



## PRESS RELEASE

### COINS OF MACEDONIA IN THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION

Exhibition at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki  
27 February 2009 – 8 June 2009

Inauguration: Thursday 26 February 2009

***The Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection, which is considered one of the most important ones on an international level, owns more than 10,000 coins from the ancient Greek world. A few extremely rare items stand out among them, unique specimens of ancient engraving. The ancient coins of Macedonia which exceed 4,000 are among the most significant in the Collection.***

Alpha Bank, in collaboration with the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, is organising an exhibition of coins taken from the Bank's Numismatic Collection at the Museum's Temporary Exhibitions Hall (6, M. Andronikou Street) from 27 February 2009 until 8 June 2009. The exhibition entitled "COINS OF MACEDONIA IN THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION", which is organised for the first time in Thessaloniki, will present 270 silver and gold coins from Macedonia dating from the sixth to the first century BC.

Dr Dimitra Tsangari, Curator of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection, and Mr. Christos Gatzolis, Head of the Public Relations, Documentation and Publications Department of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, have scientific oversight of the exhibition.

#### **"COINS OF MACEDONIA IN THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION"**

The Exhibition covers the history of coinage in Macedonia, which was one of the first regions in Greece to adopt coinage circa 525-510 BC.

The coins are divided in five thematic sections. The first presents the minting of coins by the renowned 'Thraco-Macedonian' tribes which resided in central and eastern Macedonia. The information that is available to us about the history of these nations and even their exact geographical distribution is extremely sparse. As a matter of fact, in certain cases, the knowledge we have of the 'Thraco-Macedonian' tribes derives from the silver coins they issued.

The Edoni, the Ichnaei, the Laeaei, the Orrescii, the Bisaltae and the Derrones are among these nations.

The second section is dedicated to the Macedonian kings; starting with Alexander I (498-454 BC), who inaugurated royal Macedonian minting, and ending with Perseus (179-168 BC), the last king of Macedonia.

The next section includes the coins that circulated during the second and first century BC. It presents the autonomous minting of coinage in the final years of the kingdom, i.e. minting after 168 BC, when Macedonia was divided into four *Merides* (districts), as well as minting after 148 BC, when the whole region became a Roman Province bearing the name *Provincia Macedonia*.

The coins are presented in a geographical order, starting at the Pierian coast, moving through the whole of Chalcidice and reaching eastwards as far as Neapolis and Thasos.

The importance of the Macedonian coins is also evinced by the imitations which circulated centuries after the issue of the prototypes. The coins of Philip II and of Alexander the Great inspired foreign dynasts and distant peoples, such as the Celts of Western and Central Europe and the inhabitants of the Arabic Peninsula, who produced coins which copied the Macedonian mints. The imitations are presented in a separate section.

At the final section of the Exhibition the visitor is given the opportunity to admire the renowned 'Alexandrian tetradrachms' which are considered to be the international currency of antiquity. With the help of a map, one may follow Alexander the Great's march to the East and at the same time see the various mints that continued to issue coins bearing his name long after his death.

Educational programmes intended for primary and secondary school pupils will take place during the exhibition.

### **PUBLICATION: "COINS OF MACEDONIA IN THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION"**

The Exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue-album in Greek and English. All the texts are written by Dr Dimitra Tsangari.

The introductory text of the book discusses coinage in Macedonia. The following pages include historical texts which refer to the Macedonian kings and to the period after the dissolution of the Macedonian Kingdom, when Macedonia was divided into four districts (*merides*) and gradually passed under Roman administration. The cities whose coins are presented in the Exhibition and the Celtic tribes that issued imitations of the Macedonian coins are also studied. A separate chapter presents the tetradrachms of Alexander the Great and at the last pages there is a selected bibliography on Macedonian coinage. The book includes natural size and enlarged photographs of 171 coins accompanied by analytic explanatory texts.

The present publication actually constitutes the second volume of the series which accompanies the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection Exhibitions and was printed in 4,000 copies in Greek and 1,000 copies in the English language.

The first volume of the series is entitled "HELLENIC COINAGE: THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION" and it was published on the occasion of the Exhibition of the same title which took place at the Benaki Museum in 2007.

The luxurious publications of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection can be purchased at all central bookstores, in addition to the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki Shop.

## **PARALLEL EVENTS**

In the context of the exhibition "COINS OF MACEDONIA IN THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION" the following events have been scheduled in Athens and Thessaloniki:

- **18 March 2009**: A presentation of the Exhibition and the accompanying book in Athens. The event will take place at the Building of the Ionian Bank (12-14, Pasmazoglou Street) and Messrs Olivier Picard, Professor at the Paris-Sorbonne University (Paris IV) and Honorary Director of the French School of Archaeology in Athens and Ioannis Touratsoglou, Honorary Director of the Numismatic Museum, Athens, as well as Mmes Polyxeni Adam-Veleni, Director of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki and Dimitra Tsangari, Curator of the Alpha Bank Numismatic Collection will address the public.
- 
- **19 March 2009**: A lecture at Thessaloniki by Professor Olivier Picard on the subject "THE COINS OF MACEDONIA". The event will take place at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki and will be followed by a guided tour of the exhibition "COINS OF MACEDONIA IN THE ALPHA BANK COLLECTION".

Exhibition inauguration: 26 February 2009  
Exhibition duration: 27 February 2009 – 8 June 2009

Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki  
6, M. Andronikou Street  
Tel: 231 083 0538, Telefax: 231 086 1306

### Opening Hours:

**Winter time programme: from 1 November until 31 March**

Monday: 10:30-17:00

Tuesday-Sunday: 08:30-15:00

**Summer time programme: from 1 April until 31 October**

Monday: 13:00-19:30

Tuesday-Sunday: 08:00-19:30

Opening hours may be modified due to imponderable factors.

### **For further information please contact**

#### Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki

Christos A. Gatzolis  
Head of Public Relations,  
Documentation and Publications  
Tel: 231 083 0538  
Telefax: 231 086 1306  
Email: arch.museum.thess@gmail.com  
<http://www.amth.gr>

#### Alpha Bank

Dimitra I. Tsangari  
Curator  
Numismatic Collection  
Tel: 210 326 2460  
Telefax: 210 326 2462  
Email: [numismatic@alpha.gr](mailto:numismatic@alpha.gr)  
<http://www.alphanumismatics.gr>

**Contact persons**

Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki  
Public Relations

maria panayides artproductions

Olga Sakali  
Tel: 231 083 0538  
Telefax: 231 086 1306  
Email: arch.museum.thess@gmail.com

Tel: 210 691 2331, 210 691 3943  
Telefax: 210 698 0673  
Email: panayides@ath.forthnet.gr

Athens, February 26, 2009