

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the period of crisis that the Roman Empire entered after the death of Alexander Severus, as described by the British historian and writer Harry Sidebottom in his three-part novel *The Throne of Caesars: Iron and Rust, Steel and Blood, Fire and Sword*. The work focuses primarily on the role of the army in the chaos of the third century AD. It contains questions of philosophy (Epicureans, Stoics, Pythagoreans), religion (traditional Roman and indigenous cults and superstitions), literature (knowledge of literature among intellectuals versus ordinary soldiers as obedient machines), the question of the feeling of superiority of the Romans compared to the defeated barbarians from the north, patriotism, careerism, egoism, self-sacrifice, friendship, propaganda, etc. Propaganda and manipulation of public opinion, so important for every single emperor, is then discussed in more detail in my work. The lives and evaluation of the significance of the works of those ancient authors (namely Héródiános, Aurelius Victor, Zósimos, Ammianus Marcellinus) are briefly described at the beginning of the work, from which important information on the topic can be obtained. I also consider it crucial to briefly introduce the military emperors to the reader (these are Alexander Severus, Maximinus Thrace, Gordianus I, Gordianus II., Balbinus, Pupienus and Gordianus III.). Their actions played a significant role during the incriminated period, in the time of commotion and in the development of the next phase of the deepening all-round crisis of the Roman Empire. Harry Sidebottom takes us in great detail into this ground-breaking time and helps us – thanks to his knowledge of historical sources – to understand it.