

Quotations from Late Antiquity

1) 12. "I shall say what no monuments attest to: the inhabitant of Alamannia lives for you; those whom you subtract from slaughter you add to the empire. It is enough that you have changed the character of the peoples by sparing them. What remains free for them since their wellbeing has been subjected by your kindness, and their territory by your fortresses? By right they are free for the moment, but already captive by shame. Or will they disperse to faroff places, when not only your standards but your new towns pursue them? ... 18. Let the rest of the cities, which private hands have marked out, envy the new ramparts; ... I was present, venerable Augustus, when you set aside your arms and traced out the foundations, occupying your fortunate right hand with builders' lines. ...

20. Into what peril has my speech fallen? I dare neither describe nor be silent about the form of the city's foundation. But I shall heed my confidence, which counsels boldness. Nature's gift first presents itself to onlookers, the embankment of soil and the friendly bend of two rivers [Rhine and Neckar]; next a skilled hand has surrounded the twin placement of ramparts with a mole. ... 28 . . . from the source of the Rhine to the mouth of the ocean he has covered the river banks with a garland of military works. 30. ... You have discovered, greatest of princes, another sort of laurel: while you explored the secrets of the world, while you erected not barracks but buildings in the innermost parts of foreign lands, you celebrated a triumph of peace."

(Symmachus *Oration* 2 delivered to Valentinian on January 1st, 370 CE. Symmachus attended Valentinian in Gaul in 369 and 370 and was shown round Valentinian's fortification building programme on Rhine; Valentinian had previously campaigned against the Alamanni in 368 CE. Sections 17-22 praise construction of an outpost on the Neckar river, a tributary of the Rhine; 23-28 on fortification works)

2) "We owe it to her [Rome's] peace-bearing character [...] that it is a leisure activity to view Thule and enter the remote corners which once caused shuddering, that all of us can drink from the Rhône and the Orontes, that we are all one nation. Nor will there ever be a limit to the empire of Rome, for luxury and its attendant vices, and pride with sequent hate have brought to ruin all kingdoms else." (Claudian, *Panegyric on the Consulship of Stilicho* (400 CE), 3.154-61)

3) "Examples near at hand testify to the extent of my power now thou art emperor. The Saxon is conquered and the seas safe; the Picts have been defeated; Britain is secure. I love to see at my feet the humbled Franks and broken Suebi, and I behold the Rhine mine own" (Personified Rome speaking: Claudian, *Against Eutropius* 1.391-95)

4) "[the Roman Empire] is iron, which crushes and subjugates everything" (Jerome, *Comm. in Dan.* 1.2.35): cf. Jerome in comment on the prophecies in Daniel 2:31-45, identifying the four empires whose fall would herald the coming of the kingdom of God as those of Babylon, Macedonia, Carthage and Rome)

5) "No use now are villas built from solid marble, and all the rocks carried away to empty porches" (*Epigramma Paulini* 13-14: poem = dialogue where Salmon explains to Thesbon, about the losses from the ravaging of the countryside, probably composed immediately after the initial invasion of Gaul in 407 CE: initial breach of Rhine, 407 CE)

6) "And alas, whatever the Sarmatian has destroyed, what the Vandal has burned and the swift Alan has carried off, we strive, though with uncertain hopes and painful efforts, to

restore a certain appearance of our former selves The first thing is to clear away the vines and to cut down the briars, or to repair the broken door or the smashed window, before attending to the broad fields of the soul, the mansions of the heart, and the fallen honor of the captive mind.” (*Epigramma Paulini* 18–21; 26–29)

7) “But surely you [Gallic landowners], who weep for the neglected fields, the empty halls and demolished porches of your burnt-out villas, would be able to shed tears all the more for your personal losses, if you were rather to inspect the ravaged inner recesses of your heart, and your virtue covered with filth, and the enemy marauding in the citadel of your captive mind?” (c. 418, anon poet, *De prouidentia Dei* 914–19)

8) "you say the world has come to an end... it has ended before, in the flood. The human race survived" (The "Sicilian Briton" (a Christian Theologian, originally from Britain), writing home in about A.D. 411, on reaction to the recent sack of the "eternal city")