

THE LETTERS SC ON AUGUSTAN AÆS COINAGE

By AÆSE BAY*

In 1962 the late Professor Kraft put forward a new interpretation of the letters SC on the *aes* coinage of the principate, claiming thereby to remove the difficulties that sprang from the traditional interpretation of the formula.¹ In brief, his theory was that the letters S(enatus) C(onsulto) did not refer to a senatorial decision authorizing the coinage (meaning 'geprägt auf Senatsbeschluss'), as had been generally assumed as a matter of course; rather, the reference was to the type-content of the coinage: to the decision by which the senate had voted Augustus the honours depicted on the coinage itself (the oak-wreath of 27 B.C.). Although the late H. Mattingly reacted to this theory with scepticism,² it was supported by C. H. V. Sutherland, who adduced in its favour further arguments from Augustan issues in the provinces.³ There discussion has stopped. However, there are reasons for not leaving the problem at this stage, as the solution of Kraft can hardly be the right one; instead, it should be possible to suggest another one harmonizing better with the evidence.

The problem is, in a few words, that the *aes* coinage of the mint of Rome after its re-opening under Augustus in about 19 B.C.⁴ is normally provided with a dominant SC. This SC characterizes all the denominations of *aes* (sestertius, dupondius, as, quadrans), but not the issues in precious metals which were started by the mint of Rome, apparently at the same time.⁵ The interpretation of this phenomenon as showing a real division of responsibility for the two groups of coinage between the emperor and the senate was indeed natural; it is, however, contradicted not only by constitutional and practical considerations, but also by those of titulature and by the thematic content of the two groups of coinage, both of which reflect the propaganda of the princeps.⁶ The theory of a division, which fitted so neatly into the dyarchical structure postulated by Mommsen,⁷ has therefore gradually lost ground in its complete form. But there has still been felt a certain need to assume some sort of formal senatorial control of the *aes* coinage. The fact that the dominant SC is reserved for the *aes* still has to be explained.⁸

The starting point of Kraft's attempt at revision is mistaken, in that he formulates the problem wrongly. The old interpretation of SC on the coinage he took to imply that only *aes* was coined by senatorial decision, whereas gold and silver were coined on the emperor's

* This paper was submitted in a provisional form to the *Journal* in September, 1971; on 18 October, 1971, Aase Bay was killed in a car-accident. Shortly before her death I had gone through the paper with her and as it now stands it incorporates those improvements to the English and other changes that we then agreed on, with some further minor verbal changes. I should like to thank the Editorial Committee for their help and advice over the publication of a paper which will stand as a memorial of a young scholar of high distinction. M. H. Crawford.

¹ K. Kraft, 'S(enatus) C(onsulto)', *JNG* XII, 1962, 7-49, hereafter cited as Kraft, 'SC', 1962.

² Review of Kraft, 'SC', 1962, in *NC* 1963, 255-6.

³ 'The symbolism of the early *aes* coinages under Augustus', *RN* VI, ser. VII, 1965 [1966], 94-109.

⁴ K. Kraft, 'Zur Datierung der römischen Münzmeisterprägung unter Augustus', *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 46/47, 1951/52, 28-35 (hereafter cited as Kraft, 'Datierung', 1951/52); 'Q. Aelius L.f. Lamia, Münzmeister und Freund des Horaz', *JNG* XVI, 1966, 23-31 (hereafter cited as Kraft, 'Aelius Lamia', 1966); M. Grant, *The six main Aes coinages of Augustus*, 1953 (hereafter cited as Grant, *SMACA*, 1953), 96-111; A. S. Robertson, *Roman Imperial Coins in the Hunter Coin Cabinet* I, 1962 (hereafter cited as Robertson, *HCC*, 1962), p. xxxiv with note.

⁵ Above, n. 4, and Robertson, *HCC*, 1962, p. xxxiii with notes.

⁶ Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 7-23; cf. Mattingly, *NC* 1963, 255-6.

⁷ 'Bei der Münzprägung dieser Epoche [i.e. the principate] tritt das dyarchische System deutlicher als irgendwo sonst zu Tage', *Röm. Staatsrecht* III, 1146; cf. II, 1025-8. The theory of a division is, however, older than Mommsen; it was also subjected to criticism very early. See R. Guarini, 'Osservazioni intorno ai Triumviri Monetali', *Miscellanea* VI, Napoli 1814, who argues for unity of coinage under the control of the emperor, and F. M. Avellino, 'Osservazioni sulla sigla S.C.', *ibid.*, who explains SC as a mere formality, the reason for which was to furnish a mark that might distinguish Roman *aes* from local issues in the provinces.

⁸ H. Mattingly and E. A. Sydenham, *The Roman Imperial Coinage* I, 3; H. Mattingly, *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* I, pp. xvi; xxvi-xxvii; LXXV; cf. vol. V, p. xxii; *NC* 1963, 255; *Roman Coins*², 102, 129, cf. 24; C. H. V. Sutherland, *Coinage in Roman Imperial Policy*, 195, 47, 183-4; *NC* 1952, 144.

The difficulty of explaining the combination of division of control of the coinage with what is otherwise known of the character of the principate is clearly mirrored in most formulations of an explanation (see for instance R. Göbl, *Einführung in die Münzkunde der römischen Kaiserzeit*, 1957, 12, and the collection of quotations in Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 20-21, cf. 38).

authority.⁹ To reject the viewpoint of older scholarship is thus comparatively easy (Kraft's section I), but this cannot undermine the traditional *translation* of *SC*, since it does not necessarily entail the consequences ascribed to it and argued against by Kraft. Difficulty arises from the translation, not because it implies a division of coining authorities, but because the decision of the Senate is invariably *mentioned* on one group of coins and not on the other. Divided authority is only one of the possible explanations.

But is Kraft, apart from his mistaken formulation of the problem, right in his assault on the premise of the traditional view? Are we to revise the translation of *SC* in the sense suggested by Kraft?

This seems to me to involve a number of difficulties:

- (a) If the letters *SC* refer to the type-content of the coinage, they should also appear on the coinage in precious metals, which was introduced in the same period as the *aes* types and has the same type-content as the *aes*. They do not: the oak-wreath on gold and silver is not combined with *SC*.¹⁰
- (b) Conversely, it is striking that *SC* in its first occurrences on the as cannot be related to the type-content.¹¹ Again, the precious-metal coinage furnishes a control: Roman denarii with the same type-content as the as (Head of Augustus, *tribunicia potestas*) from the same period also have no *SC*.¹²
- (c) If we completely rule out any connection of *SC* in the early principate with the organization of minting, we have to assume a change of meaning; *SC* on a large number of Republican coins clearly referred to the authority behind the issue; only in rare and unmistakable cases did it relate to the type-content.¹³

As a matter of fact, there is hardly reason for making such a radical attack as Kraft does on the normal translation of *SC*, which can be given a perfectly understandable meaning. If this way out has not been taken before, it may be because the question has become unduly complicated; the reading of *SC* traditionally has been linked (as by Kraft himself) with a theory of division of powers in itself untenable and in any case not necessarily involved in the reading. Moreover, such attempts as have been made to remove the dyarchical consequences combine their interpretation of the letters *SC* with another, hardly more tenable, of the letters *CA* on Augustan coins struck in the East, at the same time involving the question with another very doubtful constitutional theory.¹⁴

In interpreting the letters *SC* we must obviously reckon with constitutional and administrative practice as well as typological considerations. But we must not forget the function of coinage as money. This indeed seems to have been somewhat overlooked in the debate—understandably, in that the problems of ancient monetary theory are extremely complicated and to a large degree still unresolved. This circumstance, however, can hardly justify explanations that overlook the basic function of coinage.

Since 82 B.C. the Roman minting of *aes* had been suspended. Before that time *aes* had consisted of bronze coinage, the standard of which had been increasingly difficult to maintain. Bronze had become valuable, and in the Social War the weight of the as was reduced by law to half an uncia (against 1 uncia earlier), which meant the introduction of a token coinage.¹⁵ Apparently, however, the time had not yet come to introduce this token coinage

⁹ 'Da nur die Aes-Münze, nicht aber die Edelmetallprägungen in Gold und Silber die Buchstaben S.C. aufweisen, ergab sich zwangsläufig die Folgerung, dass nur die Aes-Münzen auf Grund eines Senatsbeschlusses, die Gold- und Silbermünzen jedoch aus kaiserlicher Machtvollkommenheit ohne Befragung des Senats hergestellt wurden', Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 2; cf. 12 *et passim*.

¹⁰ Aurei of P. Petronius Turpilianus, L. Aquilius Florus, and M. Durmius (about 19-18 B.C.), *BMCEmp*, Aug. nos. 5; 6; 35; 51; cf. 22; 45; 60; *RIC*, Aug. nos. 97; 109; 121; 126; cf. 116; 124; 135.

¹¹ Cf. below p. 116.

¹² P. Licinius Stolo, of 17 B.C., *BMCEmp*, Aug. nos. 74-6; cf. L. Vinicius, L. Mescinius Rufus and C. Antistius Vetus in 16 B.C., *BMCEmp*, Aug. nos.

79-81; 87-9; 95-7; *RIC*, Aug. nos. 136-7; 147; 152-4; 156-8.

¹³ Cf. below, p. 117.

¹⁴ M. Grant, *From Imperium to Auctoritas* (cited as Grant, *FITA*, 1946), 92 ff.; 424 ff., especially 443-5; *SMACA*, 1953, 42 ff. Cf. the remarks of Robertson, *HCC*, 1962, p. LIII; M. Liberanome, 'Sul principato di Augusto', *Atene e Roma* 1959, 129-39; E. T. Salmon, 'The Evolution of Augustus' Principate', *Historia* 1956, 456-78.

¹⁵ This is the commonly, but, it should be added, not universally accepted view: F. M. Heichelheim, *An Ancient Economic History* III, 1970 (cited as Heichelheim, *Ec. Hist.*), 15-16, 215; *Wirtschaftliche Schwankungen der Zeit von Alexander bis Augustus*, 1930, 43.

generally, and when the crisis was over, the problem was 'solved' simply by stopping the Roman minting of *aes*. In the following period the need for *aes* was met by different issues made by provincial governors and commanders in the field, coining outside Rome. The politically centrifugal character of the final epoch of the Republic, indeed, has its counterpart in the coinage; the widespread minting of *aes* mirrors the political and military operations of the period. The standards of these various coinages differed, and their values were difficult to assess. All of them may have been in principle token coinages; this is especially true of Antony's fleet coinage, but also of some issues of Octavian. No attempt, however, was made to extend the token coinage principle to the Roman mint. The general picture of the *aes* coinage at the end of the Republic reflects a terribly chaotic situation.¹⁶

What happened at the re-opening of the mint of Rome about 19 B.C. was basically the following. Whereas the issues in gold and silver of the re-opened mint were in the main a simple resumption of the Republican coinage system,¹⁷ the production of *aes* was now organized in a new way.

- (a) A new choice of metals appears. Orichalcum, a copper alloy containing zinc, 'brass',¹⁸ is introduced for the sestertius, which is thus no longer coined in silver, and for the dupondius. Copper replaces bronze for the denominations of the as and the quadrans.¹⁹
- (b) The coins are adjusted to new weights:

sestertius: 1 uncia
dupondius: $\frac{1}{2}$ uncia
as: $\frac{2}{3}$ uncia
quadrans: $\frac{1}{8}$ uncia.²⁰

In fact we have here two systems, one of orichalcum and one of copper; within each of these, the weights are arithmetically related.

The choice of orichalcum for coinage, first certainly attested under Caesar,²¹ had several advantages. It had not been used for this purpose at Rome before, so that a direct comparison between old and new coinage, which might reveal a deterioration of value, was ruled out; it was an artificial alloy, which again made it difficult for the public to evaluate it; finally, it was possible for Augustus (as for Caesar) to control virtually all the existing quantities of *cadmea* (the zinc minerals and ores that formed the important part of the orichalcum alloy), for antiquity only knew of a very few deposits; the fact that very few objects in orichalcum other than coins are found seems to confirm the existence of a state monopoly.²²

Thus orichalcum, the value of which may strictly speaking be considered as arbitrary, lies at the centre of the new system. The older system of coinage had been in principle derived from the Roman system of weights; its history in broad terms was that of the Roman as, in time reduced from one pound, *via* its subdivisions, to half an uncia in 91 B.C.²³ In the Augustan system, the uncial standard²⁴ is attached to the sestertius, which had long ago

¹⁶ Grant, *FITA*, 1946, 3-87; *Roman Imperial Money*, 1954 (cited as Grant, *RIM*, 1954), 17-18; *BMCEmp* 1, pp. XLV-XLVII; E. A. Sydenham, *The Coinage of the Roman Republic*, 1952 (cited as *CRR*), pp. xxx, xxxiv-xxxix; M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 1973 (cited as *RRC*), Ch. 2.

¹⁷ The only difference of importance was that the aureus was standardized at 42 to the pound; in the previous period it had been at 40 to the pound, *BMCEmp* 1, p. XLIV.

¹⁸ The alloy contained lower proportions of zinc than most varieties of modern brass. It was not of fixed composition; gradually the proportion of zinc decreased, whereas tin and lead, which to begin with had been mere impurities, became important components, E. R. Caley, *Orichalcum and Related Ancient Alloys* (Numismatic Notes and Monographs 151, 1964; cited as Caley, *Orichalcum*, 1964), p. 1; Grant, *FITA*, 1946, 85; 87; *SMACA*, 1953, 5.

¹⁹ *BMCEmp* 1, pp. XLIV-LVII. The semis, triens, and sextans which had been struck at the mint of

Rome before the suspension of its *aes* coinage were not revived.

²⁰ These are the theoretical weights as they may be assessed, not average ones, *BMCEmp* 1, pp. XLV ff.

²¹ C. Clovius, Italy, 45 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 476; Grant, *FITA*, 1946, 7-11); M. Acilius, Thessalonica, 45-44 B.C. (?) (Grant, 13-19); Q. Oppius, Syria, date uncertain (*RRC*, no. 550; Grant, 61-4); Caley, *Orichalcum*, 1964, 8-10. P. Sulpicius Rufus, Pontus and Bithynia, 45 B.C., who is mentioned by Grant (1-13) as a possibility, and Sosius, Zacynthus, 32 B.C., who is included by Grant (39-41), lack decisive evidence based on chemical or spectographic tests, Caley, p. 9, cf. Grant, 85-90.

²² Grant, *FITA*, 1946, 85-90; Caley, *Orichalcum*, 1964, 92 ff.; 13 ff.; O. Davies, *Roman Mines in Europe*, 61; Pliny, *n.h.* xxxiv, 2.

²³ Regling, s.v. 'Münzwesen', *RE* XVI (1933), col. 478.

²⁴ The basis of which is the same pound as formed the basis of the Republican asses.

replaced the as as the normal unit of reckoning; within this system, the dupondius is fixed at half its weight and half its value.

The weight relationship within the copper coinage (as and quadrans) is perhaps less immediately clear, when the specimens of the mint of Rome are considered in isolation. It is possible, however, that the coining of the quadrans, which was not started in the mint of Rome until about 9 B.C.,²⁵ had a precedent within the system in the eagle and bull types that were coined in Lugdunum from about 15–11 B.C.²⁶ These quadrantes were probably intended to have a weight of $\frac{1}{16}$ uncia—such as in theory they ought to have within the system of the mint of Rome.²⁷

For the present purpose we may consider the monetary value of a coin as dependent on three factors: (a) an intrinsic value, depending on the nature of the metal; (b) a nominal value, fixed by the coining authority, which comprises the value of the metal, the costs of coining and perhaps a tax; and (c) a value in trade, depending on supply and demand.²⁸ It now becomes clear how the reforms of Augustus are extremely relevant to the value of the coins as money; new metals were introduced and nominal values for them were established. Moreover, since the previous period had witnessed considerable uncertainty about the value of *aes*, with several authorities coining *aes* of different intrinsic value, a natural explanation of the meaning and purpose of the letters *SC* presents itself. Precisely on the new coins, beginning with the spectacular sestertius, but not on the well-known gold and silver coins, the legend *SC* was placed to convey to the general public that by decision of the senate a new system had been introduced, in which these coins were legal tender. This is an interpretation which would be understood easily by the public as well as by the issuing authority. The consumer who saw the new coins for the first time would naturally look for some guarantee of the coin's face value, and this was the *SC* mark. On the other hand it was both natural, and for Augustus perhaps even advantageous, to allow this guarantee to assume the form of a *SC*.

In what follows, I shall try to support the theory which I have outlined by treating what seem to me the necessary conditions for its confirmation. These are (a) that the letters *SC* and the coin reform can be shown to accompany one another, and (b) that a *SC* can be shown to function in the way here suggested. In dealing with these questions, I shall concentrate on the issues of the mint of Rome, and offer only a few very brief remarks on the provincial series, which have constitutional, administrative, and above all methodological problems of their own.

The coinage reform and the letters SC

That the letters *SC* and the *aes* of the re-opened mint of Rome go together is a well-known fact, and I shall only briefly recall the evidence. The following *aes* was issued:

(1) *Sestertius in orichalcum*

Q. Aelius Lamia, C. Marcus Censorinus, T. Quinctius Crispinus Sulpicianus; M. Sanquinius, P. Licinius Stolo, Ti. Sempronius Graccus; C. Asinius Gallus, C. Cassius Celer, C. Gallius Lupercus; Cn. Calpurnius Piso, L. Naevius Surdinus, C. Plotius Rufus—c. 18–15 B.C.²⁹

²⁵ See below, pp. 115–6.

²⁶ *BMCEmp* 1, Aug. nos. 561–4; p. CXVIII, n. 3.

²⁷ *BMCEmp* 1, p. LVI, gives from 3 specimens the average weight of 2.75 grams. The reason why the Roman quadrantes were made more heavy may be the one suggested by H. Mattingly, 'the Government probably did not grudge a little extra metal to this denomination which was not issued on the grand scale', *BMCEmp* 1, p. XLIX.

²⁸ R. Bogaert, *Banques et banquiers dans les cités grecques*, 1968, 316.

²⁹ Both the absolute and a relative dating of the *aes* coinage is extremely difficult, among other reasons because of the repetitive character of the types. The moneyers provide an essential criterion for dating. Here I have followed the arrangement of

Kraft, who bases his results on the relative and absolute dating of the consulates of the moneyers, combined with data deriving from the evidence of coin finds, see Kraft, 'Datierung', 1951/52; 'C. Aelius Lamia', 1966; 'SC', 1962, 26. This, of course, is a method which contains many possibilities of error, and the problem is not yet solved. See M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coin Hoards*, 1969, Table XVIII and p. 42; J.-P. Callu and F. Panvini Rosati, 'Le dépôt monétaire du Pozzarello (Bolsena)', *MEFR* 1964, 51–91, esp. 65–9. What is sure is that P. Licinius Stolo and M. Sanquinius struck in c. 17 B.C. (their issues in gold and silver contain references to the secular games of 17 B.C.), and a re-opening of the mint c. 19–18 B.C. (cf. n. 4 above) is probable.

Ob.: Oak-wreath between laurel-branches. OB above wreath, CIVIS within wreath, SERVATOS below wreath.

Rv.: S.C. large in centre. Name of moneyer. IIIIVIR A.A.A.F.F.³⁰

(2) *Dupondius in orichalcum*

The same moneyers.

Ob.: AVGVSTVS TRIBVNIC. POTES. in three lines in oak-wreath.

Rv.: as the sestertius.³¹

(3) *As in copper*

In three periods:

(a) C. Asinius Gallus, C. Cassius Celer, C. Gallius Lupercus; Cn. Calpurnius Piso, L. Naevius Surdinus, C. Plotius Rufus—*c.* 16–15 B.C.?

Ob.: Head of Augustus, bare. CAESAR AVGVSTVS TRIBVNIC.POTES.

Rv.: As the sestertius.³²

Piso, Surdinus, and Rufus have moreover:

Ob.: Head of Caesar, bare. CAESAR DIVI.F.AVGVST.

Rv.: Head of Numa Pompilius, with long beard, diademed.

CN.PISO C.PLOTIVS L.SVRDIN.³³

Piso alone has moreover:

Ob.: Head of Augustus, bare. CAESAR AVGVSTVS TRIBVNIC.POTES.

Rv.: Head of Numa as above. CN.PISO CN.F.IIIVIR A.A.A.F.F.³⁴

(b) A. Licinius Nerva, Sex. Nonius Quinctilianus, Volusus Valerius Messalla; P. Lurius Agrippa, M. Maecilius Tullus, M. Salvius Otho—*c.* 3–2 B.C.? (The first obverse is represented by both colleges; the second by the last only.)

Ob.: Head of Augustus, bare. CAESAR AVGVST.PONT.MAX.TRIBVNIC.POT.

Rv.: as the sestertius

Ob.: Head of Augustus, laureate; at point of bust, globe; behind, Victory, draped, holding cornucopiae in left hand and with right touching the fillet of the laurel-wreath. CAESAR AVGVST.PONT.MAX.TRIBVNIC.POT.

Rv.: as the sestertius.³⁵

(c) Asses without moneyers' names—*c.* A.D. 10–12.

Ob.: Head of Tiberius. TI.CAESAR AVGVST.F.IMPERAT.V.

Rv.: PONTIFEX TRIBVN.POTESTATE XII. S.C. large in centre.

Ob.: Head of Augustus. IMP.CAESAR DIVI F.AVGVSTVS IMP.XX.

Rv.: PONTIF.MAXIM.TRIBVN.POT.XXXIII. S.C. large in centre.³⁶

(4) *Quadrans in copper*

In two periods:

(a) Lamia, Silius, Annus; Pulcher, Taurus, Regulus—*c.* 9–8 B.C.?

Ob.: Clasped hands, holding caduceus. LAMIA SILIVS ANNIVS.

Rv.: S.C. large in centre. IIIIVIR A.A.A.F.F.

Ob.: *Simpulum* left, *lituus* right. The same names as above.

Rv.: As above.

Ob.: Cornucopiae, to left and right of it, S.C. The same names as above.

Rv.: Altar with wreath. IIIIVIR A.A.A.F.F.

(Pulcher, Taurus and Regulus have the same three types.)³⁷

³⁰ *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 134, 139, 147, 157, 165, 171–2, 175, 178, 181–3, 191–2, 195–6; 198; *RIC* Aug. nos. 67, 70, 73, 76, 79, 82, 85, 87–9, 138, 143, 145.

³¹ *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 135–6; 141–2, 150–2, 150 bis, 158–60, 166–8, 173, 176–7, 179–80, 184–90, 193–4, 197, 199; *RIC* Aug. nos. 68, 71, 75, 77, 80, 83, 86, 90–4, 139–40, 144, 146.

³² *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 137–8, 143–6, 153–6,

161–4, 169–70, 174; *RIC* Aug. nos. 69, 72, 74, 78, 81, 84.

³³ *BMCEmp* I, p. 28; *RIC* Aug. nos. 64–6.

³⁴ *BMCEmp* I, p. 28; *RIC* Aug. no. 63.

³⁵ *BMCEmp* I, pp. 41–6; *RIC* Aug. nos. 186–97.

³⁶ *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 271–6; *RIC* Aug. nos. 219–20.

³⁷ *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 200–8; *RIC* Aug. nos. 180–5.

(b) Apronius, Galus, Sisenna, Messalla; P. Betilienus Bassus, C. Naevius Capella, C. Rubellius Blandus, L. Valerius Catullus—*c.* 5–4 B.C.? The first college has the first type mentioned below, the second the last.

Ob.: Altar, hung with garland. Two moneyers' names. III VIR.

Rv.: S.C. large in centre. Two other moneyers' names. A.A.A.F.F.

Ob.: S.C. large in centre. Name of a moneyer.

Rv.: Altar with bowl-shaped top hung with garland. III VIR A.A.A.F.F.³⁸

That the letters *SC* accompany the introduction of the new coins is clearly true, as has often been stated. The only possible exception to this rule are the rare asses of Piso and Piso-Plotius-Surdinus, which stand quite apart from the others with their Numa-reverse. If we can assume that Piso and his colleagues were hardly the first to coin the new asses, these coins do not seriously weaken the argument for the connection between the letters *SC* and the introduction of the new coinage.³⁹

On the other hand, it may be seen that, neither at the introduction of the as, nor at that of the quadrans, can the letters *SC* be connected with the type-content. This forced Kraft to suppose that the *SC* reverse, two years after its introduction on the sestertius and the dupondius, had already become a mark by which the metal *aes* was identified, and so was automatically transferred to new denominations; in this way it lost its original connection with the type-content of the coinage.⁴⁰ This is theoretically possible. But from the established fact that *SC* (not *SC* with oak-wreath) is the mark characteristic of *aes* as such, it seems preferable to choose an explanation that gives a real meaning to the *SC* on all denominations, apart from the trivial function of distinguishing the *aes* from the other metals.

In fact, the above survey of Augustan *aes* reveals that the characteristic feature about the presence of *SC* on the coins is not so much its connection with the oak-wreath as its invariable connection with the moneyer's name and the title III VIR A.A.A.F.F., at least as long as the moneyers appear on the coins. Both elements point in the same direction, to the official authority behind the coin; it is hardly simple coincidence that the two items appear together.

This leads directly into the next problem: is it possible on general grounds for the letters *SC* to have the meaning suggested here? ⁴¹

SC on coins of the Republic

A number of coins (mostly denarii) from the last century of the Republic bear the inscription *SC* or *EX SC*. The earliest known are denarii from shortly before 110 B.C. (Crawford, *RRC*, no. 286/1) inscribed with *EX SC*. This formula is occasionally found in the remaining period of the Republic, but *SC* becomes the more usual one; it appears for the first time on a denarius of about 82 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 364).

³⁸ *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 243–70; *RIC* Aug. nos. 198–218.

³⁹ Kraft, 'Datierung', 1951–52, 28–9; Crawford, *RRCH*, 1969, Table XVIII. Against this Callu-Rosati, 'Dépôt', 1964, 65–7, like Mattingly, *BMCEmp* 1, p. xcv, prefer to consider the asses of Piso as the first issue of asses. However these coins are to be explained, they are in any case a short-lived phenomenon, representing an exceptional situation. The rest of the issues of the three moneyers (including many asses, cf. Callu-Rosati, 'Dépôt', 1964, 76–7) are perfectly normal.

⁴⁰ 'SC', 1962, 28–9. Kraft certainly puts forward the not very convincing opinion that the Augustus head of the as can be connected with the symbolism of the oak-wreath. 'Es ist das Bild des Empfängers der Ehrung und gehört eigentlich zur vollen Darstellung des Themas' (p. 28). Thus, the connection can 'immerhin bedingt erkannt werden' (p. 29).

⁴¹ For the sake of completeness, a few words should be added about the period after the principate of Augustus. With the introduction of the quadrans in c. 9 B.C. the letters *SC* could still have functioned as a

guarantee that the coin was legal tender, or they might be mere convention. Obviously the guarantee must have been felt more and more superfluous as time went on, and it is therefore not surprising that it tends to disappear. (This is perhaps detectable in the quadrans, where *SC* is placed rather freely). The imperial propaganda machine simply took over the large, and for its purposes very suitable, area of the sestertius (first instance: Gaius, *BMCEmp* Cal. nos. 33–5, pl. 28, 3; see the list in Kraft, 'SC', 1962, p. 33), the first step in this direction being the elimination of the names and titles of the moneyers towards the end of the reign of Augustus. Furthermore, there was probably a change in the conception of the guarantee behind the coinage: in the period after Augustus the portrait of the emperor is extended to denominations of *aes* other than the as, and this portrait, in accordance with constitutional development, may have been taken to refer to the guarantee behind the coin. (Cf. the 'coin of the emperor' in *Mark* xii, 13–17.) Also the interpretation of *SC* may in fact have undergone a development, cf. below, p. 121–2 with note.

These inscriptions regularly appear together with an indication of the title of the coining authority: *Quaestor designatus*, *Quaestor*, *Aedilis curulis*, *Praetor*, *Curator denariis flandis*, *Imperator*; and it is therefore commonly assumed that the formula refers to the decision of the senate which authorized this coinage by the man in question, instead of the normal moneyer. The letters *SC* and *EX SC* thus do not appear as a rule on coins struck by ordinary moneyers. When they do, it seems that the coinage in question falls outside their ordinary official duties. Some of the issues are perhaps connected with the performance of games.⁴²

However, there is also another meaning of *EX SC* and *SC* on coins of the Republic. On a few of these the formula has a distinct relation to the type-content and not to the authorizing of the coin:

- (a) Denarius—c. 66 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 419/2)
Ob.: Head of Alexandria. ALEXANDREA
Rv.: M. Lepidus placing wreath on the head of Ptolemy V.
 TVTOR REG. S.C. PONF. MAX. M. LEPIDVS.
- (b) Denarius—c. 66 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 419/3)
Ob.: Head of the vestal Aemilia.
Rv.: The Basilica Aemilia. AIMILIA REF. S.C. M. LEPIDVS.
- (c) Denarius—c. 42–38 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 511/3, cf. 1–2 and 4)
Ob.: Head of Pompey the Great. MAG. PIVS IMP. ITER.
Rv.: Neptune between Anapias and Amphinomus. PRAEF. CLAS. ET ORAE MARIT. EX S.C.
- (d) Denarius, Gallia Cisalpina—Octavian, 43–42 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 490/1, cf. 3 and no. 497/1)
Ob.: Head of Octavian. C. CAESAR IMP.
Rv.: Equestrian statue of Octavian. S.C.
- (e) Denarius, Gallia Cisalpina—Octavian, 41 B.C. (*RRC*, no. 497/3)
Ob.: Bust of Mars. CAESAR IIIIVIR R.P.C.
Rv.: Aquila between two *signa*. S.C.⁴³

The use of (*EX*) *SC* in the last three instances may be seen as reflecting the need to appeal to the senate to provide activities of the civil wars with a stamp of legality. In the first two instances, also, *SC* serves the propagandist purposes of the moneyer in giving, in honorific terms, legality to an act.

On Republican coins, the possible meanings of *SC* are thus two, and these must be considered in interpreting *SC* on the coins of the principate. In the light of the Republican precedents, the choice of one interpretation for some cases need not exclude the second interpretation for other cases.⁴⁴ Normally on Republican coins no doubt exists as to which meaning *SC* has in a given case. If this reasoning is extended to the principate of Augustus, the uses of *SC* should also fall into two categories: in one, represented by the precious metal coinage,⁴⁵ *SC* would refer to the type-content, and in the other, represented by the *aes*, it would refer to the authorizing of the coinage.

What has seemed hitherto a decisive obstacle to this—otherwise natural—solution is that whereas *SC* in the Republic pointed to an extraordinary issue, under the principate it appears on coins which bear the title of IIIIVIR A.A.A.F.F. and thus are indicated as being ordinary issues.⁴⁶ This is, however, only apparently a paradox. It remains true that

⁴² H. Mattingly, 'Some New Studies of the Roman Republican Coinage', *PBA* 39, 1953, 271–7; 'Roman Numismatics: Miscellaneous Notes', *PBA* 43, 1957, 188–9; 'Roman Numismatics: Further Miscellaneous Notes', *PBA* 46, 1960, 255–66; 'Various Numismatic Notes', *PBA* 49, 1963, 329–43; Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 23–4; Crawford, *RRC*, ch. 4. Mattingly, in his list in *PBA* 39, 1953, 274, also includes a *tribunus aerarius* (*RRC*, no. 404) and *praefectus classis et orae maritimae* (*RRC*, no. 311). However, in spite of *RRC*, no. 394 (TA on *denarius* of C. Postumius, c. 74 B.C.), the TA of *RRC*, no. 404

will probably have been an abbreviation for Titus Tadius, supposed ancestor of the moneyer T. Vettius Sabinus (cf. *RRC*, no. 344). As to the *praefectus classis et orae maritimae*, *SC* probably refers to his title, not to the actual coining (see below).

⁴³ See bibliography in previous note.

⁴⁴ Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 25 chooses exclusively one possibility (the more unusual one).

⁴⁵ *BMCEmp* Aug. nos. 1–4, p. 3 n., nos. 38–9, 55, 90–4; cf. 77–84, 86–88, 90, p. 19; *RIC* Aug. nos. 22, 95–6, 108, 159–60.

⁴⁶ Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 24.

(EX) SC on Republican coins normally signified that the coinage was issued by decision of the senate and to meet some extraordinary circumstances whether these concerned the issuing magistrate, the purpose of the issue, or some other unusual element. The function of the letters SC was to make it clear to the public that the coin was, in spite of this, legal tender.⁴⁷ So it is not only not paradoxical, but quite logical, that SC and III VIR A.A.A.F.F. appear together. Both of them underline the same thing: that the legal authorities, the senate and the ordinary moneyers entitled to coin in all metals, are behind the coin.⁴⁸

But is there a precise Republican parallel to our situation, i.e., where the extraordinary circumstance indicated by the SC placed on the coin is the issue of a coin with a new metal-content? Not to my knowledge, but nor should it be expected. In the Republic, fundamental and far-reaching reforms of coinage, to which a reform of the metal and weight must belong, were not made by senatorial decision, but by law.⁴⁹ Searching for parallels, we must thus not look for a SC, but for a law.

Such a parallel can be found. By the *Lex Plautia Papiria*, probably of 91 B.C., (i) the silver sestertius was revived after over 100 years; and (ii) the bronze as was reduced to half an uncia.⁵⁰ The new coins actually mention the law:

(a) Sestertius—c. 91–90 B.C. (RRC, no. 337/4, cf. no. 340/3)

Ob.: Head of Roma. E.L.P. (i.e., *Ex Lege Papiria*)

Rv.: Victory in biga. D. SILANVS.

(b) As (RRC, no. 338/1, cf. semis, triens, and quadrans).

Ob.: Head of Janus

Rv.: Prow. L.P.D.A.P. (i.e., *Lege Papiria De Assis Pondere*⁵¹)

The law is mentioned on each of the denominations included by the reform, but not invariably.⁵² In this respect the coins differ from the *aes* of the principate; but the basic fact remains that we have here a precedent whereby the introduction of a new coin was accompanied by a mention of the authorization on the coin itself. In the period after 91–90 B.C. the senate often took important decisions on the coinage, presenting itself officially as the authority behind the coin by placing SC and EX SC on the issues.⁵³ Since, then, there is mention on the coinage itself of the legal decision behind a new issue, and since there is extensive use of SC to vouch for the legality of an issue, the situation of the principate was sufficiently well prepared and the SC could be read by the public as a guarantee and authorization of a new issue.

Provincial issues

Two reasons make it impossible to treat the SC on Roman issues without any consideration of contemporaneous provincial issues. First, the Roman *aes* series was part of a common plan for the coining of *aes* in the empire; it was only one of the six main official series which, together with other issues struck by representatives of the central and the local administrations, were intended to cover the need for *aes* throughout the empire.⁵⁴ Secondly, a reverse very similar to the Roman one is actually found as a fixed mark on one

⁴⁷ It follows that any particular interpretation of EX SC or SC must depend on what the extraordinary circumstances were about any given coin. Thus we cannot decide *a priori* whether SC means that the monetary magistrate was coining by a SC, or if it means that the coin was struck by SC.

⁴⁸ This might also explain why the *tresviri* are called only III VIR on coins of gold and silver, whereas on *aes* they are invariably styled carefully with the full title, stressing their competence in all the coinage metals. Indeed, P. Licinius Stolo and M. Sanquinus, who are the only moneyers to be named on AV, AR and AE, style themselves III VIR on precious metals, but III VIR AAAFF on *aes*, *BMCEmp.* Aug. nos. 69 ff., cf. 191 ff.

⁴⁹ Th. Mommsen, *Geschichte des römischen Münzwesens* 364.

⁵⁰ Crawford, *RRC* ch. 5, section 1.

⁵¹ This is the interpretation of H. Gaebler, 'Zur Münzkunde Makedoniens', *Zeitschrift f. Numismatik* 23, 1902, 174, n. 5, against Mommsen's tentative suggestion in *Münzwesen* 582, n. 354, 'Lege Papiria De Aere Publico', which is the more commonly accepted one (Sydenham, *CRR*, p. 104; H. A. Grueber, *Coins of the Roman Republic in the British Museum* 1, 282, n. 1).

⁵² See, for instance, *RRC*, no. 339.

⁵³ Mommsen, *Münzwesen* 377–8 and 389; *RSIR* II, 639–42.

⁵⁴ Grant, *FITA* 91 ff., cf. 1; *SMACA* 1953, XI–XIII; Heichelheim, *Econ. Hist.* III, 212 ff. In what follows the arrangement of *SMACA*, 1953, is used.

of the other series. But there are also rather cogent reasons for caution in interpreting the connection between these series and their symbolism. The evidence for establishing these interpretations is simply not available. Thus, the basic preliminaries to the solution of the problem—such as identification of time and place of the issues—are to a distressing degree lacking. So I shall limit myself to the following remarks.

The SC reverse belongs to the large eastern series which was possibly issued in Antioch, and which was started some time after 23 B.C.:⁵⁵

(a) Asses (?) in bronze; average weight perhaps a little above $\frac{1}{2}$ uncia (perhaps aimed at $\frac{2}{3}$).

Ob.: IMP. AVGVST. TR. POT. Laureate head of Augustus.

Rv.: S.C. in laurel wreath.

(b) Semisses (?) in bronze. Average weight perhaps about $\frac{2}{3}$ uncia.

Ob.: AVGVST. TR. POT. Bare or laureate head of Augustus.

Rv.: As above.⁵⁶

Why is a SC mentioned on these coins? An obvious start would be to compare this reverse with reverses of the main official series, where we have apparent parallels in the Roman SC, and in the legends CA, COL.NEM., and ROMA ET AVGVSTVS. However, this method is hardly feasible. It presupposes that all six series were established on one single principle. But this does not hold. It is true that the aes series discussed above are apparently co-ordinated and part of a common plan. But that this does not necessarily imply unity in all visible aspects of the coins is shown by the fact that the alloys are different.⁵⁷ On the other hand, it seems improbable that two reverses such as those of Rome and Antioch (?), which present such close similarities, could possibly have meant very different things, the more so as they were started at about the same time.

I should very tentatively suggest that the reverse at Antioch (?) is an imitation of the Roman one. It is found on this series especially, perhaps because it was started at the same time as the Roman series, or perhaps it was the first to follow it. Perhaps the imitation was simply automatic, due to an idea that reverses of aes ought to have this mark, SC. But it may also have the same explanation as at Rome: this very extensive series introduced a new coin type and a break with tradition; old Seleucid coins were thereby made obsolete by new denominations and types, which may well have been placed into some relation to the existing coins.⁵⁸ This might have been done by a SC.

SC in the principate of Augustus. The senate in financial administration

Even if it might have been strictly speaking a constitutional novelty, there can be nothing surprising in the fact that a coinage reform under Augustus was passed in the form of a SC rather than by a law. On the one hand, this development had been prepared by the late Republican senate's competence in this sphere; on the other hand, Augustus will not have had reason to reverse the development. It is not impossible that the SC was followed by a law, but the question is formal and need not be discussed here. The essential fact is that the SC is what is chosen to impress the public. Is it probable in fact that Augustus chose the senate to play this rôle?

This question⁵⁹ only creates a difficulty if one sees a sharp contrast between the orders emanating from Augustus and those issued by the senate. It is surely time to stop doing so: Augustus ruled through the senate. The formal rights he possessed amply provided for use

⁵⁵ Antioch is commonly assumed, but as yet not proved, *SMACA*, 1953, 125, with references. The certain point in the dating of the issue is the *terminus post quem* furnished by the title of *tribunicia potestas*. Grant (*SMACA*, 1953, 123 ff.) by employment of stylistic criteria (similarity of portraits) arrives at a date about 14 B.C. or shortly afterwards. This very uncertain method might in fact lead to a date of 20–19 B.C. (portraits in *SMACA*, 1953, dl. II, 2 and 4). The quite exceptional forerunner of the series, the bilingual issue, cannot be precisely dated (*FITA*, 1946, 98; *SMACA*, 1953, 123, 126;

W. Wruck, *Die syrische Provinzialprägung von Augustus bis Trajan*, 1931, no. 13).

⁵⁶ Series 3 of *SMACA*, 1953, 7–8.

⁵⁷ Apart from the Roman series apparently only Series 4 (Asia Minor) of *SMACA* has the new coins of orichalcum and copper. The rest of the series is in the usual bronze alloy, *SMACA*, 1953, 1–13.

⁵⁸ *The Excavations at Dura-Europos. Final Report VI: The Coins*, by A. R. Bellinger, 1949, 202, 196 ff.

⁵⁹ Already discussed in Grant, *FITA* 92 ff.; 424 ff.

of the senate as a channel of his directives,⁶⁰ and closer study of the methods actually followed by Augustus confirms that he utilized these rights.⁶¹

In the particular situation in which he found himself, Augustus' possible methods of introducing a coinage-reform would be either by a law or by a *SC*.⁶² A *SC* would be relatively simple to arrange,⁶³ and it might be completely dictated by Augustus.⁶⁴ There is no reason to see any difficulty in the fact that the *SC*—and not the real initiator, Augustus—is put forward as the dominating feature on the coin.⁶⁵ This is quite in accordance with what we observe of Augustus' style of government. Anxious though he always was to dominate the working of the system, his efforts as to the Republican forms were rather to keep them as untouched as possible. The *res publica restituta* implied the theoretical sovereignty of the senate and the people; and particularly in spheres concerning the senate the formalities were, as far as possible, painstakingly observed.⁶⁶ The financial administration and the coinage were traditionally very important prerogatives of the senate,⁶⁷ but at the same time were spheres which it was naturally essential for Augustus to control. The senate was central to the structure of Republican financial administration; with it rested powers of decision and control. Magistrates responsible to the senate administered the actual execution of measures both in Italy and in the provinces, and the *aerarium*, the state treasury where day-to-day accounting was done, was directly under the control of the senate.

The fundamental change which the principate brought about was the introduction of a single man whose vast political and economic resources gave him every opportunity of dominating the system, a fact which, in the long run, brought with it the rise of a new administrative apparatus, the *fiscus* and the new imperial staff in the financial administration. But under the early principate few formal changes were made in Republican practice. The evidence in general points to a continuation of Republican methods in basic principle. The senate and the *aerarium* still formed the foundation of the financial administration. The *aerarium* was still the state treasury and the theoretical recipient of the revenues of the empire.⁶⁸ Yet it is significant that Augustus felt it necessary to change the Republican formalities at such a conspicuous point as the direction of the *aerarium*.⁶⁹ His reforms, transferring the direction from the quaestors to persons of higher rank, who had consequently more experience and authority, were probably aimed at more competent direction, while at the same time securing for himself the effective control; all this points to the real significance of the *aerarium*. It is hardly a mere coincidence that the two reforms of Augustus occur precisely before the two fundamental revisions of his position in 27 and 23 B.C. The reform of 28 B.C. creating *praefecti* (together with the simultaneous conduct of the census and the regulation of the army) was probably for Octavian a preliminary step to the 'translation' into the hands of senate and people of the *res publica* on 13 January, 27 B.C. Similarly, the reform of 23 B.C. transferring the direction of the *aerarium* from *praefecti* to praetors may be connected with the regulation of Augustus' legal position. Until

⁶⁰ E.g. the right to convene the senate at any time, the rights relating to his procedural powers in senatorial debates (I am here not speaking of political reality), the right to annul decisions, and, after A.D. 13, the possibility of passing *senatusconsulta* in his *consilium* without even the collaboration of the senate. O'Brien Moore, s.v. 'Senatus', *RE* Suppl. VI (1935), coll. 771-3; J. Crook, *Consilium principis*, 1955, 8-19; V. Arangio-Ruiz, 'La legislazione' (in *Augustus, Studi in occasione del bimillenario augusteo*, 1938) 123-6; F. De Martino, *Storia della Costituzione Romana* IV, 1962, 486 ff., 500-3.

⁶¹ Material in S. Riccobono, *Acta Divi Augusti*, 1945; Th. A. Abele, *Der Senat unter Augustus*, 1907; O'Brien Moore, op. cit. col. 809; P. Sattler, *Augustus und der Senat*, 1960. The very existence of the probouleutic committee shows the wish of Augustus to make the senate work, but under his control.

⁶² Or both; but not by edict, which is an order and statement of intention by a magistrate, and which Augustus did not use in Rome. Arangio-Ruiz, 'Legislazione', 127.

⁶³ Cf. Pomponius, *Dig.* 1, 2, 2, 9: 'Deinde quia

difficile plebs convenire coepit, populus certe multo difficilium in tanta turba hominum, necessitas ipsa curam rei publicae ad senatum deduxit'.

⁶⁴ Cf. the later development, wherein the 'oratio principis' is quoted as source of law instead of the subsequent *SC*.

⁶⁵ Cf. *contra* Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 20.

⁶⁶ G. E. F. Chilver, 'Augustus and the Roman Constitution, 1939-50', *Historia* 1950, 408-35; Salmon, 'Evolution', 1956; Libermanome, 'Principato', 1959; L. Wickert, s.v. 'Princeps', *RE* XXII (1954), coll. 2068-71.

⁶⁷ Polyb. VI, 13 1; cf. De Martino, *Costituzione* II, 175 ff.

⁶⁸ Vell. II, 39, cf. T. Frank, 'On Augustus and the *aerarium*', *JRS* 1933, 133-48.

⁶⁹ This was, especially for the conservative Augustus, a remarkably radical infringement of the powers of the Republican magistrature. As late as A.D. 44 this conflict is mirrored in Claudius' attempt to re-establish the quaestors at the head of the *aerarium*, Tac., *Ann.* XIII, 29; Dio LX, 24, 1; Suet., *Claud.* 24.

that time, he had as consul formally been able to issue mandates to the *praefecti*.⁷⁰ His resignation of the consulate removed this power, and the direction of the *aerarium* was consequently transferred to more independent magistrates, the praetors.⁷¹

As a corollary to this, the senate continued to be the scene of debates on financial questions. In the descriptions of these debates from sources for the Julio-Claudian period the impression given is that the issue was always determined by the princeps.⁷² Yet a more interesting fact is that the accounts show that such questions belonged in principle to the senate, and that the emperor acknowledged this principle in consulting that body. The senate was competent also in the fiscal affairs of the imperial provinces. Thus in A.D. 23 the senate discussed the question of remission of tribute for communities of the then imperial province of Achaëa.⁷³ This evidence notwithstanding, the principle may have borne little relation to reality. It is clear that a number of fiscal decisions at every level were made outside the senate, and it is equally true that the collaboration of the senate might because of the position of the princeps be extremely illusory.⁷⁴

The reopening of the mint of Rome is in strict accordance with Augustus' policy of recreating the system as far as possible in the Republican manner. When Augustus intervened openly in the financial administration, it was normally in situations where his generosity could be seen to advantage. In the matter of coinage, Augustus might determine the contents of the reform, but, as far as his official image was concerned, there was no advantage to be gained in claiming to be the formal authority as well. Perhaps, rather, the opposite was the case. His gratuitous concession to the senate and to Republican forms may have brought an additional advantage, in that the public had already become used to reading SC on the coinage as authorizing any surprising or extraordinary features.

It may well be doubted, however, whether Augustus' revival of the mint of Rome was quite wholehearted: the issues of precious metals were modest in quantity, and soon stopped.⁷⁵ Augustus preferred to base his system on issues in the provinces. This meant in fact administrative dispersion; but it does not mean that we must return to the theory of divided coining authorities. The whole system of coinage may well have been under the theoretical authority of the senate, in the same way as the senate was notionally competent in cases concerning revenues of both senatorial and imperial provinces.

So far the question of principle. In this particular case, I should venture to suggest that the actual dispersion of the mints, combined with the continued use of the letters SC as the characteristic mark of the *aes*, may in fact have led the senate to consider this coinage as especially 'senatorial'. This may be reflected in the events of A.D. 43, when the senate decided to melt down the *aes* coinage bearing the image of Gaius.⁷⁶ Even apart perhaps from the possibility that gold and silver were considered too precious for this sort of demonstration,⁷⁷ the decision is a sign of a special senatorial concern for the *aes* coinage, the motive

⁷⁰ 'Praefectus' is the 'Titel von Amtsträgern und Offizieren in einem Vorgesetztenverhältnis zu anderen, die als Gehilfe und Mandatare von Magistraten und vor allem nachher vom Kaiser eingesetzt wurden. Ihre Stellung beruhte, ohne eigentlich amtlich im Rechtssinn zu sein, auf dem freien Willen eines Mandaten, der einen p. mit einem bestimmten Mandat versehen hatte', W. Ensslin, s.v. 'Praefectus', *RE* xxii (1954), col. 1257. Cp. Sachers, s.v. 'Praefectura', 'Praefectus', *RE* xxii (1954), col. 2349.

⁷¹ Seen in this light, the reform of 23 represents a loosening of Augustus' too conspicuous legal control of the *aerarium*, just as the constitutional reforms of the same time and the resignation of the consulate meant abandoning an arrangement which had become too conspicuous. For the changes of 28 and 23 to the *aerarium*: Dio LIII, 2; 32, 2; Tac. *Ann.* XIII, 29; Suet., *Aug.* 36.

⁷² E.g. Tac., *Ann.* I, 76; II, 47; IV, 13; Suet., *Tib.* 30; Tac., *Ann.* XII, 61; 62; XIII, 56; XV, 18.

⁷³ Tac., *Ann.* IV, 13: 'factaque auctore eo [Tiberius] senatus consulta, ut civitati Cibyrticae apud Asiam, Aeginensi apud Achaïam motu terrae labefactis, subveniretur remissione tributi in trien-

nium'. Achaïa had been taken over by the princeps in A.D. 15 (Tac., *Ann.* I, 76).

⁷⁴ The best surviving illustration of this intricacy in Augustus' use of the senate is perhaps the SC *Calvisianum* of 4 B.C.: a SC valid for all provinces, prepared in the *consilium* of Augustus, passed in the senate in Augustus' presence and with his signature, and by decision of Augustus sent to the provinces, accompanied by his edict. See F. de Visscher, *Les édits d'Auguste découverts à Cyrène*, 1940.

This section deals only summarily with a complicated subject; see also P. A. Brunt, 'The Fiscus and its Development', *JRS* 1966, 75-91; F. Millar, 'The *aerarium* and its officials under the Empire', *JRS* 1964, 33-40; 'The Fiscus in the first two centuries', *JRS* 1963, 29-42, with references to the literature on the subject.

⁷⁵ H. Mattingly, 'Origins of the Imperial Coinage in Republican Times', *NC* 1919, 228; 230; C. H. V. Sutherland, 'The senatorial gold and silver coinage of 16 B.C.', *NC* 1943, 40 ff.; *BMC* *Emp* I, pp. xv-xvi; *RIC* I, p. 3.

⁷⁶ Dio LX, 22, 3.

⁷⁷ Thus Kraft, 'SC', 1962, 10, who also draws attention to the fact that Messalina, not the senate, disposed of the melted metal.

being perhaps the wish to destroy coins on which the portrait of Gaius was combined with the specially 'senatorial' letters *SC* on the *aes*. Moreover, this change in the interpretation of *SC* may also account for the different uses of *SC* and *EX SC* on coins after the Augustan period. Since *SC* had established itself as the special mark of the *aes*, it is natural that the Republican use of *SC* or *EX SC* indiscriminately, referring both to the authorizing of the coinage and to the type-content, was no longer possible. So, when a senatorial decree under Claudius appears on the coinage, with reference to the type-content, the formula is *EX SC*.⁷⁸ This was a direct continuation of the second meaning of (*EX*) *SC* already noticed in the Republican and Augustan issues.⁷⁹ Now the difference of meaning had become explicit, crystallized in the formula.⁸⁰

University of Odense, Denmark

⁷⁸ Claudius, aurei and denarii, *BMCEmp* Claud. nos. 3-4, 16-19, 84-8; *RIC* Claud. nos. 19-21, 98-9; Nero, aurei and denarii, *BMCEmp* Nero nos. 1-10, 12-51; *RIC* Nero nos. 1, 9-10, 18-36.

⁷⁹ Above, pp. 116-7.

⁸⁰ This is perhaps most strikingly demonstrated by the use of the formulas on *aes*, where *EX SC* is used with reference to type-content: *BMCEmp* Claud.

nos. 115-20; 185-6; *RIC* Claud. nos. 60-1, in fact a commemoration of the presentation of the civic oak-wreath to Claudius. cf. the objections against Kraft ('*SC*', 1962, 33 ff.) on this point in Mattingly, *NC*, 1963, 256. Kraft's attack on the possibility of two distinct meanings for *SC* and *EX SC* is based on a failure to discriminate coins of the time of Augustus from coins of a later date (o.c., p. 37).