

# ORIENTAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

## ONS NEWSLETTER No 141 Summer 1994

### ONS News

1. The ONS American region had a meeting on 11 June during the spring New York International Numismatic Convention. The guest speaker was Dr Stefan Heidemann of the University of Berlin, who spoke on 'Timur and Damascus, the Tanka vs the Dirhem'. Regional Secretary William B Warden, Jr was presented with the President's Award by the New York International Numismatic Convention President Robert M Brueggeman for his services as Educational Program Chairman during the previous three years. Fellow ONS member Harlam J Berk was presented with a similar award and plaque for a talk given during the show, as was Dr Heidemann.

2. The British Museum Department of Coins and Medals in association with the Oriental Numismatic Society organised an Indian Coin Study Day on 28 May. The subject was Recent Research on Coinages of the North West.

- i. Osmund Bopearachchi: Recent Discoveries: hoards and finds of ancient coins from Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- ii. Elizabeth Errington: Rediscovering General Court's Collection, a 19th century collection of coins and antiquities from the North West.
- iii. Terry Hayes: Observations on Apollonius of Tyana's journey to India according to Philostratus.
- iv. Joe Cribb: A new hoard of Kushano-Sasanian coins from Afghanistan.

### 3. Tübingen Islamic Coinage Conference

The eighth Tübingen week-end conference on Islamic numismatics was held on 23-24 April 1994, attracting some 30 participants from Germany and neighbouring countries, Turkey and the USA. This year the meeting was hosted by Tübingen University's Archaeological Institute at its new location in the grand setting of Tübingen castle. Overlooking the mediaeval city centre, the castle is currently undergoing a dungeon-to-attic refurbishment and upon completion of the works most parts of the structure will be turned over to Tübingen University for its liberal arts department.

Five papers were read during the two working sessions Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, one in English and the rest in German. In chronological order of topics handled, L Ilisch, using recent unpublished research by Dr M Bates, listed the officials whose names appear on the coinage of the Abbasid caliphate in the years 275-281 AH and pondered the significance of such mentions in terms of devolution of mint rights in a time of crisis (end of the so-called Samarra period). J-Chr. Hinrichs drew on a wealth of unpublished material from Turkey to describe the production of the Antaliya mint in the last half-century of the Rum Seljuqs and under their Hamidid successors. S. Album used hitherto misattributed issues and some recent discoveries for a description of the coinage of Ghazan II, the very last and most obscure of the Ilkhans but still the nominal ruler of Adharbaijan for some months in 757-758 AH. Dr S. Heidemann elaborated on the monetary and financial consequences of Timur's conquest and occupation of Damascus, with details concerning the Timurid tanka-type coinage produced by the Damascus mint. R. Ehlert described the nasri or square silver coinage of Almohad descent struck by the Ottomans at five North African mints from the 10/16th to the 13/19th centuries. The conference ended with a visit to the Archaeological Institute's premises led by the resident numismatist Prof D. Mannsperger. The ninth conference has been set tentatively for 22-23 or 29-30 April, 1995.      GPH

4. We regret to announce the death of Oriental Numismatic Society member Harry W. Fowler. Mr Fowler was President of the American Numismatic Society from 1984 to 1990, having been a member since 1973. He specialised in the coinage of Bactria. His collection is being prepared for publication by the ANS together with its own holdings in a major catalogue of the series.

5. Ken Wiggins (UK and Eire Regional Secretary) has some Indian Princely State coins for disposal. Enquiries are welcome.

6. Future London meetings are scheduled for 1 October at the British Museum, and 12 November 1994 for an Arab-Byzantine coinage study day (contact for the latter: Marcus Phillips - tel: 0767 312112)

## NEW AND RECENT PUBLICATIONS

1. Some recent articles in Spink Numismatic Circular:

May 1994 (Vol CII, No 4): Michael Kenny: An Early Tenth Century Samanid Half-dirhem from Millockstown, Co. Louth.

June 1994 (Vol CII, No 5): Bent Juel-Jensen: A Gold Coin of Aksum struck from hitherto unpublished dies. NG Rhodes : The Birmingham Mint and coinage for Nepal.

2. The Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies has published the second issue of IIRNS Newline. This contains information on the institute's activities and some coin items.

3. Naoto Hattori, Kyoto, Japan has published *Khulba (9) — Studies on the Islamic Coinages of Central Asia*. This is the ninth in a series of works on these coinages and contains a wide range of observations and articles, supported by good quality photographs. Any member interested in this area should contact Mr Hattori (see members list for address).

## WORK IN PROGRESS

Judith Kolbas is preparing a catalogue of Mongol money from Chingiz Khan to Uljaytu (AH 616-709, AD1220-1309). Most of this material has not been previously published. It comprises a corpus of nearly 5000 coins forming about 30 main types, with mint areas from Qunya in Western Turkey to Khojandah in Eastern Farghana, from Bulghar on the Volga to Kurriman near the Indus and al-Hilla near the Gulf. Twenty-four major sources and collections have been examined to provide the corpus. Judith would like to hear from any member with one or more coins issued prior to AH 656 (except from Tiflis) or any copper other than the 'adiliya from Fars. Please write to her at Flat 19, 119 Haverstock Hill, London NW3 4RS, UK.

## OTHER NEWS

1. In the previous Newsletter we mentioned that the inaugural meeting of ICOMON was due to take place in May. The aims of this committee are as follows;

i. to support the aims and objectives of ICOM, in particular with reference to numismatic or monetary museums and museums of financial and economic institutions or companies;

ii. to contribute to the development and implementation of ICOM's programme;

iii. to formulate and carry out a programme of activities related to museological aspects of numismatic or monetary museums and museums of financial and economic institutions or companies;

iv. to provide a forum for communication, co-operation and information exchange between museums, professional museum workers and others concerned with numismatics and economic, financial and banking history;

v. to provide advice to ICOM on numismatic and economic, financial and banking history and be a source of professional expertise to assist in the implementation of ICOM's programme;

vi. to represent the interests of the numismatic and monetary museums within ICOM;

vii. to co-operate with national Committees and Regional Organisations of ICOM and with other International Committees and Affiliated Organisations in matters related to ICOMON's specific mandate and to the broader interest of ICOM.

ICOMON is chaired by Mando Oeconomides of the Greek Numismatic Museum. The secretary is Christiane Logie of the National Bank of Belgium Museum. Membership of ICOMON is open to ICOM members who request membership and to such other persons co-opted to the committee from time to time. The address is ICOMON, BNB-BL, boulevard de Berlaimont 14, B-1000, Brussels, Belgium.

2. The Museum of London is holding a seminar on 21 September 1994 entitled 'Look after the Pennies, Numismatics and Conservation in the 1990s'. Enquiries should be addressed to Joan Edwards, Conservation Department, 'Look after the Pennies', Museum of London, London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN. Telephone: 071-600-3699. Fax: 071-600-1058.



## LISTS RECEIVED

1. Stephen Album (PO Box 7386, Santa Rosa, Calif. 95407, USA) lists 106 (April 1994), 107 (May 1994), and 108 (June-July 1994).
2. Scott Semans (PO Box 22849, Seattle, WA 98122, USA), lists 58, 58n (Indian Native States), 58s (sycee).
3. W B Warden, Jr and N Economopoulos (PO Box 356, New Hope, PA 18938, USA) *Historia Numismatica V*, Ancient and Islamic coins.
4. Jean Elsen (Tervurenlaan 65, B-1040, Brussels, Belgium) list 163 which includes some oriental coins, and the 1994 book list.
5. Fritz Rudolf Künker Münzenhandlung (Gutenbergstrasse 23, D-49076, Osnabrück, Germany) Lagerkatalog 108 (May 1994) includes some Artuqid and Abbasid coins.
6. Poinson Numismatique (4, rue des Francs Bourgeois, F-67000 Strasbourg, France) list 37 includes various oriental coins.
7. Galata (The Old White Lion, Market Street, Llanfyllin, Powys SY22 5BX, GB), *Sacra Moneta* (Autumn 1994) includes a selection of Indian coins and around 1800 books on oriental and other numismatic subjects.

## AUCTION NEWS

1. Spink held an extensive auction of oriental coins and banknotes in Singapore on 25 June 1994. The auction included a collection of banknotes of the private banks of Singapore.
2. Taisei Stamps and Coins (S) Pte Ltd (Singapore) and Taisei Gallery (HK) Ltd Hong Kong held an auction on 11 June 1994 in Hong Kong. The auction comprised over 900 lots of Chinese coins including many rarities.

## ERRATUM

There is a small correction to be made in the article on Malhaz by Dick Nauta on page 6 of Newsletter 140. In the 'note' beneath the table *a*, *b*, *c* and *d* should be replaced by N, G, C and W respectively.

## BOOK REVIEW

**R. Krishnamurthy, *Late Roman Copper Coins from South India: Karur and Madurai***, Garnet Publications, Madras, 1994. 140 pp. Available from the publishers, 34 II Main Road, R A Puram, Madras 600 028 India. US \$20 plus postage.

As Mr. R. Krishnamurthy himself clearly points out in his preface, this book is an attempt to draw attention to thousands of late Imperial Roman coins found in South India. It is true that the interest of scholars involved in Indo-Roman studies has so far been focused mainly on the early Imperial Roman coins found in India; in this context, Mr. Krishnamurthy's book is most welcome.

In the preface, the author explains his motivations for writing this book. Chapter one is a brief historical introduction to the late Roman empire during the rule of Constantine I and his successors. As one would expect, nothing original is said about the political developments of this period known to us through other sources. In chapter two, a useful list of Roman coin hoards found in the district of Coimbatore is given. In chapter 3, entitled 'Studies on Late Roman copper coins from Madurai and Sri Lanka' the author seems to be satisfied by including, without making his own commentary, four long quotations, two on the findings of Madurai by Tufnell and Sewell and two on Sri Lankan findings by Codrington and R. Walburg (English translation). Chapters 4 and 5 on 'Mints and mint marks' and 'Portraits and legends' are derived entirely from works by David R. Sear and R.A.G. Carson. In each of chapters 6 to 17, Mr. Krishnamurthy describes each coin type - correctly categorised according to the reverse type - with the legend, symbols, issuing emperors and issuing dates. The description is followed by a drawing of the type and a good number of illustrations. For each type he gives a table, with the name of the find spot, weights, diameter and, if legible, the name of the mint. Although the illustrations are rather disappointing, as one would expect them to be because of the bad conservation of the coins and technical problems, this section deserves some credit for having illustrated examples of the main types known to him. It may be of use to those who do not have access to LRBC by Carson, Hill and Kent.

Before coming to chapter 18 on 'Observations', we may just say a few words about the appendix II on 'Metallurgical investigations on late Roman coins or Indo-Roman coins from Karur' by S. Srinivasan. Seeing the title, I thought that at last someone has done some good analyses on late Roman and Indo-Roman coins, because the basic question for historians working in this field is to know whether the so-called Indo-Roman coins were struck in India or elsewhere. It is satisfying that Mr. Srinivasan concludes: 'There is possibility that some of this coinage is Indo-Roman imitative coinage, particularly the very highly leaded coins, (p. 135). Unfortunately he does not say to which coins he is referring in this study. None of the analysed coins is described or illustrated. Judging from the illustrations that Mr. Krishnamurthy has reproduced, we do not see any Indo-Roman coins in his list, at least compared with the ones found in thousands in Sri Lanka. As far as the Indo-Roman imitations found in Sri Lanka are concerned, they can be divided into two groups. Of course, it is difficult to draw a clear line of demarcation between the two. The coins of the first group of imitations adhere closely to the original with the exception of the lettering, 'which baffled the native minters' (cf H.W. Codrington, *Ceylon Coins and Currency*, Colombo, 1924, p. 33). The coins bearing signs of poor workmanship, characterized by a stereotyped portrait of the emperor with a straight nose and hair taking the form of a cap or a turban, and the legends replaced by strokes or stars or by row of dots, are classified as the second group. J. Still (*Catalogue of Coins exhibited in the Colombo Museum*, Colombo, 1909, p. 25), named them Na-imana type according to the name of the village where they were first found. So, we have absolutely no way of knowing which coins were analysed by S. Srinivasan and why they were analysed. What is more interesting to know is whether the category of coins which Mr. Srinivasan identifies as "Indo-Roman imitative coinage" is identical to the one found in Sri Lanka or it is a group of casts made in India out of the genuine coins. A correct answer to this question will enable us to solve many puzzling problems regarding the circulation of Roman 'third brass' in India and Sri Lanka.

Only in chapter 18 does Mr. Krishnamurthy present his observations on late Roman Imperial coins found in Karur and Madurai. As the author himself admits his attempt is 'to piece together tiny bits of evidence and throw some light on this period' (p. 113). His whole approach has problems right from the very beginning. He is not aware of other discoveries. What we know so far is that late Roman Imperial coins were found in thousands in South India, and we still do not know where they were found, how they were found and above all what other types were represented, because the coin types illustrated by Krishnamurthy are according to him only the ones in his collection. Then he goes on to compare his statistics with those of R. Walburg on Sri Lankan coins. Although I admire the work done by R. Walburg, it should not be forgotten that since his publication my own investigations on the question have changed the statistics given by him (see *Ancient Ceylon*, no. 8, 1990, pp. 20-37; *Revue des Etudes Anciennes*, 1992, pp. 107-121; *Res Orientales*, V, 1993, pp.63-87). As well as all the hoards published by Codrington and R. Walburg, hoards of Roman, 'third brass', have been reported from Godavaya (about 30 000), and Hungama (20 000), and I have been able to examine several hundreds of unpublished Roman and Indo-Roman coins from Bentota, Kalutara and Negombo.

Are we really certain that these coins reached Sri Lanka systematically from the time of Constantine the Great? According to Dr. D.P.M. Weerakkody, an authority on this question, both Roman and Indo-Roman coins may have been circulating in South India for a considerable time before reaching Sri Lanka in the latter half of the fifth century. His hypothesis is based on the theory that the Roman and Indo-Roman coins may have been introduced to Sri Lanka from south India by these invaders who were led by a certain Pandu from south India, who set up a dynasty at Anuradhapura which, according to the Mahavamsa, ruled for 27 years (A.D. 433-460) until it was uprooted by Dhatusena. If this hypothesis is correct, the comparison of Roman 'third brass' found in Sri Lanka with those attested in South Indian will fall. Although I am not wholly convinced by Dr. Weerakkody's hypothesis, this possibility cannot be discarded fully. Only a comparative and exhaustive study of genuine and imitative Roman coins found in India and Sri Lanka may perhaps enable us to draw conclusive results regarding this enigmatic problem. So, I think that it is extremely dangerous to jump to quick conclusions before examining the whole



problem. We have to accept that unfortunately present investigations on the genuine 'third brass' and the so-called 'Indo-Roman imitations' found in South India and Sri Lanka are still at their beginning and are neither systematic nor complete. I hope that Mr. Krishnamurthy's book is a prologue to a larger and much more comprehensive study of this vital question. I sincerely wish him good luck in this laborious and painstaking enterprise.

Osmund Boparachchi, C.N.R.S. (Paris)

## Two New Books of Interest - Dr Michael Bates

*The Seljuks of Anatolia: Their History and Culture According to Local Muslim Sources*, by Mehmed Fuad Köprülü, translated and edited by Gary Leiser. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1992. ISBN 0-87480-403-5 cloth \$22.00.

This was originally a long article, published in Turkish in 1943. It is not a history of the Rum Seljuks, either political or cultural, although there are plenty of ideas and comments about their history that are still fresh and interesting today fifty years after the original publication. This book surveys the materials available for the study of Seljuk history. It lists and discusses in detail non-literary sources (numismatics, epigraphy, archeology); local sources, published and unpublished; chronicles, surviving and lost; diplomatic (documentary) sources, and other literary sources. Dr. Leiser has done an enormous service by providing a translation with additional information on publications since the original work. This translation is one of a series he has undertaken and published. On numismatics, there is nothing new for the specialist. A short note on page 66 lists the major older catalogues, and Leiser has added one 'new' book, Ölçer's Karaman oğulları (1982). In this respect, it was an error not to have consulted a specialist about more recent publications. Nevertheless, any Rum Seljuk numismatist who wants to know the historical background - and how can one work on the coins without it? - will have to have this book.

*Mamluk Economics: A Study and Translation of al-Maqrizi's Ighathah*, by Adel Allouche. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994. ISBN 0-87480-431-0 Cloth \$35.00.

Al-Maqrizi is one of the great historians of the Islamic world, the author of several major chronicles and also of a number of short essays like the one translated here, which was written in 1405. Since the time it was first studied by a European, it has been known as *Le traité des famines*, but, as Allouche points out in his valuable introduction, it is not about famines and that is not its title. It is really *Ighathat al-umma bi-kashf al-ghumma*, 'Helping the nation by examining the causes of its distress.' It is a political essay criticizing the monetary policy of the Mamluk rulers of Egypt by showing how similar policies led to disaster in the past and present. It is full of information on monetary events and coinage. It should be remembered, however, that this is an essay, not a careful historical study. Many of his statements about the distant past are simply wrong. For his own time, or for the periods about which he was well-informed, one still has to look at the account here in combination with the accounts of the same event in his *Shudhur*, his work on the history of coinage (but really another political essay that makes the same argument as the *Ighathat* organized differently); his *Khitat*, or geography of Egypt; and his two histories of the Fatimids and the Mamluks, *al-Hunafa'* and the *Suluk*.

The translation is excellent: Allouche has rendered al-Maqrizi's clear straightforward Arabic into clear straightforward English. He has added to it an enormous quantity of explanatory apparatus. As well as footnotes explaining technical terms and difficulties in the text, there is a long list of weights and measures, and lists of exchange rates, wheat, barley, bean, flour, bread, mutton, and beef prices in Egypt in the late 14th and early 15th centuries, the period of the economic crisis that al-Maqrizi describes.

Al-Maqrizi's proposed solution to the crisis will be sympathetic to many collectors and numismatists. The government should stop the issue of arbitrarily tariffed copper coins, and issue only gold dinars and silver dirhams, maintaining a ratio of 24 dirhams to a dinar. Then 'the situation will improve, conditions will ease, wealth will be abundant, and prosperity will increase infinitely'. Would that it were so simple! But his essay and his other works are interesting as an example of informed economic thought in his time. Apparently, in Mamluk Egypt, the same sort of economic ideas began to appear that were to circulate in Europe, and form the basis of modern monetary theory. It would be interesting to know what are the parallels and possible connections.

Even those who are not interested in late medieval Egypt should read this little book. It shows a pre-industrial monetary system in actual operation, thereby providing a useful correction to the nonsense that is all too often written by historians of coinage and currency. (University of Utah Press, 101 University Services Bldg., Salt Lake City, UT 84112, USA. Credit cards accepted; add \$3.50 to order for postage).

## SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE RE-USE OF DIES IN SASANIAN NUMISMATICS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS. François Gurnet

Dies have always been expensive to produce. In all parts of the ancient world, there are numerous cases in which old dies have been re-used either accidentally or purposely with or without re-engraving.

The Sasanian coin series (as well as Parthian) have a distinctive feature that render them yet more subject to this practice; the basic type is often the same from one king to the next, apart from some details characterizing the crown and the legends. This is particularly true amongst the last kings most of whose crowns are similar to that of Xusro II).

On the other hand, Sasanian mints were well organized and strictly controlled most of the time in most of the empire. This is why mixtures of dies seldom occur and, when it does happen, it can be easily misinterpreted by scholars more than 13 centuries later as a new type or king. The aim of this paper is mainly to draw attention to this problem by reviewing some cases.

### 1) Accidental re-use of dies<sup>1</sup>.

I call these accidental because there is no clear reason for the existence of the coin, although generally, a reason can be suggested.

- Ardashir I (224-41) (fig. 1): obverse III/2<sup>2</sup>, reverse 2 with vertical line on the altar shaft.

This reverse is always associated with obverse III/1, while III/2 has no line. This coin could be seen as purely accidental or as a transition between the two types. If the latter is true, this may be a proof that the types were consecutive.

- Varhran II (276-93)<sup>3</sup> (fig.2): obverse (Varhran II) I, reverse (Hormazd I, 272-73) 1.

The reverse of this coin is a typical reverse of Hormazd I with the name of the king to the left of the left attendant still very clear. During this period, attendants' crowns or caps were mostly different from one king to another and engraved with great precision. There was no reason to keep such a die during the whole reign of Varhran I (273-76) and yet, it was kept. It is important to note that both dies are very carefully engraved and are thus the work of official mints.

- Shapur II (309-79) (fig.3): obverse (Shapur II) Ia, reverse (Ardashir II) 1.

From the Tepe Maranjan hoard<sup>4</sup>. See next coin for discussion.



- Ardashir II (379-83) (fig.4): obverse (Ardashir II) I, reverse (Shapur II) 6.

Most of the coins of type I/2 of Ardashir II are mules (even the one illustrated by Göbl!). Coins of this type do exist but are much rarer as soon as we eliminate the mules. All these coins are barbarous; we don't know exactly the precise circumstances in which these coins were struck but the number of mules is amazing.

This coin and the previous one could have been struck when Shapur was campaigning in the East at the end of his reign<sup>5</sup>. Ardashir was maybe associated with Shapur before the death of the latter and could very well have had coins struck in his own name<sup>6</sup> as well as his brother's<sup>7</sup> during the war. Anyway, the situation must have been very confused for such a coinage to be created.

- Varhran IV (388-399) (fig.5): obverse (Varhran IV) I, reverse (Shapur II) 6.

Coins of Shapur II were minted in such quantity that many dies might have survived him and could have been used during the following reigns (Ardashir II, Shapur III, Varhran IV). On this example, the obverse has probably also been re-engraved from a die of Shapur II.

- Xusro I (531-79) (fig.6): Obverse (Xusro I) II, reverse (probably Hormazd IV or Vistahm) 1.

I know of two coins of this 'type': APR/4<sup>8</sup> and APR/8<sup>9</sup>(fig.6). Both are of very good style and struck on large planchets like all coins of Hormazd IV or Vistahm but the mint and date combinations are most likely to be of Hormazd IV.

The last coin has an obverse style which is identical to the one used by Hormazd IV and could have been made using a re-engraved die of this king. If more coins of this 'type' appear and are from the same mint, the chance that this coinage was purely accidental would be minimal and an explanation for it might be found in the rebellions of Vistahm and Varhran VI<sup>10</sup>.

- Xusro II (590-628) (fig.7): obverse II (style after year twenty, more probably in the 30's) and reverse 2<sup>11</sup>.

These coins have been attributed by scholars to Xusro IV or V<sup>12</sup>.

It is hardly possible to accept this attribution without proof that obverse and reverse dies are not dies of Xusro II or of ALCs<sup>13</sup>. The first coins of Xusro V<sup>14</sup> (as to Göbl) combine an obverse identical to Xusro II (type II) but with a beardless bust and a late reverse type (reverse 3) with regnal years two and three<sup>15</sup>. It is difficult to find any reasons for Xusro V to revert to the reverse 2 of Xusro II. These coins should therefore be attributed to another Xusro. Coins of up to year seven of this 'type' have been published, all from various and important mints<sup>12</sup>. If these drachms were really struck by a different king, he would have left more traces in the sources known to us. On the other hand, the fact that there is a variety of mints and dates is more in favour of an artificial regrouping of mules. If this is the case, we would not be surprised to find in the future such coins with dates up to year ten as this reverse was used during the first ten years of Xusro II!

In my opinion, the discussed coins should be considered for the moment as mules or ALCs until we have more information about them.

Other coins formerly attributed to Xusro V or to Xusro IV<sup>16</sup> might also be mules. These coins combine a late obverse (II) and reverse (3) of Xusro II with an early date (only year two known up to now). The problem is that we are not sure that the reverse dies are not dies of Hormazd V which have a very similar style<sup>17</sup>. Coins of this type exist with a rather barbarous style<sup>18</sup> or with the word Afid in the obverse margin. This last fact points to a mixing of dies<sup>19</sup>.

When were these coins produced? The first explanation is that they could come from the period that followed the reign of Xusro II: it was a dark one; the entire empire was not under the control of the king and it is very probable that more than one king was ruling the country at one time. In these circumstances, local authorities probably preferred to strike coins in the name of the last great king rather than taking sides in a dangerous struggle. A second explanation is the Arab invasion and the time taken by the Arabs to really control the mint organization.

These two explanations give us a rather lengthy period of time during which people were relatively free to strike coins on a model of their own choice: mostly Xusro II and sometimes Yazdgard III. This is also probably the origin of most ALC's. In my opinion, the coins discussed here should for the moment be regarded as such as we have no conclusive proofs that they are not mules or ALC's.

- Hormazd V (631/632)<sup>20</sup> (NYH, Year 35 ): obverse (Hormazd V) 1, reverse (Xusro II) 3 or more probably Arab-Sasanian or ALC because of the reverse style. One thing is sure: this aberrant coin cannot be taken as proof that Hormazd V reigned 35 years!

- Arab-Sasanian period:

- Two coins published by M. I Mochiri<sup>21</sup> share the same reverse die (APR/60). One is from 'Ubaydallah b. Ziyad and the other's obverse is described as a pure Xusro II type without any marginal legends.

- In the same book, we find a similar situation with coins 1 and 2 (plate 1). The reverse dies seem to be identical (so called 'year one of Yazid') while the obverse of coin 1 is from Xusro II (pure Sasanian style) with Afid in the margin and that of coin 2 is in the name of Ziyad b. Abu-Sufyan.

- A mule with an obverse of the anonymous type of Xusro II combined with a reverse 2 of Xusro II (AYLAN/ year 8) has been published by R. Gyselen and A. Nègre.<sup>22</sup>

To conclude this first part, it is now clear that dies could be kept for a long time, even if they were inappropriate. Most of the time, the obverse is more recent than the reverse<sup>23</sup>. Various reasons can be put forward for the existence of such mules, e.g.:

- error at an official mint, • an unstable political situation, • unofficial mints, with forgers being in possession of official dies and using them to strike coins to their advantage, but proof is lacking.

## 2) re-engraving of dies

The term 're-engraving' is maybe not the best one. We do not know exactly how Sasanian dies were produced and distributed through the empire but we certainly can't exclude the use of master dies or of punches without legends produced in one or a few central workshops. Legends would then have been added afterwards, maybe at a local level.

Evidence of this might be found in some coins of Yazdgard II on which the reverse legends are either totally<sup>24</sup> or partially lacking (fig. 8).

a) re-engraving during the same reign.

- Yazdgard I (399-420) (fig.9; reverse only):

On this coin, the mint mark (BBA) has been replaced by stars (dots) and transferred from the sides of the flames to the right of the right attendant. This coin is very important because it provides definite proof of the the sequence of types

- Ardashir III (628-30):

- This well known<sup>25</sup> reverse die (fig. 10; ART/ year two) has clearly been recut from a die of the same ruler from ST(?), year one.
- The obverse die of the first type (fig. 11) has been re-engraved (wings added) to be used as a second type die (fig. 12).



b) Other cases

• Varhran IV (fig.5):

Example already discussed in the first part. There is no clear proof of the recutting of the obverse but the style is definitely of Shapur II.

• Valkas (484-488) (fig.13; obverse only):

Legend VLK' has been clearly engraved where the name of Peroz should have been<sup>26</sup>. This example, as well as the following ones, show that at an earlier stage, dies did not have legends; they were added afterwards, otherwise, signs of re-engraving should have appeared on the coin.

• re-use of dies of the second type (II/2) of Xusro II.

-These drachms (fig. 14), published<sup>27</sup> by M.I.Mochiri are clearly made by the same hand that engraved Xusro II's early drachms. However, the name of the king is, without any doubt, Hormazd. The regnal year is one; the reverse die is then a die that used to be utilized with the very first type of Xusro II (type 1 with stars being added) or, more probably, a later die (type 2) where the date was not yet inscribed.

-This is a drachm of Yazdgard III (632-651) (fig.15). The mint is ST, year 17. The dies used are clearly of Xusro II. This drachm is useful in that it shows us that 'old types' could be re-used much later on. The dies were probably made about the years 595-598 and re-used or used for the first time, having remained unused in the meanwhile, in about 647 or later<sup>28</sup>. So, we must be aware that the original type is only a terminus post quem and no more than that !

-This is a drachm of a certain Muhammad (fig. 16). The coin cannot be attributed with any degree of certainty to a particular ruler. It may be an anonymous early issue struck during, or even before the Arab invasion. Some of these coins were struck with dies that have a style very similar to dies of Xusro II<sup>29</sup> while others have a more barbarous style (fig. 16, barbarous copy of the type).

The first two coins studied together give us a very different picture of the coinage of the so called Hormazd V. The reasons evoked by Dr Mochiri to attribute coins to this ruler are no longer valid<sup>30</sup> although they have been accepted by most scholars. With no other proof, the most logical solution is to attribute them to the 'old' Hormazd V as an early coinage probably struck in an emergency situation. That would fit well, as no coins of year one of Hormazd V are known.

It is probable that after (and maybe during) Xusro II's reign, a large amount of coins were re-engraved or struck from dies without legend, to which a legend was subsequently added. The coinage of this ruler bearing the word Afid in the margin might also have been produced from dies originally lacking this word (as well as some posthumous Yazdgard III drachms and some anonymous Arab-Sasanian drachms). Only a complete die study of this king would let us know the answer to this mystery but one thing is certain: the amount of Xusro II's dies used for one mint and one date was considerable and a die study would certainly be a gigantic work.

My opinion is that during the long period of disorders that followed his reign (last Sasanian kings, first half century of Arab rule, old dies mostly from Xusro II were used in official as well as unofficial mints as 'emergency dies', either as they were without changing the name of the king<sup>31</sup> or re-engraved. This habit probably continued after the stock of old dies had been used up and new dies, with a more contemporary or barbarous style were then made (ALCs).

• Ardashir III (628-630):

This enigmatic coin (fig. 17) was sold to me as a Yazdgard III drachm but a closer look at the ruler's name clearly shows that it belongs to Ardashir. Here start the problems:

• NAR, Year 6 !

• Star and crescent combinations on both sides of the portrait

• Afzun recut to read Xvarrah Afzutu

• Ribbons on the altar shaft going upwards

This type can only be explained if we look at the coins of Yazdgard III from the same year and mint (fig. 18). These drachms show an identical obverse with a rather cruder style and the name of Yazdgard clearly written. The reverse has ribbons going downwards (only found on coins of Ardashir III) and the combinations of star and crescents outside the beaded circles penetrate the first circle in a way that suggests it has been added to a die which only had one circle, as had the dies of Ardashir III. So, these two coins from the same mint and year were probably issued together, using recut dies of Ardashir III and unmodified dies of Yazdgard III<sup>32</sup> very probably in the sixth year of the latter.

In conclusion,

• We are now sure that dies could have been kept for a long time even if we think they had become useless.

• There is a great probability, particularly at the end of the empire, that dies were initially produced with no legends, these being added afterwards. The lack of traces of re-engraving is thus no proof that the die was originally made for the king whose name is inscribed on the coin.

• The original type in re-engraved Sasanian coins should be considered only as a terminus post quem; any other deductions must be made with great care.

Generally, a die study would be necessary although hoard evidence can be of great help.

• I think it wise, as long as we do not have definitive proof of their attribution to a king with no known coins

• To consider as mules, or ALCs coins formerly attributed to a Xusro (IV or V) from years two to seven (up to ten very probably!) with a bearded bust and reverse 2 or 3 of Xusro II

• To attribute coins of Hormazd V with a regnal year one and type II/2 of Xusro II to the 'old Hormazd V' as described by Göbl as we have not evidence of an earlier Hormazd.

F Gurnet

Belgium

1 I do not include in the study dies purposely re-used for obvious reasons when for instance an obverse type was modified while the reverse remained unchanged.

2 The types used are the ones as described by Robert Göbl in his book: *Sasanian Numismatics*, Braunschweig, 1971.

3 Sotheby, July 1985 lot 381

4 Raoul Curjel and Daniel Schlumberger. 'Mémoires de la délégation archaéologique française en Afghanistan' tome XIV, *Trésors monétaires d'Afghanistan*, Paris 1953 planche IX, 1.



- 5 See: Richard N. Frye, *The History of Ancient Iran*, München, 1983, p 312.
- 6 The fact that a king associated with another might have struck coins in his own name or just with his own portrait during the reign of the latter is not improbable. See for instance: F. Gurnet, 'Une curieuse émission Sassanide de la fin du IVe siècle: Shapur III ou Ardechhr II?', *CENB*, vol 23, N°3, pp 45-51.
- 7 It is not certain whether Ardashir II was the brother or the son of Shapur II or of another Shapur; see R.N. Frye, op. cit.
- 8 See: M.I. Mochiri, *Etude de Numismatique Iranienne sous les Sassanides et Arabe-Sassanides*, vol. II, Leiden 1983, fig. 539.
- 9 I would like to thank Mr Schaack of Luxemburg for the permission to publish this interesting coin from his collection.
- 10 For instance, according to Tabari (*De Salomon à la chute des Sassanides*, extraits de *La Chronique de Tabari*, La Bibliothèque de l'Islam, Paris 1984) Varhran VI had 100 000 drachms struck in Raï in the name of Xusro II during the reign of his father, Hormazd IV. No trace of this coinage, if it really exists, has ever been found.
- 11 For another discussion of this drachm (fig.7) see: H. M. Malek, 'Xusro II or Xusro IV: a reply', *ONSN* No 137, Summer 1993. The facts that on the obverse the inner rim reaches the wings of the crown and that a crescent is present under a round hairball as on earlier coins of this type together with a large bust and a strange although definitely late style are more in favor of an ALC (see fn 13) combining at random elements of different types. This coin seems to be an exception as drachms of this 'type' are generally struck with dies showing the normal late obverse type II of Xusro II (see for instance M. I. Mochiri, *Etude de Numismatique Iranienne...* Op. Cit., pp 200-202 for other examples).
- It is important to note that the characteristics (rim, crescent, hairball) found on early coins (year 2 to 10) of type II of Xusro II make them now part of a clearly new obverse type different from the one found after year ten (year 11-39).
- 12 Xusro IV: M.I Mochiri, *Etude de Numismatique Iranienne*, op.cit. pp 197-199; Xusro V: see for instance R. Göbl, op. cit.
- 13 ALC: 'Abnormal looking coins'; in this category, include all coins whose style does not match what would not normally expected for the mint, date and type. These coins can be either contemporary or later imitations as well as part of the regular coinage of the king struck under certain unknown circumstances that led to coin production with an abnormal style.
- I owe this definition to Steve Album who calls them in his lists "Funny Looking Coins" (FLC) which is probably a better term as the attribution of a coin to this category is sometimes based more on a diffuse feeling rather than a scientific approach.
- 14 I still think that this king should be called Xusro V (see Malek, op.cit. for another opinion as well as M.I Mochiri, *Etude de Numismatique Iranienne...*, op. cit, pp 167) as, according to Christensen (*L'Iran sous les Sassanides*, Copenhague 1944, p 499), Farrukhzadh-Khusro seems to have been the only Xusro to have reigned in Ctesiphon. Tabari (Op. cit. pp 390-391) clearly mentioned three Xusro's after Xusro II. See also Paruck, *Sasanian Coins* (reprint), New Delhi, 1976, p 119).
- 15 For year 3 see M.I. Mochiri, 'A Coin of Khusraw III's Third Year' in *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1983, pp 221-223.
- 16 M.I.Mochiri. *Etude...*, op. cit. and H.M. Malek, op. cit.
- 17 The two 'common' mintmarks for these coins are WYHC and AIRAN (see Malek, op. cit.) which are also the commonest mintmarks of Hormazd V while the production of AIRAN was not very important under Xusro II. It is important to note that most of the coins of Hormazd V are from year two, drachms from year three being extremely rare.
- 18 See: M.I. Mochiri, *Etude de Numismatique Iranienne...*, op. cit., fig.493.
- 19 See: Michael Mitchiner, *Oriental Coins and their Values, The Ancient and Classical World*, London, 1978, pl95. coin 1249. This coin was produced with barbarous dies, another element in favour of a non-regular emission. See also Muhammad Abu-l-Faraj Al-'Ush, *The silver hoard of Damascus*, Damas 1972, plate XXIX, S. 1166.
- 20 See: Hodge Mehdi Malek, 'An Unusual Drachm of the Sasanian King Hormizd V or VI', *Numismatic Circular*, March 1993, pp 46-47.
- 21 M.I. Mochiri, *Arab-Sasanian Civil War Coinage*, Paris, 1986, plate XVI, 95-96. I have not examined the coins but, looking closely at the photograph, it is not improbable that coin 96 bears the inscription *bismillah* in the margin.
- 22 See: Rika Gyselen et Arlette Nègre, 'Un trésor de Gazira (Haute Mésopotamie): monnaies d'argent sassanides et islamiques enfouies au début du IIIe siècle de l'hégire/IXe siècle de notre ère", *Revue Numismatique* 24, 1982, pp 170-205.
- 23 This habit might have some sense; from one king to the next, the obverse showing the king's bust was iconographically speaking changing much more than the reverse. For a coin to be accepted, it may have had to show a rather recent obverse type while the reverse type was not so important.
- 24 Seen in Mr Schaack's collection.
- 25 See F.D.J. Paruck. 'Sur quelques monnaies sassanides inédites' *Revue Numismatique* 36. 1933, pp 43-50, coin 19, PL VII.
- 26 This coin will be published in *Studia Iranica*, vol. 23, second part, 1994.
- 27 M.I.Mochiri, *Etude de Numismatique Iranienne...*, op. cit., pp 209-212. I would like to thank Mr Mochiri for his kind permission to reproduce some photographs from his books (fig 14, 15).
- 28 The presence of the letter 'p' (maybe added afterwards on the die) on the obverse might indicate, as suggested by Dr Mochiri, that the coin was struck under Arab rule maybe at a later date than year seventeen of Yazdgard.
- 29 See for instance: F. Timmermann, 'An unpublished Arab-Sasanian dirham of the hitherto unidentified governor Muhammad', *ONS Newsletter* 92-93, October-December 1984.
- 30 The only valid reason left is the context in which the drachm was found. Nevertheless, that group of coins is very small and might only be the leftover of a larger one including more recent coins in better condition and sold separately. Moreover, the fact that many of the illustrated coins are clipped points to a later date for the deposit of the 'hoard' (after the Arab invasion).
- 31 If it is the case. this means that the coins of Xusro II discussed above (see first part: accidental re-use of dies), are only the tip of the iceberg, the bulk of these emissions being composed of drachms using normal pairs of dies of Xusro II and thus identical to the coins produced during Xusro's reign. The only way to separate these two populations is to undertake a weight and/or metal analysis but a negative result would not necessarily mean that this theory is false.
- 32 For a discussion of the coins of Yazdgard III see F. Gurnet. 'Monnaies Sassanides inédites de Yazdgard III' *CENB*, vol 25, 1988, pp. 49-56, 76-85.







7



8



9



10



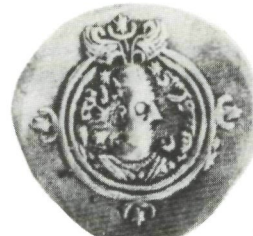
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12



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16



17



18





## A SILVER-PLATED SAMANID DIRHAM FROM SAMARQAND Gunnar Holst

From Stephen Album I purchased a Samanid dirham of a heavy module (5.83 g) minted in Samarqand 337AH/ 948-949 AD (number 295 in price list 101). The date is almost unreadable but on the reverse there are the names of the Caliph al-Mustakfi (deposed 334/946, but acknowledged on Samanid coins until 345/956) and of the local ruler Nuh b. Nasr (331-343/943-954), which helps to determine the date. The heavy module is not uncommon and from Samarqand 326 and 343 AH I have Samanid dirhams of 5.4g. In Beatrice Granberg, *Förteckning över kufiska myntfynd i Finland*, Helsinki 1966, number 1141 is a dirham of the same sort, minted in Samarqand in 339 AH.

If the dirham is examined a little more carefully some surprising properties are revealed. The volume, 0.70 cm<sup>3</sup>, calculated by the method of Archimedes, gives a specific gravity of only 8.33 g/cm<sup>3</sup>. This should be compared with the normal specific gravity 10.3 - 10.0 g/cm<sup>3</sup> of Samanid dirhams from Samarqand 320 - 340 AH.

Close examination reveals a coating of silver over a base metal core. Heat and pressure of striking the coin might have been enough to achieve the desired fusion of the metals. An analysis obtained by X-ray fluorescence spectrometry gives the following percentages of the metallic elements in the surface layer: silver 93%, copper 3%, tin 2%, lead 0.7% and gold 0.4%. The core of the plated dirham is probably a copper-tin alloy which in part has been oxidised, thus causing microscopic holes to be formed inside the alloy.

A silverplated Roman denarius (Subaeratus) of 3.9 g contains about 0.45g (11.5%) silver and 3.45 g (88.5%) base metal. If the silverplated dirham was manufactured in the same way the coating of silver around the core would have a weight of about 0.67 g, i.e. 10.6% silver.

Plated coins have, of course, been produced by counterfeiters, but some of the Roman issues had official sanction as a form of debasement of the currency.

Is the dirham a contemporary forgery? Has it been documented that Islamic dynasties struck plated dirhams for the same purpose as the Romans?

## SULTAN AHMED III's HANDSTRUCK AKCHE Kenneth M. Mackenzie

In Newsletter No.134 a handstruck para of this Ottoman sultan was described<sup>1</sup> Recently a rare handstruck akche was offered by a dealer<sup>2</sup>. A coin of this denomination was suspected by Dr Suchy when he wrote about the silver coins of Ottoman sultans Ahmed II, Mustafa II and Ahmed III from Qustantiniye and Edirne mints<sup>3</sup>

Sultan Ahmed III succeeded his brother Mustafa II when he abdicated on 21st May 1703 (10 Rabi'11,1115) due to an uprising of the Janissaries. All coins bear his accession date of 1115.

Fig 1 (the 'early' handstruck akche)



obverse  
(illegible) Sultan  
Ahmed bin  
Mehmed Khan  
(within circle of dots)

reverse  
(azze nasrahu  
duribe)  
Qustantiniye  
1115



9 mm. 0.18 gr

Until the end of the 17th century minting techniques in the Empire remained comparatively simple. But after some military defeats Mehmed IV (1648-1687) concentrated upon some projects he developed for the reform of the currency and the operation of the mint. New machinery was installed in the mint which coincided with Yusuf Mustafa's period as assayer (a non-Muslim) in 28 May 1686. However Mehmed was deposed in October 1687 and his machine-struck manghir doesn't appear to have had wide circulation.<sup>4</sup> His successor Suleyman II and later his brother Ahmed II (1687-1695) used the new machinery to strike vast quantities of the copper manghirs<sup>5</sup> equivalent to an akche, which had lost almost all its efficiency as a means of payment and had been largely replaced by the new para. The minting of the manghir was suspended in 1692 (1103) and the mint was transferred to a site beside the St. Irene Church in the garden of the Topkapi Palace.

The next sultan, Mustafa II (1695-1702) found it necessary to withdraw from circulation the vast number of foreign coins in circulation. These were melted down for his own coinage but no akche is known struck in his name.

As usual, when Ahmed III came to the throne, he was faced with the payment of the accession largesse as well as the delayed 'ulufes' (pay to the soldiers for fodder for their horses), so enormous quantities of akches were required. The akche described herein was typical of the ones handstruck for these necessary distributions.

The 13th regnal year Ahmed III (1128/1715) appears to have marked the last stage of the monetary reform which had been started by Mehmed IV, and continued by Ahmed III when he introduced his well-known machine struck coinage. The exquisite designs show his direct influence since he was an accomplished calligrapher.

Fig 2 (a machine-struck akche)



obverse  
Sultan  
Ahmed bin  
Mehmed Khan

reverse  
azze nasrahu  
duribe  
Qustantiniye  
1115



9 mm. 0.18 gr

1. ONS Newsletter No.134 (August-October 1992) p.6

2. S. Album list 105 #472.(1994)

3. Bulletin of the Turkish Numismatic Society (Papers of the 1st International Symposium, Nov.1993) Istanbul 1994.

4. The Machine-struck Manghir of Sultan Mehmed IV (*Numismatic Circular*) Nov 1991, pp 293.

5. K MacKenzie. Suleyman II manghirs. (*Numismatic Circular* vol 88 No 1) July-Aug 1980, pp 258-60.



**INDRAVARMA AND ASPAVARMA R C Senior**

In the Numismatic Chronicle, 1944, R.B.Whitehead wrote a paper entitled 'The dynasty of the General Aspavarma', the substance of which has been repeated by scholars writing on the period ever since. His readings of the legends lead him to construct a family dynasty beginning with a Vijayamitra, a supposed vassal of Menander, his son Indravarma, grandson Aspavarma and his grandson's nephew Sasan. I have written elsewhere that in my opinion the coins show that Sasan (Sases) *preceded* Aspavarma, but here I wish to look at the coinage of Aspavarma and his supposed family predecessors.

The coins of Aspavarma fall into four types;

(1) Tetradrachms. King mounted left in Parthian style with Gondopharid symbol before and *Bu* below it. Nandipada below horse. The greek legend around is unintelligible. On the reverse is Zeus standing right with monograms, symbols and letters as shown in figure A. The kharosthi legend reads *Itravarmaputrasa Aspavarmasa Strategasa Jayatasa Tratarasa*.

(2) Drachms only. King right in Parthian style with Gondopharid symbol before and *Shi* above. Unintelligible greek legend around. Reverse: Zeus Nikephoros left with monogram in left field and greek *B* with *Va* below in the right field. The legend is *Itravarmaputrasa Aspavarmasa Jayatasa Strategasa*. Figure B. (x 1.5)



(3) Tetradrachms. The commonest series and with many varieties. King mounted right in Scythian dress with various kharosthi monograms before and sometimes letters below. Garbled corrupt Azes legend around. On the reverse is Pallas standing right with monogram before, nandipada behind. Above the nandipada is usually a rosette of dots (or star symbol) and on most coins a kharosthi letter or symbol below it. The legend around is *I(lm)travarmaputrasa Aspavarmasa Strategasa Jayatasa*. Figure C.

(4) Drachms only. King right as last with *Va* before and sometimes a kharosthi letter below. Garbled greek legend around. Reverse: Pallas right with monogram before and nandipada behind. The legends reads simply *Itravarmaputrasa Aspavarmasa Stratega*. Figure D. (x 1.5)



The only important thing we need to note on these coins is the way that the two names, Itravarma and Aspavarma are written in kharosthi. They are as follows; i Itravarma. Figure E from types 1, 2 and 4 and figure F from type 3.



ii Aspavarma. Figure G on all coins.



On ALL these coins the letter *Rma* which is Crucial to all readings is written thus



Recently I came across a small hoard of copper drachms from which I selected 12 specimens that gave me clear readings. Among these coins were types (as Mitchiner, Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythic coinage vol.7, types 891 and 892) which could be read for the first time and which lead me to revise Whitehead's reading of the coins of Indravarma, son of Vijayamitra. Indravarma is supposed by Whitehead to be the same king as the Itravarma mentioned on the above coins of Aspavarma. These Indravarma coins (MIG 897) are very different in style to the Aspavarma coins but have essentially the same design. They share the nandipada and monogram on the reverse and another feature that is common to most coins is the star or rosette of dots. It is on the reverse of most 'Indravarma' coins ( though on the obverse on one coin, which I illustrate as H). On Aspavarma's coins of type C it occurs on the majority of coins, in fact **all** except those with the obverse monogram as shown on the coin I have illustrated as C above! (see T below)

We now need to examine the coins to read the legends and this is where the new hoard coins will help.

According to Whitehead (and followed by Mitchiner) the legend in kharosthi reads:

*Vijayamitraputrasa Itravarmasa Apracharajasa*

I illustrate two coins from my collection. Fig. H is the original coin (2) illustrated by Whitehead and which has the rosette on the obverse. Fig. I is a more usual variety with the rosette on the reverse.





From the British Museum coins illustrated by Mitchiner one can read the *Vijayamitraputrasa* quite clearly but the king's name even more clearly reads *Itravasasa*. The penultimate *Sa* has a hook to it and since it is cut differently to the last letter, it MIGHT be intended to be a *Su* or *Sam*? See fig. J for enlargements as they appear on the coin.



Quite definitely the penultimate letter is **not** *Rma*. The title given by Whitehead is *Apracharajasa*, but this isn't fully clear on any specimen. The first two and last three letters seem correct but the *Cha* (or *Ca*) is doubtful and a better specimen is awaited. The 12 hoard coins mentioned above can be examined to throw a little more light possibly on the readings.

(1) Posthumous drachm of Azes.

Zeus Nikephoros type. 2.22gm

(2) ditto with different monograms. 2.40 gm.

(3) Sases drachm as MIG 1139a. 2.54<sup>1</sup>

(4) Aspavarma drachm as MIG 899

(type 4 above). 2.33 gm

(5) ditto 2.28 gm

(6) ditto 2.08



Now come the coins with the new legends. There are two groups with both bearing the legend *Ispavasa Itravasasa Avatiraj'asa*

ΠΥΓΑΓΓΙ ΠΠΓΕΓ ΠΓΓΓ

On the first group the legend is continuous beginning at 3 o'clock. On the obverse the letter *Ya* is before the king on horse right. On the reverse a female deity faces right with right hand raised. Behind is a *nandipada* and in the right field is the letter *Pra*. The drapery over the deity's shoulder is single.

On the second group the design is the same except on the reverse where there is no *nandipada* and the letter is *Pri*. The legend begins at 4 o'clock but is split with *Avatiraj'asa* reading in at the bottom.

A third group is similar to group one with the same obverse and *Pra*, or *Pri* on the reverse but no *nandipada*, double drapery behind the deity and the legend, continuous, beginning at 1 o'clock reading: *Itra(gi?)vasasa Ispavasa Apatirajasa*

ΠΥΓΑΓΓΙ ΠΠΓΓ ΠΠΓΠΓ

These readings have been made with the assistance of several other coins in my collection.

(7) *Itravasa* drachm as group one. 2.19 gm

(8) ditto 2.20 gm.

(9) ditto but as group two. 2.30 grn

(10) *Ispavasa* as group three, *Pra*. 2.46 gm

(11) ditto 2.25 gm



Some enlargements of the legend will confirm these readings.



Figure K below is the reverse of a type one coin in my collection that shows the complete legend.

The stroke of the *Ti* is clearly shown.  
 On some coins the letter looks like an  
*A* with horns, hence the misreading with the letter *Ca* or *Cha*.

Fig. L shows the legend on type two.  
 Fig. M shows the legend on type three with  
 both *Pra* and *Pri* in right fields.



On some of the Itravasa coins the second *askara* could be a *Dra*.  
 The questions are several. Does *Ispavasa Itravasasa* mean that *Ispava* is the father of *Itravasa* and that the *putrasa* is omitted because of the shortage of space? On the third group do we have a father for *Ispava*? Does *Apatirajasa* mean the same as *Avatirajasa* and what does it mean? Is this the same title that occurs on the *Itravasa* tetradrachms and are this last king and *Itravarma* synonymous?

If we take the title first we can find references to it in the important article 'Two Kharosthi casket inscriptions from Avaca' by Prof H.W. Bailey in *JRAS* 1978. In line 4 of the first casket he reads *Apacaraja* as the title of a king *Idravarme* (almost certainly the father of *Aspavarma*). In line 7 he reads *Avacaraya* as the same title and in his note on page 10 he refers to the possible origin of the word in *aprati* (must also be *avati*?) meaning without rival or peer. On the Bajaur casket *Apracaraja* appears. These variations must be due to some dialect differences and we have on coins and inscriptions *Apracaraja*, *Apacaraja*, *Avacaraya*, *Apatiraja*, *Avatiraja* all derived from *aprati-raj*, king without equal. On the above casket the *Apacaraja* is un-named but the *Avacaraya* is called *Vaga* and also *stratega* (as *Aspavarma*). Could it be that the two variations meant higher and lower status with the *Avacaraja* being the subordinate and general of the *Apacaraja* (possibly his brother?).

There is a pedigree on the casket showing that *Idravarme's* mother was *Rukhunaka*, the daughter of *Azes*<sup>2</sup>. It mentions her brother *Ramaka* (why didn't he succeed *Azes*?) and sister *Adasaka*. *Indravarme's* grandfather is *Cagahine* son of *Visnuvarma*. His wife is *Vasavadatta*. *Vaga's* aunt is mentioned - *Vijayamiroya*.

From this family tree and the coins can we suggest a reconstruction of the history? After the death of *Azes* there was no overall direct successor and we have a possible explanation of why. *Visnuvarma* obviously goes back long before *Azes* and must have been of an illustrious family. *Azes's* daughter married into the family and her father became *Apacaraja* after *Azes's* death. I think that we can assume that the posthumous issues of *Azes*, particularly of the *Pallas* type would have been issued by this dynasty. This posthumous issue is large and was issued over a long period. It began with good silver-billon and ended with a copper series. To answer some of the other questions of succession we can start by looking at the last copper drachm from the hoard;

(12) Drachm in the name of *Azes* 2.31 gm. Alongside it I illustrate (N) another coin of the same type from my collection. Both are shown 1.5 x. They are the drachms that accompany the last *Azes* posthumous issue (O) having both the same rosette, monogram (obverse on the tetradrachm and reverse on the drachm) and *nandipada*.



This last posthumous *Azes* issue is illustrated as O below and next to it is figure I of *Itravasa* for comparison.



It is important to note that the corrupt Greek obverse legend is identical on both coins. Both have *Bha* below the horseman and on the reverse they both have the rosette, monogram and *nandipada* in the same places. They would seem to be the work of the same artist. It suggests that *Itravasa* issued coins, as his predecessors, in the name of the dead *Azes* and then in his own name. His coins are very rare. Apart from one early and unique drachm, the posthumous *Pallas* series was a tetradrachm-only issue until this final series O. This suggests that the other 'named' drachms come after it. We therefore have *Itravasa*, son of *Vijayamitra*, whose coins are followed by those of *Ispava*, son of *Itravasa* and then by those of *Itravasa*, son of *Ispava*. We are then left with the question of whether *Istravasa* and *Idravarme* of the inscription/ *Itravarma* (father of *Aspavarma*) of the



coins are one and the same person. We know that Vijayamiroya was Idravarme's aunt and on the Bajaur casket a Vijayamitra (the Apracaraja) is mentioned and we know that Itravasa's father was Vijayamitra. They all seem connected family names and if the father of Idravarme of the casket deciphered by Prof Bailey turns out to be a Vijayamitra then I suppose that we have the answer. But as yet we do not know. Aspavarma is the son of Itravarma and Ispava is the son of Itravasa. Are they the same people? I would suggest not, but they are clearly related. This family was clearly large and very powerful. It survived the rule of Azes, perhaps on the principle of if you cannot beat them, join them. By intermarriage they survived and conquered and they probably did the same when the Indo-Parthians under Gondophares I came along. Possibly they married into his family and on his death the succession was contested by his nephew Abdagases and a scion of the same family, Sases, sister's son of Aspa. Sases adopts the title Gondophares and also, on some rare issues *Apratihatachakrasa*- the irresistible sovereign, which reminds one of the *Apratirajasa* (and variants) title of this dynasty.

Apart from an early and good silver issue (P), Gondophares I issued no further Pallas issues similar to the posthumous Azes ones and Abdagases none at all. Nor did Sases issue any Pallas issues though both he and Abdagases issued Zeus types with elements of the middle and later period posthumous issue monograms.

The explanation would be clear if Gondophares I allowed this noble family to retain control of the area they ruled as autonomous subjects. Abdagases never had power there and his rival Sases ousted him from Gandhara and expanded his control as far as Arachosia. He would leave the senior branch of his family in control of that same area until his death when the danger was then coming from the west in the form of the Kushan. His general was Aspavarma who succeeded him, as can be seen from the Zeus Nikephoros issues of Taxila. Sases's earliest issues there (Q) closely follow identical ones of Abdagases and are of good billon.

The monogram reverse left has no bar at the bottom. His later issues are much baser and do have a bar (R). Aspavarma's issue is of drachms only and of copper and with this bar (B). This excludes, I think, Aspavarma as being the same as the Aspa, uncle of Sases.



P



Q



R



S



T

Where do Aspavarma's coins fit in relation to those of Posthumous Azes and Itravasa? Coin C is extremely closely related to a very late posthumous Azes issue (S) and probably contemporary in time to Itravasa's issues. This is followed by other extremely numerous issues like T which include the rosette used by the Itravasa group. They are in a very different style, Pallas carries a spear which she doesn't on the latter's issues.

I feel that Aspavarma, Sases and Itravasa belong to three branches of the same family and that for a time they were all issuing coins around the same time. Aspavarma and Ispava followed by Itravasa II issued coins for a time after Sases, before being overwhelmed by the Kushan under Soter Megas. A drachm of his came with the above hoard but I haven't included it here. Idravarme/Itravarma, grandson of Azes was a prince in 6 AD (63rd year of Azes) and issued coins at the end of Sases's reign. Sases was successor of Abdagases, successor of Gondophares I. Simply, **Gondophares could not have ruled from c. 19 - post 46 AD!**

RC.SENIOR 1994

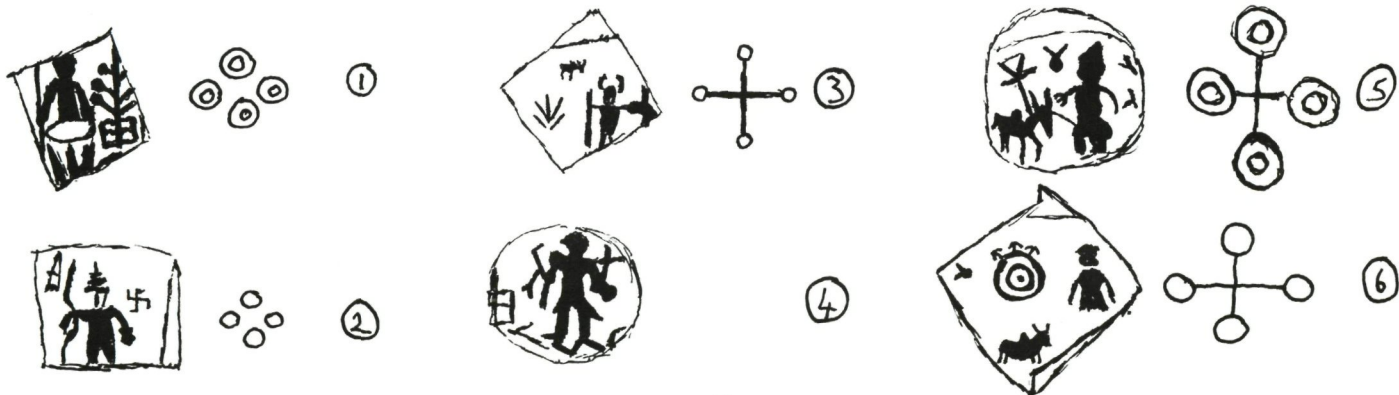
1. 1139a has the FULL legend as on 1138. Only type 1139b has the shorter legend. This coin is very clear.
2. Year 63 of the dead Azes. No mention of an Azes II.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

Since writing this article I have had correspondence with Prof. R. Salomon of Washington University and he informs me that he has been working on an unpublished reliquary casket and it refers to an 'Apararaja' called INDRAVASU ! This is none other than the name I have suggested for coin H. Itravasu and Idravasu (Indravasu) are one and the same. The hook on the Sa means that it should be read Su. From the caskets now known it seems that Indravasu is the son of Vijayamitra, father of Vispavarma, grandfather of an Indravarma (and great grandfather of Aspavarma?). Another casket inscription is dedicated by the harem keeper to Prince Visnuvarma (= Vispavarma), father of Indravarma. These inscriptions will be published by Prof. Salomon in the near future. Together, the coins and inscriptions are beginning to unravel the complexities of the post-Azes period.

INDIAN MISCELLANY

1. Richard Wells has sent details of some unusual Æ Ujjain coins. He is not sure whether any of them have been previously published.







1. Man tending pot over fire, staff in right hand, tree in box railings. Circle in circle Ujjain symbol. Rectangular. 20 x 15 mm. 5 grams Normal fabric.
2. Man (Rama) with bow in right hand, water pot in left, swastika in r. field. Plain circle Ujjain symbol. Rectangular. 14 x 12 mm. 2.25 grams. Normal fabric.
3. Man with staff in right hand leading bull with left; bull and tree in field. Early small circle on long arms Ujjain symbol. Rectangular. 16 x 14 mm. 5.25 grams. Normal fabric.
4. Man carrying person on his shoulders, tree in box in right field. Plain reverse. Round, diameter 16 mm, 6 mm thick. 11.5 grams. Thick fabric.
5. Shiva, a bull to his right; standard above with taurine symbol. Circle in circle on short arms Ujjain symbol. Rectangular. 15 x 12 mm. 2.9 grams. Thick fabric.
6. Disk in disk with central dot and three arrows at top, man to right, bull below, taurine left. Early small circle on long arms Ujjain symbol. Rectangular. 15 x 12 mm. 2.9 grams. Normal fabric.
7. Solid disk, man to right, half off flan, bull below, river symbol below bull (?) Half of Ujjain symbol, unclear symbol in circles. Rectangular. 16 x 14 mm. 2.7 grams. Normal fabric.
8. Disk with wheel symbol, bull beneath, man with staff (Shiva) to right. Early circle on long arms Ujjain symbol. Square, 15 x 15 mm. 1.2 grams. Very thin fabric.

**2.**

**A RARE SANGAM AGE CHERA SILVER COIN FOUND R Krishnamurthy.**

A rare silver coin with a portrait of a King and legend has been found in a village near Pollachi town, in Coimbatore district, Tamilnadu. The coin weighs 2.300 gms and has a diameter of 1.9 cm. The coin's diameter is similar to Roman denari issued by Augustus and Tiberius. Roman silver coins of these emperors have been reported in large numbers in Coimbatore district during the last several decades.



† C G D K F X

The coin carries a legend KUTTUVAN KOTHAI in Tamil and in Tamil-Brahmi script. The legend runs left to right above the portrait on the obverse. The reverse is blank. The coin belongs to the 1st century A.D. The die for the coin was cut by a die-cutter who had no knowledge of the Tamil language or Tamil-Brahmi script. The pulli or dot which should be in the middle of second character from the left, has been placed in the middle of the third character and 'n', the fifth character from the left has been engraved wrongly and is reversed. Such types of incorrect lettering is very common on the 1st and 2nd century Roman gold imitative coins found in Andhrapradesh and Tamilnadu. This coin is very similar to the 'Makkotai' silver coin of the Sangam period Chera King discovered in 1990. In the Sangam classic, Purananooru, in song number 54 there is a reference to this king. The king is said to have ruled Kuttanad on the West Coast (Kerala).

**3.**

B S D Godbole of Pune, India, has sent details of an unpublished copper coin of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq, struck at Deogir Fort. Tughlaq was Sultan of Delhi from AH 720-25 (AD 1320-24). Deogir or Devagiri had been the capital of Yadava kingdom of the same name. This kingdom had been reduced to a vassal state of the Delhi Sultanate in AH 695 (AD 1296) followed by the invasion by 'Ala-ud-din Khalji towards the end of the reign of his father Jalal-ud-din Firoz. During 'Ala-ud-din's reign (AH 695-715, AD 1296-1316), further military expeditions were made into the Deccan and further south with the result that the local princes acknowledged Delhi sovereignty, albeit only as long as the Delhi armies were present. Gold or silver tankas were struck in the name of 'Ala-ud-din Muhammad at Deogir Fort in years 714 and 715, probably under the 'governorship' of Malik Kafur. It was not long before Deogir was again lost to the Sultanate, so that in AH 718 (AD 1318), Qutb-ud-din Mubarak (AH 716-20, AD 1316-20), marched on the city and occupied it and the fort without difficulty. He seems to have renamed the city Qutbad and gold and silver tankas are known with the mint name Qila' Qutbad. The existence of a coin dated 717 with this mint-name, however, is puzzling if the date of the invasion and mint attribution are correct (see coin 374A in H Nelson Wright's *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*), though 717 could be a misreading of 719. The usurper Nasir-ud-din Khusru (AH 720, AD 1320) also struck a few silver tankas at Deogir (HNW 424A).

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq struck a regular series of gold tankas at Deogir from AH 721 to 725 (HNW no 432) but only 721 is quoted for the silver tankas (HNW no 441). The present coin is the first copper coin to be published from this mint.

عدل غياثی



بقلعه دیوگیر

12 mm. 2 grams.



4.

**A New Type of Silver Tanka of the Bengal Sultan, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, AH 837-64 (AD 1433-59).**

A wide range of silver tankas are known for this ruler. Many of these are very crude products, whilst others show much greater calligraphic and artistic merit. The type published here has very crude lettering combined on the 'king's' side, with the aesthetic qualities of the Tughra style of writing. In this respect it resembles certain coins of the earlier ruler Jalal-ud-din Muhammad (AD 814-36, AD 1415-32).



Obv. In tughra characters

Nasir-ud-dunya wa ud-din  
Abu'l Muzaffar Mahmud Shah  
(al-Sultan)

ناصر الدنيا والدين  
ابو المظفر محمود  
شاه (السلطان)

The presence of Al-Sultan is not certain,  
though it would be usual.



Rev.: very crude inscription  
which may represent

Nasir al-Islam  
wa'l-Muslimin.

ناصر الاسلام  
و المسلمين

Margin unread, but may be a  
date formula.

Published by courtesy of Sanjay Rampuria, Calcutta.

5

Senior Consultants have provided photographs of two quarter tankas of the Bengal Sultan Sikandar bin Ilyas (AH 758-92, AD 1357-89). Interestingly, one of these coins is struck in the Sultan's name, the other is anonymous. Moreover, both coins show a date in figures; dates on the tankas of this reign are invariably written out in full.



A



B

A

Obverse

سكندر شاه  
ابن الياش شاه  
السلطان  
خدا الله  
ملكه

Sikandar Shah  
ibn Ilyas Shah al Sultan  
khallad Allah MulkaHu

Margin

ضرب فيروز آباد سنه ٧٨٠

zarb Firuzabad sanah 780

Reverse

الامام العادل  
العالم الكامل  
ابو المجاهد

Al-Imam al-'Adil  
al-'Alim al-Kamil  
abu'l Mujahid

Weight 2.65 grammes

B

Obverse

الامام  
العالم العادل  
الكامل ابو  
المجاهد

Al-Imam  
al-'Alim al-'Adil  
al-Kamil abu -  
l-Mujahid

Reverse

الامام  
العالم العادل  
المجاهد

Al-Imam  
al-'Alim al-'Adil  
al-mujahid

Margin  
as for A, but dated 786.

Weight 2.65 grammes

Coin B is strange in not only being anonymous but in repeating titles on both sides. I had a similar coin in my own collection.



6

**A Clearly Dated Silver Tanka of Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur**

In his book *The World of Islam* (1977), Michael Mitchiner illustrates a silver tanka of Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur from the collection of Jan Lingen (no. 2862). The same coin is depicted in Dilip Rajgor's *Standard Catalogue of Sultanate Coins of India* (type 2706). The margin of this coin is unfortunately defaced by various shroff marks, making it impossible to read the date.

Sanjay Rampuria of Calcutta has kindly provided photographs of a similar coin in his collection showing a clear date of 823.



ثلاث عسريت و ثمانائة

7

**Some Unusual Mughal Coins**

Bob Senior has provided details and photographs of some unusual coins recently sold by Senior Consultants.

**i) Two heavy coins of Jehangir**

During his reign, Jehangir introduced two series of heavy silver coins: the Jehangiri, weighing 13.4 - 13.7 grams, i.e 20% above the normal rupee, and the Sawai, weighing 14.0 - 14.4 grams 25% above the normal rupee. Such coins are known from around a dozen mints, with those struck at Agra and Lahore showing most variety.

Akbarnagar

Year 1017. 14.3 grams. This is a Sawai. The Standard Guide to South Asian Coins lists Akbarnagar as a mint that struck Jehangiris with the Sakhat Nurani legend during years 1014-16 (type 155.2). The present coin bears the 'Gardun' couplet (cf type 149.7 in the Standard Guide), Couplet 21 in C Brown's Catalogue of Coins in the Provincial Museum, Lucknow.



Dehli

AH 1016 year 2. 13.63 grams. This is a Jehangiri and appears to be the first heavy 'rupee' published for Dehli. It is the kalima type (type 152 in the Standard Guide), with Jehangir's titles on the reverse.



**ii) A Jehangir rupee of Agra**

This is a standard weight Ilahi rupee of Agra with an unusual layout of the legend on the reverse. It is dated AH 1021, year 7. The Ilahi rupees usually have the month at the top and the mint below. On this coin the positions are reversed thus:



صلى الله عليه وسلم  
محمد بن عبد الله

**iii) A Shah Jehan I nisar of Akbarnagar**

This coin is of 1/8 rupee weight and is dated year 31. The Hijra date is only partly on the coin and is faint, but appears to be 1067. The coin is similar to type 244.1 in the Standard Guide except that the position of the date and regnal year is different.



**iv) A Heavy Rupee of Shah Alam I**

During his reign, Shah Alam I raised the weight of the tola to around 12 grams and rupees are known from several mints, e.g. Akbarnagar, Jehangirnar, 'Azimabad, Surat, at this weight. The present coin of 'Azimabad is very unusual in having a weight of 13.89 grams. It is dated AH 1123, year 5 and has normal legends.





v) **A Heavy Rupee of Shah Jehan III**

This is a coin of 'Azimabad, dated AH 1174, Ahad and weighing 13.55 grams. It bears the normal legends with the trident mint-mark.



It would be interesting to know whether 'Azimabad (Patna) rupees of this weight exist for other rulers between Shah Alam I and Shah Jehan III. Can members please check the weights of coins in their collections ! It would also be interesting to know whether these coins are in fact pure silver.

8  
**A Five Rupee Piece of Jaipur State**



Ken Wiggins and Raju Bhatt of Delhi have provided details of the above coin. It weighs 53.9 grams and is 35 x 35. The square shape is unusual for Jaipur, as is the 'V'-shaped milling around the edge. The coin is dated 1217 or 1218, year 44. The former date would fit the regnal year (year 44 = AH 1216-1217). The coin is clearly a special presentation piece.

9  
Bernd Becker has sent details of a new variety of Sikh rupee from Amritsar. Dated VS 1845 it is similar to Herrli 01. 06. 04, but lacks the leaf mark. The coin weighs 11.02 grams.



10.  
Jhajjar and George Thomas

Ken Wiggins writes that he can agree with Devendra Handa (Newsletter 138, page 9) that the Jhajjar rupee of AH 1198/26 cannot, unless the date is manipulated, be attributed to Georger Thomas, nor that he even established at mint at Jhajjar. He must, however, disagree with Devendra Handa that the 42 on the reverse of the Sahibabad-Hansi rupee has anything to do with Thomas's age. AH 1214 on his rupee equates with 5th June 1799 to 25th May 1800 and the regnal year 42 of Shah Alam II equates with 10th September, 1799 to 30th August, 1800.

**THE APPEARANCE ON THE MARKET OF FAKE STAGS-HEAD TAELS François Thièrry.**

The political and economic opening up of Vietnam has not only had good results. As far as numismatics are concerned the first fakes are starting to appear in seconhand and antique shops. There have recently appeared the first fake silver taels imitating the rare stags-head tael, the type with long antlers (World Coins: 3.2 and fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> The imitations (fig. 2)<sup>2</sup> present a certain number of details which differentiate them from the genuine coins: on the obverse, the stag has a more slender muzzle and no eye,<sup>3</sup> and the two 'skid marks' made by the graver at 11 and 14 o'clock, which on the original are strong and clear, are deliberate and hesitant. On the reverse, the forms of the Chinese characters are stiff and crude, the slender up and down strokes of the original have disappeared and the Lao script is so labourious that the consonants 'no' າ and 'bo' ງ are confused.

So far, all of the coins we have seen are for sale 'as struck' and have not been distressed. The edges are sharp and the characters catch one's finger. I feel, however, that it will not be long before the forgers sand down fakes, patinate them and make them presentable to collectors and that they will then spread out onto the international market.

1. In recent editions of World Coins, the obverses and reverses of these two coins have been reversed; it is the type with the short-antlered deer which has, on the reverse, the Thai forms of the Laotian characters and the large Chinese characters (World Coins 1989, French Indochina, Bullion issues WW II, 570-1 and World Coins, vol I, same reference, 833).

2. I have been able to study ten examples of the fake taels and compare them with two genuine pieces. Concerning the weight, around 37 grams, and the diameter, 40.7 mm genuine and fakes are similar, but genuine coins are slightly thicker at the edge. I would like to thank Mr Luong Minh Long for giving me access to these coins.

3. On several old specimens, the eye has disappeared through wear. It is probable that the engraver of the die used as his model a worn specimen, or perhaps a photograph of a worn specimen.





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Shortly before going to press we heard of the death of Dr. H. J. van der Wiel,  
ONS Regional Secretary for Europe. A full obituary will appear in the next issue.  
In the meantime his secretarial duties will be carried out by Jan Lingen,