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**Newsletters numbers 90 - 91****June - August 1984****Members news**

As it was not possible to produce a newsletter in June this is a double length newsletter to cover both the June and August issues. During the time since our last newsletter there has been a welcome response to the request for short articles to include in the newsletters and a selection is included here. Thank you to those members who have sent material. More short articles are still welcome.

... has drawn attention to SAN, the Society for Ancient Numismatics, whose secretary is Beate Rauch – PO Box 2138, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, California 90051. They publish a quarterly journal and some ONS members may find that they also have an interest in the activities of SAN.

The next ONS meeting in London will take place on Saturday 10th November, 2-30 pm, at 28 Little Russell Street, near the British Museum. The next meeting of the Northeastern USA chapter of the ONS will take place on Saturday 1st December at the New York International Numismatic Convention. Dr. N. D. Nicol will talk on the 'Coinage of the Fatimids'. The 72nd Annual Conference of the Numismatic Society of India will be held at Varanasi under the auspices of the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Banares Hindu University on the 7th, 8th and 9th October 1984.

### **Some recent publications**

- Aves, W., Two unrecorded varieties of British India rupees, *Seaby's C & M Bull.*, Feb. 1984, 32 - 33
- Baldwin, M. T., Coinage of Muscat and Oman pre AH 1365, *Seaby's Coin and Medal Bull.*, May 1984, 126 - 9
- Burns, Craig, The Gadahara connection, *Numismatic Digest (Bombay)*, June-Dec. 1982, 35 - 43
- Campbell, I. C. G., Some notes on the coinage of the South Indian Peninsula, *NI. Bull.*, Oct. 1983, 334 - 8
- Cribb, J., The origin of the Buddha image – the numismatic evidence, *South Asian Archaeology 1981*, 231 - 44
- Curiel, R. and Gyselen, R., Une collection de monnaies de cuivre Sasanides tardives et Arabo-sasanides, *Studia Iranica* 12, 1983 i, 27 - 45 and 1983 ii, 207 - 221
- Gyselen, R., De quelques ateliers monétaires Sasanides, *Studia Iranica* 12, 1983 ii, 235 - 238
- Gyselen, R. and Nègre, A., Un trésor de Gazira (Haute Mésopotamie): monnaies d'argent Sasanides et Islamiques enfouies au début du 11<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'Hégire, *Revue Numismatique* 24, 1982, 170 - 205
- Hennequin, G., Catalogue des monnaies orientales, *Archives de la ville de Marseille, Cabinet des médailles*, 1983, pp 68.
- Herrli, H., *Munzen des Romischen Indienhandels*, *Munzen Revue (Basel)*, Oct. 1983, 832 - 834

- Iisch, L., Zwei funde osmanischen Maydins aus dem Yaman, *Munstersche Numismatische Zeitung*, Dec. 35 - 37
- Iisch, L., Munzgeschenke und Geschenkmunzen in der mittelalterlichen islamischen Welt, *Munstersche Numismatische Zeitung*, June 1984, 7 - 12
- von Kleist, Ch-E., Numismatische Kleinodien aus dem Himalaya, Die kleinsten Munzen der Welt, *Munstersche Numismatische Zeitung*, June 1984, 5 .
- Koutsoukos, E., The mass production of bronze blank castings for coining in Ptolemaic Egypt, *Spink's Numismatic Circular*, May 1984, 115 - 6
- Kuntz, R. and Warden, W. B. jr., A gold dinar of the Sasanian queen Buran, *ANS Museum notes* 28, 1983, 133 - 135
- Mitchiner, M., The date of the early Funanese, Mon, Pyu and Arakanese coinages ('Symbolic coins'), *Journal of the Siam Society (Bangkok)* 70 i - ii, 1982, 5 - 12
- Plant, R., The two lions of Burma, *Seaby's C & M. Bull.*, April 1984, 101
- Rhodes, N. G., A portrait medallion from Nepal, *SNC*, April 1984, 77
- Robinson, M., A puzzling tin token from South East Asia, *SNC*, Dec. 1983, 338
- Robinson, M. and Pollard, A. M., Analysis of Burmese coins by X-ray fluorescence (contd.), *SNC.*, Nov. 1983, 293 - 4
- Robinson, M. and Shaw, L. A., The die varieties of nineteenth century Burmese copper coins, 1984, 12 pp., 4 pl. £5 from the authors, c/o Lancashire and Cheshire Numismatic Society, Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester 2, England
- Singh, Jai Prakash, The Garuda or Nowi on a Tripura coin, *NI Bull.*, Dec. 1983, 392 - 4
- Sylvester, John jr., The traditional awards of Annam: the Khanh, Boi, Tien and Bai; draft monograph available from the author at 10 dollars plus postage: 10109 Earthstone Court, Raleigh, NC 27609, USA
- Warden, W. B. jr., A short note on a hitherto unpublished Arab-sasanian dirhem of 'Attab b. Warqa' Al-Riyahi, *Seaby's C & M Bull.*, April 1984, 97 - 8
- Westphal, H., Some silver coins from 12th century Adharbayjan, *Munstersche Numismatische Zeitung*, July 1983, 15 - 16

### **Burmese animal weights**

Dr. Donald Gear of Box 111, Cato Ridge 3680, South Africa writes: -

Regarding the animal weights of Burma, in particular the post AD 1560 official duck-like weights, Dr. Michael Robinson recently suggested that the bird looked more like the mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*) than the ruddy shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*) which Temple (1892) thought it was. Upon making some detailed comparisons I support Dr. Robinson's suggestion. However, the mandarin duck does not occur in Burma today, while the ruddy shelduck does. The mandarin duck occurs, or occurred, in China and Japan only.

Since before the 6th century BC the mandarin duck has been regarded as a symbol of marital fidelity, or connubial compatibility - at least in China. But, so also was the ruddy shelduck noted for the faithfulness of the couples. One of the characteristics of the bird weights is that care has been taken to emphasise the occurrence of the two sexes, eg. by differences in angularity or roundedness, by the emplacement of 'beards' on some styles, by the emplacement of small birds (young ?) by the side of, or on the chest of, the larger bird, etc..

The earliest lion-like and duck-like figurines come from Upper Burma and have been dated to the 5th - 8th centuries AD. The main body of Burmese entered Burma around the 8th - 9th century, through present day Yunnan from Mongolia. The Assyrians used the lion and the duck on their weights about 1,000 BC.

The pre-1550 bird weights of Lower Burma were made to a binary scale of mass sub-division. The post-1550 bird weights, introduced by a king from Upper Burma, were made to a decimal scale (with one explainable exception about AD 1790). I believe, from memory, that the decimal scale was adopted in China about the 12th century. Kublai Khan's forces took Pagan in Upper Burma in AD 1287.

My problems are these:

1. Why should the mythical lion and duck have been used in Burma in AD 1550, as in Assyria in 1000 BC? Is there a known connection between Mongolia and Assyria?
2. Why should the mandarin duck in AD 1550, so long after the main Burmese immigration, have replaced the earlier jungle-fowl-like bird? Was it and had it long been symbolic of Upper Burma?

3. What is the significance to the weight system of the display of sexual difference, if any, other than to emphasise that the bird was intended to be a mandarin duck? But the display also occurs on the jungle-fowl-like weights.
4. If these symbols were imported from China then should we expect now that more of the symbolism employed in Burma is of Chinese, rather than Indian influence, both on the weights and also on the payas, or pagodas?

I would be grateful for any comments, corrections etc., that ONS members may be able to make.

**A rare and unpublished Arab-Sasanian drahm of 'Abdallāh ibn al-Zubair**

*by William B. Warden jr.*

'Abdallah ibn al-Zubair was a nephew of 'A'isha, widow of the Prophet Muhammad, and one of the leading members of the Islamic aristocracy. After the death of the Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwīya ibn Abi Sufyan in AH 60, and upon the accession of his son Yazid I, 'Abdallāh openly asserted his own claim to the Caliphate. During this period, 'Abdallāh struck a series of silver drahmms from different mints, the earliest of which was issued from Kirman mint in AH 62. This issue has been published by Walker<sup>1</sup>.

These coins usually bear the name in Pehlevi, 'Abdallāh son of al-Zubair. In AH 64, he was elected Caliph and made the holy city of Mecca his capital. During his reign as Caliph, 'Abdallāh controlled the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina, part of Syria and all of Iraq, with both fortresses and garrison cities of Basra and Kufa under the governorship of his brother Mus'ab ibn al-Zubair. He also controlled part of southern Iran which was under the command of his great general al-Muhallab ibn Abī Sufra, who was battling Kharijites and members of the Shi'at 'Alī, who were in control of most of the rest of Iran. The rival Umayyad Caliphs were in control of most of Syria and Egypt.

During this period, he struck coins with the name and title, 'Abdallāh Commander of the Faithful.

The rival Umayyad Caliph Yazid I died and was succeeded by his son Mu'āwīya II, who, after a reign of a few months also died. In AH 64, Marwan, an able member of another branch of the Umayyad family, succeeded Mu'awiya. After a brief reign of only one year, he was murdered by an offended wife. In AH 65, his son 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan became Caliph, and, with the help of the two able generals al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf and al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufra<sup>2</sup>, he brought about the downfall of the Zubayrids and their followers.

In AH 72, 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan defeated the Zubayrid army and Mus'ab ibn al-Zubair was killed. In this manner 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan gained control of Iraq. His general, al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, in AH 73 laid seige to Mecca and later defeated 'Abdallāh ibn al-Zubair who died on the field of battle, thus, ending his reign and establishing 'Abd al-Malik as sole Caliph over most of the Islamic world.

Recently, the writer acquired the earliest recorded coin of 'Abdallāh. It is dated AH 61 and was struck at Jayy mint (Isfahan, Iran), prior to 'Abdallāh's assumption of the title of Caliph; an issue which seems to be unpublished. A second similar drahm was acquired a few years ago by the Cabinet des Medailles, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France, and it appears to have been struck from the same dies<sup>3</sup>.

'Abdallāh ibn al-Zubair: AR Drahm: 27 mm., 2.3 gm.

Obv. Usual type bust of Khusro II, facing right.  
To left of bust, the usual AFZUT inscription,  
To the right in Pehlevi: APDLAA  
I ZUBIRAN

سپهبد  
زبیران

Margin: first quarter  
second quarter: Bish'illah

ع  
سبیل

Rev. Usual fire-altar and attendants.  
At left (= AH 61: 680/1) YA'JSHST  
At right, mint signature of Jayy (Isfahan): GD

سبیل  
جی



The name differs from the usual APDULA I ZUBIRAN ('Abdallāh son of Zubair) inscription, both in the omission of the U in the first word and in the addition of a second A (or H, which would more accurately reflect the Arabic pronunciation of the name than the form later made canonical in Pehlevi). It is puzzling to find coins struck in Jayy mint at this early date for 'Abdallāh; especially since the Ummayyad governor 'Ubaidallāh ibn Ziyad was in control of this mint. 'Ubaidallāh struck large quantities of drahms from AH 60 through 63, but Zubayrid's partisans must have temporarily gained control of this mint in AH 61 and issued a few rare drahms in 'Abdallāh's name. There is no mention of such an incident<sup>4</sup> by any Arab historians of this period but, judging from the rarity of this coinage, there is no doubt in my mind that a transient occupation by Zubayrid partisans is exactly what occurred. It is hoped that after publication of this article, some more coins from Jayy mint will surface and be published to shed some more light to these enigmatic issues of the period.

#### Footnotes:

1. Walker, John, *A Catalogue of Arab-Sassanian Coins*, Oxford, 1941, page 30, no. 38.
2. In the early part of the year AH 72, he defected from the Zubayrid cause and swore allegiance to 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan.
3. A plaster cast of this coin was sent to me through the courtesy of Dr. Raoul Curiel last year.
4. Caetani, L., *Chronographia Islamica*, Paris, 1912, which brings together all of the reports of the Arabic historians for the Ummayyad period.

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- ” *The Numismatic History of Rayy*, ANS. Numismatic Studies, no. 2, New York, 1938
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#### A half rupee of Shah Jehan I

by S. L. Goron

The silver coinage of the earlier Moghul emperors, up to and including Shah Jehan I (1628 - 57), is notable for a wide range of designs, inscriptions, calligraphy and even format. Thereafter a high degree of uniformity becomes the order of the day. Shah Jehan's coinage, while not so varied in format (most coins are round, though a few square rupees are known) as that of his immediate predecessors, Akbar and Jehangir, nor exhibiting so great a variety of 'poetic' couplets as that of Jehangir, nevertheless bears a pleasing range of designs. This is particularly the case with the coinage struck at the capital Agra, which Shah Jehan had renamed Akbarabad early in his reign in honour of his grandfather. The Akbarabad coinage comprises rupees with purely linear inscriptions, with inscriptions in square areas, in circular areas, in lozenge shaped areas of varying design and permutations of these.

This article, however, is not about rupees, but about a half rupee, struck at Akbarabad. Moghul half rupees are generally much scarcer than full rupees (the half rupees of Surat from Shah Jehan I onwards are relatively common, but then the full rupees are very common). The half rupees usually have the same design as the rupees, though they may be struck from specially prepared dies with smaller lettering. This particular half rupee has the Kalima in a circular area on the obverse and the ruler's name in a square area on the reverse. Both these designs are well known for the Akbarabad rupee coinage, but *not combined on the same coin*. I have not come across this particular combination on any other Akbarabad coin. Does anybody have a rupee of this type? If so, please let me know.

Obverse  
Kalima in a circle



Around: part of –

بصدق ابر بكر و عدل عمر  
بازرم عثمان و علم علي

Kalima +  
bi-sadiq Abi Bakr wa 'adl 'Omar  
bi-azzam 'Othman wa 'ilm 'Ali

[by the truth of Abu Bakr and the justice of 'Omar  
by the modesty of 'Othman and the wisdom of 'Ali]

Weight: 5.2 grams (the coin is quite worn)  
The date is off the flan.

### Wattasid silver dirhams

by Stephen Album

One of the least understood of all the Islamic coinages is that of the Wattasid kingdom in 15th and 16th century Morocco, an obscure dynasty whose power derived from their initial position as servitors to the last Merinid ruler, and who were overthrown by the first of the Saadien Sharifs. Hazard assigns a number of rather attractive square silver dirhams to this dynasty (the gold assigned to these kings probably should be reattributed elsewhere), as follows:

H 1154	to Abu Abdallah Muhammad II,	ruled 910 to 932
H 1155	to Abu'l - Hasan Ali II,	ruled 932 and again in 961
H 1156	to Abu'l - Abbas Ahmad,	ruled 932 - 952 and 956 - 957

These are inscribed in a rather elegant Naskhi script, very similar to the dated silver pieces of the first Saadian, Abu Abdallah Muhammad II, which bear dates 956 - 962 and were struck at Fes (the Wattasid coins lack indication of mint). On the basis of that comparison, I would prefer the following attributions:

H 1154	to Abu Abdallah Muhammad III,	ruled 952 - 956
H 1155	as given by Hazard, but to his second reign in 961	
H 1156	as given by Hazard: to either reign, probably the second	

About two years ago I acquired some Wattasid coins from the collection of the late Dr. Rault, which included, in addition to a couple of specimens of H-1155 of Ali, two apparently unpublished types. One was inscribed with the name and title of "Al-shaykh Amir al-Muslimin" (some have the mint name Meknes), and the latter with the title "Nasir al-Din Amir al-Muslimin". The style is similar to some of the Merinid coins of the later rulers, and is thus indicative of an assignment to the earlier Wattasid kings. The first is almost certainly a coin of Abu Abdallah Muhammad I (869 - 910 / 1465 - 1504), who was known as al-Shaykh. The second is more troublesome, for I am unaware of any Wattasid who took the title Nasir al-Din. Dr. Rault had assigned them to Abu Abdallah Muhammad III (952 - 956), which is unlikely on grounds of style and type, and I will propose, on the basis of their type and style resembling those of Muhammad I al-Shaykh, but somewhat less carefully executed, that the coins be assigned to Abu Abdallah Muhammad II, surnamed al-Burtughali (910 - 932 / 1504 - 1525). None bear a mint name, and none are dated. Comments on these proposals would be welcomed.



1

Abu Abdallah Muhammad I  
Nasir al din (869 - 910)



2

Abu Abdallah Muhammad II  
al Burtughali (910 - 932)



3

Abu'l Hasan Ali II  
(second reign: 961)

(photographs are enlarged to about 1.6 times natural size)

Reverse  
In a square:

بار شاه غاز  
شاه جهان

Margin: part of –

شهاب الدين محمد صاحب  
قران ثانی ضرب اکبراباد

Square: Shah Jehan badshah ghazi  
Margin: Shihab-ud-din Mohammed  
sahib qiran thani zarb Akbarabad

[shihab-ud-din Mohammed, second lord of  
the conjunctions, struck at Akbarabad]

### A coin of Rana Bahadur Shah of Nepal struck in Almora

by N. G. Rhodes

The coin illustrated here appeared in Steve Album's list no. 27 (July 1982) as no. 1047, described as a coin of the Rohillas. However, a closer examination shows that the inscription reads: —

سرسى مہاراجہ رانا بہادر شاہ

Obv. Sri Maharajah (Ra)na Bahadur Shah Bahadur

Rev. Fulus, Zarb Almorah

فلوس ضرب المورہ

It was in 1790 that the Gorkhas conquered Almora, ousting the last ruler of the Chand dynasty, Mahendra Singh. The Nepalese initially intended to extend their conquests further west, but the war with Tibet and the subsequent Chinese invasion of Nepal delayed such action, and it was not until 1803 that Garhwal, and subsequently Sirmur, were brought under Nepalese rule. Almora remained under Nepalese control until the war of 1815, when the whole of Kumaon, including Almora, and all the territory to the east, was ceded to the British.

The weight of the present coin, 11 grams, is comparable with the other copper coins of Rana Bahadur dated 1844 VS (1787 AD), although these were struck further east. It must, therefore, have been struck in Almora after 1790 and before Rana Bahadur's abdication in 1799, and hence is the earliest coin attributable to the mint of Almora.



Magatama: natural size: 1.70 gm (left) and 2.20 gm (right)

### Magatama: primitive currency or jewellery ?

by M. B. Mitchiner

Magatama are claw-shaped pendants made of jade, or comparable precious material, which are pierced through their broader end. They are best known from their occurrence in early Japanese tombs, though they were also used in Korea. N. G. Munro, writing in 'Coins of Japan' (Yokohama 1904), illustrated some on plate 1 and commented (p. 5) that the word could well be interpreted as meaning 'curved gem'. He commented on the amuletic power of the tiger claw in early Japan and Korea and went on to include the Magatama as a form of primitive currency (pp. 6 and 11) used before the introduction of cash coinage. Since that time Magatama have commonly been considered an item of Japanese primitive currency and no relevant evidence has been forthcoming in western literature to either substantiate or disprove that opinion.

The situation has recently been changed, thanks to the exhibition of 'Treasures from Korea' (British Museum publications 1984) recently held in London. Among the many artefacts recovered from well defined excavation contexts is a substantial quantity of jewellery of the Kingdom of Silla dating from the 5th to 7th centuries AD. Magatama figure prominently on the jewellery of this period as simple pendants (pl. 52), as pendants on gold ear-rings (pl. 59), as important items of elaborate golden crown pendants (pl. 64), as the central pendant of precious necklaces (pl. 70 and 81), and along with other forms of pendant on a girdle (pl. 92). Dating both from the Silla period (pl. 93) and also from the adjacent Kaya kingdom which was absorbed by Silla in AD 562 (pl. 43: 5th - 6th century AD) were shown two elaborate golden crowns that each had numerous Magatama attached on to them.

This recent evidence from Korea would seem to show quite clearly that Magatama were highly respected cultural artefacts of the 5th to 7th century used in both Korea and Japan. But the evidence is equally clear in showing that Magatama have no place among classifications of primitive currency. Magatama were essentially items of jewellery that were probably also endowed with amuletic powers.

## Chupperbund counterfeiters

by Prashant P. Kulkarni

The meaning of the word 'Chupperbund' is obscure<sup>1</sup>. It was, however, used to denote a tribe of fakirs engaged in the business of manufacturing counterfeits of British Indian rupees. No sooner had the British currency stabilised after 1835, than the Chupperbunds realised the benefits they could derive from forging the rupees. However, it was AD 1865 when Mr. J. Gibbs, the Acting Session Judge at Poona, realised the need for putting a check to this practice. His letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Judicial Department, dated the 23rd May 1865 is self explanatory: —

'A case having occurred during the present session in which a man was convicted for uttering a base coin, it occurred to me that in India there is apparently no system in force for detecting the different places where the counterfeit coins are made ..... I therefore make some sincere observations and suggestions.

First of all I give a short description of the activities of these counterfeiters. The person was a mendicant faqueer, a stranger in Sholapur, and his plan of operation was as follows. He went to a small money changer's shop at which an elderly woman presided, and tendering 16 annas and 9 pies, requested she would give him a rupee, which she did. The Faqueer looking at it while holding it in his hand asked her whether she had a newer one, whereupon she gave him a second, telling him to take what he preferred. By a sleight of hand trick he changed them and put down two false rupees on the shop board saying neither would suit him. The woman, however, immediately detected the false rupees and called for assistance. The faqueer was caught .....

Such was the 'modus operandi' of the Chupperbunds. They always pretended to exchange more than sixteen annas to a rupee and ultimately refusing the deal exchanged the forged rupees for good ones by hand tricks. Gibbs described the six rupees seized from the cuprit: —

'The forged coins are such that they would escape detection from genuine if kept amidst several genuine rupees. The milling is inferior and it appears that there are small cracks on the dies ..... Two of them are of the old East India Company. Out of the remaining four, three are from the same die as there is a slight mark or crack between the Q and U of 'QUEEN' and the fourth has it between the two E's.'

Justice Gibbs' suggestions were taken up and a drive was launched against the Chupperbunds. Up to February 1870 as many as 64 persons were caught, 28 of whom were convicted. The Inspector Generals of Police were required to report regularly on the activities of these gangs of professional coiners. Within the next twenty years as many as 24 gangs were caught: moulds, ladles and other equipment seized and several counterfeit rupees destroyed.

Mr. Nicholls, the Deputy Commissioner of Nursinghpore, submitted a very full report on Chupperbund coiners in 1881. On the lines of this report, A. Mackenzie, the Secretary to the Government of India wrote on 19th April, 1882, to the Secretary of Government of Bombay that "Chupperbunds when sentenced in the Central Provinces should be returned on completion of their sentence, to their homes near the rivers Krishna and Bheema (West Maharashtra) so that they could be rehabilitated".

Gradually the Chupperbunds were wiped out, but stray counterfeiters continued their operations on a small scale. The Inspector General of Police, Hyderabad Acquired Districts, wrote on 1st. August 1891 that there was also a tribe called 'Baluchies' in the Mozuffernagar district who coined forged money. Of course, the stray forgers never ceased and even now we come across several rupees of George the sixth made of iron or lead. It will be interesting if somebody could find the Chupperbund rupees described by Justice Gibbs.

At the end I pay my heartfelt thanks to Mr. S. D. Guru, the Director of Archives, Madhya Pradesh and Mr. Satpal, the Record Keeper, who have allowed me to go through the archives and make use of the unpublished material in this paper.

### Footnote:

1. According to the "Glossary of Indian Terms for use of the various departments of the Government of the East India Company" (J & H Cox, Bombay, c. 1842) the term Chupperbund means resident cultivators in contradistinction to those residing in a village of which they are not permanent inhabitants (KW).