Bob Langnas. "An Introduction to Parthian Silver Fractions, the Little Anomalies of Arsacid Coinage"

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- 1 The author in this paper analyses a typology of Parthian coins that seldom managed to catch the attention of the scholars: the drachm fractions. These specimens, hemidrachms (half of a drachm) diobols ($\frac{1}{3}$ drachm) and obols ($\frac{1}{6}$ drachm) are much less common than drachms and tetradrachms and were mint only by some Arsacid monarch in limited periods of Parthian history. Usually, their types replicate with few exceptions and modifications the types employed in the main issues: King's bust on the reverse and Arsakes/archer on the obverse. Before 1989 it was generally thought that Orodes II, in the 1st century BC, was the last Parthian great King to produce fractions of drachm. This fact had been connected to the gradual disappearance of Greek elements from Arsacid coinage and art. The discovery of the Shiraz hoard put into discussion this conviction: from that collection, fractions are attested for all monarchs between Vologases I and Osroes. Some scholars consider these specimens fully Parthian others ascribe them to a pro-Arsacid dynasty ruling part of Persis along with the local rulers.

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