

## ANOTHER CENTURY OF GODS? A RE-EVALUATION OF SELEUKID RULER CULT\*

### ABSTRACT:

This paper argues that numismatic representations portraying living Seleukid kings as divine can be found before the reign of Antiochos III on royal coinage. Furthermore, the numismatic evidence does not support a claim that Antiochos III presented his own divinity on coinage in a way that is significantly different from that of his predecessors. Instead it was not until the reign of Antiochos IV that the living king was unequivocally portrayed as divine through the legend on his coinage. The numismatic evidence therefore differs from the epigraphic evidence as it is only under Antiochos III that there is inscriptional evidence for the recognition of a deified living Seleukid king in a non-civic context. This paper argues that the coinage re-examined here provides evidence for the royal presentation of the kings' divinity in a non-civic context. In doing so, this paper opens the possibility of re-assessing when a Seleukid royal cult developed.

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This paper proposes that living Seleukid kings were recognised as divine by the royal court before the reign of Antiochos III despite lacking an established centralised ruler cult like their fellow Ptolemaic kings.<sup>1</sup> Owing to the nature of the surviving evidence, we are forced to rely heavily on numismatics to construct a view of Seleukid royal ideology.<sup>2</sup> Regrettably it seems that up until now much of the numismatic evidence for the divinity of living Seleukid rulers has not been fully considered.<sup>3</sup> I argue that the evidence from silver coinage produced in the name of the king presents a version of the official image of the king and that images that portray the king as divine reflect central acceptance of the king's divinity. Thus coinage with divine images of the kings provided one of the mechanisms through which the royal court transmitted the divine nature of the kings to the population. As we will see, in the case of Antiochos Hierax, local considerations also influenced the numismatic representation of the king. This blurring of boundaries between local veneration of the king, which has long been accepted as normal civic practice, and royal images of the divine king calls into question the strict division between civic and centralised ruler cults.<sup>4</sup> The reflection of local cults within royal ideology can be seen as a manifestation of a negotiative model of Seleukid power that relied heavily on dialogue with a

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<sup>1</sup> For the Ptolemaic system see S. Pfeiffer, *Herrscher- und Dynastiekulte im Ptolemäerreich : Systematik und Einordnung der Kultformen* (München: C. H. Beck, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> See for example O. Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria*, *Classica et Mediaevalia Dissertationes VIII* (Copenhagen, 1966); P.P. Iossif, 'Les Monnaies de Suse Frappées Par Séleucos Ier: Une Nouvelle Approche,' *Numismatica E Antichità Classiche* 33 (2004): 249–71; O.D. Hoover, 'Never Mind the Bullocks: Taurine Imagery as a Multicultural Expression of Royal and Divine Power under Seleukos I Nikator,' in *More than Men, Less than Gods: Studies on Royal Cult and Imperial Worship: Proceedings of the International Colloquium Organized by the Belgian School at Athens (November 1-2, 2007)*, ed. P.P. Iossif, A.S. Chankowski, and C. Lorber (Leuven, 2011), 197–228; K. Erickson, 'Seleucus I, Zeus and Alexander,' in *Every Inch a King: Comparative Studies in Kings and Kingship in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds.*, ed. L. Mitchell and C. Melville (Leiden, 2012), 109–28.

<sup>3</sup> The evidence for cults of the Ptolemaic kings is so extensive that investigations into the links between the numismatic representations and cults are often ignored in favour of the more documentary evidence, see for example S.G. Caneva, 'Queens and Ruler Cults in Early Hellenism,' *Kernos. Revue Internationale et Pluridisciplinaire de Religion Grecque Antique* 25 (October 2012): 75–101 who does not discuss the numismatic portraits of Arsinoë II. P. van Nuffelen 'Le Culte Royal de L'empire Des Séleucides: Une Réinterprétation,' *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 53, no. 3 (2004): 278–301 goes the furthest in combining the epigraphic and numismatic material for the Seleukid royal cult. The "More than Men, Less than Gods: Studies on Royal Cult and Imperial Worship" colloquium organized by the Belgian School at Athens and subsequent proceedings make further strides in this direction.

<sup>4</sup> The clearest proponent of this view is C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum Und Griechische Städte*<sup>2</sup>, (München, 1970).

wide range interest groups.<sup>5</sup> This article argues that the inconsistencies in the development of an iconography of divine kingship before the reign of Antiochos IV is a manifestation of the same phenomenon.

Following Habicht's work on the divinity of the Hellenistic kings, scholars have tended to divide ruler cults into civic and royal categories.<sup>6</sup> The traditional view of Seleukid cult marks central imposition and control as the dividing line between civic and central cults.<sup>7</sup> Since for the Seleukid kings, the epigraphic evidence for a royal cult is limited before the reign of Antiochos III, this has led to the argument that the Seleukids did not have a centralised cult until his reign,<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See J. Ma, *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor* (Oxford, 2000); L. Capdetrey, *Le pouvoir séleucide: territoire, administration, finances d'un royaume hellénistique, 312-129 avant J.-C* (Rennes, 2007); D. Engels, 'Middle Eastern "Feudalism" and Seleucid Dissolution,' in *Seleucid Dissolution: The Sinking of the Anchor*, ed. K. Erickson and G. Ramsey (Wiesbaden, 2011); R. Strootman, 'Hellenistic Court Society: The Seleucid Imperial Court under Antiochos the Great, 223-187 BCE.,' in *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective*, ed. J. Duindam, T. Artan, and M. Kunt (Leiden, 2011), 63–89.

<sup>6</sup> For some tempering of this view see P. van Nuffelen, 'Le Culte Des Souverains Hellénistiques,' *Ancient Society* 29 (1999): 298–300; P. Debord (n. 6) in *L'Orient Méditerranéen de La Mort d'Alexandre Aux Campagnes de Pompée*, ed. F. Prost (Toulouse, 2003), 281–310; B. Dreyer, *Die römische Nobilitätsherrschaft und Antiochos III. (205 bis 188 v. Chr.)* (Hennef, 2007), 315–317.

<sup>7</sup> See Habicht (n.4); Ma (n.5), 374; A. Chaniotis 'The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers' in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. A. Erskine (Oxford, 2003), 435–438; A. Chaniotis, "La Divinité Mortelle d'Antiochos III À Téos," *Kernos* 20 (2007): 157.

<sup>8</sup> S. Sherwin-White and A. Kuhrt, *From Samarkhand to Sardis: A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire*. (London: Duckworth, 1993), 203; Ma (n.5), 64; Chaniotis (n.7), 436–437; Debord (n. 6), 281–308; B. Virgilio, 'Epigrafia E Culti Dei Re Seleucidi,' in *Atti dell'Incontro Di Studio Sul Tema: Epigrafia E Storia Delle Religioni: Dal Documento Epigrafico Al Problema Storico-Religioso: Roma, Escuela Española de Historia Y Arqueología En Roma, 28 Maggio 2002*, ed. P. Xella and J.A. Zamora (Verona, 2003), 39–50; van Nuffelen (n. 3), 278–9. For Seleukid ruler cult in general, all of which prefer a late date for the creation of the royal cult see: E. R. Bevan, 'The Deification of Kings in the Greek Cities,' *The English Historical Review* 16, no. 64 (1901): 625–39; C. Lattey, 'The Diadochi and the Rise of King-Worship,' *The English Historical Review* 32, no. 127 (1917): 321–34; A. D. Nock, 'Notes on Ruler-Cult, I-IV,' *JHS* 48 (1928): 21–43; K. Scott, 'The Deification of Demetrius Poliorcetes: Part II,' *American Journal of Philology* 49, no. 3 (1928): 217–39; A.D. Nock, 'SUNNAOS THEOS,' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 41 (1930): 1–62; E. Bickerman, *Institutions Des Séleucides* (Paris, 1938); Habicht (n.4); S.R.F. Price, 'Between Man and God,' *JRS* 70 (1980): 28–43; S.R.F. Price, *Ritual and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1984); S. R. F. Price, "Gods and Emperors: The Greek Language of the Roman Imperial Cult," *JHS* 104 (1984): 79–95; B. 1999. Bosworth, "Augustus, the Res Gestae and Hellenistic Theories of Apotheosis," *JRS* 89 (1999): 1–18; van Nuffelen (n. 6); E. Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," *Classical Philology* 95, no. 1 (2000): 21–43; R.A. Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy: Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda* (Toronto, 2000); Ma (n.5); S. Le Bohec-Bouhet, "The Kings of Macedon and the Cult of Zeus in the Hellenistic Period," in *The Hellenistic World: New Perspectives*, ed. D. Ogden (London, 2002), 41–57; van Nuffelen (n. 3).

well after a similar introduction in the Ptolemaic kingdom.<sup>9</sup> This paper argues that the numismatic evidence does not support a claim that Antiochos III presented his own divinity on coinage in a way that is significantly different from that of his predecessors. Instead it was not until the reign of Antiochos IV that the living king was unequivocally portrayed as divine through the legend on his coinage.<sup>10</sup> The major implication of this is that Antiochos III does not appear to be a distinctive marker in the numismatic representation of Seleukid divinity, and rather both before and after his reign (and through the reign of his son Seleukos IV) the representation of Seleukid kings as divine on coinage did not significantly alter. The recognition of living Seleukid kings as divine on royal coinage prior to the reign of Antiochos III, even if limited in scope, opens the door to a future discussion on the potential for royal cult arising earlier in the Seleukid empire.

While Seleukid coinage does not provide direct evidence of cult for the living king, some images of the kings strongly suggest their divinity and therefore may well reflect a royal cult. The reflection of cults within coinage is far from universal, but early in the Hellenistic period it is clear that particular claims to divinity by kings and queens who received cult were also reflected on their coinage. The two most prominent examples are that of Demetrios Poliorketes and Arsinoë II of Egypt, both of whom were deified both in cults and on their coinage. Portraits of Demetrios invariably include bull horns. These horns have long been interpreted as a sign of his divinity, although the precise god to which they refer has never been established.<sup>11</sup> These horns

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<sup>9</sup> Chaniotis (n.7) 436–437. For the Ptolemies see: Hazzard (n. 8), 3–17; Pfeiffer (n. 1). For the Antigonids the cult remained polis oriented see: C. Habicht, “Divine Honours for King Antigonos Gonatas in Athens,” *SCI* 15 (1996): 131–34.

<sup>10</sup> Mørkholm (n. 2). See P.P. Iossif and C. Lorber, “Celestial Imagery on the Eastern Coinage of Antiochos IV,” *Mesopotamia* 44 (2009): 129–46. for the development of celestial imagery and its connection to Antiochos IV’s divinity.

<sup>11</sup> See already Scott (n. 8) who comments on the interpretations of Newell and Eckhel on whether the reference is to Poseidon or to Dionysus, more recently see K. Ehling, ‘Stierdionysos Oder Sohn Des Poseidon: Zu Den Hörnern

have been assigned as aspects of both Dionysos and Poseidon, gods to whom the Athenians in the Ithyphallic hymn both connect with Demetrios.<sup>12</sup>

Demetrios' deification, alongside that of Alexander by his successors,<sup>13</sup> appears to have formed a model of interaction for the other successors to further develop. The clearest example of this is in the sister-wife of Ptolemy Philadelphos, Arsinoë II. She was probably first deified as one of the *Theoi Adelphoi* with her brother/husband.<sup>14</sup> The creation of the cult for the *Theoi Adelphoi* was paralleled by the introduction of the famous *Theoi/Adelphoi* coinage which featured the deified Ptolemy I and Berenike with the legend *Theoi* on the obverse and Ptolemy II and Arsinoë II on the reverse with the legend *Adelphoi*. Given the simultaneous appearance 'of priests of Alexander and the *theoi adelphoi* in official documents'<sup>15</sup> it seems unnecessary to doubt the explicit connection between this coinage and the newly established cult for the royal family even if some hesitancy is expressed in using the title *theon*.<sup>16</sup> Following Arsinoë's death<sup>17</sup> and the establishment of an individual cult for her Ptolemy II issued a series of coinage in her name. This coinage also features divine attributes as was fitting for the newly established goddess, including a small horn behind her ear and a sceptre that may be connected with Isis.<sup>18</sup> Later Ptolemaic

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Des Demetrios Poliorketes', *GFA* 3 (2000): 153–60. I follow Scott in his suggestion that the precise deity is unknowable but that the divine attribute is significant, see below for a discussion on the nature of horned portraits and see also Erickson (n. 2).

<sup>12</sup> Scott (n. 8); Ehling (n. 11); Chaniotis (n. 7); J.R. Holton, 'Demetrios Poliorketes, Son of Poseidon and Aphrodite. Cosmic and Memorial Significance in the Athenian Ithyphallic Hymn,' *Mnemosyne* 67 (2014): 370–90.

<sup>13</sup> K. Dahmen, *The Legend of Alexander the Great on Greek and Roman Coins* (London: Routledge, 2007), 42–44.

<sup>14</sup> The bibliography on the *Theoi Adelphoi* and the establishment of cult for Arsinoë is extensive. See Caneva (n. 3), n. 11.

<sup>15</sup> S. von Reden, *Money in Ptolemaic Egypt: From the Macedonian Conquest to the End of the Third Century BC* (Cambridge, 2007), 51.

<sup>16</sup> Von Reden (n. 15), 15 connects the coinage with the cult but only in a broad and implicit way, as she refers to the notion of potential rejection of the cult of the living king and the separation of the title *theoi* from the title *adelphoi*.

<sup>17</sup> See now B. F. van Oppen de Ruiter, 'The Death of Arsinoë II Philadelphus: The Evidence Reconsidered,' *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 174 (2010): 139–50.

<sup>18</sup> See W. Cheshire, 'Zur Deutung Eines Szepters Der Arsinoë II. Philadelphos,' *Zeitschrift Für Papyrologie Und Epigraphik* 48 (1982): 105–11 for the scepter.

kings also continued to promote their divinity on their coinage, for example the gold octadrachms studied by Johnson for Ptolemy III.<sup>19</sup> Therefore there is strong evidence that the presentation of the king or queen as divine on coinage can be linked to the establishment of a cult.

In order to limit the scope to images that were produced by the court, this study is limited to mints that produced coinage for the Seleukid kings rather than exclusively civic mints.

Furthermore, to limit the scope of the study to royal iconography rather than potentially limited local iconography, silver coinage with its potential for larger patterns of circulation is preferred, although some bronze coinage is also considered.

Complicating any attempt to verify the existence of a cult for the Seleukid kings numismatically, their coinage does not depict images of temples or altars for the kings, indeed it does not depict any buildings or monuments, nor like its Ptolemaic counterpart does it include divine titles in the legends.<sup>20</sup> While this contrasts greatly with the depictions of the Roman imperial cult on Roman

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<sup>19</sup> C. G. Johnson, 'The Divinization of the Ptolemies and the Gold Octadrachms Honoring Ptolemy III,' *Phoenix* 53, no. 1/2 (1999): 50–56.

<sup>20</sup> The one notable exception is the fire altar coinage from Persis. However this coinage is produced by a particular group (the *frataraka*) for their own purposes and without Royal control. See now D. Engels, 'A New Frataraka Chronology', *Latomus: Revue d'Études Latines* 72 (2013): 28–80. cf. J. Wiesehöfer, *Die "Dunklen Jahrhunderte" Der Persis. Untersuchungen Zu Geschichte Und Kultur Des Färs in Frühhellenistischer Zeit (339-140 v.Chr.)* (München: Beck, 1994), 101–138; J. Wiesehöfer, *Ancient Persia from 550 BC to 650 AD* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 110; C. Tuplin, 'The Seleucids and Their Achaemenid Predecessors: A Persian Inheritance?', ed. S.M.R. Darbandi and A. Zournatizi *Ancient Greece and Ancient Iran: Cross-Cultural Encounters. 1st International Conference (Athens 11-13 November 2006)*, (Athens, 2008), 114. There is considerable debate concerning the independence of the issuers of the *frataraka* coinage from Seleukid rule, as well as their date. J. Wiesehöfer, 'Fars under Seleucid and Parthian Rule,' in *The Age of the Parthians*, ed. V.S. Curtis and S. Stewart (London, 2007), 37–49; J. Wiesehöfer, 'Frataraka Rule in Early Seleucid Persis: A New Appraisal,' in *Creating a Hellenistic World*, ed. A. Erskine and L. Llewellyn-Jones (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2011), 107–21 all follow M. Alam, *Nomina Propria Iranica in Nummis. 4. Iranisches Personennamenbuch. Band IV*. (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986), 163 and prefer a date after the revolt of Molon, whereas D.O.A. Klose and W. Müseler, *Statthalter, Rebellen, Könige. Die Münzen Aus Persepolis von Alexander Dem Grossen Zu Den Sasaniden* (München, 2008) at 15–21 and 33–34 argue convincingly for a date either in the reign of Seleukos I or shortly after his death.

or Roman provincial coinage,<sup>21</sup> it appears that monuments and buildings were not an iconographic category that was employed by the Seleukids for use on royal coinage even after the establishment of a royal cult. The only evidence for royal promotion of a cult of the living king found on Seleukid coinage are images that presented the king as divine (or with attributes of divinity) as it is for the coinage of the Ptolemaic royal family.<sup>22</sup>

There are two possible methods to present a king as divine on coinage: epithets which clearly mark the king as a god or divine iconography, such as horns or wings. As a point of methodology, this paper does not attempt to link a divine attribute with any particular deity, but rather follows Smith and sees these as features that associate the king with the divine.<sup>23</sup>

Like the Ptolemies before the reign of Ptolemy V, before the reign of Antiochos IV the Seleukids eschewed the use of divine titles for the living king (and in fact all kings with the exception of the unique Antiochos Soter coinage.<sup>24</sup> This may reflect a reluctance to overtly advertise an unambiguous claim to divinity to the broader Greek world and all of their subjects even when cults for the living ruler existed. Johnson proposes a clear rationale for this reluctance within the Ptolemaic context: ‘Participation in the royal cults and use of divine titulature were optional, and it was up to the individual subject to choose the terms in which he might interpret the king.’<sup>25</sup>

The lack of divine titles in the Seleukid realm suggests that similar rationale appears to have operated perhaps as a concession to Greek sentiments within some of the Greek cities of Asia

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<sup>21</sup> See Price (n. 8), 180, pl. 2–3; A. Coşkun, “Der Ankyraner Kaiserkult Und Die Transformation Galatischer Und Phrygisch-Galatischer Identitäten in Zentralanatolien Im Spiegel Der Münzquellen,” in *Repräsentation von Identität Und Zugehörigkeit Im Osten Der Griechisch-Römischen Welt*, ed. H. Heinen and S. Pfeiffer (Frankfurt, 2009), 173–211.

<sup>22</sup> See Johnson (n. 19) for a summary of Ptolemaic practice.

<sup>23</sup> R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford, 1988), 41–42.

<sup>24</sup> G. Le Rider, *Antioche de Syrie Sous Les Séleucides. Corpus Des Monnaies D’or et D’argent, I: De Séleucos I À Antiochos V, C. 300-161*. (Paris, 1999) 74–96.

<sup>25</sup> Johnson (n. 19), 54.

Minor. An interesting parallel may be adduced in that within Egypt we have cults, particularly for Ptolemaic Queens, for whom we do not have coinage with divine attributes<sup>26</sup> but we do not have coinage with divine attributes for an individual that we do not otherwise have evidence for a cult.

This raises the obvious question of what constitutes the divine image of a king. There are several features of Seleukid coinage that may point to an earlier divinity of the kings. However, the two following possible representations of the king as divine will not be considered as they are too subjective to draw any firm conclusions. A significant but often overlooked change in Seleukid coinage is the placement of the portrait of the living king on the obverse in the reign of Antiochos I.<sup>27</sup> This placement had been traditionally reserved only for gods, a convention followed even by Alexander. In fact, as Kroll shows, Antiochos I appears to be the first of the Hellenistic kings to consistently place his own portrait on coinage without other clear symbols of divinity.<sup>28</sup> It seems probable that this was done only when Antiochos I was already deified by some of the cities in Asia Minor<sup>29</sup> and thus did not break the convention as radically as it

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<sup>26</sup> For example Berenike daughter of Ptolemy III who receives a cult at Kanopus but never appears on coinage. For the cult see: *OGIS* 56 ll. 47 and 57ff. and von Reden (n. 15), 53.

<sup>27</sup> See Iossif, (n. 2); Erickson (n. 2) for the argument that Seleukos I's portrait occurs on coinage from Susa during his lifetime.

<sup>28</sup> J.H. Kroll, 'The Emergence of Ruler Portraiture on Early Hellenistic Coins: The Importance of Being Divine,' in *Early Hellenistic Portraiture: Image, Style, Context*, ed. P. Schultz (Cambridge, 2007), 113–22. The Hellenistic successors who place their own portrait on coinage do so with some other attribute of divinity, for example the bull horns on the coinage of Demetrios and Seleukos I.

<sup>29</sup> See for example the hymn from Erythrai: *I.Erythrai* 205 ll. 74–75: ὑμνεῖτε ἐπὶ σπονδαῖς Ἀπόλλωνος κυανοπλοκάμου | παῖδα Σέλευκον. ὃν αὐτὸς γείνατο χρυ[σ]ολύρας...; see M. Klinghardt, 'Prayer Formularies for Public Recitation. Their Use and Function in Ancient Religion,' *Numen* 46, no. 1 (1999): 9; Habicht (n. 4), 85. dates the decree to 274; although a date closer to Seleukos' death is suggested by the recent discovery of the decree from Aegae in Aiolis (H. Malay and M. Riel, 'Two New Hellenistic Decrees from Aigai in Aiolis,' *Epigraphica Anatolica* 42 (2009): 39–47. P.P. Iossif, 'Apollo Toxotes and the Seleukids: Comme Un Air de Famille,' in *More than Men, Less than Gods: Studies on Royal Cult and Imperial Worship: Proceedings of the International Colloquium Organized by the Belgian School at Athens (November 1-2, 2007)*, ed. P.P. Iossif, A.S. Chankowski, and C. Lorber (Leuven, 2011), 246–247 follows Paul Goukowsky, "Sur Une Épigramme de Thespies," in *L'épigramme d'Antiquité Au XVIIe Siècle Ou Du Ciseau À La Pointe*, ed. J. Dion (Paris, 2002), 218–219 in translating παῖδα as servant rather than son and suggests Seleukos II rather than Seleukos I. Both seemingly ignore the statement that the god bore Seleukos in the following line. See also *OGIS* 212 = *I.Ilion* 31; Compare also Habicht (n. 4), 82–83. for the cult in

appears. As there are other far clearer representations of divine Seleukid monarchs and that this practice quickly becomes standard, I will not use this as a criterion for the central acceptance of the divinity of the king. For the same reasons and for the subjectivity involved, it seems necessary to exclude any attempt to identify the king in the portraits of a god. While it is possible that this may have occurred, its value as an advertisement of the link between the king and the god is limited owing to the fact that few of the royal subjects would have personally seen the king closely enough to recognise a resemblance between him and the god on the coinage.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, images of the king with horns do represent a deified version of the king.<sup>31</sup> The most important antecedent for this image was the image of Alexander. The addition of ram horns to his portrait associated him with Ammon but is also believed to have reaffirmed his divinity.<sup>32</sup> It was not only Alexander who gained horns which linked him to divine beings, but a similar process explains the appearance of the ram's horn behind the ear of Arsinoë II which appears to

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Ilion. See Habicht (n. 4), 90. for the possibly later cult of Seleukos and Antiochos at Lemnos as preserved in Phylarchos.

<sup>30</sup> Smith (n. 23), 39. rightly points out that we should not assume that these similarities were necessarily deliberate, nor should we interpret them in the same clearly deifying manner as specific divine attributes. Furthermore, in most cases these portraits for the most part simply represent gods.

<sup>31</sup> The use of horns as divine motif seems apparent in both Greek as well as Egyptian and Mesopotamian sources. Divine figures in Mesopotamian art are often horned and the bull holds specific divine and royal connotations in Egypt. cf. Michael Rice, *The Power of the Bull* (London, 1998), 116. For the Seleukos I in particular, see Hoover (n. 2). In the Greek world horns appear on a limited number of deities, mostly associated with water: E. M. M. Aston, "Mixanthropoi: Animal/human Composite Deities in Greek Religion" (University of Exeter, 2007), 347–348; M. S. Smith, "Ugaritic Studies and Israelite Religion: A Retrospective View," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 65, no. 1 (2002): 21.; for a more extensive regional view encompassing the ancient through medieval world see: R. Mellinkoff, *The Horned Moses in Medieval Art and Thought* (Berkeley, 1970), 37–57; D Svenson, *Darstellungen Hellenistischer Könige Mit Götterattributen*, Archäologische Studien 10 (Bern, 1995), 58; R Thomas, *Eine Posthume Statuette Ptolemaios' IV. Und Ihr Historischer Kontext. Zur Götterangleichung Hellenistischer Herrscher*, Trierer Winckelmannsprogramme 18 (Mainz am Rhein, 2002). This view goes beyond that of A. Stewart, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 197.: 'To some Greeks and Romans, paraphernalia of this kind was indeed a visible sign of apotheosis and signified that the ruler was literally a god on earth: *theos epiphanes* or *deus praeiens*. To others, it remained on the level of metaphor, continuing to signal that the ruler's power was *like* that of the divinity whose attribute he wore, but not that he was himself a god, and still less that he merited a formal cult. Yet when all was said and done, attributes of this kind were special: they were the specific symbols of the Olympians, who were divine. These images oscillate between two worlds, partaking fully of neither, and for the steadfast and the critical their iconic and symbolic aspects continued to contradict each other, defying reconciliation.'

<sup>32</sup> Smith (n. 23), 40; J. J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), 32.

be linked to her association with the ram god of Mendes<sup>33</sup> and Demetrios Poliorketes' whose horns have often been associated with Poseidon and Dionysos.<sup>34</sup> A similar process seems to have taken place with the posthumous image of Seleukos. The images of horned Seleukid kings fall into three separate categories: firstly images of a deceased king with bull horns sprouting from his head, secondly images of the living king with bull horns sprouting from his head, and thirdly images of the living king with horn-like hair. There is one further set of images that is related but unique; these are the images of Seleukos in a horned helmet.<sup>35</sup>

The first divinised images of Seleukos I appeared on coins issued at Sardis which featured his horned diademed portrait on the obverse. The reverse of these coins displays either the horned horse head or Apollo-on-the-omphalos, and in both cases the legend reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ANTIOXOY. These types clearly depict Seleukos as divine, in the same way as the posthumous portraits of Alexander with the horns of Ammon represented his close relationship to that god and emphasised Alexander's divine status. According to the dating of Houghton and Lorber,<sup>36</sup> these two types were introduced during Antiochos I's stay at Sardis before the First Syrian War (276-274). They may therefore shed some light on the existence of a centralised royal cult for Seleukos I. The horned portraits of Seleukos issued at Sardis clearly reflect royal acceptance of the deceased king as a god of the royal house. The production of these portraits should be related to Antiochos I's contemporary establishment of a cult for Seleukos at Seleukeia-in-Pieria:

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<sup>33</sup> B.F. van Oppen, *Berenice II Euergetis: Essays in Early Hellenistic Queenship* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 49–50. For the complex associations with the crowns associated with Arsinoë II see now M. Nilsson, 'The Crown of Arsinoë II: The Creation and Development of an Imagery of Authority.' (PhD Thesis, Gothenburg, 2010)..

<sup>34</sup> Ehling (n. 11).

<sup>35</sup> Erickson (n. 2); Iossif (n.2); R. A. Hadley, 'Seleucus, Dionysus, or Alexander?,' *The Numismatic Chronicle* 14 (1974): 9–13.

<sup>36</sup> A. Houghton, C.C. Lorber, and B. Kritt, *Seleucid Coins a Comprehensive Catalogue. Part I, Seleucus I through Antiochus III* (New York (N.Y.); Lancaster (Penn.); London: The American Numismatic Society ; in association with Classical Numismatic Group, 2002), 123–124.

Philetaerus, the prince of Pergamus, bought the body of Seleucus from Ceraunus for a large sum of money, burned it, and sent the ashes to his son Antiochus. The latter deposited them at Seleukeia-by-the-Sea, where he erected a temple to his father on consecrated ground, to which ground he gave the name of Nicatoreum.

-translation White<sup>37</sup>

This demonstrates that Antiochos actively deified Seleukos outside of, or in correlation with, the cult at Seleukeia-in-Pieria.<sup>38</sup>

Antiochos also produced bronze coinage with horned portraits of Seleukos in several cities outside Asia Minor. At Dura-Europus, a diademed horned portrait appears paired with a horned horse head<sup>39</sup> and with an anchor<sup>40</sup>. At Houghton and Lorber's Uncertain Mint 26 in Bactria,<sup>41</sup> Seleukos is portrayed diademed with bull horns sprouting from his head on gold and silver coinage, and in all cases he is paired with a horned horse on the reverse. The evidence for horned images of Seleukos is not limited to numismatics. Libanius also places bull horns on a statue of Seleukos, this time at Antioch. According to him, Seleukos' horns are associated with respect for the local cult of Io.<sup>42</sup> While Libanius may be incorrect in his reasoning behind the horns, we should not doubt that the statue did exist in Antioch in the fourth century AD and that his version

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<sup>37</sup> Appian, *Syr.* 63. και Σέλευκον μὲν ἔκαιε Φιλέταιρος ὁ Περγάμου δυναστεύσας, πολλῶν χρημάτων τὸ σῶμα τὸν κεραυρὸν αἰτήσας, καὶ τὰ λείψανα ἔπεμπεν Ἀντιόχῳ τῷ παιδί αὐτοῦ. ὁ δ' ἐν Σελευκείᾳ τῇ πρὸς θαλάσση ἀπέθετο, καὶ νεῶν αὐτῷ ἐπέστησε καὶ τέμενος περιέθηκε: καὶ τὸ τέμενος Νικατόρειον ἐπικλήζεται.

<sup>38</sup> See Erickson (n. 2) for discussion of the divine myths surrounding Seleukos. See L. Hannestad and D. Potts, "Temple Architecture in the Seleucid Kingdom," in *Religion and Religious Practice in the Seleucid Kingdom*, ed. P. Bilde et al. (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990), 91–124. for the identification of the temple.

<sup>39</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritt (n. 36) no. 363.

<sup>40</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritt (n. 36) no. 364.

<sup>41</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritt (n. 36) no. 469–472.

<sup>42</sup> *Lib. Or.* 11.92; Appian, *Syr.* 57; there is also the strange mention of Seleukos' statues bearing horns on the walls of Alexandria (*sic!*) in the gamma recension of the Alexander Romance (*Historia Alexandri Magni* 2.28) which must derive from a similar tradition. See R. Fleischer, *Studien Zur Suleukidischen Kunst I: Herrscherbildnisse* (Mainz am Rhein, 1991), 91–96; Hoover (n. 2).

represented part of the broad array of potential interpretations for the bull horns. Additionally, a horned statue of Seleukos in the Antakya Museum likewise confirms Seleukos' horned representations were not confined to coins.<sup>43</sup> The broad chronological and geographic range does not suggest a regionally specific acceptance of Seleukos as divine. As the temple dedicated to Seleukos in Seleukeia-in-Pieria is a royal foundation, it seems evident that Antiochos both established a cult of his father and promoted his divinity widely across the empire.

The first appearance of a living Seleukid with horns occurred during the reign of Seleukos II;<sup>44</sup> his son Antiochos III also produced horned-portraits of himself. Bronzes were issued at Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris which featured a three-quarter facing bust of Seleukos II adorned with bull horns.<sup>45</sup> Additionally on bronzes from Susa, Seleukos II was again depicted in three-quarter profile with bull horns sprouting from his head.<sup>46</sup> [IMAGE 1] The reverse images of these coins clearly relate the image to martial victory and connect Seleukos II to his ancestor, Seleukos I, through the repetition of Seleucus I's coin types.<sup>47</sup> Seleukos II's assertion of his own divinity was limited by the choice of more locally circumscribed bronze issues for these images. As most of the cults established for the earlier Seleukids were the result of benefactions or military protection,<sup>48</sup> as we have seen above, Seleukos may have seen it as necessary to link his own

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<sup>43</sup> A. Houghton, "A Colossal Head in Antakya and the Portraits of Seleucus I," *Antike Kunst* 29, no. 1 (1986): 52–62.

<sup>44</sup> It may be possible to connect the divine images of Seleukos II to the cult for the Seleukid kings at Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris. This cult, identified by Peter van Nuffelen, "Un Culte Royal Municipal de Séleucie Du Tigre À L'Époque Séleucide," *Epigraphica Anatolica* 33 (2001): 85–87 as a municipal cult, is fragmentary and has been dated to the reigns of various kings. He argues for a date after Antiochos III but if this paper's view of the nature of Seleukid ruler cult is correct, the dating cult documents need not be restricted to this period. In this case the proposition of either M. Rostovzeff, "ΠΙΠΟΓΟΝΟΙ," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 55, no. 1 (1935), 66 as dating to Antiochos II or of Robert H. MacDowell, *Stamped and Inscribed Objects from Seleucia on the Tigris* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1935), 258–259 as dating to Seleukos II would be possible.

<sup>45</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 767–768.

<sup>46</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 800–801.

<sup>47</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 710, 716, 767, 768, 800, 801.

<sup>48</sup> For a comparison with the creation of cult for Alexander and other early Hellenistic monarchs see: Chaniotis (n.7) 431–437.

divine claims with a martial victory, in this case his Parthian campaign. Seleukos II's claim to divinity may have also been linked to the dedications for the life of the king given by Anu-uballit (Kephalon), as they occurred in the same limited geographical region.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, Seleukos II's horned image should be contrasted with the "horned-lock" of hair on his brother's coinage. Together, these images suggest that this generation of Seleukid monarchs was willing to present themselves as divine.

My third category of "divine" images (images of the living king with horn-like locks of hair) appears nearly concurrently with the appearance of Seleukos II's horned portraits at Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris and Susa. Under Hierax,<sup>50</sup> the mint at Ilion produced two types of coinage both featuring what may be idealised portraits of Antiochos I. These feature small locks of hair that curl over the diadem in a manner reminiscent of horns.<sup>51</sup> [IMAGE 2] This feature, combined with the idealised nature of the portraits on the coinage of Hierax, suggests a deification of Antiochos I, and possibly Antiochos II. This is at most a subtle hint towards divinity, although it is a striking feature given the care in which the diadem is normally depicted. The diadem is normally depicted on top of the hair, with no hair on top of the diadem. The only objects which cross over the diadem are the horns of Seleukos I and the wings from Antiochos Hierax's coinage, discussed below. Both of these images have a connection to divinity: the bull horns signify the divinity of the figure depicted and the wings tie the king into the tradition of his ancestor Perseus. There also appears to be a difference of iconography based on the metal in which the coin is minted. At Susa and Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris, the images of the living king with

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<sup>49</sup> G. J. P. McEwan, *Priest and Temple in Hellenistic Babylon*, Freiburger Altorientalische Studien 4 (Wiesbaden, 1981), 125.; cf. L. T. Doty, "Nikarchos and Kephalon," in *A Scientific Humanist: Studies in Memory of Abraham Sachs.*, ed. E. Leichty, M.D. Ellis, and P. Gerardi (Philadelphia, 1988), 95–96.

<sup>50</sup> See B. Chrubasik, "The Men Who Would Be King: Kings and Usurpers in the Seleukid Empire" (2011), 53–54 for the representation of Hierax's self-representation as a legitimate Seleukid ruler in the context of his usurpation.

<sup>51</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritt (n. 36) no. 866–867.

horns were produced on low value bronze coinage. The images which feature the horn-like hair occur on higher value silver coinage (as well as the images of the deified Seleukos). This may be a symptom of the slow development of divine mortals in the Greek world, as Chaniotis argues the kings were at least initially reluctant to propose their own divinity without the sanction of a Greek city or sanctuary.<sup>52</sup>

After this extremely timid introduction, Seleukos III extended the use of this distinctive style. It was first utilised at a temporary subsidiary mint to Antioch-on-the-Orontes<sup>53</sup> and then moved eastward and was produced at Nisibis.<sup>54</sup> [IMAGE 3] This trend continued under the first part of Antiochos III's reign, where he initially adopted features of divinity on his bronze coinage, at the same mints, only later adding horns to his silver portraits. Similarly, a lock of hair also extends over the diadem on Seleukos IV's principal silver coinage.<sup>55</sup> The use of this lock of hair over three generations of Seleukid rulers (and four kings) suggests that this became an important Seleukid iconographic feature.

The final "divine" type, the winged-diadem, first appeared on the coinage of Antiochos II at Alexandria in Troas.<sup>56</sup> [IMAGE 4] The type was a re-cutting of an original die from Abydos or Ilion so as to include the wing. The first suggestion for the origin of this type comes from the numismatist Babelon,<sup>57</sup> who concludes that the device was originally adopted by Antiochos II in order to advertise the Antigoniid claims of his mother and therefore his descent from Perseus. On

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<sup>52</sup> Chaniotis (n.7) 433.

<sup>53</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 925.

<sup>54</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 942.

<sup>55</sup> A. Houghton, C. C Lorber, and O. D. Hoover, *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue. Part 2, Seleucus IV through Antiochus XIII* (New-York: The American numismatic society, 2008), 4: e.g. Antioch: no. 1313; Tarsus: no. 1306, 1308; Cilician mint: no. 1311; "Wreath mint": no. 1328; Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris: no. 1334; Ecbatana: no. 1352.

<sup>56</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 491.

<sup>57</sup> E. Babelon, *Les Rois de Syrie d'Armenie et de Commagene* (Paris: Rollin & Feuermann, 1890), lv–lvi.

the other hand, MacDonald concluded that the device was local and reflected the links between the Seleukid monarchs and some local deity who was worshipped with wings on his head.<sup>58</sup> The mint produced three types under Antiochos II: the first type portrays a rejuvenated and idealised Antiochos I with a winged-diadem, the second portrays Antiochos II with a winged-diadem and the third an idealised young king with the winged-diadem.<sup>59</sup> The final portrait may have been produced under Antiochos Hierax as unidentifiable heads of young kings seem to be a distinctive feature of his reign.<sup>60</sup> We, therefore, have a series of coins that represent Antiochos I and II as clearly linked to a divinity, either to a local god or to Perseus.

While the initial image of the winged-diademed king may have been related to a local cult, the image did spread on coinage produced under Hierax to other mints. These included Lampsacus (one type, from a recut die),<sup>61</sup> Ilion (two types, similar in type to those from Alexandria Troas),<sup>62</sup> Alexandria Troas (twelve types),<sup>63</sup> and one type that may have come from Abydos.<sup>64</sup> [IMAGE 5]

As all of these cities are in the same region, we should not exclude the possibility that the cult established at Alexandria Troas, with its own particular image of the king, expanded to the other cities. Although we have no evidence for such a cult, beyond this coinage, the Ptolemaic parallels are suggestive of its existence. Additionally, the winged-diadem coinage is one of the major products of mints linked to Hierax, as a consequence this divine image was also used by the court. This may have been the mechanism through which the supposed cult may have spread.

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<sup>58</sup> George MacDonald, "Early Seleucid Portraits," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 23 (1903): 101–102.

<sup>59</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 490–492.

<sup>60</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 293–294.

<sup>61</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. n. 850.

<sup>62</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 871–872.

<sup>63</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 874–886.

<sup>64</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Kritz (n. 36) no. 843.

If this is evidence for a local cult, that identity of the kings becomes important. As Antiochos II appears with the winged-diadem during his lifetime, he must have already been deified (this does not rule out that idea that Antiochos I was also deified during his lifetime, only that the evidence does not demonstrate this). Given the types first appearance at Alexandria Troas it seems suitable to locate the cult's genesis there. The adoption of the image by the local mint for coinage of the royal type suggests official acceptance of the image. This interaction between the local cult and the royal presentation of the king is likely the result of the same types of influence which led the kings and the cities to use the same divine titles. As this shows official recognition of the kings as linked with a divinity, the inclusion of the young king on the coinage of Antiochos II raises the interesting question of who it is meant to represent.

Given that portraits of Hierax are difficult to identify,<sup>65</sup> the young king who is portrayed on Hierax's coinage is normally taken to be Hierax himself. Additionally, the portrait of a young king also appears on the coinage of Antiochos II which is very similar to the portrait that appears on Hierax's coinage, it therefore stands to reason that Hierax is the young king on the coinage of Antiochos II. However, this is problematic for several reasons. One is that this would require that the son of the living king would have been placed on the obverse of his father's coinage without also being co-ruler. This is unparalleled elsewhere in the kingdom. Secondly, Antiochos Hierax did not seem to be considered the first option for succession. That prospect fell either to his older brother the future Seleukos II or less likely, except in Ptolemaic propaganda, his younger half-

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<sup>65</sup> O. Mørholm, *Early Hellenistic Coinage: From the Accession of Alexander to the Peace of Apamea (336 - 188 B.C.)* (Cambridge, 1991), 124.

brother the son of Berenice.<sup>66</sup> The problem may be resolved by assigning the production of the young king portraits to Hierax's reign rather than the reign of his father.

During the reign of Hierax only two kings are depicted wearing the diadem, Antiochos I and the young king. The young king may either represent Hierax, or an idealised youth, or a fully rejuvenated Antiochos I, or Antiochos II. Although, Hierax is the most likely candidate. In the unlikely event that all of the portraits of the mint represent Antiochos I, then his increasingly youthful appearance may suggest a closer connection with the ever youthful Apollo and more extensive linkage between Antiochos and Apollo. However, ideologically and in parallel with all other Seleukid practice it makes the most sense that the portrait represents Hierax, since all other Seleukid monarchs (or later claimants to the throne) placed their portrait on the obverse of their coinage. Thus when examining the winged diadem coinage with portraits of the young king we are looking at portraits of Hierax rather than looking at posthumous images of deified versions of either Antiochos I or Antiochos II.

Perhaps most interestingly, at Alexandria Troas during the reign of Antiochos Hierax, portraits of Antiochos II wearing the winged-diadem were noticeably absent, although his non-winged portrait continued to appear at other mints during Hierax's reign. If there was indeed a cult of the kings who were depicted wearing the winged diadem at Alexandria Troas as is suggested by this coinage, does the lack of a portrait of Antiochos II suggest that he was removed from the cult, while Hierax and Antiochos I remained? This proposition seems difficult to accept especially as according to Appian (*Syr.* 65) Antiochos II was generally popular in Asia Minor and received

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<sup>66</sup> See L. Martinez-Sève, "Laodice, Femme d'Antiochus II: Du Roman À La Reconstruction Historique," *Revue Des Etudes Grecques* 106 (2004): 690–706. for Seleukos II as the appointed heir of Antiochos II. See also A. Coşkun, "The War of the Brothers, the Third Syrian War, and the Battle of Ancyra: A Re-Appraisal," 2012 for a new chronology of the Third Syrian War.

cult elsewhere. Perhaps, Hierax chose only to represent himself and his deified grandfather owing to his personal importance to Hierax, but the local cult continued to honour all of the kings. The winged-diadem coinage suggests that Antiochos II and Antiochos Hierax adopted some of the iconography of a local cult and used it to present themselves as associated with a divinity. Another option would be to view this coinage as the expression of Hierax's own claims to divinity and connection to his grandfather, rather than a continued representation of the local cult. Under this view, the local cult would have been fully internalised by Hierax's court.

The final category of divine markers on coinage is the inclusion of divine epithets on coinage. Outside the posthumous Antiochos Soter coinage,<sup>67</sup> none of the Seleukid kings until Antiochos IV issues coinage with a divine epithet. Antiochos IV changes this practice when he expands the coin legends to include the epithets. After about 173/2 at Antioch, Antiochos IV issued a new series of tetradrachms that more clearly reflected his divine nature.<sup>68</sup> The obverse of this type featured the diademed portrait of Antiochos IV, with the diadem ends adorned with stars which may have associated the king with a solar deity, possibly Apollo-Helios. Elsewhere, as Iossif and Lorber have clearly shown,<sup>69</sup> he linked himself to a solar deity by the introduction of a radiate crown onto his portraits. The reverse type featured the re-introduction of Seleukos I's Zeus Nikephoros type alongside a new legend. Rather than the normal *Basileós Antiochou*, the legend reads *Basileós Antiochou Theou Epiphanou*. Antiochos IV introduced three different connected epithets on his coinage: *Theos Epiphanes*.<sup>70</sup> Following Antiochos IV's reign, the use of clearly

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<sup>67</sup> Le Rider, *Antioche de Syrie Sous Les Séleucides. Corpus Des Monnaies D'or et D'argent, I: De Séleucos I À Antiochos V, C. 300-161.*, 74–96.

<sup>68</sup> P.F. Mittag, *Antiochos IV. Epiphanes: Eine Politische Biographie* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006), 118–127..

<sup>69</sup> Iossif and Lorber (n. 10).

<sup>70</sup> Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover (n. 55): Antioch: nos. 1396-97, 1403-06, 1408-15; Syria: nos. 1435-39; Dura Europus: no. 1434; Seleukeia: nos. 1513-15; Ecbatana: no. 1549); *Theos*: Ecbatana: nos. 1539-1542, 1547; *Theos Epiphanes Nikephoros*: Antioch: nos. 1400-01; Ptolemaïs: nos. 1474-76.

divine epithets became on coinage issued by Seleukid kings and queens.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, from a numismatic perspective there is a clear break in the tradition during the reign of Antiochos IV.

As can be seen from the numismatic evidence there was a significant amount of coinage issued from a range of royal mints across the empire that depicted the living king as either divine or partially divine. The pattern of Seleukid coinage suggests that the recognition of the Seleukid kings as divine varied both in location and in form. Contrary to what would be expected if it was not until the reign of Antiochos III that a centralised cult of king and his family was established, there are portraits of divine kings with similar iconography both before and after his reign. Furthermore, it is not until the reign of his son, Antiochos IV, that unambiguous symbols of divinity (either in the legend or the iconography) become common on Seleukid coinage. This suggests that Antiochos' reforms had relatively little impact on the presentation of ruler cult across the empire.

This paper has argued that there was a significant amount of coinage issued from a series of royal mints across the empire that depicted the living king as divine or with divine attributes.

Furthermore, the variation in the types of images fits with the pattern of royal engagement with local cults as is particularly clear from the winged diadem coinage. As such, the recognition of the Seleukid kings as divine varied both in location and in form, and could, if necessary, be ignored by a sceptical or hostile Greek audience in the same way as similar iconography could be viewed on Ptolemaic coinage. Therefore, we can conclude a few things with certainty and then

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<sup>71</sup> F. Muccioli, *Gli Epiteti Ufficiali Dei Re Ellenistici* (Stuttgart, 2013) now provides the standard analysis of royal epithets. It should be noted, that not only epithets that are clearly divine, e.g. *Theos*, now appear on Seleukid coinage, Antiochos V uses the epithet *Eupator* (Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover (n. 55) 128–129) on his coinage. For a contextualisation of this phenomenon across the Hellenistic world see F. de Callataÿ and C. Lorber, “The Pattern of Royal Epithets on Hellenistic Coinages,” in *More than Men, Less than Gods: Studies on Royal Cult and Imperial Worship: Proceedings of the International Colloquium Organized by the Belgian School at Athens (November 1-2, 2007)*, ed. P.P. Iossif, A.S. Chankowski, and C. Lorber (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 417–456..

proceed reassess the nature of Seleukid ruler cult. Before the reign of Antiochos III it is clear that:

- The Seleukid kings certainly received civic cults from the cities of Asia Minor (as is clear already from Habicht 1970).
- Seleukos I and Antiochos I were portrayed as divine on the coinage of their successors.
- The Seleukid kings beginning with Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II portrayed themselves with divine attributes on their coinage.

Finally, it is also clear that the situation persists after the reign of Antiochos III and it is not until the reign of Antiochos IV that fundamental changes occur. This clearly does not provide evidence for a cult of the Seleukid kings, but it does demonstrate significant interest by the Seleukid kings for the divinity of the ruling kings from at the least the reigns of Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II onwards. These cults may also have been linked to local circumstances, as the winged diadem coinage suggest, but were reflected in the royal prerogative of silver coinage. The appearance of divine Seleukid kings on coinage prior to the reign of Antiochos III in a manner similar to their Ptolemaic counterparts raises new opportunities to assess Gruen's proposal:

there is no reason to believe that this [ruler cult] first saw the light of day in the time of Antiochos III. It seems unlikely that the Seleukids would have lacked a centrally organised cult when the Ptolemies had long had one. The origins may go back to Antiochos I who erected a temple at Seleukeia to honour his deceased father.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> E. Gruen, "Seleucid Royal Ideology," *Seminar Papers, Society of Biblical Literature* 38 (1999): 33.

Images:

Image 1:

Image 1a: Obverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 800

Image 1b: Obverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 800

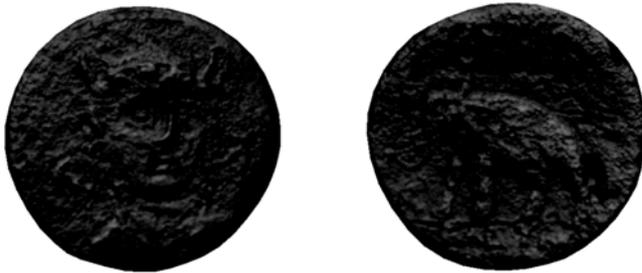


Image 2:

Image 2a: Obverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no.867.2

Image 2a: Reverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 867.2



Image 3:

Image 3a: Obverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 942.1

Image3b: Reverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 942.1



Image 4:

Image 4a: Obverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 941.1

Image4b: Reverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 941.1



Image 5:

Image 5a: Obverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 843

Image5b: Reverse of Houghton and Lober (2002) no. 843

