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## **Coins and tokens from ancient Ceylon: being a critical survey of the coins and coin like objects unearthed on the island based on a thoroughly annotated catalogue of finds, and supplemented by an analytical part dealing with the island's ancient economy and its trade with the western world**

der Reihe / of the series

**Ancient Ruhuna; Volume 2 (FAAK Bd. 5)**

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## Foreword

*I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorise before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suite theories, instead of theories to suit facts.*

*Arthur Conan Doyle*

This monograph\* is the second volume in a series entitled *Ancient Ruhuna: Sri Lankan – German Archaeological Project in the Southern Province*. At first sight, it seems to be an unsuitable place to publish in this context a general survey of the ancient coins discovered on the island. However, the ancient dominion of Rohaṇa (Ruhunu, Ruhuna) in the southern part of Śrī Laṅkā played a central role in the monetary history of ancient *Laṅkā*, the *Taprobane*, *Palaesimundus*, and *Σιελεδίβα* of the Greek, Roman, and Byzantine authors. This had already become evident about twenty years ago, when first mapping the finds of Late Roman coins and their imitations. Nevertheless, it was the results of the recent archaeological excavations in the ancient capital of Rohaṇa, Tissamahārāma – which provided an overwhelming amount of numismatic data – that enabled us to recognise the then economic conditions more clearly. These primary data are supplemented by previously published, as well as unpublished, coin material collected from the eighteenth century until today, to broaden the basis for future studies.

I am indebted to the editor of *Forschungen zur Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen*, Burkhard Vogt, Director of the *Kommission für Archäologie Außereuropäischer Kulturen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (KAAK)* and to the chief excavator in Tissamahārāma, Hans-Joachim Weisshaar for accepting to publish the present study in this series. Supplementary to the primary material, the numerous data preserved in the Biddell documents could also be used thanks to the generosity of its present owner, L. S. D. Pieris, in Colombo. Special thanks are due to William Southworth who thoroughly improved my English text, and to Hans Wittersheim (KAAK) who processed and enhanced the photographs and designed the maps. H.-J. Weisshaar and the librarian of the KAAK kindly provided me with literature, which in many cases was not obtainable in other German libraries. However, without the forbearance of my wife and our daughter throughout all those long years, this book would never have been written.

\* Manuscript completed: September 2006.