

## Arsaces II (c. 211 - 191 B.C.)

### ΑΡΣΑΚΗΣ

Son of [Arsaces I](#) and the nephew of Tiridates, he was the second king of Parthia. He was frequently called Artabanus I by earlier scholars and, following Justin, Arsaces II could be assigned that name but it is not attested for the second or third ruler of the Arsacid dynasty.<sup>1</sup> The usage of Artabanus mostly predates the finding of the ostraca of Nisa and Koshelenko's revised chronology. See the [genealogy chart](#).

After the death of Arsaces I, the Seleucids evidently found opportunity to retake former territory and in 211 B.C. Antiochus III secured the allegiance of Artabazanes, ruler of Media Atropatene, then advanced to [Ecbatana](#) where he replenished his treasury by looting the temple of Anahita.<sup>2</sup> In 209 B.C., Antiochus moved his army eastward toward [Hecatompylos](#) almost unopposed. The army moved forward to [Tagae](#) (Tak?) near Damghan, then defeated Arsaces II at Mount Labus (Lamavu), and entered [Hyrcania](#) where he occupied [Tambrax](#). [Syrinx](#) was then taken by siege.<sup>3</sup>

We know nothing more of Arsaces II following his defeat except that Antiochus III made peace and an alliance with the Parthians, and that Arsaces II was succeeded by [Phriapatius](#) in 191 B.C. Frye notes that Parthia and Bactria may well have maintained allegiance to Antiochus until he was defeated by the Romans at Magnesia in 189 B.C., and that it was a revival period for Greek influence in Iran.<sup>4</sup>

[Click here](#) to view the inscriptions on this king's coins.

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#### Notes:

1. Frye, *History* (1984), p. 210
2. Polybius X. 27
3. Debevoise, *Political History*, 18
4. Frye, *Heritage* (1963), p. 173

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## Coins Attributed to Arsaces II

Click on coin images to enlarge:

### Sellwood Type 5



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.04 g, 13 mm, die axis +25 deg  
Mint/ [Hecatompylos?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots  
Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow  
A; behind archer, single-line inscription APΣAKOY; border of dots  
Photo/ by Chris Hopkins  
- Sellwood 5.1



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.19 g  
Mint/ [Hecatompylos?](#), undated  
Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots  
Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow  
A; behind archer, single-line inscription APΣAKOY; border of dots  
Photo/ by permission [Peus](#) 363, Lot 5093  
- Sellwood 5.1  
- Shore 3



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.09 g  
Mint/ [Hecatompylos?](#), undated  
Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots; border of dots  
Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow  
A; behind archer, single-line inscription APΣAKOY; border of dots  
Photo/ by permission [Classical Numismatic Group](#), CNG 36, lot 3  
- Sellwood 5.1  
- Shore 3 (this coin)



Arsaces II [Mule](#)

AR Drachm, 4.27 g, 13 mm, die axis -10 deg  
Mint/ [Hecatompylos?](#), undated  
Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots  
Rev/ beardless archer wearing bashlyk and cloak seated right on backless throne, holding bow in left hand;  
below bow, eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer, single-word Greek inscription APΣAKOY;  
circular border of dots  
Note/ this is a "mule" bearing a Sellwood type 5.1 obverse and a type 6.1 reverse; one of only two examples  
known  
Photo/ by Chris Hopkins  
- Sellwood 5.1 obverse/6.1 reverse "mule"  
- cf. *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1971, Pl. 22, no. 6/59 for another example

## Sellwood Type 6

See Sellwood [Type 5](#) for a "mule" example of a Sellwood type 6.1 reverse on a type 5.1 obverse



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.24 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission Alex Filer

- Sellwood 6.1

- Sear 7324



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.19 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission [Peus](#) 363, Lot 5094

- Sellwood 6.1

- Shore 4



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 3.92 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission [Classical Numismatic Group](#)

- Sellwood 6.1

- Shore 4



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.11 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission [Classical Numismatic Group](#)

- Sellwood 6.1

- Shore 4 (this coin)



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.17 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission [Dr. Busso Peus](#) Auktion 363, Lot 5095

- Sellwood 6.1

- Shore 4



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.20 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission, [Lanz](#) 80, Lot 194

- Sellwood 6.1

- Shore 4



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.19 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ  
Photo/ by permission, [Tkalec](#) Auktion 2000, Lot 192

- Sellwood 6.1
- Shore 4



Arsaces II

AR Drachm, 4.21 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ beardless archer, wearing kyrbasia and cloak, seated right on backless throne; in hand, bow; below bow eagle standing facing, head left; behind archer single-line inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ

Photo/ by permission, [Elsen](#) List 212, Lot 160

- Sellwood 6.1
- Shore 4



Arsaces II

AE Dichalkous, 2.69 g, die axis 12h

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

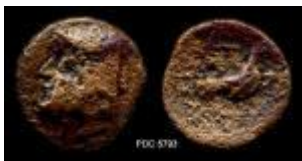
Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ bow in case; single-word Greek inscription ΑΡΣΑΚ[ΟΥ] in field right read from outside; monogram M in field left; circular border of dots

Note/ in 1980, Sellwood knew of only one recorded specimen

Photo/ by permission [Lanz Numismatik](#), Auktion 102 (May 2001), lot 310

- Sellwood 6.2 variant (monogram)



Arsaces II

AE Chalkous, 3.7 g

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/

eagle standing right on bucranium, wings open; single-word Greek inscription left; circular border of dots

Note/ the obverse die is almost identical to the one used for some of Arsaces II's drachms (see *Num. Chron.* 1971, Pl. 21, nos. 6/20, 6/21, and even 6/26 and 6/27). The object on the is a bird above a bull's head. These are clearer on better preserved examples seen in David Sellwood's collection, and the example below

Photo/ by permission [Rian Thum](#)

- Sellwood 6.2 variant (eagle & bull)



Arsaces II

AE Chalkous, 3.35 g, 16 mm

Mint/ [Rhagae?](#), undated

Obv/ beardless head left, wearing bashlyk; circular border of dots

Rev/ eagle standing right on bucranium, wings open; single-word Greek inscription left; circular border of dots

Additional images/ [larger obverse & reverse](#), [reverse detail](#)

Note/ This is a much better preserved example than the one immediately above

Photo/ by permission [Najaf Coins & Collectibles Inc.](#)

- Sellwood 6.2 variant (eagle & bull)

source:

<http://www.parthia.com/arsaces2.htm>