

ROMA CAPUT MUNDI

EXPANSION AND MEMORY OF A GREAT CIVILIZATION

Title, introduction and plan (1)



1933, Kingdom of Italy, photographic proof depicting the Roman Forum, the heart of ancient Rome

Rome, a shining star in the darkness of Italian prehistory, brightens twelve centuries of human history in a vivid light: twelve centuries in which wars and crimes certainly did not lack, but which, for the most part, were characterized by a lasting and sure peace, the Roman pax. In fact, after the end of the centuries, after the conclusion of its historical parable, the Urbe has become, in the memory and the emotion of the following ages, an authentic place of the spirit, a sort of category of thought.

The exhibit, through strictly postal material, illustrates the various aspects of ancient Rome, from the dawn till the end of the empire, and how its greatness, handed down to posterity, may allow us today to consider *ROMA CAPUT MUNDI*.

Prologue.... The greatest Mediterranean civilization(1)

1. From the foundation of the city(*Ab urbe cōndita*) (8)

- 1.1 Birth of Rome - between legend and reality
- 1.2 The first institutions - the *res publica*
- 1.3 Julius Caesar - the winter of the Republic

2. At the center of the network: the Empire

(*Intra reaticula: Imperium*) (9)

- 2.1 The Mediterranean - the Roman lake
- 2.2 Augustus - a genius of propaganda
- 2.3 The Latin language - *sermo maiorum*
- 2.4 The Emperor - son of God

3. The influence of Rome(*Romanus auctoritate*) (11)

- 3.1 Citizenship - the prestige of being Roman
- 3.2 Religious pluralism - a beneficial syncretism
- 3.3 The emperor and Jesus - an impossible dualism
- 3.4 Latins and Germans - an inevitable division

4. The epilogue (*Sic transit gloria mundi*) (12)

- 4.1 Invasions - barbaric enemies
- 4.2 Religion - a cosmopolitan pantheon
- 4.3 The economic crisis - a world in crisis
- 4.4 The myth of Rome - a European model
- 4.5 The mission of Rome - the eternal becoming

Total sheets exhibition pages 42 - A3 format



PROLOGUE

The history of the world has always fascinated the great thinkers; the German writer Mommsen, at the end of the nineteenth century, wrote a colossal history of Rome and its parallels with other civilizations ...

1950, Mexico, postcard, 15 centavos



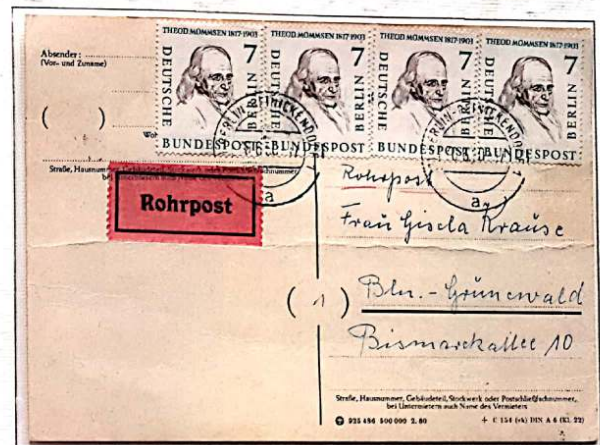
THE GREATEST MEDITERRANEAN CIVILIZATION



1911, German Kingdom, advertising appendix depicting a Persian satrap



... the pre-Columbian civilizations, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Babylonian civilization.



30 June 1960, Federal Republic of Germany, Berlin, pneumatic post (ROHRPOST) rate 28 pfennig, postcard within the city limits of Berlin

The study of past civilizations, of all latitudes, offers us an irrefutable fact, that they are like living organisms: they are born, prosper and die.



Therefore even the fall of Roman civilization was destined to clash with the prophecy of Jupiter: "I do not set boundaries between them, neither in space nor in time". But let's see how it all started, continued and ended ...



1930, Kingdom of Italy, air mail, green minting proof on white paper (value which in the type adopted was changed to 9 + 2 lire)



1. FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY (AB URBE CONDITA)

1.1 BIRTH OF ROME

FROM TROY TO LAZIO

Resuming the emotions written by **Homer**, about a thousand years earlier, they are also narrated by **Virgil**, who recounts the wonder and exultation of those who, having escaped the Trojan fire after wandering the Mediterranean, are about to land on the Lazio coasts.



Aeneas, the Trojan hero, heads for Lazio, towards a new land and a new future; future destined to mark Italian and European history forever.



Aeneas sights Lazio

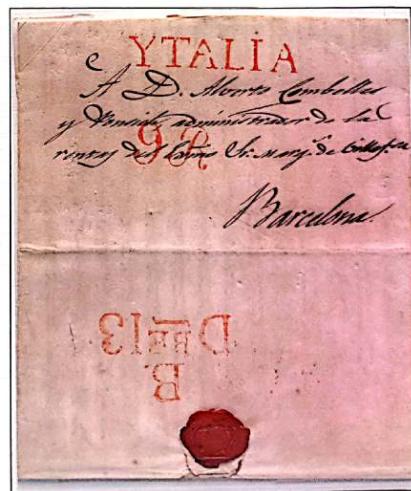


missing silver color (eight specimens are known)

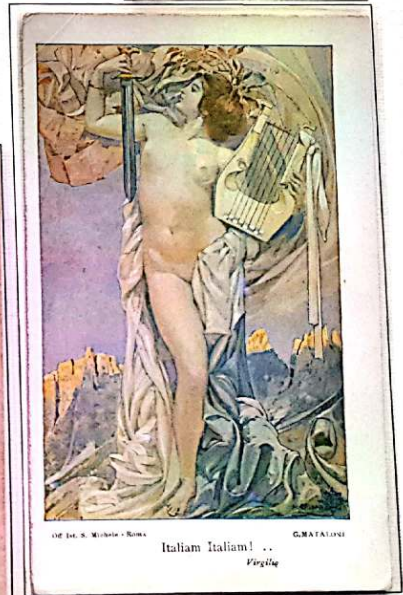


"Italiam, Italiam", Virgil makes the exiles say when they greet the goal, the promised land, the Italian coasts.

9 January 1831, letter from Naples, Ytalia linear entry stamp in Spain to Barcelona



26 July 1912, round duty stamp, PIROSCAFO REQUISITO LAZIO, Tripoli güller



1911, Kingdom of Italy, postcard, 5 cents

1.1 BIRTH OF ROME



1930, Kingdom of Italy, green minting proof on white paper

Even Aeneas, the Trojan hero, after the fatigues of his escape from Troy with his father Anchises, must to face the primitive populations of the new promised land: Italy.



He will have to clash with Turnus, the brave and demi-god king of the Rutulis. Once defeated Turnus, Aeneas married his betrothed, Lavinia, in honour of whom was founded Lavunium, later to become Civita Lavinia.



envelope from Civita Lavinia (Rome) to Genga (AN), postmarked tax stamp, correspondence between mayors



26 April, 1871.



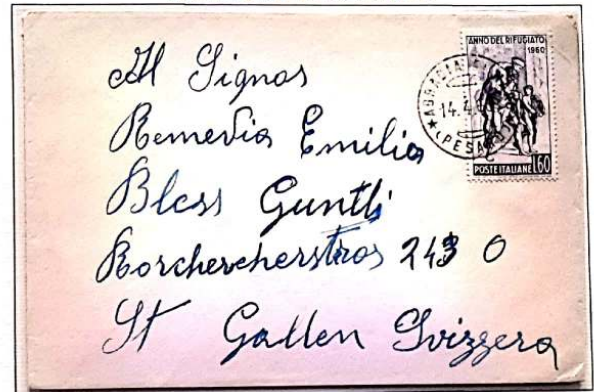
definitive colour adopted for the Italian colonies



1923, Kingdom of Italy, machine tests on gray paper coming from the only two known sheets

AENEAS, THE FIRST ROMAN HERO

14 April 1960, letter with first rate abroad, 60 lire



The legend is confused with historical reality; it is said that the first Etruscan inhabitants saw an eagle circling where Rome must have risen, on the banks of the Tiber river.

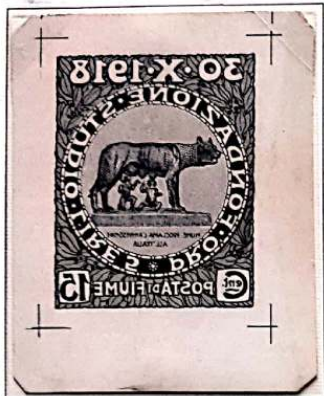
January 1812, letter from Rome to Collevicchio (RI), with linear stamp *Préfet Dep (artment) du Tibre* (Tiber in French), stamp used from 1809 to 1814 during the French occupation of Rome



The Tiber allowed good navigability and was far enough from the sea to provide shelter from enemy incursions.

1.1 BIRTH OF ROME

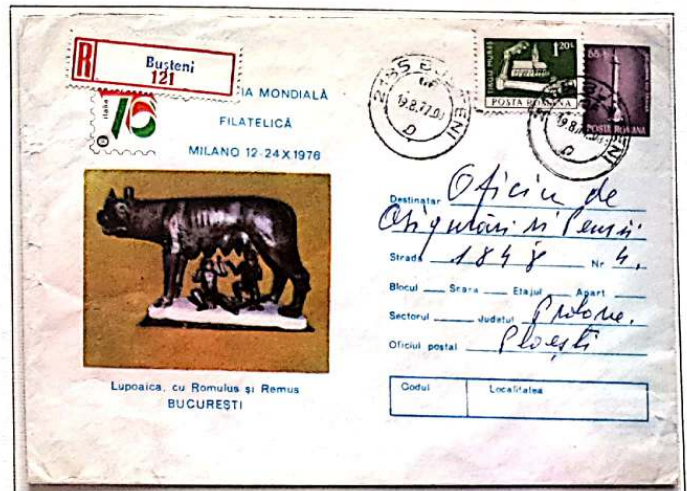
ROMULUS, THE WOLF'S SON



1918, mail of Fiume, proof of printing from mother stone on cardboard



1940, Italian Aegean Islands, block of four stamps with SAGE overprint



20 April 1840, USA, letter from Romulus - handwritten postmark - in Albany, taxed 18 3/4 cents for distances between 150 and 400 miles



29 October, 1939, second day of use, letter from Rome to Palermo, 50 cents, first rate for inside. The Naples-Palermo transit postmark - on the reverse - was used the following day



specimen

All this happened 753 years b. C. and the date is still celebrated as the birthday of the town. Since then the years were counted *ab urbe condita*, that is from that famous 753 b.C., the beginning of the history of Rome and its civilization.



1.2 THE FIRST INSTITUTIONS

Romulus became Rex; in addition to governing the town his main task was to observe natural phenomena to make prophecies called 'vaticini'. From these derives the name of Vatican given to the hill where several 'oracles' - intended as places of prayer and prediction of the future - were active.

6 January 1939, Kingdom of Italy, letter from the steamer *Rex*, from Genoa to Frankfurt, poststamp of arrival the following 18 January



letter sent from Swedish cruise ship *Patricia*, in service from 1950 to 1957 - arrival postmark at Palma de Mallorca 23 September, 1952

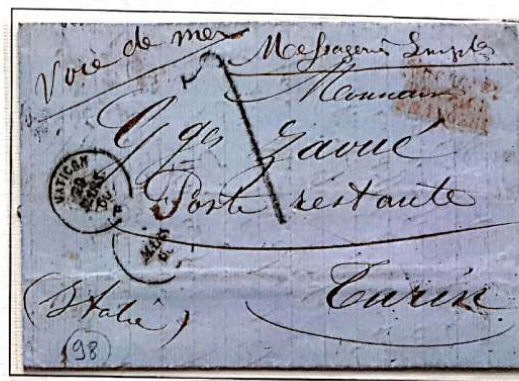


PATRICIANS AND PLEBEIANS



The society was divided between plebeians, protected by the **tribunes** of the plebs, and patricians, gathered in the Senate.

Letter from Marseilles on 29 March 1860 and arrived in Turin on 31. Travelled with the French Vatican postal service of the indirect line of Italy and disembarked in Genoa on the 30th, the postmark "PIROSCAFI POSTALI FRANCESI" was placed and taxed by the recipient for 7 tenths of a lira.



13 March, 1804 - light red linear mark of the French Revolution - Postes Senat Conservateur in use at Paris 1804-1814

1.2 THE FIRST INSTITUTIONS



The current legislative body, which can be compared to the *concilia plebis* (assemblies of the plebs), is similar to the current democratic lower houses (in Italy the Chamber of Deputies).

HIC MANEBIMUS OPTIME



the background colour is partially missing in the right stamp of the pair

Historians report a curious episode occurred during the tensions between patricians and plebeians. After the victory over the Etruscan Vejo, the plebeians wanted to leave Rome and the oppression of the patricians and only the intervention of a centurion persuaded everyone to stay.

Hic manebimus optime ("here we will be very well"), exclaimed at the end of his speech and the people understood that statement as a positive omen.



strip of five stamps imperforate vertically with misplaced perforation



colour error, known only imperforate



background colour strongly displaced



without background colour



imperforate with decals



misplaced perforation



31 May, 1921, Fiume (today in Croatia), registered letter for Vienna, rate 2 lire

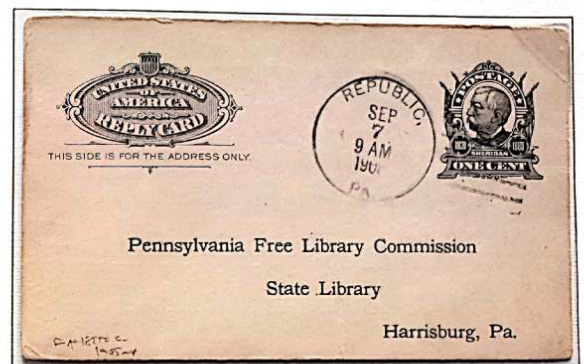
1.2 THE FIRST INSTITUTIONS

THE RES PUBLICA



The name of town was Corneto Tarquinia till 1922 when it turned into Tarquinia

The pride of the last Etruscan kings, coming from Tarquinia, led to the establishment of the new form of government: the res publica.



Contrary to what happens today, the Romans of antiquity did everything seriously and they were ruthless versus the defeated enemies. The Etruscans dominated the current Tuscany, Roman Etruria, but the new conquerors, the Romans, left only a few traces of it.

misplaced perforation



missing green print and shifted perforation



black and green proof on non-watermarked and non-rubberized paper (e)



definitive stamp



The Etruscan women had great freedom and in fact they were very often depicted together with men who loved very much to have fun as opposed to Romans who were normally serious and concentrated on military conquests. Many finds documenting the "happy life" of the Etruscans have been found in the necropolis of Cerveteri.



23 November 1805 - ETRURIE linear postmark on a cover from the kingdom of Etruria, established by Napoleon from 1801 to 1807

5 December 1873 - Kingdom of Italy - Colletoria italica from Cerveteri on letter for Rome stamped 20 cents, cancelled with Rome numeral points 206 - Vaccari signature -



1.2 THE FIRST INSTITUTIONS

The new Republic included two **consuls** managing the executive power. The imperium, was represented by a bundle of rods joined together: the **littorio**, which the Romans inherited from the Etruscans.

4 February 1796 - linear stamp on envelope of the Consulate of the French Revolution, in use from 1792 to 1804



In case of war, on the Senate advice, the Consuls gave the command to a dictator, **Dux**, who returned it to the Consuls once the emergency was over.



15 December, 1927 - first rate registered letter from the office of the Senate of the Kingdom to Paris

THE CONSULS AND THE IMPERIUM



newspaper wrapper sent with the first post flight to Rome - Buenos Aires on 26 January 1934. The flight was interrupted in Fortaleza because of a failure



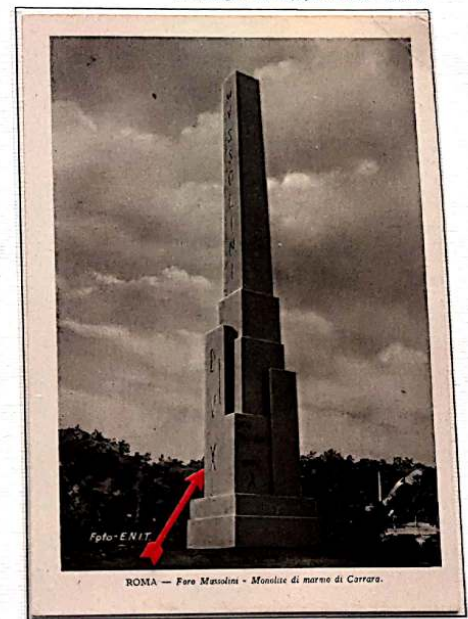
The **Dux** exercised full powers out of any control; for this reason this office was rarely assigned.

not adopted proof of the stamp of the set "march on Rome", made by of the engraver Giulio Cisari.

imperfector pair



1936, Kingdom of Italy, postcard, 20 + 5 cents



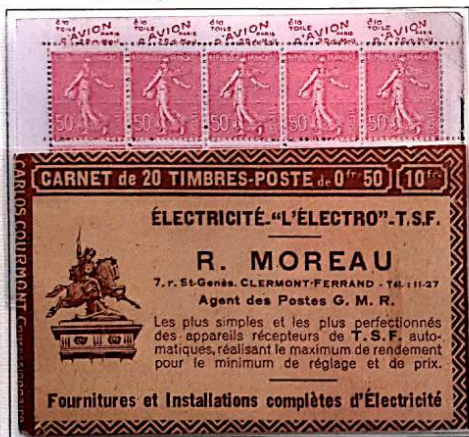
The surcharge was used to make them less competitive than private editions. They could only be sold at post offices, which explains their rare use.

1.3 JULIUS CAESAR

Lettercard sent 27 June 1943 to Livorno having the güller of the Royal ship *Giulio Cesare*



1932 - France - advertising booklet with paper clip containing 20 stamps. The cover depicts the statue of the Gaul *Vercingetorix*



Opponents tried to stop the irresistible rise of Julius Caesar towards the dictatorship with the 23 stab wounds of Brutus's conspiracy.



May 1793 - envelope directed to Paris from "Brutus le magnanime", revolutionary name of Saint Pierre le Moutier from 1792 to 1795, during the French Revolution.

FROM THE REPUBLIC TO THE EMPIRE

When the consul *Julius Caesar* took the power, the Dux office became permanent; apparently he showed respect to the senators, but in reality he disregarded their wishes several times.



Following the conquests of the Gauls, after the defeat of *Vercingetorix*, *Julius Caesar*, took absolute power.



inside of air letter

2. AT THE CENTER OF THE NETWORK: THE EMPIRE (INTRA REATICULA: IMPERIUM)

2.1 THE MEDITERRANEAN

The successor of Julius Caesar was **Octavian** who, after eliminating the opponents, assumed for himself the appellation of **Augustus** "he who increases" and **Imperator** "holder of military power", which was attributed only to the generals on the occasion of a victory: the Republic had turned into an Empire.



block of eight stamps, six of which with evanescent print



misplaced perforation

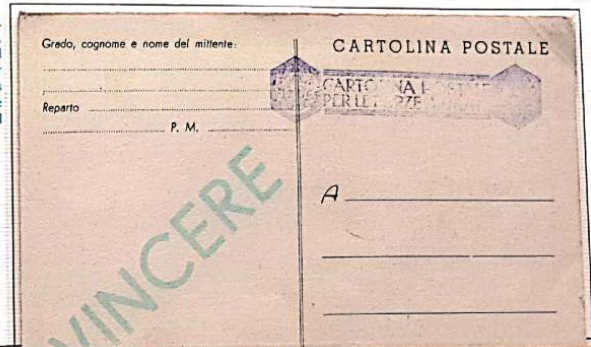


rejoined paper

The achievement of peace was the occasion for the construction of a monument praising the new peace and the new order: the **Ara Pacis**; now the Mediterranean sea could be called **Mare Nostrum**.

The Ara Pacis built by Augustus

December 1941. Kingdom of Italy. picture postcard rendered free for the armed forces through a purple lineal rubber seal locally made



In ogni ora della sua gloriosa storia, Roma ha assolto la sua missione di civiltà. Oggi l'Italia prosegue per la stessa via, più che mai unita in uno spontaneo sforzo di fede e volontà.
VITTORIO EMANUELE



28 September 1938, Aegean Italian Island, registered letter with first rate (50 cents letter + lira 1.25 for registration fees)

2.2 AUGUSTUS



19 September 1964, USA; letter from Trevor to Virgil, received on the 21st of the same month



1900
German
Kingdom,
postcard with
stamp imprint
on private order,
2 pfennig

THE AUGUSTAN POETS

Virgil was one of the poets called by Augustus to glorify, through his poems, both the deeds of Rome and incidentally himself.



1929 - imperforate
proof in the final
colour on glossy
paper without wa-
termark

Orazio, another great poet, exalted the figure of Augustus, to legitimize his powers against the great external threats: the rough cocks, the astute Cleopatra, the warrior parts, the bellicose Italic peoples, the rugged Germans.



3 January 1940, Kingdom of Italy, postal steamer Orazio operating from 1926 to 1940; postal service on board for passenger



2.3 THE LATIN LANGUAGE



The great poets of Augustus' entourage not only communicated the message (Roman pride) to all peoples, but the medium itself, the Latin, as an instrument of cultural integration.

1900, private mail of the city of Cologne, private commission postcard, 2 pfennig

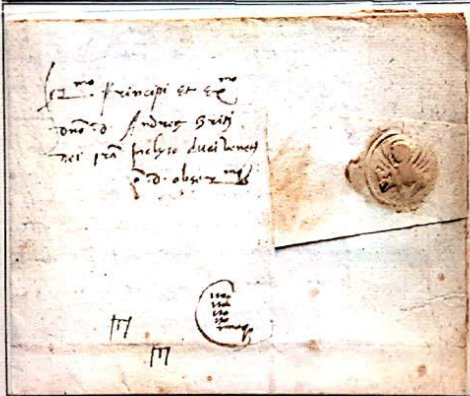


Over the centuries, the Latin maintained its importance; the postal messengers in the Middle Ages used the word cito - quickly - to make the correspondence express and the religious used the words **Requiescat in pace** - rest in peace - to transmit the mortuary announcements.

6 December, 1783 - correspondence with the **Requiescat in pace** - as a post-paid franchise in use from 1719 to 1792 for the forwarding of mortuary circulars between the convents of the French Carmelites



6 June 1523, letter addressed to the Venetian Doge Andrea Gritti bearing the words cito, cito, cito, citissimo and two gallows signs on the recto as a menace in case of delay



POLITICAL TOOL



Many other words continue to have their original meaning: Romania identifies the current Balkan country, Elvetia, the Swiss Confederation having the same name nowadays, and *gratis* - free -, which we all know...



1871, Switzerland, block of four of the stamp in military relief used by French soldiers prisoners in Switzerland

2.4 THE EMPEROR

Another key position of the imperial policy was the appointment of the head of the priests as **Pontifex Maximus**. The appointment of the **vestals**, the priestesses who treated the sacred fire of Rome, gave the illusion of maintaining the ancient republican virtues.



Augustus was depicted with a sacrificial ceremonial robe, and even the poet **Horace** enhanced the deeds of the Pontifex, supporting enthusiastically to the new policy.



THE PONTIFEX MAXIMUS



October 1940, Kingdom of Italy, post card free for the armed forces, in the two colors brown and myrtle green



Enea, the progenitor of the Romans, is depicted too with the clothes of the Pontifex Maximus.

25 November, 1880, USA, letter from Vestal Center - New York - to Ithaca, handmade cancellation

2.4 THE EMPEROR

THE SON OF GOD



1931, Kingdom of Italy, postcard domestic mail, 15 cents

The propaganda potential was amplified by the historian Tito Livio, who handed down the divine nature of the Emperor.



1932, Kingdom of Italy, postcard for abroad, 75 cents

Temples were built throughout the empire to remind the subjects of the divine nature of Augustus, who was considered the *Filius Divi*, the son of God, i.e., son of Julius Caesar, deified at his death.



1932, Kingdom of Italy, postcard, answer paid for abroad, 75 cents



15 November, 1956, France, postal letter of private commission



Julius Caesar



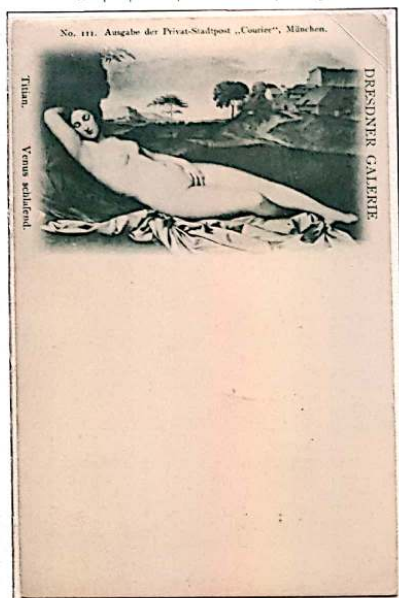
definitive stamp



photographic proof, without indication of the face value

2.4 THE EMPEROR

1898, private post of Munich, kingdom of Bavaria, postcard with stamp imprint on private order, 20 pfennig



Among the temples dedicated to him, particular importance is given to the so-called **Temple of Diana**, in Portugal, wrongly called, in this way, because of the association with the goddess of hunting, Diana, according to a legend born centuries later.

1936, Portugal, strip cut out of the notebook showing the colours of the projects of the new issues were shown; four imperforate tests of 6 centavos: light red brown on blue, ocher, white and ivory paper, all overprinted SPECIMEN vertically in red



THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY

The divinity of **Venus**, from which **Augustus** had been begotten, invested the latter of divine nature, being able to exercise the **Imperium**, the necessary authority to govern Rome.



2 September, 1938 - letter from Tripoli to Milan, use of 5 cents stamp is used for book commission coupon rate - coupons from Italian colonies are very rare

1935, Portugal, black print proof



24 May 1938 - registered letter from Abbiategrasso to Milan franked for 1.70 lire (1.10 lire for open letter + 0.50 lire for check repayment) over 10 cents

2.4 THE EMPEROR

THE DIVINITY ON EARTH



1936, Kingdom of Italy, postcard 20 + 5 cents



1901, Greece, postcard, 10 + 10 lepta

Throughout the empire, the officers of the local constituencies were appointed directly by the emperor and were called the Procurator Augustus, a very coveted position.



The divine nature of the emperor was a accepted throughout the empire; temples were raised to him, the new god Mars of war.



The penates (a sort of guardian angels) were questioned and animal sacrifices were practiced following the old Greek traditions.



photocopy of the reverse side

1936, Switzerland, postcard, 5 cents



Mars depicted with the armor of the Roman soldier



Portuguese mail franchise for periodicals, from Lisbon 21 February, 1923 to Salvaterra de Magos (departure stamp on the reverse-to photocopy)

2.4 THE EMPEROR



In the whole empire several Roman towns dedicated to Augustus arise everywhere, such as Augsburg, village of Augustus, in present-day in Germany...



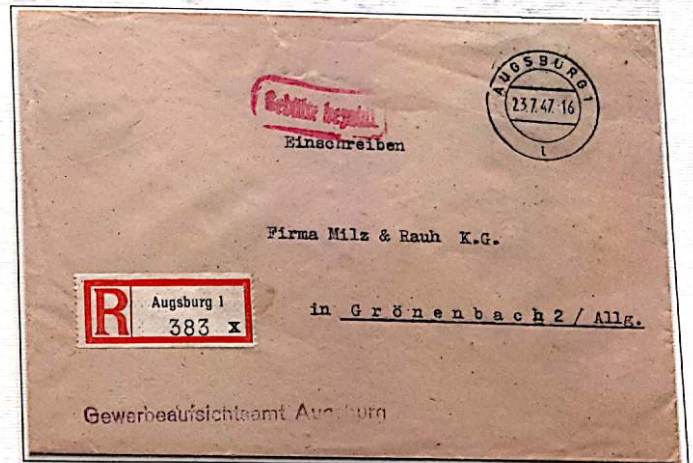
1870. Austro-Hungarian Empire, telegram from the city of Römerstadt, so called until 1918. Today, it is called Rýmařov, in the Czech Republic

... Autun, the former Augustodunum, the fortress of Augustus in France...and Augst, Augusta Raurica, the main Roman city in Switzerland.

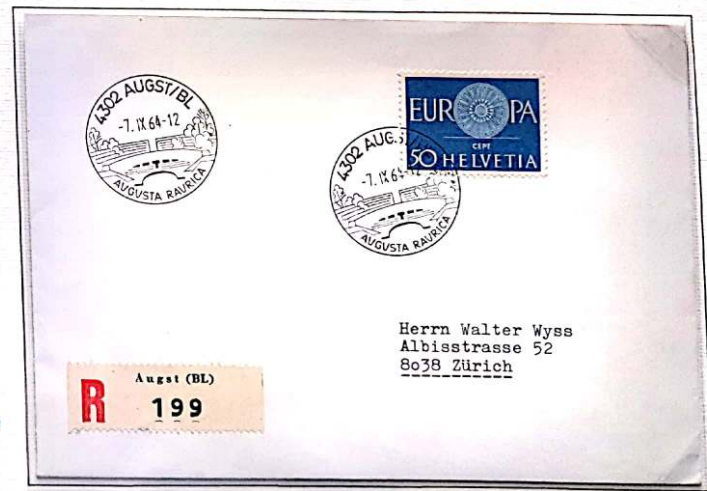


27 October, 1945, France, letter free of postal fee of the Hospice Militaire of Autun

THE AUGUSTAN CITIES

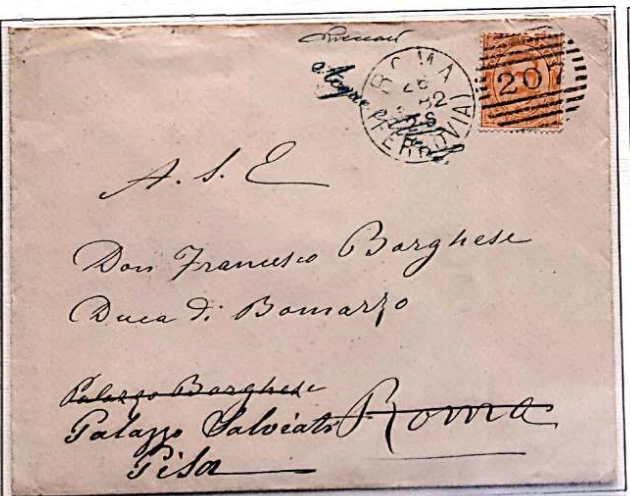


23 July 1947, Germany, registered letter with the indication "gebührt bezahlt" (tax paid)



2.4 THE EMPEROR

The Roman towns followed a well-established structure. In addition to the **forum**, the center of city life, there were other architectural works for the well-being of citizens.



1882, Kingdom of Italy, greenish blue cursive postmark from Acque Albule in Rome, then returned to Pisa



The theatre. The one in Orange is defined as unique in the world for its excellent acoustics, while the one in Cagliari has the peculiarity of being dug into the rock, according to Greek theatres.

The **thermae**, as well as a place for personal cleaning, was also a meeting place with friends and customers. The **Acque Albule** (white water) sulphurous, east of Rome, were heavily exploited by the emperors.

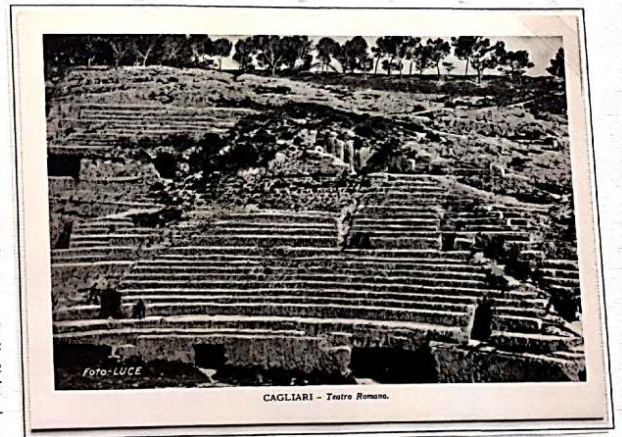


The amphitheater, a building that could hold thousands of people (the largest, the Colosseum contained 80.000). In this structures, various games were organized by the emperors to enjoy the people.

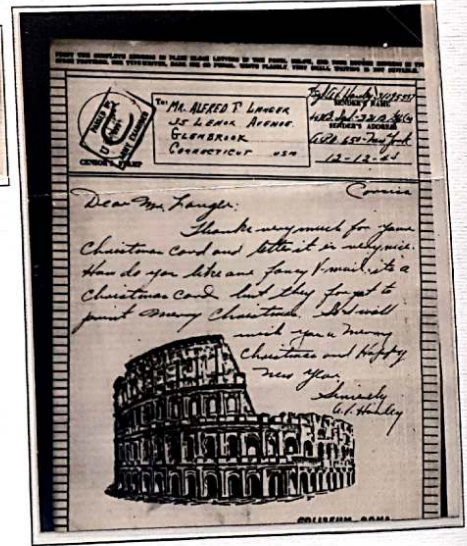
1928, Tunisia, colour proof without indication of value



THE CITY, THE HEART OF THE EMPIRE



1936, Kingdom of Italy, postcard, 20 + 5 cents



3. THE INFLUENCE OF ROME (ROMANUS AUCTORITATE)

3.1 CITIZENSHIP

The prestige of Rome spreads among the leaders of the new conquered populations. The amphitheater in Lyon, in the Gauls, is financed and inaugurated by a local chief, proud of his new status of Roman citizen. The original S.P.Q.R.-*Senatus Populusque Romanus*, the Senate and the Roman People, in which the first inhabitants identified themselves, became *civis romanus sum*: I am a Roman citizen.



1957, France, colour proof

The basic rule established by Romulus was that Rome was ready to receive whoever was entitled to become a Roman citizen with open arms. The civilization of Rome was, in fact, a great blender that mixed anyone coming from its territories; in 212 AD citizenship was extended to all the inhabitants of the empire.



2 January, 1855, USA; letter from Romulus to Hummelstown, single-postage rate 3 cent

CIVIS ROMANUS SUM



The *toga* was the dress of Roman citizens, the togated people (the "gens togata"), who dressed like Augustus.

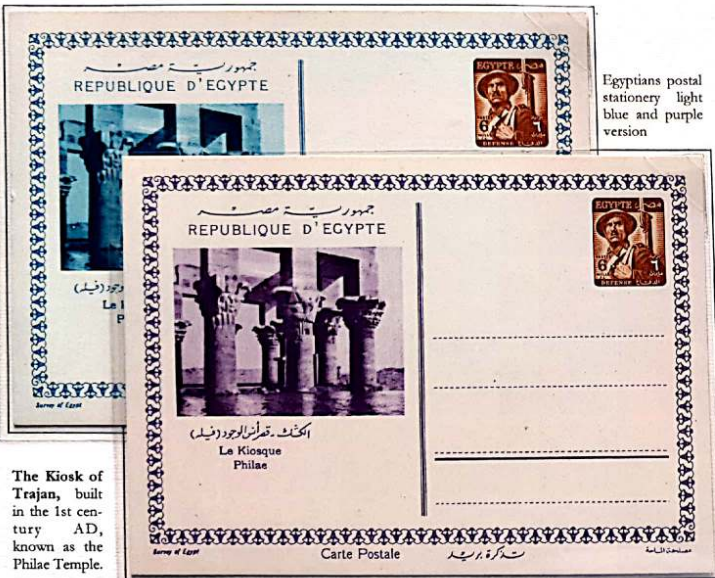
3.2 RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

In the ancient world the divine principle was everywhere and influenced everybody. For example, deities from Egypt and the Middle East were adopted and worshipped: thus, in honor of **Isis**, the emperor Trajan ordered the built the so-called



kiosk to protect the temple dedicated to her.

Many Romans were initiated into the cult of **Cybele**, the "great mother", the first of all the gods, the eternal, depicted on a chariot drawn by lions.



Egyptians postal stationery light blue and purple version

The Kiosk of Trajan, built in the 1st century AD, known as the Philae Temple.



The Romans tolerated all these religions, but the cult of the emperor had a particular political significance, being essential to maintain the unity of the empire. All the other gods could be worshipped, but it was obligatory to obey the emperor and Rome.

THE TOLERANCE OF OTHER FAITHS



16 September, 1938, Kingdom of Italy, registered letter express from Porto d'Ischia to Berlin (lira 1 letter + lire 1.50 registration fee + lire 2.50 express fee; total lire 5 lire and 1 lira of surcharge for the Augustan Roman Exhibition in Rome which was held from September 23rd to November 4th 1938)



On this 5 lire + 1 lira stamp is depicted the emperor Augustus and the inscription: "Of Rome and Italy, tutelary deity"

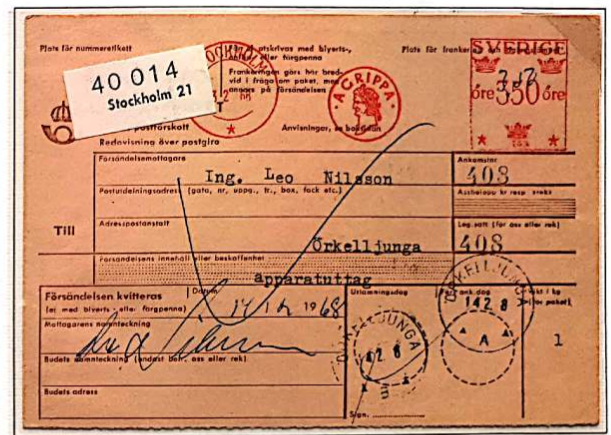
3.2 RELIGIOUS PLURALISM



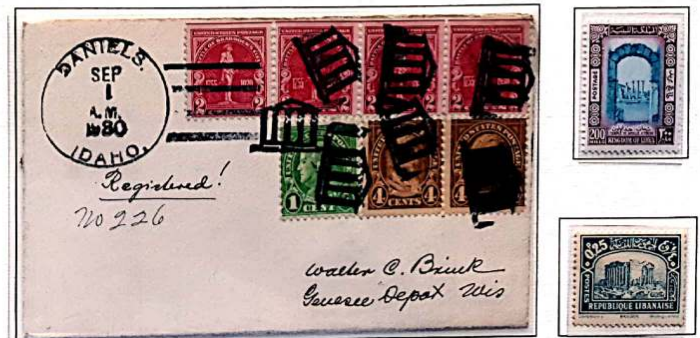
The *Pantheon* on a Cuba air letter

THE PANTHEON, TEMPLE OF THE GODS

On the other hand, with regard to religion, the Romans were very open mind toward the various deities: they used to welcome new gods in the *Pantheon*, temple of all the gods, and indeed the Roman architect *Agrippa* designed it to accommodate all the present and future divinities.



Similar temples, in homage to the various gods, arose in every part of the Empire.



1 September, 1930, USA, registered letter from Daniels to Genesee Depot, seven fancy cancels depicting temple with columns

3.2 RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

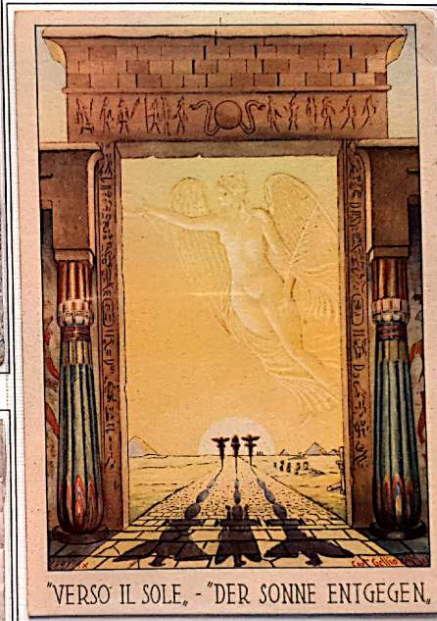


27 September, 1938, letter from Addis Abeba to Salerno (1.25 lire letter + 2.50 lire for registration fee)



Victory is the goddess who symbolizes victory in battles and was associated with **Bellona**, depicted as a young winged woman. The Romans respected this divinity, at the base of their territorial expansion.

1942, Kingdom of Italy, postcard free of charge for the armed forces



Christianity will then adopt these figures to identify the angels, the messengers of God's will.

3 May, 1945, registered letter with stamps of the National Liberation Committee of the Bormida Valley used, from 26 April till 20 May 1945. Arrival stamp on the reverse - 8 May 1945

A HEARTFELT GODDESS: VICTORY



Victory was also associated with **triumph**, the greatest honor bestowed upon the general who achieved an important victory over the enemy through a solemn ceremony.



The triumph of Caesar.

1945, USA, V-mail from the command of the Persian Gulf



3.2 RELIGIOUS PLURALISM



minting test without value, printed in green on white paper



definitive colour for colonies



pair tête-bêche



(e)

... we find Mercury, the god of commerce, the Greek Hermes.



block of four, proof in black with a value of 40 lepta

A cult that took root during the empire was that of Mitra, a Persian deity, born as a protector of soldiers. The temple of Garni, in Armenia, is the most shining example of this pagan cult

31 May, 1864, letter with oval cancellation from Trieste to Athens. Tax of 75 lepta on arrival was paid with four polychrome stamps of the Mercury issue (issue of Athens).

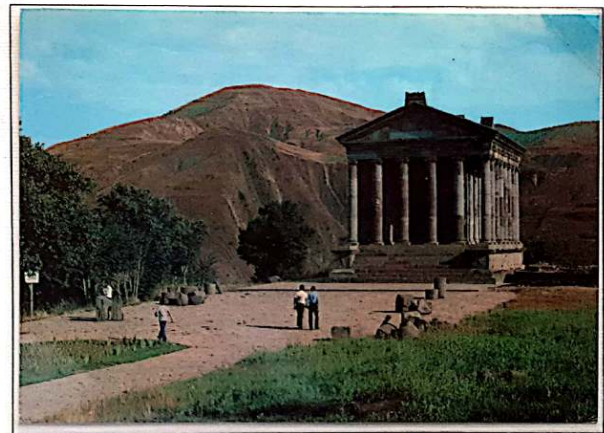
THE IMPORTATION OF NEW DEITIES

Here is one of the reasons why Rome has been so imitated: a rich and varied culture, with the assimilation and impulse of a universal sentiment of Romanity. Next to the **Roman hearth**, the most traditional symbol of archaic Rome, of the goddess **Ceres**, goddess of the **harvest** and agriculture...

During the French Revolution, from 1792 to 1805, the names of the months were renamed: the **Messidor** went from the 19/20 June to the 18/19 July of the Gregorian calendar.



25 June, 1794, French Republic, letter free of charge with the postmark of the Comité de Salut Public



1981, U.R.S.S., postcard, 4 kopeks

It could have become the main cult of the Romans, but in the meantime a certain Jesus was born in Palestine...

3.3 THE EMPEROR AND JESUS

Jesus was a Jew born in Bethlehem, near Jerusalem, in the Galilee of the first century, in full Roman times. The Jews had the idea of one God, who had sent his son Jesus as Savior and to spread the Gospel among the peoples of the earth.



11 October 1857, Lombardy-Venetia, official mail of the Parrocchiale Fabbrica of Gazzolo, with parish stamp depicting the Holy Family



17 June 1923, Kingdom of Italy, registered letter for the inland, from Rome to Modena, (letter rate 0.50 cents + registration fee 0.50 cents)



printing test of the value of 80 cents, not issued as replaced by the value of 1 lira



printing proof of 1 lira value

THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

25 December, 1899, Austrian post office in Jerusalem, Christmas day



proof of the value of 80 cents, not issued, with a light orange center



imperforate vertically

3.3 THE EMPEROR AND JESUS

Sun worship was widespread during in the Empire. **December 25th** was the moment when the **sun**, after winter, resumed its rise.



25 December, 1842, USA, letter from Cleveland, the rate of 25 cents is written in the upper right corner with the payment certified by the linear PAID stamp

THE PAGAN WORLD INFECTS CHRISTIANITY

The emperor Aurelian instituted the *Natalis solis invicti*, the birth day of the unbeaten Sun.



The solar cults were so widespread among peoples that the Chirstian Church decided to celebrate the Christmas of the Sun in the same day with that of Jesus.



10 August 1844, Spain, local post of Cadiz called "Compagnia del Sol"

1944, USA, V-mail from the command of the Persian Gulf



Elios, the Greek god leading the chariot of the Sun.



definitive version

1976, Tunisia, progressive print proof



3.3 THE EMPEROR AND JESUS

On the one hand, the Emperor, *divi filius*, the son of god (pagan), on the other Jesus who proclaimed himself the only son of God (Christian). Could this be tolerated? No, it couldn't, and we all know how it turned out...

9 november, 1933, registered mail for Milan city. Registration fee lire 1.75 and lire 2.50 of surcharge for welfare works of the Voluntary Militia for National Security was an armed force of fascist Italy



1900, Bavaria, postcard with stamp imprint on private order, 5 pfennig

THE TWO SONS OF GOD



... Jesus was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate, prefect of Judea, and crucified on the cross. But his resurrection conditioned the epilogue of the Empire.



3.4 LATINS AND GERMANS

Wars between Germans and Romans have been taking place for centuries, almost always in favor of the latter. But the battle of Teutoburgo of 9 AD represented the worst military defeat of the Roman army, drawn into a death trap in the woods between the rivers of the Rhine and Elba.



1960,
Germany,
telegram

1914, France, post card free of charge for the armed forces

CORRESPONDANCE

FRANCHISE
Partie Réserve à la Correspondance

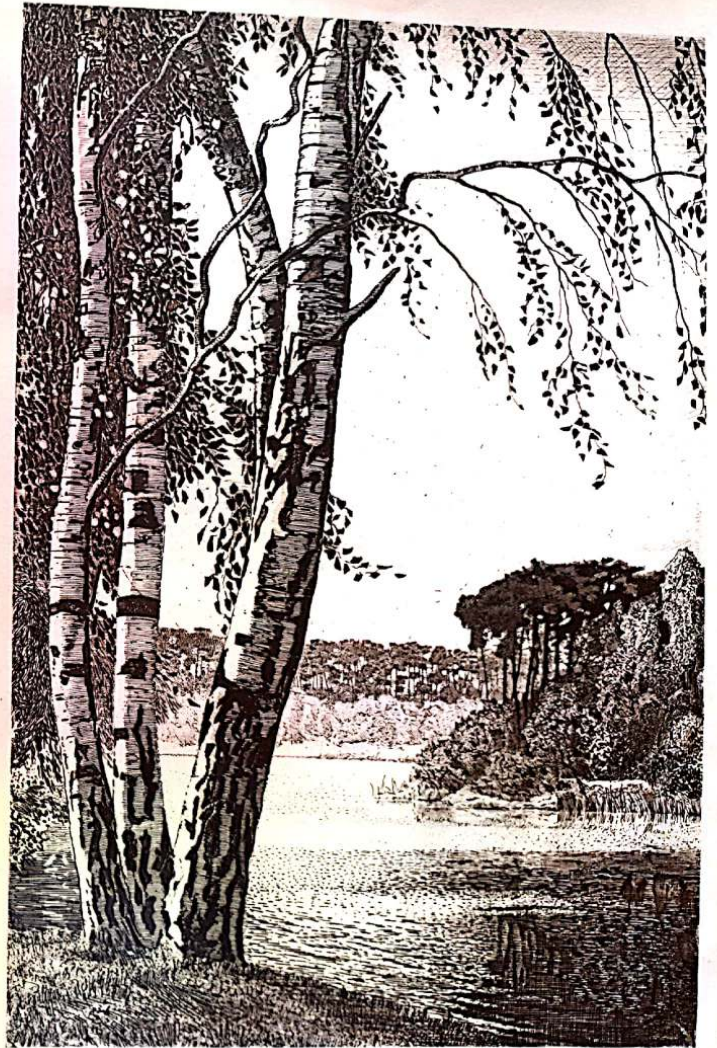


DES ARMÉES

MILITAIRE
Adresse du Destinataire



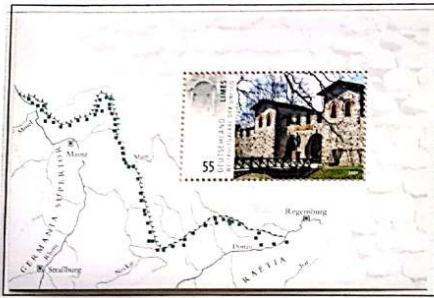
Few wars have been so important in world history; the fracture between Latins and Germans is still present.



LEON SCHNELL

3.4 LATINS AND GERMANS

After the massacre in the forest, the Romans no longer tried to colonize the Germanic territory and a limes was built: a fortified border line along the Rhine river, which varied according to the course of the battles.

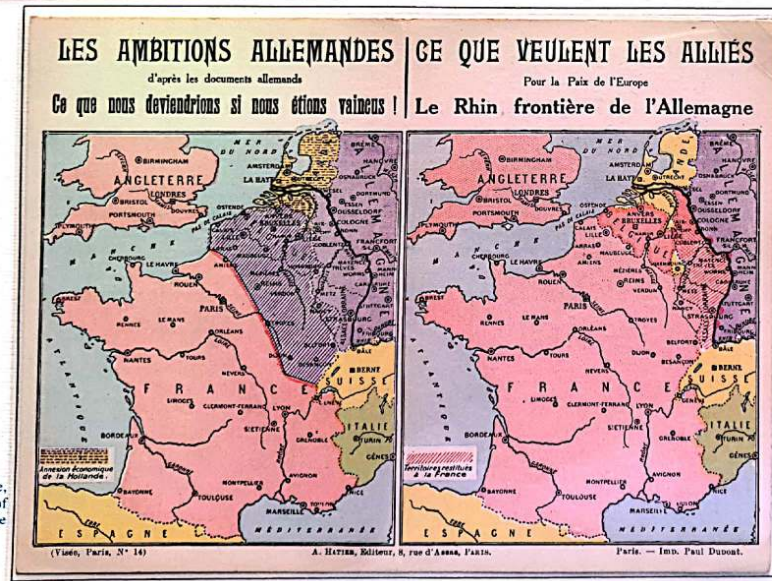


The battle of Teutoburg represented a turning point in the European history: countries divided by language, customs and... wars that lasted until a few years ago....

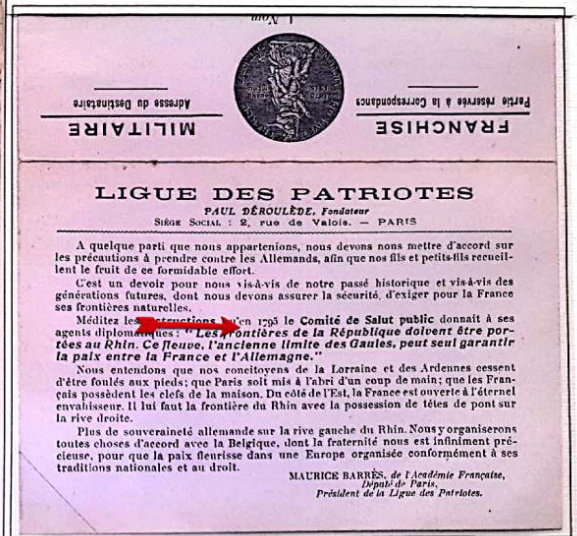
THE LIMES



1897, Kingdom of Germany, free postcard with the seal of the Reichs-Limes-Kommission



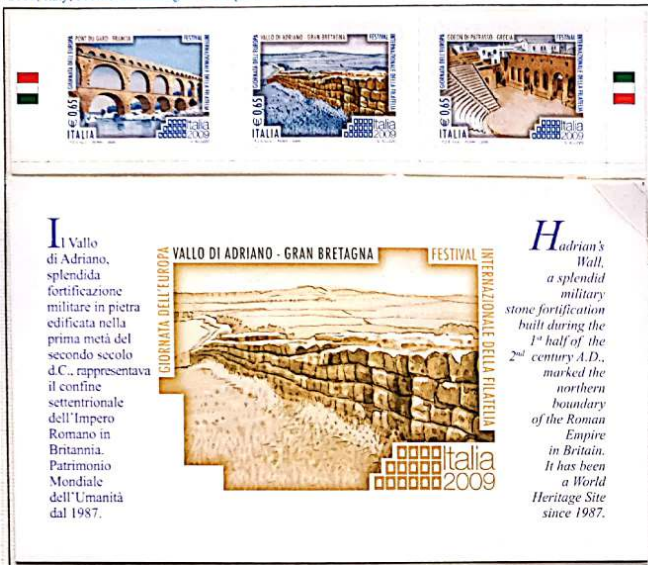
1916, France, postcard free of charge for the armed forces



photocopy of the back of the postcard

3.4 LATINS AND GERMANS

2009, Italy, booklet containing five stamps of 0.65 euro



The need to defend the frontiers of the Empire led to the construction of various fortifications. In the north of Britain the Hadrian's Wall was built to protect itself from the belligerent populations of the north.



red label
1919
1927



1927
1933

Registratio labels from the Australian city of Wallsend (end of the wall) used in various ages. The name of the Australian city recalls that of the suburb of the city of Newcastle, in the north east of England, where Hadrian's Wall ended



blue label
and black
writing
1933
1937



provisional
handwritten
1940

THE FRONTIERS OF THE EMPIRE

The eastern frontier also varied as the conquests advanced: from the wall of the Julian Alps, after the conquests of the Pannonian plains (present-day Hungary), to the point of establishing the border along the Danube river.

8 July 1899, Austro-Hungarian Empire, postcard from Sibenik to Prague, with stamp of the steamer Pannonia



11 June, 1859, letter from Beirut to Marseille, with seal of the French steamer Danube



New towns were built as military camps (castra).



4. THE EPILOGUE (*SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI*)

4.1 THE INVASIONS

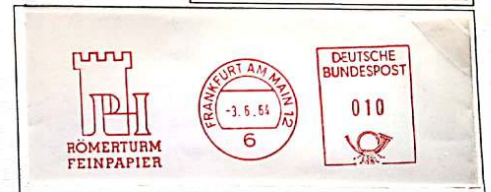
THE THREAT COMES FROM THE EAST

Historians made countless attempts to individuate the causes of the fall of Rome; now, we will try to analyze the most plausible ones. In China, in this remote and unknown country, an empire had grown so much that it succeeded in unifying the East. When it collapsed, it was in the same situation of Rome, the barbarians at its boundaries, and the construction of the Great Wall appeared as the only possible defence.

The Romans, as we told before, had elevated the *limes*, consisting of long walls spaced out with communicating towers.

2000, China, postcard, 60 yuan

The Great Wall resisted; the nomadic populations were repelled through Siberia and therefore they attacked the western countries, successfully this time...



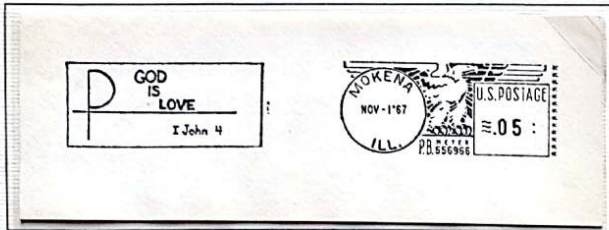
1970, German Democratic Republic, progressive print proofs



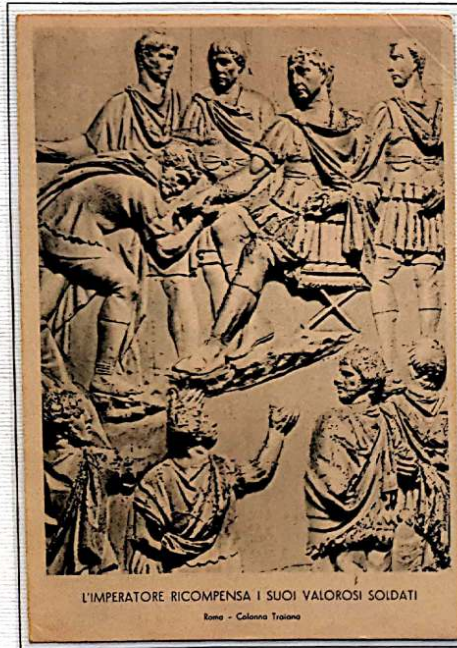
1956, Russia, booklet of 12 postcards, 4 kopeks each

4.1 THE INVASIONS

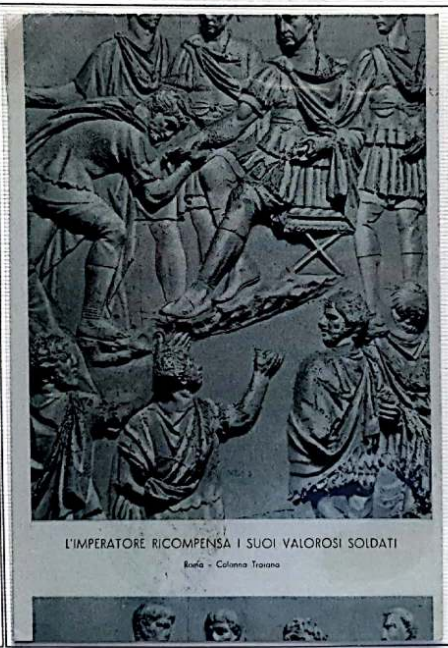
Rome was a society based on the power of army and display of male bodies. What about the losers? The more things go wrong for Rome because of the increasingly weaker borders and the more **Christian ideas** are successful.



The number of armed men doubled... and the nomination of the emperors depended on them...



1942, Kingdom of Italy, post card free of charge for the armed forces

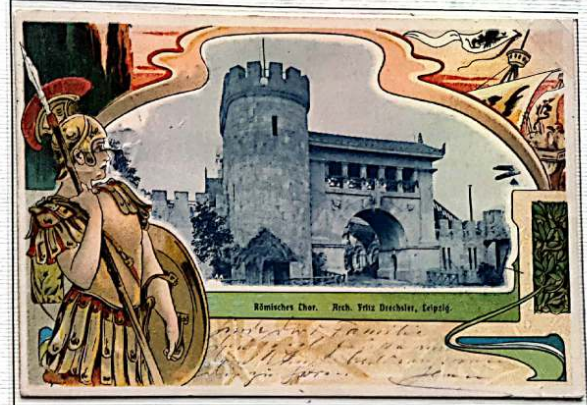


shifted cut



Emperor Valerian defeated by the Persian king Shapur I.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARMY GROWS



1900, Kingdom of Germany, postcard, 5 pfennig

black print proof



violet print proof



brown print proof

The borders become weaker and the importance of legionaries grows.



brown mint proof on white paper

(e)

The oath of the legionaries to the emperor.



imperator on the top

4.2 THE RELIGION



10 November 1855, Kingdom of Hanover, duty stamp of the biblical society of Hanover



28 September 1862, letter with parochial duty-free cancel showing Saint Stephen



The cross of Christ becomes a central element in the theological elaboration of the new Christian doctrine, an island of mercy and hope for a better world.

THE AFFIRMATION OF CHRISTIANITY

Despite the initial human hesitations, biblical teachings make their way. The apostle Peter, after the triple denial, will operate with renewed vigor and during the persecutions he will also be martyred on the cross, but upside down by his specific request.



specimen



1900, Bavaria, postcard with stamp imprint on private order, 5 pfennig



1897, private mail of the city of Munich, 6 pfennig



1929, Vatican City, press proofs with the colotype procedure



(e)

4.2 THE RELIGION



1900, Bavaria, postcard with stamp imprint on private order, 5 pfennig

The first emperors, including Tiberius, had no hostile attitudes towards Christians perhaps they were not so enthusiast of this new faith, when they realized that it was not based on earthly pleasures but on a new life in the world to come.



1936, Kingdom of Italy, postcard, 20 + 5 cents

Nero started the first persecutions for the elimination of the ideological adversaries: the Christians and, at the same time, to entertain the public in the amphitheatres, built for the games to enjoy the people.

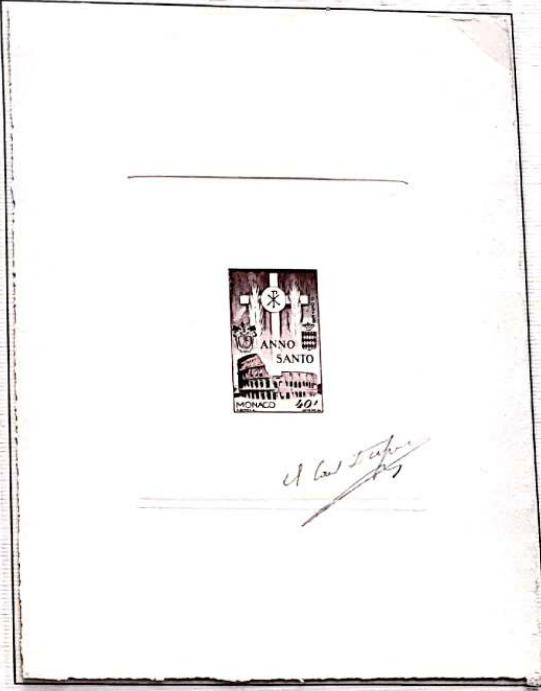


ROMA — Il Colosseo dai Giardini del Colle Oppio.

The Colosseum, in Rome, owes its good state of preservation to the fact that during the Middle Ages it was considered a sacred building, where the blood of martyrs had been shed.



CHRISTIAN PERSECUTIONS



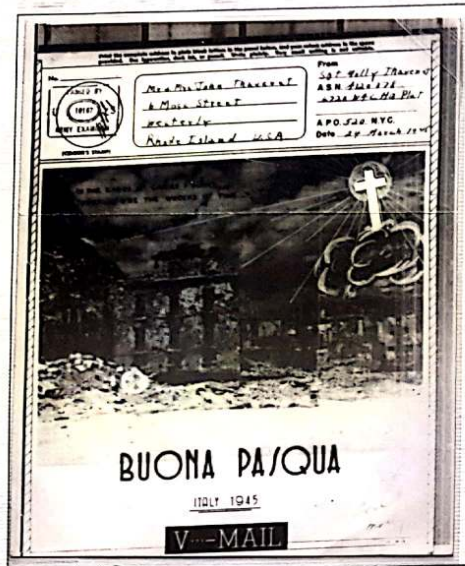
1951, France, color test in brown, signed by the engraver Charles-Paul Dufresne

With Diocletian the persecutions took place in the amphitheatres where beasts captured in Africa devoured Christians.



missing yellow color

4.2 THE RELIGION



In 313 the edict of Milan, one of the imperial capitals, gave everyone, including Christians, the right to profess their faith freely.



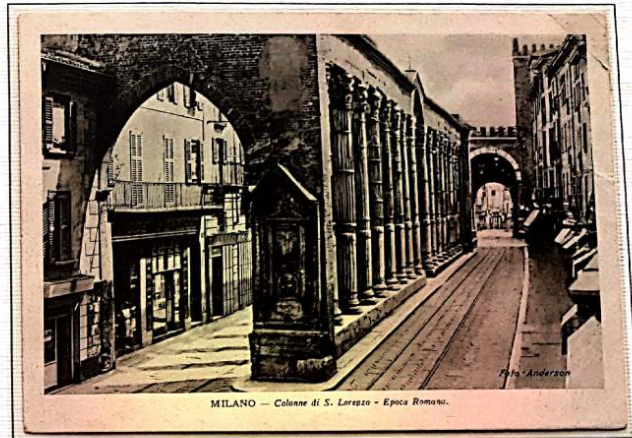
Perhaps the history of Europe would have been different if, in 312, in the decisive battle of the Milvian bridge, north of Rome, the emperor Constantine had not seen the cross of Christ with the inscription: "in hoc signo vinces" (with this sign you will win).



Later on he revoked it to recognize the primacy of the Christian religion, and moved the capital of the empire from Rome to Constantinople (the city of Constantine), on the banks of the Bosphorus.

THE CONVERSION OF CONSTANTINE

1936, Kingdom of Italy, postcard, 20 + 5 cents



The San Lorenzo colonnade is one of the rare finds of imperial Milan, remains of a pagan basilica.



4.2 THE RELIGION



The choice of **Constantine** swept away the remnants of the ancient world and accelerated the **fall of the Roman Empire**.



Thus, when, in 476, the last western emperor, **Romulus Augustulus**, was deposed at **Castel dell'Ovo** in Naples, the imperium was played by the new barbarian kings, who invaded the empire very easily. The Middle Ages began.

1936. Kingdom of Italy. postcard, 20 + 5 cents



THE FALL OF THE WESTERN ROMAN EMPIRE



Christians, organized in their small **ecclesias** (community of the faithful), began to exercise the powers and the privileges previously carried out by imperial officials.



The king of the Goths, **Theodoric**, sent the imperial insignia to the eastern emperor, declaring that he would rule Italy, as his lieutenant.



4.2 THE RELIGION

After the barbarous occupation of Rome, Constantinople became, with Justinian, the most important town of the Mediterranean and the center of the free trade area.

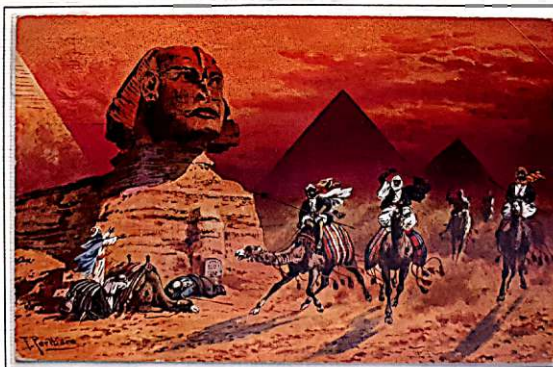


1910, Bavaria, postcard, 5 pfennig



The word of Muhammad, the **Koran**, was spread through a blitzkrieg that brought almost all of the Mediterranean under **Arab** influence, finding the Roman army unprepared. On 29 May 1453, then, also Constantinople fell at the hands of Mohammed II.

1910, Bavaria, postcard, 5 pfennig



CONSTANTINOPLE ALSO FALLS

At the beginning of the fifth century it was surrounded by the colossal triple city wall, which protected the city, both from the sea and from the hinterland: an impregnable city! No one, however, could have foreseen the disaster that was about to overwhelm it....



Verse of the Koran



1940, Kingdom of Italy, post card free of charge for the armed forces



4.3 THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

October 1915, Lorenzo Marquez, Portuguese colony in Africa, now Mozambique, with censorship strip "opened by the Censor", arrival cancel in Geneva 23 October, 1915



printed matter domestic rate, 25 lire



The Tetrarchs, depicted in Venice in Piazza San Marco.

The main consequence was a deep economic crisis. The **censors**, officers in charge to take a census of the whole population and to collect their taxes, contributed with their illegal behaviours to further destroy the economy.



The coins, at the time of Caesar, were composed of 97% of silver which was only 4% at the time of Trajan!

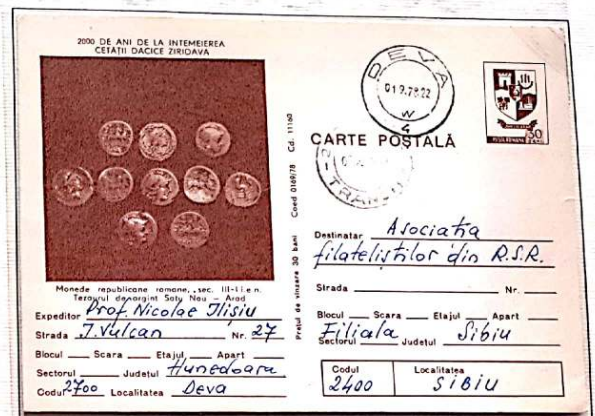


colour proof



The crisis required a radical solution: Diocletian implemented the "tetrarchy", i.e. the government of four leaders, two "Augusto", assisted by two "Cesare". Then, the empire was divided in four main areas, each of them led by one of the four tetrarchs.

DESPERATE MEASURES



But these desperate measures worsened the situation causing countryside depopulation and a further terrible inflation.

4.4 THE MYTH OF ROME



1932, German Kingdom, postcard, 6 pfennig

But already in France, in the '600, the playwright **Pierre Corneille**, in his works dedicated to the history of Rome, exalts the positive aspects of the republican period, in particular, the patriotism.



1932, France, carnet containing 20 stamps of 50 cents

THE ALLEGORIES OF THE NEW BOURGEOISIE

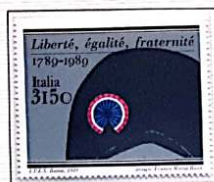
The myth of Rome is reborn in Germany at the end of the 18th century through the work of **Goethe** who, during his journey in Italy, meditates on the greatness of Roman works and their influence on the history of the world.



1946, France, colour proof in violet



A century later, the various female personifications of the allegorical universe of the **French Revolution** have Roman symbols, in particular the **Phrygian cap** which in ancient Rome was worn by freedmen.



misplaced perforation



16 messidoro second year, paid port Bagueres + stamp P.P. surmounted by a Phrygian cap

4.4 THE MYTH OF ROME

25 April, 1942, letter from Milan to Rome, for 7,5 cents, reduced rate for publishing houses



The French Revolution evoked to anti-Roman heroes.

In France, Vercingetorix, although defeated by Romans, became a national flag because considered "the first of the French"

Julius Caesar

VS

Vercingetorix



1966, France, artist proof in black, with dry seal of the printing house and signature of the artist Decaris



11 May 1945, Kingdom of Italy, registered letter with use of stamps overprinted P.M. (military post), issued 5 November, 1942, distributed in Albania and Greece to the forces armed, but used in Italy for civil use



In Germany, Arminius is considered the symbol of the Germanic heroes because he defeated the Romans in Teutoburg

August

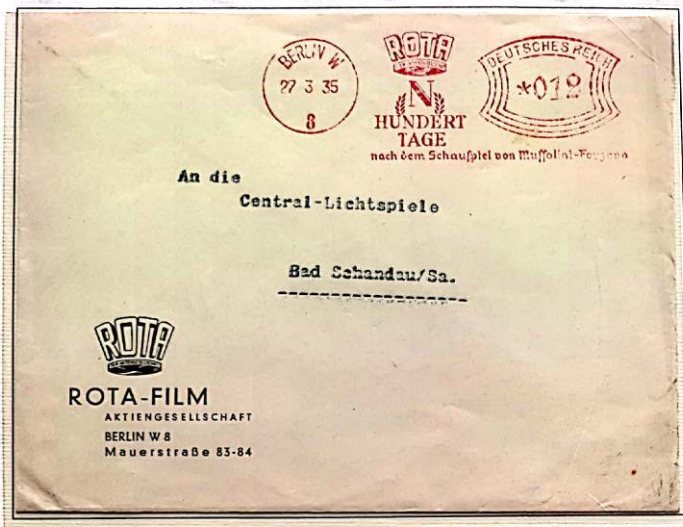
VS

Arminius



1899, German Kingdom, postcard, 5 pfennig

4.4 THE MYTH OF ROME



In this letter, from Paris to Zurich, we find both issues: the 20 cent stamp with a laurel wreath and the other stamp without the crown.

THE NEW CAESARS

In France, the rise of **Napoleon** marked the beginning of a dictatorship as well as that introduced by **Caesar**; similarly to Caesar, crowned as champion of the freedoms of his people, Napoleon was crowned too.



The need to legitimate his power pushed the German emperor to give himself the same name as Caesar, **Kaiser**.



Napoleon III, French emperor from 1852 to 1870, dusts off the French grandeur also on postage stamps: first the head is uncovered, then it is encircled by a laurel wreath: Roman honor attributed to the triumphant general.



1916, Germany, free postcard through the FELDPPOST label and the postmark of the imperial navy (Kaiserliche Marine)

4.5 THE ROME MISSION

Looking at this long history, and trying to find the essence of so many events, we can say that Rome was born with a mission that was carried on and accomplished. The mission was to gather the other previous or contemporary Mediterranean civilizations - the Greek, the Carthaginian, the Jewish, the Egyptian - to merge and spread them throughout Europe and the Mediterranean.



Greek Jupiter in Rome on the Capitoline Temple.

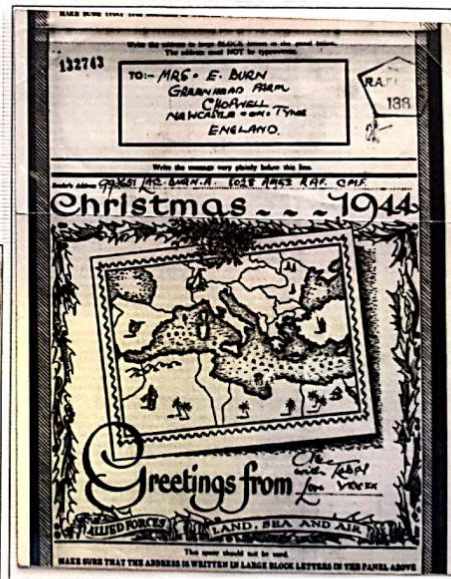


Carthaginian votive stele



THE ROMAN HERITAGE

In addition Rome created a formidable complex of laws, many of which are still alive, to guarantee the development of common life, built many roads and bridges to circulate them.



1959, Austria, minting proof



28 August 1942, Kingdom of Italy, registered letter with first rate (50 cents letter + 1.25 lire for registration fee)

Rome did not create so much in philosophy, created a bit more in art as well as in politics but provided armies and power to defend them all.



Finally, Rome adopted a common language, Latin, to make everything really universal. Even Christianity itself, to triumph in the world, had to become "Roman"...