



*Latest Contributions
to the Numismatic History
of Central Asia
(late 18 – 19th Century)*

Vladimir NASTICH

Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences

XIV International Numismatic Congress (Glasgow 2009), Section IV: Oriental and African

1. *Autonomous Coinage* of the “*Tashkand Republic*” (1784–1808)

In 1784 the town and region of *Tāshkand* (Tashkent) seceded from the Kazakh khanate and fell under the joint rule of four local *ḥākims*, one of which, hakim of the Shaykhantaur section of the town **Muhammad Yunus Khwaja `Umari** (ca 1756–1805), soon became the sole ruler of Tashkand.

As the post of hakim (circuit justice administrator) was primarily elective, we can state that the Tashkand hakimate should be considered a kind of republic.

During the «republican» period of its long history, Tashkand issued its own coins — tanga and pul (or *fulūs*).

The tangas are produced in debased silver (about 3.8g, 22 to 27mm) and resemble the Janid silver money but for the name of the hakim محمد یونس خواجه عمری on one side; the other side bears the traditional Kalima (Sunnite creed formula). Unless undated, these coins show the only fixed year of issue ۱۲۰۴ (1789–90 AD).



The copper coins are of two different sizes: smaller pieces are 14–17mm in diameter, bigger ones — 20–24mm. They also bear Yunus Khwaja's name, sometimes without his «family» nisba *'Umari*.



The other side of the coppers can bear the invocation in Persian عاقبت خير باد *may the future life be good (or blessed be the future life)*, the mint name ضرب تاشکند *coinage of Tāškand*, or else remains blank.



According to some data requiring further verification, Yunus Khwaja's sons went on striking copper coins with different mintname versions —
فاخره تاشکند *Tāškand*,
شاش *Šāš* *Fāhira-yi Tāškand*,
(ancient name of the Tashkent oasis), or without legends, just with various images — feline beast, bird, one to four fish, fabulous creature, etc. The only reported date is *1220* (1805 AD).



Lack of reliable information prevents the indisputable attribution of these coins to Yunus Khwaja's sons, Sultan Khwaja or Hamid Khwaja, inclining us to admit that they could equally be issued before the establishment of the Tashkand hakimate, viz. under the Janid or Kazakh khans.

Suggested chronology

- Joint rule of 4 hakims, 1199/1784–1204/1789 (no coins known)
- **Muhammad Yunus Khwaja `Umari**, sole ruler, 1204/1789–1215/1801 (died in 1219 or 1220/1805; silver tanga dated 1204 AH and undated copper coins)
- **Muhammad Khwaja**, 1215/1801–1218/1804 (governed in his father's name; no coins known)
- **Sultan Khwaja Ishan**, 1218/1803–1223/1808 (anonymous copper dated 1220 AH; several undated coin types also surmised)
- **Hamid Khwaja**, 1223/1808–...? (appointed by `Alim Khan of Khoqand; no coins known)

2. *Copper Coinage of the Shahrīsabz Bekdom (after 1747–1870)*

© **Prime communication**
(updated Nov. 2011)

After the fall of the Janid khanate, *Shahrīsabz* (formerly *Kesh*, the birth-place of Timur), town and region south of Samarqand was an autonomous domain ruled by local beks holding out against the Manghit amirs of Bukhara who always regarded it as their own appanage.

A distinctive copper coinage of *Kesh* and *Shahrīsabz*, singled out recently from the late Central Asian coin range (6 types with 4 mint name varieties), proves the autonomous status of the *Shahrīsabz* bekdōm.

Bilād-i Kesh

Earliest coin type (3 pieces known, weight up to 4g), all dated *1225* (1810 AD):

Side 1 — فلووس ۱۲۲۵
fulūs 1225

Side 2 — بلاد کیش ۱۲۲۵
Bilād-i Kīš 1225

The term *bilād* can be interpreted as «region, country, province», or just as the Arabic plural of *balad* — «towns», which may point to the regional character of the mintname *Kīš*.



Kesh-i Dilkaš

Cast specimen, virtually unique (private collection, Moscow), dated *1246* (1830–31 AD) or, less probably, *1264* (resp. 1849–50 AD).

Weight 6.16g, diameter 13–14mm, thickness up to 5mm.

Side 2 —

کیش / دلکش

Kīš-i Dilkaš
+date



Zeno #69830

Side 1 —

فلوس <...>

copper [coinage]
+date(?)

NB: *Kīsh* upturned upside-down over *Dilkaš*.

Dilkaš (literally «charming, heart-attracting») is an historical epithet to the name «Kesh», like *Buḡārā-yi Šarīf* «Bukhara the Noble» or *Ḥūqand-i Laṭīf* «Khoqand the Pleasant».

Kesh-i Dilkaš



Another coin type
(5 known, 3.3–4.0g);
two subtypes struck on
differently shaped flans:

1) round — 1246 (1830–31 AD);

2) almond-shaped — 1250
(1834–35 AD)



Side 1 — ضرب کیش دلکش
struck [at] Kīš-i Dilkaš +date

Side 2 — عاقبت خیر باد
blessed be the future life +date

Shahrisabz

Two different types with similar legends (3.3–4.3g):
1) dated *1254* (1838–39 AD); 2) discernible dates — *1257*
and probably *1256*, *1258* & *1259* (all within 1840–1843 AD):

Type 1 — ضرب شهرسبز ۱۲۵۴
struck [at] Šahrisabz +date



Zeno #32824



Type 2 — عاقبت خیر باد ۱۲۵۷
blessed be the future life +date

Balda-yi Kesh-i Dilkaš



Zeno #52834

Large coin (7.4–7.6g), seemingly of higher denomination, the only date known — *1268* (1851–52 AD):

Side 1 — فلوس ۱۲۶ بلده

copper [coinage] of the town (baldah) + date

Side 2 — کیش دلکش سنه؟ ۱۲۶۸

Kīš-i Dilkaš [in] year? 1268

Suggested chronology (tentative for the moment)

- Imam Quli Biy (seceded from the Janid khanate in or after 1160/1747)
- <...> (a few names omitted as irrelevant to the topic)
Shahrisabz conquered by the Manghits in 1199/1785
- Niyaz `Ali Bek, after 1785 – 1800(?) (no coins known)
- Daniyal mir-akhur ataliq, c.1225/1810–1252/1836
(anonymous copper coins of *Bilad-i Kesh* and *Kesh-i Dilkash*)
- Baba Biy dadkhwah, c. 1252/1836–1256/1840(?)
(anonymous coins of *Shahrisabz*, type 1)
- Khwaja Qul[i] parwanachi, c.1256/1840–1262/1846
(anonymous coins of *Shahrisabz*, type 2)
- Iskandar, 1262/1846–1272/1856
(anonymous large coins of *Balda-yi Kesh-i Dilkash*)
Shahrisabz reconquered by Bukhara in 1272/1856;
autonomy regained in 1278/1861
- `Ashur Bek Biy; Hakim Bek Biy; Baba Bek Biy (successively from 1272/1856 to 1287/1870) (no coins known)
Shahrisabz occupied by Russian troops in 1868 and finally
incorporated into the Bukhara emirate in 1287/1870

3. Malla Khan's "Posthumous" Issues of Khoqand (1288–1290 AH) — a Regular Coinage of Ya'qub Bek at Kashghar

One of the most enigmatic issues in the numismatic history of Central Asia is a coinage in the name of **Malla Khan of Khoqand**, dated **1288** to **1290** AH and thus often taken either for an evidence of his putative second reign or else a «commemorative» series under his brother Khudayar Khan, actually ruling over Khoqand at the time.

First inspected at the 9th All-Russian Numismatic Conference (Veliky Novgorod, April 2001).



AV Tilla, 1288 AH
4.51g, 23mm



AV Tilla, 1289 AH
4.6g, 23mm

AR Tanga, 1289 AH
2.85g, 20-21mm




AR Tanga, 1289/1290 AH
2.96g, 15mm




Meanwhile, the same dates are encountered in the regular gold and silver coinage of Khudayar Khan. Moreover, it is known that Malla was assassinated in 1278 AH (exactly on 24 Feb. 1862) not without Khudayar's tacit approval. Likewise, no Malla II ever existed as well. So neither of these versions stands up to criticism.

The cited arguments cast heavy doubt on the very reliability of the mint name *خوقند لطیف* *Hūqand-i Laṭīf*, and the real question is —

who actually struck these coins, and **where** did it take place in reality?



A sudden clue is found
in the chronicle
Ta'riḥ-i Amaniya
written by
Mūsā Sayramī,
a court annalist
of the governor
of Kashghar,
Ya`qub Bek.



Musa Sayrami wrote:

*«Ya`qub Bek brought from the Khoqand Khanate a group of exquisite craftsmen — seal-carvers and coin-stampers. They undertook the fabrication of gold coins **in the name of Malla Khan** (reporter's highlighting.— V.N.) and, on the other hand, started with preparations for coining copper money».*

And here is a quotation from

Svat Soucek, ***A History of Inner Asia***
(Cambridge 2000), p. 265:

«**The coins** struck in the mint of Kashgar between 1867 and 1873 still bore the legend "**Struck in the Mint of Khoqand**" (reporter's highlighting here and below.— V.N.) and the name of **Malla Khan** (1858–62), but then die legend was changed to "**Struck in the Mint of Kashgar, the Capital**" and bore the name of the Ottoman sultan **Abdulaziz**».

AV Tilla, 1290 AH
Maḥrūsa-yi Kāšġar



AR Tanga, 1292 AH



AV Tilla, 1290/1291 AH
Dār al-Saltāna-yi Kāšġar



AE Pul, 1292 and 1293 AH



So, all coins of the mint *Kāšġar* struck in **1290–1295** AH bear the names of Ottoman sultans — mostly *'Abd al-'Azīz Khān*, in the very end also *Murād Khān* (Tukhtiev, 1989) and *'Abd al-Hamīd Khān* (see below)



but never their real issuers — Ya`qub Bek and his son Bek Quli.



Yet until lately we had no idea what kinds of coins (if any) were issued by Ya`qub Bek **prior** to that period.

From now on,
a considerable part
of this gap, viz.
from 1871 to 1873,
can be proven
to be reliably
filled with
the coin series
presented
here :

The coins dated
1288–1290 AH
and shown as struck
at **Khuqand-i Latif**
in the name of
Sayyid Muhammad
Malla Khan
were in fact
produced by
Ya'qub Bek
in **Kashghar**

Latest Contributions to the Numismatic History of Central Asia *(late 18 – 19th Century)*

Dr Vladimir NASTICH

Moscow, July 2009
(updated 11. November 2011)

Institute of Oriental Studies,
Russian Academy of Sciences

12 Rozhdestvenka St.
107996 Moscow, RUSSIA

Tel. +7 916 587 2504
E-mail v.n.nastich@gmail.com