

COINS OF EARLY MEDIEVAL KHWARAZM

Rustam A.Nematov
Gulistan State University
r.nematov60@gmail.com

Received: Feb 22, 2024; Accepted: March 29, 2024; Published: Apr 18, 2024;

Abstract: The paper briefly analyzes the coins minted by the Khwarazm oasis rulers during the period of the Turkic Khaganate. And through these studies, the coins minted in the Khwarazm oasis provide an opportunity to determine the socio-political and ethnocultural situation of their time, as well as to determine the names of the rulers of Khwarazm, and to more accurately restore the names of the Khwarazmshah-Afrighids known through written sources

Keywords: Coins of Sovereign Ramik, Coins of Sovereign Bravik, Coins of Sovereign Shram, Coins of Sovereign Askajvar (Chagan), Coins of Sovereign Canic, equestrian image, stamp.



This is an open-access article under the [CC-BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license

Introduction

The issue of Khwarazm in the period of the Turkic Khaganate has not been fully analyzed from a scientific point of view by historians. Numismatic materials – coins and money have a special place in illuminating the history of the period of the Western Turkic Khaganate, which has the legitimate foundations of the Khwarazm oasis. More detailed information about the coins minted by Khwarazmshah-Afrighids in the early Middle Ages can be found in the monograph in Russian called "Ancient Khwarazm Coins" by numismatist B.I. Weinberg. In this study, the most ancient coins related to the history of Ancient Khwarazm were analyzed, and they were divided into groups A, B, V, G. The topic of this research is the coins belonging to group G, which were minted mainly during the Afrighids period, in the 8th century. Also, the pre-Islamic Khwarazm coins have been touched upon S.P. Tolstov's studies (Tolstov S.P., 1948, p. 15). In addition, Khwarazm coins of this period took place to one degree or another E.V. Rtveladze, E.V. Zeymal and D.V. Biryukov's studies (Rtveladze E. V. et al., 2004 p. 19).

Methods

The research methodology is based on analysis and synthesis, gradualism, historical-comparative, objectivity, periodical-problematic and retrospective analysis. Coins related to the history of Khwarazm are analyzed with dividing them into groups and types, and comments are given on inscriptions, images, Rulers. Coins minted in the periods of Rulers after 712 Azkajuvar-Chagan, Shavat, Savshafan and Azkajuvar-Abdullah were also analyzed in the work of BI Weinberg. Bearing in mind the fact that this study was created in the 70s of the last century, it should be said that some scientific innovations were obtained during the past period. For example, the name of Shavat, which

was not mentioned in the work of B.I. Weinberg, was determined based on numismatic materials in the research of V.V. Artev (Artev V.V., 2009, p. 54-56).

Results and Discussion

According to the results of the research, the coins of the Khwarazm oasis from the period of the Turkic Khaganate had different appearances during the time of the oasis Rulers. Below, we will focus on some of the coins minted by the Khwarazmshah-Afrighids dynasty in the VI-VIII centuries:

1. Sovereign Ramik Coins



1

Av. There is an image of a crowned ruler facing left on the right surface. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left, and there are written words MR'Y MLK' R'myk "Khwarazmshah Ramik" in ancient Khwarazm script around him. Material: silver; Weight: 7.07 gr; Diam: 27.8 mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; The end of the VI century.

The name Ramik, which appears on this type of coin, is associated with the god Ram, who is widespread in the mythology of the ancient Indo-Iranian peoples. It should be mentioned here that the influence of ancient Indian culture in the Khwarazm oasis has not been sufficiently studied.

MR'Y MLK' appear on all Khwarazmshah-Afrighids coins, and it is believed that this monogram, introduced through the Aramaic script, which is the basis of the ancient Khwarazm script, actually read "Khwarazmshah".

2. Sovereign Bravik coins



2

Av. On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left, and the words MR'Y MLK' Brawik "Khwarazmshah Brawik" are written in ancient Khwarazm script around him. Material: silver; Weight: 4.3 g; Diam: 27.0 mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; The beginning of the 7th century.

The names of the ancient Khwarazm rulers are dominated by words specific to Eastern Iranian languages, in particular, the Khwarazm branch of this language group. It can be seen from the names Ramik, Braviy, Kanik, etc., that the names of the rulers were formed as a result of adding the ancient Khwarazm suffix -ik to the names of some gods.

3. Sovereign Shram coins



3

Av . On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left, and the words MR'Y MLK' Šram "Khwarazmshah Shram" are written in ancient Khwarazm script around him. Material: silver; Weight: 4.81 gr; Diam: 27.0 mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; The beginning of the 7th century.

The name of this ruler is also a word specific to the ancient Khwarazm language. However, it is difficult to give an opinion about its literal meaning. There are also problems with the reading and pronunciation of this name, since no similar name is found in the written sources of its time.

4. Sovereign Askajvar (Chagan) coins



4

Av. On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left, and the words MR'Y MLK' y/zk'nšw r "Khwarazmshah

Azkanshvar (Askajvar)" are written in ancient Khwarazm script around it. Material: copper; Weight: 3.20 g; Diam: 24.5-25mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; 712-713.

B.I. Vainberg emphasized that the ruler given as Askajvar in the list of Abu Rayhan Beruni appears as wzk'nšw'r (Azkachvar) on coins with Khwarazm inscriptions found in the Khwarazm oasis, and that he is the same person as Chagan, who was recorded as the ruler of Khwarazm in 712 in Muslim sources, and Vainberg assumed that this ruler came here from the land of Tokhoristan (Chaganian) (Vainberg B.I., 1977.-P. 41, 91-94). It's quite possible that he will be a ruler of Turkic origin (Boboyorov G. 2019.-P.48-50). According to A. Gudkova, who deeply studied the history of pre-Islamic Khwarazm, the name Chagan is one of the most common names in the Turko-Mongol world (Gudkova A.V., 1964. – P. 120) . If we consider the name Azkachvar, we can recognize that it comprises two words "Azka" and "Chvar". "Chvar" is possibly another form of the Turkic title Chor. This title is written as "cwr" in Sogdian sources (V.A. Livshitsa, 1962. - P. 47). On the coins with the ancient Khwarazm script, the second part of the name wzk'nšw'r (Azkachvar) "chvar" is actually given in the form of "shvar". But researchers read it as "chvar". Because, in the ancient Khwarazm writing, there is a possibility to read "-sh" as the consonant "-ch" (Tolstov S.P., 1964. - P. 53). Also the factor of Azkachvar Chagan (Askajvar in Beruni's list) came out of the environment organized by the Turks as the majority of the rulers of Tokhoristan can be considered as one of the proofs of his origin being Turkic.

5. Sovereign Canic coins



5

Av. On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman heading to the left, and the words MR'Y MLK k'nyk "Khwarazmshah Kanik" in ancient Khwarazm script around it. Material: silver dirham; Weight: 2.68 gr; Diam: 26-27mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; After 713.

The name Kanik is also found in connection with other regions. Abu Rayhan Beruni says that the pre-Islamic dynasty of the Kabul Tegin Shahis was Turkic, and the name of the ruler who founded this dynasty was Kanik, in his works "India" and "Mineralogy" as follows: According to what I heard, silk while this genealogy written on the goods is kept in Nagarkot fort; I was very interested to see it, but for some reason I could not [see it]. One of their kings was Kanik, who is credited with the Vihora [construction] of the Buddha temple at Purushovar. Therefore it is called Kanik-chaitya (Sachau. CE . 1888. P. 10-13.).

6. Sovereign Shavat coins



6

Av. On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left and the words, MR'Y MLK ŠW'T "Khwarazmshah Shavat" in ancient Khwarazm script around it. Coin Type: Dirham; Material: Silver; Weight: 4.33 gr; Diameter: 31 mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; Before 750.

Researcher V. Artev, in his research, believed that this type of coin belonged to a completely different ruler, and the name of the ruler on the reverse side of the coin has read as MR'Y MLK ŠW'T, i.e. "Sovereign King Shavat". These coins are recorded as Savshafan's "GV/9" type coin in B.I. Weinberg's studies. It is considered that Shavat ruled after Kanik before Savshafan, because his copper coins are similar to those of Kanik, and his silver coins are similar to those of Savshafan.

The obverse of Shavat's silver coin depicts a crowned beardless ruler within a circle of a collar with a traditional pattern. The reverse of the coin depicts a horseman, with the collar inscription MR'Y MLK ŠW'T.

7. Sovereign Savshafan coins



7

Av. On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left and the words, MR'Y MLK SAW(ə)ŠFAN "Khwarazmshah Savshafan" in ancient Khwarazm script around it. Material: Silver dirham; Weight: 3.48 gr; Diameter: 28 mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; After 751.

In Beruni's list of Khwarazmshah dynasty, Askajamuk's son Shavshafar ascended the throne in the middle of the 8th century . This information B. I. Also mentioned in Weinberg's research . It is recorded in Chinese sources that Khwarazmshah Savshafan sent an ambassador to China in 751 .

One of the main features of these coins of the ruler is that the name of the ruler is written on the front side of the coin in Sugdian script and on the reverse side in ancient Khwarazmian script, this inscription is V. Read as ŠWŠPRN by A. Livshits .

8. Sovereign Askajuvar - Abdullah coins



8

Av. On the right surface there is an image of a crowned ruler facing left. The words 'skcwr "Askachvar" are written on the left sight of him in Sugdian script. Rv. On the reverse side, there is an image of a horseman facing left and The words MR'Y MLK WY/ZK'NŠW'R "Khwarazmshah Askajuvar" in ancient Khwarazm script around. Material: Silver dirham; Weight: 2.91 gr; Diameter: 22 mm; Place and date of minting: Khwarazm; After 762 years.

In Beruni's list of Khwarazmshahs, Askajuvar-Abdullah is mentioned as a ruler who accepted Islam . There is a word `K`NSW`R written in Sugdian script In front of the image of the ruler on the obverse side of the coin, which is considered to be associated with this ruler . V.A. Livshits read this inscription as "Azkajuvar" and it was read as zk`cw`r by V.B. Henning .

The pre-Islamic coins of Khwarazm have their iconography, all of which feature similar but slightly different headdresses and crowns. In this point, the Khwarazm coins are completely different from the Central Asian coins of the Turkic Khaganate period. Obviously the absolute majority of the images of the ruler on the coins of the Turkic Khaganate and its subjects such Chach, Otror, Isjifob, Fergana, Sughd (Samarkand, Nakhlab, Kesh), Bukhara and Tokharistan are drawn without a crown. There are images with crowned ruler only on the coins of Chach Tudun and Ustrushona Afshin .

It is noticeable that some aspects of the images on the coins of the West Turkic Khaganate, minted in the Chach (Tashkent) oasis, are similar to the images on the coins of the Khwarazmshah Afrighids dynasty. Among the coins minted in Central Asia during this period, similar images of a horseman can be found only on coins of both Chach and Khwarazm rulerships, which are located far from each other. Chach coins were minted by the Western Turkic Khagans and have the symbols of power characteristic of the ancient Turkic state, while the Afrighids coins are dominated by the traditions of the ancient Khwarazm. It is noticeable that most of the details of the image of the horseman on these

coins are similar to each other. In addition, only Khwarazm coins contain such plots among the vassal principalities like Chach, Otror, Isjifob (Sayram), Fergana, Ustrushana, Sughd, Bukhara and Tokharistan under the Khaganate during this period.

Discussion

The pre-Islamic coins of Khwarazm have their iconography, all of which feature similar but slightly different headdresses and crowns. In this point, the Khwarazm coins are completely different from the Central Asian coins of the Turkic Khaganate period. Obviously the absolute majority of the images of the ruler on the coins of the Turkic Khaganate and its subjects such Chach, Otror, Isjifob, Fergana, Sughd (Samarkand, Nakhlab, Kesh), Bukhara and Tokharistan were drawn without a crown (Rtveladze E.V., 2002 p. 55). There are images with crowned ruler only on the coins of Chach Tudun and Ustrushona Afshin (Babayarov G., 2007. – P. 52.).

It is noticeable that some aspects of the images on the coins of the West Turkic Khaganate, minted in the Chach (Tashkent) oasis, are similar to the images on the coins of the Khwarazmshah Afrighids dynasty. Among the coins minted in Central Asia during this period, similar images of a horseman can be found only on coins of both Chach and Khwarazm rulerships, which are located far from each other (Babayarov G., 2007 - pp. 12-13). Chach coins were minted by the Western Turkic khagans and have the symbols of power characteristic of the ancient Turkic state, while the Afrighids coins are dominated by the traditions of the ancient Khwarazm. It is noticeable that most of the details of the image of the horseman on these coins are similar to each other. In addition, only Khwarazm coins contain such plots among the vassal principalities like Chach, Otror, Isjifob (Sayram), Fergana, Ustrushana, Sughd, Bukhara and Tokharistan under the Khaganate during this period (Boboyorov G., 2010. – P. 1840.).

The stamps found on the pre-Islamic coins of Khwarazm are also unique in their appearance, which is completely different from the stamps found on the coins of the Central Asian oasis kingdoms of the same period. It is interesting to note that these stamps have a close resemblance to the stamps of Kanka coins belonging to the III-IV centuries, printed with the words "Chach people" in Sugdian script. Perhaps, the mutual similarity between them can be related to the times when the Kanka State (II BC - III centuries AD) established its rule in Khwarazm.

It has to be explained the fact that the coins of Chagan or Askajvor Chagan, one of the representatives of the Khwarazmshah-Afrighids dynasty, have a stamp with a different appearance from such stamps and that it has aspects similar to the Khaganate's stamps. It was customary for the clan stamp of the ruling house to appear on the coins during the change of dynasties because the stamp found on most Central Asian coins was a symbolic sign of a dynasty or rulership in pre-Islamic times. Stamps were often associated with the ethnicity of a ruling dynasty that succeeded another dynasty. The presence of a stamp different from the traditional stamp on one of the coins of Khwarazmshah Afrighids can be explained by similar factors. Askajvor Chagan, who ruled in the first quarter of the 8th century, was originally from Tokharistan, probably from the ruling house of the Chaganian rulership, and it is considered that he came to Khwarazm for a while and seized the power here (Gudkova A.V., 1964. – P. 120.). Thus he seems to indicate that there was a dynastic change by putting his name and title

on the coinage of Khwarazmshah Afrighids and minting his stamp. However, the fact that his reign did not last long is confirmed by the presence of traditional stamps on Afrighids coins minted after him.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the coins minted in the Khwarazm oasis in the Early Medieval reflected the socio-political and ethno-cultural conditions of their time, and the names of pre-Islamic Khwarazm rulers can be determined based on them. They provide an opportunity to more accurately restore the names of Khwarazmshah-Afrighids known through written sources..

References

- [1] Tolstov S.P. Drevniy Kharezmi: Opyt istoriko-archeologicheskogo issledovaniya. – M.: Izdanie MGU, 1948.
- [2] Rtveladze E. V. Drevnie i rannesrednevekove monety istoriko-kulturnykh oblastey Uzbekistana. T. 1. – Tashkent: Media Land, 2002; Zeymal E.V. Monety rannesrednevekovoy Sredney Azii // Archeologiya. Srednyaya Azia i Dalniy Vostok v epochu srednevekoviya. – M., 1999. – S. 192-206; Biryukov D.V. Moneta v zhizni narodov Transoxian. facky, problemy, conceptsiya // Numizmatika Tsentralnoy Azii, vyp. VII. – T., 2004. – P. 7 – 19.
- [3] Artev V. V. Novoe imya v numismatike antichnogo Khwarazma. Pyatnadsataya vserossiyskaya numismaticheskaya konferentsiya. Tezisy dokladov i soobshcheni. Rostov-na-Donu, April 20-25, 2009 / otv. red. I.V. Shiryakov . M.: Izdatelstvo "Numizmaticheskaya literatura", 2009. – P. 54-56.
- [4] Weinberg V.I. Monety drevnego Kharezma. – M.: Nauka, 1977. – P. 41, 9194
- [5] Khwarazm during the Khaganate of G. Boboyorov // History of Khwarazm in modern studies. – Tashkent-Urganch, 2019. – B. 48-50.
- [6] Gudkova A.V. Tok-kala. – T.: Nauka, 1964. - P. 120
- [7] Sogdiyskie dokumenty s gory Mug. Chtenie, Perevod. Commentary. Vyp. II. Juridicheskie dokumenti i pisma / Chtenie, perevod i kommentarii V.A. Livshitsa. – M.: Izd-vo vostochnoy lit-ry, 1962. – P. 47
- [8] Tolstov S.P., Livshits V.A. Datirovannye nadpisi na Khwarazmiyskiy ossuariy s gorodishcha Tokkala // SE, N2. – M.: 1964. – P. 53
- [9] Sachau. CE Alberuni's India. An account of the religion, philosophy, literature, geography, chronology, astronomy, customs, laws and astrology of India about AD 1030. An English Edition, with Rotes and Indices. In two volumes. Vol.I. London. Trübner and Co., Ludgate Hill. 1888. P. 10-13.
- [10] Rtveladze E. V. Drevnie i rannesrednevekove monety istoriko-kulturnykh oblastey Uzbekistana. T. 1. – Tashkent: Media Land, 2002.
- [11] Babayarov G. Drevnetyurkskie monety Chachskogo oazisa (VI - VIII centuries AD). – Tashkent, 2007. – P. 52.
- [12] Babayarov G. Drevnetyurkskie monety Chachskogo oasis. – P. 12-13.
- [13] Boboyorov G. Information on statehood in the territory of Uzbekistan on the coins of the Early Middle Ages // Problems of source studies of the history of Uzbekistan. – Tashkent, 2010. – P. 1840.

- [14] Gudkova A.V. Tok-kala. – T.: Nauka, 1964. – P. 120.
- [15] NEMATOV, R. (2023). POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE KHWARAZM AFRIGHIDS DYNASTY AND THE TURKIC KHAGANATE. *Journal of Fundamental Studies*, 1 (7), 16-23.
- [16] Nematov, R. (2023). ETHNO-CULTURAL PROCESSES IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES IN KHWARAZM. *Actual Problems of Humanities and Social Sciences.*, 3 (6), 14-23.
- [17] Nematov, R. (2023). Current status of historiography of Khwarazm in the Early Middle Ages _ *History and Culture of Central Asia*, 1 (1), 122-125.
- [18] Nematov, R.A., & Almanov, Q.O. (2022). THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL SOURCES IN THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF THE TURKISH EMPIRE. *American Journal Of Social Sciences And Humanities Research*, 2 (10), 25-31.
- [19] Nematov, R. (2023). SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF KHWARAZM HISTORIOLOGY IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES. *Interpretation and research*, 1 (21).