



## DEMETRIUS

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**DEMETRIUS**, name of two Greco-Bactrian kings.

*Demetrius I, son of Euthydemus I.* While still crown prince of Bactria Demetrius conducted, on behalf of his father, negotiations with the Seleucid Antiochus III in 206-05 B.C.E.; Antiochus considered Demetrius “worthy of kingship because of his distinction, conversational rapport, and capacity for leadership” and promised him one of his own daughters in marriage. Having succeeded to the throne of Bactria, Demetrius campaigned in India, making apparently extensive conquests (Polybius, 11.39). On the obverse of his silver coins he is portrayed wearing the elephant-scalp headdress of Alexander the Great (q.v.), with the reverse type of a youthful Hercules crowning himself with a garland. On a commemorative “pedigree coin” of the later Euthydemid king Agathocles, presumably a son of Demetrius (Allan), Demetrius is portrayed with the title Aníkētos (invincible), which had been borne by Alexander himself. Subsequently, after the appearance in Bactria of the rival prince Eucratides around 175 B.C.E., he returned from India (Justin, 41.6, where he is described as king of India) and besieged Eucratides’ small escort with an army said to have numbered 60,000; he was nevertheless outmaneuvered, defeated, and apparently slain. The curious allusion to “the grete Emetrius, the King of Ynde” in Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale* (ll. 2155-57) is thought by some to echo Demetrius’ story, as found in medieval sources was derived from the lost histories of Trogus (Bivar).

*Demetrius II.* Demetrius II was presumably another son of Demetrius I; he is known only from Greco-Bactrian coins with the reverse type of a standing



Athena.

Bilingual Indo-Bactrian coins in the name of Demetrius Aníkētos, in particular a remarkable tetradrachm with the royal portrait wearing the *kausía* (sun hat), though usually attributed to Demetrius II, or III, are similar in monogram and arrangement of the legend to late issues of Menander (ca. 155-46 B.C.E.) and were probably commemorative issues of an unnamed ruler.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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