



NMCS - 11

Newsletter of Mumbai Coin Society

Reg. No F-37374 (Mumbai)

A new coin of Sultan Burhan Nizam Shah – Murtazabad

-Dr.Abhishek Chatterjee

An image of an unusual coin was recently shown to me by noted numismatist of Mumbai, Mr.Sandeep Nijasure during one of our online discussions. The coin intrigued me and on an impulse, I decided to acquire it. This unusual coin was later identified by Dr. Shailendra Bhandare (Senior Assistant Keeper, Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, UK) when sent him the images for his opinion. The coins turned out to be a coin of the Ahmednagar Sultanate from the rare mint of Murtazabad issued during the reign of Sultan Burhan Nizam Shah II.

Coin



The weight of the coin is 9.6 grams which corresponds to the $\frac{2}{3}$ falus weight standard of the Nizamshahi metrology for copper coins.

Probing deeper, I came across one more coin in the collection of Mr. Naeim Sheikh of Kolhapur, weighing 9 grams which helped complete the parts of the legend which had gone off the flan on my coin.

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The complete legend thus, looks like this

The legend reads: **Obverse- Burhan Shahi**
Reverse – zarb Murtazabad

Location of the mint.

Chaul is located 60 km South of Mumbai, in the Raigad District of Maharashtra State in Western India. The co-ordinates are 18.5461°N Latitude and 72.9272°E longitude. During the reign of Murtaza Nizam Shah I, of Ahmednagar his son Hussain Shah, recovered North Konkan from Vijaynagar after the battle of Talikota. The administrative headquarter of this area was Chaul, which was renamed as 'Murtazabad' after Sultan Murtaza I. 1



The coins of Murtaza I from Murtazabad mint are rare and are known only from few examples. Burhan Nizam Shah II succeeded Murtaza I in AD 1591. Sultan Burhan II was involved in a conflict with the Portuguese in AD 1594, but the campaign ended in failure and Chaul (Murtazabad) was lost to the Portuguese. Coins of Burhan Nizam II of low weight (2gms) 1/8 falus(?) have been reported earlier in a landmark paper by Mr. Aravind S Athavale in 1996.2 These coins are only mentioned as rare and being of low weight in the book "Coins of the Indian Sultanates" by Stan Goron and J.P. Goenka but without no illustrations.3 The coins with weight corresponding to 2/3rd falus as illustrated here of this ruler and mint have been reported yet. No coins of Ahmednagar Sultans prior to the reign of Murtaza I are known to have been minted and hence the name of the ruler mentioned on the present coins as 'Burhan Shah' has to be Sultan Burhan II. Burhan II held Murtazabad only for a very short period of 4 years which probably would explains the rarity of these coins.

References

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- 3).Coins of the Indian Sultanates covering the areas of present-day India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Stan Goron and J.P.Goenka. pg 323-329. 2001. New Delhi.

Special thanks to Mr.Amit Mehta (Ahmedabad) for reviewing the article.


About Author:



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Mumbai Coin Society

Regn No. F-37374 (Mumbai)


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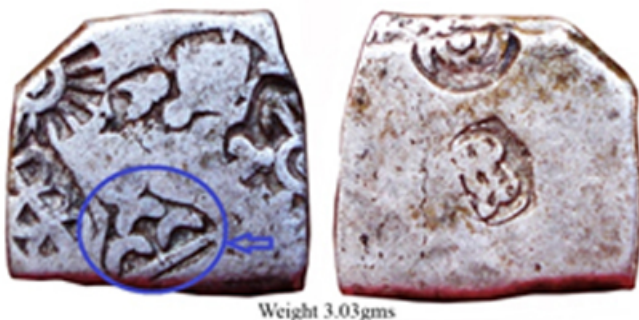
Coins as messengers ! An insight into the usage of coins in India other than as money

- Gautam Jantakal

It is a well accepted fact that coinage started in India around the 6 -5 Century BC, that is about 2500 years ago. Before this period, payment for goods or services used to be done through common objects of value such as cows, food grains, pieces of precious metals, iron tools and implements to name a few. These objects all suffered from a common drawback as to “who will decide” their exact value on a day to day basis. Obviously both the seller and the buyer had their own notions of the value and this hindered everyday trade and commerce. The time of 6-5 Century BC was the period of the second urbanization in India (Indus-Saraswati civilization being the first urbanization period) where new towns emerged in the Gangetic valley. It is quite logical that urbanization marked an increase in trade and commerce which perhaps could no longer be sustained by using these common objects of value as money. It must have been at this point of time that the state political machinery, with suitable inputs and pressure from local powerful traders, must have decided to intervene and set things right, there by paving the way for introduction of coinage. By definition, a coin is a piece of metal of specific weight and fineness and struck/guaranteed by a stamp of authority of the state. In that way, coins differ from pieces of precious metal used as money in the vedic period because those pieces of precious metal were not struck/guaranteed by the state.

Since its invention, coinage has served mankind in an unprecedented way. Coins have eased trade and commerce, enabled simpler taxation and book keeping. Coins have brought large geographies together in a common exchange network, thereby promoting not only commerce but also cultural and social exchanges. It would therefore not be wrong to consider coinage as an important marker of a mature civilization. Well beyond its use as money, coins have also served an important means of communication and propaganda among the masses which is the subject of focus of this article.

To better understand the usage of coins as an object of communication and propaganda in ancient and medieval India, one needs to step back in time to a period where there were no televisions, mobiles , radios , newspapers or even an effective human messenger system. It is also a fact that coins were handled, used and treasured by all classes of society, be it a rich merchant, a common craftsman, a peasant, living either in a town or a rural village. So the potential of coins as a means of communication and propaganda was very evident and this is precisely the leverage used by the state political machinery. There of course were certain obvious limitations using coins as communication objects, in that they were small in size and could hold only limited information. So most of the information on coins were pictorial, and less in written form. A study of Indian coinage across various periods reveals its usage as communication messengers in various scenarios. These scenarios are better described in the remaining section of the article.



Communicating symbols of Religion:

A punchmark coin of the Mauryan period (3 Century BC) showing a three arched hill as one of the punches/symbols. The three arched hill is correlated with the Buddhist religious prayer hall, also called the Chaitya.



Communicating symbols of Religion:

A gold coin issued by the Sarabhapuriya dynasty of Chattisgarh (6 Century AD) showing symbols of Garuda with Shank(conch) and Chakra(discus) on its either side. This coin shows patronage of the rulers towards worship of Vishnu.

Communicating reigning ruler's name:

A gold coin issued by Samudragupta (4 Century AD) of the Gupta dynasty. The name "Samudra" appears on the obverse of the coin in late Brahmi script. Most of the coins invariably carried the ruler's name in ancient times and hence served as a means of communicating the reigning monarch's name to the masses.



Image Courtesy: Classical Numismatic Gallery

Political Propaganda:

A gold coin issued by Samudragupta (4 Century AD) of the Gupta dynasty. The coin is communicating the performance of the highly regarded Ashwamedha yagna. This coin type is perhaps the only pictorial evidence of Ashwamedha yagna. The obverse of the coin shows the ceremonial horse and the reverse shows the chief queen standing and ready to pierce the horse at the end of the yagna.

Political Propaganda:

A gold coin issued by Kumaragupta I (5 Century AD) of the Gupta dynasty. The coin is showing the king single handedly slaying a lion. Such a depiction of a heroic act of the king would obviously instil a sense of respect and confidence in the minds of the subjects towards their ruling monarchs.



Image Courtesy : Oswal Auctions



Mughal throne claimant "Kam Bhaksh" Reign: 1707 - 09
Mint : Torgal (Deccan India)
Image Courtesy : Oswal Auctions

Establish legitimacy of Ruler:

Islamic tradition had two unique ways to establish the legitimacy of a ruler. One was Khutba where the reigning monarch's name would be read in the Friday prayers conducted at the mosque. Other was Sikka, where the ruler had to establish his legitimacy to rule by striking coins in his name. An interesting outcome of the Sikka tradition was that sometimes a claimant ruler issued coin only for a few days or months before being deposed, making those coins rare.

Show change in Political status :

After the first war of Indian independence (1857), the British government decided that the administration of India has to be brought directly under the British monarchy i.e the British crown. So the coins from 1862 were issued with Queen Victoria having a crown on her head, thus signifying the passing of Indian administrative control to the Crown.



Image Courtesy: Oswal Auctions



25 years of Indian Independence

Mark commemorative events :

The Indian Government from time to time issues special coins to commemorate certain important events or milestones. These coins are called Commemorative coins. Thus the government is communicating important events to the masses through these coins.

Communicate focus areas of the Government :

The Indian Government also issues from time to time, special coins to highlight its focus areas to the masses. Coins with themes "Food For All", "Unity in Diversity", "Information Technology" are good examples.



Unity in Diversity

New bust variety of ½ Rupee in Victoria Empress Period

- Leitton Rezaul

The study of the British Indian (BI) Coinage is an ongoing process; it is a vast area for researchers to research and present new discoveries. In Indian sub-continent, this is a popular subject for coin collectors. Discovery of new varieties on a regular basis makes this subject more interesting and thrilling. From gold Mohur to 1/12 Anna many denominations were introduced in the British Indian Period from 1835 to 1947 with various metal; perhaps not all the denominations were deeply researched.

Let's take the example of one rupee coins, it can be noted that in regards to one rupee denomination many authors, experts, researchers and even senior collectors wrote their books, catalogues and articles on one rupee coins and still they are doing their work on that and discovering new varieties, but comparatively this is rarely seen in case of other denominations. Many things are yet to discover in British Indian Coinage. Two new varieties of ½ rupee obverse of Bombay mint in Victoria Empress Period have been discovered which is described below along with all the varieties introduced by Bombay mint in Victoria Empress Period.

There are four types of Obverse busts that were considered in ½ rupee coins in Victoria Queen's period. These are bust A, B1, B2 and C. Bust B1 and B2 were used by Bombay mint. Bust A and C were used in Victoria Queen's period for Calcutta mint and they both had many differences in their jabot panel and bodice embroidery floral design. Bust A has a small raised V like design and in some specimen reverse tick like design as privy mark at the center point of the baseline of the bodice which was used in both the Queen and Empress Period from 1862 to 1899 for Calcutta mint but bust C was not used after Queen's Period.

In 1877, the very 1st year of empress period, Bombay mint introduced a **NEW BUST** which is similar to the old bust A. The new bust has a raised base line at the bottom of the bodice and some new embroidery floral designs. This embroidery floral designs are small but much prominent to identify the mint and do not match with old bust A which was used by Calcutta mint from 1862 to 1899 (Queen and Empress both period).

Two images of the **NEW BUST** are shown below:



New bust

In the above images the yellow line indicates the raised bottom line and the red marking areas indicate the new floral embroidery designs which do not match with old A bust. Except those new designs, all embroidery floral designs are same as old bust A but the bodice embroidery design is little thicker than the old bust A. A detailed description is given below with the help of split images:



Old A bust



New bust

For better understanding the differences of those busts are explained in details by splitting it into 2 parts as shown below:

Part -1



Old A bust



New bust

Left side image is from old A bust and Right side is from NEW BUST, the yellow line of NEW BUST indicates the raised line which is absent in the old A bust. Both of these images have 7 black circles marked area and they show the embroidery floral designs which reflect many differences between the two busts.

Part -2



Old A bust



New bust

Left side image is from old A bust and right side is from **NEW BUST**. Both those images have three black circles which show the different embroidery designs of both the bust and there is an arrow mark in both the images which indicates different gaps between the flower petal and the base line of bodice.

By considering all the above discussions and comparisons it can be said that it is a **NEW BUST**, and this bust deserves a new name. Since this bust is similar to old bust A, so it can be named as bust **A1**. Bombay mint introduced this **A1** bust in 1877 and this bust always came with Reverse II. Surprisingly Bombay mint did not use this bust in later date (except any mule). No record was found for the **A1** bust in later date of Victoria Empress Period. Bombay mint also used old B2 bust from 1877 to 1884 in ½ rupee of Victoria Empress Series which also came with Reverse II.

In their next striking year (1881) of Victoria Empress Period for ½ Rupee coins, Bombay mint introduced another **NEW BUST**. This bust is also similar with old bust A and new bust **A1**. This new bust also has a raised base line at the bottom part of the bodice like bust **A1** but in some specimen bottom part of the bodice looks like cut out. It has some prominent embroidery floral design at the bottom part of the bodice which does not match with old bust A or new **A1**. Except these changes all other embroidery designs are same. The images given below show a new bust introduced by Bombay mint in 1881:



Another NEW Bust

This is the new bust introduced by Bombay mint in 1881; those blue arrows show a raised base line at the bottom part of the bodice and new embroidery floral designs are shown by red color. The comparison of this NEW BUST with bust A1 is shown below:



Bust A1

New bust

From the above images many differences on the floral embroidery design can be seen. The only similarity is the raised base line at the bottom part of the bodice but some floral designs have crossed the raised base line in bust **A1** but in the new **NEW BUST** no floral design has crossed the raised base line. For better understanding of the bust details, splitting of the images of red marked floral embroidery design area are done into two parts, as shown below:

Part - 1



Bust A1



New Bust

Left side image is from bust **A1** and right side image is from **NEW BUST**. Each image has seven black circles and those circles indicate the embroidery floral design differences. Those differences can be easily explained particularly through each circle-marked area. 2nd part is shown below:

Part - 2



Bust A1



New bust

Left side image is from bust **A1** and the right side image is from the **NEW BUST**. Each image has three circle-marked areas to clearly indicate the design differences of the floral embroidery. The only similarity between them is the arrow marked area; both have the same gap in between floral design and base line of bodice.

Based on all these discussions, evidences and comparisons with other busts now it can be considered as a **NEW BUST** which is similar to old bust A and new bust **A1**. So it should deserve a name as bust **A2**. Bombay mint introduced this **A2** bust in their 2nd ½ rupee striking year of Victoria Empress Period 1881 and in most of the following years they used this bust. This bust came with all the Reverse I, II and II (i). However, there are few specific years where this bust has not been recorded yet, for example 1899.

In 1882 (3rd ½ rupee striking year of Empress Period for Bombay mint, 1st at 1877, 2nd at 1881), they introduced another **NEW BUST** which is pretty simple. Pridemore mentioned in his book about this variety as the only A bust variety of Bombay mint in Victoria Empress Period (page 126). Bombay mint used the old A bust design which was used by Calcutta mint in both Queen and Empress Period from 1862 to 1899. In the old A bust there is a small raised V like design and in some specimen there is reverse tick like design as privy mark at the center point of the baseline of the bodice. However, in that **NEW BUST** there is no small privy mark raised V or reverse tick in the center point of the base line of the bodice but only the left stroke of raised V or reverse tick as privy mark.

Pridemore also mentioned about this privy mark (page 126) which is confusing. This bust actually came with both the Reverse I and II(i) with no change of the privy mark in bodice. Pridemore also mentioned about this bust with modern proof restrike in 1877 (page 127). **The most interesting thing is that, this variety was known as the only Bombay minted A bust variety of ½ rupee coins in Victoria Empress Period before this article.** Comparison of the old A bust with NEW BUST of 1882 for Bombay mint is shown in the images below:



Old Bust A



Another NEW Bust

In old bust A there is a raised V or reverse tick like privy mark in the center point of the base line of bodice (above left image) and in the **NEW BUST** there is only the left stroke in the same point of bodice (above right image). Except that little change, all embroidery designs are same as old A bust. That difference is a minor one but very noticeable to identify the mint. So it can be considered as a new variety. Considering Bombay mint issuance of varieties over the subsequent years this variety may deserve a new name as bust **A3**.

Based on all findings, information, comparisons and analysis, it is evident that in total Bombay mint used four different busts for their ½ rupee Obverse in Victoria Empress Period: Bust B2 from 1862 to 1884 (both Queen and Empress Period), Bust **A1** only used in 1877 (no record found for further years), Bust **A2** from 1881 to 1898 (no record found yet in 1899) and Bust **A3** from 1882 to 1899. Interestingly, there are few dates for **A2** and **A3** which are very difficult to get, such as; **A3** is available in 1897 but not too easy to get in 1898. Few mules exist in ½ rupee of Victoria Empress Series. The images shown below are all the busts used by Bombay mint in Victoria Empress Period :



Bust B2 from 1877 to 1884



Bust A1 only for 1877



Bust A2 from 1881 to 1898



Bust A3 from 1882 to 1899

This article is based on circulated coins only and it is very important for serious collectors who like to collect rare, mule and unlisted variety of ½ Rupee coins in Victoria Empress Series.



- Leitton Rezaul

Events - Exhibitions & Auctions

Events List 2019 (as reported by Prem Peus Kumar)

2nd National Level Coin & Stamp Expo - 2019

Date : July - 5, 6 & 7th

Venue : SRT Hall, 2nd Cross, Thillai Nagar, Main Road, Trichy - 18 Tamil Nadu

Contact: Abay - 9894871110 / 9894694698 / 9976103576

Kolkata Coin Exhibition - 2019

Date : July - 12, 13 & 14th

Venue : Haldiram Banquet Hall, Kolkata, West Bengal

Contact: Ravi Shankar Sharma - 9051070786; Manish - 7059434383

Kovaipeex 2019

Date : July - 26, 27 & 28th

Venue : Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Contact: H. Jambu Kumar - 9443039704

Ahmedabad Coins & Currency Fair - 2019

Date : Aug - 9, 10 & 11th

Venue : The President Hotel, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Contact: 079 26562323 / 9909991596 / 9909991598

ERO PEX - 2019

Date : Aug - 16, 17 & 18th

Venue : Erode, Tamil Nadu

Contact: 94439 44845

HYPEX - 2019

Date : Sep - 6, 7 & 8th

Venue : Federation House, Red Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana

Contact: 9346777206 / 9882031013

KARNAPEX 2019

Date : Oct - 12 to 15th

Venue : Mangalore, Karnataka

Coinex Pune - 2019

Date : Nov - 15, 16 & 17th

Venue : Pune, Maharashtra

Contact: Sharad Bora - 9422001894

Kumaripex - 2019

Date : July - 12, 13 & 14th

Venue : Dharamin Kalyana Mandapam, Meenakshipuram, Nagarcoil, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu

Contact: Jacob - 9894484993; 7010649496

Chennai Coin Society - 2019

Date : July - 19, 20 & 21st

Venue : 134 - C, Arcot Road, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Contact: 9972627773 / 9884095777 / 9940720123

Nanya Darshini - 2019

Date : July - 26, 27 & 28th

Venue : Shikshak Sadan, Opp. Kaveri Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore, Karnataka

Kudanthai Archaeology & Numismatic Society Exhibition - 2019

Date : Aug - 10, 11 & 12th

Venue : M. S. R. Mahal 55/645, Nageswaran South St, Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu.

Contact: 9443668635 / 9445238635 (W)

Puratatva Mudra Utsav

Date : Aug - 16, 17 & 18th

Venue : Puratatva Mudra Utsav Madhya Pradesh Hotel Prince Viraj,

Contact: Mohit Rathore - 9977333336, Ashutosh - 7000686883

Mumbai Coin Society - 2019

Date : Sep - 20, 21 & 22nd

Venue : World Trade Center, Cuff Parade, Mumbai, Maharashtra

Contact: Kaizad Todywalla - 9820032468, Ambrish Thaker - 9833668819, Amit Surana - 9819381833;

Mudra Utsav - 2019 & Numismatic Society of India Jt. Exb.

Date : Dec - 20, 21 & 22nd

Venue : Kolkata, West Bengal

Contact: Manish Agarwal - 7059434383

FAQs

● Which articles are accepted and published in the newsletter?

- Articles on Coins, Banknotes, Stamps, Medals, Tokens,
- News about launch of new books, bookings of Republic India UNC & Proof sets,
- Forgeries,
- Lost or robbed coins, stamps, banknotes,
- News about Events: Exhibitions & Auctions in India.

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- cc to antiqueee@gamil.com & bcc to parthsolutions@gmail.com
- Subject of the email should be Article for NMCS
- and please dont forget to mention Authors name right below the heading of the article.
- images for the article should be in .jpg format only and should not exceed 5MB in size.

For any more queries you can whats app our Admin editor Amit Surana on 9819381833.

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