

ONS



Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society

No.194
Winter 2008

ISSN 1818-1252

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ONS News

From the Editor

I am very pleased to announce that Robert Bracey has agreed to assist me as Assistant Editor. Robert is the author of the Brief Guide to Kushan History, www.kushan.org, which has been providing articles on general Kushan history since 2001. He recently joined the British Museum's Coins and Medals Department where he is working with Joe Cribb on the Kushan collection.



Interested in and knowledgeable on the coinage, typology and currency of the Chola Empire; coinage of ancient Arabia (Nabataea, Edessa, Palmyra etc).

North American Region

1495 Judith Kolbas, 620 S. College Ave., #11, Oxford OH 45056, USA
Interests: Coinage of Central Asia

Revised addresses, interests etc.

1502 Dr. Helle Horsnæs, Danish National Museum, Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, Frederiksholms Kanal 12, 1220 Copenhagen K., Denmark.

1645 Kerry Wetterstrom, PO Box 10607, Lancaster PA 17605-0607, USA

1704 Rob de Raaij, postbus 94382, 1090 GJ Amsterdam, Netherlands. E-mail: laestrygonia@hotmail.com

1907 Mohammad Elhadri, e-mail: melhadri80@yahoo.com

Annual General Meeting in London 1 December 2007

The AGM duly took place at the British Museum on 1 December. The report of the Society's activities in the previous year as well as the accounts were duly approved by those present. A copy of the accounts may be obtained from the Treasurer. The AGM was followed by the four talks mentioned in the previous Journal.

London Meetings 2008

Meetings will take place at the Coin & Medal Department of the British Museum 26 April and 15 November 2008. The theme for the April meeting will be "Great Men of the East". At the time of writing two papers are already promised for the April meeting:
i. Mao Badges etc. by Helen Wang. (Helen's exhibition 'Seeing Red: revolutionary icons in post-Mao China' Badges will open in early April and her book on Mao will be published)
ii. The coins of Reza Shah (the last Shah of Iran) by Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis.

New Members

UK Region

1934 Graham, Cawser, PO Box 7283, Burton on Trent, Staffs. DE14 7DN, UK
Interests: Indian sultanate coins; Chinese Sung dynasty

European Region

1931 David Patsia, Nutsbidze str. 44, Building 2, Ap. 7, Tbilisi 0177, Republic of Georgia.
Interests: Georgian numismatics and sphragistics

1932 Gia Bebia, Vazisubani microrayon 2, Building 11, Ap. 26, Tbilisi 0152, Republic of Georgia.
Interests: Georgian numismatics, ancient coins.

1933 Philipp Schwinghammer, Sobieskigasse 18/7, 1090, Vienna, Austria.

Lists Received

1. Stephen Album (PO Box 7386, Santa Rosa, Calif. 95407, USA; tel ++1 707 539 2120; fax ++1 707 539 3348; album@sonic.net) lists 230 (December 2007), 231 (January 2008)

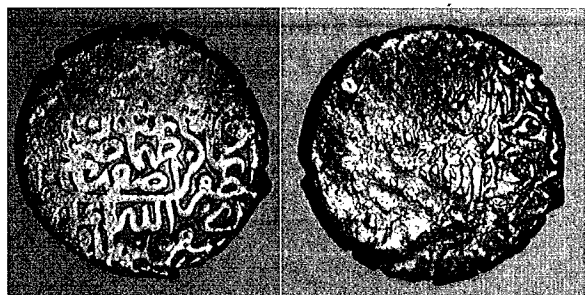
2. Jean Elsen & ses Fils s.a. (Tervurenlaan 65, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium; tel ++32 2 734 6356; fax ++32 2 735 7778; numismatique@elsen.eu; www.elsen.eu) list 242 (October-December 2007) includes around 200 items of oriental interest.

3. Galerie Antiker Kunst Dr Serop Simonian GmbH (Oberstrasse 110, D-20149 Hamburg, Germany tel:++49 40 455060; fax ++49 40 448244; drsimonian@web.de) Islamic & oriental list December 2007.

4. New and Recent Publications

Federico De Romanis e Sara Sorda, eds., *Dal Denarius al Dinar: l'Oriente e la moneta romana*, Studie e Materiali, 12, Istituto Italiano di Numismatica, Roma 2006, 340 pp., 13 pls. ISBN 88-85914-58-6

This is a publication resulting from a workshop held in Rome in 2004 jointly by IIN and IsIAO. It includes the following articles:
E. Lo Cascio 'Osservazioni sulla funzione della moneta aurea nell'economia monetaria dell'impero romano'
D.W. MacDowall 'The use of bimetalism in the Roman and Kushan coinage'



Shahi of Isfahan, dated year (93)4, 7.7 g. Ruler's name and mintname within cartouche. Date just below to the left.



Shahi of Kashan, year 930, 7.5 g. Ruler's name and date in rhombus, mintname at bottom, only partly visible. Reverse with the 12 *rashidun* in mill-sail arrangement.



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Annual Subscription: £15, €25, \$30.

Website: www.onsnumis.org

Printed by Pardy & Son (Printers), Ringwood, UK.

circle. Therefore one can assume that the reverse with double circle shown on p.47 is inserted by mistake and that it belongs to a coin dated 13-45 or 13-46.

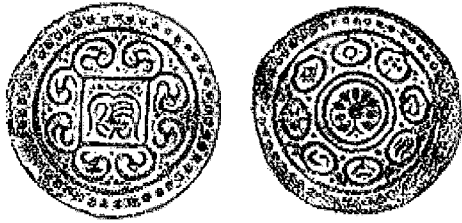


Illustration found on p.47

Two rare banknotes, a 10 tam (ser. no. 20864) and a 25 tam (serial no. 45675) issue, are illustrated for the first time. On p.177 the reverse of a 25 srang note is shown, although it must have been intended to show the reverse of the 15 tam note of which the obverse is illustrated on page 176. On p.156 Wang Haiyan illustrates the same fantasy coin which was already illustrated by Jia Lin (2002, p.416, no.22) and Yin Zhengmin (2004, p.103, no.380).

Including the two publications which I briefly discuss above there are now seven Chinese language books which are dedicated to Tibet's currency. This is evidence for the interest which exists in China for Tibet's numismatic history. At the same time it reflects the effort made by Chinese authors to integrate Tibet also numismatically into China. It is noteworthy that among the authors of these publications only two Tibetans have acted as co-authors, while a total of ten Chinese have authored or co-authored the seven books.

Here are the publication details of the five remaining Chinese publications. All these books, except for the one by Cao Gang, are in Chinese only.

Cao Gang: *Zhong guo xi zang di fang huo bi* (*Chinese Tibet's Regional Currency*), Sichuan Minzu Chubanshe, Chengdu, 1999. ISBN 7-5409-2203-6/C.37. Text in English and Chinese. 207 pages, numerous colour illustrations.

Xiao Huaiyuan: *Xi zang di fang huo bi shi* (*The History of Tibetan Money*), Beijing 1987. The proper translation of the title would be *The History of the Tibetan local (regional) Currency*. 140 pages, 52 black and white and 8 colour plates. Only the table of contents is translated into English.

Yin Zhengmin: *Zhong guo xi zang qian bi tu lu* (*Illustrated Catalogue of the Money of China's Tibet*), Xizang Renmin Chubanshe (Tibet People's Publishing House), Lhasa 2004, ISBN 7-223-01686-8. 261 pages, numerous colour illustrations. In Chinese only.

Zhu Jinzhong, Ciren Pincuo und Yan Lunzhang: *Yuan xi zang di fang qian bi gai kuang* [*Introduction to the Tibetan regional Currency*]. Institute of Finance of the People's Bank of China in Tibet, Lhasa, 1988. 42 pages, numerous colour illustrations. In Chinese only.

Zhu Jinzhong, Wang Haiyan, Wang Jiafeng, Zhang Wuyi, Wu Hanlin, Wangdui and Tsering Pincuo: *Zhong guo xi zang qian bi* (*Chinese Tibet's Money*). Xi zang zi zhi ou qian bi xue hui (Tibet Autonomous Region Numismatic Society). Zhong hua Shu ju, Beijing, 2002. ISBN 7-101-03360-4/Z.449. 491 pages, numerous colour and some black and white illustrations. Only the table of contents and the foreword are translated into English.

Further to these seven titles one may mention the following book from Taiwan which partly deals with Tibetan currency, the other part of the book being dedicated to Tibetan philately:

Li Dongyuan: *Xi zang you bi kao* (*Research in Tibetan Stamps and Coins*). Taipei, 1959. In Chinese only. Part of the text of this work was republished in the above-mentioned book by Xiao Huaiyuan (1987).

Articles

A NEW DATE ON THE TETRADRACHMS OF VARDANES II

By G. R. F. Assar*

Tacitus (*Annals* XIII.6-7) intimates that, shortly after the accession of Nero, rumours brought the disturbing news of Parthian incursions into Armenia and so alarmed the Romans about the end of AD 54. However, as Nero instructed his generals to expel the invaders, "a rival to Vologases appeared in the person of his son, Vardanes". This compelled the Parthians to postpone hostilities and evacuate Armenia without a battle: *Exortusque in tempore aemulus Vologesi filius Vardanis: et abscessere Armenia Parthi, tamquam different bellum*. Although this last passage is not entirely clear about the identity of the Arsacid rebel, he is, nevertheless, generally recognised as Vardanes II,² son of Vologases I (c. AD 51-54, 1st reign, and c. AD 58-78, 2nd reign). Unfortunately, Tacitus fails to explain the circumstances of Vardanes' revolt and whether he ultimately secured the Parthian throne for himself. In three further passages, Tacitus (*Annals* XIII.37, XIV.25, and XV.1) speaks of an uprising in Hyrcania that preoccupied Vologases and diverted Parthian forces from Armenia. Wroth comments³ that the Hyrcanians may have supported Vardanes' rebellion, to which Debevoise⁴ attributes the permanent secession from Parthia of that important satrapy. According to Wroth and Sellwood, the presence on the later drachms of Vologases I (S71.1 and S71.3) of the abbreviated personal name *wl* (for *wlgshy*) strongly suggests that the latter's authority was challenged by a rival.⁵ However, the connection between the Hyrcanian revolts and the earlier rebellion under Vardanes cannot be recovered with complete certainty. What is, nevertheless, noteworthy is that the combined numismatic evidence and literary sources show that a contender ousted Vologases I sometime during Sep./Oct. AD 54 – Jan./Feb. AD 55 (cf. below), reigned for about four years and was ultimately supplanted by Vologases in Aug./Sep. AD 58 or some months later.⁶

Several early numismatists ascribed to the putative son of Vologases I a series of coins ostensibly minted during AD 55-58. These included a few tetradrachms, depicting on their obverse the bust of a young prince with a short beard and a wart on his temple

* I am grateful to the Soudavar Memorial Foundation for sponsoring my research.

² Lewis (1728), 170; Lindsay (1852), 76; Rawlinson (1873), 268-269; Debevoise (1938), 180; Colledge (1967), 50 (with hesitation); Sellwood (1980), 225; Bivar (1983), 81; Sellwood (1983), 295; Wolski (1993), 165-166. This identification is, however, not universally accepted. Gutschmid (1888), 130, and Anderson (1934), 879, for example, question the emendation of Vardanis to Vardanes in Tacitus. Gutschmid (1888), 130, and Frye (1983), 239, believe that Vologases' rival was a son of Vardanes I (c. AD 40-45).

³ Wroth (1903), liii.

⁴ Debevoise (1938), 182.

⁵ Wroth (1903), lii, n. 2; Sellwood (1980), 223.

⁶ This is the date of the latest tetradrachm ascribed to Vardanes II, year ΘΞΤ (369 SEM), month ΛΩΠΥ (seen in commerce). For conversion to Julian date cf. the works in n. 20 below. However, the earliest extant tetradrachm from the 2nd reign of Vologases I (S70.1) is dated ΒΠΤ (372 SEM = AD 60/1) with the month off the flan (cf. Prokesch-Osten (1874/5), 63, first entry under Arsaces XXV, Artabanus IV (AD 59-67)). This entails a gap starting from just over 2 years and 2 months up to around 3 years and 3 months between the two issues. Perhaps the struggle between Vologases and Vardanes went on for some time after Sep. AD 58 without a clear outcome, leading to the suspension of mint operations at Seleucia on the Tigris.

(similar to the one on S64 tetradrachms of Vardanes I). Although Visconti and Lindsay had already assigned identical pieces to Vologases I,⁷ de Longpérier provisionally ascribed them to Vardanes II, adding that if the same youthful bust appeared on dated coins from 364-366 SEM (Seleucid Era of the Macedonian calendar, beginning 1 Dios 312 BC) = AD 52/3-54/5, then the issue as a whole should be given to Vologases I.⁸ However, Rawlinson unhesitatingly attributed these tetradrachms, with dates running from 367 to 369 SEM (AD 55/6-57/8), to Vardanes II and yet Prokesch-Osten almost immediately placed the series under Vologases I.⁹

In 1877 Gardner, too, identified the royal portrait on a similar tetradrachm in the British Museum (BM) trays and two further pieces in the Prokesch-Osten and Paris¹⁰ cabinets with Vardanes II. Building on the above-quoted passages in Tacitus, he argued that, as the rebellious son of Vologases I, Vardanes reigned during AD 55-58 and issued coins.¹¹ Gardner's attribution remained unchallenged for some twenty five years until Wroth grouped the same BM tetradrachm and sixteen additional pieces with similar obverse busts under Class B of the early coinage of Vologases I.¹² He held that the differences between the obverse portraits on these tetradrachms and the ones he had securely attributed to Vologases I did not warrant their assignment to a different prince. However, having correctly sequenced the Parthian die-engravers in the 1st-2nd centuries AD, Sellwood¹³ confirmed de Longpérier, Rawlinson and Gardner, and finally ascribed the disputed tetradrachm issue and its accompanying drachms and bronzes (S69.1-16) to Vardanes II.¹⁴

Among the pieces in Wroth's above quoted group, one (no. 16) has a peculiar year date as $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$.¹⁵ Perhaps taking $\overline{\text{N}}$ as an aberrant form of Z, Wroth thought $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ to be a variant of $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ = 367 SEM (AD 55/6).¹⁶ Yet, there are four coins in the BMC *Parthia* that are unmistakably dated $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$.¹⁷ At any rate, the BM specimen from year $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ is not an isolated case and additional examples with the same date have since come to light (Figs 1 and 2). In fact, we now have at least 25 tetradrachms dated $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$, struck from 18 different reverse dies (including the BM piece).¹⁸ Of these, the following six have retained legible traces of their exergual month names:

1. Month Peritios (seen in commerce).
2. Classical Numismatic Group, Sale 31 (9-10 Sep. 1994), Lot 490. Month Panemos.

⁷ Visconti (1825), 164-166, and Tav. VI, no. 8 (dated $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$); Lindsay (1852), 76, 155-156, and Pl. 6, no. 10 (dated $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$).

⁸ de Longpérier (1853-82), 110-112, and Pl. XIV, no. 157 (dated $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$).

⁹ Rawlinson (1873), 268 (n. 5)-269; Prokesch-Osten (1874/5), 61-63 and Pl. 5, no. 43.

¹⁰ This is discussed in de Morgan (1923-36), 164, Fig. 174.

¹¹ Gardner (1877), 13, 51, and Pl. VI, no. 1, tentatively accepted by Petrowicz (1904), 130-131, nos. 1-4 and Taf. XIX, no. 8.

¹² Wroth (1903), I-liii, 180-182 (nos. 15-31) and Pl. XXVIII, nos. 13 and 14.

¹³ Sellwood (1967), 18.

¹⁴ Sellwood maintains that although the S69 coinage may not have been minted by "Vardanes II son of Vologases I", it was not struck under the latter either (private communications).

¹⁵ Wroth (1903), 180, no. 16, and Pl. XXVIII, no. 14.

¹⁶ Wroth (1903), no. 16. Cf. also Shore (1993), 149.

¹⁷ Wroth (1903), 180, nos. 15 and 17-19, the first illustrated on Pl. XXVIII, no. 13.

¹⁸ Cf. http://www.parthia.com/vardanes2_366.htm for the images of the 25 tetradrachms. Of these, nos. 1-6, 8, 10, 11, 13-15, 17-20, 24, 25 are from different reverse dies. Nos. 6, 7, 12, and 21; nos. 9 and 4; nos. 16 and 5; nos. 22 and 19; and nos. 23 and 18 are struck from a common reverse die respectively.

3. Classical Numismatic Group, Sale 58 (Sep. 2001), Lot 786. Month Panemos.

4. Month Loios, given as $\Lambda\Omega\text{D}\Upsilon$ (seen in commerce).

5. J. Elsen, Sale 52 (13 Dec. 1997), Lot 1455 = Dr. Busso Peus, Auktion 372 (30 Oct. 2002), Lot 682. Month Hyperberetaios

6. Classical Numismatic Group, Electronic Auction 4 (22 Sep. 2000), Lot 59563. Month Hyperberetaios.

It is noteworthy that Sellwood dates S69.4 tetradrachms to year $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$, month Panemos and that we also have nos. 2 and 3 in the above list from year $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$, month Panemos. Likewise, S69.6 tetradrachms are dated $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$, month Hyperberetaios while nos. 5 and 6 above bear $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$, month Hyperberetaios. The intentionally differently rendered first letters in $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ and $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ strongly indicates that they were not designed to represent the same numeral. Moreover, close inspection of over a hundred tetradrachms of Vardanes II in several public and private collections as well as collation of many good images in sale catalogues have confirmed a single craftsman responsible for cutting their reverse dies. It is, therefore, unlikely that he correctly cut Z on some dies (Fig. 3) and also persistently incorrectly as $\overline{\text{N}}$ on others.



Fig. 1 – S69.1var. tetradrachm of Vardanes II, dated $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ (Author's collection)



Fig. 2 – S69.1var. tetradrachm of Vardanes II, dated $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ (Author's collection)



Fig. 3 – S69.2var. tetradrachm of Vardanes II, dated $\overline{\text{Z}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ (Dr. Busso Peus Nachfolger, Auktion 363 (Frankfurt, 26.4.2000), lot 5178)

Taking $\overline{\text{N}}$ as a stylised "squared" form of Σ (Greek sigma), I proposed that the date $\overline{\text{N}}\overline{\text{E}}\overline{\text{T}}$ should be interpreted as 366 SEM (AD 54/5).¹⁹ This agrees both with Tacitus' statements on the

¹⁹ Having identified $\overline{\text{N}}$ on some tetradrachms of Vardanes II with the Greek letter sigma, I forwarded my conclusions to the editor of www.parthia.com in April 2001 (cf. <http://www.parthia.com/vardanes2.htm>, foot-note 1). The initial note on www.parthia.com was later withdrawn for further appraisal

revolt of Vardanes II before the close of AD 54 and the date of the latest tetradrachms from the first reign of Vologases I (S68.11). The latter are from year $\Xi\Xi\Gamma$ (365 SEM), month Hyperberetaios.²⁰ Given that the correspondence of months in the Macedonian and Babylonian calendars had changed at least in the period 48 BC – AD 79, causing the Macedonian Dios to coincide with the Babylonian Arahsamnu rather than Tashritu,²¹ these may be dated to Sep./Oct. AD 54. Reading $\Xi\Xi\Gamma$ as 366 SEM would, therefore, place in Jan./Feb. AD 55 the above listed no. 1 tetradrachm of Vardanes II from month Peritios, only four months after the last tetradrachm of Vologases I from his first reign. If, on the other hand, $\Xi\Xi\Gamma$ is read as $\Sigma\Xi\Gamma$ (367 SEM), it would push the earliest extant tetradrachm of Vardanes II to Feb./Mar. AD 56 and thus create an unnecessarily long gap of about a year and a half between the two contiguous issues of Vologases I and his rebellious son.

I should, however, emphasise that, having recently consulted a detailed article by A. de la Fuy e, reviewing Wroth's *BMC Parthia* (1903) and rearranging the coins of the Arsacid rulers, I noticed that, although he incorrectly assigned to Vologases I a tetradrachm from year $\Xi\Xi\Gamma$, he had already correctly read the date as 366 SEM.²² He also commented that having studied the BM pieces catalogued by Wroth under Class B of Vologases I, he found that no. 16 bore a doubtful date which appeared to him to be 366 SEM.

The identification of Ξ with Σ is further strengthened by the appearance on certain non-Parthian issues of an almost identical character. We have, for example, two Imperial coins from Antioch with the head of Augustus, one dated ΞK = 26 of the Actian Era = 6/5 BC,²³ and the other ΞA = 36 of the Actian Era = AD 5/6,²⁴ as well as a bronze coin from Apamea dated ΞKT = 326 SEM = AD 14/15.²⁵

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²⁰ Prokesch-Osten (1874/5), 58.

²¹ Assar (2000), 6-12; Assar (2003), 176-184.

²² De la Fuy e (1904), 370, and Pl. VIII, no. 12.

²³ Wroth (1899), 166, no. 131, and Pl. XX, no. 10.

²⁴ Wroth (1899), 168, no. 147, and Pl. XX, no. 13.

²⁵ Macdonald (1905), 194, no. 30, and Pl. LXXIII, no. 24.

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JAL L AL-D N MANGUBARN 'S COPPER COIN MINTED IN THE KINGDOM OF GEORGIA AND WITHOUT MARGINAL LEGEND: AN ADDENDUM

By Irakli Paghava, Severian Turkia, Giorgi Lobzhanidze

In ONS Journal 192 we had the opportunity to publish a "Georgian style" copper coin of Jal l al-D n Mangubarn  of standard²⁶ type, except that it did not bear the typical marginal legend on the obverse²⁷; referring to the obverse of that coin we wrote: "there is a sufficiently wide (3 mm) fragment of the coin left intact by the die applied to the flan. Comparing this with other specimens where the distance between the inward linear border and the marginal legend is equal to 1 mm or even much less, permits us to exclude the possibility that the marginal legend had been engraved on the die, but is simply off-flan: we have no doubt, that the die had only the central legends engraved on it" [1, p. 8].

Unfortunately, it was impossible to ascertain whether the marginal legend was present or missing on the reverse: "in contrast to the obverse, the reverse die was applied in a better-centered strike, imprinting only the central fragment of the legends on the reverse of the coin, the outer part of the die being applied off the flan" [1, p. 8].

However, we are delighted to have another coin available for study now, the coin, missing the marginal legend on the reverse:

Obverse.

In the central area:

جلال الدنيا
و الدين
jal l al-duny 
wa'l-d n.

The area normally occupied by the marginal legend is off-flan.

Reverse.

In the central area:

السلطان
[ان]
المعظم
[م]

The great sultan

No marginal legend.

²⁶ For a concise, though general review of Jal l al-D n Mangubarn 's coinage produced in the Georgian Kingdom please refer to [1, pp. 6-7].

²⁷ We consider the side with a formula containing Jal l al-D n's name to be the obverse.