

## Coin in Jewellery from Bukhara

From ancient times coins used as currency and as element of adornment or amulet. The shell known as “kauri” was a currency and ornament in the same time. Pierced coins famous from archaeological excavations in Qunya-Uaz (Khorezm) dated by late 3<sup>rd</sup>-early 4<sup>th</sup> (Fakhretdinova, 1988, 106). 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries coins from the collection of Bukhara State Museum were possibly pendants for ornaments.

Jewellers of late medieval Bukhara produced a different types of articles used silver Bukharan coin called “tanga” from Mangit dynasty (1753-1920), Iranian coins from Kadjar dynasty (1796-1925), 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Russian silver coins “rubble” and “kopeyka”, Chinese coins from the same time. They worked in Toki Zargaron 16<sup>th</sup> century jewellers trading dome in Bukhara. Artisans mostly used Bukharan and Russian coins of small diameter for pendants of head, breast ornaments, of belts, sometimes they formed from Russian, Iranian and Chinese coins of big diameter the shape of jewellery. They soldered loop to coins or pierced them for suspending on chains.

The most important works regarding the jewellery of the Bukhara are by O. A. Sukhareva, L. A. Chvir', D. Fakhretdinova, N. Azizova. Even using of coin in jewellery of Central Asia was not study before especially some information represent in the listed above researches.

L.A. Chvir among necklaces of beads described so-called “marjons” that composed of coral beads alternated with silver Bukharan coins that were struck especially for jewellery (Chvir', 1977, 27) and “tanga” and “tangai djavak” from Tadjik cities Nurek, Qulyab, Garm (Chvir, 1977, 127, 129, 137, 139).

N. Sicheva wrote that typical practice in late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century Kazakhstan was the use of silver coins or old silver medals for ring bezels and necklace pendants, suspended on long silver chains (Sicheva, 1984, 130, 131).

In “Centuries of Gold”, author describing Muslim countries noted that after their marriage women often wore their family's wealth in the form of jewellery made from gold and silver coins, because while it may have been reasonable to rob man of his arms, harming a woman was generally considered unacceptable. Headdresses were made of circlets of small coins, with belts and necklaces of heavier pieces. The mints often struck coins on special broad, thin flans that made them both ornamental and easy to convert into jewellery (Centuries, 1986, 41).

D. Fakhretdinova described some Uzbek ornaments consists of coins. She noted Russian, Persian, Afghan, English and Central Asian Khanates coins that used for jewellery. (Fakhretdinova, 1988, 106). “Tangatuzi”, “tilla-tuzi” is ornaments consist of coins: silver “tanga” and gold “tilla”. Usually these ornaments were composed of linked 18-23 coins, terminating in hooks. Ornaments were fixed to the headdress by means of small hooks. Sometimes silver coins were gilded. Discussing with ornaments of coins, D. Fakhretdinova noted that if in ancient times it had a magical meaning only, 19<sup>th</sup> century ornaments had not only protecting power but also were a symbol of power and richness (Fakhretdinova, 1988, 107).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century juridical document from Bukhara on division of the inheritance, different items are listed. Among them is necklace “vasmai-tillo” composed of gold coins (Egani, 1994, 134).

Coins were widely used for Turkmen jewellery also. G.P. Vasil'eva described women and girls ornaments with using of coins (Vasil'eva, 2001).

Collection of jewellery from Bukhara State Museum, private collections from Bukhara and published jewellery pieces of Bukharan origin are using for this article.

### *Forehead ornaments*

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the silvergilt head-dress ornament for women, *tillo kosh* (uzb.) or *koshi tillo* (tadj.) meaning “golden eyebrows” was popular in Bukhara. The ornament consists of a double-curved silvergilt plate in the shape of woman’s eyebrows or in the shape of reproduced birds’ wings. Usually it is hung alternately with pearls and stamped bracteates. Carnelians, turquoise, paste and coloured glass are combined in multicoloured inlay on the triangularly pointed arch in openwork. Shape of the jewellery has a special power, because some birds were honoured as sunbirds and, accordingly, linked with fertility rites (Si’cheva, 1984, 17). In the centre of one of published *tillo kosh* among pearls and stamped rosettes hung a silver Bukharan coin “tanga” (Kalter, Pavaloi, 1995, 283). As *tillo kosh* was a bridal ornament, coin considered sacral and to be fertility symbols. Bridal jewellery was not only protective charms for girl like before marriage but was regarded also as beneficent symbols, associated with fertility.

The headdress usually worn together with the temple ornaments (Bukhara State Museum, Inv. N° 17085/22, 17086/22). Ornament is composed of pair of oval-shaped pendants that were suspended over the temples and ears and were fixed to the headdress by means of a hook. Pendants of silver filigree wire and with set of cornelian in the centre are very graceful. They are hung with corals on chains of silver ware. One of the pendants finished by silver Bukharan coins, another by stamped rosettes.

Usually this kind of jewellery used only for brides and coins demonstrating richness of young girl and at the same time were symbols of fertility.

Coin used in manufacturing of jewellery for head decoration known as “*sinsila*”. *Sinsila* headband usually is composed of one or two flexible rows of small stamped rosettes of silver Bukharan coins joined by hinges and chains.

Skull-cap finial was composed of Bukharan silver coins. Ornament is a silver dome-shaped finial, terminating in a hollow tube in the centre and in a fringe of four failing pendants of coins and coral beads. Hair ornament known in Bukhara as “*zarkokul*” is decoration of big diameter coin on the top and two chains of silver Bukharan coins linked with it. Chains were threaded through tubular beads and hemispheres of

stamped silver with pendants of silk or cotton tassels (Plate 1:1). It was favourite decoration of Tadjik women (Chvir, 1977, 22).

### *Neck ornaments*

They represented by necklace called “*hafaband*”. Ornament is composed of a band of boteh-shaped elements. All the elements have pendant either Russian or Bukharan coins. This type of jewellery was popular in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Bukhara.

### *Breast ornaments*

Massive coral necklaces, called *mardjons*, were very popular among women, especially in Bukhara. Ornaments are composed of one or two strings of coral beads alternating with silver Bukharan coins (Plate 1: 2). Early 20<sup>th</sup> century photo demonstrate how this kind of jewellery used: it covered fully the neck of young girl (Kalter, Pavaloi, 301). Women set great store by their breast ornaments with coins that were supposed to guard this vital part of body and give fertility (Rossikova, 1902, 280).

Artisans used coins for manufacturing of another ornaments such as “*tumor*” amulet-holder (Plate 1: 4). The amulet-holders were worn on chains on the breast or across the shoulder. Tumors were in triangle, cylindrical or square shape boxes. They were used for keeping prayers and were regarded as talismanic pendants with repel the evil eye. Coins that richly suspended from chains and box make the power of amulet stronger. For this kind of ornament, Russian coins “*kopeyka*” and Bukharan coins usually used. The surfaces of amulets were richly inlaid with semi-precious stones, engraved, and nielloed that enhanced by the colour of coins (Sicheva, 1984, 165).

The “*peshavez*” with toilet accessories suspended on chains was a breast ornament of young Bukhara women. Silver eyebrow tweezers, ear and nail pickers, perfume bottles were fastened to the chains. The central part of some of these ornaments was manufactured of one or few soldered Russian or Iranian coins (Plate 1: 5, 6).

Sometimes jewellers hung the false coins for decoration of the ornament like clasp (Sicheva, 1984, 53).

An impressive selection of massive metal necklaces for women famous as “zebi gardan” or “nozi gardan” is widely presented in Museum and private collections of Bukhara. Usually necklace is composed of a three or five chains linked by seven or nine metal elements of different shapes. The central pendant of complicated shaped suspended from it (Chvir', 1997, 28, 29; Fakhretdinova, 1988, 140-143). Some of this necklaces composed of coins that used on the places of metal elements (Plate I: 3). Women set great store by their breast ornaments with coins that were supposed to guard this vital part of body and give fertility (Rossikova, 1902, 280).

### *Jewellery for hands*

“Poncha” is a bracelet for children made of one string of coral beads and silver stamped rosettes or silver Bukharan coins (Plate I: 6). Bracelet was used not only for the protection of the child from evil eye but was live-saving charm also.

Bukharan coins used also for bezels of a finger rings famous in Bukhara as “angushtarin-i radjabi”.

### *Belts*

One of the elements of men's costume in medieval Bukhara was a belt. Some broad leather belts were fully set with lines of silver coins. Additionally coins were suspended on hooks. For decoration of belt houses in Bukhara State Museum collection Russian so-called “kopeyka” was used.

In the Bukhara State Museum preserved many details of jewellery composed of coins hung on silver chains.

Coins in jewellery of late medieval Bukhara mostly used as amulets giving magical protecting power to the ornaments that they decorated, to show social status and richness of their owners. It can explain popularity of coins for jewellery in Bukhara and Central Asia.

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*Plate I: 19<sup>th</sup> early 20<sup>th</sup> century jewellery composed with coins*

1. zarkokul' hair decoration
2. mardjon necklace
3. zebe garden necklace
4. tumor amulet-holder
- 5-6. peshavez breast ornament