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**IN HONOUR OF STAN GORON
IN HIS 75TH YEAR**



Edited by

Karan Singh
Joe Cribb

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From the Secretary General

This volume is dedicated to Stan Goron, who is a founder member of this Society, its Deputy General Secretary since 1997, and was the editor of this journal for 30 years from 1985 to 2015. During this time he turned what was then the Society's very short 'newsletter' into its substantial *Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society*, recognised throughout the world as a medium for serious students and collectors of oriental coins.

To many people Stan is also known for the volume he wrote with J.P. Goenka, *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates* (2001). This ground-breaking volume quickly became and has since remained the standard reference for all those researching or collecting South Asia's medieval Islamic coins. In addition to all these contributions, Stan has been, and continues to be, always available to help anyone struggling to learn about or solve a problem relating to oriental numismatics.

As Secretary General of the Society, I should like to extend my heart-felt thanks to Stan for all he has done both for the society and for me personally, and to extend to him on behalf of the Society our congratulations on this celebratory volume in his honour.

Paul Stevens

From the Editor

It is indeed a fitting tribute to Stan Goron that so many leading numismatists have come together in this issue to cover medieval Islamic numismatics in his honour. We have all gained from Stan's expertise in some way, during our research or while building up our collections. The range of the articles in this commemorative issue also reflects the breadth of Stan's own numismatic experience: the subjects range from Afghanistan to Bengal, and from the 9th to 18th centuries. This issue presents new data, important interpretations, and many hitherto unpublished coins.

For us at the Journal, Stan has left very large shoes to fill. As editor of 130 issues, he was instrumental in establishing this as a serious platform for research in oriental numismatics. It is therefore fitting that this special issue is also the very first issue to be printed in colour. This is to illustrate as realistically as we can the coins that we publish.

As Editor of the Journal, I extend my sincere thanks to Stan for his vision for this publication. I have always found him generous with his time and knowledge. I hope this volume conveys the scale of our thanks due to him.

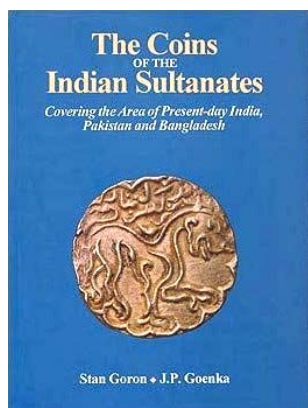
Karan Singh

STAN GORON'S THE COINS OF THE INDIAN SULTANATES: FERTILE GROUND FOR SCHOLARLY STUDIES

John Deyell

Stan Goron has had an immense influence on Asian numismatics through his decades of dedicated, prolific and thoughtful editorship of this journal. Indeed, he nourished it through a long and impressive transformation from our club newsletter to an influential and internationally respected publication. As noteworthy as this achievement has been, it must also be recognised that Stan's capable pen has been equally influential in the field of medieval Indian numismatics and monetary history.

His classic *Sultanates* book (Goron and Goenka 2001) quickly became the 'go-to' catalogue for collectors of Indian sultanate coinages. This was only to be expected, given its comprehensive treatment of this immense field, skillfully managing to be simultaneously broad and deep. However, it is probably not as well known that Stan's *Sultanates* has proven to be of great utility to scholars of monetary and social history. It is my pleasant duty to acknowledge my own debt to Stan and to repay him in a modest manner, by highlighting the many ways in which the book has materially assisted my own work, as well as broader medieval studies. The following does not pretend to be exhaustive, but does provide a flavour for the very real influence of Stan's catalogue.



The Coins of the Indian Sultanates (2001)

1. Catalogue numbers

It is not easy to create a catalogue numbering system that is at once robust, flexible, and sufficiently detailed. That Stan managed to do so is evident from its almost universal adoption by collectors and coin dealers in their description and references to sultanate coins on offer or in collections. Not so well-known is the fact that the numbering has been adopted as well by serious scholars:

- Although it was the seat of imperium in colonial India, and the home of the Asiatic Society and the Indian Museum, there was never a formal recording or reporting system for treasure troves in Bengal. So, unlike in Uttar Pradesh, it is a major job of digging through old journals to determine what hoards of medieval coins might have been unearthed in that state. Over the last decade, Professor Sutapa Sinha of the University of Calcutta has patiently gone through the museum coin collections in India and Europe, to trace hoards of Bengal sultanate silver *tankas*, through their recorded provenance in accession registers and as written on the tickets on the trays. To keep track of this data, she used the *Sultanates*' catalogue

numbers as the identifiers for the coins in all the hoards she inspected. This has now been released as a corpus of Bengal coin hoards (Sinha 2017). Recently published as well is a follow-up to this study, analysing the regional distribution of Bengal *tankas* from their place of minting to their place of loss. This study is also based on Stan's catalogue numbering (Sinha 2019).

- In 2016, our ONS Regional Secretary for North America, Professor Pankaj Tandon of Boston University, and Professor Phil Wagoner of Wesleyan University, found themselves thrown together at the Indian Institute of Numismatic Studies (as it was then called) in Nasik, India. Phil Wagoner, who is interested in Bahmanid coins, was inspecting the Akola Hoard of Bahmanid coppers in the IIRNS collection. The hoard was of such long duration and of so many different denominations, that the two were able to undertake a joint study of the intriguing issue of why copper coin production sharply rose in the opening decades of the fifteenth century. Copper supplanted silver, as the dominant coin metal of the Deccan, in part as a response to a series of devastating famines. The co-authors used Stan's *Sultanates*' catalogue numbers in their typology and also used the book's section on the Bahmanid Sultans as the basis for their metrology (Wagoner and Tandon 2017).

2. Comprehensive listings

The cataloguing of Indian sultanate coins has been a long process over many generations. For a long time, the only references were the catalogues of sultanate coins in various museums (Lane-Poole 1884; Wright 1907; Singhal 1935). Being inaccessible to many, the museum listings were brought together by Donald Hull in the 1970s (Hull 1972). Soon after, Michael Mitchiner expanded these listings in his *World of Islam* (Mitchiner 1977). Indian collectors were given their first handy catalogue by Dilip Rajgor (Rajgor 1991). There the matter sat until Stan catalogued the Goenka collection, and convinced his co-author to expand the scope to all sultanates and most contemporary Indian dynasties using Arabic or Persian on their coins. For poorly-studied regions like Arakan and Sind, this was an important step forward.

- One of the pioneering sections in Stan's *Sultanates* was that covering the small silver 'three-dot' coins of Sind. Virtually unknown to previous generations, these small coins began showing up in the market in significant quantities in the last two decades. Their many varieties and curious legends caused much excitement. Although a number of scholars studied the coins, for a long time Stan's listing was the only reference available to collectors. Even after inspecting many thousands of these new coins in hoards, Alex Fishman and Ian Todd used Stan's *Sultanates*' listings for Sind and Multan as the point of departure for their comprehensive analysis of coin hoards and a new interpretive framework for these coins (Fishman and Todd 2018).

An essential aspect of Stan's listings was an indication of each known year of issue for each type, and an indication of its mint (place of issue). This enabled collectors to create series by type, mint and date, in addition to king (minting authority). From the narrow perspective of the monetary researcher, the use of this detailed listing throughout the catalogue enabled geographical, temporal and metrological comparisons to be made.

- Pushkar Sohoni was able to compare the coin production of the late Bahmanids to the successor sultanates of Maharashtra and the Deccan, thanks to the relevant sections in Stan's *Sultanates*. He found that Bahmanid coinage continued to be issued, and to circulate, long after the passing of *de facto* power to regional governors, who progressively established independent sultanates. Despite the Islamic norm of *sikka* to announce the legitimacy of new rulers, these fledgling sultans had initially foregone this coining privilege. Only when

threatened by Mughal expansion, did the new kingdoms launch their own currency (Sohoni 2018).

3. Guidance on rarity

One of the great strengths of the *Sultanates* catalogue was the very carefully assessment of relative commonness or rarity for each coin type, as observed by Stan in the coin market over several decades. Although only intended as a guide to collectors, the 'rarity' ratings have proven very useful to scholars in their coin population calculations.

Without these very essential indicators of the different survival rates of medieval coins, researchers from other disciplines would have great difficulty distinguishing between, on the one hand, those bright, shiny things that capture the attention of art lovers, but had no circulation or monetary influence in their own day; and, on the other hand, the rude, crude, dull and ugly base coins of little aesthetic merit, that circulated in immense numbers and were the monetary 'workhorses' of medieval markets and revenue systems.

- One example lies in the Bahmanid Sultanate, mentioned above in respect to the Akola Hoard. In direct succession to the earlier Delhi Sultanate, this Deccani kingdom issued gold, silver and copper coins over the period of its existence. But were the coins all of the same importance in monetary matters? Did this menu of coins vary over time? Were different metals or denominations more plentiful than others at different times? To answer some of these questions, Phil Wagoner, with some statistical input from myself, found that Stan's *Sultanates'* statements of rarity provided a reasonable proxy for coin population statistics for Bahmanid gold, silver and copper coinages (Wagoner 2014).

4. Chronology

One of the highlights of Stan's listings of sultanate coins is its indication of every single year of issue of every coin type in every metal, in the catalogue. While intended to assist collectors in the formation of their collections, it has proven to be a useful research tool for comparative studies.

- A new study relied extensively on Stan's chronological data for the 15th century to hypothesise an impact of the Ming silver market on the West Asia 'silver famine' of that period. Only by comparing Stan's listings for all the Indian sultanates, was I able to establish that in the Delhi, Jaunpur, Gujarat, and Bahmani kingdoms, there was little silver coinage between 1400 and 1450, while the same was true for Malwa in 1400-1440. Other scholars had remarked that in contemporary China, the early Ming encouraged silver remittances from 1403 onwards, with silver receipts rising to a quarter million *taels* per annum for the following decades. This level of remittances collapsed in the late 1440s. So Stan's careful cataloguing enabled this trans-Asian phenomenon to be recognised (Deyell 2019a).

5. All of the above

- While Stan's catalogue was limited to South Asia, and focused on the domestic production of coins, the subcontinent did not exist in a vacuum. A popular topic of study in recent years has been trade: overland trade (the northern Silk Route and India's role in it, or the trans-Asian trade in horses, in which India was one terminus), or maritime trade (commerce and pilgrimage in the Indian Ocean World, in which the Indian subcontinent held the central, nodal position between Africa, West Asia, Southeast Asia and China). Precious metals and copper were important trade items, and it is clear that the need to constantly replenish the stock of coins in circulation caused a significant demand for coinage metals. In a recent work, I relied extensively on Stan's *Sultanates'* observations of chronology, denominational frameworks and metallic content, as one basis for an exploration of the role of coinage in Indian Ocean trading systems. The aim was to get a sense of the

principal coinage metals used in each region, and to assess the relative importance of the various coinage metals (gold, silver and copper), in India's maritime trade (Deyell 2019b).

So it is evident that over the years, this writer hasn't been hesitant to 'mine' Stan's *Sultanates* for titbits of useful information, for purposes of other research. Nor have others. Indeed, this doesn't pretend to be a comprehensive list of all the works that have taken advantage of the accuracy or completeness of the monumental *Sultanates* catalogue. But it is enough to give the flavour of writings that have benefitted greatly from the existence of this catalogue and the careful, patient, systematic and observant work of its author/ compiler. Well done, Stan!

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CHARLES MASSON'S FINDS FROM BEGRAM AND IDENTIFYING THE ISLAMIC MINT OF FARWĀN

Joe Cribb

“The coins to which the following notice refers form part of the extensive collection made in Afghanistan by Mr. Masson, now deposited in the Museum at the India House. Amid the more important relics of the Bactrian successors of Alexander the Great, which constituted the bulk of this acquisition, slight attention was attracted by the medals of a subsequent Mohammedan dynasty, the events of whose rule were comparatively well known, and whose history in itself possessed none of the classic interest attaching to the survival of the Greek monarchies in Central Asia. From this and other causes Professor Wilson, in his description of the antiquities of Ariana, which the labours of Mr. Masson had placed at his command, but briefly referred to the numismatic monuments of the race of Sabaktagin. Such being the case, and adverting both to the numerical amount of these coins now available, and to the very limited number of medals of the Ghaznavid princes yet noticed, either by English or continental writers, it seemed probable that an attempt at a classification of these minor antiquities might not be altogether devoid of interest.” (Thomas 1847: 267)

The collection used by Edward Thomas to document the coins of the Ghaznavids was assembled by the British traveller Charles Masson while he was in Kabul 1833-1838. Masson excavated Buddhist sites and collected coins and small antiquities. In 1833 he discovered an ancient city site in the plain of Begram, about 50 km north of Kabul, and decided to build a collection of finds solely from this site (Masson 1842, III: 140-144, 148-149). The site is located on the southern flank of the Hindu Kush mountains, where the Panjhir river emerges and is joined by the Ghorband river before it flows south to meet the Kabul river to the east of Kabul. The site is at the end of two of the main passes through the Hindu Kush from northern Afghanistan (ancient Bactria/ Tokharistan): the Salang pass and the Khawak pass (via Panjhir). French excavations at the site later revealed the remains of an ancient city and discovered the famous Begram Treasure of the late Kushan period (Ball 2019: 57-60; Allchin, Hammond and Ball 2019: 337-338; 353-361). On the northern edge of the site there is a large citadel overlooking the confluence of the Panjhir and Ghorband, protecting the entrance and exit of the passes into northern Afghanistan.

Masson decided to collect coins found at the site with the intention of revealing and understanding its history: “The discovery of a multitude of coins, which may be classed into many well defined and distinct series, and which were undeniably current in these countries, yield abundant testimony that not only did they undergo a number of political convulsions, and experience considerable alternations in the authority of various dynasties, but that divers religions were introduced, and patronized by the monarchs of the day.” (Masson 1842, I: 196). He concluded that the city had been founded by Alexander the Great as he passed northwards through the Hindu Kush c. 329 BCE (Masson 1836: 6-10). Among the surviving coins, however, two Achaemenid period bent-bar fractions (BM: 1880.3733.a-b) have been found, suggesting that the site was already occupied during the period of Persian rule before Alexander’s arrival and that the citadel may have been an Achaemenid foundation (Cribb 2020).

Farwān

“It may be superfluous to dwell upon the importance of the Begram collections; independently of the revelation of unknown kings and dynasties, they impart great positive

knowledge, and open a wide field for speculation and inquiry on the very material subjects of the languages and religions prevailing in Central Asia during the dark periods of its history.” (Masson 1842, III: 149-50)

A large part of Charles Masson’s collection of coins and antiquities from Afghanistan is now housed in the Department of Coins and Medals in the British Museum, the British Library (The India Office collection on loan to the British Museum), and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The collection is now the subject of a catalogue being written by Dr Elizabeth Errington, which will be published later this year (Errington 2020). Charles Masson’s finds and an account of his explorations are the subject of two previous volumes by Errington (2017a and 2017b).

The nature of Charles Masson’s finds, casually collected from the surface of the Begram site by locals gathering metal for recycling every time they were exposed by the weather, meant that the finds were normally base metal, as precious metal coins were less frequently lost by accident. His intention was to document the history of the site through its coins. The collection therefore provides a detailed record of small change current at the site over many centuries, allowing a historical overview of the city to emerge. The density of finds at particular periods, and the distribution of the types found locally and elsewhere, can suggest whether minting took place at the city. This is particularly useful in identifying the mint of Farwān (فروان), which appears on some of the Islamic coins found by Masson. The Afghan province in which Begram is located is now called Parwan, i.e. the same name as the mint, so it seems likely that the mint of Farwān was in the vicinity.

There are four references to Farwān in early Islamic geographies, all of which imply an urban settlement where the Panjhir river leaves the Hindu Kush mountains on its way south to join the Kabul river on its way past Jalalabad and Peshawar to join the Indus. The first is in the geography *Ṣūrat al-‘Arḍ* of the mid-10th century Iranian geographer Istakri (died 957 CE), who identified this town as the destination of a journey from Khulm southwards across the Hindu Kush. Just before Farwān, the route goes through Andarab and Panjhir (Mordtmann 1845, I: 476). His contemporary, the Arab geographer Muḥammad Abū’l-Qāsim ibn Ḥawqal, who travelled in the area in the mid-10th century, described Farwān in his geography, written c. 977: “*The river of Penjhir runs through the town [Panjhir], and passes Jariane till it comes to فروان Ferouan, and so proceeds into Hindoostan*” (Ousley 1800: 225; Kramer 2014). The anonymous geographer who wrote the *Hudud al-‘Alam* for the ruler of Juzjan in north-western Afghanistan in 982 also mentioned Farwān as “*a pleasant town and a resort of merchants, it is the gateway of Hindustan*” (Minorsky 1970: 112, 348). A more detailed account appears in the *Nuzhat al-Mushtaq* of Al-Idrisi, a 12th century Italian geographer, where he wrote: “*arriving at Farwān, the river (Panjhir) enters into the lands of India and turns its course towards Nahrwara (probably a scribal error for Nangarhar, the region of Jalalabad)... From [Haraiana] to Farwān, one heads south for 2 days. The town of Farwān is small, but pretty, its surrounds are agreeable, its bazaars are busy, its inhabitants are wealthy; the houses there are built in mud and in brick. It is situated on the banks of the river which comes from Panjhir. This town is one of the main markets for India.*” (Jaubert 1836: 476) The description by Al-Idrisi corresponds well with the location of the site of Begram, on the west bank of the Panjhir river where it meets the Ghorband.

Islamic coins from Begram

The Saffarid conquest of Kabul c. 870 CE introduced Islamic coinage to the Begram region. There does not seem to have been a mint in the area under the conqueror Ya’qūb b. al-Layth al-Ṣaffār and his brother and successor ‘Amr b. al-Layth, but the finds of Charles Masson at Begram (Bagram), include one silver coin of ‘Amr (BM: IOLC.6028). This coin and other issues of

Ya'qūb and 'Amr lack a mint identity, but were probably made for circulation in this region, as they share their narrow thick fabric with the earlier Shahi coins which were current at the site before the Saffarid conquest (Cribb 2020). The nearest Saffarid mint to Begram appears to be at Panjhir in the Panjhir valley in the mountains to the northeast. The exact location of the town of Panjhir is not known, but the coin found by Masson is probably from that mint. From the accounts of the geographers mentioned above, it seems that Panjhir was located on the Panjhir river to the east of Andarab and near the lower end of the Khawak pass. The valleys between Panjhir and Andarab were one of the most important sources of silver in the medieval world, and mints in both towns supplied silver coins which have been found as far away as in the Viking hoards of northern Europe (e.g. Noonan 1977: 247-248: 45 dirhems of Andraban mint, 2 of Panjhir, and 3 of Farwān, dated AH 314, 315 and 323, found in Estonia). The town disappeared when the region was sacked by the Mongols and mining ceased (Merkel et al. 2013).

'Amr b. al-Layth's reign came to an end when the Samanid ruler Ismā'il b. Ahmad captured him in 900 CE, so the Kabul region came under Samanid rule. There are no coins of this period in Masson's collection from Begram, but Samanid silver coins were made at the Farwān mint: dirhems of Isma'il b. Ahmad (892-907 CE) dated AH 292 and 295, of Ahmad II b. Isma'il (907-914 CE) dated AH 296, 297, 299, 300, and of Nasr II b. Ahmad (914-943 CE) dated AH 303, 308, 313, 314 (see Fig. 1), 315, 316, 320, 322, 323, 324 (Diler 2009, II: 891; Schwarz 1995: 64, nos. 686-693).



Fig. 1. Silver dirhem of Samanid Nasr II b. Ahmad, 'Farwān' mint, AH 314, British Museum 1971.0320.21, 2.92 g, 29 mm

A Farwān gold dinar of Nasr II b. Ahmad, dated AH 324, has also been recorded (Balwin Islamic Sale 20, Lot 603, 8.5.2012). During Nasr II's reign the region came briefly under the control of a rebel, Ahmad b. Sahl, who issued a silver dirhem at the Farwān mint, dated AH 306 (Baldwin Islamic Sale 16, Lot 537, 20.10.2009). The issue of coins continued at Farwān mint in the name of local amirs under the authority of the Samanids: Ahmad b. Yusuf (AH 331-343), silver dirhems dated AH 334 (Schwarz 1995: 64, no. 694) and copper coins dated AH 334 and 348 (Album 2011: 157, types U1478 and V1478).



Fig. 2. Copper coin of Nasir b. Ahmad, under the Samanid Manşūr I b. Nūh, 'Farwān' mint, AH 365, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6785, 2.18 g, 18 mm

Copper coins in the name of later Samanid rulers were also struck at the Farwān mint, and examples of these were found by Masson. Six of these copper coins (IOLC.6781-6786) in the name of Manşūr I b. Nūh (961-976 CE) (see Fig. 2) and Nuh II b. Mansur (976-997 CE) (see Fig. 3) are in the India Office loan collection. These six coins were first identified by Edward Thomas (1847: 301-2) in his study of Ghaznavid coins in Masson's collection, then housed in the India House Museum in London. A seventh example, also from Masson's collection, issued by Manşūr I b. Nūh, is in the Fitzwilliam Museum (CM.IS.364-R). As well as naming the Samanid overlord, a local amir Nasir b. Ahmad is also named; most of the coins have illegible dates, but the year AH 365, the last year of Mansur I b. Nuh, can be read on two examples in Nasir b. Ahmad's name. Thomas (1847: 300) thought that these coins were issued under the unnamed authority of the first Ghaznavid Alptegin, but there is nothing on the coin to indicate this and his view has been rejected by Schwarz (1995: 64, no. 695, note 12).



Fig. 3. Copper coin of Nasir b. Ahmad, under the Samanid Nuh II b. Mansur, 'Farwān' mint, date illegible, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6783, 2.06 g, 17 mm

Among Masson's surviving collection there are also three imported copper coins in the name of Samanid rulers: a *falus* of Mansur I b. Nuh (961-976 CE) of the Bukhara mint, dated AH 357 (968 CE) (BM: IOC. 6021), and another of Nuh II b. Mansur (976-997 CE) with unclear date and mint, and a third illegible.



Fig. 4. Silver dirhem of Ghaznavid Mahmud b. Sebuktegin, 'Farwan' mint, date illegible, British Museum India Office Collection (ex Masson), IOC.1332, 3.83 g, 19 mm

Ghaznavid coinage minted at Farwān began in the reign of Sebuktegin (977-997 CE) with small flan dirhems, matching the size of Shahi coins, being issued from AH 380, 381, 383, 384 and 385, but often with the mint name and date illegible (Schwarz 1995: 64-66, nos. 696-746). On these coins Sebuktegin acknowledges the Samanid ruler as his overlord. His successors Isma'il b. Sebuktegin (997-998 CE) and Mahmud b. Sebuktegin (999-1030 CE) continued the same coinage, but only one year, AH 395, has been read (Schwarz 1995: 66-69, Isma'il nos. 747-750; Mahmud nos. 751-785). The mint name Farwān is clear on some of Mahmud's silver coins (see Fig. 4) as it is in the middle of the design (Schwarz 1995: 68-69, nos. 780-785). Two examples of this type from Masson's collection are in the Fitzwilliam Museum (CM.IS.0394-R and 03945-R).



Fig. 5. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Isma'il b. Sebuktegin, 'Farwān' mint, date illegible, British Museum 1883,1004.73, 3.11 g, 25 mm

A so-far unique copper coin of the Farwān mint with illegible date of the reign of Isma'il b. Sebuktegin (997-998 CE) is in the British Museum (see Fig. 5; Lane-Poole 1889: 199, no. 457kk). The Samanid overlord was acknowledged by the Ghaznavids on their coins until AH 389 (999 CE), but after that the Ghaznavids were fully independent. Examples of the silver issues were in the collection of Charles Masson, but it is not clear whether he collected them from Begram.



Fig. 6. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Mas'ud III b. Ibrahim, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6383, 2.78 g, 10 mm

About 900 Ghaznavid copper coins were collected by Charles Masson from the Begram site. They do not have mint names, but it seems likely that the production of copper coins at the Farwān mint continued throughout this period. Tye (1995: 102, type 84e1) only attributes one type to the mint, but there were likely more. The rulers represented by these copper coins continue after Mahmud b. Sebuktegin: Muhammad b. Mahmud (1031-1041 CE), Mas'ud I (1031-1041), Mawdud I (1041-1050), 'Abd al-Rashid (1049-1052), Mas'ud III (1099-1115), Arslan Shah (1116-1117), Bahram Shah (1117-1157), Khusrau Shah (1157-1160), and Khusrau Malik (1160-1186). Some of these coins are so common at Begram, but barely known elsewhere, that there seems little doubt that they were struck at the Farwān mint. Such a type of Mas'ud III is known from 52 examples (see Fig 6; cf. Tye 1995: 107, type 105e1), of Arslan, known from 148 coins (see Figs. 7-9; Tye 1995: 107, type 107e1) and of Bahram Shah, known from 118 examples (see Figs. 10-11; Tye 1995: 108, type 110e1).



Fig. 7. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Arslan Shah, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6571, 2.81 g, 13 mm



Fig. 8. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Arslan Shah, India Office Loan Collection IOLC. 6536, 1.82 g, 12 mm



Fig. 9. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Arslan Shah, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6538, 1.97 g, 11 mm



Fig. 10. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Bahram Shah, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6525, 1.91 g, 11 mm



Fig. 11. Copper coin of Ghaznavid Bahram Shah, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.6654, 1.60 g, 12 mm

Many of the common coins of this period in Masson's Begram assemblage have a distinctive bevelled edge flan (see Figs. 6-14) which is not otherwise known, again suggesting their production at a single mint in the region. The bevelled edge seems to result from the flans being cast, and occasionally the cut sprues can be seen (see Figs. 10 and 13). Each of the types just referred to were unknown to Tye until he examined the Masson material in the British Museum and the Fitzwilliam Museum, hence their 'e' type numbers. In 1150 the Ghaznavids began to lose territory to the emerging Ghurid dynasty. Masson collected from the site coins of Khusrau Shah and Khusrau Malik, Ghaznavid rulers who ruled after the Ghurid invasion, but it is likely that they are imports from elsewhere, as they do not resemble earlier Ghaznavid issues from the region.



Fig. 12. Silver dirhem of the Ghurids Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad b. Sam and his brother Mu'izz al-Din Muhammad b. Sam, 'Farwan' mint, date illegible, Fitzwilliam Museum CM 769.1996, 2.82 g, 20 mm

Over 200 Ghurid copper coins were collected by Masson from Begram, but mostly without mint name. An undated silver coin type (Tye 1995: 112, type 137) of the joint reigns of Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad b. Sam (1163-1203) and his brother Mu'izz al-Din Muhammad b. Sam (1173-1203) is known with the mint name Farwān (see Fig. 12). No examples of this type are among the British Museum and British Library Masson material, but there is an example in the Fitzwilliam Museum (CM 769.1996). These coins were issued after 1173, but before 1192 because subsequently the Farwān mint came under the authority of the Ghurids of Bamiyan. Two Bamiyan Ghurids are known to have

issued silver coins at Farwān: Shams ad-Din Muhammad b. Mas'ud (1163-1192) and Baha' al-Din Sam b. Muhammad (1192-1206) (Schwarz 1995: 68-69; Muhammad: no 786; Baha: nos. 787-793, Tye 1995: 114, type 153). The dates on two of the Farwān silver coins of Baha have been read as AH 595 (Schwarz 1995: nos. 787-788), i.e. 1198/9 CE. The transition from Ghiyath al-Din to the Bamiyan Ghurids took place after 1180 as Muhammad names the Caliph al-Nasir (1180-1225) on his Farwān coins (Schwarz 1995: nos. 786).



Fig. 13. Anonymous copper coin of the Bamiyan Ghurids, inscribed *bāmiyān*, undated, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.7439, 2.48 g, 13 mm



Fig. 14. Anonymous copper coin of the Bamiyan Ghurids, inscribed *bāmiyān*, undated, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.7438, 2.07 g, 14 mm

The only copper coins attributable to the Bamiyan Ghurids in Masson's collection from Begram are six anonymous coppers with the word *bāmiyān* in a circle (see Figs. 13 and 14; Tye 1995, p. 145, type 362), struck to a heavier weight standard than the late Ghaznavid coins, but struck on the same cast bevel-edged flans. The discovery of six examples of this rare type at Begram also suggests their attribution to the Farwān mint, even though they have the mint name of Bamiyan inscribed on them.



Fig. 15. Anonymous copper coin attributable to Ghurid governor Taj al-Din Yildiz, 'Farwan' mint, date illegible, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.7421, 3.38 g, 14 mm



Fig. 16. Anonymous copper coin attributable to Ghurid governor Taj al-Din Yildiz, 'Farwan' mint, date illegible, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.7423, 2.84 g, 14 mm

There are also in Masson's collection seven examples of a type (Tye 1995: 139, type 323) with the mint name Farwān which appear to be Ghurid issues, but do not have the ruler's name (see Figs. 15-16). They are inscribed with the title *malik al-sharq* (King of the East), followed on some examples by some illegible words. This title was first adopted by the Ghaznavid ruler Mahmud b. Sebuktegin (998-1030) (Bosworth 1962) and continued to be used by later Ghaznavids and Ghurids. On coins this title was only otherwise used by the Ghurid general Taj al-Din Yildiz (1206-1215) on gold coins from his Ghazna mint, inscribed *al-malik al-mu'azzam sultan al-sharq taj al-dunya wa al-din yildiz* (Schwarz 1995, nos. 574, 575). 69 of the 83 Taj al-Din Yildiz coins (excluding the seven *malik al-sharq* coins) in the British Museum and British Library are of a single type (Tye 1995: 121, type 199), suggesting that they were struck at Farwān, rather than at Ghazna as Tye suggested. If this attribution of these Farwān coppers is correct, then it shows that he took over the Begram region on behalf of the Bamiyan Ghurids after Baha's death. Once established, Taj al-Din Yildiz quickly established his independence under the nominal sovereignty of Mahmud Ghiyath al-Din (1206-1212), Ghurid ruler of Ghur. He remained in power until overthrown by an invasion from the west, when the army of the Khwarezmshah ruler Muhammad b. Tekish 'Ala al-Din (1200-1220) captured Kabul and Ghazna in 1215.



Fig. 17. Silver dirhem of Khwarezmshah Muhammad b. Tekish 'Ala al-Din, 'Farwan' mint, date AH 614, British Museum 1982,0206.2, 6.16 g, 32 mm



Fig. 18. Silver dirhem of Khwarezmshah Muhammad b. Tekish 'Ala al-Din, 'Farwan' mint, date AH 617, British Museum 1982,0206.3, 5.55 g, 31 mm

Begram also came under Khwarezmshah rule and the mint of Farwān began to issue silver and copper coins in Muhammad's name (Schwarz 1995: 70-71, silver: nos. 794-796 Diler 2009, II: 892; Schwarz 1995: 70-71, copper: 797-807, Tye 1995: 133, type 278) (see Figs. 17-19). These silver coins are dated AH 614 and 617 (1217/8 and 1220/1 CE). A silver coin of the next ruler Mangubarni b. Muhammad Jalal al-Din (1220-1231) is listed by Album (2011: 190, type 1744).



Fig. 19. Copper coin of Khwarezmshah Muhammad b. Tekish 'Ala al-Din, 'Farwan' mint, undated, British Museum 1881,1202.3, 3.03 g, 15 mm



Fig. 20. Copper coin of Khwarezmshah Muhammad b. Tekish 'Ala al-Din, no mint name, undated, India Office Loan Collection IOLC.7306, 3.01 g, 15 mm

490 copper coins of Muhammad were collected by Masson from Begram (see Figs. 19-20), but there are no coins which can be attributed to Mangubarni. Most of the coins of Muhammad in Masson's collection are of a type without mint name and previously attributed to Ghazna (Schwarz 1995: 58-61, nos. 612-645; Tye 1995: 133, type 283), but it seems likely on the basis of their discovery in such vast numbers at Begram that they should be re-assigned to the Farwān mint. Only one example of the copper type bearing the mint name Farwān is among Masson's collection (IOLC.7328, Tye 1995: 133, type 278), but there are two from Masson's collection in the Fitzwilliam Museum (CM-IS.0482, CM-IS.0483).

The Khwarezmshah control of the Begram region was short-lived and ended in 1221 when the Mongol army, under one of Genghis Khan's generals, arrived in the region. Mangubarni was able to inflict a defeat on the Mongols in the 'Battle of Parwan', but this brought retribution from Genghis Khan and Mangubarni had to flee. Genghis Khan caught up with him and defeated him in the 'Battle of the Indus'. The arrival of Genghis Khan seems to have brought a complete stop to the circulation of coins at Begram and to the production of coins at the Farwān mint. Masson's collection contains no significant later coins from Begram and there are no later coins with the mint name Farwān (apart from the Timurid issue discussed below). Genghis Khan appears to have ended the life of the city either on his way through the region following Mangubarni or subsequently on his return. The ruins Masson encountered seem to be the result of the Mongol leader's retribution for the humiliation of his army by Mangubarni. As Masson, himself observed: "It is not indeed improbable that this city, like many others, may owe its destruction to the implacable rage of the barbarous and ruthless Genghis" (1842, III: 160).

Farwān, the Muslim name of Begram?

The extensive finds of coinage minted at Farwān, and the sudden cessation of the mint when the town was destroyed, suggest that Farwān was the name of the ancient city on the Begram site during the Islamic period. The contemporary travellers all describe Farwān as standing on the banks of the Panjhir river after it left the mountains of the Hindu Kush and headed south towards the Kabul river and then the Indus. Later writers however suggest a different location for Farwān. Masson

identified Farwān, which he called Perwān, as a township about 12 km to the north of the ancient Begram site: "a city of magnitude, must have existed at Perwān, about eight miles, bearing north nineteen west, from Begram, consequently that distance nearer to the great range of Caucasus, under whose inferior hills it is in fact found. Coins are discovered there in large numbers..." (Masson 1844, III: 166). This referred to a small town situated at the entrance to the Salang Pass on the northern edge of the Begram plain, a city now known as Jabal-e Serāj (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jabal-e-seraj>, consulted 28.6.2019). The early geographers placed Farwān on the banks of the Panjshir river where Begram is located, whereas Jabal-e Serāj (the name given to Masson's 'Perwān' in the early 20th century) is on the Salang river, a tributary of the Ghorband river. This suggests that after the destruction of the ancient city, its name Farwān was reused for the township further north.

In his account of travelling through the region in the mid-14th century, Moroccan geographer Ibn Battuta located Farwān in the same place as Masson:

"We halted next at a place called Banj Hir (Panjshir), which means "Five Mountains," where there was once a fine and populous city built on a great river with blue water like the sea. This country was devastated by Tinkiz, the king of the Tatars, and has not been inhabited since. We came to a mountain called Pashay... We travelled thence to Parwan, where I met the amir Buruntayh. He treated me well and wrote to his representatives at Ghazna enjoining them to show me honour. We went on to the village of Charkh [Charikar], it being now summer, and from there to the town of Ghazna. This is the town of the famous warrior-sultan Mahmud ibn Sebuktegin, one of the greatest of rulers, who made frequent raids into India and captured cities and fortresses there." (Gibbs 1929: 179-180).

The route followed by Ibn Battuta from where the Panjhir river leaves the mountains to Charikar passes along the northern edge of the plain through Jabal-e Serāj.

The latest known coin with the mint name Farwān must relate to the town visited by Ibn Battuta as it was issued in AH 839 (1435/6 CE) under Timurid rule (Diler 2009, II: 892), long after the city of Begram had disappeared.

Conclusion

It seems likely that the mint of Farwān during the period of Samanid, Ghaznavid, Ghurid and Khwarezmshah rule was located in the ancient city investigated by Charles Masson. According to Islamic writers of this period, Farwān was located on the banks of the Panjhir river as it went south towards the Indus. The mint ceased operation when the city was destroyed by the Mongols after the 'Battle of Parwan'. The town later known by this name also briefly had a mint under the Timurids, but was located on a different river 8 miles (13 km) north of the ancient town. The simplest explanation is that, during the period of Islamic rule, Farwān was the name of the city at Begram which was the focus of his collecting, and that by the time Ibn Battuta visited the region, a new settlement with the same name had arisen north of the original city.

Table A. Coins of the Farwān mint, compared with the coins collected by Charles Masson from Begram
(List of rulers based on Bosworth 1996)

Dynasty	Ruler	AH	CE	Local ruler	Mint name Farwān, dated (AH)			AE Masson collection
					AU	AR	AE	
Saffarid	Saffarid conquest c. 870							
	Yaqub b. al-Layth	247	861					
	'Amr b. al-Layth	265	879					
Samanid	Samanid takeover c. 900							
	Isma'il b. Ahmad	279	892			292–295		
	Ahmad II b. Isma'il	295	907			296–300		
	Nasr II b. Ahmad	301	914		324	303–324		
				[Ahmad b. Sayl rebel]		306		
	Nuh I b. Nasr	331	943					
				[Ahmad b. Yusuf amir]		334	344	
				[Muhammad b. Yusuf]			348	
	'Abd al-Malik	343	954					
	Mansur I b. Nuh	350	961					1
				[Nasr b. Ahmad amir]			365	4
	Nuh II b. Mansur	365	976					1
				[Nasr b. Ahmad amir]				3
Ghaznavid	Ghaznavid conquest before 990							
	Sebuktegin b. Qara Bechkem	366	977			380–385		16
	Isma'il b. Sebuktegin	387	997			-	x	
	Mahmud b. Sebuktegin	388	998			395		20
	Muhammad b. Mahmud first reign	421	1030					6
	Mas'ud I b. Mahmud	421	1031					61
	Muhammad b. Mahmud 2 nd reign	432	1040					
	Mawdud b. Mas'ud	432	1041					55
	Mas'ud II b. Mawdud	440	1048					
	'Ali b. Mas'ud	440	1048					
	'Abd al-Rahsid b. Mahmud	440	1049					42
	Farrukhzad b. Mas'ud	443	1052					
	Ibrahim b. Mas'ud	451	1059					81
	Mas'ud III b. Ibrahim	492	1099					66
	Shirzad b. Mas'ud	508	1115					
	Arslan Shah b. Mas'ud	509	1116					154
	Bahram Shah b. Mas'ud	511	1117					125
	Khusrau Shah b. Bahram Shah	552	1157					4
	Khusrau Malik b. Khusau Shah	555	1160					9
Ghurids	Ghurid conquest c. 1150							
	Muhammad b. Sam Ghiyath al-Din	558	1163					2
	Muhammad b. Sam Mu'izz al-Din	569	1173					80
	Bamiyan Ghurids after 1180							
	Muhammad b. Mas'ud	558	1163			x		
	Baha' al-Din Sam b. Muhammad	588	1192			595		4
	Jalal al-Din 'Ali b. Sam	602	1206					9
	anonymous							13
	Taj-al Din Yildiz	602	1206					90
Khwarezmshah	Khwarezmshah conquest 1215							
	Muhammad b. Tekish 'Ala al-Din	596	1200			614–617		588
	Mangubarni/Mengubirti	617	1220			x		
Mongols	Mongol conquest 1221							

Acknowledgements

This article is based on the exhaustive work done on the Masson collection by my former colleague Elizabeth Errington, who has worked since 1992 to reconstruct the finds of Charles Masson. I thank her for sharing these resources with me. I also thank Paramdip Khera who catalogued the Islamic coins found by Charles Masson as part of Elizabeth Errington's project. I am also grateful to Steve Album for his comments on the 'king of the east', and to Adi Popescu and his colleagues at the Fitzwilliam Museum for giving me access to the Masson coins in their collection. Thanks also to Vesta Curtis for her help in finding Masson coins in the British Museum collection.

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I am delighted to participate in this volume of JONS in honour of its former editor Stan Goron. As well as being a long-term editor of the journal and an active member and officer of the ONS, Stan's name is a byword for the classification of the coinages of South Asia's sultanate period. His contribution to the study of Islamic coinage has been outstanding and his catalogue (with J.P. Goenka) of sultanate coinage will remain the soundest guide for scholar and collector alike for the foreseeable future. Congratulations Stan!

Joe Cribb

SOME NEW TYPES AND VARIETIES OF SULTANATE COINS

Paul Stevens

Since the publication of Goron and Goenka's catalogue of sultanate coins (2001), many new types and varieties have come to light. Some of these have been published, many in this journal, but others remain unpublished, although some may be found in auction catalogues or old lists of coins for sale. For some time past, efforts have been made to update the original catalogue and, hopefully, at least parts of that new version will see the light of day in the not too distant future. I have been working on this project with a number of other people, including Stan, for about two years, and have come to realise the immensity of the work that must have been undertaken to produce that first edition.

This short paper presents a small number of the new types and varieties that will appear in the new catalogue. The catalogue numbers shown are the new numbers proposed for the new version of the catalogue. These numbers might change, although every effort will be made to keep them as shown here. All photos are enlarged.

Sind

SS12A – billon *jital*

Saif al-dīn al-Ḥasan Qarlugh (1239-1249 CE)?



The *jitals* of Saif al-dīn al-Ḥasan Qarlugh usually have the word Qarlugh at the bottom of the reverse inscription. This coin says *bin muḥammad*. This might indicate that Ḥasan was the son of Muḥammad, or it may be a coin of a different ruler. (From a private collection)

Dehlī

D99 – gold *tanka*, 11.03 g

Jalālat al-dīn Raḍīyya (AH 634-637, 1236-1240 CE)



The legend within a plain circle: *al-sulṭān al-a'zam, shams al-dunyā wa al-dīn iltutmish al-sulṭān naṣrat amīr al-mū'minīn*

fi ahd al-imam al mustanṣir amīr al-mū'minīn

Raḍīyya is the only female sultān to appear in the entire sultanate series. She was the daughter of ʿĪltutmish and was chosen by him as his successor. However, she had to overcome strong opposition to her succession, but was eventually successful and reigned for about three years. Gold coins of her reign are extremely rare, the only one reported in the catalogue having been issued in Bengal (B55). The present coin appeared in a list of coins for sale from Sovereign JONS Vol. 238, Winter 2019

Rarities Ltd. Although described as unique, at least one other specimen is known in a private collection.

D224A – gold pagoda, 3.66 g

ʿAlā al-dīn Muḥammad (AH 695-715, 1296-1316 CE)



'alā al-dunyā wa al-dīn

sikandar al-thani

Muḥammad Khaljī is well-known as a successful invader of southern India. Presumably this coin was struck somewhere in that area either by him or by a local ruler hoping to appease him. It appeared in an auction held by Classical Numismatic Gallery (Auction 29, Lot 167, 2017).

D340A – gold *tanka* – *ḥaḍrat* Dehlī, AH 725. 11.03 g

Muḥammad bin Tughlaq



The legend in a circle: *al-mujāhid fi sabīl allāh muḥammad bin tughluq shāh*. Names of the four Caliphs in the margin.

The *Shahāda* in a circle; mint and date in margin.

This coin is similar to D340, but the obverse legend is in a circle with the four Caliphs in the margin. Once again, this coin appeared in an auction of Classical Numismatic Gallery (Auction 29, Lot 170, 2017).

Bengal

The number of new types and varieties for Bengal is quite large and only a very few examples are shown here. The work on this part of the new catalogue is being undertaken mainly by Iftekhar Alam, with the help of Noman Nasir, Stan Goron and myself.

B40A – silver *tanka*, AH 622

In the name of Shams al-dīn ʿĪltutmish, Sultān of Dehlī, by Governor Ghiyāth al-dīn ʿIwaḍ, second series



The legend within a dotted circle: *al-sulṭān al-mu'azzam shams al-dunyā wa al-dīn abū*

The *Shahāda*, without the caliph, inside a plain circle and a dotted circle. The date

al-muzaffar iltutmish al-sultānī yamīn khalīfat allāh nāšir amīr al-mū'minīn

in the margin with another dotted circle around the outside.

This variety differs from B40 in having both a plain and a dotted circle surrounding the central legend on the reverse. It comes from a private collection.

B150A – gold $\frac{1}{4}$ *tanka*, 2.70 g
Shams al-dīn Ilyās (AH 743-758, 1342-1357 CE)



The legend within a plain circle: *ilyās shāh*

The legend within a plain circle: 'ādil

This coin appeared in a Baldwin's sale (Auction 53, Lot 1642, 2007).

B408 – gold *tanka*, AH 841
Nāšir al-dīn Maḥmūd (AH 837-864, 1433/34-1459 CE)



nāšir al-dunyā wa al-dīn abū al-mujāhid maḥmūd shāh al-sultān

al-mu'ayyad bi-ta'yid al-raḥmān khalīfat allāh bi'l-hujjat wa al-burhān

Sold in a sale by Marudhar Arts, this coin is the same as the silver *tanka* B429 but struck in gold.

Deccan sultanates

BH50A – gold *tanka* or 'Adlī, 9.08 g
Bahmanīs – Muḥammad Shāh II (AH 780-799, 1378-1397 CE)



The legend in a plain circle: *sultān al-'ahd wa al-zaman hāmī millat rasūl al-raḥmān*

The legend in a plain circle: *muḥammad maḥmūd bahmanī*
Date in the margin.

Sold in a New York sale (Baldwin et al, New York Sale IX, Lot 314, 2005). The auctioneer wrote: "This remarkable piece has the same weight as the earlier, experimental 'adlī coins of Muḥammad bin Tughluq of Dehlī (9.1 g). No other gold coins (or silver coins) of this weight have been reported for the Bahmanīs. The type too, is not otherwise known for this ruler. It actually resembles that of the gold Dīnār of Muḥammad I struck in years 771 and 773 (G&G BH25)".

BH108 – copper sixth *gānī*, 1.75 g
Bahmanīs – Nizām al-dīn Aḥmad Shāh III (AH 866-867, 1461-1463 CE)



From a private collection.

N74 – copper third *falūs*, 4.49 g
Ahmadnagar – Burhān Nizām Shāh III (AH 1019-41, 1610-31 CE)



hiḥfat or *hiḥzuhuma* below divider

From a private collection.

Q26A – copper two thirds *falūs*, 9.92 g
Golkonda – Muḥammad Qulī Quṭb Shāh (1580-1611 CE)



falūs shāhī ta'yir dah paiasta ilahī bala'nat

From Victor Newey.

Jaunpūr

J9A – copper $\frac{1}{4}$ *falūs*, 0.88 g
Shams al-dīn Ibrāhīm Shāh (AH 804-844, 1402-1440 CE)



ibrāhīm shāh sultānī

khalīfa abū al-faḥ

From a private collection.

Mālwa

M41A – billon *jītal*, 3.54 g, possibly Shādīābād (*ḥaḍrat*) mint
'Alā' al-dīn Maḥmūd Shāh I (AH 839-873, 1436-1469 CE)



From a private collection.

M113A – silver sixteenth *tanka*, 0.57 g
Nāṣir Shāh (AH 906-916, 1500-1510 CE)



nāṣir shāh khaljī bin ghiyāth shāh *al-kibriyā' lillāh*

This could be a special issue (see M130). From a private collection.

Gujarāt

G52A – gold fractional *tanka*, 3.0 g
Quṭb al-dīn Aḥmad Shāh II (AH 855-862/3, 1451-58 CE)



Probably: *quṭb al-dunyā wa al-dīn aḥmad shāh al-sulṭān* Probably: *al-khilāfa amīr al-mū' minīn khulidat khilāfatahu*

Sold in a Baldwin et al. sale in New York (Sale XI, Lot 593, 2006).

G80A – gold ½ *tanka*, 5.5 g
Nāṣir al-dīn Maḥmūd Shāh I (AH 862/3-917, 1458/9-1511 CE)



The legend in a hexagon: *allāh rabbi* in tughra form. *sikka am az bandagist nusratum as qadir ast*
Margin: *hamd be-maḥmūd man geh ba-'ālam rasad*

From Classical Numismatic Gallery (Auction 2, Lot 52, 2010).

G566 – gold ½ *tanka*, AH 975, 5.91 g
Shams al-dīn Muẓaffar III (AH 968-980, 1560-73 CE)



al-mu'ayyad bi-ta 'yīd al-raḥmān shams al-dunyā wa al-dīn abū al-naṣr *muẓaffar shāh bin maḥmūd shāh al-sulṭān*

Baldwin et al., New York (Sale XI, Lot 594, 2006)

Kashmīr

K137A – Copper ½ *kaserah*, 2.37 g
Muḥammad Yūsuf Shāh (intermittently, AH 987-94, 1579-86 CE)



Probably: *al-sulṭān al-a'ẓam muḥammad yūsuf shāh*. Mint and date written out.
Diamond-shaped knot with cross.

K137B – copper ¼ *kaserah*, 1.17 g
Muḥammad Yūsuf Shāh (intermittently, AH 987-94, 1579-86 CE)



Probably: *al-sulṭān al-a'ẓam muḥammad yūsuf shāh*. Mint and date written out.
Diamond-shaped knot with cross.

The quarter *kaserah* denomination has not previously been reported for coins of the Kashmīr sultānate and is presumably extremely rare. Both the last two coins are in a private collection.

Bibliography

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This paper is written in recognition of the great work that Stan has done on the coins of the Indian sultans, and also to thank him for all the help that he has personally given me in forming my collection of Indian coins.

Paul Stevens

DATES IN ARABIC LETTERS IN THE MARGINS OF BENGAL SULTANATE COINS

S. M. Iftekhar Alam

For the first 180 years (AH 601-781, 1204-1380 CE) of Bengal Sultanate coinage, dates in the margins of coins were spelt out using letters of the Arabic alphabet (*al-abjadiyyah*). After that, dates started to appear in the margins in both letters and numerals until the end of Shams al-Din Ahmad Shah's reign (AH 836-837, 1432-1433 CE), with the exception of the coins of Hamzah Shah (AH 813-814, 1410-1412 CE in the whole of Bengal and AH 815, 1412-1413 CE in Mu'azzamabad only), Danujamarddana Deva (AH 819-821, 1416-1418 CE) and Mahendra Deva (AH 821, 1418 CE), where dates were written in numerals only. After Ahmad Shah, all coins of subsequent rulers bear the dates in numerals only. However, the transition from letters to numerals in coin dates began during the reign of Sikandar Shah (AH 758-792, 1357-1390 CE).

But deciphering the Arabic letter dates in the margins of coins of the Bengal Sultanate is not easy for most coin collectors and numismatists. This is due to the smaller than optimum flan sizes, eccentric strikes, crudely-written letters, poor engraving etc. Other factors are the absence of *Tashkil* and *I'jam* in almost all coins. The marginal legends contain not only dates, but also words for mints, mint epithets, terms and adjectives used to describe a coin, and some other words needed to construct a sentence that combines all these elements into a meaningful statement. Several different ways have been used to write mints, dates, and other information in the margins of the coins, which will be discussed below in detail. Before that, we first need to know – for the period from Bakhtiyar Khalji to Shams al-Din Ahmad Shah, when dates were inscribed in letters – the names of all known mints, epithets, terms and adjectives used for the coins, and the prepositions required to complete a statement. We also need to know how the units, tens, and hundreds of the dates were spelt in words at that time.

Words used in inscriptions in coin margins

Known mints (from Bakhtiyar Khalji to Shams al-Din Ahmad)

1	Banga	بنك
2	Chatgaon	چٹگانو
3	Chawlistan 'urf 'arsah kamru	چاولستان عرف عرصہ کامرو
4	Nagaur	ناگور
5	Nawlistan	ناولستان
6	Firuzabad	فیروز آباد
7	Gaur	گور
8	Ghiyathpur	غیاثپور
9	Mu'azzamabad	معظمآباد/معظم آباد
10	Laknauti/ Lakhnauti	لکنوتی/لکنوتی
11	Lakur	لکور
12	Lakhur	لکھور
13	Naudiya	نودیا
14	Ruhanpur	روہنپور
15	Satgaon	سٹگانو
16	Shahr-i-Nau	شہر نو
17	Sonargaon	سنارگانو
18	Tirhut	ترہٹ
19	Dakhil Banjaliya	داخل بنجلیہ
20	Sikandarabad	سکندر آباد
21	Gunjaniya	گنجنیہ
22	Jannatabad	جنتآباد/جنت آباد

Epithets of mints

1	<i>Hadrat</i>	حضرة
2	<i>'Arsah</i>	عرصة
3	<i>Mulk</i>	ملك

4	<i>Balad/ Al-balad</i>	بلد/البلد
5	<i>Baldah al-mahrusah</i>	بلدة المحروسة
6	<i>Baldah al-mu'azzam</i>	بلدة المعظم
7	<i>'Arsah al-ma'murah</i>	عرصة المعمورة
8	<i>Qasbah</i>	قصبہ
9	<i>Khittah</i>	خطہ
10	<i>Iqlim</i>	إقليم
11	<i>Shahr</i>	شہر
12	<i>Hadrat Shahr</i>	حضرة شہر
13	<i>Hadrat Jalal</i>	حضرة جلال

Terms used for coins

1	<i>Al-sikkah</i>	السكة
2	<i>Al-fiddah</i>	الفضة
3	<i>Al-tankah</i>	التنكة
4	<i>Al-dinar</i>	الدينار
5	<i>Al-turfah</i>	الترفة

Al-fiddah has also been used as an adjective in some coins.

Adjectives used for coins

1	<i>Al-fiddah</i>	الفضة
2	<i>Al-mubarakah</i>	المباركة
3	<i>Al-mubarakah al-maimunah</i> <i>al-'azimah</i>	المباركة الميمونة العظيمة
4	<i>Al-munirah</i>	المنيرة
5	<i>Al-'adliya</i>	العدلية

Prepositions

Three types of prepositions are used either before a mint or its epithet or date. These are:

1	<i>fi</i>	في
2	<i>bi</i>	ب
3	<i>min</i>	من

Spelling of numbers found on the coins

Units

1	One	أحد / إحدى
2	Two	إثنان / اثنتي
3	Three	ثلاث / ثلاث
4	Four	أربع
5	Five	خمس
6	Six	ست / ستة
7	Seven	سبع
8	Eight	ثمان
9	Nine	تسع

Tens

10	Ten	عشر / عشرة
20	Twenty	عشرين
30	Thirty	ثلاثين / ثلاثين
40	Forty	أربعين
50	Fifty	خمسين
60	Sixty	ستين
70	Seventy	سبعين
80	Eighty	ثمانين
90	Ninety	تسعين

Hundreds

600	Six hundred	ستمائة/ستمائة
700	Seven hundred	سبعمائة
800	Eight hundred	ثمانمائة

Ordinal Numbers

1	First	الأول
2	Second	الأخر/الثاني
3	Third	الثالث
4	Fourth	الرابع
5	Fifth	الخامس
6	Sixth	السادس
7	Seventh	السابع
8	Eighth	الثامن

9	Ninth	التاسع
10	Tenth	العشر
20	Twentieth	العشرين

Names of lunar months

1	<i>Muharram</i>	محرم
2	<i>Safar</i>	صفر
3	<i>Rabi' I</i>	ربيع الأول
4	<i>Rabi' II</i>	ربيع الآخر / ربيع الثاني
5	<i>Jamadi I</i>	جمادي الأول
6	<i>Jamadi II</i>	جمادي الآخر / جمادي الثاني
7	<i>Rajab</i>	رجب
8	<i>Sha'ban</i>	شعبان
9	<i>Ramadan</i>	رمضان
10	<i>Shawal</i>	شوال
11	<i>Dhu al-qa'dah</i>	ذو القعدة
12	<i>Dhu al-hajjah</i>	ذو الحجة

Examples of mint and date inscriptions in coin margins

Now we can look at the different formats of writing mints and dates in the margins of coins in different periods of the Bengal Sultanate.



Coin 1. Gold tanka, NM, Ramadan, AH 601
(British Museum 1970,0411.1)

Coin 1

In the name of Muhammad bin Sam, issued by Bakhtiyar Khalji. Legend in obverse margin, starting from 7 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

Gauda Vijaye في منتصف رمضان سنة إحدى وثمانية

(On the victory over Gaur in the middle of Ramadan [in the] year six hundred and one)

Gauda Vijaye is written in Nagari script.



Coin 2. Silver tanka, NM, Ramadan, AH 606
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 2

Rukn al-Din 'Ali bin Mardan. Legend in obverse margin, starting from 9 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله بتاريخ رمضان سنة ستة وثمانية

(There is no God but Allah [and] Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, dated Ramadan [of the] year six hundred and six)



Coin 3. Silver tanka, NM, AH 614
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 3

In the name of Shams al-Din Iltutmish, issued by Iwad Khalji. Legend in obverse margin, starting from between 1 and 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

و ستمائة محمد رسول الله بتاريخ سنة أربع عشر لا إله إلا الله

(There is no God but Allah [and] Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, dated year six hundred and fourteen)



Coin 4. Silver tanka, NM, 19 Dhu al-Qadah, AH 616
(Stephen Album Rare Coins, Auction 15, Lot 871)

Coin 4

Iwad Khalji (AH 609/10-624). Legend in reverse margin, starting from between 8 and 9 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

بتاريخ التاسع عشرة من ذو القعدة سنة ستة عشرة ستمائة

(Dated nineteenth of Dhu al-qa'dah (of the) year six hundred and sixteen)



Coin 5. Silver tanka, NM, Rabi' II, AH 619
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 5

Iwad Khalji (AH 609/10-624). Legend in reverse margin, starting from between 11 and 12 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة في ربيع الآخر سنة تسع عشرة و ستمائة

(This coin has been struck during Rabi' II (of the) year six hundred and nineteen)

In Bengal Sultanate coinage, the term *sikkah* (سكة) was used for a coin for the first time during Iwad's reign.



Coin 6. Silver tanka, NM, 22 Rabi'II, AH 620
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 6

Iwad Khalji (AH 609/10-624). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

في الثاني والعشرين من شهر ربيع الآخر سنة عشرين و ستمائة

(On the twenty second of (the) month of Rabi' II (of the) year six hundred and twenty)



Coin 9. Silver tanka, NM, months of AH 622
(G&G B39)

Coin 9

In the name of Iltutmish, issued by Iwad (AH 622). Legend in reverse margin, starting from between 2 and 3 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

هذا الضرب في شهور سنة اثني عشرين و ستمائة

(This has been struck during the months of year six hundred and twenty two)



Coin 7. Silver tanka, NM, 20 Rabi'II, AH 620
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 7

Iwad Khalji (AH 609/10-624). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 12 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

في التاريخ العشرين من شهر ربيع الآخر سنة عشرين و ستمائة

(On the date of twentieth of (the) month of Rabi' II (of the) year six hundred and twenty)



Coin 10. Silver tanka, NM, months of AH 628
(Scott Semans)

Coin 10

In the name of Iltutmish and caliph Al-Mustansir (AH 628-633). Legend in reverse margin starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذا التكنة في شهور سنة ثمان و عشرين و ستة مائة

(This tankah has been struck during the months of year six hundred and twenty eight)

This coin is dated AH 628, the earliest date when the term *tankah* (تكنة) appears on a sultanate coin. This term was used for a denomination for the first time during Iltutmish's reign.



Coin 8. Silver tanka, NM, 19 Safar, AH 622
(ONS Newsletter #169)

Coin 8

In the name of Iltutmish, issued by Iwad (AH 622). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 11 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

التاسع عشر من سفر (صفر) سنة إثنان عشرين و ستمائة

(Nineteenth of Safar (of the) year six hundred and twenty two)

This is an example where the legend begins with the day of a month, instead of beginning with التاريخ or بتاريخ as in coins 4 and 7 respectively.



Coin 11. Silver tanka, NM, months of AH 630
(G&G B48)

Coin 11

In the name of Iltutmish and caliph Al-Mustansir (AH 628-633). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذا التكنة في شهور سنة ثلثين و ستة مائة

(This tankah has been struck during the months of year six hundred and thirty)



Coin 12. Silver tanka, Laknauti Mudafat, months of AH 633
(G&G B49)

Coin 12

In the name of Iltutmish and caliph Al-Mustansir (AH 628-633). Legend in obverse margin, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

من خراج رال و برند في شهور سنة ثلث و ثلثين و ستة مائة

(From the land tax of Radh and Barind during the months of year six hundred and thirty three)



Coin 13. Silver tanka, Lakur, months of AH 633
(G&G B50)

Coin 13

In the name of Iltutmish and caliph Al-Mustansir (AH 628-633). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه الترفة بلكور في شهور سنة ثلث ثلثين و ستمائة

(This wealth has been struck at Lakur during the months of year six hundred and thirty three)

Here the coin has been termed as *turfah* (ترفة = wealth).



Coin 14. Silver tanka, Laknauti, months of AH 634
(Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 35, Lot 144)



Coin 15. Silver tanka, Laknauti, months of (year off flan)
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coins 14 and 15

Rukn al-Din Firuz (AH 633-634). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذا الفضة بلكنوتي في شهور سنة أربع ثلثين ستمائة

(This silver has been struck at Laknauti during the months of year six hundred and thirty four)

On Rukn al-Din Firuz's coins we see the term *fiddah* (فضة = silver) used for a coin for the first time. Coin 15 shows this *الفضة* more clearly at 6 o'clock on the reverse margin.



Coin 16. Silver tanka, Laknauti, AH 651
(Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 31, Lot 147)

Coin 16

Joint issue of Mughith al-Din Yuzbak and Nasir al-Din Mahmud Shah (AH 651-652). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب لکنوتي في سنة إحدى و خمسين و ستمائة

(Struck (at) Laknauti in the year six hundred and fifty one)

A different style has been used in the script on the margin of this coin.



Coin 17. Silver tanka, Laknauti, Ramadan, AH 653
(Baldwin's Auction 26, Lot 1040)

Coin 17

Mughith al-Din Yuzbak (AH 652-655). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

هذا الضرب بلکنوتي من خراج أزمردن و نوديا في رمضان سنة ثلث و خمسين و ستمائة

(This has been struck at Laknauti from the land tax of Azmardan and Naudiya in Ramadan (of the) year six hundred and fifty three)



Coin 18. Silver tanka, Laknauti, AH 666
(Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 20, Lot 192)

Coin 18

In the name of Ghiyath al-Din Balban, sultan of Dehli (AH 664-686). Legend in obverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه الفضة بخطة لکنوتی فی سنة ستة و ستین و ستمائة

(This silver has been struck at *Khittah* Laknauti in the year six hundred and sixty six)

Here the mint epithet *Khittah* has been used for Laknauti.



Coin 19. Silver tanka, Laknauti, AH 688
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 19

Nasir al-Din Mahmud (AH 687-688). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 12 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه الفضة بحضرة لکنوتی من خراج بنک سنة ثمان ثمانین و ستمائة

(This silver has been struck at *Hadrat* Laknauti from the land-tax of Banga (in the) year six hundred and eighty eight)

Here the mint epithet *Hadrat* has been used for Laknauti.



Coin 20. Silver tanka, Ghilyathpur, AH 722
(Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 21, Lot 240)



Coin 21. Silver tanka, Ghilyathpur, AH 722
(JONS 207)

Coins 20 and 21

Ghiyath al-Din Bahadur Shah (AH 720-724). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 3 o'clock for both coins, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة فضبة غیاثپور من میر ترهت سنة اثني عشرین و سبعمائة

(This coin has been struck at *Qasbah* Ghilyathpur from the supplies of Tirhut (in the) year seven hundred and twenty two)

Here the mint epithet *qasbah* has been used. The coin was struck from "supplies" of silver from Tirhut, indicating that Bahadur either took control of Tirhut or plundered its treasures, or maybe even both.



Coin 22. Gold dinar, Satgaon, AH 730
(G&G B118)

Coin 22

Muhammad bin Tughlaq (AH 726-735). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 12 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

هذا الدينار سنکانو فی سنة ثلاثین و سبعمائة

(This *dinar* (from) Satgaon in the year seven hundred and thirty)

This is the first instance in the Bengal Sultanate that a gold coin has been called a *dinar*.



Coin 23. Copper tanka (forced currency), Iqlim Lakhnauti,
AH 732 (private collection, Canada)

Coin 23

Muhammad bin Tughlaq (AH 726-735). Legend in reverse margin in Persian script, starting from 4 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

در إقليم لکنوتی سال بر هفصد سی دو

(At *Iqlim* Lakhnauti in the year seven hundred and thirty two)



Coin 24. Silver tanka, Sonargaon, AH 737
(G&G B133)

Coin 24

Fakhr al-Din Mubarak Shah (AH 734-750). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 11 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذا الدينار في حضرة جلال سنارکانو سنة سبع ثلاثین و سبعمائة

(This *dinar* has been struck at *Hadrat* Jalal Sonargaon (in the) year seven hundred and thirty seven)

This silver coin has been called a *dinar*, which may be due to using a gold die for a silver coin.



Coin 25. Silver tanka, Sonargaon, AH 741
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 25

Fakhr al-Din Mubarak Shah (AH 734-750). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة بحضرة جلال سناركانو سنة إحدى وأربعين و سبعمائة

(This coin has been struck at *Hadrat Jalal Sonargaon* (in the) year seven hundred and forty one)



Coin 26. Silver tanka, Firuzabad, AH 744
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 26

'Ala al-Din 'Ali Shah (AH 740-746). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

هذه الفضة السكة البلد فيروز اباد سنة أربع أربعين و سبعمائة

(This silver coin is (from) *al-Balad* Firuzabad (in the) year seven hundred and forty four)

This is an example of an adjective being used for the coin. However, grammatically the adjective الفضة (silver) should have been placed after السكة (coin) to mean 'a silver coin'.



Coin 27. Gold ½ tanka, Firuzabad, AH 752
(G&G B150)

Coin 27

Shams al-Din Ilyas Shah (AH 746-758). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

سكة في البلد فيروز اباد سنة إثني خمسين سبعمائة

(Coin by *al-Balad* Firuzabad (in the) year seven hundred and fifty two)

On this gold half *tanka*, the marginal legend has been shortened compared to the full *tanka*, due to space limitation. This can be also observed on the next coin (silver half *tanka*).



Coin 28. Silver ½ tanka, Firuzabad, AH 750
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 28

Shams al-Din Ilyas Shah (AH 746-758). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

السكة في البلد فيروز اباد سنة خمسين و سبعمائة

(Coin by *al-Balad* Firuzabad (in the) year seven hundred and fifty)



Coin 29. Silver tanka, Mu'azzamabad, AH 780
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 29

Sikandar Shah (AH 758-792). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 12 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة في إقليم معظم اباد سنة ثمانين و سبعمائة

(This coin has been struck at *Iqlim* Mu'azzamabad (in the) year seven hundred and eighty)



Coin 30. Silver five tanka, Firuzabad, AH 781
(private collection, India) (reduced images)

Coin 30

Sikandar Shah (AH 758-792). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة المباركة الميمونة العظيمة في بلدة المحروسة فيروز اباد سنة إحدى و ثمانين و سبعمائة

(This large auspicious blessed coin has been struck at *Baldah al-Mahrusah* Firuzabad (in the) year seven hundred and eighty one)

Here three adjectives (المباركة، الميمونة، العظيمة) have been used to describe this 5 *tanka* coin, and the mint town Firuzabad has been called بلدة المحروسة (secured/ guarded city/ town).



Coin 31. Silver 1/2 tanka, Firuzabad, AH 782
(G&G B200)

Coin 31

Silver half *tanka*, Sikandar Shah (AH 758-792). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة في بلدة فيروز اباد سنة اثني ٧٨

(This coin has been struck at Baldah Firuzabad (in the) year 78 two)

The intended date of this coin was 782 in alphabets, but after inscribing *إثني* (= two) the engraver must have realized that there was not enough space left for eighty and seven hundred to be inscribed in words. So, to solve this problem, he was forced to engrave 7 and 8 in numerals. This is the first instance of using numerals, though partially, for the date in Bengal Sultanate coinage.



Coin 32. Silver 1/4 tanka, Firuzabad, AH 786
(G&G B205)

Coin 32

Silver quarter *tanka*, Sikandar Shah (AH 758-792). Legend in obverse margin, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

فيروز اباد سنة ٧٨٦

(Firuzabad year 786)

This is the first coin to be completely dated in numerals only.



Coin 33a. Silver tanka, Jannatabad, date off flan
(World of Coins forum, Dec. 2017)



Coin 33b: Silver tanka, Jannatabad, AH 790
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coins 33a and 33b

Ghiyath al-Din 'Azam Shah (AH 785-790, 1383-1388 CE in some parts of Bengal; AH 792-813, 1390-1411 CE in the whole of Bengal), coins issued during the reign of his father. Legend in reverse margin, combining from both coins, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة المنيرة في جنتاباد سنة تسعين سبعمائة

(This shining coin has been struck at Jannatabad (in the) year seven hundred and ninety)

Here the adjective *منيرة* (shining) has been used to describe this coin.



Coin 34. Silver tanka, Firuzabad, AH 812
(Bombay Auctions, Auction 13, Lot 250)

Coin 34

Ghiyath al-Din 'Azam Shah (AH 792-813). Legend in reverse margin, starting from the top segment, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة بحضرة الفيروز اباد سنة ٨١٢

(This coin has been struck at *Hadrat* Firuzabad (in the) year 812)

This is an example of the date being written on the margin of a full *tanka* in numerals only.



Coin 35. Silver 1/2 tanka, NM, AH 809
(G&G B253)

Coin 35

Ghiyath al-Din 'Azam Shah (AH 792-813). Legend in reverse margin, starting from 2 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة سنة تسع و ثمانمائة

(This coin has been struck (in the) year eight hundred and nine)

No attempt was made to inscribe the mint name on this half *tanka*.



Coin 36. Silver tanka, Firuzabad, AH 816
(Baldwin's Auction 53, Lot 1646)

Coin 36

Shihab al-Din Bayazid Shah (AH 814-817). Legend in reverse margin in eight segments of concave lines, starting from 1 o'clock, anti-clockwise:

In alternate 4 segments:

أبو بكر، عمر، عثمان، علي
(Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, 'Ali)

In the other alternate 4 segments:

ضرب فيروز اباد سنة ٨١٦
(Struck (at) Firuzabad (in the) year 816)



Coin 37. Silver tanka, NM, AH 816
(private collection, Bangladesh)

Coin 37

Shihab al-Din Bayazid Shah (AH 814-817). Legend in reverse margin, starting from the top segment, anti-clockwise:

سنة ستة عشر و ثمانمائة
(Year eight hundred and sixteen)



Coin 38. Silver tanka, NM, Jamadi II, AH 816
(private collection, India)

Coin 38

Shihab al-Din Bayazid Shah (AH 814-817). Legend in reverse margin, starting from the top segment, clockwise:

جمادي الآخر سنة أربع عشر و ثمانمائة
(Jamadi II (of the) year eight hundred and fourteen)



Coin 39. Silver ten tanka, Firuzabad, AH 824
(G&G B340) (reduced images)

Coin 39

Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, second reign (AH 821-836). Legend in reverse margin, starting from the top segment, anti-clockwise:

ضرب هذه السكة العدلية في الفيروز اباد سنة أربع و عشرين و ثمانمائة
(This just [i.e. legal] coin has been struck at Firuzabad (in the) year eight hundred and twenty four)

Here a different adjective, عدلية (just, i.e. legal or legal tender), has been used to remove any confusion that this massive ten tanka is a legal coin.

The process of reading coin margins

Among all the styles/ formats mentioned above for inscribing the date and mint on the margin, the one beginning with ضرب هذا / ضرب هذه was most frequently used for a long period, starting from Ghiyath al-Din Iwad (AH 609/610-624) up to Nasir al-Din Mahmud (AH 837-864).

I shall now explain the marginal legend on the reverse of Coin 40 to show the steps required to read the entire inscription, including mint and date. Coin 40 has been chosen for this purpose as its reverse marginal legend starts with هذه, the most common format.



Coin 40. Silver tanka, Nawlistan, AH 780
(Todywalla Auctions, Auction 101, Lot 38)
(enlarged images)

- Step 1: First we need to find the starting point of the legend, which in this case is ضرب at 12 o'clock in the reverse margin.
- Step 2: The next possible word should be هذا or هذه – we can see هذه at 11 o'clock.
- Step 3: Now we need to find a term for the coin that could be any of: الترفة، الدينار، التنكة، الفضة، السكة. Here we can clearly see هذه to the left of هذه.

- Step 4: At this step we will be looking for an adjective for the coin. Sometimes there is no adjective (e.g. Coin 25), in which case we can move to step 5. But on this coin we can clearly see المباركة next to السكة. We need to keep in mind that multiple adjectives may be used to describe a coin (e.g. Coin 30).
- Step 5: Here we expect to see a mint or its epithet, but before that we may see a preposition on some coins. On this coin there is a preposition في just next to المباركة.
- Step 6: Now we will look for a mint or its epithet. Here we can find ملك as an epithet sitting next to في, but sometimes there may be more than one word for the epithet (e.g. بلدة / عرصة المعمورة / المحروسة / حضرة جلال).
- Step 7: At this stage we need to find the mint name. Just after ملك we can see ناولستان (Nawlistan) as a mint place. However, on some coins, especially on fractions, the mint may not be present at all due to space limitations (e.g. Coin 35), and on some coins the mint is even deliberately omitted (e.g. Coins 37 and 38).
- Step 8: Next we want to see the date. The date may begin, on some coins, with the name of a month (e.g. Coin 5). The preposition في may precede the word سنة (year) on some coins (e.g. Coin 18). We may also see a word شهور (months) before سنة indicating that coins of this type were struck during different months of that particular year instead of any specific month (e.g. Coins 9 and 12). However, for this particular coin the date starts with the word سنة after the mint ناولستان.
- Step 9: After sanat سنة, we will be looking for the ones, tens and hundreds of the date. We can clearly see the words ثمانين (eighty) and سبعمان (seven hundred) separated by وا (and). This word وا may or may not be present on some coins. This particular coin (Coin 40) does not have units for the date as the date is seven hundred and eighty.

In these nine steps, we have completed reading the spelt-out date on the reverse margin, including mint, epithet, and other terms and adjectives. If one follows these steps it will be easier to read the mint and date on most coins, though some coins of the initial period of the Bengal Sultanate have several different formats for the marginal legend (e.g. Coins 1-4, 6-9 and 11). On Coin 40 we have read the full marginal legend as:

ضرب هذه السكة المباركة في ملك ناولستان سنة ثمانين و سبعمان

(This blessed coin has been struck at *Mulk* Nawlistan (in the) year seven hundred and eighty).

The above steps can be summarised as:

Starting word, ضرب ▶ هذا or هذه ▶ Term used for the coin ▶ Adjective(s) used for the coin ▶ Preposition ▶ Epithet of mint ▶ Name of mint ▶ Preposition ▶ Specific date of a month or شهور ▶ سنة ▶ Ones and or Tens and or Hundreds (of year of strike).

In the early part of the Bengal Sultanate, some coins are dated with the name of the month and a specific day of that month (e.g. Coin 4), and on some coins the word 'month' is also written as شهر before the actual name of the month (e.g. Coin 6).

Marginal legends on some coins bear additional information regarding the resources used to strike the coins (e.g. Coins 11, 17, 19, 20 and 21), while Coin 1 was a special issue to commemorate the conquest of Gaur by Bakhtiyar Khalji. On this coin the words *Gauda Vijaye* (victory over Gauda) appear on the margin along with the date. Interestingly, instead of mentioning any specific day of the month *Ramadan*, the word *muntasaf* (منتصف) has been chosen. Since *muntasaf* means 'middle', the day is likely to be the 15th of *Ramadan*.

Reference

Goron, S., and Goenka, J.P., 2001, *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, New Delhi.

For Stan

My long wait for a detailed catalogue of the coinage of the Indian sultanates came to an end when I received a copy of *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, authored by Stan Goron and J.P. Goenka. Stan did amazing work by including a huge number of coins of different types of all the sultanates of India. Since the publication of his catalogue in 2001, it remains the most used reference book by collectors, numismatists, and other scholars till today. That is why I felt privileged to write an article for this volume in honour of Stan Goron, a very successful and long-serving editor of JONS. All the best for Stan!

S. M. Iftekhar Alam

**POLITICAL CHANGES REFLECTED IN
THE COINS OF SUNARGAON MINT:
AN ARCHAEO-METALLURGICAL
ATTEMPT TO RE-EXAMINE THE
HISTORY OF 14th CENTURY BENGAL**

Mohammad Abu Al Hasan, A.S.W. Kurny
and Syed Mohammad Kamrul Ahsan

The relation between currency management and mint towns is closely related. One of the most interesting features of the Bengal Sultanate is the presence of various mint towns within its boundaries in time and space. Recent research has mentioned about 40 mint names inscribed on the sultanate coins of Bengal (M.R. Karim 2013: 322). More recently a researcher has listed 47 mint names on coins of the Bengal Sultanate (S.M.I. Alam 2015). Finding such a large number of mint names does not necessarily mean this number of mints actually existed. Bengal was not geographically large enough to justify such a large number of mint towns. The actual number has been estimated to be between 16 (Jahan 1953: 225) and 26 mints (Shahnawaz 1999: 37). In the sultanate period of Bengal, the day-to-day local need for silver or gold coins was very limited. Local people were comfortable with cowries to purchase their daily commodities (M. Alam 2014: 70). Silver or gold coins were used only for large transactions, internal and external trade, and for religious offering purposes. Although the demand for metal coins by the general inhabitants of Bengal during the sultanate period was limited, the volume of coins of that period, especially silver coins, found till today is immense. Hundreds and thousands of silver coins of the Bengal sultans are preserved in various museums around the world and in private collections, and still more continue to be unearthed from various locations in Bangladesh, West Bengal, Assam, and the Tripura region. The existence of various mint towns within Bengal appears to indicate the decentralised monetary policies of the Bengal sultans.

In order to gain a clearer view of this, it is necessary to study the metallic composition of the coins issued by a single mint, from its first appearance to its last known issue. Without studying the coins of a mint thoroughly, it will not be possible to explore the metallic and technological characteristics of that mint. A thorough archaeo-metallurgical analysis of the coins of a mint that is geographically identified can also create an opportunity to judge the inter-relations of metal flow, trade and political relations between the mint towns within the sultanate and with other kingdoms.

An attempt has been made here to analyse the silver coins of Sunargaon mint as part of a series of metallurgical analyses of the silver coins of all the mints of the Bengal Sultanate. Silver coins were selected from their first appearance to the end of their production (on the basis of availability and date). In total, 22 coins of Sunargaon mint from a private collection have been analysed by WDXRF. On the basis of the silver percentages of the coins of each year, an attempt has been made to relate the reason for such percentages with contemporary political history, to find out possible sources of silver of that period, and also to make observations on the other elements found in our metallurgical analysis.

The mint at Sunargaon

Sunargaon was the second most important city after Lakhnauti during the sultanate period of Bengal. Ziauddin Barani mentioned Sunargaon in the *Tarikh I Firuz Shahi* in the context of Balban's pursuit of Mughisuddin Tughril (Hussain 2003: 245). It was introduced as a mint town during the reign of Shams al-Din Firuz (AH 700-720, 1300-1320 CE) (Sarkar 1948, 2: 79). The earliest coin of Sunargaon found till now is dated AH 705 (Goron and Goenka 2003: 161, B99). The epithet used for the mint name on this coin is *Hadrat* (honourable), which indicates that Sunargaon was already an established town. In the sultanate period, it was also known as Suvarnagram, with the coins of Danujamarddana Deva and Mahendra Deva carrying the the mint name *Suvarnagrama*. Sunargaon was the second most important mint town (Shahnawaz 1999: 192) and a maritime trade centre for three centuries during the sultanate period (Ali 1985, 1B: 949)

Table A. The coins issued at the mint of Sunargaon

	Ruler		Metal	Dates (AH)	Mint epithets	References
1	Shams al-Din Firuz Shah		Ar	705, 710	<i>hadrat</i>	Goron and Goenka 2003: 161, B99; A. Karim 1960: 162
2	Shihab al-Din Bughda Shah	son of 1	Ar	717-718	no epithet	A. Karim 1960: 164; Goron and Goenka 2003: 162, B101
3	Ghiyath al-Din Bahadur Shah	son of 1	Ar	717	no epithet	A. Karim 1960: 162
4		with Muhammad bin Tughlaq	Au, Ar	728	<i>hadrat</i>	Goron and Goenka 2003: 164, B115-B117
5	Bahram Khan (governor)	in name of Muhammad bin Tughlaq	Ar	733-734	<i>shahr</i>	Goron and Goenka 2003: 164-165, B118, B124, B125, B129
6	Fakhr al-Din Mubarak Shah		Au, Ar	734, 737-750	<i>hadratjalal</i>	M.R. Karim 2007: 255; Bandopadhyay 1917: 103; Goron and Goenka 2003: 166, B133, B135, B136
7	Ikhtiyar al-Din Ghazi Shah	son of 6	Ar	750-753	<i>hadratjalal</i>	Mukhapadhyay 1999; Goron and Goenka 2003: 167, B138
8	Shams al-Din Iliyas Shah		Ar	753-758	<i>hadratjalal</i>	Bhattachali 1922: 27; Thomas 1866: 63; Goron and Goenka 2003: 168-169, B148
9	Sikandar Shah	son of 8	Ar	758-760	<i>hadratjalal</i>	G&G 171, B170, 174
		mint moved to Muazzabad				Ahmed 1998: 63
10	Danujamarddana Deva		Ar	819 [Saka 1339]	Suvarnagrama	Shahnawaz 1999: 91; Goron and Goenka 2003: 189, B319, 320
11	Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah		Ar	818, 824		S. Ahmad 1939: 61, nos. 148 and 149; H. Blochmann 1873: 267; Bhattachali 1922: 125

Coins of Sunargaon mint

Sultan Shams al-Din Firuz of Bengal started issuing coins from Sunargaon mint in AH 705 with the epithet *Hadrat*. His coin dated AH 710 is also reported (Goron and Goenka 2003: 161, B99; A. Karim 1960: 162). His son Shihab al-Din Bughda issued silver coins dated AH 717 (A. Karim 1960: 164) and AH 718 (Goron and Goenka 2003: 162, B101) from Sunargaon, but the mint name was without the epithet. Ghiyath al-Din Bahadur, another son of Shams al-Din Firuz, issued silver coins from Sunargaon as an independent ruler in AH 717 (A. Karim 1960: 162), and then jointly with Muhammad bin Tughlaq, sultan of Delhi, both gold and silver coins dated AH 728 with the epithet *Hadrat* (Goron and Goenka 2003: 164, B115-B116). Bahram Khan, a governor appointed by Delhi, issued silver coins in the name of Muhammad bin Tughlaq from Sunargaon in AH 733 and AH 734 with the epithet *Shahr* (Goron and Goenka 2003: 165, B125). Both gold and silver coins dated AH 734 from Sunargaon mint, issued by Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, have been discovered recently (M.R. Karim 2007: 255). Coins dated AH 737-750 (all years) of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, issued from Sunargaon, also exist (Bandopadhyay 1917: 103). From AH 750-753, coins from Sunargaon were issued in the name of Ikhtiyar al-Din Ghazi who has been identified as the son of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak (Mukhopadhyay 1999). Shams al-Din Ilyas succeeded in Sunargaon and unified the whole of Bengal as a nation in AH 753, because silver coins of Ilyas from Sunargaon are available from the same year (Bhattachali 1922: 27). Ilyas continued to issue coins from AH 753 to 758 continuously (Thomas 1866: 63). His son Sikandar continued to issue coins from Sunargaon from AH 758 to 759. After that the mint was transferred to Muazzamabad, a suburb of Sunargaon about 12 miles away (Ahmed 1998: 63). After a gap of 59 years, coins from Sunargaon reappeared in the name of Danujamardana Deva, dated *Saka* 1339 (AH 819, 1419 CE) with the mint name written as *Suvarnagrama* (Shahnawaz 1999: 91). Coins of Jalal al-Din Muhammad are reported dated AH 818 (Ahmad 1939: 61). Blochmann (1873: 267) and Bhattachali (1922: 125) reported a coin dated AH 824 of mint Sunargaon. Unfortunately, no specimens of such dates of Jalal al-Din Muhammad were available for the present research to conduct metallurgical analysis. The aesthetic beauty of the coins from Sunargaon is exceptional. The later coins of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak are veritable gems of the art of coin-striking and speak volumes of the skill of the die engravers at Sunargaon mint. These coins have a regular shape and their lettering is delightfully neat and refined.

Metal composition of the coins

To explore and identify the metal composition and the presence of trace elements in the coins of Sunargaon mint we selected 22 coins with a clear date and mint name for metallurgical analysis. The analysis was performed by the WDXRF technique at the Department of Glass and Ceramics Engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), using a LAB CENTER XRF-1800 (Shimadzu) machine. The coins and the results of their WDXRF analysis are listed below.

Coin 1

Sultan: Shams al-Din Firuz

Date: AH 70(?)

Mint: *Hadrat* Sunargaon

Diameter: 28.045 mm, Thickness: 2.24 mm, Weight: 10.99 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam shams al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar firuz shah al-sultan

Al-imam caliph al-Musta'sim



Coin 1. Silver tanka of Shams al-Din Firuz, AH 70?

WDXRF data for Coin 1 (Sample SN_705?_SF)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	90.7449 %	Quant.-FP	AgKa	395.915	4.457
Al	2.7164 %	Quant.-FP	AlKa	27.488	1.353
Au	1.4739 %	Quant.-FP	AuLa	8.970	1.154
Cu	1.1357 %	Quant.-FP	CuKa	12.972	0.661
S	0.9148 %	Quant.-FP	S Ka	10.515	0.398
Ca	0.7632 %	Quant.-FP	CaKa	3.267	0.831
Pb	0.7274 %	Quant.-FP	PbLb1	4.638	2.182
Mg	0.6554 %	Quant.-FP	MgKa	1.131	0.155
Fe	0.6256 %	Quant.-FP	FeKa	3.637	0.479
Ac	0.2026 %	Quant.-FP	AcLa	2.371	2.077
Rb	0.0400 %	Quant.-FP	RbKa	0.960	2.422

Coin 2

Sultan: Ghiyath Al Din Bahadur

Date: AH 729

Mint: *Hadrat* Sunargaon

Diameter: 26.335 mm, Thickness: 2.38 mm, Weight: 10.93 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-mu'azzam ghiyath al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar bahadur shah al-sultan bin sultan

Duriba bi-amr al-wathiq billah Muhammad bin Tughluq shah



Coin 2. Silver tanka of Giasuddin Bahadur, AH 729

WDXRF data of Coin 2 (Sample SN_729_GB)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	95.1496 %	Quant.-FP	AgKa	378.146	4.218
Au	1.5278 %	Quant.-FP	AuLa	8.490	1.079
Ca	0.9359 %	Quant.-FP	CaKa	3.593	0.881
Mg	0.8008 %	Quant.-FP	MgKa	1.253	0.151
Fe	0.5301 %	Quant.-FP	FeKa	2.764	0.408
Al	0.4868 %	Quant.-FP	AlLb1	4.475	0.327
Cu	0.3901 %	Quant.-FP	CuKa	4.012	0.633
S	0.1082 %	Quant.-FP	S Ka	1.170	0.312
Rb	0.0707 %	Quant.-FP	RbKa	1.581	2.329

Coin 3

Sultan: Muhammad bin Tughlaq
 Date: AH 729
 Mint: *Shahr* Sunargaon
 Diameter: 23.77 mm, Thickness: 2.735 mm, Weight: 10.80 g
 Arabic legends:

*Al-sultan al-mu'azzam
 ghiyath al-dunya wa'l din
 abu'l muzaffar bahadur shah
 al-sultan bin sultan*

*Duriba bi-amr al-wathiq
 billah Muhammad bin
 Tughluq shah*



Coin 3. Silver tanka of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, AH 729

WDXRF data of Coin 3 (Sample SN_729_MT)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	86.2603 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	267.772	4.717
Ca	5.5188 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	16.539	1.142
Al	4.1387 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	28.878	1.350
Au	1.2197 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.101	1.086
Fe	1.0262 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	4.059	0.426
Mg	0.5929 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.705	0.150
Cu	0.5839 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	4.526	0.616
S	0.4829 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	3.800	0.266
Cr	0.1383 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.286	0.138
Rb	0.0383 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.649	2.363

Coin 4

Sultan: Muhammad bin Tughlaq
 Date: AH 731
 Mint: *Shahr* Sunargaon
 Diameter: 21.73 mm, Thickness: 3.145 mm, Weight: 10.60 g
 Arabic legends:

*Al-mijahid fi sabil allah
 Muhammad bin Tughluq
 shah*

Shahada



Coin 4. Silver tanka of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, AH 731

WDXRF data of Coin 4 (Sample SN_731_MT)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	95.4905 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	377.338	4.517
Au	1.5221 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	8.414	1.051
Al	0.8183 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	7.526	0.683
Cu	0.6847 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	7.034	0.555
Fe	0.4350 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	2.266	0.410
Ca	0.3937 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.504	0.657
Mg	0.2840 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.442	0.152
S	0.2536 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	2.725	0.308
Rb	0.1181 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	2.625	2.275

Coin 5

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak
 Date: AH 738
 Mint: *Hadrat Jalal* Sunargaon
 Diameter: 24.68 mm, Thickness: 2.80 mm, Weight: 10.60 g
 Arabic legends:

*Al-mijahid fi sabil allah
 Muhammad bin Tughluq
 shah*

Shahada



Coin 5. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 738

WDXRF data of Coin 5 (Sample SN_738_MT)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	81.4355 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	356.821	4.344
S	8.4713 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	91.768	0.640
Fe	3.1034 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	17.772	0.435
Al	2.0605 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	20.288	0.984
Au	1.7952 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	10.619	1.004
Ca	1.4033 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	5.924	0.877
Mg	0.9834 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.667	0.135
Cu	0.4233 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	4.673	0.552
Pb	0.1826 %	Quant. -FP	PbLb1	1.121	1.749
Ac	0.0543 %	Quant. -FP	AcLa	0.612	1.689
Rb	0.0453 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.059	2.118
Ni	0.0418 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.391	0.393

Coin 6

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak
 Date: AH 740
 Mint: *Hadrat Jalal* Sunargaon
 Diameter: 23.775 mm, Thickness: 2.63 mm, Weight: 10.53 g
 Arabic legends:

*Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-
 dunya wa'l din abu'l
 muzaffar Mubarak shah al-
 sultan*

*Yamin khalifat allah nasir
 amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 6. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 740

WDXRF data of Coin 6 (Sample SN_740_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	86.0739 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	188.021	4.260
Al	4.4871 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	22.567	1.039
Au	3.2268 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	9.659	1.064
Fe	2.2258 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	6.527	0.435
Ca	0.9627 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	2.090	0.764
Cu	0.9626 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	5.446	0.610
Mg	0.6852 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.591	0.140
Ti	0.5291 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.290	0.052
S	0.4487 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	2.447	0.368

Rb	0.1832 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	2.121	2.333
Cr	0.1603 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.246	0.157
Ni	0.0546 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.264	0.440

Coin 7

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak

Date: AH 741

Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*

Diameter: 24.995 mm, Thickness: 2.605 mm, Weight: 10.79 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan

Yamin khalifat allah nasir amir al-mu'minin



Coin 7. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 741

WDXRF data of Coin 7 (Sample SN_741_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	85.9303 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	230.282	3.976
S	2.9213 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	20.145	0.574
Au	2.5069 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	9.348	1.018
Al	2.2654 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	14.185	0.741
Ca	1.7239 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	4.596	0.888
Fe	1.0324 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	3.725	0.386
Cu	0.9835 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	6.957	0.581
Mg	0.8303 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.892	0.141
Hg	0.7704 %	Quant. -FP	HgLa	3.119	1.105
Pb	0.5306 %	Quant. -FP	PbLb1	1.986	1.825
Ti	0.3192 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.214	0.054
Rb	0.1403 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.986	2.107
Ni	0.0455 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.275	0.439

Coin 8

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak

Date: AH 742

Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*

Diameter: 24.66 mm, Thickness: 2.41 mm, Weight: 10.63 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan

Yamin khalifat allah nasir amir al-mu'minin



Coin 8. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 742

WDXRF data of Coin 8 (Sample SN_742_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	82.3895 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	354.358	4.087
Al	5.6555 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	53.814	2.476

Cu	3.0219 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	32.976	0.641
Fe	2.4792 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	14.226	0.455
Au	2.0879 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	11.779	1.021
Ca	1.6221 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	6.939	0.940
Ti	1.0225 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	1.100	0.063
Mg	0.9496 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.557	0.176
S	0.5887 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	6.108	0.293
Cr	0.0946 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.284	0.179
Rb	0.0572 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.284	2.248
Ni	0.0313 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.293	0.462

Coin 9

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak

Date: AH 743

Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*

Diameter: 25.02 mm, Thickness: 2.715 mm, Weight: 10.83 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan

Yamin khalifat allah nasir amir al-mu'minin



Coin 9. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 743

WDXRF data of Coin 9 (Sample SN_743_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	91.7910 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	370.412	4.198
Al	2.8402 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	26.561	1.247
Au	1.7041 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	9.579	1.008
Cu	0.8949 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	9.408	0.613
S	0.6939 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	7.350	0.345
Fe	0.6018 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	3.216	0.449
Mg	0.4959 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.789	0.150
Pb	0.3958 %	Quant. -FP	PbLb1	2.325	1.872
Ti	0.2847 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.282	0.064
Ca	0.2530 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	0.993	0.760
Rb	0.0449 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.999	2.206

Coin 10

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak

Date: AH 744

Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*

Diameter: 25.62 mm, Thickness: 2.37 mm, Weight: 10.66 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan

Yamin khalifat allah nasir amir al-mu'minin



Coin 10. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 744

WDXRF data of Coin 10 (Sample SN_744_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	87.0905 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	374.644	4.417
Al	4.0399 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	39.154	1.882
Fe	2.8452 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	15.982	0.452
S	1.2508 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	13.606	0.355
Au	1.1839 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	6.885	1.099
Ca	1.0230 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	4.288	0.815
Ti	0.8530 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.899	0.062
Mg	0.7490 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.242	0.162
Cu	0.5566 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	6.006	0.624
Pb	0.3026 %	Quant. -FP	PbLa1	1.861	1.988
Rb	0.0757 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.769	2.263
Ni	0.0298 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.274	0.451



Coin 12. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 746

WDXRF data of Coin 12 (Sample SN_746_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	90.5731 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	369.962	4.226
Al	3.3211 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	30.690	1.493
Fe	1.5862 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	8.498	0.429
Cu	1.0080 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	10.483	0.584
Au	0.9159 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.109	0.992
Mg	0.8857 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.400	0.158
Ca	0.6280 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	2.488	0.776
Ti	0.3591 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.358	0.055
Pb	0.3407 %	Quant. -FP	PbLa1	2.024	1.844
S	0.2311 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	2.446	0.269
Mn	0.0625 %	Quant. -FP	MnKa	0.264	0.308
Zn	0.0350 %	Quant. -FP	ZnKa	0.384	0.823
Ni	0.0295 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.262	0.419
Rb	0.0242 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.545	2.190

Coin 11

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak

Date: AH 745

Mint: Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon

Diameter: 25.725 mm, Thickness: 2.385 mm, Weight: 10.81 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan

Yamin al khalifa nasir amir al-mu'minin



Coin 11. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 745

WDXRF data of Coin 11 (Sample SN_745_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	96.1555 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	377.464	4.210
Au	1.0440 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.730	1.044
Al	1.0199 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	9.258	0.506
Mg	0.3455 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.531	0.127
Cu	0.3310 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	3.350	0.605
Ca	0.3139 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.181	0.772
Fe	0.3087 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	1.580	0.428
S	0.2270 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	2.429	0.239
Ti	0.1038 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.098	0.052
Cr	0.0936 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.250	0.148
Ni	0.0300 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.260	0.452
Rb	0.0273 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.609	2.209

Coin 12

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak

Date: AH 746

Mint: Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon

Diameter: 25.11 mm, Thickness: 2.59 mm, Weight: 10.82 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan

Yamin khalifa nasir amir al-mu'minin



Coin 13. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 747

WDXRF data of Coin 13 (Sample SN_747_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	87.5419 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	356.913	4.224
Ca	6.5656 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	29.877	1.083
Fe	4.6754 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	27.339	0.478
Mg	3.7389 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	6.331	0.168
Al	3.4353 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	32.748	1.533
Cu	1.1930 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	13.005	0.606
Au	0.8803 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.129	0.995
Ti	0.8307 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.919	0.065
S	0.6519 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	7.143	0.318
Mn	0.2208 %	Quant. -FP	MnKa	1.021	0.316
Cr	0.0989 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.306	0.164
Zn	0.0895 %	Quant. -FP	ZnKa	1.031	0.786
Ni	0.0501 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.467	0.438
Rb	0.0277 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.662	2.150

Coin 14

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak
 Date: AH 748
 Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*
 Diameter: 24.635 mm, Thickness: 2.68 mm, Weight: 10.84 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan *Yamin al khalifa nasir amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 14. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 748

WDXRF data of Coin 14 (Sample SN_748_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	93.2055 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	370.056	4.200
Al	2.8521 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	25.928	1.254
Au	1.0480 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.751	1.029
Cu	0.8052 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	8.207	0.580
Fe	0.6093 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	3.158	0.440
Mg	0.4663 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.720	0.145
S	0.3430 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	3.584	0.260
Ti	0.3113 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.299	0.052
Ca	0.3006 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.145	0.679
Ni	0.0303 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.264	0.426
Rb	0.0284 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.633	2.160

Coin 15

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak
 Date: AH 749
 Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*
 Diameter: 24.78 mm, Thickness: 2.585 mm, Weight: 10.77 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan *Yamin al khalifa nasir amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 15. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 749

WDXRF data of Coin 15 (Sample SN_749_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	88.7674 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	373.047	4.160
Al	4.1334 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	39.025	1.786
Fe	1.6258 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	8.843	0.442
Ca	1.1804 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	4.764	0.906
S	1.1368 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	12.120	0.339
Au	0.9846 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.615	1.056
Mg	0.7656 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.235	0.153
Cu	0.7356 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	7.786	0.599

Ti	0.5259 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.534	0.053
Cr	0.0917 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.261	0.160
Ni	0.0292 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.264	0.448
Rb	0.0239 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.555	2.204

Coin 16

Sultan: Fakhr al-Din Mubarak
 Date: AH 750
 Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*
 Diameter: 23.965 mm, Thickness: 2.80 mm, Weight: 10.83 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam fakhr al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Mubarak shah al-sultan *Yamin al khalifa nasir amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 16. Silver tanka of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, AH 750

WDXRF data of Coin 16 (Sample SN_750_FM)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	87.0731 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	371.777	4.283
Al	6.2530 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	59.649	2.655
Fe	2.0883 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	11.580	0.436
Au	0.9678 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.579	1.070
Ti	0.9376 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.973	0.060
Mg	0.8926 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.461	0.174
Cu	0.8431 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	9.037	0.617
S	0.4274 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	4.486	0.312
Ca	0.3337 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.370	0.710
Hg	0.1253 %	Quant. -FP	HgLa	0.785	1.173
Ni	0.0321 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.294	0.461
Rb	0.0260 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.610	2.211

Coin 17

Sultan: Ikhtiyar al-Din Ghazi
 Date: AH 750
 Mint: *Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon*
 Diameter: 25.06 mm, Thickness: 2.505 mm, Weight: 10.48 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-a'zam ikhtiyar al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Ghazi shah al-sultan bin al-sultan *Yamin al-khalifa nasir amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 17. Silver tanka of Ikhtiyaruddin Ghazi, AH 750

WDXRF data Coin 17 (Sample SN_750_IG)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	95.0331 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	373.053	4.191
Al	1.4152 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	12.784	0.684
Au	1.0655 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	5.789	1.038
Cu	0.8393 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	8.518	0.593
Ni	0.4412 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	3.529	0.450
Fe	0.3307 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	1.705	0.444
S	0.2337 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	2.476	0.245
Mg	0.2109 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.322	0.133
Ca	0.1687 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	0.638	0.713
Ti	0.1281 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.122	0.053
Cr	0.1042 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.280	0.137
Rb	0.0294 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.650	2.208



Coin 19. Silver tanka of Shams al-Din Ilyas, AH 756

WDXRF data of Coin 19 (Sample SN_756_SI)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	91.7396 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	378.233	4.329
Al	2.0652 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	19.615	1.481
Au	1.6193 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	9.267	1.042
Fe	1.3105 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	7.147	0.455
Mg	0.8043 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.304	0.189
Ca	0.6158 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	2.484	0.759
Cu	0.5928 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	6.315	0.604
Pb	0.4793 %	Quant. -FP	PbLa1	2.872	1.945
S	0.3023 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	3.299	0.340
Ti	0.2778 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.282	0.058
Cr	0.1025 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.292	0.159
Rb	0.0618 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.401	2.376
Ni	0.0288 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.262	0.464

Coin 18

Sultan: Shams al-Din Ilyas

Date: AH 754

Mint: Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon

Diameter: 25.06 mm, Thickness: 2.505 mm, Weight: 10.54 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-adil shams al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Ilyas shah al-sultan

Sikandar al-thani yamin al-khalifa amir al-mu'minin



Coin 18. Silver tanka of Shams al-Din Ilyas, AH 754

WDXRF data of Coin 18 (Sample SN_754_SI)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	92.6733 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	376.927	4.235
Al	1.9078 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	17.915	0.938
Au	1.5097 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	8.546	1.006
Cu	0.8220 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	8.678	0.574
Fe	0.7873 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	4.234	0.425
Mg	0.7228 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	1.157	0.151
S	0.4712 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	5.090	0.404
Ca	0.4676 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.850	0.652
Pb	0.3530 %	Quant. -FP	PbLa1	2.098	1.940
Ti	0.1951 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.194	0.060
Rb	0.0902 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	2.033	2.210

Coin 19

Sultan: Shams al-Din Ilyas

Date: AH 756

Mint: Hadrat Jalal Sunargaon

Diameter: 25.665 mm, Thickness: 2.43 mm, Weight: 10.88 g

Arabic legends:

Al-sultan al-adil shams al-dunya wa'l din abu'l muzaffar Ilyas shah al-sultan

Sikandar al-thani yamin al-khalifa amir al-mu'minin



Coin 20. Silver tanka of Shams al-Din Ilyas, AH 758

WDXRF data of Coin 20 (Sample SN_758_SI)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	90.8025 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	383.604	4.254
Cu	4.3604 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	48.170	0.630
Al	1.6350 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	15.565	0.758
Au	1.1393 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	6.427	0.939
Fe	0.5969 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	3.415	0.423
Mg	0.3844 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.623	0.124
Ca	0.3417 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.431	0.709
Pb	0.2468 %	Quant. -FP	PbLa1	1.478	1.827
S	0.1693 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	1.879	0.291
Ti	0.1237 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.131	0.043
Cr	0.0785 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.234	0.161
Rb	0.0628 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.432	2.132
Zn	0.0313 %	Quant. -FP	ZnKa	0.365	0.861
Ni	0.0273 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.259	0.435

Coin 21

Sultan: Sikandar

Date: AH 759

Mint: *Hadrat Jalal* Sunargaon

Diameter: 26.91 mm, Thickness: 2.23 mm, Weight: 10.74 g

Arabic legends:

*Al-sultan al-mu'azzam
Sikandar shah ibn Ilyas shah
al-sultan*

*Yamin khalifat allah nasir
amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 21. Silver tanka of Sikandar, AH 759

WDXRF data of Coin 21 (Sample SN_759_SS)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	93.7052 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	402.275	4.480
Al	2.0268 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	19.889	1.070
Fe	1.0996 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	6.165	0.435
Au	0.7486 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	4.436	1.031
Cu	0.6721 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	7.373	0.607
Mg	0.5802 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.968	0.137
Ca	0.4181 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	1.729	0.749
Ti	0.2698 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.281	0.052
Pb	0.2364 %	Quant. -FP	PbLa1	1.499	1.876
S	0.1959 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	2.245	0.300
Ni	0.0271 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.254	0.445
Rb	0.0201 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	0.485	2.143

Coin 22

Sultan: Sikandar

Date: AH 760

Mint: *Hadrat Jalal* Sunargaon

Diameter: 26.91 mm, Thickness: 2.23 mm, Weight: 9.91 g

Arabic legends:

*Al-mujahid fi sabil al-
rahman shah Sikandar ibn
Ilyas shah al sultan*

*Yamin khalifat allah nasir
amir al-mu'minin*



Coin 22. Silver tanka of Sikandar, AH 760

WDXRF data of Coin 22 (Sample SN_760_SS)

Analyte	Result	Proc-Calc	Line	Net Int.	BG Int.
Ag	81.9708 %	Quant. -FP	AgKa	403.766	4.546
Fe	13.1620 %	Quant. -FP	FeKa	87.826	0.544
Au	1.3281 %	Quant. -FP	AuLa	8.156	1.011
Al	0.8865 %	Quant. -FP	AlKa	9.438	0.590
Ca	0.6767 %	Quant. -FP	CaKa	3.455	0.816
S	0.5941 %	Quant. -FP	S Ka	7.438	0.356
Cu	0.5308 %	Quant. -FP	CuKa	6.046	0.593
Mg	0.3706 %	Quant. -FP	MgKa	0.673	0.142
Ti	0.1821 %	Quant. -FP	TiKa	0.236	0.064

Mn	0.1024 %	Quant. -FP	MnKa	0.546	0.353
Cr	0.0698 %	Quant. -FP	CrKa	0.254	0.185
Rb	0.0536 %	Quant. -FP	RbKa	1.336	2.240
Zn	0.0460 %	Quant. -FP	ZnKa	0.553	0.802
Ni	0.0266 %	Quant. -FP	NiKa	0.259	0.460

Silver percentage of Sunargaon coins

22 silver *tanka* coins from AH 707 to AH 760 of Sunargaon mint have been analysed above using WDXRF technique. The percentages of silver in these coins are shown in Graph 1, and our observations are described below:

1. The percentages of silver in the coins of Sunargaon mint varied from almost 96% to 81%. The highest percentage, 96.15%, was found in the coin dated AH 745, while the lowest percentage, 81.43%, was found in the coin dated AH 738 of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak. Out of these 22 coins, 12 coins have a silver content of over 90%; the coins of Ikhtiyar al-Din Ghazi and Shams al-Din Ilyas from AH 750 to 759 are included in this group of 12 coins.
2. Coins of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak have shown a wide variation in silver percentage, from 81.43% to 96.39%, during the period AH 738 to 750. Coins from the initial period of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak show a comparatively low percentage of silver compared to his later period.
3. Only three coins contain a low percentage of silver compared to the remaining 19 coins. These are the coins dated AH 738, AH 742 and AH 760, which contain 81.43%, 82.39%, and 81.79% respectively.

Interpretation of silver data

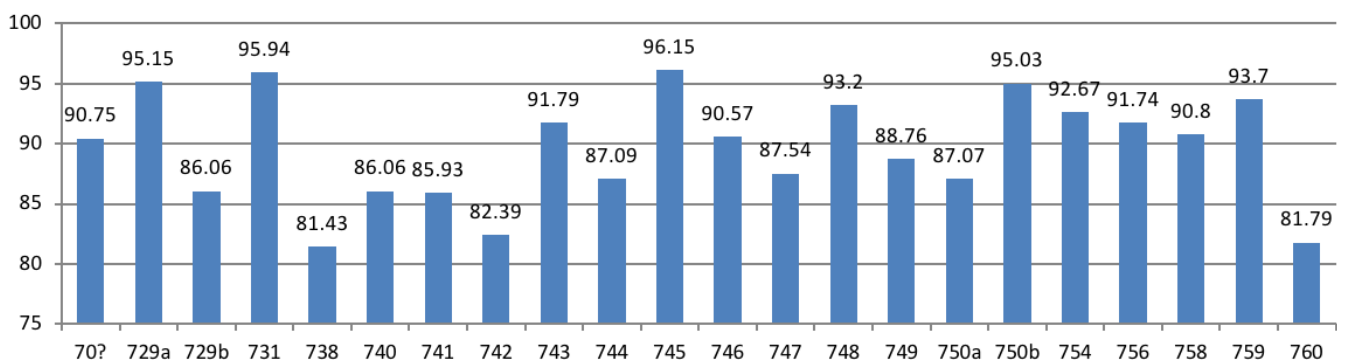
1. Fakhr al-Din Mubarak was an independent ruler in eastern Bengal and issued coins from AH 734. His coins can be found for every year of his reign from AH 737-750, except the years AH 735 and 736. As an independent sultan, without the recognition of Delhi, he was perhaps not able to store much quantity of silver bullion from other parts of Bengal through trade, for striking coins, because he was surrounded by Haji Ilyas and Ali Mubarak. But the large quantity of coins issued by Fakhr al-Din Mubarak suggests that later in his reign he must have found some convenient sources of silver to strike coins.
2. Zia-ud-Din Barani noted in his *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* that after the defeat of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak by a joint force of Kadar Khan and his companions Malik Hisham al-Din Abu Reza, Aja al-Din Ahia, and Firuz Khan, all except Kadar Khan left for their own territories. Kadar Khan chose to stay some more days at Sunargaon. He collected a large number of silver coins from various areas of Bengal and kept them in the royal vault at Sunargaon. But soon Fakhr al-Din Mubarak fought back and recaptured the throne of Sunargaon with the help of the corrupt soldiers of Kadar Khan (Y. b. Ahmad 1931: 106-107). In this process, Fakhr al-Din Mubarak acquired all the stores of silver coins kept by Kadar Khan. These events took place probably between AH 735-736, because no coins of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak dated AH 735-736 have been found so far. The war with Kadar Khan may have prevented Fakhr al-Din Mubarak from issuing coins, and right after that he was busy reconstructing his military forces and ships to stand against the attack of Lakhnauti and Satgaon. Fakhr al-Din Mubarak therefore had to spend a large amount of his wealth and he could not focus on striking silver coins. As a result, the early coinage (AH 737-739) of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak is crude compared to that of his later period. The very low percentage of silver (81.43%) in his coin of AH 738 supports this observation.
3. The coin of AH 742 also contains a low percentage of silver, 82.39%. According to the account of Moroccan traveller Ibn Battuta, Fakhr al-Din Mubarak appointed a saint named Shayda as the administrator of Sadkawan. But when Fakhr al-Din Mubarak marched against one of his rivals, Shayda revolted

against him. Fakhr al-Din Mubarak returned quickly and killed the saint (Ibn Battuta 1959, 2: 267-271). The *Tarikh-e-Mubarakshahi*, *Tabakat-e-Akbari*, and *Futuh-us-Salatin* described that Fakhr al-Din Mubarak was attacked by either Shams al-Din Ilyash or 'Ala' al-Din 'Ali in AH 741 (A. Karim 1977: 180). So it is possible that in AH 741 when Fakhr al-Din Mubarak was attacked by one of his rivals, his stock of silver may have decreased in quantity and he may have been forced to use a lower percentage of silver to produce coins in AH 742.

4. A possible source of silver for Fakhr al-Din Mubarak may have been the Harikela coins that circulated earlier in Comilla, Noakhali and Chittagong region. Harikela coins have been found in huge quantities with quite a large number of die varieties (Bose and Nasir 2016: 78). Fakhr al-Din Mubarak invaded and captured the Chandpur and Chittagong area. Jadunath Sarkar mentioned a description of Shihab al-Din Talish, a servant of Aurangzeb, where he said that long ago a sultan of Bengal, Fakhr al-Din Mubarak, had captured Chittagong completely and constructed a dam along the river from Chandpur to Chittagong (Sarkar 1919: 122). Fakhr al-Din Mubarak may have collected Harikela coins from these areas and used the silver to strike new coins.
5. Ibn Battuta travelled to Bengal (Chittagong, Sunargaon, and Hobonko) during the reign of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak. He mentioned Sunargaon as a prosperous business centre in his travel account. He also mentioned the abundance of commodities in Sunargaon, and was astonished by the cheapness of agricultural and man-made products there (Battuta 1959: 267-271). The kingdom of Fakhr al-Din Mubarak only imported high breed horses and silver (Hussain 2013: 279). Many locally-produced agricultural products, such as rice and fine cloth, were exported through maritime trade, perhaps in exchange for silver bullion. As a result, the merchants of Bengal had silver available and this was possibly used for striking coins by the mint authority.
6. Shirin Moosvi (1987: 56-57) calculated the total production of Surat mint on the basis of an estimation of the annual average output. Syed Ejaz Hussain (2013) used this approach to calculate the yearly production of coins from each major mint. He showed that, during the sultanate period, Sunargaon mint needed 15.25 metric tons of silver to produce 1,525,000 pieces of full *tanka* coins annually (Hussain 2013: 277). Although Hussain has shown that each year each mint needed to collect the silver from external sources, it can be assumed that it was not needed each year to bring that huge amount of silver. Previously, it has been mentioned that Fakhr al-Din Mubarak issued coins continually from AH 737-750, his son Ikhtiyar al-Din Ghazi from AH 750-753, Shams al-Din Ilyas from AH 753-758 and his son Sikandar from AH 758-760 from Sunargaon mint. It can be considered that

the coins preserved in the royal treasury from the previous years could have been recycled to make new coins with new dates. In addition, following any change in royal power, the new ruler could have recycled the coins of previous rulers in issuing new coins in his own name.

7. Many silver coins of the Bengal sultans have been found with bankers' marks. These bankers' marks were created in the process of examining the authenticity of the coins, and in that process the coins lost a small portion of their metal. To avoid the erosion of the silver coins, merchants who had a large number of older coins would have made new coins with new years from those old coins by paying fees to the mint on the basis of weight.
8. In Graph 1, another low percentage of silver (81.79%) is seen in AH 760 during the initial stage of the reign of Sikandar. Deyell (1983) identified the period AH 758-769 (1357-1366 CE) as a time of net outflow of silver from Bengal, and the low percentage in the sample coin of this time reflects this assumption. Sikandar appeared on the throne of Bengal after the death of his father Shams al-Din Ilyas in AH 758 (1357 CE) according to numismatic evidence (Botham 1930: 156). Shams al-Din Ilyas invaded Kamrup in the later period of his reign, and Sikandar probably concluded the invasion in Kamrup. Some silver coins of Sikandar dated AH 759 bear an inscription *Mulk-i-Chawlistan urf Arsah Kamru* (Hussain 2003: 93). The very next year, Sikandar faced the second invasion of Firuz Tughlaq and his army from Delhi in AH 760. One of the basic reasons for Firuz's second military expedition to Bengal was to ensure the supply of elephants and silver in tribute for the Delhi Sultanate. His invasion lasted two years and seven months, from AH 760-761. According to the *Tarikh-I Mubarak Shahi*, Sikandar took the initiative to avoid a face-to-face clash by sending 50 elephants and other rich souvenirs, but Firuz was not pleased and marched out with his army to invade Bengal (Hussain 2003: 94). Sikandar's invasion of Kamrup in the first years of his reign and Firuz Tughlaq's military expedition against Sikandar must have put pressure on Bengal's treasury and the stock of silver available to Sikandar. He had to spend a large amount to send his army into Kamrup and to give presents to Firuz. That could be the reason for the very low percentage of silver (81.79%) in his coin of AH 760. Unfortunately, no coin dated AH 761 and 762 of Sunargaon mint are available, and coins dated AH 760 from other mints were not found for analysis, so it was not possible to analyse them to verify this assumption.



Graph 1. Silver percentage in the 22 sample tankas of Sunargaon

Percentages of other elements in Sunargaon coins

All the other elements identified and their percentages have been listed in Table B:

1. All coins of Sunargaon mint have tiny amounts of gold (Au) and aluminum (Al). Gold is present in a range from 0.7486% to 3.2268%, while aluminum is present in a range from 0.4868% to 6.253%. Other metals, such as iron (Fe) and magnesium (Mg), were also detected in all 22 coins. The highest percentages of Fe and Mg are 13.162% and 3.7389% respectively.
2. Calcium (Ca) and rubidium (Rb) were detected in all the coins. Nickel (Ni) and titanium (Ti) are present in 13 coins; lead (Pb) and chromium (Cr) in nine coins each; while Manganese (Mn) and zinc (Zn) are present only in three coins.
3. The presence of sulphur (S) was detected in all the sample coins. The radioactive element actinium was also present in a few coins.

Interpretation of other elements data

1. Every coin tested from this mint has a small percentage of gold. Gold and silver are commonly found associated with mineral deposits (Rapp 2009: 147). Adding gold to silver intentionally for minting purposes is not logical. As Deyell pointed out: "It is inconceivable that any administration would knowingly produce and circulate coinage at such a loss by using gold in silver coinage. So, presumably, the gold content was below the threshold of detection of the refining technology of the time and was a trace element characteristic of the mineral at the silver's source" (Deyell 2012/13: 136).
2. It is interesting to find the presence of aluminum in these silver coins. None of the natural alloys of silver contains aluminum. Aluminum was also never found in any previous metallurgical analysis of the silver coins of Bengal. At this stage, it is not possible to make any inference from the presence of aluminum in these coins. It requires further investigation.
3. All the sample coins also contained magnesium. There is an aluminum-magnesium alloy, known as magnalium, which is very light in weight and shows great strength. But it is not known if the minting authority knew about this alloy or whether they used it for enhancing the strength of coins.
4. Iron is a commonly used metal in any society. It was perhaps used for increasing the hardness of silver coins during the sultanate period of Bengal. The hardness of silver is 2.5 whereas the hardness of iron is 4. So, it is possible that, being a comparatively cheap metal, iron was intentionally added to increase the strength of silver coins. From Table B, it is evident that all the coins having a low percentage of silver also contain a higher percentage of iron. The coins of AH 738 and 760 contain a higher percentage of iron at 3.10% and 13.162% respectively. The silver percentage in these coins is low, while iron is the second highest element.
5. Rubidium is a very common element that is as abundant as zinc and more common than copper in the earth's crust (Butterman and Reece 2003). Because of its availability, rubidium probably came as a trace element from the silver ore.
6. Silver is mostly produced as a by-product of lead, copper and zinc mining. So Cu, Pb, and zinc could be trace elements of the natural source, if not intentionally added. In south and southeast Asia, silver is refined from lead ore. In medieval India, for purifying silver, a quantity of adulterated material was put together with a proportionate amount of lead (Mukherjee and Lee 1988: 25). According to *Ain-i-Akbari*, one-fourth of lead was put on the top of the silver to refine silver bullion for coinage (Allami 1873: 22). If the same method was applied during the sultanate period, coins should contain a remarkable amount of lead (Pb). Only 19 coins have a small amount of lead, which perhaps came as a primary element of the ore with silver. Zinc (Zn) and copper (Cu) are also present as primary elements of the ore. The reason behind the presence of other elements could not be determined.

7. In nature, sulphur (S) is found in its native form and is abundant. It also creates compounds (sulfides) with other elements in an ore. Sulphur (S) might have come along as sulfides of other metals in the coins. Radioactive elements like thorium (Th) and actinium (Ac) were perhaps identified as a result of calibration error during WDXRF analysis.

Limitations of present research

As this research is the first of its kind on the coins of Sunargaon mint and the archaeo-metallurgical analysis has been conducted in Bangladesh, there have been some limitations:

- The research articles that have been published so far on metallurgical analysis of coins only describe the techniques and results of the analysis. Those results have not been used to link up with contemporary historical events and no attempt has been made to explain political, economic or social history on the basis of a metallurgical analysis of coins. As a result, there was no precedent for us to compare with or to follow when undertaking the present research.
- One of the first major challenges of our research was to find appropriate coins for conducting metallurgical analysis. Museums do not allow taking out the coins preserved in their cabinets to perform such tests. As a result, the research was entirely dependent on the coins preserved in a private collection. With not all the appropriate coins available; the tricky or confusing results of some coins could not be verified by additional samples of that type/ date.
- Finding and accessing the necessary technological facilities for non-destructive analysis was the second major challenge. In Bangladesh, non-destructive metallurgical analysis techniques like WDXRF are available only at the Department of Glass and Ceramics Engineering of BUET, Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GIS) and Bangladesh Atomic Energy Center-Dhaka. These institutions have heavy workloads and schedules of their own, so it was not always easy to get access on time for metallurgical analysis.
- Inadequate research funding was another crucial limitation of this research. The institutions that provide the technological facilities for the metallurgical analysis of silver coins charge a huge amount of money for each sample. As a result, the number of analysed coins was limited by the lack of funds.
- Unfortunately, information on the silver mines of Burma is very limited. A trace elements study of the silver from these mines could have helped us to identify the provenance of the silver in Bengal coins, but due to the lack of information, a provenance study of silver on the basis of trace elements could not be done.

Future scope

Due to the lack of funds, it wasn't possible to analyse the coins of other important mints of the Bengal Sultanate, such as Firuzabad, Fatehabad, Barbakabad, Muazzamabad and Satgaon. So there is scope to investigate the metallurgical composition of the coins of these mints.

In order to find appropriate coins to analyse, a joint collaboration of the museums with a good collection of Bengal Sultanate coins, and the organisations that are capable of providing technical support, would be able to test coins of each available year of each mint. There is also scope to examine more coins of those years that have been found to be crucial in the present study, to review our interpretations.

Future efforts should also be directed towards accessing information on the silver mines of Burma, so that a provenance of the silver in Bengal coins, on the basis of its trace elements, can be carried out.

Table B. Summary of metallurgical analysis of 22 coins

Sample	Ag	Au	Al	Ca	Cu	S	Mg	Fe	Rb	Ni	Ti	Pb	Cr	Ac	Mn	Zn	Hg
SN_70?_SF	90.7449	1.4739	2.7164	0.7632	1.1357	0.9148	0.6554	0.6256	0.0400			0.7274		0.2026			
SN_729_GB	95.1496	1.5278	0.4868	0.9359	0.3901	0.1082	0.8008	0.5301	0.0707								
SN_729_MT	86.0603	1.2197	4.1387	5.5188	0.5839	0.4829	0.5929	1.0262	0.0383				0.1383				
SN_731_MT	95.9405	1.5221	0.8183	0.3937	0.6847	0.2536	0.284	0.435	0.1181								
SN_738_FM	81.43	1.79	02.06	1.40	0.42	8.47	0.9834	3.10	0.0453	0.0418		0.18		0.0543			
SN_740_FM	86.0639	3.2268	4.4871	0.9627	0.9626	0.4487	0.6852	2.2258	0.1832	0.0546	0.5291		0.1603				
SN_741_FM	85.9303	2.5069	2.2654	1.7239	0.9835	2.9213	0.8303	1.0324	0.1403	0.0455	0.3192	0.5306					0.7704
SN_742_FM	82.3895	2.0897	5.6555	1.6221	3.0219	0.5887	0.9496	2.4792	0.0572	0.0313	1.0225		0.0946				
SN_743_FM	91.791	1.7041	2.8402	0.253	0.8949	0.6939	0.4959	0.6018	0.0449		0.2847	0.3958					
SN_744_FM	87.0905	1.1839	4.0399	1.023	0.5566	1.2508	0.749	2.8452	0.0757	0.0298	0.853	0.3026					
SN_745_FM	96.1555	1.044	1.0199	0.3139	0.331	0.227	0.3455	0.3087	0.0273	0.03	0.1038		0.0936				
SN_746_FM	90.5731	0.9159	3.3211	0.628	1.008	0.2311	0.8857	1.5862	0.0242	0.0295	0.3591	0.3407			0.0625	0.035	
SN_747_FM	77.5419	0.8803	3.4353	6.5656	1.193	0.6519	3.7389	4.6754	0.0277	0.0501	0.8307		0.0989		0.2208	0.0895	
SN_748_FM	93.2055	1.0408	2.8521	0.3006	0.8052	0.3430	0.4663	0.6093	0.0284	0.0303	0.3113						
SN_749_FM	88.7674	0.9845	4.1334	1.1804	0.7356	1.1368	0.7656	1.6258	0.0239	0.0292	0.5259	-	0.0917	-	-	-	-
SN_750_FM	87.0731	0.9678	6.253	0.3337	0.8431	0.4274	0.8926	2.0883	0.026	0.0321	0.9376						0.1253
SN_750_IG	95.0331	1.0655	1.4152	0.1687	0.8393	0.2337	0.2109	0.3307	0.0294	0.4412	0.1281		0.1042				
SN_754_SI	92.6733	1.5097	1.9078	0.4676	0.822	0.4712	0.7228	0.7873	0.0902		0.1951	0.353					
SN_756_SI	91.7396	1.6193	2.0632	0.6158	0.5928	0.3023	0.8043	1.3105	0.0618	0.0288	0.2778	0.4793	0.1025				
SN_758_SI	90.8025	1.1393	1.635	0.3417	4.3604	0.1693	0.3844	0.5969	0.0628	0.0273	0.1237	0.2468	0.0785			0.0313	
SN_759_SS	93.7025	0.7486	2.0268	0.4181	0.6721	0.1959	0.5802	1.0996	0.0201	0.0271	0.2698	0.2364					
SN_760_SS	81.7908	1.3281	0.8865	0.6767	0.5308	0.5941	0.3706	13.162	0.0536	0.0266	0.1821		0.0698		0.1024	0.046	

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In honour of Stan Goron

As a postal museum professional, Stan Goron's passion for medieval Indian coins is very surprising, yet inspiring. He hasn't just restricted himself to collecting; his scholarly contribution to the study of the coins of India has surpassed the level of any present-day academic professional in this field. Stan's outstanding contribution, *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, along with J.P. Goenka, is the most up-to-date and detailed documentation available of the medieval coins of the Indian subcontinent. This is a daily must-read book for every enthusiast of this topic. We wish him a happy and healthy life ahead and look forward to many more scholarly works from him.

Mohammad Abu Al Hasan
A.S.W. Kurny
Syed Mohammad Kamrul Ahsan

THE COIN HOARDS OF BENGAL SULTANS PRESERVED IN EUROPE'S MUSEUMS

Sutapa Sinha

An unexpected exposure in 1992 to an unpublished coin hoard of 767 silver coins of medieval Bengal, acquired by the State Archaeological Museum of West Bengal, Kolkata (it had been discovered near a village called Chandir Jhar in Alipurduar district of West Bengal in 1987), ignited the idea of undertaking an in-depth research on reconstructing the monetary history of the sultans of Bengal using hoards of their coins, both published and unpublished, discovered and reported since the 19th century, as a primary source. It was not an easy task to document all published coin hoards, because those unearthed before Independence, from undivided Bengal and other eastern Indian states, were published in various numismatic literature apart from *Proceedings* and *Journals of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Physically too, those coin hoards were scattered and disposed off to many museums, not only in the Indian subcontinent (including present-day Myanmar and Pakistan), but also to the museums of Great Britain and Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

In 1998, I started to study and photo-document the coin collection of the sultans of Bengal preserved in the coin cabinets of the British Museum, London, and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, the two major public collections in the U.K. Following the recovery of a coin hoard, often by chance, the respective district authority used to order the police to seize the find. The coins were then acquired by the government after careful examination under the Indian Treasure-Trove Act, and parts of it were distributed to different museums in the Indian subcontinent, including Burma (presently Myanmar) and Afghanistan, and also to Great Britain, particularly to the British Museum. This Treasure-Trove Act came into force in 1878, but before that the most important and largest-ever coin hoard of the Turkish rulers of Bengal, amounting to 13,500 silver coins, was unearthed in 1863 in Cooch Behar, a princely state under British control. Very little is known about the disposal of this treasure trove, apart from the fact that this hoard was seized by the district magistrate and subsequently sent to the Calcutta mint in order to pay the overdue revenues of Cooch Behar. This point will be discussed later.

A group of British officials and Indologists of the East India Company posted in Bengal were avid collectors and well-known numismatists, some of whom it can be presumed must have donated or sold their collection after going back to their home country – a presumption which proved correct with the gradual progression of my study of coin collections preserved not only in the British Museum but also in other collections in the U.K. and Germany. While staying in the U.K., I carried out an extensive investigation by sending a letter along with sample photographs of the coins to 23 museums in the UK that hold any oriental coins. Only the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, responded in the affirmative. These two museums each had a small collection of the particular series of coins preserved in their holdings and lying totally unnoticed since the 19th and early 20th century respectively. No catalogue of Indian coins has ever been published from either of these two museums.

The catalogues of the 'Muhammadan' coin collections of India preserved in the British Museum and the Ashmolean Museum were published by Stanley Lane-Poole in 1885 and 1888, with holdings of 162 and 17 silver coins of the series respectively (Lane-Poole 1885 and 1888). When published by Lane-Poole, the Ashmolean Museum's 17 coins were held in the Bodleian Library. Thus, in the late 1990s, the majority of these two collections (of the series under review) was lying unnoticed and unpublished, barring a few articles

published by scholars like H.E. Stapleton, R.B. Whitehead, Richard Burn, Nicholas Lowick, Stan Goron and others.

With the progress of my study I came across many unknown facts, but the most important one was to find out, through the study of the paper tickets attached to them, the linkage between a group of coins preserved in the cabinet of the British Museum and that of another large public collection in Europe, the Münzkabinett of Bode Museum in Berlin. These coins in the British Museum were identified as a part of the Cooch Behar Hoard. The coins in the Bode Museum were also part of the same hoard.

Apart from these, I have also rediscovered in these four museums in the U.K. a fair number of coins of several other published coin hoards recovered from undivided Bengal, including Mahalla, Bashail, Moorshidbad, Ketun and others. I will now examine the methods and results of these recovered hoards in different public collections in Europe that were deposited in these museums in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Cooch Behar Hoard was found on the bank of Dhurla river near Deenhata in the then Cooch Behar princely state. This huge hoard could have been a landmark in reconstructing the politico-economic history of the Bengal sultans had it been properly preserved and studied. Awareness was sadly absent at that time of the importance of the analytical study of coin hoards, so the numismatists and Indologists of Calcutta made no attempt to preserve the hoard in its totality. Instead they let bureaucrats treat this huge number of silver coins of the 14th-15th centuries as bullion and use the silver metal to pay the revenues of Cooch Behar that were overdue. Barring a few hundred coins (we are still not sure about the number of coins kept aside), the entire hoard was melted down in the Calcutta mint. From a very brief report by Rajendralala Mitra published in the *Proceeding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Mitra 1864), and an extensive article by Edward Thomas published in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Thomas 1866), we can gather limited information that a selection of a few hundred coins was made for the Calcutta mint and for the government, and a thousand coins for private collector Colonel Charles Seton Guthrie, lately of the Bengal Engineers. Rajendralala Mitra made this selection, but surprisingly, he abstained from mentioning the actual number of coins he selected for the government and for Col. Guthrie. Edward Thomas used 143 coins from Guthrie's collection in writing his famous essay 'The initial coinage of Bengal' in 1866 (Thomas 1866).



Fig. 1. Silver tanka of 'Ala al-Din 'Ali Shah (AH 740-746, 1339-1345 CE), Firuzabad mint, from Cooch Behar Hoard, British Museum 1868,0516.10, ex. Guthrie collection

Table A. Coins of the Bengal sultans in major European museums

Name of the museum	Total no. of coins	Silver coins	Gold coins	Extremely rare coins and coins from hoards/ finds
British Museum, London	668	650	18	One gold quarter <i>tanka</i> of Rukn al-din Ali Mardan, and silver fractional <i>tankas</i> of several sultans of Bengal. Coins from the Howrah, Cooch Behar, Moorshidabad, Kastabir Mahalla and Ketun hoards, and the Khulna and Habiganj finds.
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford	428	422	6	Three extremely rare coins of the Habshi ruler Qutb al-din Mahmud Shah (1490 CE). Coins from the Moorshidabad, Kastabir Mahall and Bashail hoards, as well as the Enayetpur, Mymensingh and Sonakhira finds.
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge	47	47	Nil	Rare coin of Barbak ibn Barbak Shah of the Chittagong trade series. Coins from the Kastabir Mahalla and Bashail hoards, and the Habiganj find.
National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh	14	14	Nil	Five coins from the Cooch Behar Hoard.
Bode Museum, Berlin	445	440	5	375 coins from the Cooch Behar Hoard. This museum preserves the largest number of Cooch Behar Hoard coins.
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris	7	7	Nil	None deserve special mention.

Methodology used to rediscover coin hoards lost in the public collections of Europe since the 19th century

My study of the coin cabinets of the Bengal sultans in the coin room of the British Museum unveiled the coins from the Cooch Behar Hoard in an interesting way. 39 coins in the cabinet have the name of Col. C.S. Guthrie written on the accompanying white paper tickets, along with their date of acquisition (Fig. 1). Similarly, 18 coins, with the name of Col. Haughton written on their attached

tickets, were found in the coin cabinet (Fig. 2). All these coins were purchased by the museum in February 1868 in two separate lots. No place name was mentioned on any of the tickets attached to these coins.

Colonel John Colpoys Haughton was the district magistrate of Cooch Behar when the treasure trove was unearthed, and later its Commissioner (Buckland 1906: 195). In spite of realising its historical importance, he sent the entire hoard to the mint in Calcutta with a suggestion that "it might be received as bullion by Government, as part of the annual tribute of the Cooch Behar estate", and also "in order to enable numismatists in Calcutta to have a sight of it" (Mitra 1864: 480). Col. Guthrie collected more than a thousand coins from the Cooch Behar hoard as selected by Rajendralala Mitra of Calcutta in 1864.



Fig. 2. Silver tanka of 'Ala al-Din 'Ali Shah (AH 740-746, 1339-1345 CE), Firuzabad mint, from Cooch Behar Hoard, British Museum 1868,0519.4, ex. Haughton collection

The accession register of the Coins and Medals Department of the British Museum does not mention any more information apart from the basic data of the coins and the amount of money spent on their purchase by the British Museum.

A closer examination of these 57 coins reveals that all of them bear a particular counter-mark usually stamped on the reverse margin of the coins without defacing the legend (Fig. 3). The composition of these two groups in the cabinet is very similar to the basic composition of the Cooch Behar Hoard as noted in the *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (Mitra 1864). The most conclusive factor is the association of these two people, Col. Haughton and Col. C.S. Guthrie, who were directly associated with the discovery, disposition or partial collection of the Cooch Behar Hoard in 1863-1864. Col. Guthrie was the only private collector who requested Rajendralala "to secure any examples of importance that might have escaped his earlier investigation" (Thomas 1867: 1-2). As a result, around one thousand specimens were rescued from the Presidency mint crucibles.

I have found 11 more coins bearing that particular counter-mark preserved in this coin cabinet of the British Museum, purchased at different points of time in the 19th and early 20th centuries from several collections, including that of Sir Alexander Cunningham. Later on, in other collections in the UK, such as the Heberden Coin Room of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and in the coin cabinet of the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, I located a few more coins, though quite small in number, due to the presence of that particular counter-mark on these coins. On further probing, Joe Cribb, the then Deputy Keeper of the Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, said that my intuition regarding the identification of coins from the Cooch Behar Hoard based on the

presence of this particular shroff mark was correct, as he could recollect the same story heard from John Deyell of Canada, who found the same mark on the coins of the Bengal sultans preserved in the Bode Museum in Berlin.



Fig. 3. Silver tanka of Shams al-Din Ilyas (AH 743-758, 1342-1357 CE), Sunargaon mint, AH 754, showing distinctive mark (circled in red) of the Cooch Behar Hoard, British Museum



Fig. 4. Silver tanka of Delhi sultan Mu'izz al-Din Kaikobad (AH 686-689, 1287-1290 CE), [Delhi mint], showing distinctive mark of Cooch Behar hoard (circled in red), Bode Museum

A large number of 440 silver coins and five gold coins of the Bengal sultans have been preserved in the Münzkabinett of the Bode Museum since 1876, all of which were purchased from a single collection, that of Col. Guthrie (Fig. 4). This was the largest unpublished collection of Bengal Sultanate coins in Europe (outside England), lying unrecorded for over 125 years till I published it (Sinha 2009: 359-366). Among these coins, 376 silver tankas can be shown to have come from the Cooch Behar Hoard, as each of these bear that particular counter-mark. The accession record also strongly supports this hypothesis. A collection of 1,340 gold coins, 7,100 silver coins and 10,000 copper coins were offered to the German government for the sum of £5,000 in 1876 after the sudden death of Col. Guthrie in 1875. The entire collection was bought by the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin (Whitehead 1937: 139) and is now preserved in the Münzkabinett of the Bode Museum (Sinha 2009).

In this context it may also be mentioned that in India I could recover 150 silver coins of the same hoard from the coin cabinet of the National Museum, New Delhi, which were acquired through a donation made by the district authority of Cooch Behar in 1955. Therefore, with the recovery of these coins in the National Museum, and 17 coins in the cabinet of the British Museum acquired from Col. Haughton, we can be certain that Col. Haughton kept those pieces aside before sending the treasure trove to Calcutta (Sinha 2005 and 2011). Whether he collected those pieces out of curiosity or he acquired a nominal percentage of the entire find as a district magistrate is not known till date (Sinha 2017: 53). A contents reconstruction of that lost hoard has been made, along with a reconstruction of the political and economic history of 14th-15th century Bengal to a certain extent (Sinha 2005: 69; Sinha 2017: 4, 50-53).

Another story of recovering parts of coin hoards came up in the coin room of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, where a small collection of 47 coins of the Bengal sultans was assembled, courtesy of people like A.W. Botham and R. Friel, government officials in

administrative service in India. While working on the coin collection of the Fitzwilliam Museum, I came across a few early 20th century letters preserved there. One of these letters was written from Shillong, Assam, by A.W. Botham, the then Second Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, to the director of the Fitzwilliam Museum (Sinha 2019). Dated 2nd December, 1915, Botham informed the director of the Fitzwilliam Museum that the local administration was presenting seven specimens to his museum. He also mentioned that these coins were found at village Kastabir Mahalla in Sylhet district in 1913. Apart from some other details of the coins, he wrote to the director that the "coins have been forwarded to you by Mr. Friel in a separate insured parcel". This information about the origins of the coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum came from the late Mark Blackburn, former keeper of Numismatics in the Fitzwilliam Museum. I am indebted to this much-missed scholar for his unstinting kindness in helping me during my periods of research in the Fitzwilliam Museum coin room in 1998 and 2005, and for providing me with access to and photocopies of this important correspondence.

No. and metal.	Class.	King.	Date.	Mint where found.	Remarks.
70-74	Ahem	Gaurinath Singh	-	Sibsagar	half rupee. Gauri.
75-79	"	Frajanath Singh	-	"	half rupee.
80-87	Koch	Devendra Narayan	1/18-27	Chamaria, Kamrup.	half rupee.
88-91	"	Harendra or Harendra Narayan	-	Do.	Do.
92-99	Fengal	Fakhruddin Kubarak, Sunargaon	745	Kastabir Mahalla, Sylhet	I.M.C.17
100-104	"	Do. do.	746	Do.	
105-111	"	Do. do.	747	Do.	
112-117	"	Do. do.	750	Do. 1/112-117	
118-126	"	Shamsuddin Ilyas, Firuzabad	754	Do. 1/118-126	I.M.C.24.
127	"	Ruknuddin Barbak	-	Fashail, Sylhet	I.M.C.147
128-137	"	Shamsuddin Yusuf	-	Do.	I.M.C.149. 1/128-137
138-139	"	Ghiyasuddin Mahmud Shah III	-	Senekhira, Sylhet	I.M.C.222 1/138-139

Fig. 5. List of coins for disbursement along with the name of the respective hoard/ find

On investigation it was found that these seven coins presented to the museum from the Kastabir Mahalla Hoard were published by A.W. Botham and R. Friel in 1919 in the catalogue of the coin cabinet of Assam, along with some other hoards and finds like the Bashail Hoard, Rupaibari find, and others (Botham and Friel 1919). Thus, it was the custodian of the coin cabinet of Assam himself who was instrumental in distributing extraneous coins formally to museums in the U.K., that had been deposited over the years in the Assam coin cabinet in Shillong (Fig. 5). Some more specimens of these hoards have been documented with the help of these letters, in the coin cabinets of the Fitzwilliam Museum, the British Museum, and the Ashmolean Museum.

Observations

A thorough study of the collections mentioned above brought several unknown facts to light, but the most important fact is the presence of coins from the coin hoards and finds unearthed from the geo-political limits of the then Bengal, dating back to as early as 1843, that found their way to museums in the U.K. and Europe. The most important hoard of the sultans of Bengal unearthed till date is the Cooch Behar Hoard, and coins of that have revealed important aspects of the fiscal policy of these Islamic rulers.

Coins of the Bengal sultans are known to bear shroff marks, counter-marks, chisel cuts or scoop marks. But stamping a special mark on each and every specimen of a coin hoard was never noticed before by earlier scholars. Even Rajendralala, who examined these

coins several times before its disposal, probably did not realise the importance of this mark. Out of the 56 coin hoards or finds of this series known till date, the Cooch Behar Hoard is the only example which is not an outcome of the simple savings of an individual or of a family for generations. Instead it appears to have been part of the royal treasury that was perhaps being transferred from the capital to pay the salary of soldiers and to bear other expenses of a large troop deployment.

From two different texts, *Yoginitantra* and *Ahom Buranji*, we find reference to the Kamrup invasion by the Muslim rulers of Bengal, though the date differs (Sinha 2011: 143). *Yoginitantra* stated that this invasion was around 1394-1395 CE, while *Ahom Buranji* refers to a later date in the first decade of the 15th century. Nevertheless, both dates fall within the reign of Sultan Ghiyath al-din Azam Shah of Bengal. A stone inscription of this sultan found from a place called Boko, 55 km southeast of Guwahati, strongly supports the theory of his invasion and conquest of Kamrup. The latest dated coin of Azam Shah found in the Cooch Behar Hoard dates to 1405 CE and perhaps the loss of this royal treasure might have occurred during this military mission. Thus, it may have been a standard practice to legalise a mobile currency by stamping these with a particular symbol, though this symbol does not resemble any royal symbol or insignia.

From the contents analysis of this truncated royal treasure, it is also evident that not only coins of the predecessors of the same dynasty, but also coins of earlier dynasties were very much accepted and were in circulation during this period. We find coins of Delhi sultans Ghiyath al-din Balban, Jalal al-din Firuz Shah Khalji, Ala al-din Muhammad Shah Khalji, and Ghiyath al-din Tughlaq Shah, along with coins of early governors of Bengal, Muiz al-din Kaikobad, Nasir al-din Mahmud Shah, and Ghiyath al-din Bahadur Shah; all present in the royal treasure in good condition, being carried for the payment of soldiers in northeast India. Therefore, we can assume that the reuse and re-striking of coins issued by previous ruling authorities was not in vogue; instead the coins of earlier administrations were accepted and very much in circulation. Otherwise, how could it be possible to find coins of Ghiyath al-din Balban, the Delhi sultan who ruled from 1266 to 1286 CE mixed up with the coins of Ghiyath al-din Azam Shah (1393-1410 CE) who ruled in Bengal over 120 years later? The hoard also contained coins of the first independent rulers of Bengal, such as Fakhr al-din Mubarak Shah and Ala al-din Ali Shah, whose reign predates Azam Shah by at least 50 years. Coins of Azam Shah's direct ancestors – his father Sikandar Shah and Ilyas Shah – were present in the hoard in as large a proportion as those of Azam Shah.

The occurrence of money older than hundred years in a royal treasury certainly provides a pattern of the circulation of money in the market. Bengal under sultanate rule witnessed a very uniform currency system, almost mono-metallic, with silver coins of 10.6-10.8 g issued from the second half of the 13th century to the first half of the 16th century, especially in terms of the weight standard. Could this typical characteristic feature of the economy be the reason for the occurrence of much older coins, even of Delhi, in circulation when the treasure was buried in the 15th century in north Bengal? If it is so, then the necessity of devaluing or discarding earlier currency, of the same weight and the same metal, did not arise, and this in effect gave rise to a more stable economy where the loss of bullion was negligible due to the reuse of earlier currency.

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My sincere thanks to the Nehru Trust for Indian Collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, which offered me its U.K. Visiting Fellowship in 1998 to undertake this project of studying coin collections in the U.K. I also express my heartfelt gratitude to Joe Cribb for selecting me as one of the Hirayama Trainee Curators of the Department of Coins and Medals in 1999 to expand the spectrum of my study in Europe, and for sponsoring my trip to study the Bode Museum collection in Berlin.

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My first interaction with Stan Goron was through his articles on the coins of the Bengal sultans published before 1998. When I started to study the coin collection of this series in the British Museum's coin cabinet, I found that a large number of coins in this collection were purchased from Stan Goron's collection. I first met Stan at the British Museum in 1998, and since then whenever I visit London I try to meet him to enrich myself as we share a common interest in Indian sultanate coinage. I am much indebted to him as he allowed me to study his personal collection for the purpose of writing my PhD thesis. His voluminous work *The Coins of the Indian Sultanates*, which he authored jointly with J.P. Goenka, is considered to be the most accurate and up-to-date corpus of Indian sultanate numismatics available to us today.

Sutapa Sinha

WERE RAJA GANESH AND DANUJAMARDDANA DEVA THE SAME PERSON?

Noman Nasir

The history of medieval Bengal is obscure in the first half of the 15th century during the period of the Iliyas Shahi dynasty's decline and the emergence of a powerful Hindu ruler Raja Ganesh. There is a difference of opinion regarding the identification of Raja Ganesh and his ascension as king despite Muslim supremacy in medieval Bengal. According to the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* chronicle written in 1788 (Salam 1902: 112), Raja Ganesh was a *zamindar* (landlord) of Bhaturia, while, according to the narrative recorded by Francis Buchanan Hamilton, he was the *hakim* (governor) of Dinajpur in northern Bengal (Hamilton 1833: 23-24). In a contemporary letter, he was described as a member of a landholder family of 400 years' standing (Eaton 1993: 51). Nevertheless, it is obvious from all the sources that Raja Ganesh was a noble in the court of the rulers of the Iliyas Shahi dynasty, who ascended to the throne of medieval Bengal in the early 15th century.

According to *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Sultan Ghiyas al-din A'zam Shah was killed by a conspiracy of Raja Ganesh, but the earlier sources, such as Firishta and Nizam al-Din Ahmad, did not refer to any such event. Ghiyas al-Din A'zam Shah was succeeded by his son Saif al-Din Hamza Shah and the latter by Shihab al-Din Bayazid Shah, whose identity is still disputed. A few historians identify Bayazid as a slave of Hamza Shah, who seized power with the backing of Raja Ganesh. Bayazid Shah was succeeded by his son Ala al-Din Firuz Shah, but he was soon overthrown by Raja Ganesh. None of the contemporary chronicles record the name of Ala al-Din Firuz bin Bayazid and he is only known from his coins.

The only contemporary references to this episode are by Arab chroniclers, who evidently derived their information from pilgrims or other travellers who had journeyed from Bengal to Arabia. Affirming that the throne had passed from Ghiyath al-Din A'zam Shah to his son Saif al-Din Hamza Shah, the chroniclers relate that the latter's slave rebelled against Raja Ganesh, captured him, and seized control of the kingdom. But then, the chroniclers stated, the son of Raja Ganesh revolted against the usurper, converted to Islam under the adopted name Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, and then ascended the throne as sultan of Bengal (Eaton 1993: 52). The *Riyaz-us-Salatin* provides the most detailed description of the entire event (Salam 1902: 115-116). According to this text, soon after Ganesh seized power in Pandua, he oppressed the Muslims of Bengal and slew a number of them. Thereupon, a Muslim saint Sheikh Nur Qutb-ul-Alam wrote a letter to the Jaunpur sultan, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi, appealing to him to invade Bengal and overthrow Raja Ganesh. When Ibrahim Shah reached Bengal with his army, Ganesh asked the sheikh for his pardon and protection. The sheikh agreed and Jadu, the twelve-year-old son of Ganesh, converted to Islam at his hands and was renamed Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah. Ganesh then placed his son on the throne. As soon as Sultan Ibrahim Shah returned to Jaunpur, Ganesh retook the throne and converted his son Jalal al-Din back to Hinduism again following a 'purification' ritual. But Ganesh was soon killed by some servants of his son, and Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah again ascended the throne. A similar account is also to be found in a few other chronicles (Karim 1987) such as the *Sangeet Shiromoni*, the narrative recorded by Hamilton (1833), and in a couple of personal letters written by Hazrat Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, a Sufi sheikh of Jaunpur, and Sheikh Nur Qutb-ul-Alam (Askari 1948; Eaton 1993: 53, n. 53).

Numismatic records

Numismatic evidence plays an important role in reconstructing the history of this period, and it continues to evolve with new JONS Vol. 238, Winter 2019

discoveries. The latest coin known of Ghiyas al-din A'zam Shah was struck in AH 813. He was succeeded by Hamza Shah, who struck coins in AH 813-814 at different mints, and in AH 815 as well but only from Muazzamabad mint in eastern Bengal (Goron and Goenka 2001: 182-184). Bayazid Shah's coins are known from AH 814 from the mint at the capital Firuzabad (Goron and Goenka 2001: 184-186). Hence it is evident that Bayazid Shah captured the throne on or before Jumada II, AH 814 (the earliest known coin; Fig. 1) and ruled till AH 817 (Iftekhar Alam 2014).



Fig. 1. Shihab al-Din Bayazid, no mint, Jumada II AH 814 (NN)

Hamza Shah probably fled to the east and continued to survive for nearly one more year before being completely deposed by Bayazid Shah. The political struggle during AH 814-815 is also evident from the inscription of Hamza Shah's coins where he tried to assert himself with graceful titles such as *Sultan-al-Salatin* (Sultan of Sultans), *Sikander Thani* (the second Alexander), or *al-Mujahid Fi-Sabil al-Rahman*, which appear to be an attempt to assert his authority during this period of turmoil (Goron and Goenka 2001: 182-184). Bayazid Shah's latest coin is dated in the month of Sha'ban AH 817 (8th month of the year), and he was succeeded by his son Ala al-Din Firuz Shah, who struck coins from various mints in AH 817 (Goron and Goenka 2001: 186-187) (see Fig. 2). The political unrest is further complicated by the discovery of two newly identified rulers – Nasir al-Din Muhammad Shah (Nasir, Rhodes and Goenka 2010) and Siraj al-Din (Nasir and Islam 2014) – who seem to have ruled during this troubled period.



Fig. 2. Ala al-Din Firuz Shah, no mint, Shawal AH 817 (SG)



Fig. 3. Jalal al-Din Muhammad, no mint, Safar AH 818 (GG)

The earliest coin of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah is dated AH 818 and struck in the month of Safar, the second month of the year (Fig. 3). As the latest coin of Bayazid Shah is dated Sha'ban AH 817 (8th month) and the earliest coin of Firuz bin Bayazid Shah was struck in Shawal AH 817 (10th month), the period of Firuz bin Bayazid Shah's reign can evidently be set as 4 to 6 months only. This

probably leaves no room for the placement of Raja Ganesh and subsequent events, before the initial accession of Jalal al-Din Muhammad as described in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*.



Fig. 4. Danujamarddana Deva, Pandunagar, Saka era 1339 (KS)



Fig. 5. Danujamarddana Deva, Pandunagar, Saka 1340 (CNG)

The puzzle is deepened by the presence of remarkable coins in the name of Danujamarddana Deva (Figs. 4-9) and Mahendra Deva (Figs. 10-11), struck in traditional Bengali script instead of Arabic, from Pandunagar, Chatigram and Suvarnagram mints and dated in the Saka era 1339-1340 (AH 819-821) (Bhattachali 1922). Recently a coin with the mint name Saptagrama (Satgaon) has been identified by me, which I shall publish in a separate paper.

N.K. Bhattachali, in 1922, first opined that Danujamarddana Deva and Mahendra Deva were the royal titles of Raja Ganesh and his son Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah respectively (idem: 109-115). H.E. Stapleton (1930) and Jadunatha Sarkar supported the identification of Raja Ganesh with Danujamarddana Deva, but both reidentified Mahendra Deva as the younger brother of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, who was later ousted by him in AH 820-21 (Sarkar 1948: 120-121). Their opinion might have been inspired in part by the information given in *Firishta* that Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah had a younger brother. But Ahmad Hasan Dani disregarded this opinion and considered Danujamarddana Deva and Mahendra Deva as local chiefs in east and south Bengal, the descendants of the Deva rulers of Chandradwip, who asserted independence during the turmoil caused by the capture of power by Raja Ganesh and the invasions of Ibrahim Shah Sharqi (Dani 1952; Ray 1960: 205-208). Dani's opinion was based on the testimony of later oral and literary sources that identify Mahendra Deva as the son of Danujamarddana Deva (Mukherjee 2000: 301-304). Modern scholars, such as Richard Eaton and Syed Ezaj Hussain, also support his view.



Fig. 6. Danujamarddana Deva, Chatigram, Saka 1339 (GG)



Fig. 7. Danujamarddana Deva, Chatigram, Saka 1340 (NN)

The Chatigram and Suvarnagram mints of these rulers can be recognised, without any hesitation, as the Sanskritised forms of Chatgaon and Sonargaon respectively. Bhattachali, Stapleton, and other early scholars identified Pandunagar as Hazrat Pandua, the then capital of Bengal, located in northern Bengal. But Dani contradicted this view, as according to him, since the Deva kings never controlled north Bengal, it is more likely that Pandunagar on their coins would refer to the provincial town Chhota Pandua, located in the Hughli district near present-day Kolkata.



Fig. 8. Danujamarddana Deva, Suvarnagram, Saka 1339 (NKB)



Fig. 9. Danujamarddana Deva, Suvarnagram, Saka 1340 (GG)

Meanwhile, Bhattachali explained how the name Danujamarddana was appropriate for Raja Ganesh. *Danuj* is a Bengali word which means demon or monster, while *marddan* or *mardan* is a Sanskrit and Bengali word that means crushing or destroying. So, the literal meaning of *Danujamarddana Deva* is 'the demon-destroying king', i.e. a king who crushes the demons. Needless to say, 'demon' here would refer to the Muslim aggressors. Even if we accept this logic, such a name would be similarly appropriate for any Hindu usurper who destroyed the Muslim rulers who had ruled Bengal for over 200 years, not only Raja Ganesh.

Despite the difference of opinion, all historians unanimously agree that Danujamarddana Deva, irrespective who he was, ousted Jalal al-Din Muhammad in AH 820 for a brief period of one year or so, based on numismatic evidence. Such a proposition is mainly driven by the absence of Jalal al-Din's coin in AH 820 and the issuance of Danujamarddana Deva's and Mahendra Deva's coins in Saka era 1339-1340 (AH 820-821), which fills this gap perfectly.



Fig. 10. Mahendra Deva, Pandunagar, Saka 1340 (BA)



Fig. 11. Mahendra Deva, Chatigram, Saka 1340 (GG)

I have recently discovered three coins issued by Jalal al-Din dated AH 820 and struck from the Jannatabad mint, which was previously unrecorded for this ruler (Figs. 12-14). Although this does not contradict any of the existing propositions, it may help to reconstruct the history more precisely.



Fig. 12. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Jannatabad, AH 820 (NN)



Fig. 13. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Jannatabad, AH 820 (NN)



Fig. 14. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Jannatabad, AH 820 (ZM)

The inscriptions on these new coins are as follows:

Obverse: *Jalal al-dunya wa'l-din abu'l muzaffar muhammad shah al-sultan*

Reverse: *Nasir al-islam wa'l-muslimiin khallada mulkah*

Reverse margin: *Darb Hadah al-Sikkah Fi al-Jannat-abad sanah 82(0)*



Fig. 15. Details of the dates seen on the coins in Figs. 12-13

The first two digits (8 and 2) of the date on these coins are fairly legible on these specimens; however, the last digit is not clear. A closer examination reveals that there is no unit digit scripted and that the subsequent stroke after '2' is the last part of the word for year *sanah*. The date therefore apparently reads as AH 820, as the digit 0 is sometimes represented as a tiny dot on Bengal Sultanate coins, or is even missing altogether (see examples in Figs. 16-17).



Fig. 16. Ala al-Din Hussain Shah, Barbakabad, date AH 900 with 0 missing



Fig. 17. Ala al-Din Hussain Shah, Sharifabad, date AH 910 with 0 missing

It is also significant that the same type of coins from Jannatabad mint was only struck during Jalal al-Din's first reign (Figs. 18-19). No coin from this mint has been discovered from his second reign.

We find a fair amount of coins struck during Jalal al-Din's first reign, in AH 818 to be precise, from at least five different mints as well as a few mintless varieties. The availability of coins is significantly reduced for AH 819. A handful of specimens are known from Firuzabad and Jannatabad mints only. Coins dated AH 820 are only known from the above-mentioned three specimens from Jannatabad mint (Figs. 12-14).



Fig. 18. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Jannatabad, AH 818 (SG)



Fig. 19. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Jannatabad, AH 819 (BNM)

The Jannatabad mint was first published by Nelson Wright in his *Catalogue of Coins in Indian Museum*, Calcutta, and tentatively attributed to Lakhnauti (Gaur) which was the capital of Bengal up to the mid-14th century (Wright 1907, 2: 142). The mint was previously known from a few rare coins of A'zam Shah struck in AH 790, probably in his rebel period during his father's reign. Wright's attribution was driven by a much later event in AH 945 (1538 CE). According to the *Humayun-nama*, Mughal emperor Humayun invaded Gaur and was so pleased by its natural beauty that he renamed it Jannatabad (City of Paradise) (Beveridge 1902: 134). There is enough reason to contradict this attribution. All Mughal chronicles including the *Humayun-nama*, the *Ain-i-Akbari*, and the *Tabqat-i-Akbari* mention that Gaur was renamed by Humayun in AH 945 (1538 CE), whereas A'zam Shah's coin from Jannatabad mint was issued 155 years earlier. Also, AH 790 falls under A'zam Shah's rebel period, thus it is very unlikely for him to strike coins from Gaur and then discontinue this mint once he ascended the throne himself. Hence, the above-mentioned Jannatabad mint must be a different place. We have found a place named Jannatpur under Gobindagonj Upazilla of Rangpur district, which could be a possible attribution. It also fits with the particular circumstances that I discuss later in this article.



Fig. 20. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Gunjaniya, AH 818 (TA)



Fig. 21. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Gunjaniya, AH 818 (NN)

Apart from re-introducing production at the Jannatabad mint, Jalal al-Din also established a new mint in AH 818 which apparently reads as *Al-Gunjaniya* (Figs. 20-21). The reading of this mint is not certain and it was probably only in operation for a brief period during his first reign, as we have not found any coin from this mint later than AH 818 (I have examined six or seven examples of this mint and year). There is a place named Gunjaria near Islampur in Uttar Dinajpur district (thanks to Baskhar Mukherjee of West Bengal for drawing this to my attention). It is reasonable to note that

there are some places neighboring Gunjaria called Mohania, Dhobiniya, and Purnea, which have the same ending as Gunjaniya. There are many examples where the names of places in neighboring areas have such similarities. Hence it is very plausible that the original name of the place was Gunjaniya, perhaps transformed in later years to Gunjaria.

Meanwhile, Jalal al-Din continued to strike coins from the mints at Firuzabad (Fig. 22), Muazzamabad (Fig. 23) and Satgaon (Fig. 24), as well as without mint name (Fig. 25), following his predecessors.



Fig. 22. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Firuzabad, AH 818 (PS)



Fig. 23. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Muazzamabad, AH 818 (NN)



Fig. 24. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, Arshah Satgaon, AH 818 (GG)



Fig. 25. Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah, no mint, Rabi-ul-Awal, AH 818 (IA)

The following points can be summarised after considering the numismatic evidence:

1. A'zam Shah was succeeded by Hamza Shah in AH 813, who was dethroned by Bayazid Shah, a usurper (probably a slave), on or before Jumada II AH 814. Hamza Shah fled to the east (Muazzamabad) where he ruled till AH 815 before being murdered.

2. Bayazid Shah ruled for about 3 years and was succeeded by his son Ala al-Din Firuz between Shab'an and Shawal months of AH 817 (the 8th and 10th months respectively).
3. Ala al-Din Firuz ruled for 4-6 months and was deposed by Jalal al-Din, obviously backed by his father Raja Ganesh, on or before Safar (2nd month) AH 818.
4. After assuming power in AH 818, Jalal al-Din continued to strike coins from Firuzabad, Satgaon and Muazzamabad mints following his predecessors. He also re-introduced the Jannatabad mint after a 28-year gap in AH 818, and established a new mint named Gunjaniya in the same year.
5. The issuance of coins was limited to Firuzabad and Jannatabad mints from AH 819 onwards. Jalal al-Din's coin issues seem to have ceased at the southern mints (Muazzamabad or Satgaon) after AH 818, but continued at the northern mints till AH 820.
6. Danujamarddana Deva struck coins from Pandunagar, Chatigram, Saptagrama and Suvarnagram mints in Saka era 1339 and 1340 (1417-1418 CE, AH 820-21). Presumably, he captured the throne in AH 820, ousting Jalal al-Din.
7. In Saka era 1340, Mahendra Deva succeeded Danujamarddana Deva and issued coins from Chatigram and Pandunagar mints.
8. In total, Danujamarddana Deva and Mahendra Deva ruled for under two years, from AH 820 to 821.
9. No coin is yet confirmed bearing the mint name Chatgaon in Jalal al-Din's first reign, so it seems that southeast Bengal was not under his control. One coin is reported to have been found, but this is apparently a misreading of the date (Goron and Goenka 2001: 188, no. 305).
10. It is notable that the last three rulers of the Iliyas Shahi dynasty (Hamza Shah, Bayazid Shah and Firuz bin Bayazid Shah) did not issue coins from the Chatgaon mint. It therefore seems that they had no control over Chittagong. What exactly happened to Chittagong during that period is not clearly known. But it is obvious that Ghiyath al-Din A'zam Shah did hold authority over Chittagong, as evidenced by contemporary sources (Qanungo 1988: 139-140). The earliest coin at Chatgaon mint was struck by A'zam Shah in AH 801 (Goron and Goenka 2001: B240). This coin bears an unique and unusual legend, *abad allah daulatahu khallada allah mulkahu*, which means 'may his empire and kingdom last for ever'. This new legend perhaps indicates that the city had been recently conquered.
11. Jalal al-Din's coinage re-appeared in AH 821 (called his 'second reign') from Firuzabad (north-western) and Muazzamabad (eastern) mints. Coins were issued on a regular basis from different mints from AH 822 onwards, including Chatgaon.

The numismatic sequence proves that despite Raja Ganesh's dominance and power since c. AH 814, the Muslim rulers minted coins without gap up to early AH 820. So Ganesh was probably a *de facto* master and political mastermind during that period, as claimed by Firishta and Nizam al-Din Ahmad, but did not ascend the throne. The statement from the *Taabqat-i-Akbari* (3.270) supports this view. It does not call Ganesh a king, but rather called him a *zamindar* who enjoyed power and domination for seven years and his son converted to Islam and ascended to the throne (De 1927, 3.1: 443; Hussain 2003). It is very important to note that Jalal al-Din's coins disappeared from southern mints after AH 818, whereas coins were infrequently minted from the northern mints, including a couple of less known mints. It presumably signifies that Jalal al-Din might have lost his control in the southern delta very soon after his initial accession and was struggling to protect his position as the king of Bengal. It is obviously none other than Danujamarddana Deva who gradually took control of southern Bengal up to the northern delta, and ultimately became the king of Bengal in the year of AH 820. If Ganesh had dethroned Jalal al-Din, taking the title of Danujamarddana Deva, then such a gradual reduction of coins would probably make no sense. Jalal al-Din's coins should have been available from all the mints until he was deposed.

It is also worth noting that Danujamarddana Deva and Mahendra Deva's coins were minted uninterruptedly from Chatgaon mint since the very beginning of their reign. It would have been very unusual for Raja Ganesh to conquer Chittagong and struck coins immediately after an eventful accession, given the political circumstances. This implies that Danujamarddana Deva might have originated from southern Bengal and already had control over Chittagong or southeast Bengal.

According to the narrative in *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, when Ibrahim Shah reached Bengal with his army as per the request of Sheikh Nur Qutb-ul-Alam, Ganesh asked the sheikh for his pardon and agreed to convert his twelve-year-old son Jadu, installing him on the throne under the title Jalal al-Din Muhammad Shah. As soon as Ibrahim Shah returned to Jaunpur, Ganesh retook the throne and converted his son Jalal al-Din to Hinduism again, following a "purification" ritual as described in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*:

"Rajah Kans, hearing that Sultan Ibrahim had died, displaced Sultan Jalalu-d-din, and himself re-ascended the throne. According to the injunctions of his false creed, the Rajah prepared several gold-figures of cows, shoved in Jalalu-d-din through their mouths, and pulled him out from their buttock-sides, and then distributed the gold of those cow-figures among the Brahmans, and thus re-perverted his son to his own creed." (Salim 1902, 116)

Table A. Known specimens struck from different mints during this period (AH 770-837)

Ruler	Muazzamabad	Satgaon	Sonargaon	Chatgaon	Firuzabad	Jannatabad	Gunjaniya
A'zam Shah (rebel period)	770, 781, 790	790, 791			790	790	
A'zam Shah (2 nd reign)	793	795-799, 801-807		801	793-813		
Hamza	814, 815	813, 814			813, 814		
Bayazid	815, 817	815-817			814-817		
Firuz bin Bayazid	817	817			817		
Jalal al-Din (1 st reign)	818	818			818, 819	818-820	818
Danujamarddana Deva*		1339	1339, 1340	1339, 1340	1339, 1340		
Mahendra Deva*				1340	1340		
Jalal al-Din (2 nd reign)	821-824	822-823		822-823, 827, 832, 836-837	821-829, 831, 834-835		

* Saka era dates

NB. Both A'zam Shah and Jalal al-Din introduced a few other mints, but these are considered irrelevant to this context.

As soon as Ibrahim Shah returned to Jaunpur, Ganesh retook the throne and converted his son Jalal al-Din to Hinduism again, following a “purification” ritual as described in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*:

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This means that Jalal al-Din was a child and a puppet of Raja Ganesh. The *Riyaz-us-Salatin* also accused Jalal al-Din of revolting against his father and killing him (Salim 1902: 117). It appears unusual that the child, who was merely a puppet of Raja Ganesh, suddenly turned into a strong contender to revolt against his father, who had been playing the role of ultimate authority during the previous 6-7 years. It is also questionable, why Jalal al-Din would allow his younger brother Mahendra Deva to sit on the throne if he managed to kill Danujamarddana Deva.

So it appears that Dani’s opinion regarding the identification of Danujamarddana Deva and Mahendra Deva has merit. He also referred to a passage from an old manuscript called the *Deva Vamsher Itivritta* (The History of Deva Dynasty). The manuscript supplies some tantalising clues: (1) Two rulers, Devendra (identified as Danujamarddana by Dani) and his son Mahendra, were the descendants of the Deva dynasty of southeast Bengal, (2) Both of them were disciples of Chandi and adopted the title “devoted to the feet of Chandi”, and (3) They defeated the Yavana (usurpers) and destroyed the dynasty of Kans (Ganesh) and established Deva authority in Pandunagar. The source of this information does not appear very reliable as it is said to have been inspired by various unauthentic folktales and modern fabricated stories. Sukhomoy Mukherjee (2000) treated this information as garbage, manufactured after the discovery of the coins of Danujamarddana and Mahendra Deva. But it is worth considering that all three clues match with the features of Danujamarddana and Mahendra Deva’s coins.

Conflict with traditional accounts

Unfortunately, there is a lack of written history covering the Bengal Sultanate during this period. Most of the records were written by Mughal or even later historians, and there is a reasonable amount of contradiction among traditional accounts. The most contemporary sources are probably the narratives of Arab chroniclers. According to them, the son of Raja Ganesh revolted against the usurper, converted to Islam under the adopted name Muhammad Jalal al-Din, and then himself ascended the throne as sultan of Bengal (Eaton 1993: 52).

The *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, composed by Nizam al-Din Ahmad in AH 1001/ 1593 CE, stated that:

“When Sultan Shams al-Din died, a zamindar named Kans acquired domination over the country of Bengal... After the death of Kans, his son out of the desire for kingship turned Muslim, took the title of Sultan Jalal al-Din.”

It is notable that Nizam al-Din Ahmad did not confirm Ganesh’s kingship, but said the desire of kingship was the reason for Jalal al-Din’s conversion.

According to the *Ain-i-Akbari*, written by Abul Fazl during Akbar’s reign of AH 963-1014/ 1556-1605 CE:

“A native of Bengal named Kans fraudulently disposed of Shams al-Din, who was Ghiyas al-din’s grandson. When he (Kans) died, his son embraced Islam and took the name of Sultan Jalal al-Din.”

But numismatic evidence seems to contradict this statement.

The *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, written in about 1612 by Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah, mentioned that:

“When Sultan-us-Salatin (*Hamza Shah*) died, his nobles placed his son on the throne, giving him the title of Shams al-Din. He was of poor intellect, owing to his tender age; a Hindu named Kans, who was one of the nobles of this dynasty, attained to great power and pre-dominance during his reign and became the de facto master of the treasury and the kingdom. When in the year of 787 [perhaps referring to 817] he died, Kans uplifting the standard of Kingship, seized the throne. He reigned for 3 years and some months.”

Interestingly, all the chronicles specifically mention a ruler named *Shams al-Din* who was apparently the son of Hamza Shah. Shams al-Din’s name is also mentioned in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, but no coin has so far been found in his name. A few historians have attempted to recognize Shihab al-Din Bayazid Shah as Shams al-Din, but it is obvious that Bayazid Shah did not have royal ancestry. I earlier published an article about a new ruler named Nasir al-Din Muhammad Shah, and tentatively proposed him to be Shams al-Din (Nasir, Rhodes and Goenka 2010). But the lack of date and patronymic information on his coins means that this has remained conjecture.

The chronicles mentioned above were all composed at least 150-200 years after the period in question. Due to the inaccurate information and contradictions within them, it is difficult to confirm their accuracy. The most detailed description of that period was supplied by the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* and by the unknown manuscript translated by Hamilton, which narrated almost similar things, apparently having obtained them from the same source. Most modern historians, such as Abdul Karim and Shukhomoy Mukhopadhyay, accept the information given by the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*. Bhattashali’s identification of Danujamarddana as Raja Ganesh was also mainly inspired by the information given in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*. But it is dangerous to rely so much on a chronicle which was written 370 years after the event and without mentioning any concrete source of information. The information which is given in all these chronicles noticeably varies, especially in explaining Raja Ganesh’s approach towards the Muslim population. *Firishta* explained him as a moderate Hindu having good ties with Muslims, whereas the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* described him as a tyrant who oppressed and killed Muslims. According to the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, soon after Ganesh seized the power in Pandua, he oppressed the Muslims of Bengal and slew a number of them. Thereupon, Sheikh Nur Qutb-ul-Alam wrote a letter to the Jaunpur sultan, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi, to invade Bengal and overthrow Raja Ganesh. The statement of *Firishta* contradicts this and stated that “although the Raja was not a Muslim, he mixed freely with them and had so much love for them that some Muslims, witnessing to his faith in Islam, wanted to bury him on his death in the Islamic manner”. The story of the death of Sultan Ibrahim, as stated by the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, cannot be true as well. Numismatic evidence shows that Ibrahim Shah ruled up to AH 844 (Goron and Goenka 2001: 344-345).

Evidence from contemporary letters

Another important source that supplies information about this period is the series of letters exchanged between contemporary holy men. As mentioned earlier, Nur Qutb Alam wrote a letter to Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur and asked for him to invade Bengal. Another group of personal letters written by Jahangir Simnani, a saint in Jaunpur, to different recipients, including Ibrahim Shah, has been published by Ahmed Hasan Askari. These letters show some hints regarding Raja Ganesh’s oppression of Muslim holy men and his conflict with them. Another letter of Nur Qutb Alam to an unknown recipient has been found, where the sheikh expressed his disappointment because of the power and dominance of an infidel (Raja Ganesh), whom he called a ‘400 years zamindar’, though he did not mention any oppression of Muslims. He wrote:

“How exalted is God, He has bestowed, without apparent reason, the robe of faith on the lad of an infidel and installed him on the throne of the kingdom over his friends.”

This clearly indicates that the letter was written after the initial accession of Jalal al-Din and shows the sheikh’s disappointment even after Jalal al-Din had become a Muslim. It seems that the reason for the sheikh’s unhappiness might not be oppression but a conflict of religious interest, which is usual in the context of medieval Bengal. Richard Eaton explained it appropriately:

“Tensions between the Indo-Turkish ruling class and Hindu Bengali society surfaced toward the end of the fourteenth century, when Sufis of the Chishti and Firdausi orders, who vehemently championed a reformed and purified Islam, insisted that the state’s foreign and Islamic identity not be diluted by admitting Bengalis into the ruling class.” (Eaton 1993: 50)

Though Raja Ganesh maintained a good alliance with the Muslim elite, his relation with Sufis and sheikhs might have deteriorated due to the antagonism and continuous obstacles by Nur Qutb Alam. This may have intensified when the sheikh invited Ibrahim Shah to invade Bengal. If Raja Ganesh had so much animosity towards the Muslim community, it would not have been possible for him to become the *de facto* master for 7-8 years by excluding Turkish influence in politics.

According to the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Nur Qutb Alam was still alive when Raja Ganesh ascended the throne for the second time, ousting his son Jalal al-Din. The exact date of the sheikh’s death was rightly identified by Beveridge (1892) as 7th Zil Qadd AH 818, which is the 11th month of the year. As we know from numismatic evidence, Jalal al-Din’s first reign started on or before Safar AH 818 (2nd month) and extended up to AH 820, so the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*’s statement regarding the death of Nur Qutb Alam cannot be true. But it is obvious that all this correspondence must have taken place during the lifetime of Nur Qutb Alam, and before the accession of Danujamardana Deva in AH 820. Hence, taking the contents of these letters into consideration, identifying Danujamardana with Raja Ganesh is not feasible. The *Riyaz-us-Salati* also stated that Ganesh killed Sheikh Anwar, the son of Nur Qutb Alam and exiled Sheikh Zahid to Sonargoan. We cannot verify the authenticity of these events or whether the same was done by “Danujamardana Deva” instead of Raja Ganesh, provided both were different people.

Conclusion

There are two different schools of thought regarding the identification of Danujamardana Deva. According to the first, which was introduced by Bhattashali and later accepted by some other historians, Danujamardana and Raja Ganesh were the same person. This proposition is mainly driven by the information received from the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, Hamilton and other literary sources, and from the correspondence of contemporary saints backed by numismatic evidence. The second school identifies Danujamardana as a ruler of southern Bengal, backed by different understandings and contradictions among the literary sources. Due to the absence of authentic information, it is important to put the emphasis on primary evidence such as numismatic and epigraphic records. But these need to be read properly, otherwise they may lead to a wrong interpretation.

This paper has attempted to shed some light on an obscure period of Bengal Sultanate history on the basis of updated numismatic evidence, and has also discussed the inconsistencies and contradictions in contemporary and modern histories. It does not offer any new proposition, but rather supports the second school of thought, proposed by R.D. Banerjee, Ahmed Hasan Dani, Syed Ejaz Hussain, and Richard Eaton, in the light of latest numismatic discoveries, that Danujamardana Deva was a local ruler of southern Bengal. We may have to wait for more concrete evidence to turn up before coming to a widely acceptable conclusion.

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Sources of images

BA	Bombay Auctions
BNM	Bangladesh National Museum
CNG	Classical Numismatic Group, LLC
GG	Goron and Goenka
IA	Iftexhar Alam
KS	Karan Singh collection
NKB	Nalini Kanta Bhattasali
NN	Noman Nasir
PS	Paul Stevens
SG	Stan Goron
TA	Todywalla Auctions
ZM	Zahid Mamun

A tribute to Stan

I was first introduced to Stan Goron in 1995-1996 via email. It was not very easy to communicate with numismatic enthusiasts and experts then as there was no social media. A Yahoo! group was active and I came to know about him from that group. I emailed him to share an unpublished Bengal Sultanate coin and his immediate response was so overwhelming to me. Since then we have exchanged a lot of emails and discussed many things about the attribution of sultanate coins. Being a young lad with a keen interest in this series, I would badger him quite often and he responded to all my queries so nicely. I have always found him a humorous and helpful person, but unfortunately, we have never met in person. I wish him a healthy and prosperous life, and I hope to meet him soon.

Noman Nasir

FIRST SURI RUPEE OF MUHAMMAD SHAH GHAZI WITH A NAGARI LEGEND

Karan Singh

When the Suri dynasty was supplanted by the returning Mughals in AH 962-964 (1554-1557 CE) as the rulers of northern India, the transition was not as clear-cut as when Sher Shah Suri had evicted Humayun 15 years previously. This time the change in power was marked by multiple kings, each staking his hold over a part of northern India. On the Afghan side, there was the incumbent sultan Muhammad Adil Shah and his rebel clansmen Ahmad Khan Sur (Sikandar Shah), who declared himself ruler of the Punjab and Lahore; Ibrahim Khan Sur (Ibrahim Shah), who raised the banner of revolt in Agra; and Muhammad Khan Sur (Shams al-din Muhammad Shah Ghazi), the governor of Bengal; while the Mughals – under Humayun, followed by his son Akbar – regained control of the Punjab, Delhi and Agra.

With no less than five kings jostling for paramountcy in AH 962, we see a multitude of coins issued by them (Goron and Goenka 2001: 127-134) to declare their sovereignty and to help pay their armies. Most of these coins follow the new Suri standard of rupee – 11.2-11.6 g of silver – established by Sher Shah in AH 945 (idem: 91). Even Humayun had to ditch the earlier Mughal standard of *shahrukhi* (4.7 g)/ *tanka* (10.8 g) in favour of the rupee that was now accepted across northern India.

In this paper I will present a new type of rupee that has not been recorded so far, issued by Muhammad Shah Ghazi, the Bengal claimant to the Suri throne. I will first present the coin type and then discuss its historical context.

The two specimens known of this type (Figs. 1-2) differ slightly, with a minor variation in the arrangement of the Arabic legend. The Nagari legend *Si Mahamada Saha Gaji* (Fig. 3) is the same on both, as is the date, AH 962.

Variety A



Fig. 1. New rupee of Muhammad Shah Ghazi, Variety A (KS)

Weight: 11.51 g

Obverse:

In centre: Arabic legend *Shah Ghazi/ Muhammad Sultan/ khallada allah malkahu*; Nagari legend along lower border *Si Mahamada Saha Gaji*

In the margin:

Top: *shams al-dunya*

Right: *wa'l din*

Left: *abu'l muzaffar*

Bottom: Mint name?

Reverse: Shahada and the four caliphs; date 962

Variety B



Fig. 2. New rupee of Muhammad Shah Ghazi, Variety B (TA)

Weight: 11.32 g

Obverse: Arabic legend *Sultan Ghazi/ Shah Muhammad/ khallada allah malkahu*; Nagari legend along lower border *(Si) Mahamada Saha Ga(ji)*

Reverse: Shahada and the four caliphs; date 962



Fig. 3. Nagari legend *Si Mahamada Saha Gaji* on Varieties A and B

The importance of this new type is that it carries a Nagari legend, *Si Mahamada Saha Gaji* (Fig. 3), the first time that Muhammad Shah Ghazi issued a coin with his name in Nagari.

There is possibly a mint name on the bottom margin of the obverse (see Fig. 1), but it remains unreadable.

Coinage of Muhammad Shah Ghazi

Till now, three types have been known for Muhammad Shah Ghazi (Figs. 4-6). These are all dated AH 962 with the mint name *Arkaan*. This mint name has been a puzzle and its correct reading and meaning is still somewhat speculative. The Arakan region had its own king at this time and was not ruled by the Bengal sultans. According to Stan Goron (private communication), *Arkaan* means 'pillars' apparently, and it has been suggested that this could represent the 'Royal Gateway'.



Fig. 4. Muhammad Shah Ghazi rupee, Arkaan mint, AH 962 (G&G B960) (DNW)



Fig. 5. Muhammad Shah Ghazi rupee, Arkaan mint, AH 962 (G&G B961) (KS)



Fig. 6. Muhammad Shah Ghazi rupee, Arkaan mint, AH 962 (G&G B962) (DNW)

These three known types do not carry any Nagari legend. So why did Muhammad Shah Ghazi then issue our new type with his name in Nagari? To answer this question, we will have to examine the events that followed his crowning himself as sultan.

The Battle of Chapar Ghata

In AH 962 Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah was busy battling revolts from his two cousins, Sikandar and Ibrahim. Muhammad Shah Ghazi, who was then the governor of Bengal with his capital at Gaur, decided to use the opportunity to carve out an independent kingdom amid the chaos (Badauni 1898: 552). He issued coins in his own name from *Arkaan* mint (Figs. 4-6), but unlike all the Bengal governors in the preceding three centuries who had declared themselves independent (Goron and Goenka 2001: 135-140), Muhammad Shah Ghazi decided that with enough finances (Goron and Goenka 2001: 141) and a powerful army, the moment was ripe for him to take over the rest of northern India too. So he marched his army out from Bengal, across Bihar, and into present-day Uttar Pradesh. According to Badauni (1898: 552), the Bengal army was “like the ants and locusts for multitude”. Muhammad Shah Ghazi captured Jaunpur and then headed towards Kalpi and Agra.

The news of this massive army from the east unnerved Adil who urgently recalled his general, Hemchandra (Hemu), who was besieging Ibrahim at Bayana fort near Agra. “At all costs come to me at once as I am confronted by a powerful enemy,” Adil wrote in

desperation from Chunar (Badauni 1898: 552). Hemu ended his siege of Bayana and marched towards Kalpi. There he found Adil’s smaller force facing the Bengal army on the other side of the river Jamuna, near a village called Chapar Ghata, around 30 km downstream from Kalpi.¹

Badauni describes the battle that ensued in December 1555:

“*Gauria* [Muhammad Shah Ghazi], confidently relying upon his superior forces to overcome the forces of *Adli* [Muhammad Adil Shah], had drawn up his cavalry and infantry and elephants to a number surpassing all computation...*Himun* [Hemu] swept down upon him like a comet...after crossing the river *Jamna*, ...taking them unawares as does the army of Sleep, and making a night-assault gave no one time so much as to lift his hand.” (Badauni 1898: 555)

Hemu’s surprise attack at night, fording the river under the cover of darkness, was an audacious plan that worked, with a complete rout of the much-larger Bengal army:

“*They were in such utter confusion that no man knew his head from his heels nor his turban from his shoes. The greater part of his* [Muhammad Shah Ghazi’s] *Amirs were slain, while the remnant who escaped chastisement took to flight*” (Badauni 1898: 555)

Of Muhammad Shah Ghazi himself there is no record of his capture or death:

“*The wretched Gauria was so effectually concealed that up to the present not a trace of him has been found, and all that retinue and paraphernalia of royalty and grandeur...became in a moment the portion of the enemy.*” (Badauni 1898: 555)

Muhammad Shah Ghazi was probably killed in the melee or drowned in the river as he attempted to escape.² Nevertheless, his failure should not take away from the sweep of his ambition. He had succeeded in reaching deep into Adil’s empire, marching from Gaur in the east to within a few hundred kilometres of Gwalior and Agra, key strongholds of Suri power (see Fig. 7).

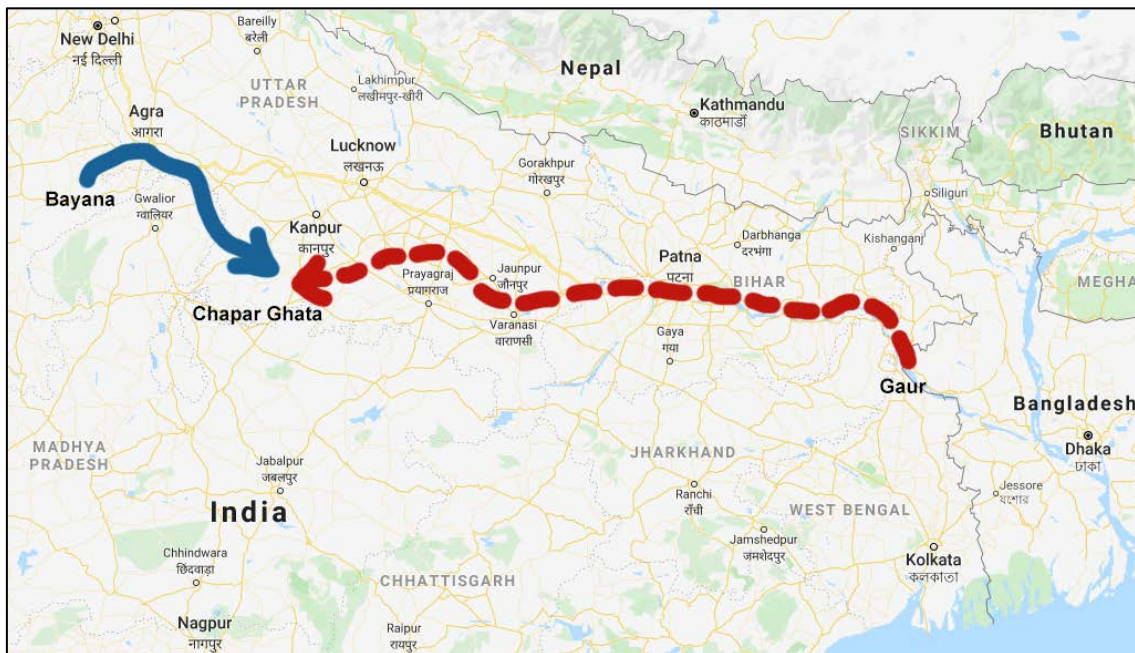


Fig. 7. Map of present-day north India, showing the routes of Hemu (in blue) and Muhammad Shah Ghazi (in red) till the Battle of Chapar Ghata (based on Google Maps)

Role of new rupee

The new type with Nagari legend was probably issued by Muhammad Shah Ghazi during his military campaign. The Suri rupees that circulated in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh all carried the ruler's name in Nagari, unlike the rupees current in Bengal.

The rupees of Sikandar (Lahore and Agra) and Ibrahim (Agra and Banaras) also did not carry any Nagari legends, so it is possible that Nagari legends were largely associated with eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The three main Suri sultans – Sher Shah, Islam Shah and Adil – all put their names in Nagari on their silver coins; while they ruled northern India, their roots and core imperial territories remained Bihar.

So when Muhammad Shah Ghazi needed to pay his troops on the long march from Bengal, he would have had to issue coins in the local type that was accepted in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh, i.e. with a Nagari legend. For comparison, see Fig. 8 for a rupee that Adil issued at Gwalior the following year, AH 963, with Nagari legend *Sri Mahamada Sahi* on obverse.



Fig. 8. Muhammad Adil Shah rupee, Gwalior mint, AH 963 (G&G D1097) (KS)



Fig. 9. Nagari legend *Sri Mahamada Sahi* (from Fig. 8)

It was customary for rulers at the time to take a camp-mint on their military campaigns to convert bullion into coins to pay soldiers (Goron and Goenka 2001: 91). Muhammad Shah Ghazi's camp-mint could therefore have created new dies, incorporating a Nagari legend in accordance with local numismatic tradition. The fact that at least two different dies were made (Figs. 1-2) indicates that the resulting mintage was not small.

Conclusion

Our new rupee is therefore a historical marker of an ambitious military campaign by a Suri contender that ended in disaster. The power struggle did not end here though. Hemu went on to defeat all the opponents of Adil, including the Mughals at Delhi, before meeting that fatal arrow at Panipat on November 5, 1556.³ Adil, now without his brilliant commander-in-chief, soon found fate catching up with him.

Khizr Khan, the son of Muhammad Shah Ghazi, succeeded his father as ruler of Bengal (Badauni 1898: 556). Taking the name Giyath al-Din Bahadur Shah, he issued the first Bengal rupees with a Nagari legend – *Sri Bahadur Sah* (Fig. 10) – in the style of his father's newly-discovered rupee. Bahadur then met Adil in battle in AH 964,⁴ and avenged his father's death by defeating and killing Adil. This brought the Suri empire to an end and removed the last main Afghan obstacle to the Mughal control of northern India. Bengal, Malwa and Gujarat remained to be conquered by Akbar, but these were regional kingdoms rather than a pan-north Indian entity like the Suri empire.



Fig. 10. Bahadur Shah rupee, Satgaon mint, AH 964 (G&G B966) (KS)



Fig. 11. Nagari legend *Sri Bahadur Sah* (from Fig. 10)

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Stan Goron and Arvind Chandra for reading the Arabic legends and for their helpful comments on this new type.

Sources of images

DNW Dix Noonan Webb
KS Karan Singh collection
TA Todywalla Auctions

References

1. Chapar Ghata is the present-day name of the village. It lies on an old crossing of the Sengar river, a tributary of the Jamuna. The village was called *Chhappar Khatta* by Badauni (1898: 555), who said it was 15 *kos* (45 km) from Kalpi. It is possible this was the crossing used by Hemu to take his army across the river at night.
2. Niamat Ullah wrote: "Mohammad Khan, on his defeat drowned himself in Jamuna river out of shame" (Suri 1968: 29).
3. The Second Battle of Panipat was won by the Mughals under Akbar when Hemu was struck in the head by a stray arrow (Fazl 1903, I: 64). Believing their commander to be dead, Hemu's army fled the battle and he was captured. He was eventually decapitated by Bairam Khan (Fazl 1903, I: 66).
4. Badauni (1898: 556) says this battle took place in AH 962, but the chronogram *Gauria bikusht* he refers to equals AH 963. Thomas (1871: 416) gives AH 964 as the date of Adil's defeat and death.

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I first met Stan in September 2012 at an ONS event, where he introduced himself simply as 'Stan'. It was only later that I realised that he was in fact Stan Goron. It is a pleasure to know him and his wife Helen. I have enjoyed discussing medieval Islamic coins with Stan, as well as developments in the field of oriental coins and on the cricket field! He has always been a patient reservoir of knowledge, with a dry sense of humour that is unique.

Karan Singh

NEW DISCOVERIES IN THE NIZAMSHAHI AND ADILSHAHI COINAGES OF THE DECCAN

Shailendra Bhandare

The rule of Muhammad bin Tughlaq (1325-1352) was marked by secessionist tendencies amongst his governors and nobles, and the vast empire he controlled as the sultan of Delhi began to fragment. The northern part of peninsular India, comprising present-day Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, came under the sway of 'Alauddin Bahman Shah, who founded the Bahmani Sultanate in 1347. After nearly a hundred and seventy years, the edifice of this sultanate also crumbled, giving way to five Deccani sultanates, namely the Nizamshahis of Ahmadnagar, the Adilshahis of Bijapur, the Qutbshahis of Golkonda (Hyderabad), the Baridshahis of Bidar and the 'Imadshahis of Gawilgarh (Berar). The former three quickly subsumed the latter two, and for much of the latter half of the 16th century to late 17th century the power centres that emerged at Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkonda (Hyderabad) dominated the politics of the Deccan. A concerted action by the Deccani sultanates in 1565 resulted in the defeat of the Vijayanagar empire. However, towards the end of the 16th century, factional fights within the court of Ahmadnagar resulted in a Mughal intervention. For the next four decades the affairs of the sultanate were run from Daulatabad and the newly established city of Fatehnagar by the able Abyssinian minister Malik Ambar. With his death in 1626, the Mughals were able to renew their campaigns and finally annexed the sultanate after a protracted war in 1636. In the following years they sought an alliance with Bijapur and continued to threaten the Qutbshahis of Golkonda. Inept rulers and constant factionalism marred the final decades of Bijapur and Golkonda. Ultimately, both Bijapur and Hyderabad fell to the Mughals in 1686.

The rulers of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, and Golkonda were all followers of the Shi'i school of Islam. In fact, this proved to be their nemesis, as Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, an ardent Sunni, had these kingdoms in his sights ever since his father Shah Jahan had appointed him as the governor of the Deccan. At the height of their power, both Ahmadnagar and Bijapur witnessed considerable migration of Shi'i Muslims from Iran, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Central Asia. This created a rift in regional politics between 'local' and 'foreign' Muslims, and the rivalry dominated Deccani politics for a long time. However, an interesting syncretic culture also evolved under the patronage of some of the sultans, like Murtaza Nizam Shah and Ibrahim Adil Shah. Many impressive architectural monuments testify to the wealth and prosperity achieved by the elites under these sultanates. A distinct 'Deccani' style of miniature painting also emerged through the royal patronage extended to artists. Ethnically, the Deccani sultans were very different: the founders of the Nizamshahi and 'Imadshahi Sultanates were Deccani Hindu converts to Islam, whereas the founders of the other three sultanates were emigres from Iran and Georgia. However, their shared Shi'i faith meant that there were matrimonial alliances.

Nizamshahi and Adilshahi coinage: introductory insights

For a long time, it was assumed that the Nizamshahi Sultanate produced a coinage that was largely monometallic. But in 1991, a single gold coin attributed to Murtaza Nizam Shah was offered at a numismatic auction (the same now rests in the collection of the American Numismatic Society, see below), and in the late 1990s a number of Nizamshahi gold coins struck at the mint of Burhanabad appeared on the market. These finds made it clear that the coinage issued by the Nizamshahis consisted, in fact, of both gold and copper. The principal mint under the Nizamshahis was Ahmadnagar, their capital, which was also sometimes known as 'Murtazanagar' or 'Burhanabad', depending on the reigning

sultan's name. In addition, the coastal town of Chaul, alias 'Murtazabad', also operated a mint for small copper coins. After the fall of Ahmadnagar to the Mughals in the early 17th century, the capital was moved to Daulatabad. The fortress of Parenda to the southeast of Ahmadnagar also became a secondary capital, particularly to keep the Adilshahi strongholds located further in the same direction under close watch. Coins were struck at both these places.

The Adilshahi Sultanate operated a largely bimetallic coinage of gold and copper in its Deccan plateau territories. Silver coins shaped like a hairpin were also struck in the coastal region of Konkan, which was exposed to the seaborne trade across the Arabian Sea to the Persian Gulf. The *larins*, as these coins were known, were first struck by the Safavids in the province of Lar in Iran, and spread across the entire Arabian Sea trading system because of their popularity as reliable silver coins, accepted all along its rim. Unlike Nizamshahi coins, the gold and copper Adilshahi coins do not bear mint names, but the silver *larins* were struck at the principal port city of Dabhol (Dabul) and it appears on the coins as an adjective (*Dabuli*) of the coin name *larin*.

The inscriptions on both Adilshahi and Nizamshahi coinage are simple – barring one exception, the couplet of Muhammad Adil Shah that equates him to the Prophet! – and affirm the Shi'i faith of the sultans. The coin inscriptions make use of the *Naskhi* style of script. In some instances, the legends are inscribed in decorative, or *Tughra* forms. The coin designs of the Nizamshahis show a distinct imprint of contemporary coinage in Iran.

Goron and Goenka (hereinafter G&G) produced a comprehensive listing of Adilshahi and Nizamshahi coins in their seminal catalogue. However, the subject of Indian numismatics is constantly evolving with new data reported every year. In the following pages, I will publish new data that was missing in the book – what could be a more fitting tribute to Stan's erudition, than to add to the wealth of knowledge that he helped to create?

1. Nizamshahi sultans

Silver coinage

By far the most significant discovery to report in the numismatics of the Deccani sultans is the silver coinage of the Nizamshahi rulers. Not a single coin of this category was recorded in G&G, but with the appearance of a small number of these coins, we can confidently say that Nizamshahi coinage was, in fact, issued in all three metals.

A. Murtaza Nizam Shah I

Two very different sorts of silver coins have come to light, one of which is an issue of Murtaza Nizam Shah I (1565-1588), the first sultan to issue an independent coinage in his own name. Five coins are illustrated below (Figs. 1-3).



Fig. 1. Three coins of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, documented in trade, weighing approximately 4 g, 2 g, and 1 g respectively

Typologically, they all belong to the same type, which might be described as:

Obverse: Arabic legend

ضرب نگر مرتضى ضامن الحظ بها الله

Zarb Nagar Murtazi Zāmin al-Hazz Bahā-Allah

The date 992 is written in figures and words, following the words *Fi Shuhur Sanah* in the lower register, the *ye* of *Fi* forming the divider. This feature is not fully visible on any coins seen so far, but it can be easily restored, particularly in comparison with the gold *hoan* or pagoda struck in the name of Murtaza I (G&G N1), which shares it in exact details.

Reverse: the Shi'i version of *Shahada* with 'Ali Wali Allah added to the normal *La Ilah Ilallah Muhammad Rasool Allah*.



Fig. 2. Silver coin of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, 2.09 g, Todywalla Auctions, Auction 70, Lot 528



Fig. 3. Silver coin of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, 1.09 g, Oswal Antiques, Auction 52, Lot 40

The legend *Zāmin al-Hazz Bahā-Allah* is noted for the first time as a coin legend. With a little emendation (adding an *izafat* between *Hazz* and *Bahā*: *al-Hazz-i Bahā-Allah*), it translates as 'the surety of the delights of the glory of Allah'. This evidently refers to Murtaza, the sultan. The origins of this inscription are not certain, but it is certain that it is not Quranic.

The coins are ostensibly of two or even three denominations; however, the weights of all coins that have surfaced have not been recorded, so it is difficult to say what weight standard they follow, or indeed, if they are smaller fractions of a larger silver denomination like a *tanka*. The coin in Fig. 2 is ex-mount and weighs 2.09 g, while the coin in Fig. 3 weighs 1.09 g, so one would presume that the latter is a half fraction of the former.

B. Burhan Nizam Shah II

The second type of Nizamshahi silver coins is very different from the coins of Murtaza I described above. So far, only two pieces of this type have come to light (Figs. 4-5).



Fig. 4. Silver coin of Burhan Nizam Shah II, 6.93 g, Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 11, Lot 196



Fig. 5. Silver coin of Burhan Nizam Shah II, 6.85 g, Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 14, Lot 162

On the obverse, these coins carry the mint name *Zarb Burhānābād* inscribed within a circle. The marginal inscription is truncated, but my best guess at restoring it is:

برهان نظام؟ شاه خادم اهل بيت رسول الله ابو الغازی
Burhān Nizām? Shāh Khādīm Ahl Bait Rasool Allah
Abu al-Ghāzi

The presence of the word *Nizam* is doubted, but with requisite *izafats* added, the epithet of Burhan Shah (*Khadim-i Ahl-i Bait-i Rasool Allah*) would translate as 'the servant of the members of the family of the Messenger of Allah', which is a clear indication of his Shi'i faith. The inscription *Khādīm Ahl Bait Rasool Allah Abu al-Ghazi Nizam Shah* is encountered on the famous 'Malik-i Maidan' cannon which is now in Bijapur (Fig. 6), but originally was stationed at Parendā, one of the secondary Nizamshahi capitals.



Fig. 6. Inscription illustrated here from *Bijapur Inscriptions – Memoir of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 49*, by Muhammad Nazim, 1936, reprinted in 1999. I am grateful to Amol Bankar for his assistance in procuring this image

The cannon was cast for the first Nizamshahi ruler, Ahmad Shah, by a master foreman named Muhammad ibn Hasan, who was a *Rūmi*, i.e. a native of Constantinople or present-day Istanbul in Turkey. It was taken to Bijapur as a war trophy after the ultimate demise of the Nizamshahi Sultanate at the hands of a Mughal-Adilshahi alliance. The occurrence of this inscription on a significant piece of military equipment belonging to the Nizamshahi Sultanate shows that it was already a part of the epigraphic repertoire of the kingdom.

The mint name 'Burhanabad' is known from a number of anonymous copper coins (G&G N16-N26) struck in the reign of Burhan Nizam Shah II (1591-1595), so conceivably these two silver coins can be attributed to the same ruler. The location of 'Burhanabad' is not certain yet, but it was either a new name for the city of Ahmadnagar (naming cities after the reigning sultan was a common practice), or an extension to the old city, incorporating the township of Bhangar, that was renamed as such.

On the reverse, these coins have the Shi'i version of the *Shahada* placed inside a *mihrab*-shaped cartouche. The margins were occupied most likely by the names of the Shi'i imams, as remnants of *Hussain/ Hassan* and *Muhammad* visible on one of the coins attest.



Fig. 7. Silver coin of Burhan Nizam Shah II, 1.82 g, Oswal Antiques, Auction 40, Lot 79

A fraction of the same type has also come to light (Fig. 7). It has exactly the same obverse and reverse devices as described above, though these are not fully visible because of the fractional nature of the coin.

New (and re-attributed) gold coins of the Nizamshahi sultans

The gold coins of the Nizamshahis were virtually unknown until a solitary specimen was offered at the Spink-Taisei 'Skanda' auction in 1991 (G&G N1). The same piece is now in the collection of the American Numismatic Society, New York (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Gold coin of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, 2.89 g

In 2013, one more coin of the same type was offered in an Indian auction (Fig. 9). The legend on the obverse of this type begins with *Murtaza*, but the rest is yet to be read satisfactorily.



Fig. 9. Gold coin of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, 2.9 g, Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 14, Lot 161

The type resembles the silver coins of Murtaza I published above, in having the date in figures and words inscribed in the lower register of the obverse and the Shi'i version of the *Shahada* on reverse. As the date here is AH 993, it is evident that the gold coins were struck in the year following the silver coins.



Fig. 10. Gold coin of Murtaza Nizam Shah I

A third gold coin of the same type is illustrated here (Fig. 10), from a private collection in Mumbai (with gratitude to the collector, who wishes to remain anonymous). Ostensibly, it is struck with a different pair of dies from the two previously known specimens.

A. New variety of *hoan* of Burhan Nizam Shah II

Subsequent to the offer of the gold coin of Murtaza I, a very large hoard of gold coins (*hoans*/ pagodas) bearing the mint name 'Burhanabad' appeared on the market in India. These coins had been previously unknown. They have, like all other coins we have discussed so far, the Shi'i version of the *Shahada* on reverse. On the obverse, the mint name appears in a scalloped circle. Many coins show traces of a legend around this cartouche, but as G&G have

admittedly remarked, it has been impossible to restore it, even though now many coins of this type have come to light.



Fig. 11. Gold hoan of Burhan Nizam Shah II, 3.42 g Todywalla Auction 112, Lot 72

Much rarer than the coins with the scalloped cartouche on obverse, are a few that have the mint name in a circular cartouche. This variety is not listed in G&G, so it would be worthwhile publishing here (Fig. 11). Also illustrated is a half *hoan* weighing 1.7 gm (Fig. 12) – the whereabouts of this coin are not known now, but it was documented in trade almost a decade ago.



Fig. 12. Half hoan of Burhan Nizam Shah II, 1.7 g

At a cursory glance these gold coins are very similar to the two silver coins published above. Although the marginal inscriptions on the obverse are not fully visible, I believe they are the same – *Burhān Nizām? Shāh Khādīm Ahl Bait Rasool Allah Abu al-Ghāzi*.

The inscription on the reverse of the coins is the Shi'i version of the *Shahada*, enclosed in a *mihrab*-shaped cartouche, much like the silver coins. The only difference here is that on the gold coins there is a clear date 1001 at 6 o'clock. This is adjudged to be an AH date and corresponds to 1592-1593 CE, thus falling in the reign of Burhan Nizam Shah II.

Judging by the mint name 'Burhanabad' and listing the date as AH 1001, G&G attributed the gold coins with the scalloped cartouche to Burhan Nizam Shah II (G&G N10). However, it must be noted that, so far, no coin of the 'scalloped cartouche' type coins are known to bear a clear date. The date appears to a feature only on the 'circular cartouche' type coins, which are unlisted in G&G. Perhaps, G&G assumed the date to be inscribed in words in the margins and concluded it to be 1001 with a comparison to the copper coins which have the same date. But the data published here suggests that the marginal inscription on the obverse of the 'scalloped cartouche' type coins is much more likely to be the name of the issuing sultan with the *Khādīm Ahl Bait Rasool Allah Abu al-Ghāzi* titles appended to it.

B. Gold hoans of Ibrahim Nizam Shah

Here it is worthwhile to note that all coins of the 'scalloped cartouche' type need not be taken as issues of Burhan Nizam Shah II. At least two specimens have come to light, which reveal that the name of the sultan mentioned in the obverse marginal inscription is *Ibrahim* (Figs. 13-14 – I have taken the liberty to show these coins rotated 180° in their orientation so as to make the placement of this word easily discernible).



Fig. 13. Gold hoan of Ibrahim Nizam Shah



Fig. 14. Gold hoan of Ibrahim Nizam Shah

So in all likelihood these are issues of Ibrahim Nizam Shah, who succeeded Burhan Nizam Shah II for a brief interlude in 1595-1596, and was killed in an anti-Adilshahi campaign he launched following troubles and factionalism in his own court. From whatever is visible on these two coins, it can be surmised that the marginal legend surely ends in ...*Rasool Allah Abu al-Ghazi*, but what precedes these words is far from clear. All one can say at this moment is it does not appear to be *Khādīm*, but something a bit more elaborate than that. The legend is inscribed at a different orientation on these coins as well: the name of the Sultan appears between 12 and 2 o'clock and the final title *Abu al-Ghazi* between 7 and 9 o'clock. The rest of the features are quite the same as on other coins of the 'scallop cartouche' type, attributed to Burhan Nizam Shah II.

C. Gold hoan of Burhan Nizam Shah III

The last new Nizamshahi coin worth reporting is a unique *hoan*/pagoda offered in auction in 2017 (Fig. 15). This is a significant coin, because it adds another mint to the Nizamshahi repertoire – Fatehnagar – and it is struck in the name of a sultan (Burhan Nizam Shah III, 1610-1631) who was not known to have issued any other coins apart from copper.



Fig. 15. Gold hoan of Burhan Nizam Shah III, 3.36 g
Oswal Antiques, Auction 66, Lot 111

Obverse: Arabic legend in three lines

برهان نظام شاه خادم رسول الله
Burhan Nizam Shah Khadim Rasool Allah

Reverse: Arabic legend in three lines

في شهر سنه فتح نگر
Fi Shuhoor Sanah Fateh Nagar

There are traces of a date above the word *sanah* and it looks to be 102X. If this is reckoned as the Hijri year it would place the issue of the coin in the decade of 1610-1620 CE. If taken as a Shuhoor era date it would correspond to 1620-1630 CE. Both these decades mark a significant resurgence in the fortunes of what was left of the Nizamshahi Sultanate following the loss of Ahmadnagar to the Mughals in the early 1600s. Malik Ambar, the Abyssinian minister of Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah II, became the de facto regent from 1607 till his death in 1626. Under his command, the sultanate was able to consolidate itself and successfully resist the Mughal ambition to gain a further foothold in the Deccan. Malik Ambar founded a new city by the name of 'Fatehnagar' close to the stronghold of Daulatabad, near a village named Khirki or Khadki. Various theories prevail about this name: some suggest that it was named as such to celebrate a Nizamshahi victory against the Mughals, while another view is that it was named after Fateh Khan, the son of Malik Ambar.

Adilshahi coinage – some new discoveries

The new Adilshahi coins I intend to list here are mainly silver and gold. As stated at the beginning, the silver Adilshahi coinage was limited to the coastal issues of *larins*, hairpin-shaped silver wires which were then stamped with dies. The very nature of the coin meant very little space was provided for the impressions to be legibly visible; however, some pieces have indeed been struck just so that, quite fortuitously, the details numismatists often look for, like a date or a mint name, are visible and legible.

The gold coinage is comprised of Muhammad Adil Shah's *hoans*/pagodas (listed as G&G BJ20) and *fanams* (listed as BJ20A), a *fanam* attributed to Sikandar Adil Shah (BJ41), and a group of gold *hoans* and ½ *hoans* (listed as BJ45-BJ50), known commonly as 'Hudki' pagodas, with a boat-like symbol on them. G&G do not attribute these to particular rulers, but there is room to believe that a feature seen on some of them – an Arabic initial/ part word inscribed on the obverse – probably served as an attributive mark, being the initial or part of the name of the sultan. Thus, coins with 'Ali could be of Ali I, the letter 'Ain of Ali II, and the letter *Seen* of Sikandar.

Most known Adil Shahi *larins* (G&G BJ37) bear the mint name *Dabuli*. Ostensibly the place of issue of these coins was Dabul or Dabhol, a harbour at the mouth of the river Vasishthi in north Konkan. It rose to be the pre-eminent Adilshahi port for trade as well as travel, particularly for Muslims in the Adilshahi territory embarking on the pilgrimage to Mecca in the 17th century. The *larins* are struck in the name of Sultan 'Ali 'Adil Shah and a few dated specimens help us to attribute them to Ali Adil Shah II (1656-1672). G&G list an issue of his predecessor Muhammad Adil Shah (1627-1656) as BJ21, but comment that "no *larins* of this ruler have been seen by the authors but they may exist".

A. Larins of Ibrahim Adil Shah

Larins of Muhammad Adil Shah have not yet come to light, but those struck by his predecessor Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1627) indeed have. Four specimens are illustrated here (Fig. 16-19).



Fig. 16. Silver larin of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, 4.78 g,
Oswal Antiques, Auction 55, Lot 68



Fig. 17. Silver larin of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, 4.8 g,
Classical Numismatic Gallery, Auction 34, Lot 159



Fig. 18. Silver larin of Ibrahim Adil Shah II,
Oswal Antiques, Auction 32, Lot 250

On the obverse of all of these, the legend can be safely restored as:

ابراهيم عادلشاه
Ibrahim 'Adil Shah

All three auction specimens (Figs. 16-18) had been wrongly identified as coins of Ali Adil Shah II by the cataloguers. However, a specimen from a private collection (Fig. 19) is particularly clear with respect to the *do-chashmi* 'H' in the sultan's name, so it leaves little doubt on the reading.



Fig. 19. Silver larin of Ibrahim Adil Shah II, 4.8 g (private collection, Mumbai)

On the reverse, these coins have the legend:

ضرب لاری دابل سنه
Zarb Lari Dabul Sanah

On the coin in Fig. 18, the traces of the date are visible as 'Alf', so it is evident that it has the date written in words, and it corresponds to AH 1000. The interesting variation here is that unlike the issues of Ali Adil Shah II, the mint name here appears in its nominative form and not as *Dabuli*, the adjective form.

B. Larins of 'Ali Sahib'

The fact that *larins* were also produced during the reign of Ibrahim Adil Shah makes us wonder when they were first issued by the Adilshahis. In this respect, I would like to illustrate two unusual *larins* here (Figs. 20-21).



Fig. 20. Silver larin of 'Ali Sahib', 4.8 g

One of them was (Fig. 20) documented in trade while with A.H. Baldwin & Sons (London 2007). The other (Fig. 21) is in the large collection of oriental coins housed in the Wereldmuseum in Rotterdam. Unfortunately, the collection now happens to be in storage with no accession details or weight for the coin.



Fig. 21. Silver larin of 'Ali Sahib'

Both these coins appear to be struck from the same pair of dies. On the obverse the restorable legend is:

بعهد علی صاحب
Ba-'ahd 'Ali Sahib

On the reverse, the only legible word is *Lari*. However, what follows it is probably a mint-name that ends in the adjective form, with a long or majhool letter 'Ye' at its end.

One wonders who this 'Ali Sahib' is whose name appears on the obverse legend. Could it be Ali Adil Shah I (1558-1580), the first Adilshahi sultan to initiate an independent coinage? Although this attribution is not conclusive, it is worth considering.

C. Larin of Ali Adil Shah II, Rajapur mint

In *JONS* 186, Prashant Kulkarni published a silver *larin* of Ali Adil Shah II, struck at Rajapur mint, for the first time ('New Discoveries in Larins of India', *JONS* 186, 2006: 43-47). The same coin later sold in Todywalla Auction 101 (Lot 42) in 2016. This was no doubt an important discovery, as I outlined in a subsequent issue of *JONS* ('The Rajapur mint and coinage in South Konkan in the 17th century to the early 18th century: some observations', *JONS* 188, 2006: 24-27). The legend on the reverse of this coin was

ضرب لاری راجاپوری
Zarb Lari Rajapuri

One more *larin* struck at Rajapur mint was noted in Rajgor's Auction 1 (Lot 39) in 2012. The same is illustrated here (Fig. 22), now in a private collection in Mumbai. Unfortunately, even though the mint name on the coin is clearly readable, it was offered at the auction wrongly attributed as an issue of Dabul mint. The difference between this *larin* and the one published by Kulkarni is just one letter: the final 'Ye' in the mint-attributive word 'Rajapuri' is inscribed on this coin as a long orthographic or *majhool* form, whereas on the coin published earlier it is inscribed in the short form.



Fig. 22. Silver larin of Ali Adil Shah II, Rajapur mint, 4.71 g

D. Silver coin of Sikandar Adil Shah

Sikandar was the last of the Adilshahi sultans (1672-1688) and a minor for much of his reign. Only a gold *fanam* had been listed for precious metal coins struck in his name (G&G BJ41). A silver coin is illustrated here (Fig. 23), weighing 2.3 g. It has a simple design which is comparable to the gold *fanam*: on the obverse only a single word *Sikandari* and on the reverse the AH date, *Sanah 108X*.



Fig. 23. Silver fanam of Sikandar Adil Shah, 2.3 g

The weight of the coin is particularly interesting because it corresponds to 1/5th of a rupee, or a silver *fanam*, commonly called as 'Velli' *fanam*, and in its anglicised form as 'Billy'. This was a denomination that bridged the north and the south Indian currency systems. It is interesting to note that coins in the name of Shivaji, the Maratha king, are also known in this denomination (for example, see <https://www.coinarchives.com/w/openlink.php?l=306265|223|1187|f8f9598f6a0162869a295bfc0e071808>)

E. Gold half *hoan* of Sikandar Adil Shah

Alongside the silver Velli *fanam*, it would also be worthwhile to publish a gold half *hoan* of Sikandar Adil Shah, from a private collection in Mumbai (Fig. 24).



Fig. 24. Gold half *hoan* of Sikandar Adil Shah, 1.77 g

Obverse: Arabic legend

سکندر سلطان شیوا؟

Sikandar Sultan Shiva?

Rev: Arabic legend

حکم در زمان

Hukm dar Zamān

Although the coin does not bear a date, its weight and similarity with the coin published next, makes it amply clear that it is an issue of Sikandar Adil Shah. A curious aspect of this coin is the small word inscribed below *Sultan* on obverse. It appears to be *Shiva* and it is tantalising to guess if it has anything to do with Shivaji.

F. Gold half *hoan* of Ali Adil Shah II

Very similar to the half *hoan* of Sikandar and sharing the same title on the reverse is this unique half *hoan* of Ali Adil Shah II (Fig. 25), from the J.P. Goenka collection, to whom I record my grateful thanks for allowing it to be published.



Fig. 25. Gold half *hoan* of Ali Adil Shah II. 1.76 g

Obverse: Arabic legend, arranged in two lines

علی عادل شاه

'Ali 'Adil Shah

Reverse: Arabic legend

حکم در زمان

Hukm dar Zamān

N.B. The coins are not illustrated actual size.

One of the sterling contributions of Stan Goron is the standard catalogue of the coins of Indian sultanates that he co-authored with J.P. Goenka. What could be a more fitting tribute to Stan's scholarship, erudition and knowledge than to add to the vast repository he created, by reporting new data that is interesting in both numismatic and historical ways? In addition, what would a better avenue to honour his contributions than the 50th anniversary of the Oriental Numismatic Society, whose Newsletter (and later *Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society*) he assiduously edited for three decades? I am greatly indebted to Stan for his constant encouragement in my research, his compassionate persuasion and barbed wit in editing my writings, and his enthusiasm for sharing his incredible breadth of knowledge on topics as varied as music, geology, linguistics, horticulture, and our common affection for domestic animals of a certain furry and feline sort!

Shailendra Bhandare

A GARDEN OF VERSE: NUMISMATIC POETRY OF THE MUGHALS

Sanjay Garg

In the history of Mughal numismatics, versified coin inscriptions in Persian play a significant role. They provide evidence not only of the high quality of penmanship of that period, but also of the political manifestation of the ruler's (or a claimant's) propaganda material. At the same time, these inscriptions also offer vital clues for identifying worn, crude, or other such coins on which the legend is only partly visible.

Apart from the appearance of poetical Persian inscriptions (*saja'* or metrical legends) on extant numismatic specimens, a large number of such coin inscriptions are reproduced *verbatim et literatim* in contemporary and later literary works. While the use of some of these inscriptions is endorsed by their extant specimens, there are still quite a few inscriptions of which no numismatic evidence is available till date. As such, these have largely remained outside the focus of numismatists and students of Mughal numismatics.

The present paper catalogues such versified coin inscriptions (*abyāt us-sikkah*) found in contemporary, or even later literature, tracing their historical context and emphasising their significance in the study of Mughal numismatics. This paper also aims to underline the importance of having a sound knowledge of Persian prosody while reading the verse inscriptions on these coins, so as to derive their correct meaning.

Catalogue

1. Nasir ud-din Muhammad Humayun (1508-1556 CE)

*Tā Humāyūn nām ū rā sikkah bar dil naqsh kard,
Mihr dar muhr-ash dahāne sikkah pur zar mī kunad,
Mimbarī kaz khutbah-ye alqāb-i ū zināt girāft,
Mushtarī gauhar nisār-i farq-i mimbar mī kunad.*

The reason why Humayun inscribed his name on the heart of the coin,

The Sun of thy stamp on the face of gold coin may,
In the same way that the pulpit has gained beauty by [recitation of] Khutbah of your titles,
Help Jupiter in scattering gems distinguishing between the coin and the pulpit.

Ref: Muhammad Ma'sum alias 'Nami', son of Sayed Safai Safa, *Tarikh-i Sindh*, [Persian Ms.], India Office Library collection (p. 115); quoted by Akelawi 1993: 9.

2. Jalal ud-din Muhammad Akbar (1542-1605)

2.1 *Sahanshā* (coins of 100 *muhrs*)

Obverse:

*Khurshīd ke haft bahr az-ū gauhar yāft,
Sang-i siyah az partaw-i ān jauhar yāft,
Kān az nazar-i tarbiyat-i ū zar yāft,
Wa ān zar sharf az sikkah-ye Shāh Akbar yāft.*

It is the Sun from which the seven oceans get their pearls,
The black rocks get their jewels from his luster,
The mines get their gold from his fostering glance,
And their gold is ennobled by the stamp of Shah Akbar.

Reverse:

*Īn Sikkah ke pīrā-ye ummīd buwad,
Bā naqsh-i duwām-o-nām-i jāwāid buwad,
Sīmā-ye sa'ādat-ash hamīn sikkah ba-dahr,*

Yak zarra nazar karda-ye khurshīd buwad.

This coin which is the ornament of hope,
Carries an everlasting stamp and an immortal name,
As a sign of its auspiciousness, it is sufficient,
That once for all ages the sun has cast a glimpse upon it.

2.2 *Rahas* (coins of 50 *muhrs*)

Obverse: Same as 2.1

Reverse:

*Īn naqad-i rawān-i ganj-i Shāhenshāhī,
Bā kaukab-i iqbāl kunad hamrāhī,
Khurshīd parwar-ash az ān rū ke ba-dahr,
Bāyad sharf az sikkah-ye Akbar Shāhī.*

This current coin of the imperial treasure,
Accompanies the star of good fortune,
O Sun, foster it because for all ages,
It is ennobled by the stamp of Akbar Shah.

2.3 *Ātmah* (coins of 25 *muhrs*)

Obverse: Same as 2.1

Reverse:

*Īn sikkah ke dast-i bakht rā zewar bād,
Pīrā-ye nuh siphar-o-haft akhtar bād,
Zarrīn naqad-īst kār az-ū chūn zar bād,
Dar dahr rawān ba nām-i Shāh Akbar bād.*

This coin – may it adorn the hand of the fortunate,
And may it be an ornament of the nine heavens and the seven stars,
Is a gold coin – may golden be its work,
Let it be current for all ages in the name of Shah Akbar.

The above verse-inscriptions (2.1, 2.2 and 2.3) are in the form of *ruba'is* or quatrains, and were composed by Shaikh Faizi, the court poet of Akbar.

Ref: Abul Fazl, *Ain-i Akbari* (*Ain* 10: The Coins of this Glorious Empire); see also Hodivala 1976: 63-65.

3. Mirza Muhammad Hakim (1554-85)

*Bismillāh ir-Rahmān ir-Rahīm,
Wāris-i mulk ast Muhammad Hakīm.*

In the name of the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,
The Heir of the kingdom is Muhammad Hakim.

This was composed by Ghizali Mashhadi.

Ref: Akelawi 1993: 72; Faruqui 2005.

4. Nur ud-din Muhammad Jahangir (1569-1627)

4.1

Obverse:

*Ba-khat-i nūr bar zar kilak-i taqdir,
Raqam zad Shāh Nūr ud-dīn Jahāngīr.*

In illuminated letters on gold, the pen of Destiny,
Engraved 'Shah Nur ud-din Jahangir'.

Reverse:

*Shud chū khūr īn sikka nūrāni jahān,
Aftāb-i Mamlīkat tārikh-i ān.*

By the beauty of this coin the world got illuminated,
'Aftāb-i Mamlīkat' (Sun of the Kingdoms) is its date.

In the Abjad system, the numeric value of the words *آفتاب مملکت* (*Aftab-i Mamlīkat*) comes to 1014 (AH) which is the date of Jahangir's first regnal year. The legend was composed by Asaf Khan, who was ordered to make these couplets (*baitis*) for large gold coins, one for each side. "Between the lines of the obverse couplet, the Kalimah was written, while between the lines of the reverse

couplet were to come the name of the mint and the Hijri year. These coins were of 100, 50, 20 and 10 tolas.”

Ref: *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, Rogers 1909, I: 11; quoted by Rodgers 1888: 19-20; see also Hodivala 1976: 316.

4.2

*Ba zar īn Sikka zad Shāh Jahāngūr zafar partaw,
Pas az fath-i Dakan āmad chū dar Gujarāt az Mandū.*

On gold this coin (was) struck by Shah Jahangir, the Glorious Victor,
As he, after the victory of Deccan, arrived in Gujarat from Mandu.

Jahangir mentions that he ordered silver *tankas* to be struck when he was in Cambay (Khambhat) in the 12th year of his reign (AH 1027, 1618 CE).

Ref: *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, Rogers 1909, I: 418; quoted by Whitehead 1923: 147-8; see also Hodivala 1976: 317.

4.3

*Dar Badāun sikkah zad Sultān-i gardūn pāigāh,
Shāh Nūr ud-dīn Jahāngīr ibn Akbar Bādshāh.*

In Badaun struck (this) coin, Emperor with (his) base in skies,
Shah Nur ud-din Jahangir, son of Akbar, the Emperor.

Ref: ‘Ali 1903: 219.

5. Azam Shah (1653-1707)

*Nagīn Sulāimān ke tābindah būd,
Bar ū ism-i ‘Azam hamī kundah būd.*

The gem of Suleman became illuminated,
By the exalted name (Azam) inscribed upon it.

Ref: *Siyar-i Gulistan-i Hind*: 96; quoted by Akelawi 1993: 162, 203.

Var. a. same as above, but with second hemistich (*misra*) as follows:

Hamin ism-i ‘Āzam bar ū kundah bud.

By the exalted name (Azam) inscribed upon it.

Ref: Zatali 1854/5: 57.

6. Shah Alam Bahadur Shah I (1643-1712)

6.1

*Ze nām-i Shāh ‘Ālam bādshāh ghāzī ‘ādīl,
Jahān ba khair-o-barkāt shud, iyar-i sīm-o-zar kāmīl.*

By the name of Shah Alam, the Emperor, Warrior, the Just
The world became safe and prosperous by the perfect touchstone of silver and the gold.

The above couplet, along with the next one (6.2), is said to have been composed by one Danishmand Khan ‘Ali’. However, in accordance with the orders of Munim Khan, Deputy Governor of Lahore, neither of the two couplets was placed on the coins of Shah Alam I.

Ref: Irvine 1922, 1: 140.

6.2

*Shāh ‘Ālam bādshāh ghāzī gardūn janāb,
Sikkah shud raushan ze nām-i nāmish chūn āftāb.*

Shah Alam, the Emperor, Warrior, the Lucky Highness
The coin became illuminated like the Sun by the name of his name.

Ref: Irvine 1922, 1: 141.

6.3

*Sikkah zad dar jahān ba fazl-i Ilāh,
Shāh-i Hindustān Bahādūr Shāh.*

Struck coin in the world by the grace of God
King of India, Bahadur Shah.

Ref: ‘Ali 1903: 105; quoted by Akelawi 1993: 162, 203.

7. Jahandar Shah (1661-1713)

*Ba zad sikkah-i nuqra chūn mihr-o-māh,
Shāhenshāh-i ghāzī Jahāndār Shāh.*

Struck silver coin like Sun and Moon,
Emperor, Warrior Jahandar Shah.

Ref: *Mukhtasar-i Siyar-i Gulshan-i Hind*, quoted by Rodgers 1888: 28; Irvine 1922, 1: 240-41; Hodivala 1976: 323.

Var. a. With first hemistich as:

Zad sikkah dar mulk chūn mihr-o-māh.

Struck coin in the country like Sun and Moon.

Ref: *Hadiqat ul-Aqalim*, (written about AH 1190, vide Elliot and Dowson, VIII: 180); quoted by Hodivala 1976: 323; Irvine 1922, 1: 240-241.

8. Nekusiyar (1679-1723)

*Ba-zar zad sikkah sāhib qirānī,
Shāh Nekūsiyar, Taimūr-i Sānī.*

Struck coin on gold, the Lord of Conjunctions,
Shah Nekusiyar, the second Taimur.

Ref: Khafi Khan, *Muntakhab ul-Lubab*: 825; quoted in Irvine 1922, 1: 412; see also Hodivala 1976: 325.

9. Rafi ud-Darjat (1699-1719)

*Sikkah zad Shāh Rafī’ ud-Darjāt,
Mihr mānīnd ba-yamin-o-barkāt.*

The Emperor Rafi ud-Darjat struck coin,
Like the Sun, with the power and felicity.

Var. a. With *yumn* (power) in place of *yamin* (prosperity) in second line.

Var. b. With *badr* (Moon) in place of *Mihr* (Sun) in second line.

The above verse was composed by Fath Khan ‘Fazil’, by the order of Qutb ul-Mulk, Saiyyad Hasan Ali Abdulla (one of the Saiyyad brothers). The couplet with *mihr* was for the gold coins, and with *badr* (Var. b) was for the silver coins.

Ref: Irvine 1922, 1: 418-19.

10. Muhammad Ibrahim (1697-1720)

*Sikkah bar sīm zad dar jahān,
Ba-fazl-i Muhammad Ibrāhīm, Shāh-i Shāhān.*

Coin was struck on silver in the world,
By the grace of Muhammad Ibrahim, King of Kings.

Ref: Irvine 1922, 2: 76.

11. Muhammad Shah (1702-1748)

*Ze fazl-i Haq, Shāhenshah Muhammad Shāh dīn-parwar,
Darīn ‘ālam zadah sikkah ze mihr-o-māh raushantar.*

By the grace of God, Muhammad Shah, the Patron of the Faith,
Struck coin in this world, brighter than the Sun and Moon.

Ref: *Miftah ut-Tawarikh*, Beale 1867: 305, last para, line 1; quoted in Hodivala 1976: 375; Qadri undated: 26.

12. Bedar Bakht (c. 1778-1789)

Hāmī-i dīn-i Nabi Bedār Shāh.

Sikkah zad dar Hind az fazl-i Ilāh.

The Defender of the Faith of the Prophet, Bedar Shah.

Struck coin in Hind, by the grace of God.

Ref: Beale, *Miftah ut-Tawarikh*, Beale 1867: 361, para 1, line 10; see also Hodivala 1976: 327.

13. Akbar Shah II (1760-1837)

13.1

Ba-zad ba-qurs-i mah-o-mihr zarb sultānī,

Khadev shāh Jahāngīr Akbar sānī.

Silver is struck at the royal mint to shine like Moon and Sun,

The King of Kings, world grasper, Akbar the Second.

Composed by Muhammad Zahir ud-din 'Azfari'.

Ref: *Waqiat-i Azfari*, Ms. fol. 6a and b; trans. p. 111, quoted in Garg 1986: 140.

13.2

Sikkah zad dar jahān ze fazl-i Ilāh,

Hāmī-i dīn-i Muhammad Akbar Shāh.

Struck coin in the world by the divine favour,

The Defender of the Faith of Muhammad, Akbar Shah.

Ref: *Mukhtasar-i Siyar-i Gulistan-i Hind*, quoted by Rodgers 1888b: 32; see also Hodivala 1976: 327.

Var. a. With *ba-fazl* (by the grace of) in place of *ze-fazl* (by the grace of) in the first hemistich.

Ref: Qadri undated: 26, quoted by Akelawi 1993: 168, 207.

13.3

Ba-sīm-o-zar zādah khūsh sikkah-i jahānbānī,

Chirāgh-i dūdh-ye Taimūr Akbar sānī.

On silver and gold struck beautiful coin, to be current in the world,

The light of the family of Taimur, Akbar the Second.

Ref: *Miftah ut-Tawarikh*, Beale 1867: 375 last line; see also Hodivala 1976: 328.

Var. a. With *ba sānī* (with Second) in place of *jahānbani* (current in the world) in the first hemistich.

Ref: *Kitab-i Nuqran* Sherwani undated.

13.4

Sikkah Mubāarak sāhib qirān sānī,

Muhammad Akbar nasl -i Changez Khānī.

The auspicious Coin of the Second Lord of the Conjunctions, Muhammad Akbar, the Second Changez Khan.

Ref: 'Āli 1903: 107; quoted by Akelawi 1993: 168, 207.

Var. a. *Mubāarak sikkah sāhib-i qirānī,*

Muhammad Akbar-i Changez Khānī.

The auspicious coin of the second Lord of the Conjunctions, Muhammad Akbar, of the House of Changez Khan.

Ref: 'Āli 1903: 107, quoted by Akelawi 1993: 168, 207.

14. Bahadur Shah II (1775-1862)

14.1

Sikkah-i Bahādur Shāh, Shāh-i Hindustan,

Ba Fazl-i Aizdī, Zewar-i Jahan.

King Bahadur Shah, King of Hindustan,

Is, by grace of God, an ornament of the world.

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This couplet (along with the one that is actually found inscribed on the solitary known coin of Bahadur Shah issued during this tumultuous period), is said to have been composed by Mirza Asadullah Khan 'Ghalib', the noted Urdu and Persian poet of Delhi during the reign of Bahadur Shah II.

Ref: Nizami 1924: 42; Husain 1958: 300; Wiggins & Garg 1987: 89-92; and Garg 1988/1989: 123-126.

14.2

Ba-zar zad sikkah Sahib Qirani,

Sirāj ud-Din Bahādur Shāh Sānī.

Struck coin on gold, the Lord of Conjunctions,

Siraj ud-din, Bahadur Shah the Second.

Ref: 'Āli 1903: 108; quoted by Akelawi 1993: 169, 208.

14.3

Ba-sim-o-zar zādah shud Sikkah ba Fazl-i Ilāh,

Sirāj dīn Abu Zafar Shah-i Bahādur Shāh.

Struck coin on gold and silver by the grace of God,

Siraj din, Father of Victory, King Bahadur Shah.

Ref: *Miftah ut-Tawarikh*, Beale 1867: 394; Qadri undated: 26; quoted by Akelawi 1993: 168, 207; Hodivala 1976: 328.

14.4

Sikkah zad dar jahan, ba-aūn-i Ilah,

Hami-i dīn-i Haq, Bahādur Shāh.

Verily Bahadur Shah, Defender of Faith,

Struck coins in the world by the grace of God.

"Maulvi Zahoor Ali was the *Thanadar* and *Rais* of Dadri. He was jubilant over the event of 12th May 1857 and immortalised it in verse announcing the new coinage of Emperor Bahadur Shah. The following are some of his typical verses, the first verse being a chronogram."

Ref: Husain 1958: 300.

14.5

Ba-sharq-o-gharb zādah, sikkah hamchū mihr-o-mah,

Abu-z Zafar sheh-i 'ālī Bahādur Shāh.

Struck coins like the Sun and Moon, in the east and the west,

The great and exalted emperor, Abu Zafar Bahadur Shah.

This was composed by Maulvi Zahoor Ali, *Thanadar* and *Rais* of Dadri.

Ref: Husain 1958: 300.

14.6

Ba-dahr sikkah-i shāhī zādah Bahādur Shāh,

Ba-Haq ashadān, Lā Ilah il-lalāh.

Bahadur Shah struck the royal coins in the world,

By virtue of the creed - There is no God but Allah.

This was composed by Maulvi Zahoor Ali, *Thanadar* and *Rais* of Dadri.

Ref: Husain 1958: 301.

14.7

Ba-dahr sikkah-i shāhī zādah ba-fazl-i Ilah,

Abu-z zafar shāh-i gāiti sitan, Bahādur Shāh.

By the grace of God, Emperor Abu Zafar Bahadur Shah,

Capturer of the world, struck coins of kingship for the world.

This was composed by Maulvi Zahoor Ali, *Thanadar* and *Rais* of Dadri.

Ref: Husain 1958: 301.

Contd. on page 60

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14.8

*Chale na ashrafi-i āftāb 'ālam mein,
Khat-i shuā' se us pe jo ye na ho tehrīr:
Abu-z Zafar shah-i wālā-guhar Bahādur Shāh,
Sirāj-i Din-i Nabi Sāya-i Khudā-ye Qadr,
Jahān musakhkhar-o- 'ālam mutī'-o-khalq mutā',
Falak muwayyad-o-akhtar mu'īn-o-bakht nasīr.*

The Sun-like gold coins wouldn't circulate in the world,
Lest with a pen of a sunray this is not inscribed on it:
Abu Zafar, the Exalted King [and] Bahadur Shah,
A lamp of the Faith of the Prophet, a shadow of the omnipotent
God,
Who has conquered the world and (is) obeyed by the world and
the people,
(Who is) assisted by the skies, and (has) the stars as friend, and
fate as helper.

Ref. 'Āli 1903: 108; quoted by Akelawi 1993: 106.

Apart from the couplets intended for the coins of the Mughal rulers, parodies of certain actual coin couplets of a few rulers, such as Aurangzeb, Farrukhsiyar, and Akbar Shah II, have also been mentioned in a few contemporary chronicles. These parodies were prevalent in contemporary society in the same fashion as these coins were. These have been dealt with in detail elsewhere (Garg 1996).

Before the Mughals, the use of Persian couplets can be seen on the coins of the sultans of Gujarat and Kashmir. Among the contemporaries of the Mughal rulers, Persian coin couplets were used by the Adil Shahs of Bijapur, and the Qutb Shahis of Golkonda. Later, the coins of the Afsharids, the Durrani, the Sikhs, the Dogras of Jammu, the Nawabs of Awadh, the Muslim rulers of Mysore, the Ahom kings of Assam, and rulers of Princely States such as Jodhpur, Indore and Tonk, bore distinctive Persian verses. The garden of Persian verse remained blossoming on coins minted in various parts of India, for a very long time (Garg 2000). It may be added that quite a few versified inscriptions of these rulers too, that were composed by some of the best poets and panegyrics of the age, have also remained confined to pieces of paper and have been obliterated from memory. These un-minted and scattered pieces of poetry, however, fall outside the scope of the present paper, which deals exclusively with the house of the Mughals.

Acknowledgement

The title of this paper has been adapted from Briggs (1980). I presented a paper on this theme at a meeting of the Oriental Numismatic Society, held at Taormina, Italy on September 22, 2015.

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Dedication

The main title of this paper has been chosen as a mark of my reverence for dear Stan Goron. My first introduction to Stan was in 1985 through the pages of this journal (then called 'Newsletter') of which he was the editor. I was then a novice in the field of numismatics and was particularly fascinated by the coins of the Mughals. On this topic, I found that issue after issue of ONS-NL was filled with remarkable contributions from the pen of its erudite editor. With each reading, my esteem for Stan's deep understanding of the subject multiplied.

Stan was in the audience when I presented a paper on the current subject in September 2015. He particularly appreciated the paper and encouraged me to contribute it to JONS. (तेनः तुभ्यम समर्पयामि – Yours, to you, I bequeath).

Sanjay Garg

AKBARNAGAR: A MUGHAL MINT IN BENGAL

Syed Ejaz Hussain

Akbarnagar, also known as Rajmahal, is located in the Sahebganj district of present-day Jharkhand state in India. It is situated on the right or western bank of the river Ganga, at a distance of only 20 miles west of Gaur, the capital of the Bengal Sultanate. The well-known Teliagarhi pass, the gateway to Bengal, was only 10 miles from there. It was perhaps because of Akbarnagar's important strategic location that it became a provincial capital during the Mughal period. Abul Fazl noted:

"On this day [9th November 1595] Akbarnagar was founded. When Rajah Man Singh was in Bengal he considered about a seat of government which could to some extent be safe from an attack by boats. After much inquiry a place was found near Ākmahal (Rājmahal). Apparently Sher Khan had approved of it. The foundation was laid in a fortunate hour, and in a short time there was a choice city to which the glorious name was given." (Beveridge 1907, 3: 42)

Akbarnagar was formerly known as *Āk-* or *Āg-Mahal*. Due to frequent outbreaks of fire in the town, causing extensive damage to the houses, the place was called *Āgmahal* or 'Fire Palace'. Since Akbarnagar commanded the river route down the Ganga to Calcutta, it also figured frequently in the records of the English East India Company in the context of trade and commerce.

Abdul Latif of Gujarat visited Akbarnagar in 1608 when he was appointed as the diwan of Bengal by Jahangir. Abdul Latif took the river route from Agra to Bengal:

"on 5th June 1608 we arrived safe and sound at Akbarnagar [i.e. Rajmahal], the capital of Bengal and the end of my journey by river. Akbarnagar, known also as Āgmahal, was an ordinary village before the accession of Akbar. Its name is explained in the following way: Gaur was the capital of the former rulers of this country and whenever they set out on travel in Bihar their advance tents were sent to this place so the people called it Āgmahal [advanced palace]".

Abdul Latif further noted:

"As Akbarnagar commands the route to all parts of Bengal, it was frequently the camping ground of the imperial army. Rajah Man Singh made it the seat of the Governor, because it stands on the skirt of the hills and so remains safe from the enemy's hands when at the end of the rainy season all other places of Bengal are flooded and the enemy with their flotilla (nawwara) can occupy them, and also because it excels behind the rest of Bengal in climate. He built here a fort and mansions. From that time all people have called it Rajmahal. As the Rajah colonised the place in the name of his late Majesty, it is styled Akbarnagar in the official paper" (Sarkar 1919: 601-602)



Fig. 1. Silver rupee of Akbar, Akbarnagar mint, 11.25 g, dated IE 50 (SA)

Akbarnagar as the capital of Bengal

Akbarnagar rose to prominence from the time of Mughal emperor Akbar, who appointed Raja Man Singh, one of his chief nobles, as the subedar of Bengal in 1594. It is interesting to note that instead of naming the new capital in the name of his emperor, Raja Man Singh first called it Rajmahal after himself. Perhaps he did not feel it objectionable or he felt free to name a place after his own name. But soon, following a complaint by his rival Fateh Jang Khan to Akbar, Man Singh did not want to offend the emperor and rechristened it Akbarnagar in the name of his imperial master. But both names remained current in history. Akbarnagar served as the capital of Bengal under three other subedars of the imperial province: Qutbuddin Khan Koka (1606-07), Jahangir Quli Khan (1607-08), and Prince Muhammad Shuja' (1639-60). Islam Khan shifted the capital to Dhaka in 1612, but Prince Shuja' restored the capital to Akbarnagar in 1639. Mir Jumla finally transferred the headquarters to Dhaka in 1660. Thus, Rajmahal functioned as the capital of Bengal for a total of only 37 years, from 1596 to 1612 and from 1639 to 1660.



Fig. 2. Silver rupee of Shah Jahan, Akbarnagar mint, 11.35 g, AH 1038 (CNG)

Akbarnagar as the principal mint of Bengal

A mint was founded at Akbarnagar sometime in 1596, and struck coins regularly during the reigns of Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. John Marshal, the British traveller, visited Akbarnagar thrice during the reign of Aurangzeb. On his journey along the river route from Hughli to Patna, he reached Rajmahal on 28th April 1670. Marshal noticed the East India Company's servants stayed in a building which had three small rooms and a small upper room, and transacted business with the officials of the Akbarnagar mint. His second visit to Rajmahal was on 20th September 1670 on his return journey from Patna to Hughli, but we do not find him making any comment here about Rajmahal or the Akbarnagar mint. However, on his third visit to Rajmahal on 13th May 1671, he made a close examination of the palace and gardens of Shah Shuja' (Khan 1927, 5: 9-11, 14 and 17). He also witnessed the Akbarnagar mint in operation and observed the coining of rupees there:

"Here stayed till about 3 o'clock, when went to the Tanksāl [tankasālā, tahsāl, takskāl mint] where Rupees are coyned. In the way thither happened a blast of wind which had like to have overset my Pallenkeene. I see them make, but not stamp, Rupees; but the stamp is broad, being cut in steele, and having the characters on a rupee in 5 places cut upon the Rupee (vizt.), upon the middle, and round about 4; so they ly the Rupee upon the middle and another stamp upon the rupee, and so stamps both sides at once." (Khan 1927: 117)

John Marshal obviously meant here that two dies – one upper and one lower die – made of hardened iron, were simultaneously used to strike coins at the mint of Akbarnagar. According to him, the mint functioned the whole day and it produced silver rupees. By his reference to a broad die (stamp), perhaps Marshal meant that upon the broad metal surface, five versions of the rupee die were cut (one in the middle and four around it). Rather than make each obverse die separately, a larger hardened surface was probably used with multiple cuttings of the die on it, so that when one die wore out the coiner could immediately move onto the next.



Fig. 3. Silver rupee of Shah Shuja, Akbarnagar mint, 11.4 g, AH (10)68, regnal year 1 (MA)

Akbarnagar or Rajmahal functioned as a mint in eastern India during the 17th century. Foreign merchants, especially the Dutch and later the English, who were active in commerce at Hughli during this period, got their bullion converted into coins at this mint. Since they had to go to Rajmahal for coining their money they desired this mint to be shifted to Hughli and in this connection they made appeals to the provincial administration, but their request was not entertained. However, during the rebellion of Sobha Singh, the mint was temporarily shifted to Hughli in the 1690s, but it was again restored to Rajmahal. In this connection, Om Prakash, who has consulted the Dutch sources, writes: "Almost from the very beginning of its commercial operations in the region, the Dutch Company had tried to persuade the provincial administration to prevail upon the imperial authorities to have the Rajmahal mint shifted to Hughli or to have a new imperial mint established there. These efforts, however, did not bear any fruit. The temporary shift of the Rajmahal mint to Hughli in the 1690s at the suggestion of the Company was a purely fortuitous circumstance following from considerations of security in the context of the rebellion by the zamindār Sobha Singh." (Prakash 1987: 175).

In 1701, when Murshid Quli Khan became diwan, the capital of Bengal was Dhaka. He shifted the capital to Maq̄sudabad in 1703 and the very next year, i.e. 1704, renamed it Murshidabad and struck coins from Murshidabad mint. His coins from Maq̄sudabad mint are very few and rare, and they are dated 1703. It is generally believed that from this time the Rajmahal mint became almost ineffective and its output dwindled. But the reality was not so clear-cut. From 1704 onwards, while the coins of Murshidabad mint are found in abundance, the coins of Rajmahal mint are also found, though few in number. This at least suggests that even after the establishment of the diwan's court at Murshidabad, the mint at Rajmahal was not totally abandoned. Rather, the Rajmahal mint continued to strike coins, though the number was low. It is notable that all these coins were silver rupees.

R.B. Whitehead (1914) has given a very informative note on the coins of Akbarnagar mint. It is quoted here for the students of numismatics. His note consists of five small paragraphs, but I have taken the liberty of amalgamating it into a single quote:

"Akbarnagar, the modern Rajmahal, was the provincial capital of Bengal for the last few years of Akbar's reign, and again for the last twenty years of the reign of Shah Jahan. One or two very rare *ilāhī* silver coins of Akbar struck at Akbarnagar have been found, and a copper *dām* was in the White King Collection. Coin No. 125 is one of two known gold mohars of Akbar. The other, an exactly similar specimen, is in the Bodleian Collection. These are peculiar in exhibiting no date beyond the Persian month. Only silver coins are known of Jahāngīr. They begin with heavy pieces of the usual Kalima type, and of what I may term the *ساخت نورانی* type – see No. 950 – but these give way in the year 1019 to rupees of normal weight bearing the rare couplet exhibited on No. 957. The ordinary *ilāhī* type is found for the last fourteen years of the reign. Coin No. 951 is an isolated specimen dated 1017. There is an Akbarnagar rupee of Nūr Jahān in the Lucknow Museum. The rupees of Shāh Jahān commence as usual with the Kalima type, which is followed in the second year by the anomalous Kalima *Ilāhī* type. Shāh Jahān implies his devotion to the tenets of Islam

by the presence on these coins of the Kalima, the Hijrī year, and the conventional Muslim regal title of غازی, but traverses them by also including his own *ilāhī* or divine year, and the Persian month. By the seventh year, the 'square areas' type holds the field, and endures till the end of the reign. A gold 'square areas' coin of Shāh Jahān, dated 1067, 30 R., was published in N.S. XI. Mr. G. B. Bleazby had a silver Akbarnagar niṣār, dated 1068, 32 R. Two others are in the Cabinet de France, Paris, together with a copper coin of Shāh Jahān of this mint. I have written a paper, which will be published in the *J.A.S.B.*, to show that Shāh Shujā', who disputed the succession with his brothers Aurangzeb and Murād Bakhsh, struck rupees at Akbarnagar. Shāh Shujā' was governor of Bengal, and Akbarnagar was the seat of his Court, and his principal residence. There is a unique 'square areas' type gold mohar of Aurangzeb, of the twelfth year, in the British Museum, but mohars are known of the thirteenth and fourteenth years of what I may term the 'Muḥīu-d-dīn' type, so characteristic of Aurangzeb's earliest issues. The earliest silver coin known to me is dated 1070, 3 R., and is of the usual couplet type, but with *بدرمنیر* instead of *بدرمنیر*. This gold couplet on the silver issues continues till the forty-second year, when it changes to the normal silver couplet. The Akbarnagar rupees are also peculiar in having both Hijrī and regnal years on the reverse side. Mr. Bleazby had a copper coin of Aurangzeb. Akbarnagar rupees of the usual types are known of all the succeeding emperors except Jahāndār, Raḥīu-d-darjāt, Shāh Jahān II, and Shāh 'Ālam II. No other gold or copper pieces have been found." (Whitehead 1914, II: xliii-xliv).

Table A. Summary of Akbarnagar coins in published museum collections

Museum	Reference	Ruler	AU	AR	AR
British Museum London	Lane-Poole 1892	Jahangir		4	
		Shah Jahan		3	
		Aurangzeb		1	2 <i>anna</i>
Indian Museum Calcutta	Wright 1907	Jahangir		10	
		Shah Jahan		9	
		Aurangzeb	1	38	
		Shah Alam I		1	
		Muhammad Shah		2	
		Ahmad Shah Alamgir II		1	
Punjab Museum Lahore	Whitehead 1914	Akbar	1		
		Jahangir		10	
		Shah Jahan		12	
		Aurangzeb		19	
		Shah Alam I		2	
Lucknow Museum	Brown 1920	Akbar		1	
		Jahangir		30	
		Jahangir & Nurjahan		1	
		Shah Jahan		49	
		Shah Shuja		2	
		Aurangzeb		18	
		Shah Alam I		3	
		Jahandar Shah		1	
		Farrukhsiyar		2	
		Muhammad Shah		3	
	Singhal 1965		Jahangir		6
Shah Jahan				8	
Aurangzeb			1	13	

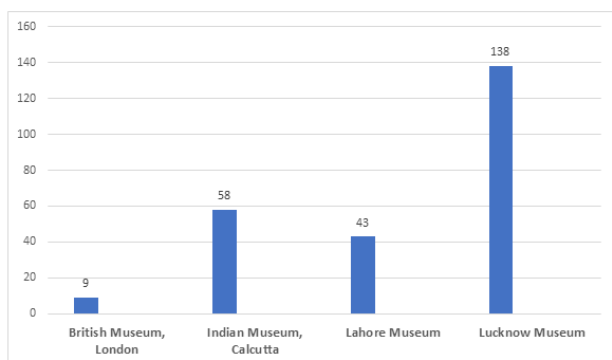
Coins of Akbarnagar mint in catalogues

Stanley Lane-Poole (1892) listed 9 silver coins of Mughal rulers from Akbarnagar mint: Jahangir 4 coins, Shah Jahan 3, and Aurangzeb 2. It is interesting to note here that Aurangzeb's silver coin dated AH 1079 is a small denominational coin of 2 *anna* (Lane-Poole 1892: 80, 81, 98, 117, 123, 129, 139 and 147). H. Nelson Wright (1907) has published 1 gold and 58 silver coins from

Akbarnagar mint. The gold coin is struck in the name of Aurangzeb. The 58 silver coins represent: Jahangir 10, Shah Jahan 9, Aurangzeb 34, Shah Alam I 1, Muhammad Shah 2, Ahmad Shah 1, and Alamgir II 1 (Wright 1908, III: 75-76, 106-07, 131, 141-44, 192, 221-22, 245, 257). The coins of these rulers are found in other catalogues of coins also. Longworth Dames had reported and illustrated 1 silver coin of Shah Alam I from Akbarnagar mint (Longworth Dames 1902: 297).

Whitehead (1914: 20, 133-135, 181-182, 229-231 and 277) has described 1 gold and 43 silver coins of the Mughal rulers struck from Akbarnagar mint. The gold coin was issued by Akbar. The 43 silver coins consist of: Jahangir 10, Shah Jahan 12, Aurangzeb 19, and Shah Alam I 2. It may be noted here that Whitehead mentioned 10 silver coins of Aurangzeb in the introduction to his catalogue (idem: xliii), but the present author found 19 described by him (idem: 229-31). C.J. Brown (1920) listed 109 silver coins, the largest number of coins of the Akbarnagar mint in any coin catalogue. It contains the following silver coins: Akbar 1, Jahangir 30, Jahangir with Nur Jahan (jointly) 1, Shah Jahan 49, Shuja 2, Aurangzeb 18, Shah Alam I 3, Jahandar Shah 1, Farrukhsiyar 2 and Muhammad Shah 3 (Brown 1920, I: 47; 2: 24, 108-10, 151, 170-173, 215, 220, 235-238, 294, 303, 311, 337-338). C.R. Singhal (1965) has described a further 29 coins, out of which there is 1 gold coin of Aurangzeb. The 28 silver coins represent: Jahangir 7, Shah Jahan 8, and Aurangzeb 13 (Singhal 1965: 50, 70-71, 89 and 95-96), but he has also noted 15 silver coins of Aurangzeb (idem: 6).

In total, 3 gold coins from Akbarnagar mint have been published, of which 2 are of Akbar, struck by Raja Man Singh in the name of the emperor, and 1 gold coin of Aurangzeb. The silver coins of Akbarnagar mint described in the coin catalogues mentioned above total 248 pieces, including a ½ rupee and a 2 *anna*.



Graph 1. Number of silver coins of Akbarnagar in the four major coin catalogues

Akbarnagar coins in hoards

Coins found in hoards discovered in Bihar were published by H. K. Prasad (1970). He listed one hoard from Darbhanga, which had 19 silver coins. Six hoards were discovered from Godda, now a district in Jharkhand, that yielded 136 coins. From Palamau district of Jharkhand he reported 547 coins found in two hoards. A total of 13 coin hoards were noticed from Hazaribagh of Jharkhand. Out of these, 3 were reported in 1917, which consisted of 60 coins, while in 1966 there were 10 hoards containing 284 coins of Akbarnagar mint.

The coin hoards of Maharashtra published by P.L. Gupta (1970) also include some coins of Akbarnagar mint. 15 silver coins have come from four hoards discovered in Ahmadnagar, while a single coin was found in a Bijapur hoard. One coin each have come from three hoards dug out in Khandesh (East and West). Three hoards from Nashik produced a total of 7 coins. One coin was found from a Poona hoard, while two coins each from the two hoards from Satara are reported (Gupta 1970).

Srivastava (1980) reported on the hoards from Uttar Pradesh containing the silver coins of Akbarnagar mint: there were 73 coin hoards from 37 different places. The total number of coins of JONS Vol. 238, Winter 2019

Akbarnagar mint from all these hoards was 261. This is reflected in Table B below, which shows how the coins of Akbarnagar mint circulated in the regional market and merchants carried these coins for transactions. Some of the places from where Akbarnagar coins were found are presently located in Uttarakhand.

Table B. Akbarnagar coins in Uttar Pradesh coin hoards (including present-day Uttarakhand)

Place	No. of hoards	No. of Akbarnagar coins	Total no. of coins
Agra	6	15	699
Aligarh	1	1	22
Allahabad	6	9	272
Azamgarh	1	1	7
Badaun	2	14	442
Banda	2	2	172
Barabanki	1	1	119
Bareilly	2	7	264
Basti	4	22	589
Buland Shahr	1	30	926
Etawa	1	1	128
Etah	1	1	76
Faizabad	2	2	130
Farrukhabad	1	6	107
Fathpur	4	11	986
Firuzabad	1	11	252
Ghazipur	1	1	16
Gorakhpur	2	2	110
Hamirpur	1	1	18
Hardoi	1	2	121
Hardwar	1	3	59
Jalaun	1	11	370
Jaunpur	1	4	37
Jhansi	4	6	880
Kheri	1	1	22
Kanpur	1	1	80
Meerut	1	2	230
Mirzapur	2	6	410
Moradabad	2	5	119
Nainital	3	28	529
Pilibhit	1	2	30
Rampur	1	8	2851
Rae Bareli	3	19	253
Saharanpur	3	5	279
Sitapur	3	3	133
Sultanpur	2	15	86
Unnao	2	2	149

Corruption and the Akbarnagar mint

It is well-known to numismatists and monetary historians that the dynamism of Bengal's currency system during the sultanate and Mughal periods was due to the hyperactivity of the *sarrafs* or money exchangers. In fact, sometimes money exchangers, even before the rise of Jagatseth, acted as the principal bullion supplier and money exchanger in the province, and played a role in monopolising and controlling mint operations as well as the money supply. They even created artificial crises of money for the foreign agents. Om Prakash has observed:

“Of course, in order to draw more custom to themselves, the *sarrafs* were not averse to creating artificially adverse conditions for the Europeans at the mint. In 1663, for example, a group of Hughli *sarrafs* approached the master of the Rajmahal mint with the offer of a handsome amount if only he would delay the delivery of the rupees coined against the silver deposited by the Dutch.” (Prakash 1987: 174)

Such *sarrafs* were probably active in Bengal in both the sultanate and Mughal periods. *Sarrafs* even tried to approach the subedar and diwan in order to corrupt these high officials. When Azim-ush-Shan was the subedar of Bengal in 1701, some *sarrafs* approached him and offered him 60% of their additional profit and 20% to the diwan

if the subedar asked the mint master of Rajmahal to delay the delivery of rupees to the European agents so that they could have some additional profits. Interestingly they also offered to lower the market price of silver by 5% (idem: 174). This instance of inducement reveals not only the malpractices, but also highlights the viability of the mint. On account of corruption, in 1669:

“the master of the Rajmahal mint wrote to the subedar of the lack of safety to and from the mint as well as the recent increases in the unauthorised duties charged on the Europeans’ bullion had led to a decline in the total amount brought to his mint by the companies. Since this involved a decline in the imperial income from the mint, the subedar instructed the toll officials to desist from this practice but, it would seem, with little effect.” (idem: 189-190, n. 5)

Om Prakash has drawn our attention towards the extra gifts and other items given to the mint staff. The Dutch sources inform us that, apart from their fixed wages, the beaters, washermen and some other staff were regularly paid with sweets and provisions. It is notable that nine washermen worked at the Rajmahal mint. Seven of the nine were permanent and paid Rs. 2.75 per month, while the two temporary washermen were surprisingly paid a higher wage of Rs. 3.00 per month (Prakash 2007: 342).



Fig. 4. Gold mohur of Aurangzeb, Akbarnagar mint, 11.05 g, regnal year 36 (CN)

Akbarnagar mint output

Aziza Hasan (1967) studied Mughal mint output on the basis of the number of coins in public collections. In her study she included the mints of Patna, Akbarnagar, Maksudabad, Bangala and Jahangirnagar. She did not include Karimabad mint in her study. Hasan rightly said that since the production of the Maksudabad and Bangala mint was negligible, she did not consider them for quantitative study. Her study focused on the Patna, Akbarnagar and Jahangirnagar mints. With regards to Akbarnagar mint she commented:

“The Akbarnagar mint’s share of the total increases until 1665, with a fall in 1636-45. These fluctuations correspond to those of the Patna mint during the same period. Akbarnagar shows a slight tendency of decline during the rest of the century, which, too, is similar to the movement of the share of the Patna mint, except that Patna shows an increase in the last decade.” (Hasan 1967: 323)

Hasan’s figures for coin production at the Akbarnagar mint were based on 6-3/5 rupees worth for 1598-1606 (9 years), 30-3/5 rupees worth for 1607-16 (10 years), 24 rupees worth for 1617-26 (10 years), and 51 1/2 rupees worth for 1627-35 (9 years). In relation to the total imperial output, she accordingly calculated that the mint production of Akbarnagar for the above-mentioned decades was 1.3%, 4.8%, 4.2% and 7.8% respectively of the whole production (idem: 332 and 338). Since Aziza Hasan’s study was based only on coin catalogues, there were many flaws in her methodology and her method did not provide a factual impression. Hoards of coins give us a better understanding of mint output. Thus, the coins mentioned in Table B provide a more accurate reflection of the levels of coin production. But these figures should not be treated as true or the real scale of mint output. Richard Edwards, an English factor, noted in 1676 that daily stamping capacity of a good ‘coyner’ at Rajmahal mint was 10,000 *sikka* rupees. The daily production output of Murshidabad mint was above 40,000 coins. But in a small mint like

that of Akbarnagar the daily output may not always have been 10,000.

Conclusion

This brief note has attempted to establish that Akbarnagar was a mint of eastern India during the Mughal period. Under Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, it produced coins in moderate numbers. After Aurangzeb the mint continued to strike coins at least up to the time of Alamgir II. The number of Akbarnagar coins found in various hoards is very low, and the reason for this might have been the drain of coins to Delhi or to the Mughal emperor as *nazrana* and revenue. Still, the Akbarnagar mint catered to the monetary demands of the foreign trading companies who were active in the eastern region in the 17th and 18th centuries, with commercial interests in saltpeter, turmeric, sugar, textile and other items.

Sources of images

CN	Classical Numismatic Gallery
CNG	Classical Numismatic Group, LLC
MA	Marudhar Arts
SA	Stephen Album Rare Coins

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I am delighted to acknowledge and remember my contacts with Stan Goron. It is more than three decades since I first came into contact with him. I was then doing my Ph.D. on the Bengal Sultanate. We have had a long correspondence on several issues relating to the coins of my period of study. Stan patiently replied to my letters through the post as there was as yet no e-mail or mobile services available to us. Later I met him in India and the U.K. He has always been kind, helpful and receptive. Recently, when I was doing research on Jaunpur coins, he helped again with his valuable suggestions. I never miss going through Stan’s notes in JONS. I wish him good health and long, happy living.

Syed Ejaz Hussain

SOME COINS OF A SPECIAL PROVENANCE, THE FORMER COLLECTION OF STAN GORON

Jan Lingen

The provenance of coins becomes more and more important, particularly when legislation get stricter, like in Germany, and one needs to prove that certain coins have been in one's collection for over a certain number of years. It may also provide a way to prove authenticity. I know a certain dealer who will auction Chinese coins only with a confirmed provenance prior to World War II, to minimise the chance of counterfeits.

Sometimes prestigious pieces in auction catalogues may show a complete pedigree chart. Museums often also maintain a good listing of the pedigree of the objects in their collections.

It is not only in the past that many dealers and general collectors did not pay much attention to the provenance of the coins they sold or acquired. Even today, old tickets are often disposed of when coins are put up for sale or auction again.

In my own collection I have been getting more and more aware of the importance of keeping records with coins and medals of when and where they were obtained. As a rule, most tickets found with the coins are anonymous and as such doesn't reveal their provenance, but some tickets can be recognised by their peculiar way of writing and other details. In my collection I have come across several square tickets (Fig. 1). The writing with blue or black ballpoint, and the details inscribed, makes them unmistakably from the former collection of Stan Goron.



Fig. 1. Some tickets of Stan Goron's former collection

Stan would start a collection in an almost fanatical way, but when he ran out of the possibility of acquiring more of the series due to either non-availability of specimens or rising prices, he would stop all of a sudden (so it appears to me), dispose of the collection, and then start collecting a completely different series. As long as I have known Stan, and that's from the mid-seventies of the last century, he has been a devoted collector of Indian coins, but when prices became too dear and the supply dried up, his collection was sold and found many new owners, including myself.

In the 1970s Ken Wiggins and I undertook the writing of a monogram, *Coins of the Sindhias*, that was published in 1978. It was 'state of the art' at that moment, but since its publication, understandably, several more varieties, denominations, and new historical interpretations have been published.

This includes the discovery of a copper 1 *pai* denomination of Gwalior that, when Stan decided to dispose of his collection of Indian coins, I was able to obtain from him (Fig. 2). It is the smallest denomination in the series of the cobra obverse, of which the ¼ *anna* and ½ *pice* are the common denominations, and was introduced in VS 1953 (1896 CE).



Fig. 2. Gwalior AE 1 *pai* of Madho Rao (1886-1925), Lashkar mint, (2.85 g, 13.3 mm), cobra obverse type, date VS (19)55

Inscription in abbreviated form:

Obverse: *Shri . Ma . Dho . Ra (o) . Ma(haraj) . Si(ndhi) / x Ali (jah) . Ba(hadur) . x .*

Reverse: *Gwa(lio) . r / pai / Sa(mat) . / 55*

Ref: KM 161; Zeno.ru 226503

This denomination may have proved too small for daily use and further minting of this denomination therefore ceased. The coin is extremely rare and to my knowledge no other specimen has been reported so far.

Another coin that I was able to acquire from Stan's collection is a so-called 'Mudra' rupee in the name of Tukoji Rao II (Fig. 3). The former princely state of Indore is well-known for a series of 'Mudra' coins in silver and off-strikes in copper. I have a fair collection of this series, but was missing one particular type.



Fig. 3. Tukoji Rao II Holkar XI (1844-1886), AR 'Mudra' rupee (11.15 g, 20.5 mm), dually dated in Fasli San 1287 and VS 1934 (1877 CE). The date Fasli 1287 has often been misread as an AH date

Obverse: Sun face with crossed spear and sword below; Devanagari legend around

Reverse: Devanagari legend *Mudra* within a decorated scroll; Devanagari legend around

In 1877 Tukoji attended the imperial durbar at Delhi, where he was granted a personal 21-gun salute and appointed *Mushir-i-Khas-i-Kaisar-i-Hind* (Councillor of the Empress of India), which may be the reason for the issue of this coin which was probably used for presentation (*nazarana*) purposes.

According to Shailendra Bhandare (Zeno.ru 218306), the legends on the 'Mudra' coinage of Indore are in Sanskrit. The inscription is split between the two sides:

श्री महाराजशैवमल्लारिशुषाहल्या पौत्रेदुराधीशतुकोजीहोळकर

There are two sandhis (compounds) here: शनुषा + अहल्या and पौत्र + इंदुराधीश. After breaking them apart, we get the meaning: 'Tukoji Holkar, King of Indore, (who is the) grandson of Ahalya, daughter-in-law of king Malhari, the devotee of Shiva'.

An enigmatic coin that once adorned Stan's collection is a copper *dam*, struck at Lahore and dated AH 963 (Fig. 4). On 11 *Rabi' I*, AH 963, Humayun had a fatal accident in the *Din-i-Pannah* library at the Purana Qila in Delhi, and died two days later on 13 *Rabi' I* (26 January 1556). Akbar's coronation took place near Kalanaur on 28 *Rabi' I* 963, 17 days after Humayun's fatal accident. There was thus an interregnum period of a little over a fortnight.



Fig. 4. Anonymous AE *dam* (20.00 g, 24 mm), Lahore, AH 963, unpublished

Obverse: Peacock standing right
Reverse: *zarb falus Lahore 963*

The mint name is undoubtedly Lahore and is identical, in its style and calligraphy, to a Lahore mint *shahrukhi* of Akbar, also dated AH 963 (Fig. 5). Observe the way *zarb* has been engraved and the placing of the punctuation marks which are also similar to those on the silver *shahrukhi* (Fig. 6). It is even possible that the same die-engraver may have been responsible for the dies of both issues.



Fig. 5. AR *shahrukhi* of Akbar (4.69 g, 25.5 mm), Lahore, AH 963 (KM 70.3)



Fig. 6. Detail of Fig. 5

Earlier discussions on internet forums suggested that the copper *dam* was a Persian civic issue, but this proved untenable as no fitting mint name exists and moreover the calligraphy is so identical to the Lahore *shahrukhi* of AH 963 that it must be assigned to the Lahore mint. Therefore the attribution to Lahore remains the most valid.

Who then was responsible for this anonymous copper issue of AH 963? Not Sikandar Shah Suri, who struck rupees at Lahore with the date AH 961 and 962, but was defeated at the Battle of Sirhind, fought, according to Abul Fazl, on 2 *Sha'ban*, 962 (22 June 1555). The armies of Sikandar Shah Suri were decisively defeated and the Mughal empire was re-established in India.

So we are left with only two contenders, Humayun or Akbar, either of whom may have issued this coin. Humayun entered Lahore on 2 *Rabi' II*, 962 (24 February 1555) and a few extremely rare JONS Vol. 238, Winter 2019

silver *dirhams* or *shahrukhis* of Lahore mint of Humayun's second reign are known dated AH 962 (*P.M.C.*, pl. I, no. 61) and AH 963 (Whitehead, *Numismatic Chronicle* 1926, pl. VI, no. 14). No Lahore mint copper issues of his second reign have been reported so far.

Comparing this 'peacock-falus' with contemporary silver coins, it shows the closest stylistic and calligraphic resemblance to Akbar's silver *shahrukhi* of Lahore (Fig. 5). For this reason, it is possible to attribute this coin to the beginning of Akbar's reign or perhaps to the interregnum period prior to Akbar's coronation. This was the last Lahore copper issue till AH 970 when *dams* of Akbar have again been reported (Zeno.ru 125583).

These are just a few interesting coins of great provenance. Despite some being illustrated in the Standard Catalogue of World Coins, they have not been properly published till now. This is an excellent occasion to do so as a tribute to a great numismatist and my friend, Stan Goron.

STAN GORON'S ARTICLES IN *JONS*, 1978-2017

Joe Cribb

Stan Goron edited the Society's Newsletter from 1985 and later Journal from 2006 to 2015. Before taking up this role, Stan was already contributing articles to the Newsletter. Since his first article in 1978, he has made 150 contributions, some simply publishing a new coin, others of greater breadth. Since handing on the editorship, leaving it in good health and greatly enlarged in size and status, Stan has continued to publish in the Journal and long may he continue to do so.

The following list of his contributions gives an indication of both the scale and range of his attention to the study of coins. It also enables those interested to investigate further the coins he has published through the Society's online access to past journals: <http://orientalnumismaticociety.org/JONS/journals.php>.

Title	Year	Vol.	Page no.(s)
Additions etc. to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates, I</i>	2001	169	24–25
Additions to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates, II</i>	2002	170	27–29
Additions to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates III</i>	2002	171	19–20
Additions to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates, IV</i>	2002	172	19
Additions to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates, V</i>	2003	174	26–27
Additions to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates, VI</i>	2003	175	17
Additions to <i>Coins of the Indian Sultanates, VII</i>	2003	176	16
Bahmanid – a fractional silver tanka of Mujahid Shah (with S. Godbole)	1993	137	16
Bahmanid – Isma'il Shah – a precursor of the Bahmanid Sultans in the Deccan	1981	71	4
Bijapur – a gold fanam of 'Adil Shah Sikandar	1981	74	1
Bengal – gold coins, part I	1996	147	11–13
Bengal – gold coins, part II	1996	148	18–21
Bengal – gold coins, part III	1996	149	11–14
Bengal – fractional silver tankas	1997	154	20–21
Bengal – some fractional tankas	1995	143	10–11
Bengal – two quarter tankas of Sikandar b. Ilyas (with R. Senior)	1994	141	15
Bengal – a gold tanka of Mughith al-Din Yuzbak (with J.P. Goenka)	2007	192	25
Bengal – a tanka of Saif al-Din Firuz	2008	194	46–47
Bengal – A coin reconfirming Nasir al-Din Muhammad Shah as Sultan of Bengal (with M.S. Islam & M.M. Hossain)	2017	230	31–32
Bengal – new variety of Sikandar bin Ilyas tanka	2010	204	27
Bengal – an unusual tanka of Fath Shah	1978	53	4

Bengal – a new date for Rukn al-Din Kaikaus	2001	167	15–16
Bengal – two gold tankas of Shahzada Barbak	2009	199	38–39
Bengal – a tanka of Ghiyath al-Din A'zam	2008	194	46
Bengal – a tanka of Nasir al-Din Nusrat of Khazana mint	2008	194	47
Bengal – a tanka of Shams al-Din Yusuf	2008	194	46
Bengal – some tankas (with N. Rhodes & P. Stevens)	2008	194	46–47
Bengal – some tankas (with P. Stevens)	2008	198	14–15
Dehli – Lakhnur, a new mint for Ghiyath al-Din Balban	2001	167	16
Dehli – a billon coin of Muhammad bin Firuz	2008	194	47
Dehli – another coin of Firuz Shah Suri (with P. Stevens)	2008	107	47–48
Dehli – Muhammad bin Tughluq, a token tanka of Sunargaon	2007	192	24–25
Delhi – Sher Shah Suri: unique silver coin	1995	146	13
Delhi – a copper coin of Tughluq of Deogir Fort (with S. Godbole)	1994	141	14
Delhi – some coins of Iltutmish (with P. Stevens)	2009	200	63–64
Delhi – Sher Shah Suri, quarter rupee	1986	102	3
Gujarat – Ahmad I, earliest dated coin	1991–1992	131	6
Jaunpur – a clearly dated silver tanka of Ibrahim Shah	1994	141	16
Madura – a gold coin of Ahsan Shah (with S. Godbole)	1997	154	19
Madura – an unknown gold coin of Ala-ud-din Sikandar Shah (with S. Godbole)	1997	154	19
Madura – a gold tanka of Shams-ud-din 'Adil Shah	1989	118	6
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Mughal coins from the Khusru collection	1998	156	19–22
Ahmad Shah Bahadur – a rupee of Alamgirpur	1997	152	5
Akbar – a quarter rupee of Ujjain	1987	104	5
Akbar – an unusual rupee of Berar	1989	117	6
Akbar – an 1/8 dam of Ajmir	1989	116	6
Akbar – a half rupee of Akbarpur Tanda	1989	117	6
Akbar – a presentation rupee of Agra	1989	116	6
Akbar – a rupee of Satgaon	1989	116	5–6
Akbar – a new type of Mahmudi from Gujarat (with B. Tabor)	2007	192	25–26
Akbar – a copper coin of Fathabad	1987	104	6

Alamgir II – a rupee of Ausa	1997	152	5
Aurangzeb – a 1/8 rupee of Lahore	1987	105	7–8
Aurangzeb – a rupee of Mukhtal?	1989	117	6–7
Aurangzeb – fractional silver coins in the British Museum	1990	122	5
Aurangzeb – a half mohur of Surat	1998	157	14
Aurangzeb – a mohur of Kabul	1998	157	14
Aurangzeb – a mohur of Machhlipatan	1998	157	14
Aurangzeb – a mohur of Patna	1998	157	14
Aurangzeb – a quarter mohur of Dar al-Zafar Bijapur	1998	157	14
Aurangzeb – two varieties of mohurs and rupees	1990	122	4–5
Aurangzeb et al. – Islamabad – more on the Mughal mint	1990	122	5
Aurangzeb – a quarter rupee of Alamgirpur	1985	94–95	4
Aurangzeb – a quarter rupee of Alamgirpur	1985	94–95	4
Farrukhsiyar – a 1/8 rupee of Ujjain	1987	105	8
Farrukhsiyar – a rupee of Farrukhnagar	1985	94–95	4–5
Humayun – the Mughal interlude in Bengal: a new date	2007	192	25
Humayun – a half dirhem of Qandahar	1987	104	5
Jahandar – a rupee of Allahabad	1987	104	7
Jahandar – a rupee of Firuzgarh	1985	94–95	4
Jahandar – rupees of Alamgirpur and Kabul	1986	101	6
Jahangir – a one twelfth rupee of Burhanpur	1987	105	7
Jahangir – a mohur of Kabul	1998	156	22
Jahangir – a mohurs of Agra	1998	156	21
Jahangir – a quarter mohur of Mandu	1998	156	20–21
Jahangir – a gold tanka of Cambay (with M.R. Babar)	2003	175	18
Jahangir – a heavy rupee of Jalnapur	1985	97	4
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Muhammad Shah – a rare rupee of Jahangirnagar	1984	92–93	7
Muhammad Shah – a half rupee of Shahjahanabad	1987	104	7
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Shah Alam I – a mohur of Ahmadnagar	1998	157	15
Shah Alam I – a mohur of Alamgirpur	1998	157	15

Shah Alam I – a mohur of Allahabad	1998	157	15
Shah Alam I – a mohur of Elichpur	1998	157	15
Shah Alam I – a mohur of Peshawar	1998	157	15
Shah Alam II – an unidentified rupee (with D. Handa & H. Herli)	1989 1993	117 135, 137, 138	7 6; 5 9
Shah Jahan I – a 1/8 rupee of Burhanpur	1987	104	6
Shah Jahan I – a copper dam of Akbarabad	1987	105	7
Shah Jahan I – a gold mohur of Katak	1998	156	22
Shah Jahan I – a gold nisar of Akbarabad	1998	156	22
Shah Jahan I – a half rupee of Akbarabad	1984	90–91, 92–93	5–6; 7
Shah Jahan I – a mohur of Akbarabad	1998	156	21
Shah Jahan I – a mohur of Aurangnagar	1998	156	21
Shah Jahan I – a nisar of half rupee weight (with S. Sahadev)	2001	169	25
Shah Jahan I – a rupee of Kabul with name Khurram	1986	100	6
Shah Jahan II – a rupee of Ajmir	1986	100	6
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Safavid – some coins of Baghdad Mosul (with Y. Jafar)	2009	199	39–40
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<i>Coins of Mediaeval India: a newly discovered hoard from West Bengal</i> by Mitrautapa Simha (with N. Rhodes)	1997	154	10–11
<i>Coins of Mughal Emperors in the State Bank Museum (Lahore)</i> by A. Lashari	2016	229	6
<i>Coins of Nadir Shah Afghan Rulers</i> by Dr A. Ibrahim, A. Lashari & N. Anjum	2016	229	6–9
<i>Collector’s Guide to Mughal Coins</i> by D. Rajgor	2002	170	7–8
<i>Medals of British India, Vol. 1, Commemorative and historical medals from 1750 to 1947</i> by R.P. Puddester	2003	174	6–7
OMJ1: <i>Sylloge der Münzen des Kaukasus und Osteuropas</i> by T. Mayer, S. Heidemann & G. Rispling	2005	184	5
<i>Standard Catalogue of Sultanate Coins of India</i> by D. Rajgor	1992	132	3–6
<i>The Coinage of the Hon. East India Company: Part 1 – The Coins of the Bengal Presidency</i> by Dr P. Stevens	2012	213	7–8
<i>The coins of the Sikhs</i> , second edition by H. Herrli	2005	182	5–6
<i>Zahir–uddin Muhammad Babur</i> by Aman ur Rahman (with D. Moin)	2005 2007 2007	184 190 191	5–6 23 4–5

STAN GORON AND THE ONS: A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY



1975 - Stan visiting Jan Lingen (right) in The Netherlands



1980 - The ONS meeting at Rotterdam. Stan is 3rd from right



1984 - Visiting the Golconda fort, India. Stan is 2nd from right and Ken Wiggins 1st from right



1988 - Stan giving a talk in Calcutta, India. Prashant Kulkarni is 1st from left and Ratan Lal Rampuria 3rd from left



1988 - Stan meeting Jagdish Aggarwal (1st from left) and Gouri Shankar Beed (centre) in Calcutta



2000 - ONS meeting at Cambridge, U.K. (L to R) Michael Mitchiner, Nicholas Rhodes, Shailendra Bhandare, Stan Goron, Syed Ejaz Hussain, and Michael Matzke



2001 - The launch of Stan's Sultanates book in London. He is flanked by Robert Tye and Nicholas Rhodes



2010 - During Coinex, Stan having lunch with (L to R) Paul Stevens, Nicholas Rhodes, and Ujjwal Saha



2012 - ONS Council meeting over lunch in London. (L to R) Peter Smith, Shailendra Bhandare, Howard Simmons, Robert Bracey, Stan Goron, Barbara Mears, and Paul Stevens



2012 - ONS study day at the British Museum, London



2016 - Stan giving a talk on the coinage of Nadir Shah at an ONS meeting at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

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