

3. Sho-gang/Srang Coinage System

In 1904, His Holiness, the 13th Dalai-Lama, fled from Lhasa before the British Expedition which had forced its way through the Chumbi Valley to Lhasa under Colonel Younghusband. The Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa in 1909 after spending five years in Mongolia and China where he must have had opportunities to study China's efforts to reform its coinage. He probably saw new machines striking crown size silver coins, observed the issuing of paper money, the funding of banks and other financial institutions. It was probably during this period that the Dalai Lama conceived the idea of reforming the Tibetan monetary system. On his return to his homeland, the Dalai Lama ordered the opening of the mint at Dode in the valley bearing the same name about 10 km Northeast of Lhasa where the machinery was operated by water-power.

This new monetary reform of the 13th Dalai Lama began in 1909 and ended in 1953. The monetary system is based upon the Tibetan system of weights using Chinese decimal sub-divisions:

10 'on = 1 sKar

10 skar = 1 Sho-gang (Chinese Miscal or Chi'ien)

10 Sho = 1 dNgul-srang or Chinese tael (liang) = ounce = c. 37 grams

The new monetary reform is referred to as 'Sho-gang/Srang Coinage System.' This system has been broken down into six 'Coinage Series' as noted below.

- a. First Coinage Series Yr. 1 (1909)
 - ° Wheel type design minted in the name of Hsuan Tung
- b. Second Coinage Series
 - ° Snow lion design 15-43 (1909)
- c. Third Coinage Series (1913-1919)
- d. Fourth Coinage Series (1918-1930)
- e. Fifth Coinage Series (1932-1946)
- f. Sixth Coinage Series (1947-1953)

These coinage series are described below:

a. First Coinage Series - (1909)

'Wheel Type' Design minted in the name of Hsuan Tung, the last Emperor of the Manchu Dynasty. The new series was a Srang valued at 6-2/3 Tamkas and weighing just over a half Nyul Srang; a 5 Sho piece to the same standard; and also denominations expressed as fractions of a Sho-gang, 1/8 and 1/4.

The Code Classification is noted below:

Code

'T'	Type	Year	Reference ⁽¹⁾
10	1/8 Sho-gang	Yr. 1 (1909)	YA7
11	1/4 Sho-gang	Yr. 1 (1909)	YB7
12	5 Sho	Yr. 1 (1909)	Y8
13	1 Srang	Yr. 1 (1909)	Y9

(1) Krause-Mishler Catalog Number



T 10
1/8 Sho-gang
Actual size

T-10 (Y-A7)

1/8 Sho-gang



The classification of the 1/8 Sho-gang is the result of studying seven coins detailed in the following eight tables.

LIST OF TABLES

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I. COIN FEATURE DETAILS

REVERSE DETAILS

Type	Description
I	 High arc with bead between the fleurets
II	 Low arc with bead between the fleurets

II. COIN TYPE

There are two types recognised by the arch connecting the florets as described above and detailed in the following table.

III. DETAILS OF COIN TYPES

Type I
Code T10.1
Mint: Dode
Denomination: 1/8 Sho-gang, Yr. 1 (1909)
Diam: 21.6 mm; Th. 1.4 mm; Wt. 4.01 gms.
Metal: Copper, Plain Edge



Obverse: A small square in the center with one bead in each upper corner encloses the 'Wish-Granting Jewel' (Tib. Norbu). A larger square with four diagonal lines to the corners of the small square forms four quadrangles in which Tibetan script is inscribed. Outside the large square is a 16.0-mm diameter circle which forms four segments, each containing a rosette of seven beads and two scrolls. Between the circle and rim are eight stars. The Tibetan script reads:

1. Script: Shon-thong,
Tibetan pronunciation of the Manchu Emperor Hsuan Tung

2. Khri, spoke as 'Thri'



3. Year 1

4. Shon-thong period 1, Value

Reverse: Type I - Starting in the center, two very small circles followed by eight oblong beads enclosed by the 3rd circle (diam. 5.0 mm). Between the 3rd and 4th circle (diam. 8.0 mm) are eight small beads. Between the 4th and 5th circle (diam. 16.8 mm) are eight separate fleurets containing Tibetan script. The eight fleurets are connected at top by an arc with a bead. Outside the 5th circle are eight stars placed equidistant apart.

The Tibetan script reads: dga'-ldan-pho-bran-phyod-las-rnam-rgyal, The Ga-den Palace, victorious in all directions

Type II
Code T10.2



Obverse/Reverse: Same as T10.1. Type II Low arc with bead between the eight fleurets

IV. SUMMARY DISTRIBUTION TABLE

Type	Code 'T'	No. Var.	No. Dup.	T.N.
I	10.1	1	-	1
II	10.2	1	5	6
	Total	2	5	7

V. MEASUREMENT ANALYSIS

The average diameter is 21.6 mm and the average thickness is 1.1 mm.

VI. SUMMARY WEIGHT ANALYSIS

No. Coins	Weight (gms)			s.d.m.	95% c.i. for mean
	Low	High	Avg.		
7	3.45	4.43	3.85	0.36	3-13-4.57

VII. X-RAY MINI QUANTITATIVE ANALYSES

Code 'T'	Analyses (%)				
	Cu	Zn	Fe	Pb	Sn
10.1	97.0	-	0.73	.301	.262
10.2	97.2	-	-	-	.262

VIII. TABLE SHOWING COIN DETAILS

Type	Code 'T'	Rev Die Axis	Diam. mm.	Th. mm.	Wt. Gms.
I	10.1	100°cw	21.6	1.4	4.01
II	10.2	5°ccw	21.7	1.4	4.43

A silver striking of this coin exists and is attributed as an off-metal strike.