appendices on the prosopography, a glossary, a large bibliography, and a full index. The book is a true *opus magnum* by a scholar who has spent a lifetime — at the university of Cologne, of course — as an academic teacher, administrator, and prominent scholar of Roman imperial history. This volume (no. 387 in E.'s personal bibliography) is a tribute to the great city and to the great scholar alike. And should the BBC consider similar productions on later European history, Cologne would provide an ideal setting again; after all, this is just the first of a projected series of thirteen volumes on the 'History of the City of Cologne'.

University of Mannheim KAI BRODERSEN

K. BUTCHER, *COINAGE IN ROMAN SYRIA. NORTHERN SYRIA, 64 BC–AD 253*. London: Royal Numismatic Society, 2004. Pp. xii + 534, 32 pls. ISBN 0-901405-58-2. £75.00.

This gigantic study of the coinage of Northern Syria continues an outpouring of work from Kevin Butcher (cf. *Roman Syria and the Near East* (2004)). It is the descendant of a dissertation presented in 1991 and collection of material and references stopped in 1997 (though this happens to be no great loss). The core of the work is the catalogue of coins of sixteen mints, and of coins produced at Rome for circulation in Syria (265–480), to which reference is made throughout. The catalogue falls somewhere between a simple list of types and the comprehensive style of *Roman Provincial Coinage*; it does not attempt to list known specimens but describes major type variants and places them in geographical and chronological order. Where *RPC* lays out the evidence for its counts and allows them to speak for the size of issues, here we have to be content with a rarity scale provided in a chapter entitled 'Frequency' (481–93) that uses the 'C(ommon)' to 'R(are)' scale familiar from other numismatic reference works.

The rest of the book defends the arrangement of the material and attempts to place the coinage of Syria in its broader imperial context. There are chapters devoted to production, circulation, metrology, and types and legends, as well as a relatively short (232–68) interpretive chapter and summary of conclusions. The result is massive, and at times the sheer weight of it overwhelms the reader. Sections such as that on the Flavian tetradrachms of Antioch, however clearly laid out, will represent a slog for the uninitiated, who may begin to ask what all the fuss is about. But the effort pays off in a clearer understanding both of the coins of Syria and of the mentalities that produced them.

As the author notes (3), these coinages have been regarded as the poor relations of mainstream Roman coinage, and that has obscured nuances of their different roles. Between the clearly 'imperial' (i.e. denarial, for most of this period) coins and the 'civic' issues (those bearing local identifications, intended for local circulation) lies what he calls 'provincial imperial': coins *without* ethnics, struck for broad, usually province-wide, circulation, in both silver and base metal. The prime example of this under consideration is the coinage of Antioch, which has 507 entries in the catalogue. Antioch coined in all three categories mentioned above, and at the end of its output it seems to have produced coins bearing the names of other cities as well, on a model more familiar from the province of Asia (there is a chart of dies of the coinage of Hierapolis — itself produced at Antioch — that are shared with reverses of other cities at p. 132).

Lately students have identified large numbers of issues once assigned to the provinces that were pretty surely produced at Rome; and here, apart from the mints identified by the coins themselves, there is a section devoted to 'Coinage probably produced at Rome for circulation in Syria' (406–12). Here there is less unanimity, and the 'probably' should perhaps read 'possibly' in most cases. For example, even if it is 'doubtful' that any of the 'Commagenian dupondii' were produced in Commagene, this does not make the case for Rome. Nor does the argument that stylistic similarities of the 'S C' orichalcum of Trajan (Nos 13–17) are only 'superficial' point to Rome: it was the stylistic *difference* from contemporary Roman issues that suggested to Mattingly that these coins belonged elsewhere.

Finally, it is worth drawing attention to the author's observations about the connection between coinage and military pay as well as broader questions of monetary policy (245–56). His examination of the former question leads him beyond the borders of Syria and into Cappadocia, where the Caesarean silver coinage played a role apparently similar to that of the Antiochene. B. concludes that neither the evidence from Antioch nor that from Caesarea presents a high correlation with major military campaigns, and in this it has a parallel in the imperial coinage of Domitian. B. does not ask the next question — where did the money come from, if not from new coin? — but the answer must include older coin, and if this is so many popular assumptions about

the relationship between coins and conquest must be re-examined. The author believes the fluctuations in production are to be accounted for in terms of 'adjustments to the financial organization of the province, or in the case of Nero's reforms, several different provinces'. In his view, the imposition of related silver standards would have facilitated assessment and payment of taxes while maintaining provincial currencies. But the argument is in danger of circularity: the only province for which we have more than one kind of evidence available is Egypt, and the tax documents do not always fit well with what we know of the coinage.

B. has provided for the first time a reliable conspectus, with excellent and ample illustrations, of North Syrian coinage, together with the reflections of one who has studied it more deeply than anyone, perhaps ever. The new framework will be fundamental when the appropriate volumes of *Roman Provincial Coinage* come to be written.

Yale University WILLIAM E. METCALF

C. CERCHIAI MANODORI SAGREDO, *CIBI E BANCHETTI NELL'ANTICA ROMA*. Rome: Libreria dello Stato, Istituto poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 2004. Pp. 144, 187 figs. ISBN 8-8240-3443-8. €60.00.

This unusually handsome volume is a valuable addition to the recent wave of works on Roman food and ancient gastronomy more generally. On the one hand it could be mistaken for an exhibition catalogue, so lavish and frequent are the apposite illustrations; on the other, it is a scholarly account, rooted in the ancient literature, which is cited throughout.

The structure of the book is not especially clear — it follows food stuffs before ending with anecdotes of Roman dinner parties, but without a table of contents it is hard to discern a pattern. The literary sources are clear; there is little attempt to make the images anything other than a running visual commentary, and there is little attempt to relate image to context. The consequence is a beautifully illustrated but slightly disjointed account, with a lack of theory in relation to text or image, and a slightly timeless feel, despite the possibility of making distinctions between different periods of the Roman world, and indeed different areas. Roman Italy is the obvious focus, with examples taken from Pompeii in particular.

What is striking, though inevitable in a book which returns repeatedly to élite manifestations, is the wealth and variety of food available. Anyone who turns to this book could be forgiven for mistaking it for one of the many modern, glossy productions on food, and the volume acknowledges luxury foods and star chefs. This is a reminder that Rome had the capacity and the inclination to treat food with huge pretension, and to invest its preparation and presentation with the kinds of social meaning which we have learnt both as historians and as consumers. The volume reflects less than it might on this, and by underplaying the significance of the images, does less than it should to use this dense and rich imagery as an index of the complex interplay between food and art. On the front cover is a stunning Pompeian still-life with birds, eggs, cloth and vessels — reproduced again without comment at p. 35. Yet the combination of items cries out for interpretation in terms of the artistic handling of volume and shape, of formality and informality, perhaps even of symbolism. A more careful juxtaposition of the sensuousness of food as described, as depicted, and as experienced remains to be written.

University of St Andrews CHRISTOPHER SMITH

A. MACMAHON and J. PRICE (EDS), *ROMAN WORKING LIVES AND URBAN LIVING*. Oxford: Oxbow, 2005. Pp. viii + 224, illus. ISBN 1-8421-7186-0. £20.00.

The stated aim of this volume is to draw attention to the daily lives of the many artisans and craftspeople of the towns of the Roman Empire. The editors have indeed succeeded in marshalling papers which present a wide range of material relating to this topic, both archaeological and literary. However, the book is somewhat lacking in coherence, and in innovative approaches to the significance of these 'working lives' beyond mere descriptive elaboration. The absence of a full introductory chapter to highlight connections and themes in the papers is a significant factor in this, and the book is therefore more likely to be referred to for particular contributions than for significantly pushing forward a broad research area. Several of these contributions are individually important and interesting. The volume begins with a single-page introduction which simply outlines its origins, in a conference at Durham in 2001, and lists the papers. The first five of these are collected under the heading 'Urban Living and the Settings for Working Lives', dealing mainly