



Festal and Dated Coins of the Roman Empire: Four Papers by Aline Abaecherli Boyce

Review by: Stewart Irvin Oost

Classical Philology, Vol. 62, No. 2 (Apr., 1967), pp. 146-147

Published by: [The University of Chicago Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/268213>

Accessed: 08/05/2014 22:07

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



The University of Chicago Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Classical Philology*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

garchy wanted to keep it one (*ibid. et pass.*); city-states cannot rule empires with any success. It is common dogma to hold this latter view. Historians of antiquity wisely point out that Athens lost her Empire by remaining an exclusive city-state, and Rome held hers by ceasing to be one; but Venice had a considerable run of success as a city-state ruled by an oligarchy and controlling an Empire for centuries, so some other factor must also be involved. The oligarchy (Toynbee prefers the modern British "Establishment") frustrated Roman "democracy" (I, 315–26). Yet it seems improper to refer to Roman "popular" movements as democratic; rather they were ordinarily attempts made by dissident members of the oligarchy to force their policy upon the oligarchy by utilizing the people's discontent or strivings, or by persons from outside the oligarchy attempting to force their way in. Apart from this particular question, however, is democracy prerequisite to the success of a state or system? Democracy is the rarest form of human government; are all others to be classed as failures?

But whether these views are right or wrong (the reviewer forbears to transcribe from his notes the many other places where he could also take issue with the author with varying degrees of conviction, as well as various instances of outright error of fact, for the latter are almost inevitable in any long work of this kind), they are hardly new. And this is the principal fault of so long and so expensive a book, a book which ranks in price with those containing large numbers of plates, but without a single illustration other than the maps at the end. For example, leaving aside the question of the relevance of the thorny problems of Etruscan origins to this subject, one concludes that the author's extensive discussion of those problems contributes nothing essential to what is to be found in elementary manuals of Etruscology, or even in general textbooks of Roman history (I, 354–72). The universal historian necessarily depends almost exclusively on the best mono-

graphic information and interpretation he can discover; his originality consists in putting disparate information together in a new synthesis. The scholar working in a limited area must see new things in his subject as a whole, or in its parts; to compile and contrast the views of others does not suffice. There is, in fact, new insight in this book, but the proportion seems far from justifying its huge bulk, much of which consists in epitomizing the published researches of others. Toynbee would have been better advised to concentrate his work in a series of essays on particular points where he speaks mainly for himself. One is tempted to compare another recent survey in ancient history, A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*, a book much more modest in price, especially in the United States, and more original in contribution, to the disadvantage of this one. Yet it would be unfair to leave the matter at that. Toynbee covers so many problems that the specialist in one series of them will find it convenient and illuminating to survey the results in other related areas to which he has not given so much attention. The advanced student of Roman history will find this book a convenient introduction to work in many aspects of the subject, although the reader who does not have a general idea of Roman history in the period roughly 400–133 B.C. will do well to acquire it before he starts this account.

STEWART IRVIN OOST

University of Chicago

Festal and Dated Coins of the Roman Empire: Four Papers. By ALINE ABACHERLI BOYCE. ("Numismatic Notes and Monographs," No. 153.) New York: The American Numismatic Society, 1965. Pp. x+102+16 pls. \$4.00.

The first three of these papers are quite short. The first (pp. 1–11) concludes that a new aureus of 17 B.C. commemorates not Divus Iulius or Iulus (Ascanius), as previously thought on the evidence of

similar coins, but the new age itself, as proclaimed by the Secular Games of that year. The argumentation is interesting, but not conclusive, since it contains a considerable subjective element. The second paper (pp. 12–21) rearranges the dated coins of Pompeiopolis (Soli) in Cilicia, and transfers what was previously thought to be the earliest dated coin of the city from the late Republic to the reign of Tiberius. The third paper (pp. 22–39) examines an uncommon coin of the ninth consulship of Diocletian and pronounces its purpose to be the celebration of the consulship itself; the type, which goes back to Antoninus Pius, had previously also been used by Diocletian after it had tended to lapse in the later third century.

The fourth paper (pp. 40–90) is both the longest and the most important. "A New Solidus of Theodosius II" is used as the point of departure for an essay devoted to the further refinement of the classification and dating of the vota and consular coinage of the first half of the fifth century in both East and West, with some consideration of later developments. This late period has been relatively neglected by most classical numismatists, and careful study and arrangement of the coins is particularly necessary, since many of the common earlier criteria for dating the imperial coinage have disappeared or are no longer used in the same way as before. Among conclusions of direct historical importance is the tracing of Eastern influence on the coins of the West, especially those of the Empress Galla Placidia.¹

STEWART IRVIN OOST

University of Chicago

1. There are several misprints, although none is misleading; further: *P. 41*: Valentinian III was probably not crowned; the question of the date of the first true coronation in the fifth century is a disputed question of scholarship, and the word should not be used loosely. *P. 48*: "the brief period before Arcadius' accession... when Gratian was still alive"; read "after Arcadius' accession"? *P. 65*: Despite Marcellinus Comes, *s.a.* 434 (*Chron. Min.*, II, 79), the Honoria scandal is to be dated in 449 rather than 434; see J. B. Bury, "Justa Grata Honoria," *JRS*, IX (1919), 1–13, and cf. E. Stein, *Hist. du Bas-Empire*, I*, 333, 581, n. 75.

Studies in Ancient Greek Topography, Part I. By W. KENDRICK PRITCHETT. ("University of California Publications: Classical Studies," Vol. I.) Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965. Pp. viii+140+119 pls.+2 maps in pocket; 7 figs. in text. \$6.50.

Pritchett is surely right in saying (p. 3) that too much study of topographical problems has been done with maps, books, and a priori dead reckoning. Unfortunately this fact also poses a certain problem for the reviewer who has not himself gone out to "Macedonia" (Livy 44. 22. 13); accordingly this review has had to be based on the assumption that Pritchett's observations in the field are correct (not a great assumption, for the historian of antiquity must frequently trust observers far more lax and uncritical than a modern scholar). Criticism therefore must be limited to the use of the results of autopsy in conjunction with the ancient documentary evidence. Usually Pritchett is quite persuasive, and one will find little fault with his principle that the ancient historian is probably right until proved wrong.

The present volume (a sequel is promised, p. 3) includes twelve studies of varying length and importance on various problems of Greek topography, especially in connection with ancient battles. There is at least one clue which leads to the suspicion that they were originally conceived for publication as independent articles (p. 30, n. 1, for "plate I," read "plate 32"). Only a few of the conclusions can be noted here. Concerning Pylos and Sphacteria (pp. 6–29) Pritchett argues that the land has sunk relative to the sea since antiquity; accordingly the lagoon by Pylos did not exist in the fifth century B.C., and the harbor of Thucydides is the Bay of Navarino (p. 16). If correct, this disposes of a good deal of scholarly discussion, but it convicts Thucydides of writing that both entrances to the bay were narrow (4. 8. 6), although in fact one is quite wide. At least this view has the merit of attributing only one topographical blunder to Thucydides.