



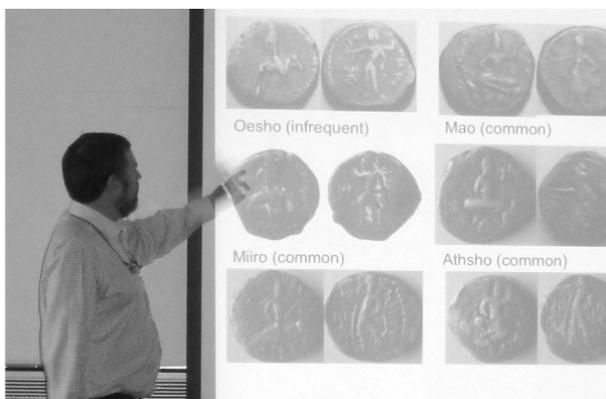
### ONS News

With this issue, we are pleased to publish a supplement containing a selection of the papers given earlier this year at the British Museum seminar to celebrate the centenary of the Numismatic Society of India. All the papers are due to be published later by the NSI.

Congratulations to Stefan Heidemann, who from mid-October this year will be working for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. He will be working on the new permanent display of Islamic Art, with special responsibility for pre-1500 art of the Arabic world.

### Oxford Meeting

The society met at the Ashmolean Museum on 5 October. There were a series of talks by society members. The event was particularly well attended by collectors and numismatists from India.



*Joe Cribb opens proceedings by outlining a new approach to the coinage of the Kushan king, Huvishka*

The talks began with Joe Cribb on the Coinage of Huvishka. Barbara Mears took the opportunity to pose a question to the audience which she then took up in her talk later in the afternoon on the complex naming of South Indian Pagoda coins. Ujjwal Saha spoke next on some new types of Gupta and Samata coinages and Girish Sharma presented a previously unknown Satavahana king. Shailendra Bhandare, who had co-ordinated and chaired the session, gave a final presentation in which he showed some of the Indian coins from the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.

### Joe Cribb Felicitation Volume

Joe Cribb will shortly be retiring from his role at the British Museum. During his time there he has had an enormous impact on the study of Oriental numismatics, both directly through his own publications, but also through the support and encouragement he has given to others. He has been consistently generous in sharing

his expertise and has been responsible for organising many fruitful meetings of the ONS in the Coins & Medals study room.

Joe has much more to contribute to the subject but his friends and colleagues wanted to take the opportunity of his retirement to celebrate his achievements so far. Shailendra Bhandare and Sanjay Garg have edited a felicitation volume with contributions from many of those who have benefited from Joe's guidance over the years. This volume will shortly be published by Reesha Books International. Details of the contents can be found below on page 4.

With the support of Shatrughan Jain, a reception was organised following the Oxford meeting at which Joe was presented with a copy of the volume.



*Joe is presented with the felicitation volume by Andrew Burnett, Deputy Director of the British Museum, and Shailendra Bhandare*



*Guests from India enjoy a drink at the reception*



*Friends, colleagues, and fellow enthusiasts, gather for the reception*



*Andrew extols Joe's many virtues*



*The editor (right) relaxing, with Girish Sharma and Ujjwal Saha*



*Attendees gather after the meeting*

**Commemoration**

The commemoration of Joe's career extends far beyond the ONS. A new medal has been produced by Linda Crook celebrating his time as Keeper of Coins and Medals at the British Museum from 2003 to 2010. The medal (diameter 123mm) is shown below, and features symbolic animals from South Asia, and invented legend on the Chinese coin, a quotation from Chairman Mao 'Let the past serve the present.'



If readers are interested in purchasing the medal it is being sold by the British Museum for £320 and more information is available by contacting Janet Larkin, Department of Coins and Medals, British Museum, London, WC1B 3DG, UK (jlarkin@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)

**ONS Meeting Utrecht, 16 October 2010**

This year's ONS meeting in Utrecht took place at the Geldmuseum on Saturday, 16 October. The meeting was well attended with over 30 participants including members from Belgium, Germany, Russia and the U.K. After introductory refreshments, the programme of talks began with one by **François Gurnet**: *Ribbons on Sasanian coins: symbolism and consequences*. The ribbons, as part of the royal diadem, form a particular detail on Sasanian coinage. The royal diadem is already found on earlier coinages, like those of the Graeco-Bactrian, Parthian and other series. But, in Gurnet's opinion, the ribbons on Sasanian coinage have a particular symbolism, in addition to the use of the cluster of three dots, representing, according to him, the triple nature of royalty. Of course, various questions can be raised, for instance, on the coinage of Yazdgerd the ribbons are absent. Why should this be? Perhaps it indicates an issue during a regency? This was an intriguing lecture, which showed that the symbols used on the coinage were not merely a kind of decoration, but provided at the time much more information than we nowadays realise.

**Paul Murphy**, presented an equally provocative presentation *Ancient Indian Metrology; Numismatists versus Archaeologists? Or together!*, and as he described it himself "Archies versus Numies". In this part of his presentation the pro's and con's of these two disciplines, Archaeology – Numismatics, were put side by side and the need for co-operation between those two sciences was well emphasised. Numismatics as a science was too often ignored among archaeologists (but not only among those). How many of either discipline read each other's publications? A much better co-operation and exchange of information was definitely required.

In his review on Indian metrology, he largely followed Robert Tye's recent publication *Early World Coins & Early Weight Standards* (York 2009), saying that in the ancient world, there was a common weight system maintained from Mohenjo Daro and Harappa onwards of c. 3.43g (4 mashas) and its multiples. He illustrated this using ancient weights from Syria, Babylon and Mohenjo Daro.

**Jonathan Morris**, presented a mildly humorous look at the Indian princes during the nineteenth century, with the title: *The Raja, the Praja, and the Cowherd*. In a 60-slide PowerPoint presentation, he gave a brief overview of the Indian Princely States, their origins and activities as well as some of the coins they produced. In particular, the various anecdotes between the Indian

princes and the British made this lecture colourful and humorous. For example, the story of one of the princes who expressed his surprise at the size of Buckingham Palace, “so small?” or another prince who could not understand that, despite being invited by Queen Victoria to Buckingham Palace, it was not the intention that he should also stay there. These episodes and the large variety of coins, legends and scripts, as well as the use of exotic coats of arms, made it an amusing as well as an informative presentation.

During the lunch break, Mrs **Ans ter Woerds**, the librarian of the Geldmuseum, again made it possible to visit the library of the museum where various books on oriental coinage were on display. There was also the possibility to view some of the exhibitions in the museum. In particular, the display entitled EYECATCHERS, 100 Sensational objects from the collection of the Geldmuseum, was really worth a visit.

After lunch, **Roland Dauwe** presented a paper on *The Timurid Coinage of Qumm*. In general, the Timurid coinage struck at Qumm is very scarce to extremely rare and Roland was even able to mention how many examples of a particular variety or date he had observed. Often this was only one or two and, for the others, they could be counted on the fingers of one hand. 75% of the coins of Qumm mint, most frequently met with, are in the name of Shah Rukh ibn Timur (807-850/1405-1447), and fall within the period AH 830-837. He described the coins in depth, illustrating each and every variety and date so far observed of Qumm under the Timurids. Thorough research, indeed!

Then, after a tea-break, followed the traditional auction of oriental coins and related books. This time an exceptional number of books on Chinese numismatics was available for sale for which and there was keen interest. This year’s auction realised almost 725 euros for the benefit of the ONS. Our thanks are due to all those who supplied and donated material for the auction as well as those participating in the bidding. The day ended with some 20 participants enjoying a nice Chinese meal at a nearby restaurant.

We are particularly grateful to the Geldmuseum, who most generously enabled us to make use of the facilities for this meeting, and to Jan Lingen for organising the event once again with his usual efficiency. The next meeting is due at the same venue, the Geldmuseum, Leidseweg 90, Utrecht, on **Saturday 15 October 2011**. Do make a note of this in your diary now.



*Paul Murphy during his presentation*



*Jonathan Morris talking about Indian princes*



*François Gurnet giving his talk on aspects of Sasanian coinage*



*Roland Dauwe giving detailed information on the mint of Qumm*

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## New and Recent Publications

The contents of the Joe Cribb Felicitation Volume (see above) are:  
Preface

Joe Cribb - Curriculum Vitae

Andrew Burnett: 'Joe Cribb – a Eu-lo-joe-y'

Joe Cribb – Personality in Pictures

Michael Alram: 'Coinage, prestige and identity: from Rome to Persepolis and China'

Shailendra Bhandare: 'Linking the past: overstruck coins and the chronology of the Satavahanas'

Robert Bracey: 'Kankali Tila and Kushan chronology'

Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis: 'Fascination with the past: ancient Persia on the coins and banknotes of Iran'

John S. Deyell: 'Reinterpretation of a Samatata coin – the first numismatic depiction of Bodhisattva Manjushri'

Elizabeth Errington: 'A hoard of punch-marked coins from Mathura (?)'

Harry Falk: 'Ten thoughts on the Mathura Lion capital reliquary'

Christine Fröhlich: 'Looking for Tyche: on the tracks of a syncretism from Greece to Gandhara'

Sanjay Garg: 'The Raj and the Rajas: a tale of numismatic diplomacy'

Najaf Haider: 'Minting technology in Mughal India'

Terry Hardaker: 'Aspects of human society from the earliest punch-marked coinages of the Indian subcontinent'

Syed Ejaz Hussain: 'Coins and commerce in Bihar in the seventeenth century: some reflections'

Barbara Mears: 'A review of the pagoda coins of south-east India during the Nayaka and early colonial period'

Wilfried Pieper: 'Harashri: a new king of ancient Almora'

Himanshu Prabha Ray: 'Coins as history: Kuninda and Kota coins of the Punjab'

Nicholas Rhodes & Vasilij Mihailovs: 'The coinage of Samudra Pasai'

Sutapa Sinha: 'History of the coin collection of the Bengal Sultans in the British Museum'

Paul Stevens: 'John Prinsep's copper coinage'

Pankaj Tandon: 'The crowns on Kanishka's bronze coins and some additional Shiva images on Kushan coins'

François Thierry: 'Onomastic, title and chronology of the Türgesh Kaghans'

Helen Wang: 'Famous and not-so-famous people associated with the Royal Asiatic Society'

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Members interested in the coinage of the Middle East may also be interested in a new, trilingual cartographic work entitled *Atlas historique du golfe Persique (XVI<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles)*. *Historical Atlas of the Persian Gulf (Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)* edited by JL Bacqué-Grammont, Z Biedermanhn, D Couto & M Taleghani; 492p. 75 black and white illustrations, 75 colour illustrations, 210x270mm; ISBN 978-2-503-52284-5. Published by Brepols, Begijnhof 67, B-2300 Turnhout, Belgium; info@brepols.net; www.brepols.net. Price €90. In French, English and Persian.

The aim of the book is to retrace the way in which the Gulf was depicted in maps between 1500 and 1750. Around 100 printed maps and manuscripts from libraries and archives in Europe, the USA and Iran have been assembled, some of which are published for the first time. They are presented in five sections dedicated to Portuguese, Dutch, French, English and German cartography. Each is published with the part showing the Gulf enlarged and accompanied by a brief commentary as well as a transcription of the place names and the legends.

*Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria*  
Edited by John Haldon, Princeton University, USA; Ashgate 2010. Hardback, pp 226. ISBN: 978-0-7546-6849-7

"The transformation of the eastern provinces of the Roman empire from the middle of the seventh century AD under the impact of Islam has attracted a good deal of scholarly attention in recent years, and as more archaeological material becomes available, has been subject to revision and rethinking in ways that radically affect what we know or understand about the area, about state-building and the economy and society of the early Islamic world, and about issues such as urbanisation, town-country relations, the ways in which a different religious culture impacted on the built environment, and about politics. This volume represents the fruits of a workshop held at Princeton University in May 2007 to discuss the ways in which recent work has affected our understanding of the nature of economic and exchange activity in particular, and the broader implications of these advances for the history of the region."

**Contents:** Preface; Introduction;

John Haldon: 'Greater Syria in the 7<sup>th</sup> century: context and background'

Alan Walmsley: 'Coinage and the economy of Syria-Palestine in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries AD'

R. Stephen Humphreys: 'Christian communities in early Islamic Syria and Northern Jazira: the dynamics of adaptation'

Arietta Papaconstantinou: 'Administering the early Islamic empire: insights from the papyri'

Clive Foss: 'Mu'awiya's state'

Gene W. Heck: 'First century Islamic currency: mastering the message from the money'

Lutz Ilisch: 'Abd al-Malik's monetary reform in copper and the failure of centralization'

Jodi Magness: 'Early Islamic urbanism and building activity in Jerusalem and at Hammath Gader'

Jairus Banaji: 'Late antique legacies and Muslim economic expansion'

Hugh Kennedy: 'Syrian elites from Byzantium to Islam: survival or extinction?'

*Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum*  
by Venetia Porter, with Robert Hoyland, Alexander Morton and Shailendra Bandhare, British Museum Press 2010; pp 196; ISBN-13: 978-0-86159-160

"The first part of this book focuses on the 638 Arabic, Persian and Indian seals covering material from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Introduction covers seal practice in different periods and levels of society; the role of the seal and the 'alama or motto, the use of figural representation on the seals, seal engravers, the forgery of

seals and the importance of the stones used are described. The features of the seals themselves, in particular the palaeography and dating of early Islamic seals, some grammatical features of the inscriptions, and the range of designs present on the seals are analysed. The types and form of Islamic names, the range of phrases that commonly appear and the characteristics of later seals are also discussed. The second part focuses on 170 amulets in the collection preceded by an introduction to the subject. Research into the engraving techniques is presented with analysis of the stones used.”

## Other News

### *A 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

The British Museum’s Department of Coins and Medals is about to celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was in November 1860 that the Museum trustees decided to divide up the Department of Antiquities, over which Edward Hawkins had presided for more than thirty years, and, in the process, create a separate Department of Coins and Medals. After some months spent considering how the new structure would operate, on 2 February 1861 the trustees formally approved the appointment of three new keepers, and one week later William Vaux, the new Keeper of Coins and Medals, and his colleagues reported to the trustees ‘that they had entered upon the duties assigned to them’.

The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Department will be marked by a conference on the general subject of UK museums and the future of numismatics, to be held in the British Museum on Friday 18 February 2011. Around a dozen papers will examine different areas of numismatic activity within museums, including new sources of information and the impact numismatic research can have on both the scholarly community and the general public. Collection development, numismatic expertise, treasure, archaeology, history, art history, conservation, science, public engagement and digitisation will be among the areas covered. While also looking to the past, the primary focus will be on plans for the future.

More information will be available in due course. In the meantime, make a note of the date and, for any queries, contact Janet Larkin on [jlarkin@britishmuseum.org](mailto:jlarkin@britishmuseum.org).

## Articles

### THE SEQUENCE AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE LATE AKSUMITE COIN TYPES RECONSIDERED\*

By Wolfgang Hahn

It is well known that Aksumite coins are the only source for a series of otherwise unknown kings’ names for the late 3<sup>rd</sup> to the early 7<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. Only two of these rulers are otherwise attested, by literature and monumental inscriptions: Ezanias who introduced Christianity c. 350 and Caleb, the avenger of a Jewish persecution of Yemeni Christians in the 520s. Both episodes have entered the historical records of the universal church providing us with footholds for a very approximate chronology.

The decline of Aksum is manifested by the end of coin production, an activity which had been instigated by international trade. It is usually linked to the disruption of the connection with the Byzantine empire, which was permanently affected by the Islamic conquest of the Middle East (Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia) and the eastern parts of North Africa (Egypt, Libya) in the 630s and 640s.

### *Periodisation, time frame and sequencing criteria*

The reigns of Ezanias and Caleb are regarded as historical caesuras. They have also been used in the periodisation of Aksumite numismatics although their impact on the monetary development is less evident. The post-Caleb era can be regarded as the epoch of late Aksumite coinage. The loss of the Yemenite regions under direct or indirect rule characterises the monetary situation of this time. Reconstructing the sequence of the kings whose names are attested on their coins is primarily guided by the identification of a contemporary of Muhammad and the assumption that this king was the last ruler to issue coins. Recent numismatic literature (which was headed by the late Stuart Christopher Munro-Hay from the 1970s) offers diverging opinions on this question, all of which have been stated more or less authoritatively. However, a satisfactory solution to this contentious problem - which would also be of interest to archaeologists - has not yet been found. A detailed comparison of the different approaches hitherto published is not worth the effort. Further use of H.-numbers<sup>1</sup> is limited to the quotation of coin types as a means of communication; they cannot be upheld as conveying the correct chronological sequence. Altogether 25 main types (H.44-72)<sup>2</sup> are involved, which were struck in the three metals: gold, silver and copper (temporarily with partial gilding, which is a speciality of Aksumite coins and may also be helpful for dating them).

An increased number of coins enables us to apply new methods like metal analysis, statistics and die studies. The evidence has to be viewed critically and reweighed, avoiding any influence of those traditional tales that have entered into the historiography. Numismatists usually tend to reconstruct a sequence of types as a line of continuous development, without breaks; in consequence, what look like parallels have been explained by the suspected existence of a co-regency. Although we cannot exclude such situations entirely – especially when we take into account the obvious *imitatio imperii Romani* practised by the rulers of Aksum – the absence of other, i. e. non-numismatic, clues does not favour these hypotheses.

We have to begin with a few general observations regarding the lettering and protocol of the kings’ names and titles. As a rule, the gold coins – throughout, rather rare specimens because of the breakdown in Yemeni provenances - have Greek legends, although partially blundered, with frequent inversions. These were apparently intended to impress the outside world. On the other hand, the silver coins and coppers after Caleb use the indigenous idiom, Geez (only rarely with partial vowelising). In the cases where the names originate from the Bible (Caleb, Israel, Gersam, Joel)<sup>3</sup> equivalents are immediately possible. But it needed newly-found gold coins to recognise that the king who is called HTZ in Geez was transformed with vowels into Greek as (H)Ethasas, and so we can now be sure that this king, too, issued coins in all three metals - even if he should be the last in our sequence.

The gold coins of two kings show the so-called throne-name transliterated into Greek (Allamidas, Ellagabaz) whilst the potentially associated silver and copper coins might have carried the personal (baptismal) names. On this premise, all kings of the late period could be provided with issues in all three metals. Although not necessary, this would render an evenly balanced, coherent picture for the reigns of altogether six kings. They style themselves as *basileus Aksomiton / neguse Aksume*, i.e. with a geographical specification (which was re-assumed after Caleb).

\* English version of an article originally written in German (MIN 41/2010); Vincent West is to be thanked for helping with the translation.

<sup>1</sup> The complete series of coin types can be found as drawings in Hahn 2000, 307-11, as photos in Hahn 1983, pl.12-5 (the same photos were used in ANS Museum Notes 29, 1984, pl.27-32). It is not appropriate here to discuss the criteria used to differentiate between types and variants in numismatics.

<sup>2</sup> Without H.52, 58, 60, 64 (silver types allegedly struck in copper).

<sup>3</sup> Cf W. Hahn, ‘Noe, Israel und andere Könige mit biblischen Namen auf aksumitischen Münzen – Der Gottesbund als Legitimation der christlichen Königsherrschaft im alten Äthiopien’, *Money Trend* 33/12, 2001, 124-8.

Late Aksumite, first phase: c.540-c.580

ALLA AMIDAS



ARMEH



ELLA GABAZ WZN



ISRAEL



Late Aksumite, second phase: c.580-c.620

GERSEM



JOEL



HETHASAS / HTZ



The results of metallurgical analyses (in which different and barely compatible methods were applied)<sup>4</sup> are rather vague for the late period, apparently because of wide tolerances. Therefore, the decrease in alloy (postulated as a dating indicator) cannot be reconstructed precisely. Regarding the gold coins, one can suppose that the intended alloy was defined by the number of fine gold carats weight in a certain number of carats gross weight. The alloy was made by adding silver, or silver and copper. After Ezanas, the theoretical gross weight seems to have been fixed at 9 carats (1.69g; tending to fall after Caleb). 5-6 of the 9 carats were fine gold (56-67%, depending on the standard of how highly gold was refined). The accuracy on the one hand suffers from carelessness in the manufacture of the blanks, and on the other hand from the low and, therefore, unrepresentative number of coins which were available for analyses.

Regarding the silver coins, more analyses could be undertaken; there, the tolerances seem to be even wider. Perhaps under Caleb and for some time afterwards an alloy of 50% silver was intended, but it could have been diluted whenever a shortage in the precious metal occurred. Towards the end of coin-striking, a real drop is obvious and this must be taken into account when reconstructing the kings' sequence. What were taken for copper coins struck from dies of silver coins in most cases seem to be only oxidised pieces in uncleaned condition<sup>5</sup>. In general, the deterioration of the alloy is clear in the colour of the coins, in their fragility and, often, in an inhomogeneous mixture of the metals (globules of lead within the copper).

From the side of excavation archaeology, attempts have been made to assist numismatic chronology by registering the coins of the different types in radiocarbon-dated layers so that their earliest occurrence could be determined<sup>6</sup>. Besides the notorious unreliability of the C14-measurements, the application of this method also suffers from the small number of coins involved. Anyway, no blatant contradiction arises against the new sequencing proposed below.

Delimiting the time-frame for the late period, we first have to fix its beginning: the end of Caleb's reign (his abdication?) may be dated to the late 530s according to literary sources. The king who calls himself by the Graecised throne-name Allamidas (Ella Amida) must be the immediate successor to Caleb because a reverse die match can be observed with a late issue of Caleb<sup>7</sup>. As an alternative, a co-regency in the late years of Caleb has been proposed. This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by an epigraphic hint: in an inscription of Sumuyafa Ashwa, Caleb's Yemeni viceroy, he speaks of his overlords (plural)<sup>8</sup>, but this can perhaps be understood as a *pluralis majestatis*<sup>9</sup>. In the hagiographic biography of Saint Gregentius of Zafar, the name of the (or a) successor to Caleb is given as Atherphotam, which is a form hopelessly distorted in the manuscripts (transliterated from hearsay over a long transmission chain) and of no use<sup>10</sup>. The gold

coins of Allamidas have the three crosses as invocation of the Holy Trinity similar to their use under Caleb. Thus, it is certain that they begin the series of the late kings. Whether this king also issued silver and copper coins under another name will be discussed below.

### *Clues in the history of early Islam?*

Which king of Aksum is to be placed at the end of the coinage and when he reigned depends on his links with the expanding Islam and on what we are told of the relations between Muhammad and his contemporary on the throne of Aksum in the Islamic tradition (hadith). These accounts have been used again and again. According to them, some of the first adherents of the Prophet went into exile in AD 615 from Mekka to Abyssinia where they found refuge and protection at the court of the negus. When they returned in AD 628, one of the women (Umm Habiba), who was to be married to Muhammad, was provided with a dowry of 400 gold pieces by the negus. She was enthusiastic about the splendour of Axum's cathedral. The name of the negus is given in Arabic as (Al) Ashama ibn Abjar. His son, Arha by name, is said to have perished when his ship was wrecked on a pilgrimage to Mekka. The Prophet bemoaned his death or that of Ashama in AD 630. Both names have been equated with Ella Gabaz and Armaha of the kings' lists since the time of Martin Hartmann (1895)<sup>11</sup>, building on diverse linguistic transmission processes. It may be supposed that both names in the kings' lists (mediaeval concoctions) were inspired by coin finds. But Al Ashama most probably derives from Ella Asbeha, the throne-name of Caleb, whose memory lasted a long time in the Arabic tradition because of his Yemenite campaigns<sup>12</sup>. The patronymic Abjar is even taken from Abgar, king of Edessa, famous for his legendary correspondence with Jesus Christ. Arha could be a contraction of Abreha, Caleb's Yemeni viceroy, who strove to divert the pilgrimage from Mekka to Sana, where he built a magnificent cathedral; this church may be the one meant in Umm Habiba's tale. Taken altogether, these relations with Muhammad should have resulted in Abyssinia being excluded from the jihad<sup>13</sup>.

Given these names, the historicity of such Arabian stories is more than doubtful; thus, "Armaha" as the last coin-issuing king dating to the 630s disappears. This form of the name as Armaha (or Ramhai) was apparently misunderstood from the frequently found unvocalised coins, but the correct vowelising (which we know from very rare specimens) is in fact Ar(e)meh<sup>14</sup>. This king's silver coin type (H.71) has been interpreted under the influence of the late dating: the architectural arch with three crosses above and a pendant crown below was understood as a schematic representation of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the circumscribed sentence on the typologically related silver coins of his alleged predecessor (H.69: "the king who exalts the Saviour") was seen as a reference to spectacular events in the time of the emperor Heraclius (the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians and removal of the Holy cross relic in AD 614, its restitution and

<sup>4</sup> For the gold coins see J.-N. Barrandon, E. Godet, C. Morrisson, 'Le monnayage d'or axoumite: une altération particulière', *RN* 1990, 186-211 (where the results of different methods are compared); for the silver coins (and also some coppers) a series of analyses were undertaken by M. Blet-Lemarquand, but they have not been published yet, cf. M. Blet-Lemarquand, E. Godet, W. Hahn, 'Les monnaies axoumites d'argent: premières résultats d'analyse', *BSFN* 5, 2001, 86-8.

<sup>5</sup> Cf note 2.

<sup>6</sup> D. Phillipson, *Archeology at Aksum II*, London 2000, 485f (domestic area).

<sup>7</sup> It is strange that G. Fiaccadori, in his entry "Ella Amida (II)" in *EAE II*, 260, took this die-link as proving that this king was one of Caleb's predecessors (according to the kings' lists); apparently he did not understand the sequence of Caleb's issues.

<sup>8</sup> G. Ryckmans, 'Une inscription chrétienne sabéenne aux musées d'antiquités d'Istanbul', *Muséon* 59, 194, 171f, lines 3 and 7.

<sup>9</sup> M. Kropp by letter; on the other hand, the form *basileusi* which occurs on the reverses of the latest gold issue of Caleb (H.41d) as well as on Allamidas pieces could be read as a dative plural (cf note 30) so that we cannot exclude a short time of co-regency (perhaps when Caleb had withdrawn from actually reigning).

<sup>10</sup> This biography is a much later compilation, but its parts set in South Arabia (§9 and 10) are based on quite old sources. The most recent edition

in A. Berger, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentius, Archbishop of Taphar*, Berlin 2006, offers only slight variants of the name from the manuscripts (§9, 249 on pp.66f); the commentator (G. Fiaccadori), postulates a (palaeographically?) easily explainable deformation from Gabra Masqal, a legendary son of Caleb. This interpretation is pure fantasy – besides the objection that Gabra Masqal (servant of the cross) in all probability was an epithet, not a personal name. In the same document the throne-name of Caleb, Ella Asbeha, was distorted to Ellesboam by a similar pattern of blundering (M. Kropp by letter).

<sup>11</sup> M. Hartmann, 'Der Nagasi Ashama und sein Sohn Arma', *Zeitschr. d. Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellsch.* 49, 1895, 299-300.

<sup>12</sup> Stories of his military activity (even in Africa) were put into Umm Salama's mouth, who is also said to have been in Abyssinian exile and later became a wife of Muhammad.

<sup>13</sup> W. Raven, 'Some early texts on the negus of Abyssinia', *Journ.Sem.Studies* 33, 1988, 197-228; U. Pietruscha, 'Die ersten Muslime in Aksum – Frühe arabische Berichte', *Folia Orientalia* 29, 2003, 35-45.

<sup>14</sup> W. Hahn, 'Die Vokalisierung axumitischer Münzaufschriften als Datierungselement', *Litterae Num. Vindobonenses* 3, 1987, 217-225; E. Godet, *Le monnayage de l'Ethiopie ancienne* (unpublished thesis, Paris 2005), no.1390 has a copper coin, where the R seems to be vocalised.

exaltation by Heraclius - both incidents with enormous repercussions in the Christian world). But the connection of the motif with Jerusalem can be of an earlier date: according to the hagiographic tradition, Caleb gave his crown to the church of the Holy Sepulchre when he resigned his kingship<sup>15</sup>. That the object under the arch (of H.71) really depicts a crown is apparent from the gilding which denotes its sacred character and is also applied to the crown on the king's head on the obverse. There are comparable depictions on Byzantine coins of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD<sup>16</sup>. The ecclesiastical symbol of the architectural arch could have been imitated from contemporary Byzantine bronze weights (where it mostly appears inlaid in silver)<sup>17</sup>. Thus a radical shifting of Armeh's coins to a much earlier date can be reconsidered; the consequence of this is a complete rearrangement of the late Aksumite coin series and, therefore, of the sequence of the kings.

### *Armeh (Allamidas) redated*

If we regard king Armeh as the immediate successor to Caleb he is identical with Allamidas of the gold coins (H.44) who is thus provided with silver (H.71) and copper coins (H.72). For these it would imply a typological break, combined with new legends carrying mottoes of "mercy, peace and joy to the peoples"<sup>18</sup>. Although biblical in wording, they seem to suit the new era of appeasement with the Yemen of Abreha. The transition to Geez was prepared by Caleb's silver (H.42). In both metals the composition of the types connects some old and striking new elements. The traditional motif of the ears of wheat returns (H.71 obv.; H.72 rev.), but the architectural arch on the reverse of the silver coins has not appeared before and the sacred parts of the picture are gilt on both sides. Its symbolic meaning (church of the Holy Sepulchre with Caleb's crown) has already been noted<sup>19</sup>.

Because of an increase (probably double) in their weight, Armeh's copper coins are notably larger, so that a whole-figured representation of the king was possible (enthroned to fit into the coin's circle). Like the half-length bust on the silver coins the seated figure is turned to the right. If we consult the typological repertoire of Byzantine coins for comparison we can find other enthroned representations now and then, but they are viewed from the front, except the seated personification (cult figure) of Antiochia on pentanummia struck in this mint between 522 and 528 AD<sup>20</sup>. The cross on staff with gilt centre between two ears of wheat recurs from an old model (H.P30).

The increased weight of Armeh's copper could be seen as a remote parallel to a similar phenomenon in the Byzantine copper coinage, which was made heavier by one third in 538; there, however, other sizes were involved<sup>21</sup>. An impact of the great plague of the early 540s on Aksum, as was suggested by Munro-Hay<sup>22</sup>, is not mirrored in its coinage.

Armeh resumed the application of diacritical (issue-)marks such as had been used on gold coins of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> c. AD and are to be found on Byzantine coins, too. They appear in parallel on Armeh's silver and copper coins: one or three dots, crosslets, crescents or Geez letters. The same variety of issue marks is also an argument for the allocation of the silver and copper coins which belong to the next king.

<sup>15</sup> Martyrium Sancti Arethae (mid 6<sup>th</sup> c.), ed. E. Carpentier (Acta Sanctorum X, Oct.24, Brussels 1861), 758A.

<sup>16</sup> MIB Justin I 35c and 42c.

<sup>17</sup> Cf W. Hahn, 'Diener des Kreuzes - Zur christlichen Münztypologie der Könige von Abessinien in spätantiker Zeit', *Money Trend* 32/6, 2000, 58-63.

<sup>18</sup> The translation of 'Hzb (*peoples*, plural) has to be corrected in V. West, 'Ge'ez Legends on Aksumite Coins', *ONSNL* 159, Spring 1999, 5-6

<sup>19</sup> This type is represented within the Palestinian finds which may be connected with Abyssinian pilgrims to the Holy Land, cf W. Hahn, 'Touto arese te chora - St. Cyril's Holy Cross cult in Jerusalem and Aksumite coin typology', *INJ* 13, 1999, 103-7 (p.117, no.9).

<sup>20</sup> MIB Justin I 7 and Justinian I 140.

<sup>21</sup> Cf MIBEC p.16. The coppers of Armeh correspond in weight and size to Justinian's eight folles (pentanummia); it seems doubtful whether the mint of Aksum would have been able to strike larger denominations.

<sup>22</sup> Munro-Hay 1991, p.92.

### *W(a)z(e)n Ella Gabaz, Armeh's successor*

The reverse of the silver type was now simplified to an architectural arch (ciborium) with one cross beneath, with its centre gilt, and the explicatory inscription saying that the king exalts the Saviour (H.67). The obverse shows a frontal bust of the king (in Byzantine manner); his crown is gilt as under Armeh, but it looks different. The personal name appears as W(a)z(e)n.

The same name is written on his copper coins in the genitive form (H.70) introduced by the pronoun Z(a) in the quadrants of the reverse, which are made up by the crosslet (with gilt central spot). The weight of these coppers was reduced again; therefore, the flans got thinner. The obverse depicts the king in a half-length profile bust wearing only the head-cloth and holding an ear of wheat (often crossed, as if it were in a combination with a sceptre). The diacritical marks are the same. The accompanying legend ("this + may please the peoples") was adapted from the reverse (the side with the head-cloth representation) of the Caleb silvers (H.42; the notion of the peoples, introduced by Armeh, replaced the country/city).

The frontal view of the king's bust on the silver coins is certainly copied from Byzantine models<sup>23</sup> where it was reintroduced in 538. Soon this rather rare silver type was modified: instead of the king's name WZN, a monogram (also consisting of three letters) was placed in the left field and the additional space now available filled by the inclusion of Aksum in the title (H.69). The cross under the architectural arch is slightly altered, sometimes with a stand. The unchanged inscription adds to the assumption that we are dealing with the same king. The composition recalls an epithet like Gabra Masqal ("servant of the cross"). Denoting this type by the reverse legend as a quasi-king's name (often used in the numismatic literature) is, however, quite wrong.

Kings' monograms in the South Arabian tradition had already occurred before on Aksumite coins (lastly under Caleb: H.41a,b), but in addition to the full name of the king. Munro-Hay is certainly right in resolving the ADG monogram as Alla Gabad<sup>24</sup>, the Geez form of the throne name Ella Gabaz as it is written on the gold coins of this king (H.45). It is revealing that these gold coins copied the title NG (transliterated into Greek) from the silver coins and added it to the king's name, whereas the reverse legend reads *+ba+si+le+us*, again interrupted by the four cosmological crosses (as in the 5<sup>th</sup> c. and in parallel with the reverse of the copper type H.70).

### *A place for Israel*

What follows within the sequence of silver coins is the type with architectural arch, but without the king's name or monogram on the obverse (H.68). This anonymous variety could fill the place of the missing silver coins for a king who is named Israel on his gold (H.46) and copper coins (H.47). The appearance of an anonymous issue is not so surprising because there had been earlier forerunners (H.32 in the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> c.<sup>25</sup>).

With Israel (originally an epithet of Jacob) the biblical names return. His reign might have been short because his copper coins (H.47) are as rare as the anonymous silver coins (H.68). The gold coins (H.46), too, would be as rare as the other late issues if it were not for a small hoard known by chance. It was found by the Italian excavation campaign of 1906/7 in Adulis<sup>26</sup>, Aksum's main

<sup>23</sup> As on earlier, quite isolated, forerunners in the time of Licinius (H.5, 10, 11).

<sup>24</sup> The interchange of D and Z occurs frequently on the epigraphic material too, cf. R. Schneider, 'Trois nouvelles inscriptions royales d'Axoum', *Quaderno della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* 191, 1974, p.769.

<sup>25</sup> Cf W. Hahn, 'The "Anonymous" Coinage of Aksum - Typological Concept and Religious Significance', *ONSNL* 184, Summer 2005, 6-8

<sup>26</sup> Together with the other coins from this excavation the hoard first came to the museum of Asmara. In 1923 or 1924, by order of the then colonial minister, Luigi Federzoni, they were transferred to Rome in order to be identified in the Museo Coloniale (later called Museo Africano). There the famous Ethiopicist (and councillor of state), Carlo Conti Rossini, intended to study them, but Anzani beat him to it. In the early 1980s the coins

outlet to the Red Sea, and consisted entirely of gold coins struck by king Israel (altogether 33+1?)<sup>27</sup>. In Anzani's corpus of 1926 all the coins of this hoard were illustrated from plaster casts so that they can be subjected to a die-critical analysis. According to the excavator's report, they were contained in an earthenware jar with a slot like a savings box<sup>28</sup>. Ash layers have led to the belief that the town was destroyed by an incursion so that the cause for concealing the hoard was sought in an Arab conquest which would have happened in the later 7<sup>th</sup> c. Such speculation, however, is not founded on reliable literary sources. All we can say is that the former owner had no opportunity to add coins struck after Israel, which are nevertheless known from Adulis itself. Perhaps it is wiser to think of a trader's deposit dating into the time when Sasanian expansion into the Yemen began to trouble Red Sea commerce<sup>29</sup>.

From Israel onwards, the king's name on the gold coins changes to the side where he is depicted with the head-cloth and there it is interrupted by the four cosmological crosses in the earlier (5<sup>th</sup> c.) tradition. On the other side (that with the tiara), only an invocation cross at 12h is used, so that there is room for the geographical specification (corresponding to the silver coins H.68), of course in Greek as *basili Aksomi* – it is uncertain whether the final 'i's are abbreviation marks (standing for *basileus* with the genitive *Aksomiton* as familiar in the 4<sup>th</sup> c.) or whether we have to suspect a dative<sup>30</sup> plus locative (“for the king in Aksum”, with the city's name transliterated from Geez).

Israel's copper coins (H.47) revive Caleb's type (H.43), but without central gilding and with a Geez slogan (“mercy to the peoples”, having also been used by both his predecessors).

#### *With Gersem into the second phase of late coinage*

King Gersem (in the bible, Num.12:1, the son of Moses by a Kushite woman) follows Israel in the reverse type of his copper coins (H.53), whereas, on their obverse, the frontal bust was finally adopted, as is also the case on his first gold type (H.50). On the other hand, his silver type (H.51) resumed the old model of two busts (with head-cloth / tiara) which had not been used there since Caleb (but was, of course, nearly always present on the gold coins). It was slightly modernised by adding the cross sceptre retained from Israel's copper (H.47). It corresponds to the copper type, where it was doubled on the obverse (H.53), which is also a parallel to Byzantine coins with frontal effigy. On the reverse, the frame of the cross seems to take an oval form (mandorla, a symbol of heaven).

Because of the double appearance of the king on the silver coins, the name and the title (neguse, occasionally vocalised) were spread over both sides of the silver coins (H.51) as in former times. Therefore, they do not contain a slogan, but a new one was introduced on the copper coins (H.53, “by Christ he conquers”).

The frontal effigy on the obverse of a (hitherto unique, lost) gold coin (H.50) has a tiara with pendilia and reminds us of Byzantine models, especially if we compare it with solidi of emperor Tiberius II (578-82). Due to the character of trade coins, this was as short-lived as earlier deviations from the traditional profile bust on the obverse of the gold coins, which returned still

under Gersem (H.49). Now the round fringe of the *clypeus*<sup>31</sup> was omitted on the side with the head-cloth (as before, with Caleb) so that the half-length profile of the king between the ears of wheat appears freestanding, perhaps by analogy to the silver coins.

#### *The ambivalent Joel*

The coins of the next king, Joel (in the Bible one of the minor prophets who preached the eschatological kingdom of God), can be divided into two groups<sup>32</sup>, which in all three metals are typologically different as well as in the size of their flans (either small and thick or somewhat larger and thinner). Therefore, one could perhaps think of there having been two concurrent mints if there were more clues from provenances. This is not the case, however, so that a succession seems more likely.

As we can argue from an overstruck specimen<sup>33</sup>, the group with the smaller (thicker) flans could have come first. This is confirmed by a typological affinity with Gersem, which becomes clear in several details: the (unique) gold coin of the first group (H.55) has no inner circle (clypeus) on either side; in all metals the legends refer to Christ - fully expressed in the slogan “Christ is with us” on the associated coppers (H.61b) which display a Latin cross of the passion, also without clypeus; on these, the frontal bust is crowned by a tiara similar to Gersem (but surmounted by a cross because the tiny coins had no room for the cross sceptres of Gersem).

The silver type of the first group (H.57) varies the frontal bust in a representation with head-cloth and the reverse has a nice clypeus with a luminous cross in the old tradition, i.e. with central gilding and with its standard formula in Greek (*touto arese te chora*)<sup>34</sup> in the circumscription. As the legend on the other side is written in Geez (as is usual on the silver coins of the late period) this type has a bilingual character. Because of the small size, the slogan is shortened to *xv arese* which can be read as “the + of Christ may please”. Thus the reference to Christ is also present there and this is the case, too, on the small gold coin (H.55) where the initial X was placed over the head-cloth (instead of the cross).

The appearance of the small silver coins is of a striking similarity to Carthaginian half siliquae of emperor Maurice, struck in the 580s<sup>35</sup>, in typological composition (frontal bust / clipeus with cross) as well as size. Although an influence in either direction is hard to imagine, the contemporaneity seems to be correct.

The transition to the second group of Joel's coins is marked by relatively rare copper pieces of the smaller type, but on larger /thinner flans (H.61a). They differ from the smaller coins by a deepened central spot as if it were intended to revive the partial gilding on the copper coins; but no specimens are vouched for with a gold inlay. Instead, the Greek cross pattée on the following coppers (H.59) has an enhanced central dot. In the angles are placed the four letters of the king's name while a circumscribed slogan was omitted so that the edge of the coin could serve as the rim of the clypeus. This restriction of the king's name to one side and his title to the other (around the bust with tiara) was inspired by the matching silver coins (H.56) which return to the two busts' type of Gersem, not continuing with the central gilding. The gold coin belonging to the second group (H.54, also unique) follows the old model with clipeus on both sides and the four cosmological crosses on the side with the head-cloth and the king's name.

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disappeared from the museum and, since then, several pieces have emerged successively onto the international coin trade.

<sup>27</sup> Paribeni p.501 and 526; Anzani nos.216-249.

<sup>28</sup> Perhaps it is the jar illustrated by F. Anfray, ‘Deux villes axoumites: Adoulis et Matara’, IV Congresso Internazionale di Studi Etiopici (Rome, 10-15 April 1972) I, Rome 1974, pl.II, fig.3.

<sup>29</sup> In the course of the war between the Byzantine and the Persian empires (which in 573 had again broken out) Chosroes I, exploiting an uprising against the Abyssinian viceroy Masruk, supported the Himyarites by sending an expeditionary corps into Yemen. After the defeat of Masruk, the tributes earlier paid to Aksum were diverted to Ktesiphon.

<sup>30</sup> This had already been proposed by E. Littmann, ‘Eine neue Goldmünze des Königs Israel von Aksum’, *ZfN* 15, 1925, 272-4; cf also W.R.O. Hahn, ‘Déclinaison et orthographe des legends grecques sur les monnaies d'Axoum’, *BSFN* 49, 1994, 944-8.

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<sup>31</sup> The traditional form of personal images was the *imago clipeata* (on a round shield).

<sup>32</sup> Cf W. Hahn, ‘Zur Interpretation der Münztypen des Aksumitenkönigs Joel’, *MIN* 34/2007, 7-11.

<sup>33</sup> Illustrated by Munro-Hay 1995, JJ332.

<sup>34</sup> Cf W. Hahn, ‘Zur Interpretation eines axumitischen Münztyps: Kreuzschild und Kreuzdevise als Bekehrungsmanifest’. *MIN* 31/2005, 6-7.

<sup>35</sup> *MIB* 57 and 58.

### *Hethasas the very last*

Some scholars have previously assumed that, on account of the crude style<sup>36</sup> of certain coins, that the king whose name is given as HTZ in Geez, but vocalised to (H)Ethasas in Greek<sup>37</sup>, should be positioned at the end of the coin sequence. We find, however, that the coinage of this king also consists of two groups of coin types, on flans differing in size (at least in silver). Therefore, some have pondered the possibility of two kings with the name HTZ separated in time<sup>38</sup>, or otherwise, of a dating contemporary with the two groups of Joel. It remains rather doubtful whether this name is biblical too<sup>39</sup> - Armeh and Wazen are certainly not.

The smaller and thicker silver coins (H.62) continue the type of two profile busts of his predecessors. There are also larger coppers (H.66) of a more or less innovative typological composition: the side with the frontal bust of the king has the head-cloth and two staff-crosses visible behind the shoulders; it is anepigraphic but framed by the two ears of wheat of the gold type. The name and the title of the king (as negus of Aksum) is shown on the other side where the Greek cross has received an octagonal casing; the number 8 plays an important role in Christian symbolism<sup>40</sup>. The first group of Hethasas' coins are of better workmanship.

The second silver type (H.63) is larger and thinner than the first and of very poor alloy. Metal analyses indicate a drop in silver content to a level just over 10%. It may be surmised that this debasement went so far that it led to a complete suspension of using silver for the coinage and the issue of mere copper pieces. This is because the type occurs with and without the addition of silver; some specimens look brassy. In the course of this issue a small pictorial variation can be observed in the cross type (H.65): the Greek cross in the rhombus constituting the centre of the cross crosslet acquired nail-like ends and, finally, the four dots in the angles symbolizing the quarters of the world. The circular legend is divided into the four quadrants and resumes the slogan of Israel ("mercy to the peoples"). The other side has a frontally viewed half-length image of the king with a hand-cross held before his chest. Again, issue marks appear in the fields.

Eventually, Hethasas had gold coins of barbarous appearance struck (H.48). The reading of the king's name is +H+Θ+A+CA or (in order to have a more equal distribution of the letters, with only three separating crosses) +HΘ+AC+AC. Although the letter Θ always takes the position of 7h the reading can be somewhat complicated by retrograde writing and distorted letters (by a wrong attachment of the H's horizontal bar or the flattening of the C to I). Metallurgical analyses have not yet been undertaken but, judging from the colour and the fragility of the coins, the alloy seems to be of low quality. By all indications these, indeed, very negligently struck coins bring up the rear of the series of Aksumite coinage.

### **Conclusion**

The meditations of a veteran numismatist on the sequence and dating of late Aksumite coins lead to the following results:

Between the end of Caleb's reign shortly before 540 and about 580:

- 1) Armeh Ella Amida,

- 2) Wazen Ella Gabaz,
- 3) Israel;

Between about 580 and about 620:

- 4) Gersem,
- 5) Joel,
- 6) Hethasas.

The chronological clues are: the expansion of Sasanian dominion in the Red Sea area (at least on the Arabian side, which caused the end of the mutual monetary connection between Abyssinia and the Yemen from the late 570s onwards) and, some four decades later, its further extension over Palestine (614) and Egypt (618).

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## **AN UmayyAD POST-REFORM COIN OF AYLAH: A CONCISE COMMENTARY**

By Tareq Ramadan

Like their Arab-Byzantine predecessors, Umayyad post-reform copper coins have garnered the attention of many a numismatist, including, and especially, those whose historical interests lie in researching the genesis of the early Islamic state. Umayyad post-reform coins are a fascinating bunch in that they depict and employ a plethora of various and, rather intriguing, iconographies, symbols, mint-names, and inscriptions, much of which has provided us with deep insights into the socio-cultural and religio-political landscapes prevalent in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> century *Bilād al-Shām*. As many may already know, such post-reform *fulus* were introduced during the monetary reform of the fifth Umayyad Caliph, 'Abd al-Malik Bin Marwan, in around 696 AD in an attempt to provide a standardised, uniform Arab-Islamic currency that reflected the new politico-cultural order of the day.<sup>41</sup>

With that said, the focus of this short article is to bring attention to what is regarded as a peculiar post-reform Umayyad copper *fuls* minted in, what appears to read, "bi-Aylah." Aylah was an early Islamic town in Jund Filastin (Palestine), constructed in around 650 AD, and whose ruins lie within the modern, southern Jordanian port of al-Aqabah on the Red Sea.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, Aylah was a thriving port city that is reported to have prospered

<sup>36</sup> Conti-Rossini (who only knew of the copper coins and speaks of a "decadent" style) 1927, pp.211f and 1928; Vaccaro 1967, p.40f (9<sup>th</sup> c.), F. Anfray, 'Les rois d'Axoum d'après la numismatique', *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 6, 1968, 1-5 (8<sup>th</sup> c.); Munro-Hay 1984 (c.700).

<sup>37</sup> The appropriate reading was first suggested by E. Godet, 'Bilan des recherches récentes en numismatique axoumite', *RN* 1986, 174-209 and in his thesis (cf note 14).

<sup>38</sup> Anzani 1926 dates a Hataz I to the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> centuries, a Hataz II to the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>39</sup> Previously, I had followed F. Altheim, *Die Araber in der Alten Welt IV*, Berlin 1967, 508, unnecessarily identifying the name with a certain Hathath in the lists of generations in 1 Chron.4:13 (at least a grandson of Kaleb). A Jezlia (from 1 Chron.8:18), which harks back to a misreading of the coins, can be likewise discounted.

<sup>40</sup> Sunday was regarded as the new and eternal sabbath, being the "eighth" day of the week.

<sup>41</sup> 'Abd al-Malik (Makers of the Muslim World) by Chase F. Robinson (Oxford 2005) pg. 73-75

<sup>42</sup> Jordan: The Umayyads : The Rise of Islamic Art (Islamic Art in the Mediterranean); "Aqaba" by Ina Kehrberg, pg 183. Trans-Atlantic Publications, Inc. (April 2002)

until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD and which, throughout that time, “benefited from the annual pilgrimage to Mecca” as well as having served as a “trans-shipment point for goods.”<sup>43</sup> Thus, let us keep in mind that the local, bustling economy may have had needs that required the production of coinage either minted in or for Aylah. It is also interesting to note that copper mines were located within Aylah’s surrounding “hinterland” while there also existed active copper-smelting camps, during the early Islamic period, in Aylah’s sister city of Eilat, located just across the Gulf of Aqaba.<sup>44</sup> Collectively, all of the necessary ingredients needed for the production of local coinage seemed to have been present in and around the ancient Islamic town: commercial activity, a diverse economy, and a number of relevant resources.

While I alluded to the possibility that Arab-Byzantine Standing Caliph coins may have been struck in or for Aylah, in a previous article, it is also important to bring attention to the possible post-reform monetary situation in that town, since a coin bearing its name has surfaced. The seller of this coin, some years ago, reported that this was the second Aylah specimen that he had acquired. One of these was offered to me in early 2004 by him, while another example was allegedly sold to a collector based in Saudi Arabia a few years earlier. In a 2004 e-mail exchange, renowned numismatist and specialist in early Islamic coins, Shraga Qedar, informed me that there existed reports that some post-reform Umayyad *fulus* were, in fact, attributable to Aylah. Below are images of the very coin that was offered to me some six years ago.



Obverse:

لا إله إلا الله وحده

“There is no god but God, He is One/Alone”

Reverse centre:

محمد رسول الله

“Muhammad is the Messenger of God”

Reverse margins:

بسم الله ضربة هذ الفلص بايلة

“In the name of God, this *fuls* struck in Aylah”

As can be seen, the obverse inscription is typical of post-reform *fulus* and is situated within three circular bands while the reverse contains the standard formula for such types, albeit bearing the mint-name of “Aylah” in this particular case. Such a coin probably dates from the 80-90’s AH (early 700s - late 710s), chronologically following those *fulus* bearing the most basic Islamic religious formulae by just a few years.<sup>45</sup>

As the photos above indicate, the coin is well-centered and struck on a nice, full flan with legends that are rather complete. According to the original seller, the coin was found in southern Jordan but it is not known if its exact provenance was Aqaba,

specifically. In order to show how this coin relates to its Palestinian post-reform counterparts, I have included some photos of an Iliya (Jerusalem) *fuls* alongside its Aylah counterpart (for comparative purposes).<sup>46</sup>



1A. Iliya obverse

1B. Iliya reverse



2A. Aylah obverse

2B. Aylah reverse

Images 1A and 1B, above, are that of a post-reform *fuls* bearing the “Iliya” (Jerusalem) mint-mark. Images 2A and 2B, in the lower row, are photos of the Umayyad *fuls* bearing the Aylah (Aqaba) mint-name. They are similar in style and epigraphy but the mint-names should not be confused as they clearly offer two different and distinct readings.

However, some of those whom I shared these images with argued that the legend on 2B contained a simple blundering of “Iliya” while one person suggested that it actually reads “Iliya” altogether. At this point, it is difficult to prove whether or not the coin was meant to read “Aylah” or that it simply contained a misspelling of “Iliya.” It is true that this Aylah coin closely resembles many of the Iliya (Jerusalem) types from the same post-reform series, but this is hardly surprising considering that there was a rather high degree of standardisation in this phase of early Islamic coinage.<sup>47</sup>



Bi-Aylah inverted



Bi-Aylah close-up



Bi-Aylah darkened

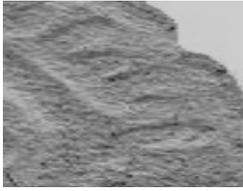
<sup>43</sup> Ibid, pg. 185

<sup>44</sup> Early Islamic Settlement in the Southern Negev Author(s): Uzi Avner and Jodi Magness Source: Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 310 (May, 1998), pp. 39-57 Published by: The American Schools of Oriental Research

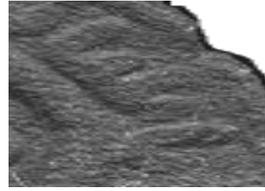
<sup>45</sup> *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tubingen: Palastina IV c Bilād aš-Šām I*, bearbeitet Lutz Ilisch, pg. 10 for approximate dating (Der Gund Filastin-Iliya). Also see Tafel 1#’s 7-14 (Iliya types)

<sup>46</sup> The Iliya/Jerusalem *fuls* (photos 1A and 1B) belongs to Fawzan Barrage and is in his Maskukat Collection no. UM-FIL-025.

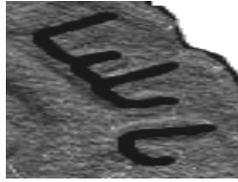
<sup>47</sup> *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tubingen: Palastina IV c Bilād aš-Šām I* (bearbeitet Lutz Ilisch) Tafel 1#’s 7-14 (Iliya types) and Tafel 9 #277 (Jerash type)



Bi-Iliya inverted



Bi-Iliya close-up



Bi-Iliya darkened

To emphasize the differences in the mint-names, I have included close-up images of the two coins bearing both the Aylah and Iliya legends, above. The upper three photos bear the “bi-Aylah” (“In Aylah”) inscription, which appears at about two o’clock on the reverse, in the outer margins. The inscription appears clearer upon colour inversion and clearly reads “bi-Aylah” (بأילה). The lower three photos contain an inscription that distinctly reads “bi-Iliya” (بإيليا), the Umayyad name for Jerusalem, positioned at about three o’clock in the outer reverse margins. What is most certain, from a visual perspective, at least, is that the mint-names are not the same and that, alone, is sufficient for the reconsideration over whether or not Aylah was ever an Umayyad mint or whether coins were minted elsewhere for circulation there.

While it is much too early to speak with any level of certainty or authority over the legitimacy or historicity of post-reform Aylah coinage, the possibility that such a coin may have been intended to read “Aylah” (to reflect its place of mint or area of circulation) should not be disregarded and ignored. We are still very much, in the early, investigatory stages of research with regards the study of early Islamic coinage and, as such, we must continue to bring to light coins that are of a questionable or peculiar nature. It is imperative that we continue to do this, as they may help to unlock secrets to the political, geographic, historical, and socio-cultural conditions of seventh century *Bilād al-Shām*; an era of historical study filled with ground-breaking potential.

## SOME BUYID COINS

By Yahya Jafar

The Buyids, or Buwayhids, were a Daylamite dynasty that claimed to be descendants of the old Sasanian kings of Persia. The Daylam area in Iran is a mountainous area situated to the south-west of the Caspian sea. In the early fourth century AH, they managed to occupy areas in Fars, then entered Shiraz in 320/932 when they won the recognition of the Abbasid caliph and struck their first coinage. In 334/945 Mu’iz al-Dawla Ahmed b. Buwah entered Baghdad and quickly asserted his power by replacing the then Abbasid caliph, al-Mustakfī, with a cousin of his, al-Muṭī’.

From then onwards, the Buyids assumed full powers in Baghdad and the areas that the Abbasids controlled, leaving minor religious duties to the caliphs. They lavished themselves with titles and honorary names as is noted on their coinage. However, gradually the Buyids, who controlled most of Iraq and Iran, grew weaker, mainly because of family feuding. This dynasty was ended in 447/1055 when the Seljuk sultan, Tughrul Beg, entered Baghdad and imprisoned the last Buyid king, al-Malik al-Raḥīm.

In 2001, Luke Treadwell of Oxford University published his highly commendable corpus entitled *Buyid Coinage: A Die Corpus (322-445AH)* which is now the standard reference work on Buyid coinage.

There are in my collection some Buyid coins which are not listed in Luke Treadwell’s work and which I present here, for the

benefit of those interested in this coinage. I have tried, as far as possible, to adopt the same format and abbreviations that Luke used and added a couple for new mints that were not listed in that work. Moreover, I added some comments that I thought were appropriate.

## FARS



Ar347G Arrajān 347 (Dinar) Rukn al-Dawla + ‘Uḏḏh al Dawla + al-Muṭī’

لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له  
ركن الدولة  
ابو علي بويه

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
المطيع لله  
عضد الدولة  
ابو شجاع

(4.05, 28) Appears to have been struck from dirhem dies (هذا....  
....الدرهم).



Ar378 Arrajān 378 Abū’l Fawāris + al-Muṭī’

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك ابو الفوارس  
بن عضد الدولة  
و تلج الملة

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
الطائع لله

(4.76, 24)



Da424 Dārābjird 424 Abū Kālījār + al-Qā’im

لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له

محمد رسول الله  
القائم  
بامر الله  
ابو كاليجار

(3.46, 30)



Fd415 Fairūzābād 415 Abū'l Fawāris + al-Qādir

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك ابو الفوارس  
بن عضد الدولة  
وتلج الملة

بِالله  
قل هو الله احد  
الله الصمد لم يلد  
ولم يولد ولم يكن  
له كفوا احد  
القادر

Right of obv (الامة) and left of obv (ومغيث)  
(2.38, 26)



Sh357G Shīrāz (Dinar) Rukn al-Dawla + 'Uḍḍh al-Dawla + al-Muṭī'

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
ركن الدولة  
ابو علي  
\*

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
المطيع لله  
الامير العدل  
عضد الدولة  
ابو شجاع

(3.93, 18) Small circle above obverse



Kr363G Kard Fana Khusra 363 (Dinar) Rukn al-Dawla + 'Uḍḍh al-Dawla + al-Muṭī'

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
ركن الدولة  
ابو علي

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
المطيع لله  
الامير العدل  
عضد الدولة  
ابو شجاع

(3.98, 21)



Sh389G Shīrāz (Dinar) Ḥusām al-Dawla + Nūr al-Dawla + al-Qādir

ن  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك العدل  
حسام الدولة  
وسيد الامة  
ابو القاسم

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
القادر بالله  
الملك العدل  
نور الدولة  
ومحي الامة  
ابو نصر

(4.11, 20)



Sh336 Shīrāz 'Imād al-Dawla + al-Muṭī'

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
عماد الدولة  
ابو الحسن

الله  
محمد  
رسول  
الله  
المطيع لله  
ع

(3.72, 25)



Sh394G Shīrāz 394 (Dinar) Qiwām al-Dīn + Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Qādir

شاهانشاه  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
ملك الملوك العدل  
شاهانشاه قوام  
الدين ابو نصر

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه وسلم  
القادر بالله  
بها الدولة و ضيا  
الملة و غياث الامة  
ح

(4.24, 21)



Sh414 Shīrāz 414 ‘Imād al-Dīn + Sulṭān al-Dawla + al-Qādir

دولة لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له عماد الدين ابو شجاع	الله محمد رسول الله ملك الملوك سلطان الدولة ومعز الملة ومغيث الامة
--	---

(h4.16, 29)



Su420G Sūq al-Ahwāz 420 (Dinar) Abū Kālījār + al-Qādir

لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ملك الملوك ابو كاليجار	الله محمد رسول الله القادر بالله شاهانشاه
--	---

(4.30, 25)



Si410G Sīrāf 414 (Dinar)<sup>48</sup>

الله لا اله الا الله (ل الله محمد رسو)	الله محمد رسول الله علي ولي الله
---	---

(0.89, 13) Words in brackets are turned 180 degrees



Su421G Sūq al-Ahwāz 421 (Dinar) Abū Kālījār + al-Qādir

لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له ملك الملوك ابو كاليجار	الله محمد رسول الله القادر بالله شاهانشاه
--	---

(3.79, 25)

### KHUZISTAN



Ah409 Al-Ahwāz 409 ‘Imād al-Dīn + al-Qādir

لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له الدين ابو شجاع	الله محمد رسول الله القادر بالله وسلم
---	--

(ch2.05, 29) Right of rev (صلى), left of rev (عليه).



Su424G Sūq al-Ahwāz 424 (Dinar) Abū Kālījār + al-Qā’im

لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له القائم بامر الله	الله محمد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم شاهانشاه ابو كاليجار
---	---

(4.33, 25)

<sup>48</sup> This carries neither Abbasid nor Buyid names, however, it is probably a largesse coin used to celebrate certain occasions. I considered it pertinent to include it here since Sīrāf was under Buyid control at that time.



Tu336 Tustar min al-Ahwāz Mu‘iz al-Dawla + ‘Imād al-Dawla + al-Muṭī‘

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
معز الدولة  
عماد الدولة  
ابو الحسن بويه

(3.69, 27)

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه و سلم  
المطيع لله  
ابو الحسين  
بويه



Ba387b Al-Baṣra 387 al-Qādir + ?<sup>49</sup>

عدل  
لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له

(3.03, 27) Extra marginal area on both obverse and reverse with some identifiable words, on the obverse, the word “الملك” and on the reverse “بالنصر”

الله  
محمد رسول  
الله صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
القادر بالله  
ط

### IRAQ/JAZIRA



Ba336G Al-Baṣra 336 (Dinar) Mu‘iz al-Dawla + ‘Imād al-Dawla + al-Muṭī‘

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
معز الدولة  
ابو الحسين  
بويه

(4.41, 24)

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه و سلم  
المطيع لله  
عماد الدولة  
ابو الحسن  
بويه



Ms372G Madinat al-Salām 372 (Dinar) ‘Uḍḍh al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi‘

• د  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك العدل  
شاهنشاه  
عضد الدولة  
و تاج الملة  
ابو شجاع

(5.48, 21)

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
الطائع لله



Ba364 Al-Baṣra 364 ‘Uḍḍh al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi‘

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
عضد الدولة  
و تاج الملة  
ابو شجاع

(2.86, 26)

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
الطائع لله



Ms373G Madinat al-Salām 373 (Dinar) ‘Uḍḍh al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi‘

• د  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك العدل  
الدولة و شمس الملة  
و عضد الدولة و تاج  
الملة بن ركن الدولة

(4.59, 21)

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
الطائع لله

<sup>49</sup> Al-Baṣra was in political chaos in 387h which may explain the reason for mentioning the Abbasid caliph only. However, other names may have been given on the peripheries which are unclear on the shown coin.



Ms379G Madinat al-Salām 379 (Dinar) Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi'

ح  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك العدل  
بها الدولة  
عضد الدولة  
و ضيا الملة  
ابو نصر

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
الطائع لله

(7.38, 21)



Ms390G Madinat al-Salām 390 (Dinar) Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Qādir

د ح  
لا اله الا الله وحده  
لا شريك له الملك العادل  
شاهانشاه بها الدولة  
و ضياء الملة و غياث  
الامة ابو نصر

الله  
محمد رسول  
الله صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
القادر بالله

(4.19, 21)



Ms388G Madinat al-Salām 388 (Dinar) Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Qādir

ح  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك العدل شاهها  
نشاه بها الدولة و ضيا  
الملة و غياث الامة  
ابو نصر

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله صلى  
الله عليه و سلم  
القادر بالله

(3.61, 27)



Ms393G Madinat al-Salām 393 (Dinar) Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Qādir

ملك  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك بها الدولة  
و ضيا الملة  
و غياث الامة  
الملوك

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه و سلم  
القادر بالله  
شاهانشاه قوام  
الدين ابو نصر  
ابريز

(3.17, 27)



Ms389G Madinat al-Salām 389 (Dinar) Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Qādir

الله  
لا اله الا الله وحده  
لا شريك له الملك العدل  
شاهانشاه بها الدولة  
و ضيا الملة و غياث  
الامة ابو نصر

محمد رسول  
الله صلى الله  
عليه و سلم  
القادر  
بالله

(3.87, 21)



Ms405 Madinat al-Salām 405 Sulṭān al-Dawla + al-Qādir + al-Ghālib

س  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
القادر بالله  
و ولده الغالب بالله

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه و سلم  
الملك شاهانشاه  
سلطان الدولة و عز الملة  
و مغياث الامة ابو شجاع

(3.44, 30)



Ms406 Madinat al-Salām 406 Sulṭān al-Dawla + al-Qādir + al-Ghālib (heir)

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
القادر بالله  
وولده الغالب  
بالله

(3.10, 28)

محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه وسلم  
الملك سلطان  
الدولة وعز الملة  
ابو شجاع



Ms413G<sup>51</sup> Madinat al-Salām 413 (Dinar) Sulṭān al-Dawla + al-Qādir + al-Ghālib (heir)

Field as Ms411G

Field as Ms411G

(2.97, 26)



Ms411G<sup>50</sup> Madinat al-Salām 411 (Dinar) Sulṭān al-Dawla + al-Qādir + al-Ghālib (heir)

عماد  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
القادر بالله  
وولده الغالب بالله  
الدين

(3.10, 26)

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه وسلم  
الملك سلطان الدولة  
وعز الملة ابو شجاع  
ابريز



Ms435G Madinat al-Salām 435 (Dinar) Abū Kālījār + al-Qā'im

لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك ل  
القائم بامر الله  
شاهاتشاه المعظم  
ملك الملوك

(4.88, 29)

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه واله  
محي دين الله  
وغيث عباد الله  
وقسيم نعم الله  
ابو كاليجار



Ms412G Madinat al-Salām 412 (Dinar) Bahā' al-Dawla + al-Qādir

ملك  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك ل  
الملك بها الدولة  
وضيا الملة  
وغيث الامة  
الملوك

(c2.97, 26)

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه وسلم  
القادر بالله  
شاهاتشاه قوام  
الدين ابو نصر  
ابريز



Ma374G Moşul 374 (Dinar) Şimşām al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi'

ص  
لا اله الا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
الملك صمصام الدولة  
وشمس الملة بن عضد  
الدولة وتاج الم  
بن ركن الدولة

(6.66, 24)

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه واله  
الطانع لله

<sup>50</sup> This may be a contemporary imitation as the heir, al-Ghālib, died in 409h; moreover, it is marked "ابريز" at bottom of rev, meaning pure gold, which it is not.

<sup>51</sup> Comment as (3) above.



Ma374 Moṣul 374 *Šimšām al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi'*

ص  
لا اله الا الله  
وحدّه لا شريك له  
الملك صمصام الدولة  
و شمس الملة بن عضد  
الدولة و تاج الملة  
بن ركن الدولة

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
صلى الله  
عليه و اله  
الطائع لله

(3.90, 26)

## JIBAL



Ha356G Hamadān 356 (Dinar) *Rukn al-Dawla + al- Muṭī'*

لا اله الا  
الله وحدّه  
لا شريك له  
المطيع لله

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
(ركن الدولة)  
ابو علي  
بويه

(3.48, 23) Extra marginal area with four annulets on obverse and reverse.



Sm 338 Sur man Ra'a 338 *Mu'iz al-Dawla + Rukn al-Dawla + al- Muṭī'*

لا اله الا الله  
وحدّه لا شريك له  
معز الدولة  
ابو الحسين  
بويه

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
المطيع لله  
ركن الدولة  
ابو علي  
بويه

(3.71, 27)



Mb335G Māh al-Bašra (Dinar) *Rukn al-Dawla + 'Imād al-Dawla + Musāfir b. Sahlān + al-Muṭī'*

لا اله الا الله  
وحدّه لا شريك له  
ابو الحسين عماد  
الدولة

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
المطيع لله  
ابو علي ركن الد  
ولة مسافر  
بن سهلان<sup>52</sup>

(3.56, 21)



Wa421 Wāsiṭ 421 *Jalāl al-Dawla + al-Qā'im*

لا اله الا الله  
وحدّه لا شريك له  
القادر بالله

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
صلى الله عليه و سلم  
شاهاتشاه

On right of obverse (هو ولي عهده), on left of obverse (القائم بامر الله)  
Inner reverse margin (ركن الدين - جلال الدولة - و جمال الملة - ؟)  
(ch4.11, 29)



Mk339 Māh al-Kufa *Rukn al-Dawla + 'Imād al-Dawla + al-Muṭī'*

لا اله الا  
الله وحدّه  
لا شريك له  
ركن الدولة  
ابو علي

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
المطيع لله  
عماد الدولة  
ابو الحسين

<sup>52</sup> Musāfir b. Sahlān is an enigmatic character. It is not known in what capacity he was in Māh al-Bašra, also known as Nahawand, in 335h. Mu'iz al-Dawla asked for his help against one of his opponents in 345h, when he was still in Nahawand. In 359h, a Sahlān b. Musāfir, likely to be a son of Musāfir, was in Nahawand. If these characters represented the Buyid king then the coin should be classified as a Buyid coin, otherwise, it would, presumably, be considered of an independent dynasty, perhaps, the Sahlānids?

Small ornaments on the left and right of the obverse and three dots arranged in a triangle at the bottom of the reverse.  
(3.68, 21)



Mu347G al-Muḥammadiya 347 (Dinar) ‘Uḏhh al-Dawla + al-Muti’

ح  
لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له  
المطيع لله  
ح

الله  
محمد  
رسول الله  
عضد الدولة  
ابو علي  
بويه

Small ornaments on either side of (الله) on the reverse with the word (خلد) in miniscule between lines 4 and 5 from the top.  
(3.33, 21)



Mu382G al-Muḥammadiya (Dinar) Fakhr al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi’

لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له  
الطابع لله

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
الامير السيد  
شاهاتشاه  
فخر الدولة  
و فلك الامة  
بن ركن الدولة

(2.74, 21)



Mu393G al-Muḥammadiya 393 (Dinar) Majd al-Dawla + al-Qādir

لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له  
القادر بالله  
○

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
الامير السيد  
مجد الدولة  
و كهف الامة  
بن فخر الدولة  
بويه

Ornament at top of obverse.  
(4.53, 26)

## CASPIAN



Sy371G Sariya (Dinar) ‘Uḏhh al-Dawla + Mu’ayyad al-Dawla + al-Ṭāi’

لا اله الا  
الله وحده  
لا شريك له  
مؤيد الدولة  
ابو منصور

الله  
محمد رسول الله  
الطابع لله  
الملك السيد  
عضد الدولة  
و تاج الملة

(3.17, 20)

### Acknowledgement

As always, I must thank the Editor for his efforts in editing the images and arranging them in the correct order.

## A NOTE ON SOME INTERESTING INDO-GREEK COINS

By Osmund Bopearachchi

Numerous Indo-Greek coins of historical importance come to light everyday, and it is sometimes impossible to keep a systematic track of them. Almost twenty years after the publication of *Monnaies gréco-bactriennes et indo-grecques, Catalogue raisonné*, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (1991), the time has come to present a revised corpus of all the Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek coins. I wish to achieve this target by the end of 2011. In the meantime, I thought that it would be fruitful to publish important rarities without further delay. This short article is written with this in mind.

### Menander II

We have shown elsewhere, on the basis of stylistic features, monograms and composition of hoards, that Menander II Dikaios should be separated chronologically from Menander I Soter.<sup>53</sup> The drachms of Menander II depicting the king on prancing horse remind us of the same reverse type on Artemidoros' coins found in the Sarai Saleh hoard. It may suggest that the type in question is the work of the same engraver,<sup>54</sup> and may further indicate that both kings are close contemporaries ruling in the Taxila region. The first coin catalogued here was allegedly found at Taxila as well.

Coins of Menander II which differ from those of the great king bearing the same name by monetary types and monograms are still rare. Until the publication of the Bibliothèque Nationale catalogue he was known through 15 coins. Since then about ten more coins have surfaced in the coin market. These coins can be divided into seven different coin types bearing six different monograms. The

<sup>53</sup> On the question of two homonymous kings in the name of Menander, see O. Bopearachchi, «Ménandre Sôter, un roi indo-grec. Observations chronologiques et géographiques», *Studia Iranica*, 20, 1990, pp. 39-85.

<sup>54</sup> For example compare the drachm of Menander II cf. *Pre-Kushan Coins in Pakistan*, no. 497) with that of Artemidoros cf. *Pre-Kushan Coins in Pakistan*, no. 510).

combination of types on the obverse and reverse makes the first drachm published below unique.

**1. Menander II. AR. Indian-Standard Drachm. (2.42 g, 16 mm)**



*Obv.* Diademed bust of king to l., seen from the back, thrusting a spear from upraised r. hand. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

*Rev.* Winged Nike walking to r., holding palm in l. hand and wreath in outstretched r. hand. *Maharajasa dhramikasa / Menamdrasa.* To l.

As far as coins of Menander II are concerned, the spear-thrower is known through a unique coin in a private collection.<sup>55</sup> The reverse of that coin depicts Zeus seated, holding Nike, with the chakra at his side. On the new coin catalogued below, the reverse is characterised by the winged Nike walking to right.

Nonetheless, the monogram is common to both series. The obverse and reverse types of the next coin of Menander II (no. 2) are known through four coins bearing the monogram

**2. Menander II. AR. Indian-Standard Drachm. (2.43 g, 16 mm)**



*Obv.* Diademed bust of king to r. King is shown wearing a helmet with bull's horn and ear. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΜΕΝΑΝΔΡΟΥ.

*Rev.* Diademed king, wearing a crested helmet, on prancing horse to r. *Maharajasa dhramikasa / Menamdrasa.* To l.

The new coin catalogued above bears a new monogram never attested before for this series, but known through other series of the same king.<sup>57</sup> It is also worth mentioning that, unlike the other known coins of this series, the helmet worn by the king is decorated with bull's horn and ear as on the coins of Eucratides I.<sup>58</sup>

**Peucolaos**

At present it is generally accepted that Archebios was the last Greek king to rule in Taxila before the occupation of this city by the Scythian, Maues. The posteriority of Archebios in relation to Peucolaos is attested by two overstrikes of the former over the tetradrachms of the latter.<sup>59</sup> Apart from this, the combination of

two monograms: and common to both rulers is another factor that marks them as close contemporaries.<sup>60</sup> Until 1991, Peucolaos was known only through four tetradrachms and

five bronzes.<sup>61</sup> Since then, two more tetradrachms and one drachm, which remains unique until today, have been published.<sup>62</sup> The hitherto unique drachm published in *Triton*, XIII, no. 264 has

the usual double monograms, to left and to right . The new drachm catalogued below is characterised by a single monogram . The tetradrachm of Peucolaos published by R.C. Senior also has a single monogram .

**3. Peucolaos AR. Indian-Standard Drachm. (2.09 g, 17.5 mm).**

Probably from Shaikhan Dheri (near Peshawar).



*Obv.* Diademed bust of king to r. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΠΙΠΥΟΚΛΑΟΥ. It is interesting to note that the king's name is written as ΠΙΠΥΟΚΛΑΟΥ instead of ΠΙΕΥΚΟΛΑΟΥ.

*Rev.* Zeus standing to l., extending his right hand in gesture of benediction and holding a long sceptre in his left hand.

*Maharajasa dhramikasa tratarasa / Piukulaasa.* To l. .

**Apollodotos II**

Our next coin is of Apollodotos II. Although the denomination

and the types are already attested,<sup>63</sup> the monogram on the obverse and the combination of two kahroshtih aksharas on the reverse are so far unknown for this series. Furthermore, the obverse monogram has not been seen in the whole coinage of the Indo-Greeks until now. This is also the first coin of this series

bearing a monogram on the obverse.<sup>64</sup> The monogram engraved on two rare silver series of Vonones with Spalahores is almost the same as the one on Apollodotos II's coin. The only difference is that the monogram on the coins of Vonones with Spalahores is devoid of the Greek letter 'rho' attached to the extreme right of the horizontal bar over the 'alpha'.<sup>65</sup>

**4. Apollodotos II AE. (15.32 g, 26 x 25 mm)**



*Obv.* Apollo standing to r., with quiver on back and holding an arrow with both hands. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ / ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΤΟΥ. Monogram to l. .

*Rev.* Tripod. *Maharajasa / tratarasa / Apaladatas.* To l. & to r. .

<sup>55</sup> O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Menander II, series 4.

<sup>56</sup> O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Menander II, series 3; *Pre-Kushan Coins in Pakistan*, no. 497; *ANS, SNG*, nos 1270 & 1271.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Menander II, series 2.A.

<sup>58</sup> For example, see O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Eucratides I, series 4 & 5.

<sup>59</sup> O. Bopearachchi, «Monnaies indo-grecques surfrappées», *Revue Numismatique*, 1989, pp. 49-79, particularly pp. 71-2, nos. 16 and 17

<sup>60</sup> Cf. O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Archebios, series 1D; 2 D, E, 4 C, D; 6 A, B; 9 A; 10 A; 13 A & B; Peucolaos, series 1 A.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Peucolaos, series 1 & 2.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. R.C. Senior, 'A few more new Indo-Greek and Indo-Scythian discoveries', *ONS Newsletter*, no. 195, Spring 2008, pp. 14-7, no. 1; *CNG, Triton*, XIII, no. 263 and *CNG, Triton*, XIII, no. 264.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Apollodotos II, series 15.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Cf. R.C. Senior, *Indo-Scythian Coins and History*, London, 2001, p. 27, types 65. 1 T & 65. 1 D.

**Coin of Heliocles II overstruck on a coin of Agathocleia and Straton**

Eight coins of Heliocles II struck over bronzes of Agathocleia are known to date.<sup>66</sup> The ninth overstrike described below increases the abundance of overstrikes of Heliocles II, also known through other coins struck over the coins of Eucratides I, Strato I, Antialcidas, and Hermaios.<sup>67</sup>

**5. Overstrike. 8. 34 g, 22 x 20 mm**



*Obv.* Diademed bust of Zeus to r. Of the Greek legend of Heliocles II, apart from the first four letters, the rest can be seen, viz. ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ / ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ / ΗΛΙΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ.<sup>68</sup> When the coin is turned upside down, further to the upper part of the helmeted bust of Athena to right, the following letters can be detected: ΕΟΤΡΟΠΙΟΥ / ΑΓΑΘΟ.<sup>69</sup>

*Rev.* Elephant walking to l. Of the Kharoshthi legend, only the first three *aksharas* are not visible *Maharajasa / dhramikasa / Heliyakreyasa*. Some traces of the monogram  are just visible. When the coin is turned upside down, from the under-type the following *aksharas* are detectable: *tarasa dhra/mikasa*.

<sup>66</sup> All these overstrikes are discussed in O. Bopearachchi, 'L'apport des surfrappes à la reconstruction de l'histoire des Indo-Grecs', *RN*, 2008, 245-268, particularly pp. 249-250 & 259.

<sup>67</sup> For a complete recapitulation of these overstrikes, see O. Bopearachchi, *RN*, 2008, 245-268.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Heliocles II, series 7.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. O. Bopearachchi, *BN*, Agathocleia and Heliocles II, series 3.

**NĀSĪR AL-DĪN MUḤAMMAD, SULTAN (?) OF BENGAL**

by Noman Nasir, Nicholas Rhodes & J.P. Goenka



Fig. 1

*Obv:* *nāṣir al-dunyā wa'l dīn abū'l naṣr muhammad shāh .... [al-sultān?]*, within square with cusped sides, the names of the four Caliphs around, only *ābu bakr* visible at top.

*Rev:* *nāṣir al-islām wa'l muslimīn yamīn amīr al-mu'minīn*, legend around, presumably with mint and date, but unfortunately not legible.

This newly discovered tanka illustrated above seems to have been struck by an unknown issuer of whom only one coin was previously recorded. Stylistically it is undoubtedly a coin of the Bengal sultanate and it fits into the period of Ghiyāth al-Dīn A'zam Shāh or his son and successor, Saif al-Dīn Ḥamzah Shāh. Although the date is unfortunately not legible, the reverse of the coin appears very similar in style to the tanka of Ḥamza Shāh of the Mu'azzamābād mint illustrated below. (Fig.2)



Fig. 2

The new *tanka* is of normal size and weight for a Bengal Sultan coin of the ninth century Hejira, and the style is clearly identifiable as being of the mint of Mu'azzamābād in south-eastern Bengal. The name of the sultan is, however, different from any of the known sultans of the period. Unfortunately, the lower part of the obverse legend is not clearly legible, but might provide evidence of the name of the father of this Muḥammad Shāh, who may have been a sultan, if we are correct in interpreting the last word of the legend.



Fig. 3

A coin with similar legend was included in Goron & Goenka's book of Sultanate coins (B472)<sup>70</sup>, fig. 3 above. The new coin

<sup>70</sup> Stan Goron & J.P.Goenka, *The Coins of the Indian Sultanate*, Page: 208. The coin was discovered in the Chandirjhar Hoard and is now preserved in the State Archaeological Museum, Calcutta, and was published, along with the other coins in the hoard, by P.K.Mitra and Sutapa Sinha in *Pratna Samiksha*, vols.2 & 3 (1993-4), Calcutta 1995.

confirms the reading of G&G as ‘Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh’ with the kunya ‘*abū’l naṣr*’ which is very unusual for this period. G&G, however, suggest, very tentatively, that the coin described by them may be attributed to Nāṣir al-dīn Mahmūd, AH 837-64 (AD 1433-1459). However, they were unhappy with the attribution because the ruler’s name is given as Muḥammad, rather than Mahmūd, and the *kunya* is different. This particular *kunya* only otherwise occurs on the coin of Shams al-Dīn Muzaḥfar Shāh, who ruled several decades later. The previous coin also has no mint or date visible, but was attributed, on the basis of style, to Mu‘azzamābād mint, but it is harder to date the coin confidently, on the basis of style.

It appears that both these coins were struck by the same ruler, most probably at the Mu‘azzamābād mint. Stylistically, the new coin suggests a date around AH 815, and there is nothing, stylistically, to suggest a later date for the other specimen. The fact that two different types were issued suggests an issue period longer than a few days.

The identification of this unidentified coin-issuing ruler is not at all clear, and we can only suggest that it may belong to the confused period during the final years of the Ilyās Shāhi dynasty. Apparently, Saif al-Dīn Ḥamzah Shāh was slain by his slave, Shihāb al-Dīn Bāyazīd, some time in AH 814/5. Coins of both rulers are known, with the latest date for most coins of Ḥamzah Shāh being AH 814, but a few coins dated 815 have been discovered from the Mu‘azzamābād mint (B269 & 273). For Shihāb al-Dīn Bāyazīd, the earliest coin is dated 814 from the Fīrūzābād mint (B280) but no dates on the coins of Mu‘azzamābād mint have yet been discovered. Apparently Bāyazīd, in turn, was killed by Rājā Ganesh, but numismatic evidence shows that his son, ‘Alā al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh, ruled for a short time in AH 817, before Rājā Ganesh subdued the whole of Bengal and Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh ascended the throne. According to numismatic evidence, Saif al-Dīn Ḥamza Shāh issued a few coins from Mu‘azzamābād mint with unusual titles. On more than one coin he calls himself *sultān al-salāṭīn* (Sultan of Sultans) and *sikander thānī* (the second Alexander) and another specimen shows the title *al-mujāhid fī sabīl al-raḥmān* which appears nothing but an attempt to prove his legitimacy during the period of turmoil.

In these troubled times, it is not impossible that a son of Ḥamzah Shāh may have been installed in Mu‘azzamābād for a short time in AH 815, before the latter’s subsequent assassin and successor, Shihāb al-Dīn Bāyazīd, managed to take control of all the territory ruled by Ḥamza Shah, with the help of Raja Ganesh. According to some contemporary history books such as *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, *Tarikh-i Firishṭa*, *‘Ain-i Akbari*, *Tabqat-i Akbari*, a son of Ḥamza Shāh, named *Shamsuddīn* (*Shams al-Dīn*) was enthroned just after Ḥamza Shāh was killed. Many historians have asserted that *Shamsuddīn* was not a son of Ḥamza Shāh, but was an adopted son and that his name was Shihāb al-Dīn (Shihāb al-Dīn Bāyazīd Shāh)<sup>71</sup>. But numismatic evidence shows that neither Shihāb al-Dīn Bāyazīd Shāh nor his son, ‘Alā al-Dīn Fīrūz Shāh, mention the name of their predecessor on their coins, as one might expect.

Hence, we may suggest a tentative conclusion here that the son of Ḥamza Shāh managed to take over the throne in the south-eastern part of Bengal, taking the title of ‘Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad Shāh’ and struck coins in his own name. Otherwise he might have been a governor of southeast Bengal who tried to assert his independence during the end of Ḥamza Shāh’s reign, taking advantage of the political unrest.

This attribution is, of course, conjecture, and we must await a better preserved specimen of this type, with the mint, date and/or patronymic legible, before a secure attribution is possible, but what is certain is that this coin does prove the existence of a new coin-issuing authority in south-eastern Bengal, most probably in the early years of the ninth century AH.

## IMPORTANT INDIAN COINS IN THE KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM, VIENNA

By Shailendra Bhandare, University of Oxford

In June 2010 I visited the ‘Münzkabinett’ of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. The collection of Indian coins there is not numerically strong, but includes some very interesting and important pieces, very few of which have been published. I took the opportunity to document most of the coins and present here a good selection of them. Unfortunately not much information on how this collection was formed is available – all that can be said with certainty is that most of the coins were part of the imperial coin collection of the Habsburg emperors of Austro-Hungary and that almost all of them were added to the collection prior to 1870.

The only time a few coins from the Vienna collection were published was in R.B. Whitehead’s paper in the 1930 issue of the *Numismatic Chronicle* – ‘Some Notable Coins of the Mughal Emperors of India – part III’ (pp. 199-220, Pl. XIV-XV). Parts I and II of this paper appeared in NC 1923 (pp. 115-157, Pl. VI-VIII) and NC 1926 (pp. 361-416, Pl. XXIII-XXV), respectively. I will refer to Whitehead at appropriate junctures agreeing or disagreeing with some of his views as I go along. Before I begin describing the coins, I must acknowledge, with deepest gratitude, the help and co-operation extended by Dr Michael Alram, the Director of the Münzkabinett, and Dr Klaus Vondrovec, curator in the department during my visit. I am also thankful to Dr Alram for allowing the publication of these coins.

I would divide the coins presented here broadly as ‘Mughal’, ‘non-Mughal’, ‘colonial’ and ‘miscellaneous South Indian’ coins. Firstly, the Mughal coins:

### 1. A unique rectangular double mohur of Akbar



Fig. 1

Obv: *allāhu akbar*

Rev: *yā mu‘īn*, the date AH 981 can be seen in the top left corner.

The coin weighs 21.8 g. Both obverse and reverse fields are decorated with floral motifs and the execution of the *kāf* in ‘Akbar’ is noticeably different from most other coins. This coin was published by Whitehead (no. 1 in his paper) with corroborating details from the *‘Ain-i Akbari*. What Whitehead did not discuss was the historicity associated with the coin legends. I will briefly address both these points here.

Whitehead quotes extensively from S.H. Hodivala’s *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics* as far as his corroborations from the *‘Ain* are concerned. Thus, while describing the inventory of Akbar’s coins, Abu’l Fazal, the author of the *‘Ain* mentions the following gold issues:

- The *‘Adlḡutka* has a value of nine rupees; on one side *allāhu akbar*, and on the other *yā mu‘īn*

- The *Mu‘īni* is both round and square; it bears the stamp *yā mu‘īn*.

Whitehead adds, ‘The two Mohur pieces are the *chugul* of a square form, and a round piece having on one side *allāhu akbar* and on the other *yā mu‘īn*. The legends on the *chugul* are not mentioned’.

Whitehead’s corroboration from the *‘Ain* seems to be lacking a couple of other references. Chapter 10 of the *‘Ain*, entitled ‘Coins of this Glorious Empire’ describes the currency system under Akbar (*‘Ain-i Akbari*, trans. H Blochmann, Calcutta, 1873, p. 27-

<sup>71</sup> Muhammad Mohar Ali, *History of the Muslims of Bengal*, Volume 1A, Page: 147

31). Here the reference to the *Adlgutka* as described by Whitehead occurs as the 11<sup>th</sup> point, but before that the 7<sup>th</sup> point mentions a coin named *La'al Jalāli*, which is 'round in shape' and 'in weight and value equal to two round Mohurs, having on one side *allāhu akbar* and on the other *yā mu'in* or 'O Helper''. Whitehead missed this reference. Also, while describing the *Mu'ini*, the *Ain* makes it clear that it is both round and square, and has the 'same weight and value as the *La'al Jalāli*'. This could perhaps be as near to a textual substantiation of the Vienna double Mohur as we can get, but Whitehead missed this, too.

Whitehead carries on to describe another coin with the *yā mu'in* legend, a *Mihrābi* piece published by Mr J.G. Delmerick in JASB, part 1, 1876 (PL. V, 8), which is amongst the 'only two *Mu'ini* pieces known', the other being the square double mohur in Vienna. This *Mihrābi* has the same obverse and reverse legends as on the double mohur and is struck in the same year. Whitehead adds, 'I believe that it was purchased by, and may still belong to the Nawab of Loharu, a state west of Delhi'.

The distinction of publishing this piece goes to Lt. Col. P.S. Tarapore, who wrote an article entitled 'The Two non-Ilahi Mihrabi Muhurs of Akbar of 981 AH' in JNSI, vol. XII, part II, 1950, pp. 161-164, Pl. XII, no.1. Tarapore does not make any reference to the Vienna double mohur bearing the same legends, but provides brilliant historical details to contextualise the employment of these legends. I have no hesitation in quoting verbatim from Tarapore's paper as it would, once and for all, bridge the gaps left between Whitehead and Tarapore and will provide the necessary historical context for the Vienna coin. Tarapore says –

"The principal event of the year 981 AH recorded in Badaoni's *Muntakhab ut-Tawārikh* vol. II (Lowe's translation 1924 edition vide pp. 167-173 and 424) and the *Tabaqāt-i Akbari* by Nizamuddin Ahmed (History of India as Told by its Own Historians, by Elliott and Dowson Vol. V, pp. 362-370) is the battle of Ahmedabad in the second campaign of Gujarat for the suppression of the rebellion raised by the Mirzas led by Muhammad Hussain Mirza, Shah Mirza and Ikhtiyar ul-Mulk who had besieged the fortress of Ahmedabad. Briefly the events narrated are as follows –

On the 24<sup>th</sup> *Rabi us-Sāni* 981 AH, the Emperor left Fathpur and by forced marches reached Ajmir on the 26<sup>th</sup> of that month. There he paid his respects at the shrine of his patron saint, Khwajah Mu'inuddin Chishti. On the same day he left Ajmir and reached the village of Kari, 20 *coss* from Ahmadabad on the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Jamāda al-Awwal*, where a skirmish took place with the rebel army. On the 9<sup>th</sup> day after leaving Fathpur he arrived within 3 *coss* from Ahmadabad. Here the first battle with the main rebel forces under Muhammad Hussain Mirza took place on the 5<sup>th</sup> *Jamāda al-Awwal*. The battle raged furiously and when the Emperor saw his vanguard was giving way, to use Badaoni's own words, "He raised the cry of "Ya Mu'in", which on that day was his battle cry and making a desperate charge broke the ranks of the enemy and dispersed them in the direst confusion". After the victory when the Emperor was investigating the individual acts of prowess of the combatants, Ikhtiyar ul-Mulk suddenly appeared with a force of 5000 horsemen which had been employed in maintaining the siege of the fortress and preventing a junction between the garrison and the Royal army. Again, to quote Badaoni, 'Great commotion was observed among his men, and a great hubbub arose, so that the Emperor ordered a body of men to discharge arrows at them. They raised a terrific shout of 'Ya Mu'in' and stretched on the dust of death the band which was marching in advance of Ikhtiyar ul-Mulk'".

Quoting from the account of the battle of Ahmadabad in *Tuzuk-i Jahāngiri* (by Rogers and Beveridge, 1909 edition, Volume I, pp. 40-43), Tarapore adds – "At a critical stage in the battle when the Emperor found that his army was outnumbered he expressed his determination to attack, and '... he drew his sword and with a shout of 'Allahu Akbar' and 'Ya Mu'in' charged with those devoted to him'".

Tarapore thus comments that the legends *allāhu akbar* and *yā mu'in* were the 'battle cries used by Emperor Akbar and concludes, 'I am therefore of the opinion that this *Mu'ini* Mihrabi was struck in the 'Camp of Victory or *Mu'askar-i Iqbāl* at Ahmadabad to commemorate the victory over the rebellious Mirzas in 981AH'.

As the Vienna double mohur shares the same date and legends with the *Mu'ini Mihrabi* published by Tarapore, it would follow that both coins should share the context provided by Tarapore for the legends and the consequential attribution to the 'Camp' mint. But while Tarapore's historical corroboration regarding the nature of the legends is impeccable, one would think his inference in treating the legends solely as 'war cries' to justify the attribution of the coins is a bit tenuous. After all, we know from the *Ain* that the legend *yā mu'in* appeared on all sorts of coins and, while in the case of the double mohur and the Mihrabi there is the chronological detail of AH 981 to link the coins with the battle of Ahmadabad, the same account also links the coins with Akbar's visit to Ajmir en route to Ahmadabad. How would we know, then, if the coins were struck after the battle at Ahmadabad, and not before it, as a mark of respect to the Khwajah at Ajmir? Judging by the shape, a Mihrabi is equally likely to have been struck for a religious significance, as a political one.

## 2. A unique half mohur of Akbar with the depiction of a hawk



Fig. 2

Obv: Hawk facing right

Rev: *allāhu akbar 50 khurdād ilāhī zarb āgrāh*

This unique half mohur was described by Whitehead as no. 2 in the 1930 part of his paper. He also suggested that this piece was a 'worthy companion' to the full mohur of the hawk type of Agra mint, which was then in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum of Berlin and which is now in the coin cabinet of the Bodemuseum, Berlin (Fig. 2A – photo courtesy Sanjay Garg).



Fig. 2A

This piece is dated Isfandarmuz 47, so was struck almost 2½ years before the Vienna half mohur. However, the executional similarities in the full and the half Mohurs make it evident that both were engraved by the same hand.

## 2.A 'Rama-Seeta' half mohur)



Fig. 3

Obv: Man wearing dhoti, with stole draped over his shoulders, carrying strung bow in one hand and an arrow in another. He wears three-pointed headgear and has a quiver on his back. He is followed by a woman in North Indian attire – a petticoat, a blouse and a stole to cover her head. With her left hand she carries one end of the stole to partially cover her face as a veil, in a typical *ghunghat* style. The scene can be interpreted as the depiction of the Hindu hero-god Rama and his consort, Seeta.

Rev: 50 *ilāhī farwardīn*, against a typical Mughal whorled decoration as background.

Part I of Whitehead's paper, published in 1923, makes mention of two 'Rama-Seeta' half mohurs, in the British Museum (BM) and Cabinet des Medailles, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris (BN) collections as nos. 50-51, respectively. These are shown here as Fig. 3A and 3B, respectively.



Fig. 3A



Fig. 3B

He also mentions that 'not more than three or four specimens' of this type are known. He however, does not mention this piece in the Vienna collection. The Paris specimen is illustrated as no. ii, Plate XXI of volume II of the *Catalogue of the coins in the Punjab Museum, Lahore – the coins of the Mughal Emperors*, edited by Whitehead. It is unique inasmuch as it carries a Devanagari legend above the obverse depiction which Whitehead read as *Ramasatya*. The discovery of the silver half rupees of this type - one in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Banaras Hindu University collection, Varanasi and the other sold recently at the 'Triton XIII' sale, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010, lot 2001 (Fig. 3C, image courtesy www.cngcoins.com) makes it clear that it is in all probability *Rāma-Siyā*, the colloquial form of 'Rama-Seeta' in the dialects of the Hindi/Hindustani language.



Fig. 3C

In the 1923 paper, Whitehead remarks that although the BM and BN pieces are evidently struck from the same dies, the Devanagari inscription seems to have been erased from the obverse die in the case of the BM specimen. The Vienna specimen is evidently struck from the same dies as that of the BM and indeed shows a rough surface where the legend is situated on the BN coin. Whitehead's remark that the legend was consequently rubbed off the die may thus be appropriate. In this case, one wonders as to why such a drastic step was taken. Depicting a Hindu god and his consort on the coins was heretical enough, but naming them as such must really have incensed the Islamic orthodoxy in Akbar's kingdom. It is possible that the name was erased, perhaps as a compromise, to appease the orthodox clergy. In any case, the coins survive as a wonderful testimony to Indo-Islamic syncretism practised at the Mughal court and a forerunner to further

numismatic 'heresies' that were to follow in the reign of Akbar's successor, Jahangir.

#### 4. A copper coin of Akbar of Delwara mint



Fig. 4

Obv: *allāhu akbar sanah (1)001*

Rev: *(zar)b delwā-ar(ah)*

Copper coins of this mint were first published by R G Gyani as 'Coins of Delwara' in JNSI, vol. II, 1940, pp. 139-141. The specimens he illustrated, rather poorly, all came from the collection of S.H. Hodivala, which was 'purchased for the cabinet' of the Prince of Wales Museum of Western India, Bombay (now renamed 'Chhatrapati Shivaji Vastu Samgrahalaya, Mumbai'). Gyani published eight copper coins in the name of Akbar and one copper coin in the name of Jahangir. He notes that 'all coins bear the date 1000 either on obverse or reverse', but in none of his illustrations can it be seen very clearly. Our coin has a clear 1001 on the obverse and perhaps Gyani was misled by the presence of dots below the 'e' in 'Delwara' on the reverse to take them as remnants of the date.

According to Gyani, the coins 'weigh roughly in proportion of 3, 2 and 1 being about 150, 100 and 50 grains respectively'. The Vienna piece, weighing 9.1 g, must thus be the 'Unit of 3' in Gyani's metrological scheme. Quite clearly, the coins do not fit the imperial Mughal denominational system for copper coins.

Gyani identified Delwara with an 'estate under the jurisdiction of Udaipur' founded by two brothers named Sajja and Ajja who were Jhala Rajputs hailing from Halwad in Kathiawad (Saurashtra). Sajja was killed in the famous siege when Akbar invaded Chitor and Gyani speculates that his descendents 'might have accepted the suzerainty of the great Mughal and struck local coins in his name'. This Delwara is located 28 km north-east of Udaipur and is presently known for its 18<sup>th</sup> century fort which is now a heritage hotel. However, it is unlikely that in c. AH 1000, the family there had been of sufficient importance to run a mint and strike coins. In the region, Chitor was a very prolific mint for copper coins during Akbar's reign, especially during AH 990-1010 and it struck coins to the imperial 18-20 g standard. So it seems unlikely that there was need for another mint close by producing copper coins, struck to a different standard. Furthermore, coins of Delwara, rare as they are, turn up in the Mumbai coin market regularly through dealers based in Gujarat and Saurashtra. The coins are evidently struck to the local Gujarat/Saurashtra standard, with the unit making a 'Trambiyo', the double unit a 'Dokdo' and the triple unit a 'Dhinglo'. Judging by these facts, it is pertinent to locate Delwara in Gujarat, or specifically the Saurashtra peninsula, rather than in Rajasthan.

There exists a Delwada near Diu in Saurashtra (presently located in Una district, Gujarat State). It has a certain religious significance – there is a Jaina pilgrimage shrine, and 'Gupta Prayag' nearby has Hindu temples. From its geographical location, situated near the mouth of the Macchundri River on its right bank, it is likely that, in historical times it may also have served as a port. It is, therefore, plausible that this is the Delwada where the coins were struck.

#### 5. The 'Portrait' issues and Zodiacal mohurs and rupees of Jahangir

There are two coins bearing the portrait of Jahangir in the Münzkabinett – one a mintless quarter mohur (Fig. 5), dated AH 1021/R7, which is a die-duplicate of a similar specimen in the British Museum; the other is a full mohur with legends surrounding the portrait (Fig. 6), struck at Ajmer. As these are

both well-discussed coins, nothing more needs to be said about them.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

The Münzkabinett has a fine set of zodiacal mohurs of Jahangir, most of which are in impeccable condition. The list of all the mohurs is as follows:

Aries – Agra, 1028/14 (Fig. 7); Urdu, 1036/22 (Fig 8)



Fig.7



Fig.8

Taurus (bull facing left, Fig. 9) – Agra, 1028/14



Fig. 9

Gemini – Agra, 1029/15

Cancer – Agra, 1031/17

Leo (facing right) – Agra, 1028/14

Virgo – Agra, 1031/17 (obverse shows signs of RY14 to the left of 'Virgo', but this has been erased from the die – this indicates the die was reused in 2-3 years to be coupled with the reverse die with date and RY on the same side).

Libra – Agra, 1032/18

Scorpio (facing left) – Agra, 1030/15

Sagittarius – Agra, 1030/15

Capricorn – Agra, 1031/16 and 1032/17 (two specimens, the latter coin has the obverse depiction in a smaller circle of rays)

Pisces – Agra, 1028/13

Aquarius – Fathpur, 1028



Fig. 10

This last coin (Fig. 10) has the Aquarius sign re-engraved over a different zodiac. The reverse of Fathpur is nevertheless interesting as only one other mohur of Fathpur (Aries) exists in the Bodemuseum in Berlin. Its electrotype replica in base metal can be seen in Vienna (Fig. 11).



Fig. 11

The couplet on the reverse of these coins runs *ba-fatahpūr sikka-i zar gīst fīrozadah / za-nūr-i nām jahāngīr shāh akbar shāh* [In Fathpur, the gold coin begot vicissitude, through the light of the name of King Jahangir (the son of ) King Akbar]. Wit and pun is made on the name of the mint-town Fathpur – the town of victory – and 'nūr', or 'light' which was part of the king's *laqab* Nūr al-Dīn.

Additionally, the collection has electrotype replicas in base metal of two mohurs in the name of Nur Jahan, the Queen Consort of Jahangir – Pisces and Sagittarius, both struck at Lahore.

There are a few zodiacal rupees in the collection too – they include:

Aries – Ahmedabad, 1027/13; Taurus – Ahmedabad, 1027/13; Gemini – Ahmedabad 1027 (2 specimens); Cancer – Ahmedabad, 1027/13; Leo – Ahmedabad, 1027/13; Libra – Agra, 1031/17 (an imitation).

#### 6. An unusual normal-weight quarter rupee of Jahangir



Fig. 12

Obv: ...shāh nūr al-dīn...

Rev: (sikka)...shāh dīn... (sanah) 17

The extant legends indicate that this coin probably had the *dīn panah* couplet on it, which is known on coins of Burhanpur and Ajmer mints. The calligraphy of this coin, however, does not match with known coins of this type. Perhaps it is an issue of a mint other than Burhanpur or Ajmer. Its weight, 2.8 g, indicates

that it was struck to the normal weight standard, not 20% or 25% heavier, as some of Jahangir's silver coins are.

### 7. A 'Nazarana' rupee of Shahjahan, struck at Akbarabad



Fig. 13

Obv: within a square, the *Shahada* and RY 18 in the bottom left corner. Names of the four *rashidūn* with their titles are placed in four *mihrab*-shaped cartouches emanating in cardinal directions from the borders of the central square, and the date AH 1054 in the right-hand cartouche.

Rev: within a square, the name of the emperor *shāhjahān bādshāh ghāzī*, the *laqab* (*shihāb al-dīn*), *ism* (*muḥammad*) and title (*ṣāhib qirān thānī* – 'second Lord of Conjunctions') arranged in three *mihrab*-shaped cartouches, clockwise from bottom around the central square, followed by a fourth cartouche on the right containing the mint-name, *zarb akbarābād*.

This coin is complimented by a similar coin in the Ashmolean Museum collection, though both are struck by different obverse and reverse dies. AH 1054 spans the period 10 March 1644 to 27 February 1645. In early 1644, Shahjahan left Lahore and came to Agra a.k.a. Akbarabad, where he remained till mid-1645, when he departed for Kashmir. So during the period these coins were struck, Shahjahan was present in Agra and most likely they were struck for one of his annual celebrations, the Persian New Year (*Nowruz*) or his lunar birthday. It was also in 1645 in Agra that the English East India Company secured rights to trade freely anywhere in the Mughal Empire. This concession was granted by Shahjahan when Gabriel Broughton, an English surgeon successfully treated his sister, Jahan Ara, for her burn injuries which she had sustained earlier as a result of an accident.

### 8. Two 'Nazarana' rupees of Aurangzeb, struck at Akbarabad, *Mustaqir al-Khilafa*



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

Obv: nominative couplet for Aurangzeb in three lines – *sikka zad dar jahān chūn badr munīr, shāh aurangzīb 'ālamgīr*, the AH date is placed at bottom left.

Rev: legend in three lines, read from bottom to top – *julūs mānūs maimanat zarb mustaqir al-khilāfa akbarābād*. The RY is placed after the 'S' of 'mānūs'.

No presentation rupees of Aurangzeb of Akbarabad (Agra) mint were known before, so these two come as a welcome addition to the repertoire of 'Nazarana' coins. The two coins are identical in design, except that one is struck with AH 1114 and the other with AH 1115. The RY on both coins is the same, 47. The obverse and reverse dies are mostly complimentary, even to the small details of decoration – however, they are both different. This RY commenced on 8-1-1703 and ended on 27-12-1703. AH 1114 commenced on 17-5-1702 and ended on 5-5-1703, while AH 1115 began on 6-5-1703 and ended on 24-4-1704. These dates help us to place the issue of the coin with AH 1114/R47 in the period 8-1-1703 to 5-5-1703, whereas the coin with AH 1115/R47 must have been struck between 6-5-1703 and 27-12-1703.

The most interesting aspect of these coins is that the emperor Aurangzeb was not present in Akbarabad (Agra) during this time. One would have assumed, given the ceremonial role of 'Nazarana' or presentation coins during the 'high' Mughal period, that their issue must have taken place where the court was. Aurangzeb's court in the year 1703 was definitely located in the Deccan and not in Agra. Between May and November 1703 Aurangzeb resided in Pune. Prior to May 1703, he was in the vicinity of Pune and, after November 1703, he moved on to Ahmednagar. This begs the question: what prompted the issue of 'Nazarana' coins in Agra, not once but twice in the year 1703?

### 9. An unusual mohur of Shah 'Alam Bahadur of Akbarabad mint



Fig. 16

Obv: *sikka shāh 'ālam bādshāh ghāzī*, traces of date XX19 to bottom left

Rev: *julūs wālāh sanah aḥd zarb akbarābād*

This mohur is unusual in the sense that it does away with the usual formulaic legends seen on Mughal coins, as well as the calligraphic style and coin design. The obverse legend omits the word *mubārak* and no '*maimanat mānūs*' is seen on the reverse. Instead, the adjective used for *julūs*, the regnal year, is *wālāh*, or 'exalted'.

In his 1930 paper, Whitehead published this coin as no.9, restoring the AH year to 1119 and reading *wālāh* as *shawwāl*. He took it to be a reference to the lunar month of the same name. He also forwarded a historical substantiation for this reference, mentioning that, in the month of Shawwāl of AH 1119, a proclamation was issued by Shah Alam Bahadur announcing that the official beginning of his reign was to be dated from 1<sup>st</sup> Muḥarram of 1119. The coin, according to Whitehead marks this event.

However, it was only the proclamation that was issued in the month of Shawwāl; the month otherwise had no bearing on the date of accession of the emperor. Also, it would be odd that an event merely readjusting the beginning of the reign to a date of the Emperor's choice would be celebrated by the issue of a special coin. Shah 'Alam Bahadur had gained the throne after a fratricidal war with his brother, A'zam Shah, after each of them had declared themselves heirs to their father, Aurangzeb. It was thus pertinent that, as the winner, Shah 'Alam Bahadur chose a particular day to

be reckoned as the beginning of his reign, as hostilities leading up to his formal accession would mean that his status as a ruler would have been uncertain prior to it.

It is likely that Whitehead was misled into reading *wālāh* as Shawwāl because of a hole drilled through the coin, margins of which create an illusion, coupled with a cluster of ornamental dots just above, that there is a letter *shīn* before the *wāv*. Having said that, the use of *wālāh* as 'exalted' is unusual, but it does have parallels in Shah 'Alam's rupees struck at Kambayat in his first year which have the legend *jalūs zaḡfar mānūs* – "the regnal year honoured by victory". There is also his rival, A'zam Shah labelling his *julūs aḡd* or first regnal year as *ashraf* (noble) and *afshān* (resplendent) on his coins. Shah 'Alam's successor, Jahandar Shah, struck coins with *mubārak* as the adjective for his *julūs aḡd*. As an adjective of *julūs*, this is certainly the earliest use of *wālāh*. It is seen sporadically on a few later coins, most notably the rare rupees of Nadir Shah struck at Muhammadabad Banaras, and also on copper coins struck by the Nawabs of Awadh in their mints at Banaras and Muzaffarnagar (Gorakhpur).

**10. A 'Nazarana' mohur of Shah 'Alam Bahadur – mint Akbarabad, Mustaqir al-Mulk**



Fig. 17

Obv: in four lines *sikka mubārak shāh 'ālam bahādūr bādshāh ghāzī*, date AH 1123 in the top line.

Rev: in three lines *julūs sanah 5 maimanat mānūs zarb mustaqir al-mulk akbarābād*

This mohur is a die-duplicate of two 'Nazarana' pieces - a mohur and rupee - in the British Museum collection.

**11. Heavy mohur fractions of Shah 'Alam Bahadur, Karimabad mint**



Fig.18

Obv: Parts of the legend *sikka shāh 'ālam bādshāh ghāzī*

Rev: Parts of *zarb karīmābād sanah julūs 5*

Karimabad occurs as an alternative mint-name for Murshidabad only on coins of Shah 'Alam Bahadur. It was the name of a suburb of Murshidabad where the mint was located. The coins struck here have dissimilar legends inasmuch as they omit *mubārak* on the obverse and replace it with *sanah* followed by the AH date. The reverse legends also omit *maimanat mānūs*. Peculiarly for RY5, the last RY for Shah 'Alam Bahadur, the coins of Karimabad are struck to a 10% heavier standard. There are other examples from mints in the Bengal province such as Akbarabad, Jahangirnagar and Katak where heavier rupees were struck sporadically. Thus phenomenon of c. 10% heavy coins

struck during Shah Alam I's reign is not, however, confined to the province of Bengal alone. There are instances of similar heavier coins being issued from other mints with the following date/Ry combinations known –

- Akbarabad, Mustaqir-al-mulk - years 4, 6
- Akbarnagar - 1123/5, yr 6
- Allahabad - yr 6
- Azimabad - 1122/4, 1122/5, 1123/5, 1124/6
- Jahangirnagar - yr 5
- Lahore - 1123/5
- Shahjahanabad - 1123/5, yr 6
- Surat - yr 5
- Tatta - 1122/4, yr 5

However, not all coin struck in these years from these mints are struck to the heavier standard. (I am grateful to the Editor for this listing).

The coins published here are the first instances of fractions of mohurs struck to this standard. The larger coin is a half mohur and weighs 6.1 g. The smaller coin is a one-eighth mohur weighing 1.51 g.

**12. Mohur fractions of Shah 'Alam Bahadur, Surat mint**



Fig. 19

Obv: Parts of the inscription *sikka mubārak shāh 'ālam bahādūr bādshāh ghāzī* in four lines.

Rev: Parts of the legend *sanah julūs maimanat mānūs zarb sūrat*

No fractional gold coins of Surat mint for Shah 'Alam Bahadur were known so far. The Vienna collection has a half and a one-eighth mohur. The date and RY portions of the legends are truncated beyond reconstruction on both these coins.

**13. A 'Nazarana' rupee of Farrukhsiyar, mint Akbarabad, Mustaqir al-Mulk**



Fig. 20

Obv: Nominative couplet for Farrukhsiyar arranged in three lines – *sikka zad az faḡl-i ḡaq bar sīm wa zar / bādshāh bahr wa bar farrukhsiyar*, with *faḡl* in second line and the name of the king with *ḡaq* in the top line. The date, AH 1126, is placed above *siyar* in the top line.

Rev: Formulaic legend *sanah 3 julūs maimanat mānūs zarb mustaqir al-mulk akbarābād*.

No 'Nazarana' rupee of Farrukhsiyar struck at Akbarabad was hitherto known. This handsome coin is, thus, a further welcome addition to the known 'Nazarana' coins of the Mughal emperors.

**14. A gold mohur of Murshidabad and its fractions in the name of Farrukhsiyar**



Fig. 21

Obv: Nominative couplet for Farrukhsiyar arranged in three lines – *sikka zad az faẓl-i ḥaḡ bar sīm wa zar / bādshāh bahr wa bar farrukhsiyar*, with the name of the king in the middle line. The date, AH 1130, is placed to the left in the last line.

Rev: Formulaic legend *sanah 7 julūs maimanat mānūs ẓarb murshidābād*.

A mohur of Farrukhsiyar of Murshidabad mint dated AH 1127/R4 is listed in the PMC as no. 2137, so, as such, it is not an unknown coin. However, its fractions are here being reported for the first time. Most of the inscriptions on the fractions are truncated and, had it not been for the comparison with the details on the full mohur, the attribution of the fractions would surely remain a difficult task. The fractions in the Vienna collection weigh 2.9, 0.72 and 0.36 g, thus making them 1/4<sup>th</sup>, 1/16<sup>th</sup> and 1/32<sup>nd</sup> mohur, respectively.

**15. A mohur of Muhammad Shah, Burhanpur mint, with added Laqab and Qunya for the king's name**



Fig. 22

Obv: ...*abū al-faṭḥ (nā)ṣir al-dīn bādshāh ghāzī muḥammad shāh* in three lines.

Rev: Formulaic legend *sanah aḥd julūs maimanat mānū(s) ẓarb dār al-sar(ūr) (b)ju(r)hān(pūr)*.

This coin was published by Whitehead in his 1930 paper as no. 11. He also published a silver rupee with the same features in 'part II' (1926) of his contribution, making reference to a similar specimen in the Nagpur Museum collection that had previously been published by Nelson Wright, in NS-XII of 1909 and S H Hodivala, in his *Historical Studies in Mughal Numismatics*. Coins of Muhammad Shah with full *laqab* and *qunya* are known from other mints as well – one of Jahangirnagar was published by Stan Goron

in ONS 92-93 (1984). They are all struck in the first regnal year, exactly as this mohur is.

**16. Two copper fulus of Muhammad Shah, mint Akbarnagar**



Fig. 23

Obv: in two lines, (*fulūs*) *bādshāh muḥammad shāh* with AH date above the 'S' of *fulūs* in the lower line.

Rev: *ẓarb akbarnagar sanāh 5*

One of the copper coins is dated AH 1135 and the other is dated AH 1136, while both bear RY5, which began on 6-1-1723 and ended on 25-12-1723. This means that the coin with AH 1135 was struck between 6-1-1723 and 20-9-1723 while that with AH 1136 was struck between 21-9-1723 and 25-12-1723. Copper coins of Muhammad Shah are rare and no copper coin of his reign is reported from a mint located in Bengal. The province was ruled by Nawabs and Murshid Quli Ja'afar Khan was in charge during 1723.

**Colonial (and Related) coins**

**17. A mohur of Aurangzeb with an interesting countermark**



Fig. 24

Obv: nominative couplet for Aurangzeb in three lines – *sikka zad (dar jahān) chūn mihr munīr, shāh aurangzīb 'ālamgīr*. The date, XX78, is seen to the left of the word *sikka* in the central line. A countermark composed of two Roman letters 'E' and 'R' is struck just above '*ālamgīr*' at 12 o'clock (see enlargement, below).

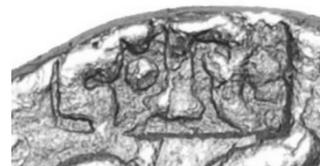


Fig. 24A

Rev: Formulaic legend (*san=h*) *7 julūs maimanat mānūs ẓarb akbarābād*, with the mint-name at the top.

The countermark 'ER' is most curious indeed. Conceivably it was placed on the coin in or after AH 1075/R7, but where, by whom and for what significance is anyone's guess! The style of lettering is appropriate to the 17<sup>th</sup> century judging by the serifs added on all

three horizontal bars of 'E'. The dots placed between the two letters would mean that this is an acronym. 'ER' would usually signify 'Elizabeth Regina', but this coin postdates the period of Elizabeth I by almost three quarters of a century. AH 1075 began on 25 July 1664 and ended on 14 July 1665. RY7 commenced on 19 March 1664 and ended on 7 March 1665. The coin must, therefore, have been struck between 25 July 1664 and 7 March 1665. A noteworthy historical event that occurred during this time was the sack of the port city of Surat by the Maratha ruler, Shivaji (16-20 January 1665). Apart from the English, the Dutch were also a significant presence in India at this time and it is possible that the countermark is a Dutch feature, if anything, like the one on the next coin is.

**18. A 'Surat' rupee countermarked with a 'horse-rider' motif**



Fig. 25

Obv: nominative couplet for Aurangzeb in three lines – (*sikka*) *zad dar jahān chūn dar munīr* ( *shāh aurangzīb 'ālamgīr*), with date 11XX, obliterated under the stamp of the countermark on the reverse.

Rev: formulaic legend *sanah 37 julūs maimanat (mānūs) zarb sūrat*, with a 'horse-rider' motif counterstamped at 11 o'clock.

This is a rare example of the Mughal rupees of Surat countermarked and exported by the Dutch East India Company for use in Java. Scholten in his 'Coins of the Dutch Overseas Territories' (Amsterdam, 1953, p. 36, no. 16) mentions that the rupees were counter-stamped vide the advertisement of July 17, 1693 and notification of August 17, 1693 and 'it was the intention of the Company to keep them in circulation'. He notes coins of AH 1102/RY34, 1104/36, 1104/37 and 1105 indicating that the countermarking was carried out on freshly imported coins. One coin listed by Scholten was countermarked with a different device in 1755 so it would seem that these coins continued in circulation for over fifty years in Java. On our coin the device is rectangular but Scholten mentions 'shield-shaped' devices were also employed. A similar piece dated RY37 exists in the British Museum collection as well.

**19. A Dutch triple fanam struck at Negapatnam(?)**



Fig. 26

Obv: 'A human figure resembling Kali, but, on the 'breast', there is a Sankha shell, to the right of which is a cluster of four dots'

Rev: 'An object resembling a horizontal 'J' under which are 12 dots (3 rows of 4 dots) and, above, 'O C' (Oostindische Compagnie = East India Company)'

The descriptions given above are from Scholten, 'Coins of the Dutch Overseas Territories', (Amsterdam, 1953), pp. 139-140, coin no. 1230. Scholten mentions that the triple fanams were struck at Negapatnam to be brought into circulation 'elsewhere' and they weighed c.1 g. The coin illustrated here at 1.02 g foots the bill. What sets it apart from Scholten's description is the gold purity – Scholten says these coins were of only about 0.333

fineness, whereas this coin looks much purer than that (although this is only a physical observation).

Scholten's description of these 'Vira Raya'-type fanams is somewhat confusing as to where they were struck and circulated as well. On p. 140, he gives the description of the coin as I have given above, but on p. 144, while describing 'silver Cochin fanams', he illustrates an exactly similar coin of silver. Here he says, quoting Elliot, that these coins were also called 'Puttan', and 'we presume that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century they were already struck at Pulicat for the port of Kayalpatnam'. He adds that 'later they were struck at Negapatnam and after 1781, at Tuticorin for Cochin', adding further that 'the type is similar to the gold triple fanam struck at Negapatnam'.

It is not thus very clear where these coins were struck. They were clearly struck at multiple locations and exported to other regions and ports, but in what chronological order is not very clear from Scholten's description. Also, if the designs of the coin struck at Negapatnam were copied at other places like Cochin, how their inception at Pulicat could be justified would be a good question. We presently have to rely on what merely is Scholten's 'presumption' in attributing the coin.

Confusing as this is, the only certain fact is that this coin is a very rare Dutch issue. Whether it is the triple fanam struck at Pulicat/Negapatnam, or an 'off-metal' Cochin puttan in gold, is left for further investigation.

**20. Indo-Dutch 'Kali' fanams with Arabic inscription on the reverse**



Fig. 27

Obv: 'Degeneration of a human figure, apparently the representation of Kali. On the breast, crescent and dot and a wreath of dots (apparently a string of skulls)'.  
Rev: 'Crude Arabic inscription, perhaps a rough reproduction of that on copper coins'.

As in the previous instance, this description is also from Scholten, p. 134, where he described a fanam of Pulicat (no. 1203). The fanams were first published by Scholten in the annual Yearbook of the Royal Dutch Numismatic Society, XXI 1934, p.90-95. The attribution is apparently based on an illustration from Pierre Sonnerat's 'Voyages aux Indes Orientales' (Pl.30, figure 8), which was subsequently described by Hans Herrli in JONS 193, p. 26. Sonnerat mentions that the 'fanam of Paliakate' is current for 7 sols (French), but the gold is so bad, that outside the comptoir, the value is 3 sols less. Scholten also mentions, quoting the 'Advys of Jacob Mossel', Anno 1739, that the coin was accounted for 5 Stivers in the books, its fineness being 0.289,5. A specimen was also offered in the auction of the Ken Wiggins Collection - Baldwin's Auction no. 25, 8 May 2001, lot 770. (I am indebted to Jan Lingen for providing these references).

The similarity that Scholten draws between the inscription on the copper coins of Pulicat and these fanams is evidently confounded as can be seen from the comparison with the illustration of the copper coin on the next page (Fig. 27A, American Numismatic Society collection, no. 73.56.325, gift of the Metropolitan Museum of Art).



Fig. 27A

The inscription on the copper coin was itself reported erroneously by Scholten – he read it as ‘*rabb sulṭān ‘abd*’, standing for ‘the Lord, the King, and the Servant’. Jan Lingen, in a Dutch article in ‘*De Beeldenaar*’ in 1977 (nr.7, p.16-18), corrected Scholten’s reading to *ba-nām sulṭān ‘abdullah* or ‘in the name of Sultan Abdullah’. From the coin shown here, it is evidently the same, albeit written in a crude way. This is ostensibly a reference to Abdullah Quli Qutb Shah, Sultan of Golkonda, as the Dutch had secured the minting rights from his governor. The inscription on the fanams is very different; however, what it is remains anyone’s guess! The attribution of these coins to the Dutch is also tentative, based entirely on Pierre Sonnerat’s account.

### 21. An Indo-French pagoda of ‘Porto Novo’ type



Fig. 28

Obv: the standing figure of Venkateshwara with dots and curvy lines besides.

Rev: Crescent and dot within a granular field on a distinctly convex surface.

Indo-French gold coins are rare and particularly so the early issues with a single ‘Swami’, or the so-called ‘Porto Novo’ type. The British Museum has four or five pieces. This type was first struck in Pondicherry in 1715 and then to a lower standard of purity in 1739. As no assay has been done on this piece in the Vienna collection, it is difficult to say which of these two issues the coin belongs to.

### 22. An ‘Arkat’ rupee with letter ‘D’



Fig. 29

Obv: (*sikka mubāra*)k bādshāh ghāzī ...mad shāh in three lines  
Rev. formulaic inscription in three lines *sanah 4 julūs maimanat mānūs zarb (ar)kā(t)*. The letter ‘D’ is placed above the letter *jīm* of *julūs*’ on its curvy side.

This is an intriguing coin so far as its attribution is concerned. Stylistically, it looks exactly like the rupees struck by the French East India Company at Pondicherry, in the name of the reigning Mughal emperor with the pseudo-mintname ‘Arkat’. A comparable piece appeared in Baldwin’s Auctions no. 30 in 2002 as lot 1000 and is illustrated here (Fig 29A).



Fig. 29A

This piece has RY7 and the ‘D’ on it is executed as it should be, unlike on the Vienna specimen, where it is turned on its convex side.

Although the execution of the legends resembles the French ‘Arkat’ rupee, at salient points they are at a variance with the prototype as evident on both the Baldwin as well the Vienna coins. Thus, in the top line on the obverse, the Baldwin piece shows a legend ‘...d shāh bahā’, whereas the Vienna specimen has ...ad shāh. This could well be the name of Muhammad Shah or Ahmed Shah Bahadur, the latter more likely with the ‘bahā’ coming after it, although the word has been left half-written and the legend ends abruptly. But what precedes the initial letter *dāl* is truncated on both the coins. Judging by what is extant on the Vienna coin, it appears that letter *mīm*, necessary to render the name either Muhammad or Ahmed, does not precede the *dāl*.

The other significant deviation is seen in the execution of the mint-name on the reverse. Although truncated to a certain degree on both the Baldwin and Vienna coins, from the extant portions, it is evident that the word *arkāt* is not executed as it should be. Only the ‘*kā*’, which would fall in the visible field on most coins, is correctly executed, the *Alif* and *Re* that precede it are no more than diagonal strokes.

Other variances include the words *sikka mubāra* on the bottom line on the obverse and *mānūs* and *maimanat* in the top line of the reverse. On the obverse of the Vienna coin, the *mīm* in *mubāra* is seen to have an execution like a ‘goose-head’. The same letter in the word *mānūs* is engraved unusually large on both coins, and in the word *maimanat*, where it precedes the *-nat* portion, it is executed as part of a trio of diamond-shaped dots and not as a ‘knot’ as it should be.

Judging by these features it is apparent that the coins have designs which are executed with reasonable accuracy only when they form part of the visible field of the coin. Features which would usually fall outside the field - owing to the die generally being wider than the average size of the blank - have been given scant attention. It is thus evident that these coins are only feigning to be French Arcot rupees, with the real distinguishing feature being the letter ‘D’. It occurs at a position where the ‘crescent’ mark of the French occurs and, as such, it must have been diagnostic for the authority responsible for striking these coins. On the earlier among the two coins (the Vienna specimen, RY4), the feigning is ‘subversive’ as the usual ‘crescent’ is simply converted to a ‘D’ by joining its free ends and making it lie on its convex side. By RY7 (the Baldwin coin), whoever was responsible for the feigning became more bold and the ‘D’ is executed as it should be.

What ‘D’ stands for is anyone’s guess – however, Baldwin’s auction catalogue attributes the coin featured therein to the Danish East India Company (DOC), quoting information in an ‘accompanying letter’ as given in the description with the coin. We have no means of establishing who this letter was from and what it contained to substantiate the attribution. The Danish Company had its main base at Tranquebar, (or Tharangambadi as it is now known) located on the coast south of Pondicherry and we know from records that the Danes struck copies of ‘Arcot’ rupees in this enclave from 1753 to 1776. Indeed, Uno Jensen in his book on ‘Coins of Tranquebar 1620-1845’ (and also on the website [www.tranquebar.dk](http://www.tranquebar.dk), accessed on 16-9-2010) attributes a variety of rupee struck in the name of Shah Alam II, with the mint-name ‘Arkat’ and the distinguishing mark of a ‘Trisul’ to the DOC. They bear the dates AH 1181/Ry14 and AH 1183/Ry16.

If we regard the coins under discussion to be struck in the name of Ahmed Shah Bahadur and bearing his RYs, the date of their issue would fall before the date the Danes undertook the coining of rupees at Tranquebar. It would, therefore, follow that these are not Danish issues of Tranquebar. But as we have seen, the legends have certain peculiarities, particularly where the emperor's name occurs. The word preceding 'shāh' ends in a 'dāl' but we cannot be sure if a 'mīm' precedes it. As such, we cannot conclusively say that they are struck in the name of Ahmed Shah Bahadur; consequently we cannot be sure that the RYs they bear are his. Conceivably, they are struck using his legends as a prototype (particularly keeping the 'bahā' bit of the legend in view), but if they were struck during his reign or after and indeed, how long after are questions difficult to answer. If the RYs are not Ahmed Shah's, whose regnal reckoning they represent would also be a good question. But judging them to be issues in the name of Ahmed Shah Bahadur and/or bearing his RYs should not necessarily be the only criteria to diagnose whether they were issued by the Danes. In conclusion, we might say that it is plausible that these coins are Danish issues, but for want of further evidence we have to leave it at that.

If they are not Danish issues, the letter 'D' needs to have some other explanation. It is less likely to be Dutch, because the numismatic activities of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) are well documented and there is no reference to them coining 'Arcot' rupees. The French are the only other candidates. The 'D' could well stand for 'Dupleix' (full name Joseph François Dupleix), the powerful governor of Pondicherry. But Dupleix left India for good in October 1754. Furthermore, why the French authorities would strike coins with incomplete legends and subvert their own well-established 'crescent' mark when their currency had been so successful, are questions that may go against a French attribution.

### 22. A quarter mohur of the East India Co., Bengal Presidency, Azimabad (Patna) mint



Fig. 30

Obv: nominative couplet in the name of Shah Alam II – *sikka zad bar haft kishwar ba-sāyah faḥl alah / ḥāmī dīn muḥammad shāh 'ālam bādshāh*, AH date 1183 in the last line.

Rev: Formulaic legend *sanah 11 julūs maimanat mānūs ḡarb 'aẓmābād* in three lines, a 'cinquefoil' mark to the right of the RY.

The control over mints of Dacca (Jahangirnagar), Patna ('Azimabad) and Murshidabad passed to the East India Company on 12 August 1765, as mentioned by Pridmore ('The Coins of the British Commonwealth of Nations, Part 4 India, volume 1: East India Company, Presidency Series c.1642-1835, London, p. 199-200). The decade of the 1760's was particularly fraught with a scarcity of silver coins and, in June 1766, Robert Clive, the governor of the Company, made gold coinage legal tender. The 'Muhr' was authorised and declared to be the equivalent of 14 Sicca Rupees, with a weight of 16 Annas or 179½ troy grains. However, this coinage was underrated and on 20 March 1769, the weight of the Muhr was increased to '17 annas sicca weight' (190.773 troy grains). Subdivisions of half, quarter, eighth, and one-sixteenth part were also ordered to be struck.

While discussing the coins of the 'country mints' of Patna and Dacca, Pridmore mentions that they are rare – only one gold 1/16<sup>th</sup> Mohur piece is listed by him for the Patna or 'Azimabad mint (Pridmore no. 60, p. 234) and this is from the British Museum collection. The quarter mohur in Vienna is, therefore, a very welcome addition to the inventory of the very rare gold coins of

the period. It weighs 3.1 g so it is conceivably struck to the heavier standard.

The 'native mint' of Patna was closed in AH 1187 or October 1773, about four years after this coin was struck.

### 23. An unusual rupee of Arkat mint, in the name of Muhammad Shah, with a 'star' mark



Fig. 31

Obv: *sikka mubāarak bādshāh ghāzī muḥammad shāh 11(4)X*  
Rev: *sanah 8 julūs maimanat mānūs ḡarb (arkāt)*. An eight-pointed 'star' is seen to the left of the RY.

Even though they are struck in Muhammad Shah's name, none such 'Arkat' rupees should be attributed to the Mughals, as the region had gradually slipped out of Mughal control in the years following the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. Soon after Muhammad Shah came to the throne in 1719, the Nawabs of Arkat were much in control of their affairs, their main challenger being not the emperor but his recently seceded prime minister, the Nizam ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I. The coins, however, continued to be nominally struck in the name of Muhammad Shah. RY8 seen on this coin corresponds to 1727-28, when Nawab Sa'adatullah Khan was in charge.

It is however the execution of the coin and the curious 'star' mark that sets this apart from other known Arkat rupees. The Nawabs were also instrumental in farming minting rights to other authorities in the region, most notably the English, French and Dutch mercantile companies. The rupees struck by such issuing authorities often carried 'Arkat' as the mint name on the coins but they were distinguished by the addition of marks and also by the executional style. The 'star' had been a mark of the British East India Company, and indeed rupees in the name of Muhammad Shah, bearing the mint-name Chinapatan and the 'star' mark were struck by the English in their mint at Madras. However, the star on these (and also coins in the name of preceding emperors, namely Shah 'Alam Bahadur, Jahandar Shah and Farrukhsiyar) is a five-pointed star. The star on the Vienna rupee is, on the other hand, eight-pointed and the executional style of the legends also differs drastically from other British issues.

With the present state of evidence it cannot be ascertained who struck this coin, but it is quite certainly not the issue of the Nawabs of Arkat. The most likely contenders are to be found among the mercantile companies, but it is difficult to say which one.

### Coins of Independent Kingdoms (Sikhs)

There is a good number of Sikh coins in the Vienna collection the greater portion of which come from the Kashmir mint. The two most noteworthy Sikh coins are described hereunder.

### 24. A quarter rupee of Amritsar with Gurmukhi legends on the reverse



Fig. 32

Obv: parts of the 'Gobind Shahi' couplet ...*gūrū go (bind) singh fa(za)*... with a 'comb' mark below 'singh'.

Rev: a leaf in the centre, surrounded by Gurmukhi legend ..(*ra*)*ba sr(ī)*.../(*sa*)*ra*..., indicating it stands for *jaraba srī/ambratsa/raji*.

In Hans Herrli's monograph 'The Coins of the Sikhs' (Delhi, 2004), no silver coin with a combination of Persian and Gurmukhi legends was published for the mint of Amritsar. This quarter rupee should thus be regarded as a new type. The 'comb' mark on the obverse indicates that it was issued after vs 1884 when that date became a 'frozen' date on the Gobindshahi rupees. The reverse die is similar to the one used for copper coins of Amritsar mints, so it is likely that this coin type was constituted as a mule of an obverse die for silver coins and a reverse die for copper coins.

**25. A light-weight rupee of Kashmir mint with full Gurmukhi legends**



Fig. 33

Obv: legend in Gurmukhi *deg teg fa/té nasrat bedirang/jafat aj nanak/guru gobind singh*. Mark of a sword against a round shield between the second and third lines.

Rev: in Gurmukhi *jarib sasa/mira sri a/kāl purakhaji*. A leaf mark is placed between the second and third lines. To its left, a trace of Persian numerals and, to the right, 189(2) in Nagari numerals is seen.

The coin weighs 7.6g. This type of Kashmir rupee was published by Herrli (p. 139) as no. 06.60.04 and 06.61.04 under the category 'special rupees'. The two coins Herrli illustrates are virtually the same, except that the second coin has an additional 'Ram' added to the obverse field to the left of the sword mark. Our coin does not have it, so it is 06.60.04. According to Herrli, "the rupee 06.60.04 was for the first time published in a paper by Joseph Arneth on Bactrian coins. The drawing of a coin brought to Vienna by Baron von Hügel appears at the end of the text – upside down and with the laconic comment 'Ranjit Singh's rupee'. As the coin is extremely rare and weighs only about two-thirds of a regular *Hari Singhi* rupee of Kashmir, this designation must be based on some error. The rupee looks in fact less like a coin than a medal or a token struck for a special and now long forgotten occasion".

This description makes it certain that the coin in Vienna was brought there by Baron von Hügel. In Appendix 7 of Herrli's work (p. 285-286) we find who this person was. "Baron Karl Alexander Anselm von Hügel (1796-1870) was born at Regensburg in Bavaria. After studying at Heidelberg he joined the Austrian army, fought against Napoleon in the Neapolitan campaign of 1820-21 and resigned in 1824 with the rank of Major. Between 1830 and 1836, von Hügel travelled in India, Australia, the Philippines and again in India where he visited the Punjab and Kashmir... He was appointed the Austrian ambassador to Tuscany in 1849 and to Brussels in 1859. He retired in 1867, spent the last years of his life in England and died in Brussels in 1870". Baron von Hügel wrote 'Kaschmir und das Reich der Siek' in four volumes, published in Stuttgart over the period 1840-1848. Appendix 1 of Herrli's monograph (pp. 251-255) publishes excerpts from von Hügel's book and its English summary.

Herrli's reference to the first publishing of these coins by Arneth appears a bit confused – the footnote appears to suggest that Arneth's paper is to be found in the fourth volume of von Hügel's book. Perhaps the relevant section of von Hügel's book was contributed by Arneth. In any case, Herrli's conclusion that this piece is a 'medal or token struck for a special and forgotten

occasion' is worth reconsideration. This inference appears to have stemmed from two aspects – the rarity of the coin and its low weight. However, it is not unusual to find silver coins struck to a lower weight standard in north-western India. Sikh issues of Peshawar weigh 8.5 g and some of the Kashmir rupees Herrli lists (06.40.04 to 06.43.04) are struck to the same standard, too. These light-weight rupees of Kashmir are dated vs 1890 and 1891, which is close to vs 1892 in which the coin under discussion was struck. This chronological proximity might not be entirely irrelevant when it comes to justifying the low weight of the coin. Perhaps there was a temporary 'dip' in the weight of silver coins during this period. The low weight standard did not entirely go away from Kashmir, as is evident from later rupees struck under the rule of the Dogra Rajas. It is therefore plausible that the piece is not a 'medal' or 'token', but a light-weight coin which presumably did not survive a longer issue because of its atypical design and the low weight.

Herrli notes that von Hügel's collection was presented to the 'Kaiserlich-Konigliches Münz- und Antiken Kabinett' in Vienna. In all likelihood, the large number of Kashmir coins in the Kunsthistorisches Museum collection come from Baron von Hügel.

**Miscellaneous South Indian coins**

The Vienna collection contains a number of very light (around 500-700 mg) silver coins, collectively known as *taras*. As they are uninscribed, it is difficult to attribute them. But all of them have designs such as the 'lazy J' or a 'Kali' that links them with issues of the Malabar area. In an article 'Studies in South Indian Coins', entitled 'Taras of Malabar and Cochin' (SSIC, vol. XIV, pp. 76-81), Beena Sarasan has indeed identified them as such and some varieties of *taras* listed below are included in it.

**26. Silver tara coins with 'Lazy-J' design**

These all have on one side the 'lazy-J' with 12 dots below it, arranged in three lines of four dots each. They can be further subdivided into three groups depending on what they have on the other side.

The first subgroup consists of a single coin (Fig. 34) with a 'Kali'-like design on the reverse, but here the 'Kali' has no 'head'. Instead, only two curved lines stand for the 'hands' and an assortment of dots decorates the rest of the field.



Fig. 34



Fig. 35

Coins of the second subgroup (Fig. 35) have obverse and reverse designs very similar to the first subgroup, but the execution of the 'Kali' on the reverse is different. Here there are crescent-shaped lines above and below the central portion where the lateral curvy lines are joined by a bar. The number of dots is considerably less than that on the first subgroup.



Fig. 36

The third subgroup is again represented by a single coin (Fig. 36), which has a seated 'diad' of divinities, very similar to those seen on Vijayanagara coins. No distinguishing emblems or attributes are seen but the couple is usually recognised to be either Shiva-Parvati or Lakshmi-Narayana. The 'lazy-J' design on the other side has a conch-like symbol present above the 'hook' of 'J'. As the conch is a symbol of Vishnu, it is likely that the divine couple is Vishnu (Narayana) and his consort Lakshmi. This variety features in Sarasan's article as no.5.

**27. Taras with a 'horse' motif**



Fig. 37

There are a total of nine coins of this category in the Vienna collection, but only four are illustrated here. They all have a stylistically rendered horse on the obverse and a strange design on the reverse. The horse has a crescent above its back. The reverse design is composed of a semicircular line with ends that turn inwards and end in two dots. There are two other lines in the design, one like a walking stick and the other a curved one like a bracket. Three dots are placed in exergue along the left side. It is not certain what this design represents, but it is very likely that it is a depiction of a divinity with hands in a gesture of salutation (*namaskāra*) seated in a *lalitāsana* pose, with one leg flexed at the knee and drawn upwards and inwards on the seat, while the other rests on the floor.

**28. Taras with Krishna playing the flute**



Fig. 38

There are three coins of this type in the Vienna collection and they seem to be fractional *taras*. In Beena Sarasan's article in SSIC (vide supra) a full *tara* of this type was listed as no. 1, weighing 0.07 g. On the obverse they have the figure of the Hindu god, Krishna, standing in a characteristic pose, which helps to identify it as his 'flute-playing' iconic form. On the reverse, a curvy line with two knots is seen, placed within a circle of dots. This most likely represents a serpent, probably the Naga Kaliya who features in one of the tales of Krishna's lore. However, Sarasan identified it as a 'corrupt representation of Kannada *Sri*.'

In another article in 'Studies in South Indian Coins', entitled 'A Rassi Coin with Sreekrishna Symbol from Kerala' by V.

Manmadhan Nair (SSIC, vol. XV, pp. 84-87), a debased gold coin weighing 0.38 g with the same 'Krishna' motif on the obverse, but a 'Lazy-J' design on the reverse was published. This ostensibly is a fanam of a variety similar to the silver *taras*. The fact that these coins seem to share the repertoire of obverse and reverse motif is noteworthy and points to the possibility that their issues may not have been far apart in time and space. Sarasan attributed these coins to the Rajas of Kottayam, on the basis of their purported provenance ('...understood to have been recovered from the riverbeds around Sultan Battery in Wayanad'). I am thankful to Barbara Mears for furnishing details of the SSIC articles.

**29. 'Kali' fanams with disparate reverse motifs**



Fig. 39



Fig. 40



Fig. 41

Three varieties of fanams with the so-called 'Kali' motif on the obverse exist in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. The first of them (fig. 39) has the inscription *Rama Rau* on the reverse. This well-known type is discussed in detail by Hans Herrli in his book 'Gold Fanams 1336-2000' (Mumbai, 2006, p. 74), where he corrected its earlier attribution to the Maratha Chhatrapati Rajaram by suggesting that the *Rama Rau* legend does not refer to him, but is just a corruption of 'Ranga Rayu', the name of one of the last kings of Vijayanagara. The other two varieties are worth noting – one (fig. 40) has a double-lined cruciform motif on the reverse while the other (fig. 41) has the Persian inscription 'Alamgir'. The latter is evidently a reference to either Aurangzeb or Alamgir II and it is possible that this coin was struck by one of the Mughal potentates in the region of Tamilnadu (such as the Nawabs of Arcot). The first appears to be an issue of a European mercantile company, judging by the crucifix design. Herrli discussed several varieties of the 'Kali' fanams (pp. 71-79) as well as fanams in the name of Mughal emperors (pp.100-108) in his book, but these two varieties do not feature in his monograph.

**THEORIES OF "KACHCHA-NESS"**

By Barry Tabor

My recent article about the *kachcha pice* of Malwa (JONS 203, spring, 2010, p.16) resulted in feedback from a number of colleagues, leading to some useful conversations about the coins and possible methods of classifying and cataloguing them. I have summarised the outcome in the form of a list of the main 'theories' and, with the Editor's permission, I will attempt to apply them to particular cases and states in future issues of JONS, in the hope that the resulting tentative results will also be of some interest.

Of the five principal theories that emerged, some could happily co-exist, and one or more of them could probably help us to catalogue the copper coins of central Indian states more satisfactorily than has been done hitherto. Some of the theories might be applicable for certain areas but not others, and they might overlap in their effects, both in time and space. Testing them against several of the series would be a first step towards ‘classifying’ and cataloguing the coins, and that is to be the subject of the proposed future papers, starting with Ratlam.

### 1. ‘Coins from each mint became more *kachcha* with time’

This proposes that, including Ratlam and Sailana, all Malwa mints produced *pukkah* copper coins to begin with. As time wore on, the several pressures described in the first paper caused them all to reduce standards, some more than others. In most cases, only the earliest products can be described as *pukkah*, and the later ones became increasingly *kachcha*. Hence, when cataloguing them, generally speaking, the nearer to ‘proper standards’ a coin is, the earlier it was probably struck.

This theory appears plausible for some mints like Dewas, Mandsaur and maybe Jhabua, and could be a tenable and practicable starting point for making a catalogue for some mints, but it appears not to be the whole answer. Discovering whether there were purely *kachcha* mints working alongside them, striking copies and imitations of the *pukkah* pice of many places, near and far, may not be easy.

### 2. ‘*Kachcha* coins are derived from *pukkah* coins, but were struck in separate mints

‘Unofficial’ workshops like those described in the first paper, in Ratlam and Sailana states, are, according to this theory, a completely separate group from the official mints, and both kinds continued to strike their respective classes of coins during several or many years, and some of them probably did so from first to last. Perhaps it became necessary for official mints to reduce standards to stay in business, but they remained official and their issues were all *pukkah*. A variation of this theory (call it 2b.) might be that *kachcha* coins all derive from *pukkah* coins and many of them were struck in the same mints that were producing the *pukkah* coins from which they were copied. This would necessitate that the ‘false coin mints’ of Ratlam and Sailana were engaged in the production of both *pukkah* and *kachcha* coins. Nothing in the known ‘evidence’ would appear to rule out this possibility.

*Kachcha* pice of ‘original stamp’ are clearly not direct derivatives (copies or imitations) of the products of any of the official Malwa mints, and could have been struck anywhere. From his considerable local knowledge, Dr Bhatt suggests Dhar to be the place where they originated. It, therefore, appears possible that this theory holds the key to some series.

### 3. ‘The further you stray from an official mint, the less like the coins of that mint, and the more like those of the next mint along the road the locally used coins get’ (‘Ripples on a pond’ effect)

According to this explanation, *kachcha* coins are those from village workshops in the ‘no-mans-lands’ between official mints. This would call for Malcolm’s utterance to be literally true – that almost every village had a workshop producing *kachcha* pice with little circulation beyond that village.

This idea, therefore, envisages a number of official mints (the ones listed in catalogues, or maybe just the big city mints like those at Ujjain and Indore) striking *pukkah* coins, with production facilities for *kachcha* pice liberally interspersed between them. The latter would be producing coins copied from, or intermediate in design between those of the official mints, and later of ‘original stamp’ as well, all more or less related to two or more of the proper mints closest to them. This closely fits with Dr Bhatt’s ideas about the Dhar state coinage.

There would need to have been an awful lot of *kachcha* mints to make this work – Dr Bhatt proposed 5 official mints for Dhar state alone just to explain what I have called ‘hybrid’ coins. There

appears to be little evidence for such a large number of long-running *kachcha* pice mints in Malwa, or that so many mints would have escaped the notice of the British writers and record keepers. Although this idea fits in with the known coinage in some places, and with Col. Malcolm’s somewhat jaundiced description, it seems very unlikely to be applicable universally and literally in the whole area.

Certainly, there are ‘hybrid’ coins that speak plainly of having been struck for use in border areas or by two or more populations, but they are the minority. The ‘intermediate’ mints striking them probably were not numerous, and there is no reason to propose that they were not the same few ‘false coin mints’ that struck the rest of this coinage.

When the states under discussion are as small as most Malwa states, there appears to be no overriding requirement that a separate mint would be needed to cater to the ‘needs’ of each of a number of border areas, all of which would be only a few miles from the nearest state mint and even closer to other border areas. Concentration of manufacture at just a few mints in each state would certainly be more efficient from the point of view of the consumption of expensive resources, and this consideration would probably have imposed limits on the number of *kachcha* mints on economic grounds alone – an important consideration in an industry where cost-saving was so clearly a very high priority.

### 4. ‘All coins from this area, except those from the big-city mints are *kachcha*’

This postulates that mints such as Indore and Ujjain were the only ones striking *pukkah* coins, and all products of the remainder are *kachcha*. Of this, there is reasonable doubt. This theory postulates that we do not need to consider any of the Malwa coins as *pukkah*, and consequently we should not catalogue them with *pukkah* coins, which are the ones generally catalogued.

That could be true only if the description ‘*kachcha*’ could be stretched to fit all the coins from almost all the mints, including many like those listed in the last paper, which have every appearance of being *pukkah*. As noted there, there appear to be proper, standard *pukkah* coins from all or most of the known and catalogued mints, even the very small ones, and such coins probably make this idea untenable in respect of most of the known Malwa series.

This appears to be possibly the least likely of the theories to have widespread application, except, perhaps in the later years of this period. Even Malcolm’s contention that ‘all’ coins in the area are of very low standard is clearly somewhat overstated for effect. He was, after all, trying to get ‘something done about’ what he saw as a major problem for English commerce and profits, and the intended supremacy of British E I C coinages.

### 5. ‘All Durbar mints struck *pukkah* coins at first, but these quickly became out-numbered by *kachcha* copies and imitations of their products from unofficial mints’

In this case, as for theory number 1 above, the most *pukkah* of the coins we find would be mainly those that were struck first. For later products, we must postulate that the unofficial mints, and possibly also the official ones all struck lighter and cruder coins as time went by, until the issues of all mints were exclusively *kachcha*, and this suggestion again clearly overlaps with theory 1 above.

This idea would probably be the most difficult to prove or disprove, as we cannot put firm dates on most of the issues. We know about Ratlam and Sailana ‘false coin mints’, and there may well have been other similar workshops or groups of workshops elsewhere in Malwa. However, the close resemblance of many of the *kachcha* pice to official coins suggests that there ought to have been *kachcha* pice mints copying coins from just about every official mint in the area. If there were a lot of them, as noted above it is somewhat unlikely that only two of them attracted the attention of British officials to the extent that written records still exist. The alternative – that a few mints struck a wide variety of *kachcha* coins – looks more feasible. On the other hand, Malcolm

did say that nearly all the coinage of the area was (in effect) *kachcha*, and its manufactories widely spread. The undisputed fact that *kachcha* pice are so much more numerous in Malwa today than the corresponding *pukkah* coins could be seen to support this theory, but it is also in tune with others.

#### 6. 'The whole lot are *kachcha*'

One step further than Number 4.

Proponents of this view believe that all the issues of all Malwa mints except Ujjain and Indore are *kachcha*, right from the start. It is their view (I hope I am not misrepresenting them) that this is exactly what Col. Malcolm meant when he was describing the local Malwa coinages as unfit for purpose. This theory does not allow for arguing that some of the Malwa mints started by striking *pukkah* coins, and that standards and coins at some or all mints became worse with time. It postulates that no *pukkah* coins were ever struck at the Malwa mints, except at Ujjain and Indore.

The comments under 4 above also apply here, but more so. This idea appears to be too extreme, in its literal form, to allow for so many apparently standard quality coins that have certainly been struck in the area, even if we assume them to have been the earliest.

In other words, the evidence of the coins does not appear to support this theory, because so many of the coins from mints other than the ones at Ujjain and Indore are decently engraved, properly struck, contain the correct amount of metal and bear dates and / or mint names. Their very nature is evidence that they were struck in a properly controlled fashion at official local mints.

#### Possibilities

When all the scant evidence is considered, it is probable that the reasons for most of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Malwa coins looking as they do is a combination of a number of factors. For now, I stand behind most of the things I put into the first paper. However, it would be extremely unwise to say 'never' in relation to a change of mind in the light of new facts or better interpretations.

As noted above, I intend that a tentative catalogue of a few of the Ratlam types, based on the first of the theories of *kachcha*-ness mentioned above, will follow, after which a few more case-studies are planned, if interest continues. Meanwhile, as always, I would welcome comments and criticisms that might assist in the development of reliable catalogues of these series.

## THE COINS OF RATLAM STATE, 1773 TO 1857 – INTRODUCTION AND CATALOGUE Part 1: Introduction

By Barry Tabor

### Introduction: - Malwa in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, most of Malwa was held by Maratha clans, including the Ponwars of Dhar, the Sindhias of Ujjain and Gwalior (Gwalior only after about AD 1753), and the Holkars of Indore. They were all nominally subservient to the Peshwa with his headquarters at Pune, some way to the south. For a long time, the Sindhias and Holkars had supplied the Peshwa's principle armies of conquest and occupation. The Gaikwads of Baroda, another powerful Maratha clan, were just to the west in south-east Gujarat, and the Bhonsles held territory around Nagpur, a little way to the southeast. The majority of the Malwa population were tribal peoples. It was a heavily militarised 'pressure cooker' of small states, split into even smaller sections, interspersed with parts of other small states and outlying bits of the larger ones. During the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and especially from about the 1790s up to about 1820 it suffered considerably from warfare, plunder and general unrest. Until their demobilisation following their complete defeat by British forces during the last Maratha and Pindari Wars, the Pindaris were also

active there at various times, both as auxiliaries of the Holkars and Sindhias and, as was their wont, they also perpetrated plunder, rapine and extortion on their own account.

Since the Sindhias and Holkars were both supposed to be subservient to the Peshwa, they were allies. However, they often worked to each other's detriment in a spirit of rivalry and jealousy. Both were occasionally led by underage or weak-minded rulers, and suffered from divisions caused by subversive elements within. So, as well as undermining each other, they each usually had ambitious, powerful generals and sibling princes backed by powerful factions, eager for a chance of usurping power. Partly because of the debilitating effects of such internecine hostilities, there were times during the first two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Pathan, Amir Khan, was probably the most powerful single personage in Malwa. He had his headquarters in an area around Sironj that Jaswant Rao Holkar had given him as his headquarters and 'home territory' in 1798. He was a particularly ruthless and merciless operator ('Soldier of Fortune') who frequently employed a number of the Pindari leaders and their *labhars*, to work with his own army of mainly Pathan soldiers and freebooters.

This period represented the height of the '*Gardi-ki-Waqt*' or 'Time of Troubles' for Malwa and central India. Almost the whole area had been in a state of anarchy and chaos from well before, but especially after the death of Jaswant Rao Holkar (AD 1811) that continued to have repercussions even after the end of the last Maratha War.

In conformity with the generally anarchic state of affairs at the time, the means of striking copper coins was subject to little effective control outside the big city mints. According to Sir John Malcolm<sup>(1)</sup> there were only four mints in and around Malwa where decent standards for minting copper coins were kept up and where 'standard' copper specie was being produced when he began to settle the area about AD 1819. The mints he mentioned were at Kotah (in Rajasthan), and at Indore, Ujjain and Bhopal. However, when we consider the coins themselves, he may be thought to have overstated his case, because standard weight and decently made copper coins of most Malwa mints can be found. The quality of the standard coins issued from mints in the places he mentioned appear to have been little affected by the chaos in Malwa, and demand for their products probably even benefited from it, as many of their coins were trusted and used (and copied and imitated) many miles from where they were struck.

Cheap copper coins of variable and unstable value from badly controlled 'native mints' were used primarily 'up-country' largely to monetise the burgeoning opium and cotton trades. They were called *kachcha* ('*cutcha*') pice, in contrast to the standard copper coins from properly controlled mints, which were known as '*pukkah pice*' by both the Indian and English at the time<sup>(2)</sup>. Despite the fact that these words are rarely met with in numismatic literature, they are well-established terms with a long pedigree.

The degenerate copper coins of the minor Malwa mints were described by the historian, Frank Perlin as 'gimcrack' and by Malcolm as 'degraded' and unfit for purpose. Under the chaotic conditions that prevailed in Malwa during the '*Gardi ka-Waqt*,' and because of the continued demand for '*kachcha pice*' as opium-trade coinage that lasted for decades thereafter, many of the Malwa state mints and an unknown number of 'private' mints produced these coins specifically to meet those demands. These workshops became the 'milch-cow' of unscrupulous cartels and grasping landlords, who included many of the legitimate local rulers and their minions. *Kachcha* pice were made for use by people who cared little for 'standards' of coinage, so long as they had sufficient specie, of whatever quality, to carry on their trades and businesses. The term '*kachcha pice*' may have been applied to the whole of the production of some Malwa mints, but that description must have excluded the smaller quantities of specie that matched up to the 'standard' coinage of the major mints like those at Bhopal, Indore, Ujjain and Kotah. These must surely have retained the right to be called '*pukkah*'.

In a previous article<sup>(3)</sup> I attempted to draw attention to the rather blurred lines I discerned that separate the *pukkah* from the

*kachcha* pice issued from the small Malwa state mints, and some 'country mints' of the Holkars and Sindhias. The purpose of that paper was to illustrate the differences between coins that appear to belong to the two contrasting classes of coinage. Mention was made of the production of many tons of *kachcha* pice from the 'false coin' mints at Ratlam and Sailana in particular, the only such mints in Malwa that appear to have been documented so far.

Some experts are of the opinion that such 'lines' between the *pukkah* and *kachcha* pice of most or all of the Malwa mints are illusory. That view has a solid foundation in the data available concerning the weights and general condition of most of the Malwa copper coinage of that time.

If that view prevails, possibly ALL the copper coinage of **Rajod, Dohad, Khachrod, Jawad and Mandsaur** (even although they were 'official' Sindhia mints), **Mehidpur and Maheshwar** (even though they were 'official' Holkar mints), **Dholera** (even though it was a 'transitional' mint of the 'Company Bahadur'), **Sailana** (including **Barmawal, Sunth, Banswara, Lunavada, Chhota Udaipur, Baria, Ratlam, Jaora, Jhabua, Dungarpur, Sitamau, Pratapgarh** (Deogarh), **Dewas** (Allote) and the Dhar mints of **Amjhera, Piran-Dhar, Anandgarh and 'Kukureti(?)'**, would have to be regarded as *kachcha* pice, at least until the 1830s or thereabouts. It is an indisputable fact that until about 1820, these states often had no effective durbars, and that no or very little 'standard' coinage appears to have been struck outside the established Durbar mints of strong and relatively stable states like those of the Holkars and Sindhias. Even these, as noted above, were not properly under the control of their governments at all times, particularly when those governments were actually at war with each other, plundering each other's territories (or getting the Pindaris to do it for them) or sacking each other's cities. Consequently, any attempt to bring into focus those 'blurred' dividing lines between the coins of particular states and mints, between the products of 'properly constituted state durbar mints' and 'false coin mints' and between 'standard' (*pukkah*) and *kachcha* pice may be doomed to failure in respect of all or many of the mints mentioned. Some of them, indeed, perhaps never struck any *pukkah* coins for the whole of their existence. At present, there is little agreement about these matters, but at least discussions have begun, which have presented a number of possible lines of study that may help us to codify, classify and catalogue the Malwa copper coinage. In the article on pages 33-35 of this present Journal, I listed the first tentative theories to have emerged. The following is an attempt to apply the first of those theories to the early coinage of Ratlam State.

It can hardly be doubted that the first known coins from this mint, dating from about the middle of the reign of the Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam II, was a perfectly legitimate Mughal-style coinage, struck to controlled standards from properly engraved dies under the auspices of a legitimate state authority – in other words, '*pukkah pice*'. These coins bear normal legends of Shah Alam II, the mint name is properly engraved, and the coins are correctly dated. Later coins apparently issued by the Ratlam durbar are very far from this ideal, and, from most standpoints, some of the later series might be regarded as reasonably typical *kachcha* pice. The evolution from the first case to the last appears to have taken 40 to 50 years, and can be traced through a number of coin series. Lines - even 'blurred' lines – between *pukkah* and *kachcha* coins are, however, rather more difficult to trace.

The first purpose of this piece is to test 'Theory 1' from the last paper by making an attempt to use it to catalogue the better-known of these series, apparently struck by or for the Ratlam State durbar. It is offered to illustrate the problems I encountered when I began to tackle the problem of '*kachcha*-ness'.

### A brief history of Ratlam

Although a number of histories and ruler lists were consulted, the accession dates given for some rulers, especially earlier ones, were not consistent. Thus the table at the end of this first part of the article (p. 38) is a reasonable average.

Ratlam state was founded in 1651 by Ratan Singh, a great grandson of Udai Singh of Jodhpur. In conformity with his policy

of 'Divide and Rule' the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan, wished to have a loyal Rajput state in Maratha-ruled and largely tribal-populated western Malwa. To this end, he took part of what is now Sailana state, gave it to Ratan Singh, and went to considerable lengths to see that he was a successful, pro-Mughal ruler. Ratan immediately began to build a new capital for himself, and named it Ratlam, after his own name. He was killed fighting loyally (though against his better judgement) on the side of Shah Jahan's favoured son, Dara Shikoh, against Prince Aurangzeb, at Dharmat in April, 1658.

In the course of the Battle of Dharmat (Dharmatpur, Fatehabad), Ratan Singh and his Rathors did a great deal of damage to Aurangzeb's army before he was, himself, killed and his army decimated and dispersed. Aurangzeb was, of course, well aware that Ratan Singh might have cost him the Mughal throne, not to mention his life, and felt ill-disposed and vengeful towards Ratan Singh's heirs and their state. He confiscated a large portion of it, and neighbouring rulers took a lead from his royal hostility and annexed other parts to their own territories. Aurangzeb maintained his hostility towards the Ratlam ruling family almost until the end of his life. He still, of course, required them to serve loyally in his armies.

Ratan Singh's son, Ram Singh, ruled the reduced state for 20 years before being killed in Aurangzeb's service in the Deccan. Shiv or Shiva Singh, his successor, died without an heir, and the throne was seized by Kesho Singh (Keshav Das) an illegitimate son of Ram Singh. In the process, he killed a Muslim noble and alienated most of the other high-ranking men in his state, who persuaded the emperor to dethrone him. He then set himself up at Sitamau. For ten years, from about 1695 until 1705 Aurangzeb took the whole state under direct Mughal rule by what were effectively a succession of Mughal governors, but the details are obscure. This period is generally spoken of as an interregnum. Eventually, Aurangzeb relented and placed Chhatra Sal (a son of Ratan Singh) on the Ratlam *gaddi*. Chhatra Sal had served his Emperor well in his Deccani campaigns, fighting at Golkonda, Bijapur, Raigarh and Gingee. Finally, at Pannala, in 1706, his eldest son, Hathi Singh (Hattesingh) was killed.

This broke his spirit, and he retired from public life, splitting his territory between Hattesingh's son, Bhairisal (who got Dhamrode), and his own two remaining sons, Pratap Singh (who was given Raoti), and Keshri Singh (who received Ratlam). Disputes arose immediately between these three. Bhairisal was intimidated and quickly gave up his territory, which was rejoined to Ratlam. Keshri and Pratap fought and Pratap was killed. His sons, Man Singh and Jey Singh, avenged his death, and Man Singh took over Ratlam, handing Raoti (Sailana) to Jey Singh, from whom the present Sailana ruling family is descended<sup>(5,6)</sup>.

The Marathas first began to be troublesome to the Malwa states during Man Singh's reign, but at that time they consisted of isolated gangs of plundering freebooters and Man Singh was able to drive them from his land. Man Singh died in 1744 and was succeeded by his son, Prithvi Singh, who was forced to pay large sums of money to keep the growing menace of the Marathas (principally Holkar) and Pindaris out of his state. Padam Singh, his son and successor, was also forced to pay for the survival of his state, which became very impoverished as a result of the haemorrhage of much of the revenues into the ever-hungry maw of the Maratha overlords. Jaswant Rao Holkar attacked and sacked Ratlam twice during Parbat Singh's reign, and the Dhar chieftain took advantage of this, plundered much of the state and annexed more of its territory.

During the reigns of Prithvi Singh, Padam Singh and Parbat Singh, Ratlam, in company with most of the other small Malwa states, was subject to almost constant Maratha and Pindari aggression, intimidation and financial extortion, and on a number of occasions the state was in danger of being totally overrun and obliterated. The Marathas relentlessly demanded tribute and 'contributions' and Amir Khan plundered the state almost at will, causing such a loss of production and revenues that Parbat Singh was invariably in arrears with the payments he had been forced to agree to make.

In about 1815-16, Bapu Sindhia was told to collect unpaid tribute, but Parbat Singh was unable to pay. He felt his state to be in so much danger that he called on the Rajputs of Malwa and further afield (Sirohi in Marwar is specifically mentioned) in a 'last ditch' effort to defend his state against annihilation.

In 1817, an army of about 12,000 Rajputs gathered at Ratlam, thereby challenging Maratha suzerainty over the state. This force successfully attacked the Maratha army sent against it under Bapu Sindhia, inflicting heavy losses. They then prepared themselves for the 'return leg' of the match. By now, the Maratha and Pindari Wars were in progress and retribution was delayed. Before the Marathas had time to regroup for another campaign against Ratlam, the wars had ended in defeat for the Marathas and disbandment of the Pindaris. Further Maratha aggression was brought under British control by treaties and agreements made in 1817 and succeeding years, and effective British protection was afforded to all the small Malwa states. Sir John Malcolm was appointed Settlement Officer, and he arrived on the scene in 1819 to impose the *Pax Britannica*. Further bloodshed at Ratlam (and elsewhere) was thereby averted.

When Balwant Singh came to the *gaddi* in 1824, he was a minor of 11 years of age, and his durbar was guided during his minority by Col. Borthwick. When he died in 1864, his son was only two years old, and another period of regency began.

Sir John Malcolm's strong government, backed by the undoubted might of the Paramount Power, afforded Ratlam and the other minor states of Malwa an opportunity to recover, consolidate the rulership of their durbars, and introduce effective fiscal and financial management. They soon began to recover their former level of control and status, but the Malwa copper coinage did not begin to 'recover' until the 1860s and '70s. This was because the demand for cheap copper coins for the opium and cotton trades continued to run at a very high level during the 1820s and for several decades thereafter and only the *kachcha* pice mints were able to sustain the necessary level of production<sup>(3)</sup>.

Probably all mints in the area took part in the degradation of the copper money. At the very least, all the authorities in the affected states appear to have contributed to, and benefitted from abuse of their own coinages.

Before the British standard coinage was introduced with Government backing, and machine-minted specie from some mints run by the most important Indian durbars began to take over, many smaller mints were closed by the orders of (or under pressure from) the British, and more unified quality standards were imposed on those that survived, including Ratlam. After about the middle of the century, demand for cheap copper coins declined, and cash was increasingly replaced by paper money and credit transfers<sup>(3)</sup>.

### Ratlam copper coinage

It appears that the standard copper currency of Ratlam consisted almost entirely of paisas, with only a few half paisas. Other denominations, such as double paisas, quarter paisas, takkas, and quarter and half-anna pieces were struck in neighbouring states, and all of those were probably widely used by, and their comparative values known to everybody in Malwa, even although fluctuations in values and exchange rates were reportedly very frequent. In addition, *kachcha* coins copied and imitated from those of many of the nearby states, and 'of original stamp' are extremely common all over Malwa, for reasons discussed in previous papers on this topic. These are a source of serious confusion when attempting to describe and systematise the official standard coinages of the central Indian states, and probably explains why no serious attempt to do so has yet been made. 150 to 200 years ago, businessmen and other travellers (apparently there were few tourists in the area at that time) must have found the local copper coinages of Malwa rather confusing. They were doubtless put to great inconvenience and expense, perhaps being obliged to change some of their copper money at a discount every few miles, or risk its becoming worthless after a few miles more. Rates of exchange, if Col. Malcolm spoke rightly, were whatever the man in charge decided on the day.

Padam Singh struck Mughal-style coins, dated in the Hijra era, Parbat and Balwant Singh's issues are of novel types, and either bear Hijri dates or were dated in the Malwi Fasli Era. Ranjit Singh's issues utilised both Samvat era (VS) and AD dates. These changes may have been partly to demonstrate subservience to the sovereign and paramount powers, which changed from the Mughals to the Marathas and finally the English. If a Fasli era were used, it would have been for reasons of convenience.

### Ratlam coins in existing catalogues

Only a few of the rulers of Ratlam struck copper coins. Apart from those shown bold in the table, others may have done, but, if so, their coins have not been recognised. Ratlam never struck any silver or gold currency of its own. Like other small states in Malwa that did not produce their own silver coins, for the most part Ratlam used the 'Salim Shahi' rupees of Pratapgarh. It is stated in a number of places that a proportion of those coins were struck outside Pratapgarh, and Dr Bhatt informs us that the Ratlam mint was one of a number of places to have produced them. At present, there appears to be no way to distinguish the 'Salim Shahi' rupees struck at any of several predicted out-of-state mints, but variations in the way the mint name 'Deogarh' was engraved (already noted by some researchers) could assist in solving this puzzle. There was probably little call for gold currency in the small Malwa states, but when it was needed it must have come from out-of-state mints, a number of which (such as Surat) were ready and able to strike it 'to order'.

In none of their entries for Ratlam State over the years since 1980, do the Krause catalogues mention any coins struck between the end of Padam Singh's reign in 1800 and the start of that of Ranjit Singh, in 1864. The early coins of Ratlam listed there are restricted to an undated, anonymous copper coin in the name of Shah Alam II with the mint name 'Ratlam' (KM 5) and the far more common KM 1, with the same mint name, listed in older editions, but inexplicably removed from later ones. More recently, other coins were added, then moved to the Banswara State listing, and later returned to the Ratlam entry. The coins of Ratlam struck after the mint was re-opened in 1864 for Ranjit Singh are the only ones properly listed in the Krause catalogues, though unlisted half paisas have been reported. In some previous years, the thin, lightweight re-strikes of Ranjit Singh's milled paisas of AD 1888 dated vs 1945 (KM 4) issued during World War II by Sajjan Singh as emergency currency, were listed as KM 4a, but dropped from recent editions, having been wrongly classified as non-currency re-strikes, not for circulation.

John Allan's catalogue of the Native State coins lists only those struck by Ranjit Singh, and illustrates only the 1888 milled paisa. Mitchiner's 'World of Islam' and 'Non Islamic Series' unfortunately hardly scratch the surface of most Princely States corpuses, and under Ratlam he mentions only Ranjit Singh's coins. No other existing generally available catalogues are of any use whatsoever in relation to the Malwa states. In short, the early coins of Ratlam have been incompletely and erratically treated, despite most of them being fairly common, and familiar to collectors of Indian coins.

The single exception to the above remarks is Dr Bhatt's series of articles and books of the 1980s<sup>(7)</sup>, in which he discusses at length and in some detail the coins of the Ratlam, Jhabua and Dhar areas. He mentions and illustrates some coins attributed here to the reigns of Padam Singh, Parbat Singh and Balwant Singh, but these are not dealt with systematically. The books are no longer as easy to obtain as they once were, and in any case they have been heavily criticised as being 'muddled' and hard to understand, partly because of the order in which the coins are dealt with, the eccentric methods Dr Bhatt has used to classify them and the confusing layout of the plates. In addition, doubts have been raised concerning some of his attributions and readings of mint names. In short, they have had limited success in respect of making the Ratlam coinage of those reigns better understood.

Hence, the coins of Parbat Singh, Balwant Singh and, to some extent, Padam Singh have not been properly or consistently published anywhere, and enquiries suggest that some of the

missing types are not well known to present-day collectors. Perhaps it is appropriate to briefly re-publish the best-known coins presumed to be of those three reigns, adding a few new illustrations and what I hope will be some relevant thoughts, in an attempt to begin a systematic catalogue. That is the secondary purpose of this piece.

It is almost inevitable that any list of Ratlam coins will include some of the *kachcha* pice struck there or thereabouts, both copied from and in imitation of Ratlam *pukkah* pice. Any catalogue written with the sparse knowledge we have today must expect to be refined and re-written in the light of future studies.

### The Malwi and other Fasli eras

It appears uncertain which calendar was used immediately after production of the early, Mughal-style coinage – with Hijra (AH) dates - ceased in Ratlam. The dates on some coins of Parbat Singh and Balwant Singh, written in Nagari figures, were interpreted by Dr Bhatt as also being Hijra dates, but they could be dates of the Malwi (or Deccani) Fasli era.

The Persian word *Fasl* relates to seasons of the agricultural year (99). Several Fasli eras were introduced for use in parts of India by the early Mughal Emperors, but the first, the Sahur Era, although widely used in the Deccan, was used only on a few of the Deccani sultanate coins. Like so many revolutionary and lasting administrative, financial and metrological introductions to India, it was a Suri invention.

Akbar introduced at least three more Fasli eras for use in parts of northern India. The Deccani Fasli era was introduced in AD 1636 by Shah Jahan.

Fasli calendars were based on solar years, which were preferred in the Deccan and other mainly agricultural areas, because of difficulties with using the Muslim Lunar calendar (AH) in which dates for sowing, harvests, rent payments and so on would fall usually 10 or 11 (sometimes 12) days earlier every year *vis-a-vis* the natural seasons. The introduction of the Hijra calendar by the conquering Mughals was creating unnecessary difficulties for the farming communities and the landowners and revenue officers, who wanted to retain unchanging annual dates for such agricultural events, and this is only possible using a solar calendar. The starting point for the Malwi Fasli Era was 12 July, AD 590 and so the addition of 590 or (after 1<sup>st</sup> January) 591 years

to the Fasli date would convert it to AD. Very few coins appear to have been dated according to Fasli calendars, the only well-known example being the Pune rupees struck under the Bombay Presidency of the BEIC and dated FE 1230 to 1244 in mostly Nagari (sometimes Persian) characters. Indore also used Fasli era dates on certain issues. Dr Bhatt tells us that certain dates on Dhar coins are Fasli dates<sup>(8)</sup>. He also tells us that the Malwi Fasli era was two years behind the 'Fasli Era Proper,' introduced by Akbar (1266 = 1858/59: FE 1289 = AD 1881 on certain Dhar coins).

The Fasli year, being solar, took longer to complete than the Hijra year. Consequently, the starting date of each succeeding Fasli year, and eventually also the actual year date, moved gradually further out of synchrony with the AH date. That is why Fasli eras introduced earlier require more years to be added to them to equate with AH dates.

Between Fasli New Year and the end of the AD year, it is necessary to add an extra year to the FE year to equate it with the AD date. In short, when converting Malwi (Deccani) Fasli dates that fall after July 12<sup>th</sup> on the Gregorian calendar (this date was changed to 1<sup>st</sup> July in 1854) add 591 years, but for earlier dates only 590 years are to be added. Fortunately, this is easier to understand than to explain! For more details see Table 2 on page 39.

### Why it matters that we know which era was used for the Ratlam coins with dates in Nagari figures listed below

Dr Bhatt reports that the Ratlam mint closed in 1830 (Ratlam Coinage, Pt. II on p. 61) but does not cite his source. The latest date reported on the types of coins that I have attributed to Balwant Singh's reign, in which this date falls, appears to be 1245, which, if it is MFE is equivalent to AD 1835/36, but to AD 1829/30 if the date is AH. Therefore, if the dates on these coins are in the MFE, and the coins are indeed those of Ratlam, 1835 would be the earliest possible date for the first closure of Ratlam mint, but if they are AH, Dr Bhatt's date of 1830 could be correct. Likewise, if we use the wrong calendar to convert the dates of these (or any) coins, we shall inevitably attribute some of them to the wrong reign, and misread the evidence they offer us. The coinages of several other states may be similarly affected.

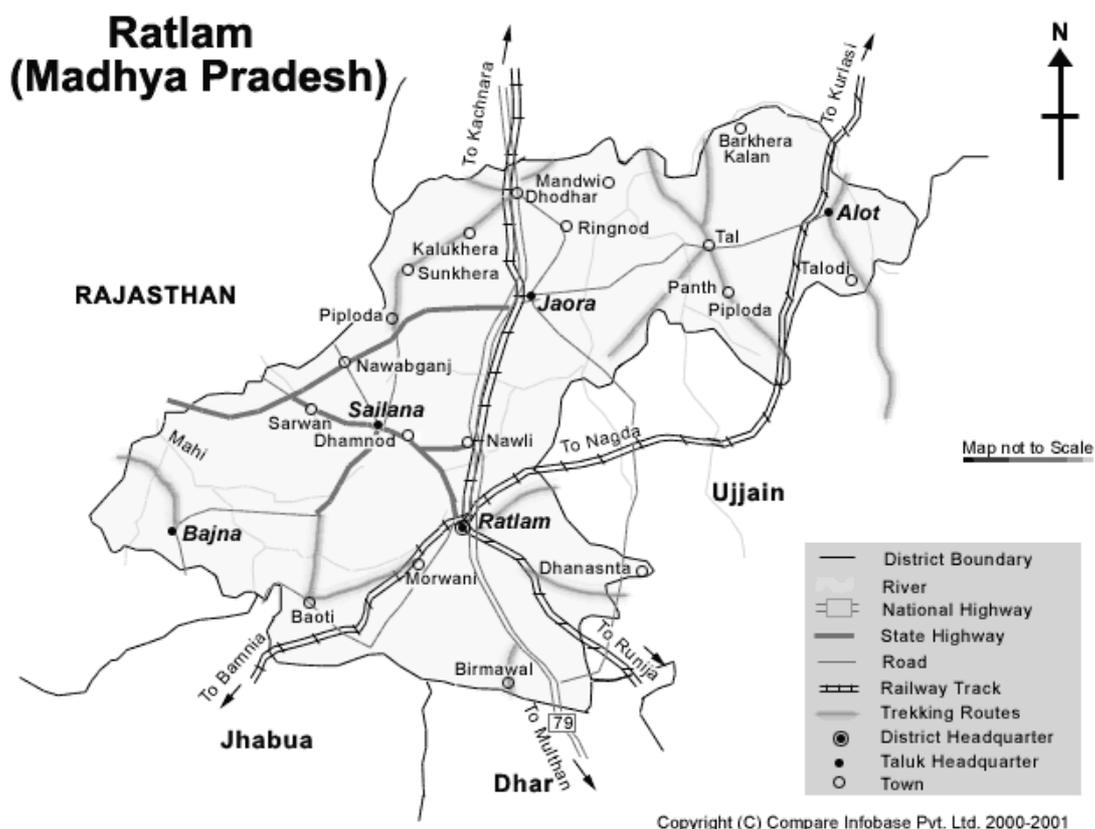
**Table 1: Ruler dates according to relevant calendars.**

<b>Rajas</b>	<b>AD</b>	<b>AH</b>	<b>MFE (+ 590/591 = AD)</b>	<b>VS (+ 57 =AD)</b>
State founded	1651			
Ratan Singh	1651 to 1658			
Ram Singh	1658 to 1682			
Shiva Singh	1682 to 1684			
Keshav Das (Kesho Das)	1684 to 1695			
Interregnum – Mughal rule.	1695 to 1705			
Chhatrasal	1705 to 1706			
Keshri Singh	1706 to 1716			
Man Singh	1717 to 1743			
Prithvi Singh	1743 to 1773			
<b>Padam Singh</b>	<b>1773 to 1800</b>	<b>1186/87 – 1214/15</b>	1182/83 -1209/10	
<b>Parbat Singh</b>	<b>1800 to 1824</b>	<b>1214/15 – 1239/40</b>	<b>1209/10 - 1233/34</b>	
<b>Balwant Singh</b>	<b>1824 to 29 Aug 1857</b>	<b>1239/40 - 1274</b>	<b>1233/34 - 1266/67</b>	
Bhairon Singh	29.08. 1857 to 27.01. 1864	1274 - 1280	1266 - 1274	1914 - 1921
<b>Ranjit Singh</b>	<b>28.01.1864 to 20.01.1893</b>			<b>1921-1950</b>
<b>Sajjan Singh</b>	<b>20.01.1893 to 3.02.1947</b>			<b>1950-2004</b>
Lokendra Singh	3.02 to 15.08.1947			

**Table 2**

<b>Table of the most commonly used Fasli eras</b> (modified from a table kindly supplied by Hans Herrli)				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Type of year</b>	<b>New year</b>	<b>To convert to AD years (2)</b>
Sahur (Shuhoor, Soor) (5)	Maharashtra (esp. Konkan)	Solar	June	Add 599/600
Fasli	Hindustan proper (Upper Provinces)	Luni-solar (like Samvat year)	1 <sup>st</sup> of the lunar month Asan / Aswina (September)	Add 592/593 years
Bengali San	Bengal and Bihar	Sidereal (solar) (like Saka year)	1 <sup>st</sup> Baisakh (in 1 <sup>st</sup> half of 18 <sup>th</sup> century: 10 or 11 April, now 14 April)	Add 593/594 year
Vilayati	Orissa	”	1 <sup>st</sup> of the solar month Asan (September)	Add 592/593
<b>Deccan (Tamil) Fasli (3)</b>	<b>South India + Marathas</b>	”	<b>July (4)</b>	<b>Add 590/591</b>

1. Indore used the Deccani Fasli era
  2. The two numbers mean: if a date falls in the time between Fasli New Year and the 31 of December add the first number; from 1 of January to the end of the Fasli year add the second number.
  3. Introduced by Shah Jahan in the 1630s. Adopted by the Marathas AD 1637/38.
  4. The Madras Presidency fixed the following Fasli New Year dates: AD 1800-1854: 12 July, and from 1855 onward: 1 July.
  5. The Shahur era does not occur on Mughal or post-Mughal but only on a few sultanate coins in the Deccan.
- Certain details concerning this subject were kindly explained by Prof. Amar Farooqui of the History Department at Dehli University, to whom grateful acknowledgement is hereby made.*



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8. Ditto p. 12

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