



DIODOTUS

DIODOTUS, the satrap of Bactria-Sogdiana, who revolted against his Seleucid sovereign Antiochus II (q.v.) and proclaimed himself king, thus laying the foundation of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom. The date of his revolt has been a subject of much debate. It has been placed between 256 and 239 B.C., the majority of scholars arguing for about the year 250. He was succeeded by his son Diodotus II.

Apart from the classical sources, our knowledge of Diodotus depends, to a great extent, on numismatic evidence. His gold and silver coins ([PLATE XXVIII](#), [PLATE XXVIIIa](#), [PLATE XXVIIIa reverse](#)) can be divided into two distinct groups. In the first group, while keeping his sovereign's name, Diodotus introduced his own portrait instead of the portrait of Antiochus II, and replaced the most common Seleucid reverse type, Apollo seated on the Omphalus, by a full-length figure of a thundering Zeus with an eagle at his feet. By minting these coins in the name of Antiochus II but with his own portrait, Diodotus showed a formal attachment to his Seleucid sovereignty while taking a revolutionary step towards independence, without taking the royal title. In the second group, not only the portrait and the reverse type, but also the name are those of Diodotus. It is evident that Diodotus, by minting them, took the final step to declare openly his independence. The date of the emergence of the Seleucid satrapy of Bactria-Sogdiana as a totally independent kingdom may be placed at around 239-38 B.C.E.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

P. Bernard, *Fouilles d'Aï Khanoum IV. Les monnaies hors trésors. Questions d'histoire gréco-bactrienne*, MDAFA 27, Paris, 1985.

O. Bopearachchi, *Monnaies gréco-bactriennes et indo-grecques, Catalogue raisonné*, Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, 1991.

R. Curiel and G. Fussman, *Le Trésor monétaire de Qunduz*, MDAFA 20, Paris, 1965.

M. Mitchiner, *Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian Coinage I*, London, 1975.

A. K. Narain, *The Indo-Greeks*, Oxford, 1957.

E. T. Newell, *The Coinage of the Eastern Seleucid Mints from Seleucos I to Antiochos III*, New York, 1941.

W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1951, repr. Chicago, 1984.

Willrich, "Diodotos 7," in Pauly-Wissowa, V/1, cols. 714-15.

Plate XXVIII. a. Silver tetradrachm, Diodotos in the name of Antiochus (Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, no. R.3681.26). b. Silver tetradrachm, Diodotos in the name of Diodotos (BM, no. 1880.5.1.1.). Copyright British Museum.