

STEVEN BATTELLE

Certificate of Authenticity

This coin has been personally inspected and determined to be an authentic ancient coin .
If deemed a forgery by the ACCS, IGC, NGC, or PCGS, it may be
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Macedon, Alexander the Great, 336-323 BC, AR Drachm

Bo82629 / U0394c 4.2 Gm 16 mm

Obv: Head of Herakles r., clad in lion's skin Rev: Zeus enthroned l., holding eagle and sceptre.

Of all the ancient Greek coins, the coinage of Alexander the Great continued to be minted for hundreds of years after his death. This was the main coin (along with the tetra = 4 drachm larger version), for the ancient world that Alexander had conquered during that period. Classical historians have estimated the daily wage for a skilled worker or a soldier was one drachma, and that half a drachma per day would provide "a comfortable subsistence" for "the poor citizens" or just enough for the daily subsistence of a family of three. The subject of much debate has always been whether the obverse portrait of Herakles with lion skin is indeed a depiction of Alexander the Great. The image of Herakles is often shown clad with the lion skin that he was purported to have slain barehanded in one of his "ten labors". During his lifetime, Alexander chose only a few artists to produce his image, and famous names such as the sculptor Lysippos and the painter Apelles were associated with his portraiture. Alexander was always shown clean-shaven, which was an innovation: all previous portraits of Greek statesmen or rulers were bearded. This royal fashion lasted for nearly five hundred years with almost all of the Hellenistic kings and Roman emperors until Hadrian being portrayed beardless. Alexander was the first king to wear the all-important royal diadem, a band of cloth tied around the hair that was to become the symbol of Hellenistic kingship. There is little doubt, however, that ancient cultures believed the coinage portrait to be that of Alexander since, by this time, portraiture of the reigning monarch had become fairly commonplace and the image of Herakles would have been assumed to be that of Alexander himself. The fact that this same belief and conclusion continues to linger over 2300 years later serves as a testament to Alexander's incredible achievements and their impact on the history of mankind. In general, the design of silver denominations during Alexander's lifetime depict Zeus with his legs side by side while posthumous issues show his legs crossed.

