A complete set of Umayyad gold dinars and other coins of the Islamic World

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London
Tuesday 7 March 2006
A complete set of Umayyad gold dinars and other coins of the Islamic World

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**Album**

**ANS**
American Numismatic Society

**Artuk**

**Bernardi**

**BMC**

**Cairo**

**Gaube**

**Klat**

**Lavoix**

**Lowick**
Lowick, N. and E. Savage, *Early Abbasid Coinage: A Type Corpus 132-218H / AD 750-833*, typescript, no date

**Markov**

**Metcalfe**

**Miles, Fatimid**
Miles, G.C., *Fatimid Coins, ANS Numismatic Notes and Monographs no. 121*, New York, 1951

**Miles, Rayy**

**Mitchiner, IGISC**

**Pere**

**SICA**
Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean:


**Treadwell**

**Walker**

**Wurtzel**

**ARAB-SASANIAN COINAGE**

The earliest coins struck by the Muslims were based on types already in circulation in the lands they conquered. In the former Sasanian empire these were chiefly silver drachms - broad, wafer-like coins weighing slightly over 4 grams. At first the Muslims made only minimal modifications to the Sasanian designs, adding a short religious phrase in the obverse margin but retaining the bust and name of the Sasanian king and using the Persian Pahlavi script for the mint and date. A gradual series of changes over a period of thirty or forty years gave the coinage a more distinctly Islamic appearance. High relief was used instead of the older Sasanian dating system based on the dead king Yazdgird III's regnal years, names of Arab governors replaced the name of the Sasanian king, and Arabic script began to supplant Pahlavi. Eventually the Umayyad caliphs 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (685-902) introduced a series of reforms to the gold and silver coinage in the mid-70s, and by about 900 the issue of drachms of Arab-Sasanian type was almost entirely confined to local coinages in the far east of the Islamic world.

Roughly forty or fifty individuals (governors, caliphs and rebels) are named on Arab-Sasanian drachms during their main period of issue. The selection offered here includes a number of scarce and rare types, including what is believed to be the second published example of a drachm of the rebel 'Abdallah b. 'Amir al-Mujahidi (Lot 10).

**Mugatil b. Mismas**, drachm, BYR (Bishapur) 738, obv. margin, in second and third quadrants: *bi'malih / bakiyya*, 3.84g (SICA 1, 190), good very fine, £250-300

The word *bakiyya* on this coin refers to the name of Mugatil b. Mismas’ tribe. It is the only appearance of a tribal name on Arab-Sasanian coinage.

**'Abd al-’ Aziz b. ’Abdallah b. ’Amir**, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 669, obv. margin, in second and third quadrants: *bi’imalih / al-’aziz*, countermarked in fourth quadrant, jayyiYd, 4.06g (Walker p.96, Cat.7), reverse with old ink mark and graffito, good very fine and rare, £200-300

‘Abd al-’Aziz was appointed governor of Sijistan in 669, where he fought, defeated and killed the native ruler of Kabul.

**’Abdallah b. Umayya**, drachm, SK 777, obv. margin, in second and third quadrants: *bi’imalih / al-’aziz*, 3.90g (SICA 1, p.33, note 185), good very fine, small flan lamination in reverse margin, rare, £250-300

The son of Umayya b. ’Abdallah (a relative of the caliph ’Abd al-Malik b. Marwan). ’Abdallah was placed in charge of Sijistan at the time of his father's unsuccessful expedition into Khurasan in 744. His rare drachms are the earliest Islamic coins to bear the phrase al-’aziz.
al-Qatari b. al-Fuja’a, drachm, ART (Ardashir Khurrua) 75h, 3.78g (SICA I, 34, same obverse die), areas of corrosion on both sides where chloride deposits have been removed, otherwise almost extremely fine £300-350

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja’a, the last leader of the Atrak Khurruites, was celebrated as a poet and orator. Appointed ‘caliph’ of the Atrakks in 65h, he was able to lead his forces from their base in Khurru into Iraq where, for a while, they threatened Basra. By the time this coin was struck in 79h he had been checked by the general al-Muhaalla b. Abi ‘Uthma, and was finally killed in the late 79s (probably 78 or 79h). His drachms all bear the Khurruite slogan ‘ir hakma bi-Dhiwān’ (There is no judgment but from God) in the obverse margin.

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja’a, drachm, 8th (Bishapur) 75h, 3.80g (SICA I, 191h), almost very fine £300-350

al-Qatari b. al-Fuja’a, drachm, TART (Tawwaj) 75h, 4.19g (SICA I, p.30, note 168), toned, almost extremely fine, rare £500-600

al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, drachm, DA+P (Fasa) 71YE=83/84h, of standard Arab-Sasanian type with governor’s name in Pahlavi, 4.03g (Wahid p.119, Th.16), about extremely fine and rare £800-1,200

al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf bear his name in Arabic on the obverse and arg the first such coins to do so. This issue is in fact more conservative in design than al-Hajjaj’s earlier Arabic types, even though it is his latest-known by at least two years. Like the very earliest Arab-Sasanian drachms his name is written in Pahlavi script (one of only two issues of al-Hajjaj where this is the case), and uniquely among his drachms the date is expressed in terms of the Yezdegard era instead of a Hijri year.

Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad (Ibn al-As’ath), drachm, DA+RA (uncertain location in Darabgird), 70YE=82/83h, obv. with long marginal legend ‘Ismallah / rab’b haumatu in second and third quadrants, 4.58g (Gauhe 39, same dies, where mint incorrectly given as DA), traces of handling, otherwise extremely fine and very rare £600-800

The descendant of a noble Yemeni family, Ibn al-As’ath was also the nephew through marriage of the famous governor al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf. Relations between the men were friendly at first but gradually became increasingly strained. In 68h, despite warnings that his nephew might revolt, al-Hajjaj nevertheless appointed Ibn al-As’ath to lead an army into eastern Sijistan where Zunbil, ruler of Kufa, had previously defeated a force under ‘Ubayyallah b. Abi ‘Uthma. The expedition was a success but led to further friction between al-Hajjaj and Ibn al-As’ath, who made a pact with Zunbil and rebelled against his uncle in 68h. At first al-Hajjaj was driven back as the rebel forces briefly occupied Basra and Kufa. Gradually, however, he was able to halt their advance and, after a series of skirmishes and battles, al-Hajjaj defeated the rebel forces decisively in 68h.

The defeated Ibn al-As’ath fled to Sijistan, where he died in 68h. According to one account he threw himself from the battlements of a castle rather than be handed over to al-Hajjaj.

Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 63h, 3.99g (SICA I, p.30, note 165), good very fine, scarce £250-300

Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 63h, 3.99g (SICA I, p.30, note 165), good very fine, scarce £250-300

Abdallah b. `Amir al-Mujashi`, drachm, SK (Sijistan) 80h, obv. margin. in third and fourth quadrants: يـر ابب / al-Mujashi, rev. in fourth quadrant of margin: 1/4, 3.50g (of Solhney’s, 25 May 2000, lot 233 = SICA I, p.31, note 175), traces of hoard-staining in margins, very fine to good very fine, extremely rare £2,500-3,000

When Ibn al-As’ath led his army into eastern Sijistan against Zunbil as described above, he named a certain ‘Abdallah b. `Amir al-Mujashi’ as governor in his absence. However, it appears that Ibn al-As’ath and al-Mujashi’s had quarrelled shortly before this and, although they were subsequently reconciled, the circumstances under which this drachm was struck are therefore unclear. Whilst it is perhaps more likely that the coin dates from the time of al-Mujashi’s rule in Sijistan as Ibn al-As’ath’s deputy, it might also have been issued as a statement of his independence during their dispute.
11
'Amr b. Luqit, drachm, GRM-KIRMAN (uncertain location in Kirman) 83h, 4.07g (SCICA 1, p.34, note 191), almost extremely fine and rare
£400-600

'Amr b. Luqit’s few known drachms are all from mints in Kirman, where he acted as Ibn al-Ash’ ath’s deputy. All are dated 83h.

12
'Amr b. Luqit, drachm, KIRMAN-AN (also an uncertain location in Kirman) 83h, 4.06g (SCICA 1, p.34, note 191), minor edge damage where corrosion has been removed, otherwise almost extremely fine and rare
£400-600

13
Arab-Khwarezm, al-Fadi b. Sahi (as Dhu’l-Riṣāṣatayn), drachm, head of king right, rev., horesman advancing right and brandishing weapon, Dhu’l-Riṣāṣatayn in two lines behind rider, Aramaic legend below, 1.71g (Artuk 21 = Mitchiner, IZSC 5006), edge chipped but very fine for issue, rare
£700-900

POST-REFORM UMAYYAD GOLD COINAGE

Umayyad dinar, year 77h (enlarged)

A complete set of fifty-six post-Reform Umayyad dinars, comprising an example of each year from 77h to 132h inclusive, generally in excellent condition and including a superb example of the celebrated ‘year 77’, only the second complete set of Umayyad dinars to be offered at auction (56)
£180,000-220,000

The famous ’year 77’ dinar, issued by the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, is generally considered to be the first purely Islamic coin. Its design and inscriptions set a pattern for Islamic dinars which lasted until the fall of the Umayyads and whose influence can be seen on coins issued centuries later. Apart from the date on the reverse, the legends remain unchanged throughout the fifty-six years these coins were struck, but examination of a set such as this reveals many subtle changes in style and calligraphy with a gradual change from a small, rounded script with dear Pahlavi influence to a more angular form of Iraq Kufic.

From an historical perspective, the establishment of a uniform and distinctively Islamic coinage system represents a key stage in the creation of a stable Islamic state. During the early years of conquest and expansion, the victorious Muslims had wisely left existing social and political institutions largely untouched. Over time, however, priorities inevitably shifted towards settlement and government, and it became important that the Islamic lands should become administered in a distinctively Islamic way which followed the precepts of the Holy Qur’an. With its central role both in taxation and in the payment of troops, the coinage had a prominent part to play in this process.

Monetarily, the territory controlled by the Muslims at this time comprised two distinct areas. The erstwhile Byzantine provinces in the West had maintained a bimetallic system based on the gold solidus and the copper follis. The Sassanian empire had issued only small quantities of gold and copper coins, relying instead on a plentiful supply of silver drachms which the Muslims had continued to strike in a modified form. Establishing a single coinage system for both areas was a highly visible statement of unified Muslim control: a symbolic as well as a practical measure.

‘Abd al-Malik’s coinage reforms are not still fully understood, but it appears that in the early 70’s he began to issue experimental gold and silver coins. Several different types of solid and copper were struck, all clearly based on Byzantine issues but with minimal modifications to remove obviously Christian symbols. Indeed, these “transitional” dinars give a strong impression that the Muslims were still trying to copy Byzantine solidi as closely as possible. Few of them survive today, and it seems unlikely that they were ever produced in large quantities.

This conservative approach to coinage design was dramatically reversed in the year 77h, when ‘Abd al-Malik introduced a dinar of a radically new type. Purely epigraphic, the new coin replaced modified crosses and images of emperors or caliphs with verses from the Qur’an rendered in early Kufic script. The weight of the coin was also changed from that of the Byzantine solidus to the mithqal of approximately 4.25g. As dinars of the earlier Byzantine type dated 77h are also known, this gives the impression of an abrupt change in policy for reasons which remain unclear. Modern Arab writers stress the religious aspects of ‘Abd al-Malik’s coinage reforms rather than their economic significance, while ancient and modern authors have suggested a link between these reformed dinars and a new series of Byzantine solidi, issued at approximately the same time, which were the first to depict the facing bust of Christ.
The dinars are listed in full below, giving individual weights, references and the condition of each piece:

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<th>No.</th>
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<td>132h</td>
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**POST-REFORM UMAYYAD SILVER COINAGE**

Production of silver dirhams to complement 'Abd al-Malik's new and distinctively Islamic gold coinage began in 718h. Like the dinars, these were purely epigraphic in design and were struck to a different weight standard to that of the older Arab-Graeco-Roman drachms. Unlike the gold coins, however, virtually all Umayyad dirhams also indicate the name of the mint where each was struck. More than one hundred mints are now recorded, of which several are only known from one or two specimens while many others are rare. Geographically, dirham mints were active throughout the Islamic world, from Spain to the north-west coast of India.

![Image of dirham coins]

**15**

**Umayyad**, dirham, Madinat Balkh al-Bayda 111h, 2.83g (Khat 176), generally very fine, the reverse slightly better

£700-900

This is the earliest known dirham from the mint of Balkh, here described as 'the white city'.

![Image of dirham coins]

**116**

**Umayyad**, dirham, al-Jazira 126h, 2.71g (Khat 222, same dies), very fine to good very fine and rare

£1,200-1,500

![Image of dirham coins]

**27**

**Umayyad**, dirham, Ramlhurmuz 96h, 2.58g (Khat 389), lightly clipped, old scratch in obverse field, otherwise very fine and a very rare date for the mint

£700-900
18
Umayyad, dirham, Sabur 83h, 2.91g (Klat 419), traces of hoarding, good very fine and a very rare date
£600-800

19
Umayyad, dirham, Sijistan 99h, 2.81g (Klat 441), reverse struck from a worn die and with a few old scratches, otherwise very fine or better and extremely rare
£2,000-2,500

20
Umayyad, dirham, Sijistan 130h, variety with four pairs of annulets in obverse margin, 2.77g (Klat 448b), good very fine/very fine, rare
£1,200-1,500

21
Revolutionary Period, 'Abdallah b. Mu'awiyah (127-130h), dirham, Isbaah 128h, obv., variety without hadha al-dirham and without inner marginal circle, 2.86g (Wurtzele 17 Klat 63b, same reverse die), small edge nicks, very fine or better, extremely rare
£2,500-3,000

'Abdallah b. Mu'awiyah was an 'Aid rebel and one of several claimants to the Umayyad throne. He died in 127h, and the coin types under his rule are rare. This coin is considered extremely rare.

22
Revolutionary Period, 'Abdallah b. Mu'awiyah, dirham, Javy 129h, 2.86g (Wurtzele 17, Klat 270a), old scratches on both sides, about very fine
£200-300

23
Revolutionary Period, Abu Muslim, dirham, Manw 132h, 2.86g (Wurtzele 26, Klat 666), good very fine, bright surfaces
£300-400

LATER ISLAMIC DYNASTIES

24
Abbasid, al-Musta'in (248-251h), dinar, Malka 248h, 4.10g (cf Sotheby's Geneva, 25 June 1985, lot 114), about very fine and of the highest rarity
£15,000-20,000

See also enlargement on inside front cover.

All Abbasid coins bearing the name of the Umayyad of Malka are rare and highly prized by collectors. This is the earliest known date for a dinar of this mint, although a handful of extremely rare dirhams with dates in the early 250s are also known.
25. Abbasid, al-Muktafi (289-295h), dinar, Msr 293h, 4.18g (Cairo 1346), good extremely fine
£200-250

Although not a particularly rare type this example is in outstanding condition.

26. Abbasid, al-Radi (322-329h), dinar, Qumm 325h, 2.55g (Markov p.55, 1061), on a ragged flan but fine to good fine, a rare mint
£400-500

27. Abbasid, al-Radi, dinar, Hamadhun 326h, 4.15g (cf Morton & Eden auction 14, 25-26 May 2005, lot 578), very fine
£250-300

29. Abbasid, al-Muttaqi (329-333h), dinar, Baysh 334h (sic), 2.77g (SICA X, 7, same dies), slightly weakly struck from rusty dies, good very fine for issue and very rare
£2,000-3,000

This is a posthumous issue of al-Muttaqi from the Yemeni mint of Baysh.

30. Abbasid, al-Mansur (136-150h), dirham, al-Hadhrimagh 138h, 2.90g (Lowick 1077), very fine and scarce, the first year of issue for this mint
£200-300

31. Abbasid, al-Rashid (170-193h), dirham, Msr 181h, obv., annulets apparently O oo O O oo O, rev., citing Ja for h. Yahya, 2.95g (cf Lowick 503-504), faint scratch on obverse and some dirt adhering, otherwise almost extremely fine and rare, this variety apparently unrecorded
£300-600

28. Abbasid, al-Radi, dinar, Ardabil 327h, with letter 'jim' in lower obverse field, 4.31g (cf Baldwin's Islamic Coin Auction 10, 20 July 2005, lot 135, same obverse die), centres weak, very fine and very rare
£800-1,200
Abbasid, Zubayda, wife of Harun al-Rashid, dirham, al-Hida'iq Dhat Bayt 185b, obv. margin, mint/date formulae; in field: Qur'an XV. 46-47: 'Enter in peace and tranquility; we shall cast out any grudge which may remain in their hearts,' rev. margin: 'Among the things ordered by the Mother of the Heir to the Caliphate at the hands of 'Yasir, a blessing from God'; in field: Qur'an XV. 47-48: 'They will sit on thrones facing each other like brothers, no weariness will come upon them, nor will they ever be sent away', 2.94g (cf. Spink auction 172, 31 March 2000, lot 337), lightly toned, very fine or better and extremely rare

£3,000-3,500

The mint on this remarkable coin translates as 'The Glorious Gardens,' and this issue seems to represent the only occurrence of this mint name in the coinage. Exactly where the Glorious Gardens were located is difficult to determine, although we should presumably be looking for an established Abbasid mint-town where Zubayda and the court of Harun al-Rashid spent some time. Two possible candidates are Madinat al-Salam (Bagdad, the capital of the Abbasid state) and al-Rufiqa, where al-Rashid established his residence and built a new palace in the early 1850s. The Spink catalogue noted that the amulet pattern is identical on dirhams struck at al-Muhammadiya in the same year (Lawick 1855-1856), but this seems an unlikely residence for Zubayda at the period.

This type is also unique in its choice of Qur'an sura verses in the fields, which can plausibly be related to the question of Harun al-Rashid's succession. By describing herself as 'Mother of the heir to the caliphate,' Zubayda establishes her own status and authority, while her choice of religious quotations emphasizes brotherly unity at a time when factions were already developing around the young princes al-Amin and al-Ma'mun.

The identity of 'Yasir is not known, although his name also appears on a dirham of Zubayda struck at the unlocated mint of al-Kamiliya in 184.

Abbasid, al-Ma'mun (193-218h), dirham, Samanqand 202h, citing al-Rida, 3.18g (Album 224 RR; Lawick 2678), good very fine
£250-300

In an attempt to reconcile Sunnis and Shi'i Isma'ilis, al-Ma'mun named the Shi'i Imam 'Ali b. Musa al-Rida as heir to the caliphate. Unfortunately, al-Rida died shortly afterwards (probably in 203 or 204h) and al-Ma'mun's bold plan came to nothing.

Abbasid, Muhammad b. Tughj (323-334h), dinar, Filitin 333h, obv., Abu Mansur bin 'amir al-ma'mun, rev., al-Mutaqqin Shah (al-Ikhshid), 3.45g (Lavoix 49), traces of old mount on edge, fine and rare
£300-400

A model slave of Muhammad b. Tughj, Kafur was appointed regent to his sons Abu'l-Qasim and 'Ali. On 'Ali's death in 355h Kafur became sole ruler, although most of his dollars lack his full name. A great patron of the arts, Kafur was also a capable and successful general who was able to repel the eastward advances of the Fatimids and to keep the Hamdanid rulers of Syria in check.

Ikhshidid, 'Ali b. al-Ikhshid (349-355h), dinar, Msr 353h, with letter s for Kafur in lower obverse field, 4.15g (Lavoix 62), about uncredited, with lustroso fields
£300-400

Ikhshidid, 'Ali b. al-Ikhshid (349-355h), dinar, Msr 353h, similar type to the last, 3.51g (BMC II, 239), a slightly weak striking showing evidence of rust on the reverse die, about extremely fine for issue
£400-600

Ikhshidid, Ahmad b. 'Ali (357-358h), dinar, Filitin 358h, citing al-Husayn b. 'Ubaydallah (governor of Tabaristan) and Tughj (probably Tughj b. Jufi, founder of the Ikhshidid dynasty), 3.85g (Lavoix 64, same rev. obv.), areas of weak striking on both sides, about uncredited and rare
£600-800

Ahmad b. 'Ali came to power on the death of Kafur in 357h. Described as a weak and ineffective ruler, his short reign was ended when the Fatimids under Jawhar took control of Egypt.
38  Ikhshidid, Ahmad b. 'Ali, dinar, Fihrist 358h, citing al-Husayn b. 'Ubaydallah alone, 3.02g (Lavoix 63), extremely fine for issue with some lustre, rare
£600-800

39  Fatimid, al-Hakim (386-411H), dinar, Dimashq 409h, 3.89g (Miles, Fatimid 1; cf BMC IV, 87 for a similar coin dated 409h), centre a little weak on both sides, almost very fine and rare
£1,000-1,500

40  Crusader County of Tripoli, bezant, imitating a Fatimid dinar of al-Mustansir, 'Tribis' 465h (mint-name slightly blundered), with three propeller-shaped ornaments in borders of fields on both sides, 3.68g (cf Metcalf 484), area of cuppyy colouration in centre of reverse, very fine and unusual
£300-400

The calligraphy on this coin is more angular than on regular Fatimid issues. While the legends are not fully literate they demonstrate a higher standard of Arabic than is typically found on comparable Crusader imitations. Interestingly, the first part of the mint-date formula is much more blundered than the mint and date themselves; the mint-name is very close to a correct version of 'Tribis' while the date is accurately rendered in full.

41  Fatimite Rulers of Alamut, 'Ala al-din Muhammad III (618-653H), fractional dirham, 'Ala al-din / waht-din / al-mawla / al-azam', 1.95g (Album 1921A RRR), reverse legend partly off flan, almost very fine and very rare
£1,000-1,500

42  Ottoman, Bayezid II (886-918H / AD1481-1512), sultani, Serez 886h, 3.51g (Pere 103), very fine to good very fine, rare
£1,000-1,200

43  Ottoman, Selim III (1203-1222H / AD1789-1807), sultani, Iza / 1210h, 3.40g (cf Artuk 1909 [dated 1216h]), evenly struck, very fine or better
£300-350

44  Ottoman, `Abd al-Aziz (1277-1293H / AD1861-1876), guinea, Muz 1277H, 8.5g (Pere 921), extremely fine
£250-300
45
Ottoman, Muhammad V (1327-1336h / AD1909-1918), Irau, Brusa 1327/1, 7.22g (Pere 1004), almost extremely fine
£250-300

46
Saffarid, Khalaf b. Ahmad (Second Reign, 360-369h), dinar, Sijistan 362h, obv., la ilaha illa Allah / Muhammad rasul allah / al-Ta'i Allah / Khalaf b. Ahmad / adj. rev., Qur'an 112 (complete, including the prefatory qull hawza omitted on the Umayyad coinage), 4.63g (cf. Altmann A1417 = Sotheby's, 28 May 1987, lot 881), struck from rusty dies and with matt surfaces, very fine to good very fine and extremely rare, apparently the second published dinar of this ruler
£1,500-2,000

Khalaf b. Ahmad, described by historians as a man of great learning and honour, ruled Sijistan at various periods from 352h until the province was conquered by Mahmud of Ghazni in 393h. His grip on Sijistan was never completely secure, and his only other published dinar (dated 364h) acknowledges the support of the Samanid ruler Mansur b. Nuh as well as that the Abbasid caliph.

Mansur b. Nuh is not mentioned on the present piece, whose legends are very different. The obverse names Khalaf and the caliph al-Ta'i while the inscriptions on the reverse are purely religious in nature, comprising the entirety of Qur'an CXXI. This legend is generally associated with the Umayyads, who used it on the reverse of their post-reform silver dirhams, although it also occurs infrequently on issues of the Buwayhids and Samanids (see the following lot). Whether Khalaf b. Ahmad should have chosen to place it on this piece remains a mystery.

47
Samani, Nuh b. Nasr (333-343h), dinar, al-Muhammadiya 333h (as), legends similar to Miles, Rayy 172 but arranged in three lines across both fields, 4.27g (Spink Taisey auction 34, 19 June 1999, lot 361, same dies), small edge marks, good fine and a rare type
£300-400

Like the previous lot, this type is exceptional in bearing Qur'an CXXI, here placed on the obverse. The year is somewhat problematic, since the coin dates the Abbasid al-Mu'tazz who did not become caliph until 333h – two years after the date on this coin. However, it is difficult to interpret the date legend differently; the word for 'three' is clearly and correctly written, and while 'one' is rendered as 'ahd (i.e. without the final iliff niswah), the final iliff is extremely clear, which appears to preclude other readings.

48
Kurdish Ruler of Adharbayjan, Dayasam b. Ibrahim (c.326-341h), dinar, al-Maraghah 329h, 4.50g (Album A1484 RRR), small modern test-cut on edge, slightly wavy flan, very fine and rare
£400-600

Dayasam b. Ibrahim was a half-Kurdish warlord who controlled areas of Azerbaijan at various periods in the first half of the fourth century Hijri.

49
Buwayhid, 'Imad al-dawla (322-333h), dinar, al-Muhammadiya 337h, 3.89g (Treadwell Mu337Q), very fine
£200-300

50
Buwayhid, Rukn al-dawla (335-366h), medallion portrait 'dirham,' in silvered bronze, al-Muhammadiya 351h, obv., in six lines: la ilaha illa Allah / wahdahu la sharika lahu / Muhammad rasul Allah / al-Ta'i Allah / Rukn al-dawla / Abu Ali Buwayh, mint/date formula around, apparently with min hjira raddlewla (or similar) after the date, rev., facing portrait bust of Rukn al-dawla wearing ornate robe and a wavy Sassanian-style crown, Persian legend 'May this glory increase of the King of Kings' to either side, 14.36g (cf. Miles, G.C., 'A Portrait of the Buwayd Prince Rukn al-Dawla,' ANS Museum Notes 11, 1964, pp. 283-293), pierced above bust and with traces of solder from an earlier mount, otherwise generally fine and extremely rare
£700,000

See also enlargement on inside back cover.

This remarkable piece is almost identical to that published by Miles (op. cit., pp. 283-285), except that this was made of silver and described as a dinar in the mint/date formula. In other respects, the legends on the two are virtually identical. The concluding phrase following the date is not easy to read, but appears to support Miles's suggestion of something similar to min hjira nallawla, 'Of the Hijra of the Buwayhid.' Miles thought that the coin might have been gilded at some stage, in which case his silver 'dirham' would correlate well with the present silvered bronze 'dirham.'

Because of contact wear it is difficult to tell conclusively whether this piece was struck or made by casting, but in our opinion it was almost certainly cast. This makes it difficult to date and also raises questions as to its status. One might expect that a major Buwayhid mint such as al-Muhammadiya would have produced medallions of this type by striking. The existence of splendid esagirigraphic multiple-draught struck there in 367h (Treadwell Mu387c) shows that the mint could and did produce such pieces by this method, although it does not necessarily follow from this that the mint could not produce cast pieces also.

Whatever the method of manufacture, there are good reasons for believing that this piece may date from the Buwayhid period, possibly from the reign of Rukn al-dawla. It has clearly been extemely worn, to the extent that it has been mounted (at least once) and also pierced, probably after a mount were cut or broke. Unlike other Islamic coins, whose religious quotations are not necessarily closely associated with one particular dynasty and which might therefore be worn long after they were made, this piece is highly specific to the Buwayhids and to Rukn al-dawla in particular. It can therefore be argued that a portrait medallion of this type would probably not be worn after the fall of the dynasty, unlike a piece worn in order to display religious verses.
51 Mongol Great Khans, Ogedai (624-639h), dinar, Balad Kurrman nd, obv., (in Arabic) "In the city of Kurrman," rev., (in Persian), "Whenever does not accept this coin is a sinner" (punaghe'), 3.17g, partly flat-struck on both sides, otherwise very fine or better and apparently unpublished £500-700

52 Ilkhanid, Abu Sa'id (716-736h), dinar, Nishapur 722h, type D, 6.90g (Album 2202), good very fine £250-300

53 Ilkhanid, Abu Sa'id, dinar, Hamadan 722h, type D, 8.47g (Album 2202), very fine to good very fine £250-300

54 Ilkhanid, Abu Sa'id, dinar, Arman 726h, type F, 7.65g (Album 2208), struck off-centre, almost very fine and scarce £250-300

55 Ilkhanid, Queen Sati Beg (739-741h), dinar, Shiraz 739h, 6.65g (type as Album 2231 [silver]), wavy flan, very fine and extremely rare £1,500-2,000

On this type, Sati Beg's titles are given in the masculine form al-sultan al-'jadil rather than as the grammatically correct al-sultana al-'jadila. The mint-name is not completely clear; the formula appears to read al-durar Shenz if axelt... but it is conceivable that the syllable read here as the preposition if is in fact part of a longer, unread mint-name.

56 Safavid, Shah Abbas I (995-1038h), ashraf, Tehran, date off flan, 4.53g, with flat areas on both sides but good very fine for issue and a very rare mint £200-250

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