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COIN COLLECTING IN COLONIAL TURKESTAN
(FROM RUSSIAN CONQUEST
TO THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY)

Abstract

The article surveys coin collecting activities in Russian colonial Turkestan during the last three decades of the 19th century. Material presented makes it clear, that significant acquisitions were made by central and local museums with the help of Turkestan colonial government. Even larger volume of numismatic material was in the hands of a fairly large community of coin collectors. While it is impossible to estimate the overall mass of coins produced by Central Asian soil and settled in various collections locally and around the world, we can be sure that it was in tens of thousands. Such a demand called to life a market with professional coin seekers, dealers, and even forgers. In other words, coin collecting was quite developed in colonial Turkestan.

It is interesting, however, that unlike British India and some other colonial societies, Turkestan amateur numismatist did not leave us a significant bulk of scholarly writings. There are two apparent reasons for this: (1) there was a wide spread notion that numismatic publications should be written by professional scholars and (2) there were no local scholarly periodicals suitable for numismatic publications and thus there was a definite lack of publication opportunities. As result, most of the important information about such things as the topography of finds and hoard composition was lost and the study of Central Asian coins, especially those of pre-Islamic period, seriously started only in 1930s-1940s.

Keywords

Coin collecting, Turkestan, 19th century

1. BEFORE THE BEGINNING

There is no record of coin collecting among local Central Asian elite prior to Russian conquest. There was, of course some treasure hunting and occasional numismatic finds on ancient sites, but there was no interest in coins as witnesses to history and no appreciation of their antiquarian value. The basis of such a conclusion is not just on the absence of information about collecting activities in pre-colonial period of Central Asian history. We know, for example, that Bukharan Amir Nasrulla, who dealt with English emissary Alexander Burnes and with his counterpart on the Russian side of the Great Game, Captain Jan Prosper Witkiewicz, who decapitated British officers Colonel Charles Stoddart and Captain Arthur Conolly, was so puzzled by the interest that Europeans showed towards ancient coins, that he bothered to ask about this strange matter during an official audience, that he granted to the missionary Joseph Wolf.

In other words, we can be quite sure that the real history of coin collecting started in Central Asian after 1865, i.e. after the year when General M.G. Chernyaev, defying the orders of St Petersburg government, moved up the Syr Darya and took the city of Tashkent, thus starting the conquest of Turkestan. Within the next 17 years practically all what was known as Russian or Western Turkestan came under the direct control of the Russian Empire with exception of two protectorates, the khanates of Bukhara and Khiva.

2. TURKESTAN ADMINISTRATION

The first general-governor of Russian Turkestan, Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman, formulated his attitude towards the study of Turkestan in a simple and clear way: “exploration¹ is the most important of all means that can justify our conquests [in Central Asia], our movement ahead.”² In regard to the historical studies, this statement materialized first of all in an ambitious production of six-volume *Turkestan Album* – an extensive visual record of newly acquired territories with some 1,200 photographs, combined with the plans of architectural monuments, watercolors, and maps. The work included two “archaeological” and two “ethnographic” volumes while “Trades Part” and “Historical Part” constituted two more. The compiler of

¹ The word used in the original Russian text is *nauka*, a term that covers both science and scholarship.

² AKRAMOV 1974, p. 11, with the reference to: Sokolov 1933 (1934), p. 13. For a recent attempt to contextualize Kaufman’s views on the practical importance of the ethnographic and historical exploration of the newly acquired lands see: Brower 2003, pp. 54-55.

the first three parts was Kaufmann's permanent Orientalist on staff, Aleksandr Liudvigovich Kun, a graduate of the *Fakul'tet* of Oriental Languages at Sankt-Petersburg University. It is noteworthy, that the *Turkestan Album* was completed already in 1871-72, very few years after the conquest: Tashkent was taken by Russians in 1865 and Samarqand only in 1868. No doubt, the *Album* was considered to be the high priority project.³

Of course, Kun's responsibilities as an expert on old and traditional Central Asian culture were not limited to the production of the *Album*. His main function was to be a consultant on various issues related to Islam in general and *shari'a* in particular. For example, his expertise was required when administration had to deal with legal issues involving old property documents such as *waquf*. Yet Kun also gathered various collections while travelling with the troops⁴ and by himself.⁵ For instance in 1871 sent to St Petersburg fifteen boxes with archaeological finds.⁶

No doubt, that Kun's personal scholarly interests, which centered mainly on old manuscripts and on the ethnography of Central Asia, defined his research preferences and influenced his actions as explorer.⁷ It is also certainly true that coins only marginally attracted his attention. Nevertheless, we know that 340 dies of the Khivan mint, which were seized when Russian troops captured Khorezmian capital⁸, were sent to St Petersburg by his initiative.⁹ In the same Khivan campaign he also reported the acquisition of 172 Jochid coins and 3 gold specimens struck under Kungrat Sufis.¹⁰

Kun was not the only representative of the colonial administration who gathered coins during the trips in Turkestan: for example, naturalist Aleksei Pavlovich Fedchenko, another protégé of Kaufmann, in his report on exploration of *Zarafshan*

³ In order to facilitate the work on the project a military engineer, Nikolai Venediktovich Bogaevskii, was appointed to assist Kun.

⁴ The acquisition of cultural "booty" in the course of military campaigns was a standard practice during the conquest of Turkestan. The Russian Geographic Society even published an instructions to the officers taking part in Khivan campaign of 1873, which was composed by the orientalist and numismatist Lerch, who possessed an extensive travel experience in Turkestan. Quite naturally, this document directed special attention of the officers to the identification, description and preservation of archaeological, numismatic, epigraphic and ethnographic monuments: Lerch 1873.

⁵ LUNIN 1965, c. 115.

⁶ LUNIN 1958, p. 25.

⁷ A biography of Kun, bibliography of his works and the list of literature about him see in: LUNIN 1974, p. 203-208. Kun left a very extensive archive: ANDRIANOV 1951, pp. 149-155.

⁸ Now held in the Department of Numismatics of the State Hermitage they were published: SEVEROVA 1988, p. 94-114.

⁹ LUNIN 1965, p. 115; GORSHENINA 2004, p. 42.

¹⁰ GORSHENINA 2004, p. 42.

okrug dated September 1, 1869, mentions 150 ancient coins as collection no. 13 among zoological, geological, and other ones.¹¹

Already under Kaufmann the Chancellery of Turkestan General Governor started acting as the representative of Archeological Commission, the governmental institution responsible for the antiquities of the Russian Empire. Military governors of the Turkestan provinces, heads of county administration (*уездные начальники*), and other officials were obliged to send coin finds made on the territory under their control to the Chancellery with letters describing when, where, by whom, and under which circumstances these were found. Chancellery would then pass the finds to the Archaeological commission in St Petersburg, where the coins were reaching the hands of leading scholars such as W. Tiesenhausen, A.K. Markov, N.I. Veselovsky, V.V. Barthold, and others who were attributing them and making the inventories. Brief information about the coins and their destiny (such as “given to the Hermitage” or “sent to particular local museums”, or, sadly, if there were multiple specimens of the “same” type, sent to the mint to be turned into bullion) was then reported back to the Chancellery and was published in the «Reports of the Archaeological Commission» (*Отчеты Археологической Комиссии*).

The Chancellery of the Turkestan General Governor also represented the Archaeological Commission when the latter was buying coin hoards and whole private collections in Central Asia, as, for example, in the cases with the collections of Mirza Bukhari and Akram Palvan Askarov.

Another responsibility of the Chancellery was the support of Russian scholarly missions such as, for example, led by Orientalists P.I. Lerch and F.W. Radloff. Some members of these missions were particularly interested in numismatics. For example, Lerch bought Bukhar Khuda coins, made them his major research subject and ultimately wrote the first and up to date the only monograph about them.¹² A special case was N.I. Veselovskii's protracted archaeological commandment to Turkestan.¹³ In the course of of this venture the scholar acquired and brought to the research institutions of St Petersburg over 1500 old coins.

Eventually, Turkestan government provided space and means for local museums, first in Tashkent (1876) and then in Samarqand (1896),¹⁴ Ferghana (1899), and Ash-

¹¹ AGAFONOVA, KHALFIN 1956, p. 169.

¹² LERKH (Lerch) 1909.

¹³ A large assemblage of materials regarding the Central Asian exploits of N.I. Veselovskom v Srednei Azii see in: LUNIN 1979.

¹⁴ The first attempt to create a historical museum in Samarqand dates back to 1874. Supported by the Head of Zaravshan Region (*начальник Зеравшанского округа*) General A.K. Abramov with active involvement of M. Rostislavov it started amassing different categories of historical objects (coins, manuscript, tombstones with inscriptions, old and traditional household objects: SHISHKIN 1969, p. 13. In 1976, however, Museum was liquidated and at least part of its collections was moved to the

gabad (1899). In the course of time, all these institutions built their own numismatic collections.

In other words, the numismatics was certainly one of the historical disciplines that received a fair share of attention from the colonial government of Turkestan. One can even say that Chancellery of Turkestan General Governor acted as a government agent representing the coin collecting activities of the state.

The results of this situation, however, should not be overestimated: there was no permanent allocation of funds, and means for each purchase had to be obtained from sponsoring institutions on the case to case basis. This situation caused significant delays that frightened away some of the sellers. In other cases collection owners willing to deal with the Chancellery were simply unable to wait long enough. In one case, we are told that government institutions could not come up with sufficient monetary resources.¹⁵ In general, being a bureaucratic structure, the colonial government of Turkestan was relatively inert and was too slow when swift action was necessary.

3. PRIVATE COLLECTORS

No wonder then that the largest numismatic treasures of Central Asia turned out to be in private hands. The first local generation of coin collectors appeared in Turkestan with the Russian conquest. Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman, the first general governor of the newly acquired lands, was not a stranger to collecting, although coins were not his personal interest.¹⁶ Among the few surviving names of coin collectors active in the initial period of colonial rule from late 1860s to early 1880s are two officers of Kaufman's administration: N.N. Golovachev and A.K. Abramov. Both started their service during the conquest and reached highest ranks as representatives of Russian military administration within the next decade or two.

The impulse coming from Kaufman himself, his government, and his immediate environment was well matched by the general excitement in local society—after all many of the classically educated Russian officers and civil servants expected newly conquered lands to reveal rich traces of Assyrian, Achaemenid, Hellenistic, Parthian, and Sasanian cultures. In the words of Veselovskii there was an expectation that

newly organized Tashkent Museum.

¹⁵ According to the published summary of a report by D.I. Evarnitskii's, the owner of one of the largest Turkestan collection, Captain L.S. Barzewski, had intention to sell his coins and was asking for mere 300 rubles: EVARNITSKII 1895, p. 19-20. The sum, although significant (about the size of annual starting salary on a government service), seems to be puzzlingly small for the collection, which, according to another publication of the same author comprised up to 10, 000 coins: EVARNITSKII 1893.

¹⁶ A description of his collection by P.I. Lerch and V.D. Smirnov can be found in several successive issues of the *Reports of the Imperial Public Library*: LUNIN 1958, p. 257, note 107.

Afrasiab, the site of Ancient Samarqand was to become “Russian Pompeii”.

While all these people with their expectations were soon somewhat disappointed by the lack of the monuments belonging to the «text book cultures of antiquity», those of them with true collecting ardor quickly discovered that the soil in various parts of very large and historically very diverse Central Asia is capable to yield interesting artefacts of different epochs and interesting cultures.

Some of the areas of Turkestan were especially rich in regard to numismatics, while in other coin finds were rare instances. In Samarqand and Tashkent we see the formation of a market oriented towards tourists, while no information survived about any coin trade in Semirech’e.

As local “conditions” varied, so were the forms of collecting in different parts of Turkestan. On the other hand, some structure is in any case necessary in the following description of coin collecting activities in the 19th century Turkestan and it seems quite sensible to organize the data by territorial principle.

3A. SAMARQAND

With Samarqand being the most famous Central Asian historical city in Russian hands, the important collecting activities concentrated there. The first major collectors in Samarqand were civil servants D.O. Petrov-Borozna and M. Rostislavov.

Rostislavov had broad historical interests and was publishing on Central Asian antiquities in general – for example he described in a special article the results of the first excavations on Afrasiab, the site of ancient Samarqand,¹⁷ that were conducted by Major Borzenkov on the order of General A.K. Abramov in 1874.¹⁸ We are told also, that Rostislavov was the first to express in press the opinion that Samarqand needs its own museum¹⁹ and we know that he took active, if not the leading role, in further attempts to organize it.²⁰ Unfortunately, we know nothing about the composition of Rostislavov’s collection, except that it was large and contained significant number of gold coins.²¹

D.O. Petrov-Borozna amassed a collection of over 2500 specimens.²² Although he was stationed in Samarqand, his collecting activities were not limited to this city

¹⁷ ROSTISLAVOV 1897-1898, p. 144-149.

¹⁸ Sudden death of Borzenkov prevented him from compiling the report of these excavations.

¹⁹ Lykoshin 1896, p. 12.

²⁰ Shishkin 1969, p. 13.

²¹ From a private letter written by N.I. Veselovskii to N.P. Ostroumov on May 16, 1886 we learn that «the collection of Rostislavov, gathered in Samarqand, vanished without trace (except for manuscripts) with all its gold coins and other [things – AN]”: LUNIN 1958, p. 40-41.

²² LUNIN 1965a, p. 207, note 26.

and its environs. We know, for example, that he visited the site of Paykand in the Bukharan oasis and even sent the very first description of it to the *Izvestiia Arkheologicheskoi Komissii*. In 1877 Petrov-Borozna showed his materials in the exhibition of the Russian Archaeological Congress held in Kazan and renowned numismatist P.S. Savel'ev gave a talk on his coins.²³ Later, the principal core of Petrov-Borozna's collection was purchased by M. Stroganov and was partially published, when the collection of the latter became a subject of a study by W. Tiesenhausen.²⁴

The importance of these collecting activities was recognized in St Petersburg. Among the tasks of the long term archaeological trip to Turkestan undertaken by prominent scholar N.I. Veselovskii in 1885 was the description of local private collections. Yet upon the arrival to Turkestan, Veselovskii occupied himself with other tasks and instead of simple recording preferred to buy coins from local collectors. Among his suppliers were many local residents such as Samarqand residents Unusov, Hajji Zargar, and Hafiz.²⁵ As it has been already mentioned, Veselovskii acquired and brought to St Petersburg over 1500 old coins.

Later, the main bulk of the famous Hafiz collection was acquired later by one of the most prominent collectors of early Turkestan, Captain L.S. Barszewski (Russian – Barshchevskii).²⁶ According to one estimate, the combined volume of coins in Barszewsky's collection by 1893 reached an impressive figure over 10,000 specimens.²⁷ Eventually it was offered for purchase to the government with the purpose of re-starting on its basis the Samarqand Museum, but was not bought because of the lack of funds. Ultimately, the collections was acquired by Shafrajon and Magini, the members of the French archaeological mission and ended up in France. The inability to retain Barszewsky's collection within the borders of the Russian Empire became a subject of public debate. Unfortunately, several brief publications devoted to Barszewsky's collection, provide very little information about its actual content.

Another important amateur numismatist of Samarqand was K.I. Fadeev. According to M.E. Masson the main strength of his collection was in Qarakhanid and Chaghataid coins.²⁸

²³ LUNIN, 1965a, p. 207-10.

²⁴ TIESENHAUSEN 1880.

²⁵ LUNIN 1979, p. 173.

²⁶ For a bibliography concerning Barszewskii's exploits in Central Asia see: LUNIN 1958, pp. 40-42; JASIEWICZ 1994, pp. 363-4.

²⁷ EVARNITSKII 1893: no. 86.

²⁸ There are no mentions of this collection besides the publications of M.E. Masson. Yet the latter seemed to have known the composition of Fadeev's collection fairly well as referred to it on several occasions, for example: MASSON 1956, p. 12 (spelled Faddeev); MASSON 1957, p. 103, note 10.

The most prominent figures among local Samarqand collectors were Mirza Barat and Mirza Bukhari. We know more about the latter as he travelled to Saint Petersburg, was granted an audience by the Emperor, and wrote a book about his adventures. Bukhari was Veselovskii's permanent correspondent in Central Asia and his collection became one of the main sources of this scholar's acquisitions in 1885.²⁹ Bukhari was also known as a major benefactor cultural institutions: in 1883 he made a very significant donation including some 130 coins to the Tashkent Museum, while in 1887 sent several especially spectacular finds to Alexander III, with the view of them being passed to Imperial Hermitage.³⁰ In 1888 the Imperial Archaeological Commission decided to get acquainted with his collection and requested help of Chancellery of the Turkestan General Governor in the matter. In response Mirza Bukhari sent 6 cases containing 6,300 coins and other "antiques" to Saint-Petersburg. The Archaeological Commission returned to him 4,894 copper coins, but acquired everything else. Later Mirza Bukhari demonstrated his coins on the Turkestan exhibition of 1890.³¹

3B. TASHKENT

The most famous among Turkestan collections was the one of Tashkent resident Akram Palvan Askarov. This man apparently had very significant means - he had his own pavillion on the Turkestan exhibition of 1890.³² After Askarov's death in 1891, his collection of 15 000 coins was offered to the Hermitage Museum.³³ Out of this huge assemblage A.K.Markov selected 504 specimens which were consequently acquired by the museum.³⁴

There were also a few major collectors among the officers and civil servants stationed in Tashkent. The first to be mentioned is of course N.A.Maev, the editor of main local newspaper *Turkestanskije Vedomosti* from 1870 to 1892 and one of the most active writers on the subject of Turkestan antiquities.³⁵ In 1876, he presented his collection of antiquities as a gift to the newly opened Tashkent Museum.³⁶

²⁹ A list of coins acquired from Mirza Bukhari by Veselovskii in 1885 survived in the archive of the Archaeological Institute in Sankt-Peterburg: LUNIN 1979, p. 173.

³⁰ SHKODA 2000.

³¹ CHABROV 1956, p. 124.

³² CHABROV 1956, p. 124.

³³ LUNIN 1960, no. 6, p. 74.

³⁴ LUNIN 1964, pp. 233-46.

³⁵ The list of major articles by Maev see in: *Turkestanskije Vedomosti*, 1896, # 3.

³⁶ MAEV 1876.

There are very few references to General N.N.Golovachev and his collection in literature. Most likely, the reason was the scandal of 1877 caused by Golovachev's abuse of power during his tenure as the Governor of Syr-Darya Province.³⁷ Golovachev showed his coin collection on the Polytechnic Exhibition in Moscow.³⁸

The most "professional" among the Tashkent numismatists was Orientalist N.F. Kal', who served as the "officer for special assignments" at the Chancellery of the General Governor. We will talk about him further in this paper. Here it is suffice to say, that in 1888 Kal' gave 350 selected specimens from his own collection to the Russian Archaeological Society and that these coins were so interesting that Tiesenhausen devoted to them a special work.³⁹ When Kal' died in 1891, his main collection (around 1400 coins) was passed to the Archaeological Commission and subsequently was divided between the Hermitage Museum and the University of St Petersburg.⁴⁰

3C. FERGHANA AND SEMIRECH'E

The first important coin collection in Ferghana belonged to K.A.Abramov, who was stationed there prior to his appointment to Samarqand. An important collection was gathered in Ferghana by engineer Gelmann,⁴¹ whose donation would later start the collection of the Turkestan Circle of the Amateur Archaeologists. M.E. Masson also mentions that B.L. Grombchevsky (in Polish – Grabczewski) best known for his exploration of Pamirs and Hindukush⁴² collected coins in Ferghana.⁴³

The best known collector in the Talas Valley and in Semirech'e was N. Pantusov, a man responsible for a large bulk of publications on all aspects of Turkestan past,⁴⁴ a number of them on coins.⁴⁵

³⁷ BARTOL'D 1963, p. 377.

³⁸ *Katalog* 1872.

³⁹ TIZENGAUZEN 1889: pp. 374-376.

⁴⁰ LUNIN 1966: pp. 120, 124, no. 72.

⁴¹ MASSON 1985, p. 254.

⁴² AKRAMOV 1974.

⁴³ MASSON 1985, p. 254.

⁴⁴ KONONOV 1989, pp. 182-4.

⁴⁵ 'Pantusov 1873a, no. 43'; 'Pantusov 1873b'; 'Pantusov 1885'.

3D. TRANSCASPIAN PROVINCE

In the Transcaspien Province – modern Turkmenistan, a huge collection was gathered by General A.V. Komarov. Some stories related to the colourful figure of this general have an epic scale as he appeared in Turkmenia immediately after the Russian conquest and used his military detachments to collect coins on the sites: “In one hour kossaks collected over 500 coins, carved gems and beads in the locality of Ishan-baba ... Once 100 kossaks picked up to 1500 coins in Old Marv in two hours ...”.⁴⁶ The composition of local finds made Komarov’s collection invaluable for the Islamic⁴⁷ and Sasanian numismatics,⁴⁸

Another major collector in Transcaspien province was N.P. Linevich. Coins of Komarov and Linevich were partially published by Sankt-Peterburg scholars such as W. Tiesenhausen and A.K. Markov in special publications.⁴⁹

3E. THE DEFICIENCY OF INFORMATION AND EXTRAPOLATION BASED ON DATA FROM THE 20TH CENTURY

Since our sources of information are predominantly contemporary publications, the majority of those collectors who were not active on the scholarly side of numismatics remain almost entirely unknown to us. This is clear from the better recorded situation of the early twentieth century: the address list of a coin dealer published in 1910 yields the names of 45 coin collectors in various towns of Central Asia.⁵⁰ Only three of them are known to me from other sources. Meanwhile, I am aware of at least a score of major Central Asian coin collectors, such as Poslavsky, Kastal’sky, Viatikin, Stoliarov, Semenov, Mallitsky, Vundtsetel’, Trofimov, Castagne, Petrovskii, Zampaeu, who were not included in Shumilov’s list.⁵¹ Some of these collections

⁴⁶ LUNIN 1980: 89.

⁴⁷ A significant number of scholarly publications were completely or partially based on the coins from Komarov’s collection, such as, for example: TIESENHAUSEN 1888, p. 51-84. For a list of references to the scholarly publications of Komarov’s coins and for a scholarly appraisal of his collection, see: LUNIN 1980, p. 88, 93, notes 28-30.

⁴⁸ Out of 3000 coins in his last (third?) collection, which Komarov bequeathed to the Hermitage Museum, 300 specimens belonged to the Sasanian period: LUNIN 1980: pp. 88, 93, nos 28-30.

⁴⁹ See, for example Tiesenhausen’s publications based completely or partially on the coins of his collection: TIESENHAUSEN, 1890; TIESENHAUSEN 1892, p. 229-264; TIESENHAUSEN 1896. See also: MARKOV 1892.

⁵⁰ SHUMILOV 1910.

⁵¹ These are all major collectors with serious “scholarly” interests -- I am not including here people who had small collections of occasional finds, such as one gathered by telegraphist Odintsov on Paykand, or dealers, like Samarqand jeweler Shakirians, albeit their holding could be quite

were whole archaeological museums. Altogether it looks like that there were at least 60 active collectors in Turkestan in 1900s. In other words, only about 20% to 25% names of amateur numismatists appeared in scholarly and popular literature. Similar situation could be expected at least in the last two decades of the 19th century.

One striking difference between the data of the 19th and early 20th century is that for latter period we lack information about collecting activities among the native population. It is hard to imagine, that coin collecting activities, once they took root in local society, could suddenly seized to exist. Most likely, then this is a gap in our data caused by the cultural divorce between the native and colonial elites in Turkestan.

Definitely new was the interest towards numismatics among the elites of Bukharan and Khivan Khantes. Nothworthy, that it was at least partially coming from the top of the society -- it was during the early 20th century that Emirs of Bukhara and Khiva started their royal "collections".

4. MARKET

As the coin collecting was fairly well developed in Russian Turkestan it certainly prompted the appearance of a numismatics market. This market of course was only partially oriented towards the needs of local numismatic community, it also supplied historical souvenirs to tourists, of which by the standards of the time Turkestan received a fair number, and sent some of local finds to British India through the intermediary of Indian money changers and other merchants.⁵²

By the beginning of the twentieth century the coin trade in Samarqand acquired all the characteristic attributes of a developed market in antiquities. There were professional coin and antiquity seekers, who worked both for the market and for particular patrons.⁵³ Professional dealers formed an extensive network, activities of which were described by Bartol'd in 1904 in this way: the trade in antiquities "is perfectly organized; brokers form a serried syndicate, and all the threads are joined in the hands of one man; on the surface, however, the brokers are working independently from each other. A certain Mr. B comes to your suite in the hotel, offers you 'antiques' and persuades you to purchase them only from him and not from certain Mr A, whose improper methods (which you have already seen) he, Mr B, cannot approve; meanwhile, there is a full agreement between Messrs A and B, and Mr. B delivers received money to the same Mr. A"⁵⁴. Writing in the same year, Samarqand

valuable and interesting.

⁵² On the flow of Central Asian coins to British India see: NAYMARK 2005, pp. 126-127.

⁵³ MASSON 1972: pp. 6-7.

⁵⁴ BARTOL'D 1966: p. 127.

collector and scholar V.V. Viatkin bitterly complained that “even those few Russians who permanently live in Samarqand, and whose interest in antiquity or craving for profit make them buy up antiquities, to say nothing about foreigners and visitors, very rarely are able to avoid the intermediary of the almighty brokers and manage to buy objects at first hand”.⁵⁵

There were locally produced forgeries⁵⁶ and the import of the most popular objects and their forgeries from afar⁵⁷. Semenov describes “a long row of boutique shops which emerged between *madrasa* Ulug Bek and *madrasa* Tillia-Kori on the always lively Registan; a connoisseur could always find in them various small antiques and art objects: coins, figurines, dishes, Islamic seals and gemstones”⁵⁸. In other words, there is little doubt that by the beginning of the twentieth century there was a significantly developed numismatics market at least in Samarqand, which certainly was able to attract coins from distant places.

5. LACK OF PUBLICATIONS

One striking feature of the Turkestan amateur numismatics is the lack of publications. Almost none of the numerous collectors of Russian Turkestan dared to come

⁵⁵ Viatkin 1904.

⁵⁶ The presence of forgeries on this market *in general* is suggested by the fake golden coin of Demetrius in the assemblage of antiquities presented by the famous Samarqand collector Mirza Bukhari to Alexander III in 1887: SHKODA 2000: p. 203. The earliest firm record of *locally produced* coin forgery goes back to 1896: the Archaeological Commission returned to certain Kahramon Melik-Muradov a fake tetradrachm of Antiochus made by Samarqand jeweller Khwaji: SHISHKIN 1969: p. 38, footnote 95. Twenty years later there were already whole groups of fakes successfully imitating large hoards. For example, Masson often referred to the hoard of silver coins of Soter Megas/Vima Taktu, which “according to an oral communication of Viatkin” was found near Kitab in 1908: MASSON 1928: p. 286, no. 1; MASSON 1950: p. 23; MASSON 1968: p. 45. There was no silver denomination with these “bronze types” in the coinage of Vima Taktu/Soter Megas and the two silver specimens in the collection of the Samarqand Museum, which Masson took for the proof of the existence of this denomination are cast in one matrix: ZEIMAL 1983: p. 161-2, no. 30. This fake “hoard” was apparently the source of silver forgeries of Soter Megas coins, which ended up in the collections far beyond the territory of Central Asia: in the Moscow Museum of Oriental Art (w/n) and the American Numismatic Society (0000.999.26829).

⁵⁷ Among the latter were: terracota figurines replicating Egyptian ushabtis, which were claimed to have been found in the canal Dargom near Samarqand (TURKESTANSKIE VEDOMOSTI 1906); copies of ancient ceramic objects produced in contemporary Crimean workshops (BARTOL'D 1966: p. 127); imitations of metal objects and tiles of Islamic times (VIATKIN 1904) as well as “Sasanian” drachms of contemporary production (VIATKIN 1904) Imported forgeries were sold also in other areas of Central Asia, as for example a fake Assyrian bronze tablet which was purchased in Khiva: KALMYKOV 1908: p. 65; see also: PTKLA 1909: p. 46; and detailed discussion in: KLOCHKOV 1998: p. 78-82.

⁵⁸ SEMENOV 1957: p. 149.

up with numismatic publications, despite the fact that many of them had sufficient knowledge of the living and even old Central Asian languages⁵⁹ and despite their often distinguished record of publications. Indeed, most of the aforementioned army officers authored books -- descriptions of the different areas of Turkestan from the military point of view, while among the civil servants many were responsible for special works in the fields of local ethnography, traditional economy, or even history. Yet in most cases these highly educated and creative people left the honour of publication to the professional numismatists of St Petersburg, such as W. von Tiesenhausen and A.K. Markov.

One of the most striking examples of such an attitude was provided by E.F. Kal'. He graduated from St Petersburg University in 1885 with a gold medal after achieving excellent grades in exams in "Arabic and Turco-Osmanic languages, history of the Turkic people, Islamic numismatics, Islamic law, the history of the East, the history of Persia and Turkey, *etc.*" Upon his arrival in Turkestan, Kal' was appointed an "officer for special assignments" in the Chancellery of the Governor-General. In fact he served as the director of the Tashkent Museum,⁶⁰ where he had to deal with coins on a more or less constant basis and by 1886 prepared "the catalogue of the numismatic collection" belonging to this institution.⁶¹ He was certainly technically well equipped for the job — from a private letter of his we know that the major numismatic works of Fraehn, Dorn, Tiesenhausen, and Savel'ev were all available to him already upon his arrival in Tashkent.⁶² His ability to produce scholarly writings and catalogues in particular is also beyond any doubt — for example, he authored the catalogue of manuscripts in the Turkestan Public Library. Nevertheless, he left to Tiesenhausen the honour of publishing unique and rare coins from his large personal collection.⁶³

There was, however, one exception to this "silent" attitude: Captain Trofimov. It is interesting to look at both his numismatic profile and his career as an amateur scholar, for it may allow us to access the specific features of the "numismatic environment" in Russian Turkestan. First of all, Trofimov was interested primarily in

⁵⁹ Many educators and civil servants involved with historical studies in colonial Turkestan received their fundamental orientalist education at Kazan Religious Academy or at St Petersburg University. As to the army officers, they mostly acquired their knowledge of Central Asian languages at the Education Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or on courses at various military schools (KRACHKOVSKII 1953: p. 187).

⁶⁰ LUNIN 1966: p. 107.

⁶¹ LUNIN 1966: pp.110, 122, nos. 25, 28.

⁶² LUNIN 1966: p.110.

⁶³ TIZENGAUZEN 1889. For more references in academic literature to the coins of this collection see: LUNIN 1966: pp. 111-112, 123, nos. 41-43).

Islamic coins.⁶⁴ The theme of his first scholarly work also points to the main interests of the local community of amateur numismatists: he produced the chronological plates of Islamic dynasties, which were certainly meant to meet the needs of the Turkestanian collectors.⁶⁵ In the next year Trofimov rearranged the coin collection of the Tashkent Museum and published its catalogue.⁶⁶ Finally, he compiled an illustrated catalogue of his own extensive collection in the hope that the Turkestanian Circle of Amateur Archaeologists would be able to publish it.⁶⁷ Lack of the necessary “technical abilities” forced the Circle to redirect the request for publication of the illustrated catalogue of Trofimov’s collection to the Oriental Section of the Russian Archaeological Society. I am not aware of the details, but judging from the absence of such publication, the project must have failed. As to Trofimov himself, by 1910 he lived on the Vasil’evsky Ostrov in St Petersburg and kept collecting coins.⁶⁸

The case of Captain Trofimov illuminated one principal problem that all amateur numismatists of Turkestan had to face - there were no scholarly periodicals in Turkestan. For the most part of the 19th century the only edition that was willing to print information about coin finds was newspaper *Turkestanskije Vedomosti* published by Maev. The latter was a coin collector himself, but he still could put in his newspaper truly specialized numismatic works as the edition was addressing the general public. Beginning with the very end of the 19th century the first scholarly society of Turkestan, the Circle of Amateur Archaeologists published protocols of its meetings, but these were thin booklets printed locally in modest quality. Indeed, when Trofimov tried to publish the catalogue of his large collection and requested help from the Turkestanian Circle of Amateur Archaeologists, the lack of the necessary “technical abilities” forced the Circle to redirect the request for publication to the Oriental Section of the Russian Archaeological Society. The research institutions of St Petersburg, however, did not show an interest in publishing works by local Turkestanian amateur scholar – they did not fit the high standards of the academic institutions mentioned on the title page of such publication. As a result, Trofimov, as many other amateur Central Asian collectors, became voiceless.

⁶⁴ The coins of the Qarakhanid dynasty are said to be the main strength of Trofimov’s collection: see: MASSON 1971: p. 83, no. 13; MASSON 1985: p. 253.

⁶⁵ TROFIMOV 1900.

⁶⁶ TROFIMOV 1900.

⁶⁷ LUNIN 1958: p. 39.

⁶⁸ SHUMILOV 1910.

6. SOME CONCLUSIONS

Our brief inquiry seems to indicate that there were coin collecting activities reached a rather significant level in Russian colonial Turkestan during the last three decades of the 19th century. With the help of Turkestan colonial government coins were acquired by local and central museums, as well as by a fairly large number of coin collectors, many of whom gathered thousands of coins. While it is impossible to estimate the overall mass of coins produced by Central Asian soil and settled in various collections locally and around the world, we can be sure that it was in tens of thousands. The demand created a market with professional coin seekers, dealers, and even forgers. Yet strangely enough, unlike British India and some other colonial societies, Turkestan produced no amateur numismatic literature. The reasons for this were two-fold: (1) there was a wide spread notion that numismatic publications should be written by professional scholars and (2) there were no local scholarly periodicals suitable for numismatic publications and thus there was a definite lack of publication abilities. As result, most of the important information about such things as the topography of finds and hoard composition was lost and the study of Central Asian coins, especially those of pre-Islamic period, seriously started only in 1930s-1940s.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

VDI – Vestnik drevnei istorii

ZVORAO – Zapiski Vostochnogo otdeleniia Russkogo arkhologicheskogo obshchestva. SPb

IMKU – Istoriia material'noi kul'tury Uzbekistana. Tashkent and Samarkand

Izv. SREDAKOMSTARISA – Izvestiia Sredne-Aziatskogo Komiteta po delam muzev i okhrany pamiatnikov stariny iskusstva i prirody

IOON Tadzhiksloi SSR – Izvestiia Otdeleniia Obshchestvennykh Nauk Akademii Nauk Tadzhikskoi SSSR, Dushanbe

ONUz – Obshchestvennye nauki v Uzbekistane. Tashkent

PTKLA – Protokoly Turkestandkogo Kruzhka Liubitelei Arkheologii. Tashkent

Trudy IuTAKE – Trudy Iuzhno-turkmenistanskoi kompleksnoi ekspeditsii. Ashkhabad

TV – Turkestanskije vedomosti, Tashkent

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