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September - October 1986

NEWSLETTER no. 102

From the Editor

Because of pressure of work, Howard Simmons has had to resign his post as co-editor of the Newsletter. On behalf of the Society, I should like to thank him and particularly Frances Simmons for their work over the past 14 months in looking after the production side of things.

From the Treasurer

The audited summary of the Society's accounts for the year ended 31 March 1986 is available on application by members to their Regional Secretaries.

10th International Numismatic Congress

The 10th International Numismatic Congress took place as planned between 8th and 12th September in London. Some 570 participants from over 30 countries attended what all agreed was a highly successful congress. No fewer than 40 papers were read on oriental subjects, ranging from Muslim Spain to China. This was a higher figure than at any previous such congress and is an indication of the growing interest and research in this field. The two ONS workshops on Islamic coinages and South Asian coinages were also highly successful, each being attended by 40 - 50 people. Participants at these were invited to talk briefly about work being done in their countries on the relevant subjects, including recently published books, dissertations, papers, and work in hand. The results in both cases were impressive and summaries will appear in future Newsletters or as separate Information Papers. It is also planned to reproduce the abstracts of the oriental congress papers as a special Information Paper. The *full* texts of the papers and proceedings of the congress will be published by the International Numismatic Commission in due course. The next International Numismatic Congress will take place in Brussels, Belgium, in 1991.

ONS members will be pleased to learn that Dr. P. L. Gupta, the doyen of Indian numismatic studies, has, along with a small number of other eminent numismatists, been made an honorary member of the International Numismatic Commission.

Symposium in Louvain, Belgium

The Contact Group for Phoenician and Punic Studies of the Belgian National Funds for Scientific Research and the Séminaire de Numismatique Marcel Hoc, are organising their annual symposium for the first week of March 1987 on the theme of Pre-monetary and Monetary Economy in the Phoenician and Punic World. Any members wishing to produce numismatic papers for the symposium should contact T. Hackens, Collège Erasme, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, by November this year. Accommodation can be arranged for participants.

Quadrennial prize of the Royal Belgian Numismatic Society

The prize is conferred upon the author of an un-published scientific, original dissertation relating to numismatics or sigillography. It was granted for the first time in 1981 and will be granted again in 1989. Participation is not restricted to holders of diplomas or titles or to nationality, but it is restricted to persons who are no more than 35 years old as of 1st of November 1988.

The dissertation should have at least 75 pages of typewritten text and may be written in French, Dutch, English, German, Italian or Spanish.

In 1989 the prize will amount to 50,000 Belgian francs (almost £1000).

Manuscripts must be in possession of the Society before November 1, 1988.

The rules can be obtained on application to the Chairman of the Society, Dr. Maurice Colaert, avenue Winston Churchill 58, bte 17, 1180 Brussels, Belgium.

Proposed ONS award

The ONS is proposing the creation of a biennial Award for Islamic Numismatics. It would be called the Balog Award, in honour of Dr. Paul Balog who worked extensively in this field and did so much to encourage students of Islamic numismatics. The aim would be to get scholars to publish the results of their studies both to disseminate new knowledge and to promote critical examination of their conclusions. ONS is currently seeking discussions with possible co-sponsors with a view to making the first award in 1988. More news of this in due course.

Notes on the Sultans of Kashmir. Part 1. by Nicholas Rhodes and Stan Goron

It is exactly a hundred years since Rodgers wrote his pioneering paper entitled "The Square Silver Coins of the Sultans of Kashmir",¹ and a full reappraisal of this coinage is long overdue. Since then more specimens of these scarce pieces have appeared, and advances have been made in the study of the history of Muslim Kashmir. Whitehead has published some of the rare gold coins of the Sultans,² and Valentine³ published a selection of the common, but usually badly struck copper pieces, but no-one has published a full integrated study of the coinage. This series of articles is not an attempt at such a study, but merely points to a few areas where corrections in attributions seem to be required, in the hope that someone more knowledgeable than us will attempt a full study of this difficult series.

1. Shams-ud-din.



At the head of the series of coins published in both the British Museum and Indian Museum, Calcutta, are square silver coins attributed to Shams Shah (1334-37 A.D.: 735-38 A.H.). It is unfortunate that the reverse marginal legends containing the

date are unread in both catalogues, while the illustrations are insufficiently clear. Stylistically, however, the coins have much in common with those struck some 150 - 200 years after the reign of this early Shams Shah. At the end of this period there was indeed a similarly named ruler entitled Shams-ud-din Shah, who is said to have ruled in 1537-8 A.D. (c.944 A.H.). In his article, mentioned above, Rodgers illustrates the obverses to two "Shams" coins. Both coins appear to be inscribed "Shams-ud-din" or "Shams din". The reverses are not illustrated as they were in too poor condition. A particularly fine example of this coinage is in the collection of one of the present authors and is illustrated here. It differs in style and the arrangement of the legend from the other published specimens. In the bottom left-hand corner of the obverse appears to be a date that may represent 94(0), while on the reverse, in words, is the date 842 (copied from the coins of Sultan Zain-ul-'Abidin (1417-67AD: 820-72AH). This latter coin is without doubt attributable to the later Shams-ud-din Shah (whether the date 94(0) is wrongly read or wrongly engraved, or whether the previously reported date of his reign is wrong remains to be determined). Following inspection of the three "Shams" specimens now in the British Museum's cabinet, it is also clear that these, all similar in style, are also to be attributed to the later Shams-ud-din Shah. On two of the coins the reverse margins show enough of the date for it to be read as 842 (or 84x).

1. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. LIV, part 1, 1885.
2. Numismatic Chronicle Series V, vol. XIII.
3. Copper Coins of India, 1914 (reprinted 1971 by Spink & Son Ltd.)

A ¼ rupee of Sher Shah Suri by Stan Goron

The fractional silver coins of the Suri rulers are very rare. H. Nelson Wright in his book "The coinage and metrology of the Sultans of Dehli" (1936)¹ mentions only ten specimens² in all, eight half rupees, one quarter rupee and a sixteenth rupee which broke into pieces on its way to Britain! And this despite his statement that "in any collection of the coins of the Sultans of Dehli it will be found that the coins of the Suri dynasty predominate in number". Of the ten coins, six were struck by Sher Shah, two by Islam Shah, one by Mohammed Adil and one by Ibrahim. Almost 50 years have elapsed since the original publication of this book, but few additional specimens have turned up. The quarter rupee published here, by kind permission of R. C. Senior Ltd., corresponds to a known rupee type (see HNW coin number 1078). The type, known dated AH 949 and 950, is mintless but belongs to a class of coins that include the word Jahanpanah, the significance of which has been debated at some length³ without a definite conclusion being reached. The word can mean both "Asylum of the world" and "His Majesty" and may refer either to the ruler himself or a place of minting.

Obverse



In circle: The Kalima

Margin: parts of

ابا بكر عمر عثمان علي
السلطان العادل

Margin: Abu Bakr, 'Omar,
'Othman, 'Ali
As-Sultan al-'Adil
(The just Sultan)

The coin weighs 2.75 grams.

Reverse



In circle:

شیر ساه
السلطان

جلد الله ملكه
و سلطانه ۹۴۹

Margin: parts of

فرید الدنیا و الدین ابو المظفر

حہا نپناہ
سہی سہر ساہی

In circle: Sher Shah as-Sultan
Khallad Allah Mulku wa
Sultanahu
(May Allah perpetuate his kingdom
and his power)

Margin: Farid-ud-dunya wa ud-din
Abu'l Muzaffar Jahanpanah
Shri Ser Sahi
(Pearl of the world and the faith,
Father of the victorious one, His
Majesty (or Asylum of the world)
Sher Shah)

1. This excellent book was reprinted in 1974 by the Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi.
2. Coin numbers 1031C, 1031D, 1048, 1076, 1077A, 1291A, 1294A, 1434C, 1480E and the footnote to number 1103.
3. HNW op. cit., p.385.



The brass struck cash illustrated above is beautifully struck, with very fine calligraphy. The only imperfection is that the reverse die has been inverted, which is very unusual for a Chinese cash. Presumably the piece was a pattern struck in Europe or America during the Kuang Hsu era (1875-1908), for a Peking, Board of Works cash. Does anyone know who made it, where, and when ?

Book Review

Hennequin, G., *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes - Asie Pre-Mongole - Les Salgucs et leurs Successeurs*. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. 1985. xi, 932, 50 plates. Price announced on publication as FF 1500.

The only major collection of Islamic coins for which a fairly complete catalogue is available is that at the British Museum. Its 10 volumes still provide a valuable source of reference even though it is nearly a century since the last volume was published. Regrettably, the ambitious and extensive revision begun in 1941 by John Walker has not yet progressed as far as the original volume II. The appearance therefore of a new volume of the catalogue of the Paris collection is of particular interest to numismatists working in the field of Islamic coins.

It is a large volume in all respects. Over 2000 coins are included, spread out over nearly 1000 pages, each 205 mm by 297 mm, and the 50 plates contain natural size photographs of 852 casts. The catalogue covers the coins that were issued by the different groups of Seljuks and by the dynasties that followed them, up to the Mongol invasion. There is a sprinkling of other Turkoman coins, both before and after the Seljuks, but no Ottoman issues. Geographically the area represented is of present day Syria, Iraq, Persia and Asian Turkey; chronologically, the extreme range is AH 433 to 869 / AD 1041 to 1464. The long delays that are normal these days between text and production mean that the catalogue is complete only up to 1980. So that, for example, it omits the 52 rare Seljuk pieces acquired in 1982, for which descriptions must be sought in the same author's paper in *Annales Islamologiques*, t. XIX 1983.

The book is published out of sequence, being the second of a two-volume section on the period between the Caliphs and the Mongols, and the historical introduction will be provided only in the yet-to-be-published Volume IV. One consequence of this particular publication's timing is that Volume V appears to be more of a reference listing than a description of the coinages it includes. In the absence of a mint/date index it is a little difficult to use at first, unless one is well versed in the complex history of the dynasties involved.

Well over half the entries relate to the coins of the Zengids and the Artuqids. Here one is provided with a long series of the gold coins and a magnificent array of the figured copper pieces; a boon to the specialist in this series for whom the existing references are scattered and mostly out of print. Where the catalogue of the British Museum collection has 85 Zengid coins, CMMBN V has 518. There are 663 Artuqid coins against 199 in the BM and 77 Bektiginids to 29. The listing of the Great Seljuks comprises an extensive run of gold coins from AH 433 on to some of the rare pieces of the 540's. In contrast, the Seljuks of Rum have little that is new and the representation of the Turkoman dynasties is sketchy, apart from the Danishmendids.

In a sequence that follows Zambaur's 1927 *Manual de généalogie et de chronologie* . . . , each series is set out in a carefully designed hierarchical sequence of dynasty, ruler, mint, metal and date. One very useful consequence of this approach is that, where several names appear on a coin, their relationship to each other is stated, if known, with the source given in a footnote. These footnotes are one of the valuable features of the book and provide an encyclopaedic, if occasionally unselective, index to the relevant references.

The entries themselves have two parallel systems of reference numbers. Each coin has a unique number, given in Arabic digits, while specimens with nominally identical designs, apart from the date, are grouped together under a reference given in Roman numerals. For some unspecified reason coins of different dates are given the same Roman reference although minor changes in the relative position of the marginal legends attract separate references. However this system has the advantage that the actual record is that of the die types used; the coins being represented only by details of the weight in grams, the maximum diameter in millimetres, and the alignment of the die axes (expressed to the nearest half hour against a clock face). The detail provided for each die type is impressive ! The legends are given in full, pointed, Arabic script with the marginal inscriptions allocated to specific points of the compass, where this is possible. Symbols and decorations are described meticulously, line by line, and all diacritical points are recorded. Finally, references are given for all published types.

Inevitably, in a work of this complexity, there are some errors. Silver coins of the Rum Seljuk Kay Ka'us II are attributed to Kay Ka'us I on the basis of a misreading of the diwani numerals used for the dates. A few pieces are not of the metal listed, e.g. Nos. 360, 1702 and 1703 and the description of the design of the elegant copper coin of the Armenian Atabeg, Begtimur, as "a horse attacked by a wolf" is hardly an improvement on the usual "mare suckling her foal". But these are minor quibbles for a major addition to any library attempting to cover Islamic numismatics. The price is steep, but the scholarship it buys is extensive and the degree of attention given to detail is unparalleled in modern numismatic publications. M. R. Broome