

## GRAECO-BACTRIAN AND INDO-GREEK KINGDOMS

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The number of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins appearing on the market has increased since the mid-1990s, reaching a peak in the early 2000s, a phenomenon linked to the political situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This new material, in addition to the discovery of coins in renewed archaeological excavations in Central Asia, as well as the great importance of coins as the best, and in many cases only, primary source of evidence for the rulers of these kingdoms has led to significant numismatic scholarly attention on this period in recent years. Since the last Survey, GLENN (18) has appeared as an attempt to provide a comprehensive bibliography of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins with a small commentary.

Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins have long been considered interesting for the iconography they employ as well as the high quality of the portraiture of the rulers under whom they were struck. The lack of evidence of other visual media has often led the imagery of the coins to be considered in isolation. ABDULLAEV (1) addresses this lack of comparison by detailing the ways in which coin portraits interacted with other forms of art, seeing the portraits as an 'iconographic reference' which might follow the model of other genres of fine art, with the focus on the posthumous Central Asian imitations of tetradrachms of Alexander the Great. Similarly, BOPEARACHCHI (5) traces the influence of the image of Alexander on the numismatic portraits of Seleucid, Graeco-Bactrian, and Indo-Greek kings. (An impressive collection of Bopearachchi's earlier works is now available (BOPEARACHCHI (4)) providing English translations from the original French publications of many of his important contributions to the subject.) DUMKE (8) reviews the way in which the iconography and the physical properties of Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins may have been aimed at particular groups of users, fitting into the wider coinage traditions in Central and South Asia. Studies of the iconography of coins have not been limited to broad reviews. SMIRNOVA (29) provides an analysis of the large coinage of Eucratides I and the coinages which imitated it, describing changes in the coin types and legends and how they reflect the king's policy as well as the significant impact of Eucratides's choices on the coinages of successive rulers.

Although there are few catalogues of collections devoted solely to Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins, the collection of the National Museum, Prague has now appeared as volume 10 in the *SNG Czech Republic* series. MILITKÝ and MAŠEK (25) presents the 333 Graeco-Bactrian, Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, and imitation coins in the collection. A large proportion (201) of these coins was acquired from commercial sources from 2002 onwards. The collection as a whole has most rulers represented with only those whose coins are particularly rare absent. As well as the scholarly presentation of a broad collection the authors include the results of XRF analysis of 174 of the coins, providing the largest published sample of composition analysis in the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek series to date.

In addition to recent collecting, the lasting results of the approach taken by nineteenth century scholars, such as Alexander Cunningham, has been analysed by BHANDARE (3). In particular the 'Essentialist' position taken by such scholars which led to coins of similar types to be divided into 'Greek' and 'Indian' groups on the basis of different features, such as the inclusion or omission of a legend. With the evidence of overstrikes of these so-called 'Taxila' types on coins of Apollodotus I, Bhandare suggests that these issues were produced during the 'Indo-Greek' period of the city and shows that the previous dating of these coins to a period during which Taxila was apparently an 'independent state' is incorrect and that such a

situation may never have existed. Coins without inscriptions often cause difficulty in attribution. GLENN (17) suggests removing a group of small, rare gold coins from the Graeco-Bactrian king Demetrius I where they had tentatively been placed and moving them to a later, although still uncertain date. The rejection of a simple 'Greek' or 'Indian' identity for Indo-Greek coins has also been demonstrated with regard to the rectangular silver coinage of Agathocles. BARALAY (2) argues for a more nuanced view of these coins on the basis of iconographic and metrological analysis, seeing them instead as hybrid issues.

Unpublished types have continued to appear with the large numbers of new coins on the market. GAWLIK and MIRZA (15) present an unpublished drachm type of Zoilus II while SENIOR (28) uses the evidence of new types of later Indo-Greek kings, in particular Apollophanes, to give a new interpretation of the relationships between the kings at the end of the Indo-Greek period. The kings of this period have also received from JAKOBSSON (21). TANDON (30) presents a new type of a bronze 'quadruple unit' of Amyntas with unusual features, highlighting a major problem facing the study of coins of these kingdoms: the authenticity of new pieces. Although Tandon considers this new type to be genuine, he also presents troubling evidence of coins of Apollodotus retooled so that they appear to be much rarer issues of Apollophanes. An additional coin is presented as a clear modern forgery thanks to errors in the legend and type. Other methods of forgery are of course still prevalent, as GAWLIK (12) demonstrates with evidence of cast forgeries of Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian, and Kushan coins.

More encouragingly the results of excavations in Central Asia have been published recently, increasing considerably the number of coins known from archaeological contexts. BORDEAUX, BESEVAL, MARQUIS, and RASSOLI (7) present 113 coins found during the Franco-Afghan excavations at Balkh (ancient Bactra) in Afghanistan between 2004 and 2008. Of these coins 14 are of the Hellenistic period, mainly issues of the Graeco-Bactrian king Euthydemus I, while the remainder belong to the Kushan era. Another major excavation of the Hellenistic fortress of Uzundara on the border of Northern Bactria in the modern Boysun region of Uzbekistan has also produced many coin finds (DVURECHENSKAYA, GORIN, and SHEIKO (10, 11); GORIN (19)). Coins of the Seleucid and Graeco-Bactrian periods were found along with imitations of Heliocles I and Kushan issues. Excavations at the ancient city of Kampyrtepa in the Surkhandarya region of Uzbekistan from 1979–1991 and 1999–2010 unearthed 38 Seleucid and Graeco-Bactrian coins (RTVELADZE and GORIN (26, 27)). Although the coins at these northern sites generally followed the same pattern as finds at similar sites with a preponderance of bronze coins of Euthydemus I and other early Graeco-Bactrian kings, a poorly-preserved illegible rectangular flan may be a bronze issue of the later king Agathocles. If the identification is correct this would be the first find of one of this king's coins north of the Amu Darya. The publication of all these site finds has important implications for our understanding of the geographical and chronological extent of Graeco-Bactrian rule in the north of the region and it is to be hoped that more coins continue to appear from similar systematic excavations.

The rather less certain evidence of coins from hoards has also continued to appear over the period covered by this Survey, with all the attendant difficulties of establishing the original find spot and composition of the assemblage after discovery and dispersal of the material. GAWLIK (13) provides details of a hoard of 127 silver drachms of Apollodotus II, Zoilus II, Zoilus III, Strabo II and III, and Bhadrasya which appeared on the market in March 2017, perhaps coming from the area of Taxila in the Punjab province. The same author published a

second note (GAWLIK (14)) on 216 bronze coins offered in smaller lots but with a similar composition of rulers to the silver hoard, indicating a single original find.

A comparable level of uncertainty, in terms of find spot and composition, surrounds the Vaisali hoard of early Graeco-Bactrian gold staters of the Diodotids and Euthydemus I apparently from Bihar State in north-east India and originally reported in 2001. The hoard, because of its location and apparently large number of high value coins, is of considerable importance for our understanding of the early period of Graeco-Bactrian history and in particular the theory, originally proposed by Jakobsson in 2010, of a third (previously unidentified) king called Antiochus Nicator ruling after Diodotus I and Diodotus II. Jakobsson reattributed coins with the types of the Diodotids, but bearing the name of 'Antiochus', from their traditional place in the sequence as issues produced by the Diodotus I as a satrap of the Seleucid king Antiochus II. The discovery of die links between staters, apparently from the hoard, of 'Antiochus' and those of Euthydemus I strengthen the Nicator theory (ZENG (32)). KRITT (23) and BORDEAUX (6) have made arguments, on the basis of reconstructions of the production systems of the Diodotids, against the existence of a Bactrian king Antiochus and it seems likely that this question will remain unsettled for some time.

The reinterpretation of numismatic evidence in a broader historical reconstruction has allowed important conclusions in the period of this Survey. The lack of any non-numismatic evidence can lead to dramatically different rearrangements of coinages. The Heliocles and Laodice coins have been removed from the issues of Eucratides I and given to Heliocles and Laodice themselves as the rulers under whom they were struck. JAKOBSSON (20) argues that Heliocles was to become Heliocles I, who is known from other coins, and rejects Tarn's suggestion that Heliocles and Laodice were the parents of Eucratides. GLENN (16) also rejects this proposed relationship and uses the evidence of a die study of the coins to confirm that Heliocles and Laodice appear on the obverses of the coins, suggesting they were the issuers, although he remains reticent about their own relationship or position in the Graeco-Bactrian series. DUMKE and GRIGO (9) have undertaken a similar reexamination of the coins of Agathocleia and Strato I concluding, through an analysis of the organisation of production and the iconography of the coins, that the relationship between the two figures on the coins was one of husband and wife rather than mother and son.

This Survey marks the first time that the die study methodology has begun to be used by multiple scholars. As well as the relatively small and self-contained coinage of Heliocles and Laodice, the issues attributed to Sophytes have received considerable attention. These coins all into three distinct series: imitations of Athenian tetradrachms with a head of Athena on the obverse and an owl on the reverse; an 'eagle group' with the head of Athena retained and an eagle on the reverse; and a group with a male head wearing a helmet on the obverse and a reverse type of a cockerel along with the legend ΣΩΦΥΤΟΥ. The date and circumstances of the issue of these coins is unclear, as is the identity of the issuer, Sophytes. The evidence of die studies and other technical numismatic analysis has led to multiple suggestions for dating: JANSARI (22) concludes that Sophytes was a ruler in the Punjab and a contemporary of Alexander the Great. KRITT (24), through comparison with the helmeted male head of the Susa trophy coinage of Seleucus I, as well as his models for Seleucid coin production in Bactria, assigns a date from *c.* 295/3–270 B.C. for the three groups. TAYLOR (31) prefers to associate the Sophytes coinage with Andragoras and suggests that Sophytes was satrap of Parthia following the death of Andragoras leading him to date the coinage between *c.* 250 and 238 B.C..

The most expansive use of the die study methodology and the broadest contribution, running from the beginning of the Graeco-Bactrian period to the end of the Indo-Greek, during the period covered by this Survey is the monograph of BORDEAUX (6). The work consists of die studies of six kings: Diodotus I and Diodotus II, Euthydemus I, Menander I, Eucratides I, and Hippostratus. Bordeaux was thus able to bring a huge new body of evidence (4,117 coins) to bear on parts of the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek series which had been subject to significant historiographic interest in the past and to test theories against the objective evidence of his studies. Although these coins have waited so long to be the subject of such large-scale studies, the appearance of large numbers of coins since the beginning of the millennium have made die studies viable and the subject will clearly benefit from the application of this approach.

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