



JĀMĀSP II. COINAGE

Typology. The obverses of Jāmāsp’s coins are notable for the addition of a small bust, to the right of the king’s own, which wears a mural crown with a *korymbos* (a cloth element enclosing the hair). The figure faces left and holds a diadem. Göbl has argued that it represents the god Ahura Mazdā and not, as was earlier believed, a crown prince (Göbl, 1952; Göbl, 1971, p. 51). Even if his arguments are not fully convincing, the fact that the depiction under Jāmāsp has very close parallels in the coinage of Bahrām II (276-293), in which the bust certainly represents the goddess Anāhitā handing over the diadem to the king on the obverse—thus repeating the investiture (q.v.) scene on the reverse—is a very strong argument for interpreting the bust on Jāmāsp’s coins as Ahura Mazdā (Schindel, 2004, pp. 450-51). This depiction certainly can be seen in the context of the internal struggles after the deposition of Kawād I, most likely to emphasize the legitimacy of Jāmāsp’s reign. During regnal year one and the earlier part of regnal year two, the diadem which the bust holds is depicted with two short ribbons showing to the left and to the right (PLATE I.a, Figure 1-1.Ia), whereas in the latter half of regnal year two and in regnal year three, the ribbons are much broader and ribbed, and show to the right (PLATE I.b, Figure 1-1.Ib). The king’s crown basically follows the model of that of Wahrām V, which most likely has a propagandistic meaning. The main difference is that Jāmāsp adds a second crescent on a pearl between the two mural elements. The obverse legend consists only of Jāmāsp’s name in the abbreviated form g’m *Gām*; the absence of any royal title has parallels in the first reign of Kawād I (488-96). As in that period, on breast and shoulders various combinations of dots, crescents, and the like occur, which were used



empire-wide.

On the reverse, the attendant figures face the altar and raise their respective right hand in a gesture of adoration towards the altar. Typologically, Jāmāsp does not alter the reverse depiction of Kawād I's first reign (see [Figure 1-4.1a-b](#)). Two minor reverse variants occur: On type 1a, the bodies of the assistant figures are shown with two parallel lines adorned with three dots (PLATE I.a, [Figure 1-2.1a](#)), whereas on type 1b their bodies are built up with a number of fine, parallel strokes (PLATE I.b, [Figure 1-2b.1b](#)). Apart from some precursors in AS (Āsuristān) and WH (Veh-Antiok-Šāpur in Kuzestān), in most other mints type 1b commences in regnal year three. Combinations of obverse type Ib with reverse type 1a are certainly hybrid. An important feature is the canonical introduction of regnal years at 9h (year 1-3). Dates had been placed on the same location already during regnal years two to seven of Pērōz (457-84), but their use was discontinued thereafter. From Jāmāsp until the end of Sasanian-style coinage, the date indication—together with the mint indication at 3h—was to remain canonical.

Denominations. No gold coins are attested so far for Jāmāsp. Apart from the silver drachms, sixths of a drachm, or obols, are known from the mints DA (Dārābgerd) and LD (Ray). All the DA specimens are dated to regnal year one, and perhaps are connected with the king's coronation, which thus may have taken place in Dārābgerd. One bronze coin has turned up so far (Schindel 2004, no. 29). Both silver and copper fractions feature the same typology as the drachms.

Mints. So far, 18 different mints are attested for Jāmāsp, which were active also under other rulers. In contrast to Balāš and the first reign of Kawād I, under whom GW (Gorgān) was the most prolific mint in the empire, the center of monetary production under Jāmāsp is located in the center of the Sasanian realm. The most common mint is WH (Veh-Antiok-Šāpur), followed by AY (Erān-xwarrah-Šāpur) and AS (Āsuristān).

(images in this article: Plate I, Figure 1)



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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