

this prolongation of the minting activity (even after Severus had already left the region) by the need to pay the discharged local recruits.

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C. Augé and F. Duyrat (eds.), *Les monnayages syriens. Quel apport pour l'histoire du Proche-Orient hellénistique et romain? Actes de la table ronde de Damas, 10-12 Novembre 1999*. Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique 162 (Beyrouth: Institut français d'archéologie du Proche-Orient), 2002. iv + 216 pp. French + 39 pp. Arabic. ISBN 2 912738 17 2.

This collection of articles by leading scholars is the first major publication built around the question of what numismatic evidence can contribute to our understanding of the history of the Levant in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The well-produced volume is divided between five articles on Hellenistic Syria (including the Nabataean kingdom) and seven on Rome's first Near Eastern *provincia* and its surrounding lands. The set of papers is topped by reflections on each period by O. Picard and M. Sartre respectively. Five indices, Arabic summaries and a paper on Umayyad coinage (included both in French and in Arabic) conclude the book, which is accompanied by a selection of maps, tables and illustrations of coins. The editors, C. Augé and F. Duyrat, have preserved the nature of the round-table discussions held at Damascus in 1999 from which the volume sprang: it does not pretend to be a comprehensive overview, and its contributors have not departed from a unanimous point of view.

The focus of the opening paper of the Hellenistic section, by A. Houghton, is on the coin production by the mints in the centre of the Seleucid kingdom. Taking into account the prominence given to the coastal area of northern Syria by the earliest rulers of the dynasty, the relative meagreness of the monetary production by Antioch throughout the third century BCE, especially when compared to that of the nearby mint at Laodicea, is surprising. The second paper is directed more to the south, where a small number of coastal cities in northern Phoenicia that were directly situated within the sphere of influence of Aradus started to manufacture their own autonomous coins in the third century BCE, leading to a strain in relations with the island stronghold. Around the middle of the second century Aradus regained control over the southern part of the *peraia*, and still dominated it in the first century BCE, by which time its territory will have been extended to include the sanctuary of Zeus Baetocaece in the Jebel Ansariyeh. F. Duyrat also concludes from her catalogue that the cities of the Aradian *peraia* shared a common religious culture, which was strongly connected with that of southern Phoenicia. Not surprisingly, two further papers in the Hellenistic section are also concerned with coastal areas. F. de Callatay notes how the active minting of tetradrachms on the Syrian coast from the end of the second century BCE is in sharp contrast with the decrease in production of these silvers elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean. O. Callot deals with the numismatic finds from the site which had once been Ugarit: a hoard of Thracian-Macedonian coins dating from the Persian period seems to herald the resettling of Ras Shamra after ages of being deserted, but the scarcity of numismatic evidence until Late Antiquity confirms the picture of a very modest level of occupation throughout Hellenistic and Roman times. The Hellenistic section concludes with a presentation by B. Zouhdi of the collection of silver and bronze issues of the Nabataean kingdom in the National Museum of Damascus.

The second part of the volume opens with an investigation of the degree of Romanisation, in the sense of 'looking like coins from the mint of Rome' (115 n. 2), of Levantine coinage. A. Burnett throws further light on the special character of Syria, as evoked by other source materials, by arguing that its coinage lagged behind that of other regions in the Roman world in taking over imperial fashions and standards. In contrast to what happened elsewhere, the numismatic

production of Syria did not come to resemble the sestertius, local coin values may have remained in use for some time, and (with the notable exception of Herodian production) the portrait of the emperor appeared only seldom on the reverse. However, the widespread application of Latin on Syrian coinage does not fit this picture of continuing strength of indigenous traditions, and, as Burnett is right to point out, it does not match the paucity of non-numismatic evidence for the use of Latin in the Near East, either. Z. Sawaya puts forward the hypothesis that issues from Berytus, with Octavian on the obverse and a dolphin and a trident on the reverse, support a colonial foundation ca. 15 years before Agrippa's activities in 15 BCE as reported by Strabo (*Geogr.* 16.2.19), but note Sartre's scepticism (188) about connecting this coinage with an installation of Roman colonists. In a short paper M. Amandry discusses the intensive production of gold and silver coinage in the Near Eastern provinces in the last years of the Jewish war, when the new Flavian dynasty needed cash to pay its soldiers and to organise festivities for the Syrian cities. According to K. Butcher, patterns of circulation of bronzes between the cities in the Orontes valley point to a situation in which the respective civic authorities regulated what coinage was allowed to circulate freely, and he suggests 'restrictive currency systems' at work in this sub-region. However, a very different impression is created by C. Augé's reflections on the circulation of coinage of eighteen cities of the Decapolis and Arabia. Further inland, the oasis city of Palmyra struck coins that were wholly different from the products of other mints in Syria. They are dealt with in this volume by A. Krzyżanowska, whose bibliography unfortunately lists nothing but six articles of her own, of which the most recent dates from 1982. She classifies the Palmyrene bronzes in nineteen groups, and (too) confidently identifies all the divine figures depicted. As she acknowledges, attribution of these coins to Palmyra is not always straightforward, as the city's name is rarely added. However, despite the potential of Palmyrene coins for the study of the city's religious life, their interpretation is more frustrating than Krzyżanowska admits. As the coins were issued by the city as a collectivity, an attempt to compare the presentation of the divine world on these bronzes with the patterns of worship as these can be learned from non-numismatic evidence might have been instructive. In any case their indigenous character is sufficient to counter, or at least to modify, any presentation of Palmyra as a 'Greek city'. The final paper, fittingly, is by W. Metcalf on the sudden end to the minting of tetradrachms in Antioch.

Historians of the Near East in the Greek and Roman periods have a lot to learn from this volume, and can also look forward, in addition to the remaining volumes of Roman Provincial Coinage, to a monograph announced by K. Butcher on Coinage in Roman Syria. As Duyrat states in her paper, minting was neither an innocent nor a solely symbolic activity, but it was always provided in accordance with the needs of a political entity (58). The study of Levantine history needs to go hand in hand with the study of Levantine coinage, and vice versa.

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E.D. Frolov, *Russkaya nauka ob antičnosti. Istoriofizičeskie očerki* (La science russe de l'antiquité. Etudes historiographiques). St. Peterbourg: Editions de l'Université de St. Peterbourg, 1999. 542 pp. et 26 photographies.

Le livre que nous présentons aux lecteurs est une oeuvre fondamentale sans analogie ni dans l'historiographie russe prérévolutionnaire et soviétique ni dans l'historiographie occidentale. Bien entendu, il y avait des travaux sur l'historiographie russe de l'antiquité, surtout les travaux de l'académicien V.P. Buzeskul et d'E.D. Frolov lui-même (voir plus loin note 8) mais c'étaient des travaux consacrés à l'historiographie universelle y compris l'antiquité,<sup>1</sup> à l'antiquité en général,<sup>2</sup> à

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Par ex. V.P. Buzeskul, *Vseobščaya istoriya i eyo predstaviteli v Rossii XIX i načale XX veka* (L'histoire universelle et ses représentants en Russie au XIXe et au début du XXe siècles) I-II, Leningrad, 1929-31.