

- ¹ Cf. Price, *Porus Coinage*; Bernard, *Monnayage*; Smith, *Imagine*, pp. 15-18; Holt, *Alexander the Great and the Mystery of the Elephant Medallions*; Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 296-307.
- ² Such fictitious duels became part of the historiography of Alexander's reign, see Chares, *FGrHist* 125 F 6 = *Plut. Mor.* 341C; *Alex.* 20.8; *FGrHist* 138 T 4 = *Luk. Hist. Conscr.* 12.
- ³ Rightly so Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage*, 53. Bernard, *Monnayage*, believes that the coins were issued at Susa under Eumenes, which is not convincing.
- ⁴ Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage*, 53. It is the most probable location, nonetheless hypothetical. A Greek Ε on the obverse is perhaps the initial of the name of the Macedonian commander (*phourarchos*) at Susa, Xenophilos (*Curt.* 5.2.16).
- ⁵ Price, *Porus Coinage*, 76.
- ⁶ Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage*, 52f.
- ⁷ Hölscher, *Griechische Historienbilder*, 172f.
- ⁸ For Phrygian helmets, see: Waurick, *Helme*, 163ff.
- ⁹ So suggested by Waurick, *Helme*, 167. Such a helmet is known from Vergina, cf. Waurick, *Helme*, Abb. 64. The helmet has a neck guard and cheek pieces.
- ¹⁰ See Price, *Porus Coinage*, pl. IX 1.
- ¹¹ Already Neuffer, *Kostüm Alexanders*, 29, recognized a neck guard and cheek pieces in Alexander's headgear as elements of the Persian tiara. Side flaps are mentioned by Aisch. *Pers.* 661f.
- ¹² Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 301f.
- ¹³ Cf., e.g., Bosworth, *Tragedy*, 6.
- ¹⁴ Calmeyer, *Fortuna*, 348f. An original is identified on coins of Tiribazos issued at Issos in the first half of the 4th century – it depicts a figure on a winged sun disc holding a wreath in hand (*op. cit.* 352f.).
- ¹⁵ Stewart, *Faces of Power*, 203. Price says: "The part played by the Indian forces in the Greek army is thus fully recognized" (*Porus Coinage*, 82f.). This supposition is sheer speculation for the Indian allied contingents played no essential role in the Alexander's Hydaspes campaign.
- ¹⁶ For details, see: Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 158ff.; *idem*, *Hydaspes*.
- ¹⁷ Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 153ff.
- ¹⁸ Price, *Porus Coinage*, 77f.
- ¹⁹ Illustrations are given by Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage*, Pl. III, nos. 44-46.
- ²⁰ Holt, *Alexander the Great and the Mystery of the Elephant Medallions*. For the Indian archer, see: Price, *Porus Coinage*, 81.
- ²¹ *Curt.* 8.14.19; *Arr. An.* 6.10.1; *Arr. Ind.* 8.16.6.
- ²² Bosworth, *Tragedy*, 6, rightly remarked: „This impressive visual record of the defeated army is difficult to explain“ but did not give a convincing answer.
- ²³ Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 81f.
- ²⁴ *Arr.* 5.12.2.
- ²⁵ Details in Olbrycht, *Hydaspes*. The presence of Iranian archers in Alexander's army was postulated by Altheim, *Weltgeschichte* I, 185.
- ²⁶ Such guard is confirmed in Susa in 324, cf. *Phylarchos*, *FGrHist* 81 F 41 (*apud Athen.* 12.539 D-F).
- ²⁷ Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 81.
- ²⁸ A full review of chariots in Iran is given by Nefedkin, *Boevye kolesnitsy*, 268-342.
- ²⁹ Details are discussed by Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 305f. Cf. Boardman, *Greek Gems*, no. 887.
- ³⁰ For Alexander's exercise in archery and chariot driving, see: *Plut. De fort.* 2.6; *Alex.* 23.1-3. For the Achaemenid chariot, see: Briant, *Histoire*, 226-228, 236f., 339-342.
- ³¹ Alexander's pro-Iranian reforms in 330 in eastern Iran are analyzed by Olbrycht, *Alexander the Great*, 286-293. For the Iranian diadem as Alexander's attribute, cf. studies by Ritter, *Diadem*, and *idem*, *Bedeutung*.
- ³² The opinion of absent Iranian elements in Alexander's portraits was expressed by Khodza, *Muzhskaya terrakotovaya golova*, 52, n. 52 (a highly valuable work in its own right).
- ³³ Mørkholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage*, 48, nos. 28-29; Price, *Coinage*, 452.

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Illustrations:

1. Alexander III of Macedon, called the Great. Silver dekadrachm (after CoinArchives January 2006). Obverse and reverse. Minted ca. 324-323 BC.



2. Alexander III of Macedon, called the Great. Silver tetradrachm (after CoinArchives January 2006). Obverse and reverse. Minted ca. 324-323 BC.



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longbows of the type seen on the coins in question.²⁷ It seems that it was the issuer's intent to refer to Iranian traditions to emphasize the Iranian contribution to the Indian campaign. An archer in a chariot, known from some of Alexander's coinage, is also an allusion to Iranian tradition. In the Iran of the Achaemenid period, war chariots were often used on the battlefield and as iconographic element – Great Kings, too, were depicted in chariots.²⁸ It should be remembered that the archer theme dominated on Achaemenid coinage and was frequent in art.²⁹ Alexander eagerly practiced archery and drove a chariot: those abilities were certainly associated with the Achaemenid Great King and Iranian traditions.³⁰

All in all, it seems that dekadrachms and tetradrachms with elephant and standing archer and with elephant and archer in chariot are special issues struck in 324-323 BC at Alexander's orders upon his return from India. It should be assumed that those issues were meant for the Macedonians and Iranians. The Indian war had demonstrated that Iranian-Macedonian cooperation could be effective. Such cooperation was the foundation of Alexander's policies in 330-323, given which, references to Iranian traditions are not surprising.

A close analysis of sources reveals that Alexander the Great instituted major changes in Parthia in 330 BC, altering his monarchical concept and initiating pro-Iranian policies. From then on, he used the Iranian diadem as a royal insignium (Curt. 6.6.4; Diod. 17.77.4; Iust. 12.3.8). His another insignium became the Iranian tiara (Arr. 4.7.4; Itin. Alex. 64, 89; Luk. Dial. Mort. 12 (14).3=396-397). Moreover, the king took to wearing Iranian elements of Iranian dress (Iranian sleeved *chiton* and *kandys*-cloak).³¹ Having accepted the Iranian *ornamenta regia* in 330 BC, including the tiara and the diadem, Alexander apparently ordered that the new insignia be featured in the iconography of coinage issued at some mints.

The above discussion, in emphasizing the role of some iconographic elements from Alexander's coinage, demonstrates the close relationship between monetary depiction and royal ideology and helps better to understand the nature of the "Poros issues" struck by the king. Opinions voiced to the effect that Iranian elements of dress and insignia do not make a presence in official portraits of Alexander is unjustified in the light of numismatic material.³² Moreover, it should be borne in mind that Alexander himself continued Achaemenid coin issues. Thus produced were double *dareikoi* (perhaps in Anatolia and almost certainly in Babylon), known from the Oxos hoard, and ordinary *dareikoi*. They feature a royal archer in a "Knielauf" posture.³³

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helmet, while to the Iranians it was an upright royal tiara. It seems that the twin significance in the dekadrachm iconography reflects an intentional move: monetary depictions were aimed at Macedonians and Iranians alike.¹²

In Alexander's complementary figure bringing a wreath of victory or royal power to Alexander some scholars see a male figure; the *communis opinio* identifies it as the goddess Nike.¹³ P. Calmeyer rightly sees here a bearded personification of the Iranian "royal glory," or *khvarenah/farnah*.¹⁴ A rendition of "royal glory" personified on Alexander's dekadrachms sent a powerful message to the Iranians.

The message of the "Poros issue" is often understood as Alexander's recognition of the role played by Indians as formidable enemies.¹⁵ This does not seem fully correct, therefore a brief characteristic of Alexander's empire is in order, for coin iconography closely followed the monarchical concept pursued by the ruler. In the light of Alexander's policies in 330-323 BC, the empire's elite was to be made up of Macedonians and Iranians. To Alexander, victory over Poros in India was no more than an example of Macedonians and Iranians cooperating (after a difficult period of Macedonian-Iranian strife in Central Asia in 329-327), which produced excellent results in the battle against Poros' army on the Hydaspes river in 326.¹⁶ Hence it would seem that the dekadrachm iconography was consciously targeted at Macedonians and Iranians as victorious allies. That explains why Alexander appears in Macedonian-Iranian headdress. Records leave little doubt that the role of Indians fighting alongside Alexander in the Indus valley campaign was marginal. A bulk of his 120-thousand strong army were Iranians.¹⁷

Besides the dekadrachms, there are other issues by Alexander that clearly contain Iranian elements in their iconography. A Babylon hoard revealed tetradrachms with the same monogram and letter as in Alexander's dekadrachms discussed above.¹⁸ The obverse features a soldier shooting a large bow, the reverse an elephant. A single tetradrachm shows an archer in a quadriga, and on the reverse an elephant with two people.¹⁹ The elephant theme indicates a commemoration of Alexander's success in India. Motifs of archer in chariot in Alexander's tetradrachms are often thought to refer to Indian warfare.²⁰ Indeed, the Indians were noted for their archers,²¹ but those were not such a carrying and evocative symbol of India as, say, war elephants. If the reverse unmistakably bears an Indian war elephant, it is hardly acceptable that the obverse shows an Indian soldier. What would have been the point of such placement of two symbols of India²²? Rather, the archer must represent Alexander and his army. Among the Macedonians themselves, archers were a small minority, and it was not at them that this iconography was directed. But the archer figure meant much to the Iranians. With them, archery was a particularly valued ability.²³ Alexander's army on the Hydaspes included foot archers.²⁴ It is highly probable that their core was made up of Iranians.²⁵ It seems almost certain that at Alexander's side in India there was a guard of royal archers, fashioned after an Achaemenid formation.²⁶ The Persians and other Iranian peoples used

On Some Coins of Alexander the Great (336-323 BC) and his pro-Iranian policy

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The iconography of Alexander's famous dekadrachms still remains a controversial issue.¹ The monograms on the reverse – a combined A and B – may stand for *basileos Alexandrou*, which unambiguously identifies the issuer. The obverse depicts a battle scene between a mounted horseman identified as Alexander with an Indian war elephant. Two figures on the elephant are Indian king Poros and his attendant. That deliberately heroic scene, with two royal adversaries in a duel which actually never took place, is seen as commemorating Alexander's victory over Poros.² On the revers, a standing male figure with the thunderbolt of Zeus in his hand, is depicted. The figure, identified as Alexander, receives a wreath from a flying deity. The dekadrachms were probably struck shortly after the Indian campaign about 324-323 BC.³ Their denomination in itself is characteristic for commemorative issues and suggests the initiative coming from the king rather than from local satraps, as some think. Where the pieces were struck is the subject of some debate. Not impossibly, it was Susa, where a new mint was opened perhaps even late in Alexander's reign.⁴ But Babylon is also a possibility.

According to M.J. Price, the king represented on dekadrachms is wearing a Phrygian-style helmet with a crest and high plumage. The falling bands seen over the shoulders he believes to be leather protection for the neck.⁵ O. Mørkholm identifies the headgear as "Phrygian helmet" alternately with "Persian headdress."⁶ T. Hölscher speaks of a Thracian-type helmet decorated with feathers.⁷ Contrary to M.J. Price's interpretation, the bands are certainly not leather protection but rather the points of a diadem, an Iranian insignia of royal authority. The shape of the headgear resembles a Phrygian helmet with protruding feathers,⁸ or an Attic type with a tall, narrow metal crest arched forward (in reality such helmets could have been a Macedonian invention).⁹ It seems that the figure on dekadrachms has the sides of his face protected by long, drooping elements¹⁰ which were part of the Iranian tiara. These side pieces could be tied together to form a large protection for the cheeks and chin.¹¹ The bell-shaped part of the headgear worn by the dekadrachm figure resembles an upright Iranian tiara. In sum, Alexander's headdress in dekadrachms seems to be a combination of an upright Iranian tiara with elements of a Macedonian helmet, i.e. tall plumage and possibly a crest. This combination could have been a conscious device. To the Macedonians, Alexander's headgear looked like a battle