

(140–4). His obsession with, castration of, and marriage to the boy Sporus (who looked like the dead Poppaea) should be understood as a manifestation of Nero's multifaceted interest in spectacular Saturnalian overturnings of everyday norms to win the people's favour: 'Saturnalian behavior made him popular' (151). Nero's Golden House, according to C., should be understood not as a tyrannical land grab, but as a pleasure palace built by an emperor who 'would do nothing to exclude his people' (206). And C.'s study of the ways in which Nero exploited the practices of the military triumph is extremely helpful, particularly his discussion of the ways in which the pageantry of the so-called Golden Day in celebration of the submission of Tiridates draws upon imagery of the cult of Mithras as god of the Sun (229).

Some aspects of C.'s revisionism are in line with recent collaborative work between literary and historical scholars on Neronian Rome; interestingly, he distances himself from such work (236, n. 2). His boldest arguments may not persuade everyone. I hesitate to conclude that the evidence shows that 'the emperor appears to have been deeply romantic' (162). It will never be known for sure whether Nero planned the fire at Rome so as to perform the role of a new Camillus who would rebuild the city (191, 199). The scandalous qualities of Nero's manipulations of Roman triumph ceremonies seem downplayed by C. Nevertheless, C. produces mesmerizing and intensely detailed visions of the spectacles Nero staged at Rome to set himself apart from mere humans and justify his position as emperor. As it happens, I read C.'s *Nero* in Rome. In the forum, on the Capitoline, on the Palatine, in the Circus Maximus, on the site of the Theatre of Pompey, while walking along the routes taken by triumphal processions, and in the Domus Aurea and its surroundings, I found myself able to see Rome through Nero's eyes. It was an uncanny sensation; I appreciate C.'s skill in conjuring it so powerfully in his readers.

*University of Washington*

CATHERINE CONNORS

W. ECK, *KÖLN IN RÖMISCHER ZEIT. GESCHICHTE EINER STADT IM RAHMEN DES IMPERIUM ROMANUM* (Geschichte der Stadt Köln vol. 1). Cologne: Greven-Verlag, 2004. Pp. xlvi + 864, illus. ISBN 3-7743-0357-6. €75.00.

Preparing a BBC production on what the Roman history of Europe can teach us today, and looking for a location in which to talk about Roman Germany, the British journalist and politician Boris Johnson MP recently chose the city of Cologne, as the history of this city has much to contribute to understanding the Roman Empire. The same connection of city and empire, but in the opposite direction, is made by Werner Eck in his massive volume on 'Cologne in Roman Times', which explains to a general educated audience the 'history of a city within the frame set by the Roman Empire', using what we know (not least thanks to E.'s own research) about the latter to fill in the gaps in our evidence about the history of the city of Cologne.

The book starts with a look at the geography, goes on to detail the place's fate under Caesar, Agrippa, and Augustus and the foundation of the *Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium*; it then follows the city's history through to the years of crisis A.D. 68–70, and to its subsequent 'flowering' under the Flavian emperors up to Trajan. The narrative is then stopped to allow for chapters on Cologne as a provincial capital, on the people who lived in the city, its governors, the urban centre, the economy in Lower Germany, and religions. The narrative then resumes with a chapter on 'Rome, the Emperors and their Politics in the 2nd Century as seen by a Provincial City', continues with the 'crisis' (A.D. 222–260) and how it was overcome, the rise of Christianity, and eventually presents the Franks as the new rulers. Throughout the book, E. uses all the available sources for the history of the city, and supplements this with the evidence from other cities and provinces in the Empire, which are understood so much better thanks to E.'s previous meticulous research. In this book, he often goes beyond the evidence of the sources, using 'constructive imagination' (2) and 'general considerations of historical plausibility' (156). So, by p. 611, it was the Bishop of Cologne, Maternus, who 'in all probability' impressed Constantine greatly, and made the emperor turn towards Christianity in A.D. 312 (alternative dates are not discussed); 'thus, Maternus of Cologne, like his colleagues, engages into a historically important position so far never attributed to them' (613). In the note to this claim (which at first sight looks as if it owes more to the subject of the book than E. allows himself elsewhere) E. promises to expand further on this theory (as yet only published in a local house-owners' society's journal; no. 375 in his personal bibliography).

E.'s elegant prose is matched by the lavish production of the book, with colour photographs and well-designed new maps integrated into the text, endnotes detailing all references, three

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