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## COIN HOARDS

ANCIENT

### 1. A Small Hoard of Alexander Tetradrachms from Batman (Turkey)

*by*

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### 1. A Small Hoard of Alexander Tetradrachms from Batman (Turkey)

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[PLATES 21-22]

#### *Introduction*

In January 2018 a Turkish collector informed us of a small hoard of 15 Alexander the Great tetradrachms (none in the name of Philip III), found by a farmer on the surface of private land on the outskirts of Batman in south-east Turkey, probably in 2017. No container was recorded; if there had been one, it must have been of perishable material, like a leather or cloth bag.

The state of preservation of the pieces is good, although many show some wear. Some of the tetradrachms showed their original dark patina at the time when they were photographed and weighed. Some are half-cleaned, others completely cleaned, since the finder wanted to sell the coins quickly.

We suggest below that the hoard could be related to the demobilized soldiers of Craterus and/or the First War of the Diadochi (321 BC). Alexander hoards from Anatolia of the late fourth century BC are of particular interest because of their scarcity and historical importance. Despite the difficulties in information retrieval, the Turkish collector said that the hoard was complete. We cannot of course guarantee this, and the group could perhaps be only a part of the total found. All the coins were sold and their whereabouts cannot be traced.

#### *Catalogue*

*Obv.* Head of beardless Heracles right wearing lion skin headdress.

*Rev.* Zeus seated on stool-throne left, eagle on outstretched right hand, sceptre in left hand, ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ or (nos 3, 4, 7, 12-15) ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ.

#### **Amphipolis, c.336-323 BC**

1. 17.16g. Price, *Alexander* 4.
2. 17.58g. Price, *Alexander* 78.

#### **Amphipolis, c.323-320 BC**

3. 17.16g. Price, *Alexander* 109e.

<sup>1</sup> Respectively, Universitat de València and Universidad Complutense de Madrid. We are very grateful to Richard Ashton and François de Callatay for their critical comments on the text.

**Side, c.325-320 BC**

4. 17.34g. Price, *Alexander* 2949.

**Aradus, c.328-320 BC**

5. 17.22g. Price, *Alexander* 3304.  
6. 17.07g. Price, *Alexander* 3305.  
7. 17.08g. Price, *Alexander* 3309.

**Sidon, c.333-331 BC**

8. 17.55g. Price, *Alexander* 3467 or 3468.

**Sidon, no date / c.333-305 BC**

9. 17.00g. Price, *Alexander* 3474.

**Babylon, c.325-323 BC**

10. 17.20 g. Price, *Alexander* 3601.

**Babylon, c.325-323 BC**

11. 17.28g. Price, *Alexander* 3617.  
12. 17.39g. Price, *Alexander* 3673.  
13. 17.25g. Price, *Alexander* 3674.  
14. 17.14g. Price, *Alexander* 3673 or 3685.  
15. 17.32g. Unidentified.

*Commentary*

The coins of this hoard came from the mints of Amphipolis (cat. 1-3), Side (4), Aradus (5-7), Sidon (8-9), and Babylonia (10-15). The Babylonian mint is the most represented (33% of the total), and this is unsurprising since Alexander resided there, and its output was massive during the years 325/24 to 318/17 (almost 200 obverse dies)<sup>2</sup>. The obverses of coins 12 and 13 seem to be from the same die, which confirms the immediate continuity of Price, *Alexander* 3673 and 3674.

Amphipolis (20%) coined large amounts of silver under the viceregency of Antipater (334-23 BC), both to meet his own military costs, and to fund his monarch's campaigns<sup>3</sup>. The metallographic analysis of Amphipolitan tetradrachms has revealed

<sup>2</sup> Despite earlier disputes, it is generally accepted that Babylon was a major mint: see Imhoof-Blumer 1895; id. 1906; Howorth 1904; Waggoner 1968, id. 1979; Price 1991, pp. 453-7 (p. 454: 'the attribution to Babylon underlines how easy it is for a major mint to become firmly established at a city through constant repetition, and without fully exploring the facts or other possibilities'); Le Rider 2007, pp. 225-40; Monerie 2018, pp. 112-25.

<sup>3</sup> Price 1991, pp. 85-8, 103-104, 109-111, argues that coins did not begin to be minted at Pella until after Alexander's death and not at Amphipolis until the reign of Cassander, so he prefers to give one mint the general title of 'Macedonia', the other 'Aegeae'; Troxell 1997, pp. 48-50, 86-98; Le Rider 2007, pp. 8-16, 45-60.

that their silver did not come from local mines, but from various sources, *i.e.* the Persian booty of Alexander among them<sup>4</sup>. That is consistent with the bankruptcy of Macedonia prior to the invasion of the Achaemenid Empire, the monetization of a large proportion of the precious metals looted from its treasuries, and the sending of some Persian bullion to Macedonia<sup>5</sup>. Amphipolitan coins were obviously exported in large quantities to the Eastern provinces of Alexander's empire: a third of all listed in the Demanhur, Egypt hoard (*IGCH* 1664) came from this mint<sup>6</sup>.

The mints of Aradus (20%) and Sidon (20%) began striking on the arrival of Alexander in 333/332 and the ensuing capture of substantial financial resources from the Persians, and continued up to 319/18<sup>7</sup>. Finally, the scarce coinage of Side (7%) apparently met the expenses of Alexander's armies passing through, their reinforcements and discharged soldiers, as was the case with the rest of the Asia Minor and Levantine mints, most of them strategically located in ports<sup>8</sup>.

All the coins of the Batman hoard belong to the 332-322 BC period. Their chronology is reasonably clear, with the exception of the coins from Amphipolis. The first two of the latter belong to Groups A (prow) and E (herm); according to the calculations of Troxell, their date falls *c.*332 BC<sup>9</sup>. She also concluded that the title *Basileos* found on the third coin (Group G) was inscribed on Amphipolitan tetradrachms only after Alexander's death, in late 323 or 322<sup>10</sup>. The coins had seen little circulation, so a date shortly after 322 BC should be given to the deposit. Its earliness, shortly before the burial of the enormous tetradrachm hoard found at Demanhur (*c.*318 BC)<sup>11</sup>, make this small hoard important for chronology.

Hoards *IGCH* 1437-1440, found in Asia Minor and dated *c.*321/20 BC, are similar, with coins from Macedonia, Western Asia Minor, the Levantine coast, and Mesopotamia<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Kallithratis-Konts-Katsanos-Touratsoglou 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Diodorus 18.12.2; Curtius 3.1.20, 10.2.24; Arrian 7.9.6; Callataÿ 1989, *id.* 2011; Price 1991, pp. 25-7; Le Rider 2007, pp. 24-31.

<sup>6</sup> Newell 1923.

<sup>7</sup> Price 1991, pp. 414-16, 435-6; Duyrat 2005a, pp. 10-29, 122-6, 209-18; Le Rider 2007, pp. 111-17, 140, 145-6.

<sup>8</sup> Price 1991, pp. 362-3; Callataÿ 1994, pp. 29-35; Le Rider 2007, pp. 93-110, remains sceptical about the association of the Alexander coinages from western Asia Minor with payments to demobilized troops.

<sup>9</sup> Troxell 1997, pp. 86-90.

<sup>10</sup> Troxell 1997, pp. 92-93.

<sup>11</sup> Newell 1923; Duyrat 2005b.

<sup>12</sup> *IGCH*, pp. 193-4: 1437: *c.*321 BC; 89+ Alexander III lifetime and early posthumous dr. (Amphipolis 1, Lampsacus 10, Abydus 33, Colophon 1, Magnesia 22, Miletus 11, Sardis 10, Ake 1). 1438: *c.*320 BC; 70+ Alexander III lifetime and early posthumous tetradr. (Amphipolis 28, Lampsacus 1, Abydus 2, Tarsus 5, Myriandrus 3, Citium 7, Salamis 2, Aradus 6, Byblos 1, Sidon 1, Ake 4, Damascus 4, Babylon 3). 1439: *c.*320 BC; 80+ Alexander III lifetime and early posthumous tetradr. (Amphipolis 18, Sicyon 1, Tarsus 7, Salamis 4, Citium 1, Amathus 1, Myriandrus 6, Aradus 17, Byblos 2, Ake 5, Babylon 18). 1439: *c.*320 BC; 80+ Alexander III lifetime and early posthumous tetradr. (Amphipolis 18, Sicyon 1, Tarsus 7, Salamis 4, Citium 1, Amathus 1, Myriandrus 6, Aradus 17, Byblos 2, Ake 5, Babylon 18). 1440: *c.*320 BC; 90+ Alexander III: lifetime and early posthumous tetradr. (Amphipolis 32, Lampsacus 2, Side 1, Tarsus 8, Myriandrus 9, Citium 1, Salamis 10, Aradus 16, Byblos 2, Ake 1, Babylon 8).

*Historical circumstances*

In 1984 Margaret Thompson proposed that the great increase in production at Alexander's mints in the years 325/24 and 324/23 BC was linked to the demobilization of mercenaries and Macedonian soldiers ordered by Alexander, because their wages were paid out in harbours on their way back, and after return to their homelands<sup>13</sup>. She considered Amphipolis the main source of reimbursement (330 obverse dies). This thesis was in part questioned by Georges Le Rider, who made three remarks:

1. Soldiers did not need to go home in order to be fully paid.
2. Some salaries were totally disbursed in Mesopotamia, according to Arrian.
3. The rise in coinage output in western mints like Amphipolis can also be explained by the growing military expenses of Antipater in Macedonia<sup>14</sup>.

Ioannis Touratsoglou has highlighted that the successive appearance of tetradrachms in hoards located in Thessaly (333-330 BC), the Peloponnese (330-325 BC), Macedonia itself (323 BC), and Central Greece (319 BC) shows that they represent payments to discharged mercenaries and Macedonian soldiers<sup>15</sup>.

Despite these caveats, it is true that in late 325 or early 324 BC Alexander ordered his generals and satraps in Asia to disband all their mercenaries, mainly Greek and Balkan<sup>16</sup>. In 324 he also demobilized 10,000 veteran Macedonian infantrymen at Opis, after a mutiny. Craterus was charged with the repatriation of these forces. He advanced slowly and arrived in Cilicia, where he learned of the king's death, and stayed until 322, pending the development of the succession (and awaiting, perhaps, the payment of the troops' wages?). Then, Antipater requested reinforcements from him to suppress the revolts of Greece and Thessaly, the so-called Lamian War (323-322 BC). Craterus recruited fresh forces from Asia Minor and took 6,000 out of the 10,000 veterans he commanded. The other 4,000 men remained in Cilicia and its environs for some months, under the leadership of White Cleithos, who built a fleet<sup>17</sup>.

The present-day Batman region lies in the upper course of the Tigris river, on the border between the ancient satrapies of Armenia and Mesopotamia, and not far from Cilicia. Armenia, which was not under total Macedonian control at the death of Alexander, was assigned in 322 to Neoptolemus (strategos or satrap). He became secretly allied with Antipater and Craterus against the regent Perdikkas and moved to join them, but Eumenes discovered the plot, brought him to battle in spring 321, and defeated his army, capturing his baggage train. Neoptolemus took refuge with Craterus and urged him to engage Eumenes in a new battle near the Hellespont, which resulted in a second defeat and Craterus' death. The remnants of their army did, however, manage to escape to Antipater, who reached Cilicia and Northern

<sup>13</sup> Thompson 1984.

<sup>14</sup> Le Rider 2007, pp. 60-72.

<sup>15</sup> Touratsoglou 1998, 2000, 2004, pp. 182-4.

<sup>16</sup> Diod. 17.106.3.

<sup>17</sup> Arr. 7.12.1.; Diod. 18.12.1.; Hammond 1984. For Craterus and Cleithos, see Heckel 1992, pp. 95-122, 171-173; Heckel 2006, pp. 87-88, 95-99.

Syria, where he received information that Perdikkas had been murdered in Egypt by his own soldiers<sup>18</sup>.

Meanwhile, in the Partition of Babylon of 323 BC, Mesopotamia was allotted to Arcesilaus, who supported Perdikkas and disappeared after his death, presumably deposed or executed<sup>19</sup>.

In conclusion, this hoard, dated shortly after 322 BC, could be related to the presence of demobilized soldiers commanded by Craterus not far from Cilicia and/or the participation of Neoptolemus' and Antipater's troops in the First War of the Diadochi. Both events could explain the presence of the late coin from Amphipolis in south-east Anatolia.

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<sup>18</sup> Plut. *Eum.* 4.1-4, 5.2-3; Arr. *Succ.* fr.1.26; Diod. 18.29.1-4; Just. 13.8.3; Bosworth 1978; Anson 1990; Heckel 1992, pp. 275-7; Heckel 2006, pp. 174-5.

<sup>19</sup> Diod. 18.3.3.; Just. 12.4.23; Heckel 2006, p. 42.

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MARTÍNEZ CHICO AND GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA,  
A SMALL HOARD OF ALEXANDER TETRADRACHMS FROM BATMAN (1)

PLATE 22



10



11



12



13



14



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