



# ORIENTAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER No. 137 Summer 1993

### ONS News

1. The second study day on Arab-Byzantine coinage due to take place at the British Museum Coin & Medal Department on 3 July will include the following papers:

Simon Bendall - The Byzantine mint at Jerusalem

Paul Pavlou - Was there ever a Byzantine mint on Cyprus?

Marcus Phillips - Currency in Syria in the 7th century: problems of supply and demand.

2. The newly formed Pakistan branch has been busy organising meetings in and around Islamabad. Shafqat Mirza, the Secretary, is planning to organise a national meeting for ONS members in the near future. A listing of members of this branch can be found below.

3. Tübingen conference.

The seventh Tübingen week-end conference on Moslem numismatics was held at the usual venue April 24-25, 1993, attracting some 30 participants from Germany and neighbouring countries, Turkey, India (ONS South Asian secretary P. Kulkarni) and the USA (Steve Album).

Eight papers were read during the two working sessions Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, all of them in German. Ottoman specialist R. Ehlert (Heidelberg) spoke on the Egyptian silver and copper coinage of Sulayman the Magnificent. H. Herrli (Karlsruhe) led the audience into the world of Indian freaks or invented denominations in the names of Mogul emperors and/or pre-colonial princely rulers, all presumably produced in the Subcontinent this century. S. Heidemann (Berlin) showed rediscovered pictures of now-missing Islamic coins from the pre-first world war German excavations at Assur (Iraq). L. Ilisch (Rottenburg) surveyed a thousand years of coin minting in Islamic Damascus, from the Umayyads to the Ottomans (650-1650 AD). H. Wilski (Sulzbach), with philological expertise by Prof. G. R. Puin (Saarbrücken), described a "very special loewenthaler", namely an Italian imitation of the Dutch trade dollar with an additional Persian legend. J.-Ch. Hinrichs (Bremen) based his outline of the coinage of the Hamit Ogullari beylik (8/14th century) on a mass of unpublished material. F. Schwarz (Tübingen) attributed to the Ghuzz successors of the Great Saljuqs some hitherto mysterious Central Asian copper dirhams imitating Qarakhanid types (2nd half of the 6/12th century). Finally, H. Wilski returned to mention 251 Ottoman bronze coins of the 1255 AH 40-para type, bearing late 19th century countermarks, now part of a hoard in the village museum of Agiasos on the island of Lesbos (Greece).

Steve Album (Santa Rosa) read a eulogy on the late Dr. C. Burns, a former ONS Americas secretary whose donation of Kushan coins to the Berne Historical Museum has significantly enhanced the importance of that public Swiss collection with respect to the numismatics of Central Asia. P. Kulkarni (Nagpur) praised H. Herrli's just released corpus of Sikh coinage as an example of German-Indian cooperation (Decision by the Indian Coin Society to publish the book was made after Mr Kulkarni had been shown the manuscript at the '92 Tübingen conference).

The eighth conference has been set tentatively for April 23-24, '94.

G.P.H.

4. A reminder that there will be an ONS meeting on 25 September 1993 at the British Museum Coin and Medal Department, 1.30p.m.

### **Other News**

1. A meeting of the Numismatic Section of the Society for South Asian Studies took place on 22 May at the British Museum Coin & Medal Department. The following papers were given:

Terry Hardaker - Art and design in the punch-marked coinage.

Chandrika Jayasinghe - Indian connections to ancient Sri Lankan coin design.

Joe Cribb - Coin design and mint organisation of Vasudeva's gold coinage.

Ellen Raven - Design diversity in the gold coins of Chandragupta.

2. The Numismatic Society of Hyderabad remains commendably active. A former secretary of the society, Dr D. Raja Reddy has been awarded the M. Rama Rao medal for his contribution to Deccan numismatics. An academy for the promotion and research in numismatics has been formed in Hyderabad under the guidance of Sri G. L. Tandon. The academy plans to hold workshops and exhibitions in different parts of the country. The first such exhibition took place at the State Museum from 12-16 November last year in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology & Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

3. Medieval Islamic Coins exhibited - Morgenländische Pracht - Islamische Kunst aus deutschem Privatbesitz, June 18 - August 22, 1993.

In June the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg, Steintorplatz 1, 2000 Hamburg 1, opened an exhibition of Islamic art. All the objects have come from private German collections. It is the biggest exhibition of its kind since the exhibition in Munich 1911. One of the sections is dedicated to medieval Islamic numismatics.

The Museum has published a catalogue in German and English. This contains four contributions under the heading of 'Coins and Works of Art': S. Heidemann: Gold-Ashrafi issued by Qansûh al-Ghûri, Ornament and Design; Dinars of Baybars, a Ruler represented by a Lion; al-Hasan ibn Muhammad, a die engraver of the 10th century, and by J.-C. Hinrichs: Dinars of the Seljuks of Anatolia.

4. In July 1992 a numismatic society was created for the first time in Sri Lanka. The 'Sri Lanka Society for Numismatic Studies' is based at the National Museum of Colombo and is presided over by Dr. Osmund Boppearachchi.

5. The Banque Centrale de Tunisie is examining the possibility of a new money museum.

## Book Review

### **The Royal Animal-Shaped Weights of the Burmese Empires**

by Donald and Joan Gear, Twinstar, Harrow, Middlesex, 1992. 299pp, 64 b/w photos, 130 diagrams, 24 tables, bibliography and index. Hardback, £38. ISBN 0 9519599 0 5.

Until now collectors of Burmese animal weights have had to rely on isolated articles, or single chapters in books. The only work devoted entirely to the subject was R. and I. Braun's "Opium Gewichte" published in 1983 with text in English, French and German. This trilingual aspect meant of course that the amount of information was inevitably curtailed. As well as Burmese weights, figurines from neighbouring countries such as Laos and Thailand were also shown.

The new book has evolved from a text "The Ancient Royal Animal Weights of Burma" by Donald Gear (typescript 1976), which he deposited in SOAS Library (Shelf Mark MS, accession No. 380452), and represents a considerable amount of new research, revisions and rearrangement of subject matter.

During two periods of 2 years each, in the late 50s and early 70s, the authors, while living in Burma, acquired a large collection of over 1000 animal weights and set about researching their origins, use and symbolic meanings. They found help from interested monks and professional men, and searched a mass of literature.

The Gears must be congratulated on their achievement in presenting so much information on a subject which at first sight might seem relatively simple, but which turns out to be surprisingly complex. With over 1000 weights to examine, they have divided them into seven "style groups" of animals or birds of a similar design, and have subdivided these into "style classes" by minor features such as base shape, and then made a further subdivision of "style systems" of details such as number of knobs on the animal's head. Probable dating of these groups is suggested in places through the book, but not given in any detail until Chapter 15.

Many readers of the book will probably want to date specimens in their own collections, and there is a simply stated procedure for dating a weight in Chapter 15, but the reviewers found that, in practice, it is not easy to work through the various parts of the book to achieve this. However there are plenty of good photos of the weights and sketches to illustrate detail.

Some readers used to recording the "weights" of their coins may be confused by the academic use of "mass" instead of "weight", but it is perhaps logical when the objects are described as "weights". Nevertheless it takes some mental effort to appreciate terms like "weight masses", "mass unit" and "unit mass". So referring to the accuracy of manufacture of the weights the authors state that Burmese weights were not made as accurately as in Europe, yet nevertheless conclude, somewhat erroneously we think, that the highest recorded unit mass must be the correct one. Having decided on what the unit mass of the kyat was for a particular group, the authors then attempt to use this information to fit the group in a particular time sequence, based on stated values of the kyat by travellers or other sources. For example, there is evidence that in very early times the kyat was around 11 gm, but later on it had increased to over 16 gm. This study also necessitates keeping a check on what was happening in China, Thailand and India.

The mythology and symbolism associated with the composite parts of the animals and birds is examined in great detail, as are the various religions of Asia and their relationship to animals. Not only are the obvious influences of India and China considered, but also those from much further afield in place and time, such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, Siberia etc. of 5000 years ago. At times the book seems to have gone well beyond Burmese weights into a study of the whole of Asian animal mythology. We are not in a position to comment on all the links and associations made, and in many cases it would be impossible to say exactly what the significance was of a particular feature of animal design. In any event it is useful to read their suggestions, although the casual collector will find these sections heavy going.

One has to read half way through the book before finding an explanation for the title "Earth to Heaven" in the chapter on symbolism of the bird weights, where we learn that in Vedic symbolism the gander (the basic bird weight) forms a link between the monsoon rains and the plains, and thus a link between heaven and earth. The gander is also associated with the purity of water, and because of this could repel dross and attract the pure and the good. Hence it could differentiate between false and correct weights, and is an appropriate symbol for the weights.

There is a good section on the materials used for the weights and their method of manufacture, and another on the kinds of goods and materials weighed and the procedures used for weighing. Due acknowledgement is given to sources such as Temple.

The last chapter in the book gives a brief "summary and conclusions" which we suggest that readers would be well advised to read before attempting the main text. There are four appendices on weights which come outside the main theme and give a useful guide to related objects which some collectors or readers may come across. The book ends with an impressively comprehensive Bibliography giving full details of the references listed after each chapter, and finally there is a very good index.

The book is generally free of obvious errors, but on page 201 it is stated that Thibaw ascended the throne in 1875, whereas it should be 1878. There are also two plates 54 and no 55.

In conclusion, we have no hesitation in warmly recommending the book to all serious collectors of Burmese animal weights, or to those with an interest in Asian animal mythology, religion and culture. Bearing in mind the price, the casual collector should perhaps examine it prior to buying, as for some it will contain more than they may want on the animal symbolism and its origins.

Michael Robinson and Lewis Shaw

## New & Recent Publications

1. Heinz-Wilhelm Kempgen - Frühe chinesische Münzgeschichte: zur Chronologie der Spatenmünzen (7. bis 3. Jahrhundert v. Chr.) Published by the Linden-Museum, Hegelplatz 1, Stuttgart. 110 pp. Originally published in Tribus, the museum's yearbook, December 1992. After many year's research, the author proposes a dating system for the spade-money of the Eastern Zhou dynasty. He has donated his own collection to the Linden-Museum which now houses the best East-Asian coin collection in South Germany. The collection contains coins (and amulets) of China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, Hong Kong, Macao and Vietnam.

2. Dr Amjad Ali has published a book on 400 years of coins in Hyderabad, in Urdu. An English edition may appear in due course. Details from Dr Amjad Ali, H. ....
3. 'Italia Fato Profugi', Numismatic Studies Dedicated to Vladimir and Elvira Clain-Stefanelli, edited by Richard G. Doty and Tony Hackens and published by the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium, contains the following articles of oriental interest:  
 Michael L. Bates - An Abbasid Dinar of the year 200 Hijra from Wasit.  
 Rose Chan Houston - A Preliminary Investigation into the Gold and Silver Coinage Problem of Chinese Antiquity.  
 Jacques A. Schoonheydt - Des monnayages du royaume du Siam.  
 Clothbound, 309 pp, 60 plates. 6500 Belgian Francs (plus shipping & VAT in EEC countries). Available from Séminaire de numismatique Marcel Hoc, Place Blaise Pascal, 1, B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.
4. The Proceedings of the XIth International Numismatic Congress, Brussels 1991, have been published in 4 volumes:  
 Vol. I - Greek & Greek Imperial Coinage.  
 Vol. II - Celtic & Roman Coinage.  
 Vol. III - Byzantine, Mediaeval, Oriental, Islamic and Chinese Coinage.  
 Vol. IV - Modern coinage, banknotes, medals, tokens, primitive money, technology, statistics, computerisation, etc.  
 Price: 3500 Belgian Francs per volume or 12000 Belgian Francs for the set. Obtainable from Séminaire de numismatique Marcel Hoc, address as above.
5. The Indian Coin Society has recently published Hans Herrli's book *The Coins of the Sikhs*, price 500 Indian Rupees. Case-bound, 255 pp, this book is the most comprehensive work on the subject that has appeared. It is illustrated throughout with clear drawings of the coins and other relevant illustrations. It is hoped to publish a review in a future newsletter.
6. The Indian Books Centre (40/5, Shakti Nagar, Delhi 110007, India) Has the following books for sale:  
 i. Prayal Dayag - Catalogue of Coins of the Kings of Oudh, New Delhi, 1992, English & Persian, 78pp, 8 plates. US \$ 10.  
 ii. Muhammad Mohar Ali - History of the Muslims of Bengal. 1985. Vol. IA, Muslim Rule in Bengal (1203-1757), 683pp, maps etc., US \$ 167; Vol. IB, Survey of Administration, Society & Culture, 400pp, US \$ 167.  
 iii. P. E. Pieris - Ceylon & the Portuguese 1505-1658. 1986. US \$ 20.  
 iv. Rosie Llewellyn Jones - A very ingenious man: Claude Martin in Early Colonial India. Delhi 1992. 241pp, ill. US \$ 21.67.  
 v. B. N. Mukherjee - Coins & Currency System in Gupta Bengal (c. AD320-350), New Delhi 1992. 100pp, ill. US \$ 13.33.  
 vi. S. P. Upadhyaya - Indo-Nepal Trade Relations: A Historical Analysis of Nepali Trade with British India. Jaipur, 1992. 287pp, ill. US \$ 23.22.  
 vii. C. E. Bosworth - The Later Ghaznavids: Splendour & Decay: The Dynasty in Afghanistan & Northern India. Delhi 1992 reprint. 196pp. US \$ 13.33; The Ghaznavids: Their Empire in Afghanistan & Eastern Iran 994-1040. Delhi 1992 reprint. 331pp. US \$ 23.33.  
 viii. W. Barthold - Turkestan: Down to the Mongol Invasion. Delhi 1992 reprint. 573pp. US \$ 36.67.  
 ix. Rajputana Gazeteers. The Western Rajputana States Residency and the Bikaner Agency. K. D. Erskine. Gurgaon, 1992 reprint. 2 vols. US \$ 33.33.  
 x. A. V. Narasimha Murthy (Ed.) - Studies in South Indian Coins: Vol. III. Madras, 1993. US \$ 14.  
 xi. S. L. Shali - Kashmir: History and Archaeology through the ages. New Delhi, 1993. 312pp, ill. US \$ 64.
7. Tayeb El-Hibri - Coinage Reform under the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun. Published in the Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient 36 (1993), pp.58-83. The article shows how the new-style 'Abbasid coinage of the 3rd century was introduced throughout the Caliphate, with data on the fineness of dinars.
8. Norbert Bartonitschek - Teilstücke des Kupfer-Kahavanu König Parakrama Bahu II von Ceylon. (Fractional pieces of the copper kahavanas of King Parakrama Bahu II of Ceylon). Published in the Münstersche Numismatische Zeitung XXIII Jahrgang. March 1993. The article publishes some small copper coins weighing 0.18g and 0.11g. which the author thinks are probably 1/24 and 1/32 kahavanu.
9. The following titles are mentioned in the April 1993 International Numismatic Newsletter:  
 i. M. A. Adal - Tariakh al-Umlah fi al-Kuwait (History of coins in Kuwait, in Arabic), Kuwait, Al Qabas Press, 1992.  
 ii. T. Aykut - Mongol and Ikhanid Coins (in Turkish and English), Istanbul, Yapi ve Kredi Bank, Istiklal Cad., no. 258, TR 80050, Beyoglu-Istanbul, \$ 50/DM 82.  
 iii. G. Bernardi - Islamic Gold Coins, Trieste, G. Bernardi, Numismatico, 1991.  
 iv. P. Canivet and J.-P. Rey-Coquais, eds. - La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam, VIIe-VIIIe siècles, Damascus, Institut Français 1992. (Proceedings of the Lyon-Paris colloquium, 1990, 367pp, with a contribution by C. Morrisson & M. Bates on Umayyad coinage).  
 v. H. A. Daniel III - The Catalogue and Guidebook of Southeast Asian Coins & Currency, vol. II, part 2, Republic of Viet Nam Coins & Currency. Dunn Loring, VA, USA, 1992.  
 vi. R. & E. Darley-Doran - History of Currency in the Sultanate of Oman, Central Bank of Oman, Muscat, 1990.  
 vii. N. G. Goussous & K. F. Tarawneh - Coinage of the Ancient & Islamic World, Amman, 1991.  
 viii. The Legendary Kijang, Bank Negara Malaysia, Money Museum, 1992, \$ 2.  
 ix. The Journal of the Academy of Indian Numismatics and Sigillography has issued its combined vols. VII & VIII, 'Cities, Towns & Republics in India', price US \$ 30, from the Academy, 115 Kailash Park, Manorama Ganj, Indore, 452001, India.  
 x. G. Kurkman - Ottoman Weights & Measures, Istanbul, Turk ve Islam Eserleri Muzesi, 1992.  
 xi. N. Ivochkina - (The beginning of circulation of paper money in China) in Russian, Moscow 1990.

### Lists Received

1. Stephen Album (P O Box 7386, Santa Rosa, Calif. 95407, USA) - Lists 95 (illustrated), 96 and 97.
2. Scott Semans (P O Box 22849, Seattle, WA 98122, USA) - List 57 (a wide-ranging list of oriental and not-so-oriental material).
3. Joel Anderson (P O Box 3016, Merced, Calif 95344, USA) - List of Indian coins, ancient to princely states.
4. Lloyd Bennett (P O Box 2, Monmouth, Gwent NP5 3YE, UK) - Illustrated list of scarce Chinese coins.
5. Robert Tye (Locheynort, Isle of South Uist, PA81 5SJ, UK) - List 25 - Early world coins. Robert has also produced a 20 page booklet about Wang Mang, the great statesman and scholar of Han China.

## Work in Progress and Forthcoming Publications

- i. Scott Semans (Seattle) will publish in 1993 'Thailand Gambling Tokens' (with B W Smith) and 'Chinese Amulets' (with Gong Jishui).
- ii. The Bank Negara Malaysia, Money Museum, is preparing a study on the coins of Johore.
- iii. Dr V. Novák at the Náprstek Museum, Prague is working on the Fatimid glass weights and vessel stamps preserved in the museum.
- iv. Kh. Ben Rhomdhane, 'Les monnaies tunisiennes', A.N.P., Tunis, currently in press; 'Sources arabes relatives à la technique monétaire' and 'Le métier de changeur dans l'Islam médiéval' are in preparation.
- v. I. Günay Paksoy and Dr. Chem. Eng. A. Güleç at the Archaeological Museum, Istanbul, are studying and analysing the 809 copper coins of the Anadolu Selçuklu hoard 1989. B. Özden is studying the coins of Murad I in the Belgradkapi hoard 1987.

## Comments on Previous Articles

1. In Newsletter 134 we illustrated a gold coin from Steve Album's list 90. The coin was ascribed to an uncertain ruler of the Pala dynasty. Devendra Handa has corrected this attribution to King Suravarmmana I of Kashmir (c.933-34 AD). His article on this subject appeared in Spink Numismatic Circular June 1993, Vol. II no. 5.

2. Devendra Handa has also been able to complete the reading of the legend on the gold coin of Sudarshan Shah of Tehri Garhwal published by Nick Rhodes in Newsletter 134. Mr Handa reads the reverse legend as 'Hara charana tale mera panah hai'.

3. Dr Wilfried Pieper has written regarding his article 'Three Hills with River' in Newsletter 136. He says that after studying more coins in another private collection, he is convinced that the reverse design is the same on all the coins of this type - viz.

Dr. Osmund Boppearachchi is of the view that these coins are die-struck, rather than cast.



4. A possible explanation of the anchor-mark on rupees of Jhajjar - Hans Herli.

In a short, illustrated note the editor of the ONS Newsletter published in No. 117 a rupee in the name of Shah 'Alam II, dated AH 1198/26 and showing on its reverse an unread mint-name and a very distinctive mint-mark: an anchor in a triangular cartouche. Almost four years later, in ONS NL 135, Devendra Handa proposed his (and in my opinion the correct) reading of the enigmatic mint-name: *Jhajjar*, but the meaning of the anchor-mark still remains unexplained.

AH 1198/26 (= 3.III. - 13.XI.1784 AD) fell into a chaotic period during which real power in the shrunken Mughal empire passed from the Rohillas to Mahadji Sindhia. It is difficult to see why and how some minor official administering Jhajjar, a town which had never before had a mint, should have coined rupees of excellent fabric and why he should have chosen an anchor as his mint-mark.

In his presentation of the rupee S. Goron wrote: "The anchor mint-mark suggests the coin was minted somewhere with a significant maritime or river trade."<sup>1</sup> For the end of the 18th century this statement might have been correct in a European context, but not for North India, where at this time the location of a town on a river was normally symbolised by a *fish*. The mint-mark, an anchor with a stock, shows a then rather modern type, which one would have expected to find on a European man-of-war or an East Indiaman, but hardly on an Indian river craft. Among the host of late Mughal mint-marks the anchor looks quite out of place and even distinctly foreign, but if we are ready to consider the possibility that AH1189/26 may be a fictitious date, Jhajjar is perhaps the one place in North India where occurrence of a Western type anchor-mark during the reign of Shah 'Alam II would make some sense.

In 1794 Appa Khande Rao, the Maratha lord of Rewari and Mewat, gave the town of Jhajjar, as well as Bairi, Mandoti and Pathoda in *jaghir* to the famous Irish military adventurer George Thomas. In 1802, a few months before his death, Thomas told a Captain Francklin the story of his life, but his published *Memoirs* unfortunately only start at his 37th year and very little about his earlier life is known for certain.<sup>2</sup> George Thomas, who was probably born at Tipperary in 1756, is said to have come to India with the fleet of Admiral Hughes and to have deserted from the Royal Navy in 1781 in Madras. After some years spent with the Palegars in South India he reached Delhi in 1787 and joined the army of Begum Somru, who made him the governor of her *jaidad* around Tappal. Thomas left the Begum in 1792 and joined Appa Khande Rao in 1793. When this Maratha chief died in 1797, his Irish general began conquering his own state in Haryana, which at one time comprised the towns of Jhajjar, Rohtak, Hansi, Hissar, Sirsa and their districts. Outside Jhajjar Thomas built a strong fort, which he called *Georgegarh*, but which, as well as the small town that grew up around it, was generally known (and still is) as *Jehazgarh*<sup>3</sup> (Ship Fort). Due to the political developments in North India, George Thomas' state proved rather shortlived; on the 10th of November 1801 he lost *Jehazgarh*, which he had owned from AH 1209/37 to 1216/44, to General Perron, Daulat Rao Sindhia's French governor of Hindustan.

In an often quoted passage of his *Memoirs* George Thomas stated: "At Hansi I established a mint and coined my own rupees,<sup>4</sup> which I made current in my army and country. As from the commencement of my career at Jhujhur I had resolved to establish an independency, I employed workmen and artificers of all kinds, and I now judged that nothing but force of arms could maintain me in my authority."

Francklin was not always the most trustworthy reporter and although, according to him, George Thomas only mentioned his mint at Hansi, it is not at all impossible or even improbable that he also issued rupees from Jehazgarh, his oldest and strongest fort, and that such coins would bear the mint-name *Jhajjar* and show an anchor, the personal mark of the *Jehazi Sahib*.

If it could be shown that the Jhajjar rupees were not struck in AH 1189/26 but at least 11 years later by George Thomas, the three riddles of their existence, their amazingly good fabric and their anchor-mark would all simultaneously find a satisfactory solution.

### NOTES

1. ONS Newsletter no. 117 (March-April 1989).

2. The main sources of biographical data of George Thomas are: Francklin, W.: *The Military Memoirs of George Thomas*, London 1803; Compton, H.: *A Particular Account of the European Military Adventurers of Hindustan*, London 1893.

3. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, I, 261. *Jehazgarh* sounds slightly like *Jarjgarh*, the Indian pronunciation of *Georgegarh*, but it seems to refer to the fact that George Thomas once was a sailor. To his face his sepoy called him *Bahadur Sahib*, but he was much better known by his nicknames: *Jarj Jung* (Victorious George) and more commonly: *Jehazi Sahib* (Lord Sailor).

4. On page 143 of his *A Particular Account...* Compton has published a rupee dated AH 1214/42 bearing the mint-name *Hansi Sahibabad*, a coin which may have been struck by George Thomas.

### Editor's Note:

I wrote to Mr. Handa informing him of Mr Herli's comments and the possible attribution of the coin to George Thomas. Mr Handa, in a reply, was very doubtful about such an attribution.

## Frogs and Tortoises? from Ujjain?

K W Wiggins

May I refer to the article by Mr. W H Pieper in Newsletter 134 (August-October 1992) entitled "Frogs and Tortoises from Ujjain" in which the author describes and illustrates six coins, of which he says two depict tortoises and the other four frogs. Although the photographs are not particularly clear I may perhaps question whether they are indeed frogs or tortoises that appear on these coins.

According to an article by Dr N. Annandale, D. Sc., F.A.S.B. and Mahamahopadhaya Haraprasad Shastri, C.I.E., M.A., F.A.S.B. in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. X, No. 5, May 1914, pp.130-38, they are more likely to be representations of mud turtles.

Briefly, the first author relates that the practice of tortoises living in shrines as sacred animals is probably one of wide distribution in the east and is not now confined to any particular race or cult. Dr. Annandale says that he visited three shrines: one Hindu at Puri in Orissa, one Muhammadan near Chittagong and a third, a Buddhist shrine, at Mandalay in Burma. The Brahmins, presumably at the first shrine, told a confused story of a man called Gopal who annoyed Juggernath by his laziness. The god therefore turned him into a turtle. He noted that when the turtles were called for feeding they were called Gopal.

The second author, Dr. Shastri, gives an account of a number of instances where mud turtles figure in religious practices— (a) Altars (vedi) raised for Vedic sacrifices are generally built of bricks ... but when the ground is prepared for the building of an altar they make a rather deep depression in the centre of the area covered by the altar. In this depression they put a mud turtle and give it food to last till the end of the sacrifice and the destruction of the altar. (b) Chapter LXIV of *Vrhat Samkita* of Varaha Mihir (Sanskrit encyclopedia, 6th century AD) encourages kings (sic) to rear tortoises and turtles which have certain auspicious marks. The author goes on to say that the tortoise plays an important part in Buddhism in Bengal. In some of the Dharmas temples the figure of the deity is exactly that of a tortoise and is often represented in Bengali mantras with which he is worshipped as Kurmarupi or Kacchapakara. (c) The author remarks on the tortoise-like form of some stupas, which is associated with some totemistic form of tortoise worship and also mentions round playing cards used in the district of Bankura which depict mud turtles on a proportion of the cards. Presumably the origin of such cards goes back for centuries.

Dr. Annandale concludes that the available evidence seems to suggest that the tortoise of Indian iconography is not one of the species of land tortoise but a mud turtle and that the reverence for the animal originated in Northern India. There is in the article from which I quote much further information of a zoological nature but neither author mentions frogs or the representation of a tortoise or mud turtle on ancient coins.

Undoubtedly, as the authors remark, the tortoise, or more probably, the mud turtle plays an important part in Hindu iconography, both as regards the tortoise incarnation of Vishnu and the myth of the Churning of the Oceans.

None of this really helps to confirm Allan's or Mr. Pieper's attribution of the coins mentioned to Ujjain, although mud turtles must have been found in the river Sipra there. In view of the information contained in the article, their origin could have been in any part of Northern India.

In conclusion I may add that I know little about ancient Indian coins and less about tortoises or mud turtles. Maybe one of our learned Indian members would care to give us their views on this subject?

## Two New Dates on Characene Coins

Ed Dobbins

Georges le Rider in 1959 published two Characene tetradrachms found at Susa with previously unknown dates of TMΘ and TNE (349 and 355 SE = 37/8 and 43/4 AD). He attributed these coins and four others to a new king which he designated Attambelos III. The dates placed this ruler between Adinerglos (21/2 AD) and Thionésios II (45/6 AD) in a time period for which no coins had been reported by Hill in the BMC. Nodelman in 1960 referred to Le Rider's work in a footnote, but did not believe the evidence at that time was strong enough to justify the inclusion of this Attambelos in his Characene king list. In 1988, Potts reported another example of a coin dated TMΘ found at the site of ed-Dur, Umm al-Qawain, U.A.E.

I recently acquired a coin from R C Senior Ltd of Somerset, U.K., which adds a new date to Le Rider's Attambelos III designation. The pictured billon tetradrachm is dated TMZ (347 SE = 35/6 AD), two years earlier than the TMΘ coins, and weighs 14.72 grams. It was found at the Mleiha site in Sharjah, U.A.E. where several Characene pieces have been located. The obverse portrait resembles the published Attambelos III coins and depicts a diademed bust with the hair in tight, narrow curls and a long scraggle beard. There is no evidence of a star or monogram in the right obverse field as suggested for the examples reported by Le Rider and Potts. On the reverse, the seated Herakles design and surrounding four line legend are typical for the series. The legend reads: (B)AC(IAEWC)/ATTAMBHAOV)/(Σ)WTHP/(KAI)(EV)EPTE(TOV). Beneath Herakles's arm is an inverted triangle. The monogram before Herakles's face is unclear.

A re-examination of a coin published last year may further extend the known reign of this king. In the Dr. Busso Peus Auction 333, May 1992, a bronze Characene drachm appeared as Lot 382. The coin's date was given in the text as 78/9 AD which placed it within a 25 year period for which no other coins had been reported in the series. Inspection of the photograph, however, shows the date to be TM (340 SE = 28/9 AD), forty years earlier than noted in the catalogue. This reading places the coin with two other varieties of early first century bronze drachms found at Susa (Le Rider 1965). The name ATTAMB occurs on the reverse of the coin and, on the obverse, the king is depicted with a beard that is shorter than the representation on the TMZ coin. It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that the TM coin in the Peus auction probably represents an issue from early in the reign of Attambelos III.

Based on presently available published evidence, then, it seems that Le Rider was justified in creating the new king designated Attambelos III in his 1959 paper. This Attambelos is now known from coins of two denominations and four different dates: 28/9, 35/6, 37/8 and 43/4 AD. Coins listed as Attambelos III in the BMC and Nodelman should more appropriately be referred to as Attambelos IV.

I am currently conducting research on first and second century AD Characene coinage, in particular countermarked issues, and would greatly appreciate hearing from ONS members interested in this area.

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Le Rider, G.: *Suse Sous Les Séleucides et Les Parthes*, MMAI, XXXVIII, Paris, 1965, p. 186.  
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## Xusro II or Xusro IV: a reply

Hodge Mehdi Malek

In the early seventh century AD three Sasanian kings of Iran with the name Xusro are known to have struck drachms. Xusro II (AD 590/1-628) the great king who struck a vast number of drachms spanning regnal years 1-39. Xusro III (AD 629-31) of whom little is known, who struck scarce drachms of regnal years 2-3 with an unbearded bust. Finally Xusro IV (AD 631-37?), whose short reign is also shrouded in obscurity, who struck even scarcer drachms of regnal years 2 and supposedly 4-7 with a bearded bust. The obverse legend on drachms of all three kings is identical: to the right *hwslwb* (Husrav, Xusro or Xusrau) and to the left *GDH 'pzwt* (xvarrah abzud, may his splendour grow). Numismatists are not agreed as to the designation of Xusro III and Xusro IV. Thus, Sellwood,<sup>1</sup> for example, has grouped both bearded and unbearded types as being of Xusro V and ascribes no coins to Xusro III or IV.<sup>2</sup> The attribution adopted here of the unbearded type to Xusro III and the bearded type to Xusro IV is without concrete proof, although it is likely that the bearded and unbearded types should not be attributed to only one ruler. This article considers the differences between drachms of Xusro II and Xusro IV which should be borne in mind. Appendix I is a table of drachms known for Xusro III, Xusro IV year 2, and those attributed by some to Xusro IV years 4 to 7. In contrast with the large number of mints under Xusro II, as can be seen from Appendix I each of these three types is known for only a very limited number of mints.

### Drachm of YZ, year 2

In ONS Newsletter 135, (Winter 1993), Bob Senior illustrated two late Sasanian drachms in the name of Xusro. Both drachms have the usual reverse for drachms of Xusro II, namely fire altar, one attendant each side of altar, mint abbreviation right (YZ, possibly for Yazd and not ZR for Zarang as suggested by Göbl) and date left (years 2 and 3 respectively). In his article Senior puts forward the hypothesis that the coin on the left may well be of Xusro IV with a Xusro II reverse die, whilst the coin on the right is a normal Xusro II drachm typical of the early period of his reign. There can be no doubt as to his attribution of the second drachm illustrated, being of Göbl type II/2, YZ 3.

Senior advances two reasons in support of his view that the first coin may be attributed to Xusro IV. The first on the ground that the portraiture of the king's head on the obverse is in his opinion of a style of later drachms of Xusro II (post-regnal year 10). Secondly on the basis that for it to be an early issue of Xusro II would not fit in with the rest of the hoard, which consisted almost entirely of drachms of the later period of his reign and following kings up to Yazdgird III (AD 632-51).

Illustrated here are 3 drachms from a private collection together with the Senior coin.



1. Xusro II, mint WYHC, year 6 (4.02g, 29mm)



2. Xusro II, mint YZ, year 28 (4.10g, 32mm)



3. Xusro IV, mint AYLAN, year 2 (4.38g, 31mm)



4. Xusro II, mint YZ, year 2 (Senior coin)

Fig. 1 is typical of the drachms of the early type of Xusro II (Göbl type II/2), covering regnal years 1-10. Two features on the obverse should be noted: the narrow portrait of the king and the inner circle of dots extending to 11 o'clock (11h) on the left side right up to the left wing on the crown and not broken by the legend *GDH 'pzwt*. On the reverse the altar attendants' headdress is what Senior describes as a bonnet which extends down to the side of the head.

Fig. 2 is of the type of the drachms of the later period of Xusro II (Göbl type II/3), covering regnal years 11-39. In contrast with the obverse of the early issue at fig.1: the bust is broader (the narrow bust is still found prior to the 20s of Xusro II's reign, however in the 20s and 30s in particular the bust is significantly broader) and of a finer style, and the inner circle of dots is broken by the legend *GDH 'pzwt* and does not extend to the left wing of the crown. These features continue on drachms of the later Xusros after Xusro II. On the reverse the altar attendants' headdress is no longer a bonnet.

Fig. 3 is a drachm of Xusro IV.<sup>3</sup> The obverse follows later issues of Xusro II as in fig. 2. The reverse also follows fig. 2. One can tell that this is not of Xusro II as it is dated year 2, and it was not until year 11 that Xusro II began striking drachms where the inner margin of dots was broken by the legend at 11h on the obverse and the attendants' headdress ceased to be a bonnet. Coins of year 2 of this type are known for the following mint signatures: AYLAN (with and without 'pd in obverse margin), PL and WYHC (see note 3).<sup>4</sup>

The obverse of the drachm illustrated and identified as possibly being of Xusro IV by Senior is clearly of the same or similar type as fig. 1: the bust is narrow and the inner circle of dots reaches the wing on the crown at 11h. The reverse he accepts is of Xusro II. Thus instead of a rare mule between a Xusro IV obverse and a Xusro II reverse, the coin on stylistic grounds should probably be regarded as a normal Xusro II drachm of year 2, albeit the craftsmanship of the die cutter is better than found on many early Xusro II drachms.<sup>5</sup>

This leaves the second argument of Senior as to the coin being part of a hoard comprised of drachms dating almost exclusively from the 20s of Xusro II rule and later. The hoard was not found in an archaeological context, let alone with an established provenance. It is well known that dealers of coins in the Middle East split and add to hoards prior to sale. An example of this is the Quetta hoard of 299 seventh century AD Sasanian drachms, where it was apparent that 3 drachms had been added to the hoard by the dealer.<sup>6</sup> It is doubtful that this second point of Senior is of sufficient weight to give any real support to an attribution to Xusro IV.

Therefore Senior's drachm should not be attributed to Xusro IV as the design of the coin is somewhat removed from the style of Xusro IV drachms. An attribution to Xusro II is more probable, although it is possible to accept that the portraiture on the obverse has a slightly different look and size to it than the usual early type of Xusro II.

### Drachms of years 4 to 7

It may be appropriate here to consider briefly those late Sasanian drachms with regnal years 4 to 7 in the name of Xusro which have been attributed by some numismatists to Xusro IV (or Xusro V). The obverse follows the style of drachms of the later years of Xusro II and the reverse follows the style of years 1 to 10 of that king. Coins of this type are known for the following mint and date combinations: AW 5, LD 7, ST 6, WH 7, WYHC 4-5 (see note 3). As discussed in the notes to this article, such attribution should be regarded with some scepticism as there are various factors which should be taken into account before reaching any conclusions.

First the historical evidence needs to be considered. Between the death of Xusro II in AD 628 and the accession of Yazdgird III in AD 632, Sasanian Iran was ruled by a succession of kings and queens: Kavād II (AD 628), Ardāshir III (Ardaxsir, AD 628-30), Boran (AD 630-31), Azarmidokht (Azarmig-duxt, AD 631), Xusro III (Husrav, AD 629-31), Xusro IV (AD 631-37?), and Hormizd VI (Ohrmazd, AD 631-32). The historical sources state that Xusro IV (and indeed any other Xusro in this period) only ruled for a brief period and make no reference to a Xusro ruling in the early years of Yazdgird III's reign, as would be otherwise implicit in the attribution of coins to this king spanning seven regnal years, i.e. well into the early years of Yazdgird III's reign.<sup>2</sup> For other rulers, as a general rule the attribution to specific Sasanian rulers of coins has tied in well with the historical material. An example of this is the attribution of scarce drachms in the name of Azarmidokht to the well known queen referred to in the historical texts. Unfortunately to equate these drachms dated years 4 to 7 does not fit in comfortably with any established historical factual matrix. It may be argued that there is a gap in the historical sources reflected by the numismatic evidence.<sup>7</sup> Some support for such an argument may be derived from the fact that for the early part of his reign drachms in the name of Yazdgird III are only known for a limited number of mints. This may reflect difficulties confronting Yazdgird III in asserting his rule throughout the empire, particularly in the light of the encroaching forces of Islam and the possibility of usurpers or local rulers seeking to set up their own power bases. Drachms for the mint ST (Stakhr) are known for years 1 and 2 (AD 632-3) and again from year 10 (AD 642) in the name of Yazdgird III. On the other hand a drachm of ST of year 6 (AD 636?) has been attributed to Xusro IV. If the latter questionable attribution is correct it would follow that Xusro IV may have taken control of Stakhr from Yazdgird III after the beginning of Yazdgird III's reign. Although the prospect remains that these drachms were struck by a rival to Yazdgird III, there seems to be little support for this view on the historical evidence.

Secondly, the headdress on the attendants is, unlike other drachms from year 11 of Xusro II to the fall of the Sasanians in AD 651, a bonnet on issues dated years 4 to 7. Whereas with Xusro IV's issues for regnal year 2 the attendants do not have a bonnet, it seems unusual to revert in years 4 to 7 to the early style of Xusro II for years 1 to 10 (AD 590-99). Nevertheless the possibility of a reversion to an archaic or earlier style is not impossible. For example the drachms of half-weight of the Ispahbad of Tabaristan Farrukhan (PYE 60-77; AD 711-28) display the bonnet for issues dated PYE 60 to 75, whereas for issues dated PYE 75 to 77 there is no such bonnet and the style of headdress is similar to the later issues of Xusro II. The analogy is not exact as with Farrukhan the change is from the old bonnet style to the later style, whereas with the supposed Xusro IV issues the change is from the later style to the bonnet style.

Thirdly, mules are not unknown for drachms in the late Sasanian period.<sup>5</sup> It is conceivable that these drachms dated years 4 to 7 are mules of obverses of the later issues of Xusro II with the reverses of early issues of Xusro II. A study is required in order to see if the obverse or the reverse of any of these issues of years 4 to 7 can be die linked with any regular drachms of Xusro II.

Fourthly, these drachms of years 4 to 7 are known for 5 mint signatures, whereas the year 2 type is known for 3. Only one mint signature WYHC, is common to both types as can be seen from Appendix I. This is another factor, albeit not entirely unequivocal, which indicates that the two types represent two separate rulers.

To conclude, clearly this is an area where further research is needed before expressing any firm view in respect of these drachms. The attribution to Xusro IV is at the very least doubtful and the matter remains unresolved.

### Appendix I. Table of Mint/Date combinations

Signature	A Xusro III Years 2-3	B Xusro IV Year 2	C Xusro ? Years 4-7
AW			5
AYLAN	2	2	
KL	2		
LD			7
PL		2	
ST	2		6
WH			7
WYHC	2-3	2	4-5

Note: Obverses of type of late issues of Xusro II for B (Xusro IV) and C (Xusro ?); for A (Xusro III) unbearded bust. Reverses of type of late issues of Xusro II for A (Xusro III) and B (Xusro IV); for C (Xusro ?) reverse similar to early issues of Xusro II years 1 to 10.

#### NOTES

- Sellwood, D., Whiting, P. and Williams, R., *An Introduction to Sasanian Coins* (1985), pp.173-4; also Göbl, R. *Sasanian Numismatics* (Braunschweig, 1971), table 13.
- Frye, R.N., 'The political history of Iran under the Sasanians' in *Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3(1) *The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods* (Cambridge, 1983), chapter 3, p.171. Christensen, A. *L'Iran sous les Sassanides* (2nd ed., Copenhagen, 1944), pp.498-9 refers to both Xusro III and IV; little is known about both kings. Xusro III is said to have been a nephew of Xusro II and was murdered by the governor of Khorasan (even before he could reach Ctesiphon as king). Historians attribute only a very brief reign of no more than a few months to Xusro IV as one of the various short reigned kings and queens in the period between the death of Xusro II in AD 628 and the accession to the throne in AD 632 of Yazdgird III. The attribution by some numismatists of drachms of regnal years 4-7 to this king is inconsistent with this and as discussed in notes 3-4 below, this attribution should not be regarded as certain.
- Göbl (op. cit.) table 143 records years 2 and 4 for the ruler he designates as Xusro V. Göbl 'Sasanian Coins' in *CHI* 3(1) chapter 9, pl.30, fig.1 for WYHC 4. In addition Mochiri, M.I., *Etude de numismatique iranienne sous les Sassanides et Arabe-Sassanides*, vol. II (Tehran, 1977) revised (Leiden, 1983) figs. 495, 497, 499, 500a-b, 709 has illustrated drachms of years 2 and 5-7: AYLAN 2, AW 5, LD 7, ST 6, WH 7, WYHC 2 and 5. The Bab Tuma hoard found in Syria included a drachm of Xusro IV, WYHC 2 (wt. 2.95g); Gyselen, R. and Kalus, L., *Deux trésors monétaires des premiers temps de l'Islam* (Paris, 1983), fig. 709. The large hoard found in Damascus in 1950 included a drachm which may well be of Xusro IV, AYLAN 2, which had 'pd (abd, excellent) in the second quarter of the obverse rim, an attribute not found on drachms of Xusro II for years 1 to 10; al-'Ush, M., *The Silver Hoard of Damascus* (Damascus, 1972), no.1166 and p.147. For drachms of year 2 the headdress of the attendants on the reverse is the same as the later issues of Xusro II for years 11-39. For those drachms of years 4-7 which have been attributed by some numismatists to Xusro IV the headdress of the attendants is a bonnet like the early issues of Xusro II prior to year 11, however on these drachms as with the later issues of Xusro II the inner circle of dots does not reach the wing of the crown at 11h.
- For unbearded drachms of Xusro III see Mochiri (op.cit.) figs. 437, 482, 487, 492, 501, 502, 503, 504, 702, 928: AYLAN 2, KL 2, ST 2, WYHC 2. For WYHC 3, see Mochiri, M.I., 'A coin of Khusraw III's third year', *NC* 23 (1983), pp.221-3.
- Mules of late Sasanian drachms are not unknown. For an example of an Hormizd VI obverse and a Xusro II reverse of WYH year 35 see: Malek, H.M. 'An unusual drachm of the Sasanian king Hormizd V or VI', *NCirc* (1993), pp.46-7. It is arguable that the drachms dated 4-7 referred to in note 3 are not in fact of Xusro IV, but instead mules between obverses of late drachms of Xusro II and reverses of drachms of his early reign: see Gurnet, F. 'Monnaies Sassanides inédites de Yazdgird III (632-651)', *CENB* 25 (1988), p.50. This view is possible in view of the difficulty of reconciling a Xusro IV ruling 7 years with the fact that Yazdgird III commenced his reign in AD 632, some four years after the

death of Xusro II in AD 628. Thus for example there are drachms attributed to Xusro IV of ST year 6 (see note 3; ca. AD 636?), whereas drachms are known of ST years 1-2 for Yazdgird III (AD 632-3). Historical sources make no reference of a Xusro ruling during the early years of Yazdgird III's reign.  
 6. Malek, H.M. 'A seventh-century hoard of Sasanian drachms', *Iran* 31 (1993), forthcoming.  
 7. So argued by Mochiri (op. cit. note 3), pp.198-9.

## New Varieties of the Arab-Byzantine Coinage of Hims

W. A. Oddy

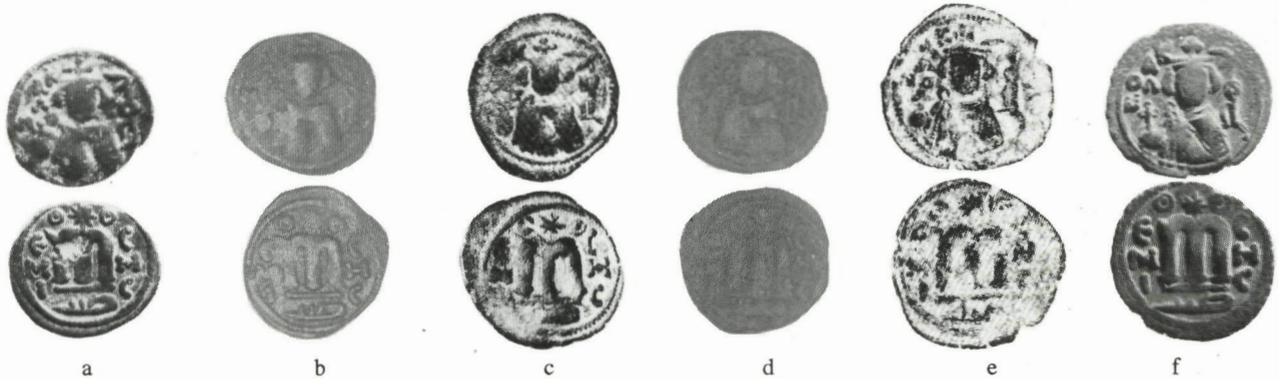
One of the well known types of the so-called Arab-Byzantine coinage is that struck at Hims in Syria, the Hellenistic Emesa, depicting the bust of an emperor on the obverse and a large cursive m on the reverse. Both faces of the coins have legends in both Greek and Arabic.

Both faces of the coin also have various symbols. On the obverse these consist of  $\sim$ ,  $\cup$  or  $\omega$  above the Arabic legend to the right of the bust and \* or  $\cdot$  below, although sometimes either or both of these positions are blank. On the reverse the space above the m has  $o * o$ ,  $\theta * \theta$  or  $\sim * \sim$ .

The various known combinations of these symbols have recently been listed,<sup>1</sup> but two more have now been identified from specimens in the Ashmolean Museum, the American Numismatic Society and in a private collection.

The first new variety is without symbols on the obverse, but has  $\theta * \theta$  on the reverse and is known from six specimens:

- (a) Ashmolean Museum, ex Sotheby 14 July 1977, lot 193 (part). Weight 3.906g. Die axis 7.30. This coin is die linked with (b)
- (b) American Numismatic Society, 1974.175.4. Weight 3.69g. Die axis 7.30. This coin is die lined with (a).
- (c) American Numismatic Society, 1971.284.34. Weight 3.57g. Die axis 7.30. This coin is die linked with (d).
- (d) American Numismatic Society, 1954.112.74. Weight 2.92g. Die axis 6.30. This coin is die linked with (c).
- (e) American Numismatic Society, 1971.37.17. Weight 3.92g. Die axis 5.00.
- (f) Private collection. Obverse slightly double struck. Weight 4.194g. Die axis 6.00



The second new variety has  $\sim$  and \* on the obverse and  $o * o$  on the reverse. It is known from only one specimen:

- (g) American Numismatic Society, 1972.243.2. Weight 3.45g. Die axis 7.00



In the previous publication, a table was presented of the known combinations and symbols which included an obverse symbol =  $\cdot$ . Although many more of these coins have now been examined, no further examples of this symbol have been found. The coin in question has now been re-examined and it appears that the symbol originally read = is, in reality, a \* . The table of recorded symbol combinations can now be amended as follows:

Obverse symbol combinations		Reverse symbol combinations		
		$\sim * \sim$	$o * o$	$\theta * \theta$
b	b	x	x	x
b	*	x	x	x
b	*	x	x	x
$\sim$	b	x	x	
$\sim$	*		x	x
$\sim$	*	x	x	x
$\cup$	b			
$\cup$	*			
$\cup$	*		x	

b indicates that this position is blank  
 x indicates that this combination of symbols occurs.

1. W. A. Oddy, 'The "Constans II" bust type of Arab-Byzantine coins of Hims', *Revue Numismatique*, 6th series 29 (1987), pp.192-7.

## Ottoman copper coins from Zabid in the Yemen

Dick Nauta, Khartoum

### Introduction

During the last ten years or so, more and more Ottoman coins from the Yemen have found their way into the international coin trade and thence into private collections. Although not common, some may be found on offer in international sales lists<sup>1</sup> and auction catalogues.<sup>2</sup> Of these, the gold coins may all be considered rare to extremely rare, many of the silver coins much less so and the copper coins, though not particularly rare, appear to have been largely ignored, possibly due to the difficulties of identification of these mostly crudely executed coins.

A first brief overview of Ottoman Yemen numismatics written by Lowick in 1983<sup>3</sup> may now confidently be elaborated upon in the light of many additions to the corpus of these coins. Indeed, Popp et al.<sup>4</sup> five years later did so in their interesting and revealing survey work which concentrated on Ottoman silver and gold coins minted in the Yemen. Meanwhile again much new material has come to light and some collections which I saw recently contain many interesting and frequently unique coins.

Important and unique reconnaissance work on source material regarding numismatics of the Ottomans and other medieval dynasties in the Yemen has been done by Samuel Lachman in his recent series published in the Numismatic Circular.<sup>5</sup> Lachman's work makes it possible to look at the available coins with renewed interest because the attribution of coins becomes meaningful once the outline of the local history which produced these coins has become clear.

This has prompted me to embark on a series of articles regarding the coinage of the Ottomans in the Yemen largely based on the coins collected during my residence in the Yemen in the 1980s. These articles do not claim to present a full picture; rather they should be seen as contributing to the contours of a field of numismatics where much work remains to be done. In view of the considerable numbers of coins collected for study purposes, the information offered is expected to be of interest to the serious collector and of value to the Ottoman numismatist.

The descriptions and date presented in most cases are based on the study and comparison of a number of specimens of a particular type of coin. The present article thus offers a first attempt at classification according to types.

The study of these coins naturally has also yielded information on weights and sizes, but little of this can as yet be translated into a tangible metrology for this interesting coinage. It is hoped that this article may assist in the attribution of so far unidentified coins in both private and public collections. Vice versa, feedback from such collections could significantly contribute to the overall picture of the corpus of Ottoman coins from the Yemen.

### Historical Outline

I propose to start this series with the earliest known Ottoman copper coinage of the Yemen, that of Zabid. Zabid has a history going back to well before the advent of Islam. During the centuries immediately prior to Ottoman rule, Zabid was the centre of commerce and was famous for its schools and university where both Islamic and secular learning were at a high level. The town reached its zenith during the Rasulid period in the 14th and 15th century AD, and for a long time was the main town of the Tihama coastal plain of the Yemen.

According to the information contained in Lachman's article<sup>6</sup> and quoted in this paragraph, Zabid was conquered by the Mamluks in 922H/1516. In 923H/1516 the Ottomans defeated the Mamluks and entered Cairo. The Yemen territory under Mamluk rule essentially became an Ottoman dependency. However, in 927H/1520 it is recorded that the 'khutba' and 'sikke'<sup>7</sup> in Zabid were not in the name of the Ottoman Sultan. In another document dated 931H/1525 there is again a remark that in Zabid and Taiz, the 'khutba' and 'sikke' ought to be in the name of the Ottoman Sultan, suggesting that this was otherwise. In order to rectify this situation, a fleet was despatched to the Yemen coast in 932H/1526 under the command of Selman Reis. In 933H/1527 however, the Yemen does not appear in the official list of Ottoman vilayets of that year.

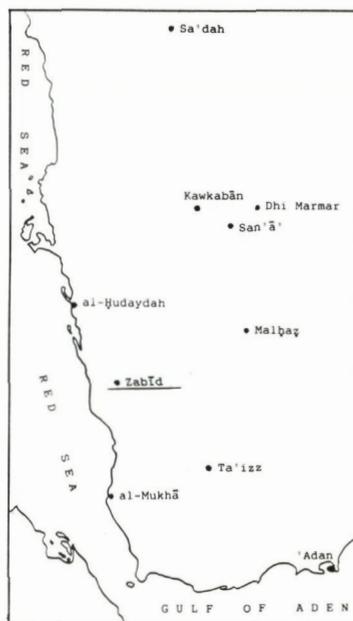
In the light of this historical documentary evidence it is unlikely that before the year 932H/1526 any coins were minted at Zabid in the name of the Ottoman Sultan. Yet two coins in my collection have 931 as the year. Even when conceding that these might be misstrikes where the Arabic numerals 1, 2, 3 and 4 all share the single upright stroke, a gold sultani from Zabid unmistakably dated 932 is shown by Pere.<sup>8</sup> However, from 933H/1527 onwards, we do find coins in both copper and silver continuing up to the later years of the reign of Sultan Suleiman I.

The Ottoman Zabid coinage of the 930s and early 940s however was minted not by the Ottomans themselves, who had hardly left any impact on the Yemeni scene, but by the Levend rulers who were the successors to the Mamluks in their control of Zabid.<sup>9</sup> In name at least, they recognised the overlordship of the Ottomans as is borne out by their mention of the Sultan's name on their coins.

When in 945H/1539 the Ottomans themselves, on their return from an unsuccessful expedition against the Portuguese at Goa, arrived at the gates of Zabid, they killed the last Levend ruler and many of his followers and took possession of the town. Coins struck in Zabid after 945 therefore represent Ottoman coins proper.

After the 960s/1550s the importance of Zabid as an Ottoman mint is clearly eclipsed by that of San'a', and no coins are known from Zabid for the subsequent Ottoman Sultans with one notable exception of a copper coin dated 977H/1569 (type IX below), which therefore belongs to the reign of Selim III.

**Map of the Yemen** showing the (approximate location) of the ten mints so far substantiated. For an indication of scale: linear distance between Aden and Sa'dah is almost 500 km, between Aden and San'a' almost 300 km. In the rough, dissected highlands terrain, the actual ground distances are of course considerably more.



## Typology

After this short historical excursion I shall present the copper coins of Zabid according to their types, as far as dates allow, in chronological order.

As is often the case, the decision of what to name the obverse, and what the reverse of some of these coins is rather arbitrary. Just to be clear, for the purpose of this article the *obverse* is the face of the coin bearing the Sultan's name and/or an ornament; *reverse* is the face with the mint name and date.<sup>10</sup> What to do in case no sultan is mentioned and date and mint name are on different sides of the coin becomes a matter of choice.

The listing according to types of the copper coins presented here is comparatively easy as so far each type has been found to be a fixed combination of an obverse specific to that reverse with only minor variations in the design. This, for example, is in contrast to the Ottoman silver coins of Zabid, where a certain obverse may be found combined with different reverses, giving rise to a number of sub-types.<sup>11</sup>

It should be stressed that the typology used here has been adopted for the purpose of this article only. It does not claim to be complete and in due course may need to be modified to include further types which may come to light. If possible it should be made to correspond with an overall typology for the corpus of Yemen Ottoman coins, yet to evolve.

### TYPE I.

The drawing is a reconstruction of the coin based on two well-preserved specimens, one of which has a clear date 933. The reconstruction was much facilitated by the fact that the design of this coin is almost identical to that of the first silver Ottoman coins, 'medin' or 'buqshah',<sup>12</sup> struck in Zabid, of which detailed drawings had already been prepared earlier.

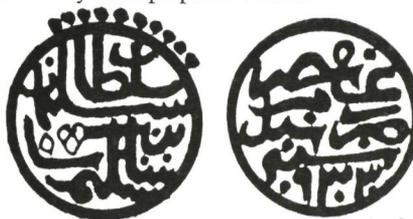
سلطان سليمان شاه بن سليم شاه

Obv. 'Sultan Suleiman Shah bin Selim Shah'

عز نصره ضرب زبيد سنة ٩٣٣

Rev. 'azze nasruhu duriba (bi-)Zabid\* sanah 933'

Av. weight around 3g; diam. 15-17mm; thickness > 2mm.



Note\* It is not clear in this coin whether the prefix 'bi' for the preposition 'in, at' is actually attached to the 'zai' of Zabid or not. Dots are liberally and often, it seems, randomly dispersed in the calligraphy and do not always tie up with the letters for which they are required and vice versa. Both 'dhuriba bi-Zabid' and 'dhuriba Zabid' without 'bi' are known to occur.

General note: nowhere in this article is the text on both obverse and reverse more extensive than in the above type of coin. For this reason I provide the full rendering in Arabic only once here, assuming that the remaining instances of transcribed text for the other coin types can be readily related to the present example. Similarly, the simple Arabic epigraphy of these coins is assumed to be familiar to interested readers; I have thus chosen in my subsequent English renderings to omit the various signs and conventions commonly used to more precisely represent the Arabic spelling.

### TYPE II

The drawing is an enlarged rendering of what can be discovered on two coins, well-struck on planchets of very inadequate size. One of the coins moreover is poorly preserved. Remarkable here is the central and elongated 'heart-shaped knot' ornament<sup>13</sup> which, in contrast to most later uses of this pleasing sign, here is pointing downwards. Curious is also the calligraphy of the word 'sultan' which starts with a rather deep, u-shaped downward loop instead of the more usual, almost horizontal line for the first letter 'sin'. It is possible that in this coin the word 'sultan' has been prefixed with the article 'al-' (the) which could explain this peculiar calligraphy. The design of this coin type does not, as far as I know, exist in silver coins of Zabid or other mints in the Yemen.

Obv. 'Sultan Suleiman ....'

Rev. '.... dhuriba Zabid sanah 93.. '\*

Av. weight just under 2g; diam. 13-14mm; thickness 2mm.



Note \* The clear dot under the figure 3 of the year does not denote the 0 for 30, but is frequently found in that position on Zabid coins. In this coin the last digit of the year may only be guessed from the little stroke that is barely visible to the right of the figure 3. The proper date, or at least one of the dates of this coin is known to be 937 from a third specimen of this coin which I saw in the possession of a German collector. The small part of the third digit of the year visible on the coin illustrated would agree with the left-hand stroke of the Arabic 7.

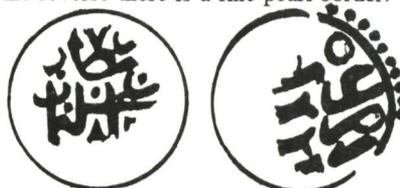
### TYPE III

The drawing is based on a close scrutiny of only one single coin, very poorly centered and not very well preserved. Curious in the obverse of this coin are the two hints of v-shaped points, possibly part of the commonly used heart-shaped knot ornament, one pointing down on top of the 'ta' of 'sultan' and forming part of this letter; the other below the middle of the horizontal bar of the stylised name Suleiman, pointing up. Outside the plain edge circle of the reverse there is a fine pearl border.

Obv. 'Sultan Suleiman ....'

Rev. 'azze nasruhu dhuriba Zabid' (no date)

Weight 1.71g; diam. 15-16mm; thickness 1.3mm.



The justification for the inclusion of this coin without year in the present position of Type III lies in the consideration of its textual make-up. This points towards mention of the sultan's name etc. in full, which would appear to be characteristic for the earlier, Levend-struck coins.<sup>14</sup>

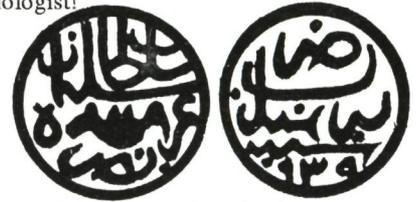
#### TYPE IV

The drawing is a successful reconstruction of a coin type, based on three coins, each of which, though poorly produced, very obligingly provided complementary details with convincing overlap. Needless to say, the surprising aspect of this coin is the bird in the centre of the obverse. We need not look very far for its origin, as during earlier days of greater achievements, the thin, silver Rasulid dirhems for generations were adorned with a bird (in some instances two birds) as a pictorial symbol for Zabid. How this symbol came to be chosen for the town is not clear. Why it surfaced again in Ottoman times I dare not guess. It is not clear which species of bird is depicted; some interesting probabilities offer themselves to the Yemen ornithologist!

Obv. 'Sultan Suleiman azze nasruhu', picture of a bird in centre.

Rev. 'dhuriba bi-Zabid sanah 939'

Av. weight 1.5-2.0g; diam. 13-15mm; thickness 1.5-2mm.



The preceding four coin types can all be attributed to the 'Levend' period of Zabid (932-945H). All of them have the sultan's name on the obverse in deference to the Ottoman overlordship.

The following types V - IX can all, by virtue of their dates, be ascribed to the Ottoman period after 945H, and are therefore proper Ottoman coins even though none of them mention the sultan by name. Apparently submission to their sultan by the subsequent Ottoman Pashas was taken for granted, thus possibly obviating the need for the sultan's name to appear on the copper coins struck during their governorship.

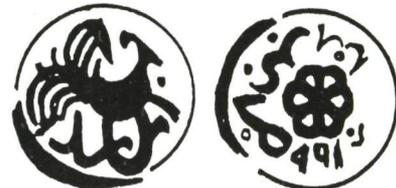
#### TYPE V

Reproduction of a single coin, poorly struck as usual. Unmistakable on the obverse here again is a bird. This time of more robust proportions and with conspicuous tailfeathers. Its head however is largely missing; where the beak would begin there is the edge of the flan. Curious too is the pointed object above the back of the bird, like the blade of a spear poised for the thrust. Where the legs of the bird would be there appear some interwoven letters which could make 'Zabid'. The reverse too is a departure from the previous designs which all show commendable calligraphic standards. Here we see a central design of uncertain significance. It resembles a six-petalled flower. Around this there is the usual reverse text arranged in circular fashion, part of which was incompletely struck, so that only the upper part of the letters (closest to the central ornament) can be read.

Obv. Picture of a bird, with below 'Zabid' (?)

Rev. Central stylised flower design, surrounded by: 'dhuriba bi-Zabid sanah 951'.

Weight 1.66g; diam. 13-14mm; thickness 1.8mm.



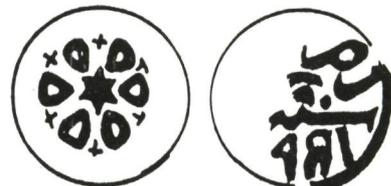
#### TYPE VI

Reconstruction of part of the coin, based on two coins, one well-preserved, struck on an almost square planchet, totally inadequate to take the die for this coin, but with clear date and convincing fragments of the mint name Zabid. The other coin is on an even smaller planchet but helps in confirming some details of date and mint. The obverse has done away with any lettering and just shows a pleasing, flower-type arrangement with a 6-pointed star in the centre. This type represents the smallest and lightest copper coins of Zabid so far found.

Obv. Central star with radial arrangement of six roughly egg-shaped rings with small + signs in between.

Rev. '.... dhuriba Zabid sanah 951'

Weight 0.94-0.74g; diam. 10-11mm; thickness 1.3mm.



The coins discussed under types VII and VIII below represent Ottoman coinage of the 'thin' variety. A notable feature is that the planchet used is relatively large and thin, typically of 14-18mm diameter with a thickness of about 1mm. It is believed that this type of coin, despite the year 926H, belongs to the later period of Suleiman's rule, when, as was done in Egypt with the gold *sultanis*, the actual year of minting was replaced with the year of the sultan's accession. The same phenomenon may be noted with the Zabid silver coinage. In view of the fact that silver coins with actual dates of up to 963H have been recorded in an almost complete series of years and that also silver coins from Zabid with year 926H exist,<sup>15</sup> it may be surmised that this change in practice of dating the coins took place sometime after 963H. And thus this change may also have been applied to the copper coins.

On a speculative note, this thin variety of coinage may represent an attempt at standardising Ottoman coinage throughout the Yemen. In the design of these coins of the thin variety, which are also known to exist for San'a', Sa'dah and Kaukaban,<sup>16</sup> two design features occur almost as a standard feature. The first of these is the use of two ovals or sub-rectangles intertwined cross-wise and used as a central ornament for obverse and/or reverse (this design is also found on some of the silver coins from San'a', Sa'dah and Aden). The second recurrent design feature is the use of a star shape, most frequently a hexagram, with or without dots and other accents added to various parts, as an ornament that covers all of the obverse. The intertwined ovals are mostly found in the centre of the star.

Another characteristic of this thin variety of coin is the consistent use of thin lines for script and ornaments and the use of relatively small letters. This is in contrast to the thick lines of cruder script and design used in what I would term the later Ottoman copper coins of the thick variety (for an example see Type IX below).]

Many sub-types of these coins of the thin variety exist. In most of them the year is not part of the design. Attribution of these coins to the rule of Suleiman is entirely based on a similarity shared with the coins that do have a year (926H) and/or in the use of the intertwined ovals ornament in silver coins with Suleiman's name.

**TYPE VII**

The drawing represents a reconstruction based on four coins of, for the period, surprising uniformity in appearance, if not in weight.<sup>17</sup>

Obv. Hexagram over the full surface of the coin, with elaborations within and between the points. In the central hexagon an ornament of two oval rings interwoven cross-wise, surrounded by a series of indifferently placed dots.



Rev. Central ornament \* as described for obverse, surrounding this, but in horizontal arrangement, the text: 'azze nasruhu dhuriba Zabid sanah 926'.

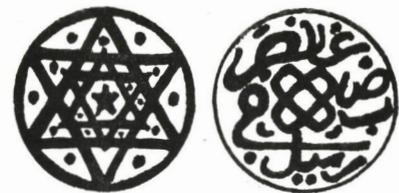
Weight 0.7-1.4g; diam. 14-16mm; thickness 0.8-1.2mm.

Note \* Of type VII two sub-types of the reverse can be distinguished: in two of the coins the ornament of crossed oval rings is placed in perpendicular fashion as in the drawing. In the other two coins this central ornament is placed like an X.

**TYPE VIII**

The drawing is a reconstruction based on six coins, all poorly struck on crude planchets. Fortunately enough overlap of detail is available to enable a reasonable presentation of this coin to be made. Although this coin type shares with type VII the two pertinent design features of intertwined ovals and hexagram, both obverse and reverse are sufficiently different to warrant inclusion here as a separate type. Like type VII it belongs to the variety of thin planchet coinage and based on its design features it has tentatively been ascribed to the reign of Suleiman I even though no dates have been found for this type of coin.

Obv. Within a plain edge-circle a large hexagram within which there is another, smaller hexagram with sides parallel. Within central hexagon a star or dot. \* Many of the triangular interstices of the double hexagram have round dots in them, but in none of the coins does this feature appear to have been consistently pursued by the die engraver.



Rev. Within a plain circle a central design of two intertwined flat ovals in X position. The text is arranged around this central design in horizontal fashion as shown. Peculiar here is the introduction of the word 'fi' (in, at), with a long drawn out 'ya' below the centre ornament. Below this line is the mint name Zabid. The vertical stroke of the 'dal' of Zabid intersects with the horizontal line of 'fi' and extends to touch the ornament. Text: 'azze nasruru dhuriba fi Zabid' (no year)

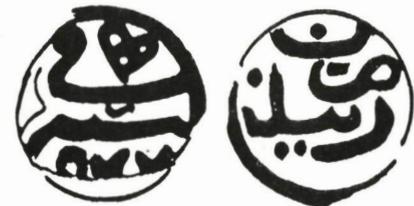
Weight 1.0-2.0g; diam. 14.2-17.8mm; thickness 0.9-1.2mm.

Note \* Three sub-types of obverse have been noted, viz: central star of five points (2 coins); central star of six points (2 coins); central round dot (2 coins).

**TYPE IX**

This type is represented here by a single coin, the heaviest of the group of copper coins from Zabid described above. It is in an excellent state of preservation with a pleasing dark patina; it is well struck, and is the only coin from Zabid known to me from after the period of Suleiman I. Its date, 977H is only with the upper parts of the figures on the planchet, and it might be argued that the digits represent 926H rather than 977H. Having the coin here before me, I can say that the 977 interpretation appears the more convincing, making it a coin of Selim II's reign. This would also be borne out by its design, which represents a total departure from the Zabid coinage that we have seen above. This coin is in fact much more in line with the heavy, thick variety of coinage with coarse lettering which we find with dates from the 970s onwards from other mints in the Yemen, such as San'a', Sa'dah, Kaukaban and al-Mokha.

Obv. Ornament of heart-shaped knot above 'fi', drawn out horizontally across the coin. Small sign below 'fi', then 'sanah', also drawn out across the lower part of the coin, with below it 977.



Rev. 'dhuriba Zabid'

Weight 4.32g; diam. about 15mm; thickness 3.0mm.

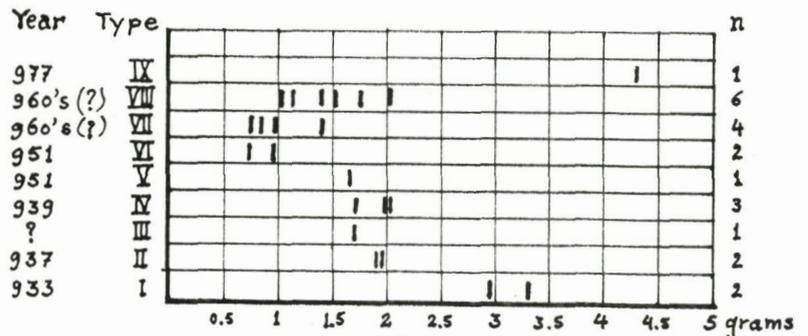
**Metrology and Terminology**

From the weights and sizes of the 22 Zabid copper coins on which the descriptions in this article are based, no meaningful deductions as to the metrology of these coins can be made at this stage.

For ease of comparison the weights of the coins have been set out on a horizontal weight scale in grammes. The vertical axis ought to be a time scale, but due to the paucity of actual years on the coins, I chose to arrange the 9 types insofar possible in chronological order as described in this article.

It can be seen that the earlier coin types were heavier and that a decrease in weight took place as time progressed, with coins of around 3 grams gradually being reduced to less than 1 gram in weight. The majority of the coins weigh between 1 and 2 grams. After the reign of Sultan Suleiman heavier coinage would seem to have been introduced.

However, these deductions based on the small sample of some 22 coins representing 9 types can be no more than conjectural at best. More coins will have to be included in a more thorough study at a later date.



Distribution of coin weights according to types and years.



all the coins of class II is the existence of a circular symbol ⊙ behind the tail of the deer. The legend is only partially visible on the different specimens which, however, give a fair idea of what it may actually have been. Coin no. 457 shows the title *Maharajasa* from 5 to 8 o'clock but nothing can be made out of the legend along the upper margin of the coin. ... *ghabhutisa* may be seen on coin no. 458 between 11 and 3 o'clock. Coin no. 459 reveals that *bhutisa* exists between 1 and 3 o'clock and *mahara* between 5 and 7 o'clock. Important evidence is provided by coin no. 461 as it shows the letter *sa* of the title *Maharajasa* at 11 o'clock position, followed immediately by *Am(ogha)* between 10 and 12 o'clock indicating clearly that the upper margin contained the name *Amoghabhutisa* while the title *Maharajasa* was placed along the lower margin. That the circular symbol punctuated the two words is revealed by coin nos. 463-465 besides those mentioned above. The cumulative evidence makes it very clear that the legend on all these coins was *Amoghabhutisa Maharajasa* only and that this legend was complete in itself and not fragmentary as it covered the entire available margin of the flan. This, thus, is the abridged version of the legend which omits the title *Rajnah* and the tribal name *Kunindasa*.



The connotation of the word *Amoghabhuti* has been a matter of controversy. Some scholars take it to be the personal name of the issuer of these coins while others regard it to be his title. Dr. P. L. Gupta believes that "this is neither a personal name nor an epithet. The term *Amoghabhuti* stands for Siva."<sup>5</sup> We have discussed the untenability of this view elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> The legend on coins of class II discussed above also confirms that *Amoghabhuti* was the personal name of the great *Kuninda* king and does not stand for Siva as held by Dr. Gupta.

NOTES

1. Parmeshwari Lal Gupta, *Numismatic History of Himachal Pradesh and the catalogue of coins in Himachal State Museum, Shimla and Bhuri Singh Museum, Chamba, Delhi, 1988.*
2. *Ibid.*, p.25.
3. *Ibid.*, p.103. Dr. Gupta has described the symbols on the reverse correctly but has placed them wrongly in the catalogue.
4. Of the coins of class II, Dr. Gupta has illustrated seven (nos. 457-59 and 462-65, the last one not marked in the catalogue) in pl. VIII.10-16. We have examined the coins of the Chakkar hoard in the Himachal State Museum, Shimla through the courtesy of Shri S. M. Sethi (Curator) and Mrs. Sushila Negi (Jr. Tech. Asst.) to whom both we express our gratitude.
5. Gupta, *op. cit.*, p.26.
6. *JNSI*, LIII (1991), pp.78-81.

**A New Double Karshapana Punch-marked Silver Coin of Ancient India**  
**Wilfried Pieper**

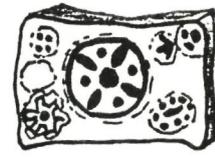
In 1991 Donald P McIntyre presented in the ONS Occasional Paper No. 26 a part of a hoard of early single punchmarked silver coins from ancient India roughly falling into two groups: one with a pentagon design, the other with a symbol composed of wavy lines and dots. Donald McIntyre's provisional attribution of both these groups, one to Kuru, the other to Panchala, both closely connected ancient Indian states, seems to be no longer plausible because in the meantime coins have turned up having both symbols on one and the same planchet and, even more important, a new third group in the series has come to light. One such coin showing both symbols was obtained from Bob Senior who told me this was the only coin from the hoard coins he had seen struck on a flat flan and having both symbols. Another was subsequently nicely illustrated in Steve Albums price list no.88. This same list contained another silver punch-marked double karshapana of a new type now in my collection. On a rectangular convex flan of 7.0 gm it shows a deeply impressed single large punch in the centre showing through on the plain reverse. On the outer parts of the obverse several smaller banker's marks can be seen. The central punch looks like a four-spoked wheel with a big dot in the centre and four smaller dots between the spokes.

To the 'pentagon type' and the 'wavy line type' we can now add the 'four-spoked wheel type' - all three forming part of a coherent series of single punch-marked double karshapana silver coins, witnesses of India's earliest monetary history.

Metal: silver  
 Weight: 7.0 grammes  
 Size: 2.3 x 2.2 cm  
 Technique: punchmarked  
 Flan: flat  
 Reverse: plain



Metal: silver  
 Weight: 7.0 grammes  
 Size: 2.5 x 1.6 cm  
 Technique: punchmarked  
 Flan: convex  
 Reverse: plain



### A Fractional Silver Tanka of the Bahmanid Sultan Mujahid Shah

S D Godbole has sent details of a fractional tanka struck in the name of Mujahid Shah who ruled from 776 to 779 AH (1375-8 AD). Silver coins of this ruler are rare. Hitherto only a few whole tankas and a 1/3 tanka have been published. Even the copper coins are scarce. The present coin weighs 1.60 gm and would seem thus to be a 1/6 tanka.

ساجد



Mujahid (Shah)

ابو المغازی



Abu'l Mughazi

Diameter 1.2 cm. Provenance: Nevasa, district Ahmednagar

### A New Benares Mohur



In his book *The Coins of the British Commonwealth of Nations, Part 4 India*, Fred Pridmore listed under Muhammadabad Banaras (Bengal Presidency) two mohurs only, of the first period 1776-1812. The earliest of these is dated 1209 AH, regnal year 37 of Shah Alam II (1794/5 AD), Pridmore 217. Here is a new unlisted coin in mint condition that predates the above mentioned specimens, as Fred suspected might occur. It carries the usual fish mintmark but unlike the published specimens carries a much shorter legend and is therefore a new type. It is dated year 24 of Shah Alam II which corresponds to 1781/2 AD, much closer to the possible inception of coinage in 1776 AD.

R C Senior

### Notes on the coins of the Kachwaha Rajputs

R Dauwe

#### 1. The C.61 half mohur of Jaipur

In the ANA Centennial Edition of the Krause & Mishler catalogue, a new gold coin of Jaipur was listed for the first time. It received the number C.61 and was described as a 1/2 mohur dated RY 25 of Muhammad Akbar II. From the illustration it is obvious that it is the same coin as the one sold at the auction no. 9 of Spink-Taisei in January 1991 (The Skanda Collection, lot no, 521). The coin is now in the author's collection and I think that some rectification is necessary. The obverse shows indeed the normal titulature of Muhammad Akbar II, but the reverse is dated RY 25 of Ram Singh II. It means that the coin is a mule, joining a regular obverse die with the name of the Mughal emperor Muhammad Akbar II (1806-37) and a regular reverse die dated RY 25 (=1860) of the Maharaja of Jaipur, Ram Singh II (1835-80).

The weight of the coin is 4.48g, which is far too light for a genuine issue. In the auction catalogue of Spink-Taisei it was stated that aberrant weights are quite normal for the fractional issues, but anyone familiar with the coinage of Jaipur knows that the weight of the coins of that state varies very little and always remains within normal limits. That it one of the reasons I consider the coin to be an unofficial issue, possibly struck in relatively recent times. If it is to be listed in the Krause & Mishler catalogue, it should be placed with the coins of Ram Singh II, or it would be even more correct to list it together with the nazarana rupee Y.A21, another mule, with an obverse of Man Singh II and a reverse of Madho Singh II.

A second 1/2 mohur of Jaipur was sold at the same auction (lot no. 522), dated RY 23 of Ram Singh II. As was correctly stated, it is a contemporary imitation, easily recognisable by its cruder style and the pale colour of the gold, though the weight is correct (5.41gm). An almost similar specimen was once listed by Stephen Album (list 37, no. 172), and if one compares both coins, it seems quite probable that both were struck from the same pair of dies.

So far as I know, no 1/2 mohur pieces have officially been struck dated by the regnal years of Ram Singh II or his successors.

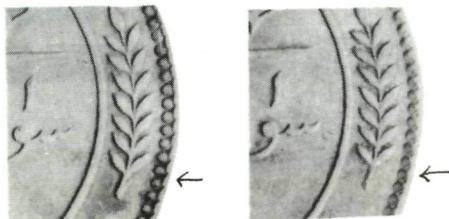
#### 2. A Jaipur overdate

Last year I purchased a 1 anna of Jaipur, dated 1944 (Y.18), a two year type issued in 1943 and 1944. There is a remarkable difference in style between both dates, the obverse of the latter being of a much cruder design. My piece, though dated 1944, was of the same style as the 1943 coins. And indeed, a closer look gave the explanation for that similarity: on the obverse the date 1943 had been altered to 1944. As far as I know, this is the first overdate recorded for Jaipur. Though this technique was often used in western mints, it was rather unusual for India in general and the Princely States in particular.

The same obverse die had already been used in 1943, since such a piece exists in the author's collection, Probably in 1944 obverse dies were not ready in time, which might explain the use of one or more altered 1943 dies.



#### 3. The 1891 rupee of Alwar



Spine

No spine

In 1991 I had to work on a group of Indian coins intended for one of the auctions of J. Elsen in Brussels. Among them was a small lot of 8 rupees of Alwar, all dated 1891. I have taken that opportunity to compare those coins, hoping to detect one or more die varieties. I was indeed pleasantly surprised by the fact that two different reverse dies have been used for that issue. Both are easily recognisable by a small detail, which is a small spine on the base of the two jhars, each spine pointing at the rim. Those spines were visible on three of the eight pieces. For all the 1891 rupees I have seen until now, one and the same obverse die have been used, recognisable by some re-engraved letters of the legend (the letters ESS of EMPRESS).