

HORMAZD IV (CE 579-590) son of Khusru I

(Silver Drachm)



Obverse: 'AuHRMaZ AFZUI' (*Hormazd, the bestower of prosperity*). The Crown and features are similar to those of Khusru I, his father but in each of the 3 Crescents (outside the Rim) there is a Star.

Reverse: Fire Altar is narrow decorated with upturned ribbons. Star to the right and crescent to the left of the fire. Attendants are King and Prince (wearing their high hat Crown. Both are facing forwards with hands resting on sword halters. **Mint** is 'ZR' (*Zaranj*) and **Regnal year** is 12 (*Dvaj-dah*).

Hormazd IV was nicknamed '*Turkzadeh*' because he was born of a Turkmenian mother, Kayen, daughter of the Khakan, Mohad Khan.

Campaigns:

After the death of Khusru I the Romans, once more, became boisterous. Hormazd, unfortunately, did not possess the foresight and greatness of his father. He did not enter into any battle but apportioned most of the major expeditions to the whims of his **Commander, Behram Chobin**.

***CE 579:** The Romans regained the *fortress of Dara*.

***CE 582: Maurice Tiberius CE 582-602**, on his way to Constantinople, gained a decisive victory over Behram Chobin at the **Battle of Constantia**. The dying Byzantine **Tiberius II** appointed him to succeed as Emperor.

CE 588: *The Khazars, instigated and aided by the Romans under Maurice Tiberius, entered through Syria with a large army of 80,000 men. They swept through Armenia and Adzerbaijan and threatened the very heartland of Airan. Hormazd directed the able Commander, Behram Chobin to deal with the crisis. Behram routed the invaders and captured their Chief and the Romans and dispatched them to Hormazd in Ctesiphon.

***CE 589:** Maurice Tiberius discontinued paying the annual levy of 30,000 pieces of gold imposed by Khusru I (Treaty of Lazica). Behram Chobin made a bid to conquer Lazica but was utterly defeated. Hormazd, unwisely, ridiculed him in the court and dismissed him under disgrace from the army. Behram revolted, obtained the allegiance of the army and advanced towards Ctesiphon. Hormazd, fearing a plot, imprisoned many nobles, but there was a revolt in the palace. The nobles retaliated by deposing Hormazd and blinding him. Khusru, eldest son of Hormazd fled to Constantinople and remained under the protection of Maurice Tiberius.



T iberius II CE 578-582



Maurice Tiberius CE 582-602

VARAHRAN VI (CE 590-591)
***(Behram Chobin - army commander
and usurper of the throne)***

Although Behram had supporters, the Council of Nobles was disinclined to recognize him heir to the throne. In the eyes of the people, the Royal Glory '*Khvaar Kayaanik*', innate in the House of Ardeshir Papakan, was absent. No one outside the glory of the '*Khvaar*' could possibly be the King.

Nevertheless, Behram ordered the minting of his coins. Having assumed the title of Varahrans he had the features of the coin of Varahrans V copied.

(Silver Drachm)



Obverse: '*VaRaHRAN AFZuN*' (*Behram the Prosperous*). The crown and features on the coin are similar to those of Khusru I.

Reverse: Tiara has two turrets (one front and back). A Crescent clip (rather than ribbons) holds the small Orymbos. Ribbons hold curled locks of hair. Beard is short trimmed. Necklace and earrings bear large gemstones. Embroidered border of Cape is open in front.

Reverse: Fire attendants are himself (as King) and presumably his son, (as prince) each wearing the high hat crown. Both face forwards with hands raised in reverence.

Mint: 'AIRAN' (*Airan Khurra Shahpur*) **Regnal Year:** 'AIOKI' (*One*)

Khusru, the eldest son of Hormazd IV fearing for his life, had fled to Constantinople and had taken refuge under Maurice Tiberius. The only royal Princes left were the elderly **Bindoe**, governor of Atrapatan and **Vistakhm**, governor of Khorasan, brothers-in-law of the Hormazd IV. There was a civil strife to allow one of them to take the throne. Bindoe escaped from Ctesiphon to Nisibis and took up the cause of his nephew, Khusru in refuge in Constantinople. Vistakhm, Governor of Khorasan, gathered an Army to take up arms against Behram.

***CE 590:** Khusru returned with a large Roman army, assisted by **Maurice Tiberius (CE 582-602)** and captured the Fortress of Dara with the connivance of **Narseh, the Iranian Commander** of Behram in Dara. An Army headed by Bindoe and other Nobles from Nisibis then joined him. The combined armies, also joined by Vistakhm's army from Khorasan gained a minor victory in the **Battle of the Zagros Mountains**. Behram's army retreated. His regrouped army was utterly defeated in the second **Battle of the Zab River**, summer of CE 591. Behram Chobin escaped and fled to the Khakan of Turkemenia. Later, after Khusru ascended the throne he contrived to and had Behram assassinated.



Maurice Tiberius CE 582-602

VISTAKHM (Bistam)-(CE 592-596) maternal uncle of Khusru II

(Silver Drachm)



Obverse: 'PiRuChI BiSTa(k)HM AFZUTU' (*Victorious Vistakhm, the bestower of prosperity*). The crown and features of the coin are similar to those of Khusru I but the 4 crescents outside Rim bear 3 dots each. The hair is shoulder length, straight. The beard is short - trimmed

Reverse: The Altar Shaft is wide with the decorative ribbons turned upwards. Star to the left and Crescent to the right of Fire. The Fire attendants are himself and presumably his son, with the high hat crown on their heads. Both are facing forwards, with hands resting on swords. **Mint:** 'RD' (*Raiy*) **Regnal year:** 3 (*Talta*).

After the overthrow of Behram Chobin, Vistakhm hurried back to Khorasan, where he remained Governor for 2 years. In CE 592 he decided to declare himself the suzerain King of Airan - the entire Empire.

Khusru, the eldest son of Hormazd, being the legitimate heir was instated King in the Capital, Ctesiphon by the nobles. Khusru soon commenced the task of eliminating those who had initially favored

Behram Chobin, his treacherous commander. This included his maternal uncle, Bindoe but the other uncle, Vistakhm was out of reach in Khorasan. He also had Behram Chobin assassinated while in exile under the shelter of the Khakan in Turkemenia.

CE 596: Khusru then engaged his uncle, Vistakhm in Battle and defeated him. But Vistakhm managed to escape to the Khakan for shelter. Khusru, however, had him assassinated by treachery.