwary. Those interested in Roman history, amateur coin collectors, and professional numismatists will all find much here to widen their knowledge of the public context of Roman coins. George Paul is Professor of Classics, McMaster University. Michael Ierardi is Lecturer in Classics, McMaster University.

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