

## Regarding the review article of Ziad Sawaya, *Histoire de Bérytos et d'Héliopolis d'après leurs monnaies*, by Thomas Faucher (*Syria* 89, 2012, pp. 442-444)

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The review published by Thomas Faucher (*Syria* 89, 2012, p. 442-444) contains many errors and notably some misleading insinuations which prompted the current response that could not wait for another year to be published in *Syria*, the natural and rightful place to do it, as its volume of 2013 was under press. Consequently, the author warmly thanks the editors of the *Bulletin d'Architecture et d'Archéologie Libanaise*, in particular Anne-Marie Afeich, for offering him the opportunity to reply quickly despite the fact that contributions to the present volume were already closed. He is also in debt to Rana Khoudary (editing corrections) and Georges Abou Diwan for commenting the draft of the text.

The reviewer (e.g. Th. Faucher) starts by emphasizing on the regain of interest for historical studies on the cities of Syria and Phoenicia during the past years. He lists the publications on hellenistic Arados by F. Duyrat, persian Tyre and Sidon by J.

and A.G. Elayi as well as the PhD Thesis of G. Abou Diwan on hellenistic and roman Sidon (Abou Diwan 2009), proposed and unofficially supervised by the author (e.g. Z. Sawaya). He surprisingly omits from it the author's works on hellenistic and roman Berytos (Sawaya 2002, Sawaya 2004, Sawaya 2005, Sawaya 2008), roman Botrys (Sawaya 2006a), hellenistic Arados (Sawaya 2006b) and wrongly presents the book as a new study. It seems that he missed the fact that the study was taken from the author's PhD Thesis defended in 1999 (Sawaya 1999), as stated in the first paragraph of the first page of the book's introduction (p. 13).

Then he describes the three distinct parts of the book: 1) catalogue of the coins of Berytos and Heliopolis; 2) commentary on the coin's production and circulation (chapter I) as well as on metrology (weight studies) and monetary systems (chapter II); 3) the historical study stretched over six chapters,

followed by a general conclusion, annex on the rhythm and volume of Arados' emissions, 6 maps, 61 plates, bibliography, index and a summary in Arabic. The Reviewer admits the challenges faced in the process of assembling a numismatic *corpus* because of the dispersion of the coins over many public and private collections, published or unpublished. He acknowledges the author's unremitting effort to gather a sample with an unquestionable quality and for the well made catalogue, whose continuous numbering of the coins and the dies (engraved stamps used for striking the coins) permit to find them easily in the plates.

The reviewer wonders then about the use of the term "série" in the book designating, according to him, "tout ensemble de monnaies frappées avec le même métal et présentant la même date d'émission sans changements typologiques ou métrologiques, pendant une longue période". He criticizes it because each denomination is considered as a new series, claiming that their extensive number (123 series for Berytos only) renders difficult the establishment of distinct groups. He also prefers to present the catalogue of the Hellenistic coins by series containing their several emissions without any distinction unless when changes occur on modules and types. As for the Roman period, he would rather use the reigns, since the continuity of the emissions does not allow distinguishing clearly the introduction of new series.

Concerning the citation of the meaning of the term "series", the reviewer discredits the validity of his work by using an un-academic way to distort the author's stance by cutting and pasting passages out of two different paragraphs on p. 14-15, as the following shows:

"Le terme *série* est employé dans ce livre pour **tout ensemble de monnaies frappées avec le même métal et présentant la même date d'émission**, le même *module* (diamètre), le même poids et les mêmes *types* de droit et de revers. Contrairement à un usage répandu, ce mot ne désigne pas strictement des exemplaires issus de la même paire de *coins*. Il est en somme l'équivalent de ce qu'on appelle aussi un «groupe», mais ce dernier terme est vague.

Le mot *série* s'applique bien à la description des monnayages civiques dont les mêmes séries sont émises **sans changements typologiques ou**

**métrologiques, pendant une longue période** [method generally used for many hellenistic coinages, and recently for the coinage of Arados to cite an example from Phoenicia, see Duyrat 2005]. Mais ce n'est pas le cas pour les monnaies provinciales, coloniales et impériales grecques. Un même type de revers se rencontre parfois sur des monnaies de diamètre et de poids différents (de *dénominations*, ou dimensions liées à des valeurs différentes). Il est souvent associé, en tous cas à l'époque impériale, à plusieurs types de droit présentant différents portraits de souverains, ce qui peut donc constituer une même émission ou plusieurs émissions différentes.

Ces complications, qui fournissent aussi de précieux critères de classement, sont courantes dans les monnaies de Bérytos (civiques et coloniales) et d'Héliopolis (coloniales). J'ai donc considéré, pour bien distinguer entre les séries et par souci d'harmonisation, qu'il s'agissait d'une série différente chaque fois que de tels changements ont été décelés".

With this distortion of the author's position, the reviewer aims to criticize it in order to systematically apply a system listing annually and separately each series from the beginning of its production until its end. Although defensible and legitimate for many types of coinages, this model of cataloguing has its weaknesses. The author already showed (Sawaya 2006b, p. 440) how difficult it makes the understanding of the composition of the annual emissions when they were produced with different denominations, usually reflecting the will of the authorities and thus the needs of the city. If we follow the reviewer, only two series of the civic pre-colonial berytian coinage would fit into his system: dolphin entwined around trident (series 1-2, suppl. series 2, series 4 and series 11) and Baal Berytos in a quadriga (series suppl. series 1, series 5-6 and 8). No metrological changes were attested, unless once for series 11 in 29/8 B.C. The system claimed by the reviewer to amplify the number of the series was established many years ago and fits perfectly to the colonial and provincial roman coinages (see the examples of Klose 1987 and Touratsoglou 1988). In this case, is it worth presenting the catalogue according to two models, one for the few late Hellenistic series and another for the very prolific Roman colonial series at the expense of the uniformity and the legibility of the catalogue? However, from a statistical point of

view what erroneous repercussions this so-called “amplifying series system” would have on the study of the emissions’ sizes, and therefore on “defining” the economic status of the city, since they are based on the number of dies and not on that of the series?

After presenting the second part of the book reserved for the numismatic commentary, the reviewer takes a particular interest in the die study. This kind of exercise aims to establish the links and identify the dies used for striking the coins within a certain sample by comparing them, their photos, their casts, etc. He acknowledges the difficulty of such a task when it comes to bronze coins because they are very worn most of the time. According to him, this is reflected in the book by the number of coins whose dies and links are not identified. Nevertheless, he asserts that there is certainly a tendency towards over estimating the number of dies. He notes, for example, that obverse dies D42, D47 and D49 (emission 9, series 15-17) are identical. He confirms the same for D64 and D68 (emission 10), as well as for D211 and D213 (emission 22) and that these corrections are not exhaustive.

The reviewer is certainly right about the difficulty of carrying out die studies on the bronze coinages. Yet, he missed the clearly indicated fact (p. 18 and 153) that most of the unidentified dies and links belong to coins from collections that the author was not able to personally examine during the writing of the thesis, nor get their casts or photographs, and which were not illustrated when published or were known by other sources listing them such as the unpublished notes of Henri Seyrig. On the other hand, the reviewer committed many errors in the attribution of dies to series and series to emissions, which should be rectified. In fact, D42, D47 and D49 belong to only series 14 (see p. 28-29), whilst series 16-17 are from emission 10 (see p. 30).

Regarding the corrections that he notes for the die study, a simple glance shows without any doubt that D47 is different from the others by the distance separating the legend from the back of the head, the circular ear against “oval ones”, the hair locks arrangement on the neck and the aquiline nose. D42 and D49 are surely similar. A thorough examination differentiates D42 by the circular versus angular “P” of “IMP”, the wider curve on the top of the ear, the forwardly projected mouth and the elongated versus

curved final “S” of “AVGVSTVS”. D64 and D68 are from emission 11 (see p. 30-31) and do not belong, as the reviewer states, to emission 10. The former die presents “GV” of “AVGVSTVS” on the same level, whilst on the second “G” starts a bit higher and the features of Augustus are “unconventional”. D211 and D213 belong to emission 23 rather than emission 22 (p. 49-50). The distinction is clear on the right sleeve, cut as three large bands on D211 and three thin lines on D213. The dissimilarities of the loop and the ribbons of the laurel wreath are also clear. Of course these rectifications do not exclude possible errors in the dies study. If any, they are not deliberate and due to the bad conservation of the coins, to the low quality of the photographs or merely to simple identification mistakes. Therefore, they do not justify the reviewer’s judgment of a generalized “tendency to overestimate the number of dies”. Since the number of identified dies in a sample of coins is crucial to determine the emissions’ sizes by using statistical formulas, such that of Carter adopted also by the author, it becomes evident that the reviewer’s goal is to cast some doubts over the results regarding the study of the economical situation (see also below, p. 356-357).

This is what can be also recorded when he criticizes the establishment of ratios between the denominations (the nominal values of the coins) in order to determine the volume of production that should reflect the importance of the different emissions. For him, this practice aims to “minorer l’importance des petites denominations par rapport aux grandes” because the denomination 1 (e.g. the larger), on which the calculations are based, is not the same for the coinages of the Hellenistic and the Roman periods. Therefore, he acknowledges the difficulty to compare their production sizes.

In fact this difficulty is dissipated by the fusion of both systems, as the Hellenistic denominations 1-4 were incorporated as denominations 4-7 by respecting the same old ratios between them after the foundation of the roman colony in Berytos during the second half of 15 B.C.. Furthermore, some contradiction is noticed when he later comments the general conclusion of the book: “l’A.[Auteur] dégage néanmoins quelques faits notables de son étude comme l’opposition entre les volumes de production monétaire avant et après la fondation de la colonie romaine en 15 av. J.-C.”.

However, establishing value ratios between different denominations aims to determine the hierarchy and the relations between them in order to evaluate the volume of production and the monetary mass put in circulation. This is the case for instance with emissions containing tetradrachms, didrachms, drachms and hemi-drachms. Would it be thus minimizing the importance of the hemi-drachm if the contemporary scholars respected its recognized value to the tetradrachm (e.g. 1/8) by the Greeks?

The reviewer points out to the absence of a certain number of series in the recapitulative tables concerning the coin production in Berytos (p. 117-119) that record net peaks during the years 15 B.C., 98-102 AD, 114-117 AD, 128-138 AD and 218-222 AD. He affirms the absence of 91 out of 123 berytian series and gives as example the “denomination 4 of emission 10 struck under Augustus” which cannot be neglected with its 7 identified obverse dies.

These words indirectly insinuate to the unguarded reader that the author is capable of manipulating the data in order to fit to a preconceived idea, which will be considered as an extremely serious attempt to his credibility. However, the reader can be assured that there is no intention to hide the 32 berytian series. The reviewer unquestionably missed, once again, the fact that these tables represent the emissions by denominations and not by series as he states. For some denominations are represented by several series in the same emission and in this case the sum of their dies is indicated. Even the example that he gives of the “denomination 4 of emission 10 struck under Augustus” shows undeniably how inaccurate his reading of the book is. In fact as rectified above, series 18 corresponds to denomination 4 and belongs to emission 11 (see also p. 30-31, n° 269-301 as well as p. 118, 129, 140-141, 144, 195 and 197) and can be seen on row 5 of the same tables (p. 118).

It is legitimate to seek a further extension of the study of the coin circulation in Berytos in the light of the huge quantity of finds from several sites on which the author is working and not only the 204 coins from sites BEY 006, BEY 020 et BEY 045. However, the reviewer notes that no reference was made to Butcher's publication of the finds from BEY 006 and BEY 045 in the bibliography, insinuating consequently some sort of plagiarism.

Actually, the 204 cited coins (sites BEY 006, BEY 020 and BEY 045) were the only data available during the final writing of the PhD Thesis in 1998-1999. The study of the finds from BEY 006 and BEY 045 was based on the provisional lists prepared by Kevin Butcher and that the author indentified part of it. He was warmly thanked in p. 11 of the acknowledgments as well as in the note 78 of p. 123. This Thesis was defended in June 1999, which explains the reason why his book (Butcher 2001-2002), erroneously dated by the reviewer to 2003, was not cited in the bibliography compiled in 1999. Only the author's newer publications (Sawaya 2002; Sawaya 2004; Sawaya 2005; Sawaya 2006a; Sawaya 2008) and few others related directly to the subject of the book were added (for example Duyrat 2005; Hoover 2007; Sawaya 2006b). Meanwhile, the number of site finds under study by the author is getting more consequent since the edition of his work in 2009. Their publication will not wait for long to see the light. A primary overview is published (Sawaya 2011) and a full study of more than 2100 coins is now completed (Sawaya forthcoming). Furthermore, future syntheses by periods are already in preparation for many thousands of coins found on more than fifty berytian sites, starting with the Persian and Hellenistic periods.

Concerning the study of metrology and the monetary systems (part II, chapter II), the reviewer confirms that the multiplication of tables does not dissipate the vagueness around the classification of the different denominations, as it is the case in the study of bronze coinages. He explains it by the absence of mention of value on the bronze coins, in contrast with silver coins, which gives them a fiduciary value permitting the state to manipulate the values of their different denominations. He asserts that “La variabilité des poids et des diamètres rend difficile toute interprétation et hypothétique toute comparaison avec le système romain. Même si l'équivalence entre la denomination 1 et le sesterce peut être raisonnable, les relations entre les dénominations des monnaies coloniales et précoloniales restent bien peu assurées”.

The author already expressed the difficulty of determining the value of bronze coins, because of the variability of their diameters and weights, and therefore the complexity of establishing the ratios between their different denominations (p. 127). The

recurrence of denominations with the same diameters, weights and value ratios especially in Berytos (civic and colonial), Heliopolis (colonial) and Sidon (civic, Greek imperial and colonial) as well as in other Phoenician cities under Elagabal (Sawaya 2006a, p. 175-176; Sawaya 2009, p. 137-143; Abou Diwan 2009, p. 207-208, 233-234, 237-238 and 252-254) endorse the existence of a certain system followed by at least some of the authorities from this region. The intention to fusion their local Hellenistic and Roman monetary systems is clear in the cases of Berytos and Sidon as well as their adaptations to the official roman monetary system by reducing the weights of his correspondent denominations. In addition, the recent analysis of site finds from Beirut (Sawaya forthcoming) gives credit to the relation established by *RPC I* (p. 588-589) between the bronze *SC* Antiochean monetary system, itself inspired from the official Roman one, and the colonial monetary system of Berytos. Therefore, the proposed ratios by the author between the pre-colonial and colonial denominations are fairly reliable, and not “bien peu assurées”, as the reviewer asserts.

The reviewer describes the third part of the book as “not being the best” for several reasons. He would have liked to get more information on the contents of the data used by the author to analyze the history of the region from the end of the Seleucids towards the middle of the third century AD, period that he estimates too large for such type of studies.

As affirmed on page 153, the use of this data aims to distinguish the common or the particular aspects of the coinages of Berytos and Heliopolis on the regional scale: historical events, political status, rhythm of production, typology etc. It was therefore crucial to the author to use it as a frame to their issues. This data contains both published and unpublished collections and it was not possible to present its whole contents for editorial restrictions. Whenever it was possible it was systematically referred to the already prolific published material in order to allow the readers to check it and access the whole desired information. As for the chronological frame of the study, it is needless to assert that it is not “too large”, as the reviewer describes it. On the contrary, it is essential to understand the evolution of both cities, and it was certainly not an innovation to adopt it (see the examples of Klose 1987, Touratsoglou 1988, Butcher 2004 and Duyrat 2005).

The reviewer claims that this third part suffers from clear methodological problems and that it was difficult for the author to exploit the essence of the information present in his catalogue especially with the long description of the types, without specifying which ones (the reverses or the imperial busts on the obverses). This is interpreted as a result for stretching the city’s history over six chapters. He proposes to reunite them in order to get a precise analysis on the relation of the coin production with the different wars, the status of the city and the cults, etc.

However, since the study of the reverse types is placed at the end of each chapter, one will assume that the reviewer is pointing to the discussion of the imperial busts. In fact, their detailed argumentation was crucial to regroup different series by emission and to distinguish these ones when the imperial titles were not of much help. It is also noteworthy that the original manuscript of the book did not present the same organization of the chapters. This was judiciously recommended by the scientific committee of the *Bibliothèque Archéologique et Historique* (BAH, the editor).

In addition, what should always be kept in mind is that the coinages of Berytos and Heliopolis, as most of the local bronze coinages, were struck to meet the city’s daily needs and not the enormous army payments and war expenditure. That’s why the conventional theory linking the increase of coin production to the military activities cannot be systematically applied to all of the cases studied by the author. Nonetheless, many links were established between warfare and the sudden interruption (fall of Orthosia under the Ituraeans in the 90s B.C., p. 160) or the resumption (Byblos at the end of the Parthian invasion in 40/39 B.C., p. 175) of coin production. Some coin productions were associated with struggles that affected the region such as: 1) Berytos never having been under the Ituraean grasp (p. 168); 2) the reuse of the Pompeian era in Orthosia, Tripolis and Byblos reflects the support of the revolt of Bassus against Julius Caesar (46-44 B.C., p. 172); 3) Berytos did not rebel against Cleopatra VII as generally believed (32/1 B.C., p. 188); 4) Phoenicia passed under the control of Octavian since 31/0 B.C. (issues depicting his bust in Chalcis and Victories as reverse types alluding to Actium in Berytos, p. 178); 5) possible relation between the coins mentioning the

legate Varus on the reverse and the participation of 1500 berytian recruits, or a contribution of Berytos, to the expedition in Judaea towards the end of 4 B.C. (p. 195).

The political status of the cities was in reality fully discussed, to cite some examples: 1) the autonomy of Berytos in 81/0 B.C. was not due to good relations with Tigranes, as it was believed following Seyrig, but to the complete absence of the Seleucid presence in the region (p. 160); 2) Sidon kept its freedom after the Parthian retreat in 40/39 B.C. despite supporting them against Rome (p. 175); 3) the dates and the reasons of the installations of the Roman colonists in Berytos (30 B.C. and 15 B.C.), the status of the autochthones, the repercussions on the monetary system and the coin production related to construction activities under Augustus, Trajan and Hadrian now corroborated by archeological excavations (p. 118-119, 181-185 and 187-194 etc.); 4) a great deal of attention is given to the problem of independence of Heliopolis whose coinage provided the date (194 AD), reasons related to the punishment of Berytos for its support to Niger, the date of reception of the *ius Italicum* (198 AD), information about the attachment to Septimius Severus, responsible for the new status of independent colony, monetary types alluding to imperial victories, marriage, concord between the imperial young brothers, the apotheosis of Septimius Severus etc. (p. 238-240 and 245-246 etc.); 5) Berytos becomes *antoniniana* reflecting a special relation with Caracalla, due to his intervention to annul the punishment by his father, and then dropping this privilege after his assassination to win Macrinus' favor (p. 240-243 and 252); 6) dates of the colonial status of Caesarea of Lebanon (219/20 AD), Sidon (220/1 AD), its loss and recovery by Tyre (220/1 AD and 221/2 AD) (p. 254-255).

All of these personal contributions and many more are overlooked by the reviewer who in addition reproaches the author of attributing to himself the credits of many emissions' dating already suggested by others. Actually, the most recent dating of berytian emissions before Sawaya 2009 were delivered by *RPC I*, *RPC II* and *RPC Suppl. I*, that stop at the end of Domitian's reign (81-96 AD). They do not cover yet most of the Berytian colonial coinage (29 B.C.-A.D. 260) nor all of the Heliopolitain (194-256/7 AD), fully

studied by the author. Other commentators restricted themselves to date these issues by reign, with very few rare exceptions. The field was therefore widely open to the author to deliver personal genuine propositions. Even when previous scholars inspired his proposals, they were enhanced with further accuracy in the light of new specialized studies regarding the imperial titles and the governors of Syria (Kienast 1996; Dabrowa 1998). Not to mention, as examples, the rectifications done to *RPC's I* calculations concerning the dates of Zenodoros' coins of Chalcis (p. 184).

Consequently, the case of the issue of Tiberius (series 21-22, for once the series were correctly indicated) should be rejected as *RPC I* proposes c. 14-16 AD, when the author suggests 17 September 14-late summer 16 AD. No intention of "plagiarism" can be recorded since the reference to *RPC I* is done in the corresponding paragraph (see p. 199, note 7 and particularly note 9 asserting "À propos des ressemblances stylistiques et de la date d'émission, je me rallie à la proposition des auteurs de *RPC I*, p. 649". Moreover, Michel Amandry, one of the authors of *RPC*, was the president of the examination committee when the author defended his Thesis in 1999 and had already written a review on Sawaya 2009 (Amandry 2011). If there were any intention of "plagiarism" he would have not missed it on both of the occasions. On the contrary, he proposed to the author to publish *RPC V* in 2007 (the project never being started for lack of budget) and the *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum France 8. Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Monnaies, Médailles et Antiques. Phénicie* (almost achieved).

The issue of the links between monetary production, wealth and importance of a city is surely debatable. The reviewer criticizes the "systematic linkage of the size of monetary production and the health of the economy" and gives as an example the case of Berytos during the period 79/8-31/0 B.C.

In fact, economic activity may develop on certain sites when the coinage decreased or disappeared, as foreign coins may be used to palliate the absence of the local ones, etc. Nevertheless, this fact should not be applied systematically everywhere as an evident pattern. Different parameters should also be taken into account such as the regional political situation, the local coin production over a long period, the site

finds and comparison with the coin production of the neighboring cities. During the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., most of northern Lebanon and Mount Lebanon was either occupied or under the danger of the Ituraeans, who also attacked Berytos (Strabo, XVI, 2, 18). This troubled situation certainly affected the economic activities of the weaker cities as Berytos, though unoccupied, whose line of the monetary production dramatically fell starting the conflict between Antiochos VIII and Antiochos IX (114/3 B.C.) until the foundation of the Roman colony. Starting this time, the situation changed and the monetary production increased to supply the needs of a larger population, thus bigger number of local commercial transactions. Moreover, this action did not seem to be sufficient, consequently a great quantity of SC bronzes was imported from Antioch, whilst foreign coins from many berytian sites are hardly attested from 79/8 to 31/0 B.C.. This flood of SC bronzes was the very reason for the decrease in the Berytian coin production during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Many of them were even halved to avoid the expenses of striking smaller denominations until the first decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (Sawaya 2011 and Sawaya forthcoming). The comparison with the outputs of the mints of Arados (Sawaya 2009, p. 288-289) and Sidon (Abou Diwan 2009, p. 209-215), both not affected by the Ituraean danger, shows also without any doubt how derisory the Berytian needs were from 79/8 to 31/0 B.C.

To sum up, reviews should be conscientious, academic and should stimulate debates after serious reading, which is not the case of Faucher's article. As shown above, it lacks precision or is erroneous most of the time (number of series, number of emissions, references, examples) and presents some contradictions. Its only purpose seems to discredit the author and his work by distorting some of his positions, generalizing alleged mistakes and claims of "plagiarism" through insinuations and overlooking his personal genuine contributions.

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