

ORIENTAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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From the Secretary General

Response to the note in newsletter no. 98 about the International Numismatic Congress has been encouraging. To date 23 papers have been offered in the Oriental section. Arrangements have been made for the informal workshop on Islamic studies under the direction of Michael Bates and any suggestions for topics should now be sent directly to him at the American Numismatic Society (for address, see below in American exhibitions section).

ONS Meeting in Germany

On 16th November, 15 ONS members attended the meeting in the Mondial Hotel, Cologne. Bernhard Rhode gave a lecture on Mysore coins, highlighting the issues of mints of Tipu Sultan. Henk van der Wiel showed imitations and contemporary forgeries of VOC coins, made in Indonesia; and Jan Linggen provided a survey of Indo-Greek coinage and its influence on Indian numismatics.

Future ONS meetings

UK: 28 Little Russell St, London WC1

Cologne:

Saturday 25th January 1986

Saturday 10th May 1986

Saturday 8 November 1986

MISCELLANY

Medieval and Islamic photofile at the American Numismatic Society

Michael Bates, Curator of the ANS Islamic coins section, has written to us about a Medieval and Islamic photofile organised in August 1984 at the ANS in New York as a complement to that society's well established file of photographs of Greek and Roman coins. Building on a long-discontinued file of post-classical coinage, this new file contains photographs of hammer-struck European, Islamic, Indian, and non-Islamic Near Eastern coins from auction catalogues and price lists. Catalogue illustrations are cut out and glued on a 3" x 5" (76 x 126mm) index card which gives the name of the state or dynasty by which it is filed, subdivided by locality and/or ruler as necessary. Date (where given) and metallic content are included, as well as denomination. A reference to the catalogue and catalogue number allows the user to seek further information in the ANS library's files.

The Islamic section has two major divisions: Islamic dynasties (regardless of location) and Non-Islamic dynasties (including numerous Near Eastern and Indian coinages). With approximately 3500 entries so far, the section is strongest in Abbasid dinars, Umayyad and Moghal issues, Artuqid bronze, and Aksumite, Gupta, Kushan and Sassanian coinages. Donations of relevant sales catalogues, in duplicate if possible, are welcome. Equally

welcome are researchers who will give the file a practical testing and communicate their comments and enquiries to the file editor (Christine Ryba Curry). The file may be used during regular ANS library hours.

American exhibitions

1. ONS member Ray Hebert has organised an excellent exhibition entitled "Aditi: the monies of India". The exhibition opened on 24 October at the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC as part of the "Festival of India" celebrations and is due to run for at least 6 months. This is the first exhibition built completely in-house by the Smithsonian Institution's Numismatic Division. An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition has been produced, thanks to the generosity of another ONS member, William Barrett.
2. The American Numismatic Society's exhibition "Coinage of India through the Centuries" opened on 12 October in the East Exhibition Hall at the ANS Museum, Broadway at 55th Street, New York City. It will remain on view until 11 January 1986.
3. A two-part display, consisting of Indian coinage and United States paper money opened on 30 October at the American Numismatic Association museum in Colorado Springs, and will be on view until well into 1986.

News from Krause Publications

The latest edition of the Standard Catalog of World Coins will soon be available. This will comprise two volumes, containing almost 58,000 illustrations and 2,496 pages. The Ottoman listings now go back to 1593 AD and the new edition will re-incorporate the Moghal and Indian Princely State listings (suitably amended and enlarged) that currently appear in the South Asian catalogue.

Recent publications

1. An introduction to Sasanian Coins by D. Sellwood, P Whitting & R. Williams: published by Spink & Son Ltd at £12. We hope to review this book in the next newsletter.
2. Ray Hebert has written an article entitled "Four more Chinese devotional medals" in the October edition of Numismatics International.
3. Seaby's Coin & Medal Bulletin for September 1985 contains a short item by Paul Stevens on a Bombay Presidency pice dated 1728, as well as a revue of Leo Mildenberg's book on the coinage of the Bar Kokhba War.
4. Volume XLVI (parts I & II) 1984, of the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India has recently been published. The volume contains 39 articles, most of which relate to the ancient period. The quality of the articles varies somewhat.

Members News

Bob Kriz has integrated Mandel's Cast Coinage of Korea and the KCDA Catalog 1985 (in the Korean language) and other sources into a revised listing, using the Mandel numbering system. The result is over 3600 different pieces in the Sang Pyong Tong Bo period, 1633-1891. He welcomes correspondence from those of similar interests, who should write to him at: 1980 N. Atlantic Avenue no. 809, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931, USA.

Michael Broome is undertaking a study of the coins of the Seljuqs of Rum and would be pleased to receive details of any unpublished material members may have in this series.

AN UNPUBLISHED TYPE OF POTIN COIN FROM INDIA by Terry Hardaker

While in Ahmedabad in 1965 I purchased four identical small globular coins from a scrap metal dealer, bearing on both sides a symbol rather like the bow and arrow on ancient Satavahana coins. The dealer had a small sackful, but apart from a few more that were purchased by an American who was there at the same time, I believe all would have been melted as they had no numismatic value to the dealer.

As all the coins are smaller than the dies from which they are struck, an examination of all four is needed to reconstruct as much as possible of the complete designs:



obverse



reverse



In the ensuing twenty years I have neither seen any other coins like this nor found anyone who would venture any comment. Viewed in such an isolated context it is difficult to do more than speculate on their age and identity. In this light the following observations are made.

1. The coins were in the hands of a metal dealer in Gujerat; he also had various other boxes full of coins from punchmarked to Native States. Something of a local flavour was, not unexpectedly, apparent in his assemblage and it is likely that the present coins had come from a local findspot.

2. Potin is used in ancient Indian coinage especially that of the Satavahanas, and it also occurs on some early medieval coins, but not much, if at all, on later coins.

3. The bow and arrow symbol is likewise confined to the early period, in the silver punchmarked series as well as on Satavahana coins.

It may therefore be very tentatively concluded that this is a hitherto unknown Satavahana issue, perhaps circulating in the Saurashtra region as a smaller denomination contemporary with the potin bow and arrow coins of various Satavahana kings, e.g. BMC Andhras nos. 14-31.

If any reader has seen similar coins, I would be glad to hear from them.

COINS OF GIRVAN YUDDHA OF NEPAL STRUCK IN ALMORA by Ken Wiggins

As an appendix to the article by Nicholas Rhodes in Newsletter 90-91 (June-August 1984) describing a copper coin of the Nepalese ruler Rana Bahadur from the Almora mint, I should like to publish here two further issues of this mint but of a somewhat later period.

1. Ae. Weight 9.46 grams. Diameter 26-27 mm



Obv.

महाराज किरान
शुद्ध बिक्रम शाह

(Sri) Maharajah Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah



Rev.

शुद्ध
१८०८

Zarb Almora 1858

This coin is poorly engraved and struck. Most of the obverse legend is complete but the first part of the word Sri is off the flan or obliterated. The bottom of the reverse is clear. In the upper half a bow and arrow may be seen but other parts of the inscription are missing. Possibly it is the word falus. The coin is dated Samvat 1858 (AD 1801).

2. Ae. Weight 7.65 grams. Diameter 18-19mm



Ob

महाराज किरान
शुद्ध

Incomplete but possibly as No.1



Rev.

शुद्ध
१८०८

.... 1858 Zarb ... Almora

This coin is a worse production than the last and only partial inscriptions fall on the flan. The date is clear but the last digit seems to have been engraved over another figure. It is possible that this type of coin preceded no. 1.

THE LEAD "KHMER" COINS OF SOUTH EAST ASIA by M. Robinson

In Oriental Coins and their values - the Ancient and Classical World, Dr Michael Mitchiner illustrates a series of lead coins with floral design, scalloped or round edge, and central hole. He ascribed them to the Khmer Kingdom of Angkor (c.802-1369 AD). On p.662 of that book many examples are illustrated. Subsequent X-ray fluorescence analysis by Dr A.M. Pollard of ten coins of this type showed them to be a mixture of lead and tin, roughly 80% lead but ranging from 47% to 100%.

Whilst on holiday in Thailand in December 1984, I made a short visit to Ayudhya, the former Thai capital from 1350 to 1767. Near to Wat Mahathat there is a small museum which contained one exhibit of particular interest. As far as I could make out, the items were dug up from the area of the Portuguese settlement around the church of St Dominique, likely period 16th century. There was a skeleton, some religious objects, and two coins. The captions were not very helpful - "coin" and "Chinese coin". I did not have time to try to examine them as they were under glass. Nevertheless, the Chinese coin, of normal cash type, would have been identifiable and hence dateable. Of more interest was the other coin, which was of lead, rather worn, with scalloped edge and hole. In Bangkok I bought an example which is very similar, and which I show below.

Obverse and Reverse floral design
15.51 gm, 66% lead, 34% tin.



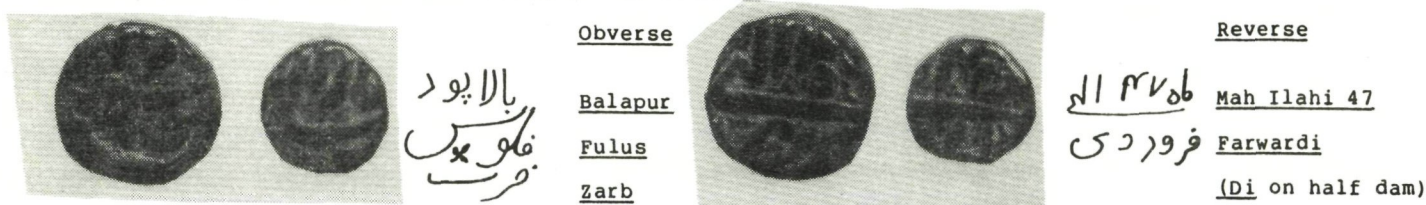
Despite several letters to various authorities in Bangkok and Ayudhya asking for further details of the circumstances of this find, it is regretted that so far no reply has been received. I have therefore decided to report this item in the hope that someone either in Thailand or on a visit there might be able to glean more information about it. The idea is of course that if all the other objects can be dated to the same period, this is strong evidence (though not proof) that the lead coin is roughly contemporary. The provenance of this series as reported by Mitchiner was Laos/Cambodia although he has told me that one has since been found in South Thailand. These coins are plentiful in Bangkok in various sizes.

Anyway, I put forward the theory that this lead coinage may be later than previously suggested, possibly 16th century. Support (or otherwise) for this view must await a proper evaluation of the find at Ayudhya, and I should be very grateful for information on this, whether available now or in the future.

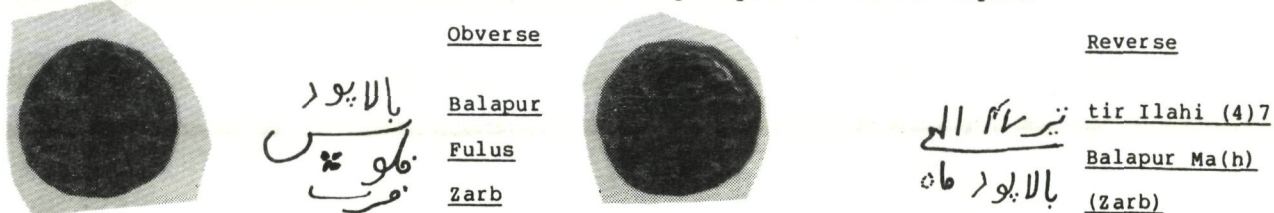
AKBAR'S COPPERS OF BALAPUR by Prashant P. Kulkarni

Akbar's Dams of Burhanpur mint are well known. On the obverse they bear Zarb fulus Burhanpur and on the reverse is the Ilahi date and month. Similar coins have been found recently showing very similar calligraphy - the same slant of the lam of falus, the same elongated seen, but with a different mint - Balapur.

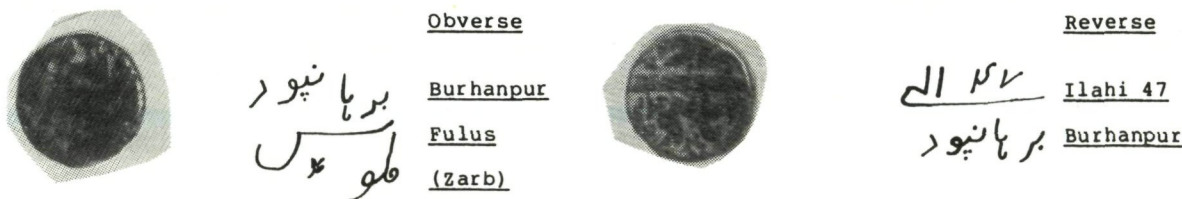
A dam as well as a half dam that was found is illustrated



Another dam shows the mintname on reverse too. This unique specimen has the legend.



The inscription of the mint-name on both sides is unusual. The practice however, seems to have been in existence in the 47th RY, since another such specimen has come to light bearing the mintname Burhanpur. This half dam is illustrated below:-



Balapur is situated in Berar at 20 42'N, 76 52'E. It is just a little south of Burhanpur; hence the similarity in the calligraphy on coins. Akbar's rupees of Balapur were also issued from this very mint and not from Balapur in Karnataka, from which fanams and pagodas were issued at a later date. These two Balapurs are often confused but can be very easily distinguished. The former seems to have issued coins only in the name of Akbar, whereas the latter was taken over by the Moghals as late as AD 1689 and stuck coins from Farrukhsiyar onwards.