

NOTES ON OLD SIAMESE COINS

(A description of some rare coins of the National Museum
in Bangkok and other old coins recently discovered.)

by

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A. General Remarks :

The number of old Siamese coins, still existing in public and private collections in Siam and still available in Bangkok silver-shops today, is exceedingly small and rapidly decreasing. Within the few years since I wrote my first and second article ("Further Studies of Old Thai Coins", JSS Vol. XXXV/2 and "Some Investigations on the Evolution of the Pre-Bangkok Coinage", JSS XXXVI/1) it has become more and more difficult to discover any additional old coins not yet described by le May in his book "The Coinage of Siam" or in one of my articles. And not only that! Coins of the Ayuthia period, which were fairly common a few years ago, have become scarce, and it seems that gradually the greater part of the silver and gold bullet-coins still left, have disappeared in the melting pots of local silver dealers and jewellers. Prices for silver and gold are still high enough to induce the trade to melt down such "useless" things as old coins for which nobody seems to care, all the more, as the silver of old coins is of excellent quality and even contains traces of gold. Considering all the havoc and destruction which the second world war has wrought, and remembering the unrecoverable losses of cultural values sustained by so many countries in Europe and Asia, it may appear like making "much ado about nothing," if one laments about the disappearance of old coins. But from my point of view-and I hope that some people will share it-it is deplorable that those old coins which are witnesses of a high civilisation existing in Siam so many

centuries ago, should be lost for purely commercial purposes. When Ayuthia was destroyed in 1767 all records relating to the various coins of that and earlier periods have been lost. Should we not endeavour, like all other countries, to preserve the coins still in existence? The old bullet-coins of Siam are *unique*, all made by hand in that particular shape, bearing different and interesting marks, which may, I hope, one day still disclose their age and the reign in which they were struck. Admittedly this hope is a faint one. It seems that we shall not be able to attribute the coins of the Ayuthian period or those of the pre-Ayuthia period to each particular reign, with the exception of that one coin of Phra Narai's reign of which we have a drawing in de la Loubère's book ("A new Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam," London 1693). But I have not yet entirely given up hope and in the mean time I shall continue to place on record all those coins which have not yet been described by le May or me. Fortunately, the valuable collection of the National Museum in Bangkok, which had been evacuated during the war, is on display again. By permission of the Curator, Luang Boribal, I was enabled to inspect that collection, to make notes of the various coins and to weigh and to describe them. Mr. J.J. Boeles was kind enough to make some photographs. This publication therefore contains an additional list of those bullet-coins of Sukothai and Ayuthia periods which have not yet been described before by either le May or me. Thereby this list, for the time being, will conclude the records of old Siamese coins known to me, with the exception of the lesser values of bullet-coins of the pre-Bangkok periods. There is a great number of such small coins exhibited at the National Museum. Many of them have not yet been described. It will, however, take a long time to make a complete survey of them, and I preferred to publish the larger coins first with a few smaller ones in addition, partly with the idea that this publication would otherwise by necessity become too long, and partly, since I was afraid that it would make still more dry reading to most members than it is already now.

The subject of old coins may actually seem a dry one. To me there is a certain romance connected with those mute witnesses of the past. They have gone through so many hands, have been exchanged for so many goods, have made some people happy who received them and others sore who had to part with them, they may have rested in boxes and chests for decades or even centuries, may have been paid for buying a bride or as war contribution, for ransom or as bribes. They may have been handled by kings or beggars, a child may have played with them or a murder committed for their possession. I have always wondered why nobody has yet tried to write the life history of such an old coin. But this is not the place to write fiction.

Siam can justly be proud of her old coins. They are proof of the fact that a monetary system has existed in this country since a very long time, and the execution of the coins proper-their shape, their marks etc.-will always present new and interesting problems, not only to the student of numismatics but also to the historian. There is one sad disadvantage: Old Siamese coins are very rare. I have no knowledge of the collections of Museums outside of Siam, except of that of the late King of Italy and that of Mr. Noirot, now in Paris. I presume that Dr. le May took his collection to England. But in addition to about half a dozen of private collections in Siam there is only the collection of the National Museum in Bangkok which contains a number of old and rare coins. I know of some undoubtedly genuine coins which exist in but one specimen each. It is the lack of sufficient material that makes comparison and research so difficult. I was inclined to consider each coin *prima facie* as doubtful as long as there was not at least another specimen of the same kind. But I have changed my attitude since then. A considerable number of genuine coins *do* exist in but one specimen. The rarity of old coins is, on the one side, an explanation of the fact that so little is known about them and that there is no market for them as f.f. for stamps. In many cases it seems impossible to value a coin which may be unique or available in two or

three specimens. On the other hand, I believe that the rarity should be a motive to preserve what is left. I understand that for this reason the National Museum which at present does not possess all known coins will try to complete its collection for the benefit of future generations.

The rarest and most valuable old coins in the possession of the National Museum are those purchased from the heirs of the late Prince Piya. Though many of them must have been known to le May, it appears that quite a number of them have not been included in his book, because le May confined himself to the description of those coins which are of standard weight, i.e. approximately weighing one Baht. In addition, le May may not have included part of the coins which the late Prince may have collected at a later date, i.e. after the publication of le May's book.

I have selected the most interesting specimens for description in this article. As it will be seen, quite a number of them are of the standard weight. Furthermore, I have described some coins which I was able to add to my own collection in the mean time. Finally, I have added various other coins-including specimens of the Bangkok period-which seemed to me worth mentioning on account of certain peculiarities.

B: Descriptions of Coins :

Nearly all coins described hereafter are either from the collection of the National Museum or from my own collection. I have only described coins which I have seen with my own eyes, which I have myself handled and weighed. The scale of the photos in relation to the natural size of the coins is stated in each particular case. All weights are given in grammes. "N.M." means= National Museum, "G." means from my own collection.

1) *Plate I/1a-1c, Blocks 1-3 (G)*

Obverse-*Rachasi* in centre, *two Conch shells* on left, *1 conch shell* on right,

Reverse-not clear, probably similar marks as obverse.

Weight- 58 grm.

Remarks- The discovery of this coin, a 4-Baht-, or 1-Tamlueng-piece of what is probably one of the oldest pre-Bangkok bullet-coin in existence, i.e. the May Mark 1, "Studies" Plate I/6a-d, No. 6, appears as one of the most important numismatic discoveries during my time of coin-collecting. As it is so often the case, I found this coin by chance, hidden in a junk-bowl, in which a Chinese silver-smith kept odds and ends of broken pieces of silver ready for the melting-pot.

The 1-Baht piece with identical marks is known from Gerini's book of Photos, now in the National Museum, of which he may presumably made his block, since he does not show a photograph of the coin in his book. In the mean time I have seen about 12 specimens of the 1-Baht coin, one of the 1/2-Baht-piece with similar marks and one of 1/4-Baht. Whereas the 1-Baht pieces weigh all between 9 and 11 grm., the 1/2-Baht piece weighs 7 and the 1/4-Baht piece 3,4 grm. The weight of this 4-Baht piece is 58 grm.

When comparing the 1-Baht coin as depicted in "Investigations" Plate I/1a-c, or the coin in "Studies" Plate I/6a-c. with Plate I/1 of this article, it seems evident that both coins are nearly related. In order to facilitate the comparison, I have added the 1-Baht coin on Plate I under No. 2 and 3, showing their shape from various angles.

Though the 1-Baht pieces have generally no hole, there are two specimens at the National Museum which have a hole. Therefore the hole can not be considered as a characteristic of this coin.

The newly discovered 4-Baht piece consists of a round bar of silver, wide in the middle and narrowing down at the ends. Both ends meet leaving a large round hole in the centre. The bar has been bent by a number of still visible hammer-marks, similar to the 1-Baht specimen.

The marks are similar to the marks on the 1-Baht coin, i.e. Rachasi in the centre walking to the right in a more elaborate execution than on the 1-Baht piece, 2 conch-shells on the right and on the left of the Rachasi and an additional conch shell on the left. See Blocks 1-3. On the reverse there is another mark which is blurred, but which seems to represent once more two conch shells right and left, whereas the centre mark-probably a Rachasi again-is not clear. In comparison to the size of the coin the marks are small. It can be noted on Block 1 that the picture of the Rachasi is surrounded by a number of small marks which may be purely decorative, but may also have a special meaning which might give a hint to the age of the coin.

The discovery of this specimen is, however, not only important, because I suppose that it is one of the oldest Siamese coins of that size known so far, but, still more so, because it appears to me to be the most important piece of evidence in the chain of development of old Siamese coins.

I refer to le May's "Coinage" pages 10/11 and Plate III. Quite evidently our new coin described here is very much alike le May Plate III/6 though without cuts. Now, the transition from both of these coins via "Studies" Plate II/4 to the bullet coins on le May Plate V seems quite obvious. On Plate I of this article I have reproduced once more the main stages of this development under Nos. 4 to 9. These have all been shown on the plates in my former articles.

Furthermore— le May Plate III/7 bears a Rachasi as mark. So does our new coin, and the latter in turn actually bears the same marks as le May Block 1, which is probably one of the oldest bullet-coins in existence. The evidence seems conclusive, and our

new coin seems, by the identity of its marks and shape with those of an early bullet-coin, to fill the remaining gap.

The Rachasi suggests Indian influence. It is quite probable that our coin under discussion dates back as far as the IXth or Xth century. It would then seem that the corresponding I-Balit coin is actually much older than we have anticipated so far. The early influence of India on the population of Northern Siam has been mentioned by le May. It is proven by numerous Buddhist images found in the North and being of Indian style and type. This would explain the fact that many of our very early Siamese coins bear Indian symbols.

Le May believes that, what he calls the types of "truer bracelet-coinage" (le May Plate III/5 and 7) are much older than the ka-kin coins proper (le May Plate III/1-4). I am inclined to presume that even the so-called "truer bracelet" types of le May—although being related on their crescent-like shape to le May Plate III/6—are neither the predecessors nor the ancestors to le May Plate III/6, because they are much larger and have sharp edges and the marks are distributed all over the surface, whereas with le May Plate III/6 the bar is rounded and the marks have a tendency to shift to the centre of the bar.

I believe it highly probable that le May Plate III/6, which must be a very rare coin indeed, because Dr. Kneeder in his very complete collection (see JSS Vol. XXIX/1) does not show any similar specimen—is the actual fore-runner of the bullet coinage of Sukothai period and of Ayuthia period. But whereas the marks on le May Plate III/6 are not represented on any later bullet-coins, the newly discovered coin establishes the connection to the early type of bullet-coins owing to the identity of their marks.

It may be seen from Plate I/4-9 that the tendency of development is well illustrated and confirmed in the manner I have described in "Evolutions" page 31, i.e. "from a low and rounded coin the shape develops into a higher coin with shoulders more clearly marked."

I must leave the question open, whether the 1—Tamlueng coin of 58 grm weight did exist at the same time, side by side, with the small coin of 10 grm, or whether the former is much older than the latter. If it existed at the same time, the respective weights of 58 grm and 10 grm are difficult to reconcile. In addition, the theory that the small coin represents an advanced stage in the evolution of the shape would not hold water. But it may be that the large coin was taken as a sample for the small coin during that period and that when the demand for smaller coins arose the authorities decided to make small coins with the same marks for better change, without however giving the small coins a fixed proportion in weight to the large value.

The similarity between both coins is so striking that I am inclined to suppose that both coins existed at the same time side by side, so that the transition from a ring-like coin to a bullet-like coin was rather sudden. In this light le May Block I may be considered as the father of all bullet-coins in Siam.

The above reflections are a good example to show the difficulties of numismatic research in Siam. I would like to emphasize once more that the discovery of this new coin represents by no means conclusive evidence for the theories submitted above, but there seems to be no doubt that this coin is the most important coin discovered since the publication of le May's book.

2) *Plate II/1 (NM) Obverse-Elephant*

Reverse-blank

Top — an undecipherable mark

Weight — 27 grm

A high coin of very ancient shape with round shoulders. Ends meet, longish hole, two medium cuts.

3) *Plate II/2 (NM) Obverse-Conch shell*

Reverse-Elephant (?)

Top — *Wheel with 8 spokes*

Weight — 23 grm

Note to Plate I – VI:

The original plates with photographs, from which the blocks for reproduction have been made, measured about 145×200 mm. During the process of reproduction it became necessary to reduce the size of the original plates to about 123×170 mm. Consequently, the scale added to each coin is not quite correct any more and allowance should be made by the reader for the above reduction. *Approximately 20% of the measurements of each coin should be added,* in order to obtain the size that corresponds to the scale stated for that particular coin. F.i.: Plate V/7: the length shown here is 78 mm.; as the scale indicates a proportion of $3/4 : 1$, the length of that coin would be about 104 mm. whereas the actual coin is about 125 mm. long.

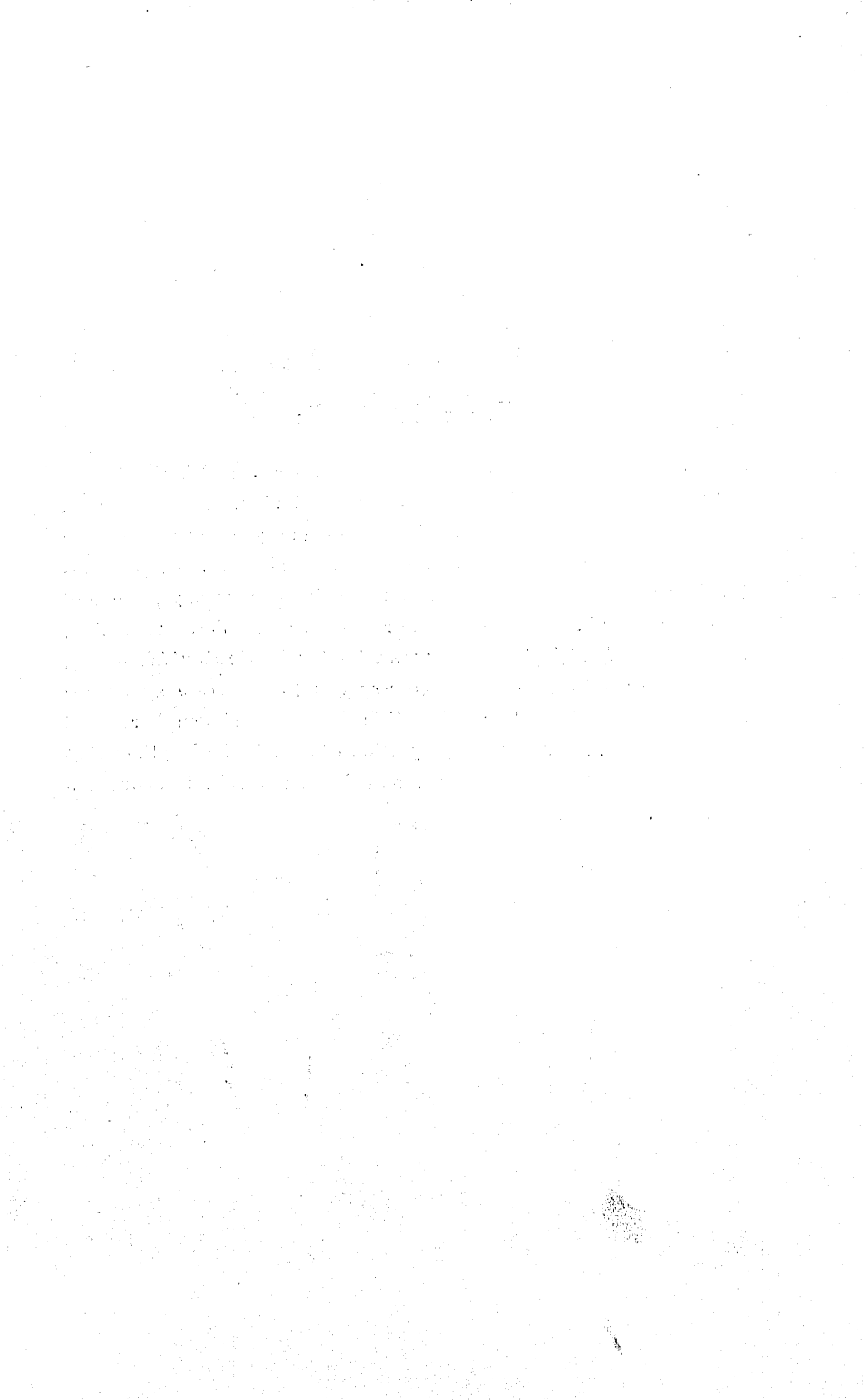
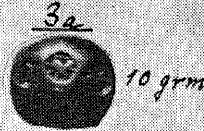


Plate I



$\frac{1}{2}:1$



$1:1$



$\frac{3}{4}:1$



$\frac{4}{48}$ gm



$1:1$



$\frac{5}{73}$ gm



$\frac{6}{13}$ gm



$\frac{3}{4}:1$



$\frac{7}{74.5}$ gm



$\frac{2}{4}:1$



$\frac{8}{77.6}$ gm

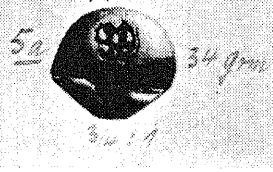
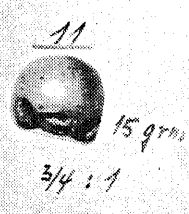
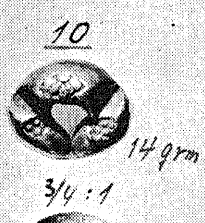
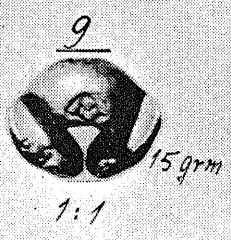
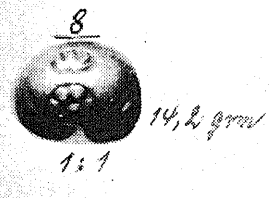
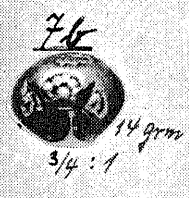
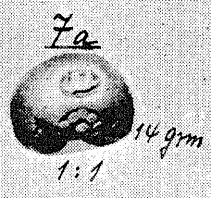
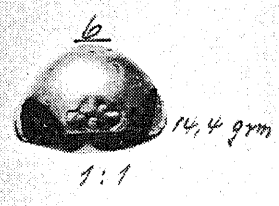
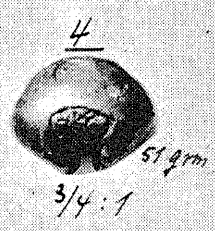
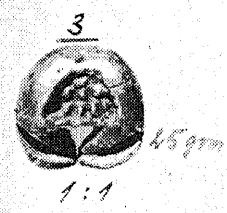
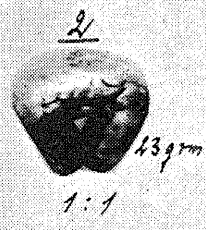


$\frac{9}{75.4}$ gm

all

$\frac{3}{4}:1$

Plate II



A triangular coin of very old appearance with rounded shoulders. Ends meet, medium hole, two small cuts.

4) *Plate II/3 (NM) Obverse-Flower Blossoms (?)*

Reverse – blank

Top – *Wheel with 8 spokes*

Weight – 25 grm

An almost round coin with a large front-mark, ends meet, two deep cuts very low at the ends.

Note—I am inclined to believe that the coins 2) to 4) belong to a very early period, probably Sukothai, and that they perhaps represent 2-Baht specimens. Few similar coins are known so far, but the Album of Gerini at the National Museum contains a few coins very much alike those described above. It seems certain that during the very early periods of bullet-coins the weights were not standardised and that a certain relation between larger and smaller coins was established only much later. The shape as well varies very much with all these old coins.

5) *Plate II/4 (NM)* This is a peculiar coin of otherwise entirely unknown shape. The coin has three ends which are bent together but do not meet. The weight is 51 grm. On top as well as on all three sides a conch shell. There are no cuts. I frankly do not know where to place this coin. It appears to be of considerable age judging from the traces of wear and tear. According to its weight it might represent a 4 Baht piece. The silver is good.

6) *Plate II/5 and 5a (G) Obverse* – *Flower blossoms in frame* like 1e May Block 37

Reverse – *Shell* in an elaborate (See Block 4) design

Top – *8 dots around a centre dot* in circles like 1e May Block 28

Weight – 34 grm

An almost round coin, very much worn. Ends meet, medium hole two large horizontal cuts. This coin may date back to a very early Ayuthia period. The weight is approximately 2 1/2 Baht. It may be a coin from Phra Narai's reign, because the mark on the obverse and on top are almost identical to the one-baht coin of that reign (le May marks 37 and 28). Like so many other coins not of standard weight and standard type its age cannot be exactly determined.

7) *Plate II/6 (NM) Obverse - Bunch of Flowers* similar to Block 11
Top - Wheel of law with 5 spokes
Weight - 14, 4 grm

The coin is almost round in shape, ends nearly meet, 2 very deep cuts, small hole.

8) *Plate II/7a-b (NM) Obverse-Bunch of Flowers* similar to le May
 Mark 4
Top - Elephant
Weight - 14 grm

Apparently an early Ayuthia coin, so far undescribed. Ends nearly meet, 2 medium cuts. To the right and the left of the mark on the obverse are two additional marks, the meaning of which I do not know.

9) *Plate II/8 (NM) Obverse - Bunch of Flowers* with 4 and 1 blossoms
Top - Elephant
Weight - 14,2 grm

This coin is similar to the preceding one, but the number of blossoms is different.

10) *Plate II/9 (NM) Obverse - Bunch of Flowers*
Top - Ox (?)
Weight - 15 grm

Quite different from le May Marks 13/14, with two large cuts and a large hole. Ends almost meet.

11) *Plate II/10 (NM) Obverse - Bunch of Flowers* similar to Block 10
Block 10 Top - Wheel with 6 spokes

Weight - 14 gm

Two deep cuts and a large hole. Ends meet. There are additional marks at the ends as shown on the photo.

12) *Plate II/11 (NM) Obverse - Shell*

No Top-mark

Weight - 15 gm

A round coin with two medium cuts. Ends meet, medium hole.

13) *Plate III/1 (NM) Obverse - Bunch of Flowers* with 10 blossoms

Top - Wheel with 5 spokes

Weight - 15 gm

Small hole, ends meet, clear hammer-marks, two large cuts. This coin is similar to le May Plate VII/4, but the wheel has but 5 spokes.

14) *Plate III/2 (NM) Obverse - le May Block 6*

Top - Wheel with 5 spokes

Weight - 15 gm

This is coin "Som Dokmai major" as shown on le May Plate VIII/5, but here again the wheel on the top has but 5 spokes and the shape seems to be older. Ends meets, a small triangular hole, two large cuts and a nick.

15) *Plate III/3 (G)* The weight of this coin is 14 gm. It represents Som Dokmai major again. But the shoulders are much higher and more marked than in the specimen depicted by le May on Plate VIII/5. Ends meet. Two oval hammer-marks, 2 medium cuts and a nick. A medium hole. According to my opinion this coin is one of the first editions of Som Dokmai. Cf. "Investigations" Plate V.

16) *Plate III/4, Block 5 (G) Obverse - Chandra-monthon symbol*

Top - 7 dots around a centre dot

Weight - 13, 5 gm

The top-mark is repeated on one hammer-mark at the end. Perfect standard Ayuthia shape with clear round hammer-mark on each side. Ends parts, no cut, no nick. The mark on the obverse is similar to the May mark 45, which the May has taken from the album of Gerini. As compared with the coin in Gerini's album, this coin is, however, different in shape as well as with regard to the top mark.

Note: After reading the manuscript of this paper, the Hon. Editor, drew my attention to the similarity of the marks on the coins No. 16 and No. 37, as depicted on Blocks No. 5 and 7, with the top of a symbolic monogram, published by *Gruenwedel* ("Der Weg nach Śambhala", Abh. kgl. Bayr. Ak. der Wiss. phil.-hist. Kl., Band 29, Muenchen 1918) — see Plate VII/2 — and another symbolic monogram published by *de Schlagintweit* ("Le Bouddhisme au Tibet" Ann. Mus. Guimet, Paris 1888) — see Plate VII/3 —. Mr. Boeles, who has made the sacred syllable "om̐" the subject of special studies, the results of which are partly published in his profound article "The Migration of the Magic Syllable Om̐" in "India Antiqua", Leyden 1947, states on page 45 that this symbol (moon, sun and fire) according to the Brahnavidyā upaniṣad stands for "Om̐".—This observation has released quite a train of thoughts and gives ample material for further studies and research. I shall, at a later date, try to make a special investigation about the different marks on Siamese coins. It will, however, take a long time, before researches may lead to results and conclusions. In the mean time I would invite the reader to compare the various marks on coins, as shown on Plate VII/6-12 with the symbols reproduced on Plate VII/1 — 4. Plate VII/1 is the reproduction of the head of a statue of Harihara, published by *Groslier* in "Les Collections du Musée Albert Sarraut", "Ars Asiatica" XVI, Plate XXXVII No. 1. Plate VII/4 is taken from BEFEO, Tome III, 1903 and shows the engraving on a stone of an ancient building in Champa. (Pō Romé at Phanrang).

Plate VII/5 is the reproduction of the foot-marks of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa on a stone relief from Jaipur and published in "Rama-

Legenden und Rama-Reliefs in Indonesien" by Willem Stutterheim, German translation by A. Doehring, Plate 102.

There seems to be no doubt that all those old Siamese coins, which we have so far described as "vertical conch-shell" or as "open conch-shell on a tray" or "on a stand", are actually representations of the symbol of the universe with sun, moon and the holy flame. This symbol of moon, sun and fire is wellknown in Siam as *chandra monthon* (chandra = moon, monthon = mandara = circle) and we shall in future, when discussing the appearance of this symbol on Siamese coins, refer to the same as the "Chandra-monthon"-symbol. So far, we sometimes have been inclined to consider many of the minute marks and designs on Siamese coins as decorative variations of the sacred conch shell. It seems, however, that all these marks and their variations have each a separate meaning. Quite a number of other marks on old Siamese coins, as f. i. the ox, the hare, the anchor, the namo etc., require further investigation. Certainly all those marks have not been applied at random, but represent a certain tradition and have a special meaning, and the study of all those marks and symbols invites further research.

17) Plate III/5 (G) Obverse - Unalom or Bua Yan (?)

Top - 4 dots in a small circle

Weight - 13, 7 grm

Two clear round hammer marks, no cuts, no nick.

NB- Both coins described under No. 16 and 17 may be coins from the North on account of their low weights.

18) Plate III/6 (G) Obverse - Elephant walking to the left

Top - Wheel with 6 spokes

Weight - 14,5 grm

This coin is similar to le May Plate IX/5/6 which was reproduced from a photograph. It has two clear hammer marks and 2 small cuts. Ends part. This is the rare "Elephant-mark" coin. There

are many forgeries of this coin to be found which are however easily recognisable on account of their shape and weight.

19) *Plate III/7 (G) Obverse - Krut as le May Mark 33*

Top - le May Mark 35

Weight - 14,5 gm

This coin is similar to le May Plate XI/1/3, but the remarkable difference is that this coin has a *large hole*, which is not well recognisable on the photo. The hammermarks are long and oval. This is the first specimen of the Ayuthia Krut-Mark coin with a hole so far known to me. The Krut Mark coin of Ayuthia period is often found with oval hammermarks and with cuts and nicks. Cf. "Investigations" page 36. The hole in the present specimen seems to confirm my assumption that the Krut mark belongs to an early period of the Ayuthia dynasty.

20) *Plate III/8 (G) Obverse - Elephant walking to the right*

Top - Wheel with 6 spokes

Weight - 14,5 gm

This coin is similar to "Studies" Plate III/4 except that it has no mark on the reverse. The shape is not quite clear. There are two small cuts.

21) *Plate III/9 (G) Obverse - Conch shell*

Top - A spiral similar to the magic sign "Om"

Weight - 15 gm

The shape is not at all clear and the marks seem to be engraved. In spite of the doubtful shape I hesitate to declare the coin a forgery. Why should one forge a coin with an entirely unknown top-mark? I have heard—though I have no evidence for this—that in former times the Buddhist priests used to engrave coins with special marks. These coins were used during special religious ceremonies or given away as charms. I forward this theory with great reservations. The similarity of the top-mark with the magic sign "Om" is quite

evident. Cf. J. J. Boeles "The Migration of the Magic Syllable Om" in "India Antiqua" 1947 page 43, Figure 1/e.

- 22) *Plate III/10 (G) Obverse - Fork*
Top - Wheel with 6 spokes
Weight - 15 gm

Another specimen of the Fork-mark for record. Cf. le May Plate XVIII/8 and "Studies" Plate VI/6-7. I do not know whether this is a genuine coin or not.

- 23) *Plate III/13 Block 12 Obverse - the Mark as shown on Block 12*
Top 6 dots surrounding a centre dot in circle
Weight - 13,4 gm

The coins belongs to Phra Sri Sachayamuni. The shoulders are low. Two clear round hammermarks. It may be a coin from the North.

- 24) *Plate III/12 (NM) Obverse - An oval dot surrounded by two frames*
Top - 4 dots in a circle separated by crossed lines
Weight - 13,5 gm

2 clear round hammermarks, ends part, small hole, no cuts or nicks. This may again be a coin from the North. A similar coin is depicted in Gerini's album.

- 25) *Plate III/11 (NM) Obverse - Three crossed lines and two dots*
Top - 5 dots in a circle
Weight - 13 gm

Hammermarks clear, ends parts. Probably a coin from the North.

- 26) (NM) *Obverse - A cross of two lines*
Top - 7 dots around a centre dot in a circle
Weight - 14 gm

Two clear round hammermarks, ends part, but there is a small hole. No cuts.

- 27) (NM) *Obverse* — Three dots below each other, surrounded by a frame
Top — 5 dots around a centre dot
Weight — 14,5 gm

Two clear round hammermarks, ends part, no hole, no cuts, no nick. A photo of this coin is in Gerini's book.

- 28) Block 9 (NM) *Obverse* — 6 blossoms surrounded by a double frame as shown on Block 9
Top — 8 dots around a centre dot
Weight — 14,9 gm

Two clear hammermarks, no cuts, no nicks, no hole. Ends part.

- 29) Plate III/14 (NM) *Obverse* — A mark similar to Unalom or Bua Yan
Top — 8 dots surrounding a centre dot
Weight — 14 gm

This coin is similar to "Studies" Plate IV/4. The hammermarks are clear, ends part, no cuts or nicks. I presume it is a Northern coin.

- 30) Plate III/15 (NM) *Obverse* — A mark similar to the Tri-mark
Top — 8 dots surrounding a centre dot
Weight — 14,2 gm

Shoulders low, but clear hammermarks. No cuts or nicks. Ends part.

- 31) Plate IV/1 (NM) *Obverse* — Shell
Top — No mark
Weight — 7 gm

Ends do not entirely meet, a longish hole, two very deep cuts. There are additional marks at the ends of the coin. 1/2-Baht Coin.

Plate III

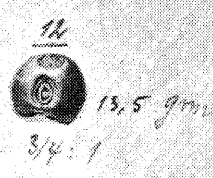
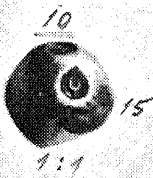
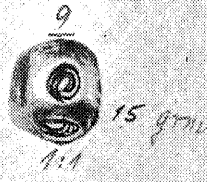
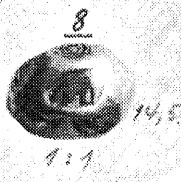
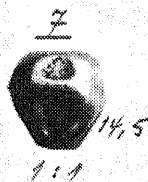
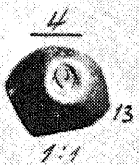
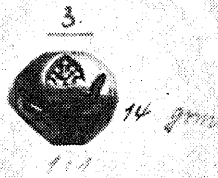
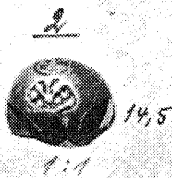
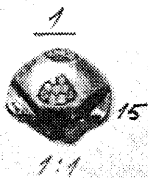


Plate IV


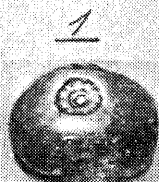
<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>
		
♀	♀♂	3.4 gram
1:1	1:1	1:1
<u>4.</u>	<u>5.</u>	<u>6.</u>
		
♀	♂	3 gram
3/4:1	1:1	1:1
<u>7a.</u>	<u>7b.</u>	<u>8.</u>
		
♀	♀	3.7 gram
1:1	3/4:1	1:1
<u>9.</u>	<u>10.</u>	<u>11.</u>
		
♀	♀	30 gram
1:1	3/4:1	1:1
<u>12.</u>	<u>13.</u>	<u>14.</u>
		
♀♂	3.6	11 gram
3/4:1	1:1	1:1

Plate V



24



24



15 grms



$3/4 : 1$



$3/4 : 1$ 57 grms



1:1

7a



118 grms

7b

$3/4 : 1$



118 grms

$3/4 : 1$

Plate VI



13



14

32) *Plate IV/2 (NM) Obverse - Shell*
Top - Elephant
Weight - 7,3 grm

Ends meet, two deep cuts, large hole. Another 1/2-Baht coin of an early period. This coin may belong to le May Plate XIV/1 1/4 (Baht)

33) *Plate IV/3 (NM) Obverse - Shell*
No Top Mark
Weight - 3,4 grm

An old 1/4-Baht coin of round shape; ends part; two deep cuts.

34) *Plate IV/4 (NM) Obverse - Bunch of Flowers like le May*
Block 13
Top - Ox like le May Block 14
Weight - 7 grm

This coin is quite obviously the 1/2-Baht coin belonging to the famous "Ox-mark" coin as depicted by le May on Plate VIII/3. It is the first specimen I have seen and must be extremely rare.

35) *Plate IV/5 (NM) Obverse - Ox*
Weight 2 grm

A small round and flat coin with two clear oval hammermarks on both sides. The ox-mark appears in the same execution as on the 1-Baht - and 1/2-Baht coin.

36) *Plate IV/6 (NM) Obverse - Ox*
Weight - 3 grm

Another small coin with the ox-mark in a different design. Two clear oval hammermarks. A photo of this coin is in Gerini's album.

37) *Plate IV/7 a,b (G) Obverse - Rachawat*
Top - Chundra-monthon symbol (see Block 7)
On both hammermarks - Ox
Weight - 7 gr

Only this one specimen is known to me. The coin is undoubtedly

genuine. The shape is round and the hammermarks are oval. Plate IV/7b shows the ox-mark. All 1/2-Baht coins of Pre-Bangkok period are very scarce.

38) Plate IV/8 (G) *Obverse - Som Dokmai mark like le May*
Block 17
Top - Wheel with 6 spokes
Weight - 3,7 gm

Note: I have remarked in "Studies" that I was inclined to presume that the smaller values of Ayuthian coins would show the marks of the 1-Baht coins on a reduced scale, i.e. that f.i.a coin, of which the 1-Baht value shows 10 lotus blossoms as mark, the 1/4 Baht value of the same coin would show only 4 blossoms. Here, however, we have a coin of 1/4 Baht weight which has exactly the same mark as the 1-Baht value. See Block 8! The shape and the weight are good. So far, this is the only coin of small value with the *full mark* of the 1-Baht value which I have seen, as far as Lotus Flowers with blossoms are concerned.

39) Plate IV/9 Block 6 (G) *Obverse - Hare walking to the left*
Top - 6 coins around a centre dot
Weight - 7 gm

A so far unknown design of the hare-mark. The shoulders are round and the hammermarks not quite clear. It may be a coin from the North.

The following coins are rare coins from the Bangkok period, which have not yet been reproduced in le May's book or in former publications:

40) Plate IV/10 (NM) *Obverse - Tri-mark*
Top - Chakra Wheel
Weight - 7 gm

The 1/2 Baht is a very rare coin and I have never seen any except in the National Museum and in my own collection.

- 41) *Plate IV/11 (G) Obverse - Unalom*
Top - Chakra Wheel
Weight - 30 grm

The 2-Baht coin of the Unalom mark is mentioned by le May who adds a typical coin story to the description of this coin. See "Coinage of Siam" page 74! The coin illustrated on Plate IV/11 is the only specimen which I have seen. There is no picture of the coin in le May's book. A photo of this coin is however shown in le May's first publication about the coins of the Bangkok dynasty. (See JSS, Vol. XVIII Part 3 Plate I No. 12). Although the reproduction of the coin there is somewhat blurred, it can be noted that the design of the Unalom is almost identical with that of the coin depicted on Plate IV/11. I have examined the latter very carefully and have come to the conclusion that the coin is genuine. Shape and weight are correct. This coin is extremely rare!

- 42) *Plate IV/12 (NM) the 1/2-Baht value and*
 43) *Plate IV/13 (NM) the 1/4-Baht value of the Krut mark*
 both very rare coins and scarcely to be seen in private collections.

- 44) *Plate IV/14 (G) Obverse - Mongkut mark*
Top - Chakra Wheel
Weight - 11 gram

The shape of this coin is true to standard. The silver is pure. The outstanding property of the coin is its weight. It may be a 3/4 Baht coin, although this value is not known. Perhaps it is a specimen, struck for approval but rejected.

On *Plate V* I have reproduced miscellaneous coins

- 45) *Plate V/1 (NM) Obverse - a mark similar to the Krut mark*
and V/2 Top - Chakra Wheel
Reverse - an elaborate design, perhaps representing the interior of a Conch shell (V/2)
Weight - 24 grm

A well preserved coin with round shoulders. Ends meet. There is a round hole and there are two large cuts below the front-mark.

Note: As the chakra wheel is unknown on Pre-Bangkok coins I have placed the coin on this Plate, although I take it for granted that the coin dates back to Ayuthia period. I have discovered until now quite a number of coins which weigh between 20 and 25 gm. These coins seem to me to occupy a special place among the old coins. They require further studies and investigations, all the more as none of them seems to correspond in shape and marks to known 1-Baht coins.

46) *Plate V/3 (G)* This coin represents the *1-Baht value* of the *Bai Matum mark* mentioned by le May in his book on page 81. This is the only specimen I have seen so far. The coin must be very rare.

47) *Plate V/4 (G)* This is the *4 Att* coin of *le May Plate XXIX/1*, but the coin is struck the other way round, so that a mirror-like imprint has been made. As these coins were struck in England, it seems strange how this coin should have come to Siam, and I show it as a curiosity.

48) *Plate V/5a-b (G)* The famous Mexican Dollar, counter-stamped with the Chakra wheel and the Mongkut during the IVth reign, is well known, although very rare. The coin shown on Plate V/5 is the only *Peruvian Dollar* known so far counter-stamped in the similar way. It is dated 1846.

49) *Plate V/6 a, b (G)* The coin depicted here is a silver coin of the weight of 1 Fuang. In execution it is very similar to the Fuang pieces of the IVth reign. There is, however, no coin known, on which the elephant is depicted walking to the right. This is the reason why I show it here as a curiosity. It might be a specimen coin. The silver is of good quality.

50) *Plate V/7a,b (G)* This coin has been recently discovered and is known so far in two specimens. It belongs to the various kinds of "lat" money shown by le May on Plate IV and by Kneedler (JSS, Vol. XXIX Part 1) on Plate VII. The coin weighs 118 grm. It is stamped on the obverse with an elephant on four places and with a chakra wheel on the little handle. On the reverse there are three stamps of the chakra wheel. This is to my knowledge the first coin of that type known with a handle. In addition it must be one of the largest specimens in existence.

51) *Plate V/8 (NM)* The cylindrical piece of metal shown here is in the collection of the National Museum in Bangkok. It weighs 51 grm. On both ends of it is cut a small chakra wheel. Luang Boribal informs me, that he believes that this piece of metal was used as a die in the IVth reign, when King Mongkut ordered the Royal Mint to stamp an unknown number of Mexican Dollars with the mark of the Mongkut and the Chakra Wheel. Actually the little Chakra Wheel on this piece of metal corresponds in size to the impressions of the chakra wheel on the Mexican Dollars. It seems, however, strange that the mark should be engraved on both sides of the piece. One would presume that the stamping of the silver Dollars was done by striking the die with a hammer and then naturally one of both marks would suffer by the hammer stroke. I therefore leave the question open, whether this piece of metal was actually used for counter-stamping the Mexican Dollars or whether it has served other purposes.

52) Finally, I would like to put on record the existence in the collection of National Museum of a 1-Baht coin with the *Tri mark*, which has as top mark not the chakra wheel, but *a circle of four dots surrounding a fifth dot*. Shape and weight of this coin are of the standard type.

53) *Plate VI (G)* There is a story connected with the old pieces of metal pictured on Plate VI. During my wanderings through Nakon Kashem I came to the shop of a Chinese who is dealing in scrap metal. In an old bucket in front of his shop I noted a great number of broken pieces of Tok Money and Bar Money from the North. Digging down to the bottom of the bucket, I found the copper bars and copper pieces shown on Plate VI. The Chinese told me that he had bought the whole lot from a Chinese in Lampang as scrap metal, and I purchased the copper pieces. After thorough examination I have come to the final conclusion that these pieces of copper on Plate VI/1-10, 12, represent nothing less than pieces of the very rare "Fish" money. During twenty years of coin collecting I have never been able to find a single piece. Two pieces are shown on le May Plate I/1-2 and additional two pieces by Kneedler on Plate XI/12-13. Let us repeat what le May says on page 3 of his book: "Two very interesting bars of copper, shaped like fishes, have come out of the bed of a small river in the north of Siam. They appear to be of great age, and they are undoubtedly made to shape and not naturally formed. Are they merely toys or were they made for purposes of barter in the bronze age?"

Kneedler shows two pieces which he calls "a very rare type of old money, known as fish money" and states: "It is particularly interesting that No. 12, which really looks like a fish, appeared together with some pieces of leaf money."

When looking at the copper pieces depicted on Plate VI, it can easily be seen that the pieces are made by man and have been made to shape apparently by the use of very crude tools. Although I do not know, whether le May or Kneedler have given the name "Fish-Money" to these pieces, this name seems to me as good as another. There is no doubt that some of these pieces resemble in shape the shape of fishes, though it may require sometimes a good deal of imagination. Among the pieces shown on Plate VI. Nos. 4, 6, 8 and 12 certainly have a fish-like appearance. The pieces are undoubtedly of considerable age,

some of them have deep marks of wear and tear, others show marks of oxidization. The similarity of shape of most of the specimens depicted is striking. The metal of the coins appears to be an alloy of copper and tin. In some pieces the amount of copper is prevalent and the pieces are of a reddish colour, whereas No. 6—almost looking like a dolphin with a pointed snout but without a tail—seems to have a greater admixture of tin or silver and has a whitish appearance. No. 11 is a flat piece of copper with rounded ends but with sharp edges at the sides. It seems to have been formed with a much more advanced type of tool than the others. The weights of the twelve pieces are as follows: No. 1) = 72 grm, No. 2) = 52 grm, No. 3) = 52 grm, No. 4) = 45 grm, No. 5) = 39 grm, No. 6) = 36 grm, No. 7) = 32 grm, No. 8) = 30 grm, No. 9) = 26 grm, No. 10) = 20 grm, No. 11) = 20 grm, No. 12) = 12 grm.

I must leave the question open whether these weights can be brought in connection with the later standard weights. Nos. 2) to 5) seem to correspond — at least approximately — to a weight of four (northern) Baht. No. 12), weighing 12 grm, seems to be similar to the early Baht of the bullet coins in the north. But all this still remains a matter of speculation.

I am not in a position to determine the approximate age of these pieces of "Fish"-money. They might belong to the bronze-age, but they might as well have been used for barter by some tribes in the north of Siam much later, i.e. at a time, when in the larger places and cities a kind of standard coinage was already in existence as f.i. during the time of the kingdom of Lannat'ai which lasted from 1296 to 1558. It is a well-known fact, that the migrating tribes of the North continued for a long time using their old primitive metal-pieces for barter purposes even when a standard coinage was already introduced in the capital of their country.

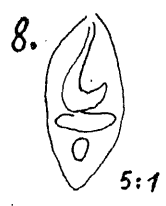
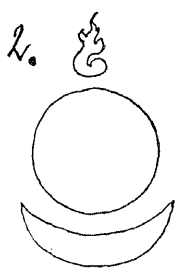
CONCLUSIONS.

Again it seems that Dr. le May was unduly pessimistic, when he stated that presumably no new coins would be found after his search. Actually the number of undescribed coins of the standard

weight has been increased again. I am far from assuming that the chase is over. Admittedly, the considerable number of additional coins makes the whole issue rather confusing. It proves that the problem is by far more complicated than it may appear from le May's book.

My remarks in my former publication about the evolution of the pre-Bangkok Coinage require some corrections. I have said in "Further Studies of Old Thai Coin" on page 170 "Bracelet-money seems to me the fore-runner of the Kha-Kim money as well as of the bullet coins". This sentence as well as the consecutive sentences in the same paragraph seem to me no longer correct, since I have re-considered the problem. After repeated studies I have now come to the conclusion that the bracelet-money may be considered as the fore-runner of the Kha Kim coins, *but not as the fore-runner of the bullet coins*, because the former, i.e. the bracelet money, is made from sharp-edged long pieces of silver, whereas the bullet coins are evidently made from a short rounded bar. I had been misled by the fact that le May includes the coin depicted on his Plate III/6 in what he calls coins "much closer to the true bracelet type", whereas actually the coin pictured on Plate III/6—which is almost identical in shape to the newly described coin on Plate I/1a - 1c - is not related to the bracelet type, but evidently made from a round bar. There seems to me no doubt, that le May Plate III/6 as well as the coin depicted in this article on Plate I/1 are the predecessors of the bullet coin. In this connection I would like the reader to look at the coin No. 10 on Plate II/9 - of which in the mean time I have obtained another specimen-. This coin, almost round in shape with an almost round hole - looks like a replica on a reduced-scale of le May Plate III/6 and Plate I/1 of this article.

There exists, however, another coin - so far in two specimens only - which I have acquired together and which are illustrated on Plate VI/13 and 14. This coin has been published before in "Studies" on Plate XI/5. It weighs 26 gm. The coin is clearly bullet-shaped but apparently not made from a bar. Whether it has been



1.

