

# Afghanistan

Amanullah Period, 1919-1929

## Objective & Purpose

By showing the various issues, printings, and usages made between the years 1919 and 1929, this exhibit will answer the question: “*What effect did the socioeconomic reforms made during the reign of King Amanullah have on the postal system?*”

Some of the changes/improvements to the postal system are:

- New standards for handling **registered mail**—only one postmark instead of two now required;
- New types of stamps issued such as **commemoratives**, **newspapers**, and Afghanistan’s only **booklet**.
- A standardized system for dealing with inbound mail without Afghan postage (**postage due**) since Afghanistan did not become a member of the Universal Postal Union until April, 1928.

## Historical Background

King Amanullah, who reigned from February 1919 to January 1929, tried to end Afghanistan’s isolation following the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919) as well as be the buffer in Central Asia between Russia and British India. During his reign, he toured Europe bringing home ideas for modernizing the country. He also brought in many engineers, particularly from Europe and America, to help build new infrastructure.

## Exhibit Organization and Outline

This is a traditional exhibit organized chronologically by issue (important items identified with “❖”):

### Frames 1 and 2

- Forerunners, 1919–1920
- Commemorative Issue, 1920
- “Habibia” Parcel Post Stamps, 1921

### Frames 3, 4 and 5

- “Royal Star” Definitive Issue, 1921
- “Royal Star Reissues,” 1922–1925

### Frame 6

- Kabul Interurban Issue, 1923
- 5th Independence Day, 1923
- Supplementary Values, 1924–1926

- 6th Independence Day, 1924
- 7th Independence Day, 1925
- Mazar Provisional Issue, 1925
- 7th Anniversary of Independence, 1926

### Frames 7 and 8

- 8th Anniversary of Independence, 1927
- Imperforate Definitive Issue, October, 1927
- Perforated Definitive Issue, 1927–1928
- 9th Anniversary of Independence, 1928
- Unissued 10th Anniversary of Independence, 1929(?)
- Parcel Post Stamps and Newspaper Stamps, 1928

## Bibliography and References

- Patterson, Frank E., III. *Afghanistan: Its Twentieth Century Postal Issues*. Collectors Club Handbook No. 18. New York: Collectors Club of New York, 1964.
- Uyehara, Cecil H., and Horst G. Dietrich. *Afghan Philately, 1871-1989*. Santa Monica: George Alevizos, 1995.
- Wilkins, John and Divall, Richard. *Afghanistan Revisited: Postal Stationery, Revenues, Forgeries*. Melbourne: The Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria, 2005.
- Wilkins, John M., RFD. *Afghanistan, 1840-1996, Postal History Handbook*. Melbourne: The Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria, 2000.



## Forerunner • Habibullah Stamps Still in Use, 1919 ♦

Amanullah's Reign Begins on February 28, 1919 After the Assassination of Amir Habibullah  
Amanullah Stamps Not Issued until September, 1920

**Habibullah Official Stamp** on Linen Envelope from Muhammad Dhafar, Ruler of *Noor*, at Queen's Court in Exile (Probably Laghman) During Third Anglo-Afghan War (6 May–8 August, 1919) • Official Stamp Tied by Military Field Post Cancel(?) • Kabul Arrival, "1337 *Shah'ban* 23" (May 24, 1919)



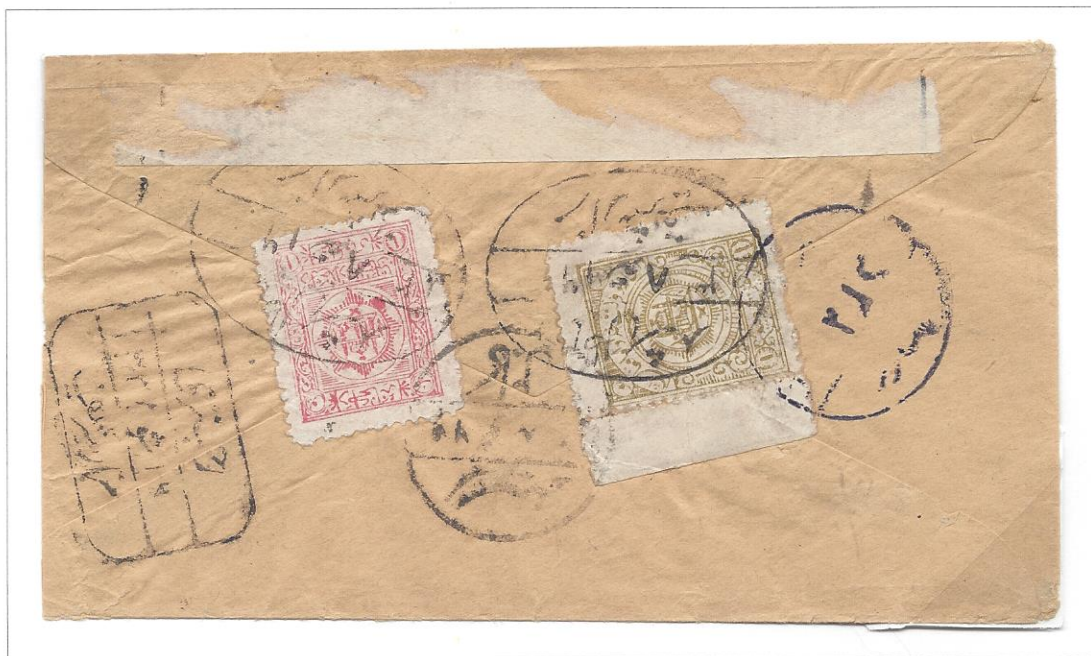


**Forerunners • Habibullah Stamps Still in Use, 1920 ❖**



**Habibullah 1918-19 One Rupee Pair on Cover**

*Bokhara Agency to Peshawar (Afghan P.O.), 1920. Posted, February 7, 1920. Two rupees pays quintuple-letter rate plus registration. Illustrated in Patterson. ex "Major Adrian Hopkins"*



**Habibullah 1918-19 One Abasi and One Rupee on Cover**

*Mazar-i-Sharif to Peshawar (Afghan Extra-Territorial P.O.), 1920. Posted, "1338 Shawal 16" (July 2, 1920). Rate (40p) is triple-letter plus registration.*

## Forerunner • Amanullah Stamps Not Yet Available, 1920 ♦

Only a Cancellation Was Used to Indicate Postage Collected • Not Recorded in Current Literature



*Jhelum, India to Kabul, 1920. Posted "AHMADABAD B.O. (Branch Office), JHELMUM," August 28, 1920. Transit through the Indian Post Office in Peshawar. Kabul arrival, "1338 Zou'lhaj-jeh 20?" (September ??, 1920).*

**Only Known Example of this Kind of Usage: "Postmark Indicating Postage Collected"**

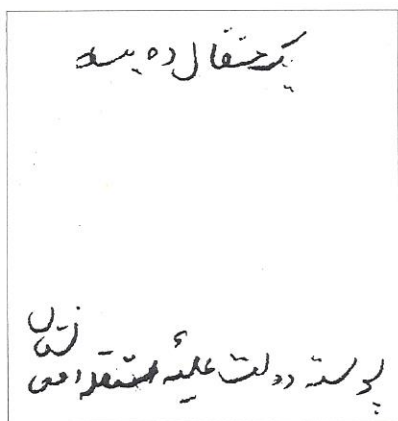
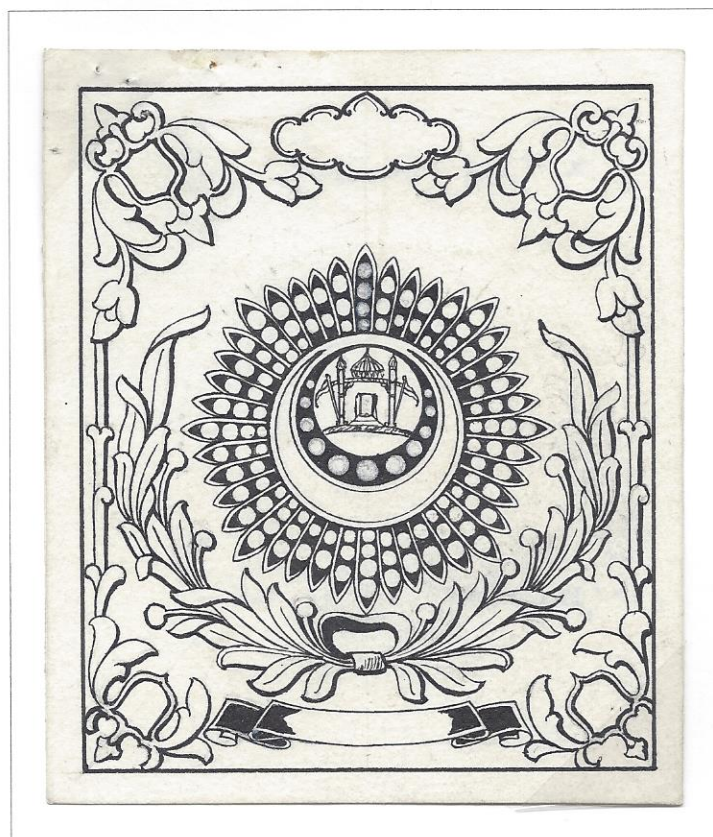


## Commemorative Issue, 1920

Issued to Commemorate First and Second Anniversaries of Signing of Armistice  
That Ended War of Independence (Third Afghan War) • Also Served as Definitive Stamps

**Hand Drawn Essay ♦ • Black India Ink on Thick Card**

Main Features of Design Only, Less Values and Inscriptions • Design Size: 76 by 90 Millimeters



Annotated in Pencil on Reverse Side

Top Line: "10 Paise Denomination"

Bottom Line: "Divinely-Appointed  
Government of Afghanistan"

**Unique**



## Commemorative Issue, 1920

Issued to commemorate signing of the armistice that ended the War of Independence (also known as the Third Afghan War). Printed from plates composed of only two cliches, two by one. Ten paisa plate has two types: Type I, position 1, measures 38.5 by 45mm (design trimmed at top); Type II, position 2, measures 38.5 by 46mm.

Typographed • Perforated 11¾ All Around (Stamps with Imperforate Sides Are Known)

• Thin Hard Wove or Soft Smooth Wove Papers



10-paisa Rose (Type I Cliché)



20-paisa Lilac Brown



30-paisa Bluish Green

## Chronology of Postal Rates, 1919-1928

Approximate Change Date	1st Class		Registration		Postal Cards		
	Inland 5 grams*	Foreign 20 grams	Inland	Foreign	Local	Inland	Foreign
<i>About 1920</i>	10 paisa	**	10 paisa	**	4 paisa†		**
<i>October 1927</i>	15 poul		10 poul		4 poul†		
<i>April 1928</i>	30 poul	40 poul	30 poul	40 poul	8 poul†		**

1870. 12 shahi = 6 sanar = 3 abasi = 1 rupee

1920. 60 paisa = 2 q'ran = 1 rupee

1927. 100 poul = 1 afghani

\*\* Before April, 1928, all outbound foreign mail had to have international postage prepaid with stamps issued by a member of the UPU. Those of British India were normally used.

† No stamps issued for these rates, only postal cards.

\* Sometime around 1921 until April 1928, this rate used to collect postage due on inbound letters only. (Up until April 1928, Afghanistan was not a member of the UPU.) New postage due rate based on weight only and disregards the kind of service the letter bore. For each 5g (1 "dafda"), a letter was charged 10 paisa (15p, beginning October, 1927).

## First Major Innovation of the Amanullah Period: Issue of Commemorative Stamps





## Commemorative Issue, 1920 • Sheets of Two ❖

### 10 Paisa

Type I Cliché (Position 1 of Sheet): 38.5 x 45mm • Type II Cliché (Position 2 of Sheet): 38.5 x 46mm • Two Settings, Narrow Gutter and Wide Gutter

**One of Five Sheets  
Known Unused**



### 20 Paisa

Note the Imperforate Right Margin  
In the Second Stamp

**One of Three Sheets  
Known Unused**



### 30 Paisa

**One of Five Sheets  
Known Unused**



## Commemorative Issue, 1920 • Paper Types

*Thin Hard Wove Paper With or Without Mesh*  
 Mesh Can Sometimes Be Seen on Front Surface of Design



10p, "Position 2" (Type II Cliché)  
 With Mesh



20p Value  
 With Mesh



30p, Unused, "Position 1"  
 Without Mesh

*Soft Smooth White Paper Without Mesh*



10p, "Position 2" (Type II Cliché)



20p Value  
 ex "Dietrich"



## Ten Paise "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Settings

Two Settings Recorded: Wide Gutter (19mm) and Narrow Gutter (12–13mm)

### Wide Gutter Setting (19mm)

Characterized by Double Perforation in Gutter and Narrow Stamp Margin



Carmine Rose (Type I)



Deep Carmine (Type I)



Deep Rose (Type I)



### Complete Sheet on Cover ♦

*Kabul to Peshawar(?)*, 1921. Posted Kabul, "1339 Zou'lhajjah ???" (August-September, 1921). 20p is **possibly double-letter rate** (since there is no sign of registration such as a remnant of the registration receipt). ex "Hopkins" and "Dietrich"

**Only Known Pane of the Wide Gutter • One of Two Known 10p Covers Franked with Full Pane**



10p "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Wide Gutter Setting (19mm) ❖



*Kabul to Peshawar, 1920. 10p deep red (Type I) pays single-letter rate. Posted Kabul, "1339 Muharram 4" (September 18, 1920).*

**Earliest Known Use (First Month of Issue) of 10p**



*Kabul to Peshawar, 1920. 10p deep rose (Type II) pays single-letter rate. Posted Kabul, "1339 Muharram 7" (September 21, 1920). ex "Dietrich"*

**Early Use (First Month of Issue) • Illustrated in Uyehara Afghanistan Book**



## 10p "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Narrow Gutter Setting (12-13mm)

Characterized by Single Line Perforation Between Stamps and Wide Margins

- Misaligned Clichés are a Result of Careless Workmanship at the Perforating Machine



Tile Red (Type I)



Rose (Type II) • Misaligned Cliché



Deep Carmine (Type II) • Misaligned Cliché



**Rose Shade, Complete Sheet of Two ♦**

Misaligned Clichés • Illustrated in Uyehara Afghanistan Book

- ex "*Light*" and ex "*Dietrich*"

**Five Unused Complete Sheets Recorded • All Known  
Unused Sheets of the 10p are from Narrow Gutter Setting**



## 10p "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Narrow Gutter Setting (12-13mm)

Used Examples • "Kabul" Postmarks



Salmon (Type II),  
Slightly Misaligned



Carmine Rose (Type I)



Deep Carmine (Type I)



*Kabul to Peshawar, 1921 10p carmine rose complete sheet on registered cover. Rate is 20p: 10p registration + 10p single-letter rate. Posted "1340 Safar ???" (October-November, 1921).*

**One of Two Known Covers Franked with Complete Pane of the 10p ❖**



**10p "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Narrow Gutter Setting (12-13mm)**  
Paper Types on Single-letter Rate Covers



*Kabul to Peshawar, 1920. Franked with 10p carmine rose (Type II) on thin hard wove paper with mesh. Posted Kabul, "1339 Muharram 7" (September 21, 1920)*

**Early Use (Within First Month of Issue)**



*Kabul to Peshawar, 1921. Franked with 10p pale rose (Type II) on soft smooth paper without mesh. Posted Kabul, "1340 Rabi I 10" (November 11, 1921)*



# Twenty Paise "Commemorative Issue, 1920"

Unused Examples



Dark Lilac



Dark Lilac



Lilac Brown  
Right Margin Imperforate



Dark Lilac  
Complete Pane of Two ❖



## Twenty Paise "Commemorative Issue, 1920"

20p is the Basic Registered Letter Rate: 10p Registration + 10p Single Letter Rate



Cancelled Charikar "1399 Rabi I ??"  
(Date?)



Cancelled Turkestan "1339 Muharram  
??" (September-October, 1920)  
**Early Use (First Month of Issue)**



Cancelled Kabul "1339(?) Muharram 16"  
(September 30, 1920)  
**Early Use**



*Kabul to Jalalabad, 1921.* Registered cover front franked with 20p value. **Rate = 10p for registration + 10p for single-letter Rate.** Posted Kabul, "1340 Rabi I ???" (December ??, 1921). Note remnant of registration receipt.



## Twenty Paise "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Registered Uses ❖



*Kabul to Peshawar, 19??.* 20p, position 1, canceled "Kabul," pays **10p registration fee plus 10p single-letter rate**. Note remnant of registration receipt.  
ex "Dietrich"



*Charikar to Peshawar, 19??.* Registered cover franked with 20p deep lilac, position 2, paying **10p registration fee plus 10p single-letter rate**. Note remnant of registration receipt.  
ex "Dietrich"



## Thirty Paise "Commemorative Issue, 1920" ❖

Thin Hard Wove Paper with Mesh Unless Otherwise Mentioned  
(Mesh Can Be Seen on Front of Stamp and Through Design)

### Unused Examples



Pale Green  
Thin Hard Wove Paper  
without Mesh



Medium Green  
Thin Hard Wove Paper  
without Mesh



Dark Green  
Position 2 of Sheet  
("Dots in Left Value Panel")



Dark Green  
Position 2 of Sheet  
("Dots in Left Value Panel")



Dark Green, Complete Pane of Two • ex "Light"

**Only Five Unused Panes Recorded, This Being the Finest Example**



## Thirty Paise "Commemorative Issue, 1920" • Used Examples



Bright Green  
"Kabul" Cancellation Dated  
"1339 Muharram ???" (September-  
October, 1920)



Deep Green Complete Pane on Piece • Unidentified Oval Cancellation  
• "Kabul" Receiving Postmark

One of Three Sheets Known Used ❖



*Kabul to Peshawar, 192?. 30p complete sheet on registered cover pays 60p rate: 10p registration plus 50p quintuple-letter rate. Posting date illegible. ex "Hopkins" and "Dietrich"*

Only Known Cover Franked with 30p Full Pane ❖



## "Habibia" Parcel Post Stamps, 1921

Legend in Top Cartouche Specifies Permitted Weight Limit and Repeats Denomination •  
Produced in Small Quantities as Needed • Line Perforated  $11\frac{3}{4}$  on Various Wove and Laid Papers •  
Carelessly Hand-applied Gum Often on Surface of Stamps

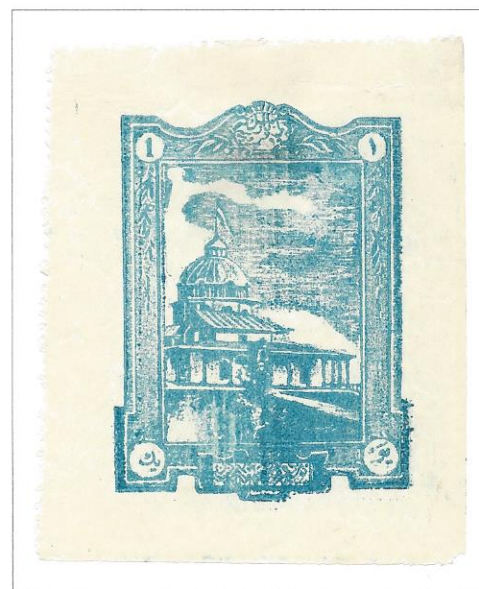
*"Half Khurd Parcel, Ten Paisa"*



*"One Third Khurd Parcel, Fifteen Paisa"*



*"Half Pound Parcel, Thirty Paisa"*



*"One Pound Parcel, One Rupee"*



## "Habibia" Parcel Post Stamps • Background

Habibia parcel post stamps were issued in several sheet layouts: sheets of 2, two by one; and, in two different sheets of 4 arranged two by two and four by one. Patterson states that, *"A study of the quantity of block sheets in 'post office' condition indicates that these were actually panes in an original press sheet of four, or possibly six blocks."* Press sheets were broken up either by cutting or by tearing along a straight-edge. Thus, many block issue sheets have one or more deckled edges.



10-Paisa Value (*Layout Ba*) with Deckled Edge at Top



15-Paisa Value (*Layout Bc*) Showing Deckled Edges All Around



## "Habibia" Parcel Post Stamps • Identifying a Sheet Layout

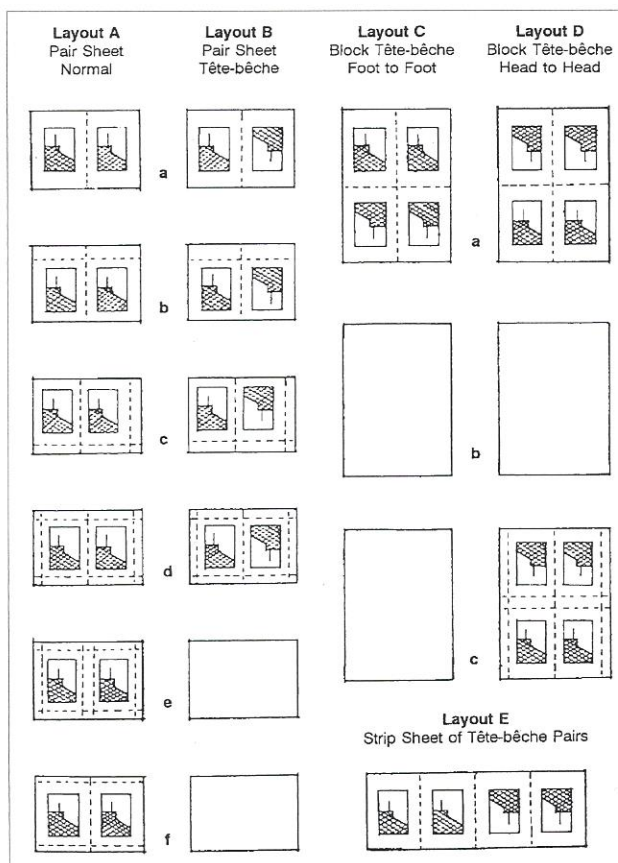


Thirty Paise Sheet: *Layout Bd*

Habibia stamps were printed from plates composed of only two clichés. These were reassembled from time to time and many settings exist. Several different perforation patterns were also used on both the pair and block sheets.

Using the information of cliché arrangement and perforation, one can identify the format (or layout) of a particular sheet. The chart at right, taken from Patterson's book, *Afghanistan: Its Twentieth Century Postal Issues*, shows the layout combinations known so far.

The 30-paisa sheet on this page is a sheet of two with one inverted cliché. Looking at the chart, the sheet is classified under "Layout B, Pair Sheet, Tête-bêche." Going down column B, row "d" corresponds to the perforation pattern of this sheet. The complete classification is, thus, *Layout Bd*.





## "Habibia" Parcel Post Stamps • Regular Postage Uses

As Evidenced by the Number of Covers That Survived, These Saw Limited Use as Regular Postage



10p, Layout Af, Position 1  
"Kabul to Peshawar"



1r, Layout Ae, Position 2  
Postmarked Kabul, May 1, 1926



*Kabul to Peshawar, 1921* Posted Kabul, "13[00] Kaus 16?" (December 7, 1921).  
10p, Layout Aa, position 2, pays **domestic single-letter rate**.



## 10p "Habibia" • Cliché Types

### Type I

- Top portion of vertical cloud spiral curves to left and ends in rounded blob near or touching frame.
- Numeral 1 pointed at top; bottom left serif longer than serif on right.



### Type II

- Vertical cloud top has reverse curve to right and ends in flat pointed oval.
- Numeral serifs equal and top of 1 is flat.



### Type III

- Cliché basically similar to that of Type II.
- Large conspicuous dot in front walkway.





## Ten Paise "Habibia" • Sheet Layouts

**Layout Ba** • Pair Sheet, Tête-bêche • Type II and Inverted Type III Clichés



**Layout E** • Tête-bêche Pair from Strip Sheet of Tête-bêche Pairs  
Positions 2 and 3 of Sheet, Type II Cliché and Type II Cliché Inverted  
Postage Due Handstamps



Strip sheets come from single trial issue. Most broken up to obtain center tête-bêche pair. Tête-bêche pairs from strip sheets are easy to identify—both stamps are same cliché type and perforated vertically but *not* horizontally.



## 15p "Habibia" • Cliché Types

### Type I

- Lower right-hand cloud large and encompasses upper roof.
- Top flag of numeral 5 does not touch enclosing circle.



### Type II (Early State)

- Lower cloud smaller; does not touch upper roof and is pointed.
- Flag of numeral 5 extends through enclosing circle.



### Type IIA (Late State)

- Lower cloud and flag of 5 as in basic Type II.
- Lower right inside frame corner cut by wide blank diagonal line at left of value circle.





## Fifteen Paise "Habibia" • Sheet Layouts

**Layout Ac** • Pair Sheet, Normal • Type I and Type II (Early State) Clichés



**Layout Ab** • Pair Sheet, Normal • Type IIA (Late State) and Type I Clichés ❖



Blue Octagonal  
Control Mark on  
Reverse Side

Similar to Mark  
Used on "Royal Star"  
Issues in 1923



## Fifteen Paisa "Habibia" • Sheet Layout

Layout Dc • Block Tête-bêche, Head to Head

*Top Row: Type IIA (Late State) and Type I Clichés Both Inverted*

*Bottom Row: Type I and Type IIA (Late State) Clichés*

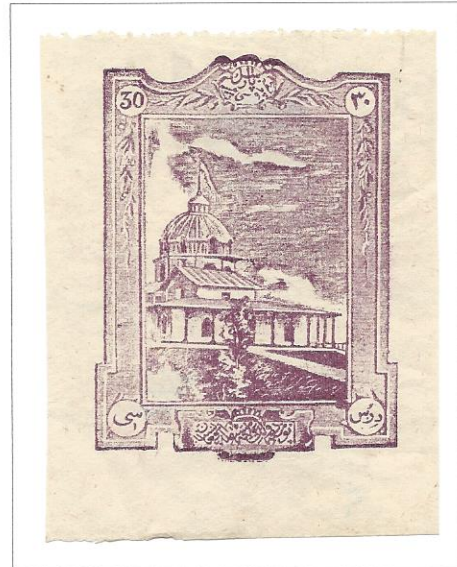




## 30p "Habibia" • Cliché Types

### Type I

- Vertical left cloud, normally separate, has "seahorse" profile.
- Lower right corner of bottom inscription panel is square.



### Type II (Early State)

- Vertical cloud joined to horizontal cloud.
- Lower right corner of inscription panel rounded.
- Outer frame design basically complete.



### Type IIA (Late State)

- Like Type II cliché but with prominent line at junction of clouds.
- Portions of outer frame on left side and corner are blank.
- Conspicuous blot in left frame opposite porch roof.



ex "Lagerloef"



# Thirty Paise "Habibia"

- Sheet Layouts

## Layout Ae

Pair Sheet, Normal • Type I  
and Type II (Early State)  
Clichés



## Layout Da

Block Tête-bêche,  
Head to Head

*Top Row:* Type I and Type IIA  
(Late State) Clichés,  
Both Inverted

*Bottom Row:* Type IIA (Late  
State) and Type I Clichés





# One Rupee "Habibia" • Cliché Types and Sheet Layout Example



**Type I**

- Main left cloud has narrow 1 mm neck below junction with horizontal cloud.
- Numeral 1 has bottom serifs on both sides.



**Type II**

- Left cloud has wide 2¼ mm neck below cloud junction.
- Numeral 1 has bottom serif on right side only.

## **Layout Ab • Pair Sheet, Normal • Type I and Type II Clichés**





**One Rupee  
"Habibia"**

- **Sheet Layouts**

**Layout Bd**

Pair Sheet, Tête-bêche  
Type II and Type I Clichés



**Layout Ae**

Pair Sheet, Normal  
Type II and Type I Clichés



**Layout Ae Variety**

Extra Perforations All Around

Pair Sheet, Normal  
Type II and Type I Clichés





# One Rupee "Habibia" • Sheet Layout

## Layout Da

Block Tête-bêche, Head to Head

*Top Row: Type II and Type I Clichés, Both Inverted*

*Bottom Row: Type I and Type II Clichés*

