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Obituary

David Sellwood (23 July 1925 – 7 April 2012)

To be the bearer of sad news is always heart-rending; more so to report the passing of a close friend and mentor for over 25 years. It is, therefore, with great sadness that I should inform the numismatic community that David Grenville John Sellwood, the leading Parthian numismatist, passed away on 7 April 2012 at Kingston Hospital.



David Sellwood, visiting the International Museum, Tehran, October 1994

David was born in Brentford, West London, to Thomas Dorey Sellwood and Jenny Rebecca Lawes. After completing his primary and secondary schooling he followed in his father's footsteps and chose engineering as a career; Tom Sellwood was an aeronautical engineer, working on important engineering projects during and after WWII, particularly at the new Spitfire factory at Castle Bromwich built by Lord Nuffield and later managed by Vickers-Armstrong. David then began his National Service in 1946, serving in the Royal Engineers in India, Malaya, Singapore, and Japan, and rising to the rank of captain. Later he went to Birmingham University to take a degree in Mechanical Engineering and then worked in industry for a few years. He joined Kingston College of Technology (as it then was) as a

lecturer, to teach engineering evening classes and quickly became a permanent member of staff. He remained in academia for over 40 years, gaining an MSc in metallurgy in the 1970s and finally retiring as a Principal Lecturer in 1995. David was immensely proud to be an engineer and always championed the profession.

With his great intellect and numerous contacts in further education, David was able to help and advise many people, not just his engineering students. He is, nevertheless, recognised around the world most for his interest in coins which began in childhood when his grandfather gave him a box of assorted currency. David's passion for collecting and studying coins continued throughout his adult life and included ground-breaking numismatic research. One of David's friends from the Royal Numismatic Society, John Casey, has summed up his impact as follows: "David's contributions to the field of numismatics were outstanding. Best known for his pioneering work on the coinage of the Parthians, he put Iranian numismatic studies on a new footing with the publication of two editions of 'An Introduction to the Coinage of Parthia'". David also contributed to the study of the Sasanian successors to the Parthians with a work which made these coins accessible to the non-specialist. I have been drawing upon David's articles and books for many years and believe that the true significance of his contributions to Parthian numismatics has not yet been fully appreciated. As the product of an insightful and incisive intellect, David's papers have set the highest standards of critical scholarship. They represent an important landmark in the study of Arsacid coinage and have played a pivotal role in establishing numismatics as an essential technique of historical research. He was undoubtedly a remarkable teacher and a writer of considerable erudition.

David not only developed a technique of coin classification, but also was at heart a working scientist, a metallurgist and an engineer. He brought his professional expertise to bear on problems which had vexed historians for generations. To this end, the workshops of Kingston Polytechnic became a branch of the mint of ancient Athens where David applied practical methods to answer the question of 'not what was produced, but how much was produced'. Re-establishing the technology and metallurgy of antiquity, he made dies and struck coins to the extinction of the dies, so defining the quantitative limits of ancient coin production per die. He thus transformed a subject hitherto based on art-historical studies into one in which serious economic questions could be addressed.

David was appointed President of the Royal Numismatic Society in 1979. He served in this office, which had been held for more than a century by great scholars, until 1984 with distinction. As President he furthered the application of science to numismatic studies. His achievements were recognised by his appointment as an Honorary Fellow of the Society. David was generous with his knowledge. A short conversation with him was worth a month's formal library research.

Classical music, too, was a passion throughout David's life and an interest he shared with many people. He himself played the flute and piccolo, forming a trio with two friends, Andy Tittensor and Kenneth Jenkins, and often holding concerts at Christmas in each others' homes. He had an enormous collection of recorded classical music first of vinyl records and later of CDs. In later years, his favourite composer was Schubert and he chose for his funeral the Adagio from Schubert's Quintet.

David had two loving marriages. The first was to June Ethel Mary Woollard, whom he married in 1954, and with whom he had two daughters, Lynette and Philippa. June, an art teacher by profession, sadly died in 1981 at the early age of 53. David later married Gladys in 1991 and with her he shared many of his interests until his death.

David enjoyed going to concerts with Gladys and many other friends, making the most of the music London had to offer. Though a natural athlete, he was very modest about his prowess in a number of sports. Much to his embarrassment, given his gentle manner, he was a champion boxer in the army. He played basketball at Birmingham University after the War at a time when the team was Varsity champions. He was a powerful swimmer and met his first wife June through a swimming club. During summer holidays at Rustington, he was the only swimmer on the beach attempting a butterfly stroke in a strong Channel swell. He played squash well into his sixties while at Kingston University.

David also loved to travel; this may have stemmed from his days of National Service. He was not only a traveller but also a linguist who worked in both Germany and Sweden, spoke fluent French and German and could more than "get by" in Italian and Spanish.



David Sellwood, visiting Iran's National Trade Exhibition, Tehran, October 1994

A big thrill for David was finally to travel to Iran with me in October 1994. Together we visited several museums and David delivered two lectures on Parthian coinage and history at the Iranian Cultural Heritage Centre in Tehran. We then travelled to Kerman, visiting the provincial museum as well as the famous Arg-i Bam, a massive mud-brick construction from the Parthian and Sasanian periods. We continued to Shiraz visiting Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rostam and Pasargadae to the north, and several Sasanian sites to the south of that city.

Up until his final days, David was involved in the revision of his 'An Introduction to the Coinage of Parthia' in collaboration

with me. He even wrote the "Foreword to the Third Edition" on 11 May 2011, while waiting for some coins from his collection to be photographed at the offices of Spinks in London. Implementing the changes that he had approved, I shall complete the project in his memory.

David is survived by his second wife, Gladys, two daughters from his first marriage, Lynette and Philippa, and two grandchildren, Holly and Jacob.

A funeral service was held for him at 11:00 o'clock on 1 May in Kingston Crematorium. Although Parthian numismatics will be poorer without David Sellwood, his legacy will surely endure.

Requiescat In Pace.

G.R.F. Assar (Oxford, UK)

ONS NEWS

Shamma Prize

The Royal Numismatic Society has awarded its biennial Shamma prize to Dr Giulio Bernardi for his work *Arabic Gold Coins*. Corpus, vol. I, Trieste, 2010.

Colin Mackenzie: collecting Indian history

A study day focusing on Col. Colin Mackenzie (1754-1821), the first Surveyor General of India, has been arranged at the British Museum for Wednesday, 18 July 2012. The early colonial period saw the formation of some of the important collections of South Asian *materia antiqua*. Among these, Mackenzie's was one of the largest and most wide-ranging. Unusually, a significant proportion of his artefacts, manuscripts and documents are still available in British and Indian institutions for research. The aim is to provide an ongoing forum for those working on various aspects of Mackenzie's collections to discuss current research and encourage greater collaboration. Members interested in the event should contact Paramdip Khera (pkhera@britishmuseum.ac.uk) at the British Museum's Department of Coins and Medals.

ONS Study Day, Oxford

A Study Day will be held in Oxford on 9 June 2012 at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Members should contact Shailendra Bhandare or Peter Smith (██████████) for details.

Two Centuries of Islamic Numismatics in Russia

An international numismatic conference will be held in St. Petersburg at the State Hermitage Museum on 24 September 2012. This is a one day conference and the present programme includes:

Kravtsov, Konstantin (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia): History of the study of Tabaristan numismatics (VIII-IX centuries) in Russia.

Talvio, Tuukka (National Museum of Finland, Helsinki, Finland):

C. M. Fraehn and the origins of Islamic numismatics in Finland.

D'Ottone, Arianna (Sapienza University, Rome, Italy): On the formation of the Stanzani collection of Islamic coins in nineteenth-century Russia.

Naymark, Aleksandr (Hofstra University, New York, USA): Coin Collecting in Russian Colonial Turkestan.

Kiwan, Khaled (University of Aleppo, Syria): Les Monnaies découvertes à Tel Syanu près de Jablé.

Gariboldi, Andrea (University of Bologna, Italy): A Hoard of Bukharkhudat drachms from Sandžar-šach (Tajikistan).

Paghava, Irakli (Ilia Chavchavadze State University, Tbilisi, Georgia), Turkia, Severian (Tbilisi, Georgia): The Circulation of copper fulus within the Tiflis Emirate (finds from the Mtkvari riverbed).

al-Chomari, Alaa al-Din (Sorbonne University, Paris, France): La circulation monétaire d'al-Djazira au 10^{ème} siècle AD. D'après les donnés du trésor de Tiflis (Bortchalo).

Tyler-Smith, Susan (Royal Numismatic Society, London, UK): An enigmatic group of coins in the name and style of Khusrau II.

Mochiri, Malek Iradj (Paris, France): A Survey of 'Abd al-'Aziz b. 'Abdallah b. 'Amir's coinage.

Curtis, Vesta Sarkhosh (British Museum, London, UK): The living world: man and beast on Arab-Sasanian copper coins.

Gyselen, Rika (CNRS, Paris, France): The Arab-Byzantine al-wafā' lillāh coinage.

Schwarz, Florian (Director of Institute of Iranian Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna): Once again on the so-called Ghitrifi dirhams.

Phillips, Marcus (Royal Numismatic Society, London, UK): The contribution of the meetings of the Numismatic Round Table (1992-2011) to the study of early Islamic coinage.

Bhatia, Pratipal (National University of Singapore): Continuity and change in the coinage of South Asia during the early centuries of the Islamic period.

Schindel, Nikolaus (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna): Some thoughts about Umayyad copper coinage.

Walmsley, Alan (University of Copenhagen, Denmark): Dirhams as circulating currency in southern Bilād al-Shām in the first Islamic centuries.

Illisch, Lutz (University of Tübingen, Germany): Ways to reach the Baltic Sea in the initial phase of Russian dirham imports.

Vardanyan, Aram (Institute of Oriental Studies, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, Yerevan): Harun ar-Rashid's accession to the throne and the Abbasid administration in Armenia as reflected in coins.

Rediscovering the Silk Route

From the call for papers: "This three-day conference brings together archaeologists, art historians, philologists and researchers who share a common interest in the Silk Route's past from prehistoric to historic periods. Its aim is to facilitate communication between different disciplines, to present current work in the field, and to stimulate future research." This conference will be held at Hazara University, Pakistan, from the 5th to the 7th September 2012. Anyone interested in the event should contact Dr. Abdul Samad [REDACTED]

New Members

UK Region

| | |
|------|------------|
| 2002 | [REDACTED] |
|------|------------|

Lists Received

1. Tim Wilkes ([REDACTED] www.wilkescoins.com; tim@wilkescoins.com) list 15 of Islamic coins, spring 2012

2. Early World Coins ([REDACTED] orders@earlyworldcoins.com) list 52 of mainly oriental coins.

3. Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction No.7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] info@classicalnumismaticgallery.com; www.classicalnumismaticgallery.com

4. Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 13, May 18-19, 2012 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] www.stevealbum.com

New and Recent Publications

MARWAR. JODHPUR STATE: History and Coinage of the former Indian Princely State of Jodhpur by Jan Lingen, 2012; Hard bound; 208 pp.; Size 280x220 mm; Introduction, 20 chapters, 2 appendices, bibliography, 502 coloured and black and white illustrations; ISBN 978-81-86786-30-7: Rs. 3000+ Rs. 1000 (packaging +airmail postage for 1 copy)

From the publisher's description of the book: "The present work, providing a detailed and updated illustrated account of the coinage of Jodhpur state, is a very welcome addition to Indian numismatics. An introduction to the history and coinage of Marwar is followed by the catalogue of coins in 20 chapters.

Attractively printed in colour, there are 454 illustrations and line drawings of coins and 48 coloured images of kings, princes, palaces, etc. At the end, a very instructive chapter on the mints in Jodhpur State from the Official Gazette of Jodhpur written in Vikram Samvat 1940 (1883-84) is reproduced with an English translation. The book, resulting from the author's painstaking research of more than three decades and his vast expertise on the subject, will remain the most comprehensive work on the coinage of Jodhpur State for a long time to come."

O. N. Singh, D.P. Sharma (ed.), *A Study of Coins*. New Delhi, Kaveri Books 2011. 126 p., 50 col. plates, ISBN: 9788174791115. From the publishers description: "A Study of Coins" covers Numismatic studies of South Asia from earliest time to the modern period. The ancient South Asian coinages have a very long and varied historical tradition providing a rich source of information. The section on punch-marked to Gupta period coins will serve the needs of students and academics, who want to study the coins from ancient to modern times. This is the first kind of study, which will highlight from the first punch-marked coins issued between the 7-6 century BC to the present era." Readers will be able to form their own opinion!

Michael Fedorov, "Chionite rulers of Chach in the middle of the fourth to the beginning of the seventh century (according to the data of numismatics)" in *Iran XLVIII*, 2010, pp 59-67, published by the British Institute of Persian Studies.

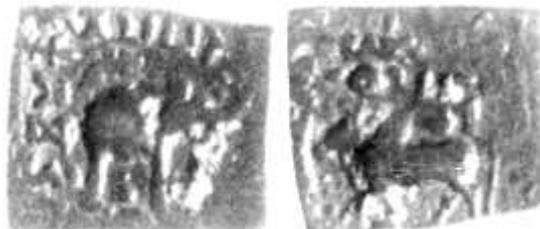
Articles

SOME MORE VEMAKA COPPER COINS

By Devendra Handa

Under 'Uncertain Coins' from the Indian Museum collection, Allan listed a square copper coin of bull-elephant type which had been described by Rodgers in his MS notes as an unpublished coin of Hermaeus. Allan described it as follows¹:

(1) Æ, Square, 0.55 (1.4 cm), 31.5 grains (2.04 g or approximately 17.5 ratti)



Obv. Elephant r., *nandipada* behind, Brahma legend

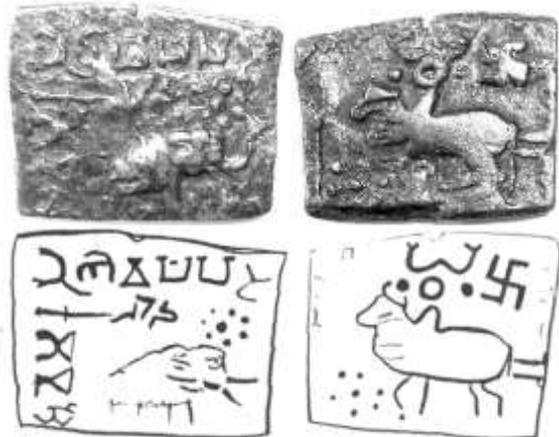
ΔΧ† - - UUU
Vamaka[- -] papasa

Rev. Bull l., *nandipada* (☸) and *svastika* (卐) above

Allan observed that "The Brahma legend is very uncertain. It seems possible to read *Raja* (this may, however, be a *nandipada*) *V - mak[-] [-]napapasa . . .*" He rightly restored the first word as *Vemaka* and linked this coin to Rudravarma and the Audumbaras noting that "The coin came from the Panjab, probably from the Hoshiarpur district, and belongs to the first century B.C."² Chintamani Kar³ corrected Allan's reading to *Vemaka janapadasa*, which was accepted by Dasgupta⁴ and Bela Lahiri⁵ also but P.L. Gupta⁶ preferred to read *Vemaka(sa) janapadasa* which he thought was incorrectly engraved as *papadasa* on this coin. Nisar Ahmad⁷ preferred to read *Vemakisa jahapada(sa)* whereas Mitchiner⁸ restored the legend as *Rajno Vemakisa . . .* and noted traces of a Kharoshthi legend on the bull side. Allan drew the eye-copy of the last part of the legend as UUU as he could not decipher the legend satisfactorily on the coin. The first of these letters seems to have lost the middle vertical stroke and

the next the horizontal stroke in wear and tear. Bringing to light another coin of this type from a private collection I read the legend as *Vemakisa Sivaghoshasa* and described the coin as follows:⁹

(2) Æ, Rectangular, 1.5 X 1.2-1.0 cm, 2.07 g

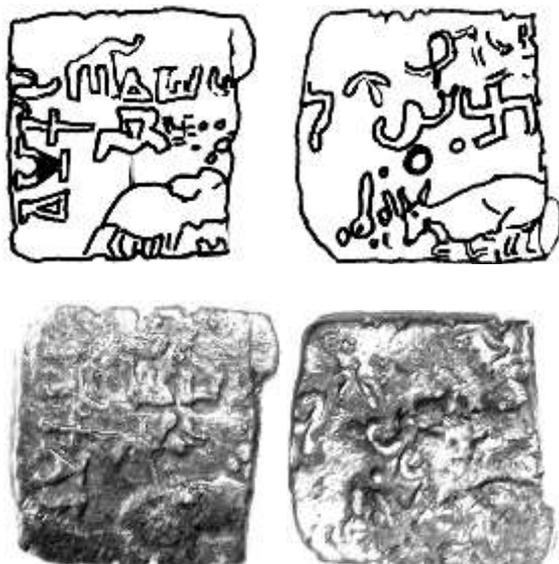


Obv. Elephant to right with trunk upraised, (holding) a flower of dots above the head, only the three prongs of the trident-axe visible below the tusk; traces of a symbol (probably inverted *nandipada* with triangular base or perhaps Kharoshthi *Siva*-, Brahmi legend in the left margin *Vemakisa*, *Sivagh(o)shasa* on the top.

Rev. Humped bull to left, *nandipada* above the hump and a *svastika* above the back; flower of dots below the face of the bull.

The extreme rarity of Vemaka/Vemaki silver and copper specie may be judged from the fact that only one silver coin of Rudravarman, brought to light by Cunningham,¹⁰ and the single copper coin listed by Allan in his catalogue were known for more than a hundred years till I published the second Vemaka silver coin of Rudravarman and another of Bhavavarman and one copper coin referred to above a few years back.¹¹ The coins published by me have added substantially to our knowledge about the Vemakas. Recently twenty more copper coins of Sivaghosha came to my notice but most of them are in a very indifferent state of preservation. I have picked out the best three specimens which are described and discussed here.¹² The size of these coins varies from 1.3 to 1.5 cm and the weight between 1.94 and 2.12 g. They thus all belong to the 20-ratti weight standard equivalent to the *Pada-karshapanas*.

(3) Æ, Square, 1.3 x 1.4 cm, 1.94 g



This coin is in an indifferent state of preservation. The die-impression on the obverse leaves the upper part blank and the elephant appears partially in the lower right corner. The dotted flower above the head of the elephant, too, is only partially accommodated. The inverted *nandipada* above the back of the animal, however, has come out clearly. Traces of the upper part of a trident may be seen between the forelegs and trunk of the elephant. The Brahmi legend placed perpendicularly along the left margin from bottom upwards reading *Raja (Rajno) Vemakisa* and continuing on the top as *Sivagh(o)sha[sa*]*, however, may be made out without any doubt. The reverse has suffered some damage and also looks more worn out. As on the obverse, the die impression leaves the upper part of the flan blank and the bull to left has its legs off the flan. The bold *nandipada* above the back of the bull and the *svastika* to its right have survived only partially. Traces of some Kharoshthi letters may be seen along the right and top margins, the last two letters of the legend ending in '*shasa*' being very clear at the top left corner. Both the obverse and reverse impressions indicate that the coin has not been struck carefully.

(4) Æ, Square, 1.4 x 1.5 cm, 1.97 g



The next coin resembles the British Museum specimen with the obverse impression coming out very clearly. The word *Vemaki* with the genitive singular suffix *sa* constricted on the top along the left margin is preceded by *Raja* and all the letters of this line are quite bold and well-impressed. The deep incuse mark on this side indicates the heavy impact of the hammer while the opposite right hand side seems to have lost the force of the blow almost completely. The dental sibilant of the top line slightly overlaps the *sa* of the preceding *Vemakisa*. The letter *gha* of (the issuer's name) *Sivagh(o)shasa* in the top line is, however, quite clear. The whole legend *Raja Vemakisa/Sivaghoshasa* may thus be made out quite satisfactorily. The elephant to right with trunk raised above its head holding the dotted flower is the best-preserved figure of the animal met with on any Vemaka copper coin. The trident below the head of the elephant near the lower right corner may be seen with its vertical shaft. The *nandipada* above the back of the elephant, however, has come out only partially. The reverse showing the bull to left with *nandipada* and *svastika* above its back and dotted flower below its head is preserved quite clearly though the die-impression is not as deep as on the obverse. There are traces of Kharoshthi letters along the right and top margin and the last three letters in the top left corner reading *ghoshasa* confirm the name of the issuer.

(5) Æ, Rectangular, 1.3 X 1.4 cm, 2.12 g



Our last piece shows on the obverse the elephant in profile as usual to right with trunk raised up. Its back, however, looks like the domed back of a tortoise. The trident below the upraised trunk is better preserved than on other examples though the coin has suffered badly from corrosion and lost details of the legend. Between the fore and hind legs there seems to have been a small symbol looking like a *nandipada*. The legend, however, varies slightly and is interesting. As on other coins it starts from the bottom left corner and the first three visible letters read *Raya Ve...* Of the letters in the top row traces of *Sivaghosha* remain though not very distinctly. That the coin belongs to Sivaghosha is evident from the Kharoshthi legend reading *Sivagh(o)shasa* on the top of the reverse, which carries as usual the humped bull to left with *nandipada* and *svastika* above its back. Traces of Kharoshthi letters along the right margin may be presumed to have read (*rana*) *Vemakisa* of which the last two letters (*kisa*) are still visible. With *Rana* instead of *R(a)j(no) Ve(makisa Sivaghosha)* on the obverse and well-preserved *Sivaghosha* in Kharoshthi on the reverse this coin seems to have been issued in the beginning of Sivaghosha's reign. Like Rudravarman and Bhavavarman, he did not issue silver coins (or none has come to light as yet) nor did he use the title *Vijayaka* 'victor' like them and may have been the last ruler of the tribe to issue coins during the latter half of the first century BC or the beginning of the first century AD. Like his predecessor, he used the title of *Raya* (*rana*) or *Raja* 'king' only and the coins under discussion leave little doubt that this title occurs in the beginning of the legend just like the silver coins of Rudravarman and Bhavavarman. Dasgupta's observation that the British Museum copper *Vemaka* coin does not bear any Kharoshthi legend is contradicted by the evidence of Sivaghosha's copper coins published here.

Palaeographic differences are also noticeable in these coins. The syllable *Ve* has been engraved as X (Coins 1 & 4), A (Coin 5) and B (Coins 2 and 3) while *Ma* shows variations like Y (Pl.I.1), Z (Pl.I.2), W (Pl. I.3) and V (Pl.I.4). These variations indicate different die-engravers at different times. In some cases the letter *Ka* is elongated (Pl. I.2-3).

All these coins were struck from different dies. The cracks appearing on the edges of all the coins indicate that the planchets were not heated sufficiently before being struck. The first two coins (nos. 2-3) have a bluish-black patina while the remaining two (nos. 4-5) show yellowish red encrustation. The metal composition may have differed and the exactness can only be determined by analysing it. The round shape adopted for the silver coins and square shape for the copper specie recalls similar practice adopted by the Audumbaras in whose neighbourhood they may have lived in the hills of the Kangra-Jwalamukhi region of Himachal Pradesh.

Notes and References

1. John Allan, *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*, London: British Museum, 1936, p. 280, no. 9.
2. *Ibid*, p. cliv.
3. *IHQ*, XX, p. 62, fn. 14.
4. K.K. Dasgupta, *A Tribal History of Ancient India A Numismatic Approach*, Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1974, p. 184. Taking a clue from Allan's description perhaps, he observed that "The coin does not bear any Kharoshthi legend and hence the side with the Brahmi legend has been taken as obverse."
5. Bela Lahiri, 'Typology of the Tribal Coins', in Lallanji Gopal *et al* (eds.), *Seminar Papers on the Tribal Coins of Ancient India (C. 200 B.C. to 400 A.D.)*, Varanasi: Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, 1977, p. 35.
6. P.L. Gupta, *Numismatic History of Himachal Pradesh*, New Delhi: B.R. Publications, 1988, p. 18.
7. *JNSI*, XXXIV (ii), p. 187.
8. Michael M. Michiner, *Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian Coins*, Vol. 7, London: Hawkins, 1977, p. 631, Type 927.
9. Devendra Handa, *Tribal Coins of Ancient India*, New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2007, p. 134, Pl. XXXIV.5 & 5a).
10. Alexander Cunningham, *Coins of Ancient India*, London, 1891 (reprinted Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1963), p. 68, Pl. IV, Fig. 6.
11. Handa, *op. cit*, pp. 129-34, Pl. XXXIV.2-3 & 5-5a.

These coins belong to the collection of Shri R.K. Aggarwal of Ambala City, Haryana (India). I am thankful to him for bringing these coins to my notice and furnishing their scans.

A TALE OF 'FOUR' HOARDS (OR UNPICKING AKKI ALUR)

By Rebecca R. Day

The Akki Alur hoard is one of the most significant discoveries of Byzantine *solidi* on Indian soil. Unearthed by accident in March 1977 in a field near the village of Akki Alur in Karnataka, the hoard contained forty-six gold coins in an earthenware pot. Of these, forty-three have been identified as Byzantine *solidi*. Thereafter, however, the mystery of the hoard begins. The analysis here is a reflection of both the importance and the difficulty of synthesising earlier data (published and unpublished) where artefacts are no longer accessible. It also illustrates one of the perennial problems in the broad field of 'Indo-Roman' studies: a plethora of published material, which confuses as much as it elucidates. Often this literature revisits the same artefacts and texts, since the corpus of finds is now growing at a moderate pace, rather than refining and enhancing interpretation of long-distance trade and contact. It also frequently replicates old errors, or deepens existing confusion. This is a symptom of the different interests of scholars (in particular, 'pure' numismatists, and those with a broader interest in economic history), but it is also a product of the very uneven quality of scholarship which the material has received.

Discovery and notification of the hoard

Upon its discovery by two farmers ploughing a field in Hangal Taluk, Dharwar District, the hoard came to the attention of the then Director of Treasuries (Karnataka). As a consequence, it escaped possible black-market sale or being melted for bullion, and was secured by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in Mysore. The first official description of this hoard was issued in 1980 by the Director of Archaeology, M. S. Nagaraja Rao. Appearing in volume thirty six of the *Journal of Indian Museums*, this telegraphic, two-page, account describes the discovery of the coins and summarises the hoard content thus:¹

| Emperor | Regnal Dates | Number of Coins |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Augustus | 29 BC – AD 14 | 2 (?) |
| Antoninus Pius | AD 138-161 | 1 |
| Theodosius II | AD 408-450 | 10 |
| Marcian | AD 491-518 | 15 |
| Justinus I [sic] | AD 518-527 | 1 |
| Unidentified | | 1 |
| | Total | 27 |

Fig. 1: Summary of hoard provided by Nagaraja Rao (1980).²

An indication of future problems with the publication and analysis of this hoard may be found in the erroneous total (for which no explanation is given), and the attribution of the regnal dates of Anastasius I to Marcian.²

Nagaraja Rao then goes on to give a brief account of other related coin finds in south India. He mentions three silver hoards from Karnataka found near Bangalore (1891), in the village of Katryal (Bijapur District, 1922) and during the development of a new runway at HAL Airport (Bangalore, 1965). He also refers to four silver Roman coins 'recovered at Chandravalli, near Chitradurga, since 1901'.³ Finally, it is worth quoting the close of this account of the hoard in full:

"The present hoard from Akki Alur is of great importance, as the majority of the coins belonging [sic] to the Byzantine rulers. The coins have the bust of the king on the obverse, with his name, while the reverse has among other things, the name of the mint. The coins have all been struck at Constantinople, the modern Istanbul.

So far we know only a few coins of the later Roman rulers in South India, all reported from Tirumangalam Taluk, in Madura District, and Pudankaru in Travancore. Therefore, the present find is important, as it opens up a new area of trade contact with

the Roman and Byzantine world, during the 5th and 6th century A.D.⁴”

These paragraphs highlight several important points about this initial analysis of the hoard, which should be considered in the light of its subsequent publication. First, the importance of the hoard for an understanding of Late Roman contact with India had been appreciated (even overstated in the final lines of the article). Nonetheless, it should be remembered that the Karnataka Directorate of Archaeology and Museums had already been in possession of this hoard for three years before this notification was issued. Second, it is clearly implied that the legends on the coins (especially the name of the emperor on the obverse) had been read, which makes the misidentification of several coins (and omission of Anastasius I, Zeno and Leo I) difficult to explain. Finally, it is clear from the assertion that all of these coins were minted in Constantinople, that the hoard had not, at this point, received the attention of anyone with a good understanding of Byzantine numismatics, since almost all Byzantine *solidi* bore the mint mark CONOB, regardless of their minting location, which must be established from other marks or stylistic features.

The first publication (Gupta, 1980)

Clearly, it cannot be expected that the Karnataka Directorate of Archaeology and Museums should employ a specialist in Byzantine numismatics, nor is it necessarily unreasonable that the initial notification of the hoard’s discovery (above) should contain errors resulting from only a cursory survey of the coins. By 1984, however, no more detailed examination of the coins had been forthcoming from the Directorate. In view of the importance of the hoard, this led P. L. Gupta, one of India’s most established and respected numismatists to take action. Prompted by the ‘indifference on the part of the Archaeological Directorate of Karnataka State’, Gupta felt compelled to bring the hoard to further light, based on notes from a private viewing of the coins in 1980.⁵ Gupta provides descriptions of the coins, including inscriptions, but does not, in contrast to usual numismatic practice, include weights. This suggests that his viewing in 1980 may have been informal or cursory, with no opportunity to weigh the coins. He does not mention having had the chance to view the coins between 1980 and his publication of them in 1984.

In a pattern, which would characterise later analyses of this hoard, Gupta pays very little attention to the three early coins in the hoard, but contributes to the confusion surrounding them by attributing two to Septimius Severus and one to Caracalla, without any description to justify these choices.⁶ Summarised in table form, Gupta’s composition of the hoard is:

| Emperor | Regnal Dates | Number of Coins |
|-------------------|--------------|---|
| Septimius Severus | Not given | 2 |
| Caracalla | Not given | 1 |
| Theodosius II | AD 402-450 | 10 |
| Marcian | AD 450-457 | 4 |
| Leo I | AD 457-474 | 8 |
| Zeno | AD 474-491 | 4 |
| Anastasius I | AD 491-518 | 15 in the individual coin descriptions 14 in the discursive section of the article |
| Justinus I [sic] | AD 518-527 | 1 |
| Unidentified | | 1 |
| | Total | 46 |

Fig. 2: Summary of the composition of the Akki Alur hoard as assessed by Gupta 1984, based on a private viewing in 1980.

Gupta, too, attributes all Byzantine coins to the mint of Constantinople (presumably based on the CONOB mint mark, though he is not explicit about this).⁷ The regnal dates of the emperors are now correct, the hoard analysis includes all forty-six coins (albeit only forty-three examined in detail), and, as will be shown later, the emperors represented in the hoard now agree with the existing data, with the inclusion of Leo I, Zeno and Anastasius I. Gupta also identifies different types for several of the emperors,

and provides a standardised version of the legend for these types, although his presentation is not as clear as it could be.

Gupta also identifies several coins as possible imitations and refers to the question of their condition and preservation. He identifies at least four coins as imitations owing to blundered legends, including the unidentified example (Gupta 9, 10, 22, 43). Of these, Gupta 9, 10 and 22 are remarked upon as apparent mules. In the case of Gupta 22, in particular, he attributes the obverse to Leo I, and the reverse bears the image of Constantinopolis seated, holding a sceptre with the legend CONCORDI-A AVGGG I, a reverse type not recorded among Leo I’s official issues. Gupta also notes the *officinae* in which the coins were produced:⁸

| Emperor | Officina | Number of Coins |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Theodosius II | A | 1 |
| | Not given | 9 |
| Marcian | A | 2 |
| | H | 2 |
| Leo I | A | 1 |
| | B | 2 |
| | H | 1 |
| | I | 3 |
| | Unclear | 1 |
| Zeno | A | 2 |
| | H | 1 |
| | S | 1 |
| Anastasius I | A | 1 |
| | B | 4 |
| | Γ | 2 |
| | Δ | 1 |
| | Z | 1 |
| | S | 1 |
| | I | 5 |
| Justin I | B | 1 |
| Unidentified | Δ | 1 |
| | Total | 43 |

Fig. 3: Table of the officinae listed by emperor for the Byzantine coins, as published by Gupta 1984.

Finally, referring to the condition of the coins, Gupta makes the following observation:

“The period covered by the kings represented by these coins is about one and a quarter centuries; yet all the coins look alike and fresh and show no traces of any kind of wear by circulation and use. This raises suspicion that they are not the original coins, but only copies meant for the purpose of jewellery...The jewellery nature of these pieces is also apparent from the fact that 18 out of 43 pieces have two holes at the top.”

In his notification, Nagaraja Rao had not referred to the distinctive double-piercings, so typical of Indian coin finds. Though Gupta records 18 pierced coins he does not specify which examples are pierced and which not.

Overall, Gupta’s publication, constrained as it was by his frustration at the Karnataka Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, and produced by his own admission on the basis of notes taken four years earlier, represented a major step forward in properly publishing this crucial Late Roman hoard. As will be seen below, however, this article, despite Gupta’s only partial access to the material, also seems to have become something of a template for future publication.

The second publication (Nagaraja Rao, 1987)

The second effort to publish the Akki Alur hoard fully did, in fact, come from the Karnataka State Directorate, ten years after its receipt of the hoard. Nagaraja Rao, still superintending the Directorate’s collections after his first documentation of the hoard in 1980, undertook a full and systematic publication. It is not explicitly stated that Nagaraja Rao re-examined the coins for this purpose, but since he was at the time in charge of the collection in which they were stored, this must be assumed to have been the case. Nagaraja Rao also produced for the first time with his publication plates of the hoard. Unfortunately, the quality of these plates was sufficiently poor as to render them useless from the

perspective of close examination of the coins. They can, however, contribute something to an understanding of the hoard, as will be shown later.

In his second publication of the hoard (which makes no mention of his 1980 article), Nagaraja Rao again offers a partial and brief summary of Roman coin finds in south India, stressing the uncommonly late date of the Akki Alur exemplars. Focussing more closely on the late coins, he refers to R. A. G Carson's 1980 article on the Byzantine *solidi* now in the British Museum, but found at the Hidda Tope in Afghanistan in the nineteenth century.⁹ He also makes reference to a coin of Zeno recorded in Thurston's catalogue of the coins in the Madras Government Museum in 1894, the possible deposition of *solidi* from the Katryal hoard in the Museum of the Royal Asiatic Society, Mumbai (for which no reference is provided), and the recent discovery in excavations of two coins of Constantine I and Anastasius I from the site of Kudavelli in Andhra Pradesh.¹⁰

Finally beginning his analysis of the hoard, Nagaraja Rao again summarises the circumstances of its discovery, and for the first time remarks on the significant gap between the three early coins (which he attributes, after Gupta, to Septimius Severus and Caracalla), and the later examples. This he explains:

“.. from the fact that both the coins of Septimius Severus have two holes at the top and the coin of Caracalla has a loop attached at the top. As such, all the three coins were used as pendants [sic] and formed part of jewellery. In this form they survived in the family of the owner and (were) found buried with the later Byzantine coins.”

The use of coins in jewellery and for decorative purposes probably had an impact on the nature of their survival in India. Nevertheless, since Nagaraja Rao concurs with Gupta in stating that 18 of the coins are pierced for suspension, it is not clear why their use in jewellery *per se* should have affected the earlier coins differently than the later ones (which, Nagaraja Rao's assessment implies, must have been pierced for use in jewellery, then immediately buried before they became worn).

Nagaraja Rao then lists the 43 Byzantine coins in the hoard. The three earlier coins are included in the plates, but no description is provided. Here, his hoard composition matches Gupta's precisely.

| Emperor | Regnal Dates | Number of Coins (Gupta) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao) |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Septimius Severus | Not given | 2 | 2 |
| Caracalla | Not given | 1 | 1 |
| Theodosius II | AD 402-450 | 10 | 10 |
| Marcian | AD 450-457 | 4 | 4 |
| Leo I | AD 457-474 | 8 | 8 |
| Zeno | AD 474-491 | 4 | 4 |
| Anastasius I | AD 491-518 | 15 (though article text lists as 14) | 15 |
| Justinus I [sic] | AD 518-527 | 1 | 1 |
| Unidentified | | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | 46 | 46 |

Fig. 4: Hoard composition as given by Gupta, 1980 and Nagaraja Rao, 1987.

Nagaraja Rao's analysis of the *officinae* is also extremely close to Gupta's, with only four points of difference (see Fig. 5). This should be the outcome of two professional numismatists independently examining the same hoard, with minor differences reflecting the difficulty in some cases of identifying *officina* marks, especially for numismatists not fully familiar with Byzantine coinage. Nonetheless, the incorrect regnal dates for Theodosius II, replicated across both articles may suggest another reason for overlap.

| Emperor | Officina (Gupta) | Officina (Nagaraja Rao) | Number of Coins (Gupta) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao) |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Theodosius II | A | A | 1 | |
| | Not given | Not given | 9 | 8 |
| | | O | | 2 |
| Marcian | A | | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | 2 | 2 |
| Leo I | A | | 1 | 1 |
| | B | | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | 1 | 1 |
| | I | | 3 | 3 |
| | Unclear | | 1 | 1 |
| Zeno | A | | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | 1 | 1 |
| | S | | 1 | 1 |
| Anastasius I | A | | 1 | 1 |
| | B | | 4 | 4 |
| | Γ | | 2 | 2 |
| | Δ | | 1 | 2 |
| | Z | | 1 | 1 |
| | S | | 1 | 1 |
| | I | | 5 | 3 |
| | | H | | 1 |
| Justin I | B | | 1 | 1 |
| Unidentified | Δ | | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | | 43 | 43 |

Fig. 5: Coins with officinae listed according to Gupta, 1980 and Nagaraja Rao, 1987.

The striking similarity of Gupta and Nagaraja Rao's articles is further borne out by Nagaraja Rao's analysis of the preservation of the hoard:

“Though the period covered by the kings represented by the coins is about one and a quarter centuries, yet all the coins look fresh and show no traces of any kind of wear by circulation and use. This raises suspicion that they are not originals but replicas meant for the purpose of jewellery...The jewellery nature of these pieces is also apparent from the fact that 18 out of 43 coins have two holes at the top.”

The remainder of Nagaraja Rao's article consists of an explanation of the Latin abbreviations on the coins for the benefit of readers likely to be unfamiliar with these forms, and a short account of other evidence for fifth- and sixth-century contact between India and Byzantium. This includes a brief description of rock-cut inscriptions mentioning Yavanas and a Sanskrit drama of the Gupta period (fifth-sixth centuries AD) containing the name 'Irama', suggested by Moti Chandra to be a Sanskritisation of Hermes.¹¹ The account in the sixth-century *Christian Topography* of journeying to Male, apparently in Kerala, is also referenced, though no analysis or criticism of these sources is provided.¹²

Though Nagaraja Rao's debt to Gupta is clear in both his identification of the coins, and much of his text, he differs slightly from Gupta in the numbering of the coins (adding to the confusion of trying to synthesise analyses of this hoard). The two numismatists also disagreed in their precise reading of the unidentified coin (Gupta: OR HYER – SIVS PE AVG, Nagaraja Rao: ORHYER – SIVS PE VG). More worryingly for any consistent evaluation of the Akki Alur hoard from the published data, Nagaraja Rao's numbering of the coins in his text does not match his numbering of the coins in the accompanying plates.

| G | NR - Text | NR - Plates | G | NR - Text | NR - Plates |
|---|-----------|-------------|----|-----------|-------------|
| 1 | 1 | 1 | 23 | 23 | |
| 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | 24 | |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 25 | 25 | |
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 26 | 26 | |
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 27 | 27 | |

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 6 | 6 | 6 | 28 | 28 | 23 |
| 7 | 7 | 7 | 29 | 29 | 24 |
| 8 | 8 | 8 | 30 | 30 | 25 |
| 9 | 9 | 9 | 31 | 31 | 26 |
| 10 | 10 | 10* | 32 | 32 | |
| 11 | 11 | 11 | 33 | 33 | |
| 12 | 12 | 14** | 34 | 34 | |
| 13 | 13 | 12 | 35 | 37 | 32 |
| 14 | 14 | 13 | 36 | 38 | 33 |
| 15 | 15 | 15 | 37 | 35 | |
| 16 | 16 | 16 | 38 | 36 | 23 |
| 17 | 17 | 17 | 39 | 39 | 24 |
| 18 | 18 | 18 | 40 | 40 | 26 |
| 19 | 19 | 19 | 41 | 41 | 25 |
| 20 | 20 | 20*** | 42 | 42 | 42 |
| 21 | 21 | 21 | 43 | 43 | 43 |
| 22 | 22 | 22 | | | |

Fig. 6: Table showing the relationship between Gupta's numbers, and Nagaraja Rao's text and plates, based on linking issuing emperor, type and officina. Numbers in bold highlight points of difference, while bold and italic indicates that these coins could be interchangeable. Numbers 23-27 and 32-34 cannot be correlated since the officinae provided in the text are completely different from those in the plates.

* Although the numbers here are consistent, the coin is attributed in Nagaraja Rao's text to Theodosius II (as in Gupta), but in the plates is attributed to Marcian.

**As a result of the mix up with number 10, it is impossible to attribute plate number 14 to catalogue number 12 with any certainty, since the text does not contain a coin of Marcian with officina I.

***Though these appear to be the same coin, the officina is listed as I in the text and (curiously) 'r' in the plates.

As this table demonstrates, the synthesis of these two accounts of the hoard has already begun to reveal insoluble complications in the recording and presentation of data. As a result of reviewing the plates, it becomes necessary to add the following to figs. 2 and 4:

| Emperor | Regnal Dates | Number of Coins (Gupta) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - text) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - plates) |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Septimius Severus | Not given | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Caracalla | Not given | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Theodosius II | AD 402-450 | 10 | 10 | 9 |
| Marcian | AD 450-457 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Leo I | AD 457-474 | 8 | 8 | 8 |
| Zeno | AD 474-491 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Anastasius I | AD 491-518 | 15 (though article text lists as 14) | 15 | 15 |
| Justinus I [sic] | AD 518-527 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Unidentified | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | 46 | 46 | 46 |

Fig. 7: Hoard composition as given by Gupta, 1980 and Nagaraja Rao, 1987, including inconsistencies between the text and plates in the latter. Bold highlights points of difference.

| Emperor | Officina (Gupta) | Officina (Nagaraja Rao - Text) | Officina (Nagaraja Rao - Plates) | Number of Coins (Gupta) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - plates) |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Theodosius II | A | | | 1 | | |
| | Not given | | | 9 | 8 | 7 |
| | | O | | | 2 | 1 |
| | | | S | | | 1 |
| Marcian | A | | | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | | | I | | | 1 |
| Leo I | A | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | B | | | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | I | | | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| | Un-clear | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | | | r | | | 1 |
| Zeno | A | | | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | S | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Anastasius I | A | | | 1 | 1 | |
| | B | | | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | Γ | | | 2 | 2 | |
| | Δ | | | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| | Z | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | S | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | I | | | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| | | H | | | 1 | 2 |
| | | | r | | | 3 |
| Justin I | B | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Unidentified | Δ | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | | | 43 | 43 | 43 |

Fig. 8: Coins with officinae listed according to Gupta, 1980 and Nagaraja Rao, 1987, including the inconsistencies in the text and plates of the latter. Bold highlights points of difference.

Interpretatively, it is impossible accurately to correlate these two hoard analyses to form a coherent summary of the Akki Alur hoard, and the disagreements between Nagaraja Rao's text and plates suggest that the foundation of this difficulty may have been a misplaced desire to combine an independent re-examination of the hoard, and Gupta's 1980 publication. Finally, it is worth noting that Nagaraja Rao, despite presumably having the coins in his possession when writing this article, and being familiar with numismatic procedure, also fails to provide weights for the coins.

The third publication (Berghaus, 1991)

The Akki Alur hoard was finally re-examined some time before 1991 by Peter Berghaus, who published a summary of it, with two images, in 1991. By far the most cursory of the three accounts of the hoard, Berghaus's treatment of it nevertheless raises some troubling questions. Berghaus thanks the Director of the Mysore Museum for permission to see the hoard, but provides no weights. Again, the question arises of why a meticulous and highly experienced numismatist would omit such a vital category of information without explanation. Second, deepening the confusion surrounding the three early coins still further, Berghaus attributes all three to Septimius Severus, again without explanation, description or images.

In other respects, Berghaus's description of the hoard concurs with Gupta and Nagaraja Rao's general outline: that it contains 43 Byzantine *solidi*, ranging in date from the reign of Theodosius II to Justin I, of which 18 have double piercings. Berghaus asserts that at least three coins are probable Indian imitations (compared

to Gupta's minimum calculation of four). The image provided is of a double-pierced *solidus* of Anastasius I (not referenced to either Gupta or Nagaraja Rao's numbers).¹³

The plot thickens: a re-evaluation

Efforts by the author to gain access to the Akki Alur hoard in recent years have resulted in a personal communication to the effect that the coins are unavailable owing to a technical problem with the lock of the museum safe. No information was provided concerning the length of time for which the safe has already been inaccessible and it was suggested that it was unlikely to be opened for at least another one or two years (information provided March 2010). It can only be hoped that this important hoard may one day be available for full examination but the possibility must also be considered on the basis of this record of publication that the hoard has now been lost. The fact that three independent analysts, from both European and Indian numismatic traditions, have failed to give weights, and the fact that no absolute proof currently exists of anybody having seen the hoard since 1980 lend support to this hypothesis.

New information on the hoard has, however, come to light. In April 2011 the author was given permission to view and reproduce Berghaus's original photographs of the Akki Alur hoard, now part of his collected papers, held by the Institut für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte in Vienna. No notes survive to accompany the photographs, they were not produced with a usable scale, and six reverse images are missing. In addition, the three early coins in the hoard are not included. The high-quality black and white pictures nevertheless reveal more detail than either the grainy plates provided with Nagaraja Rao's 1987 analysis, or the descriptions of either Gupta or Nagaraja Rao. It is possible from the pictures to identify coin types, aspects of wear, the die axis of some coins, the legends in all cases, and scratched graffiti in the fields of some examples. It is also possible to identify from the photographs the position of the double piercings and in most cases the direction from which they were made.

Given the likelihood that this most important hoard will remain inaccessible in the foreseeable future, the following description and analysis is presented from Berghaus's photographs. The data has been correlated where possible with the earlier publications, but the impossibility of a full synthesis becomes clear from even a cursory review of the images. All three authors who have dealt with the hoard have noted, for example, that 18 of the 43 Byzantine coins are double-pierced. However, when the pictures are examined, there are clearly 22 pierced coins. More striking still is the fact that close examination of the images provided by Nagaraja Rao also reveals 22, not 18, pierced coins. In the light of such an inexplicable inconsistency, the matching of the published records to Berghaus's photographs is not carried too far. The numbers provided for the hoard in this analysis are taken from the order of Berghaus's photographs, and subsequently all numbers used (unless otherwise stated) refer to this revised coin list.

| Revised | G | NR - Text | NR - Plates | Revised | G | NR Text | NR - Plates |
|---------|----|-----------|-------------|---------|----|---------|-------------|
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 23 | 23 | |
| | 2 | 2 | 2 | | 24 | 24 | |
| | 3 | 3 | 3 | | 25 | 25 | |
| | 4 | 4 | 4 | | 26 | 26 | |
| | 5 | 5 | 5 | | 27 | 27 | |
| | 6 | 6 | 6 | | 28 | 28 | 23 |
| | 7 | 7 | 7 | | 29 | 29 | 24 |
| 5 | 8 | 8 | 8 | | 30 | 30 | 25 |
| | 9 | 9 | 9 | | 31 | 31 | 26 |
| | 10 | 10 | 10* | | 32 | 32 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|-----------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 11 | 11 | 11 | | 33 | 33 | |
| | 12 | 12 | 14** | | 34 | 34 | |
| | 13 | 13 | 12 | 35 | 35 | 37 | 32 |
| 13 | 14 | 14 | 13 | | 36 | 38 | 33 |
| 19 | 15 | 15 | 15 | | 37 | 35 | |
| 18 | 16 | 16 | 16 | | 38 | 36 | 23 |
| 21 | 17 | 17 | 17 | | 39 | 39 | 24 |
| 15 | 18 | 18 | 18 | | 40 | 40 | 26 |
| | 19 | 19 | 19 | | 41 | 41 | 25 |
| | 20 | 20 | 20*** | 43 | 42 | 42 | 42 |
| 17 | 21 | 21 | 21 | 42 | 43 | 43 | 43 |
| 20 | 22 | 22 | 22 | | | | |

Fig. 9: Table showing the revised numbers where these can be matched to Gupta, 1980 and Nagaraja Rao, 1987. The majority of the coins cannot be matched to published records.

Apart from the number of pierced coins (and the fact that these can, for the first time, be associated with particular coins), the following hoard composition and officinae can be identified from the photographs:

| Emperor | Number of Coins (Gupta) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - text) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - plates) | Number of Coins (Revised) |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Theodosius II | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| Marcian | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Leo I | 8 | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| Zeno | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Anastasius I | 15 (though article text lists as 14) | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| Justinus I [sic] | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Unidentified | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 |

Fig. 10: Revised composition of the hoard based on the author's analysis of Berghaus's photographs. The three earlier coins are not included in the photographs and are henceforth omitted. Points of distinction are marked in bold.

| Emperor | Officina (Gupta) | Officina (Nagaraja Rao - Text) | Officina (Nagaraja Rao - Plates) | Officina (Revised) | Number of Coins (Gupta) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - text) | Number of Coins (Nagaraja Rao - plates) | Number of Coins (Revised) |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Theodosius II | A | | | | 1 | | | |
| | Not given | | | | 9 | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| | | O | | | | 2 | 1 | |
| | | | S | | | | 1 | 1 |
| | | | | Θ | | | | 1 |
| Marcian | | | | Un-clear | | | | |
| | A | | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | H | | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | | | I | | | 1 | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------|---|--|---|----|----|----|----|
| | | | | Γ | | | | 1 |
| | | | | Δ | | | | 1 |
| Leo I | A | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | B | | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | H | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | I | | | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| | Un-clear | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | | r | | | | | 1 | |
| | | | | Γ | | | | 1 |
| Zeno | A | | | | 2 | 2 | 2 | ? |
| | H | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | ? |
| | S | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | ? |
| Anastasius I | A | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 |
| | B | | | | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| | Γ | | | | 2 | 2 | | 3 |
| | Δ | | | | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| | Z | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| | S | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | I | | | | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| | | H | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | r | | | | | 3 | |
| Justin I | B | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | ? |
| Un-identified | Δ | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | ? |
| | | | | I | | | | 1 |
| | Total | | | | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 |

Fig. 11: Table of officinae based on revised analysis of the hoard based on Berghaus's photographs. Six coins (marked '?') do not have reverse images, so the officinae cannot be determined.

In addition to the identification of officinae, the photographs permit detailed examination of scratch marks, usually found in the obverse field of some of the coins. Nine scratched designs can be seen in the Akki Alur hoard, on ten coins. S6 (see Fig. 12) is the only mark to occur on more than one coin and Coin 21 (Leo I) is the only one to carry two scratch marks, one in each field of the obverse. The following scratches have been identified:

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----------|--|----|--|----|--|
| S1 | | S2 | | S3 | | S4 | |
| 1 | | 13 | | 14 | | 6 | |
| S5 | | S6 | | S7 | | S8 | |
| 16 | | 18 32 | | 21 | | 31 | |
| S9 | | S10 | | | | | |
| 36 | | 21 | | | | | |

Fig. 12: Scratch marks found on coins in the Akki Alur hoard. Coin numbers on which these appear are given in bold.



Fig. 13: Close-up of scratch marks on Coin No. 14.

Revised Analysis

What then can be said about the significance of this hoard in its current state of analysis? It contains 43 *solidi* and three earlier coins, dating to some point in the second century AD. It would be improper with the information at hand to attribute these coins to specific emperors, though at least two of them are likely to be genuine or imitation coins of Septimius Severus. Berghaus, however, describes the early coins as being in poor condition in comparison with Byzantine *solidi*.¹⁴ This heavier pattern of wear, and the double piercings also described by Berghaus, strongly indicate that the later coins were fulfilling a pattern of use already established with regard to earlier coins. Indeed, the wear on the earlier coins would strongly suggest that the older coins continued in use alongside their newer companions until the deposition of the hoard some time in or after the sixth century. One of the early coins (possibly that attributed to Caracalla) has an attached loop for suspension rather than piercings, but displays a similar pattern of heavy wear. The remaining 43 coins bear the legends of emperors reigning from the early fifth to the mid-sixth century.

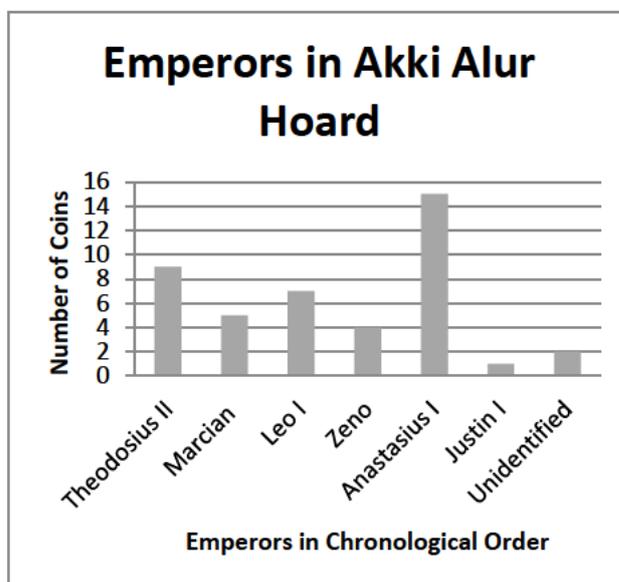


Fig. 14: The distribution of the Akki Alur hoard by emperor demonstrates certain features atypical of more general trends. The large number of coins of Anastasius I, for example, may suggest that the main body of the hoard was constructed around the early sixth century.

22 have distinctive double piercings for suspension. Where it is possible to establish the direction of piercing from Berghaus's photographs, the holes were made from obverse to reverse, and in all cases the piercings are positioned over the obverse imperial portrait, presumably so that this image could be suspended upright, facing outwards. As Fig. 15 (below), demonstrates, coins of earlier emperors are more likely to be pierced than those of later emperors, suggesting that piercings may have been applied after coins had already been in India for some time.

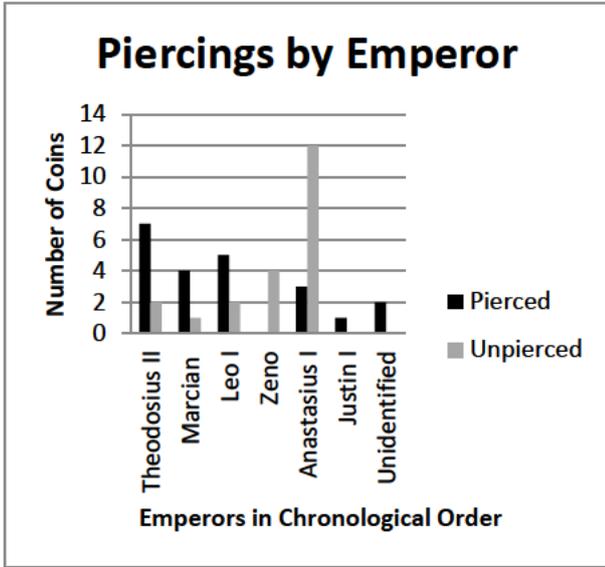


Fig. 15: Pierced coins arranged by emperor. As this simple tabulation demonstrates, it is possible that coins were more likely to be pierced after some time in India, given that later coin types are less likely to be pierced than earlier examples.

As Berghaus notes, and Nagaraja Rao's plates testify, the condition of the *solidi* is excellent, with almost no visible signs of wear.¹⁵ This may support deposition shortly after the arrival of the latest coins in India (i.e. in the mid-sixth century, since the latest examples which can be associated with a named emperor are of Justin I), but it may also suggest that fine-quality coins were valued and therefore kept carefully, even for some considerable time, in order to preserve their appearance. The occurrence of red dust on many ancient coins found in India, thought to be *pūja* dust (dust used in Hindu worship, traditionally made from saffron or a mixture of turmeric and slaked lime), strongly suggests that the good condition of such coins may in some cases be attributable to display and care in temple settings or private worship at some point in their life in India, rather than simply burial. The fact that the Akki Alur images are in black and white makes this difficult to determine in the present case.

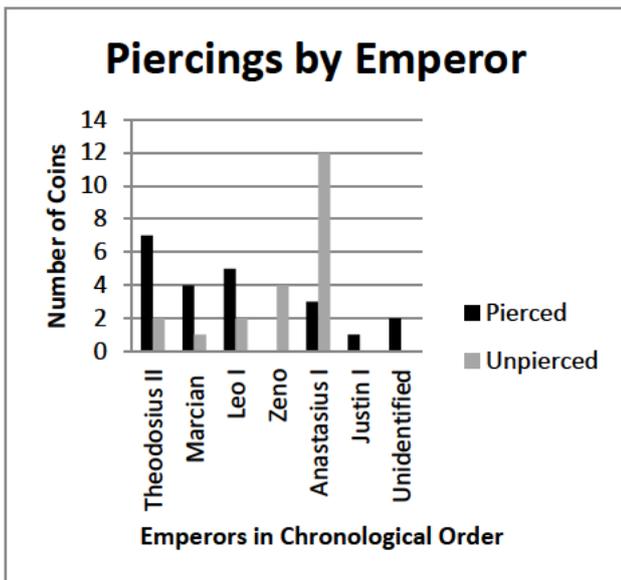


Fig. 16: Tabulation of scratch marks found on coins, arranged by emperor. As in the case of piercings, the comparatively higher incidence of scratch marks on coins attributable to earlier emperors suggests that this was a modification more likely to be applied to a coin the longer it remained in India. This representation displays the total number of coins with scratch marks, not multiple marks on single coins (of which there is one example, of Leo I).

The evidence of piercings, discussed above, may support this hypothesis, and a similar pattern is visible if scratch marks are tabulated: there is a higher tendency for earlier coins to be scratched, suggesting either an earlier practice or, more probably, something that was more likely to be applied to coins the longer they remained in India. In the cases of both piercings and scratch marks, the coins on which they are found are in similarly good condition to non-pierced and unscratched coins, reinforcing the theory that coins were maintained in good condition for social reasons.

On 27 coins in the hoard, the officina is clearly visible. Various officinae are represented, but B, Γ, H and I are particularly common. With such a small sample of coins available, no conclusions can be drawn from this pattern. When dealing with imitations, however, it is worth noting that officinae have, in some cases, been reproduced. This indicates the care with which some imitations were produced, since it is doubtful that officinae had any local meaning in India. All of the imitations in the Akki Alur hoard are of a good enough standard that it is likely they were produced for economic as well as social reasons. None, for example, are uniface or lack inscription, as is common on other categories of imitation found in India. The coin weights would help to confirm this conclusion, since coins imitated partly for economic circulation tended to adhere closely to the official weight of the solidus (4.53 g.). The opportunity to examine the coins minutely would also assist in identifying imitation coins.

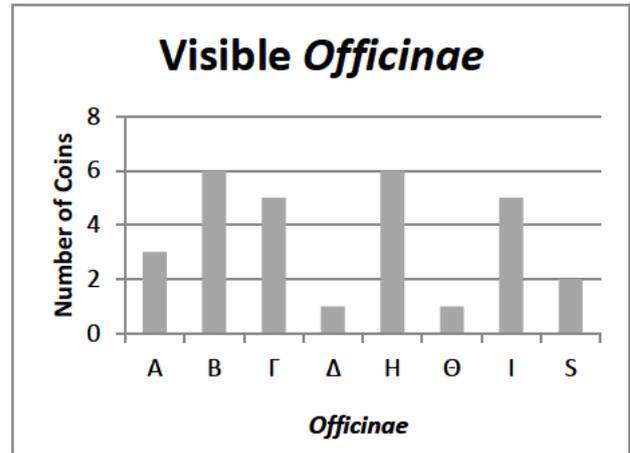


Fig. 17: Chart of visible officinae in the Akki Alur hoard, showing the preponderance of coins with the officinae B, Γ, H and I.

Conclusion

The Akki Alur hoard remains one of the most significant finds of Late Roman coins on Indian soil. It is the largest hoard of Byzantine gold *solidi* on record, and its discovery in Karnataka raises important questions about the distribution of Late Roman coin finds, of which the largest numbers in museum and private collections currently come from Tamil Nadu, but which are most often discovered in excavation contexts in Andhra Pradesh. Ideally, this hoard will one day be subjected to a full and detailed analysis, including the publication of weights, examination of the fabric and the production of high-quality, scale images of the obverse and reverse of all coins, including the three early pieces. The primary objective of this article is not to fill the place of such a publication.

It is, however, hoped that this article will supplement the information currently available and act as a corrective to some of the errors in reporting the Akki Alur hoard. This is particularly vital as the incorrect representations of the hoard continue to mount. In 1991, for example, R. Gopal, Nagaraja Rao's successor at the Karnataka Directorate of Archaeology also mentioned the Akki Alur hoard (by this time in his possession), when discussing Venetian coins in Karnataka. He described all of the coins in the hoard as being pierced, again suggesting that he had not looked at the hoard personally.¹⁶ When the hoard is cited regularly as evidence of Late Roman contact with India, it is crucial that

accurate information at least be available to those who wish to consult it.

The other hope of this article is that it raises one of the biggest problems with the numismatic evidence for (late) Roman trade with south India. It is a subject area, which continues to be beset by the earliest assumptions and interpretations to attach themselves to the field. The plethora of publications, articles and short notices which bring evidence to light piecemeal have also resulted in a mounting confusion of contradictory and sometimes incorrect information (no more so than in the case of the Akki Alur hoard). The Late Roman evidence, in particular, has suffered from a tendency to interpret it as simply a postscript to the Roman trade of the first two centuries AD, subject to the same (often problematic) assumptions, and frequently inexpert examination.

For these reasons, it is no longer sufficient or even possible to understand Indo-Roman contact via the collation of available data, as valuable as many publications are. Rather, it seems time to address in detail the theoretical questions underlying interpretations of Roman contact with and impact upon India, and to assess critically the quality as well as the mass of numismatic and other information available. Current work on Late Roman and Byzantine coins found in India, as a body of evidence with a far smaller volume of pre-existing scholarship attached to it, is seeking to present new and published numismatic data alongside a new interpretation, using network theory and the intersections of archaeological, numismatic and literary evidence in order to understand Indian Ocean-Mediterranean contact in the fourth to eighth centuries.¹⁷

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Notes on Revised Coin List:

- {X} = suggested reading of an unclear character
[X] = suggested insertion where characters are missing
- = break in legend as part of coin design
Off. = *Officina*
Star = unless otherwise stated, eight-pointed star

Owing to the unusual publication of this hoard, for clarity all coins are marked as either 'pierced' or 'not pierced'.
All coins are (genuine or imitation) AV *solidi*, though weights remain unknown and exact diameters are unclear.

Revised Coin List

Theodosius II (r. 408-450)

Coin 1: Axis, 180°
Obv. DNTHEODO – [SI]VS PF AVG
¾ bust wearing helmet with plume, and diadem the ties of which show to left, tunic and cuirass. Right hand holds spear behind head. On left shoulder, shield with device of horseman right, spearing fallen foe.
Rev. IMPXXXXII COS – X VII PP
Constantinopolis seated left, *globus cruciger* in right, holding spear upright with left hand, left foot rests on prow of a ship, star in lower left field.
CONOB in exergue.
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse, scratch-mark S1 in obverse right field, worn reverse die. Imitation?

Coin 2: Axis, 180°
Obv. DNTHEODO – [SI]VS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. VOT XXX – MVLV XXXX
Constantinopolis seated left, *globus cruciger* in right hand, holding spear upright in left hand, left foot rests on prow of a ship, star in lower left field, round shield leans on throne, lower right.
[CO]NO[B] in exergue.
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse.

Coin 3: Axis, 180°
Obv. DNTHEODO[S] – [I]VS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. [M]PXXXXII COS – VII PP
See Coin 2.
CON[OB] in exergue.
Notes: Double pierced (direction unclear), very worn obverse die. Imitation?

Coin 4: Axis, 180°
Obv. DNTHEODO - SIVS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. CONCORDI – A AVCC S
Constantinopolis seated facing, head to the right, crowning Victory on right hand, sceptre in left hand, left foot resting on prow of a ship, star in left field.
CON[OB] in exergue. *Off.* S
Notes: Double pierced obverse to reverse.

Coin 5: Axis, 0°
Obv. DNTHEOD[O] - SIVS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. GLOROI - TERRAR
Emperor standing left holding banner with horizontal cross motif in left hand, *globus cruciger* in right hand, star in left field.
CONOB in exergue.
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse. Imitation?

Coin 6: Axis, 150°
Obv. DNTHEODOS - VIS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. MPXXXXII COS – XX VII PP
See Coin 2.
CONOB in exergue.
Notes: Not pierced, scratch-mark S4 in lower right field. Imitation?

Coin 7: Axis, ?°
Obv. DNTHEODO - SIVS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. CONCORDI – A AVCCC
See Coin 4.
CONOB in exergue.
Notes: Not pierced, deep crack on obverse die over diadem.

Coin 8: Axis, 180°
Obv. DNTHEODO - SIVS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. VICTORI – A PCCC Θ
Winged Victory advancing left, long staff with cross bar and loop at top in right hand, star in left field.
[C]ON[O]B in exergue, *Off.* Θ
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse.

Coin 9: Axis, 180°
Obv. DNTHEOD[O] – [SI]VS PF AVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. VOT XX- MVLV XXX
Winged Victory advancing left, long voided cross in right hand.
[CO]NO[B] in exergue.
Notes: Double pierced (direction unclear). Imitation?

Marcian (r. 450-457)

Coin 10: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN MARCIO - VOIPPAVC
See Coin 1.
Rev. VICTORI – AVVCCC H
Winged Victory advancing left, long voided cross in right hand, star in right field.
[C]ONO[B] in exergue. *Off.* H
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse. Imitation?

Coin 11: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN MARCIA – NVS PFAVC
See Coin 1.
Rev. VICTORI – AVVCCC H
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* H
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse.

Coin 12: Axis, 180°
Obv. DHMARC [IA – N] VS ΔVC
See Coin 1.
Rev. VICTORI – ΔAVCCC A
See Coin 10.
[CO]NO[B] in exergue. *Off.* A
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse. Imitation?

Coin 13: Axis, ?°
Obv. DN MARCIA – NVS PPAVG
See Coin 1.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC Γ
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* Γ
Notes: Not pierced, scratch-mark S2 deeply in obverse right field.

Coin 14: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN MAR[C]A – [N]VS PFAVC
¾ bust wearing helmet with plume, and diadem with trefoil ornament, the ties of which show to left, tunic and cuirass. Right hand holds spear behind head. On left shoulder, shield with device of horseman right, spearing fallen foe.
Rev. [VI]CTORI – AAVCCC Δ
See Coin 10.
CON[OB] in exergue. *Off.* Δ
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse (very large holes), scratch-mark S3 in obverse right field. Deep cracks at ten and four o'clock on reverse die.

Leo I (r. 457-474)

Coin 15: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN LEO PE – RPET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. [VI]CTORI – AAVCCC H
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* H
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse.

Coin 16: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN LEO PE – RPET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. [VI]CTORI – AAVCCC I
See Coin 10.
[CO]NO[B] in exergue. *Off.* I
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse, scratch-mark S5 in obverse right field.

Coin 17: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN LEO PE – RPET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. [VI]CTORI – AAVCCC
See Coin 10.
CON[OB] in exergue.
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse. Possibly double-struck, mangled reverse die at bottom.

Coin 18: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN LEO PE – RPET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. [VI]CTORI – AAVCCC B
See Coin 10.
[C]ONO[B] in exergue. *Off.* B
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse, scratch-mark S6 in obverse right field.

Coin 19: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN LEO PE – [RP]ET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. [VI]CTORI – AAVCCC A
See Coin 10.
CON[O]B in exergue. *Off.* A
Notes: Double pierced (direction of piercing unclear).

Coin 21: Axis, ?°
Obv. DN LEO PE – RPET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC B
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* B
Notes: Not pierced, worn obverse die, scratch-mark S7 in obverse right field, scratch-mark S9 in obverse left field.

Coin 22: Axis, ?
Obv. DN LEO PE – RPET AVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC Γ
Winged Victory advancing left, long cross in right hand, star in right field.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* Γ
Notes: Not pierced

Anastasius I (r. 497-518)

Coin 23: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC B
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* B
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 24: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC H
See Coin 8.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* H
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 25: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC H
See Coin 22.
CON[OB] in exergue. *Off.* H
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 26: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC H
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* H
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 27: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC B
See Coin 8.
[C]ONO[B] in exergue. *Off.* B
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse.

Coin 28: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC I
See Coin 22.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* I
Notes: Not pierced, obverse bust quite worn, worn reverse die.

Coin 29: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC B
Winged Victory advancing left, long staff with cross bar and loop at top in right hand, eight-pointed star in left field, with pellet at centre.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* B
Notes: Not pierced, very crisp.

Coin 30: Axis, ?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – ΔAVCCC Γ
See Coin 10.

CONOB in exergue. *Off.* Γ
Notes: Not pierced, very scratched reverse.

Coin 31: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN ANAST[A] – [S]IVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC I
Winged Victory advancing left, long voided cross in right hand, six-pointed star in right field.
[C]ON[O]B in exergue. *Off.* I
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse, scratch-mark S8 in obverse right field. Imitation?

Coin 32: Axis, 180°
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC A
See Coin 10.
C[O]NO[B] in exergue. *Off.* A
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse, scratch-mark S6 in obverse right field.

Coin 33: Axis,?
Obv. DN ΛΛASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC Γ
See Coin 29.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* Γ
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 34: Axis,?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC Γ
See Coin 29.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* Γ
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 35: Axis,?
Obv. DI ANASTA – S[reversed]IA[inverted]SPPAA[inverted]C
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC S
See Coin 31.
COIOB in exergue. *Off.* S
Notes: Not pierced, obverse shallow die impression. Imitation.

Coin 36: Axis,?
Obv. DN ANASTA - SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC I
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* I
Notes: Not pierced, scratch-mark S9 in obverse left field.

Coin 37: Axis,?
Obv. DN ANASTA – SIVSPPAVC
See Coin 1.
Rev. VICTORI – AAVCCC B
See Coin 10.
CONOB in exergue. *Off.* B
Notes: Not pierced.
Zeno (r. 474-5, 476-491)

Coin 38: Axis,?
Obv. DN ZENO - PERPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. *IMAGE MISSING*
Notes: Not pierced.

Coin 39: Axis,?
Obv. DN ZENO - PERPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. *IMAGE MISSING*
Notes: Not pierced, very worn obverse die.

Coin 40: Axis,?
Obv. DN Z[reversed]ENO - PERPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. *IMAGE MISSING*
Notes: Not pierced, die crack/flaw in left field.

Coin 41: Axis,?
Obv. DN ZENO - PERPAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. *IMAGE MISSING*
Notes: Not pierced.

Justin I (r. 518-527)

Coin 43: Axis,?
Obv. DN IVSTI - NVSPPAVC
See Coin 1.
Rev. *IMAGE MISSING*
Notes: Double pierced (direction unclear), very worn obverse die with deep crack in right field, die flaw over bust, die-wear lines distort inscription.

Unidentified

Coin 20: Axis, 180°
Obv. ΕΟΙΓΕΟΩ - SPETAV
See Coin 14.
Rev. COICOUDI – AAVCC I
Constantinopolis seated right, star in right field, crowning Victory in right hand.
CON[O]B in exergue. *Off.* I
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse. Imitation.

Coin 42: Axis, ?^p
Obv. OB[reversed]HVRЯЯ - VSPEAVC
See Coin 14.
Rev. *IMAGE MISSING*
Notes: Double pierced from obverse to reverse. Imitation.

Notes

- 1 Nagaraja Rao, 1980.
- 2 Nagaraja Rao, 1980, 111.
- 3 Nagaraja Rao, 1980, 111.
- 4 Nagaraja Rao, 1980, 112.
- 5 Gupta, 1984, 39.
- 6 1984, 39.
- 7 Gupta, 1984, 39.
- 8 The physical infrastructure of a Byzantine mint remains unclear owing to a lack of archaeological or textual evidence, but at least administratively, Byzantine mints were divided into a variable number of workshops (or *officinae*), to which a particular coins could be traced. The *officina* in which a coin was produced was normally denoted by a Greek character (despite the fact that the inscriptions on early Byzantine coins were still in Latin, only changing to Greek in the seventh century). For further information see Grierson, 1999.
- 9 Nagaraja Rao 1987, 441.
- 10 Carson, 1980; Thurston, 1894, 9; Ghosh & Ismail, 1980.
- 11 Motichandra, 1959, 37.
- 12 Nagaraja Rao, 1987, 445.
- 13 Berghaus 1991, 111.
- 14 Berghaus, 1991, 111
- 15 1991, 111.
- 16 Gopal, 1995, 39.
- 17 R. R. Day, PhD thesis in progress, to be submitted by September 2013 for examination by the University of Birmingham. This will include detailed images of the Akki Alur photographs.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ASHVAMEDHAS OF SAMUDRAGUPTA AND KUMARAGUPTA I AS HIGHLIGHTED ON THEIR ASHVAMEDHA COINAGE

By Mahesh A. Kalra*

Introduction

The Gupta Dynasty (c. AD 320-550) was the first indigenous dynasty of ancient India to issue its own coinage in gold for general circulation purposes. Hence the Gupta Age is often referred to as the 'Golden Age' of Indian history. The Gupta era (c. AD 320-550) was a period of great strides in art and

metallurgical technology as reflected by the pristine gold coinage of the Gupta Empire.

In the numerous types of gold coins introduced by various Gupta Emperors, the 'Ashvamedha' type gold coins issued during the reign of two Gupta Emperors, Samudra Gupta (r. AD 335–380) and his grandson, Kumara Gupta I (r. AD 415–455) were entirely new paradigms in Indian coinage referring to a significant religio-politico-social event in their reigns.

The initial Gupta era was a period of territorial expansion accompanied by a revival of ancient Vedic traditions in the mid-fourth century AD under the first Gupta ruler who assumed imperial pretensions, Chandra Gupta I (r. AD 320-335). His successor, Samudra Gupta promoted the revival of the almost extinct Vedic traditions of Hinduism and combined them with his Vaishnavite beliefs to promote Gupta territorial ambitions.

The Vedic concept of kingship⁴ as elucidated in the Vedas involved a symbiotic relationship between the king and the Purohita in which the latter raised the former to divine glory as well as conferred religious legitimacy upon his conquests.

The Ashvamedha Yagna⁷ was a Vedic sacrifice described in the Rig Veda, notably in hymns of Rig Veda Mandala 1.162-163 (which are themselves known as *Ashvamedha*) and elaborated in the Yajur Veda (TS 7.1-5, VSM 22–25) and the pertaining commentary in the Shatapatha Brahmana (ŚBM 13.1–5). It is also described in the two greatest Indian epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata as a legitimate form of territorial expansion. The Aitareya and Shatapatha Brahmana⁶ mention the name of some monarchs who performed the Ashvamedha sacrifice along with Aindra Mahabhishekha such as Para of Koshala, Shatanika, Satrajita and Purukutsa Aikshvaka, etc.



Illustration of the Ashvamedha in Ramayana by Sahib Din, 1652; Kaushalya is depicted slaying the horse while the queen lies to the right besides it¹⁶



Fresco in Irkutsk museum showing horse sacrifice by Buriat Mongol shamans¹⁷



King's tomb in the Indo-European settlement in the Karakum (modern Turkmenistan) contains a valuable horse to accompany him into the afterlife¹⁸

It was probably a remnant of an ancient 'barbaric' ritual of the proto-Indo-European people whose variations are found in far off places such as the steppes of Russia and Mongolia where a significant equestrian factor was closely attached to the rise in political fortunes of these communities¹².

It involved a ritual wandering of the royal horse to provoke neighbouring kingdoms into a military contest for territorial submission or absorption of the kingdoms into the growing empire. The Yagna involved a prominent role for the Chief Queen or the Mahishi who had to initiate the ritual as well as end it with the sacrifice of the horse.

The Ashvamedha was adopted by Samudra Gupta as a legitimate exercise of his desire to subdue a host of neighbouring kingdoms, tribal republics and states into submission. The description of the Ashvamedha conducted by Samudra Gupta is conspicuously missing from the famed Prayāga Prashasti (Allahabad Pillar Inscriptions) composed by his court-poet, Harishena¹⁴

Hence, the Ashvamedha coins of Samudra Gupta assume the role of unique 'historical metallic documents' symbolising the expansionist phase of the Gupta realm far away from the traditional seat of the Gupta kingdom in Magadha in east Bihar.

A probable reason for the early Gupta reliance on Vedic traditions was a probable Vaishya caste origin as hinted by A. S. Altekar¹. The early Gupta period was marked by relative rigidifying of the Hindu caste structure with the Kshatriyas being elevated on a higher scale than Vaishyas. Hence, the Ashvamedha sacrifice was a probable exercise in demonstrating the 'Kshatriya' character of Samudra Gupta who took pride in being addressed as 'Lichchavidauhitra' the maternal grandson of Lichchhavis who were an ancient established clan of Kshatriyas in East Bihar and Nepal.

Another important development during the early Gupta period was the Vaishnavite belief of the rulers as reflected by Samudra Gupta's son and successor, Chandra Gupta II's biruda 'Parama Bhāgavata' and the adoption of Lakshmi as the predominant reverse device on the coinage of almost all Gupta rulers with few exceptions; notably the Kartikkeya type coins of Kumara Gupta I.

Thus, Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha coins issued on the occasion of his final conquests and his anointment as overlord of vast dominions represents a consolidation of various politico-socio-religious ideals and traditions of the Indian society in that era and should be seen in that context.

Kumara Gupta I, on the other hand, had inherited an empire larger than Samudra Gupta's realm from his father, Chandra Gupta II (r. AD 380-415), and had a largely peaceful reign of nearly four decades. However, according to the Bhitari Pillar Inscriptions⁶, he had to embark on a 'defensive' Ashvamedha towards the end of his reign to battle the hostile Pushyamitra or Yudhyamitra tribe. He issued his Ashvamedha coins as a sign of ultimate triumph over his difficult adversaries probably towards the end of his reign in a rather harried fashion as is evident from the inferior designs of his Ashvamedha coins.

Kumara Gupta I nevertheless succeeded in defending his territories but his successors continued to face the onslaught of the Shaka invaders from the north-west till the final decline of the empire. His Ashvamedha coins are thus stylistically inferior in stark contrast to Samudra Gupta's well-planned issues with their unique features.

Comparison between the Ashvamedha coins of Samudra Gupta and Kumara Gupta I

The first type of Ashvamedha coin has been attributed by various experts to Samudra Gupta on the basis of two facts: the legend on reverse 'Ashvamedha Parakrama' has Samudra Gupta's exclusive biruda, *Parakrama*, and elsewhere in the Nalanda Copper Plate³ of the Year 5, he is described as '*chirotsannāshvamedhaharttā*' i.e. 'Performer of Ashvamedha which had long been discarded'.

This description is further confirmed by the legend on the obverse³

'*Rājādhirājah prithivim avitā divam jayati āhrita-vājimedhah*'

meaning 'The King of Kings having protected the Earth is conquering the heavens through the Ashvamedha sacrifice which he has performed'.



Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha Coin's obverse image from the Chand Collection in the Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore, shows a very clear reading of the obverse legend Image Courtesy: Chand Collection⁵

All images of Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha issues show on the obverse an image of a well-built horse facing left, standing in front of a well-constructed Yupa (sacrificial post) at the extreme left of the coin flan and the character 'si' below the belly of the horse, and the circular legend in Gupta Brāhmi on the obverse.

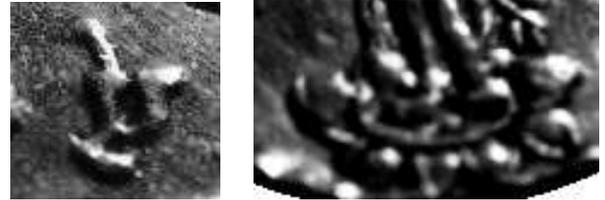
The reverse has the image of the 'Chief Queen' who was supposed to have presided over the first killing or immolating stroke to the horse with a specially prepared spear called Sūchī. The legend 'Ashvamedha Parakrama' is written on all coins in a vertical format.

The Ashvamedha coins of Kumara Gupta I (especially the image from British Museum collections see below) shows a right-facing Horse with a poorly detailed Yupa on the extreme right; an almost illegible legend from 8'o clock position; the horse prominently shows a saddle in place (as opposed to the image on Samudra Gupta's coin where there is an unbridled horse) the 'Si' is conspicuously missing from the coin. The reverse image of the 'Queen' is similar to the earlier queen's image except that it is less remarkable in its detailing and the legend reads 'Shri Ashvamedha Mahendra'.

The legends of Kumara Gupta's Ashvamedha issues are difficult to decipher as they are not well-etched as compared to Samudra Gupta's legends; the reverse legend is also circular as opposed to the vertical legend on Samudra Gupta's issues.

These are some easily detectable differences, evident to the casual observer, between the two types. They can be attributed to different mint masters during the two regimes which were separated by at least four decades.

However, comparing the design of Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha coins with those of Kumara Gupta I, one finds two intriguing facts which have been overlooked by earlier authors. These become evident after seeing the various images of Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha coins available on the internet (most certainly of different specimens) in detail as below.



Ashvamedha coin of Samudra Gupta with reverse legend 'Ashvamedha Parakrama' Inset: 'Si' (left) and lotus feet (right) Image courtesy: www.shivlee.com



Kumara Gupta's Ashvamedha coin with right-facing horse with indistinct legend on obvers.; Reverse: Queen with Suchi/fly whisk in hand with legend 'Shri Ashvamedha Mahendra' Image courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum www.britishmuseum.org

A close comparison of both coins shows three major differences; the presence of an elaborate Yupa (which has been commented upon by earlier commentators), a small initial 'Si' below the belly of the horse and the presence of a lotus pattern at the feet of the 'Chief Queen' in Samudra Gupta's coins but absent on Kumara Gupta's coins. Two other images accessed on the Internet shows two slightly different patterns of the lotus probably since the images are of different coin specimens.



Ashvamedha gold coin of Samudra Gupta with different pattern of lotus adorning the feet of the 'Queen' Inset: 'Si' (left) and 'lotus' (right) Image courtesy: www.columbia.edu



Another specimen of Ashvamedha coin of Samudra Gupta with different pattern of lotus emblem adorning the feet of the 'Queen'
Inset: 'Si' (left) and 'lotus' (right) Image courtesy:
www.coinnetwork.com

When one focuses on the last two features; the simultaneous presence of the word 'Si' and the presence of different kinds of lotus emblems at the feet of the 'Chief Queen' of Samudra Gupta's coins, it is evident that the word 'Si' implies an abbreviated form of 'Shri' invoking Goddess Lakshmi's blessings, and the lotus symbol at the feet implies that the image is of Goddess Lakshmi herself. In fact, Goddess Lakshmi is often called Padmalakshmi since she prefers the lotus as her seat.

The Rg Veda has the earliest references to a Lotus Goddess, who has all the classical attributes of the 'Classical' Gupta period Lakshmi. It has a late apocryphal hymn appended to it with the classical names 'Shri' and 'Lakshmi' where she is praised as 'Padmasambhava' 'Lotus born', 'Padmasthanita' 'Standing on a Lotus' which illustrates the iconic association with the Goddess Lakshmi¹¹.

Two other facts corroborate this conclusion: firstly, Samudra Gupta with his prominent Vaishnavite leanings could not have embarked on an ambitious expedition without invoking the blessings of Lakshmi and consequently her consort, Vishnu.

A. Lakshmi has been always invoked to bring lasting prosperity even before the Gupta period¹⁵ According to Dhal, during Ashvamedha, the queen has a major role to play as she represents Shree or Lakshmi herself pp. 27;

B. Shree Lakshmi is identified with the power to rule (Rajya) and also the territory itself (Rashtra or Kshatra) and hence is invoked as 'Shree vai Rashtra' Taittiriya Brahmana 3, 9, 7 and Sattapatha Brahmana'. Thus, in a horse sacrifice, the priest endows the performer with Shree and Rajya both (Dhal 1978 pp. 29)].

Secondly, the legend on the obverse states that 'the King of Kings after securing the Earth wishes to capture the Heavens' implying that Samudra Gupta wished to project himself as an equal to the gods akin to the 'Daivaputra' title of the Kushanas on successful conclusion of the Ashvamedha. Hence, his mint masters tried to project Goddess Lakshmi as the royal consort on his Ashvamedha coins symbolising a divine support for his imperial ambitions.

In India, the tradition of invoking 'Shri' on all important occasions has persisted particularly amongst the Vaishya business community. Hence, A. S. Altekar was probably right in assuming a Vaishya origin for the Guptas; the Guptas probably continued to view their war expeditions like business ventures which required divine blessings! A 500-Rupee note from modern Nepal, the world's only modern 'Hindu' state, incidentally home to Samudra Gupta's maternal forefathers, the Lichchavis, used a prominent 'Shri' on the top of its central legend till the deposition of its last monarch, King Gyanendra.



श्री
नेपाल राष्ट्र बैंक

Modern Nepal's 500 Rupee Note with 'Shri' in the centre. Inset:
'Shri' in Devanagari

Some other observations on Ashvamedha coins of the Gupta dynasty

The Ashvamedha coins of the Samudra Gupta represent the zenith of Gupta period art renaissance evident through their detailing of particulars on the coin like the Yupa, the Suchi and the braiding of the horse with gold beads and, of course, the variety of 'lotus feet' emblems.

Samudra Gupta ended his prosperous reign some time before AD 380, the first date known for Chandra Gupta II. Whether Chandra Gupta II succeeded him directly or Rama Gupta intervened is unclear. The Ashvamedha coins were probable souvenirs of his long reign given to the priestly class as Dakshina for the Ashvamedha or probably for supporting his long prosperous reign.

In this scenario, they appear to have been well-planned issues phased over a period as is evident by the different designs of the 'lotus feet' emblem on various sub-types of the coins. The use of many changes of design indicates the use of many artists and designs and implies that the coins were issued many times as a commemoration of the early Ashvamedha.

The Bayana hoard³ found in 1946 in the Bharatpur State had 1821 Gupta era coins with various coins ranging from Chandra Gupta I's era to Skanda Gupta's era; the hoard had 183 coins of Samudra Gupta of which 20 were his Ashvamedha issues; in case of Kumara Gupta I, there were 628 coins of which only 4 were Ashvamedha coins.

These numbers highlight a few important facts: firstly that the issues were very rare souvenirs given away to privileged persons who were gifted these coins on special occasions.

Secondly, Samudra Gupta issued more Ashvamedha coins than did Kumara Gupta I since the ratio of the two is very different; in the case of Samudra Gupta, his Ashvamedha coins form the second largest group in the Bayana hoard (20 out of 183 i.e. 10.92 %) after his 'Standard type' coins which were 143 in number³; in the case of Kumara Gupta I, 4 coins out of 628 coins, 0.63%, were Ashvamedha types, a miniscule number, indicating that their issue was very limited and these coins were probably issued only once unlike Samudra Gupta's phased issues. The Kasarva hoard³ mentioned by Altekar had 17 coins of Samudragupta, out of which 11 were Standard type and 3 were Ashvamedha (17.64 %). However, it has no coins of Kumara Gupta to allow a comparison.

Thirdly, Kumara Gupta's Ashvamedha coins had no stylistic variation compared to Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha issues. Hence, it can be assumed that Kumara Gupta's Ashvamedha was a minor 'token' sacrifice conducted on a much smaller scale than Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha, and basically aimed at invoking memories of the halcyon days of his forefathers to reassure his supporters and silence his critics within the kingdom after a period of major upheaval in his domains.

The last conclusion after studying these rare issues is about the hoarder of the Bayana hoard himself; he was probably a privileged noble or a Brahmin whose family had served the Gupta rulers for generations to be able to procure specimens of both the

Ashvamedha coin types. The hoarder could also have been an official representative of the Gupta Empire like a governor or state minister who might have perceived himself as a likely target of the marauding Hunas and hid the coins as a preventive measure.

Alternatively, he was a rich moneylender/trader who had acquired the coins from various clients over a lifetime of usury and hid the hoard in the absence of safe conditions after the collapse of the Gupta Empire in the fifth century AD as a result of Huna invasions from the north. In all probability, the hoarder was killed because of the Huna invasions because the hoard was not reclaimed as he originally intended.

It would seem probable that such high-value coins were used as a store of value and were used only occasionally to transfer wealth rather than circulated frequently. However, Altekar records that many of the Ashvamedha coins of the Bayana hoard handled by him were slightly worn, indicating that they may have been in general circulation (or stored in poor conditions).

Conclusion

The Ashvamedha coins of the Gupta dynasty represent a revival of ancient Vedic traditions which were conveniently adopted to satisfy the imperial ambitions of the early Guptas. However, the later issues by Kumara Gupta I represent a desperate attempt by that ruler to preserve his existing realm and thwart any further rebellions from his other vassals. The Ashvamedha coins also represent an imperial Gupta policy of appeasing their priestly class supporters, as a Dakshina is prescribed in the scriptures³. Hence, apart from being a commemorative coinage, they also represent a means of transferring 'value' to the receiver, the priests, from the imperial treasury.

Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha coins represent an additional attempt by the emperor to project himself as a divine ruler at par with the heavenly gods, evident in portraying the Goddess Lakshmi as his royal consort. Additionally, the initial 'Si' on the obverse also probably represents her Avatar as 'Shri' or 'Shrīdevi', the goddess of abundance who would bestow more glory on him.

Samudra Gupta's Ashvamedha coins also reflect the glorious and peaceful winding up of his reign as opposed to the harried conditions projected by the rarity and inferior designs of Kumara Gupta's issues.

Thus, the Ashvamedha coins of the Gupta dynasty form a small numismatic periscope which helps us peep into the complex dynamics of India's Golden Age for a historiographic reconstruction of this glorious period in the country's history.

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SINJĀR – A NEW STANDING CALIPH MINT IN SYRIA?

By Tony Goodwin

An interesting Standing Caliph fals appeared recently in Steve Album's Auction 12 with a mint name read as Sinjār - سنجر (Fig. 1). This reading was first suggested by Abd al-Rahman al-Atassi and he also suggested that the mint referred to is not the well-known town in the Jazira, but a village about 60 km south of Aleppo.¹

At present two other coins are known with this mint name, the first in the Ashmolean Museum and the second, rather worn example, in an English private collection (Figs. 2 and 3).² All three coins are struck from the same pair of dies.



Fig. 1. Stephen Album Auction 12, 13th and 14th Jan. 2012, lot 57, 3.08g³



Fig. 2. Ashmolean Museum (SICA 1 686), 3.03g, 12h⁴



Fig. 3. Private collection, 3.06g, 12h

The legends are incomplete on all three examples, but on the obverse of the Ashmolean coin the start of the legend can be made out - *li-'abd allāh 'abd al-m...* and on all three examples we can read *...mīr al-mu'minīn* at the end. The letters are badly formed and the start of the legend appears to be slightly blundered, but this appears to be a reasonable rendering of the standard legend - *li-'abd allāh 'abd al-malik amīr al-mu'minīn* (for the servant of God 'Abd al-Malik, Commander of the Believers).⁵ The legend around the reverse is much more blundered, but is presumably trying to copy the standard legend - *lā ilāha illā allāh waḥdahū muḥammad rasūl allāh* (there is no god but God, he is alone, Muhammad is his messenger). Slightly blundered legends are normal on Standing Caliph coins, but it is unusual, although not unknown, for a regular coin with a readable mint name to have reverse legends as badly blundered as on these coins.

We now come to the all-important question of the mint name. When I catalogued the Ashmolean coin in 2000 I assumed that the mint name ended in a large uncertain round letter and I was unable to offer any plausible reading. However, close examination of this last “letter” on the less worn Album coin shows that it has three die cracks leading off it, and in fact it appears not to be properly joined to the baseline of the word, which ends in a short curved letter (see Fig. 4).

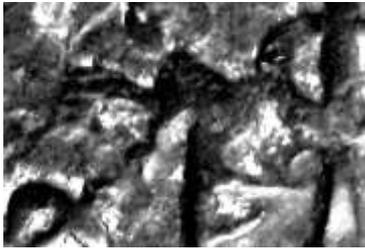


Fig. 4. Magnified image of the end of the mint name on the Album coin showing die cracks

We therefore have two possibilities; either the final round “letter” has been the source of die cracks rendering it unreadable or it is not a letter at all, but a flaw in the die which acted as a source for the cracks. Because the “letter” is apparently not joined to the baseline of the mint name I think that the second possibility is more likely and so the mint name reads **سج** a perfectly good writing of *bi-sinjār*. Unequivocal confirmation would require a coin struck when the die cracks were less developed, but all three examples known so far appear to show roughly the same degree of die damage.

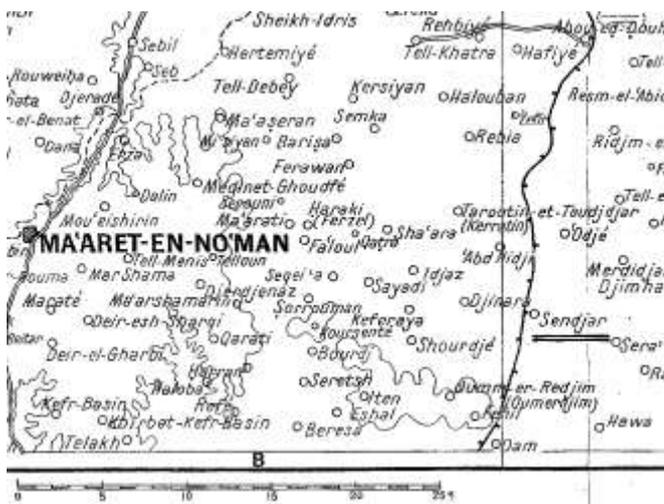


Fig. 5. Location of Sinjār (written Sendjar) as shown on Dussaud's map X of 1927.

Fig. 5 shows the location of Sinjār, which lies on an ancient road from Aleppo to Hims. I can find no mention of this village in any of the easily accessible Arab historians or geographers and I have been unable to find any relevant excavation reports to confirm that it existed in the Umayyad period. However, in his comprehensive survey of ancient and medieval Syria, René Dussaud makes brief mention of ruins and inscriptions being found there, so it appears to be an ancient site, albeit rather an insignificant one.⁶ Is it possible that minting took place at such an apparently insignificant location? Standing Caliph mints are generally located at known Umayyad towns, the only exception being the mint of *Tanūkh*, which may be associated with the tribe of the same name. So at first sight Sinjār looks a rather unlikely location, but it could have had a short-lived strategic or administrative importance, situated as it is on an important road and probably close to the boundary between Junds *Hims* and *Qinnasrīn*.

One other question which may help in judging the plausibility of the claimed mint location is whether the style and design of the coin are appropriate to that location. The style of Standing Caliph

coins varies between junds and most known irregular coins with unreadable mint names are clearly in the style of *Jund Qinnasrīn*.⁷ However, the obverse image of the Sinjār coin most closely resembles Standing Caliph images from Hims or Baalbek and the reverse with a star to one side of the symbol-on-steps is only found at Hims and ‘Amman.⁸ Comparison with a coin of Hims (Fig. 6) shows that, overall, the style of the Sinjār coin is closer to that of Hims than to that of any other mint. The Jund boundaries are somewhat uncertain, but it is most likely that Sinjār was within *Jund Hims*, close to its northern boundary, so the style of the coin certainly lends credibility to the suggested mint location.



Fig. 6. Standing Caliph fals of Hims, 3.97g, 12h. (private collection)

In conclusion there seems to be a reasonably good case for regarding Sinjār in Syria as a new Standing Caliph mint, although the obscure nature of the mint location and the fact that the reverse legend is unusually blundered still leave us with some room for doubt. The case would be strengthened to near certainty if another example were found struck from undamaged dies or even better struck from a different reverse die with the same mint name.

Notes

- 1 The auction catalogue states that the coin was found at Sinjār, but clearly this claim needs to be treated with some caution.
- 2 I saw a fourth specimen some years ago in another English collection, also struck from the same dies.
- 3 All coins are illustrated approximately enlarged.
- 4 S. Album and T. Goodwin, *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean* Vol. 1 Cat. 686.
- 5 It is possible that the part of this standard legend that would have been below the feet is missing altogether.
- 6 R. Dussaud, *Topographie Historique de la Syrie Antique et Médiévale*, Paris 1927, pp. 201-202 and Map X.
- 7 See for example SICA 1 Cats. 683-685.
- 8 The coins of ‘Amman, however, are very different in style to the coin under consideration here.

A NEW COPPER COIN TYPE OF ABŪ SA’ĪD FROM GEORGIA (WITH GEORGIAN COUNTERMARKS?)

By Irakli Paghava, Roland Spanderashvili and Severian Turkia

The treatise on the Ilkhanid coinage by Ömer Diler (2006)¹ provides an extensive checklist of the currency of this dynasty, including the extremely diverse series of Abū Sa’īd. Nevertheless, like any other book, it naturally cannot be considered all-embracing, especially in the light of the perpetual inflow of the new numismatic material. It would not be out of place to mention that not long ago a new fals (unlisted by Diler) of Abū Sa’īd from Barda’ mint was published². Now, yet another hitherto unknown coin type has surfaced and calls for scholarly attention. With this short paper we would like to discuss a group of peculiar copper fulus discovered in Georgia, as well as the countermarks that some of them bear.

¹ Ömer Diler, *Ilkhans. Coinage of the Persian Mongols* (Istanbul, 2006).

² Alexander Akopyan, and Irakli Paghava, “The Unpublished Fals of Abu Sa’id, Minted in Barda”, in *Proceedings of the International Numismatic Conferences Coins and Monetary Circulation in Mongol States of the 13th-14th C.*, ed. Pavel N. Petrov (Moscow, 2008), 195.

Type description: We have at our disposal nine coins. They constitute two major subtypes, which share the legends and much of the obverse design, whereas the reverse design is seemingly identical in both cases. We present eight specimens of the first subtype (Figs. 1-8) and one specimen of the second subtype (Fig. 9):



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

Obverse (of the 1st subtype): A cross-like geometrical figure within a linear square, with first linear and then beaded circles around. The segments between the linear square and the outer circles are filled with vignettes (?).

The quadrants made by the beams of the cross-like figure and the sides of the linear square contain fragments of the legend (in *naskhī* script, starting from the upper left quadrant):

- Fig. 1: سلطان / ... / سعيد / خان
- Fig. 2: سلطان / ... / سعيد / خان
- Fig. 3: ... / سعيد / ... / ... (much of the obverse is obliterated by the countermark applied to this side of the coin)
- Fig. 4: ... / ... / ابو (?) / ابو (?) (this specimen is very corroded)
- Fig. 5: ? / ? / ? / ? (the legends seems to be extremely distorted, no interpretation would be unequivocal)
- Fig. 6: سلطان / ... / سعيد / (?) (fragment missing)
- Fig. 7: سلطان / ... / سعيد / خان
- Fig. 8: سلطان / ابو (?) / سعيد / ...

Evidently, the full legend is: سلطان / ابو / سعيد / خان



Fig. 9

Obverse (of the second subtype): A cross-like geometrical figure, identical to the first subtype, except for the additional triangular protrusions with dots inside between the beams of the cross-like figure; within a linear square, with just one (?) linear circle around. The segments between the linear square and the outer circles are filled with vignettes (?) instead of the legends.

Reverse (common for both subtypes): Linear square within first linear and then beaded circles. The segments between the linear square and the outer circles are filled with decorative dots and / or vignettes (?). The linear square contains the Sunni shahada (in *kūfī* script), with $\text{Ē}^{\text{sh}}\text{ā}}\text{A}$ seemingly omitted:

$\text{ÜA É}^{\text{sh}}\text{ā}}\text{A Ü}$
 $\text{fĀZ}^{\text{sh}}\text{ā}}\text{Z}$
 $\text{É}^{\text{sh}}\text{ā}}\text{ā}}\text{A} \text{ā}^{\text{sh}}\text{ā}}\text{m}^{\text{sh}}\text{ā}}\text{i}$

The metrology for the available specimens of the first subtype is as follows:

- Fig. 1. Weight 1.62g; diameter 17-19 mm;
- Fig. 2. Weight 1.12g; diameter 19 mm;
- Fig. 3. Weight 1.42g; diameter 18.5-20 mm;
- Fig. 4. Weight 1.26g; diameter 17-18 mm;
- Fig. 5. Weight 1.92g; diameter 18 mm;
- Fig. 6. Weight 1.01g (fragment missing); diameter 16 mm;
- Fig. 7. Weight 1.47g; diameter 17 mm;
- Fig. 8. Weight 1.19g; diameter 20-22.5 mm;

The metrology for the available specimen of the second subtype is as follows:

- Fig. 9. Weight 0.73 g (note incrustation on the reverse); diameter 16.2-17.3 mm;

Die axes could not be established, as it was unclear what was the correct orientation of the obverse (that presented in our images is purely conventional).

Attribution: The surviving fragments of the obverse legends on the first subtype coins point quite unambiguously to Abū Sa'īd as a ruler in whose name this coin type was issued. The other subtype (the second) lacks the name, but is so similar to the previous one that we consider it safe to attribute it to Abū Sa'īd as well. However, to the best of our knowledge, no one has published

this coin type before³. Hence we shall consider this series as a previously unknown coin type of this Ilkhanid dynasty.

For the possible relation of this coin type to Georgian numismatic heritage, please refer to the **Minting place** and **Countermarks** sections of this article.

Denomination: It is established that some of the Ilkhanid cities had a relatively intricate system for producing copper money, at times issuing more than one copper denomination at once⁴. However, that does not seem to be the case with this series. The average weight for seven specimens of the 1st subtype is 1.43 g (we discarded for this purpose the fragmentary coin – Fig. 6). The weight fluctuation (1.12-1.92 g) is relatively insignificant. We consider all eight specimens of the first subtype to belong to the same denomination. The weight of the only available specimen of the second subtype is significantly lower (0.73), despite the incrustation. It is hard to say, judging by this sole coin, whether the second subtype coins were minted to a truly lighter weight standard than the first subtype coins.

Minting place: apparently no mint place is indicated on this coin type (including both subtypes). However, the recorded find locations provide some clues: of the 9 specimens brought to our knowledge, four (Figs. 2, 4, 6, 9) were discovered on the Mtkvari riverbed in the territory of Tbilisi (the 14th c. *Tiflīs*), and five others (Figs. 1, 3, 5, 7-8) were unearthed by metal detectorists somewhere in south-eastern Georgia, possibly, in the environs of Dmanisi (the 14th c. *Dmānīs*). Taking into consideration the evidently absent reporting of the coins of this type from other areas, we consider it permissible to attribute their issue tentatively to the Georgian Kingdom (which produced the Ilkhanid type coinage with the names of the Mongol overlords in this epoch⁵). More specifically, they could have been minted both in Tiflīs and Dmānīs, as both of them issued coins in the Ilkhanid period⁶. At least, it may be postulated that the coppers of this type circulated in eastern provinces of the Georgian Kingdom.

Minting time: The name of Abū Saʿīd is present, but not the precise date. Therefore, this copper type may be roughly dated by his reign, i.e. 1315-1335, which overlaps the reign of Giorgi V the Brilliant in Georgia (1314-1346).

The legend lacks Abū Saʿīd's honorary title *bahādur*. According to Y. Pakhomov, the latter appeared on the coins minted after AH 722⁷. This observation seems to be correct for the major types of silver coins, though numerous exclusions (mostly minor types and subtypes) exist⁸. Moreover, it is unclear whether this trend can be applied to the copper coinage⁹. For the time being we consider it more prudent to abstain from an attempt to narrow down the time period when this coin type could have been issued.

Countermarks: three specimens out of nine (Figs. 1, 3, 8) bear peculiar countermarks (Figs. 11-13), none of which was

earlier recorded for Abū Saʿīd's coins¹⁰. Their connection to Georgia is not impossible¹¹, since the coins proper may have well have been minted somewhere within the Georgian Kingdom (cf. **Minting place**); moreover, their (conjectural) content may lead us in the same direction. The countermarks are as follows:

One coin (Fig. 3) bears the countermark resembling the Georgian letter D in the *Asomtavruli* script (Ⴃ) within a beaded circle (Fig. 11).

It could possibly belong to Davit IX, son and successor of Giorgi V the Brilliant (1346-1360), as there seemed to be no one else with sufficient authority and whose name started with D. However, this is mere supposition: an *Asomtavruli* D countermark was widely used in a somewhat earlier epoch for punching the irregular copper coins of Queen Tamar of Georgia and her second husband Davit Soslani (cf. Fig. 10); and several hypotheses were suggested for explaining its significance, some of them contesting its connection to the name *Davit*¹².



Fig. 10

On the other hand, the resemblance of the countermark in question to Georgian *Asomtavruli* D may be incidental, particularly in the absence (at least, so far) of any more coins bearing it. It is also possible that its shape owes its existence to an overlay of the symbol carved on the countermark punch upon the extant host coin design. For instance, if we remove an already somewhat detached thick dot constituting the right part of the top bar of this “letter”, we would end up with Georgian G, but in *Mkhedruli* script (გ). This is an option, since Abū Saʿīd's contemporary Georgian King was Giorgi V the Brilliant. Moreover, Ts. Ghvaberidze has already published Ilkhanid copper coins (by means of both photoreproduction and drawing) supposedly bearing this initial, namely a *Georgian Mkhedruli G-like ornament*¹³. This numismatist has also published a drawing presenting yet another copper Ilkhanid coin of *Ūljāytū* (1304-1316) with the countermark made by Georgian GI, also in *Mkhedruli* script (გო)¹⁴. Ts. Ghvaberidze attributed both these coins to Giorgi V the Brilliant¹⁵. We had no opportunity for any hands-on *de visu* study of all these coins, and the drawings may be misleading; nevertheless, it would certainly be wrong to ignore this evidence. We have some doubts regarding the coins with the *Georgian Mkhedruli G-like ornament*¹⁶, but the *the countermark* GI (გო)¹⁷ does look very convincing.

³ Cf. Muhammad Seyfeddini, *Monetary System and Monetary Circulation in Azerbaijan of the 12th-15th C. Volume II, 14th-15th C.* (Baku: Elm, 1981), 22-38; Tsiala Ghvaberidze, *Georgia's Relationship with Ilkhanid Iran and Jalayrid State (According to the Numismatic Material)* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1986), 63-65; Tsiala Ghvaberidze, *A Catalogue of the Copper Coins of Ilkhanid Iran (According to the Holdings of the Georgian State Museum)* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1994), 61-136; Diler, *Ilkhans. Coinage of the Persian Mongols*, 438-509.

⁴ for instance, “A series of fulus struck in Tabriz in the early 720s has four clearly defined denominations in the ratio of 1:2:4:8.” Stephen Album, *A Checklist of Islamic Coins, Second Edition* (1998), 107.

⁵ Yevgeniy Pakhomov, *The Coins of Georgia* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1970), 177-189; Ghvaberidze, *Georgia's Relationship with Ilkhanid Iran and Jalayrid State*, 16-43, 56-67.

⁶ Pakhomov, *The Coins of Georgia*, 177-189; Giorgi Tsereteli, “On the Subject of Dmanisi Coin”, *Literary Surveys II* (1944): 167-172; Davit Kapanadze, “About Some Debatable Copper Coins Minted in the 13th-14th C.”, *Messenger of the Georgian SSR Academy of Sciences* Vol. VII, #1-2 (1945): 69-76; Ghvaberidze, *Georgia's Relationship with Ilkhanid Iran and Jalayrid State*, 16-67; Aram Vardanyan, “Some Additions to the Coins with the Inscription “Ulugh Mangyl Ulus Bek”, *Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society* 190 (2007): 10.

⁷ Pakhomov, *The Coins of Georgia*, 180, 182.

⁸ Cf. Diler, *Ilkhans. Coinage of the Persian Mongols*, 438-485.

⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 485-509.

¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.*, 436-437.

¹¹ It is noteworthy, that, according to S. Album, some of the Tabriz fulus of Abū Saʿīd were often counterstamped with symbols of indeterminate significance, perhaps of Georgian origin. Stephen Album, *A Checklist of Islamic Coins*, 107; the ones that the author has had in mind (for instance, on Zeno #95674) (*personal communication with S. Album*) have been different from the counterstamps on this new type of copper fulus of Abū Saʿīd.

¹² Pakhomov, *The Coins of Georgia*, 112-114.

¹³ Ghvaberidze, *Georgia's Relationship with Ilkhanid Iran and Jalayrid State*, 64-65, plate VII, #55; Ghvaberidze, *A Catalogue of the Copper Coins of Ilkhanid Iran*, 134-135, plate XIII, #80-81.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 135-136, plate XIII, #82.

¹⁵ Ghvaberidze, *Georgia's Relationship with Ilkhanid Iran and Jalayrid State*, 64-65; Ghvaberidze, *A Catalogue of the Copper Coins of Ilkhanid Iran*, 134-136.

¹⁶ Ghvaberidze, *Georgia's Relationship with Ilkhanid Iran and Jalayrid State*, 64-65, plate VII, #55; Ghvaberidze, *A Catalogue of the Copper Coins of Ilkhanid Iran*, 134-135, plate XIII, #80-81.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 135-136, plate XIII, #82.

According to Georgian historiographic tradition, Giorgi V the Brilliant liberated Georgia from Mongol sway. However, during his reign the Georgian mints continued to issue the regular Ilkhanid coinage. This fact, along with many other arguments, was employed by D. Lang for postulating almost quite the contrary, that Giorgi V eventually had to cede the eastern provinces of the Kingdom to the Mongols and retreated to the western part of the country¹⁸. Later, D. Lang's arguments were very convincingly impugned by V. Kiknadze¹⁹. However, it is still unclear, what was the extent (and nature) of Giorgi V's control over the mints within his kingdom but issuing the regular Ilkhanid coinage. From this point of view, the appearance of his countermarks on copper Ilkhanid coins, possibly constituting a special local coin type, seems to be very interesting.



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

Two other coins (Figs. 1, 8) bear the countermark that we are incapable of interpreting. However, in this case also, a certain element of the overall outline does look like a Georgian G in *Mkhedruli* script (გ) again (Figs. 12-13).

By way of conclusion, we would like to reiterate that the aforesaid copper fulus constitute a previously unknown coin type of Abū Sa'īd. Their Georgian provenance is possible. As to the countermarks they bear, their Georgian origin is debatable, and can be neither proved nor rejected for the moment. It is hoped that new discoveries will help us to clarify this aspect of Georgian-Mongol numismatics and, more generally, political relationship in the first half of the 14th c.

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A RARE DIRHAM OF THE 'ALID REBEL, ABŪ AL-ḤUSAYN AḤMAD IBN MUḤAMMAD (AH 270)

By Aram Vardanyan (Yerevan)

A rare 'Alid dirham has recently been found that sheds light on a short period of a transition of power in Ṭabaristān in AH 270 – 271. The coin was struck at Madīnat Āmul in AH 270. The coin derives from a hoard discovered in the Orel district of Russia around 2011. Apart from this single 'Alid coin, the hoard also included 3 Abbasid, 53 Sāmānid, 1 imitation of a Sāmānid dirham of Nuḥ ibn Naṣr and 1 Volga Bulgar (Yaltawar period) coin. The earliest coin was dated AH 341 and the oldest, AH 270. The coins of this hoard represented the mints of Āmul, Baṣra, Balkh, Bukhārā, Nisābūr, Samarqand and al-Shāsh.²⁰

AR Dirham. Madīnat Āmul, AH 270.

Obv. 1: عبد الله / لا له لا لله / وحده لا شريك له / لقائم بالحق

Obv. 2: بسم الله ضرب هذا درهم بمدينة أمل سنة سبعين و مائتين

Obv. 3: Qur'ān, XLII, 23.

Rev. 1: بو لحسين / محمد / رسول / لله / حمد بن محمد

Rev. 2: Qur'ān, XXII, 39.

¹⁸ David Lang, "Georgia in the Reign of Giorgi the Brilliant (1314-1346)", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* Vol. 17, No. 1 (1955): 74-91.

¹⁹ Vazha Kiknadze, "The Critical Review of D. Lang's Article "Georgia in the Reign of Giorgi the Brilliant", In *Issues of Georgian History of the Feudal Period, V*, ed. Mamia Dumbadze, and Kveli Chkhatarashvili (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1986), 113-130.

²⁰ My thanks to Vadim Kalinin and Andrey Gomzin for providing me with this information.



The name of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad cited beneath the reverse area should refer to Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm, the son-in-law of the al-dā'ī, Ḥasan b. Zayd and about whom Ibn Isfandiyyar left a passage in his narration. According to that source, in Rajab AH 270 Ḥasan ibn Zayd fell sick and bade his son-in-law, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, who was also the army chief (*ṣāhib al-jaysh*), to take the oath of allegiance from the people of Ṭabaristān in favour of his brother, Muḥammad ibn Zayd. Aḥmad, however, taking advantage of the death of Ḥasan in Rajab, rebelled and seized the treasury. He made people recognise him as a great dā'ī and took the title *al-qā'im bī al-ḥaqq*. He then received obedience from both Daylamite chieftains and the Bāwandīd rulers, Qārīn and Pādhūsān, the sons of Ispahbād Rustam of Firrim.

As news arrived at Jurjān, where he was at the moment of his brother's death, Muḥammad collected an army and made for Āmul. He arrived in Sārī on Jumādā I AH 271, but could not catch his opponent, who had left the city for Āmul. Muḥammad took possession of Sārī and then set out for Āmul. Aḥmad, accompanied by his allies, Laytham and Nu'mān, the local Daylamite rulers, entrenched himself at Jālūs. Muḥammad ibn Zayd pursued them and seized the city, having taken his opponents captive. He then made for Āmul where he arrived at in the same month. He was proclaimed the great dā'ī instead of his late brother. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad was obliged not only to return the contents of the treasury, but also to yield up the jewels and gold ornaments of his sister, the widow of Ḥasan ibn Zayd. However, this did not bring safety to Aḥmad. He was soon accused of a new crime and sent in chains to the Ṣaffarīd 'Amr ibn Layth. On the way to Sārī he was killed together with his ally, Laytham. His other ally, Rustam b. Qārīn, was soon driven out of his territories and taken prisoner. He was pardoned only after he had agreed to pay all the taxes to Muḥammad ibn Zayd and to dissolve his army in his possessions.²¹

The coin published here provides numismatic evidence for the ten-month rebellion (Rajab AH 270 - Jumādā I 271) of Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad at Āmul. He claimed his right to the Imāmate thanks to his direct connection to Ḥasan ibn Zayd and his marriage to Ḥasan's daughter. With the testimony of the narrative source, this coin can definitely be dated after Rajab and till the end of the year AH 270. Probably, such coins were issued immediately after the recognition of Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad as chief dā'ī with the purpose of legitimising his power in the province. At the same time, the use of the Qur'ānic verses XLII, 23 and XXII, 39, that first appeared on Āmul coins struck in AH 253,²² reappearing on Niṣābūr dirhams of AH 262,²³ and then inscribed on coins struck at the mint of Madīnat Āmul in AH 270 and 274,²⁴ prove that Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad shared the ideological views of Ḥasan ibn Zayd and his successor.

A NEW DENOMINATION (1/8 DIRHAM) AND A NEW HALF DIRHAM FOR THE SILVER COINAGE OF THE MARINIDS

By Ludovic Liétard

The Marinid dynasty entered the history of Morocco at the beginning of the 13th century and the silver coinage of this dynasty consists of dirhams, half dirhams, and quarter dirhams (based on a weight of 1.5 g for a full dirham).

This article introduces a new type of Marinid half dirham and a subdivision, the 1/8 dirham (the theoretical weight being 0.1875 g). Both of them can be attributed to the last Marinid ruler, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq II (AH 823-869 / AD 1420-1465) and it is the first time that a 1/8 dirham is reported for the Marinids.

The half dirham

This half dirham (0.75 g and 16 x 16 mm) bears the end of verse 13 of sura 61 of the Qur'an on the obverse (see Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: obverse of the half dirham

Obverse:

الحمد لله تعالى
نصر من الله
وفتح قريب
وبشر المؤمنين

The end of the word تعالى is not very easy to read but the close-up of Fig. 2 clearly shows the final letters لي written between the first two lines.

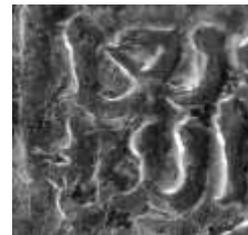


Fig. 2: the word تعالى

This obverse can be translated by "Praise is to God, may He be exalted / Help from God / And an imminent victory / And give glad tidings to the believers". The three last lines are the end of verse 13 of sura 61 of the Qur'an.

The reverse (see Fig. 3) bears the name of 'Abd al-Ḥaqq with the mint name Tāza (تازي) and is already reported for the reverse of a half dirham struck by 'Abd al-Ḥaqq II (Hohertz 290 [5]).



Fig. 3: reverse of the half dirham

²¹ Ibn Isfandiyyar, *An Abridged Translation of the History of Ṭabaristān*, ed. by Ed. G. Browne, Gibb Memorial Fund, London, 1905, pp. 187 - 9.

²² Stern S., 'The coins of Āmul', *NC* 1967, no. 2, p. 211.

²³ Vardanyan A., 'Numismatic evidence for the presence of Zaydī 'Alids in the Northern Jibāl, Gilān and Khurāsān from AH 250 to 350 (AD 864 - 961)', *NC* 2010, nos. 3-4, pp. 358-9.

²⁴ Stern, op. cit., no. 4, p. 212.

Reverse:

عن امر عبد الله
عبد الحق امير
المسلمين ايده
الله تازى

This reverse can be translated by "At the command of the servant of God / 'Abd al-Ḥaqq commander / Of the Muslims; God help him / Taza".

However, the mint name Taza (تازى) is not very readable (the last letter is missing due to the hole) but it can be easily guessed (see Fig. 4).

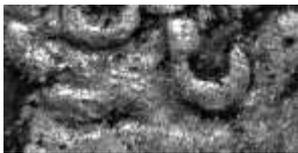


Fig. 4: the mint name Tāza

The extract of the verse 13 of sura 61 of the Qur'an which appears on the obverse is not new to medieval Islamic numismatics from Morocco and al-Andalus since it can be found:

- On more than 25 different gold coins (quarter and half dinars) attributed to the Marinids (see [1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 11]).
- On a single type of half dinar struck in Murcia in the years AH 644, AH 646, AH 647, and AH 648 by Baha' al-Dawla of the Hudids of Murcia (Medina Gómez 221 [7], Rodríguez Lorente 106 [10], Lavoix 777 [6] and Vives 2156 [12]).
- On a half dinar struck in Gharnata by the Nasrid, Muhammad XIII (Medina Gómez 260 [7], Rodríguez Lorente 36 [9] and Vives 2189, 2190 [12]).

As a consequence, this verse has been reported only for gold coins and mainly for the Marinid dynasty. It can also be found on a modern Moroccan gold coin (Eustache 1295 [3]) dated AH 1297 (AD 1879-1880). It is the first time that this verse is reported for a silver coin from Morocco or al-Andalus, this coin being a half dirham struck by the last Marinid ruler, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq II (AH 823-869 / AD 1420-1465).

The 1/8 dirham

This 1/8 dirham (0.18 g and 8 x 11 mm) bears on its two sides a shorter extract of the previously introduced verse (the end of verse 13 of sura 61 of the Qur'an, see Fig. 5 and Fig. 6).



Fig. 5: obverse of the 1/8 dirham

Obverse:



Fig. 6: reverse of the 1/8 dirham

Reverse:

و فتح
قريب

This obverse can be translated by "Help from God" and the sentence continues on the reverse, the translation of which is "And an imminent victory".

It is very probable that this 1/8 dirham was struck by 'Abd al-Ḥaqq II since:

- It bears a verse which is only reported for the silver coinage of Morocco and al-Andalus on the half dirham previously introduced in this article (which bears the name of 'Abd al-Ḥaqq).
- The legend on the 1/8 dirham can be considered a shorter version of the one on the half dirham.

It is worth mentioning that an anonymous quarter dinar bearing the same legend (without addition) has been attributed to the Marinids by Brèthes (Brèthes [1] 1375). The same coin has also been attributed to the Marinid, Abū'l Hassan 'Alī, by El Hadri (El Hadri [2] 121) and to the Marinid, Abū Yahya Abū Bakr, by Hazard (Hazard [4] 705).

Conclusion

A new type of Marinid half dirham (with mint name Tāza) and a Marinid 1/8 dirham (the theoretical weight being 0.1875 g) have been described in this article. They can be attributed to the last Marinid ruler, 'Abd al-Ḥaqq II (AH 823-869 / AD 1420-1465).

The 1/8 dirham is a new denomination for the Marinids which has never been reported until now (El Hadri [2] proposes a different Marinid 1/8 dirham, El Hadri 143, but since its weight is 0.3 g it should be considered a quarter dirham).

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NOTES ON THE MONETARY SITUATION IN PERSIA AS RECORDED BY A DUTCH TRADE MISSION TO THE COURT OF SHAH ABBAS II.

By Dick Nauta, Dieren, the Netherlands.

1. Introduction

In the early years of the 17th century, the international trade of the Netherlands Republic of the Seven United Provinces expanded rapidly. Companies were established by private charter to engage in this trade. The most important of these enterprises was the United East-India Company (VOC) which developed over almost 200 years into a large global trading power with establishments in many of the countries along the northern and eastern shores and islands of the Indian Ocean and contiguous seas. After the Portuguese had been ousted from their fortress at Hormuz which controlled access to the Persian Gulf, Persia became one of the areas of VOC interest.

In 1651, the VOC sent Joan Cunaeus as their envoy to Persia. In his entourage was Cornelis Speelman, his secretary, who kept the official Journal (logbook) of their travels and described all events and noteworthy things they observed and experienced. This manuscript Journal, in essence an administrative report, has been elaborated for publication by A. Hotz, who himself had lived, worked and travelled extensively in Persia as a merchant and scholar from 1874 to 1903. See biographical notes on these three persons^A

Hotz transcribed the manuscript Journal for print^B and supplied the core text with extensive explanatory and complementary footnotes, together running to 378 pages. To this he added an extensive Introduction of 100 pages and 15 pages of literature quoted. In addition he produced four main annexes on relevant subjects, a list of additions and corrections and an index, adding up to 66 pages. Hotz also included a fold-out route map of scale 1: 2,000,000^C and two folded plates of a view and a plan of Persepolis to illustrate Speelman's extensive description of the ruins. The completed work was published in Amsterdam in 1908 as number 26 in the third series of the publications of the Dutch Historical Society based in Utrecht. It runs to a total of over 580 pages.

One of the four annexes provided by Hotz concerns his notes regarding the coins, measures and weights of Persia as recorded in the Journal by Speelman. Using his own knowledge and observations from his days in Persia during the late 19th century, and based on a good number of references from early and later travelogues and other relevant literature sources, Hotz provides 11 pages with copious notes on Persian coinage during the 17th century.

As Hotz's 1908 publication in Dutch is unlikely to have come to the notice of an international public of persons interested in Persian numismatics, it was thought useful to provide an annotated translation in English of the Annex on Coins, even if this comes more than a hundred years since it was first published.

2. Historical context

To provide a setting for Hotz's Annex on Coins, a very brief background to the Journal, mainly derived from Hotz's introduction, will serve.

The Dutch were relative late-comers to the trade with Persia. Venetian, Portuguese, French and British travellers and traders had preceded them there. Dutch involvement in the Persian trade only developed after the VOC had securely established its base at Batavia^D, from where almost all their trading operations were directed. Cunaeus' Embassy to the Peacock Throne was initiated from Batavia with the main objective to try and obtain better trading conditions for the Company which already had a trading establishment at Gamron, present-day Bandar Abbas.

The Persians under the Safavid Shah Abbas II (1642-1666 / 1052-1077) tolerated Dutch presence and participation in their trade as long as the Company agreed to buy certain fixed quantities of silk at pre-determined prices, more or less by way of

levying a fee. This cumbersome imposition was barely profitable and often led to financial losses as the retail price of the silk would rarely cover its cost^E. Thus Cunaeus was required to try to either obtain a reduction in the quantities of silk to be purchased, or to obtain the silk at better prices, preferably both, or find another more favourable way out of this trade encumbrance. Besides, there were a number of internal issues to be settled with company staff resident in Persia and sundry matters to attend to. Cunaeus' detailed instructions, issued and signed by his six superiors in Batavia, cover eight pages^F.

The Journal written by Cornelis Speelman details their voyage from Batavia to Gamron, undertaken in the Company's yacht D'Sperwer, with *en route* inspection visits to some Company establishments on India's south coast, as well as their land journey from Gamron to Isfahan with all its day-to-day occurrences^G. Once the Embassy arrived in Isfahan the Journal relates in detail the negotiations conducted there, with all the amounts in all kinds of money recorded. Those parts of the journal thus cannot be read and appreciated without having at least some understanding of the monetary situation of the time, hence Hotz's informative Annex B. Coins, Measures and Weights, of which the translation of part 1, Coins, forms the main part of the present article.

3. The Journal

The text of Speelman's manuscript Journal was transcribed by Hotz in its original form, with all the inconsistencies of spelling and grammar that characterised written Dutch of 400 years ago. Sentences are complex and convoluted, often difficult to understand or unravel, partly too because of unfamiliar words and expressions. Many sentences continue as one long string of words, touching on several different matters with little or no punctuation, frequently running to the best of half a page or so, making it difficult to grasp the meanings of matters described.

In the manuscript, most financial matters relating to VOC affairs *per se* are expressed in Dutch gulden / guilders. Sometimes amounts in local coin are converted to gulden equivalent.

The unit of Persian money most frequently used for business transactions, prices of commodities, cost of carriage, custom fees, weighing charges, taxes, fines, debts, transfers, money owed etc. is the *toman*, abbreviated in the manuscript to th^o/n. Smaller payments, such as for meals, for lodging, for hire of staff, for personal services, for presents, for (frequently generous) rewards etc. appear mostly to be made in *mahmudi*, rendered in the manuscript as m^a/oy.

The Journal reveals a culture of reciprocal gifts on a truly royal scale, which the VOC envoy has to keep up with under the pretence of doing so in the name of the Dutch 'king', i.e. the Stadhouder, even though the company is in Persia acting on its own as an autonomous body. The presents are often in gold coin, that is in '*Moorse ducaten*', possibly Ottoman sultanis.

Not only were amounts in money given and received as presents, but also horses, weapons, quantities of spices, precious robes etc. were exchanged, and in one case even a big dog was presented to the '*sulthan*', i.e. the governor of Gamron^H. Those Persian servants lucky enough to be charged with delivering such presents to the Dutch deputation were paid handsome rewards in *mahmudis* or even *tomans*, ducats or Spanish 'pieces-of-eight' reals which latter coins to a certain degree were current in the region^I.

Most amounts mentioned in the Journal are expressed either in full *tomans* or *mahmudis*, and there are clear exchange rates in use throughout: 1 *toman*, a unit of account only, = 100 *mahmudis* = 40 gulden; 2½ *mahmudi* = 1 gulden.

There are a few instances of large amounts being expressed in e.g. 1426 *tomans* and 12½ *mahmudis*. As regards amounts in gulden, these are mostly rounded off to the full gulden, but occasionally we find amounts specified into gulden, stuivers and duiten. An example is to be found on p. 250: 3811 *toman* and 22 69/100th *mahmudi* equals 152,449 gulden, 1 stuiver and 8 duiten! Agility of mind to deal with such calculations must have been an undeniable asset in those days! We may assume that the VOC made use of printed tables which would assist in making quick conversions both ways.

Amounts expressed in *toman* were in practice made up of a great deal of small coin, and we read on p. 317 that 'they had been busy all day counting an amount of 750 *toman*' [30,000 gulden]¹.

In addition to the *toman* and *mahmudi* as main Persian monetary units, there is limited mention in the Journal of other coins such as *ory*, *lari* (Dutch: *larijn*, in the Journal expressed as *l^a/n*), of *khazbegi* and of *abbasi*, but in the company's financial records such coins appear not to have played much of a role.

In the journal there are only few instances where amounts of money can be clearly identified as prices for goods or services obtained². It is clear that the Journal is not a financial register. The VOC was in business for money, not for adventure, discoveries or social activities. Very likely there was a bookkeeper with the mission who was in charge of detailed recording of actual financial transactions, debits and credits³. We find in the Journal records of negotiations and transactions involving money, but the Journal is not a financial accounting document.

4. The Annex on Coins

While reading and transcribing the manuscript Journal for publication, Hotz must have been baffled by the profusion of different monies used by the servants of the VOC as recorded in the numerous transactions found in the Journal. In order to make sense of what he was retrieving for posterity from the manuscript, Hotz himself must have gone to considerable lengths to study and understand the monetary complexities of Shah Abbas II's day and it must have been from his own learning during this process that he composed the notes that make up the text of the annex on coins.

Hotz's text on Persian coins, knowledgeable and commendable as it is and interesting as much of it may be, also has its limitations. Regrettably, Hotz provides not a single illustration of any of the types of coins he discusses; rather, he refers to illustrations in other works, nowadays mostly difficult to find. Neither does he give us much information on the dimensions (diameter, thickness) of the coins; only here and there a weight or shape is mentioned. The physical appearance of the coins is given scant attention and the composition of Arabic or Persian inscriptions on the coins merit mention only once or twice. Hotz's preoccupation appears to be with relative weights and values, relationships, names, etymology, derivation and origins of coins, rather than with their physical appearance. As regards purity of silver or gold, he states only once that silver content remained stable over a long period of time and throughout the realm, and provides a few examples of the very high purity of gold, 23½ carat, used at the royal court (see note 9 below), but hardly more than that. Apart from small presentation coins called *tila*, it is noteworthy that no Persian gold coins appear to have been current at the time.

Hotz's annex, therefore, appears to have more a monetary rather than a numismatic perspective. This is in line with the purpose for which he prepared his notes, that is, to provide clarifications for the financial transactions described in the Journal's text. These limitations should not distract from the annex's undoubted importance and value.

Through his broad education and his many years in Persia and adjacent territories, Hotz had developed a deep interest in the country, its history, geography and culture; he was widely read and had acquired an admirable knowledge about Persia and everything related to it; his writing in the Annex on Coins, here presented in translation, appears at first not very structured. He struggles with the amount of detail that he has at his disposal and tends to hop from one thing to another when dealing with all the bits of knowledge and information he has gathered from his several disparate sources. Thus the textual quantity of his foot notes almost equals that of the annex itself. He tends to be cryptic, uses many abbreviations which readers are assumed to understand, and freely quotes from Dutch, English, German and French sources in equal measure. In Hotz's day, Dutch readers at whom his publication would have been aimed were assumed to be proficient in their European languages.

5. Notes on translation and editing

Hotz places many remarks, notes and details in brackets in his text. Where possible, I have tried to do away with the brackets and integrate information in the text. Hotz's footnotes were serially numbered for each page; I have mostly retained their original sequence and content and presented them as end notes with a serial numbering from 1 to 20. In addition notes have been provided for the purpose of the present article. These are indicated as A to O. A few explanatory words have been added in the text in square brackets.

The word 'our' in the translated text should be understood to refer to 'Dutch' or 'Netherlands'; words as 'nowadays, at present, currently' etc. refer to Hotz's years (1874 to 1903), and not to Cunaeus' time in Persia. In view of the vintage of the text I have chosen to retain the words Persia and Persian throughout, rather than substitute them with the now politically more correct Iran and Iranian, which would make little sense in this context. Hotz writes *Sefeviden* throughout. In keeping with more common present-day usage, I have rendered this here as Safavid(s).

In his text, Hotz uses a few brief quotes from literature in (old) English and French. Where these occur, I have indicated them in '*italics*'. As regards the few French quotes, I have provided their translation at the end of this article, so as not to further clutter the text unnecessarily.

In order to provide value indications and comparisons for amounts and coins, Hotz uses, based on its original use in this context and for an originally Dutch readership, the Dutch gulden (guilder), which in the text, where not written in full, has been rendered by the traditional *f* (*florin*) placed before the amount. In the few cases where amounts in (French) francs are mentioned, this has been expressed in full. It is, however, not always clear whether such conversions refer to the modern 20th century gulden or to the 17th century gulden. I did not consider it meaningful to try to relate the gulden / guilder values of around 1900 to present day international euro or US-dollar values. For those readers yet interested to do so, the Dutch guilder was converted to the Euro in 2001 at a value of 2.203:1. Needless to say, conversion rates of guilder to US-dollars or pound sterling rates in Hotz's day, say around 1900, were very different from the present.

In the text of the annex, values of some coins are converted to amounts expressed in *dinār*, which, as Hotz is at pains to explain, underlies the total value system of Persian coinage. Both the *dinār* and the even more frequently encountered *tūman* are units of account, fictive coins.

Where coin weights are expressed, I have, in keeping with the International Metric Standard, used **g** for gram, rather than the now obsolete **gr.** as used in Hotz's text.

To maintain concord with the original text of the annex, its page numbering has been indicated in the translated text in square brackets e.g. [p.398].

I am not knowledgeable regarding Persian numismatics; I have endeavoured to render Hotz's work in a comprehensible and manageable modern text and to place it in a relevant context. Although some editing of Hotz's text was unavoidable, I have refrained from providing unwarranted modifications or interpretations. Other than my few remarks about obvious limitations in an article such as this, I cannot provide an assessment of the numismatic or monetary correctness and value of Hotz's text on coins in relation to other information available to Persian numismatists. The Annex on Coins is here presented for an international numismatically interested reading public in the way that Hotz meant his Dutch readers to understand it a hundred years ago.

6. The Translation

JOURNAL OF THE JOURNEY TO PERSIA BY THE ENVOY OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, JOAN CUNAEUS IN 1651-1652, KEPT BY CORNELIS SPEELMAN.

Produced by A. Hotz, with route map and plan and plate of Persepolis.

[Published in] Amsterdam, Johannes Müller, 1908.

Annex B, Coins, Measures and Weights

1. Coins¹ [pp. 394 – 404]

The unit of the Persian monetary system during the Safavids was the *dinār*. Originally this was a standard gold coin of a weight of 72 grains of barley² and a value of about *f* 6.50 according to von Kremer. This standard gold coin (denarius, denier, denary) together with the silver *dirhem* and copper *fil*s, was adopted by the Arabs from the Byzantine Empire. [p.395] As a result of the [Muslim] conquest of Persia, the coin got introduced there³.

Already before the rise of the Safavids [in 907/1501], the *dinār* as a coin had disappeared and the term was merely used as a unit of account, whose insignificant fictive value was reckoned to be about *f* 0.004. The *dinār* now formed the basis according to which the value of the current coinage was expressed. This has meanwhile been convincingly demonstrated by two names which under the later Safavids equally denoted units of account: the *bīstī*⁴ from Persian *bīst* = twenty and the *tūman* which is Mongol for ten thousand.

In Persia, gold coins were only minted to serve as presents for the population at new year (*no-rūz*) and at the occasion of accession to the throne, that is, as coins to be scattered. They were called *tila*, or *altūn* in Turkish, both terms signifying gold, and *sherēfi*, that is, noble, similar to the old term ‘noble’ used in Europe for certain gold coins. These scattered coins, according to Tavernier, had a value of around *f* 2.50; Chardin gives their weight and fineness as that of the German ducat, which thus would be at least double the value quoted by Tavernier. The Persian authorities were not bound by any specific dimension or weight, as these coins formed no legal tender, and only circulated on the basis of their intrinsic gold value. This was very much the same for imported ducats: those of Venice, (*zeczien*, *zeczino*) whose value was variable, but which usually exchanged against 26 to 28 *shahis*, that is around *f* 5.20 to *f* 5.60 of the United Provinces, still very much in circulation in the early years of the 19th century, and those of the German States. The import of foreign coins, whether gold or silver, was forbidden; even small quantities, brought along for travel expenses, [p.396] had to be declared and taken to the mint to be smelted, after which the counter-value was paid out in local currency. In case one failed to do so, any [foreign] coins discovered on leaving the country would be confiscated. Equally, upon departure from the country, one was obliged to declare the money in one’s possession, and an export duty would be levied to the value of one *shahi* (*f* 0.20) per ducat^N.

Coins used to be struck by hammer; only in 1877, under Nasred-Din Shah, European technology of coin production was introduced. Apart from the *bīstī* and the *khazbegi*, which were oval in shape (Tavernier)⁵, and the *lari* (a small, folded silver bar), all other coins had a more or less precisely round shape⁶. The silver coins on one side showed the Islamic creed with the names of the twelve Imams and on the other side the mint town, the year and in most cases the name of the Shah in the shape of a *distichon* of which ‘Abbas II used two in rhyme. Since ‘Ismaël II, almost a century before, this had not happened. In R.S. Poole’s translation: “Throughout the world imperial money came, Struck by God’s grace in ‘Abbas Sani’s (the Second) name”; and: “Lo! at this time throughout the world imperial money came, Struck by God’s grace in ‘Ali’s watchdog ‘Abbas Sani’s name”. ‘Watchdog’ here refers to the guardian of Imam ‘Ali’s rights and interests. Copper coins on one side usually had some kind of image; Tavernier mentions the Lion and Sun, but more usually it is an animal, more in particular one that occurs in the Tatar zodiac. Olearius⁷ avers that these animal symbols were different for each mint town and that each year the coins were withdrawn from circulation and struck anew with a different symbol. Their reverse shows the name of the mint town.

[p.397] A number of towns possessed a mint⁸. In the extensive collection [of Persian coins] of the British Museum there are coins struck in 26 different places, of which nowadays five no longer are

in Persia: two are in Central Asia and three in the Caucasus. All the same, fineness and weight remained so constant, that habitually [large numbers of] coins were not counted but weighed. Even during Hanway’s days in 1743 silversmiths used to weigh with coins, rather than weights.

The coining right for silver was very considerable: 7½%; for copper it was only between ½ and 1% with the result that coppersmiths frequently used copper coins as raw material for the production of pots and pans.

Payment in bullion gold or silver was not rare; in such cases bars or broken, worn utensils might be used⁹

During the Safavid period, only insignificant quantities of silver were mined within Persia. In earlier periods however, silver was mined. Morier in his ‘A Journey through Persia’ p. 238, writes that most of the money in circulation consisted of silver from a mine in Bokhara, and he mentions mines in Azerbeidjan and near Shiraz, which, however, yielded little.

In the mid-17th century, the relation of the value of gold to silver was around 1:14.

In two regards, the Persian monetary system under the Safavids was much to be preferred over the chaotic situation which during that period and continuing long after, obtained in Europe, and not least in the Netherlands. It was based on [p.398] a decimal system and there was unity throughout the realm.

Tūman in Mongol denotes ten thousand (*dinār*), an expression similar to the Dutch word ‘ton’¹⁰. In a memorandum, composed in 1640 by the president of Persian trade in the [Dutch United] East India Company [VOC], Wollebrandt Geleynsz. de Jongh¹⁰, the value of the *tūman* is stated as 39 gulden and 9 6/7 stuivers. In the same year he proposed to the Government in Batavia, in order to simplify book-keeping, to adopt *f* 40 as the value of one *tūman*, which was approved¹¹. With this coin as basis, the value of the other coins can be deduced¹². [p.399]

| [Nominal] | Dinār | Approximately |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Tūman, fictive coin | 10,000 (= 40 gulden / guilders) | <i>f</i> 40.- |
| Silver coins | | |
| Hèzar <i>dinār</i> , Ori | 1000 | <i>f</i> 4.- |
| Pendj sad <i>dinār</i> , Riyāl | 500 | <i>f</i> 2.- |
| Abbasi | 200 | <i>f</i> 0.80 |
| Abbasi seh shahi | 150 | <i>f</i> 0.60 |
| Lari | 125 | <i>f</i> 0.50 |
| Mahmūdi | 100 | <i>f</i> 0.40 |
| Shahi | 50 | <i>f</i> 0.20 |
| Bīstī | 20 | <i>f</i> 0,08 |
| Copper coins | | |
| Khazbegi | 5 | <i>f</i> 0.02 |
| Nīm khazbegi | 2.5 | <i>f</i> 0.01 |
| Fūlus | 0.5 | <i>f</i> 0.002 |

Hèzar dinār, one thousand dinar. Geleynsz de Jongh in his memorandum mentions this coin as *ory* and also *oorij*. Tavernier uses *or*. This points to the [French] origin of those terms: gold. It is probable that Europeans in Persia used this name for the small gold coins [p.400] that were scattered as mentioned above, and which the Persians also called *tila*, i.e. gold. Possibly at some time, these gold coins had a value of a thousand dinar, which is why the foreigners applied this name to the later silver coin of the same value¹³. I have found no evidence that the word *ori* was adopted by the Persians themselves. Chardin knows this coin as ‘*pièce de cinq abassis*’ and adds that it was struck ‘*par curiosité: il n’y en a point dans le courant du commerce*’. Tavernier provides an image (II, 590, No.1) and thus contradicts himself where he says (I, 136) that the *or* is a money of account. The British Museum has several of these coins of different years. (See Poole’s Catalogue with image Pl. II, No. 57 – of 1684)¹⁴.

Pendj sad dinār, five hundred *dinār* or *riyāl*. Chardin uses for this coin ‘*double cinq chahis*’ and mentions that, just as the coins of 1000 dinars, it was struck only ‘*par curiosité*’. Tavernier speaks of *reale*, written by the Persians as ‘*riyāl*’, which name apparently

was applied to the Spanish *real de ocho* (*sic*), which had been introduced in Persia during the first half of the 16th century and which was valued there at 5.75 francs, but whose real average value amounted to only 5.33 francs. Tavernier sets its value at 8 *shahi*. Geoffrey Duckett in 1574 mentions 'an incredible summe of Dutch dollars'¹⁵ which in his day was being imported into Persia for the purchase of silk. Without a doubt it concerns here either Spanish *reals* or German *Thalers*. It was only with the arrival of the [Dutch] East India Company in Persia [p.401] in 1622 that the considerable import of our [*i.e.* Dutch] '*reals of eight*' started. A Persian coin by the name of *riyāl* is mentioned by Morier (1808, *A journey through Persia*, App. 1), who equates its value to eight *shahi*, just as Tavernier did, but in Morier's day these counted for 1250 dinar and weighed 2 *miskāl*, 6 *nūkhūd* pure silver. This coin was produced from 1710 to 1858¹⁶. At the same time, the term *riyal* was applied to foreign coins. Scott Waring (1802, *A tour to Sheeraz*, p. 128), mentions it as such. This probably concerns the *Maria Theresia Thaler*, which even at present circulates around the Persian Gulf and is known there as *Riyāl* or even *Taleri*. There this coin is avidly bought up by those going to Mekka on pilgrimage, because it is readily current along the shores of the Red Sea. In our times the name *riyāl* is in daily use for the coins of 1¼ *kran* (1 *riyāl*) and 2½ *krans* (2 *riyāls*).

Abbasi. This coin was first minted by 'Abbas I and named after him. Four different *abbasis* of varying weight are known. Chardin mentions one of 18 *sols*, that is 8.199g; Tavernier gives a slightly higher weight of 18 *sols*, 6 *deniers* which equals 8.424g. Concerning the other two no particulars can be provided here. [But see also note 12* below]

Abbasi seh shahi. Apparently an *abbasi* of three *shahi*. Chardin, and as far as I know no other author, mentions a coin which he calls *abassi de chayé* (read: *shahi*) and which he equals with 1½ *Mahmūdi* and therefore equals 3 *shahi*. It is probable that the word '*de*' in Chardin's spelling is a printing error for '*se* (*seh* = three)'.
Lari – In the text of the Journal [p.303] and also by Geleynsz de Jongh mentioned as *larijn*. Named after the town of Lār, the *lari* was especially current around the Persian Gulf but after the conquest of Lār [p.402] by 'Abbas I at the end of the 16th century, apparently soon discontinued. However, as a unit of account, the name continued for a considerable time. Lockyer, who did not find the *lari* around the Persian Gulf, thought that it only occurred in Isfahan. Chardin puts its weight at 11 *sols*, 3 *deniers*, that is 5.12g. Olearius (p. 560) and Tavernier (II, p. 589) provide images of this curious coin: a small rod of pure silver, folded double and provided with a stamp, to the thickness of a goose feather, and about one eighth of its length ('*un travers de pouce*' according to Chardin). Tavernier also mentions the half *lari* and says that both were struck by independent Sheikhs in the surroundings of Basra. This was also very much the case on the island of Ormūz, when the Portuguese ruled there, and also in N.W. Hindostan. By the end of the 16th century the *lari* was current throughout India as far as Malacca and Ceylon. Olearius informs us that it existed in Persia as a coin of the realm during Shah Isma'el I. Indeed, a specimen of this coin is known with a weight of 5.184g.

Mahmūdi – Chardin states that the name of this coin derives from Sultan Mahmūd of Ghazna, who first had it struck '*il y a quelques quatre cents ans*' which therefore would have been around 1270. However, Mahmūd reigned from 998-1030. If Chardin's dating is correct, he must have meant Gazan Mahmūd (1295-1304), according to Schindler the descendant of Djengiz-khan. Olearius avers that this coin, the double *shahi*, was already being minted by Mūhammed Khodabendeh in 1577, who named it *Khodabendehi*. Schindler is of the opinion that this coin was also named Mūhammedi and not Mahmūdi, which, through contraction, may easily be rendered as Mahmedi or Mamedì and that therefore it is probable that this coin was first struck by Mūhammed Khodabendeh. Even at the present day, in southern Persia, for 'two shahi' the accounting term Mamedì or Mahmedi is in use, and not Mamūdi or Mahmūdi¹⁷. The *mahmūdi* continued in circulation [p.403] during Safavid rule. Nadir Shah too retained this coin, but during the period of disturbances after his death it disappeared; in the lists of coins of the early 19th century it no longer features.

Shahi – that is: royal. According to Chardin it was first coined by 'Abbas I. It was maintained in circulation as a silver coin up to the early years of the 19th century. Southgate in 1837 mentions it as a small copper coin to the value of 2½ stuiver; presently this coin is produced in Belgium, in nickel, and has a value of around f 0.01125.

Bīsti – from Persian *bīst*, meaning twenty. Already in 1571 Vincenzio d'Alessandri mentions the *bīsti* as a widely circulating coin under shah Tahmasp I. In those days it was also the name for a unit of weight, as in former days used to be the case with so many coins. Olearius finds this coin during the reign of Sèfi I and pictures it in his book (p. 560); Chardin mentions that [it or it is] is was still being struck during 'Abbas I. After that however, it apparently ceased to exist as a coin but continued in use as a unit of account. These days, in daily usage, the term is inappropriately applied to a unit of account equal to 10 *dinār*, the *kran*, which is about f 0.225, and consists of 1000 *dinār*.

Khazbegi – also written *Ghazbegi* and *Ghazbek*¹⁸. Originally this was the name of a weight of two *miskāl* of Siraf which equals 16.2676g. Later on coins were struck that contained this weight in copper and which thus acquired the name of the weight¹⁹. Olearius writes *kasbeki* and informs us that the usual name of the coin was *pūl*, which literally means 'money'. Even at present, copper money (actually nickel), is called *pūl-i-siyah*, that means black money, and mostly simply *pūl*.

Tavernier writes *casbequé* and provides a picture. Chardin writes *kasbequi* and Hanway *kazbekie*. Lockyer, who only [p.404] visited the Persian Gulf, writes *coz* and adds 'or *pice*', which is the name of a copper coin of British India. Geleynsz de Jongh too mentions the name *pays*. Towards the end of the 17th century the name appears to be no longer in use. In Fars and Būshīr the *ghaz* exists as a unit of account, being 1/100 *kran* equal to 10 *dinār*, elsewhere (see above) named *bīsti*.

Nīm khazbegi – half *khazbegi* is only mentioned by Chardin.

Fūlūs, the plural of Arabic *fals*, mostly pronounced *fihs*, is the word generally used for any small copper coin²⁰. *Fūlūs* of the 17th century weighed 1/10 of a *khazbegi* and were solely used in alms giving. No travellers mention this coin, with the exception of Herbert (p.314): '*Fluces (like the Turks Aspars) ten to a Cozbeq*'. Geleynsz de Jongh mentions that the '*casbogis* are subdivided into several smaller pieces which are mostly in use among the poor folk and which in terms of commerce are of no consideration'.

Nowadays, a similar coin with the name *Jendeki*, is minted in Meshhed only, to a value of 80 or 85 to a *kran* of approximately f0.225. Many of these have no imprint of a die.

7. End notes (Hotz's original footnotes with, additionally, some of his footnotes from the Journal to which he refers in his annex).

1) (p.394) The following European publications contain data concerning the monetary system at the time of the Safavids. As regards contemporaries, there are the two French jewellers Chardin, *Voyages*, IV, p. 180-187 and Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages*, I, p. 133-136, II, p. 589-591.

Jonas Hanway, *An historical account of the British trade over the Caspian Sea*, II, p. 20-21 provides a list of some coins with their weights. He visited Persia during the reign of Nadir Shah, that is, just after the fall of the Safavids.

Reg. Stuart Poole, *Catalogue of the coins of the Shāhs of Persia in the British Museum*;

O. Codrington, *A manual of Musulman numismatics*.

Eug. Leggett, *Notes on the Mint towns and Coins of the Mohamedans*.

For the present period there is a short entry in Greenfield, *Die Verfassung...*, p. 326-329, and an extensive treatise in E. Lorini, *La Persia economica contemporanea*, p. 287-372.

Most complete is the work of Stolze and Andreas: *Die Handelsverhältnisse Persiens...*, *Ergänzungsheft No. 77, Petermanns Mitteilungen*, 1885, p. 34-36.

2) (p. 394) *Traité des monnoies musulmanes*, traduction de l'Arabe de Makrizi par A.I. Silvestre de Sacy, Paris, An VII.

3) (p. 395) See A. v. Kremer, *Culturgeschiede des Orients*, p. 169-170.

4) (p. 395) It would appear that during the later Safavids this coin was no longer produced. Although Tavernier mentions it under those of oval shape, he finds only very few in circulation and Chardin (p.183) states that in former days only *bīstis* and *shahis* were coined; both he and Hanway are explicit in naming the *bīsti* among the fictive coins.

5) (p. 396) In the illustration in his work (II, p. 590), Tavernier shows only the *bīsti* in oval shape.

6) (p. 396) Copper coins were also minted in a roughly hexagonal shape.

7) (p. 396) *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung*, p. 560-561.

8) (p. 397) Since 1877 all provincial mints have been abolished. All the money required is produced in Teheran, except the nickel coins, which are produced in Belgium. The building which at the time of the Safavids housed the mint (*zarb khaneh*) in Isfahan was situated in the most important bazaar, to the right of the figure 26, with which in the plan of Coste its middle vault has been indicated (plate XLV), situated close to the Maīdan-i-Shah. Up to recently it served as the office of the Dutch Trade establishment in Persia.

9) (p.397) This note derives from Note 1, p. LXXIV of the Introduction by Hotz.

The opulence at the court must have been truly astonishing. Chardin (III, p.216) estimated the value of the golden vessels, tableware and cutlery of 'Abbas II at several million écus. He received some pieces of a dish, in payment of some gemstones he had supplied, and found that these consisted of the purest gold of 23½ carat. This was also the fineness of the gold of which everything was made that belonged to the stable equipment of the horses intended for the personal use of the Shah, the chains with which they were tied up, the horse-shoes and nails and even the farrier's hammer used to fix the horse-shoes. In the *Relation d'une mission.... par l'Archevesque d'Ancyre* (1699), we find this confirmed, in addition to many other miraculous examples in similar vein. Schefer provides an overview of this in his publication of Raphaël du Mans' *Estat de la Perse en 1660* (Append. L, p. 373-376). Chardin's description of the treasury chambers of the Shah (VII, pp. 485-492) reminds one of the cave of the forty thieves in Ali Baba. Those about the palace situated at the Maīdan-i Shah (VII, pp. 368-388) equally transport us to the stories of the 1001-nights. A general, Ali Kūli Khan had a retinue of 1500 men, and 300 servants in addition. His several sinecures brought him an income of f1200000 [annually?] (Chardin, X, p. 70).

10) (p. 398) 'Reductie van de Parsiaensche munte soo d'selve tot ultimo December 1640 bij de Residenten van de Vereenichte Nederlantsche Oost Indische Compagnie in den handel als stellen van hare negotie-boecken in gebruycke sijn gestelt ende in reeckeninge gepasseert warden'. 31 December 1640 (Hs. Rijks-Archief, aanwinst Alkmaar).

Translated: Exchange calculations of Persian coins which up to the end of December 1640 had been obtained in trade by the Resident Officer of the United Dutch East India Company and which had been entered and approved in its account books. 31 December 1640 (Historic State Archives, acquisition Alkmaar).

11) (p. 398) Similar to what may be observed in many countries regarding different coins, such as livre, pound, mark, gulden, the *tūman* too has lost much of its value. Tavernier and Chardin value it at 45 livres, Jaubert (early 19th century) at an average of 22.60 francs. That was during Feth Ali Shah (1797-1834), who was the first to strike gold coins with the name *Ashrēfi*, as well as a coin of half its value. Even nowadays such a coin exists by name of *tūman*, whose nominal value is 10 *kran*, that is around f2.25. However, in view of the diminished price of silver, it is now valued at 19 or 20 *kran*. The name *ashrēfi* (most noble) was retained. It is however assumed that this name goes back to the ruler of the Egyptian Mamluks, Al-Ashraf Barsabāi (1422-1438).

12) (p. 398) The following list in no way claims to be comprehensive. It only contains the names of the coins which can be found in source material at my disposal. Not listed are, for instance, some coins that are in Poole's *Catalogue of Coins of the Shahs of Persia in the British Museum*, of which he provides the weights (Introduction, p. LXIII), but not the names, e.g. the coin listed as No. 39, which is known as ¼ Or which is 1¼ Abbasi, but of which no Persian name appears to be known. Mr J. Allan, assistant with the Department of Coins and Medals of the British Museum, was kind enough to send me, at my request, the following list of some of the coins present of 'Abbas II and Sēfi II Suleiman with the numbers as in Poole's catalogue:

| | | |
|------------|---------|---------|
| 'Abbas II: | Abbasi | No. 36a |
| | Mahmūdi | No. 38 |
| | Shahi | No. 37 |
| | ¼ Or | No. 47 |
| Suleiman: | ½ Or | No. 50 |
| | Shahi | No. 67 |
| | Abbasi | No. 58 |
| | Or | No. 68 |
| | Mahmūdi | No. 66 |
| | Bīsti | No. 69. |

As regards copper coins, of both 'Abbas II and Suleiman there are some Fūlūs and Khazbegis in the collection. Of Sēfi I only Abbasis of a heavy weight are included (Nos. 34 and 34a) and a Mahmūdi (No. 35). Not mentioned was a small coin of the weight of a *danik* or *dang*, that is one sixth of a *mithkāl* or 0.766g (see note 1, p. 240 of Journal, attached below*), as it is unclear whether or not this was still current at the time of the Safavids. At the end of the 16th century this coin was widely current. It was probably only used for scattering to the public. Nowadays for this purpose a small silver coin is struck, known as *shahi sēftd* (white *shahi*), of which 7 or 8 make one *kran*. A coin of this name was also struck in gold. In former days, the *dirham* too was subdivided into six *danik*.

**Abbasi noh dang va nim*. [This is the corrected rendering by Hotz of the corrupted phonetic writing produced by the writer of the Journal, Speelman, who, not knowing Persian, reproduced what he had heard as: *abacys nodonguim*].

The coin most frequently encountered in Persia at the end of the 16th century was the dirhem of 4.6g. There was also a coin in circulation called *dang* or *danik*, meaning one sixth; it weighed 0.766g (those in coin collections [which?] weigh 0.764g). Shah 'Abbas had a new coin struck, the *Abbasi*, which weighed *noh dang va nim*, i.e. 'nine dang and half'. Thus the standard weight of the Abbasi became 9½ x 0.766 = 7.277g. Coins in collections weigh 7.30g, slightly more than the required standard. It is thus understandable that payments received in this coin were much welcomed. (Schindler).

13) (p. 400) This guess was confirmed by a statement which I received from Mr Allan. Tahmasp I already struck gold coins of five Abbasis (Br. Mus. Catal. No. 19). These days these coins are rare. Khodabendeh coined a lot of gold. The British Museum has as many as 18 pieces of 5 Abbasi gold coins of his name, of which however only one occurs in the catalogue: No. 27a. Without a doubt, these were the coins which foreigners called "or".

14) (p. 400) The '1000 dinār' coin (*jekhēzar*) nowadays is the *kēran* (*kran*) to the value of approximately f 0.225.

15) (p. 400) Richard Hakluyt, *The principal Navigations.....*, III, p.161.

16) (p. 401) During the reign of Nadir Shah this coin was called *Nadiri* and also *Rūpi*, after the coin from India of that name, which Lockyer (1705) already mentions as one of the foreign specie in circulation around the Persian Gulf.

17) (p. 402) Al-Makrizi mentions that a dirham Makhmūi was current in Egypt and Syria in 781AH / AD1379; S. Sacy proposes to read this as Mahmūdi (Traité, p.45-46).

18) This note derives from footnote 1, p. 317, in the Journal. *Khazbegi* literally means: treasure - money - of the sovereign. A

small copper coin, of which 2000 to a *toman*, that means a value of f0.02 on the basis of a *toman* of f40.

19) (p. 403) The *doghaz*, currently still in use with pharmacists in the south and also in Azerbeidjan (150 *doghaz* = 1 *men-i-kohneh* of Tabriz = 1066 legal or 600 Sirafi *miskāl*), was equal to two *khazbegis* of 32.735g [??] (Schindler).

20) (p. 404) Originally, one of the meanings of *filizz*, *filazz* or *fūlūzz* was ore, metal in general (Johnson). *Fūlūs* in Basra and Bagdad is the term for 'money' (pronounced [in Dutch]: floes), similar the copper money in Persia, *pūl*, and in Turkey, *para*. For this coin see also al-Makrizi, 'Traité....', p. 53-59 and also Sauvaire, 'Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la numismatique....', *Journ. Asiat.*, t. XV, 1880, p. 257, v.v. He found *fūlūs* already mentioned in A.H. 650 (mid-13th century). Also mentioned as: *keta*. [unexplained]

8. Additional notes

A). Biographical notes

Albertus P. H. Hotz, editor of the journal, was born in Rotterdam in 1855 into a family engaged in commerce and iron foundry industry. In 1874 his father sent him to Persia to take care of the family's trading activities there. Despite ups and downs in trading fortunes, Hotz persevered with the Persian trade and the development of activities i.a. in early oil exploration, coal mining, irrigated agriculture and banking up to 1903, when, after the demise of a number of other international trading houses operating in Persia, Hotz's firm too eventually had to close down. Hotz then concentrated on his scholarly pursuits relating to Persia and the history of the Dutch United East India Company's presence in Persia, while intermittently holding consular posts in i.a. Beirut. During his lifetime Hotz had assembled a considerable library and a large collection of early photographs of Persia. In 1925 Hotz donated a number of valuable early Dutch works to the British Royal Geographical Society of which he was a Fellow; the remaining library and collections of photographs were bequeathed to the Leiden University Library upon his death in 1930.

Source: Vuurman, Corien and Theo Martens, 1995, *Perzië en Hotz - Beelden uit de fotocollectie-Hotz in de Leidse Universiteitsbibliotheek*. Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit Leiden.

Johannes (Joan) Cunaeus, envoy for the VOC, was born in Leiden in 1617, the elder son of a professor at the University there. In 1644 he took employment with the VOC and left for Batavia in the Dutch East Indies where the Company had its head office. He held several important posts relating to the governance of the company, gradually climbing up till, in 1650, he was appointed Counsel Ordinarius jointly with several other public functions. From mid-September 1651 to mid-November 1652 he travelled as the Company's envoy to the court of Shah 'Abbas II with the task to solve problems that had arisen and to improve and facilitate trading relations and conditions in Persia for the Company. He was then 34 years of age.

After 14 years in the East, he returned to Holland in 1658, where he took up studies at Leiden again. In 1667 he obtained a Doctorate in Law. He died in Leiden in 1673.

Source: A. Hotz, 1908, *Journal der Reis van den Gezant der O.I. Compagnie Joan Cunaeus naar Perzië in 1651-1652.....* Amsterdam. (pp. XXXI -XXXIV of the Introduction).

Cornelis Speelman, secretary to the envoy Cunaeus, was born in Rotterdam in 1628, started work with the VOC in Batavia in 1645 in a lowly position. Through his enterprising energy and intelligence he distinguished himself and soon climbed up in the organisation: from 1655 to 1663 he was auditor general, after which he attained several high-ranking positions, counsel ordinarius in 1667 till, in 1678, he was appointed Director General and in 1681 reached the rank of Governor General of the Dutch East Indies, in which function he was counted amongst the most distinguished and famous ever to hold that position. He died in 1684. At the time of the Embassy to Persia he was only 23 years old. Although he could have had only little formal education when, at age 17, he set out for Batavia, he was able to keep a

meticulously detailed journal full of highly varied and complex information while also functioning more or less as the factotum of the envoy and his entourage.

Sources: Geillustreerde Encyclopaedie A.Winkler Prins, 1887, Vol. 13, Elsevier, Rotterdam.

A. Hotz, 1908. *ibid.* (Introduction, pp. XLVIII-LXX).

B). Introduction p. LXXXII - The manuscript of the Journal of Cunaeus' mission to Persia is in the Colonial (VOC) section of the General State Archives in the Hague. It is numbered Kol. Arch. 1081. In its totality it comprises 747 folio sheets, written both sides. The first 633 folios are the Journal as kept during the voyage and the subsequent travels and sojourns. Folios 634-680 comprise minutes and notes concerning the deliberations with the 'Crown of Persia' and the last 65 folios comprise the letter copy book. Hotz's work consisted in deciphering the original text and transcribing it for print and deleting ancillary documents from it that had no relevance to the mission to Persia such as incoming letters and reports from other company establishments that were received by Cunaeus during his travel and stay in Persia, outgoing letters, records of court cases and proceedings and other non-relevant matters. It must be borne in mind that the Journal was an administrative record that was never intended for publication!

C). Introduction p. X - The map added to this publication was prepared by Mr Craandijk, mainly according to T.H. Holdich's "Map of Persia compiled in the Simla drawing office, Survey of India, 1897. Scale 1: 1013790. Dehra Dun, 1898", whereas the improvements were inserted that occur in Wilson's and Cruickshank's map of their journey from Gamron to Shiraz, 1907, scale 1: 1000000.

D). Batavia, established on the site of the old indigenous fortress Jakarta, on the island of Java in the Dutch East Indies, after 1947 Jakarta, capital of Indonesia.

E). See Introduction p. XXVII, where this issue is explained, and pp. 193 ff. in the Journal from where the negotiations about the silk issue are described.

F). See Introduction pp. XIX-XXVI, with summary and explanation of instructions on the pages following.

G). Introduction p. XXVI - 'The envoy and his retinue left Batavia on 15th September 1651 and after a journey of five months arrived in Isfahan. The deliberations, as is usual in Persia, required considerable time, so that the envoy could only start his return journey on 15th June 1652, returning in Batavia on 12th November'.

H). Pp. 29-31 of the Journal provide itemised lists of presents given to six officials of rank and a number of persons of lesser ranks in Gamron, and on pp. 31-32 there is a list of presents received by VOC officials prior to setting out on their journey to Isfahan. Similar lists of presents occur elsewhere in the Journal. In the Index such listings of presents given and presents received and the pages where these occur are shown.

I). On p. 29 of the journal Hotz has added the following footnote, which relates to a gift of 26¼ Ra. [real] non-coined gold: "2) The *real* mentioned here was most probably the Spanish *real de ocho* (piece of eight) which was in common use in the Indies (in Dutch 'Spaanse *mat*', Cf. Veth, Java, 1875, I, p 491). Its weight is somewhat variable. A specimen in the [Royal] Coin Cabinet in the Hague, dated 1586, weighs 28½ g. According to the present-day price of standard gold (22 carat), this would represent a value of 26¼ x 28½ g, that is about f1220. The value of gold in relation to that of silver in those days, however, was considerably less high than at present. One may also assume that the purity of the gold of this gift was rather less than 22 carat".

Regarding the gift of one large dog, Hotz mentions that this appears to be an odd present in a country where this animal is only tolerated for the hunt or, in the villages, as a guard dog, whereas for both purposes suitable breeds are available in Persia. However, in the documents of the Company one finds repeatedly the demand from Persia (and India) for very large, or very small dogs, which,

as curiosities would be presented to persons of rank, who valued such presents highly.

J). There are more references to the problem of counting money. On p. 277 of the journal we find: "Evening had fallen, but the cashier with all his helpers had counted no more than 490 toman, most time having been spent on separating out the filthy scrap of the abbasis which the traders also loath.....".

K). Prices paid for goods - the following examples have been extracted from the text of the journal. As will be seen, none of these are specific.

10 mahmudi as a reward for a servant delivering presents. (p. 22)

½ toman as a reward as above (p. 27)

10 mahmudi to pay for fruit (unspecified) (p. 43)

½ toman for warm breakfast (unspecified) (p. 48)

185 mahmudi for camel transport of sick persons (unspecified) (p. 56)

19½ mahmudi for woolen material per half meter(?) (unspecified) (p. 58)

f40, gift to a servant (p. 97)

18000 toman annual income to the crown from irrigation fees from Kur River (p. 106)

40 mahmudi reward to housekeeper where the mission lodged (p. 132)

110 mahmudi for transport / freight paid to an Armenian (p. 279)

1, 1½ or 2 toman payable as weighing fees (p. 315)

40 mahmudi reward to housemaster for services (p. 320)

2 toman: estimated value of a horse received as a present (p. 340)

3 toman to a village head, for services to the mission (p. 341)

L). The composition of the mission eventually travelling from Gamron to Isfahan is provided on pp.37-38 of the Journal. The mission travelled in two groups, one with 25 pack animals loaded with all the materials and presents amounting to a value of f46479.18.10, an assistant merchant, a sergeant, 7 soldiers and two sailors. The second group consisted of the envoy, several merchants, the secretary, 3 assistants, a surgeon, 10 soldiers and a trumpeter. No specific mention is made of a bookkeeper or accountant, but this function may have been taken care of by one of the assistants.

M). The full title of the publication in Dutch is:

JOURNAAL DER REIS VAN DEN GEZANT DER O. I. COMPAGNIE JOAN CUNAEUS NAAR PERZIE IN 1651-1652 gehouden door CORNELIS SPEELMAN uitgegeven door A. HOTZ Met Route-kaart en Plattegrond en Plaat van Persepolis. Amsterdam, Johannes Müller, 1908.

N). Not only the export of coins from Persia was restricted, it was strictly forbidden to export gold and silver [bullion], as explained by Hotz, Note 1, p. XXIX. 'In those days Persia, with Europe, shared the fallacy that, to hinder the export of gold (and silver) coin, could impede the decline of prosperity. It is known that in England the prohibition of such export was lifted only in 1819 (M'Culloch).

In this context it is noteworthy that we find on p. 215 of the Journal part of a sentence implying that the available cash money should be secretly smuggled aboard any of the company's ships riding at anchor at the roadstead [at Gamron, obviously with a view to take it out undetected].

On p. 238 there is mention of an instruction from the court to the *shahbandar* at Gamron i.a. to the effect that if he finds the Company bringing in goods belonging to others under its own name, or find them exporting reals or ducats, he will have to report it to the King [Shah].

O). It is curious that Hotz should invoke this word-analogy here, as it is quite erroneous. The Dutch word 'ton' refers not to 10,000 but to amounts of 100,000 (gulden), also in his days!

9. Translations of French language fragments

pièce de cinq abassis – a coin of five abassis

par curiosité: il n' y en a point dans le courant du commerce – for the sake of curiosity; there are none at all in commercial circulation

double cinq chahis – double five shahis

un travers de pouce – the width of a thumb (an inch)

il y a quelques quatre cents ans – some four hundred years ago

10. List of references quoted by Hotz in the Annex on Coins.

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Tavernier, Jean Baptiste, *Les six voyages.... en Turquie, en Perse, et aux Indes, pendant l'espace de quarante ans....* Paris 1679. 2 Vols.

Vincenzo d'Alessandri, *Narrative of the most noble Vincentio d'Alessandri, Ambassador to the King of Persia for the Most Illustrious Republic of Venice*. Transl. and edited by Ch. Grey (*A narrative of Italian travels in Persia in the 15th and 16th centuries*, p. 211-229). London, (Hakluyt Soc.) 1873.

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Note: A few authorities referred to by Hotz in the above text could not be located amongst the entries in his 15 pages of references (pp. CI-CXV, Literature Quoted).

These include: Duckett, Geoffrey, 1574; Johnson; Southgate (1837).

SOME ASPECTS OF DOST MUHAMMAD'S KABUL COINAGE

By Stan Goron

The first reign of the Barakzay ruler, Dost Muhammad, began at Kabul some time in AH 1241. It is not certain whether he actually occupied that city immediately or only some months later¹. During this first reign he issued coins with three different legends. The first of these was an anonymous one that had been used during the two previous years, but arranged differently on the actual coins:

fakhr kon ey sim o zar as sekke-ye šāheb-e zamān

Be proud, O silver and gold, of the stamp of the master of the age

This legend was used during the first five years of the reign, from AH 1241-1245, in two different arrangements.



šāheb-e zamān rupee type used from AH 1241 to 1244



šāheb-e zamān rupee type used from AH 1244-1245

In the middle of 1245, Dost Muhammad introduced a completely different legend, this time in the name of his deceased father, Payinda Khan. This legend was used from AH 1245 to 1250 with some variation in the actual legend layout on the obverse, while various reverse styles were also used. The legend is:

*sim o ṭalā beh shams o qamar midehad navid
vaqt-e ravāj-e sekke-ye pāyendeḥ khān rasid*

*silver and gold have brought news to the sun and moon
that the time of currency of the stamp of Pāyinda Khān has arrived*



Rupee of AH 1246



Rupee of AH 1246 with different obverse legend arrangement and reverse variety



Rupee of AH 1248 with tughra-style reverse

In the year 1250, Dost Muhammad proposed a jihad upon the infidels, specifically the Sikh rulers of the Punjab who had occupied former Durrani territory. This was reflected in a new legend for the coinage, which continued in use until the end of his first reign in AH 1255. In this legend for the first time he actually quotes his own name.

*amir dōst moḥammad bi-‘azm-e jang-e jehād
kamar bebast o bezad sekkeh nāšerash ḥaqq bād*

*Amir Dost Muḥammad, intending a war of jihad,
Girded his loins and struck coins; may the Truth grant him
succour*



*Rupee of AH 1250 in his own name.
Variations in the legend arrangement exist*

In AH 1255, Dost Muhammad was ousted by the British and Shuja' al-Mulk was restored to the Durrani throne at Kabul until 1257. During this period, three types of rupee were struck in Shuja' al-Mulk's name in Kabul, details of which can be found in Stephen Album's paper. There then ensued a year or so of turmoil, rebellions, ephemeral rulers, with anonymous coins being struck by Muhammad Zaman (two brief reigns) and Muhammad Akbar, and no less than four types in the name of Fath Jang, and then Shahpur Shah. The first of Muhammad Zaman's coins were struck in 1257, all the rest in 1258, a year of ephemeral rulers. (See KM 485, 486, 488.1-4, 489)

Dost Muhammad, who had been in exile in Calcutta, was allowed to return to Afghanistan and, according to Album's paper (p.13) was welcomed into Kabul during the spring of the year 1259, whereupon he introduced a new coin type bearing a couplet clearly announcing his resumption of power:

*bezad za ‘eyn-e ‘enāyāt-e khāleq-e akbar
amir dōst moḥammed doubāreh sekkeh bar zar*

*By the fount of favours of the Supreme Creator,
Amir Dost Muḥammad once again placed the royal stamp on
precious metal*

While it is true that this legend was, indeed, introduced in 1259, there exist coins with the previous jihadi legend clearly dated 1258 and 1259.



Rupee with jihadi legend, dated AH 1258



Rupee with jihadi legend, dated AH 1259

Album states that, after the very brief reign of Shapur Shah in 1258, Muhammad Akbar, Dost Muhammad's son, resumed power in Kabul and issued the anonymous rupees, dated 1258, with the Kalima on one side (KM 493). The existence of the above rupees suggests that he also anticipated his father's return by the issue of a limited number of rupees in his father's name bearing the last legend of his earlier reign.

Die-engravers were clearly given some freedom in arranging the new legend on the dies when it was introduced in 1259. There are at least three different legend arrangements known for that year. It was only in the following year, that it settled down for the rest of the reign.



Rupees, dated AH 1259, with the new legend arranged in three different ways. Note also the different reverses and different positions for the date



Rupee of 1260 with what became the standard obverse layout for the remainder of the reign

Note

1 The historical information in this article is taken from Stephen Album's authoritative paper "The anonymous coinage of the Barakzays and their rivals in Afghanistan: a reappraisal", published as the supplement to ONS Newsletter 159. I have also taken the details of the coin legends from this paper.

A CHINESE COIN HOARD FROM BARROW

By Qin Cao, Manchester Museum

A Chinese coin hoard comprising 107 coins and 1 fragment was found by two members of the public while searching with a metal detector in a field in Dalton-in-Furness, in the borough of Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, in August 2011. It is one of the few Chinese coin hoards known to have been found in England. In recognition of its significance, the hoard has been kindly donated to the Dock Museum, Barrow, by the finders and landowners.

I. Description of the find

The coins are all copper alloy cast pieces with square holes in the middle, and are 'cash' coins of East Asia.

The coins were reported to have been found lying tightly packed together, and the finder also preserved a few fragments of thread between the individual coins, which suggests that some (or perhaps all) of the coins were originally tied with a cord. In East Asia, it was customary to pass a thread through the central hole to create a 'string of coins' (normally 1000) for ease of carrying and spending.

Most of the coins are in good condition and could be identified easily. All of them have been photographed, weighed and measured. However none of the items in the hoard have yet been conserved. All of the weights given below are for the coins in their original condition and therefore may vary slightly after cleaning. The coins are all of the same denomination, 1-cash, and almost all (101) have inscriptions from the Chinese *Qing* dynasty (1644-1911). All of the Chinese coins have both obverse and reverse inscriptions. The obverse inscription indicates the reign period when a coin was issued. The reverse inscription records the mint name in both Chinese and Manchu scripts with the exception of the 'Shunzhi tongbao' coin. This was an early type of coin issued just after the Manchu took control of China in 1644. The reverse inscription is in Chinese only: the denomination, '1-li', and the mint, 'Yunnan'.

As the majority of the coins appear to be contemporary imitations (see discussion in II Analysis of the hoard), it is quite difficult to determine when exactly those coins were cast. However, according to their inscriptions, the coin range in date from 1659 to 1850 (see 'Chart 1 Distribution of coins issued in different reigns'). A 'Shunzhi tongbao' coin was probably the earliest coin in the hoard, and was perhaps cast between 1659 and 1661.

The majority of pieces (56, representing 52% of the hoard) have the inscription 'Daoguang tongbao' and were probably issued in the *Daoguang* reign period (1821-1850) or later and might be the latest coins in the hoard. Coins with the inscription 'Jiaqing tongbao' formed the second largest group (22, 20% of the hoard). 2 coins are Vietnamese, and their inscriptions suggest that the first was issued during the *Canh Hung* reign period (1740-1786) of the *Restored Le* dynasty (1592-1789), the second during the *Canh Thinh* reign period (1793-1802) of the *Tay Son* dynasty (1778-1802). Two groups comprising 2 and 3 coins respectively were found corroded together. The coins on top of both of these corroded groups are 'Daoguang tongbao'. The rest are illegible, along with 1 coin and a fragment from the main hoard.

Summary by reign and mint

China

Shunzhi (1644-1661)

1 coin: Yunnan

Kangxi (1662-1722)

5 coins: Board of Revenue (4), Board of Works (1)

Qianlong (1736-1795)

17 coins: Board of Revenue (8), Chengdu (1), Guilin (1), Guizhou (1), Suzhou (1), Yunnan (1), uncertain (4)

Jiaqing (1796-1820)

22 coins: Board of Revenue (1), Guangdong (4), Hangzhou (11), Yunnan (3), uncertain (3)

Daoguang (1821-1850)

56 coins: Gongchang (1), Guangdong (42), Yunnan (6), uncertain (7)

Vietnam

Canh Hung (1740-1786): 1 coin

Canh Thinh (1793-1801): 1 coin

Illegible

5 coins

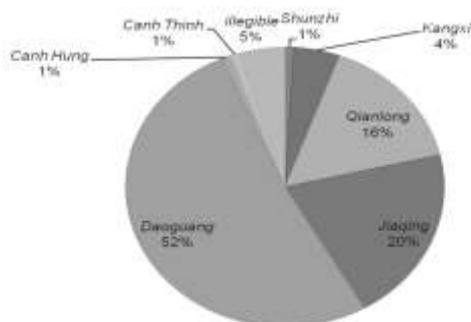


Chart 1 Distribution of coins issued in different reigns

As we can see from 'Chart 2 Mints distribution of Chinese coins', 45% of the coins appear to be from the Guangdong mint (also known as Kwangtung in English). Of the 'Xianfeng tongbao', and of the latest coins, 42 out of 56 coins were also inscribed with mint Guangdong. The 2nd largest group comprises coins with inscription of the Board of Revenue mint, Beijing and represents 13% of all the Chinese coins.

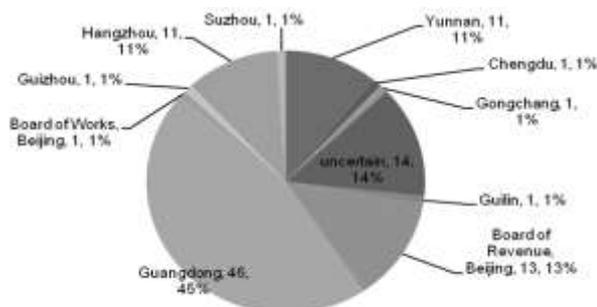


Chart 2 Mints distribution among Chinese coins

Due to the limited space available in this article, coins with the same inscription and mint name will be represented by one example. Images of all the coins are available on Yaoqiantree's Flickr account at the time of writing and can be viewed at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/76335260@N07/>. The hoard has also been recorded in the database of the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the unique ID is LANCUM-0095B8.4.73, 7.33



Map 1 Mints distribution among Chinese coins⁷

II Analysis of the hoard

Following close examination of the dimensions and weights of the coins, the difference in weight is shown to be significant. The lightest coin is 0.72g and the heaviest is 4.1g. Interestingly, both of these coins are 'Daoguang tongbao' pieces and are supposedly from the 'Guangdong' mint. As all the coins are of the same denomination (1-cash), they should follow the standard weight regulations for 1-cash coins. The weight for 1-cash 'Qianlong tongbao', 'Jiaqing tongbao' and 'Daoguang tongbao' was 1 qian 2 fen (approximately 4.48g), an adopted standard from the 12th year of the reign of Yongzheng (AD 1734)³. Standards during the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns vary slightly, but an official coin should range from about 3.73g to 4.66g⁴. Considering the weight variation during the casting process and natural degradation of the coins during circulation, coins weighing 3g and above were considered to be officially minted pieces, yet this can only be said for 8 coins in the entire hoard. 4 of them are 'Qianlong tongbao' coins and the others are 'Daoguang tongbao' coins. The rest are most likely to represent privately cast coins or the official mint's private production. It seems that thin and underweight coins were commonly accepted⁵ and this coin hoard from Barrow is not exceptional in this regard.

Underweight coinage was always a serious problem in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), especially in the late period. The currency was mainly bullion silver in combination with base metal coins⁶, but there were no officially minted standard silver coins until the late 19th century. Silver circulated in the form of ingots and its value depended on weight and purity. The exchange rate between silver and cash coins determined the value of cash coins. During the reign of Shunzhi (1644-1661), the first emperor of the Qing dynasty, the government regulated that 1-liang (1 tael, about 37.3g) of silver was equal to 1000 1-cash coins⁷ (a standard string of coins). However this regulation was not successfully implemented, despite many attempts, and the situation became worse in the later period of the dynasty.

In 1744, during the reign of Qianlong (1736-1795), between 700 and 815 1-cash coins equalled 1-liang of silver in Guangdong province, due to the heavy weight of the coins and shortage of copper in China in the market at that time⁸. This resulted in people regarding private coinage as a higher profit opportunity and they started to buy copper coins and melt them down to produce thin and lightweight alternatives. The skill and equipment required to cast coins was less than that for hammered coins.⁹ The official mints also seized the opportunity to profit and copper was mixed with cheaper metals, such as lead and iron, to produce more coins. Meanwhile, thin and lightweight coins from Vietnam and Japan poured into China¹⁰. During this same period, the growing trade in opium meant that China was no longer in a position of trade surplus. The reign of Jiaqing (1796-1820) saw a turning point in the exchange rate between silver and coin¹¹. In 1802 (7th year of Daoguang reign), about 1450 1-cash coins equalled 1-liang silver in Shandong province¹², implying a doubling of the debasement compared to 1744. Obviously, those 1450 coins of 1802 would not be of a similar weight and quality to those in 1744, but would have comprised standard-weight coins together with counterfeits, including thin and lightweight Japanese and Vietnamese coins.

The face value of the Barrow coin hoard - 108 coins (107 pieces and 1 fragment) represents 108-cash and approximately 1/10 of a standard string of coins. As most of the coins were issued during the reign of Daoguang (1821-1850), statistics quoted below are taken from that period. However the value of 108 cash is not just a direct calculation using the exchange rate of silver and cash coins. According to J. Edkins's observation, the value of a set of cash coins also depended on the composition of the coins - how many good coins were mixed with bad ones or simply a set of counterfeit pieces¹³. As there are only 8 standard-weight coins in the hoard, the total value of these coins would be less than 2.6g of silver¹⁴.

As rice has always been a major part of the diet for people in China, its price has been well documented and used as an indicator of price stability. On average, about 3314 cash would buy a gongshi (about 84 kg) of rice during the Daoguang reign (1821-

1850)¹⁵, so 108 cash would buy 2.74 kg of rice or less¹⁶. By contrast, with the average rice price between 1651-1660, during the later reign of *Shunzhi* (1644-1661), 108 cash would buy 10.76 kg of rice¹⁷, which was nearly 4 times the buying power compared to the *Daoguang* reign (1821-1850).

In the following decade, during the reign of *Xianfeng* (1850-1861), the Taiping Rebellion¹⁸ broke out in 1851 and took over nearly half of the country in the next 2 years. In order to pay for the military expense and relieve the shortage of copper (Yunnan, the major province for producing copper was taken over by the rebellion), the government resorted to issuing coins of high denominations, ranging from 4 to 1000 cash, and paper money. The 1-cash coin weighed 1 *qian* (about 3.73g), but a 50-cash coin from the Board of Works mint weighed only about 35.8g¹⁹. If someone melted down 10 pieces of 1-cash '*Qianlong tongbao*', he could produce 1 piece of 50-cash '*Xianfeng zhongbao*'. The weight was reduced by nearly 80% and private minting was highly profitable. As Peng commented in *History of Chinese Money*, the debasement during the Taiping Rebellion represented the worst monetary system crisis of the whole *Qing* dynasty (1644-1911)²⁰. It did not happen overnight, nor was it caused by the Taiping Rebellion alone, but was probably a result of high numbers of devalued 1-cash coins (contemporary imitations and foreign lightweight coins) in circulation since the *Jiaqing* reign. The Chinese coin hoard from Barrow is not an exception, but simply one example among many that reveals the appalling monetary situation.

III. Discussion of the find

The find has been discussed with Joe Cribb (former Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals at the British Museum), Dr Helen Wang (Curator of East Asian Money within the Department), and David Hartill, author of the book *Chinese Cast Coins*. This string of coins was almost certainly removed from China while still in circulation. It is not unusual to find coins from China and Vietnam in the same string. To determine why it was found in the Barrow area, we need to look at the three dates most relevant to such a coin hoard: when the coins were put together as a set, when the coins were removed from circulation and when the hoard was buried or abandoned in Barrow-in-Furness. One fact kindly provided by one of the finders, Dave Taylor, is that although the coins were found together with remains of thread between the coins, there is no actual evidence that all the coins were in a string together. However, it is a reasonable assumption that they were probably removed from circulation at the same time. Normally, 100 coins comprised a set, and 10 sets would form a string of coins. This hoard could possibly be a set of coins with some loose additional pieces. '*Daoguang tongbao*' coins comprise 52% of the hoard and were definitely cast after 1821, the first year of the reign of *Daoguang* (1821-1850) (see Chart 1). It is obvious that the string was put together after 1821. Although no coins from the *Xianfeng* reign (1851-1861) are present this does not exclude the possibility that the set was assembled after 1851. As there were no other objects associated with the find, it is very difficult to determine an exact date for the burial or abandonment.

Combining the evidence of the find spot and local context, some non-numismatic evidence can also be adduced. The coin hoard was found in a field in Dalton-in-Furness, in the borough of Barrow-in-Furness and 5 miles from Barrow dock. Dalton-in-Furness had been in decline ever since the dissolution of Furness Abbey in the 16th century²¹, and Barrow-in-Furness was only a small village until the early 19th century. However, the rich deposits of iron ore in the local area brought the railway in 1846 and the area started to flourish²². Steel was added to the iron production by 1859²³. In 1870, a local shipbuilding industry started and Barrow became a separate port from Lancaster in 1872²⁴. Ironworks and shipbuilding brought prosperity to the Barrow area, and in the late 19th century it was home to one of the largest steelworks in the world. Due to the limited interaction an inland village or town may be expected to have had with the outside world, it is more likely that the Chinese coins were

brought to Barrow after 1846, and the findspot of the hoard was close to the railway line (personal communication, Dave Taylor).

As mentioned earlier, 45% of the Chinese coins were inscribed with the mint name 'Guangdong', and the majority of coins are '*Daoguang tongbao*' (see Chart 2). Guangzhou, capital city of Guangdong province, was one of the five ports that were opened to foreign trade after the First Opium War in 1840. The set of coins was possibly put together in Guangdong. It would be difficult to say when and where the coins were removed from circulation, but the close association with Guangdong is certain. It might not be a coincidence that Barrow and Guangzhou were both prosperous ports at that time.

Another question concerns the original owner of the hoard, who may or may not have had a connection with China. The building of railways, steelworks and the shipbuilding industry in Barrow may have attracted labourers from China. There could have been business links between Barrow and China and locals may have travelled to China and brought back the coins. The Collection Manager at the Dock Museum, Barrow-in-Furness, noted that links between Barrow and Japan in the 19th century are well established, but a Chinese connection has not been much explored by local historians. She also mentioned that a Chinese diplomat, Li Hongzhang (also known Li Hungchang) visited Barrow. Li Hongzhang was one of the most powerful statesmen in the imperial *Qing* court in the second half of the 19th century. His visits to a number of western countries in 1896, including Russia, Germany, France, England, Canada and America, were well documented in contemporary news reports and government archives²⁵. Although Li Hongzhang's visit to England was only a one-off event, and the date does not tie in with the latest coin of the hoard, the significance of Barrow-in-Furness's ironworks and shipbuilding industry was not overlooked, despite the absence of documentation in the local archives.

As there is no apparent spiritual or ritual reason for Chinese coins to be buried at this particular location, and as these coins would have had no monetary value in England, it is difficult to conclusively say why they were buried or possibly abandoned by the owner. Giving consideration to the local context and hoard information, however, a few theories can be postulated. Due to the heavy weight of the coins and their quantity, it is more likely they were deliberately abandoned or purposefully buried, rather than the result of accidental loss. One theory must be that a Chinese worker or servant travelled to Barrow with the coins, and buried them with the intention of retrieving them before returning to China. When the coin hoard was discovered, it was about 7 or 8 inches below the ground (personal communication, Dave Taylor). If the owner buried the coins on purpose, then they were not placed in a particularly deep hole. After contacting the Barrow Chinese Society, it was learnt that the first known Chinese resident arrived in Barrow in the 1940s. Alternatively, the coins could simply have been abandoned by the original owner, due to their uselessness in England. A Briton may have travelled to China on business and obtained the coins, or the coins could simply represent leftover spending money on returning to England. The owner might have immediately abandoned the coins due to their lack of value in England. Finally, the coins could have been brought back as a souvenir or gift which was abandoned by the owner or recipient.

IV. Similar finds in the UK and China

Although it is rare for a Chinese coin hoard to be found in the United Kingdom, there are a few known cases.

- In 1973, 128 copper alloy coins from around 1900 were found in a rubbish tip in South London (Cribb, J.E., *Coin Hoards I*, Royal Numismatic Society, 1975, p.84)
- In 1976, a group of 26 copper alloy coins (AD 1851 or later) was dug up in garden in Old Amersham, Buckinghamshire. (Cribb, J.E., *Coin Hoards III*, Royal Numismatic Society, 1977, p.121)

- In 1976, 17 copper alloy coins (c. AD 1850) were found by a metal detectorist, Westcliff on sea, Essex, England. (Cribb, J.E., *Coin Hoards IV*, Royal Numismatic Society, 1978, p.100)

In China, large quantities of coin hoards have been found in recent years. In *Coin Hoard IV*, Joe Cribb recorded 74 finds of coins between 1963-1976, among which were 10 hoards and 48 deposits with tomb burials²⁶. The sheer size of some individual coin hoards in China can be surprising, for example, about 1500 kg of ‘huoquan’ coins were found in Xuzhou, Jiangsu province in December 2009²⁷. Brief reports of coin hoards are normally published in archaeological journals, such as *Kaogu*, *Wenwu*, and numismatic journals, such as *Zhongguo Qianbi* (Chinese Numismatics).

V. Further reading

Qing cash coins and their monetary system have been well recorded in a number of official contemporary documents and later books:

Qingshi Lu (Qing historical archives), 2nd edition, Zhonghua shuju, 2008, ISBN 9787101056266.

Qingchao wenxian tongkao (Qing dynasty comprehensive historical compendia), 2nd edition, Zhejiang guji publishing, 2000, ISBN 7805180458.

Qingchao Tongdian (Qing dynasty comprehensive canons), 2nd edition, Zhejiang guji publishing, 2000, ISBN 7805180393.

People's Bank of China ed., *Chinese Modern Monetary History during the Qing Government 1840-1911*, 1st Series, Zhonghua shuju, 1964.

Hartill, D., *Qing Cash*, Royal Numismatic Society Special Publication 37, London, 2003.

King, F.H.H., *Money and Monetary Policy in China 1845-1895*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Kann, E., *The Currencies of China: An Investigation of Silver & Gold Transactions Affecting China with a Section on Copper*, 2nd edition, Kelly & Walsh Limited, Shanghai, 1927.

General reference books:

PENG Xinwei, *A Monetary History of China*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954; translated by Kaplan, E. H., Western Washington University Press, 2 volumes, 1994.

Hartill, D., *Cast Chinese Coins*, Trafford Publishing, 2005.

International Numismatic Commission, *A Survey of Numismatic Research*

2002-2007, International Association of Professional Numismatists Special Publication 15, Glasgow, 2009.

Zhongguo Qianbi Xuehui ed., *Zhongguo Qianbi Lunwenji* (The collection of numismatic articles), Vols. 1-5, Zhongguo jinrong publishing, 1985-2010.

Notes

¹ Cash: A Chinese base-metal coin with a square hole in its centre, the Chinese name for which is ch'ien; the word 'cash' seems to derive from the Portuguese caixa (a chest or strongbox). Doty, R. G., *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Numismatics*, Macmillan, 1982, p. 47.

² For known mints, they were marked on the map with square boxes. For unknown or uncertain mints, provinces names were given.

³ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.488.

⁴ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.486-8.

⁵ Kann, E., *The Currencies of China An Investigation of Silver & Gold Transactions Affecting China with a Section on Copper*, 2nd edition, Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh limited, 1927, p.415.

⁶ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.485.

⁷ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.486.

⁸ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.526.

⁹ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p 528-9.

¹⁰ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.492.

¹¹ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p. 528.

¹² PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p 538.

¹³ Quoted in Kann, E., *The Currencies of China An Investigation of Silver & Gold Transactions Affecting China with a Section on Copper*, 2nd edition, Kelly & Walsh limited, Shanghai, 1927, p.416.

¹⁴ Here I used the exchange rates between coins and silver from various provinces from 1821 to 1847. The average price was 1535 coins to 1-liang of silver. PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.538-9.

¹⁵ Here I used the average rice prices during the reign of *Daoguang* (1821-1850). PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p.542.

¹⁶ Please note that most people in China live on a diet of rice that is locally planted. It is very much like flour in the UK.

¹⁷ 843-cash would buy a *gongshi* of rice between 1651-1660. PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p 531.

¹⁸ *Taiping Rebellion*: A rebellion that spread all over southern China, led by Hong Xiuquan. Its programme, which aimed at ushering in a 'Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace' (*Taiping tianguo*) was a mixture of religion and political reform. The rebels took Nanjing in 1853 and made it their capital, but internal strife, foreign intervention and the Qing forces under Zeng Guofan eventually brought the downfall of the movement. Lenman, B. P. & Boyd, K. ed., *Dictionary of World History*, Chambers, 1994, p. 90. Further reading: Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Son The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan*, W. W. Norton & Company, 1996.

¹⁹ The average weight of 50-cash coins from the numismatic collection at the Manchester Museum.

²⁰ PENG Xinwei, *History of Chinese Money*, Qunlian Publishing, China, 1954, p 540.

²¹ Cumbria County Council & English Heritage, *Extensive Urban Survey-Archaeological Assessment Report Dalton*, 2006, p.10, doi:10.5284/1000195.

²² Cumbria County Council & English Heritage, *Extensive Urban Survey-Archaeological Assessment Report Barrow*, 2006, p 9, doi:10.5284/1000195.

²³ Cumbria County Council & English Heritage, *Extensive Urban Survey-Archaeological Strategy Report Barrow*, 2006, p.18, doi:10.5284/1000195.

²⁴ Cumbria County Council & English Heritage, *Extensive Urban Survey-Archaeological Assessment Report Barrow*, 2006, p 9, doi:10.5284/1000195.

²⁵ CAI Erkang, ed., LIN Lezhi, translated and ed , *Li Hongzhang Lipin Ou-Mei Ji* (Li Hongzhang's visit to Europe and America), Hunan renmin publish, China, 1982.

²⁶ Cribb, J.E. ed , China section, in *Coin Hoards IV*, Royal Numismatic Society, 1978, p.78-102.

²⁷ WU Jin, 'The Large Hoard of Huoquan coins Unearthed on Pengcheng Road, Xuzhou', *Jiangsu Qianbi* 2010 2.

Images of the Hoard



Fig.1 'Shunzhi tongbao', Yunnan, 1.76g~21.9mm



Fig.2 'Kangxi tongbao', Board of Revenue, 1.36g~20mm



Fig.3 'Kangxi tongbao', Board of Works, 1.54g~20.5mm



Fig.4 'Qianlong tongbao', Board of Revenue, 2.17g~20.5mm



Fig.5 'Qianlong tongbao', Chengdu, 3.54g~23.5mm



Fig.6 'Qianlong tongbao', Guilin, 1.97g~20.5mm



Fig.7 'Qianlong tongbao', Guizhou, 1.79g~21mm



Fig.8 'Qianlong tongbao', Suzhou, 1.56g~24mm



Fig.9 'Qianlong tongbao', Yunnan, 3.37g~26mm



Fig.10 'Jiaqing tongbao', Board of Revenue, 2.66g~23mm



Fig.11 'Jiaqing tongbao', Guangdong, 1.52g~23.5mm



Fig.12 'Jiaqing tongbao', Hangzhou, 1.45g~21.5mm



Fig.13 'Jiaqing tongbao', Yunnan, 2.86g~24mm



Fig.14 'Daoguang tongbao', Gongchang, 1.42g~23.1mm



Fig.15 'Daoguang tongbao', Guangdong, 4.1g~24.5mm



Fig.16 'Daoguang tongbao', Yunnan, 2.18g~22mm



Fig.17 'Canh Hung Thong Bao', Vietnam, 1.38g~21mm



Fig.18 'Canh Thinh Thong Bao', Vietnam, 2.02g~24.1mm

THE VIETNAMESE COIN COLLECTION IN THE HEBERDEN COIN ROOM, ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD

By François Thierry

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nationale de France)

In 2011, thanks to the Robinson Visiting Scholar Fellowship Award granted jointly by the Heberden Coin Room of the Ashmolean Museum and Wolfson College, I had the opportunity to study the collection of Vietnamese coins in Oxford.¹ The majority of the Vietnamese coins are housed in two small cabinets made of grey plastic, in which each tray can hold 49 coins (seven rows of seven recesses). There are more Vietnamese coins housed in other cabinets labelled ‘Surplus Chinese’, in which each tray can hold 64 coins (eight rows of eight recesses). The identification of the coins was largely done following Toda’s catalogue,² which is now obsolete. The collection is thus in need of attention and correction. The Vietnamese coin collection at the Ashmolean Museum includes a great variety of coins from all the official dynasties, rebel powers, as well as unofficial coinages, from the early times to the nineteenth century. There is also a series of very interesting struck patterns. However, not all the coins housed in the so-called Annam trays are from Vietnam: there are many unofficial coins of Japan, such as *boekisen* ‘trade currency’, *mochūsen* ‘copied coins’, and *shimāsen* ‘island coins’.³ Given this confusion, we might expect to find that some Vietnamese coins have been misidentified and housed in the Chinese cabinets.

In terms of the provenance of the collection, the principle is that each coin should sit on its own unique ticket in a recess in a tray in a cabinet, and that the details pertaining to that coin are written on the ticket. In the case of the Vietnamese coins that I studied, most (but not all) coins had tickets. In several recesses, there were two coins with a single ticket marked ‘xxx a b’, but with no indication as to which coin was ‘a’ and which was ‘b’. Some tickets were left blank, without a registration number or indication of provenance (hereafter referred to as **no number**). I noted seven types of tickets that were marked: old rectangular tag-like tickets with a yellow thread tied to the coin, hereafter referred to as **rt1**; round tickets marked ‘Laird Gift (C.T. Gardner coll) 1947 xx’, hereafter **Gardner xx**;⁴ round tickets marked ‘bought fr. Tregaskis The Caxton Head London Feb. 5, 1902 00’, hereafter **Tregaskis xx**;⁵ round tickets marked ‘Uvedale prior 1903 xx’, hereafter **Uvedale xx**;⁶ round tickets marked ‘Howel Wills Collection’, hereafter **Wills**;⁷ and some tickets marked ‘Leeds’ both with and without a number, hereafter **Leeds**.⁸ There are also tickets that are marked with an unclear identification code — for example, ‘I.a⁴ I’, ‘I.a¹ xiii’ and ‘II.G²i’. Dr Shailendra Bandare suggested a system noting the tray number and the coin’s position in the tray. In this way, **Annam-I-4** is the coin placed in the fourth recess of the first tray of the Annam collection.⁹

The first national dynasty is represented by a group of *Đại Bình hưng bảo* 大平興寶 of Đinh Bộ Lĩnh (970-980), *Đại Bình* era (970-980); on different coins, the inscription is clearly 大 or 太. There are several types of *Thiên Phúc trấn bảo* 天福鎮寶 of Emperor Đại Hành (981-1005) of the Former Lê 黎 Dynasty. There are no coins of the Lý Dynasty: the three *Càn Phù nguyên bảo* 乾符元寶 (Annam-I-29, rt32; Annam-I-30, Uvedale 1242a and b), are erroneously attributed to Lý Thái Tông, for his Càn Phù era (1039-1041) on the ticket, but are in fact small coins from an unofficial mint; the *bảo* 寶 character is typical of the late small currency known as *tiền giần* ‘diminutive coins’.¹⁰ Other coins that

have been identified as from the Lý dynasty are also small unofficial coins with Chinese or mixed inscriptions, such as *Tian Xi yuanbao* 天禧元寶, *Thiên Phù nguyên bảo* 天符元寶, and *Da Ding tongbao* 大定通寶. For the Trần 陳 Dynasty, there are two rare *Thiệu Phong nguyên bảo* 紹豐元寶 (Annam-II-17, rt45 and rt46) and a nice group of three *Đại Trị nguyên bảo* 大治元寶 and eight *Đại Trị thông bảo* 大治通寶 in various scripts (**figs 1 and 2**), cast during the Thiệu Phong era (1341-1357) and the Đại Trị era (1358-1369) of Emperor Dụ Tông 裕宗 (1341-1369).¹¹ There are three *Thiên Khánh thông bảo* 天慶通寶 of Trần Cao 陳暲¹², puppet emperor of Lê Lợi between 1426 and 1428, one of which bears a crescent on the reverse (C18-I-17, B.G ii); these are housed in the ‘Surplus Chinese’ cabinets.

The collection comprises all the different types of coins of each emperor of the *Lê sơ* period,¹³ and there are rare varieties such as the *Đại Bảo thông bảo* 大寶通寶 of Lê Thái Tông (1433-1442) with large characters (Annam-II-48, rt83, **fig. 3**); the *Diên Ninh thông bảo* 延寧通寶 of Lê Nhân Tông (1442-1459), with the ‘double bar’ Ninh 寧 character (Annam-III-33, rt116)¹⁴, and two *Quang Thiệu thông bảo* 光紹通寶 of Lê Chiêu Tông (1516-1526) (Annam-IV-21, rt165a and 166a).¹⁵ But because the coins have been arranged according to Toda’s classification, there are also a lot of small unofficial coins, Chinese coins and Japanese imitations mixed in with the official Lê coinage. For example, in the *Thiệu Bình thông bảo* 紹平通寶 of Lê Thái Tông (1433-1442) series we find small *Thiệu Bình thánh bảo* 紹平聖寶 and *Thiệu Bình phong bảo* 紹平豐寶 unofficial coins, a Chinese *Zhi Ping yuanbao* 治平元寶 in seal script. Similarly, among the official *Đại Hòa thông bảo* 大和通寶 coins of Lê Nhân Tông (1442-1459) we find several small unofficial issues: a zinc cash of the Southern Nguyễn Kingdom of eighteenth century date (Annam-III-16, rt105) and a Japanese *boekisen* of the seventeenth century (Annam-III-9, rt97, **fig. 21**).¹⁶ The first three emperors of the Mạc 莫 Dynasty are well represented by their coins: *Minh Đức thông bảo* 明德通寶 of Thái Tô (1527-1530), *Đại Chính thông bảo* 大正通寶 of Thái Tông (1530-1540) and *Quảng Hòa thông bảo* 廣和通寶 of Hiến Tông (1540-1546). Of the coins of Hiến Tông there is only one coin that belongs to the official coinage: a large cash (Annam-IV-37, rt183a, **fig. 5**). The other coins bearing the same inscription but in seal script are small diminutive coins of later date.¹⁷ The collection also includes two small *Vĩnh Định thông bảo* 永定通寶 (Annam-IV-41, Uvedale 1334a and b), that have been wrongly attributed to Mạc Phúc Nguyên for his Vĩnh Định era,¹⁸ which corresponds only with the lunar year *đinh-mùi* 丁未 (22th January 1547/9th February 1548).

The traditional classification devised by Toda was not chronological, but political. For these reasons, he placed the so-called ‘rebel coinages’ after the end of the ‘official’ series. This non-chronological arrangement is reflected in the cabinets, thus, we find a very interesting coin of the late *Lê Sơ* period in the last trays of the cabinet, although we would expect to find it among coins of the early sixteenth century: it is a very rare *Trần Công tân bảo* 陳公新寶 (Annam-XIV-18, rt184, **fig. 4**) cast by Trần Tuấn

or by Trần Công Ninh during the Hồng Thuận 洪順 era of Tương Dực Đế (1509-1516).¹⁹

The second period of the Lê Dynasty, known as *Lê Trung Hưng* 黎中興, the Restoration of the Lê (1592-1789), is well represented: there is a unique *Thịnh Đức thông bảo* 盛德通寶 (Annam- IV-43, rt189, **fig. 6**)²⁰ cast between 1653 and 1658 during the second reign of Lê Thần Tông 神宗 (1649-1662); a large variety of *Vĩnh Thọ thông bảo* 永壽通寶 coins of the same Emperor during his Vĩnh Thọ era (1658-1661); some *Vĩnh Thịnh thông bảo* 永盛通寶 and *Bảo Thái thông bảo* 保泰通寶 coins of Lê Dụ Tông (1705-1729), and, as we might expect, a large quantity of over a hundred different types of official, semi-official and unofficial *Cảnh Hưng* 景興 coins of the time of Lê Hiến Tông (1740-1786). Of particular note are a rare *Cảnh Hưng thông bảo* 景興通寶 with the date *canh tân* 庚申 (1740) on the reverse (Annam-VII-35, Gardner 93), another with *Bạch* 帛 below the hole on the reverse (Annam-VII-48, Gardner 137a), and two others with *Thái* 太 to the left of the hole on the reverse (Annam-VIII-1, Gardner 88¹ and 88²). The official types of *Cảnh Hưng* coins are fairly well known and I will not go into detail here,²¹ other than to note the conspicuous absence of large *Cảnh Hưng* coins. These are not rare coins, and I suspect that there may be some large *Cảnh Hưng* coins housed among the Chinese charms and amulets, but did not have time to investigate this further. The most interesting coins in the *Cảnh Hưng* series in the Ashmolean collection are the unofficial or semi-official issues, which include several rare coins, including some that have not been seen before, such as the *Cảnh Hưng thông bảo* with reverse *nhật cung* 一工 (Annam-VII-28, Gardner 141); the *Cảnh Hưng thông bảo* with the same *Cảnh Hưng thông bảo* inscription on the reverse (Annam-VIII-3, Gardner 144); the *Cảnh Hưng cự bảo* 景興巨寶 in brass (Annam-VIII-16, Gardner 132a); the *Cảnh Hưng đồng bảo* 景興同寶 in brass (Annam-VIII-40, Gardner 119, **fig. 7**); the *Cảnh Hưng vĩnh bảo* 景興永寶 in brass, bearing the inscription *Yuan Fu tongbao* 元符通寶 on the reverse (Annam-VIII-46, Gardner 143, **fig. 8**), and many other types. There are no rare coins among those of Mẫn Đế, the last Emperor of the Lê Dynasty, the *Chiêu Thống thông bảo* 昭統通寶, but all the ordinary varieties are present.

There are several coins of the Nguyễn Lords of Southern Vietnam. These include a rare bronze *Thái Bình thông bảo* 太平通寶, with crescent and dot on the reverse (Annam-XIV-12, Gardner 166*a, **fig. 9**), and a series of zinc coins with Chinese, Vietnamese or uncertain inscription, unofficially cast in the middle of the eighteenth century and wrongly associated with a particular emperor, prince or rebel: *Zheng He tongbao* 政和通寶 (Annam-V-16, rt85), *Zheng Yuan tongbao* 正元通寶 (Annam-XII-32, rt364), *Đại Hòa thông bảo* 大和通寶 (Annam-III-16, rt105), *Thiệu Phù nguyên bảo* 紹符元寶 (Annam-XV-40, rt353), *Tường Tống nguyên bảo* 祥宋元寶 (Annam-XV-47, without number), *Tường Trị thông bảo* 祥治元寶 (Annam-XVI-2, rt360), and *Hoàng Nguyên thông bảo* 皇元通寶 (Annam-XVI-24, rt379).

The coins of the Tây Sơn 西山 Dynasty are found in the last trays (trays 17-18) with the 'rebel coinages': all the kings' coins are represented except *Bảo Hưng thông bảo* 寶興通寶 (1801-1802).²² Of particular interest are the two *Quang Trung thông bảo* 光中通寶 of Nguyễn Văn Huệ 阮文惠 (1789-1792) with the inscription *Annan* 安南 in seal script on the reverse (Annam-XVIII-25, Gardner 200, **fig. 10**, and Annam-XVIII-26, without number), seven others with *Quang Trung thông bảo* on both obverse and reverse, and a *Cảnh Thịnh thông bảo* 景盛通寶 of Nguyễn Quang Toán (1792-1802), bearing *Quang Trung thông bảo* on the reverse (Annam-XVIII-36, Gardner 231, **fig. 12**).

Almost all the ordinary coins of the four first emperors of the Nguyễn Dynasty (Gia Long 嘉隆 era 1802-1819, Minh Mạng 明命 era, 1820-1840, Thiệu Trị 紹治 era, 1841-1847, and Tự Đức 嗣德 era, 1848-1883) are represented (trays 10 and 17). In trays 11, 12 and 13, among several Vietnamese unofficial cash of different types (imitations of Chinese or Vietnamese coins, and cash with wrong inscriptions that have been miscopied from Chinese types, etc.), we also find some Japanese *shimase* and *boekisen*. This part of the collection is probably the most interesting because it includes many unknown coins and coins known only from rubbings published by Miura Gosen;²³ I have included images of those pieces I consider to be the most characteristic of this coinage (**fig. 13 to 20**). The two cabinets labelled 'Surplus Chinese'²⁴ also contain some Japanese and Vietnamese coins, including a group of *Qian Long tongbao* 乾隆通寶 coins with *Annan* 安南 on the reverse, which were cast during the Qing occupation of the Tonkin (1789); and several copies of Chinese coins, mostly Northern Song types, that were cast during different periods and sometimes modified in terms of the script or the type of reverse (**fig. 13, 14, 20**).

I was very pleased to find in the Ashmolean collection a group of struck patterns of the nineteenth century. There were clearly struck with dies engraved by foreigners (probably French) living in Vietnam, because the calligraphy is crude and contains errors.²⁵ There are both Chinese and Vietnamese patterns. The Vietnamese patterns are of Tây Sơn coins: two *Tian Sheng yuanbao* 天聖元寶 (Annam-XIII-21, Gardner i29*, **fig. 22**, and Annam-XVI-10, Gardner i44), four *Quang Trung thông bảo* 光中通寶 (Annam-XVII-35/36, Gardner 220a and b, **fig. 23**, Annam-XVII-37/38, Gardner 221 and without number), and two *Cảnh Thịnh thông bảo* 景盛通寶 (Annam-XIX-6/7, Gardner 226, **fig. 24**, and without number). The first two *Quang Trung* are die-linked, a feature that can also be observed on the two later *Quang Trung*, and on the two *Cảnh Thịnh*.

The Vietnamese coin collection of the Heberden Coin Room at the Ashmolean Museum is very interesting not only on account of the coins it contains, but also because of the provenance of these coins. The majority are from 'Prince Tamba' and nineteenth century European collectors who were living in China. Further research on the entire collection and on the inventories should throw more light on the official and unofficial coinage of Vietnam.

Notes

1 I would like to thank Prof. Christopher Howgego, Director of the Heberden Coin Room, Prof. Hermione Lee, President of Wolfson College, and Dr Shailendra Bandare, Keeper of the Oriental Coins in the Heberden Coin Room, for their kind invitation and warm welcome in July 2011. I would also like to thank Helen Wang of the British Museum for her help,

particularly on the biographies of the collectors. This preliminary report is a résumé of the survey I made of the collection; I have followed *grosso modo* the present organisation of the collection. However, this is not ideal, and if the East Asian coin collections at the Ashmolean Museum were to be published (as Helen Wang and I would wish), then it should be completely reorganised.

- 2 Edward Toda, 'Annam and its minor currency', *Journal of the North-China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Shanghai), vol. 17, part I (1882).
- 3 See Sakuraki Shin'ichi, Helen Wang and Peter Kornicki, with Furuta Nobuhisa, Timon Screech and Joe Cribb, *Catalogue of the Japanese Coin Collection (pre-Meiji) at the British Museum with special reference to Kutsuki Masatsuna*, British Museum Research Publication 174 (2010).
- 4 Christopher Thomas Gardner (1842-1914), British consul at Yichang, and a great collector of East Asian coins; in 1883, who sold his collection of over 3500 East Asian coins to the British Museum (*Catalogue of the Japanese Coin Collection*, p. 2).
- 5 James Tregaskis (c.1851-1926) was a book and art dealer, with his business address as Caxton Head, 232 High Holborn, London. In 1900 the company was renamed James Tregaskis and in 1915 he moved the business to Great Russell Street.
- 6 It is likely that G. Uvedale Price refers to George Uvedale Price, who travelled and took photographs in China in the 1890s, and authored several books including *Rambles with a camera: Or a series of photographs with descriptive text illustrating the physical features, scenery, temples, types of native life ... of the island of Amoy and its immediate neighbourhood* (Kelly and Walsh, c. 1893).
- 7 Howel Wills (ca 1856-1901), collector and antiquarian bookseller. He bought the collection of Kutsuki Masatsuna (Prince of Tamba) and sold a part (2500 coins out of a total of 9000) to the British Museum; he gave the remaining coins to the Oxford Indian Institute, which later transferred these coins to the Heberden Coin Room of the Ashmolean Museum.
- 8 Edward Thurloe Leeds (1877-1955) was Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum from 1929 to 1945. Notes relating to his work to catalogue the East Asian coin collection are in the Ashmolean archives labelled Arch.Ash.12, 16, 17 (see *Catalogue of Japanese coins at the British Museum*, pp. 14-15).
- 9 In the Heberden Coin Room, the colonial word 'Annam' is used instead of Vietnam. A coded system helps to keep track of the coins, thus C17-X-25 refers to the coin in the 25th recess of the 10th tray of the 17th cabinet in the Chinese coin collection ('Surplus Chinese').
- 10 This attribution comes from Toda (Toda, 'Annam and its minor currency', pp. 79-80, no. 6), see Thierry François, Review of Allan Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam, I-Official and semi-official coins*, *Revue Numismatique* 2007, pp. 361-371, esp. p. 363.
- 11 There are a lot of Vietnamese imitations of Chinese *Yuan Feng tongbao* 元豐通寶 wrongly identified as Trần Thái Tông (1225-1258) coins.
- 12 This rebel should not be confused with the Trần Cao 陳曩 (1516-1517) who cast *Thiên Ứng* 天應 coins (Allan Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam, I-Official and semi-official coins*, Singapore 2004, no. 42).
- 13 In Vietnamese historiography, *Lê Sơ* 黎初, meaning 'beginning of the Lê', is the name of the first and glorious part of the Later Lê Dynasty, from the end of the Chinese Occupation (1428) to the rise of the Mạc Usurpers in 1527. For

these coins, see Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam*, pp. 101-137.

- 14 See Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam*, No. 33-1.
- 15 See Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam*, No. 40.
- 16 Kutsuki Ryukyo (Masatsuna) 朽木龍橋, *Wakan kokon senkakan* 和漢古今泉貨鑑, 12 vol., Osaka-Tokyo 1798, vol. 7, p. 5ab.
- 17 See Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam*, No. 48-3.
- 18 Toda, 'Annam and its minor currency', nos 175-176. Although Barker repeats this attribution, many scholars have contested it with reliable argument (Miura Gosen 三浦吾泉, *Annan senpu* 安南錢譜, 3 vol. Tokyo 1965-1971, vol. II, p. 41, Tạ Chí Đại Trung, 'Tiền đúc ở Đàng Trong : Phương diện loại hình và Tương quan lịch sử', in Tạ Chí Đại Trung, *Nhung bài đã sự Việt*, Westminster (California) 1996, pp. 267-355, pp. 289-290; Thierry François, *Catalogue des monnaies vietnamiennes, Supplément*, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris 2002, p. 17 ; Phạm Quốc Quân, Nguyễn Đình Chiến, Nguyễn Quốc Bình et Xiong Baokang, *Tiền kim loại Việt Nam* 越南錢幣 Vietnamese Coins, Bảo tàng lịch sử Việt Nam, Hanoi 2005, p. 261, nos 473-474, and p. 301; François Thierry, 'La monnaie Thịnh Đức thông bảo dans la crise monétaire au Vietnam (1546-1658)', forthcoming in the *Revue Belge de Numismatique*.
- 19 Numismatists are still not in agreement about the origin of these coins: Trần Tuấn 陳珣 rebelled in Sơn Tây Province in the 3rd year of Hồng Thuận (1511) and Trần Công Ninh 陳公寧 in the 8th year (1516) (Ngô Sĩ Liên 吳士連, *Đại Việt sử ký toàn thư*, 大越史記全書, Chen Jinghe 陳荊和 ed., Toyo bunka kenkyujo, Toda University, 3 vols, Tokyo 1984-1986, XV, pp. 800-801 and 808-810).
- 20 This coin was already mentioned, without illustration, by Kutsuki Ryukyo, Schroeder and Okudaira; the first illustration is given by Zhang Chongyi in 1831. The first rubbing appears in the 1930s, in Dao Baoting's catalogue of rubbings; for details see Thierry, 'La monnaie Thịnh Đức thông bảo ...').
- 21 See Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam*, pp. 168-189.
- 22 See Barker, *The Historical cash coins of Việt Nam*, no. 97.
- 23 Miura Gosen, *Annan senpu*, vol. 2, see note 14.
- 24 Cabinets 17 and 18.
- 25 Some of these coins have were mentioned by Miura Gosen who called them *pen shote* ペン書手, 'pen style'. See Miura Gosen, *Annan senpu*, vol. 2, p. 55; and François Thierry, 'Nouveaux documents sur les essais de frappe de sapèques au Vietnam', forthcoming in the *Revue Numismatique*.

A- Official and unofficial coinage



Fig.1: *Đại Trị thông bảo* 大治通寶, Tang kaiyuan tongbao style, but large character *Trị*; plain reverse. Bronze, 23.3 mm, 2.58 g (Annam-II-28, Gardner 21). Trần 陳 Dynasty, Dụ Tông 裕宗 (1341-1369), *Đại Trị* era (1358-1369).



Fig.2: *Đại Trị thông bảo* seal script; plain reverse. Bronze, 23 mm, 2.93 g (Annam-II-31, rt61). Trần Dụ Tông (1341-1369).



Fig.3: *Đại Bảo thông bảo* 大寶通寶, large characters; plain reverse. Bronze, 24.6 mm, 4.45 g (Annam-II-48, rt83). Lê 黎 Dynasty, Thái Tông 太宗 (1433-1442), Đại Bảo era (1440-1442).



Fig.4: *Trần Công tân bảo* 陳公新寶; plain reverse. Bronze, 23 mm, 2.65 g (Annam-XIV-18, rt184). Rebel Trần Tuấn (?), 1516.



Fig.5: *Quảng Hòa thông bảo* 廣和通寶; plain reverse. Bronze, 24 mm, 3.82 g (Annam-IV-37, rt183a). Mạc 莫 Dynasty, Hiến Tông 憲宗, Quảng Hòa era (1541-1546).



Fig.6: *Thịnh Đức thông bảo* 盛德通寶; plain reverse. Bronze, 22.4 mm, 3.35 g (Annam-IV-43, rt189). Lê Thần Tông 神宗 (second reign, 1649-1662), Thịnh Đức era (1653-1658).



Fig.7: *Cảnh Hưng đồng bảo* 景興同寶; plain reverse. Brass, 23 mm, 2.09 g (Annam-VIII-40, Gardner 119). Lê Hiến Tông 顯宗, Cảnh Hưng era (1740-1786). Unofficial casting.



Fig.8: *Cảnh Hưng vĩnh bảo* 景興永寶; reverse: *Yuan Fu tongbao* 元符通寶 in seal script. Brass, 21.4 mm, 1.86 g (Annam-VIII-46, Gardner 143). Lê Hiến Tông (1740-1786). Unofficial casting.



Fig.9: *Thái Bình thông bảo* 太平通寶; reverse: moon crescent right and dot left. Bronze, 21 mm, 1.85 g (Annam-XIV-12, Gardner 166*a). Southern Vietnam, Nguyễn Lords, 18th century.



Fig.10: *Quang Trung thông bảo* 光中通寶; reverse: 安南 *Annam* in seal script. Bronze, 24.3 mm, 3.22 g (Annam-XVIII-25, Gardner 200). Tây Sơn 西山, Nguyễn Văn Huệ 阮文惠, Quang Trung era (1789-1792).



Fig.11: *Cảnh Thịnh thông bảo* 景盛通寶; reverse 工, positioned so the coin has a 3 o'clock axis (when looking at the coin, the 工 appears as H). Brass, 23 mm, 1.59 g (Annam-XV-10, Gardner 236a). Tây Sơn Dynasty, Nguyễn Quang Toản, 阮光纘, Cảnh Thịnh era (1792-1802).



Fig.12: *Cảnh Thịnh thông bảo* 景盛通寶; reverse: *Quang Trung thông bảo*. Brass, 24 mm, 1.58 g (Annam-XVIII-36, Gardner 231). Tây Sơn, Nguyễn Quang Toản (1792-1802). Casting error.

B- Uncertain unofficial coinage



Fig.13: *Song yuan tongbao* 宋元通寶 *yuan* in Vietnamese seal style; plain reverse. Bronze, 24 mm, 2.55 g (C18-I-8, II ii). Northern Vietnam, 15th century.



Fig.14: *Zhou yuan tongbao* 周元通寶; reverse: *mi* 米 ? Bronze, 24 mm, 2.77 g (C18-I-15, IC i). Northern Vietnam, 16th-17th century.



Fig.20: *Yuan Feng tongbao* 元豐通寶, very crude script; plain reverse. Brass, 23.4 mm, 1.61 g. (C17-X-35, without number). Unofficial casting, 18th century.



Fig.15: *An Pháp nguyên bảo* 安法元寶, geometrical script for *nguyên*; flat reverse. Brass, 22.3 mm, 1.79 g. (Annam-XIII-36, rt328). Small unofficial casting known as *tiền giân* 'diminutive coin', Northern Vietnam, 17-18th century.

C- Japanese coinage



Fig.21: *Đại Hòa thông bảo* 大和通寶; plain reverse. 24 mm, 2.31 g (Annam-III-9, rt97). Japanese *boekisen* (17th century), imitation of the *Đại Hòa thông bảo* coins of Nhân Tông 仁宗 (1442-1459) of the Lê Dynasty issued between 1443-1453.



Fig.16: *Nguyên Long thông bảo* 元隆通寶; flat reverse. Brass, 21.5 mm, 1.75 g. (Annam-XV-22, Gardner 253b). Unofficial casting, 18th century.

D- Nineteenth-century struck patterns



Fig.22: *Tian Sheng yuanbao* 天聖元寶, crude script; flat reverse. Copper, 21.7 mm, 1.63 g. (Annam-XIII-21, Gardner i29*). Struck pattern, 19th century.



Fig.17: *Dương Nguyên thông bảo* 洋元通寶; flat reverse. Brass, 22.7 mm, 1.67 g. (Annam-XV-48, Tregaskis). Unofficial casting, *tiền giân*, 18th century.



Fig.23: *Quang Trung thông bảo* 光中通寶, crude script; plain reverse. Brass, 24.4 mm, 1.84 g. (Annam-XVII-36, Gardner 220b). Struck pattern, 19th century.



Fig.18: *Long Đức thánh bảo* 隆德聖寶; four lines on reverse. Brass, 23.5 mm, 1.59 g (Annam-XVI-13, Gardner i29b). Unofficial casting, *tiền giân*, 18th century.



Fig.24: *Cảnh Thịnh thông bảo* 景盛通寶, crude script; plain reverse. Brass, 25 mm, 1.98 g. (Annam-XIX-6, Gardner 226). Struck pattern, 19th century.



Fig.19: *Yuan You tongbao* 元祐通寶; *shang* 上 left. Brass, 22.7 mm, 1.63 g (C17-X-14, without number). Unofficial casting, *tiền giân*, 18th century.

GOLD COINS OF MĀYINDEVA – A NEW RULER IN 13TH CENTURY GOA

By Shailendra Bhandare, University of Oxford

The Kadambas were the pre-eminent dynasty in Goa during the first two centuries of the 2nd millennium AD. They initially served as feudatories under the Chalukyas of Kalyani but by the 11th-12th centuries AD they were virtually independent, ruling over a large area covering half the Konkan strip, the islands and estuaries of Goa and the region around Dharwad, Halshi and Banavasi in north-central Karnataka. Their independence came to an end in c. 1215 when the Yadava ruler Singhana II conquered Goa.

The best publication to deal with the political and dynastic history of the Kadambas of Goa is George Moraes' 'The Kadamba Kula', first published in 1931 and then as several reprints. Most of the historical information discussed here is taken from this work. At the end of the book, Moraes also adds a small section (Appendix II) discussing the Kadamba coinage.

However, epigraphic and other sources indicate that a period of turbulence follows this conquest and there was Kadamba presence in Goa right up to the Islamic conquest in the early 14th century AD. At least three rulers, named 'Tribhuvanamalla', 'Shashta Deva III' and 'Kama Deva' are known to have ruled in Goa, chiefly from epigraphic sources.

The Kadambas struck a predominantly gold coinage with one type prevailing – featuring a roaring lion (which was their dynastic emblem) on the obverse and a Nagari inscription in four or five lines on the reverse. This inscription invokes the tutelary deity of the dynasty, Sri Saptakotishwara, and names the issuing ruler as the 'Veera' (warrior) who has been 'blessed by a boon at the feet' of the god. An important feature of the coinage of this type is that it is dated – the coins bear the name of the cyclical year or *Samwatsara* based on the ancient Indian chronological measure of the 60-year period that Jupiter takes to transcend a zodiacal sign. As Jupiter is called *Brhaspati* in Sanskrit, this cycle is named as the *Bārhaspatya* Cycle. The name of the cyclic year is inscribed in front of the lion on the obverse. This is a helpful adjunct to attribute the coins, particularly useful for distinguishing between issues of homonymous kings such as Jayakesi I, II and III.

While commenting on the coins of the Kadambas, Moraes comments on two coins of the type described above, with the legend mentioning a ruler named 'Soyi-deva' or 'Sova-deva', first published in Sir Walter Elliott's 'Coins of Southern India' and illustrated there in Pl. II, nos. 68, 69. (Fig 1 and Fig 2).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

On one of these coins, the name of the cyclic year was read as 'Bahudhānya', corresponding to AD 1218-19. Although the name is 'not found in the Kadamba dynastic lists', Moraes identifies the ruler with the one named 'Tribhuvanamalla', known from inscriptional sources to have ruled in the turbulent period following the Yadava conquest of Goa in c. AD 1215. He also

contends that 'Tribhuvanamalla' might have been 'a title of dignity than the name' of this ruler.

A careful examination of the reverse legend of the first coin illustrated by Elliott (Fig. 1) suggests that the name of the ruler is not 'Soyideva', as read by Sir Walter and then by Moraes, but 'Mayindeva'. A group of Kadamba-type coins which recently turned up in the trade had a number of specimens of this ruler and can be used as a worthwhile comparison. I have so far had access to at least fifteen coins from this group and close examination of them confirmed the reading 'Mayindeva' – a clear specimen is shown here as Fig. 3. I am grateful to M/s Pankaj Tandon, K V Pandit, JP Goenka and Shatrughan Saravagi for allowing me access to coins from their collection, so I could undertake this comparison.



Fig. 3

The reverse legend of the coins can be read as:
श्री सप्तकोटीश्वर चरण लब्ध वर वीर मायिदेव

(Blessed at the feet of Lord Saptakotishwara, Mayindeva the warrior)

Also, the 'ti' in the word 'Saptakotishwara' is engraved as a short 'ti' on the Elliott coin (Fig 1), whereas it is inscribed as a long 'tee' on the coin in Fig 3. Other variations in this legend are noticed on some specimens –



Fig. 4

1. On the coin illustrated as Fig. 4 we see the honorific 'Sri' replacing 'Veera' that precedes Mayindeva's name (श्री सप्तकोटीश्वर चरण लब्ध वर श्री मायिदेव)



Fig. 5

2. On Fig. 5 the reverse legend appears to read श्री सप्तकोटीश्वर चरण (...) श्री मायि (देव) राणा with the title 'Rānā' appended to Mayindeva's name.

3. On at least one specimen, in the American Numismatic Society, New York collection (accession number 1926.999.121) – the name is inscribed as मायीदेव, with a long 'i' in the spelling.

Who was this Mayindeva and when did he flourish? The answer to the second question is relatively easy, because, as the coins are based on a Kadamba type, they bear cyclic years and we know a range of them. So far I have documented the occurrence of 'Hemalambi' = AD 1237/38 (Fig. 4); 'Plava' (?) = AD 1241/42 (Fig. 6); 'Vishwavasū' = AD 1245/46 (Fig. 3) and 'Keelaka' = AD 1248/49 (Fig 7; British Museum collection). We can, therefore,

conclude that Mayindeva's numismatic career spans the middle of 13th century AD.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

Mayindeva is also known from two stone inscriptions from Karnataka. An inscription at the Kedareswara Temple, Belgamvi, Dist. Shikarpur, Karnataka describes him as a 'great minister, plenipotentiary, worthy of ultimate trust, sun amongst the 'nayakas' of the king' (*Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. VII, Shikarpur Taluk Inscriptions, no. 95, p. 115). In the other one, found on a Hero-stone at Belgutti, Dist. Honnali, Karnataka he is mentioned as 'Dannāyaka' (*Danda-Nāyaka*) of Banavasi country (*Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. VII, Honnali Taluk inscriptions, nos. 44 and 48 on Virkals at Belgutti near Siddheshwar Temple, pp. 294, 297). Both these are dated to c. 1215, so it would seem that Mayindeva was an important officer at this time, but did not assume any royal titles.

Apart from the two inscriptions mentioned above, there exists a third epigraphic substantiation for Mayindeva's career – this comes from a set of copper plates known as the 'Pallika copperplate charter'. This charter has been published in a number of Marathi sources on epigraphy, including *Prachin Marathi Koriva Lekha* by S G Tulpule (Pune, 1963). It is attributed to one, Nagadeva, and its inscriptional details have been interpreted to indicate that this Nagadeva was a descendant of Mayindeva. The reading of the date of its issue has also been a matter of some controversy. I am not in full agreement as to how the inscription is interpreted but this is a subject for another paper – suffice it to say at this point that a number of achievements of Mayindeva's career find mention in this set of copperplates. He is lauded for being a saviour of the Kadambas and for liberating the Kadamba fortunes by ending 'a tyranny of Maharashtra kings' which lasted twelve years. This he did by having installed on the throne a king named 'Tribhuvanamalla', ostensibly a Kadamba prince, who was the son of Vijayaditya. Mayindeva is also credited with victories against the rulers of Saurashtra and Lāta, Telingana, the Dravida country and the 'Hammiras', possibly a reference to Turks. He is addressed with eulogistic titles such as 'one whose reputation as a 'king who did not leave a single other ruler unconquered' would live up to the end of the world' and 'the one who showers the world with the nectar of his reputation, to make it go white with it'. It is noteworthy that the way the name of Mayindeva is written in this copper plate matches exactly with the way it is written on coins (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8

As seen from Moraes, the history of the end of Kadamba rule in Goa and the course of events which led to it over the entire 13th century AD is not well established. We know from the inscriptions of the Yadava kings of Devagiri that the Yadava, Singhana II (1210-1245), subjugated the Kadambas in c. 1215, but it is apparent that there was a rebellion, for in c. 1238 we find mention of Bichanna, a general of the Yadava army, trying to re-establish Yadava rule in Goa (*Gomantak: Prakrutee aani Samskrutee* [Marathi], by B D Satoskar, Pune, 1982, p. 259-260; Moraes, 'Kadamba Kula', p. 207).

Where does Mayindeva's resurgence fit in with respect to these developments is a good question. Inscriptional sources indicate that Mayindeva was evidently active in the Goa region as a minister of the Yadavas soon after Goa was conquered for the first time in c. AD 1215.

The outline of political succession for this period as given by Moraes places 'Tribhuvanamalla' in 1216-1238, followed by Shashtha III, 1246-1265 and, lastly, Kamadeva in 1265-1310. Moraes equated Tribhuvanamalla with the 'Soyideva' of the coins, which we have seen is a misreading for 'Mayindeva'. This effectively brings an end to the problem of fitting 'Soyideva' in the dynastic list even though his name did not appear in it in the first place.

The dates on Mayindeva's coins indicate he was active between AD 1237/38 – 1248/49. It is thus plausible that the Goan rebellion which the Yadava general Bichanna is credited with quelling, perhaps was not quelled and Mayindeva appears to have asserted himself as a ruler in the region around the same time. If this is to coincide with the 'ending of 12 years of tyranny' of the 'Maharashtra kings', one would assume the tyranny to have begun at about AD 1225. It is therefore conceivable that Mayindeva began his career as a governor of the Yadavas soon after Singhana conquered Goa in c.1215, but a decade later, he was side-lined by Singhana and another person, more favourable to the Yadavas – perhaps even a Yadava prince – was given that office. From Mayindeva's viewpoint, 1225 would thus mark the beginning of the 'tyranny'.

The Pallika copperplate charter indicates that Mayindeva was responsible for a Kadamba reinstatement and that the name of the Kadamba king who he reinstated was 'Tribhuvanamalla'. Judging by the evidence of dates on Mayindeva's coins, the reinstatement of Tribhuvanamalla appears to have happened sometime after 1248/49. We have a copperplate charter of a Kadamba ruler named Shashtha III, dated 1250/51 to indicate that he was in charge of Goa at that date. Perhaps it would be logical to conclude that 'Tribhuvanamalla' was a title held by Shashtha III, rather than a ruler named 'Soyideva', whose existence is entirely fictitious and based on the misreading of a coin legend, as we have seen.

This leaves us with the second coin from Sir Walter Elliott's collection, illustrated above as Fig 2. A close re-examination of this coin reveals several interesting aspects –

1. The coin is struck in gold but of a much inferior composition than other Kadamba coins.

2. The name of the cyclic year in front of the lion is not very clear, so the date when the coin was struck cannot be satisfactorily ascertained.

3. The reverse legend bears distinct differences in its articulation – its beginning is uncertain but it appears to read ...*chara(na / la)bdha wara prasā / da...* followed by the ruler's name. It begins with what looks like 'Sri' or 'Sā' and is followed by 'Wa/Cha', 'Ta/Dra', then by 'Deva'. The name of the issuer seems to be something like 'Sri Chata Deva' or 'Sri Chandra Deva' – any other combination of the possibilities would not make sense. 'Chata Deva' is plausible because it is a known name in Kadamba genealogy and a Prakrit version of the Sanskrit name 'Shashtha'. It is also interesting to note that the remaining legend, which in other Kadamba coins would end with the title *Malavaramari*, appears to be something completely different than this usual ending.

A SILVER TANKA OF BENGAL SULTAN, 'ALĀ DE DĪN ḤUSAIN SHĀH, COUNTERMARKED WITH THE TITLE OF ...A REVENUE OFFICIAL?

By John Deyell

It is well known that coins of the Bengal sultanate (ca. 1205-1576), especially in the later years, were heavily countermarked by punches called in the literature 'shroff marks'.²⁵ These are quite distinct from the official design struck on the coin during its manufacture at the mint, being placed on the coins while in circulation. Shroff-marks are of several types: narrow deep drilled or punched holes, which expose the coin's interior metal; broad shallow bored holes, which reduce the weight of the coin; a variety of identification marks (geometric and pictorial devices and Bangla *aksharas*), which identify the moneychanger who tested the coin, and finally chisel marks, which cancel the coin's status as current tender. Despite the frequency of these marks on coins found in hoards, so far they have been limited to single letterforms. So they themselves have not yielded much historical information, beyond the linguistic preferences of the banking fraternity in medieval Bengal. It is rather the implications of their use that have been analysed.²⁶

Recently, however, Noman Nasir has brought to our attention, a Bangla-script shroff mark comprising a full word which he reads as '*mahananda*'. The first two *aksharas* are quite clear; the last two not as much, at least in the photo he published.²⁷ Whether this indicates a title or name, is yet to be decided. It does, however, show that full words, and not just initial letters, were occasionally placed on the coins.

Some years ago I came across a Bengali coin with five shroff marks, four of which are Bangla *aksharas*:



Silver tanka of 'Alā al-dīn Ḥusain Shāh, Ḥusainābā Dār al-Zarb mint ca. AH 904, 26-27 mm, 9.56 g. Type of GG-B765.

On closer inspection, it is evident the four *aksharas* were placed around the margin in a specific order, forming the work *bhatarāka*:



The only cognate term I am able to find is the Prakrit title *Bhāṭāraka*, which, according to D.C Sircar's *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, was one of those ancient regal epithets which underwent a slow degradation in status, such as happened with the title

²⁵ G.S. Farid, 'The Markings on the Coins of the Sultans of Bengal' *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. 40-1, 1978, pp. 27-33.

²⁶ Syed Ejaz Hussain, *The Bengal Sultanate Politics, Economy and Coins (AD 1205-1576)*, New Delhi, 2003, p. 306; John Deyell, "Cowries and Coins: the Dual Monetary System of the Bengal Sultanate", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Delhi, Vol. 47-1, Jan-Mar 2010, pp. 87-88, 101.

²⁷ Noman Nasir, message no. 17280, posted Wed. Jan. 11, 2012 on South Asia Coin Group, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southasia-coins/message/17280> (accessed 14 January, 2012).

maharaja. This would imply that by the late sultanate period, the word may have been the title of a lesser functionary, although somewhat evolved from its original spelling and pronunciation. Presumably such a person was involved with the revenue department at some level of government, or was an independent banker of some status. I welcome the suggestions of philologists on this question.

THE STATE OF PALESTINE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE COMMEMORATIVE COINS

By Tareq Ramadan

On November 15, 1988 Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasser Arafat announced the Declaration of the State of Palestine in Algiers.²⁸ The declaration, itself, was crafted by the late, but renowned, Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish, and, while mainly symbolic, it was seen as a major move towards internationalising the plight of the Palestinians and their right to self-determination.²⁹ To celebrate this important historical announcement, The Palestinian Center for the Study of Non-Violence (an organisation established in Jerusalem in 1985 by Palestinian activist and psychologist, Dr Mubarak Awad) commissioned the minting of a three-coin set of Palestinian commemoratives highlighting the occasion.³⁰ These were never circulating currency but only commemorative objects celebrating the declaration in Algiers.



Bronze/11grams/30.60mm

²⁸ Palestine's Declaration of Independence: Self-Determination and the Right of the Palestinians to Statehood; Quigley, John, B.U. Int'l L. J. 1 (1989) pg. 1-2

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ The Palestinian Center for the Study of Non-Violence State of Palestine Commemorative Coin order form.



Silver/ 1oz./38.10mm

| |
|--|
| Close-up of obverse Arabic legend |
| Line 1: إعلان يوم Declaration Day |
| Line 2: دولة استقلال: (of) the independence of the state of |
| Line 3: فلسطين Palestine |
| Line 4: ١٥ تشرين الثاني ١٩٨٨ November 15, 1988 |



Gold/.25oz/21.20mm

More than twenty years ago, these Palestine commemoratives were offered in three different metals: bronze (\$12), sterling silver (\$60), and 24 carat gold (\$300), and could be purchased individually or as a boxed set of three for \$360.00.³¹ In terms of size, relative to some of the British Palestine Mandate coins that also bore the name “Palestine” between 1927 and 1947, the bronze commemorative measures slightly larger than a 100 mils coin (100 mils = 29 mm) and weighs slightly less than a 20 mils coin (20 mils = 11.33 g).³² The silver commemorative is much heavier and much larger than any of the British Palestine Mandate coins measuring an impressive 38 mm and weighing one ounce, while the gold commemorative measures the same as a 1 mil coin (21 mm) and weighs close to that of a 2 mils coin (7.77 g).³³ It appears from the accompanying documentation, as well as the sharp lustre on the coins themselves, that they were struck as ‘proofs’.³⁴

In terms of iconography and design, all three coins share an identical obverse and reverse pattern. The obverse reads “Declaration Day of the Independence of the State of Palestine” (إعلان يوم فلسطين دولة استقلال) followed by the date ‘November 15, 1988’ (١٥ تشرين الثاني ١٩٨٨) written, entirely, in elegant Arabic calligraphy as seen below.



The reverse, a take on previous designs, depicts an olive sprig with seven leaves and six berries, similar to the 1, 2, and 100 Mil coins issued by the British during the Palestine Mandate period.³⁵ Accompanying the olive branch are English legends reading “15 NOVEMBER 1988” (upper half) and “STATE OF PALESTINE” (lower half). The legends are separated by two, parallel diamonds—one on each side of the coin.



Reverse: Palestine 2 Mil



Reverse: Palestine Commemorative

While we know that the coins were designed by Jerusalem-born Palestinian artist, art historian, and author, Kamal Boullata, it is still unclear as to how many of each coin (or how many sets) were produced.³⁶ We do, however, know that the coins were released in February of 1990 though, as the accompanying certificate of authenticity states. Given the level of market rarity, I presume that they were struck in very limited quantities. Where, exactly, they were minted is unclear, but orders could be placed with U.S.-based ‘Invisions, Inc.’ according to the organization’s order form.

In terms of presentation, the coins, if purchased individually, were housed in high-quality, black velvety, metallic boxes. Once opened, the inside lid depicted the coin’s Arabic declaration (the coin’s obverse) stamped in silver. The coin, itself, was encased in a secure and fitted, round plastic holder in the center of the box accompanied by a small, square, multipage certificate of authenticity which fit nicely underneath and out of sight.

³¹ Ibid

³² The Coins and Banknotes of Palestine Under the British Mandate, 1927-1947 by Howard M. Berlin (2001), pgs. 34-43.

³³ Ibid

³⁴ The Palestinian Center for the Study of Non-Violence State of Palestine Commemorative Coin Certificate of Authenticity (1990)

³⁵ Berlin, pgs. 34-43.

³⁶ The Palestinian Center for the Study of Non-Violence State of Palestine Commemorative Coin order form.



Order form cover



Obverse and Reverse of the Silver Coin

SOME COINS OF THE SAFAVID RULER, SULTĀN ḤUSAIN (AH 1135-45), STRUCK AT QAZVĪN

By Stan Goron

During his reign of just over a decade, Sultān Ḥusain struck silver coins on four different standards. His earlier coins were very well engraved but usually poorly struck, most of them ending up with some flatness. Coins of the second standard, struck from AH 1123-1128 are mostly of rectangular format, also well engraved and much better struck. The most copious coinage is that of the third standard, mostly struck between AH 1129-1135. And it is some coins of this period that are featured below.

They all have the same legend. The obverse has the inscription: *Hoseyn bande-ye shāh-e velāyat* (*Hoseyn, servant of the king of the Velayat*, the king of the Velayat being 'Ali b. Abi Talib, the fourth caliph after the death of the Prophet and regarded by Shi'ites as the rightful successor to the Prophet.³⁷ The reverse legend comprises the Shi'ite Kalima and, from year 1131, the names of the 12 imams, in the margin. The initial coinage of this type from Qazvīn is quite plain with simple borders on each side. In 1131, however, Ḥusain moved his capital to this city for a brief period and this led to a flourishing of the engraver's art there with considerable variation in calligraphy, decoration and legend arrangements, as will be seen below.



Abbasi of AH 1130 with plain borders



Abbasi of AH 1131; the reverse has the 12 imams in the margin within an inner border of fine dots and an outer border of larger dots



Abbasi of AH 1131 with main legends on both sides within an ornamental inner border



Abbasi of AH 1131, again with main legends on both sides within an ornamental border



Abbasi of AH 1131, again with main legends on both sides within an ornamental border and with plenty of decoration



Abbasi of AH 1131, reverse similar to previous coin but obverse within fine dotted, ornamental border



Abbasi of AH 1131, with obverse within ornamental border, and reverse within fine dotted borders

³⁷ Steve Album, *Checklist of Islamic Coin*, 3rd edition, 2011, footnote 656.

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