

VLADIMIR N. NASTICH

EARLY ISLAMIC COPPER COINAGE OF TRANSOXIANA  
A GENERIC SURVEY FOCUSED ON NEWLY DISCOVERED COIN TYPES

The suggested paper deals with a group of early Islamic, mostly 'Abbāsid, copper coins (Arab. sg. فلس *fals*, pl. فلوس *fulūs*) produced in the minting towns of Transoxiana (otherwise Transoxania<sup>1</sup>) during about a century from the incorporation of the area into the Arab Caliphate till the formation of autonomous Ṭāhirid and Sāmānid states, resp. middle of the 8th – first quarter of the 9th ct. CE. However, the proposed survey does not claim for a detailed in-depth study, which the overviewed stuff is definitely worth and which hopefully will be done ahead.

The traditional written records from the period under review are rather scanty and the information they provide is far from desired completeness and reliability; in these conditions, the coins can be considered (and often become indeed) a primary historical source. Recent finds in Central Asia prove once again that in many aspects they fairly comply with that purpose. How meager was until lately the numismatic research base concerning those remote ages, can be seen

---

<sup>1</sup> Arab. ما وراء النهر *mā warā' al-nahr* '[the land] that is behind the river' [Amū Daryā]; a normal Russian appellation for the region is Средняя Азия 'Middle Asia'; see e.g. [BREGEL 1996: pp. 1–3], including a concise bibliography of the topic. Although the term is not basically recognized as common in Western usage (possibly because it may also embrace some adjacent regions like parts of the Marw oasis, Khorezm or historical Turkestan), I will sometimes mention it in the text instead of the prolix *Mā warā' al-Nahr* or heterogenous *Transoxiana/Transoxania*, especially where it does not imply an opposition to Khurāsān in the proper sense.

from the comprehensive Type Corpus *Early 'Abbāsīd Coinage* compiled up to 1986 by the untimely gone Nicholas Lowick: of the 33 entries, covering the copper coinage of Transoxiana [Lowick 1996: pp. 382–85, nos. 816–48], 4 belong to Ṭāhir's governorate (205 AH / 820 CE and later), 14 represent doubtful, unconfirmable or plainly erroneous attributions, while only 15 descriptions (viz. 12 different types) of copper *fulūs* struck at Bukhārā and Samarqand alone can be considered reliable enough in the scholarly respect. Since then, mostly due to private search rather than regular professional excavations, numerous new coin types fabricated in a good dozen of Central Asian minting towns have been detected. Many of them bear the names of 'Abbāsīd governors, commanders, prefects, and other figures who held different official posts in the towns and regions of Middle Asia; some of those names are absent from any other written sources relating to those times.

While getting established in Mā warā' al-Nahr, the newly conquered province of the Caliphate officially to Khurāsān, and arranging the trade and coinage in that region, the Arab officials hardly did that job from scratch, since a number of local states and domains had already existed there with rather developed political, economical and social institutions, not excluding coin production and money circulation. By that time, copper or bronze coins were cast or struck at Bukhārā, Paykand, Samarqand, Panjikand, Kish (Kesh, later Shahrisabz), Nakhshab (later Nasaf/Qarshī), more distant Farghāna, Chāch (later al-Shāsh, now district of Tashkent), [al-]Ṭārban[d] (Pārāb/Otrar) (Fig.1, a–d) and a few other domains, towns and settlements. Silver coins, reportedly issued only in Bukhāran Soghd and Tokharistan, were shaped to the so-called Bukhārkhudā[t] portrait type, initially imitating the Sāsānian drachms of Varhran V (420–38 CE). The copper coins were furnished with inscriptions in Soghdian, Khwārezmian (Chorasmian), possibly some other Iranian languages, also in various local writing modifications, as well as Turkic and even imitative Chinese.

In the further course some of the above mentioned mints were closed, but some went on working, adapted or reoriented to the production of Islamic money issues. The bulk of regional copper coin production in that period came to the markets of Transoxiana from Bukhārā and Samarqand. Properly speaking, the latter two mints (especially Bukhārā with its exquisite variety of the names of local

officials<sup>2</sup>) were from the very beginning well known to historians<sup>3</sup>, as their copper production was represented in relative abundance both in archeological findings and numismatic collections. However, a good deal of transitional issues initially using the Arabic writing for coin legends cannot be regarded Islamic in the strict sense — only because they simply gave place to the newcomers' language, albeit in some cases the script alone (Fig.2, a-d).

The first copper coin type, 'purely' Islamic by definition that could belong to local production, must be an undated and mintless issue, related to the period between 90–96 AH / 709–15 CE and struck (or rather cast) in the name of *الامير المنصور قتيبه بن مسلم* *al-amīr al-manṣūr* (the victorious commander) *Qutaybah b. Muslim*, the prominent Arab conqueror of Mā Warā' al-Nahr. Two of the three known examples of this highly important and interesting type are posted on [ZENO: #13823 and 13824]. Basing on the finding places of the specimens known so far (the Bukhara oasis and Turkmenia), the publicator of this coinage [KALININ: 2005] confidently implies its Transoxanian provenance, of which, however, no direct proof exists as yet; besides, it comes from the Umayyad period and for this reason also falls beyond the scope of the present paper. Nevertheless I could not leave this important coin type without a quick mention at the least (Fig.3).

The ensuing survey embraces all copper coin types (*fulūs*), hitherto known to the author as issued and circulated in Middle Asia during the period of 'Abbāsīd rule, with legible mint names and dates and/or issuers' names and titles, identified through direct reading of coin legends or verifiable otherwise with more or less confidence (I would call it conditionally 'List A'). Real coin types, regularly encountered in the area and presumed to have belonged to local production but for different reasons (mainly for the lack of mint names on them) unamenable to

<sup>2</sup> According to E. von Zambaur, "die Kupferprägungen von Bukhârâ des II. und III. Jhd. H. zeichnen sich durch eine besondere Fülle von Beamtennamen aus" [ZAMBAUR 1968: p. 67]. As we shall see below, the present-day reality proves the rightfulness of these words not only towards the mint of Bukhârâ, just the 'Abbāsīd copper coinage of the region in general.

<sup>3</sup> Still as late as the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, "only three mint towns in Transoxiana (in the pre-Sāmānīd times)" were regarded available [FRYE 1949: p. 30–31, note 108 (with reference to Ibn Ḥawqal), and p. 34] — namely Bukhârâ, Samarqand and Ilāq (al-Shāsh); however, the latter's copper *fals* dated 166/782–3, mentioned in the cited work [FRYE 1949: p. 35], is in fact a result of misreading, as clearly follows from Tiesenhausen's footnote to No. 1008 [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 110].

precise determination so far, are also included. Separate items are arranged in chronological order, according to the succession of governors of Khurāsān appointed by 'Abbāsīd caliphs from Baghdad; as now appears contrary to previous notions, the majority of those governors are eventually found mentioned on the inspected coins. The main list is followed by a brief review of doubtful and unconfirmable definitions ('List B'). Many of the latter, recognized as plainly erroneous and thus believed to be non-existent at all, still cannot be completely neglected due to rather frequent mentions in numismatic publications (especially those considered and cited as trustworthy<sup>4</sup>), and therefore obviously require appropriate comments. The *fulūs* struck after 205/821 under Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn and his descendants, regarded in many aspects as the first autonomous ruling dynasty rather than the last legitimate 'Abbāsīd governors, are not considered in the present work. Equally omitted is the copper production of other Khurāsānian mints located in greater or lesser proximity west & south of Amū Daryā (Amul, Marw, Balkh, Harāt, &al.), as well as Khwārizm, although significantly represented among the Middle Asian finds, yet still originating from beyond the strict geographical scope of our survey.

---

<sup>4</sup> [FRAEHN 1826; TIESENHAUZEN 1873; MARKOV 1896; LOWICK 1996] &al., let alone [SHAMMA 1998] with numerous inaccuracies namely in 'KHURASAN' and 'JAXARTES & SUGHD' sections.

## A. VERIFIABLE ATTRIBUTIONS

### 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muslim [al-Bākhilī], governor of Khurāsān (131/749 – 137/755)<sup>5</sup>

The first 'Abbāsīd governor of Khurāsān, more often called Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī, originally was one of the most active leaders of the anti-Umayyad movement. Numerous copper coins issued in his name, dated successively from 131 to 137 AH, representing three different varieties at least, always with Qur'ān, 42:23 in marginal legends, typical for the coinage of anti-Umayyad rebels throughout the transitional period, generally lack the mint name(s) and thus cannot be attributed with due confidence to certain Transoxanian localities; although tentatively believed to be produced at Marw [VLOTEN 1892: p. 441; ZAMBAUR 1968: p. 238–239, notes 1, 5, 16; &al.]<sup>6</sup>, they are frequently encountered in different places of Middle Asia<sup>7</sup> and for this reason should be considered an integral part of local monetary circulation. However, the distinct coin types dated 131, 132 and 137 AH [WURTZEL 1978: p. 192, nos. 36–37; BATES 2003: p.309] do not occur among the numismatic finds in Middle Asia, and on this basis they are excluded from the following survey<sup>8</sup>.

#### No mint name, 133–136 AH (Fig.4, a-c)

All dates show the same uniform type:

Obv.<sup>9</sup>, field — لا اله الا الله / وحده (Kalima-I) in 3 lines;

<sup>5</sup> Some of the following dates shown as the governors' ruling periods are tentative due to lack of compliance between the basic written sources on the topic (AL-ṬABARĪ, GARDĪZĪ, AL-YA'QŪBĪ, &al.).

<sup>6</sup> Sometimes Nisābūr was also presupposed, however without any argumentation; see e.g. [GUEST 1932: p. 556].

<sup>7</sup> In particular, a perceptible number of copper *fulūs* dated 133–136 AH is known to me as certainly originating from the regions of Surkhan Darya (ancient Saghāniyān), Bukhārā and Tashkent (ancient Chach/Shash). The same observation for the region of Bukhārā has even enabled Dr. Boris D. Kochnev to admit that at least part of them could have been produced *in situ*: "... le grand nombre de ces *fulūs* trouvés dans l'oasis de Boukhara permet de supposer qu'une partie d'entre eux au moins étaient frappés dans cette ville" [KOCHNEV 2001a: p. 146, note 12].

<sup>8</sup> A detailed review of the whole series is well represented in two recent and apparently most informative publications [WURTZEL 1978: pp. 188–93; BATES 2003: pp. 298–99 and 309].

<sup>9</sup> Here and elsewhere onward 'Obv.' stands for obverse and 'Rev.' for reverse. If not indicated otherwise, the Obv. field would contain Kalima-I (often without لا شريك له; later, on the *fulūs* of al-Ṣaghāniyān after 146 AH and elsewhere after 172 AH normally with it), the Rev. field — *resp.* Kalima-II (generally as in the present description but also with different line layout, which is not separately specified).

margin — بسم الله امر به الامير عبد الرحمن مسلم سنة ثلث وثلثين ومئة *bismi'llāh amara bihi al-amīr 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muslim* and date 133 (resp. 134 to 136, in words).

Reverse, field — رسول الله // محمد (Kalima-II) in 2 lines, divided with a fancy pattern (double-line horizontal lozenge with a dot in the centre and two palmettes at the edges);

margin — لا اسئلكم عليه اجرا الا المودة في القربى = Qur'ān, 42:23, divided into 4 parts with triple annulets.

Coins of this type were relatively wide-spread and are now represented in many collections [FRAEHN 1826: p. 18, nos. 3–4; TIESENHAUZEN 1873: pp. 65–67, nos. 665, 673, 681, 687; Markov 1896: p. 14, nos. 16–18, 21; WURTZEL 1978: p. 193, nos. 38–41; &al.].

**Abū Dā'ūd Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Dhuhlī, governor of Khurāsān  
(137/755 – 140/758)**

According to al-Ṭabarī, Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm was Abū Muslim's lieutenant; after the death of the latter in 137/754–55, he was appointed governor over Khurāsān by the caliph Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr; killed in 140/757–8.

**No mint name, 138 AH**

Obv. margin — بسم ... [امر به خالد بن ابراهيم] سنة ثمان وثلثين ومئة *bism <...> [a]mara bihi al-amīr Ḥālīd b. Ibr[āhīm] <...>* and date 138 (in words).

Rev. margin — Qur'ān, 42:23, divided into 4 parts with triple annulets.

Reference: [FRAEHN 1826: p. 19, no. 10; WURTZEL 1978: p. 196, no. 46].

**No mint name, 139 AH (Fig.5)**

A small crescent with two 8-pointed asterisks in the middle of Obv. field, dividing the Kalima-I into two lines; a fancy pattern flanked also with 8-pointed asterisks in the middle of Rev. field, dividing the 2-line Kalima-II, as on the coins of Abī Muslim (see above).

Obv. margin — Qur'ān, 42:23, divided into 4 parts with single annulets.

Rev. margin — بسم الله امر الامير خالد بن ابراهيم سنة تسع وثلثين ومئة *bismi'llāh amara al-amīr Ḥālīd b. Ibrāhīm* and date 139 (in words).

The mint name was not indicated on these coins, so their actual provenance cannot be established so far, but specimens of this type are rather frequent among

the findings in and around Bukhārā. An identical coin is in Tübingen (inventory no. 91-12-1), which M. Bates examined in 1991 and 2002. The date was formerly identified as 129, but on better preserved specimens (including author's private collection), 139 is clear enough. The governor's name was not preserved in full on any of the accessible specimens, so the proposed reading is actually a type reconstruction.

**No mint name, no date (Fig.6)**

Obv. margin — Qur'ān, 42:23.

Rev. margin — بسم الله مما امر به الامير خالد بن ابراهيم *bismi'llāh mim mā amara bihi al-amīr Ḥālīd b. Ibrāhīm*.

Small module (16–18mm), cast. Reportedly found in the Surkhan Darya region (ancient Ṣaghāniyān). Two specimens are posted on [ZENO: #111359 & 111360], two more pieces in a private collection (Russia)<sup>10</sup>.

**'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Azdī, governor of Khurāsān  
(140/758 – 141/759)**

'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān was appointed governor by al-Manṣūr in 140/758, but soon refused to recognize the caliph's suzerainty and expressed the aspiration for the autonomy of Khurāsān, which resulted in his dismissal and execution in the following year.

**No mint name, no date (Fig.7)**

Small module (16mm), cast.

Obv. margin — [امر] الله بالوفا والعد [ل]... *[amara] Allāh bi'l-wafā wa'l-'adl <...>*.

Rev. margin — بسم الله [مما امر به عبد الجبار بن عبد الرحمن] *bismi'llāh [mim mā amara bihi 'Ab]d al-Ġabbār b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān*.

A single specimen, reportedly unearthed also in the Surkhan Darya region (ancient Ṣaghāniyān), was fixed by the author in a private collection (Russia).

---

<sup>10</sup> Here and further on, anonymous references to private collections imply that the owners of the cited coins did not agree to mention their names

Despite considerable damage, its principal legends are still fairly readable and along with ornamental setting exactly coincide with [Lowick 1996: pp. 386–87, no. 869] (identified as Khurasan, ca 140 AH).

**Muḥammad al-Mahdī, heir-apparent and honorary governor of Khurāsān  
(141/759 – 150/767 or 151/768; later, until about 155/772, actual supreme leader  
of all al-Mashriq)**

In 141/759, second 'Abbāsīd caliph Abu Ja'far al-Mansur appointed his son and heir-apparent Muḥammad al-Mahdī governor of Khurāsān. During the next 10 years, most of the copper coins in Mā warā' al-Nahr, perhaps save for the earliest issues, were normally struck or cast with the names of amīr al-Mahdī (placed for the first time on copper *fulūs* of Bukhara in 143/760-1; see below) and local officials — *amīr* *امير* = 'commander', *āmil* *عامل* = 'officer, agent, clerk', probably also '[local/subordinate] governor', sometimes 'prefect', often introduced by *مما امر به* (rarely *بأمر* or just *امر*) or else within the clauses *فى ولية* 'during the governorate [of ...]', *عامل الامير* or (for minor executives) *على يدي* 'in the presence' (literally: 'on both hands') [of ...]', etc.

Throughout al-Mahdī's tenure as governor of Khurāsān, actual office in that capacity was reportedly executed by his deputies, whose names seem to have never appeared on the Transoxanian coins of the cited period; different sources offer controversial data regarding their terms of service and even their real number (fluctuating from one to four), so I skip them here as irrelevant to the subject.

Apart from the above-reviewed copper *fulūs* issued without mint name(s), undated or with lost years of issue, let alone an elusive, nay even illusive Bukhārā, 138 AH<sup>11</sup>, the earliest date fixed with confidence for the 'Abbāsīd copper coinage in Transoxiana is 142/759–60:

---

<sup>11</sup> For this often mentioned but extremely doubtful item see below, under 'Unconfirmable Attributions' (List B).

**al-Ṣaghāniyān, 142 AH (Fig.8, a-b)**

Cast or struck on cast flans. The obverse is adorned by a square lozenge with straight or concave sides and palmettes crowning each of the closed angles (variant A) or expanding from the unclosed ends (variant B), all with a dot in the centre.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس بالصغانيان سنة اثنين واربعين ومئة  
*bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi'l-Ṣaghāniyān* and date 142 (in words).

Rev. margin — بسم الله امر به الامير اوسكره (?) عامل الامير الحسن بن حرمان  
*bismi'llāh amara bihi Abū S.k.rah (?) 'āmīl al-amīr al-Ḥasan b. Ḥamrān.*

Up to 6 specimens known so far, all preserved with considerable defects. The type was first published with partially identified date (14×) and wrongly read amīr's name (حمادار instead of حرمان) [RTVELADZE 1985: pp. 39–40; LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 837]. Al-Ḥasan b. Ḥamrān is known as governor of Balkh (fl. 142–145 AH), both from narrative sources [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 350; GARDĪZĪ 1991: p. 43] and coin legends [NASTIČ 2000: pp. 106–07; LOWICK 1996: pp. 378–79, no. 775; BATES 2003: pp. 295 and 316, note 38; TREADWELL 2006 — Balkh and al-Tirmidh]; see also under al-Tirmidh, 142 AH. In *Ta'riḫ* by al-Ṭabarī [cit. sup.] this name is disfigured into *al-Ḥasan b. Ḥamdān* (definitely a *lapsus calami*). M.Bates and L.Treadwell [cit. sup.] use to spell the patronymic as *Ḥumrān*, whereas I would still prefer *Ḥamrān*, as it was given for instance in [GARDĪZĪ 1991: p. 43]. However, it may well happen that either of the latter versions is acceptable.

I could not identify the person hidden behind the name ابو شكره / اوسكره = *Abū Šakraḥ/Šukrah/Šakarah*? The only person known to me bearing a more or less resembling name, encountered in [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 349], is a warlord called for Abī Muslim's audience in 135 AH on the occasion of his denial to recognize the rebel Ziyad b. Salih, whose name was *Abu Shakir*, but the latter is very unlikely to be the figure in question.

**al-Tirmidh, 142 AH (Fig.9, a-b)**

Obv. field — a broad double circle (variant A — a regular full-line ring, variant B — uneven beaded ovals), virtually empty save for a dot in the middle, however absent in some dies;

margin — بسم الله ضرب الفلّس بالترمذ (!) سنة اثنين واربعين ومئة  
*bismi'llāh ḍuriba al-fals bi'l-Tirmidh* and date 142 (in words).

Rev. field — الحمد / لله *al-ḥamdu li'llāh* in 2 lines;

margin — مما امر به ابراهيم بن ماهان عامل الامير الحسن بن حمران *mimmā amara bihi Ibrāhīm b. Māhān 'āmil al-amīr al-Ḥasan b. Ḥamrān*.

Three pieces are known to me thus far; first published in [NASTIČ 2000: pp. 106–07]. Ibrāhīm b. Māhān is virtually unknown from other sources; for al-Ḥasan b. Ḥamrān see above, under al-Ṣaghāniyān, 142 AH.

The main peculiarity of these coins consists in using Arabic article =ال *al-* preceding the mint name *Tirmidh*; as far as I can judge, the cited fact is the first and virtually unique that would not take place ever after in the long and various coinage of this town.

### **Bukhārā, 143 AH (Fig.10)**

The type is encountered rather frequently (e.g. 19 specimens in the State Hermitage alone). First published in [FRAEHN 1826: pp. 21–22, no. 22], since then more than once in [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: pp. 71–72, no. 724; MARKOV 1896: p. 16, nos. 49–50; LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, nos. 819–20; SHAMMA 1998: p. 327, no.(3)] &al.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب ببخارا فى سنة ثلث واربعين ومئة *bismi'llāh ḍuriba bi-Buḥārā* and date 143 (in words).

Rev. margin — امر به الامير الاشعث فى ولية المهدي الامير محمد بن امير المؤمنين *amara bihi al-amīr al-Ash'at fī wilāyat al-Mahdī al-amīr Muḥammad b. amīr al-mu'minīn*; known also with one or more omissions and graphic errors —

مر (!) به [الامير w/o] الاشعث فى وله (!) المهدي الامير محمد بن امير المومس / المومس (!)

Amīr al-Ash'ath b. Yahyā, witnessed by coins as governor of Bukhara in this and of Samarqand in the following year (see below, under Samarqand, 144 AH), is a figure scarcely found in historical written sources. No such mentions are known to [BATES 2003: p. 293], while [TREADWELL 2006] refers in this connection to [AKHBĀR 1997, pp. 221–22], and Ibn al-Kalbī 1408, p. 264, which I myself had no chance to come across so far.

### **Samarqand, 143 AH (Fig.11)**

A 6-ray solar rosette with tips curved clockwise (a tamgha?) below field on Obv.; 3 dots •• below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب بسمرقند سنة ثلث واربعين ومئة *bismi'llāh ḍuriba bi-Samarqand* and date 143 (in words).

Rev. field — Qur'ān, 42:23 in 3 lines; margin —

امر به الامير داود بن كراز/ كراز (?) فى ولاية محمد بن امير المؤمنين  
*amara bihi al-amīr Dā'ūd b. K.rāz (?) fī wilāyat Muḥammad b. amīr al-mu'minīn.*

The type is rather common [MARKOV 1896: p. 16, no. 51; SMIRNOVA 1963: pp. 139–41, nos. 799–814; LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, nos. 838–39; &al.] and known in many weight and size varieties, sometimes looking like different denominations. According to [TREADWELL 2006], Arabic written sources (al-Ṭabarī, al-Balādhurī, Ibn al-Athīr), citing amīr Dā'ūd, reflect his patronymic name in a number of graphic/phonemic varieties — *Karār*; *Karrāz*; *Karādh*; *K.wā.rā*; *K.rā.rā*; etc., none of which can be confidently taken for unique and reliable. M. Bates spells it *Karār* and insists that the person is otherwise unknown [BATES 2003: p. 294]. Russian authors, evidently following [SMIRNOVA 1963: p. 139], without any explanation or references call him 'Dā'ūd, son of *Gurāz*'.

#### Samarqand, 144 AH (Fig.12)

A Soghdian tamgha  below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب بسمرقند سنة اربع واربعين ومئة *bismi'llāh ḍuriba bi-Samarqand* and date 144 (in words).

Rev. margin — امر به الاشعث بن يحيى فى ولاية المهدي الامير محمد بن امير المؤمنين  
*amara bihi al-Aš'at b. Yaḥyā fī wilāyat al-Mahdī al-amīr Muḥammad b. amīr al-mu'minīn*;  
 known also with a few graphic errors — المومس or المومس instead of المؤمنين.

A well-known abundant issue [MARKOV 1896: p. 16, no. 56; SMIRNOVA 1963: pp. 141–49, nos. 815–902; LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 840; SHAMMA 1998: p. 334, no.(2); &al], represented in many museums and private collections.

For amīr al-Ash'ath b. Yaḥyā see above, under Bukhārā, 143 AH.

#### al-Ṣaghāniyān, 146 AH (Fig.13)

A lozenge-shaped fancy pattern with palmettes at the edges in the middle of Rev., almost exactly as on the coins of Abī Muslim examined above, just without a central dot.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلص بالصغانيان سنة ست واربعين ومئة *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi'l-Ṣaghāniyān* and date 146 (in words).


Rev. margin — امر به الامير ابو عاصم (?) فى ولاية محمد المهدى بن امير المؤمنين  
*amara bihi al-amīr Abū 'Āṣim (?) fī wilāyat Muḥammad al-Mahdī b. amīr al-mu'minīn.*

The type is still unpublished. Three specimens known, all in rather mediocre condition. The legends could be deciphered only through cross-comparison of all partially preserved portions. The name of a local amīr is therefore clarified without full credence.

A certain Abū 'Āṣim ('Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sulaym) was mentioned in [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 313] as Abū Muslim's envoy to Ṭāliqān under 129 AH; otherwise this amīr could be identical with the same al-Ash'ath b. Yaḥyā, governor of Bukhara in 143/760-1 and Samarqand in 144/761-2 (see above), whose *kunya*, according to AKHBĀR 1997, p. 221, reportedly was also Abū 'Āṣim [TREADWELL 2006].

#### **Bukhārā, 148 AH (Fig.14)**

A six-pointed asterisk ★ below field on Obv., Bukhāran tamgha  flanked with 3-dot sets below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب بيخارا فى سنة ١٤٨ ثمان واربعين ومئة  *bismi'llāh ḍuriba bi-Buḥārā* and date 148 (in words), divided into 3 parts with annulets stuffed with dots.

Rev. margin — امر به معبد فى ولاية المهدى ولى عهد المسلمين محمد بن امير المؤمنين  
*amara bihi Ma'bad fī wilāyat al-Mahdī waliyy 'ahd al-muslimīn Muḥammad b. amīr al-mu'minīn.*

The type is well-known and spread [FRAEHN 1826: p. 24, no. 35; TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 81, no. 779; MARKOV 1896: p. 17, nos. 91–92; SMIRNOVA 1963: pp. 149–50, nos. 903–10; LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 823; SHAMMA 1998: p. 328, no.(6); &al.]. Ma'bad [b. Khalīl] (reportedly born in Marw and died as governor of Sind in 159/776) — a prominent functionary mentioned in a number of sources (al-Ṭabarī, Narshakhī, Ibn al-Kalbī, etc.); the inspected coin shows that in 148/765 he was acting as amīr of Bukhārā.

#### **al-Ṣaghāniyān (?), 148 AH (Fig.15)**

A star-like dotted sign above field on Obv., tamgha-like sign  below.

Obv. margin, instead of the circular legend, a broad zigzag pattern rim with 3 evenly placed annulets inside.

Rev. field in 3 lines — *mimmā amara bihi* / المهدى محمد / بن امير المؤمنين *al-Mahdī Muḥammad b. amīr al-mu'minīn*;

margin — *bismi'llāh* <...> *al-fals* بالصغاس (!) سنة ثمان واربعين ومئة *fals bi'l-ṣ. ḡnāy.n* (!) and date 149 (in words).

Three specimens known so far, all present on [ZENO: #25332, 50418 & 105103]. First published in [RTVELADZE 1985: p. 39 & pl. I] with wrong attribution (the mint name defined as “al-...ra” and the date deciphered as 146). Of the above inspected specimens, the Rev. marginal legend is virtually lost, while the other two expose a blundered graphic for the mint, which is conventionally recognized as distorted *al-ṣaghāniyān*, — unlike the above described issue of 146/763–64, showing the mint name in the perfect way, and apropos, also with Arabic article ال, which was always inherent to the coins of *Ṣaghāniyān* up until the early 13<sup>th</sup> ct.).

#### **al-Shāsh, 149 AH (Fig.16)**

Obv. margin — *bismi'llāh wilāyat al-* بسم الله ولية المهدى سنة تسع واربعين ومئة *Mahdī* and date 149 (in words).

Rev. margin — *amara* (or *amru*) *Sa'īd* امر سعيد بن يحيى ضرب بالشاش ستين بدرهم *b. Yaḥyā ḍuriba bi'l-Šāš sittīn bi-dirham*.

Recently discovered [NASTIČ 2000: p. 107] but proved not to be especially rare (about 20 pieces presently known to the author). Denominated *ستين بدرهم* ‘sixty to a dirham’ (on some specimens carved as *ستين بدم*). Separate dies show numerous errors and omissions in the legends on both sides, most of which were detalized in [FARR, NASTIČ 2001: p. 13]. The cited *amīr Sa'īd b. Yaḥyā*, according to [TREADWELL 2006], may have been a brother of *Ash'ath b. Yaḥyā*, governor of *Bukhārā* and *Samarqand* in the mid-140s (see above, under *Bukhārā*, 143 AH and *Samarqand*, 144 AH).

#### **Bukhārā, 151 AH (Fig.17)**

An oblong decorative cartouche on Rev., dividing the *Kalima-II* into two parts in a way similar to that on the *fulūs* of *Abī Muslim* and *al-Ṣaghāniyān*, 146 AH (see above).

Obv. margin — *bismi'llāh ḍuriba bi-* بسم الله ضرب ببخارا فى سنة احدى وخمسين ومئة *Buḥārā* and date 151 (in words).

Rev. margin — امر به الجنييد بن خلد عامل الامام المهدي ولي عهد المسلمين *amara bihi al-Ġunayd b. Ḥâlîd 'āmil al-imām al-Mahdī waliyy 'ahd al-muslimīn*.

The type is wide-spread and known since long [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: pp. 83–84, no. 802; MARKOV 1896: p. 18, nos. 112–13; SMIRNOVA 1963: pp. 151–53, nos. 916–28; LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 825; SHAMMA 1998: p. 328, no.(7); &al.]. The calligraphic style of Kūfī inscriptions exposes an obvious similarity with late Umayyad and contemporary 'Abbāsīd gold *dīnār* issues. I feel no need to give special references to the design analogies, as those are too numerous and easily accessible in lots of respective matters, printed or Internet-posted; however, compare e.g. with [ZENO: #58415], dated 151 AH as well; see also below, Samarqand, 172 AH (subtype A) and Kish, 173 AH.

The governor's title الامام *al-imām*, placed on the reviewed *fals* instead of الامير, rather expected in this position, in some dies of this type is carved as اما. Separate specimens show considerable fluctuations of size and weight (from above 2.4 down to 0.7 g), looking like different denominations.

Al-Junayd b. Khâlîd b. Ḥarīm al-Taġhlibī was mentioned by [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 354] as flogged and imprisoned by governor 'Abd al-Jabbār in 140/758 together with Ma'bad b. al-Khalīl al-Muzānī (see above, under Bukhārā, 148), later as amīr of Bukhārā in 163/780 [NARSHAKHĪ 1897: p. 92]. The inspected coins show that he was acting in the latter capacity for the first time in 151/768.

#### **Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba al-Ṭā'ī, governor of Khurāsān (151/768 or 152/768 – 159/776)**

According to [GARDĪZĪ 1991: p. 44], caliph al-Manṣūr appointed Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba governor of Khurāsān on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Sha'ban 151/168; [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 361] fixed the same event for 152/769, while [AL-YA'QŪBĪ 2011: p. 69] mentioned him in the same capacity interrupted once for a while, but without exact dates. Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba held that office until his death in 159/776. It was in his term of service that the religious pretender Hāshim b. Ḥakīm (*apud* al-Muqanna') had raised his revolt.

#### **[al-]Ṣaghāniyān, 153 AH (Fig.18)**

Obv. field — an 8-pointed linear design (octogramme) with a dot in the middle;

margin — بسم الله ضر... صغانيان [سنة] ثلث وخمس مئة (!) *bismi'llāh ḡuri[ba etc. <...> bi'l]-ṣaḡāniyān* and date 153 (in words) in an amusingly wrong spelling, which allows its reading as 503.

Rev. margin — ... مما امر به الامير [مير] *mimmā amara bihi al-amīr* <...>, all the rest is gone.

The only specimen known so far (cast; 1.3 g, 19×21 mm), unearthed in 2008 on the citadel of ancient Termez and is now kept in the Institute of Archeology, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan<sup>12</sup>. Its surface has been heavily cleaned, the legends are damaged and yield guessing rather than coherent reading; nevertheless, the mint name specified with reasonable confidence. The year of issue, had it been actually 503 AH, should belong to the Qarakhanid period (resp. 1109–10 CE), which is absolutely impossible for many reasons, viz. coin type in general, content of legends, writing style, flan & die/mold producing technology & al., normal for the 'Abbāsid time but never fixed in aggregate after the middle of the 10<sup>th</sup> ct. CE.

#### Samarqand, 153 AH (Fig.19)

A tamgha-like arabesque  below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — مما امر به حمزة بن عمرو في ولاية الامير حميد بن قحطبة *mimmā amara bihi Ḥamzah b. 'Amr fī wilāyat al-amīr Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭabah*.

Rev. margin — ... ضرب بسمرقند في ولاية المهدي سنة ثلث وخمسين ومئة *ḡuriba bi-Samarqand fī wilāyat al-Mahdī* and date 153 (in words).

Known in quantity, mostly from excavations at Pendžikent [SMIRNOVA 1963: pp. 153–57, nos. 929–63], on which other references [LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 842; SHAMMA 1998: p. 334, no. (3)] are fully dependent. First fixed in 1973 among the finds on Afrasiab (the site of ancient Samarkand) [ERNAZAROVA 1979: p.118, no. 185].

Obv. shows two names: Ḥamzah b. 'Amr (a local official) and *al-amīr Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭabah* (governor of Khurāsān, AH 151 or 152–159), but Rev. definitely contains *fī wilāyat al-Mahdī*, who was governor of Khurāsān reportedly between AH 141 and 150 (or 151).

<sup>12</sup> The image and general information about this unique *fals* are available thanks to the courtesy of my Samarkand colleague Anvar Kh. Atakhodžayev.

The above specimen seems to make obvious that Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba ruled whole Khurāsān, including Transoxiana, residing (as indicated in reliable sources) in Marw, while al-Mahdī retained direct supervision upon Khurāsān after his resignation as active governor. As for amīr Ḥamza b. 'Amr, no mentions of his name have been found in the written sources. On the presence of al-Mahdī's title on the coins of Khurāsān in 153 AH see also [BATES 2003: pp. 291–92 and 315, notes 33–34].

#### al-Ṣaghāniyān, 155 AH (Fig.20)


Anonymous.

Obv. margin blank, otherwise without external peculiarities.

Rev. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا بالصغانيان سنة خمس وخمسين ومئة *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi'l-Ṣaghāniyān* and date 155 (in words).

Unpublished. Two specimens known to the author, both in private collections (Russia). The mint name is written normally.

#### Nasaf, 157/9 AH (Fig.21)

Obv. field — image of a horse walking left, apparently with traces of saddle on back and an unclear signet  above;

margin (legible only in part) — ... الفليس بنسف سنة سبع (؟) وخمسين ... *al-fals bi-Nasaf* and date [1]57 or [1]59 (in words).

Rev. margin (legible only in part) — مما امر به سعام... (؟) ... [ال]مهدي *mimmā amara bihi al-\*ā'im (?) <...> [al-]Mahdī*.


Unique until recently, the badly worn and oxidized coin was published as dated 157 AH by [KOČNEV 1984: pp. 193–95, ZEIMAL' 1994: p. 251, note 51; KOČNEV 1999: p. 43, type 6]. Another specimen, also with weakly preserved legends, is posted in 2011 on [ZENO: #102443]; now supposedly in a private collection).

Nasaf (Nesef) was named *Nakhsheb* in pre-Islamic times and *Qarshi* (Karši) under the Timurids and ever after. A local official's name cited in Rev. margin, along with the considerable part of the ensuing legend, however finishing with clearly discerned al-Mahdī, could not be reliably deciphered and identified.


However, I would dare express a wild guess regarding this strange coin. It was issued in Nasaf right at the time when the town was a residence of al-Muqanna' (see above), a vigorous rebel who was renowned for his adherence to the late Abū

Muslim, claimed him to be al-Mahdī (the redeemer and just ruler before the Day of Resurrection) and denied his death. It is not improbable that exactly those events could call for the emergence of coins depicting a saddled horse, which was commonly perceived as an allegory of anticipating al-Mahdī's advent. Hence, the word seen clearly enough at the end of the Rev. marginal legend, might belong to the anticipated prophet, rather than the heir-apparent, former governor and future caliph Muḥammad al-Mahdī. So my assumption is that the above copper struck at Nasaf, especially if its date of issue was indeed 159/773–74, may well be connected with rebel Hāshim b. Ḥakīm, otherwise known as al-Muqanna', whose identity is unconditionally hidden behind the following coin type.

#### No mint name, no date (Fig.22)

Cast copper *fals* of unusual appearance: both sides show field legends only, encircled by double linear rims with 4 dotted annulets  between the lines instead of marginal inscriptions.

Obv. field — *مما امر به / هاشم وصي / ابي مسلم* *mimmā amara bihi Hāshim waṣiyy Abī Muslim*.

Rev. field — *امر الله / بالوفا و / العدل* *amara Allāh bi'l-wafā wa'l-'adl*, 'Allah has commanded the loyalty and justice', 3 dots  below.

The clause placed on Rev. was first used in 100 AH and later on Umayyad copper *fulūs* of al-Kūfa and some other mints [WALKER 1956: pp. 241, 260–61, 278–79, 285], often with the same triangle of dots at the bottom.

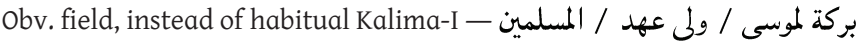


The coin of this type was first fixed without definition in [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 293, no. 2945]; another specimen was later unveiled by B.D. Kočnev in the State Hermitage collection and subjected to detailed investigation in [KOČNEV 1995; KOCHNEV 2001a]. Presently two more pieces are available on [Zeno: #57386 and 74996]. I have virtually nothing to add to his thorough research and well-grounded conclusions about this important coin type, perhaps only correct the erroneous of *ابا مسلم* as *ابي مسلم*, and what is much more substantial, the reading *وصي* *waṣiyy* (literally 'inheritor, feoffee in trust, executor [of someone's will]' also 'bequeathed, conferred, endowed', &sim.) as *ولي* *walī* ('mate, cognate, assistant, representative'), with respective abolition of Kočnev's discourse into the meaning of this wrongly defined term [KOCHNEV 2001a: p. 147].


**Abū 'Awn 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd, governor of Khurāsān  
(159/776 – 160/777)**

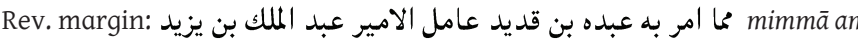
'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd “became governor in 159, only to be dismissed in disgrace in the following year” [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 362; CRONE 2003: p. 174].

**Bukhārā, 160 AH (Fig.23)**



Palmettes  above and  below field legend on Rev.

Obv. field, instead of habitual Kalima-I —  *barakah li-Mūsā / waliyy 'ahd / al-muslimīn* (a blessing for al-Mahdī's heir and future caliph Mūsā al-Hādī); the heir's name is encountered in two graphic varieties —  and  ;

margin —  *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Buḥārā* and date 160 (in words).

Rev. margin:  *mimmā amara bihi 'Abduhu b. Qudayd 'āmīl al-amīr 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd*.

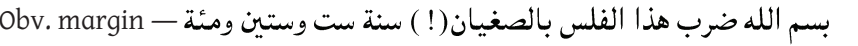
A well-known coin type [FRAEHN 1826: p. 33, no. 75; TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 97, no. 906; MARKOV 1896: p. 20, no. 185; LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 827; SHAMMA 1998: p. 329, no.(9); &al.].

Different authors dealing with the topic suggest various readings of the name  : 'Abda, 'Abadah, 'Abdat &sim. My opinion is that it should be spelled  'Abduhu — literally 'His (viz. God's) slave' — a normal praenomen fairly common among the Muslims of Arab origin in the 'Abbāsīd period, being a specific synonym of 'Abd Allāh, 'Abd Rabbihi and a number of other theophoric proper nouns.

**Temp. Abū'l-'Abbās al-Faḍl b. Sulaymān al-Ṭā'ī al-Ṭūsī, governor of Khurāsān  
(166/783 – 171/786)**

al-Faḍl b. Sulaymān was appointed by caliph al-Mahdī to Khurāsān, where he stayed until the early years of Hārūn (AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: pp. 364–65; AL-YA'QŪBĪ 2011: p. 70).

**al-Ṣagh[ān]iyān (?), 166 AH (Fig.24)**

Obv. margin —  *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi'l-Ṣaḡīyān (!)* and date 166 (in words).

Rev. margin — *mimmā amara bihi al-amīr* 'Amr b. Ġamāl (?) 'azza Allāhu naṣrahu.

A single unpublished specimen is posted on ZENO, #93027. The mint name is somewhat blundered but believed to denote *al-Ṣaġāniyān*; compare for instance above, *al-Ṣaġhāniyān* (?), 148 AH. The officer's name 'Amr b. Ġamal / Ġamāl (?) mentioned on the coin is otherwise unknown.

**Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath al-Khuzā'i, governor of Khurāsān  
(171/787 – 173/789)**

Ja'far b. Muḥammad was appointed governor of Khurāsān by the heir-apparent Hārūn on behalf of caliph Mūsā al-Hādī [AL-YA'QŪBĪ 2011: p. 70]; his governorship ended in 173 when Hārūn, then already caliph al-Rashīd, withdrew him from that office in favour of his son al-'Abbās [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 365].

**Samarqand, 172 AH**

Two closely similar subtypes, however differing fundamentally through the additional mention of a certain person on one of them. First mentioned without any details in [MARKOV 1896: p. 27, nos. 366–67].

**Subtype A (Fig.25, a)**

عدل 'adil below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — *bismi'llāh* بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس بسمرقند سنة اثنتين وسبعين ومئة and date 173 (in words).

Rev. margin: *mimmā amara bihi al-amīr* 'al-ash'ath al-Khuzā'i 'alā yaday Mas'adah b. Buḡayr.

A well-known type [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 129, no. 1164; NÜTZEL : pp. 378–79, no. 2181a; KALININ, TREADWELL 2004: p. 16; SNAT 2008: pp. 62–63, no. 574; ANS, no. 1917.215.68]. Next after Bukhārā, 151 AH (see below), it stands out of the bulk due to unusual appearance and writing style: "The calligraphy is very similar to the Abbasid dinars of the late 160s and early 170s. Could it be that the dies were cut in Baghdad (Madinat al-Salam) and shipped to Samarqand, or an engraver from Baghdad or Cairo was sent to Samarqand to continue his practice?" [ALBUM 2011a: Sale 10, Lot 443].

The patronymic of the cited official Mas'ada was usually read in a wrong way: *Buḥayr* [NASAFĪ 1999: p. 231, no. 378], *Yaḥyâ* [LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, nos. 844–45 (collection of Limbada, London); SNAT 2008: no. 574], *Zuhayr* [SHAMMA 1998: p. 334, no.(4)], or otherwise. The currently accepted version *Bujayr*, although looking like a facetious nickname rather than official noun (literally 'stout, abdominous'), still seems to be closest to the truth.

### Subtype B (Fig.25, b)

Similar to subtype A but designed in the style common for copper coins of the time; Obv. with inner beaded rim and عدل 'adil below field;

Obv. margin — same as in subtype A, the only difference being instead of in the date.

Rev. فتح fath (instead of عدل 'adil) below field;

margin: المامير جعفر بن محمد على يدى مسعده بجير mimṡā a<marā> bihi al-amīr Ġa'far b. Muḥammad 'alā yaday Mas'adah b. Buḡayr.

Unpublished; image source — [ZENO: #75011]. Dr. A. Atakhodžaev's observation shows that this variety is much rarer (about 1:50) than the previous one, which means that at least a few more specimens should exist<sup>13</sup>.

According to [NASAFĪ 1999: p. 669, no. 1177], one of Mas'ada's sons was called *Fath*; it seems reasonable to connect the word فتح on the present fals with that person.

### Kish, 173 AH (Fig.26)

عدل 'adil below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب [هذا الفللس بكش سنة ثلث وسبعين ومئة] bismi'llāh ḡuriba hâḡdā al-fals bi-Kish and date 173 (in words).

Rev. margin — مامر به الامير جعفر بن محمد على يدى [يحيى (?) م]ولى امير المؤمنين mimṡā amara bihi al-amīr Ġa'far b. Muḥammad 'alā yaday [Yaḥyâ (?) ma]wlā amīr al-mu'minīn.

Unique, unknown so far. Acquired in the Moscow coin market (May 2011), now in the author's collection.

<sup>13</sup> A. Atakhodžaev's personal e-mail to the author (a thread dated 29 Jan. – 11 Feb. 2012).

The same unusual “dinar” calligraphy (if not the same hand) as on Samarqand, 172 AH, subtype A. The local officer’s name, although badly spoiled through casting defect, still seems to be *Yaḥyā*, apparently following with the prestigious title *mawlā amīr al-mu’minīn*.

**Bukhārā, 173 AH (Fig.27)**

Obv. field, instead of habitual Kalima-I — *المؤمنين / لهرون امير / بركة* *barakah li-Hārūn / amīr / al-mu’minīn* (a blessing for the newly enthroned caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd; compare above, Bukhārā, 160 AH);

margin — *بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس ببخارا سنة ثلث وسبعين ومئة* *bismi’llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Buḥārā* and date 173 (in words); a legend variety is fixed without *هذا الفلّس* and with additional *في* before *سنة* [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 130, no. 1180].

Rev. margin — *مما امر به محمد بن عمرو عامل الامير جعفر بن محمد* *mimmā amara bihi Muḥammad b. ‘Amr ‘āmil al-amīr Ġa’far b. Muḥammad*.

The type is known since long [FRAEHN 1826: pp. 12–13, no. 141; TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 130, nos. 1179–80; LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 828; SHAMMA 1998: p. 329, no.(11)] but seems not to be very common. The name *Muḥammad b. ‘Amr* is not encountered in other written sources.

**Temp. al-‘Abbās b. Ja’far b. Muḥammad, governor of Khurāsān  
(173/789 – 175/791)**

**No mint name, 174 AH (Fig.28)**

Obv. margin — *بسم الله مما امر به يحيى بن معاذ سنة اربع وسبعين ومئة* *bismi’llāh mimmā amara bihi Yaḥyā b. Mu’ādh* and date 174 (in words).

Rev. field — Kufic *ع* above, *يحيى* *Yaḥyā* below;

margin — *Qur’ān*, 9:33.

Several specimens known [MARKOV 1896: p. 27, no. 381; LOWICK 1996: pp. 386–87, no. 853; ANS, no. 1971.316.21; &al.]. Rich information about *Yaḥyā b. Mu’ādh b. Muslim* based on different written sources is available in [CRONE 2003: p. 184]. According to [GARDĪZĪ 1991: p. 48], caliph Harun gave control of Khurāsān to al-Faḍl b. *Yaḥyā al-Barmakī* who sent *Yaḥyā b. Mu’ādh* to govern there on his behalf in Ramaḍān 177/December 193, which office the latter should be executing during a few months until al-Faḍl’s arrival there early next year. However, the inspected coin is dated at least 3 years before those events when the person named on it

should reportedly sojourn in Jurjān or elsewhere, and in addition it is devoid of the mint name, just given that it was found in the Bukhara region, and on the other hand, taking into account that the dates reported by Gardīzī are very often far from exact, I decided to include this rare type as related anyhow to the numismatic history of ‘Middle Asia’.

**Temp. Ḥamza b. Malik b. al-Haytham al-Khuzā‘ī, governor of Khurāsān  
(176/792 – 177/793-4)**

Appointed by Hārūn al-Rashīd to replace al-Ghiṭrif b. ‘Aṭā’, but soon deposed in favour of caliph’s wazīr al-Faḍl b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: pp. 365–66; AL-YA’QŪBĪ 2011: p. 70].

**al-Khuttal, 177 AH (Fig.29)**

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس بالختل سنة سبع وسبعين ومئة *bismi’llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi’l-Ḥuttal* and date 177 (in words).

Rev. margin: مما امر به الامير هعدر (؟) بن الحسن عامل الامير منيف (؟) *mimmā amara bihi al-amīr H.\*d.r (?) b. al-Ḥasan ‘āmil al-amīr Munīf (?)*.

Recently discovered, the type is now represented by 4 specimens with clear and unambiguous mint name, all posted on [ZENO: #93024–26, 112432]; however, both names mentioned (where preserved) in the marginal legend on Rev. allow quite obscure reading.

**‘Alī b. ‘Īsā b. Māhān, governor of Khurāsān  
(183/799 – 191/806)**

A notorious figure ill-famed for his exquisite brutality and speculation, whose personality and deeds met a detailed account in the basic sources [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: pp. 367–70; GARDĪZĪ 1991: pp. 49–53; AL-YA’QŪBĪ 2011: pp. 70–71; TA’RĪKH-Ī SĪSTĀN 1974: pp. 166, 427]. “... Hārūn appointed ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā b. Māhān to Khurāsān where he misgoverned the province for eight years, accumulating vast wealth and fighting a spate of rebels until he was finally replaced by Harthama” [CRONE 2003: p. 178].

**Bukhārā, 185 AH (Fig.30)**

A palmette  above the upper line and عدل ‘*adil* below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس ببخارا سنة خمس وثمانين ومئة *bismi’llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Buḥārā* and date 185 (in words).

Rev. margin — *amara bihi al-amīr 'Alī b. 'Īsā abqāhu Allāh fī wilāyat Sa'īd b. Ġa'far*. The word *wilāyat* is written with *alif*, unlike in the most of other cases.

The type is known since long [FRAEHN 1826: p. 25, no. 200; TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 155–56, no. 1391; MARKOV 1896: p. 31, nos. 491–92; LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 829; SHAMMA 1998: p. 329, no.(12); &al.]. Sa'īd b. Ja'far's name was not found in the written sources.

### **Binkath, 186 AH (Fig.31)**

A swastika with rounded hooks  below field on Rev.

Obv. field — Kalima-I with first line partly retrograde لا اِلهَ اِلاَّ ; the rest is as usual;

margin — *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Buḥārā* and date 186 (in words); the deformed word for 'hundred' (normally مئة or مائة).

Rev. margin — *bismi'llāh mim mā amara bihi al-amīr Sibā' b. Mas'adah abqāhu Allāh*.

Unique until recently [KALININ, TREADWELL 2004: p. 15–16], today this important coin is known already in 3 specimens. The name *Sibā' b. Mas'adah* cited in the Rev. legend belongs to another son of Mas'ada b. Bujayr mentioned on copper *fulūs* of Samarqand in 172 AH (see above). Binkath is universally perceived as the capital of the Shāsh province.

### **Bukhārā, 190 AH (Fig.32)**

Palmette  above and عدل 'adil below Rev. field.

Obv. margin — *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Buḥārā* and date 190 (in words).

Rev. margin — *mim mā amara bihi Hārūn amīr al-mu'minīn 'alā yaday al-Ḥakam b. Sa'īd*.

A well-known coin type [FRAEHN 1826: p. 33, no. 235; TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 166, no. 1490; MARKOV 1896: p. 34, nos. 558–59; LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 830; SHAMMA 1998: p. 330, no.(12); &al.]. Judging by the Rev. marginal legend, this coinage was undertaken upon the direct command from the caliph Hārūn, whose name was struck on these coins in full spelling with both *matres lectionis*. The name *al-Ḥakam b. Sa'īd* seems to be otherwise unknown.

**Harthama b. A'yān al-Balkhī, governor of Khurāsān  
(191/806 – 196/811-2?)**

Appointed to Khurāsān by Hārūn al-Rashīd in 191 AH; killed in 200/815 [AL-ṬABARĪ 1987: p. 370; GARDĪZĪ 1991: pp. 50–52; AL-YA'QŪBĪ 2011: pp. 70–71; PELLAT 1971: p. 231]. Harthama b. A'yān was reportedly deposed by al-Ma'mūn after Hārūn's death in 193/809 [CRONE 2003: p. 75], nevertheless, his name was placed on silver dirhams struck at al-Shāsh as late as 195 AH; T. Mayer points to 186 AH as the final date of Harthama's governorate [SNAT 1998: pp. 32–33, no. 173; TREADWELL 2006]

**Bukhārā, 194 AH (Fig.33)**

Palmette  above and عدل 'adil below Rev. field.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس بيخارا سنة اربع وتسعين ومئة bismi'llāh ḍuriba hâḍā al-fals bi-Buḥārā and date 194 (in words).

Rev. عدل 'adil below field;

margin — مما امر به الامير هرثمة بن [عين على يدي (؟)] سكر (؟) بن ... mimmā amara bihi al-amīr Harthamah b. [A'yān 'alā yaday (?)] \*.s.k.r (?) b. <...>.

Reported more than once [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 285, no. 2822; MARKOV 1896: p.36, no. 621; LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–5, no. 831; SHAMMA 1998: p. 330, no.(13)], this type is still represented by a single specimen (State Hermitage, Numismatic department, inv. no. OH-B-M-2948). The coin is badly worn, yet its legends happen to be fairly discernible, which unfortunately applies but partially to the persons mentioned on Rev. Mr. Vyacheslav Kuleshov from the State Hermitage inspected this fals upon my request and found out that governor Harthama's name can be observed there “with highest confidence”<sup>14</sup>, whereas the second name is barely visible and its spelling remains dubious; I only dare surmise a cautious version ... يشكر بن yashkur b. <...>, however having no idea as yet whose identity could be concealed behind this uncommon (Arabian or Yemenite) name.

<sup>14</sup> V. Kuleshov's personal e-mail to the author (a thread dated 27–28 Apr. 2012).

**‘Abd Allāh al-Ma’mūn (as honorary leader of all al-Mashriq, 193–200 AH)**

**Al-Faḍl b. Sahl, governor of Khurāsān  
(197/812–3 – 202/817–8 or 203/818–9)**

A Zoroastrian converted to Islam by hand of al-Ma’mūn, the influential al-Faḍl b. Sahl was his *wazīr* and commander-in-chief (hence his nickname *dhū’l-riyāsatayn* ‘the holder of the two highest positions’. Acting as al-Ma’mūn’s deputy governor of Khurāsān (since 197 or 198 AH), he was suspected in double-dealing and murdered at Sarakhs in 202/817–18 or 203/818–19 [AL-YA’QŪBĪ 2011: p. 71, 209; ZETTERSTÉEN 1927: p. 39].

**Samarqand, 198 AH (Fig.34)**

A 6-pointed asterisk below field on Obv.; marginal legend replaced by a double linear rim with a few intermittent crescents and annulets.

Rev. field — *مما امر به الامير ذو الرياستين العباس mimma amara bihi al-a/mir du al-riyasatayn / al-‘Abbās;*

margin — *درب هذا الفل بسمرقند سنة ثمان وتسعين ومئة duriba hādā al-fals bi-Samarqand and date 198 (in words).*

One specimen fixed so far (ex Najaf Coins & Collectibles; image source — [ZENO: #77515]; the general type coincides in all comparable details with the description of two copper pieces unearthed at Persepolis [MILES 1959: p. 81, nos. 631–32]; however judging by G. Miles’ descriptions, the most significant parts of the legends (namely mentions of persons and the mint name) were not preserved on the published finds.

Although positioned on the coin in close sequence, *Dhū’l-riyāsatayn* and *al-‘Abbās* are definitely two different persons. The first appellation belongs to Ma’mūn’s *wazīr* and deputy governor al-Faḍl b. Sahl who was widely known under this laqab; as to *al-‘Abbās*, it should be respectively a local officer, probably the then ruler of Samarqand or a person authorized for coinage supervision.

**Ghassān b. ‘Abbād, governor of Khurāsān  
(204/819 – 205/821)**

Appointed by al-Ma’mūn in 204/819 in order to ‘improve the bad governorate of Rajā’ b. Abī’l-Ḍaḥḥāq’ but dismissed in Shawwāl 205/March–April 821 in favour of Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn [GARDĪZĪ 1991: p. 52; AL-YA’QŪBĪ 2011: pp. 71–72].

**al-Shāsh, 204 AH (Fig.35)**

Obv. below field — غسان *Ġassān*;

margin — محمد رسول الله ارسله بالهدى ودين الحق (part of Qur'ān, 9:33).

Rev. above field — لله *li'llāh*;

margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلاس بالشاش سنة اربع ومئتين *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi'l-Šāš* and date 204 (in words); the hundreds ومئتين are often reduced to 2 or 3 first letters.

Known since recently [KOČNEV 1994: p. 102], the coin is now considered moderately rare.

**Samarqand, 205 AH (Fig.36, a-b)**

الله above field, tamgha-like sign **د** (Arabic letter *hā* ?) below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلاس بسمرقند سنة خمس ومائتين *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Samarqand* and date 205 (in words); a few distortions are observed in the date (خمس or ماس instead of مائتين, sometimes without *wāw* after خمس).

Rev. margin — مما امر به الامير غسان بن عباد ابقاه الله *mimmā amara bihi al-amīr Ġassān b. 'Abbād abqāhu Allāh*.

A common type encountered in quantity [MARKOV 1896: p. 42, no. 742; NÜTZEL 1898, no. 2212; KOČNEV 1994: pp. 101–02; LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 846; SHAMMA 1998: p. 335, no.(6)], apparently representing two aliquot denominations, perhaps somewhat analogous to later *'adlī* (full fals) and *pashīz* (half fals): all legends are the same, the only distinguishing element, apart from weight and size, is a dot inside *li'llāh* above the field legend on Rev.; bigger and heavier coins (usually 2g and more, 19–21mm — variant A) are always with that dot, while smaller and lighter ones (up to 2g, 16–17.5mm — variant B) never have it. One more discriminating feature refers to circular inner rims separating the field from marginal legends (linear, dotted or none at all), just being used in separate dies quite arbitrarily, this element of coin design is hardly relevant in the typological sense.

**Naw[ī]kat[h] Zakariyā (?), 205 AH (Fig.37)**

Obv. field — Kalima-I, ليث *Layṭ* below; a decorative rim (double-twisted wavy line between dotted and beaded circles) instead of marginal legend.

Rev. field — Kalima-II, غسان *Ġassān* below;

margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس بيو[د]كت ركرنا سنة خمس وماس (!) *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hâḍā al-fals bi-Naw[ī]kaṭ Zakariyā* and date 205 (in words); hundreds of the date shown as مائتين instead of ماس.

Four specimens known to me *in kind*, three of which posted on [ZENO: no. 55618]; at least one more piece is reportedly present in a private collection (Uzbekistan); first mentioned The mint name appears on some of them as ركرنا , on some others looking more like بيوكت . The first part of this quite uncommon word combination is definitely نوكت *Nawkaṭ* or نويكت *Nawikath*<sup>15</sup>; as to the second component, ركرنا or (actually without reasonable alternative options) زكريا *Zakariyā'*, it is not fixed in any other written sources; probably the borough was named in this way after a certain person whose activity had been distinguished in the eyes of its dwellers, judging by the basic appellation, of Soghdian root. The whole toponym *Nawikath* (or rather *Navēkath*)-*e Zakariyā* may be translated as 'Zacharia's New town/borough/village', with =ī (properly =ē, otherwise =ač) in the capacity of Soghdian suffix for feminine nouns.

The name ليث *Layṭ* placed on Rev. would also require an identification, just this task is rather complicated, as no persons appropriate to the case seem to be mentioned under this name in accessible written sources. It could be a local functionary — city governor, mayor, praepostor &sim., or else an official endowed with the right of coining.

#### **Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muṣ'ab al-Būshanjī, governor of Khurāsān (205/821 – 207/822) and later**

The Middle Asian coinage of governor Ṭāhir b. al-Husayn and his descendants holding that post until 259/873 is not reviewed here (see above), in part because it obviously deserves a separate study, for which no more space is left in this article...

<sup>15</sup> The alternative reading of the mint name, *Tunket* (or *Tūnkath*) [KOCHNEV 1994: p. 102; ATAkhODŽAEV 1998: p. 16] is now renounced as less consistent in favour of *Nawkat* [Bates 2011: p. 3].

## MORE PUZZLES TO SOLVE

(Addition to List A. Coin types with incomplete or unreliable attribution)

## Bukhārā, [1]×(?) AH (Fig.38)

Unique so far (1.96g, 16–18mm; in the author's private collection), the coin belongs to the most enigmatic Transoxanian issues for the moment.

Obv. margin — بسم الله (?) ضرب ببخارا في ... (?) *bismi'llāh (?) ḍuriba bi-Buḥārā fī sanah wa (?)* and uncertain date.

Rev. margin — امر به الامير حلد س الربط / الولد / ابريك (?) سس حار *amara bihi al-amīr ḥālid b. al-...> (?)* — a quite ambiguous portion, ending very likely with ستين جاز *sittīn ḡāz* 'sixty [of these coppers are] acceptable [for a dirham]'.  
 Heavy mechanical damage having affected the most significant places of coin legends, unfortunately, prevents this important specimen from adequate definition.

The letter after سه is by all features a wāw, so the cited grapheme, otherwise normally perceived in this position as سنة 'year', looks here more like a unit of the date, namely ... سته *sittah wa-...>*, just as if it represented the remnant of the date [1]×6 (?). The second part of amīr's name cited on Rev. is badly distorted, apparently through illiterate carving, but by overall appearance I would dare surmise here a broken ابراهيم, and thus relate the item to the coinage of governor Khālid b. Ibrāhīm; in such case, however, reading the date as [1]×6 is hardly possible, — sure unless it should be another Khālid, which is tantamount here: the name حلد (resp. خلد) is shown on this coin without *alif*, unlike all other coin types definitely related to Khālid b. Ibrāhīm's reign (see above).

## Far[ghā]nah (?), 204 AH

سهل *Sahl* below Rev.


Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلّس بفر[غا]نة سنة اربع ومايتين *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hādā al-fals bi-Far[ghā]nah* and date 204 (in words);

Rev. margin — مما امر به الامير غسان بن عباد ابقاه الله *mimmā amara bihi al-amīr Ḡassān b. 'Abbād abqāhu Allāh*.

A unique description given in [LAVOIX 1887: p. 442, no. 1596] fits well to the known issues of Ghassan b. 'Abbād (see above) and could actually match the existing coin type, just the questionable reading of the mint name by H. Lavoix himself, strengthened by the unclear image on Pl. IX and especially the absolute

absence of similar examples findable till now among the abundant coin finds throughout Middle Asia, compels us to refrain thus far from perceiving with full confidence the idea about the fabrication of this *fals* in Farghāna proper.

#### Haf[t]dih (?), 205 AH (Fig.39)

الله above field, tamgha-like sign  (Arabic letter *hā* ?) below field on Rev.

Obv. margin — بسم الله ضرب هذا انفس ب حفدا (؟) سنة خمس وميتين (!) *bismi'llāh ḍuriba hâḍā al-fals bi-Ḥ.f.d.[h](?)* and date 205 (in words); graphic deviations throughout the legend.

Rev. margin — امر به الامير غسان بن عباد ابقاه الله *amara bihi al-amīr Ḡassān b. 'Abbād abqāhu Allāh*.

At first glance, the mint name (something like *حفدا* or *حفده*) seems to be clear enough on the perfectly preserved unique specimen, yet the entire marginal legend looks so heavily blundered that it cannot afford a univocal reading. The only version I could set forth is *Haftdeh* or *Haftdih* (normally *هفتده*, though shown on the coin in a different way), bearing in mind a small town in Fergana, known as coin-producing centre in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century [KOČNEV 2001: p.67–68; KOČNEV 2006: p.44, 132]. On the other hand, the overall coin type, including all Arabic legends, is very similar to the copper coinage of Samarqand in the name of Ghassān b. 'Abbād (see above); so unless turning out a terminally spoiled *سمرقند*, its minting place must have been anyway not too far from it.

#### al-Ṭārband, no date (Fig.40)

Obv. margin — ضرب هذا الفلّس بالطاربند *ḍuriba hâḍā al-fals bi'l-Ṭārband*.

Rev. margin — بامر الامير عبدالله بن محمد *bi-amr al-amīr 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad*.

Three specimens are placed on [ZENO: #65765, 69951, 70240]; the overall 'archaic' appearance of this interesting coin type, looking rather like an Umayyad one, alongside the absence of date in its legends, leaves no chance to specify the real time of its fabrication.

The toponym *al-Ṭārband* is conventionally admitted as the ancient name of later Otrar, capital of the Pārāb region located in the basin of Sīr Daryā River (now in South Kazakhstan). According to some sources, [al-]Ṭārband or Ṭurārband (presumably from ancient Turkic *Kangü Tarban*) was once a capital of the vast Shāsh

region; the latest and most comprehensive survey of written evidence on the topic see in [KAMOLIDDIN 2006: p. 57, 80].

**No mint name, no date (Fig.41)**

Cast. Linear rims on both sides.

Obv. field — لا اله الا الله *lā ilāha illā Allāh*;

marginal legend undecipherable.

Rev. field — لا شريك (؟) وحده *waḥduhu lā šarika lahu* (slightly distorted but generally legible);

margin — ... الامير محمد بن *al-amīr Muḥammad b. <...> (?)*.

No reference; reportedly acquired in early 1990s from a Tashkent seller. Image and general data courtesy — N.N. Ivanov (Moscow).

**No mint name, no date**

Rough casting.

Obv. field — الله *Allāh* in a beaded rim;

margin — لا اله الا الله محمد رسول *lā ilāha illā Allāh Muḥammad rasūl*.

Rev. field — [ه] (؟) *ḥ.m.r* or *ḥ.m.z[ah]* (?), three dots below;

margin — ... [امر] به الامير سره (؟) *[amara] bihi al-amīr <...> (?)*

Known in relative quantity but hardly ever published; reportedly originating from Shāsh region (Kanka, the ancient site of Kharashket) [Zeno: directory <http://www.zeno.ru/showgallery.php?cat=8371>], also in a few private collections (Russia). The name *Ḥamr* (*Ḥamz[ah]* or otherwise) remains unidentified.

**No mint name, no date (Fig.42)**

Anonymous, cast.

Obv. field, in 4 lines — لا اله الا الله نعم القا / در الله و / ستين بدرهم *lā ilāha illā A/llāh ni'ma al-qādir Allāh wa / sittīn bi-dirham*; all in beaded circle without a marginal legend.

Rev. field, 2 lines — بسم الله محمد ر / سول الله *bismi'llāh muḥammad rasūl Allāh*; no marginal legend around.

No references. Two pieces, reportedly unearthed in the Surkhan Darya region (ancient Ṣaghāniyān). Image and general data from a private collection (Russia).

## B. UNCONFIRMABLE ATTRIBUTIONS

### Bukhārā, 138 AH

The initial referent, [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p.68, no. 696], communicates only partial information: “Fals of the same year [=138 as in the previous description no. 695. — V.N.] from Bukhara (بيخارا). In the Imper. Hermit[age]”, providing no information about the coin legends. In [ZAMBAUR 1968: p. 67] the date 138 is noticed for ‘Bukhârâ’ without any references or comments. The *fals* in question was regarded doubtful as early as in [FRYE 1949: p. 35, note 123]; see also [LOWICK 1996: p. 382–83, no. 817; SHAMMA 1998: p. 327, no.(1)]. Upon my request, a search of this fals was undertaken by Mr. Vyacheslav Kuleshov in the State Hermitage collection, however without result: “The ‘Bukhara 138’ fals is most likely a result of misreading: such coin type was absent in the Hermitage collection in 1896 and did not emerge later. It is neither indicated in Vasmer’s catalogue nor fixed elsewhere. Judging by [the composition of ] the collection, the copper coinage of Bukhara proper should have commenced in 143 AH (19 pieces available) <...>”<sup>16</sup>.

### Tirmidh/ Saghaniyan, 139 AH

Reference: [SHAMMA 1998: p. 337, no. (1)], without any details, ostensibly with the names of Khalid b. ‘Abd Allah and Muhammad b. Tahir (?) — the whole passage looks like an overt mistake and hardly needs a special explanation.

### Bukhārā, 13× AH

Reference: British Museum collection [LANE-POOLE 1875: p. 191, no. 80]. The date was read as 1xx, so perhaps 13× could be admissible, just only if the rest of the type features had been correctly described, which doesn’t look any convincing because of almost complete obliteration of the coin.

### Bukhārā, 140 AH

Rev. margin — الاشعث في ولاية المهدي الامير محمد بن امير المؤمنين ... <...> *al-Aš‘at fi wilâyat al-Mahdî al-amîr Muḥammad b. amîr al-mu’minîn*.

Reference: British Museum collection, 1905 unregistered [LOWICK 1996: p. 382, no. 818; TREADWELL 2006]. Al-Mahdî was not appointed governor of the Mashriq

<sup>16</sup> V. Kuleshov’s personal e-mail to the author, dated 27 Apr. 2012.

until 141, so the probability is that either the date on this coin was mistakenly engraved or it has been misread. Its legends are similar to the Bukhāran *fals* of 143 AH (see above).

#### **Ṣaghāniyān, 140 AH (?)**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 837], mentioning as a source of information [RTVELADZE 1985: pp. 38–40], — in all probability a result of misunderstanding the Russian text where no such combination of mint and date is present at all.

#### **Akhsīkath, 144 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 816], based on [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 73, no. 732], — regarded as suspicious by [FRYE 1949: pp. 35–36], also by [ZAMBAUR 1968: p. 38, note 2]; no real coins with this combination of mint and date have ever come to light.

#### **Bukhārā, 144 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 821], based on [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 73, no. 731], — “in the Imperial Hermitage. Handwritten catalogue by M. Brosset”; no details were given by the first publisher and no real specimens emerged ever since anywhere, including the Hermitage collection as well.

#### **Bukhārā, 145 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 822], based on [ANS: no. 1917.215.65], — now confirmed as dated 143: “Identified by Nicholas Lowick as 145, but this is unlikely: the coin is identical to the issue of 143 and the inscription supports this date”<sup>17</sup>.

#### **Bukhārā (?), 146 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 824], based on [RTVELADZE 1985: p. 38, table, nos. 3–4], — an interrogatory assumption in the Russian original, now proven as related to the copper issue of al-Ṣaghāniyan, 148 (see above).

---

<sup>17</sup> See <http://numismatics.org/collection/1917.215.65>.

**Bukhārā, 147 AH**

Reference: [ZAMBAUR 1968: p. 67], without any additional information — seems to be nothing but a misprint for 143.

**Samarqand, 149 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 841], based on [FAHMI 1965: no. 2748, pl. 88], “misread [as] Khizāna Ḥalab, 146” — both definitions look like highly suspicious and ultimately erroneous.

**Bukhārā, 14× AH**

Image source — [ZENO: #36026], — now reattributed as related to the common type dated 143 AH (see above). The item was used in my PPT presentation of the paper to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assemani Symposium in Rome, where I presented its Rev. marginal legend as seemingly containing the name **الامير يحيى** *al-amīr Yaḥyā* (however, doubtful from the very beginning), which in fact turned to be a half-cut **[ولية المهدي] الاشعث في** without **الامير**, normally preceding al-Ash’ath’s name on the *fulūs* of Bukhārā struck in 143 AH.

**Samarqand, 151 AH**

Image source — [ALBUM 2011b: item No. 114990 (lot 306)], — evidently an erroneous reading of the mint name, which is actually Bukhārā, 151 AH (see above).

**Samarqand, 154 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 843], based on [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 87, no. 836], citing BARTHOLOMAEI, ‘Lettre à M. Soret’, p. 33, no. 53, tab. I, no. 7; the entry was reported as essentially the same as the preceding item 835 from Nihāwand, just save for the three small annulets instead of two below field on Rev. Taking into account a fairly broad hint at the similarity in all other details, logically implied by such ‘description’, we must admit that its attribution was erroneous *per se*, since it is hardly impossible even in theory to admit the full coincidence of legends with specific name(s) of local official(s) on the coins of two mints, so distant from each other. Therefore my opinion is that either J. Bartholomaei or depending on him W. Tiesenhausen could merely confuse between the mint names, similar to some extent in graphic shape (**بسمرقند** and **بنهاوند**), especially if those had certain defects on the coins.

**Khawārizm, 154 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 384–85, no. 848], based on [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p. 87, no. 837], — seems to be Lowick’s plain misunderstanding, as W. Tiesenhausen had clearly attributed the item as struck at Dabīl (Caucasia): “Фельсъ 154 года, изъ Дебиля”.

**Bukhārā, 155 AH**

Reference: [LOWICK 1996: pp. 382–83, no. 826], based on [MARKOV 1896: p. 19, no. 141], — “R.Vasmer and I.G. Dobrovolsky had reportedly read the date on this specimen as 185”<sup>18</sup>. According to V. Kuleshov’s notice<sup>19</sup>, the basic inventory of the Hermitage collection now contains a record of this piece as Bukhārā, 185 AH (inv. no. OH-B-M-2920), whereas the very coin is absolutely similar to the other specimens of this single-year type with the specific names ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā and Sa‘īd b. Ġa‘far.

**Samarqand, 186 AH**

Reference: [MASSON 1933: p.105], — without description or any other details; so most likely a wrong attribution.

**Khujandah (Khojend), 194 AH**

Reportedly with the names of هرثمه *Harṭamah* [b. A’yān] and نعيم *Na‘īm* (or *Nu‘aym*); no further details forwarded.

References: [ATAKHODŽAEV 1998: p. 15], supported with the author’s quick note of alleged V. Kalinin’s oral communication (late 1990s).

**Bukhārā, 197 AH**

Rev. الفضل *al-faḍl* below field, other legends reportedly worn out.

References: [TIESENHAUSEN 1873: p.185, no. 1665], citing SORET, ‘Lettre à M. Dorn’, p. 15, no. 10; [SHAMMA 1998: p. 330, no.(14)], showing the date as 197/9. The item has never been confirmed anywhere.

---

<sup>18</sup> K. Kravtsov’s personal e-mail to the author, dated 21 Apr. 2012.

<sup>19</sup> V. Kuleshov’s personal e-mail to the author, dated 27 Apr. 2012.

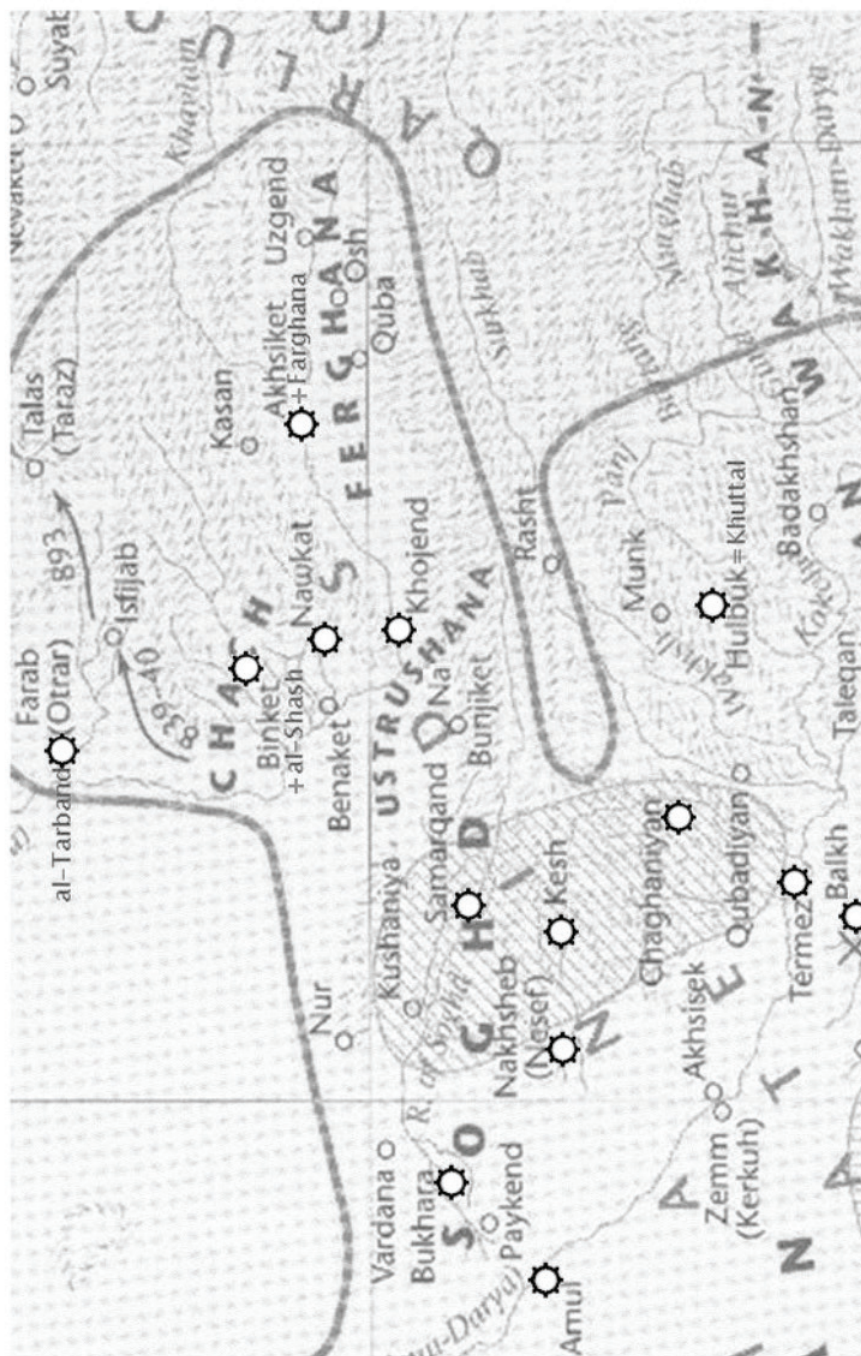
**al-Shash, 199 AH**

A misty discourse in [SHAMMA 1998: p. 339, no.(1)] with no clearer reference to Tabatiba'i; no trace of such copper item or even a slightest hint at its existence has ever been found anywhere. The only explanation seems logical if Mr. Shamma mistook for a copper fals the reference to a silver dirham struck at al-Shāsh in that year [LOWICK 1996: p. 298-9, nos. 2743-44].

**CONCLUSION**

Now we can see that the copper coinage in the north-easternmost regions of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> – early 3<sup>rd</sup> cts. AH was not sporadic and occasional as it could have seemed before when we were only aware of about half dozen separate fals types produced at two or three coin-minting centres. Whether any regional copper coin issues in Transoxiana could be defined as strictly Islamic during the Umayyad domination (viz. prior to 132/750) is not certain thus far; on the contrary, the ensuing 'Abbāsid coinage looks more or less systematic, internally coherent, rather regular and apparently massive enough, and in the quantitative sense it seems to expose no fundamental difference from similar systems of small change money supply in the central parts of the Arab caliphate. In the qualitative sense, however, — political, administrative, actually cognitive in general, providing so many names of provincial and local officials, combined for the most part with attributable places and exact dates, sometimes even showing respectively localizable signs of property (*tamghas*), it looks much more informative than any other regional set of copper *fulūs* from the early 'Abbasid period.

**‘Abbāsīd Copper-minting Centres of Mā warā’ al-Nahr (Transoxiana)**



A schematic map (based on Yuri Bregel's *Historical Atlas of Central Asia*)

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

AKHBĀR, 1997: *Aḥbār al-dawlat al-'Abbāsiyya wa-fihi Aḥbār al-'Abbās wa-waladihi* <...> / Taḥqīq: 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī – 'Abd al-Ġabbār al-Muṭṭalibī, Bayrūt, Dār al-Talī'ah li'l-ṭibā'ah wa'l-našr.

ALBUM, S., 2011<sup>3</sup>: *Checklist of Islamic Coins*, Santa Rosa, CA.

ALBUM, S., 2011a: *Stephen Album Rare Coins*, Auction 10 (April 22–23) [URL – <[http://db.stevealbum.com/php/toc\\_auc.php?site=1&lang=1&sale=10](http://db.stevealbum.com/php/toc_auc.php?site=1&lang=1&sale=10)>].

ALBUM, S., 2011b: *Stephen Album Rare Coins*, List 265 (December) [URL – [http://db.stevealbum.com/php/lot\\_rtl.php?site=1&lang=1&sale=265](http://db.stevealbum.com/php/lot_rtl.php?site=1&lang=1&sale=265)].

ANS: American Numismatic Society, Islamic collection [online access – <[www.numismatics.org](http://www.numismatics.org)>].

ATAKHODŽAEV, A.X., 1995: *Fel'si' Termeza i Balxa s imenem al-Xasana b. al-Xamrana (VIII v.)*, «Arxeologija i xudožestvennaia kul'tura Central'noy Azii: Tezisi dokladov naučnoi konferencii», Taškent, p. 14–15.

ATAKHODŽAEV, A. KHAŠIMOVICH, 1998: *Central'noaziatskie mednie monetii VIII–X vv. kak istoričeskii istočnik* [a synopsis of Ph.D. thesis], Samarkand.

BATES, M.L., 2003: *Khurāsānī Revolutionaries and al-Mahdī's Title*, in *Culture and Memory in Medieval Islam: Essays in Honour of Wilferd Madelung*, ed. by Farhad Daftary – Josef W. Meri, London & New York, I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, pp. 279–317.

BATES, M.L., 2011: *The Coinage of Shash under the Caliphate*, «Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society» 206, p. 3.

BREGEL, Y., 1996: *Notes on the Study of Central Asia*, «Papers on Inner Asia» 28, Bloomington, Indiana.

CRONE, P., 2003: *Slaves on Horses: the Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, Cambridge University Press.

ERNAZAROVA, T., 1979: *Novie monetii Afrasiaba i ego okrestnostey*, «Istoriia material'noy kul'turi Uzbekistana» 15, p. 105–119.

FAHMI 1965: *Mawsū'at al-nuqūd al-'arabiyya wa-'ilm al-nummiyyāt*, I. Fajr al-sikkat al-'arabiyya / Ta'līf al-duktūr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Fahmī Muḥammad, [al-Qāhira], Maṭba'a Dār al-kutub.

FARR, J.A.-NASTICH, V.N., 2001: *An Unrecorded 'Abbāsīd Fals of al-Shāsh, AH 149, in the name of al-Mahdī*, «Oriental Numismatic Society Newsletter» 168, p. 12-14.

FRAEHN, CH. M., 1826: *Recensio numorum muhammedanorum Academiae Imp. scient. Petropolitanae*, Petropoli.

FRYE, R.N., 1949: *Notes on the Early Coinage of Transoxiana*, «American Numismatic Society. Numismatic Notes and Monographs» 113, New York.

GARDĪZĪ, ABŪ SA'ĪD, 1991: *Zayn al-axbar: Ukrašenie izvestiy. Razdel ob istorii Xorasana* [Transl. by A.K. Arends], Taškent.

GUEST, R., 1932: *A Coin of Abu Muslim*, «Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society» 3 (July), pp. 555-56.

KALININ, V.A., 2005: *Kutayba b. Muslim i ego monetī*, «XIII All-Russian Numismatic Conference» [Abstracts], Moscow, p. 55-56.

KALININ, V. – TREADWELL, L., 2004: *A unique fals of Binkath (Shāsh province) dated 186 AH*, «Oriental Numismatic Society Newsletter» 179, p. 15-16.

KAMOLIDDIN, Š.S., 2006: *Drevnetiurkskaia toponimiia Sredney Azii*, Taškent.

KOČNEV, B.D., 1984: *Zametki po srednevekovoy numizmatike Sredney Azii, Čast' 6 (rannee srednevekov'e, Samanidi, Karaxanidi)*, «Istoriia material'noy kul'turi Uzbekistana» 19, pp. 185-205.

KOČNEV, B.D., 1994: *Drevneyšiy samanidskiy fel's*, «Vserossiyskaia numizmatičeskaia konferenciia, Tezisi dokladov», St. Petersburg, p. 101-02.

KOČNEV, B.D., 1995: *Moneti Mukanni*, «Arxeologii i xudožestvennaia kul'tura Central'noy Azii: Tezisi dokladov naučnoi konferencii», Taškent, p. 32-33.

KOČNEV, B.D., 1999: *Sredneaziatskie kufičeskie fel'si s izobraženiem konia*, «Numizmatika Central'noy Azii» IV, Taškent, p. 42-56'.

KOČNEV, B., 2001: *La chronologie et la généalogie des Karakhanides du point de vue de la numismatique*, «Études Karakhanides» [Cahiers d'Asie Centrale, 9], Tachkent – Aix-en-Provence, pp. 49-75.

KOCHNEV, B., 2001a: *Les monnaies de Muqanna'*, «Studia Iranica» 30, fasc. 1, pp. 143-50.

KOČNEV, B., 2006: *Numizmatičeskaia istoriia Karaxanidskogo kaganata (991-1209 gg.)*. Čast' 1. Numizmatičeskoe issledovanie, Moscow.

LANE-POOLE, S., 1875: *Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum, I. The Coins of the Eastern Khaleefehs in the British Museum*, London.

LAVOIX, H., 1887: *Catalogue des monnaies musulmanes de la Bibliothèque nationale*, publié par <...> M. Henri Lavoix, [I], *Khalifes orientaux*, Paris.

LOWICK, N., 1996: *Early 'Abbāsīd Coinage. A Type Corpus 132–218 H / AD 750–833* / A posthumous work by Nicholas Lowick, ed. by Elizabeth Savage, London, British Museum Press [stopped in press – January 1996].

MARKOV, A., 1896: *Inventarniy katalog musul'manskix monet Imperatorskago Ermitaža*, St.Petersburg.

MASSON, M.E., 1933: *Monetnie naxodki, zaregistrirrovannie v Sredney Azii v 1930 i 1931 godax*, Taškent.

MILES, G.C., 1959: *Excavation coins from the Persepolis region*, «American Numismatic Society. Numismatic Notes and Monographs» 143, New York.

NARSHAKHĪ, M., 1897: *Muxammad Naršaxi, Istoriia Buxari* [Transl. by N. Likošin], Taškent.

NASAFI, NAJM AL-DĪN 'UMAR B. MUḤAMMAD, 1999: *Kitāb al-Qand fī dhikr 'ulamā' Samarqand* [ed. Y. al-Hādī], Tehran.

NASTIČ, V.N., 2000: *Novie dannie o mednoy monetnoy čekanke v Sredney Azii VIII – načala IX v.*, «Arxeologija, numizmatika i epigrafika srednevekovoy Sredney Azii» [Proceedings of the conference dedicated to Dr. Boris D. Kochnev's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary], Samarkand, pp. 104–10.

NÜTZEL H., 1898: *Katalog der orientalischen Münzen / Königliche Museen zu Berlin* [Heinrich Nützel], Erster Band, Berlin.

PELLAT CH., 1971: *Harthama b. A'yān*, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, n.e., III. H-Iram, Leiden, Brill, p. 231.

RTVELADZE, E.V., 1985: *K istorii denezhnogo obraščeniia v Saganijane VIII – načala XIII v.*, «Epigrafika Vostoka» XXIII, Leningrad, pp.38–43.

SHAMMA, S., 1998: *A Catalogue of 'Abbasid Copper Coins*, Al-Rafid, London.

SMIRNOVA, O.I., 1963: *Katalog monet s gorodišča Pendžikent* (Materiali 1949–1956 gg.), Moscow.

SMIRNOVA, O.I., 1981: *Svodniy Katalog sogdiyskix monet: Bronza*, Moscow.

SNAT 1998: *Sylloge numorum arabicorum Tübingen, Nord- und Ostzentrasien, XV b Mittelasien II*, bearbeitet von Tobias Mayer, Tübingen-Berlin.

SNAT 2008: *Sylloge numorum arabicorum Tübingen, Buḥārā / Samarqand, XV a Mittelasien / Central Asia I*, bearbeitet von / catalogued by Michael Fedorov – Boris Kočnev (†) Golib Kurbanov – Madeleine Voegeli, Tübingen-Berlin.

AL-ṬABARĪ, 1987: *Istoriā at-Tabari* [Transl. by V.I. Beliaev], Taškent.

TA'RĪKH-I SĪSTĀN, 1974: *Ta'rīkh-i Sīstān* [Transl. by L.P. Smirnova], Moscow.

TIESENHAUZEN, W., 1873: *Moneti Vostočnago Xalifata, V. Tizengauzena / Monnaies des Khalifes orientaux*, par W. Tiesenhausen, St.-Pétersbourg.

TREADWELL, W.L., 2006: *The City Governors of Transoxania from the 'Abbasid Revolution to the Beginning of the Samanid Era* [first posted on the Khalili Research Centre website, now updated; forthcoming in the Boris D. Kochnev Memorial Festschrift prepared for printing in Moscow].

VAN VLOTEN, G., 1892: *Über einige bis jetzt nicht erkannte Münzen aus der letzten Omeijadenzeit*, «Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft» XLVI, S. 441'.

WURTZEL, C., 1978: *The Coinage of the Revolutionaries in the Late Umayyad Period*, «ANS. Museum Notes» 23, New York, pp. 161-99.

AL-YA'QŪBĪ, 2011: *Al-Īqubī, Kniga stran (Kitab al-Buldan)* [Transl. by L.A. Semenova], Moscow.

VON ZAMBAUR, E., 1968: *Die Münzprägungen des Islams, zeitlich und örtlich geordnet*, I. Band, Wiesbaden.

ZEIMAL', E.V., 1994: *The Circulation of Coins in Central Asia during the Early Medieval Period (Fifth-Eighth Centuries A.D.)*, «Bulletin of the Asia Institute», n.s. 8, pp. 245-67.

ZENO: ZENO.RU – *Oriental Coins Database* [a leading Internet resource on oriental numismatics]; directory "ISLAMIC WORLD «'Abbasid, 132-656» Copper coinage» Iran & the East" [URL – <[www.zeno.ru/showgallery.php?cat=3067](http://www.zeno.ru/showgallery.php?cat=3067)>].

ZETTERSTÉEN, K.V., 1927<sup>1</sup>: *al-Faḍl b. Sahl b. Zādhānfarūkh*, in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, II. E-K*, Leiden-London, p. 39.

## ILLUSTRATIONS



Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig. 5



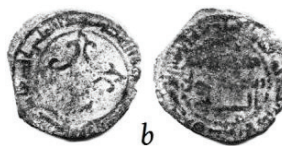
Fig. 6



Fig. 7



a



b

Fig. 8



a



b

Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig.16



Fig.17



Fig.18



Fig.19



Fig.20



Fig.21



Fig.22



Fig.23



Fig.24



a



b

Fig.25



Fig. 26



Fig. 27



Fig. 28



Fig. 29



Fig. 30



Fig. 31



Fig. 32



Fig. 33



Fig. 34



Fig. 35



a



b

Fig. 36



Fig.37



Fig.38



Fig.39



Fig.40



Fig.41



Fig.42

### Illustrations:

**Fig.1.** Pre-Islamic coin issues of Transoxanian mints:

- a)* Bukhara, ruler Asbar (date uncertain). Image source — ZENO: #21134;
- b)* Samarkand, ikhshīd Turghar (SMIRNOVA 1981: pp. 198–217, nos. 519–656, type II). Image source — ZENO: #41898;
- c)* Chach, Kabarna principality, unknown ruler (7–8<sup>th</sup> ct.). Image source — ZENO: #15633;
- d)* Otrar, unknown ruler (c. 700 CE). Image source — ZENO: #20482.

**Fig.2.** Earliest Islamic coin issues of Transoxanian mints:

- a) Kesh, dihqān Ikhrīd (mid-8<sup>th</sup> ct.; [SMIRNOVA 1981: pp. 416–17, nos. 1661–66]). Image source — ZENO: #14025;
- b) Kesh (?), *sixty to a dirham*, (mid-8<sup>th</sup> ct.; [SMIRNOVA 1981: pp. 420–21, nos. 1677–81]). Image source — ZENO: #71836;
- c) Bukhārā or Paykand, local Arab tributaries (8<sup>th</sup> ct.; *'sixty to a dirham'*). Image source — ZENO: #30440;
- d) No mint, no date; cast (8<sup>th</sup> ct.; *'sixty to a dirham'*). Image source — ZENO: #91060.
- e) Paykand, with 'dancing man' tamgha (8<sup>th</sup> ct.). Image source — ZENO: #29610;
- f) Nasaf, local Arab tributaries (8<sup>th</sup> ct.). Image source — ZENO: #46921.

**Fig.3.** No mint, no date, *Qutayba b. Muslim* (c. 90/709–96/715), *one hundred twenty to a dirham*. Image source — ZENO: #13823.

**Fig.4.** No mint, 133–136 AH, *'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muslim* (Abū Muslim):

- a) 134 AH. Image source — author's private collection;
- b) 135 AH. Image source — ZENO: #14023;
- c) 136 AH. Image source — author's collection.

**Note:** common Rev.

**Fig.5.** No mint, 139 AH, *Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm*. Image source — ZENO: #79762.

**Fig.6.** No mint, no date, *Khālīd b. Ibrāhīm*. Image source — ZENO: #111360.

**Fig.7.** No mint, no date, *'Abd al-Jabbār b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān*. Image source — a private collection (Russia).

**Fig.8.** al-Saghāniyān, 142 AH:

- a) variant A (lozenge with closed angles);
- b) variant B (concave open-ended cartouche). Both images from a private collection (Russia).

**Fig.9.** Tirmidh, 142 AH:

- a) variant A (regular full-line ring);
- b) variant B (uneven beaded ovals). Both images from the author's collection.

**Fig.10.** Bukhārā, 143 AH. Image source — author's collection.

**Fig.11.** Samarqand, 143 AH. Image source — ZENO: #25210.

**Fig.12.** Samarqand, 144 AH. Image source — author's collection.

**Fig.13.** al-Saghāniyān, 146 AH. Image source — a private collection (Russia).

**Fig.14.** Bukhārā, 148 AH. Image source — author's collection.

**Fig.15.** al-Saghāniyān (?), 148 AH. Image source — ZENO: #50418.

**Fig.16.** al-Shāsh, 149 AH. Image source — ZENO: #25208.

- Fig.17.** Bukhārā, 151 AH. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.18.** [al-]Saghāniyān, 153 AH. Image source — courtesy of A. Atakhodžaev (Samarkand).
- Fig.19.** Samarqand, 153 AH. Image source — R. Cannito's collection (USA), no. is-1834.
- Fig.20.** al-Saghāniyān, 155 AH. Image source — a private collection (Russia).
- Fig.21.** Nasaf, 157/9 AH. Image source — ZENO: #102443.
- Fig.22.** No mint, no date. *Hāshim waṣiyy Abī Muslim* (al-Muqanna'). Image source — ZENO: #57386.
- Fig.23.** Bukhārā, 151 AH. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.24.** al-Ṣagh[ān]iyān(?), 166 AH. Image source — ZENO: #93027.
- Fig.25.** Samarqand, 172 AH:
- a) subtype A. Image source — ZENO: #74992;
  - b) subtype B (with the name *Faṭḥ*). Image source — ZENO: #75011.
- Fig.26.** Kish, 173 AH. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.27.** Bukhārā, 173 AH. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.28.** No mint, 174 AH, *Yaḥyā b. Mu'ādh*. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.29.** al-Khuttal, 177 AH. Image source — ZENO: #93025.
- Fig.30.** Bukhārā, 185 AH. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.31.** Binkath, 186 AH. Image source — ZENO: #42076.
- Fig.32.** Bukhārā, 190 AH. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.33.** Bukhārā, 194 AH. Image source — State Hermitage, Numismatic Department, inv. no. OH-B-M-2948.
- Fig.34.** Samarqand, 198 AH. Image source — ZENO: #77515.
- Fig.35.** al-Shāsh, 204 AH. Image source — ZENO: #42415.
- Fig.36.** Samarqand, 205 AH:
- a) variant A, bigger flan with a dot inside *li'llāh* on Rev. Image source — Zeno: #75009;
  - b) variant B, smaller flan without dot inside *li'llāh*. Image source — R. Cannito's collection (USA), no. is-6322.
- Fig.37.** Naw[ī]kat[h] Zakariyā (?), 205 AH. Image source — ZENO: #55618.
- Fig.38.** Bukhārā, [1]×× (?), *Khālīd b. <...> (?)*. Image source — author's collection.
- Fig.39.** Haf[t]dih (?), 205 AH. Image source — ZENO: #70610.
- Fig.40.** al-Ṭārband, no date, *al-amīr 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad*. Image source — ZENO: #69951.
- Fig.41.** No mint name, no date. Image source — N.N. Ivanov's collection (Moscow).
- Fig.42.** No mint name, no date. Image source — a private collection (Russia).