On the attribution of Sassanian coins in the FLAME database

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The assignment of mints of Persian Sasanian coinage is theoretically a simple task due to the presence of the initials of mint names on the Sassanian gold, silver, and bronze coins between the 4th century and the fall of the Sassanian Empire in the 7th century. However, tying Pahlavi mint signatures to concrete cities in the Sassanian Empires has been a subject of intense debate between different scholars in the past two centuries. Therefore, this document has been prepared as a guide for both users and contributors to the FLAME Project's database to justify the mint attributions that the database has chosen to follow. It must be made clear that, barring any further shift in scholarly consensus, the attributions of the FLAME Project closely follow two publications: the third volume of the Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum[1] and the Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum catalog of the Schaaf collection.[2] In case of discrepancies, *SNS III* will be followed, but mint attributions from the reign of Khosrow I and his successors must be supplemented from *SNS Schaff*. The mint signatures will be presented in alphabetical order and will include a brief discussion of their attribution to a particular mint location in the FLAME Project's database. In case of uncertainty or multiple identifications, an explanation of the decisions taken by the FLAME Project's staff will be provided. In case of variant transliterations of the names of Persian cities in English, preference will be given to *SNS III*. Finally, the end of this document contains a table that can be used as a quick reference for users and it will include

[1] Nikolaus Schindel, "Zur Lokalisierung der Münzstättensiglen," in *Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum: Paris, Berlin, Wien, vol. III: Shapur II. – Kawad I./ 2. Regierung (309-531)*, ed. Nikolaus Schindel (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004), 147-178.

[2] Nikolaus Schindel, "General Remarks and Commentary on Selected Coins in the Catalogue. Overview," in *Sylloge Nummorum Sasanidarum: The Schaaf Collection*, ed. Nikolaus Schindel (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014), 9-12.

the name of the mint signatures, their identification according to the two *SNS* volumes, and their respective name in the FLAME database.

AH/AHM/KWN AH/KWN AHM

These mint signatures almost certainly refer to the city of Hamadan (the former city of Ecbatana in Media), today the capital of the province and county of Hamadan in Western Iran.[3] On the attribution of KWN AH and KWN AHM, see "KWN mint signatures" below.

ALM

The attribution of this mint signature is still unclear, but a tentative attribution has been given to Armenia. In absence of any more precise identification of the mint signature with another city or region, the FLAME Project's database will locate this mint the Sassanian capital of Armenia, Dvin, south of modern Yerevan, and will mark its location as "uncertain."[4]

AM

This mint signature almost certainly refers to the city of Amul in Tabaristan, today the city of Amol in Mazandaran Province in Northern Iran.[5]

AMW

This mint signature appears only on the bronzes of Peroz I and is most likely connected with his military expedition against the Hephtalites, which leads *SNS III* to favor its identification with the city of Amul in Khorassan over an equivalence with the AM mint signature and therefore with the

[3] *SNS III*, 148
[4] *SNS III*, 148-149. Cf. also map on p. 176.
[5] *SNS III*, 149.

city of Amul in Tabaristan.[6] Therefore, the FLAME Project will locate this mint in the city of Amul, modern Türkmenabat, on the border between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

AP/APL

These mint signatures most likely denote the province of Abarshahr in Khorasan.[7] Therefore, this mint will be located in the capital of Abarshahr, Nishapur, today located in Razavi Khorasan province in Northeastern Iran.

ART/ARTHŠTR/ARTHŠTRGDH

These mint signatures are certainly denoting Ardashir-Khwarrah, one of the five "Kreise" of Fars.[8] Therefore, this mint will be located in the capital of Ardashir-Kwarrah, the city of Gor, near modern Firuzabad in Fars Province, South Iran.

AS

This mint signature could denote either the province of Asuristan or the district of Aspanvar in Ctesiphon.[9] Whatever the precise reading of the full mint signature, the mint is certainly located in the Sassanian capital Ctesiphon, capital of Asuristan province. Therefore, this mint will be located in the excavated site of Ctesiphon, 22 miles southeast of modern Baghdad, Iraq.

AT

This mint signature certainly denotes the province of Adurbadagan (modern Iranian Azerbaijan).[10]

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[6] *SNS III*, 149.
[7] *SNS III*, 149-150.
[8] *SNS III*, 150.
[9] *SNS III*, 150-151
[10] *SNS III,* 151.

Therefore, this mint will be located in province's capital of Ganzak, located near modern Leylan in Malekan County, East Azerbaijan Province, Iran.

AW/AWH

These mint signatures almost certainly denote the capital of the province of Ohrmazd-Ardashir in Khuzistan, located in Ahwaz (today Ahvaz, still capital of the Iranian southwestern province of Khuzestan).[11]

AW/AR?

The reading of this mint signature is extremely difficult.[12] It certainly cannot be attributed to either Ahwaz (AW/AWH) or Ardashir-Khwarrah (ART) out of stylistic reasons and must therefore remain unlocated. In the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

AY/AYL

The identification of these two mint signatures is a source of major contention and uncertainty.[13] The AY mintmark can with certainty be connected with the capital of the province of Eran-Khwarrah-Shapur, located close to the ancient city of Susa. Therefore, this mint will be located in the ruins of Susa near modern Shush in Khuzistan Province, Southwest Iran. However, the AYL mintmark poses greater difficulties. Under Bahram IV and Yazdegerd I it is certain that the two mintmarks denote the same location. However, following *SNS III*, under Kavad I it seems the AYL mint signature began to denote another city that had the component "Eran" in its name (e.g. Eran-

[11] *SNS III*, 151
[12] *SNS III,* 152
[13] *SNS III*, 152-153

asan-kar-Kawad/Eran-winnard-Kawad/Eran-khwarrah-Yazdegerd, etc.). Therefore, the FLAME Project will use the AY and AYL mint signatures to refer to the same mint, Susa (Eran-Khwarrah-Shapur), following *SNS Schaff*,[14] until the reign of Bahram I, at which point the AYL mint signature will diverge to denote a separate mint, whose identification should be left up for later SNS volumes. In the meantime, the later AYL mint signature will be placed somewhere between the known locations of towns bearing the particle "Eran." This identification should be revisited once the new scholarship is published and it is our hope that a solution will be found to this problem of attribution.

AYLAN

This mint signature poses even greater difficulties than AYL.[15] Different opinions have been expressed regarding its location. It is possible that it denotes the same mint as AY, but Eran-asan-kar-Kawad in Media or a royal court mint are also possible identifications. The *SNS* volumes do not make a decision regarding the localization of this mintmark, but the FLAME Project is forced to place mints in specific locations, where possible. Therefore, it seems to the author that the soundest approach is to tentatively place the halfway between the towns of Harsin and Susa, the present locations of the proposed mint towns of Eran-asan-kar-Kawad and Eran-Kwarrah-Shapur. However, in doing this, the FLAME Project does not claim neither finality nor correctness in its attribution and therefore expects this attribution to be revisited, once newer scholarship becomes available.

BBA/KWN BBA

[14] *SNS Schaff*, 10
[15] *SNS III*, 153

This mint signature, while still not with complete certainty, must be equated with the mobile court mint of the Sassanian emperors.[16] "Mobile" is, of course, a relative concept. It seems that, even though this mint could follow the emperor on campaigns, for the majority of time it was firmly located in the capital of the empire, Ctesiphon. Therefore, the FLAME Project will locate this mint in the excavated site of Ctesiphon, 22 miles southeast of modern Baghdad, Iraq. On the attribution of KWN BBA, see "KWN mint signatures below."

BHL

This mint signature is not discussed by either of the *SNS* volumes. However, *SNS Schaff* equates the city with Balkh in Northern Afghanistan.[17] Therefore, the FLAME Project will follow this attribution. A note of clarification is required. While the *SNS III* volume discusses the mint of Balkh as a mistaken reading of the BBA signature,[18] the mint signature that is discussed is BLH, not BHL, which is not discussed at all in the volume.

BN

This mint signature was located in an uncertain city in the province of Kirman.[19] Therefore, until a more precise identification with a city is possible, the mint will be marked as "uncertain" and located in the modern-day capital of the province of Kerman, the city of Kerman in Southeastern Iran.

BŠHP/BŠHPW

[16] *SNS III*, 153-154
[17] *SNS Schaff*, 11
[18] *SNS III*, 153-154
[19] *SNS III*, 154

These mint signatures have been discovered only for the reign of Bahram IV (388-399), but no precise identification with a city or a region is possible.[20] In the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

BŠT/BYST

The BŠT mint signature could describe the mint of Bist in Sakastan or Bušt in Khorassan.[21] *SNS III* does not make a decision regarding which of the two theories is correct and *SNS Schaff* tentatively adopts the reading of the signature as Bust in Sakastan.[22] Therefore, the FLAME Project. The BYST mint signature is simply a misspelling of BŠT.[23]

BWB

This mint signature must refer to a town in Fars,[24] but until a closer attribution is possible, the FLAME Project will mark it as "uncertain" and place its location in one of the Sassanian capitals of Fars, Stakhr, today placed at the ruins of the site in Fars, South Iran (29° 58′ 51″ N, 52° 54′ 34″ E)

BYŠ/BYŠHPW

These mint signatures with certainty can be identified with the city of Bishapur in Fars.[25] The FLAME Project will place the mint in the ruins of the site, located south of modern Faliyan, Kazerun County, Pars Province, Iran.

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[20] *SNS III*, 154-155.
[21] *SNS III*, 155
[22] *SNS Schaff,* 11
[23] *SNS III*, 155
[24] *SNS III*, 155
[25] *SNS III*, 155

DA/DAL/DALAPKR

These mintmarks with certainty can be equated with the city of Darabgird in Fars.[26] Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the city of old city of Darabgird near Darab, Fars, in modern South Iran.

DYWAN/DYWAS/DYWAT

These three mint signatures pose large difficulties.[27] Dinar, a district in the city of Ray, and Dinawar in Media have been proposed, but also an unknown "diwan." It is possible that the variations of the last letter in the mint signature could denote different officina of the same mint, attested only for years 33-35 of Kavad I (520-523 CE). In the absence of further studies that could make a decision regarding the reading of these three mintmarks, the FLAME Project will mark the mint as "uncertain" and will place the mint at the halfway point between Dinawar and Dinar around the village of Tajarak Pish Khowr Rural District, Pish Khowr District, Famenin County, Hamadan Province, Iran.

GD

This mint signature can easily be attributed to the city of Gay (ancient Gabae), a district in the city of Isfahan in Media.[28] Therefore, the FLAME Project will locate it in the modern city of Isfahan, the capital of the province of the same name in Central Iran.

GHL

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[26] *SNS III*, 155-156
[27] *SNS III*, 156-157
[28] *SNS III,* 157

This mint signature must be placed in the region of Fars, which leads *SNS III* to agree with the proposed identification of the signature with Jahrum in Fars.[29] Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the city of Jahrom in Fars Province, South Iran.

GLM

This mint signature has not been discussed in *SNS III*, but *SNS Schaff* attributes it with certainty to the subregion of Garm-Kirman (warm Kirman) in Kirman, possibly located in the city of Bam.[30] While the FLAME Project does not claim finality on the discussion of the exact city in "warm Kirman" where the mint was located, until the relevant volumes of *SNS* come out with a finalized discussion of the placing of this mint in the reign of Khosrow II (590-628), we will mark the mint location as "uncertain" and place it in the city of Bam, Kerman Province, Iran, following Mochiri.

GNCKL

This mint signature seems to be somehow related to the DYWAN/DYWAS/DYWAT signatures, described above.[31] It is most probable that the signature is an abbreviation of the Pahlavi word "ganj" – treasure. It is uncertain whether the KL at the end is a reference to the region of Kirman or an adjective that defines the "treasure". Another proposed identification that has been proposed for the mint is Ganzak in Adurbadagan (Azerbaijan). Due to its uncertain location, we have no choice but to place it in a location in the region of Kirman until a more precise identification is possible and mark it as "uncertain."

GW

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[29] *SNS III*, 157
[30] Cf. M.I. Mochiri, "Garmkirmān: a Sasanian and Early Islamic Mint in Kirmān Province," *The Numismatic Chronicle* 145 (1985): 109-122.
[31] *SNS III*, 158

This mint signature is one of the enigmas of Sassanian coinage, because it clearly represents two separate mints in two distinct chronological periods of Sassanian history.[32] Under the reign of Yazdegerd I (399-420) the mint was located in Guwaim in Fars, which likely corresponds to modern Joyom in Pars.[33] However, after 420 and until the end of the Sassanian period, this signature came to denote the province of Gurgan. Therefore, the FLAME database has chosen to divide the coins with this mint signature into an "earlier" and "later" mintmark, as discussed below.

GW [earlier]/GWDMY

As mentioned, the GW mint signature most certainly denotes two separate mints in different time periods.[34] Under the reign of Yazdegerd I, this mint was certainly located in Fars and probably denoted the city of Guwaim. However, it is uncertain which Guwaim in Fars is to be preferred: whether Guwaim in the district of Ardashir-Khwarrah or the one in the district of Darabgird. The FLAME database will follow the localization of modern-day Joyom, Fars Province, South Iran.[35]

GW [later]/GWL

After the reign of Yazdegerd I, the mint signature GW came to denote the region of Gurgan in modern Northeast Iran. It was possibly located in the provincial capital of Gurgan-Shahristan.[36] This city should be identified with the later Islamic city of Jorjan, close to present-day Gonbad-e Kavus and the mint will therefore be placed along the coordinates provided by UNESCO for the tower located close to the site of the ruins of Jorjan/Gurgan-Shahristan (37° 15′ 29″ N, 55° 10′ 8″ E).

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[32] *SNS III*, 158
[33] For location, see also cf. A.V. Williams Jackson, "The Location of the Farnbāg Fire, the Most Ancient of the Zoroastrian Fires," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 41 (1921): pp. 81-106 and map 2 in *SNS III*, 177.
[34] SNS III, 159
[35] Jackson, "The Location of the Farnbāg Fire," 90.
[36] *SNS III*, 159-160

H

This mint signature is, as of yet, unidentifiable.[37] Therefore, in the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

HL

The HL mintmark poses similar difficulties to the GW signature in that it possibly denotes two separate mints at different times in Sassanian history.[38] Therefore, it will similarly divide the coins with this mint signature into an "earlier" and "later" mintmark groups, as discussed below.

HL [earlier]

This mint signature is present on the coinage of Bahram IV (388-399) and Yazdegerd I (399-420).[39] While the debate concerning the localization of this mint is still unsolved, as *SNS III* observes, the FLAME Project will adopt, in the absence of a further shift in scholarly consensus, its proposal for the identification of the HL coins of Bahram IV and Yazdegerd I with the village of Harat in the district of Istakhr in Fars, today located in Yazd Province, Iran.

HL [later]/HLY/HLYDW/HLYDY

For the later Sassanian period, the identification of the HL mintmark with the city of Herat in Khorasan, now located in Western Afghanistan, is almost certain.[40] Therefore, the FLAME Project will assign the HL mintmark and its variants to the city of Herat.

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[37] *SNS III*, 160
[38] *SNS III*, 160
[39] *SNS III*, 160-161
[40] *SNS III*, 161

HLM

This mint signature is not discussed in *SNS III*, but it has been tentatively equated in *SNS Schaff* with the city of Kholm in Khorasan.[41] Therefore, the FLAME Project will follow its attribution and locate the mint in the modern-day city of Khulm in Northern Afghanistan.

HWC

This mint signature is similarly absent from *SNS III*, but has been equated with a mint in the province of Khuzistan.[42] No information is, however, provided concerning the exact city where the mint was located. Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the ruins of the provincial capital at Gundeshapur near the village of Eslamabad, Choghamish District, Dezful County, Khuzestan Province, Southwest Iran, and mark the attribution as "uncertain."

HYL

This mint signature is known from only a couple of examples from the reign of Yazdegerd I (399-420).[43] *SNS III* argues for the equivalence of this mint signature with the Lakhmid capital of Al-Hira, located to the south of modern Kufa in central Iraq. Therefore, the FLAME database will place this mint in the region of Al-Kufa.

KA/KAL/KALCYDY

These mint signatures have with certainty been linked to the mint of Karzi in the district of Ardashir-Khwarrah in Fars.[44] The mint signature remained the same even after the city was

[41] *SNS Schaff*, 11
[42] *SNS Schaff*, 11
[43] *SNS III*, 161-162.
[44] *SNS III*, 162-163

renamed to Kawad-Khwarrah under the reign of Kavad I (488-531). Therefore, FLAME will place this mint in the modern city of Karzin, Qir and Karzin County, Fars Province, South Iran.[45]

KL

This mint signature is with certainty attributed to the region of Kirman and particular its capital Shiragan.[46] Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the city of Sirjan in Kerman Province, South Iran.

KWN mint signatures

The KWN mint signatures (KWN AH, KWN AHM, KWN BBA, and KWN LYW) pose a different problem than the above-mentioned GW and HL min signatures.[47] The second portions of these mintmarks are clearly attributable to Ahmadan, the royal mint BBA, and Rew-Ardashir. However, the first portion of the name, read by Paruck as "kawan" – kingly/royal,[48] poses additional difficulties. Were these mint signatures used for different mints within a larger city? Were they a separate base of production? Were they "officina" markers? Their interpretation is complicated also by their use only under the reign of Bahram IV (388-399) for KWN AH/KWN AHM/KWN BBA and Yazdegerd I (399-420) for KWN LYW. *SNS III* seems to suggest a more likely equivalence between KWN AH/KWN AHM with Ahmadan and KWN LYW with Rew-Aradshir than between KWN BBA and BBA. However, until further scholarship is able to resolve the issues concerning these mint signatures and their localization, the FLAME Project database will treat these mint signatures as markers of the same mints as their counterparts without the "KWN"

[45] For this attribution, see Heinz Gaube and Thomas Leisten, *Das Kernländer des 'Abbāsidenreiches im 10./11. Jh. Materialen zur TAVO-Karte B VII 6* (Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert, 1993), 94, quoted in *SNS III*, 162, note 757.
[46] *SNS III*, 163.
[47] *SNS III*, 163-164.
[48] Furdoonjee D.J. Paruck, *Sasanian Coins* (Bombay: The Times Press, 1924), 159, 280, cited by *SNS III*, 163, note 767.

portion. The exception to these is KWN BBA, which will be treated as a separate mint of uncertain identification and location.

LAM

This mint signature is not discussed by *SNS III*, but has been attributed to the city of Ram-Orhmazd in Khuzistan.[49] Therefore, the FLAME database will follow this attribution and locate this mint in the modern city of Ramhormoz in Khuzestan Province, Southwest Iran.

LD/LDY/LY

These mint signatures can with certainty be attributed to Ray, today part of the metropolitan area of Greater Tehran.[50] Therefore, the FLAME database will place this mint in Ray.

LWD (?)

There are still doubts about the correct reading of this mint signature.[51] However, provided this reading is accepted as correct, the signature can likely be attributed to the city of Royan in Fars. However, the location of this city is, as of yet, impossible to pinpoint. It is possible that it denotes the same area as that of the later Muslim district of Rudhan, a part of the *kurah* of Stakhr in Fars, located between Fars and Kirman.[52] Therefore, the FLAME Project will mark this mint as uncertain and follow Gyselen in placing it on the border between Fars and Kirman, "au sud-est de Yazd et à l'est-nord-est de Staxr", around the city of Anar at the border between the two modern provinces.[53]

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[49] *SNS Schaff*, 11
[50] *SNS III*, 164.
[51] *SNS III*, 164.
[52] Rika Gyselen, *La géographie administrative de l'empire sassanide: les témoignages sigillographiques* (Paris : Groupe pour l'étude de la civilisation du Moyen-Orient, 1989), p. 58, cited by *SNS III*, 164, note 775
[53] On localization, see also Gaube and Leisten, *Das Kernländer des 'Abbāsidenreiches*, 148

LYW/ LYWARTHŠT/KWN LYW/GNC LYW

These mint signatures with certainty can be attributed to Rew-Ardashir, located near Bushehr (the ancient Antiocheia in Persis), on the border between the Sassanian provinces of Fars and Khuzistan.[54] Therefore, the FLAME Project will situate this mint in the location of the ruins near Bushehr.

MA (MA/DY)

This mint signature almost certainly denotes the region of Media,[55] although the exact city in Media where the mint was located is uncertain. Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the capital of the province, Hamadan (ancient Ecbatana), and will mark it as "uncertain."

ML/MLW/MLWY

These mint signatures can with certainty be attributed to the city of Marw (ancient Antiochia in Margiana) in Khorassan.[56] Therefore, the FLAME Project will locate this mint in the ruins of Merv near modern Mary in Turkmenistan.

MY

This mint signature must denote the region of Meshan and can possibly be associated with the city of Kark-Meshan (ancient Spasinu Charax/Antiocheia in Susiana).[57] Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the ruins of the city at the Jabal Naysan archaeological site in Southern Iraq.

NAL/WAL

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[54] *SNS III*, 165.
[55] *SNS III*, 165.
[56] *SNS III,* 165-166.
[57] *SNS III*, 166.

This mint signature's location is not discussed by either *SNS Schaff* or *SNS III*.[58] In the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

NY

This mint signature is with certainty located in the city of Nihawand in Media.[59] Therefore, this mint will appear in the city of Nahavand in Hamadan Province, West Iran.

PL

The localization of this mint is still debated but a proposal has been made to equate it with Forat-Meshan (also known as Bahman-Ardashir) in Meshan Province, Southern Iraq.[60] Therefore, the FLAME database will follow the PLEIADES website localization of "Vahman-Ardashir."[61]

PW/PWLGY

These mint signatures have been equated by Mochiri with the city of Furk in Fars.[62] Therefore, the FLAME Project will follow this attribution and place the mint in the Forg Rural District in Darab County, Fars Province, Iran.

S

The single-letter S mint signature poses a different kind of problem for scholars than the mints that shifted their location, mentioned above.[63] The reason for this is that the S signature, used during

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[58] For its existence, cf. *SNS Schaff*, 11
[59] *SNS III*, 166.
[60] *SNS III*, 166-167.
[61] "Bahman Ardashir", PLEIADES, accessed October 21, 2021, location no. 912899, https://pleiades.stoa.org/places/912899
[62] M. I. Mochiri, "Petite Liste de Quelques Ateliers Sassanides Inédits," *Iran: Journal of Persian Studies* 34 (1996): 74-75," cited by *SNS III*, 167, note 798.
[63] *SNS III*, 167

the reign of Shapur II (309-379), denotes two clearly separate mints. The first one, of which only the S mint signature is known, is, as of yet, impossible to locate despite arguments for its equivalence with the mint of Stakhr.[64] In the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

N/S/SK/SKSTN

On the other hand, these mint signatures are with certainty equated with the province of Sakastan/Sistan and its capital of Zaranj.[65] "S" is here a shorter form of the "SK" and "SKSTN" mint signatures,[66] which stand for Sakastan. "N" was used as a "Beizeichen" in Sakastani mints under Shapur II. However, until further research is done and other mints in Sakastan are identified with certainty, it will remain as a "Beizeichen" of the "S" mintmark. The Flame Project will place the mint at Zaranj in Southwest Afghanistan.

ST/STHL

These mint signatures can with certainty be attributed to Stakhr, one of the district centers of Fars and an important religious center for the Sassanians.[67] Therefore, the FLAME Project will locate this mint in the ruins of Istakhr near the village of Hajjiabad, Qarah Chaman Rural District, Shiraz County, Fars, South Iran.

ŠLK

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[64] *SNS III*, 167
[65] *SNS III*, 167
[66] *SNS III*, 167
[67] *SNS III*, 167-168

This mint signature has been discovered only for the reign of Bahram IV (388-399), but no precise identification with a city or a region is possible. [68] It shows some stylistic similarities with the BŠHP/BŠHPW mint signatures. In the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

SYLAP/ŠYLAC(?)

The reading of this mint signature, based on a single bronze coin, is uncertain.[69] It could be read either as SYLAP and thus denote the port city of Siraf or as ŠYLAC, located in Fars (see below). Given the small (as far as we know) output of this mint and the uncertain reading of the mint signature, the FLAME Project does not consider it prudent to decisively agree or disagree with the attribution of SYLAP to Siraf. Therefore, in the absence of further finds or scholarship on this mint signature, this mint signature will be equated with ŠYLAC and located in the same location. (see below)

Š/ ŠY/ ŠYLAC

These mint signatures, despite a proposed attribution to Shiragan, can with certainty be placed in the city of Shiraz, today the capital of Fars Province, Iran.[70] The FLAME Project will then located this mint in the modern city of Shiraz.

WH/WHY

[68] *SNS III*, 168.
[69] *SNS III*, 168.
[70] *SNS III*, 168-169.

These mint signatures can, with near certainty, be attributed to the important intellectual center of Weh-Andiyok-Shapur (also known as Gundeshapur) in Khuzistan.[71] Therefore, the FLAME Project will place this mint in the ruins of the provincial capital at Gundeshapur near the village of Eslamabad, Choghamish District, Dezful County, Khuzestan Province, Southwest Iran.

WLC

This mint signature's location is not discussed by either *SNS Schaff* or *SNS III*.[72] In the FLAME database, it will be marked as "uncertain" and located somewhere in central Iran to denote its Persian character, but no more precise description of the minting location is possible.

WYH

This mint signature's identification is, as of yet, not fully certain, but the most probable attribution is the city of Weh-Kawad, located in Asuristan.[73] The city was located somewhere along the middle Euphrates, between the cities of Anbar (modern Fallujah) and Al-Hira (modern Kufa).[74] Therefore, the FLAME Project will mark the location of this mint as "uncertain" and place it around the modern city of Al-Hindiya, Kerbala Governorate, Iraq.

WYHC

The WYHC mint signature has been argued to exhibit similar difficulties to the GW and HL mint signatures (see above) and to denote two completely different minting locations throughout the different centuries of Sassanian history.[75] Therefore, the FLAME Project will create two mints and

[71] *SNS III*, 169-170.
[72] For its existence, cf. *SNS Schaff*, 11
[73] *SNS III*, 170.
[74] Cf. map on *SNS III*, 177.
[75] *SNS III*, 170-171

attribute them to two different locations, as has been done for the above-mentioned mint signatures.

WYHC [earlier]

For the reign of Kavad I (488-531), it has been argued that the WYHC mint signature corresponds to the foundation of Weh-az-Amid-Kawad, known also as Arrajan.[76] Therefore, the FLAME database will follow the PLEIADES website localization of "Veh-az-Amid-Kavad."[77]

WYHC [later]

From the reign of Khosrow I (531-579) and his capture of Antioch in 540, the WYHC mint signature came to denote the city of Weh-az-Andiyok-Khusro, one of the cities in the greater Ctesiphon metropolitan area.[78] While the precise localization of this site is, as of yet, uncertain, the FLAME Project will place the mint at the ruins of Ctesiphon at Madain, south of Baghdad, and will mark the mint location as "uncertain."

YZ

This mint signature has also historically been read as "ZR" and equated with Zarang in Sakastan/Sistan, but the FLAME Project will adopt *SNS III*'s reading of the signature as "YZ." This allows us to more or less confidently place this mint in the city of Yazd in central Iran.

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[76] *SNS III*, 170-171
[77] "Veh-az-Amid-Kavad, Veh-az-Amid-Kavad/[Arragan]", PLEIADES, accessed October 22, 2021, location no. 912989, https://pleiades.stoa.org/places/912989
[78] *SNS III*, 170-171

Identification (per SNS III.1/Schaff)	Mintmark in SNS III.1	Name of the mint in FLAME:	Comments:
Hamadan, Media	AH/AHM/KWN AH/KWN AHM	Hamadān(AH/AHM/KWN AH/KWN AHM)/Hamedan/Ancient Ecbatana	
Armenia (?)	ALM	Armenia (ALM)/ Armenia	
Amul, Tabaristan	AM	Amul (AM), Tabaristan/ Amol	
Amul, Khorasan	AMW	Amul (AMW), Khorasan/ Türkmenabat	
Nishapur, Abarshahr, Khorasan	AP/APL	Abarshahr (AP/APL)/Nishapur/Nev-Shapur	
Gor, Ardashir-Khwarrah, Fars	ART/ARTHŠTR/ ARTHŠTRGDH	Ardashir-Khwarrah (ART/ ARTHŠTR/ ARTHŠTRGDH)/Firuzabad/Gor	
Ctesiphon, Asuristan	AS	Ctesiphon (AS)/ Salman Pak/ Asuristan	
Ganzak, Ardubadagan	AT	Adurbadagan (AT)/Ganzak/ Azerbaijān	
Ahwaz, Ohrmazd-Ardashir, Khuzistan	AW/AWH	Ohrmazd-Ardashir (AW/AWH)/Ahwaz/Suq al-Ahwaz	
	AW/AR (?)	AW/AR (?)/ Unknown (Sassanian)	
Eran-khwarrah-shapur, Khuzistan	AY/AYL	Eran-Khwarrah-Shāpūr (AY/AYL[earlier])/Susa/Bahram	NB! Mintmarks mark same mint until Kavad I, then only AY denotes Eran-Khwarrah-Shapur

Eran-asan-kar-Kawad?/ Eran-win(n)ard - Kawad?/ Eran-khwarrah - Yazdgerd ? (AY[later])	AYL	Eran-asan-kar-Kawad?/Eran-win(n)ard-Kawad?/Eran-khwarrah-Yazdgerd? (AYL[later])	NB! Mintmark marks some city starting with the name "Eran" during and after the reign of Kavad I, but we are uncertain which
?	AYLAN	Eran-asan-kar-Kawad?/Eran-Khwarrah-Shapur? (AYLAN)/ Harsin?/Susa?	Uncertain attribution. Could be the same mint as AY (Eran-Khwarrah-Shapur) or also refer to Eran-asan-kara-Kawad near Harsin.
Royal mobile mint	BBA	Mobile Court Mint - Ctesiphon (BBA)/Salman Pak/Al-Madain	
Balkh, Khorasan	BHL	Balkh (BHL)/Balkh/Ancient Bactria	
?, Kirman	BN	? (near Bisotun) (BN)/Kermanshah/Ancient Carmania	
	BŠHP/BŠHPW	? (BŠHP/BŠHPW)	
Bist, Sakastan	BŠT/ BYST	Bist (BST)/Lashkar Gah	BUST SIGISTAN (p. 40 Gaube/Leisten): Qasaba, zweitwichstigste Stadt von S. nach Zarang, blühend, hübsch, Bevölkerung ähnelt den Irakern, Münzstätte, befestigt, Rabad, Fmoschee, Suq im Rabad, Handel mit Indien, mehrere Flüsse, ObstßWeinßun Dattelgärten, viel Obst, Trauben, Dateln = Qal'e-ye Bost 31-28/64-20 - https://www.getamap.net/maps/afghanistan/helmand/_qalehyebost/
?, Fars	BWB	?, Fars/ BWB	

Bishapur, Fars	BYŠ/BYŠHPW	Bishapur (BYŠ/BŠHP/BŠHPW) /Faliyan/Veh Sabur	
Darabgird, Fars	DA/ DAL/ DALAPKR	Darabgird (DA/DAL/DALAPKR)/Dārāb	
	DYWAN/DYWAS/DYWAT	Dinawar?/Dinar? (DYWAN/DYWAS/DYWAT)/ Dinawar?/Shahr-e Ray?	Could refer either to Dinar in Ray or Dinawar in Media
Gay, Isfahan, Media	GD	Gay (GD)/Isfahan/Jayy/جي	
Jahrum, Fars	GHL	Gahrum (GHL)/Jahrum/Jahrom	
(Bam?), Garm-Kirman, Kirman	GLM	Garm-Kirmān (GLM)/Bam	
	GNCKL	Ganj/Ganzak? (GNCKL)	GNC = Ganj = treasure. Possibly located either in Ganzak (Adurbadagan) or a mint in Kirman
Gurgan/Guwaim	GW	Gurgān (GW)/ Gurgān	The GW mintmark was moved under Yazdegerd I from Guwaim, Fars, to Gurgan. We therefore have two separate mints in FLAME
Gurgan-Shahristan/Jorjan, Gurgan,	GW/2, GWL	Gurgan-Shahristan (GW[later]/GWL), Gorgan, Jorjan	
Guwaim, Fars/Darabgird	GW/1, GWDMY	Guwaim, Fars (GW[earlier]/GWDMY)/Juyom/Joyom	
	H	? (H)	
	HL		Same situation as GW above. See below:
	HL/1	Herat, Istakhr, Fars (HL[earlier]/Harat/Tajabad	Under Bahram IV and Yazdegerd I, located in Harat, Yazd, Iran
	HLM	Kholm (HLM)/Kholm/Khulm	

Herat, Khorasan	HL/2, HLY, HLYDY, HLYDW	Herat, Khorasan (HL[later]/HLY/HLYDY/HLYDW)/ Herat	Under Peroz and Shapur II, located in Herat, Khorasan.
Khuzistan	HWC	Khuzistān (HWC)/ Khuzestan	
Al-Hira, Asuristan	HYL	Al-Hira, Asuristan (HYL)/Kufa	
Karzi/Kawad-Khwarrah, Ardashir-Khwarrah, Fars	KA/KAL/KALCYDY	Karzi (KA/KAL/KALCYDY)/Karzin/Kawad-Khwarrah	
Kirman	KL.	Kirman (KL)/ Sirjan/ Shiragan	
?	KWN BBA	? (KWN BBA)	Possibly a variant of BBA, but most likely a completely different mint of unknown location
Ram-Ohrmazd, Khuzistan	LAM	Ram-Ohrmazd (LAM)/Ramhurmuz/Ramhormozd	
Ray, Media	LD/LDY/LY	Ray (LD/LDY/LY)/Tehran	
Royan, Fars	LWD/LWDY	Royan, Fars (LWD/LWDY)/ Ar-Rudan?/ Rudhan	
Rew-Ardashir, Khuzistan	LYW/ LYWARTHŠT/ KWN LYW/GNC LYW	Rew-Ardahir (LYW/ LYWARTHŠT/KWN LYW/GNC LYW)/ Bushehr/ Bandar Bushehr	
Media	MA, MA/DY	Mah (MA/MA/DY)/Media	
Marw, Khorasan	ML/MLW/MLWY	Marw (ML/MLW/MLWY)/ Merw/Bayramaly	
Kark-Meshan, Meshan	MY	Maysan (MY)/ Naysan/Kark-Meshan	
?	NAL/WAL	? (NAL/WAL)	
Nihawand, Media	NY	Nihawand (NY)/ Nahavand	

Forat-Meshan, Meshan	PL	Forat-Meshan (PL)/Maghlub/ Vahman-Ardashir	
Furk, Fars	PW/PWLGY	Purg (PW/PWLGY)/Forg/Furk	
?	S	? (S)	
Sakastan	N/S/SK/SKSTN	Sakastan (N/S/SK/SKSTN)/ Zaranj/ Sistan	
Stakhr, Fars	ST/STHL	Stakhr (ST/STHL)/ Istakhr/Estakhr	
	ŠLK	? (ŠLK)	
Siraf, Ardashir-kwarrah, Fars/Shiraz, Fars	SYLAP/ŠYLAC/		In the absence of further evidence, to be equated with Shiraz mint
Shiraz, Fars	Š/ ŠY/ ŠYLAC/	Shiraz (Š/ŠY/ŠYLAC)/Shiraz	
Weh-Andiyok-Shapur, Khuzistan	WH/WHY	Weh-Andiyok-Shapur (WH/WHY)/Gundeshapur/Gondishapour	
?	WLC	? (WLC)	
Weh-Kawad, Asuristan	WYH	Weh-Kawad (WYH)/Al-Madain/	
Weh-az-Amid-Kawad	WYHC	Weh-az-Amid-Kawad (WYHC [earlier])/Behbahan/Arrajan	This mintmark corresponds to Weh-az-Amid Kavad under Kawad I
Weh-az-Andiyok-Khusro, Asuristan	WYHC	Weh-az-Andiôk-Khusro (WYHC[later])/Al-Madain/Antiocheia Chosroou	This mintmark corresponds to Weh-az-Andiyok-Khusro under Khosrow I after the capture of Antioch in 540
Yazd, Fars	YZ	Yazd (YZ)/ Yazd	