

ORIENTAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No. 134 August - October 1992

ONS News

1. From the Secretary General - Appointment of Honorary members

It is now some 22 years since the Society was founded in March 1970. At that time, interest in coins was at its peak and many people joined clubs and societies only to leave again as prices began to fall. ONS has proved resistant to the trend. Not only has our membership grown steadily over the years but, of the first hundred people to join, currently 32 are still members.

The credit for this remarkable success must go primarily to the enterprise and interest of our honorary officers who have together created this international organisation spanning some 40 countries. None has been paid or rewarded in any way except in the satisfaction of seeing their endeavours prove so successful.

The time has come when the Society should recognise the roots of its success in the only way open to it. That is by appointing as Honorary Members those honorary officers who have given continuous service to the Society for five or more years. The following ten people qualify and their names will be singled out in the next issue of the official List of Members:

2. The Society accounts for the year ending 31 March 1991 are now available. A copy can be obtained by any member on application to their Regional Secretary. An A4 stamped, addressed envelope would be appreciated.

Members News

1. Ken Wiggins has a number of oriental coins which were unsold at previous ONS meeting auctions. Any member requiring a list should write to Ken (see address under UK & Eire Regional Secretary) enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope or international reply coupon.

2. The discussion on the topic of A Rare Islamic Coin of Valencia in Newsletters 131 and 132 is focusing on the accuracy of the recorded dates on four very rare coins. If any member has an example of the billon dirhems of Toledo, dated 448, or of Valencia, dated 457, 458 or 459 in their collections, Michael Broome would be most grateful for details, particularly if the date can be read clearly.

3. Your Editor has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the Indian Coin Society, Nagpur.

From the Membership Secretary - The new, 1 October 1992 List of ONS Members should have reached you all by now, together with Occasional Paper 27. All details were checked with each Regional Secretary before going to press, but doubtless a few errors have slipped through. Please check your entry and send any corrections to your Regional Secretary.

Other News

On Friday April 2nd and Saturday April 3rd 1993 a colloquium will be held in the British Museum to mark the opening of the exhibition The Hirayama Collection of Silk Road Coins. The exhibition will be held in the British Museum (gallery 69a) from April 1st to May 31st. Professor Ikuo Hirayama is the founder of the Institute for Silk Road Studies, Kamakura, Japan, and a Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO. His collection focuses on coins issued and used along the Silk Roads in the pre-Islamic period.

Speakers at the colloquium will include:

Dr K. Tanabe, Ancient Orient Museum, Japan (on Kushan history)

Mr N. Rhodes, Royal Numismatic Society (on Chinese coins)

Dr V. Porter, Joe Cribb, and Helen Wang, Dept of Coins and Medals, British Museum (on coins)

Prof. R. Whitfield, Percival David Foundation, University of London, (on Stein paintings)

Dr A Farrer, Dept of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum (on Stein paintings)

Dr S. Lieu, University of Warwick (on Inner Asian history)

Dr F. Wood, Oriental Manuscripts, British Library (on Chinese Central Asian manuscripts)

Ms S. Whitfield, Dunhuang Manuscripts Project, British Library (on Chinese Central Asian manuscripts)

Any member wishing to find out more about the colloquium should contact Helen Wang, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London WC1B 3DG.

Planned Events for 1993

Saudi Arabia

An exhibition is to be organised in Riyadh on Islamic coinage by Mr M. el Kholi of the National Museum, Damascus and curators of other collections.

Egypt

A Gallery of gold coins is to be opened in the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo.

India

The Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, Anjaneri is collaborating with the Istituto Italiano per il Medio e Estremo Oriente and the Italian Embassy Cultural Centre in an event entitled "Ancient Rome & India".

Turkey

The coin department of the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul is preparing for the opening of a permanent exhibition on the mint of Istanbul from the beginning to the present time.

New and Recent Publications

1. *Earth & Heaven - The royal animal-shaped weights of the Burmese empires*, by Donald & Joan Gear. Available from Twinstar, Cunningham House, Westfield Lane, Harrow HA3 9ED, UK for £38 plus packing & post (surface £1.50; Air, Europe & Israel £7.50; Canada, USA, Hong Kong £10.20; India, Pakistan, SE Asia, Australia £11.30; New Zealand £12.90).

Hardback, 222 x 152mm, 320 pages, 69 black & white photographs, 130 black & white diagrams, 4 maps, etc.

The increasingly rare, royal, animal-shaped weights of the ancient Mon and Burmese empires are associated with mystery and romance. This work, comprised mainly of new and original information, attempts the resolution of many of the problems, so adding a little more to the knowledge of past Burmese metrology, culture and their origins. It endeavours also to indicate some of the pleasures available in the beautiful shapes of the weights, the study of the symbolisms, the histories of the weights and peoples of the region and the accounts of the older travellers.

The work will be of permanent value as a source of reference to both specialist and non-specialist. In particular, the book will be useful to the historical metrologist, the oriental numismatist, the art historian, the symbolist, the ethnologist, the antiquarian, the dealer, the collector, the oriental museum curator, the specialist librarian and the university oriental studies department. It will appeal, as intended, to the many Burmese who are proud of these unique weights, their symbolic and other attributes.

About one-half of the work is concerned with the physical characteristics of the weights, i.e. the models for the parts of the weights, the style changes, their classifications, the reasons for them and their chronology. It records the methods of manufacture, standardisation and usage. It studies, briefly, the origins of the binary and decimal mass scales, both used on the weights of the region. It inquires into the reasons for the changes in the mass unit, the mass ranges, the mass frequencies and the related changes in the various kinds of ingot and cowry currencies.

About one-third deals with the ancient and remote origins of the shape motifs and the possible manners and routes of their transference to Burma from the artifacts of the ancient Mesopotamians, the steppe nomads, the barbarians of west China, the Sakas in north India and the northern Thai. It shows the relation to the Malayan gambar.

Another third investigates the religious and other symbolic meanings of the weight shapes, their parts and their associations.

Collections, surveys, inquiries and a preliminary unpublished monograph were made in Burma during 1957-60 and 1970-73, later supplemented by bibliographic investigations.

(Publisher's text)

A copy of this book has been received and it is hoped to publish a review in a future Newsletter.

2. Edition 3, 1991 of *Zhoushan Numismatics* has been received. This contains a variety of articles on Chinese numismatics, all in Chinese.

3. *Spink Numismatic Circular* for July, September & October 1992 contains parts 3, 4 & 5 of Samuel Lachman's article on the Numismatics of the Yemen of the 10th-16th centuries. The October issue also includes an item by N. du Quesne Bird entitled 'The Avon Brass Industry and the Libyan Zinc Coinage'.

4. *Numismatika Chronika 1991* (Athens) contains an article by Kenneth M. MacKenzie on 'Gold coins of Suleyman the Magnificent from the mint at Sidre Qapsi'.

5. *Numismatics International Bulletin*, vol. 27 no. 7, July 1992 contains an article by Samuel Lachman entitled 'Mamluk Trade Coins', and an article by the late Ray Hebert on 'Two Fatimid Gold Coins of Al-Mustansir.' The two coins in question are a dinar of al-Misr, year 460 AH and a dinar of al-Mansuriyah, year 464 AH.

6. Two volumes on the Sasanian empire have appeared in the series *Res Orientales* (published by the Groupe pour l'étude de la civilisation du Moyen-Orient, 13 rue du Fond Garant, F-91440 Bures-sur-Yvette, France and by E. Peeters, PB 41, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium). The first volume is entitled 'La géographie administrative de l'empire sassanide' by R. Gyselen and the second volume 'Prix, salaires, poids et mesures', with various metrological and numismatic contributions.

7. The Indian Institute for Research in Numismatic Studies, Nasik have published the following works:

'Coinage of the Katoch Rulers of Kangra' by A.K. Jha and S. Garg. Rs115/ US\$30.

'Studies in the coinage of the Western Kshatrapas' by Amit Jha and D. Rajgor. Rs275/US\$45.

Neither work has been received for review.

Lists received

i. A pricelist from Münzen Schoenawa, Ostlandstrasse 12, W-3342 Werlaburgdorf, Germany. This contains details of modern coins from a range of countries, including oriental ones.

ii. List 1059 (August 1992) from S.A. Jean Elsen N.V., Tervurenlaan 65, 1040 Brussels, Belgium. A five page list of oriental coins.

iii. List no. 371 (1991-2) from DK Agencies (P) Ltd, A/15-17 Mohan Garden, Najafgarh Road, New Delhi - 11059, India. This contains a list of some 500 books on Indian history, sociology, politics etc.

iv. Stephen Album lists nos. 89, 90 and 91. List 90 contains the following unpublished or apparently unpublished coins



1. Zangids of Mosul: Lu'lu' 1233-59 AV heavy dinar (15.14g), al-Mausil 635, struck as independent ruler without overlord.
2. Shaybanids: 'Abd Allah II, 1583-98, AV 1/4 ashrafi (0.9g), without name of mint, dated 992.
3. Palas: Uncertain ruler (9th century?), AV dinar (8.01g), ruler's name only partially deciphered, perhaps Sivavarman.
4. Mughals: Shah Jehan I, 1628-58, AV mohur (10.85g), Daulatabad 1061, year 23.
5. Mughals: Shah Jehan I, 1628-58, AV mohur (10.93g), Golkonda, undated.
6. Mughals: Aurangzeb, 1658-1707, AV mohur (10.95g), Kabul, year 3.
7. Mughals: Shah 'Alam II, 1759-1806, AR rupee, Murtazabad 1187 year 14. Presumably a Rohilla mint, but where was it?

v. R. C. Senior Ltd. (Butleigh Court Tower, Butleigh, Glastonbury, Soms., BA6 8SA, UK): a list of mainly South Asian coins.

Work in progress

Mr Mohammed El Mahdi Seham (Museum of Islamic Art, 11 Mohammed El Mahdi Street, Awkaff City, Dukki-Giza, Cairo, Egypt) is studying a hoard of mediaeval Italian gold coins discovered in Cairo in 1990 along with other European and Mamluk gold coins, and would be grateful for any appropriate reference documents.

The Coin Museums in Beijing and Shanghai, China, would be grateful for any kind of numismatic documentation concerning Western coinages that could be sent for their libraries. The latter museum opened earlier this year. Precise addresses are not available.

Mr M. El Kholi at the National Museum, Damascus, Syria, is working on Mongol coins (Great Khans, Persia and rival Khans) and hopes to publish this work in 1993.

In Tunisia, Khaled ben Rhomdane is preparing a catalogue of coins in the Musée du Bardo (Punic & Numidian period) and a translation with commentary of Arab treatises on 'monetary technique' (technique monétaire).

Book Review

Sigtuna Papers. Proceedings of the Sigtuna Symposium on Viking-Age Coinage 1-4 June 1989. Ed. by Kenneth Jonsson and Brita Malmer. Stockholm 1990. 339 pages, hardback. Price £40. Available from Spink.

This is number 6 of the Nova Series of Commentationes de Nummis Saeculorum IX-XI in Suecia repertis. The series has the primary aim of publishing the results of basic research so as to provide the foundation for the attribution of coins in the Corpus Nummorum Saeculorum IX-XI qui in Suecia reperti sunt. This volume consists of a collection of 39 papers, based on those prepared for, or presented at, a Symposium on Coinage of the Time of the Vikings which was held at Sigtuna, Sweden, in June 1989. This review is concerned with the nine papers that deal primarily with Islamic coinage.

The papers range from detailed hoard records to general accounts of possible reasons for dirhams appearing in Scandinavia. There is also a paper by Toll discussing die production and methods of use. Almost all these papers contain something of interest for the Islamic numismatist and several have important pieces of new information. One group of papers concentrates on the reasons why coins, ostensibly minted in what is now Afghanistan, should end up on the shores of the Baltic Sea, some 10,000 kilometres away. One paper, by Fomin, suggests that the mechanism is purely trade, while another, by Sawyer, favours tribute, subsequently split up into soldiers' pay packets.

A distinction is drawn between coins minted in the eighth or early ninth centuries, and later issues. The first group are 'Abbasid, coming predominantly from North African mints. They are thought to have travelled via Kharijite traders and finished up in Eastern Europe. The later coins are Samanid and come to light around the Baltic Sea. An interesting paper by Kromann describes Danish hoards of Kufic coins containing quantities of cut half and quarter dirhams. This leads to the suggestion that the hoards were first put together in areas where the coins were originally current.

Several papers discuss the possible sources of the silver and it is thought that the 'Abbasid dirhams were minted from silver mined in the Atlas Mountains. Lieber argues, unconvincingly, that there was no shortage of metallic silver in Fatimid Egypt and that the evident shortage of coined silver was due to administrative incompetence. Noonan applies some dubious (and grossly inaccurate) calculations to suggest a total number of dirhams reaching the Baltic area as over 200 million, based on finds of 115,000 coins.

It is impossible in a short review to do justice to the wealth of data and ideas contained in this volume. It is well worth reading all the papers if only for the scene they set for the economic conditions under which coins were used and hoarded in Viking times. For example, in Gotland, according to Jonsson and Ostergren, most hoards have been found on the sites of individual buildings. It is surmised that they were probably owned by individuals and acquired in trade. Hoards from the banks of the River Volga in contrast, indicate that the Kufic coins were probably ornaments rather than currency. An important component of the volume is provided by the detailed records of individual hoards. For example, Ilich describes two large unpublished dirham hoards from Amuda, near the Turkish/Syrian border, each with a large proportion of fragments of a similar date range to the whole coins.

One of the more important pieces of data, at least for your reviewer, was provided by Rispling in his paper on the Volga Bulghar imitations. The chain of die links illustrated should make every student of Samanid coins look very carefully indeed at their dirhams! All in all, this book amply justifies its place on the shelf of anyone with a serious interest in the coinage of the 'Abbasids or their contemporaries.

A Buwaihid Fractional Dirham from Tabaristan

Naoto Hattori

The Buwaihid Dynasty of medieval Iran (320-454 AH/ 932-1062 AD) issued a wide range of dirhams at many mints in the territories of the present-day Iran and Iraq. The present silver coin may be called a fractional dirham of the Buwaihids. As there are still no standard catalogues of this dynasty's coins nor any comprehensive medieval or modern histories of this dynasty, it was difficult for me to decipher all the inscriptions on this half-flat coin. But Mr. Stephen Album was able to read the crucial name on the coin as Khusraw Firuz and he assumed the mint to be Amul (capital of Tabaristan, a province on the Caspian Sea).

Normal dirhams naming Khusraw Firuz are not at all common. I have been able to find only four specimens:

With Fakhr al-Dawlah	Amul 37X	Coin Hoards, VII, 1985, p.253
	Amul 373	Tübingen, ED6 C4
	Amul 374	Zambaur (from A. Markov)
With Mu'yid al-Dawlah ¹	Amul 373	ANS 1971.316.866

According to G. C. Miles, fractional dirhams were rare, but, in recent times, examples of fractional dirhams from different medieval Islamic dynasties have been emerging gradually:

'Abbasid	Yahya b. al-Rabi'	0.425 gm ²
Samanid	Nasr b. Ahmad?	0.836 gm ²
Kakuyid	al-Karaj, 41(6?)	0.50 gm, 12 mm ³
Saljuq	Barkiyaruq	0.97gm, 14 mm ⁴

According to Mr. S. Album, there is another example of a Buwaihid fractional dirham in the Tübingen University collection (EF6 B2):

'Adud al-Dawlah struck on a minute flan

Description of dirham (1.6 gm, 15 mm)

Mint: Amul? Date c. 373-374

(لا اله الا
الله وحده
(لا شريك له
الملك يوم
الدين)
خسرو فيروز
(بن ركن الدولة



(محمد رسول الله
الامير السيد
نشا هانثاء
رئيس الدولة
روفلان الامه
بن ركن الدولة

Titles and names on coin: 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ta'i li Allah (363-381 AH)

Buwaihid ruler (1) on the reverse: Al-Amir al-sayyid Shahanshah Fakhr al-Dawlah wa Falak al-Amma b. Rukn al-Dawlah (The Wise Amir, King of Kings, Glory of the State and Heaven of the People, Son of the Pillar of State) [In Rayy 366-387, in Hamadan and Isfahan 373-387]⁵

Buwaihid ruler (2) on the obverse: Khusraw Firuz b. Rukn al-Dawlah

According to Donald S. Whitecomb's frequency table for the Buwaihid dirhams (time span 347-382 AH), weight standards can be fixed around 3.2 - 3.4 gm for the early period 347-72 and around 3.6 - 4.2 gm for the later period 380-82.⁶ So, the present fractional dirham has about half the weight of normal dirhams. Under the Buwaihids, as with other dynasties, dirhams were probably weighed rather than counted for transactions.⁷

Information on Khusraw Firuz is sparse.⁸ According to 'Utbi, he was a younger brother of Fakhr al-Dawlah. Rukn al-Dawlah had three powerful sons: 'Adud al-Dawlah Fana Khusraw (eldest), Mu'yid al-Dawlah Buwaih and Fakhr al-Dawlah 'Ali. Though Fakhr al-Dawlah along with Qabus of the Ziyarids had fought against Mu'yid al-Dawlah, he was defeated. So, for 7 years till his death in 373, Mu'yid al-Dawlah ruled both Tabaristan and Jurjan. From coins, it is certain that Khusraw Firuz, a younger brother amongst quarrelsome brothers, was installed as their (i.e. Mu'yid al-Dawlah and Fakhr al-Dawlah's) viceroy in Tabaristan.⁹

I acknowledge thanks to Mr. Stephen Album for deciphering this coin.

NOTES

1. Though the title of مؤيد الدولة has been spelt as Mu'ayyad al-Dawlah, this reading has no suitable meaning. It means literally 'fortified of state'. I think Mu'yid al-Dawlah (helper of the state) is the correct reading.
2. Raymond H. Hébert, 'Two Rare Silver Fractional Dirhams', *ONS NL* no. 113, July-Aug. 1988.
3. G. C. Miles, *ANS MN* 18, 1972, p.144.
4. T. Khodžaniyazov, *Katalog monet gosudarstva velikikh Sel'džukov*, Ashkhabad, 1979, no. 260.
5. C. E. Bosworth, *Islamic Dynasties*, (my edition is Russian tr., Moscow, 1971, pp.137-8).
6. D. S. Whitecomb, 'The Fars Hoard: A Buyid Hoard from Fars Province, Iran', *ANS MN* 21, 1976, pp.179-80.
7. John S. Deyell, *Living without Silver*, New Delhi, 1990, p.73.
8. Herbert Busse, 'Iran under the Buyids', *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 4, 1975, There is no mention of Khusraw Firuz here.
9. 'Utbi, *Ta'rikh Yamini*. I can refer to the Persian translation by Jurfadqani, ed. by J. Sho'ar, Tehran, 1345/1966, p.67. Hamd Allah Mustaufi, *Tarikh-e Gozida*, ed. by 'Abd al-Husayn Nava'y, Tehran, 1339/1972, pp.416-7.

Some Samanid and Ghaznavid dirhams from the last years of the 10th century

Gunnar Holst

In the last years of the 10th century the Samanid empire in Transoxania and Khurasan was under double pressure from its own rebellious generals and from an external enemy, the Qarakhanids.

The Amir Nuh b. Mansur (366-387 AH/976-997 AD) had in 384/994 been obliged to ask Sebüktigin, the Turkish slave governor of Ghazna, to intervene against the rebels. After his victory over them, Sebüktigin was rewarded with a Samanid governorship. He always regarded himself as a governor on behalf of the Samanids and not as an independent sovereign and thus on his coins the names of the Samanid Amirs were placed before his own. Judging by his last wishes he did not intend his heirs to set themselves up as a separate dynasty.

The Samanids, and with them the Ghaznavids, had refused to recognise the succession in 381/991 of the 'Abbasid caliph al-Qadir and had continued to acknowledge his deposed predecessor al-Ta'i^c.

Sebüktigin's most common coins were small dumpy dirhams, minted in Farwan, a town to the north of Kabul in Afghanistan. They are usually struck partly off flan and lack both mint and date. In the field inscriptions, at the bottom of the obverse is the caliph's name al-Ta'i^c lil-lah. On the reverse are the names of Nuh b. Mansur and Sebüktigin (Sabuktakin).

During the last decades of the 10th century broad dirhams (ca. 35 mm; 3.5 - 5 gm) were produced in the town of Balkh and by means of these we can follow, year by year, political developments in the Samanid state.

On the obverse of a dirham of 387/997 is the epithet al-Malik al-Mansur (the king assisted by God). The reverse field has the names of al-Ta'i^c lil-lah and of Nuh b. Mansur, the latter with a sentence from the Koran, Sura 9, verse 130: Hasbia'llahu (God is enough for me).

In 387/997 both the Samanid Amir Nuh b. Mansur and Sebuktigin died. Nuh's son Mansur II b. Nuh was too young to control all the inland conflicts which took place in 388/998, so in Safar 389/February 999 he was deposed and then blinded. His successor was a younger brother 'Abd al-Malik b. Nuh, but he could not rouse the people of his domains against the Qarakhanids and in the same year (389/999) he was taken prisoner. In an article, 'On the dating of Samanid outsize dirhams', Nicholas Lowick has pointed out that 'Abd-al-Malik was named on coins from Naisabur. Mansur II b. Nuh and 'Abd al-Malik b. Nuh had a younger brother called Isma'il, who assumed the title al-Muntasir (the victorious). He escaped from the Qarakhanid prison but was killed near Marw in 395/1005 in the last attempt of the Samanids to regain power.

Sebuktigin had thought that various members of his family would hold his territories as governorships. He had six sons and the eldest, Mahmud, did not have the same mother as a younger son Isma'il, whom Sebuktigin had appointed as his successor in Ghazna. The more experienced and capable Mahmud proposed a division of power within the Ghaznavid territories, but as Isma'il refused this, he was deposed (388/998) after a few month's reign in Ghazna.

Coins of Isma'il are scarce. A dirham, similar to those of Sebuktigin, has on the obverse the caliph's name al-Ta'i^c lil-lah and on the reverse the names of Mansur b. Nuh and Isma'il. The coin is minted after Nuh's death in 387 and probably in Farwan (v. Zambaur, Farwan, Gh 387). Mahmud was now the real Ghaznavid leader and in 389/999 he was victorious over all his enemies and down to that year the Ghaznavids acknowledged the Samanids on their coins.

Mahmud of Ghazna, whose complete name was Abu-l-Qasim Mahmud had in 384/994 received his first honorary title Saif al-Dawla (sword of the state) from the Samanid Amir Nuh b. Mansur.

The dirhams of Balkh, 388 and 389 have, except for the date, the same inscription. On the obverse we read Mahmud al-Wali (the confidant; the close friend) Saif al-Dawla. The title is indicated by a sword, reproduced to the left on the coin. On the reverse is the caliph's name al-Ta'i^c lil-lah and a regal title al-Malik al-Mu'azzam (the very great king), belonging to the name Mansur b. Nuh. In C. E. Bosworth's article, 'The Titulature of the Early Ghaznavids', it is mentioned that Mansur I b. Nuh (350/961 - 366/976) on his coins used the two epithets al-Malik al-Muzaffar (the victorious king) and al-Malik al-Mu'azzam. In that case the young Mansur II took over a title from his grandfather of the same name. Mansur II has on a dinar of Naisabur, 387 a further title al-Malik al-Mushaddad (the king fortified by God). Michael Mitchiner's book, *The Multiple Dirhems of Medieval Afghanistan*, has a chapter about the later broad dirhams from Balkh. It is remarkable that Mitchiner in his description of the dirhams Balkh, 388 and 389 gives the title al-Malik al-Mansur to Mansur II b. Nuh.

Mahmud of Ghazna was eager to secure legitimization of his power from the 'Abbasid caliph and in 389/999 he received his first titles from Baghdad, those of Yamin al-Dawla (right hand of the regime) and Amin al-Milla (trustee of the religion).

The dirham Balkh, 390 is a true Ghaznavid coin, but in respect of size and weight is like the dirhams of 388 and 389. On the obverse is the name of the reigning caliph al-Qadir bil-lah; Mahmud's title Saif al-Dawla is, as earlier, indicated by a sword. The field on the reverse has at the bottom: al-Amir (the leader) al-Sayyid (the ruler) Yamin al-Dawla wa Amin al-Milla Abu-l-Qasim.

From Balkh come in 391/1000 and in some later years dirhams of normal size (ca. 28 mm; 3 - 3.8 gm) and often a lovely calligraphy and style. But the most common Ghaznavid dirham, coined at different mints by Mahmud and his successors, is a small coin (ca. 19 mm; ca. 2.8 gm), known as the 'yamani' dirham.

A Rare Handstruck Para of Sultan Ahmed III

Kenneth M. MacKenzie

From the late 16th century until the early 17th century the Ottoman State experienced great fiscal problems. The akche became very unstable and its silver content fluctuated, with the result that the government attempted to establish a new standard for it. However a series of debasements turned the akche into a very small coin; so starting in 1625, in the reign of Sultan Murad IV, the para, originally an Egyptian coin (*pare-i Misri*) began to be minted in Constantinople. It was a larger coin containing three times more silver than the akche, and at the beginning was worth three akches.

In Egypt the *para* was called the *medin*. A hoard of them was described in an article by Mr Lachman.¹ Among them were 216 specimens struck in the name of Murad IV (1623-1640) with an average weight of 0.78 g and sizes between 14 - 19 mm.

Just over sixty years later at the beginning of the reign of Sultan Ahmed III (1707-1730) paras were evidently handstruck at the mint in Constantinople patterned after the *medin* of the period. A specimen of this rare coin is illustrated herein,² its weight (in its worn state) is 0.65 g and size 15 mm.

It is of interest to note that seven years prior to Ahmed becoming sultan, machinery had been installed in a special mint situated in the garden of the Topkapi Palace. It was used to produce *menghirs* (copper coins) during an inflationary period. At first they equalled one half an akche, but were later revalued at one akche, until in 1691 the minting was suspended. However by that time the minting techniques with machinery had been well established.³ The discovery of this para dated 1115 confirms Dr Suchy's hypothesis on the step-by-step reform of the Ottoman monetary system, started by Mehmed IV and finished by Ahmed III. He had surmised that there was a parallel production of coins in two mints or workshops, one striking coins (of traditional denominations) in an old manner and the second with machinery.⁴

The new style coinage introduced by Ahmed III is well listed in the SCWC⁵ and includes the machine-struck para (non-tugrali) with a weight of 0.30 g with his accession date of 1115.

NOTES

1. A Hoard of Medins, *NCirc*, October 1977.

2. Mr. E. Yenisey's kindness in loaning me the coin is gratefully acknowledged.

3. H. Sahillioglu, 'Ikinci Suleyman ve Ikinci Ahmed zamanlarinda Bakir Para Üzerinde bir Enflasyon Denemesi H. 1099-1103,' *Bulletin of the Turkish Numismatic Society*, 1982.

4. 'The Machine-Struck Maaghir of Sultan Mehmed IV from Qostantiniye and Monetary Reform of 1099AH,' *NCirc*, November 1991.

Para/ Hand-struck
0.65 gr. 15mm.



SULTAN AHMED BIN
MEHMED KH III

AHED N SOUVU
DURIBE
1115

Two Rare Misr Akçes

Ömer Diler

Of these two, the first was struck in 928 Misr. The only other silver coin pertaining to this date is in Artuk, (I. & C. Artuk, *Fatihin Sikke ve Nadalyalari*, Istanbul, 1946), which is a madini, and of a quite different type.

1.

sultan
Sulayman
b. shah
(Salim shah)



(‘azza nasrahu)
duriba
bi-Misr
sana 928



10 mm, 0.55 g.

The second akçe has been published in E. Zambaur, *Die Münzprägungen des Islams*, Wiesbaden (1968), and nowhere else, but Zambaur, for obvious reasons, has not noted the denomination. I therefore thought it appropriate to publish it here in detail.

2.

sultan
Sulayman
b. shah
Salim shah



‘azza nasrahu
duriba
bi-Misr
sana 932



14 mm, 1.10 g.

Frogs and Tortoises from Ujjain

W H Pieper

Having described the few punchmarked silver coins with a frog and those with a tortoise on them, Allan states in the British Museum Catalogue on ancient Indian coinage (*Coins of Ancient India*, p. XXX): "The frog is also found on a few rare coins from Ujjayini, but the tortoise seems to be unknown elsewhere." This is no longer true today. Apart from two copper coins with a tortoise on the obverse and so-called Ujjain-symbol on the reverse in my collection, Rajendra Kumar Sethi also mentions a coin in his collection with a tortoise on it (*Journal of the Academy of Indian Numismatics & Sigillography*, Volume VI, 1988, p. 50). He describes it as seen from above, but he does not provide a photo or other details of the coin. For two other ancient Indian copper coins of non-Ujjain style, one of them being inscribed, found at Tripura and depicting also the frog and the tortoise see the article by R. R. Bhargava published in *Numismatic Digest*, vol. 12, 1988 & vol. 13, 1989.

The tortoise coins from my collection form part of a hoard of 50 Ujjain coins. I purchased the whole group some time ago and I think it deserves to be published in a later article. The two tortoise coins are both in a nice state of preservation. They are small square copper coins having a weight of only 1.1 g and 0.7 g and both with a diameter of 0.8 x 0.9 cm. The reverses have the 'Ujjain-symbol' with a pellet in each orb. The obverse design shows a framed tortoise seen from above, both obverses differing insofar as on the one coin the tortoise is accompanied by four fish whereas on the other specimen, the lighter one, there are no fish, but four crescents, placed in the four angles of the frame.

As far as the frog coins are concerned there are four in my collection; three of them belong to Allan's Ujjain-class 3, var. a., published by Mitchiner as type 1195 in volume 9 of his *Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythic Coinage*. The weights of my frog coins are 3.9/4.0/4.3 g, the diameters are 1.4x1.4, 1.4x1.4 and 1.8x1.2 cm. The fourth coin is an unusual one. While also having a nicely executed frog on the reverse side, the obverse shows the multi-headed standing god Karttikeya holding a stick in his right and an object which might be a severed human head in his left. On the right side of Karttikeya there is a tree in railing. The square copper coin is attractively covered with a dark green patina. Its weight is 3.6 g and its size 1.5x1.7 cm. The coin seems to be unpublished and its importance is easily detected: many scholars have found the attribution of the coins with frog reverse to Ujjain doubtful because of the complete absence of the 'Ujjain-symbol'. This new type however with its combination of the frog reverse with a typical Ujjain motif on the obverse supports Allan's attribution of this class of coins to Ujjain.



Haidar Ali's Malabar Fanams

Ken Wiggins

Haidar Ali, the Muslim general who gained power in Mysore during the middle of the 18th century, assumed the right to strike his own coins about 1763 after he captured Bednur or Nagar as it was later named. Continuing a policy of aggression, in 1766 he invaded the Malabar coastal region and overran the state of Calicut. The Rajas of the adjoining states of Cochin and Palghat capitulated and agreed to pay tribute to Haidar. The Raja of Cannanore, the only Muslim state on the coast, entered into an alliance with Haidar Ali, who eventually controlled all the coast from Karwar, just south of Goa, down to Cochin. He captured the territory of Coorg in 1773. Haidar Ali held all this region until his death and it was only ceded to the British by his son, Tipu Sultan, in 1792 at the end of the Third Mysore War.

The major currency unit of the Malabar coast until Haidar Ali's conquest was the gold *vira raya fanam*.

Weight: 5.25 g.
Diameter: 8 mm.



These are said to have been issued by the Kolatnad or Cherakal Raja and afterwards imitated by the Zamorins of Calicut.¹ They were also struck in Cochin and doubtless at other places along the coast. Marsden apparently attributed them to Coorg, but it is thought that the Coorg fanams are somewhat different.²

It should not appear surprising that, having conquered Malabar, Haidar Ali, or perhaps his son, should impose their mark upon the coinage. The gold fanam illustrated here does not appear to have been previously published but I have heard that others exist.

Weight: 5.25 g.
Diameter: 7-8 mm.



It is, in most respects, identical to the Malabar *vira raya* fanam but with the addition of a Persian ζ (He) for Haidar. Just where these fanams were struck is a matter of speculation. The only known mints of Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan on the Malabar coast were at Calicut and Feroke, where, with other coins, gold fanams with the mint name in Persian and the Hegira date were struck. It is possible that the fanam illustrated here was struck at Calicut shortly after its occupation by Haidar Ali and was superseded by the better known fanams with the Persian inscription and date.

NOTES

1. Sir W Elliot, *International Numismata Orientalia Coins of Southern India*. London, 1886, p.137.
2. *Ibid.* p. 147 quoting Buchanan's *Journal*, vol. II, p.310.

The Gold Coins of Sudarshan Shah of Tehri Garhwal

N. G. Rhodes

In the Spink-Taisei Singapore Coin Auction on 20th Feb, 1991¹ there appeared two "medallic" gold coins attributed to "Sudarshan Shah of Bhadaranath, AD 1872", described as "unpublished and extremely rare". Similar pieces had earlier appeared as no. 165 in Steve Album's Price List no. 48 (Dec. 1986), where Sudarshan Shah was described as a rebel against the British Raj in AD 1872, and in Bob Senior's List no. 8. These attributions did not seem convincing, and when I acquired a similar piece from the son of a former Nepalese ambassador to the UK, who comes from a Hindu family with origins in the far west of Nepal, I decided to try to find a more convincing attribution.

The type can be described as follows:



Obv. Inscription in Arabic script, "Maharaja Sudarshan Shah, Samvat 1872" $\text{مہاراجہ سدرشن شاہ سنہ ۱۸۷۲}$

Rev. Nagari letter "Sri" at top, with Arabic legend below, commencing "Badrinatha".

$\text{بدریناثہ بنی بڑا پناہ}$ سدری ناتھ

I have been unable to read the greater part of the reverse inscription, but there is enough in the part of the legend that I have managed to read to make an attempt at a proper attribution.

The date of the coin is clearly 1872 samvat (1815 AD), or 57 years earlier than previously thought. That was the accession year of Sudarshan Shah, the raja of Tehri Garhwal, who ruled the state, under British suzerainty, until his death in June 1859. Sudarshan Shah was the heir of Parduman Shah, who ruled Garhwal from 1785 until his kingdom was conquered by the Nepalese in 1804. During the Nepalese occupation, Sudarshan sought refuge in Bareilly, but when, in 1815, the British annexed Kumaon and Garhwal after the Gorkha war, they handed back a portion of the territory of the previous state of Garhwal to him to rule. Sudarshan chose Tehri as his capital, so his state became known as Tehri Garhwal. In common with the other so-called Native States of India, Sudarshan Shah was required to give assistance and supplies to the British, when requested, and to furnish facilities to the British for trading in his kingdom and the countries beyond.

Sudarshan seems to have ruled well in the eyes of the British, and in 1857, during the Mutiny, he remained loyal. Certainly there is no truth in Album's suggestion that he rebelled against the Raj.²

The word "Badrinath" on the coins presumably refers to the famous Hindu temple situated near the source of the Alakananda river, one of the main branches of the Ganges. Before the Gorkha conquest, this temple had been within the boundaries of the Garhwal kingdom, but after 1815 it was in the part of Garhwal that was ruled directly by the British. Hence, Badrinath was never ruled by Sudarshan Shah and, as far as I can ascertain, he was never given permission by the British to strike coins for circulation, so it is interesting to postulate why these gold pieces exist.

Having been a major pilgrimage centre for many centuries, Badrinath became very rich, and the Rajas of Garhwal occasionally used to borrow funds from the temple against the surity of the revenue derived from certain villages; for example, at the time of the Nepalese invasion, Parduman Shah had borrowed Rs. 50,000. As a result of these loans, by 1824, revenue from 226 villages in Kumaon and Garhwal, totalling over Rs. 2,000 per annum, was payable to the Badrinath temple.³ Presumably, some of this ongoing liability to repay past loans fell on Sudarshan Shah, and indeed he may have wished to donate further funds to the temple. Accordingly, it is possible that these gold coins were struck so that Sudarshan Shah could make such payments in coins with his own name on them, and in that way he hoped to gain greater merit with God.

It is interesting to note that the pieces must have been struck on at least two occasions, since two very different styles exist:

1. Hand struck coins, as illustrated above, with a flan smaller than the dies used, so that not all the legend is visible. The full mohur, weighing 10.6 (Rhodes) and the half mohur weighing 5.4 (Brilliant), are both struck with the same pair of dies.

2. Machine struck mohurs, struck in a collar with a plain edge, and with the full legend visible, weighing 11.6 g (Brilliant).

The weight standards give some indication of the date of issue. The hand-struck pieces are of the normal weight standard of the pure gold Moghul mohurs, whereas the machine struck pieces were probably struck to the standard of 179/180 grains, a standard first used by the British in Bombay after 1800 for their 85% fine gold pieces, and later, in 1835, introduced as the standard weight of the mohur throughout India. Accordingly, it is likely that the machine-made pieces were struck after 1835, while the hand-struck pieces were struck rather earlier in the reign. Although I have not analysed the metal content of the coins, it is likely that the hand-struck pieces are pure gold, whereas the machine-struck pieces are probably only about 90% fine, so that both varieties would have the same gold content.

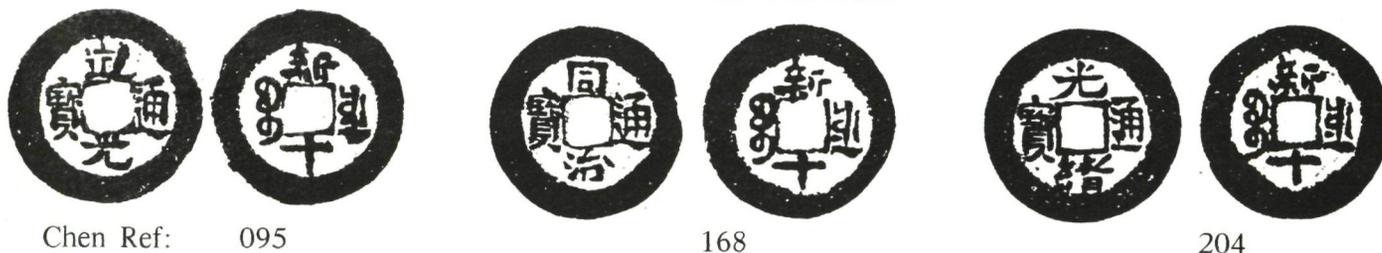
Perhaps the unread part of the reverse inscription may shed further light on the reason for their issue,⁴ so if any reader can assist, please let me know.

NOTES

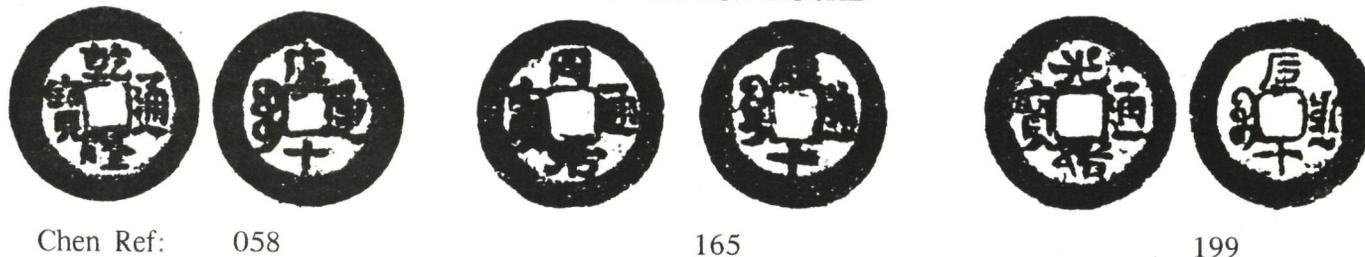
1. Lots 475/6, the collection of Dr. L. B. Brilliant.
2. For historical background, see A. S. Rawat, *History of Garhwal 1358-1947*, New Delhi 1989.
3. Cf. *Gazetteer of North-Western Provinces* vol. II, *Himalayan Districts* vol. III, by E. T. Atkinson, 1886, p.25.
4. The coins may have been inspired by the octagonal silver coin struck by Fath Shah of Garhwal and dated 1757 samvat (1700 AD), which also referred to Badrinath in its reverse inscription. Cf. J. Deyell, 'Commemorative Rupee of Fateh Shah of Garhwal,' *Numismatic Digest*, vol. VII (1983), pp.87-91.

Kuche Bao Xin Mint
David Hartill

KUCHE BAO XIN FOR URUMCHI



KUCHE BAO XIN FOR KUCHE



The Dao Guang coin illustrated by Chen¹ as Ch095 has been variously described in the past as coming from Sichuan² or as Xinjiang "general" coinage.³ It, and its fellows with the Tong Zhi and Guang Xu year titles (Ch168 and Ch204) have a different appearance from other coins of the main mints mentioned in the records, as well as a perplexing Manchu mint name. I spent some considerable time unsuccessfully searching through the records to see if they could be the work of an unrecorded mint first opened in Dao Guang (with an awkward gap for Xian Feng). Latest thinking is that the coins with all three year titles were issued during Guang Xu, and they are stylistically so similar that there is no reason to doubt this. The problem remains of which mint issued them. They have a "six-stroke" *bao*, and *xin* above the hole in the reverse which seems to link them to the Urumchi mint; however Urumchi, referred to as Dihua Bao Xin 迪化寶新, used the Manchu *boo sin* on its coins. The second row of coins, Ch058, 165 and 199, are similar in the style of *bao*, the "two-dot" *tong*, and the Manchu mint name (whatever it is), but have *Ku* above the hole, indicating Kuche. *Xinjiang Numismatics* states that the Xinjiang mints sub-contracted work to each other, with the Chinese character on the reverse signifying the contracting mint, and the Manchu mint name the mint that undertook the work. Given this, a passage from the *Xinjiang Tuzhi* now becomes clear:

Guang Xu 12th Year 4th Month (1886)

Report to a Superior. At present the Kuche mint already has much copper stored up, part of which is to be transported to the provincial mint [Urumchi, whose mint opened three months later]. Copper from Bai is in the future not to be sold [to Kuche]. It is suggested that only the Aksu mint collect Bai copper. It is intended that the *Kuche Bao Xin* 庫車寶新 mint should stop casting in the present year, and then be closed down. It is also requested that the *Kuche Bao Xin* mint is not closed before opening Aksu [presumably for the autumn casting season - Aksu had already been re-opened in 1878] in order to avoid holding up the distribution of Bai copper.⁴

Here, then, is a description of the sought for separate mint, or at least minting activity, the *Kuche Bao Xin*, as distinct from the Urumchi *Bao Xin*, casting coins for use in the Urumchi area until its mint opened up, as well as for the Kuche area. There is no mention of when this mint was opened, but I would suggest that it was not before 1883 when some semblance of order was introduced to the Xinjiang coinage which had lapsed into confusion after the mints were re-opened in 1878. The Qian Long coin, Ch058, with a "seven-stroke" *bao*, is somewhat different from the others in this series; perhaps it was designed by the Kuche authorities, who were enjoined to produce a quota of 40% Qian Long coins, which the Urumchi mint authorities were not aware of.

As to the Manchu mint name, sometimes read as "ch-u-a-n", I can only think that an Urumchi engraver who was more familiar with the Mongol than the Manchu alphabet, although not very good at either, produced his own reading of *K-u-ch-e* based on current Kuche coins such as Ch093. The dot that indicates the final *-e* has become elongated so that it looks as if it belongs to the *u*. No doubt it was intended that it should read "Kuche".

REFERENCES

1. Chen, *Xinjiang Hongqian Jiage Mulu*. Taiwan 1988.
2. H. F. Shepens, *China Review* 1895.
3. Krause Mishler, *Standard Catalog of World Coins*.
4. *Xinjiang Tuzhi* p.1279.

A Rupee of the Rajas of Nabha - a rejoinder

Dr P. L. Gupta

This rejoinder is prompted by the notes entitled 'A rupee of the Rajas of Nabha' published in ONS Newsletter no. 131 (November 1991 - January 1992). But before the coin mentioned in the note is dismissed, it needs to be pointed out what is believed or said today about the coinage of the princely states of the Punjab, often called the Cis-Sutlej states, is based on an article by R. C. Temple of a hundred years ago (Indian Antiquary, Bombay, XVIII (1889), pp.321-2). Whilst he was successful in focusing our attention on these coins, what he said about them now needs careful scrutiny in the light of present day historical knowledge.

In his paper, Temple stated that "in the year AH 1164 or AD 1751, being the fourth year of his reign, the famous Shah Durrani (Abdali) [i.e. Ahmad Shah] made a raid into the Punjab and over-ran the greater part of it and it is a *common historical statement* (italics mine) that in that year, he granted to the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jhindh and Malerkotla, the right to coins within their respective states." Unfortunately Temple provided no evidence to support his statement. On the other hand, the chronicle *Husain Shahi*, written only about 50 years after Ahmad Shah's invasion in 1798 AD simply mentions that "the coins of Ahmad Shah are current in the family of Amar Singh, the Raja of Patiala." It does not say a single word about the minting of such coins by Nabha and other Cis-Sutlej states. Had there been any such historical tradition as Temple mentioned, the author of *Husain Shahi* would surely have heard about it and would not have failed to mention it.

It is a well established historical fact that the rulers of Patiala had presented themselves and submitted to the Mughal emperor and the Afghan invader Ahmad Shah, had accepted their suzerainty and offered gifts, had become their vassals and paid annual tribute to them. In 1761 AD when Ahmad Shah reached Sahrind (Sarhind), Ala Singh, the ruler of Patiala, attended him in person, offered him gifts and promised to pay him annual tribute. Ahmad Shah received him warmly and gave him *khilat* (a robe of honour). When Ahmad Shah came to Sarhind again in 1767, after receiving tributes from the Patiala ruler Amar Singh, the successor of Ala Singh, he bestowed upon him the subedari (governorship) of Sarhind and the grandiloquent title of *Raja-i-Rajagan* (king of kings). He was also authorised to mint coins from Sarhind in the name of the Durrani sovereign. Hence for this reason we have coins of Patiala with the legend of Ahmad Shah's Durrani coins with the mint name Sarhind.

On the other hand, we have no evidence to say that Ahmad Shah had at any time any contact with the Nabha rulers and had treated them at par with the Patiala family. It is known that the Nabha rulers were collaterals of the Patiala family but that they never maintained good relations between themselves; they were always feuding. Besides the family quarrels, the two did not belong to the same camp. Patiala, as mentioned earlier, had alliances with the Mughals and the Afghan invaders; Nabha rulers, on the other hand, followed the main stream of the Sikhs i.e. Dal Khalsa. The Dal Khalsa never bowed before the tyranny of the Mughals and Afghans. They tried always to maintain their independence and issued their own coins in the name of their Gurus Nanak and Gobind Singh.

In view of these historical realities, it is unrealistic to think that Nabha rulers would ever have issued coins that imitated the coins of Patiala, using a Durrani legend and the mint name Sahrind of their rival, Patiala. If there are some such coins that have a Durrani legend with dates like those that are seen on later Nabha coins, that does not necessarily mean that those coins were issued by Nabha. They could well be the coins of Patiala. The reasons for such dating could well be something else that needs to be researched in the Patiala records.

Likewise, if the Nabha rulers had established their own mint and issued coins as a sign of their royalty and to equate themselves with the house of Patiala, there could be no reason for them not to use the name of their own mint. If we do not have their earlier coins, that does not necessarily mean that the Nabha rulers had no earlier coins. It is not beyond possibility that we have so far failed to get hold of them. There may also be another reason for not having come across the early Nabha coins. The chief assembly of the Sikhs, *Sharbat Khalsa* had issued an injunction in 1761 AD that no coin would be issued in any personal name other than those having the names of their Gurus Nanak and Gobind Singh. As adherents to the Dal Khalsa, the Nabha rulers might have issued their coins on the pattern of the coins of the Dal Khalsa, as we see on their later coins; and refrained from putting on them the name of their own mint, as this could have been interpreted as them seeking to assert their personal identity, a thing disapproved of by the Sharbat Khalsa. If they did so, their coins might be intermingled with the Dal Khalsa coins bearing the mint name Amritsar, which we cannot distinguish for the present.

In any case, it is certain that no Nabha coins had a Durrani legend; and the piece published in the ONS NL cannot be taken as a genuine Nabha issue. If it has the reverse of Nabha coins, it can only mean that the two dies imprinted on it do not belong to one and the same pair. This is also clear from the calligraphy of the legends. The obverse is close to the calligraphic form that we have on the Patiala coins; likewise, the reverse is the same as that of the later Nabha coins. It is simply a fantasy created from two different dies of two different pairs. Evidently, it is a product of the period when the minting of Patiala and Nabha coins had ceased and dies were discarded. Some one must have laid his hands on them and struck this fantasy. This piece therefore has no importance.

Editor's Note:

Dr Gupta has kindly provided photographs of some Nabha rupees where the mint name Nabha is clearly inscribed. These are reproduced below.



He says that he has seen 5 gold and 15 silver coins of Nabha with the Sikh legend on the obverse and the mint name Nabha on the reverse followed by another, undeciphered word. These coins are in the Sheeshmahal Museum, Patiala. Two of the coins were illustrated in Dr Gupta's book *The Coins of Dal Khalsa and Lahore Darbar* which was published by the Punjab government, but, because of poor production quality, not released. It is a great pity that the fruit of Dr Gupta's research in this area has not been made available to the numismatic world and it is hoped that the Punjab government will either release the book as it is or arrange for a properly produced reprint.

In view of the interest this item has aroused, I invited **Ken Wiggins** to comment on Dr Gupta's rejoinder:

The crux of Dr Gupta's argument, put briefly, is that the rulers of Nabha state never issued coins in the name of Ahmad Shah Durrani and therefore the rupee published in Newsletter no. 131 must be some sort of fabrication.

The coins of the Cis-Sutlej states are a complex series and no definite authoritative information has ever come to light. A fairly complete study of these coins was made by Captain Temple about 1880, who published his findings, as Dr Gupta states, in the *Indian Antiquary* in 1889. As regards the attribution of the various rupees to individual states Temple "found that the officials knew very little but the bankers knew a great deal and traditionally knew to whom to assign the various rupees at once." He "preferred their statements, as given to me direct, to those of the books."¹ On this basis Temple attributed the coins in his collection, which were later published in the above mentioned journal. It is reasonable to assume that the bankers of the region at the time had a good knowledge of the rupees then circulating as those that came into their possession had different values.

Temple, in his article, described and illustrated four rupees which he attributed to Jaswant Singh of Nabha (AD 1783-1840). All bear the obverse legend of Ahmad Shah Durrani. As these coins now repose in the British Museum I was able to examine them with a view to resolving if they were actually coins of Nabha.

They are certainly not rupees of Patiala or Maler Kotla as coins of these two states each have a distinctive mark to the right of the *sin* of the word *jalus*:  Patiala,  Maler Kotla. These so-called Nabha rupees are on thick dumpy flans and in no way compare with the rupees of Jhind or Kaithal. One is dated 83 and another 93 and assuming these to be the final digits of the Samvat date then they were struck in AD 1826 and 1834. Both bear a mark  which Temple refers to as a *kalghi*. There is another rupee which Temple says is dated 77 but the two VVs could be part of the ornament. The fourth rupee shows no date. One important mark on these coins is a star * or + which also occurs on the later Nabha coins of Bharpur Singh which have the Sikh legend.

I am of the opinion that Temple, having regard to the source of his information, was right in ascribing these rupees to Nabha. They certainly do not fit in with any of the other known coins of the Cis-Sutlej states. If they are indeed Nabha coins then the piece published in the Newsletter could well be a legitimate rupee of that state. There are a number of examples of rupees, mainly from Patiala, which are struck on broad flans probably for some auspicious occasion. The date of 97 = S.1897 = AD 1840 is significant as this was the year that Devindar Singh (AD 1840-46) was enthroned and he may have decided that the Sikh pipal leaf was a more appropriate symbol for the state coinage, later changing the Durrani legend for a Sikh one; Devindar Singh having more affinity with the Sikhs than anyone else.

In conclusion it can be said that Nabha is reported to have established its mint during the reign of Hamir Singh (AD 1754-83)² and it is probably that coins were struck in imitation of the Patiala rupees bearing the Durrani legend. If the Nabha coins originally bore the Sikh legend on the obverse, why then imitate the reverse legend of the Patiala coin? The Nabha mint, according to Major General Taylor, was operated only spasmodically, on special occasions or when there was a need for coinage, so the calligraphy of the legends is not uniform and therefore does not bear critical analysis with that on coins of other states.

As Dr Gupta says the first rulers of Patiala became vassals of Ahmad Shah Durrani and there is no known historical evidence that the chiefs of Nabha were in any way subject to Durrani influence. As Nabha, however, is only some thirty miles from Sarhind and somewhat less from Patiala it is unlikely that this place was completely ignored by the Durranis.

NOTES

1. I do not know what "books" Temple refers to. Prior to 1880 there was only the report of Maj. Gen. R. G. Taylor, Agent to Lieut. Gov. Cis-Sutlej States, dated 26th November, 1869 and published in the *Financial Department Proceedings*, January, 1876 and a book by Sir Lepel Griffin, *Rajas of the Punjab*, Lahore, 1870, which appears to quote from Taylor's report.

2. Sir R. Lethbridge, *The Golden Book of India*, London, 1900.

Late News

ONS Meeting in Amsterdam

On October 24th, an ONS meeting took place at the Maritime Museum, Amsterdam (due to renovation works the usual meeting place at the Museum of Antiquities/Royal Coin Cabinet, Leiden, could not be used this year). Some 20 members attended. The following lectures were held:

R Dauwe, 'Some problems regarding the coinage of Jaipur State'. In this talk Dauwe pointed out various coins with unusual symbols or of different fabric which might indicate a mint other than Sawai Jaipur; so far no conclusions could be reached.

T. D. Yih, 'The metallic composition of some S.E.-Asian coinage as revealed by X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis.'

In the framework of research on some cash-like indigenous coinages from the former Dutch East Indies present in the collection of the Ethnological Museum (EM) at Rotterdam some pieces originating from the region of Cheribon and Surakarta/Jogjakarta on the island of Java were investigated for their metallic composition. In addition some 20 bazaruco pieces from Diu (Portuguese India) were investigated. In contrast to the literature, the main metallic component of the Diu pieces (dates ranging from 1768 to 1827) was not tin or lead, but zinc. The zinc content ranged from 70 to 94%; the pieces with the lower zinc content contained, in addition, a fairly high amount of magnesium (14-24%). The amount of tin or lead was low. The two Javanese coinages clearly differed in their metallic composition. The pieces from Cheribon consisting of small round-holed pieces with traces of latin letters as illustrated by Millies no. 118 has lead as the major component (90-94%) with tin only ranging from 5-9%. The pieces from Surakarta/Jogjakarta known under the name of "Keteng" and illustrated under Netscher no. 167 do not bear legends, but have 4 high-relief pyramids around the central square hole. These pieces consist of a lead/tin alloy, the lead:tin ratio ranging from 1.0 to 3.5; one of the pieces had a very high bismuth content (45%).

An article by T. D. Yih and J. de Kreek on this subject has been submitted for publication to Spinks *Numismatic Circular*.

Ken W. Wiggins, 'Coins struck during the Indian Mutiny'. In this lecture coins of Awadh and Bareilly, struck during the so called 'Great Indian Mutiny', were discussed as well as the historical background of these rare coins.

Mr. C. J. F. Klaassen gave a talk on 'A gold funeral-medal from Batavia preserved in the collection of the Royal Zeeland Society of Sciences' and provided some historical background of the deceased (Mr. Dirk van Cloon †1735) to whom the medal was dedicated.

Secondly Klaassen discussed some of the currency used in the early days of the VOC spice trade. Spanish reals were most in demand for this trade. By the beginning of the 17th century such coins were in short supply in the Netherlands. For this reason the United Company of Zeeland requested from the Provincial Government of Zeeland permission to strike Spanish reals at their mint at Middelburg. A representative of the city of Goes in the Provincial Government, however, made some objection and would only approve of it if some of the coins were struck with the coat of arms of the Cities and Province of Zeeland. It has been reconstructed from the secret mint reports that, from the total amount of 2590 marks silver, 23021 coins were struck. Of those, 803 bear the coat of arms of the Cities and Province of Zeeland (Scholten 7) and 22218 pieces were struck with the coat of arms of Spain. For the last issue a secret mark was added to the dies of these coins, which so far has not been identified. — This recent research provides more accurate data and differs from the information given by Scholten in his book *The coins of the Dutch Overseas Territories, 1601-1946*.

Finally Jan Lingen gave a lecture on the coinage of South India and particularly Ceylon countermarked by the VOC. On the basis of a recent Dutch publication, *Ceylonese Placardbook, placards and other acts promulgated by the Dutch administration at Ceylon, 1638-1796* by Lodewijk Hovy, Lingen was able to arrive at a more accurate dating of VOC-countermarked coinage. So far Indo-Portuguese tangas and Persian abbas of 4 and 5 shahi are well known. Much rarer are the Chinese cash coins which, in accordance with the proclamation of 23 Oct./8 Nov. 1660, had to be countermarked, too. Indian rupees, according to the same proclamation, were not allowed to circulate on the island of Ceylon, "except those which are stamped with the Companies' mark". Such rupees were not known until, recently, a small hoard was discovered, containing some Indian rupees (Aurangzeb, mint: Surat) with the monogram of the VOC (Pulicat, Scholten 1260) and a few others with a C above the VOC monogram (Colombo, Scholten —). This was the first time that those coins, which have evaded discovery for such a long time, were publicly shown.

The next ONS meeting in the Netherlands is scheduled for Saturday 23 October 1993 and will again be held at the premises of the Royal Coin Cabinet at Leiden. Dutch ONS members will receive a separate invitation in due course. Others may obtain further information from the Regional Secretary, Europe.