

ORIENTAL

NUMISMATIC

SOCIETY

Secretary General

Mr. M. R. Broome

Regional Secretaries

General Section: Mr. C. M. Webdale

Newsletter Editor

Dr. M. B. Mitchiner

Europe

Dr. H.J. van der Wiel

Annual Subscription

£3-00; H.F.I. 12-00; 5-00 dollars

UK. and Eire:

Mr. K. W. Wiggins

North America:

Mr. P. D. Hogan

Newsletter number 50

August 1977

Notes for the Newsletters

It would be appreciated if more members could submit short notes on interesting coins or other numismatic items for inclusion in the newsletters. At present most of the writing is being done by a fairly small group of people.

Some more forgeries

Following Mr. Rhodes' note in the last Newsletter more information has come from Scott Semans of Ohio. He writes of two groups of forgeries currently arriving from India :-

- a) Sikkim Paissa. Letters and edges have a very "sharp" feel; where a date should be there is a filigree on some dies; generally the style of lettering is wrong, but it may take an experienced eye to spot this. There are at least 16 different false dies, in combination, being used, so seeing several different dies among a group of coins does not exculpate them. One other important sign - the fakes are much too convex and "rock" quite a bit on a flat surface. (see Mr. Rhodes' note)
- b) Tibet 21 Skar, date 15/55 (Y - A 19). Easy to distinguish as the "1" and "5" of 15 are connected on the fake and the tail of the "5" is split. However, many dies may have been used, so caution is advised. The style of this piece is generally wrong.

To these one may also add that there is also a flood of false Ancient Indian silver "Bent Bar" coins. A group of these, pressure cast from about seven different moulds, has been around London for about three years, but now forgeries of similar type, including a specimen from one of the same moulds, are arriving again. They have been seen on the Continent and in America. The forgeries tend to have a similar general appearance with details that should be sharp being rather rounded but they are not always easy to detect visually and by far the best test is to weigh them. Nearly all genuine coins weigh more than 11 grammes but very few (if any) of the forgeries weigh more than 10.5 grammes

Mr. Wiggins has sent details of a forged gold mohur from Jaipur State weighing 162.5 grains. He writes :-

Some gold mohurs which appear to bear the names of George V and Maharajah Man Singh have recently appeared in this country. The few that have been seen bear the regnal year 3 of Man Singh, which supposedly dates the coin to c. 1925. These pieces are undoubtedly fabrications and ought to be recognised as such by the crude engraving of the die when compared with genuine Jaipur coins of the same period, by the extra leaf at the bottom right of the "Jhar" and by their low weight of 162.5 grains (10.53 grams).



The Large Ottoman Copper Coins

by Samuel Lachman

This discussion deals with the large copper coinage of the Ottoman Empire struck, in general, during the eighteenth century. Similar coins of brass and of silver-plated copper are also included. Copper, in this context, may be bronze since none of the coins has been analysed. The coins are all identical in type with the large silver coins of the same period. It is possible that some of these coins were struck from the same dies as silver coins (fraudulently?).

Although these coins are listed in several catalogues, only Ismail Galip¹ states that Ottoman historians do not mention the striking of such specimens. No catalogue attributes any denomination to these coins. Their weight is usually less than that of corresponding silver coins. It seems most probable that all these coins are counterfeits which were, at one time, silver plated. Some coins in the writer's collection still bear traces of silver.

The following list comprises all coins traced by the writer. The references are indicated thus : -

BMC	Stanley Lane-Poole, Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum, Vol. VIII : The Coins of the Turks in the British Museum, London 1883.
Galip	Ismail Galip, Takvim-i Meskûkat-i Osmaniye, Istanbul 1307 (AD 1890).
LAC	The writer's collection.
Pere	Nuri Pere, Osmanlilarda Madeni Paralar, Istanbul 1968.

The coin types are indicated by the corresponding silver coins : -

Suleyman II	AH 1099, Kostantiniye:	Copper Yarim Kurus	30 mm., 8.05 gm.	LAC	
Ahmad III	AH 1102, Kostantiniye:	Copper Kurus	40 mm., 16.79 gm.	LAC	
Mustafa II	AH 1106, Kostantiniye:	Copper Kurus	38 mm., 15.35 gm.	Pere 495	
		Copper Kurus	36 mm., 18.4 gm.	Galip 590	
		Brass Kurus	38 mm.,	Galip 591	
		Copper Yarim Kurus	30 mm.,	BMC 422	
		Copper Yarim Kurus	29 mm., 8.40 gm.	Pere 496	
		Copper Yarim Kurus	29 mm., 8.77 gm.	LAC	
		Copper Kurus	37 mm.,	BMC 428	
Ahmad III	AH 1115, Kostantiniye:	Copper Kurus	39 mm., 14.4 gm.	LAC (worn)	
		Copper Yarim Kurus	27 mm., 8.15 gm.	Pere 497	
		Silver plated Kurus	39 mm., 23.95 gm.	LAC	
		Silver plated Zolta	38 mm., 18.3 gm.	LAC	
Mahmud I	AH 1143, Kostantiniye:	Copper Zolta	37 mm., 18.30 gm.	Pere 536	
		Brass Yarim Zolta	30 mm., 11.08 gm.	LAC	
		Copper Kurus	38 mm., 18.45 gm.	Pere 583	
		Silver plated Kurus	41 mm., 15.6 gm.	LAC	
Abdul Hamid I	AH 1187, Kostantiniye	Copper Yirmilik	31 mm.,	Pere 583	
		year 1	Copper Kurus	38 mm., 14.25 gm	Pere 685
		year 1	Copper Kurus	38 mm.,	BMC 726
		year 2	Copper Kurus	38 mm.,	BMC 727
		year 7	Copper Kurus	36 mm.,	Galip 866
		year 1	Copper Zolta	35 mm., 11.93 gm.	Pere 686
Selim III	AH 1203, Kostantiniye	year 2	Copper Yuzlik	41 mm., 25.75 gm.	Pere 722
		year 9	Copper Yuzlik	42 mm., 30.32 gm.	Pere 721
		year 18	Copper Yuzlik	44 mm.,	BMC 809
	AH 1203, Misr (Egypt)	year 16	Copper Kurus	35 mm.,	Galip 921

The theoretical weight of genuine silver coins was based on the following weights of the Kurus : -

Suleyman II, Ahmad II, Mustafa II	6 dirhems	= 19.24 gm	
Ahmad III	circa 8¼ dirhems	= 26.46 gm	
Mahmud I	initially	circa 8¼ dirhems	= 26.46 gm
	later	circa 7½ dirhems	= 23.25 gm
Abdul Hamid I	5 10/16 dirhems	= 18.039 gm. in 1780 ²	
Selim III	4 dirhems	= 12.83 gm	

Counterfeit Ottoman silver coins of the correct weight and fineness were struck at Baden-Durlach but appear not to have been placed in circulation. It has also been said that such coins were struck at Vienna³. A report about the striking of Ottoman coins at St Petersburg (= Leningrad) in 1808/09 was recently published⁴.

- 1 Ismail Galip, *Takvim-i Meskukat-i Osmaniye*, Istanbul 1307 (AD 1890), p. 257.
- 2 Pierre Frédéric Bonneville, *Traité des monnaies d'or et d'argent qui circulent chez les différents peuples*, Paris 1806, p. 198.
- 3 Friedrich Wieland, *Turkenmunzen aus Durlach*, *Berliner Numismatische Zeitschrift* 1953, XIII, 13 - 20.
- 4 Marianna B. Severova, *Turetskie monety chekanennye na Petersburgskom monetnom dvore* (Turkish coins struck at the St. Petersburg mint), *Soobshcheniia Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha, Leningrad*, vol. 40, 1975, 77 - 82.

Some Latin - Arabic coins struck by the Genoese at Caffa in the Crimea

by M. B. Mitchiner

The Genoese commercial colony at Caffa in the Crimea was administered by a Consul General assisted by an emissary from the ruling Mongol Khan who ensured that the annual tribute was paid. The colony at Caffa, formerly the classical city of Theodosia on the Cimmerian Bosphorus, was founded by the Genoese under suzerainty of the Golden Horde Mongols shortly before AD 1289. When Timur crushed Toktamish Khan of the Golden Horde during the 1390's AD the power of that people waned and the new Khanate of Krim emerged. During the interval between the final defeat of Toktamish Khan in 1393 and the foundation of the Krim Khanate by Hajji Giray I in 1420 the real power in the Crimea was Ulugh Mohammed, father of Hajji Giray, who remained nominally subject to the rather impotent later Khans of the Golden Horde. In later decades Ottoman Turks and Krim Khans joined combat in the Crimea, a series of conflicts that ended with the sack of Caffa by the Turks in 1475 and the final end of the colony two years later. The majority of Caffan coins are bilingual. They normally bear the Genoese "Gateway" design on one side enclosed by a Genoese legend that often includes the initials of the Consul General (many Consuls General of the period AD 1289 - 1477 were listed by Schlumberger in *Numismatique de l'Orient Latin*, pp. 462-3), while the other side bears the standard design, in Arabic script, of the Mongol suzerain. The three coins shown here are representative of the three major periods in Caffan coinage: the period under the suzerainty of Toktamish Khan, the period when Ulugh Mohammed dominated the Crimea under the nominal suzerainty of the later warring Golden Horde Khans and the period of the Krim Khanate.

Suzerain: Toktamish Khan of the Golden Horde - AD 1376 - 93 : AH 778 - 96

Genoese Consul General: not cited

AR Dirhem. weight 1.0 gm.

Obv. Genoese design : - Gateway with legend around COMUNE IANVEM

Rev. Mongol design : - Standard inscription of Toktamish Khan السلطان العادل تکتیمیش خان خدا ملکہ

(This issue antedates the earliest coin known to Schlumberger by several decades)

Suzerain: Anonymous Khan of the Golden Horde - period AD 1400 - 1420

Genoese Consul General: initials V. C.

AE Follis, weight 0.6 gm.

Obv. Genoese design : - Gateway with legend (C: A: F:) F: A: V: C:

Rev. Mongol design : - Tamgha of the Golden Horde

Suzerain: Hajji Giray Khan of Krim - AD 1420 - 66 : AH 823 - 61

Genoese Consul General : - E. L. S. (in Greek), probably Azzolino Squarciafico AD 1460 - 61

AR Denga, weight 0.6 gm.

Obv. Genoese design : - Gateway with legend (M D) C A F E A C

Rev. Mongol design : - Krim tamgha with Hajji Giray's legend (slightly corrupt) سلطان گرای بن غیاث



The Abbasid - Sassanian coinage of Seistan

by M. B. Mitchiner

Although silver dirhems of the normal post-reform type provided the basic currency of the Caliphate from the beginning of the 8th century AD¹ there remained a persistent preference for traditional Sassanian forms of silver coinage in several outlying eastern provinces. Sassanian style issues struck by Arab governors of Tabaristan provided a local currency for that province on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea during several decades of the Abbasid period². Further to the east Transoxiana had a dual currency of standard Abbasid issues and local silver coins based on the previous currencies of the Hephthalite "Lords of Bokhara" and of the Choresmian kings. The Sassanian style 'Bust / Fire altar' drachms of Bokhara were issued until the Caliphate of Al Amin (AD 808 - 13: AH 193 - 98)³ while the 'Bust / Horseman' drachms of Choresmia appear to have been issued for the last time during the governorship of Al Fadl ibn Yahya (AD 787 - 95)⁴. A comparable situation existed in the South Afghan province of Seistan where Sassanian style drachms were struck until the governorship of Tamim ibn Sa'id (AH 169: AD 785 - 86)⁵ alongside normal drachms of post-reform Omayyad and Abbasid types⁶. It is noticeable that the Sassanian style and Choresmian style drachms which subserved the needs of local commerce in Transoxiana and Seistan during the Abbasid period tended to be made of somewhat debased silver and were often rudely engraved whereas contemporary Islamic style dirhems struck in the same provinces were made of good quality silver and show a superior standard of engraving.

The Arab - Sassanian drachms of Seistan are a coherent series of rather base and crudely engraved coins in similar style to the specimen published here. The phrase 'بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ رَبِّیْ' (In the name of Allah, the Lord) is often found around the obverse margin and some coins bear a longer marginal legend giving the mint name 'Zaranj' بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ ضَرْبُ بَزْرَنْجِ (In the name of Allah, struck at Zaranj). Zaranj was the chief city of Seistan. The chronology of the series used to be debateable until Bivar⁹ published a similar drachm whose marginal legend named an ephemeral Abbasid governor of Seistan province, Tamim ibn Sa'id. The coin published here is very similar to that published by Bivar; a second specimen of this unusual issue which provides a chronological key to the Abbasid - Sassanian coinage of Seistan.

AR (moderately debased) Drachm, weight 2.3 gm.

Obv. Crude Sassanian style bust right with winged headress

traces of pahlvi legend in front and behind

marginal Arabic legend: -

Tamim ibn Sa'id (Governor of Seistan, AH 169: AD 785 - 6)

In the name of Allah, the Lord

تمیم بن سعید
بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ رَبِّیْ

Rev. Crude Sassanian Fire altar and Attendants design.

- 1 The currency reform of AH 77/79 (AD 697/9); but some Sassanian style drachms continued to be issued at a number of mints during the following few years.
- 2 From the Arab conquest of Tabaristan in PYE (Post-Yezdegird era) 111, until PYE 143 (AD 761 - 794: AH 144 - 178). For details see J. Walker, A Catalogue of Muhammadan coins in the British Museum: I. Arab - Sassanian coins, 1941.
- 3 J. Walker, *ibid.*, Pl. XXIX.
- 4 British Museum. See also R. Frye, Notes on the early coinage of Transoxiana, Numismatic notes and monographs of the American Numismatic Society 113, 1949 and M. Mitchiner, Early coinage of Central Asia 1973, Pl. VIII, 71c.
- 5 For details of this ephemeral governor see C. E. Bosworth, Sistan under the Arabs, *IsMEO*, Rome 1968, p. 84.
- 6 Post-reform dirhems had been struck in this province, bearing the two alternative mint names Seistan and Zaranj, since before AH 100 (= AD 718). See, for example, E. von Zambaur, *Die Munzprägungen des Islams*, Wiesbaden 1968.
- 7 For such coins see J. Walker, *ibid.*, XXXVII, 9 and M. Mitchiner, *the World of Islam*, 1977 (in press), coins 298 - 299.
- 8 For example J. Walker, *ibid.*, XXXVII, 10 and M. Mitchiner, *ibid.*, no. 300.
- 9 A. D. H. Bivar, Fresh evidence on the "Sijistan Barbarous" series of Arab-Sassanian Dirhams, *J. Numismatic Society of India* XXX, 1968, 1-6

