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SUMMARY

GENIO POPULI ROMANI AND THE CHI-RHO

In Roman numismatics the Genio Populi Romani appeared on reverse designs at the time of the Roman Republic, in about 75 BC. After that it appeared very rarely. This kind of reverse went through its greatest “revival” under Emperor Diocletian, when there were many emissions of folles showing the Genius. Later emperors had the reverse struck less often, and it disappeared at the time of the “Christian” emperors. It was no longer mentioned under its original name after the proclamation of Theodosius but it did get another name with reduced characteristics, powers and meanings. With the appearance of the Chi-rho symbol after the Edict of Milan another idea about a uniform Roman religion began, which was essentially only a transformation of the older idea. The Chi-rho became very important on the reverse after the disappearance of the Genius, and this reverse design remained generally accepted in the world of Constantinian Christianity.