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Marcus Antonius in the Space of “Oblivion” or About the Representation of the Temple on the *denarius* RRC 496/1

In the last century of the Roman Republic, in comparison with the earlier period, the legends and iconography of the coinage were more numerous and diversified¹. It was on the coins, among others, that images of the Roman edifices – either newly erected or restored by the contemporary politicians – were exhibited². On the one hand, the presence of such on-coin representations resulted from the revival of building activity in Rome – a typical feature of the period. On the other hand, they appeared as an effect of the architectural projects, which the politicians, aspiring to high positions in the Republic, made a part of their political struggle, escalating at that time³. Yet, the name of Marcus Antonius is not listed among those politicians and builders in Rome.

In the M. Antonius content-rich coinage there is, however, a *denarius* which, among other iconographic elements, contains an architectural structure: Obv. M ANTONI IMP, head of M. Antonius, bare, with beard; Rev. III VIR R P C, façade of distyle temple within which is a medallion bearing radiate head of Sol, facing (cf. Fig. 1)⁴.

Our knowledge about the meaning of this reverse representation is insufficient and scarce. Not very precise data concerning the chronology and circumstances in which M. Antonius *denarii* were struck provide only an uncertain key to the interpretation of this image. The coins are assumed to have been minted in autumn 42 BC (after the second battle of Philippi) in a military mint, mov-

¹ See e.g. DeRose Evans 1995, 33–34; Depuyrot 2006, 19 and 26.

² See Panvini Rosati 1955, 72 ff.; Fuchs 1969, 5 ff.; Stoll 2000, 17 ff.

³ See Coarelli 1977, 1–23.

⁴ RRC, no. 496/1; CRR, no. 1168; BMCRR Gaul, nos. 60–62; Bab., Antonia, no. 34. Cf. Panvini Rosati 1955, fig. 5; Lugli, Grosso 1962, 375, no. 499, pl. 12.6; Hill 1975, pl. 3.46; Stoll 2000, 25, fig. 13; Matern 2002, M 217, fig. 121 and 26; Fuchs 1969, 30, 68, fig. 4,45; Wiercińska 1996, no. 1414; Sear 1998, 86, no. 128; Hefner 2008, 33, no. 1, 2, 1A; Rovithis-Livaniou, Rovithis 2014, 180, fig. 23.

ing together with the triumvir in the Balkans⁵. They belonged to the series in which the references to the Sun, whose bust was shown, were made three times⁶. Due to the dominance of the sun motif, linking the three types of the series, the meaning of the RRC 496/1 coin is generally discussed in terms of the solar ideology and issues connected with M. Antonius political and religious power. This predilection for the Sun, expressed through the coins⁷, is understood in terms of the cult of Dionysus, which had solar character⁸ and propagated the conception of a new age⁹, which was sometimes a metaphor of the political changes connected with the liberation of the East from Caesar's assassins¹⁰ or perceived as a current influence of the local traditions and customs during the triumvir's stay in the eastern world¹¹.

The image of the Sun *en face*, in *corona radiata*, set against the background of a temple, distinguishes itself among the *denarii* of the solar series, bearing the traditional images of the Sun radiate head in profile¹². The temple is presented frontally as an almost square structure, raised on a two- or three-stepped *crepidoma*, with two columns (*distylos*), topped with Ionic (?) capitals. The architrave is equally simple. The fronton remains unadorned with only some floral (?) *acroteria*. On the front of the temple there is a disc-like medallion with an image of the Sun in the radiate crown. In some cases the medallion with the Sun bust fills the whole façade of a building. But there are sometimes smaller rings as well and also the crown of the Sun can be made up of eight, nine, eleven or twelve rays¹³. The representation was earlier unknown and its novelty in the coinage implies reference to the events worth commemorating. Moreover, the said medallion with the picture of the Sun somehow defines the architecture which supplies background for it: the image of a temple itself, an undoubtedly very important element in the coin iconography, is schematic and simplified¹⁴.

⁵ See e.g. Sear 1998, 86. Cf. Hill 1975, 172–173 (Lugdunum?).

⁶ RRC, nos. 496/1–3; CRR, nos. 1168–1170; BMCRR Gaul, nos. 60–62; BMCRR East, nos. 87–92; Bab., Antonia, nos. 29, 31, 34.

⁷ E.g. Fuchs 1969, 30; Pennestri 1989, 401.

⁸ E.g. Morawiecki 2014, 116–118.

⁹ E.g. RRC, 740; BMCRR, 398–399; Berrens 2004, 29–30, 218–219.

¹⁰ E.g. Sear 1998, 85–87; Woytek 2003, 487–489.

¹¹ E.g. Hill 1975, 172; Stoll 2000, 25. Cf. Cesano 1912, 232, 239–246.

¹² RRC, nos. 496/2–3. Cf. RRC, nos. 494/20a–b, 21, 43a–b. (42 BC); 533/2 (38 BC). For earlier depictions of Sol in this manner, see RRC nos. 303/1 (109/108 BC); 390/1 (76 BC); 437/1a–b (51 BC); 463/4a–d (46 BC); 474/5 (45 BC). Summarized in: Ryan 2005, 81–95; Rovithis-Livaniou, Rovithis 2014, 170 ff.

¹³ Cf. Fuchs 1969, 68; Hefner 2008, 33, 44.

¹⁴ Cf. Fuchs 1969, 94–95.

It has been observed that this unconventional representation of the Sun can be a numismatic interpretation of the solar *halo* phenomenon, which the Romans called a *corona* (Sen., *Nat.*, 1,2,1)¹⁵. The main argument here is provided by the medallion – a background for the Sol’s bust – which, as it seems, was supposed to symbolize the luminous ring, characteristic for a *halo* surrounding the Sun.

In various descriptions concerning Roman history, solar anomalies often accompanied dramatic and significant events. References to the solar halo in the year 42 BC can be found in the writings of Pliny the Elder (Plin., *Nat.*, 2,31,99), Cassius Dio (Dio, 47,40,2) and Julius Obsequens (Obs., 70). The image of Sol, set against the sun disk, may be a reflection of this rare and unusual phenomenon and the first attempt to render it in the Roman coinage. Besides, the fact of introducing the motif into the coinage may suggest a pursuit to surround M. Antonius with ideological benefits by linking his person with the connotations of this atmospheric phenomenon. It is a well-known fact that in the Roman tradition unusual natural phenomena, including the ones occurring in the firmament like e.g. the eclipse, the appearance of a comet, stars at daylight glowing near to the Sun, a lasting shiny ring around the Sun, observed or indicated by the ancients, became the *omina* portending important or critical events¹⁶. It is a repertoire of prophetic signs foreshowing either disaster or prosperity for the state and pointing out the uniqueness of the persons whose fortunes were intertwined with the fate and condition of the Roman state.

In the same sense the solar halo was also woven into the records concerning Octavian – Marcus Antonius’ rival. Numerous ancient authors (Velleius Paterculus, Pliny the Elder, Suetonius, Cassius Dio, Julius Obsequens, Orosius) mention such *omina* as the appearance of a solar halo over the head of the young Caesar entering Rome, which pretended his grandeur (Vell., 2,59,6: *at the moment of his entering the city [of Rome], men saw above his head the orb of the sun with a circle about it, coloured like the rainbow, seeming thereby to place a crown upon the head of one destined soon to greatness*, transl. F.W. Shipley) or a halo around the Sun, a disk similar to a rainbow or sundogs (*parhelion*), and they locate these rare phenomena in the years 44 (Plin., *Nat.*, 2,28,98; Suet., *Aug.*, 95,1; Dio, 45,4,4; Obs., 68; Oros., *Hist.*, 6,20,5; cf. Sen., *Nat.*, 1,2,1), 43 (Dio, 45,17,4–5) or 42 BC (Plin., *Nat.*, 2,31,99).

However, there are no materials confirming that the iconographic elaboration of these solar phenomena was currently done by Octavian as a part

¹⁵ Woods 2012, 87–88.

¹⁶ On solar phenomena as omens, see Krauss 1930, 67–71; Vigourat 2001, 24–30, 126–130, 424–425.

of his self-presentation in this first period of his career. Therefore, the initiative connected with the person of M. Antonius and reflected in the iconography of his *denarii* seems precursory in the history of the Roman coinage. It possibly aimed to discredit the uniqueness of the young Caesar by surrounding M. Antonius with an aura of exceptionality.

However, a similar iconographic conception was realized under Augustus on the provincial coins minted at Buthrotum in Epirus: M PVLLIENVS L AT-EIVS FVSCVS QVIN, head of Sol (?) facing on disc within a distyle temple façade / AVGVST in a laurel wreath; beneath, BVTHR¹⁷. According to Lesław Morawiecki, the identity or the similarity of the coin from Buthrotum may be explained by the adoption of the design from M. Antonius coins though it is difficult to give reasons for that operation. Quite often images for the local coins were adopted from the official ones, and not vice versa¹⁸. These remarks may support the above suppositions of how to understand the meaning of the reverse representation on the triumvir's *denarii* of 42 BC. Secondary to them, the bronze coins from the times of Augustus (after 27 BC), could also represent the solar halo, which, as indicated above, at the early stage of the later *princeps* career suggested, as the ancients believed, his grandeur and exceptional personality. Applying the motif, previously used on M. Antonius *denarii*, to the bronze coins from Buthrotum, may have been an attempt to recall the signs pretending Augustus reign and to include the measures, drawn from the resources of his former political adversary and rival in the struggle for power, in the repertoire of images indicating that he was predestined to reign.

Still, the motif of a temple in the reverse representation of the RRC 496/1 coin is equally significant. Its image was reduced to mere outlines, which does not facilitate identification. Among different opinions on the subject there was a supposition that the building may symbolize the local temple in Buthrotum¹⁹. It was based on the fact that M. Antonius issues were partly struck at Buthrotum and that the representations on the triumvir's coins were iconographically similar to the images of a temple placed on the aforementioned bronze coins minted here under Augustus. Morawiecki rejected this hypothesis claiming that the symbolic picture was not supposed to depict a real building²⁰. David Woods expresses the same view. He notices that the image of the Sun on the sun disk, set against the background of a temple, may be an attempt to point

¹⁷ CCREAM 1, pl. 27, no. 1117; RPC 1, no. 1383. Cf. Woytek 2003, 492 (criticism).

¹⁸ Morawiecki 2014, 114–115.

¹⁹ RRC, p. 100; RPC 1, p. 275. Images of temples in provincial coinage, see RPC 1, 43–44, Heuchert 2005, 50–51; Burnett 2011, 24–25.

²⁰ Morawiecki 2014, 115.

out the topographic context of the halo phenomenon, similarly to Livy when he described the *omina* of the year 174 BC²¹. The researcher says nothing about the identification of the structure shown on the *denarii* of the year 42 BC: it is only an argument for him, supporting the interpretation of the image as a solar halo. Yet, the contents of this fragment of Livy (41,21,12–13), *in the middle of the day, the sky being perfectly clear, a rainbow was seen, stretching over the temple of Saturn, in the Roman Forum, and three suns shone at once* (transl. G. Baker) – does not suggest the iconographic solution employed in M. Antonius coinage. It seems, the image of the radial Sun in a medallion alone might have sufficed to represent a *halo*. After all, only Cassius Dio, when describing the *omen* of the year 42 BC, puts it among the numerous *omina* preceding the battle of Philippi which he locates in the capital city of the Republic (Dio, 47,40,7: *These were the events occurring in Rome*, transl. E. Cary)²². Other ancient authors do not define the place of the phenomenon.

A disk with the Sun bust on a medallion, placed on the front of a temple, draws attention to the building itself. Still, the literary sources provide no exact information about M. Antonius building activity in Rome: it remains a presumption as Duane W. Roller shows it in his research study²³. Little is known about triumvir’s interest for construction in general. The most particular reference was made by Plutarch of Chaeronea (*Ant.*, 23), who writes that M. Antonius *had measurements taken of the temple of Pythian Apollo, with the purpose of completing it; indeed, he promised as much to the senate* (transl. B. Perrin) since the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi had been destroyed by fire and had to be restored²⁴. Further developments of this project, though, remain unknown.

As for the situation in Rome, the trace of M. Antonius presence in the area of building and architecture as well as on the monuments of the capital is even slighter. When Cassius Dio (43,49,2) writes about Julius Caesar moving *rostra* to the Forum Romanum and restoring the statues of Sulla and Pompey the Great, he also adds that *he* (sc. Caesar) *yielded to Antonius both the glory of the work and the inscription on it* (trans. E. Cary)²⁵. M. Antonius himself, as M. Tullius Cicero informs in his letter to C. Cassius Longinus, erected a statue of Julius Caesar *in rostris*, and added the inscription *parenti optime merito* (Cic.,

²¹ Woods 2012, 88.

²² Allusion to the politics of C. Cassius in the face of the Rhodians and their god Sun, cf. Dio, 47, 33, 4. Role of the god Helios / Sun in the year 42 BC, the Sun left C. Cassius and passed on M. Antonius side, cf. Val. Max., 1, 5, 8.

²³ Roller 2007, 89–98. Cf. Humphrey 1986, 73 ff.

²⁴ Cf. Plut., *Numa* 9, 12; Euseb., clxxiii olymp. (p. 151, ed. Heim).

²⁵ Cf. Nic. Damasc., 24; Vell., 2, 61, 3; Suet., *Jul.*, 75, 4; Dio, 42, 18, 2; Purcell 1995, 336–337.

Ad Fam., 12,3)²⁶. It suggests that M. Antonius understood the symbolic and ideological message conveyed by the monuments raised in the Urbs and perceived the political and propaganda meaning of such undertakings. Although the suggested and recorded activity of M. Antonius was of rather honorific than constructional nature, it is essential here that his name was either engraved on those statues or associated with their erection. Thus M. Antonius became included in the circle of the persons whose names were made public within the space of the Urbs by placing them on the monuments and who were perceived as politicians understanding the ideological and political capital hidden in such material demonstrations. These monuments acquire the value of *porte-mémoires* which – for the contemporaries and their descendants – perpetuate the memory about the honoured and the honouring. Within this field of collective memory, the events with the participation of the heroes, worthy of being retained, were selected, reconstructed, modified, endowed with political meanings, according to the requirements and needs of the ruling elites and influential people²⁷.

In the context of M. Antonius possible interest for building in Rome, it would be tempting to link the image of a temple on the RRC 496/1 coin with the erection of the temple in honour of Julius Caesar – *aedes* or *templum divi Iuli*, or even, in general, with the commemoration of his person and the honours awarded to him during his lifetime²⁸. As early as in October 44 BC M. Antonius was associated with the act of raising Caesar's monument on *rostra* in order to commemorate his merits for the Roman state (Cic., *Ad Fam.*, 12,3,1). Moved by the power of Caesar's name, in the year 42 BC, the triumvirs decided *about the foundation of a shrine to him, as hero, in the Forum, on the spot where his body had been burned* (Dio, 47,18,4, transl. E. Cary). The temple visible on *aurei* and *denarii*, minted in 36 BC (Obv. IMP CAESAR DIVI F III VIR ITER R P C, head of Octavian; Rev. COS ITER ER TER DESIG, tetrastyle temple; within, figure wearing veil and holding *lituus*; on frieze, DIVO IVL; within pediment, star; on left, lighted altar²⁹), was only dedicated in 29 BC, after the civil war had finished (Dio, 51,22). Placing a star among the ornaments of this temple is symptomatic: it is an allusion to *sidus*

²⁶ Statues erected earlier, still during lifetime of Caesar, see Nic. Damasc., 20; Vell., 2, 61, 3; Suet., *Iul.*, 80; Dio, 44, 4, 4–5; 44, 9, 2.

²⁷ See Flaig 2013, 68–94; Olszewski 2013, 332–345; cf. Mrozewicz 2011, 11–15; Maciejowski 2011, 31–41.

²⁸ Cf. Foss 1990, 31.

²⁹ RRC, nos. 540/1–2; CRR, nos. 1337–1338; BMCRR Africa, nos. 32–33; Bab., *Iulia*, nos. 138–139; Fuchs 1969, 37, fig. 4.57; 5.58. Cf. RG 19; Dio, 51.22.2 and 4; Hill 1989, 21–3; Gros 1976, 66, 85–7; Gros 1996, 116–9; Whittaker 1996, 89–92; Stamper 2005, 109–111; cf. Fishwick 1984, 265 (Octavian started building the temple of Divus Julius in the same year as the emission of the coin). Description of the temple: Vitruv., *Arch.*, 3, 3, 2; Stat., *Silv.*, 1, 1, 22–24; cf. Ov., *Pont.*, 2, 2, 84; Ov., *Met.*, 15, 842 *etc.*

Iulium, a comet which appeared in 44 BC after Caesar’s death and was interpreted by the contemporaries as a sign of his immortality and divinity³⁰.

The question is whether M. Antonius emission, which appeared as early as in 42 BC, also pursues the theme of the temple in praise of the Divus Julius, as an announcement or a signal of the decisions and actions taken to start raising it? It is easy to give such meaning to the reverse of the RRC 496/1 coin³¹ and, in particular, by interpreting it this way, to break the code – the image of the Sun set against the conventionally outlined imaginary structure – as it would be merely a projection of an object that was just in the state of being created. Yet, an important argument against this interpretation is the lack of similar references in the parallel coinage of Octavian. It seems that Octavian, who craved to take over the political heritage from the assassinated dictator and, as *divi filius*, surrounded himself with divine charisma³², could not pass in silence over Antonius’ attempt to gain ideological profits from the aura of the deified Julius Caesar. And although a simultaneous numismatic response of Octavian is unknown to us, the endeavours to find material expression for the commemoration of the great Caesar and the initiatives of M. Antonius and Octavian intertwining in that area may be treated as such. According to Morawiecki, it was M. Antonius who, in September 44 BC, reconstructed the huge column-shaped altar made of Numidian marble that had been raised in the Forum Romanum by the plebs shortly after the assassination of Caesar (Suet., *Iul.*, 85: *Afterwards they set up in the Forum a solid column of Numidian marble almost twenty feet high, and inscribed upon it, ‘To the Father of his Country’.* At the foot of this they continued for a long time to sacrifice, make vows, and settle some of their disputes by an oath in the name of Caesar, transl. J.C. Rolfe) and destroyed by P. Cornelius Dolabella in April of 44 BC (Cic., *Ad Att.*, 14,15; Cic., *Phil.*, 1,5)³³. Possibly, the image of this column-shaped altar was placed on the bronze coins (*sestertii? assi?*) struck by Octavian in Lugdunum and Vienna after the year 40 BC: Obv. DIVI IVLI IMP CAESAR DIVI F, heads of Julius Caesar and Octavian, back to back, or CAESAR, head of Octavian; Rev. COPIA or CIV, prow of ship with

³⁰ See Suet., *Iul.*, 88; Plin., *Nat.*, 2, 23, 94; Plut., *Caes.*, 69; Dio, 45, 7, 1; Obs. 68; cf. Ov., *Met.*, 15, 749–750; 843–850; Morawiecki 2014, 157–160, 170, 172; Ramsey, Licht 1997; representations of *sidus Iulium* on the coin types, see de Schodt 1887, 329–405.

³¹ Cf. Roller 2007, 90–91.

³² Milczanowski 2013, 97–144; Morawiecki 2014, 160–170. Manipulation of Caesar’s memory, cf. Newman 1990, 52–63; building really existing and (or only) symbolic their images on coins, cf. Prayon 1982, 319–330, esp. 321.

³³ Cf. Liv., *Perioch.*, 116, 9; Suet., *Iul.*, 84; Plut., *Caes.*, 68; App., *BC.*, 1, 4; 2, 148; 3, 2; Dio, 47, 18, 4.

a superstructure, column or obelisk, or mast?, and *sidus Iulium* or the sun disc?³⁴.

It seems that another temple deserves attention, namely the temple of the Sun located *apud Circum* on the slope of the Aventine Hill. Kurt Latte once suggested that M. Antonius initiated erecting this temple in Rome³⁵. It is a too far-reaching view. In the Circus Valley, the cult of the Sun existed since long ago³⁶ but Tacitus, when writing about the events of the year 65, was the first to mention the local temple of the Sun and describe it as *vetus aedes* (Tac., *Ann.*, 15,74,1). Its early past is also suggested by Vitruvius who reveals some knowledge of the constructional details of the temple dedicated to the cult of the Sun (Vitr., *Arch.*, 1,2,5). In the later period, frequently allusions were made to the temple of the Sun and even some indications were given concerning its location³⁷. Its appearance, however, was preserved only in the representations of ancient provenance which are few and occur mainly on medallions and coins: first of all on Trajan *sestertii* with the legend SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI S C of the years 103–104 (cf. Fig. 2)³⁸, then on Caracalla *aurei* and *sestertii* from 213, bearing the legend P M TR P XVI IMP II COS IIII P P (S C)³⁹, on Philip I medallion proclaiming SAECVLARES AVGG⁴⁰ issued in connection with the *millenium* of the city of Rome celebrated in 248, on the contorniates (c. 350–425, cf. Fig. 3)⁴¹ but also on a gem from Geneva (beginning of the 3rd century, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire)⁴², on a mosaic from Carthago (3rd century,

³⁴ Blanchet 1912, 99, fig. 133; Sydenham 1917, 58, no. 17; CCREAM, nos. 1081–1086; CNR 1, 166–167, nos. 22–24; cf. RIC 1, 43. See Morawiecki 1980, 261–265; Morawiecki 1983, 38–48; Morawiecki 2014, 156–157.

³⁵ Latte 1960, 232.

³⁶ Cf. Quinn Schofield 1969, 639–649; Ziolkowski 1992, 150–152; Ciancio Rossetto 1999, 333–334; Marcattili 2009, 37–59. The sources for the Circus Maximus (the cult of Sol (and Luna) – Lugli, Grosso 1962, 374, no. 488 – 376, no. 502.

³⁷ Tert., *Spect.*, 8, 1; Cat. Reg. XI. Circus Maximus. Cf. Bariviera 2012, 425, 432; Humphrey 1986, 232–233.

³⁸ RIC 2, Tr., no. 571, pl. 10.187; BMCRE 3, nos. 853–855, pl. 32.2–4; MIR 14, no. 175; Perassi 1993, 404, fig. 16; Hefner 2008, 102–106, 147–148, IV 6a; Marcattili 2009, 274, no. 99. Cf. CIL VI 955; Suet., *Dom.*, 5; Plin., *Pan.*, 51, 2–5; Paus., 5, 12, 6; Dio, 68, 7, 2.

³⁹ Gn. 3, Car., no. 8, pl. 152.10; RIC 4/1, Car., no. 500, pl. 15.3; BMCRE 5, 439, note †, 477–8, nos. 251–253, pl. 75.2–3, 479, note †; Fontana 1966, 91–6; Guarducci 1957/58, 167, fig. 5; Perassi 1993, 403–5, fig. 14 and 15; Hefner 2008, 117–118, 147–148, IV 6c; Marcattili 2009, 274–5, no. 100. Cf. Chr. a. 354.

⁴⁰ Gn. 2, Fil. padre, Otacilla, Fil. figlio, nos. 11–12, pl. 109.5; Humphrey 1986, 127–128; Pennestri 1989, 414; Perassi 1993, 405–406, fig. 17; Marcattili 2009, 275, no. 100, 276, no. 105.

⁴¹ E.g. Alföldi, Alföldi 1976, nos. 90, 120, 170, 299, 303, 312, 520–521, pl. 30.7–8, 40.7–9, 59.9–10, 123.1–6, 125.9–12, 126.1, 128.7–8, 202.1–3; Humphrey 1986, 130–131; Marcattili 2009, 275, no. 101.

⁴² Vollenweider 1979, 2, 361–362, no. 407, pl. 112,1; Humphrey 1986, 121–122, 173, fig. 77; Marcattili 2009, 276–277, no. 106.

The National Bardo Museum)⁴³ and – possibly – in the Maffei relief (4th century?, lost, survives only in a drawing and a reproduction)⁴⁴. Here the temple was shown within a broader topographical context since the main iconographic theme of this group of representations is the whole Circus Maximus, a place offering space for chariot racing. We get a bird’s-eye view of that place – from the direction of the Palatine Hill into the Murcia Valley (*vallis Murcia*) and the opposite slope of the Aventine Hill. A building situated to the left of the obelisk (in some variants – to a palmtree) distinguishes itself among the architectural elements. It is a rectangular structure on a three-stepped *crepidoma*, with four- or six-columned façade (tetrastyle or hexastyle). In some representations, on both sides of the façade, we can see columns supporting statues and statues between the columns of the façade. The building was possibly a *peripteros* or pseudo-*peripteros*. The ornaments on its fronton are especially interesting. The *acroteria* adorning its simple tympanum have various forms: in the corners they are floral elements or statues?, on the top the central ornament is either a statue of Sol in *corona radiata* or *exploding sunrays*.

The connections between the representations of the temple from the times of the Empire and the architectural image on *denarius* RRC 496/1 are seemingly loose. The differences between them are obvious, which may be caused by the conventions of definite iconographic realizations. Some changes could be the effect of the reconstruction of the temple⁴⁵. An image or a symbol of the solar deity, however, is the main link between these diverse representations: a statue of the Sun topping the construction, rays symbolizing the Sun or the Sun bust on the frontal wall of a temple. Extraordinarily maximized in proportion to the size of the temple, it functions as an element identifying it.

It can be therefore assumed that the *denarius* RRC 496/1 is the oldest known iconographic evidence for the existence of the Roman temple of Sol at the Circus Maximus⁴⁶. An immense image of the deity situated on the front of the building, may have served the purpose of indicating this particular temple located in Rome. The picture on the *denarius* may refer to its renovation, initiated or rather continued by M. Antonius⁴⁷. We may go a step further and associ-

⁴³ Humphrey 1986, 141–143, 209–210, fig. 63; Ghedini 1995, 178–180; Marcattili 2009, 264, no. 78.

⁴⁴ Rodenwaldt 1940, 24–26, fig. 10–11; Humphrey 1986, 248, fig. 122; Pennestri 1989, 407–408, fig. 3; La Rocca, Tortorella 2008, 42 and 78; Marcattili 2009, 247–248, no. 17.

⁴⁵ See Golvin 2008, 243–258.

⁴⁶ Guarducci 1957–59, 167; Pennestri 1989, 401; Ziolkowski 1992, 151; Ciancio Rossetto 1999, 333; Matern 2002, 24–26; Hijmans 2009, 484; Marcattili 2009, 59–60. Contra: Turcan 1958, 255–262 (the structure shown on the coin types is simply a box for the judges).

⁴⁷ Fuchs 1969, 68, note 12; Humphrey 1986, 73, 91–92. Contra: Cesano 1912, 238–239; Prayon 1982, 320–321 and note 13; Ryan 2005, 85–86.

ate the aforementioned *omen* with this undertaking as a stimulus for drawing attention to the temple dedicated to the Sun – the god who gave his prophetic signs in the moments crucial for the Roman Republic.

By ascribing these actions to M. Antonius we make him enter the circle of the republican politicians who undertook constructional activity in Rome from the mid 40s of the 1st century BC⁴⁸. For example, C. Asinius Pollio, M. Antonius adherent, renovated the Atrium Libertatis and founded a public library⁴⁹. Restoration work in the old Apollo temple *in Circo*, was undertaken by C. Sosius after his triumph in 34 BC⁵⁰ at the same time when Octavian was erecting a new temple dedicated to Apollo on the Palatine Hill⁵¹, which could be viewed as a kind of rivalry between these politicians in the area of building, all the more that C. Sosius belonged to M. Antonius faction⁵². Another M. Antonius adherent, Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, built or restored Neptune's temple *in Circo*, which is certified by an *aureus* struck about the year 42/40 BC (Rev. NEPT CN DOMITIVS L F IMP, tetrastyle temple)⁵³. Cn. Domitius Calvinus rebuilt the Regia, which had been earlier the task of Caesar⁵⁴. T. Statilius Taurus started raising a stone amphitheatre in the Campus Martius after his triumph in 34 BC⁵⁵. L. Aemilius Lepidus Paulus finished building Basilica Aemilia⁵⁶. L. Cornificius restored the temple of Diana on the Aventine Hill⁵⁷ while L. Marcius Philippus renovated the temple of Hercules Musarum *in Circo*⁵⁸.

Also the complex of Circus Maximus was reorganised. Julius Caesar already saw the necessity to introduce some alterations in connection with the

⁴⁸ Cf. Shipley 1931, 9–60; Haselberger 2007, 64–69, 76–85.

⁴⁹ Suet., *Aug.*, 29; Ov., *Trist.*, 3, 1, 71; Plin., *Nat.*, 7, 30, 115; 35, 2, 10; Isid., *Orig.*, 6, 5, 2; Coarelli 1993, 133–135.

⁵⁰ Plin., *Nat.*, 13, 11, 53; 36, 4, 28; Shipley 1930, 73–87; Viscogliosi 1993a, 49–54; Stamper 2005, 119–120.

⁵¹ *RG* 19; Vell., 2.81; Suet., *Aug.*, 29; Dio, 49, 15, 5; 53, 1, 3; Gros 1993, 54–57; Stamper 2005, 116–118; Morawiecki 2014, 187–189.

⁵² Cf. Dio, 50, 2, 2.

⁵³ RRC, no. 519/1 (41 BC); CRR, no. 1176; BMCRR East, no. 93; Bab., Domitia, no. 20; CIL VI 8423; Plin., *Nat.*, 36, 4, 26 (*delubrum Cn. Domitii*); Viscogliosi 1996a, 341–342.

⁵⁴ Dio, 48, 42, 4–6; CIL VI 1301 = ILS 42; EphEp III 265–267; Plin., *Nat.*, 34, 18, 48; cf. Dio, 44, 5, 1; Scott 1999, 189–192.

⁵⁵ Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 72, 1; Suet., *Aug.*, 29; Dio, 51, 23, 1; CIL VI 6226–6228; Strabo, 5, 3, 8; Viscogliosi 1993, 36–37.

⁵⁶ Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 72, 1; Dio, 49, 42, 2; Steinby 1993, 167–8; Stamper 2005, 103.

⁵⁷ Suet., *Aug.*, 29; CIL XI 4305; Vendittelli 1995, 12. See: RIC 1³, Aug., no. 273 (*aedes Dianae?*).

⁵⁸ Suet., *Aug.*, 29; Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 72, 1; Mart., *Ep.*, 5, 49, 13–14; Ov., *Ars* 3, 168; Ov., *Fasti* 6, 857–858; Richardson 1977, 355–361; La Rocca 1987, 356–357; Viscogliosi 1996, 19; Viscogliosi 1999, 146.

games (*ludi*) held there⁵⁹. Maybe L. Valerius Acisculus’ *denarius*, struck in 45 BC (Obv. ACISCVLVS, head of Sol, behind *acisculus*; Rev. L VALERIVS, Luna in *biga*)⁶⁰, contains an allusion to the work that was being accomplished there in these years⁶¹. Later, M. Vipsanius Agrippa, wanting to improve the organization of the races, started to alter the structures set up on the *spina*⁶². An obelisk and a *pulvinar* were erected there to make the whole complex more representative⁶³. In the meantime, possibly also M. Antonius put his name behind the construction and reconstruction works thus continuing dictator’s earlier projects, which may have comprised *aedes* of the Sun whose reflection can be the on-coin picture of the temple.

Still, apart from the allusions in the coin iconography RRC 496/1 and CCREAM 1086 (?), other elements of the architectural scenery in Rome, that could perpetuate the memory of Marcus Antonius as a builder, are lacking. This scarcity of materials may be the result of the activity pursued by his political opponents who, among others, brought about depriving M. Antonius of his dignities and honours (Dio, 50,4,3–4) as well as destroying his statues and public images (Plut., *Ant.*, 86,9; Plut., *Cic.*, 49,6) or, in other words, making his name fall into oblivion⁶⁴. Moreover, they supposedly brought about removing all traces of the constructional activity initiated by M. Antonius in Rome. It was possible all the more that the construction and reconstruction works, carried on for years, may have been completed under Augustus and it was him who benefited from that. Having lost the political struggle, Marcus Antonius, the potential *aedis Solis restitutor*, in that area also yielded to the winner Augustus, who survived in the tradition as *templorum omnium conditor aut restitutor* (Liv., 4,20,7).

⁵⁹ Plin., *Nat.*, 36, 24, 102; Suet., *Iul.*, 39, 2.

⁶⁰ RRC, no. 474/5; Bab., *Valeria*, no. 20; CCR, no. 1002; BMCRR Rome, nos. 4110–4113.

⁶¹ Humphrey 1986, 92 and note 176. Cf. Cesano 1912, 237–238; Pedroni 1999, 93, 97 and 110 (46 BC); Ryan 2005, 84.

⁶² Dio, 49, 43, 2; Shipley 1933, 84–85; Bariviera 2012, 431–432.

⁶³ RG 19; CIL VI 701–702; Fest., 500 L; Cassiod., *Var.*, 3, 51, 4; Isid., *Or.*, 18, 31; perhaps Liv., 1, 56, 2; cf. Dio, 50, 10, 3; Suet., *Aug.*, 45. Cf. Humphrey 1986, 78–83; Pennestri 1989, 399–400; Ciancio Rosetto 1993, 272–273.

⁶⁴ See: Suet., *Aug.*, 17, 3 (32 BC?); Plut., *Cic.*, 49, 6 (30 BC); Dio, 51, 19, 1 (31 BC); cf. Babcock 1962, 30–32 (31 BC); Ferriès 2007, 54 (30 BC). Cf. Plut., *Ant.*, 60, 1; Dio, 50, 6, 1.



Fig. 1.

Denarius, Marcus Antonius, mint ?, 42 BC

Rev.: distyle temple; within, medallion bearing radiate head of Sol, facing; cf. RRC no. 496/1 = CRR, no. 1168



Fig. 2.

Sestertius, Trajan, Rome, 103–104 AD

Rev.: Circus Maximus; in centre, spina, metae and obelisk surrounded by colonnades; in the background temple; cf. RIC 2, Tr., no. 571 = MIR 14, no. 175



Fig. 3.

Contorniate, late 4th – early 5th century AD

Rev.: Circus Maximus; in centre, spina, metae and obelisk surrounded by colonnades; in the background temple; cf. Alföldi, Alföldi 1976, no. 90, pl. 30.7

Streszczenie

Marek Antoniusz w przestrzeni „niepamięci” albo o wyobrażeniu świątyni na denarze RRC 496/1

Przedmiotem rozważań stało się wyobrażenie na denarze RRC 496/1: głowa Słońca w koronie promienistej, w medalionie na tle świątyni, wyemitowanym w ramach „serii solarnej” powstałej w mennicy obozowej Marka Antoniusza, jak się przyjmuje, w 42 roku p.n.e.

W kontekście wskazanych w przekazach antycznych znaków wieszczych, które objawiały w latach 44–42 nadejście przełomowych dla Republiki rzymskiej wydarzeń i zwiastowały obecność uczestników gry politycznej przeznaczonych do wyjątkowych misji, można przyjąć, że przedstawienie na denarach M. Antoniusza było numizmatyczną interpretacją solarnego zjawiska o nadzwyczajnym charakterze. Przepuszczalnie jej przeznaczeniem było otoczenie M. Antoniusza aurą wielkości.

Jednocześnie omawiane wyobrażenie jest też prawdopodobnie najstarszym znanym ikonograficznym świadectwem rzymskiego przybytku Słońca *apud Circum*. Nie jest wykluczone, że M. Antoniusz, może kontynuując wcześniejsze plany dyktatora, firmował swym imieniem prace budowlane i rekonstrukcyjne prowadzone w Rzymie. Ich zasięg mógł objąć także już istniejącą *aedes* Słońca, a obraz świątyni na monecie może być ich odbiciem. Niemniej poza aluzjami w ikonografii monetarnej brakuje elementów architektonicznej scenografii w Rzymie zachowującej pamięć o Marku Antoniuszu-budowniczym. Można w tym niedostatku materiałów upatrywać skutek działań jego przeciwników politycznych, które przywiodły do podjęcia decyzji między innymi o zniszczeniu jego pomników i wizerunków publicznych, czyli zacierania pamięci o nim, a także – w domyśle – doprowadziły do usunięcia śladów działalności budowlanej przez niego realizowanej w Rzymie.

