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For valour: the ‘shield coins’ of Alexander and the Successors

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The majority of coinage issued in the Hellenistic Period (c.336–168BC) follows a similar, and somewhat distinctive, iconographic layout. However, on occasion, coins were struck which deviated from this standard pattern with the issuance of what are known as ‘shield coins’. The evidence indicates that these coins were special issues—made to recognize the actions of individual military units within the armies of various Hellenistic rulers. As such, Hellenistic ‘shield coins’ are some of the earliest identifiable examples of a means of commemorating the valour of specific contingents of soldiers and the particular events in which they played a significant part.

Much of the numismatic record for the time of Alexander the Great and his successors generally follows the same basic iconographic layout: a bust in profile on the obverse of the coin, and the depiction of a deity (in most cases) on the reverse (Fig. 1).¹

However, on occasion, coins issued by cities under the control of these rulers depart from this sequence of ‘standard’ imagery with the production of what are known as ‘shield coins’. These issues display a dramatic, but temporary, alteration to the iconography. The obverse side of a ‘shield coin’ displays a

Macedonian shield; shown front-on and filling the entire surface area of the coin. The shield is depicted in high detail; often including a series of concentric crescent designs and a rosette and/or pellet pattern around the outer edge of the shield depending upon the individual issue. The centre of the shield is filled with further decoration which comes in a variety of guises including portrait busts, monograms, rosettes with a varying number of petals, anchors, Gorgon’s heads and lightning bolts.² Similarly, the imagery on the reverse of a ‘shield coin’ can come in a number of forms ranging from clubs, to deities, elephants, helmets or wreaths. These various reverse designs can be depicted either singularly or in any one of a number of possible combinations and may, or may not, have an accompanying inscription. Shield coins come in varying denominations, metals and sizes, and were issued right across the Hellenistic world from Pella in Macedonia to the city of Bactra in Bactria-Sogdiana (Balkh in modern Afghanistan).³ ‘Shield coins’ can be found in the issues produced under Alexander the Great in the later part of the fourth century BC, right through the age of the successor kingdoms, and into the time after Macedon had become a protectorate under the Romans (post 168BC)—a period of more than 200 years (Fig. 2).



Figure 1. Examples of ‘standard’ Hellenistic coins with a portrait bust on the obverse and the depiction of a deity (generally) on the reverse.⁴

What prompted the issue of these ‘shield coins’? Why was there an occasional, and short-lived, departure from what would seem to be a standard series of numismatic imagery in the Hellenistic world only to quickly revert back to its original format after the ‘shield coin’ had been issued? Why are there different designs displayed in the centre of the shields on these coins? And why are these coins so sporadic in terms of their place of issue and the times at which they were produced?

It has been suggested that ‘shield coins’ were issued to commemorate

specific battles. Carson, for example, states that a ‘shield coin’ issued under Antigonus Gonatus around 277–276BC (Fig. 2c) was an issue produced to commemorate Antigonus’ defeat of the Gauls at Lysimachia in 277BC; after which he was, according to Carson, hailed as king of Macedonia by his troops.⁵ It is further suggested that the bust of Pan in the centre of the coin, is representative of the ‘panic’ that the god had spread through the Gallic forces during the course of the battle which allowed Antigonus to claim victory.⁶ Tarn, in his work on Antigonus, similarly states that, during Antigonus’ wedding in 276BC,



Figure 2. Examples of Hellenistic 'shield coins' of various denominations and with various designs on the obverse and reverse.⁷

Aratus of Soloi composed a hymn to Pan who 'had stood by Antigonus at Lysimachia and spread his panic terror among the barbarian host'.⁸ Tarn claims that the image in the centre of the coin, struck to commemorate the event, is actually a portrait of Antigonus in the guise of Pan.⁹

However, there are numerous problems associated with conclusions such as these. The main problem is that the literary record for the battle of Lysimachia makes no mention of a panic spreading through the Gallic forces.¹⁰ Even Tarn himself, despite his attribution of the

imagery on the coin to a commemoration of the battle, states that the evidence for the battle of Lysimachia is 'untrustworthy'.¹¹

Additionally, in all of the sources, there is no reference to Antigonus being hailed king of Macedonia by his men immediately following the battle as Carson suggests. As such, it is unsure where the correlation between Antigonus, Pan, a divinely inspired panic and the battle may have come from.¹² When Antigonus finally returned to Macedonia following his victory at Lysimachia, the sources are unspecific as to whether he returned as a conqueror, a restored exile, or as an invited



Figure 3. Examples of Hellenistic coins commemorating specific battles.¹³

liberator.¹⁴ All that can be stated with certainty is that, following his return, he eventually ascended to the throne. Subsequently, the conclusions that this coin commemorates the battle of Lysimachia and/or Antigonos' ascension to the throne of Macedon can only be regarded as speculative.

Another problem with the attribution of this coin (and other 'shield coins') to just the commemoration of a specific engagement is that 'shield coins' do not follow the iconography of other singular issues of coins which do commemorate a particular event. Like the 'shield coins', issues commemorating an individual engagement also depart from the 'standard' layout, but follow a pattern of imagery completely separate from that of both the 'standard' issues and the 'shield coins'. Commemorative coins for battles in the Hellenistic Period generally display images reflective of the engagement that they are commemorating on the obverse side. A coin struck to celebrate Alexander the Great's victory over the Indian king Porus on the Hydaspes River in 326BC, for example, replaces the portrait bust common to 'standard' issues with an image of a valiant Alexander, who lead the Companion Cavalry during the battle, charging against one of Porus' war elephants.¹⁵ The regular

depiction of a deity on the reverse side is also replaced with the image of a triumphant Alexander, standing to be crowned by Victory herself, and wielding one of Zeus' thunderbolts (Fig. 3a).¹⁶ Another example of a commemorative coin, issued under Demetrios the Besieger, clearly immortalises his naval victory off Cyprian Salamis in 306BC.¹⁷ Again, the bust on the obverse has been replaced; this time by a winged Victory standing on the prow of one of Demetrius' ships. The reverse of this coin bears an image of Poseidon preparing to throw his trident, following the customary depiction of a deity, but with clear ties to the naval engagement (Fig. 3b).¹⁸ These two examples clearly demonstrate that the iconography on Hellenistic coins commemorating particular victories displays imagery specifically reflective of that victory. This would have made these issues both commemorative and a readily transportable means of disseminating propaganda.

If Hellenistic commemorative coins display imagery clearly reflective of the engagement, then the imagery on the 'shield coins' must be representative of something else (contrary to Carson and Tarn). The evidence shows that these coins, rather than just commemorating a

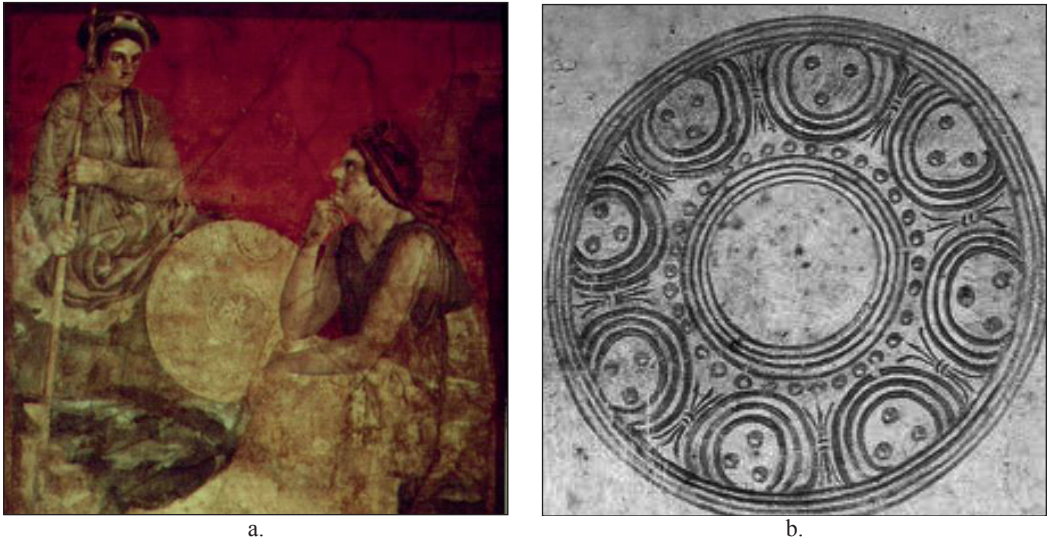


Figure 4: Pictorial evidence for Hellenistic shields. a. Fresco from the Villa of Fannius Synistor. b. Painting from the tomb of Lyson and Callicles.

specific battle, are testaments to the actions of particular units within a Hellenistic army. This is confirmed by the very thing that the ‘shield coins’ are named after—the shields carried by the different units of Hellenistic armies.

Liampi, in her examination of the Macedonian shield, covers the extensive range of evidence, which comes in a variety of forms ranging from the pictorial to the archaeological, all of which indicates that infantry shields in the Hellenistic Period were decorated in a manner consistent with their portrayal on the ‘shield coins’.¹⁹ A fresco from the Villa of Fannius Synistor in Boscoreale for example, dated to the third century BC and which has been suggested to be a depiction of Antigonos Gonatas, clearly shows a Hellenistic shield with the concentric crescent pattern and centrally positioned rosette common to some ‘shield coins’ (Fig. 4a).²⁰ A wall painting from the tomb of Lyson and Callicles at

Lefkadia also contains a depiction of a Hellenistic shield with the common concentric crescent pattern running around the edge (Fig. 4b).²¹

The archaeological remains of shield facings, and of miniature votives in the form of shields, also display the common concentric crescent pattern with various decorations in the centre.²²

Other artistic examples of Hellenistic shields, in the form of statuary and relief carvings with varying decorations, can be seen on the Monument of Aemilius Paullus at Delphi—built to commemorate the Roman victory over the Macedonians at Pydna in 168BC (Fig. 5a). There is also evidence for the decoration of Hellenistic shields on the frieze of the so called ‘Alexander Sarcophagus’ of King Abdalonymus of Sidon, from the fourth century BC (Fig. 5b).

The figures on the ‘Alexander Sarcophagus’ were originally elaborately painted with bright colours and minute



a.



b.

Figure 5. Sculptural representations of Hellenistic shields. a. The Monument of Aemilius Paullus, Delphi. b. The 'Alexander Sarcophagus'.²³

detail. This detail has unfortunately faded and degraded with the passing of the centuries. However, the traces of remaining pigment show that some of the shields borne by the Macedonian troops on the frieze were originally decorated with busts of gods and characters in the centre; just as is shown on some issues of 'shield coins' (see Fig. 2c and 2f).²⁴ One of these busts is even said to have been of Alexander himself, in Persian dress, as King of Asia.²⁵

Sekunda, in his book on the Macedonian army, suggests that the different images portrayed in the centre of the shields on the 'Alexander Sarcophagus' were representative of different units within the army of Alexander the Great.²⁶ Everson discounts Sekunda's hypothesis, suggesting that the application of regimental insignia upon the shields of Alexander's men would have been both costly and time prohibitive.²⁷ Everson

further suggests that the shield decorations on the 'Alexander Sarcophagus' are merely some form of decoration dreamed up by the artisan who painted it.²⁸ However, the existence of other representations of Macedonian shields with similar decorations (in particular 'shield coins' and the finds of actual shield facings with similar decorations) indicates that the portrayal of shields on the 'Alexander Sarcophagus' is based upon actual practices and is not merely artistic license. Thus Everson's conclusion should be dismissed. Importantly, this various evidence shows that the imagery on the 'shield coins' can be regarded as accurate representations of actual shields that were in use with the units of different Hellenistic armies. Furthermore, if the symbol in the centre of a shield's design was symbolic of a specific unit within an army as Sekunda suggests, then the imagery on the 'shield coins' must also be a reflection of the

shields carried by a specific unit. But to which units do they refer? The key factor in determining the individual contingents that these coins are representing is the actual type of shield that was carried by the different units within a Hellenistic army.

Not all shields carried by troops in the Hellenistic Period were of the same size or configuration.²⁹ Images, such as those on the Monument of Aemilius Paullus and the 'Alexander Sarcophagus', clearly show troops wielding one-handed weapons and/or the large *aspis* of the Greek hoplite. This indicates that what is being shown in these reliefs are not members of a Hellenistic army equipped as regular Macedonian phalangites (i.e. men armed with the small *pelté* and long pike or *sarissa*), but as Greek hoplites.

The identification of the type of shield being carried in the relief carvings allows for an important conclusion to be made: if the shields in the relief on the 'Alexander Sarcophagus' are the hoplite *aspis*, and if those shields are decorated in a manner similar to some 'shield coins', and if these decorations are indicative of individual units within Alexander's army, then it must be concluded that the imagery on some of the 'shield coins' struck under Alexander must be representative of the shields carried by a specific unit within his army which was armed as Greek hoplites. This allows for some of the units that are being honoured on the 'shield coins' issued under Alexander the Great to be identified.

In Alexander's army there were only three units armed as hoplites. The first was the contingent of troops and mercenaries sent by Greek city-states subordinate to Alexander.³⁰ The other two units were the *Hypaspists*. The *Hypaspists* were a unit, 3,000 strong, arranged into three brigades

of 1,000 men each, armed as Greek hoplites which formed a more mobile 'hinge' between Alexander's cavalry on the wings and the slow lumbering phalanx in the centre.³¹ The lead brigade, or *agema*, of the *Hypaspists* formed a unit unto itself and acted as Alexander's Royal Guard.³² Diodorus states that the *Hypaspists* were fiercely loyal to Alexander and would suffer no other commander.³³ Being more mobile than the rest of the phalanx, and somewhat more trustworthy than the mercenary hoplite units, the *Hypaspist* regiment saw some of the fiercest action of any of Alexander's army; under all sorts of conditions, in all theatres of operation, and in every engagement Alexander ever fought.³⁴ In recognition of their bravery, the shields carried by the *Hypaspists* were covered in silver and the name of the unit changed to the *Argyraspids* (the 'Silver Shields').³⁵ In the literary accounts we have of Alexander's campaigns, there are more specific references to the two contingents of *Hypaspists* than there are for any other infantry unit within the whole army.

This evidence suggests that the 'shield coins' struck under Alexander are homages to the actions of these *Hypaspist* units. Interestingly, the majority of 'shield coins' struck under Alexander have only three different designs in the centre of the shield: the Gorgon head, the thunderbolt and a bust of Herakles, and all have infantry helmets on the reverse sides.³⁶ It is possible that the three common insignia in the centre of Alexander's 'shield coins' are representative of the Royal Guard and the two units of 'regular' *Hypaspists*.³⁷

As noted, Alexander may have portrayed himself as Herakles, from whom the line of Macedonian kings claimed descent, on some of his 'standard' coin

issues (see note 1). Some images of Alexander also show him wielding a lightning bolt (for example see Fig. 3a). The lightning bolt was a symbol of the god Zeus, from whom Alexander additionally claimed direct descent.³⁸ Price also identifies the depiction of the Gorgon head on the shield as a direct tie to the shield that was carried by Herakles; which had an image of Fear depicted in the centre; although this correlation is somewhat questionable.³⁹ This would suggest that those ‘shield coins’ which possess either a lightning bolt or some correlation to Herakles in their centre could be representations of the shields carried by troops with a close connection to Alexander himself; most likely his *Hypaspists* and Royal Guard. This correlates to the imagery on the shields of the hoplites on the Alexander Sarcophagus. Unfortunately, the ancient texts rarely make a distinction between the different *Hypaspist* units. As such, the attribution of a specific one of these three insignia to the Royal Guard is all but impossible.

Regardless, the evidence clearly identifies the majority of ‘shield coins’ struck under Alexander the Great as representative of the *Hypaspist* units. Furthermore, it is possible to connect most of the individual issues of ‘shield coins’ from various cities to specific historical events involving the *Hypaspists*. Due to the lack of distinguishable (and more importantly datable) markings on these coins, the attribution of these issues to specific events can only deal in probabilities rather than absolutes. However, certain criteria allow for the events which these issues are commemorating to be narrowed down:

a. The minting city: A city cannot have been issuing coinage under the authority of Alexander the Great prior to that city falling to Alexander. For example, coins struck at Miletus are unlikely to have been minted before the city fell to Alexander in 334BC.

b. The date of the commemorative event: If a coin is commemorating a specific event, then the issue has to have been struck after that event has occurred. This sets an ‘earliest possible’ striking date for the issue.

c. Proximity of the event: The event that is being commemorated is most likely to have occurred close to the minting city.

d. Proximity of Alexander’s army: Unlike larger commemorative issues (Fig. 3) or coins with ‘standard’ imagery (Fig. 1), ‘shield coins’ would have had little propaganda value within the general circulation of the minting city. The ‘value’ of the imagery on the ‘shield coins’ lies in their distribution among the soldiers of Alexander’s army as a means of recognising the valour of specific units and in providing a tangible reminder for other units to emulate.⁴⁰ As such, the issuance of ‘shield coins’ has to have occurred shortly after the event being commemorated while Alexander’s army was still in the region (most likely within one or two months of the event). Once the army had moved on, either to a distance where it was no longer practical for the minting city to send coinage to the army and/or to where a new event had occurred which warranted the striking of a new series of commemorative ‘shield coins’ by a different city, the minting city would not

have been required to continue the issue. This explains the sporadic, and short-lived, nature of the striking of 'shield coins' and sets a 'latest possible' striking date for the issue.

e. Involvement of the Hypaspists: Importantly, for the shields of the *Hypaspists* to be depicted on a commemorative issue, the regiment has to have played a pivotal role in a battle or event near the minting city to warrant such recognition.

By following these guidelines, it is possible to connect every issue of 'shield coins' under the authority of Alexander the Great with a historical event, which occurred close to the minting city, and in which a contingent of *Hypaspists* played a pivotal role. Furthermore, these criteria establish a narrower date-range for the striking of the issue than is found in most numismatic catalogues.

'Shield coins' from Macedonia

Alexander rose to the throne of Macedon following the assassination of his father, Philip II, in 336BC.⁴¹ Following Philip's death, several Greek city-states revolted from their previous alliance with Macedon. Alexander subdued these rebellious cities prior to his departure for the east in 334BC.⁴² The most likely event that these coins, all of which have a lightning bolt in the centre of the obverse side, are commemorating is the storming of the city of Thebes by a contingent of *Hypaspists* under the command of Perdicass in September 335BC.⁴³ The date of the fall of Thebes narrows the date-range for this issue to late 335BC.

'Shield coins' from Sardes

Coins minted in Sardes cannot have been issued prior to the city's capture by Alexander in early 334BC. These coins most likely commemorate the battle of the River Granicus in May 334BC in which *Hypaspist* units, under the command of Nicanor, were part of the initial assault across the watercourse.⁴⁴ Coins minted in Sardes have either the bust of Herakles or the caduceus in the centre of the shield. This suggests that two units are being honoured on these coins. The Herakles coins correlate with the involvement of the *Hypaspists* in a major role in this engagement, while the coins with the caduceus suggest the additional recognition of another unit (possibly a contingent of allied hoplites or even phalangites) on these 'shield coins'. The date for both the fall of Sardes and the battle at the Granicus gives a minting date for these issues of mid-334BC.

'Shield coins' from Miletus

'Shield coins' struck at Miletus cannot have been minted prior to the city's capture by Alexander in mid-334BC. These coins are most likely commemorating the actions of the *Hypaspists* at the siege of Halicarnassus in late 334BC. During this operation, members of the *Hypaspists* were involved in two memorable actions. In one instance, two men from the unit of *Hypaspists* commanded by Perdicass (who were drunk at the time) decided to try and storm the city on their own. The town's garrison counter-attacked but the two inebriated guardsmen managed to fend off all opponents. Both sides committed more

and more troops to the action and the city was almost captured.⁴⁵ A few days later, the city's garrison sallied out again in an attempt to set fire to Alexander's siege engines and the attack was only repulsed by a counter-attack by a well disciplined unit of 'Guards' commanded by Ptolemy.⁴⁶ Tales of this event were still being recounted among Alexander's officers six years later.⁴⁷ As such, it is most likely the valour of the *Hypaspist* unit in this last event that is being commemorated on Alexander's 'shield coins' issued from Miletus. The majority of coins struck at Miletus possess the Gorgon head in the centre (with a few containing a pellet or a double axe).⁴⁸ This correlates with the attribution of the coin to the second event noted above as, had the unit being recognised been under the command of Perdicaas (the commander of the troops in the first event) coins issued from Miletus would most likely possess the lightning bolt in the centre similar to those issued in Macedonia to commemorate the actions of troops under Perdicaas' command (see 'shield coins from Macedonia' above). The time of these events gives a striking date for the issue of late 334BC or early 333BC

'Shield coins' from Asia Minor

Any coins issued in eastern Asia Minor cannot have been minted before Alexander's army conquered the region in mid-333BC. 'Shield coins' issued from this area (probably from Tarsus) most likely commemorate the Battle of Issus in November 333BC.⁴⁹ In this engagement, the *Hypaspists* occupied their regular position on the right wing during the attack across the river and helped break the Persian line. 'Shield coins' attributed to unknown mints in Asia Minor all have a

bust of Herakles which confirm the recognition of the *Hypaspists* on these coins. The date of the event suggests that these coins were minted between late 333BC and early 332BC.

'Shield coins from Salamis (see Fig. 2a)

Cyprian Salamis was not conquered by Alexander but surrendered and later supplied ships to aid Alexander's siege of the island city of Tyre between January and August 332BC.⁵⁰ Coins minted in Cyprian Salamis most likely commemorate the capture of Tyre where a contingent of *Hypaspists*, under the personal command of Alexander, were some of the first troops to breach the city's defences.⁵¹ Coins from Salamis all possess the Gorgon head; suggesting that Alexander led a single unit of *Hypaspists* during the assault. The date of the event provides a minting date of late 332BC for Cyprian 'shield coins'.

Hypaspist units continued to be used in the armies of the 'Successor Kingdoms' following Alexander's death in 323BC. In 317BC, for example, sixty and seventy year old veterans from Alexander's 'Silver Shields' served in the army of Eumenes in his clash against Antigonos Monophthalmos ('the One-Eyed') at Paraetecene in Asia Minor.⁵² Following Eumenes' defeat at Gabiene eight weeks later, Antigonos officially disbanded Alexander's 'Silver Shields' but the *hypaspist* way of fighting would continue throughout the successor kingdoms.⁵³ This is illustrated by the actions of Antiochus III who trained 10,000 Syrian locals to fight as a new, and enlarged, unit of *Hypaspists* in 217BC.⁵⁴

However, the bearing of shields decorated in the same manner as the 'shield coins' appears not to have been

restricted to units armed as hoplites in these later Hellenistic armies. The fragments of two bronze shield coverings, dated to the third century BC, show designs similar to that of the 'shield coins'. However, the curvature of the rim of these fragments shows that the shields possessed a diameter of only 66cm and 74cm respectively.⁵⁵ A terracotta mould used to create the metallic covering for the shields of a Ptolemaic army (third century BC) also measures 70cm in diameter.⁵⁶ The size of these shields is too small to be that of troops armed as hoplites; they can only be the shields of phalangites. As such, it appears that many units in the armies of the later Hellenistic Period carried shields decorated in a manner similar to the 'shield coins' of the same time-period. This makes the attribution of many of these coins to specific units, let alone specific events with which they are associated, much more problematic if the minting city or a narrow date-range for the issue of a coin can not be established.⁵⁷

Regardless of whether a correlation between a 'shield coin' and a particular unit and a specific historical event can be established or not, what is certain is that these coins represent special issues within the world of Hellenistic numismatics. Based on the examples set by the 'shield coins' of Alexander the Great, it can be concluded that all similar coins are singular commemorative issues struck to celebrate the conspicuous actions of particular military units within the armies of various Hellenistic rulers. This accounts for the sporadic nature of the issuance of 'shield coins' throughout the Hellenistic world and the variance in their denomination and place of issue. The identification of a 'shield coin' from a

certain minting city with a specific unit of a Hellenistic army allows for the progress of that unit to be 'tracked' across the Hellenistic world and may even highlight events for which only a scant, or even missing, written record exists (particularly for the 'shield coins' of the later Hellenistic Period). Despite the scarcity of the available evidence for the later period, it is clear that the 'shield coins' of Alexander and the Successors are some of the earliest recognisable commemorations of the actions of individual military units and that the purpose of these coins was to mark the valour of these men.

Notes

1. Coins issued under Alexander the Great regularly display a bust in profile of a young man with a lion skin head-dress on the obverse (see Figure 1b). These images have been variously interpreted as being either an image of Alexander himself, an image of a young Herakles, or an image of Alexander in the guise of Herakles; from whom the line of Macedonian kings claimed descent (Curt. 4.2.3; Arr. *Anab.* 3.3). See: A.R. Bellinger, 'Essays on the Coinage of Alexander the Great' *ANS Numismatic Studies* 11 (1963) 14–21; M. Bieber, 'The Portraits of Alexander the Great' *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 93 (1949) 373–427; O. Palagia, 'Imitation of Herakles in Ruler Portraiture – A Survey from Alexander to Maximinus Daza' *Boreas* 9 (1986) 137–151; K. Dahmen, *The Legend of Alexander the Great on Greek and Roman Coins* (London, Routledge, 2007) 39–41. Price (*The Coinage in the Name of Alexander the Great and Philip Arrhidaeus Vol.1* (London, British Museum Press, 1991) 33) suggests that the practice of placing of a monarch's image on the obverse of a coin began with the *diadochi*. This would rule out the depiction of Alexander (as Herakles) on his own issues. However, there is some evidence that supports the idea that the images on Alexander's coins may be portraits of the young king. One is a statue, attributed to Lysippos, of

Alexander wearing a lion skin helmet in the guise of Herakles which was found in Sparta (see: P. Green, *Alexander the Great* (London, Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1970) 27). The features of this statue bear a striking resemblance to the portraiture on Alexander's coinage (as do images of Alexander on posthumous issues struck under the successors (see Figure 1). Price (p.33) warns that, even though there are similarities between the bust on Alexander's coins and the images of Alexander on other issues, the unwary should not jump to conclusions too quickly. However, the frieze on the 'Alexander Sarcophagus' of king Abdalonymos of Sidon (c.311BC), now in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, distinctively portrays Alexander on horseback wearing the lion-skin on his head. A bust of Alexander found near Corinth (c.330BC) also shows Alexander wearing the lion-skin of Herakles (see: D.M. Robinson, 'Unpublished Sculpture in the Robinson Collection' *AJA* 59:1 (1955) 25, pl. 16). Furthermore, the bust on the obverse of a gold stater issued towards the end of Alexander's life (Westmoreland 5) is said to possibly be the depiction of Alexander in the guise of Apollo (see: M. Thompson, 'Posthumous Philip II Staters of Asia Minor' in S. Scheer (ed.), *Studia Paulo Naster Olbata* (Leuven, Orientaliste, 1982) 57–63). If it is possible that one coin contemporaneous with Alexander's lifetime (albeit the end of his life) is a depiction of the king in the guise of a god, then it cannot simply be ruled out that the images on other coins struck during Alexander's lifetime are not similar depictions of Alexander as a deity (such as Herakles). No theory for the identity of the figure on Alexander's coins is able to provide irrefutable evidence to support its position and either possibility is as likely as the other. As such, it also cannot be ruled out that the images on coins attributed to Philip II, but issued under the authority of Alexander (see Figure 1a), are depictions of Philip in the guise of Zeus (see: A.N. Oikonomides, 'A Portrait of King Philip II of Macedonia' *The Ancient World* 20:1/2 (1989) 5–16)—Philip had, after all, stylised himself as the thirteenth Olympian god (Diod. Sic. 16.92.5, 16.95.1). If this is the case, then Alexander/ Herakles could have illustrated, through the images on his early coin issues, a

parallel line of descent from Philip/Zeus. This would have helped Alexander to cement his tenuous hold on the Macedonian throne in the early months of his reign and would place the beginnings of the depiction of royal portraiture on Hellenistic coinage with the issues minted under Alexander. Unfortunately, the true identity of the figures on Alexander's coins may never be definitively established.

2. For an overview of the different designs found in the centre of the shield design see: K. Liampi, *Der makedonische Schild* (Bonn, Rudolf Habelt, 1998) 33–41.
3. For examples of 'shield coins' issued in Macedonia see: Price: 397, 403b, 405b, 406, 407, 409, 416a, 417, 420a; for examples of 'shield coins' issued in Bactria c.190–171BC see: Mitchiner 106–107.
4. **a:** Alexander III (the Great) 336–328BC—AR Tetradrachm (23mm, 14.27g). *Obv:* laureate head of Zeus (or Philip); *Rev:* rider on horse carrying palm frond. *Insc:* ΦΙΛΙΠ ΠΟΥ ('of Philip'), 12 pointed star below. *Mint:* Pella (SNG ANS 8410); **b:** Alexander III (the Great) 336–328BC—AR Drachm (16mm, 4.24g). *Obv:* head of young Herakles/Alexander to right with lion skin head-dress; *Rev:* seated Zeus with staff and eagle. Lightning bolt to left, monogram under throne. *Insc:* ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ('of Alexander'). *Mint:* Miletos (Price 2088); **c:** Ptolemy I (Soter)—satrap 323–305BC—AR Tetradrachm (26mm, 16.59g) struck in the name of Alexander III c.319–315BC. *Obv:* diademed head of Alexander to right with elephant skin head-dress; *Rev:* Athena advancing to right with raised spear and shield, ΕΥ and eagle on lightning bolt to right. *Insc:* ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ('of Alexander'). *Mint:* Alexandria (SNG Copenhagen 4015). **d:** Lysimachos 305–281BC—AR Tetradrachm (30mm, 17.10g). *Obv:* diademed head of the deified Alexander with Horn of Ammon to right; *Rev:* seated Athena to left holding Nike in right hand and reclining on shield. Spear behind. Monogram to left. *Insc:* ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΛΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΣ ('King Lysimachos'). *Mint:* Uncertain (Müller 414); **e:** Antiochus II 261–246BC—AR Tetradrachm (28mm, 17.02g). *Obv:* Diademed head of Antiochus I to the right; *Rev:* seated Apollo Delphios, monograms to outer left and right, *Insc:* ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ ('of King Antiochus'). *Mint:* Seleukia on the Tigris

- (SC 587.1c); **f**: Diodotos II 246-230BC—AR Tetradrachm (26mm, 16.66g). *Obv*: diademed head of Diodotos II to right; *Rev*: Zeus striding left hurling lightning bolt and with outstretched left arm. Eagle and wreath to left, B to right. *Insc*: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΔΙΟΔΟΤΟΥ ('of king Diodotos'). *Mint*: Bactria – Mint B (Mitchiner 74).
5. R.A.G. Carson, *Coins – Ancient, Medieval and Modern Vol.I (Coins of Greece and Rome)* (London, Radius Books, 1971) 85.
 6. G. MacDonald, *Catalogue of Greek Coins in the Hunterian Collection – University of Glasgow Vol.1: Italy, Sicily, Macedon, Thrace and Thessaly* (Glasgow, Maclehose and Sons, 1899) 340; Carson (n.6) 85.
 7. **a**: Nikokreon 323-315BC—AE ½ unit (15mm, 4.20g) struck under Alexander III 336–323BC. *Obv*: Macedonian shield with five sets of concentric crescents and five sets of quincunx dots in an alternating pattern around edge, Gorgon's head in centre. *Rev*: Macedonian helmet with caduceus lower left. *Insc*: Β_Α (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ('of King Alexander')). *Mint*: Salamis (Price 3158); **b**: Antipater, Polyperchon or Cassander c.325–310BC—AE ½ unit (16mm, 4.75g). *Obv*: Macedonian shield with four sets of concentric crescents enclosing a pellet and four adjoining rosettes in an alternating pattern around edge. Lightning bolt within two concentric circles in centre; *Rev*: Macedonian helmet with plume and snake below. *Insc*: Β_Α (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ('of King Alexander')) *Mint*: uncertain (Price 409); **c**: Antigonos II (Gonatas) 277–239BC—AR Tetradrachm (30mm, 17.07g). *Obv*: Macedonian shield with seven sets of concentric crescents enclosing a rosette around edge. Head of Pan with horns and goat-skin cloak to left in centre; *Rev*: Athena advancing to left with raised lightning bolt and shield. Helmet to left, monogram to right. *Insc*: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΟΥ ('of King Antigonos'). *Mint*: uncertain (SNG Copenhagen2 1199); **d**: Philip V 221–179BC—AE (17mm, 5.17g). *Obv*: Macedonian shield with six sets of concentric crescents enclosing a pellet and a tri-dot arrangement in an alternating pattern around edge. Rosette with six petals within two concentric circles in centre; *Rev*: club of Herakles. *Insc*: Β_Α_Φ_Ι (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ ('of King Philip')). *Mint*: uncertain (SNG Sargolos 949) **e**: Philip V 221–179BC—AE ½ unit (12mm, 1.49g) struck c.186–182BC. *Obv*: Macedonian shield with six sets of concentric crescents enclosing a pellet around edge. Pellet within two concentric circles in centre. *Rev*: Macedonian helmet with plume and cheek guards. *Insc*: Β_Α_Φ_Ι (ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ_ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ ('of King Philip')). *Mint*: uncertain (SNG Alpha Bank 1102); **f**: Macedon (Roman protectorate) c.158–146BC—AR Tetradrachm (31mm, 16.76g). *Obv*: Macedonian shield with seven sets of concentric crescents enclosing a half-rosette and bi-dot arrangement in an alternating pattern around rim. Diademed head of Artemis with quiver to right enclosed with a circle and a ring of dots in centre. *Rev*: club of Herakles within oak wreath. Lightning bolt to left, monograms on top and bottom. *Insc*: ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ_ΠΡΩΤΗΣ ('of the first region of the Macedonians'). *Mint*: Amphipolis (SNG Copenhagen2 1314).
 8. W.W. Tarn, *Antigonos Gonatas* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1969) 174; interestingly, the biography of Aratus suggests that the hymn to Pan may have been composed before Aratus' time with Antigonos but that it may have been first performed for the new king (*Vit. Arat.* 3.15). There is also no mention in the biography of any correlation between the hymn, Pan, Antigonos, the battle of Lysimachia and a 'divine panic'.
 9. Tarn (n.8) frontispiece.
 10. Diog. Laert. 2.141–142; Just. 25.2.1–10; see also: *Vit. Arat.* 3.11–15; for Pan causing 'terror without reason' (although mentioned in an account of the battle of Delphi during the Gallic invasion of Greece c.279BC rather than the battle of Lysimachia) see: Paus. 10.23.5.
 11. Tarn (n.8) 165; see also: F.M. Heichelheim, 'Numismatic Evidence for the battle of Lysimachia' *American Journal of Philology* 64:3 (1943) 332–333.
 12. Pritchett (*The Greek State at War Vol.III* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1979), 32–34) suggests that as there is no literary evidence to tie Pan to Lysimachia, modern scholars have made this association based solely on the depiction of Pan on the 'shield coins' of Antigonos.
 13. **a**: Alexander III ('the Great') 336–323BC—AR Dekadrachm (42.4g) *OBV*: Macedonian cavalryman (Alexander?) charging Indian war

- elephant with mahout and warrior. Warrior (Porus?) facing left to engage cavalryman; REV: standing Alexander in armour with spear upright in left hand and thunderbolt in outstretched right hand. Nike above crowning with wreath. MINT: uncertain: possibly Bactra or Taxila (Mitchiner 21); **b**: Demetrios Poliorketes ('The Besieger') 306–283BC—AR Tetradrachm (30mm, 17.11g) struck c.300–295BC. *Obv*: Nike standing on a ship's bow blowing a trumpet; *Rev*: Poseidon striding left preparing to hurl trident and with outstretched left arm. Monograms to left and right. *Insc*: BA_ΣΙΑΕΩ_Σ_ΔΕΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ('of King Demetrios'). *Mint*: Salamis (SNG Copenhagen2 1193).
14. Antigonos steps into power vacuum left by death of Ptolemy: Memn. 14.1; Paus. 1.16.2; Antigonos subdues Macedonia by force: Euseb. *Chron*. 235d; Antigonos inherits the throne from the line of succession: *Vit. Arat*. 3.14–15; see also: M. Chambers, 'The First Regnal Year of Antigonos Gonatus' *American Journal of Philology* 75:4 (1954), 385–394.
 15. For accounts of the battle see: Arr. *Anab*. 5.18.9–11, Diod. Sic. 17.87.1–17.89.3; Curt. 8.13.3–8.14.46; Plut. *Alex*. 60; Head (*Historia Numorum—A Manual of Greek Numismatics* (London, Spink, 1963) 832–833) suggests that the cavalryman depicted on the coin may be Taxiles, an Indian satrap fighting on the side of Alexander, as the imagery on this coin closely follows part of the account of the battle given by Arrian: 'Taxiles rode up as near as he dared [to the Elephant upon which Porus was riding] and requested him to stop his elephant and hear what message Alexander had sent him as escape was no longer possible. But Taxiles was an old enemy of the Indian king and Porus turned his elephant and drove at him; to kill him with his lance'. Head further suggests that this coin may have been issued in Taxiles' capital (Taxila) by Taxiles himself in commemoration of the episode and may be the one of the earliest Dekadrachms minted so far to the east. F.L. Holt (*Alexander the Great and the Mystery of the Elephant Medallions* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2003) 124–126) dismisses the conclusion that the mounted figure is Taxiles based upon the similarity between the armour that the mounted figure is wearing to that of the figure on the reverse side of the coin; which is considered to be Alexander. Holt convincingly argues that the figures on both sides of the coin are representations of Alexander in Macedonian armour. Mitchiner (21) assigns Bactra as the issuing mint for this coin.
 16. For the identification of this figure as Alexander the Great see: Holt (n.14) 122–124.
 17. Diod. Sic. 20.49.1–20.52.3; Paus. 1.6.6; Polyaeus, *Strat*. 4.7.7.
 18. See: Carson, *Coins*, 86.
 19. See: Liampi (n.3).
 20. See: Liampi (n.3) 57–58, pl.4; The attribution of this painting to a portrait of Antigonos is, however, problematic when compared with the numismatic evidence as all of the 'shield coins' issued under Antigonos have the head of Pan in the centre (see Figure 2c) and not the rosette as shown in the fresco. Regardless, there are still similarities between the shield shown in the painting and the decorations on many shield coins.
 21. Liampi (n.3) 56–57.
 22. See: Liampi (n.3) 51–55, pl. 1.
 23. **a**: Author's photo; **b**: Image taken from: L. Foreman, *Alexander the Conqueror* (Cambridge, Da Capo Press, 2004) 6–7; For other examples of artistic and sculptural representations of Hellenistic shields see: Liampi (n.3) 59–97, pl. 6–21.
 24. T. Everson, *Warfare in Ancient Greece* (Stroud, Sutton, 2004) 180.
 25. Everson (n.24) 180.
 26. N. Sekunda, *The Army of Alexander the Great* (Oxford, Osprey, 1999) 38.
 27. Everson (n.24) 180; it is unsure what Everson has based this conclusion on as most shields across the Greek world from the sixth century BC onwards were decorated with highly elaborate (and mostly likely costly) designs. Some states, such as Sparta, also had recognisable 'national' emblems painted on the shields of their troops (Paus. 4.28.5; Photius, *Lexicon*, n.v 'lambda'). As such, the use of a single device to identify a particular unit in the Hellenistic Period was not without an earlier precedent.
 28. Everson (n.24) 180.
 29. The ancient military writer Asclepiodotus describes the Macedonian shield (or *pelté*) as only 64cm in diameter (*Tact*. 5.1). It had a central armband through which the left forearm was inserted, a shoulder strap used to support its

- weight, and a small strap near the outer rim which went around the wrist. When worn, the left hand extended beyond the rim of the shield. This was important as it left the hand free to wield the phalangite's primary weapon: the *sarissa*. The *sarissa* was, in effect, a very long pike. Throughout the Hellenistic Period the length of the *sarissa* varied from 5 to 7½m (Ascl. *Tact.* 5.1, Polyb. 18.29; Ael. *Tact.* 12). Due to its great length and subsequent weight, the *sarissa* could not be wielded in one hand but had to be carried in both hands with the weapon held about waist height—hence the requirement for the left hand to extend beyond the rim of the *pelté* (Polyb. 18.29–30). The other shield used by some units of Hellenistic armies was the hoplite *aspis*. The *aspis* was larger than the Macedonian *pelté* with an average diameter of 90cm and was 'bowl-like' in shape (Tyr. 1; Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.18; Ar. *Av.* 484; for archaeological finds of the remains of the *aspis* see: P.C. Bol, *Argivische Schilde* (Berlin, Walter De Gruyter, 1989) 106–117; M.T. Homolle, *Fouilles de Delphes—Tome V* (Paris, Ancienne Librairie Thorin et Fils, 1908) 103, D.M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus, Part X—Metal and Minor Miscellaneous Finds* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1941) 443; T.L. Shear 'The Campaign of 1936' *Hesperia* #6—*The American Excavations in the Athenian Agora: 12th Report* 6:3 (1937) 347). The *aspis* possessed no shoulder strap like the *pelté*. However, the 'bowl-like' concavity of the shield allowed for much of its weight to be rested on the shoulder. Due to its size, the left hand did not extend beyond the outer rim but grasped a corded handle behind the inner rim. This meant that the *aspis* could only be used with one-handed weapons like swords or the thrusting spear of the classical hoplite.
30. Alexander received contingents of reinforcements from Greek city-states right throughout his campaign. For example see: Arr. *Anab.* 2.20, 3.5, 3.17; Diod. Sic. 17.17.4, 17.65.1; Curt. 5.1.40–42.
 31. For the positioning of the *Hypaspists* between the cavalry and the phalangites see: Arr. *Anab.* 1.14, 3.11–12; the term '*Hypaspist*' has its root in the Greek word *aspis* (the name of the hoplite shield) and translates as 'shield bearer'. This indicates how these troops were armed (i.e. as hoplites). For recent discussions on the armament of the *Hypaspists* see: W. Hekel and R. Jones, *Macedonian Warrior—Alexander's Elite Infantryman* (Oxford, Osprey, 2006) 18, 32, 41, 63; Everson (n.24) 177; Sekunda (n.26) 30; P. Connolly, *Greece and Rome at War* (London, Greenhill Books, 1998) 70; for an overview of the arguments both for and against the *Hypaspists* being armed as hoplites see: J.F.C. Fuller, *The Generalship of Alexander the Great* (London, Wordsworth, 1998) 49–50.
 32. Arr. *Anab.* 1.2; see also: Sekunda (n.26) 30; Hekel and Jones (n.31) 32–44.
 33. Diod. Sic. 14.6.7.
 34. For the 'elite' status and operations of the *Hypaspists* and the Royal Guard see: Arr. *Anab.* 1.2, 1.5–8, 1.14, 1.28, 2.4, 2.8, 2.20, 2.23–24, 2.27, 3.2, 3.11, 3.17–18, 4.26, 4.29–30, 5.13, 5.23, 6.2–3, 7.11; Diod. Sic. 14.6.7, 17.45.6, 17.57.2, 17.61.3, 17.99.4, 17.110.1; During Alexander's withdrawal down the Indus River, Peucestas, the commander of the *Hypaspists*, was even personally responsible for saving the life of the young King despite being seriously wounded himself (see: Arr. *Anab.* 6.10; Diod. Sic. 17.99.4; Curt. 9.5.14–19).
 35. Diod. Sic. 17.57.2; Arr. *Anab.* 7.11; note how the root of the new name for the unit is still the word for the hoplite shield (*aspis*) showing that this unit was still armed in its original manner. Interestingly Everson who, as noted earlier, thought that the painting of unit specific insignia on the shields carried by Alexander's army would have been cost and time prohibitive, makes no comment on the apparent time or cost involved in covering the shields of an entire unit in silver.
 36. In Price's catalogue of the coins of Alexander for example, coins with a lightning bolt in the centre of the shield all come from Macedonian mints (397–420). Coins with the Gorgon head come from Miletus (2063–2066, 2068A–2070) and Cyprian Salamis (3157–3162A). Coins with Herakles come from unknown mints in Asia Minor (2801–2808A) and Sardes (2546, 2573). These constitute the bulk of the 'shield coins' issued under Alexander. There are also small issues containing a double axe (2067–2068) or a pellet (2071–2072) from Miletus and coins with a caduceus (2604–2607, 2612–2614) from Sardes.
 37. What the other issues may be representative of is difficult to determine. These coins could be representative of contingents within the other

- unit of hoplites in Alexander's army—those from the subordinate Greek city-states. It is also possible that the units of heavy phalangites in Alexander's army also carried shields decorated in the manner of the 'shield coins'; just like units in later Hellenistic armies (see following). Unfortunately, the only representations we have of Alexander's infantry are all depictions of hoplites rather than phalangites so this possibility can not be explored further. However, it would provide an explanation for the less frequent designs on Alexander's 'shield coins'.
38. Arr. *Anab.* 3.3; Diod. Sic. 17.51.1; Curt. 4.7.8; Plut. *Alex.* 27.
39. Price (n.1) 39; Hes. *Sc.* 144.
40. Interestingly, the 'shield coins' issued under the authority of Alexander are all small bronze coins. While the rate of pay for soldiers in the Classical and Hellenistic periods was calculated in 'obols per day' (Thuc. 5.71; Xen. *Hell.* 5.2.21; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 42.3; Men. *Olynthia*, fr.357; Dem. 4.28) the pay seems to have been doled out in 'staters per month' (Arr. *Anab.* 7.23.3–4). The small bronze 'shield coins' may be part of some form of donative given to the army ('an extra obol in your pay packet'), after a particular victory, on which the shield of a unit that had distinguished itself in the battle is represented. It is only in the later Hellenistic Period that 'shield coins' begin to appear in larger denominations and in silver (see Fig. 2). This may be reflective of the tenuous reliability of some contingents during this time and the need for larger 'donatives' to secure the loyalty of the army (Eumenes, for example, was handed over to his rival, Antigonus, by contingents of his own unit of 'Silver Shields' following the battle of Gabiene in 316BC). It is also possible that the minting city produced these 'shield coins' specifically for the soldiers of Alexander's army to use in their markets while the troops were in the vicinity of the minting city. While this accounts for the short-term and sporadic nature of the issues, it does not account for the similarities in the designs (other than the various motifs in the centre), or the variances in denomination, for coins issued at different times and in different places right across the Hellenistic world. Regardless, of what the coins were actually used for, the important aspect of the issues is the representation of the shields carried by specific units on the obverse side of the coins.
41. Plut. *Alex.* 11.
42. Arr. *Anab.* 1.1–7; Diod. Sic. 17.7.3–17.13.4; Plut. *Alex.* 11–14.
43. Coins: Price 397–420; Perdicas as commander of the 'Guards': Arr. *Anab.* 1.8; the storming of Thebes: Diod. Sic. 17.12.3; Plut. *Alex.* 11.
44. Coins: Price 2546, 2573 (Herakles); 2604–2607, 2612–2614 (caduceus); description of the battle: Arr. *Anab.* 1.14–17.
45. On Perdicas commanding the 'Guards': Arr. *Anab.* 1.8; on the 'drunk battle': Arr. *Anab.* 1.21.
46. Arr. *Anab.* 1.22; Diod. Sic. 17.27.2.
47. Curt. 8.1.36.
48. Coins: Price 2063–2066, 2068A–2070 (Gorgon); 2067–2068 (double axe); 2071–2072 (pellet).
49. Coins: Price 2801–2808A; account of the battle: Arr. *Anab.* 2.8–10; Diod. Sic. 17.33.1–17.36.6; Curt. 3.9.1–3.11.20.
50. Plut. *Alex.* 24; Arr. *Anab.* 2.20.
51. Coins: Price 3157–3162A; the storming of Tyre by the *Hypaspists*: Arr. *Anab.* 2.24; Diod. Sic. 17.45.6.
52. Diod. Sic. 18.59.3, 18.61.3–5; Nep. 18.7.1–3, 18.8.1; Plut. *Eum.* 13–15; see also: Polyaeus, *Strat.* 4.6.10, 4.8.2.
53. Diod. Sic. 19.40.1–19.48.3–4; Plut. *Eum.* 16–19; Polyaeus, *Strat.* 4.6.13, 4.6.15; Just. *Epit.* 14.3.7; Oros. 3.23.
54. Polyb. 5.79.
55. Liampi (n.3) 52–55, pl.1.
56. Liampi (n.3) 59–61, pl.5.
57. For example, the two 'shield coins' issued under Philip V (221–179BC) in Figure 2 (d and e), are from what is listed in the numismatic catalogues as 'uncertain' mints. During his long reign, Philip expanded Macedonian control over mainland Greece, the island of Rhodes, several other islands in the Aegean and 'all of the commercial ports and harbours in Asia Minor' in which he left garrisons (Polyb. 18.2, 18.8, 18.44). Without the identification of a minting city or specific date, the attribution of any of Philip's 'shield coins' to any of the numerous engagements which were a part of this expansion is all but impossible. For some 'shield coins' the short lived reign of the authorising ruler can help pinpoint the event that the issue is commemorating. For example, in

149BC a pretender to the Macedonian throne named Andriscus formulated a rebellion against the Romans by calling himself Philip VI and claiming descent from the former ruler Perseus (who had been defeated by the Romans at Pydna in 168BC). In the first major battle of the insurrection, Andriscus defeated the Roman *praetor* P. Juventius Thalna and established control over the whole of Macedonia. However, within a year, a combined Roman and allied army under the command of Q. Caecellus Metellus defeated Andriscus' rebels in another major battle and brought Macedonia back under Roman domination. For his victory, Metellus was given the cognomen 'Macedonicus' (Polyb. 36.10.1–7; Vell. Pat. 1.11.1; Flor. 1.30.1–5; Paus. 7.13.1; Diod. Sic. 32.15.1–7; Eutr. 4.13.1; Livy, 50a, 50e; Zonar. 9.23e, 9.28b–d; Euseb. *Chron.* 239c–d). Due to the brevity of Andriscus' rule, a 'shield coin' (Weber 2251) issued by Andriscus has to commemorate the only victory he had – his defeat of Juventius. Despite all the literary sources lacking any detail of the specific units involved in the battle, the issue of a 'shield coin' suggests that there was at least one contingent armed as hoplites or phalangites within Andriscus' army that played an important role in the victory. The issue of a coin following the same style as previous rulers would have also helped Andriscus legitimise his tenuous position on the Macedonian throne. Another 'shield coin' (Weber 2250) is attributed to Juventius. This seems unlikely as Juventius was killed in the first battle of the rebellion. The inscription on the back of this coin (ΑΕΓ_ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ ('Legion of Macedon') clearly identifies it as a pro-Roman issue. It is more likely that the coin was struck under the authority of Metellus to commemorate his suppression of the rebellion. The issue is of a Roman 'shield coin', suggesting that there was at least one unit of hoplites or phalangites among the allied contingents of Metellus' combined army. The date of Metellus' victory narrows the striking date for this coin to 148BC.

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