

# Sulla Imperator Iterum : the Samnites and Roman republican coin propaganda

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THOMAS R. MARTIN

SULLA *IMPERATOR ITERUM*,  
THE SAMNITES AND ROMAN REPUBLICAN COIN PROPAGANDA

*Plate 1*

*Introduction*

A large number of inscriptions surviving from the late Roman Republic testify to the abiding interest that public figures of the time had in publicizing themselves. By proclaiming their own achievements and those of their families in inscribed texts, displayed as conspicuously as possible, Romans with ambitions could create the kind of personal publicity which apparently helped to advance their status and careers. The most conspicuous publicity was generated by inscriptions placed on public monuments; the most widely circulated publicity, however, was generated by the inscriptions and small relief sculptures which appeared on coins. Since people at all levels of society handled coins in their everyday lives, they were constantly exposed to the messages that coins could be made to bear.

Not only did their mobility make coins suitable as instruments of publicity, but coins also offered the possibility of a frequent change in the message they bore. Both the officials regularly in charge of issuing coinage for the state (the board of moneyers, *tresviri monetales*), as well as the other magistrates who also from time to time oversaw the minting of coins in the late Republic, decided on their own initiative what designs the coins would carry. This freedom of decision meant that these men could employ the inscriptions and relief sculptures which together made up the types on the coins to carry publicity of their own devising. The annual change in the membership of the board of moneyers, to say nothing of the irregular intervention of other monetary magistrates, created nearly constant opportunities for changes in Republican coin types, reflecting the choices of the new officials in charge of coin production<sup>1</sup>.

- AJAH American Journal of Ancient History  
Combès R. Combès, *Imperator. Recherches sur l'emploi et la signification du titre d'imperator dans la Rome républicaine* (Montpellier 1966)  
ILLRP A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae* (Florence 1957-63)  
ILS H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (Berlin 1892-1916)  
RRC M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republic Coinage* (Cambridge 1974)  
RRCH M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coin Hoards* (London 1969)  
Samnium E. T. Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge 1967)

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the moneyers, other monetary magistrates and their freedom of choice in relation to types, see Crawford, RRC, 598-604, 620, 712, and 726.

These characteristics made coinage a unique instrument of publicity in the Roman Republic. For this reason it makes sense to continue to use the traditional phrase «coin propaganda» to designate the messages conveyed by the types of Roman Republican coinage, although it is anyone's guess how effectively this mode of communication actually functioned<sup>2</sup>. In this respect the study of Roman Republican coin propaganda resembles the study of propaganda in other forms and at other times. That is, it is easier to puzzle out what propagandistic message the originating authority was trying to send than to grasp exactly what the members of the intended audience made of the message, or how much serious attention they devoted to the official publicity directed at them. In the analysis of Roman Republican coin propaganda, therefore, we can hope to gain insights into the pretensions and the programs of the disseminators of the propaganda.

Published some thirty years ago, Andreas Alföldi's article on coin propaganda under the Roman Republic still offers an excellent starting point for the consideration of the subject<sup>3</sup>. In his wide-ranging survey Alföldi divided the history of the development of the types of Republican coinage into stages corresponding to the general trends in the history of the Republic itself:

The historical transformation of the structure of the Roman state, as reflected by the unceasing change of the character of the coin-types, has, roughly, three stages, which approximately correspond to the three centuries of the later Roman Republic. In the third century B. C. the coin-pictures announce aims and ideas concerning all the Romans and their state. . . . In the second century the aspirations of the ruling class begin to overshadow the manifestations of the state and to supplant them by the continually growing references to their own clans. . . . At the beginning of the first century the symbols of the state to a great extent disappear. The era of the great oligarchies gives place to that of the powerful individuals who occupy first the reverse and then the obverse of the coins, gaining ground continually until the final success about the middle of the first century<sup>4</sup>.

Alföldi's scheme yields a clear picture of the general lines of the development of Republican coin types. For about a century and a half after the introduction of coined

<sup>2</sup> For strong doubts about the effectiveness of ancient coin propaganda, see A. H. M. Jones, *Numismatics and History*, in: *The Roman Economy*, ed. P. A. Brunt (Oxford 1974), 61-81; Crawford, *RRC*, 726; idem, *Roman Imperial coin types and the formation of public opinion*, in: *Studies in Numismatic Method presented to Philip Grierson* (Cambridge 1983), 47-64. For more optimistic views about the efficaciousness of Roman coin propaganda, see C. H. V. Sutherland, *The purpose of Roman Imperial coin types*, *RN* 1983, 73-82; N. Hannestad, *Roman Art and Imperial Policy* (Aarhus, Denmark, 1986, *Jutland Archaeological Society*, vol. 19), 11-12 with the bibliography cited in his note 8; C. T. H. R. Ehrhardt, *Roman coin types and the Roman public*, *JNG* 34, 1984, 41-54.

<sup>3</sup> A. Alföldi, *The main aspects of political propaganda on the coinage of the Roman Republic*, in: *Essays in Roman Coinage presented to Harold Mattingly* (Oxford 1956, hereafter cited as "Main Aspects"), 63-95.

<sup>4</sup> Alföldi, *Main Aspects*, 65.

money at Rome, Republican coins uniformly displayed «public» types with no direct connection to the magistrates issuing the coins. By the time of the Gracchi near the end of the second century B.C., however, «family» types commemorating the famous deeds and distinction of the ancestors of the coining magistrates had become more common than «public» types. These «family» types continued to be popular choices until the end of the Republic. They were next supplemented by «personal» types which celebrated the offices, accomplishments of fame or the contemporary magistrates themselves, not just those of their ancestors. Since «family» types alluding to a magistrate's family or distinguished forebear of course also referred to his personal history, even if only indirectly, the emergence of these «personal» types constituted a natural, but marked, intensification of personal reference in the coin propaganda of the late Republic. This innovation—the minting of purely «personal» types—suited particularly well the ardent desire for publicity evinced by leading figures in Republican politics during all aspects of their careers<sup>5</sup>.

The way toward this innovation of minting «personal» types in the sense intended in this paper was clearly opened when the followers of Marius represented him symbolically on coins they issued. On the denarii of C. Fundanius, for instance, the figure of a *triumphator* unmistakably points to Marius, although this miniscule representation cannot be thought of as a portrait in any meaningful sense<sup>6</sup>. Strictly speaking, of course, these coins did not carry a purely «personal» type because Marius was not identified on them as their issuer. «Personal» types in the sense intended in this paper consisted only of types referring to the contemporary status of the person whose identifying inscription they carried<sup>7</sup>. The ultimate development of «personal» types, no matter how this term is understood, came when the monarchical figures of the end of the late Republic had their own portraits placed on coins.

The shift to a preference for «family» types over «public» types obviously constituted a major innovation in the kind of propaganda Roman coinage could be made to carry. The same is true of the shift from «family» types, referring only to the past, to the «personal» types which referred directly to the contemporary status of an individual. This second innovation is especially striking because the first appearance of this sort of «personal» type on Republican coins marks a break with Roman tradition and was symptomatic of a fundamental reason for the death of the Republic: the rise of the great man who placed his personal advancement and power before the welfare of Rome. The date when leading Roman politicians began to put their own «personal» types on the coins they issued has significant implications for the interpretation of Roman coin propaganda in the turbulent years of the late Republic, when Roman political and social traditions were being challenged across the board. We need to know when this innovation first occurred, but its date remains controversial.

<sup>5</sup> On the general trend of development, see E. Badian, *Sulla's Augurate*, *Arethusa* 1, 1968, 26–27. Crawford, *Types and Legends*, RRC, 712–744, provides an extensive and nuanced discussion of Republican coin propaganda. Hannestad's remarks (*supra* n. 2), 18–31, are wide ranging but less focused.

<sup>6</sup> RRC, issue no. 326, dated 101 B. C. Unless otherwise indicated, issues of Roman Republican coins will be cited in this paper by the numbers and dates given in the catalogue of RRC.

<sup>7</sup> Crawford in his discussion of types and legends (RRC, 712–744) applies the term “personal” type more broadly than I am doing here.

Alföldi placed this decisive turning point in about 70 B. C. when «the typical imple-ments of the priesthoods of the state held by the coining officials themselves began to occupy the reverses . . .»<sup>8</sup>. Since Roman priesthoods were official state positions with at least as much political as religious significance, this allusion by symbols to the magistrate's priestly status made for an unmistakably «personal» type referring directly to the contemporary political status of the issuer of the coins<sup>9</sup>. At this point, in Alföldi's view, coin propaganda passed beyond the turning point which marked the shift from «family» types to «personal» types. As Alföldi goes on to say, the great men of the later Republic subsequently made good use of the devices of office as a form of personal reference in coin types to proclaim their tenure of prestigious offices.

Eleven years after the appearance of Alföldi's study, however, B. W. Frier published an article which by implication revised the date of this turning point. In his article Frier concentrated on the significance of the symbols of the Roman priestly office of augur (a jug and a crooked staff) that appeared on a certain issue of coins produced by L. Cornelius Sulla (issue no. 359 in RRC, here pl. 1,1), in the late 80s B. C. Frier argued that these symbols in fact referred to Sulla's contemporary claim to continued tenure of the augurate as part of his propaganda attack against his enemies in Rome<sup>10</sup>. Since Sulla had these coins minted more than a decade before 70 B. C., Frier's arguments about the augural symbols on Sulla's coins implied a revision of Alföldi's date for the shift from «family» to «personal» types, although this point was not made in the article.

Pointing to the implications of Frier's arguments for Alföldi's «rule» (that is, no «personal» types referring to the contemporary status of the issuer of the coins before ca. 70 B. C.), E. Badian soon rejected Frier's explanation of the augural symbols found on issue no. 359. He argued that the symbols could not possibly refer to Sulla's holding of the augurate because Sulla had not yet become an augur at the time this

<sup>8</sup> Main Aspects, 75.

<sup>9</sup> The reverse types of the earlier issues no. 330 of 100 B. C. and no. 351 of 86 B. C. are usually identified as «personal» types of minor magistrates of a different sort, see Alföldi, Main Aspects, 78, and RRC, 331 and 367. Both reverses show male figures seated on their official bench (*subselli-um*) with large ears of grain depicted beside them to symbolize special grain distributions at Rome, a point made clear by the inscription of no. 330 (AD FRV EMV). The figures, which are far too small to be thought of as portraits, are assumed to represent the magistrates themselves, quaestors on no. 330 and plebeian aediles on no. 351. The inscription EX S C also found on the first of these issues, however, suggests that these reverses carry a stylized scene meant to represent the Senate's function through its agents as a beneficent provider of grain in times of need and not to glorify the particular magistrates themselves. The inscription EX S C on no. 330 marks it as an extraordinary issue authorized by the Roman Senate, in this case to finance the special distribution of grain to the people of Rome. (See RRC 606–609, for the special nature of the EX S C issues.) The inscription makes clear the Senate's claim to primary credit for the relief program. The magistrates who carried out the Senate's orders could bask in the reflected glory of the Senate, but their positions were too minor to allow them to monopolize the credit for the program with personal types relevant only to themselves.

<sup>10</sup> B. W. Frier, Augural symbolism in Sulla's invasion of 83, MN 13, 1967, 111–118.

issue was in production<sup>11</sup>. Badian showed, against Frier, that Sulla became an augur only after his victory at the Colline Gate of Rome on November 1, 82 B. C. and his subsequent return to power at Rome. Relying on M. H. Crawford's revised chronology for no. 359, Badian, like Frier, assumed a date in 84 or 83 B. C. for the minting of this issue. Furthermore, Crawford also postulated that these coins carrying the symbols of the augur's office were replaced well before November 1, 82 B. C. by another issue of Sulla's coins without any augural symbols (no. 367, here pl. 1,2)<sup>12</sup>. This chronology for the two issues of coins in question, in tandem with Badian's demonstration that Sulla was not an augur before November 1, 82 B. C., therefore meant that Sulla had not produced any coins with augural symbols while he held the augural office, despite Frier's claims. With this conclusion, Alföldi's date of ca. 70 B. C. for the first appearance of this kind of «personal» types thus remained unchanged<sup>13</sup>.

In a subsequent contribution to the discussion, Arthur Keaveney based his arguments about the meaning of the augural symbols appearing on no. 359 on two points: (1) Badian's date for Sulla's augurate (in Keaveney's words, «after November 1, 82»); and (2) Crawford's revised chronology for no. 359 («before that war [Sulla's invasion of Italy in 84–82] ended»)<sup>14</sup>. Keaveney suggested that the augural symbols on issue no. 359 expressed a propagandistic claim that Sulla's *imperium* as a proconsul remained *iustum* during his invasion of Italy in what amounted to a civil war, regardless of what his enemies in that struggle were saying about the illegitimacy of his position. In other words, in Keaveney's view the symbols served as expressions of Sulla's claim to exercise legitimate and, indeed, divinely sanctioned authority in the face of his opponents' accusations to the contrary<sup>15</sup>. This view necessarily disassociated the symbols from the augurate. Nevertheless, the type of no. 359 would still have been a «personal» one in a fundamentally new way if the symbols truly referred to Sulla's holding of *imperium* as a proconsul. That is, Sulla's name inscribed on no. 359 as the only name that they bore showed that Sulla was to be seen as their issuer. At the same time, Keaveney argued, the augural symbols expressed a propagandistic claim about Sulla's contemporary status as proconsul. It was not some adherent of Sulla's, as in the earlier case of Marius, but Sulla himself as the issuer of no. 359 who employed the symbols on the

<sup>11</sup> Supra (n. 2) 26–46. The debate continued in Frier, Sulla's priesthood, *Arethusa* 2, 1969, 187–199, and Badian, A reply, *Arethusa* 2, 1969, 199–201. See also J. R. Fears, The coinage of Q. Cornificius and augural symbolism on late Republican denarii, *Historia* 23, 1975, 592–602 (especially 598–600).

<sup>12</sup> For this revised chronology, which will be discussed later in this paper, see RRC, 80, 373–374, 386–387.

<sup>13</sup> B. Wosnik, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Sullas* (Diss. Würzburg 1963), 40–41, makes the curious argument that the augural symbols on Sulla's coins are not an exception to Alföldi's «rule» even though, on his chronology, the issue belongs to the end of the civil war in 82 B. C.

<sup>14</sup> A. Keaveney, Sulla Augur, coins and curiate Law, *AJAH* 7, 1982, 150–171.

<sup>15</sup> Alföldi, *Main Aspects*, 86, linked the augural symbols on Sulla's coins to «the two aspects of his imperial power: *ductu auspicioque*». In: *Redeunt Saturnia regna V: zum Gottesgnadentum des Sulla*, *Chiron* 6, 1976, 156–158, Alföldi discussed augural symbols on coins not necessarily referring to the moneyer's own augurate. Cf. the comments of A. Keaveney, *Sulla and the Gods*, *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 3 (Brussels 1983), 62, n. 87. See Broughton (*infra* n. 40) vol. 3 suppl., 75–76, for a brief review of the evidence of Sulla's augurate.

coins to publicize his own, contemporary status in 84–82 B. C. Keaveney's interpretation of the augural symbols on no. 359 therefore reasserted the identity of this issue as the earliest Republican issue to bear a «personal» type. In other words, no. 359 did represent a contravention of Alföldi's «rule» (i.e., no «personal» types before c. 70 B. C.).

As often when one is in pursuit of the answers to larger historical questions in ancient history, precision in chronological matters has a great bearing on the validity of the conclusions that we can reasonably draw about these questions based on the available evidence. In the present case, the chronology of the issue of Sulla's coins bearing augural symbols is significant for two reasons: it bears directly on the history of an important innovation in Roman coin propaganda, and it makes a difference to our evaluation of Sulla as a politician and a propagandist. Therefore, the evidence for dating issue no. 359 deserves close attention. As we shall see, the problem of the chronology of these coins of Sulla has an extraordinary history that rivals the remarkable-ness of the coins themselves, about which more remains to be said. The investigation of the chronology of these coins in the interest of shedding light on larger questions inevitably depends on the historical and the numismatic evidence. The rest of this paper will examine both these categories of evidence, beginning with the historical implications of the distinctive inscription which appears on issue no. 359.

### *Part One*

Issue no. 359 consists of aurei and denarii carrying the inscription L SVLLA / IMPER ITERVM. The abbreviation IMPER stands for the title *imperator*, which was conveyed by an imperial acclamation. Such an acclamation took place when Roman troops in the field hailed their commander as *imperator* in a supposedly spontaneous burst of enthusiasm after a major victory in battle. The Senate and people were subsequently asked to confirm the title. To receive an imperial acclamation meant, strictly speaking, to carry the honorific title of *imperator*, but nothing more. An acclamation neither conveyed nor implied any political or military office. It did bestow considerable prestige which brought its own worthwhile rewards in Roman society, and, most importantly, it suggested that the victorious commander might deserve a triumph, the highest possible military honor<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Zonaras, Epit. 7.21 (Cassius Dio, Book 6) provides a description of Republican procedure for imperial acclamations. For a full treatment of the history and meaning of the imperial acclamation under the Republic see Combès. He discusses the link between the acclamation and the triumph on 81 and 86. For specific discussion of the meaning of the imperial acclamation see also H. S. Versnel, *Triumphus. An Inquiry into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph* (Leiden 1970), 340–355 (discussing earlier views); D. Kienast, *Imperator*, *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte* 78, 1961, 403–421; and M. A. Levi, *L'appellativo imperator*, *Riv. di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica* n.s. 10, 1932, 207–218. D. McFayden, *The History of the Title Imperator* (Chicago 1920), has little to say on the Republican period.

Although Roman armies had begun to hail their commanders as *imperatores* long before, it was not until the 80s B. C. that the title first appeared on coins<sup>17</sup>. As it happens, the first to display the title on a coin was not a Roman but rather the Samnite rebel leader C. Papius Mutilus, who put *embratur*, the Oscan for *imperator*, on an issue of Italian coins during the Social War at the beginning of the decade (here pl. 1,3). This inscription did not of course refer to the reception of an imperial acclamation from a Roman army<sup>18</sup>. Sulla was unquestionably the first Roman to proclaim his status as *imperator* on Roman coins<sup>19</sup>. Furthermore, no. 359 stands as the first record we have in any medium of a Roman commander publicizing his reception of the title *imperator* on more than one occasion<sup>20</sup>. Since a Roman Republican commander could receive no more than one acclamation in the course of a single campaign, the inscription *imperator iterum* on no. 359 advertised Sulla's status as someone who had received two imperial acclamations in his lifetime<sup>21</sup>.

If we knew the date of Sulla's second imperial acclamation, we would have a *terminus post quem* for the minting of no. 359. Unfortunately we have no direct testimony to reveal the chronology of Sulla's acclamations. All that we know for certain is that one of the two acclamations came in the course of his campaign in the mid-80s B. C.

<sup>17</sup> See the listing of Republican issues with this inscription by H. Mattingly, Some new studies of the Roman Republican coinage. The *imperator* in the coinage of the Roman Republic, Proceedings of the British Academy 39, 1953, 261-271. Combès, 451-464, has a chronological list of attested Republican acclamations.

<sup>18</sup> Mattingly (supra n. 17), 261, no. 1; Crawford, NC 1964, 146; Combès, 38, 100, no. 70; Salmon, in: Samnium, 99, n. 1, and 351, thinks that this inscription shows that the Samnite commander-in-chief in the Social War was called *imperator*. Alternatively, we might imagine that Mutilus had received an acclamation from his Italian troops. The inscription *embratur* on his coins comes in the right place for a title.

<sup>19</sup> In: Sources for Roman History 133-70 B. C., ed. A. H. J. Greenidge and A. M. Clay, sec. ed. rev. by E. W. Gray (Oxford 1961), 286, and in the preface to the second edition, C. M. Kraay described a cistophorus in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford as bearing on its reverse the name Fimbria on the right and a partially preserved inscription read as I[MPER] - on the left. (To my knowledge, this coin has not been otherwise published.) This cistophorus is identified as a coin of C. Flavius Fimbria, minted in Asia Minor during his campaign there in 85 B. C. Alan Walker has kindly informed me that research by Charles Hersh shows this coin to have been in fact struck in Laodicea in Phrygia in the 40s B. C. It therefore cannot be a candidate for the status of the earliest Roman coin to bear the inscription *imperator*.

<sup>20</sup> Badian (supra n. 5), 46, n. 64, points out that Sulla's recording of his iteration of the title "at a time when iteration of any sort was rarely noted. . . helps to throw light on his character and propaganda". He has collected the Latin evidence for the recording of iteration of offices and titles in JRS 58, 1968, 244-245.

<sup>21</sup> Since the reception of an imperial acclamation founded a claim to a triumph, there could be no question of receiving more than one acclamation per campaign. Cassius Dio makes explicit mention of this Republican tradition of one acclamation per campaign after reporting that Claudius received multiple acclamations "contrary to traditional practice" while on campaign in Britain (60.21.4-5). Kienast (supra n. 16), 409, argues that the inscription of no. 359 speaks against the notion of such a tradition under the Republic because he thought, mistakenly as we now know, that the issue had been minted in Greece before Sulla returned to Italy, and, thus, that both acclamations referred to on these coins must have come in the course of Sulla's campaign in the East. In a sense, Sulla's designation of himself as *imp. iterum* ("*imperator* for the second time in my life") carried the same sort of message as the designation *cos. iterum* that is so familiar from subsequent Roman history.



against the forces of Mithridates in the Eastern Mediterranean. Inscriptions from the Greek East show that Sulla had already received an acclamation as *imperator* by 85 B.C. before his invasion of Italy<sup>22</sup>. The literary sources allow us to determine the occasion of this acclamation in the East. In 86 B.C., in a battle fought at Chaeronea in Boeotia, Sulla crushed the troops of Mithridates commanded by Archelaus and then followed up this victory with the defeat of the reinforced Mithridatic army at nearby Orchomenus<sup>23</sup>. The latter battle apparently gave rise to a famous incident. In the course of the struggle at Orchomenus, the Roman troops were running away from the enemy in panic when Sulla rallied his army by running to the front and shouting to his men that, whenever they were asked where they had betrayed him, they should say it was at Orchomenus. His forces thereupon turned to face the enemy and won the victory. Frontinus in his quotation of Sulla's shouted exhortation to his troops at Orchomenus reports that he referred to himself as *imperator*<sup>24</sup>. Plutarch confirms Sulla's use of the title on this occasion in his own report of this incident. Employing the correct Greek translation for *imperator*, Plutarch quotes Sulla as referring to himself as αὐτοκράτωρ when he shouts to his men<sup>25</sup>.

There is of course no absolute guarantee that Sulla at Orchomenus was not using *imperator* in a general, descriptive sense simply to mean «commander» and not to refer to an acclamation that he had recently received after the battle of Chaeronea<sup>26</sup>. But the inscriptions cited above show that Sulla did win an acclamation in this campaign, and the battle of Chaeronea is the most likely occasion. None of our sources happens to mention an acclamation explicitly in the description of this victory, but the trophies that Sulla erected and the games he established to commemorate his success at Chaeronea show how much significance he attached to the victory. Furthermore, Sulla inscribed these trophies to Mars, Victory, and Aphrodite<sup>27</sup>. In other dedications

<sup>22</sup> See R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore 1969), no. 17, line 10; no. 20, line E 14; and no. 23, line 39, where Sulla is described as αὐτοκράτωρ, the proper Greek translation for *imperator*, in reference to his actions in the East in 85. (See Combès, 22–26, on the imperial title in these inscriptions and 111–118 on the Greek translation of *imperator*.) Cicero Philippic 14.23, indirectly confirms Sulla's reception of the title while in the East. Furthermore, Plutarch, Pompey 8.3, reports that Pompey greeted Sulla as *imperator* upon Sulla's return to Italy from Greece to begin the invasion. Extraordinarily, Sulla called Pompey *imperator* in return, a greeting that could only refer to Pompey's recent victories over opposing Roman armies (Pompey 7), one of which had included some foreign troops (Celtic cavalry). Strictly speaking we cannot tell whether Pompey later included this as one of his multiple acclamations as *imperator*, but this occasion seems too informal to count as an acclamation even for someone as avid for glory as was Pompey. For the evidence on Pompey's acclamations, see Kienast (*supra* n. 16), 410, 413.

<sup>23</sup> The sources are conveniently collected in Greenidge and Clay (*supra* n. 19), 181–184. For a narrative description and references to other modern discussions, see A. Keaveney, *Sulla, The Last Republican* (London 1982), 92–99.

<sup>24</sup> Strat. 2.8.12. So, too, Ammianus Marcellinus 16.21.41.

<sup>25</sup> Sulla 21.3. Appian, Mith. 49, 195, reports the quotation using the imprecise στρατηγός, while Polyaeus, Strat. 8.9.2, reports it with only Sulla's name and no reference to any title at all.

<sup>26</sup> E. Valgiglio, *Plutarco. Vita di Silla*, sec. ed. (Turin 1960), 99, appears to take *imperator* here as meaning simply “commandante”.

<sup>27</sup> For the trophies and their inscription, see Plutarch, Sulla 19.9–10. Cf. G. C. Picard, *Les trophées romains, Contributions à l'histoire de la religion de l'art triomphal de Rome* (Paris 1957, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, vol. 187), 174–175. For the games, see Sulla 19.11–12.

which he made to Mars and to Aphrodite while he was in the East, Sulla called himself *imperator*. Most likely these dedications also referred to his victory at Chaeronea and imply that he then did indeed receive an imperial acclamation<sup>28</sup>.

The great success at Chaeronea with the defeat of an appropriately large number of enemies certainly presented a natural occasion for the award of the imperial title. We can reasonably conclude that, in the course of the subsequent battle at Orchomenus, Sulla did refer to himself as *imperator* in the sense of a commander who had previously received an acclamation from his army. After all, at Orchomenus he would have been trying to rally the same men who had bestowed the honor on him not long before at Chaeronea. The reminder of the honor they had paid him would have been meant to appeal to their pride as successful soldiers. Since we know that Plutarch used Sulla's memoirs as a source for his biography of Sulla, there is an excellent chance that he took his quotation of Sulla's dramatic words from Sulla's own account of the battle and that this reference to Sulla's status as the holder of the imperial title therefore relies on the testimony of Sulla himself<sup>29</sup>.

If Sulla received one of his imperial acclamations for his victory at Chaeronea in 86 B.C., when did he receive the other acclamation uniquely attested by the inscription on the coins of issue no. 359? Since we have no reason to suspect that Sulla ignored the traditional prohibition against receiving more than one acclamation in a single campaign, the other acclamation had to come as a result of some great victory which Sulla achieved in a campaign conducted either before or after his eastern campaign of the mid-80s against Mithridates. Which was it—an earlier campaign or a later one?

Crawford and Keaveney identify an earlier victory for Sulla, won in Cappadocia in 96 B.C., while he held his Cilician command, as the occasion of his first imperial acclamation<sup>30</sup>. They therefore make the acclamation at Chaeronea Sulla's second one. This identification of an acclamation won in Cappadocia depends on a brief report in Lucius Ampelius' eclectic handbook of knowledge (*liber memorialis*) composed in the imperial period<sup>31</sup>. In a section entitled *Reges Parthorum*, Ampelius begins his highly

<sup>28</sup> For his dedication to Mars at Sicyon, see ILLRP no. 224; for his dedication to Aphrodite, see Appian, BC 1.97, 455, with E. Gabba's comments *ad loc.* in: Appiani Bellorum civilium liber primus, sec. ed (Florence 1967).

<sup>29</sup> Plutarch frequently cites Sulla's *Commentarii* in his narrative of Sulla's actions in Greece and the East (Sulla, 14.4,10; 16.1; 17.2; 19.8; 23.5; 27.6,11.). For discussion of Plutarch's use of Sulla's autobiographical work, see C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (Oxford 1972), 83; E. Valgiglio, *L'autobiografia di Silla nelle biografie di Plutarco*, in: *Atti del convegno: gli storiografi latini tramandati in frammenti*, Studi Urbinati 49, 1975, 245–281.

<sup>30</sup> RRC 374; Keaveney (*supra* n. 23), 38, and AJAH 7, 1982, 160. For his evidence, Keaveney refers to Ampelius 31, and to Th. Mommsen, *Histoire de la monnaie romaine*, vol. 2 (Paris 1870), 440, n. 1, who adds nothing new. For the victory in Cappadocia, see Plutarch, Sulla, 5.6–7. On Sulla in Cilicia, see E. Badian, *Sulla's Cilician Command*, *Studies in Greek and Roman History* (Oxford 1964), 157–178 (= *Athenaeum* 37, 1959, 279–303). See Broughton (*infra* n. 40) vol. 3, suppl., 73–74, for further discussion of the controversial date of Sulla's mission in Cilicia.

<sup>31</sup> Ampelius does not rate a mention in the new *Cambridge History of Classical Literature II. Latin Literature* (Cambridge 1982), but there is a recent, short entry on him by M. Fuhrmann in *Der Kleine Pauly*, vol. 1 (Munich 1975), cols. 307–308.

selective and compressed treatment of the Parthian kings with a sentence on Seleucus and then continues as follows:

Arsaces, forma et virtute praecipuus, cuius posterii  
Arsacidae cognominati sunt; qui pacem cum Sylla  
imperatore fecit. Orodes, qui foedus cum Cn. Pompeio  
percussit, Crassum cum legionibus apud Carras funesti  
clade delevit. (*lib. mem.* 31)

If, as Ampelius seems to imply, Sulla was called *imperator* at the time he had contact with the Parthians in the 90s B. C., he must have already won the title as the result of his immediately preceding military victory in Cappadocia.

There are, however, two important difficulties with this part of Ampelius' report about the Parthians. First, the Arsaces who gave his name as a title to all subsequent Parthian kings belongs to a period much earlier than the time of Sulla<sup>32</sup>. Ampelius has therefore become enmeshed in some sort of chronological confusion here. Second, it is inaccurate to say, as Ampelius does, that Sulla made peace with the Parthians, above all because there had been no war between the Romans and the Parthians when Sulla was approached by the envoy of the Parthian king, the first official contact between the two nations. If an agreement was in fact formally reached between the Romans and the Parthians on this occasion, it involved «friendship and alliance» rather than a treaty of peace<sup>33</sup>.

The details and especially the implied chronology of Ampelius' report on Sulla do not inspire confidence, to say the least. It may be that Ampelius, like Velleius<sup>34</sup>, post-dates the episode of Sulla and the Parthian envoy by placing it later in Sulla's career at a time when Sulla had in fact already received an imperial acclamation. There is, however, a more plausible explanation for Ampelius' use of *imperator* to describe Sulla at what, as we shall see, is an impossibly early point in his career. That explanation is that Ampelius had a firm command neither of the chronology of Sulla's career nor of the significance of *imperator* as a title conferred upon Roman Republican generals by the acclamation of their troops. We have already seen how Ampelius is not to be trusted on matters of chronology in this instance. We can equally well believe that he

<sup>32</sup> On the first Arsaces, see J. Wolski, L'historicité d'Arsace 1<sup>er</sup>, *Historia* 8, 1959, 222-238, and, Arsace II et la généalogie des premiers Arsacides, *Historia* 11, 1962, 138-145.

<sup>33</sup> Livy, *Epit.* 70; Plutarch, *Sulla* 5.8-11; *Festus* 15. Velleius 2.24.3 wrongly dates the episode to immediately before Sulla's return to Italy in 84 or 83 B. C. For discussion of Sulla's contact with the Parthians, see J. Dobiáš, Les premiers rapports des Romains avec les Parthes et l'occupation de la Syrie, *Archiv Orientalni* 3, 1931, 218-220; N. C. Debevoise, A Political History of Parthia (Chicago 1938), 46-48; A. Keaveney, Roman treaties with Parthia circa 95-circa 64 B. C., *American Journal of Philology* 102, 1981, 195-199; R. N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran* (Munich 1984), 214 (who does not believe that an agreement was reached). The eastern monarch with whom Sulla as *imperator* made peace was in fact Mithridates of Pontus, and it is a remarkable coincidence that the Parthian king who sent an envoy to Sulla happened to have the same name (as opposed to his title Arsaces) as that of this king of Pontus with whom Sulla actually did conclude a peace, i. e. Mithradates (the spelling of the name regularly found in documents; see, for example, *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas Pertinentes* no. 943). Perhaps Ampelius' erroneous report arose from a confusion of these two homonymous kings.

<sup>34</sup> See the previous note.

was not using the term *imperator* in a precise fashion here, either. Ampelius elsewhere uses *imperator*, for example, to refer to Hannibal as a teenager and to Lucullus the consul of 151 B. C.<sup>35</sup>, neither of who was an *imperator*. Ampelius almost certainly used *imperator* merely to describe Sulla as a «commander» or «general», as the *supremus bellidux*, and not as someone who had received an acclamation<sup>36</sup>. In short, we cannot rely on Ampelius for evidence that Sulla had received the title *imperator* when he met with the envoy of the Parthian king in 96 B. C. Ampelius in fact should have referred to Sulla at this point as *pro consule*. Festus, by contrast with Ampelius, has it right: *primum a Lucio Sylla pro consule Arsaces, rex Parthorum, missa legatione amicitias populi Romani rogavit ac meruit* (*Breviarium* 15).

Several inscriptions from Greece provide additional, if somewhat problematic, evidence against the idea adopted by Crawford and Keaveney that Sulla won an acclamation during his proconsular command in the mid-90s. ILLRP no. 349 from Delos is an inscription from a statue base: *L. Cornelius L. f. Sulla pro co(n)s(ule)*. ILLRP no. 350, also from Delos, is found on a Doric capital: *L. Cornelius L. f. Sulla pro co(n)s(ule) / de pecunia quam conlegia / in commune conlatam*. Neither inscription can be independently dated. Some have thought that Sulla himself had these monuments erected during a personal visit to Delos near the end of his time in the Eastern Mediterranean, which is to say after he had received the acclamation at Chaeronea in 86 B. C.<sup>37</sup>. If this were so, it would be difficult to explain the omission of any reference to his status as *imperator* because Sulla seems to have used this title in preference to *pro consule* in the dedications previously mentioned that he made to Mars and Aphrodite while in the East. Since Sulla himself evidently preferred the honorific title of *imperator* to his title of office, we should expect the party responsible for these Delian inscriptions to have observed the proprieties considerations of honor demanded. This expectation certainly holds true if that party was Sulla himself. It should also apply, however, even if the person responsible for the inscriptions was one of Sulla's minions carrying out his wishes, or perhaps a group such as, for example, some Italian traders operating on Delos who hoped to anticipate what would flatter Sulla to good effect<sup>38</sup>. If Sulla had

<sup>35</sup> Lib. mem. 22.3 (Lucullus) and 28.4 (Hannibal).

<sup>36</sup> For this definition of *imperator* in Ampelius, see V. Colonna, *Lucii Ampelii Lexicon* (Univ. of Genoa 1980), p. 97.

<sup>37</sup> See Degrassi's comments *ad loc.* in ILLRP, Cf. Keaveney (*supra* n. 23), 124–125.

<sup>38</sup> On the tendency of *imperator* to replace titles of office, see G. Vinay, *Nota su consul e imperator*, *Riv. di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica* n.s. 10, 1932, 219–221. Combès, 69–70, 97, 104–107; Badian (*supra* n. 5), 46, n. 64 (with reference to ILLRP nos. 514 and 515). Cn. Pompeius Strabo, cos. 89 B. C., even used the title *imperator* in lieu of *consul*. (ILLRP no. 515, line 1, and in the text inscribed to the right of the main text, which is given at the end of ILLRP no. 515. This “postscript” is also conveniently available in Greenidge and Clay (*supra* n. 19), 156.) In ILLRP no. 351, an undated inscription from Suessa, *imperator* replaces Sulla's title of office: *L. Cornelio L. (f.) Sullae Feleici imperatori publice*. A. Momigliano, *Ricerche sulle magistrature romane*, *Boll. della Commissione Archeologica Comunale di Roma* 58, 1930, 52, dates the inscription to 83 B. C. during the civil war, in which case Sulla's title of office was *pro consul*. J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Sulla Felix*, *JRS* 41, 1951, 4, n. 50, dates it to the end of 82 B. C. after Sulla had officially received the cognomen *Felix* from the Senate (according to the chronology of Appian, B. C. 1.87). On the tendency to use *imperator* in addressing those who had once been awarded the title, see also Cicero's remarks (Philippic 14.25) on calling Hirtius and Pansa by the honorific title of *imperator* even though from their office they held the title of *consul*, which he describes as *honoris nomen amplissimi*.

already received the title *imperator* by the time these Delian texts were commissioned, they should have reflected that status rather than the title of his office of proconsul. These texts, then, reflect a time when Sulla, operating in the East, held the title *pro consule* but had not yet received an acclamation as *imperator*.

The same inference can be drawn from a Greek inscription found on Rhodes. ILS 8772 honors a man for his embassies on behalf of the Rhodians to various Romans, who are listed by name along with their titles. The first Roman so listed is L. Cornelius L. f. His cognomen is missing, but his title is given as proconsul. This man is usually identified as Sulla. The same list includes a reference to L. Licinius Murena as *imperator* (given in Greek transliteration). This detail shows that those responsible for putting up this inscription took considerable care to get the titles correct for the distinguished Romans the honorand had called upon during his embassies, probably because the honorand himself had provided this specific information from his personal knowledge of the status and titles of the Romans whom he met in his capacity as ambassador. We should expect that others who bore the imperial title at the time when the honorand met them would also have been designated by *imperator* in the list. We can infer from the list, therefore, that the honorand had gone on an embassy to Sulla at a time when the latter was in the East as a proconsul who had not received an imperial acclamation and therefore would not be designated as *imperator*. That is to say, this Greek inscription appears to reflect the same situation for Sulla as do the two Latin inscriptions from Delos: sometime before his acclamation at Chaeronea, Sulla was operating in the East as a proconsul who had never been hailed as *imperator*<sup>39</sup>. When was this period of time?

Since all these texts lack independent indications of date, there are two possible periods in Sulla's career before Chaeronea to which they could in theory refer: either to the period of Sulla's provincial command *pro consule* in Cilicia in 96 B. C., or to the period during his campaign in Greece before he received the acclamation for his victory at Chaeronea in 86 B. C.. Since the Lentulus also mentioned in ILS 8772 does not turn up in our accounts of the Mithridatic Wars, he fits more comfortably in the earlier period of the mid-90s<sup>40</sup>. Although the case cannot be proved, we can suspect that all the inscriptions just discussed were put up in the context of Sulla's Cilician command, the ones on Delos precisely when he was returning home after his campaign in Asia Minor at that time. It makes sense to see these texts, especially the ones on Delos, as documents of the period after Sulla's service in the East in 96 B. C. when he was leisurely returning home and had money from his conquests to lavish on statues and building projects.

<sup>39</sup> ILS 8771 is an honorary inscription for Sulla as proconsul set up by the demos of Halicarnassus which may also reflect the same situation as the three texts discussed here. But the case is too uncertain to make with any confidence. The text could actually be later than the date of Sulla's acclamation at Chaeronea because there is no indication that the people of Halicarnassus, as opposed to those of Rhodes or Delos, ever had an opportunity to learn firsthand about Sulla's titles, for example during a visit to the city by Sulla. And if the demos had heard indirectly of Sulla's acclamation at the time they commissioned this inscription, they may not have known that Roman protocol required them to refer to Sulla as *imperator* rather than proconsul.

<sup>40</sup> The chronology of Lentulus' service in the East is obscure. See T. R. S. Broughton, *Magistrates of the Roman Republic* (New York 1952), vol. 2, 68, 73, n. 5, and 464.

The Social War of 91–89 B. C. is another period previous to Sulla's victory at Chaeronea in 86 B. C. during which Sulla could have been hailed as *imperator*. If Sulla had received an acclamation during the Social War, the acclamation after Chaeronea would of course have been his second. No source, however, states or even implies that Sulla became *imperator* for a victory won in this war. An argument from silence can never be decisive by itself, of course, but as we shall soon see, the numismatic evidence strongly suggests that the silence of the sources on an imperatorial acclamation for Sulla in the Social War is not misleading. The only remaining occasion prior to 86 B. C. on which Sulla could possibly have won an imperatorial acclamation was his victorious campaign in 88 B. C. to take Rome. But Roman tradition did not allow an acclamation in a civil war fought solely among Roman citizens, which the campaign of 88 certainly was<sup>41</sup>, therefore Sulla could not have carried the title *imperator* as a result of the battles which he fought in this campaign. The next military operations after the campaign to take Rome in which Sulla had the opportunity to win an acclamation were in the East against the forces of Mithridates, in the course of which Sulla won the battle of Chaeronea and was hailed as *imperator* by his troops.

We can see, therefore, that the historical evidence as we have it all points to the acclamation at Chaeronea as Sulla's first. Since, as we have seen, tradition prevented Sulla from winning a second acclamation from further action in his campaign against Mithridates after Chaeronea, it appears that the only possible remaining occasion for Sulla's second acclamation is his invasion of Italy after his return from the East. But, as we have also seen, a Roman commander was not supposed to gain the title *imperator* in the course of a civil war. The numismatic evidence, to which we now turn, suggests that we nevertheless can find an appropriate occasion for Sulla's second acclamation at the end of his campaign in Italy in late 82 B. C.

### *Part two*

Our investigation of the numismatic evidence must begin with the chronology of issue no. 359. Before Crawford's work, scholars routinely assumed that Sulla had minted no. 359 in 84 or 83 B. C. while still in Greece before his invasion of Italy<sup>42</sup>. Craw-

<sup>41</sup> Victories won in a civil war over Roman citizens in good standing were not appropriate occasions for the conferral of the title, even if the victor's troops, carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, happened to hail their leader as *imperator* for a victory over other Romans (Cicero, *Philippic* 14.11–12, 22–23; Valerius Maximus 2.8.7; Dio 41.52.1); see Combès, 78–80. Whether the title could be won with a victory over Roman citizens who were seen as *hostes* or over people whose citizenship was in doubt is a question to which we will come in our discussion of Sulla and the Samnites.

<sup>42</sup> For earlier discussion of the chronology of Sulla's imperatorial issues see H. Cohen, *Médailles impériales* (Paris 1888), 106–107; Th. Mommsen, *Geschichte des römischen Münzwesens* (Berlin 1860), 594, n. 379 and 596, n. 386 (= vol. 2, 440, n. 1 and 443, n. 1 in the French translation [Paris 1870] entitled: *Histoire de la monnaie romaine*); F. Lenormant, *La monnaie dans l'antiquité* (Paris 1878), vol. 2, 294–300; E. Babelon, *Description historique et chronologique des monnaies de la République romaine* (Paris 1885–86), vol. 1, 403–413; *BMC Roman Republic*, vol. 2, 459, n. 1, 461, n. 1 and 463, n. 1; S. L. Cesano, *Silla e la sua moneta*, *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia di Archeologia* 22, 1945/46, 202–208; E. A. Sydenham, *The Coinage of the Roman Republic* (London 1952), 123.

ford, however, put the discussion on an entirely new footing with his first treatment of the coinage of Sulla in an article published in 1964<sup>43</sup>. There he demonstrated from the evidence of the hoards known at the time that the coins had plainly been minted in Italy, not in Greece. None had ever been found in Greece, or elsewhere outside Italy for that matter. In addition, he pointed out that the statistics on the appearance of the coins in hoards found in Italy were entirely consistent with a date of production for no. 359 sometime late in Sulla's invasion. To be precise, in this article Crawford maintained that any date for no. 359 from the middle of 82 B. C. onwards was «compatible with the hoard evidence». He concluded that «on the whole a date at the end of 82 B. C. or the beginning of 81 B. C. is perhaps to be preferred and Sulla's second imperial salutation is ascribed to the battle of the Colline Gate»<sup>44</sup>. We shall return in the next part of this paper to this suggestion for the occasion of Sulla's second acclamation.

In the same article Crawford gave a relative chronology for this issue and two others whose inscriptions refer to Sulla's titles. First came the issue inscribed L MANLI PROQ / L SVLLA IMPE (i. e., no. 367); next, the issue inscribed L SVLLA / IMPER ITERVM (i. e., no. 359); and finally, the issue inscribed A MANLI A F Q / L SVLLA FELIX DIC (i. e., no. 381, here pl. 1,4). Crawford explained this order of the three issues with the observation that «this natural and logical order is confirmed by hoard evidence»<sup>45</sup>. By «natural and logical order» he of course meant the progression in Sulla's titulature indicated on these issues from, first, *imperator* with no indication of iteration (no. 367) to, next, *imperator* for the second time (no. 359) to, finally, *dictator* (no. 381). No. 367 was dated to 83 and 82 B. C. during Sulla's invasion, no. 359 at the end of 82 B. C. after Sulla had regained Rome, and no. 381 to 81 B. C. after Sulla had assumed the dictatorship.

In his subsequent comprehensive work on Republican coinage published in 1974, however, Crawford proposed a strikingly revised chronology for issues nos. 359 and 367. There he reversed their relative chronology, placing no. 359 earlier than no. 367 (dating no. 359 to 83 B. C. in his discussion of the hoard evidence and to 84–83 B. C. in his catalogue, while dating no. 367 to 82 B. C. in both discussion and catalogue)<sup>46</sup>. He explained this revision of his previous relative chronology of the two issues as follows: «On balance I am now convinced that this is their relative order, despite the implication of the titulature that the order is the other way round; no. 359 appears in the hoards later than no. 367, but when it does appear it is markedly more worn; its absence from earlier hoards should be explained by its relative rarity.» His reference to the appearance of no. 359 as «markedly more worn» depends on the analysis of one

<sup>43</sup> M. H. Crawford, *The coinage of the age of Sulla*, NC 1964, 141–155.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 151. Wosnik (*supra* n. 13), 19–23, also considers the battle of the Colline Gate a possible occasion for Sulla's second acclamation.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 149 with note 1.

<sup>46</sup> Wosnik (*supra* n. 13), 10–13 suggests an idiosyncratic chronology that puts no. 359 first in late 82 B. C., no. 381 second at the time of Sulla's dictatorship in 81 B. C. (pp. 32–37), and no. 367 third at the time of Sulla's triumph in 81 B. C. (pp. 37–41).

hoard in particular, the so-called Ferentino hoard. Crawford adds an important *caveat*, however: «I am aware that the evidence of a single small hoard is not decisive.»<sup>47</sup>

The Ferentino hoard which seems to have been the pivotal piece of evidence behind Crawford's revised chronology for no. 359 is preserved in the Medagliere of the National Museum in Rome; through the kindness of Dottoressa Silvana Balbi de Caro, I have been able to examine this hoard of thirty-one coins (twenty-eight denarii and three quinarii)<sup>48</sup>. The hoard contains only one specimen of no. 359 (from series 2 as described in Crawford's catalogue) and two specimens of no. 367 (series 5). These statistics mean that Crawford was forced to base his judgment on the comparative states of wear of no. 359 and no. 367 in the Ferentino hoard on only a tiny sample. His evaluation of the comparative states of wear of these three coins is certainly correct: the single specimen of no. 359/2 in the hoard appears in general to be more worn than either of the two specimens of no. 367/5<sup>49</sup>. The comparison of relative states of wear is of course a well-known numismatic technique for establishing relative chronology, but this technique certainly cannot be used with any confidence at all on a sample of such scanty size. As Crawford himself has well remarked, the state of wear of a single coin is not a reliable guide to relative chronology<sup>50</sup>. A comparison of the states of wear of the specimens of no. 359 and no. 367 in the Ferentino hoard therefore cannot be relied on to establish the relative chronology of these issues.

The evidence of other hoards on published record as containing specimens of both no. 359 and no. 367 is also inadequate for the determination of their relative chronology. Hoard no. 278 (Fragagnano) in RRCH contains one example each of coins from issues no. 359 and no. 367, but no indication of their states of wear is given in the publication of the hoard. Hoard no. 309 (Maccarese) in RRCH contains five specimens of no. 359 whose conditions are described as «media» and twenty-four specimens of no. 367, twenty of which are grouped together as «media», «quasi buona» and «buona», three as «quasi buona» and one as «media». Hoard no. 311 (Pontecorvo) in RRCH contains one specimen of no. 359 (described as «media») and sixteen of no. 367 (fifteen «media» and one «buona»).

The largest single group of specimens of no. 359 and no. 367 found together in the same hoard occurs in the large Mesagne hoard which came to light after the publication of Crawford's RRC in 1974<sup>51</sup>. This hoard of approximately 5,940 Republican denarii buried ca. 58 B.C. contained eleven specimens of no. 359 (all from series 2) and seventy specimens of no. 367 (one from series 1, nine from series 3, and sixty from series 5). Through the kindness of Dr. L. Mildenberg I have been able to examine

<sup>47</sup> His discussion can be found in RRC, 80, with n. 3. For the catalogue entries, see 373–374, 386–387.

<sup>48</sup> The Ferentino hoard is no. 261 in RRCH.

<sup>49</sup> One of the specimens of no. 367/5 has some wear visible around its rim, but the details of the type are nevertheless clear both on the obverse and the reverse. The second specimen of no. 367/5 is in nearly perfect condition. The reverse of the single specimen of no. 359/2 shows few signs of wear, but its obverse displays the most wear in this group of three coins. It may well be the case, however, that this specimen of no. 359/2 was struck from a worn obverse die.

<sup>50</sup> M. H. Crawford, *Money and exchange in the Roman World*, JRS 60, 1970, 40.

<sup>51</sup> C. Hersh and A. Walker, *The Mesagne hoard*, MN 29, 1984, 103–134.



forty-three specimens of the two issues found in the hoard, namely, four specimens of no. 359 and thirty-nine specimens of no. 367. My examination has convinced me that it is impossible to base any reliable chronological conclusions on the relative states of wear of the two issues on the basis of this fragmentary sample of the specimens of no. 359 and no. 367 that were originally contained in the hoard. Other specialists who examined the same sample concur in this judgment<sup>52</sup>. Finally, the scholars who published the Mesagne hoard, Charles Hersh and Alan Walker, have kindly informed me of their opinion that the general condition of all the specimens of no. 367 and no. 359 in that hoard was indistinguishable.

In sum, then, the criterion of comparative states of wear of coins found in hoards does not allow us in this instance to judge which of these two issues was minted earlier than the other. This conclusion makes perfect sense, as it happens, because the criterion of comparative wear is certainly not fine enough to distinguish reliably between issues of coinage minted quite close together in time, as was the case with no. 359 and no. 367. The first coins minted in whichever issue in fact came earlier were separated from the last coins produced in whichever issue came later by, at most, a span of two years (or less). One simply cannot expect to find reliable indications of relative chronology from a comparison of the states of wear of coins so close to one other in absolute chronology. This limitation applies regardless of whether the coins were buried in hoards assembled only a few years after their production (as in the case of the Ferentino hoard, whose latest coin belongs to 81 B.C.) or several decades later (as with the Mesagne hoard of ca. 58 B.C.). The criterion of comparative states of wear can only serve as a reliable indicator of relative chronology for issues whose dates of production were separated by more years than were those of issues no. 367 and no. 359.

The available hoard evidence therefore does not, and indeed could not, present any *prima facie* reason why the «natural and logical» order of no. 359 and no. 367 implied by Sulla's titulature should be rejected. That is, the hoards as currently known give us no reason not to place no. 367 before no. 359. This relative chronology would have no. 367, inscribed L MANLI PROQ / L SVLLA IMPE, being minted after Sulla had received one acclamation as *imperator* but before he had received a second, and no. 359, inscribed L SVLLA / IMPER ITERVM, being minted after Sulla had received a second imperatorial acclamation and could therefore be described as *imperator iterum*. This «natural and logical» order in fact fits perfectly with the implication of the relative sizes of the two issues, a factor of crucial importance in determining the relative chronology of these issues. That is, since no. 367 was, in Crawford's words, «by far the largest part of the Sullan coinage»,<sup>53</sup> and therefore a much more copious issue than was no. 359, it makes eminently good sense to believe that Sulla had no. 367 minted to serve as the principal precious-metal coinage to finance his long and expensive cam-

<sup>52</sup> Professors E. Badian, Clive Foss and Fred Kleiner all graciously gave their time to examine these coins carefully. They reported that no conclusions about the relative chronology of the issues could possibly be based on the condition of these coins because the two groups did not exhibit significant differences in their states of wear.

<sup>53</sup> RRC, 387.

paign in Italy during 84–82 B. C. which ended with the victory at the Colline Gate<sup>54</sup>. The much smaller issue no. 359, by contrast, was most likely minted to commemorate the achievement to which its innovative inscription testifies, namely, Sulla’s having won a second imperatorial acclamation. The relative sizes of these two issues, and the intended purposes for them implied by their sizes, are the appropriate criteria for determining with the help of the historical evidence what were the dates of production of no. 367 and no. 359.

On this argument, there is no need to make room, so to speak, for no. 359 at the beginning of the campaign in Italy (as Crawford does on his revised chronology by dating it to 84–83 B. C.), and then further to postulate that this apparently small issue was superseded at some early point in the campaign by the new issue no. 367 (along with no. 368, an issue of bronze asses) which, for some unknown reason, no longer carried a reference to Sulla’s second acclamation, as the earlier issue no. 359 had. Instead, we should assume from the inscriptions and the relative sizes of the two issues that the smaller issue no. 359 was minted subsequent to the far larger issue no. 367 and for a much shorter span of time. The date of no. 359 is presumably late in 82 B. C. and precisely after Sulla had received his second acclamation as *imperator*. As we shall now see in the next part of this paper, the historical evidence in fact does support the conclusion pointed to by the numismatic evidence. That is, Sulla’s second imperatorial acclamation came at the end of his campaign in Italy, as Crawford once suggested.

### *Part Three*

A Samnite army formed the core of Sulla’s opponents in the famous battle of the Colline Gate on Nov. 1, 82 B. C.<sup>55</sup> Some mopping up remained to be done, but this great victory essentially brought Sulla’s invasion of Italy to a successful close. Sulla subsequently inaugurated a set of games in honor of the *felicitas* of the day of his victory at the Colline Gate, a victory which, Velleius reports, Sulla expressly commemorated as a victory over the Samnites and their commander Telesinus<sup>56</sup>. This celebration of

<sup>54</sup> The bronze issue no. 368 which like no. 367 carries a reference to Sulla as *imperator* (with no indication of iteration) should be seen as contemporary with no. 367, as Crawford says (RRC 80). The asses of no. 368 would have served as the small denomination bronze coinage preferred for the payment of troops. The choice of a helmeted Roma as the obverse type for no. 367 revived a tradition of the second century B. C. that had fallen into disuse. (See RRC, 721, on the history of this type.) The last previous use of this type according to Crawford’s catalogue had come in 91 B. C. (no. 337/3). Roma as a type on Sulla’s major campaign coinage in the civil war served his propagandistic purposes as a claim to legitimate authority in the service of the Republic. Cf. RRC, 387, 732. He regards the wartime issues of Sulla as “quite simply illegal” (RRC 604).

<sup>55</sup> The sources are conveniently assembled in Greenidge and Clay (*supra* n. 19), 207.

<sup>56</sup> Velleius 2.27.6: *Felicitatem diei, quo Samnitium Telesinique pulsus est exercitus, Sulla perpetua ludorum circensium honoravit memoria, qui sub eius nomine Sullanæ Victoriae celebrantur*. Cf. Cicero, *In Verr. Act.* 1.10.31 and [Ascon.] *ad loc.* (p. 217 St.); Appian, *BC* 1.99, 464 (ostensibly referring to 80 B. C.). Plutarch, *Sulla* 34–35, makes it clear that Sulla saw to the presentation of great celebrations not long after his victory and return to power at Rome, either in late 82 or early 81 B. C., or perhaps both. This, then, was the occasion of the initial celebration of Sulla’s victory games. In the fall of 81 B. C., Sulla’s nephew Sextus Nonius Sufenas put on the first regular celebration of the victory games as an annual occasion culminating on the anniversary of the battle (November 1). See Broughton (*supra* n. 40), vol. 2, 76; RRC, 445–446 on no. 412; A. Keaveney, *Studies in the Dominatio Sullae*, *Klio* 65, 1983, 189.

games is especially noteworthy for our purposes because Sulla had also celebrated games after the victory at Chaeronea which, as we have seen, brought him his first acclamation as *imperator* and which he also commemorated as evidence of his «good fortune» (εὐτυχία in Plutarch's report)<sup>57</sup>.

Since Sulla had instituted victory games in Greece to commemorate his first imperial acclamation, we are entitled to wonder whether the later games at Rome could have been created to celebrate his second. Plutarch reports an incident which implies Sulla did in fact sponsor a public celebration at Rome in late 82 or early 81 B.C. to commemorate a victory whose success had been crowned with an acclamation as *imperator*. The biographer quotes the flirtatious Valeria, who shortly thereafter became Sulla's wife, as addressing Sulla as αὐτοκράτωρ (i.e., *imperator*) and referring to his εὐτυχία (i.e., *felicitas*) while the two were attending a gladiatorial show which, so far as we can tell, figured as part of Sulla's public celebration after his victory at the Colline Gate<sup>58</sup>. To be sure, Valeria could have addressed Sulla as *imperator* whether or not he had received a second acclamation; his first acclamation at Chaeronea had, after all, brought him the right to be addressed by the title<sup>59</sup>. But the historical and numismatic

<sup>57</sup> Plutarch, Sulla 19.9 (good fortune) and 19.11–12 (games).

<sup>58</sup> Sulla 35.5–8. Plutarch dates the Valeria incident “a few months” after the feasting in honor of Heracles during which Sulla's wife Metella died (35.1–4). In Greenidge and Clay (supra n. 19), 211, this feasting is identified with the “festival” commemorating the victory at the Colline Gate. In Plutarch's description of this period of feasting, however, there is no mention of the contests or shows that properly speaking constituted *ludi*, and it seems likely that the gladiatorial games at which Valeria saw Sulla were part of the victory games Velleius (2.27.6) tells us that Sulla instituted. The games themselves, which in any case would have required time to organize, most likely did not take place immediately after the battle itself. In line with the characteristic imprecision of Plutarch's chronology, “a few months” after November 1 could have been at the end of December or in January, which would not be too late for the initial celebration of Sulla's victory games. A period of even elaborate feasting, on the other hand, did not call for equally time-consuming preparations and could have commenced as soon after the victory as the victor desired. One could perhaps try to explain away the evidence of the quotation on the assumption that αὐτοκράτωρ in Sulla 35.8 actually stands for *dictator*, but Plutarch correctly expresses this Latin term with δικτάτωρ (Sulla 33.1). Moreover, as we have seen, Plutarch elsewhere correctly uses αὐτοκράτωρ as the translation of *imperator*. He knew the terminology. It does not seem a significant objection to regarding the Valeria incident as taking place at Sulla's victory games that Plutarch appears to say that Valeria met Sulla in the “theater” (Sulla 35.5), while Velleius 2.27.6 calls Sulla's victory games “circus games”. We cannot tell whether these authors have been accurate in their use of this particular terminology for spectacles, and we certainly need not assume that the initial, “irregular” celebration of Sulla's games took place in the same way and in the same place as did later, regular celebrations. On Sulla's title Felix, see Balsdon Supra n. 38), 1–10; E. Badian, From the Gracchi to Sulla (1940–1959), *Historia* 11, 1962, 229. See Combès, 408–434, H. Wagenvoort, *Felicitas imperatoria*, *Mnemosyne* ser. 4, vol. 7, 1954, 300–322, and E. Wistrand, *Felicitas imperatoria* (*Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia* vol. 48, Göteborg, 1987), 27–34, on the relationship between the status of the *imperator* and the concept of *felicitas*.

<sup>59</sup> That Valeria could address Sulla as *imperator* did not imply that he held military *imperium* inside the city; only a *triumphator* did that and only on the day of his triumph. See Versnel (supra n. 16), 190–192, 360. Valeria used the title as flattery in remembrance of Sulla's martial success, much as a modern boxing fan might address an ex-boxing champion as “champ” even after the ex-champion had retired from the ring. An undated inscription from Suessa treats the title in much the same way: *L. Cornelio L. (f.) Sullae Feleici imperatori publice* (ILLRP no. 351).

evidence together indicate that we must find an occasion for a second acclamation after Chaeronea, and Sulla fought no more battles in the field after his campaign to retake Rome had ended in late 82 B. C. The Valeria incident suggests that Sulla had received another imperatorial acclamation as a result of his victory at the Colline Gate which he proceeded to commemorate with games, as he had the acclamation he received at Chaeronea.

In order, however, to accept the idea that Sulla gained his second imperatorial acclamation after his victory over the Samnites, we must deal with the objection that this identification cannot be correct because Roman tradition forbade the award of the imperatorial acclamation for a victory won not over enemies of Rome but over Roman citizens. Valerius Maximus (2.8.7) explains this tradition. Neither the title *imperator*, he says, nor any of the other customary ceremonial rewards of great victories, especially a triumph, was conferred for victories in a civil war because they were won with «domestic blood» rather than «external blood» Valerius means that the traditional occasion for an acclamation was a victory over foreign foes, and what information we have about the occasions of acclamations in early Republican history bears him out<sup>60</sup>.

This tradition complicates the case at hand because current scholarly opinion holds that the Samnites were in fact Roman citizens at the time of the battle of the Colline Gate. To quote E. T. Salmon in his standard work on the history of the Samnites, with reference to 87 B. C.: «That the Samnites were admitted into the Roman state as full-fledged citizens (*cives optimo iure*) admits of no doubt.»<sup>61</sup> If the Samnites whom Sulla defeated in 82 B. C. at the Colline Gate had become Roman citizens by 87 B. C., as Salmon argues that they had, Sulla would have had to ignore, indeed to flout, Roman tradition in order to receive an imperatorial acclamation for a victory over them<sup>62</sup>. Of course, if Sulla's march on Rome in 88 B. C. is any indication, he certainly was prepared to place the demands of his ambition before his respect for tradition when the

<sup>60</sup> For the evidence see Kienast (supra n. 16), 405–409, and Combès, 78–80. As for Sulla, Valerius Maximus comments as follows (2.8.7): *Iam L. Sulla, qui plurima bella civilia confecit, cuius crudelissimi et insolentissimi successus fuerunt, cum consummata atque constricta potentia sua triumphum duceret, ut Graeciae et Asiae multas urbas, ita civium Romanorum nullum oppidum vexit.*

<sup>61</sup> Samnium, 376. See also Salmon's earlier article, Sulla Redux, *Athenaeum* 42, 1964, 60–79, and A. Keaveney, Sulla and Italy, *Critica storica* 19, 1982, 499–515.

<sup>62</sup> Frier (supra n. 10), 112, states that Sulla could not have been hailed as *imperator* after the battle of the Colline Gate because «such a hailing took place after *hostes* . . . were conquered, not Roman citizens and allies». Badian (supra n. 5), 38–39, replies that we are not required to believe that Sulla would have observed the letter of the law: «The man who instituted special games in celebration of that victory . . . would not disdain an imperatorial acclamation.» He compares the bestowal of the title on Cn. Pompeius Strabo and C. Caesar after victories over Roman allies and suggests that the three trophies on the coins of Faustus Sulla (no. 426/3) in 56 B. C. recall the two trophies on no. 359 with the addition of a third for the victory at the Colline Gate. Keaveney (supra n. 56), 188, asserts that Sulla regarded the Italians as allies of Mithridates because Sulla is reported by Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 38.1.16, to have displayed in his triumph the treasure from the Capitol which the younger Marius had carried off to Praeneste. If this assertion were true, Sulla would not have been able to claim a second acclamation for his defeat of the Samnites because his victory over them would then have figured as part of his campaign against Mithridates in which he had already received the one permissible acclamation. But this evidence is far from strong enough to bear the weight of the unlikely assumption that Sulla regarded his campaign in Italy as part and parcel of his campaign against Mithridates.

occasion required it<sup>63</sup>. In this case, however, the evidence shows, as we shall now see, that he could claim to have acted in full accord with the *mos maiorum* in receiving an acclamation for his victory over the Samnites at the Colline Gate.

The first issue we must clarify is that of the circumstances under which an acclamation could legitimately be received when the defeated foe was something other than an indisputably foreign army with absolutely no ties to the Roman state or claims to Roman citizenship. In a civil war in which both sides plainly retained full Roman citizenship, there could be no question of a commander winning an acclamation for a victory over the other side. This is the kind of clear-cut historical incident that Valerius has in mind in his reference to domestic *versus* foreign blood. As in any other period of history, however, actual incidents in Republican history can turn out on close inspection to be far from clear-cut. Cicero, for example, reveals what we would otherwise suspect: the Roman tradition that defined the acceptable circumstances for an acclamation was malleable when politicians exploited it in the service of factional interests. When, for example, a proposal was put before the Senate to vote a *supplicatio* in honor of the initial victory at Mutina of Hirtius, Pansa and Octavian, Cicero argued that they should be hailed as *imperatores* because for the past twenty years those for whom thanksgiving had been decreed were also called by the title *imperator*<sup>64</sup>. But, he argues, they cannot be called *imperatores* unless they have been victorious over *hostes* and not over *cives*<sup>65</sup>. We must, Cicero implies, regard their opponents as enemies of the Roman state and no longer as Roman citizens. Cicero's aim here is not, of course, to clarify the formalities of an acclamation in the interest of proper ceremonial procedure but, rather, finally to succeed in having Antony, a Roman citizen, declared a *hostis* of Rome. His remarks are significant, however, because they show that a Roman politician could, in a properly self-serving context, envision an acclamation for a victory over *hostes* who were not in reality foreigners but in fact Roman citizens who had been declared enemies of the state.

This observation is relevant to the situation of the Samnites because Sulla's treatment of them in his invasion of Italy plainly shows that, regardless of their true status, Sulla in any case did not regard them as Roman citizens and consistently operated against them as if they had been declared *hostes* of the Roman state. Sulla made a treaty (*foedus*) in winter 83/2 B.C. with the Italic peoples in which he pledged to respect their new citizenship granted at the end of the Social War, but the Samnites did not participate in this agreement<sup>66</sup>. As Salmon remarks, Sulla evidently «marked down for destruction» those who were not included in this pact<sup>67</sup>. Before the campaign in Italy was over Sulla had massacred thousands of Samnite prisoners captured in the

<sup>63</sup> For a critical reply to Keaveney's generally positive assessment of Sulla's motives in his career, see D. J. Woolliscroft, Sulla's motives, *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 13.3 (March 1988), 35–39.

<sup>64</sup> Philippic 14.11.

<sup>65</sup> Philippic 14.6,12.

<sup>66</sup> See Livy, *Epit.* 86 for a bare report of the treaty. Salmon (*supra* n. 61), *Athenaeum* 42, 75, and *Samnium*, 382–384, argues that Sulla purposely excluded the Samnites. Since Sulla needed all the allies that he could muster at this point, this seems improbable. See Keaveney (*supra* n. 61), 509–510.

<sup>67</sup> *Samnium*, 384, n. 3.

war<sup>68</sup>. Strabo in fact quotes Sulla as saying that the Romans would never have peace so long as the Samnites existed as a people<sup>69</sup>. This quotation amounts to a call for genocide, and the historical record gives us no reason to doubt that this sentiment accurately reflected Sulla's attitude toward the Samnites: they always had been Rome's enemies in the past and remained so in the present<sup>70</sup>. As far as he was concerned, the legal niceties of a citizenship granted in his absence would have meant nothing. He regarded the Samnites as *hostes*, and a great victory over them encompassing the wholesale slaughter of such bitter enemies of Rome under the very walls of the city itself would certainly have provided Sulla with a fitting occasion for a second acclamation. He had good reason to feel justified in this if, as seems to have been the case, the Samnites had refused to subscribe to his treaty with the Italians made in 83/82 B. C.

We should have no doubts about Sulla's readiness to ignore the legal details of the status of the Samnites as new citizens if it suited his purpose. But the strong probability is that Sulla faced no impediment on this score at all because, despite Salmon's insistent statement to the contrary, a close reading of the sources reveals that the Samnites as a people had not in fact been officially recognized as legally valid Roman citizens at the end of the Social War or, indeed, at any time before the date of Sulla's victory at the Colline Gate. Appian, BC 1.53,231 states that the Lucanians and the Samnites did not receive the citizenship along with the other peoples of Italy at the end of the Social War in 89 B. C.: «for they seem to me to have gotten what they wanted later.» He does not tell us how much later this was. We find in Livy, *Epit.* 80, however, the statement that «the citizenship was given by the Senate to the Italic peoples.» The date is 87 B. C., and this is one of the principal pieces of evidence Salmon uses to argue that the Samnites received the citizenship at this date<sup>71</sup>. The passage continues, however, with the statement that «the Samnites, who alone took up their arms again, allied themselves with Cinna and Marius.» Since at this point in 87 Cinna and Marius were officially *hostes* of the Roman state whose Samnite allies were engaging in hostilities against the Senate's forces (as the *Epitome* immediately tells us)<sup>72</sup>, we cannot take this statement in the *Epitome* about a grant of citizenship to the Italic peoples as evidence that the Samnites actually became citizens in 87 B. C. as part of this group.

Other sources reveal the details of the situation<sup>73</sup>. With Sulla in Asia, the Senate in 87 needed additional military support against the rebellious Cinna and Marius. In desperation the Senators instructed Metellus to attempt to come to terms on their behalf with the Samnites. One of the demands the Samnites made was citizenship for

<sup>68</sup> Appian, BC 1.87, 400, 1.93, 432, 1.94, 437–438; cf. Plutarch, Sulla 28.15, 30.3–4, 32.1; Livy, *Epit.* 88.

<sup>69</sup> 5.4.11 (C249).

<sup>70</sup> Keaveney (supra n. 61), 512, 529–531, disagrees, arguing that Sulla's policy toward the Samnites was no harsher than toward the other peoples of Italy.

<sup>71</sup> Samnium, 376.

<sup>72</sup> Appian, BC 1.70, 323–324 (the Senate later rescinds the status of Cinna and Marius as enemies of the state which shows that at this earlier date they were still official enemies of Rome); Livy, *Epit.* 80 (the Samnites defeat a senatorial force).

<sup>73</sup> Granius Licinianus (ed. Flemisch), p. 20, lines 11–13, p. 21, lines 1–4; Appian, BC 1.68, 309–310; Dio fr. 102, 7.

themselves and for their deserters, a demand which strongly implies that the Samnites had not already become citizens by this date<sup>74</sup>. Since the Senate refused to accept the conditions laid down by the Samnites, no agreement was reached. After the failure of these negotiations between the Senate and the Samnites, however, Cinna and Marius promptly made contact with the Samnites and agreed to all their demands. The Samnites thereupon became their allies in opposition to the Senate. It must be emphasized that Cinna and Marius struck this bargain while they were still officially *hostes*, and the Senate at this point obviously did not ratify any agreement which its enemies had made with Samnites who were fighting against the Senate's army.

Cinna and Marius of course soon became, in Salmon's words, «masters of the state»<sup>75</sup>, and they could have rammed their agreement with the Samnites through the cowed Senate during their reign of terror in Rome, if they took the time out from their gruesome spree of murder and confiscation for such mundane business. No source tells us that they did so, but, given our dearth of information, we have no way to rule out absolutely Salmon's assumption that the Samnites were technically made citizens at this point in 87 B. C. while the Senate functioned as the tool of its new masters and Sulla was himself being declared a *hostis*<sup>76</sup>. But it is impossible on general grounds to believe that Sulla upon his return to Italy would ever have regarded the ratification of such an agreement as valid, especially because the Samnites were not included in the *foedus* made in winter 83/82 B. C. a treaty which guaranteed to the peoples of Italy that Sulla would regard them as Roman citizens.

Indeed, that Sulla concluded a *foedus* with the Italians effectively and adroitly rendered the entire question of prior citizenship moot. A *foedus* was an agreement between Rome on the one hand and a foreign state or states on the other; it was not a kind of agreement that could be concluded between groups of Roman citizens. By offering to conclude a *foedus* with the Italians, Sulla was *de facto* maintaining that they were not Roman citizens before making the agreement. But what he took away he immediately gave back by making it a provision of the *foedus* that the Italians who agreed to it would in fact be Roman citizens. Since the Samnites did not subscribe to the *foedus*, they necessarily remained outside the category of those Italians whom Sulla considered to have become Roman citizens. The fact that Sulla made this sort of treaty with the Italians clinches the argument that he did not regard the Samnites as Roman citizens<sup>77</sup>.

In fairness to Salmon's argument, however, we must review the remaining evidence cited by him in his argument that, regardless of Sulla's view, the Samnites had received a valid grant of citizenship in 87 B. C. This evidence also fails to carry convic-

<sup>74</sup> It seems unlikely that we should understand Licinianus and Dio, who report this demand, to imply that the Samnites made this demand because they were already citizens but the deserters were not.

<sup>75</sup> Samnium, 375.

<sup>76</sup> Samnium, 374.

<sup>77</sup> I owe this point about the significance of Sulla's *foedus* with the Italians to the help of E. Badian and his student at Harvard University, Leah Johnson. Cf. E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae* (Oxford 1958), 244. On Roman treaties in general, see E. Täubler, *Imperium Romanum*, vol. 1 (Leipzig 1913). For a useful short discussion, see the article under "foedus" by Dieter Medicus in *Der Kleine Pauly*, vol. 2 (Munich 1979), cols. 587-588.

tion when seen in context. Licinianus, after his report of the alliance between the Samnites and Cinna and Marius as the enemies of the Senate, goes on to say that the citizenship was given to «all those who surrendered.»<sup>78</sup> As Licinianus' narrative shows, this grant came before Cinna and Marius had taken Rome, not while they were in charge after the capture of the city. In other words, this grant was a last-ditch effort by the Senate to attract allies who, Licinianus adds, did not show up in the numbers they had promised<sup>79</sup>. The Samnites plainly cannot be part of the group that did ally themselves with the Senate at this date: they had not surrendered, they did not send forces to the aid of the Senate against Cinna and Marius, and they contributed great numbers of soldiers to the war, as their enormous losses to Sulla show.

In the end, then, Salmon's argument that the Samnites became citizens as early as 87 B. C. turns on the claim that Appian, BC 1.65,294 shows the Samnite town Nola to have had full Roman citizenship at that date<sup>80</sup>. In this passage Appian describes Cinna's efforts to raise an army soon after Sulla had left for Asia but before Marius had returned to Etruria. This incident therefore precedes the union of Cinna and Marius, their eventual alliance with the Samnites, and their capture of Rome. Appian says that Cinna in seeking to gather allies and raise money traveled to «the nearby cities which had not long before become Roman – Tibur and Praeneste and those as far as Nola» (ἄσσαι μέχρι Νώλης). This may well mean that Appian believed Nola already had the Roman citizenship at this date in 87 B. C., but Salmon himself makes it clear that Nola got the citizenship at the same time and in the same way as the other Samnites: later in 87 B. C. when Cinna and Marius made their deal with the Samnites and then took Rome<sup>81</sup>. Appian is simply wrong if he means to say that Nola had the citizenship earlier in the year when Cinna first began to look for allies. There had been no opportunity for an earlier grant because Nola had remained a «great rebel stronghold» continuously since Papius Mutilus had captured it in 90 B. C.<sup>82</sup>. Even in the unlikely and undocumented event that the Senate had tried to give the citizenship to the diehards holed up in Nola, there is no indication that they had acknowledged it. The inhabitants of Nola faced the same dead-end as the other Samnites whom Cinna and Marius promised to enfranchise: they had no deal with Sulla and they could expect none. In fact, we know that Sulla's forces finally captured the place by force only in 80 B. C.<sup>83</sup> We cannot believe that this siege was conducted against a town whose inhabitants were recognized as holding the Roman citizenship.

The status of the Samnite people posed no difficulties for Sulla, either in war or in peace. Since they were not as a group Roman citizens, Sulla found no legal impediments whatsoever to his treatment of them as enemies of Rome. The odd individual of Samnite origin could gain the citizenship if he deserted to the winning side early enough, like the Staius who apparently joined Sulla after his return to Italy<sup>84</sup>. The

<sup>78</sup> Page 21, lines 9–10: *Dediticiis omnibus civitas data.*

<sup>79</sup> Page 21, lines 10–11.

<sup>80</sup> Samnium, 376.

<sup>81</sup> Samnium, 375, n. 2.

<sup>82</sup> Samnium, 358. See Appian, BC 1.42, 185.

<sup>83</sup> Livy, Epit. 89; Licinianus p. 32, lines 9–13.

<sup>84</sup> Samnium, 379. Cf. Badian (*supra* n. 77), 246–247.



only Samnites we hear about who found any success as Roman citizens in later years seem to have followed this path: they had made themselves as individuals the allies of Rome in the Social War, or of Sulla in the Civil War<sup>85</sup>. As Salmon points out, by the time we begin to find prominent Samnites in the historical record again at the end of the Republic, there is little assurance that they were genuine, ethnic Samnites anymore rather than carpetbaggers who had settled in Samnium in the aftermath of Sulla's savage depredations in the region after his victory in the Civil War<sup>86</sup>. Sulla had quite literally made the issue of Samnite citizenship a dead issue. It would have been the most natural thing in the world for him to have been once again acclaimed *imperator* after he had smashed a Samnite army in the battle of the Colline Gate on November 1, 82 B. C. An imperial acclamation was granted for a victory over the enemies of Rome, a description which emphatically applied to the Samnites even as late as 82 B. C.

This victory furnishes the most plausible occasion for Sulla's second imperial acclamation. Production of issue no. 359, with its inscription publicizing Sulla's having received the honor twice, presumably began shortly after November 1, 82 B. C. The association of no. 359 with Sulla's victory at the Colline Gate would also explain the change from Roma as the obverse type of no. 367 to Venus as the obverse type of no. 359. Sulla had encamped near a shrine of Venus Erycina the night before the battle<sup>87</sup>. Since this cult had long-standing associations with military victory, the success that he won the next day gave him reason to think that the goddess had shown him her special favor at the Colline Gate<sup>88</sup>. She had, after all, shown him the same favor at Chaeronea in the guise of Aphrodite. The new obverse type of no. 359 commemorated the good fortune that Venus had helped Sulla win at the Colline Gate when he received his second imperial acclamation, a distinction commemorated by the inscription on the reverse. We should therefore date the small issue no. 359 to the relatively brief period between the date of the battle of the Colline Gate and the time not

<sup>85</sup> This is the implication of Salmon's discussion of the obscurity of Samnites in the military and political history of the last decades of the Republic (Samnium, 390-393). Cf. M. H. Crawford, *Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1985), 181.

<sup>86</sup> Samnium, 393-395. For an assessment of the extent of the devastation in Samnium, see E. Pais, *La persistenza delle stirpi sannitiche nell'età romana e la partecipazione di genti sabelliche alla colonizzazione romana e latina*, *Atti della Reale Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti* (Naples) n.s. vol. 7, 1918, 445-452.

<sup>87</sup> Appian, *BC* 1.93, 428. This was the shrine built by L. Porcius Licinus in 181 B. C. (Livy 40.34.4). For its cult, architecture and sculpture, see S. B. Platner and T. Ashby, *Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Oxford 1929), 551; R. Schilling, *La religion romaine de Vénus depuis les origines jusqu'au temps d'Auguste* (Paris 1954), 254-262; E. Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, 2nd. ed. (London 1968), vol. 1, 491; G. K. Galinsky, *Aeneas, Sicily and Rome* (Princeton 1969), 180-183, 243-257.

<sup>88</sup> The Roman victory in the First Punic War led to the establishment of the cult of Venus Erycina on the Capitoline. A victory over the Ligurians in 184 B. C. motivated the establishment of her cult near the Colline Gate. See Schilling, 272-295, for a full discussion of Sulla's relationship with the cult of Venus. Cf. C. Lanzani, *La Venere Sillana*, *Historia* 1,3, 1927, 31-55; R. Pera, *Venere sulle monete da Silla ad Augusto: aspetti storico-politici*, in: *Contributi di storia antica in onore di Albino Garzetti* (Genoa 1977, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto di storia antica e scienze ausiliare dell'Università di Genova, vol. 14), 244-248.

long thereafter when the production of regular issues of coinage recommenced in the mint of Rome<sup>89</sup>.

If this dating is correct, we must reopen the question of the significance of the augural symbols on no. 359 because, as we have seen, Badian has established that Sulla became an augur at some time after November 1, 82 B.C.<sup>90</sup>. Unfortunately we cannot determine precisely how much time elapsed after this date before Sulla entered upon his augurate. But we can suspect that it did not take long. The man he displaced in order to assume the augural office, L. Cornelius Scipio Asiagenus, was declared a *hostis* of Rome and fled the city to avoid death as one of those whose names Sulla had placed on his first proscription list<sup>91</sup>. These events presumably took place soon after Sulla's victory on November 1, because immediately thereafter he took action to punish his opponents at Rome and to consolidate his own position. Under the circumstances, Sulla had no good reason to delay his assumption of the coveted position as augur. And it is equally plausible that no significant delay ensued between November 1 and the production of the issue of coins Sulla produced to publicize his having won the title of *imperator* not once but twice. In short, we can well believe that Sulla was indeed an augur precisely during the time when no. 359 was being minted. This chronology naturally means that the symbols of the augurate appearing on the coins of no. 359 do indeed refer to Sulla's own, contemporary augurate rather than to the augurate of one of his ancestors, or to the legitimacy of his *imperium* as a proconsul<sup>92</sup>.

This conclusion in turn means that issue no. 359 stands as the first issue of Roman Republican coins carrying a reference to the prestigious priestly office currently occupied by the powerful individual who had the coinage produced. Furthermore, it is not the augural symbols alone on no. 359 that make its types «personal». The inscription proclaiming that Sulla had won two acclamations as *imperator* is equally «personal» in that it, too, refers to Sulla's contemporary status and renown<sup>93</sup>. As far as the coins themselves reveal, these proclamations of contemporary status are indeed personal because only Sulla's name appears on the coins. These coins do not even imply that someone else was responsible for their design and production, as in the case of no. 367, for example. On that issue, since the name of L. Manlius Torquatus, *proquaestor*, appears as that of the monetary magistrate, the inscription on the reverse proclaiming Sulla's status as *imperator* technically represents not Sulla's own assertion of his con-

<sup>89</sup> As soon as Sulla had consolidated his power, he put new moneymen into office to produce the routine issues of the state, nos. 369–371. See Crawford (*supra* n. 85), 187.

<sup>90</sup> See Keaveney's discussion in *AJAH* 7, 1982, 150–154, of Badian's arguments in *Arethusa* 1, 1968, 26–46, for this *terminus post quem* for Sulla's augurate.

<sup>91</sup> See Badian, *Arethusa* 1, 1968, 38, and Keaveney, *AJAH* 7, 1982, 153–154.

<sup>92</sup> Keaveney, *AJAH* 7, 1982, 154–161, as previously noted, argues for the last of these three possibilities. He also reviews Frier's arguments in favor of the first and Badian's in favor of the second.

<sup>93</sup> It may be more than a mere coincidence that the augural symbols appear prominently on no. 359 in conjunction with the claim to a double award of the imperatorial title because there was a conceptual link between the office of augur and the status of *imperator*. See Combès, 401–408.

temporary status but rather a description of him by his subordinate, Torquatus<sup>94</sup>. No. 359 observes no such scruples. With this issue minted in late 82 and, perhaps, for a short period of time in early 81, Sulla initiated a new instrument in Roman coin propaganda: the blatantly, unmistakably «personal» type of the great man. These coins constitute graphic evidence for Sulla's relentless drive in pursuit of those eminently Roman goals, power and status. Sadly for the peace and stability of the Roman Republic, the precedents he set with his willingness to ignore the limitations on individual self-aggrandizement imposed by the Roman *mos maiorum* did not go unnoticed by those so-called great men who followed him. Sulla's use of coin propaganda was one of those precedents<sup>95</sup>.

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#### *Key to plate 1*

##### *All illustrations 2:1*

- Fig. 1 Sulla. Denarius, RRC no. 359
- Fig. 2 Sulla. Denarius, RRC no. 367
- Fig. 3 C. Papius Mutilus (*mutil embratur*). Denarius
- Fig. 4 Sulla. Aureus, RRC no. 381.

Photos 1-3 Bank Leu; 4 Kent-Hirmer, *Roman Coins*, 51 (BM)

<sup>94</sup> The associated issue in bronze, no. 368, lacks Torquatus' name, either because these asses were too small to leave room for the inscription or, perhaps more plausibly, because Sulla felt no compunction about advertising his status on these coins that were to be used to pay the troops who had awarded him his imperatorial status in the first place.

<sup>95</sup> For their help and advice on this article, I want to thank Silvia Hurter, Alan Walker, and, especially, Professor E. Badian and the members of his numismatics class at Harvard University to whom an oral version of this argument was presented.



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