



NEWSLETTER

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ONS News

Membership List

The revised membership at last was sent out with Newsletter 183. Please check your entry and if any amendment is required contact your Regional Secretary, NOT the Editor.

Annual General Meeting 2005

The AGM took place in London on Saturday, 11 June and was chaired by your Editor in the absence abroad of Nicholas Rhodes, the Secretary General. The chairman reported on the year's activities including meetings, publication of the Newsletter, change of printer, production of the updated membership list. He thanked the Regional Secretaries and the other Council members for their efforts during the year. The accounts for the year ending 31 March 2004 were presented by the Treasurer and questions invited. Resolutions to accept the report of activities and the accounts were passed. Any member requiring a copy of the accounts in question should contact the Treasurer or their Regional Secretary.

Under the ONS constitution, officers (other than Regional Secretaries) hold office for three years and thereafter have to either stand for re-election or stand down. As the present Council had been in office for three years, a new election was held. The following officers were re-elected: Nicholas Rhodes, Secretary General; Stan Goron, Deputy Secretary General and newsletter Editor; David Priestley, Treasurer, Peter Smith, Secretary, Paul Withers, Membership Secretary; Joe Cribb, Publications Secretary and Howard Simmons, Council member. Tony Holmes did not stand for re-election. Shailendra Bhandare and Barbara Mears were elected as additional Council members.

Following the AGM, Michael Mitchiner gave the Ken Wiggins memorial lecture entitled "Numismatic thoughts on a trip along the Silk Road" and Vesta Curtis gave the Michael Broome memorial lecture on "Religious symbolism on Sasanian coins".

We are grateful for Howard and Frances Simmons for kindly making the room available for the AGM.

Oxford

A very informative meeting took place as planned on Saturday 16 April at the Ashmolean Museum. The following talks were given:

- Paul Stevens: Transitional mints of the Bengal Presidency
- Shailendra Bhandare: Maratha issues of Ahmadabad
- Stan Goron: The Qazvin coinage of Husain Shah Safavi
- Nick Rhodes: Some aspects of the Ahom coins of Assam

Obituary

George A. Fisher, Jr (1926-2005)



George Albert Fisher, Jr was the creator of *Fisher's Ding*. Frustrated by the lack of sequential numbering in Ding Fubao's [Ting Fu-pao] *Lidai guqian tushuo / Catalogue of Ancient Chinese Coins*, George A. Fisher, Jr set about numbering and annotating his own copy. From this, he eventually produced an English version, published in 1990 as *Fisher's Ding, or Ding Fubao's catalog of old Chinese cast coinage selectively translated and annotated, with coin numbering, modern pricing, an index, a cross-reference to Schjöhth's catalog, transliteration conversion tables, Manchu writing examples, a list of Qing dynasty mints, etc., added*.

George Albert Fisher, Jr. passed away at home on 18 March 2005. He is survived by his wife Joyce, Sister Susan (Glenn) Benton and children Linda (Jon) Schinnow, Patty (Dallas) Eckhardt and Gear (Shana) Fisher, and granddaughters, Payton and Kendal Fisher. He was born on 13 November 1926 in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and grew up in Westport and Fairfield, Connecticut. George spent thirty-five years working for the Federal Government and a lifetime working on his hobbies: geography, cartography, coin and stamp collecting. His other interests included hunting, fishing and overseas travel.

He enlisted with the Army shortly after graduating from high school in June 1944, and was selected for specialised training corps studying Japanese language and intelligence. He attended the University of Connecticut and Chicago University during this time. Upon completing these studies, he served two years in occupied Japan during World War II. Returning to the U.S., he studied at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. While there, he was recalled to active service during the Korean conflict. Upon his return, he continued his work with the National Security Agency as a civilian and enrolled at the American University, Washington D.C., graduating with a degree in Political Science.

He worked eight years for the National Security Agency. George eventually grew tired of Washington D.C. and decided to move west. While on a fishing excursion that took him to Minnesota, he met Joyce, they married on 24 June 1961 and lived in Evergreen, Colorado. George and Joyce then moved to Arizona, New Mexico, South Dakota, Nebraska and settled in Denver. In Denver, he worked for twenty-seven years as the Programs and Budget Officer for the Rocky Mountain Region of the National Park Service before retiring in 1986.

His lifelong passion was devoted to coin and stamp collecting, and he was lucky enough to focus on this throughout his retirement. George travelled the world with Joyce, visiting numerous countries including: China, Thailand, Tanzania, Kenya, Egypt, Israel, Brazil, Canada, Panama, Turkey and Mexico. George was perhaps best known for his endless historical knowledge of ancient China and Palestine. His knowledge lives on through his many published numismatic and philatelic articles and book *Fisher's Ding*.

The Fisher Family, courtesy of Helen Wang

Kenneth Malcolm McKenzie
12 January 1917 – 12 January 2005



After some months of uncertainty, I received the sad news that my dear friend, Kenneth McKenzie, had passed away at the age of exactly 88 years.

Ken was born in 1917 in Devon, England. He was the ninth child of the family. After World War II (where he rose to the rank of major), he took employment in the book trade in

London. In 1948 he was sent to New York. In due course he joined the American MacMillan and there he became Contracts Manager. He retired in early 1987 at the age of 70.

Ken had been interested in foreign coins from his early youth. Later, he concentrated on Ottoman coins. But it was not until 1971 that he began to publish articles on the results of his research work. His first paper was devoted to early Ottoman banknotes; the second dealt with countermarks on Ottoman copper coins of the 19th century. A new interest in this completely forgotten field of activity had been growing since 1968 when papers by Hadziotis and Lachman had been published. Ken, an old specialist with a good knowledge of books, was aware of the long-forgotten first papers on this subject, published around 1897 by archaeologists. He made a modern interpretation of these papers possible, and, in this way, attracted my attention to him. The acquaintance soon turned into friendship, for not only was he knowledgeable but also always ready to help. Only three years after his first paper on countermarks, he published with Samuel Lachman (Haifa) the first clearly arranged survey of countermarks from the Aegean region (1974). Comprising 56 pages, it was his largest publication and it attracted suitable attention. His second large work was the description of the Ottoman coins found during the excavation of Sardes, which he published with Michael Bates (1981). Ken also participated in the books by Slobodan Sreckovic dealing with Ottoman akches. On the first pages of his new book *Akches volume 4* (see note under New and Recent Publications), Slobodan wrote: "During the final days of work on Akches IV, we received the sorrowful news of the death of Mr Kenneth MacKenzie of New Jersey USA on January 12, 2005. it was indeed sad that he is

unable to see the finished work, though he collaborated on every stage of its research. Our cooperation began in the late 1980s, and Kenneth was extremely helpful and supported me at crucial times when I was thinking of giving up. I overcame my difficulties because of him. His name will be remembered together with the names of Cüneyt Ölcer and the Artuks as pioneers in Ottoman coinage..."

There are numerous publications by MacKenzie, most of them quite short. Up till his 80th birthday, he had published 110 articles. In the following years he wrote 28 more. Added to his 71 book reviews, this adds up to 200 papers in all. As a result of this he became well known and appreciated by collectors of Ottoman coins, in particular.

Ken was a member of six numismatic societies, some of whom honour their members for the work they have done. After 22 years of cooperation, especially for the work on Ottoman coins, Ken was elected a Fellow of the American Numismatic Society in 1974. Several years later – when he was 80 years old – the same society conferred on him (for the first time!) the society's Distinguished Volunteer Award (recognising in this way his volunteer efforts over a period of some 40 years. By happy coincidence, immediately following the ceremony, it was learned that Ken had won the Fred Philipson award of the International Bank Note Society for an article of his appearing in that journal in 1996. And, finally, another honour was bestowed upon him: he became a Life Member of the Hellenic Numismatic Society. Three years later, in 2000, there was a special and very kind honour given to him: to acknowledge his assistance with the first volume about Ottoman akches, Sreckovic dedicated the second volume to Ken.

Ken was a long-time member of the ONS and attended meetings whenever he could. In 1989 he was present for the first time at an ONS meeting in Tübingen, Germany and last attended an ONS meeting in that country in 1999, Jena. Nobody knew at that time that he was already suffering from a serious pulmonary disease. In 2004 he suffered a bout of pneumonia, which left him weaker. He passed away on his 88 birthday. His last paper was a review of a book about Mesur Izzet Bey by Celil Ender, which he probably did not live to see published in *Geldgeschichtliche Nachrichten*. His memory will live on with us in the numismatic world, as well as with his family. His widow, Jean, wrote to me some weeks ago: "Ken was a wonderful man and I miss him". There is nothing more to add.

Hans Wilski

Obituary: Ömer Diler (1945-2005)



On March 18, 2005 Ömer Diler passed away. He was the representative of the Oriental Numismatic Society in Turkey and my best friend. Ömer Diler was born on 12 June 1945 on Büyükdada one of the Prince's Islands in the Sea of Marmara. His father was one of the pioneers in the pharmaceutical industry in Turkey. Ömer, therefore, decided to study chemistry. His father died early, so early that Ömer was still too young to take over the company. The

mother sold the business and by doing so she ensured the livelihood for herself, Ömer and his brother.

Ömer was a born collector. During his lifetime he acquired books, weights, snail boxes, shells, revenue stamps, antiquities of all sorts and, above all, coins, first Ottoman, then Ilkhanid and

finally coins of the Beyliks. His main concern, however, was not only to collect, but also to inquire. He had the ambition to rewrite Eduard von Zambaur's 'Die Münzprägung des Islams'. For decades he compiled a listing of mints and years of Islamic coins, first on a card-index, then on a computer. But he was not able to complete this work.

Publishing was not really his passion. Apart from some articles in the 'Bülten' of the Turkish Numismatic Society, he published a book (together mit Garo Kürkman) about the coins minted in Alanya (*Alâiye paraları - Coinage of 'Alâ'iye*, Istanbul 1981) and another on the epithets of Islamic cities on coins (*Şehir lâkapları*, Istanbul 2001). His second major work (on the Ilkhans) was close to being finished when he fell ill with lung cancer. After this diagnosis he still had one and a half years to live thanks to chemotherapy. The manuscript was sufficiently advanced that it will be brought to print this year by his wife and friends. It will be the standard reference for the coins of the Ilkhans in the coming decades.

Johann-Christoph Hinrichs

We also regret to announce the death on 14 and 16 May respectively, of Marianna B. Severova and Igor' G. Dobrovolskiy, both keepers of the Islamic collection and scientific researchers of the Numismatics Department, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Our condolences to their families.

Cast Chinese Coins by David Hartill. Perfect bound, 474 pages. ISBN 1-4120-5466-4. Available from Trafford Publishing (01270 251 396 or www.trafford.com/05-0364).

The author has provided the following information.

The lack of an up-to-date and comprehensive catalogue of traditional cast Chinese coins for western collectors has been evident for some time. It is hoped that this work will fill this deficiency and prove useful to those with little or no knowledge of Chinese coins, as well as to those who find the lack of detail in more general catalogues frustrating.

From consulting Chinese specialist works, many coins and much information not previously included in catalogues for westerners have been included. By omitting non-essential obverses and reverses, it has proved possible to illustrate around 5,200 spade, knife and cash coins in only one volume without omitting many of the minor calligraphic variations which are of importance in many series. In particular, a full account of Qing Dynasty and coins from the Xinjiang area is given. These items were treated in a cavalier fashion by previous general catalogues. However, some items, such as contemporary forgeries, fantasies, and a few extremely rare varieties have not been included. The ancestor and mother coins, which were used as part of the manufacturing process, have also been excluded, as they are very rarely available. The latest attributions based on archaeological discoveries over the last forty years are given, and, where controversial, discussed.

Those not familiar with Chinese coins will find in the first few pages of the book a general explanation of their inscriptions and the styles of writing used in them. The Finding Guide, which shows both the Pinyin and the older Wade Romanisation, and full-form and modern simplified Chinese characters, will then enable a particular coin to be located readily. As far as possible, all information pertaining to the coin will be found under its catalogue entry. An indication of rarity and value is given for each coin. Where possible, there are cross-references to Schjöh and Ding Fubao. A brief overview of the general and numismatic history of the period, and maps (if relevant), are presented at the beginning of each chapter. Further useful background information is included in the appendices. Some of the commoner Annamese, Japanese and Korean coins are included (with their inscriptions transcribed into the appropriate language), as well as a selection of amulets that could be taken for coins.

The author has been collecting and studying Chinese coins for over forty years, and is the author of "Qing Cash", the definitive work on the coinage of the Manchu dynasty of China.

Spink Numismatic Circular, June 2005, Volume CXIII, number 3, has a couple of items of oriental interest: "Russian Turkestan: some modern counterfeits" by N. du Quesne Bird, and "A new Aksumite coin" by Bent Juel-Jensen.

Slobodan Sreckovic has published *Akches IV (AH 974-1003)*, Selim II Sari to Murad III. The format is similar to the previous volumes and the book contains 163+ pages and 60 plates with 735 line drawings and more than 270 photos. The price is 45 Euros / US\$55.

Work has begun on *Akches V (AH 1003 - 1102 / 1595 - 1691)* which will conclude the handstruck AKCHE series, hopefully within the next 12 months.

Already published are:

Akches I, Orhan to Murad II (699 - 848 AH); 50 Euros / US\$61;
Akches II, Mehmed II to Selim I (848 - 926 AH); 45 Euros, US\$55;
Akches III (926 - 974), 50 Euros / US\$61.

Mints - identification and illustration of every Ottoman mint name and inscription variety relative to ALL denominations and reigns up to the 20th century; 50 Euros / US \$61.

For more information please contact the author or Tom Clarke, (ocl-tom@ix.netcom.com), Box 290145, Davie FL USA 33329-0145

New and Recent Publications

Collector's Guide to Indian Canteen Tokens by Praful Thakkar, 2004, Cary, NC, USA; 88pp, illustrated throughout, price US\$13, IRs190, distributed by Reesha Books International, Mumbai, India (www.reeshabooks.com). This is a reference catalogue of canteen tokens issued in India since 1939, by government and non-government establishments like mills, banks, clubs, hotels, companies, factories, etc. The Guide contains details of some 295 tokens of which 260 are illustrated. Members may also like to visit the following website: www.thakkarfoundation.org

Lists Received

1. Stephen Album (PO Box 7386, Santa Rosa, Calif. 95407, USA; tel ++1 707 539 2120; fax ++1 707 539 3348; album@sonic.net) lists 204 (April 2005), 205 (May 2005).
2. Jean Elsen & ses Fils s.a. (Tervurenlaan 65, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium; tel ++32 2 734 6356; numismatique@elsens.be, www.elsens.be) list 233 (July-September 2005).
3. Early World Coins (7-9 Clifford Street, York, YO1 9RA, UK; tel ++44 (0)845 4900 724; orders@earlyworldcoins.com) list 41 of mainly oriental coins, with some comments on metrology and cast copper coins of ancient north India.

Other News

Biennial Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists

This conference took place 4-8 July 2005 in the British Museum, London. Hosted by the UCL Institute of Archaeology, the conference comprised a series of panels, with subjects ranging from prehistory to palaces of the colonial period. One of the subjects was punch-marked coins. At the time of writing, the following was the list of participants and paper titles:

Shailendra Bhandare, Asst. Keeper, Heberden Coin Room, Ashmolean Museum: 'Silver Punch-Marked Coins of the "Archaic" series: Approaches to Classification'

Rehan Ahmed, Research Officer, IIRNS, Nasik, India: 'Imperial Silver Punch-Marked Coin Hoards from Bihar: An Analysis of the Coin Types'

Susmita Bose-Mujumdar, University of Calcutta: 'Punch-Marked Coins of the Barikot Hoard'

Elizabeth Errington, Dept. of Coins and Medals, The British Museum: title to be announced

Maryse Blet-Lemarquand and Jean-Noel Barrandon, CNRS, IRAMAT, Centre Ernest-Babelon, Orleans, France: 'Imperial Mauryan Punch-Marked Coins and their Copper Imitations: First Analytical Insight'

Amiteshwar Jha, Director, IIRNS, Nasik, India: 'Copper Punch-Marked Coins vis-a-vis Silver Punch-marked Coins: Investigating the Links, Typology, Sequence and Distribution'

The conference proceedings will be published in due course by UCL Press. More information can be obtained from the website www.ucl.ac.uk/southasianarchaeology

New Appointment at the British Museum

Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis has been appointed Curator of Islamic and Iranian Coins at the British Museum, London, from April 2005. She was formerly part-time curator of Parthian and Sasanian coins and Secretary of the British Institute of Persian Studies. Vesta was born in Tehran, Iran, and studied Near-Eastern Archaeology and ancient Iranian languages at the University of Goettingen, Germany. She completed her PhD at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. For many years she has edited *IRAN*, *Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*. She is currently involved in a joint project with the National Museum of Iran to catalogue their collection of Sasanian coins. She is particularly interested in royal and religious symbols on coins.

Auction News

Baldwin's Auctions Ltd will be holding their 10th specialist auction of Islamic coins on 20 July, at the De Vere Cavendish Hotel, 81 Jermyn St, London SW1. The sale comprises 323 lots, and there are particularly strong sections of Abbasid, Fatimid, and early Iranian coins. Highlights include an Umayyad Revolutionary dirham from the mint of Gharshistan, an unrecorded dirham of Zubayda, wife of the caliph Harun al-Rashid, and an unrecorded dinar of the Ziyarid rebel Bakran b. Khurshid.

For more information or to request a copy of the catalogue please contact: Tim Wilkes, Baldwin's Auctions Ltd
Tel: 020-7930-6879/020-7930-9808
e-mail: tim@baldwin.sh

In their Coinex Sale on 29th September Spink are offering an exceptional collection in 160 lots, likely to be of interest to all collectors of Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian and Kushan coins. It contains several coins with new or rare control marks, and all are in excellent condition for their type. Issues of Persis, Parthia, the Kushano-Sasanians and Parata Rajas of similar quality are also listed.

A large collection of coins of Persia, and, more specifically Iran, are also offered, ranging in date from Hemidrachms of Tabaristan to issues of the Qajar dynasty. To receive a catalogue, contact Barbara Mears at bmears@spink.com or telephone 0207 563 4000.

Reviews

Zahir-uddin Muhammad Babur – a Numismatic Study by Aman ur Rahman, published by the author, 2005, ISBN 969-8890-00-9. Case-bound, 140 pages of which 37 colour plates illustrating 345 coins. Price around US\$50 plus postage, with proceeds going to the Himalayan Wildlife Foundation. Distributed in North America by Satya Bhupatiraju (satya1234us@yahoo.com); for other countries please contact the author at otto1@emirates.net.ae

Babur is best known as the founder of the Mughal empire in India. His victory over Ibrahim Lodi, Sultan of Delhi, at the Battle of Panipat in AH 932 (1525/6 AD), came towards the end of his life, however. He was in fact born in AH 888 (1483 AD) in Andijan, Farghana of Timurid and Chaghatai descent. Much of what we know of his life comes from his autobiography, the *Baba-nama* but there are various periods in his life for which we have no account. Much of his life was spent campaigning in Central Asia and in what is now Afghanistan. He managed to occupy Samarkand for several short periods, and various other towns in the region, before making his base in Kabul.

Babur's coinage consists mainly of silver shahrukhis of Central Asian type plus some billon/copper pieces struck in India after the conquest. His early coinage is rare, reflecting the impoverished state of the Central Asian cities he occupied at the time. Moreover, much of his coinage does not include a mintname in the legends and often there is no date. Aman ur Rahman has spent years studying this series and this book is the fruit of his endeavours.

The first chapter consists of a diary of events that are known from his life together with their numismatic relevance, if any. This is done year by year where possible and is followed by a commentary on the coinage. The author has examined many examples of the coinage in major museum collections, private collections and in the trade. He has also undertaken a number of die-link studies. From all this he has determined the relative rarity of the mintages from the Central Asian mint, the possible centralised die production in Kabul and die-links between some of the issues bearing an Indian mint-name. The large number of dies employed to strike the mintless and mintless/dateless coinage after AH 930, probably in Kabul, is also commented upon. The evolution of the coin legends is then discussed in the context of known historical events. The inclusion or exclusion of certain titles can help to date otherwise undated coins.

The next section deals with economy and coin circulation. When Babur captured various towns in Central Asia or Badakhshan, it is reported that the citizens were often so impoverished that the occupiers themselves were reduced to dire straights! An exception was the capture of Qandahar in AH 913. When he occupied northern India the coinage there comprised billon tankas known as Sikandaris. These had very little silver in them and appeared very coppery. Babur issued silver shahrukhis with the names of several Indian cities but these are very rarely found in present-day India; instead, they are mostly found in present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan. This raises the question as to whether they were actually struck in India and what their purpose was. Die-links between some of the "Indian" issues have been found and the style of the coinage from most of the mints is

very similar. This does suggest at least a centralised die production and perhaps even a centralised striking of the coins, either at his Indian headquarters, or perhaps even in Kabul, where the coins may have been struck for propaganda purposes. What are found in India are the anonymous "copper" coins with the mintname Qila' Agra, dated 936-937. The author suggests that these were a replacement for (or rather continuation of) the then circulating Sikandarīs. This is probably correct but it would have been helpful if a couple of specimens could have been analysed for metal content. The first type of this series, with the mintname in a circle, is very scarce; the specimens seen by the reviewer have appeared to be billon rather than copper and it is quite possible that all these "copper" coins are in fact very debased billon issues, which were continued by Babur's successor in India, Humayun.

Each of the mint towns found on the coins is discussed in turn together with their coinage, Central Asian places first and then the Indian ones. The author reattributes the rare coins previously assigned to Lakhnau to Luknur, in what is now Shahabad in the Rampur district. This was an important place at the time and the reading is based primarily on the fact that on a few coins there is a letter at the end of the mintname (i.e. at the extreme left of the coin) that looks like an "r", and which was not visible on the specimens first discovered. This reattribution seems to be very plausible.

Other sections of the book are devoted to countermarked coins; the AH "935" silver coins, where the last digit is in the shape of a fish-hook, which the author believes should be read as a form of "6" and not "5"; and to commentating on various earlier misattributions, including a couple of small gold coins, which are issues of Humayun and not Babur. Most of the rest of the book is devoted to the catalogue. This comprises 33 excellent plates of all the known types, often with several specimens clearly illustrated, together with their details and comments on the relevant facing pages.

The production values of this book are excellent. All in all, it is an essential work for anyone interested in this ruler and his coinage. Aman ur Rahman is to be congratulated on what he has achieved here.

SLG

Orientalisches Münzkabinett Jena 1: Sylloge der Münzen des Kaukasus und Osteuropas [Oriental Coin Cabinet Jena 1: Sylloge of the coins of the Caucasus and Eastern Europa], by Tobias Mayer with contributions from Stefan Heidemann and Gert Rispling, published by Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, Germany, 2005; ISSN 1613-9682, ISBN 3-447-04893-X; A4 format, soft covers, 243 pages, illustrated throughout; price in the region of 70 Euros.

This excellent publication, dedicated to the memory of Johann Gustav Stickel, contains a significant portion of the Jena collection. Stefan Heidemann has already provided some information about this collection in ONS 147 and 157. Suffice it to say here that it was founded in 1840 as the Grossherzogliche Orientalische Münzkabinett and by 1906 had some 14000 items, making it a very significant collection of oriental coins for the period. As a result of the vicissitudes of war, however, the collection suffered greatly, being moved on several occasions; coins were lost or removed, the trays and cabinets upended with the result that coins and labels became disassociated; and the whole collection being stored in unsatisfactory conditions. By 1994 there were only 8950 coins left in the collection with little if any documentation. Fortunately, steps were then taken to rectify matters: a suitable location for the collection was found, work was undertaken to sort and catalogue the coins, and, by means of donations, the collection was expanded to contain around 15000 specimens.

The present volume covers the coins in the collection struck in the Caucasus and Eastern Europe. It is particularly strong in coins of the Golden Horde, and the collection, with some 900 coins of this series, is the most comprehensive outside the source

countries. The collection also has a good representation of coins of Georgia struck in the 12-13th centuries AD, and copper coins struck in the Caucasus states during the 17-19th centuries, e.g. Darband, Shemakhi.

The inclusion of some 72 eastern European imitations of Abbasid and Samanid dirhems forms the basis of an important section by Gert Rispling where he attempts, by means of hoard evidence and die studies, to group such issues chronologically and geographically.

The book starts with a short history of Islamic numismatics and then a history of the collection. A chapter entitled "Einleitung" (introduction) is devoted mainly to a brief history of the Golden Horde, their coin issues, and a listing of the mint-places with comments and references elsewhere in the literature. There then follows a 7-page bibliography and several pages of cartouches found on the coins of the Golden Horde and other issues. The purpose of the latter is not clear as it is not referenced to anything else in the book, and the numbering is somewhat obscure.

Next comes the main catalogue, covering 1398 coins. This is divided on a geographical basis in four sections, and then by mint within each of the sections. The four sections are:

- i. The Volga region from Kazan to Astrakhan (824 coins, including the issues from major mints like Bulghar, Saray, Saray al-Jadida, Gulistan)
- ii. The northern Black Sea region (140 coins, including Qrim)
- iii. Armenia and Georgia, as currently constituted (278 coins)
- iv. Northern Azerbaijan and Darband (156 coins).

The overall format will be familiar to anyone owning any of the volumes of the recent Tübingen sylloge. All coins are described on one page and clearly illustrated on the facing page. Coin types are numbered consecutively in bold type, and individual coins in normal type. The language throughout is, of course, German, and the transliteration system of names and place-names is the normal German one, which can take some getting used to for those accustomed to the various English transliteration systems. Each transliterated mint-name is accompanied by its Arabic form, which should help. Each coin is appropriately described, with die-axis, and referenced to other published examples. One can argue the pros and cons of organising a work like this by mints rather than by issuing states/dynasties/authorities etc but, of its type, this work is exemplary. Moreover, the A4 format is more convenient than the rather unwieldy format of the Tübingen volumes.

The main catalogue section is followed by the 36 page chapter on eastern European imitations of Islamic coins. This begins with an introductory section where Gert Rispling explains his methodology and basis for grouping the various types of imitation coins into time slots and to possible issuers, e.g. Khazars, Volga Bulgars and others. The 72 coins in the Jena collection are then described in detail, with appropriate comment and comprehensive references. After this comes a listing of 314 hoards of Islamic coins found in Europe, with the percentage of imitation coins noted for each. The heading for this section "Funde islamischer Nachahmungen" is somewhat misleading as a number of the hoards listed do not contain any imitations. A bibliography of over 4 pages is provided for this section.

The book ends with a concordance of the numbers used for the coins in the sylloge with collection inventory numbers and sources.

All in all, the authors and publishers are to be congratulated on this excellent work, which is essential reading for anyone interested in the coins of the region covered, and in the coins of the Golden Horde and European imitations of Islamic coins in particular.

SLG

Articles

The "Anonymous" Coinage of Aksum - Typological Concept and Religious Significance

By Wolfgang Hahn

In reconstructing the sequence of Aksumite coin types according to the kings the numismatist is not only challenged by chronological uncertainties as to the dates of their reigns but also by the fact that many coins do not betray a king's name. Some of these are only the result of more or less casual muling of obverse and reverse dies not belonging together; this was caused by the pictorial similarity of both sides displaying the royal image. These cases we shall leave aside¹. But there are substantial issues of regular coins on which the lack of an individual king's name was not incidental but originated from the concept of composing the coin type. Apart from the difficulty of narrowing down the dating of these coins we shall have to deal with this concept. Four coin types are concerned of which three were struck in huge numbers: one in silver (H.32) and the two most common copper types (H.33 and 36); a transitional, experimental type (H.P30) must be added. All belong to the Christian period, i. e. they are struck after the acceptance of Christianity by the king and they are intended to propagate the new religion.

Much has been written about the so-called conversion of king Ezanas and its date so crucial for Ethiopia's history. The arguments derived from all kinds of sources, not least from the coins, seem to be in favour of late in the 340s² although the traditional, somewhat earlier date still has its inconvertible adherents. As the Aksumite coins had had a significant religious expressiveness earlier it is not surprising that Christian symbols there immediately replaced the signs of the pagan astral cult. The most prominent Christian symbol is, of course, the cross, but besides its different shapes more elements of symbolic character are involved such as its position within a circular shield or in a repeated form surrounding the *imago clipeata* (image type on a round shield) of the king. For the latter composition - which was chosen immediately for the gold coins of King Ezanas (H.21a) and continued by his successors - an appropriate interpretation has already been attempted³.

The Greek cross in a circular shield was adopted a little later on copper coins (H.33) and, after a while, on the silver coins too. It is nothing other than an *imago clipeata* like that of the king which it replaces on one side of these coins. The reluctance to depict Christ as a human person (in part originating from the prohibition of divine images in the Old Testament) still prevailed, at least on coins - but there are many other objects known from all over the Christian world on which His cross does stand for Him⁴. Thus the double-sided representation of the Aksumite king which had been generally used previously on silver and copper coins (H.18,19 and 22,23) would soon disappear from them. As the legend belongs to the picture surrounded by it, a change in relevance from king to cross was felt necessary there. Thus the first religious slogan to be found on Aksumite coins was created: the formula TOVTO APECE TH XΩPA. It was used for a long time, apparently in a causal connection with the cross on shield picture. Why this particular expression was chosen and whence its religious meaning stemmed will be explained below.

But first we have to consider the hierarchy of the two coin sides. As the cross serves as a substitute for Christ, the king of kings, it is therefore shown on the obverse where the king's name had stood before. The bust of the king was restricted to the reverse where the legend as usual only comprises his title, *basileus*. This was the simple origin of the anonymity of these coins. This phenomenon can be seen in line with a development towards an immobilisation of coin types according to a Greek monetary tradition as it was transmitted by the South Arabian coinage. We may suppose that such tendencies also affected the Aksumite gold coins which occasionally seem to carry on the names of certain kings posthumously⁵. On the other hand, the Roman tradition of propagating the glory of the ruling king by his coins had been

followed in the earlier period of Aksumite coinage and it predominated again and again.

The literal meaning of the *touto arese te chora* legend is: "may this (i.e. the cross symbol standing for Christ) please the country". In our Christian thinking we are at once bewildered by the meaning of this desire - as humble believers we wish to please God who can elect His people, not vice versa. An initial search undertaken in the direction of a possible quotation from the Bible checking the use of the verb *areskein* in its various contexts did not find anything relevant, but there is a strong connotation of the (holy) land (XΩPA) as allotted by God. The concept of the Abyssinians as an at least co-opted part of the chosen people and rightful heirs of their land - makes its earliest appearance⁶, an outspoken message of Judaist Christianity. Nevertheless it is surprising that the "land is to be pleased".

The formula does not seem to originate from a primary Christian background, but there is another clue: in his *Ecclesiastic History*, Eusebius of Caesarea (2, 2; first published c.300) translates the story he found in Tertullian's *Apologeticum* (5, 2; written around 200) how the emperor, Tiberius, recommended the Christian cult to the senate of Rome, which was the competent authority for the admission of new cults (as *licita religio*) since the Lex Papiria of 304 BC⁷. The verb *placere* = *areskein* in Greek was the technical term used in the votes of the senate. Tertullian, the famous Christian lawyer, comments on this practice of "making gods"⁸. Anyway, religious matters belonged to the traditional domain where the senate was consulted and it cannot be excluded that this was done even as late as the time of Constantine⁹. The *touto arese te chora* legend surrounding the cross shield thus appears to be a juridical formula and a further instance of the *imitatio imperii Romani* in Aksum. Perhaps we might even suggest that it was inspired by the Eusebius text itself because the use of the famous Constantinian victory slogan (*hoc signo victor eris / en touto nika*) - turned into Geez - on later Aksumite copper coins (H.30; cf. below) also indicates some knowledge of this author on the part of the Greek clergy of Aksum.

In this first stage of anonymous coinage only the copper coins were affected: the plentiful issue of the obverse type with the simple cross shield and the *basileus*-legend beside the king's bust (H.33) was apparently struck over a long period. The starting point cannot be fixed exactly. The copper coins of Ezanas' later years seem to have adopted the contemporary silver type which is wrongly called "without religious symbol" because the pagan crescent over the king's head has vanished (H.22,23). In fact these coins have a religious symbol in the form of the triple rim, which is surmounted by a luminous (gilt) = solar cross on some silver pieces. Presumably they were struck together with the Christian gold coins of the older Ezanas type (H.21a). Another issue of gold coins was issued on a reduced weight standard (H.21b), probably after the death of Ezanas which might have occurred in the 360s or 370s; they carry on his name in a slightly variant fashion. How long this type of gold coin was struck can only be guessed at by comparing the frequency of the different types, albeit influenced by chance finds. The last third of the 4th century might be an appropriate span of time. The coins of this gold type were matched by the older anonymous coppers (H.33).

The next stage in the anonymous coinage was reached with the appearance of a silver type (H.32) of similar appearance, but different in two respects: the cross side has a partial gilding by which a heavenly (solar) light is shed on the cross according to the ancient symbolism of colours. This is to be seen in parallel to the gilt *imago clipeata* of the king on earlier silver coins. Another innovation is the alteration of the legend beside the king's bust on the other side: instead of *basileus* it reads *baxasa*. This legend has puzzled commentators for a long time. Amongst several proposals were: a personal name of a king¹⁰ or a concoction of *basileus basileon* (king of kings)¹¹.

The riddle can be solved¹² only in connection with a certain gold type (H. 28), which, therefore, must be discussed briefly. It succeeds the supposedly posthumous Ezana issue, but shows a

different pattern of the legends containing the name of a new king and another protocol of titles. That this type of gold coin was also frozen for a lengthy period resulted in the use of many dies which progressively degenerated, especially by interchanging certain Greek letters (C/B/E, Λ/A, ω/Φ), and also their grouping into the four sections of the legends (as made up by the four cosmological crosses which are inserted into the legends). These "secondary" dies hindered the correct reading of the king's name as well as that of his titles. Fortunately there are early dies with the correct lettering, though, even on these, one has to take into account that the starting point of the legends depends on the angle from which the observer views the coin. Thus, different quarters of the legends must be read inwards or outwards. The personal name of the king which has constantly been misread as EON can easily be revealed as NOE, his "clan"-name as BICI ANAAΦ and the position of these names is worthy of note: they are written on the side where the king is depicted with the head cloth and which had hitherto been the reverse. The obverse with the tiara has the title in a somewhat abridged form and position so that one of the four cosmological crosses comes to stand within the most important element of the legend: X+AC, the genitive *choras* = of the land, thus written in the style of a *nomen sacrum* (abbreviation of certain holy names and terms). It matches "the land" in the *touto arese* formula of the anonymous coins and in both cases the obverse was its right place. The genitive is dependent on the preceding BA standing for basileus and "the land" is specified by the following ABACCIN(on), of the Abassinians. Noe is the king of the Abyssinians (the Greek form of the Habashat which is attested here for the first time), not of the Aksumites. Of course the choice of the biblical name Noe in connection with the land ideology carries the signification even further as has been shown elsewhere¹³. Finally by the denouement of the legends on the gold coins of Noe (and his successors) we can also recognise that the new legend of the anonymous coins is identical, but (because of the small space) abbreviated to BA-XAC-A. The meaning which should be expressed by the whole composition might be paraphrased as: the king reigns the (allotted) land which is to be pleased by the cross.

Because of this connection with the gold coins, the anonymous silver (H.32) is to be dated roughly at the same time, i. e. to the first half of the 5th century. Moreover, the striking of anonymous copper coins of the old type with the basileus-legend (H.33) is likely to have been continued for some time¹⁴. They are not only the most common Aksumite coins and reveal a variety of dies but also have a wide-ranging distribution even outside the country¹⁵, so much so in fact as to be taken as one of the models for casting substitute small change in Egypt. These imitations have often been confused with the Aksumite originals¹⁶. They differ, however, in weight and, correspondingly, in size. Although it is difficult to infer the intended weight standard of the originals which were, of course, struck within a large tolerance, a standard of 1.3 - 1.4g seems plausible and this points to 1/240 of the Roman pound = 1/20 ounce¹⁷. Their diameter is about 13/14mm. The miniature copies weigh about 0.3/0.5g, their size is around 10mm; they are relatively thin and often the casting plug is visible.

The new *baxasa*-legend seems to have been introduced on the copper coins after some delay. It appears on what is to be called a transitional type (H.P30); only two (non-die identical) specimens are known. The king's side was perhaps struck from dies of the anonymous silver type. On the other side, the cross is not shown in the circular shield but encircled by the two royal fronds and it has a gilt punch-hole in the centre. This kind of luminous cross had a much older predecessor in the form of the small solar symbol over Ezanas' bust on some of his silver coins (H.22a) as already mentioned. Without the fronds it was also used on the copper coins of king Mhdys (H.30), which apparently interrupt the anonymous series at some time around 430. This issue diverges from the series not only by giving the king's name but also by the use of Geez¹⁸ instead of Greek (even on the matching gold coins H.A30) and the cross is accompanied by the famous Constantinian motto. The silver coins of Mhdys, which are of doubtful authenticity, differ

from the coppers by their cross design; it was inspired by that of the transitional anonymous type.

In the long run, the traditional cross shield with its Greek circumscription returned, superseding the Mhdys copper and, thus, the later anonymous type (H.36) was created. It continues the gilt central spot from the transitional type and, on the king's side, the *bax(+)-asa*-legend, but the royal head now wears the tiara over the cloth cover. This is paralleled by new silver coins of a king Ebana (H.35) who also put an end to the frozen Noe gold type¹⁹. The new anonymous copper coins were often overstruck on Mhdys' copper as were the Ebana silver coins on anonymous ones. The change can perhaps roughly be dated to the middle of the 5th century. The weight standard of the anonymous coppers remained the same. They, too, are very numerous (the second most common Aksumite coins) and must have been struck over a very long period; they continue into the reign of king Kaleb (c.510-c.540) as can be inferred from a single die where the *baxasa*-legend was replaced by XAAHB, perhaps incidentally (H.43). As we do not know copper coins of Kaleb's immediate successor(s?) it seems possible that striking of the anonymous coppers continued even over the mid 6th century. On Kaleb's silver coins (H.42), which returned to the old design of representing the king on both sides, but at once turned to Geez legends, the *touto arese* motto was simply translated and seems to refer to the cross over the king's bust. When king Joel (late 6th century?) resumed the cross shield on his silver coins (H.57) only the original Greek circumscription was thought appropriate and it reappears, although in a very curtailed form.

In pursuing the development of Aksumite coin legends one has to acknowledge the importance bestowed on the written message. The *touto arese te chora* formula had the longest tradition. We must not, however, suppose a higher grade of literacy within the Aksumite populace (albeit Semitic), but the possibility of finding interpreters everywhere.

1. H. 29 in silver, H.31 and 39 in gold. The H.-numbers given as reference for the different types are taken from W. Hahn, *Aksumite Numismatics*, a critical survey of recent research, *Revue Numismatique* 155, 2000, 281-311 (drawings) and *idem*, *The numismatic evidence for the reconstruction of the Aksumite royal line*, *ANS Museum Notes* 29, 1984, 159-79 (photos).
2. Cf. Hahn (n.1), p.295.
3. Cf. W. Hahn, *Symbols of Christian and pagan worship on Aksumite coins*, *Nubica IV/V*, 1999, 431-54.
4. Comparable examples from another field of Christian art may be found in Coptic sculptures, e. g. where a cross shield is fixed to the cross of passion or a cross is riding on the ass of Palm Sunday.
5. As is well known, this habit was still adhered to in Ethiopia during the first third of the 20th century.
6. Cf. W. Hahn, *Der Heilige Kaleb Ella Asbeha, König des Abessinierlandes und seine Münzen*, *Money Trend* 32/3, 2000, 60-7; *idem*, *Diener des Kreuzes - zur christlichen Münztypologie der Könige von Abessinien in spätantiker Zeit*, *Money Trend* 32/6, 2000, 58-63; *idem*, *Noe, Israel und andere Könige mit biblischen Namen auf aksumitischen Münzen - Der Gottesbund als Legitimation der christlichen Königsherrschaft im alten Äthiopien*, *Money Trend* 33/12, 2001, 124-8.
7. cf. Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht*, vol.3/2, Berlin 1888, pp.1049-51.
8. ...apud vos de humano arbitratu divinitas pensatur. Nisi homini deus placuerit, deus non erit; homo jam deo propitius esse debet (that divinity depends on your human judgement: if a god does not please man, he will be no god; man must favour god).
9. At least it is known that the senate was involved in religion under Aurelian (*Vita Aureliani* 31, 9, written in the early 4th century).
10. Amongst others this was suggested by F. W. Prideaux, *The coins of the Aksumite dynasty*, *Num. Chron.* 1884, 205-19 (cf. pp.314ff).
11. G. M. Browne, *Some remarks on Aksumite coin legends*, *Nubica* 3, 1990, 293-6.
12. This solution was first offered by W. Hahn, *Das Kreuz mit dem Abessinierland - epigraphische Anmerkungen zu einer aksumitischen Münzlegende*, *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für Numismatik der Universität Wien*, 18/1999, 5-8. A die-study is desirable and should make clear how the legends degenerated.
13. Cf. W. Hahn, *Noe...*(n.6).
14. Sometimes the cross side was struck by a die intended for the silver coins (where the cross is indented for the reception of the gilding).

15. Most notably, in Palestine where they provide evidence of early pilgrimage from Abyssinia, cf. W. Hahn, *Touto arese te chora - St. Cyril's Holy Cross cult in Jerusalem and Aksumite coin typology*, *Israel Num. Journ.* 13, 194/99, 103-17.

16. Cf. Hahn (n.1) p.286.

17. The use of Roman units in Aksum and in Adulis is attested by excavated bronze weights, cf. H. de Contenson, *Les fouilles à Axoum en 1958*, *Annales d'Ethiopie* 5, 1963, 3-16, pl.XIVc and XXg; R. Paribeni, *Ricerche ne luogo dell'antica Adulis*, *Monumenti antichi pubblicati per cura della accademiadei lincei*, Milan 1907, 439-572 (cf. 562).

18. For the Geez of the coin legends see V. West, *Ge'ez legends on Aksumite coins*, *ONS Newsletter* 159, 1999, 5-6.

19. A die link of a *baxasabassin*-side of the Noe coinage was found by B. Juel-Jensen, *Two gold coins of king Eon of Aksum struck from unpublished dies*, *Num. Circ.* 107, 1999, 44-5.



H. A30
Mhdys



H. 30
Mhdys



H. 35
Ebana



H. 42
Kaleb



H. 57
Joel

Anonymous types



H. 33.



H. 32



H. P30



H. 36



H. 43
Kaleb

Comparative types



H. 18
Ezana's pagan



H. 21a
Ezana's Christian



H. 22a
Ezana's Christian



H. 21b
Ezana posthumous



H. 28
Noe

A Variant Legend for Wazena of Aksum

By Vincent West

Among the Aksumite coins in the Spink auction of 31 March 2005, lot 133¹ was described as follows:

Wazena (early 6th century A.D.), AE, 0.91g., draped bust right, wearing headcloth with rounded ribbon behind, holding wheat stalk, Ge'ez legend l + 'Hzb zydl "may this be suitable for the people", starting 11:00 and interrupted by bust, *rev.* cross crosslet with inlaid gold centre, superimposed on small cross, dividing the Ge'ez legend zwzn zngs "of Wazena, of the king", (AC² 119 var.; H³ 70).

and was noted as providing "an unrecorded arrangement of the obverse legend".



The coin, now in the author's collection, has a diameter of 15mm and a die axis of 3:00 (the reverse has not been realigned in the photograph).

AC lists nine varieties of the copper coin of Wazena under types 118 to 123 (including 119i, 119ii and 120i). These are distinguished by whether the king is holding a wheat stalk or a wheat stalk sceptre cruciger, whether the legend contains a cross, and the arrangement of the legend around the wheat stalk and cross. In every case the legend reads from behind the neck *l'Hzb zydl'*.

The new coin, now in the author's collection, adds a new variety 119iii. Though the catalogue description is correct, the legend is better described as reading from behind the neck *zydl l'Hzb*, with the cross after the second 'l' and the wheat stalk before the 'H'. The engraver incorporated the same words but chose to alter the word order.

Notes

1. The photograph was kindly provided by Spink.
2. Munro-Hay S.C. and Juel-Jensen B., *Aksumite Coinage*, Spink, 1995.
3. Hahn W.R.O., *Die Münzprägung des Axumitischen Reiches, Litterae Numismaticae Vindobonenses* 2, pp.113-180, pl. 12-15, 1983.
4. For further details on Ge'ez legends see West V., *Ge'ez Legends on Aksumite Coins, Oriental Numismatic Society Newsletter* 159, Spring 1999, pp.5-6.

An Almost New Arab-Byzantine Coin Type (Additions to ONSN 182)

by Nikolaus C. Schindel

It is a curious coincidence that the Arab-Byzantine coin type featuring a palm-branch instead of a standing human figure on the obverse has not been recognised for some decades, except for an entry in an auction catalogue¹ and a short note in an earlier article². However, precisely now when a note on this coin type has been published³, an important new book by N. Goussous⁴ has come out which includes five specimens in addition to the seven coins I had been able to gather. Apart from this, one more example turned up in a recent auction sale⁵. Thus, a short discussion of these new coins, which almost double the number previously known, might be useful to round off the picture of the palm-branch fulus.

Out of the six additional coins, four represent type variants already known (Goussous no. 64-66; Baldwin's no. 3120). The Baldwin's specimen was placed in the 'ba'd' group by the cataloguer, but this attribution was based on an erroneous reading of the OX legend as Kufic, the obverse being in addition presented upside down on the plate.

Two of the additional specimens published by Goussous, however, bear a new type variant (Goussous no. 67, 68 [fig. 1]).



fig.1

On the reverse, a capital M with a crescent in the place of an officina letter is shown instead of the uncial m of the other specimens. Because of the style, the square form of the flans as well as the obverse type, there can be no doubt that these two coins also originate from the same production place as the other ones,

and were struck during roughly the same period. The best support for this assumption, however, is an obverse die-link between an m fals (Goussous no. 65 [= fig. 2]) with an M coin (Goussous no. 68). This proves that in the palm-branch group, the form of the M on the reverse does not have any serious chronological implications.



fig.2

As for the variants already known, one can now safely see that the OX legend is repeated also to the right of the palm-branch (Goussous no. 65, 68). It thus cannot make any sense at all. As for the reverse legends, the new pieces just prove that they are senseless, garbled Greek. The absence of crosses above the m is further supported by Goussous' no. 64 featuring a clearly recognisable six-pointed star. The statistics regarding the different subgroups now are as follows:

Obverses:	ΠΑΠΟVΝΙ:	6 coins
	OX-OX:	7 coins
Reverses:	m:	11 coins
	M:	2 coins

The number and distribution of obverse and reverse dies has increased through the emergence of the new coins, as is shown in the chart below. The numbering follows that given in ONSN 182. Especially for the reverses, a certain identification is in most cases extremely difficult, since, on most specimens, only very few comparable details are visible. I am pretty sure, though, that there are no reverse die-links between the five Goussous specimens. The smaller number of obverse dies (so far, six) compared to the more numerous reverse dies (approximately ten) proves that what is labelled as obverse here was also the technical upper side.

Table 1. Die Links (S = Schindel; G = Goussous; B = Baldwin's)

	obverse die	reverse die
S1	1	1
S2	?	2
S3	2	2
S4	3	3
S5	4	4
S6	?	5
S7	4	?
G64	1	6
G65	5	7
G66	1	8
G67	6	9
G68	5	10
B3120	?	?

All the new coins are struck on square flans, which thus remain characteristic for the entire group. The weights of the new coins are all in the range of the specimens already published; a sound statistic, however, still cannot be done on the basis of only 13 coins.

To sum up: we now have three different sub-groups of the palm-branch fulus. The number of dies has also further increased; thus, the palm-branch coins represent a rather substantial issue. As for the localisation, the new coins support the idea of a mint in the south of Bilad al-Sham since the Goussous collection was largely formed in Jordan. As for the question when to date these palm-branch fulus, we still have to wait either for specimens from an archaeological context which offers definite clues, or for overstrike evidence.

Notes

- 1 Classical Numismatic Group, mail bid sale 47 (1998), lot 2094.
- 2 M.A. Metlich and N.C. Schindel, 'Egyptian copper coinage in the 7th century AD. Some critical remarks', *ONSN* 179 (2004), p. 13 with fig. 16.
- 3 N.C. Schindel, 'A New Arab-Byzantine Coin Type', *ONSN* 182 (2004), pp. 7-11.
- 4 N.G. Goussous, *Rare and Inedited Umayyad Copper Coins* (Amman, 2004). This catalogue also contains some more square coins which, however, do not add substantial new information to our understanding of them.
- 5 Baldwin's Islamic Auction 9, 12. 10. 2004. I have to thank Marcus Phillips not only for drawing my attention to this specimen, but also for providing me with a copy of the catalogue.

Glass Tokens from Palace B in Al-Raqqā

By Stefan Heidemann

In 1952¹ ten glasstokens were discovered in Palace B within the palace area located north of the twin cities al-Raqqā and al-Rafīqā at the middle Euphrates. Palace B was a richly decorated compound close to the main palace of Harun al-Rashid (reigned 170-193/786-809) at its south-western corner (fig. 1, 2, 3). Al-Raqqā/al-Rafīqā served Harun al-Rashid as his imperial residence from 180/796 to 192/808. Abbasid glass tokens produced in Syria or northern Mesopotamia were previously unknown. A production of these in al-Raqqā's industrial district located between the two cities during the period of Harun al-Rashid can be assumed on the basis of numerous contemporary glass workshops there.¹ One token, which is now in the exhibition of the Museum in al-Raqqā, with a different design, was found in this area (ill. 4).²

All tokens from Palace B were made of a pale green glass. They had a diameter of about 25 mm and were stamped with the same die. The reverse is blank. They had, on the rim, traces of a break, which occurred when the glass was in a cold state. These traces are in a random position to the inscription. This, therefore, seems to exclude the possibility that these tokens were intended as cheap jewellery where someone had merely broken away the glass mount or loop. The weights vary between 3.30 g and 4.35 g without a significant peak. This does not suggest the use of these tokens as weights either. A supposed use as currency tokens would also not explain the break at the rim. A glass-workshop within a splendid, richly decorated palace neighbouring the main palace of Harun al-Rashid seems unlikely too. The Syrian archaeologist, Nasib Saliby, the excavator of Palace B, read the inscription as³

mubārak wa- / kayl rashīd
blessing and / a right kayl-weight

1 Julian Henderson, "Archaeological Investigation of an Islamic Industrial Complex at Raqqā, Syria", in: *Damascener Mitteilungen* 11 (*Gedenkschrift für Michael Meinecke*) 1999, 243-265. On the urban development of the industrial district see the forthcoming article by Stefan Heidemann, "The History of the Industrial and Commercial Area of 'Abbasid al-Raqqā, called al-Raqqā al-Muhtariqā", in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.

2 Julian Henderson, "Recent Investigations of Islamic Industry at Raqqā: Harun al-Rashid's Glass Workshop", in: *Syrian/British Archaeological Cooperation. A Symposium Held 3rd-4th May, 1998* at al-Assad Library, Damascus. Organised by the Directorate General of Antiquities & Museums, the Council for British Research in the Levant and the British Council, Damascus 1998, 25-27, pl. 14-15. The illustration is taken from this publication.

3 Ṣalībī, N. (1954-5): "Rapport préliminaire sur la deuxième campagne de fouilles à Raqqā (Automne 1952). Hufriyāt al-Raqqā. Taqrīr awwalī 'an al-mauṣim al-thānī khārīf 1952." In: *Annales Archéologiques Syriennes* 4-5 [1954-5] *AAS* 4-5, 205-212 (Europ. part), 69-76 (Arabic part), 75 p. 209 [Fr.], 75 [Arab.].

This reading would point to a *dirham kayl*-weight of 3.13 g⁴, which, however, can be excluded for several reasons mentioned above. Furthermore the reading *kayl rashīd* creates philological problems. Usually the word *rashīd* did not specify an object like a weight. One would expect attributes like *wāfin*, *jayyid* or *jā'iz*, "full", "good" or "perfect". *Rashīd* implies "rightly guided" or "orthodox in his belief". An interpretation as "kayl-weight of [Harun] al-Rashid" is not possible. This would be a *kayl rashīdī*. Another reading may be proposed:

mubārak wa- / kīl rashīd

Mubārak rightly guided agent

Both readings obviously involve a word-play on the name of the caliph. The attribute *rashīd*, however, fits much better with an agent than with an object. However one would expect the office to be qualified with a definite article, i.e. *al-wakīl al-rashīd*.

The traces of the break at the rim may suggest that these tokens sealed or closed something, probably something precious. The token had to be broken away in order to unseal or open it. A certain Mubārak might be in charge of the correct handling of these objects. Remains of the consumption of precious objects (or liquids) are likely to be found in a palace compound. Until now further parallels are missing. Perhaps other specimens of similar glass tokens might have survived in various collections. The author would be grateful to know about them.

About these tokens and the excavations in al-Raqqā see: Stefan Heidemann - Andrea Becker (eds.): *Raqqā II - Die islamische Stadt*, Mainz 2003, 195-196.



fig. 1



fig. 2

Heidemann, no. 610, 3.75 g Heidemann, no. 614, 3.30 g



fig. 3



fig. 4

Heidemann, no 614 (drawing) Glasstoken from industrial district (drawing: Henderson, 1998)

Qumm, A New Ziyarid Mint, and some Remarks on the Dinars of Al-Qahir and Al-Zahir from that Mint.

By Roland Dauwe

In March this year I had the opportunity to buy a dinar dated 322 AH and struck at Qumm in the name of the ziyarid ruler Mardawij bin Ziyar. Two weeks later, Steve Album sent me the scan of a similar coin from a collection located in the Gulf region. In May I

4 Hinz, Walther: *Islamische Maße und Gewichte, umgerechnet ins metrische System* (Handbuch der Orientalistik, 1. Abteilung, Ergänzungsband I, Heft 1), Leiden 1955, 2-3.

was offered another specimen and, in the latest auction of Morton & Eden (25-26 May), a fourth specimen appeared. Both specimens from my collection as well as the one offered by Morton & Eden were probably part of an important hoard of dinars that was discovered near Hamadan in Iran, a hoard that, without any doubt, was composed of several hundred pieces dating from c. 300 AH to c. 328/329 AH. Until now, only coins struck at al-Karaj have been reported¹ for that ruler. The dinar is of a normal Abbasid type with the name of the caliph al-Qahir (320-322 H), but on the obverse a fifth line has been added, reading *Mardawij bin Ziyar*. On the reverse a letter ζ is visible beneath the central legend, the same letter that is visible on the dinars of al-Qahir struck at Qumm in 321 AH, possibly the initial of a mint official (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1

All four specimens I have seen seem to have been struck from the same obverse die, but there are two distinct reverse varieties, the second one differing by a sign that was added to the left of *Lillah* at the top of the reverse, and which looks like a letter ξ . Fig. 2 shows the reverse of the second piece in my collection and the one Steve Album has sent me the scan of, has that same reverse, with the sign more recognizable. It looks as if that letter was engraved later on an existing die.



fig. 2

fig.2 (detail)

The coins of Mardawij were struck in a period when the political situation in central Iran was very confused. Several Dailamite warlords were opposing the Samanid ruler, Nasr II bin Ahmad, for supremacy over the region. The situation was even more complicated as the Dailamites showed great rivalry between each other and alliances, even with the Samanids, could change very rapidly. All this caused a lot of instability in the region, and that for several decades. It seems that in 321 AH the Zirayids gained control over Qumm, with Mardawij, who was in the service of the Samanids, as their leader. Early in 323 AH, he was murdered by one of his generals and it is obvious that the Ziyarids were not able to keep their supremacy over the region much longer, the struggle continuing between the Samanids and another Dailamite dynasty, the Buwayhids. In 329, the Samanid, Nasr II bin Ahmad, gained control over Qumm and the Samanids were able to keep their power until they were driven out by the Buwayhids, probably c. 335 AH, but certainly before 340 AH².

The dinars from the period 320 AH to the Samanid conquest in 329 AH are very interesting, though not fully understood. As far as I know, no dinars showing additional signs or names have been recorded for Qumm up to the end of the reign of the Abbasid caliph, al-Muqtadir. With the pieces of al-Qahir a change can be observed. For that ruler, only dinars dated 321 AH have so far been recorded (only 2 specimens, both from the Hamadan hoard), but both show very interesting additional letters, the reading of which is still a problem (Fig. 3).



fig. 3

On the obverse, four isolated letters are found to the left and right of the central legend. From their position (all four are written with the top to the left) it is clear that they should be read from top to bottom and from left to right. In his description of the example in the Morton & Eden sale, the cataloguer read those letters as MK? and RF? After an examination of my specimen and the one at Morton & Eden, I am wondering whether those letters should not be read MD and RW, all four letters being part of Mardawij's name, and standing in the correct order if one reads the two top letters first. Could it be possible that Mardawij put separate letters of his name on the dinars struck in 321 AH, making them look like the initials of some official(s), and then decided, a year later, to have his full name on them, as a clear sign to all his rivals that he was his own master now and no longer a vassal of the Samanids?

No dinars struck at Qumm in 323 AH are yet known to me, but on those of 324 AH the initials have disappeared, showing only several ornaments in the form of annulets and arabesques (Fig. 4).



fig. 4

It is very strange, however, that, on the obverse, one can read *Abu'l-'Abbas bin amir al-muminin*, while no heir is recorded on al-Radi's coins before 327 AH and the name of that heir should have been *Abu'l-Fadl*! Both specimens from my collection show that peculiarity, since both were struck from the same pair of dies. Was it a mistake by the die-cutter, copying an obverse die of al-Muqtadir, or was an old obverse die of that caliph re-used, after altering the date and adding the ornaments? I consider the first possibility more likely. From the above it is quite understandable that it was not the obverse dies of the dinars of al-Qahir that were copied, but rather those of his predecessor.

On a dinar of 325 AH from my collection, the name of the heir has disappeared and no special marks are visible. But on another specimen of that same year, words have been added all around the centre of both the obverse and reverse (Spink Zürich, Auktion 27, 410). On the obverse one can read clockwise, starting from the top, *Lillah al-Quwwat Lillah al-'Azamat* and on the reverse *Lillah al-Qudrat Lillah al-'Azza*.



fig. 5

On the coins of 326 AH (Fig. 5) the words were changed again, with, on the obverse, *Lillah al-'Azza al-Mulk Lillah*, and with a part of the reverse legend still not being well understood. It

seems that no dinars of 325 or 326 bear the name of a local ruler or governor, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether they were struck during some brief occupation of the town by the Samanids or by the Buwayhids.



fig. 6

On the dinars of 327 AH the words were again replaced by isolated and groups of letters (Fig. 6). Though I have six specimens in my collection, all from the Hamadan hoard and struck from the same set of dies, the reading still remains uncertain. Beneath the obverse I think there is only one isolated letter ح, with, to the right of it, some kind of ornament, rather than a group of letters as one would think in the first place. Beneath the reverse seems to be written حل, but others have read it as an isolated ص. To the right is a word that could possibly be read as مهر. That word seems to have been of great importance, since on two of my specimens it has disappeared, and a close examination of the coins shows that the word was removed from the die, leaving a small depression on it (Fig. 7). This obviously points, once again, to a change in the political situation.



fig. 7

fig. 7 (detail)

No coins struck at Qumm dated 328 AH are known to me, and the next issue was struck in 329 AH, in the name of the Samanid ruler, Nasr II bin Ahmad. All the changes that can be observed on the dinars struck in the name of al-Qahir or al-Radi do, without any doubt, reflect the continuously changing political situation at Qumm from 321 AH up to the brief conquest by the Samanids in 329 H, but it remains very hazardous to attempt to determine, except for when the Ziyarids are concerned, which issues were struck under the control of the Samanids and which by the Buwayhids.



mint-name "Qumm"

- (1) Miles, George C., *Coinage of the Ziyarid Dynasty of Tabaristan and Gurgan*. ANSMN 18 (1972), pp. 119-137; and *Album, Stephen, A Checklist of Islamic Coins* (1998), no. 1530.
- (2) For more historical information, see: Drechsler, Andreas, *Die Geschichte der Stadt Qom im Mittelalter (650-1350): politische und wirtschaftliche Aspekte*. Berlin 1999.

A Portrait Coin of the Sangam Age Cholas

by Dr. Wilfried Pieper



The coin I am publishing here came to me as an ancient Indian coin of unknown provenance. It is a rectangular copper piece measuring 15x13mm and weighing 2.76g. The obverse shows a human portrait to right, the reverse a lion-like animal walking to right with its long tail elegantly curled above its back. The hair of the portrayed ruler is combed backwards and tied together at the back of the head and the neck in the form of two thick dots. The clean-shaven young face has feminine features, the visible ear is decorated with a large earring.

Which dynasty issued this coin and what is the identity of the person portrayed? As the coin is anepigraphic, there is no legend to help us to answer this question and most probably the identity of the person portrayed will remain unknown. We have, however, a link to a comparable square copper portrait coin among the Sangam Age Tamil coinages and we may not be wrong in attributing our coin to the Sangam Age Chola dynasty, identifying the lion-like animal as the Chola tiger, the emblem of the ancient Cholas.

Only a few portrait coins of Sangam age Tamil dynasties have surfaced and these have recently been published by R. Krishnamurthy¹. The first case is a series of round, uniface silver pieces with the portrait of a right-facing king with a clean-shaven head and a Tamil-Brahmi legend above². Based on provenances and on his identifications of the legends, Krishnamurthy attributed these silver pieces to the Sangam Age Chera dynasty. The second case is an anepigraphic, square copper type of which only four specimens are known, two of which appear in Krishnamurthy's catalogue³. Their obverse shows a right-facing portrait, the reverse a rectangular tank symbol with tortoises inside. Krishnamurthy attributed this type to the Sangam Age Pandyas. As for the reverse design, one would usually expect the stylised fish symbol, the emblem of the Sangam Age Pandyas par excellence. But in this case Krishnamurthy made his attribution by analogy with a number of Pandya coins bearing the same 'tortoises in a tank' symbol. The ruler of Krishnamurthy's square Pandya portrait coins is described by the author as wearing a crown, but, due to wear, one cannot be sure about the details of the head-gear. At least on coin 50 the hairstyle appears tied with a thick dot at the back of the head, thus looking similar to that on the new type published here. Apart from that, both portrait types, the Pandyan and our new one, share the same square shape and might well have been issued at about the same time. Krishnamurthy discusses the possibility that the Pandyas were influenced by the portrait coins of the Roman emperor Augustus and that the portrait copper type of the Pandyas might belong to the latter part of the first century BC⁴. If one would like to discuss a possible Roman influence on the portrait style of the new Chola portrait type, one could perhaps see some similarity to royal female portraits on Roman coins of the 1st-2nd century AD. Mitchiner⁵ describes the rectangular Chola coinage as having started in the 1st century BC with rectangular shaped copper coins bearing multitype obverse designs. Chronologically later issues leave the multitype designs and develop via some intermediate types to coins showing a single design. From the very beginning, however, the tiger is and remains the characteristic reverse design of the ancient Chola coins. According to Mitchiner the latest Sangam Age Chola coins were struck on round flans in contrast to the earlier issues which were all of square or rectangular shape⁶. In his

view, these latest issues belong to the early 3rd century AD. Within this time-frame our new portrait type could be placed somewhere in the 1st-2nd century AD. Its special importance lies in the fact that it is the first Sangam Age Chola portrait coin ever reported.

References

- 1) Krishnamurthy, R., *Sangam Age Tamil Coins*, Madras 1997
- 2) Krishnamurthy, R., *ibid*, coins 164-172
- 3) Krishnamurthy, R., *ibid*, coins 50-51
- 4) Krishnamurthy, R., *ibid*, p.46
- 5) Mitchiner, M., *The Coinage And History Of Southern India*, part 2, p.81. London 1998
- 6) Mitchiner, M., *ibid*, p.83

Achyu coins of Ahichhatra and their late 4th century derivatives

By Dr. Wilfried Pieper

Some years ago a hoard of small Northern Indian copper coins appeared on the London coin market. It contained late Panchala coins of Ahichhatra of the wheel/Achyu type together with types that had obviously been inspired by and developed from the Achyu coins. It's interesting to see these small imitative copper coins in the context of comparable small copper coins of late 4th century NW India that have surfaced over the last few years.

Ahichhatra was the capital of ancient Northern Panchala situated in the Bareilly district of modern Uttar Pradesh. At the end of the 1st century AD Panchala and the other Ganges valley states lost their independence and were incorporated into the Kushan Empire. At this time the Kushan Empire stretched as far as Bengal in the east and the Narmada valley in the south. In the early 3rd century AD, during the reign of Vasudeva I, the Kushans seem to have lost the Ganges valley and Central India. This was the time when many tribal states and kingdoms of the Ganges valley and of Central India gained or regained their independence: among others, the Panchalas of Ahichhatra, their north-western neighbours, the Yaudheyas, the Kota people of the Punjab, further south, the Senas of Kanauj, the Maghas of Kausambi and the Nagas of Padmavati and, east of Panchala, the kings of Kosala. All these states enjoyed independence from the 3rd century AD to the middle of the 4th century AD when Samudragupta (c.335-380 AD) enlarged the Gupta Empire by making extensive conquests all over Northern India. These conquests are recorded in his Allahabad stone inscription engraved shortly after his death on a pillar that had originally been set up by Ashoka¹. From this inscription it appears that the independence of the Panchalas of Ahichhatra, the Senas of Kanauj, the Kotas of the Punjab, the Nagas of Padmavati and many others was brought to an end by Samudragupta. Rulers subdued by Samudragupta according to the Allahabad inscription are, inter alia, Ganapatinaga, the last king of the Naga line, Nagasena, probably ruler of Kanauj and Achyuta who has been identified as the issuer of the Achyu coins of Ahichhatra.

The Achyu coins are small, round copper coins weighing between 1.5-2.5g. Hoard evidence and the occurrence of these coins in post-Kushan strata at Ahichhatra confirms that they are to be placed significantly later than all other Panchala coins. They show a wheel on one side and the Brahmi legend ACHYU on the other side. The wheel is in most cases eight-spoked but varieties depicting a seven-spoked wheel have also come to light². Allan noticed already that the Brahmi characters of the legend point to the 4th century AD and the use of the wheel as well "suggests that it is not remote in time or place from the coins of the Naga dynasty, one of whom, Ganapatinaga, shared the fate of Achyuta...The coins should be attributed to a local dynasty of the fourth century AD at Ahichhatra in the Bareilly district of the United Provinces."³ Bela Lahiri took the wheel as a chakra symbol. For her the common use of this device on coins of several Naga kings and on the coins from Ahichhatra also suggests a connection between both series but for her "it also bears an allusion to the king's name, as it represents probably the Sudarsanachakra of the god Achyuta (Vishnu). This feature seems to connect the coins of Achyuta with

the earlier series of Panchala coins. We do not know of any other ruler of the dynasty to which Achyuta belonged. As already noted, he was overthrown by Samudragupta."⁴

The post-Kushan copper coins of the Yaudheyas and those of Kosala are quite large, heavy pieces but these are rather exceptions among the north-western and Ganges valley coins of this period. In general there is a tendency in the post-Kushan currencies of Northern India to small and low-weight copper coins reflected, for example, in the Achyu coins of Ahichhatra, the issues of the Senas of Kanauj, the Nagas of Padmavati and the Maghas of Kausambi. The same tendency for small, low-weight coppers can be observed in the Kushano-Sasanian copper currencies and, even more so, in the crude degenerate imitations of Kushan and Kushano-Sasanian prototypes that circulated in Gandhara from the 4th century onwards when Kushano-Sasanian Gandhara was taken over from the Kidarites⁵. A great number of new, small copper varieties circulating in 4th to 8th century Gandhara have come to light in recent years from a find in the Swat valley in Northern Pakistan, the so-called Kashmir Shmast or Kashmir Cave hoard⁶. These pieces took their inspiration mostly from Kushan, Kushano-Sasanian, Hun or Kidarite prototypes, frequently mixing diverse elements or combining them with local designs. Even low-weight, small copper imitations of Indo-Greek silver drachms are among them⁷. The coins presented here fit well into the frame of such low-weight, imitative pieces reaching back to an older popular prototype, and the late 4th century AD can reasonably be assumed as the date of their issue. One can assume that the region where these coins circulated had already lost its independence at the time of their issue in the face of Samudragupta's conquests. It is however probable that, like other low-weight copper pieces, these coins were allowed to continue in circulation to serve a restricted local trade. Coin no.1 is a good example of the Achyu prototype with correct designs and perfectly round flan in contrast to the imitative pieces with designs running wild struck on irregularly shaped planchets with rugged edges. Through several stages of increasing degeneration in design and technical execution, the wheel transforms into a star and the legend becomes meaningless, finally evolving into crude Kushan styled human depictions or into a design similar to that found on some Kota Kula coppers.

CATALOGUE:



Type 1: Copper coin, 1.71g, 12mm, BMC 'Coins of Ancient India' pl.XIV,nos.1-5;

MitchinerACW, no.4727

Obv.: 8-spoked wheel

Rev.: Brahmi legend Achyu



Type 2: Copper coin, 11mm, 0.56g

As coin no.1 but highly reduced weight and cruder execution of the designs



Type 3: Copper coin, 2.27g, 20mm widest diameter

As coin no.1 but struck on an irregular planchet with ragged edges



Type 4: Copper coin, 1.17g, 14mm

Obv.: The wheel design is reduced to its central part with a few irregular lines around; the spokes and the outer circle are no longer depicted.

Rev.: Distorted Brahmi legend Achyu



Type 5: Copper coin, 1.13g, 12mm

Obv.: The wheel has changed into a star symbol

Rev.: The legend has been reduced to a crude design that has some similarity with the 'Kota character flanked by crescents' found on Kota copper coins



Type 6: Copper coin, 1.42g, 12mm

Obv.: Star symbol

Rev.: Kushan styled standing human figure



Type 7: Copper coin, 1.24g, 14mm

Obv.: Kushan styled standing human figure

Rev.: Kushan styled standing human figure



Type 8: Copper coin, 1.18g, 12mm

Obv.: Highly disintegrated depiction of wheel symbol

Rev.: Blank

Notes

1. Mitchiner, M., 'Oriental Coins and their Values- the Ancient and Classical World', 1978, p.596
2. Bopearachchi, O. & Pieper, W., 'Ancient Indian Coins', 1998, pl.27/coin 8
3. Allan, J., 'British Museum Catalogue-Coins of Ancient India', 1967, p.lxxx
4. Lahiri, B., 'Indigenous States of Northern India', 1974, p.182
5. Pieper, W., 'A New Find of Small Copper Coins of Late 4th Century Gandhara', 2002, in ONS-Newsletter 170, pp.23-27
6. Tareen, H., 'Late 4th Century AD Copper Coins of Kashmir-Smast Hoard', 2002, in ONS-Newsletter 173, pp.17-19
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Sikh Coins with the Dar Jhang Legend

By Gurprit S. Dora

When I first wrote the article on Sikh coins "Zarb Sri Amritsar Jiyo: A Broader Prospective" for the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India (JNSI), Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (Volume LXIII, Parts 1 & 2), to support my claim that not all coins with the legend "zarb Sri Amritsar Jiyo" were minted at Amritsar alone, one of the strongest arguments I offered was that of the existence of coins with the legend *zarb Sri Amritsar Jiyo* with the additional legend "Dar Jhang". These coins have the mint name *Sri Amritsar Jiyo* as on the normal coins of the Sikhs of Amritsar mint. However, on the reverse itself of these coins, there is an additional legend "Dar Jhang" within the *lām* (ل) of *akal* (اکال). These are the coins which I thought lent the strongest evidence to the fact that there are coins with the legend "zarb Sri Amritsar Jiyo" that were minted from places other than Amritsar itself.

Dar Jhang Coins

(Courtesy: "Coins of the Sikhs" by Mr. Hans Herrli, illustrated on Page 57 of the second edition)



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The coins with "Dar Jhang" have been noted for two years only, namely VS 1873 and VS 1874, corresponding to the years 1816 AD and 1817 AD respectively. So far no coin with "Dar Jhang" has been noted for any other year. These coins are illustrated on page 57 (types 01.09.04N and 01.09.04), as shown above, of the new edition of the book *Coins of the Sikhs* by the noted numismatist, Hans Herrli, and comments regarding the coins appear on page 58 of the book. Mr. Herrli was kind enough to mention my argument about these coins. However, he rejected my argument on the basis of the years VS 1873 and VS 1874 on these coins in footnote 17 on page 58. But it was regarding these very years that I put forward my argument.

Whereas Mr Herrli assumed that what I mentioned were the first and second conquests of Jhang by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in

the years 1803 and 1805 respectively, my contention was that Maharaja Ranjit Singh was already the sovereign ruler of the territory, and Nawab Ahmed Khan Sial was paying a fixed annual tribute to the Maharaja in lieu of the rights to rule the territory and collect revenue from the territory. Whereas the arguments offered by Mr. Herrli are based on the works of historians Sohan Lal Suri and Nur Muhammad Chela Sial, the arguments offered by me were based on concrete historical evidence as detailed below.

About 193 loose sheets of newsletters in Persian were discovered by mere chance from Poona by one, Dr. Mohammad Nazim, an officer of the Archeological Survey of India, who happened to be stationed in Poona in the year 1932-33. These sheets gave a first hand day-to-day chronological account of the happenings in the court of Ranjit Singh between the years 1810 to 1817 AD. An English translation, made over a period of 18 months, of the original papers in the Alienation Office, Poona, was jointly edited by Lt.-Col. H.L.O. Garrett, Keeper of the Records of the Punjab and G. L. Chopra, Deputy Keeper of Records in 1935. The Language Department, Punjab, published these translated papers in book form in the year 1970. The book is entitled "*Events at the Court of Ranjit Singh 1810-1817*". Several pages are missing, but a few mentioning the events relating to Jhang Sialan, which are crucial to the numismatic discussion on the "*Dar Jhang*" coins, were apparently intact and were included in the book. Mentioned below are the portions relevant to events related to Jhang Sialan in the year 1816 AD (VS 1873, the first year of the "*Dar Jhang*" coins. Only extracts which are crucial to the discussion of the "*Dar Jhang*" coins are being mentioned below.

1. On page 330 of this book, the events refers to Monday, dated 15th April, 1816 (16th Jamadi-ul-awwal, 1231 AH). A part of the paragraph reads as under:

Ahmed Khan of Jhang was ordered to pay one lakh of rupees. He pleaded that something less might be taken from him. Bhai Gurbaksh Singh stated that revenue tax be taken from him with some concession.

2. On page 331 of the same book, of the events referring to Tuesday, dated 16th April (17th Jamadi-ul-awwal), a part of the paragraph reads:

A note was sent to Phula Singh Akalia, asking him to go and establish his camp near Multan. Ahmed Khan of Jhang was told that after the evacuation (of Multan) to be brought about with his help, etc., the country would be given to him. He welcomed the suggestion.

3. Again, page 345 of the same book refers to the events on Saturday, dated 21st December, 1816 (1st Safar, 1232 AH). In the middle of the paragraph it is written that:

Jahan Khan, the brother of Ahmed Khan of Jhang Sial, presenting one horse and paying his respects, submitted that if the Noble Sarkar would grant him an estate he would remain there, and that otherwise he would leave for some other place. The Noble Sarkar replied that he should remain present, adding that he would be suitably favoured.

4. Page 346 of the book refers to the events titled under 1816(20) Deorhi of Sirdar Ranjit Singh Bahadur: Thursday, dated 26th December, 1816 (6th Safar, 1232 AH), Lahore. Part of the paragraph reads:

The Noble Sarkar asked the Wakil of Ahmed Khan of Jhang Sialan as to how many lakhs of rupees was the income of the Taaluqa of Jhang Sialan. He was told that it might be five lakhs, and that Sujana Rai had been very cruel to the people there. The Noble Sarkar said that he knew all about it, and gave fifty rupees to him to meet his expenses.

5. Further down in the same paragraph it states:

Sujan Rae was ordered to give Nazrana out of what he had earned in making embezzlements of the revenue tax of Jhang Sialan. He replied that he would do as he would be ordered. Himmat Singh Chilliawala submitted that the aforesaid person agreed to pay twenty thousand rupees, and the Noble Sarkar replied that he would be charged forty thousand.

Two things are clear from these pages. Firstly, that these events relating to Jhang Sialan took place in 1816 AD corresponding to VS 1873, the first year on the "*Dar Jhang*" coins. Secondly, Ahmed Khan was still entrusted with the territory of Jhang Sialan by the Maharaja. It appears that Ahmed Khan did not find favour with Maharaja Ranjit Singh after the year 1817 AD, corresponding to VS 1874, because we do not find any "*Dar Jhang*" coins after the year VS 1874.

The reason for considering the present evidence more trustworthy is that this is a first hand, eye-witness account of the events when they actually occurred. The person/persons who was/were recording these events had access to the innermost circle in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and were present in the court when the events and conversations took place. The events were recorded on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand the works by historians are usually compilation works. For much of their work they often depend on the works of others. Sometimes they have to depend on the narration by individuals who claim to have been on the scene at the time of the events. This is usually long after the event had actually taken place, and the narration becomes less reliable. In such an event if someone tries to chronicle the events after some time has elapsed since the actual happening, there is every possibility that the chronology of the events becomes distorted. Sometimes events are recorded on the basis of hearsay only. But in the case of these papers, there is no possibility of error due to the currency of the events at the time they were recorded.

It is evident that Ahmed Khan was either not in a position to pay the full tribute money or he did not intentionally want to pay the full amount. Whatever the reason, it is obvious that it had become necessary in the light of the facts recorded above that coins were minted to please the Maharaja and this could explain the presence of the "*Dar Jhang*" legend. This would have been done either by Ahmed Khan of Jhang or his brother Jahan Khan. I have added the name of Jahan Khan in view of the events of Saturday, 21st December 1816, recorded on page 345 of the book (serial no. 3 above). It is possible that Jahan Khan, who was very keen on pleasing the Maharaja, had these coins minted. It is my view, therefore, that the "*Dar Jhang*" coins were minted in Jhang itself in the years VS 1873 and VS 1874, corresponding to the years 1816 and 1817 AD.

A Unique True Nanakshahi Coin of the Sikhs By Gurprit Gujral

Recently a huge controversy raged among Sikh clergy over the introduction of the Nanakshahi calendar in place of the Vikrami Samvat calendar, which was in use till now, for calculating the dates of all important events related to the Sikhs. Apparently, the Sikh clergy took the decision to introduce this calendar to provide a distinct identity for the Sikh religion, different from that of the Hindus.

The Vikrami Samvat calendar is a calendar used by the Hindus in India. Probably the only other country to use this calendar is Nepal, which is considered to be a Hindu state. The word Vikrami is derived from the name of King Vikramaditya who first introduced the Vikrami Samvat year. Vikrami Samvat started some 57 years prior to the beginning of the Christian era. To arrive at a Vikrami Samvat year one only needs to add 57 years to the Christian year. Similarly, by just subtracting 57 from the Vikrami Samvat, one can arrive at the AD year.

The coins of the Sikhs represent a unique numismatic phenomenon as they are the only major series issued anywhere in the world at that period which consistently did not

carry the name of the ruler on them but which, instead, bore testimony of 'rule through 'divine intervention'. Even Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of Sikh sovereign state did not dare put his name on these coins in strict adherence to this convention.

In these circumstances, the legibility of the years on the coins of the Sikhs is an important aspect of Sikh numismatics. Almost all coins of the Sikhs carry the full year in Vikrami Samvat on the reverse, i.e. the mint side. In the absence of the name of the ruler, the presence and legibility of the years on these coins has helped to clearly separate the coins minted and circulated by the Sikh Misls from the coins minted by the Sikh sovereign state, despite their continued similarity in shape, type, size, weight, design and calligraphy. Not only this, the Sikh coins continued to be minted and remained in circulation for almost ten years even after the death of Ranjit Singh. The presence of clear dates makes it easy to attribute the coins to successive rulers in the absence of names of the rulers on the coins.

The Vikrami Samvat was probably chosen by the Sikhs as a symbol of defiance to the might of the Muslim rulers who were in the practice of placing the Hijri year on their coins. It must be remembered that the very creation of the Khalsa was made for the purpose of protecting the Hindus from the persecution of the Muslim rulers, and spare them the ignominy of forcible conversion. For this reason they needed to have something on their coins which not only clearly defied the might of the contemporary Muslim rulers, but also portrayed a symbol of Hindu/Sikh domination. In those days, coins were used to portray the stamp of authority of the issuer of the coins, and the Muslims in no way could be identified with the Vikrami Samvat, clearly a practice of only the Hindus. Also, since the language used on almost all the coins of that period was Persian, and the coins of the Sikhs were no exception, only the placement of the year in Vikrami Samvat provided a distinct identity to the coins of the Sikhs, different from that of the coins of the Muslim rulers,

The Sikh Misls started minting their own regular coins in the year 1765 AD (VS 1822) in Lahore. From 1775 AD (1832 AD) onwards, the Misls also started minting coins at Amritsar. Till 1775 AD, Amritsar had never been a mint town before the Sikhs starting striking coins there. Since Amritsar was the religious centre of the Sikhs, it was made a mint town with a view to demonstrating the status of Sikh supremacy in the region. The total destruction and defiling of the Harmandir Saheb (Golden Temple), the religious centre of all the Sikhs, by Ahmed Shah Abdali, in his bid to subdue the Sikhs, probably made the Sikhs more resolute in their bid to accord such a status to Amritsar.

Around 1784 AD (VS 1841), the Sikhs must have decided to accord more Sikh identity to their supremacy in the region. For this purpose, they might have decided to bring about a change in the design of the coins. Since the Vikrami Samvat was identified with the Hindus, the Sikhs must have decided to put the Guru Nanak era on their coins from Amritsar. The reverse of the coins of Amritsar was changed and the year of issue in Vikrami Samvat was placed within the *Lām* of *Akāl*. To add a Sikh identity, the Sikhs put the number of years from the birth of the founder of the Sikh religion, Guru Nanak, on the obverse of the coins minted from Amritsar.

Guru Nanak was born in 1469 AD. In 1784 AD, exactly 315 years had passed since the birth of the Guru. As such, digits 3, 1 and 5 were spaced on the obverse of the coins of Amritsar in the year 1784 AD, corresponding to VS 1841, to signify the 315th birthday of Guru Nanak. Such coins continued to be minted till 1790 AD (VS 1847). These have been catalogued as 01.05.04 on page 51 of the new edition of Hans Herrli's Coins of the Sikhs. Such coins have been termed as Guru Nanak Era coins in the said book. In any case, these coins carried both the Vikrami Samvat year and the Guru Nanak Era. *No coins were known to have been minted with only the Guru Nanak era and which could truly be termed 'Nanakshahi Coins'*. Presently the terms Nanakshahi and Gobindshahi are being used to represent the two types of couplets found on the coins of the Sikhs to simplify the cataloguing of the coins into two distinct categories viz. *Nanakshahi Coins* and

Gobindshahi Coins. In its true sense, a Nanakshahi coin would be a coin only bearing the number of years from the birth of Guru Nanak.

About a couple of years ago, I was contacted by a small-time dealer of coins from Amritsar who knew about my keen interest in Sikh numismatics. He told me that he had come across a Sikh coin with the year 316 only. He assumed that the coin was of Anandgarh mint. In fact, part of the legend 'GOBIND' on the obverse appeared to read 'AND' of 'ANAND'. This is a common mistake which is sometimes committed by even expert numismatists. I rushed to Amritsar. Although the name of the mint was off the flan, it was a Sikh coin of unique type. It was the first coin to surface with only the Nanakshahi year (Guru Nanak Era) (316) on it.

Since the said dealer was asking an exorbitant price for the coin, I thought it fit to obtain a photocopy or a scan of the coin. It was with great deal of persuasion that I could convince him to provide me with such a photocopy. This is the copy which I then emailed to Hans Herrli for his expert opinion as well as for listing in the new edition of his book. This coin is now listed as Unidentified Sikh Mint F (31.01.04) on page 105 of Herrli's new edition. Now that I have a scan of the original coin with me, I must say that it is to the credit of Mr. Herrli that he was able to reproduce almost the exact drawing of the said coin from a rather bad copy transmitted to him.

The weight of the coin is 11 g and the diameter is 21.5 mm. The image of the coin together with the legible legends on it is given below.



UNIQUE SIKH SILVER RUPEE
THIS IS THE PROBABLY THE ONLY KNOWN COIN OF THIS TYPE.
(YEAR 316 REFERS TO GURU NANAK ERA)

Between the years VS1841 (1784AD) and VS1847 (1790AD) Sikh coins from Amritsar mint were issued with the VS year appearing within the *Laam* of *Akaal* and the Guru Nanak Era (i.e. the number of year from the birth of the first Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Nanak, appearing in small numerals on the obverse)
Herrli: Type 31 01 04
(Unidentified Sikh Mint F, Page 105 new edition)

Obverse: Part of the legend on the obverse that is legible is *Shah Nanak* in the middle line; *Sachcha of Sachcha Sahib* is legible on the lower part. In the uppermost line, part of the legend *Guru Gobind* is legible. This suggests that the coin carries the Nanakshahi couplet on the obverse.

Reverse: The Guru Nanak Era 316, corresponding to the year 1785 AD (Vikrami Samvat 1842) with a dagger next to it can be seen in the upper part. In the lower part, the legend that is clearly legible is '*Takht, Bakht, (Jul)us Akal*'.

Maratha Issues of Ahmedabad By Shailendra Bhandare

Introduction

The city of Ahmedabad was originally a town named 'Karnāvati', founded in 1074 AD by Karna Deo I, the Solanki Rajput king of East Gujarat to commemorate his victory over a local tribal chieftain. In 1299, Sultan 'Ala al-Din Khilji of Delhi occupied Gujarat and made it into a province of the Delhi Sultanate. As the Sultanate fragmented in the late 14th century, a local dynasty was established in Gujarat by Shams al-Din Muzaffar Shah. A ruler of this house, Ahmed Shah I, made Karnavati his capital in 1411 AD

and renamed it 'Ahmedabad' after himself. During the next two centuries, Ahmedabad grew and prospered into a wealthy city, embellished with several architectural edifices such as mosques, palaces, step-wells and lakes.

In 1572, the Mughal Emperor, Akbar, conquered Gujarat from Shams al-Din Muzaffar III, the last sultan. He rebelled in 1586, but was captured and killed in captivity by Akbar. Gujarat then became a province of the Mughal Empire and remained as such until the post-Aurangzeb years, when the empire started to crumble in the face of regional resurgences. The province was headed by a *šubāhdār*, appointed directly from Delhi and a total of 59 *šubāhdārs* were appointed from the reign of Akbar till the Marathas captured the city in 1753. Gujarat thrived under the Mughals with cities like Ahmedabad and Surat contributing significantly to the prosperity by playing the role of important mercantile and commercial centres.

Marathas in Gujarat – Gaikwads, Dābhādés and the Peshwas

The Marathas came into contact with Gujarat early in their resurgent phase. Shivaji, the premier Maratha king, realised the economic importance of the port city of Surat and staged two daring raids on it in 1664 and 1672. These raids signalled the onset of Maratha involvement in the province, which was to last for almost a century and contribute to the total elimination of Mughal authority from the province. In the years following Shivaji's death, the Marathas fought the Mughals on many fronts and plundered Gujarat several times to raise quick money. Meanwhile, declining imperial power meant the Mughal *šubāhdār* of Gujarat acted more and more independently. Certain families rose to prominence on both sides during this period of turmoil. Amongst the Marathas, the Dābhādés and the Gaikwads were two such and their careers largely centred on Gujarat. On the Mughal side, the Afghan house of Babis rose to considerable power and went on to establish the ruling house of Junagarh, an important princely state in peninsular Gujarat. The involvement of Dābhādés in Gujarat began in 1699 when the Maratha king, Rajaram, gave Khanderao Dābhādé, a leading baron the rights to collect the *Chauth* (25% share of the revenue) in Gujarat. In 1716-17, Shahu the successor of Rājārām, appointed him his commander-in-chief (*Senāpati*) with a special title *Senā Khās Khel*.

Damāji Gaikwad was a trusted lieutenant of Khanderao. Khanderao gave him the title of *Samsar Bahadur* in 1720. Damāji, along with his nephew Pilāji, was active in Gujarat against the Mughals during 1720-40, raiding as far as Kathiawar and Saurashtra from his den, the hill-fort of Songarh located in the extreme south of the province. Pilāji named his own son after the uncle and it was Damāji II who went on to found the lineage that ruled the princely state of Baroda.

Khanderao Dābhādé died in 1728 and his sons fought amongst themselves for the inheritance to his titles and rights. They were not worthy military leaders. Meanwhile, scuffles within the Dābhādé house gave an opportunity to Bajirao I, the Peshwa (Prime Minister and head of the Maratha Confederacy, the *de facto* ruler) to meddle in their affairs and have a say in matters over Gujarat and, most importantly, its revenue, at their expense. In 1731, the armies of the Peshwa and the Dābhādés clashed at Dabhoi with the Peshwa managing to keep Damāji Gaikwad neutral. Yeshwant Rao, the heir of Khanderao, was killed in the battle. This meant the Gaikwads remained the only force to reckon with in Gujarat affairs and the Peshwa colluded with them to apportion the province between the two with respect to revenue collection. Baburao, one of the dissolute sons of Khanderao, sold the title of *Senā Khās Khel* to Damāji II, along with the rights associated with it, in 1736.

After the downfall of the Dābhādés, the Gaikwads remained the only Maratha force to be reckoned with in Gujarat. Damāji, knowing his relatively weak position, sagaciously established a cordial relationship with the Peshwa. They agreed to apportion the constituent districts of the province of Gujarat with reference to the share in revenue collection. In 1731, Pilāji had established his own

seat at Baroda. He was murdered in 1732 at the behest of the Mughal *šubāhdār* and his son, Damāji II, succeeded to the Gaikwad titles after him. In 1738, the power struggles within the Mughal court offered him an opportunity to back the claim of an Afghan officer named Najm al-Daula Amin Khan for the *šubāhdār* office. Amin Khan was successful and returned the favours to Damāji II by giving him certain rights in revenue collection from the city of Ahmedabad. This brought the Marathas in direct contact with the riches of the city and once they found a taste for this, the inevitable was to follow.

Both the Gaikwad and the Peshwa remained content with occasional raids into interior Gujarat to collect tributes till 1752. In that year, with Maratha power fast approaching its zenith under the leadership of the Peshwa, Bālāji, the son of Bajirao I (r. 1740 – 1761), Damāji II concluded a treaty with the Peshwa that consolidated the earlier agreements on apportioning the revenue share of Gujarat. Both could not, however, agree on Ahmedabad, which, as the capital of the province, held a premier position both in terms of its political importance and wealth accumulated for the previous several centuries. The Mughal *šubāhdār* in office at this time was all but a weakling. Seeing this as an opportunity, Damāji and the Peshwa decided to launch a joint assault on the city. This was undertaken in April 1753 and the city was won over from the Mughals, the Peshwa's troops being led by Raghunath Rao, his younger brother. Damāji and Raghunath Rao then partitioned the city into 'Peshwa' and 'Gaikwad' parts, each being independent of the other's authority. This event marked the onset of Maratha rule in Gujarat. It came to an end in late 1817, when the British took over the administration of the city.

The Ahmedabad mint and its coinage

Trade and the resultant impetus for monetisation meant there had been a mint in Ahmedabad ever since the days of the sultans. Under the Mughals, it struck a profuse coinage in gold, silver and copper, much of which is discussed by the veteran numismatist G. P. Taylor (JBBRAS, no. 56, vol. XX). For the subsequent period, an article by Alfred Master ("The post-Mughal coins of Ahmedabad, or a Study in Mint Marks", JASB-NS, no. XXII, 1914, pp. 153 – 173) is a landmark contribution. Most of the coins discussed by Master have since been deposited into the collections of the Heberden Coin Room of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. 'Maratha Mints and Coinage' by Kenneth Wiggins and K. K. Maheshwari (Nasik 1989, pp. 38 – 41) lists the Maratha issues of Ahmedabad with a brief commentary. A couple of short articles have appeared in the IIRNS Newline in the past three years, publishing new varieties and offering attribution for some varieties. A Marathi book dealing with Maratha rule in Gujarat, namely *Gujarātētīl Marāthī Rājawat* by V. G. Khobrekar (Pune, 1962) also briefly describes the coinage of Ahmedabad.

Each of these contributions has its drawbacks. A salient drawback in most notices of Ahmedabad coins that this paper attempts to rectify is that they restrict their scope only to 'Peshwa' issues of Ahmedabad. The Gaikwad issues, although struck in close contemporaneity with the Peshwa coins, are never dealt with – presumably because they are classified alongside the issues of Baroda State - and as such a good part of the monetary picture for Ahmedabad is unnecessarily obliterated. The article by Master is by far the most exhaustive and remedies this flaw to a good extent but it has its own problems – the most conspicuous is his treatment of issues of 'Ahmedabad' in the name of Bidar Bakht as Maratha, stemming from confusing two homonymous towns, one in Gujarat and the other located to the north of Delhi. The issues from the latter are thus clearly Rohilla in nature and not Maratha. The treatment of Wiggins and Maheshwari is typically numismatic and, although they discuss the history of Ahmedabad, it is not well reflected in their discussion of the coinage, which is largely limited to presenting a catalogue. Khobrekar's Marathi account remains focussed on the Gaikwad issues in general. Moreover, much of what he says is jumbled information, ostensibly because he was not at all familiar with coins. This paper will address all such

issues and also devote a section to the Gaikwad coinage, with its own set of problems and perspectives, so that the subject is treated more as a monetary history than simply numismatics.

Maratha coinage of Ahmedabad – political reflections in miniature

The most striking feature that Maratha issues of Ahmedabad bear is incorporation of a distinct symbol to indicate the Maratha authority. This is the 'Ankus' or the elephant goad, one of the attributes of the god Ganesha, placed within the letter 'sin' of *Julūs* on the reverse. Once introduced, it became a constant feature of all Maratha issues of Ahmedabad. Although the Peshwa initiated its use (and justifiably so, because the Peshwas were Ganesha-worshipping *Chitpāvan* Brahmins by caste), it also appeared on the Gaikwad's coins once his mint became operational. As a numismatic phenomenon, this is the earliest dateable instance where a symbol of ostensible Maratha affinity was employed on coins to indicate a change in the political authority. Although most authorities contend that the placement of the 'Ankus' on Ahmedabad coins was made immediately after the Marathas wrested the city from the Mughals (April 1753), the earliest issues hitherto published had been struck in the name of Alamgir II, whose reign began in June 1754. Here a rupee in the name of Ahmed Shah Bahadur, the predecessor of Alamgir II, struck in his 7th regnal year is published (fig.1) and, as such, it may be considered the earliest instance of the incorporation of the 'Ankus' mark. The 7th regnal year of Ahmed Shah Bahadur had begun in mid-1753, which is soon after the sack of Ahmedabad by the Marathas.



fig. 1

The association of the 'Ankus' symbol with Maratha authority is reflected from an instance during the reign of Alamgir II, which involved its selective replacement. This shows the importance of the symbol and of the practice in which minute symbols added into the coin design made political statements in their own right. It happened when the Marathas temporarily lost control of the city to Momin Khan, a Mughal protégé, due largely to the machinations by Shambhu Lal, a local Brahmin politician disaffected by Maratha treatment. Thus, the 'Ankus' mintmark is seen on coins struck in the name of Alamgir II till his RY3, but in RY 4 it is replaced by a flower, which had been used while the mint was under Mughal control before the Maratha takeover of the city. The Mughal re-occupation did not last long and within a year the Marathas succeeded in driving out Momin Khan along with his sympathiser, the Brahmin Shambhu Lal. The city reverted back to Maratha rule, and, with it, the mark of the 'Ankus' was reinstated on the coins from RY 5 onwards (figs. 2-4). Barring this interlude, coins struck in the name of Alamgir II at Ahmedabad continued to bear the 'Ankus' mintmark. Half rupees struck as such are also known. (fig. 5)



fig.2



fig. 3



fig. 4



fig. 5

Coins were struck in Ahmedabad in the name of Shah Jahan III, who was briefly installed on the Mughal throne. His reign began on 29 November 1759, when the imperial vizier murdered his predecessor Alamgir II, and came to an end on 10 October 1760, when the Marathas under Sadashiv Rao deposed him to make way for Shah Alam II to be crowned emperor. The coins struck in Shah Jahan III's name continue to bear the 'Ankus' and rupees and half rupees are known (figs. 6-7). H. Nelson Wright erroneously lists a rupee in his name as a gold mohur in the plates of the Indian Museum Catalogue of Mughal coins (IMC no. 2262, pl. XXII); the error, however, is rectified in the descriptive pages.



fig. 6



fig. 7

The Peshwa's mint in Ahmedabad functioned steadily after the initial tumult involving Momin Khan. Rupees and halves struck



fig. 9

in the name of Shah Alam II are known in large numbers (figs. 8-9).



fig. 8

The coins were referred to as the 'Ahmedabad Halli Sikka', the latter part of this nomenclature denoting they were acceptable for revenue payments to the government treasury. Conceivably, this nomenclature later distinguished them from rupees named 'Ankusi' struck at Pune and various other mints in the Deccan, which also had the 'Ankus' as mintmark, albeit executed differently. Alfred Master confused these 'Ankusi' rupees with the Ahmedabad issues, confessing "I do not know any but the Ahmedabad rupees bearing the Ankush" and devoted a good number of words to explain how certain chiefs like the Rastes, running mints in faraway Deccan, might have been connected with the issue of coins in Ahmedabad. Obviously, all his comments need to be ignored in the wake of his confusion. The account of Maratha issues of Ahmedabad following the issues struck in the name of Shah Alam II is inextricably linked with historical developments at Ahmedabad. One would assume a civil servant like Master, serving in Gujarat, would have had access to sources that describe these. But he does not seem to be aware of this fact and, therefore, his discussion has ended being inadequate at most counts and his analysis often confused with unnecessary details.

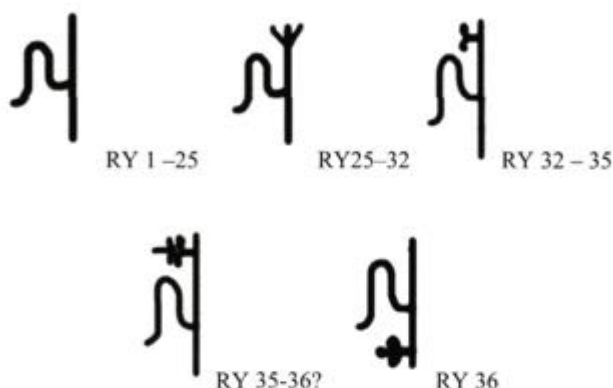
The Maratha officials in Ahmedabad and variations in mintmarks

Soon after the city was taken over, the Peshwa appointed his own official in charge of it. Given the Mughal precedent, he was also called the *šubāhdār*. Later, the practice of farming the rights of this office became the norm and the title of the office-holder suitably changed to *kamāvisdār* (the word *kamavis* denotes a farmed tenure in Marathi). Shripat Rao Bāpuji was appointed the first Maratha *šubāhdār* of Ahmedabad in 1753 and he held office till 1756. Sadāshiv Rāmachandra succeeded him in 1756 and held the office until 1761. The January of that year saw the fateful defeat of the Marathas at the third battle of Panipat and the confederacy largely survived it, only to be plagued by the strife between the Peshwa, Madhav Rao, and his uncle, Raghunath Rao. The Gaikwads allied themselves with Raghunath Rao and thereby incurred the Peshwa's wrath. In one of the fights between the Peshwa and Raghunath Rao, the former managed to capture Govind Rao, the eldest son of Damaji II Gaikwad, and hold him captive in Pune.

Mainly as a measure to increase revenue collection, the Peshwa farmed out some offices at this juncture and that of the *šubāhdār* of Ahmedabad was one such. It was farmed out initially for a period of three years, Appaji Ganesh successfully bid for the rights and took charge in late 1761. At the end of his tenure, Gopal Rao Barve was appointed the *kamāvisdār* and he continued till 1771. The Peshwa, Madhav Rao, succumbed to tuberculosis in 1772 and was succeeded by his young brother, Narayan Rao. Raghunath Rao, the old aspirant, saw this as his last chance to get to the premiership and conspired to imprison Narayan Rao. But things went horribly wrong as a skirmish between the Peshwa, Narayan Rao, and his captors ended in the Peshwa's murder in his mansion in broad daylight. Raghunath Rao's henchmen then paved the way for him to succeed to the office but the enormity of the situation made even some of his own supporters amongst the courtiers change their minds. A group of ministers and courtiers, led by Nana Phadnavees, then grouped themselves against Raghunath Rao and declared him a usurper. Fortunately for them, the pregnant wife of the late Peshwa gave birth to a posthumous son. The

ministers declared the baby to the office and ousted Raghunath Rao in a coup. He fled to the British and this marked the onset of the first Anglo-Maratha war with its theatres spreading in Gujarat, the Deccan and Central India. It was brought to an end in 1782 by the treaty of Salbai.

It is against this larger backdrop that we need to follow developments in Gujarat and Ahmedabad to understand certain key features of the coinage of the Ahmedabad mint. Towards the last two decades of the 18th century, the coins of the Ahmedabad mint demonstrate certain peculiarities – the form of the 'Ankus' mintmark shows variations, which include small ornamentations on the shaft, above and below the blade. Half rupee coins bearing all these variations are also known. The variations encountered *vis-à-vis* the chronological details seen on the coins are as follows (RY details refer to the reign of Shah Alam II):



The first diagram illustrates the 'Ankus' without variation. As seen from the RY details, this seems to have continued till 25, i.e. 1784-85. From that year onwards, the variations seem to have become the norm on Ahmedabad coins. They are seen on rupees as well as half rupees (figs. 10, 10a, 11, 11a, 12, 12a, 13, 13a). Alfred Master's paper lists all varieties, though not for both the denominations. But he does not offer any explanations for their occurrence. The question why there would be such tiny variations in the symbol is worth investigating and political events in Gujarat and Ahmedabad in particular may provide us with an answer.



fig. 10



fig. 10a



fig. 11



fig. 11a



fig. 12



fig. 12a



fig. 13



fig. 13a

In 1772 Appaji Ganesh was awarded the *kamāvis* of the Peshwa's part of Ahmedabad once again. The Gaikwad's part was held by Khanderao Gaikwad, an illegitimate son of Damaji Gaikwad, at this juncture. In the meantime, 1768 saw the death of the Damaji II and a dispute for succession amongst his sons. Govind Rao was the eldest but his mother was the second wife of Damaji. In contrast, Sayaji Rao was younger than Govind Rao, but his mother was the first wife. Sayaji Rao was mentally unstable and virtually in the custody of the sons of the third wife, Manaji, and Fateh Singh. The succession had to be ratified by the Peshwa. Being at Pune in captivity, Govind Rao managed to stake his claim quicker than any of his brothers, who were thus disaffected owing to the fact that Govind Rao's right to succeed was not free from doubt. The Peshwa, Madhav Rao, intervened, and decided to split the claim between Govind Rao and Sayaji Rao with Fateh Singh and Manaji appointed in charge of the latter. All concerned accepted this, but certain unhappiness prevailed amongst the Gaikwad brothers. It caused them to drift apart from the cordial bonds that their father had forged with the Peshwa. When the late Peshwa's uncle, Raghunath Rao, usurped the office, the Gaikwads backed him. Later as he defected to the British, this allegiance brought Gaikwads in close touch with the latter against the ministerial combine at Pune. The Gaikwads then embarked on raids alongside British troops against the ministerial armies in several parts of Gujarat. No details of how long the second tenure

of Appaji Ganesh as the Peshwa's *kamāvisdār* of Gujarat lasted are available, but it is conceivable that it must have ended sometime between 1775 and 1780. The decade also saw the Gaikwad titles change hands between Govind Rao and Sayaji Rao a couple of times, with Manaji and Fateh Singh acting as the latter's regents. Govind Rao lost them in 1778 to Sayaji Rao for a longer period, regaining them only in 1793, by which time both Manaji and Fateh Singh had died. The British under General Goddard captured the city of Ahmedabad in February 1780, and transferred it to Fateh Singh Gaikwad. He held it for four years and, after the treaty of Salbai, reluctantly surrendered the Peshwa's part back to the ministerial combine in 1784.

It is about this time (RY 25) that the first variation on the 'Ankus' appears on the Ahmedabad rupees and it is conceivable that it was introduced to mark the beginning of the tenure of the new *kamāvisdār*, namely Bhawani Shivaram. The possibility that variations were introduced to mark change of administrative heads is further strengthened by the observation that the inception of the second variation (in RY 32) also coincides with the tenure of a new *kamāvisdār*. The *kamāvisdār* to follow Bhawani Shivaram was Krishna Rao, alias Abaji Shelukar, a close confidant of Nana Phadnavees, the virtual regent at Pune. Shelukar was an avaricious man – he engaged in several underhand deals and left financial administration of the wealthy *subah* of Ahmedabad in a state of mismanagement. Abaji Shelukar's fortunes prevailed while Nana Phadnavees remained virtually in charge of Maratha affairs. In 1796, that situation changed dramatically when the man Nana had declared the Peshwa as a baby almost 25 years ago, died tragically from a bout of distemper in Pune. The next in line to succession was Baji Rao II, the son of Raghunath Rao, Nana's *bête noire*. Baji Rao II clipped Nana's wings and sent him into political exile. Four years later, the crestfallen Nana died a natural death, leaving the Maratha confederacy to its doom. All of Nana's cronies met with the same political fate as Nana and Abaji Shelukar was no exception. Baji Rao II encouraged Govind Rao Gaikwad who shared his enmity with Nana to occupy Ahmedabad and oust Abaji. In 1800, Govind Rao dispatched his illegitimate son Bhagwant Rao against Abaji and took over the Peshwa's part of Ahmedabad. Baji Rao II then officially transferred his share of the *kamāvis* of Ahmedabad to the Gaikwads, initially for four years and then renewed it in 1804 for a further ten years. Thus for a period of almost fifteen years, the city of Ahmedabad remained under a single administration, that of the Gaikwads.

These years no doubt witnessed the mismanagement of affairs at Ahmedabad, initially at the hands of Abaji Shelukar and then as a result of the political turmoil involving the tussle between Baji Rao II and Nana. This is reflected in the coinage – within a short period of five or six years, at least three variations are encountered on Ahmedabad coins. The variation introduced at the beginning of Abaji's tenure remained in situ till RY 35. In that year, a third variation was introduced and in RY 36, a fourth one. This last one has a modification to the stem of the 'Ankus' at its lower end. Two rupees in the Ashmolean collection bear RYs 37 and 39 but have a normal form of Ankus on them. Thus it is evident that towards the end of the 18th century, the mint at Ahmedabad was producing rupees in several varieties. The reasons for this are far from clear.

Another variation which has left numismatists in a quandary over its attribution is seen on rupees and half rupees minted in RY 39. these are found with the Nagari legend 'Ram' added below the word 'Julūs' (figs. 14, 14a).



fig. 14



fig. 14a

The form of 'Ankus' here is normal, i.e. without any variation. Danish Moin and Dilip Balsekar (IIRNS Newslines, issue 10, April 1996, pp. 6-7) sought to attribute these coins to Ramchandra, alias Babu Mairal, a powerful courtier in the service of the early Gaikwads and a deputy at Pune to settle various disputes between them and the Peshwa. They suggest two possibilities – the first is 'Ram' being short for 'Ramchandra' and the second is " 'Ra' stands for 'Ramchandra' and 'Ma' for 'Marial (sic)' ". Although the attribution comes only as a suggestion, the authors have not given consideration to the fact that the 'Ram' coins are all struck in the name of Shah Alam II and bear his RY 39 while the career of Ramchandra Mairal dates much later, during 1808 – 1812. Moreover, there is no indication that Ramchandra Mairal had anything to do with the city of Ahmedabad in his capacity as a Gaikwad courtier. Secondly, the first possibility of 'Ram' standing for 'Ramchandra' is plausible but the second is not simply because the authors have got the surname of this gentleman wrong - they constantly refer to him as 'Marial' while his surname was 'Mairal'. Written in Nagari, each would have a distinct letterform and thus 'Ma' could not have stood for the initial of Ramchandra's surname. As such the 'Ram' of the coins cannot be equated with Ramchandra Mairal. The attribution of the 'Ram' rupees is therefore open for investigation. An etching of a coin of this type in the unpublished folios of James Prinsep, now in the archives of the Heberden Coin Room of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, may provide further clues. This has a remark inscribed in cursive handwriting, probably Prinsep's, that reads 'Drutpal' (fig. 15). The reading of the remark is however, not free from doubt, but it seems to be the name of an individual – maybe a person responsible for the issue of the 'Ram' coins.



fig. 15

A word about a coin listed by Maheshwari & Wiggins would be appropriate to end this description. They list a rupee dated RY 43 bearing a normal 'Ankus' mark. This cannot be verified, as the coin is not illustrated. But if true, it would amount to a further complication in matters regarding the functioning of the Peshwa's mint at Ahmedabad as it would indicate that after all those years of having varied 'Ankus' marks, the mint once again reverted to the original form. Reasons for this would remain obscure.

Gaikwad Coinage at Ahmedabad

There are indications that a mint became operational in the Gaikwad's part of Ahmedabad in the turbulent last decade of 18th century. The earliest year noted on its coins is RY 39 of Shah Alam II. The coins had a Nagari initial 'Gā' below the 'Julūs', ostensibly for 'Gaikwad', and they have the normal 'Ankus' as the principle mintmark (fig. 16).



fig. 16

The Gaikwads continued to run the mint after the entire city of Ahmedabad came under their control in 1800. Most of the coins produced in the period 1800-1814 do not show clear chronological details and thus the numismatic picture they help to reconstitute is not a cohesive one. Apart from the coins with 'Gā' below 'Julūs' and a normal 'Ankus' mark, there exist rupees and halves bearing the 'Gā' with an 'Ankus' with additional protrusions towards the lower end of its stem, very similar to that seen on the last variety known from the Peshwa's mint (figs 17, 17a).



figs. 17, 17a

One would assume that these must have been struck in succession to these Peshwa issues, soon after all of Ahmedabad was transferred to Gaikwad rule. But the chronological details seen on them do not indicate such a succession. Coins with normal 'Ankus' and 'Gā' show details of RY 40+x, but those with the variant 'Ankus' have RYs extending to 50 and perhaps beyond. These are evidently posthumous RYs of Shah Alam II as the Emperor had died in his 47th RY in 1806. The RYs seen on the Peshwa's issues, which have a comparable form of variant 'Ankus' on the other hand, do not exceed 40. Thus it is clear that the Gaikwad issues with variant 'Ankus' were not struck in succession to comparable Peshwa coins, but introduced almost a decade later.

The next variety struck at the Ahmedabad mint under Gaikwad control was in the name of Muhammad Akbar II. These coins have a normal 'Ankus' but the initial 'Gā' has an additional vertical stroke added to it (fig. 18). Such a stroke indicated that the letter preceding it stood for a shortened version of a longer word – thus the differentiating mark was not merely the initial of the issuing authority's name, it officially stood as a shortened form of 'Gaikwad'.



fig. 18

Minting of these coins began in close succession to the last variety struck in the name of Shah Alam II, the first coins with confirmed chronological details being dated 1226 AH /RY 6. It is clear from this that the RY details were taken from the real RY of Muhammad

Akbar, notwithstanding the fact that for first three-four years of his reign, the coins continued to bear the name and RY of his predecessor, Shah Alam II. Soon after the introduction of these coins, a change in differentiating marks occurred – some specimens bearing RY 6-7 show a letter 'Rā' with a stroke added to it below the 'Sīn' of 'Julūs', in addition to the 'Gā' with a stroke and the 'Ankus' (fig. 19).



fig. 19

It is not certain who was responsible for this change, although judging by the fact that a vertical stroke following would mean 'Ra' was a shortened version of a word that began as such, a few calculated guesses may be made. Anand Rao Gaikwad succeeded Govind Rao to the Gaikwad titles in 1800, but as he suffered from epilepsy, his cousin Fateh Singh II acted as regent. The administration rested in the hands of two brothers, namely Raoji Appaji and Babaji Appaji Phanse. The latter ran the army while the former looked after civil affairs. Raoji Appaji died in 1803 and his two sons, Sitaram Raoji and Sakharam Raoji, succeeded him as *diwans* or executors of Gaikwad affairs. It is quite likely that one of these was responsible for the incorporation of the additional character onto the coins of Ahmedabad.

The brief Peshwa interlude 1814-15

The lease of Ahmedabad granted to Gaikwads came to an end in 1814. In the meantime, a lot of politicking had taken place between the British, the Gaikwads and the Peshwa. Soon after the sack and transfer of Ahmedabad in 1800, the Peshwa Baji Rao II concluded a subsidiary alliance treaty with the British in 1802. This effectively segregated him from other members of the Maratha confederacy such as the Gaikwads, the Sindhias and the Holkars, as the British reserved the right to communicate on his behalf in matters involving these others. A similar treaty was concluded in 1805 with the Gaikwads. As a result of these treaties, the British also got a good chunk of Peshwa and Gaikwad lands. Meanwhile Govind Rao Gaikwad died and was succeeded by Anand Rao in 1800. The succession had to be ratified by the Peshwa, who asked for a sizeable sum of 'gift money' to get his act together. This led to a dispute involving many other claims and counterclaims. The British got involved in these disputes after they signed the aforementioned treaties with the Peshwa and the Gaikwad. Relations between the Peshwa and Gaikwads reached a low point and he refused to renew the lease of Ahmedabad to them, instead appointing Trimbakji Dengley, one of his stooges, as the new *kamāvisdār* in December 1814. Trimbakji earlier farmed the mint at Pune, where he was responsible for striking the 'Poona Hali Sikka', or coins with the 'spectacle' mark on them. When he took over Ahmedabad, the mint there also came under his control and he chose to indicate this transfer of power by incorporating the 'spectacle' mark on coins struck there. It replaced the 'Ga', and all other vestiges of Gaikwad authority were also suitably removed. The 'Ankus' was retained without any variations in its form. Rupees and half rupees struck under the tenure of Trimbakji Dengley are known and they all bear the name of Muhammad Akbar and his RYs 8 and 9 (figs. 20, 20a).



figs. 20, 20a

The tenure of Trimbakji Dengley as the *kamāvisdār* of Ahmedabad was but brief – it was brought to an end in late 1815 as a result of another intrigue involving the Gaikwads, the Peshwa and the British. Early in 1814, Fateh Singh II, the regent for Anand Rao Gaikwad appointed Gangadhar Shastri Patwardhan as a deputy to plead on the Gaikwads' behalf to the Peshwa in the ongoing dispute over monetary claims. Gangadhar Shastri was a staunch partisan of the British, a fact that the Peshwa resented. Trimbakji Dengley was involved in this dispute on the Peshwa's side, as he wanted to protect his own interests in Ahmedabad against the Gaikwads. The British had pledged protection to the Shastri, but in late 1815, while on a pilgrimage to the holy city of Pandharpur in Maharashtra, the Shastri was murdered one night while returning to his lodgings from the temple. Trimbakji was accused of being the perpetrator of this conspiracy and the British demanded he be handed over to them for eventual prosecution. The Peshwa vacillated for some time but in the end yielded to the British demand. Trimbakji was removed from his office as the *kamāvisdār* of Ahmedabad and handed over to the British. He was imprisoned in the fort of Bassein. The lease of Ahmedabad was transferred to the Gaikwads in June 1817 but, only a few months later, the British concluded a wider treaty with the latter, which allowed them to take Ahmedabad over.

The years between Trimbakji's ousting and the ultimate transfer of Ahmedabad to the British via the Gaikwads saw yet another variety of rupees and halves struck at the Ahmedabad mint. The mark they employed was the 'Ankus' modified with a banner at the top end of its shaft and they are known to bear RY 9 and 10 of Muhammad Akbar (figs. 21, 21a).



fig. 21



fig. 21a

Although Wiggins and Maheshwari included the coins under the broad 'Maratha' label, political conditions at the city indicate that the attribution of these coins is problematic. After Trimbakji's departure from Ahmedabad in late 1815, the Gaikwads under the regency of Fateh Singh II took charge of the city. Who was appointed as *kamavisdar* in this period is not known, but even though it took more than a year for the Gaikwads to politically consolidate their hold on Ahmedabad (only to be given up in a short while to the British), it is quite clear that no one on the Peshwa's behalf was in charge at Ahmedabad during 1816-17. These are the very years in which coins with the 'Ankus with banner' mark were struck and all indications are that they were struck under the Gaikwad's command. The fact that the design was changed and any connection with marks associated with Trimbakji was dropped proves beyond doubt that the coins reflect a change in the political authority that governed their issue. Why the Gaikwads did not include any obvious marks to denote their authority, like the initial 'Ga' seen on earlier Gaikwad issues, is not known but it is conceivable that such a measure was taken because the Gaikwad claims on the city had not been ratified or agreed upon by the British.

The British continued to operate the Ahmedabad mint till uniform coinage of the East India Company was launched in 1835. Paul Stevens in his excellent study on the British issues of Ahmedabad (ONS 182) has indicated, chiefly from archival sources, that the mint at Ahmedabad had been closed when the British took over and that the supply of coins had been so low as to impede trade. Mr. Dunlop, the British Commissioner of Ahmedabad, therefore resorted to 're-starting' the mint in December 1817. However, the fact that the 'Ankus with banner' coins, which are the immediate predecessors of the British coinage, are rather commonplace may indicate that the mint was not as deficient in producing coins as indicated by Dunlop.

The discussion presented so far has centred on silver coins. Before coinage in other metals is considered it may be worthwhile to add that in terms of denominations, the Ahmedabad silver coinage is largely restricted to rupees and halves, any other fractions being exceedingly rare. Only a couple of quarter rupee pieces are known (fig. 22) and a unique eighth rupee (fig. 23) exists in the Raghuvveer Pai collection, Mumbai. As the main indicators of attribution are missing in both cases, it is difficult to attribute them either to the Peshwa or to Gaikwads. Gold coinage must no doubt have been struck at Ahmedabad, although no specimens have survived.



fig. 22

fig. 23

Copper coinage at Ahmedabad

Copper coins of Ahmedabad, in marked contrast to the silver, are rare for most of the latter half of 18th century. Paisa and half paisa denomination were struck in the name of Alamgir II and may constitute the earliest Maratha copper coinage at Ahmedabad (figs. 24, 24a). They do not bear any particular distinguishing mark. Both Alfred Master and Wiggins-Maheshwari have listed the paisa, but a half is being published here for the first time. In comparison, copper coins struck in the name of Shah Alam II seem exceedingly rare. From a few known specimens, it is evident that they retain the design for silver coins including the 'Ankus' mark (fig. 25) and in this respect differ markedly from those Paisas struck in the name of Alamgir II.



fig. 24, 24a, 25

Ganesh Nene has published an interesting variety (IIRNS Newslines, no. 38, April 2003, p.6) where a short sword or scabbard appears placed below the 'Julūs'. This coin is important also for its chronological detail – it has RY 21 on the reverse (fig. 26).



fig. 26

Another curious coin is one where a variant 'Ankus' has been countermarked on an earlier coin (fig. 27).



fig. 27

While the 'Ankus' of the undertype resembles a form seen on the silver coins, the one countermarked is very different in execution than any variant seen on silver issues. The purpose of this countermarking is not clear – it is evidently not to reintroduce a worn coin into circulation, as the host specimen seems in pretty good condition. It may have been done to indicate a change of *kamāvisdār* in office but, in the absence of any chronological detail, it is impossible to verify such a suggestion.

Paisas struck in the name of Muhammad Akbar are scarce but not as rare as those struck in the name of Shah Alam II. Unlike the latter, they have a design that is different from the silver rupees and also carry a different mintmark. The obverse legend in the case of these coins reads 'Fulūs Bādshāh Akbar Shāh' and the reverse bears the legend *Julūs sanah Mubārak Zarb Ahmedābād*. The RY rests above the word *sanah* and the differentiating mark of a trident or 'Trisul' is seen placed within the 'sīn' of 'Julūs' on the reverse as illustrated in Wiggins-Maheshwari (fig. 28). A few coins wherein the 'Trisul' has a three-pronged central shaft are also known (fig. 29). In most cases, the RY details are truncated but as the mint was under the control of the Gaikwads for the initial years of Muhammad Akbar II's reign, it is plausible to attribute these copper coins to them. The paisa listed in Wiggins-Maheshwari is dated RY 9 and therefore they attributed it to the 'Marathas' i.e.

Peshwas, but as we have seen in case of rupees bearing similar RY, this attribution is by no means certain.



figs. 28, 29

Post-script - A rupee with an interesting variation

The classification of Ahmedabad rupees is facilitated on the tacit basis of variations seen in the 'Ankus' mark on the reverse. The obverse bears no such adjuncts, except for a rupee struck in the name of Shah Alam II in his 8th RY. Here a small 'Trisul' mark is seen placed above the 'H' of 'Bādshāh' in the second line of the obverse legend (fig. 30).



The purpose of introducing this variation is uncertain – RY 8 corresponds to 1767-68 and nothing particularly significant is known to have happened in Ahmedabad in that year to cause such a change. It is plausible that it marks a minor administrative change such as the *kamavisdar* delegating his authority to a deputy for a short while.

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A New Assamese Coin with Nagari Script

By Nicholas Rhodes



It is normal that as soon as a book is written, new discoveries are made. Since we published our book on Ahom coins in 2004⁵, only one completely new type has appeared, and the purpose of this article is to record this new discovery. Two examples of this new type turned up from different sources within a few months of each other. The first piece, in excellent condition, is now in the

⁵ *The Coinage of Assam, Vol.II, Ahom Period*, by N.G.Rhodes & S.K.Bose, Kolkata & Guwahati, 2004.

collection of Mr J.P.Goenka, and the second specimen, slightly damaged by having been mounted, is in my own collection. The coin is a silver eighth rupee of Rajesvara Simha (1751-69 AD), and is remarkable as it has the legend in Nagari script, rather than the normal Assamese script.

Obv: *Śrī Śrī Rājēśvara*
 Rev: *Simha/ Nrpasya*
 Wt. 1.4g

The illustration is shown twice natural size, so that it can be more easily seen. Rupees in Nagari script are easily available, all dated 1675 Śāke (=1757 AD)⁶, but the half and quarter rupees in Nagari script are extremely rare⁷. The quarter rupees in Nagari script are dated 1681 Śāke (=1763 AD), so the Nagari coins were not all struck as a set on one occasion, and no explanation is yet forthcoming as to why they might have been struck. It should just be pointed out that the precise letter forms are not uniform on all these coins. On this eighth rupee, in particular, the open form of the letter Va in Rājēśvara is only otherwise found in the word Śiva on the half rupee. There is, therefore, no way of telling exactly when the undated half rupee and the new eighth rupee might have been struck, which could have been at any time during the reign. I have given this new type the reference O.84A.1.

A Safavid Coin of Rayy

Rayy (ancient Rhaga, Rhagae) was a very important city in early Islamic times. Situated a short distance to the south-east of modern Tehran, it was a mintplace during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, and coins were struck by various subsequent authorities including the Buyids and the Seljuqs, either with the mintname al-Rayy or al-Muhammadiya. For a detailed discussion of the numismatic history of the place please refer to GC Miles's *Numismatic History of Rayy* (ANS Numismatic Studies 2, New York, 1938). The city was severely damaged during the Mongol invasions in the 1220s and its population massacred. There must have been some recovery after that as the mint was reactivated under the Ilkhanids, and under the Sarbadarids and Amir Wali during the period 769-781 AH. Any recovery was again brought to a stop by Timur's invasion so that when the European historian and traveller, Clavijo, passed through the country in 1404 he confirmed that Rayy was no longer inhabited.

A few late Muzaffarid and early Timurid coins of Rayy are in fact known and one then has to wait until the later Aq Quyunlu reigns of Ya'qub (883-896 AH) and Baysunghur (896-897 AH) when some undated tankas were struck.

A coin of the Safavid ruler, Isma'il I (AH 907-930) is now known and is described below.



Shahi, 9.4 g, 21 mm, undated.

Obv: *Isma'il shah zarb rayy* within central cartouche, ruler's titles around.

Rev: Shia' Kalima in margins with the names of the 12 *Rashidun* arranged in a type of millsale formation in the centre.

SLG

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⁶ *Op.cit.* O82.1.

⁷ *Op.cit.* O83.1 & O84.1.