

Zeus to Apollo and Back Again: Shifts in Seleukid Policy and Iconography

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The kingdom founded by Seleukos Nikator was the largest and most territorially diverse of the new kingdoms that emerged from the disintegration of Alexander's empire. At its greatest extent, the empire spanned from Thrace to Syria and across into Afghanistan and western India. As with the Achaemenid Empire before it, the Seleukid kings ruled a range of diverse ethnicities and cultures ranging from Graeco-Macedonians, Persians and Medes to Assyrians, Syrians, and Bactrians. While the last decade has seen a marked increase in scholarship on the Seleukid Empire (Ma 1999; Ogden 2002; Houghton and Lorber 2002; Boiy 2007; Wörrle and Cotton 2007; Capdetrey 2007; Hoover 2007; Houghton et al. 2008; Hoover et al. 2010; Erickson 2010; Erickson and Ramsey 2011; Iossif 2011; Ogden 2011; Wright 2012; Kosmin 2013; Engels and Erickson forthcoming), two kings remain the best known outside the narrow field of Hellenistic studies: Antiochos III, defeated by the Romans at Magnesia, and his son Antiochos IV (Mittag 2006). It is the coinage of this latter king that will be the focus of this chapter.

Antiochos IV's coinage reforms are a pivotal moment in the history of Seleukid numismatics (Mørkholm 1963; Mørkholm 1966; Iossif 2011) as he partially broke from the long-standing tradition of placing Apollo on the reverse of his silver coinage (a tradition begun by the second Seleukid king, Antiochos I) (Wright 2007/2008; Wright 2009/2010); he expanded the use of epithets on the coin legends (see Iossif and Lorber 2009 for celestial imagery as well), changed the monetary standards (Le Rider 1995), and granted municipal mints the right to produce coinage (Meadows 2001). This chapter will focus on an aspect of Antiochos IV's changes of the reverse types and its connection to his campaign against the Ptolemaic Empire in Egypt.

Early attempts to explain the shift of coinage motifs from Apollo to Zeus tended to focus on the perceived view that Antiochos was personally

obsessed with Zeus (Bickermann 1937, 36–48, 92–96; rejected by Mørkholm 1966, 13–131; Rigsby 1980). This view has its roots in the idea of Antiochos IV as the oppressor of traditional Judaism and the imposer of a cult of Zeus at the temple of Jerusalem. Thus early-modern scholars followed the Jewish literary tradition that painted him as a religious fanatic particularly devoted to Zeus (Nicklas 2002 for Antiochos IV in the Macabean tradition; Clifford 1975 for the tradition in Daniel). To some extent, this portrayal was also present in non-Jewish contemporary sources, Polybius recounts the story of how he was called Epimanes (mad) instead of Epiphanes (illustrious) by the citizens of Antioch (Athenaeus 10.439A = Polybius 26.1). Combined with this description is an emphasis on his devotion to the gods: 'But in the sacrifices he furnished to cities and in the honours he paid to the gods he far surpassed all his predecessors, as we can tell from the temple of Olympian Zeus at Athens and the statues round the altar at Delos' (Polybius 26.1.10–11; see also Livy 41.20). The emphasis on Zeus was a real change from the previous policy of his family (see Rigsby 1980, although he over emphasises the Seleukid connection to Zeus as a dynastic god). During the earlier part of the Seleukid dynasty, beginning with Antiochos I, Apollo was the major focus of dynastic patronage (Erickson 2010; Iossif 2011). Antiochos IV appears to have returned and refocused the Seleukid religious orientation to what had been the case late in the reign of Seleukos I: Zeus was regarded as a personal god and Apollo as a dynastic god, and to have emphasised this change by the reintroduction of Zeus onto Seleukid coinage.

The discussion of this iconographical development at certain mints in Antiochos' empire has often viewed the changes as the result of an increased need for syncretisable deities in his kingdom, local independence and his personal devotion to Zeus (Zahle 1990; see Wright 2009/2010 for analysis of various syncretisms in the later Seleukid coinage

of Syria). While these views have much to recommend them, they are not the entire story (see the important analysis of the celestial imagery by Iossif and Lorber 2009). By combining the Seleukid historical perspective with an analysis of Antiochos' political and military ambitions as recorded by his literary critics, we can add a political dimension to the religious shift that appears in Antiochos' coinage iconography. Specifically this chapter will argue that the new types introduced by Antiochos were tied to his preparations for an invasion of Egypt which occurred earlier in his reign than has been previously argued.

Before examining the changes that took place under Antiochos IV, an overview of Seleukid religious iconography prior to his reign will help better explain the background against which the reforms took place. The Seleukid Empire was created out of Seleukos' success during the wars following the death of Alexander the Great. As one of the successor kings, Seleukos' coinage naturally evolved out of Alexander's own types. Thus the majority of Seleukos' coinage was of a variation of Alexander's Herakles/seated Zeus Aetophoros coinage. When his coinage deviated from this, it still often presented an aspect of Zeus, such as the Zeus/elephant coinage (Erickson 2012). A few other gods also appear but in a much more limited manner. Athena appears occasionally, particularly on military types (Houghton and Lorber 2002, nos. 88–91, 15–16, 125–133, 177–180, 259–263, 272–282), and Apollo appears in the East and at Antioch (Houghton and Lorber 2002, nos. 112–113, 148–150, 163, 257; Erickson 2010; Erickson and Wright 2011; Iossif 2011). This should be connected with Seleukos' close relationship with Zeus, as he even received the epithets Zeus Nikator in the priest list from Seleucia-in-Pieria (OGIS 245; Erickson 2012). But between 288 and 276 BC a shift took place; Apollo began to be promoted as the father of Seleukos and the patron of the Seleukid house (Erickson 2010; Iossif 2011).

This change in familial god is revealed most prominently with the introduction of the seated Apollo archer type on the coinage of Antiochos I in 276 BC (first with a deified Seleukos and later his own portrait) and in Justin's epitome and the epigraphic sources (Justinus, *Epitome* 15.4; *OGIS* 219.26–27; *RC* 22; Powell 1925, 140 = *I.Erythrai*

205 ll.74–75; Habicht 1970, 85; Sherwin-White and Kuhrt 1993, 27; Klinghardt 1999, 9; Ogden 1999, 118–119; Erickson 2010; Iossif 2011; Engels and Erickson forthcoming). This change (Fig. 1) was not a move away from an easily syncretised supreme god to a traditionally Greek god, but a move towards a god and image that had particular relevance to the Eastern subjects of the empire. There the image of the archer exploited the traditional imagery of kingship as well as prompting associations with a variety of eastern gods, particularly the Babylonian god Nabû (Erickson 2010; Erickson 2011; Iossif 2011).

Despite the overall stability of the majority of Seleukid silver coinage in terms of iconography for roughly the century following the introduction of Apollo-on-the-omphalos during reign of Antiochos I up until the reign of Seleukos IV (276 BC to 175 BC), there were nevertheless some notable variations. Some of the more significant of these reverse variations include a weary Herakles under Antiochos I and a standing Apollo during the reign of Seleukos II (Erickson 2010, 167–168). Normally during this period, Seleukid silver coinage had the portrait of the ruling king wearing a diadem on the obverse and Apollo (either seated or standing and holding either a bow or arrow or a cithara) on the reverse with the legend restricted to the king's name and his epithet Basileus.

Let us now turn to the coinage of Antiochos IV. The terms imposed by the Romans on his father after his defeat at Magnesia on the Sipylus in 190 BC (Polybius 21.17–38; Livy 37.45; Diodorus Siculus 29.10; Appian, *Συριακή* 38) put a significant limit on Seleukid power. As well as requiring the payment of a massive indemnity, the peace terms required that Antiochos IV be sent as a captive to Rome (Livy 38.37; Polybius 21.41; Appian, *Συριακή* 39). Following his father's death in 187, his brother Seleukos IV took the throne and he remained captive at Rome until 178, when the Romans agreed to exchange him for his nephew, Demetrius (Appian, *Συριακή* 45; Paltiel 1979). In 175, while Antiochos IV was in Athens (Mittag 2006, 41), Seleukos IV was assassinated (Appian, *Συριακή* 45). With the help of Eumenes II, he raised an army and marched into Seleukid Syria where he declared himself the guardian for another of Seleukos' sons, Antiochos, and married his brother's wife

and queen Laodike. By marrying Laodike (possibly his sister), Antiochos IV integrated himself into the existing power structure (Mittag 2006, 42–48). Unsurprisingly, at the start of his reign Antiochos issued coinage of the traditional Seleukid type. At Antioch, the production of the Apollo-on-the-omphalos type continued until about 173/2, when a second series of tetradrachms was begun (Mittag 2006, 118–127). The obverse of this type featured the diademed portrait of Antiochos IV, with the diadem ends adorned with stars (Iossif and Lorber 2009). The reverse type featured the re-introduction of Seleukos I's Zeus Nikephoros (Fig. 2). A second significant change was the legend. Rather than the normal *Basileus Antiochou*, the legend reads *Basileus Antiochou Theou Epiphanou*. While Seleukid kings had been recognised as divine by various cities from the beginning of the empire, the explicit statement of the king's divinity was rare on coinage. The change of legend was even rarer, with a single recorded type, the Antiochos Soter coinage (Le Rider 1999, 74–96). Thus Antiochos' coinage represents a dramatic break in the self-representation of a Seleukid king.

The full range of Antiochos IV's activities necessarily falls outside the scope of this chapter, which instead focuses on a single coherent group of changes to the numismatic iconography and how this iconographic shift may help better explain some of Antiochos' new agendas. It is fairly clear from his other actions, such as the support of the construction of the temple of Zeus Olympios in Athens (which had begun under the Pisistratids and was only completed by the emperor Hadrian), and his construction of a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus in Antioch, that Antiochos was more active in the construction of temples for Zeus than his predecessors (Livy 41.5). As Mittag has pointed out, this does not necessarily mean that Antiochos was solely devoted to Zeus, as a religious zealot for the god as some early 20th century authors suggested (Mittag 2006, 256–268, 279–281). If we look beyond a purely personal motive, we can see the possible religious and political motives for this change. One of the most important attempts to explore the full range of explanations came from Jan Zahle in 1990 who argued that:

'The Seleukids rejected this 'inter-ethnic' notion and not only focussed on the rulers and their gods,

but also seemed mainly to aim this 'propaganda' at their Greek subjects and disregard Oriental sensibilities.... Antiochos IV seems to have attempted a new direction. ... he strongly emphasized his own divine status ... on the other he changed the focus from Apollo to that of a supreme male god of well-established syncretistic character in accordance with Oriental beliefs in the sky god as the head of the pantheon' (Zahle 1990, 127–128).

Much of Zahle's analysis has been overturned by new directions in Seleukid studies, particularly the non-syncretistic nature of Apollo (Erickson 2010; Iossif 2011). Nonetheless, Zahle's study still highlights the important fact that the Zeus coinage appears to have a different audience than the Apollo coinage. The analysis that follows builds upon both the new directions proposed by Erickson and Iossif and also serves as an underpinning to Wright's (2009/2010) explanation of the implications of the introduction of Zeus the sky god for the Syrian populations.

The problem of decoding the intended audience for Seleukid coinage lies behind some of the differences in interpretation. Royal coinage was a tangible representation of the dynasty and it carried a message from the royal house to its intended audiences. While the initial recipient of the majority of Seleukid silver coins would have been the military, the coinage would have then filtered to some other parts of the population (Aperghis 2004, 260–262; with criticism by Ma 2007). Simultaneously, low denomination bronze coins would have had a more geographically limited circulation and have spread more readily amongst the population at large. Whereas earlier in the Seleukid empire, silver coinage was minted at a vast number of mints (upwards of 30 separate mints were active during his long reign), during the reign of Antiochos IV only a few mints produced silver coinage, with Antioch and Ptolemais producing the bulk of the coinage (Houghton *et al.* 2008, 44). These two mints are also the only mints that produce the new tetradrachm types. All other mints, including Ecbatana and Seleucia-on-the-Tigris continued the Apollo-on-the-omphalos reverse type (Houghton *et al.* 2008, 44). The lack of change in iconography in one region while it changed in another could have several explanations. The first is that the one region, in this case Mesopotamia and Iran,

was both reluctant to change traditions and not fully under the control of the king. The ability of a mint to maintain a type despite changes at surrounding mints was not unknown in the Seleukid Empire. For example, during the reign of Seleukos II, Ecbatana did not adopt the standing Apollo of Seleukos II but maintained the traditional seated type (Houghton and Lorber 2002, nos. 806–808). In the case of Ecbatana, however, it does not seem to be the case that the city had asserted any independence from Seleukos II and its retaining the old form may simply suggest a local preference for the traditional dynastic type.

Nevertheless, the occurrences of major changes in form not being adopted at the majority of mints were relatively rare and often occurred only at a single mint rather than at several, suggesting they were driven by local rather than regional or supra-regional significance. Could Mesopotamia and Iran's retention of the Apollo be seen as a sign of resistance to Antiochos' rule? This seems unlikely both on political grounds and on iconographic grounds. Antiochos was active in the East and in Babylon where he may have re-founded the city as a Greek polis (Mittag 2006, 182–208). Furthermore, as Iossif and Lorber (2009) have shown, the celestial imagery that began to appear on Antiochos' coinage is not limited only to the West, but also present in the East. The combination of Antiochos' control of the east and the adoption of certain aspects of Antiochos' new iconographic programme strongly suggests that the reintroduction of the Zeus coinage was not designed to be adopted wholesale across the empire but rather that it was aimed specifically at the areas where it first appeared and circulated; that is the relatively newly conquered territory of Koele-Syria and, as this chapter will argue, perhaps Egypt as well. If we accept that Koele-Syria was the main audience for the new coinage type, then we need to look at that region and its surroundings to determine the possible motivations behind the switch.

A major point of contention between the Seleukid and Ptolemaic kingdoms had been control over the territory of Koele-Syria. From the Battle of Ipsos (301) until the reign of Antiochos III (198) the territory had been under Ptolemaic control but claimed by the Seleukid house. The situation reversed when Antiochos III finally conquered the territory. While

the Lagids never fully accepted this loss, they made no attempt to regain it while Ptolemy V remained married to Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochos III, nor while she lived. However, this queen, Cleopatra Syra, died in 178/7 (Bennett 2011) shortly before Antiochos IV engineered his succession to the diadem (Mittag 2006, 42–48). With Cleopatra Syra no longer in power, it became more likely that the Ptolemies would attempt to retake Koele-Syria, which they claimed as their ancestral territory. This chapter will attempt to show that Antiochos had his own designs on control in Egypt, but first it is necessary to explore the traditional narrative of events before examining the complicated state of affairs at the start of the war.

According to the generally accepted narrative, the Ptolemaic court began the hostilities by invading in 170/169 under the auspices of the boy king Ptolemy VI (Grainger 2010, 291–308; Mittag 2006, 159–181 for two recent analyses of the causes and progression of the Sixth Syrian war). In response to this Ptolemaic aggression, Antiochos sent several of his ministers in order to register a complaint in Rome (Polybius 27.19, 28.1; Diodorus Siculus 30.15–16; Livy 42.29.7; Mittag 2006, 159 view the Ptolemies as aggressors while *Maccabee* 1.1.16; Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 12.242; Justinus, *Epitome* 34.2.7 present Antiochos as aggressor in a tradition generally regarded as hostile to Antiochos. It is to this debate that we will return). However, instead of waiting for a response from the Roman Senate, Antiochos took his own force and defeated the Ptolemaic army (in Ptolemaic territory), occupied the gateway into Egypt at Pelusium, and then conquered most of Egypt from his new headquarters in Memphis. The Ptolemaic house, as was to become increasingly normal, was divided against itself, a state of affairs that Antiochos was able to exploit to his advantage while stationed in Memphis. After a series of negotiations, Ptolemy VI, who had begun to fall out of favour in Alexandria, joined his uncle in Memphis (Porphyry FGrH (Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker) 260 F 49a–b; cf. Diodorus Siculus 30.18.2; Mittag 2006, 168–170). In response, the Alexandrians then proclaimed Ptolemy VIII, the younger brother of Ptolemy VI, king (Livy 44.19.6–8; Mørkholm 1966, 85; Mittag 2006, 178). The question of whether or not Antiochos had himself

declared pharaoh or king in Egypt during this campaign should now be settled firmly in the negative (Mittag 2006, 171–178; Mørkholm 1966, 82–85). However, even without the title of pharaoh, with his young nephew, the king Ptolemy VI, residing with him in Memphis, Antiochos was in the position to dictate much of Ptolemaic policy and control the country. On behalf of Ptolemy VI, Antiochos then besieged Alexandria but was unable to conquer the city (Livy 44.19.13–14; Justinus 34.2.8–3.1; Mittag 2006, 178–181). He returned to Syria in the autumn of 169 leaving Ptolemy VI in control of his interests in Egypt. This campaign was Antiochos' greatest success, and, according to the generally accepted narrative, from Autumn 169 until the following year, Antiochos introduced a series of unique bronze coins of large size featuring Serapis or Isis and the eagle of Zeus (Figs. 3, 4) as well as a series of silver fractions that highlighted the importance of Zeus, a goddess normally identified as Athena, and Apollo. The largest of these fractions, drachms, features the head of Antiochos with a diadem adorned with stars on the obverse and the same eagle reverse, a similar bronze features the radiate bust of Antiochos on the obverse (Fig. 5). The other types feature Antiochos with a radiate crown and the reverse types are an aegis with a gorgoneion in the centre (Fig. 6) and the final is a tripod (Fig. 7).

Antiochos' success at controlling Egyptian policy was not to last, his two Ptolemaic nephews came to an understanding in 169/8, and in order to maintain his hard-won control Antiochos invaded Egypt for a second time. This time Antiochos could not use the excuse that he was simply coming to the aid of his nephew and he was likely crowned pharaoh himself (Porphyry FGrH (Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker) 260F 49a–b; Mittag 2006, 171–175 contra Mørkholm 1966, 82–83; Hölbl 2001, 14; Mooren 1979, 81–86). While advancing towards Alexandria, he was met by a delegation led by the Roman C. Popilius Laenas (Polybius 29.27; Diodorus Siculus 31.2; Livy 45.12.3–6; Velleius Paterculus 1.10.1; Valerius Maximus 6.4.3; Appian, *Συριακή* 66; Cicero, *Orationes Philippicae* 8.23; Justinus, *Epitome* 34.3.1–4). At this famous meeting at Eleusis, Antiochos was forced to withdraw from Egypt without a fight in order to maintain his friendship with Rome. While most

historians now follow Diodorus and look at this as a major defeat for the Seleukid king, Antiochos returned to Syria and presented his time in Egypt as a victory (Diodorus Siculus 31.16.1; Polybius 30.25.1–26.9). A new legend appeared on Antiochos' coinage in Antioch. The legend now read *Basileus Antiochou Theou Epiphanou Nicephorou* (Fig. 8). At the same time a special tetradrachm issue was produced, which featured the laureate head of Zeus on the obverse, rather than the king, and the reverse showed Zeus Nikephoros (Fig. 9). After the special issue, the normal Zeus Nikephoros type was resumed. This time rather than Nike offering the crown to Zeus, Nike crowns the legend which includes Antiochos' name, reinforcing the connection between the victory and Antiochos (Fig. 10).

From this narrative we can establish an important fact that has defined our understanding of Antiochos' coinage: he produced the coinage to commemorate his campaigns rather than producing it before or during them. This narrative relies on a fixed chronology for a range of coinage produced in a relatively limited time period. By re-examining the iconography, it may be possible to re-assess the conflict to which each coinage is related and to take differing views on Antiochos' intentions. It is fairly clear that, after his second return to Antioch from Egypt, Antiochos promoted his 'victories' through coinage that highlighted his personal connection to Zeus. What I wish to propose is that we should see the first introduction of Zeus onto Antiochos' coinage before his first invasion of Egypt in a similar light. It appears that the promotion of Zeus goes hand in hand with Antiochos' campaigns in Egypt, not only because of his personal connection to the god but because it recalls the coinage of founders of his oecumene, Alexander, Ptolemy I and Seleukos I (see Hadley 1974; Hoover 1996; Iossif 2004; Erickson 2012 for Seleukos I's use of Zeus in this manner). Not only would this imagery have allowed Antiochos to tap into the prestige of his predecessors, but also may have reminded his audience of Seleukos' legitimate claims to Koile-Syria and thus legitimatised Seleukid control in face of Ptolemaic threats. The crucial question then remains, when did Antiochos introduce his Zeus coinage and was it a reaction to his success in Egypt or a precursor. To assess this question we

need to return to Antiochos IV's actions before 170.

In regards to the first invasion of Egypt, there are two opposing traditions regarding the instigation of the war: one in which Antiochos responds to Ptolemaic aggression, and one in which he is the aggressor. The two traditions can be roughly broken into two groups, the Graeco-Roman sources and sources that stem from a Jewish tradition. The Graeco-Roman sources include Polybius, Diodorus and Livy all of whom place the blame on the Ptolemaic court (Polybius 27.19, 28.1; Diodorus Siculus 30.15–16; Livy 42.29.7); this view is followed by most modern scholars (Mittag 2006, 159). The Jewish tradition consists of the first book of Maccabees and Josephus. Interestingly, Justin also follows this tradition (*Maccabee* 1.1.16; Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae* 12.242; Justinus, *Epitome* 34.2.7). Jewish authors are, for the most part, entirely hostile towards Antiochos. For this reason, they are often dismissed as prejudiced and the Graeco-Roman tradition is preferred (Mørkholm 1966, 68 note 16). While an anti-Antiochos bias may lie behind the attribution of aggression, no one denies that Antiochos' army was prepared to engage the Ptolemies, something clearly unexpected by the Egyptian rulers. With the Treaty of Apamea, the Romans had limited the numbers and the types of troops permitted to the Seleukids and the Ptolemaic court appears to have relied on an assumption of continued weakness. However, it is clear from the result of the campaign that Antiochos and his predecessor had been active in building their forces, despite the restrictions imposed by the Romans, and Antiochos was ready to respond to an Egyptian threat quickly and totally. This Egyptian complete ignorance of the Seleukid military capacity is surprising given the events of the prior two decades. Following the death of Antiochos III, Seleukos IV became king, and following a period of consolidation, even he appeared to consider a more aggressive foreign policy, with an aborted invasion of Asia Minor (Diodorus Siculus 29.24.1), an action that should have been known to the Ptolemaic court. Thus on one level it would be surprising if the Egyptian court expected to find Antiochos unprepared and expected Egypt to win a swift victory. If we are to approach the narrative from the other perspective, then we must ask what are the reasons that Antiochos began his military campaigns with an invasion of Egypt?

One reason for Antiochos' desire to lead a successful campaign may have been his perception that kingship required military success (Austin 1986 for the importance of warfare to the Hellenistic kings). The Seleukids, from their centres in Mesopotamia and Syria, had three directions for expansion: towards Asia Minor, towards Egypt, and towards the East. Perhaps mindful of his brother's refusal and Roman interests in Asia Minor, Antiochos must have considered the traditional area of Seleukid (re)conquest in Asia Minor as unavailable; he may have harboured thoughts of expanding against the dynasty's age-old enemy to the south rather than against the more problematic East. This would have followed the same pattern as the campaigns of his illustrious father. If we are willing to accept the possibility that Antiochos would have considered a campaign against Egypt as an option, then it is necessary to examine all of his coinage to understand this shift.

Traditionally, only two sets of coinage are connected with Antiochos' Egyptian campaigns. The first is the series of bronze coinage and silver fractions produced in c. 169. The silver fractions exist in three variations, all feature the head of Antiochos with a diadem adorned with stars on the obverse. The reverses are as follows the eagle of Zeus (Fig. 5), Athena/aegis with gorgoneion (Fig. 6), and Apollo/tripod (Fig. 7). The bronze denominations feature either Serapis or Isis on the obverse and the eagle of Zeus on the reverse (Figs. 3, 4). The second series is a return to the Zeus Nikephoros coinage with the expanded legend (Figs. 8, 9, 10) produced after the second campaign. Antiochos also produced another series of coinage associated with Zeus that has not been connected with his Egyptian campaigns, that is the first introduction of the Zeus Nikephoros coinage in 173/2. It may be worth exploring if a connection to Antiochos' intentions on Egyptian control lay behind all of his Zeus coinage.

Let us begin with the bronze coinage with Egyptian imagery. The first question is whether or not this material fits within the same pattern and when they were produced. These coins are normally dated to after Antiochos' first invasion, so 169 (Houghton *et al.* 2008, 68), but Mørkholm (1963, 22–23) proposed an earlier dating for the coins. Traditionally, these coins are seen as the continued attempt by

the Seleukid state to accommodate the reluctance of the major trading cities that had fallen under their control in 198 to adopt the Seleukid weight standard and their desire to maintain the traditional Ptolemaic one (Le Rider 1994; Le Rider 1995). However, Anokhin (forthcoming) argues that we should view this coinage as Antiochos' propaganda to justify his invasion and celebrate his success alongside displaying his new connection with Zeus to further establish a link between himself and the Egyptian house.

The location of the coin production, together with the imagery itself strongly suggests that Antiochos' new connection to Zeus (established through numismatic evidence by the introduction of the Nikephoros coinage in 173/2) in the west was heavily emphasised on this coinage. Through an exploration of the iconography and ideology of the Seleukid court, it may be possible to further refine and expand Anokhin's thesis. We can see that Antiochos claimed to have the support of the same gods that were popular under the founder of the dynasty, Seleukos I: Zeus through his eagle, Athena through the aegis and gorgoneion, and Apollo through the tripod (Erickson 2010, 35–91 for interpretation of the coinage of Seleukos I). The choice of the eagle as an attribute of Zeus was not without a wide range of implications, particularly for those familiar with Ptolemaic coinage. While the eagle was the traditional bird of Zeus and commonly associated with him in iconography, (for example the Zeus Aetophoros coinage of Alexander and Seleukos I) (Fig. 11) the Ptolemaic royal house had used the image of an eagle clutching a thunderbolt as a reverse type since the reign of Ptolemy I, where it may have been used to demonstrate a strong connection between Ptolemy's birth and the house of Alexander (Ogden 2011, 80–88). The most significant Egyptian element of the coinage was the appearance of Isis and Serapis, both of whom were heavily utilised in Ptolemaic presentation (Anokhin forthcoming). Thus, under the traditional dating, Antiochos IV appears to have celebrated his first set of victories over the Ptolemaic Empire with a series of coins that emphasised the support of the Egyptian gods that were particularly important to the Ptolemaic house, as well as the gods of the founder of the Seleukid house, Zeus, Athena and Apollo. This coinage is clearly connected to

both Antiochos' presentation of himself in the tradition of drawing legitimacy from Zeus as well as to his Egyptian campaign. Thus it is fairly clear that links to Zeus run through all of Antiochos' Egyptian campaign coinage.

The second question of when this coinage was produced is more difficult. Here, I believe that Anokhin's (forthcoming) highlighting of the Ptolemaic symbolism of this coinage and its possible connections to Antiochos IV himself is important. Normally, Antiochos is viewed only as placing himself as regent for his Ptolemaic nephews subsequent to his invasion. If the bronze coinage can be dated to prior to 170, then the relationship between Antiochos and the boys may be more significant. Within the Seleukid kingdom, Antiochos had shown himself willing to exploit familial connections when they suited him to claim the diadem. In taking the kingdom, he excluded his older nephew Demetrius from the kingdom, married his brother's wife, and claimed the regency for his immature nephew, who when it proved necessary was removed. All accept that Antiochos had a legitimate claim to the Seleukid house, so what about the Ptolemaic house? The marriage of Cleopatra Syra to Ptolemy V could be viewed as a merger of the Seleukid and Ptolemaic royal houses, as the children born would have a claim to both Seleukid and Ptolemaic heritage. With both Cleopatra and Ptolemy V dead by 176, could Antiochos not already claim regency over the Ptolemaic princes before his invasion? While Antiochos does not seem to have done so before the invasion, as Anokhin (forthcoming) rightly points out, this mixing of the two houses is the clearest message that emerges from the mixed lineage portrayed on the coinage. In this case, through the introduction of a coinage that would have been particularly suitable for old Ptolemaic possessions under Seleukid control, as well as a rationalisation of bronze coinage in Antioch, Antiochos would have begun to lay the groundwork for his legitimate right to intervene in Ptolemaic affairs.

For this proposal to be plausible, it is necessary that Seleukid coinage does not only react to events but looks forward to potential campaigns of the kings. Furthermore, if Zeus is connected for the most part with campaigns towards Egypt and the Ptolemaic house, then I believe we should expect a

different god to be highlighted on campaigns elsewhere in the empire. To test this we now turn to the festival held at Daphne in 166 before Antiochos embarked on his eastern campaign (Diodorus Siculus 31.16.1; Tacitus, *Historiae* 5.8.4–5). At this sanctuary of Apollo, Seleukos held a fantastic procession to highlight Seleukid military strength before he began a campaign eastward against the growing Parthian threat. For this celebration, Antiochos issued another special edition coinage, this time featuring the laureate head of Apollo on the obverse and Apollo carrying a cithara on the reverse (Fig. 12) (Le Rider 1999, 228 suggests a temporary mint at Daphne). The reverse image most likely represents the cult statue of Apollo in Daphne (Lacroix 1949, 174). The strong connection between this coinage and the festival has been readily noted, but the wider implications of a festival, special coinage issue and the particular choice of god before a large military campaign was undertaken have not been noted. While the sacrifice and consultation of the relevant gods was a normal practice, the issuing of special coinage is more unique. But through this coinage and the continued production of Apollo types in the eastern empire, it is clear that the most important Seleukid god in the eastern part of the empire was Apollo. It seems likely that Antiochos was not only promoting the dynastic god, Apollo, in Antioch before his campaign but suggesting that his campaign eastwards would have been supported by the most relevant god.

If we follow the model of the Daphne coinage and its connection to Antiochos' Eastern campaign, then it may be possible to do the same for the Zeus Nikephoros coinage. Therefore, if this interpretation of the Zeus coinage is correct, before both of Antiochos' major campaigns he would have produced series of coinage that were directly relevant to those campaigns and we can propose a new model of what Seleukid propaganda looked like before Antiochos' invasion of Egypt. After establishing his power in Antioch and removing the threats to his power from within his family, Antiochos began to look to expand his prestige through military expansion. His first target was Ptolemaic kingdom to the south. To mark the beginning of preparations for this possible campaign, among other reasons, Antiochos introduced the first phase

of his Zeus coinage. This coinage not only looked towards Egypt, but backwards towards the foundation of the Seleukid kingdom and to Alexander. As it became clear that the Ptolemaic house was also preparing for this conflict, Antiochos shifted his message to include his claims to a familial connection with the Ptolemaic house. This stage of the message explicitly mixed the Seleukid patrimonial message of the first Zeus coinage with an expanded emphasis on the Egyptian royal house. Finally, after the defeat of his plans to control Egypt, Antiochos was forced to return to his first message, but expanded with a new legend that promoted his success (however ephemeral). As his focus began to shift eastwards, Antiochos was able to shift his message once again, now focusing on the most important Seleukid god in the East.

Thus, rather than a concerted effort to promote Zeus throughout his kingdom, Antiochos appears to have chosen to promote the most relevant deities connected with the Seleukid house for the areas with which he was most concerned. His primary aim was the strengthening of his own power and using his family, broadly defined, to secure and expand his power. In some areas, he maintained the traditional Seleukid link to Apollo. In others, mostly the recently conquered parts of Syria and his base in Antioch, he promoted the chief sky god, Zeus. Perhaps the cause of this shift lay in the past, as the king looked to re-expand his possessions after a series of setbacks he may have found inspiration in his own ancestor who had once lost everything and fled like a refugee to Egypt before returning to found the new dynasty. Perhaps in this inspiration, Antiochos saw a devotion to Zeus as an important factor in his success, while simultaneously providing an opportunity to expand his rule by controlling his Ptolemaic nephews. An awareness of his whole heritage and potential claims also allowed him to recognise the importance of the traditional family god. The shrewd opportunism that Antiochos showed elsewhere in his reign may have led him to realise how to most effectively advertise the support of both gods in order for him to promote himself. Through all of this political manoeuvring, it is possible that Antiochos saw himself as a king who could draw on his family's connections to forge a new kingdom that included both the Seleukid lands and control of Egypt.



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