

The Numismatic Chronicle 175 Offprint

COIN HOARDS 2015

MEDIEVAL and MODERN

MIDDLE EAST?

THE HEPHTHALITE DRACHMS MINTED IN BALKH A HOARD,
A SEQUENCE, AND A NEW READING

8. Unknown (probably historical Greater Iran), in European trade before 1992

by

STEFAN HEIDEMANN

LONDON

THE ROYAL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

2015

MIDDLE EAST?

THE HEPHTHALITE DRACHMS MINTED IN BALKH
A HOARD, A SEQUENCE, AND A NEW READING

STEFAN HEIDEMANN

10. Unknown (probably historical Greater Iran), in European trade before 1992**[PLATES 48–49]****Dep.* 480s to the 560s27 \mathcal{A} and billon*Disp.* In European and American trade before 1992*Keywords:* Sāsānian numismatics, Pērōz, imitations, Hephthalites, Balkh.*Introduction*

This contribution studies aspects of coin production in Balkh for the period between the Hephthalite victory over Pērōz probably in AD 474 and the destruction of the Hephthalite realm in a co-ordinated effort by the Western Turks and the Sāsānian empire in 560s. In May 1992 a parcel of 27 coins including hoard material was brought to the attention of the author.¹ The status of this group could not be established. The parcel may represent a complete hoard with some intrusive elements; it may be part of a hoard after a random division (it appears homogenous); it may be a group picked according to criteria such as quality or, perhaps even more oddly, a group selected for coins with four pellets on the obverse.²

The core of the parcel is a homogenous group of 22 Hephthalite imitations of coins of Pērōz (457–84)³ struck in Balkh, and four regular coins of Perōz from various mints. One coin of Khusrō I (531–79) (no. 27) appears to be a later intruder, either modern or ancient. If the latter, it would be separated from the Hephthalite imitations by up to forty years depending on their dating. It is also uncertain whether all the regular Pērōz coins are from the original hoard or have been added later. The imitative group displays a grey toning with a slight bluish hue and turquoise patches; some coins even have a thick layer of horn silver, indicating a group of coins exposed to the same environment for a long time. The condition suggests the hoard had been protected by a container. Unprovenanced parcels of hoards represent

*Photos by Katrin Gutberlet, Berlin.

¹ In the international coin market, assemblages of coins cannot be taken as ‘hoards’ but have to be scrutinized. ‘Hoard material’ circulates among dealers, and is then put together for consignment, but can stored for decades before being offered for sale. Publishing hoard material from commercial parcels should be done either by studying cohesive selective groups connected by appearance (tone, soil deposit, corrosion product) or by die links. The mere fact that they were offered together cannot be taken as evidence that they once formed a hoard or originated together.

² In the present group and in the one published by Alram, the so-called Göbl type 287A with the figure of an Hephthalite ruler is conspicuously absent, a type which is closely connected with Göbl’s type 287; Alram 2002.

³ For a revision of his regnal years see Schindel 2013; *SNS* 3/1, pp. 388–9.

a challenge for the historian, not only on ethical grounds, but also for reasons of reliability of the information collected from the numismatic source. As a historian, one is obliged to consider all information available and measure it with the yardstick of numismatic and historical source criticism.

Despite these problems, the recording of this group was deemed to be useful because of the rare opportunity to study a group of Hephthalite coins associated with each other, even though they might be a deliberate selection of ‘strange’ coins. Hence, the study focuses on the imitations, undoubtedly forming a single group, accepting that the group has possibly been mixed to an unknown extent with regular Sasanian issues of Pērōz. More material, especially from controlled excavations, might set a more defined context. The parcel appears similar to a parcel of hoard material – also unprovenanced – published by Michael Alram.⁴ The slightly different composition suggests that the two parcels originate from different hoards.⁵

Historical background

The east of Greater Iran including modern southern Uzbekistan may be assumed to be the place of origin of the hoard. Alram suggested that his parcel might have been found in northern Afghanistan, based on the concentration of coins minted in Balkh. The design of the imitative coins, both in Alram’s hoard and here, is based on coins of Pērōz with the winged crown, *SNS* 3, type IIIb. Type III can be divided into two varieties: type IIIb is distinguished from IIIa by the different depiction of the two ribbons either side of the shoulder which have horizontal ribs rather than one vertical rib. The change from type II (without wings) to type III (the wings signifying the god of victory, Verethragna) is difficult to date but may have been for military or political reasons.

The Arabic sources do not provide any precise date for the campaigns of Pērōz into Tokharistan. They also conflate the maximum of three campaigns into one.⁶ In one of these campaigns, which must have started in 464/5, Pērōz fought the Kidarites and reached Tokharistan. In 467 it was reported to the Roman court that he had occupied the city of *Balaxam* which was identified by Nöldeke with Balkh.⁷ A scyphate gold *dīnār* in the Kidarite style depicting Pērōz wearing his second crown might be a testimony of this victory.⁸ A Baktrian document seems to attest Sasanian control in the northern Hindu Kush in 471.⁹ A second campaign sometime after 474 ended in a humiliating defeat. Peroz was captured and only released after payment of

⁴ Alram 2008.

⁵ Alram and Pfisterer 2012, pp. 27–32, later summarized their knowledge on this group of coins (Göbl type 287).

⁶ That the number of campaigns amounted to three, see Josua Stylites 1997, pp. 39–40 (ch. 9–10).

⁷ Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, tr. Nöldeke, p. 119, n. 1. See also Grenet 2002, pp. 2010–211, esp. n. 13.

⁸ Alram 2014, p. 271, no. 13 (correct citation of the taking of Balkh would be Priscus, *Fragments* 51), pl. 41, no. 13 (coin of Pērōz from Balkh). Schindel 2006, p. 681. *SNS* 3/1, p. 415. Grenet 2002, pp. 2010–211, esp. n. 13. Blockley 1981, pp. 121–2 (n. 41, dating of the campaign, n. 51 taking of Balkh), 1983, pp. 348–9 (Priscus, *Fragments* 41,3, campaign), pp. 360–1 (Priscus, *Fragments* 51, Taking of Balkh), p. 396, n. 163 (note to fragment 41,3).

⁹ Schindel 2006, p. 282; Sims-Williams 1999, p. 253.

a ransom. This dating is based on a mission sent by Zeno (first reign 474-5) to Pērōz while the latter was on campaign in the east.¹⁰ A third campaign in 484 was even more disastrous as Pērōz was killed. While there is a degree of plausibility in dating the change from type II to III to after 474 in the wake of the second campaign, it is based on too many assumptions. The previous confirmed victory over the Kidarites in approximately 467 would have been a more likely occasion. This change from type II to type III would also be closer to the latest dated coins of year 7 of Pērōz (463/4), the year when he began the first campaign against the Kidarites. According to Josua (Joshua) the Stylite, thirty loads of drachmas were paid as ransom for Pērōz following his defeat, which can be dated to after 474. According to Schindel it resulted in the popularity of this coin-type in Tokharistan.¹¹

Description of the early Hephthalite imitations

A distinctive feature found on the obverse of these imitations is four pellets in the positions 1.30, 4.30, 7.30 and 10.30 h in the margin. These coins served as a regional supplement to the circulation of Sasanian coins within the realm of the Hephthalites in Tokharistan. Until now, only one variety of the imitations mentioned here (Göbl type 287 var.) has been found outside Tokharistan in the Chinese province of Shanxi.¹²

A name is written in Bactrian script to the right of the winged crown and above the honorific ribbon, between 1h and 2h, and reads from the inside. The letters have been read by Nicholas Sims-Williams as $\eta\beta$, $\bar{e}b$. The $\eta\beta$ appears in various degrees of corruption. It is presumably an abbreviation of the Baktrian $\bar{e}bodalo$ or *hephthal*. The coins are thus marked as Hephthalite.¹³

On the reverse the arms of the attendants are shown in one continuously flowing line. The right arm of the attendant to the left of the altar is pointing down and the left arm of the right attendant is pointing upwards towards the flames. This is the opposite of the regular issues of Pērōz where both attendants have their right arms raised towards the altar; the right attendant's left arm is shown hanging down.

The reverse of most of the imitative coins shows the Pahlavi character $m\bar{e}m$ (SNS 3, type 1e) to the left of the fire altar. The $m\bar{e}m$ has been interpreted differently. One likely interpretation is that it stands for *MLK*, Aramaic *malkā* or Persian *shāh*. On the right side of the altar we find distinct variations of a Baktrian inscription $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda o$, read from the outside, from left to right. Some renderings of the word are more legible than others. The inscription attributes the minting of these coins to the capital of Tokharistan, Baktra, later Balkh.

Dating of the parcel

As already described, Pērōz' relationship with the Hephthalites was mostly one of unsuccessful, and finally disastrous, military campaigns. The Hephthalites arrived

¹⁰ SNS 3/1, pp. 395–9; Procopius, *History of the Wars*, pp. 16–17 (book 1, ch. 3).

¹¹ Schindel 2006, pp. 282–3; SNS 3/1, pp. 415–17; Josua Stylites 1997, pp. 39–40 (ch. 10).

¹² Alam 2008, p. 238; Alam and Pfisterer 2012, p. 31 (with illustration). While the coin from the Shanxi province has the mint mark of Balkh, it lacks the typical four pellets.

¹³ For the revision of the reading see Sims-Williams in Alam 2002, p. 150–1.

in Transoxiana in about the 440s.¹⁴ They may have supported Pērōz in his attempts to maintain the throne against his brother and contender Hormizd [III] (457–9).¹⁵ In return Pērōz seized the region of Ṭaliqān. Early in his reign, presumably in 467, the Sāsānians with the support of the Hephthalites may have taken Balkh from the Kidarites, which would have left the Hephthalites as the major power in Tokharistan.¹⁶ Litvinsky and Bivar suggested there were three eastern campaigns by Pērōz, the latter two against the Hephthalites. During the first campaign the Sāsānians may have occupied Balkh for a brief period. The second campaign resulted in the defeat and capture of Pērōz, who left his son Kavādh as hostage.¹⁷ Schindel has dated this defeat to 474 or after on historical and numismatic grounds and it could have led to the popularity of coins with the winged crown (*SNS* 3, type IIIb) as a model for the imitations in Transoxiana.¹⁸ Schindel argues for the dating of the beginning of the imitative coinage outside Iran to the time after the death of Pērōz in 484, but this is unconvincing. There is no reason why the imitative series could not have been begun earlier, at some point between 474 and 484.¹⁹ Alram tacitly criticises Schindel when he points out that the Hephthalites acknowledged Sasanian overlordship in Tokharistan at least until 474.²⁰

A type in Alram's hoard shows a star behind the bust and a crescent in front. He compares this position of the star with that on the coins of Kavādh I in his first reign (488–96). This pattern serves him as an argument for the continuation of the Pērōz-imitative coinage during the reign of Kavādh.²¹ Such a universal ornament does not necessarily require a specific model in the Iranian world. Nevertheless, the Hephthalites were undisputed masters of a vast territory, probably centred around Tokharistan, where their main mint was located, and extending far into Central Asia and Khurāsān. Sasanian strength in Khurāsān was only regained in the third decade of Kavādh's reign (about 508) as Schindel has shown.²²

The present group of imitations is so tightly knit stylistically that a common mint can be assumed. This includes the imitations with the abbreviation 'AS' bearing the name *ēb* in a blundered form on the obverse (nos 5 and 6). Vondrovec suggests that the use of 'AS' (Aspānvar, city within the urban agglomeration of Ktesiphon)²³ and 'BBA' (the mint of the court) among imitative groups from Central Asia supports the idea that in 484, after the decisive defeat of Pērōz, one or two mobile mints (BBA and AS) were seized by the Hephthalites. These two mints then continued producing slightly blundered coins under the Hephthalites.

¹⁴ Litvinsky 1996; Sinor 1990; Moravcsik 1983, pp. 69–70.

¹⁵ No coins are known for Hormizd III; according to Schindel it was probably he who challenged Pērōz unsuccessfully; *SNS* 3/1, pp. 388–9; Schindel 2013.

¹⁶ Bosworth, tr. Tabarī, p. 110, fn. 283; based on Zeimal 1996, pp. 125–6.

¹⁷ Litvinsky 1996, 138–9; Bivar 2004. Based on Josua Stylites 1997, pp. 39–40 (ch. 9–10).

¹⁸ *SNS* 3/1, pp. 415–19.

¹⁹ *SNS* 3/1, p. 410.

²⁰ Alram 2008, p. 257.

²¹ Alram 2008, p. 253, nos 10–11, and p. 256. Again in Alram and Pfisterer 2012, p. 31.

²² Schindel 2006, pp. 684–5.

²³ At the time of Pērōz Aspānvar was one of the main Sasanian mints. Alram, 2014, p. 278, suggests that the closeness in style of the Hephthalite 'AS'-coins may indicate that dies or even the mint workshop of AS and BBA has fallen into the hand of the Hephthalites. This does not seem likely on the present numismatic grounds. Further die studies may bring some answers.

This hypothesis originates from an over-interpretation of a passage in Ṭabarī's chronicle (written about three hundred years after the event), who merged all the eastern campaigns of Pērōz into one. For the (final) campaign in which Pērōz perished, Ṭabarī reports the seizure of the treasure and the 'offices' but does not mention any mint. Schindel dismisses Ṭabarī's follow up report on the retribution campaign by the Sāsānian general, Sūkhṛā, as propaganda. Sūkhṛā is said to have forced the Hephthalite ruler to hand over the seized 'office of the treasuries' (*al-dīwān buyūt al-amwāl*) and the hostages. Finally, Sūkhṛā returned after 'taking the *dīwān* and everything that was with Fayrūz of his treasuries'.²⁴ There is no report of any mint being seized. It is more likely that 'BBA' and 'AS' are the most commonly imitated mint abbreviations in Central Asia because these imperial monies came from the war-chests of Pērōz which had been seized or were sent as tribute to the Hephthalites.

It can be assumed that the series of coins present in this parcel begins with coins naming the ethnic and with the mint abbreviation 'AS', taking the latter as part of the coin design, not as an administrative abbreviation (nos 5 and 6). This fictitious mint name was then replaced with the real mint name *βαχλο*. One could suggest that the coins with well written mint names, such as nos 7 to 9, are the earliest, followed by nos 11 to 13 which are slightly blundered. But the sequence does not necessarily run in that order. No die links were found except in the supposedly final group consisting of nine pieces in mint condition, nos 18 to 26. Here, all the coins were struck from the same pair of (rusty) dies, suggesting that this group stayed together between minting and burial. The rust almost obliterates the mint name *βαχλο*, and the ethnic *ηβ*. The rest of the imitative coinage (nos 14 to 17) may have been produced between the 'AS' coins and the die-linked group of nine. Their sequence is impossible to determine without internal die linking. What can be established is that different die engravers' hands cut the Baktrian script.

The ratio of coins with well-written, to those with weak, inscriptions of *βαχλο* in Alram's parcel was 22 to seven. The same visual criteria applied to the present parcel suggests a ratio of two coins with the 'AS' mint mark (supposedly predating the *βαχλο* coins), three with *βαχλο* well-written and 17 with *βαχλο* weak. Supposing the coins with a clearly engraved *βαχλο* were struck first and the ones with a weak

²⁴ SNS 3/1, pp. 150–1; 154–5; Alram and Pfisterer 2012, p. 31 and Vondrovec 2014, p. 400, repeat the incident as if the seizure of a mint was fact. Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* I, p. 877 (*wa-akhadha Akhshunwāru athqāla Fīrūza wa-nisā' ahū wa-amwālahū wa-dīwānahū*); tr. Nöldeke, p. 126 ('Achšunwār aber erbeutete das ganze Gepäck des Pērōz, seine Frauen, sein Geld und seine Canzlei'), tr. Bosworth, pp. 116–17 ('Akhshunwār seized Fayrūz's baggage, his womenfolk, his wealth, and his administrative bureaus.'). The second passage on the retribution campaign is Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* I, p. 877 (*wa-nšarafa Sūkhṛā ba 'da stinqādhi l-asārī wa-akhdhi l-dīwāni wa-rtifā 'i l-amwāli wa-jamī 'i mā kāna ma 'Fayrūza min khazā 'ini ilā arḍi Fārs*). Schindel then argues that the presumed itinerant mint was seized by the Hephthalites and continued to operate under the mint names of 'AS' and 'BBA'. This hypothesis assumes the temporary end of coin production by the (official Sasanian) mint of BBA and, in principle following Schindel's arguments, also AS after Pērōz' death and the continuation of stylistically close imitations of the 'Pērōz'-coinage under the Hephthalites. Only BBA stopped minting, for unknown reasons. This hypothesis of Schindel's did not take into account how quickly a mint can be established, or that AS continued to produce coins. Alram and Pfisterer 2012, Vondrovec 2014, and Alram 2014, p. 278, accept this idea without re-checking the primary sources, and thus the idea continued on a life of its own. Further die studies may bring some answers.

inscription later (rather than engravers of different ability working simultaneously), the present parcel might be slightly later than Alram's. No die links were found to coins in Alram's parcel.²⁵ Neither hoard contains any coin with additional marks, except one in the present parcel which has a tiny crescent beside the left wing of the crown (no. 14). Other marks not represented in this parcel but in Alram's include an S-shaped *tamghā* and 'a star and a crescent behind and in front of the bust'.²⁶ These might be later series.

A new reading for Göbl's Type 288

If one tentatively places the types in the present parcel (Göbl's type 287) in the last quarter of the fifth century and minted at Balkh, there is a long time gap before the Sāsānian campaign into Tokharistan in the 560s. Göbl type 288, which has four large pellets in the obverse margin similar to Göbl type 287, has an inscription in the lower segment of the obverse and a *tamghā* in the right obverse segment. Göbl type 289 is a similar design to 288 but with an additional *tamghā* to the left.²⁷ Neither Alram's nor the present parcel include either of these two types. These three varieties – Göbl's types 287, 288 and 289 – are all connected by the four pellets in the obverse margin. A recently discovered type can be placed between Göbl 287 and 288. This is distinguished from Göbl 288 by the absence of a *tamghā* on the right (**Pl. 49, Fig. A1**).²⁸ Arguably, it is the earliest in a sequence which continues with Göbl 288 and 289. On the obverse of these latter varieties, there is a word between 5h and 7h in Baktrian script. Although the reverse inscriptions – the 'mint' and 'date' – are almost completely blundered, the inscription on the obverse of Göbl 288 has been read in two different ways by Göbl and Humbach as *σοαμο/σοομο* or *ιοαμο/ιοομο*, and even as *φρομο*.²⁹ The two first suggestions, as the authors admit, do not make any sense. A careful comparison of the stages of degradation of the inscription on Göbl 287 suggests that the inscription on the new types, Göbl 288 and 289, are renderings of the common designation *βαχλο*, but in ligature and even more abstract.³⁰ Later the newly discovered type was specifically countermarked with a *tamghā*.³¹ The next stage in the series was the integration of the *tamghā* into the die (Göbl type 288).³²

²⁵ The die comparison was undertaken on the basis of the plates in Alram 2008.

²⁶ For additional marks see Alram and Pfisterer 2012, pp. 27–32.

²⁷ Göbl 1967, vol. 1, pp. 197–8; vol. 3, pl. 79.

²⁸ *SNS Usbekistan*, pp. 43–5, no. 452. The authors publish one example without the *tamghā* but do not mention this.

²⁹ Humbach 1966–7, vol. 1, p. 66; Göbl 1967, vol. 1, p. 198; Humbach 1983, p. 306, figs 4 and 5 (*φρομο*); Humbach 1996 (*φρομο*); *SNS Usbekistan*, pp. 43–4.

³⁰ I am grateful to Nicholas Sims-Williams for discussing this inscription with me and confirming the reading. Email (23 Nov. 2014) from Sims-Williams: 'On the face of it, it does look like *ιοομο* (or something similar). However, that makes no sense, so it is no doubt a corruption of something else. I would never have thought of *βαχλο*, but since you suggest it, I can see at least a slight resemblance. The 'io' would be an initial *β*, written on its side for lack of space. Then 'o' would be an *α* without its link to the next letter (which is a not unusual simplification). Finally, the apparent 'μ' would be greatly simplified *χλ*. All this implies that this rendering is very distant from its prototype.'

³¹ *SNS Usbekistan*, pp. 43–5, nos 449, 451. The authors place these two coins under Göbl's type 287 without noting the additional word in the lower section of the obverse.

³² See also *SNS Usbekistan*, nos 453–456.

If this new reading is correct, all the coins of Göbl's type 289 tentatively attributed by Schindel to Termez in *SNS Usbekistan*,³³ based on the reading by Humbach and Göbl and continued by Vondrovec, must now be attributed to Balkh, south of the Oxus. It is not surprising that coins of Göbl's type 287 with the mint name of βαχλο³⁴ and Göbl's type 288 were also found in Kara Tepe, the Buddhist monastery in Termez, and Čingis Tepe close to Old Termez,³⁵ because Balkh lay on the opposite shore of the Amu-Darya (Oxus). The second lyra-shaped *tamghā* was not found on copper coins of Termez. This indirectly supports the new reading and the attribution of that series, with or without the *tamghās*, to Balkh.³⁶

Coda: terminus ante quem

A revenge campaign led by Khusrō I (531–79) in concert with the *khāqān* of the Western Turks in the 560s led to the destruction of the Hephthalite kingdom (*hiyāṭala*) and the killing of the Hephthalite king in a battle near Bukhārā. Khusrō I passed Balkh on his return journey to Khurāsān. The campaign had the character of a raid, rather than the re-establishment of Sāsānian authority in Tokharistan. This campaign has been suggested as the *terminus ante quem* of the Hephthalite coinage.³⁷ Dīnawārī and Ṭabarī report an attack by the *shāhānshāh al-turk* or the *malik al-turk al-a'zam* Shāba of the Western Turks in Hormizd IV's eleventh regnal year (589/90). Varhrān Čōbīn, as army commander, was sent to the east, defeated the Turks and killed the *malik al-turk*. He marched close to Bukhārā.³⁸ Sebeos, without dating his report, mentions explicitly the conquest of Balkh.³⁹ A regular Sāsānian drachm was minted in Balkh in Hormizd IV's eighth regnal year, 586/7 (**Pl. 49, no. A2**). The unusual feature is that the mint and date legends have swapped places. An error such as this might have occurred because a new imperial mint was being established. This coin issue could re-date the campaign of Varhrān Čōbīn by several years, from 589 to 586/7, as Rika Gyselen already had pointed out.⁴⁰ Coins were then struck continuously for Hormizd IV (579–90) in Balkh and for Varhrān VI.⁴¹

³³ *SNS Usbekistan*, nos 466–501, with nos 467, 499, for example, found at Termez.

³⁴ *SNS Usbekistan*, nos 446, 448–451 (Göbl type 287); all found in the monastery complex Kara Tepe close to Termez.

³⁵ Vainberg 1972, pp. 141–2, 151, 205, plate XXVII, no. 5 (Göbl type 288 var with countermarked *tamghā*). *SNS Usbekistan*, nos 452 (Kara Tepe), 453 (Čingis Tepe, Old Termez), both Göbl type 288.

³⁶ Cf. *SNS Usbekistan*, p. 45.

³⁷ Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* I, pp. 895, 899 (*wa-tajāwaza Balkha wa-mā warā'ahā*); tr. Nöldeke, p. 167; tr. Bosworth, p. 152, esp. fn. 393, p. 160, esp. fn. 104. Bosworth dates the Khāqān's campaign into the years 560 to 563. Alram 2008, pp. 256–7, dates the campaign into the 560s AD; Daryaee 2009, p. 29, dates it into the 570s.

³⁸ Gyselen 2003, p. 165; Daryaee 2009, p. 31, dates this campaign into the year 589, probably according to Dīnawārī, *Tārīkh*, pp. 81–4; and Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh* I, pp. 991–2; tr. Nöldeke, pp. 268–71, tr. Bosworth, pp. 298–302; who date the attack by the Turks to Hormizd's eleventh regnal year (588/89). This coin shows a victorious military operation in Balkh and the installation of the mint there.

³⁹ Sebeos 1999, p. 15 (ch. 10, 73).

⁴⁰ Gyselen 2003, p. 165; for the year 8 see also Mochiri 2010, no. 64; and from the same dies photos Universität Hamburg SB 07729 (3.91g; 32mm; 3h).

⁴¹ For the regnal years 9 to 12 see Mochiri 1983, pp. 107–11. For Varhrān VI, year 2, see Mochiri 1983, pp. 45–6, p. 11, fig. 256 (coll. Schaack); Malek 2013, p. 458. For a discussion of the mint abbreviation, see Tyler-Smith 1983.

Göbl type 287 was probably struck for a long, but undetermined, period with many engravers involved with the die cutting, resulting in a large variety of styles. It seems plausible that its beginning is connected with the defeat of Pērōz in either 474 or 484. The Hephthalite imitations were then probably continued under Kavādh I. The end of the series may be connected with the new military strength of the Sāsānian empire after Kavādh's twentieth regnal year, but this cannot yet be proven.

Archaeological evidence is needed for the reconstruction of mint production at Balkh, but the following relative sequence of Göbl's types can be proposed:

- 287
- 288 var (without *tamghā* at 3h)
- 288 var (with countermarked *tamghā* at 3h)
- 288 (with the same *tamghā* in the die)
- 289 (with two *tamghās*).

A sixth type shows a Hephthalite ruler with a drinking cup on one side and, probably, an imitation of Pērōz's second bust with a mural crown on the other. It is difficult to tie this type into the above chronology without hoard evidence.⁴² These six types cover about a hundred years of Hephthalite rule between c.474/84 and c.560s–586/7. The necessity for the study of coin hoards from controlled excavations means empowering the antiquity authorities within the countries of origin.

Bibliography

- Alram 2002 = Michael Alram, 'A rare Hunnish coin type', *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 8, pp. 149–53.
- Alram 2008 = Michael Alram, 'Ein Schatzfund der Hephthaliten aus Baktrien', *NZ* 116/117, pp. 253–68.
- Alram 2014 = Michael Alram, 'From the Sasanians to the Huns. The new numismatic evidence from the Hindu Kush', *NC* 174, pp. 261–91.
- Alram and Pfisterer 2010 = Michael Alram and Matthias Pfisterer, 'Alkhan and Hephthalite coinage', in Michael Alram, Deborah Klimburg-Salter, Minoru Inaba and Matthias Pfisterer (eds), *Coins, Art and Chronology II. The First Millenium C.E. in the Indo-Iranian Borderlands* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften, vol. 412), (Vienna), pp. 13–38.
- Bivar 2004 = A.D.H. Bivar, 'Hephthalites' *Encyclopaedia Iranica* XII (New York), pp. 198–201.
- Blockley 1981–3 = Roger C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus and Malchus*, 2 vols (*ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers, and Monographs* 6, 10), (Liverpool).
- Bosworth 1999 = *The History of Ṭabarī*, vol. 5, *The Sāsānids, the Byzantines, the Lakmids, and Yemen*, tr. C.E. Bosworth (New York).
- Daryaee 2009 = Touraj Daryaee, *Sasanian Persia. The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (London, New York).
- al-Dīnāwārī 1888 = Abū Ḥanīfā Aḥmad ibn Dāwud al-Dīnāwārī, Abū Ḥanīfā Aḥmad ibn Dāwud (d. c.281 or 282/894–5), *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, ed. Vladimir Guirgass, (Leiden).
- Göbl 1967 = Robert Göbl, *Dokumente zur Geschichte der iranischen Hunnen in Baktrien und Indien* (Wiesbaden). (Göbl type numbers refer to this volume.)

⁴² Alram 2002; Alram 2014, p. 279, no. 30; Vondrovec 2014, pp. 412–14, nos 287A–297C.

- Grenet 2002 = Frantz Grenet, 'Regional interaction in Central Asia and Northwest India in the Kidarite and Hephthalite periods', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 116, pp. 203–24.
- Gyselen 2003 = Rika Gyselen, 'La reconquête de l'est iranien par l'empire sassanide au VI^e siècle, d'après les sources "iraniennes"', *Arts Asiatiques* 58, pp. 162–7.
- Josua Stylites 1997 = Josua Stylites, *Die syrische Chronik des Josua Stylites*, tr. Andreas Luther (Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte) (Berlin, New York).
- Howard-Johnston 2010 = James Howard-Johnston, 'The Sasanians' strategic dilemma', in Henning Börm and Josef Wiesehöfer (eds), *Commutatio et Contentio. Studies in the Late Roman, Sasanian and Early Islamic Middle East in Memory of Zeev Rubin* (Düsseldorf), pp. 37–70.
- Humbach 1966/7 = Helmut Humbach, *Baktrische Sprachdenkmäler* (Wiesbaden).
- Humbach 1983 = Helmut Humbach, 'Phrom Gesar and the Bactrian Rome', in Peter Snoy (ed.), *Ethnologie und Geschichte, Festschrift für Karl Jettmar* (Beiträge zur Südasienforschung 86) (Wiesbaden), pp. 303–9.
- Humbach 1996 = Helmut Humbach, 'The Peroz Hephthalite coins', in B.Ja. Stavisskij (ed.), *Buddijskie komplekсы Kara-tepe v Starom Termeze. Osnovnye itogi rabot 1978–1989* (Moscow), pp. 209–12.
- Litvinsky 1996 = B.A Litvinsky, 'The Hephthalite empire', in B.A. Litvinsky, *History of Civilizations of Central Asia III. The Crossroads of Civilization A. D. 250 to 750* (Paris), pp. 135–62.
- Malek 2013 = Hodge Mehdi Malek, 'Late Sasanian coinage and the collection in the Muzeh Melli Iran', *NC* 173, pp. 457–99.
- Mochiri 1983 = Malek Iradj Mochiri, *Étude de Numismatique Iranienne sous les Sassanides et Arabe-Sassanides 2* (Tehran).
- Mochiri 2010 = Malek Iradj Mochiri, 'Monnaies dites de 'Khusraw IV'', in Rika Gyselen (ed.), *Sources for the History of Sasanian and Post-Sasanian Iran, Res orientales XIX* (Bures-sur-Yvette), pp. 177–99.
- Moravcsik 1983 = Gyula Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica. I. Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker. II. Sprachreste der Türkvölker in den byzantinischen Quellen* (Leiden).
- Nöldeke 1879 = *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden aus der arabischen Chronik des Tabari, übersetzt und mit ausführlichen Erläuterungen und Ergänzungen versehen*, tr. Theodor Nöldeke (Leiden).
- Procopius 1914 = Procopius of Caesarea (d. c.562), *History of the Wars*, ed. Henry B. Dewing, (Cambridge, MA).
- Sinor 1990 = D. Sinor, 'The establishment and dissolution of the Türk empire', in D. Sinor (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (Cambridge), pp. 285–316.
- Schindel 2006 = Nikolaus Schindel, 'The Sasanian eastern wars in the 5th century: The numismatic evidence', in Antonio Panaiano and Andrea Piras (eds), *Proceedings of the 5th Conference of the Societas Iranologica Europea, vol. 1, Ancient and Middle Iranian Studies* (Milan), pp. 675–89.
- Schindel 2013 = Nikolaus Schindel, 'Farewell to the coins of Ohrmazd III', *Studia Iranica* 421, pp. 121–31.
- Sebeos 1999 = *The Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*, (trans. R.W. Thompson, historical commentary James Howard-Johnston (Liverpool)).
- Sims-Williams 1999 = Nicholas Sims-Williams, 'From the Kushan-shahs to the Arabs. New Baktrian documents dated in the era of the Tochi inscriptions', in Michael Alram, D.E. Klimburg (eds), *Coins, Art and Chronology. Essays on the Pre-Islamic History of the Indo-Iranian Borderlands* (Vienna), pp. 245–58.

- SNS 3 = Nikolaus Schindel, *Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum Paris Berlin Wien 3. Shapur II.–Kawad I./2. Regierung* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften, vol. 325), 2 vols, (Vienna, 2004).
- SNS Usbekistan = Larissa Baratova, Nikolaus Schindel and Edvard Rtveladze, *Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum Usbekistan. Sasanidische Münzen aus Bukhara, Termez und Chganiyan* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften, vol. 418), (Vienna, 2012).
- Ṭabarī = Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), *Tārīkh al-Rusul wal-mulūk*, ed. M.J. De Goeje, 3 parts in 15 vols (Leiden, 1879–1901).
- Tyler-Smith 1986 = Susan Tyler-Smith, ‘BBA and Balkh: some historical evidence’, *ONSN* 103, pp. 6–8.
- Vainberg 1972 = B.I. Vainberg, ‘Nekotorya voprosy istorii Tocharistana v IV-V vv. (svjazi s zapusteniem Kara-tepe)’, in: B.Ja. Stavisskij (ed.), *Buddijskie komplekxy Kara-tepe v Starom Termeze. Osnovnye itogi rabot 1978–1989 gg* III (Moscow), pp. 129–54.
- Vondrovec 2014 = Klaus Vondrovec, *Coinage of the Iranian Huns and their Successors from Bactria to Gandhara (4th to 8th century CE)*, (Studies in the Aman ur Rahman Collection 4; Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften, vol. 471), (Vienna).
- Zeimal 1996 = E.V. Zeimal, ‘The Kidarite kingdom in Central Asia’, in B.A. Litvinsky, *History of Civilizations of Central Asia III. The Crossroads of Civilization A. D. 250 to 750* (Paris), pp. 119–33.

CATALOGUE

The catalogue lists the entire parcel but only imitative Hephthalite coins (marked with *) are illustrated.

Information in each catalogue entry is in the order:

Number, weight in grams, die axis by hours of the clock, die combination, additional information, a 4-digit Universität Hamburg photo number.

Coins not from the parcel are listed at the end.

Sasanian drachms. Pērōz (457–84) (4 coins)

AW (Hormizd Ardashīr? later Sūq al-Ahwāz, in Khuzistān) (SNS 3, type IIa/1e)

1. 4.00g 3h Horn silver residue (photo 5027).

AY (Ērān-Xvarrah-Shābuhr, Khuzistān?) (SNS 3, type IIa/1e)

2. 3.89g 3h Horn silver residue (photo 5023).

DA (Dārābgerd, Fārs) (SNS 3, type IIIa/1c)

3. 4.09g 3.10h Horn silver residue (photo 5025).

WH (Vēh-Artaxšīr? Central Iraq) (SNS 3, type IIIb/1e)

4. 3.74g 2.45h The *M* seems to be slightly scratched, horn silver residue (photo 5024).

Hephthalite imitations of coins of Pērōz, after 474

Pseudo-mint ‘AS’ (probably Balkh) (2 coins)

Obv. One pellet between crescent and winged crown.

Rev. Mint abbreviation ‘AS’, five outward-looking small crescents to left.

Cf. SNS 3, type IIIb/1c; Vondrovec 2014, pp. 399–400, 408, no. pre-type 287.

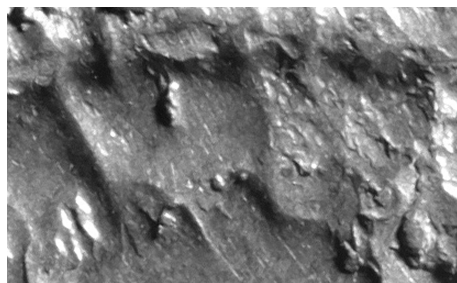


Fig. 1. No. 5. Obverse showing blundered Baktrian letters $\eta\beta$.

Fig. 2. No. 6. Obverse showing clearly legible Baktrian $\eta\beta$.

- 5.* *Obv.* To right of crown a name, but rusty die makes it unreadable; to left, two small Baktrian (?) characters (probably not a *tamghā*).
3.57g 3h (dies K-k) (photo 5012).
- 6.* *Obv.* Clearly legible Baktrian $\eta\beta$.
Rev. Altar stands on four steps, crescents or inscription to left barely visible because of rusty die.
4.03g 2.30h (dies L-l) (photo 5013).

Mint: Balkh (20 coins)

For reasons of comparability, in the following catalogue I follow Alram's divisions of the Göbl type 287 coins in his parcel into three major varieties:⁴³

- variety 1: clear legends, one pellet between the crescent and the winged cap
- variety 2: clear legends, three pellets between crescent and cap
- variety 3: blundered legends
 - 3a: with three pellets between the crescent and the winged cap
 - 3b: with one pellet between the crescent and the winged cap (one example).

The difference between imitations with legible and blundered legends is difficult to determine in some instances. The pellets, probably, do not indicate a sequence as shown by a 'one pellet' coin among the series with more marks (for example see Alram and Pfisterer 2012, p. 30, variety 1d).

Variety 1a. Legible Baktrian inscriptions, one pellet between crescent and winged cap, without any further marks or tamghas left of the crown.

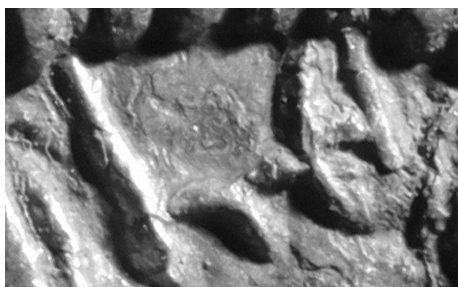


Fig. 3. No. 8. Obverse with clearly legible $\eta\beta$.

Fig. 4. No. 7. Reverse with clearly legible $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda\omicron$.

⁴³ Alram 2008.

- 7.* *Obv.* Above right ribbon rising from the king's right shoulder pellet or crescent, or a rust spot on the die.
 4.10g 4h (dies H-h) (photo 5008).
 8.* 4.00g 3h (dies I-i) (photo 5009).
 9.* 4.11g 2h (dies J-j) (photo 5010).

Variety 2. Legible Baktrian inscriptions, three pellets between crescent and winged cap.



Fig. 5. No. 8. Reverse with clearly legible βαχλο.

Fig. 6. No. 10. Obverse with almost legible ηβ

- 10.* *Obv.* Letters ηβ almost legible.
Rev. Thick horn silver over mint name.
 Horn silver on obverse and reverse so it is not certain whether this coin is Alram's variety 2 (three pellets, clear legends) or the variety 3 (weak legends). Part of the margin cracked but not broken away.
 3.56g 3h (dies N-?) (photo 5011).

Variety 3a. Blundered Baktrian inscriptions. Obverse with three pellets between crescent and winged cap.

All necessary letters are present and easy recognisable on nos 11 and 12, even when written in an awkward style. This form of writing is determined by pellets and twig-like lines.

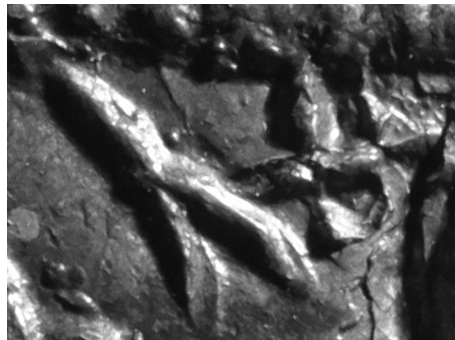


Fig. 7. No. 12. Obverse with ηβ clearly legible though the last letter is uncertain, perhaps because of double striking.

Fig. 8. No. 13. Obverse with clearly legible ηβ.

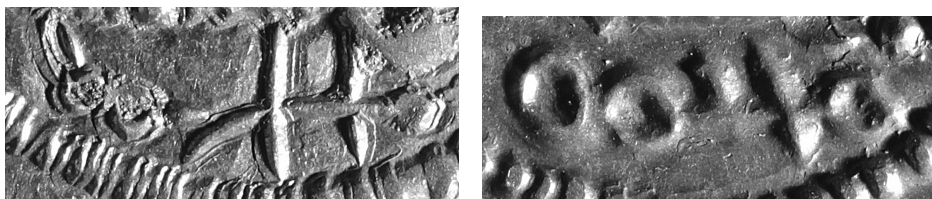


Fig. 9. No. 11. Reverse, variety 1 with clearly legible $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda o$.

Fig. 10. No. 14. Reverse showing how $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda o$ has been turned into a chain of circles. The first circle is a β the second an α , the following tooth a χ the longer stroke a λ in ligature with the χ and the last circle is an o .

- 11.* 3.84g 2.50h (dies A-a) (photo 5001).
 12.* 3.78g 2.30h (dies B-b) (photo 5002).
 13.* 3.85g 3h (dies C-c) spots of horn silver, part of margin broken off (photo 5003).
 14.* *Obv.* Crescent above the left shoulder ribbon, pointing outwards at 11h to 10h. A crescent is also found on Alram 2008, no. 7 (Alram and Pfisterer 2012, variety 1b), at the same place on the obverse but pointing upwards. Uncertain whether there are one or three pellets between crescent and cap because of rusty dies. Ethnic reduced to three short 'teeth'. The engraver of the ethnic and the mint used more circles for the Baktrian script, thus simplifying it to an abstract pattern.
 3.93g 2.30h (dies D-d) (photo 5004).

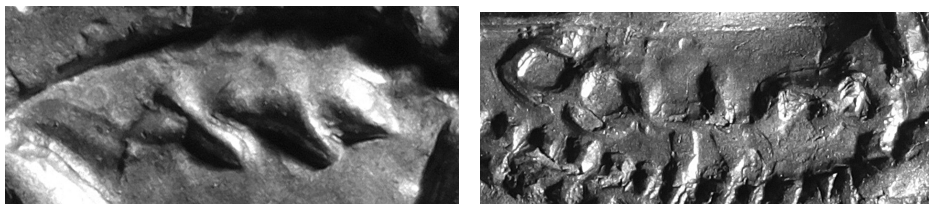


Fig. 11. No. 15. Obverse with blundered ethnic, almost appearing to be inverted.

Fig. 12. No. 15. Reverse with blundered form of $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda o$ with several letters turned into circles, again almost making it appear inverted.

- 15.* *Obv.* Ethnic $\eta\beta$ becoming abstract and blundered. The three pellets in the crown are placed with two at the top and one at the bottom. The design is very close to no. 14. Stylistically close, but not die identical, to Alram 2008, nos 24 and 26.
 4.03g 2.15h (dies E-e) (photo 5005).

Variety 3b. Blundered Baktrian inscriptions, obverse with one pellet between crescent and winged cap.

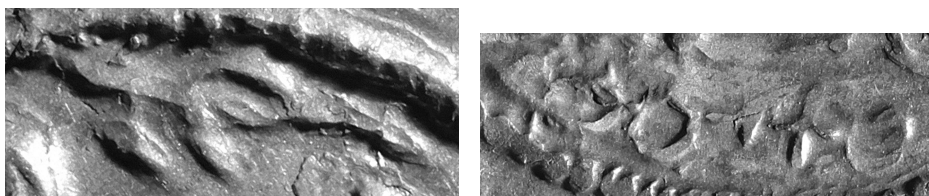


Fig. 13. No. 16. Obverse with slightly blundered $\eta\beta$.

Fig. 14. No. 16. Reverse with legible $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda o$ mostly formed by circles.

16.* 3.96g 3h (dies G-g) (photo 5007).



Fig. 15. No. 17. Reverse with blundered $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda\omicron$. The ethnic on the obverse is an indistinct bulge.

17.* *Obv.* Number of pellets between crescent and winged crown uncertain because of rusty die. Ethnic weak, only a tiny bulge.

3.52g 2.00h (dies F-f) (photo 5006).

The following group of nine coins share the same pair of dies (M-m). The ethnic is weak because of rust on the die. The second letter β of the ethnic seems to be recognisable.



Fig. 16. No. 20. Obverse showing rusty die; the β of $\eta\beta$ perhaps visible.

Fig. 17. No. 18. Reverse with $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda\omicron$ barely legible.

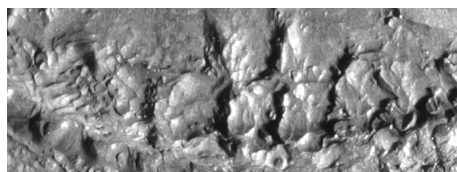
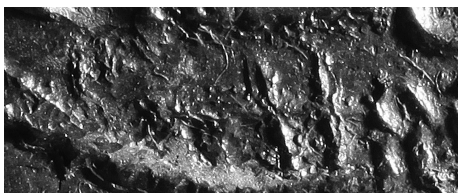


Fig. 18. No. 18. Reverse after cleaning.

Fig. 19. No. 24. Reverse with $\beta\alpha\chi\lambda\omicron$ barely legible.

- | | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|------------|--------------|
| 18.* | 4.19g | 3h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5014) |
| 19. | 4.01g | 3h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5015) |
| 20.* | 3.89g | 2.45h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5016) |
| 21. | 3.87g | 3h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5017) |
| 22. | 3.84g | 1.30h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5018) |
| 23. | 3.99g | 2.30h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5019) |
| 24. | 4.16g | 2.30h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5020) |
| 25. | 4.10g | 2.30h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5021) |
| 26. | 3.91g | 2.30h | (dies M-m) | (photo 5022) |

Part of group but probably intrusive: Khusrō I Anūshīrwān (531–79)

YZ regnal year 26 (Yazd, Fārs)

27. 4.02g 3h (photo 5026)

Additional coins not part of group

Hephthalites

Balkh, cf. Göbl type 288 but without *tamghā* to the left; cf. *SNS* Usbekistan, no. 452. Between 5 and 7 h on obverse an ‘abstract’ form of βαχλο.



Fig. 20. No. A1. Göbl type 288 var. Obverse showing abstract βαχλο.

Pl. 49, no. A1

A1.*3.05g 30mm 9h (photo Universität Hamburg SB 06490)

Hormizd IV, Balkh, regnal year 8 (Pl. 49, no. A2).

Rev. Year (*TWMN*) and mint abbreviation (BHL) changed places.

A2.*3.91g 32mm 3h (photo Universität Hamburg SB 07729)

PLATE 48



HEIDEMANN, THE HEPHTHALITE DRACHMS MINTED IN BALKH (1)



HEIDEMANN, THE HEPHTHALITE DRACHMS MINTED IN BALKH (2)

