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Members News

Mr. Scott Semans of New Orleans, in connection with his World Coin Sourcebook research 1977-78, would like copies of any commercial numismatic publication except American, in any condition (send by sea mail). He offers a free copy of the resulting book to those who can help him. He is also seeking, for a Reference collection leading to a comprehensive work on cash coins, scarce types and varieties of all Chinese cash, either single specimens or collections.

Back numbers of Information sheets and Occasional publications can be obtained from Michael Broome and back numbers of the more recent newsletters from the editor. Subscriptions to the ONS will remain unchanged (please remember to pay), but the initial enrolment fee will be raised to £5 (or equivalent) from 1st. January 1979.

ONS meetings

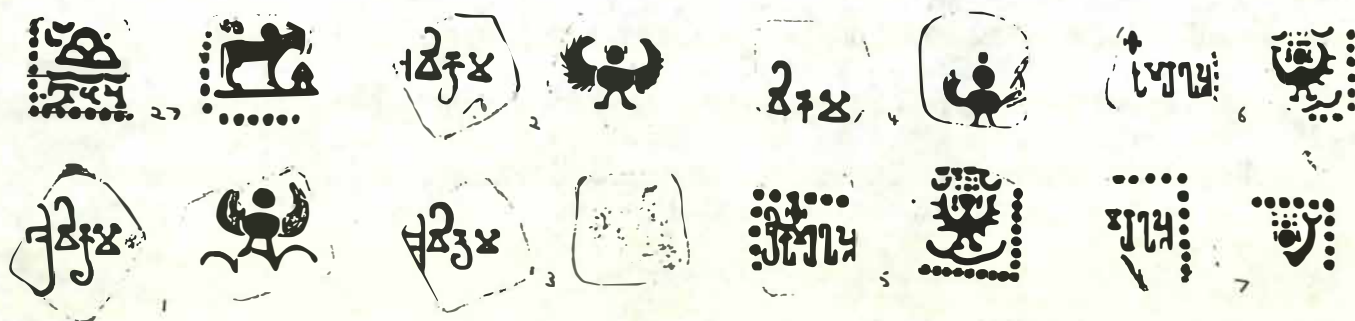
Seventeen members were present for the meeting at St. James' Hall on 21st. October last. It was a pleasure to meet two overseas members, Mr. Ken West from the Netherlands and M. Michel Roussel from Paris. ONS funds benefitted by over £ 20 from the sale of members' duplicates. Thanks are due to Messrs. Spink and Son Ltd. and to Mr. S. Goron for kindly donating some coins and to Mrs. Gwyneth Watson for arranging the tea. It is anticipated that the next meeting at St. James' Hall will be on Saturday March 10th. 1979. The recent meeting in Cologne was attended, among others, by Mr. Jan Lingen of the Netherlands and Mr. R. Senior of Hamburg. A further meeting is being planned for May 1979 in Frankfurt.

Forgeries of Spanish Islamic coins

M. B. Mitchiner

Two types of forgeries have recently been seen in London. Both are die-struck, bear the appropriate epigraphic style for the period when they purport to have been issued and have a superficial appearance of authenticity.

- 1 Obv. Normal designs of the Spanish Omayyad 'Abd al Rahman III (AH 300 - 350) and purporting to have been struck at Al Andalus in AH 333
Rev. Normal inscription of Almoravid 'Ali ibn Yusuf citing his heir Tashfin (AH 533 - 537)
- 2 Two coins from the same dies showing identical "double striking" and calling themselves dinars, though struck in silver. The reverse field legend is of Spanish Taifas Almoravid type and names Al Imam 'Abdallah Amir Al Muminin Al 'Abbasi but the obverse bears the North African mint name Madinat Fas and the date 537 (Normal Almoravid coins were being struck at Fas until AH 539).





A Hoard of Abhira and Gupta Lead Coins

by J. Moller and M. Mitchiner

Seventy two square lead coins were recovered from this hoard which was found in Gujarat. The earlier group of coins (46 specimens) are anonymous dated specimens that were formerly attributed to the Western Satraps. These coins bear a humped bull on one side and have a "Hill" with adjunct symbols and date beneath on the other side. The design and metrology are in the tradition of Western Ksatrapa issues struck in their eastern provinces but as the eastern provinces of the Kshatrapa realm had become the domain of the Abhiras some years before this series of coins was struck it is apparent that they should be considered Abhira¹, rather than Kshatrapa² issues. Specimens in the British Museum range in date from Saka 280 to 294: AD 358 to 372. The hoard coin illustrated here bears the slightly earlier date 276.

The remaining 26 coins in this hoard were struck for the Gupta Emperors who conquered this region from the Abhiras at the end of the fourth century AD (Chandragupta II). Following the Gupta occupation of Malwa Chandragupta is known to have struck a few small copper coins of Malava type³ and when he had progressed westwards beyond Gujarat into Saurashtra he issued silver drachms modelled on those of the Western Satraps⁴. But Gupta lead coins modelled on those of the Abhiras have not previously been published, indeed, the present specimens appear to be the first known Gupta lead coins of any type. The obverse of all these coins bears the Imperial Garuda (Peacock) symbol enclosed within a dotted square. The reverse bears the Emperor's name and a date is sometimes visible beneath. The coins may be described as follows :-

Abhira

- 27 - 72 Obv. Humped bull standing right with object (? altar) in front: dotted rectangular border.
 Rev. Hill symbol with two crescents on the left and sun on the right: river below and date in ex.
 Date: Saka year 276 (AD 254) on the coin illustrated
 Lead, 3.68 gm (coin shown)

Gupta

- 1 - 4 Chandragupta II Vikramaditya: c. AD 380 - 414
 Obv. Imperial Garuda symbol without border around
 Rev. Brahmi legend: Sri Vikrama
 Lead, 4.80, 2.45, 3.57, 3.59 gm

Kumaragupta I Mahendraditya: AD 414 - 455

- 5 - 17 Obv. Imperial Garuda symbol enclosed by a rectangular dotted border
 Rev. Brahmi legend: Sri Kumaragupta
 Lead, 3.87, 3.62, 4.25, 3.73, 3.08, 3.92, 2.71, 2.23, 2.39, 2.13, 1.63, 3.90, 2.42 gm

Skandagupta Kramaditya: AD 455 - 480

- 18 - 26 Obv. similar
 Rev. Brahmi legend: Sri Skandagupta: date occasionally legible below
 Date on coin 19 - year 148 (Gupta era of AD 320)
 Lead, 2.95, 2.60, 2.67, 2.05, 2.54, 2.98, 1.71, 2.43, 2.54 gm

1 M. B. Mitchiner, Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian coinage, vol. IX, type 1417

2 BMC p. 187

3 BMC 183 - 189; Mitchiner type 1243

4 BMC 133 - 139; Mitchiner type 1306

AR Rupee: weight 11.6 grammes, diameter 30 mm.

Obv. اله حامی دین محمد
نناه

سایه فضل شہ عالم باد
سکہ
زد بر هفت کشور

Sikka zad bar haft kashur
seeah faizal Shah Alam Badshah
ilah hami din Muhammad 1175



Rev.

حانوس
مہنت
سکہ جلوس
ضرب روشن آباد تریپورہ

Zarb Roshnabad Tripura
sanah 3 jalus
maimanat manus



Translation: The defender of the religion of Muhammad,
Shah Alam Badshah, Shadow of the Divine favour,
put his stamp on the seven climes.

Struck at Roshnabad Tripura in the third year
of his reign of tranquil prosperity

Among the late Mughal coins in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford is this remarkable rupee dated AH 1175 and regnal year 3 of Shah Alam II (AD 1761/62), with the mint name Roshnabad Tripura.

The Hindu Rajas of Tripura struck a fine series of coins from the 15th. until the present century. The only gaps in this long series occur during the mid 18th. century, when the state came under Muslim domination. It was about AD 1728 when the Mughals, under Mir Habib, the Naib of Murshid Quli II of Dacca, finally conquered Tripura and changed the name to Roshnabad (the abode of light). The Muhammadans, though dominating the whole of Tripura, actually occupied only the plains and these were parcelled out among the Muslim nobles and annexed to revenue. The hill territory was too difficult to administer profitably and was left in a state of near anarchy.

In 1760 Krishna Manikya was confirmed as Raja of Tripura by the Nawab of Murshidabad, but in the following year there was an internal dispute which was referred to the Nawab. The Nawab, by this time, was virtually under the control of the British who decided that this dispute provided a good pretext for the annexation of Tripura. A Muslim army was despatched, followed by a British force, and the Raja submitted without resistance. A Collector of Revenue was sent from Chittagong and the revenue for the year 1761 was fixed at Rs. 100,001 sicca. Mr. Ralph Leak was then appointed the first Resident at Tripura and thus the state passed effectively into British hands although, because of the British policy of deference towards the Nawab, it was the latter who retained nominal control until the Dewani grant of 1765. According to the Krishnamala, the Nawab, aided by the British, placed one Balarammanikya on the throne and it was only in 1767 that Krishna Manikya was able to regain power.

Following the example set by the Mughals, the Raja of Tripura was allowed almost complete autonomy in the hill territory - later known as Hill Tipperah. The territory in the plains was, however, fully annexed, although the Raja of Tripura retained the title of Zamindar of Chakla Roshnabad, the largest estate in this area.

The coin which forms the subject of this article was struck about the time when the British first took control of Tripura and placed Balarammanikya on the throne. Since nominal control remained with the Nawab, the piece should be regarded as a Mughal rather than a British East India Company issue. The precise place of issue, however, remains a difficult problem. It may have been struck at Udaipur (the old capital), Agartala (Krishna Manikya's new capital) or at Comilla (now in Bangladesh) where the British Resident was located. It may, however, have been a product of the Company's mint at Calcutta or of the Nawab's mint at Murshidabad - the mint mark that appears on the obverse is common to rupees of that period emanating from both mints. The workmanship of the die cutting and the style of calligraphy tend to indicate that the coin was struck in an established mint. In any case the coin is of great interest as being the only Muslim coin struck for Tripura.

Some recent publications

- R. N. Bridge*, The coinage of the Ancient Crimea, *Seaby's Coin & Medal Bull.* Nov. 1978, 335 & 338 - 342.
- R. N. Bridge*, The coinage of the Ancient Crimea, *Seaby's C & M Bull.*, Dec. 1978, 372 - 377
- I. C. G. Campbell*, Two hoards of unknown early type Indian coins, *Numismatics International Bull.* Oct. 1978, 323 - 330
- G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville*, Sh'i rulers at Kilwa, *Numismatic Chronicle* 1978, 187 - 190
- G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville*, Numismatic evidence for chronology at Kilwa (review), *NC.* 1978, 191 - 196
- D. G. Loulakakis*, Turkish countermarks on early Greek (modern) coins, *Spink's Numismatic Circular*, Dec. 1978, 581
- K. M. MacKenzie*, Abdullatif Suphi Pasha, a renowned Turkish Numismatist, *Spink's NC.* Dec. 1978, 582
- M. B. Mitchiner*, Mint organisation in the Sassanian Empire (concluded), *Spink's NC.* Nov. 1978, 524 - 526
- R. N. J. Wright*, The silver coinage of China, 1912 - 1928, *Numismatic Chronicle* 1978, 147 - 175

Books

- Coin Hoards III*, A number of Oriental hoards are summarised in this annual publication of the Royal Numismatic Society (London)
- M. B. Mitchiner*, *Oriental Coins and their Values: the Ancient and Classical World, 600 BC - AD 650*, pp. 760
This is now available from B. A. Seaby, 11 Margaret St. London W 1