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978-1-316-60369-7 - Roman Anniversary Issues: An Exploratory Study of the Numismatic and Medalllic Commemoration of Anniversary Years 49 B.C.-A.D. 375

Michael Grant

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CHAPTER I

THE CELEBRATION OF 'ANNIVERSARY YEARS'

(i) *Roman attention to 'Anniversary years'*

The celebration of past events played an extensive and vital part in the public religion and daily life of Romans of all periods.¹ The present study is intended to indicate certain evidence of this pre-occupation, provided by the coins and medallions and relating in particular to anniversaries. But a distinction must be drawn between two quite different senses of the word 'anniversary', that is to say between two different categories of anniversary for which these coins and medallions might be, and were, issued:

(a) the annually recurrent noteworthy *day* of the month² or more usually of the year; e.g. the New Year Day,³ the reigning emperor's 'Regnal New Year Day'⁴ and birthday,⁵ and probably other days also, hitherto uninvestigated from this point of view.⁶

(b) the *year*⁷ in which was celebrated the centenary, or multiple or subdivision of a centenary—or other such 'round' anniversary—of an important event:⁸ here loosely described as the 'anniversary year'.

1 Cf. Altheim, *History of Roman Religion*, pp. 190 f. (temples; cf. G. Rohde, *Die Bedeutung der Tempelgründung im Staatsleben der Römer*, pp. 1 ff., 8, 12 ff.), 386 (deaths; cf. K. Sauer, *Untersuchungen zur Darstellung des Todes*, Frankfurt Diss. 1930, W. Schultze, *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 138 ff.); cf. *PR.* (*Fortuna huius diei*, Aius Locutius).

2 Lambrechts, *L'Antiquité Classique*, 1944, p. 48; id. *Latomus (Mélanges Heuten)*, 1946, p. 327.

3 For commemorative issues (some of the instances questionable) see the following writings: coins (*BMC. Imp.* III, pp. 448, 476; *ibid.* IV, pp. lxxvii, 282; *M. & S.* IV, I, p. 76; Toynbee, p. 76; *id.* *JRS.* 1945, pp. 117 f.; *ibid.* 1946, p. 236; Alföldi, *ibid.* 1940, p. 9), medallions and semi-medallions (Toynbee, pp. 33 ff., 73 ff., 89; cf. *BMC. Imp.* IV, pp. xciv, clxxxii; Alföldi, *Die Kontorniaten*, Pl. I. 1, 3) and contorniates (Toynbee, *JRS.* 1945, pp. 117 ff.; *ibid.* 1946, p. 236, accepts a proportion of the attributions of Alföldi, *loc. cit.* pp. 37 ff.).

4 Cf. Nock, *CAH.* x, p. 489; Toynbee, pp. 74 ff.; Snyder, *YCS.* 1940, p. 266.

5 Cf. Pippidi, *Recherches sur le Culte Impérial*, pp. 44 f., 116 f. n. 3; Nock, *CAH.* x, *loc. cit.*; Kornemann, *Gestalten und Reiche*, p. 100; Ensslin, *SB. München*, 1943. Censorinus wrote a work *De Die Natali*; cf. below, p. 2, nn. 6, 7.

6 Cf. Toynbee, p. 73 n. 1.

7 For this distinction cf. Altheim, *loc. cit.* p. 191: 'the year and day...live on in memory.'

8 Here, too, the commemoration centres on the *day* in so far as it is on this, in all probability, that its climactic point is reached; but this is so, not only or not even principally because this annually recurrent day of the year has again been reached, but because the *year* (of which for this purpose the day in question is the central point) is of peculiar importance as the 100th (or similarly 'round' anniversary; for the importance of 50 see Roscher, *Abh. Leipzig*, 1917, Rose, *OCD.* p. 614) of the event which is commemorated.

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'ANNIVERSARY YEARS'

As regards (a), there is abundant evidence of keen attention by Romans of all periods to anniversary days and to coincidences connected with them,¹ and this interest is reflected in coins and medallions. But this book is about (b), for which, indeed, the coinage is rather more appropriate; for it took some time to pass from hand to hand, and was therefore better suited for the celebration of a year than for that of a day. Up to the present, we have known much more about (a) than about (b), since it is naturally the former, rather than the latter, type of occasion with which *Fasti* and *Ferialia* are concerned. But there are two exceptions to our ignorance about (b). First, an interest has long been taken (it was stimulated by Laffranchi)² in the *decennalia*, *vicennalia*, etc. of emperors, and in the celebrations which accompanied, preceded and followed those occasions.³ Secondly, great progress has been made, especially by Gagé⁴ and Piganiol,⁵ with regard to the *ludi saeculares*, which on a number of occasions commemorated intervals of 100⁶ or 110 years,⁷ or artificial intervals fixed for political reasons, in the history of Rome.⁸ In the

1 E.g. Augustus (Gagé, *RGDA*, pp. 159 n. 1, 167 f., 175, 182 f.; Snyder, *YCS*, 1940, pp. 233 f. [especially p. 234 n. 21], 236; Weber, *Princeps*, 1, pp. 99*, 101*; Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor*, p. 206); Tiberius (Weber, loc. cit. pp. 94*, 99*; cf. Rogers, *Studies in the Reign of Tiberius*, p. 57); Caligula (Pippidi, *Recherches sur le Culte Impérial*, p. 109); Claudius (Weber, loc. cit. p. 101*); Nero (Laffranchi, *Atti e Memorie dell' Istituto Italiano di Numismatica*, 1921, p. 58; cf. *BMC. Imp.* II, pp. lxxvii, xcvi); Severus (Fink, *YCS*, 1940, pp. 77 ff., 81; cf. Weinstock, *JRS*, 1942, p. 128); Macrinus (Fink, loc. cit. p. 81, cf. n. 256); Diocletian (Alföldi, *Röm. Mitt.* 1935, pp. 98 f.); Maxentius (Besnier, *Histoire Romaine*, IV, 1, p. 354). One of many Republican instances is provided by Cicero (cf. Gagé, *RGDA*, p. 156 n. 1).

2 E.g. *Atti e Memorie dell' Istituto Italiano di Numismatica*, 1921, pp. 54 ff.

3 There is some reason for thinking that certain developments in the official Alexandrian coinage occurred not every five, but every seven years after accessions (cf. Milne, loc. cit. p. xxxix: for the religious significance of the number, see Nock, *CAH*, XII, p. 421 n. 1, and references). Asia on the other hand was particularly attentive to Σεβαστά occurring at intervals of four years (cf. *FITA*, p.

362: on Greek quadrennial and octennial festivals see Thomson, *JHS*, 1943, pp. 59 ff.; on Roman quadriennial intervals, Ginzler, II, pp. 250 f.; Bolton, *CQ*, 1948, pp. 82 ff.). Fourth and seventh centenaries are correspondingly stressed. Cf. Rose, *OCD*, p. 614.

4 *Recherches sur les Jeux Séculaires, Saeculum Novum (Transactions of the International Numismatic Congress of 1936); Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire*, 1934, pp. 1 ff., etc.

5 *Revue des études anciennes*, 1936, pp. 219 ff.; *Histoire de Rome*, pp. 43, 60, 67, 71, 229, 239, 251, 412, etc. See also now Pighi, *Pubblicazioni dell' Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore*, (ser. V, sc.-fil.), xxxv, 1941.

6 Censorinus, *De Die Natali*, xvii, 13; cf. Ginzler, II, p. 201 and n. 2; *CAH*, x, p. 150 n. 1.

7 Censorinus, loc. cit. xvii, 9; cf. Ginzler, loc. cit. This interpretation leads (as coins will show) to emphasis on multiples of that figure (and especially on 550) in connection with events other than the foundation of Rome. It is recorded by Horace, *Carmen Saeculare*, 21.

8 For the persistence of the *saeculum* motif see Mattingly, *CAH*, XII, p. 719; id. *The Emperor and his Clients (Todd Memorial Lecture*, II, Sydney, 1948), pp. 16 f., 26; Manni, *Atene e Roma*, 1938; id. *Rendiconti R. Acc. Bologna*, 1939.

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present volume no attempt will be made to discuss the secular celebrations or the well-known coinages in honour of them, though these will be used as evidence in an endeavour to pierce the obscurity surrounding other anniversary issues. The same will apply to our attitude to *decennalia*, etc., and their coinages; except that, in the early empire, some attempt will also have to be made to identify various neglected and unapparent issues of decennial character, since these will be found to throw light on the problems of anniversary coinages as a whole.

Unfortunately mint-masters often preferred to generalise their types, being aware of what was familiar to some contemporaries and careless of the worries of future historians: so that many pieces carry no specific allusion to the occasions of their issue.¹ This applies to anniversary issues as much as any others, and has caused students to ignore the possibility that such issues may celebrate *decennia*, centenaries, etc., of events quite other than the foundation of Rome or the accession of the reigning emperor. For, even viewed as a general hypothesis apart from specific evidence, this possibility must be admitted. A people which was so attentive to the centenaries of its city or to the *decennia* of its ruling *princeps* was not likely to neglect similar anniversaries of other great events in its history. Least of all could such neglectfulness be considered a likely trait in the traditionally minded Roman. Indeed, quite apart from the coins, there is—though ancient authors took such matters too much for granted to comment on them²—specific evidence to the contrary; though it has not, as far as the present writer knows, been collected. For example, under the Republic, the Romans being deeply attentive to the years of temple foundations,³ it had surely not been fortuitous that the temple of *Concordia in arce* was vowed in the 150th year (218 B.C.)⁴ of the traditional foundation-date of the first known temple of Concord in 367;⁵ that the temple of *Fortuna Primigenia* was dedicated in the 100th year (194 B.C.)⁶ of the temple of *Fors*

1 Cf. Sutherland, *Numismatic Review*, II, 1 (July 1944), pp. 7, 9. See also Introduction.

2 Snyder, *YCS*. 1940, p. 225, refers to scattered references by the literary authorities to anniversary days.

3 Cf. Rohde, *Die Bedeutung der Tempelgründung im Staatsleben der Römer*; Altheim, *History of Roman Religion*, p. 191.

4 Cf. Platner and Ashby, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, p. 137.

5 For references, see Altheim, *History of Roman Religion*, p. 282; Pippidi, *Recherches sur le Culte Impérial*, p. 64 n. 1.

6 Cf. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*², pp. 260, 596, Rose, *OCD*. p. 368.

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Fortuna (293 B.C.);¹ that the second temple of Mars (138 B.C.) was dedicated just a quarter of a *millennium* after the traditional date of his first temple (388 B.C.);² and that C. Sosius is likely to have completed his restoration of the temple of Apollo in the quadringenary year (c. 32 B.C.) of the original date assigned to it (431 B.C.).³ Similarly, the first attested *augurium salutis* (160 B.C.), a ceremony in honour of Peace, coincides with the centenary of a foundation with preeminently similar associations, the temple of Janus (260 B.C.).⁴

Another important type of religious occasion, the *deductio* of colonies, sometimes follows a similar pattern. Thus *colonia Copia* at Thurii (194–3 B.C.) is founded precisely a quarter of a *millennium* after the Greek colonisation of the same city (444–3 B.C.); and the very next colony to be called *Copia*, at Lugdunum (43 B.C.), is established just four centuries and a century and a half respectively after the two foundations of Thurii, whose coin-types it deliberately repeats.⁵ Similarly, Caesar apparently planned the colonisation of Carthage just 100 years after its destruction (p. 120).⁶

If we turn to the Principate, Augustus timed his *ludi saeculares* to occur 10 years after the 'restoration of the Republic';⁷ and he assumed the titles of *pontifex maximus* and *pater patriae*, with much ceremony, 15 and 25 years respectively after the same great event. His thirteenth consulate coincided with the same quarter-centenary occasion, just as his twelfth consulate had been timed to coincide with the quarter-centenary of *Aegyptus capta*. The second consulate of Tiberius was likewise arranged to fall on the *vicennium* of the *res-publica restituta*.⁸ Another *vicennium*, that of the first victories of Nero Drusus, was signalled by games in A.D. 6.⁹ Attention should also be paid to the simultaneous dedication of altars to *Pax*, *Salus* and Janus (with *Concordia*). This took place in 10 B.C., the sesquicentenary

1 Wissowa, loc. cit. pp. 256, 595.

2 Cf. Platner and Ashby, loc. cit. p. 328.

3 Cf. Strong, *CAH* x, p. 573. For the special importance of four (and its multiples), see p. 2 n. 3; for 'quadringenary', p. 53 n. 1.

4 *PR*; see Liegle, *Hermes*, 1942, pp. 249 ff.

5 Bull; I hope to amplify elsewhere.

6 Mommsen, *Die römische Chronologie bis auf Cäsar*², p. 175, considers a different type of religious ceremony also to have a centenary character, namely the hammering of a nail into the wall of the Capitoline temple, of which he believed the first recorded example

(363–2 B.C.; Livy, vii, 3. 3 f.) to have related to a plague of 463–2 B.C. (ibid. iii, 6); but this view is seriously contested; cf. Ginzel, ii, pp. 204 f. (references).

7 Cf. Stuart Jones, *CAH* x, p. 150. See also below, p. 84 and n. 9.

8 Cf. Sutherland, *NC* 1943, p. 46. The *Carmen Saeculare* (29 f.) stresses *Tellus*, whose temple's quarter-millenary might have fallen in the previous year, Platner and Ashby, loc. cit. p. 511 against Weinstock, *PW*. va. 1.804.

9 Weber, *Princeps*, i, p. 231*; cf. Dio 55. 27.

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year of the first recorded *augurium salutis* in honour of peace, and the quarter-millenary of the temple of a deity indissociably linked with peace, Janus:¹ so that the occasion, like *decennia* and *quinquennia* of 27, 17, 12 and 2 B.C., had a multiple anniversary significance. Moreover, the *vicennium* of this same event of 10 B.C. seems to have been signalised by the foundation, or dedication, of a further altar of *Concordia* in A.D. 10.²

Similar coincidences occur later. Tiberius's restoration of Venus' temple on Mt. Eryx (A.D. 20)³ was undertaken 200 years after the dedication of the temple of Venus *Erycina* at Rome (181 B.C.).⁴ Likewise his *Ara Pietatis Augustae* in A.D. 22 was dedicated just 50 years after the probable establishment of the *Arcus Pietatis* in 29 B.C.⁵ Claudius deified Livia in the centenary year of her birth (p. 70). Nero's closure of the temple of Janus in A.D. 66 (which could, as far as the cessation of warfare was concerned, have taken place several years earlier) coincided with the tercentenary of the first closure that is historically attested (235 B.C.).⁶ Vitellius used the appellative *Germanicus* in a very special sense—initially it even seemed to replace Augustus,⁷ whose precedents he partly neglected⁸—and his principate coincided with the half-centenary of the much commemorated Germanicus's death.⁹ Domitian's *ludi saeculares*, at a date otherwise inexplicable (A.D. 88), fell in the 100th year of the no less carefully remembered inauguration of the imperial high priesthood. Later, Severus, in A.D. 203, restored the *Circus Maximus*, on which Trajan had spent large sums in c. 103;¹⁰ and of the only three years in which the Arval brothers are known to have carried out special celebrations for all *divi*¹¹ (the third was for an accession),¹² one (A.D. 183) was the bicentenary year of the *saeculum aureum* of

1 *PR.*; cf. p. 3 and n. 4.

2 For the date see Pippidi, *Recherches sur le Culte Impérial*, pp. 63 f. (references on p. 64 n. 1).

3 Cf. Colin, *Revue archéologique*, 1946, p. 42.

4 Cf. Schilling, *Rev. de phil.*, 1949, p. 314.

5 Rushworth, *JRS.* 1919, pp. 37 ff., 53 ff.; cf. Platner and Ashby, loc. cit. p. 42.

6 *PR.*; see Momigliano, *JRS.* 1942, p. 63.

7 *BMC. Imp.* 1, p. ccxxviii, cf. p. ccxxii. Here he was accentuating a tendency of the later Julio-Claudians, Snyder, *YCS.* 1940, p. 137 n. 592. On coinage he often writes *Germanicus* in full even when all titles are abbreviated, *BMC. Imp.* 1, p. 379. 62, etc.

8 *BMC. Imp.* 1, p. ccxxviii. His apparent employment of the title *consul perpetuus* (cf. Hammond, *The Augustan Principate*, p. 283 n. 42; Stevenson, *CAH.* x, p. 826) shows an attitude to the constitution very different from that of Augustus from 23 B.C.

9 For the persistence of this commemoration cf. Snyder, loc. cit. pp. 136 ff., 277; Taylor, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1942, p. 310.

10 Cf. Longden, *CAH.* xi, p. 205 n. 3.

11 Henzen, *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, p. 148; cf. Hoey, *YCS.* 1940, p. 185.

12 Of Elagabalus (A.D. 218).

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Augustus, and another (A.D. 224) was the quarter-millenary year of the equally celebrated *respublica restituta*.¹ Constantine began his Arch, with its Trajanic designs, in A.D. 312–13,² just two centuries after the dedication of the *Basilica Vlpia* and *Forum Trajanum* (p. 149; cf. also pp. 41–2 n. 5).

There are other instances in which *principes* seem to have made use, for publicity purposes, of the *accidental* coincidence of important events with the 'anniversary years' of other occasions. Thus it seems that the cult of Actian Apollo under Augustus owed something, not only to the temple on the Epirote promontory, but also to the coincidence of the battle of Actium with the quadringenary of Apollo's temple at Rome—an occasion apparently signalised in the previous year by a political opponent, Sosius (p. 4). Similarly, Claudius made much of the coincidence of his accession with the fiftieth year of his life and of the *Ara Romae et Augusti* at his birth-place Lugdunum (pp. 70, 74). Caligula, too, in his extensive and immediate commemoration of Augustus,³ was surely not unaware that his own accession (A.D. 37) fell in the centenary year of the latter's birth (63 B.C.) (cf. p. 69); and the coincidence of the same event's bicentenary with the accession of a better Augustan, Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138), is unlikely to have escaped notice. One of his first and most emphasised coin-types is the Augustan *Pax*; and Gordian I, by stressing the same type, shows awareness that his own accession (A.D. 238) took place a century after that of his model and kinsman⁴ (p. 129).⁵ Likewise Carausius, whose emphasis on *Pax* was even greater, may have been conscious that he, too, came to the purple

1 Snyder, loc. cit., has collected a number of inscriptions which, though not explicit, seem to tell a similar story (*CIL*. xi, 3781: thirtieth anniversary of adoption of Tiberius), 241 (Preisigke and Bilabel, *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*, 4583: fifteenth of *dies imperii* of Trajan), 245 (*CIL*. xiv, 4553: beginning of sixtieth year of life of Antoninus Pius), 250 (*CIL*. xii, 5905: fortieth birthday of Marcus Aurelius), 253 f. (*CIL*. xiv, 168, *ILS*. 6172: beginning of fiftieth year of life of Severus), 257 (*CIL*. vi, 862: tenth year of *imperium* of Severus). Acclamations of later emperors often took the 'centenary' form *vivat centum annos*, cf. Alföldi, *Röm. Mitt.* 1934, p. 87. It may not be entirely fortuitous that the Theodosian *Codex* coin-

cided with the half-millenary of the birth of Augustus. For '50' see Rose, *OCD*. p. 614.

2 Toynbee, *JRS*. 1941, pp. 190, 193.

3 E.g. the dedication of his temple, Baldson, *The Emperor Gaius*, p. 35, and coinage.

4 Constantius II and his colleagues may likewise have appreciated the quadringenary character of their accession year, A.D. 337.

5 The conqueror of Gordian I, Maximinus, may, by his assumption of the title *Germanicus* in A.D. 235–6 (M. & S. iv, 2, pp. 133 f.), show consciousness that his German victories (*ibid.* pp. 146 f.) occurred just a quarter of a millennium before the first German victories (15 B.C.) of the first imperial figure to be granted the same title, Nero Drusus—whose same victories, on an earlier anniversary, had

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in an anniversary year (the 150th) of the accession of Antoninus, a year which was also the 350th after the birth of Augustus (p. 144). Again, Constantius II, by issuing medallions with the Augustan legends AVGVSTVS-CAESAR for his visit to Rome in 357, seems to indicate that he appreciated its coincidence with the quadringenary of a year in which contemporaries believed the Principate to have begun (43 B.C.) (p. 152).

(ii) *The numismatic record of 'Anniversary years'*

The coincidences, deliberate or accidental, to which the last section has called attention, are only the concern of this book in so far as they are recorded by coins and medallions; and its aim is to suggest the extent to which these, like other instruments of official policy, coincided with, and celebrated, years possessing an anniversary character. As monetary and medallion issues play a great part in commemorating *ludi saeculares* and *decennalia*, there is no reason why they should not equally have joined in the celebration of other anniversaries. Moreover, the strongly marked anniversary character of the coinage at Roman colonies and *municipia* and even at *civitates peregrinae*¹ would be strange if similar customs did not prevail at Rome. This would harmonise with the intensely traditional appearance of the Roman coinage, illustrated, for example, by the numerous 'restorations' and revivals of earlier emperors' portraits and types.² Indeed, *Fasti*, *Acta* and *Ferialia* show clearly that even at late periods the celebration of recurrent rites dating from Republic or early empire was by no means limited to *ludi saeculares* or *decennalia*; and it is on general grounds likely that the coinage was included among the media of propaganda utilised for such commemorations.

Finally, there is a special reason for believing this probable: namely, the peculiar attention devoted to their coins by the Roman

received special commemoration (see above, p. 4). Among recent writings on Maximinus are those of Bersanetti, *Studi sull'Imperatore Massimino il Trace*; Passerini, *Epigraphica*, III, 1941; id. *Athenaeum*, 1942, pp. 150 ff.; Hohl, *Klio*, 1941, pp. 264 ff.; ibid. 1942, pp. 287 f.; Altheim, *Rheinisches Museum*, 1941, pp. 192 ff.; d'Ors Perez Peix, *Emerita*, 1941, pp. 200 f.; Ensslin, *Philologische Wochenschrift*, 1943, pp. 253 ff.

Domitian had already perhaps, at an earlier date, especially honoured the centenary of Nero Drusus' death for a similar reason (p. 96).

1 *FITA*, pp. 295 ff., 338, etc.

2 E.g. Mattingly, *BMC. Imp.* II, pp. xxxvii f., lxxvii, xcvi; III, pp. I, lxxxvi f., xc; id. *NC*, 1920, pp. 179 ff.; Mattingly and Salisbury, *NC*, 1924, pp. 235 ff.; Gagé, *Revue archéologique*, xxxiv, 1931, pp. 40 f., etc.

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authorities and so by the people of the empire.¹ This is a topic on which the present writer has enlarged elsewhere² as follows: 'Roman coinage is a branch of archaeology which has two arresting features. First, it is enormously varied, offering a kaleidoscopic variety of types, usually numbering hundreds in every reign. And secondly—the reason for such variety—it served a propagandist purpose far greater than has any other national coinage before or since. This was the means which the Roman government, lacking modern media of publicity, used to insinuate into every home in the empire each changing nuance of imperial achievement and policy. Their unremitting use of this means is evidence enough, if evidence is needed, that in the course of their vast circulation these coins were studied with an attentiveness that is quite alien to our own practice. Their subtle and highly differentiated symbolism is often hard for us to understand, but millions of contemporaries must have been immune from this difficulty. For if this were not so, the hard-headed Roman government would not have been so foolish as to continue, for centuries, this lavish outlay of energy and ingenuity. I do not mean that everyone who saw a coin would necessarily understand each of the often complex significances of its type; but I do mean that most people, or most educated people, noted and understood at least some of the several imperial themes imprinted thereon; and to us, as to them, the fluctuations of these themes are of peculiar interest as reflecting the principles which successive imperial governments wished to have identified with the bases of their rule.'

A particular aspect of this attentiveness to coinage which is relevant here is the religious character not only of the mint (which was in the temple of Juno *Moneta* and was, from the second century A.D., described as *sacra*),³ but even of coin-types, and especially portraits.⁴ *MONETA* itself begins, before the death of Caesar, to appear on the coinage (on an anniversary occasion) as a religious concept (p. 15); and before the end of the next century it has become *MONETA AVGVSTI*.⁵ Indeed, not only were old and unusual pieces

1 Cf. Charlesworth, *The Virtues of a Roman Emperor*, p. 8; and *PR.*

2 *PR.*; cf. *CSNM.*, and below, p. 171.

3 *ILS.* 1638 (Hadrian); cf. Hirschfeld, *Die kaiserlichen Verwaltungsbeamten*², p. 186 n. 3; Ensslin, *CAH.* xii, p. 362.

4 Cf. Clerc, *Les Théories relatives au Culte des Images* (Diss. Paris, 1915), p. 57;

Rolland, *Courrier numismatique*, 1931, p. 11; Cahn, *RS.* 1944, p. 58.

5 *BMC. Imp.* iii, pp. xxxv ff. (cf. ii, pp. xii, lxxxiii, lxxxiv n. 1, xc); Strack, i, pp. 154 ff. (references on p. 161 n. 675); cf. Dieudonné, *Rn.* 1940; Mattingly, *NC.* 1943, p. 36. See also Grimal, *Lettres d'Humanité*, iv, 1945, pp. 29, 120.

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ANNIVERSARY COINS

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selected by Augustus for his *Saturnalia* presents (p. 24), but coins,¹ as well as medallions and medallic objects,² were themselves objects of consecration. They were thus very easily utilisable for the commemoration of the great anniversaries of public religion. But the coins' own religious character leads to a further point also: we ought not to be surprised if we find coins commemorating the anniversaries, not only of earlier events, but of earlier coins—just as a number of emperors, of whom the most thoroughgoing is Trajan,³ stress the significance of much earlier coinage by reviving or 'restoring' a large number of its types.⁴

These points will be illustrated during the identification and discussion of anniversary issues which will follow. These will be seen to be of considerable number. Modern writers have identified a minute proportion of them.⁵ For example, Laffranchi and Mattingly appreciated that certain issues of Vespasian commemorated the centenary of Actium and of the *respublica restituta* of Augustus in 27 B.C. (p. 88); and Strack has rightly ascribed Hadrianic innovations to the 150th anniversary of the latter occasion (p. 101). Mattingly has also attributed a Lugdunese *quadrans* of Claudius to his fiftieth birthday (p. 74). Wruck assigned the Eastern s.c. *aes* of Tiberius to the half-centenary of the inauguration of that series by Augustus (p. 65).⁶ Gagé, too, noted the lapse of 100 years between the consecration (?) of the Temple of Venus and Rome and a reminiscent medallion of Severus Alexander. He did not pursue this topic, but rightly added *cette coïncidence nous paraît mériter réflexion* (p. 127). The same thought was probably also in the mind of Dobiaš, who observed (without comment) that the issues of Claudius in honour of Nero Drusus were made just half a century after the latter's death (p. 73). There may be similar references that have escaped the present writer's notice. But in any case such allusions are very few indeed, and only refer to an insignificant percentage of the issues

1 Cf. Mabbott, *Numismatic Review*, 1, 3 (Dec. 1943), p. 29 n. 4; M. & S. II, p. 303; cf. later, Laurent, *Cronica Numism. si Arheol.* 1940, pp. 119 f. Laum, *Heiliges Geld*, p. 154, restricts this unduly to Greece.

2 E.g. Nemausus *patte de sanglier* pieces; cf. Babelon, *Rn.* 1943, p. 2.

3 *BMC. Imp.* III, pp. lxxxvi ff., 132 ff.—he was 'one of the first to recognise Numis-

matics as an aid to History' (M. & S. II, loc. cit.) (on an anniversary, p. 100).

4 Republican issues remained a very long while in circulation: cf. *BMC. Imp.* III, p. lxxxviii and n. 2.

5 Von Schrötter's *Wörterbuch der Münzkunde*, p. 297, s.v. *Jahrhundertmünzen*, mentions no ancient examples.

6 I would express it differently.

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978-1-316-60369-7 - Roman Anniversary Issues: An Exploratory Study of the Numismatic and Medallion Commemoration of Anniversary Years 49 B.C.-A.D. 375

Michael Grant

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to which, in the present writer's view, an anniversary character is to be ascribed.

Before an attempt is made to review these issues, certain observations are necessary regarding the methods which we may expect the coinage to adopt in celebrating anniversaries. Nowadays we should often confine our attention to the actual day, or at any rate to the week or other brief period, in which the centenary (or its multiple or subdivision) falls. The Romans took a rather more elastic view, according to which celebrations might instead (or in addition) be held within the year immediately preceding, as well as the year immediately following, the anniversary day. To take the former of these two marginal years, Vespasian,¹ Septimius Severus² and Gallienus³ are among the numerous emperors who celebrated their *decennalia* not on the tenth, but on the ninth, anniversary of their accession—that is to say at the beginning, not the end, of the tenth year of their reigns. Likewise, Augustus chose Livia's 49th birthday for the dedication of the *Ara Pacis Augustae*;⁴ and Tiberius dedicated a statue of Divus Augustus on the 49th anniversary of his own assumption of the *toga virilis*.⁵ The second Republican temple of Concord was vowed not much more than 149 years after the first, and 99 years separate two Republican temples of *Fortuna* (pp. 3 f.); while inscriptions possibly commemorate the 59th and 49th birthdays of Antoninus and Severus respectively, and the ninth anniversary of the latter's *dies imperii*.⁶

Our understanding of this emphasis on the year preceding an anniversary (which the coins and medallions may be expected to share) is assisted by entries in the *Acta Arvalia* such as the following: *vota quae superioris anni magister voverat persolvit et in proximum annum... nuncupavit*.⁷ Thus anniversary celebrations came to have two parts, one of which was naturally felt to be concerned with the

1 Cf. *BMC. Imp.* II, p. liii.

2 Cf. Miller, *CAH.* XII, p. 19.

3 Cf. Piganiol, *Histoire de Rome*, p. 425; von Domaszewski, *Rheinisches Museum*, 1902, pp. 510 ff.; Alföldi, *Röm. Mitt.* 1935, pp. 90 f. n. 2.

4 Cf. Snyder, *YCS.* 1940, p. 234. For recent contributions to the voluminous literature on the *Ara*, see Strong, *Quaderni di Studi Romani*, II, 1939, pp. 23 f. (bibliography); Picard, *Revue des études Latines*, 1941, pp. 279 ff.

(bibliography); Momigliano, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 1942, p. 228; id. *JRS.* 1944, p. 110; Poulsen, *Acta Archaeologica*, 1946, pp. 1 ff.

5 Weber, *Princeps*, I, pp. 94*, 99*.

6 *CIL.* XIV, 4553, 168, VI, 862: cf. above, p. 6 n. 1.

7 Thus restored by Henzen, *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, pp. xxxiii, 95; cf. Gagé, *Revue archéologique*, 1931, pp. 24 f.; Pearce, *NC.* 1937, p. 118 ff.