

ONS



Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society

No.209

Autumn 2011

ISSN 1818-1252

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ONS News

Obituaries

Mark Blackburn (1953 – 2011)



The Keeper of the Coins and Medals department at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Dr Mark Blackburn, died of cancer on 1 September.

Mark was born on 5 January 1953, in Camberley, Surrey, and attended the Skinners' School in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. He graduated in jurisprudence from the University of Oxford (St Edmunds Hall, 1975) and then trained and worked as a barrister at the Middle Temple. His interest in numismatics was already blossoming while at Oxford, where he was a founder member of the University's Numismatic Society. Mark's primary numismatic interests were devoted to Anglo-Saxon coins and, from there, branched, to medieval European coinages in general. He benefitted from association with great scholars in the field such as Christopher Blunt and Michael Metcalf.

Mark's 'moment of reckoning' came in 1982 when Philip Grierson, the eminent numismatist at Cambridge was looking for a Research Assistant to publish his exhaustive collection of medieval European coins as well as that of the Fitzwilliam Museum. Although the post did not offer any permanent prospect and while Mark worked with the merchant bankers Kleinwort Benson, he took the decision to take up the post. This was a momentous decision not only of Mark's life or for the subject of medieval European numismatics, but also for the subject of numismatics in the UK in general. In nine years, Mark became the Keeper of the department in the Fitzwilliam – a post that he held for twenty years, in which he made several pioneering contributions to the subject from several angles.

Mark's interest in coins started as a collector and he remained an avid collector at heart. Coins of many series appealed to him and he had a unique sense of 'ownership' towards the collection of his museum. No series of coins was exempt from his enthusiasm and, in this way, he endeavoured to make the Cambridge collection the perfect 'teaching' collection, constantly seeking to fill gaps, increasing scope and acquiring lesser-known rarities. Oriental coins was not his own forte – however, as a numismatist with unique

qualities (in the words of his obituarist in the 'Guardian' – "respect for attention to detail, a strong sense of purpose and efficiency, and a knack for perceiving the broader implications") he appreciated their importance very much. As the Keeper of the department, oriental coins were very much on his mind.

I first met Mark during the International Numismatic Congress at Berlin in 1997, when he approached me with a proposal to be a 'visiting curator', under a scheme for rearranging and publishing the coins from the Indian subcontinent that he had set up with funding from the Charles Wallace India Trust. The project had room for inviting three such visiting scholars and, accordingly, the three following years saw Sanjay Garg, me and S. Ejaz Hussain working in Cambridge in succession. I spent the spring and summer of 1999 in Cambridge working on the coins of the Indian princely states and the colonial series. The first of the project's results – Sanjay and Nurussabah Garg's catalogue of the Mughal and contemporary coinages in the Fitzwilliam is now in its 'manuscript' stage. Mark followed the project diligently and only days before his death, had secured a publications grant to see it through its final publication.

While in Cambridge and in successive years of my career at the British Museum and Ashmolean Museum, I came to know Mark better, both as a numismatic scholar and a person. He paid meticulous attention to detail and was a very efficient, even strict, manager. At the same time, he was congenial and warm, full of knowledge and had taste for an 'adventure' – like eating chillies from Indian snacks! The department became a hub of activities during his tenure as the Keeper – he helped set up a superb web-based interface for the collection, encouraged the building of a massive library of auction catalogues, and increased the outreach of the department within collector communities like the metal detectorists.

The way he appreciated the importance of other coin series, apart from having a keen research interest in his own areas of interest, was indeed praiseworthy. Alongside the project to publish the Indian coins, Mark also drew on the expertise of Vlastimil Novák to catalogue the Islamic collections and actively increased the department's holdings of Chinese and other far-eastern coins. His enthusiasm for acquisitions as purchases, benefaction or bequests was admirable – he very much relished it as if he were collecting the coins for himself! It was the same enthusiasm that directed him to acquire the collection of Michael Broome, the founder of the ONS.

Mark held several honours both in the University as well as in numismatic circles. He was a Reader in numismatics and monetary history and taught in the university's department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic studies. He was made a fellow of Gonville and Caius College in 2005. He served as president of the British Numismatic Society (2004-08) and was awarded the prestigious Medal of the Royal Numismatic Society in 2008.

Mark is survived by his wife, Fiona and children Molly, Hal and Will.
Shailendra Bhandare

Shams Eshraq

It is with great sadness that I report the demise of my dear friend Abdolrazagh Shams Eshraq (27.6.1937 - 3.10.2011), whom most of us, simply and fondly, called "Shams". Shams was born and lived in Isfahan where he started his coin collecting hobby more than fifty years ago and became, deservedly, one of the well-known numismatists worldwide. In Iran, Shams was a very well-known figure, not only in Isfahan, but also in the markets of Tehran where, whenever he visited, many would welcome him, flock around him and shower him with coin questions that he generously answered. His two well-remembered publications, "A Study Of The Earliest Coinage Of The Islam Empire", published in 1990, and the more recent "Silver Coinage Of The Caliphs", published 2010, and for which he was awarded a prize (see JONS 204) are very important contributions to Islamic numismatics. Apart from his coin collecting hobbies, Shams was a respected journalist who enjoyed reading gardening and travelling, always lending a helping hand to anyone in need. Shams will be missed inside and outside Iran by many. Our heartfelt condolences to his wife, his son, Behnam, and daughter, Sepideh.

Yahya Jaffar

ONS Meeting Utrecht 2011

Some 35 members attended the annual ONS meeting in at the Geldmuseum, Utrecht on 15 October.



Great Expectations.....



Concentrating hard.....

Four talks were given as follows:

Paul Stevens: "The 'Lucknow' rupee: where was it struck?" This talk described some series of rupees in the name of Shah 'Alam II, with mintname Muhammadabad Banaras, which were struck by the Nawabs of Awadh and the East India Company. These coins were

struck at Benares, Lucknow and Allahabad but it is not known for certain which types were struck at which mint. One series of these coins bears regnal years but no AH date and it was suggested that it was these coins that may have been struck at Allahabad.



Paul, wondering which of the coins were struck at Allahabad

Shailendra Bhandare: "Some interesting coins from the collection of the former Ethnological Museum, Rotterdam". The extensive collection of Oriental coins in the Rotterdam museum is in the process of being incorporated into the collection of the Geldmuseum. A selection of some rare Mughal coins, including several Zodiac mohurs, as well as Gupta coins, were for this occasion displayed in the entrance hall of the Geldmuseum. The speaker had selected a number of coins from different series and periods and provided some detailed information about them.



Shailendra making a fine point about a zodiac mohur



A zodiac mohur from the former Ethnological Museum collection; Virgo, Agra mint, AH 1033, regnal year 19

Ellen Raven: "Gupta coins from the collection of the former Ethnological Museum, Rotterdam". The speaker described her new system for categorising Gupta gold coins based on stylistic criteria, rather than the typological systems that had traditionally been used. In doing so, she used examples of Gupta coinage from the former Rotterdam collection.



Ellen about to explain her new system for categorising Gupta coins



...ably supported by Jan



A gold dinara of Purugupta from the former Ethnological Museum collection

Jan Lucassen & Jaco Zuiderduijn: “The end of Western numismatic supremacy? Global perspectives on numismatics”. The speakers introduced the audience to some new research fields in global history undertaken by groups of scholars in the Netherlands. They also singled out possibilities for numismatists of the Orient to make contributions to these research fields, and thus to bridge the gap between Oriental numismatics and global history. In their talk the speakers stated that all too often western numismatists tended to discuss numismatics from a western point of view, thereby ignoring the vast coinages and economies of Asia over the past 2000 years. By way of example, they described the issue and circulation of copper coinage for a certain area of northern Indian.



Jaco pondering the possible end of Western numismatic supremacy..

After the talks, the usual auction of coins and books took place, which raised about 700 euros for ONS funds. Once the meeting was over, some 22 of the attendees enjoyed a nice meal at a nearby Chinese restaurant.

Jan Lingen is to be congratulated yet again for organising the meeting and auction so successfully. All the talks were given in English. On this occasion, while most of those present were from the Netherlands, there were also some from neighbouring countries and four members from the UK. We should also like to thank the Geldmuseum for hosting the meeting, and, in particular to Ans ter Woerds, the museum librarian, for facilitating the event and for providing most of the above photographs.

The next meeting will take place on Saturday, 20 October 2012. All members are welcome to attend.

New York Meeting

The North American branch of the Oriental Numismatic Society will meet again in 2012 at the venue of the New York International Numismatic Convention. The program will include four papers:

Judith Kolbas: “Mamluk glass weights”

Roman Kovalev: “On the compilation and completion of Noonan's complete dirham hoard catalogue”

Michael L. Bates: “Remarks on the eastern caliph copper coinage labeled “# bi-dirham””

Aleksandr I. Naymark: “The international silver and local copper in Central Asian coinage: the case of Sogdiana”

The organisers will also try to include very brief notices and announcements of interest to ONS members. If possible, contact Michael Bates in advance.

The meeting will take place on Saturday, 7 January 2012, from 5:00 to 6:30 in the Beekman Suite, 18th floor, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, 301 Park Avenue, New York. All are welcome. It is not necessary to register for NYINC to attend the ONS meeting (use the east elevators).

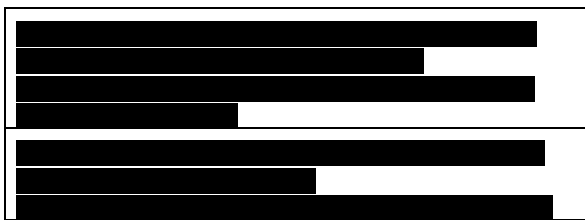
There will be a dinner together at a nearby restaurant after the ONS meeting. Please inform Michael Bates, Tiesenhausen@yahoo.com, if you intend to come to the dinner.

New Members

UK Region



European Region



Lists Received

1. [Redacted] UK;
orders@earlyworldcoins.com) list 51, of oriental coins.

New and Recent Publications

A Survey of the Coinage of the Seljuqs of Rūm by Michael Broome, edited and prepared for publication by Vlastimil Novák. Royal Numismatic Society Special Publication No. 48, London, 2011, Pp. xvi + 400, and 62 plates. ISSN 0080 4487, ISBN 090140554X. [Redacted]

“This volume represents the life’s work of Michael Broome, author of the *Handbook of Islamic Coins*, and founder of the ONS, who died in 1997. It has been edited and prepared for publication by Vlastimil Novák, head of oriental coins at the National Museum-Náprstek Museum in Prague. Some 1119 varieties (most of them illustrated) of Seljuq coins in silver, bronze and gold are listed with more than 7,500 specimens noted, and there are historical introductions to each reign, together with extensive discussions of mint attributions, weight standards, epigraphy, iconography and style. The survey covers the general Seljuq coinage (12th to early 14th century AD), plus vassal coinages (joint coinages with Cilician Armenians and Artuqids of Mardin). The volume also includes a biographical account of the author by his daughter.

Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Israel Museum: The Paul Balog Collection - Egypt vol. III – *The Mamlūks 1248-1517*, by Issa M. Baidoun with a Contribution by Warren C. Schultz. General Editors: Stefan B. Heidemann and Haim Gitler. Published by the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, in association with EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste & Numismatica Bernardi S.R.L., Trieste, 2011. Price: € 60 plus shipping from Numismatica Bernardi, Trieste.

“The present volume is the first in a series devoted to the Islamic coins in the collection of The Israel Museum, Jerusalem. The majority of these coins were donated to the museum by the late Paul Balog. The Israel Museum is proud to continue Balog’s legacy by making his rich coin collection available to the public. The adoption of the sylloge format, organized by individual mints, is best suited to the needs of scholars of political and monetary history. The Egyptian series is by far the strongest in Balog’s collection, and one of the largest of its kind. Appropriately, the Mamlūk mints of Egypt were chosen to be the subject of the first volume of the series.”

Issa M. Baidoun is an Islamic art historian and numismatist, affiliated to the numismatic department at the Israel Museum. He is also a fellow of the Israel Numismatic Society.

Haim Gitler is Curator of Numismatics at the Israel Museum. He is currently the president of the Israel Numismatic Society and a lecturer at Tel Aviv university.

Stefan B. Heidemann is Associate Curator in the Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum, as well as Professor of Islamic History and Artistic and Material Culture at The Bard Graduate Center, New York.

Warren C. Schultz is Professor of History at DePaul University, Chicago. He is also a fellow of the American Numismatic Society

History of Ottoman Coins – Volume 4, by Dr Atom Damalı; in Turkish and English, pp. 360, in colour, hard cover, 210 x 297 cm, published by Nilüfer Damalı Education, Culture and Environment Foundation.

This volume covers in detail the coins of Sultan Mehmed III and Sultan Ahmed I.

“Under the influence of the military, economic and social structure, the Ottoman money system naturally moved towards a new process by the end of the 16th century. This process lasted approximately one hundred years during the 1600s and struck a heavy blow to the Ottoman financial structure. The Ottoman mines, which were unable to compete with the cheap silver ore that Europe obtained from America, began to shut down one after another. This was followed by the shutdown of mints. Thus, the coins of Mehmed III and Ahmed I, the early sultans of this period, were struck under these difficult conditions.

The volume includes the pictures of 270 silver and gold coins of Sultan Mehmed III and 200 coins of Sultan Ahmed I. In addition, it details the regional history relating to the 40 cities that struck Ottoman coins during this period, and describes the characteristics of the coins struck in those cities.

The last section of the book comprises a coin inventory relating to the two sultans.”

The Alexander Medallion: Exploring the origins of a unique artefact, by Holt, F & Bopearachchi, O (eds), Imago Lattara 2011. ISBN 978-2-95166-796-9

The unique artefact of the title is a gold medallion, featuring, on one side, the head of Alexander wearing an elephant scalp, and, on the other, the image of an elephant. It was first published by Bopearachchi and Flandrin in 2005. They suggested then, as they believe now, that this medallion was made following the battle of the Hydaspes, when Alexander defeated the Indian forces of Porus.

Since its publication the object has been condemned as a modern forgery, or the attribution proposed by Bopearachchi has been otherwise contested by a number of well-informed scholars. This volume, based upon a seminar in 2007 has contributions from seven proponents of the authenticity of the medal. None of the critics are represented, however, though an effort was apparently made to involve them in the seminar (p.67). A detailed and critical review of this book is due to be published in the next edition of the Numismatic Chronicle.

De Muntmeester, September 2011, the journal of the numismatic study circle of Diest, Belgium, includes an article on a 33 mm bronze medal, probably made in Goa and which imitates a medal of Catherine the Great of Russia. The article is in Flemish. For more information, please contact Patrick Pasmans, diest44@hotmail.com

Auction News

Steve Album Rare Coins (PO Box 7386, Santa Rosa, CA 95407, USA; www.stevealbum.com) held its auction 11 on 16-17 September. The auction comprised some 1500 lots of oriental coins, including a superb collection of Chittagong coins from the period of the Arakanese occupation, and a fine run of Sikh rupees.

Following their remarkably successful sale earlier this year, Morton and Eden have announced that they will hold a further auction of Important Coins of the Islamic World on 23 April 2012. Rarities already consigned for this sale include an Arab-Sasanian Standing Caliph drachm of Dimashq 75h and a unique Umayyad dinar struck at the 'Mine of the Commander of the Faithful' in the year 89h, the earliest date recorded for this rare and historic issue. For all enquiries please contact Stephen Lloyd or Tom Eden (+44 020 7493 5344, info@mortonandeden.com).



Arab-Sasanian Standing Caliph drachm, Dimashq 75h



Umayyad dinar 89h struck at the 'Mine of the Commander of the Faithful'

Other News

Third Seminar on Early Iranian and Central Asian Numismatics in Memoriam Boris Kochnev (1940-2002)

The seminar was held at Hofstra University, Hempstead, N.Y., on 4 April 2011. The subject was the coinage of the regions from the Caucasus to Xinjiang and from ancient times to the late Middle Ages. The seminar was sponsored by the Middle East and Central Asian Program at Hofstra University and was organised by Hofstra Professors, Aleksandr Naymark and Daniel Varisco, in cooperation with Curator Emeritus of ANS, Dr Michael Bates. There were 11 papers by 10 authors and over 20 registered listeners, which besides New York members of ONS and ANS included faculty and graduate students from Bryn Mawr College, UPENN, Princeton, Columbia, NYU, Connecticut State, and Yale Universities. The seminar was followed by a lively dinner at Café Uzbekistan, in southern Brooklyn. Below we publish submitted abstracts of papers, edited by Dr Michael Bates. See also the photo on p. 35 below.

An obscure period in the history of Tabaristan (760s AD): Analysis of written and numismatic sources

By Konstantin Kravtsov (Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg)

The Caspian province of Iran, Tabaristan, was first mentioned by the Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus (90–30 bc) as one of the conquests in Europe and Asia of the mythical Babylonian king, Nin, who either lived in the days of Abraham or, according to Plato, was a contemporary of the Trojan War (13th or 12th century BC) (*Historical Library*. II, 2, 3). From then, until the reign of the Abbasid governor, 'Umar b. al-'Ala, the history of Tabaristan is very sparsely and ambiguously recorded. There are two reasons for this: on the one hand, the peripheral geographical position of Tabaristan, and on the other, the fact that all information in the local Tabaristan chronicles about the early period of its history is based

on the legendary tradition. The interlacing of real historical facts with legendary and mythological subjects complicates and obscures many periods in the history of Tabaristan.

One of these obscure and intricate periods is the time from the death of the last Tabaristan Spahbed, Khurshid, until the end of the reign of the Abbasid governor, Khalid b. Barmak. The present paper, by analysing the written and numismatic sources, tries to resolve the chronology of rule of the first Abbasid governors in Tabaristan. The most interesting conclusions of this research are connected to the reign of Khalid b. Barmak. He replaced the previous Abbasid governor, Rawh b. Hatim, who was convicted of tyranny and injustice towards the inhabitants of Tabaristan. In such circumstances the appointment of Khalid b. Barmak was not a random choice. He was of Iranian origin and the head of the famous Barmakid family of court favourites. Because of his sympathetic attitude to the Iranians, Khalid b. Barmak was the most suitable candidate to end the revolts in Tabaristan after Rawh b. Hatim's tyranny, and to consolidate Abbasid control over this province. According to local chronicles, Khalid b. Barmak governed for four years (Ibn Isfandiyar, 1941. P. 181, 187; 1905. P. 124. Zahir al-Din, 1850. S. 274, 325. Khwandamir, 1954. P. 406), but the numismatic evidence indicates that he ruled longer. On the one hand, the governor struck drachms in his name from 115 PYE / AH 149 to 120 PYE / AH 155. On the other hand, a series of Khurshid posthumous issues dated 114 (fig. 1) and 115 PYE (fig. 2) is known. It is very likely that Khalid b. Barmak, being a wise administrator, decided at first to strike coins for some time in the traditional "frozen" style with the name of the last Spahbed, Khurshid. This action reflected, on the one hand, an attempt to legitimise his power and, on the other hand, demonstrated his conciliatory policy towards the populace of Tabaristan, in contrast to Rawh b. Hatim's tyrannical and unjust actions. When Khalid b. Barmak further consolidated his authority, he began to issue drachms in his own name, but with legends in Pahlavi script only.

The basic conclusions of the paper are shown in the following chronological scheme:

Governor	Coinage
Abu-l-Khasib 109-10 PYE, AH 143-44	Khurshid posthumous issues 110 PYE, AH 144
Khazim b. Khuzayma 110-11 PYE, ah 144-45	Khurshid posthumous issues 110-11 PYE, AH 144-45
Abu'l-'Abbas al-Tusi 111-12 PYE, AH 145-46	Khurshid posthumous issues 111 PYE, AH 145 (and 112 PYE, AH 146?)
Rawh b. Hatim AH 146-48	In the name of Rawh b. Hatim AH 146-48
Khalid b. Barmak 114-20 PYE, AH 148-55	Khurshid posthumous issues 114-15 PYE, AH 148-49 In the name of Khalid b. Barmak 115-20 PYE, AH 149-55



Fig.1
Khurshid, 114 PYE (AH 148, AD 765-66)
The State Hermitage Museum, ON-V-M-44
1.71 g., 23.5 mm.



Fig. 2
 Khurshid, 115 PYE (AH 148, AD 766-67)
 The State Hermitage Museum,
 ON-V-M-Azmuz-10600
 1.95 g., 25 mm

Crisis on an Asian Frontier: The Countermarking of Umayyad Dirhams in Khurasan in the Early Eighth Century AD

By Stuart Sears (Wheaton College, Massachusetts)
 This is being published as a separate article elsewhere.

The Very Last Sogdian Coin

By Luke Treadwell (Oxford University), Aleksandr Naymark (Hofstra University)



Fig. 1. Arab-Sogdian coin of AH 160
 (Photo courtesy owner; Zeno.ru 8)



Fig. 2: Brick from Afrasiyab with inscription 'Ishtihñ'
 (photo credit Yuri Karev, published with kind permission of Frantz Grenet)

The transition from traditional coins based on a variety of old Sogdian models to the new Islamic coins started only in the middle of the 8th century AH and continued, so it seems, for several decades. This process is still only partially documented and new and interesting discoveries are constantly being made, which keep changing the overall picture quite significantly. One promising new piece of data is an Arab-Sogdian copper coin, which was found in Samarqand some 10 years ago and was posted by its owner on the site Zeno.ru (№ 8). One side of this specimen is entirely Sogdian, while the legend of the other one is in Arabic (fig. 1).

The inscription on the margin of the Arabic side reads *bism allāh ḡuriba hādhā l-fals bi-īshihā[n] fī sanat*, while the date itself occupies the field: *sittīn wa mi'a*. There are some orthographic mistakes: the numeral *sittīn* is written without the *yā'* that indicates the long vowel *ī*; likewise, the second *yā'* which is usually present in the word *Ishtihan* and can be seen in an almost contemporary

inscription on bricks from Afrasiyab (fig. 2) is omitted on the coin. The last tall vertical shaft of the same word can be taken for the letter *alif*, although in Arabic and Persian texts *īshihñ* is written without one. Alternatively, this final letter could be the tall vertical shaft of *nūn* similar to the one on the brick stamp from Afrasiyab (fig. 2). Whatever was the case, it is likely that the loop of the *nūn* simply did not fit in: the die sinker started by carving the numerals in the field; then he moved to the margin, where he began with the phrase *fī sanat* and continued further around to the end of the city name; he, however, miscalculated the space and had to sacrifice the final letter.

The other side has a Y-shaped *tamgha* in the centre surrounded by a Sogdian legend of three words, none of which is complete due to the poor state of the coin. An initial *x* and possibly a following *w* may be recognised in the first word, while weak traces of the two following letters are consistent with *βw*, so that the word could be the title *xwβw*, but this is by no means certain. The second word, which is the best preserved, lacks the first two letters. The remaining part *...xγ'nk* (?), though sufficiently visible, defies interpretation. It is, however, tempting to see in it a "nisba" formed from a place name ending in *x'n* (Ishtikhan - ?). The last four letters of the third word are very likely to be *m'n*, but the first letter or two preceding them are completely obliterated, preventing the identification of this word as well (which is possibly a proper name).

Some conclusions about the origin of this coin can be drawn from the year of its issue: AH 160 (AD 776-777) witnessed the peak of al-Muqanna's revolt in Central Asia. The rebels seized most of the Zarafshan valley above the Bukharan oasis, gained control over the valley of Kashka-darya, and were active in Tokharistan. The Abbasid governor, Jibrā'īl b. Yahyā, had to evacuate Samarqand, leaving the city in the hands of "the people in White Raiments" (Bol'shakov 1976, 95). Yet our specimen does not represent the coinage of the rebels: the single known *fals* type issued in the name of al-Muqanna' (Kochnev 1995, 32-33; Kochnev 2001a, 16-17; Kochnev 2001b) is very different in design, and, what is more important, in the content of its inscriptions. Indeed, the Arabic legend of this Arab-Sogdian coin contains nothing more than the issue data, while the inscriptions on the coins of al-Muqanna' lack the issue data and consist solely of religious and political statements.

We can form a judgment about the authority responsible for issuing our coin even without knowing the content of the Sogdian inscription: in accordance with local tradition, the Sogdian side of a coin provides a visual reference to the minting location – the *tamgha* placed in the central field. While the history of this *tamgha* could lead us back to the period of Hunnic domination in Sogd and even possibly to the first centuries AD (Ilyasov 2003, 135-141; Ilyasov 2004; Cazzoli and Cereti 2005, fig. 11; Ilyasov 2007; Alram 2007, 142-4), by the second half of the 8th century this sign had undoubtedly acquired a very particular meaning in Sogd – it was firmly associated with a claim to authority over the realm of Samarqand (Naymark 2005). Meanwhile, aside from al-Muqanna' and his Abbasid opponents, neither of whom could be responsible for the minting of this coin, only one person could have claimed power over Samarqand in AH 160 – the Ikshid of Sogd, who resided in Ishtihan. In AH 160 this title most likely belonged to Yazīd b. Ghūrak.

From the story of Bukharkhuda Buniyat related in the *Tarikh-i Bukhara* (Narshakhi-Ridhawi 1939, 15; Narshakhi-Frye 1954, 10-11) we know that the revolt of al-Muqanna' revived the political aspirations of the Sogdian rulers who still hoped to regain their independence. Yet, judging by our coin, the Ikshid, Yazīd b. Ghūrak, had no intention to join the struggle against the Arabs, nor to join the latter against the rebels. It is most likely that Yazīd b. Ghūrak issued this coin in order to remind the Sogdians about his rights over Samarqand at the moment when the "people in White Raiments" managed to push the Arabs out of the Ikshid's ancestral capital for the first time in half a century. This issue was destined to remain an isolated instance: within a year the tide was turned by the defeats suffered by the followers of al-Muqanna' and, no later than 780, the rebellion was crushed (Bol'shakov 1976, 96-97).

Islamic Coins from a Hindu Temple: Re-evaluating Ghaznavid Policy towards Hindu Sacred Sites through new Numismatic Evidence from the Kashmir Smast in Gandhara

By Waleed Ziad (Yale University)

This paper examines a recent find of coins, featuring Arabic legends, that were minted and circulated within the Kashmir Smast, a Saivite Hindu cave temple in the Hindu Kush in northern Gandhara. The majority of these specimens can be attributed to the Ghaznavid period, based on legends and typology. This new numismatic evidence, considered against contemporary histories, calls into question certain historical narratives of the Ghaznavid invasion of al-Hind, which posit that the Ghaznavids pursued a uniformly iconoclastic policy towards Hindu sacred sites."

The Kashmir Smast cave temple and its environs sustained a local mint, issuing its own civic copper currency for 700 years, from the Kidarite to the Hindu Shahi period and beyond. The civic currency, while variable in fabric, generally comprises small, thin copper units ranging from 0.5 – 1 g, which may have served as temple offerings. The existence of such local minting practices in Hindustan is attested in Awfi's *Jawami al-Hikayat*, and his narrative suggests that some mints would have functioned independently under the ultimate authority and guarantee of the sovereign.

Textual and archaeological evidence suggests that, in the early eleventh century, Ghaznavid armies would have incorporated the Kashmir Smast region into their empire, in the process of expanding their domains from Gandhara to the northern kingdom of Udyana (Swat). The image of Mahmud as *butshikan* (destroyer of idols), advanced by contemporary historians, notably 'Utbi, Gardezi, and Bayhaqi, implies that the Kashmir Smast would have undergone the same fate as the major temples attested in the early sources. It is, therefore, surprising that the Kashmir Smast has yielded Ghaznavid silver and copper issues, as well as new small copper varieties with Arabic legends minted in the Kashmir Smast fabric.

The 24 coins featuring Arabic legends which the author had examined from the cave temple can be separated into two groups. Group I comprises published coins circulating across Hindustan and the Kabul Valley, produced by larger 'state' mints. This includes two Habbarid *qanhari dirhams*, seven late Ghaznavid *qanhari dirhems* of Ibrahim (of which two may be local imitations), four late Ghaznavid Æ 2 g civic issues (SNAT, Ghazna / Kabul XIVd Hurasan IV, 474-477, but bearing different legends), and one enigmatic clipped *dirham*. Group II comprises 10 unpublished small Æ varieties minted in Kashmir Smast fabric. Three are derived from earlier Hindu Shahi Kashmir Smast issues, including a Shahi horseman type citing the Ghaznavid ruler, Mas'ud (r. AD 1030-1039). Group II also features a unique Æ unit citing Mahmud (r. AD 997-1030).

There are several conclusions to be drawn from these finds. First, the temple and its mint continued functioning under the Ghaznavids. The relative rarity of these specimens suggests that they circulated alongside earlier Hindu Shahi civic derivatives from the Kashmir Smast, which are amongst the most prevalent specimens found in the area. Another pertinent point is that most of the Arabic legends on Group II varieties are legible, and designs are sufficiently original, implying that some local mintmasters were versed in Arabic.

This numismatic evidence raises questions as to whether Mahmud's policy towards religious sites in Gandhara could have been influenced, in certain cases, by larger administrative and economic considerations. A critical comparison of the numismatic evidence with early text sources offers a number of potential explanations. The Kashmir Smast temple complex and its independent civic monetary system could have, for example, been maintained under Ghaznavid rule for the temple's potential role as a trade entrepôt between Gandhara and Swat. Another explanation could be rooted in the Ghaznavid dual policy towards administrative units versus raiding territories. The Kashmir Smast and its environs may have been treated as an integrated unit of the empire, or as an autonomous tributary, as in the case of Tabaristan. The hypotheses presented in this paper suggest that further research is required on

Ghaznavid policy towards non-Muslim subjects and religious institutions at large.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Fig 1: Kashmir Smast early Ghaznavid Æ fractional (enlarged)

Obv.: *lā ilaha illā; allāh wah (dahu); lā sha(rīk lahu)*
Rev: *maḥmūd* or *muḥammad* within leaf 0.87g / 15 mm

Fig. 2: Kashmir Smast early Ghaznavid AE fractional derivative of bull and horseman Hindu Shahi jitals citing Mas'ud (enlarged)

Obv.: Kūfic Arabic: (*lā*) *ilaha illā; allāh wah dahu; (la) sharīka lahu; (ma)s'ūd.*
Rev.: Horseman facing left. 0.96 g / 14 mm

Fig 3: Kashmir Smast Ghaznavid Æ fractional derivative of 'crescent and circle' Hindu Shahi units (enlarged 2)

Obv.: Kufic *allāh* in circle.
Rev.: Circle within crescent.
0.95 g / 15 mm

Rasulid Coinage in the Daftar of al-Malik al-Muzaffar: A Preliminary Textual Study

By Daniel Varisco (Hofstra University)

The Rasulid dynasty of the 13th-15th centuries in Yemen has received only limited attention by historians, but there is a wealth of textual material, as well as available coinage. One of the most important texts for reconstructing the economic life of late thirteenth century Yemen is a *daftar* of field reports compiled for the second Rasulid sultan, al-Malik al-Muzaffar Yūsuf, who reigned from 647/1249 to 694/1295. This unique text was edited in two volumes in 2003 and 2005 by the Yemeni historian, Muhammad 'Abd al-Rahim Jazm, as *Nur al-ma'arif* and published by the Centre Français d'Archéologie et de Sciences Sociales de Sanaa. My talk focused on a passage from this text regarding the kinds of dirhams used in Mecca at the end of the thirteenth century. Entitled "Report on the Kamili and Qaysaniya dirhams in Mecca," the text notes that the Mecca weights for 100 Kamili dirhams are 7% less than the Egyptian weights, so that in Mecca one would only have the value of 93 dirhams. Information is provided on exchange rates for the Kamili dirhams in the Rasulid cities of al-Mahjam and Zabid; both of these towns also minted Muzaffari dirhams. The Rasulid Muzaffari dirhams are said to circulate only a little in Mecca, where the Egyptian Kamili are preferred. The same is true for other major cities and regions, like Syria, Baghdad, India, Ethiopia, etc., conducting their selling and buying only with the Kamili. The Muzaffari dirham is limited in circulation for selling and buying to Ali, al-Sirayn and Mecca. Mention is also made in the text of the Qaysaniya dirhams, which circulate in Mecca and nowhere else. These are exchanged for the Kamili during the months of Dhu al-Qa'da and Dhu al-Hijja, when the Qaysaniya dinars are newly minted each year. The text further describes the seasonal changes in exchange rates for these dirhams. The purpose of the talk was to draw attention to this source for relevant local information on coinage during the zenith of the Rasulid era.

**Coin Finds from the Heart of the Mongol Empire: Qara Qorum
Results of the Bonn University Excavations 2000-04**

By Stefan Heidemann (The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Bard Graduate Center)

The Mongol empire stretched from the borderlands of middle Europe (Silesia) to Korea in the east. Qara Qorum was the early capital and seat of the Qagan, the Great Khan of the Mongols. Between 2000 and 2005 Bonn University, under the direction of Prof. H. R. Roth, and the Academy of Science in Ulan-Bator Ulambayar Erdenebat, excavated in the market area of the city.

The first five seasons (2000-2004) retrieved 332 coins. These coin finds constitute an independent source about the regional, political and economic history of Qara Qorum. Medieval money circulation in Mongolia was almost unknown, except for an excavation report from Qara Qorum by the Russian numismatist Evtuchova from the sixties of the past century.

The most important discovery from a historical point of view was the first dated document to mention the city of Qara Qorum dated 635 (AD 1237-8), (see ONS Newsletter 185 2005). This date on a coin came about two years after the supposed construction of the palace of Ögedai in 1235, which probably constituted the beginning of the urban settlement. Among the 332 coin finds, almost all, except for nine Islamic coins, were Chinese-type cast coins, suggesting that daily purchases were almost exclusively made with Chinese coins. We already knew from collections that coin production in China dropped considerably with Mongol rule. This fact is mirrored in the coin finds from the Mongol capital. Only five Chinese-type coins from the Mongol Yuan period were found. Pre-Yuan coins were apparently still available in large quantities. Their circulation apparently did not have to be considerably supplemented by new coins. The Bei Song period (AD 976-1126), is represented with all the emperors, and almost all the reigning periods and issues, comprising 258 coins. Coins of the Jin Dynasty, the northern pre-Chinggis Khan empire bordering the Song empire, were, as one would expect, comparatively abundant with 19 coins.

Dynastic distribution of coin finds:

Xi Han (25-221)	1
Tang (618-907)	10
Nan Tang (937-975)	1
Bei Song (976-1126)	258
Nan Song (1127-1275)	15
Jin (1149-1190)	19
Unidentified Tang to Song	12
Yuan (1260-1312)	5
Mongol 'Islamic' silver	9

Almost all coins in the newly founded capital were imported from China. From the point of view of coin circulation, Qorum, or to be specific, the market of the Chinese quarter, appeared to be a northern Chinese city. Qorum was apparently firmly integrated into the northern currency zone of China.

The most spectacular discoveries of the excavations were coins minted in *Qara Qorum* or just *Qorum*. The finds established Qorum as a mint for the first time. Seven of the nine Islamic silver coins were minted there. One of the coin types, that with the date AH 635, is already published (S. Heidemann *et al.*, "The First Documentary Evidence for Qara Qorum from the Year 635/1237-8," *Zeitschrift für Archäologie außereuropäischer Kulturen* 1 [2006], 93-102). Previously, coins of Qorum were unknowingly published as part of a hoard. Their findspot, however, the Oasis of Utrar, had led to the reading *Qrim* instead of *Qorum*, although there are no similar coins from the Crimean peninsula and the letter 'ya' of *Qrim* would be missing (K. M. Baipakov and V. N. Nastich. "Klad serebrianykh veshchei i monet XIII v. iz Otrara" in *Kazakhstan v epokhu feodalizma (problemy etnopoliticheskoi istorii)*, Alma-ata, 1981, 20-60). The full documentation of the Islamic coins will be part of the final report.



Coin of Qorum (on first line of obverse), period of Ögedei (Kar2-2004-3519)(enlarged)

Coins of the Ilkhanid Ruler Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan

By Necla Akkaya (Selcuk University, Konya)

The subject of this presentation was the evaluation of the coins which were minted by Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan, the Ilkhanid sultan, on the evidence of the examples in the Konya and Mardin museums. It is possible that almost all coin types of the Ilkhanid period can be found in these two museums.

The ninth Sultan of the Ilkhanid Empire, Abu Sa'id Bahadur Khan, ruled AD 1316–1336. During his twenty-year reign, the sultan won many victories, but died without designating a successor (Yuvalı 2000, 104-105). He was the son of Uljaytu Muhammad Khudabanda, and his reign saw the peak of Ilkhanid sovereignty in Iran (Öztuna 2005, 557). The coins of this period are the most common in Anatolia, exhibiting a number of different types.

The coins of this period can be classified into eight main types, according to the geometric forms ("cartouche" or "frame") that surround the inscriptions. The dirhams are divided into seven main types¹, while the eighth type includes all the copper coins (Artuk 1970, 763-813).



Type 1: Curvilinear octagram, Erzincan, AH 717



Type 2: Mihrab. Baghdad, Mardin, Sebzevar and Tabriz, AH 719-23



Type 3: Curvilinear Pentagon, Baghdad, Mardin, Sabzavar and Tabriz, AH 722-24

¹ Editor's note: this listing excludes the rare "triangle" type (Album type E), struck only at Pol-i Aras, Erzurum, Lahijan and Kayseri. It also seems to exclude Album type A.



Type 4: Square and Circle, Baghdad, Sivas, Sultaniye and Tabriz, AH 723-29



Type 5: Circle and looped octagon, Kayseri, 727



Type 6: Octalobe and looped octagon, Ahlat, Baghdad, Jajerm, Damghan, Harput, Hilla, İsfahan, Mardin, Mosul, Nishapur, Saveh, Sabzavar, Sinjar, Sivrihisar, Shabankara, Shehristan, Tabriz and Tus, AH 724-33



Type 7: Square Kufic Shahada, Ruler's name in Uighur script. Baghdad, Basra, Bayburt, Barda', Abu-Ishaq, Abu-Sa'idiya, Erzurum, Kashan, Kayseriye, Kirman, Kırşehir, Konya, Ma'den, Maragha, Rayy, Ruyan, Saveh, Sinjar, Sivas, Sultaniya, Shustar, Tavus, Tabriz and Yazd, AH 734



Type 8: Copper coin, various mints and types

A Copy of the Royal Seal of Bulgarian Tsar, Ivan II Asen, from the Archaeological Site of Afrasiyab (Samarqand), or 'a Story of One Interesting Disappointment'

By Olga Kirillova (Orel, Russia), Aleksandr Naymark (Hofstra University)

A few years ago one of the authors of this report received a rather poor and blurry computer scan of one side of a little single-sided "bracteate" with crudely executed images and a completely blundered inscription in old Slavonic with transposed right and left "columns" of the original text. It was supplied with a note explaining that the object had been found by chance on the surface of Afrasiyab, the site of ancient Samarqand, and that it was made of yellowish. base metal with traces of gilding. The object would fit well into a category of objects that are very familiar in Central Asia – as of today archaeological sites have yielded almost fifty gold reproductions of different types of Byzantine solidi from Theodosius II to Heraclius, both double-sided "imitations" and single-sided bracteates with crude images and blundered inscriptions. Also known are pieces of base metal bearing "fantasy" images derived from coins and seals, some of which are certainly datable to early Islamic times.



Fig. 1. "Bracteate" from Afrasiyab



Fig. 2. Gold seal of Ivan II Asen

The principal feature that makes this "bracteate" unique is its date – the image and distorted inscription reproduces the "royal" side of the state seal of the Bulgarian Tsar, Ivan Asen (1218-1241). Yet the "irregularity" of the date seemed to have a perfectly legitimate explanation – while during the Samanid and Qarakhanid times the so-called Silk Road trade gradually subsided, the large scale trans-Eurasian trade was revived during the Mongol period, the very beginning of which corresponds to the time of Ivan II Asen's rule. As this tsar was very active in the international arena, it seemed possible that documents with the royal seal could have passed Samarqand on the way to Qarakorum, in which direction many European embassies travelled during the early Mongol era. It is also known that Christianity experienced a golden age in Samarqand during the first decades of Mongol rule and, thus, we might expect that some local Christian made a little bracteate as a piece of jewelry, employing images from a seal brought to the city by an embassy.

All our persuasive theories, however, proved to be mere speculations: when finally the sharp colour images of both sides arrived, it immediately became clear, that this is a modern brass piece struck by a die worked with modern steel tools. Disappointed as they were, the authors, however, could not help being puzzled about the nature of this little object: the very crude execution and

the negligent transposition of the inscription columns left no doubt that it was neither a fake meant to trick a collector, nor a souvenir. Puzzled, we contacted Dr Ilya Prokopov in Sophia, who explained that this is a typical “coin imitation” pendant from a monisto – a widespread piece of Bulgarian traditional jewelry with coin pendants. As these were widely used by Bulgarian folk dancers, they were mass produced for them in the Soviet era by craft shops using all possible Old Bulgarian coin types as prototypes.



Fig. 3. During the presentation

There remained one last question: how a monisto “coin” of a Bulgarian folk dancer of the 20th century came to be on a Central Asian archaeological site which ceased to be occupied in the 13th century. The answer is likely to be in the rituals of the Soviet era: folk dancing was a common feature of Soviet festivities from the 1930s, with delegations of different republics being represented by their choreographic groups; meanwhile, Samarqand celebrated its 2500th anniversary in 1969 and part of the gala festivities were held on the site of Afrasiyab. In other words, it is likely that this little object is a witness to the 20th century cultural politics in the former Soviet bloc.

After the arrival of good scans and of the “collapse” of their original interpretation, the authors first considered cancelling their conference report, but then in the post-Modernist mode of thinking decided that this is an instructive instance that illustrates, on the one hand the complex life of numismatic and sphragistic objects and, on the other, demonstrates how circumstantial evidence commonly used in our historical studies can easily lead to unwarranted conclusions. The authors are also very happy that they did actually receive the good scans prior to the conference.

Boris Kochnev Memorial Seminar on Middle Eastern and Central Asian Numismatics

On Saturday, 17 March 2012, the Middle Eastern and Central Asian Program at Hofstra University will hold the Fourth Seminar on Middle Eastern and Central Asian Numismatics in Memoriam Boris Kochnev (1940-2002).

If you are interested in presenting a paper, please send the title of your talk to Aleksandr Naymark by January 1. It is planned to form the programme by 1 February. By 1 March brief abstracts of papers should be available for pre-publication. Themes of presentations can range from the Caucasus to Xinjiang, and from the earliest times to the late Middle Ages. Each talk will be allocated 20 minutes + 5 minutes for questions.

For more information contact: aleksandr.naymark@hofstra.edu.

During two previous seminars our speakers were: Michael Bates (American Numismatic Society, New York), Arianna D’Ottone (La Sapienza Università di Roma, Italy), Stefan Heidemann (Jena University, Germany), Judith Kolbas (Central Asian Numismatic Institute, Cambridge University/Miami University, Ohio), Konstantin Kravtsov (Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia), Dmirtry Markov (Markov Coins and Medals, New York), Aleksandr Naymark (Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York),

Stuart Sears (Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts), Luke Treadwell (Oxford University, England), Daniel Varisco (Hofstra Univeristy) and Waleed Ziad (Yale Univeristy, New Haven, Connecticut). Among seminar attendees were international guests such as Ahmad Ghouchani (Tehran, Iran), Nicholas Sims-Williams (Cambridge, England), Li Tiesheng (Beijing, China), and numerous scholars and collectors from New York and the East Coast.

Numismatic Research at the British Museum

Naturally the Oriental section of the Department of Coins & Medals at the British Museum has felt the impact of Joe Cribb’s retirement. His energy, enthusiasm, and intellectual guidance is largely responsible for the huge output of oriental numismatics from the department and London members will no doubt appreciate the many study days and other events organized at the department. However, Joe’s legacy at the department is more than his own work, he has encouraged and developed colleagues and various projects. Today the department has two permanent curators of oriental coins, Helen Wang (East Asia) and Vesta Curtis (Islamic and Iranian), and a number of project staff². Joe still visits occasionally and the department continues to be a regular venue for ONS meetings in London. There are a number of ongoing research projects relating to oriental coins which might be of interest to members.

Dr Elizabeth Errington’s Masson Project is nearing a major milestone. She has been working on the collection of Charles Masson for many years and soon all of the numismatic and other material stored in the British Museum will be available online. Charles Masson spent the 1830s in Afghanistan exploring many important Buddhist sites and also the urban site of Begram. His finds were sent to the East India Company’s own India Museum in London. When this museum was shut in 1878 the antiquities and some of the coins were transferred to the British Museum. The majority of coins were auctioned in 1887 and the residue (apart from around 500 given to the Fitzwilliam museum in 1911) remained in the India Office library and eventually became part of the British Library collection. This group of coins has since been transferred, as a long term loan, to the British Museum where the Masson Project team supported by various colleagues are close to having created online computer records for every coin and artifact.

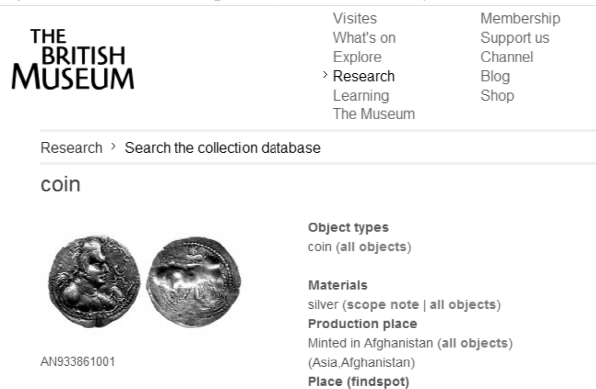


Fig. 1 An example of a Masson collection record online

Not only did Masson collect an amazing number of objects, many of them very interesting in their own right, he was also well ahead of his time in record keeping. Much of the material that Masson collected can be linked back to particular sites, especially Begram, and provides one of the few really useful numismatic assemblages from Afghanistan. Readers who are interested in the collection can find more information from the British Museum’s collections database <http://www.britishmuseum.org/research.aspx>. The coins from the British Library can be found by searching for the museum number “IOLC*” but probably more interesting is a

² The information in this item was kindly supplied by Helen Wang, Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis, Elizabeth Errington, Paramdip Khera and Elizabeth Pendleton

general search for “Charles Masson”, which brings up 6,089 objects, not just coins, in the collection, most with pictures. Ultimately there will be 11,000 coins and other objects online. The Royal Numismatic Society will host a lecture on 17 January 2012 in which the team will discuss Islamic and Roman coins, finds of coins from relic deposits, and how Masson’s numismatic records have enabled the reconstruction of his collection.

Digitisation of the collection is a priority for the Museum. One soon to be completed project, managed by Paramdip Khera (ZNM Project Curator) is the Sikh Coin Catalogue. The study of Sikh coins has seen a recent resurgence in interest and popularity after being somewhat neglected and overlooked in the past. The British Museum catalogue of Sikh coins is scheduled to be published at the end of this year and aims to highlight one of the world’s greatest collections of Sikh coins and introduce the material to a wider audience. This new catalogue focuses on coins that circulated as currency and includes coins from various Sikh mints that were issued by the Sikh Misals (1760-1801) and Ranjit Singh (1801-1839). An introduction to the coins gives an overview of Sikh history from the founding of the religion in 1469 to the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 and provides information about coin denominations, mints, inscriptions, dates and symbols. This information is followed by a comprehensive catalogue of the collection that comprises over 500 coins. It is hoped that this project will provide academic and amateur numismatists alike with a detailed reference work which can be used to identify Sikh coins more precisely.

Also in the realm of South Asia, the museum’s Kushan Coins Project nears its conclusion. All of the Kushan coins will be online by the end of this year with pictures (3,616 records are available, more than half with images, and another thousand to follow). As the world’s most extensive collection of Kushan material, it has been extensively used by scholars in the past. Kushan coins include several dynasties, the successors of Kujula Kadphises (AD 50 to 340), the Kushanshahs (AD 230 to 350), and the Kidarites (AD 330 to 400), whose territory included Afghanistan, Pakistan and North West India. The project will also see the publication of a catalogue of the Kushan material some time in 2012.

Moving to East Asia, there are a number of numismatic projects underway. The first - Textiles as Money on the Silk Road – a collaborative project with specialists in China, Japan, Canada, USA and France, is examining how silk functioned as money on the Silk Road in the Tang dynasty (AD 618-907). This project is being managed by Helen Wang and follows on from her previous work on Silk Road money which was published as *Money on the Silk Road: the evidence from Eastern Central Asia to c. AD 800* (2004), and her work on the publication *Textiles from Dunhuang in UK Collections* (2007).

Dr Wang is also editing the collected works of Richard Wright in a single volume *The Modern Coinage of China, 1866-1949 – the evidence in Western archive*

Like other parts of the collection, work continues to put the East Asian collections on to the BM database. Selected parts are already available and more is going on all the time, with images whenever possible. This has been possible thanks to valuable help from various people including the late Nicholas Rhodes (Tibetan and Nepalese coins and paper money), Alice Lamouille (East Asian paper money), Sarah Ng (Chinese coin-shaped charms) and Qin Cao (the United Reformed Church collections).

As part of an HLF-funded project, Qin Cao is developing museum experience working with Asian coins. She spent six months at the BM (April – Sept 2011) and has now transferred to Manchester Museum for 12 months to work with Keith Sugden on the Asian coin collection there.

The Department has two large ongoing projects relating to coins of West Asia, being led by Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis: the Sasanian Coin Project and the Parthian Coin Project.

The Sasanian Coin Project is a collaboration between Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis, Elahe M. Askari and Elizabeth J. Pendleton. It has resulted in a two-volume published catalogue of c. 4,500 Sasanian coins in the National Museum of Iran. The first volume appeared in January 2010: *Sasanian Coins. A Sylloge of the Sasanian Coins in*

the National Museum of Iran (Muzeh Melli Iran), Tehran. Ardashir I – Hormizd IV. Each coin is illustrated and described in the catalogue. Volume II deals with coins of Khusrau II – Yazdgird III, and will go to press at the end of 2011. The British Museum collection of Sasanian coins will be fully available on Merlin in early 2011.



Fig. 2 Parthian tetradrachm of Phraates (Farhad) IV, mint of Seleucia on the Tigris

The Parthian Coin Project (Sylloge Nummorum Parthorum - SNP) is a large international collaboration between many institutions including The British Museum, Kunsthistorisches Museum (Vienna), Institut für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte (Vienna University), National Museum of Iran (Tehran), Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris), Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, American Numismatic Society (New York) and the Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente. This project is also funded by the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the British Institute of Persian Studies. The co-directors of the SNP are Michael Alram (Vienna) and Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis (London).

Parthian coins are the most extensive and informative primary source for a dynasty that was in power for over four hundred years in the ancient Near East. In the second century BC this Iranian empire stretched from the River Euphrates in modern Iraq to Bactria in modern Afghanistan. After the collapse of the Seleucid Dynasty in the ancient Near East, Parthia became Rome’s main rival until the appearance of the Sasanians at the beginning of the third century AD. Despite its importance, this resource has been largely ignored by scholars working on Parthian culture. The Parthian Coin Project will be a major source of information not only about Parthian coins, but also about the history, art history and culture of the Parthian Empire.

The project will bring together all the Parthian coins in the collections of the participating institutions and it is planned to produce altogether nine volumes. The British Museum team will be responsible for volumes II and IV. Volume II will deal with coinage of Mithradates II (c. 123 – 88 BC) and Volume IV will publish the coins of Mithradates III, Orodes III and Pacorus I (c. 57-38 BC). The other seven volumes have been allocated amongst the other participating institutions.

Book Review

Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum

By Venetia Porter. With special assistance from Robert Hoyland and Alexander Morton; with contributions from Shailendra Bhandare, and scientific analysis by Janet Ambers, Sylvia Humphrey, Nigel Meeks and Margaret Sax.

British Museum Research Publication number 160. Published by The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG, 2011

ISBN 978-086159-160-2, pp. viii + 202, Price £40

This is a catalogue of the British Museum’s extensive collection of Arabic and Persian seals and amulets, as the title makes clear. This understates the scope of the study. The wider field of material in other collections and of earlier studies on seals and sealings is included in a detailed introduction of twenty-six pages. The topics covered include the influence of Byzantine and Sasanian practices on the development of seals and sealings in the Islamic world (pp.

1-3), followed by a discussion of early Islamic sealing practice (pp. 3-7), and a discussion of the Safavid (pp. 7-9) and Indo-Muslim seals of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries (pp. 9-10). These comments illustrate the broad scope of the material covered in this book. Other sections of the introduction include script styles, seal shapes, the names and the phrases encountered on seals, and how some of these features evolved during the course of time. The development of the British Museum's collection is also described. Epigraphic styles, ornamentation and seal shapes are illustrated by the plates on pages 23 to 26.

The main body of the work is the catalogue of 634 seals (nos. 1-634) and 170 amulets (nos. A1-A170) in the British Museum's collection. The catalogue commences with a small number of early sealings (seal impressions) made in clay and in lead (nos. 1-31), among which the Dulafid lead sealings (bullae) are noteworthy. The majority of pieces in the collection are the seals, themselves (nos. 32-634). The seals are most commonly engraved semi-precious stones. They have their inscriptions engraved in reverse. This means that the derivative sealings can be read from right to left in the normal way. All the seals are illustrated in colour, and their images have been reversed in order to make them easier to read. In each catalogue entry, the illustration is followed by a description of the nature of its material, and its shape. The inscription is first presented in Arabic script. This is followed by an English translation. The entry ends with the dimensions of the seal and its provenance. Sections two to five (nos. 32-375) are concerned with seals of the Islamic classical period, the seventh to thirteenth centuries. The general progression in the catalogue is from seals bearing names to seals bearing phrases. Also included are a few re-used pre-Islamic pictorial seals that have been re-engraved with Arabic inscriptions. Sections six to eight (nos. 376-634) are concerned with seals of the fourteenth century and later, including Indo-Muslim seals.

The collection is particularly rich in material from Iran and surrounding regions. It is less well endowed with items from more westerly parts of the Islamic world, particularly North Africa. The early lead sealings, noted above, are also fairly few in number. This is not surprising, because Islamic sealings are rarely preserved by contrast with the large numbers of extant Byzantine lead sealings (bullae). When Byzantium was progressively expelled from mainland Turkey, some successors used lead sealings (bullae) with Arabic inscriptions. These are not represented in the collection, but the field is covered in the introduction and appropriate references are given. The wide scope of the introduction has already been noted, and this is another example.

The amulets (A1-A170) are commonly engraved with religious texts (some are more magical). They were worn to provide protection. Whereas seals have their inscriptions engraved in reverse, the amulets normally have their inscriptions engraved from right to left, so that they can be read directly. The catalogue of amulets progresses from those citing the names of God to those citing the Bismillah and the Shahada (Kalima). It continues with more numerous specimens citing verses from the Qur'an. These are followed by amulets bearing a range of religious inscriptions, both Orthodox and Shia. The section ends with amulets bearing letters, symbols, numbers and magical squares, as well as miscellaneous pieces, some of which have pseudo-inscriptions.

The book is well written and the illustrations are clear. There is a clear system of classification, which applies to both the seals and the amulets.

After the catalogue, there is a section on identification of the materials of the seals and amulets, written by Sylvia Humphrey and Janet Ambers. This is followed by a section on methods of engraving, written by Margaret Sax and Nigel Meeks. The study ends with a detailed bibliography and a list of concordances.

A few silly mistakes have crept in. There is a group of amulets bearing Shia inscriptions, which commence "Call upon 'Ali who makes wonders appear (nad 'aliah mazhar)". They are numbers A75 to A83. The inscription has varied endings. The Arabic text entries reflect what is written on the amulets, but a few of the English translations have incorrect endings. On A75, the ending of the Arabic text entry can be translated as "through your prophethood, O Muhammad, through your friendship, O 'Ali". The incorrect

English translation given below it ends without making reference to Muhammad and reads "through your friendship, O 'Ali, O 'Ali, O 'Ali". The reverse kind of error occurs on A79, where the ending of the Arabic text entry reads, in translation, "through your friendship, O 'Ali, O 'Ali, O 'Ali". The ending of the English translation that follows is "through your friendship, O 'Ali". I have described these as silly mistakes. This is because such mistakes are easy to make when cutting and pasting. However, they should have been picked up during proof reading. The few errors do not detract from the overall merit of the work.

This book has been well researched and it manifests a high standard of scholarship. A reviewer is obliged to notice the occasional lapses. I have found this book a reliable and very informative work. It fills a gap in the available literature and it will be useful both to students of sigillography and also to numismatists who may have a few seals or amulets in their collections. I am pleased to recommend this book.

Michael Mitchiner

Articles

A LEAD TESSERA AND ITS POTENTIAL IMPORTANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE REVERSE IMAGE OF 'ABD AL-MALIK'S "STANDING CALIPH" COINS

By Nikolaus Schindel

The purpose of this short contribution is to present a lead object which possibly might date to the early Islamic period, and which could be of interest for the discussion of the reverse image of the "standing caliph" coinage of the Umayyad ruler, 'Abd al-Malik (AD 685-705). What is meant with this device has been a subject of discussion for quite some time; many different suggestions have been brought forward, but none seems so far to have won universal acceptance.³ I briefly mentioned this object in a short note on this topic and herewith finally fulfil my promise to publish it.⁴



Weight: 2.21 g; diameter: 14 mm; broken edges; reverse blank

The obverse shows something resembling the Greek letter Φ with two lines running to the left and right at an angle of 45° at the bottom, thus resembling the Greek letter Λ . Unfortunately, the top is not visible due to the broken edge. To the left and right of the symbol, a branch or ear of wheat is depicted.

I would call this object a lead tessera, or token – lacking a fathom channel, it cannot be a seal, nor a bulla since there is no form of suspension. Being uniface, it cannot have been meant to circulate as a coin, apart from the fact that its typology is not directly connected to any coin type known to me.

It is essential to state that with such an isolated object without any archaeological context we are facing many uncertainties. Our specimen was bought from a German antiquities dealer together with other lead objects from the Near East, among them one from

³ Some older suggestions are discussed by J. Walker, *Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and Post-Reform Umayyad Coins*, London 1956, p. XXII f.; S. Album/T. Goodwin, *Sylloge of the Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean. Volume 1: The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period*, Oxford 2002, p. 93; T. Goodwin, *Arab-Byzantine Coinage*, London 2005, p. 24 f.

⁴ N. Schindel, *Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum Israel*, Vienna 2009, p. 30.

the crusader period. It might have come from the Levant, but we cannot be sure of this. The same uncertainty regards its dating: one might claim that it depicts a Greek monogram, and that it might date from the Hellenistic or Roman Imperial period, even if, to my eye, lead objects from these periods look different.

However, I would like to suggest a different, albeit highly conjectural, interpretation here. My approach (which may be merely the result of wishful thinking) is the following: The Φ -shaped object resembles the central part of the reverse device of the “standing caliph” fulus. On the copper coins as well as on the few dinars, however, it is shown standing on three or four steps which are ultimately derived from the depiction of the cross potent on Byzantine solidi from Tiberius II Constantine (578-582) onwards. On our lead tessera, the lower part looks different, taking the form of a Λ . We should remember, though, that in Byzantine coinage the lower part of the cross on the reverse could denote the denomination: the solidi feature the steps, the semisses a globe, the tremisses a horizontal line. Thus, even if the lower part of the real jeweled cross in the church of the Holy Sepulchre had the same form as that of the solidi, the depiction was not totally invariable.

The palm branches or bunches of wheat to the left and right of the device cannot be identified with absolute certainty if we are looking only at our tessera. There are, however, close parallels in Byzantine coinage of the 7th and 8th century. From Mauricius Tiberius (582-602) to Tiberius III (689-705)⁵ there exist rare ceremonial silver coins – siliquae or miliarensia – which show two palm branches on the reverse. From Heraclius (610-641) onwards, it is the cross potent, the most important symbol of Christianity, which is flanked by the two palm branches. I believe that the same depiction is encountered also on our lead object: the two branches flank an important symbol, but in the case of the tessera, it is certainly not the Christian cross potent. It should be emphasized that the way the palm branches are depicted on these rare Byzantine silver coins fully corresponds to the depiction on our lead tessera, which to my eye is an important argument both for the dating suggested here, as well as for the interpretation.

Interestingly enough, the same form of the lower part – also resembling a Λ – can be seen on a certainly Early Islamic coin type, namely on the so-called “mihrab-‘anaza”-drachms struck approximately at the same time as the “standing caliph” fulus.⁶ Could it be that this is not merely the result of chance? My idea – and this is just guesswork, I have to reiterate – is that basically the same object is depicted in both cases, namely a lance. The Φ in fact could represent the ribbons attached to the top of the lance in a very stylised form. On the “standing caliph” fulus, the top of the object consists of a small circle. I do believe that the Φ -symbol which appears on the reverses of most “standing caliph” coins – maybe it would be more appropriate to call it the “Umayyad symbol” – is also depicted on the obverses of the Dimashq drachms in Sasanian style issued in the year AH 74 – intriguingly enough, only on the coins from this year in which also the first dated “standing caliph” dinars were struck, but not on the Dimashq drachms from AH 72 and 73. On these coins, the lower part consists of a small circle.⁷

What to make now of our tessera? If all the assumptions that have to be accepted to date it to the Early Islamic period are accepted – and that is quite a lot of “ifs” – then our small lead piece would lend credibility to the idea that what is depicted on the reverse of the “standing caliph” coins was an object that existed in reality. Clearly, it cannot have been merely a de-Christianized cross; this assumption is exceedingly unlikely if we consider that the obverse image is a well-planned, fully meaningful Arab and Muslim image. We would also expect the reverse image to have had a clear

meaning to the people of the time. I think that it could have been a symbol of sovereignty and victory which was depicted in a somewhat stylised form. Perhaps it was a lance; maybe some sort of a tropaeum, as has been suggested by Goodwin.⁸ In any case, we should bear in mind that the original cross potent was erected at the Golgotha Hill in Jerusalem, and that we can at least expect some memory of this object to have survived into the Early Islamic period, so that ‘Abd al-Malik was facing a kind of propagandistic challenge from this symbol of Christianity. This is another argument for the assumption that he responded by countering with an equally tangible and really existing object, whatever it might have been in detail. Both the way it is shown on the “standing caliph” coins as well as on our tessera proves that it was used in a propagandistically very similar form to the cross potent of Byzantium, another proof that it must have been a pivotal symbol for ‘Abd al-Malik. However, after a few years the caliph apparently came to the conclusion that for an Islamic empire, it was more characteristic and more fitting not to use any pictorial device at all, but rather to limit imperial propaganda to its finest and highest achievement, namely language and the text of the Qur’an.

A BRIEF NOTE ON A “SKINNY” STANDING CALIPH ARAB-BYZANTINE COIN PRESUMABLY FROM AMMAN

By Tareq Ramadan

Every so often collectors come across peculiar, intriguing, or never-seen-before coins. Sometimes the coins contain characteristics that are so subtle that they are almost indiscernible from their immediate counterparts and, in other instances, there is strong deviation or very noticeable variation from the norm (for that type or from that mint). In the case of the coin in question today – an Arab-Byzantine Standing Caliph coin – there were enough subtleties to provoke me to write a short note on it. This particular coin caught my attention because of the rendition of the caliph on the obverse and the slightly strange style and iconography found on the reverse.



“Skinny Caliph” obverse



Large sphere-through-pole reverse; no mint

As is visible from the photos above, this standing caliph appears ‘skinny’ and is depicted with thin arms and a large, roundish head and face, and a short beard with some remnants of either long hair or a *kafiyya*. His ‘girdle band’ shows three strings emanating from it while his *dishdasha* consists of vertical ruffles without any additional patterns. The obverse legend is of the 04-type, though most of it is not clear and only partially visible.⁹ The reverse depicts four steps and a large sphere-through-pole which is capped by an orb. An eight-pointed star is situated to the left of the steps and sphere near the words “*muḥammad ra...*” (محمد ر). On the upper right, going downwards, reads “[ra]... *sūl allāh*” (سول الله) completing the second half of the Islamic declaration of faith. The Greek letter ϕ (Phi) separates that part of the legend from the remaining portion which makes up the first half of the Muslim

⁵ W. Hahn/M. Metlich, *Money of the Byzantine Empire Continued. Justin II – Revolt of the Heraclii, 565-610*, Vienna 2009, pl. 21, no. 52, 55 f., pl. 32, no. 52-55; W. Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini III. Von Heraclius bis Leo III. / Alleinregierung (610 – 720)*, Vienna 1981, pl. 9, no. 128-133; pl. 27, no. 137-141; pl. 35, no. 60 f.; pl. 39, no. 37 f.; pl. 42, no. 29; pl. 45, no. 69 f.

⁶ L. Treadwell, “Mihrab an ‘Anaza” or “Sacrum and Spear”? A Reconsideration of an Early Marwanid Silver Drachm, *Muqarnas* 22, 2005, p. 223-268.

⁷ Schindel (as note 1), p. 28-30.

⁸ Goodwin (as note 1), p. 24.

⁹ Tony Goodwin, *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean Volume 1: The Pre-reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period*, Ashmolean Museum Oxford 2002, pg. 94

shahada and begins with “*lā ilaha...*” (لا اله – there is no god (but God)...”). Further, the reverse contains an R1 legend but lacks the place of minting.¹⁰ The coin weighs 3.4 g and measures 16 mm and its overall stylistic characteristics and iconography are most closely related to those found on the coins of Amman (which is almost certainly its place of origin).

This assertion is further supported by the existence of another coin that contains a similar-looking “skinny caliph” obverse with a clear, right-side ‘*ammān*’ (لعمان) mintmark on the reverse which reasonably confirms it as the place of minting for such “skinny caliph” types. Numismatist Ingrid Schulze kindly sent me images of the similar coin and agreed that the coin I was writing about was, in fact, from Amman.¹¹ While the obverse depictions of the caliph are quite similar, they are not identical; nor are the reverses, which indicate that both coins were struck from two separate sets of dies (though probably from the same engraver). The obverse of the coin below closely resembles that of the coin above.



Schulze specimen obverse



Schulze specimen reverse with “Amman” mint mark to right

While Standing Caliph coins represented a major effort by the Umayyads to standardise their empire’s coinage, unique, variant, odd and irregular types do surface every now and then which, to say the least, help to make this historical and numismatic era even that much more interesting and exciting.

A SECOND MUḤAMMADIYYA, AND THE FOUR MINTS OF THE BĀJUNAYS MINE

By Michael L. Bates

The original presentation of this topic¹² began with the description of similarities between certain exceptional dirhams with the mint name al-Muḥammadiyya and the earliest dirhams of 190 (806) with the mint name Ma’din Bājunays. It then sketched a continuous series of al-Muḥammadiyya dirhams with the same characteristics, back to 171 (787-88). The earliest of these is dielinked to a dirham of al-Hārūniyya, also dated 171. Since al-Hārūniyya is generally considered to be the same place as Hārūnābād, the latter mint would then have produced the first coinage from the silver of the Armenian mine of Bājunays in 169 (785-86). This paper, however, will be easier to follow in chronological sequence, starting with the development of the mine itself.

Bājunays is the Arabic equivalent of the Armenian clan and district name Apahunis or Apahunik, between northern Lake Van and the upper Aracani river, in eastern Turkey today. The precise location of the mine is not yet known. It first appears in history, without being named, in the words of the Armenian historian Ghevond:

“Now after this his son, Muhammad al-Mahdi, succeeded him. He was much more noble than his father and of much better

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Many thanks to Ingrid Schulze for the images as well as for suggesting the name “Skinny Caliph” to differentiate the caliphal figure from those normally found at Amman.

¹² At the Third Seminar on Early Iranian and Central Asian Numismatics in Memoriam Boris Kochnev (1940-2002) at Hofstra University, Hempstead, N.Y., on 4 April 2011, organized by Professors Alexandr Naymark and Daniel Varisco, to whom we are all grateful.

disposition. He opened all the treasuries which the impious al-Mansur had kept closed, and distributed gifts to his troops. He also opened the border gates, allowing merchants to trade and to satisfy the requirements of those in need. And then there was plenty in the country, and *the discovery of silver expanded*, and the inhabitants of the country were at peace from the coercive extraction of taxes. Although al-Mahdi tightened the yoke of taxation, the country rested somewhat from the cruel and calamitous tribulations *because of the discovery of silver. This was due to the additional discovery of silver in the mountains in the land of the Armenians. During his reign pure silver ore [sic?] was extracted for the needs of the population.*¹³

The first identifiable monetary product of the mine is dated 168 (784-85), the penultimate year of al-Mahdi’s reign. The dirhams bear his name, the name of the province Irmīniyya, and the mint name Hārūnābād, Persian for “Harun City,” named for the governor of the caliphate’s northwestern frontier, al-Rashīd Hārūn, son of al-Mahdi and future caliph. The Persian mint name indicates either the presence of miners from Iran, who are often mentioned in connection with early caliphal mines, or Khurasani troops to protect the mine, or both. Al-Mahdi, Hārūn and his local agent, Ḥasan, are named on the dirhams of this first year and part of 169.¹⁴



Fig. 1: dirham, Hārūnābād 168, al-Mahdi, Hārūn b. Amīr al-Mu’minīn, Ḥasan, Irmīniyya Lemberg coll. = zeno 96595

The mint name Hārūnābād was soon replaced, in 169, by the Arabic name al-Hārūniyya, which has the same meaning, since it is short for al-Madīna al-Hārūniyya. A *madīna* was, in that era, not literally a city but rather a fortified administrative centre. The synonymy of the two mint names is generally accepted on the basis of the carryover of distinctive features from the last dirhams with the one mint name to the first ones with the other.¹⁵ Al-Hārūniyya dirhams have only three dates, 169, 170, and 171 (785-88), but there is a remarkable variety of reverse types, naming different provincial and local officials.¹⁶ During these years there were no dirham issues naming Irmīniyya as the mint in the obverse margin, although these are quite common before and after this episode.



Fig. 2: dirham, al-Hārūniyya 171, al-Rashīd, Muḥammad b. Amīr al-Mu’minīn, Hārīth, ṣad American Numismatic Society 1966.126.30

¹³ Italics mine. Ghevond, *History*, translated Robert Bedrosian 2006, p. 40; also translated Zaven Arzoumanian (1982), section 37; also Bonner 1989, 179. The only other medieval author to mention the mine is the thirteenth-century geographer Yāqūt, I, 220, 455; he lists other mineral products but not silver. Qudama, 246, lists Bājunays among the provinces of Armenia. I am grateful to Dickran Kouymjian for help in navigating Armenian historiography for this article.

¹⁴ Bonner 1989 *passim*; Vardanyan 2011, 86.

¹⁵ Bonner 1989, 174.

¹⁶ Bonner 1989, 175; Vardanyan 2011, 87-91. There are also coppers from al-Hārūniyya, very rare: Vardanyan 2011, 115.



Fig. 3: dirham, al-Muhammadiyya 171, al-Rashīd, Muḥammad b. Amīr al-Mu'minīn, Hārith, ṣad
Islamic Coin Auction London 13, 116

One of the al-Hārūniyya reverse types (fig. 2) is the earliest coin to name the one-year-old Muḥammad, son of al-Rashīd. The administrative establishment that was created in the name of Hārūn seems to have been turned over to his son, because that same reverse, from the same die, is combined with two obverses of 171 (788), one bearing the mint name al-Hārūniyya (fig. 2) and the other al-Muhammadiyya (fig. 3). The latter name, on this evidence, cannot be the famous citadel of al-Rayy founded by Muḥammad's grandfather Muḥammad al-Mahdī when he was governor there. Rather, it must be the same construction as al-Hārūniyya, renamed for little Muḥammad, the future al-Amīn, al-Madīna al-Muhammadiyya instead of al-Madīna al-Hārūniyya.

As will be shown, this location is the mine of Bājunays. To identify Hārūnābād and al-Hārūniyya this way resolves several long-standing problems. Previously, most scholars have identified these two mint names with a place said to have been founded by the caliph al-Rashīd Hārūn in the eastern mountains of Cilicia in 183.¹⁷ As Vasmer argued in rebuttal,¹⁸ it is most improbable (he could have said impossible) that dirhams inscribed *Irmūniyya* would have been minted in another province. Their assignment to the correct province also eliminates the contradiction between the coins dated 168-71 and the history which puts the Cilician foundation, or its renaming, in 183. It is no longer necessary to invent elaborate speculations to explain the names of governors of Armenia on coins of a Cilician mint.¹⁹ And the "bewildering number of issues at this mint"²⁰ is explicable in parallel with the same feature of the dirhams of (the second) al-Muhammadiyya and Ma'din Bājunays.

The 171 dirham with the mint-name al-Muhammadiyya is the first of a long dirham series dated AD 171-190 (and 193-97; 787-805, 808-12) that has heretofore been catalogued with issues of al-Muhammadiyya of Rayy. The entire corpus of dirhams with this mint name in al-Rashīd's reign form a most complicated series, with several different reverse types in almost every year, up to as many as ten in 182. The ones attributable to al-Muhammadiyya in Armenia are generally those with names above and below the reverse such as Ṣurad²¹ (174-95), Sallām (172-94), and Dā'ūd (170-77, 182-95; these might be two different Dā'ūds), as well as less frequent names. In contrast, the dirhams naming Ja'far, who is generally identified as the powerful Barmakid secretary of al-Amīn, are probably all official issues of Rayy. As this is written, the count of different names on the Armenian Muhammadiyya dirhams is fifteen, subject to future research. The letter *ṣad* on al-Muhammadiyya 171-72 and al-Hārūniyya 171 is likely to represent Ṣurad, making him the longest survivor of these officers, connected to the mint names al-Hārūniyya and Ma'din Bājunays as well as to al-Muhammadiyya. Ṣurad and Sallām are often named together (172-77, 186-94), but each of these two is also named with other officials.

There are two groups of officials that are mutually exclusive: those like Sallām who are named above the reverse field

inscriptions and those like Ṣurad who are named below; no one named above is ever named below. These names, as Nicol²² suggested, are probably mine agents of some sort, evidently in two classes. Like most other government officials of the era, they probably paid in advance every year for their position, and recouped their investment by the profits of their office. In particular, one suspects that one of the two sets of officials monopolised the legal right to buy silver from the miners and take it to the mint. Each of these officials was named on the coins made from silver he brought in. Some of these coins he used to buy more silver from the miners. Each buyer, named below on the reverse, might operate under the authority of different senior officials, named at the top of the field, who also had a share in the profits. Why two officials? To keep an eye on each other, obviously. A model of this sort suggests an explanation of the several reverse types in each year at al-Hārūniyya, al-Muhammadiyya, and Ma'din Bājunays.



Fig. 4: dirham, al-Muhammadiyya 186, al-Amīn, Umm Ja'far, Muḥammad
Shamma collection = Spink Zurich 27 383a

In 186 (802) Umm Ja'far, wife of al-Rashīd and mother of al-Amīn Muḥammad, begins to be named on dirhams with the mint name al-Muhammadiyya. She is named on such dirhams in every year thereafter until 190 (805-06), suggesting that her son, now sixteen, had transferred his rights in the mine to her, although his name still appears on the coins. The dirhams with her name seem to be much more common than those without, but some of the former names continue to appear, with Umm Ja'far or in pairs without her. The position of her name above the reverse is the slender evidence that the person named there was senior to the one named below.

In 190 (805-06) there are no al-Muhammadiyya dirhams attributable to the mine except those of Umm Ja'far, nor are there any at all so attributable for several years, but in that year similar dirhams naming Umm Ja'far begin to be minted with the mint name Ma'din Bājunays, "the mine of Bājunays" (in 190 represented by a unique coin in Berlin²³). From 190 to 196 these dirhams name Umm Ja'far, accompanied by some of the names already assignable to the mine (Dā'ūd, Sallām, Ṣurad, 'Ubayd), or have one or two of those names without Umm Ja'far, as well as new names such as Masrūr.²⁴



Fig. 5: dirham, al-Muhammadiyya 187, al-Amīn, mīm, 'Ubayd
American Numismatic Society 1972.79.269

¹⁷ Al-Balādhūrī, *Futūh*, 113.

¹⁸ In Anderson, *Kochtel*, 21.

¹⁹ Bonner 1989, 175-81.

²⁰ Miles, *Rare Islamic Coins*, 60; Bonner 1989, 182.

²¹ The index volume to the SUNY translations of al-Ṭabarī lists only one person named Ṣurad (b. 'Abd Allāh al-Azdī), but there are two men, Sulaymān and Zuhayr, who are Ibn Ṣurad. Zuhayr is also Abū Ṣurad. None of these have to do with the reign of al-Rashīd; Ṣard, as a name, is wrong.

²² Nicol 1979, 111. These men, or one set of them, probably had the title *'āmil*, "agent," like the *'āmil* of the Banī Sulaym mine in 128 (745-46), al-Ṭabarī II, 1943.

²³ Nützel 1228.

²⁴ Vardanyan 2011, 92-96.



Fig. 6: dirham, al-Muḥammadiyya 189, al-Amīn, yubqī Allāh li-Umm Ja'far, Ja'far, 'Ubayd Allāh
Markov Mail Auction 6, 207



Fig. 7: dirham, al-Muḥammadiyya 190, al-Amīn, yubqī Allāh li-Umm Ja'far, 'Ubayd Allāh
Islamic Coin Auction London 3, 129



Fig. 8: dirham, Ma'din Bājunays 191, al-Amīn, Umm Ja'far, Dā'ūd
American Numismatic Society 1922.999.60

The complexity of the series is illustrated by a common type with the mint name Ma'din Bājunays, dated 190 and 191, with the word "Umm" above the reverse field and the head of the letter 'ayn below it; this must be an extra-legal emission of some sort, because no Abbasid official, even at a mining camp, would dare to call the caliph's wife merely "Umm!" (note that the person responsible identifies himself only by his initial). Nevertheless, this variety is as common, or even more so, as that with Umm Ja'far's correct nomenclature.

Coins naming Umm Ja'far correctly were minted with the name Ma'din Bājunays from 190 to 196, and in 197, for the last time, with the name al-Muḥammadiyya again. Bājunays-type dirhams with the mint name al-Muḥammadiyya begin to be minted again in 194, followed by more in 195, 196, and 197 (809-13), while Ma'din Bājunays continues to produce dirhams naming Umm Ja'far until 196, and then, more normal dirham issues until al-Mā'mūn's death in 218 (833).²⁵ The late Muḥammadiyya dirhams of 194-97 name al-Amīn as caliph, so these are not mulings of old and new dies; and they cannot come from al-Muḥammadiyya of Rayy, which was controlled by al-Mā'mūn from 193 onward. The latest dirham of the series, dated 197 (812-13) was described by its cataloguer as "a mystery coin that should not have any reason to exist."²⁶ This statement would be quite justifiable if one thinks that the dirham was minted at al-Rayy, but it surely was not. Nevertheless, it is still something of a mystery that it does not have the Ma'din Bājunays mint name like its similar predecessors of 195 and 196. Perhaps these late dirhams are explicable if the location of the mint al-Muḥammadiyya and that of the mint that used the name Ma'din

²⁵ Vardanyan 2011, 97-102.

²⁶ Baldwin Islamic Coin Auction 13 (30/10/2007), 124.

Bājunays were different, though nearby; and that the volume of production or some other factor made the opening of a second mint at the old location expedient.



Fig. 9: dirham, Ma'din Bājunays 190, al-Amīn, "Umm", 'ayn
Islamic Coin Auction London 13, 108



Fig. 10: dirham, Ma'din Bājunays 195, al-Khalifa Muḥammad, Dā'ūd, Ṣurad
American Numismatic Society 1917.215.394



Fig. 11: dirham, Ma'din Bājunays 195, al-Khalifa Muḥammad al-Sayyida Umm al-Khalifa
American Numismatic Society 1971.104.82



Fig. 12: dirham, al-Muḥammadiyya 197, al-Khalifa Muḥammad al-Sayyida Umm al-Khalifa
Islamic Coin Auction 13, 124

These last Muḥammadiyya dirhams from Bājunays are very rare. Nicol suggested that Ma'din Bājunays was a mine-head mint and somehow owned by or assigned to Umm Ja'far.²⁷ He was surely correct, but the similar use of her name and the names of various other officials on dirhams of al-Muḥammadiyya shows that the mine was transferred to her already in 186, and those latter dirhams also are to be attributed to the Bājunays mine-head mint. The presence of some of the same names on other al-Muḥammadiyya coins extending back to 171 indicates the same attribution for those dirhams, and the die link of the latter year to a dirham of al-Hārūniyya extends the Bājunays mine series back to the first dirham of Hārūnābād in 168 (784-85). All these coins with their different mint names are from the same location in the southwest quadrant of ancient Armenia.

²⁷ Nicol 1979, 88, 111.

This brief survey omits many anomalies and loose ends. More research will be needed to establish securely which al-Muḥammadiyya dirham types are to be assigned to Bājunays, which are from al-Muḥammadiyya of Rayy, and which possibly are from other places, such as a location in the Maghrib and a mint in the Khazar land (just over the mountains from Bājunays). Two special methodological tools will be helpful. A full die study of all dirhams with the mint names Hārūnābād, al-Hārūniyya, al-Muḥammadiyya and Ma'dīn Bājunays, and also if possible those with the mint names Irmīniyya and Ifīrqiya, will probably turn up more die links between Bājunays types as well as define other groups that may be attributable elsewhere. Trace element analysis of the silver in dirhams from those mints will certainly fingerprint the dirhams made from Bājunays mine silver, enabling the identification of dirhams made of the same silver from the mints of Armenia, the Khazars, Hārūn's capital al-Rusāfa, and Madīnat al-Salām where al-Amīn Muḥammad and Umm Ja'far resided.

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THE COINAGE OF TAQĪ KHĀN DURRĀNĪ, REBEL IN KIRMĀN

By A. Akopyan (Moscow), F. Mosanef (Tehran)

After the death of Nādir Shāh, Iran descended into civil war. During this period, Karīm Khān Zand, who succeeded in conquering his rivals, tried to stabilise his rule throughout Iran. The province of Kirmān after the death of Nādir was ruled by the local governor, Shāhrukh Khān Afshār, who was recognised by the Afsharid kings, °Adil Shāh and Shāhrukh. But in fact Shāhrukh Khān Afshār ruled in Kirmān independently and refused to send tax to the Afshārids. As a result, in AH 1172, Karīm Khān Zand sent Khodā Murād Khān Zand to capture Kirmān. Shāhrukh Khān passed away before Khodā Murād Khān reached there; as a result, Kirmān was easily captured and put under the control of the Zand governor.²⁸

The rule of Khodā Murād Khān continued until AH 1176. In this year Taqī Khān Durrānī, who was a coal seller and a hunter, on his way from his family village of Durrān, came to Kirmān to sell his coals, and bring a hunted ibex to present to the governor. He was, however, insulted and beaten in Khodā Murād Khān's palace.²⁹ Because of this, he decided to take his revenge and returned to Kirmān with 300 of his friends and relatives. They entered Kirmān in the middle of the night and attacked Khodā Murād Khān's residence, where they killed him along with thirty of his guards.

Taqī Khān Durrānī then took control of Kirmān, whereupon he declared himself ruler and his brother, Aḥmad Khān, sheriff of the city. Karīm Khān Zand was shocked at the events which had happened in Kirmān and sent an army under two of his commanders, Amīr Güne Khān Afshār and Muḥammad Amīn Khān Garūssī, in AH 1177 to the city. But the two commanders fell out and fought each other before reaching Kirmān, with the result that the army returned to Shīrāz without any result.³⁰ The second time, Karīm Khān sent an army under the sole command of Muḥammad Amīn Khān. Taqī Khān Durrānī attacked the Zand army several times but finally left the city and escaped to a mountainous area in the suburbs.³¹

Kirmān was captured by the Zand army in AH 1178, after four months. The Zand governor of Kirmān who had not been successful in repressing Taqī Khān, decided to attack him in the mountainous area. Muḥammad Amīn Khān Garūssī was defeated by Taqī Khān Durrānī and fled from Kirmān. Karīm Khān who was surprised at the defeat of his governor, after his arrival at Shīrāz on the 2nd of Šafār 1179, sent Taqī Khān Bafqī, who was the governor of Yazd, to repress the rebellion in Kirmān. But before any serious engagement between the armies of Taqī Khān Durrānī and Taqī Khān Bafqī could take place, the latter, fearing defeat, escaped to Yazd in disgrace.³²

This time Karīm Khān sent one of his bravest commanders, °Alī Khān Shāhsavan, with his troops to Kirmān, and they succeeded in surrounding Kirmān. One day during this siege, when °Alī Khān was reviewing his troops beside the walls of the city he was killed by a sniper. The death of their commander discouraged the troops, and they returned to Shīrāz.

Taqī Khān, who now felt more confident, considered himself a serious rival of Karīm Khān in Kirmān and south-eastern Iran and asked other areas to send him taxes. In the spring of AH 1179 (Ramaḍān or Shawwāl), Karīm Khān sent troops under the command of Nadhar °Alī Khān Zand towards Kirmān. Nadhar °Alī Khān surrounded the city for some time until, with the inhabitants facing hunger and starvation, Taqī Khān Durrānī decided to escape to his village in the mountainous area. This time, however, when he

²⁸ Mīrzā Muḥammad Šādiq Mūsavī Iṣfahānī. *Tārikh-i Gūī Gushā*. Tehrān, SH 1366. P. 90-91; Ḥajj Mīrzā Hasan Ḥusaynī Fasayī. *Fārs nāme-ye Nāširi*. Tehrān, SH 1388. Vol. I. P. 601.

²⁹ Muḥammad Ḥāshim Āṣaf. *Rūstam al-tavārikh*. Tehrān, SH 1352. P. 375.

³⁰ *Tārikh-i Gūī Gushā*. P. 117-119, 136; Reza-Qolī Khān Hedāyat. *Rūḍat al-ṣafā-ye Nāširi*. Tehrān, SH 1385. Vol. XIII. P. 7159-7162.

³¹ *Tārikh-i Gūī Gushā*. P. 140; *Rūḍat al-ṣafā-ye Nāširi*. P. 7161-7162.

³² *Tārikh-i Gūī Gushā*. P. 140-142; *Rūḍat al-ṣafā-ye Nāširi*. P. 7162; *Fārs nāme-ye Nāširi*. P. 608-609.

tried to escape from the siege, some of his guards betrayed him and he was arrested by the Zand army. He was taken to Shīrāz, where he was executed by order of Karīm Khān. Thus did one of the longer rebellions in Zand history end.³³

Numismatic evidence confirms the rule of the Zand governor, Muḥammad Amīn Khān Garūsī, in Kirmān in AH 1178 – there is known a gold ¼-mohur of this year struck in Kirmān (weight 2.71g, fig. 1).³⁴



Fig. 1

This coin bears the usual couplet placed on the obverse of coins of Karīm Khān:

شده آفتاب و ماه زر و سیم در جهان
از سکه امام بحق صاحب الزمان

shod āftab o māh zar o sīm dar jahān / āz sekke-ye imām be-ḥaqq ṣāhib al-zamān

(the sun and moon have become gold and silver throughout the world, from the coin of the Imam, indeed the Master of Time, i.e. Mahdī, the Hidden Imam).

The reverse has the mint and date in a cartouche

ضرب دار الامان کرمان ۱۱۷۸

ḍarb dār al-āmān kirmān 1179

above: *yā, karīm* (oh, Karīm).

The last evocation “oh, Karīm”, i.e. *Oh, The Bountiful* is addressed to Allah, as *Karīm* is one of the 99 names of God, but it is also an allusion to the name of Karīm Khān Zand. As Karīm Khān never styled himself Shāh, and, instead, used the titles *vakīl-e ra‘āyā* (representative of the people) he could not use the *de jure* right of *sikka*. Hence, he placed his name on the coins only in that way.³⁵

According to the above historical account, during all of the year 1179 Kirmān was ruled by Taqī Khān Durrānī. Recently, a silver ‘abbāsī of AH 1179 (weight 4.33 g, size 21 mm, fig. 2), came to light, struck in Kirmān with the same legend on the reverse and with the same couplet on the obverse but without the evocation *yā, karīm*. The absence of Karīm Khān’s evocation provided us with a firm basis to ascribe this coin directly to Taqī Khān Durrānī.



Fig. 2

³³ *Tārīkh-i Gītī Gushā*. P. 143, 150-153; *Rūḍat al-ṣafā-ye Nāṣiri*. P. 7162-7163; *Fārs nāme-ye Nāṣiri*. P. 609; *Rustam al-tavārīkh*. P. 376-377.

³⁴ Baldwin’s Islamic Coin Auction 14, 8th July 2008. Item no. 484. According to Diler (Ö. Diler. *Islamic mints*. Istanbul, 2009. P. 1003) this type is the only one struck in Kirmān in this year.

³⁵ St. Album. *A Checklist of Islamic Coins*. 2nd edition. Santa Rosa (CA), 1998. P. 134. The same information is in the manuscript of the 3rd edition (pp. 259-260).

To show their disobedience and to announce their rebellion, this innovation – the absence of *yā, karīm* – was also used, after Karīm Khān’s death in AH 1193, by other rebels, like Taqī Khān Bafqī in Yazd (AH 1199-1204)³⁶ and Hedāyat Allāh in Rasht (ca. AH 1199-1200).³⁷ Moreover, later, in the time of Aghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār, came the rebellion of Aḥmad Khān Donboli in Khūy and Tabrīz³⁸, and he deleted the evocation *yā, muḥammad* from his coins of AH 1204-1206.

Despite the fact that the evocation *yā, karīm* was used by Karīm Khān from AH 1173³⁹, in Shīrāz, his capital, it was not until AH 1179 that it started to be used on his coins.⁴⁰ It seems that the events in Kirmān of that year stimulated Karīm Khān to order that *yā, karīm* must to be added on the reverses of all the coins struck in his territories to underline his rule. Thus, this newly described coin is the earliest coin of a rebel struck during the reign of Karīm Khān Zand.

THE MARATHAS IN DELHI IN THE ‘PANIPAT’ YEAR: A NUMISMATIC INSIGHT

By Shailendra Bhandare, University of Oxford

Introduction

The ‘Third Battle of Panipat’ was fought between the Marathas, under the command of Sadashiv Rao alias Bhau, the cousin of Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, and an Afghan majority coalition led by Ahmad Shah Durrani, the king of Afghanistan, on 14th January 1761. The defeat suffered by the Marathas at the hands of the Afghans was a pivotal moment in the history of the Maratha Confederacy. In a contemporary letter, the loss of important persons who perished in its course were famously alluded to (using a partly numismatic metaphor, to say the least) as ‘two pearls, twenty-seven mohurs’ and ‘countless rupees and smaller change’.

In the historical memory of Maharashtra, Panipat remains alive as a saga of sacrifice, bravery and tragedy. Such was its enormity that it left a legacy of its own in the Marathi language with phrases like ‘having met with one’s Panipat’ alluding to ‘total annihilation’ or ‘Bhaugardee’ meaning ‘chaos of a calamitous order’. In the years leading up to the fall from this historic precipice, the Marathas reached their political zenith with troops carrying the Maratha flags to the traditional boundaries of ‘Hindustan’, the banks of the River Indus at Attock (now in Punjab province, Pakistan). This achievement also left a mark on the language – ‘pennants beyond Attock’ is used as a phrase in Marathi to describe ‘crowning glory’.

The roots of what happened on that fateful day on the plain outside the modern town of Panipat can be traced in events, personalities and politics of the preceding five decades. In the early decades of the 18th century, the Marathas emerged as nominal vassals of the Mughal emperor, largely as a result of the political ‘worldview’ of Shahu, the ‘Chhatrapati’ or supremo of the confederacy. The right to collect a portion of the empire’s revenue from designated provinces was the Marathas’ reward for accepting Mughal suzerainty and the duty to ‘protect’ the empire in return was its corollary. Shahu’s prime ministers, or ‘Peshwas’ aided in fulfilling both these tasks.

Lucrative as this deal was, realising the revenue portion was a different matter altogether. A combination of the diminishing power of successive Mughal emperors, the ambitions of some of the empire’s courtiers as well as other emerging ‘regional’ polities, and the involvement of ‘foreign’ interests such as those of the Iranians and the Afghans (not to forget the Europeans), all limited the extent to which the Marathas could realise their financial goals through the pursuit of their political policy. The provinces over which the Marathas claimed their rights proved to be a constant bone of contention. Campaigns carried out, firstly to assert the right to collect the revenue share and,

³⁶ *Op. cit.* P. 135. Nos. A2826, B2826.

³⁷ *Ibid.* Nos. E2826, F2826.

³⁸ *Op. cit.* P. 135. No. 2840.

³⁹ St. Album. *Checklist of Islamic Coins*. Manuscript of 3rd edition. P. 259. Description of type C of Karīm Khān.

⁴⁰ *Op. cit.* P. 259. Note 608.

secondly, to get the cash into their hands, imposed a severe financial burden on the exchequer, led to an increasing indebtedness to wealthy moneylenders and the need to carry on further expeditions year after year. The system of ceding financial rights oriented to specific territories (later perfected as 'subsidiary alliance' by Lord Wellesley) meant more imperial provinces could be promised away in return for political gains. Indeed, such promises made to the Marathas in the decade before Panipat saw them get into increased political wrangling. The history of the Marathas leading to Panipat is, thus, a story of realising economic 'hard facts' on the one hand and territorial expansion, political responsibilities and personal valour on the other.

One of the major sub-plots of the story leading to Panipat has attracted a lot of attention, particularly in nationalistic history-writing of the 20th century. This is the episode wherein Sadashiv Rao Bhau allegedly 'destroyed the Mughal throne of Delhi' in August 1760 – an act which the nationalist historians view as the ultimate defiance of the 'alien' Mughal sovereignty, perpetrated through the agency of the 'resurgent regional nationalism' of the Marathas. As we will see further, the aim of this action was much more mundane than the glory thus attributed to it – in fact the 'throne' was never destroyed, just the lining above it was removed; the lining was made of silver and silver was needed to strike coins so that Bhau could feed his starving army. While the incident itself is very widely known, no attempt has hitherto been made to identify and attribute the coins that were struck as a result of it.

And this is not by any means the only instance in the story of the 'Panipat Year' to feature coins - there are indeed more, and they more or less share the same attributive fate (or lack thereof!). The primary aim of this paper is, therefore, to investigate these instances from a numismatic viewpoint and to provide a wider historical context to them, so they can be understood as significant elements of the 'Panipat' story. In addition, it will bring forth publication of new numismatic data and a discussion about questions of attribution. At the outset, it must also be noted that much of the exercise in attribution undertaken here depends on a careful reckoning of the events, as they unfolded, with AH dates and regnal years (RY) of the rulers in whose name the coins were struck, in particular the Mughal emperors, Alamgir II, Shahjahan III and Shah Alam II and the Afghan kings, namely Ahmad Shah Durrani and his son, Taimur Shah, as his deputy or 'nizam', for the province of the Punjab. At the end of the paper, I have appended a reckoning chart for AD dates, corresponding to these chronological details.

The historical sources I have utilised include vols. 1 and 2 of Sir Jadunath Sarkar's masterpiece, 'Fall of the Mughal Empire' (Sangam Books, London / Orient Longmans, Bombay, 1991) and 'Panipat 1761', an impressively analytical Marathi account by T. S. Shejwalkar (Pune, 1993). 'The Rise and Decline of the Ruhela Chieftaincies in 18th century India' by Iqbal Husain (OUP 1994) also serves as an important source for Indo-Afghan history. Amongst other Marathi primary sources, '*Pānipatchā Sangrām*', a collection of papers and excerpts from non-Marathi textual sources pertaining to Panipat, edited by N. R. Phatak and Setumadhav Rao Pagdi (Mumbai, 1961) provides some useful details pertaining to coinage. Marathi historical narratives or 'Bakhars' are often considered an important secondary source of information when it comes to Maratha History. *Bhāūsāhebānchi Bakhar* (ed. S. N. Joshi, 8th (critical) Edition, 1965), an 18th century narrative in this genre contains some information about money supply and coining undertaken by the Marathas at Delhi and Panipat.

For numismatic details, I have made use of 'Maratha Mints and Coinage' by K. K. Maheshwari and K. W. Wiggins (IIRNS, Nasik, 1989) and the 3rd volume of the Punjab Museum Catalogue, entitled 'Coins of Nadir Shah and the Durrani dynasty' by R. B. Whitehead (Oxford, 1934). Numismatic data has been sourced from institutional, virtual and private sources. The on-line database www.zeno.ru has provided some images, while coins from the collections of Jan Lingen (the Netherlands), Stan Goron (UK), JP Goenka (Kolkata/Mumbai), Aman ur-Rahman (Dubai) and the Stevens Collection (on long term loan c/o the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), have been used to illustrate key numismatic points. I most gratefully acknowledge the help and support these gentlemen have given me. Thanks are also due to Jan Lingen and Stan Goron for discussing some worthwhile numismatic aspects featured in the article and to Stan and Paul Stevens for having

a preliminary read and making suggestions.

Maratha Involvement in Delhi Affairs, c. 1752 – 1757

By the mid-18th century, the Marathas had become a force to be reckoned with in Indian politics. Of the north Indian provinces, Gujarat and Malwa had been brought under their control by the early 1750's. Their involvement in the affairs of provinces further north was the direct cause of the ambitions of the Afghan king, Ahmad Shah Durrani. The province of the Punjab had been surrendered to Nadir Shah of Iran after his invasion of India in 1739, but after Nadir Shah's murder in 1747, it had gradually reverted to descendants of the Mughal governors of the province and held nominally by them under Mughal sovereignty. Ahmad Shah, being the successor of Nadir in the eastern part of his kingdom, laid his claim to the Punjab as his political 'patrimony'. After a first, unsuccessful attempt in 1747, he had managed to secure a foothold in the Punjab during his second invasion of the Punjab in 1749. As his forces advanced to Lahore for a third time in March 1752, taking advantage of the on-going strife between the emperor and his wazir, Safdar Jang, the latter concluded a defensive treaty with the Marathas. Under the articles of this treaty, the Marathas were assured a sum of 3 million rupees to keep the Afghans at bay. They were also given the right to collect a quarter of the revenues from the imperial provinces of the Punjab and Sind. The Peshwa's generals were to be received at the imperial court like other high officers of the empire. In return, the Peshwa along with his generals undertook to defend the empire from foreign invaders. He was also to bring rebellious courtiers, local rajas and *zamindars* to heel.

Before the Marathas could appear at Delhi, however, Safdar Jang's plot was thwarted by the emperor, who acted on the counsel of his confidant, the eunuch Javid Khan, and ceded the province of Punjab to the Durrani. Despite this, Mir Mannu, the Mughal governor of the province, managed to keep it under his control by nominally changing his allegiance to the Durrani king.

As for the Marathas, although the power rested in the hands of the Peshwa, Balaji Bajirao, the 'movers and shakers' so far as north India was concerned were his younger brother, Raghunath Rao, and trusted lieutenants, Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia. After their conquest of Malwa and Gujarat, the Marathas were seen as key players in various power disputes in north India. They became embroiled in two campaigns in the early 1750's - one was the war of succession in Jodhpur and the other was the conflict with Surajmal, the Jat raja of Bharatpur. Both these involvements were marred by important casualties on the Maratha side – Jayappa Sindhia was murdered at Nagore while pursuing the Jodhpur campaign and Khanda Rao, Malhar Rao's only son, was killed in the battle of Kumbher while fighting against the Jats. After Jayappa's demise, Sindhia affairs passed into the hands of his young son, Jankoji, who was mentored by his uncle, Jayappa's younger brother, Dattaji.

After 1752, following Ahmad Shah Durrani's third invasion of the Punjab, politics in the Mughal court quickly slid into anarchy. Key events in these years were the rebellion, ousting and subsequent death of the wazir, Safdar Jang and the rise of 'Imad ul-Mulk as the new wazir and 'king-maker'. 'Imad ul-Mulk Ghazi ud-Din II, was the young grandson of Nizam ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I by his eldest son, Ghazi ud-Din I Firuz Jang. In the beginning of 1754, the relations between the emperor, Ahmad Shah Bahadur, and 'Imad ul-Mulk, who was then the *Bakhshi* (paymaster general) of the empire, rapidly deteriorated. 'Imad had his eyes on the office of the wazir, which was held by his rival, Intizam ud-Daula, after Safdar Jang's death. To realise his ambitions, 'Imad had to seek the help of the Marathas, as he had very few supporters in the imperial court to help him. The Marathas made peace with the Jats and marched to Delhi to 'Imad's aid. His bid for power was thus successful – Ahmad Shah Bahadur was deposed on 2nd of June 1754 and thrown into confinement together with Intizam ud-Daula. 'Imad became the new wazir and proclaimed Alamgir II, the son of Jahandar Shah, as the new emperor.

East of the Punjab, in the northern Gangetic plains of north India, another polity of Afghan descent had taken root from the mid-17th century. These Afghans were the descendants of landholders who had been settling in the region under Mughal patronage displacing the local Rajput ruling class. Their forefathers were adventurers and

mercenaries who had left the barren Afghan heartland in search of a better life. Collectively they were known as 'Ruhelas' and the region in which they inhabited came to be known as 'Ruhelkhand'. ('Ruhela' is the more accurate version for the anglicised 'Rohilla' and I have chosen to use the former over the latter.) The Ruhelas traditionally harboured hostility to the 'Irani' faction in the imperial court at Delhi and as such were 'daggers-drawn' towards the Wazir Safdar Jang.

In the 1750's, a Ruhela named Najib Khan, emerged as the most prominent amongst these 'Afghans gone native' in India. By the mid-1750's he had become established in a town he named after himself as Najibabad and wielded considerable influence in the district of Saharanpur. The intrigues between 'Imad and the emperor had fired his ambitions to covet the high imperial office of the wazir, which 'Imad had only just managed to secure for himself.

The promises 'Imad made to the Marathas were very difficult to fulfil given the bankruptcy of the imperial treasury. The Marathas raised their claims to an impossible sum of 8.25 million rupees. 'Imad could pay only a fraction of this huge amount. The Marathas launched severe depredations in and around Delhi for the rest of the year to exact money. The country was plunged into disorder. Najib Khan was quick to take advantage of this situation and stood in open defiance of 'Imad. At the heart of his machinations was of course his ambition to oust 'Imad and become the wazir himself.

By early 1755, 'Imad had managed to turn the Marathas away from Delhi by promising them the remainder of the money through bankers' advances and committing the revenues of some imperial provinces in the south Gangetic Doab. Only a small Maratha force remained at Delhi under the command of Antaji Mankeshwar.

'Imad then tried to bring the Ruhelas to heel by his own strength. He attacked Najib Khan but, with the financial ruin the empire was facing, the campaign ended in dismal failure. Furthermore, the campaign against Najib Khan, elicited a response from his kinsman, the Durrani king, from across the Indus.

The Afghan Invasion of the Punjab and North India 1756-57

Ahmad Shah Durrani had two immediate reasons for launching his fourth invasion of the Punjab – the first was the infighting involving rival claimants to the governorship of the Punjab that had erupted following the death of the former governor, Mir Mannu, and the second was the war against his kinsmen, the Ruhelas, that was waged by 'Imad. The Afghan king marched to Lahore in October 1756 and occupied the city. He then appointed his protégé, Khwaja Abdulla, as the governor. The counter-claimant, Adina Beg, fled towards his domains in east Punjab and thence to Delhi, with the Afghan army in hot pursuit. Ahmad Shah's presence in the Punjab came as a boon to the Ruhelas, as the invading Afghans came to the aid of their brethren settled in India.

The Durrani campaign ended in the sack and plunder of Delhi in early 1757. The Afghans subsequently sacked the Hindu holy city of Mathura. However, the advancing north Indian summer was not a season the Afghans were accustomed to. A cholera epidemic broke out, forcing the Afghan army to return to their homeland. On his way back, Ahmad Shah re-installed the beleaguered emperor, Alamgir II, on the throne in Delhi and gave the wazirate back to 'Imad ul-Mulk. But he left Najib Khan at the helm as the 'plenipotentiary' with supreme command of affairs. In May 1757, Ahmad Shah halted at Lahore on the way to Kabul from Delhi and proclaimed his son, Taimur Shah, as the 'nizam' (deputy) for the *subahs* of the Punjab.

However, the 'unholy alliance' which Ahmad Shah Durrani created between Alamgir II, 'Imad and Najib Khan was doomed from the word go as none of them trusted the others. As soon as Ahmad Shah turned his back, 'Imad plotted against Najib with the emperor's complicity. Once again, he managed to gain Maratha support in his bid – the Marathas under the command of Raghunath Rao attacked Delhi in August 1757 and besieged Najib Khan. He could not hold out against them and made a truce, cleverly negotiating through Malhar Rao Holkar to seek a pardon for his life and safe passage to Najibabad, his fief across the Yamuna River. Raghunath Rao reluctantly conceded and let Najib leave. However, the Marathas were aware of the fact that the continued Afghan presence in the Punjab would help bolster the Ruhela position any time and this came to be a constant threat to any

political arrangements arrived at in Delhi. For this reason, they decided to rid the Punjab of the Afghans and restore the province to the Mughal faction.

The Marathas in the Punjab, 1758 – 1759

At the end of January 1758, the Maratha troops of Raghunath Rao and Malhar Rao Holkar assembled around Delhi and began their bid to free the Punjab. Soon after Taimur Shah became the 'nizam' of the Punjab in May 1757, a minor incident involving some of his Afghan troops and a Sikh village headman triggered a major Sikh rebellion, which plagued the Punjab (November 1757 – February 1758). Durrani authority began to falter. Adina Beg Khan, the contender for the governorship of the province under the Mughals, had been appointed Taimur Shah's deputy to govern the eastern part of the Punjab. He saw a chance to reassert his ambitions coming.

Taking advantage of the lawlessness in the Punjab, the complicity of Adina Beg Khan and the rebellious Sikhs, the Marathas launched their campaign by capturing Sarhind on 21 March. During the siege, Adina Beg openly defected from the Durrani ranks and joined the Marathas in a renewed bid to secure the governorship of the Punjab. Invigorated by the capture of Sarhind, Raghunath Rao marched on to Lahore. With no Afghan resistance beyond Sarhind, and Adina Beg on their side, the Marathas arrived at Lahore in less than two weeks' time.

Taimur Shah's position in Lahore thus became precarious. He had not enough food, the countryside was ravaged by Sikh rebels and no help could be sought from across the Khyber, as Ahmad Shah had been busy quelling rebellions in the west of Afghanistan. Taimur, therefore, decided to abandon the city and flee westwards crossing the river Ravi. Lahore came into Maratha possession on 10 April 1758. Raghunath Rao duly appointed Adina Beg as the governor of the province and the latter promised to pay an annual tribute of 7.5 million rupees for this favour. As Adina Beg was an old hand in managing the affairs of the province, he pacified the Sikhs and appointed his son-in-law, Mirza Khan, as his deputy at Lahore. With these arrangements in place, the Marathas turned back to Delhi. Raghunath Rao returned to Pune in September 1758, where he received a hero's welcome.

This 'Pax Maharashtra' lasted only for five months. In October 1758, Adina Beg suddenly died and, with his death, disorder once again erupted in the Punjab. Afghans and Gakkhars from across the Jhelum threatened the province. Mirza Khan, the late Adina Beg's deputy at Lahore, became the effective governor of the province. With the help of Maratha troops left behind, he tried to push the Gakkhars back.

The anarchy in the Punjab prompted the Peshwa to order one of his ablest commanders, Dattaji Sindhia, to take charge and restore order to the province. Dattaji had met Raghunath Rao in Malwa, during the latter's journey to Pune. Raghunath Rao had been acutely aware of the folly he was obliged to commit at the behest of his old and trusted commander, Malhar Rao, which was to keep Najib Khan free to cause further intrigues. He, therefore, counselled Dattaji to try and annihilate Najib Khan.

Thus Dattaji set out to the north with two main aims – to restore the Punjab to the Marathas, and to vanquish Najib Khan. He also faced the task of collecting arrears of tribute including that from the Delhi government. Of these, the first objective was accomplished with relative ease. Dattaji's armies were vast in comparison to the brigands who had usurped the command of the Punjab. In April 1759, Dattaji's troops reached the eastern part of the Punjab, where they were received by the late Adina Beg's son. Dattaji dispatched Sabaji Sindhia to Lahore and restored order, taking over the governorship and the administration of the province. With the Punjab firmly back in Maratha hands, Dattaji turned his attention to his other goal – that of bringing Najib Khan to heel. But Najib managed to entrench himself in the fortress of Shukartal. Dattaji had no alternative than to launch a siege and hope to bring Najib to surrender by starving his troops out of resources. The siege dragged on for much longer than expected and Dattaji's army became entangled in it.

The tide then began turning against the Marathas. Ahmad Shah Durrani finished with his campaigns in western Afghanistan about the same time. He now had time on his hands to re-assert his rule in the Punjab. His ally, the Ruhela Najib Khan, was now facing Dattaji's threat and he made incessant appeals to his powerful Afghan kinsman

to come to his rescue. He also employed a malicious rhetoric to further his politics – he gave the conflict a markedly religious turn in order to garner support against the Marathas. This rhetoric was articulated by Shah Waliullah, a powerful clergyman, in a series of letters to Ahmad Shah in which he exhorted the Afghan king to rescue the Islamic empire of India from the tyranny of Maratha infidels.

Taking advantage of the fact that Dattaji was busy at Shukartal, the Afghans crossed the Indus and advanced towards Lahore. Without Dattaji's help, his governor, Sabaji, chose to abandon Lahore. The Afghan onslaught was so powerful that they not only re-occupied Lahore, but chased the fleeing Maratha armies across the Punjab. Sarhind was taken back from the Marathas on 27 November 1759. Dattaji hurriedly lifted the siege of Shukartal against Najib Khan and rushed to the help of the Maratha army fleeing the Punjab.

The Afghans forded the Yamuna River and joined ranks with their Ruhela kinsmen. Together, their armies defeated the Marathas on 22 December near Thanesar in Haryana. Dattaji fell rapidly back towards Delhi and pitched camp at Barari Ghat, 10 miles north of Delhi. The final blow came on 9 January 1760, when an Afghan marksman managed to shoot Dattaji dead while he was reconnoitring just outside his camp. Having killed the commander, the Ruhelas charged against the Marathas, who fled in disarray. They were chased and slaughtered by the Afghans. Dattaji's nephew, Jankoji, managed to reach the realms of his ally, Surajmal, the Jat Raja of Bharatpur. The Afghans occupied Delhi in late January 1760. After occupying Delhi, Ahmad Shah entrusted the affairs of Delhi to an able Afghan governor named Yaqub Ali Khan.

Politics in Delhi had taken another turn in the meantime. The wazir, 'Imad ul-Mulk, found the emperor Alamgir II's ambitions too lofty for a servile puppet, and murdered him on 29 November 1759. He then installed a prince, supposedly a grandson of Kam Bakhsh, the son of Aurangzeb, as 'Shahjahan III' on the throne. After the Maratha defeat in January 1760, he fled from Delhi, fearing an Afghan backlash.

Ahmad Shah then launched a campaign against the Jats and the Marathas. Malhar Rao Holkar had been sent by the Peshwa to aid Dattaji, but he fell short of the purpose as Dattaji was killed. He had then joined forces with Jankoji Sindhia in the safety of the Jat heartlands, but the Sindhia-Holkar armies were attacked and defeated once more by the Afghan alliance on 4 March. After this victory, the Afghans decided to station themselves at Aligarh, in Najib Khan's territories, to brace themselves against the advancing north Indian summer, which they found hard to bear. Sarkar (vol. 2, p. 148) mentions that 'the political centre of gravity shifted from Delhi to the Doab'.

The Maratha occupation of the Punjab thus lasted for almost a year. The news of the loss of the Punjab and the chain of defeats following the death of Dattaji Sindhia caught the Peshwa while in a celebratory mood – his cousin, Sadashiv Rao, alias Bhau, who so far had been managing the financial and administrative side of the Peshwa's domains, had proven his military skills as well, having scored a major victory at Udgir against the long-standing foe of the Marathas in the Deccan, the Nizam of Hyderabad. Now a fresh expedition to north India was needed to eject the Afghan invaders – an expedition more powerful than all the previous ones.

The Peshwa's brother and an old north India hand, Raghunath Rao, would perhaps have been the one most suitable to lead it. But the Peshwa was not impressed by his lack of statesmanship in leaving Najib Khan free, as well as his tribute management whilst on his previous campaign. The Peshwa, therefore, decided to give the command of this momentous expedition to Sadashiv Rao Bhau. He met him when the latter was on the way to Pune from his Udgir campaign and directed him to proceed to the north. A massive army was gathered for this campaign. Almost every Maratha nobleman, retainer of armed bands, and feudal lord was summoned to mobilise his troops for the campaign. Added to these, there were mercenary soldiers from the corps won over from the Nizam of Hyderabad. Thus began the last Maratha effort against the Afghans, the effort that was to culminate in the battle at Panipat almost a year later.

Sadashiv Rao Bhau's Expedition to Delhi and the Battle of Panipat, 1760-1761

Bhau left the Deccan soon after his appointment as the commander of the expedition to expel the Afghans on 13 March 1760. Accompanying him was Vishwas Rao, the Peshwa's oldest son, only a teenager at the time. There were several Maratha noblemen in Bhau's retinue, including the old north India hands, Malhar Rao Holkar and Jankoji Sindhia. But the army was burdened with a civilian presence as well – all the nobles came with their families and other household staff; there were itinerant traders, suppliers of fodder and grain and other tradesmen. Taking advantage of the security afforded while travelling with an army, large numbers of people joined the expedition, so they could undertake pilgrimage to holy Hindu cities such as Mathura in the vicinity of Delhi.

As regards financing this massive expedition, Bhau's position was rather precarious. The army was already in arrears for the previous north Indian campaigns. Bhau had just enough money to keep the army on the march, but he depended heavily on his revenue collectors to supply him with specie, so that not only the army could be paid but the supplies and munitions for the expedition could be secured, the farther he went from the Deccan. The record of the Maratha revenue collectors like Govind Ballal Bundélé and Naro Shankar was not admirable. There was room to believe that they had resorted to personal enrichment instead of remitting the dues to Pune. Govind Ballal had established himself in the lower Doab, making Itawa his headquarters. His sway extended to Jalaun, Konch and Kalpi. Naro Shankar had made Jhansi his base. Bhau had been in charge of finance before embarking on his military career and his management style had antagonised these collectors. Unless they paid for it, the expedition was doomed to suffer from financial starvation.

And this is what happened – with his large retinue, Bhau took more time than he expected to get beyond the Chambal River, which he did on 8 June 1760, just when the monsoons were advancing. Larger rivers lay in their way, like the Yamuna and the Gambhir, and the Marathas had to ford them to engage with the Afghan alliance which was camped across the Yamuna in the Doab region. But the rivers flooded and the Marathas had to wait till they found it safe to ford them. In the meantime Bhau negotiated with other political powers in the region to make a coalition against the Afghans and to ensure steady financial help. The Jats were firmly on the Marathas' side but Shuja' ud-Daula, the Nawab of Awadh, who was a key player, was wavering about whom to pledge his support to. All Bhau wished was that he remained neutral if he could not be an ally. Five weeks passed during which Bhau learnt that his arch-rival, Najib Khan Ruhela, had managed to turn Shuja' ud-Daula to the Afghan cause. Najib's religious rhetoric – of articulating what was an Indo-Afghan conflict into a 'Hindu-Muslim' conflict – paid off in Shuja's case. But although Shuja' joined the Afghan alliance, he kept his involvement limited as he was deeply mistrustful of the Ruhelas.

As the days went by, Bhau's finances began to dry up. Govind Ballal bore the brunt of Bhau's anger – many letters written to him by Bhau are available in which Bhau pours scorn, and cynicism over the old man. Local land-holders had turned their positions into small fortresses in anticipation of the political turmoil and coughed up a bit of money every time they were threatened. However, what Govind Ballal could get his hands on using the limited force he had, was not enough for Bhau's huge retinue. Bhau was particularly anguished by Shuja' ud-Daula's betrayal, given the good relations his father, Safdar Jang, had harboured with the Marathas, and ordered Govind Ballal to launch punitive expeditions into Awadh territory. This further added to the old man's woes. But Bhau refused to relent; he even turned down an offer of peace made by Ahmad Shah Durrani in May 1760.

Financial problems made the Marathas turn towards Delhi. Here Yaqub Ali Khan, the Afghan governor, was in charge with Shahjahan III still on the throne. The puppet emperor's mentor, 'Imad ul-Mulk, had been hiding with his friend, the Jat Raja Surajmal. The flooded Yamuna River had cut off Delhi from the Doab region so the Afghan army could not come to the aid of Delhi's governor. Thus, the city seemed a relatively easy target. The Marathas attacked Delhi on 22 July and, after a series of skirmishes, exhausted Yaqub Ali Khan's defence. On 3 August, Delhi once again came under Maratha possession.

While at Delhi, Bhau's financial worries grew. Nothing worthwhile either as money or as materials had been received from revenue collectors like Govind Ballal. Bhau was, therefore, forced to entertain a 'three-point' proposal from Shuja' ud-Daula that would give peace a chance. Shuja' offered to broker a truce provided Shahjahan III was deposed, Shah Alam, the son of Alamgir II, was proclaimed emperor in his place and Shuja' was appointed as his wazir. But this would amount to the removal of 'Imad from the office of the wazirate. As 'Imad was a friend of the Jat Raja, Surajmal, the mere consideration of such a proposal by Bhau antagonized Surajmal towards him. He left the Maratha camp in a huff. This was a blow to Maratha diplomacy as they were greatly dependent on Surajmal's support. Surajmal's estrangement only added to Bhau's financial woes and, by September, even the high noblemen in the Maratha camp were starving for food.

One of the measures which Bhau undertook to alleviate his pecuniary woes has gone down in Maratha history. On 6th August, Bhau took down the thick, beaten silver lining that adorned the roof of the *Diwān-i-Khās*, or 'Hall of Private Audience', in the imperial quarters inside the Delhi fort and sent it to the mint to get it coined into rupees. A total of 0.9 million rupees are said to have been coined out of this silver. This episode is referred to by Marathi texts such as *Bhāusāhebānchi Bakhar*, as one of calamitous impunity – even the estranged Surajmal is said to have come to Bhau in person and requested him 'not to destroy the sanctity of the site where Mughal sovereignty had been enshrined'. But nationalist Maratha histories of the 20th century often regard it as an act of ultimate defiance of the Mughal authority by any Maratha soldier/statesman. However, the nationalist pride attached to this episode is very much misplaced, for Bhau always maintained he was safeguarding the nominal Mughal suzerainty in the face of an impending Afghan threat.

The rupees coined out of the roof lining lasted Bhau for a month. At the beginning of October, starved of funds and unable to engage with his enemy across the Yamuna as the river remained in flood, Bhau resolved to push northwards in search of money. His primary target was Kunjpura, a fortified town in the charge of a Ruhela named Najabat Khan, where plenty of grain and wealth had been stored by the Afghans anticipating a prolonged North Indian campaign. Bhau's larger plan was to recapture Sarhind and cut the Afghan supply lines running eastwards from the Punjab to the Doab.

But before he could get to Kunjpura, Bhau thought he could placate Shuja' ud-Daula so as to cause a rift in the Afghan ranks. He, therefore, decided to execute the proposal Shuja' had suggested. On 10 October 1760 Bhau sent two Maratha agents to Delhi and deposed Shahjahan III. Shah Alam II was proclaimed as the emperor in absentia (he was in Bihar). His investiture was further solemnised by appointing Mirza Jawan Bakht, his son, as the *Wali Ahd*, or crown prince and by striking coins in the name of the new emperor. Shuja' was declared the new emperor's wazir.

Bhau arrived at Kunjpura to find Abd us-Samad Khan, the Afghan governor of Sarhind, and Qutb Shah, a Ruhela leader and chief perpetrator in Dattaji Sindhia's killing, camped outside the town to aid Najabat Khan. After a quick and decisive battle the Marathas captured Kunjpura on 13 October. Both Abd us-Samad Khan and Najabat Khan were killed in the battle while Qutb Shah was captured and executed in revenge for Dattaji's death. Kunjpura yielded plenty of arms, ammunition, food and money to the starving Marathas.

But the exultations from this victory were short-lived. On 25 October, the Afghan allies bravely forded the flooded Yamuna River at Baghat and appeared at the rear of Bhau's army. Bhau's game thus turned on himself - he was cut off with a vast Afghan army between him and his base in Delhi. A quick crossing into the Doab across the Yamuna River could have proved a good strategy, but so unwieldy was Bhau's retinue that he simply could not do that. Bhau turned southwards and the two armies came within striking distance at Panipat. In the meantime, the Afghans cut this last resort off by offering stiff resistance from across the river. The stalemate continued for the last two months of 1760 with the Marathas camped at Panipat.

As the loot from Kunjpura was consumed by the Maratha army in these two months, starvation ensued once again. Bhau again pleaded with Govind Ballal to open a 'second front' against the Afghans in the Doab and send money and supplies to the army besieged at Panipat. As

a last resort, he melted vessels, plates and many such gold and silver objects to strike coins and make money available. Bhau's last hopes were dashed when Govind Ballal was killed while carrying out a raid against the Afghans on 17 December. With him gone, the Afghan supply lines were restored without any hindrance. They managed to foil every attempt by the Marathas to supply their comrades stuck at Panipat. In the first week of January 1761, a treasure sent by Maratha partisans was looted. Bhau had no other choice but to brace his army and attempt to break through the Afghan lines.

The beleaguered Maratha leaders strategized to make a tight circular formation, surrounded by artillery which could then break into the Afghan army and move southwards, cutting through enemy lines. The decisive day was 14 January 1761. On that day, the battle began in the early hours of the morning. Superior military tactics by Ahmad Shah won the day for him – by afternoon, the right flank of the Maratha formation had been breached by the Afghans, thereby breaking the circular formation. The Maratha stratagem failed and their army was in tatters. In late afternoon, Vishwas Rao, the young son of the Peshwa was shot and, following him, Bhau disappeared into the chaos never to be seen again. A headless body, thought to be that of Bhau, was cremated at Panipat on the day after by Hindu Brahmin ministers in Shuja' ud-Daula's camp. Carnage followed and the Afghans slaughtered a great number of Marathas as they fled towards Delhi. Those lucky to survive were able to group together a couple of hundred miles to the south, in the relative safety of the Jat kingdom.

Even before the Maratha entrapment at Panipat, the Peshwa, Balaji, had started towards the north from Pune with a fresh army to aid his beleaguered cousin. But when news of the debacle reached the Peshwa, he was heartbroken. He returned to Pune where the disaster took its toll on him – he rapidly lost his health and died on 23 June agonising over the loss of his beloved cousin, Bhau.

The victorious Ahmad Shah Durrani entered Delhi on 29 January 1761. For the months of February and March he lived in the imperial palace in Delhi and held court in the Hall of Private Audience. This last Afghan occupation of Delhi was no different in terms of depredations from the previous one. Ahmad Shah's troops looted and pillaged the capital and, when it was all over, demanded to return to their homeland to escape the savage north Indian summer. Ahmad Shah left Delhi on 20 March after recognising Shah Alam II as emperor, reappointing 'Imad ul-Mulk as the wazir and appointing his favourite, Najib Khan Ruhela, as *Mir Bakhshi* or paymaster-general. But Shah Alam II could never reconcile himself to 'Imad, the killer of his father. Thus Najib managed to outwit 'Imad and get himself appointed as regent. Najib dominated the politics in the decade after Panipat in north India, till his death on 16 October 1770. His patron, Ahmad Shah Durrani, died at Qandahar a little more than two years later. Only 'Imad ul-Mulk outlived everyone else – he died at Kalpi a lot later, in 1800!

Maratha Coinage at Delhi - First Phase, August – October 1760

This brings us to the 'numismatic' part of this paper where I will describe and discuss the numismatic legacy of the Afghan-Maratha conflict in the final year. First we will deal with Maratha coinage during 1760. It focuses on Delhi, while a discussion about coinage at two other places, namely Sarhind and Panipat, will follow in the subsequent section. The last section will contextualise Durrani coinage in the same period and that following the Afghan victory at Panipat.

As we have seen in the historical description, the Marathas under Bhau were involved in two events which explicitly dealt with coinage at Delhi – the first was when Bhau took down the silver roof lining of the Hall of Private Audience and had it coined into 0.9 million rupees, which happened on 6 August 1760, and the second was when he proclaimed Shah Alam II as emperor (10 October 1760) and ordered coins to be struck in his name while the city was still under Maratha control. While both these episodes are very well known, no attempt has been made to identify which coins the Marathas struck in these instances. As the coins were struck in Delhi, one would presume they carried the mint-name as 'Dar al-Khilafa Shahjahanabad', and as Shahjahan III was on the throne with Maratha acknowledgement, they would be struck in his name. From the viewpoint of type description, such coins come with only one kind of obverse legend – the kind which quotes his name, which goes:

سگه مبارک بادشاه غازی شاه جهان
sikka mubārak bādshāh ghāzī shāh jahān

The reverse legend bears the following formulaic inscription with the mint-name appearing at the top –

مانوس میمنت سنه احد جلوس ضرب دار الخلافه شاه جهان آباد
mānūs maimanat sanah aḥd julūs zarb dār al-khilāfah shāhjahanābād

6 August 1760 was only a week before the AH year 1173 ended and AH 1174 began (13 August 1760). As Shahjahan III had been on the throne since 29 November 1759, he would have been in the first year of his reign during August – October 1760 (hence the RY *aḥd*) but as the AH year changes in August, his first regnal year would span both AH 1173 and AH1174.

Since the Marathas occupied Delhi only towards the very end of AH 1173, one would imagine that at least some of the coins of Shahjahan III of Delhi (Shahjahanabad) mint, bearing AH 1173/R_Y *aḥd* can be regarded as Maratha issues. There exist two types of Shahjahan III which have the AH date 1173 – they can be broadly classified depending upon the placement of the date. One type of coin has the date in the last line (fig. 1, gold mohur; fig. 2, silver rupee, Zeno 71219), while the other has it in the second line of the obverse inscription (fig. 3, silver rupee, Zeno 85694). Which of these types was struck by the Marathas is what needs to be answered.



Fig. 1 Mohur, AH 1173 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Jahan III, date in the third line of the obverse



Fig. 2 Rupee, AH 1173 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Jahan III, date in the third line of the obverse



Fig. 3 Rupee, AH 1173 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Jahan III, with date in the second line of the obverse

The situation regarding coins dated AH 1174 is clearer by comparison. The Marathas were definitely in control of Delhi during AH 1174 from the inception of the year on 13 August till Shahjahan III was deposed in October. This would mean that all coins of Shahjahan III of Shahjahanabad mint dated AH 1174/R_Y *aḥd*, can be regarded as Maratha issues without doubt.

These coins are known only of one type – that with the date in the second line of the obverse inscription (fig. 4, gold mohur; fig. 5, silver rupee). Apart from the placement of the date, these coins also have other salient differences in layout and execution. In general the letters are engraved with a bold hand somewhat lacking the usual Mughal finesse. The mint-epithet is inscribed associated with the mint-name in

the top line of the reverse legend; this is unlike the coins dated 1173, where it appears in the second line and dissociated from the mint-name. A half rupee of this type, dated AH 1174/R_Y *aḥd* is also known (Fig. 6, Zeno 73752). There remains little doubt that these coins were struck in Delhi under Maratha authority during August-October 1760.



Fig. 4 Mohur, AH 1174 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Jahan III, with date in second line of obverse



Fig. 5 Rupee, AH 1174 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Jahan III



Fig. 6 Half rupee, AH 1174 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Jahan III

If the coiners in the mint followed the calendar accurately, one would presume that the coins struck out of the silver roof lining would carry the AH date 1173 as it happened a week before that year ended. Going by the evidence of style of execution, it will be reasonable to suggest coins bearing the date 1173 but exactly similar in style and execution to those bearing 1174 (which can be conclusively attributed to the Maratha issues) could well be those struck during this momentous episode. These would be the coins of the type we have just described (i.e. AH date in the second line of the obverse inscription), except that the date in this case would be AH 1173. The coin shown in fig. 3 above can, therefore, be the most likely candidate for attribution to the Marathas, struck before the AH year changed on 13 August. It could well be one of the 0.9 million rupees Bhau struck out of the roof of the Hall of Private Audience.

Maratha Coinage at Delhi – Second Phase, October 1760 onwards

The second episode in which Bhau undertook coinage at Delhi received some numismatic attention in Wiggins & Maheshwari's monograph (Maratha Mints and Coinage, p. 140-141), unlike the first one. However, they have completely conflated the two episodes – the coinage they discuss is that produced out of the silver lining of the roof of the *Diwān-i-Khās*, which happened in August 1760, whereas the sources they employ to describe it refer to the coinage following Bhau's instatement of Shah Alam II which took place in October 1760. To confuse matters further, their analysis of the description is flawed and thus the conclusion they draw on how this coinage is to be identified is wrong.

We have already described what could be the Maratha issues struck with the silver lining of the roof in August 1760. This helps us separate out the conflation of events in August and October 1760 which Wiggins & Maheshwari created. We can now address the coinage that happened in October 1760.

Wiggins & Maheshwari referred to two letters, published according to them, in the Marathi work *Pānipatchā Sangrām*, a collection of letters and précis translations of non-Marathi historical sources for the battle of Panipat, edited by N. R. Phatak and S. M. Pagdi (Bombay, 1961). The first of these letters is dated 14 October

1760, and is from Sadashiv Chimnaji (that is Bhau) to Govind Ballal Gosavi (which is the same as Govind Ballal Kher, Bhau's revenue farmer, the word 'Gosavi' being an honorific). The letter, as quoted by Wiggins & Maheshwari, states – "Nana and Appaji Jadhav have been sent to Delhi on 36th [sic] Safar, they have issued Gajshahi coins in the name of Ali Gauhar. The coins were put in circulation". The second letter is undated and its contents, as Wiggins & Maheshwari quote, are – "Gajshahi Sikka in the name of Ali Gauhar have been struck. In your province please issue Gajshahi Sikka in the name of Shah Alam".

Wiggins & Maheshwari concluded (p. 141) from these quotes that the coins struck in October 1760 in Delhi by the Marathas were 'Gajshahi', i.e. "the coins struck in Delhi... had on them the mark of a *gaja* (a mace or a club)". They further contend that "the *gaja* mark is known on coins of the [sic] Gwalior, Datia and Orchha states". They also remark that "...they were struck in the name of Ali Gauhar and also with the name of Shah Alam and bore the mint-name Shahjahanabad".

When the source employed by Wiggins & Maheshwari is consulted afresh, a number of discrepancies in this assessment become apparent. Firstly, there are four letters in *Pānipatchā Sangrām* that refer to the events in Delhi in the context of Bhau's reinstatement of Shah Alam II as the emperor – only the first and the second are mentioned by Wiggins & Maheshwari, but they do not include the word 'Gajshahi' at all! Quoted hereunder are all four references -

1. The reference made in the first letter is (p. 3 of *Pānipatchā Sangrām*) –

चिरंजीव राजश्री नाना, आपाजी जाधवराव यास दिल्लीस
पाठविले. त्यांनी छ ३० सफरी अलीगोहर याचे नांवचे
गजशिकके केले. शहरात द्वाही फिरविली. त्याचे पुत्रास
बाहेर काढून वलीहद केले. सर्व अलमास खुशाली जाहली.
लोकांनी नजरा केल्या. शिकके चालते जहाले. मोठा
समारंभ केला.

(Nana and Appaji Jadhavrao were sent to Delhi. On 30th Safar, they made 'Gajsikka' in the name of Ali Gauhar. He was proclaimed in the city. His son was brought out and declared heir apparent. The world was pleased. People made presentations (to the son). Coins were made current. The event was celebrated with great pomp.)

2. The second letter, on p. 6, is fragmentary and thus undated but, judging by its contents (scorn over inefficiency in remitting cash), it is evidently a fragment of a letter from Bhau to Govind Ballal. Here it is stated –

अलीगोहरचे पुत्रास वली आहद शुक्रवारी केले. गजशिकका
अलीगोहरचा केला. आपले तालुकियांतही शाहा आलमाचा
गजशिकका चालवणे.

(Aligohar's son was made the heir apparent on Friday. 'Gajshikka' was [made in] Aligohar's [name]. Render Shah Alam's 'Gajshikka' current in your province, too.)

3. The third is a letter on p. 12, dated 9 November 1760 sent to 'Lalajee', or Lalaji Ballal Gulguley, the Sindhias' representative at the Rajput court of Kotah. It has some scribal errors but states –

याबद्दल वर्तमान यैकतच तथून दिलीस आलीगोराचा पुत्र
स्छापून प्रतिनिधीत्व त्याकडे आण पातशाह गजसिका
अलीगोराच्या नावे ठहराउन तो बाहीर बंगालास आहे या
करीता यैसे करून कूच केले.

(The report as we have heard is that as Ali Gohar is in Bengal his son was installed at Delhi as his representative and 'Gajsika' was made in the name of Ali Gohar. Then [he] began the march.)

4. The fourth reference is to be found in a letter dated 23 November 1760, sent by 'Balwantrao Ganpat', that is Balwant Rao Mehendale, a Maratha nobleman and Bhau's cousin, to 'Baburao Baba', Balwant Rao's brother. It refers to –

इकडील वर्तमान तर, आश्विन शुद्ध प्रतिपदेस अल्लीगोहर
याचे लेकास वलीहद दिल्लीत करून बसविले. गजशिकका
अल्ली गोहराचा करून, दिल्लीचा बंदोबस्त करून, नारो
शंकर यांस तेथे ठेविले.

(The report from here is – on the first day of the first half of the month of Ashwin, Ali Gohar's son was made heir apparent in Delhi. 'Gajshikka' was made [in the name] of Ali Gohar and Delhi was fortified, Naro Shankar was kept there in charge.)

As can be seen from these references, the term uniformly used by all of them is 'Gaj-Shikka' or 'Gaj-Sikka', not 'Gajshahi Sikka'. Had it been the latter, one could take to mean a particular kind of coin and Wiggins & Maheshwari would have been well justified; but since it is not, the inference they drew that the coins struck in October 1760 by the Marathas at Delhi might have had 'a mace or a club'-like symbol on them is erroneous.

It is worth investigating if the term 'Gaj-sikka' (or 'Gaj-shikka') of the letters refers to coins in this context and also what it means, at all. The dictionary of Marathi historical words (*Aitihāsik Shabdakosh*, ed. Y N Kelkar, Pune) does not list it as a composite word but one finds 'Gaj' and 'Sikka' or 'Shikka' listed separately. What the latter means is fairly clear – seal, coin or stamp. The meaning of 'Gaj' in Marathi differs with how the 'J' is pronounced; as Marathi speakers will know, 'J' is written by a single character ज, but pronounced in two ways - . either as a voiced affricate like J in English, or as a voiced sibilant close to Z in English. One of the meanings, when ज is pronounced as a voiced sibilant, is 'standard of measurement of length', coming from the Persian 'gaz' گز or 'yardstick'. Indeed, measures introduced by prominent rulers and administrators are known after their name such as 'Shivashahi Gaj' introduced by Shivaji, or 'Malik Ambaree Gaj' introduced by Malik Ambar, the prime minister of the Nizam Shahi rulers of Ahmadnagar. This word, used in context with and as a composite with 'Sikka/Shikka' (stamp) must therefore relate to standards of 'weights and measures'. It is, therefore, likely that the term employed in the Maratha letters refers broadly to weights and measures being made current in the name of Shah Alam II. The words 'शिकके चालते जहाले' (coins became current) which refer to coins but occur separately from the composite word 'Gaj-sikka' in the first letter indicate this clearly. Furthermore, it is conceivable that the composite word is used as part of a phrase – to 'render weights and measures current in a ruler's name' could thus mean a reference to the initiation a regnal reckoning for the newly instated emperor. The deployment of the word 'Gaj-sikka' must therefore be construed to mean a 'regime change' at Delhi and the transfer of sovereignty from Shahjahan III to Shah Alam II. It is therefore evident that the word 'Gaj-sikka' does not refer to a particular variety of coins.

By the far the clearest reference to coining in Delhi in the aftermath of Bhau's installing Shah Alam II as the emperor there comes from another Marathi source, *Bhāūsāhebhānchi Bakhar* (critical edition by SN Joshi, Pune, 1965) although it is described in reverse chronological order, i.e. before the episode involving coining rupees from the silver lining of the ceiling, rather than after it. In section 104 (p. 103 of the book) it is said –

मग भाऊसाहेब यांणी अलीगौर चकते याचा पुत्र चौदा
वर्षाचा शहाजादा होता त्यास तख्ती बसवून त्याचे नावे

शिकके व मोहरा व रुपये केले.

(Then Bhau Sahib installed the 14-year old prince the son of Ali Gohar Chaghatayid on the throne and made the seals, mohurs and rupees in his name.)

Here the order of words could mean the coins were struck in the name of the prince rather than his father, the absentee emperor, but the fact that no coins were ever struck in the name of the crown prince before he became the suzerain means that we have to take this statement to mean that the coins (mohurs and rupees) struck by Bhau had the name of the emperor on them and not his son the crown prince.

This brings us back to the question – which coins could be identified as those struck in Delhi by the Marathas, when they deposed Shahjahan III and made Shah Alam II the absentee ruler? Surely they must bear the name of Shah Alam II, or ‘Ali Gohar’ as the Marathas chose to refer to him, the current AH year and the first regnal year of the ruler. The coins we are looking for, therefore, must have AH 1174 and RY *aḥd*. In addition to this, a stylistic similarity with the predecessor coinage, in the name of Shahjahan III that we have already described would be a desirable feature.

Two coins fit the bill – a unique gold mohur (fig. 7) and a rupee (fig. 8). The rupee has been illustrated in KM, but mistakenly listed there as an issue of Ilahabad mint (I am extremely grateful to Jan Lingen who brought this coin to my notice).



Fig. 7 Mohur, AH 1174 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Alam II



Fig. 8 Rupee, AH 1174 *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Alam II

On the obverse, both coins bear the couplet for Shah Alam II –

سکه زد بر هفت کشور بسایه فضل اله

حامی دین محمد شاه عالم باد شاه

sikka zad bar haft kishwar ba-sāyah faḥl-i-ilāh
ḥāmī dīn-i-muḥammad shāh ‘ālam bād shāh

(Struck coins in the seven climes by divine grace, Shah Alam, the emperor, defender of the Faith of Muhammad)

- and on the reverse, the usual formulaic ‘*julūs*’ inscription -

جلوس میمنت مانوس سنه احد ضرب دار الخلافه شاه جهان اباد

julūs maimanat mānūs sanah aḥd zarb dār al-khilāfah shāhjahānābād

The date AH (11)74 is clear on both coins – on the mohur, only the last digit is visible whereas on the rupee ‘74’ is seen. Both coins bear the RY *aḥd*. The execution of these coins is also complementary to the Shahjahan III issues, as if the obverse as well as reverse dies of both the coins were engraved by the same hand. The date is placed exactly at the same position as on the Shahjahan III issues dated AH 1174. The obverse dies employed for the two coins are very similar, except for the placement of the cluster of four dots above the words ‘hami din’ – in fact there exist traces on the rupee’s obverse which suggest that this cluster might have been re-engraved to the left of where it originally

was. If this is the case, the two coins would be linked through a re-engraved obverse die.

A curious feature of the obverse legend, which is visible only on the rupee, is the employment of the word الله *allāh* at 12 o’clock instead of the more accurate الله *ilāh*. This would make sense (it would mean ‘by God’s grace’ instead of ‘by divine grace’) but breaks the meter of the couplet. It is plausible that the error must have crept in because the choice of the couplet was made by someone from the Maratha camp not familiar with Persian meters. As we will see, this peculiar feature was carried on in some issues of Shahjahanabad and other mints.

With all these aspects in mind, it would not be unreasonable to see this coin as a direct successor to the Shahjahan III AH 1174 issues that we have discussed above. The similarities evidently suggest that these two issues – one in the name of Shahjahan III and the other in the name of Shah Alam II – must have been struck within a very short space of time. The ‘type succession’ thus points strongly to a ‘numismatic continuum’ which is well corroborated by the ‘historical continuum’ in terms of the chronology of events in Delhi. The rarity of the Shah Alam II gold coin bears evidence to the fact that it must have been a very short-lived issue. The mohur is, therefore, the most likely contender to be one that the Marathas struck after deposing Shahjahan III on 10 October. The occurrence of a mohur and a rupee corroborates the textual evidence, which states that both these denominations were issued.

Two anomalous silver coins dated RY *aḥd*

We do, however, know of two silver rupees (fig. 9, fig. 10) that bear the name of Shah Alam II and his RY *aḥd*, but are of a different type to the one we have just discussed as the most likely Maratha issue. Unfortunately, neither has a clear AH date. On one of the coins, there is a small dagger-like mark just above the ‘*mīm*’ of ‘*maimanat*’ on the reverse, while, on the other, it is replaced by a small trefoil symbol. On the obverse of the coin with ‘dagger’, one sees the peculiar feature of employing the word الله *allāh* in the instead of الله *ilāh*, similar to that seen on the silver rupee we have discussed above.



Fig. 9 Rupee, *aḥd*, in the name of Shah Alam II, with small dagger-like mark on the reverse



Fig. 10 Rupee, *aḥd*, of Shah Alam II, with trefoil symbol on reverse

As we will see in the relevant section below, soon after the battle of Panipat, the mint at Delhi issued coins in the name of Ahmad Shah Durrani, dated AH 1174, RY15. These must have continued till the Afghans left Delhi for the final time in March 1761. After the Afghan departure, Najib Khan Ruhela emerged as regent in Delhi and continued coinage in the name of Shah Alam II. These coins bear AH 1174, but RY2 (fig. 11) - ostensibly counting the RY reckoning not from the Maratha investiture of Shah Alam II in October 1760, but from November 1759, when Alamgir II was murdered and Shah Alam II declared himself the emperor in Bihar. This is in accordance with the political proclivities of the Ruhelas, who never recognised Shahjahan III as the emperor, but as the stooge of their arch enemy, ‘Imad ul-Mulk, himself a protégé of the Marathas.



Fig. 11 Rupee, AH 1174 year 2, in the name of Shah Alam II

It is evident that the two silver coins under consideration must have been issued sometime between 10th October 1760 and 29th January 1761 as they are very different from the Ruhela issues which follow the Durrani issues. Who issued them and under what circumstances would be the worthwhile points of discussion. The factual details we have to bear in mind are:

1. The coins bear no trace of the AH year, only the RY *ahd*.
2. The legends they bear are very dissimilar to the coins we discussed in the previous section, in terms of the 'hand' as well as placement – for example, the words '*hāmī dīn*' are placed almost beyond the vertical stem of the word '*sikka*' as seen in fig. 10. But there are 'type similarities' – like the peculiar feature of the usage of the word الله *allāh* in the couplet on the obverse instead of الله *ilāh*
3. They bear differentiating symbols, unlike the issues discussed previously.
4. They are of a smaller size and apparently also of a different (more base) metallic standard.

Such features point towards the possibility that, with respect to the coins we discussed in the previous section, these coins are either struck at a different mint, or a different time or both. The fact that they do not show the AH date is significant, because in its absence we have to assume it to be 1174 – and this is a 'big if' in terms of addressing the question of attribution, because as we know there are many instances, particularly in the case of issues in the name of Shah Alam II, where the RY does not actually reflect the RY of the emperor; it can well be of a different person, who has assumed the authority to strike coins in the emperor's name.

From a purely 'numismatic' viewpoint, these coins appear to be the successors to the coins we discussed in the previous section, rather than being their precursors or forerunners. The factors that they have additional symbols, an inferior style of execution, smaller size and possibly baser metal – all point to this. Jan Linggen (in a series of private e-mail communications, October – November 2011) suggested the possibility that they are issues struck by the Marathas, at a time when Bhau decided to execute his plan to declare Shah Alam II the emperor. They were struck in a makeshift mint further away from Delhi, perhaps in Bhau's camp while he was on his way to Kunjpura. Jan also suggested the possibility that Bhau's agents whom he dispatched to Delhi to execute his plan might even have carried these coins with them. While this proposition satisfies the first condition for their issue (which is that they are struck at a different mint than the coins discussed in the previous section), it falls short of some of the evidence we have on hand –

- a) It goes against the 'numismatic' indication that the coins are the successors to the previously discussed issues – it would mean that they are their precursors, as Bhau's action of striking them before his agents reached Delhi would precede their arrival in the city.
- b) If the Marathas had already been in charge of Delhi, and had access to the imperial mint to issue coins in the name of Shahjahan III, why would Bhau resort to have coins struck in a makeshift mint beforehand? According to a reference in *Pānipatchā Sangrām* (vide 4th letter discussed above), Bhau left Naro Shankar in charge as he left Delhi to march towards Kunjpura in early October 1760. He would be eminently capable of getting coins struck in the same mint (as indeed seems to be the case, given the similarity of execution between the Shahjahan III coins struck under Maratha authority and the mohur and rupee in the name of Shah Alam II discussed in the previous section). The agents, after their arrival in Delhi, could have asked Naro Shankar to get this done in accordance with Bhau's

wishes.

- c) The two coins are made of two different sets of obverse and reverse dies. If they were indeed struck and sent to Delhi with Bhau's agents, one would presume the issue to have been a curtailed one and the coins, in all likelihood, would be die-duplicates. However, this does not seem to be the case.

In view of these arguments, it is difficult to agree with the proposition that these coins are Maratha issues. But if they are not Maratha issues, which other authority could be responsible for their issue?

The chronology of events that took place in Delhi leaves us with a period between October 1760 and late January 1761, with Bhau's departure from Delhi at one end of the chronological bracket and the victorious Afghan entry into Delhi at the other. Precious little is known about who was in charge in Delhi during November-December 1760 and much of January 1761. However, in view of the fact that the Afghans cut off Bhau's lines by crossing the Yamuna at Baghpat on 25 October, there is not much likelihood of the Marathas remaining in control of Delhi much after the end of October 1760. Just before the Afghans arrived victorious in Delhi in late January 1761, we find references that one, Habash Khan, was in charge at Delhi as the garrison commander. All through this period, the parlous pecuniary situation of the Marathas continued at Delhi. Naro Shankar had to borrow 0.35 million rupees from the ex-empress, Zeenat Mahal, to pay to Habash Khan before he could flee to the Deccan in the immediate aftermath of the battle. After the Afghans arrived in Delhi, they once again plundered the city, with Habash Khan having to cough up 10,000 gold coins. Zeenat Mahal paid 100,000 rupees to the Afghans (Sarkar, vol. 2, p 228).

A likely proposition is that the silver coins under discussion were issued during this period, perhaps under the authority of Habash Khan and at a mint located somewhere outside the imperial quarters. However, there is one potential problem with this attribution. As the coins do not bear a clear AH date, we must assume that detail to be AH 1174 which spans the period 13 August 1760 to 2 August 1761. According to S. H. Hodivala ('Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics', p. 228), Shah Alam II's regnal reckoning was officially counted from '8 Rabi us-Sani 1173', which was the day on which his father Alamgir II was murdered. This date corresponds to 29 November 1759. This being so, any coins issued in AH 1174 but after 29 November should bear RY2, not RY *ahd* and this might go against the contention of placing these coins during the December 1760 - January 1761 period. However, it must be remembered that this correction to the RY reckoning was applied only in retrospect, much later than the events of these fateful months, as evident from the sources Hodivala quotes. It is very clear from Marathi sources described above that the 'regime change' undertaken by the Marathas in October 1760 initiated a regnal year reckoning of its own – the discussion regarding the phrase 'gaj-shikka' is evidence to this effect. In all likelihood, Habash Khan must have followed this reckoning. The coins issued under his authority would, therefore, bear *ahd* - the first year of Shah Alam II's reign as counted from 30 Safar 1174, or 10 October 1760 - even if they were struck during the December 1760-January 1761 period.

There also remains one more possibility of attribution and this bypasses the RY quandary altogether. The feature of using the word الله *allāh* in the couplet on the obverse instead of الله *ilāh* is seen on Ruhela issues of Aonla mint struck dated AH 1174/Ry2 as well (Fig. 12).



Fig. 12 Rupee, 1174 RY2, of Aonla, in the name of Shah Alam II

The date-RY combination on the Aonla coin indicates it was struck within half a year after the rupees under discussion. Aonla was under the jurisdiction of Hafiz Rahmat Khan, a powerful Ruhela baron who was present in the Afghan alliance at Panipat and it is, therefore, likely that the same Ruhela faction might have been responsible for the issue of the Shahjahanabad rupees. As the Ruhelas never did acknowledge

Shahjahan III, RY *ahd* of Shah Alam II by Ruhela reckoning would end on 17 November (8 Rabi us-Sani 1174). Any coins struck by them after 25 October (15 Rabi al-Awwal 1174), and before 17 November (8 Rabi us-Sani 1174), would therefore bear RY *ahd* of Shah Alam II.

The last of the possibilities is of an issuing authority that existed in the region around Delhi, and was well disposed towards the Marathas, to have followed a regnal reckoning initiated by them. The Jats can well have been such an authority – as we shall see below, they indeed struck coins in the name of Shah Alam II dated 1174/ *ahd* after his (re)-investiture by Bhau in mints under their command, following from preceding issues in the name of Shahjahan III. If the Jats did strike these coins, they could well have done so even after the Maratha defeat at Panipat – in fact the possibility that they Jats did so to provide specie for the retreating Marathas cannot be entirely ruled out.

Other mints following Bhau's command

Bhau's instruction to 'make coins in the name of Shah Alam current in your provinces' is also validated by numismatic evidence. As said earlier, this order comes in a fragmented letter written most likely by Bhau to his revenue farmer, Govind Ballal, whose base was at Itawa. Indeed, we have coins in the name of Shah Alam II from the Itawa mint, bearing RY1 or *ahd* (Fig. 13 – Stevens Collection, c/o Ashmolean Museum). This coin bears the non-couplet legend of Shah Alam II with a distinct 'Trisul' mark on the obverse indicating Maratha affinity. As Govind Ballal was killed in December 1760, this coin must have been struck between October and December.



Fig. 13 Rupee of Itawa in the name of Shah Alam II, *ahd*

Maratha allies such as the Jats also seem to have followed Bhau's instructions as evident from a rupee of Akbarabad mint dated AH 1174/*ahd*, struck in Shah Alam II's name (fig. 14).



Fig. 14 Rupee of Akbarabad in the name of Shah Alam II, AH 1174 *ahd*

Noteworthy in the execution of this coin is the orthography of the phrase '*hāmī dīn*' in the couplet on the obverse – here the word is written separately as *دین حامی* whereas on most other Jat issues, it is written as a single word *حامیدین*

Postscript: Maratha Coinage at Panipat (and Sarhind), 1760

The Marathas are said to have struck coins whilst stuck in a stalemate at Panipat, before the final battle. But the evidence to this effect comes only from the Marathi narrative *Bhāūsāhebānchi Bakhar*; the more reliable archival sources are totally silent about it. In section 117 of the said narrative (p. 116-117 of S. N. Joshi's edition, *ibidem*), one finds an account of 'a famine of food and finance' ('अन्न दुष्काळ व दाम दुष्काळ') in Bhau's camp at Panipat. In this context, the narrator notes:

सोनियाची कडी व रुप्याची चीजवस्तू होती तितकी
निवडून टांकसाळ्यापासून (manuscript variants - एक
टंकशाळा घालून, मोडून आटणी घालून) भाऊशाही व

मल्हारशाही व जनकशाही तमाम मोहरा व रुपये केले. तरी पैसा पुरेना.

(Gold rings and silver wares were collected and through the agency of a mint-master – variants: by operating a mint, melted them down – 'Bhaushahi', 'Malharshahi' and 'Janakshahi' mohurs and rupees were made. Even then, the money was not enough.)

While this reference indicates with some certainty that the Marathas resorted to striking what effectively was 'emergency money' at Panipat, the coins have never been identified. Going by the reference in the *Bakhar*, they were presumably of three kinds – 'Bhaushahi', 'Malharshahi' and 'Janakshahi', each taking their names from a respective Maratha commander – even though the *Bakhar* takes only Bhau to be the person responsible for providing the bullion by melting objects of precious metals. What characteristics helped distinguished the three kinds of coins remains unknown, but it could well be something like an initial of the concerned person.

The reference from the *Bakhar* was taken verbatim by the 19th century historians of the Marathas Messrs C. A. Kincaid and D. B. Parasnees, and thence by Wiggins & Maheshwari (p. 162). In addition to this, Wiggins & Maheshwari also quote a letter from Panipat, dated 14 October 1760, from Sadashiv Chimanji (sic) to Govind Ballal Gosavi, published in the collection *Pānipatchā Sangrām* – it states, "Ali Gauhar coins have been sent to Delhi...on which, instead of the emperor's mint, the name of this mint is inscribed". Wiggins & Maheshwari then comment, "It may be inferred from this brief statement that the coins bore the mint name of Panipat and the name Ali Gauhar instead of Shah Alam".

However, a careful review of the letters published in *Pānipatchā Sangrām* did not reveal any such letter! Furthermore, the date Wiggins & Maheshwari attribute to this letter (14 October) appears to be too early for the Marathas to have encamped at Panipat – it is only a day after they captured Kunjpura and so they must have been at Kunjpura rather than Panipat. It is obvious that the information about the issue of coins given by Wiggins & Maheshwari, barring the more famous detail from *Bhāūsāhebānchi Bakhar* that they quote second-hand from Kincaid & Parasnees, is either confused or erroneous or both. There is, thus, no tenability for the inference they have drawn about what mint name these coins must have had and in whose name they were struck.

There does exist, however, an enigmatic and unique coin of Sarhind mint in the British Museum collection (fig. 15), which is struck in the name of Shah Alam II, has the date AH 1174 and the RY *ahd*.



Fig. 15 Rupee of Sarhind in the name of Shah Alam II, AH 1174 *ahd*

Sarhind was firmly under the control of the Durranis before its Afghan governor, Abd us-Samad Khan, was killed by the Marathas when they captured Kunjpura on 13 October. There was no Maratha presence at Sarhind in the immediate aftermath, but, given Sarhind had already been an established mint in the region (indeed, the Durrani struck coins there in the year following the battle of Panipat), it is plausible that the Marathas might have struck coins with the mint-name 'Sarhind' if they did undertake any minting activity at Panipat. It is very unlikely that coins in the name of Shah Alam II could have been struck while Sarhind was firmly under Durrani occupation – the only possible contenders to have struck this coin would, therefore, be the Marathas. The fact that Marathas were never present in Sarhind during this period indicates it might have been struck elsewhere with a pseudo- mintname. As Marathas were camped at Panipat during this period, this is a plausible location for the mint.

One might argue that Sarhind is located at quite a distance from Panipat – but it must be borne in mind that the only lines of supply the

Marathas had any access to, ran through the Sikh possessions and Ala Singh, the Sikh chief (whose descendents later went on to form the princely state of Patiala), was their ally. With this in mind, it is conceivable that a 'Sarhind' rupee was likely to find more favour in the procurement of food and fodder for the Marathas and they might have, therefore, resorted to just such a coin. This is, however, only a guess - but at least a calculated and educated one.

Appendix 1

AH/AD concordance for the period (AH year = begins AD date to ends AD date)

AH 1170 = 26 September 1756 to 15 September 1757

AH 1171 = 15 September 1757 to 9 September 1758

AH 1172 = 9 September 1758 to 24 August 1759

AH 1173 = 25 August 1759 to 13 August 1760

AH 1174 = 13 August 1760 to 2 August 1761

AH 1175 = 2 August 1761 to 22 July 1762

Appendix 2

RY/AD concordance for the period

Alamgir II

1 = 2 June 1754 to 14 May 1755

2 = 14 May 1755 to 1 May 1756

3 = 1 May 1756 to 20 April 1757

4 = 20 April 1757 to 10 April 1758

5 = 10 April 1758 to 31 March 1759

6 = 31 March 1759 till 29 November 1759 (deposed and killed)

Shahjahan III

1 = 29 November 1759 till 10 October 1760 (deposed by Bhau)

Shah Alam II

1 = 10 October 1760 (Maratha reckoning)

1 = 29 November 1759 (Ruhela reckoning, later confirmed as the official reckoning)

Ahmed Shah Durrani (reckoned from the date of Nadir Shah's murder)

	Ry.	commences	AH	commences
10 Jumada II 1160	Ahd	19 June 1747	1160	02-01-1747
10 Jumada II 1161	Ry.2	07 June 1748	1161	22-12-1747
10 Jumada II 1162	Ry.3	28 May 1749	1162	11-12-1748
10 Jumada II 1163	Ry.4	17 May 1750	1163	30-11-1749
10 Jumada II 1164	Ry.5	06 May 1751	1164	19-11-1750
10 Jumada II 1165	Ry.6	25 April 1752	1165	09-11-1751
10 Jumada II 1166	Ry.7	14 April 1753	1166	08-11-1752
10 Jumada II 1167	Ry.8	04 April 1754	1167	29-10-1753
10 Jumada II 1168	Ry.9	24 March 1755	1168	18-10-1754
10 Jumada II	Ry.10	12 March 1756	1169	07-10-1755

1169				
10 Jumada II 1170	Ry.11	02 March 1757	1170	26-09-1756
10 Jumada II 1171	Ry.12	19 Feb. 1758	1171	15-09-1757
10 Jumada II 1172	Ry.13	08 Feb. 1759	1172	04-09-1758
10 Jumada II 1173	Ry.14	29 January 1760	1173	25-08-1759
10 Jumada II 1174	Ry.15	17 January 1761	1174	13-08-1760
10 Jumada II 1175	Ry.16	06 January 1762	1175	02-08-1761

TIBETAN PATTERN COINS STRUCK FROM BRITISH DIES

By Wolfgang Bertsch

As part of the drive for modernisation, which was initiated in Tibet by the 13th Dalai Lama after 1912, in 1913 four Tibetan boys were sent to England for higher education. One of them was Rigzin Dorje Ringang (*rig 'dzin rdo rje rin sgang*), born in 1899 (Dhondup, 1984)⁴¹. He studied electrical engineering at Northampton Polytechnic Institute in London (1916-1918) and left England in June 1920 after almost seven years of studies. For further professional training Ringang returned to England in January 1922. After training two years in various fields of electrical engineering at General Electric Company and in hydro-electric work with the firm of Arms Whitworth and Co. Ltd, he purchased hydro-electrical machinery for the government of Tibet and returned to his country in September 1924 (Dhondup, 1984, p. 53-56).

The machinery had arrived in Kalimpong already by the end of October 1924, but it took until the end of 1926 until all parts had reached Lhasa. Ringang could at long last start in July 1927 to set up the hydro-electric power plant at Dode (*dog bde*) near the already existing mint.⁴²

The Dode plant supplied the electric power for the mint and arsenal at Trabshi Lekhung⁴³. This power was crucial for working modern imported machinery for printing paper money and minting coins after this mint was modernised and officially reopened in 1932.

Most probably the Tibetan government had contacted the English manufacturer of modern coin presses, Taylor & Challen of Birmingham, in about 1923, either directly or with the help of Ringang in order to purchase and import modern minting equipment. This date is suggested by two of the pattern coins which bear the date 15-57 (1923). The British Company or one of its suppliers must have prepared several coin dies intended for striking Tibetan coins of various denominations in order to show the Tibetan mint officials what kind of coins could be produced with modern coin presses. One pair of master punches and a pair of dies and several patterns struck from other British dies have survived and are illustrated below. The date 16-1 on one of the patterns allows us to speculate that, in this year (1927), further coin presses may have been imported from England, although I am not aware of any other evidence to support this assumption.

None of the British coin dies were used by the Tibetans to strike coins for circulation, but their style and finish had a considerable impact on the quality and design of coin dies which were manufactured in Tibet between 1928 and 1953. In 1928, Tibetan patterns of fine style of two denominations (5 Sho and 10 tam; see figs. 13 and 13a) were produced in the Dode mint or in Tabshi

⁴¹ A joint website by the Pitt Rivers Museum and the British Museum gives 1901 as Ringang's year of birth. http://tibet.prm.ox.ac.uk/biography_23.html

⁴² Dode was located about 15 km northeast of Lhasa in the valley of the same name. I have recorded three different ways of spelling the toponym Dode in Tibetan: *dog bde*; *dog sde*; *rdo sde*.

⁴³ The full name of this mint which was located about 3 kilometers north of Lhasa is *grwa bzhi glog 'phrul* (or *'khrul*) *las khungs* "Trabshi Electrical Machine Factory".

Lekhung, followed by further patterns in 1930 (figs.12 and 14). But it took four more years, not until 1932, for the first copper shokang coins of fine style to be produced for general circulation in the modernised mint of Tabshi Lekhung (see fig. 3). The copper shokang coins were followed by silver coins of three srang, dated 16-7 (1933), and, in the following years, by further coins of fine style in different denominations, struck in both silver and copper with the help of the coin presses from England.

Except for the shokang dated 15-57 (fig. 9), the English patterns (figs 5, 6, 8 and 11) feature a snow lion of British imperial style and a lotus flower in south-east position on the obverse or on the reverse (except the shokang 15-57) which are in a style which cannot be seen on regular contemporaneous issues of Tibetan coins. However, the above-mentioned new, neatly struck copper shokang coins which were introduced for general circulation in 1932 (fig. 3) feature four lotus blossoms on the reverse, which are almost identical to the ones seen on the reverse of two of the pattern coins which were struck with British dies (figs. 2, 11 and 12). Also the 3 srang and 1½ srang silver coins which were struck between 1935 and 1936 and 1938 respectively, and again in 1946 feature two lotus blossoms with eight petals on their reverses which are like the ones found on the two British patterns just mentioned.

The illustrations which follow clearly show that the patterns and dies which I believe to be of British origin were influenced by Tibetan coins and how certain design elements of the British patterns in turn influenced the design of both patterns and circulation coins which thereafter were designed and struck in Tibet.

A. British Patterns -- Tibetan coins which served as model for or the design of which was influenced by the former



Fig. 1 Details of the coin illustrated as Fig. 11 Fig. 2



Fig. 3
1 Sho coin dated 16-6 (1932) Weight: 4.84 g. Diam: 24.0 mm.
Collection W. Bertsch.

Note the style of the four lotus flowers with eight petals on the reverse. It is likely that the Tibetan die engraver copied this design element from the pattern dies supplied to Tibet by Taylor & Challen, such as the ones illustrated as figs. 11 and 12.



Fig. 4
Tibetan 20 Tam Srang gold coin. Year 15-53 (1919). Weight: 11.45 g.
Diam: 26.6 mm. Collection W. Bertsch.

It is likely that the British die engraver took a Tibetan 20 srang gold coin as example for the designs of his dies of the same denomination.



Fig. 5
Undated 20 Tam Srang, silver. Weight: 7.80 g, diameter: 26.6 mm,
thickness: 1.85 mm.
Zhu Jinzhong et al., 2002, p. 120, no. 1-272.
Reverse: The figure "2" of the denomination ("tam srang 20") is only partly visible.



Fig. 6
Undated 20 Tam Srang. Copper. Collection Li Cai (courtesy Gao Jian)
Weight: 7.6 g, diameter: 26.8 mm, thickness: 1.96 mm.
This pattern is struck from the same pair of dies as the previous coin (Fig. 5).



Fig. 7a
Pair of undated dies for a half Srang (5 Sho) pattern coin (Zhu Jinzhong et al., 2002).
The denomination is given as tam srang 05 (0 over 5)

Above (fig.7): Actual pair of dies. Below (fig. 7a): Pair of dies illustrated reversed and enlarged in order to be able to appreciate how the coins struck with these dies would have appeared. A (silver?) coin struck with these dies may not have survived. The dies seem to be a copy of the dies used for the patterns of fig. 5 and 6. Only the figure "20" on the reverse die was replaced by the figures "0 over 5".



Fig. 7b
Pair of master dies (Zhu Jinzhong et al., no. 1.266)

These could be the master dies (punches) with which the dies for the patterns illustrated as fig. 5 and 6 were produced as well as the dies illustrated as fig. 7 and 7a. On the reverse punch the figure for the denomination (tam srang) is left blank and would have been engraved by hand after the dies were punched from the master die. The master die may have been sent by Taylor & Challen along with dies punched with it, and most probably also examples of coins struck from these dies. Further patterns from this or from slightly altered dies (see the reverse of the 1 tam srang pattern of fig. 14) may have been struck in Tibet.



Fig. 8
20 Tam Srang, dated 15-57 (1923). Brass. Weight: 7.23 g. Diam: 26.6 mm.

Collection W. Bertsch

Another example of this coin exists in the collection of N. G. Rhodes: Weight: 7.49g. Diam.: 26.5mm. Milled edge.⁴⁴

While seven of the eight Buddhist emblems on the obverse are almost exact copies of the ones found on the Tibetan gold coins (see fig. 4) the lotus flower in the south-east position is completely different. It rather resembles the ones found on the patterns of figs. 5 and 6 and the obverse die of fig. 7a.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ One specimen of the 20 srang brass pattern was presented by the management of Taylor & Challen to the Royal Mint in London in 1924, and is still preserved in the Mint Museum, now in Wales. This information was kindly provided by Nicholas Rhodes. Yet another specimen was presented on 13/3/1924 to the Royal Mint Museum of Nepal by Mr Madeley of Taylor & Challen when he came to the Kathmandu Mint on a visit. This was reported by N.G. Rhodes in a letter to Carlo Valdettaro (Nov. 1974). In 1974 N.G. Rhodes saw this coin in the Mint collection in Kathmandu (Valdettaro, 1974, p.41).

⁴⁵ This coin was published by Bertsch (1987 and 1997).



Fig. 9

Pattern of Shokang, dated 15-57 (A.D. 1923), struck in brass.

Formerly in the collection of Karl Gabrisch.⁴⁶

Another example of this coin exists in the collection of N. G. Rhodes:

Weight: 4.98g Diam.: 24mm Plain edge.

This pattern features a standing rather than resting lion and does not have the design of a lotus flower which is found on the other patterns illustrated above. However, the style of the Tibetan script is very similar to the one found on the other coins which I illustrate. It is therefore very likely that this coin was also produced with dies provided by Taylor & Challen.

The four design elements which are placed between the legend on the reverse were copied by the British die engraver from a Tibetan copper shokang such as the one illustrated as fig. 10.⁴⁷



Fig. 10

Shokang, dated 15-52 (1918). Copper. Weight: 4.83 g. Diam: 24.1 mm.

Collection W. Bertsch

Copper shokang coins such as this may have served as a model for the die engraver who produced the coin dies for the pattern illustrated as fig. 9.



Fig. 11

Shokang, dated 16-1 (1927). Brass. Weight: 5.26 g. Diam: 24.2 mm.

Collection W. Bertsch.⁴⁸

Another example of this coin exists in the collection of N. G. Rhodes:

Weight: 5.3 g Diam.: 24mm Plain edge.

⁴⁶ The measurements of this coin are not recorded. Photograph by Baldwin et al. (Hong Kong, 2005, lot 242).

⁴⁷ The coin which I illustrate was published by Gabrisch (1990, p. 106, plate 38, no. 142), in SCWC (1999) as Pn 5 and 6 and by Yin Zheng Min (2004, p. 209, no. 769). The Gabrisch coin was acquired from Lawrence B. Brilliant who illustrated this specimen in 1983 (winter), p. 11, no. 72.

⁴⁸ The same coin type was published by Gabrisch (1990, p. 106, plate 38, no. 143), Rhodes (1987), Bertsch (1997, p. 10, fig.5) and Yin Zheng Min (2004, p. 209, no. 770). I purchased the illustrated coin from Stephen Album, who published a photograph in his relevant coin list (1988). Previously this coin was sold in a U.S. auction (Lepczyk, 1984).

A pair of master dies and a pair of working dies for this coin have survived and were illustrated by Cao Gang (1999, p. 76).

B. Patterns struck from dies which were partly or entirely designed in Tibet



Fig. 12

5 Sho, dated 16-4 (1930). Silver. Weight: 4.44g, Diam.: 24mm, milled edge. Collection Nicholas Rhodes

The reverse of this coin appears to have been struck from the same die as the shokang pattern dated 16-1 (Fig. 11) after the figure “1” had been replaced by “4” and the syllable “gang” by “Inga” (Rhodes, 1987). It is possible that the die for the obverse of this coin was cut by a Tibetan who took the obverse of the pattern of fig. 11 as a model and replaced the British lion by one of Tibetan style and used his die in combination with a recut British reverse die to strike this coin.



Fig. 13

5 Sho pattern, undated. Believed to have been struck in 1928 or 1929⁴⁹.

Weight: 6.55 g. Diam: 26.7 mm. Collection W. Bertsch.

Another example of this coin is in the collection of Nicholas Rhodes:

Weight: 6.27g, Diam.: 26.5mm, milled edge.

This pattern was designed and struck in Tibet and represents the highest technical and artistic achievement of Tibetan coincraft.

Obverse: Most of the eight auspicious emblems, particularly the ones in the north-east (two fishes) and south-east (lotus blossom) are very similar to the ones found on the undated British patterns illustrated as figs. 5 and 6.



Fig. 13a

10 tam pattern, undated, believed to have been struck in 1928 or 1929

Weight: 12.61g. Diam.: 30.3 mm. Formerly in the collection of K. Gabrisch.⁵⁰



Fig. 14

Undated Tibetan pattern of 1 tam srang struck in silver. Collection A. Lissanevitch.

Another example of this pattern exists in the collection of Nicholas Rhodes. Weight: 6.05g, diameter: 26.5mm. Milled edge.

While the obverse is similar but not identical to the 5 sho coin of fig. 12, the reverse is very similar to the reverses of the coins illustrated as fig. 5 and 6. Only the figure “20” has been replaced by “1”, and the central dot by two comma-shaped devices which probably represent *norbu dga’ khyil* (“jewel of whirling pleasure”). I believe that both dies for this coin were cut in Tibet, the design of the reverse die closely following the British prototype.⁵¹



Fig. 15

Pattern of one and half srang struck in silver, dated 16-9 (1935)

Weight: 6.26 g; Diameter: 24 mm. Collection A. Lissanevitch.

The denomination is indicated on the reverse as *srang gang zho Inga* (“one srang and five sho”). While the snow lion on the obverse is very similar to the one found on the one sho coins dated from 16-6 to 16-12 (see fig. 3) the reverse is inspired by the patterns illustrated as figs. 11 and 12.



Fig. 16

Screw press in the Dode Mint, photographed in 1930 by S. W. Laden La.

(Courtesy Nicholas Rhodes)

⁴⁹ The Chinese author, Xiao Huaiyuan (1987, chapter 5), reports that these 5 sho coins were struck in 1928 and used for almsgiving. Judging by the rarity of this coin, only few if any can have entered circulation. This is why I consider this coin as a pattern. See also Bertsch, 1997.

⁵⁰ Photograph by Baldwin et al. (Hong Kong, 2005, lot 239).

⁵¹ Nicholas Rhodes dated this coin to 1930, since his wife’s grandfather, S. W. Laden La, during a stay in Lhasa in 1930, obtained one example of this pattern along with a specimen of the 5 sho pattern dated to this year and illustrated as fig. 12 (information kindly forwarded by electronic mail, Feb. 4th, 2011).

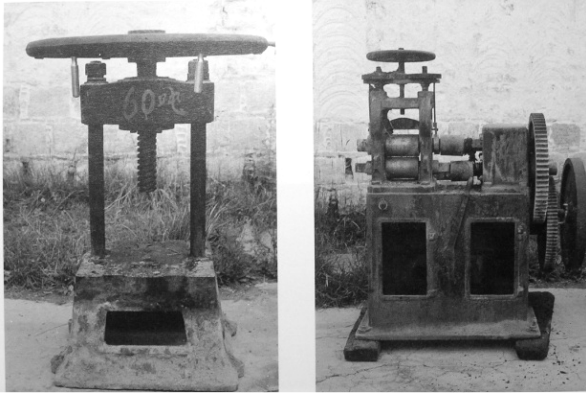


Fig. 17

Minting machinery from Tabshi Lekhung according to Zhu Jinzhong et al., 2002.



Fig. 18

Copper medal of 1912. Obverse legend: "MINTING MACHINERY FOR THE WORLD'S COINAGE, TAYLOR & CHALLEN LTD ENGINEERS BIRMINGHAM ENGLAND 1912" The reverse features a coin press and other coining machinery from Taylor & Challen Ltd. Diameter: 38 mm

Baldwin's Auctions Ltd: Auction no. 49, Hongkong, 26.08.2010, Lot 884



Fig. 19

The now defunct firm of Taylor & Challen Ltd in Birmingham, photographed by Ian Bower in 2007
Source: flicker-photosharing

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Note: My thanks go to the late Nicholas G. Rhodes for making many valuable suggestions and providing additional information and illustrations for this article.

PALEMBANG PICIS INSCRIBED "ALAMAT SULTAN"

By Dr T. Yih,

Introduction

The subject of this short paper is a series of small cash pieces (picis) inscribed "Alamat sultan", attributed to the city of Palembang on the Indonesian island of Sumatra.

A preliminary typology will be presented and their historical context will be discussed. It is based on about 107 pieces from the author's collection

In addition to the black-white drawings in this paper, the reader is referred to the Zeno database (www.ZENO.ru) for images of the coins by ZN-numbers within brackets.

Historical background

The city of Palembang situated on the northeastern coast of the island of Sumatra near the estuary of the Musi river has been an important trade centre in the past. Around AD 1659 the sultanate of Palembang was established after a period of anarchy and war amongst contestants for power. It maintained its independence until 1821, when the sultan, Mahmud Baharuddin II, was deported to Ternate by the Dutch. Thereafter, puppet sultans were installed under Dutch supervision. A list of the Palembang sultans is available on the Zeno database. There has always been a large Chinese minority that was not only involved in trade, but also in monetary affairs, e.g. the production of picis was the exclusive right of the sultan, who, in turn, often had it farmed out to Chinese.

Numismatic background

Palembang picis are described in the main numismatic literature dealing with the coins of the former Dutch East Indies. Millies⁵² states that the earliest date found on Palembang coins is AH 1103/

⁵² H.C. Millies, *Recherches sur les monnaies des indigènes de l'archipel Indien et de la péninsule Malaie*, La Haye, 1871.

AD 1691 or AH 1113/ AD 1701 and the latest, AH 1219/ AD 1804, whereas he regards the earlier date, AH 1061/ AD 1650 as mentioned by Netscher and van der Chijs⁵³, as a misinterpretation. The Palembang picis can be divided roughly into two main classes: those without a central hole (picis buntu) and those with a central hole (picis teboh).

Palembang picis with the legends “alamat sulṭān” have been described in the literature. In Millies and Netscher/vd Chijs they are listed under nos M206-209 and N200-201, respectively. This refers, however, only to pieces with a square central hole. Those with a round central hole have so far not been mentioned in the numismatic literature. Recently, however, the latter have appeared in reasonable quantities on the market.

General description

The pieces are rather thin and have a fragile appearance. They have a square or round central hole surrounded by a low-relief Arabic legend reading “alamat sulṭān” (i.e. mark of the sultan). The words or parts of the words are arranged counter-clockwise around the hole in the fashion of Chinese cash: “ala” at the top; the letters mīm (m) and ta (t) on the left-hand side; “sulṭā” at the bottom and an isolated nūn (n) on the right-hand side. The writing is crude and the words/letters often vary in shape.

The obverse generally has a tiny outer and inner border, whereas the reverse is completely flat without borders. Remnants of the casting-channels are still visible as protrusions on nearly half the number of the coins. Usually, these protrusions have to be filed off. Their presence on these coins is indicative of a hasty finishing process.

Typology - Main types

Two main types can be distinguished:

- main type I pieces with a square central hole (ZN104644; ZN104651)
- main type II pieces with a round central hole (ZN99254; ZN104668)

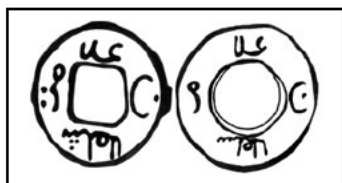


Fig 1 Main type I Main type II



Fig 1a
Main type I with circle around (l.)
Main type II (r.)

Main types I and II comprise 81 and 26 pieces, respectively.

As mentioned above, the writing is rather crude. For main type I on only 3 out of 81 pieces are the three dots of the letter “sīn” present. Remarkably, regardless of the condition of the piece, the two dots belonging to the letter “ta” are always visible; with respect to main type II no dots belonging either to the letter “sīn” or “ta” have been encountered, except on a single piece (no. 5).

Within main type I, a subtype can possibly be distinguished. It concerns a single piece with the legends surrounded by a tiny circle (ZN104657).

The collection also contains a few pieces from both main types I and II, that are clearly aberrant with respect to the direction of the

writing and the position of the letters “n” and “m”. These aberrant pieces may be arbitrarily considered subtypes or simply errors.

For the moment they are considered as errors, although it is peculiar that the same type of errors occur in both main types.

Errors

Two error-types can so far be distinguished for both main types I and II.

- error type 1: legends clock wise instead of counter-clock wise. Two specimens (ZN104655; ZN104656) and one specimen (ZN104660) for main type I and II, respectively



Fig 2 Error type 1



Fig 2a: Error type 1 with square hole

- error type 2: legends counter-clock wise, but the letters “n” of sultan and “m” of ‘alamat have changed position. two specimens show this error (ZN104652; ZN104654) for main type I and two (ZN104659; ZN104662) for main type II.

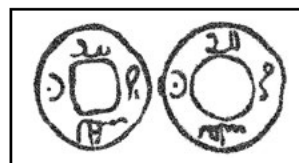


Fig 3 Error type 2

- error type 3 (tentatively) legends clockwise, but the letters “n” of sultan and “m” of ‘alamat have changed position. The words “sulṭā” and “ala”, however, are upside down. Represented by a single specimen (ZN104663) of main type II.

METRICAL DATA

Table 1 show the metrical data of the pieces from the author’s collection

The weights vary considerably. This is especially due to the variation in diameter and the size of the square hole. The right column gives the ratio between the diameter of the piece and diameter of the central hole.

	Weight (g)	Diameter (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Diameter central hole (mm)	Ratio diameter/diameter hole
Square-hole picis					
Mean	0.54	17.7	0.6	6.6	2.66
S.D.	0.10	0.8	0.1	0.4	0.16
Range	0.34-0.88	16.0-19.4	0.5-0.8	5.5-7.5	2.36-3.05
N	80	81	81	81	80
Round-hole picis					
Mean	0.66	19.6	0.6	8.9	2.21
S.D.	0.14	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.11
Range	0.47-0.94	19.2-20.1	0.5-0.9	8.2-10.1	1.96-2.38
N	26	26	26	26	26

Table 1 mean metrical data.

⁵³ E. Netscher and J.A. van der Chijs, *De munten van Nederlandsch Indie*, Batavia, 1863.

Metallic composition

The metallic composition as revealed by XRF-analysis of two main type I specimens is about 74% tin and 23% lead

DISCUSSION

Historical context and dating

The eldest known Palembang pieces are a small picis with the date AH 1103 (AD 1691/92) and some pieces dated AH 1113 (AD 1701/02). According to Millies, the oldest Palembang picis had no central hole and only from AH 1198 (AD 1783/84) did the sultans of Palembang issue round or octagonal picis with a round central hole. This is in contrast with his own illustration (M184) of a holed Palembang piece with date AH 1163/AD 1749. Such a piece is now available in the Zeno database (ZN96455 and ZN104679). In view of its weight (1.49 g) one might wonder whether it should be considered a picis. Rademacher, however, in his description of the island of Sumatra in 1779, mentions the circulation of small lead picis with a square hole. As far as is known, the only Palembang picis with a square central hole are those with the legend “alamat sultān”.

Although type I is apparently much more common than type II, the frequency ratio type I versus type II being about 3 (76% versus 24%), it is remarkable that type II has not been mentioned in the literature.

Another unsolved item is the question why type II appeared and whether it might represent a higher value. Table 1 shows that although type II is larger in diameter than type I, because of its larger central hole the weights of both types are more or less comparable.

Table 2 Individual metrical data

No	Wt (g)	Diameter (mm)	Thickness (mm)	# (mm)	Remarks
Main type I					
1	0.61	18.1	0.7	7.1	ZN46675
2	0.88	18.3-20.5	0.8	6.3-7.0	
3	0.61	18.2	0.6	6.4	
4	0.49	18.1	0.6	7.2	
5	0.41	18.0	0.5	7.4	
6	0.47	18.1	0.5	6.1-7.2	
7	0.60	17.8	0.5	6.1-6.8	
8	0.54	18.3	0.6	6.7	
9	0.55	17.6	0.6	7.2	
10	0.77	17.0	1.1	6.6	error type-2 ZN104654
11	0.47	17.3	0.6	6.0-7.3	error type-1 ZN104656
12	0.57	16.9	0.5	7.0	ZN104651
13	0.48	18.1	0.5	6.7	
14	0.62	17.4	0.6	5.8	
15	0.36	16.2	0.5	6.0-6.7	
16	0.53	18.1	0.5	7.5	
17	1.02	18.2	1.2	6.4-6.8	two pieces stuck together
18	0.41	16.0	0.7	6.4	
19	0.38	16.5	0.5	6.3-6.9	
20	0.50	17.7	0.6	6.6	
21	0.37	16.0	0.7	6.7	error type-2 ZN104652
22	0.61	18.0	0.6	6.3	
23	0.44	16.8	0.6	5.5	
24	0.44	16.5	0.5	6.3	
25	0.61	18.3	0.7	5.1-7.4	
26	0.54	18.0	0.6	7.4	
27	0.53	18.1	0.7	6.8-7.9	
28	0.52	18.4	0.7	7.0	

With respect to the error types, the following can be said. Millies illustrated some aberrant coins under nos 208 and 209. Error type 1 in which the legend is written clockwise is comparable to Millies no. 208. The legend of Millies no. 209 is very similar to our round-hole no. 14 because of the way that “sultā” is engraved upside down. It differs, however, with respect to the interchanged positions of the “n” and “m”. Error type-2 has not been previously described.

As mentioned above in the general description, nearly 50% of the pieces have the remnants of a single casting channel still visible. This protrusion is not randomly positioned around the coin, but is restricted to defined places. There is apparently a difference between the two main types. For main type I the protrusion is located as follows: 26 pieces (72%) at the “n” and 10 pieces (28%) at “m”. For main type II the numbers are: 4 pieces (31%) at “n”; 3 pieces (23%) at “m” and 6 pieces (46%) at “ala”.

Unfortunately, up till now, no moulds for these picis have been discovered. The position of the protrusions at the “n” and “m” means that some coins have the protrusion at the left side and others at the right side. This suggests that they were cast using a mould with side channels left and right to a central channel resulting in a money-tree as is known from Malaysian sultanates such as Kelantan or with a wooden mould as shown by Netscher/vd Chijs in their plate XXXII.

In conclusion, this short paper gives an update of the data of Millies and Netscher/vd Chijs from more than a century ago and the author hopes that it will be a stimulus to describe the picis of the Palembang sultanate based on the numerous new discoveries and offerings on the market.

29	0.50	16.7	0.6	6.8	
30	0.64	18.2	0.7	6.1-6.8	
31	0.63	18.2	0.6	6.5-7.3	
32	0.42	17.3	0.6	6.9	error type-1 ZN104655
33	0.59	18.3	0.6	6.6-7.0	
34	0.54	18.3	0.5	6.7-7.5	
35	0.64	18.3	0.7	6.3-7.1	
36	0.47	16.5	0.7	6.2	Error type-2 ZN104653
37	0.73	18.2	0.7	6.3-7.1	
38	0.43	16.2	0.5	6.5	
39	0.43	18.2	0.5	6.1-7.3	
40	0.52	17.2	0.7	7.1-7.5	
41	0.61	17.1	0.7	6.8	
42	0.71	18.6	0.6	6.8	
43	0.67	18.3	0.6	6.3-6.6	
44	0.59	18.3	0.6	6.2-7.0	
45	0.63	18.2	0.7	6.3-6.7	
46	0.52	17.5	0.6	6.5	
47	0.56	18.1	0.6	6.9-7.6	
48	0.48	17.8-18.5	0.5	6.6-6.9	
49	0.50	18.3	0.5	6.5	
50	0.52	18.2	0.6	6.5-7.0	
51	0.60	18.5	0.6	5.6-7.0	
52	0.56	18.0-18.3	0.6	6.3-7.0	
53	0.65	18.3	0.6	6.4-6.9	
54	0.55	18.5	0.5	6.5-7.0	
55	0.69	18.5	0.7	6.3	
56	0.53	18.0	0.6	6.8	
57	0.76	18.2	0.7	6.4	
58	0.57	18.5	0.6	6.8	
59	0.47	16.9	0.5	6.9	
60	0.52	18.0	0.5	6.8-7.8	
61	0.59	18.2	0.6	6.4-6.9	
62	0.44	16.5	0.6	6.7	
63	0.63	16.1	0.7	5.8-6.0	
64	0.34	17.2	0.5	6.7	
65	0.45	16.2	0.6	6.4-6.9	

66	0.53	16.9	0.6	6.8	
67	0.55	18.2	0.6	6.8	
68	0.51	16.8	0.6	6.7	
69	0.62	18.1	0.6	6.7	
70	0.52	17.8	0.6	6.4	
71	0.48	18.3	0.5	6.5	
72	0.45	17.2	0.8	6.2-6.7	
73	0.51	18.1	0.6	6.6-6.8	
74	0.53	18.3	0.5	6.7	ZN104644
75	0.58	18.4	0.5	6.4-6.6	
76	0.49	18.1	0.6	6.0-7.1	
77	0.64	17.3	0.7	5.7-6.0	circle ZN104657
78	0.50	17.2	0.5	6.2-7.0	
79	0.40	16.7	0.5	6.6-7.0	
80	0.35	17.1	0.5	6.8	
81	0.38	16.9	0.5	6.7	
Main type II					
1	0.65	19.9	0.6	9.0	
2	0.61	19.2	0.6	8.6	
3	0.64	19.5	0.9	8.2	
4	0.72	20.1	0.8	8.6	
5	0.58	19.8	0.6	10.1	error type-1 ZN104660
6	0.59	19.5	0.6	9.4	
7	0.59	19.3	0.7	9.2	
8	0.68	19.6	0.6	8.2-9.1	
9	1.14	19.8	1.1	8.4	error type-2 ZN104662
10	0.60	19.8	0.7	8.5	error type-2 ZN104659
11	0.60	19.8	0.7	9.2	

12	0.60	19.9	0.6	8.8	
13	0.53	19.6	0.5	9.1	ZN99254
14	0.57	19.5	0.6	9.3	error type-3 ZN104663
15	0.63	19.4	0.6	9.0	
16	0.47	19.3	0.5	9.3	
17	0.57	19.6	0.5	9.4	
18	0.69	19.4	0.7	9.2	
19	0.55	19.6	0.5	8.9	
20	0.72	19.8	0.7	8.8	
21	0.71	20.1	0.6	8.7	
22	0.63	19.4	0.6	8.6	
23	0.64	19.4	0.7	8.5	
24	0.60	19.8	0.5	8.9	
25	0.91	19.4		8.4	
26	0.94	19.7	0.5	8.7	ZN104658

Late News – New Publication

Anatolian Early 14th Century Coin Hoard by Judith Kolbas, Timothy May and Vlastimil Novák, published by the National Museum, Prague, 2011. Format: A4, soft covers, pp. 111 with black and white illustrations. ISBN 978-80-7036-305-8

This book comprised the results of the detailed study of a group of 405 dirhams struck in Anatolian mints around the turn of the 14th century AD. It includes coins of the Ilkhanid, Ghazan Mahmud and the Seljuq rulers, Kay Khusraw III, Kay Qubad III and Mas'ud II, and some imitations. The hoard appeared in Prague in 2006, having been in private hands since the 1960s. An unspecified locality in Ukraine or Romania was reported as the alleged place of discovery.

Third Seminar on Early Iranian and Central Asian Numismatics in Memoriam Boris Kochnev (1940-2002)



Fig. 1. Survivors of the Hofstra seminar: speakers and remaining guests in the lecture hall by 6:30 pm

