

Three unique gold Coins of the Eldigüzid Atabegs of Northwestern Iran¹

The fortunes of the Seljuks of Iran were revived for an additional three decades after the mid-twelfth century, thanks to the strength of their Eldigüzid atabegs. Upon the capture (548/1153) and finally death (551/1157) in Khurāsān of the Great Seljuk Sultan Sanjar b. Malikshāh, his brother Sultan Muḥammad, the Seljuk ruler of western Iran, remained the only important representative of the dynasty in the Islamic East. He took Sanjar's more elevated title, the Supreme Sultan (*al-sulṭān al-a'ẓam*) in place of his own, the Exalted Sultan (*al-sulṭān al-mu'aẓẓam*). However, shortly after, in a bid to consolidate the Seljuk position in Iraq and Iran, he failed to take Baghdad despite a three month siege in 551-2/1157, and retired to his capital Hamadān, sick and broken, to die there in 554/1159. Western Iran, especially the province of al-Jibāl, was left in chaos with the provincial *amīrs* attempting to reunite the area's resources under a suitable Seljuk candidate². In 555/1160

1. The preliminary research on these coins was done under George C. Miles during the American Numismatic Society Summer Seminar in 1965. The coins have been described and discussed in the author's unpublished doctoral dissertation, *A Numismatic History of Southeastern Caucasia and Ādharbāyjān Based on the Islamic Coinage of the 5th/11th to the 7th/13th Century*, Columbia University, New York, (1969), University Microfilms No. 70-17,025 (hereafter referred to as *Numismatic History*), 349-357. The author takes this opportunity to acknowledge a research and travel grant from the American University in Cairo in 1970 which enabled him to examine at first hand the Eldigüzid coins in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, and the Armenian State Historical Museum, Erevan, and to thank the curators of these institutions who were so helpful during his brief stay: in Erevan, Kh. Musheghyan, and in Leningrad, A. A. Bykov and I. T. Dobrovolskiĭ. He would also like to thank the Research Board of the American University of Beirut for a travel grant enabling him to attend the International Numismatic Congress in New York and Washington in September 1973.
2. A convenient summary of twelfth century Seljuk history can now be found in C. E. Bosworth, ¹*The Political and Dynastic History of the Iranian World (A.D. 1000-1217)*,² *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. 5 (hereafter *CHI*, 5), *The Saljuq and Mongol Periods*, edited by J. A. Boyle (1968), 135-157, 167-184. A more detailed account of the Seljuks of Iraq (as the dynasty of western Iran was called) will be found in K. A. Luther's unpublished doctoral dissertation, *The Political Transformation of the Seljuq Sultanate of Iraq and Western Iran: 1152-1187*,

they chose once again as sultan Sulaymānshāh b. Muḥammad³. When their choice proved unfit for the office, the *amīrs* opted to allow the ruler of Arrān and Ādharbāyjān, Shams al-Dīn Eldigūz, to put on the Seljuk throne his stepson and charge Arslanshāh b. Tughril II. Because the latter was a minor, Shams al-Dīn as his guardian (*atabeg*) became the ruling power behind the sultanate.

Eldigūz⁴ was originally the *mamlūk* of a Seljuk vizier and later of the Sultan Mas'ūd (529/1135-547/1152), who appointed him governor of Arrān and gave him as wife the widow of Sultan Tughril II (d. 527/1133)⁵. By this union Shams al-Dīn became stepfather to her son Arslanshāh and eventually his official atabeg. With the elevated title Supreme Atabeg (*alābak al-a'zam*)⁶ he gave new life to the Seljuk sultanate; in the name of the youthful ruler he reintegrated into the state territories previously lost and succeeded in winning the loyalty and respect of the *amīrs* of al-Jibāl and the caliph. This system of rule, of sultan and atabeg, has been described as a dyarchy⁷, and because Eldigūz was able later to appoint his own son Muḥammad Pahlavān as guardian to Sultan Arslanshāh's son, Tughril, in

Princeton University, (1964), University Microfilms No. 65-2143, esp. 1-53. Still valuable is V. V. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*², London. (1958), 329-347. The details are also given in D. K. Kouymjian, "An Historical and Dynastic Survey of Caucasia, Eastern Anatolia and Adharbayjan from the xth to the xiiith Century," *Haigazian College Armenological Review*, 2, 1971, esp. 111-120, and in *Numismatic History*, 81-91.

3. On Sultan Sulaymānshāh see G. C. Miles, *The Numismatic History of Rayy* (1938), 216; Luther, *op. cit.* (above n. 2), 114-126 and the Appendix, 268-275; D. K. Kouymjian, "A Unique Coin of the Shīrvānshāh Minuchīr II Dated A.H. 555/1160 A.D.," in *Near Eastern Numismatics Iconography, Epigraphy and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles* (1974), 342-3; and *Numismatic History*, 165-169.

4. I have used the form Eldigūz as against Arabic *Idēgiz* ('yldiz) used previously in my *Numismatic History* in deference to the coins whose legends are universally in Arabic. As V. Minorsky pointed out (*Studies in Caucasian History* [1953], 92, n. 2), the Armenian sources render the name *Eltkuz* (also *Eltikuz*), to be read *Eldguz* or *Eldiguz*. The Turkish *Il-deniz* is modernizing and impossible as Minorsky pointed out; it is unfortunate that the *Islam Ansiklopedisi* continues to use that form and that Bosworth in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², though citing Minorsky's evidence, continues to use *Il-deñiz* alongside *Eldigūz*. See also *Numismatic History*, 288, n. 2.

5. For the sources and the literature on the Eldigūzid dynasty see *Numismatic History*, 16-55 *passim*, and 56-60. To this bibliography may be added the following works published since 1967: C. E. Bosworth, *Ildeñizids or Eldigūzids*, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², and *CHI* 5, 167-184; R. A. Guseinov, "Irakskie Sel'dzhukidy, Il'degizidy i Zakavkaz'e," *Pal. Sbor.*, 21 (84), 1971, 185-198, while containing nothing new on political history, presents interesting comments on Shams al-Dīn's identification with Sher Shams al-Dīn of the *Dede Korkut* and Shermadin of the Georgian epic *The Knight in the Tiger's Skin* by Shota Rustaveli (p. 195); K. A. Luther, "Rāvandī's report on the administrative changes of Muhammad Jahān Pahlavān," in *Iran and Islam in memory of the late Vladimir Minorsky*, edited by C. E. Bosworth, (1971), 393-406.

6. This is according to the Arabic texts and the coins; Persian texts have *alābak-l a'zam*.

7. The term was first used by M. Sanallah, *The Decline of the Saljūqid Empire*, Calcutta (1938), 7, but only popularized and fully developed by Luther, *op. cit.* (above n. 2) 137-204. See also *Numismatic History*, 59, n. 134, and 89; Luther, "Rāvandī's report," *passim*.

1175⁸, upon the death of Eldigüz and Arslanshäh within a few months of each other, Pahlavän continued the dyarchy as atabeg to the new sultan.

Under Pahlavän the unity of this state was threatened in several ways. First, he gave his brother Qızıl Arslan semi-autonomous control of the home provinces of the Eldigüzids, namely Ādharbäyjän and Arrän⁹. Secondly, during his lifetime he seems to have given appanages to his four sons¹⁰ — Qutluğ İnanch, Amīr-i Amīrān ʿUmar (both issues of his wife İnanch Khatun), Nuşrat al-Dīn Abū Bakr, and Özbek (sons of a slave woman) — reminiscent of King Lear's partition amongst his daughters. Finally, he gave his own *mamlūk* commanders high administrative posts, and according to Rāvandī and Ibn Isfandiyār, these Pahlavānīyah as they are called by Ibn al-Athīr, were the major cause for the disorganization of the Seljuk sultanate of Iraq at the end of the sixth/twelfth century¹¹.

The dyarchical system finally broke down altogether under the atabegate of Pahlavän's successor, Qızıl Arslan (582/1186-587/1191). The main reason seems to have been Qızıl's overtly harsh treatment of the young Tughrl, who tried to obtain enough support from various *amlrs* of al-Jibāl to free the state of Eldigüzid control. Animosity between sultan and atabeg had grown to such proportions that a falling out was inevitable. Tughrl refused to cooperate with Qızıl; in 584/1188 the atabeg, with Caliph al-Nāşir's blessing, quickly retaliated by declaring Tughrl deposed and Sanjar b. Sulaymān the new sultan in his place. Two years later Qızıl imprisoned Tughrl, declared the end of the Seljuk dynasty, and proclaimed himself sultan¹². Yet, Tughrl, who otherwise is praised in the sources as a man of superior qualities, was as much to blame for the disintegration of the dyarchy. His desire

8. Luther (*The Political Transformation*, 201-202) by careful deduction from al-Rāvandī, has established that Eldigüz died in Rabīʿ I, 571/October-November 1175. This date is confirmed by a short Armenian chronicle, presumably written in the following year, which has Eldigüz alive and laying siege to Ani in 1175; V. A. Hakobyan, *Marz šamanakagrut'gunner XIII-XVIII dd.* [*Minor Chronicles of the XIII-XVIIIth Centuries*, Erevan (1956), No. 24, p. 502, cf. *Numismatic History*, n. 77].

9. Bosworth, ⁶Ideñizids or Eldigüzids, *ET*². Apparently Qızıl had the northwestern areas with Tabriz as capital, and Pahlavän, al-Jibāl; this is explicitly confirmed by the Armenian historian Vardan (d.1271), *Havak'amm patma'ean* [*Universal History*], ed. L. Alishan, Venice (1862), 130-131; cf. *Numismatic History*, 292, n. 12.

10. al-Rāvandī, *Rāḥat al-şādūr wa ḍiyat al-şurūr*, ed. M. Iqbāl, G.M.S., n.s. II London (1921), 336, and, al-Ḥusaynī, *Akhbār al-dawlah al-saljuqiyyah*, ed. M. Iqbāl Lahore (1933), 172-173. cf. *Numismatic History*, 292; Bosworth, *CHI* 5, 180. Luther, *«Rāvandī's report»*, 396, maintains it is not clear from Rāvandī's information whether this distribution was made just before or after Pahlavän's death.

11. For complete discussion and excerpts from the sources, see Luther, *op. cit.* (above n. 5) *passim*.

12. Rāvandī, *op. cit.* (above n. 10), 363; Ḥusaynī, *op. cit.* (above n. 10), 181-184; Bosworth ⁶Ideñiz, ²in *ET*², and *CHI*, 5, 181; *Numismatic History*, 292. On al-Nāşir's involvement see Luther, *The Political Transformation*, 252.

for more control of Seljuk affairs was natural; but he failed, as did Qızıl, to appreciate that only *because* the dyarchy — a combination of Eldigüzid military strength and the prestige of the Seljuk name — had existed and in fact worked, was it possible for the Seljuks of Iraq to keep ruling in western Iran as late as the eighties of the sixth/twelfth century.

Qızıl's sultanate was short-lived. Toward the end of 587/1191, the « Sultan » was murdered under mysterious circumstances; shortly after, Tughrił was released from his imprisonment¹³. For the next three years he fought against Qutluğ Inanch who had taken over the Eldigüzid heritage in al-Jibāl. Qutluğ lost no time in appealing to the Khwārazmshāh Tekish for help, and in 588/1192 the latter took Rayy, made peace with Tughrił, and returned to Khurāsān. Tughrił, lacking the support of Caliph al-Nāṣir, having alienated the *amīrs* of al-Jibāl — his only real source of personal power — by arbitrary actions against them, constantly at war with the Eldigüzids, first Qızıl, then Qutluğ Inanch and finally Abū Bakr, nevertheless, decided to attack the Khwārazmian troops and Qutluğ at Rayy. Out-numbered and refusing to wait for his own reinforcements, he hopelessly, foolishly, but bravely plunged at the head of his troops into Tekish's army near Rayy and perished. His head was sent to the caliph in Baghdad¹⁴. The Great Seljuk Sultanate was ended. Iran and the lands to the east were never again to have a Seljuk ruler. It was left to the branch of the family in the west, the Seljuks of Rūm, to carry the dynastic name on until the turn of the thirteenth-fourteenth century before its total disappearance from the pages of Near Eastern history.

The Eldigüzid state was to survive the collapse of the Seljuks of Iraq. For another thirty years until 622/1225, the atabegs continued to rule but in an area limited mostly to their home territories in northwestern Ādharbāyjan and Arrān¹⁵. As mentioned above much of al-Jibāl had come under Khwārazmian control already before Tughrił's death¹⁶, though not so firmly that *amīrs* and atabegs as well as the

13. Rāvandī, *op. cit.* (above n. 10) 343; Husaynī, *op. cit.* (above n. 10), 181. It is suspected that Qızıl's new bride, his brother's former wife, Inanch Khatun, mother of Qutluğ, poisoned him. She in turn was married by Sultan Tughrił, who perhaps fearing the same fate as Qızıl, took the preventive action of murdering her. For the details see T. Houstma, « Some Remarks on the History of the Seljuks », *Acta Orientalia Hungarica*, 3, 1925, 142-143, 151. Cf. *Numismatic History*, 293; Bosworth, *CHI* 5, 181; Luther, *The Political Transformation*, 252-253.

14. Tughrił was only twenty-five when he died. According to al-Jurjainī he was personally killed by Qutluğ Inanch, *Ta'rikh-i Jahān-Gushā*, English trans., J. A. Boyle, *The History of the World-Conqueror*, 2 vols. Cambridge, Mass. (1958) 1, 302-303; see also Bosworth, *CHI* 5, 182, n. 1, for citations from the other sources, and Luther, *The Political Transformation*, 255-256.

15. For details on the death of the last atabeg, Özbek, see below, n. 53.

16. Upon Tughrił's death Tekish occupied the capital Hamadān and all of al-Jibāl. The Eldigüzid Qutluğ Inanch was appointed as his governor until the latter's death shortly after in 591/1195. Although his half-brother Abū Bakr ruled in Ādharbāyjan, Qutluğ was considered the primary successor to the family's legacy; unfortunately, we have as yet no numismatic data for him.

caliph did not from time to time entertain the hope of regaining parts of it for themselves.



Shams al-Dīn Eldigüz had taken the prerogative of striking coins already before his ward Arslānshāh became sultan¹⁷. In doing so he always mentioned the name of the Seljuk sultan (the immediate overlord), and usually but not always the caliph¹⁸. His successors continued minting coins until the end of the dynasty. Of poor quality and exclusively in copper, they can be divided into two general types: regularly and irregularly struck coins¹⁹. The former type, nearly round in shape and bearing an almost complete legend, was probably intended for use in adjacent Christian areas such as the Armenian city of Dvin²⁰. Hoard finds indicate that the output was considerable but that the circulation was local, confined to Ādharbāyjān Arrān and eastern Armenia²¹. Unlike some of the neighbouring dynasties, whose history for certain periods is made intelligible thanks to the contribution of numismatics²², the Eldigüzids, because of their special relationship with the Seljuk court

17. For these issues see the author's *Corpus of Eldigüzid Coins, Numismatic History*, 296-300 nos. 1-5.
18. *Numismatic History* nos. 8-9, 305-308; these coins only bear the name of Sultan Arslānshāh and Eldigüz. They are the most numerous of the twelve basic types of Shams al-Dīn which have come to light and are found principally in areas of dense Christian population such as Dvin (Kh. A. Musheghyan, *Denezhnoe obrashchenie Dvina po numizmaticheskim dannym*, Erevan [1962], *passim*), and Nakhijavan (E. A. Pakhomov, *Monetnoe obrashchenie Azerbaidzhana v XII i nachale XIII veka*, NS [USSR] 26, 1957, 87).
19. Pakhomov was the first to call attention to this distinction. He roughly defined them thus: «regularly» struck copper coins were of a definite form usually circular and near uniform in weight, which he conjectured allowed them to be regarded as money with a specific unit value; «irregularly» struck coppers were bits of metal of diverse form, size and weight, rarely containing the impression of a whole die, and whose largely fluctuating weight did not suggest the possibility of their use as unit currency. Rather this irregularly struck copper was sold or exchanged by weight of minted metal. Furthermore, irregular copper is almost never found outside the area in which it was struck, indicating that it was probably not used as monetary units, but as weight-lots of stamped copper in areas of local barter economy. E. A. Pakhomov *Monety Gruzii*, I, *Domongoľskii period*, St. Petersburg (1910), 82, new edition with the hitherto unpublished second volume of his *Georgian Coins* and a commentary by the editor D. G. Kapanadze, Tiflis (1970), 85 and 298; *idem*, *Monetye klady Azerbaidzhana i Zakavkaz'ia*, I, Baku (1926), 26-27; *idem*, *op. cit.* (above n. 18), 87; Musheghyan, *op. cit.* (above n. 18), 30-31; cf. *Numismatic History*, 118-123 for a detailed discussion.
20. On circulation in Christian areas see *Numismatic History*, 120-123, and note 18 above.
21. The evidence from coin hoards is found in the indispensable and monumental publication of all hoards and single finds in the Caucasus by Pakhomov, *Monety klady etc.*, (above n. 19), 9 vols., Baku (1926-1966).
22. This is especially true of the Maliks of Darband (*Numismatic History*, 243-286), the Bāshkinid Beshkenid Maliks of Ahar (*ibid.*, 369-410, and 60-61 for references to the literature on the dy-

and their own patronage of Islamic men of letters, are blessed with a comparative richness of literary sources which discuss them directly. Yet, even though we do not have to rely on their coins for their history, the numismatic data help clarify various points and, as we shall see, illuminate certain intentions in their foreign policy.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Ādharbāyjān and Caucasia, the minting authorities — the Eldigüzids, the Shirvānshāhs, the Kings of Georgia, the Bīshkīnid Maliks of Ahar, the Maliks of Darband, and an unidentified vassal of the Eldigüzids²³ — except for a few base silver pieces of the Shirvānshāhs²⁴ and the gold pieces to be discussed below, struck only copper coins. This was likewise true for the Islamic rulers, epigones of the Seljuks, to the west and south of the area, in Anatolia. The explanation usually given is that at a time when the monolithic Great Seljuk Empire's control of the Near East decayed, allowing indigenous dynasts, *amīrs* and Turkic generals to take for themselves whatever territory they could, coinage was intended for limited circulation in areas which economically reverted to a local barter economy rather than intra-area or international trade²⁵. (There was also the so-called silver crisis or famine in the Middle East, resulting in the nearly total absence of coins in that metal)²⁶. The only dynasty in western Iran issuing gold was the Seljuk sultanate of Iraq, but already in the first half of the sixth/twelfth century the quantity and quality was inferior. Very few preserve either date or mint. George Miles had underlined this situation more than three decades ago on the basis of the excavations at Rayy²⁷:

* This phenomenon is doubtless in part due to the decentralization of the Seljūq Empire and the continually harassed state of the eastern lands; but perhaps even more to the degeneration of the coinage (for we are no better supplied with Seljūq issues of other Persian mints during this period). Between the last date entered here, 555-556, and the end of the 6th Century, Rayy was nominally in the hands of the Seljūqs of 'Irāq, and such specimens of their coinage as have been preserved are so miserably designed and struck that it is not at all surprising that there is this

nasty), an unidentified Eldigüzid vassal for which even the numismatic evidence provides scant help (*ibid.*, 411-418), as well as the Shirvānshāhs of the eleventh-thirteenth centuries *ibid.*, esp. 238-242, and Kouymjian, *op. cit.* (above n. 3) 339 and 346.

23. For all these dynasties except the Kingdom of Georgia see references to *Numismatic History* in the previous note. For Georgian coins, in addition to Pakhomov, *Monety Gruzii*, (above n. 19), see D. Kapanadze, *Gruzinskaja numizmatika*, Moscow (1955) with the revised third edition in Georgian, Tiflis (1969); D. M. Lang, *Studies in the Numismatic History of Georgia in Transcaucasia*, (1955), with supplements in NC 1957 and ANS MN 1966.
24. Nos. 1-11 of the Corpus of Shirvānshāh Coins, *Numismatic History*, 142-160.
25. See note 19 above.
26. For a discussion and references to the literature on the silver crisis see *Numismatic History* 55-56, n. 118; 115-118, 421-425; for a concise statement on Ādharbāyjān, Pakhomov, *op. cit.* (above n. 18), 90.
27. Miles, *op. cit.* (above n. 3), 216-217; cf. *Numismatic History*, 352-352.

long lacuna in the history of the Rayy mint. The quantity as well as the quality of the output must have fallen off considerably, for relatively very few of the coins of the 'Irāq Seljūqs have come to light. This degeneration is to me remarkable in view of the superior quality of the artistic products, of pottery at least, at Rayy during this period. Very probably the old gold, the good gold of the earlier Seljūqs and perhaps even of earlier dynasties, continued in use even into the beginning of the Mongol period. *

It is in this context that the three gold coins in the American Numismatic Society which are the subject of this article are of such interest. They are the only known gold issues for any of the regional dynasties other than the Seljuks. They are base, poorly engraved, badly struck and worn. Their formal description and an analysis of their legends follows.

1. (Pl. 55, 3)

AV. Mint name and date lacking. Sultan (?) Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad Jahān Pahlavān b. Eldigūz (587/1191-607/1211). Caliph al-Nāṣir lidīnillāh (575/1180-622/1225).²⁸

Obverse

Field within a square inscribed in a triple circle, the center one made of dots.

السلطان [? ...]	The Sultan [...?].
ابو بكر بن [? ...]	Abū Bakr son of [Muḥammad?]
جهان پهلوان [? ...]	Jahān Pahlavān [...?]

Margin: to the right between the inscribed square and the first ring of the triple circle, a sword, probably representing a *tamghā*.²⁹

Reverse

Field within a square inscribed in a triple circle, the centre one made of dots.

لا إله إلا الله	[There is no God] but A[llāh].
محمد رسول الله	[Muḥamm]ed is the Messenger of Allāh.
الناصير لدين الله	[al-Nāṣir lidīnillāh].

28. For an earlier and somewhat different description and analysis of the coin, *Numismatic History*, Eldigūzid Corpus, 349-352, no. 45. I would like to thank George Miles and the ANS for supplying the photographs of this and the other two gold coins discussed below.

29. Pakhomov confirms the use of a sword (in addition to the more common trident) as an Eldigūzid *tamghā*, *op. cit.* (above n. 18), 89.

Margin : at the bottom between the square and the first ring of the circle, either a floral ornament or parts of an illegible legend.

American Numismatic Society. Accession No. 63.174, gift of Y. Nahapetian of Isfahan. d=28.5-30.0 mm.; w=3.65 gr.

The reverse of the coin presents no problems; the *shahādah* and the name of the Caliph al-Nāṣir are clear though the right side of the coin is worn smooth. Our interest is in the obverse legend. Here, despite the worn left side, about five-sixths of the three line inscription is clearly visible. The reading given above, except for those sections indicated by an interrogation point, is reasonably certain. The *rā'* of Bakr seems to be rendered twice, once up, characteristic of final *dāls* and *rā's*, and again down as one would expect. Were there additional words crowded into the space at the end of each line? It is hard to say. The field is enclosed in a square, the lower, upper and left sides of which are visible. (A rectangle appears to be ruled out since it could not be inscribed in a circle). The distance from top to bottom is sixteen millimeters; measuring the existing legend we find remaining respectively four, two and two millimeters at the end of each of the three lines. If these remnants of lines contained normal words, their letters would have had to have been very crowded together. Let us assume that this was the case, for such crowding is not uncommon in this period³⁰. What then might the additional words be? For the first line the only possibility would be *al-mu'aẓẓam* or *al-a'ẓam*, the greatest or supreme sultan. The second line might contain the conjectured Muḥammad; indeed there seems to be some traces which suggest that the word extended downward to the third line too. The final line, assuming that the Muḥammad from the line above did not carry down, might conceivably have carried the word atabeg. If we complete the legend this way, then we would have a title for Abū Bakr, and (greatest) sultan would refer to the Khwārazmshāh Tekish. In fact according to al-Juvainī in, 595/1199 the Caliph al-Nāṣir gave Tekish the title Sultan of Iraq, Khurāsān and Turkestan;³¹ of course the Khwārazmshāh could have unofficially assumed the title already after his defeat of Sultan Tughrl in 590/1194.

Continuing our argument from these supposed additions to the obverse legend, we might further support the case for the title « sultan » referring to someone beside Abū Bakr by citing another coin, this time of copper, which according to Soret was issued in Ardabīl by Abū Bakr and is dated 594/1197-8³². The reverse is standard

30. For illustrated examples of Seljuk gold *dīnars* from Rayy in al-Jibāl, see Miles, *The Numismatic History of Rayy* (above n. 3), pl. V.

31. al-Juvainī, *op. cit.* (above n. 14), I, 312.

32. F. Soret, "Lettre à S. E. M. le conseiller d'État actuel de Gilles, sur quelques monnaies inédites de l'Adherbaidjan," RN 1860, 69-70, no. 5; the obverse is illustrated, 1859, pl. XXII, fig. 5. Reference to the same coin with a copy of the line drawing illustrating it can be found

with the *shahādah* and al-Nāṣir, Commander of the Faithful, in four lines. The obverse reads : The Greatest Sultan / The Supreme Shāhānshāh / Abū Bakr [son of] / Muḥammad. Soret attributed the title sultan to the Khwārazmshāh (mistakenly Jalāl al-Dīn instead of Tekish), and stated that Abū Bakr had taken the elevated title Shāhānshāh. Pakhomov in reporting a similar specimen, but with out mint name or date, placed question marks beside the first two lines of the obverse, but whether he meant to question the reading or the attribution of the titles, is not clear³³.

To the best of my knowledge there is no reference in the sources regarding the taking of the title Shāhānshāh by Abū Bakr or any other Eldigūzid. If the title does refer to the Khwārazmshāh, if we can trust the reading of the date 594/1197-8 on the copper coin, and if we add the testimony of al-Juvainī, then our gold piece No. 1 could be an issue struck by Abū Bakr in 594 on the occasion of Tekish receiving the title sultan. However since the gold coin is not dated, nothing, according to this line of reasoning, precludes the title from referring to Tekish's successor Muḥammad (596/1200-617/1220) and the coin dating from the twelve year period 595 until the death of Abū Bakr in 607.

Yet this supposition, that the title « sultan » refers to other than Abū Bakr and the supporting argument above, is one to which I personally *do not* subscribe. I do not believe there is enough room for proper additions at the end of the obverse lines, and I think the traces on the lower left side are part of the word Muḥammad. Furthermore, the rationale followed above leaves Abū Bakr without a title for this gold issue and on no other example of his coinage does he lack a title³⁴. Rather it seems to me that Abū Bakr took the title sultan for himself. He was not the first Eldigūzid to do so, for his uncle Qizil Arslan had already set the precedence in a more dramatic way about which the sources speak (see above). Since Abū Bakr

in W. H. Valentine, *Early Muhammedan Coins*, a manuscript in the library of the American Numismatic Society, N. Y., no. 29, pl. 13. The style of the epigraphy, at least according to Soret's drawing, is not like that of other Eldigūzid issues. The word Ardabīl does not in fact appear on the coin (or line drawing), but is guessed at by Soret in the effaced left margin. The present location of this specimen is unknown.

33. Pakhomov, *op. cit.* (above n. 19), VII (1957), 47, hoard no. 1709, coin no. 68. The margins which seemed to have existed are worn. The adjectives are reversed, *al-a'zam* for sultan and *al-mu'azzam* for *shāhānshāh*; the obverse is in three lines instead of four, with son of Muḥammad moved up with Abū Bakr. The coin is part of a hoard of 545 copper coins, over half of which were Eldigūzid, found in Derbend (Darband), Dagistan in 1953. The hoard was deposited in the Derbend District Museum and is presumably still there.
34. Counting the gold coins under study and the copper issue with *shāhānshāh*, there are fifteen major types with many more minor variants; for the corpus of Abū Bakr's coins see *Numismatic History*, 323-357, nos. 31-47. Except for no. 40 (*shāhānshāh*) and the gold pieces, nos. 45-47, the rest bear the title atabeg or supreme atabeg.

was Qizil's favored nephew³⁵, upon the death of the latter in 587, the former with his uncle's legacy founded a state in Ādharbāyjān separate from the rest of the Eldigüzid inheritance in al-Jibāl which was nominally under Qutluğ Inanch's control. In fact it is possible that Abū Bakr may have just retained Qizil's self-proclaimed title of sultan after his death as a sign of continued defiance toward Tughrl b. Arslanshāh.

Assuming that the title sultan on the copper coin refers to the Khwārazmshāh and *shāhānshāh* (perhaps) refers to Abū Bakr, for what reason would Abū Bakr wish to strike in that same or a later year a gold coin in which he has either no title or (perhaps) just the title atabeg? It would be unreasonable to imagine that the Khwārazmshāhs put pressure on him to strike such coins, for they could have issued their own without even mentioning Abū Bakr's name. Additionally, in terms of the economy of the Eldigüzid state, Abū Bakr had no monetary reason to strike gold. Dinars had not been used for currency in his lands for a century; no new gold had been struck and very little of the « old gold » has been found in hoards from the area. Rather this dinar was probably struck by Abū Bakr as a symbolic affirmation of his assuming or maintaining the title sultan. When this happened, is not clear. Most logically it would seem Abū Bakr would have dared assert himself in the period not only after the death of the Seljuk Tughrl in 590/1194, but after the death of Tekish in 596/1200, when the Khwārazmshāhs under Muḥammad were pre-occupied with events in the east³⁶ and when his halfbrother Qutluğ Inanch, the only other obstacle to Abū Bakr inheriting, at least nominally, the former territories of the dyarchy, was also dead.

This dating would call for a reexamination of the Abū Bakr's copper issue mentioned above. It does not seem to me unthinkable to imagine that both *shāhānshāh* and *al-sultān* refer to Abū Bakr. This would recall for him the grandeur of the Great Seljuk Sultans', Tughrl Bey, Alp Arslan, and Malikshāh, who used the two titles on their coins³⁷. The date of 594 on the copper coin is based on a single worn example where, in the margin in addition to a clear ninety, there was what Soret read as the *bā'* and '*ayn of arba'a*', four; but the stroke could just as easily belong to the *bā'* and '*ayn of sab'a*', seven, or the last tooth of the *stn* and '*ayn of tis'a*', nine, for the reading 597 or 599³⁸, which of course fits very well with the time limits (595-607) set above for the gold piece. Needless to say only other specimens of these coins will help settle the problem in a more conclusive manner.

35. *Numismatic History*, 292; Bosworth, *CHI* 5, 180.

36. Bosworth, *CHI* 5, 184 and n. 1 for references to the sources.

37. See for example the issues of these three sultans for Rayy, Miles, *op. cit.* (above n. 3), 198-208, nos. 226, 228-231, 233-235, 237A-244.

38. Soret's drawing is of no help. The only thing visible is a doubtful final '*ayn*'; see reference in n. 32 above.

2. (Pl. 55, 4)

AV. Mint name and date lacking. Sultan (Abū Bakr?) b. Muḥammad Jahān Pahlāvān. Caliph al-Nāṣir lidīnillāh.³⁹

Obverse

[...]	[...]
[محمد رسول الله]	[Muḥammad] is the Messenger of A[llāh].
[السلاطان ... (?) ابو بكر]	[The Sultan (?) Abū [Bakr]
[جهان پهلوان]	Jahān Pahlavā[n]

Reverse

[لا اله الا الله]	[There is no] God [but Allāh]
[واحد لا شريك له]	[A]lone. [He has] no associate.
[الناصر لدين ... (?) الله]	[al-Nāṣir lidīnillāh]
[امير المؤمنين]	[Commander of the Faithful].

American Numismatic Society, E. T. Newell Collection, ex-Valentine Collection. d=18.5 mm.; w=1.54 gr.

The word *sultan* is clear; what follows it on the third line of the obverse is not. It looks like an animal head, above which is a figure (animal?) on hands and knees. More probably it is a word composed of letters which have melted together from wear, even though such wear is not evident in the rest of the inscription. Perhaps a stylized *Muḥammad* is concealed within this strange form. This is followed by an *alif*, and then a stroke with a point underneath (the engraver added diacritical marks on both faces of the coin) for *bā'* followed by a loop for *wāw*, rendering *Abū*. Below, the words *Jahān Pahlāvān*⁴⁰ are very clear and tend to add weight to the reading *Abū (Bakr)* above. In the next to the last line of the reverse there appears to be a small animal (rabbit?) or design above the *yā'* and *nān* of *lidīn*. For the same reasons as stated under No. 1, one is inclined to associate the title *al-sulṭān* with *Abū Bakr*.

39. The coin has been somewhat differently discussed in *Numismatic History*, Eldigüzid Corpus, 350, 354, no. 46.

40. The *nān* of *Jahān* has passing through it what appears to be a spear forming the most common of the Eldigüzid *tamghā's*, a trident. Other examples of this *tamghā* are found in the coins of *Abū Bakr*, issues nos. 36-38, *Numismatic History*, 337-344, and *Özbek*, nos. 48-50, *ibid.*, 358-362; see also variant types of the three pronged spear illustrated in *Musheghyan*, *op. cit.* above n. 18), pl. 16, figs. 112-115.

3. (Pl. 55, 5)

AV. Mint name and date lacking. Abū Bakr (?) b. Muḥammad Jahān Pahlavān [and/or?] Ōzbek (?) b. Muḥammad Jahān Pahlavān. Caliph al-Nāṣir lidīnillāh.⁴¹

Obverse

(?) ابو بكر ...	[A]bū Bakr (?)
(?) اوزبك ...	[Ō]zbek . . . (?)

Reverse

محمد رسول الله	[Muḥammad] is the Messenger of Al[lāh].
الناصر لدين الله	[al-Nāṣir]r lidīnillāh].

American Numismatic Society. E. T. Newell Collection, ex-Valentine Collection. d=19.5 - 20.5 mm.; w=1.75 gr.

This is the most difficult of the three to decipher. The reverse is fairly confidently read, though the *yā'* and *nān* of *lidīn* must have been engraved below the line. A floral design at the top is similar to that of another coin of Abū Bakr and one belonging to Ōzbek⁴². The first line of the obverse seems to read Abū Bakr with the *wāw* of the word Abū and «Bakr» clear, even though the *rā'* of the latter is not attached to the *kāf*. At the end of the line the visible traces look like two *wāws* written vertically, followed by an *alif* . . . The three visible letters of the second line can be read as the *zā'*, *bā'* and *kāf* of (Ō)zbek, or, less likely, the *rā'* and *lām dāl* of (al-Nāṣir) lidīn, the *yā'* *nān* being worn away, followed by what looks like an Allāh written vertically. The reading al-Nāṣir seems improbable since the caliph's name already appears on the reverse (unless of course that too is a faulty reading). One is also surprised to see a joint issue struck by the brothers Abū Bakr and Ōzbek, for at least one source indicates that they were not on good terms⁴³. Yet in the face of a common enemy, for example their stepbrother Qutluḡ Inanch, they may have worked together; this would require a minting before Qutluḡ's death in 591/1195, a not impossible circumstance.

41. *Numismatic History*, Eldigūzid Corpus, 351, 354-356, no. 47.

42. For Abū Bakr, *Numismatic History*, 340-341, no. 38B, a coin in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Münzkabinett, no. 12, access. Guthrie 320/1885, a plaster cast of which is in the ANS; for Ōzbek, *ibid.*, 361, no. 50A, a coin in Copenhagen, wrongly attributed to Abū Bakr, J. Østrup, *Catalogue des monnaies arabes et turques du Cabinet Royal des Médailles du Musée National de Copenhague* (1938), 163, no. 1546. A variant is illustrated by Musheghyan, *op. cit.* (above n. 18), pl. 16, fig. 108, as appearing on a coin of Shams al-Dīn (87, no. 125).

43. Juvainī, *op. cit.* (above n. 14) I, 308, informs us that in 592/1195-6, «The atabeg Ōz-beg came to him from Azerbaijan having fled from his brother. The Sultan [Tekish] received him with honour and bestowed Hamadan upon him».

Though this coin is the least certain of the group, one feels compelled to place it together with the other two for several reasons. First in terms of size, weight, and epigraphy it is related to No. 2; by its color, texture, thinness, and baseness, it is quite like both Nos. 1 and 2. Additionally, the size and spacing of the letters in Nos. 2 and 3 are very similar to those of No. 1 and in any case not smaller or less; therefore, they were probably engraved on normal size dies, but stamped on planchets about half the size of No. 1.

The sources say little about such coins, unless they are the barbarous dinars spoken of by al-Nasawī when relating that in one year the Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn (617/1220-628/1231) collected 200,000 « barbaric dīnārs » in neighboring Shirvān⁴⁴. Since we know of no gold struck there, perhaps this is a reference to coins such as these base pieces. However, it would seem that the high number quoted by Nasawī would militate against their being our scarce items.



Thus ~~for~~ these base dinars are unique. None are known to be in other western collections, nor are there any in the vast holdings of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, nor in Armenia or Ādharbāyjān, nor in the major Istanbul collections⁴⁵. Where exactly Valentine originally acquired his pieces (Nos. 2 and 3) is not known, but at least No. 1, the largest and best preserved coin, come from Iran. It is probably there, especially in hoards from northwestern al-Jibāl and Ādharbāyjān, that one might hope for more to come to light. Iranian collections which have not yet been examined thoroughly for these varieties may also yield new examples.

If these coins or any one of them, can be securely attributed to the Eldigūzid Abū Bakr, and if they reveal something which the historical texts fail to report: namely Abū Bakr's claiming the title and prerogatives of sultan for himself and his dynasty, then once again the numismatic data help us understand better the confused internal affairs of this area in this very difficult period. The evidence also helps enrich

44. al-Nasawī, *Strat al-sulṭān Jalāl al-Dīn Mangubernī*, ed. and trans. O. HOUDAS, *Histoire du Sultan Djelal ed-Din Mankoberti*, 2 vols., (1891, 1895), text, 173-174.

45. The author was able to consult briefly the collections in the Hermitage Museum, the Archaeological Museum and Yapi ve Kredi Bankasi in Istanbul, and the State Historical Museum in Erevan. The Curator of Coins of the latter museum, Kh. Musheghyan, has personally informed me after examining photographs of these coins and reading the appropriate section in *Numismatic History*, that no such coins are known in Soviet collections. None are reported in any of the works of Pakhomov, and there is no mention of them in M. A. Seifeddini, *Monetnoe delo v Azerbaidzhana v XII pervoi polovine XV vv.*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, 3 vols., Institut Istorii Akad. Nauk Azer. S. S. R., Baku (1969), which I was able to consult in Erevan in 1970.

the profile of those typically sixth/twelfth century Seljuk figures, the atabegs⁴⁴. From military slaves they became generals and then guardians of the Seljuk princes. Shams al-Din Eldigüz went a step further by establishing joint sultan-atabeg rule, the dyarchy. Ultimately under his descendents Qızıl Arslan and Abū Bakr, the dynasty aspired to the highest political office in the contemporary Islamic world, coveting complete control of the lands of western Iran. The atabegs became sultans. But by then the title had lost its value and glitter, just as these base dinars have lost theirs. The Seljuk sultanate in Iran had been reduced to a small state in its last years; like the caliphate, it commanded respect for its political authority only in the districts under its direct control.

In the years before the end of the sixth/twelfth century, the atabegate was divided; the sultanate had been ill for a long time; the caliphate was vainly trying to regain a political rôle which it had been deprived of for nearly 300 years⁴⁷. By 607/1211 when atabeg Özbek inherited Abū Bakr's provinces⁴⁸, any thought of sultanate was little more than a nostalgic dream. To be sure Abū Bakr in his last years had defeated the family's long time enemy the Aḥmadīlī and taken Marāgha and the lands west of Lake Urmia⁴⁹, but for the most part Eldigüzid lands were confined to Arrān and Ādharbāyjān, and even these areas were no longer completely secure nor totally under the central government's direction. The great cities of al-Jibāl — Rayy, Iṣfahān, Hamadān — were lost forever. To the north the Georgians under the strong leadership of Queen T'amar and her Armenian generals Ivanē and Zak'arē Mkhagrđzeli, were already claiming Armenia as their own and would soon be threatening Ādharbāyjān itself⁵⁰. The various *amīrs* given *iqṭā's* by Pahlavān, the Pahlawānīyah of the sources, were also continuing to deny the atabeg monolithic control in his own lands⁵¹. Already by the death of Sultan Tughrl, new political entities

46. On the institution see Cl. Cahen, « Atābak », *EI*²; F. Köprülü, *Ata, İslām Ansiklopedisi*; cf. Kouymjian, *op. cit.* (above n. 2), 113-114.

47. The most recent work on the attempt of reviving caliphal political power culminating under al-Nāṣir is H. Mason, *Two Statesmen of Medieval Islam*, The Hague-Paris (1972), Part II, Caliph an-Nāṣir le Dīn Allāh, 69-140, with bibliography (141-146) citing the sources and earlier literature.

48. He had already been ruling sporadically as early as 592/1195-6 in Hamadān (see note 43 above) and other areas of northern al-Jibāl after 600/1203-4; Bosworth, *op. cit.* (above n. 5); *idem*, *CHI* 5, 183, Luther, *op. cit.* (above n. 5), 400-401.

49. On Aḥmadīlī-Eldigüzid relations see V. Mironsky, « Marāgha », *EI*¹, « Aḥmadīlī », *EI*².

50. On the series of raids and counter-raids made by Abū Bakr and Mkhagrđzels, Mironsky, *Studies in Caucasian History*, London (1953), 101-103; W.E.D. Allen, *A History of the Georgian People*, (1932; reprint 1971), 107-108. On the Mkhagrđzels in general, with a collection of inscriptions, colophons and texts on them from Armenian sources, G. Yovsēp'ean (Hovsepian), *Xalbakank' kam Pfošean' Hayoc' patmal'ean meč'* (*Khaghbakians or Proshians in Armenian History*), 2nd and complete edition, Antelias (1969).

51. Luther, *op. cit.* (above n. 5), *passim*.

the

within the home territories of Arrān and Ādharbāyjan, theoretically under vassal status to the Eldigūzids — the Bīshkīn Malik of Ahar and an unidentified vassal — were exercising such autonomous power as the striking of coins ⁵².

But all of this was a very temporary state of affairs. The Khwārazmshāh Jalāl al-Dīn, fleeing before the Mongol onslaught, was to give the final *coup de grâce* to the Eldigūzid as well as their vassals. Özbek was imprisoned and finally died in 622/1225 shortly after his wife was taken by the Khwārazmshāh ⁵³. His deaf-mute son Khāmūsh and grandson Nuṣrat languished as émigrés, finding refuge with the Seljuks of Rūm ⁵⁴. The subsequent Mongol defeat of the Khwārazmshāhs and their long term occupation of these areas, guaranteed that no attempt at reviving the atabegate or sultanate could succeed.

52. The earliest known coin of Bīshkīn b. Muḥammad dates to 591/1194-5, and the latest 623/1226; Bīshkīnid Corpus, *Numismatic History*, 378-409. The unidentified vassal seems to originate from Mūqān where most of his coins have been found; the known issues mention the name of the atabeg Abū Bakr and the Caliph al-Nāṣir, but bear no dates, *ibid.*, 415-418.
53. al-Juvainī, *op. cit.* (above n. 14) II, 424-426; the narrative (426) claims a non-violent death, 'An internal pain, which was irremediable, was aggravated by this external cause, and on that very day, out of grief and chagrin, he delivered up the ghost'.
54. Nuṣrat al-Dīn b. Khāmūsh was appointed a commander of Tabriz and Ādharbāyjan by the Mongols ca. 644/1246, JUVAINĪ, *op. cit.* (above n. 14), II, 511, but we hear nothing more about him or other Eldigūzid atabegs after this; see *Numismatic History*, 293-294, 363-364; Minorsky, 'Uzbek', *EP*³ and 'Ahmadīlīs', *EP*³; Bosworth, *op. cit.* (above n. 9).



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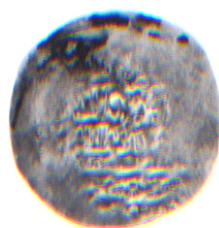
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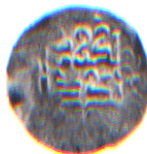
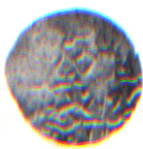
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