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Roman Provincial Coinage, Vol. IX, *From Trajan Decius to Uranius Antoninus* (AD 249–254). Part I, *Introduction and Catalogue*; Part II, *Indexes, Maps, and Plates*, The British Museum / Bibliothèque nationale de France 2016, 456 pages, 8 maps, 155 plates; BMP ISBN: 978 0 7141 1829 1 / BnF ISBN: 978 2 7177 2710 4

Roman Provincial Coinage is an international project with the aim of recording and cataloguing the Roman coinage minted in the provinces as well as in the client states (e.g. the Bosporan Kingdom). The provincial coinage developed from the Late Republican period up to the late 3rd century AD, when it was ultimately liquidated by Diocletian. Twenty-five years have passed since the publication of Volume I of *Roman Provincial Coinage* (44 BC – AD 69) (abbreviated *RPC I*). Successive volumes were published in the years 1999 (the Flavian dynasty) and 2008 (the first part of Gordians' coins catalogue: AD 238–244) (*RPC VII. 1*). During the International Numismatic Congress at Taormina in 2015, Volume III (Nerva – Trajan) was presented to the public. Furthermore, the coins (along with their temporary item numbers) that form part of the forthcoming Volume IV (Antoninus Pius – Commodus) can be viewed on the project's website: <http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/>. The latest volume deals with the period between the reign of Trajan Decius and the usurpation by Uranius Antoninus. This five-year period would seem to be very brief in comparison with the first volume, which catalogues the coins struck in the space of more than a hundred years. Nonetheless, over 2,000 coin types in over 100 cities were minted in this particular period.

Volume IX of *Roman Provincial Coinage* is focused on a very short period, which coincides with the apogee of the empire's crisis. Over this five-year period, as many as nine pretenders to the throne assumed the title of *Augustus*. Trajan Decius and his son Herennius Etruscus were killed by the Goths in the Battle of Abrittus in 251. Decius' other son, Hostilian, died of smallpox in the same year. The succeeding emperor, Trebonianus Gallus, was killed, alongside Volusianus, by his own soldiers two years later. The same tragic fate befell Aemilianus, who died at the hands of his own men after ruling for three months. The catalogue concludes with the death of the usurper Uranius Antoninus in 254. Considering the dynamic course of events that mark this brief period, one should not be surprised at the great variety of issues by the mints, especially as they would endeavour to adapt to the current situation with each new usurpation. The authors have succeeded in their effort to portray the dynamics of the period in question.

Volume IX is divided into two parts. The first part consists of an introduction and a catalogue, while the second contains indexes, maps, and plates. The general

introduction is preceded by a preface, acknowledgements, and a list of abbreviations. The introduction itself is divided into five chapters: historical background; emperors and imperial families; reverse and legend designs; production and currency; denominations. Next, the authors proceed to the catalogue, which is preceded by instructions and a list of cities. The catalogue is divided according to the provinces, beginning from the northwest (Moesia Superior) to Egypt. Part Two contains seven indexes: cities, figures, legends, names and titles, personal names, types, and countermarks. This is followed by eight maps, beginning with a general map of the eastern part of the empire to the maps of the geographical territories: Greece and south-eastern Europe; western Asia Minor; eastern Asia Minor; Syria and the Near East. The latter three maps represent the Roman East during the reigns of Decius, Trebonianus Gallus, and Aemilianus. Part Two ends with the plates (in total, 155) and with illustrations of the coins featured in the catalogue. Each plate features the province and the mint that struck the represented coins (each with its own catalogue number). All the reproduced images are high-resolution photographs. In each case, the obverse and the reverse of the coin are shown.

The catalogue is based on the ten most significant numismatic collections of Roman provincial coinage (such as the Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford). After examining around 15,000 coins from these collections, the authors determined that there were as many as 2,333 coin types struck at 120 mints. Each province has its own introduction, with an overview of the coinage produced in the territory under consideration. Also added are a number of details on the most important publications, popular motifs, circulations, and denominations. Each individual *conventus* receives the same treatment, including a similar introduction. With regard to the mints, general information is provided as well. To illustrate the manner in which the mints are represented, let us have a look at the example of the city called Prusa (pp. 91–92). This locality was situated in the provinces of Pontus and Bithynia. The introduction provides us with its geographical location, the history of the coinage from the city, as well as a monograph on the subject and information on the popular motifs, including the relevant analogies; finally, denomination details are provided. Thanks to the numerous analogies and references to the numismatic literature, the information that is presented allows us to learn more about each individual coin and mint. In addition, explanations of problematic legends are included as well as numerous details on the coin iconography or the errors found in some of the legends.

The catalogue's arrangement is very clear and, significantly, intuitive. The coins from each specific city are arranged chronologically and assigned (wherever possible) to the appropriate emperor. They also possess their own specific numbers. This is followed by metrological data, i.e., the type of metal used, weight, diameter, axis, as

well as the number of pieces examined. On the right-hand side, we can see figures referring to the representation of each coin in the main collections. In the second line, there are references to the relevant primary numismatic literature. Below this, the authors provide legends, including obverse and reverse descriptions. Further below, there are references to the particular pieces in smaller lettering. Additional notes can be found in the following line.

Of course, it was not possible to assign each single coin type to some specific emperor, as not all the coins contain direct references to rulers (as in the case of Apamea, p. 191). The authors have also attempted to determine the precise denominations (cf. e.g. Aege, p. 293). Wherever possible, the authors assign the coins to their mint houses (Antioch, pp. 317–346). The issue of coins common to “befriended” cities (*homonoia* coins) is also discussed. Overall, eight such cases are mentioned (e.g. Byzantium and Nicaea, pp. 82–83).

To sum up, Volume IX of *Roman Provincial Coinage* maintains the high quality of the preceding volumes. The catalogue is comprehensive and free of errors, with a clear and logical arrangement. The assigning of 15,000 coins into 2,333 types from 120 cities must have been a very arduous task, but the authors have done an excellent job in bringing it to fruition. Because it has been properly arranged, the collected material will certainly bring results in the form of new research that will be conducted on the ample coinage of this difficult and turbulent period.

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AXEL FILGES

Münzbild und Gemeinschaft: Die Prägungen der römischen Kolonien in Kleinasien (Frankfurter Archäologische Schriften 29). Bonn 2015, XII + 404 pages, 558 figures; ISBN 978-3-7749-3947-9

The subject of Roman provincial coinage has drawn the attention of a considerable number of scholars in the last two decades. The volumes in the series *Roman Provincial Coinage* and monographs on the mints have contributed to filling in many gaps in our knowledge. The new research throws more light on various aspects of the local coinage. Among the hundreds of provincial mints, those located in the colonies are a group of particular significance, and it is this topic that is explored in Axel Filges' work *Münzbild und Gemeinschaft: Die Prägungen der römischen Kolonien in Kleinasien*. Here, the author analyzes the coinage of fourteen Roman colonies in Asia Minor: Sinope, Parium, Apamea, Antiochia pros Pisidiam, Lystra, Iconium, Ninica Claudiopolis, Cremna, Alexandria Troas, Comama, Olbasa, Parlais, Germa, and Mallus, from the second half of the 1st century BC up to the second half of the 3rd century AD. This work is a postdoctoral thesis from 2012, supplemented with results from more recent research.

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The volume has a total number of 404 pages and is divided into six parts, consisting of the following: an introduction and a section on methodology; the issue of the Roman colonies; the motifs on the coins; the identification of the colonies; four digressions; and finally, a bibliography and a list of illustrations. The work is complete with a CD that contains a catalogue and database.

The author begins with an introduction and deliberations over the chosen methodology (pp. 1–23) (*Einleitung und methodologische Prämissen*), where, apart from delineating the research and methods, he deals with some key questions such as why the colonies struck their own coinage (pp. 15–18).

The second part (*Lebensorte in der kleinasiatischen Ferne*) presents terms connected to Roman colonization (e.g. *ius Italicum*, foundations, functions) and proceeds to discuss the character of the fourteen colonies (pp. 23–55). It concludes with a comparative analysis.

The third and most extensive part is dedicated to the motifs depicted on the coins (pp. 57–324). This part is divided into four chapters, with the following topics being addressed in turn: reverse types; a semantic and iconological analysis; denominations vs. iconographic types; and finally, the epigraphic and literary sources. In the first of these chapters, the author analyzes each of the mints individually, beginning with the themes that existed in pre-Roman times (or prior to the foundation of the colonies). Then he provides tables presenting, in brief, the obverse and reverse

types, followed by a short analysis of them. In the next chapter, the author analyzes the manner in which the coins portray specific emperors, deities, personifications, the motifs universal among the colonies, and the remaining types. In the third of these chapters, the author examines the coin denominations in respect of the themes that are portrayed. Finally, the last chapter in this section supplements information on the colonies with details from literary and epigraphic sources.

In Part 4 (*Koloniale Identität zwischen historischer Verortung und neuzeitlicher Interpretation*) (pp. 327–345), the author proceeds to analyze the results of his research with regard to several aspects. He gives some thought to the picture of reality that can be deciphered from the colonial coinage and considers such questions as what the ancient issuers wished to communicate through the representations seen on the coins and what methods they used to demonstrate their identity. The chapter ends with conclusions and summaries/abstracts in German, English, and Turkish.

The final four chapters (pp. 345–381) are dedicated to several questions. First, the author considers the problem of coins which are difficult to date because of their lack of Imperial portraits or legends (so-called pseudo-autonomous coins). Next, the author makes use of a table to show the Roman Imperial coins minted in Asia Minor and then analyzes them in terms of their influence on local colonial coinage. The penultimate chapter offers a brief analysis of the relation between the weights and sizes of the coins and the choice of iconographic motifs. In the final chapter, the author presents, in alphabetical order, a simplified list of the reverse types.

The way the volume's content is arranged seems to be a bit disjointed. Some aspects crucial to colonial coinage are mentioned in the introduction, e.g. why the colonies minted their own coinage (pp. 15–18), but it is only further on that the author ventures into a discussion on the definition and status of the colonies (pp. 29–36). Moreover, while the chapter dealing with the relationship between a coin's weight and the choice of iconography does not appear until the final section (pp. 356–376), it should have been appended to the chapter in the second part devoted to the coins' denominations (*Nominalsysteme*) (pp. 310–313). In addition, the history, coinage, and literary and epigraphic sources of the individual colonies are described separately, which means that the reader is constantly moving back and forth between the relevant chapters. Likewise, the chapter dedicated to an analysis of the semantics and iconology of the coins may raise some questions. The way the author has decided to divide the topics, i.e. by emperors, deities, personifications, and colonial and other motifs, is not always entirely appropriate. For instance, the image of Sol from Parium (in a quadriga surrounded by columns) is found in

the deity subsection even though it apparently depicts an altar consecrated to this god, as a result of which it should have been featured in the section on architecture (pp. 204–205). Also, while the lack of an index is compensated, at least in part, by a shortened types list, the reader is still forced to browse through the book when looking for particular representations.

As far as the factual content is concerned, the publication is a work of great value. The author makes use of a variety of literary sources from the fields of archaeology, art history, history, and of course numismatics. He also addresses the manner of self-presentation on the coins (especially on the reverses), accurately observing that over time the colonial mints would adopt regional motifs, even though certain Roman characteristics would remain in use until the minting of provincial coinage came to an end. The author goes on to discuss the degree to which the information encoded on the reverses would have been intelligible to the intended users of the coins. He argues that the user's ability to decipher a particular coin would have been dependent both on the degree to which this user's native land had been Romanized and on the user's cultural awareness. Despite the fact that the author's conclusions are pertinent and well-explained, some of the points are disputable. The author's opinion that there were no motifs universal to the colonial coinage – that there were only references to the status of the city or that references were only made in order to make a distinction between the colonies and the surrounding cities – is surprising. Examples cited by the author (Lupa Romana, the establishment of the colonies, the legions' standards, Marsias) appeared on colonial coins from the Iberian Peninsula all the way to Syria between the 1st century BC and the 3rd century AD. Exactly these motifs would seem to be examples of just such universal types. In a different passage, the author states that only some of the colonies struck their own coins shortly after they were founded (Sinope, Parium, Apamea, Antioch of Pisidia, Lystra). However, from a broader perspective, we know that with regard to the Roman colonies in Spain, Achaia, Macedonia, and Syria, most of them began to mint their own coinage immediately after receiving the status of a colony.

To sum up, this work by Axel Filges is a very valuable and comprehensive study of the colonial coinage in Asia Minor. To date, the colonies have rarely been discussed as a separate group (H. Papageorgiadou-Bani's *The Numismatic Iconography of the Roman Colonies in Greece: Local Spirit and the Expression of Imperial Policy* is one of the better known exceptions). The author has noted the exceptional character of this phenomenon and attempts to handle the task on many levels, focusing primarily on the iconography of the reverses of the colonial coins. In spite of some inconsistencies, the not entirely logical arrangement of

some of the material, and some controversial statements, the volume can surely be recommended to all numismatists concerned with Roman provincial coinage, scholars dealing with themes of colonization and cultural processes (e.g. Romanization), and to all those interested in the history of the individual colonies and, in general, that of the Roman Empire.

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