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Michael H. Crawford
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BY

MICHAEL H. CRAWFORD

Lecturer in Ancient History
University of Cambridge



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To my parents

PREFACE

I began to work in 1961 on the finances of the Roman Republic, with a particular interest in the effect on these of the Roman conquest of the Hellenistic World. It soon became apparent that an adequate account of the coinage of the Roman Republic was a necessary preliminary and I was gradually drawn into writing a handbook on the Roman Republican coinage. Some of the work involved has been congenial, some has not; I have tried to do it all conscientiously. Chapter 7 presents some of the work with which I started in 1961; but the subject as a whole still cannot be properly studied in the absence of an adequate knowledge of the coinages of Rome's enemies during the last two centuries of the Republic and of the coinages, such as the cistophoric, used by Rome, but not struck by the main mint of the Republic or by its magistrates for empire-wide circulation.

This book is in any case quite large enough; I have kept it to this size only by imposing on myself two major restraints. In the first place, I have only dealt with what may be called the mainstream coinage of the Republic; this is not easy to define, but it may be regarded as being coinage struck by officials of the Republic which was theoretically valid throughout the Empire; by way of example, the Social War coinage is excluded (it has no more place here than the Oscan denarii struck by Sertorius), as are all cistophori (it has never been clear to me why those of M. Antonius are traditionally included in handbooks on the Republican coinage, those of M. Cicero not) and all local bronze of the Triumviral period (in which category I include the 'fleet' bronze of M. Antonius, but not the issues of L. Atratinus and Cn. Piso Frugi). The catalogue closes with three issues whose inclusion is not perhaps entirely justifiable; but it is not likely that any other handbook will ever include them.

In the second place, I have considered the coinage of the Republic solely from the point of view of the issuing authority or authorities; there is much to be written about the behaviour of the Republican coinage in circulation, but not here. I have put down some thoughts on the context in which Roman coinage functioned and on the economic significance which it had in *JRS* 1970, 40–8; it is perhaps worth repeating that coinage is struck at Rome, as in other ancient states, to serve the needs of the state, not to supply the consumer.

A few other words of explanation may be desirable. In preparing the catalogue, I have cited an actual coin as evidence for a given type, preferably from a published source, and within a published source, the first coin listed of the type in question;

Preface

I have attempted to illustrate every significant type, using the best specimen known to me. Given the fullness with which I have been able to illustrate the coinage of the Republic, I have not attempted to describe in the catalogue such minutiae as the various forms of the letter A or the precise punctuation of a legend, unless particularly significant. I am aware that my lists of control-marks are not quite complete and that for reasons of space I have been able to list control-marks only for a selection of issues; but no attempt to list control-marks for more than a few isolated issues has ever been published and one has to make a start sometime. I have attempted to estimate the size of every issue (the principles followed are set out in connection with Tables L–LVII); this seems to me a necessary advance from the traditional practice of estimating degrees of rarity, with its collectors' emphasis on distinguishing carefully between pieces which are 'of the greatest rarity' and pieces which are 'exceedingly rare'. In dating an issue, I have tried to distinguish between certainty, probability and conjecture (see p. 123). I have used only two abbreviations apart from those which are in common use in classical studies, 'l.' for 'left' and 'r.' for 'right'. I have usually provided translations of Latin and Greek. Finally, the book was substantially finished in the autumn of 1971 and in the process of preparing it for the press I have not attempted to take systematic account of work appearing after that date.

The writing of this book has taken me into many fields in which my competence is at best dubious and I have profited from the advice of those more knowledgeable than I; apart from those mentioned below and in the course of the book, I have asked advice from Professor T. V. Buttrey, Dr C. H. V. Sutherland, the late Dr S. Weinstock and Mr A. Drummond; the Introduction and Volume II were read in typescript by Professor F. W. Walbank, the catalogue in typescript by Professor H. B. Mattingly, in proof by Dr T. P. Wiseman; all were extremely helpful. In addition, others have read different parts of the book in the interests of clarity and accuracy: Professor M. I. Finley Chapter 1, Professor P. Grierson Chapter 2, Professor Cl. Nicolet Chapter 6, Professor P. A. Brunt and Monsieur E. Fallu Chapter 7, Dr T. P. Wiseman Chapter 8, Dr J. A. North Chapter 9, Professor D. E. Strong Chapter 10. My stubbornness and ignorance account for the errors which remain.

But my chief debt is to my teachers Peter Brunt and the late Isobel Henderson and to Moses Finley and Philip Grierson; I have learnt a great deal from them, and much of my education as an ancient historian and an economic historian is due to them.

I must also record numerous debts of gratitude: to Tony Hackens for permission to quote from his thesis (Louvain, 1961); to *Münzen und Medaillen A.G.*, the Royal Numismatic Society, the *Jahrbuch für Numismatik* and the Court of the University of Glasgow for permission to reproduce material in their charge; more generally to the keepers of all the collections in which I have worked for showing me their material and allowing me to cite and illustrate it – it would be invidious to single out

Preface

particular individuals or museums; above all to Robert Carson, whose readiness to help in mastering the problems involved in producing a book of this kind has gone far beyond the call of duty or friendship; to the British School at Rome and to the Faculty of Classics of the University of Cambridge for financial support; to my College both for generous financial support and for the company with which it has surrounded me; to the Cambridge University Press for accepting this book for publication and for producing it with consummate skill and imagination; to Erica Mattingly for the beautiful drawings of Pls. LXVI–LXIX; to Geoffrey Bennett, June Ethridge, Génie Gordon, Helen Gebbett, Alison Jones, Lynda Lyne and Simon Williams for an immense amount of help with typing and indexing; finally to my wife, without whose impatient enquiries this book would have taken even longer to produce than it has.

MICHAEL CRAWFORD

Christ's College, Cambridge
August 1973