

# IMAGE AND AUTHORITY IN THE COINAGE OF AUGUSTUS\*

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(Plates I–II)

Epictetus speaks:

Just as it is not open to the banker or the greengrocer to reject the value of Caesar's coin, but he is obliged, whether he likes it or not, when you offer it, to hand it over for what he has for sale in exchange for it, so it is with the soul. The good on its appearance instantly attracts to itself, the bad repels. The soul will never reject the worth of something with the manifest appearance of goodness, no more than one would reject Caesar's coin.

And again:

... human qualities, the stamp (*character*) with which a man comes imprinted on his disposition, [are] like the stamps we look for on coins too: if we find them, we accept their value, if we don't, we chuck them out. 'Whose stamp does this sesterce bear? Trajan's? Take it. Nero's? Chuck it out.' The process is just the same. 'What stamp do his judgements bear? Is he kind, sociable...? Accept him. Just make sure he hasn't the stamp of a Nero... Does he beat passers-by about the head if he fancies?...'

These two passages are among the few in ancient literature which offer an insight into the function of coin design.<sup>2</sup> What did people look for when they inspected a coin? The first passage offers an answer we can understand: they looked for the stamp of legal authority, and what bore the imperial head was legal tender, to be accepted willy-nilly. The second is more surprising: they made a value judgement, and if they condemned

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B. Levick (1982), 'Propaganda and the Imperial Coinage', *Antichthon* 16, 104–16  
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Note also the following catalogue abbreviations:  
AMC = *Catalogue of Coins of the Roman Empire in the Ashmolean Museum*. 1. *Augustus (c. 31 B.C.–A.D. 14)*, ed. C. H. V. Sutherland and C. M. Kraay  
BMC = *Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum*. 1. *Augustus to Vitellius*, by H. Mattingly (1923)  
BNC = *Bibliothèque Nationale. Catalogue des monnaies de l'empire romain*. 1. *Auguste*, by J.-B. Giard (1976)  
RIC = *The Roman Imperial Coinage*. 1. *31 BC–AD 69*, second edition, by C. H. V. Sutherland (1984).  
References are to the coins of Augustus except where otherwise specified.  
RRC = *Roman Republican Coinage*, M. H. Crawford (1974)  
<sup>a</sup> Arrian, *Discourses of Epictetus* 3. 3–4 and 4. 5. 15–18. For coin testing as an analogy, cf. 1. 20. 8–9.  
T. O. Mabbott, 'Epictetus and Nero's coinage', *CP* 36 (1941), 398–9 unnecessarily argues that Nicopolis had locally demonetized Nero's coinage. See further F. Millar, 'Epictetus and the imperial court', *JRS* 55 (1965), 141–8.  
<sup>b</sup> On the function of coin types in general, see P. Grierson, *Numismatics* (1975), 72 ff.

Nero's character, they condemned his coin. Behind them lie two apparently contrasting conceptions of authority: the first is legalistic (the coin is marked as 'official'); the second may be termed 'charismatic', for the image depends on an appeal to values the user shares.

The symbolism of contemporary coinage is so depleted that we find it hard to imagine that the two conceptions may coincide. The 'Marianne' of the French coinage with her Phrygian cap of liberty has come to function as a mark of legal authority; yet in her time 'Marianne' has been a powerfully emotive symbol of revolution and freedom (as in Delacroix's *Liberty leading the people at the barricades*), and the background to her presence on the coinage is extended controversy over the appropriate 'face of authority' in post-revolutionary France.<sup>3</sup> In Roman imperial coinage, the appeal to emotive values is much closer to the surface than it is in the case of our legalistic conception of authority. This paper is an attempt to explore the links between image, authority and values in Roman imperial coinage. The argument will advance on two levels, the general and the particular. I start by considering the function of coin design in general, arguing (against much recent scholarship) that it must be seen as persuasive. The coinage of Augustus will then serve as a particular case-study, not only to test my hypothesis, but to suggest how the coin types may illuminate the nature of the Augustan regime.

### I. THE FUNCTION OF THE IMAGE

Recent discussion of the function of coin types has tended to revolve around the term 'propaganda'. Opinions are sharply divided as to whether it fits the processes of organization of public opinion in the ancient world in general, or in the particular case of Roman imperial coinage.<sup>4</sup> In the following discussion I shall avoid the term, which threatens to distract the debate into a semantic one. The substantive question is about the persuasive content of the imperial coin type. Did the imperial type seek to persuade? If so, who was persuading whom of what? Two recent contributions to the debate have independently sought to play down or deny a persuasive function to the coin type.

Conventionally, imperial types (particularly reverse types) have been used as a window on the mind of the emperors themselves. Here we have the emperor speaking directly to his people; and if what he says is not necessarily wholly truthful, at least it gives us an authentic picture of how the emperor wished to be seen in contrast to the biased representation of the historian. The inadequacies of this interpretation have been exposed by Levick. The difficulty lies in imagining that emperors personally played a significant part in the day-to-day choice of types (and given the astonishing multiplicity of types employed, there was much choosing to be done). It is more plausible to see lesser men at work, whether the senatorial *tresviri monetales*, or a high imperial official like the secretary *a rationibus*, or a lower mint official like the *procurator monetae*. Levick therefore proposes an inversion of the conventional picture: instead of the emperor addressing persuasion to his subjects, we have the subjects offering symbols of respect to the emperor himself.<sup>5</sup> This suggestion is to be welcomed, at least in its model of the mechanics of selection. By emphasizing the flow from below upwards, it aligns coinage with what we know of other main types of public language, panegyric and court poetry. It is unnecessary to suppose that the coin designers, any more than Pliny or Horace, received direction from the emperor on the terms in which they ought to glorify him.

<sup>3</sup> The potency of French republican symbolism is vividly brought out by M. Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle. Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France 1789-1880* (1981), unfortunately saying little on the subject of coins.

<sup>4</sup> See my remarks in *Historia* 30 (1981), 307-8 and the discussion of Levick (1982), 104-7. For rejection of the term cf. G. G. Belloni, *Contributi del Istituto di Storia Antica* [della Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore] IV (1976), 131 and *ANRW* II, 1, 997; F. Millar in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (ed. F. Millar and E. Segal, 1984), 45. Sutherland (1976), 101 now rejects the term 'propaganda'; Sutherland (1983), 74 argues

that 'propaganda' leads to misunderstanding if understood as the spreading of *falsehood*. Numismatists dealing with other periods do not fight shy of the term: cf. M. Jones, 'The medal as an instrument of propaganda in late 17th and early 18th century Europe', *NC* 142 (1982), 117-26. Cf. also for a later period, R. W. Scribner, *For the sake of simple folk: popular propaganda for the German Reformation* (1981).

<sup>5</sup> Levick (1982). Cf. p. 107: 'types were intended to appeal, not to the public, but to the man whose portrait as a rule occupied the obverse of the coins: they were a public tribute to a great individual'.

But to accept Levick's suggestion is not to divest the coinage of a persuasive function. Pliny's panegyric of Trajan may have been undirected, even unsolicited; but it would be naive to pretend that such a speech, not only delivered orally but subsequently published, did not have as a central aim to persuade contemporaries and posterity of the merits of Trajan. It is equally hard to dissociate a numismatic tribute aimed by an official at the emperor from an attempt to persuade the coin-using public that they too should pay the same tribute to Caesar. Nor would it be easy for the public to distinguish the niceties of authorship (here coins are unlike literary publications). It was too easy to assume that what bore Caesar's name emanated from Caesar. This is in fact the assumption made by the few authors from Suetonius to the anonymous pamphlet *de rebus bellicis* who actually mention type selection: choice of types, like everything else, is assumed to be an imperial decision, though Suetonius at least must have known that the practicalities were more complex.<sup>6</sup> So, while Levick's hypothesis offers a more plausible model of the mechanics of selection, and nicely replaces the interpretation of coin designs as 'messages' from the emperor, with one of tributes to the emperor, paradoxically it leaves the function of the type from the user's point of view unaffected: it may still be read as persuasion emanating from above.

Crawford, too, seeks to invert the conventional picture of the persuasive thrust of imperial coins, but in a different way.<sup>7</sup> His case is a modification and refinement of the classic scepticism of Jones.<sup>8</sup> Because Jones's intention was to shift the centre of numismatic study away from the ideological to the economic (successfully, in the event), his case was polemical and overstated: the type content of imperial coins, he argued, passed unnoticed by the sources, was of trivial importance at the time, and was in any case largely unintelligible. In fact the types were both largely intelligible and occasionally noted by the sources.<sup>9</sup> Crawford's more careful examination of the sources produces two interesting observations. In the first place, coin types are less often noticed than other forms of publicity. It is indeed entirely plausible that if the coins were a vehicle of persuasion, they were not the most important vehicle: monumental sculpture and above all the public rituals and ceremonial that clustered around the imperial cult will have had greater impact.<sup>10</sup> For the same reason we may doubt whether the primary function of the type was 'informative'.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, troops may have received fresh consignments of coins celebrating the latest victory; yet the details of military success were more fully supplied by celebrations and thanksgivings. When Augustus' coins celebrate the capture of Egypt, they do not inform so much as appeal to information already possessed by the user. The capture of Egypt was a symbol of Augustus' termination of civil war, his defeat of the forces of barbarism and tyrannical evil, and remained a theme worth harping on in monuments, poetry and coinage long after the factual information had been absorbed in the remotest corner of the empire.<sup>12</sup>

Crawford's second thesis is that when types *are* noticed, what attracts the most emphatic attention is the head, not the reverse image. Conventional wisdom is that the head is a mark of authority, and that the reverse carries the persuasive content. But as Crawford demonstrates, the imperial head itself constitutes powerful persuasion: the familiar exchange from the Gospels ('Whose is this *image* and superscription?')<sup>13</sup> illustrates how the imperial head made a real impact on the user, and one of the effects of the coinage was to disseminate the visage of a remote ruler across the cities of a Mediterranean empire.

<sup>6</sup> cf. S. R. F. Price, *CR* 29 (1979), 277. Suetonius, *Aug.* 94. 12 and *Nero* 25. 2 explicitly attribute the choice of particular types to the emperors concerned, but characteristically 'collapse' the processes of imperial responsibility by speaking of emperors as 'doing' what was done under them.

<sup>7</sup> Crawford (1983).

<sup>8</sup> Jones (1956). Note Crawford's sympathetic bibliographical *mise-au-point* in the reprint of this paper in *The Roman Economy*, 80 f.

<sup>9</sup> As argued by Sutherland, 'The Intelligibility of Roman Coin Types', *JRS* 49 (1959), 46.

<sup>10</sup> The public rituals associated with the imperial cult are of especial importance here; on the ceremonial aspect of this cult see S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and*

*Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (1984), esp. 101 ff.

<sup>11</sup> cf. Sutherland (1976), 96 ff., esp. 107: 'these themes . . . offered *information*—and not just comment—on matters of major importance' (my italics); Sutherland (1983), 79 disclaims the analogy with a newspaper, but insists on the dissemination of information.

<sup>12</sup> *RIC* 257a (dated to 28 B.C.) and 544 f. (28–7 B.C.); *AMC* 255 ff., 315; *BNC* 905 ff., 928 ff. Note that the sundial laid out on the Campus Martius as late as 9 B.C. celebrated the capture of Egypt: E. Buchner, *Die Sonnenuhr des Augustus* (1982). Its purpose was evidently not *informative*.

<sup>13</sup> Mark 12. 17; Matthew 22. 21; Luke 20. 24.

But having restored to the obverse its persuasive content, Crawford then proceeds to drain the reverse. Unnoticeable, trivial, reverse types, on his account, should be regarded as scarcely more than decorative, the product of artists working in an exuberant artistic tradition.<sup>14</sup> The effect of this thesis is to create a strange imbalance. The obverse is loaded with significance: it both marks authority, giving the coin economic validity, and acts as advertisement. The reverse is correspondingly voided: it neither marks authority nor conveys persuasion; it is little more than figural, an aesthetic exploitation of a blank space, without a discursive power.<sup>15</sup> I shall argue that this contrast between obverse and reverse is false, and that the two faces of a coin must be read as part of a coherent whole.

Conventionally, distinction is made both between 'primary' and 'secondary' function of the coin type, and between function of head and tail. So Crawford distinguishes the functions of republican types: 'The legends and types of ancient coins could be used in two ways, to indicate the authority responsible for the coins and to convey a message put out by that authority. The first piece of information must be given for a coin to be a coin at all, the second may be regarded as an optional extra'.<sup>16</sup> In the case of imperial (though not republican) types this distinction appears to coincide with the distinction between 'heads' and 'tails'. Sutherland's introduction to the latest major catalogue offers a succinct statement. He separates his analysis of obverse and reverse. On the one hand, 'heads': 'What we today term the "obverse" type is generally that which shows the mark of supreme authority, most obviously in the form of the head of a deity, state-personification, or temporal ruler . . .'. On the other hand, the reverse: 'In every case, so far as can be seen, the purpose of the design was informative, or at least informatively suggestive'.<sup>17</sup> Here, too, the 'message' is seen as secondary, for Sutherland holds emphatically that 'coinage under the empire had a primarily economic purpose'.<sup>18</sup>

In effect we are offered a series of binary oppositions, which are thought of as coinciding: obverse/reverse, head/design, authority/message, economic/non-economic, primary/secondary. Already we have seen that these oppositions are not watertight, for the imperial image is both 'authority' and 'message'. Further reflection will dissolve the obverse/reverse opposition in other respects.

1. Both obverse and reverse images represent images of authority. The emperor's head is a symbol of the central power of the state. But any allusion to his successes, qualities or honours on the reverse is also an evocation of authority. Victory is overwhelmingly the commonest of reverse themes at all periods of the empire; it was on victory that the power and authority of the emperor was founded.

2. Both obverse and reverse images are value-laden. The emperor's head is a symbol of authority based in ideal on consent. The emperor was ideally respected and literally worshipped by all his subjects. Any reverse image specifies one of the reasons for which he is respected: the 'good' deserves respect.

3. Both images are consequently persuasive. It is the coin that speaks, not the emperor: and its message is an appeal to a power outside itself, the emperor to whom it does honour. But by paying tribute the coin sets a model to the user, appeals to values which he ought to share, and so encourages him to share them. One sign that emperors consciously exploited this possibility is their use of the head. When the usurper Procopius laid claim to the purple under Valentinian, he reinforced his claim by two symbolic gestures: one was to ride in public with the granddaughter of Constantine; the other to distribute gold coins minted in his image.<sup>19</sup> Hence, too, coinage remains our fullest guide to the usurpers of the third century.

<sup>14</sup> cf. Crawford (1983), 59: 'One problem remains, to find an explanation for the diversity, imaginativeness and often great beauty of Roman imperial coin types . . . The reason, I think, is a combination of accident and human nature'.

<sup>15</sup> I borrow the contrast of 'figural' and 'discursive' from Norman Bryson, *Word and Image. French painting of the Ancien Régime* (1981). His discussion of the very varied degrees and ways artists imbue visual images with content susceptible of being read 'in words' is suggestive in the present context. The presence of

written legends on imperial coin types is in itself a clear pointer to strong 'discursive' content.

<sup>16</sup> *RRC*, p. 712. Note that Crawford's contrast of functions is not a contrast of obv. and rev., which would be inappropriate to republican coinage.

<sup>17</sup> *RIC* 11-13.

<sup>18</sup> Sutherland (1983), 77.

<sup>19</sup> Ammianus 26. 7. 10-11, describing the distribution of 'aureos . . . nummos, effigiatos in vultum novi principis'.

4. Both images are simultaneously economic and non-economic in purpose. The coin seeks to achieve maximum *economic* validity by drawing on images of the maximum *ideological* potency. We cannot subordinate the non-economic image as secondary (an 'optional extra') because it is integral to the economic function of the coin. The economic function of a coin lies in its potential for exchange, not in its design; but only through a design does a piece of metal become a coin, and the design in its nature draws on values outside the economic sphere.<sup>20</sup> Of course, the ideological content of coin types is more prominent at some periods than others. Contemporary coinage is notable for the low level of its ideological appeal. But the relevant factor here is not only the desire of the issuing authority to put across a message, but the availability of value-laden symbols that can command assent in the society within which they are to circulate. The sharper the dissent within Roman society, the more stridently assertive became the symbols deployed on the coinage. Thus the coinage of the rebels of A.D. 68, with its reassertion of the ideals of republican liberty, is manifestly persuasive,<sup>21</sup> while the typology of the peaceful Antonine period, though profuse, sinks to a level of soporific blandness.<sup>22</sup> From this perspective, the extreme variety and liveliness of content that marks Roman coinage from the 130s B.C. to the end of the first century A.D. is a reflection of the degree of political instability that marks that period, and of the tremendous stresses to which the Roman value system was subjected.

To test and flesh out these propositions, I turn now to the coinage of Augustus. The choice of this reign may seem surprising: not only is Augustan coinage exceptionally complex and controversial, but it is by no means 'typical' of the pattern of imperial coinage that was eventually established. It is a period of transition and experimentation in the area of coinage as of so much else. But herein lies its potential for illuminating the nature of the coinage of the empire. Just as interpretation of this reign must be fundamental to any analysis of the nature of the principate, it is precisely at the moment of transition that the emergence of a new idiom in coin language can be seen most clearly. This is not to underestimate the complexity and intractability of many of the questions associated with Augustan coinage.<sup>23</sup> What I have to say, however, scarcely touches on numismatic controversy, except in the one vexed question of the reading of SC. I shall start by showing how ill the conventional contrast of function between obverse and reverse squares with the observable facts of Augustan coinage (II), and then go on to examine the emergence of an idiom suitable to the new regime (III), and the significance of the non-monarchical elements that persisted (IV).

## II. HEADS AND AUTHORITY

Octavian's victory at Actium brought in its wake a momentous change in the physical appearance of Roman coinage—and not only of the state coinage of Rome and the major provincial mints, but of hundreds of independent civic issues across the Mediterranean. It is the result of this change that we take for granted the formula obverse = head of emperor = symbol of authority. Millar has recently drawn attention to the pattern. Until the last year of Caesar's life, there is no certain case of a Roman coin portraying a living Roman. Caesar's new example is rapidly followed by both triumvirs and liberators, and yet even then many issues continued without portraits. 'Then from 31 BC onwards almost every single issue of official Roman coinage, in gold, silver, and bronze, portrays Octavian-

<sup>20</sup> Note that occasionally appeal is made to the virtues of the government in financial affairs, as by the type of LIBERALITAS AVGVSTI, while the types of MONETA and (I have argued) AEQVITAS refer directly to the operations of the mint (see 'Galba's Aequitas', *NC* 141 (1981), 20–39). Nevertheless, the appeal is to values external to the economic function of the coins themselves.

<sup>21</sup> cf. *ibid.*, 37–8; further Sutherland, *NC* 144 (1984), 29–32.

<sup>22</sup> cf. *Historia* 30 (1981), 319.

<sup>23</sup> Much important work has been done on Augustan coinage in the last generation. It is exceptionally well served for catalogues: see *AMC*, *BNC*, *RIC*; also Anne S. Robertson, *Roman Imperial Coins in the Hunter Coin Cabinet* 1 (1962). In addition note the important studies by Kraft, reprinted in his *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (1978), by Sutherland (1976) with 'Some observations on the coinage of Augustus', *Quaderni Ticinesi* 7 (1978), 163; A. Kunisz, *Recherches sur le monnayage et la circulation monétaire sous le règne d'Auguste* (1976).

Augustus.' Civic coinages tell the same story. 'The story of the non-Roman coinage of the Empire is if anything more dramatic . . . between 31 BC and AD 14 portrayals of Augustus are known from 189 different places.' Millar rightly underlines the drama: the shift in symbolic language was nothing short of revolutionary.<sup>24</sup> But what the compression of his account conceals is the gradual nature of the change. Even after Actium portrait heads remained only one of a number of ways of evoking imperial authority. Nor is it necessarily a statement of authority when Augustus' head is portrayed. The formula obverse = head = authority is still in the making.

If we look first at the 'state' coinage, there are very considerable exceptions to Millar's pattern to register. Frequently obverses are without portrait of Augustus. The clearest example is the major series of bronze from the Roman mint, one struck in huge quantities.<sup>25</sup> The four denominations are carefully distinguished by their obverse typology; of the four, only the *as* carries a portrait (Pl. I, 3). On the *sestertius* an oak wreath surrounds the legend OB CIVIS SERVATOS (Pl. I, 1), on the *dupondius* a laurel wreath surrounds AVGVSTVS TRIBVNIC POTEST (Pl. I, 2), while the *quadrantes*, relative late-comers to the series, bear a variety of simple symbols—clasped hands, the cornucopiae, an altar, or other religious emblems. There is a sense in which the *sestertius* and *dupondius* portray Augustus quite as effectively as the *as* by evoking his image. It is in this broader sense that we can generalize more accurately. The only state coins issued between 31 B.C. and A.D. 14 which do not carry an 'image' of Augustus are the little *quadrantes*, and also those coins issued at the end of the reign which already bear the head of Tiberius (Pl. I, 5). But the distinction in this context is critical; for the type of wreath surrounding the legend both had been in the past, and continued even now, to be employed as a reverse type.<sup>26</sup>

In fact, for the purpose of evoking the image of Augustus, types which would later be regarded as 'tails' are both equivalent to 'heads' and almost interchangeable with them. A vivid illustration is the beautiful series issued around the time of Actium.<sup>27</sup> Here, as Kraft was first to show, certain of the types fall into deliberately conceived pairs. In each, Caesar (Octavian) shares the coin with a goddess or god, exchanging places on obverse and reverse. Thus on one of the pair, Caesar's head appears on the obverse, while the reverse has a standing figure of Venus and the legend CAESAR DIVI F (Pl. II, 6); and on the corresponding coin of the pair, Venus' head takes the obverse, while a standing figure of Caesar accompanies the CAESAR DIVI F of the reverse (Pl. II, 5). The intention of this series is manifestly to set up a strong sense of association between Caesar and the goddess with whom he pairs: obverse and reverse must be read together, and it makes no odds whether Caesar's image is of the 'heads' or 'tails' type. The intention of association becomes even more explicit in other pairs in the series, when the heads of the gods absorb the features of Caesar (or Caesar those of the gods) in such a way that it becomes hard to state who is portrayed. Thus the Jupiter with thunderbolt who is represented as a herm on one reverse (Pl. II, 7) acquires in his obverse transformation as a bust the unmistakable features of Caesar (Pl. II, 8).<sup>28</sup> The conventional heads = authority/tails = message opposition would make nonsense of the natural reading of this whole series.

In this Actium series, one typological convention at least is preserved: obverse and reverse are typologically distinct from each other in a way we can instantly recognize, as could the Romans (for the obverse = portrait-head convention was one the Romans had long since inherited from Greece). Yet there are other issues in the reign where this convention is deliberately set aside. A double-headed coin offers a valuable idiom for

<sup>24</sup> F. Millar in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, 44. The revolution in symbolic language applies to a much wider sphere in the visual arts than coinage, as has been brought out by the studies of Paul Zanker, e.g. recently 'Der Apollontempel auf dem Palatin' in *Città e Architettura nella Roma Imperiale* (Analecta Romana, Supp. 10, 1983), 21 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *RIC* 323 ff.; *AMC* 466 ff.; *BNC* 229 ff., etc.

<sup>26</sup> For wreath and legend as rev. cf. *RRC* 481/1 ( *aureus* of Caesar, 44 B.C.); 538/2 (*denarius* of Octavian, 37 B.C.) and numerous civic and provincial

issues under Augustus, e.g. *AMC* 925, 1005, 1039 (all Spain); 691 ff. (Eastern mints).

<sup>27</sup> *RIC* 250 ff.; *AMC* 190 ff.; *BNC* 1 ff. On this series, see Kraft (1978), 292–311; C. H. V. Sutherland, *Quaderni Ticinesi* 1976, 156 ff.; M. H. Crawford, *JRS* 64 (1974), 247 ff. (arguing that the series starts in 34 B.C.).

<sup>28</sup> On these, see Rainer Albert, *Das Bild des Augustus auf den frühen Reichsprägungen* (1981), 21–38 with A. Burnett, *Gnomon* 55 (1983), 563–4.

making a dynastic statement, as when Agrippa is elevated to virtual parity with Augustus (in 13–12 B.C.).<sup>29</sup> It leaves the user, who expects a distinctive obverse, in confusion as to which the obverse is. That sense of confusion is precisely the ‘message’ the coin conveys, just as in the Actium series the confusion of Caesar with various deities is deliberate. Double-tailed coins are even more unexpected (and therefore sensational). The catalogues hesitate (and differ) over which to designate as obverse when one face offers the triumphal *toga picta* and laurels with the legend SPQR PARENT CONS SVO, and the other a triumphal quadriga and the words CAESARI AVGVSTO (Pl. II, 12).<sup>30</sup> But the absence of an obverse is an essential part of the statement the coin makes: the two faces are a continuum, iconographically and grammatically, to be read in either order and proclaiming the fact that they say the same thing. The very absence of the head makes the user ask where it has gone: perhaps it is not too subtle to suggest that this is part of the ‘message’, that it conveys an honour by the senate and people to an absent (and longed-for) Augustus. There are several other cases of double-tailed pieces in the precious metal series of the *tresviri monetales* (to which we will return), and their effect is eye-catching and thought-provoking.<sup>31</sup>

All these later cases may be untypical, but they show how little justification there is for reading obverse and reverse as unconnected statements conveying ‘messages’ of different types. The imperial portrait remains the most potent and common symbol of authority. But the moment we turn to the civic coinage, we are forced to ask what we mean by ‘authority’. For it becomes apparent that a portrait of Augustus cannot always be read as indicating the authority to issue the coin.<sup>32</sup> The issues represent the independent minting, normally in bronze, of hundreds of cities all over the Mediterranean, from east to west. The failure of the standard catalogues to record these civic issues results in a strangely distorted picture of the coinage in circulation in the Roman world; it is the peculiar merit of the Ashmolean Museum catalogue of Augustus’ reign that we are enabled to see the ‘state’ coinage in the context of local issues.<sup>33</sup> It was Burnett who, in the course of work on these neglected issues, observed the significance of the phenomenon by which numerous of these independent local authorities, which had, almost without exception, no tradition of portraying living Romans on their coins, and remained under no legal obligation to do so, increasingly chose to represent Augustus.<sup>34</sup> Much remains to be learnt, notably the chronology of this diffusion: for the changes that this longest and most dynamic of reigns introduced were ones that emerged over the course of decades. One point, however, is plain. The head of Augustus was not used to indicate issuing authority. On the contrary, the very diffusion of Augustus’ image tends to produce a novel pattern whereby the issuing authority is indicated on the reverse. This may be achieved in a variety of ways. Sometimes the name of the issuing city is spelled out—Julia Traducta, Turiaso, etc.; or a symbol of the city is given, like the unmistakable labyrinth of Cnossus, which also names the responsible magistrates (e.g. C. PETRONIO M. ANTONIO IIVIR EX DD (Pl. I, 10)); or both the name of the state and those of the magistrates may be spelled out, as at Bilbilis (MVN AVGVSTA BILBILIS M. SEMP TIBERI L. LVCI VARO around an oak wreath, and II VIR in the centre (Pl. I, 8)).<sup>35</sup> In the case of a local issue it is obviously important to state the authority clearly, since its circulation could not be guaranteed

<sup>29</sup> *RIC* 407 f. (Platorinus, 13 B.C.), 413 f. (Cossus Lentulus, 12 B.C.); *AMC* 301, 305; *BNC* 531 f., 548 f. For the dating, below n. 74.

<sup>30</sup> *RIC* 96 ff.; *AMC* 92 ff. (rejecting previous identification of obv. and rev.); *BNC* 1187 ff.

<sup>31</sup> It is apposite to compare the wording of Horace’s (approximately contemporary) *Odes* 4. 5, esp. 5 ff.: ‘lucem redde tuae, dux bone, patriae: / instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus / adfulsit populo, gratior it dies / et soles melius nitent’ (‘return the light to your country, good leader; for when like spring your face shines on the people, the day passes better and the suns shine brighter’; n.b. the analogy between the *face* of the ruler and the face of the sun). In the precious metal coinage of the *tresviri monetales* ‘headless’ types are found in 16 B.C., when Augustus was absent from Rome (e.g. *AMC* 291 ff.).

<sup>32</sup> On the complex issue of the authority to coin, see, e.g., Sutherland (1976), 5 ff.; Burnett (1977).

<sup>33</sup> cf. A. Burnett, *JRS* 68 (1978), 173 ff. reviewing *AMC*. Grant’s two major studies of Augustan coinage (1946 and 1953) remain impressive for their grasp of the local coinages. For the republic, see now M. H. Crawford, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic. Italy and the Mediterranean Economy* (1985); cf. 273 on Augustus.

<sup>34</sup> Burnett (1981a), 23–35, cf. Burnett (1981b), Map 2 for a distribution map. Burnett informs me that his list is in need of revision, and now includes over 200 cities.

<sup>35</sup> See *AMC* 1068 ff. (JVLIA TRAD[ucta]); 1005 f. (MVN TVRIASO); 1154 ff. (Cnossus); 924 ff. (BILBILIS).

elsewhere. There is no objection to using the reverse for this information, since there is no competing 'head of state' to depict. Kings by contrast are faced with a slightly different problem, and it is interesting to observe how they cope. Rhoemetalces of Thrace (as several other kings) experiments with double-headed coins on which it remains ambiguous whether he himself or Augustus constitutes the obverse: his deliberate exploitation of this ambiguity is emphasized when he twins his head with his queen's on one face, and twins Augustus and Tiberius on the other (Pl. I, 9). Juba of Mauretania, on the other hand, never strikes a portrait of Augustus; yet he does sometimes use reverse types which evoke Augustus, most powerfully by the capricorn, which here and in numerous cities was a popular symbol of Augustus' luck and power.<sup>36</sup>

What does the head of Augustus convey in these issues? It is true that Corduba and a number of other cities in Baetica and elsewhere add the legend PERMISSV CAESARIS AVGVSTI. This may indicate that he had sanctioned the issue, though to say that he had authorized it is not to make him the issuing authority.<sup>37</sup> The phrase might even refer to permission to use his portrait, just as we know that the cities of Spain requested permission to set up cults of Augustus. But the portrait heads without any statement of permission are much more frequent, and it can scarcely be maintained that the occurrence of the portrait in itself indicates official sanction for the issue from Augustus.<sup>38</sup> A likelier explanation is suggested by the not infrequent cases where portraits of members of the imperial family other than Augustus are used, with Gaius and Lucius as popular favourites, but also Livia and, increasingly towards the end of the reign, Tiberius. The appearance of their faces on independent coinages runs exactly parallel to the rash of honorific and cultic inscriptions that spreads across the empire. The parallel indicates that it was as a form of honour that all imperial heads were struck on local coins.<sup>39</sup>

The case of local coinages suggests that the imperial head had a spectrum of significations, from direct involvement of the emperor in the issue at one end to an unsolicited honour at the other. We need not be too anxious to press our interpretation to one or other end of the spectrum. For even when it was an honour given without Augustus' knowledge, his portrait must have been an immeasurable benefit to the coin. It did indeed lend its *auctoritas*. If the benefit to a coin of a design lies in facilitating its economic function by encouraging its circulation and unquestioned acceptance, the head of Augustus was an ideal design. Who would dare deface or refuse a coin bearing his head? The emergent concept of *maiestas* offers the key here. Just as Augustus' name was voluntarily invoked in oaths, and his statues became an unchallengeable asylum for slaves, his portrait on coins lends the 'majesty' of his name. It may be appropriate to recall that under Tiberius it was allegedly an offence to carry a coin stamped with his image into a latrine or brothel; this cannot be true, but it illustrates the perceived potency of the imperial image.<sup>40</sup>

These, I propose, are the terms in which we should view the use of the imperial head not only on local issues, but on all Roman coins. In an atmosphere in which the ruler was seen not simply as the embodiment of the 'official' and 'legal', but as a charismatic force on the veneration of whose majesty depended the survival of the Roman world, the head is not the emblem of legality which we see in the sovereign's head, but an appeal to a potentially powerful emotive response. What is suggested here is not a shift in the basis of Augustus' power ('from *imperium* to *auctoritas*'); rather a conception of imperial power in which the legal and suprallegal become inextricably intertwined.

<sup>36</sup> *AMC* 837 ff. (Rhoemetalces); 879 ff. (Juba). For the relative popularity of the capricorn, cf. Burnett (1981a), 6 and below n. 56.

<sup>37</sup> *AMC* 1037 ff. (Colonia Patricia Corduba); 1050 ff. (Emerita); 1060 f. (Italica); 1067 (Colonia Iulia Traducta); cf. Grant (1946), 220 and *passim*.

<sup>38</sup> cf. Tac., *Ann.* 1. 78 (Tarraco asks permission for cult to Divus Augustus); 4. 37 (permission sought unsuccessfully for temple to Tiberius). However, the occurrence of parallel formulae with the names of governors (PERM SILANI, etc.) makes it more likely that explicit authorization for the issues was sought.

<sup>39</sup> See Burnett (1981a), 57 ff. for a careful study of the coin portraits of Gaius and Lucius on local coinages. For a selection of honorific inscriptions, cf. V.

Ehrenberg and A. H. M. Jones, *Documents illustrating the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*<sup>2</sup>, nos. 61–79; D. Braund, *Augustus to Nero*, nos. 28, 52–82 for translations.

<sup>40</sup> On attitudes to the imperial image, see S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power*, 191–206 (192 specifically on asylum); on desecration of the imperial image as *maiestas*, R. A. Bauman, *Impietas in principem* (1974), 82–92; Suet., *Tib.* 58 for the allegation that it became a capital charge to take into a brothel or latrine Tiberius' effigy ('nummo vel anulo effigiem impressam'); Seneca, *de ben.* 3. 26 tells the anecdote of a man who used a chamber pot while wearing a ring with Tiberius' image, perhaps the source for Suetonius' generalization.



## III. THE EMERGENCE OF THE IMPERIAL IMAGE

Once the path is cleared of false dichotomies which obscure the reciprocal relationship of obverse and reverse, of message and authority, the way lies open to a better understanding of the impact of the new Augustan political order on the language of Roman coinage. In order to place the new developments in context, it is helpful briefly to look back over the long-term patterns of republican coin language.<sup>41</sup>

The earliest period of the Roman *denarius* coinage is marked by the blandness of its persuasive content. Between its institution in 211 and the 140s the types scarcely vary: the head of Roma is the standard obverse for the *denarius*, while the reverse has a standard two-horse type, initially of the Dioscuri, but with Luna or Victoria in a biga as later variants. The dominant concern is to mark the coin as Roman, both by Roma's head and by her name on the reverse, and the appeal is to values to which any Roman might unquestioningly subscribe. Names of the moneyers appear in abbreviated form as a further control; while indicating the specific minting authority, the names have at best a minimal element of self-advertisement.

But from the 140s starts a new era of experiment, in which types both obverse and reverse make us increasingly aware of the individuality of the moneyer, and of his particular political affiliations and ethical values. The 130s represent the decisive break, most dramatically with the issues of Ti. Veturius in c. 137. The head of Rome is displaced by that of Mars; on the reverse a scene of oath-taking points to his ancestor's involvement in the treaty of the Caudine forks, and incidentally lends topical support to the Numantine treaty negotiated by the moneyer's relative Tiberius Gracchus.<sup>42</sup> From now till the collapse of the republic the thematic range of the coinage is politicized, and the potential for self-advertisement vigorously exploited by the moneyers. To revert to the terminology suggested above, the discursive force of the image becomes more transparent, the persuasion more blatant as the common ground of values of the coin-using population disintegrates. Roma's head is replaced by a great variety of deities: one sign of the more explicit value content of these heads is the appearance of deities representing ideals, Libertas or Concordia, according to the conflicts of the moment. Another important sign is the rising importance of the legend, the written text which glosses the image. Ambiguity of the image becomes intolerable when it has a message to convey, and can no longer rely on common assumptions.<sup>43</sup>

A new stage is reached with the 50s. Until this point a conventional contrast is normally sustained between 'heads' and 'tails': the obverse is occupied by the head of a god. This is important, for though the god may be chosen for particular relevance to the moneyer's family, and though some deities (like Concordia) are explicitly persuasive in a way that Roma is not, nevertheless a god represents an appeal to a value which *might* be common to the whole community. There is thus a sort of balance between the common value of the obverse and the 'private', family value frequent on the reverse. With the 50s this balance is disrupted, and a vivid sign of that is the increasing tendency to abandon the typological distinction of 'heads' and 'tails'. I draw attention to the extraordinary double-tailed issue of M. Aemilius Scaurus and P. Hypsaeus as aediles in 58: the kneeling camel on one face points to Scaurus' success in Nabataea, the triumphal chariot on the other with the gloss PREIVIR recalls the capture of Privernum by an ancestor of Hypsaeus (Pl. II, 1). This aedileship struck the elder Pliny as a turning point in the corruption of Roman morals: this coin seems to symbolize disregard for the common values of the community.<sup>44</sup> Shortly afterwards in 54 we find M. Brutus in a double-headed type celebrating both his

<sup>41</sup> The following remarks lean heavily on Crawford's chapter on types and legends in *RRC* II, 712-44.

<sup>42</sup> *RRC* 234/1; cf. p. 728 and *PBSR* 41 (1973), 1-7.

<sup>43</sup> Thus Libertas first appears on a coin of 126 B.C., identified by the *pileus*, (*RRC* 266/1, moneyer C. Cassius, alluding to the Lex Cassia tabellaria), but is only identified by a legend as LIBERTAS in 55 B.C. (*RRC* 428/2, moneyer Q. Cassius, alluding to the same law).

<sup>44</sup> *RRC* 422/1. Pliny, *NH* 36. 24. 113, '... M. Scauri, cuius nescio an aedilitas maxime prostraverit mores maiusque sit Sullae malum tanta privigni potentia quam proscriptio tot milium', cf. *ibid.* 2. 4-3. 8. Earlier double-headed and double-tailed pieces are produced by L. Saturninus (*RRC* 317/1, 2, 104 B.C., without family reference), and by Vibius Pansa (*RRC* 342/1 and 2, 90 B.C., masks of Pan and Silenus, a punning family reference).

tyrannicide ancestors, Brutus and Ahala (later in the civil war the tyrannicide was to mint his own head and his ancestor's as a double-headed type).<sup>45</sup> In the same year Pompeius Rufus issues a pair of types, one double-headed and one double-tailed; each recalls his two grandfathers, Sulla and Pompeius, and their shared consulship of 88 (Pl. II, 2 and 3). Tyrannicides or Sulla, it is true, could serve as a rallying call beyond the circle of the families concerned: what is notable is the uncompromising attempt to represent private values as public ones.<sup>46</sup>

Such innovations provide the background to the eventual appearance of the head of the living Caesar on the coinage of 44. We are accustomed to read this as a decisive step towards the symbolism of monarchy, and that it surely is. But it is quite another thing to read it as an explicit statement that Caesar was now a king, imitating Hellenistic monarchs;<sup>47</sup> if that were so, it would be hard to explain with what intention, within months of Caesar's death, the heads of his republican opponents Brutus and Sex. Pompeius are likewise struck. The head of a living man, just as the head of a god, represents a focus of loyalty for the coin user. It is at the point at which loyalties are irreconcilably divided in civil war that a faction leader's head becomes a suitable symbol. Caesar's head uniquely united the Caesarians, and excluded his opponents: and it entered circulation at a time when the sons of the dead Pompey were using their father's portrait as the symbol of their cause.<sup>48</sup> If the head was the most open appeal to loyalty, it was not the only one, and it should be borne in mind that the Caesarians were using reverse types (such as pontifical emblems) for a similar purpose before and after the introduction of the head.<sup>49</sup>

The innovative features of the coinage of the triumvirs are too numerous to give full account of here. Portrait heads are the norm, and the potential of the double-headed coin for dynastic statements is fully exploited—for pairs of triumvirs, for Octavian and his adoptive father, even for Antony and Octavia, producing the first portrait of a Roman woman, alive or dead, on a coin.<sup>50</sup> The triumvirs also make heavier use of written text on their coins than any before, detailing their titulature at such length as to occupy at times both sides of the coin; a curious spin-off from this fondness for text is the novel use of text unaccompanied by design, to the extent that the legend IMP CAESAR DIVI F III VIR RPC can serve on its own as obverse.<sup>51</sup> Both these novelties, the portrayal of women and the use of text, are to continue into Augustus' reign.

One innovation, however, deserves special emphasis. Augustan coin language emerges from a background of competitive assertiveness in the triumviral period, of attempts to identify personal and individual values with those of the state. Both obverse and reverse types can serve this purpose, and it is the more noteworthy when both do so simultaneously. The most daring instance of this is a type struck by Octavian in 43 and 42. The obverse carries his portrait, but the reverse also offers his image in the guise of an equestrian statue (Pl. II, 4). This is the first time that a living man has been represented not merely on one face, but simultaneously on both, and it is an omen of the imperial future.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *RRC* 433/2.

<sup>46</sup> *RRC* 434/1 and 2.

<sup>47</sup> Thus S. Weinstock, *Divus Iulius* (1971), 275.

<sup>48</sup> The head of Pompey was first struck by Minatius Sabinus in Spain in 46–5 B.C.: *RRC* 470/1. Sex. Pompey's own head appears in 45–4: *RRC* 477; Brutus as liberator strikes his own portrait in 43–2; *RRC* 506–8. Cassius, however, follows family tradition striking the head of Libertas (*RRC* 498–501), cf. above n. 43.

<sup>49</sup> e.g. *RRC* 443/1, mint moving with Caesar 49–8 B.C., obv. pontifical emblems, rev. elephant, CAESAR. Cf. *RRC* 456/1a, Caesar 47 B.C., where the pontifical emblems and also the legend are divided between the two faces, making the two typologically and grammatically continuous: obv. axe and *culullus*, CAESAR DICT, rev. jug and *lituus*, ITER.

<sup>50</sup> Thus *RRC* 429/1 Antony/Octavian; 429/2 Antony/Lepidus; 495/2a Lepidus/Octavian; 490/2 Octavian/Caesar; 488/1 Antony/Caesar; 517/4a Antony/Lucius

Antonius; 527/1 Antony/Octavia; and of course 543/1 Antony/Cleopatra.

<sup>51</sup> It is in this period that the characteristic later style of a legend forming an outer circle round the head develops: e.g. *RRC* 493/1 obv. C.CAESAR.IMP.III. VIR.R.P.C.PONT.AVG.; rev. M. ANTONIVS.IM. III.VIR.R.P.C.AVG. For unaccompanied text, e.g. *RRC* 534/1, rev. M.AGRIPPA.COS.DESIG.; 537/1, obv. IMP.CAESAR.DIVI.F.III.VIR.R.P.C., rev. pontifical emblems.

<sup>52</sup> *RRC* 490/1, 3, 4 (43 B.C.); 497, 1 (42 B.C.); 518/2 (41 B.C.). On these types, cf. D. Mannsperger, in *Festschrift Ulrich Hausmann* (ed. B. von Freytag, D. Mannsperger, F. Preyon, 1982), 331–7. Note that Octavian strikes a similar type with his own head obverse, and himself on horseback reverse in the 'Actium' series, *RIC* 262, *AMC* 200, *BNC* 82 f. The moneyer Stolo uses the equestrian statue as an obverse (*RIC* 344 f., *BNC* 300 f.), as does Vinicius (*RIC* 362, *AMC* 291 f.—here shown as rev.—*BNC* 357 f.).

Against this background, one of the most significant features of the idiom of imperial coinage is its tendency to engross the whole potential of the coin for making value-laden statements for the benefit of the emperor. It is as if the imperial value system could tolerate no rival, could acknowledge no value outside the person of the emperor unless it too was referred back to him. Actual portrayal of the emperor on both faces remains, of course, exceptional: but there are other techniques available. The coinage of the early part of Augustus' reign illustrates three of the possibilities, which have various potential for the future.

(i). *The badge*. The reverse may carry what is felt to be a personal badge of the ruler. Eastern cistophori in the early 20s use two such badges: the sphinx, which Suetonius reports to have been the design on his seal-ring at an early stage, and the capricorn, his natal star, which, again according to Suetonius, he struck on a silver coin after publishing his horoscope<sup>53</sup> (the facts are considerably more complicated than Suetonius' account suggests<sup>54</sup>). The use of badges in coin design was very traditional, both in Greece (the owl of Athens, etc.) and in republican Rome, where the link between seals and coin design was well established.<sup>55</sup> Under Augustus, the sphinx soon disappears (just as he abandoned this seal), but the capricorn remains one of the most popular themes of the reign, both on state and civic issues.<sup>56</sup> The surprise, then, is that Augustus' successors abandon the use of the badge; as far as one can see, their coins make no use of similar personal emblems. They also abandoned the use of personalized seals, and stuck to the portrait Dioscurides cut for Augustus.<sup>57</sup> The process is reminiscent of the Weberian 'routinization of charisma' seen by Price in the evolution of the imperial cult: the founder's power is highly personal, 'charismatic', but with his successors that power becomes institutionalized, and the legitimation of power shifts away from personal gifts (the capricorn indicates that Augustus was providentially ordained to save and govern the world) to the example of the founder and the benefits of imperial rule in general.<sup>58</sup>

(ii). *Honours*. The commonest theme of Augustan reverses draws on the honours heaped on him by senate and people. Those of January 27 B.C. set the pattern: the oak wreath, the laurels, the golden shield and the name of Augustus are abundantly illustrated on a series of reverses. Throughout the reign further honours, triumphs, thanksgivings for road-building, *vota suscepta* (prayers for safety) and many honours not even recorded in the *Res Gestae* proliferate. This pattern persists under later emperors. It is here that the distinction between the reading of the reverses as 'tributes' or 'advertisement' becomes most blurred. Their advantage is that they are both: they underline the reciprocity of the relationship between emperor and state which renders the advertisement of an individual's glory identical with an appeal to communal values.<sup>59</sup>

(iii). *Personal deities*. We have seen that deities formed the standard theme of republican obverses. One effect of the seizure of the obverse by faction leaders, then emperors, is to displace deities to the reverse. In the series issued during and after the Actium campaign we have observed a transitional phase in this process: Caesar and a series of goddesses and gods alternately occupy obverse and reverse. Thereafter, alternation is abandoned; but the underlying implication of the series persists. Deities depicted on imperial coins are closely associated with emperors, almost (if not quite) to the point of identification. Apollo, to take an example, is not identified with Augustus after the Actium series, but through the erection of Apollo's temple within the imperial palace and the emphasis on his role at

<sup>53</sup> Sphinx: *RIC* 487 ff., *AMC* 676, *BNC* 927; cf. Suet., *Aug.* 50, 'in diplomatis libellisque et epistulis signandis initio sphinge usus est, mox imagine Magni Alexandri, novissime sua, Dioscuridis manu sculpta, qua signare insecuti quoque principes perseverarunt'. Capricorn: *RIC* 488 f., *AMC* 677, *BNC* 916; Suet., *Aug.* 94. 12, 'nummumque argenteum nota sideris Capricorni quo natus est percusserit'. On these cistophori, dated c. 27-6 B.C., see C. H. V. Sutherland, *The Cistophori of Augustus* (1970).

<sup>54</sup> cf. K. Kraft, 'Zum Capricorn auf den Münzen des Augustus', *JNG* 17 (1967), 17 ff. = Kraft (1978), 262 ff.; E. J. Dwyer, 'Augustus and the Capricorn', *Röm. Mitt.* 80 (1973), 59 ff.; E. Buchner, *Die Sonnenuhr des*

*Augustus* (1982) with my observations in *JRS* 75 (1985), 247.

<sup>55</sup> So Crawford, *RRC* II, p. 727 f.

<sup>56</sup> cf. above, n. 36. The Capricorn is also a popular motif in *Kleinkunst* of the period; cf. T. Hölscher, *Jahrb. Zentralmus. Mainz* 12 (1965), 59 ff. and *Klio* 67 (1985), 96 f.

<sup>57</sup> cf. Suet., *Aug.* 50, cited above n. 53.

<sup>58</sup> So Price, *Rituals and Power*, 58 f.

<sup>59</sup> For the honours of 27 B.C., see the series attributed to Spain, *RIC* 26 ff., *AMC* 21 ff., *BNC* 1091 ff. The close thematic connection between the coinage and the *Res Gestae* is observed by Burnett (1981a), 11 f.

Actium, his personal associations with Augustus become intimate.<sup>60</sup> The process is carried to the ultimate with goddesses representing abstract values. The Concordia of the republic becomes the Concordia Augusti/Augusta/Augustorum of the empire, and a deliberate ambiguity is created as to whether the values concerned are external or internal to the person of the emperor. Such 'personifications' become in due course the stock-in-trade of imperial typology; under Augustus this idiom has scarcely emerged. One may add that the more frequent the personification of such abstracts, the blander the discursive content of the typology becomes. There is good reason for this. The more specific and tied to the individuality of the ruler the image is (as with Augustus' capricorn), the sharper appears the conflict with the implicit claim to represent a communal ideal, and therefore the more transparent the persuasive content. Conversely, the ruler who bases his claim to respect on adherence to ideals which in any case are commonly held (the abstracts) merely seems to offer platitudes. Thus the typological movement from the reign of Augustus, when the nature of the regime and its values are still highly unstable, to the Antonine period, when stability is high, is a movement away from specific images towards generalized ones.<sup>61</sup>

#### IV. EMPEROR AND SENATE

I have argued that the effect of autocratic rule is to absorb for itself the whole potential of a coin for images of value: both obverse and reverse become images of the emperor. Augustus' reign introduces the new pattern; it does indeed show the 'impact of monarchy'. On the other hand, one must be struck by the hesitancy with which the new idiom is established. Once the over-all pattern is understood, the exceptions to it acquire new interest. Hence the singular importance of the coinage of the revived moneyers, *tresviri auro argento aere flando feriundo*, issuing from Rome itself. Precious metals and base fall into two distinct series which are treated in rather different ways; but each betrays the complexities of expressing suitably the relationship between Augustus and the state in the aftermath of 27 B.C. The two series will be examined in turn.

#### *Moneyers' precious metals: the growth of anonymity*

Only five (or six) colleges of moneyers issued in silver and gold, all probably between 19 and 12 B.C.<sup>62</sup> Yet these show a remarkable evolution in perceptions of what was possible under Augustus. The first of these colleges,<sup>63</sup> consisting of Petronius Turpilianus, Aquilius Florus and M. Durmius, produces one of the most varied and imaginative of all imperial series (Petronius alone has at least seventeen separate type combinations).<sup>64</sup> One (astonishing) rule underlies the whole series: that Augustus should be explicitly celebrated on one face of the coin but not the other.<sup>65</sup> On approximately half the types the obverse portrays his head: on all these the reverse types are delightfully non-imperial, often suggesting personal badges of the moneyers (Tarpeia could well be a punning reference to Turpilianus (Pl. II, 9); a flower certainly puns on Florus), but sometimes, as with Durmius' crab, seemingly no more than figural.<sup>66</sup> On the other half the head of a deity

<sup>60</sup> Burnett, *Gnomon* 1983, 564 rightly observes that implicit identification with deities ceases after the Actium series. For the later use of Apollo Actiacus see the Lyons series of 15 B.C. and later, *RIC* 170 ff., *AMC* 127 ff., *BNC* 1394 ff., with Kraft (1978), 311 ff. On Augustus' exploitation of Apollo symbolism, G. Carettoni, *Das Haus des Augustus auf dem Palatin* (1983), with *JRS* 75 (1985), 247–8; H. Jucker, 'Apollo Palatinus und Apollo Actius auf augusteischen Münzen', *Mus. Helv.* 39 (1982), 82 ff.

<sup>61</sup> cf. *Historia* 1981, 307 ff.

<sup>62</sup> These dates are now more or less agreed: see Kraft (1978), 42 ff.; Burnett (1977), 49 f.; Sutherland, *RIC* 31 ff. Against the unorthodox datings of Pink and Panvini Rosati, see Kraft (1978), 342 f. and recently M. D. Fullerton, 'The Domus Augusta in imperial iconography of 13–12 BC', *AJA* 89 (1985), 473–83.

<sup>63</sup> It is possible that Q. Rustius issued his types in celebration of Augustus' Fortuna Redux either in the year before the college of Petronius (so Burnett (1977), 49 f.), or in the same year (so Kraft and Sutherland). The reference to the return of the Parthian standards in 20 B.C. on Petronius' issues points to a date of 19 or 18 for the college. The altar to Fortuna Redux was 'constituted' on the day of Augustus' return, 12 October 19 B.C. Rustius' coins will belong to late 19 or 18 B.C. Why Rustius does not fit into the scheme of colleges remains obscure.

<sup>64</sup> *RIC* 278 ff.; *AMC* 262 ff.; *BNC* 106 ff.

<sup>65</sup> Mattingly in *BMC* 1, pp. ci ff. is helpful on this.

<sup>66</sup> Several of Durmius' types are reproductions of Greek types: cf. *BMC* 1, p. civ n. 1.

occupies the obverse, sometimes chosen for private relevance to the moneyer (Feronia, it is plausibly assumed, points to Turpilianus' origins (Pl. II, 10), and Aquillius Florus produces a bold revival of ancestral types),<sup>67</sup> while Caesar Augustus is celebrated on the reverse by an appropriately imperial type (Parthian standards surrendered, triumphal cars, etc.). We meet again the assumption behind the Actium series, that obverse and reverse offer alternative and interchangeable idioms for saying the same thing. But the degree of prominence the moneyers are able to afford themselves looks like a conscious harking back to the republic. We are reminded of the republic by the careful balance between appeal to values private to the moneyers and public values—except that now it is the imperial head or theme which represents the public value. In fact such a balance was not unknown in the triumviral period (Vitulus could strike for Octavian with his own badge of a calf),<sup>68</sup> but what causes surprise is the consistency with which the principle of 'sharing' the coin with Augustus is applied.

Following colleges do not sustain this initiative.<sup>69</sup> Although for a couple of years family references can still be detected<sup>70</sup> (the Antistii are exceptionally persistent in this respect<sup>71</sup>), Augustus rapidly comes to occupy both faces, with only the moneyer's name left to remind us of his role. This does not preclude experiment. The college of 16 B.C., led by Mescinius Rufus, is adventurous: Augustus is celebrated by a range of types recording senatorial honours, struck almost indiscriminately on obverse and reverse.<sup>72</sup> In consequence, we are sometimes presented with two depictions of the ruler on a single coin (a portrait head and an honorific statue), sometimes with none at all, but in their place the ungainly and overlettered types which recall all too elliptically the wording of senatorial honours (e.g. obv. IOM SPQR V S PR S IMP CAE QVOD PER EV RP IN AMP ATQ TRAN S E in laurel wreath, rev. IMP CAES AVGV COMM CONS on cippus, flanked by SC (Pl. II, 11)).<sup>73</sup> These types represent the ultimate in the growth of importance of the written text, and of the dispensability of the figural image. But despite the prominence of Augustus, the series of 16 B.C. does maintain a balance of sorts: the insistence on honorific form serves as a constant reminder of the SPQR (or more simply, the senate) as source of the honours.

<sup>67</sup> The deities concerned are: Liber, Feronia (Petronius); Sol, Virtus (Aquillius); Honos, Hercules (Durmius). Aquillius also uses a *triskelis* with Medusa head as an obverse. There might of course be covert reference to Augustus in some of these types: note that the Ara Fortunae was dedicated before the temple of Honos and Virtus (RG 11). But Aquillius' Sol reproduces a type struck by his (adoptive) ancestor Mn. Aquillius, *cos.* 101 (RRC 303/1); his Virtus reproduces a type of the later Mn. Aquillius of 71 B.C. (RRC 401/1); his reverse type of warrior and Sicilia (RIC 310) reproduces the reverse of the latter; and the Triskelis and Medusa refer to the same event, the suppression by Mn. Aquillius, *cos.* 101, of a Sicilian slave war, though derived from a type of L. Lentulus of 49 B.C. (RRC 445/1). The implication that families under Augustus kept copies of coins issued by their ancestors is borne out by the types of Piso and Rustius (below nn. 69 and 109).

<sup>68</sup> RRC 526/1.

<sup>69</sup> Q. Rustius (RIC 321 f., AMC 258 ff., BNC 220 ff.) adheres to a comparable pattern. He strikes heads of two Fortunae obv., and an Augustan design rev. (victory and shield, or the altar to Fortuna Redux). The Fortunae are topical, but apparently overlaid with a family reference: the ram's-head finials on the bar under the goddesses on the commoner variant recall the fine ram of the rev. of an ancestor L. Rustius (RRC 389/1, 76 B.C.), and the legend FORTUNAE ANTIAT points to the family's own Antiata origins (cf. Syme, *Roman Papers* 11, 599; T. P. Wiseman, *New Men*, 257).

<sup>70</sup> The types of 17 B.C. (Sanquinius and Stolo) refer to the Ludi Saeculares, but even here family references may be found: cf. below, Appendix §4 on the *ancilia* and *apex* of Stolo.

<sup>71</sup> Two Antistii held office as moneyers, C. Antistius Vetus (son of the *cos.* 30 B.C.) in 16, and C. Antistius Reginus in c. 13. Both employ two personal reverses: a scene of Tarquin's treaty with Gabii, FOEDUS P.R. QUM GABINIS (RIC 363-4, 411, cf. BNC 365-7, both very rare), and a commoner type of priestly emblems (RIC 367-8, 410, AMC 299, 302-3, BNC 369-71, 542 ff.). The Antistii presumably came from Gabii (cf. *PIR*<sup>2</sup>, Antistius 771). Vetus was a pontifex, and both his children, as Velleius remarks (2. 43. 4), were members of priestly colleges. Vetus (unlike Reginus) goes one step further towards displacing Augustus: he strikes two deities in the place of imperial heads as obv. But his deities are Venus and Victoria, closely modelled on those of Octavian's Actium series, and should doubtless be taken as 'imperial' in reference (cf. RIC 367-9, AMC 299, BNC 361a/b, 369-71).

<sup>72</sup> RIC 350 ff., AMC 289 ff., BNC 330 ff.

<sup>73</sup> RIC 358, AMC 297 f., BNC 345 f. The sense of the obv. is 'Vows offered to Iuppiter Optimus Maximus by SPQR on behalf of the safety of Imperator Caesar because through him the Republic is in a more ample and tranquil state'. The rev. is taken to mean 'To Imp. Caesar Augustus by common consent' (i.e. COMMuni CONSensu); I prefer 'To Imp. Caesar Augustus the common saviour' (i.e. COMMuni CONServatori).

By 13 B.C. even this balance is lost.<sup>74</sup> Issues take on an unmistakably dynastic flavour: double-headed types celebrate the prominence of the partner in *imperium*, Agrippa, of the daughter Julia (now after Octavia the second Roman woman to feature on a state coin), and of the grandsons Gaius and Lucius.<sup>75</sup> One final issue, preserved in a unique specimen, from the last college to mint in precious metal (Cossus Lentulus, 12 B.C.), sums up the extraordinary ambiguity of Augustus' relationship with tradition. On the reverse a togate Augustus raises a kneeling Republic from the ground: the two are clearly identified, AVGVST and RES PVB (Pl. II, 13). The supremacy of Augustus could hardly be more explicit, twice named and depicted on the coin, with the *res publica* kneeling before him: yet we are reminded that Augustus bases his claims to respect on his services to the state as a whole and his endorsement of its traditional values.<sup>76</sup>

From 11 B.C. the *tresviri* either cease to strike precious metals (the normal assumption), or at least cease to leave any evidence of themselves if they do strike.<sup>77</sup> The movement, within the course of a decade, is a generally consistent one, from surprising self-assertion to complete self-effacement. Why this pattern? It is significant how closely it mirrors the changing attitude to senatorial 'self-representation' recently illuminated by W. Eck.<sup>78</sup> In the 20s Augustus appears to give positive encouragement to senators to celebrate their own glory: there is a spate of notable public buildings by private citizens in Rome, and seven individuals outside the imperial family celebrate triumphs. The teens bring the reversal of this pattern: Balbus' triumph of 19 is the last 'private' one, and so is his theatre, dedicated in 13, to much public acclaim.<sup>79</sup> There are other pointers in the same direction. In the early 20s *triumphatores* are encouraged to undertake the repair of roads; two at least take up the challenge. But Augustus soon takes over the *cura viarum*, and milestones throughout Italy and the empire advertise the ruler's name.<sup>80</sup> Gladiatorial shows in Rome are brought under control in 22 B.C.: no longer can an aristocrat use a death in his family to generate acclaim and prestige, unless with explicit authorization.<sup>81</sup> It is at the same date that Egnatius Rufus makes political capital out of the employment of a private fire-brigade; by the end of 19 Egnatius is dead, and the fire-brigade imperial property.<sup>82</sup> The *tresviri monetales* were young men at the start of their career, probably appointed by imperial favour, and dependent on imperial favour for future advancement. They knew how to read the signs.

### *Moneymen's bronze: imperial and senatorial authority*

The *aes* or bronze (the name is conventional) produced by the moneymen offers a number of significant contrasts with their precious metal production. In the first place, there is a visible continuity (albeit occasionally suspended) between the Augustan series starting (I shall argue) in 23 B.C. and the production in bronze of the Roman mint for the next three centuries. Even under Augustus, there is a certain disjunction in production: all

<sup>74</sup> The coinage of C. Marius Tro. with its joint celebration of Agrippa and Augustus (*RIC* 400, *BNC* 521) is more plausibly placed with the similar types of Sulpicius Platorinus (*RIC* 406-7, *BNC* 537-9) in 13 B.C., the year of the renewal of Agrippa's powers, than in 17, the year of the birth and adoption of Lucius; see Fullerton, loc. cit. (n. 62), 475 ff. convincingly *contra* Pink, *NZ* 1946, 120 ff.; also Burnett (1981a), 57.

<sup>75</sup> Julia, Gaius and Lucius feature together on an issue of Marius, *RIC* 404-5, *BNC* 526, *BMC* 106 f. I take the head of Diana (identified by a quiver) on the rev. of Marius' coin, *RIC* 403, *BNC* 522-4, *BMC* 104, as also a portrait of Julia.

<sup>76</sup> This unique specimen was published (with illustration) by C. Vermeule, *Numismatica* 1 (1960), 5-11, and is included now in *RIC* 413, *BNC*, p. 114; for a large illustration, Burnett (1981b), 28 fig. 29a. A very similar scene is used by Galba for the theme *LIBERTAS RESTITVTA* (*RIC* 479); for later recur-

rence of the theme ('Roma/Italia/Orbs Terrarum restituta') see Vermeule, loc. cit., S. Weinstock, *Divus Iulius*, 46 f. It would seem captious to deny in Cossus Lentulus' type an illustration of the 'restoration of the republic'.

<sup>77</sup> Kraft (1962), 7 ff. pointed out that the continuation of the titulature AAAFF implies, on the face of it, continued involvement in the production of precious metal.

<sup>78</sup> W. Eck, 'Senatorial self-representation: developments in the Augustan period' in *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, 129 ff.

<sup>79</sup> Eck, loc. cit., 138.

<sup>80</sup> Eck, loc. cit., 140; cf. D. Kienast, *Augustus: Prinzeps und Monarch*, 414.

<sup>81</sup> G. Ville, *La gladiature en occident des origines à la mort de Domitien* (1981), 121-3.

<sup>82</sup> cf. Eck, loc. cit. (n. 78), 152 n. 16 for this and further illustrations of the point.

but one of the colleges of moneyers issue in one metal but not the other.<sup>83</sup> Secondly, the typology is treated differently. While the precious metal issues are distinguished by their dazzling typological variety, the bronze is marked by pronounced lack of variety. The same types are used for nearly two decades and the only significant variety is between different denominations and the different moneyers named. Finally, all denominations in bronze share a central typological feature which is absent from the precious metals: the letters SC.

We are forced to confront the reasons for these contrasts and consequently the controversial issue of the interpretation of SC. The arguments have been repeatedly rehearsed in recent years.<sup>84</sup> It seems to me possible to be relatively brief in bringing out the relevance to this question of the propositions here advanced for the interpretation of coin types in general. Mommsen took SC as a mark of authority, and concluded that there was a disjunction in the production of precious and non-precious metal: the emperor struck gold and silver, the senate struck bronze.<sup>85</sup> Some sort of disjunction there manifestly was, but the notion that senate and emperor were two independent systems of authority operating in parallel is no longer acceptable.<sup>86</sup> Kraft therefore sought to dissolve the contrast by reading SC not as a mark of authority but as a design feature: initially referring to the senatorial origin of the honours depicted in the types, it almost immediately acquired the function of merely identifying the series of Roman bronze. The second part of his explanation is convincing; but the idea that SC refers to type content has failed to carry persuasion.<sup>87</sup> It is in fact superfluous to the refutation of Mommsen's theory of divided authority.

All design, I have argued, serves the economic purpose of securing the circulation of the coin by giving it authority. The reading of SC as a mark of authority is inescapable when Roman bronze is viewed against the background of the remaining bronze of the empire.<sup>88</sup> We have seen how in the case of numerous civic bronze issues, the effect of the appearance of Augustus' head on the obverse is to drive the symbol of the issuing state to the reverse. This is also true of bronze coinages that are more than local: the bronze struck at Emerita in the late 20s offers the name P. CARISIVS LEG AVGVSTI as the sole reverse design (Pl. I, 7),<sup>89</sup> while the two major series from Nîmes and Lyons indicate their origin by the crocodile and palm COL.NEM., and by the Gallic altar of Lyons ROM ET AUG. Above all we should note the precise parallelism between certain civic issues and the Roman series. Cnossus we have seen to give on its reverse the names of the responsible *duoviri* and the letters EX DD (Pl. I, 10); the formula EX DD (Pl. I, 11, Carteia) or simply DD is common on such civic issues, and manifestly parallel to the Roman SC: the order of the local council (*Decreto Decurionum*) corresponds to the order of the supreme council (*Senatus Consulto*). The point is emphasized visually by a type such as that of Dium in Macedonia, where the magistrate's name (i.e. P. BAEBIUS IIVIR QVINQ) surrounds the large letters DD just as the names of the *tresviri* at Rome surround SC (Pl. I, 12).<sup>90</sup>

<sup>83</sup> M. Sanquinius and P. Licinius Stolo are the only moneyers to issue in both precious and bronze, in 17 B.C. The mystery of why only they do so is compounded by the failure of their third colleague, whoever he was, to do the same. Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, usually assigned to this college, issued only in bronze. Note that Kraft's dating scheme has two separate colleges in 16 B.C., one issuing in precious, one in bronze, a solution which in my view is unacceptable.

<sup>84</sup> See Kraft (1962); Sutherland, *Rev. Num.* 1965, 94 ff.; Bay (1972); H. R. Baldus, *Chiron* 3 (1973), 441 ff.; A. Kunisz, *Recherches sur le monnayage et la circulation monétaire sous le règne d'Auguste* (1976), 18 ff.; Sutherland (1976), 5 ff.; Burnett (1977); T. Leidig, *JNG* 31/2 (1981/2), 55-76; Sutherland, *RIC*, p. 32; Crawford, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic*, 261 f.

<sup>85</sup> *Staatsrecht* II, 602, 1025-8; III, 1146.

<sup>86</sup> So F. Millar, 'The Emperor, the Senate and the Provinces', *JRS* 56 (1966), 141-8.

<sup>87</sup> The survey of the literature by Leidig (above n. 84) shows that Kraft's thesis is almost universally

rejected; he himself revives the reference to type content by regarding SC as a gloss on the imperial titulature and thus an endorsement by the senate of imperial legitimacy.

<sup>88</sup> This is not to suggest that SC may not in other contexts refer to type content; cf. below n. 93.

<sup>89</sup> The typological similarity of both portrait and legend between Carisius' obverses and those of the *asses* of the moneyers suggests that the former might have been modelled on the latter. This supports a date of 23 B.C. for the moneyers' *asses*. I owe this point to T. R. Volk.

<sup>90</sup> I here follow D. Kienast, *Augustus: Prinzeps und Monarch*, 327 n. 62 (giving examples of this pattern from Carthage, Sardinia, Messana, Lilybaeum and Sinope). For the Dium coin, see Grant (1946), 282 (attributed to Pella). Note also the EX DD of Carteia (*AMC* 1020-8, cf. Pl. I, 11) and the DD of Parium (*AMC* 1193). For Cnossus, cf. above with n. 35. Paestum strikes anomalously under Augustus with PSSC (? 'Pecunia Signata Senatus Consulto').

The function of the design in this case, as Kraft saw, is to identify the coin. The user discovers that the disc in his hand is a Roman coin, not one of Dium, and that will crucially affect his acceptance and valuation of it. It bears the mark of supreme authority—the senate. The only possible confusion was with the eastern bronze struck in Antioch which also bears SC on its reverses (though surrounded with a laurel wreath, not moneyers' names (Pl. I, 6)).<sup>91</sup> The exception confirms the point, for this Antiochene series, like the Roman but unlike any other of the 'six major aes coinages' of Augustus, continues into the third century. The circulation patterns of the two series, one predominantly western, the other eastern, show that they run parallel to each other, not in competition.<sup>92</sup> The Antiochene series is, so to speak, an 'eastern edition' of the Rome series, issued by a different mint (and therefore different mint officials) but likewise backed by senatorial authority from Rome.

All this can be maintained without reverting to the Mommsenian disjunction of authorities. The problem is created by the contrast of bronze and precious metal: it is not merely a question of why bronze has SC, but of why silver and gold lack it.<sup>93</sup> The answer is not that the precious metal excluded the senate: the *tresviri* of the republic only struck SC on their coins under exceptional circumstances.<sup>94</sup> The contrast is one of the general pattern of coinage of the Roman world. With a very few exceptions (particularly in the semi-autonomous kingdoms) there was no local precious metal coinage from which the state coinage needed to distinguish itself. Of course Augustus struck at several mints, in east and west, other than Rome, but there was no advantage to be derived in setting up contrasts between state issues of different origins, and privileging that of Rome by the use of SC. Indeed, this helps to explain why the moneyers' silver was so much shorter-lived an experiment than their bronze: their names and emblems set up a contrast between their *denarii* and other equally valid Roman *denarii*, and it is this contrast that is eliminated within a decade. With the establishment of the mint of Lugdunum, the silver coinage production of the Roman Mediterranean is concentrated at a single centre.

Behind the letters SC one must postulate at least one actual *senatusconsultum*; and since the moneyers of the republic only invoked SC under special circumstances, it seems reasonable to infer that here too there were special circumstances. Aase Bay identified these as the bold innovation by which a bimetallic base currency was introduced, with orichalcum (brass) for *sestertii* and *dupondii*, copper for *asses* and *quadrantes*.<sup>95</sup> Burnett objected, first, that the reform of metals was introduced at an earlier date (perhaps c. 29/8) by Octavian in the east in the series distinguished by the letters CA, and secondly, that a *lex* not an SC would have been appropriate for such a reform.<sup>96</sup> Metrological analysis has now clarified the first point.<sup>97</sup> It emerges that the use of brass and copper to distinguish denominations was developed in Asia Minor in the early and mid first century B.C., notably at Amisus by Mithradates VI. It therefore makes sense that it should have been in the eastern CA series that Octavian first extended the novelty to Roman coinage; and it follows that it is highly probable that Augustus was directly responsible for transferring this system to Rome. Unlike Burnett, I see no reason for doubting that the SC would have been an appropriate vehicle for the reform. Not only is it characteristic of Augustus to operate through the senate for administrative reforms (the obvious example is the SC Calvisianum of 4 B.C. reforming the system of hearings for charges of extortion),<sup>98</sup> but it fits exactly into

<sup>91</sup> W. Wruck, *Die Syrische Provinzialprägung von Augustus bis Traian* (1931); Grant (1953), 7 f.; C. Howgego, 'Coinage and military finance: the imperial bronze coinage of the Augustan east', *NC* 142 (1982), 1 ff.

<sup>92</sup> cf. Grant (1953), 14 ff.

<sup>93</sup> With the notable exception of the EX SC of Nero's early silver coinage: M. Griffin, *Nero: the End of a Dynasty* (1984), 120 ff. Arguably, EX SC in this context refers to type content: cf. C. Clay, *NZ* 96 (1982), 24 ff.

<sup>94</sup> Crawford, *RRC* 606 ff.

<sup>95</sup> Bay (1972), supported by Crawford, *Coinage and Money*, 261.

<sup>96</sup> Burnett (1977), 45 f.

<sup>97</sup> A. M. Burnett, P. T. Craddock, K. Preston, 'New light on the origins of orichalcum', in *Proceedings of the 9th International Congress of Numismatics, Berne, September 1979* (1982), 263 ff.

<sup>98</sup> See P. A. Brunt, 'The role of the senate in the Augustan regime', *CQ* 34 (1984), 423 ff., esp. at 427 on the development of the senate as a source of new law.



a pattern of reforms initiated at precisely the period of the bronze coinage reform. Frontinus' treatise on aqueducts preserves excerpts from the extensive series of *senatus-consulta* by which the senatorial water commissioners (*curatores aquarum*) were introduced in 11 B.C. and their privileges and duties defined. They point back to a similar series of *senatusconsulta* in 22 B.C. when the board of corn commissioners (*praefecti frumenti dandi*) were set up and their privileges defined in terms parallel to those for the water commissioners.<sup>99</sup>

Augustus was active in the late 20s reorganizing the minor magistracies ('vigintivirate'), of which the college of moneyers formed the most prestigious part.<sup>100</sup> In my view we should envisage an SC or even a series of SCC, as for the water commissioners, which could have defined a whole range of points:

- (i) that *tresviri monetales* should in future be regularly appointed (civil war had seen the office lapse, or at least disrupted);
- (ii) that the *monetales* should issue a bronze coinage from time to time;
- (iii) that the denominations should be distinguished by the use of orichalcum and copper, following the example set by Augustus;
- (iv) that the obverses should honour Augustus, *inter alia* by celebrating his recent honour of Tribunicia Potestas (the *quadrantes* were a later introduction and may not have been covered at this stage);
- (v) that the reverses should carry the letters SC.

If all (or most) of these points were laid down, it will account for the fact that moneyers did not feel free to vary the types of bronze as they did those of silver.

A further suggestion may be added, though it is tangential to the central hypothesis. The date at which the new bronze coinage started remains under dispute.<sup>101</sup> It must be after the grant of *tribunicia potestas* in July 23, but can hardly be later than 19, on the basis of topical allusions in the precious metal series. If Mattingly was right, 23 was the starting date and Cn. Calpurnius Piso the senior member of the first college. This view has unobserved attractions. The young Piso, the same friend of Tiberius who was to come to grief over the death of Germanicus, was son of Cn. Calpurnius Piso the consul of 23, a former adherent of the liberators noted for his ferocious independence.<sup>102</sup> It was in line with republican practice for the consul to fix the appointment of a junior relative as moneyer.<sup>103</sup> If the reforming *senatusconsultum* dates to 23, Piso as consul will have introduced it (it would be known as the SC Calpurnianum). It could indeed be thought appropriate that his son, who had recently returned from service with Augustus in Spain, be given the honour of striking the first series.<sup>104</sup> This suggestion has the further merit of providing a background for the eccentric and rare *asses* issued both by Piso individually and by all three members of his college as a group, known as Numa *asses* (Pl. I, 4).<sup>105</sup> Visually quite unlike the rest of the series, they are double-headed, bearing Augustus on one face and Numa on the other. Double-headed coins, as has been seen, invite the user to discover some special significance: Augustus is placed in correlation with Numa, as a second Numa. The piece is a commemorative medallion, not part of the main denominational series. Numa was, on at least one traditional account, the legendary founder of Roman coinage;<sup>106</sup> Augustus as author of the reform stands beside him as second founder.<sup>107</sup> But a pun may be detected. Numa was also, through his son Calpus, claimed as ancestor by the gens Calpurnia.<sup>108</sup> Piso the consul had advertised the fact in his

<sup>99</sup> Frontinus, *de Aqu.* 2. 98 ff. = *FIRA* 1, no. 41.

<sup>100</sup> Dio 54. 26. 5-8 shows that the vigintivirate had been reorganized before 13 B.C. Mommsen, *Staatsrecht* II, 592 ff. associated the abolition of the *iiuiri viis extra urbem purgandis* with Augustus' taking over of the *cura viarum* in 22 B.C.

<sup>101</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>102</sup> Tac., *Ann.* 2. 43 on father and son.

<sup>103</sup> cf. Burnett (1977), 41 f.

<sup>104</sup> For Piso's service in Spain in 26-5, Syme, *Roman Papers* II, 739, by inference from Tac., *Ann.* 3. 16 (45 years' service up to A.D. 20). It may even be that the father owed his consulship, offered unsolicited at the late age of 56, to the success of the son.

<sup>105</sup> *RIC* 390 ff., *AMC* 469, *BNC* 433; Grant (1953), 102 ff.; Kraft, *JNG* 3/4 (1952/3), 74; Burnett (1977), 48 ff.; Sutherland, *Quaderni Ticinesi* 1978, 173 ff. and *RIC*, p. 71.

<sup>106</sup> Pliny, *NH* 34. 1; Isidore, *Origines* 16. 17; Lydus, *de mensibus* 1. 20.

<sup>107</sup> So Grant (1953), 103, citing Livy 1. 19 and Dionysius, *Rom. Ant.* 2. 62 f. for parallelism between Numa and Augustus. There is no need to follow Grant in seeing reference to the Secular Games, as the Livy passage shows.

<sup>108</sup> *Laus Pisonis* 3 and 15; Horace, *Ars Poet.* 291 f.; Plut., *Numa* 21.

colourful youth, striking in 49–8 for Pompey a type with Numa's head as obverse.<sup>109</sup> Tacitly, the Calpurnii stand alongside Augustus as refounders of the coinage.

The details of my reconstruction are speculative, and cannot be confirmed on existing evidence. The underlying assumption, however, is that the relationship between Augustus and conventional patterns of behaviour was more subtle and complex than has been allowed. There can be no reasonable doubt that Augustus was the effective author of the new series of Roman bronze. Yet it is launched, on the present hypothesis, on the formal proposal of a consul famous for the tenacity of his opposition to both Caesar and triumvirs, whose son was to become a leading *amicus* of Tiberius, not without his own touch of independence. The proposal was in a form that combined the practical with the honorific, by offering tribute to Augustus and recording the latest expression of his powers. It was also in some measure 'republican', for it reactivated a traditional magistracy, even if what was to be issued was innovative. And it imposed the letters SC as the mark of authority and the identifying feature of the series. It did so not in order to set up any contrast with 'imperial' coinage, or to suggest a division of authority, but to give this token coinage the added authority it needed to guarantee circulation in a Mediterranean world with many other bronze coinages.

But in this act of economic persuasion, it concomitantly conveyed a persuasive message of another sort: that the authority of the senate was supreme in the Roman world. It was central to Augustus' own purpose to convey this message, for the restoration of an effective senate was part of his restoration of order, and the *auctoritas senatus* a value he explicitly endeavoured to reinforce. We are surely right to see in this SC a symbol of the way the new monarchy not only allowed republican institutions to survive, but recreated them for its own purpose.<sup>110</sup> Finally, and without cynicism, one may add that the new coinage was a source of private profit to Augustus and his circle. The best mines for the essential copper were in the Val d'Aosta (conquered in 25 B.C.) owned by Sallustius, rising intimate of the imperial family, and in Gaul, owned by Livia.<sup>111</sup>

This subtle interweaving of the monarchical and the republican belongs to the late 20s and teens B.C. But Augustus' reign was dynamic, and the Roman bronze, as the state in general, was to undergo marked evolution in the direction of the monarchical. The production of moneyers' bronze survives the cessation of their silver, but not by many years. The last issue is normally dated to c. 4 B.C.,<sup>112</sup> but the orichalcum *sestertii* and *dupondii* had gone out of production as much as a decade earlier, and from then on only *asses* and *quadrantes* were minted. Production of all moneyers' bronze apparently ceases between c. 4 B.C. and A.D. 10. The new series differs from the old in two ways: only portrait bronze is issued, and since Tiberius' head now becomes an alternative to Augustus', it would appear that the occasion for the new series is the impulse to honour Tiberius (Pl. I, 5).<sup>113</sup> Secondly, the moneyers' names have disappeared from the reverse, to be replaced by imperial titulature. The next step was to add a figural design to the reverse too, pushing aside the prominent SC to subordinate status in the margins. By this means the imperial image as well as the imperial titulature came to colonize the reverse. Typologically the bronze now scarcely differs from the remaining state coinage; only the letters SC preserve the spirit in which the series started. It is under Tiberius, so moderate and republican in appearance, that this change takes place.<sup>114</sup> Ironically, it is on *dupondii* celebrating Tiberius' MODERATIO that the head of the emperor for the first time appears simultaneously on both sides of the moneyers' bronze, for the form of the design is an *imago clipeata*, a bust on a shield.<sup>115</sup> In retrospect, it would appear that both the features of the original Augustan moneyers' series which were dropped, the limited

<sup>109</sup> *RRC* 446/1, with p. 738. For deliberate copying of family types, cf. above n. 67.

<sup>110</sup> For this positive interpretation of the restoration of the republic as a strategy to the autocrat's benefit, cf. *JRS* 72 (1982), 47; *JRS* 75 (1985), 250.

<sup>111</sup> Pliny, *NH* 34. 2. 2–4. On Sallustius, cf. below Appendix.

<sup>112</sup> 4 B.C. is Mattingly's date; 3 B.C. Kraft's; I suggest below 2 B.C. as a possibility. Note that G. F. Carter and T. V. Buttrey, *ANSMN* 22 (1977), 64 f. raise the

possibility of a later, even post-Augustan, date for the *quadrantes*, though without good grounds.

<sup>113</sup> *RIC* 469–71, *AMC* 658 ff.; *BNC* 878 ff. The Tiberian portraits are securely dated by *trib. pot.* to A.D. 10–11; the Augustan to A.D. 11–12.

<sup>114</sup> *RIC*, Tiberius 33 (A.D. 15–16) for the first instance.

<sup>115</sup> *RIC*, Tiberius 39. Note the aptness of Tacitus' expression 'adroganti moderatione', *Ann.* 1. 8.

presence of the imperial portrait and the presence of moneyers' names, gave too limited expression to the visual prominence of the emperor.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

The first aim of this paper has been to dissolve the traditional dichotomy between 'authority' and 'message' in interpreting imperial types. It is the 'heads and tails' idiom of the empire that tempts us into this false dichotomy. Hence the value of looking at the coinage of Augustus, at a transitional point when the conventions are in the making. A coin invokes authority at many levels. It may simultaneously proclaim the name of the responsible official (e.g. the municipal *duumvir*, or the metropolitan *triumvir*), the name of the issuing state; and seek the additional authority of the imperial image (whether or not the emperor has legally 'authorized' the issue) or of a divine image (which may be associated with the imperial power). Thus the types of 'authority' invoked range from the narrowly legal to the charismatic, overlapping with and supplementing each other. These marks of authority have a persuasive function. Consequently, the message of the coin is not an extra, over and above the mark of authority, but is part of the process of legitimization. The symbols involved are persuasive on two levels: they attempt to persuade the user that the coin is legitimate by presenting images that will command respect; and in so doing they lay claim to the user's respect for the images they present, and so tend to legitimate the regime that issues them. So the city of Sestos in the second century B.C. saw the value of resuming the issue of coin as both economic gain and publicity: they would make the city's symbol (*character*) current.<sup>116</sup> The senate of Rome benefited from similar publicity in the circulation of coins bearing its mark.

My concern has been to investigate the nature of the persuasive language of imperial coinage, and not the precise mechanics of persuasion. Large room for manoeuvre remains. It may be urged, for instance, that the images of particular issues should be interpreted in the context of the occasion of their emission and the audience to which they were issued: the recurrence of themes of military success is connected with the importance of payment of troops as the occasion for striking new issues.<sup>117</sup> Such a demonstration that the authorities actually targeted their persuasion on identifiable groups would be a valuable extension of the arguments I have put forward. Another area of uncertainty that remains is of the mechanics of type selection, the processes and personnel involved. Further thought might be given to the role of the *monetales*. It has been too readily assumed that their involvement with the production of gold and silver lapsed with the disappearance of their names; yet their title, AAFF, continued to imply responsibility for all three metals, and the way this post remained a plum for the well-born and well-connected might be linked to the opportunities it offered for courtly flattery.<sup>118</sup>

The coin persuades by offering images of authority. Hence one of the values of imperial coin types to the historian is the evidence they offer of the nature of the state as contemporaries perceived it. A secondary aim of this paper has been to use Augustan coinage to explore the nature and development of the new regime. Yet the processes of discovering a suitable image could be fraught with difficulty. In 1848 the new republican government of France launched a series of competitions for new figures of the Republic, in painting and in sculpture, for the seal of state, for postage stamps, for coins. The variety of the images submitted reflected the variety of political conceptions of what the state ought to be: from the bare-breasted Amazon, brandishing pike and Phrygian cap of liberty, of the left, to the serene, dignified, fully-clad, capless, olive-bearing figures of the right. The selection committees included both artists and statesmen; and the choices were made not without an underlying anxiety, for images too bland might be rejected by the people,

<sup>116</sup> *OGIS* 1, no. 339, ll. 43-5, with L. Robert, *RevNum*<sup>6</sup> 15 (1973), 43-53; cited by Crawford (1982), 56.

<sup>117</sup> A point urged on me by Oswyn Murray; cf. my remarks at *NC* 1981, 36.

<sup>118</sup> cf. above no. 77.

images too revolutionary might serve as focal points for agitation.<sup>119</sup> At moments of political transition, the individuals who make up the regime may be unsure, even in their own minds, of the image they think the state should project, and of what they can get away with. Augustus' coinage reflects something of the same quandary, and in the experimentation and uncertainty of the Roman mint we glimpse the difficulties of striking a balance between the monarchical and the republican.

What emerges as the central feature of autocracy is the urge to monopolize all symbols of authority. The spread of the head of Augustus to the obverse is the most dramatic sign of this; but no less significant is the spread of supplementary 'images' of imperial power, celebrations of imperial success, power and glory that become characteristic of the reverse. It is this tendency, an intolerance of rival images of power, even of the gods, unless their power can be identified with that of the emperor, which dictates the pattern of the coinage of Augustus' successors. But against this broad background, the exceptions, hesitations and uncertainties that set Augustus' coinage apart from that of his successors acquires an added interest. At least initially, a tradition is reactivated that the minor magistrates actually issuing the coin should impose their own marks of authority; this applies not only to the *tresviri* at Rome, but to a legate like Carisius in Spain. Moreover, when Augustus introduces the boldly innovative series of Roman bronze, he does so, on my interpretation, through the senate, and welcomes the senate's mark of authority on the coin. This mark (unlike other features) survives on the coinage of his successors, and is indicative of a conception of their power that they inherited from him: that the traditional authority of the senate was not so much a challenge to as a vehicle for their own authority.

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#### APPENDIX. THE DATE OF THE FIRST AUGUSTAN COLLEGE OF *MONETALES*

The account of the introduction of the new coinage of the *tresviri monetales* suggested above rests on the assumption that Mattingly correctly dated it to 23 B.C. and that Kraft's redating to 19/18, accepted by Bay, Giard and recently Sutherland, is false. The whole question remains wrapped in frustrating uncertainty, but it seems to me that Burnett was right to reject Kraft's case.<sup>120</sup> I summarize the main types of argument, and offer one new one.

1. Internal evidence of the coin types allows us to date all the precious metal issues with certainty to the 10s B.C. It is the dating of the bronze which is most problematic. Celebration of *TRIBUNICIA POTESTAS* ties it down to the period starting with 23. Mattingly's reason for making 23 itself the starting date was the absence of *TRIB POT* from the 'Numa *asses*' of Cn. Piso's college. This silence is in itself not conclusive, and I have not assumed in the foregoing account that the 'reform' was introduced before Augustus' resignation of the consulship in July 23.

2. Hoard evidence is potentially the most reliable external criterion. At present the evidence is inadequate for certainty, and in any case cannot be pressed to the precision needed here; nevertheless, as Burnett shows, at least one hoard points very strongly towards Piso's college as the first to issue bronze, and to a date before 19.<sup>121</sup> We must await further evidence.

3. The sequence of denominations is particularly puzzling. No college issued more than four of the six available denominations (*aureus*, *denarius*, *sestertius*, *dupondius*, *as*, *quadrans*), some only issued one (*as* or *quadrans*), and only one issued both precious metal and bronze. It is hard to detect the underlying rationale. Kraft argued that precious metals came first (in 18), that *sestertii* and *dupondii* in orichalcum were added in 17, and that the combination of orichalcum and copper *asses* followed in 16. Mattingly's order has Piso's bimetallic copper/orichalcum issue as the first stage. The analogy of eastern copper/orichalcum series is an argument in support of Mattingly's

<sup>119</sup> See the illuminating discussion of Agulhon, *op. cit.* (n. 3), 62 ff. My own account is much simplified. Note too the account of how the revolution of 1792 resulted in a search for a new image (16 f.): the Abbé Grégoire submitted a report to the Convention with detailed proposals for a new state seal, 'so that our emblem, circulating all over the globe, should present to all peoples the beloved image of Republican liberty and pride'.

<sup>120</sup> See Kraft (1978), 42 ff.; Bay (1972); Burnett (1977). Giard follows Kraft in *BNC*, pp. 41-3; Suther-

land is more hesitant, following Mattingly in *AMC*, and Kraft, only with reservations in *RIC*, p. 32. Crawford, *Coinage and Money*, 258 ff. cautiously backs Burnett.

<sup>121</sup> The hoards of Velia, Livno and Calvatone (Burnett (1977), 49 f., (1981a), 9) support the primacy of Piso's college, and tell against Kraft's date of 15 for it. The evidence from military camps deployed by Kraft himself (1978, 47) only bears on the pattern of circulation in later reigns, and shows the greater popularity of the portrait *asses*.

arrangement; but the whole question of the sequence of denominations and the rationale behind their issue remains too obscure to allow dependable inferences. That *quadrantes* were the last arrival is agreed by all.<sup>122</sup>

4. Prosopographical arguments from the careers of the moneyers have been central in the debate; it is regrettable that the use of prosopographical technique has been jejune, and some of the underlying assumptions untenable. Of the forty-five named *tresviri*, fourteen can be identified with fair confidence as later consuls;<sup>123</sup> seven more may be identified with much less confidence.<sup>124</sup> Kraft assumes that men held the post of moneyer in the same relative order as their later consulships, and that a regular interval can be postulated of about ten years between the two posts. But the unpredictability of Roman political life and the variable effects of advantage, patronage and chance, as Wiseman points out, 'make the attempt to detect a regular interval . . . practically worthless'.<sup>125</sup> Moreover, the apparent regularity of Kraft's scheme is gravely disturbed if any of a number of possible but not certain identifications happen to be right: Taurus is very likely to be the grandson of Statilius Taurus the marshal, himself consul in A.D. 11; Sisenna looks like his brother, *cos.* A.D. 16; Regulus could well be (as in fact assumed) Livineius Regulus, *cos.* A.D. 18; Messalla might be the *cos.* A.D. 20;<sup>126</sup> C. Rubellius Blandus is more likely to be the *cos. suff.* A.D. 18 (future husband of Tiberius' granddaughter Livia Julia) than his homonymous father;<sup>127</sup> Annius might be C. Annius Pollio, *cos.* A.D. 21/2.<sup>128</sup> Any of these will give a gap much in excess of ten years. In fact, careful research into the age at which the consulship was held has rendered the notion of a regular gap untenable.<sup>129</sup> The minimum age for the consulship remained 42 under the renewed *leges annales*; but patricians, sons of consulars and the highly favoured might be granted an exemption of ten years, imperial princes a further five years. Consular ages tend to cluster around 31–33 for the favoured, 38–42 for new men. In a system in which age differentials represent grades of privilege, it is futile to look for a regular gap between junior and senior office.

Worse, there has been no attempt to investigate any aspect of these individuals apart from their consulships. It may be relevant to establish their connections. The possible relevance, in explaining the appointment of a *monetalis*, of a relative's tenure of office has already been investigated in the case of Cn. Piso (treated in all numismatic discussion as a faceless name). There are several other cases. It is highly relevant to the activity of P. Licinius Stolo as moneyer in 17 B.C. to discover a C. Licinius Stolo active as *xv vir sacris faciundis* at the Ludi Saeculares in precisely this year;<sup>130</sup> Stolo's sole reverse type of the priestly *apex* (pointed hat) between the *ancilia* (sacred shields) demonstrates that this is no coincidence. Asinius Gallus was a member of the same priestly college at the same time. If his moneyership fell in 16, as Kraft's scheme requires, it is strange that his coinage (being bronze only) has no reference to the games, while that of the otherwise unknown Mescinius in the same year does have. Galus (always so spelt, unusually, in contrast to the common Gallus) holds office on traditional dating in 5 B.C., a year before the suffect consulship of Galus Sulpicius; a family connection looks plausible, and the college might be downdated to 4 or better 3 B.C.; for in the latter year M. Valerius Messalla Messallinus was consul, suggesting that Messalla the colleague of Galus was the son of the consul of 3 B.C., in his turn consul in A.D. 20. On that dating, the final college might fall in 2 B.C., suggesting a connection between the cessation of the series and the political embarrassments of that year. There is room for further investigation; if it is to be effective, prosopographic argument must take into consideration all known or guessable connections, and the fates of *monetales* must not be discussed as if operating in a political vacuum, but against the background of public and political life, the rising and falling influence of Tiberius or Julia, the vicissitudes of campaigns (in Spain, Parthia, Germany) where young men as military tribunes and

<sup>122</sup> Metrological analysis of Augustan bronze by Carter and Buttrey (above n. 112) tends to support Mattingly's broad sequence, but the basis of analysis is narrow.

<sup>123</sup> Namely Cn. Calpurnius Piso (*cos.* 7), C. Asinius Gallus (*cos.* 8), C. Marcus Censorinus (*cos.* 8), T. Quinctius Crispinus Sulpicianus (*cos.* 9), L. Vinicius (*cos.* 5), C. Antistius Vetus (*cos.* 6), Cossus Cornelius Lentulus (*cos.* 1), L. Lentulus (*cos.* 3), L. Caninius Gallus (*suff.* 2), [L. Aelius] Lamia (*cos.* A.D. 3), L. Licinius Nerva Silianus (*cos.* A.D. 7), Sex. Nonius Quinctilianus (*cos.* A.D. 8), Volusus Valerius Messalla (*cos.* A.D. 5), L. Apronius (*suff.* A.D. 8).

<sup>124</sup> Silius, colleague of Lamia and Annus, is surely P. Silius (*suff.* A.D. 3). For the six remaining possibles, see below.

<sup>125</sup> T. P. Wiseman, 'Pulcher Claudius', *HSCP* 74 (1970), 213 f.

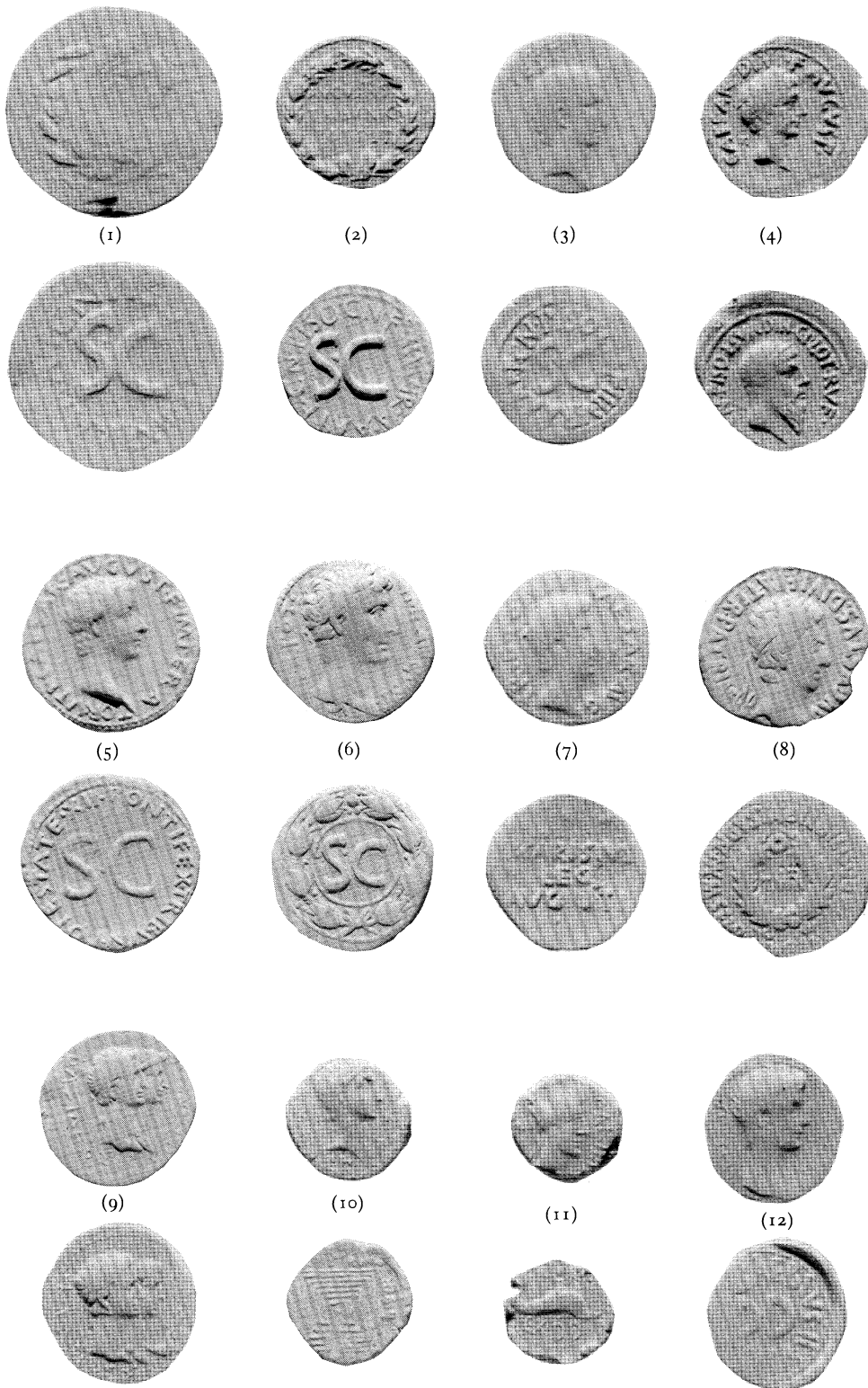
<sup>126</sup> But note Syme, *Roman Papers* 1, 262, tentatively suggesting an unknown brother of Volusus Messalla.

<sup>127</sup> *PIR* identified the moneyer with the father of the *cos. suff.* of A.D. 18, but before the latter's date was known. J. Morris (below n. 129), 330 confidently identifies moneyer and consul. On Rubellius (together with Sisenna Statilius Taurus and Livineius Regulus), see Syme, *Roman Papers* III, 1350 ff.

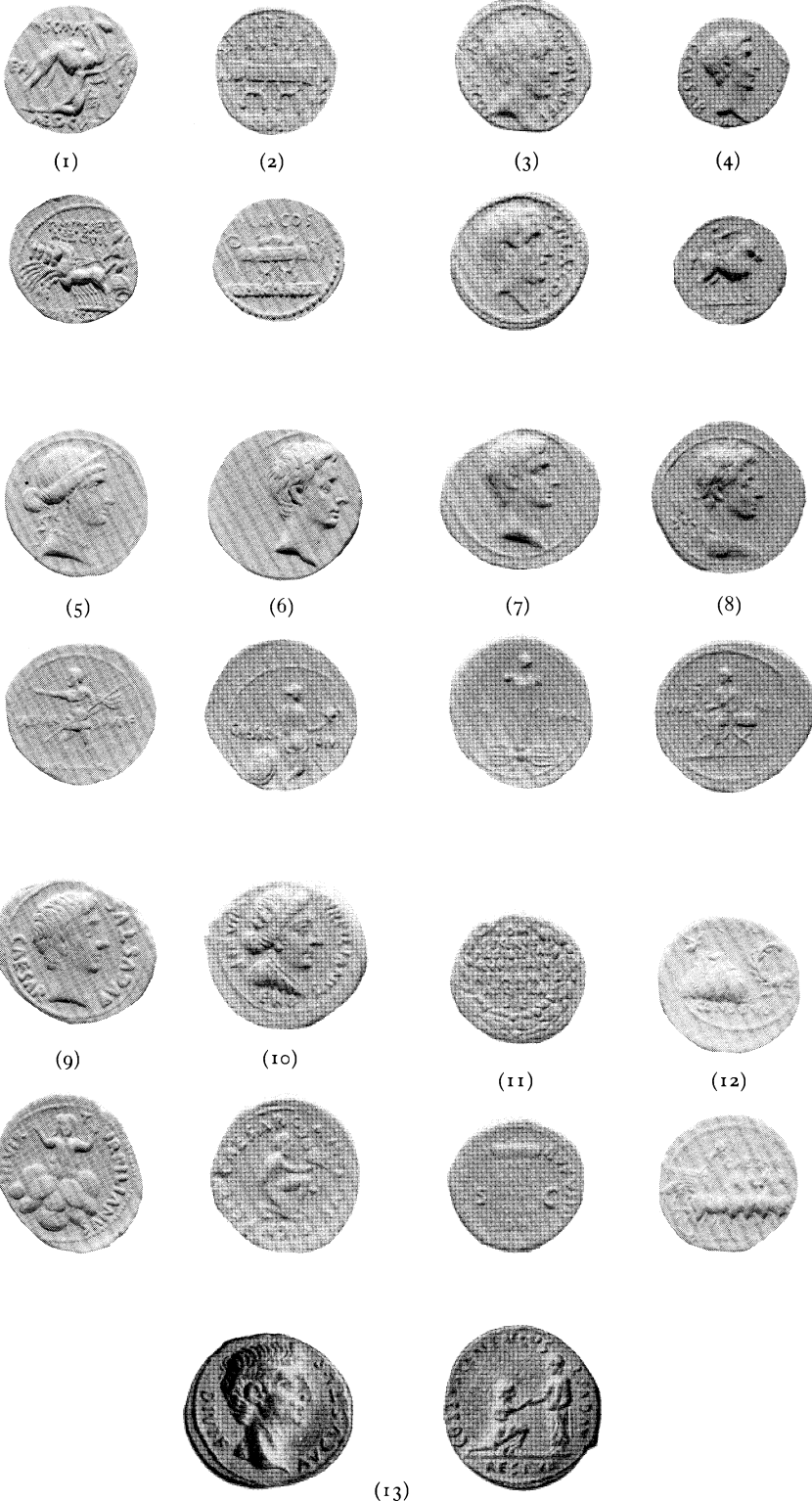
<sup>128</sup> All the above identifications are suggested by Wiseman, loc. cit. (n. 125).

<sup>129</sup> See the important analysis of John Morris, 'Leges Annales under the principate', *Listy Filologické* 87 (1964), 316–37. At 324 f. he criticizes and tacitly rejects Kraft's redating.

<sup>130</sup> *ILS* 5050, l. 150 (in the record of the Ludi).



ROMAN BRONZE AND LOCAL COINAGE UNDER AUGUSTUS. (1) Sestertius of Cn. Piso, *BMCRE* 134. (2) Dupondius of Cn. Piso, *BMCRE* 136. (3) As of Cn. Piso, *BM R* 3584. (4) 'Numa as' of Cn. Piso, Berlin. (5) As of mint of Rome, A.D. 10-11, *BMCRE* 274. (6) Eastern bronze (Antioch), *BMC Antioch* 126. (7) As of Carisius, Spain, c. 23 B.C., *BMCRE* 298. (8) Bronze of Bilbilis, *BM* 1919-2-13-1258. (9) Bronze of Rhoemetalces of Thrace, *BMC Rhoemetalces* 2. (10) Bronze of Cnossus, *BMC Cnossus* 74. (11) Bronze of Carteia, *BM* 1919-2-13-1313. (12) Bronze of Pella (?), *BM* 1919-2-13-1319.



TYPOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT IN ROMAN DENARII (LATE REPUBLIC-AUGUSTUS). (1) Denarius of M. Scaurus and P. Hypsaeus, 58 B.C., *RRC* 422/1. (2, 3) Denarii of Q. Pompeius Rufus, 54 B.C., *RRC* 434/1, 2. (4) Denarius of Octavian, 43 B.C., *RRC* 490/1. (5-8) Denarii of Octavian of 'Actium series', ?34-28 B.C., *BMCRE* 600, 610, 628, 637. (9, 10) Denarii of P. Petronius Turpilianus, c. 18 B.C., *BMCRE* 30, 13. (11) Denarius of L. Mescinius Rufus, 16 B.C., *BMCRE* 92. (12) Denarius, attributed to mint in Spain, *AMC* 94. (13) Aureus of Cossus Lentulus, c. 12 B.C. [enlarged].

*contubernales* of the influential laid the foundations of their careers. It is to be hoped that Syme's forthcoming study of the Augustan aristocracy will cast light on this problem.

Meanwhile, we may note (i) that Kraft's assertion that Cn. Piso must have served ten years as military tribune (i.e. from 25–16 B.C.) before his post as moneyer is unfounded;<sup>131</sup> (ii) that the ten (or nine) year gap between moneyership and consulship must indeed be regarded as at best a minimum, which might be extended, particularly in the case of new men, by at least ten further years, (iii) that Kraft's downdating of the moneyership of Cn. Piso (*cos.* 7 B.C.) to 15 B.C. involves postponing his quaestorship to the age of *c.* 27, remarkable for a patrician; that his consulship fell at the slightly late age of 35 must be accepted on any hypothesis, given the facts of his career.<sup>132</sup> Burnett shows that Kraft's scheme involves unacceptable contraction of minimum intervals and unacceptable bunching of colleges over a short period of time (two colleges are postulated in a single year). In fact, Kraft's prosopographical argument holds no water.

5. Contemporary references to the introduction of the new bronze coinage have not yet been discovered. However, a possible allusion to it has been overlooked. The opening stanza of Horace, *Odes* 2.2 is as follows:

Nullus argento color est avaris  
abdito terris, inimice lamnae  
Crispe Sallusti, nisi temperato  
splendeat usu.

Silver has no colour hidden in the greedy earth, Sallustius Crispus, you who hate sheet metal if it does not shine with tempered use.

Sallust, as has been seen above, was the owner of the new copper mine in the Val d'Aosta which provided bullion for the new issues. Conventional readings have not exploited this fact, though better sense can be made of the stanza on the assumption that it refers topically to Sallust's role in the new coinage.<sup>133</sup> The theme of the ode is avarice, and the addressee Sallust is offered as an exemplum of avoiding avarice—because he does not hide away his metal in the mine (*avaris terris*) but 'generously' puts it into circulation as coin. *Lamna* is the proper term for sheet-metal for coining; it was also in colloquial use for 'cash';<sup>134</sup> *temperato* is philosophical ('moderate use'), but it is also a technical term in the minting process ('conflare et temperare', i.e. 'melt down and blend/alloy').<sup>135</sup> The main objection is that Horace talks of silver not bronze; however, Sallust is not attested as possessing silver mines as well, and the choice of silver is apparently determined by allusion to a line of Greek poetry.<sup>136</sup> The date of this poem should be close to the publication of the whole book in the second half of 23 (the Sestius of *Odes* 1. 4 was consul).<sup>137</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard date it to 25 on the basis of a reference to Phraates; but it was only in 25 that Terentius Varro conquered the Salassi of the Val d'Aosta, and in 24 that the lands were divided up and a colony (Augusta Praetoria) founded.<sup>138</sup> It would appear that Sallust acquired his mines as beneficiary of this distribution. There appears to be a close causal and chronological nexus between the conquest (and virtual deracination) of the Salassi, the discovery of the new mine, the introduction of orichalcum coinage at Rome, and the wealth of Sallust (remembered for his *Horti Sallustiani*).

<sup>131</sup> A. R. Birley, *The Fasti of Roman Britain* (1981), 8: the vigintivirate might be held before, after, even inbetween, service as military tribune.

<sup>132</sup> Syme, *Roman Papers* III, 1229, inferring birth in *c.* 43 from Tac., *Ann.* 3. 16. Syme has no hesitation in placing his moneyership in 23 (1231).

<sup>133</sup> R. G. M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *Commentary on Horace Odes Book II* at p. 36 observes Sallust's mines, but do not make further use of the point.

<sup>134</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard, 38; Ulpian, *Dig.* 34. 2. 27. 6 contrasts *massa*, *lamna* and *signatum* (sc. *argentum*). Petronius 57–8 for the colloquial use.

<sup>135</sup> cf. Pliny, *NH* 7. 56. 197, 'aes conflare et temperare'. The 'use' which makes metal shine is conventionally the circulation of currency: Ovid, *Am.* 1. 8. 51, 'aera nitent usu'.

<sup>136</sup> cf. Nisbet-Hubbard, 35. Both gold and silver were mined in the territory of the Salassi; but Sallust cannot

have put silver into circulation in the late 20s, when no coin was being struck, cf. Crawford, *Coinage and Money*, 257.

<sup>137</sup> So Nisbet-Hubbard 1, pp. xxv ff. Yet possibly it would be better to abandon this traditional date for 22. I am grateful to Professor Nisbet for advice on this whole question.

<sup>138</sup> Dio 53. 25. 3–5 for the date. Roman involvement in the mines of the Salassi considerably predates 25: Strabo 4. 6. 7 (p. 205 f.) describes the endless quarrels between the tribe and first their neighbours, then the Romans, over their mines, leading to their eventual deracination. (Strabo only mentions gold, not copper mines.) Note that the general Varro is identified by some with the evanescent consul of 23. There may be further links concealed.