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12

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5th Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic coins

Rome, 29-30 September 2017

Edited by
Bruno Callegher and
Arianna D'Ottone Rambach

EUT EDIZIONI UNIVERSITÀ DI TRIESTE

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DEGLI STUDI DI TRIESTE
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PREFACE

The fifth *Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic coins* was held in Rome on 29-30 September 2017 (cf. programme): a happy and necessary return to the city where our eponym spent his youth, between family and the Maronite College[1] before leaving for Lebanon, the Assemani homeland.

At Rome, on 23 and 24 September 2011, in collaboration with "Sapienza" University of Rome – Italian Institute of Oriental Studies, the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste and the Vatican Library, there was a meeting of scholars of Islamic coins, their origins and growth over the centuries. This enriched the research, certainly with innovative methodology, on the coins of the Umayyad and Sasanian era, sigillography and on historical-epigraphic topics, especially in numismatics[2]. The positive reception of both the initiative and the volume of the Proceedings suggested continuing these meetings: three meetings were in their own way pioneering but they also consolidated a system of relationships not to be dropped. Thus the 4th Symposium, which was held in Trieste on 25-27 September 2014, tackled mainly the history of studies on Islamic coins especially in its perspective as a discipline set within the vast ambits of Orientalism. Instead, as regards Simone Assemani (SA), the discovery was of great importance of documents and papers referring to unexplored years of his human *peregrinatio*, i.e. his prolonged stay in Trieste, employed in translations and management activities at a merchant company, before moving to Venice to work with Giacomo Nani[3].

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[1] P. Raphaël, *Le rôle du Collège maronite romain dans l'orientalisme aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Beyrouth 1950, 142-144.

[2] B. Callegher & A. D'Ottone, *The 3rd Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins*, Trieste 2012.

[3] The numerous contributions can be found in B. Callegher & A. D'Ottone Rambach, *4th Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins*, Trieste 2015.

The Rome Symposium, the 5th, confirmed that these meetings have become a keenly awaited get-together; they cannot yet be defined as traditional, but they have inspired something, perhaps more than something, in a rather difficult sector of studies because it entails a command of the Arab language and its multiple paleography or the access to archives in which for the same reason letters, manuscripts, reports of scholars of the 18th or 19th centuries, at the dawn of these researches, are not easily traced. There was full awareness of this in the organizing of the Rome meeting. We opted to continue the direct confrontation, not mediated, on various genres of these studies: to meet again to personally listen to studies, research, questions for debate. To the by now traditional division in two sessions (researches on SA & Islamic numismatics), two other events were added. These may be defined in a graphic way, the first as "resistance to marginality", the second as "a good result".

The programme-invitation folder allows a reassessment of what took place during the meeting, not so much as a chronicle but rather the motivations. Daniela Porro, Director of the National Roman Museum, who hosted us in her prestigious rooms where the famed numismatic collection of King Vittorio Emanuele III of Italy is also held, inaugurated the symposium and indicated its potentials. The hope was promptly confirmed in the contributions on unpublished aspects of the biography and studies of SA. No less pertinent were the papers on the numismatic documentation from digs in archaeological sites in Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Israel, Uzbekistan, Poland, on the plains of western Russia and in Georgia, Sicily or Spain.

The numismatic documentation should be the outcome of recent archaeological investigations but also of archaeology "in the archives", i.e. of recoveries at Museums in which Islamic money had been neglected. Some colleagues proposed revisions on the metrology of the dinar or mancuso. From diverse points of view the various contributions harmonized with the unifying subject proposed in the call for papers: Islamic money in the archaeological contexts, problems, methods, documentary value for the economic history from the Umayyad period to the Mamluks. Indeed, if within the ambits of Greek-Roman and Byzantine numismatics, the analysis of money finds in archaeological contexts (single finds & hoards) had consolidated a methodology aimed at interpretation of the data in order to define areas of money circulation, contribution of the various mints, the currency stock, exchange rates and even reflections on the units of account long in use in the registrations of debits and credits in the ancient or early medieval world, this was not the case for the finds of Islamic money in archaeological digs. The possible expansion of those methods had therefore to be discussed and any incongruities due to the differences in studying the money and a partial knowledge of the many and in part unpublished Arab language sources.

The need for a constructive comparison with ancient numismatics, especially in the reconstruction of its growth over the centuries, was brought to the attention of

the attendees in the second session of the first day, when the project "Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Orientalis", acronym FINO, was presented. It should be said that it is considered complementary to the preceding and well-known FINA "Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Antiquae"[4], in which Islamic money was not considered as ancient – and it certainly is not if with the term "ancient" a line of geographical/chronological demarcation is drawn between the Greek-Roman world and Islamic-eastern world. The opening of a line of research on the history of collecting and studies of Islamic numismatics should strive for an interdisciplinary approach beyond merely classificatory aspects and at the same time a sort of resistance to the danger of considering the numismatics of the Islamic world[5] as secondary, marginal, with respect to the money of the "classical" world, which has up to now been better known and appreciated thanks to knowledge of the ancient languages: Greek and Latin. The confirmation of an undeclared inter-disciplinarity appears, however, in these proceedings, in the paper *The Nani Collection of Arabic Coins through unpublished documents & drawings by Jean François Champollion (1790-1832)*. Not dissimilar to what emerged from a sort of mini meeting hosted at the 4th session of the Symposium. Volume 35 of the *Materiali on line* of the *Collezione di Vittorio Emanuele II. Monete Arabe* by Arianna D'Ottone Rambach was illustrated, edited by Gabriella Angeli Bufalini in charge of the National Medal Collection and the editorial project of the national numismatic heritage. Daniela Porro, Domenico Tudini, Vittorio Barbato for the technical-administrative part of the project, Annliese Nef and Andrea Saccocci for the scientific part, discussed the necessary synergy in numismatic ambits tout-court because new research, and therefore new results can be identified in documentation wrongly considered as of minor importance.

Five sessions of contributions, therefore, distributed over slightly less than two intense days, made possible by the generous collaboration of many that are mentioned here with gratitude: The National Roman Museum (*Palazzo Massimo*) and the University of Rome for the logistical hospitality, the Department of Humanities of the University of Trieste, Numismatica Genevensis s.a., the professional Italian numismatists, Nadia Jazbar & Giulio Bernardi for their respective financial contributions. The support of the International Numismatic Council, the Italian Numismatic

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[4] F. de Callataÿ, « Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Antiquae »: *présentation succincte d'un nouveau projet antiquaire* », Anabases 23 (2016), 163-168 ; https://www.oeaw.ac.at/antike/forschung/documenta-antiqua/numismatik/fontes-inediti-numismaticae-antiquae-fina/

[5] For the vastness of the research in this sector of numismatic studies, the two latest surveys are sufficient: L. Ilisch, *Islamic Numismatics (North Africa to Central Asia)*, in *A Survey of Numismatic Research 2002-2007*, M. Amandry, D. Bateson eds., Glasgow 2009, pp. 479-504, in part. 479-480; *S. Heidemann, Alberto Canto & V. Nastich in collaboration with Simon Gundelinger,* Islamic Section: The Mediterranean, Western Eurasia, Central Asia and Later South Asia, in Carmen Arnold-Biucchi et al. (eds.), Survey of Numismatic Research 2008-2013, Roma 2015, 531-592.

Society, the University of Trieste Publishers, the Oriental Numismatic Society, the Societé Française de Numismatique, the Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer, the Italian Institute of Numismatics, the State Mint and Polygraphic Institute and the Sistema Modus is appreciated and influential.

When, at the "Sapienza" – Italian Institute of Oriental Studies, our 5th Assemani Symposium concluded on Saturday 30 September, as always much later than the planned time, whilst saying our goodbyes, the common sentiment was that we had worked intensely, at a good pace, that we had listened and discussed in a fruitful way. As already written in the Proceedings of the 4th Assemani Symposium, organizing these periodic meetings, for myself and I am sure also for Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, is not a major effort. We are convinced that it is indispensable to meet regularly, also to overcome the anonymity of on-line communication/discussion. All of this is taken into account in this volume that is published in both paper and digital format (in the latter with an appendix of photographs edited by Vanja Macovaz). It includes almost all the papers given; some have been added during delays in the publication, while others do not appear by express wish of the individual scholars. Not everything in these papers will be agreed with, but what is proposed will advance our research also thanks to the different positions and criticisms that are bound to emerge. In any case it will be the reason to continue our meetings, with a regularity motivated by the desire to know the economics of the Islamic world through its money, diffusion, the documents that refer to it, but also the biographical doings of those scholars who over the last two centuries initiated and then enlivened this sector of studies.

Bruno Callegher
University of Trieste

museo nazionale romano palazzo massimo

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UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI TRIESTE
Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici

5th Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coinage

Rome, 29-30 September 2017

Friday, 29 September 2017

Museo Nazionale Romano – Palazzo Massimo
Largo di Villa Peretti 1, 00185 Rome
1st session: 9-16

16-17.30: FINO
(Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Orientalis)

18-19.30: MiBACT, IPZS e MEF:
una sinergia per la numismatica

Saturday, 30 September 2017

Sapienza Università di Roma – Istituto Italiano di Studi Orientali
Circonvallazione Tiburtina 4, 00185 Rome
2nd session: 9-14

ariannadottone@uniroma1.it bcallegher@units.it

Friday, 29 September 2017
Museo Nazionale Romano – Palazzo Massimo
Largo di Villa Peretti 1, 00185 Rome

9.00-9:30 **Daniela Porro**, Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo
Direttore del Museo Nazionale Romano
Saluto di Benvenuto

1st session CHAIRMAN: **Giovanni Gorini**, Università di Padova

9.30-10.00 **Marco Callegari**, Museo Bottacin, Padova
A bibliographical (and not just) correspondence: letters of Simone Assemani to Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi (1788-1814)

10.00-10.30 **Arianna D'Ottone Rambach**, Sapienza, Università di Roma
Un'inedita traduzione di Simone Assemani nell'archivio dell'Eremo di Camaldoli (Arezzo)

10.30-11.00 **Khadijeh Baseri**, Keeper at the National Museum Teheran
Islamic Coins

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-12.00 **Michael Bates**, former keeper of the American Numismatic Society, New York
The two Mithqals and the weight standard of the Islamic Dinar

12.00-12.30 **Lutz Ilisch**, former keeper of the Forschungsstelle für Islamische Numismatik, Universität Tübingen
Methodological problems in the comparative analysis of hoards with fragmented coins

12.30-13.00 **Alaa Aldin Alchomari**, Forschungsstelle für Islamische Numismatik, Universität Tübingen
Les monnaies individuelles dans les sites archéologiques syriens

13.00-13.30 **Hassan Al-Akra**, Lebanese University Jbayl/Byblos
The history of Baalbak in Medieval Era through the coins (AD 636-1516)

13.30-15.00 Lunch at Palazzo Massimo

2nd session CHAIRMAN: **Giovanni Gorini**, Università di Padova

15.00-15.30 **Rowida Rafaat Al-Nabarawy**, Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University, Cairo
A rare Samanid Dinar struck in Muhammadiyya in 341 A.H. bearing the names of Prince Noah b. Nasser and the Caliph al-Mustakfī billah

15.30-16.00 **Andrea Gariboldi**, Università di Bologna
Numismatic finds from Kafir Kala as evidence of the Islamic transition in Samarkand

3rd session **FINO** (*Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Orientalis*)
CHAIRMAN: **Bruno Callegher**, Università di Trieste

16.00-16.30 **Antonino Crisà**, University of Warwick
Why should the state keep Arabic coins? Assessing two case studies on nineteenth century Sicily

16.30-17.00 **Fiorentino Pietro Giovino**, Independent Researcher, Rome
Sul ritrovamento di una matrice sigillare islamica a Lagopesole: un contributo quasi inedito di Michele Amari

17.00-17.30 **Stefania Santangelo**, Istituto Beni Archeologici e Monumentali, CNA, sede di Catania
Paolo Orsi e la monetazione araba di Sicilia nel Medagliere di Siracusa: documenti d'archivio

17.30-18.00 Coffee break

4th session **MiBACT, IPZS e MEF: una sinergia per la numismatica**
Il progetto editoriale del patrimonio numismatico nazionale: aggiornamenti e prospettive
CHAIRMAN: **Gabriella Angeli Bufalini**, Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo – Responsabile del Medagliere MNR – Capo redattore del BdN

Relatori: **Daniela Porro**, Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo, Direttore del Museo Nazionale Romano
Domenico Tudini, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Presidente
Vittorio Barnato, Ministero dell'Economia e delle Finanze, Dirigente Ufficio VIII DST/DAG
Silvana Balbi de Caro, Bollettino di Numismatica del MiBACT, Direttore

Presentazione BdN on line – Materiali n. 35: *Collezione di Vittorio Emanuele III. Monete Arabe*
Annliese Nef, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne
Andrea Saccocci, Università di Udine

20:30 Dinner at Casa dell'Aviatore, Viale dell'Università 20, 00185 Roma

Saturday, 30 September 2017
Sapienza Università di Roma – Istituto Italiano di Studi Orientali
Circonvallazione Tiburtina 4, 00185 Rome

9.00-9.05 Direttore del Dipartimento di Studi Orientali
Saluto di Benvenuto

5th session CHAIRMAN: **Lutz Ilisch**, Forschungsstelle für Islamische Numismatik, Universität Tübingen

9.05-9.30 **Robert Kool**, Israel Antiquities Authority (Coin Cabinet), Jerusalem
The large Fatimid gold hoard from Caesarea Maritima harbor (2015): preliminary results and conclusions

9.30-10.00 **Carolina Doménech-Belda**, Universidad Alicante
The Fatimid coins from Sicily in al-Andalus: the Jabonerias hoard (Murcia, Spain)

10.00- 10.30 **Andrea Saccocci**, Università di Udine
Il mancuso nelle fonti medievali: metamorfosi di un mito

10.30-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-11.30 **Roman Kovalev** & **Christopher Loos**, Department of History, The College of New Jersey, Ewing, NJ
Viking-Rus' mercenaries in the Byzantine-Arab Syrian wars of the 950s-960s: the numismatic evidence

11.30-12.00 **Dorota Malarczyk**, Numismatic Cabinet, National Museum, Krakow
Oriental coins from early-medieval silver hoard from Kąpiel, Czerniejewo Commune, Greater Poland

12.30-13.00 **Warren Schultz**, De Paul University, Chicago, IL
Re-excavating the excavated: analyzing Mamluk Dirham hoards from Jordan via field reports and publications

13.00-13.30 **Irakli Paghava**, Tblisi University
New data on the Ottoman coinage minted in the Georgian kingdom of Kakheti (the Telavi hoard)

13.30-14.00 Discussion and conclusions

14:30 Farewell lunch (place to be confirmed)

Académie royale des sciences d'Outre-Mer/Koninklijke Academie voor Overzeese Wetenschappen (Bruxelles/Brussel)
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ISTITUTO ITALIANO DI NUMISMATICA
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IPZS ISTITUTO POLIGRAFICO E ZECCA DELLO STATO
SISTEMA MODUS

FIRST SESSION

Arianna D'Ottone Rambach

Dipartimento Istituto Italiano di Studi Orientali e Scuola Superiore di Studi Avanzati (SSAS) Sapienza – Università di Roma

UNA INEDITA TRADUZIONE DI SIMONE ASSEMANI NELL'ARCHIVIO STORICO DELL'EREMO DI CAMALDOLI

Abstract

This short note aims at presenting an unpublished manuscript by Simone Assemani (1752-1821) containing the Italian translation of the life, in Arabic, of the Coptic saint Marqus al-Anṭūnī (1296-1386). This translation is particularly interesting as the manuscript on which Assemani based his work turns out to be seemingly the oldest copy known. Considering that a critical edition of the Arabic codex containing the Qiṣṣaᵗ ḥayāᵗ al-qiddīs al-shaykh Marqus al-Anṭūnī *is still lacking, and that the Italian translation by Assemani has just been re-discovered, it is possible now to work on a critical edition of the Arabic text and its translation using Assemani's unpublished annotated text as a valuable, additional source.*

Keywords

Coptic, Marqus al-Anṭūnī, unpublished translation, biography, Assemani

Tra le Carte Fortunato Mandelli, nel Fondo San Michele in Isola dell'Archivio Storico dell'Eremo di Camaldoli, Misc. 1357, fasc. 2, si trova una inedita traduzione di Simone Assemani (1752-1821)[1]. L'Abate Fortunato Mandelli (1728-1797)[2], camaldolese, aveva svolto – come Simone Assemani – un ruolo importante nello studio del Medagliere di Giacomo Nani di San Trovaso[3]. L'uno – Mandelli – interessato alle gemme[4], l'altro – Assemani – specializzato nella monetazione arabo-islamica[5]. Il legame e l'affinità intellettuale tra i due, sono già attestati dalla loro corrispondenza erudita, e dunque non sorprende il fatto di ritrovare un inedito lavoro di Assemani nelle carte Mandelli[6].

I 26 fogli manoscritti – numerati da 4 a 29 – contenuti nelle Carte Mandelli contengono il testo intitolato: *Vita di Marco Monaco Antoniano tradotta dall'Arabico in Volgare dall'Abate Simone Assemani*. Cui segue una indicazione bibliografica: *Veggasi la parte I del Catalogo de' Codici Manoscritti naniani vol. XXXIX p. 69 e seq.* e una nota: *Questa vita è scritta in stile popolare ossia rozzo ed il traduttore si è conformato al medesimo stile traducendola scorrevolmente*. Si tratta di una traduzione inedita che Assemani non considerò nella lista di testi – in italiano e latino – che Anna Pontani e Bruno Callegher hanno ritrovato in alcuni documenti autobiografici[7].

Più precisamente l'inedito manoscritto contiene il *bios*, la *sīra* di Marco, monaco – e futuro santo – egiziano copto nato nel 1296 in Alto Egitto e morto nel 1386 – all'età di 90 anni – nel monastero di S. Antonio.

Marqus al-Anṭūnī ovvero Marco l'Antoniano è un santo copto importante[8]: egli è infatti uno dei tre santi commemorati ogni giorno dalla Chiesa Copta nella litania nota col nome di *Majma' al-qiddīsīn*, ('L'assemblea dei Santi') – litania rivolta alla Vergine, agli angeli, agli apostoli. Dell'assemblea di santi, menzionati nella litania, fanno parte: Abba Tegi – meglio noto come Anba Ruways (1334-1404); Abba Abra'am detto l'*hegumenos* o *al-Qummuṣ* (1321-1396) e Marqus al-Anṭūnī (1296-1386)[9].

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[1] Desidero ringraziare Andrea Gariboldi per avermi coinvolta nello studio di questo ritrovamento e P. Ubaldo Cortoni, Direttore dell'Archivio Storico dell'Eremo di Camaldoli.

[2] Per una nota biografica di Fortunato Mandelli, cfr. Barzazi 2007.

[3] Cfr. Pontani 2008, p. 334.

[4] Si vedano i codici Roma, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Fondo San Gregorio al Celio 60 e 100, già segnalati da Pontani 2008.

[5] Cfr. Assemani 1787 e 1788.

[6] Sul consolidato network epistolare di Mandelli, del quale faceva parte anche Simone Assemani, cfr. Pontani 2013 p. 70.

[7] Cfr. Pontani-Callegher 2005: pp. 17-19.

[8] Cfr. Wadi 1999.

[9] Cfr. Swanson 2010: pp. 110-118.

Wadi Abuliff, autore della notizia su Marco l'Antoniano nei volumi della *Bibliotheca Sanctorum Orientalium*, ha notato, inoltre, che diversamente dalle due edizioni precedenti, nelle quali Marco non è menzionato, il messale della Chiesa copto-cattolica stampato a Roma nel 1971 inserisce il nome di Marco (l'ultimo dell'elenco) nel canone dei santi: il curatore di questa edizione – secondo Wadi – avrebbe potuto aver scambiato il nome di Marco l'Antoniano per un santo monaco dei primi cinque secoli[10].

Il testo arabo della *Vita* di Marqus al-Anṭūnī è noto con i titoli: *Qiṣṣaṯ ḥayāṯ al-qiddīs al-shaykh Marqus al-Anṭūnī* ovvero *Sīrat al-ṭūbānī l-mukhtār Anbā Marqus al-Anṭūnī*.

Sette sono i manoscritti recensiti contenenti la *Sīra* di Marqus al-Anṭūnī[11]. Questi codici si trovano in diverse biblioteche europee e orientali – e probabilmente altri esemplari potrebbero essere conservati nelle biblioteche di monasteri e conventi egiziani senza che siano noti. Tuttavia, la traduzione assemaniana si basa sul codice Venezia, Biblioteca Marciana, Or. 89 contenente *Vita et miracula Marcis copti Monachi S. Antoni Abbati in Aegypto Superiore* in arabo – manoscritto proveniente dalla biblioteca naniana di cui Simone aveva pubblicato il catalogo[12]. L'indicazione bibliografica citata in apertura, immediatamente successiva al titolo, permette di identificare la fonte araba usata da Assemani col codice Or. 39 della biblioteca di Jacopo Nani, descritto alle pagine 69-70 del relativo catalogo[13]. Ed è proprio nel catalogo che Simone parla di questa, non altrimenti nota, traduzione:

> Io avea tradotta questa *Vita*: ad illustrarla volea preporvi la dissertazione seguente[14]. Questa sola io pubblico, perché la *Vita*, per giudizio pur degli Amici, fu giudicata soltanto ripiena di cose frivole ed insufficienti.[15]

Questa nota permette dunque di meglio comprendere la presenza del manoscritto tra le carte Fortunato Mandelli – evidentemente uno degli 'Amici' ai quali Simone aveva inviato la traduzione per averne un giudizio; essa suggerisce poi, che forse copie manoscritte della traduzione possano trovarsi in altri archivi che conservano i documenti e la corrispondenza di Assemani con eruditi di sua stima e fiducia e informa, infine, del motivo che spinse Assemani a non darne alle stampe il testo: i contenuti considerati "frivoli e insufficienti" del testo agiografico.

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[10] Cfr. Wadi 1999, p. 412.

[11] Cfr. Swanson 2013, p. 205.

[12] Cfr. Assemani 1787, pp. 69-70.

[13] Cfr. Assemani 1787, pp. 69-70.

[14] Ovvero la *Dissertazione sopra la nazione de' Copti*, che segue nel medesimo catalogo alle pagine 71-84.

[15] Cfr. Assemani 1787, p. 70.

La *Dissertazione sopra la nazione de' Copti* fa tuttavia ampio uso della traduzione inedita della Vita di San Marco, ancora oggi non disponibile in una edizione critica – né antica né moderna. L'interesse per questo testo in anni recenti è tuttaa via testimoniato dalla pubblicazione di una prima fase della *recensio manuscriptorum* effettuata da Mark Swanson nel quinto volume della serie *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*[16].

Il manoscritto marciano 89 merita inoltre particolare attenzione dal momento che potrebbe rivelarsi essere una delle copie più antiche della *Vita di Marco* note. Dei sette manoscritti recensiti da Swanson tre sono considerati di datazione sconosciuta (*date unknown*) – e tra questi figura il codice della Marciana – uno è una copia moderna, un altro è databile al XIX secolo e il solo testimone datato è quello conservato presso la biblioteca del Patriarcato copto del Cairo, che riporta la data del 1679.

Purtroppo, la descrizione del codice naniano 39 – ovvero Marciano 89 – nel catalogo di Assemani non soddisfa i moderni canoni di descrizione codicologica, limitandosi a indicare il formato del manoscritto – in 8° – il supporto scrittorio – cartaceo – e il numero di pagine – 167. Tuttavia, una nuova descrizione – realizzata tra il 2011 e il 2016 – indica, almeno tentativamente, una datazione tra il 1601 e il 1700[17]: purtroppo nessun dettaglio è fornito sul tipo di carta e, particolarmente, sulla filigrana – elemento che permetterebbe di assegnare sperabilmente con più precisione il manoscritto. Se il codice marciano fosse databile alla prima metà del Seicento risulterebbe essere la copia più antica nota.

Benché l'antichità di un testimone non sia necessariamente garanzia dell'affidabilità del testo tràdito, considerare di avere una copia antica – almeno paragonabile a quella conservata presso il Patriarcato copto per datazione e numero di fogli[18] – e non una copia moderna di un testimone noto, riveste un certo interesse per la tradizione testuale.

Mancando ancor oggi una edizione critica del testo[19], appare utile dunque preparare un volume che riunisca edizione del testo arabo del testimone naniano e tradu-

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[16] Cfr. Swanson 2013.

[17] La moderna scheda di descrizione (ultima modifica agosto 2016) è stata redatta a cura di S. Fani ed è reperibile online al seguente link: http://www.nuovabibliotecamanoscritta.it/Generale/ricerca/AnteprimaManoscritto.html?codiceMan=46670&tipoRicerca=S&urlSearch=cod_nome%3D34589%26area1%3DVenezia,%20Biblioteca%20nazionale%20Marciana,%20Or.%2089%26linguaMan%3DARA%26language%3Dcpmrnrbkalfu%26o

[18] La copia del Patriarcato copto conta «88 full folios» – cfr. Swanson 2013, p. 204 – e quella della Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana consta di 87 fogli, più le carte di guardia in inizio e fine.

[19] «La Vita di Marco l'Antoniano (Marqu [*sic*] al-Anṭūnī) si legge in vari manoscritti arabi. Kāmil ne dà alcuni estratti, ma non esiste un'edizione completa» Wadi 1999, col. 410. «While there is no edition of the Life of Marqus al-Anṭūnī, a number of Arabic-language summaries have been published by monks of the Monastery of St. Anthony »

zione annotata assemaniana – in quanto anima e corpo di un lavoro, mai venuto alla luce, di un erudito orientalista del calibro di Simone Assemani. L'edizione del testo arabo contenuto nel manoscritto impiegato da Assemani, servirà inoltre ad illustrare che tipo di lingua Assemani definiva come "volgare".

SAN MARCO L'ANTONIANO: LA SĪRA

La *Vita* di Marqus al-Anṭūnī è stata composta nel 1389, tre anni dopo la morte del monaco, in forma agiografica da un autore che dice aver dato seguito ad una visione. L'Egitto mamelucco (1250-1517) di metà XIV secolo, segnato dalla peste nera del 1347, dalle misure anti-*dhimmī* del 1354 e carestie, costituisce lo sfondo storico di questa vicenda. Un secolo, il XIV, nel quale alcuni i conventi copti della regione di Sceti – come quello di Wādī al-Natrūn – erano in decadenza mentre altri, come quelli del Mar Rosso di S. Antonio e S. Paolo, vivevano un momento di grande fioritura, nonostante le razzie – come quella dei beduini contro il convento di S. Antonio che non vi lasciò neanche "una tazza di cereali".

Il santo più importante di quest'epoca fu proprio S. Marco l'Antoniano, legato ad entrambi i conventi di S. Paolo e S. Antonio.

Dalla lettura della *sīra* di Marco appare evidente che egli non solo servì la chiesa come modello di ascesi e attenzione pastorale, ma il fatto che egli ebbe un ruolo chiave nel rispondere al processo di islamizzazione che stava prendendo forza a partire dal 1354. La resistenza copta, in particolare, si sostanziava di atti volontari di martirio: nella Vita di Marco si fa riferimento a due donne e un discepolo di Marco che, stando alla testimonianza di al-Maqrīzī, sarebbero stati messi a morte nel 1380.

La *Vita* di Marco inizia con una particolareggiata descrizione della sua nascita, in Alto Egitto dai genitori *Makhlūf* e *Daskhana*, nel villaggio di Manshāt al-Naṣārā – l'attuale Manshāt al-kubrà – nella provincia di Asyūṭ. All'età di cinque anni Marco fu benedetto da Sawīrus, vescovo di Asyūṭ, il quale previde per lui un futuro di santità.

Da giovane, Marco seppe mantenersi casto e all'età di 23 anni si aggregò ad una comunità monastica vicina al suo villaggio ma, considerando che i monaci della comunità non osservassero abbastanza la pratica del digiuno – preferì rientrare dai suoi. Il suo rientro a casa non fu bene accolto dalla madre, cosa che lo spinse sulla via del deserto e a giungere al monastero di S. Antonio, sul Mar Rosso. Qui vi incontrò un parente, tale Anba Rafā'īl al-Na'nā'ī, che gli suggerì di recarsi ad un altro convento: il monastero di S. Paolo[20]. Così fece Marco che, scavata una fossa nel giardino del nuovo convento, vi passò sei anni – circa dal 1319 al 1325 – di vita rigidissima tanto che per motivi di salute fu nuovamente trasferito al convento di S. Antonio.

[20] Cfr. Swanson 2008.

Ben presto la fama della sua santità varcò le mura del monastero e arrivò – leggiamo nella *Vita* – fino al "Paese dei Franchi". Il testo include anche la narrazione di ben 34 miracoli (Ar. *'ajā'ib*) – ma alcune versioni ne riferiscono 35 e altre 36[21] – non necessariamente episodi 'miracolosi' in sé quanto piuttosto aneddoti pittoreschi, verificatisi per lo più nel corso degli ultimi anni della vita del monaco, quado era già settantenne, ovvero dal 1365 alla sua morte (1386)[22].

La *Vita* ed i *Miracoli* di Marqus al-Anṭūnī includono vari racconti nei quali si menzionano visitatori che avevano attraversato grandi distanze e affrontato lunghi viaggi per incontrare il monaco – o che questi visitò in modo miracoloso. Si tratta di personaggi tormentati, di giovani donne travestite da monaco, di convertiti all'Islam desiderosi di ritornare cristiani nonché di alte cariche di funzionari, dei "musulmani copti" (*musālima*), in conflitto con le autorità.

Karīm al-Dīn 'Abd al-Karīm b. 'Abd al-Razzāq b. Makānis – dal cui nome si evince che la famiglia, originariamente copta, si era convertita all'Islam almeno da una generazione precedente – ebbe, per esempio, una carriera tumultuosa e per ben tre volte – tra il 1382 e il 1390 – scappò all'arresto. In una di queste fughe trovò rifugio, travestito da monaco, nel monastero di S. Antonio: Marco lo riconobbe, lo rassicurò e lo fece tornare al Cairo. V'è poi Sa'd al-Dīn Naṣr Allāh al-Baqarī ricopriva, invece, la carica di *nāẓir al-khaṣṣ*[23]: dopo essere stato arrestato e selvaggiamente picchiato venne rilasciato all'indomani della visita in prigione, in sogno, di Marco. L'episodio dell'arresto di Sa'd al-Dīn Naṣr Allāh al-Baqarī è riferito anche da al-Maqrīzī, nel suo *Kitāb al-sulūk li-ma'rifat duwal al-mulūk*, che data l'episodio al Novembre 1383[24]. Ma lo stesso Maqrīzī informa che pochi anni dopo Sa'd al-Dīn Naṣr Allāh al-Baqarī rivestiva nuovamente un incarico di grande responsabilità nell'amministrazione finanziaria essendo stato nominato *nāẓir al-dīwān*.

Secondo la sua *Vita*, Marqus aveva molti doni legati alla santità: la profezia, la chiaroveggenza, la presenza simultanea in luoghi diversi e il potere di guarigione. Ma il tratto che più lo caratterizza sembra essere la sua disponibilità al perdono e l'assoluzione di coloro che avevano commesso peccato. Attraverso questo testo è dunque possibile cogliere non solo una immagine vivida della carriera monastica di Marqus al-Anṭūnī protrattasi per 67 anni, ma anche aspetti della storia dell'Egitto medievale noti solo attraverso fonti islamiche, nonché dettagli della vita delle comunità monastiche copte attraverso una fonte in arabo – e non in copto.

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[21] Cfr. Swanson 2013, p. 205.

[22] Il quarto miracolo fa, tuttavia, riferimento ad un episodio di chiaroveggenza accaduto in gioventù, quando Marco era ancora un novizio del monastero di S. Paolo.

[23] Il *Diwān al-khaṣṣ* era un dipartimento che si occupava delle entrate personali del sultano e il *nāẓir* ne era l'ispettore capo.

[24] Cfr. Swanson 2007, pp. 223-224.

In un episodio della vita di Marqus – che compare anche nella biografia del Patriarca copto Matteo (1378-1408) – si racconta, per esempio, delle avversità affrontate da Marco l'Antoniano nell'anno 1356 quando, dopo il sacco di Alessandria per mano dei Crociati che facevano base a Cipro, l'amīr Yalbagā (r. 1361-1366) iniziò una rappresaglia anti-cristiana: il monastero di S. Antonio venne razziato, i monaci vessati e i beni di valore depredati. Matteo – il futuro Patriarca ma allora giovane monaco – venne malmenato e quando Marqus al-Anṭūnī, più anziano, protestò il giovane venne rilasciato e il vecchio fu colpito al suo posto. I monaci vennero poi portati nel deserto, per essere deportati al Cairo, e fu allora che, arsi dalla sete, Marqus al-Anṭūnī – racconta la sua biografia – invocò l'aiuto di Dio – che lo esaudì inviando una copiosa pioggia. Dopodiche arrivò anche l'ordine del sultano di rilasciare i monaci fatti priogionieri che poterono così far ritorno al monastero.

Un altro miracolo di rilievo operato da Marco l'Antoniano è quello in favore di un re "Franco", in lotta contro i nemici: quando il re invocò l'aiuto di S. Antonio Abate, un monaco si presentò per combattere al suo fianco. Recatosi poi in Egitto per sapere chi era stato a soccorrerlo, il sovrano franco giunse al monastero di S. Antonio e là scoprì il monaco che aveva combattuto accanto a lui. In segno di riconoscenza donò al monastero una campana.

Gli ultimi di vita furono, per Marco, anni di malattia. Morì l'8 del mese di Abīb del 1102/2 giugno 1386 e fu sepolto nella sua cella – sulla tomba fu eretta una chiesa che divenne meta di pellegrinaggio. Secondo la Sīra di Marco, al momento della sua morte, il convento avrebbe ospitato oltre cento monaci: questo dato numerico – confermato da altre testimonianze – è notevole se si pensa che nello spesso periodo nel monastero dei Siriani nel Wādī al-Natrūn non viveva che un solo monaco. All'epoca i monasteri dell'Alto Egitto dipendevano – per la sopravvivenza – dalle carovane che portavano grano e altri beni di primo consumo dalla Valle del Nilo. In tempi di carestia e di iperinflazione – il prezzo di una misura di grano Cairota toccava i 120 dirhams – la fame poteva spingere i monaci verso le terre irrigate, benché il pio Marco esortasse i monaci a morire di fame piuttosto che a lasciare il convento.

La vita di questo santo copto di cui Simone Assemani, in anticipo sui tempi, comprese l'interesse, costituisce una fonte storica, oltre che letteraria, per l'Egitto del XIV secolo.

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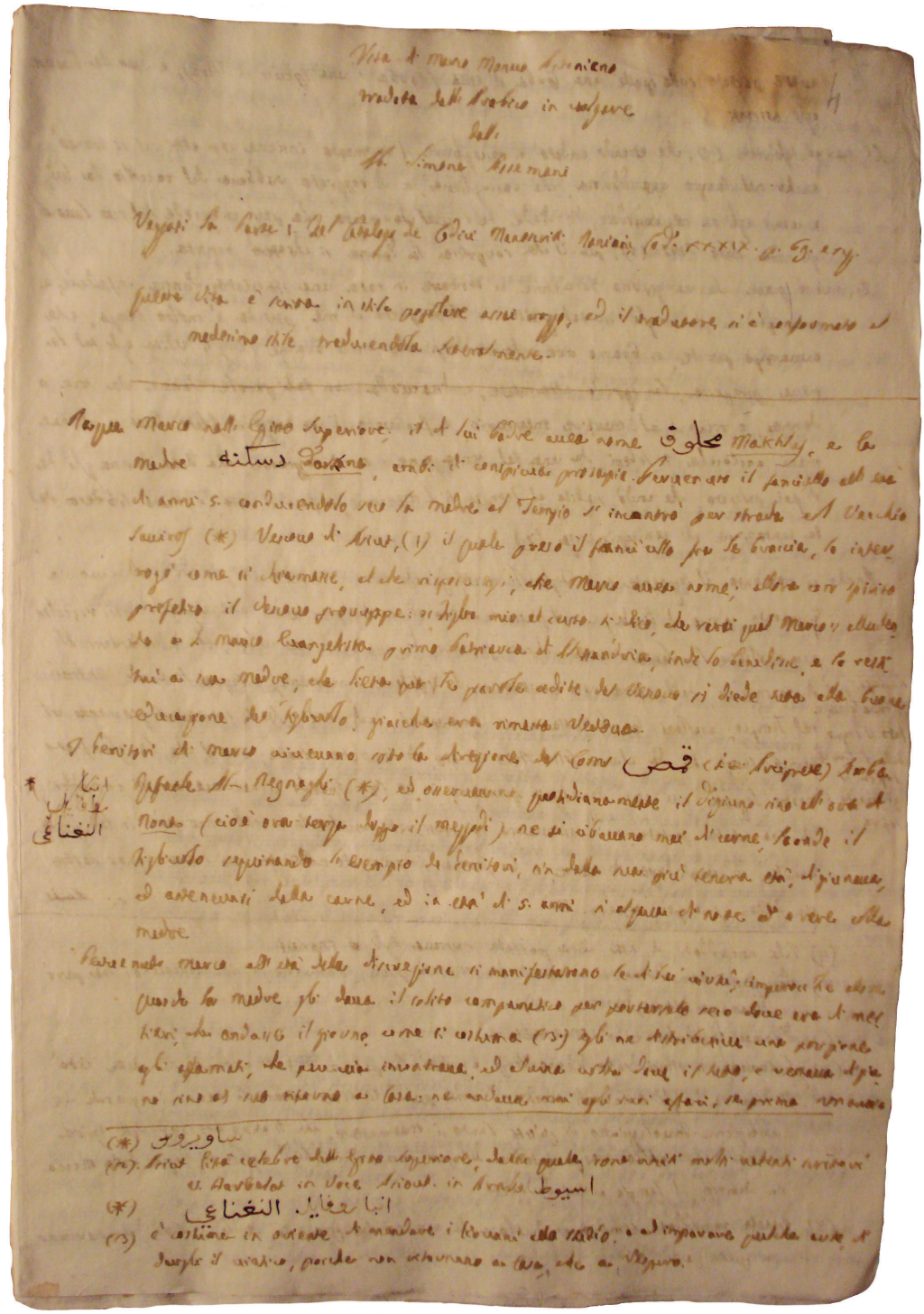
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Marco Callegari

Museo “Bottacin” – Padova

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL (AND NOT ONLY) CORRESPONDENCE: LETTERS OF SIMONE ASSEMANI TO GIOVANNI BERNARDO DE ROSSI (1788-1814)

Abstract

Simone Assemani and Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi, the most famous and important Hebrew language scholar of his time in the Italian Catholic sphere, were in correspondence for about 25 years (1788-1814). The paper is focused on their letters, in particular on the main topics discussed by the two scholars: the controversy with Oluf Gerhard Tychsen over the so-called "Chair of St. Peter" (a marble seat located in the Basilica of St. Peter of Castello in Venice), the so-called "Arabic imposture” of Giuseppe Vella and the communication of literary news.

Keywords

Simone Assemani; Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi; Chair of Saint Peter, Venice; Oluf Gerhard Tychse; Giuseppe Vella

Simone Assemani and Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi, probably the two most important experts and connoisseurs of Semitic languages in Italy between the 18th and 19th centuries, were in correspondence for about 25 years, from 22 February 1788 to 30 December 1814, even though they never met personally.[1] Today only the 46 letters written by Assemani can be consulted in the Biblioteca Palatina di Parma. De Rossi's important library, including his papers and letters received from his correspondents, was purchased by Maria Luigia Asburg-Lorraine, Duchess of Parma and Piacenza, on 13 June 1816 in exchange for a pension which was paid to him until his death on 23 March 1831. De Rossi was the most famous and important Hebrew language scholar of his time in the Italian Catholic sphere, but it is important to underline his mastery of other Semitic languages, in particular post-biblical Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Samaritan, Coptic and Arabic.

Their common acquaintance, the abbot Matteo Luigi Canonici[2], was used as a go-between by De Rossi to purchase the first volume of the *Catalogo de' codici manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Naniana*, edited by Assemani, but published in 1787 by the Venetian patrician Giacomo Nani. The book was not for sale, because Nani had printed 200 copies only for distribution to friends and family members. Assemani told him that he would gladly ask for a copy, anticipating that also the second part of the work would be printed in a short space of time. The catalogue of the coins of the *Museo Cufico* was in fact published in the following July[3] and in his opinion it was "much more interesting than the first part".[4]

Simone Assemani's tone of correspondence – in line with his extrovert character – was always confidential and far from being excessively formal. One of his peculiar characteristics was to speak directly about the subjects that were of greatest interest to him at the moment. Since it is impossible, as well as unnecessary, to reproduce in this context the content of every letter only the most important subjects have been selected, while at the same time being aware that an overall picture is given that, although certainly not complete, is well representative of the correspondence.

The controversy over the so-called "Chair of St. Peter's Cathedra", a marble seat located in the Basilica of St. Peter of Castello in Venice, was the main subject discussed by Assemani in the first and subsequent letters.[5] According to tradition, it

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[1] About Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi see PARENTE 1991 About Simone Assemani see CALLEGARI 2005; CALLEGHER-PONTANI 2005; PONTANI 2007a; PONTANI 2007b; PONTANI 2008; D'OTTONE 2013; PONTANI 2013; PONTANI 2013-2014; PONTANI 2014; CALLEGHER 2015; D'OTTONE RAMBACH 2015; PONTANI 2015.

[2] About Matteo Luigi Canonici see VIANELLO 1975.

[3] BPPr, Padova 18th July 1788.

[4] BPPr, Padova 22nd February 1788.

[5] About the St. Peter's Chair see LUCCHI 2011, pp. 302-314; *Venice and the Islamic World*

was the original chair of the Apostle Saint Peter when he was Patriarch of Antioch. During the ninth century it was donated to a doge by a Byzantine emperor in return for the help offered by the Venetians against the Arab invasion of southern Italy. The *Chronicle* written by Andrea Dandolo between 1343 and 1354, but derived from more ancient sources, is the first document in which the presence of the Chair of St. Peter is reported. Until the 18th century, when the presence of Arabic language writings was noticed, the authenticity of the artifact was not called into question. This fact meant that the Chair could not be dated to before the 7th century. In fact, the chair is made up of several distinct parts: the most important is the marble backrest, with complex geometric figures and pseudo-vegetable designs engraved on both sides. There are also cufic inscriptions of Koranic verses dating from the 11th-12th century, which suggest that it is part of a funerary stele, or – but less likely – the backrest of a kind of throne or pulpit.

In 1787 Oluf Gerhard Tychsen, the most famous Arabist in Europe at that time, published a new reading and a new interpretation of the inscriptions (in Tychsen's opinion it was the throne of a Sicilian emir), criticizing the version of Giuseppe Simone Assemani, a great uncle of Simone, that appeared in Flaminio Corner's[6] *Ecclesiae Venetae*. Assemani wrote to De Rossi: "There was no need for Mr Tychsen, without that respect due to great men such as my great uncle, to take so much pride in illustrating his mordant character, or put simply, to commit another mistake".[7]

In October of the same year, while he was a guest of Giacomo Nani in Venice, Assemani wrote his own transcription and interpretation of the engravings:[8] he believed it was a tombstone slab of one or more Saracens who died in Sicily. Assemani had the intention of inserting his opinion in a note in the catalogue of Giacomo Nani's oriental manuscripts that he was composing at that time.[9] This note was never printed and it is not difficult to imagine the Venetian patrician undertaking this kind of preventative censorship. Obviously the problem of the relic being a fake was of a religious character (the feast of the Chair of Saint Peter is still included today in the liturgical calendar on 22 February) due to its great veneration by the Venetian population, but perhaps this was not the most important reason. As we know, there are two chairs of St. Peter: the oldest was that of Antioch, where the apostle had performed his magisterium after the death of Jesus, and then there is the one located in the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome. Until the reform of the calendar, the two holidays

2007, p. 325.

6 TYCHSEN 1787.

7 BPPr, Padova 6th June 1788.

8 BPPr, Padova 6th June 1788.

9 LUCCHI 2011, pp. 302-303.

were celebrated on different days (January 18, the Roman one, on February 22, the Antiochene), signifying the importance that the single relics held in the Christian world. The Antiochene chair was linked to the period of pre-Roman Christianity and to the protector of the city, Saint Mark the Evangelist, a very close disciple and collaborator of Saint Peter. For this reason, it confirmed the prestige and moral strength of the Republic: The Cathedral of Venice kept the first chair of the first pope, while Dogal Basilica contained the body of the evangelist disciple of the first pope and the first evangelizer of the high Adriatic lagoons. The symbolic and political value of these relics is evident, also as a counterbalance to papal prerogatives in the jurisdictional field: this was the reason why Assemani could not publish his explanatory note in Venice. However, his interpretation was not unknown to scholars: and it was noted that Assemani had communicated it to Giovanni Cristofano Amaduzzi already in November 1787,[10] but now – thanks to what he wrote in his letters to De Rossi – it is confirmed that Cardinal Garampi was also aware of it already in 1784 when he met Assemani returning from Vienna at the end of the Nunciature[11] and the Sicilian canon Rosario Gregorio, to whom he had sent it in the same month of November.[12] The communication of his interpretation to De Rossi aimed to create further pressure on the German orientalist to change his mind and to adopt his own position. It can be said that the operation was successful. As early as 1788, Tychsen published an "editio secunda emendatior" of his *Interpretatio*,[13] in which he revised and corrected what he had previously written. He accepted to a large extent Assemani's remarks, who however was not mentioned, but maintained the opinion that it was a throne of a Sicilian emir. De Rossi sent a copy of this second edition to Assemani in July of the same year and put the two scholars in direct contact with each other.[14] Assemani

[10] LUCCHI 2011, pp. 302-303.

[11] «Prima che il Tychsen stampasse la sua prima edizione, io già avea avvertito molti dell'inganno, anzi avvertii l'Ecc.mo cardinale Garampi allorché passò per Venezia quattr'anni fa, quando ritornò dalla Nunziatura di Vienna» (BPPr, Padova 4th July 1788).

[12] «Il sig. Tychsen ha fatto male di ristampare la sua illustrazione avanti di vedere la mia. Io non voglio supporre che abbia veduta la mia, e chi ne abbia fatto uso senza nominarmi, poiché io sin dal passato novembre l'ho spedita al sig. Canonico Rosario in Sicilia, e so che il suddetto signore carteggia con lui […] Se m'accorgerò che il sig. Tychsen abbia fatto uso della mia fatica, non tacerò sicuramente tanto più che lui scrisse al sig. Giuseppe Vella professore di lingua arabica in Palermo in data 1 dicembre 1787 riguardo alle tre ultime parole dell'iscrizioni della così detta Cattedra queste precise parole "Pergratum mihi faceris, si super tribus altimis inscriptionis, quem hic adiungo dictionibus, mentem tuam mihi explicaveris: utinam firmissimis argumentis probare posses, ad quem nam Emirorum Siciliae haec Cathedra praestantissima pertinuerit. Cathedra enim a Mauris Sicilis originem ducere nullum mihi dubium est" Dabam Butzovii ipsis Kalend. Decemb. MDCCLXXXVII» (BPPr, Padova 6th June 1788).

[13] Rostochii, ex officina libraria Koppiana, 1788.

[14] BPPr, Padova 4th July 1788. About the correspondence between Assemani and Tychsen see also D'Ottone Rambach 2015a, pp. 18-22, 24-25: D'Ottone Rambach 2015b, pp. 207-211.

immediately began an intense correspondence with Tychsen, warning De Rossi that he had written to him about the Chair stating that "I hope that he will be convinced and persuaded of my opinion".[15] In the end Assemani reached his initial goal, to see printed – although not in Venice – his work on the Chair of St. Peter: in 1790 Tychsen published in Rostoch an *Appendix* containing Assemani's report, his letters on the subject sent to Tychsen, and some opinions of other scholars.[16] As Piero Lucchi wrote, this booklet was practically unknown in Venice: there are not any copies in the city's libraries and it is not even mentioned by Emmanuele Antonio Cicogna in his *Saggio di bibliografia veneziana* of 1847.[17] For the sake of completeness, I would also add that there is only one copy in SBN, the Italian national opac, specifically in Milan, in the Civic Archaeological and Numismatic Library, but within a miscellany published by Tychsen in 1794, *Opuscula quatuor, antiquitates orientales illustrantia, cum tribus tabulis aeneis*.[18]

In those first years of correspondence, Assemani kept De Rossi up to date on another topic, the so-called "Arabic imposture" of Giuseppe Vella, around which I will not expand as it is well known to all. Assemani's letters to De Rossi do not bring any particular novelties compared to the existing bibliography, but allow a better understanding of Assemani's position. As early as 15 November 1788, he wrote to De Rossi:

> Maybe it be known to you that a letter of the Pope Marino, dated 3 April of the year 882 extracted from the famous Sicilian Saracenic Code and written with Arabic letters but Italian words, was published in Sicily. This letter gave cause for criticism and many scholars declared the code to be a solemn imposture, despite Mr Tychsen's defence. I have been asked for my opinion; but I do not know what to say. Certainly, in the year 882 the Italian language was not spoken. You will certainly know more about this than I do.[19]

Also with his friend and correspondent Jacob Georg Christian Adler, Assemani expressed his doubts, which he then shared with De Rossi on 1 April 1789:

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[15] BPPr, Padova 15th November 1788.

[16] *Appendix ad inscriptionis Cuficae Venetiis in marmorea templi Patriarchalis S. Petri Cathedra conspicuae interpretationem*, Rostochii, ex officina libraria Koppiana, 1790.

[17] LUCCHI 2011, p. 309.

[18] Rostochii, ex officina libraria Stilleriana, 1794.

[19] «Forse vi sarà noto che in Sicilia si è pubblicata una lettera del Papa Marino tratta dal famoso Codice Saracenico Siculo in data 3 Aprile dell'anno 882, scritta con lettere arabe ma parole italiane. Questa lettera ha dato motivo a varj critici di dichiarare il suddetto codice per una solenne impostura, non ostante la difesa che ne ha fatta il sig. Tychsen. Sono stato richiesto del mio parere; ma io non so cosa dire. Certamente nell'anno 882 non si parlava la lingua italiana. Voi certamente saprete più di me in tal proposito» (BPPr, Padova 15th November 1788).

> I enclose a short answer to our common friend Mr. Adler, read it if you want to know what I think of the Sicilian Code. I long for Italy's decency that some erudite people demonstrate with luminous proofs the authenticity of it; since all appearances condemn it as being a fake. I do not know what to say. When you have read it, please give me your opinion. I imagine that Mr Tychsen is not even intimately convinced that the code and coins are genuine things. Although he defended it in response to the letter of the mordant French, Mr Tychsen's reply was supported by the Sicilian reports. Enough, I am afraid that the discussion of this code will be much greater than that of the Count of Cagliostro.[20]

Then in May 1790:

> I quickly read the second volume of the Sicilian Diplomatic Code, and more and more I see the imposture.[21]

And in June of the same year:

> I have read the other two volumes of the Codex Mauro Siculo, and I see more and more the imposture. I have written to the illustrious Monsignor Airoldi, and I have candidly told him my opinion.[22]

In 1792 the second part of the Adler's *Museum Cuficum Borgianum Velitris*[23] offered to Assemani the historical-numismatic proof, which had been missing until then, to refute the falsehoods of Vella:

> Very beautiful and rare is the collection of CXVI Cufic coins published by Mr. Adler. Among others, it is the 84th coin, which was minted by the conqueror of Sicily, Ziadar-Allah third Aghlabid prince, that decides the falsity of the Sicilian Diplomatic Code, written under the government of the Arabs and published in Palermo, and on the coins inserted in it. With the exception of Mr Tychsen, from the beginning all experts in Arabic matters had declared it to be a literary imposture, badly digested and worse written. Now I believe that our Tychsen will change his mind.[24]

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[20] «Vi accludo una piccola risposta al comune amico sig. Adler, leggetela se volete sapere cosa io penso del Codice Siculo. Io bramo per decoro dell'Italia che qualche erudito dimostri con luminose prove l'autenticità di esso; poiché tutte le apparenze lo condannano con le monete di falsità. Io non so cosa dire. Quando Voi l'avrete letto, vi prego di dirmi il vostro sentimento. Io m'immagino che né anche il sig. Tychsen sia intimamente persuaso che il suddetto codice, e le monete siano cose autentiche. Egli è vero che l'ha difeso, rispondendo alla lettera del mordace francese, ma la risposta del sig. Tychsen è appoggiata alle relazioni dei Siciliani. Basta, ho paura che si avrà molto più da discorrere di questo codice, che non si è fatto del Conte di Cagliostro» (BPPr, Padova 1st April 1789).

[21] BPPr, Padova 2nd May 1790.

[22] BPPr, Padova 12th June 1790.

[23] Hafniae, excudebat Fridericus Wilhelmus Thiele, 1792.

[24] «Bellissima e rara è la collezione di CXVI monete cufiche pubblicata dal sig. Adler. Fra le altre le 84 moneta, la quale fu battuta dal conquistatore di Sicilia Ziadar-Allah terzo principe Aglabita, e che decide della falsità del Codice diplomatico Siculo sotto il governo degli Arabi pubblicato in Palermo, e delle monete in esso inserite. Eccettuato il sig. Tychsen, tutti i periti nelle cose arabiche l'aveano sin da principio dichiarato impostura letteraria mal digesta e peggio scritta. Ora credo che il nostro Tychsen si ricrederà» (BPPr, Padova 29th December 1792).

The net was inexorably closing around Vella, when in January 1795 an Assemani's correspondent – probably Rosario Gregorio – wrote to him from Palermo:

> Since the arguments concerning the uncertainty of the authenticity of the Codes translated by Abbot Vella had reached the ears of the King, he wanted a German examiner from Vienna, his name is Giuseppe Hager, to observe the original codes and those which Vella said were transmitted from Morocco. Hager has already arrived, and when he saw the first page of the Martinian Codex and the famous papal letters engraved in copper, he was astonished and protested that these had never been Arabic characters, and now we will see if the Codex is whole, if there is new ink on the ancient, and I will report on this visual inspection at the time. In the code of the Council of Egypt, of which the first volume has already been published and the first sheet with the Arabic and Italian text was sent to you last year, Mr. Hager has recognized an Arabic language full of italics, and that the real text is Italian, ignorantly translated into Arabic. In this regard I made him read your letter, which said the same. We have certain arguments that this code is very recent and perhaps written in our times in Sicily. At the time I will explain everything to you. Mr Hager himself printed a report in Germany of the manuscript with the work of Tito Livio shown to him by Abate Vella, and it was seen that it is literally the epitome of a chapter of Floro, put in arabic characters and Maltese language. It will be my duty to send you the first printed report, which I have. We will see the unravelling of this comedy and the revelation of many mysteries. Palermo 10 January 1795.[25]

What emerges from the letters is that Assemani was not reticent in his judgments on Giuseppe Vella's imposture: he did not express his opinions in printed publications, but transmitted them to his correspondents in confidence. He used the same *modus operandi* that he was forced to put into practice in the case of the Chair of St. Peter for reasons of national politics, while in this case he probably self-limited himself in advance, because very high-level personalities were involved such as Archbishop Alfonso Airoldi, Lancillotto Castelli prince of Torremuzza, the viceroy of Sicily, Francesco d'Aquino prince of Caramanico, and even the King of the Kingdom of Naples, Ferdinando IV. It had become quite clear to Assemani that it was better to be "prudent" in his public expressions so as not to run into problems with the Venetian

[25] «Essendo pervenuti all'orecchio del Re gli argomenti sull'incertezza dell'autenticità de' Codici tradotti dal sig. Abate Vella, egli ha destinato un esaminatore tedesco da Vienna, chiamato Giuseppe Hager, per osservare i codici originali e quelli che diconsi trasmessi da Marocco. Egli è già pervenuto, ed al veder la prima pagina del Codice Martiniano e le famose lettere papali incise in rame, rimase attonito e si protestò che questi non eran giammai stati caratteri arabici, ed ora vedremo se il Codice è intero, se avvi inchiostro nuovo sull'antico, e di questa ispezione oculare ve ne darò conto a suo tempo. Il codie del *Consiglio d'Egitto* di cui il primo volume è già sortito alla luce, e di cui il primo foglio col testo arabico ed italiano l'anno scorso vi trasmisi, egli il sig. Hager v'ha riconosciuto in esso un linguaggio arabico pieno di giaciture italiche, e che il vero testo è italiano, ignorantemente tradotto in arabo. A questo proposito io gli feci leggere la vostra lettera, che diceva lo stesso. Noi abbiamo certi argomenti che il detto codice è recentissimo, e forse scritto a nostri giorni in Sicilia. A suo tepo vi darò conto di tutto. Lo stesso sig. Hager ha stampata una relazione in Germania del *Livio* mostratogli dal sig. Abate Vella, e si è veduto che gli ha dato letteralmente la epitome di un capitolo di Floro, messo in caratteri arabici, e in linguaggio maltese. La prima stampa, che io avrò, sarà mio dovere di farvela capitare. Vedremo lo scioglimento di questa comedia e la rivelazione di tanti misterj. Palermo 10 gennaio 1795» (BPPr, Padova 25th February 1795).

authorities. In fact they preferred not to be involved also indirectly in quarrels – even if of an academic nature – with other states in difficult times such as those Europe were experiencing.

Despite the literary disputes, the main task of the Maronite scholar was always his work as a professor of oriental languages at the Seminary of Padua. In May 1788 he informed De Rossi of a new project: Assemani wanted to prepare, and publish at his own expense, works which he considered fundamental for teaching purposes and impossible to find on the book market.

> I intend to print an Arabic grammar and the Dictionary of Golio with some additions, but I am afraid of the cost; as well as the Syriac grammar with the Ferrari dictionary, because what my predecessor Zannolini has printed is worth nothing. It is a great thing that nobody reprints the Dictionary of Buxtorfio: no more copies can be found.[26]

After two years Assemani was well on track with the preparation of a new revised and expanded edition of Golius' *Lexicon* (he wanted to start the impression with the coming year), but he was told that a new edition was about to be released in Leipzig.[27] The theologian and philologist Georg Christian Höpfner wrote a letter to him on 31 January 1790, in which he was asked not to publish the Golius' *Lexicon*: in April he would print the first volume and a new edition would have caused him considerable economic damage.[28] Assemani had decided to suspend printing for at least a couple of years. He did not imagine that he would no longer publish it, despite having prepared additions to increase the number of pages by about one third of the original.[29]

Another unsuccessful editorial venture was the printing of a Hebrew dictionary in 1794. The Seminar of Padua had initially entrusted the project to Assemani, who had decided to discuss it with De Rossi, asking him for advice:

> I am therefore thinking about reprinting the Lexicon of Buxtorfio expanded by Fr. Domenican according to the last edition made in Rome, four years ago if I am not mistaken, in two tomes in 4°. I will reduce that edition to a single volume, which will have the same size as the *Lexicon* of Zannolini".[30]

However, at the end of the year, Assemani had to announce that the project would not be completed, presumably because it was not very remunerative due to high

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[26] BPPr, Padova 16th May 1788.

[27] BPPr, Padova 23rd April 1790.

[28] BPPr, Padova 12th June 1790.

[29] BPPr, Padova 4th July 1810.

[30] BPPr, Padova 26th March 1794.

printing costs, even though he noted that in the Seminar "we are very poor in manual lexicons".[31] The international political and economic conditions, and those of Venice in particular, underwent sudden and unthinkable changes in the space of a few years. The recession and lack of money affected the whole of European society and the book market also suffered an inevitable contraction in sales. In 1805 De Rossi asked Assemani to contact Padua booksellers for the sale of his books, which remained unsold in Parma. However, he had to warn him that unfortunately there were not even buyers of erudition books in Padua:

> I talked to some booksellers about your learned productions, but I found them very cold and reluctant, because [not for any other reason that] they can't find buyers for lack of money, which is unfortunately true. I have also written to several of my correspondents, and I will receive the answers. The misfortune is general: little money and life is very expensive […]. Your reflection is most correct: it is better to adjust to the circumstances of the times, otherwise the poor scholars will be very bad if they print books and do not find buyers. In Germany everything seems to be blocked, it has been more than a year that I have not received letters from our Tychsen. In France there is protection, but except for our common friend De Sacy, I see only very superficial publications. In short, the letters are the last thing.[32]

Throughout any historical age it has always been necessary for any scholar – Assemani and De Rossi were certainly no exceptions – to have a well-equipped library available. However, their situation was very different, so much so that Assemani wrote to his friend with much admiration, and perhaps with some envy:

> It seems impossible that a private individual with few means has arrived to collect such a large number of codes to form a library that has no equal in Italy.[33]

Indeed, Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi's private library had no equal in Italy for Hebrew manuscripts and four-15th century editions. It was in fact formed by 1432 Hebrew codes of the 11th to 16th centuries, many of which were beautifully illuminated, and 1464 printed Hebrew volumes, which were printed between the 15th and 18th century; in addition, 10 Greek manuscripts, 85 Latin, 31 in vulgar and various items in other languages. The collection included Bibles, numerous Salterians, philosophi-

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[31] BPPr, Padova 6th December 1794.

[32] «Io ho parlato con alcuni libraj riguardo alle dotte vostre produzioni, ma l'ho trovati assai freddi e renitenti, non per altra ragione se non perché non trovano compratori per scarsezza di danaro, che pur troppo la cosa è vera. Ho pur scritto a varj miei corrispondenti, e sentirò la risposta. La disgrazia è generale: poco danaro ed il vivere carissimo […] La vostra riflessione è ben giusta, che convien addattarsi alle circostanze del tempo, altrimenti i poveri letterati staranno assai male, se stamperanno libri e non trovano compratori. In Germania sembra tutto arrenato, è più d'un anno che non ricevo lettere dal nostro Tychsen. In Francia vi è protezione, ma fuori del comune amico De Sacy, non veggo che cose assai superficiali. In somma le lettere sono nell'ultima azione» (BPPr, Padova 18th May 1805).

[33] BPPr, Padova 4th July 1810.

cal, juridical and kabbalistic texts, evidence of the intellectual and spiritual wealth of the Jewish groups of the Diaspora. Unlike many other private libraries, which disappeared after the death of their collectors, it was preserved in its entirety, because in 1816 it was purchased by the Grand Duchess of Parma and Piacenza, Maria Luigia of Austria to be gifted to the Royal Library of Parma, now the Biblioteca Palatina.

Assemani did not have a personal library, even though he said that he had tried to form one at least twice in his life:

> Everyone tells me that your library is fit for a sovereign: I don't have anything good. I spent a lot of money on codes and books. When I took my trip to the East, I made a collection which could compete and even overcome any collection, but with tears in my eyes I had to leave it in many crates, because I had to flee in order to save my skin. In Vienna I made another collection of good oriental books and some manuscripts; these were sold by the landlord, where I was staying, for 100 florins in my absence. I then decided not to make libraries on my own. Some of those few books, which now I own, have been given to me, and some of them I bought here. The Library of this Seminary provides me with various books, so I am happy to stay here. This is the description of all my book affairs.[34]

Even if we do not give too much credit to his autobiographical tales, that are often rather implausible, it is certain that he never owned a remarkable collection of books. Assemani, however, was not fully satisfied even with the Padua Seminary Library, where he worked. The reason was the lack of Oriental language texts, which was attributable to past sales:

> Not only here is there no saleable copy of the Arabic Psalter, but there is none in our library either. In a word, for a long time I have been looking for everything that you are looking for now, and especially to have an exact catalogue of all the oriental prints released by our typography. But no matter how much effort I put in, I didn't succeed. The best oriental books donated by Blessed Gregory have been removed from our library and sold at a low price, and when I came here I found everything in the utmost oblivion, so that I often had to go to Venice, not finding any support for my studies in Padua. My sensibility keeps me silent about the reason for such disorder, which, when it comes to my mind, alters my spirit.[35]

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[34] «Tutti mi dicono che la vostra biblioteca sia degna d'un sovrano: io non ho niente di buono. Ho speso moltissimo in codici ed in libri. Quando feci il viaggio d'oriente, feci una raccolta che poteva gareggiare ed anche superare qualunque collezione, ma dovetti colle lagrime agli occhi lasciarla in tanti cassoni, giacché dovetti fuggire come mi trovavo per salvare la pelle. In Vienna feci un'altra raccolta di buoni libri orientali e di alcuni mss e questi pure furono venduti in mia assenza dal padron di casa, dove alloggiavo, per 100 fiorini. Feci allora proponimento di non fare più biblioteche per conto mio. Quei pochi libri che posseggo al presente parte mi sono stati regalati, e parte me li sono proveduti qui. La Biblioteca di questo Seminario mi somministra varj libri, e perciò io sto volentieri. Eccovi descritte tutte le mie vicende in materia di libri» (BPPr, Padova 22nd June 1793).

[35] «Qui non solo non vi è alcuna copia vendibile del Salterio arabico, ma neppur esiste nella nostra biblioteca. In una parola, da molto tempo che io vado in traccia di tutto ciò che voi ora mi ricercate, e specialmente per avere un catalogo esatto di tutte le stampe orientali uscite da questa nostra stamperia, ma per quanto impegno ci abbia messo non ho potuto venirne a capo. Dalla nostra biblioteca sono stati distratti e venduti a vil prezzo i migliori libri orientali donati dal B. Gregorio, e

The lack of adequate bibliographic tools, which Assemani would have needed, only partially explains why he did not devote himself to larger works: probably he did not have a flair for this kind of study, as Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi did. However, he deserves credit for having tried to spread the interest in Arabic language and culture to a non-specialist audience. To achieve his goal, he had understood that, given the cultural changes of the time in which he lived, he had to use not Latin but Italian in his publications:

> It is deplorable that our Italy has declined from its ancient splendor in sciences, and it is dedicated to novels, tales and capricious and bizarre inventions of heated heads. I wanted to write my works in the vernacular in order to try, if possible, to ignite the interest of oriental studies in the minds of the Italians, since I see that few people read books written in Latin, and prefer to read any French and English book, rather than Latin.[36]

Finally, in order not to fall short of what was stated in the title of this paper you can see the list of books mentioned in the letters. But books were not the core of their correspondence: very often Assemani complained that he had no literary news to transmit because of the absence of new publications in Italy and Europe. The bibliographic update was almost a pretext between the two scholars, who were instead bound by the love for the Oriental languages, which united them until the end, as the farewell phrase of the Assemani's last letter summarizes:

> Goodbye my dear friend, I wish you many prosperous and happy years for our friendship and for the good of Oriental Letters.[37]

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quando io sono venuto qui trovai ogni cosa nel massimo oblio, cosicché mi convenne spesse volte andare in Venezia per istudiare, non trovando in tutta Padova verun sussidio ai miei studj. La mia delicatezza mi fa tacere la ragione di tal disordine, che all'affacciarmisi alla mente mi altera lo spirito» (BPPr, Padova 3rd May 1800).

[36] «È cosa deplorabile che la nostra Italia abbia declinato dal suo antico splendore in materia di scienze, e siasi data ai romanzi, storielle e cappricciose [sic] e bizzarre invenzioni di teste riscaldate. Io ho voluto scrivere le mie opere in volgare per tentare se sia possibile d'accendere nell'animo degli Italiani il gusto degli studi orientali, giacché veggo che i libri scritti in latino pochi gli leggono, ed amano piuttosto di leggere qualunque libro francese e inglese, che latino» (BPPr, Padova 14th March 1788).

[37] BPPr, Padova 30th December 1814.

Fontes manuscriptae

BPPr = Biblioteca Palatina di Parma, Ep. Parma 110, Simone Assemani to Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi

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Appendix

Books mentioned in Simone Assemani's letters

22nd February 1788

Assemani Simone, *Catalogo de' codici manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Naniana compilato dall'abate Simone Assemani*, In Padova, nella Stamperia del Seminario, 1787

Assemani Simone, *Saggio sull'origine culto letteratura e costumi degli arabi avanti il pseudoprofeta Maometto*, Padova, nella Stamperia del Seminario, 1787

16th May 1788

Adler Jakob Georg Christian, *Bibliotheca biblica serenissimi Würtenbergensium Ducis, olim Lorckiana*, Altonae, ex officina J. D. A. Eckhardti, 1787

Hesychiou Lexikon. Hesychii Lexicon, cum notis doctorum virorum integris, vel editis antehac, nunc auctis & emendatis ... vel ineditis ... Ex autographis partim recensuit, partim nunc primum edidit, suasque animadversiones perpetuas adjecit Joannes Alberti ... Cum ejusdem prolegomenis, et adparatu Hesychiano, Lugduni Batavorum, apud Samuelem Luchtmans, et filium, Academiae typographos, 1746-1766

Pindari Carmina cum lectionis varietate. Curavit Christian. Gottlob Heyne, Gottingae, apud Iohannem Christianum Dieterich, 1773

Pindari Carmina ex interpretatione latina emendatiore. Curavit Christian. Gottlob Heyne, Gottingae et Gothae, apud Johannem Christian. Dieterich, 1774

Tychsen Oluf Gerhard, *Interpretatio inscriptionis Cuficae in marmorea templi S. Marci cathedra, qua S. Apostolus Petrus Antiochiae sedisse traditur*, Buetzouii, typis Ioh. Gott. Fritzii, ser. duc. aul. et acad. typogr., 1787

4th July 1788

Tychsen Oluf Gerhard, *Interpretatio inscriptionis Cuficae in marmorea templi patriarchalis S. Petri Cathedra, qua S. Apostolus Petrus Antiochiae sedisse traditur. Editio secunda emendatior*, Rostochii, ex officina libraria Koppiana, 1788

18th July 1788

Assemani Simone, *Museo cufico Naniano illustrato dall'abate Simone Assemani professore di lingue orientali [...] Parte II*, In Padova, nella stamperia del Seminario, 1788

15th November 1788

Daniel secundum editionem LXX interpretum ex tetraplis desumptam. Ex codice syro-estranghelo bibliothecae Ambrosianae syriace edidit,latine vertit,praefatione notisque criticis illustravit Caietanus Bugatus [Gaetano Burgati], Mediolani, ex typographio Monasterii Imperialis S. Ambrosii sumptu et typis Linguarum exoticarum Bibliothecae Ambrosianae 1788

23rd April 1790

'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, *Abdollatiphi Compendium memorabilium Aegypti. Arabice. E codice ms.o Bodleiano edidit D. Joseph White […]Praefatus est Henricus Eberh. Gottlob Paulus*, Prostat Tubingae, apud Johann. Georg. Cotta, 1789

Abū'l Farağ Gregorius , *Gregorii Abulpharagii sive Bar-Hebraei Chronicon Syriacum e codicibus Bodleianis descripsit maximam partem vertit notisque illustravit Paulus Iacobus Bruns [...] Edidit ex parte vertit notasque adiecit Georgius Guilielmus Kirsch*, Lipsiae, apud Adamum Fridericum Boehmium, 1789

2nd May 1790

Giorgi Agostino Antonio, *Fragmentum Evangelii S. Iohannis Graeco-Copto-Thebaicum saeculi IV additamentum ex vetustissimis membranis lectionum evangelicarum divinae Missae cod. diaconici reliquiae et liturgica alia fragmenta [...] ex Veliterno museo Borgiano nunc prodeunt in Latinum versa et notis illustrata opera et studio F. Augustini Antonii Georgii*, Romae, apud Antonium Fulgonium, 1789

Terza appendice al catalogo de' libri latini, e italiani, e francesi, che si trovano vendibili appresso Carlo Scapino, Padova 1790

23rd October 1790

Assemani Simone, *Globus caelestis Cufico-Arabicus Veliterni musei Borgiani a Simone Assemano ... illustratus praemissa ejusdem De Arabum astronomia dissertatione et adjectis duabus epistolis cl. Josephi Toaldi*, Patavii, typis Seminarii, 1790

9th April 1791

Abu al-Fida Ismail ibn'Ali, *Abulfedae Annales muslemici arabice et latine. Opera et studiis Io. Iacobi Reiskii [...] sumtibus atque auspiciis Petri Friderici Suhmii [...] nunc primum edidit Iacobus Georgius Christianus Adler*, Hafniae, excudebat Fridericus Wilhelmus Thiele, veneunt apud Chr. Gottl. Proft, Vnivers. bibliopol., 1789-1794

Quatuor Evangelia Graece, cum variantibus a textu lectionibus Codd. MSS. Bibliothecae Vaticanae, Barberinae, Laurentianae, Vindobonensis, Escurialensis, Havniensis Regiae, quibus accedunt lectiones versionum Syrarum, veteris, Philoxenianae et Hierosolymitanae

jussu et sumptibus Regiis edidit Andreas Birch, Hauniae, excudebat J.F. Schultz, univers. Typographus, 1788

23rd April 1791

Gregorio Rosario, *Rerum Arabicarum quae ad historiam Siculam spectant ampla collectio opera & studio Rosarii Gregorio*, Panormi ,ex Regio Typographeo, 1790

Saadya ben Yossef Gaion, *R. Saadiae Phijumensis Versio Iesaiae arabica, cum aliis specimi-nibus arabico-biblicis, e mso. bodleiano nunc primum edidit atque [...] glossario perpe-tuo instruxit Henr. Eberh. Gottl. Paulus*, Ienae, apud C. H. Cunonis heredes, 1790-1791

21st November 1792

Gregorio Rsario, *De supputandis apud Arabes Siculos temporibus*, Panormi, ex Regio Typographeo, typis arabicis Airoldianis, 1786

29th December 1792

Adler Jacob Georg Christian, *Museum Cuficum Borgianum Velitris. Pars II. Illustravit Iacobus Georgius Christianus Adler, th. doctor et prof. Hafniensis. Inserti sunt numi cu-fici editoris*, Hafniae, excudebat Fridericus Wilhelmus Thiele, 1792

22nd June 1793

Assemani Simone, *Catalogo de' codici manoscritti orientali della biblioteca naniana com-pilato dall'abate Simone Assemani. Parte IV*, In Padova, nella stamperia del Seminario, 1792

Efrem <santo>, *S.P.N. Ephraem Syri opera omnia quae exstant Graece, Syriace, Latine in sex tomos distributaad MSS. Codices Vaticanos aliosque castigata, multis aucta, nova interpretatione, prefationibus, notis, variantibus lectionibus illustrata opera et studio Josephi Assemani bibliothecae vaticanae praefecti*, Roma, ex Tipographia Pontificia Vaticana, apud Joannem Mariam Henricum Salvioni, 1746

23rd August 1793

Buxtorf Johann, *Lexicon Hebraicum et Chaldæo-biblicum ordine alphabetico tam primi-genia, quam derivata veteris testamenti Hebraica, et Chaldaica verba, et Latinas eo-rumdem interpretationes ex Johannis Buxtorfii aliorumque eruditissimorum virorum operibus exceptas; exhibens digessit, multisque auxit, atque illustravit Fr. Josephus Montaldi*, Romae, ex typographia Jo. Zempel., sumptibus Natalis Barbiellini bibliopolæ in Foro Pasquini, 1789

Flavius Iosephus, *Flavii Iosephi hebraei opera omnia graece et latine excusa ad editionem lugduno-batavam Sigiberti Havercampii cum Oxoniensi Ioannis Hudsonii collatam curavit Franciscus Oberthür*, Lipsiae, sumtu E.B. Schwickerti, 1782-1785

6th December 1794

Giorgi Agostino Antonio, *De miraculis Sancti Coluthi et reliquiis actorum Sancti Panesniv martyrum thebaica fragmenta duo alterum auctius alterum nunc primum editum. Praeit dissertatio eminentissimi Stephani card. Borgiae de cultu S. Coluthi M. Accedunt fragmenta varia notis inserta [...] deprompta et illustrata opera ac studio F. Augustini Antonii Georgii eremitae augustiniani*, Romae, apud Antonium Fulgonium, 1793

25th February 1795

Paulinus von Heilig Bartholomäus, *De Veteribus Indis dissertatio in qua cavillationes auctoris alphabeti tibetani castigantur. A p. Paulino a S. Bartolomaeo carmelita discalceato*, Romae, 1795

30th July 1798

Amarasimha, *Amarasinha. Sectio prima de caelo ex tribus ineditis codicibus indicis manuscriptis curante P. Paulino a S. Bartholomaeo*, Romae, apud Antonium Fulgonium, 1798

Zoega Georg, *De origine et usu obeliscorum ad Pium sextum pontificem maximum*, Romae, typis Lazzarinii typographi cameralis, 1797

3rd May 1800

Baldi Francesco Antonio, *De apologia catholicæ religionis a nova & maxime propria vaticiniorum psalmi quarti aliorumque declaratione ad Hebræos, novatores, et incredulos dissertatio critica,* Venetiis, apud Justinum Pasquali Marii F., 1799

Bibliothecae arabicae specimen... praeside Christiano Friderico Schnurrer, Tubingae, 1799-1806

13th April 1805

Assemani, Simone *Sopra una moneta fenicia dissertazione*, Padova 1805

De Rossi Giovanni Bernardo, *Mss. codices Hebraici biblioth. I. B. De-Rossi ling. Orient. prof. accurate ab eodem descripti et illustrati. Accedit appendix qua continentur mss. codices reliqui al. Linguarum*, Parmae, ex publico typographeo, 1803-1804

27th July 1806

‘Ali ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥamn Ibn Yunus, Le livre de la grande table hakémite, ed. Caussin de Perceval, Paris, L’Imprimerie de la Républic, 1804

De Rossi Giovanni Bernardo, *De Corano arabico Venetiis Paganini typis impresso sub in. sec. XVI dissertatio*, Parmae, ex Imperiali typographeo, 1805

Marcus Graecus, *Liber ignium ad comburendos hostes, auctore Marco Graeco, ou Traité des feux propres à détruire les ennemis, composé par Marcus le Grec. Publié d’après deux manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale*, Paris, Delance, 1804

Silvestre de Sacy Antoine Isaac, *Chrestomathie Arabe, ou extraits de divers écrivains Arabes tant en prose qu’en vers, à l’usage des élèves de l’école spéciale des langues orientales vivantes*, Paris, Imprimerie Impériale, 1806

13th May 1807

Assemani Simone, *Ragguaglio storico-critico sopra la setta Assissana detta volgarmente degli Assassini*, Padova, nella Stamperia del Seminario, 1806

De Rossi Giovanni Bernardo, *Dizionario storico degli autori arabi piu celebri e delle loro principali opere*, Parma, dalla Stamperia imperiale, 1807

4th July 1810

Assemani Simone, *Discorso inaugurale alla cattedra di lingue orientali nella Regia universita di Padova detto nel giorno XX di dicembre MDCCCVII dal professor Simone Assemani*, Padova, nella Stamperia del Seminario, 1808

Assemani Simone, *Sopra le monete arabe efeigiate dissertazione*, Padova, per Nicolò Zanon Bettoni, 1809

Silvestre de Sacy Antoine Isaac, *Grammaire arabe à l’usage des élèves de l’école spéciale des langues orientales vivantes*, Paris, Imprimerie Impériale, 1810

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SIMONE ASSEMANI "EPIGRAFISTA" UNA LETTERA A GIACOMO NANI SU UN'ISCRIZIONE GRECA DEDICATA AD ISIDE*

Abstract

This essay deals with a letter from Simone Assemani to Giacomo Nani concerning a Greek inscription dedicated to Isis (CIG 4969b). This epigraph was realized on an Egyptian offering table, which at that time was owned by the Venetian patrician Angelo Querini and was kept in the garden of his villa in Padua; today, the table is part of the collection of the Egyptian Museum of Berlin (Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, inv. 2305). Assemani's letter is preserved in the so-called Epistolario Moschini and is the earliest known document regarding the epigraph. In the contribution, the author first describes the artifact and reconstructs its history: the inscription was published, among others, by Niels Iversen Schow, Ulrich Friedrich Kopp, and Johannes Franz, and its interpretation is still discussed today. Then, he publishes Assemani's letter, and comments it. In particular, this letter demonstrates that at the end of the 18th century there was a huge debate about this epigraph: Assemani got involved in it and gave to his patron Nani his personal reading of the Greek text.

Keywords

Simone Assemani; Giacomo Nani; Greek Inscription; Offering Table; Goddess Isis; CIG 4969b

* Ringrazio i prof. B. Callegher e A. D'Ottone Rambach per aver accolto il mio contributo nella raccolta; dedico questo saggio alla memoria del prof. John Lundon (1960-2017). Sono state utilizzate le seguenti sigle: *AV*: *Königliche Museen zu Berlin. Ausführliches Verzeichnis der Ägyptischen Altertümer und Gipsabgüsse*; *CIG*: *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*; *IG*: *Inscriptiones Graecae*; *Liddell-Scott-Jones*: H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*; *SB*: *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*; *TM*: *Trismegistos* [www.trismegistos.org].

Il presente contributo riguarda una breve lettera di Simone Assemani al suo amico e patrono Giacomo Nani, in cui l'orientalista discute dell'iconografia della lettura di un'iscrizione di una tavola per le offerte egizia, la quale era conservata presso una villa di campagna della famiglia veneziana dei Querini, nota come Villa Querini o Villa Altichiero. Alla villa, che si trovava nell'odierno quartiere padovano di Altichiero e fu distrutta ad inizio del Novecento, era annesso un vasto giardino, all'interno del quale si potevano ammirare non solo numerose specie animali e vegetali, ma anche pregevoli statue e manufatti antichi[1]; alla fine del Settecento, questa residenza divenne un importante luogo di ritrovo di intellettuali e politici italiani ed europei, in particolare grazie all'attività culturale del proprietario, ovvero il senatore Angelo Querini (1721-1796)[2].

Tra il 1780 e il 1781, Querini compì un viaggio in varie città italiane sostando per lungo tempo a Roma e, durante il suo *tour*, ebbe occasione di acquistare numerosi manufatti, che andarono ad arricchire la collezione di antichità conservata in Villa Altichiero. In particolare, egli riuscì a creare una piccola collezione di oggetti egizi, che trovarono posto in una sezione del giardino della villa denominata Canopo[3]. Tra questi, vi era anche una tavola delle offerte, o tavola per libagioni, recante un'iscrizione in greco sul bordo (*CIG* 4969b; *SB* 8456; *TM* 6345) e oggi conservata presso l'Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung di Berlino (Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, inv. 2305); la tavola misura 49x48 cm ed è in basalto nero. Siccome non possediamo informazioni sul reperto antecedenti all'acquisto da parte di Querini, non se ne conoscono né il luogo né il contesto di rinvenimento.

In Egitto le tavole delle offerte venivano poste presso la tomba di un defunto e utilizzate dai sacerdoti per officiare riti o offrire cibo al morto. Infatti, come in questo caso, sul bordo delle tavole, veniva spesso tracciato un canaletto che serviva a far defluire le libagioni. Inoltre, esse venivano decorate con bassorilievi, che solitamente illustravano il banchetto del defunto. All'interno della tavola di Altichiero[4] sono raffigurate due piante di loto in fiore e, accanto ad esse, due vasi che venivano usati per le libagioni, da ognuno dei quali sgorgano due rigagnoli che si riversano sull'altare al centro della tavola; sull'altare, vi sono alcuni frutti e, al centro, un altro fiore di loto. Al di sopra dell'altare, vi sono due piccoli ricettacoli utili per raccogliere i liquidi delle libagioni. Sulla parte superiore, nel punto in cui il canale fa fuoriuscire i liquidi, si trova una statuetta a forma di rana. Il motivo iconografico qui rappresentato è am-

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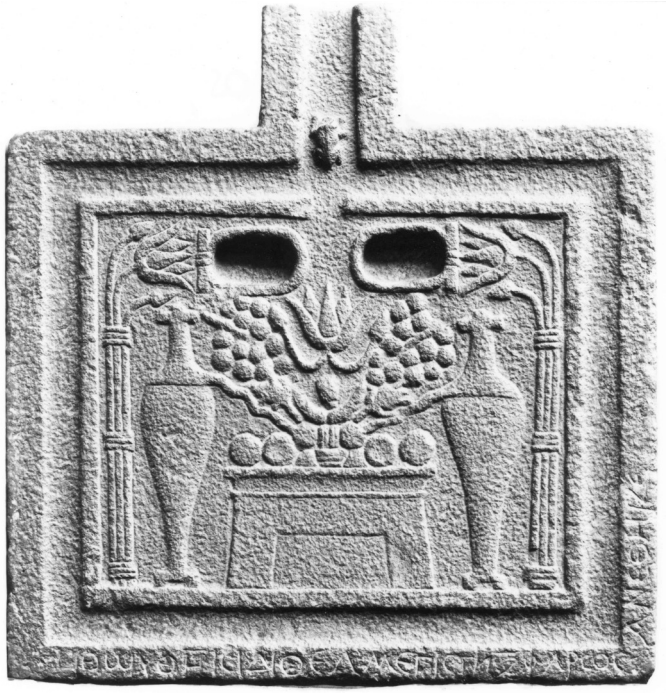
[1] Sul giardino di Villa Altichiero rimandiamo a ERICANI 1983; AZZI VISENTINI 1988: pp. 113-136; AZZI VISENTINI 1991; CATUCCI 2010.

[2] Sulla vita e l'attività di collezionista di Angelo Querini si vedano in particolare CATUCCI 2000; VARIN 2002: pp. 213-214; CATUCCI 2010; PICCHI 2010: pp. 28-29; TREBBI 2016.

[3] Su questa collezione si vedano CATUCCI 2000; VARIN 2002; CATUCCI 2010.

[4] La descrizione della tavola si legge anche in CATTANEO 2018: p. 89.

Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, inv. 2305
Copyright: SPK/SMB Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Inv.-Nr. ÄM 2203



piamente attestato in età antica, tolemaica e imperiale[5], e anche la rana è un elemento piuttosto comune in una tavola per libagioni, in quanto animale collegato ai cicli di piena del Nilo e al concetto di rinascita[6]. Prima di parlare del documento assemaniano riguardante questa iscrizione, ripercorrerò brevemente la storia dell'epigrafe.

Nel 1787 fu ripubblicato a Padova un opuscolo scritto dalla contessa Giustiniana Wynne (1737-1791) intitolato *Alticchiero*, in cui veniva descritta la villa di Angelo Querini; l'opera era stata stampata per la prima volta a Ginevra, per le cure del pittore e incisore svizzero Jean Huber. Huber aveva chiesto a Querini una descrizione della sua residenza, ma, anziché Querini stesso, a rispondergli era stata Madame Wynne, amica del proprietario della villa, con il suo opuscolo intitolato *Alticchiero*. La prima edizione è senza data, ma Marco Catucci, il quale per ultimo si è occupato di quest'opera, propone di collocarla intorno al 1782, dopo il ritorno di Querini dal suo viaggio nelle città italiane[7].

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[5] Cfr. RITNER 1994, in cui sono raccolti numerosi esempi di tavole per le offerte così decorate.

[6] Cfr. HORNUNG-STAEHELIN 1976: pp. 112-113; MASSON 2013-2015: pp. 13-14.

[7] Cfr. CATUCCI 2000: pp. 370-371.

In seguito, Madame Wynne decise di procedere ad una nuova edizione poiché la prima stampa aveva avuto una tiratura limitata e conteneva molti errori. Questa riedizione fu affidata ad un amico della contessa, il conte Bartolomeo Benincasa (1746-1816), il quale corredò l'opera di un ricco apparato iconografico e di alcune note di commento[8]; inoltre, siccome Huber era morto nel 1786, Benincasa decise di dedicare quest'opera a William Petty conte di Shelburne, come si evince dall'epistola dedicatoria posta ad inizio del volume e datata 15 agosto 1787[9].

Il testo stesso fu rivisto e accresciuto dalla Wynne, giacché, nel frattempo, Angelo Querini aveva inserito nel giardino della villa i manufatti acquistati durante il suo *tour*; ad esempio, fu aggiunta la descrizione della collezione egizia di Querini, che comprendeva anche la tavola delle offerte oggi conservata all'Ägyptisches Museum di Berlino [10]. Così Benincasa riassume le vicende editoriali di *Alticchiero* nell'introduzione:

> Mr. Huber de Genève […] demanda à Mr. le Sénateur Querini, son digne ami, la description de la maison de campagne de ce dernier, nommée Alticchiero, dont il entendoit souvent parler avec éloge. Mr. Querini […] n'en fit rien. Une Dame d'un mérite distingué, et connue par la tournure délicate de son esprit, étoit depuis longtemps dans l'habitude de passer l'Eté a cette campagne avec ses meilleurs amis. […] Elle écrivit elle-même cette description, et l'envoya à Mr. Huber. Il en fut charmé, la fit imprimer, mais n'en tira que le peu d'exemplaires, qu'il destina en présent à l'Auteur, au Sénateur, et aux amis. […] Madame s'est déterminée enfin à se prêter aux sollicitations des curieux pour une seconde Edition, d'autant plus, que M. Querini dans l'intervalle a enrichi sa campagne avec des nouvelles pièces fort intéressantes. D'ailleurs l'Edition Genévoise, ayant été faite à la hâte, est remplie de fautes […]. On a tâché de les corriger, et l'Editeur a ajouté à la fin plusieurs notes, qui entrent dans quelques détails d'érudition étrangers à l'objet, que l'Auteur s'est proposé[11].

Nel testo, Madame Wynne fa un rapido accenno alla tavola di Berlino, dicendo che era stata inserita insieme con un'altra tavola delle offerte (oggi Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, inv. 2270)[12] nel piedistallo che reggeva una statuetta egizia, in seguito riconosciuta come la statua del visir Parahotep[13]. I tre manufatti probabilmente furono assemblati dallo stesso Querini per pure ragioni estetiche, giacché non si trova un collegamento di tipo funzionale o cronologico tra i reperti: infatti, la statua di Parahotep risale all'epoca di Ramses II, la tavola Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum,

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[8] Sul contributo di Benincasa a questa riedizione e il suo rapporto con Giustiniana Wynne si vedano TORCELLAN 1966: p. 570; CATUCCI 2000: pp. 370-371.

[9] La lettera dedicatoria si legge in WYNNE 1787: pp. [a1r]-[a2r].

[10] Su questa aggiunta si veda CATUCCI 2000: p. 386.

[11] WYNNE 1787: p. [a2v].

[12] Cfr. VARIN 2002: pp. 215-218.

[13] Questa statua è tuttora conservata nel giardino di Villa Melzi d'Eril a Bellagio, in provincia di Como. Cfr. VARIN 2002: pp. 214-215; PICCHI 2010: p. 105.

inv. 2270, contenente un'iscrizione in demotico, al Periodo tardo egizio[14], la tavola Berlin, Ägyptisches Museum, inv. 2305, come vedremo, ad un periodo ancora successivo. Giustiniana Wynne individua le iscrizioni sulle due tavole, ma dice di non comprenderne il significato:

> Sur deux faces du piédestal on a enchâssé deux tables isiaques chargées de hiéroglyphes et de caractères exactement pareils à ceux qu'on admire, et qu'on étudie inutilement dans la grande table isiaque, le plus beau et le plus riche des monuments égyptiens, qui représente probablement toute l'inintelligible Théologie de ces peuples, pièce fameuse que l'on conserve dans le Museum de Turin[15].

Nelle note di commento da lui aggiunte alla seconda edizione di *Alticchiero*, Bartolomeo Benincasa ritorna a parlare di questa tavola delle offerte e riporta una lettera inviatagli dall'abate Iacopo Morelli (1745-1818)[16], bibliotecario della Biblioteca Marciana, a proposito dell'iscrizione greca. Morelli aveva mostrato una riproduzione della tavola delle offerte al dotto francese Jean Baptiste Gaspard d'Ansse de Villoison (1750-1805), il quale al tempo si trovava a Venezia per ultimare la sua edizione dell'*Iliade* che sarebbe stata pubblicata nel 1788[17], e Villoison aveva fornito una sua interpretazione dell'epigrafe.

Secondo Villoison, l'iscrizione riportava ΘΩΥΘΗ ΙΣΙΔΙ ΘΕΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΗ ΦΑΡΣΟΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ, ovvero «A Toth, a Iside dea massima Pharsos dedicò». Egli ammetteva di non riuscire ad identificare la prima lettera dell'iscrizione («la première lettre») e interpretava il simbolo tra ΜΕΓΙΣΤΗ e ΦΑΡΣΟΣ come l'abbreviazione della parola IOZ, con cui gli Egizi indicavano la luna; a questo proposito, rimandava ad una pagina del *Pantheon Aegyptiorum* di Paul Ernst Jablonski[18]:

> Les Amateur me sauront gré sans doute de rapporter ici que le savant Abbé Morelli, Garde de la Bibliothèque de St. Marc à Venise, m'écrit au sujet des tables Isiaques, dont Mr. le Sénateur avoit fait parvenir le dessein au célèbre Mr. Ansse de Villoison, pour en avoir l'interprétation de ce qu'on voit gravé sur le monument singulier de la Planche XVII: "[…] Mr. de Villoison lit ainsi l'inscription: ΘΩΥΘΗ ΙΣΙΔΙ ΘΕΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΗ ΦΑΡΣΟΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ Θωυθῇ Ἴσιδι θεᾷ μεγίστῃ Φάρσος ἀνέθηκε C'est-à-dire *Mercurio, Isidi deae maximae Pharsus consecravit* Il omet la première lettre, qu'on ne peut reconnoître, ainsi que celle qui précède immédiatement le mot

[14] Cfr. VARIN 2002: p. 218.

[15] WYNNE 1787: p. 46.

[16] Su Iacopo Morelli si veda in particolare BURIGANA 2012.

[17] Villoison aveva riscoperto e studiato presso la Biblioteca Marciana il celeberrimo codice A dell'*Iliade*. Nel 1788 uscì la sua edizione dell'Iliade con scolii (Homeri *Ilias* ad veteris codicis Veneti fidem recensita. *Scholia* in eam antiquissima ex eodem codice aliisque nunc primum edidit J. B. C. d'Ansse de Villoison, Venetiis, typ. et sumpt. fratrum Coleti, 1788), su cui si veda soprattutto FERRERI 2007: pp. 267-273.

[18] JABLONSKI 1752: p. 4: «Lunam Aegyptii vernaculo sermone appellant IOϽ, Ioh, et praeposito articulo generis masculini, ΠΙ- IOϽ».

> ΦΑΡΣΟΣ: mais si cette dernière n'est pas une syllabe ZE, ou ΞΕ, qu'il faille ajouter au mot qui suit […]: il est d'avis, que c'est une Sigle, qui contient et indique le mot IOZ, avec lequel les Egyptiens indiquoient la Lune, c'est-à-dire Isis même, comme il est prouve par Jablonski dans son Pantheon Aegyptiorum, livr. III. chap. I. p. 4"[19].

Dopo la proposta di Villoison, questa iscrizione venne citata anche all'interno di uno dei testi fondanti della storia della papirologia, ovvero l'edizione di Niels Iversen Schow (1754-1830)[20] della *Charta Borgiana*. Il motivo che induce Schow a parlare della tavola queriniana è l'etimologia di uno dei nomi che compare sulla *Charta*, ovvero ΠΑΝΥΦΙΣ. Secondo Schow, il nome deriverebbe dalla radice copta ⲛⲟⲩϥ «buono», accompagnata dall'articolo Π. Schow sostiene anche che l'uso della lingua egizia di apporre davanti alle parole gli articoli Φ, Π, Θ, ϯ è testimoniato anche in iscrizioni greco-copte come quella della tavola di Villa Querini. Quindi, ancor prima di scendere nell'argomentazione, egli ritiene che l'iscrizione della tavola non sia interamente greca, ma greco-copta:

> N. Πανυφις (*agathodaemonis cultor*) quemadmodum et Τανυφις, Ορσανυφις et Ταορσανουφις, quae omnia charta nostra exhibet, Aegyptia sunt; eorum autem radix, ut videtur, est ⲛⲟⲩϥ (αγαθος) praefixis artt. Π aut ϯ, qui, ut ex hoc quoque monumento patet, in multis nominibus Aegyptiis deprehenduntur. Hic Aegyptiorum mos articulos sive adspirationem Φ Π Θ ϯ vocibus praefigendi magnum lumen non solum in linguas gentium, quae primum culturam Aegyptiis debent, diffundit, sed et monumenta Graeco-Aegyptia novo lumine illustrat. Huius rei exemplum ex sequenti inscriptione monumenti Queriniani adseram[21].

Dopo aver descritto la tavola e averne individuato la finalità, ovvero l'offerta delle libagioni a Iside, Schow afferma che la parola ΦΑΡΣΟΣ che si legge nell'epigrafe è il nome della tavola in lingua egizia, ma scritto in caratteri greci. Inoltre, il segno che Villoison interpretava come IOZ viene letto come la lettera copta ⲋ, inserita prima di ΦΑΡΣΟΣ per esprimere il suono della lettera Φ nella pronuncia egizia. Il risultato era l'ibrido ⲋΦΑΡΣΟΣ, parola egizia scritta in parte in caratteri copti, in parte greci:

> Indicant haec omnia, quod eiusmodi ara sive mensa sacris solemnibus, nobis ceteroquin incognitis, dicata fuerit, quae autem ex indole theologiae Aegyptiae effusionem sive distributionem aquae Niliacae fuisse, haud improbabile est: eiusmodi instrumentum voce, quae in inscriptione huius monumenti ordine quinta est, nempe ϕαρσος commode exprimi potuit, cuius vocis, ex lingua Copt. deductae, significatus hic esset: *instrumentum effusorium* sive *fons effusionis* (ⲉⲣ *origo*, *fons* ⲭⲟⲩⲓ *effundere*, *effusio* et art. Φ). […] Character 7 aliquantum similis Aegyptiorum literae adspirat. ⲋ, voce ϕαρσος praefigitur, ad exprimendum sonum genuinum pronunciationis Aegyptiae, quae literis Graecis reddi non potest[22].

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[19] WYNNE 1787: pp. 72-73.

[20] Sulla vita e le opere di Niels Iversen Schow si veda da ultimo CAPASSO 2007.

[21] SCHOW 1788: p. 58.

[22] SCHOW 1788: p. 59.

La prima serie di lettere viene invece interpretata come il nome proprio ΦΘΩΥΘΗ, in cui, secondo Schow, la prima lettera, ovvero l'occlusiva aspirata bilabiale, non sarebbe segnalata con il carattere greco Φ, ma con la lettera copta Ⳬ:

> Prima inscriptionis vox videtur esse nomen proprium cuiusdam Aegytii, quod literis Graecis ita exprimendum est: Φθωυθη sive Φαθωυθη (eiusdem terminationis ac nom. Ερμη in charta Borgiana col. VII. 17.). Nam primus character simillimus est lit. Copt. Ⳬ, qua Graeco-Aegyptii literam φ exprimunt, ita quidem ut hisce duabus literis promiscue utantur[23].

L'iscrizione viene perciò così trascritta: «Φθωυθη Ισιδι, θεᾳ μεγιστῃ, ϩφαρσος ανεθηκε (*sic*). *Phathoythe Isidi, deae maximae, mensam effusionis dedicavit*»[24]. Schow conclude la sua argomentazione affermando che Stefano Borgia (1731-1804)[25], all'epoca segretario della Congregazione de Propaganda Fide, gli aveva trasmesso *per litteras* la proposta di lettura di un anonimo esperto di antichità egizie. La proposta era ΘΩΥΘΗ ΙΣΙΔΙ ΘΕΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΗ ΦΑΡΣΟΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ «A Toth, a Iside dea massima Pharsos dedicò», ovvero la stessa fornita da Villoison a Benincasa nell'opera di Giustiniana Wynne[26]. Di seguito, Schow elenca i motivi per cui questa interpretazione non può essere accettata: il primo segno e quello tra μεγίστῃ e φάρσος non sono tratti ornamentali, ma lettere dell'alfabeto copto; tra il nome delle due divinità dovrebbe esserci una congiunzione copulativa; per ordine di importanza dovrebbe comparire prima Iside, e poi Toth; non esiste in greco il nome Θωύθης, ου, da cui possa derivare Θούθῃ; sebbene talvolta nelle iscrizioni venga omesso il nome dell'oggetto che si dedica alla divinità, maggiori sono i casi in cui è esplicitato, come, in questa iscrizione, ϩφάρσος[27]. Negli *addenda* alla sua edizione, Schow afferma di essere riuscito a risalire all'autore di questa proposta, ovvero proprio Villoison, la cui interpretazione era stata pubblicata nel volume *Alticchiero* di Giustiniana Wynne[28]. Siccome inizialmente Schow dimostra di non conoscere l'ope-

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[23] SCHOW 1788: p. 59.

[24] SCHOW 1788: p. 60. Nel trascrivere l'iscrizione, Schow non segnala né spiriti né accenti.

[25] Su Stefano Borgia bastino i rimandi a ENZENSBERGER 1971; METZLER 1975; MOFFA 1986; ORSATTI 1996: pp. 1-31; BUZI 2009: pp. 1-75.

[26] SCHOW 1788: p. 60: «Hanc explicationem anonymo cuidam docto, rerumque Aegyptiarum perito, debemus; fuit autem vir insigni doctrina conspicuus, qui, ut ampliss. Praesul Steph. Borgia nos monuit, characteres, vocibus et praefixos, sculpturae ornamenta esse existimans, inscriptionem monumenti Queriniani ita interpretatus est: Θωυθη, Ισιδι θεᾳ μεγιστῃ Φαρσος ανεθηκε Mercurio, *Isidi deae maximae, Pharsus dedicavit* (hanc aram, hoc monumentum). […] Quamvis haec interpretatio ob facilitatem primo adspectu arrideat, tamen, quominus eam amplectitur aut veram esse existimemus, sequentes rationes impediunt».

[27] SCHOW 1788: pp. 60-61.

[28] SCHOW 1788: p. 135: «In libro inscripto: Altichiero, a Padoue 1787. 4, ubi antiqua monumenta villae Senatoris Querini tabulis incisa exhibentur et describuntur, auctor explicationis, cuius in illustrando monum. Queriniano ex literis amplis. Praesulis Stephani Borgiae mentionem fecimus,

ra di Giustiniana Wynne, che è citata solo negli *addenda*, si potrebbe ipotizzare che egli abbia avuto occasione di ispezionare direttamente la tavola durante il viaggio che compì nel 1787 dal Nord Europa per giungere Roma[29]. Tuttavia, non è attestato un suo transito da Padova, quindi per la sua trascrizione potrebbe essersi servito di disegni o riproduzioni simili a quelle fornite da Morelli a Villoison.

Nel 1789 l'orientalista danese Georg Zoëga (1755-1809)[30] ebbe occasione di visitare Villa Querini e di ammirare le antichità in essa conservate insieme a Simone Assemani[31] e, in seguito, registrò i reperti da lui visti, tra cui la tavola con l'iscrizione greca[32]. In un altro documento edito da Daniela Picchi, Zoëga descrive sia la statua di Parahotep sia le due tavole, riportando il disegno della tavola con l'iscrizione greca[33].

In un momento imprecisato dopo la morte di Querini, le due tavole delle offerte che erano esposte in Villa Querini confluirono nella collezione di antichità egizie del conte tedesco Johann Heinrich Karl Menu von Minutoli (1772-1846), che nel 1823 fu acquistata dal Re di Prussia Federico Guglielmo III e che in seguito diventò il nucleo fondante della raccolta di manufatti egizi dell'Ägyptisches Museum di Berlino. Nel 1825, il classicista tedesco Konrad Levezow registrava anche questo reperto all'interno della collezione del Re di Prussia e riprendeva la lettura proposta di Villoison, senza attribuirgliene la paternità[34].

Nel 1829, Ulrich Friedrich Kopp rilesse l'iscrizione in questo modo: «θωυθ Ηισιδι θεᾳ μεγίστῃ ζ′ φαρσος ἀνεθηκε (*sic*) "*… thoyth Isidi, deae maximae, septem velamina dedicavit*"»[35]. Egli riteneva θωυθ l'ultima parte del nome del dedicatario dell'iɬ

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nominatur. Cum autem in hoc libro interpretatio viri doctissimi auctior sit et locupletior, quam in literis amplis. Praesulis, ea, quae ibi deerant, quaeque ad inscriptionem monumenti explicandam faciunt, hic adiiciemus. In notis nempe ad librum supra laudatum pag. 72. 73. interpretatio monum. Queriniani ex literis cl. Villoisoni ad cl. Abb. Morellium publicata est».

[29] Cfr. CAPASSO 2007: p. 23.

[30] Sulla vita e le opere di Georg Zoëga si vedano BUZI 2009; PICCHI 2010; ASCANI-BUZI-PICCHI 2015.

[31] Cfr. PICCHI 2010: p. 52: «Ag. 26. La mattina insieme con Assemani a piedi a Alticchiero, ove passammo tutta la giornata, pranzando dal Querini in una compagnia allegra, a cui presiedeva la Sgra Benzoni: ed osservando le antichità principalmente Egizie conservate in questa villa».

[32] Cfr. PICCHI 2010: p. 104: «Altra tavola di basalte nero, alta p. V. 1 1/4 larga, 1 ½: con figure Egizie a bassorilievo, e con una iscrizione Greca nel margine».

[33] Cfr. PICCHI 2010: p. 105: «Basalte: tavola quadrangolare, lunga p. ven. 1 3/4, larga 1 ¼, coll'aggiunta d'un'altra tavoletta più ristretta applicata alla lunghezza di quella: intorno al margine della tavola grande sono intagliati dei geroglifici, tralasciati solamente nel mezzo dell'attaccatura della tavoletta, ove da questa entra viene un canale ad unirsi al piano interiore della tavola grande, e per questo canale passa come un fiume figurato in una larga linea a zigzag».

[34] LEVEZOW 1825: p. 227: «ΘΩΥΘΗ ΙΣΙΔΙ ΘΕΑ ΜΕΓΙΣΤΗ ΦΑΡΣΟΣ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ».

[35] KOPP 1829: p. 200. Come Schow, Kopp non indica né spiriti né accenti.

scrizione, Ηισιδι un errore di itacismo per Ισιδι, φαρσος il nome comune che in greco significa «porzione», ma anche «pezzo di stoffa»[36], e interpretò il segno dopo μεγίστῃ come il numero ζ[37]. All'obiezione che φάρσος non fosse concordato con il numerale, Kopp rispondeva dicendo che i Copti non declinano mai le parole greche[38].

Il contributo decisivo per quanto riguarda la decifrazione di questa iscrizione è rappresentato dall'edizione che comparve nel 1853 ne terzo volume del *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, per cura di Johannes Franz, dove tale epigrafe è indicata con il numero 4969b. Dopo il paragrafo iniziale in cui vengono elencate le pubblicazioni di Giustiniana Wynne, Niels Iversen Schow e Konrad Levezow, vengono inserite una riproduzione dell'iscrizione e la trascrizione Lι΄, Θωὺθ η΄, Ἴσιδι θεᾷ μεγίστῃ Φάρσος ἀνέθηκε, ovvero «Nell'anno decimo, ottavo giorno del mese di Toth, Pharsos dedicò a Iside dea massima». La proposta di lettura è così giustificata:

> Male Villoisonus legebat Θωύθῃ (i e. Mercurio) characteres vocibus Θωύθῃ et Φάρσος praemisł sos sculpturae ornamenta esse censens. Haec partim recte refutavit Schowius, in eo tamen falsus, quod characteres illos ex lingua Coptica explicandos putavit. $\overline{7}$, vel, ut ego dispicio, $\overline{Z}$, siglum interpunctionis videtur esse. Φάρσος nomen proprium est. Sed quod ante Θωύθ scriptum est, vix alius ese potest, quam LI colligatum. Notatur annus x. nescio cuius Imperatoris. Ceterum titulum satis recentem esse ex forma litterarum apparet[39].

L'editore, quindi, interpretavano il primo segno come l'abbreviazione per ἔτους in legatura con numero ι΄, e il segno tra μεγίστῃ e Φάρσος come un «siglum interpuntionis». Attraverso questa proposta di lettura, essi proponevano di collocare l'iscrizione in età imperiale, interpretando ἔτους ι΄ come l'anno di regno di un imperatore. Questo rappresenta il primo tentativo di datare l'iscrizione, anche se è probabile che Schow, interpretando alcuni segni come lettere dell'alfabeto copto, ritenesse questa iscrizione databile almeno alla media-tarda età imperiale.

In verità, già tre anni prima della pubblicazione del terzo volume del *CIG*, era uscito uno studio di Heinrich Brugsch sui reperti del Museo Egizio di Berlino, in cui veniva segnalata e trascritta anche questa iscrizione. La lettura e l'interpretazione di Brugsch sono identiche a quelle del *CIG*[40]. Nel 1899, nel catalogo delle antichità del

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[36] Cfr. *Liddell-Scott-Jones* s.v. φάρσος, εος, τό. 2.

[37] Cfr. KOPP 1829: pp. 199-200.

[38] KOPP 1829: p. 200: «Sed ne quis forte in το φαρσος, quia cum plurali numero conjunctum est, offendat, meminerit a Copticis vocabula Graeca neutiquam inflecti».

[39] *CIG* III, 4969b, p. 457.

[40] BRUGSCH 1850: p. 32: «LI Θωὺθ η΄ Ἴσιδι θεᾷ μεγίστῃ Φάρσος | ἀνέθηκε auf Deutsch: "Im Jahre 10 (irgend welches Kaisers) am 8. des Monats Toth weihte (diesen Stein) der Isis, der sehr grossen Göttin, Pharsus". Die Form der griechischen Buchstaben lehrt, dass die Inschrift aus später Zeit ist».

Museo Egizio di Berlino, la tavola viene registrata con il numero di inventario 2305, con l'indicazione: «Mit griechischer Inschrift: *Im Jahre 10* (eines Kaisers) *am 9. Thoth weihte Pharsos* (dieses) *der sehr grossen Göttin Isis*»[41]. L'errore di traduzione del numerale ηʹ potrebbe essere una svista di poca importanza, se non fosse riproposto anche in una recente pubblicazione di Eric Varin riguardante questo manufatto: «L'an 10, le 9 Toth, Pharsos consacre à la grande déesse Isis»[42].

L'ultima edizione disponibile dell'epigrafe è inserita nel quinto volume del *Sammelbuch*: «Basaltstein (Altar oder Opfertisch). Weihung. CIG III 4969b. Fundort? (jetzt Berliner Museen). Ptolemäerzeit (ἔτους) ιʹ, Θωὺθ ηʹ. Ἴσιδι, θεᾷ μεγίστηι, Φάρσος | ἀνέθηκε»[43]. Le novità introdotte dall'editore Friedrich Bilabel rispetto ai precedenti studi sono una nuova proposta di datazione, giacché si suggerisce l'età tolemaica anziché quella imperiale, e l'interpretazione del segno dopo μεγίστη come uno iota ascritto. Questa edizione è riportata anche online sul database *PHI Greek Inscriptions*[44].

In un recente contributo, mi sono occupato della datazione e della lettura dell'iscrizione. Per quanto riguarda la datazione, ho dimostrato, sulla base di ragioni paleografiche, come l'epigrafe debba essere collocata non prima del II/III secolo d.C., e come quindi l'ipotesi di datazione dell'editore del *CIG* sia da preferire[45]. Per quanto riguarda invece la lettura, ho innanzitutto notato come sopra il numero ηʹ l'incisore abbia tracciato un tratto orizzontale per indicare il numerale, e come lo stesso tratto si trovi sul segno tra μεγίστῃ e Φάρσος[46]. Quindi è probabile che l'incisore abbia voluto qui indicare il numero ζʹ, ovvero il numero sette, come già sosteneva Kopp.

Ho quindi suggerito che l'interpretazione di tale segno possa essere collegata alla parola seguente, ovvero Φάρσος, che dal *CIG* in avanti è stato interpretato come il nome del dedicatario dell'iscrizione; il nome proprio Φάρσος è attestato unicamente in questa epigrafe, al quale rimandano tutti i repertori che registrano questo nome. Ho quindi proposto un parallelo con un'epigrafe samia[47], il cui dedicatario Auxos si definisce ἱεραφόρος ἑπτάστολος, ovvero sacerdote portatore di oggetti sacri «che indossa

[41] *AV* 2305, p. 334.

[42] VARIN 2002: p. 219.

[43] *SB* V, 8456.

[44] http://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/222681.

[45] CATTANEO 2018: p. 92.

[46] CATTANEO 2018: pp. 92-93.

[47] *IG* XII, 6, 2, 600: «Σαράπιδι · Εἴσιδι · Ἀνούβιδι | Ἀλφοκράτῃ · Αὖξος Δημοκλέους · Σάμιος ὁ καὶ Τήνιος · ἱεραφόρος, ἑπτάστολος, σὺν καὶ τῇ γυναικὶ Ἑορτῇ καθιέρωσεν εἰς τὰ ἴδια».

sette stole»; questo epiteto sarebbe legato al culto, testimoniato da Ippolito da Roma,[48] di Iside dai sette veli[49], i quali rappresenterebbero le sette orbite dei pianeti governate da Iside stessa.

Dal momento che sia l'iscrizione samia sia la tavoletta egizia sono dedicate ad Iside, il numerale ζ΄, «sette», che si legge sulla tavola potrebbe trovare una spiegazione, soprattutto se pensiamo che φάρσος in greco significa anche, come abbiamo già visto, «pezzo di stoffa». Dietro a ζ΄ φάρσος, potrebbe quindi celarsi il nome Ἑπτάφαρσος, che potrebbe avere un significato simile all'aggettivo ἑπτάστολος del sacredote Auxos[50]. Tuttavia, siccome anche Ἑπτάφαρσος è un *hapax*, è più prudente accogliere la lettura del *CIG*, e inserire la nostra proposta in apparato[51]:

(ἔτους) ι΄, Θωὺθ η΄, Ἴσιδι θεᾷ μεγίστῃ Ζ̄ Φάρσος | ἀνέθηκε

(ἔτους) ι΄ Θωὺθ η΄ *CIG, Brugsch et SB*: Θωυθῇ *Villoison nomen proprium* Ϥθωυθη *Schow* θωυθ *Kopp* | Ζ̄: ΙΟΖ*, sive siglum ad Isidem pertinens, Villoison litteram Copticam* ϩ *legit Schow et* φάρσος *"tabula libationis" interpretavit* ζ *"septem" et* φάρσος *"velamina" Kopp siglum intepunctionis CIG et Brugsch, ut vid. iota adscriptum SB* Ἑπτάφαρσος *"ille qui septem velamina induit" dubitanter proposui. De Iside "heptastolos" cf. IG* XII, 6, 2, 600; Hipp. *Refutatio omnium haeresium* V, 7, 23.

A proposito di questa iscrizione greca, ho anche individuato una lettera di Simone Assemani a Giacomo Nani che la riguarda. Essa è il più antico documento a noi noto dedicato alla tavola delle offerte queriniana, e risulta molto utile per contestualizzare i primi dibattiti che si tennero a proposito della lettura e dell'interpretazione dell'epigrafe.

Come è noto tra gli studiosi di Assemani, nella Biblioteca del Museo Civico Correr di Venezia è conservato un corposo fondo di epistole che il letterato veneziano Giannantonio Moschini (1772-1840) raccolse nella sua vita e che è noto come *Epistolario Moschini*. All'interno del fondo, nel fascicolo «Assemani, Simeone» (*sic*), è conservata una parte dell'archivio di Assemani[52]. Nel primo sottofascicolo sono raccolte settantadue minute di lettere che Assemani mandò ad uno dei suoi più

[48] Hipp. *Refutatio omnium haeresium* V, 7, 23: «τὰ δ' εἰσὶν οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ <τὸ> ἡρπασμένον καὶ ζητούμενον ὑπὸ τῆς ἑπταστόλου καὶ μελανείμονος, <ὅπερ ἐστὶν> αἰσχύνη Ὀσίριδος. Ὄσιριν δὲ λέγουσιν ὕδωρ· ἡ δὲ Ἶσις ἑπτάστολος, περὶ αὐτὴν ἔχουσα καὶ ἐστολισμένη ἑπτὰ στολὰς αἰθ<ε>ρίους».

[49] DUNAND 1973: III, p. 64; MARCOVICH 1986: p. 296.

[50] CATTANEO 2018: pp. 93-94.

[51] CATTANEO 2018: p. 94.

[52] Sul carteggio di Simone Assemani raccolto nell'*Epistolario Moschini* si vedano PONTANI 2013; D'OTTONE 2013; D'OTTONE 2015: pp. 204-211.

importanti patroni, ovvero il nobile veneziano Giacomo Nani (1725-1797)[53]. In una di queste lettere, datata 13 aprile 1787, Assemani parla della tavola con iscrizione greca e propone una sua lettura dell'epigrafe.

> Epistolario Moschini, Fascicolo "Assemani, Simeone",
> I "Lettere a Nani cav. Giacomo", 26
>
> Eccellenza
> Ecco la spiegazione dell'Ara coll'iscrizione Greca:
> νθωυθη Ισιδι Θεα Μεγιστη και [*aggiunto sopra la linea di scrittura*] φαρσος ανεθηκε.
> La prima voce è il nome d'uno de' personaggi che hanno dedicata l'Ara, ma non sembra che debba leggersi come è qui segnata. Il resto significa, come Ella ben sa, a Iside Somma e Pharsos appese, cioè eresse, e dedicò. Rappresenta due vasi dove seminavasi, e coltivavasi religiosamente il Loto sacro a Iside.
> Mi continui la Sua protezione mentre con piena stima e rispetto ho l'onore d'essere.
>
> Padova, nel Seminario, 13 Aprile 1787.
>
> Servitore devotissimo obbligatissimo
> L'Ab. Assemani.

Innanzitutto, è importante segnalare che questa lettera è antecedente alla prima pubblicazione riguardante l'iscrizione, ovvero la riedizione di *Alticchiero* di Giustiniana Wynne curata da Bartolomeo Benincasa. Infatti, come abbiamo visto, la seconda edizione di *Alticchiero* è successiva al 15 agosto 1787, data della lettera dedicatoria di Bartolomeo Benincasa a William Petty conte di Shelburne che funge da introduzione al libello.

Poi, sebbene Assemani proponga una lettura differente da quelle che verranno suggerite dagli editori successivi, notiamo come egli affronti problematiche comuni ad essi, ovvero quelle riguardanti il significato del primo segno (e quindi della prima parola) e del segno tra ΜΕΓΙΣΤΗ e ΦΑΡΣΟΣ: la sua proposta consiste nell'intendere il primo come un ν e la prima parola come il nome di uno dei dedicatari e nel ritenere il secondo un'abbreviazione di καί. Assemani, però, afferma di non esi sere sicuro della lettura della prima parola («non sembra che debba leggersi come è qui segnata»).

[53] Su Assemani e Giacomo Nani si vedano in particolare CALLEGARI 2005; PONTANI 2007: pp. 22-23.

Egli propone anche un'interpretazione dell'iconografia della tavoletta. Secondo lui, i due vasi raffigurati sarebbero quelli in cui veniva coltivato il loto, pianta sacra a Iside; oggi, invece, si ritiene che i vasi incisi sulle tavole delle offerte siano i vasi utilizzati per le libagioni[54]. In questo senso, Assemani sembra evidenziare un dettaglio che non verrà messo in luce dagli editori sette-ottocenteschi, ovvero il fatto che le piante raffigurate sulla tavoletta sono effettivamente piante di loto, giacché, come detto da Assemani, il loto è il fiore sacro alla dea Iside.

Il fatto principale di cui la lettera dà testimonianza è però che, ancor prima della pubblicazione di *Alticchiero* e della *querelle* che coinvolse Villoison e Schow, era già sorto un dibattito a proposito della lettura dell'iscrizione greca di Villa Querini. Di esso sono testimoni sia la lettera di Simone Assemani a Giacomo Nani sia la lettera di Iacopo Morelli a Bartolomeo Benincasa citata nelle note ad *Alticchiero*, entrambe scritte prima della lettera di dedica di Benincasa a William Petty. È poi probabile che le notizie riguardanti questa iscrizione si fossero diffuse anche al di fuori dell'area veneta: infatti, sebbene l'edizione della *Charta Borgiana* sia datata 1788, Niels Iversen Schow, quando propose la sua lettura dell'iscrizione, non conosceva ancora la pubblicazione di Giustiniana Wynne, primo testo a stampa riguardante tale manufatto. Quindi Schow, che a partire dalla primavera del 1787 risiedeva a Roma[55], forse venne a conoscenza di questo manufatto grazie alla mediazione di qualcuno, come il suo patrono Stefano Borgia, i cui contatti con l'ambiente veneto e con lo stesso Simone Assemani sono ben documentati[56].

In conclusione, i reperti acquistati da Angelo Querini durante il suo *iter italicum* destarono subito una notevole sensazione tra gli intellettuali dell'epoca e suscitarono discussioni che sono sicuramente anteriori alla prima pubblicazione concernente l'argomento, la seconda edizione di *Alticchiero*. All'interno di questa *querelle*, Simone Assemani riveste un ruolo importante, giacché, probabilmente su richiesta di Giacomo Nani, egli fu il primo a trascrivere l'epigrafe sulla base di un'analisi diretta della tavola. Infatti, mentre Villoison si basò esclusivamente sui disegni fornitigli dall'abate Morelli, dal momento che Assemani risiedeva a Padova ed aveva una certa familiarità con la villa e il suo proprietario[57], si può a ragione ipotizzare che egli abbia basato la sua lettura sulla visione diretta del manufatto.

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[54] Cfr. RITNER 1994.

[55] Cfr. CAPASSO 2007: p. 23.

[56] Su questo punto si veda CATTANEO 2017, soprattutto pp. 162-164. Per una panoramica sui rapporti di Stefano Borgia con gli intellettuali suoi contemporanei si rimanda a STUIBER 2012.

[57] Fu Assemani ad introdurre Zoëga nella Villa di Querini durante il viaggio del dotto danese in Italia. Cfr. sopra la nota 36.

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SECOND SESSION

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RARA & SINGULARIS COMMIXTIO LUCIS, & TENEBRARUM! AT THE BEGINNING OF THE STUDIES ON ARAB-BYZANTINE COINAGE*

Abstract

During the pioneering studies on Islamic coins, one of the most controversial and difficult to understand themes was to explain the simultaneous presence of Christian symbols alongside Islamic ones, such as the name of the prophet or the shahada (one of the Five Pillars of Islam). Over the centuries some issues were correctly attributed to the Urtukids, others remained unexplained, such as those now attributed to the Arab-Byzantine series. The orientalists of the late eighteenth century, including Simone Assemani, remained elaborated only erudite and uncertain explanations, far from a correct reading of what was legible on the coins. Gaetano Cattaneo, the curator of the numismatic collections in Milan, was the first who identified the exact classification of these coins, thanks to a follis/fals of the Tiberias mint, coming from a Venetian collection dispersed in the trade market in Milan.

Keywords

Assemani Simone; Arab-byzantine coins

* This paper is a continuation of Bruno Callegher, *Simone Assemani nella polemica Schiepati-Castiglioni (1818-1820)*, in Bruno Callegher & Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (eds.), *The 4th Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins*, Trieste, 26/27 September 2014, Trieste 2015. (Polymnia: numismatica antica e medievale. Studi, 9), pp. 37-104.

From the very earliest publications of Islamic numismatics scholars had to contend with an unexplainable abnormality[1]: the minting of coins with epigraphs/legends in Kufic characters indicated without the shadow of a doubt that one of the most binding rules of Islamic religious culture, i.e. an absolute ban on the use of images, was not always respected. That bewilderment must be placed within the context of the knowledge *tout-court* of Islam in Europe between the 16th-18th centuries. Indeed, what the ambits and contents of the new and mysterious orientalism were among scholars of those centuries is still today a not easily researched subject [2]. This is also true in the study of the monetary issues with legends in Kufic characters or Arabic script [3]. Concerning Islamic numismatics, or Kufic as it was at that time defined on an epigraphic basis, among the first to report issues with Arabic epigraphy and images was Johann Heinrich Hottinger (1620-1667)[4]. In his *Dissertatio tertia. De Nummis Orientalium, Judaeorum maxime & Muhammedanorum* he illustrated, for example, a fals of Qutb ad-Din el Ghazi-Urtukids of Mardin (AH 572-580, 1176-1189), on which appeared a Roman style bust[5] and one with a two-headed eagle and Solomon's seal, minted by the caliph of the Urtukids of Hisn Keyfah and Amid

[1] Between the end of the 16th century and first decades of the 17th the subject was studied by Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580-1637): cf. Peter N. Miller, *Peiresc's Orient: Antiquarianism as Cultural History in the Seventeenth Century*, III, Farnham: Ashgate Variorum, 2012, pp. 103-154, in part. pp. 108-113.

[2] An historical investigation on this subject is in Edward Wadie Said, *Orientalismo. L'immagine europea dell'Oriente*, Torino 1991 (translation by Stefano Galli of the New York edition 1978), in part. pp. 115-168; Aldo Gallotta & Ugo Marazzi (eds.), *La conoscenza dell'Asia e dell'Africa in Italia nei secoli XVIII e XIX*, III, Napoli 1989. Recently, with a francophone perspective, Michel Espagne, Nora Lafi & Pascale Rebault-Feuerhahn take stock of orientalism in *Sylvestre de Sacy. Le projet européen d'une science orientaliste*, Paris 2016, certainly a valuable work in which, however, on pp. 325-326 a more updated bibliography would have been expected on Simone Assemani in line with this individual's role in both Italian and North-European orientalism. In the same line of studies, in particular for the contact with the Islamic world, an example is the anthology with reports of voyages in Attilio Brilli (ed.), *La Mecca rivelata. Avventure di esploratori europei nelle città sacre dell'Islam*, Palermo 2015 and one figure among the many: Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890): Jerrold Seigel, *Between Cultures: Europe and its Others in Five Exemplary Lives*. Philadelphia 2016.

[3] The arising of interest in Islamic coinage among European scholars in the first decades of the 17th century is investigated in Peter N. Miller, *Peiresc and the Study of Islamic Coins in the Early Seventeenth Century*, in Alan Sthal (ed.), *The Rebirth of Antiquity: Numismatics, Archaeology, and Classical Studies in the Culture of the Renaissance*, Princeton. NJ 2009, pp. 102-155, a subject taken up again in Miller, *Peiresc's Orient: Antiquarianism* cit.

[4] Jan Loop, *Johann Heinrich Hottinger. Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Seventeenth Century,* Oxford 2013, with ample biography and contextualization of this philologist/theologian within the ambits of studies on the Arabic language and culture, in particular of Islam and the Koran interconnected with Christian theology thanks to the methodological acquisitions of the reform movement.

[5] Joh. Henricus Hottinger, *Cippi ebraici*, Heidelbergae 1667 (editio secunda), pp. 157-158, plate IV.5; cf. Michael Mitchiner, *The World of Islam*, London 1977, no. 1031.

(AH 597-619, 1201-1222)[6]. He explained the recourse to images on the "Turkish" coins as due to their being less iconoclastic and most of all for trading purposes[7]. A few years later Andreas Morell (1646-1703) described an Urtukid coin with two effigies, attributing them to Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn (1137-1193) and one of his sons, then extending the comment to the collections of "Arabicorum nummorum" in Northern Europe[8]. *Rectius*, from the illustration of Morell's specimen, can be deduced to be a fals of Hosam ad-Din Yuluk Arslan-Urtukids of Mardin (AH 580-597, 1184-1201)[9]. In the numismatic collections of "oriental" coins, other cases began to be reported of nummi on which images accompanied by Latin script were associated to Arabic legends. This is the case of *Article* XVII of one of the first Dutch orientalists, Adriaan Reland (1676-1718), in which he discusses a bronze coin with a Victoria with crown of laurels on the obverse and the legend VICTORIA CONSTANTINI AVG together with the indication of the SIZ mint, in this case on the exergue of the obverse [10]. On the reverse was stamped a legend in four lines at the centre and another along the edge, but the author does not provide a full reading of this text but rather just some indications with little adherence to the epigraphy; nevertheless, for historical reasons, he assigned the coin to the Byzantine emperor Constantine IV (652-685). Obviously, the referral this emperor (also defined Pogonato in the text) derived from the necessity to put together, with some coherence, the iconography and epigraphy in a way that overcame the well-known Koranic ban rather than arriving at an identification on a textual basis. In reality the scholar had in his hands a bronze coin of the Urtukids of Hisn Kayfa and Amid, in particular of Fakhr al-Din Qara Arslan (AH 543-570 – 1144-1174)[11]. No greater precision is found in the concluding pages of a booklet by Samuel Wilhelm Oetter [Vetter] (1720-1792)[12], where two coins are men-

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[6] Hottinger *Cippi ebraici* cit., pp. 159-160, plate IV.6; cf. Mitchiner *The World* cit., no. 1112.

[7] Hottinger *Cippi ebraici* cit., p. 165: "Itaque cum Romanorum et Graecorum Imperatorum imagines in nummis et aspris [---] expressae conspicerentur, violari Prophetae legem clamabant, et abolendae monetae veteris autores erat. [---] Hodie non amplius animos arum illa religio tantopere tangit [---]. Imo nummos sive Ducatos Venetos, quibus vetitae Lege Mahumetis impressae sunt imagines, Sultaninis suis, qui nihil habent legi contrarium, Arabicis duntaxat insigniti literis, longe preaferunt".

[8] Andrea Morellius, *Specimen universae Rei Nummariae antiquae*, Lipsiase 1695, pp. 230-232 and plate XXIII, 4. Morell's attribution, however, does not convince me because in the copy consulted the acidity of the ink has made the print practically illegible.

[9] Mitchiner *The World* cit., no. 1035.

[10] Adriani Relandi, *Dissertatio de Marmoribus Arabicis Puteolanis & Nummo Arabico Contantini Pognati*, "Memoires pour l'Histoire des Sciences & des Beaux Arts, 1706, pp. 227-232, illustration on p. 229.

[11] Stephen Album, *A Checklist of Islamic Coins*, 2nd, Santa Rosa Ca 1988, no. 1820.3.

[12] Samuel Wilhelm Oetter, *Erläuterung einer überaus raren Münze von dem Erzbischöffen zu Köln*, Nürnberg 1748, pp. 45-48; cf. also Hubert Emmerig, Numismatische Publikationen im Umkreis der Churfürstlich – Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (1759-1806), in "Numismatische

tioned that display the obvious contradiction between what can be observed on them and what instead pertained to the Islamic world regarding images. They were two fals of the Urtukids of Mardin, both of Nejm ad-Din Alpi (AH 572-580, 1152-1176). The first showed such strong similarities with Byzantine issues of the Komnenos period, in particular for the *Theotokos* who crowns or protects the emperor, to be described following that coinage[13]; on the second two facing busts were stamped on the obverse and one on the reverse[14]. Nevertheless, after a display of scholarly erudition, he went no further than the by then almost inevitable reference to Turkish coinage, especially due to the absence of linguistic-philological tools to deal with this series of coins, often kept in collections precisely because of their unusual interpretative difficulty. Other works of the early 18th century were also purely descriptive, reporting the rare presence of Arabic nummi in collections[15] or among finds of dirham in the Baltic area, mainly in Sweden[16]. During those same years, an article by Jean-Jacques Barthélemy (1716-1795)[17] provided no progress. The author, after having expressed, in his opinion, some cornerstones and indicated structural difficulties in the study of Islamic coinage "*On peut donc poser pour un principe certain, que toutes les médailles Arabes qui sont venues jusqu'à nous, sont postérieures à Mahomet. J'ajoute qu'elles n'en sont pas mieux connues pour cela. Le petit nombre de celles qu'on a tenté d'expliquer, ont occasionné de nouvelles erreurs dans la Littérature, ou n'ont rien appris, parce qu'outre le nom du Prince, elles ne conte-*

Zeitschrift" 120-121 (2015), pp. 193-231, in part. pp. 207-209.

13 Album, *A Checklist* cit., no. 1827.3.

14 Mitchiner *The World* cit., no. 1029.

15 Rudolf Capell [1634-1684], *Nummotheca atque rariora Becceleriana: prout se obtulerunt et sub stylum venerunt*, Hamburgi 1684, but re-edition 1750; Franciscus Wise [1695-1767], *Nummi literis arabicis signati in Armario Bodleiano*, in *Nummorum Antiquorum Scriniis Bodleianis reconditorum Catalogus*, Oxford 1750. Other data in the reasoned bibliography of Marco Callegari, *Alle origini della bibliografia sulla numismatica islamica*, in Bruno Callegher & Arianna D'Ottone Rambach (eds.), *The 4th Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins, Trieste, 26/27 September 2014,* Trieste, 2015 (Polymnia: numismatica antica e medievale. Studi, 9), pp. 223-242: http://hdl.handle.net/10077/12034.

16 Carolus Abrahamus Clewberg [1712-1765], *Dissertatio Academica de Nummis Arabicis in Patria Repertis*, 1755: URI: http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:bib:me:I00537064701; *Nummi Arabici in Svecia effossi diversis temporibus*, in "Acta Literaria et Scientiarum Sveciae", volumen tertium (1730-1733), Uspaliae 1738, D. 115. Carolus Aurivillius [1717-1786], *De nummis Arabicis in Sviogothia repertis disquisitio*, «Nova Acta Regiae Societatis Scientiarum Upsaliensis», II (1775), pp. 79-107. The finding and collecting especially of dirhem is illustrated in Jonas Hellenberg [1748-1834], *Collectio nummorum Cuficorum, quos aere expressos,* Stockholmiae 1800.

17 Jean-Jacques Barthélemy, *Dissertation sur les médailles arabes*, in « Mémoires de littérature, tirés des registres de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres », XXVI (1759), pp. 557-576, 2 plates. ; Thierry Sarmant, *De Gaston d'Orléans à l'Abbé Barthélemy : essai de sociologie des numismates français des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, « Numismatische Zeitschrift », 120-121 (2015), pp. 403-414.

noient que des sentences de l'Alcoran qu'on sàit déjà, ou qu'on ne se soucie pas de savoir; le grand nombre de celles qu'on a fait graver semblent avoir été abandonnées à des ouvriers qui vraisemblablement auroient fait des fautes grossières en copiant des inscriptions en leur propre langue. Mais il ne faut être surpris ni de cette négligence, ni de ces erreurs ; la pluspart des médailles Arabes sont très-difficiles à lire "[18], limited himself to re-proposing previously published specimens, contributing no new perspectives on their identification and even less on those unpublished. His concentration on Omayyad or Abbasid dihrams, on Urtukid and more in general Turkish fulus, could have been due to their diffuse presence in the finds along the Baltic coasts or on the islands between Sweden and Denmark. In fact, it was there that these challenging coins were collected by enthusiasts of local antiques, collectors and public authorities, sufficient to steer the first attempts to put in order a numismatics at that time in its early dawn[19]. Among the first, if not the first, to draw attention to those until then unknown issues, certainly unpublished or ignored due to their interpretative complexity, was the cartographer-explorer Karsten Niebuhr (1733–1815). The direct examination of the coinage where it had been found, i.e. in the Palestinian regions he visited, allowed him to report new types of fulus that "*me paroissent remarquables par les signes que l'on ne trouve pas d'ordinaire sur les monnoies des Mahométans. D'un côté de la pièce 4 paroit une croix, pendant que l'inscription prouve, qu'elle a été frappée par des Mahométans*"[20]. Plate X.4 (fig. 1) allows updating of the reference to the series today defined as the "Standing caliph", in particular to the fulus minted at Jund Qinnasrīn, Qinnasrīn, Ḥalab or Manbij just before the reform of 'Adb al-Malik (ca 690)[21]. It can be supposed that previously

[18] Barthélemy, *Dissertation* cit., pp. 558-559.

[19] Still in the first half of the 19th century the Urtukid coinage and more in general that of the Seljuq and Atabek is the most widely represented in collections of Islamic coins, as in that of Ignacy Pietraszewski, illustrated in Leopold Leon Sawaszkiewicz, *Le génie de l'Orient commenté par ses monuments monétaires*, Brussels 1846, pp. 199-220. The Islamic series of the Orientalisches Münzkabinett in Jena can be interpreted in the same way, with ample attestations of Golden Horde and Mongol coins: Tobias Mayer, *Sylloge der Münzen des Kaukasus und Osteuropas*, Wiesbaden 2005 (with contributions by Stefan Heidemann and Gert Rispling).

[20] Carsten Niebuhr, *Description de l'Arabie*, Amsterdam 1774, p. 87 and plate X.4.

[21] Clive Foss, *Arab-Byzantine Coins. An Introduction with a Catalogue of the Dumbarton Oaks Coll*ection, Washington D.C. 2008; Tony Goodwin (ed.), *Arab-Byzantine Coins and History*, London 2012; Tony Goodwin & Rika Gyselen, *Arab-Byzantine Coins from Irbid Hoard. Including a new introduction to the series and study of the Pseudo-Damascus mint*, London 2015, pp. 24-28. Lastly, Cécile Morrisson & Vivien Prigent, *L'empereur et le calife (690-695). Réflexions à propos des monnayages de Justinien II et d'Abd al-Malik*, in *Hommages à Georges Tate*, Gérard Charpentier, Vincent Puech (eds.), (« Topoi », Suppl. 12), Lyon 2013, pp. 571-59, contributes notable critical relevance that seems to have been ignored by previous commentators on the « Standing caliph » series.



Figure 1 – Carsten Niebuhr, *Description de l'Arabie*, Amsterdam 1774, p. 87

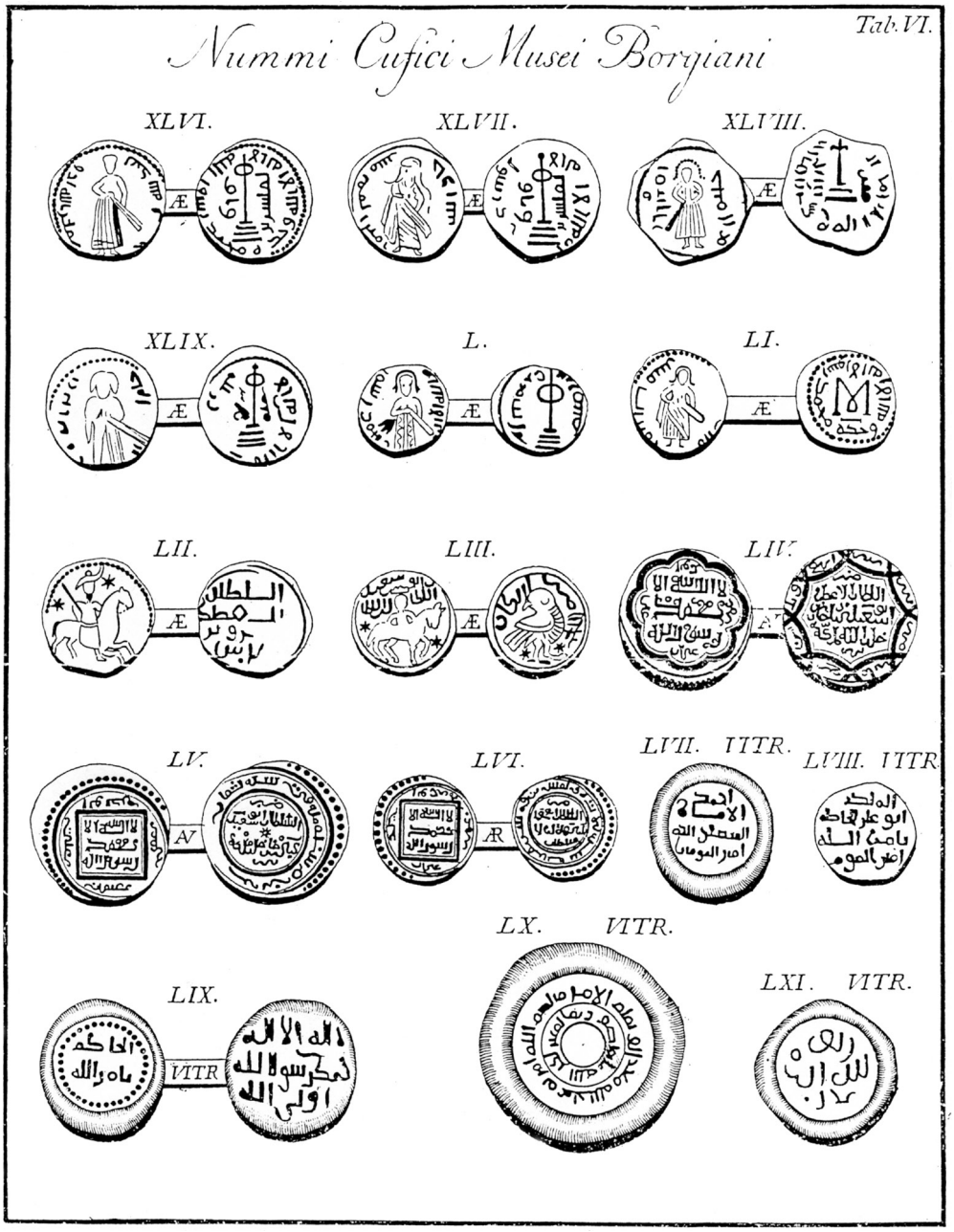


Figure 2 – Georg Christian Adler, *Museum Cuficum Borgianum Velitris*, Romae 1784, Tab. VI

these coins had not been considered in discussions on the co-presence of Kufic epigraphy and images because they were unknown or not among the finds in Northern Europe[22] and consequently in the collections constituting the documentary basis from which a first ordering began of the Kufic coinage according to dynastic and/or chronological criteria. On the contrary, those types emerged in Italian collections, in particular at Rome and Venice where they were found for similar but opposing reasons: i.e. very probably as a consequence of merchants' or sailors' travels in the Syrian-Palestinian regions (Venice) or as gifts or legacies of missionaries (Rome)[23]. In fact, these were examined by the first redactor of a catalogue of Kufic coins in a collection that was not Nordic or central-European, but that of Velletri[24] property of the cardinal Stefano Borgia (1731 –1804) of Propaganda Fide, a congregation in those years under his jurisdiction and particularly orientated to the spread of the Catholic faith in the Near East. In the first catalogue of 1782[25], citing the table of the *Description de l'Arabie*, for the Kufic nummi XLVI-LI, denominated "*Nummi aenei, cum figura Sérvatoris mundi*" Georg Christian Adler (1724 –1804) declared his inability to go any further than their description, even if insecure, despite "*Omnem diligentiam, cogitationem, mentem omnem in his nummis defixi, verum haud mihi contigit esse tam felici, ut eos ex omni parte intelligerem*"[26]. The scholar stated that on the 6 nummi also illustrated in Plate VI (fig. 2), on the obverse "*Servatoris nostri effiges est*" – the image of Christ could be justified by the proximity to Byzantine coins. He recognised a nimbus, the volume and the imperial mantle [*paludamentum*]. On the reverse the cross on steps or a symbol similar to the cross "*typi nummorum Byzantinorum animadvertuntur, in plerisque crucis figura, vario modo formata, gradibusque innixa*" [assimilable to the Byzantine coins], enough to quote the "*Tiberii Absimari, Leonis Sapientis, Romani Lacapeni*" types. It is difficult to cite, as refer-

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[22] For a first confirmation, cf. Thomas Noonan, *When did dirham imports into tenth-century Sweden decline?,* in *Festskrift till Lars O. Lagerqvist* (Svenska Numismatiska Foreningen), Stockholm 1989, pp. 295-302; *Sigtuna papers: Proceedings of the Sigtuna Symposium on Viking-Age Coinage 1-4 June 1989*, Kenneth Jonsson & Brita Malmer, Stockholm 1990, *passim*; Thomas S. Noonan, *Coins, Trade and the Origins of the Ninth Century Rus' Towns*, in Bernhard Weisser (ed.), *XII. Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress. Berlin 1997. Akten-Proceedings-Actes*, II, Bernd Kluge &, Berlin 2000, pp. 934-942.

[23] As an example see Halim Noujaim & Libero Cruciani, *Giovanni Benedetti, Ragguaglio di Terra Santa, del Monte Libano e Provincia di Chesruan*, "Studia Orientalia Christiana. Collectanea", 35-36 (2002-2003), pp. 257-364 and bibliography on the subject.

[24] Anna Germano & Marco Nocca (eds.), *La collezione Borgia. Curiosità e tesori da ogni parte del mondo*, Napoli 2001; *Le quattro voci del mondo: arte, cultura e saperi nella collezione di Stefano Borgia 1731-1804*, Marco Nocca (ed.), Napoli 2001.

[25] Georg Christian Adler, *Museum Cuficum Borgianum Velitris*, Romae 1784.

[26] Adler, *Museum Cuficum* cit., p. 71.

ences, a contemporary repertoire or collection of Byzantine coins known to Adler, but it can be supposed that he would have seen specimens of these emperors in the Borgian collection or he would have found them in Banduri (1675-1743)[27]. In effect the cross on steps is also typical, but not just, of the solidi of Tiberius III (698-705) and the miliarenses of Leo VI (886-912), while for Roman I, co-emperor between 920-944 at the time of Constantine VII (914-959), the comparison appears more difficult because small steps at the base of the cross are present only on the miliarenses[28]. The vagueness of the references thus confirms very limited knowledge of Byzantine and even more so of proto-Islamic numismatics. Among the six described by Adler, just one bears the value sign M with a Δ below. In this case, the author refers to the folles of Mauricius Tiberius (582-602)[29]. In the legends, the scholar recognises the name of Allah, الله, but is uncertain in identifying any names of caliphs. On the obverse, he correctly cites the shahda, the proclamation of faith, whereas having deciphered the Kufic legend as *Kenesrini*, attributes it to a city in Mesopotamia and not to Jund Qinnasrīn, ummayade district with Aleppo as city of reference. There are similar confusions in the chronology: Adler seems to be certain about the date 585 HE corresponding to 1189, a chronology that places those strange coins in an Urtukid or more in general Turkish ambit, thus concluding that "*In tanta horum nummorum ambiguitate nihil, nisi coniectura, mihi relinquitur*". And the interpretative conjecture induces him to hypothesise that they were minted in territories in part subject to Arab authorities in part Christian (Byzantine?) in order to encourage trade with the Christian populations, supported by coins of a value guaranteed by the "*tituli Arabici Turcis*"[30]. Almost ten years later the same Adler, from Copenhagen/Hafnia, examined another part of the Borgian collection, "*nummorum exempla sulphuri accurate impressa*", in which other unusual nummi were conserved[31]. One or more emperors were observed on these, Christian symbols like the cross and others analogous to those described in his first Borgian catalogue. He dedi-

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[27] Anselmo Banduri, *Numismata Imperatorum Romanorum a Trajano Decio ad Palaeologos Augustus. Accessit Bibliotheca Nummaria, sive Auctorum que de Re Nummaria Scripserunt*, II, Lutetiæ Parisiorum 1718, pp. 697, 706-707, 730.

[28] For the reference iconography of the coins of these three emperors cf. Cécile Morrisson, *Catalogue des Monnaies Byzantine. Bibliothèque Nationale*, I-II, Paris1970, *ad indicem*.

[29] Morrisson, *Catalogue* cit., I, *ad indicem*.

[30] Adler, *Museum Cuficum* cit., p. 73.

[31] Georg Christian Adler, *J.G. Adler, Museum cuficum Borgianum, Pars II; Collectio nova numorum Cuficorum seu Arabicorum veterum: CXVI continens numos plerosque ineditos e Museis Borgiano et Adleriano,* Hafniae 1792, pp. 170-173. This was followed shortly after by, Id., *Museum cuficum Borgianum..., Pars II; Collectio nova numorum Cuficorum seu Arabicorum veterum: CXVI continens numos plerosque ineditos e Museis Borgiano et Adleriano, Editio secunda supplemento aucta,* Altonae 1795.

cated a separate section to these, at the end of the book, with reference to the chapter already explanatory of his hypotheses: *Numi Imperatorum Byzantinorum*. He therefore assigned nos. 105-108 to Leo IV (775-780) alone or with his son Constantine VI, citing Banduri[32]. The next coin, no. 109, that today we place in the "standing caliph" series, already known in the first Borgian catalogue, was again attributed to Leo IV, but clearly reading محمد/Muhammad on it he adds that "*Sed quid sibi velit illud Muhammed, ignor, nisi respiciat ad nomen pseudoprophetae, vel tritum illud Muhammedanorum symbolum: Muhammed est apostolus Dei, quod plene quoque legitur in aliis huius aevi numis arbicis, a Christianis excusis*."[33] (fig. 3). In other words, being a reference to a pseudo-prophet, therefore a marginal personage, its incision would be of less importance than the figure of the Byzantine emperor. Analogous procedure for the last one, again assigned to Leo IV. At the end of his interpretative excursus, however, Adler felt the need to correct the conclusions in his first catalogue and even those of the Assemani catalogue[34], which had accepted them as a whole: "*Vindicandi sunt omnes, et Borgiani, et Naniani, cum illis, quo modo explicavimus, nisi eidem, quod verisimile est, Leoni Chazari, saltem alii Graecorum Imperatori, qui eos in Syria excudi, sua effige signari curavit, addito in quibusdam, indulgentiae caussa, Mohammedanorum symbolo*"[35]. The victory of the Byzantine army commanded by the *strategoi* Michele Lacanodracone, Artavasde, Tatzates, Baristerotzes and Gregorio di Muselakios against the Arabs in Syria in 778 must have left a profound mark on historiography if, in the 18th century, this was still used to identify a connection between Kufic epigraphy, the presence of images and the association of Christian elements with others undeniably Islamic[36]. That series re-

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[32] Banduri, *Numismata Imperatorum Romanorum* cit, pp. 706-707.

[33] Adler, *Museum Cuficum*. Pars II, cit. p. 171.

[34] Simone Assemani, *Catalogo de'codici manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Naniana* [...]. *Vi s'aggiunge l'illustrazione delle monete cufiche del Museo Naniano*, parte I, Padova, Stamperia del Seminario 1787, pp. xxxviii-xxxix and plate III, XLI-XLII; Id., *Museo cufico naniano*, parte II, Padova, Stamperia del Seminario 1788, p. cvij, plate VIII, C-CI.

[35] Adler, *Museum Cuficum*. Pars II, cit. p. 172.

[36] Paul Speck, *Kaiser Konstantin VI. Die Legitimation einer fremden und der Versuch einer eigenen Herrschaft*, I, München 1978, pp. 92-94; Michael McCormick, *Vittoria eterna. Sovranità trionfale nella tarda antichità, a Bisanzio e nell'Occidente altomedioevale*, Milan 1993, pp. 172-173. For the Byzantine sources cf. Teofane, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6270, De Boor, 451.11-24. Historical aspects relating to events on the Syrian border of the empire in Gustav Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen*, 2, Mannheim 1848, p. 48, notes nos. 1-2. The Arab sources on the battle of Germanicia and consequent triumph are in Ibn Wadhih and Al Tabari, authors translated by Ernest Walter Brooks *Byzantines and Arabs in the time of early Abbasids*, "The English Historical Review", 15 (1900), pp. 728-747 and Ernest Walter Brooks, *Byzantines and Arabs in the Time of the Early Abbasids,* "The English Historical Review", 16 (1901), pp. 84-92. Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Die byzantinische Reaktion auf die Ausbreitung der Araber. Studien zur Strukturwandlung des byzantinischen Staates im 7. Und 8. Jhd*, München 1976, pp. 167-181 is also useful.



Figure 3 – Georg Christian Adler, *Museum Cuficum Borgianum Velitris*, II, Romae 1784, Tab. VII

mained unexplained, also because an expert in the Arab language like Simone Assemani went no further than simply reiterating what had already been written by Adler, then confirmed in his review of that Borgian work in which, regarding the coins with the image of the "Saviour" [standing caliph series], he confirmed the *communis opinio*: they were issues of Leo IV (775-780), minted in Damascus or other Syrian cities during his campaign in Syria[37]. It should also be remembered that at the meeting of the Accademia Patavina on 8 May 1800 the orientalist of Padova returned to these coins and their iconography with a critical dissertation[38]. A few years later, in 1809, he published a summary of the subject, where he defined this coin group in contrast with the ban on images as a "monetary paradox, which tortured the brains of good Antiquarians"[39]. In this he retraced the arguments put forward by scholars in the bibliography, such as Barthélemy, Adler and his correspondent Olao Gherhard Tychsen (1734-1815)[40], finally distinguishing, even if in a non-systematic way, two groups: that of the Atabek-Urtukids [coins with images] and that of Leo IV [standing caliph].

Regarding the former he rejected Tychsen's thesis, i.e. the explanation that they were not real coins, but medals struck by Christian sovereigns offered to the Turkish

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[37] [Reviews by Simone Assemani] *Museum Borgianum 21. Velitris. Pars II illustravit Jacobus Georgius Christianus Adler*, "Memorie per servire alla storia letteraria e civile", 1793, no. XXIX, pp. 225-230 and no. XXX, pp. 233-237. These were later united in a treatise entitled *Articolo tratto dai numeri XXIX e XXX del foglio letterario impresso in Venezia nel MDCCXCIII col titolo Memorie per servire alla Storia Letteraria e Civile* [s.l. e s.d.], probably produced by the printers of the Seminario di Padova.

[38] Accademia Galileiana Padova [Archive], *Registro dei processi verbali di seduta dall'anno 1779 al dì 27 giugno 1811*, p. 412.

[39] Simone Assemani, *Sopra le monete arabe effigiate. Memoria dell'Abate Simone Assemani*, in "Memorie della Accademia di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti di Padova", Padova 1809, pp. 417-436, in part p. 417. Anna Pontani, *Dall'archivio di Simone Assemani (1752-1821): documenti e carteggi*, "Quaderni per la storia dell'Università di Padova", 40 (2007), pp. 3-66, p. 54 reports a "Memo above the illustration of a coin struck in Tiberias with Greek and Arabic inscription, read in the Institute [Accademia Patavina] on 19 January 1813 with a double account". It can be hypothesised that he presented the content of the memo in concise form in print.

[40] The contribution of O.G. Tychsen to the history of the studies and collecting of Islamic coins is described in Niklot Klüssendorf, *Rostock als Standort der orientalischen Numismatik. Mit einem Anhang zu den älteren, Inventaren des Rostocker Münzkabinetts von K. Zimmermann*, in Stefan Heidemann (ed.), *Islamische Numismatik in Deutschland. Eine Bestandsaufnahme,* Wiesbaden 2000, pp. 27-59, in part. 27-30, and also in Stefan Heidemann, *Die Entwicklung der Methoden in der Islamischen Numismatik im 18. Jahrhundert – War Johann Jacob Reiske ihr Begründer?*, in Hans-Georg Ebert & Thoralf Hanstein (eds.), *Johann Jacob Reiske – Leben und Wirkung. Ein Leipziger Byzantinist und Begründer der Orientalistik im 18. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 2005, pp. 148-202, in part. 170-176, 189-191. A rather severe judgement on his true skill in oriental languages, in particular Arabic, was expressed by Antoine-Isaac Silvestre de Sacy, s.v. *Tychsen (Olaus, ou plutôt Olauf Gerhard)*, in *Biographie universelle (Michaud) ancienne et moderne ou histoire par ordre alphabétique de la vie publique et privée de touts les hommes qui se sont fait remarquer etc*., XVII, Paris 1827, pp. 120-126.

Princes of whom they were subjects, motivated by the greater tolerance of images in the Turkish compared to Arab populations. Assemani, on the contrary, declared forcefully that "[---] these Arab coins were indeed minted by Turkish Muslim Princes [---]" because they bore the name of the Turkish sovereign and that of the Caliph, the year of the hegira and that of the minting city, adding that in Persian culture the ban on images was never mandatory[41].

On the second group, that with the so-called image of the "Saviour" accompanied by Greek and Kufic letters [standing caliph], he partly diverged from the Byzantine chronological placement of the emperor Leo IV. He proposed, instead, to consider them "[---] contraband coins struck by disreputable forgers, be they Greek, as seems more probable, or Muslims is of little importance"[42] motivating his opinion with a list of seven pieces of evidence more or less of an epigraphic nature, all deduced from what could be read on the coins[43].

Between the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century, despite an Arabist and various scholars being devoted to the study of oriental coins, if for the Urtukid & Zengid or more in general the Turkish/Ottoman series the classification was by then correctly framed within the ambits of Islamic issues, this was not so for the set which is today defined the "Arabic-Byzantine" series. This was still "*singularis commixtio lucis et tenebrarum*".

However, interest in these strange coins was intensifying thanks to "orientalism". Travellers like Domenico Sestini (1750-1832)[44], but also the inevitable relations with the Ottoman empire and Napoleonic military campaigns, promoted the flowering of erudite current affairs oscillating between the prose of memoires and a more rigorous intent, almost philological, i.e. overcoming a highly imaginative reconstruction, to be founded rather on the reading of historical sources integrated by the collection of archaeological documents in order to pass from the vague to a real and rational knowledge. In this context, the "oriental" coinage, and Arab-Islamic coins were among these, assumed great value due to their ability to cover more than one century and vast territories. In these new studies numerous scholars distinguished themselves, as was recorded to have happened during the 18th century, in particular in Central-Northern Europe[45]. However, something special happened in Lombardy-Veneto, where the Islamic coins were known in some

41 Assemani, *Sopra le monete arabe effigiate* cit., p. 426.

42 Assemani, *Sopra le monete arabe effigiate* cit., p. 435.

43 Assemani, *Sopra le monete arabe effigiate* cit., p. 434.

44 Luigi Tondo, *Domenico Sestini e il Medagliere Mediceo,* Firenze 1990.

45 Stefan Heidemann (ed.), *Islamische Numismatik in Deutschland. Eine Bestandsaufnahme*, Wiesbaden 2000.

cases after finds[46], but mainly because they were brought by the travellers/sailors for centuries interested visitors to the ports of the Ottoman Near East[47]. The turn of the 18th/19th century was then the period in which various "Kufic" collections[48] changed hands: that of Onorio Arrigoni (1668-1758)[49] and of Collalto of Susegana-

[46] There is, for example, the news of the finding of a hoard of dinars at Venice, after the demolition of the church of the convent of S. Lorenzo in 1592, reported in F. Corner, *Ecclesiae Venetae antiquis monumentis nunc etiam primum editis illustratae ac in decades distributae. Decadis undecimae, Venetiis* 1749, pp. 65-66. For the hoard and relative cataloguing, chronological and bibliographical information cf. Michele Asolati & Cristina Crisafulli, *Ritrovamenti monetali di età romana nel Veneto. Provincia di Venezia: Venezia/Altino* II, VI/2, Padova 1994, p. 226; lastly, Andrea Saccocci, *Ritrovamenti di monete islamiche in Italia continentale e in Sardegna (sec. VII-XV)*, in *Simposio Simone Assemani sulla Monetazione Islamica*, Padova 2005, pp.137-149.

[47] The presence of 6 Urtukid coins in the Venetian collection of Andrea Loredan between 1550 and 1560 is worth a mention. Illustrated in a manuscript, these are defined as "Chaldean" having come from that region to the east of Syria, today defined Mesopotamia, and perhaps also for the script, not Greek, not Hebrew and thus "Chaldean". Cf. John Cunnally, *Muslim Coins of the Crusader Period in a Renaissance Collection: Premature Medievalism or Mistaken Identity?*, in Susan Solway (ed.), *Medieval Coins and Seals. Constructing Identity, Signifying Power*, Turnhout 2015, pp. 439-453.

[48] The Kufic collection of Jacopo Nani survived those dispersals and is still today kept at the Cà d'Oro Museum in Venice: Anna Pontani, *«Or vedete, amico carissimo…»: appunti sulla «cassetta gialla» del medagliere naniano di Venezia,* in Chryssa Maltezou, Peter Schreiner, Margherita Losacco (eds.), ΦΙΛΑΝΑΓΝΩΣΤΗΣ. *Studi in onore di Marino Zorzi*, Venice 2008, pp. 309-337.

[49] Onorio Arrigoni, *Numismata quaedam cujuscumque formae et metalli Musei Honorii Arigoni Veneti, ad usum juventutis rei nummariae studiosae*, I-IV, Tarvisii 1741-1759. The author, in publishing a selection of the specimens he judged the most significant from his collection of 20 thousand coins, integrated the collection of Jean Foy-Vaillant, *Numismata imperatorum Romanorum praestantiora, a Iulio Caesare ad Postumum et tyrannos,* Parisiis 1674, a work later republished many times with additions and corrections. Excluding brief introductions, the four volumes of Arrigoni contain only plates of drawings. Plates X-XVIII of volume III show many illustrations of "Arabic nummi "; however, all the drawings have an identical module, but mainly lack reliability because done by a person without any knowledge of the script and Arab language. The paper by Cristina Ravara Montebelli, *Le tavole del primo tomo dell'opera di Onorio Arrigoni emendate dall'autore*, "Rivista Italiana di Numismatica, 112 (2001), pp. 327-338 edits the plates/drawings.
https://www.academia.edu/5054625/Le_tavole_del_primo_tomo_dellopera_di_Onorio_Arrigoni_emendate_dallautore.
The abovementioned abbot, a leading figure in Venetian numismatic collecting, published the cited collection of drawings with a didactic intent (he declared it to be "ad usum juventutis rei nummariae studiosae"). After the dispersal, there is later trace of some in Carlo Ottavio Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche dell'I.R. Museo di Milano*, Milano 1819, p. XII. More recently, the Islamic coins of the Milanese museum were reconsidered in R. Leuthold, *Monete cufiche dell' "I.R. Museo di Milano"*, "Notizie dal Chiostro del Monastero Maggiore", 1968, fasc. I-II, pp. 59-62, however without any mention of the source being from this or other collections.
His collection was the fruit of purchases and exchanges with many Italian collectors, Venetians in primis, as can be read in some letters of Apostolo Zeno. In the letter that Zeno wrote in 1737 to Annibale degli Abati Olivieri at Pesaro regarding coins, he says that "the Abbot Onorio Arrigoni has an incredible collection in his study but none reach two librae and among these many are Etruscan and barbarian" (*Lettere di Apostolo Zeno cittadino veneziano istorico e poeta cesareo nelle quali si*

Venice[50], the Stork and Anguissola collections in Milan[51]. In Milan, there was also the unceasing activity of Gaetaneo Cattaneo (1771-1841)[52], who was able to unite in the Numismatic Cabinet of Brera, directly from Dresden, the substantial Kufic collection of Gottfried Johann Lipsius (1754-1820)[53], author of the famed *Bibliotheca numaria sive catalogus auctorum qui usque ad finem seculi XVIII. de re monetaria aut numis scripserunt* published at Leipzig in 1801, and the Kufic coins belonging to Abbot Tommaso Cavanna of Novi Ligure (?-1822)[54]. To understand these "documents" Arabic was unavoidable or at least being able to read and transcribe Arabic. An infrequent ability in that period, not only among Italian scholars, but also among those in "northern Europe", as is clearly shown, for example, from the letters between Amaduzzi and Assemani and his other correspondents, which refer to the orientalists "beyond the mountains", including the previously mentioned Tychsen,

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contengono molte notizie attenenti all'istoria letteraria de' suoi tempi, Venezia 1785, V, p. 283), and in other epistles addressed to Gian Francesco Baldini in 1731 and to Annibale degli Abati Olivieri, he mentions Arrigoni's exchanges and acquisitions of medals (*Lettere di Apostolo Zeno*, cit., p. 283). On the collection cf. also Gastone Moschini, *Della letteratura veneziana del secolo XVIII fino a' nostri giorni*, II, Venezia 1806, p. 86; Simona Savini Branca, *Il collezionismo veneziano nel '600*, Padova 1965, pp. 224-225; Marino Zorzi (ed.), *Collezioni di antichità a Venezia nei secoli della Repubblica: dai libri e documenti della Biblioteca Marciana: mostra 27 maggio – 31 luglio 1988*, Roma 1988, pp. 102-103; Irene Favaretto, *Arte antica e cultura antiquaria nelle collezioni venete al tempo della Serenissima*, Roma 1990, pp. 200-201; Krzysztof Pomian, *Collezionisti, amatori e curiosi: Parigi-Venezia 16.-18. secolo*, Milano 2007, p. 102.

[50] Moschini, *Della Letteratura* cit., p. 88, mentions a not otherwise known to me Giacomo Collalto of San Stin. "NH Giacomo Collalto of Santo Stin was also a dedicated collector of every type of old junk that he jealously guarded in his palace and did not have the opportunity to examine in order to talk specifically about them, and since split series of different medals already existed in the noble family de' Quirini at Santa Maria Formosa, to improve and enhance them he referred to NH Girolamo for their care." The collecting of the Collato, both the San Stin branch and that of San Salvatore di Susegana are still an unexplored subject. For the specimens published by the Imperial Regio Museo of Milan: Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche* cit., p. XII.

[51] For the specimens in the Imperial Regio Museo of Milan: Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche* cit., p. XIII.

[52] Adriano Savio, Gisella Della Ferrera, *Il Poliedrico Gaetano Cattaneo Fondatore del Gabinetto Numismatico di Brera*, "Archivio Storico Lombardo", 96 (1990), pp. 347-374.

[53] H. Schwanitz, *Lipsius, Johann Gottfried (Jean Godefroi),* in *Sächsische Biografie, Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde e. V.*, M. Schattkowsky (ed.) Online-Ausgabe: http://www.isgv.de/saebi (01.04.2015); Rainer Grund, *Johann Gottfried Lipsius – Der Begründer der modernen numismatischen Bibliographie*, "Numismatische Zeitschrift" 120-121 (2015), pp. 265-284.

[54] Rodolfo Martini, *Le monete hispano-arabe delle Civiche raccolte numismatiche di Milano ed il Catalogo Castiglioni*, "Jarique de Numismática Hispano-Árabe", III (1992), pp. 131-140, p. 134 where a letter to the abbot Tommaso Cavanna of 26 July 1817 is mentioned, seems to be based on a geographical misunderstanding because the cited T[ommaso] Cavanna worked between Genoa and Novi Ligure and not at Nove (VI). Cattaneo also began a long negotiation with this collector for the purchase of all his coins.

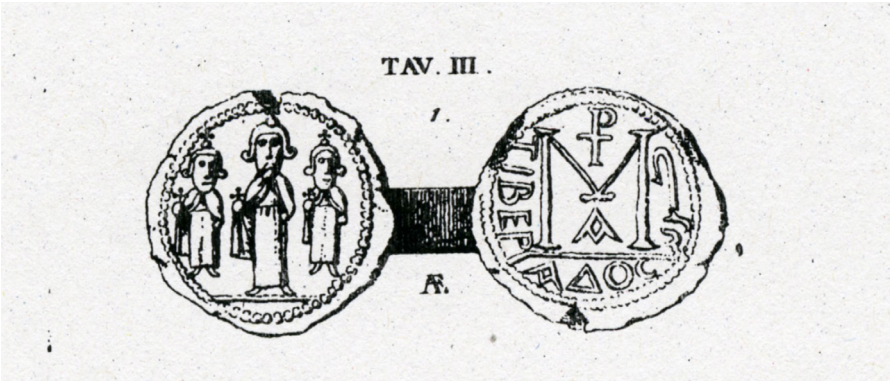


Figure 4 – Carlo Ottavio Castiglioni, *Monete cufiche dell'I.R. Museo di Milano*, Milano 1819, tav. III

or what emerged concerning the effective competence in the Arabic language of almost all the people involved in the contemporary controversy over the fakes of the Maltese abbot Giuseppe Vella (1750 ca.1815)[55]. On this front, instead, Assemani was well recognized, being defined the "doyen of Kufic numismatics", as the person to whom to apply for the deciphering of Kufic script. This role was also strengthened by the publication of the memoire *Sopra le monete arabe effigiate*. The treatise led to Milan and the Keeper of the Numismatic Cabinet, Gaetano Cattaneo. For the increase of that collection he had received a gift of a Kufic coin, up until then unknown to him. It came from a lucky find by Carlo Ottavio Castiglioni (1784-1849)[56], a philologist trained in the oriental languages in Vienna, who had unearthed it in the "tedious jumble of ancient and modern medals from the Collalto legacy of Venice"[57] (fig. 4), as Cattaneo recounted in his first publication aimed at making that unusual issue known to numismatists. It was completely new and in describing it in a letter to Domenico Sestini, he identified an undeniable correlation of his specimen with the folles of Heraclius with his two sons and on the reverse the numeral M [Cf. MIB III, 161-162][58]. In this case, the large M was surmounted by a Christogram surrounded

[55] See the bibliography in Callegher, *Simone Assemani nella polemica Schiepati-Castiglioni (1818-1820)* cit., in the notes nos. 19-21.

[56] Bernardino Biondelli [1804-1886], *Elogio del Conte Carlo Ottavio Castiglioni*, Tipografia Giuseppe Bernardoni di Gio., Milano 1856; Ida Calabi Limentani, Adriano Savio, *Bernardino Biondelli, archeologo e numismatico a Milano tra Restaurazione austriaca ed Unità*, "Archivio Storico Lombardo", 120 (1994), pp. 351-400, in part. pp. 384-385.

[57] This was the dispersal of the Collato collection in Milan: cf. supra note n. 50.

[58] Wolfgang Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini*, III (von Heraclius bis Leo III [610-720]), Wien 1981.

by a double epigraph in Greek and Arabic that gave the name of the city of Tiberias, to be placed in a "time after Heraclius", but assigned not to Constantinople but rather to the "Syrian mints of those times"[59] [SICA, nos. 587-593][60]. Thus, Cattaneo was the first to identify the exact ambits for a correct interpretation. During his attempt to understand what was legible on the coin without being influenced by the past bibliography, he had examined the Assemani text, they wrote to one another, and also consulted the influential numismatist Enrico Sanclemente (1732-1815)[61]. Cattaneo's first publication, decidedly innovative because it was faithful only to the incisions on the coin and devoid of erudite but prior interpretations, was sharply criticized by Antonio Marsand (olim Marchand) (1765-1842)[62]. A dispute arose, but in the end knowledge of the Kufic coins adorned with effigies was broadened. It derived that those attributable by type and legend to the period of Heraclius or immediately afterwards were distinct from those with the image of an individual for which the reference to Leo IV persisted[63]. Progress was remarkable. Indeed, shortly after, Castiglioni, mindful of the Cattaneo lesson and with notable competence in Arab epigraphy[64], edited his catalogue of Islamic coins[65]. That difficult ragbag, that "singularis commixtio", found a first order in the division between "Coins of the Caliphs with images" and "Coins of Christian Kufic or bilingual Princes". In the first group nine specimens were listed with on the obverse a "*Figura del principe in piedi, con gran barba e colla scimitarra al fianco, di faccia. In giro* [legend in arabic] *Nel nome di di Dio, Abdolmalec Principe dei credenti*". On the reverse *"Φ sopra tre gradini. Nell'area, da una parte* [legend in English] *in Aleppo, dall'altra, in giro* [legend in Arabic] *Non vi è altro Dio che Dio, egli è solo, Maometto è il Legato di Dio*" [SICA, nos. 608-729]. He identified the issuing authority as 'Abd al-Malik,

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[59] Gaetano Cattaneo, *Lettera di G.C. al Signor Domenico Sestini sopra due medaglie greche del Reale Gabinetto di Milano. Seconda impressione cui s'aggiunge un articolo di confutazione del Signor T. Du Mersan e la difesa dell'autore*, Milan 1811.

[60] Cf. Stephen Album & Tony Goodwin, *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean*, I, *The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period*, Oxford 2002 [successively: SICA].

[61] A bio-bibliographical update in Andrea Gariboldi, *Enrico Sanclemente e la "Medaglia di Cicerone" del Museo di Classe*, "Rivista Italiana di Numismatica", 116 (2015), pp. 361-390.

[62] Professor at the University of Padova, with numismatic and bibliographical interests in particular for the works and studies on Francesco Petrarca: cf. http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-marsand_(Enciclopedia-Italiana) (24 March 2015), who like many had a much less superficial knowledge of Arabic.

[63] On this matter, cf. Callegher, *Simone Assemani nella polemica Schiepati-Castiglioni (1818-1820)* cit., pp. 58-68.

[64] Arianna D'Ottone, *Arabic Paleography*, in Alessandro Bausi et al. (eds.), *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. An Introduction,* Hamburg 2015, pp. 271-276; Eadem, *Paleografia araba e altre paleografie*, "Rivista di Studi Orientali", 87.1-4 (2014), pp. 213-222.

[65] Carlo Ottavio Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche dell'I.R. Museo di Milano*, Milano 1819.

declaring that he had "classified these coins here, instead of in the place where others of the Caliphs should be so as not to interrupt the series because after all they are mostly of uncertain period", assigning them to various mints: Aleppo, Homs, Bir Mir (*rectius* Sarmīr), el Quds (Jerusalem)[66]. Castiglioni then placed among the coins of the caliphs also the follis with the "Figure of the Prince, but in rougher work" and "Mohamed is Legate of God" on the obverse, and the large value sign Ϻ accompanied by indication of the mint on the reverse[67] [SICA, nos. 730-731]. The series that only a few years before, influenced by the Byzantine issues and especially by an approximate Arabic had been described as "Nummi aenei, cum figura Sérvatoris mundi", was finally placed in the exact context: it was Islamic coinage although with some chronological uncertainty [SICA, pp. 91-99].

The Milanese scholar also intervened on the second group of folles that had been the subject of controversy between Castiglioni and Marsand, placing them among the "Coins of Christian Kufic or bilingual princes", primarily at the time of Heraclius. He thus identified the three figures on the obverse as Heraclius and his two sons, with a cruciform diadem and globus cruciger. On the reverse as well as the M surmounted by a Christogram (Ⱥ) he read "Taberiah"-Tiberias mint, restricting their chronology to between 632 and 638. The new dating, even if incorrect, also in this case represented notable progress because it identified without any doubt a correlation with the issues of Heraclius of 632-635.

Equal thoroughness was not applied to the discussed type with "*Figura dell'imperatore in piedi, che tiene nella destra una croce oblunga, e nella sinistra un globo crucigero, a sinistra un'aquila sopra un'insegna militare. In giro* ΔA (ϺACKOC)", on the reverse "*M majuscolo, superiormente il monogramma di Cristo* Ⱥ. *In giro* [legend in arabic] *battuta in Damasco, Chaled*" [SICA, nos. 561-562]. Castiglioni knew the previous bibliography: Adler, Tanini, Marchant, Eckhel and Sestini, but refuted the reading both of Chazaro and Leo proposing instead to read Chaled or the "name of some other Christian Arab prince" of a Syrian dynasty prior to Islamization. Nevertheless, the four coins of this group were indicated as Leo IV Chazaro, with a correct reading of the mints at Damascus and Emesa[68].

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[66] Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche* cit., pp. 46-49. During studies on this "Arab-Sasanian" series specimens in copper were explained, with imitation of the "standing caliph" type and pseudo-cross on steps, with Pahlavi legend, Persian imitations of Arab-Byzantine types: Rika Gyselen, *Arab-Sasanian Copper Coinage,* Wien 2000, Type 39a-b & 40 of the Susa mint and pp. 146-147.

[67] Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche* cit., pp. 50-51, with attribution to "Kennesrin" and "Ascalon", *rectius* today assigned to mints included in the Jund Filasṭīn: cf. SICA, nos. 730-731; Tony Goodwin & Rika Gyselen, *Arab Byzantine Coins from the Irbid Hoard. Including a new introduction to the series and study of the Pseudo-Damascus mint*, London 2015, pp. 56-57, nos. 53-57.

[68] Castiglioni, *Monete Cufiche* cit., pp. 317-325. For the actual identification cf. SIC, nos. 531-537, 560-577; Goodwin & Gyselen, *Arab Byzantine Coins from the Irbid Hoard* cit., nos. 12-13, 17-21.

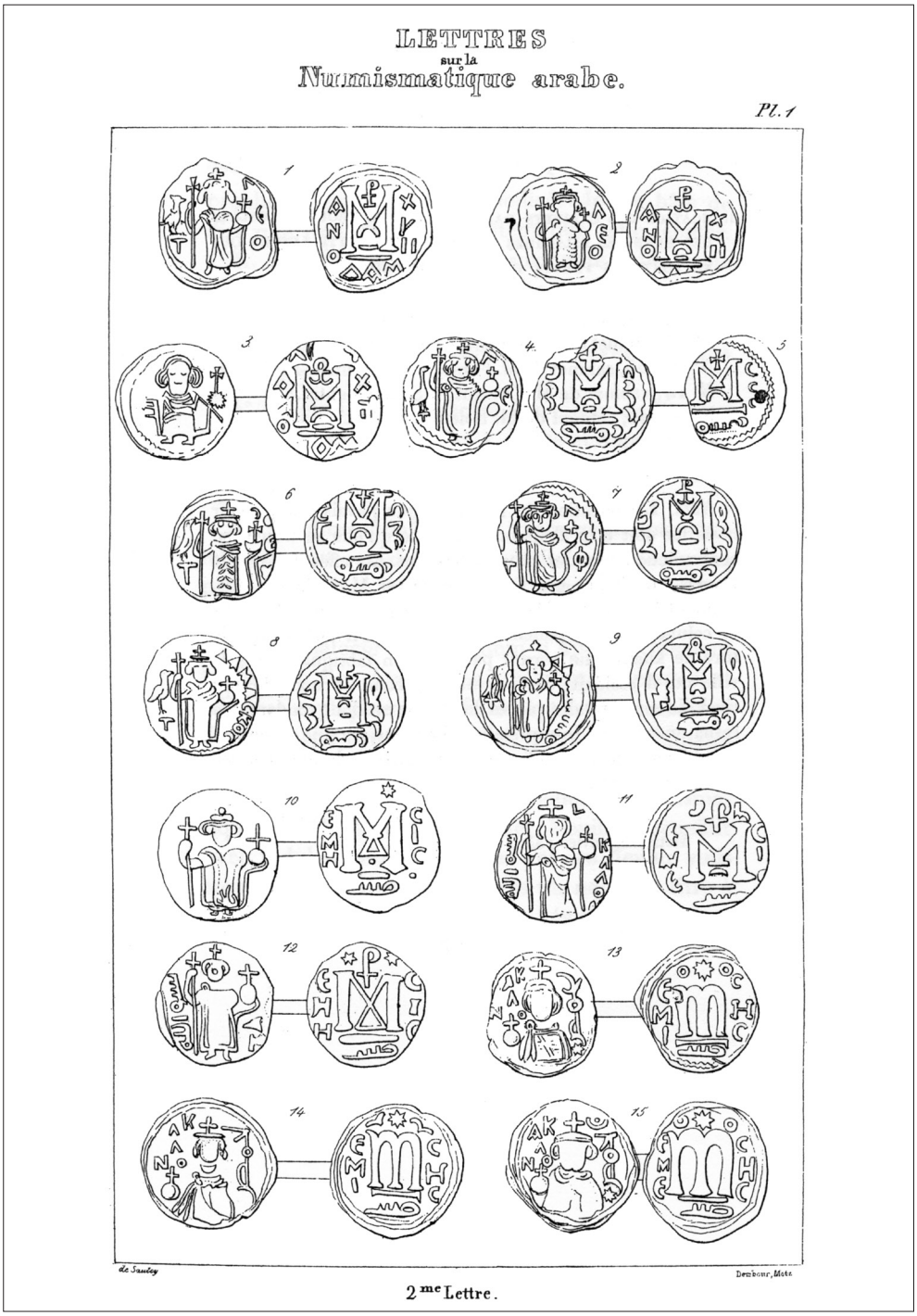


Figure 5 – Félicien de Saulcy, *Lettres sur quelques points de la numismatique arabe à M. Reinaud*, "Journal Asiatique", Mai 1839

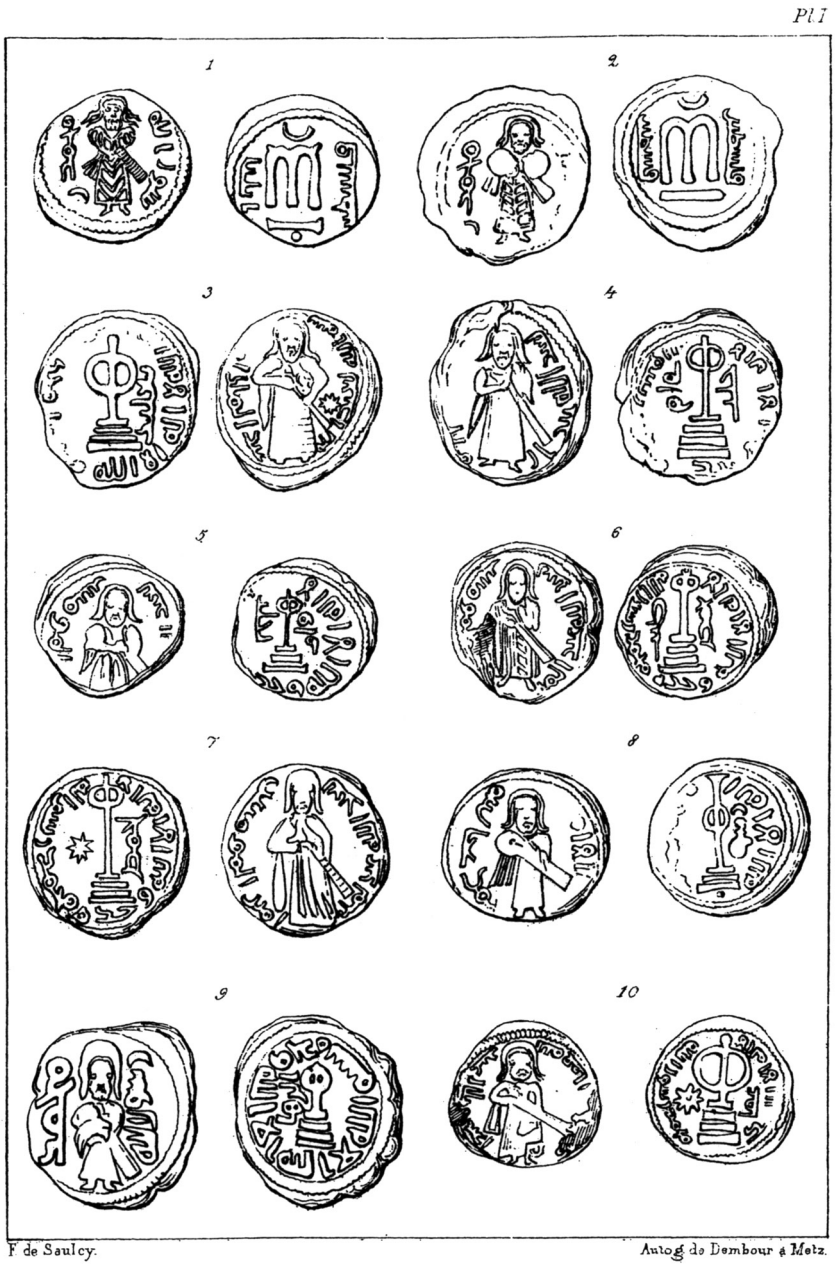


Figure 6 – Félicien de Saulcy, *Lettres sur quelques points de la numismatique arabe à M. Reinaud*, "Journal Asiatique", Décembre 1839

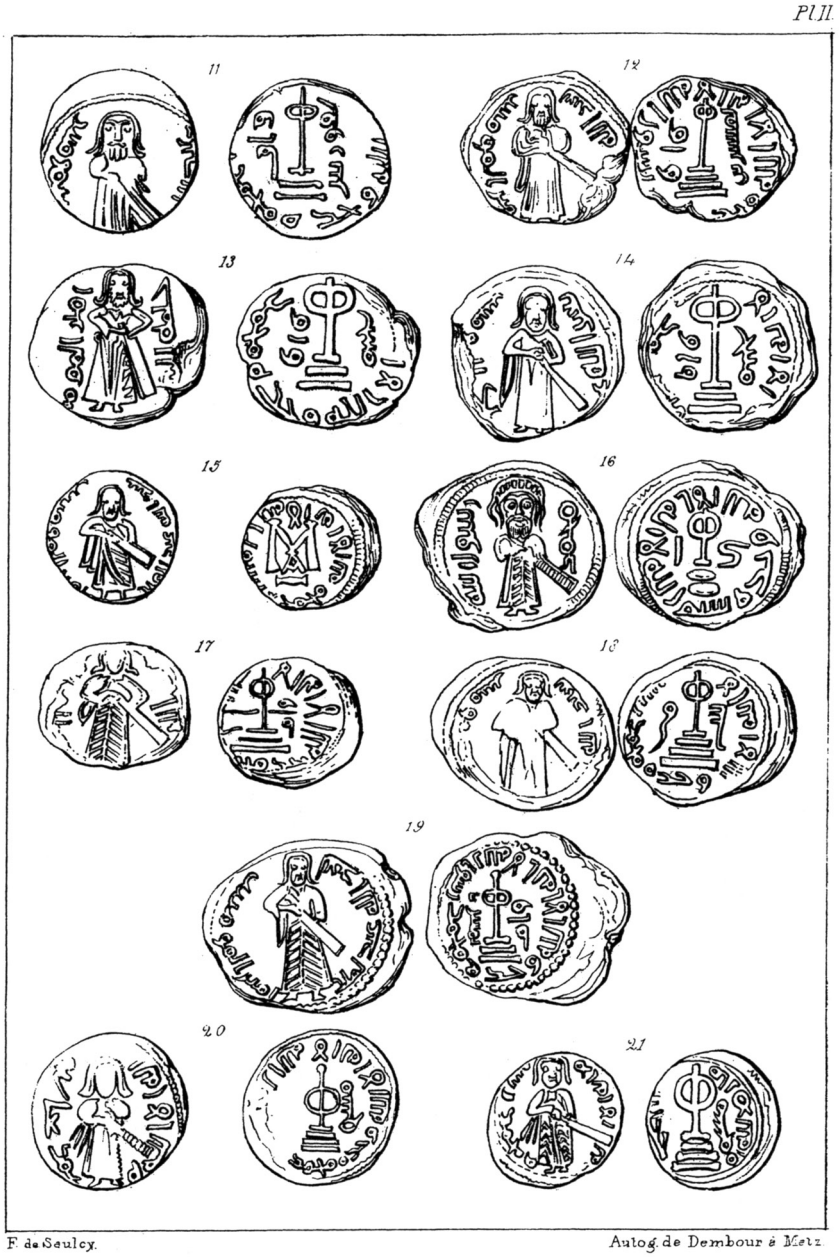


Figure 7 – Félicien de Saulcy, *Lettres sur quelques points de la numismatique arabe à M. Reinaud*, "Journal Asiatique", Décembre 1839

Reference to the folles of Constans II as reference prototype [MIB III, 162-165; 170-172] was avoided, but the issuing area coincided with that of the preceding coins. A few years after Castiglioni's lesson, fundamental for any further examination of these difficult coins with images and Arabic epigraphy, would be developed in a substantially conclusive fashion by Félicien de Saulcy (1807-1880)[69]: In his first contribution, regarding this last group, he concluded that "*La présence des monnaies bilingues arabo-grecques qui* [---] *doivent être regardées comme des espèces frappées par les chrétiens, pour avoir cours tout à la fois parmi le peuple musulman et le peuple chrétien. Leur fabrication commença donc vraisemblablement peu temps après la conquête, et fini ver l'an 76 de l'hégire, lorsque Abdou 'l-Malik décida que les monnaies de son peuple seraient désormais arabes et musulmanes pures*"[70] (fig. 5). For the group with the image of a caliph, because the name "Abdou'l-Malek" was legible on almost all of them, the classification was indubitable, as were the period and minting cities, identified as among the most important in the region between Jerusalem and Emesa[71] (figs. 6-7).

Collecting and a more competent interest in orientalism, numismatics included, had led to significant and convincing clarifications. A better periodization in relation to the Byzantine coinage but especially to the Islamic presence in Syrian-Palestinian regions is a task for future scholars, who will no longer find themselves faced with erudite but unfounded arguments: the "*commixtio lucis et tenebrarum*" has found a first solution, thanks to the autopsy method of analysis of the coins and historical-philological research applied also to numismatics[72].

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[69] Christian Charlet, *Un grand numismate, grand franc-masson méconnu : Félicien de Saulcy*, « Cahiers Numismatiques », 211 (March 2017), pp. 51-58.

[70] Félicien de Saulcy, *Lettres sur quelques points de la numismatique arabe à M. Reinaud*, « Journal Asiatique », Mai 1839, pp. 404-443. Anastatic reprint in *Numismatic of the Islamic World*, 3, Fankfurt am Main 2003.

[71] Félicien de Saulcy, *Lettres sur quelques points de la numismatique arabe à M. Reinaud*. « Journal Asiatique », Décembre 1839, pp. 472-495. Anastatic reprint in *Numismatic of the Islamic World*, 3, Fankfurt am Main 2003.

[72] John Walker, *A catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and post-reform Umaiyad coins,* London 1956; SICA; Morrisson & Prigent, *L'empereur et le calife* cit., mainly the series *Coinage and History in the Seventh Century Near East*, London 2007-. A bibliographical update in Arianna d'Ottone Rambach, *Bibliografia per la numismatica islamica*, "Comunicazione", 71 (2018), pp. 39-50.

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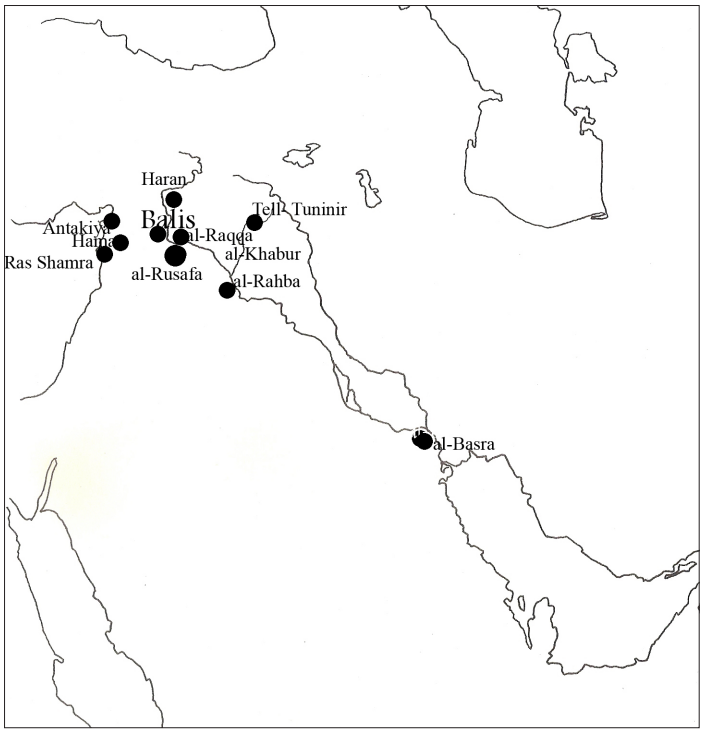
LES LIEUX DE TROUVAILLE SYRIENS DE FULŪS D'AL-BAṢRA DE 136H ET LES RAISONS DE LEURS IMPORTATION

Abstract

The aim of the study is to investigate the presence of a relatively large number of copper fulūs struck in al-Baṣra in the year 136H. (only this one year, while earlier dates of the same issue are not found) among the excavation coins from al-Ruṣāfa and certain sites along the al-Khābūr river in Syria. Lutz Ilisch had discussed the phenomenon briefly in 1996. The present study adds more historical information and new sites of such finds, which strengthen new theories. The relations between the conflict of the Abbasid counter caliph Abdullah b. ʻAlī with Abū Muslim on one side and the import of these fulūs on the other side, is discussed on the assumption that normally such fulūs would have been without value outside of their original area of issue and circulation.

Keywords

Fulūs, 136H., al-Baṣra, Abdullah b. 'Alī, al-Ruṣāfa, al-Khābūr, tell Tunaīnīr, Abū Muslim, Abī al-Khaṣīb.



Carte des sites archéologiques Syriens

Tout d'abord, notons que ce suijet a été déjà étudié par Lutz Ilisch[1]. Nous allons ajouter dans notre étude plus d'informations historiques ainsi que de nouvelles découvertes, qui renforcent certaines des nouvelles théories[2], dans le but de connaître la raison de la présence des fulūs de l'an 136 H. d'al-Baṣra, dans les fouilles archéologiques de al-Ruṣāfa et certains sites de la rivière d'al- Khābūr en Syrie.

On doit montrer le type de fals d'al-Baṣra en l'an 136H. Les inscriptions sur le fals d'al-Baṣra 136H. est comme suit :

Avers :
لا اله الا / الله وحده لا / شريك له

[1] Je tiens à remercier Dr. Lutz Ilisch de me faire bénéficier de son savoir et d'avoir bien voulu discuter avec moi des nombreux questions numismatiques que pose l'étude de cet article.

[2] ILISCH 1996: pp. 111-132.

Revers :
محمد/ رسول / الله

La légende marginale :
بسم الله ضرب هذا الفلس بالبصرة سنة ست و ثلثين و مئة

D'après les figures 1-2, on peut voir la différence de couleur du sol sur les fulūs d'après le lieu de sa découverte. En Syrie centrale, la couleur du sol est rouge (fig. 1 : Fals al-Baṣra 136H. «www.zeno.ru : n° 143931») mais en al-Djazīra cette dernière est jaune (fig. 2 : Fals al-Baṣra 136H. «FINT: AL4D2»). Alors, on peut constater que ces fulūs d'al-Baṣra 136H. ont circulé en Syrie et al-Djazīra.

Nous avons réuni dans le tableau 1 l'atelier monétaire d'al-Baṣra représenté dans certains sites archéologiques en Syrie et le nombre des fulūs, datant de 136H et 139H, émis dans cet atelier. al-Ruṣāfa est le mieux représenté quantitativement, même si les fulūs n'ont pas circulé hors de la région de frappe, où l'échange commercial se faisait en dirhams.[3] On note qu'il n'y a pas de fulūs frappés à al-Baṣra découverts dans les sites de Bālis[4], al-Raqqa[5], Ḥarrān[6], Rās Shamrā[7], al-Mayādīn / al-Raḥba[8] et Hamāh[9] (voir carte au-dessus).

On peut constater qu'un seul fals d'al-Baṣra en l'an 139H. trouvé en Antakiya. Mais peut-être s'agit-il d'une mauvaise lecture de la date 136H. de ce fals, Malheureusement, il n'y a pas de photo dans l'article publié par George Miles[10]. Un fals isolé d'al-Baṣra daté en 136H trouvé dans un tell d'al-Khābūr[11] (il n'est pas défini à quel tell du al-Khābūr), mais avec la présence des deux fals d'al-Baṣra 136H à tell Tunaīnīr, qui sont conservés au musée national de Damas[12], on peut supposer que le fals trouvé à al-Khabur étudié par Lutz Ilisch, a été probablement trouvé aussi à tell Tunaīnīr. Après l'étude de ce qui est mentionné dans les sources, nous considérons comme probable que ces fulūs furent apportés à l'al-Khābūr avec les soldats qui

[3] D'après Daulatkhoja Dovudi (Musée National de Tadjikistan), un dinar d'al-Basra 135H fut découvert en Tadjikistan. Alors on peut supposer que ce dinar était arrivé à cet endroit en raison de la guerre entre Abū Muslim et Abdullah b. 'Alī.

[4] al-USH 1978.

[5] HEIDEMANN 2003: pp. 115-196.

[6] HEIDEMANN 2002: pp. 267-299.

[7] MILES 1962: pp. 637-644.

[8] NÈGRE 1982: pp. 201-252.

[9] HAMMERSHAIMB 1969: pp. 142-164.

[10] MILES 1948: pp. 109-124.

[11] IILISCH 1993.

[12] Communication personnelle avec le directeur général du musée national à Damas.

Tableau 1 – Nombre des fulūs d'al-Baṣra 136H, découvert des sites archéologiques Syrien

Atelier	al-Baṣra	139 H.
Année	136 H.	
al-Ruṣāfa	37	
Bālis	X	
al-Raqqa	X	
Al-Khābūr	1	
Harrān	X	
Rās Shamra	X	
Al-Raḥba	X	
Ḥamah	X	1
Antākiya	X	
Tall Tunaīnīr	2	

ont participé au conflit entre Abū Muslim et Abdullah b. 'Alī et le siège de Naṣībīn. Ceci expliquerait leur présence à al-Ruṣāfa.

En ce qui concerne les fouilles de Ruṣāfa entre les années 2006 et 2010, à l'extérieur du mur d'al-Ruṣāfa, S. Heidemann[13] a publié malheureusement seulement un bref résumé des monnaies découvert. D'après le tableau 2, on ne peut voir que 9 fals d'al-Baṣra en 136H, sur un total de 200 fals, qu'il explique en tenant compte de l'étude de Lutz Ilisch.

On a réuni dans le tableau 3 les monnaies représentées dans les fouilles d'al-Ruṣāfa entre les années 1979 et 1988, étudiées par Lutz Ilisch[14]. On note que les ateliers monétaires abbasides représentés dans cette étude sont au nombre de six, avec des fréquences très inégales. On y observe que l'atelier le plus fortement représenté est celui d'al-Baṣra, avec 27 fals (136H.) sur un total de 62 fals abbasides. Le deuxième atelier par le nombre de fulūs, 16 pièces, est celui de Ḥalab. L'atelier monétaire de Khaznat Ḥalab vient après Ḥalab par 3 fals. Dimashq est représentée par 2 fals. L'autre atelier monétaire d'al-Rāfiqa ne fournit qu'un fals. Le résultat d'étude de Lutz Ilisch a montré que les fulūs d'al-Baṣra 136H. ont existé à al-Ruṣāfa en raison de la campagne militaire d'Abū Muslim al-Khurāsāni contre Abdullah b. 'Alī.

[13] HEIDEMANN 2011-13.

[14] ILISCH 1996: pp. 111-132.

Tableau 2 – Répartition des fulūs d'al-Baṣra, par nombre, dans les fouilles d'al-Ruṣāfa

Fouilles d'al-Ruṣāfa	1978-1988	1997-1999	2006-2010
Nombre total de fulūs	319	157	200
al-Baṣra	27	1	9

Tableau 3 – Synoptique, répartition des fulūs, par ateliers et par dynasties, dans les fouilles d'al-Ruṣāfa entre 1978-1988 (Ilisch 1996, pp. 111-132)

	Umayyade	Abbaside	Buayhide	Salguque de Rum	Ayyubide
Atelier inconnu		10	1	16	6
Balkh	1				
Anqara				4	
Egypte	8	2			
Qinnasrin	19				
Filastin	6				
Tabariya	2				
ar-Ramla	2				
Harran					2
ar-Ruṣāfa	1				
ar-Rāfiqa		1			
al-Mawsil	3				
al-Gazira	46	1			
Hims	12				
Manbig					7
Khaznat Ḥalab		3			
Ḥalab	2	16			28
Dimshq	42	2			3
al-Baṣra		27			

On peut voir dans le tableau 4 que les fouilles d'al-Ruṣāfa entre 1997 et 1999 ne montrent qu'un seul fals abbaside frappé à al-Baṣra en 136H. On doit mentionner que ces fouilles étaient à l'intérieur de la muraille d'al-Ruṣāfa tandis que les autres fouilles étudiées par L. Ilisch et S. Heidemann étaient en dehors de la muraille de la ville. D'après la comparaison entre la fouille à l'intérieur de la muraille d'al-Ruṣāfa qui ne contient qu'un seul fals et le grand nombre à l'extérieur, on constate qu'Abū Muslim ou Abdullah b. ʻAlī vivaient dans un des palais situés à l'extérieur de la muraille de la ville.

Le 13 décembre 136H. le calife Abū al-Abāss as-Safāḥ meurt. Son frère Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr est revenu du Hadj, il est entré à al-Kūfa et a fait un sermon pour les habitants. (Le gouverneur d'al-Kūfa ʻIssā b. Mūsā[15] a détesté le gouverneur d'ash-Shām Abdullah b. ʻAlī[16]. C'est pourquoi après la mort du calife as-Safāḥ, Issa a donné à Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr le titre de calife). Les habitants de l'Iraq et Khurāsān ont reconnu Abū Ja'far comme calife, sauf en ash-Shām comme Abdullah b. ʻAlī qui s'est autoproclamé calife. Ce dernier a affirmé que quand le calife as-Safāḥ l'envoya combattre les Omeyyades, en cas de victoire contre l'ennemi, il serait son successeur. Mais quand Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr a apprit la nouvelle de son oncle Abdullah b. ʻAlī, il envoya une armée dirigée par Abū Muslim afin de l'en chasser. Il a été fortifié à Naṣībīn. Mais, Abū Muslim lui fit savoir qu'il était venu au ash-Shām en tant que gouverneur, et non pas pour faire la guerre. Quand les gens d'ash-Shām entendirent le message d'Abū Muslim, ils quittèrent Naṣībīn, marchèrent vers ash-Shām et Abdullah alla avec eux. Alors, Abū Muslim s'installa dans le camp d'Abdullah à Naṣībīn et ce dernier prit le camp d'Abū Muslim qu'il laissa dans la région d'al-Khābūr.

Les combats se poursuivirent pendant 6 mois, à partir du 7 juin 137H. Abū Muslim vainquit l'armée d'Abdullah. Ce dernier et son frère Abd aṣ-Ṣamad fuirent à Ruṣāfa, où Abd aṣ-Ṣamad vécut, jusqu'à ce que l'armée d'al-Manṣūr, dirigée par Jamhūr b. Mirār al-'Adjlīy y arrive. Elle le vainquit, le captura et l'envoya avec Abī al-Khaṣīb[17] au calife Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr.

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[15] Fils de Muhammad b. ʻAlī, le neveu d'Abū al-Abāss al-Safāḥ.

[16] Abdullah b. ʻAlī gouverneur d'ash-Shām de 133-137H., l'oncle du calife Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr et as-Safāḥ.

[17] IBN KATHĪR 1988: p. 63 : Dit que Abū Ja'far a envoyé Abī al-Khaṣīb pour se saisir des otages obtenus par Abū Muslim du camp d'Abdullah b. ʻAlī.. Alors, Abū Muslim fut en colère après Abū Ja'far. il essaya de tuer Abī al-Khaṣīb mais il lui dit qu'il est envoyé par le calife. TABARI s. d.: p. 459 : Mentionne le nom Abī al-Khaṣīb sans le compléter. al-YA'QŪBĪ s. d.: p. 366 : Dit que, al-Mansūr a envoyé Yaqṭīn b. Mūsa, Isḥāq b. al-ʻUqaīlī et Muhammad b. ʻAmru, pour examiner les dépouilles victimes d'Abū Muslim. Abū Muslim a maudi la mère du calife al-Manṣūr. A cause de cela, le calife l'a détesté. Mais Yaqṭīn b. Mūsa lui a dit qu'al-Mansūr l'envoya pour honorer la victoire.

SA'DŪN 2005, a expliqué la signification du nom de la ville Abī al-Khaṣīb, dans le sud de l'Iraq, suivi la province d'al-Baṣra. Disant que ce nom pris du nom de la rivière Abī al-Khaṣīb, qui fait partie du

Tableau 4 – Répartition des fulūs, par ateliers, dans les fouilles d'al-Ruṣāfa entre 1997 et 1999 (KORN 2004: pp. 197-206)

	Romain et Byzantin	Umayyade	Abbaside	Salguque de Rum	Zengide	Artuqide	Ayyubide	Mamluk
al-Baṣra			1					
Madinat as-Salām		1						
al-Kūfa		8						
Ḥalab							8	
Hamah							1	
Dimshq		7					3	
Mayyafarqin							4	
Harrān							1	
ar-Ruha							1	
Qalat Djabar							1	
al-Djazira		15						
Qinnasrin		1						
Baisān		1						
Tabariya		1						
Madin Amir al-Muminin		4						
Egypte		5						3
Atelier inconnu	31	6	40	7	1	1		

Shaṭ al-'Arab. Le nom de la rivière est attribuée à Abī al-Khaṣīb Marzūq, Mawla Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr. Sur ses rives se trouvent des palais décoratifs, en plus, un palais et une forteresse d'Abī al-Khaṣīb dans un endroit appelé aujourd'hui Prem (بريم). Abū Ja'far lui a donné cette zone dans 140H. et a creusé cette rivière nommée d'après lui. Malheureusement, le livre de Ḥusayn b. Sa'dūn ne mentionne pas les sources de l'information pour le nom d' Abī al-Khaṣīb Marzūq. Mais par rapport à ce que Ibn Kathir et al-Ya'qubi ont écrit : Ibn Kathir a mentionné son nom avec Abī al-Khaṣīb Yaqṭīn. al-Ya'qubi l'a mentionné le nom Yaqṭīn b. Mūsa sans Abī al-Khaṣīb. Alors, Est-il possible que Yaqṭīn b. Mūsa, qui a été mentionné par al-Ya'qubi, soit le même qu'Abī al-Khaṣīb Yaqṭīn?

Abdullah b. ‘Alī ne resta pas à al-Ruṣāfa plus d’une nuit, puis il alla chez son frère Sulaīymān b. ‘Alī, le gouverneur d’al-Baṣra (depuis 133 H.). Il passa son séjour caché chez son frère jusqu’à la fin du son règne sur al-Baṣra en 139H. C’est à ce moment que Abū Ja’far le captura, l’emprisonna jusqu’à ce que la prison ne s’effondre sur lui et l’assassina en 147H[18].

À travers les événements historiques en 136H.-137H. à al-Ruṣāfa, nous pouvons proposer plusieurs raisons concernant la présence de ces fulūs d’al-Baṣra, à al-Ruṣāfa et al-Khābūr (et leur absence dans d’autres endroits en Syrie). Car les fulūs n’ont aucune valeur en dehors de leur région de frappe puisque ce sont les dirhams que l’on utilise dans la circulation monétaire.

On a vu le roman d’al-Ṭabarī sur Abī al-Khaṣīb, qui fut envoyé par Abū Ja’far al-Manṣūr avec Jamhūr b. Mirār al-’Adjlīy, pour amener les dépouilles obtenues par Abū Muslim d’al-Ruṣāfa. Peut-être vivait-il avec ses soldats à l’extérieur des murailles de Ruṣāfa, et payait-il pour ses soldats des fulūs apportés d’al-Baṣra en 136H. Si nous supposons qu’il venait de la ville d’Abī al-Khaṣīb, dans la province d’al-Baṣra, le nom de cette ville a pris le nom de la rivière qu’Abī al-Khaṣīb a creusée à cette période et nommée d’après lui. Il est probablement la même personne mentionnée par al-Ya’qūbī, Yaqṭīn b. Mūsā, et Ibn Kathir l’a mentionné comme Abī al-Khaṣīb Yaqṭīn. Ou peut-être Abī al-Khṣīb Marzūk selon Ḥusayn b. Sa’dūn 2005 ?

On a noté qu’il existe un fals, d’al-Baṣra 136H., a trouvé dans l’un des tells d’al-Khābūr. Deux autres fals en plus, conservés dans l’archive du Musée de Damas, découverts à Tell Tunīnīr près de Naṣībīn. Cette même ville est restée assiégée 6 mois par Abū Muslim en 137H. Peut-être ces fulūs ont été envoyés, par le gouverneur d’al-Baṣra Sulaīymān b. ‘Alī, à son frère Abdullah pour rémunérer les soldats. On a vu que Abdullah et son armée ont fui vers al-Ruṣāfa, alors c’est la raison pour laquelle on trouve les fulūs d’al-Baṣra dans cette ville. Une autre hypothèse serait que ces fulūs ont été emmenés à al-Ruṣāfa par des soldats d’Abū Muslim, qui suivaient la même route de Naṣībīn à al-Ruṣāfa.

Ces fals, ont probablement été transportés de Naṣībīn à al-Ruṣāfa avec Ḥamīd b. Quḥṭuba[19] et un groupe de soldats, envoyés par Abdullah b. ‘Alī à Ḥalab pour faire parvenir un courrier au gouverneur de Ḥalab Zufur b. ‘Āṣim. Le contenu du courrier était une demande de tuer le porteur Ḥamīd b. Quḥṭuba par le gouverneur de Ḥalab Zufur. (L’angoisse d’Abdullah b. ‘Alī du peuple de Khurāsān, qui tenta de se débarrasser d’eux. De nombreux soldats Khurassaniens ont été tués par Abdullah, avant

[18] al-ṬABARĪ s. d.: pp. 459-479. al-DHAHABĪ 1985: pp. 161. IBN KATHĪR 1988: pp. 57-67. IBN al-ATHĪR 1930: pp. 53-68. al-YA’QŪBĪ s. d.: p.366. al-BAGHDĀDĪ 1984: pp. 176-178. IBN TAGHRĪ BURDĪ 1963: pp. 133-140. SA’DŪN 2005 : p.76.

[19] Ḥamīd b. Quḥṭuba a dirigé avec Abū Muslim la révolution abbaside contre les Omeyyades. Ensuite il est resté avec le gouverneur d’ash-Shām Abdullah b. ‘Alī. Il l’a rejoint au début de sa rébellion contre Abū Ja’far al-Manṣūr. Enfin il a rejoint l’armée d’Abū Muslim.

d'arriver Abū Muslim à Naṣībīn. Ṭabarī, p. 475). Sur le chemin de Ḥalab, Ḥamīd b. Quḥṭuba ouvrit la lettre. Quand il prit connaissance du courrier, il alla à al-Ruṣāfa. Quand le gouverneur de Ruṣāfa Sa'īd al-Barbarī, a appris la violation par Ḥamīd des ordres de Abdullah b. 'Alī d'aller à Alep, le gouverneur sortit se battre. Mais face à l'armée d'Ḥamīd, si forte, il ne combattit pas. Ḥamīd marcha en dehors des murailles d'al-Ruṣāfa, mais Mūsā b. Maymūn (chef de garde de Ḥamīd) demanda à y entrer pour visiter une femme. Au moment de quitter al-Ruṣāfa, Sa'īd al-Barbarī le tua. Après ces événements, Ḥamīd rejoignit Abū Muslim.

La relation amicale entre Abdullah b. 'Alī et son frère Sulaīymān, le gouverneur d'al- Baṣra est très forte et pour preuve ; lorsque Abdullah perdit la guerre contre Abū Muslim, il se rendit chez son frère Sulaīymān passa son séjour caché chez son frère jusqu'à la fin de son règne sur al-Baṣra en 139H. A ce moment précis, Abū Ja'far le captura, l'emprisonna. Ces fulūs, peut-être, ont été envoyés, par le gouverneur d'al-Baṣra Sulaīymān b. 'Alī, à son frère Abdullah pour rémunérer les soldats à Naṣībīn et al-Ruṣāfa.

Pour conclure, on peut dire que l'un de ces événements a pu être à l'origine de la circulation ces fulūs d'al-Baṣra à al-Ruṣāfa.

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Figure 1



Figure 2

Rwayda Rafaat Al-Nabarawy

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A RARE SAMANID DINAR STRUCK IN MOHAMMEDIA IN 341 A.H. BEARING THE NAMES OF PRINCE NOAH BIN NASSER AND THE CALIPH AL-MOSTAKFY BI ALLAH

Abstract

This research is concerned in publishing and studying a rare Samanid dinar struck in Mohammedia in 341 A.H., bearing the name of prince Noah Bin Nasser (331-343 A.H), and preserved in the private collection of Mr. Mohammed Omar Nato in Holy Mecca. This dinar is firstly to be published and studied through this research; which is concerned in describing the general shape of it, by clarifying its inscriptions and decorative motives, then analyzing its inscriptions and relating it to the different circumstances, especially striking Al-Mostakfy's name on it, despite his isolation in 334 A.H., which is seven years earlier than the date of the dinar under study. Besides, the reasons of minting Surat Al-Ikhlas complete on the field of the reverse.

The published Samanid coins bearing Surat Al-Ikhlas were determined, and they are: a dinar struck in Mohammedia in 333 A.H. preserved in the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo, and a dirham struck in Samarkand in 357 A.H. under the name of prince Noah Bin Nasser (350-366 A.H.), published by Shabaan Kinawy, and a comparison between them and the dinar under study was made, regarding the prototype, the inscriptions, the date and circumstances of struck. Besides, another comparison between the dinar under study, and the Samanid and Buwayhid dinars struck in Mohammedia was made to clarify the differences between them and the uniqueness of the dinar under study.

Thus, it is obvious that the published Samanid dinar and dirham bearing Surat Al-Ikhlas along with the dinar under study were struck during the time of the military conflict between the Samanids and the Buwaihids, which ended in 361 A.H. by reconciliation.

So, in light of the above, the dinar under study is unique in its prototype, date and circumstances of struck, which firstly to be published and studied, thus, it represents a new addition to the Sammanid coins in general, and the coins of Noah Bin Nasser in particular.

Keywords

Coin, Gold, Mohammedia coinage, Al-Mostakfy Bi Allah

In the collection of Mr. Mohammed Nato – the establisher of the Islamic Dinar Museum and the Islamic numismatics specialist – there is a rare Samaind dinar struck in Mohammedia in 341 A.H., bearing the name of the Caliph Al-Mostakfy Bi Allah (331-343 A.H.), which is firstly to be published and studied in this research, as no other dinar had been published like this unique dinar in its prototype, date and circumstances of struck (Figure 1).

The general shape of the obverse of this dinar consists of three horizontal lines in the field inside two inscriptional margins, and the inscriptions of the obverse inside a circle, and there are no circles between the central and marginal inscriptions. The reverse also has three horizontal lines in the field in kufic floral script inside a circle, with one marginal line around it, with another circle outside.

The inscriptions of this dinar are as follows:

OBVERSE:

Field: محمد رسول الله / المستكفي بالله / نوح بن نصر

Inner margin: بسم الله ضرب هذا الدينار بالمحمدية سنة أحد وأربعين وثلثمائة

Outer margin: لله الأمر من قبل ومن بعد ويومئذ يفرح المؤمنون بنصر الله

REVERSE:

Filed: الله احد الله الصمد / لم يلد ولم يولد / ولم يكن له كفوا أحد

Margin: محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله ولو كره المشركون

Weight: 4.00 grams, Diameter: 25 mm.



Figure 1

The inscriptions of the obverse come in three horizontal lines in kufic floral script, the first line holds part of the Islamic testimony: "Muhammad is the messenger of Allah", which firstly appeared on the Arabic Byzantine flus and the Arabic Sassanian dirham on Al-Hagag Bin Youssef Al-Sakafee[1] "struck in Byshabour in 77 A.H.", on its obverse margin "In the name of Allah, there is no God but Allah, Muhammad is his messenger". It also came on the Ummayid dinars which holds the picture of caliph Abdelmalek Bin Marwan, and on the field of the reverse of the Abbasid dirhams and dinars[2] in three lines instead of surat Al-Ikhlas during the Ummayid era, as the Abbasid dynasty took a slogan depending on the "satisfaction of the kinfolk". This testimony continued on the contemporary coins of the Abbasids and until the establishment of the Ottomans[3].

In the second line of the obverse inscriptions; there is the name of the Abbasid caliph Al- Mostakfy Bi Allah who is Abu Al-Kasem Abdullah Bin Al-Moktafy Bi Allah Ali Bin Al-Motaded Abi Al-Abbas Ahmed Al-Mofak Bin Al-Motakel Alla Allah. In Safar 333 A.H. the caliph Al-motake Liallah was captured and Al-Mostakfy was the caliph after the allegiance of Ellias for him.[4]

Al-mostakfy remained as an Abbasid caliph until he was eliminated by Moaz Al-Dawla Al-bwayihy in 22 jumady al-akhra in 334 A.H., as he knew that the Kahremans made a great invitation which the Daylamites and Turks were present, so he accused them that they want to take the allegiance for Al-mostakfy and to eliminate Moaz Al-Dawla. The period of succession of Al-mostakfy was for one year and four months, and when Al-Motey le Allah took the caliphate he blinded Al-mostakfy and put him into prison where he remained there until his death in Raby the first in 338 A.H., and he was born in Safar in 276 A.H.[5]

Despite the discharge of Al-mostakfy in 334 A.H., and the appointment of Al-Motey le Allah (334-363 A.H.) by Moaz Al-dawla Al-bwayihy, the Samanids didn't recognize him and kept registering Al-Mostakfy's name on their gold coins until the year 343 A.H.[6], as the Samanids didn't accept what Moaz Al-Dawla did, and they registered the name of Al-Mostakfy on the field of the reverse of their dirhams until the year 341 A.H.[7], despite the fact that caliph Al-Motey le Allah registered his name

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1 Al-Metairy 2001: No. 3.

2 Al-Kharejy 1434 A.H: pp. 56-59, 78-79.

3 Al-Kharejy 1434 A.H.; Al-Metairy 2001; Zamzame 2013; Fahmy 1965; Lavoix 1887-1896; Lane-poole 1875-1890; Broome 1985; Nicol and others 1982.

4 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: pp. 187-188.

5 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: pp. 206-207.

6 Al-Zamzamy 2013: pp. 55-69.

7 Al-Zamzamy 2013: pp. 263-270.

on the Abbasid coins from 334 A.H. until 363 A.H., besides the coins of the independent countries like the Tulunid and the Ikhshid.

In the third line of the field of the obverse; there is the name of the Samanid prince "Noah Bin Nasser", who reigned the Samanid country in Shabaan in 331 A.H.[8] after the allegiance of people for him, and he was entitled "the benignant prince", and he employed Abu Al-Fadel Muhammad Ahmed as his minister[9]. And, in the time of Noah the Samanid country started to get weak and the governors started to rule a part by their own[10]. Also, the military conflict and the war started between the Samanids and the Buwayhids[11]. The prince Noah kept ruling until his death in the 29th of Rabey al-Akhar in 343 A.H.[12]. In the inner margin of the obverse there is the incomplete basmala "in the name of Allah", then the type of the coin "this dinar is struck", then the date of struck and mint "Mohamdiya in 341".

The first digit of the date of struck is obvious as it is on the Sammanid coins[13]. The second digit wasn't engraved properly[14], as the word's letters came synaptic, so probably the date of the coin under study either to be 331 A.H. or 341 A.H., but the fist date is excluded; as this dinar holds the name of the caliph Al-mostakfy who enthroned in 333 A.H., thus, it is certain that the second date which is 341 A.H. is right for two main reasons: the first one is that in the second line of the inscriptions of the reverse's field, the name of caliph Al-mostakfy (333-334 A.H.), and under it there is the name of the Samanid prince Noah Bin Nasser (331-343 A.H.), so it is certain that this dinar is struck between 333 A.H. which is the date of al-Mostakfy ruling date, and 343 A.H. which is the death date of prince Noah Bin Nasser. The second reason is that the second digit of this dinar resembles the digit of a Samanid dirham struck in Bukhara in 341 A.H., under the name of the same prince[15], specially the last four letters of the word, which assures that the second digit of the dinar under study is forty, so the date of struck is 341 A.H.

Concerning the date of struck, in 340A.H. / 951A.D., Mansour Bin Tekeen died, so price Noah Bin Nasser employed Abi Ali Bin Mihtag a leader of the Khurasanian army[16].

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8 Al-Narshakhy 3th edition: p. 337; Ibn Al-Atheer: p. 175.

9 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 175.

10 El-Feky 1987, p. 28.

11 Amen 1980: p. 7-22.

12 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 249.

13 Al-Zamzamy 2013: pl Nos 26, 127-129.

14 Al-Zamzamy 2013: pl Nos 25-28.

15 Al-Zamzamy 2013: pl Nos. 128.

16 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 238.

Ibn Al-Atheer mentioned[17] in the events of 341 A.H., that Rukn Al-Dawla Al-Buwayihy went from Al-Ray to Tabristan and Gargan, then went to Nisa and stayed there and took over it. He returned and left Al-Hassan Bin Firzan and Ali Bin Kama. This confirms that Al-Ray "Muhamdiya" in 341 A.H., was under the control of the Buwaihids and not the Samanids, which is the year of struck of the dinar under stydy.

Moreover, Ibn Al-Atheer mentioned in the events of 342 A.H., that prince Noah Bin Nasser ordered Abi Ali Mohtag to take the leadership of Khurasan's armies and to direct to Al-Ray to fight Rukn Al-Dawla Al-buwaihy, so he arranged with Shamkeer Bin Ziyad, and prepared a military plan, then headed together to Al-Ray which was ruled by Rukn Al-Dawla. When Rukn Al-Dawla saw the hugeness of the Khurasanian army, he foretified his army in Al-Tabrek castle where the siege was too long, until reconciliation was made between Rukn Al-Dawla and Ibn Mohtag, as the Khurasanians were worried about the proximity of winter and snow. One of the conditions of the reconciliation was that Rukn Al-Dawla had to pay about 200 thousand dinars annually to prince Noah Bin Nasser for lifting the siege and leave Al-Ray for him, then Ibn Mohtag who was the representative of price Noah Bin Nasser went back to Khurasan after the victory over Rukn Al-Dawla[18].

It is clear from the above that during the military conflict over Al-Ray "Muhamadya", between the Buwayhids and the Samanids, Al-Ray was under the reign of the Buwayhids between 341 and 342 A.H., and in the last year the reconciliation was made which was one of its condition to pay 200 thousand dinars annually to the Samainds by the Buwayhids to lift the siege of Al-Ray and leave it to Rukn Al-Dawla. During this military conflict, Noah Bin Nasser struck the dinar under study in 341 A.H. in one of the Samanid Mints and the name Al-Muhamadya was struck on it as a place of striking, despite the fact that it was not struck in it. Besides, the name of the caliph Al-Mostakfy was struck on it despite his isolation by Moaz Al-Dawla Al-Buwaihy in 334 A.H. and appointing Al-Motey in his place which was not accepted by the Samanids, as the Buwaihyds were controlling the set and the isolate of the caliphs. At the same time the military conflict was between the Samanids and the Buwaihyds to control Al-Ray "Muhamadiya".

In the field of the reverse of this dinar, surah Al-Ikhlas complete was struck in three lines: "Allah is one God, the eternal, he neither begets nor is born, nor is there to him any equivalent. This Surah was struck by the Ummayids in the reverse field of their coins, then they were eliminated by the Abbasids, and Noah Bin Nasser struck the dinar under study to prove that Al-Ray was politically following the Samanids despite it was under the supervision of the Buwaihyds as the coins are considered one of the signs of reign. Besides, striking the name of Al-Mostakfy on the dinar un-

[17] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 243.

[18] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 246; Meer 1988: p. 33; Abu Seif 1988; Al-Zamzamy 2013: pp.62-63.

der study despite his isolation, along with the struck of Surah Al-Ikhlas were considered as means of challenge and stubbornness against the Buwaihyds as a reflection of the military conflict between them.

In the outer margin of the obverse the Quran text of Surah Al-Rum which is part of the verses number four and five was struck which is: »To Allah belongs the command before and after. And that day the believers will rejoice in the victory of Allah". Surah Al-Rum came when the Persians had a victory over the Rum, when the polytheists were happy for the Persians victory as they are idolatries like them so the Surah came to near the promise of the Muslim's victory over the Persians[19].

This Quran text was firstly struck on caliph Al-Mamou'n's coins (198-218 A.H./ 813-833 A.D.), as it appeared on the dirhams struck in Maru in 199A.H., and on the dirhams struck in Asfahan in 201 A.H., and on the dirhams struck in Samarkand and Al-Muhamdiya in 202 A.D.[20], also on the dinars struck in 206 A.H.[21] and on flus struck in 208 A.H.[22]. Al-Mamou'n struck this text on his coins after his victory over his brother Al-Amen in 198 A.H., as he killed him and took the throne instead of him[23]. This text was struck on coins until the eighth century A.H. on the coins of the countries following the Abbasid Caliphate like the Tahirid, Samanid, Tulunid, Ikhshid, Buwayhid and Sulujuk. It also came on the coins of the countries not following the Abbasid Caliphate such as Al-Adaressa in Morocco, the Umayyad in Al-Andalusia.

In the field of the reverse of this dinar, surah Al-Ikhlas complete was struck in three lines: "Allah is one God, the eternal, he neither begets nor is born, nor is there to him any equivalent. This Surah was firstly struck incomplete on the coins struck in 77 A.H. by Abdel Malek Bin Marwan as: "Allah is one God, the eternal; he neither begets nor is born". It continued to be struck on the Umayyad coins until its fall in 132A.H/750 A.D. by the Abbasids who struck "Muhammad is the messenger of Allah", instead of it in three lines on the field of the reverse of both the dinar and dirham.[24]

The arabization held by Abdel Malek Bin Marwan was made to satisfy the religious feeling of the Islamic people by striking religious verses on coins reflecting their doctrine like Surah Al-Ikhlas which was accepted to be struck on coins[25].

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19 Al-Kortoby1967: pp. 1-7; Yousef 2003: p. 91.

20 Shamma 1995: p. 225; Miles 1938: p. 103.

21 Shamma 1995: pp. 336-337.

22 Nutzl 1890, Pl. Nom. 194.

23 Altabary 1979 pp. 124-139; Al-Basha 1965: p. 336; Yousef 2003: p. 97.

24 Al-kheregy 1434 A.H.

25 Al-Nabarawy 1988: p. 128.

The Byzantine coins held the Christian phrases reflecting the doctrine of the Byzantine Empire which is the doctrine of trinity which came in the bible of Matthew verse 28 (the father, the son, the holy spirit) which reflects the Melkite doctrine of the Byzantine empire, which says that Jesus Christ has two natures; one is a divine nature and the other is human. While the Egyptian church took the Monophysiteism doctrine which says that Jesus Christ has one nature[26]. That's why Surah Al-Ikhlas was struck on Islamic coins which reflects the Monotheism and that Allah is the only God, and there is no God but him. And in the explanation of "Lam Yaled"; Ibn Abbas mentioned that: "Allah was not born, as Jesus Christ", so this confronts the belief of the Christians that "Jesus is the son of Allah"[27].

Surah Al-Ikhlas was mentioned on many of the Islamic countries like Aghalabids (184-296 A.H. / 800-909 A.D.), on a dirham struck in Sicily in 216 A.H.[28], Samanids (261-389 A.H. / 874-999 A.D.), on a dirham struck in Al-Muhammadiyah in 333 A.H. under the name of Noah Bin Nasser preserved in the Islamic Art Museum[29], and a dirham struck in Samarkand in 357 A.H. under the name of Mansour Bin Noah (350-366 A.H. / 961-976 A.D.)[30], the Buwaiyhids who registered this Quran Surah on their coins to confirm their power in the East, which felt down by the Abbasids, who didn't struck this surah on their coins as mentioned before. So Abd Al-Rahman Al-dakhel struck this surah on his coins of Andalusia to revive the manifestations of civilization of the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus and to reflect the Monotheism in the Islamic doctrine to confront the Christians in Andalusia[31], also this surah was struck on the coins of both Banu Rasy in Yemen, and the Aluwaids in Tabristan[32].

In the margin of the reverse, there is the Quran text of surah Al-Tawbaa (verse 33), and Al-Saff (verse 9), which was struck before on the dirhams of Abdel Malek Bin Marwan in 77 A.H., and kept struck on the Islamic coins until the tenth century[33].

By comparing the dinar under study by the only Samanid published dinar struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 333 A.H., with surah Al-ikhlas in the field of the reverse which is struck by prince Noah Bin Nasser preserved in the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo[34],

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[26] Al-Rafy & Ashour 1992: p. 22-24.

[27] Al-Kortoby 1967: p. 247; Ibn Katheer 1968: p. 600; Al-Tabary 1983: p. 561.

[28] Bin Kurba 1986: p. 241.

[29] Fahmy 1965: pp. 245-245; Kinawy 2000: p. 134-135.

[30] Kinawy 2000: p. 231; Lane-Poole: Nom. 2106.

[31] Yousef 2003: p. 44.

[32] Yousef 2003: pp. 41-45; Al-Soudy 1416 A.H: p. 54; Miles 1938: p. 171; Lane-Poole, 1977: NO. 4; Nutzel 1890: No. 109; Bikhaz 1970: p. 48.

[33] Al-Kortoby 1967: p. 121; Yousef 2003: pp. 45-62; Shamma 1995: p. 254.

[34] Fahmy 1965: pp. 245-246; Kinawy 2000: pp. 134-135.

it is found that despite the resemblance of the general shape of both dinars, there are some differences. And to clarify that, it is a must to mention the inscriptions of the dinar struck in al- Muhamdiya in 333 A.H., as follows:

OBVERSE:
Field: محمد رسول الله / المستكفي بالله / نوح بن نصر
Inner margin: بسم الله ضرب هذا الدينار بالمحمدية سنة ثلث وثلثين وثلثمائة
Outer margin: لله الأمر من قبل ومن بعد ويومئذ يفرح المؤمنون بنصر الله
REVERSE:
Filed: الله احد الله الصمد / لم يلد ولم يولد / ولم يكن له كفوا أحد
Margin: محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله ولو كره المشركون

The two dinars resembles in the general shape, as they both has field inscriptions and marginal ones, in two margins on the obverse and one on the reverse, also the inscriptions of both resemble, except in the arrangement and the date of struck; as in the dinar struck in 333 A.H., we find that the text of the obverse's field comes in five lines, while in the dinar struck in 341 A.H., it came in three lines only. Also, surah Al-Ikhlas came complete on both of the dinars, but it came in the dinar of 333 A.H. in four lines and in the dinar of 341 A.H. in three lines only. Both dinars has the name of the Abbasid caliph Al-Mostakfy with the name of the Samaind prince Noah Bin Nasser under it. Al-Mostakfy name struck on the dinar of 333 A.H. was the contemporary caliph of the Abbasid caliphate, while the dinar of 341 A.H., had a different caliph ruling who was AL-Motey le Allah (334-363 A.H.), as Al-Mostakfy was eliminated in 334 A.H. and died in 338 A.H. When Noah Bin Nasser struck his dinar in 341 A.H. and minted Al- Muhamdiya on it, it was under the power of the Buwayhids as mentioned before, so this dinar was struck in one of the mints of the Samanids like Nisabour or Samarkand or Shash or Bukhara. Noah bin Nasser made this procedure to prove that Al- Muhamdiya followed him and had the loyalty to him, it also clarifies the agreement between the Samanids and Buwayhids in 342 A.H., which obligated the Buwayhid price to pay 200 thousand dinar annually to the Samanid prince to take off the siege over Al-Ray.[35]

Concerning the dinar struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 333 A.H. in the time of prince Noah Bin Nasser in the third year of his regin, when this dinar was struck, Al-Ray was under the power of the Buwayhids which was confirmed by Ibn Al-Atheer that in 333 A.H. Rukn Al-Dawla took over Al-Ray until Noah Bin Nasser sent an army with Abu Ali who went from Naisabour to al-Ray in Jumady the second which was by this time with Rukn Al-Dawla[36]. So it is clarified that al-Ray was under

[35] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 167.

[36] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: pp. 202-203.

the power of Rukn Al-Dawla from the year of 330 A.H. until Jumady the second in 333 A.H. Al-mostakfy took the caliphate in Safar 333 A.H. after al-Motaky[37]. So most probably the dinar struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 333 A.H. and preserved in the Islamic Art Museum was struck between Safar 333 A.H. which is the date of al-Mostakfy reigning the caliphate and jumady the second which is the date of controlling al-Ray by Noah Bin Nasser which continued until the year 334 A.H., when Rukn Al-Dawla took over Al-Ray again[38] which stayed under the power of Buwayhids for very long time.

The proof of what was mentioned above, is that the oldest Buwayhid dinar found till date struck in al-Muhamdiya was struck in 334 A.H.[39]. The Buwayhid dinars struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 334 A.H., and the dinar struck in 333 A.H. under the same mint name with surah Al-Ikhlas resemble in the general shape and inscriptions except for the texts of the filed on the obverse and reverse which came on the Buwayhid dinar struck in 334 A.H.[40] as follows:

Obverse Field	Reverse Field
لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له المطيع لله	لله محمد رسول الله عماد الدولة أبو الحسن ركن الدولة أبو علي

In light of what was mentioned above, it is obvious that Al-Ray was a field of conflict between the Buwayhids and Samanids as everyone tried hard to get over it for its great importance, and that the dinar struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 333 A.H. was struck between Safar and Jumady the second in 333 A.H. when Al- Muhamdiya was under the control of the Buwayhids.

It is now clear that the two dinars struck in Al- Muhamdiya with surah Al-Ikhlas on the field of the reverse, one of them struck in 333 A.H. and preserved in the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo, and the other is struck in 341 A.H. and preserved in the private collection of Mr. Mohamed Nato, have the name of the Samanid prince Noah Bin Nasser and the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mostakfy were struck during the time when Al- Muhamdiya was under the power of the Buwayhids. And the one who struck them was prince Noah Bin Nasser under the name of this mint despite that

37 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 188.

38 Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: pp. 216-219.

39 Treadwell 2001: p. 195.

40 Treadwell 2001: p. 195.

they were struck in another mint of the Samanids as we mentioned before; to proof that Al- Muhamdiya was following Noah Bin Nasser, and that writing surah Al-Ikhlas on it as a sign of confrontation against the Buwayhids who were controlling the Abbasids.

By comparing the dinar under study with the Buwayhid dinar struck by Rukn Al-Dawla in Al- Muhamdiya in 341 A.H.[41] we find that they resemble in the general shape and inscriptions except the inscriptions of the field of the obverse and the reverse on the Buwayhid dinar as follows:

Obverse Field	Reverse Field
لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له المطيع لله	لله محمد رسول الله ركن الدولة أبو علي بويه

The difference between the two dinars, is that the Buwayhid dinar has the testimony of Monotheism complete in three lines over the name of the Abbasid caliph Al-Motey le Allah, who was the contemporary caliph, while on the Samanid dinar the Muhammaden testimony came incomplete over the name of the Abbasid caliph Al-Mostakfy who was eliminated by the Buwayhids in 334 A.H., and died in 338 A.H. as it was mentioned before.

Besides, the inscriptions of the field of the reverse of the Buwayhid dinar come in six lines with the Muhammaden testimony incomplete, with the name of Buwayhid prince under it who was Rukn Al-Dawla Abu Ali, while on the field of the reverse of the Samanid dinar comes surah Al-Ikhlas in three horizontal lines.

It is worth mentioning that there is a Samanid dirham struck in Samarkand in 357 A.H., under the name of Noah Bin Nasser (350-366 A.H.) with surah Al-Ikhlas also on the field of the reverse[42], but there is a difference between it and the coin under study. The difference appears in the inscriptions of the field of the obverse and reverse, besides the type of coin, and the mint and date of struck; its inscriptions of obverse and reverse come as follows:

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41 Treadwell 2001: p. 197.

42 Kinawy 2000: pp. 231-232.

Obverse Field	Reverse Field
الله أحد الله الصمد لم يلد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفوا أحد المطيع لله منصور بن نوح	(عدل) لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له

The difference between this dirham struck in Samrkand in 357 A.H., and the coin under study is totally obvious; in the inscriptions of the field of obverse and reverse, the name of the Abbasid caliph and the Samanid prince, the type of coin, the mint and date of struck, and the circumstances of struck except for surah Al-Ikhlas on the field of obverse and reverse.

It is noted that the year this dirham was struck which is 357 A.H., there was a military conflict between the Samanids and Buwayhids, as Ibn Al-Atheer assured[43] that during the events of 357 A.H. He mentioned that Adud Al-Dawla took over Karman from Abu Ali Bin Elias who went to Mansour Bin Noah after his release from the castle's prison as he went to Bukhara where Mansour Bin Noah treated him kindly, and started to prepare and army to head to Al-Ray to face the Buwayhids. Ibn Al-Atheer[44], also mentions that Adud Al-Dawla went to Karman in Ramadan and took over it, when the political and military conflict between the Samanids and Buwayhids was still occurring until an agreement was made between them in 361 A.H., as Ibn Al-Atheer says[45] in the events of 361 A.H.: "there was a reconciliation held between prince Mansour Bin Noah - who controlled Khuarasan and Transoxiana – and Rukn Al-Dawla and his son Adud Al-Dawla, in return the two must send 250 thousand dinar annually. Noah married Adud Al-Dawla's daughter and took the presents and masterpieces for him. This reconciliation was written and witnessed by the seniors of Khurasan, Persia, and Iraq.

It is clear from the above that a Samanid dinar struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 333 A.H., under the name of prince Noah bin Mansour and bearing surah Al-Ikhlas complete on the field of the reverse, when Al- Muhamdiya was by this time under the control of the Buwayhids. And a Samanid dirham under the name of prince Mansour Bin Noah struck in Samarkand in 357 A.H., also bearing surah Al-Ikhlas was struck during the military conflict between the Samanids and Buwayhids. Besides, the dinar

[43] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: pp. 305-306.

[44] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 306.

[45] Ibn Al-Atheer 1987: p. 334.

under study struck in Al- Muhamdiya in 341 A.H. in the time of prince Noah Bin Nasser bears Surah Al-Iklas complete, when by this time Al- Muhamdiya was under the control of the Buwayhids and not the Samanids, so this three Samanid coins struck in Al- Muhamdiya and Samarkand bear surah Al-Ikhlas complete in the field of the reverse and were struck during the time of the military conflict between the Samanids and Buwayhids until it ended by a conciliation in 361 A.H.

In light of what was mentioned above, the dinar under study is unique in its prototype, date and circumstances of struck, which firstly to be published and studied, thus, it represents a new addition to the Sammanid coins in general, and the coins of Noah Bin Nasser in particular.

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NUMISMATIC FINDS FROM KAFIR KALA AS EVIDENCE OF THE ISLAMIC TRANSITION IN SAMARKAND

Abstract

The present article focuses on the numismatic finds by the Uzbek-Italian Archaeological Program "Samarkand and Its Territory" in the Sogdian and early Islamic site of Kafir Kala (Uzbekistan). The overall number of coins discovered at Kafir Kala amounts to 178. The major part of them came from the citadel. Beside many Sogdian copper coins of the 7th and first half of the 8th century, the most important discovery was an Abbasid dīnār and a hoard of 132 dirhams. The coins are described in their stratigraphic context. Kafir Kala represents a very important case-study for the comprehension of the changes in the monetary circulation in Sogdiana at the beginning of the Islamic expansion in Central Asia.

Keywords

Kafir Kala, Samarkand, Sogdians, Coins, Abbasid Hoard, Archaeology in Central Asia

INTRODUCTION (A. B., S. M)

The Uzbek-Italian Archaeological Program (UIAP) "Samarkand and Its Territory" began in 2001 as a collaboration between the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Science of Uzbekistan (IAASU) and the Department of Archaeology (later History and Cultures) of the University of Bologna (DHCUB). The main goal of this project was to learn more about the archaeological and historical heritage of one of the most important ancient Eurasian crossroads. Most of the efforts were therefore addressed to the creation of an updated digital archaeological map of the southern Middle Zeravshan Valley and a large exploration of the Samarkand territory[1]. More than 2,000 archaeological sites are positioned between the left bank of the Zeravshan River and the Karatyube range[2]. Further research activities studied human-environment interactions in this region[3], with special focus on the development of irrigation systems and the digging of targeted sites[4]. Among the latter, a long-term excavation interested in particular Kafir Kala.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMPLEX OF KAFIR KALA (A. B.)

The archeological complex of Kafir Kala is located 12 km (ca. 2 *farsakh*) southeast of Afrasiab, i.e. the city of Samarkand abandoned after the Mongol conquest of 1220 (Fig. 1). This site was built on the left bank of the Dargom canal, in a very strategic location that controlled one of the local south-north passages along the ancient Silk Road[5]. The site was defended on all four sides by the Dargom canal north, the natural Ilonsai and Yatanjarsai streams, respectively east and west, and a small artificial canal in the south. The overall extension of Kafir Kala is ca. 20 ha and it consists of a central quadrangular citadel, an inner moat with six towers (three north and three south), a living quarter (*shahristan*) that surrounded the citadel, an outer moat and an outer town (*rabat*) in the west (Fig. 2). A necropolis and an important kiln quarter were also part of this settlement. The necropolis was located just outside the southern *shahristan* and it yielded several terracotta ossuaries related to the Zoroastrian burial cult. The craft quarter, which had some tens of kilns for pottery production, was instead on the opposite side of the Ilonsai.

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1 Bonora *et al*. 2003; Shirinov, Tosi 2003; Berdimuradov *et al*. 2007; Tosi *et al*. 2007.

2 Mantellini, Berdimuradov 2016; Mantellini 2017a.

3 Rondelli, Tosi 2005; Mantellini 2017b.

4 Stride, Rondelli, Mantellini 2009; Mantellini, Rondelli, Stride 2011; Malatesta *et al*. 2012.

5 Mantellini, Berdimuradov 2005; Mantellini 2017b: p. 340.

Kafir Kala has been the subject of archaeological investigation since the early 20th century[6]. In an attempt to locate the Timurid garden of Davlatatabad, mentioned by the Castilian Ambassador Clavijo, the prominent Soviet archaeologist M. E. Masson prepared both a general map of the area of Kafir Kala and a detailed plan of the site[7]. A few years later, Sukharev investigated the necropolis, dated to the 6th-7th centuries CE thanks to the coins associated with the ossuaries, and he also discovered the industrial quarter on the right bank of the Ilonsai[8]. The kilns were then excavated in 1938-1940 by an expedition of the Institute of History and Material Culture of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR under the direction of G.V. Grigorev. Based on artefacts discovered during the excavation, including several Sogdian coins, Grigorev dated the occupation of this area to the 6th-7th century CE. Grigorev described in particular two copper coins discovered in a pit filling together with a lot of ceramic production waste at -3.90 m below ground surface[9]. Both coins were of the typical Chinese style, one with the inscription of Varxumān[10] (mid-7th century CE) and the second one mentioning the Sogdian ruler Ghūrak (first half of the 8th century CE). A third coin, minted by Tarxūn, Ghūrak's predecessor, was discovered in 1940 in Excavation no. 2 over an anthropic occupational level at a depth of -1.20 m. Grigorev suggested that these three coins belonged to the last phase of occupation of the industrial area. Between 1956 and 1957, on behalf of the Institute of History and Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, G. V. Shishkina carried out the excavation of a small mound also located on the right side of the Ilonsai, very close to the kilns investigated earlier by Grigorev[11]. This site was dated to the Early Middle Ages and its function raised different interpretations: rural manor or a small castle, or even a "tower of silence" (*dakhma*) used for Zoroastrian funerary rituals[12]. It is worth noting that the Soviet agrarian reforms of the 60s and 70s completely flattened the surroundings of Kafir Kala, thus the old information published, although scanty, is the only source of data available for both the necropolis and the right bank of the Ilonsai.

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[6] Mantellini, Berdimuradov 2005: pp. 121-124; Mantellini *et al*. 2016: pp. 227-228.

[7] Masson 1928.

[8] The results of Sukharev's research are available only in his unpublished report of 1938 "Nausy Kafyr-Kaly", stored at the Institute of History and Archaeology (today Institute for Archaeological Research) of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR (Manuscript no. 316). Some information is however mentioned by Grigorev 1940a: pp. 97-98; Grigorev 1946: pp. 94-95; Shishkina 1961: p. 208, note 21 and 212; Lebedeva 1999: p. 152.

[9] Grigorev 1946: pp. 95-96, Fig. 45, 2-3.

[10] The author actually reported the name "Vashumān" but also referred to him as the king of Samarkand who ruled Sogdiana between 650 and 655. See also Grigorev 1940a: p. 98; Grigorev 1940b: p. 32.

[11] Shishkina 1961.

[12] Lebedeva 1999.

Except for a preliminary excavation on the top of the eastern *shahristan* by O. V. Obelchenko in the late 60s[13], there was no significant archaeological activity until the early 90s, when the Institute of Archaeology of Samarkand started the excavation of the upper citadel[14]. Between 1991 and 1994, excavations focused on the squared bastion located on the northwestern corner, some rooms on the southern side, and a small area just inside the arched gate. The work opened the whole architecture of the bastion, with its inner partition and many embrasures overlooking east and west. The finds were of exceptional value: intact pottery forms, fragments of decorated plaster, a wooden bowl, wooden cutlery, textile fragments and one leather shoe, organic materials (such as nuts and fruit seeds), but also coins and clay sealings. According to the pottery and other materials, the chronology spanned late Sogdian-early Islamic periods (8th-9th centuries).

THE UIAP RESEARCH AT KAFIR KALA (S. M.)

A new season of research carried out by the UIAP began in 2001. Alongside resuming the excavation on the upper citadel KK-1 (seasons 2001-2002, 2005-2008, 2013-2014), new stratigraphic investigations concerned: i) a long trench between the northern *shahristan* and the Dargom (2001); ii) a series of test trenches along the middle-western profile between the citadel and the *rabat* (season 2002); iii) some test trenches at the base of the northern towers (season 2003); investigation of the handicraft quarter in the same area already tested by Grigorev in the '50s (seasons 2007-2008)[15].

Several investigations complied with the need to understand better: i) the chronology of Kafir Kala; ii) its role in the late Sogdian-early Islamic settlement pattern of the Samarkand region; and, iii) its relationship with the surrounding environment, in particular with the irrigation network based on the Dargom canal. Since 2013, an Uzbek-Japanese team also started investigating the citadel of Kafir Kala under the direction of G. Bogomolov and T. Uno[16].

The UIAP research on the citadel of Kafir Kala provided new important hints on the early islamization of ancient Sogdiana, when this site experienced a dramatic shift following the defeat of Samarkand by the army of Qutayba b. Muslim in 712 CE[17]. They revealed in particular two major periods of occupation (Fig. 3).

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[13] The results of this work are unfortunately unpublished.

[14] Berdimuradov, Samibaev 1995.

[15] Six kilns (coded A-F) were excavated in 2007-2008 under the direction of D. Giorgetti (UIAP).

[16] Begmatov *et al*. 2016; Usami *et al*. 2017.

[17] Berdimuradov *et al*. 2009; Mantellini *et al*. 2016; Grenet, de La Vaissière 2002.

The pre-Islamic record refers to the exceptional discovery of a set of over 700 clay sealings, which is the largest hitherto discovered in the whole Early Medieval Central Asia[18]. Most of the sealings were scattered over a very hard and compact beaten earthen floor (SU 29)[19] covered by a thick layer of burnt and collapsed beams belonging to a wooden portico. This considerable burnt evidence was certainly connected to a dramatic event that possibly occurred at the very beginning of the 8th century and caused the abandonment of the citadel. It has to do with the role of Kafir Kala in the socio-political scenario of pre-Islamic Samarkand. Such a large number of sealings suggests that Kafir Kala was the locus of a very important administrative center[20] and possibly even a royal residence (called *Rēwdād*) of the pre-Islamic kings (*ikhshīds*) of Samarkand[21]. The name of Kafir Kala itself, "castle of the infidels", as well as its monumental fortification and complex defensive systems, are further proofs supporting the hypothesis advanced above.

The citadel was resettled soon after the fire but with significant changes. A large amount of pottery, new architectural installations, and several fireplaces (around 60) show how, during the Islamic period, the citadel of Kafir Kala was used for residential purposes. Most of the pre-Islamic monumental walls, as well as construction materials, were reused for new rooms and living spaces. The building technique of the Islamic period here was, however, remarkably worse when compared to the previous one. The inner central courtyard, i.e. the core of the pre-Islamic citadel, where the archive was possibly stored, was left empty and used to discharge pottery, animal bones and architectural remains, including baked bricks and tiles. Nevertheless, the discovery of a hoard of 132 coins in Room 2 (see below Season 2006) suggested that the site was still occupied by someone important and it possibly still played a decisive role in the local economy (on this first interpretation see below).

EXCAVATION OF THE UPPER CITADEL KK-1: STRATIGRAPHY, ARCHITECTURE AND DISCOVERIES

The overall number of coins discovered by the UIAP at Kafir Kala amounts to 178 (Table 1). The major part (168 coins) came from the citadel KK-1, four coins were discovered in the soundings at the base of the northeastern tower (2003), and one from the long trench on the Dargom canal (2001). Moreover, five coins were col-

[18] This figure includes also the circa 200 sealings discovered by the Uzbek-Japanese team between 2013-2017 (Begmatov *et al*. 2016: p. 117).

[19] This floor was wrongly mentioned as SU 15 in Mantellini *et al*. 2016: p. 228.

[20] Cazzoli, Cereti 2005; Mantellini *et al*. 2016.

[21] Berdimuradov, Mantellini, Matbabaev 2007; Grenet 2010: pp. 271-272.

lected randomly by local people in the area of Kafir Kala. No coins came from the kilns KK-2 (2007-2008) and from the test trenches between the citadel and the *rabat* (2002).

Here below is a description of the coins discovered during the UIAP excavation on the upper citadel of Kafir Kala (KK-1) according to the year of excavation and their stratigraphic context (Fig. 4).

Seasons 2001 and 2002

The start of the UIAP[22] activities began with an almost L-shaped sounding measuring 10 x 5 m, oriented southwest-northeast, just in proximity of the arched gate. Despite the small surface opened, the excavation resulted in the discovery of a thick burnt layer (SU 1) covering a hard and compact earthen floor (SU 29) at -7.00 m[23] with 296 clay sealings scattered on it, three earthen *sufa* (SUs 27, 32 and 33), and 4 wooden column bases (SUs 23, 26, 31 and 34) (see Fig. 4). Although the potsherds from the layers covering the floor SU 29 were few and little diagnostic, it was possible to date this level to the late 7th-early 8th century, likely at the time of the Arab conquest of Samarkand[24].

The number of coins discovered was ten: six Sogdian of the Chinese type and four Islamic ones. However, none of them came from the pre-Islamic layers. One coin (no. 10), dated to the Abbasid Caliphate, was discovered inside the floor SU 15, which is one of the earliest Islamic levels recorded. Otherwise, the coins came from the upper layers (SUs 4, 6, 8, and 10) that were either sporadic late Islamic occupations or followed the final citadel abandonment.

In 2002 the excavation was enlarged to the northeastern corner of 2001. Investigations concerned also some limited soundings along the upper citadel's border in order to open its perimeter walls. Again, several burnt wooden beams (SU 13) and 88 sealings were discovered over the same pre-Islamic floor (SU 29) of the previous campaign[25], but no coins were found.

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[22] Tosi *et al*. 2002: pp. 345-350.

[23] The depth refers to the main topographical station placed on the top of the citadel (see Figs. 3 and 4). Because of erosion of the high perimeter walls, the inner deposit of the citadel has a typical convex-shaped profile, which is higher on its side and lower in the center. The topsoil is therefore attested at a different depth from the main station and it is lowest in the center of the citadel (-5.20 m).

[24] Cazzoli, Cereti 2005, pp. 134-137; Mantellini *et al*. 2016: p. 228.

[25] The number of sealings recorded during the 2002 excavation was actually 116 because 28 sealings were discovered after the sifting of the dumps from the 1991-1994 excavations (Cazzoli, Cereti 2005: p. 134).

Seasons 2005-2008

After a hiatus of two years[26], stratigraphic operations on the citadel restarted in 2005. The limits of the 2002 excavation were enlarged by 5 m at east, 3 m at north and 6.5 m at west, for a total surface of 22 x 14 m, with the goal of reaching the earthen floor SU 29. The archaeological deposit was very similar to that opened in 2001-2002 and another set of 83 sealings were unearthed (SU 22 = SU 14).[27] They were clustered in two different groups in the central part of the citadel, with the remains of a very thick burnt layer (SUs 19, 20, 21, 24) made of many wooden beams on their sides (Fig. 5). After their collapse, this layer sealed the floor underneath (SU 29) and thirteen wooden column bases, also burned and carved into the same floor. The L-shaped layout of the 17 column bases suggests the presence of a wooden portico that surrounded an inner courtyard and it possibly continued northward below the archaeological deposit.

Fifteen coins were found in 2005: eight of the Chinese type and seven were Islamic. Unlike the coins discovered in the first season, four Sogdian coins (coin nos. 30-33) came from the pre-Islamic layers and two of them were closely connected with the fire. Coin no. 31 (SU 21) was minted under the ruler Urk Vartārmuk (675-696 CE)[28] while coin no. 33 (SU 24) dates to Tarxūn (700-710 CE).[29] A second coin (no. 32) from SU 21 is illegible, whereas coin no. 30 (SU 17) belongs to Turgār (738-750 CE) and it was used in the preparation (SU 17) of the floor SU 15 so it was likely in a secondary context. The diagnostic pottery found in those layers is of little use to establish chronology[30]. Coins no. 31 and no. 33, however, deserve special attention because they represent a *terminus post quem* for dating the fire. Coin no. 31, in particular, dates to Tarxūn and it came from the same filling SU 24 of the clay sealings. The dramatic event that forced the people of Kafir Kala to abandon their settlement can be therefore framed in the years of the conquest of Samarkand, possibly exactly 712 CE or about. The hypothesis of the fire during Tarxūn's reign was also advanced by the Uzbek-Japanese team on the basis of the coins found within the same fire layer[31].

The other coins came from sporadic Islamic occupations or accumulations after the citadel abandonment: one coin from SU 4 (no. 19, Islamic), SU 8 (no. 26, Sogdian), SU 10 (no. 27, Islamic), SU 11 (no. 28, Islamic), and SU 12 (no. 29,

[26] Since 2005 the excavation of Kafir Kala was co-directed by A. Berdimuradov and S. Mantellini.

[27] An extension of 4 x 1 m on the northern border was done to verify the presence of additional sealings within the largest cluster.

[28] Cf. Gariboldi 2011: p. 182, no. 30.

[29] Cf. Gariboldi 2011: p. 182, no. 27.

[30] Dimartino 2011: p. 39.

[31] Begmatov *et al*. 2016: p. 117; Usami *et al*. 2017: p. 789.

Sogdian); two coins from SU 5 (no. 20, Sogdian and no. 22, Islamic); and four coins from SU 6 (no. 22, Sogdian and nos. 23-25 Islamic).

The aim of the 2006 season was to enlarge the excavation sideways in order to expose the pre-Islamic floor up to the eastern and western perimeter walls of the upper citadel. However, soon after the beginning of work, an unexpected but important Islamic structure was found on the western side just over the layer with the burnt wooden beams SU 21 (Fig. 6). It consisted of two small rooms (nos. 2 and 3) leaned up to the eastern perimeter wall of the citadel. Room 2 was particularly well-defined in its rectangular shape (11.50 x 4.20 m) and with a C-shaped earthen *sufa* (SU 90) on the eastern and southern borders. A hoard of 132 coins (nos. 36-167) was hidden inside a circular pit (SU 40 and in SU 41 its filling), 0.50 m in diameter, which was cut into the *sufa* itself at -5.05 m.[32] (Fig. 7). Most of these coins (128) are Abbasid silver *dirhams* but the hoard also included two Sasanian drachms and three Umayyad *dirhams*. In addition, during the removal of this room in 2013, the Uzbek-Japanese team discovered a gold coin of the early Abbasid period a few meters south of the hoard[33] (Fig. 8). Rooms 2 and 3 were opened just below the topsoil (the top of the wall SU of Room 2 was at -3.40 m) so the ceramic sherds from the upper fillings do not provide a coherent chronology. This is supported by the discovery of a Sogdian coin (no. 35) in a filling (SU 2) just below the topsoil at -4.86 m, hence certainly in a secondary context. However, even in this case, the coins from the hoard indicate that this room, which was built exactly over the layer of the burnt wooden beams, dates to the earliest Islamic occupation of Kafir Kala (Fig. 6). One typical dome-shaped oven (FS no. 8), also known as *tandir* and still used today in the rural countryside[34], was carved into the wall SU 153 outside Room 3 and suggests that these rooms had a prevailing domestic use (Fig. 4).

In the same campaign, a third coin (no. 34) was found in the eastern side of the excavation. This is a Samanid *fals* that came from a filling (SU 60) associated with a structured fireplace (FS no. 3) at -4.61 m. According to a practice largely attested at Kafir Kala during the Islamic period, the fireplace was carved into a previous *pakhsa* wall (SU 57). In this case, the bottom of the FS no. 3, together with a second fireplace (FS no. 2), corresponds to the floor of the Islamic period SU 15 that here was cut by postholes (Fig. 9).

The 2007 season yielded only one coin (no. 168), inside an upper deposit (SU 123 at -2.47 m) that filled both rooms 8 and 9. This coin is dated to the Sogdian king Urk Vartārmuk (675-696 CE) but it was clearly in a secondary context. The poor pottery

[32] Berdimuradov *et al*. 2009: p. 247; Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012.

[33] Begmatov *et al*. 2016: p. 118.

[34] di Cugno, Mantellini, Berdimuradov 2013: pp. 103-105.

does not allow an accurate chronology but one ceramic sherd possibly dates to the Samanid period (9th-10th centuries)[35].

In 2008 it was decided to extend the excavation northward in order to systematically investigate the Islamic occupation over the entire citadel. Eight new rooms (nos. 10-17) were uncovered by the end of the season (Fig. 6). All of them dated to the pre-Islamic period but it is impossible at present to establish their original function. Later, they were readapted for domestic and living purposes, as testified by the presence of several fire structures (23 opened in 2008). The most significant discovery came from rooms 10 and 11, where four different occupation levels witnessed an uninterrupted use of this space as a kitchen. It is especially remarkable the discovery in Room 11 of two *tandirs*[36]. Rooms 10-11 were created inside the long pre-Islamic western corridor by closing it with a small wall (SU 125) in the south, while in the north they were connected to Room 14 (the former circular tower of the pre-Islamic period) by a threshold (SU 480) made of baked bricks. One Islamic copper coin (no. 172) was discovered at -1.62 m in the filling SU 285 (phase IV of Room 11), which was interpreted as underlay for the mud floor SU 284 (Fig. 10). Although this coin is unfortunately unidentifiable, it was associated with a Kharakhanid ceramic sherd dated to the 10th-11th centuries and a handmade bottle fragment decorated with a painted red spiral and concentric circles attested at Afrasiab since the 10th century[37]. A further confirmation of this late chronology comes also from the underlying layers, which belonged to a temporary abandonment of this room (phase III) and contained material dated from the end of the 8th up to the 10th centuries.

A second coin (no. 171) was found in Room 7 that, like Room 11, was obtained inside the pre-Islamic corridor and it also presented different levels of occupation. This coin was discovered inside the wall SU 265 (-2.03 m), mixed with the mud and the straws of the *pakhsa* (Fig. 11). It is impossible to establish whether it was mixed within the *pakhsa* intentionally or not. Together with a floor (SUs 300 and 331) made of small mud blocks, this wall belongs to phase IV of Room 7, which is characterized by the absence of pottery. Despite its stratigraphic complexity, Room 7 yielded in fact very poor diagnostic sherds so its dating remains rough: a fragment of a Samanid dish was found in the filling of the earlier phase (phase III); on the contrary, the last phase of occupation of this room (phase V) was marked by a floor (SU 117) made of reused baked bricks.

Finally, a coin (no. 170) of the Bukhārkhudāt type was discovered at the beginning of this season in a 5 x 5 m sounding outside rooms 3 and 7 and near the border of the 2005 excavation. However, this coin came from a natural filling (SU 2 at -5.22 m),

[35] Dimartino 2011: p. 46.

[36] di Cugno, Mantellini, Berdimuradov 2013: pp. 103-105.

[37] Mantellini *et al*. 2016: p. 233.

which followed the final abandonment of the site and the materials associated to it are also too heterogeneous to allow for an accurate dating.

Seasons 2013 and 2014

The last two seasons of the UIAP at Kafir Kala focused on the southern half of the citadel with the aim of reaching the pre-Islamic earthen floor SU 29 discovered in 2001-2002 and 2005. In 2013 activities interested the sounding begun in 2008 almost in the center of the citadel (coin no. 171). As expected after the previous discoveries, this area was characterized by the absence of architectural remains.[38] On the contrary, there was a considerable presence of natural and anthropic fillings, such as two large wastes of baked tiles SU 718 and SU 735 at -6.70 m. The only significant architectural remain was the small wall SU 610 that delimited Room 3 in the north. The floor SU 29 was covered by some burnt wooden fragments, however, similarly to what discovered in 2001-2002 and 2005, the wooden remains in the central part of the citadel were remarkably less than those on its sides. Two copper coins (nos. 174 and 175) were discovered in the central sounding. Both are highly damaged: coin no. 174 is broken in four fragments, while coin no. 175 is preserved less than its half. The former came from SU 683, right below the northern section of the sounding, at -6.17 m; the latter from the filling SU 695 that covered the southern half of the sounding at -6.34 m. Since both SUs were slightly higher than the burnt wooden pieces (SUs 733, 748, 751-754) covering the pre-Islamic floor at -6.35/-6.70 m, they arguably belong to the earliest Islamic occupation of the citadel.

In 2014 work focused on the southeastern part of the citadel, including Room 9 and the Islamic floor SU 15 outside of it. Due to time constraints, the excavation could not reach the pre-Islamic floor SU 29. It stopped at the height of a burnt layer (SU 889) with several wooden fragments comparable to SU 13 of 2001-2002 and SUs 19, 20, 21 and 24 of 2005. Ten fire structures were opened, hence confirming a prevailing domestic function of the Kafir Kala citadel during the Islamic period. Three copper coins (no. 176, Sogdian, and nos. 177-178, unidentified) were discovered in the SU 807 at -4.58/-4.97m. This layer had many materials such as pottery, bones, glass, and also four clay sealings. It was interpreted as a preparation of the floor SU 819, which therefore belongs to the earliest reoccupation of the citadel after the fire.

[38] The only significant architectural feature discovered in that season was the small wall SU 601 closing Room 3 north.

MONETARY CIRCULATION IN KAFIR KALA (A. G.)

Single Coin Finds

The coin finds from Kafir Kala testify the important role that the citadel had both during the Sogdian and the early Islamic period. The pre-Islamic numismatic evidence, considering the material discovered by the UIAP (see above), is composed of 21 Sogdian copper coins (called *fen*) and one anonymous silver drachm of the Bukhārkhudāt, struck in the first half of the 8th century. This exemplar (Table 2, no. 170, fig. 12) was found in the south-western port of the citadel, in a superficial layer (SU 2). It is noteworthy that the Bukhārkhudāt coins normally circulated in Sogdiana mixed with Islamic reformed dirhams, as I have recently shown in a more general study concerning Sasanian coins and their imitations in Tajikistan[39]. Without doubt, the majority of Sogdian coins that were used in Kafir Kala are those of the "Sino-Sogdian" type (coin no. 4, fig. 13). Such coins were widely introduced in Samarkand after 630, when the Sogdian confederation became almost independent, although it nominally recognized the sovereignty of China. The local Sogdian lords adopted a fiduciary copper coinage that directly derives from the Tang model, the so called "kai yuan tong bao" coins (minted after 621). This class of Sogdian coins is easily recognizable from the fabric technique: coins have a thin cast module with a characteristic central square hole, encircled by a flat rim. The Sogdian kings of Samarkand put their names on the coins, normally accompanied by the prestigious title of MLK', "king", notwithstanding their authority was limited to the oasis of Samarkand and its mountainous hinterland along the Upper Zeravshan valley. On the coin reverse there is no inscription but the symbols (*tamgha*) of the most prominent clans, and in particular the emblem of Samarkand, formed by a ring with three hooks. This heraldic design was also found on a clay *bulla* coming from Kafir Kala excavations[40]. Thus, the presence of the symbol of Samarkand in the administrative archive means that the seal is contemporaneous to the Sogdian coins of late 7th and first half of the 8th century.

The poor Sogdian copper coinage was largely used along the Zeravshan river and served to pay modest salaries to local farmers and peasants[41], who probably were also employed to dig water canals around Samarkand. The oldest Sogdian coins from the area of Kafir Kala consist of three pieces of Urk Vartārmuk (c. 675-696) (Gariboldi 2011, nos. 6, 11, 30), five coins of Tarxūn (c. 700-710) (Gariboldi 2011,

[39] Gariboldi 2017: pp. 27-34 (coin no. 170 corresponds to SNS-Tajikistan Type Ie1/1a).

[40] Cazzoli, Cereti 2005: pp. 145-146, fig. 11; Grenet 2010: p. 272, fig. 13b.

[41] Thousands of Sogdian copper coins came from regular excavations in Penjikent, see Smirnova 1981.

nos. 2, 4, 12, 13, 27), four of Ghūrak (710-738) (Gariboldi 2011, nos. 25, 28, 29, 31), and finally five coins of Turgār (738-750) (Gariboldi 2011, nos. 3, 8, 9, 10, 26), who was the last Sogdian king who struck coins before the Arab conquest of this region[42]. Even if many Sogdian coins came from superficial archaeological levels (see Table 2), which are not significant to establish a certain chronology, some coins, on the contrary, like nos. 31 and 33, Urk Vartārmuk and Tarxun respectively, are important for fixing a sure Sogdian presence when the Arabs took Samarkand in 712 and set fire in Kafir Kala (cf. above). The finding of Sogdian copper coins in Islamic levels may be considered as residual. In some cases, it is possible that upper structures of the castle had collapsed over rooms that were still used during the Islamic period for domestic purposes.

In 2016 the Uzbek-Japanese team has found in the southern part of the citadel about 165 Sogdian copper coins of the middle 7th century[43], a further proof of the abundant monetization of Kafir Kala as strategic center that continued during the Islamic period too. The Arabs reused at least for two centuries some old Sogdian rooms, main evidence of this frequentation are numismatic and pottery materials. Copper *fulūs* have been found in Islamic strata (coins nos. 10, 24, 27, 28, 34) datable from the Umayyad age up to the Samanid period (coin no. 34, fig. 15). Three Abbasid *fulūs* are from the Bukhārā mint in 151 H. (768) (coin no. 27, fig. 14)[44], the Samanid *fals* was struck in Samarkand in 244 H. (858/59). The richness of this archaeological site is further demonstrated by the discovery (2013) of a gold *dīnār* of the early Abbasid period in Room 2 near a pot (figs. 8 and 16). It is an anonymous "mintless" *dīnār* struck in Iraq in year 135 H. (752) and represents the first standard emission of gold coins issued by the Abbasids[45]. It does not seem likely that this gold coin was pertinent to the silver Islamic hoard (infra), even though it has been found in the same room (but not in the same pit into the ground), where a lot of pottery fragments and traces of fire for cooking were also found.

The Islamic silver hoard

A hoard of Islamic dirhams was discovered in 2006 in Room 2 (cf. above for the archaeological context in details, coin nos. 36-167). It was hidden inside a pit dug in the

[42] Gariboldi 2015.

[43] Usami *et. al*. 2017: p. 791; Begmatov *et al*. 2016: pp. 117-118.

[44] Curiously these *fulūs* from Bukhārā, issued under the authority of al-Junayd b. Khālid, are the first Islamic coins bearing the word *al-imām* as caliph's title in the reverse margin. Cf. Nastich 2012: p. 157. Many similar coins were also found in Penjikent, see Smirnova 1963: pp. 151-152, nos. 916-926. On al-Mahdī's titles see Bates 2003.

[45] Bernardi 2009: p. 105, type 51; Lowick 1996: xxix-xxxiv.

corner of the earthen *sufa* (SU 90). It consists of 132 coins (about 350 g of silver): two fragmented and clipped Sasanian drachms of Husraw II (591-628), three Umayyad and 127 Abbasid dirhams[46]. Most of the coins were minted in the second half of the 8th century. Both Husraw II's drachms were likely struck in Shiraz (Pahlavi mint marked with the initial letters ŠY), which was very prolific during the second part his reign[47]. These coins are dated respectively to year 25 (616) and 35 (626) of Husraw II[48], so represent here the oldest coins. It is clear from the hoard record in general that Sasanian coins continued to circulate throughout the Umayyad and into the early Abbasid period as well[49]. Concerning the three Umayyad dirhams, they were struck in Dimashq year 79 H., al-Taymara 96 H. (part of the city of Isfahan active only between 90-98 H.) and Wāsiṭ 120 H. (figs. nos. 17-19). The 127 Abbasid dirhams (figs. 20-22) were minted between 140 H. and 190 H. (805/6), thus the hoard was closed at the very beginning of the 9th century. The most recent dirhams are from the mint of al-Shāsh (modern Tashkent) struck in 190 H. (805/6), but the majority of pieces were issued by the mints of Madīnat al-Salām (23 coins), al-Muḥammadīya (39 coins) in Jibal region, and Balkh (35 coins) in Khurāsān. The composition of the hoard by different Abbasid mints is shown in the graph (fig. 23)[50].

If we look at the mints, the hoard appears perfectly coherent with the monetary circulation in Transoxiana at that time. Thus, in order to know the (possible) reason/s of its hiding, being evident that it was not a casual loss of money, we should consider some historical reason. Two factors seem relevant to clarify this question: i) the chronology, and ii) the geographic provenance of the most recent dirhams of the hoard, which were struck in Balkh in 189 H. and Ma'din al-Shāsh, "the mine of al-Shāsh" in 189-190 H. (804-806). In particular, this new eastern mint was opened exactly during these two years, perhaps by order of the caliph, using silver that was freshly extracted from the rich mines located near the city of al-Shāsh[51]. But in 190 H. (805-806) the situation drastically changed, as Rāfi' b. Layth, who was member of a powerful Muslim family in Samarkand and grandson of Naṣr

[46] Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012, with full misinterpretation by Atakhodjaev of the two Sasanian coins described at p. 165.

[47] See Tyler-Smith 2017: pp. 128-130, for an up to date discussion about the attribution of Sasanian coins to the mint of Shiraz in Fārs or other possible places, marked with the mint abbreviation ŠY.

[48] Cf. Baratova, Schindel, Rtveladze 2012, pp. 142-145, nos. 371 and 375.

[49] Heidemann 1998: p. 105.

[50] Cf. Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012: p. 164.

[51] Bates, forthcoming. I thank the author for passing me his unpublished but very interesting paper.

b. Sayyār (last local governor on behalf of the Umayyads)[52], rebelled against the Abbasid governor of Khurāsān, ʻAlī b. ʻĪsā b. Māhān[53], even forcing him to abandon his seat at Balkh[54]. Thus Rāfiʻ b. Layth, supported by the "Lords of al-Shāsh" and many Turkish people from Farghāna and other places, was able to take control over Samarkand for some time[55]. Because of such serious political instability, both the important mints of Balkh and Maʻdin al-Shāsh were shut down in 190 H. The rising of Rāfiʻ was put down some years later. Therefore, it is not by chance that Islamic standard silver coinage began again in Transoxiana in 193 H., only after the re-establishment of the official Abbasid authority in the region[56].

The Islamic hoard from Kafir Kala significantly includes the very last emissions of Balkh and Maʻdin al-Shāsh coined just before the rebellion of Rāfiʻ b. Layth in Samarkand followed by the closure of these mints, and on the contrary, it does not contain coins struck after 193 H., when political order was restored by local Abbasid authorities. It is therefore highly probable that the coins in question were hidden in a safe place by someone who was involved in or alarmed by Rāfiʻ b. Layth's upset.

CONCLUSIONS (S. M., A. G.)

The numismatic discoveries from the citadel of Kafir Kala provide further information on the transformation in Samarkand after the Arab conquest of the early 8th century. On one hand, they provide a useful chronological marker to be combined with, or supplying information in place of, the ceramic remains when they not allow for an accurate dating of their provenance layers. Coin no. 33, for example, dates to Tarxūn (700-710) and it was found exactly in association with the clay sealings abandoned on the floor because of the fire. On the other hand, many coins from the citadel of Kafir Kala were clearly in a secondary context. For example, the major part of the Sogdian coins found in upper strata belong to either Islamic occupations or natural accumulations. This is the case of coin nos. 35 and 170 from SU 2, as well as other

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[52] Grenet 2008.

[53] Ṭabarī, III, 707-708 (Cf. Bosworth 1989: pp. 259-261).

[54] Ṭabarī, III, 713, reports a curious history about a big coin hoard found at that time (191 H.) after the flight of ʻAlī b. ʻĪsā: «ʻAlī set off from Balkh and arrived at Marw, fearing that Rāfiʻ b. al-Layth would march against it and take control of it. Now his son ʻĪsā had buried a huge hoard of money in the garden of his house at Balkh, reportedly amounting to thirty million (dirhams) in value» (Bosworth 1989: p. 269). This telling is a further proof of the common practice of hiding money in similar circumstances of the Kafir Kala hoard.

[55] Cf. Ṭabarī, III, 712 (Bosworth 1989: p. 267); concerning Rāfiʻ b. Layth's rebellion see Barthold 1928: pp. 200-201.

[56] Bates, forthcoming.

coins discovered in upper fillings such as SU 4, 5 and 6. They only give some basic information on their presence on this site but they cannot be contextualized in a more detailed occupation level.

A further consideration concerns the hoard of silver *dirhams* and the Abbasid *dīnār* from Room 2. Since its discovery, it was considered as the proof that a prominent person occupied the citadel of Kafir Kala soon after the Arab conquest at the beginning of the 8th century. Despite the UIAP excavation demonstrated that the citadel of Kafir Kala changed significantly its function before and after the coming of Islam, from an important administrative center to residential unit, this hoard was interpreted as a persisting important economic role of this settlement in the regional socio-political scenario. The new interpretation, based on both numismatic and historical data, provides instead a different perspective: it seems reasonable to assume that the hoard was buried – and then never recovered – because of the political troubles in Samarkand provoked by the rebellion of Rāfi‘ b. Layth in 806. This event caused a sudden suspension of the Abbasid silver minting activity in the whole region and might have stimulated coin hoarding. It is also likely that Room 2, which was built on the ruins of the collapsed pre-Islamic wooden portico, already existed at the time when the hoard was hidden inside it. The lack of both later structures and rebuilding and artefacts suggests that this room was probably abandoned after its occupation, whoever hid the hoard there. In conclusion, we may say that Kafir Kala represents a very important case-study for the comprehension of the changes in the monetary circulation in Sogdiana at the beginning of the Islamic expansion in Central Asia.

Acknowledgments

The authors express their deep gratitude to all the colleagues, students, and workers who made possible the research at Kafir Kala and the work at the Institute of Archaeology in Samarkand. A special thank goes to Serena di Cugno, Gennadiy Bogomolov, Bakhijon Matbabaev, Timur Ochilov and Khomil Rakhimov for their assistance during the daily excavation and the later data processing. Thanks also to Michael Bates, for his very kind and useful suggestions during the preparation of the present paper, as well as to Anvar Atakhodjaev, Takao Uno and Alisher Begmatov for sharing information on numismatic finds from Kafir Kala. We would like also to sincerely thank the organizers of the 5th Simone Assemani Symposium, Arianna D'Ottone Rambach and Bruno Callegher, for their invitation to take part in the conference held in Rome.

TABLES (S. M., A. G.)

Table 1

Season	Location	Coins	Notes
2001	Citadel - KK-1	10	
2001	Trench North	1	
2003	Test Trenches Northern Towers	4	All from the sounding NEW
2005	Citadel - KK-1	15	
2006	Citadel - KK-1	134	132 from hoard SU 41
2007	Citadel - KK-1	1	
2008	Citadel - KK-1	3	
2013	Citadel - KK-1	2	
2014	Citadel - KK-1	3	
2001-2014	Sporadic discoveries	5	2001, 2002 (2), 2007, 2008
	Total	**178**	

Table 2 – Coins discovered by the UIAP excavation at the citadel of Kafir Kala – KK1
(* still under study; ** coins illustrated)

Coin ID	Season	Type	Authority/ Dating	Provenance	Chrono	Reference
Coin 01	2001	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 4	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 21
Coin 02	2001	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 4	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 22
Coin 03	2001	SOGD	Turgār	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 9
Coin 04**	2001	SOGD	Turgār	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 10
Coin 05	2001	SOGD	Tarxūn	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 12
Coin 06	2001	SOGD	Illegible	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 16
Coin 07	2001	SOGD	Illegible	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 17
Coin 08	2001	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 8	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 14
Coin 09	2001	SOGD	Illegible	KK-1, SU 10	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 15

Coin 10	2001	ISL	Abbāsid fals Bukhārā 151 H.	KK-1, SU 15	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 20
Coin 19	2005	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 4	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 34
Coin 20	2005	SOGD	Ghūrak	KK-1, SU 5	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 31
Coin 21	2005	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 5	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 36
Coin 22	2005	SOGD	Ghūrak	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 25
Coin 23	2005	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 32
Coin 24	2005	ISL	Umayyad fals	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 37
Coin 25	2005	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 6	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 38
Coin 26	2005	SOGD	Ghūrak	KK-1, SU 8	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 29
Coin 27**	2005	ISL	Abbāsid fals Bukhārā 151 H.	KK-1, SU 10	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 39
Coin 28	2005	ISL	Abbāsid fals Bukhārā 151 H.	KK-1, SU 1	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 33
Coin 29	2005	SOGD	Ghūrak	KK-1, SU 1	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 28
Coin 30	2005	SOGD	Turgār	KK-1, SU 17	SOGD	Gariboldi 2011, no. 26
Coin 31	2005	SOGD	Urk Vartarmūk	KK-1, SU 21	SOGD	Gariboldi 2011, no. 30
Coin 32	2005	SOGD	Illegible	KK-1, SU 21	SOGD	Gariboldi 2011, no. 35
Coin 33	2005	SOGD	Tarxūn	KK-1, SU 24	SOGD	Gariboldi 2011, no. 27
Coin 34**	2006	ISL	Samanid fals Samarqand 244 H.	KK-1, SU 60	ISL	Previously unpublished
Coin 35	2006	SOGD	Turgār	KK-1, SU 2	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 3
Coin 36-167 ** 6 coins illustrated	2006	ISL	‘Abbāsid period up to 190 H.	KK-1 hoard SU 41	ISL	Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012
Coin 168	2007	SOGD	Urk Vartarmūk	KK-1, SU 123	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 6
Coin 170**	2008	ISL	Bukhārkhudāt drachm. First half of 8th century	KK-1, SU 2	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 1
Coin 171	2008	ISL	Illegible	KK-1, SU 265	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 7
Coin 172	2008	ISL	Illegible fals	KK-1, SU 285	ISL	Gariboldi 2011, no. 5
Coin 174*	2013	UNID	-	KK-1, SU 683	ISL	
Coin 175*	2013	UNID	-	KK-1, SU 695	ISL	
Coin 176*	2014	SOGD	-	KK-1, SU 807	ISL	
Coin 177*	2014	UNID	-	KK-1, SU 807	ISL	
Coin 178*	2014	UNID	-	KK-1, SU 807	ISL	

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CAPTIONS

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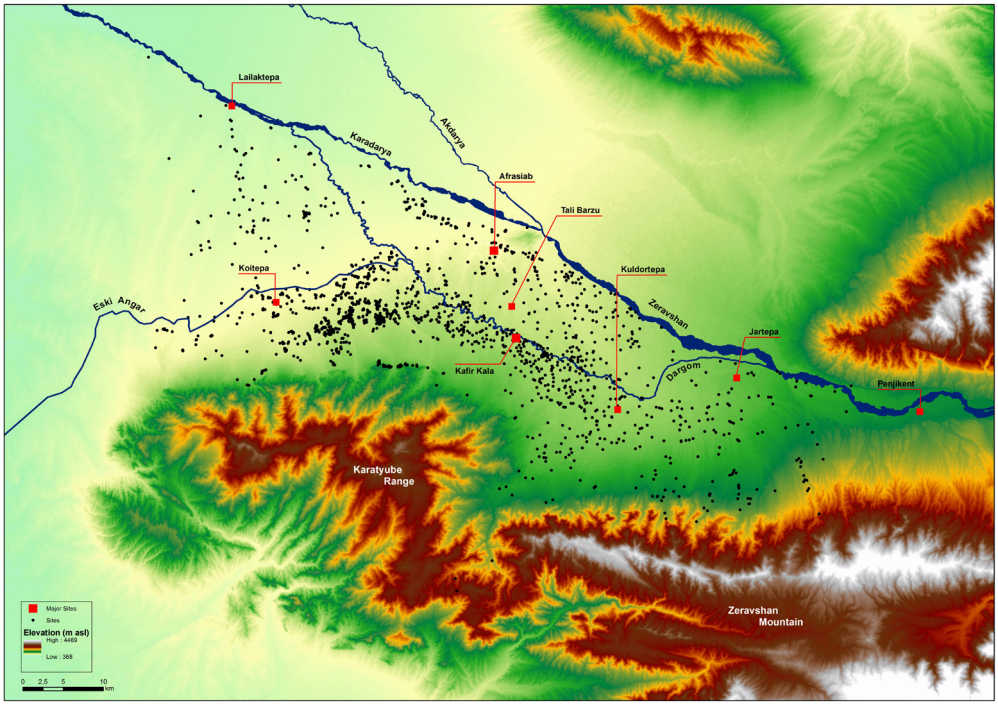


Figure 1 – Archaeological map of the southern Samarkand oasis after the Uzbek-Italian survey (Aster GDEM on the background)

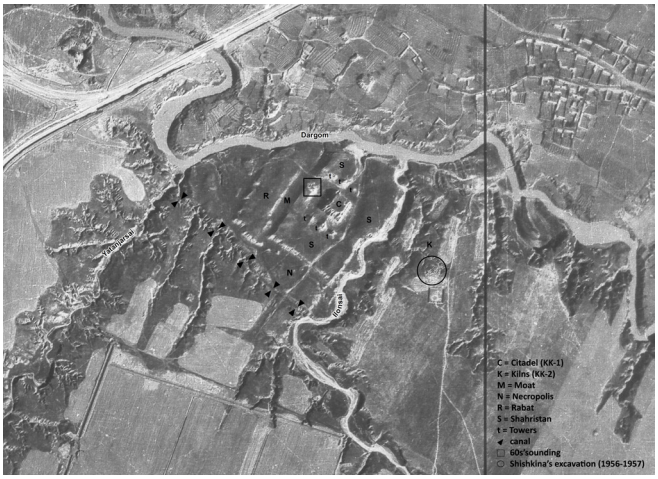


Figure 2 – The archaeological complex of Kafir Kala on the aerial picture of the early 70s

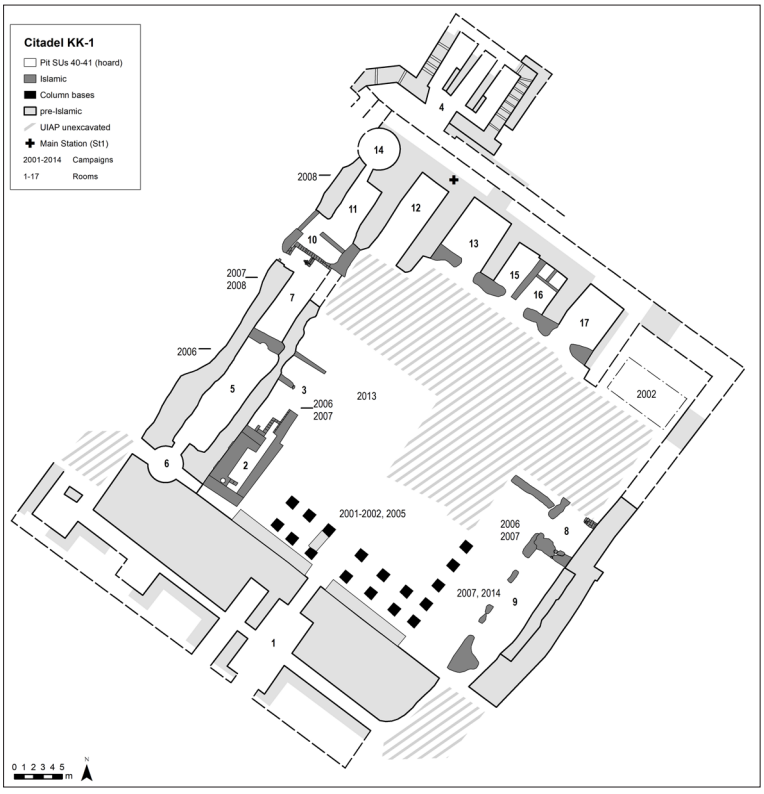


Figure 3 – Upper Citadel of Kafir Kala (KK-1):
main pre-Islamic and Islamic architectural evidences and rooms

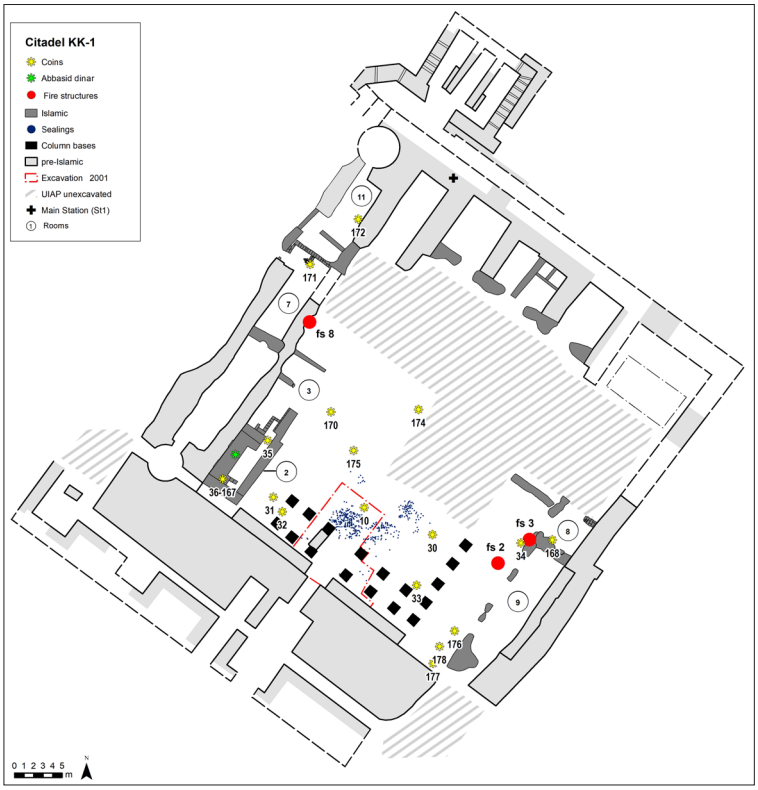


Figure 4 – Upper Citadel of Kafir Kala (KK-1): main numismatic, archaeological and architectural evidences



Figure 5 – The burnt wooden beams SU 21 covering the western part of the pre-Islamic floor SU 29 during the 2005 excavation (view from East)



Figure 6 – The architectural remains of the Islamic occupation in the western and northern inner side of the citadel of Kafir Kala (view from East, June 2008)



Figure 7 – Room 2 at the end of its excavation (view from North, June 2006)



Figure 8 – The Abbasid *dīnār* from Room 2
(courtesy of the Uzbek-Japanese Archaeological Expedition)



Figure 9 – Floor SU 15 of the Islamic period with fire structures and the postholes (black arrows)



Figure 10 – The discovery of coin no. 172 from SU 285 (Room 11, May 2008)



Figure 11 – The discovery of coin no. 171 inside the *pakhsa* wall SU 265 (Room 7, May 2008)



Figure 12 – Bukhārkhudāt drachm. First half of 8th century (Gariboldi 2011: no. 1; cf. Gariboldi 2017 Type Ie1/1a)



Figure 13 – Copper coin of king Turgār (738-750), mint Samarkand (Gariboldi 2011: no. 10)



Figure 14 – Abbasid *fals* of Junayd b. Khālid, mint Bukhārā 151 H. (768) (Gariboldi 2011: no. 39)



Figure 15 – Samanid *fals* of al-Amīr Aḥmad b. Asad, mint Samarqand 244 H. (858/59) (Cf. Album 2011: no. 1440)



Figure 16 – Abbasid anonymous *dīnār*, 135 H. (752), 4.24 g 18 mm. Courtesy of the Uzbek-Japanese Archaeological expedition. (Cf. Lane Poole 1875: p. 34, n. 2)



Figure 17 – Umayyad *dirham*, ʻAbd al-Malik, mint Dimašq, 79 H. (698/99) (Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012: p. 165, fig. 3; Cf. Klat 2002: no. 323b)



Figure 18 – Umayyad *dirham*, al-Walīd I, mint al-Taymara, 96 H. (714/15) (Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012: p. 166, fig. 4; Cf. Klat 2002: no. 212)



Figure 19 – Umayyad *dirham*, al-Hišām, mint Wāsiṭ, 120 H. (737/38) (Berdimuradov, Atakhodjaev, Mantellini 2012: p. 166, fig. 5; Cf. Klat 2002: no. 713a)



Figure 20 – Abbasid *dirham*, al-Hādī, mint Muḥammadīya, 170 H. (786/87) (Cf. Lowick 1996: no. 1666)



Figure 21 – Abbasid *dirham*, al-Rašīd, mint Madīnat Zaranj, 182 H. (798/99) (Cf. Lowick 1996: no. 2426)



Figure 22 – Abbasid *dirham*, al-Rašīd, mint Madīnat Marw, 185 H. (801) (Cf. Lowick 1996: no. 2267)

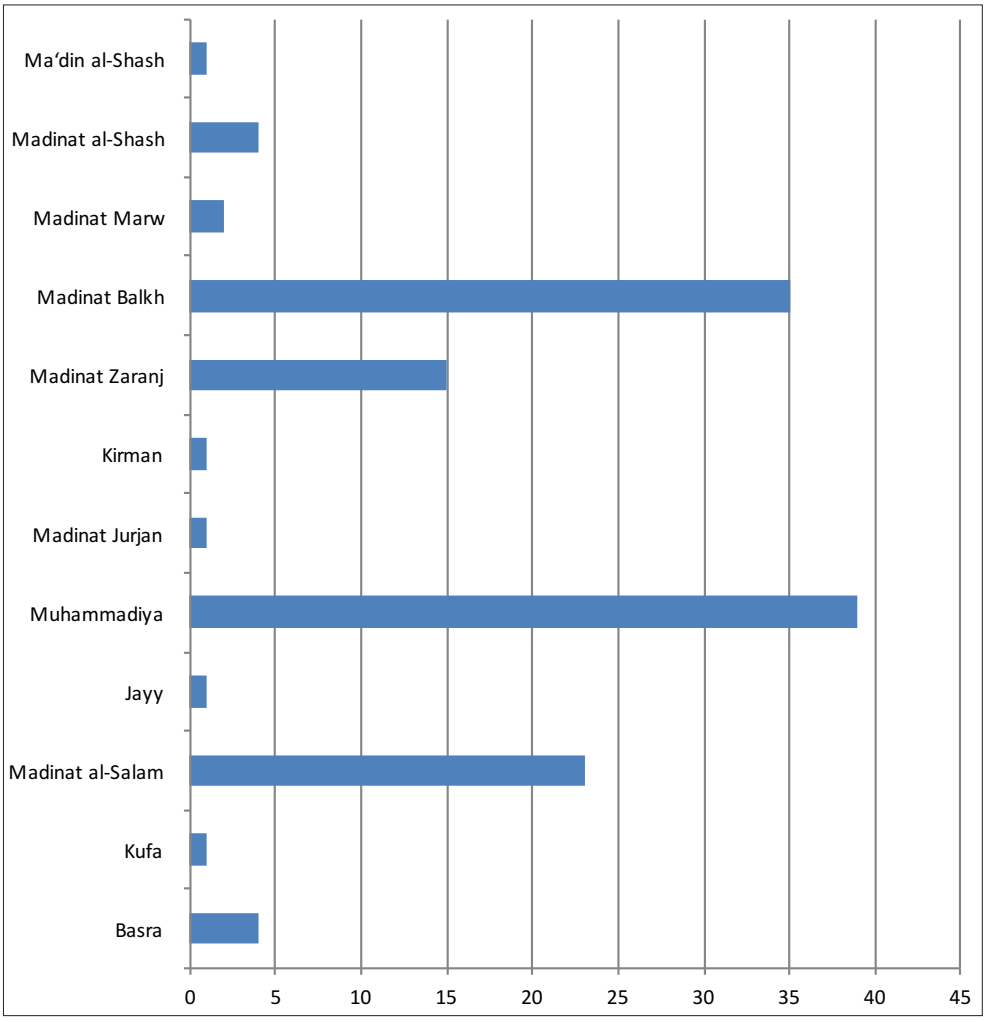


Figure 23 – Graph showing Abbasid mints of Kafir Kala hoard

Robert Kool, Issa Baidoun, Jacob Sharvit[1]

Israel Antiquities Authority

THE FATIMID GOLD TREASURE FROM CAESAREA MARITIMA HARBOR (2015): PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Abstract

In February 2015, divers off the coast of Caesarea spotted by chance a group of gold coins lying on the seabed. After alerting marine archaeologists of the Israel Antiquities Authority, a preliminary salvage excavation was conducted at the site and more than 2,600 Fatimid period gold dinars and fractions recovered, weighing a total of c. 7.5 kg. The coin's location and accompanying artifacts suggested that the coins originated from a shipwreck. The article gives a first insight into the hoard's content after two years of intensive identification work, presents some preliminary conclusions as for the reasons for its loss and offers some new insights into the circulation of Fatimid coinage in southern Bilad al-Sham.

Keywords

Caesarea Marittima harbour; Fatimid coinage; Fatimid coin hoards

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INTRODUCTION

"I could discover no end or limit to their wealth, and I never saw such ease and comfort anywhere."

Thus, wrote the Persian poet and traveler, Naser-e Khosraw, upon visiting Fatimid Cairo in AH 439/1047 CE.[1] The importance of the gold dinar and its fractions is a by now well an established fact for historians and numismatists of the Fatimid era whose caliphs ruled for 260 years over large sways of North Africa, Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean (909 – 1171 CE). The wealth and opulence of the Fatimid caliphs and the members of their court and administration was legendary, making Cairo one of the most important economic and cultural centers in the Islamic world.[2] Above all, it are the thousands of contemporary documents dealing with financial and daily matters, discovered in the ancient Genizah (storeroom) of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo, that truly show the massive scale of the use of gold dinars during the tenth and twelfth centuries in Fatimid ruled territories and beyond.[3] These documents are witnesses to the essential role the Fatimid dinar played in a highly monetized Fatimid society and its global trade network with Egypt at its center.[4]

In sharp contrast with the wealth of written documents about the use of gold money that have been made available and published, the coins themselves have until recently been relatively poorly studied. From the early twentieth century, catalogs of large numismatic collections mentioned the main types and a limited number of articles were published on selective types, denominations and their inscriptions.[5] A number of important metallurgical studies were conducted on the gold content of these coins but this was done mainly for comparison with crusader period gold imitations.[6] Only relatively recently in 2006, the first comprehensive reference work

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1 NASER-E KHOSRAW: p. 55.

2 For the enormous affluence of Cairo and its inhabitants see NASER-E KHOSRAW: pp. 45–59; for the wealth and luxury of the Fatimid court see the listing of contents of the Fatimid palace treasuries looted in the civil war in 1068/69 in the KITAB AL-HADAYA WA AL-TUHAF: pp. 229 – 239. See also HALM 2003: pp. 404–414.

3 GOITEIN 1967 – 1993.

4 GOITEIN and FRIEDMAN 2007; GOLDBERG 2012.

5 See the catalogues of the British Museum, London, the Bibliotheque nationale in Paris, the Egyptian National Library and the American Numismatic Society: LANE-POOLE, S. 1879: pp. 1 – 59; LAVOIX 1896: pp. 31–169; MILES 1951; NICOL, NABARAWY & BACHARACH 1982. KAZAN 1983: pp. 293–330. For a more recent updated sylloge type catalogue of the Ashmolean Museum collection in Oxford see NICOL 2007.

6 See the various articles on this subject published by Andrew Ehrenkreutz between 1954 and 1964 in EHRENKREUTZ 1992; see also ODDY 1980.

on Fatimid coinage was published.[7] But information about the actual circulation of coin types within and beyond the Fatimid territories has until now been virtually non-existent. This is particularly so for the Fatimid heartlands of Egypt and North-Africa where systematic registration and publication of site-finds from controlled excavations or provenanced discoveries is simply not available.[8] Paradoxically, such information does come from territories on the periphery of the Fatimid empire, like Aghlabid Sicily, Umayyad ruled Spain and Fatimid Syria.[9]

Large quantities of Fatimid coin finds— both single finds and hoards — come from southern Bilad al-Sham which during this period formed part of the eastern leg of the Fatimid empire, from Raqqa in Syria down to Aden in the Persian Gulf.[10] Many of these were found in archaeological contexts in the area which today comprises the State of Israel. Among these are gold treasures, containing both coin and jewelry. Over the past hundred years some twenty-four hoards, dated between 970 and 1153, have been excavated. Many of the hoards contain only coins. But six are jewelry hoards and 11 hoards combine jewelry and coins.[11] The majority of these come from excavations and finds in the major towns of Fatimid Bilad al-Sham: Asqalan/Ashkelon, Isdud/Ashdod, Arsuf/Apollonia, Qaysariyya/Caesarea, al-Quds/Jerusalem, Beisan/Beth-She'an, Tabariya/Tiberias. These cities and towns were islands of Fatimid influence in the political unstable and fluid environment of Syria nominally under Fatimid rule since the 960s.[12]

Excavations do show that money circulation in Fatimid Bilad al-Sham did not consist exclusively of gold, something not mentioned in written documents of the period. Coin finds demonstrate that despite the general dearth of silver in the Fatimid period, smaller silver currencies circulated in sufficient quantities serving as smaller denominations in daily transactions. During the second half of the tenth century these consisted of silver cuttings, small fragments of cut-up dirhams preserved in several small excavated hoards.[13] By the eleventh century silver currency came in the form of small billon and copper-based dirham fractions that apparently circulated

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7 NICOL 2006.

8 For challenges facing archaeology of this period see the example of excavations and research of Early Islamic Fustat, in BACHARARCH 2000: pp. 1–11.

9 LOWICK 1990: pp. 145 – 166; WHITCOMB 1994: p.18; DOMÉNECH-BELDA 2018: pp. 151–165.

10 The IAA Provenanced Coin Data-base contains 3570 Fatimid period coins; circa 250 are single finds mostly from excavations; the rest 3,315 coins were found in hoards (see below).

11 A number of these have been published, some in a preliminary fashion in: KOOL forthcoming; ROSEN-AYALON 2008; LEVY and MITCHELL 1965/6; KOOL and BERMAN forthcoming; BERMAN 2004; BROSH 1998; WASSERSTEIN 1998.

12 GIL 1997: pp. 335–366.

13 KOOL, BERMAN, SHAMIR and TEPPER 2011; KOOL forthcoming.

in quite large numbers. Data from excavations shows that such billon and copper fractions circulated alike in cities, towns and rural settlements in southern Bilad al-Sham during the long reign of Mustansir billah (1036–1094).[14] Apparently these served for the smaller day-to-day payments and show the intensive monetization and sophistication of the Fatimid economy. However, excavation finds clearly show that the majority of Fatimid period coin finds consist of gold dinars and fractions. – confirming that gold was indeed the fuel that fired the economic engine of the Fatimid state. The archaeological evidence thus *grosso modo* confirms the picture drawn by the historians and the numismatists of this period.

THE HOARD

In early February 2015 six scuba divers discovered gold coins lying on the sea-bed during a recreational dive in the ancient port of Caesarea. Realizing these were made of genuine gold they succeeded in retrieving some sixty coins before surfacing.[15] Returning to the shore they alerted the Marine Archaeology Unit of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) who shortly thereafter arrived at the port. An initial survey by IAA maritime archaeologists showed the coins were located some 300 meters from the shore, near the sunken remains of the ancient southern Herodian breakwater (Fig.1).

At a depth of circa seven-eight meters the archaeologists found a total of 2668 coins concentrated in a square measuring two meters by two meters. The coins were retrieved in five dives (February–August 2015), with most of the coins concentrated in the upper left section of the square.

The treasure is the largest gold hoard/assemblage ever to have been discovered in Israel's coastal waters, possibly one of the largest ones found in the Eastern Mediterranean in living memory. It constitutes more than 7.5 kilos of gold.

Some of the coins were visible on the sea bed but the use of underwater metal detectors by the IAA divers indicated that the main body of the coins lay below the upper sea-bed level. To reach the coins the divers first had to remove an upper layer of fieldstones.[16] Below, a second layer of coarse sand mixed with shells and pebbles

[14] The IAA coin database holds some 170 of these small billon fractions found in some 41 urban, semi-urban and rural settlements.

[15] The group consisted of six divers: Zvika Fayer, Avivit Fischler, Yoav Lavi, Joel Miller, Shai Milner and Kobi Twina. Their speedy reporting of the find to the IAA was essential in preventing robbers from pilfering the site, recovering the large number of coins and documenting the site.

[16] The site served as a dump for the fill from previous underwater excavations in other sections of the Caesarea harbor by the late Avner Raban in 1983. This explains the large number of fieldstones which had to be once more removed.



Figure 1 – Location of the treasure in the ancient port of Caesarea, Israel

('zif-zif') was taken out before reaching an underlayer of sand where the largest amount of the coins was found.

During the surveys IAA archaeologists also found five anchors near the square.[17] All without exception are of an Y anchor type dated to the Fatimid period (Fig. 2).[18] All the anchors were found without a stock connected to the shank. This indicates that the anchors were on board and not used for anchoring.

Also, during dives in August 2015, a 5cm long nail, either used in ship-building or part of chest that held the coins was found covered with sediment and encrusted with a dozen gold dinars and quarter dinars. The find of the treasure in the waters of Caesarea's ancient port, the nearby location of several ship anchors contemporary to the coins, as well as the abovementioned nail, all ostensibly indicate the treasure's association with maritime activity. Presumably it was located on a ship anchored in the inner harbor which suddenly and violently disintegrated, leading to a dramatic

[17] Hopefully more detailed excavations will be carried out in the future. Maritime excavations in Israel's coastal waters are complex due to it being a fast-moving environment. The coastal waters of the Eastern Mediterranean are prone to heavy currents and sudden movements of sand deposits. At this moment the site is once more covered with a layer of sand several meters deep.

[18] MATTHEWS and STEFFY 2004: pp. 232-235.

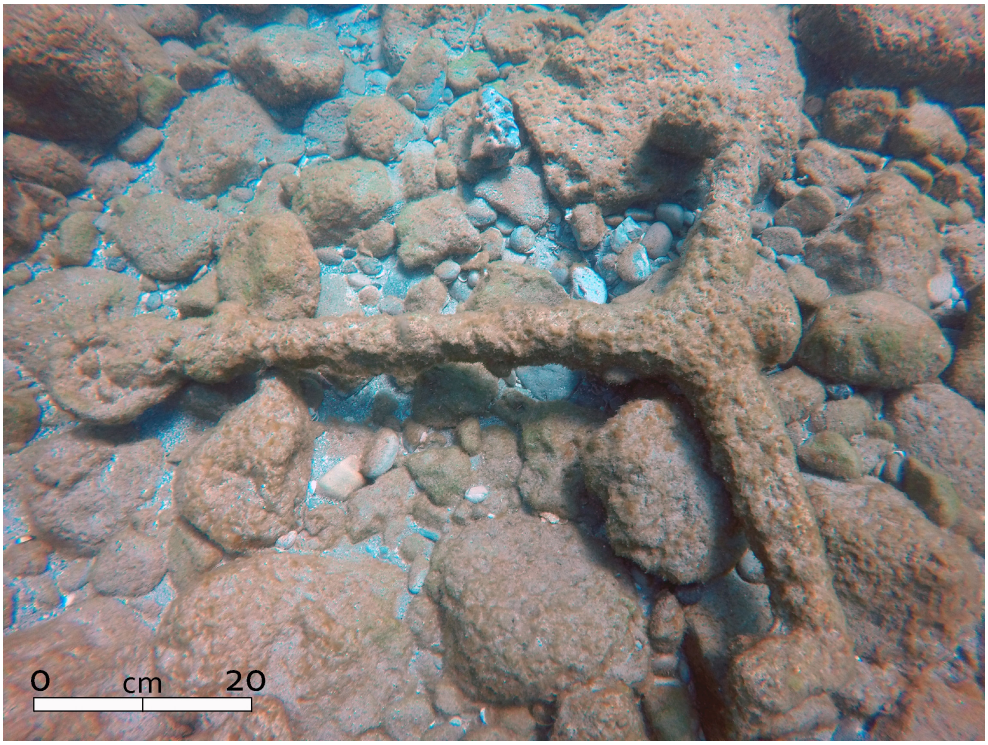


Figure 2 – Fatimid period anchor lying on the seabed near the treasure

loss of a very large quantity of gold coins. The Fatimids military and merchant navy played a strategic role in the face of constant incursions of Turkish warlords, Shi'a Qarmatian militias and local Arab tribes in southern Bilad al-Sham during the tenth and eleventh centuries. It secured political and military control over the Eastern Mediterranean seaboard and its ports and cities for the empire's administration and merchants, as shipping was relatively safe and fast taking only a few days instead of the lengthy dangerous overland route.[19]

CONTENT

The treasure currently contains 2668 coins. The hoard is made up of only two denominations: 1740 dinars, virtually two-thirds of the hoard (65%), most of them weighing 4 to 4.3 grams of gold. The rest, 928 coins consist of much smaller one-

[19] BRAMOULLÉ 2004: pp. 254–255



Figure 3 – Fatimid treasure of Caesarea

gram quarter dinar (35%). The combined weight of the coins is c. 7,5 kg of gold (Fig. 3).

Recent preliminary X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) analysis of dinars and quarter dinars in other contemporary tenth and eleventh century Fatimid hoards, excavated in Bilad al-Sham indicate that these coins are made of extremely pure gold which could vary between 93–99%, which was usual for Fatimid coins of this period.[20]

The earliest coins in the treasure are quarter dinar minted under the Aghlabid Amir Ziyadat Allah I (816–838), of the semi-independent North African Islamic dynasty in Ifriqiyah (Tunesia), who conquered Byzantine ruled Sicily and eventually were overthrown by the Fatimids in 909 CE. However, most of the treasure's coins, were minted in the reigns of three successive Fatimid caliphs, Al-Aziz Billah (AH 365– 386/ 975–996 CE), Al-Ḥakim (AH 386–411 = 996–1021 CE) and his successor Al-Ẓahir (AH 411–427 = 1021–1036 CE). The coins of al-Zahir constitute

[20] TAL, KOOL and BAIDOUN 2013: p. 270, particularly footnote 20 and pp. 288–292; MESSIER 1974: pp. 34–35.



Figure 4 – Dinar, al-Hakim, Misr, 411AH (1020/21CE)



Figure 5 – Dinar, al-Hakim, illegible mint and date

the latest datable group of coins in the hoard. The treasure belongs to an important group of nine Fatimid treasures deposited or lost during the early eleventh century in Southern Bilad al-Sham.

Many of the coins are clipped, cracked and worn, proof of their continuous circulation but quite a few are in very fine condition – as if they were just minted and had not yet circulated (Fig.4).

A considerable number of coins are bent and even carry signs of teeth marks, evidence that contemporaries used regularly to check the quality of the gold. Many of the coins also still show signs of incrustation, the result of laying more than a thousand years on the seabed (Fig. 5).

Once it was established that the latest coins in the treasure date to the reign of al-Zahir, the next task was to establish the latest documented date among the coins of this group. This date provides the *terminus post quem*, the earliest possible date of deposition or loss of the treasure, of cardinal importance for understanding the circumstances in which the hoard was lost. For this each of the 508 dinar and quarter-dinar, belonging to this ruler, were read. Of these, 373 coins had legible dates.[21]

One date had a special significance: the year AH 425 (1033/34 CE). Written sources – among them a letter preserved in the Cairo Genizah - demonstrated that Fatimid Palestine was ravaged in December 1033 by a strong earthquake, followed

[21] Among the remaining 135 coins, dates were found to be either missing or the coins were simply undated.

by a huge tsunami sweeping the coast.[22] Could it be possible that the treasure was lost in the terrible tsunami that swept the coast in that year? If so it would constitute a unique piece of archaeological evidence for a major geological event. Unfortunately, this working hypothesis had to be abandoned since the treasure contains at least 12 coins with the date 426AH, between November 16, 1034 and November 4, 1035 CE.[23] These coins convincingly demonstrated that this large treasure either reached or left Caesarea at least a year *after* the tsunami hit the coast in force.

So, what were then the circumstances in which this hoard was lost? Prior to a detailed study of the coins several scenarios were suggested: was it locally farmed tax money leaving the harbor on its way to the Diwan al-Sham, the department dealing with Syria in the Bayt al-Mal, the Fatimid treasury in Cairo? A consignment of money from merchants whose ship suddenly sunk in the harbor? Or possible wages for the Fatimid military garrison stationed at Caesarea? The answer lies in a minute analysis of the treasure's contents. Apart from the treasure's archaeological context, it is principally the enormous number of coins and the wealth of information they provide – types, names of rulers, mints and the dates struck on the coins – which presents a unique opportunity to attempt a reconstruction of the events during which this consignment of gold arrived and was lost. In turn, this will allow us to better understand the broader, supra-regional scale of the circulation of cash gold money and the economic realities of early 11th century Fatimid rule in Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean.

READING FATIMID COINS

The strict formulistic repetitive structure of Fatimid coin inscriptions simplifies their research to a substantial degree. Fatimid coins adhere basically to several set rules: the mention of the 'Shahada' "There is no God but Allah" and the proclamation of Muhammad as prophet. Since the Fatimids were Shi'ites of the Ismailiyah branch their coins extended the Kalima to include mention of Ali and conferred the title of

[22] CAIRO GENIZAH T-S 18J3.9.1r "They came out of the houses into the streets because they saw in the houses that the walls were buckling back and forth, and the beams were flexing in and out of position in the walls. The fortified structures collapsed, and the new dwellings were thrown down, and many died under the rubble because they had no means of escape. Everyone came out of their houses, each one leaving behind all that they had, and fled for their lives…the tongue is inadequate for the tale. Were it not for God's mercy that it happened still in daylight, when people could see and warn each other…". Thus, wrote Solomon ben Shemah, a Jewish inhabitant of Ramla, who survived earthquake, to acquaintances in Fustat, 425AH/1033 CE.

[23] These consist mostly of dinars minted in al-Mansuriyah and two unrecorded coins: a dinar minted in Filastin and a quarter dinar from the Siqilliyah mint.

'Imam' on the reigning ruler. The coins show a set of eight Quranic verses, amongst which Sura IX (*al-Tawba*), verse 33, appearing on Islamic coins since the Umayyad period, is the most common one.[24] Common to Islamic period coins, Fatimid dinars and fractions mention on the obverse or reverse margins of their coins the mint and the hijra year in which they were produced. However, what makes these coins at times very difficult to read is their use of a compact square Kufic script, the Arabic script used on coins during the first five centuries of Islam. These coins show a particularly densely written Kufic script with letters linked together like in cursive, changing shape depending on their location in a word. Letters are so similar in shape that reading these coins, particularly the mint name and date becomes a daunting epigraphical challenge.[25] Fatimid coins also number a large variety of types, some of them with minute variations. This is amply reflected in the hoard's contents.[26]

ANALYSIS

Distribution by rulers

The coins in the treasure span a period of 220 years. Six of the earliest coins belong to the ninth-early tenth century Aghlabid rule over North Africa and Sicily (since 827 CE) and events that followed their overthrow by the Fatimids. These are all quarter dinar, of the Aghlabid emirs, Ziyadat Allah I (817–838 CE), Ibrahim II (875–902 CE), and the rebellious pro-Abbasid wali, governor, of Sicily, Ahmad bin Qurhub (913–916 CE) minted in AH 302–914/15 CE.[27] These coins span a period of c. 98 years.

The majority of coins in the hoard though, are of six Fatimid rulers: a small group of eleven dinars of 'Ubayd Allah al-Mahdi billah (AH 297–322/910–934 CE), the founder of the Fatimid caliphate, minted in the trading towns of Sijilmassa in southern Morocco and al-Qayrawan, on Tunisia's coastal plain; a single dinar of Al-Mahdi's successor, al-Qa'im (934–946); and five dinar struck during the reign of al-Mansur (946–953) at al-Mahdiyah and his newly constructed capital, al-Mansuriyah. To this group also belongs a singular dinar of Hakim II (961–976), the Umayyad

[24] NICOL 2006: pp. xiii -xiv.

[25] BERNARDI 2007: pp. 4–5.

[26] Types and sub-types used under Fatimid caliph al-Hakim (996 – 1021) number more than a hundred. See NICOL 2006: pp. 110–131. The Caesarea hoard contains at least 64 different types and variations of which fourteen are completely new and unrecorded.

[27] For Ahmad bin Qurhub (913–916) see TAKAYAMA 1992/3: p. 24; For his coins see BERNARDI 2010: p. 163.

Caliph of Andalus, minted in Madinat al-Zahra (near Cordoba) in AH 357–967/68 CE. The two above-mentioned groups spanning circa 140 years, represent a small tail of twenty-two coins in the hoard, less than one percent of the identified coins of the treasure.

Charting the quantities of coins in the treasure, shows these are distributed in a very uneven fashion: distribution by rulers demonstrates that more than 97% of the coins were minted between al-Aziz and al-Zahir reign's– a circa 60-year period between 996 and 1035. If we chart the coin distribution by year the results are even more palpable: most of the coins of the treasure concentrate in the decade of the last years of al-Hakim's rule and the first part of al-Zahir's rule. From the last period of al-Zahir's rule, we only have 19 coins stopping abruptly at 1034/5 c. a year or more before the caliph's death, with a small but highly significant group of eleven coins from AH426 (1034/35). No coins are present of years 427 or 428 (1035-1036), the last years of al-Zahir's reign which is unusual since they are not rare. Finally, there are none of the plentiful gold dinars of his son's Mustansir's long eleventh century reign.

The treasure's internal distribution profile thus clearly reveals an extremely large accumulation of coins near the hoard's sudden closure in 1035 (Fig. 6).

This, and the absence of coins from the last two years of al-Zahir's reign seems to indicate that the treasure consisted mostly of money in circulation which was suddenly lost immediately after 1035. The hoard certainly lacks the steady, continuous build-up of a typical savings hoard – in such a case we would have expected much more of the plentiful coins of al-Hakim's predecessor Al-Muizz and Al-Aziz in the hoard.

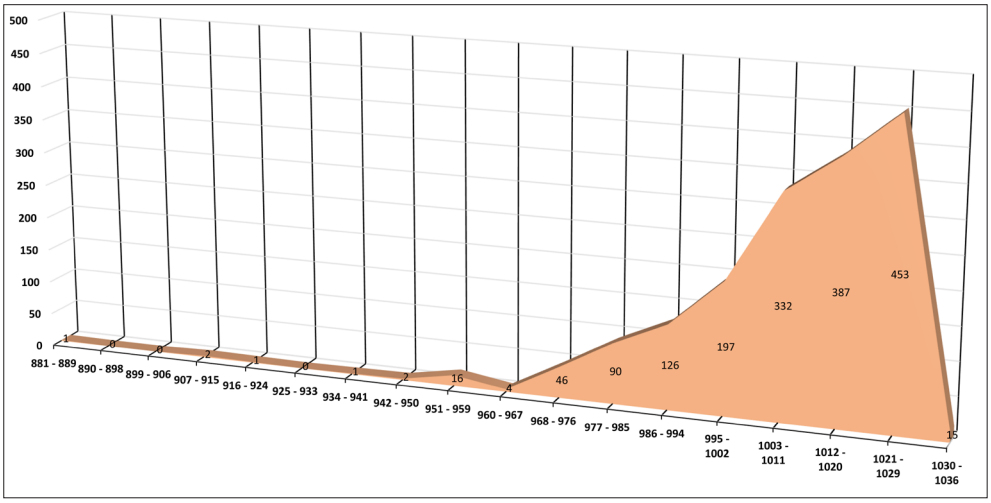


Figure 6 – Caesarea treasure, distribution by year profile

Distribution by mints

Mapping the mints of coins in a hoard is an important numismatic tool to understand the origins and purpose of a hoard. Often this is a simple enumeration of mints. But in groups with large number of coins – like the Caesarea treasure – quantity-analysis is employed to identify the dominant group of mints, creating a more reliable and balanced image. The case of Caesarea treasure is exceptional since it contains a very large number of coins, something rarely observed in Fatimid period hoards. It is thus ideal for these kinds of analyses.

Coins in the hoard came from a considerable number of mints in North Africa, Bilad a-Sham and even Arabia and the Yemen, twenty in all. Some of these are never or rarely seen in hoards from Southern Bilad al-Sham: Sijilmassa, on the northern edge of the Sahara (southern Morocco) on the route to the gold fields of Medieval Ghana ; Qayrawan and Zawilah, a commercial quarter in al-Mahdiyah in Ifriqiyah (Tunesia); Atarablus/Tripoli in Tripolitana and Barqah in Cyrenaica (present-day Libya); Qus in Upper Egypt; and Makkah/Mekka and Medinat Rasul Allah/Madinah in Arabia even several coins from the Yemen.[28]

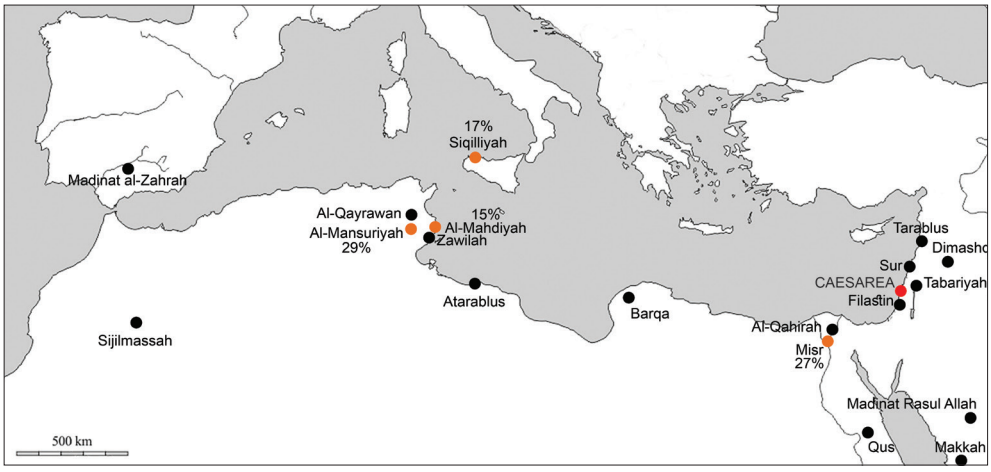


Figure 7 – Caesarea treasure, distribution by mint
(Orange colored dots indicate major mints)

[28] Unrecorded types are present in some 13 of the 20 identified mints. Among these are four rare dinars of Makka/Mecca, one with a yet unpublished date 389AH- 998/9 CE minted under al-Hakim. The treasure contains of that same year, another even rarer coin of the mint of Medinat Rasul Allah/ Medinah, known until now only for year 453 AH /1061CE during the reign of al-Mustansir.

But turning to quantity analysis we see a more concerted picture of the treasure's coins emerging. Approximately 89% of the circa 2,100 coins with identifiable mints came in fact from only four mints, active in Sicily, Tunisia and Egypt during the reigns of al Hakim and al-Zahir between 991 and 1035: Al-Mansuriyyah, Al-Mahdiyyah, Siqilliyah and Misr. In contrast, coins from mints near Caesarea and the larger area of Bilad a-Sham amounted to a mere 94 coins coming from five mints, the majority from Filastin/Ramla (Fig. 7).

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

Evidently the money was not of local origin and seems to have been transported to Caesarea for commercial or military purposes (for example soldiers' pay). Comparison with other Fatimid hoards from Bilad al-Sham show a similar pattern of money, mostly originating from Ifriqiyah and Egypt. Clearly, the coins produced in these mints seem to have dominated the coin circulation at this period in Bilad a-Sham and throughout the Fatimid empire. These consisted mostly of a mix of gold dinars and quarter dinars as is sufficiently documented in the Genizah letters and accounts.[29]

The Genizah texts also demonstrate that merchants, officials and soldiers regularly travelled with large amounts of gold coins, sealed in purses containing 50, 100 and even 300 coins, throughout the empire and beyond.[30] What seems to us a very sizable hoard may have been a large but certainly not an exceptional amount of money brought to the coastal city of Caesarea. The hoard simply shows the enormous quantity of gold money available during the Fatimid caliphate fueled by continuous supply of gold arriving from West Africa during the tenth and early eleventh centuries.

Fatimid Caesarea seems to have been a prosperous port time during this period. Planned and constructed by Herod the Great as one of the largest ports in the roman Mediterranean, Caesarea grew to be the largest city in Roman and Byzantine Palestine and seat of the imperial administration. After the Arab conquest it contracted to a medium sized town, protected by a massive wall constructed in the ninth and tenth centuries.[31] Egyptian pottery imports, indicate substantial commercial activity during most of the tenth and early eleventh centuries. Its prosperity is witnessed by

[29] GOITEIN 1967: p. 359.

[30] GOITEIN 1967: pp. 232–233.

[31] AVNI 2014: pp. 49–52. Early Islamic Caesarea had a large congregational mosque. A new street plan was constructed with a sophisticated drainage system.

a large assemblage of brass objects and impressive silver and gold hoards dating to the Fatimid period.[32]

IMPORTANCE OF THE HOARD

The combination of its exceptional size and secure provenance warrants further detailed study and publication of the hoard's contents. The hoard contains a considerable number of new types and coins with previously unregistered dates (13% of all coins). Beyond that, data-mining large amounts of information of the rulers, mints and dates mentioned on coins, with their weights and chemical analysis of their gold content, can bring to light important features of the mint policy of the Fatimids now lacking due to the dearth of mint documents from this period. Was Fatimid mint policy centralized or decentralized, independently managed by local governors controlling the mints in their territory? Answering such questions have important implications for the current centralized political and administrative model of the Fatimid empire, underwritten by many historians, archaeologists and numismatists.

Also, the question of the gold content of the treasure's coins requires further in-depth investigation. At this point, researchers agree that the gold for these coins derived from large amounts of alluvial gold mined south-west of the medieval Soninke kingdom of Ghana situated between the Niger and Senegal rivers, where it was traded and transported to the Fatimid empire.[33] But gold was also mined in smaller quantities in the eastern desert of Upper Egypt and the Hejaz and possibly other locations.[34] A future study of gold will have to review the written sources, but

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[32] For the large metal hoard consisting of brass vessels, clay and glass articles see LESTER 2011; 2014: pp. 439–454. The silver and gold treasures (unpublished) consist of two jewelry assemblages found during excavations in 1963 — a hoard of silver bracelets and Green glazed pot filled with gold filigree jewelry — found in a workshop for smelting iron near the medieval port; and an assemblage of 79 dinars found during excavations south of the walled city in 2001, in a Fatimid period graveyard.

[33] For an up-to-date summary of the gold trade in Medieval Ghana, see XAVIER-FAUVELLE 2013, pp.157–162. Already at the end of the 10th century, the Arab geographer ibn Hawqal estimated the income of the ruler of Sijilmasah (south-west Morocco), a key transit town on the West African gold trade route to North Africa and Middle East at 400,000 dinars a year (1.7 tons of gold). See IBN HAWQAL, p.98.

[34] An archaeological survey in the Samut District east of Edfu in Upper Egypt suggests that gold mining continued during the Middle Ages. Pers com. of Julien Marchard**,** Université de Poitiers to Robert Kool, November 8, 2016. Also, in the Hejaz, southeast of Medina, gold was mined in the Middle Ages. An allusion to this is an extremely rare Umayyad dinar, dated 105AH-723/24 CE which mentions on its reverse inscription "The mine of the Commander of the Faithful in the Hejaz" (Ma'dan Amir al-Mu'minin Bi'l Hijaz"). The only provenanced exemplar of this rare coin type was found in a Umayyad period hoard (282 dinars) excavated in Capernaum, on the north west shore of the Sea of Galilee in

above all study the chemical composition of these gold coins, a complex task as gold is extremely stable and does not bind with other metals or alloys.[35] This we hope will be done in the context of a multidisciplinary study combining geo-chemistry, metallurgy, archaeology and numismatic research.

1982, see WILSON 1989: pp. 164–166 and MAGNESS 1997: pp. 482–483. Gold is currently mined in the Mahd adh Dhah deposits, in the Hejaz.

[35] For example, new applications in the field of Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) with a multi-collector analysis seems promising.

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RUS' MERCENARIES IN THE BYZANTINE-ARAB WARS OF THE 950S-960S: THE NUMISMATIC EVIDENCE

In Honor of John P. Karras (1932-2016), who dedicated more than half a century of his life to the study and teaching of Ancient, Byzantine, and Military History at The College of New Jersey

Abstract

Using specific coin types (tenth-century dirhams and pre-970 Byzantine miliaresia) imported from the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia in a very restricted chronological period (950s-960s) through (the Dnepr River) and into a confined region of the Northern lands (mainly Sweden) – combined with the evidence of Arab, Byzantine, and Rus' written sources – this study argues that it is possible to trace numismatically the participation of Rus' mercenaries in the Byzantine-Arab wars of the late 950s-960s. While dirhams discovered in the Northern lands are most commonly associated with trade relations between the Islamic world and Viking-age Northern Europe, the coins considered in this study offer a unique opportunity to identify and examine some of the non-commercial origins of silver imported into the region: they were products of loot and payments, generated by the Rus' from their military operations in the eastern Mediterranean basin in the 950s-960s.

Keywords

Ru's, 10th century, dirhams, Byzantine armies, Varagians

INTRODUCTION

It is rather well known to numismatists and historians of medieval Eurasia that Sâmânid central Asia (lands of eastern Khurâsân, Trans- and Cis-Oxiana) was by far the chief supplier of dirhams or Islamic silver coins to the Northern lands of Europe during the Viking Age (ca. 750-1050). Starting in ca. 900 and continuing into the late tenth century, millions of these coins were carried by Muslim merchant caravans from Sâmânid cities and mints northwestwards through the steppe to the lands of the Bulğârs in the middle Volga basin.[1] From Volga Bulğâria, most of these coins were subsequently exchanged in commercial transactions and re-exported further west/northwest by Rus' merchants to their lands of operations in eastern Europe, from where many of them were carried even further west into the Baltic basin and beyond.[2] While dominated by Sâmânid dirhams, this central Asian route also brought other coins to the Northern lands, such as those minted by the ʿAbbâsids and Ṭâhirids (both issued in central Asia in the ninth century), Amîrs of Andarâba, Bânîjûrids, and Ṣaffârids. On a much larger scale than these coins, imitations of Islamic dirhams struck in central Asia itself, but mostly those minted in Volga Bulğâria and elsewhere in eastern Europe, also joined this silver flow. Indeed, imitation dirhams (so-called "Sâmânid-prototypes") are found in large quantities in tenth-century hoards of the Northern lands, and it seems rather certain that the great majority of them were minted by the Volga Bulğârs. The latter also issued "semi-official" and "official" dirhams, all of which entered the much larger stream of central Asian silver coins that flowed out of the middle Volga during the tenth century.[3] Again, while genuine Sâmânid dirhams dominated all other silver coin types that moved along this "Volga Bulğâr Way" silver route, there were many other dirhams (genuine and imitation) that joined in the flow. Together, all these coins constitute by far the lion's share of all Islamic silver that entered Northern Europe during the Viking Age.

As important as the great tenth-century commercial silver flow was along "The Volga Bulğâr Way" for all parties involved, during the same period silver entered the Northern lands from other regions of the Muslim world by alternative routes. For much of the tenth century, the central and western regions of the lands of Islam also possessed notable supplies of dirhams. These coins were struck across a huge area of western Asia and North Africa by the many dynasties that ruled these regions – from western Khurâsân, the southern Caucasus, and Iran through al-ʿIrâq and upper Mesopotamia to the eastern Mediterranean basin, lower Egypt, and the Gulf of

[1] Andarâba, Balkh, Bukhârâ, Marw, Naysâbûr, Samarqand, al-Shâsh, and others; see NOONAN, KOVALEV 2002: 163-174; KOVALEV 2001: 245-271; 2002: 197-216; 2003: 47-79.

[2] NOONAN 2001: 147-151.

[3] KOVALEV 2016: 193-209. Also, see KOVALEV 2013: 67-102.

Oman.[4] These dirhams were available for export to the Northern lands, and some of them were, indeed, carried there during the tenth century. It is true that in their absolute export volumes these coins are greatly overshadowed by central Asian or "eastern" dirhams for all the tenth century.[5] However, the former still constitute an important, but often overlooked, source of silver for eastern Europe and the Baltic. Most importantly, these non-"eastern" dirhams permit the study of alternative routes for silver imports into the Northern lands and the fluctuations in their exports from the Islamic world.

Of all the areas of the central and western Muslim world, by far the most important region for dirham exports to the Northern lands during the tenth century was central and southern Iraq (al-ʿIrâq) and all of Iran.[6] During the 900s-980s, coins minted in these regions were exported to eastern Europe via northern Iran, the Caspian Sea and/or the Caucasus, Khazaria, and up the Don River northwestwards. Along the way, dirhams struck in the southern Caucasus joined this flow. Particularly interesting is that none of these coins from Iran, al-ʿIrâq, and the Caucasus were brought to the middle Volga basin until ca. 980. It was only in the early ninth decade of the tenth century that Volga Bulğâria tapped into the silver stream from al-ʿIrâq and Iran until it dried up by the first decade of eleventh century. Prior to then, between ca. 900-ca. 965, Khazaria acted as the key middleman between the Rus' and northern Iran in the re-export of coins from al-ʿIrâq, Iran, and the Caucasus: Muslim merchants from northern Iran brought dirhams to Khazaria's capital of Atıl/İtil in the Volga Delta, where they were accepted by the Rus' in exchange for their goods and thence dispatched north/northwest via the Don-Oka-upper Volga river-system. After their conquest of the Qağanate in ca. 965, the Rus' made direct contact themselves with northern Iran via the Caspian and the lower Volga until ca. 980, when the Volga Bulğârs forced them out of the lower Volga and thus took over the former Khazar role of intermediary in trade between eastern Europe and northern Iran. By joining the lower Volga with its middle section and tying them both to the upper Volga of the Rus', in ca. 980 the Volga Bulğârs created a single commercial system of "The Great

[4] These include, but not limited to, dirhams issued by the ʿAbbâsids, Amîrs al-Umarâʾ, Buwayhids, Ḥamdânids, Ikhshîdids, Qarmaṭîs, Fâṭimids, Ziyârids, Sallârids, Jaʿfarids, Bâwandids, Sharwân Shâhs/Yazîdids, Sâjids, Ṣaffârids (when struck in ʿUmân), Julandids, Wâjihids, Banu Sama/Governors of ʿUmân, Amîrs of Dâmighân, Sîmjûrids (when struck in Jurjân), and, Sâmânids (when struck in northern Iran).

[5] NOONAN 2001: 140-218.

[6] This conclusion is based on the observation that the overwhelming majority of the dirhams found in eastern Europe came from mints located in al-ʿIrâq and Iran, struck at such major ʿAbbâsid, Buwayhid, and Ziyârid mints as Âmul, Arrajân, ʿAskar min al-Ahwâz, Astarâbâd, al-Baṣra, Hamadhân, Iṣbahân, Jannâbâ, Jurjân, Madînat al-Salâm, al-Muḥammadiyya, Râmhurmuz, Sâriyya, Shîrâz, Sûq al-Ahwâz, Tustar min al-Ahwâz, Wâsiṭ, and others; KOVALEV 2017A: 95-143.

Volga Way," which continued to operate for many centuries to come as one of the chief transcontinental arteries of Eurasian trade.[7] Prior to then, however, it was "The Khazar Way" that delivered an additional source of tenth-century Islamic coined silver for the Northern lands, one that is often overlooked in literature. And when these tenth-century coins from al-ʿIrâq, Iran, and the Caucasus are noted, it is almost always assumed that they were brought to eastern Europe from Iran via the lower and middle Volga, an assumption that is not at all substantiated numismatically until it became the case after ca. 980.[8] It is clear, however, that there were at least two quite independent sources of Islamic silver and two distinct routes that carried it from the Islamic world to the Northern lands during the tenth century – "The Volga Bulğâr Way" and "The Khazar Way," both of which were commercial in nature.

Another significant region of dirham production in the tenth-century Islamic world was to the west/northwest of Iran and al-ʿIrâq, or areas that can be collectively called "Western Near East" (henceforth WNE) – namely the eastern Mediterranean basin (Palestine/Filasṭîn, Syria/Bilâd al-Shâm, and Egypt/Miṣr), Muslim southeastern Anatolia/Rûm (Cilicia/al-ʿAwâṣim), and upper Mesopotamia (al-Jazîra). But, despite the minting and circulation of dirhams in these regions during the first half of the tenth century,[9] these coins were not exported to the Northern lands in any notable quantities until after the mid-tenth century. When they did appear in the early 950s, these coins became a rather regular feature in hoards – especially those in the Baltic basin – although usually found only in single digits per deposit [Appendix]. The present study will explore in detail the deposition patterns of these dirhams in the Northern lands with the intent to shed light on the questions when, why, and how these coins finally made their way from the eastern Mediterranean basin and upper Mesopotamia to Northern Europe.

THE NUMISMATIC EVIDENCE

The data for this study derives from the complete catalogue of Viking-age dirham hoards from across Afro-Eurasia, which is nearly finished for publication.[10] It includes more than 1750 hoards or assemblages of five or more dirhams, with roughly half a million coins. The present inquiry is dedicated to tenth-century WNE dirham imports into the Northern lands. For this reason, only dirhams struck at tenth-century WNE mints will be considered, although there is no doubt that some dirhams that

[7] KOVALEV 2017A: 125, 130-137.

[8] KOVALEV 2011: 43-155; 2012: 133-183; 2017A: 95-143; 2017B: 126-137.

[9] KOVALEV 2011: 120-125, Tabs. I-II; KOVALEV, LOOS, IN PREPARATION.

[10] NOONAN, KOVALEV, IN PREPARATION.

were issued in the last years of the ninth century at the same mints were brought northwards alongside later coins, since both circulated together in the WNE during the earlier part of the tenth century.[11] The purpose of omitting these pre-900 coins, which are actually found in very small quantities in the Northern lands, is to avoid confusion and contamination in our strict tenth-century chronological framework. Also, it should be kept in mind that dirhams from other regions of the caliphate (e.g., those issued at prolific mints such as al-Baṣra, al-Kûfa, Madînat al-Salâm, Râmhurmuz min al-Ahwâz, Sûq al-Ahwâz, and Shîrâz) circulated in tenth-century WNE. So, it is more than probable that these coins were extracted from the local coin-stock and transported to the Northern lands together with those issued in the WNE.[12] Since it is impossible to separate the non-local/regional WNE coins from those that were brought to the Northern lands more directly from al-ʿIrâq and Iran via the "The Khazar Way," they also cannot be included in our database.[13] Another restriction is in chronology – we have to limit the survey to hoards of the 900s-990s; as will be discussed below, a new or "Second Wave" of WNE dirhams came into the Northern lands beginning with the 990s, which brought in a new, "younger" generation of WNE issues from the 990s-1010s. These coins are left out of the database, but will be considered in another study.[14] It should be noted that these later hoards also often held notable numbers of tenth-century WNE dirhams (mostly minted in the 900s-960s), most of which were most probably brought to the Northern lands with the "First Wave." However, these "old" coins are not easy to separate from the

[11] For instance, the Ṭûlûnid dirham of Hârûn ibn Khumâraway struck in Filasṭîn, 898/99, discovered in the Swedish Stora Tune III (1910, 1912, 1917) hoard (*tpq* 954) is more than likely to be such an example. The same can be said about the dirhams from the Swedish Ekeskogs (1884), *tpq* 957/58, hoard which not only contained a handful of tenth-century WNE coins, but also ʿAbbâsid issues from Naṣîbîn (894/95) and al-Râfiqa (894/95). Other such examples can be given, not only from Sweden. For more details on the question of pre-900 WNE dirham imports into tenth-century Northern lands, see KOVALEV 2011: 52, 91-99 and 54-62 for the discussion of relative quantities of pre-900 dirhams in tenth-century WNE hoards.

[12] Since the Ḥamdânid dirhams struck in Madînat al-Salâm in 943/44 circulated in the western regions of the Near East (e.g., 3 found in the Region of Aleppo, Syria, 1986, *tpq* 945/45 hoard), on the occasion they are found in the Northern lands, it is reasonable to assume that they too were part of the wave that brought the other Ḥamdânid coins in question. However, as noted, these coins will not be entered in the database.

[13] This also includes the Ḥamdânid dirhams: the handful of coins (22 to be specific, or 4.2% of all dirham types under consideration) from al-Baṣra, Madînat al-Salâm, al-Kûfa, and Shîrâz struck by the Ḥamdânids in the 940s that have been discovered in the Northern lands have been considered, but excluded from our database, as they were not issued in the WNE. It should be observed that it is possible that one or several of the "mint indeterminable" Ḥamdânid dirhams that are registered in the database were, in fact, issued in the 940s in al-ʿIrâq or Iran; however, their quantities would be so miniscule that it would not at all impact the statistical results of our findings.

[14] KOVALEV, IN PREPARATION.

"First" and "Second" waves. Thus, for the purposes of this study, when these older coins are found together with the new ones, they and their hoards will be excluded. In sum, since the present inquiry considers only tenth-century (pre-990) WNE dirhams that can, with some high degree of certainty, be viewed as tenth-century imports, there is little question that these coins speak of the mere minimum volumes that entered the Northern lands from the WNE. No doubt, the "First Wave" of WNE dirhams brought many more coins than our database would suggest. Since we are presently concerned not with the absolute volumes of these dirham imports into the Northern lands, but with their relative importation patterns and chronological deposition, the data generated for this study is more than adequate.

Using the numismatic data and criteria outlined above, our database records 136 tenth-century deposits in the Northern lands with 500 tenth-century WNE dirhams: 74 hoards with 226 dirhams from Sweden; 27 hoards with 61 dirhams from eastern Europe; 14 hoards with 167 dirhams from Poland; 12 hoards with 28 dirhams from the southeastern Baltic; and, 2-3 hoards each with a handful of coins from Germany, Finland, Denmark, and Norway [Table I]. The Appendix provides a list of the specific hoards. The WNE dirhams include issues struck by the ʿAbbâsids, Amîrs al-Umarâʾ, Fâṭimids, Ḥamdânids (including their governors Qarghûyah and Bakjûr), and Ikhshîdids at 22 mints: Âmid, Anṭâkiyya, Dimashq, Filasṭîn, al-Fusṭâṭ, Ḥalab, Ḥarrân, Ḥimṣ, Irbil, al-Jazîra, al-Maṣîṣa, al-Mawṣil, Mayyâfâriqîn, Miṣr, Naṣîbîn, al-Râfiqa, al-Raḥbah, al-Raqqah, Raʾs al-ʿAyn, Ṭabariyya, Ṭarsûs, and Thughûr al-Sâmiyya.

The 136 hoards held a total of at least 500 tenth-century WNE dirhams [Table I].[15] Of these coins, specific mints are known for 263; others have either not yet been

[15] Unfortunately, some of the eastern European hoards from the period in question have not yet been fully studied, published, or both. For instance, Rakovtsy (Grodno oblast', 1987), *tpq* 945/46: a hoard of 2448 dirhams was found, but only very general information regarding certain rulers and dynasties nothing else has been published to date; Rakovtsy (Grodno oblast', 1971), *tpq* 952/53: a hoard of 826 dirhams was discovered, but no specific years and mints of coin issues are known; Kopievka/Kopiivka (Vinnitsa oblast', 1928), *tpq* 955/59: a coin-treasure hoard including 500 Sasanian drachms and Islamic dirhams was found, but all that is known is the dynastic and general chronological breakdown; Somewhere In Novozybkovo (Briansk oblast', pre-2001), *tpq* 956/57: a hoard of ca. 400 dirhams was discovered, but no other information is available; and, Pogorel'shchina (Minsk oblast', 1955), *tpq* 960s: coin-treasure hoard including 1904 whole and fragmented dirhams was found, but all that is known is the dynastic composition. Other examples may be given (and are to be found below), but the problem should already be apparent. The same can be said about several other regions, namely Poland; there are also very large hoards from this region that have not yet been published, although it is known that they contained a sizable ʿAbbâsid component. What this means is that it is more than very likely that other WNE dirhams were discovered in eastern Europe than our present database shows. With that said, it is unlikely that the general patterns of importation and deposition would change substantially from what is already observed: a general gravitation of WNE dirhams towards Sweden. Even if there would be a significant increase in the absolute numbers of dirhams in eastern Europe, the absolute number of hoards would still be largest for Sweden.

fully published or the coins are so defaced/damaged that their mints cannot be read. In addition, amongst the 500 coins registered in the database, 226 hold specific years of issues, permitting us to study their chronological patterns of importation and deposition in the 136 above-mentioned hoards. These coins and hoards will serve as the main database for the present study.

Table I – Spatial Distribution of the Finds of Tenth-Century Western Near Eastern Dirhams in Tenth-Century Hoards of the Northern Lands

Region	Number of Hoards	% of Total Hoards	Number of Dirhams	% of Total Dirhams
Sweden (including Åland Islands)	74	54.4%	226	45.2%
Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus)	27	19.8%	61	12.2%
Poland	14	10.3%	167	33.4%
South-Eastern Baltic (Latvia and Estonia)	12	8.8%	28	5.6%
Northern Germany	2	1.5%	7	1.4%
Finland (proper)	2	1.5%	3	0.6%
Denmark	3	2.2%	6	1.2%
Norway	2	1.5%	2	0.40%
TOTAL	136	100%	500	100%

As can be observed in Table II, exactly half of the dirhams in question derive from only three mints: al-Mawṣil (22.4%), Naṣîbîn (16.7%), and al-Maṣîṣa (10.6%). The five mints of Anṭâkiyya (7.6%), Ḥarrân (6.8%), Filasṭîn (6.4%), Ra's al-'Ayn (6.1%), and al-Râfiqa (5.3%) contributed another 32%. The remaining fourteen mints constitute only 17.6% of the WNE coins discovered in the Northern lands. Thus, 38% (101 out of 263) of these coins had their origins in areas west of the Syrian Desert (Bâdiyat Ash-shâm) or the eastern Mediterranean (including lower Egypt) basin, while the rest (162 or 62%) came from areas to the east or upper Mesopotamia. These numbers are nearly identical to those generated for all the WNE dirhams with mint names that have been found in hoards across western Eurasia, which number more than 1840 coins: 35.6% were from the eastern Mediterranean and 64.4% from upper Mesopotamia.[16] This correlation in relative percentages strongly suggests that the WNE dirhams imported into the Northern lands during the tenth century came directly from the coin-stock of the regions where they were minted and circulated – the western regions of the Near East.

[16] KOVALEV, LOOS, IN PREPARATION.

With the above conclusion in mind, it is important to observe that WNE dirhams circulated in a very limited range of the Islamic world during the tenth century – namely, they could be found in the WNE itself and, in very limited quantities, in the adjacent southern Caucasus (i.e., those issued in upper Mesopotamia).[17] Of the 33 hoards found in the Muslim lands with their 1313 tenth-century WNE dirhams, 21 deposits holding 1242 coins were without a doubt discovered in the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia; the rest come from the southern Caucasus, Iran, and India (?).[18] The southern Caucasian hoards of the first half of the tenth century were the only ones from outside of the WNE that even hint at a mild trace of these dirhams: 5 hoards with 43 dirhams or 3.3% of the total found in the Islamic lands come from the southern Caucasus. Since there was a commercial flow of dirhams coming from al-ʿIrâq and Iran to the Northern lands via the Caucasus during the first half of the tenth century, some WNE dirhams may have been picked up from the region alongside other coins circulating locally in the southern Caucasus and joined the larger silver flow along "The Khazar Way." Thus, the several upper Mesopotamian coins (Ḥarrân and Nasîbîn) discovered in hoards of the Northern lands in the 910s (Pal'tsevo, Russia, *tpq* 913/14[19]) and 930s (Triberga, Sweden, *tpq* 930/31) may well trace their origins to the trans-Caucasian route. The same may be said for hoards of the 940s, 950s, and even later ones that held these coins; some of these dirhams could have been brought via the southern Caucasus to the Northern lands decades earlier and buried there sometime thereafter. However, there are very good reasons to believe that the overwhelming majority of WNE dirhams entered the Northern lands by a more direct route from their source. To begin to explore this route, it is necessary to briefly survey the tenth-century dirham hoards of the southern Caucasus.

To date, six tenth-century dirham hoards are known from the southern Caucasus, two of which (Pichkhovani, Georgia, *tpq* 909/10; Dvin, Armenia, *tpq* 935/36) date to the first half of the tenth century, while the remaining four to its second half (Borchalu uezd, Georgia, *tpq* 953/54; Iaz-Kiragi, Azerbaijan, 1958, *tpq* 953/54; Nakhichevan', Azerbaijan, *tpq* 951-961; and, Tbilisi, Georgia, *tpq* 977/78). Of these deposits, all but the latest (*tpq* 977/78) held some quantity of tenth-century WNE

[17] KOVALEV 2011: 76-87.

[18] The provenance of seven hoards is unknown; all that is known is that they were discovered somewhere in the Near/Middle East. In other words, some of them may also have been discovered in the WNE. For more specifics on these statistics, see KOVALEV, LOOS, IN PREPARATION.

[19] *tpq* = *terminus post quem* or the year of the latest coin in a hoard, indicating the approximate date of the hoard's deposit. The reasoning behind dating hoards based on the latest coin is connected with the logic that the hoard could not have been deposited before the youngest coin was entered into it; on the other hand, if the hoard was deposited much later than the youngest coin, it would be expected that newer coins would have been added to it before its burial.

dirhams, chronologically by hoard numbering 3, 32, 2, 20, and 3 – all struck by the ʿAbbâsids and Ḥamdânids. Whilst recognizing that the numismatic data for the southern Caucasus is quite limited compared to what is available for some other region of western Eurasia, there still are some obvious distinctions in the dynastic profiles represented in the hoards of the southern Caucasus vs. the Northern lands. Thus, not one Ikhshîdid or Fâṭimid coin has been discovered in the coin deposits of the southern Caucasus. But, these coins appear in hoards of the Northern lands starting in the early 950s (Ikshîdids in Sweden: Smiss, *tpq* 951/52; Mullvalds, *tpq* 953/54; Eketorp, *tpq* 958/59) and 960s (Fâṭimids: Russia, Briansk Region, *tpq* 969/70). It would, thus, appear that dirhams from these two eastern/southeastern Mediterranean (North African) dynasties were not exported to the southern Caucasus. It is true that after the three hoards of the 950s-early 960s, the only other remaining southern Caucasian hoard for the rest of the tenth century is the tiny Tbilisi (*tpq* 977/78) deposit. In other words, there is a paucity of hoards from the second half of the tenth century from this area. Be that as it may, none of these dynasties, nor any others that struck WNE dirhams, appear in any post-tenth-century hoards from the region: Nakhichevan' (*tpq* 951-961) was the last deposit with WNE dirhams found in the southern Caucasus. Moreover, the paucity of post-950s hoards speak volumes regarding the poor state of the monetary circulation in the southern Caucasus in the second half of the tenth century. It can hardly be argued that the southern Caucasus had reserves of any dirhams in the second half of the tenth century for export anywhere.

The general picture outlined above is more clearly seen in the profile of the mints from both regions. Curiously, but not surprising in light of the southern Caucasus' proximity to upper Mesopotamia, all but one coin – a dirham from Anṭâkiyya (found in the Borchalu uezd, *tpq* 953/54, hoard) – discovered in hoards of the southern Caucasus were issued in al-Jazîra. Indeed, the dirham minted in Anṭâkiyya is the only one found in the southern Caucasus that had its origins in the eastern Mediterranean basin (representing only 2% of the total WNE found in the region). All others came exclusively from regions east of the Euphrates River, or upper Mesopotamia proper: Âmid – 3.9%; Ḥarrân – 2%; al-Jazîra – 2%; Naṣîbîn – 27.4%; al-Mawṣil – 54.9%; al-Râfiqa – 2%; and, Raʾs al-ʿAyn – 5.9%. But, the same cannot be said about the dirhams found in hoards of the Northern lands. As can be recalled, 38% of them had their origins in areas west of the Euphrates,[20] coming from mints of the eastern Mediterranean basin (including lower Egypt): Anṭâkiyya, Dimashq, Filasṭîn, al-Fusṭâṭ, Ḥalab, Ḥimṣ, al-Maṣîṣa, Miṣr, Ṭabariyya, Ṭarsûs, and Thughûr al-Sâmiyya [Map I]. It would, thus, appear that while the southern Caucasus and the Northern lands shared some of the coin-stock of upper Mesopotamia, dirhams minted in the

[20] Technically, the mint al-Raḥbah is situated on the western bank of the Euphrates, but the city belongs to the province of al-Jazîra.

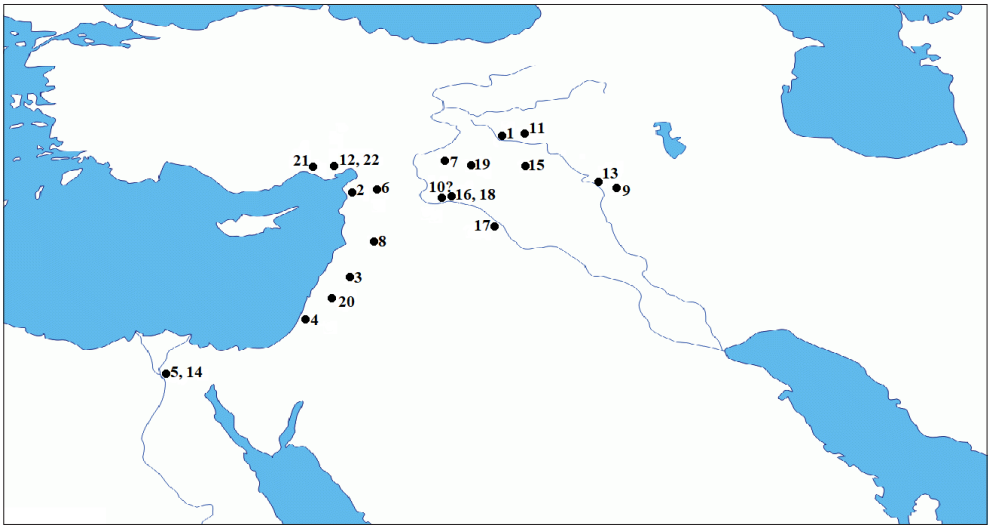
eastern Mediterranean basin were singular to the Northern lands. Had the southern Caucasus been the source of WNE dirhams for the north, it would be reasonable to expect a notable presence of these coins in the southern Caucasus themselves.

Table II – Mint Distribution of Tenth-Century Western Near Eastern Dirhams in the Northern Lands (10th-century Hoards)
[eastern Mediterranean (including lower Egypt) mints indicated in Bold]

Mint	Quantity	Percentage of Total
1. Âmid	2	0.76%
2. Anṭâkiyya	20	7.6%
3. Dimashq	5	1.9%
4. Filasṭîn	17	6.46%
5. al-Fusṭâṭ	1	0.38%
6. Ḥalab	10	3.8%
7. al-Ḥarrân	18	6.84%
8. Ḥimṣ	5	1.91%
9. Irbil	1	0.38%
10. al-Jazîira	2	0.76%
11. Mayyâfâriqîn (al-Thughûr Mayyâfâriqîn)	4	1.53%
12. al-Maṣîṣa	28	10.64%
13. Mawṣil	59	22.43%
14. Miṣr	4	1.53%
15. Naṣîbîn	44	16.73%
16. al-Râfiqa	14	5.32%
17. al-Raḥbah	2	0.76%
18. al-Raqqah	1	0.38%
19. Ra's al-'Ayn	16	6.08%
20. Ṭabariyya	5	1.91%
21. Ṭarsûs	5	1.91%
22. Thughûr al-Sâmiyya (=? al-Maṣîṣa)	1	0.38%
Total	**263**	**100%**

In light of the presence of Ikhshîdid and Fâṭimid dirhams, as those struck by the 'Abbâsids and Ḥamdânids in the eastern Mediterranean, in hoards of the Northern lands and their absence in those of the southern Caucasus, it is possible to use these coins as proxies for tracing an alternative route for the export of WNE dirhams from the caliphate northwards. This can be achieved by examining the dirhams and their hoards chronologically and geographically in the Northern lands.

Map I – Tenth-Century Western Near Eastern Mints Represented in Tenth-Century Dirham Hoards of the Northern Lands



Beginning with the former – the earliest hoard with a tenth-century dirham from the eastern Mediterranean basin found in the Northern lands is the Koz'ianka deposit from Belarus, discovered not far from the bank of the West Dvina River (Polotsk raion). Dated by *tpq* to 944/45, in addition to an old upper Mesopotamian ʿAbbâsid coin (Ra's al-ʿAyn, 900/01), it held a dated dirham from lower Egypt (Miṣr, 907/08). Despite the existence of one hoard of the 930s in Sweden and three others with WNE dirhams from the 940s in the southeastern Baltic and Sweden, all held only tenth-century upper Mesopotamian coins (Nasîbîn, 902/03; al-Mawṣil, 926/27; Nasîbîn, 903/04; and, 1 mint indeterminable, 942/43). In light of these very modest finds, it would be difficult to argue for a notable infusion of WNE dirhams into the Northern lands in the 930s-940s. Indeed, the deposition of only one, relatively old, coin struck in Miṣr in Koz'ianka can hardly speak for any direct contact between the Northern lands and the eastern Mediterranean. Since dirhams from this mint, albeit very few, did circulate in Iran (e.g., Miṣr, 904/05 found in the Isfahan, 1972 or earlier, *tpq* 936/37, hoard), it would not at all be unreasonable to conclude that this coin came from al-ʿIrâq or Iran to eastern Europe via "The Khazar Way," as did the handful of dirhams from upper Mesopotamia found in Sweden and the southeastern Baltic. In this way, the first five decades of the tenth century witnesses the importation of just a handful of WNE dirhams into the Northern lands. There is no good reason to believe that any of them came there directly from the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia.

Table III – Deposition Patterns of Tenth-Century Western Near Eastern Dirhams in the Northern Lands By Decades and Regions (Hoard Quantity/Coin Quantity)

Region	910s	920s	930s	940s	940s-950s	950s
Sweden (including Åland Islands)	0	0	1/1	2/2	1/1	21/33
Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus)	1/1	0	0	1/2	0	0
Poland	0	0	0	0	0	1/1
Southeastern Baltic (Latvia and Estonia)	0	0	0	1/1	0	2/3
Northern Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finland (proper)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Denmark	0	0	0	0	0	1/1
Norway	0	0	0	0	0	1/1
TOTAL	**1/1**	**0**	**1/1**	**4/5**	**1/1**	**26/39**

There is one hoard that is broadly dated to the 940s-950s, or more specifically to 945-959, based on the presence of two miliaresia or Byzantine silver coins of Constantine VII and Romanus II (945-959) (När, Gotland, Sweden). The hoard also contained a WNE dirham (al-Râfiqa, 906/07). The decade to two gap in the chronology of the "youngest" dirham (ʿAbbâsid, Sûq al-Ahwâz, 936/37[21]) found in the hoard and the Byzantine miliaresia suggests that the dirham hoard was formed in the late 930s and the Byzantine coins were probably added to it in the 950s, or a decade when miliaresia began to appear in the Northern lands (as we shall soon see) and then soon deposited. So, once again, the single, old coin from upper Mesopotamia found in this hoard may have been brought to Sweden in the 900s-930s and cannot necessarily speak of direct connections of the Northern lands with the western regions of the Near East. The two miliaresia, though, most probably do, as will be discussed below.

The deposition of coin types radically changed in the Northern lands with the very first years of the **950s**. During the 950s, 39 WNE dirhams issued by the ʿAbbâsids, Amîrs al-Umarâʾ, Ḥamdânids, and Ikhshîdids were entered in 26 hoards spanning the entire decade and discovered in the southeastern Baltic, Poland, Norway, Denmark as well as Sweden. Mints are known for 36 of the coins, and amongst these 10 or 25.6% come from five eastern Mediterranean mints: Anṭâkiyya, Dimashq, Filasṭîn, Ḥimṣ, and al-Maṣîṣa. The upper Mesopotamian mints in these hoards are represent-

[21] The presence of this dirham alongside a handful of other coins from al-ʿIrâq as well as Iran and the southern Caucasus in an otherwise mostly Sâmânid (with Volga Bulğâr imitations?) dirham assemblage, incidentally, leads to the conclusion that two parcels were combined into one hoard by 936/37 – one coming with coins via "The Volga Bulğâr Way" and the other via "The Khazar Way."

950s-960s	960s	960s-970s	970s	970s-990s	970s-980s	980s	980s-990s	990s
0	12/42	0	15/43	0	0	1/30	1/1	20/73
0	2/13	1/1	12/30	0	0	6/10	0	4/4
1/1	1/2	0	4/41	0	2/117	0	0	5/5
0	4/4	0	3/15		0	2/5	0	0
0	0	0	0	1/6	0	0	0	1/1
	0	0	1/2		0	0	0	1/1
0	0	0	2/5	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/1
1/1	**19/61**	**1/1**	**37/124**	**1/6**	**2/117**	**9/45**	**1/1**	**32/88**

ed by dirhams struck across a rather wide range of mints, half of which were previously unknown in the Northern lands: Âmid, Ḥarrân, al-Mawṣil, Naṣîbîn, al-Râfiqa, and Ra's al-ʿAyn. But, perhaps what is just as important is that many of these coins were very new, or relatively new: the 28 dirhams that carry exact years of issue have the following chronological profile: 900s – 9; 910s – 1; 920s – 2; 930s – 6; 940s – 6; and, 950s – 4. Thus, 35.7% of the coins deposited in hoards of the Northern lands in the 950s were very recent strikes, dating to the decades of the 940s-950s.

In a number of instances, WNE dirhams were amongst the newest, indeed, some the "youngest" coins in the hoards of the 950s: the 951/52 Ikshîdid dirham minted in Filasṭîn was the newest coin in Smiss (Gotland, Sweden), *tpq* 951/52, hoard; another Ikshîdid dirham struck in Ḥimṣ in 947/48 was found in Mullvalds (Gotland, Sweden), *tpq* 953/54; a Ḥamdânid coin issued in al-Mawṣil in 946/47? was deposited in Kastlösa (Öland, Sweden), *tpq* 953/54; and, Ḥamdânid Nasîbîn (950/51) and al-Mawṣil (940-944) dirhams were held in Häffinds (Gotland, Sweden), *tpq* 957/58. It is instructive to underscore that all these very "young" coins come from Sweden, mostly Gotland. Noteworthy is that not only were these coins channeled to Sweden from their place of striking in the WNE very quickly and arguably directly, but Sweden was clearly their main target of destination: of the 26 hoards with the 39 WNE dirhams discovered in the Northern lands, 21 deposits (80.1%) and 33 (84.6%) of the coins were discovered in Sweden. Amongst these hoards, 14 (holding 25 coins) come from Gotland while the others from six (holding 8 coins) other provinces: Åland, Blekinge, Närke, Öland, Småland, and Uppland. The two hoards from the Åland Islands suggest the bridge that brought these coins to Sweden so rapidly from eastern Europe via the eastern and northern Baltic.

In sum, the 950s very clearly experienced a sudden and notable influx of WNE dirhams (of both types) into the Northern lands: 7.8% of all dirhams in question were deposited in 19% of all tenth-century hoards with these coins discovered in this region. While the absolute volume of these coins may seem rather nominal, compared to the previous five decades their numbers rose almost fivefold – from 8 to 39 – all in one decade – and the quantity of hoards rose nearly fourfold – from 7 to 26. Thus, these coins came in much greater volumes in the 950s than in the previous decades; they came from both areas of the WNE – upper Mesopotamia and the eastern Mediterranean; they included many new and brand new dirhams; and, their geographic distribution was much more expansive that in the previous decades – spanning most of the Baltic. But, the lion's share of the dirhams without a doubt gravitated towards Sweden, mostly Gotland. Seemingly paradoxical is that not one hoard with WNE dirhams from the 950s thus far has been recorded in eastern Europe, assumedly the source of these coins for the Baltic basin. We shall turn to this issue below.

The import of WNE into the Northern lands intensified in the **960s**. Coming from eastern Europe, the southeastern Baltic, Poland, and Sweden, there are 19 hoards with 61 WNE dirhams struck by the ʿAbbâsids, Ḥamdânids, Ikhshîdids, and now Fâṭimids recorded in our database. Of the 49 dirhams that preserved their mints, 21 or 42.8% were issued in the eastern Mediterranean (Anṭâkiyya, Dimashq, Filasṭîn, Ḥalab or al-Maṣîṣa, al-Maṣîṣa, Ṭabariyya, Ṭarsûs, and al-Sâmiyya), thus significantly rising from the 25.6% of the 950s. The range of eastern Mediterranean mints represented in hoards of the 960s also rose from that of the 950s – from five to seven/eight. Amongst the mints from upper Mesopotamia in the hoards of the 960s were Ḥarrân, Irbil, al-Mawṣil, Mayyâfâriqîn, Naṣîbîn, al-Râfiqa, and Ra's al-ʿAyn, i.e., two more mints than in the 950s.

Once again, many new coins from both regions were found in the hoards of the 960s: of the 39 dirhams with exact years, the coins have the following chronological profile: 900s – 1; 910s – 0; 920s – 6; 930s – 7; 940s – 8; 950s – 2; and, 960s – 16. The near total absence of coins from the first two decades of the tenth century is striking. Indeed, 46% of these dirhams were minted just a decade or two prior to their deposition. One can come to the same conclusion when considering the dirhams that can only be placed into decades by year of issue: 909-932 – 1; 920s – 1; 920s-960s – 2; 940s – 4; 940s-950s – 1; 940s-960s – 5; 940-970s –1; 950-960s – 1; 960s – 5; and, 950s-970s – 1. Quite clearly, a great many new or relatively new dirhams were being shipped and deposited in the Northern lands in the 960s.

As in the 950s, the WNE dirhams are often found as the "youngest" coin in hoards: Lunds II (Gotland, Sweden) obtained its *tpq* from the Ḥamdânid al-Maṣîṣa (?) 962-965 coin. The Birka (Uppland, Sweden), *tpq* 963/64, hoard held two fragments of two coins issued in al-Maṣîṣa in 963/64. Three Ḥamdânid coins struck in 962/63 and

963/64 (2 mints indeterminable and 1 al-Maṣîṣa) date the Stora Vikers (Gotland, Sweden) hoard. Smedby (Östergötland, Sweden) is also dated by its Ḥamdânid al-Maṣîṣa coin struck in 964/65. A Mayyâfâriqîn dirham minted by the Ḥamdânids in 965 dates the Alskog Vicarage/Prästgården (Gotland, Sweden) deposit. Liknatte (Gotland, Sweden) is dated by its 961/62 al-Sâmiyya dirham. Other examples may be given, but it should already be evident that WNE coins were entering Sweden at great speed in the 960s as they did in the 950s.

But, it was not just Sweden that received very fresh dirhams in the 960s. Indeed, three of the four hoards from the southeastern Baltic (Estonian) of this decade held WNE dirhams that were the "youngest" or amongst the "youngest" in the hoards: "Meeksi/Mäxhof?" has the *tpq* of 963/64?, based on its Ḥamdânid dirham struck in al-Mawṣil; the Rathshof (*tpq* 965-967/68) hoard held a dirham struck at an unknown Ḥamdânid mint in 965 or 967/68; and, the Vara (Warrol) assemblage of *tpq* 969/70 included an al-Maṣîṣa or Ḥalab dirham struck in 962-965. The single hoard of the decade from Poland (Puck, *tpq* 965) held a Ḥamdânid al-Maṣîṣa dirham issued in 963/64. Finally, the Russian Briansk Region (*tpq* 969/70) hoard contained some very new WNE dirhams, although not all their exact dates are known: Ḥamdânid al-Maṣîṣa (952/53 or 962/63; 945-967) and mint indeterminable (945-967 and 961-967) as well as a Fâṭimid coin (mint indeterminable, 953-975[22]). The single WNE dirham found in the Ukrainian Shpilevka/Shpylivka (*tpq* 966/67) hoard held another broadly dated (929-969, mint indeterminable) Ḥamdânid dirham, which may have been struck in the 960s.

Altogether, it seems evident that WNE dirhams were channeled into the Northern lands in the 960s in great numbers and at great speed, seemingly more so than in the 950s. Indeed, the 960s witnessed the deposition of 14% of all tenth-century hoards with tenth-century WNE dirhams found in the Northern lands, which included 12.3% of all these coins. Thus, the volume of coins deposited in the 960s rose twofold from the previous decade, but the quantities of hoards with these dirhams declined almost twofold from the 950s. Consequently, there were higher concentrations of WNE dirhams in the hoards of the 960s. Very few older coins – those struck in the first three decades of the tenth century – were hoarded in the 960s, while about half of the dirhams that were, had been issued in the 950s-960s. Evidently, these coins were quickly transported from their mint and place of circulation in the WNE to the Northern lands where a notable number of them were very rapidly entered in the ground. As in the 950s, the main region to which these coins gravitated was Sweden, again primarily Gotland: of the nineteen hoards with their 61 dirhams found in the 960s in the Northern lands, twelve or 63% of the hoards and 41 or 67% of the

[22] The mint of the Fâṭimid dirham in the Briansk Region (*tpq* 969/70) hoard is effaced, but it was struck in one of these Tunisian mints: al-Qayrawân, al-Manṣûriyya, or al-Mahdiyya.

coins come from Sweden. Of the twelve Swedish hoards, seven are from Gotland (holding 23 coins) and the remaining five (holding 18 dirhams) from Östergötland, Södermanland (2), and Uppland (2).

The 970s offer a more nuanced and complex picture. As with the transition from the 950s to 960s, in the 970s the volume of WNE dirhams deposited and the number of hoards with these coins grew twofold from what it was in the 960s: 124 dirhams or 25% of the coins under consideration and 37 hoards or 27% of all deposits come from the 970s. In other words, a quarter of all hoards and dirhams this study is dedicated to were deposited in the 970s. The geographic range is equally impressive: spanning from eastern Europe to Denmark, including the southeastern Baltic, Finland, Poland, and Sweden in between. Of the 124 dirhams from this decade, 84 bear mints: amongst these coins, 40 or almost half (47.6%) were eastern Mediterranean (Anṭâkiyya, Dimashq, Filasṭîn, Ḥalab, Ḥimṣ, al-Maṣîṣa, Miṣr, Ṭabariyya, and Ṭarsûs), as compared to 34% in the 950s and 42.5% in the 960s. The remaining 44 dirhams were struck in upper Mesopotamia: Ḥarrân, al-Jazîra, al-Mawṣil, Mayyâfâriqîn, Naṣîbîn, al-Râfiqa, al-Raqqah, and Ra's al-ʿAyn. Compared to the decade of the 960s, several more mints are represented from both parts of the WNE: 9 in the 970s vs. 7/8 in the 960s from the eastern Mediterranean and 8 in the 970s vs. 7 in the 960s from upper Mesopotamia; no doubt the reason for this can be tied to the much larger statistical sample provided by the greater number of coins found in the 970s, although the disparity of one to two mints between the two decades is hardly consequential.

The 67 coins that preserved their years of issue have the following chronological profile: 900s – 9; 910s – 3; 920s – 4; 930s – 12; 940s – 24; 950s – 7; and, 960s – 8. This chronological breakdown illustrates a rather peculiar situation, one showing the reverse trend of the 950s and 960s – the dirhams in question are becoming "aged." Not one coin dated to the 970s and only 22.4% were issued in the previous two decades, compared to 33% in the 950s and 64% in the 960s. The vast majority of the dirhams deposited in the 970s were old coins dating to the 900s-940s (77.6%). Dirhams that can be arranged only by decades echo this trend: 910s-930s – 4; 930s-970s – 10; 940s – 3; 940s-950s – 2; 940s-960s – 12; and, 960s-ca. 970 – 2. Indeed, not one coin can be securely tied to post-960s, and only two dirhams can be securely dated to the 960s. The absence of dirhams issued in the 970s in hoards of this decade and the decline in the volumes of those struck in the 960s can, at least in part, be explained by the drop in the production rates of these coins at WNE mints, a trend that already began in the 950s (although the 960s were more productive than the 950s).[23] The fewer numbers of these coins, the less of a chance there was for their export. However, as will be seen below, not one dirham issued in the 970s and later found its

[23] KOVALEV, LOOS, IN PREPARATION.

way into the Northern lands in the following decades of the tenth century, suggesting another reason for their absence, which will be considered below.

As in the previous decades, the majority of the hoards (15) and dirhams (42) in question were found in Sweden, in the majority of both (12 hoards and 36 coins) on the Island of Gotland, with two in Skåne and one in Södermanland. Albeit, as in the previous decades, the quantity of hoards and coins found in Sweden continue to decline in comparison to other regions. If the 950s witnessed the deposition of 81% of the hoards in Sweden with 85% of the dirhams and the 960s saw the burial of 63% of the hoards with 68% of the coins, in the 970s both numbers dropped to less than half: 40.5% of hoards and 34.7% of coins. Other regions where WNE dirhams were relatively rare – notably eastern Europe – experienced their heyday of deposition: 12 hoards with 21 dirhams in eastern Europe; 4 hoards with 39 dirhams in Poland; and, 3 hoards with 15 dirhams in the southeastern Baltic region.

Overall, while more WNE dirhams were deposited in many more hoards in the 970s than during any other previous decade, the old age of these coins and that fact that none dated to the 970s themselves, leaves the impression that the WNE silver flow had ceased by ca. 970. It would be reasonable to assume that all dirhams deposited in the 970s were brought to the Northern lands in the previous two decades and remained there is circulation until they found their terminal resting spots in hoards deposited in the 970s. The greater geographic distribution of these dirhams across the Northern lands also seems to indicate that these coins came to be dispersed and entered a greater monetary circulation field by the 970s.

The **980s** experienced a precipitous decline in the deposition of hoards with WNE coins and the volume of these dirhams found in them. Thus, only nine hoards holding 45 dirhams are recorded in our database for this decade, which is an almost fourfold drop in hoard quantities and almost a threefold drop in coin volumes from the 970s. Just as notable is the huge disparity in the geographic distribution of the hoards – only one comes from Sweden while there are six from eastern Europe and two from the southeastern Baltic. Be that as it may, the single Swedish hoard held 30 of the 45 coins recorded for this decade. Accordingly, it terms of coin quantities, Sweden – namely Gotland – remains in the lead for WNE dirham quantities found in the Northern lands for the 980s. There were more hoards from eastern Europe, but few of these coins; it, thus, appears that these dirhams were less concentrated, or were in greater and wider circulation in the region.

Mints are known for 29 dirhams: 38% were from the eastern Mediterranean (Anṭâkiyya, Filasṭîn, Ḥalab, al-Maṣîṣa, Miṣr, and Ṭabariyya) and the rest from upper Mesopotamia (Ḥarrân, al-Mawṣil, Mayyâfâriqîn, Naṣîbîn, and Ra's al-'Ayn). While in the general ballpark of the previous decades (950s – 34%; 960s – 42.5%; 970s – 47.6%), the drop to 38% from the eastern Mediterranean would seem to suggest a decline in the relative numbers of the two dirham types being deposited. This drop

can also be viewed as a reversal to the situation of the 950s. In terms of chronology of the coins, of the 20 dirhams with specific years, we see the same general pattern of the 970s – no coins issued in the 970s or 980s were present: all were from the first seven decades of the tenth century: 900s – 1; 910s – 0; 920s – 1; 930s – 2; 940s – 7; 950s – 5; and, 960s – 4. Coins with broad chronology show the same pattern: 908-932 – 1; 940s-960s – 3; 940s-990s – 2; 945-974 – 1; 958-961 – 1; and, ca. 960-965 – 2. As in the 970s, the dirhams deposited in the 980s do not lead to suggest that there was any new inflow of WNE silver into the Northern lands during this decade. All the WNE dirhams deposited in the 980s were old coins, brought to the region in the 950s-960s, perhaps with a handful of upper Mesopotamian dirhams carried there during the first half of the tenth century via the Caucasus.

One hoard, a very important one, cannot be placed into a specific decade, since its chronology spans the **970s-980s**; but, it should be considered presently before moving to the 990s. It is the huge Polish Dzierznica II deposit (Wielkopolska region) with 18,200 dirhams (mostly fragments) that, based on West European silver coins (deniers), apparently dates to 976-982.[24] Unfortunately, this hoard has not yet been published in detail, but it is known that it held 2 Fâṭimid, 14 Ikhshîdid, 100 Ḥamdânid, and 430 ʿAbbâsid dirham fragments, the latter of which most probably also included at least some WNE coins. This is by far the largest recorded hoard of WNE dirhams from the Northern lands, holding at least 116 of these dirhams, or almost a quarter (23.2%) of the WNE coins in question found in the entire region for the tenth century. With this hoard included, it can be estimated that 82.3% of all WNE coins that had been deposited in the Northern lands during the tenth century were buried by 990. Until the Dzierznica II coins are published in detail, little else can be said about it presently as it pertains to coin mints and dates. But, we shall return to it in due time, as some of its other coins that have been studied and published in detail cast interesting light not only on the origins of its WNE dirhams, but on the larger question of why, when, and how WNE dirhams came to the Northern lands. To end the 970s-980s, the Polish Obrzycko hoard (*tpq* 978-983) held a unique for the Northern lands Egyptian ʿAbbâsid dirham from al-Fusṭâṭ (908-932).

The **990s** perhaps offers more questions than answers. This decade witnessed a sharp rise in the number of hoards and the volume of WNE dirhams they contained compared to the previous decade: 32 hoards and 88 dirhams; thus, almost a quarter (23.7) of the hoards with 17.6% of the dirhams under study were deposited during this decade. The geography of their finds also expands to practically every

[24] It has been reported that another part of the Dzierznica II hoard was recovered in 2006; it held 1988 dirham fragments as well as 77 West European, 14 Byzantine, 2 Roman, 542 indeterminable coin fragments, as well as 228 jewelry pieces. So far, I have not found any additional information about this find; see GLIKSMAN 2009, 615.

region – eastern Europe and the Baltic (Finland, Poland, Norway, Germany, and Sweden). Sweden again comes in first place, indeed totally dominates in the quantity of hoards (20) and dirhams (73). Amongst the 88 dirhams from the 990s, 73 have mints, 20 or 27.4% of which were struck in the eastern Mediterranean (Anṭâkiyya, Dimashq, Filasṭîn, Madînat Ḥalab/Ḥalab, al-Maṣîṣa, and Ṭarsûs), while the remaining 53 in upper Mesopotamia (Ḥarrân, al-Mawṣil, Mayyâfâriqîn, Naṣîbîn, al-Râfiqa, al-Raḥbah, and Ra's al-ʿAyn). Thus, the trend for the mint ratio observed in the 980s seems to be repeated – the decline in the percentages of eastern Mediterranean coins in relations to those of upper Mesopotamia: from 47.6% in the 970s to 38% in the 980s to 27.4% in the 990s. This steady – decade by decade – rise of the former over the latter from 950s through the 970s and then decline needs through the 980s-990s requires further study.

Concerning the chronology of the coins: the 60 dirhams with specific years of issue show the following breakdown: 900s – 7; 910s – 3; 920s – 9; 930s – 12; 940s – 13; 950s – 7; and, 960s – 9. The dirhams that can be placed into broader dates show the same general picture: 908-932 – 5; 910s-930s – 4; 934-940 – 1; 941-945 – 1; 940s-960s – 8; and, 950s-960s – 6. We thus observing the same trends as in the 970s-980s – that of the absence of post-ca. 970 dirhams and the "aging effect" of the coins. Accordingly, despite the upsurge in the deposition of WNE dirhams in their relative quantities and increased numbers of hoards with them in the 990s, none of the coins were issued after ca. 970.

Indeed, the utter absence of WNE dirhams struck in the 970s-980s by the later Ḥamdânids (post-968/69 ʿUddat al-Dawla and Saʿd al-Dawla), Ikhshîdids, and Qarmaṭîs, or early Fâṭimids (al-Muʿizz or al-ʿAzîz), and Buwayhids (e.g., ʿAḍud al-Dawla or Ṣamṣâm al-Dawla) in the 980s hoards of the Northern lands is quite strange, particularly because these coins were in circulation in the eastern Mediterranean in the 970s-980s.[25] Not one of the rather large emission – first of the Ikhshîdid Aḥmad ibn ʿAlî and then the Fâṭimid Imâm al-Muʿizz (953-975) – at Filasṭîn in 968/69-969/70 is known in any hoard of the Northern lands: the latest Filasṭîn dirhams occur in Swedish deposits and were struck in 964/65 and 965/66 (Talby, Södermanland, *tpq* 969/70; Botes, Gotland, *tpq* after 973; Lilla Rone, Gotland, *tpq* 973/74; and, Bols (Botels), Gotland, *tpq* after 983).[26] Not one of the relatively numerous dirham issues in al-Mawṣil between 969/70 and 982/83 entered the Northern lands in the 970s-990s. The same can be said of the Ikhshîdid, Qarmaṭîs, and early Fâṭimid dirhams,

[25] Tel Ashdod (Near Gaza, Palestine, 1935), *tpq* 969/70; Syria (pre-1980), *tpq* 969/70; Region of Aleppo? (Syria, 1987 or earlier), *tpq* 972/73; Caesarea (Israel, pre-1964), *tpq* 975/76; Southern Syria/Palestine, 1981 or earlier), *tpq* 985/86; see KOVALEV 2011: 58-60.

[26] KOVALEV, LOOS, IN PREPARATION.

which vanished from Near Eastern hoards, but not until 975-985.[27] However, the "youngest" coin from the WNE discovered in tenth-century hoards of the Northern lands (excluding Marwânid and ʿUqaylid dirhams of the very late tenth century that are outside the scope of this study) dates to 968/69 (only 3 in total).[28] It is true that the outputs of WNE mints experienced a precipitous decline after ca. 970 and some mints ceased producing dirhams all together, but these coins were still struck at other mints and circulate in the region in the subsequent decades.[29] Albeit, we do not see any of these coins in hoards of the 970s-990s. Most curiously and telling is that WNE Buwayhid and very late Ḥamdânid coins issued in the 970s do begin to appear in the post-1000 deposits of the Northern lands: about two dozen are recorded in post-tenth-century eastern European, southeastern Baltic, Polish, and Swedish hoards, e.g., Buwayhid ʿAḍud al-Dawla dirham minted between 977-983 in al-Mawṣil and one in al-Râfiqa? (979/80); but, mainly it was the Ḥamdânid ʿUddat al-Dawla coins that were, in relative terms, prevalent: minted in al-Mawṣil and Nasîbîn between 969/70 and 979/80. These "younger" WNE dirhams must have come to the Northern lands with the "Second Wave," which began with the 990s and lasted through the 1010s and chiefly brought Marwânid and ʿUqaylid dirhams minted in the 990s-1010s. Conversely, it is unlikely that this "Second Wave" would have brought many, if any, older WNE coins, since these ʿAbbâsid and Ḥamdânid issues of the 900s-950s had disappeared from circulation by the turn of the eleventh century, although a small amount of those minted in the 960s could still be found in circulation in the WNE into the 1010s.[30]

In sum, it would stand to reason that nearly all (excluding those few that may have entered via the Caucasus) ʿAbbâsid, Amîrs al-Umarâʾ, Fâṭimid, Ḥamdânid, and Ikhshîdid WNE dirhams deposited in hoards of the Northern lands during the tenth century were imported there in the 950s-960s. Once there, 20% were deposited during these two decades, while the remaining 80% circulated in the Northern lands and entered hoards in the 970s-990s. What caused the spigot of WNE dirhams to be turned off after ca. 969 can be explained through the examination of historical

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[27] Caesarea (Israel, pre-1964), *tpq* 975-76, and Somewhere in southern Syria/Palestine?, 1981 or earlier, *tpq* 985/86. It should be noted that the Qarmaṭîs issued dirhams in Filasṭîn, Dimashq, and Ṭabariyya through the 970s; see VARDANYAN 2011: 423-450.

[28] Mannegårde I, Gotland, Sweden, *tpq* 969/70 (Ḥamdânid, ʿUddat al-Dawla – al-Mawṣil); Zalesie, Poland, *tpq* ca. 976 (Ḥamdânid, ʿUddat al-Dawla – mint indeterminable); and, Fölhagen (Smidgårde), Gotland, Sweden, *tpq* after 991 (Ḥamdânid Governor, Qarghûya and Bakjûr – Madînat Ḥalab).

[29] KOVALEV, LOOS, IN PREPARATION.

[30] Eastern Turkey? (1978 or earlier), *tpq* of 1001/02; Northern Mesopotamia? (1997-1998?) *tpq* 1014/15; Northern Iraq/Southeastern Turkey?] (pre-1979), *tpq* 1015/16. The first of these hoards held Ḥamdânid dirhams issued in Naṣîbîn in 963/64 and 968/69 and 2 in al-Mawṣil in 968/69; see KOVALEV 2011: 61-63, for the discussion of these hoards.

records. But, prior to moving on to the written evidence, two other key numismatically tangential issues should to be considered – Byzantine coins found in the same hoards as WNE dirhams and the geographic distribution of hoards with these coins into the Northern lands.

Above, we have had the occasion to speak of a Swedish hoard När, broadly dated to the 940s-950s, or more exactly to 945-959, because it held two Byzantine miliaresia of Constantine VII and Romanus II (945-959), which were the "youngest" coins in the deposit. It was suggested that this coin assemblage may well date to the 950s, since it was this decade that witnessed a notable infusion of Byzantine silver coins into the Northern lands. A more precisely dated dirham hoard, also with two such Byzantine coins, is the Estonian Saue (Friedrichshof), *tpq* 951/52, deposit which, like När (al-Râfiqa, 906/07), held a quite dated WNE dirham (al-Mawṣil, 908/09). Whether these old upper Mesopotamian coins came into the Northern lands via "The Khazar Way" many decades prior to their deposition in the 950s, or brought there very recently via another route, is not as important as that these two hoards mark the beginning of a steady infusion of Byzantine coins into the Northern lands. Indeed, Byzantine miliaresia become a relatively common feature of hoards of the Northern lands deposited in the second half of the tenth century and on into the next.[31] Yet, there is a particularly strong correlation in the hoarding of pre-970 miliaresia (especially those struck in the mid-940s-960s) and WNE dirhams beginning with the early 950s in the Northern lands [Appendix].

Thus, five (or ca. 23%) of the 22 hoards dated to the **950s** that contained WNE dirhams also carried Byzantine miliaresia, all but one discovered in Sweden: Smiss, *tpq* 951/52 (3); Åsgårda (Åland), *tpq* 955/56 (1); Birka, *tpq* 957/58 (1); Häffinds, *tpq* 957/58 (1); and, Saue (Estonia), *tpq* 951/52 (2). In total, these five hoards enclosed 8 miliaresia: 7 of Constantine VII and Romanus II (945-959) and 1 of Basil I and Constantine (868-879). The 2 miliaresia of Constantine VII and Romanus II found alongside one WNE dirham in the more broadly dated Swedish När hoard (*tpq* 945-959) should also be remembered; in light of the obvious influx of Byzantine coins in the 950s, it would be reasonable to date this deposit to its upper chronological span of the 950s. In addition, there is a hoard from Denmark in which WNE dirhams are not recorded (although most of its 134 dirhams and their fragments were not identified), but it did hold a miliaresion of Constantine VII and Romanus II (Jyndevad, *tpq* ca. 955-960). Likewise, one Estonian deposit, of which only 6 dirhams are known (none WNE), also carried a "Byzantine coin" (Parivere, *tpq* 952/53). Similarly, one Polish hoard (Turwi/Turew, *tpq* 955) from this decade contained 3 Byzantine coins (apparently struck by Romanus II and Constantine VII), but the 80 dirham fragments deposited along with these miliaresia have not been identified; thus, it is unknown

[31] HAMMARBERG, MALMER, ZACHRISSON 1989, 14-15.

whether it held any WNE coins. Finally, 1 or 2 miliaresia of Constantine VII and Romanus II were discovered in another Swedish hoard (Norr Nånö, *tpq* 952/53) that included 5 ʿAbbâsid dirhams struck between 902 and 907 and 6 indeterminable dirhams, but no specific information is known about the mints of any of these coins. Thus, again, it cannot be determined whether it included any WNE dirhams. Overall, 16 or 17 miliaresia entered ten dirham hoards of the Northern lands in the 950s. Perhaps the deposits with miliaresia and their absolute volumes are not overly impressive, but they should be when considering the absence of these coins in the Northern land prior to the decade of the 950s.

Clearly, the 950s witnessed a new era in the import of Byzantine silver into the Northern lands. What is particularly significant is that all the deposits for which we have detailed information regarding their coin stock carried both WNE dirhams and miliaresia (almost exclusively those minted by Constantine VII and Romanus II), strongly suggesting their codependence in import, circulation, and deposition. Finally, it would be amiss not to note the Norwegian hoard of 14 gold Byzantine (and perhaps also some silver) coins – Nedre Strømshaug (1826, *tpq* 945-959).[32] Dated to the period 921-927 and 945-959, like the contemporary miliaresia, these nomismata may well have been brought as part of the larger flow of coins from Byzantium to the Northern lands in the 950s.

The **960s** witnessed a mild increase in the deposition of Byzantine coins, mainly thanks to one hoard from Russia (Briansk Region, *tpq* 969/70) that held 18 miliaresia of Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969) alongside 12 WNE dirhams. The other contemporary hoard from the same area (Briansk Region, *tpq* mid-960s) carried one miliaresion of Nikephoros Phokas; however, it did not contain any WNE dirhams. But, the next deposit from eastern Europe held both: one WNE dirham and one miliaresion of Constantine VII and Romanus II (Shpilevka/Shpylivka, *tpq* 966/67). A miliaresion of Constantine VII and Romanus II was found together with 2 WNE dirhams in the Swedish Västergårde (*tpq* 961) deposit. Another hoard from Sweden (Birka, 1872), *tpq* 963/64, also held a miliaresion of Constantine VII and Romanus and 6 WNE dirhams, two fragments of which are the "youngest" coins in the hoard (al-Maṣîṣa, 963/64). Two Byzantine coins were also found in a Polish hoard (Magnuszewice, *tpq* ca. 967), but its dirhams have not yet been published, so it is unclear whether they included any struck in the WNE. In sum, 24 Byzantine coins come from six hoards of the 960s from the Northern lands, at least four of which also held a minimum of 21 WNE dirhams. Together, these four hoards with both coin types represent 21% of the 19 hoards that held WNE dirhams deposited during the 960s, a number close to that witnessed in the 950s (i.e., ca. 24%). Except for one hoard, all others for which we have specific information regarding their coin contents held not just Byzantine

[32] SKAARE 1976, 53, 128, no. 4.

coins but also WNE dirhams. In this way, once again the pattern noted for the deposits of the 950s can be observed for the 960s – a strong correlation between the deposition of WNE dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia: now not only those struck in the 940s-950s by Constantine VII and Romanus II, but also the very recent issues of Nikephoros II Phokas of the 960s. Indeed, it would stand to reason that both Byzantine and WNE coins were carried together in the same parcels to the Northern lands where they came to be mixed with dirhams from other regions of the Islamic world that were in current circulation (e.g., those issued in al-ʿIrâq and Iran by the ʿAbbâsids, Buwayhids, and Ziyârids; central Asia by the Sâmânids; Volga Bulğârs; and, various imitations). The deposition of miliaresia issued in the 960s in hoards of the same decade, where indeed they are often the most recent coins, speaks strongly for their very rapid export from Byzantium to the Northern lands and their very quick deposition in the ground once there. Finally, it would be of interest to note a hoard (Kyselivka, 1906, *tpq* 963-969) of 37 Byzantine copper coins from Kiev, which held Cherson (Χερσῶνος/*Chersōnos*)-Byzantine folis minted in the Crimea by Basil I (867-886) (28), Basil I and Constantine (867-870) (2), Romanus I (920-944) (5), Romanus II (959-963) (1), and Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969) (1).[33] While these coins were not silver nor directly connected with the WNE, this hoard speaks well of the route and chronology for the larger flow of Byzantine coins northwards from the northern Black Sea region/Crimea up the Dnepr in the 960s.

Hoards of the **970s** and later ones began to include miliaresia of John I Tzimiskes (969-976) and Basil II (976-1025), coins that are not of interest to us presently, as they are post-970, i.e., brought to the Northern lands independent of the "First Wave" of WNE dirham imports. But, the earlier miliaresia of Constantine VII-Romanus II and Nikephoros Phokas continue to appear in hoards of the 970s alongside pre-ca. 970 WNE dirhams. Indeed, the 970s witnessed by far the largest deposition volumes of pre-ca. 970 miliaresia: 194 in total, found in 17 hoards. Thus, just from Sweden (all Gotland) there are six hoards with WNE dirhams, holding 12 miliaresia of Constantine VII and Romanus II and 2 indeterminable Byzantine coins in total (Bryor, *tpq* 972/73; Botes, *tpq* after 973; Lilla Rone, *tpq* 973/74; Gåshagen, *tpq* ca. 975; Övide/Unghanse, *tpq* 976/77; and, Sigters/Lingvide, *tpq* after 978). In addition, there is an unidentifiable Byzantine coin registered in the Swedish Suderbys/Sorbys, *tpq* ca. 978, hoard which is not known to have carried any WNE dirhams; but, it should be kept in mind that of its 141 dirhams and their fragments, 27 remain indeterminable, i.e., some of these may have been the dirhams under study. The Danish hoard (Kongens Udmark, *tpq*, ca. 975) from the same decade held not only four Ḥamdânid dirhams, but also six miliaresia of Romanus I-Constantine VII-Stephen, Constantine VII-Romanus II, and Nikephoros Phokas, spanning the period 920-944 through 969.

[33] KROPOTKIN 1962, 32, no. 177; TOLOCHKO 1983, 164, no. 7.

Elsewhere in the Northern lands, in eastern Europe three hoards with 3 miliaresia of Constantine VII-Romanus II and Nikephoros Phokas were deposited, in all cases found alongside WNE dirhams: Sanskoe (*tpq* 973/74); Novgorod (*tpq* 974/75); and, Erilovo (*tpq* 976/77). In addition, there is the Chernigov (Chernigov oblast', 2012), *tpq* 979/80, deposit that consisted of 12 kilograms or some 4000 coins. Unfortunately, the great majority of the coins in this hoard have not been studied (only ca. 1000 coins were examined cursorily and 270 dirhams closely); mints of the ʿAbbâsid dirhams, which were in the majority, are unknown. Hence, it cannot be determined whether this hoard held any WNE coins. But, the deposit did include 150 Byzantine miliaresia of Constantine VII-Romanus II and Nikephoros Phokas.

Miliaresia of Constantine VII-Romanus II and Nikephoros Phokas together with WNE dirhams also occur in southeastern Baltic and Polish hoards of the 970s. Thus, three miliaresia of Constantine VII and Romanus II and one of Nikephoros Phokas were found in two Estonian deposits, both also held WNE dirhams: Erra-Liiva (*tpq* 977/78) and Kehra (*tpq* ca. 979). Eight fragments of individual miliaresia of Romanus I (920-944) and Constantine VII as well as 6 other pieces belonging to an unknown basileus were found alongside WNE dirhams in the Polish Ciechanów (*tpq* after 974) hoard. Another Polish deposit that held WNE dirhams as well as one miliaresion of Constantine VII and Romanus II is Zalesie (*tpq* ca. 976). The Polish Maurzyce-Rusków (*tpq* 971/72) hoard held two WNE dirhams as well as a fragment of a miliaresion, perhaps of Basil I. Overall, as in the previous decades, the deposits from the Northern lands of the 970s show the same correlation between the presence of WNE dirhams and pre-ca. 970 Byzantine miliaresia. Leaving aside the 150 miliaresia of the Chernigov (*tpq* 979/80) hoard for which there is no specific information regarding its dirham component, the remaining 15 of the 16 deposits dating to the 970s that held 44 miliaresia all also held WNE dirhams, i.e., 94% of the hoards, representing by far the largest volume of miliaresia-WNE dirhams and hoards with them found Northern lands in comparison to the two previous decades.

Two broadly dated hoards of the **970s-980s** with many miliaresia need to be considered separately. The first is the Polish Dzierznica II (*tpq*, apparently 976-982) that held at least 82 miliaresia (almost all fragments), including those of Michael III (856-866), Basil I and Constantine (868-879), Romanus I, Constantine VII, Stephan and Constantine I (931-944), Constantine VII and Christopher (921-931), mostly (at least 61) Constantine VII and Romanus II (945-959) and, John I Tzimiskes (969-976)[34] in addition to a very large number of WNE dirhams – 116. The closely dated second hoard is another Polish deposit, Obrzycko (*tpq* 978-983), which held one WNE dirham alongside at least 5 miliaresia and their fragments of Constantine VII and

[34] GLIKSMAN 2009, 615.

Romanus I, and Constantine VII and Romanus II (?), and Nikephoros Phokas (?). These two hoards again underscore the close relationship between the deposition of pre-970 Byzantine and WNE coins.

Pre-ca. 970 Byzantine miliaresia continue to appear alongside pre-970 WNE dirhams in **post-970s** hoards, mainly in Sweden. Thus, there is Bols (Botels) (*tpq* after 983) hoard that held miliaresia of Constantine VII and Romanus I (1), Constantine VII and Romanus II (15), and unspecified basileus (5). They were accompanied by 30 dirhams issued by the ʿAbbâsids, Ḥamdânids, and Ikhshîdids between 926/27 and 964/65 at 10 different WNE mints. These two coin types also occur together in nine other Swedish hoards, all *tpq* post-ca. 991: Timans (1 miliaresion of Constantine VII and Romanus I and 2 of Constantine VII and Romanus II); Broa (1 of Constantine VII and Romanus II; Östjädra (2 of Constantine VII and Romanus II); Norrkvie II (2 of Constantine VII and Romanus II); Kvarne (Lillängen) (1 of Constantine VII and Romanus I); Hägdarve (1 of Constantine VII and Romanus II); Vivlings (1 of Constantine VII and Romanus II); Fölhagen (Smidgårde) (perhaps 2 Byzantine/basileus?); and, Horda (1 Byzantine/basileus?). Indeed, of the 20 Swedish dirham hoards dated to ca. 991-996 with pre-970 WNE dirhams, seven or more than a third, also carry pre-970 Byzantine coins.

Elsewhere in the Northern lands, it was only in the North Sea-western Baltic where the two pre-970 coin types were found in hoards side by side: Schleswig-Holstein (Waterneversdorf, *tpq* ca. 976-995 – 1 frag. of Nikephoros Phokas) and Brandenburg (Niedelandin, *tpq* ca. 996 – 2 frags. of Constantine VII-Romanus II and Nikephoros Phokas). Another Brandenburg (Alexanderhof, *tpq* ca. 996) hoard held a fragment of Constantine VII and Romanus II miliaresia as well as one whole and another fragment of Nikephoros Phokas miliaresion which were found together with a Ḥamdânid coin, although this dirham we exclude from the WNE database, since it was issued in Madînat al-Salâm. It should be observed, however, that it is not at all unlikely that this deposit did hold some WNE dirhams, since most of the coins in this hoard were fragments, 845 grams of which remain unidentified. But a WNE dirham and a miliaresion (Romanus I) occur together in a hoard from Norway: Tråen (*tpq* ca. 991[35]). Altogether, 41 pre-970 miliaresia were deposited in 14 hoards of the 980s-990s in the Northern lands, all but one of which were accompanied by WNE dirhams.

Taken all together, the coexistence and interconnectivity of pre-970 Byzantine miliaresia with pre-970 WNE dirhams is made strikingly clear by the fact that at least

[35] It should be noted that Tråen is dated by *tpq* to ca. 991 by its West European coin component; its latest dirham-based *tpq* is ca. 951/52, meaning that the dirham and most probably the Byzantine coins form a separate parcel created in ca. 950 and then subsequently added to with West European coins until the 990s when it was finally deposited. This means that the dirhams and the miliaresion form a coin assemblage from the decade of the 950s.

38 or 28% of all 136 tenth-century dirham hoards from the Northern lands found in our database held both types of coins. To look at it another, even more revealing way: of all 48 tenth-century dirham hoards discovered in the Northern lands with pre-970 Byzantine miliaresia, at least 38 or 80% of them also held pre-ca. 970 WNE dirhams. Quite possibly, this interrelationship would be even stronger, if all the dirhams found in the eight hoards with miliaresia, but seemingly excluding WNE dirhams, were fully preserved, examined, and published, as only the Briansk Region (2001, *tpq* mid-960s) hoard has been very well conserved and studied. To further underscore the interrelationship of the two coin types, we should recall that both began to appear in the Northern lands contemporaneously in the early 950s and continued to be brought there through the very late 960s.

Finally, while a detailed study concerning the importation and circulation patterns of WNE dirhams is not the object of the present study, it would be instructive to make one key observation that directly pertains to the geographic interlinkage of pre-ca. 970 WNE dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia in tenth-century hoards discovered in the Northern lands. Specifically, the data of Table I shows that 20% of the tenth-century hoards with WNE dirhams holding 12.2% of the total coins found in Northern Europe were discovered in eastern Europe. The remaining hoards and coins come from other areas of the Northern lands – southeastern Baltic, Poland, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The last of these regions is represented, by far, with the largest volume of both: 54.8% of the hoards and 45.3% of the dirhams. Interestingly, the Byzantine miliaresia are in general step with the relative percentages of WNE dirhams. Excluding the anomalous Polish (Dzierznica II, *tpq*, 976-982) and the Chernigov (*tpq* 979/80) hoards with unusually large volumes of pre-ca. 970 Byzantine miliaresia (ca. 82 and 150, respectively), 12.8% of the hoards (6) with miliaresia and 17.7% of these coins (23) come from eastern Europe while the rest were found elsewhere in the Northern lands (107/108 coins in 41 hoards). As with WNE dirhams, about half (49%) of all the hoards (23 of 47) and roughly half (47%) of the miliaresia (61/62 of 130/131) discovered in the Northern lands were found in Sweden.

* * *

Before moving forwards to an historical interpretation of the above numismatic data, it would be instructive to take into account the geographic distribution of the hoards with WNE dirhams in the Northern lands. It has already been observed above that Sweden, Gotland in particular, received by far the lion's share of the coins in question. Poland came in second place, but mainly thanks to its one huge hoard with these coins (Dzierznica, II *tpq* 976-982). However, the Baltic basin hoards tell us very little concerning the direction or route they took to reach the Northern lands from the

Islamic world. To answer this question, it becomes necessary to examine the eastern European deposits.

The earliest hoard from eastern Europe that can be linked with the major infusion of WNE dirhams, and Byzantine miliaresia, in the 950s-960s is Shpilevka/Shpylivka (*tpq* 966/67) discovered in Sumy oblast', Ukraine. The Village Shpilevka/Shpylivka is situated just west of the Psël River, a left tributary to the Dnepr River (towards its lower section or south of Kiev). The next deposit is Briansk Region (*tpq* 969/70), the exact location of which is unknown. However, the position of Briansk region squarely places it within the sphere of upper Desna River, another eastern tributary of the Dnepr, this time to the north of its middle section or north of Kiev. The 150 Byzantine miliaresia of Constantine VII-Romanus II and Nikephoros Phokas, and the huge number of dirhams that were left unidentified from the Chernigov (*tpq* 979/80) deposit (discovered on the bank of the lower Desna River in the city) again connects the hoard with the middle Dnepr, just to the north of Kiev. The upper Dnepr basin also has a hoard associated with it: Staryi Dedin (*tpq* 978/79) from Mogilev oblast'. The hoard was found near the Ostior River, a tributary to the Sozh, which itself is a left tributary to the upper Dnepr. In this way, a sizable number of the hoards under study clearly gravitate towards the course of the Dnepr River – its southern, middle, and upper sections.

Another major concentration of hoards under study comes from the Novgorod lands, the earliest of which being the city of Novgorod (*tpq* 971/72) deposit. Situated near Lake Il'men' on the upper Volkhov River, Novgorod lay directly on the route to the Baltic via Lake Ladoga, the Neva River, and the Gulf of Finland. Another hoard from Novgorod (*tpq* 974/75) should also be mentioned, so as the two contemporary hoards from near Novgorod, both *tpq* 973/74: Novaia Mel'nitsa and Near the Khutyn' Monastery. To the west of Novgorod was found the Erilovo (Ostrov raion, Pskov oblast') deposit (*tpq* 976/77), connected with the Velikaia River, a tributary of Lake Chud'/Peipus which drains into the Baltic Sea via the Narva River and the Gulf of Finland.

Linking the upper Dnepr River and the lands of Novgorod is a hoard discovered on the bank of the Lovat' River, one-half kilometer from Velikie Luki, Pskov oblast': Along the Shore of The Lovat' River, *tpq* 976/77 or 978/79. The Lovat' River connects the upper reaches of the Dnepr with Lake Il'men', Novgorod, and the Volkhov River that leads a route into the Baltic discussed above.

Another region with a high concentration of hoards with WNE dirhams in eastern Europe is to its northeast – the Oka River basin. Thus, where the Moscow River flows into the Oka two hoards were discovered in and near Kolomna, Moscow oblast': Kolomna III (*tpq* 975/76) and Kolomna IV (*tpq* 976/77). Just further upriver or towards the middle of the Oka basin in Riazan' oblast', the Sanskoe deposit, *tpq* 973/74, was discovered. Sidorovka (*tpq* 978/79), also in Riazan' oblast',

likewise can be connected to the mid-Oka. Further downstream towards the lower Oka, where it meets the Volga, the Savkovo (*tpq* 970-980) hoard was discovered in Murom raion, Vladimir oblast'. The WNE dirhams discovered in all these hoards are more difficult to tie directly to the Dnepr River, as they lay at some distance to the northeast. But, there are three main directions that these coins could have taken to the middle and lower Oka. The first was by way of the upper Dnepr eastwards to the headwaters of the upper Volga basin and its tributaries (including the Moscow River) that lead to the Oka. Another was via the middle Dnepr eastwards via the Desna and Seim and via Oka's tributaries to the upper Oka. The third bypassed the Dnepr by stretching directly from the Black Sea via Crimea to the Azov Sea and passed up the Don River and/or Severskii Donets-Oskol to the upper Oka. Whichever way these WNE dirhams reached the middle and lower Oka basin, by far the preponderance of the coins and hoards in question were clearly connected with the Dnepr River. This river served as the backbone of the famous route – known as "The Way from the Varangians to the Greeks,"[36] the northern (upper Dnepr River-portage to Lovat' River-Lake Il'men'-Volkhov River-Lake Ladoga-Neva River-Baltic Sea) and central (Dnepr River) sections of which are described in the Rus' chronicle *Povešt' vremennykh lět* and the middle and the southern sections (from Kiev to Constantinople) in the mid-tenth century by Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (905-959), whose miliaresia, as we have seen, are quite common to hoards of the 950s and later decades in the Northern lands.[37] What should to be added here to the two medieval documents are the several other major routes that bifurcated east and west from its middle section in and around Kiev – one leading into the interior of eastern Europe (Oka basin) and the other west (via Przemyśl and Kraków[38]) to Greater Poland/Wielkopolska, where WNE dirhams as well as miliaresia were also found in some traceable quantities [Appendix].

Finally, to better understand the flow of WNE dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia into the Northern lands, it would be instructive to turn to one key Russian coin-treasure deposit that held miliaresia and WNE dirhams: Briansk Region, *tpq* 969/70. As can be recalled, all its 18 miliaresia were struck by Nikephoros Phokas (963-969), all in excellent condition – suggesting very limited circulation. The hoard also held 5 temporal rings, a silver ingot, and 158 dirhams and their fragments (131 + 27), 126 of which have been identified. The dirham part of the hoard consisted of coins (based on dynasties and mints) from four major monetarily distinct areas of the Islamic world – central Asia (Sâmânids – 62%); Volga Bulğâria (Sâmânid proto-

[36] POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH LĚT 2003, 29-34.

[37] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS 1967, 57-63.

[38] VASIL'EVSKII 1888: 128-134; BRUTZKUS 1943: 32, 34; NOVOSEL'TEV, PASHUTO 1967: 85-86; FRANKLIN, SHEPARD 1996, 88, 92.

type/Volga Bulğâr imitations – %?); the eastern regions of the Near East or al-ʿIrâq and Iran (ʿAbbâsids and Buwayhids – 13%); and, the WNE (ʿAbbâsids, Ḥamdânids, and Fâṭimids – 9.5%). The remaining dirhams were unidentified imitation and indeterminable. Hoards with such a profile are unknown in the contemporary Islamic world.[39] Indeed, it seems quite evident that the Briansk Region (*tpq* 969/70) deposit was formed from three individual parcels of coins brought there by three distinct routes from three different regions of the Islamic world: one from the Sâmânid lands via Volga Bulğâria ("The Volga Bulğâr Way"); the second from al-ʿIrâq and Iran via "The Khazar Way"); and, the third from the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia via the Black Sea and the Dnepr River ("The Way from the Varangians to the Greeks").[40] Alongside the third group joined in the 18 Byzantine miliaresia. All three parcels came to be combined with the treasure part of the assemblage (which may have been part of any one of the three parcels or autonomous), most probably somewhere in the Briansk lands, where all three routes met in the upper Dnepr River basin and its eastern tributaries.

In sum to all the above numismatic evidence and its interpretations, several main conclusions can be made. WNE dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia began to appear in notable quantities in the Northern lands starting with the early 950s. That decade, 7.6% all pre-970 WNE dirhams (from 18.6% of the hoards) and 12.3% of all pre-970 miliaresia (from 21.3% of the hoards) discovered in tenth-century hoards with these coins from the Northern lands were deposited (excluding here the two anomalous hoards – Dzierznica II, *tpq* 976-982, and Chernigov, *tpq* 979/80). A significant number of these dirhams were new (33% of the WNE dated to the 940s-950s) and the miliaresia were almost exclusively those minted by Constantine VII and Romanus II (945-959). In the 960s, the volume of WNE dirham imports notably increased, as did the geographic range of dirham mints; 12.3% of WNE dirhams (from 14% of the hoards) and 18.5% of the miliaresia (from 12.8% of the hoards) were deposited this decade. Again, the volume of new coins entered in these hoards is noteworthy: 47% of the dirhams were minted in the 950s-960s and miliaresia now included not only those issued by Constantine VII and Romanus II in the 940s-950s, but also those struck by Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969). The 970s witnessed the deposition of even greater numbers of coins than the previous decade: 25.5% of all WNE dirhams (from 27.6% of the hoards) and 33.8% of the miliaresia (from 34% of the hoards) were entered this decade. The latter numbers would have been much larger for the

[39] See KOVALEV 2011: 54-91.

[40] In an earlier study (KOVALEV 2011: 123), it was suggested that the hoard was composed of two parcels – one came from the WNE and the other from the central Asian Sâmânid lands; however, the Buwayhid component and probably at least a part of the tenth-century ʿAbbâsid dirhams issued in al-ʿIrâq and Iran came via "The Khazar Way," for which see KOVALEV 2017A: 95-143.

decade, had we included the coins of the anomalous Chernigov (*tpq* 979/80) hoard with an additional 150 miliaresia. But, what is particularly notable is that the coins in hoards of the 970s begin to show signs of aging, i.e., very few WNE dirhams from the 960s and none from the 970s are to be found in the deposits of the 970s. Therefore, there is no reason to think that any additional infusion of dirhams from the WNE occurred during the 970s, and all the WNE dirhams that were deposited in the 970s were earlier imports. The same most probably can be said about the pre-970 miliaresia. They too appear to have been brought to the Northern lands in the previous two decades, where they circulated until they were finally deposited into hoards of the 970s and others thereafter.

Post-970s hoards strongly suggest the same conclusions as observed above. Leaving aside the broadly dated (970s-980s) anomalous Dzierznica II hoard (with its huge numbers of both WNE dirhams and miliaresia), the 980s-990s witnessed the deposition of 26.6% of all WNE dirhams (133) in 32.6% (45) of all tenth-century hoards and 31.5% (41) of pre-970 miliaresia in 30% (14) of all hoards with these coins. However, as in the 970s none of these 980s-990s hoards held a single post-968/69 WNE dirham. Since these dirhams were still minted in the WNE in the 970s-980s, their absence in 970s-990s hoards of the Northern lands lead to the reasonable conclusion that the flow of WNE dirhams ceased after ca. 970. Consequently, all WNE dirhams found in deposits dating to the 970s-990s were coins that came to the Northern lands from the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia in the 950s-960s. Almost certainly, because of the interconnectivity in the import, circulation, and deposition of WNE dirhams and miliaresia, the same can be said about the pre-970 Byzantine coins.

The geographic distribution of hoards with WNE dirhams in the Northern lands show that the overwhelming majority of these coins, as well as Byzantine miliaresia, were deposited in the Baltic basin, about half of all deposits and hoards just in Sweden. By far the largest relative volume of WNE dirhams entered Sweden at the very beginning of WNE dirham imports into the Northern lands in the 950s. Thus, of all hoards with WNE dirhams discovered in the Northern lands dating to the 950s, 89% of the coins and 84% of the hoards come from Sweden, especially the Island of Gotland. Judging by the relatively large numbers of new and brand new WNE dirhams deposited in Swedish hoards of the 950s, these coins were very rapidly imported to the region from their place of minting in upper Mesopotamia and the eastern Mediterranean. The same can be said about the dirhams deposited in the 960s, although it was not just Sweden where very new dirhams were being deposited: eastern Europe, Poland, and the southeastern Baltic also received their share of these new coins during the decade. The steady, direct, and rapid stream of WNE dirham imports in the 950s-960s can only be explained by the existence of some special system for their delivery from upper Mesopotamia and the eastern Mediterranean into

the Northern lands. Although miliaresia are not as easy to date as dirhams, due to the absence of exact dates of issue on the coins, the presence of mostly Constantine VII-Romanus II (945-959s) and Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969) miliaresia in the same hoards as WNE dirhams, the data provided above leads to suggest that Byzantine silver pieces were also channeled into the Northern lands at great speeds in the 960s, as in the 950s, from their mint in Constantinople.

As in the 950s, WNE dirhams and miliaresia gravitated towards Sweden (particularly Gotland): 68% of the dirhams and 67% of the 960s hoards with these coins come from Sweden. In the decade of the 970s, the relative deposition volumes of WNE dirhams in Sweden somewhat declined (34.7% of coins in 40.5% of hoards), but only at the expense of other regions where these coins began to appear more regularly and in larger numbers: eastern Europe, southeastern Baltic, Poland, Finland, and Denmark. Seeing that no post-968/69 WNE dirhams were found in tenth-century hoards, it is no surprise that dirhams in deposits of the 970s become "aged," a process that only escalated into the following decades. The very rapid movement of new dirhams from the WNE mints is no longer observable in the 970s, as it was in the 950s-960s. But, in Sweden, in absolute numbers, the volume of WNE dirhams and hoards with them actually increased somewhat in the 970s as compared to the 960s. The same was the case for all other regions of the Northern lands: twice as many WNE dirhams were deposited in the 970s as in the 960s. What the above, then, suggests is that while no WNE dirhams were being brought to the Northern lands in the 970s, the ones that came there in the 950s-960s remained in circulation into the 970s and were being regularly deposited into hoards during this decade.

We observe the same circumstance during the remaining two decades of the tenth century: while many WNE dirhams were being entered in hoards of the 980s-990s, these were all old coins that were imported into various regions of the Northern lands in the 950s-960s. The same can be said about the pre-970 miliaresia. Albeit, Sweden regained its leading position in the finds of both coin types in the 980s-990s: 77.6% of all WNE dirhams found in 52.4% of the hoards come from Sweden. The same region witnessed the deposition of 80.5% of the miliaresia in 57% of all hoards with these coins during the 980s-990s.

Finally, the topography of hoard finds in the Northern lands permits us to trace the route by which both coin types travelled into the region: the well-known to medieval and modern literature "The Way from the Varangians to the Greeks," which not only connected Constantinople with Kiev via the Black Sea and the Dnepr River, but also all the Northern lands with the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia. Below, we shall examine the written sources to further shed light on how and why these WNE dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia were carried into eastern Europe and the Baltic Sea basin in the 950s-960s so directly, systematically, and with such great speed.

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION: RUS' MERCENARIES IN BYZANTINE MILITARY SERVICE PRIOR TO CA. 970

It is well known that the "Varangian Guard" (Τάγμα των Βαράγγων/*Tágma tōn Varángōn*) was formally established by Byzantine Emperor Basil II (976-1025) in 988, when Grand Prince Vladimir I (980-1015) of the Rus' dispatched 4000 or 6000 (sources vary) Varangians/Vikings to Constantinople at the request of the emperor.[41] But, the use of the latter or the Rus' in Byzantine Imperial military service was more of a tradition rather than a novelty by Basil II's times; he merely institutionalized it. In fact, extant documents begin to speak of Rus' presence in Byzantine military service starting with the end of Emperor Leo VI's (886-912) reign. Specifically, 700 Rus' (῾Ρῶς/*Rhos*) were recruited by the Empire as naval troops in 910 for a successful campaign in Syria, during which Laodikeia/Lattakeia was captured; and, then in 911 they were dispatched along with a smaller Byzantine fleet on a diplomatic mission to Arab-held Crete where the Imperial navy suffered a major defeat. For their services, the Rus' were paid one *kentenarion*, equivalent to 32 kilograms, perhaps of gold.[42] Written sources then report that seven vessels with 415 Rus' seamen were amongst the eighteen ships dispatched by the Byzantines to Lombardy, Italy, in 934. Most probably, these same forces were sent to the south of France the following year.[43] It is not known how and why the Rus' first came to be recruited into Byzantine military service starting in 910-911, but evidently their success in Syria impressed the Byzantines enough to sign a treaty with them in late 911, according to which the Rus' were officially invited to participate in the Imperial armies as paid mercenaries.[44]

Curiously, there seems to be no evident numismatic record in the Northern lands of these Rus' martial activities in the Mediterranean basin in the 910s-930s for which they received payments; Byzantine gold (nomismata) or even silver (miliaresia) coins are exceedingly rare in the Northern lands from the first half of the tenth century, not speaking of coins from other places such as Crete, Lombardy, or southern

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[41] JOHN SKYLITZES 2010, 319; MICHAEL PSELLUS 1966, 14-15; YAḤYÂ OF ANTIOCH 1932: 425-426; IOANNIS ZONARAE 1897, 553. Also, see BLÖNDAL 1978, 43.

[42] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS 2012, 651-652, 654-655, 659-660; ZUCKERMAN 2018, 327-332. Also, see ZUCKERMAN 2015: 57-98. In historiography, the 910 Byzantine campaign in Syria and the participation of the Rus' on the side of the Empire has been misunderstood or overlooked. All attention has been given to the unsuccessful mission to Crete in 911 and the Rus' participation in this fiasco. Very recently, however, Constantin Zuckerman has offered a very convincing interpretation of the sources, which place the Rus' and Byzantine navy and army in Syria in 910, or just prior to the Crete expedition; see above. For literature on the Crete campaign and Rus' participation in it, see VASIL'EV 1902, 166-172; JENKINS 1953: 277-281; MAKRYPOULIAS 2000: 353, n. 33. For *kentenarion*, see OXFORD DICTIONARY OF BYZANTIUM 1991, 1121.

[43] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS 2012, 660-661.

[44] THE LAWS OF RUS' 1992, 6, art. 10.

France that have not been found in the region from this period. Possibly, the absence of a numismatic trail coming from these regions of the Mediterranean can be attributed to very limited coin circulation zones of the said areas of southern Europe at the time. But, the same cannot be said of the WNE, which was well within the zone of silver coin circulation since the last decade of the ninth century.[45] The discovery of several hoards in northern Syria/southeastern Anatolia dating to the first two decades of the tenth century suggest that 'Abbâsid dirhams struck across the central areas of the caliphate as well as a noticeable dose of local WNE coins circulated when the Rus' were engaged in Laodikeia/Lattakeia.[46] Did few, if any, of the Rus' return to the Northern lands with their coins after the 911 Cretan fiasco? Whatever the reason for the absence of a coin trail between southern Europe and the Northern lands, Rus' martial activities in the Mediterranean basin in the 910s-930s do not seem to be traced numismatically as they are in the written records.

Peaceful relations and the participation of the Rus' in the Byzantine military in the 910s-930s was interrupted by the Rus' attack on Constantinople in 941.[47] Hostilities did not end then, as soon thereafter the Rus' Grand Prince Igor' (d. ca. 945) threatened to invade Byzantine territories south of the Danube with major forces in 944.[48] However, with a very favorable treaty for the Rus', especially in regards to trade, that followed later that year, war was averted. Aside from establishing peace and commercial relations, the Treaty of 944 stipulated that "If our (Byzantine) imperial majesty wishes [to receive] warriors from you (the Rus') for war with our opponents, and if they write about this to your Grand Prince, then let him send to us as many [warriors] as we wish."[49] In this way, the Rus' once again became Byzantine allies, an arrangement that lasted for the next quarter century. Thus, starting with the last year or two of Igor's rule, all through his widow Grand Princess Olga's rather prolonged regency (ca. 945-ca. 958), and lasting through much of Grand Prince Sviatoslav's rule (effective r. ca. 958-972), the Rus' were trustworthy Byzantine allies. As is well known, Olga (Ἕλγα/Elga), herself, traveled to Constantinople where she visited with Emperor Constantine VII. It was probably then and there that she received her baptism at the hands of the patriarch and the emperor who acted as her godfather – most likely in 946.[50] She and her many attendants received "gifts" of miliaresia dur-

[45] KOVALEV 2015: 334-335.

[46] KOVALEV 2011: 54-55.

[47] SKYLITZES 2010, 221-222; LIUDPRAND OF CREMONA 2007, 179-181; THE POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH 2003, 254-328. Also, see ZUCKERMAN 1995, 264-268.

[48] THE POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH 2003, 265-271.

[49] THE LAWS OF RUS' 1992, 11, art. 2.

[50] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS 2012, 594-598; SKYLITZES 2010, 231; THE POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH 2003, 389-411. Scholars have been at odds on the question of whether

ing their stay in the Byzantine capital during the years 946-947.[51] A year or two later, however, Olga refused Constantine VII's request to send him mercenaries, probably because the Grand Princess felt slighted by the emperor during her visit (perhaps because she was refused a Byzantine-Rus' dynastic tie to marry her son Sviatislav to a Byzantine princess).[52] Since the written sources again begin to speak of the Rus' participation in Imperial military service in 949, it would stand to reason that this breach in relations between the two sides was soon normalized (see below). Indeed, it is quite likely that Olga's strong ties to Constantinople kept her son Sviatoslav from breaking peace with the Byzantines even after he reached the age of majority in ca. 958. Some two decades after her conversion to Christianity, Olga's pagan son fought against the Danubian Bulgars in 967 at the request of the Byzantines, who promised an advance payment of 1500 pounds of gold.[53] It was only after Olga's death in 969 that Sviatoslav finally broke peace with the Empire when he launched an invasion of the lower Danube and engaged the Byzantine armies there in major battles between 970-971.[54] But, prior to then, the Rus' were at peace with the Empire and, thus, it is not surprising to find Rus' mercenaries acting as Byzantine auxiliaries in their many military operations during the course of the 950s-960s.

In the post-944 Byzantine-Rus' Treaty era, the earliest date that extant written sources speak of the Rus' serving in the Imperial armies is 949, when 629 Rus' sailing in nine ships took part in the unsuccessful Byzantine expedition to recover Crete from the Arabs, for which they were paid out nomismata (gold coins) and miliaresia.[55] The next reference to the Rus' in Byzantine service comes from the year 954; it is a

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Olga was baptized in Kiev or Constantinople and when this occurred. The dates that have been proposed range from 945 to 959. For the basic discussions and literature on the date of Olga's conversion, see FRANKLIN, SHEPARD 1996, 134-137. Since then, there have been a handful of other important studies that should be mentioned: KRESTEN 2000, 6-19, 33-41; ZUCKERMAN 2000: 647-672; NAZARENKO 2001, 218-310; FEATHERSTONE 2003: 241-251; TINNEFELD 2005: 551-563. I find the arguments for 946-947 most convincing, in large part because of B. Flusin's recent and convincing study (2017: 151-168), which reexamines the sources and upholds much of the generally persuasive arguments put forwards by Constantin Zuckerman that Olga's trip to Constantinople and the conversion occurred in 946-947.

[51] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS 2012, 597-598.

[52] THE POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH 2003, 410. Specifically, *sub annum* 955, *Povešt' vremennykh lět* states that the Byzantine ambassadors from the emperor requested, amongst slaves, wax, and furs, mercenaries to be send to him. For the dating of this embassy, reasons for Olga's refusal, and other related issues, see NAZARENKO 2001, 301-308.

[53] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 111-112; SKYLITZES 2010, 265-266; THE POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH 2003, 434-435. Also, see STOKES 1961-1962, 44-57.

[54] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 128-133, 155-157, 180, 192-201; SKYLITZES 2010, 275-278, 281-294; THE POVEŠT' VREMENNYKH 2003, 476-512.

[55] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS 2012, 664, 667, 673-674; VASIL'EV 1902, 282, 284; MAKRYPOULIAS 2000, 353-356.

poem written by al-Mutanabbî (915-965), a bard at the court of Ḥamdânid Amîr of Ḥalab/Aleppo Sayf al-Dawla (r. 944-967), where the Rus' are noted to have fought on the side of the Byzantines in northern Syria. The poem taunts the inability of the Byzantines, Rus', and other allies that year to capture the Ḥamdânid fortress of al-Ḥadath/Adata, situated in the upper Euphrates region. After a battle that lasted from morning until the night of October 30, the Imperial army was defeated – many fighting on the Byzantine side were killed and captured by the Ḥamdânids.[56] Byzantine-Ḥamdânid conflict continued into the next year, most probably in which the Rus' continued to fight on the side of the Empire.[57] In his *Book of Warnings* (written in 955-956), the well-informed and reliable Arab historian al-Masʿûdî (ca. 896-ca. 957) reported that Rus' garrisoned many Byzantine fortresses along the Byzantine borders with Syria in ca. 956.[58] The use of the Rus' in Byzantine armies, thus, changed from being that of mainly naval auxiliaries/marines in the 910s, 930s, and late 940s to that of garrisoned foot soldiers in Byzantine forts situated along the northern Syrian frontier by the 950s. Such a shift in service would, in fact, correspond well with the Byzantine escalation in the hiring of light infantry mercenaries of various ethnic backgrounds beginning with the 950s.[59] Perhaps prior to the Treaty of 944, the Rus' could not yet be trusted as reliable guards. Conversion to Christianity may have been one main method for earning this trust. Baptized Rus', for instance, were to be found amongst the representatives of the Imperial Naval Forces during the ceremonies held at the Imperial Palace in Constantinople in honor of the ambassadors sent by the Amîr of Tarsus in 946.[60] By the 960s, the Rus' were a regular part of the Byzantine light infantry (javelineer) units according to the military manual *Praecepta militaria* written by Nikephoros Phokas.[61] As for their imbursement for military service, in the prior decade Constantine VII specifically noted: "Cash for the expenses of the expedition, for largesse for those who fight in battle and their leaders, and for other expenses: sacks of coin in (gold) *kentēnaria* and in *miliarēsia*…" Curiously enough, the Emperor specifically had Syria in mind when he wrote these words.[62]

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[56] BLACHÈRE, PELLAT 1993, 769-772; BIANQUIS 1997, 103-110. Also, see VASIL'EV 1902, 295. Ibn Ẓâfir (1171-1226) and Ibn al-Athîr (1060-1233) also speak of the Rus' being present at the siege of al-Ḥadath in 954, presumably using the same poem for this source; see their texts in VASIL'EV 1902, 85, 118.

[57] VASIL'EV 1902, 296.

[58] AL-MASʿÛDÎ 1894/2014, 140-141. Russian tr. of the text, see BEILIS 1961, 23 & commentary 28-29.

[59] MCGEER 1995, 201.

[60] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS 2012, 579.

[61] MCGEER 1995, 15.

[62] CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENITUS, 1990, 111; also, see 66-68, regarding Syria.

The Rus' were involved in the successful Byzantine naval expedition against Crete in 960-961, during which the Amîr of Crete was captured along with his large treasury and the rest of the wealth found on the island (including silver and gold), which was later displayed at the Hippodrome in Constantinople:[63] "The quantity was so great that it resembled an abundantly flowing river."[64] It would be amiss not to note that during the siege of Chandax (the main Cretan city), Nikephoros Phokas, the Byzantine commander, rewarded his soldiers with silver (presumably one miliaresion) for every dead enemy head they severed and brought back to him. It can be assumed that the Rus' used this opportunity seriously to "cash in," although Leo the Deacon makes specific mention that it was the Armenian corps that took this command with particular zeal.[65] The Rus' also participated in the unsuccessful Byzantine campaign in Sicily in 964-965.[66] As noted above, the Rus' were also engaged on the side of the Empire when they invaded the lands of the Danubian Bulgars in 967 at the request of the Byzantines. The last time the Rus' were known to have been involved in fighting on the side of the Empire prior to Sviatoslav's violation of Byzantine-Rus' peaceful relations in 969 was that same year when two Rus' ships took part in a Byzantine flotilla that was first dispatched to Bari, Italy, and then apparently to Syria.[67] In this way, it is most evident that the Rus' were very active military allies and mercenaries for Byzantium for much of the 950s-960s, or roughly the period between the Byzantine-Rus' Treaty of 944 and Sviatoslav's violation of it in 969.

Unfortunately, written sources seem to be silent regarding the participation of Rus' mercenaries for much of the 960s in the Byzantine-Ḥamdânid Wars in Syria and upper Mesopotamia, which finally ended with the Byzantine annexation and establishment of a Byzantine protectorate of Aleppo as its tributary state in 969.[68] Above it was noted that records relate that the Rus' were present along the Byzantine-Arab northern Syrian frontier in the 950s and perhaps 969. In light of the inadequacy and paucity of written documents, we can only make the logical assumption that the Rus' continued to be engaged in these campaigns and profit from their ventures through Byzantine payments as well as looting, bribery-ransom payments, and perhaps occasional trade with the locals during the 960s. Indeed, opportunities for plunder and acquisition of dirhams circulating in this region of theater of war were numerous. Locally-minted dirhams – struck across the eastern coast of the Mediterranean and

[63] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 60-69, 76-81; SKYLITZES 2010, 240-241; THEOPHANIS CONTINUATUS ch. 16, p. 48; TSOUGARAKIS 1988, 63-74.

[64] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 81.

[65] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 67.

[66] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 115-117; YAACOV 1984: 235-236; HALM 1996, 406.

[67] LIUDPRAND OF CREMONA 2007, 256-257, 259.

[68] For the Byzantine-Ḥamdânid Wars, see VASIL'EV 1902; CANARD 1951.

upper Mesopotamia – were quite numerous, as is attested to by the deposition of hoards in the 960s throughout the area, most probably precisely because locals buried their dirhams for safekeeping in response to the turmoil of the period.[69] Thus, despite the setback of 954, al-Ḥadath was taken and raised by the Byzantines in 957. Later that year and into the next, under the command of John Tzimiskes, the Byzantines seized several fortresses in the regions of Âmid, Arzan-ar-Rûm/Erzerum, Mayyâfâriqîn, and then besieged and took Sumaysâṭ/ Samosata.[70] The financial gains for the victors in these conflicts are usually not reported in the Arabic sources (not surprisingly), but there are exceptions. For instance, in 950 Sayf al-Dawla's "…baggage, transport, stores, money and arms were taken, and the Byzantines became possessed of such booty as they had never seen," thanks to Leo Phokas' victory at one of the passes of the Taurus Mountains.[71] A decade later, when Leo Phokas again defeated Sayf al-Dawla's army in 960 near Adrassos – a site on the Cappadocian-Cilician frontier – the amîr "…ordered that the silver and gold that he was carrying with him be scattered in heaps on the path. By thus diverting the attack of the Romans, who busied themselves picking up the gold."[72] Much other booty (plundered Byzantine and Arab) was also taken from Sayf al-Dawla's camp and then distributed amongst the Byzantine army.[73] How much truth is to be found in these accounts in not clear; but, wealth of all sorts, including local dirhams, would surely have been collected by the Byzantines, including their Rus' auxiliaries, during these numerous campaigns.

Most probably, after the conquest of Crete in 961, the Rus' followed the Byzantine expedition to Cilicia that resumed in early 962 as part of the Nikephoros Phokas' campaign to reconquer Syria. That year the Byzantines captured fifty-four forts belonging to the Amîr of Tarsus as well as 'Ain Zarbah/Anazarbus.[74] Later that year, the Byzantines seized and raided Sayf al-Dawla's capital Aleppo (except its citadel).[75] There, they took ten thousand Muslim prisoners, 390 talents of silver (= ca. 12,870 kilograms or 12.87 metric tons, *sic*!) from the amîr's palace, and "…carried off stores belonging to Sayf al-Dawla and property belonging to the merchants of which quan-

[69] Near East/Syria?, pre-1995, *tpq* 961/62 (706 dirhams); Near East/Syria?, pre-1985, *tpq* 964/65 (119 dirhams); Syria, pre-1980, *tpq* 969/70 (58 dirhams); and, Tel Ashdod, Near Gaza, Palestine, 1935, *tpq* 969/70 (at least 90 dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia); for these and other, earlier hoards, see KOVALEV 2011: 56-59.

[70] Yaḥyâ of Antioch in VASIL'EV 1902, 300-302. Ibn al-Athîr also speaks of the Byzantine raid on Mayyâfâriqîn (dating it to 956) and adds that there was a Byzantine seaborne raid on Ṭarsûs in 956 and the same town as well as ar-Ruhâ/Edessa were besieged in 959/60; see VASIL'EV 1902, 118-119.

[71] MISKAWAYH 1920-1921, 125 (129). Also, see SKYLITZES 2010, 234.

[72] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 75.

[73] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 75; SKYLITZES 2010, 241.

[74] MISKAWAYH 1920-1921, 190-191 (206-208). Also, see CANARD 1951, 805-817.

[75] SKYLITZES 2010, 243.

tity passes limit and description."[76] That same year, Mar'ash/Germanikeia was taken. Enormous wealth was captured by the Byzantines during this 962 campaign year.[77] In 964 and 965, the Byzantines seized more than twenty fortresses in Cilicia, including al-Ḥadath, 'Ain Zarbah, al-Maṣîṣa/Mamista, and Ṭarsûs.[78] Having captured the last of these, "he (Leo Phokas or the emperor)… permitted each man to carry away a specific amount of booty," while taking the rest of the city's wealth himself.[79] In 966, amongst other cities, the Byzantines captured Menbiji/Hierapolis[80] and in 968 Nikephoros Phokas reached as far south as the fortress of 'Arqa/Arka – situated south of Tripoli (which he did not take) – and "…plundered it for nine whole days, and carried off from there untold wealth; and many other fortresses he captured as well…"[81] Amongst some of these strongholds were apparently Pagras, Synnephion, Laodikeia/Lattakeia and, if we are to believe John Skylitzes, the emperor forced Tripoli and Damascus to pay tribute.[82] Finally, Aleppo was taken fully, looted for what was not plundered in 962, and temporarily occupied by the Byzantines in 969.[83]

It is more than likely that the Rus' continued their martial services in the Byzantine armies in these decisive and most profitable Syrian expeditions through the 960s, as they had in the 950s. Their employer, Nikephoros Phokas, surely would have had little, if any, objection to the plundering of his Rus' mercenaries; even by the standards of the day, the emperor carried the following image of a liberal looter: "… his soldiers were committing thousands of confiscations and he did nothing to stop them. …When he entered the city, many citizens, both high and low, were plundered without him doing a thing to bring the culprit to justice."[84] Indeed, these Byzantine-Ḥamdânid Wars were the perfect opportunity for the Rus' to acquire WNE dirhams. With fighting focused on northern Syria and upper Mesopotamia, the Rus' were operating in highly monetized areas and, as part of their spoils or peaceful exchange with the locals, they came into the possession of local dirhams. For their martial services in these campaigns the Byzantines paid the Rus' miliaresia. Rus' serving in the Imperial Guard also received miliaresia as payment. Coins of both types found

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[76] MISKAWAYH 1920-1921, 192-193 (209-210). Also, see SKYLITZES 2010, 243.

[77] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 81-82, 84.

[78] MISKAWAYH 1920-1921, 202-203, 212 (216-217, 225); LEO THE DEACON 2005, 101-102; SKYLITZES 2010, 256-259.

[79] SKYLITZES 2010, 258.

[80] YAḤYÂ OF ANTIOCH 1924: 805-806.

[81] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 119, no. 83; 122.

[82] SKYLITZES 2010, 260.

[83] LEO THE DEACON 2005, 132-134; YAḤYÂ OF ANTIOCH 1924: 823; SKYLITZES 2010, 262.

[84] SKYLITZES 2010, 262.

in the Northern lands, thus, can act as proxies for tracing Rus' mercenaries in the Byzantine service during the 950s-960s.

Here would be an opportune place to observe that since the mid-fifth century the late Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire restricted the commercial outflow of silver, as well as gold and other commodities, from its territories to "barbarians" (i.e., those not within their political "orbit").[85] The paucity of finds of Byzantine coins in the Northern lands has, indeed, been interpreted as evidence that the Byzantines maintained this restriction during the period in question.[86] This limitation on the export of "forbidden" (*kekolymena*) items, however, did not imply that silver or other restricted goods could not be shipped out from the Imperial territories for non-commercial purposes: they were used as diplomatic gifts, bribes, tribute-concession payments to "barbarians," and payments for specific services rendered such as martial when need arose. It is the last of these that led the Byzantines to disburse miliaresia to the Rus' in the 950s-960s. Seeing that the chronology of the miliaresia discovered in the Northern lands corresponds perfectly with the timetable of the Rus' acting as Byzantine mercenaries in the 950s-960s, it would stand to reason that the two are directly interrelated.[87] When the Rus' rejoin the Imperial service as Basil II's mercenaries and guards starting in 988, the flow of miliaresia alongside later WND dirhams northwards resumed. Both were the consequence of the Rus' reengagement in their martial activities on the side of the Byzantines in upper Mesopotamia and the southwestern Caucasus, which is numismatically very well documented by hoards deposited in the Northern lands during the 990s-1010s.[88] In the intervening years of the 970s, miliaresia issued by John Tzimiskes (969-976) also traveled to the Northern lands, but these were most probably the byproduct of the Rus'-Byzantine Wars in the Balkans, a subject that needs to be studied in the future.

There is a way to further illustrate and elaborate on the above-proposed historical interpretation of the numismatic evidence. Specifically, there are several hoards with unique dirhams from the Northern lands that, with a good dose of certainty, can be used to trace the activities of Rus' mercenaries to the successful Byzantine inva-

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[85] The strict prohibition on the commercial export of goods deemed strategic included not only precious metals but also grain, wine, olive oil, pearls, gems, silks, iron, and other items; see CODEX JUSTINIANUS 1954, 4.41.1-2, 178-179; BASILICORUM LIBRI 1960, 19.1.82, 86 (7), 923; ROMAN LAW IN THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE 1938, 23, 27, 53.

[86] HENDY 1985, 257; NOONAN 1980: 143-181.

[87] It should be noted that the connection between the import of Byzantine coins into the Northern lands and the participation of the Rus'/Varangians in Byzantine military service is by no means a novel one; see MORRISSON 1981: 131-140; HAMMARBERG, MALMER, ZACHRISSON 1989, 18; and, GLIKSMAN 2009, 113-114. What has, thus far, not been well explained is how and why these coins were brought to the Northern lands. The present study attempts to answer these questions.

[88] KOVALEV, IN PREPARATION.

sion and conquest of Crete in 961, the booty from which was enormous (including "…a vast amount of gold and silver… as well as barbarian coins of refined gold"[89]). The already mentioned Polish Dzierznica II (*tpq* ca. 976-982) hoard not only held a quarter of a kilogram of Byzantine coin fragments, but also fragmented dirhams: 100 Ḥamdânid, 14 Ikhshîdid, and 2 Fâṭimid. However, the most fascinating coins found in this assemblage are the one fragment of a dirham struck in 952/53 at the mint of Iqrîṭish?/Crete? by ʿAbd al-ʿAzîz (954-961) – the Amîr of Crete – and 20 fragments of dirhams issued by the Zaydî Imâms/Rassids al-Hâdî (897-911), al-Naṣr (913-936), and an indeterminable imâm – all minted in their Yamani city of Ṣaʿda sometime during their reigns.[90] The only other known dirham from Crete found in the Northern lands – also minted by ʿAbd al-ʿAzîz (in 350H-961) – has been discovered in a Swedish hoard (probably from Gotland) of unknown *tpq* date.[91] These two extremely rare coins minted in Crete aside, dirhams of Zaydî Imâms are not registered elsewhere in our database, with one exception: the 3 fragments of Zaydî Imâms, one struck by al-Naṣr and two others by an indeterminable imâm in Ṣaʿda, in the earlier-mentioned Polish Ciechanów hoard (*tpq* after 974). At first glance these very rare Zaydî Imâm coins for dirham hoards of Afro-Eurasia may not seem relevant to our present study. However, arguably their appearance in the Northern lands is not accidental, considering the close relations Zaydî Imâms maintained with the Fâṭimids and the latter with the Amîrs of Crete. The Shîʿa imâm rulers in Yaman had such close connections with the early Shîʿa Fâṭimids of north Africa that they even struck their coins in the name of Fâṭimid caliphs in early 910s.[92] The Fâṭimids, themselves, were involved in the affairs of Crete, although in 961 they supported its amîr only "morally:" al-Muʿizz (953-975), the Fâṭimid caliph, sent a threatening letter to the Byzantine Emperor and called for organizing a naval force together with the Ikhshîdids to counter the Byzantines, which in the end failed to materialize.[93] Be that as it may, it can be argued that the close ties between the Zaydî Imâms, Fâṭimids, and the Amîrs of Crete brought the former's coins to the Island from where they came to be exported by the Rus' to the Northern lands as a result of looting or prisoner ransom payments in 961. Chronologically, the coins in question (those of the Amîr of Crete and Zaydî Imâms) not only do not contradict such a possibility, but fully support it, as the *tpq* for these dirhams is 961, the year Crete was captured and mark the death of ʿAbd al-ʿAzîz. Probably not coincidentally, the Fâṭimid dirhams of Imâm al-Muʿizz (struck in the Tunisian mints of al-Qayrawân, al-Manṣûriyya, or al-Mah-

89 LEO THE DEACON 2005, 81.

90 KMIETOWICZ 1995: 21-28.

91 MILES 1970, 81-83.

92 See ALBUM 1998, 56.

93 YAACOV 1984: 236; HALM 1996, 405.

diyya) discovered in the Northern lands began to occur in hoards starting with the above-mentioned Briansk, *tpq* 969/70, deposit. Quite possibly these coins were also brought from Crete as the result of the Rus' martial activities on the Island in 961.

In sum, it is very likely that ʿAbd al-ʿAzîz's Cretan and Zaydî Imâm Yamani dirhams were carried by Rus' mercenaries alongside other coins – be they dirhams struck in Syrian mints or those in upper Mesopotamia or Byzantine-issued miliaresia – to the Northern lands directly from the theater of Byzantine-Arab Wars of the 950s-960s in the eastern Mediterranean via the Black Sea and the Dnepr River. The Rus' chiefly obtained these coins through their martial activities in these wars, i.e., as payments for their services, loot, ransom, and perhaps some form of commercial exchange with the locals. Starting with the early 950s, on their return to the Baltic – Sweden in particular – Rus' along with their parcels of coins (WNE dirhams and miliaresia) travelled directly and immediately up "The Way From the Varangians to the Greeks" route, along which few, if any, of these coins were left behind. This would explain why nearly all WNE dirhams and miliaresia deposited in the 950s come from Sweden, most notably on the islands of Gotland, Åland, and Öland. But, in the 960s both types of coins came to be deposited or partially dispersed into local circulation in a broader area of the Northern lands, thereby entering the local coin-stock which eventually came to be enclosed into regional eastern European, southeastern Baltic, Polish, Finnish, or other hoards. However, as in the 950s, the majority of these coins were carried to the main Rus' mercenaries' base of operations – Sweden. Quite probably, during the 950s-960s some of these mercenary Rus' or others who joined them as Byzantine paid soldiers came to permanently settle in other areas of the Northern lands, which would explain, in part, the greater distribution of both coin types across the region as the century progressed. However, all these martial activities came to an end in 969 when Rus' Grand Prince Sviatoslav broke the longstanding peace treaty signed in 944 with the Byzantines by attacking Danubian Bulgaria that year, leading to a Rus'-Byzantine War that ended in 971 with another peace accord. Unlike the 944 Treaty, however, this one had no stipulations regarding the dispatch of Rus' mercenaries to the Byzantines.[94] As noted above, it was only in 988 that Rus' mercenaries were again requested by the Byzantines. It is for this reason that from 969 until 988, written sources do not speak of Rus' mercenaries participating in the Byzantine military enterprises, nor is there any numismatic evidence that would suggest differently. Finally, it should be underscored that unlike the other two major tenth-century silver routes operating between the Islamic world and the Northern lands ("The Volga Bulğâr Way" and "The Khazar Way"), the route that brought WNE dirhams and miliaresia via "The Way From the Varangians to the Greeks" was non-commercial, as this coined silver had its origins in martial activities and military services rather than trade.

[94] THE LAWS OF RUS' 1992, 13.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study argues that starting in ca. 950 and lasting until ca. 969 "Western Near Eastern"/WNE dirhams (minted in Egypt, Syria, Crete, and upper Mesopotamia/al-Jazira) came to be infused into the Northern lands (eastern Europe, the southeastern Baltic, Poland, Germany, and Fennoscandia) in a relatively brief and small, but historically significant, wave of imports. It is argued that these coins were brought to the Northern lands not from the two key distributors of tenth-century Islamic silver – Iran and al-ʿIrâq brought there by "The Khazar Way" route and Sâmânid central Asia via "The Volga Bulğâr Way" commercial artery, but directly from the eastern Mediterranean via the Black Sea and the Dnepr River (i.e., the famous route "The Way From the Varangians to the Greeks"). From the early 950s, Byzantine miliaresia joined in this flow of Islamic silver from the eastern Mediterranean and upper Mesopotamia northwards. Using the information provided by Arabic, Greek, and Rus' written sources, it is argued that these WNE dirhams and Byzantine miliaresia were brought to the Northern lands not as the result of trade, but because of martial activities (looting, ransom, and payments) of Rus' mercenaries in Byzantine armies fighting the Arabs in the 950s-960s in Crete, Cilicia, Syria, and upper Mesopotamia. Thus, these coins supplement the rather laconic and cryptic written accounts concerning the activities of the Rus' mercenaries in the 950s-960s, who after 988 came to be officially established and known as the Byzantine "Varangian Guard".

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APPENDIX

TENTH-CENTURY HOARDS WITH WNE DIRHAMS AND PRE-970 MILIARESIA DISCOVERED IN THE NORTHERN LANDS

Hoards*	**Pre-970 WNE dirhams and their frags.**	**Pre-970 Byzantine coins and their frags.**
EASTERN EUROPE		
PAL'TSEVO, Tver' oblast' (1923), *tpq* 913/14	1	0
KOZ'IANKA, Vitebsk oblast' (1973), *tpq* 944/45	2	0
BRIANSK, Briansk Region (2001), *tpq* mid-960s	0	1
SHPILEVKA/ SHPYLIVKA, Sumy oblast' (1887), *tpq* 966/67	1	1
BRIANSK REGION, Briansk oblast' (2005), *tpq* 969/70	12	18
KASHIN, Kalinin oblast' (1937), *tpq* 961-976	1	0
NOVGOROD, Novgorod oblast' (1953), *tpq* 971/72	5	0
NOVAIA MEL'NITSA, Novgorod oblast' (1924), *tpq* 973/74	1	0
NEAR THE KHUTYN' MONASTERY, Novgorod oblast' (1983), *tpq* 973/74	2	0
SANSKOE, Riazan' oblast' (2011), *tpq* 973/74	2	1
NOVGOROD, Novgorod oblast' (1956), *tpq* 974/75	3	1
KOLOMNA III, Moscow oblast' (2011-2012), *tpq* 975/76	1	0
ERILOVO, Pskov oblast' (ca. 1930), *tpq* 976/77	8	1
KOLOMNA IV, Moscow oblast' (2015), *tpq* 976/77	2	0
ALONG THE SHORE OF THE LOVAT' RIVER, Pskov province (1802 or 1803), *tpq* 976/77 or 978/79	2	0
STARYI DEDIN, Mogilev oblast' (1926), *tpq* 978/79	2	0
SIDOROVKA, Riazan' oblast' (1960) *tpq* 978/79	1	0
CHERNIGOV, Chernigov oblast' (2012), *tpq* 979/80	?	150
SAVKOVO, Vladimir oblast' (1997) *tpq* 970/71-979/80	1?	0
BEL'KOVKA, Pskov oblast' (1901), *tpq* 980/81	1	0

* Quantities provided here per hoard of both coin types are at the absolute minimal, as sometimes all that is known is that at least one WNE dirham or miliaresion was present in the hoard.

BORKI, Riazan' oblast' (1958), *tpq* 982/83	1	0
KOROSTOVO, Riazan' oblast' (1891), *tpq* 985/86	1	0
NEAR BOLGAR, Tatarstan (2010), *tpq* 985/86	3	0
KRASNAIA, Vitebsk oblast' (1896), *tpq* 986/87	3	0
BELYI, Tver' oblast' (2011), 988/89	1	0
SHELEBOVO, Vladimir oblast' (1852), *tpq* 990	1	0
SMOLENSK REGION, Smolensk oblast' (2006), *tpq* 995/96	1	0
POCHINKOVO Smolensk oblast' (1998, 2000), *tpq* 990s	1	0
BARSUKI, Smolensk oblast' (1998), *tpq* ca. 999	1	0
SOUTHEASTERN BALTIC		
NEAR REVAL/TALLINN Estonia (before 1789), *tpq* 942/43	1	0
MÄKSA (MEKSHOF) Estonia (1878), *tpq* 947/48	2	0
SAUE (FRIEDRICHSHOF) Estonia (1913), *tpq* 951/52	1	2
PARIVERE, Estonia (1924), *tpq* 952/53	0	1
MÄKSA (MEKSHOF) Estonia (1878), *tpq* 954/55	2	0
"MEEKSI" (MÄXHOF)?, Estonia (1884), *tpq* 963/64?	1	0
RATHSHOF, Estonia (before 1838), *tpq* 965 or 967/68	1	0
VARA (WARROL), Estonia (pre-1847), *tpq* 969/70	1	0
ÄÄSMÄE (ESSIMÄGGI), Estonia, 1845, *tpq*, 967/68	1	0
SALASPILS LAUKSKOLA, Latvia (1967-1975), *tpq* 973/74	1	0
ERRA-LIIVA, Estonia (1933-1939), *tpq* 977/78	1	1
KEHRA, Estonia (1940), *tpq* ca. 979	13	3
EASTERN LATVIA, Eastern Latvia (mid-1970s), *tpq* 983/84	1	0
SAAREMAA II, Estonia (pre-2016), *tpq* 984/85	4	0
POLAND		
OLIWA, Pomerania (1880), *tpq* 951/52	1	0
TURWI/TUREW, Wielkopolska (1846), *tpq* 955	0	3
PUCK, Pomerania (1853), *tpq* 965	2	0
PIASKI-DRAMINO, Pomerania (1900), *tpq* 950-967	1	0
MAURZYCE-RUSKÓW, Polska Środkowa (1933), *tpq* 971/72	2	1
MAGNUSZEWICE, Wielkopolska (1873), *tpq* ca. 967	0	2
CIECHANÓW, Mazowsze (1982), *tpq* 974	19?	8+6
SIEROSZEWICE, Wielkopolska (1901), *tpq* ca. 976	4	0
ZALESIE, Wielkopolska (1922), *tpq* ca. 976	16	1

DZIERZNICA, Wielkopolska (1909), *tpq* 976-982	116	82
OBRZYCKO, Wielkopolska (1842), *tpq* 978-983	1	5
MOSKORZE, Pomerania (1931-1932), *tpq* ca. 991	1	0
RADZIKÓW I, Silesia (1884), *tpq* ca. 993	1	0
WICIMICE, Pomerania (1878), *tpq* ca. 996	1	0
POŁCZYN-ZDRÓJ, Pomerania (1886), *tpq* ca. 996	1	0
MURCZYN, Wielkopolska (1893), *tpq* ca. 999	1	0
FINLAND (PROPER)		
VANHAKARTANO, Satakunta (1926), *tpq* 976/77	2	0
HADVALA, Piikkiö parish (1949), *tpq* 998	1	0
DENMARK		
KANNIKEGÆRDE, Bornholm (1996), *tpq* 952/53	1	0
JYNDEVAD, Sønderjylland (1863), *tpq* ca. 955-960	0	1
KONGENS UDMARK, Bornholm (1861), *tpq* ca. 975	4	6
TARUP, Fyn (1862), *tpq* 976/77?	1	0
GERMANY		
WATERNEVERSDORF, Schleswig-Holstein (1873), *tpq* ca. 976-995	6	1
ALEXANDERHOF, Brandenburg (1901), *tpq* ca. 996	0	3
NIEDELANDIN, Brandenburg (1900), *tpq* ca. 996	1	2
NORWAY		
HOLTAN, Sør-Trøndelag (1905, 1913, 1920), *tpq* 950/51	1	0
TRÅEN (NUMEDAL), Buskerud (1906), *tpq* ca. 991	1	1
SWEDEN (INCLUDING ÅLAND ISLANDS)		
TRIBERGA, Öland (1960), *tpq* 930/31	1	0
GANNARVE, Gotland (1914), *tpq* 944/45	1	0
TÄNGLINGS II, Gotland (1941), *tpq* 945/46	1	0
NÄR, Gotland (1846, 1849), *tpq* 945-959 (probably 950s)	1	2
SMISS, Gotland (1878), *tpq* 951/52	3	3
ÄNGES (ENGES), Gotland (1869, 1870, 1874, 1877, 1914-1915), *tpq* 952/53	1	0
NORR NÅNÖ, Öland (1870), *tpq* 952/53	0	1 or 2
MULLVALDS, Gotland (1853), *tpq* 953/54	1	0
KASTLÖSA, Öland (1952), *tpq* 953/54	1	0
RANGSARVE, Gotland (1950, 1980, 1983, 1990), *tpq* 953/54	2	0

YXNARUM, Blekinge (1902), *tpq* 954/55	1	0
STORA TUNE, Gotland (1891, 1893, 1984, 1985), *tpq* 954/55	2	0
GULLARVE, Gotland (1938, 1977-1978), *tpq* 954/55	1	0
ÅSGÅRDA, Åland, Finland (1869), *tpq* 955/56	1	1
TJÄNGVIDE, Gotland (2009), *tpq* 955/56	1	0
SÖREGÄRDE, Småland (1903-1910), *tpq* 956/57	1	0
RINGS, Gotland (1970), *tpq* 956/57	1	0
STORA VELINGE, Gotland (1968, 1971, 1982), *tpq* 957/58	1	0
BIRKA, Uppland (1873), *tpq* 957/58	1	1
EKESKOGS, Gotland (1884), *tpq* 957/58	3	0
HÄFFINDS, Gotland (1975), *tpq* 957/58	3	1
EMKARBY, Åland, Finland (1933), *tpq* 958/59	1	0
ROMMUNDS, Gotland (1937), *tpq* 958/59	1	0
EKETORP, Närke (1950, 1985), *tpq* 958/59	2	0
HAGEBY, Gotland (1861), *tpq* 958/59	4	0
BUTERS, Gotland (1869), *tpq* 959/60	1	0
VÄSTERGÅRDE, Gotland (2006), *tpq* 961	2	1
LIKNATTE, Gotland (1903, 1977), *tpq* 961/62	2	0
LUNDS II, Gotland (1937, 2015), *tpq* 962-965	4	0
BIRKA, Uppland (1872), *tpq* 963/64	6	1
STORA VIKERS, Gotland (1993, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2007), *tpq* 963/64	6	0
SMEDBY, Östergötland (1967-1968), *tpq* 964/65	5	0
KAUNGS, Gotland (1887), *tpq* 965	5	
ALSKOG VICARAGE (PRÄSTGÅRDEN), Gotland (1840), *tpq* 965	1	0
NÄSBY, Södermanland (1892), *tpq* 967/68 or later	1	0
MANNEGÅRDE I, Gotland (1876, 1877), *tpq* 969/70	4	0
RÖCKSTA, Uppland (1889), *tpq* 969/70	2	0
TALBY, Södermanland (1936), *tpq* 969/70	4	0
UGGÅRDS I, Gotland (1856), *tpq* 971-974	1	0
BRYOR, Gotland (1941), 972/73	4	2
GÖSTAVS (GUSTAFS), Gotland (1929, 1980, 1986), *tpq* 972/73	1	0
BOTVALDE, Gotland (1899), *tpq* 972/73	1	0
GRAUSNE I, Gotland (1882, 1885, 1888, 1945, 1978, 1990), *tpq* after 973	3	0
BOTES, Gotland (1860), *tpq* after 973	11	6+2?
MÅRTENS, Gotland (1907), *tpq* after 973	3	0

LILLA RONE, Gotland (1861), *tpq* 973/74	2	2
GÅSHAGEN, Gotland (1869 and later), *tpq* ca. 975	3	2
SKÅNE PROVINCE, (by 1860), *tpq* 976/77	1	0
FÅGELSÅNGEN, Södermanland (1924), *tpq* 976/77	3	0
ÖVIDE/UNGHANSE, Gotland (1884), *tpq* 976/77	4	1
STÄVIE (RAMSÅKERN), Skåne (1853-1857), *tpq* after 977	2	0
SUDERBYS/SORBYS, Gotland (1870), *tpq* ca. 978	0	1?
SIGTERS (LINGVIDE), Gotland (1955, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1990, 2014), *tpq* after 978	3	1
KVIE, Gotland (2010), *tpq* after 979	1	0
BOLS (BOTELS), Gotland (1879), *tpq* after 983	30	16+5?
TÄRNÖ, Blekinge (1862), *tpq* 983-996	1	0
STORA HULTE, Gotland (1874), *tpq* after 991	1	0
TIMANS, Gotland (1954 and later), *tpq* ca. 991	4	3
BROA, Gotland (1913), *tpq* ca. 991	2	1
ALSKUTE, Gotland (1950s), *tpq* ca. 991	2	0
ÖSTJÄDRA, Västmanland (1917), *tpq* ca. 991	11	2
NORRKVIE II, Gotland (1834), *tpq* after 991	1	2
BROE III, Gotland (1913), *tpq* after 991	2	0
VIVLINGS, Gotland (1925), *tpq* after 991	3	0
LAUHAGE, Gotland (1877), *tpq* after 991	1	0
FÖLHAGEN (SMIDGÅRDE), Gotland (1866), *tpq* ca. 991	6	2?
HÄGVALDS/ HÄGVALLS, Gotland (1943), *tpq* ca. 991	12	0
RIDDARE, Gotland (1985), *tpq* ca. 991	1	0
KVARNE (LILLÄNGEN), Gotland (1906 and later) *tpq* ca. 994	12	1
SKAVSTA, Södermanland (1913, 1973), *tpq* after 995	1	0
HORDA, Småland (1828), *tpq* after 995	1	0
MALLGÅRDS, Gotland (1940, 1980, 1981 and later), *tpq* ca. 996	1	0
HALLEGÅRDE, Gotland (1901 and later), *tpq* after 996	4	0
KVARNE (KVARNA) I, Gotland (1839), *tpq* after 997	3	0
HÄGDARVE, Gotland (1931), *tpq* ca. 997	4	1
BJÄRS, Gotland (1879), *tpq* 997/98	1	0

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THE FĀṬIMID COINS FROM SICILY IN AL-ANDALUS: THE JABONERÍAS HOARD (MURCIA, SPAIN)[*1]

Abstract

In 2012 a gold coin hoard was recovered in the course of the archaeological activities: the excavation of an Islamic house built on the XI century in Jabonerías street, Murcia (Spain). The coins were inside a ceramic pot hidden in one wall of the house. The hoard is composed of 4 gold objects and 424 coins from northern Africa and Sicily, mostly Fāṭimid coins, and the fractions dinars from the Andalusian Party kings. The Fāṭimid coins account for 65 % of the total, and were minted in the name of al-Ḥākim, al- Zāhir y al-Mustanṣir caliphs. Most of them, 82 %, were struck in Palermo's mint, in Sicily, when the island wasn´t under direct Fāṭimid control no longer. At that time, Sicily was under the rule of the Kalbid dynasty. The Sicilian coins abound in other Andalusian hoards dated in eleventh century -over 60 hoards with Fāṭimid coins have been recorded from Al-Andalus-, and the Sicilian issues are majority in several of them.

Keywords

Islamic Numismatics. North Africa coins. Fāṭimid. Al-Andalus. Party kings. Fractional dinars. Muslim Murcia. Islamic Archeology.

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In 2012, a gold coin hoard was recovered in the course of archaeological activities taking place on Jabonerías Street, in Murcia (Spain). Murcia was the capital city of Cora of Tudmir, located in the south-eastern area of al-Andalus or Sharq al-Andalus. The coin hoard was recovered during the excavation of an Islamic house located in the ancient Islamic medina next to the wall (figure 1).

The house, which has the structure of a typical Islamic house with a courtyard, was constructed in the beginning of the 11th century. It was abandoned at the end of the same century. Some of its constructive elements were plundered, while the earth walls progressively deteriorated. The collapse was sealed by a potent deposit of silt, over which a second house was constructed during the Almohad period. The baseboards of the courtyard and northern walls were rendered with red paint and decorated with geometrical motifs. What is noteworthy is a rendering located on the courtyard wall, between the two doors that provided access to the northern hall. The motif on it must have been a Star of David or a Seal of Solomon[1].

Among the collapsed remains of one of the walls of the said hall, that is, the eastern one, the remnants of a ceramic vessel were found (figure 2). Inside was a group of gold coins and four smaller objects of the same material[2].

Its discovery during the archaeological excavation was key to the recovery of all the pieces, meaning that we have a group of objects that were hidden and have been entirely preserved. Its contextualization in a stratigraphic sequence provides valuable information to enable its correct interpretation. At the same time, this a very meaningful discovery, which provides relevant historical data for understanding the region of Murcia during the 11th century, and the relations between al-Andalus and other areas of the Western Mediterranean, especially the island of Sicily, as can be inferred from the numismatic analysis of the hoard[3].

This hidden discovery consists of 424 gold coins, 51 of which are fragments, some of them very small ones. All the pieces correspond to dividers of the dinar, except eight coins that are dinar unities.

In this hoard, the Andalusian coin only constitutes a quarter of the total, which takes the form of a group of dinar fractions from the Taifa States, independent kingdom after the abolition of the Córdoba caliphate. It is mostly composed of foreign currency minted by North African dynasties. However, issues under the name of the Fāṭimid caliphs predominate, representing 65% of the total coins discovered. This dynasty, traditionally in conflict with the Umayyads over the control of certain

[1] The archeological context is published by M. GARCÍA RUIZ 2013.

[2] There were inside four gold objects, very small and damaged, weighing 0.4 grams altogether. For a detailed description see DOMÉNECH BELDA 2013, illustrated in figure 14.

[3] See DOMÉNECH BELDA 2013.

territories in Northern Africa and the control of the Western Mediterranean, minted plenty of coinage, which is frequently part of the Andalusian discoveries that date from the 11th century. A small group of North African coins has also been identified, originating from the Siŷilmasa area and making up 1.6% of the total. Finally, there is another group of pieces, mostly fragments, whose small size or poor preservation prevents their classification (figure 3).

ANDALUSIAN COINS

The Andalusian issues represents 24.7% of all the hoard. Among the Andalusian coins, there are two dinars minted in the final moments of the Córdoba caliphate, a dinar from the Hišām II period minted in the last decade of the 10th century, and another one with the name of Muḥammad al-Mahdī, which dates from the Hegira 400 or 1009-10 CE. These coins, together with a series of coins of the Fāṭimid caliph al-Hākim, are some of the oldest pieces of the hoard.

The remaining 103 coins are issues from the Taifa period, all of them fractions of the dinar. Among the coins from the Taifa States, the largest number corresponds to the Taifa of Valencia, powerful kingdom established by the Amirid dynasty. The most abundant ones are issues from ʻAbd al-ʻAzīz al-Manṣūr, the grandchild of Almanzor, who ruled the area from the year 411 to 452 of the Hegira. This abundance of Taifa-minted coinage was circulating almost all over al-Andalus, especially in the eastern area, where it was the predominant currency during the 11th century.

The group discovered on Jabonerías Street is a good proof of that, since the Valencian issues represents 85% of all the Taifa coins in the hoard. The rest are fractions of the dinar from other Taifa kingdoms, comprising just a few coins. These are the main Taifa kingdoms from the southern and eastern half of al-Andalus: besides Valencia, there is also the neighbouring Taifa of Denia; Tortosa, Zaragoza and Calatayud in the Ebro Valley; the powerful Taifa of Toledo; and Córdoba, Granada and Sevilla in the south.

SIŶILMĀSA COINS

Seven North African dinars have also been identified in this hoard, minted by the Banū Jazrūn in Siŷilmāsa. There was much tension between the Fāṭimids and Umayyads over the city of Siŷilmāsa, as it was where the caravan routes regarding sub-Saharan gold were destined. In practice, as the control over this city meant control over the route for that metal, both dynasties worked hard in order to please the Berber tribes in the area. It was ruled by the Banū Midrār, with intermittent Fāṭimid

control, until the year 366 of the Hegira, when it was occupied by the Banū Jazrūn with the support of the Umayyads from Córdoba.

The Siŷilmāsa coins minted by these dynasties are little known and very scarce on the Iberian Peninsula. Banū Midrār's coins were only reported in a hoard from Badajoz[4], while two hoards contain Banū Jazrūn's coinage: Cruz Conde from Córdoba[5] and Santa Elena from Valence, the largest group of North Africa gold coins in al-Andalus[6]. To this coins, now must be joined Jabonerias hoard with seven gold pieces possibly from Siŷilmāsa[7]. As in the case of Santa Elena, they can be dated in the first half of the 11th century[8], during the city independence period that started with the fall of the Córdoba Caliphate. This independence is clearly revealed in the monetary issues: the name of Hisam II disappeared from the currency. After that, the supply model of north African monetary gold in al-Andalus should have been modified.

FĀṬIMID COINS

The largest group in Jabonerías hoard is comprised by the Fāṭimid coinage. We have found coins from three different Fāṭimid caliphs: al-Ḥākim (386-411 H./ 996-1021 CE.), al-Ẓāhir (411-427 H./ 1021-1036 CE.) and al-Mustanṣir (427-487 H./ 1036-1094 CE.), whose successive governments cover almost all of the 11th century. The number of coins in each of them is different, increasing progressively from the first to the last. From the al-Ḥākim period are 6.5% of the identified coins. The number of coins issued by al-Ẓāhir caliph, even though he had a shorter reign, was triple that of his predecessor, among which are some posthumous issues. But the largest group among the whole hoard, other than the Fāṭimid coins, are the ones issued by al-Mustanṣir, with a total of 195 identified pieces.

It happens that almost 70% of the coins from this caliph belong to a certain type, from which only pieces dating from the fourth decade of the 11th century are known.

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[4] According to A. PRIETO VIVES 1934, the treasure contained a consistent number of Banū Midrār's coins which dates from the Hegira 315 to 354 or 927-965 CE.

[5] It's an old find released by J.M. DE NAVASCUÉS in 1963 and J.I. SÁENZ- DÍEZ in 1984. According to A. CANTO 2002: p.121-122, and A. CANTO *ET ALII* 2005: p.194-195, contained 32 pieces.

[6] As referred to by CANTO *ET ALII* 2005, Santa Elena hoard contained 531 gold pieces of Banū Jazrūn's coins. There is the largest group located in al-Andalus. The full report on this very large hoard is awaited whose publication will provide a better knowledge on these issues.

[7] There is one fragmented piece and six full pieces. All of them are dinars, weighing between 2.4 and 3.2 grams, except for one: a divider, weighing 1.1 gram. See DOMÉNECH BELDA 2013: p.15 and figure 9. These dinars, together with a two Umayyad caliphate pieces, are the only dinars of this hoard.

[8] Under the chronological proposal for J.I. SÁENZ-DÍEZ, 1986.

This is type P in the catalogue of N. D. Nicol[9], especially variants P1, P2 and P3, which share the same distribution of the central inscription but differ in the legend on the margins. All the coins of these types with an identified mint, as referred to by N. D. Nicol, correspond to the Ṣiqillīya mint.

All of them are divisions of a quarter of a dinar, known as a *rubāʿa* weighing around one gram and mostly between 12 and 16 mm wide. The word "*rubāʿa*" on the coin appears in very few cases. On the contrary, the word "dinar" appears on many of them, as it was a generic term with gold issues. Their metrological characters, however, leave no doubt about their value as quarter dinar.

On the subject of chronology, many of these fractions of a dinar do not show a date. The quarter dinar of al-Mustanṣir, which are of great chronological interest due to being the latest Fāṭimid coins of the hoard, could have been rigorously dated in any of his 58 years of reign: from the Hegira 427 or 1036 CE, to the Hegira 487 or 1094 CE. However, none of the coins where the date can still be read surpasses the chronological barrier of the middle of the century. The latest date seen in the Fāṭimid coins of the hoard is the Hegira 438 or 1046-7 CE. Many of the coins belong to this year, which coincides with the moment where the local powers of the Sicily island began to consolidate and gain independence from the last Kalbí governor. Later monetary types, such as the stellate or clockface type, cannot be found in the hoard. In addition, 70% of the coins belong to a type that only date from the 1040s. Our guess is that, in the second half of that century, these coins had already travelled to al-Andalus and were added to the fractions of the dinar from the Taifa kingdoms, whose mint dates do not extend to the last quarter of the 11th century. All this suggests that these coins from al-Mustanṣir correspond to issues from the first half of his reign.

Even though these fractions of Fāṭimid dinars belong to types where the place of mintage is preserved in the marginal inscription, this information has not been preserved in all coins. It has been possible to identify 107 pieces, divided into four mints, all of them located in the Western Mediterranean: al-Mahdīya, al-Manṣūrīya, Aṭarāblus (Tripoli in Libya) and Ṣiqillīya. Miṣr does not appear, even though it was the capital of the dynasty when these coins where struck. Only 1% of the coins belong to al-Mahdīya, while Aṭarāblus is only represented by 5% of all the Fāṭimid coins of the hoard. All the coins in this mint were struck with the name of al-Ḥākim, the most represented caliph in the hoard. To al-Manṣūrīya belong 12% of the coins with a known mint, while the remaining 82% were struck in Sicily (figure 4).

[9] NICOL 2006.

FĀṬIMID COINS IN AL-ANDALUS

The figures in the hoard of Murcia match closely to what has been found in other Andalusian discoveries of Fāṭimid coins. On a general level, the Fāṭimid discoveries in al-Andalus are abundant[10] and distributed all over the southern part and the eastern side of the Iberian Peninsula, especially the Mediterranean Sea coast and the Guadalquivir Valley (figure 5), though with a different behaviour in both areas[11].

As in Jabonerías hoard, in al-Andalus, on a general level, the composition of the discoveries evidence that the Fāṭimid coin focuses mostly on the issues from the caliphs al-Ḥākim, al-Zāhir and al-Mustanṣir, who reigned during the 11th century. Only a few coins from the previous caliphs reached the Iberian Peninsula. The coins from the caliphs who reigned during the second half of the 10th century, al-Muʿizz y al-ʿAzīz, are scarce. It is only during the reign of the caliph al-Ḥākim (386-411 H./ 996-1021 CE.) when the number of coins preserved begins to rise significantly, especially in the larger hoards. To this caliph belongs the largest number of coins.

But there are differences between gold and silver Fāṭimid currency. Gold coins appear mostly all throughout the 11th century. There are only a few coins with a previous chronology[12]. On the other hand, silver Fāṭimid coins have already been documented in al-Andalus early, dating from the 10th century, peaking with the coin issues from al-Hakim (386-411 H./ 996-1021 CE). However, during the reign of al-Mustansir (427-487 H./ 1036-1094 CE.), when the gold coins are riching, the Fāṭimid silver coins disappear (figure 6).

There are also some differences according to the geographical area. In the Guadalquivir Valley, silver coins disappeared even sooner, as no coins from al-Zāhir have been documented. Some of the silver found there, dates from the first decades of the 11th century, a fitna period with little coinage from the Cordoba mint (figure 7). Meanwhile, Fāṭimid coins kept on reaching Sharq al-Andalus during the first half of the 11th century: silver from al-Zāhir and gold from al-Mustanṣir (figure 8). Even though gold and silver coin discoveries are distributed between both areas, it is in Sharq al-Andalus where we find the late coins that kept on coming once they stopped reaching the Guadalquivir Valley.

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[10] In 1990, C. Martínez published the first work on Fāṭimid coin findings in al-Andalus, that they were eleven in total. Currently, over fifty hoards with Fāṭimid coins have been recorded in al-Andalus. Lately, the number of hoards have increased, not only for the new discovers, also for the revision of the old ones in which Fāṭimid coins did not had the proper attention or had not been identify. It is especially relevant this fact in the area of Sharq al-Andalus where along the monetary sets, an important number of isolated findings are documented. On all this, see DOMÉNECH 2004.

[11] On a comparative analysis on geographic areas of these finds see DOMÉNECH 2004.

[12] For an extensive analysis of the Fāṭimid gold presence in al-Andalus, geographic distribution and chronology, see DOMÉNECH 2016.

In light of this fact, we have to add that the percentages of Fāṭimid coins in the discoveries are considerably higher in the Mediterranean area, with four hoards that thoroughly exceed the 50%, for example Jabonerías (65%), Elche[13] (83%), Begastri[14] (88%), and Benidorm[15] (100%). There are other ones, such as Santa Elena in Valencia, which has the largest group of Fāṭimid gold found in al-Andalus[16]. All this, together with the origin of the coins, is proof that *Sharq al-Andalus* was the gateway for all these coins. We can confirm this graphically with figure 9, which compares, with absolute figures, four gold hoards: three hoards from the Sharq in the upper area, and another one in blue in the Guadalquivir Valley, located at the bottom part of the graphic.

Regarding the denomination of coin, the quarter dinar is the most abundant one in the discoveries of Fāṭimid gold coins in al-Andalus. The presence of Fāṭimid dirham unities is very scarce and, as happened with the hoard of Jabonerías Street, the dividers of a quarter of a dinar predominate. This also happens with the silver coins, where dirham unities are very scarce. The fractions of a quarter and a half are the most documented ones. These monetary values adapted better to the economic reality of the Andalusian Taifas.

All these Fāṭimid coins, which arrived in al-Andalus, came mostly from mints located in the Western Mediterranean, especially Sicily. The percentages shown in figure 10, even though incomplete because there are many ancient hoards for which we have no data, show a tendency that is corroborated in the hoard of Jabonerías Street. The Palermo mint is without doubt the one that provided the most Fāṭimid coins to al-Andalus. The other mints had a lesser presence. The coins that came from Egypt, for example, are very scarce, even though the dynasty lived there when most of these coins were struck.

With respect to the provenance of Fāṭimid coins arrived to al-Andalus, there are differences between both metals. The most of Fāṭimid silver coinage come from al-Mansūriya, while the gold coins were minted in four differents mits: al-Mahdīya, al-Mansūriya, Tarabulus, Miṣr y Ṣiqillīya. Ṣiqillīya is the predominant mint, far apart on al-Mansūriya, the second largest one.

This volume of Sicilians coins, especially quarters of dinars struck in 11th century, shows that the Palermo's mint, although not directly controlled by Fāṭimid dynasty, continued minting coins with the names of Fāṭimid caliphs, unless during the whole reign of al-Mustanṣir. This fact is truly notable because the Kalbid governors, even

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[13] See DOMÉNECH 2003.

[14] See DOMÉNECH 2006.

[15] See DOMÉNECH 2003.

[16] See CANTO, CASAS, IBRAHIM and MARTÍN 2005; and CANTO, MARTÍN and DOMÉNECH 2017.

they kept their loyalty to Fāṭimid dinasty, they wouldn't let caliphs have direct control over the island. Between the year 1040 and 1050 Sicily was divided in independent political entities[17], like happened in al-Andalus.

A FEW WORDS IN CONCLUSION

The abundant presence of Fāṭimid coins in the Iberian Peninsula outlines the most important phenomenon of foreign currency in al-Andalus. Fāṭimid coinage was integrated into the Andalusian monetary circulation and was treasured next to Andalusian coins. In the Andalusian hoards, most of these coins were dividers: half and quarter dirham and quarter dinar fractions, in spite of the unit dinar that was the gold currency most used in Fāṭimid Empire. These fractional dinars and dirhams should have been very valued during the 11th century in al-Andalus because of the quality of his alloy. The quarter dinars coexisted with the dinar fractions minted by the taifa kings and were treasured next to them. As happens with Andalusian coinage, Fāṭimid coins were sometimes drilled, cut or fragmented.

The arrival of the Fāṭimid currency to al-Andalus is focused on the eleven century, mostly in the first half. The largest group comprises the issues from the caliphs al-Ḥākim (386-411 H./ 996-1021 CE.), al-Ẓāhir (411-427 H./ 1021-1036 CE.) and al-Mustanṣir (427-487 H./ 1036-1094 CE.) whose successive governments cover almost all of the 11th century. Coins from predecessor caliphs are very scarce. Therefore, the Fāṭimid coinage in al-Andalus links with the coinage of the Taifa states. The Fāṭimid coinage are frequently displayed treasured next to some taifa coinage such as Valencia, Toledo or Zaragoza taifas.

A full view of the Fāṭimid coinage found in al-Andalus allows to quantify and to establish the extent of the presence of this coinage. A review of the hoards, from treasures to isolated pieces, reveals that were mainly distributed in two areas: the southern of the Iberian Peninsula (Gualdalquivir Valley), and the eastern side of al-Andalus, especially the Mediterranean Sea coast. The analysis of these findings enables to observe a different behaviour in both areas according to metals and chronology. The Fāṭimid silver coins disappear from the south during the reign of al-Ẓāhir (411-427 H./ 1021-1036 CE.), nevertheless they are plentiful in Sharq al-Andalus. A great deal of gold coins kept on coming into Sharq al-Andalus during the reign of al-Mustansir, when the Fatimid gold coins in the Guadalquivir Valley were very scarce. In Sharq al-Andalus we find the latest coins that arrived, once they stopped reaching the Guadalquivir Valley. This evidence suggests that Sharq al-Andalus was the gateway for the Fāṭimid monetary flow.

[17] BARIANI 2001: p.72.

It should also be noted that all these Fāṭimid coins mostly came from mints located in the Western Mediterranean. A great amount of them is from Sicily where they were minted in a moment when the Fāṭimids had no longer direct control of the island and where the quarter dinar predominated. The abundant presence of Sicilian coins in al-Andalus highlights again the role of Sicily as the commercial centre of the Mediterranean, and its importance and impact not only towards the East, as shown by the Cairo Genizah documents, but also towards the West. In the Cairo Genizah documents is mentioned the settlement of Andalusian traders in Palermo, especially Jewish[18]. This traders' activity and the trade routes linking Sicily with the Iberian Peninsula across de Balearic Islands, may explain why the Fāṭimid currency appears with relatively frequence in al-Andalus, especially in the Mediterranean coast during the 11th century. The Jabonerías hoard in Murcia, is a good example of that relationship and makes possible to point the historical moment when these coins were hoarded.

[18] It based on information from the Cairo Genizah documents researched by O.R.Constable 1994.

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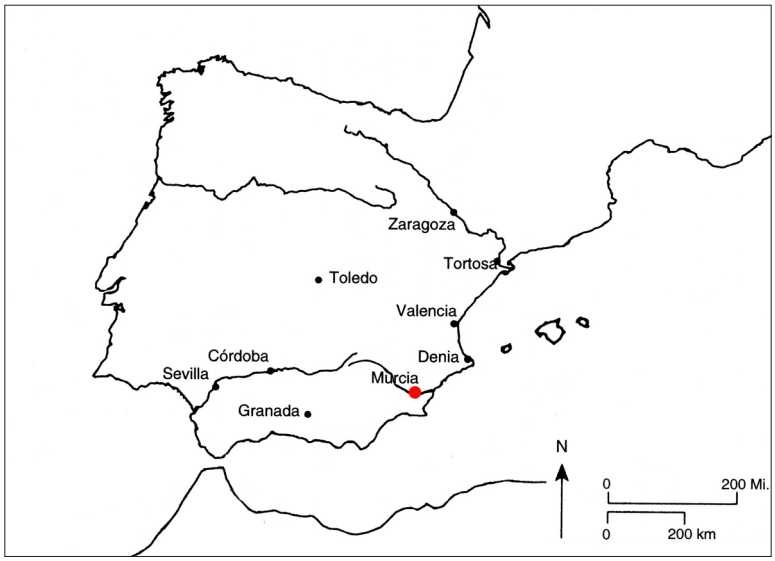


Figure 1 – Map of Spain with the location of Murcia

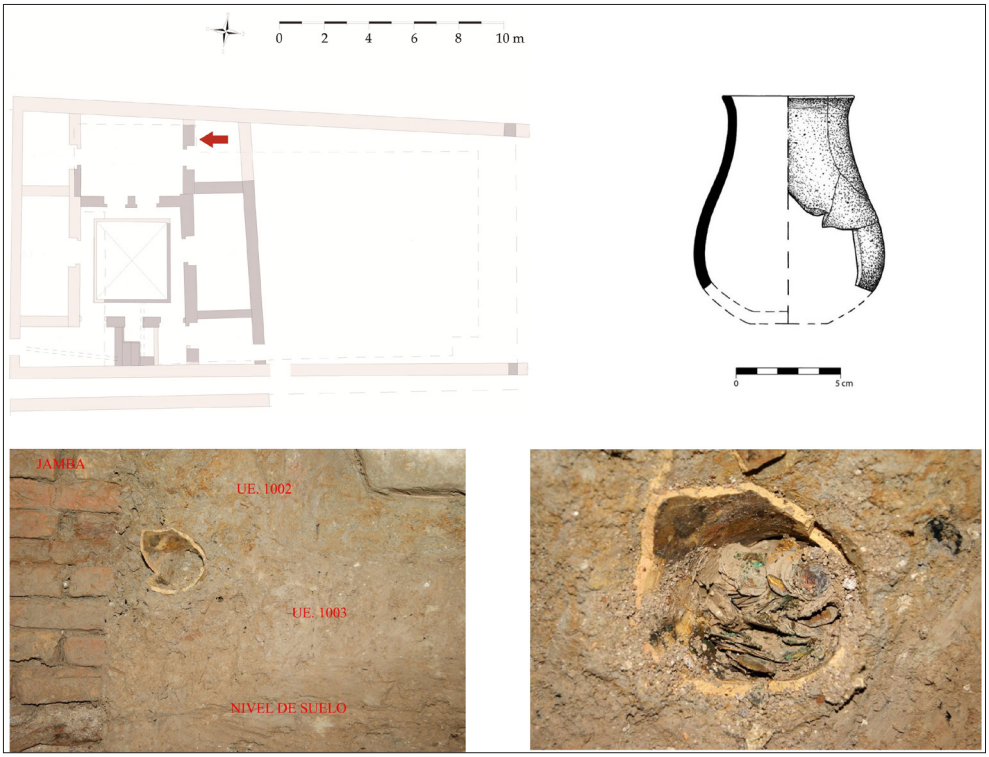


Figure 2 – Jabonerías hoard in the eastern wall of the northern hall (Pictures and photographs: M. García Ruiz)

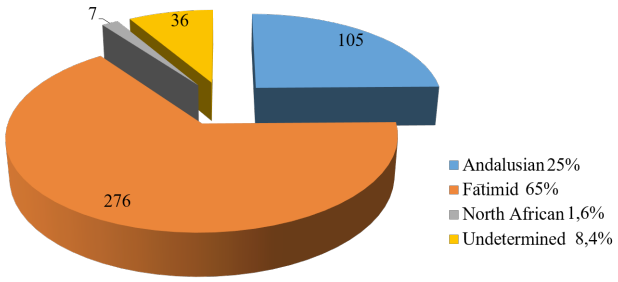


Figure 3 – Composition of the coin hoard of Jabonerías Street

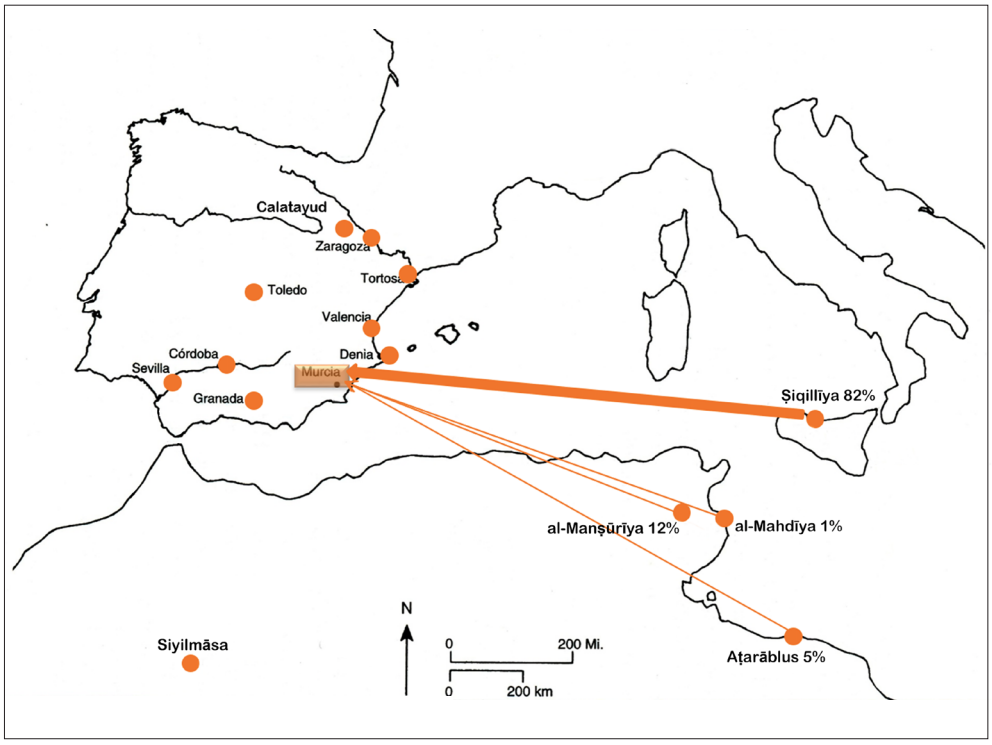


Figure 4 – Fāṭimid mints in hoard of Jabonerías

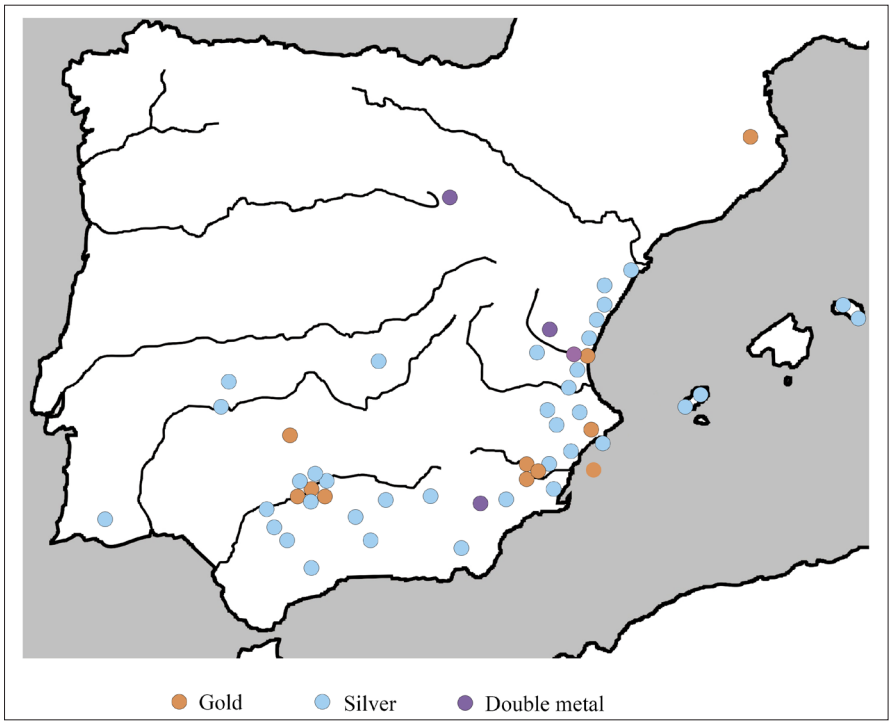


Figure 5 – Places of Fāṭimid coins discoveries in al-Andalus

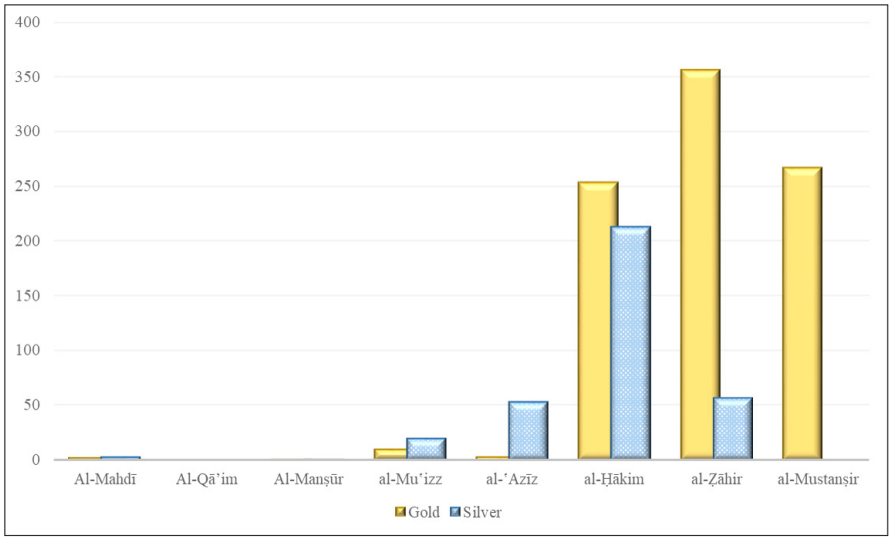


Figure 6 – Fāṭimid coins in al-Andalus: caliphs

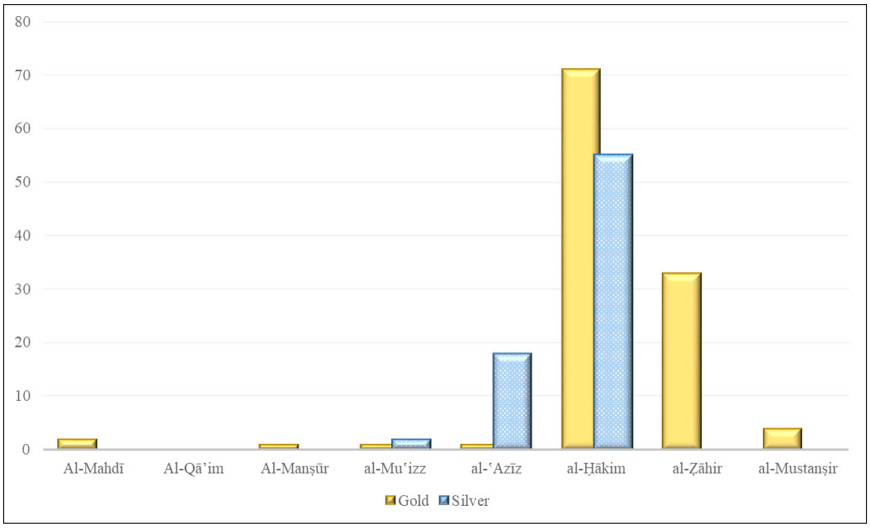


Figure 7 – Fāṭimid coin in the Guadalquivir Valley

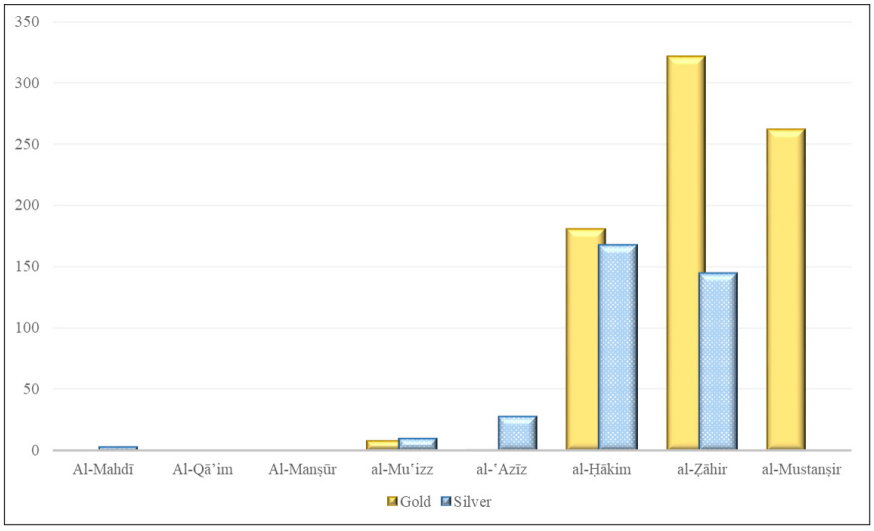


Figure 8 – Fāṭimid coin in the Sharq al-Andalus

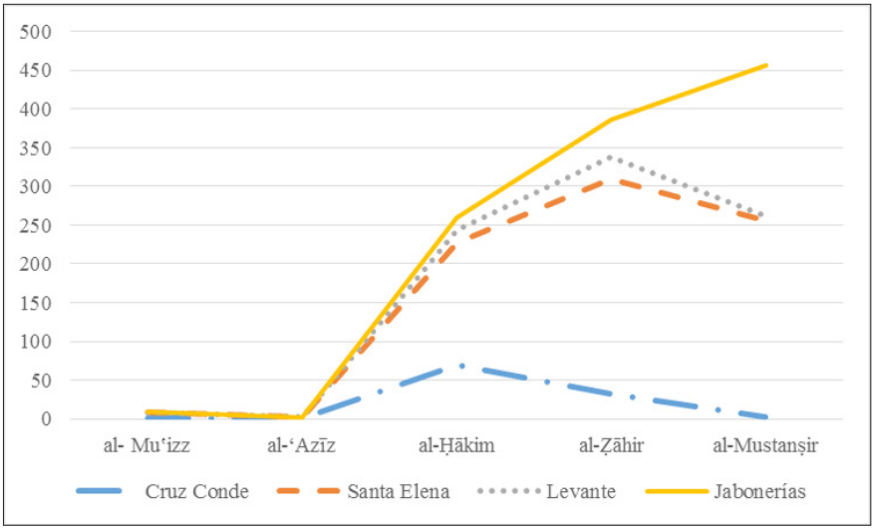


Figure 9 – Comparison chart of four great coin hoards with Fāṭimid gold

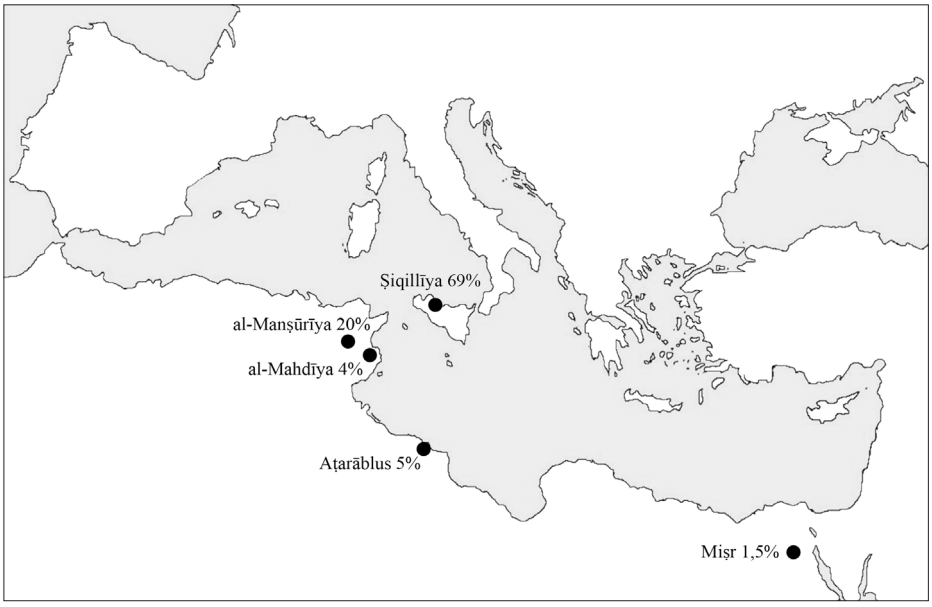


Figure 10 – Origin of the Fāṭimid pieces found in al-Andalus

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RE-EXCAVATING THE EXCAVATED: ANALYZING MAMLUK DIRHAM HOARDS FROM JORDAN VIA THEIR PUBLISHED REPORTS, AND WHY THAT IS WORTH DOING

Abstract

Five sizeable hoards of Mamluk silver dirhams have been found in Jordan since 1963. This paper focuses on three of these hoards, with the aim of making this numismatic data available to wider conversations about the Middle Islamic period in Jordan and Mamluk money. The first hoard discussed contains roughly 1100 Crusader and Mamluk silver coins found at the site of Dhībān in 1965. The second hoard consisted of more than 2200 dirhams found at Kerak in 1963. The third hoard consists of 68 Mamluk silver coins found in 1987 at the site of El-Lejjun. In all three cases, access to the actual coins found in these hoards is problematic, as not only are they preserved in multiple locations, but in at least one case, coins were distributed from the initial hoard and thus are not recoverable. Furthermore, while all three of these hoards have been published, the information found within has not been integrated into wider studies of the material culture of the Middle Islamic period in Jordan.

Keywords

Mamluk, Dirhams, Silver, Hoards

INTRODUCTION

The circular for this symposium identified five key themes for its participants: Islamic coins in archaeological excavations; coin use and coin circulation; mint production and coin circulation; coin hoards; and mints and monetary areas. My contribution touches upon the first, second, and fourth of these themes by discussing hoards of Mamluk silver dirhams found at sites in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This region was a rural hinterland for the Mamluk period (648-922/1250-1517). While in general the majority of archaeologically-found Mamluk coins in Jordan consist of single or small group finds of copper coins (*fals*, pl. *fulūs*) or silver dirhams, of notable exception to this statement are five large hoards of dirhams. These have been found at Kerak (*Karak*) in 1963, at Dhiban (*Dhībān*) in 1965, at Tell Hisban (*Tall Ḥisbān*) in 1971, at el-Lejjun (*al-Lajjūn*) in 1987, and at Umm Qeis (*Umm Qays*) in 2002.[1]

In doing this, I begin to address a lacunae in the wider discussion of archaeological finds from Middle Islamic Jordan. Writing in 2008, Alan Walmsley observed that while most authors interested in this period have addressed the ceramic evidence of the period, "the non-ceramic finds from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries reveal the richness of the period, but little has been adequately reported."[2] Walmsley also stated that:

> Non-ceramic finds manufactured from materials including stone, glass, ivory, bone and metals have only been sporadically mentioned and erratically described, as most writers with any interest in middle Islamic Jordan have concentrated on pottery in an attempt to establish a basic ceramic chronology for the eleventh to fifteenth century. Accordingly, no general survey can be offered at this time.[3]

After briefly mentioning some of the categories of non-ceramic finds—including coins—found at specific sites, he went on to mention that:

> While the evidence is tantalizing for an abundant and varied cultural horizon in Ayyubid and Mamluk Jordan, the available evidence continues to be patchy and incomplete. Until large scale systematic excavations are undertaken on a series of major Ayyubid and Mamluk sites in Jordan (which would probably require working in currently occupied towns in some instances), and while existing excavations remain unpublished, *the prevailing view of "Ayyubid-Mamluk Jordan equals only rough hand made pottery" will persist unchallenged* [emphasis added].[4]

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[1] This paper will use the anglicized versions of these place names, since they are more commonly encountered in the respective publications.

[2] WALMSLEY 2008: 530.

[3] WALMSLEY 2008: 530.

[4] WALMSLEY 2008: pp. 530-31.

While this situation described above has improved over the last decade,[5] the systematic incorporation of middle Islamic numismatic evidence into wider discussions of the period in Jordan remains in its early stages. The worthy goal of adding numismatic data to conversations based upon the rich ceramic evidence is hindered, however, by the fact that coins are not listed in the databases of JADIS, (Jordan Antiquities Database and Information System) or MEGA-Jordan (The National Heritage Documentation and Management System). While there are good reasons for not including coin data in these resources, its absence from them makes it necessary to re-excavate these coins from the publications in which they are mentioned. Working on this is not without its challenges, however, as I point out below.

THE MAMLUK SILVER HOARDS OF JORDAN

There were no Mamluk mints located in what is now the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The main Mamluk mints were located in Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt, and in Damascus, Hamah, Tripoli, and Aleppo in greater Syria. Nevertheless, Mamluk coins from all of these mints have been found in excavations in Jordan.[6] While most finds have been individual or small groups of copper *fulūs* and silver dirhams, there have also been five finds of Mamluk dirham hoards found in Jordan. These five range in size from 66 coins to more than 2000. In this paper I focus on three of those hoards: Dhiban; Kerak; and el-Lejjun, and comment only briefly on the remain two, Umm Qeis and Tell Hisban. There are two different reasons for not including these latter two hoards in this paper.

I do not discuss the Umm Qays hoard in any detail because it has not been published. All we know about it is derived from the brief description in the initial field report.[7] The hoard was found in a small ceramic jar and contained 533 coins. Of these coins, 528 were silver and the other five were identified as "gold Crusader coins." The photograph of the hoard included in the field report allows for two additional observations. It shows a pile of silver coins and those on top of the pile are easily identified as Mamluk dirhams from the first 150 years of the sultanate. (They differ in size, weight, fineness, and design from the later dirhams of the ninth/fifteenth century.) The image also included the five gold coins displayed in a row below

[5] See WALKER 2011.

[6] See SCHULTZ forthcoming. The topics of how these coins arrived in these locations, and what was their purchasing power are beyond the scope of this presentation.

[7] TAWALBEH 2002: p. 625, "Numerous Ayyubid-Mamluk coins are attested from various excavations, but more important is what was found in area (P) sq. (11) loc. (002): a small jar that contained 533 coins, 528 of them are silver..." The hoard is reported to be stored in the Irbid office of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities.

the dirhams. It is clear from this photograph that these gold coins are Venetian and not Crusader in origin. A thorough analysis of this hoard would be a most welcome development.

The Tell Hisban silver hoard consists of 66 dirhams found in a ceramic lamp. These coins have been published.[8] One of the dirhams dates from the late Ayyubid period, and the remainder are all early Mamluk. I do not discuss this hoard any further here since it is a major part of a wider study currently in preparation on the Mamluk numismatic evidence from Tell Hisban.

As for the three remaining hoards, I first describe each hoard individually, and in the concluding section, discuss how some of the information about these hoards can be meshed with what is currently known about Mamluk monetary history and the wider history of Mamluk Transjordan.

The Kerak Hoard

Perhaps the best known of these Jordanian hoards, the Kerak hoard of 2224 coins was not found in the course of an archaeological excavation, nor was it found in the famous Kerak castle. It was a salvage find discovered during a hospital construction project near the Burj al-Ẓāhir in the northwest corner of the fortified town of Kerak. The coins were inside a ceramic vessel. After discovery, the hoard was deposited in the Department of Antiquities, although subsequently 121 of the coins were distributed to other locations, including 50 to the museum in Kerak Castle itself.[9] In 1986, Saleh Sari published 1476 of these dirhams in his Ph.D dissertation.[10] These coins were described by Sari as all "the decipherable issues of the hoard."[11]

The distribution of these coins ranges from the reign of al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz through that al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā (694-6/1294-6). The vast majority of them date from the reigns of al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Baybars (658-76/1260-77), totalling 642 coins, and that of al-Malik al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn (678-89/1279-90), totalling 647. The mints represented in the hoard are Cairo, Alexandria (one coin only), Damascus, and Hamah. There also many coins lacking a mint name, which, by careful comparison of Sari's descriptions to published typologies, might lead to further information useful information about these mintless dirhams.

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[8] TERIAN 1974 . These coins were distributed between the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and the Horn Archaeological Museum at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA.

[9] SARI 1986 (A): pp. 2-3; AL-ṢARĀYRAH 2010.

[10] SARI 1986 (A), SARI 1986 (B).

[11] SARI 1986 (A): p. 3.

Another publication published in 1986 contains conflicting information about this hoard. Aida S. Arif's *A Treasury of Classical and Islamic Coins: The Collection of the Amman Museum*, described the hoard as follows:

> The other resounding figure of two thousand and eighty-seven coins in the Kerak Jar is mainly Islamic coins of the Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk and Ottoman dynasties, where almost every ruler is represented. However, al-Zahir Baybars, the Mamluk Sultan leads the others by having 747 coins struck in his name. He is followed by Qalawun with 697 coins. The last, among the rulers, whose coins are included in the same jar, is the Ottoman Sultan Salīm III.[12]

Arif's catalog was put together before Sari's indepth analysis was published. I have not found any corroborating evidence or testimony that later Mamluk or non-Mamluk coins were found in the hoard. As a specialist in Mamluk numismatics and as the only person to have studied this hoard indepths, I think that Sari's conclusions are to be preferred. That said, Arif's volume does provide some photographs of coins from the hoard, although this is difficult to pin down with precision. It contains a brief catalogue section devoted to Mamluk coins, at least three pages of which are linked to what is called "Kerak Jar – Silver Coins."[13] Photographs containing the obverses and reverses of several individual Mamluk coins are found on some of the plates, and two photographs of what is presumably at least part of the hoard are also included.[14]

The Dhībān Hoard

The Dhiban hoard of silver coins was found in a ceramic jar during the course of the 1965 ASOR-sponsored excavation season. A brief mention of the hoard is found in the published summary of that and two preceding seasons:

> As if to preserve a record of the final chapter in the story of Dhiban's occupational history, a jar containing approximately 1100 Crusader and Mamluke silver coins was found in a drain… News of the discovery of the coins spread like wildfire throughout the region. Soon the alchemy of rumor and imagination transformed the silver into gold and Amman and Jerusalem, for a time, were buzzing with wild accounts of the richness of the find. Their real value, however, was their confirmation of the ceramic evidence that the occupation of the ancient site of Dhiban (the northern mound) and come to an end by the fourteenth century C.E."[15]

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[12] ARIF 1986: p. xi.

[13] ARIF 1986: pp. 126-40 for the Mamluk coins section, and pp. 127-29 for coins linked to the hoard.

[14] ARIF 1986: Photographs of Mamluk coins are found on plates J.11207, J.11265, J.8108, and J.11212. See pp. 295 and 298 for two photographs of a pile of Mamluk dirhams.

[15] MORTON 1989: p. 232. As of 2010, the hoard and its original jar were on display in the office of the Department of Antiquities' Dhiban regional director.

Even with this buzz, however, it took many years for the hoard to be studied. In 1991, Iyad al-Misri made its Mamluk coins the subject of his Masters thesis at Yarmouk University.[16] I am not aware of any subsequent publication of this thesis. Al-Misri's work remains the crucial resource for the hoard, and since many may find access to this work to be difficult, I briefly present al-Misri's high-altitude findings here.[17] The original count of the hoard was 1124 coins. Al-Misri was able to identify 449 Mamluk dirhams. The earliest coin of the hoard date from the reign of the sultan al-Malik al-Manṣūr ʿAlī b. Aybak (655-57/1267-59), the latest from that of al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ (752-55/1351-54). However, it should be pointed out that since al-Nāṣir Ḥasan had two reigns (first: 748-52/1347-51; second 755-62/1354-61), it is possible that some of his coins without a legible date may come from the second reign, which followed that of al-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ. This raises the possibility of a slightly later terminal date for the hoard. Be that as it may, the identifed coins from the hoard are summarized in Table 1.

The remaining coins were not attributable to a specific sultan. As for mints of origins, the majority of these 449 coins lacked a legible mint, but 142 can be linked to the mints of Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo, Hamah, or Tripoli. In some cases, al-Misri was able to link specific specimens to the typology of Mamluk coins found in the foundational work of Mamluk numismatics.[18]

Before leaving this discussion of Dhiban, it is worth mentioning that a small hoard of 15 Mamluk dirhams was subsequently excavated at Dhiban in 2003 by the Jordanian Department of Antiquities.[19] I have been unable to locate any additional information beyond what was published in the brief field report: That these coins were found in a ceramic jar; and that the hoard contains one dirham from Ḥamāh bearing only the royal *laqab* al-Malik al-Nāṣir without a personal name (*ism*), two coins of al-Ẓāhir Baybars without mint names, three of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn without mint names, five Cairene dirhams of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, and four specimens worn smooth from wear and thus unidentifiable.

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[16] AL-MIṢRĪ 1987.

[17] Through the assistance of Bruce Routledge, I acquired a photocopy of the thesis. Unfortunately, however, my copy is missing pages 36 and 57 from the catalog section, and thus I have no information about coins 23-26 (four coins of al-Malik al-Ẓāhir Baybars) and 93-97 (five coins or al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad). In addition, the poor quality of my copy renders the plates unusable for identification purposes.

[18] BALOG 1964.

[19] AL-MAHĀMĪD 2003.

Table I – Sultans and Coins in the Dhiban Hoard

Sultan	Number of Coins in the Hoard
Al-Manṣūr ʿAlī b. Aybak	1
Al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz	1
Al-Ẓāhir Baybars	39
Al-Saʿīd Baraka Qān	4
Al-ʿĀdil Salāmish	2
Al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn	33
Al-Ashraf Khalīl	4
Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad	105
Al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā	1
Al-Manṣūr Lājīn	1
Al-Nāṣir Aḥmad	2
Al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl	7
Al-Kāmil Shaʿbān	22
Al-Muẓaffar Ḥājjī	25
Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan	96
Al-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ	6

The El-Lejjun Hoard

The third and final hoard discussed is one of 68 Mamluk silver coins found in 1987 in the ruins of the fortress at el-Lejjun.[20] In the words of John Betylon, who studied these coins for the excavation report:

> The latest coins from the hoard date to 1481-83. All the coins, however, show wear from circulation. Some of them are worn completely smooth from years of handling. This suggests that the hoard was deposited at el-Lejjūn no earlier than the last years of the fifteenth century, and perhaps as late as the early sixteenth century.[21]

[20] BETYLON 2006: pp. 438-44.

[21] BETYLON 2006: p. 441

This is the only one of the five hoards which dates from the late Mamluk period. Nine of these dirhams date from the reign of al-Ashraf Aynāl (857-65/1453-61), 56 from that of al-Ashraf Qāyitbāy (872-901/1468-96), and three are from the late ninth/fifteenth century—as is clear from their described fabric and size—but are too worn to attribute to a specific sultan. With the exception of the three worn coins, all the coins are linked to the mints of Cairo (36), Damascus (five), and Aleppo (24). The later date of these coins is noteworthy since, as mentioned above, ninth/fifteenth century Mamluk dirhams look very different from the earlier dirhams found in the hoards of Kerak and Dhiban. These later dirhams are smaller, thinner, lighter, and feature recognizably different arrangements of the legends they bear. They also have a higher percentage of silver in their alloy. More on this below.

CONCLUSION

Thus far I have only summarized what can be found in the respective resources available for these three hoards. In this last section, I take steps toward meshing this information in what is currently known about Mamluk monetary history and thus contribute to the wider history of Transjordan in the Middle Islamic period.

An important component of the monetary history of any region at any time is the metrology of the coinage in use. Metrology has to do with both the mass of individual coins and the quality of their alloy. In terms of fineness of alloy, in general, Mamluk dirhams were around two-thirds silver and one-third copper from the beginning of the sultanate until the early ninth/fifteenth century. Those minted from that point onwards were in the 90% silver range or higher, although exceptions exist in both time periods.[22] Thus it makes sense to consider the the two earlier hoards separate from the later hoard of el-Lejjun. The 1452 coins of the Kerak hoard were found to have an alloy between 65 and 75 per cent silver, regardless of their individual weight or their mint of origin.[23] Al-Misri's stated that the majority of the coins analysed from the Dhiban hoard fell into the 75 to 85 percent purity range, slightly higher than what has been found in other studies.[24] Without access to the actual coins, it is difficult to explain this divergence.

When it comes to the weights of these earlier dirhams, for the Kerak hoard, Sari utilized histograms in which he plotted the weights of these coins on a verticle axis of quantity and a horizontal axis of 0.05 gram intervals. On the basis of this evidence, he concluded that Mamluk silver was found in three denominations: The full dirham

[22] BACHARACH 1968: pp. 310-17. C.f. BALOG 1961: pp. 139-42.

[23] EHRENKREUTZ 1988: p. 303.

[24] Al-MISRI 1991: pp. *mim* and 132-42.

weighed 2.89 grams; the half-dirham at 1.3 grams; and the quarter-dirham at 0.8.[25] These figures are problematic. Not only do they not fit the mathematical schema of full, half and quarter (one-half of 2.89 is 1.445, not 1.3, and one-half of 1.3 is 0.65 not 0.8), but when Sari's histograms are examined—he plots the dirhams by sultanic reign—they reveal a range from 0.50 grams up to 3.75 grams, with specimens falling into every 0.05 interval on the horizontal axis of weight.

Al-Misri's analysis of the weights of the Dhiban hoard are in the same vein. He stated that the Mamluk dirham weighed 2.985 grams, and described these 449 coins as consisting of 348 full dirhams, 47 half-dirhams, 7 quarter dirhams, and 47 smaller "pieces."[26] The weight range in which these coins fell is from 0.40 to 5.15 grams. He summarized this data in a table, which I reproduce below as Table II. Given this wide range of dates, al-Misri also concluded that Mamluk dirhams passed by weight and not by count.

This was also my conclusion reached in a study published more than a decade after al-Misri's thesis.[27] That study was based upon the weights of approximately five hundred dirhams from a number of public and private collections. I argued that the best explanation that accounted for this metrological evidence was that each Mamluk dirham was in effect a mini-ingot of silver, whose value was based coins on its weight when compared to an accounting value. This accounting value was based on an ideal dirham coin-weight of one dirham weight-unit of the silver alloy in use.[28] In other words, what mattered in any transaction involving these dirhams was not the number of coins which changed hands, but the total weight of the coins changing hands. In addition, it makes little sense to refer to lighter weight silver coins as half or quarter dirhams, since when these dirhams are charted on a weight axis, there is no clear break around whatever values those weight amounts are thought to have been. In this environment lighter weight coins are better descibed as fractional dirhams rather than halves and quarters. Stripped of these labels, the weights of the coins from these two hoards bolsters this interpretation.

The coins of the el-Lejjun hoard provide a small supplement to the available data on the weights of dirhams from the reigns of sultans al-Ashraf Aynāl and al-Ashraf Qāyitbāy. There is no information provided in the published description about the purity of alloy of these 68 coins, but it is probable that they were of the higher purity found in other studies of this period. When it comes to the weights of these coins, however, while Betylon's presentation of the data is problematic. Any study of coin

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[25] SARI 1986 (A): pp. 435-44.

[26] Al-MISRI 1991: pp. *kāf* and *nūn*, and 143-53.

[27] SCHULTZ 2003 (A).

[28] SCHULTZ 2003 (B): where I argued, based upon material culture evidence, that the mass of the Mamluk-era dirham weight unit was around 3.0 grams.

Table II, Metrology of the Dhiban Hoard

Sultan	Dirham	Half	Quarter	Piece	Total
Al-Manṣūr ʿAlī	1				1
Al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz	1				1
Al-Ẓāhir Baybars	31	7	1		39
Al-Saʿīd Baraka Qān	4				4
Al-ʿĀdil Salāmish	2				2
Al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn	26	5		2	33
Al-Ashraf Khalīl	4				4
Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad	92	8	3	2	105
Al-ʿĀdil Kitbughā	1				1
Al-Manṣūr Lājīn	1				1
Al-Nāṣir Aḥmad	2				2
Al-Ṣāliḥ Ismāʿīl	75	11	2	19	107
Al-Kāmil Shaʿbān	20	2			22
Al-Muẓaffar Ḥājjī	17	7		1	25
Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan	67	6	1	22	96
Al-Ṣāliḥ Ṣāliḥ	4	1		1	6
Total	348	47	7	47	449
Source: Al-MISRI 1991: p. 21.					

weights desires the gathering of as many weights of individual coins as is possible. Except for the few cases where only one coin of any specific type was found in the hoard, Betylon grouped together all coins of the same type and provided only a weight range for the group, not the weights of each specimen in it.[29] Thus anyone interested in this metrological data would need to access the unpublished field

[29] BETYLON 2006: see coins 624-27 (range 1.19-1.48); 632-35 (range 1.45-1.55); 642-52 (range 1.36-1.55); 653-62 (range 1.42-1.52); 663-74 (range 1.42-1.53); 676-78 (range 1.42-1.46); and 679-85 (range 1.45-1.52). While these weight ranges may seem small, given that these later coins were apparently minted with greater attention paid to weight, the missing data would be useful to have.

notes (on the chance that weights were recorded there), or initiate a request to the Jordanian Department of antiquities to examine the coins themselves, recourses that would not be necessary if each coin's weight had been provided.

There are three additional monetary observations to make. The first is that the three hoards all contained coins from both Egyptian and Syrian mints. This argues against an assumption that these two major regions of the sultanate were in some part separate monetary zones. Secondly, all three hoards were found on sites known to have been on major travel routes, linked either to trade, the Ḥājj, or both.[30] In the case of Dhiban and Kerak, both were regional administrative centers in the Mamluk governmental network.

Thirdly, all three hoards also contained a number of coins which could not be attributed to a specific sultan or mint due to wear. In the case of the Kerak hoard, out of a total of 2244 coins only 1452 were attributable. Subtracting the 121 coins distributed to other museums, that leaves 671 coins (approximately 30 per cent of the hoard) about which we know nothing other than that they were found in the hoard. For the Dhiban hoard, only 449 out of 1124 were described. In this case, however, we do not know to what extent the remaining 675 coins not analyzed by al-Misri were illegible Mamluk dirhams or were perhaps the Crusader coins mentioned in the first published description of the hoard. The el-Lejjun hoard also contained three illegible coins. And yet the observation that these undiscussed coins were found in these hoards should remind us that, legible or not, these dirhams had value. Ignoring these worn and unidentifiable coins has another detriment. Without this information, we cannot know the total weight of the hoard. At the very least this means that we are unable to speculate about what the total value of these treasures was at their point of deposit.

The deposit dates of these three hoards, at least as based upon the latest dated coins found in each of them, leads to speculation about the possible reasons they were abandoned in the first place. In the case of the Kerak hoard, the late seventh/thirteenth century teminal date raises the intriguing possibility that its owner(s) may have died as a result of repercussions related to the Mamluk-Mongol battles and campaigns of 699/1299, 700/1300, and 704/1303. In the case of Dhiban, the mid-eighth/fourteenth century terminal date suggests not a military reason but a possible socio-economic one, perhaps related to the mid-century outbreaks of the Black Death and the subsequent Mamluk disinvestment in the region. The fact that both of these large hoards were found in ceramic containers also suggests that they were savings

[30] WALMSLEY 2008: p. 521, where he noted that the conflict between the Crusaders and Muslims of Syria and Egypt brought to prominance the fortress towns of Jordan, especially Kerak, and that the caravan routes ran Damascus to Busra and then probably through Lejjun ("where water was plentiful") and Kerak and beyond.

hoards, representing an accumulation of wealth gathered over time and stored in a safe location. Ceramic jars are obviously breakable, and their presence suggests that these hoards were not moved frequently, and thus would not have been in daily use. As for the el-Lejjun hoard, given its small size and location, it is tempting to suggest that it represented the portable wealth of its owner (no container of any material was noted in the published report), and was perhaps deposited as a result of predation on a trade or pilgrimage caravan.

In conclusion, the combined data provided by these hoards are a valuable resource for those interested in the history of this region in the Mamluk era. In the case of the Kerak and Dhiban hoards mentioned in this paper, years and in two cases decades passed between the discovery and subsequent analysisof these coins. The passage of this time not only increases the challenge of incorporating this information into later studies, but also necesitates that synthetic studies periodically review of material in light of subsequent developments in the field. If we are lucky enough to find additional Mamluk hoards in our lifetimes, let us hope they are described as thoroughly and as quickly as is possible, keeping in mind that when it comes to hoard analysis, every coin matters, even the illegible.

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IL MANCUSO NELLE FONTI MEDIEVALI: METAMORFOSI DI UN MITO

Abstract

The question of the term mancus *present in the documentary sources of the 8th and 9th centuries is addressed, a question that in the last twenty years has seen the rekindling of the contrast between the two historical hypotheses, an Islamic dinar or a Byzantine light weight* solidus*, a contrast that seemed to have been overcome by unanimous acceptance of the 'Arabic' hypothesis. Starting from a totally different point of view, the author believes instead that both are not correct, but that the* mancus *represents only a device used by the Carolingians to count in their monometallic system based on* libra *(pound)* – solidus *(shilling)* – silver denarius *(penny) the gold currencies present in the accounting documentation of Central-northern Italy at the time of the conquest of the Lombard Kingdom (774). In practice it would have indicated a fixed value in* denarii *(certainly 30 from the reform of 793/794), payable both in silver* denarii *and probably also in gold coins valued by weight. Therefore, it could indicate both the Arab* dinars *and the Byzantine* solidi*, and probably also the Roman* aurei*, which were certainly found relatively numerous during the spoiling of the ancient monuments. In fact, the Carolingians, throughout their history, have always tried to build money systems that incorporate within them, as simple units of account, the coins previously in use: so it happened with the* libra *and the Merovingian* solidus*, transformed into the* libra *and the* solidus *of 240 and 12* denarii *respectively, with the Lombard* solidus *of 3* tremisses*, tied to the Frankish* solidus *of 12* denarii*, and so it happens with the* mancus *of 30* denarii*. Proof of this is the fact that almost all the amounts expressed in* mancus*, if multiplied by 30, are then always divisible by 12 (the* solidus*) and also give almost whole values dividing them into 240 (the* libra*): whole* librae*, half* librae *and quarters of* librae*.*

Keywords

Mancus, money of account, Early Middle Age, coinage, Carolingian

Il significato di numeri come 1,95583, 6,55957, 1936,27 e di molti altri simili oggi di normale uso sarà ancora compreso fra un migliaio di anni? Dalle persone normali sicuramente no, ma dagli storici dell'economia probabilmente sì, e dobbiamo augurarcelo, perché vorrà dire che la imponente documentazione archivistica dei nostri giorni sarà ancora consultabile, cosa che in piena rivoluzione digitale non è al momento del tutto garantita. Quindi tali storici non avranno problemi a riconoscere l'importanza di quei numeretti, che hanno rappresentato la base di una delle più grandi innovazioni monetarie nella storia dell'Occidente, l'adozione dell'euro nel 1999 (e la sua introduzione nel 2002). Proprio grazie a loro, infatti, gran parte dei cittadini europei sono stati in grado di utilizzare una valuta totalmente nuova e creata a tavolino senza tornare, per disperazione, al baratto, il che non è poco. Come si è certo capito, infatti, si tratta di alcuni dei tassi di cambio fra l'euro e le valute nazionali precedenti[1], fissati al momento dell'adozione e considerati inalterabili, quelli che hanno consentito a tutti di comprendere come gli importi nella nuova moneta si inserissero nel loro personale data base mentale di prezzi, ovviamente completamente basato sulle monete precedenti.

Mettiamo però che i prossimi mille anni non siano diversi da quelli che ci hanno preceduto (lo diciamo per assurdo, non sono necessari riti scaramantici), e che la documentazione come in passato venga in gran parte distrutta da guerre, incendi, alluvioni e forse, novità assoluta, tempeste magnetiche e blackout di lunga durata. Cosa penseranno gli storici di questi strani numeri documentati saltuariamente ma per periodi molto lunghi, con la caratteristica di raggrupparsi per aree nazionali? Molto probabilmente la ricerca storica ed economica sarà così avanzata da consentire loro una piena comprensione del fenomeno, ma anche se così non fosse, avranno comunque a loro disposizione alcuni elementi in grado di rendere evidente la funzione di tali cifre: innanzitutto ciascuna di queste risulterà essere presente prevalentemente nella documentazione di una sola della nazioni interessate dal fenomeno generale, salvo eccezioni in alcuni siti evidentemente con un ruolo particolare come Bruxelles, Francoforte e Strasburgo, quindi ne concluderanno che dovevano avere una valenza locale; d'altro canto i rinvenimenti archeologici testimonieranno invece che in tutti i paesi interessati correvano le stessa monete 'concrete', quindi quei numeri non potevano riferirsi a valute locali ancora in produzione; poi essi rappresentavano valori tutt'altro che tondi, caratterizzati da molti numeri decimali e perciò impossibili da inserire in un qualsiasi sistema pratico di conteggio: questo suggerirà che in origine doveva trattarsi di rapporti di cambio varabili che si creavano nel mercato fra monete in concorrenza fra loro (altrimenti non sarebbero stati così complicati); infine, cosa forse più importante di tutte, l'immutabilità di tali rapporti per tutto il periodo in cui

[1] Rappresentati qui per motivi di spazio solo da quelli relativi al cambio in Germania (con il marco), in Francia (con il franco) ed Italia (con la lira).

tali numeri sono documentati porterà alla indubitabile conclusione che questi si erano ormai fossilizzati e quindi che una delle due monete non era più in circolazione, altrimenti avrebbe necessariamente avuto un rapporto variabile con l'altra, se non altro per la semplice legge della domanda e dell'offerta. In seguito sarà facile appurare come nella documentazione questi numeri compaiano solo dopo il 1999 e come proprio in corrispondenza di quella data, più o meno, i rinvenimenti monetali testimonino un repentino cambiamento: le monete databili a prima del 1999 esprimono il valore in termini di *Lire*, *Francs*, *Mark* etc., cioè nelle storiche monete nazionali dei vai paesi europei, quelle successive[2] solo in una moneta comune chiamata Euro. A quel punto non sarà difficile per gli esperti di storia della moneta del futuro arrivare alla corretta spiegazione dei nostri famosi numeretti: non sarebbero altro che i tassi di cambio fra le vecchie valute nazionali e la nuova moneta comune, rimasti in uso molto a lungo per consentire il rispetto dei debiti e dei crediti. Sarebbero in pratica delle pure 'unità di conto', come quelle oggi ben conosciute soprattutto per quanto riguarda l'Italia medievale e moderna.

Ci scusiamo di questa premessa 'futuribile' e decisamente poco scientifica, ma ci è sembrato che immaginare quali tracce potrebbe lasciare la ben conosciuta (da noi) riforma dell'Euro in un lontano futuro, sulla base di una documentazione archivistica ed archeologica ipotizzata incompleta come quella su cui possiamo contare noi per l'epoca antica e medievale, possa essere un esercizio di una certa utilità: potrebbe infatti facilitare la comprensione delle cosiddette 'monete di conto' del Medioevo, fenomeno sicuramente studiato ma non da tutti compreso nella sua effettiva portata. E senza prendere in considerazione anche tale fenomeno, a nostro avviso, difficilmente la questione del mancuso potrà trovare una soluzione convincente, come vedremo.

Su tali unità di conto 'storiche', la bibliografia è piuttosto vasta, e comprende interventi di storici della moneta e numismatici di vaglia, quali Evans[3], Einaudi[4], Cipolla[5], Lane-Mueller[6], Grierson[7], John Day[8] e molti altri. Questi offrono un quadro piuttosto esaustivo e chiaro di questi particolari strumenti monetali, ma ovviamente illustrano compiutamente soltanto gli esempi meglio documentati, relativi soprattutto ai multipli di conto del denario (come il soldo e la lira) o alle cosiddette mo-

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[2] Occorre ricordare che alcune nazioni (in genere di ordinamento monarchico) hanno iniziato a coniare euro dall'anno 1999, mentre altre (in genere repubbliche) hanno iniziato con l'anno 2002.

[3] Evans 1930-1031.

[4] Einaudi 1936.

[5] Cipolla 1957, pp. 51-65.

[6] Lane, Mueller 1985, pp, 3-15.

[7] Grierson 1993.

[8] Day 1998.

nete 'fantasma' o 'immaginarie' dei centri mercantili più importanti, come Milano, Venezia, Genova e Firenze, ben note a partire dal XII-XIV secolo. In realtà le monete di conto, come si evince da molti degli stessi contributi indicati sopra, sono qualcosa di più vasto e ubiquitario, e possono riguardare tutti quei nomi di monete registrati nella documentazione archivistica che non si riferiscano ad una specifica e ben individuabile serie monetale, non solo quelli che rappresentino un valore proprio indipendente da qualunque moneta effettiva. Un tempo, è vero, era prassi consolidata quella di cercare un rapporto esclusivo tra ogni nome di moneta registrato dei documenti ed una moneta effettiva. Tuttavia col proseguire delle ricerche, in particolare quelle dedicate alla numismatica post-classica, assai meglio documentata sotto il profilo archivistico, ci si è resi conto[9] che tale rapporto esclusivo ed univoco appare tutt'altro che scontato. Infatti la natura duplice della moneta metallica, pura "merce" per quanto riguardo il suo contenuto intrinseco, pura "unità di conto" per quanto riguarda il suo valore nominale[10], fa sì che essa lasci tracce assai diverse nei diversi tipi di fonti. Se le monete stesse, ad esempio, nella loro realtà fisica ci daranno la rappresentazione della moneta come merce, i nomi utilizzati per indicarle nelle fonti scritte ci daranno invece una rappresentazione della moneta come "segno di valore", essendo tali fonti interessate unicamente al potere d'acquisto di una moneta e non al suo aspetto ed alla sua origine, salvo casi sporadici e ben individuabili[11]. Il fatto è che tali segni di valore od unità di conto possono non corrispondere affatto ad una moneta effettiva, come è avvenuto ad esempio con quella indicata come *denarius* nella Roma tardo-imperiale[12] e quella diffusissima denominata *libra denariorum parvorum* per quasi tutta l'età moderna[13]: entrambe valute "immaginarie" che non erano rappresentate da alcuna moneta concreta, ma avevano un rapporto di cambio variabile con gli esemplari effettivi in circolazione. Inoltre, ed è il caso più frequente, anche quando tali nomi all'inizio sono stati adottati per indicare una specifica moneta effettiva, illustrandone magari una caratteristica peculiare (ad esempio il "fiorino", con riferimento al giglio rappresentato al dritto delle monete fiorentine), dopo breve tempo hanno immancabilmente finito col riferirsi a tutte le emissioni che avevano adottato lo stesso valore nominale e, più o meno, intrinseco, indipendente-

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[9] O meglio, molti studiosi si sono resi conto.

[10] Cioè il valore ufficiale con cui lo stato stabilisce che essa debba circolare, in rapporto ad un partiı colare sistema di conto o di misurazione dei prezzi; si v. ad esempio, North 1995, s.v. *Rechengeldsystem*, soprattutto a p. 330.

[11] Ci riferiamo ad esempio ai contratti di appalto di una zecca, nei quali era ovviamente necessario indicare le caratteristiche fisiche della moneta da realizzare; oppure agli atti dei processi per furto, che tendevano a registrare, se non altro a fini di prova, anche le monete effettive che erano state sottratte, non solo il loro valore di conto; in proposito v. Mueller 1996, pp. 158-161.

[12] Cfr. Harl 1996, pp. 125-157.

[13] La cui più acuta analisi va sicuramente attribuita a Luigi Einaudi; cfr. sopra, nota 4.

mente dalla loro origine e dal loro aspetto[14]. Tali valute non erano perciò meno unità di conto di quanto lo fossero le monete immaginarie prive di un rapporto fisso con qualunque moneta concreta. Indicando monete di diverse "nazioni" finivano infatti col rappresentare una sorta di 'paniere', il cui corso teneva conto del diverso contenuto intrinseco di ciascuna di esse, oppure passava dall' una all'altra, inseguendo quella più svalutate, secondo la legge di Gresham.

Questa diffusione sicuramente capillare delle monete di conto in Italia (e non solo), di fatto suggerita, almeno in termini teorici, dalle considerazioni offerte dalla bibliografia citata sopra, non ha però spinto molti studiosi a prenderle in considerazione, magari anche per negarle, ogni volta che qualche questione di natura monetaria non sembrava trovare facile soluzione. Cosi avviene che, mentre nelle manualistica di carattere generale le monete di conto sono citate e illustrate in genere correttamente e con ricchezza di esempi[15], nelle specifiche ricerche dedicate ad una zecca oppure ad un territorio, soprattutto se periferico, non vengono normalmente prese in considerazione[16]. Non parliamo poi di periodi dove le fonti scarseggiano, come l'Alto Medioevo[17]. A noi questo sembra una lacuna piuttosto grave, negli studi di storia della moneta, perché indagini statistiche sulle presenze di valute nei do-

[14] Così ad esempio, proprio la parola *florenus*, e più tardi quella di *ducatus*, sono state utilizzate per registrare tutte le monete auree dello stesso peso del fiorino fiorentino e del ducato veneziano; cfr. Travaini 2003, p. 100; il termine *veronensis* (*Berner* in tedesco) nel Triveneto e nelle aree germaniche meridionali indicava non solo il denario di Verona, ma anche tutti i denari emessi con lo stesso piede da alcune zecche concorrenti (ad esempio Aquileia, Trento, Merano, Venezia etc.); in Lombardia e nelle regioni limitrofe il termine *mezanus*, *mediatinus*, indicava tutte le emissioni del valore di mezzo denario imperiale di Milano, in qualunque zecca venissero prodotte; a Mantova nella seconda metà del XII secolo il *denarius mediolanensis* indicava anche un nuovo *denario* mantovano di piede milanese; per questi ed altri esempi del significato allargato di alcuni nomi di monete nella documentazione v. Saccocci 1999, pp. 45-48.

[15] Si, v. ad esempio Travaini 2007, *passim*.

[16] Ancora recentemente sono stati pubblicati interventi che sembrano escludere a priori la possibile esistenza di monete di conto, anche delle più diffuse e riconosciute come i denari delle varie *librae* o *librae parvorum*; così ad esempio Pigozzo 2006; cfr. anche Olivieri 2011 (che però poco dopo ha riconosciuto almeno la loro esistenza, in Olivieri 2012, pp. 628-629).

[17] Epoca riguardo alla quale alcuni autori tendono a non considerare la possibile interferenza di unità di conto, in realtà molto più probabili in un periodo di scarsa e lenta circolazione monetaria che non in periodi commercialmente più sviluppati, affermando che le fonti appaiono testimoniare la perfetta corrispondenza tra citazioni archivistiche e monete in circolazione, mentre la situazione sembra diversa in epoca successiva (e qui talvolta citano un nostro contributo; cfr. ad esempio Rovelli 2005, p. 126; Cosentino 2012, p. 438). Siamo contenti della considerazione, però rimaniamo convinti che se i valori di conto erano preminenti rispetto agli strumenti di scambio nel XIII-XIV secolo, lo erano certamente di più in un'epoca in cui probabilmente molte persone di ceto basso potevano trascorrere la loro intera vita senza mai vedere un esemplare 'coniato', anche se magari i prodotti del loro lavoro erano conteggiati dettagliatamente in moneta. Se invece non era così, sarebbe più coerente dichiarare che non lo erano neppure in epoca più tarda, e noi ci sbagliamo. Per quanto ci riguarda, non abbiamo mai avuto problemi a cambiare idea.

cumenti, di per sé o attraverso il confronto con i materiali numismatici da scavo, possano spesso individuare valori 'di conto' in grado di spiegare molte registrazioni contabili altrimenti incomprensibili[18]. Un numero elevatissimo di contratti medievali proprio nella registrazione degli importi in moneta, infatti, presenta tratti di ambiguità e di imprecisione, quando non di vera e propria sciatteria, decisamente improbabili in documenti contabili. Proprio questo in effetti ci ha spinto a prendere in considerazione sistematicamente anche la possibile presenza di alcune unità di conto, nelle nostre analisi sulla circolazione monetaria[19], anche perché, dobbiamo confessarlo, siamo rimasti molto colpiti dalla lettura, all'inizio del nostro percorso di studio dedicato alla numismatica medievale, dei contributi storici a nostro giudizio più esaustivi, dettagliati e convincenti sull'argomento, quelli di Lane[20] e Lane, Mueller[21]. Non sempre questi "astrazioni contabili" sono distinguibili con chiarezza, sia detto con sincerità, però sarebbe erroneo ritenere che non possano essere indivi-

[18] Possiamo citare un paio di significativi esempi, fra le formule problematiche che abbiamo ritenuto di poter spiegare come unità di conto: il primo riguarda l'apparentemente assurdo cambio di una lira per 8 denari testimoniato in Friuli a partire dal XII secolo ed attestato fino al XVII secolo. In realtà, a nostro avviso, si trattava soltanto del cambio fra la lira veneziana (documentata in Friuli già dal IX secolo) e la ben più preziosa marca di Friesach da 160 denari, alla quale erano state uniformate le prime emissioni aquileiesi attorno al 1150 c. Questo cambio era stato utilizzato nelle prime rendicontazioni delle rendite patriarcali documentate, nella seconda metà del XII secolo, e poi si era fossilizzato in una formula di conto costituita da 1 marca da 20 lire, ciascuna delle quali, appunto, del valore di 8 denari, definita *marcha ad usum curiae*; v. Saccocci 1996, pp. 303-304; cfr. *MEC* 12, pp. 566-567; il secondo riguarda una fantomatica moneta lucchese della fine del '300, citata dalle fonti come "popolino" ma mai individuata correttamente in passato. Lo studio dei materiali numismatici venuti alla luce di un castello in Garfagnana e pertinenti alle fasi di costruzione dello stesso, grazie alla fortunatissima coincidenza che di quella costruzione è sopravvissuto anche il documento contabile contenente il preventivo dei costi, ha consentito di stabilire come il "popolino" fosse una pura moneta di conto, che registrava il nuovo valore in denari di un grosso d'argento appena uscito di produzione (in precedenza definito nelle fonti con il suo valore, cioè "grosso da tre soldi"), dopo che una riforma monetaria ne aveva interrotto la fabbricazione e ne aveva abbassato il valore di conto da tre soldi (= 36 denari) a 2 soldi e 2/3 (= 32 denari). Non potendo più essere chiamato con il suo vecchio nome, che indicava un importo ormai obsoleto, venne registrato nei documenti come "popolino", probabilmente dal soprannome popolare che aveva la moneta. Quindi "popolino" indicava il valore di una vecchia moneta, né più né meno di ciò che la formula "1936,27 lire" indica a noi, molto più complessa perché oggi ognuno di noi ha possibilità personali di calcolo assolutamente sconosciute ai muratori del XIV secolo; v. Saccocci 2018.

[19] La nostra fiducia nell'accuratezza dei documenti contabili del Medioevo e quindi il conseguente intento di analizzarli più a fondo, prima di scartarli come inaffidabili (con spiegazioni spesso plausibili, del tipo "è una copia tarda" o "è sottinteso un cambio", ma talvolta piuttosto improbabili, come "il notaio si è confuso" – nello scrivere il valore?), ci è valsa l'accusa di limitare drasticamente il valore delle testimonianze scritte; tale opinione, sottintesa o al massimo espressa a voce bassa in qualche congresso, ha trovato tuttavia anche dignità di stampa, cfr. Olivieri 2011, p. 60-61, nota 21. Dobbiamo confessare che la cosa un po' ci ha irritato.

[20] Lane 1958-1959.

[21] V. sopra, nota 7.

duate senza una fonte che esplicitamente ne dichiari l'esistenza. In questo senso non condividiamo il pessimismo manifestato da Philip Grierson nel suo splendido saggio sulle monete di conto apparso sulla Rivista Italiana di Numismatica nel 1993, nel quale ritiene che l'assenza di documentazione relativa alle monete di conto, propria di molte serie monetali dall'antichità all'Alto Medioevo, abbia pregiudicato fortemente le nostre conoscenze di storia della moneta[22]. Al contrario la nostra esperienza ci dice che anche pochissimi elementi documentari, talvolta anche una sola fonte con un cambio 'impossibile', potrebbero sottintendere l'esistenza di un fenomeno del genere, fenomeno che poi naturalmente necessiterà di essere confermato da elementi più concreti e meglio documentati, come i rinvenimenti e la metrologia. Una decina di anni fa ci fu richiesto di discutere la presenza di monete di conto proprio nel periodo forse più carente di documentazione archivistica di epoca post-classica, l'Alto Medioevo, e dobbiamo dire che la ricerca si rivelò meno difficile di quanto avevamo supposto. Infatti abbiamo potuto elencare almeno sei possibili valute non corrispondenti stabilmente ad una moneta effettiva, di cui 5 piuttosto sicure, ed una appena un po' più incerta[23]. Quella che a nostro avviso non poteva esser altro che una moneta di conto, per una serie di aspetti che non lasciavano dubbi in proposito, era proprio il "mancuso" delle fonti[24], attestato soprattutto in Italia centro-settentrionale dalla fine dell'VIII secolo alla metà del X e poi rimasto in uso solo sporadicamente, ma con una diffusione in tutta l'Europa Occidentale, fino al XIV secolo. Evidentemente allora non ci siamo espressi in modo molto chiaro, visto lo scarso riscontro che le nostre parole hanno avuto nella bibliografia successiva, come vedremo, ma rimaniamo convinti della bontà delle nostre argomentazioni.

Prima di affrontare la questione, però, appare opportuno spendere qualche parola sulla 'fortuna' di questo nome, che a partire dal XVIII secolo ha alimentato una discussione che a tutt'oggi appare vivace, come dimostra anche questo nostro intervento. Il primo a prendere in considerazione il significato di mancuso è stato in

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[22] Grierson 1993; saggio splendido soprattutto per la sincerità che manifesta il grande studioso: alla fine della carriera non ha avuto tema di sminuire esplicitamente l'apporto complessivo di molte delle sue innumerevoli e pregevolissime ricerche, per il fatto di non aver potuto contare, per mancanza di documentazione, sullo studio delle unità di conto, la cui fondamentale importanza è stata invece messa ben in luce dagli studi sulla moneta tardo-medievale, soprattutto italiana (Ivi, pp. 613-614). In realtà ovviamente non è così, e senza le sue ricerche e quelle di altri studiosi più giovani, che nella seconda metà del '900 hanno portato le conoscenze sulla monetazione altomedioevale e bizantina ad uno standard elevatissimo, non troppo diverso da quello di altre fasi molto meglio documentate della storia monetaria antica e medievale, non sapremmo neppure dove inserire le possibili unità di conto che dovessero risultare da una rilettura delle poche fonti disponibili.

[23] Saccocci 2008.

[24] Ivi, pp. 67-72; da questo quadro avevamo escluso i mancusi catalani, imitazioni di dinar arabi (quindi sicuramente monete effettive), attestati però solo a partire dal X secolo; v. Vegué 1979, Quinsat 1997, pp. 292-296.

Italia il Muratori[25], che però non ha proposto una sua interpretazione, salvo affermare che non gli sembrava possibile che le citazioni italiane potessero riferirsi a 'monete di conto', come invece avveniva in Inghilterra[26]. Seguono poi validi autori quali Zanetti (Girolamo)[27], Carli Rubbi[28], Zagata[29] e soprattutto Zanetti (Guido Antonio)[30], ma nessuno di questi ha proposto una interpretazione che poi potesse reggere ad una seria analisi della documentazione, ad eccezione forse di Girolamo Zanetti[31]. La spiegazione più condivisa, comunque, fu quella di G.A. Zanetti, sicuramente per il grande credito di cui tale autore godeva, credito in genere meritatissimo (con l'eccezione proprio dell'ipotesi che segue, temiamo): si sarebbe trattato di solidi bizantini *manu cusi*, cioè battuti a mano, per distinguerli dai solidi di epoca romana[32]. Passa oltre un secolo, perché la questione venga ripresa, ma quando ciò avviene, indubbiamente la discussione raggiunge un livello molto elevato. Il merito e del Monneret de Villard, che propone sull'argomento un intervento straordinariamente ricco di dati, sia di natura documentaria che numismatica, riferibili a tutte le aree caratterizzate dall'uso del mancuso, non solo ad una di esse (cioè Inghilterra, Catalogna, Italia Settentrionale e Germania)[33]. Accompagnando quindi l'analisi con considerazioni in genere assai plausibili, anche se talvolta un po' caotiche, l'autore propone quella che sarà l'interpretazione ancora oggi più diffusa: il mancuso avrebbe indicato i dinar d'oro arabi, la cui presenza in Europa era ben testimoniata dai ritrovamenti e dalle imitazioni di queste monete in Inghilterra e Germania. Il suo nome, inoltre, deriverebbe dalla parola araba *manqūsh (*منقوش), attestata in alcune fonti arabe in associazione a dinar con il significato di "inciso", "coniato". Proprio da questo intervento, e dal riscontro che esso ebbe in ambito storico[34], che si è sviluppato ciò che è stato defi-

[25] Muratori 1775, coll. 69-70.

[26] Il Muratori si riferisce alla spiegazione fornita dalla *Cyclopaedia* del Chambers; Chambers 1728, s.*v. Money*, p. 568. Tra l'altro appare molto interessante il passo sulle monete di conto presente nella stessa voce, la cui lettura potrebbe essere ancora utile oggi.

[27] Zanetti 1764, pp. 431, 498.

[28] Carli Rubbi 1754, p. 109

[29] Zagata 1745, p. 124.

[30] Zanetti 1779, pp. 371-378.

[31] V. sopra, nota 27; a questo autore va il merito di aver notato la connessione della parola mancuso con i Franchi e soprattutto di aver rilevato come anche in Italia alcune menzioni non possano che riferirsi, come in Inghilterra, a monete 'immaginarie' (oggi diremo di conto) o a peso in metallo (che è poi è la moneta di conto dell'oro, visto l'altissimo valore di quel metallo). Entrambe queste valide considerazioni però hanno avuto pochissimo riscontro, nella bibliografia successiva.

[32] Zanetti 1779, pp. 375-378.

[33] Monneret de Villard 1919.

[34] Tra gli importanti storici che si sono appoggiati alla ricostruzione del Monneret de Villard, per le loro indagini sulla moneta altomedioevale, possiamo ricordare ad esempio March Bloch e Maurice

nito più tardi da Philip Grierson *the myth of the mancus*. Trentacinque anni più tardi, infatti, quest'ultimo autore contesta in toto la ricostruzione de Monneret de Villard, proponendone una propria, in un intervento che possiamo dire è alla base dell'attuale dibattito, anche se, come vedremo, in forme piuttosto contradditorie[35]: la parola mancuso non deriverebbe da *manqūsh*, vista la scarsità della attestazioni di questo lemma nelle fonti arabe relative alla moneta (almeno da quanto suggeritogli da alcuni esperti di monetazione araba), e questo toglierebbe validità all'intera tesi, perché tutti gli altri elementi portati a supporto dell'identificazione con il dinar, ancorché plausibili, non sarebbero affatto risolutivi[36]. Ci sarebbero inoltre due aspetti in aperta contraddizione, la precocità e la concentrazione di attestazioni della parola mancuso nella documentazione dell'Italia centro-settentrionale, una regione sicuramente più connessa al mondo bizantino che non a quello islamico, e l'uso di questo nome anche in riferimento a rendite percepite dai Bizantini in Istria, quando tale regione era ancora soggetta all'Impero d'Oriente. Difficile pensare che tali rendite potessero essere conteggiate in moneta araba, effettivamente. Grierson conclude quindi la sua analisi con una ipotesi del tutto nuova: il termine mancuso troverebbe la sua origine nella parola latina *mancus*, che significa "mancante", "deficitario" (da cui l'italiano monco, ad esempio, cioè mancante di una mano) e si riferirebbe ai solidi di peso leggero coniati dalle zecche bizantine di Roma, Ravenna e soprattutto Siracusa[37]. Tale tesi appare interessante ed anche ben motivata, anche se è già di per sé risultava inficiata dal fatto che in realtà quando la parola mancuso venne in uso tutte le aree in cui era attestata non erano più bizantine, ma o appartenevano formalmente all'impero Carolingio (gli ex territori longobardi), oppure erano rigidamente sotto controllo franco, in particolare per quanto riguarda la monetazione. Ma su questo torneremo in seguito, perché in realtà lo stesso autore ha risolto la questione, abbandonando la sua idea venticinque anni dopo, nel 1979, in occasione della ristampa di alcuni suoi lavori, compreso quello del 1954[38]. Negli *Addenda et corrigenda* del nuovo volume Grierson accetta con grande *fair play* la derivazione di mancuso dall'arabo *manqūsh*[39]

Lombard; Bloch 1933, Lombard 1947.

[35] Grierson 1954.

[36] Se all'inizio del suo lavoro Grierson (p. 1059, nota 2) inserisce in nota un commento piuttosto ruvido sul contributo del Monneret: *Though a work of great learning and extremely useful as a collection of material, is confused in its arrangement, uncritical in its handling of both documentary and the numismatic evidence, and quite incorrect in most of its conclusions*, nel corso della discussione sembra invece riconoscere la coerenza e la plausibilità di molte delle ipotesi proposte, pur non accettandole. Questo in un certo senso rivaluta anche criticamente il saggio del poliedrico ricercatore (docente di ingegneria, storico, storico dell'arte e numismatico).

[37] Ivi, pp. 1068-1074.

[38] Grierson 1979, *Addenda and Corrigenda*, pp. 3-4.

[39] Grazie ad un saggio evidentemente convincente sull'argomento, Linder Velin 1965.

e quindi rigetta in modo molto esplicito l'identificazione fra tale termine e le monete delle zecche bizantine d'Italia. Ribadisce anche che questo non implica che vi sia stata una massiccia diffusione delle coniazioni islamiche nell'Europa Occidentale, perché l'uso della parola mancuso potrebbe aver indicato genericamente una moneta d'oro, senza implicare l'utilizzo effettivo di una moneta islamica. E questa affermazione va sicuramente nella direzione che vogliamo esplorare in questa sede.

Il fatto che uno dei più esperti numismatici medievali d'Europa, dopo aver tentato di sfatare il "mito del mancuso (come moneta islamica)", avesse abbandonato questa sua posizione iniziale ed in seguito avesse accettato l'identificazione con il dinar finì ovviamente con l'alimentare quello stesso mito, e quindi possiamo capire come la bibliografia, nei decenni successivi, abbia massicciamente battuto questa strada[40].

Soltanto negli ultimi anni il dibattito si è di nuovo acceso, in modo a nostro avviso abbastanza sorprendente. L'inizio di quest'ultima fase va però ricercato in un contributo di quasi trent'anni fa, che ha finito con l'avere, forse suo malgrado, un ruolo decisivo nella più recente evoluzione della discussione sul mancuso. Ci riferiamo all'articolo di Alessia Rovelli su circolazione monetaria e formulari notarili nell'Italia altomedioevale, uscito nel 1992[41]. Si tratta di un lavoro molto ampio e ben condotto che dimostra in modo convincente e plausibile come le citazioni monetarie riferite alle clausole di penale non siano affatto convenzionali, come spesso ritenuto in passato, ma diano un'illustrazione puntuale della circolazione monetaria effettiva nei secoli VIII-X.

Su questo si può e si deve concordare, essendo anche grati all'autrice per aver allargato la base documentaria su cui contare nelle ricerche sulla monetazione dell'Alto Medioevo. Tuttavia nel corso degli anni tali conclusioni sono state interpretate in modo piuttosto estremo, immaginiamo al di là della volontà dell'autrice, fino a farle diventare uno strumento di prova del fatto che ogni citazione monetaria presente nella documentazione archivistica 'doveva' necessariamente corrispondere ad una ed una sola moneta effettiva, quasi fosse una fotografia di ciò che era stato utilizzato nella transazione registrata nel contratto.

Una posizione del genere contraddiceva tutta la nostra esperienza di ricerca sulle 'monete di conto', che abbiamo cercato di illustrare sopra[42], e quindi ai primi segni

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[40] Al punto che la parola mancuso è stata utilizzata anche come sinonimo di dinar, cosa non del tutto azzardata, visto che nel Nord della Spagna l'uso era proprio quello; v. Quinsat 1997, Ilish 2004.

[41] Rovelli 1992.

[42] Ad esempio, volendo esemplificare in modo un po' aneddotico, come si può spiegare, rispettando l'equazione 'valuta registrata nei documenti = una ed una sola moneta effettiva', la seguente formula, che rappresenta il modello di decine di citazioni più o meno uguali che stiamo registrando nella documentazione archivistica di varie città venete: "per il prezzo di XXX ducati d'oro di buona lega e di giusto peso in oro (*pro precio XXX ducatorum auri boni et justi ponderis in auro*)? Non si può

del manifestarsi di un simile punto di vista abbiamo cercato sommessamente di far sentire la nostra voce, paventando anche il grave rischio che questa strada potesse allontanare metodologicamente le indagini di storia monetaria sull'Alto Medioevo da quelle sul Basso Medioevo ed anche sul Tardoantico[43]. Anche in quest'ultimo settore, infatti, la cosiddette 'monete virtuali' erano ormai divenute strumento essenziale di interpretazione, grazie allo sviluppo degli studi papirologici[44].

I nostri interventi inerenti il mancuso sono stati due, il primo in un saggio sulla circolazione monetaria nelle Marche medievali[45], l'altro già citato sulle monete di conto nell'Alto Medioevo[46]. In entrambi, presenti in lavori dedicati anche ad altro, non abbiamo approfondito troppo dettagliatamente la questione, perché ci sembrava che il richiamo a concetti generali relativi alla moneta, quali la sua natura giuridica (espressione di sovranità), la sua funzione primaria come strumento di misura del valore, la natura delle formule monetarie nei documenti contabili (indicazione di un 'valore' giuridicamente garantito nel tempo, soprattutto nelle penali[47], e quindi necessariamente riferito a strumenti legali di pagamento, cioè obbligatori per i contraenti[48]) dovessero convincere di un fatto a nostro avviso scontato: in ambito carolingio solo i denari 'franchi' erano di uso legale, e qualunque altra moneta in-

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spiegare, a meno di non ammettere che esistano "ducati d'oro di ottima lega di giusto peso" … che non sono d'oro, e allora cosa sono?

[43] Dando quindi ulteriormente ragione al 'pessimismo' di Philip Grierson; v. sopra, testo corrispondente alla nota 22.

[44] Abbiamo usato volutamente il termine di storia monetaria, anziché quello di numismatica (a malincuore, perché nel nostro 'mondo ideale' le due espressioni dovrebbero coincidere), perché nelle ricerche della cosiddetta "archeologia numismatica", oggi in grande sviluppo, si è invece piuttosto refrattari a considerare il concetto di moneta virtuale (che non può essere scavata), di qualunque periodo ci si stia occupando.

[45] Saccocci 2001, pp. 81-83, nota 14.

[46] Saccocci 2008.

[47] I documenti erano atti giuridici, e come tali dovevano garantire nel tempo il valore dell'importo indicato. E l'unico modo per fornire tale garanzia, trattandosi di monete prodotte da altri paesi non soggetti alla stessa autorità politica, era quello di agganciarli ufficialmente alla valuta ufficiale del posto. Questo è ancor più vero per le penali che, per definizione, implicavano la persistenza di un certo valore per periodi anche molto lunghi. Quindi ancor meno potevano riferirsi ad una valuta straniera. Talvolta non ci si fidava neppure della moneta nazionale, e questo spiega la frequente indicazione di metallo a peso come *marchae* o *librae auri* o *argenti*, cosa che ha fatto pensare, erroneamente, al carattere convenzionale di queste prescrizioni, come abbiamo visto.

[48] L'obbligatorietà dell'uso della moneta nazionale all'interno dei confini di stato è nata probabilmente con la moneta stessa, ma si tende a dimenticarlo. Per fortuna, nell'epoca di cui ci stiamo occupando, ci sono i capitolari carolingi a ricordarcelo; ad esempio: *…nostrum edictum, quod in omni loco, in omni civitate et in omni emporio similiter vadant isti novi denari et accipiantur ad omnibus… si quis contradicit eos… quindecim solidos componat ad opus regis;* Capitolare di Francoforte, 794; *MGH*, *Capit*., IV, n. 28.5.

dicata nei documenti doveva essere rapportata ad essi[49]. Quindi tutte le citazioni di mancusi si riferivano a nostro avviso ad unità di conto da 30 denari, senza alcuna distinzione fra mancusi d'oro e mancusi d'argento citati nelle fonti, come invece era stato suggerito[50], distinzione che poteva al massimo riferirsi, quando non era soltanto espressione del formulario tradizionale adottato da ogni particolare notaio, alla moneta od ai beni con cui doveva essere concretamente saldata l'obbligazione, per reciproco accordo fra i contraenti, non al valore legale della stessa, che rimaneva di 30 denari[51]. Altrimenti dovremo concludere che i notai del periodo erano talmente sciatti da non indicare, nella maggior parte dei casi, il corretto importo della transazione, limitandosi a citare i mancusi senza indicazione del metallo[52]. Nel caso delle monete d'oro, inoltre, l'altissimo valore intrinseco faceva sì che le citazioni che le riguardavano si riferissero al peso legale di una determinata coniazione, non al singolo esemplare. Infatti bastava un po' di usura perché quegli esemplari perdessero una parte importante del loro valore, per cui era necessario pesarli. A questo punto non aveva importanza di che monete si trattasse, bastava conoscerne la lega e pesarle, per calcolarne il valore[53]. Per questo è tipico delle monete d'oro essere registrate nella

[49] Non c'erano solo elementi di natura giuridica ad imporre una scelta del genere, ma anche di convenienza. Quale autorità politica era così ingenua da inserire nel proprio sistema di conto una moneta straniera, rendendone obbligatori la circolazione ed il valore nel tempo, senza avere il controllo delle sue caratteristiche fisiche? La domanda di tali monete straniere creata dai contratti in cui dovessero essere registrate avrebbe probabilmente portato alla penetrazione dall' estero di esemplari volutamente sviliti proprio per essere lì esportati. Non mancano comunque citazioni di monete straniere, nella documentazione medievale, che anzi sono numerosissime, ma queste si spiegano allo stesso modo indicato qui per il mancuso: non registravano tutte le monete che erano penetrate liberamente in una certa piazza, ma solo quelle che erano state vagliate dall'autorità ed erano state ufficialmente accettate ed agganciate alla valuta locale con un certo valore nominale. Le altre monete che entravano in circolazione potevano anche essere utilizzate nella libera contrattazione, ma non entravano a far parte del sistema di conto. Questa spiega le differenze, talvolta enormi, rilevabili nella composizione da un lato delle citazioni monetarie nei documenti, dall'altro dei ritrovamenti monetali.

[50] In passato, infatti, è stata ipotizzata una sorta di distinzione tra la formula "mancuso d'argento", che avrebbe indicato questa unità di conto da 30 denari, e la formula "mancuso d'oro", che avrebbe invece indicato le monete d'oro (arabe o bizantine) effettive; v. Capobianchi 1892, pp. 87-88; cfr. Martinori 1915, s.v. *mancoso*; Monneret De Villard 1919, p. 83 e *passim*; cfr. Rovelli 1992, pp. 119-120.

[51] La costante carenza dell'offerta di moneta rispetto alla domanda, che caratterizzò tutto il medioevo, fece sì che tale accordo si trovasse molto facilmente, e questo spiega ulteriormente la grande varietà nella composizione dei rinvenimenti monetali.

[52] Sciatti quanto potrebbe esserlo un notaio, per intenderci, che avesse redatto un rogito di una vendita immobiliare tra due contraenti provenienti rispettivamente dalla Francia e dal Belgio, prima dell'avvento dell'euro, senza specificare se i "franchi" utilizzati per indicare l'importo erano francesi o belgi.

[53] Il fatto che le valute auree registrate nella contabilità siano unità di conto basate su un determinato rapporto peso/lega è testimoniato soprattutto in ambito islamico, dove un importo contabilizzato in un certo numero di monete di conto può essere rappresentato da un numero diverso di monete effettive, con

contabilità con il nome del prototipo a cui si sono adeguate come peso e lega, spesso senza ulteriori specificazioni, come è avvenuto con i "solidi", i "bisanti", i "fiorini", i "ducati", gli "scudi d'oro", le "doppie", gli "ongari" e sicuramente molti altri.

Dobbiamo dire che i nostri interventi, pur essendo citati, non hanno avuto una grande riscontro, forse perché sono usciti nel momento sbagliato per perorare la tesi della natura "immateriale" del mancuso, cioè proprio quando la pubblicazione dell'opera fondamentale sulle origini dell'economia europea di McCormick[54] ha riaperto la discussione incentrata sulle precedenti ipotesi di identificazione con monete auree effettive (solidi bizantini di peso calante o dinar arabi?). L' autore infatti ha sposato con notevole entusiasmo la tesi dell'identificazione con la moneta araba, cosa non sorprendente, visto che dall'epoca della revisione della tesi del dinar da parte di Grierson, nel'79, non era più stata messa in discussone. Nel corso della preparazione del nostro secondo intervento in effetti avevamo potuto leggere i passi del McCormick relativi al mancuso, e sul punto specifico dell'associazione univoca con il dinar (come con qualunque altra moneta effettiva) non potevamo concordare[55], però nel complesso ci era apparso come un notevole passo avanti. Anche perché l'autore aveva sposato la tesi araba non 'per procura', come si suole dire, ma verificando tutte le fonti, analizzando e registrando tutta la documentazione nota ed aggiungendone di nuova, discutendo gli elementi di possibile dubbio, ammettendo come in molti casi tali citazioni potevano essere interpretate anche in modo diverso, cioè come unità di conto. Per questo ci sentiamo di dire che sotto il profilo della documentazione questo contributo, assieme a quelli di Monneret e di Grierson, rappresenta uno dei passaggi fondamentali per chi voglia accostarsi alla questione che stiamo discutendo. Con un certa sorpresa, invece, abbiamo dovuto verificare come tale intervento abbia riacceso al discussione, ma non verso la direzione che secondo il nostro giudizio sarebbe stata più verosimile ed auspicabile, cioè quella della natura 'contabile' dell'espressione[56], tale da attenuare qualunque univoca identificazione

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le formule "X dinar [unità di conto corrispondenti all' unità di peso] composti da Y dinar [effettivi]"; v. ad esempio Goitein 1967, pp. 229-233.

[54] McCormick, 2001, pp. 319-342, 811-814.

[55] Così come non potevamo concordare con il fatto che in ambito carolingio il mancuso (cioè una moneta straniera) potesse rappresentare un riconosciuto standard di valore (*standard of value*, Ivi, p. 336), cioè, immaginiamo, fosse in grado di garantire la stabilità di tutto il sistema monetario. Per noi la cosa è semplicemente impossibile: o rappresentava un peso in oro di lega riconosciuta, ma in quel caso avrebbe avuto un valore fluttuante in moneta carolingia d'argento, oppure rappresentava un valore in moneta carolingia (cosa probabile, stanti la stabilità e la continuità del cambio di 30 denari), ma in quel caso non poteva essere uno standard di valore basato su una moneta aurea straniera: altrimenti i Franchi sarebbero tornati al monometallismo aureo, lasciando alle zecche arabe (o bizantine) la definizione della loro parità metallica. Ci sembra onestamente improbabile.

[56] Tra l'altro quasi sempre presa in considerazione anche dalla bibliografia precedente, sia pure come ipotesi marginale.

con una sola moneta concreta, ma verso quella dell'identificazione con il solido bizantino di peso leggero, certamente meno probabile, non essendo supportata neppure da fattori linguistici, a differenza del dinar[57]. Ad essere onesti, però, il primo intervento a mettere in discussione le conclusioni di McCormick su questo argomento, ad opera di Paolo Delogu[58], non ha riguardato affatto l'identificazione del mancuso, ma la possibilità che la sua relativa presenza nella documentazione scritta possa effettivamente testimoniare la grande diffusione della moneta aurea, soprattutto islamica, in Europa[59]. Si tratta di un ottimo lavoro, ricco di osservazioni pertinenti riguardo alla possibile natura di questa valuta, e soprattutto si pone la domanda giusta, quella relativa al perché il mancuso compaia proprio nella fase di transizione rappresentata dall'arrivo in Italia dei carolingi, individuando correttamente la risposta anche nella necessità di rendere compatibili diversi sistemi di conto[60]. Potremmo dire di concordare in molto con quanto scritto, a parte alcuni aspetti che non ci convincono, quali in particolare l'idea sottintesa che la parola mancuso debba essersi irradiata dai territori bizantini a quelli franchi[61], l'affermazione che il mancuso abbia avuto scarsa penetrazione nei territori longobardo-carolingi[62], infine la convinzione che le

[57] La derivazione dal latino *mancus*, infatti, appare onestamente improbabile, visto che non trova confronti contemporanei in ambito monetario, e poi presuppone una trasformazione dell'aggettivo *mancus –a –um,* in *mancusus*, lemma piuttosto improbabile, visto che va in direzione esattamente opposta a quanto avvenuto nell'evoluzione dal latino al volgare, con *mancus* che è divenuto 'monco'. Anche quando, nel corso del '200, tale aggettivo entra a far parte del linguaggio 'monetario', con la menzione di libbre 'carenti' da 239-238 denari (anziché 240), queste vengono chiamate *librae mancae*, non *librae mancusae*, v. ad esempio, Lane, Mueller 1985, pp. 131-132. Tale contraddizione era stata già notata in Grierson, e risolta con l'ipotesi, anch'essa però assai difficile da documentare, che *mancus* si fosse trasformato in *mancusus* come calco di *percussus*, talvolta utilizzato dai Franchi per indicare i solidi monetati; Grierson 1954, p. 1072. A questo punto, però, viene da chiederci perché non venne usato *mancussus*, attestato invece solo in pochissimi casi molto tardi (XII secolo)?; cfr. ad esempio https://www.dmgh.de/de/fs1/search sub vv. *mancussus*, *mancussos*;

[58] Delogu 2008.

[59] Diffusione che, secondo lo stesso McCormick, si concentrerebbe principalmente attorno a Venezia; v. McCormick 2001, p. 336

[60] Sulla base degli studi di Alessia Rovelli, cfr., per tutti, Rovelli 2005, pp. 123-127.

[61] Idea che traspare dall'ipotesi che la prima attestazione conosciuta di mancuso, proveniente dall'Abbazia di Sesto in Friuli e precedente di pochi anni la grande riforma monetaria di Carlo Magno del 793/4, possa essere giustificata dal fatto che il protagonista del documento, un duca *Masselius* non altrimenti noto, potrebbe essere originario della costa adriatica (intendendo quindi bizantino?), come il duca Tommaso di Senigallia ricordato in un altro documento della stessa abbazia in cui compare il mancuso; Delogu 2008, p. 155, nota 40. In realtà possiamo immaginare che i carolingi abbiano avuto ben più consistenti e frequenti occasioni di conoscere la parola araba *manqūsh*, prima di quell'epoca.

[62] Ivi, pp. 157-158; non possiamo negare come tale affermazione ci abbia sorpreso molto, perché nella lista delle *Mentions of mancusi* presente in McCormick 2001, pp. 811-814, risulta che ben 45 citazioni su 61 si riferiscono a località un tempo soggette ai longobardi e poi divenute carolinge, mentre 15 a località bizantine non soggette formalmente ai carolingi (ma di fatto sì) in cui cui era comunque

formulazioni monetarie nei documenti contabili, in certi casi, possano testimoniare con certezza anche la circolazione di monete staniere "a numero", e non solo come metallo a peso o come valori di conto nella valuta locale[63]. Se non fossero poi stati pubblicati i contributi di cui stiamo per discutere qui sotto, comunque, probabilmente non avremo deciso di affrontare questo argomento nel suo complesso, limitandoci magari ad interventi all'interno di saggi più ampi per affrontare gli aspetti che ci avevano lasciato qualche perplessità. La pubblicazione di due contributi sull'argomento da parte Salvatore Cosentino e Vivien Prigent, invece, ci ha convinto della necessità di partecipare alla discussione. Infatti si tratta di saggi piuttosto approfonditi e dettagliati, che con molti argomenti cercano di far rivivere la tesi 'bizantina', riprendendo la vecchia e poi abbandonata identificazione dei mancusi con i solidi italiani di peso ridotto[64], ma limitandola alle sole emissioni siciliane. Ci è sembrato che tale tesi, riaprendo un discussione che metteva in contrapposizione dinar islamico e solido bizantino e toccava quindi tematiche molto discusse in ambito storico[65], potesse ulteriormente ridurre lo spazio a ipotesi come quella da noi già espressa in passato[66], che riconducevano invece l'origine della parola mancuso a più banali aspetti di gestione della moneta: molto pratici e per questo forse 'eterni'[67], ma decisamente poco adatti ad infiammare il dibattito. Comunque ipotesi che presuppongono come monete coniate possano essere registrate indifferentemente nella documentazione contabile di 'imperi' diversi (il solido bizantino o il dinar arabo sarebbero entrati nella contabilità ufficiale dei territori carolingi senza condizioni o limiti), a nostro

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entrato in vigore il sistema monetario franco; 1 infine si riferisce al territorio di Benevento. Togliendo le località identificate con qualche dubbio, i risultati sono rispettivamente 36, 14 e 1. A questi dati si possono aggiungere le due citazioni di mancuso in documenti amalfitani; v. Delogu 2008, p. 145.

63 Come si deduce dal fatto che l'autore sembra accettare l'idea (espressa da McCormick), che in ambito carolingio il mancuso potesse rappresentare uno standard di valore; v. sopra nota 55.

64 V. sopra, testo corrispondente alle note 35-38.

65 Come ad esempio il bimetallismo, lo sviluppo del commercio, l'andamento ciclico dell'economia nelle varie aree, la sopravvivenza o meno dei traffici fra Oriente ed Occidente etc. Le aspettative che l'argomento suscita sui possibili sviluppi in chiave storica di una identificazione certa del mancuso sono ben esemplificate del seguente passo di Morrisson e Prigent, quest'ultimo poi convolto direttamente nella discussione: *Toutefois, très récemment, le débat a* été *rouvert par Salvatore Cosentino qui propose d'identifier le mancus à la monnaie d'or sicilienne, arguant notamment d'un nouveau document d'origine ravennate. L'hypothèse mérite un réexamen approfondi d'autant plus que cette question revêt une importance absolument primordiale pour l'image que l'on se fera de l'intensité des relations commerciales en Méditerranée dans les premiers siècles du Moyen Âge*; Morrisson, Prigent 2012, p. 141.

66 V. sopra, note 45-49.

67 Quegli stessi aspetti che hanno fatto sì che la teoria del *nómisma hellenikón* (assoluta inconvertibilità fra una moneta 'internazionale' in argento ed una moneta locale in bronzo destinata agli scambi interni alla polis), suggerita da Platone nel IV secolo a.C., sia stata poi messa in pratica anche dalla Russia sovietica oltre un millennio più tardi; cfr. Platone, *Leggi*, 742a-b; cfr. Crawford 1982, p. 30.

avviso finiscono con il cancellare il ruolo giuridico della moneta come strumento di misura di valore fissato e garantito dallo stato (in genere indicato oggi con la parola 'valuta'). A noi tale ruolo invece sta molto a cuore, perché rappresenta l'elemento distintivo della moneta, quello in grado di differenziare un esemplare coniato da un qualunque pezzetto di metallo prezioso usato come mezzo di scambio per semplice accordo privato.

Per quanto riguarda Cosentino[68], il suo contributo tratta della ricchezza della chiesa ravennate, giudicata notevolissima rispetto alle dimensioni della città, ed al ruolo fondamentale svolto dalle sue rendite siciliane e dell'attività finanziaria che ne fu conseguenza, fornendo una serie di dati e di considerazioni che delineano un scenario economico di grande interesse. In particolare l'autore ritiene che le rendite siciliane della chiesa ravennate, che al tempo del vescovo Mauro (c. 649 – 671) si potevano stimare attorno ai 65.000-70.000 solidi, non abbiano subito decurtazioni importanti fino alla metà dell'VIII secolo, e quindi testimonino come ancora all'epoca dell'arrivo dei carolingi l'area nord-adriatica sia stata irrorata da una enorme quantità di denaro, che avrebbe fatto della città un grande centro di redistribuzione di ricchezza, rappresentata prevalentemente da monete auree siciliane. Proprio questo imponente stock monetario sarebbe stato in grado di rallentare il processo di integrazione dell'intera area al sistema monetario franco, iniziato nel 774 ma completatosi solo alla metà del X secolo[69]. Su questo scenario poco possiamo dire, vista la nostra scarsa competenza in proposito, ma l'aspetto della ricchezza di Ravenna ci pare piuttosto convincente, anche sulla scorta dei rinvenimenti di Classe, che dimostrano la relativa vivacità della circolazione monetaria ancora nell'VIII secolo[70], rispetto a molti altri centri. Ci lascia invece un po' perplessi l'idea che tutte le rendite siciliane siano pervenute in solidi d'oro siciliani, perché un'affermazione del genere richiederebbe almeno qualche riscontro. È noto che il sistema di conto di Bisanzio era basato quasi unicamente sul nomisma d'oro (*solidus* in latino), con il quale venivano registrati tutti i pagamenti, indipendentemente dalle monete effettive (o dal metallo a peso o altri beni) che dovessero essere utilizzati[71]. E possiamo immaginare che gran parte di questi, ad esempio elemosine, attività edilizie, sfruttamento e valorizzazione delle proprietà (anche in Sicilia), salari di vario genere, spese militari etc. dovessero essere effettuati anche con monete di rame, probabilmente in quantità enormi. Ora su questo possono dare un certo aiuto i rinvenimenti monetali ed in effetti l'autore li prende in considerazione, però usa una scala troppo vasta per illustrarne accurata-

[68] Cosentino 2012.

[69] Ivi, p. 423.

[70] Baldi 2015, pp. 118-119 .

[71] Callegher 2017, p. 360, proprio in riferimento alla città di Ravenna; sulla monetazione bizantina in Italia, v. Morrisson, Prigent 2012.

mente la composizione. Infatti considera tutto il comprensorio Alto Adriatico come un'area omogenea, senza distinzioni fra le due coste dell'Adriatico, e così può concludere che nei ritrovamenti monetali, cosi come sono stati censiti dal McCormick e dal Repertorio Arslan[72], nel periodo tra VIII e IX secolo appare netta la preminenza di moneta siciliana, con 13 monete auree e 14 in bronzo. In realtà la distribuzione 'interna' all'area è totalmente squilibrata, perché le monete d'oro sono state trovate tutte in Dalmazia, provenienti da necropoli di popolazioni slave, all'interno di tombe di personaggi di alto rango. Questo in effetti potrebbe suggerire che quell'oro provenisse direttamente dalle casse imperiali, inviato alle popolazioni slavo-balcaniche come pagamento di neutralità, patti o tributi di varia natura nel corso dei frequenti conflitti nell'area centro-occidentale dell'impero[73]. Quelle in bronzo invece provengono tutte dalle coste Italiche. Una contraddizione simile non mette certamente in discussione le rendite siciliane della Chiesa, perché anche le Chiesa di Ravenna, sicuramente molto ricca, potrebbe essere stata chiamata a contribuire a tali operazioni di buon vicinato, ma sicuramente mette in discussione il fatto che il solido siciliano di peso ridotto abbia svolto un ruolo fondamentale nell'area che dove poi si diffonderà l'uso del termine mancuso, corrispondente all' Italia Centro-settentrionale. A tutt'oggi, in effetti, non risulta che vi sia stato trovato un solo esemplare di moneta aurea siciliana. L'intervento di Cosentino termina poi proprio con un'appendice sulle *Origini del mancuso*, che illustra dettagliatamente i motivi per cui propone nuovamente l'ipotesi del solido bizantino di peso leggero[74]. In linea generale questi riprendono i validi temi già individuati dal Delogu nel 2008 quali la scarsa congruità del contesto geografico con l'ipotesi 'araba' (se il mancuso indicava il dinar le attestazioni avrebbero dovuto riguardare più l'Italia meridionale che non quella Centro-settentrionale); la evidente connessione cronologica della comparsa del mancuso nelle fonti (dal 778 in poi) con l'arrivo dei Franchi ed conseguente passaggio di aree bizantine d'Italia al sistema monetario carolingio, e non con il diffondersi delle monete arabe d'oro, che sembra leggermente più tardo; la scarsa evidenza della presenza di esemplari islamici nell'area interessata. Quest'ultimo aspetto viene ulteriormente approfondito da Cosentino, ma con conclusioni non del tutto convincenti, come abbiamo

[72] Ivi, pp. 424-425, nota 29; McCormick 2001, 815-851, *passim*; *Repertorio Arslan* 2005, *passim*; tali dati sono un po' invecchiati, soprattutto per quanto riguarda il bronzo, ma il quadro generale non cambia; inoltre tre delle monete d'oro citate, quelle del Museo Nazionale di Ravenna, non sono di provenienza locale, come sta dimostrando una ricerca ancora in corso sulla formazione del medagliere di quel museo; dobbiamo l'informazione a Bruno Callegher, al quale vanno i nostri più sentiti ringraziamenti.

[73] Callegher 2017, pp. 360-361; sulla monetazione bizantina in generale, v. ora l'ottima ed agevole sintesi in Morrisson 2015.

[74] Cosentino 2012, pp. 431-439.

appena visto[75]. Per il resto, la critica alle spiegazioni fornite dal Cahen[76] e riprese dal Quinsat[77] sul perché la parola araba *manqūsh* compaia soltanto in Italia appare plausibile, ma non tiene conto degli elementi di prova forniti contemporaneamente da Linder Welin[78] e, soprattutto è resa inefficace dal fatto che una simile analisi non è stata rivolta anche alla tesi opposta secondo cui il latino *mancus* sarebbe stato utilizzato, sempre e solo nella medesima area, per indicare i solidi bizantini di peso ridotto. Tale tesi presenta sicuramente maggiori criticità, non essendoci alcuna prova di *mancus* con significato monetario, prima del XIII secolo[79]. La maggiore novità proposta dal Cosentino è comunque un documento finora mai utilizzato riguardo a questo tema, databile agli anni venti del IX secolo, nel quale è riportata la formula *auri solidi mancosi bisanthei*[80]. Secondo l'autore questo costituirebbe una prova del fatto che esistevano solidi mancusi di Bisanzio chiamati così per distinguerli dai solidi di conto longobardi e dai solidi bizantini. Idea del tutto verosimile, ma potrebbe avere anche un altro significato, forse più probabile nel contesto in cui ci stiamo muovendo. Ma ne parleremo fra poco, quando illustreremo, o meglio ribadiremo, la nostra spiegazione del fenomeno 'mancuso'[81].

Sulle tesi di tesi di Cosentino ed in parte di Delogu è infine totalmente incentrato il saggio di Vivien Prigent[82], ma con molta più attenzione agli aspetti monetari. Questo autore cerca di dimostrare la bontà della tesi 'bizantina' attraverso sofisticate e complesse indagini metrologiche, tese a dimostrare che il rapporto oro-argento alla fine dell' VIII secolo non era in realtà di 1:12[83], ma più alto, cosa che si adattava più

[75] V. sopra, testo corrispondente alle note 73-74.

[76] Cahen 1965, pp. 417-419.

[77] Quinsat 1997, pp. 297-301.

[78] Linder Welin 1965; è questo il contributo che ha convinto Grierson ad abbandonare la tesi 'bizantina'.

[79] V. sopra, nota 57.

[80] Cosentino 2012, pp. 435-436.

[81] V. sotto, paragrafo *Origine del nome*.

[82] Prigent 2014. Approfittiamo di questa occasione per segnalare una piccola imprecisione, nel testo qui in esame, che ci riguarda: a p. 712 l'autore attribuisce ad una nostra affermazione (in Saccocci 2008, p. 59) la dipendenza da altro autore, che però non abbiano citato né lì né in bibliografia (Toubert 1973, p. 566, nota 1). Questo, anche se in modo certamente involontario, potrebbe dare al lettore l'impressione che abbiamo nascosto l'origine dell'idea da noi suggerita. Ci teniamo a dire che in quel passo non trattavamo della fossilizzazione del mancuso a 30 denari, effettivamente menzionata dal Toubert (e da molti altri in precedenza), ma della fossilizzazione a 36 denari del solido d'oro (poi indicato anche come solido mancuso) nelle fonti ravennati e marchigiane, argomento che non ci sembra sia stato trattato dall'autore in oggetto. Crediamo che sia proprio questo cambio, testimoniato dall' 834 al 1084, che abbia convinto Cosentino della plausibilità delle nostre ipotesi sul bisante di conto, anche se per un'epoca molto più tarda di quella da noi indicata; v. Cosentino 2012, p. 439).

[83] Cosa che avrebbe confermato l''identificazione' con il dinar, v. Rovelli 2005, pp. 123-127.

al solido siciliano di peso ridotto che non al dinar[84]. Onestamente non siamo sicuri di aver colto tutti i passaggi, per cui non ci sentiamo di dare un giudizio, anche perché il problema ci sembra abbastanza ininfluente riguardo alla soluzione che stiamo per proporre, come vedremo. Nelle seconda parte del saggio vengono affrontate le questioni cronologiche e geografiche già sollevate dal Delogu e ribadite da Cosentino ed a nostro avviso l'autore si avvicina molto ad una soluzione, quando riguardo all'Italia Centro-settentrionale scrive di *…déconnection totale entre les cadres monétaires légal et réel*[85], addirittura paragonando l'Italia dell'VIII secolo alla Russia post 1989[86], con una visione per così dire 'strutturalista' della storia della moneta nella quale ci riconosciamo[87]. Purtroppo però non trae le dovute conseguenze da questa affermazione, e ritiene che la documentazione archivistica possa fornire un quadro della situazione 'reale' del mercato e non, come è ovvio, di quella 'legale', visto che si tratta per l'appunto di documenti resi 'legali' dalla firma del notaio[88]. E così in questa parte dell'intervento descrive un mercato monetario assai ricco e vivace, e forse non lontano dal vero, che però risulta del tutto indimostrabile, senza una fonte che lo supporti (ad esempio un bel trattato di mercatura come quelli trecenteschi). Avesse fatto il contrario, cercando di capire come la comparsa del mancuso nella documentazione ufficiale si inquadrasse invece nel tentativo dei Franchi di ingabbiare dentro il loro rigido sistema monetario la varietà di moneta in uso nei nuovi domini Italiani, forse non saremmo intervenuti.

Conclusa la discussione della bibliografia più recente, appare giunto il momento di illustrare le nostre personali considerazioni. Visto però che queste erano già state proposte in passato, e che nel corso della lunga analisi precedente ne abbiamo ripetutamente fatto cenno, cercheremo di procedere per punti, in modo da essere il più sintetici possibile.

Origine del nome

Su questo non vi possono essere dubbi, il nome deriva dall'arabo. Il termine *manqūsh* nel significato di inciso, coniato non solo è documentato dalle fonti, ma è anche presente, già nel 787-788, nella legenda di un dirhem abbasside[89], venendo

[84] Prigent 2014, pp. 709-716.

[85] Ivi, p. 726.

[86] Nella quale nel mercato il valore di riferimento era dato dal dollaro, mentre i valori nominali erano espressi in rubli.

[87] Non a caso abbiamo già fatto ricorso ad un esempio tratto dalla Russia (nel nostro caso *ante* 1989), per evidenziare i caratteri perenni di alcuni aspetti della moneta.

[88] E non di note private nelle quali ogni capo-famiglia registrava le sue entrate e le sue uscite nella valuta che riteneva più stabile.

[89] In perfetta contemporaneità con le prime menzioni di *mancusus* in Italia.

poi utilizzato sporadicamente nelle serie samanidi di X secolo[90]. A partire dalla fine del X secolo diventa anche il nome usuale per il dinar coniato in Catalogna[91]. Il latino *mancus* nel senso di carente (di peso), invece non è mai documentato in ambito monetario, se non nel XIII secolo, ma in ogni caso per indicare un valore più basso del normale (*libra manca*[92]), non un peso. E possiamo dire che non è documentato semplicemente perché era inutile. Come abbiamo già avuto modo di dire, l'oro avevo un valore così elevato, e, possiamo aggiungere ora, il suo grado di purezza era così semplice da determinare grazie alla pietra di paragone[93], che le monete d'oro dal Tardo-antico in poi venivano sempre e comunque pesate, non erano mai accettate solo 'a numero'. Ne è riprova, in ambito bizantino, l'altissimo numero di *exagia* (pesi di confronto per monete, in genere per solidi) rinvenuti negli scavi[94]. Di conseguenza non era necessario distinguere nei documenti fra monete di peso diverso, visto che la loro corrispondenza al peso legale sarebbe stata comunque verificata[95].

Infine, ci sembra che la corrispondenza del 797 fra il papa Leone III ed il re di Mercia Coenwulf, relativa al pagamento di 365 *mancusas* promessi del precedente re Offa nel 786[96], avrebbe assunto connotazioni un po' surreali, se il papa avesse veramente chiesto solidi bizantini d'oro ed il re anglosassone avesse esaudito la richiesta inviando imitazioni di dinar arabi inneggianti ad Allah, come il famoso esemplare a nome di Offa rinvenuto a Roma e datato, sulla base dell' anno di Egira, al 774 (ovviamente tale indicazione cronologica si riferisce al prototipo, non all'imitazione)[97]. Ci sembra più probabile che il riferimento ai mancusi fosse già presente nella promessa di Offa e quindi sia giunto dall'Inghilterra, dove poco più tardi i dinar sono ben attestati per lo più come unità di peso[98]. Probabile anche che il papa sapesse comunque benissimo di cosa si trattava, ma non ponesse alcun problema nell'accettarlo.

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[90] Linder Velin 1965.

[91] Cfr. Quinsat 1997, pp. 290-296.

[92] V. sopra, nota 57.

[93] In proposito v. Day 2018, pp. 476-478.

[94] Solo per l'Italia il numero di pezzi registrati nei *Repertorio Arslan* 2005 e nell' *Inventory Gianazza* supera la cinquantina, da c. quaranta siti diversi.

[95] Questo aspetto è ben documentato in ambito islamico; v. sopra, nota 53. È vero che molte delle emissioni di solidi bizantini leggeri portano impressa l'indicazione del peso (XXI, XXII carati etc., v. Grierson 1982, p. 343, s.v. *Light weight solidi*), ma lo scopo non era certo quello di risparmiare la pesatura a chi doveva accettare tali monete (tanto le pesava ugualmente), ma probabilmente quello di evitare che qualcuno le rifiutasse come false, essendo troppo sottopeso.

[96] V. Monneret De Villard 1919, pp. 92-97; cfr. McCormick 2001, p. 324.

[97] Riguardo a questo esemplare, conservato al British Museum di Londra, v. Allan 1914.

[98] Cfr. Monneret De Villard 1919, pp. 95-96

Chi introdusse il termine mancuso in Italia?

A leggere tutta la bibliografia sull'argomento si direbbe che questa sia una delle questioni più complicate, mentre a noi sembra semplicissima. Intanto si può dire che, essendo espressione araba, l'autoctonia in Italia Centro-settentrionale appare piuttosto improbabile, quindi bisogna guardarsi attorno. Le parole poi non sono merci e possono viaggiare in due modi: o in forma orale o in forma scritta. Siccome in forma scritta non possiamo muoverci dall'Italia, dove la troviamo attestata per la prima volta, bisogna giocoforza indagare la forma orale e quindi immaginare quali persone potevano conoscerla (molti), ma soprattutto quanti di questi erano in grado di imporla in pochissimi anni in un'area estesa dalla Val d'Aosta a Roma ed oltre (pochissimi). Questa in effetti ci dà la riposta: chi poteva aver portato con sé questa innovazione linguistica di significato monetario se non chi, esattamente in quegli anni, stava imponendo una riforma della monetazione a tutti i territori del Regno Longobardo appena conquistato ed anche a quei territori che teoricamente erano stati solo liberati dalla minaccia longobarda? Già, proprio loro, i Franchi, e non è certo un caso che la prima notizia del mancuso (778) arrivi solo dopo quattro anni dalla conquista di Carlo Magno (774). Il collegamento fra il mancuso ed il diffondersi del sistema monetario carolingio è stata indubbiamente ben considerato dalla bibliografia più recente, come abbiamo visto, ma interpretato più come reazione alle novità transalpine da parte di un mercato tradizionalmente connesso con Bisanzio, che non come imposizione dei nuovi signori. Forse non tenendo troppo conto, in questo, del fatto che i documenti notarili, soprattutto di natura contabile, non hanno propriamente la vocazione alla ribellione. Diventa in effetti difficile pensare che la valuta indicata nelle penali (non l'importo), che sovente era diretta alla camera regia, potesse essere scelta non dal notaio ma dai contraenti. A questo punto rimane solo un dubbio, come potevano i Franchi essersi impossessati di questa parola araba, senza aver lasciato alcuna traccia di questo prima di arrivare in Italia? Qui si può andare solo per ipotesi, ma ovviamente il fatto che i Franchi controllassero da Nord l'unica diretta linea di confine fra Islam e Cristianità Occidentale, con frequenti e reciproche razzie e spedizioni, sembra un buon motivo per ipotizzare un certo afflusso di dinar islamici in area franca. Tale afflusso molto probabilmente portò quelle monete, di grande qualità, a trasformarsi in unità di peso per l'oro, visto che questo metallo non faceva più parte da decenni del sistema monetario franco[99]. D'altra parte il fatto che il 'mancuso' dopo un paio di secoli compaia in Catalogna per indicare il locale dinar d'oro[100] non appare affatto in contrasto con un suo antico utilizzo, vista la tendenza alla lunghissima sopravvivenza delle cosiddette unità di conto[101]. Da lì il mancuso

[99] E questo giustifica il fatto che in Gallia non sia mai entrato nella documentazione contabile.

[100] V. sopra, nota 91.

[101] Mio padre, che era nato nel 1913, mi raccontava che subito prima della Seconda guerra mondiale

potrebbe essere giunto anche in Inghilterra, sia attraverso scambi commerciali sia a seguito delle numerosissime e profonde incursioni vichinghe nelle coste atlantiche della Gallia.

Dunque può essere che nel linguaggio parlato i Franchi abbiano usato la parola *mancus*, senza però utilizzarla ufficialmente nei documenti, perché non faceva parte del loro sistema monetario e quindi non poteva rappresentare un valore legalmente riconosciuto. Poi però appena arrivati in Italia hanno ritenuto di doverlo recuperare, ma per comprenderne il perché è necessaria una piccola digressione sugli usi monetari proprio dei Carolingi.

Uso monetari dei Franchi del periodo carolingio

Si può sostenere con una certa attendibilità che l'atto di nascita formale della monetazione carolingia sia data da un capitolare del re Pipino il Breve (752-768) del 754/755, nel quale viene deciso: *de moneta constituimus ut amplius non habeat in libra pensante nisi XXII solidos*…[102] Analizzando quella fonte si è potuto stabilire che quei solidi erano costituiti da 12 denari ciascuno del peso di 1,24 g, che corrispondevano effettivamente ai primi denari di conio largo prodotti da questo re con l'appellativo di *Rex*[103]. Questo naturalmente è ben noto, ma colpisce è il fatto che in quel passo non sia citata alcuna moneta reale: la libbra è solo un'unita di peso, probabilmente corrispondente a quella romana di c. 325 g, il solido è una pura unità di conto che ormai si era consolidata nel valore di 12 denari, non sappiamo da quando. L'unica moneta reale, il denario, non viene neppure menzionata. Da questo si comprende qual era fin dall'inizio l'atteggiamento generale dell'amministrazione carolingia rispetto alla moneta: fornire al regno un sistema di conto stabile e possibilmente immutabile, senza grande attenzione verso le possibilità di guadagno o speculazione insite nella produzione monetaria. Probabilmente la grande disponibilità di argento, garantita soprattutto dalle miniere di Melle[104], rendeva possibile uno scenario simile, in grado di cancellare perfino il ricordo dell'incredibile caos monetario che aveva caratterizzato la produzione monetaria del periodo merovingio. Questo atteggiamento attento più all'aspetto contabile diventa ancora più evidente quando Carlo Magno, nel 774, conquista il regno Longobardo e ne diventa re. Nel regno Longobardo era ancora in vigore la parità

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il pezzo da 5 centesimi veniva ancora chiamato soldo (evidentemente perché corrispondeva ad 1/20 della lira), nonostante questo facciale nella sua Toscana fosse scomparso nel 1860. Se confrontiamo le possibilità di aggiornarsi e di leggere che potevano avere i giovani del XX secolo, rispetto a quelli del X, non stupisce che allora certi nomi di monete siano sopravvissuti 'silentemente' per secoli.

[102] *MGH*, *Capit.,* III, n. 13.5

[103] *MEC* 1, p. 204.

[104] Già attive a partire dal fine del VII secolo; v. Téreygeol 2018, pp. 42-43.

aurea e Carlo sembra adattarsi, battendo nei primi anni tremissi aurei di piede longobardo, mantenendo la lega molto bassa delle emissioni dell'ultimo re Desiderio, se non peggiorandola[105]. Però probabilmente quella fase era solo transitoria, e serviva forse a raggiungere lo scopo che le autorità emittenti del regno si erano prefisse fin dall'inizio, cioè di passare alla monetazione argentea e scambiare alla pari il vecchio solido longobardo (valore di conto pari a tre tremissi d'oro) ed il solido carolingio (valore di conto corrispondente a 12 denari d'argento). Cosa che avviene nel 781, quando denari d'argento di tipo franco vengono introdotti in Italia, come attesta il capitolare di Mantova[106]. Il solido di conto franco effettivamente viene scambiato alla pari con il vecchio solido di conto longobardo, come è stato dimostrato da Alessia Rovelli sulla base di un fonte del 785 che non lascia alcun dubbio in proposito[107]. Anche in questo caso, quindi, l'amministrazione franca ha cercato un cambio molto semplice, che potesse inserire immediatamente tutte le rendite, i tributi, le obbligazioni registrate nella documentazione longobarda nel sistema franco. Garantendo così all'amministrazione centrale quella capacità di programmazione delle risorse necessaria per un impero. Però nei territori entrati a far parte del nuovo dominio di Carlo e nei territori ex bizantini sotto protettorato, come valute non si usavano solo i solidi longobardi, ora divenuti solidi carolingi da 12 denari, ma anche i solidi longobardi 'lucani' diffusi in Toscana e nel ducato di Spoleto, i solidi d'oro nell'Esarcato, nella Pentapoli e nel Lazio, ma probabilmente con valori diversi, e forse anche, un po' dappertutto ma soprattutto nella zona adriatica settentrionale, solidi costantinopolitani chiamati forse bisanti[108]. Una bella confusione, tale da far rimpiangere i gloriosi tempi della monetazione merovingia. Però le autorità franche avevano imparato come sciogliere questi nodi gordiani, lo avevano già fatto con gli innumerevoli tipi di tremissi diffusi in Gallia, uniformandoli sotto il cappello del solido di conto, e lo avevano fatto con i tremissi longobardi di qualità assai ineguale pareggiandoli a gruppi di tre al loro solido di conto. In fondo l'importante non era guadagnare nel cambio o evitare di rimetterci,

[105] In proposito v. Pardi, pp. 87-99.

[106] *MEC* 1, p. 208.

[107] Rovelli 2005, pp. 123-125; personalmente abbiamo la soddisfazione di aver ipotizzato, in un intervento al Convegno Internazionale di Numismatica tenutosi a Madrid nel 2003, il cambio alla pari fra solido longobardo e solido carolingio senza ancora conoscere il documento studiato dalla Rovelli, ma soltanto sulla base della frequenza di importi corrispondenti a multipli del solido nei primi documenti contabili di epoca carolingia in Italia; v. Saccocci 2005, pp. 1040-1043. In quell'occasione abbiamo anche ipotizzato come questo cambio, probabilmente inadatto al mercato, fu una delle cause della grande riforma di Carlo Magno del 793/794. Purtroppo tale soddisfazione è rimasta piuttosto intima, perché gli atti del convegno sono usciti solo nel 2005, cioè nello stesso anno in cui è stato pubblicato anche l'intervento della collega.

[108] In generale sulla situazione monetaria nell'Italia Centro-settentrionale, il miglior quadro d'assieme è offerto dai saggi raccolti in Rovelli 2012, in particolare nn. V, VI, XIII, XIV.

la questione principale era far sì che tutti quei mercati potessero entrare a far parte del loro sistema contabile basato sull'argento a bassissimo costo di cuoi potevamo disporre. Ecco, in questo contesto compare il mancuso.

Il mancuso

La prima citazione di mancuso viene dal territorio di Pordenone in pieno territorio longobardo, e risale al 778[109], tre anni prima dell'introduzione dei denari di tipo franco in Italia, quando probabilmente Carlo Magno produceva ancora tremissi d'oro. Il nome scelto probabilmente corrispondeva ad un peso in oro, come in Inghilterra, ma sotto il profilo monetario non sembra avere senso. I carolingi avevano già ben dimostrato di non avere interesse a coniare oro, anche se in quel momento lo stavano monetando in Italia per esigenze pratiche. Probabilmente il basso costo dell'argento che producevano in proprio li sconsigliava dall'effettuare una simile operazione. Erano però decisamente interessati alla contabilità, come abbiamo visto, e forse a Pordenone[110], per la prima volta, si sono accorti che erano in uso delle valute, probabilmente su base aurea, non compatibili con il solido longobardo. A quel punto probabilmente decisero di ricorrere al sistema che avevano già sperimentato con successo: forzare i cambi in modo che quelle valute anomale potessero entrare a far parte del loro sistema di conto, garantendosi così una facile circolazione del denario in tutte le terre soggette. Conoscevano la parola mancuso, che indicava una certa quantità di metallo giallo il cui valore non era troppo distante, più o meno, da quello di molte delle monete non facilmente rapportabili al loro sistema, gli hanno dato un valore fisso in denari carolingi ed hanno imposto ai notai di usarlo tutte le volte che era necessario registrare una qualunque di quelle monete anomale.

Sembra logico ritenere che all'inizio il valore fosse di 40 denari per mancuso secondo il rapporto fissato nella *Lex Salica* fra solido d'oro e denaro, e dopo la riforma del 793/794, che portò il peso del denario da 1,3 a 1,7 g[111] sia diventato di 30 denari. Non si può escludere però che le autorità carolinge in Italia abbiano voluto sopravvalutare il denario, dandogli fin dall'inizio il rapporto di 30:1 con le valute auree lì in uso. Il numero 30 è infatti una buona alternativa contabile, forse addirittura migliore di 40, in un sistema basato sui valori 1-12-240: infatti corrisponde a solidi 2,5, mentre 40 a solidi 3,33 periodico. Probabilmente gli stessi notai hanno poi associato alla parola mancuso il nome in uso localmente delle monete che a

[109] McCormick 2001, p. 324, nota 22.

[110] Che apparteneva all'area servita dalla zecca di Treviso, cioè l'entroterra veneto, dove ovviamente più forti erano le connessioni ed i contati commerciali con la bizantina Venezia.

111 Sui valori della *Lex Salica* ed in generale sugli aspetti metrologici delle riforme carolinge, v. ora Prigent 2012, pp. 708-716.

mano a mano veniva a sostituire, per rendere più chiaro al cliente di cosa si trattava, e questo spiega probabilmente i "solidi mancusi" ma forse anche i "solidi mancosi bisanthei" di cui abbiamo discusso. Una ricostruzione del genere appare molto teorica, ma a nostro avviso è l'unica che può spiegare il ruolo incomprensibile di questa moneta, che ora è in oro, ora in argento e talvolta può essere pagata sia in oro che in argento, come a Modena nell' 811[112]: prova evidente che non aveva un valore diverso a seconda del metallo con cui era associata[113]. Esiste comunque la possibilità di provare l'ipotesi che, fin dall'inizio, il mancuso fosse agganciato alla lira carolingia con un valore di 30 denari, anche in modo piuttosto semplice. Basta verificare se gli importi espressi in mancusi sono multipli o sottomultipli semplici delle principali unità di conto di quel sistema, che sono la lira ed il solido. In pratica basta moltiplicare l'importo indicato dal documento per 30 (denari) e poi dividere per 240, nel caso della lira, oppure per 12, nel caso del solido, e vedere se i risultati sono statisticamente casuali o meno. In questo caso non è neppure necessario fare il calcolo, perché il fatto che tutti gli importi superiori a 10 mancusi siano multipli di 10 fa intendere non solo che c'era l'intenzione di far sì che tutti i valori fossero conteggiabili in solidi[114], ma che anche l'eventuale divisione per lire portasse a risultati che non andassero oltre una suddivisione al massimo in quarti di lira, importo facilissimo da conteggiare (essendo uguale 5 solidi). Comunque abbiamo eseguito il calcolo solo per la lira, sui dati del McCormick, e questi sono i risultati: su 54 campioni che riportavano un importo preciso, 14 (25,9%) hanno dato un valore tondo in lire (da 10 a 625 lire), 24 (41%) hanno dato un valore che comprendeva la ½ lira (da 2,5 a 62,5 lire), 10 (18,2%) hanno dato un risultato comprendente da ¼ a ¾ di lira (da 0,75 a 23,75 lire), solo 5 (10,9%), hanno dato risultati sinceramente casuali (da 0,2916… a 45,6) e si trattava di importi complessivamente inferiori alla lira. Non sappiamo casa questo significhi esattamente, sotto il profilo statistico, ma da alcune prove che abbiamo fatto ci sembra che i dati si addensino su una fascia di precisione superiore a quelle che dovrebbe essere determinata dal semplice caso. In ogni modo, per quanto detto fin dall'inizio, ci sembra poco probabile che il 'mancuso' sia qualcosa di diverso da una semplice unità di conto introdotta per conteggiare alcune valute auree straniere nel sistema carolingio della lira-soldo-denaro, qualcosa di simile, per intenderci, a quei numeretti con cui abbiamo iniziato questo contributo e che ci son stati tanto utili per capire più o meno come funzionava l'euro. Oggi abbiamo capacità individuali di calcolo tali da consentirci di maneggiare senza problemi anche numeri compren-

[112] McCormick 2001, p. 814, n. 60.

[113] Come invece ritenuto da vari autori; v. sopra, nota 50.

[114] Poiché 30 denari corrisponde a 2,5 solidi da 12 denari, moltiplicando quel numero per un numero pari avremo sempre un multiplo tondo di 12.

denti 5 o 6 cifre decimali, e quindi quei numeretti sono piuttosto precisi. Allora non era così, per cui la cosa esigeva qualche sforzo per far entrare in un quadrato ciò che era tondo, in modo da poter registrare con un solo termine, il mancuso, anche valute non perfettamente allineate. Può esser che anche cosi, tuttavia, l'aver garantito una convertibilità certa fra monete auree orientali e monete argentee carolinge, grazie a questo artificio contabile, abbia favorito il concentrarsi nell'area dei traffici tra Oriente ed Occidente. O forse, cosa per noi non meno probabile, abbia inserito anche l'intero impero franco in un circuito già piuttosto sviluppato. In effetti il notevole svilimento di tutte le precedenti emissioni auree longobarde e bizantine in Italia Centro-settentrionale potrebbe anche essere associato ad un eccesso in ambito locale di domanda di moneta, quindi ad un economia piuttosto florida. Non ci pare che tale aspetto sia stato preso in considerazione, finora, ma questo oggettivamente riguarda il dibattito storico, non i nostri piccoli problemi di nomenclatura numismatica.

Bizantina o araba?

Ci eravamo ripromessi di non parlare di questo, perché non è argomento che interessi il punto di vista che abbiamo espresso. Però avendo dovuto verificare quanta importanza viene attribuita a questa questione, non ce la siamo sentita di farla cadere senza spendere almeno qualche parola. La risposta comunque è questa: entrambe, più un certo numero, forse non del tutto secondario, di antiche monete greche e romane portate alla luce nella frenetica attività di spoglio che caratterizzò tutto l'Alto Medioevo. Al massimo si potrebbe ipotizzare una certa maggior presenza di moneta islamica, almeno a giudicare dall'origine del nome, dall' esemplare a legenda araba di Offa e dalle imitazioni di monete abbassidi in ambito carolingio, ma nulla più. Il mancuso in ogni caso non può dirimere tale questione, ma può fornire preziose indicazioni sugli usi monetari dell'alto medioevo, ancora ben lontani dall'essere pienamente compresi.

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WHY SHOULD THE PALERMO MUSEUM AND ANTONINO SALINAS KEEP ARABIC COINS? NEW RECORDS ON CANON GIOVANNI PACETTO'S DONATION (1877)*

Abstract

The main scope of this paper is to understand the role of Italian authorities acquiring Arabic coins for Sicilian museums. In particular, this essay presents some valuable, unpublished records that are relevant to the history of state collections in Sicily. Antonino Salinas (1841–1914), Director of the Palermo Museum and skilful numismatist, played a leading role in the history of Sicilian archaeology. In 1877, he accepted a donation of some coins, which were offered by Giovanni Pacetto (1806-84), and he also purchased additional finds to increase the museum numismatic collections. Archival records are, therefore, vital to assess why Salinas appreciated Arabic coins, and how donations and acquisitions occurred in the early post-Unification period. These two valuable case studies can help us to understand the history of state collections and the role of the authorities in Sicily, who were constantly interested in acquiring not only classical but also Arabic coins for the newly-born Palermo Museum.

Keywords

Sicily, Palermo, Museum, Collections, Arabic coins, Salinas, Pacetto, Donations

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1. INTRODUCTION

The recent research that has been carried out at Italian state archives has generated much interest for the history of archaeology and museum collections in post-Unification Sicily (1861–1918). Undoubtedly, archives can keep vital records of past discoveries, excavations, archaeological safeguarding and classical, medieval and modern acquisitions by museum institutions. A recent exhibition that was held in Palermo in 2014 has even celebrated the centenary of the death of Antonino Salinas (1841–1914), who was the founder and first director of the local Museo Nazionale (Fig. 1).[1]

After 1861 the Italian state re-founded the old pre-Unification institutions or forged new museums to establish a fresh and modernised cultural heritage. Therefore, professors, archaeologists and curators, such as Luigi Pigorini (1842–1925) operating in Rome, were now employed by the Italian government and were evolving from the old antiquarian collectors and/or scholars to professional 'state' academics and employees.[2]

This paper seeks to present a new set of archival records from Rome that are particularly relevant to the donation of ancient and Arabic coins to the Palermo Museum, which was carried out by Canon Giovanni Pacetto on the behalf of Antonino Salinas in January 1877 (docs. nn. 1–3). The latter also asked to purchase additional coins in November 1877 (docs. nn. 4–6). These records are worth studying and publishing for the following reasons. First, they form two significant case studies for the history of numismatic state collections in Sicily and they help us to better understand how and why Salinas appreciated donations by private collectors. Second, these records shed new light on the role of Canon Pacetto as an antiquarian and antiquities collector, and they illustrate his relationship with Salinas. Until now, these aspects have remained little known and neglected by scholars.

This paper offers an introduction to the Palermo Museum, especially its role between the Bourbon period and post-Unification era. Furthermore, this paper aims to present Antonino Salinas, while also explaining the importance of donations for his institution. Then, we provide a historical reconstruction of the donation by Pacetto and of Salinas' purchase of coins, assessing all of the documentary evidence and contextualising the event in the history of archaeological collecting in post-Unification Sicily. Finally, the appendix contains all of the relevant records that are preserved at the Central State Archive of Rome, which we have traced and copied faithfully.

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[1] SPATAFORA-GANDOLFO 2016; CRISÀ 2018.

[2] BARBANERA 1998: pp. 12–19.

2. THE PALERMO MUSEUM, ANTONINO SALINAS AND FIND DONATIONS

The Bourbons, who dominated the island of Sicily as part of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (1816–1860), undertook a series of measures to establish a well-organised system for archaeological safeguarding. Their legislation was fairly innovative and it allowed the Bourbons to protect antiquities, offer excavations licenses and increase the collections of the University of Palermo's Museum, which was founded in 1814. The Bourbons aimed to create a new cultural institution in Sicily, which was to be also used to deposit new finds from excavations and preserve antiquarian collections.[3]

Once Garibaldi had liberated Sicily from the Bourbon army and the island became a region of the Kingdom of Italy, this system underwent a series of administrative reforms but still maintained some bodies (such as the Commission of Antiquities and Fine Arts, which survived until 1875). During this period, the University of Palermo's Museum, which was already well-established, undertook a crucial transformation. Thus, once the Italian state had placed many compulsory orders on the Church's property due to the Laws of 10 August 1862 and 7 July 1866, the old Oratorio of the Olivella in Palermo's city centre became empty and available for reuse. Consequently, the cultural institution was transferred from the university to via Bara dell'Olivella. Meanwhile, it acquired the substantial Etruscan Bonci-Casuccini collection.[4]

Antonino Salinas (1841–1914) (Fig. 2) played a leading role in this crucial process. Once the substantial series of archaeological and fine arts collections were fully moved, Salinas became Director of the Museum (1873), a position which he kept until he died. Salinas, who was mainly a numismatist and also Professor of Archaeology at the University of Palermo, opted to shape a new, modern institution that would represent all of the phases of the history of Sicily. His strong support for local regionalism was in contrast to the Italian government's policy to promote a national identity, as his manifesto *Del Real Museo di Palermo e del suo avvenire* and substantial archival records clearly prove. Consequently, Salinas professionally re-arranged the old collections of Greek and Roman archaeological finds—including paintings, dresses, weapons, medieval and Modern Age artefacts—to shape an innovative museum, which he could also use for educational purposes.[5]

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[3] MOSCATI-DI STEFANO 2006: p. 15; CRISÀ 2012: pp. 10–11.

[4] TAMBURELLO 1970: pp. 31–36; MOSCATI-DI STEFANO 2006: pp. 14–21; CRISÀ 2012: pp. 10–11; CRISÀ 2018: pp. 18–19, 34–36.

[5] SALINAS 1874: p. 56; CAGIATI 1914: pp. 125–31; ORSI 1915: pp. 1–9; DE VIDO 1993: pp. 17–26; CRISÀ 2018: pp. 31–34.

As a well-known and skilful numismatist, Salinas appreciated all ancient, medieval and modern coins as historical sources. Salinas had already gathered a very substantial collection of ca. 6000 coins, which he donated to the Museum after becoming director. This action had a powerful 'political' meaning, demonstrating Salinas' willingness to promote donations for the new-founded Kingdom of Italy and marking, therefore, the start of a brilliant career as state curator and professor. In terms of scientific outputs, Salinas had even written a significant monograph on Sicilian Greek coins, entitled *Le monete delle antiche città di Sicilia* (1867), which, however, remained incomplete.[6]

We know that Salinas markedly promoted donations of archaeological and numismatic finds among Sicilian collectors. He even travelled in fairly unknown and poorly accessible towns of the Messina province to meet collectors and invite them to donate their inscriptions and coins. For instance, a significant donation of rare silver tetradrachms of Syracuse, found at Mondello (Palermo) and offered to the Palermo Museum in 1868, was made by Delfino Trucchi and was directly supported by Salinas. The latter wrote a paper on these new numismatic acquisitions and officially thanked the collector on the behalf of the Italian state, as archival records effectively testify.[7]

The city of Palermo itself benefitted from significant Arabic coin collections. One of the most substantial was stored in the Biblioteca Comunale. This collection was studied by the Sicilian Arabist Bartolomeo Maria Lagumina (1850–1931), who published the monograph *Catalogo delle monete arabe esistenti nella Biblioteca Comunale di Palermo* (1892). The Biblioteca had initially acquired a substantial set of Arabic coins, donated by Cesare Airoldi in 1849.[8]

Subsequently, between 1868 and 1892, Salinas had even spent £1499.59 to buy additional coins, which he constantly transferred to the Biblioteca Comunale. The National Museum also had Arabic coins, which stimulated Salinas' attention as vital sources to reconstruct the history of medieval Sicily. The Bourbon authorities had also begun to gather Arabic coins before 1860, as the acquisition of gold finds from Cefalù

[6] SALINAS 1867; CRISÀ 2014b: pp. 281–83; GANDOLFO 2014: pp. 37–43; CRISÀ 2018: pp. 32–36.

[7] SALINAS 1868: pp. 193–207; CRISÀ 2014b: pp. 280–81; CRISÀ 2018: pp. 34–36.

[8] Bartolomeo Lagumina studied Hebrew with Canon D. Turano. He was ordained priest on 23 December 1872 and Professor of Hebrew at the University of Palermo, where he met M. Amari and became strongly interested in studying Arabic language. He was also Inspector at the Palermo Museum. Among his most significant works we can mention: *Codice diplomatico dei guidei di Sicilia* (1884), *Cronaca di Cambridge* (1890), *Catalogo delle monete arabe esistenti nella Biblioteca Comunale di Palermo* (1892) and *Catalogo dei codici orientali esistenti nella Biblioteca Comunale di Palermo* (1898). He was finally appointed Bishop of Agrigento in 1898. For Lagumina's activity in late nineteenth-century Palermo see: AA.VV. 1939: pp. 280–81; DE LUCA 2016: pp. 1–23.

clearly proves (1824). After the Unification, new discoveries increased the collections. For example, we can mention the substantial Arabic coin hoard found by some 'fontanieri'—skilled workers maintaining water conduits and pipelines—at Porta Termini (Palermo). Nevertheless, the Arabic numismatic collection at the Palermo Museum was evidently lacking and Salinas was willing to increase it as far as he could.[9]

Among newly-discovered Sicilian donors in the Messina province, who gave Salinas their finds to increase the Palermo Museum, we can mention the Baroness Merlo (Tindari), Canon Giardina (Tindari), professor Todaro (Tripi), Mr Consentino (Sant'Agata di Militello), the pharmacist Mancuso (Lipari) and Mr Di Salvo (Santa Maria delle Palate, Tusa).[10] We can also add Giovanni Pacetto as a new collector who was operating in the Ragusa province and was willing to donate finds to the Palermo Museum.

As many other Sicilian priests, Giovanni Pacetto (1806–84) was very passionate about antiquarian studies. As a canon based in Scicli (Ragusa) (Fig. 3), he was able to sustain himself while studying local history and archaeology, and collecting antiquities. He could easily obtain artefacts on the prosperous province market, fuelled by excavations or sales of old pre-Unification collections. Pacetto also explored some sites in the Ragusa's and Scicli's area. He was evidently quite well-known in Sicily and also joined the Società di Storia Patria of Palermo for a while (1876–79), which also included Salinas as a member. Among Pacetto's main antiquarian works, we can mention *Ricordi archeologici di un viaggio eseguito nel territorio di Scicli nell'anno 1867* (1872), *Memorie per un'antica greco-sicula medaglia scoperta nel modicano territorio* (1872), *Memorie di un antico bagno recentemente scoperto nella contrada Maulli in territorio di Ragusa* (1875) and finally *L'antichità di Scicli, anticamente chiamata Casmena* (1879).[11]

3. CANON PACETTO AND SALINAS: A NUMISMATIC DONATION FOR THE PALERMO MUSEUM (1877)

Thanks to archival records from Rome, we now know that Pacetto offered some coins to Salinas in 1877 through a donation, which occurred in January (docs. nn. 1–3). Our records provide us with historical data to reconstruct these events, which were unknown until now.

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[9] LAGUMINA 1892: p. IV: 'Esaminando i conti consuntivi della Biblioteca, dal 1868 a questa parte, rilevasi che furon spese non più di L. 1996,99 per acquisto di monete, vetri e pietre con iscrizioni arabe: delle quali L. 1499,59 per mezzo del prof. Salinas […]'; LAGUMINA 1895: pp. 360–74; CRISÀ 2012: pp. 36–37; DE LUCA 2016: pp. 3–5; D'OTTONE RAMBACH 2017: pp. 13–14.

[10] CRISÀ 2018: pp. 117–119.

[11] MILITELLO 2008: pp. 18, 27.

Francesco Lanza, Prince of Scalea (1834–1919), Special Commissariat for Excavations and Museums of the Sicilian Island, sent the Ministry of Public Education a short letter on 4 January 1877 (doc. n. 2). It quoted a message by Salinas, written on 2 January and sent to the Special Commissariat. The archaeologist asserted that Pacetto had just donated (probably at the very end of December 1876?) to the Palermo Museum 12 bronze classical coins, one Arabic coin and a Byzantine lead seal. Among the bronze coins, two were minted by Syracuse and were considered 'rare' by Salinas.

In particular, the Arabic coin was issued in Sicily by the Fatimid Caliph Abū al Hasanʿ Alī ibn al Ḥākim (orʿ Alī alẒāhir), who is known as al Ẓāhir liiʿ zāz al Dīn Allāh (AH 411–27; AD 1005–36). He ruled in Sicily between 1020 and 1036. Thanks to Salinas' antiquarian reference, we learn that the gold *dinar* was struck in AH 420 (1029 AD) (Fig. 4)[12]. The coin was considered to be historically valuable by Salinas for two main reasons. First, its legend reported the actual month when the coin was struck. Second, Vincenzo Mortillaro (1806–88), a well-known Arabist operating in Palermo, could not read the full coin legend on a similar issue. This specimen was previously studied by the antiquarian Salvatore Morso (1766–1828), who was an active scholar in the Bourbon Sicily.[13]

As other archival records have recently demonstrated regarding Delfino Trucchi's donation, the Italian authorities were certainly grateful to all donators who contributed to increase the national and regional collections. Thus, Giuseppe Fiorelli (1823–96), a famous archaeologist working at the Ministry of Public Education, sent the Special Commissariat in Palermo a short letter on 13 January 1877, asking him to thank Canon Pacetto for his kind and generous donation (doc. n. 3). His action was worth of high commendation and public gratification ('gesto meritevole di alto encomio e degno delle pubbliche riconoscenze').

Following this remarkable donation by Canon Pacetto, we learn that Salinas was willing to acquire other finds to increase the museum collections, as a letter of 9 November 1877 clearly proves (doc. n. 5). Again, the Special Commissioner Lanza di Scalea alerted Fiorelli, reporting that Salinas wanted to buy seven coins on the antiquarian market. Four were silver *stateri* showing the head of Athena Pallas and Pegasus—one also had the Greek ethnic name of Syracuse. The fifth was a silver Punic tetradrachm (priced £32), while the sixth was a silver *due tarì* of Philip III (1598–1621).

The seventh find was a gold *dinar* that was issued by Ibrahim II, one of the Emiri Aglabidi of North Africa and Sicily (AH 261–89; AD 874–902). We do not have

[12] Coin figure does only represent an illustrative example of Al-Zahir's gold coin, struck in Sicily.

[13] MORTILLARO 1846: vol. III, p. 378, n. LIII (2); LAGUMINA 1892: pp. 156-60; O'LEARY 1923: pp. 189-92; D'OTTONE RAMBACH 2017: pp. 20-22 (on the Fatimid Caliphate's coinage in Sicily).

enough data on this coin, only a brief hint on its issuer ('quest'ultima è di Ibrahim'). Unfortunately, Lanza di Scalea did not provide a reason why Salinas was interested in buying this coin. It can be argued that the Palermo collections were evidently lacking in this specific issue of Ibrahim.

Finally, Fiorelli approved this numismatic purchase, as he wrote to Lanza di Scalea in a very short letter on 12 November 1877 (doc. n. 6).

4. CONCLUSIONS

These archival records have demonstrated how Antonino Salinas was interested in acquiring Arabic coins to increase the Palermo Museum collections. These two case studies are strictly limited to 1877, although we know that Salinas had also purchased or acquired many coins for the Biblioteca Comunale. But how can we assess these acquisitions in terms of the history of Sicilian state collections? And, what was the final destiny of these two Arabic coins, donated by Pacetto?

Previous assessments of archival records have revealed similar bureaucratic procedures to approve any potential purchase of small antiquities or 'officialise' find donations. First, the museum curator, namely Salinas, spotted a good find or set of artefacts—eventually owned by a local collector—which might be potentially vital for increasing the collections. Once he was fully aware of its price, he normally contacted a regional authority, such as the Commissioner Lanza di Scalea, who had to consider and evaluate the purchase. Subsequently, Lanza wrote to the Ministry of Public Education for a final purchase approval, which implied that the relevant fund allocation had been made.

In terms of donations, Salinas firstly approached collectors, who could be based in all Sicilian provinces. For instance, Delfino Trucchi was in Palermo, while Pacetto operated in Ragusa and many other local collectors were active in the Messina province (e.g. Professor Todaro at Tripi or Luigi Mancuso, a pharmacist in Lipari). Salinas might also contact a state authority, such as the city mayor of San Marco d'Alunzio (Messina), who he personally encouraged to donate ancient inscriptions that were found scattered in his small town. Salinas was perfectly experienced to benefit from a wide-ranging and dense contact network over the whole island. He knew many collectors and local authorities. If acquiring finds from very peripheral Sicilian areas would have impoverished local archaeology and partially prevent the creation of local museums or *antiquaria*, then this could enrich the Palermo collections and ease any use or study of finds by national and international scholars.

Salinas' actions can be summarised as follows: 'Acquiring means preserving'. This sort of 'policy' has been clearly detected also in the Bourbon period, when state authorities acquired finds to be moved and especially preserved in the central

Museum of the University of Palermo. For instance, we can mention the case studies on the Arabic coins found in Cefalù in (1824) and some ancient coins seized to Giuseppa Giammone in Giarre (1832); both sets of numismatic finds were promptly moved to that museum institution.[14]

Both Salinas and national authorities were very keen to thank all of the collectors, who donated finds for the regional and state benefit. Above all, the donors gave their own contribution to enrich the whole Italian cultural heritage. It is evident that ministerial authorities always used laudable words to thank donors and they sometimes asked Salinas to personally be grateful to them.[15]

Salinas' selection of finds was not strictly based on 'personal' collecting tastes but followed a precise programmatic plan to boost the Museum collections, which were somehow lacking and needed to be completed. This aspect has been fully demonstrated for the Bourbon eighteenth-century coins of the 'Cerda Hoard' (1868), for Delfino Trucchi's donation of rare Greek silver tetradrachms of Syracuse (1868) and one more time for the Arabic coins offered by Pacetto (1871), as discussed here.[16]

We can also speculate about the final destiny of these numismatic acquisitions. First, we should exclude that all coins mentioned in our new records had been stored in the Biblioteca Comunale of Palermo, whose Arabic numismatic collection was published by Lagumina at the very end of the nineteenth century. It seems that our coin, issued by ʿAlī alẒāhir, does not appear in the catalogue. The other coin of Ibrahim II has not been properly described by Salinas, which makes it difficult to trace it in Lagumina's catalogue. Therefore, it can be inferred that these Arabic specimens have been finally preserved in the Palermo Museum's collections together with the other classical and modern coins that were acquired by Salinas in 1877. Future and desirable investigations may clarify this issue.[17]

In conclusion, we should stress how our new records represent just two selected case studies that assess a limited chronological period of the history of Sicilian collections. Of course, further archival research may strongly improve our knowledge on find donations and acquisitions by Sicilian nineteenth-century curators. They may also offer fresh data on the history of regional collecting, a theme which needs a more constant, in-depth analysis.

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[14] CRISÀ 2012: pp. 27–28 (Giarre, 1832), 36–37 (Cefalù, 1824); CRISÀ 2018: pp. 128–129.

[15] Doc. n. 4: '[…] sentite grazie al Sig.r Can. Giovanni Pacetto […] l'autorizzo a rendere palese il gesto meritevole di alto encomio e degno delle pubbliche riconoscenze'; CRISÀ 2014b: p. 273, doc. n. 2: 'La prego di ringraziare con mano del Governo il sig(nor) Delfino Trucchi per il dono, che ha fatto al Museo'; CRISÀ 2018: doc. TRIP.1.3: '[…] la Direzione di questo Museo sin dal 23 Ottobre 1886 non mancò di rendere all'illustre Professore Todaro i dovuti ringraziamenti pel dono da lui fatto delle sapute iscrizioni di *Abacaenum*'.

[16] CRISÀ 2014a: pp. 339–62; CRISÀ 2014b: pp. 277–86; CRISÀ 2018: pp. 85–86.

[17] LAGUMINA 1892: pp. 156–60.

5. ARCHIVAL RECORDS

[Doc. n. 1] *ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., versamento I, busta 287 | file folder | 1 side*

MUSEI, GALLERE E PINACOTECHE
152-103-34

[Doc. n. 2] *ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., versamento I, busta 287 | headed paper | 2 sides*

{1} Palermo 4 Gennaio 1877.

62-1-1
Palermo

COMMISSARIATO SPECIALE PER GLI SCAVI E PER I MUSEI DELL'ISOLA DI SICILIA

Num. 4
OGGETTO: Dono di monete ed altro al nostro Museo.

N.º 68.
Direz. Arch
7. g.º

A S.E.
Il Signor Ministro per la Pubblica Istruzione
Roma

Dal Sig.r Direttore di questo Museo, con lettera del 2 corrente mese N.º 2, mi si scrive quanto io mi premuro portare alla conoscenza di cotesto Ministero, perché ne voglia restare inteso, e per autorizzarmi a renderlo palese per le stampe, sempre allo scopo di servire ad eccitamento di altri cittadini, e spingerli a donare le loro raccolte al nostro Museo.
"Dal Sig.r Can. Giovanni Pacetto da Scicli mi sono state regalate N.º 12 monete di bronzo, una araba di oro e un sigillo bizantino di piombo, che io mi affretto a donare da parte mia al nostro Museo.
Fra le monete di bronzo ve ne ha due di Siracusa importanti per la loro rarità, alla {2} quale, una specialmente, aggiunge una bella conservazione.
Quella araba di oro è coniata in Sicilia, a nome del Califfo fatemita El Zâhir, importante, perché per un fatto singolare in numismatica, è espresso il mese in cui fu battuta la moneta.
Questo esemplare serve pure a completare la leggenda di quel dinar, perché vi si vedono alcune parole che non furono lette dal Morso nella nota manoscritta pubblicata dal Mortillaro, opere vol. III, pag. 378, n.º LIII".

[Doc. n. 3] *ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., versamento I, busta 287 | headed paper | 1 side*

Roma, addì 13. Gennaio 1877

Al Commissario dei Musei e Scavi di Sicilia
Palermo

Prot.º Gen.e N.º 68
N.º di Posiz.e 62-1-1
N.º di Part.a 244.
Risposta a nota del 4 Gennaio 1877
Div. Sez. N. 4
OGGETTO: Dono al Museo di Palermo

Prego la S.V. di esprimere a nome del Governo sentite grazie al Sig.r Can. Giovanni Pacetto di Scicli, per aver voluto generosamente donare al Museo di Palermo alcune sue monete, e l'autorizzo a rendere palese il gesto meritevole di alto encomio e degno delle pubbliche riconoscenze.

D'Ordine
F.º Fiorelli

[Doc. n. 4] *ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., versamento I, busta 287 | file folder | 1 side*

MUSEI, GALLERE E PINACOTECHE
152-103-10

[Doc. n. 5] *ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., versamento I, busta 287 | headed paper | 2 sides*

{1} Palermo 3. Novembre 1877.

COMMISSARIATO SPECIALE PER GLI SCAVI E PER I MUSEI DELL'ISOLA DI SICILIA
Num. 921.
OGGETTO: Acquisto di monete.

N.º 5353.
Direz. Archeol
6. 9mbre 77

Senza precedenti di approv.

A S.E.
Il Signor Ministro per la Pubblica Istruzione
Roma

Questo Sig. Direttore del Museo faceasi a proporre a questo Ufficio lo acquisto nello interesse di quell'Istituzione di N.º sei monete di argento, ed una di oro araba.
Quest'ultima è di Ibrahim. Delle sei di argento quattro stateri con tipi corinzi colla testa di Pallade, e col Pegaso, ed una di esse porta l'iscrizione "Dei Siracusani".
La quinta è un tetradramma punico con l'iscrizione Tritz, e la sesta un due tarì di Filippo III.
Lo stato di conservazione e propriamente la freschezza del tetradramma, non che la modicità del prezzo che se ne chiede in £ 32., m'inducono ad accogliere una tale proposta, e pregare di {2} conseguenza cotesto Ministero a volermi autorizzare l'uscita del fondo da imputarsi alle doti del Museo pel corrente esercizio.

Il Commissario
F. Lanza P.e di Scalea

[Doc. n. 6] *ACS, MPI, AA.BB.AA., versamento I, busta 287 | headed paper | 1 side*

Roma, addì 12. Nov. 1877

Al Commiss.º dei Musei e degli Scavi di Ant.à in Sicilia
Palermo

Prot.º Gen.e N.º 5353
N.º di Posiz.e 62-1-1
N.º di Part.a 8156.
Risposta a lett. 3 Nov. del 77
Div. Sez. N. 921
OGGETTO: Acquisto di monete.

Nell'approvare l'acquisto per cotesto Museo Nazionale delle monete descrittemi da V.S. col contromarcato foglio, l'autorizzo a riportare il prezzo di esse in lire trentadue nei conti delle anticipazioni, indicanti il numero nel quale d.te monete furono segnate nell'inventario.

D'ord.e
f.to Fiorelli

Abbreviations

9mbre = Novembre
AA.BB.AA. = Antichità e Belle Arti
ACS = Archivio Centrale dello Stato
Ant.à = Antichità
approv. = approvazione
Arch = Archeologia
Archeol = Archeologia
Can. = Canonico
Commiss.º = Commissario
d.te = dette
Direz. = Direzione
doc. = document
F.º = firmato
f.to = firmato
g.º = gennaio
Gen.e = Generale
lett. = lettera
MPI = Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione
Nov. = Novembre
Num. = Numero
ord.e = ordine
P.e = Principe
pag. = pagina
Part.a = Partita
Posiz.e = Posizione
Prot.º = Protocollo
S.E. = Sua Eccellenza
S.V. = Signoria Vostra
Sez. = Sezione
Sig.r = Signor
V.S. = Vostra Signoria
vol. = volume

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Figure 1 – Palermo: view of the internal cloister of the Museo Archeologico Regionale 'A. Salinas' (source: author)

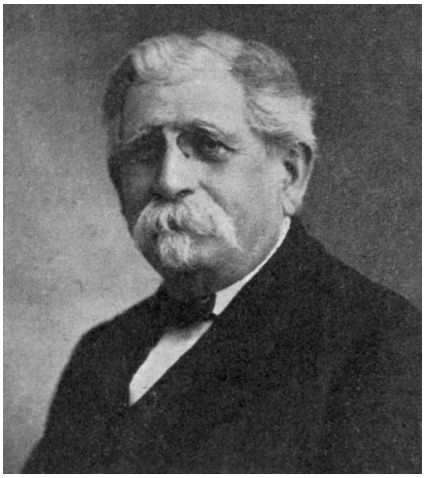


Figure 2 – Picture of Antonino Salinas (1841–1914) (source: Wikipedia)



Figure 3 – Scicli (Ragusa): early twentieth-century postcard showing Piazza Busacca (private collection)



Figure 4 – Al-Zahir (AH 411–427; AD 1005–36), Palermo, ¼ gold dinar (AH 421, AD 1030) (ex Numismatica Ltd, E-Sale 17, 25 April 2015, lot n. 1189)

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UN CONTRIBUTO QUASI INEDITO DI MICHELE AMARI. LA MATRICE SIGILLARE ISLAMICA DI LAGOPESOLE*

Abstract

This essay analyses the history of an islamic seal accidentally found nearby the medieval castle of Lagopesole (Basilicata, South of Italy). Starting from the informations contained in a newspaper article in 1889, this contribution aims to draw attention on a forgotten artefact which find could be a remarkable witness of social interactions in medieval southern Italy. Significant data for the research have been deduced from the correspondence between the archaeologist Domenico Ridola and the arabist Michele Amari at the end of the 19th century. The two exchanged views and interpretations about the seal but today they should be revised. In this outlook both the translation given by Amari and a picture of the seal were useful to understand some aspects of the artefact. The purpose of the present text is to define more clearly the features of the seal, his history and its archaeological context.

Keywords

Michele Amari, Domenico Ridola, Lagopesole, correspondence, seals

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Questo lavoro si inserisce nell'ambito di un più vasto ed ambizioso progetto di ricerca, storica ed archeologica, riguardante il castello di Lagopesole in Basilicata[1]. Il rinnovato interesse per la fortezza, suscitato dalle recenti campagne di scavo, ha favorito il riesame degli elementi di letteratura e delle più disparate fonti ad essa attinenti. Tra queste, il presente studio si propone di aggiungere un piccolo tassello alla conoscenza di un dato materiale di grande valore storico, quale è la matrice sigillare con iscrizione in lingua araba rinvenuta più di un secolo fa. Il reperto, tra le più significative testimonianze della presenza di elementi musulmani nella Basilicata medievale, riveste particolare interesse per essere stato l'oggetto di una breve ma fondamentale corrispondenza.

Si tratta di due singole lettere che, parte di un epistolario di cui non conosciamo l'esatta consistenza, condensano temi ai quali si potrebbe dedicare un'attenzione specifica. I due protagonisti del carteggio sono personaggi notissimi all'epoca: da una parte Domenico Ridola, la cui biografia umana e professionale è stata spesso oggetto dell'attenzione degli storici lucani e di archeologi di fama internazionale[2]; dall'altra il famoso arabista e storico siciliano, il senatore Michele Amari[3]. Nello specifico, l'oggetto dello scambio epistolare riguarda una minuscola pietra (una corniola) incisa con un'iscrizione in lingua araba, probabile castone di un anello signatorio, rinvenuta sul finire dell'800, pare fortuitamente, nel corso di una ricognizione presso le mura del castello di Lagopesole. Non disponiamo di ulteriori notizie circa il contesto archeologico di rinvenimento, sommariamente indicato nell'area ai piedi della fortificazione, così come non abbiamo elementi utili per identificare il luogo attuale di conservazione del sigillo.

Malgrado ciò ci è noto implicitamente il suo successivo spostamento a Matera nelle mani del dr. Domenico Ridola, Regio Ispettore degli Scavi e Monumenti del capoluogo lucano. Il Ridola segnalò e sottopose il reperto ad Amari. Una decisione probabilmente non immune da risvolti personali, tuttavia non ci è dato sapere a

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[1] Tra i fortilizi più imponenti e significativi della regione, sorge nell'omonima frazione del Comune di Avigliano in provincia di Potenza. Il castello è noto per esser stato residenza estiva di Federico II di Svevia, di suo figlio Manfredi e dei primi sovrani angioni di Napoli.

[2] Domenico Ridola (1841 – 1932) fu medico ed insigne archeologo, membro di numerose accademie ed Ispettore onorario degli scavi a Matera (dal 1877), deputato (1906-1912) e senatore del Regno (1913). In sintesi, il Ridola fu una poliedrica figura animata da vasti interessi interdisciplinari e fornì un importante contributo alla conoscenza della Basilicata preistorica. Un contributo ben documentato dalla sua collezione, confluita completamente nel Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Matera (istituito il 9 febbraio 1911) che porta oggi il suo nome. Il medico-archeologo fu tra i protagonisti di una elite che animò il risveglio culturale lucano tra '800 e '900; su di lui S. DE PILATO 1928: pp. 161-167 e T. PEDIO 1964: pp. 110 ss.

[3] Non tornerò in questa sede a delineare la figura e l'opera di Michele Amari (1806-1889). Al tempo stesso questa breve analisi ha la speranza di costituire un piccolissimo contributo alla serie delle edizioni dei carteggi costituenti il Fondo Amari.

quando doveva risalire la loro conoscenza. È ipotizzabile, più semplicemente, che il Ridola avesse necessità di un parere autorevole come quello dell'illustre orientalista siciliano per l'inquadramento storico del reperto.

Ad ogni modo, solo all'indomani della scomparsa dell'Amari, il medico-archeologo lucano decise di diffondere a mezzo stampa la notizia del ritrovamento e della sua traduzione su *L'Eco, Giornale della Lucania*[4]. In quel frangente venne pubblicata una parte della corrispondenza tra il Ridola e l'Amari, al quale era stato inviato il calco in gesso «*dell'epigrafe incisa su di una corniola, rinvenuta nelle vicinanze di Lagopesole e che diventò mia per la squisita cortesia del cav. Angelo Telesca*»[5].

La comunicazione, dal titolo *L'epigrafe curiosa*, comprendeva anche la copia della missiva inviata in risposta dall'Amari da Pisa, nella quale lo studioso siciliano suggeriva la lettura dell'iscrizione: «*La mia Buona speranza è in Dio, Nel Profeta avventurato, Nel tutore che sa la buona via, in Husain e in Hasan*», specificando che il «*suggello appartenne ad uno Sciita, ossia partigiano di Alì, come erano i fatimiti che regnarono in Sicilia nel X e XI secolo. I caratteri mi sembrano di quel tempo. La corniola è rara nei predicati che si danno a Maometto e ad Alì e che non si trovano nei comunissimi monumenti degli Sciiti*»[6].

Queste parole di Amari costituiscono la fonte principale di informazioni circa la matrice sigillare in esame[7]. La soluzione dell'enigma fornita dallo studioso segnò un passaggio cruciale nella storiografia dell'insediamento fortificato di Lagopesole, avvalorando inconsapevolmente un'antica tradizione locale, pedissequamente riportata fino ai giorni nostri, circa l'origine musulmana del primitivo sito incastellato. Non si unì a quel coro Michele La Cava, il quale escluse finanche l'eventualità di scontri armati in Lagopesole prima della sua fondazione, ipotizzando che «*il sigillo appartenesse ad un qualche arabo seguace di Federico o di Manfredi*»[8].

Inoltre quei racconti privi di fondamento ed infarciti di anacronismi suscitarono l'ironia di Émile Bertaux qualche anno più tardi (1897) il quale, non senza una buona

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[4] «L'Eco, Giornale della Lucania», 28 luglio 1889, lettera di Domenico Ridola ad Arcangelo Pomarici (direttore ed editore del periodico di Potenza). Il tutto a pochi giorni della scomparsa dell'Amari, avvenuta in Firenze il 16 luglio di quello stesso anno.

[5] Fu uno studioso lucano, originario di Avigliano (Potenza). Di lui si ricorda uno studio sui fatti di Avigliano durante la Repubblica Partenopea del 1799, pubblicato a Potenza da Pomarici nel 1892.

[6] «L'Eco, Giornale della Lucania», *Epigrafe curiosa*, cit., lettera di Michele Amari da Pisa, datata 9 dicembre 1887.

[7] Non è remoto ipotizzare che tale calco sia, unitamente alle altre riproduzioni conservate da Amari, tra quelle ereditate dalla Biblioteca Centrale di Palermo in attesa di catalogazione, cfr. DE LUCA 2015: p.165.

[8] LA CAVA 1891: p. 38: «(...) *ritrovamento di una corniola con arabiche incisioni, posseduta ora dal Dr. Domenico Ridola, che ha curato di farla interpretare dall'illustre Michele Amari*». Il riferimento è ai fedelissimi musulmani dell'Imperatore Federico II di Svevia e di suo figlio Manfredi.

dose di sarcasmo, scrisse: «*se crediamo ad una leggenda locale che esso sarebbe stato fabbricato nel 743 – bisogna essere precisi – da un capo saraceno che portava i due nomi greci di Andronicus Civrestes, inviato in Italia nientemeno che da Leonida Re di Sparta…*»[9].

Questo non bastò, perché di lì a breve la tradizione popolare, l'oggetto e l'analisi effettuata da Amari costituirono ancora una volta la base per alcune osservazioni di Giustino Fortunato (1902) circa la presunta genesi del castello da un *oppidum* saraceno di nome *Fiorenzuola*[10]. Solo per una suggestione personale lo storico ipotizzò una nuova frequentazione musulmana durante le scorrerie saracene del X secolo delle quali una, tra il 925 e il 929 «*senza dubbio pigliò di mira Lagopesole e raggiunse, io credo, il fine…*» dal momento che «*nelle vicinanze del castello fu trovata, ora è poco, una corniola con caratteri arabi* (riportando la traduzione di Amari)…»[11]. Malgrado ciò i sintetici riferimenti del celebre storico e politico lucano non sono comunque supportati da riferimenti specifici sul sito nelle cronache medievali[12].

La presenza del manufatto risultava quindi incomprensibile se non ricorrendo alle fonti storiche degli annalisti cristiani nel Medioevo. In queste si evince implicitamente come la frequentazione musulmana sia stata tutt'altro che fugace in Basilicata: un dato che si materializza ancora oggi nella toponomastica e nei prestiti lessicali del dialetto locale[13]. Tale interferenza culturale, abbondantemente attestata nelle fonti ma poco approfondita nelle tematiche, descrive un contatto diretto che va esteso ben oltre le solite note sulle devastazioni operate dai musulmani nelle cronache del tempo.

Un solo oggetto decontestualizzato non poteva certo rappresentare un corposo lascito archeologico su cui poter argomentare l'esistenza di un abitato musulmano nei pressi di Lagopesole[14]. Va quindi precisato che il ritrovamento di una matrice

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[9] BERTAUX 1897: p. XX.

[10] FORTUNATO 1902: pp. 12-13.

[11] FORTUNATO 1902: pp. 16-17.

[12] *Lacumpensulum* risulta citata per la prima volta nel 1129 cfr. ALESSANDRO DI TELESE 2001: pp.22 -23.

[13] SERRA 1983: il volume, oltre ad analizzare gli elementi linguistici di chiaro etimo arabo nel dialetto locale, costituisce un compendio delle testimonianze letterarie medievali sulla presenza musulmana in Basilicata e sull'esistenza di centri abitati popolati da arabo-berberi (alcuni anche di fondazione come Castelsaraceno; oppure Tursi, Tricarico e Pietrapertosa, dove sopravvivono quartieri che rimandano nell'etimo al *ribāṭ* maghrebino: *Rabatana, Ravata, Arabata*). Contatti che si distribuiscono in un arco di tempo piuttosto lungo, dall'arrivo delle truppe mercenarie nei principati longobardi alla nascita dell'emirato di Bari (847-871) e fino alla distruzione del castello saraceno di Lucera in Capitanata nel 1300, dove Federico II aveva confinato i ribelli (poi fedelissimi) del cosiddetto cantone musulmano di Giato (Jato) in Sicilia.

[14] Le campagne di scavo sin qui condotte sono lungi dall'avvalorare le ipotesi di Giustino Fortunato. Né i ritrovamenti di superficie né gli scavi archeologici ci hanno restituito, nell'area in

sigillare non può sempre essere legato alla presenza del titolare perché se da un lato tali oggetti erano strettamente personali, dall'altro è abbastanza attestato il commercio di gemme arabe incise sin dal primissimo medioevo anche in terre più lontane dalla dār al-Islām[15].

Rimasto confinato nell'oblio, il nostro suggello è riemerso solo recentemente ed una sua immagine venne pubblicata da Paolo Peduto e Rosa Fiorillo, all'indomani degli scavi che misero in luce le strutture di un *oppidum* prenormanno nell'area antistante le mura del castello di Lagopesole. Sulla scia di quanto asserito da Michele Amari sotto il profilo cronologico, si propose di datare il sigillo al X secolo, in seguito alla valutazione degli aspetti storico-epigrafici del formulario ispirato all'Islām sciita attendendo più dettagliati studi[16].

Attualmente le uniche testimonianze disponibili constano di due riproduzioni fotografiche, gentilmente concesse dal prof. Paolo Peduto, provenienti dalla Biblioteca della Società Napoletana di Storia Patria[17]. In queste, la corniola si presentava sotto una nuova veste, incastonata in un anello, in ottimo stato di conservazione, senza patine o impurità[18]. Il castone, di cui non si dispone delle misure ma che sembra avere dimensioni minime, presenta una sagoma quadrangolare con angoli e lati smussati. La faccia vista è interamente occupata da un'iscrizione in stile angolare[19], dispo-

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questione, reperti musulmani anteriori all'XI secolo, termine prima del quale si vuole far risalire un insediamento arabo-berbero in questo territorio.

[15] Sono molti i casi in cui questi piccoli oggetti vennero riutilizzati in altri contesti, cfr. D'OTTONE RAMBACH 2015: pp. 26, dove si rammenta la spilla con croce d'età carolingia di Ballycotin in Irlanda o anche l'anello d'argento con gemma incisa ritrovato a Birka in Svezia. Senza dimenticare che la presenza di mercanti arabi doveva essere abituale nelle città portuali della Campania e della Puglia sin dal IX secolo. Queste intrattenevano rapporti politici e commerciali in un mercato che soffre la mancanza di attestazioni scritte che non siano le fonti legate a Gaeta, Amalfi, Napoli, Bari e Salerno. In sintesi un sistema commerciale dominato dall'Islām, del quale era parte naturale la Sicilia musulmana, l'Ifrīqiya, al-Andalus e l'Oriente e che aveva il suo vertice settentrionale in Amalfi, virtuale monopolio di articoli di lusso cfr. le testimonianze del normanno Guglielmo Appulo in V. VON FALKENHAUSEN 1983: pp. 339-346 o di Ibn Ḥawqal in AMARI 1880: pp. 24-25 e gli studi di A. CITARELLA 1968: pag. 530 ss; T. LEWICKI 1978: pp. 465 ss., oltre ad una ricca bibliografia.

[16] PEDUTO – FIORILLO 2006: pp. 621-622. Si pose in evidenza la presenza di consistenti strutture murarie nell'area esterna al castello, databili tra X e XI secolo, facendo luce sulla vicenda edificatoria del complesso fortificato. Nello strato di riempimento delle fosse granarie sono stati rinvenute alcune pedine di scacchi in osso di derivazione araba (cfr. PEDUTO 2018; in corso di pubblicazione) e il frammento di un bicchiere troncoconico con iscrizione in lingua araba, legato all'importazione della prima fase angioina (cfr. FIORILLO 2005: p. 130, tav. XXXI.1).

[17] Biblioteca della Società Napoletana di Storia Patria (da ora BSNSP), *fondo Giustino Fortunato*, cartelle N. 66.2.1 (il faldone contiene 5 copie complessive di due fotografie).

[18] GIOVINO 2018 (in corso di pubblicazione): l'analisi del reperto compare in una scheda degli atti del convegno *Ad consueta solacia Lacus Pensilis*, tenutosi a Castel Lagopesole nel 2016.

[19] Per la quale si rimanda a SHARON 1997: p. XV.

sta orizzontalmente su quattro righe e priva di altri elementi ornamentali. La qualità dell'incisione sembra buona e ciò potrebbe suggerire, non esibendo a prima vista particolari segni di consunzione, un uso limitato dell'oggetto nel tempo da parte del suo possessore.

Si nota la presenza di una formula devozionale, senza data, mancante del nome del proprietario o dell'autorità rappresentata, incisa in negativo con sequenza destrorsa dei grafemi arabi, in modo da lasciare un'impronta leggibile sulla superficie da timbrare[20]. Non torneremo sulla questione, già abbondantemente affrontata da illustri studiosi, relativa all'uso cui furono destinati tali oggetti, necessari a certificare ed autenticare sostituendo la firma e/o garantire l'autenticità di lettere, documenti o altro. Resta semplicemente da ricordare, per confronto, la larghissima diffusione di questo tipo di sigilli nel mondo islamico[21].

Certo l'assenza del nome del possessore o della sua autorità può indurre ad escludere un uso ufficiale, dal momento che è in contrasto con il principio relativo alla sua funzione, di garanzia e veridicità di cui si è appena fatta menzione[22]. Al contrario, la semplice testimonianza relativa alla religione era ritenuta bastevole ad assicurare l'autenticità del documento e di altri oggetti[23].

La predilezione per la gemma da incidere era in linea di massima legata a vari fattori, da quelli più ovvi come la disponibilità economica del committente o alla possibilità di reperire la materia prima sui mercati ma, soprattutto, al potere propiziatorio e apotropaico attribuito alla pietra stessa[24]. Il tutto non manca naturalmente

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[20] Per la descrizione, l'utilizzo, le differenze con i talismani ed altre caratteristiche dei sigilli musulmani cfr. DE LUCA 2013: pp. 123 ss.

[21] Rimandi alla pratica di autenticare documenti e corrispondenza con un anello-sigillo sono ampiamente ricordati negli *aḥādīth*, a partire dall'episodio della lettera inviata dal Profeta all'Imperatore di Bisanzio nel racconto di Anas ibn Mālik, contenuto nella raccolta, *Sunan* (vol. 4, l. 35, ḥadīth 4202) di Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī; si veda anche l'episodio riportato dall'Imām al-Bukhārī, (*Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 9, l. 89, ḥadīth 276) e da Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad al-Tirmidhī (*Shama'il Muhammadiyah,* l. 11, ḥadīth 87). Ulteriormente, *aḥādīth* ricordano le fattezze, il colore o il posizionamento dell'anello nelle mani del Profeta, si vedano ad esempio le descrizioni in Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj (*al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, l. 24, *'aḥādīth* 5216-5220, 5222-5223; vol. 2, l. 4, ḥadīth 1336); in al-Tirmidhī (*Shama'il* , l. 11, ḥadīth 082 ss).; in al-Bukhārī (*Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 7, l. 72, hadīth 756); Abū Dāwūd (*Sunan*, vol. 4, l. 35, *'aḥādīth* 4204, 4206, 4209, 4211 con il riferimento al peso di un *mithqal*, corrispondente al peso di un *Dinar* ossia gr. 4, 25; vol. 4, l. 36, *'aḥādīth* 4214-4216); per le fonti citate mi sia concesso il rimando generale alla raccolta web che le contiene (https://muflihun.com, ultima consultazione 2 aprile 2017).

[22] DE LUCA 2013: pp. 129 ss.

[23] KALUS 1981: p. 10; PORTER 2011: p. 178, DE LUCA 2013: pp.129 ss.

[24] GALLOP – PORTER 2012: attributi non specifici della cultura islamica ma popolari sin dai tempi antichi a diverse latitudini. Si veda anche KALUS 1987: p. 233 e soprattutto il trattato di Ahmad al-Tīfāshī (XIII sec.) in RAINERI BISCIA 1818: pp. 44-45: « *La corniola è una pietra dalla quale si fanno sigilli, che si vendono 4 dracme l'uno. Se ne fanno ancora degli anelli, e dei manici di coltello. Un bel lapillo di corniola, inciso, e adattato per un anello vale una dracma di moneta corrente. Siffatto*

di rispondere ad una ben determinata tradizione religiosa contenuta negli *'aḥādīth*: la corniola (in lingua araba: *al-'aqīq*; العقيق), favorita dal Profeta[25], fu largamente impiegata nelle terre islamiche per le matrici sigillari. In tal senso si è scelto di evitare una lunga discussione sui presunti benefici derivanti dall'indossare un anello con corniola, piuttosto mettendo in evidenza l'importanza attribuita alla pietra dalla tradizione sciita, in particolare da ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib e dagli altri imām[26].

L'incisione stessa della pietra richiedeva la padronanza di tecniche specializzate ma sia le fonti sia la bibliografia non forniscono dati illuminanti in merito. Uno stretto legame sembra trasparire tra coloro che intagliavano le pietre per le matrici sigillari ed i monetieri, un parallelismo evidente in termini di stili, contenuti e tecniche, già evidenziato da Venetia Porter[27] e ben noto in Occidente durante il Medioevo[28].

Occorre precisare che, mancando anche una sequenza stratigrafica di riferimento, la datazione del reperto in esame non può che sfumare in una proposta ipotetica e suggerire, in base al solo dato stilistico del testo epigrafico, l'ascrivibilità del sigillo ad un periodo compreso tra X ed XI secolo. L'attuale disponibilità di confronti affidabili, in quantità considerevole, in collezioni museali di pregio, consente tuttavia una migliore comprensione, datazione ed analisi dei sigilli islamici medievali. In particolare, la matrice di Lagopesole risulta conforme alla tipologia più attestata per i sigilli islamici d'epoca classica (VIII – XIII secolo) nella divisione suggerita da Ludvik Kalus[29] e rispondente ad alcune caratteristiche stilistiche che Venetia Porter circoscrive ad un periodo compreso tra X e XII secolo[30]. É stato così possibile effettuare confronti estetici e superficiali, per la palesata ricerca di un buon livello qualitativo nella composizione e nell'incisione, con alcuni esemplari simili conservati nel British Museum e schedati sulla base del dato cronologico proposto da Venetia Porter[31].

Per sintetizzare più espressamente si può asserire che la datazione della matrice proposta da Michele Amari non è messa in discussione. Analogamente si nota l'e-

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prezzo però appartiene del tutto alla corniola rossa, che è la prima, e la più signorile della sua specie».

[25] Muslim (*Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, l. 24, ḥadīth 5222); Abū Dāwūd (*Sunan*, vol. 4, l. 35, ḥadīth 4204) in (https://muflihun.com); cfr. anche INIZAN – JAZIM – MERMIER 1992: p. 157.

[26] Nella tradizione sciita è riportato: «*Metti l'anello con pietra corniola poichè* [questa pietra] *ha testimoniato che non vi sia altro dio all'infuori di Dio, che io sono l'Inviato di Dio, che tu sei il mio successore, che i tuoi figli sono Imam…*», cfr. databili al XII secolo, KHWĀRIZMĪ 1965: P. 233 e IBN AL-MAGHĀZILĪ 1982: p. 281. Per le proprietà apotropaiche riconosciute alla corniola si veda anche il testo dell'XI sec. SHAYKH ṬŪSĪ 1993: vol . I, p. 36.

[27] PORTER 2011: p. 13.

[28] BASCAPÈ 1961: pp. 3-23.

[29] KALUS 1981: pp. 8 ss.; PORTER 2011: pp. 6,14-16; DE LUCA 2013: pp. 123 ss.

[30] Per i quali Venetia Porter propose una datazione tra il X- XII secolo, cfr. PORTER 2011: tav. 1c.

[31] Similitudini si evidenziano anche con esemplari di epoche più remote nel catalogo del British Museum in PORTER 2011: nn. 1866-1229, 122; 1866-1229, 123; 1878-1220, 206; 1878-1220, 208.

strema rarità della formula devozionale e, premettendo che la mancata conoscenza diretta del pezzo esaminato può costituire un severo limite alla sua analisi, ci si sofferma così ad una rapida segnalazione di alcuni elementi significativi: l'iscrizione appare sobria, adeguatamente spaziata e impaginata nella grafia angolare, dove si evidenzia la compresenza di grafemi curvilinei e apici bipartiti nei segmenti verticali.

In mancanza di ulteriori dati resta vano qualsiasi altro tentativo di indicare l'area esatta di provenienza, anche se le caratteristiche stilistiche ed il contenuto epigrafico fanno propendere per un'area ipoteticamente circoscritta ai territori controllati dai fatimiti. L'iscrizione palesa l'essenza stessa dell'Islam sciita, tra ciclo della profezia e inizio della *wilāya* nella legittimazione dell'autorità politica e spirituale della *ahl al-bayt* e nella concezione di una successione non esclusivamente temporale dei discendenti del Profeta[32]. Non entreremo qui nei dettagli né in un elenco bibliografico di episodi che fanno capo alle vicende legate al ruolo rivestito dal waṣī[33] Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, cugino, genero ed erede spirituale del Profeta, come fondamento dell'imamato sciita[34]. Concordando con quanto l'illustre arabista scrisse alla fine dell'800, l'iscrizione resta fedele allo spirito dell'ismailismo fatimita nella legittimazione degli alidi, nell'uso degli appellativi e nella devozione totale verso l'*ahl al-bayt* e specificatamente ai figli del *waṣī* ʻAlī, lo shahīd al-Ḥusayn e suo fratello al-Ḥasan[35]. Malgrado ciò una traduzione attualizzata del testo si è resa necessaria per il modo di scrivere dotto ma poco adatto all'uso moderno di Amari. Riguardo all'interpretazione tuttavia non si può nascondere come questa palesi i segni evidenti dell'esaltazione del mito ottocentesco da Amari stesso propagandato, quello della Sicilia musulmana. Resta nei fatti che il rinvenimento di questa matrice sigillare costituisce senza dubbio un elemento utile alla implementazione di una mappatura delle presenze materiali riconducibili alla cultura islamica in Italia meridionale.

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[32] CORBIN 1991: pp. 15, 26-27, 44; MASSI DAKAKE 2007: pp. 26-27, 33, 49, 105, 119 ss.; NASR et alii 1988: pp. 96 ss.; MOTAHHARI 2001: pp. 42 ss.

[33] Per l'appellativo e la sua accezione nell'ismailismo si veda la voce di GLAVE 2008: p. 285.

[34] CORBIN 1991: pp. 88 -91.

[35] MASSI DAKAKE 2007: pp. 103 -117.

SCHEDA

Matrice sigillare con iscrizione in lingua araba.

Provenienza: Lagopesole (Potenza, Basilicata) – area esterna al castello – rinvenimento occasionale mancante di dati di riferimento sul contesto archeologico;

Ubicazione attuale: ignota; attestata alla fine dell'800 come parte della Collezione Ridola in Matera;

Area di provenienza e datazione: califfato fatimide, Egitto/Africa del Nord, X-XI secolo (da confronti con reperti di datazione certa);

Materiale: pietra corniola (?); l'analisi è stata effettuata da rilievo fotografico e manca quindi di un esame condotto con strumenti idonei al suo riconoscimento;

Descrizione: quadrangolare con angoli fortemente arrotondati; di dimensioni minime ma ignote;

Campo scritto: iscrizione su quattro righe;

Tipo di scrittura: scrittura angolare;

Tecnica adoperata: incisione;

Tipo di iscrizione: religiosa, sciita;

Analisi effettuata da rilievo fotografico;

Bibliografia: «L'Eco - giornale della Lucania», *Epigrafe curiosa*, 28 luglio 1889; M. Lacava, *Topografia e storia di Metaponto*, Napoli 1891, p. 38; G. Fortunato, *Il castello di Lagopesole*, Napoli 1902, pp. 16-17; P. Peduto – R. Fiorillo, *Il castello di Lagopesole in Basilicata. Analisi di alcune strutture del castrum altomedievale della domus federiciana*, Atti del IV congresso nazionale di archeologia medievale (Abbazia di San Galgano, 26-30 settembre 2006), cur. R. Francovich – M. Valenti, Borgo San Lorenzo 2006, pp. 621-622.

Traduzione e testo in lingua araba a fronte:

Sia la mia buona speranza riposta in Dio Nel Profeta riconosciuto Nel garante che conosce il vero In Ḥusayn e Ḥasan	كن بالله خشى وبالنبي الميمن و بالوصي لحق البيان و بالحسين والحسن

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I manoscritti non si restituiscono — Potenza, Domenica 28 Luglio 1889. — Esce ogni Domenica

EPIGRAFE CURIOSA

Caro Pomarici,

Vi mando copia d'una lettera a me diretta da quell'insigne storico ed orientalista, che fu il senatore Michele Amari, la cui vita fu tutta un esempio, raro oggidì, di vero patriottismo, di lavoro tenace ed indefesso, di sapere profondo e modesto. In quella lettera egli interpretava ed illustrava un'epigrafe incisa su di una corniola, rinvenuta nelle vicinanze di Lagopesole e che divenuta mia per la squisita cortesia del Cav. Angelo Telesca.

Per l'importanza del documento e per la memoria di quell'uomo venerando spero che vorrete pubblicarla e di cuore vi ne ringrazio.

Matera 29 Luglio 1889.

Vostro
DOMENICO RIDOLA.

Pisa 9 Dicembre 1881.

Pregiatissimo Signore

Mi viene recapitata questa mattina, rinvenutemi da Roma la sua cortese lettera del 5 e lo scatolino con le impronte della corniola di Lagopesole.

L'iscrizione arabica dice:

« La mia buona speranza è in Dio,
« Nel Profeta avventurato,
« Nel tutore che sa la buona via,
« In Husain e in Hasan. »

Il Profeta già è Maometto. Il tutore ecc. è Alì e gli ultimi sono i celebri e sventurati suoi figliuoli.

Evidentemente il saggello appartenne ad uno Sciita, ossia partigiano di Alì, come erano i Fatimiti, che regnarono in Sicilia nel X e XI secolo.

I caratteri mi sembrano di quel tempo. La corniola è rara pei predicati che si danno a Maometto e ad Alì e che non si trovano nei comunissimi monumenti degli Sciiti.

Se potessa darmi qualche schiarimento più preciso intorno il luogo e il tempo del rinvenimento di questa corniola mi sarebbe cosa grata, ancorchè io sia adesso tanto occupato da non poter pensare alla pubblicazione di questa curiosa epigrafe.

Accolga intanto i miei saluti.

Devotissimo
M. AMARI.

All'Ill.mo Signore
Dottor Domenico Ridola
R. Ispettore degli Scavi e Monumenti
Matera

P. S. — A dichiarazione del vocabolo *tutore*, Le dico aver tradotto così un vocabolo arabico, che qui ha significato mistico di esecutore testamentario, come alcuni Sciiti chiamavano il loro semideo Alì, supponendolo incaricato di compiere la missione religiosa di Maometto. Ci sarebbe da scrivere un volume su questo argomento e però non ne dico altro.

Figura 1 – Biblioteca Nazionale di Potenza, *L'Eco: Giornale della Lucania, Amministrativo, Economico e letterario* - IT- PZ 0133 (microfilm), ff. 1, 3



Figura 2 – Biblioteca della Società Napoletana di Storia Patria, *fondo Giustino Fortunato*, cartella 66

Stefania Santangelo

CNR (IBAM) Catania

PAOLO ORSI E LA MONETAZIONE ARABA DI SICILIA NEL MEDAGLIERE DI SIRACUSA: DOCUMENTI D'ARCHIVIO

Abstract

The Syracuse Museum holds a collection of Arabic and Norman coins that I have been studying for a few years paying special attention to previously unknown or understudied coin hoards. This research focuses on the archive documents related to the findings acquired by the Museum thanks to the zealous work of archeologist Paolo Orsi who, from 1888 onwards, recovered them (in fact, he bought them) in the vast territory belonging to the Superintendence of Antiquity of Syracuse, which extended its jurisdiction to central and eastern Sicily and even, from 1923, to the whole region. Even though it has not been sufficiently emphasized up to date, the acquisition of this Collection, within the broad field of Arab-Islamic studies, was a crucial moment in the safeguarding of Arab numismatic records. Its importance – also in light of the difficulties encountered daily – allows us to speak of a real "orsian miracle"[*].

Keywords

Syracuse Museum, Paolo Orsi, Islamic coins, History of collections, Islamic and Norman Sicily

[*] Ricordando le parole di Gagliardi, "*l'opera di Paolo Orsi a Siracusa ha del miracoloso*", in quanto con una dotazione complessiva "scarsissima" riuscì a creare il medagliere siracusano, "*complesso meraviglioso*", Gagliardi 1935: pp. 289-297, in part. p. 293.

In questi ultimi anni ho avuto modo di far conoscere[1] una parte delle collezioni numismatiche del Museo Archeologico Regionale «Paolo Orsi» di Siracusa[2], che ha avuto la sorte di essere rimasta per lungo tempo nell'ombra: mi riferisco all'insieme di monete a legenda araba.

Si tratta di una raccolta di monete islamiche e normanne costituita da importanti ripostigli monetali e da esemplari singoli rinvenuti nel vasto territorio un tempo posto sotto la giurisdizione della Soprintendenza di Siracusa: da questa dipendeva dapprima la tutela archeologica delle province di Catania, Siracusa e Caltanissetta e, dal 1923 fino al 1939, dell'intera Sicilia[3].

Il materiale, per buona parte esposto in una bella ed attraente vetrina del Medagliere si trovava lì, tuttavia, privo di una revisione preliminare, a partire dalla semplice schedatura e non risultavano essere mai state effettuate operazioni di riordino o di sistematica verifica della reale consistenza.

È per tali ragioni che nel momento in cui ho intrapreso lo studio di questa raccolta ho cercato, prima di tutto, di assegnare a ciascuna moneta l'originario numero di inventario e, quindi, di ricomporne il quadro complessivo al fine di ottenere una stima precisa della sua entità; parallelamente a questo lavoro propedeutico, rivelatosi per nulla semplice – come avrò modo di spiegare – ho proceduto a ricercare dati di archivio o semplici appunti vergati nel registro inventariale che attestassero la provenienza o riportassero notizie legate ai rinvenimenti.

L'attività appena descritta mi ha portato a rivedere la figura di Paolo Orsi[4], al quale si deve la collazione di questo materiale, permettendomi di scoprirne quella che fu una silenziosa ma importantissima opera di salvaguardia indirizzata, in maniera lungimirante, anche verso le fasi islamiche e normanne della Sicilia; essa ebbe il merito di sottrarre così alla dispersione tracce di un passato che, diversamente, oggi

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[1] Anche all'ultimo Congresso Internazionale di Numismatica: Santangelo 2017.

[2] La storia del Medagliere è indissolubilmente legata a quella del Museo stesso, essendo stato per lungo tempo parte integrante delle sue collezioni. Brevemente, la ricca collezione numismatica fu inizialmente esposta in tre teche, nella sala XIII dedicata alla "Ceramica di Gela e Camarina. Collezione numismatica e ori", nella prima sede del Museo, presso lo storico edificio di Piazza Duomo (Mauceri 1914: pp. 22-24). Solo nel 2010 il Medagliere, rimasto qui ubicato, è stato ricongiunto al Museo Archeologico Regionale (già in consegna nel 1988), nella nuova sede, all'interno del parco di Villa Landolina e da allora occupa un settore dell'immobile appositamente creato (cfr. Ciurcina 2009).

[3] A seguito del R.D. n. 3164 del 1923 (e fino al 1939) fu attuata una riforma che prevedeva la separazione netta fra tutela archeologica, con sede a Siracusa, e tutela architettonica, con sede a Palermo. Vedi *infra*.

[4] Tanto è stato scritto sulla fondamentale attività svolta da Paolo Orsi in Sicilia, prima Direttore del Museo Nazionale di Siracusa dal 1891 al 1907 poi, dal 1907 al 1929, Soprintendente per le province di Siracusa (con Ragusa), Catania (con Enna) e Caltanissetta. Si vedano, fra i saggi più recenti, Paoletti 2005: pp. 194-197 (in part., nota bibliografica, p. 197) e vari contributi all'interno del volume Maurina, Sorge 2010, con bibliografia precedente.

non avremmo avuto modo di studiare. A sottolineare l'importanza di quest'attività di tutela, le carte d'archivio relative ad un ripostiglio islamico rinvenuto ai piedi del castello di Mussomeli (Caltanissetta) agli inizi del secolo scorso, hanno messo in luce le difficoltà e gli ostacoli a cui andava incontro, nell'assolvere i suoi compiti amministrativi e di tutela, lo stesso Orsi, costretto a districarsi fra le maglie di ingarbugliati impedimenti burocratici. Questi deriveranno, ad un certo momento, da conflitti di competenze fra le diverse Soprintendenze create.

Paolo Orsi, va ricordato, non conosceva la lingua araba, eppure aveva ben chiara l'importanza dell' "*archeologia araba*" a cui nessuno, egli lamentava, rivolgeva le dovute "*cure*", come lui stesso ebbe ad affermare in un articolo sulla ceramica invetriata[5]. In questo saggio Paolo Orsi faceva riferimento alla consulenza di Carlo Alfonso Nallino[6], uno dei più grandi islamisti del primo Novecento, per l'interpretazione dei grafemi dipinti sulla ceramica così come, lo vedremo, per le monete – anı che se in rarissimi casi – ebbe la possibilità di avvalersi dell'amichevole consulenza dell'arabista Bartolomeo Lagumina[7], "*antico collega*" [8].

Con questo approccio, correttamente definito 'olistico' perché lo portò a dedicarsi con uguale vigore e impegno al recupero di tutte le classi di fonti archeologiche, dalla preistoria al medioevo, nel corso della sua attività di ricerca e tutela svolta a Siracusa per circa un trentennio a partire dal 1888[9], il dirigente roveretano riuscì ad acquisire per il Museo un consistente numero di monete a legenda cufica.

Addirittura nel 1915 dava alle stampe i risultati del primo censimento del materiale numismatico medioevale in possesso del Museo alla data del 30 giugno 1914: si elencano 93 monete arabe di cui 66 auree e 27 argentee, anche se non vengono distinti gli esemplari singoli dai ripostigli[10].

A partire da questo momento la collezione di monete a legenda cufica registrerà un significativo accrescimento grazie ad importanti rinvenimenti, e segnatamente

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[5] Orsi 1915a: p. 250.

[6] Carlo Alfonso Nallino (Torino 1872-Roma 1938), eminente arabista e islamista, per quel che riguarda i suoi rapporti con la Sicilia, si ricordi che tenne la cattedra di arabo a Palermo dal 1902 al 1913 e fu curatore delle note dell'opera di M. Amari.

[7] De Luca 2016.

[8] Orsi 1915a: p. 252.

[9] Paolo Orsi (Rovereto, 1859-1935) giunse a Siracusa nel settembre del 1888 con l'incarico iniziale di Ispettore e poi, a partire dal 1891, di Direttore del Museo. Nel 1907 fu nominato anche Soprintendente degli Scavi e con questo ruolo si adoperò alacremente per contrastare i traffici illeciti degli scavatori clandestini e per acquisire o ricevere in donazione per il Museo innumerevoli collezioni private (Ciurcina 2008: pp. 52-54). Il ritratto di Paolo Orsi numismatico è stato tracciato di recente da M. Musumeci (Musumeci 2017).

[10] Orsi 1915b: p. 40. Per la consistenza attuale, Manenti-Santangelo c.d.s.

ai ripostigli relativi al periodo normanno[11], che verranno poi censiti e segnalati da Cassarino Tranchina, nel 1995, durante la direzione del Museo da parte di G. Voza.

Per quel che riguarda le monete arabe, invece, che continuano a rimanere nell'ombra, se ne ricostruiscono qui di seguito le vicende.

BREVE STORIA DELLA COLLEZIONE DI MONETE ARABE

Le monete, va premesso, vengono introitate nel Museo accompagnate da una descrizione molto scarna – frutto di chi chiaramente non riesce a interpretare ciò che vede – che fa riferimento solamente al numero di righe di scrittura di cui è composta la legenda centrale e, pertanto, sono tutte prive di attribuzione ad eccezione di due soli casi: a proposito di una moneta araba di cui Paolo Orsi scrive che era stata data "*in esame a mons. Lagumina in Girgenti*", il quale gli aveva dichiarato che era "*aglabita, ma di una zecca aglabita e non della Sicilia*" e a proposito delle novanta monete del ripostiglio di Mussomeli, dove è annotato che la schedatura – l'unica presente in tutta la collezione di monete arabe – era stata effettuata da Bartolomeo Lagumina.

E sempre a proposito di questo importante ripostiglio (delle cui vicende di rinvenimento parleremo fra poco) nel registro di inventario vi è un appunto, a margine, vergato a matita e firmato dalla signora Cassarino Tranchina, che porta la data 1961, in cui significativamente si legge che "*le monete non sono ben divise, si aspetta la classificazione del prof. P. Balog*".

Lo studioso ungherese – è noto – intorno alla metà del secolo scorso[12], nell'approfondire il quadro generale della monetazione islamica aveva attinto al materiale conservato presso il Museo di Siracusa, affrontando alcuni dei problemi più spinosi – ed ancor oggi irrisolti – della monetazione araba di Sicilia. Balog si era interessato, nello specifico, alle monete d'argento[13] e all'uso dei cosiddetti gettoni vitrei[14], esaminando per questa discussa produzione, oltre un esemplare proveniente da Sofiana (Caltanissetta), il gruzzolo di trentuno pezzi rinvenuto nei pressi del castello di Donnafugata[15] (Ragusa).

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[11] Santangelo 2017: pp. 261-262.

[12] Si veda il profilo scientifico e bibliografico tracciato in Travaini 2004: pp. 304-306.

[13] Le *kharrube* e le frazioni, come le "*cinque carrube*" contenute nei ripostigli di Modica e Zai sono presenti nel saggio di Balog 1979.

[14] Lo stesso Balog ricorda il suo "*bref séjour en Sicile, pendant le mois de Juillet 1955*" in cui ebbe l'occasione di visionare la Collezione di Palermo, le monete fatimide e i gettoni di vetro a Siracusa ed un gettone di al-Hākim nel Museo di Gela (Balog 1955).

[15] Balog 1975: pp. 125-148.

Quest'ultimo rinvenimento, in particolare, era servito allo studioso per sostenere l'ipotesi che i gettoni, poiché tesaurizzati e presenti in gran numero, circolavano come vera e propria moneta di scambio per le piccole transazioni[16].

Il materiale numismatico a legenda cufica, tuttavia, dopo questa breve e parziale parentesi di studio, torna nell'ombra di quelle che sono le collezioni più vistosamente importanti del Medagliere.

Anche in conseguenza di questa scarsa attenzione scientifica ricevuta, la ricognizione inventariale dei pezzi, come si accennava, si è rivelata non poco difficoltosa, complicata di fatto dalla perdita e/o scoloritura delle etichette recanti i numeri di prima immissione e da involontarie manomissioni nell'ordine di esposizione. Del resto, non dimentichiamolo, un momento 'critico' per le collezioni del Medagliere, *è* rappresentato dalla seconda guerra mondiale che determinò, per la salvezza delle stesse, il frettoloso trasferimento delle collezioni nell'abazia di Montecassino[17].

È per questo che, come si diceva, il lavoro preliminare di associare ad ogni moneta il suo originario numero di inventario basandosi sui dati trascritti nel registro inventariale è stato lungo e faticoso.

Spesso, infatti, il riscontro con le misure (il diametro, ma soprattutto il peso) non è stato sufficiente a poter individuare le monete già inventariate perché, laddove questi elementi erano indicati, essi non hanno potuto agevolare il riconoscimento dei pezzi a causa della loro approssimazione e della plausibile validità per più di un esemplare.

Tuttavia, al di là delle difficoltà appena esposte va detto che il rigore metodologico seguito da Paolo Orsi in fase di registrazione dei reperti lo portò ad annotare nei quaderni di inventario ogni particolare conosciuto, e perfino se avesse dubbi riguardo quanto riferito dal venditore, come nel caso, ad esempio, di un ripostiglio di *dirham* quadrati acquistato nel 1926, del quale l'antiquario aveva dichiarato la provenienza da Marsala[18].

È questa la ragione per cui gli inventari orsiani, come giustamente è stato sottolineato[19], rappresentano per gli studiosi documenti estremamente preziosi per le notizie contenute. Qui in particolare, nel caso degli esemplari islamici e normanni, trapela tutto l'impegno, anche e soprattutto alla luce della poca dimestichezza che, com'è evidente, lo stesso Orsi aveva con questo tipo di monetazione.

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[16] I gettoni vitrei rappresentano un capitolo spinoso della monetazione fatimide di Sicilia poiché riesce difficile, allo stato attuale delle conoscenze, stabilirne la loro reale funzione. Per un punto sullo *status questionis* e la relativa bibliografia si rimanda a De Luca 2000: pp. 195-197.

[17] Currò Pisanò 1962-1964: p. 217, nota 1.

[18] "*Ho qualche dubbio sulla dichiarazione di provenienza*", annota Paolo Orsi.

[19] Pelagatti 2012: pp. 599-621, pp. 617-618.

IL MEDAGLIERE DI SIRACUSA: LA COLLEZIONE DI MONETE ARABE

Fatte queste doverose premesse vediamo qual è la consistenza del Medagliere di Siracusa per quanto riguarda la monetazione a legenda araba e quali informazioni possiamo evincere dai dati d'archivio.

Volendo in questa sede tralasciare i ripostigli e le monete di età normanna, possiamo dire che gli esemplari islamici (non appartenenti a ripostigli) custoditi nel Medagliere ammontano a circa ottantatré pezzi[20]. Le monete, quasi tutte in oro, sono state battute prevalentemente nelle zecche siciliane ad eccezione di pochi esemplari e sono ascrivibili alle dinastie degli Omayyadi, degli Aghlabiti e dei Fatimidi con una proporzione fra i vari insiemi che conferma la loro provenienza dall'isola.

Dinastia	AV	AR	Numero di esemplari
Omayyadi (40-132 AH/ AD 661-750)	1	1	2
Aglhabiti (184-296 AH/ AD 800-908)	4	1	5
Fatimidi (296-567 AH/ AD 909-1171)	70	3	73
Fatimidi (imitazione in oro pallido)	1		1
Almoravidi (448-541 AH/ AD 1056-1147)	1		1
Incerta			1
Totale	77	5	83

Distribuzione delle monete islamiche per dinastie e metallo

Poco significativo, invece, nella formazione di questa raccolta, è l'apporto di donazioni, così come quello derivato dalle splendide collezioni acquistate nel tempo dal Museo stesso[21].

Modesto, infine, è il numero di monete che rivela di essere stato rinvenuto in una località ben precisa.

In breve, i pezzi sono in prevalenza frutto di acquisti, di cui viene riportato l'importo speso, la data, ed il luogo, che di solito è Taormina o Catania, da intendersi come il luogo della transazione e non del ritrovamento poiché i due centri citati,

[20] L'incertezza nasce dal fatto che al numero totale di 83 pezzi fornito già in Santangelo 2017 'sfugge' un esemplare inventariato con sommaria descrizione e non ancora individuato.

[21] Per la storia del Medagliere si veda Guzzetta 2012. Solamente la Collezione Galanti di Vizzini, acquistata l'1 dicembre del 1987, dopo la nostra classificazione ha rivelato contenere pezzi riferibili al periodo arabo, oltre che normanno, come finora segnalato (Ibidem: pp. 72-73).

come sappiamo, erano mercati antiquari importanti[22]. Taormina, in particolare, proprio per il suo ruolo di meta di viaggiatori e della villeggiatura internazionale, alimentava un commercio di antichità destinato a facoltosi acquirenti stranieri, che Orsi teneva sott'occhio per arginare l'uscita di materiali pregevoli dal territorio siciliano.

Il registro di inventario ci permette di aggiungere ora anche Agrigento, come luogo tenuto sotto osservazione da Orsi, forse anche per il tramite dell'amico Lagumina[23].

A questo proposito attrae la nostra attenzione un *dirham* (fig. 1) di cui non si conosce l'esatta provenienza; il registro testimonia l'acquisto, senza luogo, nel 1900, ma è molto suggestivo pensare possa essere stato comperato ed addirittura provenire da Agrigento. Proprio in riferimento agli esercizi di questi anni, infatti, i registri museali rivelano che Paolo Orsi attingeva con una certa frequenza dal mercato antiquario di Girgenti-Agrigento. Qui, ad esempio, nel 1903 era stato rivenuto un grande ripostiglio di molti *dirham* d'argento, parzialmente incorporato nella Biblioteca Comunale di Palermo e pubblicato da Lagumina[24], due esemplari dei quali sembrano essere confluiti proprio nel Medagliere di Siracusa[25].

Sempre in questi stessi anni, Paolo Orsi acquista, senza precisare dove, altri due *dirham* di zecca spagnola, di cui uno è l'esemplare in questione e risulta, forse per una mera coincidenza (?), identico ai due conservati ad Agrigento e pubblicati da Daniele Castrizio. Per questi l'A. ipotizza la presenza di fuoriusciti spagnoli, arrivati con Asad o Farghalàs, e la possibilità che le monete potessero appartenere ad un combattente, morto durante gli avvenimenti drammatici che caratterizzarono le prime fasi della guerra arabo-romea.

Ritornando all'insieme della raccolta, stabilito come sembra che il *dirham* battuto a Marw nel 95 AH/ AD 713 potrebbe essere riferito, insieme ad un altro *dirham* battuto in Spagna nel 107 AH/ AD 725, allo scorporo – non altrimenti documentato – di un ripostiglio rinvenuto a Girgenti nel 1903, fra i più antichi esemplari della collezione islamica del Medagliere di Siracusa si annoverano poche monete battute dagli Omayyadi. Il primo è un *dīnār*, in ottimo stato di conservazione, datato nel 120 AH/ AD 737 ed emesso verosimilmente nella zecca di Damasco (fig. 2). Come il primo *dirham* visto esso illustra perfettamente la cosiddetta svolta epigrafica che la monetazione islamica assunse dopo la riforma operata da Abd al-Malik, dapprima nei nominali in argento ed in bronzo e poi, a partire dal 77 AH/ AD 696, negli esemplari

[22] Buscemi Felici 2012: pp. 155-182.

[23] Il *trait d'union* fra Agrigento e Orsi sembra essere rappresentato da Bartolomeo Lagumina (Palermo 1850-Agrigento 1931), vescovo agrigentino, esperto arabista, fidato collaboratore di Antonio Salinas, da costui cooptato per la schedatura e il riordino del materiale islamico del R. Museo di Palermo (De luca 2016).

[24] Lagumina 1904.

[25] Santangelo 2017: p. 261.

in oro, probabilmente al fine di creare una moneta islamica di tipo 'universale', che fosse cioè universalmente accettata in tutte le regioni dello stato omayyade, compreso l'Iran e la Grande Siria[26].

Proseguendo il nostro percorso cronologico nella collezione, alla dinastia aghlabita sono riferibili cinque monete, di cui quattro appartengono sicuramente all'epoca di Ibrāhīm II[27] e sono in oro. Fra questi esemplari, in particolare, figura un solo *dīnār* del peso di circa 4 grammi, battuto nel 261 AH/ AD 874[28] (fig. 3), mentre i restanti sono *rubā'ī*, ovvero i nuovi nominali di circa 1 grammo (un quarto del *dīnār*), che probabilmente fu lo stesso Ibrāhīm II ad introdurre nella metà del IX secolo[29]. Risulta rinvenuto a Messina, anche se le indicazioni di zecca e data non sono oramai leggibili, un mezzo *dirham* battuto a nome di Muhammad I (226-242 AH/ AD 840-856).

Prevedibilmente, il nucleo numericamente più cospicuo di questa raccolta è rappresentato dagli esemplari fatimidi, incorporati nel Museo non solo come monete appartenenti a ripostigli – che in questa sede non vengono considerati – ma anche come rinvenimenti sporadici; sono battuti in argento, ma soprattutto in oro. A parte pochi *dīnār* e qualche *kharruba*, prevalgono i quarti di *dīnār* (*rubā'ī*).

Sono presenti quattro *rubā'ī* a nome del primo reggente del paese fatimida 'Ubayd Allāh detto al-Mahdī bi'llāh ("il ben guidato da Dio"), di cui solo uno ha provenienza certa: "*da Modica*" (Ragusa).

Quasi in egual numero (cinque) sono gli esemplari battuti dal successore al-Qā'im, tutti privi dell'indicazione di provenienza ad eccezione di un *rubā'ī* scoperto a Mineo (fig. 4), in provincia di Catania. Anche se non è indicato esattamente il luogo, il rinvenimento risulta degno di nota soprattutto alla luce del fatto che in questo centro, da tempo, si cercano testimonianze materiali relative alla presenza islamica, al fine di definire meglio le dinamiche insediative del territorio e dell'area limitrofa alla piana dei Margi.[30]

Con gli esemplari (otto) di al-Manṣūr bi'llāh (334-341 AH/ AD 946-953), il primo califfo fatimida nato in Africa, apprezziamo il cambiamento formale operato

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[26] Treadwell 2009.

[27] A causa del suo cattivo stato di conservazione uno degli esemplari non è attribuibile con certezza.

[28] È l'anno in cui compare il nome Balāg, come osservato da De luca 2010: p. 119. Nel registro di inventario, nel descrivere questo esemplare, Paolo Orsi annota: "*non coniato in Sicilia ma rinvenuto in Sicilia*".

[29] Secondo una recente ipotesi gli 'inventori' del quarto di *dīnār* furono, benché non direttamente, i Bizantini, avendo essi fornito, con il *tremissis* aureo in uso nel tema di Sicilia al tempo dell'occupazione dell'isola da parte degli emiri aghlabiti, il modello al quale ispirarsi (cfr. Bates 2002). Di recente, poi, la lettura di un quarto di *dīnār* databile al 262 AH/ AD 876 ha permesso di fissare un limite cronologico basso per l'introduzione del nuovo sistema monetario (De Luca 2010: pp.113-130).

[30] Arcifa 2001.

nella monetazione relativa a questa dinastia. Le monete prodotte a suo nome hanno un aspetto decisamente nuovo ed elegante; le legende sono disposte nel campo con un design accurato che denota una consapevole programmazione degli spazi; i grafemi, abbandonata la rozza staticità del periodo precedente, acquistano grazia ed morbidezza. In particolare, le iscrizioni marginali, tanto sacrificate e compresse nelle emissioni aghlabite al punto da risultare un'incomprensibile sequenza di trattini, acquistano finalmente respiro e chiarezza.

Gli esemplari del Medagliere di Siracusa, quasi tutti in buono stato di conservazione, ora sono perfettamente databili: la legenda esterna continua ad essere generosa di informazioni, come nel caso di due pezzi (fig. 5) battuti precisamente nella zecca di Palermo (*madīnat Ṣiqilliyya*), che recano addirittura l'indicazione del mese di emissione *(rabī' at-thānī del 340)*.

Le quattro monete battute a nome di al-Manṣūr bi'llāh sono omogenee per datazione, ma non per provenienza d'*atelier*: due sono nordafricane e due siciliane.

La ricerca estetica emersa all'epoca di al-Manṣūr si ritrova anche nella moneta battuta a nome del successore al-Mu'izz li-dīn Allāh (341-365 AH/ AD 925-975), proveniente forse da Siracusa[31], che presenta un *layout* nuovo con globetto centrale e legenda esterna circolare. Destinato ad avere fortuna, lo stesso tipo lo ritroviamo nei tre esemplari emessi a nome di al-'Azīz, tutti di produzione siciliana, in ottimo stato di conservazione e con date leggibili.

In proporzione rispetto al volume di emissioni prodotte nella zecca di Palermo dodici esemplari sono attribuibili ad al-Hākim. La collezione siracusana, in particolare, ha permesso di aggiungere un nuovo tassello cronologico al quadro finora noto della sua monetazione, con una emissione relativa ad un anno non ancora documentato nei repertori bibliografici[32] (fig. 6).

Passando per i numerosi esemplari di al-Ẓāhir rappresentati da alcuni *rubā'ī* perfettamente datati e due *kharrube*[33], di cui una acquistata a Girgenti, si giunge così alle numerose e variegate emissioni battute a nome di al-Mustanṣir (trentaquattro) che deterrà il potere fin quasi alla fine del secolo reggendo le sorti dell'impero fatimide per sessant'anni dal 427 AH/ AD 1036 al 487 AH/ AD 1094.

Il complesso repertorio della monetazione prodotta durante il califfato di al-Mustanṣir è per buona parte rappresentato nel Medagliere di Siracusa: qui sono presenti, oltre gli esemplari con legenda disposta in tre o quattro righe, qualche raro e splendido *dīnār*, ma soprattutto i quarti di *rubā'ī* che più di tutti caratterizzano la zecca fatimide, a ragione di un particolarissimo disegno che, a seconda di come

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[31] Nel registro si legge che fu donata da un avvocato "*da Siracusa, ai primi di febbraio del 1928*".

[32] Tipo I1, Nicol 2006, ma con data inedita 389 AH/ AD 998.

[33] Oltre i due rinvenimenti sporadici (riferibili rispettivamente ai tipi C7 e D2 o D3, Nicol 2006), si ricordi che quattro appartengono al "*ripostiglio di Terranova*" (tipi B1/B2 e C6, Nicol 2006)

viene interpretato, è variamente definito come 'a ruota stellata', 'a ruota di carro', o 'esagramma'. Sono stati battuti sia in Sicilia che in Africa[34].

Un *rubā'ī* soltanto (fig. 7) fra gli esemplari appartenenti a questo tipo reca la variante di disposizione testuale individuata nelle monete del ripostiglio di Mussomeli (X3,var.), mentre due sono imitativi.

Si tratta di due esemplari sostanzialmente diversi fra loro, pur essendo classificabili come 'non regolari' e battuti entrambi su un tipo comune.

Il primo è un esemplare proveniente dalla Collezione Galante di Vizzini, è in oro pallido e pur imitando le cosiddette 'stellate' di al-Mustanṣir di queste mantiene in apparenza solamente il reticolo di segmenti[35]. Le legende impresse sono pressoché illeggibili, ha peso ridotto (0,659 g) e forma allungata (fig. 9). Anche il secondo esemplare (fig. 10) ha medesima forma allungata ed irregolare, ma è di mistura ed il suo colore grigio scurissimo suggerisce l'impiego di argento a basso titolo nella lega. Esso appartiene a quella classe di nominali ancora problematica per quel che riguarda la sua effettiva collocazione nel sistema monetario, quella definita da Balog "*cinque carrube*"[36]. Un possibile accostamento, all'interno delle collezioni del Museo, può esser fatto con le monete del ripostiglio di Modica 1928 (Ragusa)[37] ed in particolare questo esemplare potrebbe essere ricondotto ad uno dei *layouts* individuati da Balog[38], ipotizzando che il numero di puntini presenti in un verso siano in realtà frutto di un difetto di battitura, ovvero dello scivolamento del conio che sembra aver creato l'illusione di un raddoppio dei puntini all'interno di ciascuna partizione. I frustuli di legenda, laddove leggibili, sono in pseudocufico.

Un *dīnār* degli Almoravidi battuto al tempo di 'Ali b. Yusuf (500-537AH/ AD 1106-1143) nella zecca di Sijilmasa (Marocco) nel 533 AH/ AD 1138 è la più recente moneta islamica del Medagliere ed è stata rinvenuta a Messina (fig. 8).

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[34] Già Lowick aveva individuato nel ripostiglio di Agrigento la zecca di al-Mahdiyya, in Tunisia (Lowick 1986: p. 148). Nel ripostiglio di Mussomeli, ad esempio, una buona percentuale di esemplari 'stellati' battuti da al-Mustanṣir proviene dalla zecca di al-Mansūriyya (Santangelo 2015).

[35] Occorre ricordare che per i tarì stellati in oro pallido e di cattiva fattura è stata ipotizzata la produzione da parte dei Normanni: si veda Travaini 2016, p. 102.

[36] Balog 1979: pp.16 e ssg.

[37] Santangelo 2017: p. 261.

[38] Balog 1979: tav. III, n.2.

PAOLO ORSI E L'ATTIVITÀ DI TUTELA

Siamo convinti che anche solo questa breve carrellata possa dare l'idea dell'importanza di questa raccolta per la storia della Sicilia islamica e non solo.

I dati di provenienza, come abbiamo visto nei pochi casi in cui questi sono noti, possono fornire elementi utili per gli studi futuri.

Come lo è, sicuramente, il ripostiglio di Mussomeli.

Su questo rinvenimento, da poco pubblicato, vorrei ritornare questa volta soffermandomi ad esaminare nel dettaglio la documentazione tràdita, che ci permette non solo di ricostruire perfettamente, come in un racconto avventuroso ed avvincente, i concitati momenti delle prime fasi del rinvenimento, ma anche di compenetrarci nelle difficoltà incontrate da Orsi, il quale si muoveva in un terreno difficile come quello della tutela in Sicilia nel periodo posto a cavallo fra le due Guerre[39].

Tutto ha inizio un giorno di febbraio del 1923. Il "Giornale di Sicilia" pubblica un sensazionalistico articolo riguardante la clamorosa scoperta, ai piedi del castello, di un favoloso tesoro.

La vicenda, che si trova perfettamente relazionata in una lettera dattiloscritta proveniente dal Ministero dell'Istruzione, Direzione Generale dell'Antichità e Belle Arti, a firma del Ministro Colasanti, vede intervenire immediatamente le autorità giudiziarie che, a seguito della fuga di notizie e il sospetto che le monete, affidate ad un intermediario potessero in qualche maniera 'scomparire', le consegnano alla Soprintendenza di Palermo[40].

Da questa lettera apprendiamo che il gruzzolo, che nel momento in cui viene introitato nel Medagliere di Siracusa consta di novanta pezzi, era formato originariamente da centoventiquattro monete e pertanto un terzo andò disperso prima del sequestro o, come sembra dedursi dai racconti degli storici locali, si sia lasciato in qualche modo al rinvenitore come premio di rinvenimento.

Quel che interessa in particolare di questa complicata vicenda, raccontata in varie versioni sia nella cronaca che nella letteratura locale[41] – dove si colora, com'è facile immaginare, di folcloristici aneddoti – sono i risvolti burocratici, sintomatici delle

[39] «L'archeologia in Sicilia fra le due guerre» è stato il tema di un recente convegno, di cui si veda, in particolare, il contributo sui rinvenimenti monetali nella Sicilia orientale e centro-meridionale del prof. Guzzetta (Guzzetta 2017).

[40] Il racconto più veritiero della vicenda, alla fine di quanto constatato, sembra quello che si legge nelle due pagine dedicate al *"Tesoro di Cacaladdritta"*, opera di uno storico locale mussomelese (Cumbo 1995: pp. 26-17).

[41] La stessa vicenda infatti si trova raccontata, con qualche particolare in più e qualche dato differente (come ad esempio il numero delle monete) rispetto a quello riportato dalle fonti ufficiali, in un capitolo intitolato "*Il tesoro del Castello*", all'interno del volume dedicato al castello di Mussomeli, opera di due cultori di storia locale (Sorce Cocuzza, Messina 2010: pp. 15-16).

difficoltà e degli impedimenti con cui avanzava la farraginosa macchina della tutela in Sicilia.

Le monete, abbiamo visto, vengono subito portate e custodite a Palermo. Tuttavia, secondo la normativa vigente attuata nel 1909, ma valida per pochi mesi ancora, ovvero fino al mese di dicembre del 1923, la tutela degli scavi ricadeva su Siracusa.

In Sicilia, nel 1907, anche se di fatto però sarebbero entrate a regime solamente nel 1909, erano state istituite sei Soprintendenze, distribuite per le tre diverse competenze, in due distinte sedi allocate, per la parte occidentale, a Palermo e, per la parte orientale, a Siracusa.

Nel dettaglio, a Palermo facevano capo la Soprintendenza ai monumenti, quella agli scavi e ai musei archeologici e quella alle gallerie, ai musei medievali e moderni e agli oggetti d'arte, mentre le restanti tre Soprintendenze con le stesse competenze erano state istituite con sede a Siracusa.

Quanto all'estensione territoriale di pertinenza, nel capoluogo siciliano la Soprintendenza ai monumenti aveva giurisdizione sulle province di Palermo, Messina, Caltanissetta, Girgenti e Trapani; quella agli scavi e ai musei su Palermo, Messina, Trapani e Girgenti; quella alle gallerie su Palermo, Caltanissetta, Girgenti e Trapani.

A Siracusa, invece, la Soprintendenza ai monumenti aveva giurisdizione sulle province di Siracusa e Catania; quella agli scavi su Siracusa, Catania e Caltanissetta; quella alle gallerie su Siracusa, Catania e Messina.

È per queste ragioni che Paolo Orsi, venuto a conoscenza della scoperta del tesoro di Mussomeli si attiva immediatamente per far valere i suoi diritti di competenza e si affretta ad inviare per prima cosa una richiesta "*urgente*" di chiarimento al Soprintendente di Palermo per sapere "*quanto di vero*" a lui risulta di questa vicenda e a quale epoca appartengono le monete. Alla risposta di Gabrici[42], il quale dichiara che "*Le monete sono tutte di Al Mustansir*," segue una nota di Orsi circa le "*ragioni di competenza territoriale*" grazie alle quali intende far valere i suoi diritti.

Ancora a marzo Paolo Orsi interverrà su questo punto scrivendo alla Direzione Generale della Antichità di Roma affinché venga disposto il trasferimento del gruzzolo dalla Soprintendenza agli Scavi di Palermo a quella di Siracusa.

È l'ultima notizia ufficiale che abbiamo.

Tuttavia, da questa triangolazione Roma-Palermo-Siracusa emergono quelli che sono i retroscena della paziente ed infaticabile azione quotidiana di Paolo Orsi, impegnato in un'incessante opera di tutela difficile di per sé, e resa certamente più complicata dalle difficoltà amministrative che questo nuovo tipo di organizzazione finì per comportare.

[42] L'archeologo Ettore Gabrici (Napoli 1868-Palermo 1962), nominato Direttore del Museo Archeologico di Palermo nel 1914 per volontà dell'allora ministro Corrado Ricci, continuò l'opera di riordinamento del museo compiuta da Salinas (cfr. Caruso 2013).

Dobbiamo aggiungere che proprio alla fine di quell'anno, nel dicembre del 1923, veniva introdotto un nuovo ordinamento che mutava nuovamente l'organigramma di controllo sul territorio.

In particolare, nel quindicennio che va dal 1923 al 1939 con l'entrata in vigore del R.D. n. 3164 del 1923, veniva attuata una drastica riduzione degli organi periferici e le Soprintendenze venivano differenziate in Soprintendenze alle antichità (otto) e in Soprintendenze all'arte medievale e moderna (tredici).

È probabile quindi che la legittima restituzione del gruzzolo di Mussomeli al Museo di Siracusa, per la quale Paolo Orsi dovrà attendere ben cinque anni, sia stata rallentata dagli effetti, non sempre felici, di quest'ultima riforma voluta dal ministro Giovanni Gentile.

Sia pur dettata da un criterio generale di snellimento amministrativo questa legge, di fatto, non diede i risultati sperati poiché finì con il sovraccaricare gli organi deputati al controllo, ed in questo caso la Soprintendenza di Siracusa che aveva giurisdizione sul patrimonio archeologico dell'intera isola, come anche quella di Palermo che era addetta alla tutela dei monumenti.

La vicenda del tesoro di Mussomeli, sia pur a lieto fine, può esserne assunta a paradigma.

APPENDICE DOCUMENTARIA

Trascrizione dei documenti conservati presso l'Archivio Storico della Soprintendenza di Siracusa. Cartella: "Mussomeli, scoperta tesoro monetale aureo. Vedi "Giornale isola" del 24 Febbraio 1923".

Doc. 1
Articolo anonimo pubblicato sul "Giornale di Sicilia".
Titolo: "Un tesoro ritrovato in un vecchio castello dei Chiaramonte". Nostro servizio telegrafico.

MUSSOMELI, 23 notte – *A qualche chilometro da Mussomeli ad oriente si erge un maestoso ed antico castello un tempo dei Chiaramonti ed ora del Principe di Trabia. Intorno al castello da* (sic) *fantasia popolare ha creato mille legende fra le quali quella che una dama bellissima che appare a molte persone durante i sogni ha dato notizia dell'esistenza di molti tesori. Figurarsi il pellegrinaggio della popolazione nella* (sic) *vicinanze del castello nella speranza di rinvenire qualche cosa specie nella parte sud ove* (sic) *furono battuti tutti i detriti per alcuni restauri fatti.*
Certo Belfiore Giuseppe contadino di qui mentre giorni addietro trovavasi a lavorare in un suo poderetto in contrada Castello e proprio sotto le finestre del leggendario Castello ha rinvenuto una anforetta la quale dava dei suoni curiosi. Arrivato a casa non potendola aprire la ruppe e ne venne fuori una svariata quantità di monetine d'oro.
Il Belfiore non seppe conservare il segreto e la notizia si propalò finché arrivò all'orecchio della polizia la quale venne incaricata dal Museo di Palermo per il ritiro di dette monete. Però il Belfiore dava incarico al dottor Mancuso di recarsi a Palermo e di consegnarle personalmente le monete al Direttore del Museo. Intanto prima di partire il dottor Mancuso come preso dalla delicatezza dell'incarico ricevuto ne diede avviso a questo Pretore.
Le monete in numero di novanta vennero dal dottor Mancuso consegnate ed inviate al Ministero delle Belle Arti per l'esame numismatico e la determinazione del valore. Sembra che tali monete abbiano realmente un valore non indifferente per la loro sanità. L'esito di questo esame è attesa vivamente da questa cittadinanza e più specialmente dal Belfiore che dopo mille castelli in aria attende la sua quota spettantegli per legge.

Doc. 2
Telegramma (ms.) su carta intestata "R. Soprintendenza agli scavi per la Sicilia Orientale, R. Museo Archeologico di Siracusa". N. 115. Siracusa 24 febbraio 1923.
Oggetto: Mussomeli Scoperta di tesoro Monetale aureo

Comm. Paolo Orsi
Albergo S. Chiara
Roma

Apprendo Giornale Isola rinvenimento novanta monete oro presso Mussomeli già spedite codesta
Direzione Generale Antichità.
Carta

Doc. 3
Lettera ms. su carta intestata "R. Soprintendenza agli scavi per la Sicilia Orientale, R. Museo Archeologico di Siracusa" . N.117. Siracusa 28 febbraio 1923.

Urgente
Illmo Signor Direttore Del Museo Nazionale di Palermo
Oggetto: Mussomeli Scoperta di Tesoro monetale Aureo

Apprendo dal "Giornale dell'Isola" del 24 corrente che certo Belfiore Giuseppe contadino di Mussomeli ha di recente ritrovato alla base e precisamente sotto le finestre del castello del Principe di Trabia un tesoro monetale aureo costituito di 90 pezzi.
Ritenuto pure che il sott. Mancuso di quel Comune ebbe incarico dall'inventore di recarsi a Palermo e presentare alla S.V. per il debito esame le monete medesime.
Sennonchè il dott. Mancuso, stando sempre al predetto Giornale, invece di recarsi a Palermo, stimò opportuno inviare le monete direttamente alla Direzione Gen. delle Antichità.
Ora io prego la S. V. di farmi conoscere quanto Le risulti di vero in proposito e se Ella abbia effettivamente esaminate le monete, ed in caso affermativo, a quale epoca esse appartengono.
Con ossequi,

Il Soprintendente
PO

Doc. 4
Lettera ms. su carta intestata "R. Soprintendenza agli scavi per la Sicilia Orientale, R. Museo Archeologico di Siracusa". N. 118, 28 febbraio 1923.

Urgente
SIRACUSA
Oggetto: Mussomeli Scoperta di tesoro Monetale aureo

Da una notizia apparsa nel "Giornale dell'Isola" del 24 corrente apprendo come un contadino, certo Belfiore Giuseppe, abbia di recente rinvenuto presso Mussomeli e precisamente alla base del Castello del Principe di Stabia un tesoro monetale aureo, costituito di 90 pezzi.
Ritenuto pure che il Dottor Mancuso di quel Comune per incarico avuto dall'inventore, abbia spedito direttamente a codesta onor. Direzione Generale le monete predette per essere esaminate ed eventualmente acquistate.
Dovendo questa R. Soprintendenza occuparsi colla maggior alacrità della scoperta è necessario che codesta on. Direzione Generale si compiaccia informarla ampiamente di quanto vi sia di vero in proposito ed in ispecie se le monete furono comperate dallo Stato.
Comunque, questa Soprintendenza intende far valere i suoi diritti territoriali e di conseguenza (due righe di cancellatura) comporta che le monete sequestrate dallo Stato vengano detenute a questo Museo.

Il Soprintendente
PO

Doc. 5
Lettera dattiloscritta su carta intestata "Ministero dell'istruzione. Direzione Generale delle Antichità e Belle Arti". N. di Posiz.: I Caltanissetta; Prot. 2362. Risposta a: lettera del I marzo 1923 n. 118.

Oggetto: Mussomeli. Scoperta di tesoro monetale aureo

Il primo febbraio u.s. l'ispettore onorario di Mussomeli che trovavasi a Palermo, avvertiva quel Soprintendente alle Gallerie ed ai Musei medioevali e moderni che era stato scoperto a Mussomeli un ripostiglio di 124 monete d'oro e a lui ne mostrava quattro inviategli in esame dal dott. Salvatore Mancuso. Il predetto Soprintendente riconobbe subito trattarsi di un ripostiglio di monete d'oro arabe, ed inviò immediatamente sul posto, pel ricupero del ripostiglio stesso, l'assistente sig. Ignazio Messina. Questi agì d'accordo col comando dei RR. Carabinieri, ma trovò grande ostacolo nella resistenza dello scopritore, il contadino Belfiore, che si rese latitante.
Mentre l'Arma dei Carabinieri adoperavasi in tuti i modi a Mussomeli per venire in possesso delle monete, il dott. Mancuso, che fin dall'inizio della scoperta aveva avuto delle confidenze dallo scopritore, il 5 febbraio raggiungeva la stazione ferroviaria per recarsi a Palermo. Ma il Comando dei RR. Carabinieri di Mussomeli, intuendo che il Mancuso avesse con sé le monete e tentasse di farle scomparire, avvertiva telefonicamente i RR. Carabinieri della stazione centrale di Palermo, i quali, identificato il Mancuso mentre scendeva dal treno, gli intimarono il fermo e gli sequestrarono ottantasei monete d'oro che portava indosso, depositandole poi presso predetta Soprintendenza.
In seguito a tale comunicazione fatta dalla nominata Soprintendenza, il Ministero fece rilevare che, risultava chiaramente essere stato violato l'art. 18 della legge 20 giugno 1909 per le antichità e belle arti, per la mancata denuncia della scoperta da parte del Belfiore, e che per tale reato, di cui si era reso complice il Mancuso, le monete dovevano essere confiscate, a norma dell'art. 35 della legge stessa. Le monete ricuperate sono ora in deposito presso la Soprintendenza predetta, la quale deve avere provveduto a denunziare il fatto all'Autorità Giudiziaria.

Il MINISTRO
A. Colasanti

Doc. 6
Lettera dattiloscritta su carta intestata "Soprintendenza alle Gallerie ed ai Musei Medievali e Moderni per le provincie di Palermo Caltanissetta Girgenti e Trapani". N. di prot. gen. 140. Palermo 5 marzo 1923.

Ill.mo Sig. Soprintendente dei Musei e Scavi. Siracusa
Oggetto: MUSSOMELI Tesoretto di monete d'oro

Assicuro S.V., che il tesoretto di monete auree, rinvenuto a Mussomeli e ricuperato in buona parte da questa Soprintendenza, consta di novanta monetine quasi tutte del Califo Mustansir (1035-1094 Cr.).
Esse monete trovansi presso questa Soprintendenza, la quale deve tenerle a disposizione dell'autorità giudiziaria.

Con ossequio
IL SOPRINTENDENTE
E. Gabrici

Sotto la presente, risposta ms.
N. 133 Sirac. 10 marzo 23

La ringrazio dei chiarimenti che Ella mi fornisce sul tesoro di monete arabe d'oro rinvenuto a Mussomeli e tenuto in deposito da codesto Museo.
Tengo però a dichiararLe, che per ragioni di competenza territoriale questa Soprintendenza intende far valere i suoi diritti in una quota parte del ripostiglio che per legge spetta allo Stato.
Con riguardo
Il Soprint.
PO

Doc. 7
Lettera ms. su carta intestata "R. Soprintendenza agli scavi per la Sicilia Orientale, R. Museo Archeologico di Siracusa", riferita a nota 13 marzo 1923, indirizzata all'On. Direzione Gen. Ant. e B. A. Direzione I Roma. P. 2382, N. 157 del 16 marzo 1923.

Oggetto: Mussomeli (Caltanissetta) Scoperta di tesoro Monetale aureo

Ringrazio sentitamente delle dettagliate informazioni favoritemi intorno alla scoperta del tesoro monetale aureo di Mussomeli.
Però prego cotanta onor. Direzione Generale perché si compiaccia disporre che le 86 monete sequestrate al Sig. Mancuso e poscia depositate presso la R. Soprintendenza Scavi di Palermo siano inviate a questa Soprintendenza cui a tempo debito debbono essere devolute per diritto territoriale essendo Mussomeli sotto la sua giurisdizione.

Il Soprintendente
PO

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Scala 2:1

Scala 2:1

Irakli Paghava

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TELAVI HOARD: NEW DATA ON THE OTTOMAN COINAGE MINTED IN THE GEORGIAN KINGDOM OF K'AKHETI

Abstract

Recent discoveries have provided us with new numismatic material elucidating the coin-minting activities in the easternmost Georgian province of K'akheti (mints Zagam and Kākhed). However, so far we had no contemporary monetary complexes / hoards, as opposed to the plethora of single finds, unfortunately deprived from the proper archeological context. **Our objective** *is to discuss and publish one of the rare hoards of the epoch, predominantly comprised of the coins minted there in the name of the Ottoman sultan.*

The hoard (137.90 g) was discovered back in 2016 in the vicinity of the city of Telavi. It constituted an accumulation of 56 silver coins in total (110.25 g, 79.97% of hoard weight); hacksilver (19.18 g; 13.91%); bronze pendant and a small bead, 0.13 g (3.55 g, 2.57%); gold ring with turquoise (4.89 g; 3.55%) – it constituted up to 35-40% of the hoard's total value (parallels with contemporary Georgian icon-art art were analyzed). Monetary part of the hoard: 1/56 (1.79%) Muscovy coin (0.32 g, 0.29% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard); functionally, probably hacksilver; 39/56 (69.64%) Ottoman coins minted / countermarked in K'akheti (77.52 g, 70.31%); 12/56 (21.43%) Ottoman coins of distinguishable type, with no mint (26.76 g, 24.27%); 4/56 (7.14%) unidentified coins (5.65 g, 5.12%). We provide the description of the coin types, incl. two previously unknown ones. The Moscow denga constituted a negligible and probably accidental admixture to the main body of Caucasian/ Georgian-Ottoman coins. Only two mint-names were indicated on the coins: Kākhed (11 coins; 22.78 g; 19.64% of the total number of coins, 20.66% of

the weight of the monetary part of the hoard), Zagam (28; 54.74 g; 50%, 49.65%). We also made an attempt to establish **the weight standard** *of the coins represented in the hoard. The host coins with Zagam c/m pertained to the same, or similar weight standard. All the coins were the Ottoman dirhams of 1.80-2.80 g, of declining weight-standard. We tentatively dated the hoard with the early 1600s. This was a short-term accumulation hoard (a momentary snapshot of the local contemporary monetary circulation).*

The historical significance of the Telavi hoard is multifaceted: The non-monetary items may be helpful for studying the history of Georgian art and craftsmanship; we obtained additional factual evidence for the contemporary numismatic history (incl. the discovery of new types and new data for the metrology analysis, insight into contemporary monetary circulation and coin-minting activities). The very fact of the Ottoman type coinage minted in Georgia/K'akheti constitutes an extremely remarkable historical evidence, and its significance exceeds the relative limitedness of "pure" numismatics.

Keywords

Georgian coinage, Kingdom of K'akheti, Zagam mint, Kākhed mint, Ottoman coinage, monetary circulation

INTRODUCTION

Being debilitated by the repetitive invasions of Tamerlane, and later the Qarā Quyūnlū and Āq Quyūnlū turkmans, the united Georgian Kingdom collapsed and disintegrated into several minor kingdoms / principalities. Political disintegration naturally had some economic and monetary consequences; we can observe the following:

- Increase in imports of foreign currency (Shirvanshahs', Ottoman and Safavid coinage) and its increasingly dominant role on the national monetary market;
- Disintegration of national economy as testified to by the emersion of the so called *numismatic provinces*, i.e. regions with predominance of some specific (either Georgian or foreign) money. Since the collapse of the united state the economy of correspondingly western and eastern provinces of Georgia was based on mostly different currencies, Ottoman in the west and Shirvanshahs', later Safavid in the east;
- Proliferation of the mints. We can only conjecture, whether the united Georgian kingdom had been supplied with currency produced by just one mint (located in the capital city of Tiflīs), or not; but we know for sure, that after the disintegration several mints were set up in various Georgian principalities and provinces occupied by foreign powers;

- Remarkably, the Georgian authorities were obliged to acknowledge the suzerainty of the invading neighbors as reflected by the produce of some of the contemporary Georgian mints, bearing the names of a foreign overlord but not that of the local king / prince, and typologically pertaining to the field of Iranian or Ottoman numismatics.

For the time being we focus on the numismatic legacy of the easternmost Georgian province of K'akheti. Two (newly established?) mints were located on its territory, in the cities of Bazari and Kaki, constituting a particularly significant coin-producing cluster[1].

The city of Bazari was first mentioned in 1392 ("27 [serf] households of merchant Armenian and Jewish men at Bazari"); gradually, it became one of the two capital cities of the Kingdom of K'akheti[2] (Gremi was another). From numismatic point of view, it is noteworthy, that Bazari (or *Ts'aghma-Bazari* [i.e. *Bazaar-on-the-other-side*][3]) was the major urban and mint producing center of K'akheti, frequently designated on coins (and by foreign authors employing the Arabic graphemes) as Zagam, namely "Zakam" or "Zakām" (زكم or زكام).[4] Bazari started issuing money at least since 1552/3 (AH 960), understandingly, in the name of the Ṣafavid sovereign.[5] The Zagam coinage was first studied by Tinatin Kutelia and Levan Ch'ilashvili;[6] however, the 21st century has witnessed a multitude of new publications dealing with various aspects of Bazari / Zagami numismatic history (under the Safavids).[7]

Recent sensational discoveries elucidated, that Zagami was not the only mint on the territory of the Kingdom of K'akheti. The mint "Kākhed" (كاخد) was read on several copper and silver coins published in 2012/2015[8] by Alexandr Akopyan and David Alexanyan. The authors considered this toponym to be derived from the des-

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1 Paghava I., 2016a.

2 ჭილაშვილი ლ., 1980: 157-163, 171-175.

3 *Chaghma-Bazari*, [i.e. *Downside-Bazaar*], in Temo Jojua's opinion.

4 Кутелия Т., 1979: 14-25; ფაღავა ი., 2012b.

5 Paghava I., Bennett K., 2015.
Perhaps the degraded silver, billon or copper coins of the kings of K'akheti had been minted there before as well?

6 Кутелия Т., 1979: 14-25; ჭილაშვილი ლ., 1980: 175-179.

7 Album S., 2001: plate 39; Gabashvili G., Paghava I., Gogava G., 2015; Goron S., 2003a; Goron S., 2004; Goron S., 2003b; Paghava I., 2016; Paghava I., Bennett K., 2015; Paghava I., Hasanov S., 2016; ფაღავა ი., 2012b; Акопян А., Алексанян Д., 2015; Пагава И., Туркиа С., 2013.

8 Акопян А., Алексанян Д., 2015. The initial version of the article was available online already in 2012: it was intended for publication in the collection of articles – *Путями средневековых монет: Археолого-нумизматический сборник памяти Алексея Владимировича Фомина*; however, as far as we know, the latter has never been published.

ignation of the entire province of *K'akheti* (კახეთი), i.e. "Kākhet" (کاخت).[9] In their opinion, the *Kākhed* coinage was minted at Zagami mint.[10] A *silver* coin also minted at "Kākhed" (کاخد) was published by Irakli Paghava and Goga Gabashvili in 2015; the authors (erroneously) attributed it to Muḥammad Khudābandah and conjectured that "Kākhed" could designate *Gremi*, yet another capital of the Kingdom of K'akheti; it became also clear that *Kākhed* was issuing both copper and silver coinage.[11]

However, eventually "Kākhed" turned out to be something absolutely different. In 2016 Irakli Paghava discovered a new (Georgian) mint (or at least *mint-name*), namely "Kākhetābād" (کاخت اباد).[12] In that very year the same author proved that both *Kākhed* and *Kākhetābād* designated the (mint of) the Georgian city of K'ak'i (in K'akheti).[13] Being first mentioned in the first third of the 11th c. ("… and IB (12) merchants at Kaki"), by the 16th century it became one of the major mints of K'akheti in the east of the country.[14]

Up to this point it was considered that all the coins minted at the mints of the Kingdom of K'akheti, both Zagam and Kākhed, were issued in the name of the Safavid overlord, or, at least (in case of civic copper coinage) within the framework of the Safavid monetary tradition.

However, minting the coinage in the name of the Ottoman intruders could not be excluded either: Kingdom of K'akheti had to manoeuvre between the Safavids and Ottomans to retain at least internal autonomy and immunity from invasions (on condition of paying a tribute). Already back in 2012 Irakli Paghava analysed this possibility in his article (in Georgian) devoted to Georgian-Ottoman Numismatic Relations;[15] he reverted to this issue in yet another article (in English) published in 2013[16]: in both cases a note by Ibrahim Rahimizadeh was employed; the latter was an Ottoman Chronicler accompanying Lala Mustafa Pasha's army invading the Caucasian provinces of the Safavids, who directly mentioned minting Ottoman coins by Alexandre II, king of K'akheti.

Contrary to expectations, within a time span of only 2-3 years, the narrative source was confirmed by the hands-on numismatic material: in 2015 Irakli Paghava and Giorgi Gogava were the first scholars to discover and publish the so called K'akhetian-Ottoman coins, i.e. the coins minted in the name of the Ottoman sul-

[9] Акопян А., Алексанян Д., 2015: 150-153.

[10] Ibid.: 155-156.

[11] Paghava I., Gabashvili G., 2015.

[12] Paghava I., (in print, a).

[13] Paghava I., 2016b.

[14] Paghava I., (in print, b).

[15] ფაღავა ი., 2012a: 128-129.

[16] Paghava I., 2013.

tan at K'akhetian mints – their article was devoted to the monetary series issued in K'akheti in the name of the Ottoman sulṭāns Murād III (1574-1595 / AH 982-1003) and Muḥammad (Mehmet) III (1595-1603 / AH 1003-1012) at two different mints – "Zakam" (زكم) and "Kākhed" (كاخد). A new chapter of Georgian (and Ottoman) numismatic history was opened – the so called K'akhetian-Ottoman series.

Two years later, in 2017, David Alexanyan and Dmitri Yanov published several new K'akhetian (and Caucasian)-Ottoman coin types (along with re-publishing and reviewing the coin types already published by Irakli Paghava and Giorgi Gogava).[17]

A Countermark of Zagam (certainly a novelty, at least as far as it regards the *published* evidence) was made public most recently by Giorgi Gogava in the same issue of the Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society.[18]

*

Evidently, new discoveries have provided us with plentiful new monetary data, certainly amplifying the Georgian numismatic history typologically and providing a valuable monetary material serving as primary historical source.

However, the chronology of minting for many coin types can be established only approximately (2nd half of the 16th century – 1st third of the 17th century?); more importantly, their role and interrelation in the contemporary monetary circulation is equally vague. The major reason is the absence of the contemporary monetary complexes / hoards, as opposed to the plethora of single finds, unfortunately deprived from the proper archeological context. Correspondingly, few hoards available for study constitute potentially extremely significant primary sources of information.

Our objective is to discuss and publish one of the rare hoards of the epoch, discovered on the territory of K'akheti (eastern Georgia), and predominantly comprised of the coins minted within the Kingdom of K'akheti and in the name of the Ottoman sultan.

Telavi Hoard: Composition and Analysis

This hoard was discovered back in 2016 somewhere in the vicinity of the city of Telavi (in K'akheti, Georgia). Unfortunately, the precise find location and circumstances could not be established. However, we were provided an opportunity to take pictures of the coins and artifacts from the hoard, as well as to weigh them.

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[17] Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017.

[18] Gogava G., 2017. The author evidently inclined to the idea that the countermark was applied to the coins in the period of Safavid dominance ("The countermark is of a traditional Persian style showing the influence of the Safavid dynasty"). At least theoretically, we would not exclude that it was applied under Ottoman control.

The Telavi hoard constituted an accumulation of silver (billon) coins and artifacts (jewelry) from precious metals (both silver and gold), as well as hacksilver, also a tiny bronze pendant and tiny non-metallic bead. The composition of the hoard (137.90 g in total) was as follows (Charts 1-2):

– Silver coins (Figs. 1.1.1-4.1.4): 56 in total (110.25 g in total, 79.97% of total hoard weight);

– Hacksilver (Fig. 5): slightly deformed silver ring (3.69 g); fragments of silver necklace, with some incrustations, in one case; silver flan, holed twice (19.18 g in total, including the ring; 13.91% of total hoard weight).

Silver generally, both coined and bullion (hacksilver, ring) constituted 129.43 g (93.86% of total hoard weight);

– Bronze pendant (Fig. 5, details) (fragment of some other necklace?), 3.42 g, and a small bead, 0.13 g (Fig. 5, details) (3.55 g in total, 2.57% of total hoard weight);

– Gold ring with turquoise (Figs. 6.1-6.4): 4.89 g; 3.55% of total hoard weight).

Chart 1 – General hoard composition (silver coins and hacksilver indicated separately); % of total hoard weight (137.87 g)

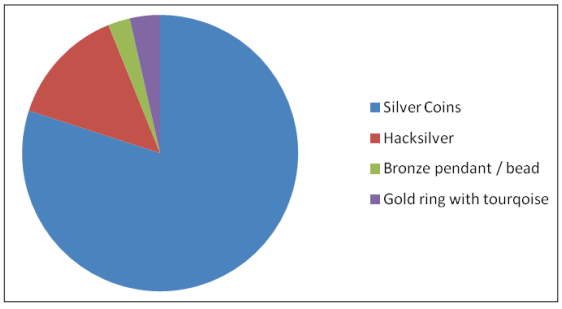
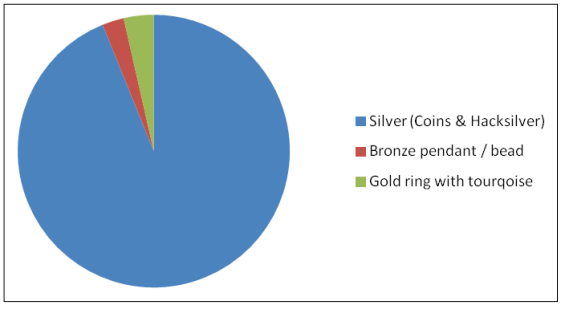


Chart 2 – General hoard composition (silver coins and hacksilver counted together); % of total hoard weight (137.87 g)



Silver coins (Figs. 1.1.1-4.1.4)



Fig. 1.1.1 – 0.32g.



Fig. 2.1.1 – 2.17g.



Fig. 2.1.2 – 1.94g.



Fig. 2.1.3 – 1.96g.



Fig. 2.1.4 – 2.12g.



Fig. 2.1.5 – 2.04g.



Fig. 2.1.6 – 1.93g.



Fig. 2.1.7 – 2.12g.



Fig. 2.2.1 – 2.18g.



Fig. 2.2.2 – 2.20



Fig. 2.2.3 – 1.93g.



Fig. 2.3.1 – 2.18g.



Fig. 2.4.1 – 2.20g.



Fig. 2.4.2 – 2.13g.



Fig. 2.5.1 – 2.09g.



Fig. 2.5.2 – 2.08g.



Fig. 2.5.3 – 2.10g.



Fig. 2.5.4 – 2.17g.



Fig. 2.5.5 – 2.08g.



Fig. 2.5.6 – 2.18g.



Fig. 2.5.7 – 2.08g.



Fig. 2.6.1 – 2.07g.



Fig. 2.6.2 – 1.99g.



Fig. 2.6.3 – 2.04g.



Fig. 2.6.4 – 2.00g.



Fig. 2.6.5 – 1.99g.



Fig. 2.6.6 – 1.83g.



Fig. 2.6.7 – 2.13g.



Fig. 2.6.8 – 2.04g.



Fig. 2.7.1 – 1.63g.



Fig. 2.7.2 – 1.54g.



Fig. 2.7.3 – 1.57g.



Fig. 2.7.4 – 1.59g.



Fig. 2.7.5 – 1.56g.



Fig. 2.8.1 – 1.98g.



Fig. 2.8.2 – 1.90g.



Fig. 2.8.3 – 1.91g.



Fig. 2.8.4 – 1.98g.



Fig. 2.8.5 – 1.99g.



Fig. 2.8.6 – 1.89g.



Fig. 3.1.1 – 2.27g.



Fig. 3.1.10 – 2.23g.



Fig. 3.1.11 – 2.14g.



Fig. 3.1.12 – 2.29g.



Fig. 3.1.2 – 2.28g.



Fig. 3.1.3 – 2.21g.



Fig. 3.1.4 – 2.28g.



Fig. 3.1.5 – 2.29g.



Fig. 3.1.6 – 2.16g.



Fig. 3.1.7 – 2.17g.



Fig. 3.1.8 – 2.19g.



Fig. 3.1.9 – 2.25g.



Fig. 4.1.1 – 1.51g.



Fig. 4.1.2 – 1.61g.

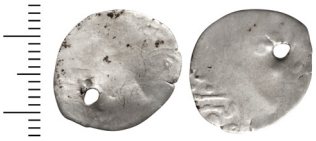


Fig. 4.1.3 – 1.20g.



Fig. 4.1.4 – 1.33g.

Hacksilver (Fig. 5)



Fig. 5, details: bronze pendant, 3.42 g (left); small bead, 3.55 g (right)



Gold ring with turquoise (Figs. 6.1-6.4)



MONETARY PART OF THE HOARD

We will discuss the monetary part of the hoard first, later proceeding with a short section on the non-monetary (mostly jewelry) part.

The monetary part can be divided into following categories (Charts 3-4):

Chart 3 – Monetary part of a hoard: composition (by coin number)

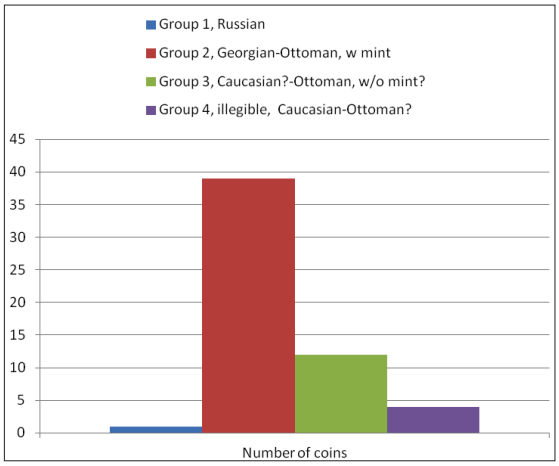
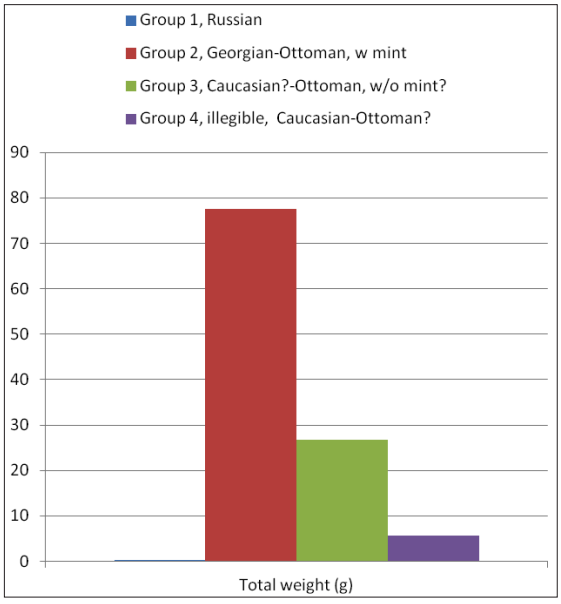
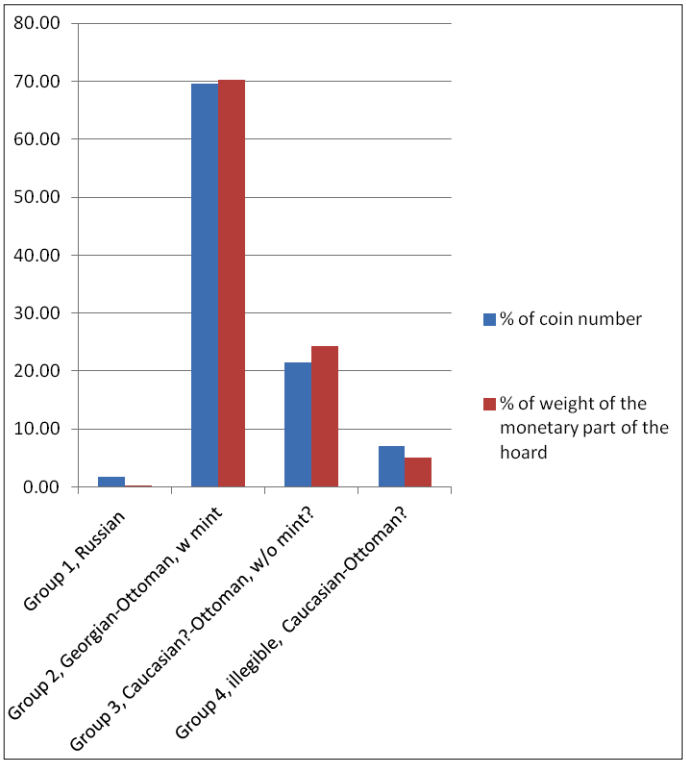


Chart 4 – Monetary part of a hoard: composition (by coin weight, g)



– Group 1: 1/56 (1.79%) Muscovy coin, with total weight of 0.32 g (0.29% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard); functionally, probably also hacksilver (*vide infra*);
– Group 2: 39/56 (69.64%) Ottoman coins minted / countermarked in K'akheti, with total weight of 77.52 g (70.31% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard);
– Group 3: 12/56 (21.43%) Ottoman coins of distinguishable type, possibly minted in K'akheti, with total weight of 26.76 g (24.27% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard);
– Group 4: 4/56 (7.14%) unidentified coins of similar weight, flan size, and alloy (de visu); most probably also the monetary issues from K'akheti, with total weight of 5.65 g (5.12% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard).

Chart 5 – Monetary part of a hoard: composition (number of coins vs. their weight, in %)



As we see, the Telavi hoard comprised only silver coins, and almost exclusively the Oriental ones; by latter we presume in case of perhaps all the coins the Ottoman issues. On the other hand, the majority of the coins in this hoard (discovered in a Georgian province) pertained to the group of Georgian-Ottoman, or, more precisely K'akhetian-Ottoman coinage. For the composition of the monetary part of the hoard, in percents, cf. Chart 5.

We proceed with description of the coin types.

For the list of the hoard coins, incl. individual characteristics, cf. Table 1.

Table 1 – List of (silver) coins from the Telavi hoard

Coinage groups		Mint	Fig. #	Weight (g)
Group 1, Russian (Muscovite) Coinage		Moscow	1.1.1	0.32
Group 2, Georgian(K'akhetian)-Ottoman coinage	Sub-group 1	Kākhed	2.1.1	2.17
		Kākhed	2.1.2	1.95
		Kākhed	2.1.3	1.96
		Kākhed	2.1.4	2.12
		Kākhed	2.1.5	2.04
		Kākhed	2.1.6	1.93
		Kākhed	2.1.7	2.12
	Sub-group 2	Kākhed	2.2.1	2.18
		Kākhed	2.2.2	2.2
		Kākhed	2.2.3	1.93
	Sub-group 3	Kākhed	2.3.1	2.18
	Sug-group 4	Zagam	2.4.1	2.2
		Zagam	2.4.2	2.13
	Sub-group 5	Zagam	2.5.1	2.09
		Zagam	2.5.2	2.08
		Zagam	2.5.3	2.1
		Zagam	2.5.4	2.17
		Zagam	2.5.5	2.08
		Zagam	2.5.6	2.18
		Zagam	2.5.7	2.08

Group 2, Georgian(K'akhetian)-Ottoman coinage	Sug-group 6	Zagam	2.6.1	2.07
		Zagam	2.6.2	1.99
		Zagam	2.6.3	2.04
		Zagam	2.6.4	2
		Zagam	2.6.5	1.99
		Zagam	2.6.6	1.83
		Zagam	2.6.7	2.13
		Zagam	2.6.8	2.04
	Sub-group 7	Zagam	2.7.1	1.63
		Zagam	2.7.2	1.54
		Zagam	2.7.3	1.57
		Zagam	2.7.4	1.59
		Zagam	2.7.5	1.56
	Sub-group 8	c/m of Zagam	2.8.1	1.98
		c/m of Zagam	2.8.2	1.9
		c/m of Zagam	2.8.3	1.91
		c/m of Zagam	2.8.4	1.98
		c/m of Zagam	2.8.5	1.99
		c/m of Zagam	2.8.6	1.89
Group 3, Ottoman coinage of identifiable type, but NM?		no mint?	3.1.1	2.27
		no mint?	3.1.2	2.28
		no mint?	3.1.3	2.21
		no mint?	3.1.4	2.28
		no mint?	3.1.5	2.29
		no mint?	3.1.6	2.16
		no mint?	3.1.7	2.17
		no mint?	3.1.8	2.19
		no mint?	3.1.9	2.25
		no mint?	3.1.10	2.23
		no mint?	3.1.11	2.14
		no mint?	3.1.12	2.29
Group 4, unattributed coins (Caucasian-Ottoman?)		?	4.1.1	1.51
		?	4.1.2	1.61
		?	4.1.3	1.2
		?	4.1.4	1.33

Group 1 was represented by a sole coin, a *сабельница*, i.e. a *sabre coin*, according to the effigy of the ruler, i.e. denga (1/2 copeck) of the Muscovite Russian State, minted in the name of Ivan IV the Terrible (1533-1584).
AR, 0.32 g, holed. Fig. 1.1.1
Obverse: Mounted figure of a Prince with sabre in hand
Reverse: Russian legend in three lines:

КНЗЬ
ВЕЛІКІ
ІВАНЬ
i.e. *Prince / the Great / Ivan*

This is the early coin type with the title of *Great Prince*. It was introduced by the 1535-1538 monetary reform of Elena Glinskaya, Ivan IV's mother, who was the regent of the state while her son was still a minor, and was minted till 1547, when Ivan IV started to indicate on the coinage additionally his title of *Tsar*. The coins were produced from high-standard silver (at least 900/1000) with standard weight of 0.34 g. Intended to replace the previous issues, they were minted in quantities, and circulated until at least till the beginning of the 17th century. Being struck from high-standard silver, they could penetrate the areas beyond the boundaries of the Muscovite State. Single finds are known in Crimea and North Caucasus.[19]
Possibly, this is the southernmost find of the Russian coinage of the epoch.
This denga constitutes the oldest coin of the hoard. Being minted before 1547, it reached eastern Georgia and was hoarded with other coins by the end of the 16th – early 17th century.
We incline to the idea that it was imported into the Kingdom of K'akheti within the context of Georgian-Russian diplomatic, military and cultural contacts in the 2nd half of the 16th century, rather than due the trade relations between the Kingdom of K'akheti and the Muscovite State.

Group 2 comprised 39 silver coins, pertaining to various types, issued at the mints of Kākhed (Kaki, major city of the Kingdom of K'akheti, later of the Elisu Sultanate) and Zagam (capital city of the Kingdom of K'akheti, Bazari, according to Georgian sources).
We will assign these coins to sub-groups corresponding to coin types.

[19] Information was kindly provided by Vasiliy Zaytsev. Cf. Мельникова А., 1989: 14-28.

The general coin type will be described, based on the extant specimens and available literature (if published, already). The metrology data will also be analyzed: we will attempt to establish the average weight of each coin type.

Sub-group 1:
Kākhed mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type X.[20]
Obverse: A toughra of Mehmet III (سلطان محمد بن مراد خان), additional legend above / around, possibly صاحب العز و النصر فی البر و البحر
Reverse: Mint formula within central horizontally elongated cartouche: ضرب
and beneath it: کاخد
Above: fragments of a legend (starts with و?).
Surrounded by linear and then beaded circles.
7 specimens (Figs. 2.1.1-2.1.7).
Average weight 2.04 g calculated by 7 specimens from the hoard.
If we take into account also 3 specimens published by Alexanyan and Yanov, the average weight would be slightly lower, 2.02 g.

Sub-group 2:
Kākhed mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type XI.[21]
Obverse: A toughra of Mehmet III (سلطان محمد بن مراد خان)
Reverse: Within central cartouche, the mint formula with graphemes distributed in two lines:

ضر کا
ب خد

Additional legend above: عز ایده و نصره?
3 specimens (Fig. 2.2.1-2.2.3).
The average weight: 2.10 g.
If we take into account also 2 specimens published by Alexanyan and Yanov, the average weight would be identical.

[20] Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017: 26.

[21] Ibid.

Sub-group 3:
Kākhed mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Paghava and Gogava, 2015, type 2[22] (= Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type IX[23]). First published by Akopyan and Alexanyan in 2015, but erroneously attributed to Ismail I Safavid.[24]
Obverse: A toughra of Mehmet III entitling his father as sultan along with khan (سلطان محمد بن سلطان مراد خان)؛ عز نصره
Reverse: ضرب كاخد within central circle.
Additional legend around: خلد الله ملكه و سلطنته؟
It is remarkable, that on the specimen from the hoard the legend starts at 3:30 from the ornament and is oriented centrifugally, whereas on two specimens published by Alexanyan and Yanov it started at an ornament at 5:30 and was oriented centripetally.
1 specimen only (Fig. 2.3.1).
Weight of the sole specimen: 2.18 g.
If we take into account also 2 specimens published by Paghava and Gogava in 2015 and 2 more specimens published by Alexanyan and Yanov in 2017, the average weight would be slightly lower, 2.13 g.

Sub-group 4:
Zagam mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Paghava and Gogava, 2015, type 1.[25]
Obverse: Within Solomon's Seal-like cartouche: سلطان محمد
Reverse: Within central horizontally elongated oval cartouche: زكم [effigy of a rosette] ضرب
Illegible legend above and below.
2 specimens (Fig. 2.4.1-2.4.2).
The average weight: 2.17 g.
If we take into account also 5 specimens published by Paghava and Gogava in 2015, the average weight would be somewhat lower, 1.96 g.

Sub-group 5:
Zagam mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Paghava and Gogava, 2015, type 3[26] (= Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type VIII[27]).

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[22] ფაღავა ი., გოგავა გ., 2015: 277.

[23] Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017: 25-26.

[24] Акопян А., Алексанян Д., 2015: 169-170.

[25] Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017: 25-26.

[26] Акопян А., Алексанян Д., 2015: 169-170.

[27] ფაღავა ი., გოგავა გ., 2015: 275.

Obverse: سلطان محمد within central circle.
Fragments of a legend around (Alexanyan and Yanov claimed it was
خلد الله ملكه و سلطنته
– we are not convinced).
Reverse: ضرب زكم within a hexagonal star (no فی contrary to description in Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type VIII). Dots within star rays. Stars between the rays.
7 specimens (Fig. 2.5.1-2.5.7).
The average weight calculated by 7 specimens: 2.11 g.
If we take into account also 1 specimen published by Paghava and Gogava in 2015 and 1 more specimen published by Alexanyan and Yanov in 2017, the average weight would be slightly lower, 2.06 g.

Sub-group 6:
Zagam mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); new coin type:
Obverse: محمد within a small central circle.
Fragments of a legend around.
Reverse: ضرب زكم (mirrored) within a hexagonal star. Dots within star rays. Stars between the rays. Similar to the reverse of Sub-group 5.
8 specimens (Fig. 2.6.1-2.6.8).
The average weight calculated by 8 specimens: 2.01 g.

Sub-group 7:
Zagam mint, in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Paghava and Gogava, 2015, type 2[28] (= Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type VII[29]).
Obverse: A toughra of Mehmet III entitling his father as sultan along with khan (سلطان محمد بن سلطان مراد خان); عز نصره
Reverse: خلد الله ملكه و سلطنته. ضرب فی زكم within a circle.
5 specimens (Fig. 2.7.1-2.7.5).
The average weight calculated by 5 specimens: 1.58 g.
If we take into account also 4 specimens published by Paghava and Gogava in 2015 and 6 more specimens published by Alexanyan and Yanov in 2017, the average weight would be slightly higher, 1.66 g.

Sub-group 8:
A countermark of Zagam mint on unattributed host coins. A new countermark (different from that published by Giorgi Gogava[30]).

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[28] Ibid.: 276.

[29] Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017: 25. The colleagues considered the types to be different?

[30] Gogava G., 2017.

Octagonal countermark: عدل زكم
Both *Obverse* and *Reverse* of the host coins illegible. In terms of weight, flan size, alloy and calligraphy of the extant fragments of the legends, the contemporary Ottoman issues, probably issued at the same (Georgian) mints.
6 specimens (Fig. 2.8.1-2.8.6).
The average weight calculated by 6 specimens: 1.94 g.

Group 3: No mint? In the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603, AH 1003-1012); coin type: Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type XV[31]). The mint name is not indicated or has not been read so far. However, we might conjecture it originated at one of the Georgian mints in K'akheti: Zagam or Kākhed. The arguments are as follows: All or almost all known specimens were discovered in the corresponding area; as far as we take into consideration only the coins with legible mints, the hoard we are describing comprised exclusively the coins produced in Zagam or Kakhed (except for a sole Russian denga). Nevertheless, at the moment it would be better to discuss the coins of this type separately, as a separate sub-group.
Obverse: The area divided into 9 (not 6, as in Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type XV, the specimen they studied seemingly had been struck twice or overstruck) sectors.
سلطان محمد in the central one.
Fragments of a legend in the upper, right, left and bottom segments, in two lines?
Ornaments in the angle segments.
Reverse: Four linear elements (possibly stylized letters of the Arabic alphabet, similar to 4 على-s), dividing the area into four quadrants. Fragments of a legend therein.
We would prefer to abstain from discussing the legends in more detail for the moment, and would prefer to await having available for study more and better preserved specimens (cf. description in Alexanyan and Yanov, 2017, type XV).
12 specimens (Figs. 3.1.1-3.1.12).
The average weight calculated by 12 specimens: 2.23 g.

Group 4 comprised 4 coins. As we have already mentioned, in view of the similarity in weight, flan size, alloy and calligraphy of the extant fragments of the legends, they most probably pertain to the same epoch and perhaps were also issued at Caucasian mints.
As we could not read the legends, we provide only weights.
4 coins (Figs. 4.1.1-4.1.4): 1.51, 1.61, 1.20, 1.33 g.

[31] Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017: 24-25.

NON-MONETARY PART OF THE HOARD

The non-monetary part of the hoard comprised silver ("hacksilver", in a sense), elements of a necklace (globular pendants, and also a circular artifact), silver ring, silver blank; base metal pendant of different shape, and non-metallic small bead (Fig. 5), as well as gold ring with turquoise (Figs. 6.1-6.4).

There are 14 globular pendants; the weight of 12 of them fluctuates within the range of 0.30-0.41 g. These light-weight pendants have to be hollow. There are 2 heavy-weight ones too: one globular pendant weights 3.48 g, probably because of incrustation or being made from a solid piece of metal (second from the left in the middle row); another (third from the left in the middle row) weighs 2.14 g, probably being solid. The latter globular pendant is remarkable for its workmanship: granulation *in silver* (on a solid globule of silver?).

Silver ring bears no legends or ornamentation and does not constitute a particularly fine piece of artisanship.

Silver flan (in the upper row) bears absolutely no traces of legends, and has perfectly smooth surface. Therefore, we have not placed it into the monetary part of the hoard and we would not risk conjecturing that was a blank intended for striking.

On the other hand, the Russian denga, reviewed above along with other coins, possibly was considered by the owner to be rather a piece of (high-standard) silver, rather than a currency. Our arguments are as follows: 1) heterogeneity of this denga to other coins of the hoard, all pertaining to Oriental, most probably, exclusively Ottoman numismatic tradition; 2) heterogeneity of this denga to local monetary circulation, which until the 18th century never knew *mass*-imports of Russian coinage; 3) uniqueness of this denga – a single coin out of 56, only 0.32 g, 1.79% of total coin number, but just 0.29% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard (Charts 5, 7-8); 4) more or less demonetized condition: holed (to transform into a pendant?) (only two other coins were holed, Figs. 4.1.3-4.1.4. By the way, those two coins, and perhaps all the coins with effaced surfaces could be valued also rather by weight than by tail). That denga might have found better place within the non-monetary part of the hoard, but due to its monetary *past* we still reviewed it along with other coins.

We do not know the reason/s, but whoever interred this hoard, deposited also a base-metal pendant (3.42 g), and a tiny bead (0.13 g). Perhaps being in a hurry he made a mistake by considering them to be made of silver (with dark patina).

The gold ring with turquoise (Figs. 6.1-6.4) seems to be the most interesting (and valuable) non-monetary item in this hoard. Possibly being produced by a local goldsmith (or was it imported from Iran?), it fits the epoch (16th century) ideally. We know that in this period the Kingdom of K'akheti enjoyed relative political stability and consequently achieved a remarkable economic prosperity. Arts and religious feelings flourished; inter alia, a special K'akhetian type of Georgian icons was born (possibly,

under Persian influence):[32] It was quite remarkable in terms of differing from the previous Georgian tradition of icon-making by employment of *turquoise* and rubies for jewelling the metal mounting of the icon, made from *gold* (instead of silver, as it had been normally done earlier); also of a different technique for decorating the metal mounting, and painting the faces of the saints instead of chasing them in metal as earlier (Cf. Fig. 7).



Fig. 7 – Georgian icon of K'akhetian type

[32] საყვარელიძე თ., ალიბეგაშვილი გ., 1980: 12-13.

HOARD COMPOSITION: SOME ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

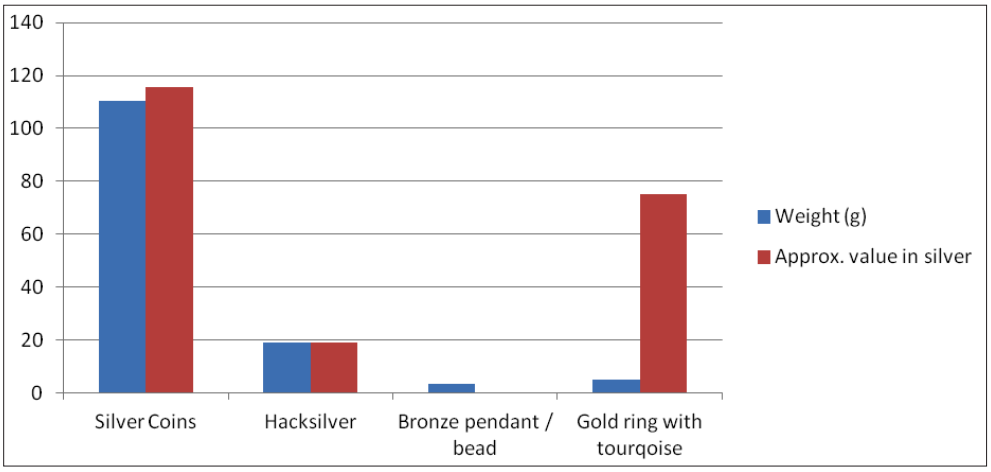
Evidently, the hoard contained mostly silver (93.86% by weight). However, it has to be noted, that the gold had much higher value than silver (ratio of approximately 1:15?[33]); as to turqoise, we do not know its precise value in that epoch (*vide infra*), but tentatively, it was more or less on par with gold (?). Therefore, we can perhaps conjecture, that the gold(-turqoise) part of the hoard was probably equal in terms of value to approximately 75 g of silver (as compared to 129.43 g in silver or even *billon* coins and bullion; we would assume that the single gold-turqoise ring constituted up to 35-40% of the hoard's total value.

Coined silver probably had higher value (per weight) than hacksilver (bullion). We would assume that the former cost by approximately 5% more than the latter.

The value of the base metal / non-metallic artifacts undoubtedly approximated nil and they were included by mere association.

The conventional value of individual constituents of the hoard (vs. their weight) is represented in a Chart 6.

Chart 6 – General hoard composition (weight vs. value)



*

[33] The ratio for the late 16th century and the region has certainly to be researched thoroughly; the figures 1:15 are somewhat conventional and constitute a retrograde extrapolation of the late 18th century data. ფაღავა ი., ბიჭიკაშვილი ი., ჩაგუნავა რ., 2014: 224-226.

When studying **the distribution of the hoard coins by mint**, it becomes clear that Moscow denga constituted a negligible (both numerically and in terms of silver content) and probably accidental admixture (as hacksilver element?) to the main body of Oriental / Caucasian-Ottoman / Georgian-Ottoman coins. As to the latter when the mint name could be read or was indicated on the coins, it was exclusively either Kākhed (11 coins; 22.78 g; 19.64, almost 20% of the total number of coins, 20.66% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard), or Zagam (28 coins; 54.74 g; exactly 50% of the total number of coins, 49.65, almost 50% of the weight of the monetary part of the hoard). (Charts 7-9).

We can add, that that the hoard comprised approximately 2.5 times more coins of Zagam than of Kākhed and the weight of the former was approximately 2.5 times more than that of the latter.

Chart 7 – Monetary part of the hoard: distribution by mints (by coin numbers)

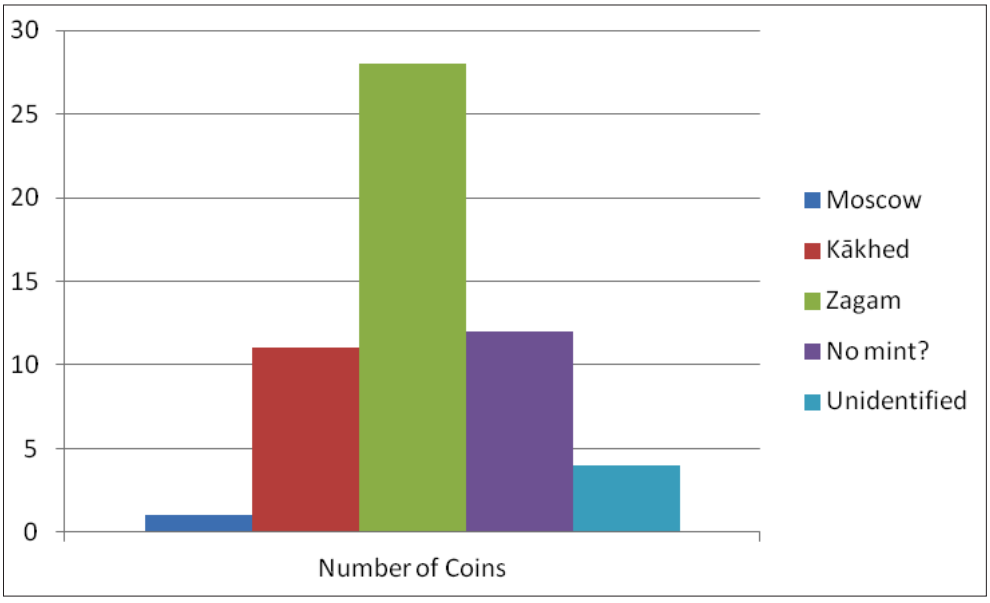


Chart 8 – Monetary part of the hoard: distribution by mints (by total weight of the coins represented in the hoard)

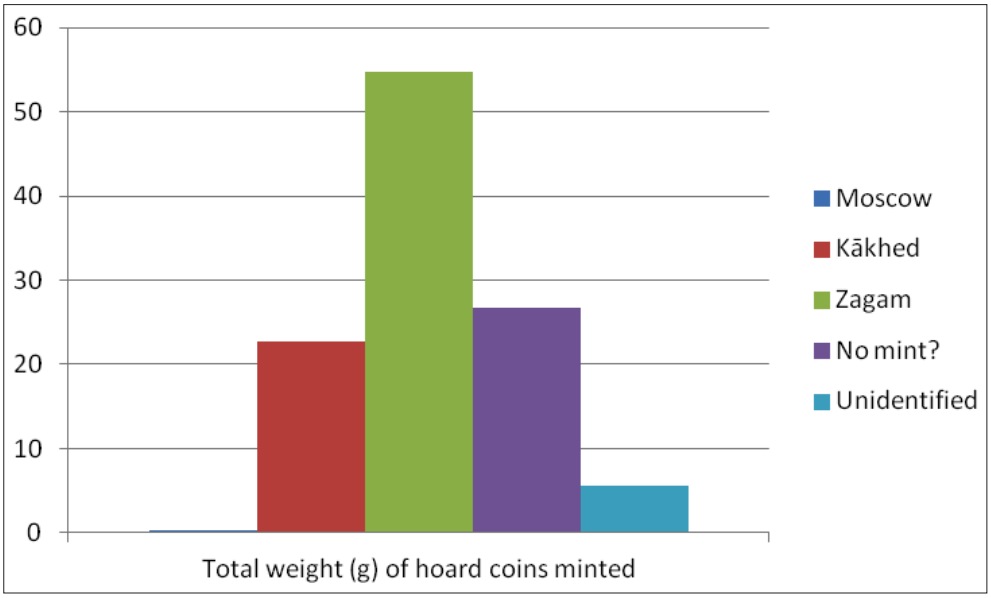
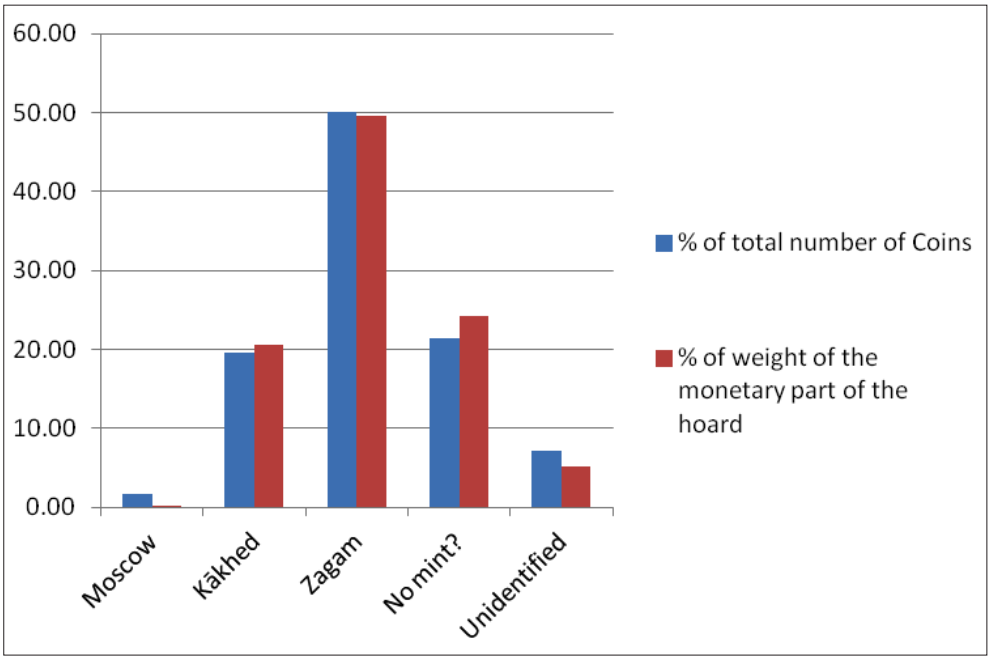


Chart 9 – Monetary part of a hoard: composition by mints (number of coins vs. their weight, in %)



WEIGHT STANDARD OF THE COINS AND THEIR DENOMINATION

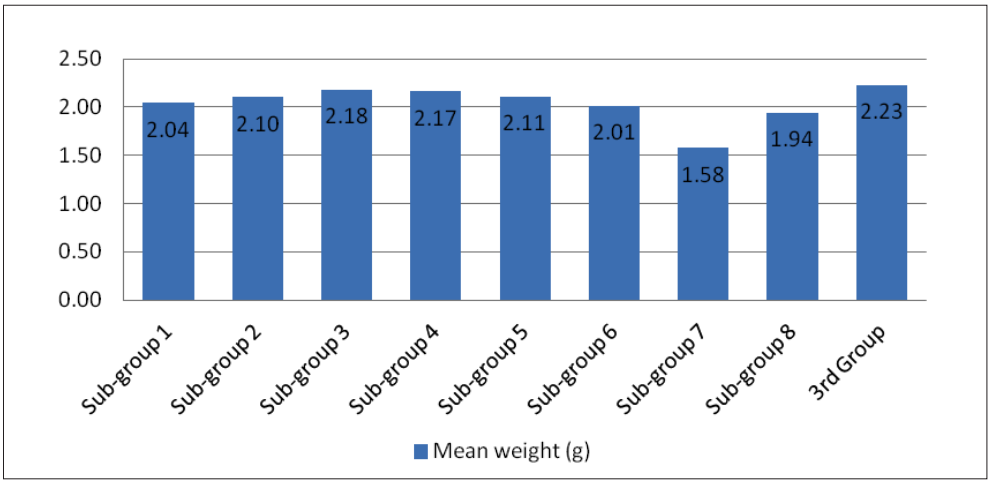
We made an attempt (*vide supra* for calculations per coin type) to establish **the weight standard** of the coins represented in the hoard. For mean weight of the coins pertaining to various coin types, including the type with no mint, refer to Chart 10. Descriptive statistics for the oriental coins are presented in Table 2.

The average weight of all three of the Kākhed coin types, as well as that of three Zagam coin types fluctuates within the range of 1.94-2.17 g; the difference seems to be insignificant. Just one Zagam coin type (Sub-group 7) was issued in much lighter weight, the average being 1.58 g (1.66 if considering all the extant coins, and not only the hoard material). The no mint coins of Mehmet III (Group 3) on average (2.23 g) tend to be somewhat heavier. It is hard to say, whether the coins of this type were issued to a truly different standard than the coins of Kākhed and the majority of the Zagam coins.

It is remarkable, that the host coins countermarked with عدل زكم seemingly pertained to one and the same, or at least similar weight standard, with mean weight of 1.94 g (range 1.89-1.99 g) (Table 2).

As to **the denomination**, we are inclined to consider that all these coins represent the Ottoman *dirham* of 1.80-2.80 g, perhaps reflecting consequent stages of its ever-declining weight-standard against the background of the economic turmoil within the Ottoman Empire in the reign of Mehmet III, when "the expenses amounted to three times as much of the revenues".[34]

Chart 10 – Mean weight of coins from various sub-groups



[34] Damali A., 2011: 1153-1156.

Table 2 – Descriptive statistics for the Ottoman (incl. Georgian-Ottoman and Oriental unidentified) coins of the hoard

Parameter	*Sub-group 1*	*Sub-group 2*	*Sub-group 3*	*Sub-group 4*	*Sub-group 5*	*Sub-group 6*	*Sub-group 7*	*Sub-group 8*	*3rd Group*
Mean	2.04	2.10	2.18	2.17	2.11	2.01	1.58	1.94	2.23
Standard Error	0.04	0.09		0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02
Median	2.04	2.18		2.17	2.09	2.02	1.57	1.95	2.24
Mode	2.12	#N/A		#N/A	2.08	1.99	#N/A	1.98	2.28
Standard Deviation	0.10	0.15		0.05	0.04	0.09	0.03	0.05	0.05
Sample Variance	0.01	0.02		0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Kurtosis	-2.13				-0.84	2.80	0.70	-3.04	-1.44
Skewness	0.10	-1.70			1.14	-1.17	0.84	-0.05	-0.41
Range	0.24	0.27		0.07	0.10	0.30	0.09	0.10	0.15
Minimum	1.93	1.93		2.13	2.08	1.83	1.54	1.89	2.14
Maximum	2.17	2.20		2.20	2.18	2.13	1.63	1.99	2.29
Sum	14.29	6.31		4.33	14.78	16.09	7.89	11.65	26.76
Count	7	3	1	2	7	8	5	6	12
Confidence Level (95.0%)	0.09	0.37		0.44	0.04	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.03

HOARD CHRONOLOGY

In terms of chronology of the hoard, we have to underline that the jewelry pieces, albeit pointing to the same epoch (we mean the gold ring), do not provide solid basis for dating the hoard.

However, the coins can serve as sufficiently precise indicators therefore.

The denga of Ivan IV the Terrible issued in the 1535-1547 time period constitutes an interesting element of the hoard, but does not help much in dating it, since the Russian coins of this period remained in circulation for many decades.

The presence of 6 unattributed host coins with applied countermark عدل زكم does not help, since the countermark is undated.

But, generally, the Ottoman / Oriental coins of the hoards are quite helpful. As to the identifiable major part of the hoard, comprised entirely of the K'akhetian-Ottoman coinage, it is clear that historically, it could not be issued before Lala Mustafa Pasha's invasion in 1578; hence a *terminus post quem*; moreover, all the identifiable coins, even those with no mint were issued in the name of Mehmet III (1595-1603 / AH 1003-12). No coins of Ahmed I (1603-1617 / AH 1012-1026) or 'Abbas I the Safavid (1587-1629) found their way into this hoard. That means that this monetary complex was most probably hoarded during the reign of Mehmet III proper, or shortly after his death. Therefore, we would date this hoard with the first decade and probably even first half of the first decade of the 17th century.

On the other hand, there were no coins (minted either in K'akheti or elsewhere) of Murad III (1574-95 / AH 982-1003) represented in this hoard (we know that Murad III issued coins at least at Zagam mint[35]). That means that either the earlier coins (like the issues of Murad III) had already been banned, which is hardly probably for the region and epoch; or, that this is a short-term accumulation hoard, constituting a momentary snapshot of the monetary circulation in the Kingdom of K'akheti in the first years of the 17th century.

THE COUNTERMARK عدل زكم: ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The gravimetric uniformity of the host coins (*vide supra*) supplied with this countermark may indicate that only some specific group of coins was intended for countermarking; or, more likely, that the countermarking with this countermark was performed in a relatively short period of time, when only a relatively homogenous coinage was submitted to the mint for this operation.

It is also noteworthy, that the host coins look like Caucasian-Ottoman (by remnants of the legends, general style and metrology). There is not a single Safavid coin with this countermark. Therefore, we consider it would be safe to presume that this countermark was applied to the coins not long after the death of Mehmet III, or, more likely, during his reign, and constitutes a Georgian(K'akhetian)-Ottoman countermark.

Why was this countermark applied? We do not know the answer. The standard responses like reviving the worn-out specimens or legalizing the foreign currency are hardly acceptable, since 1) the legends on the host coins became indiscernible probably because of the pressure inflicted by the countermark-punch, rather than wore

[35] ფაღავა ი., გოგავა გ., 2015: 274-275; Alexanyan D., Yanov D., 2017: 22-24.

out; and if not for suffering the countermarking process, they probably would had been not worse in terms of preservation / legibility than the coins of the hoard with no countermarks; 2) the host coins seem to be Ottoman as well.

NUMEROSITY OF THE COIN TYPES

This aspect of the K'akhetian coinage in the name of Mehmet III (and his predecessor too) merits some attention. What made the mint authorities (whoever they were – local Georgian officials appointed by the King of K'akheti, or the commanders of the deployed Ottoman garrison?) issue at least three coin types at the mint of Kākhed and three coin types at the mint of Zagam within the relatively short period of time of 1595-1603 (approximately 9 years)? Let alone the countermark, probably applied to the coins in the same period.

Theoretically, the alteration of the coin design could herald the alteration of the weight standard. However, if our calculations with regard to weight standards of various coin types above are correct and future discoveries confirm them, we may conjecture, that the weight standard has never been altered at the Kākhed mint, and was altered once or twice at the Zagam mint. In this case, what made the authorities change the coin design, i.e. the coin type at least in case of Kākhed? And in some cases at the Zagam mint too?

The bullion for the minting could have been submitted to the mints intermittently, leading to coin-striking activities of uneven intensity, probably occasional and even frequently coming to a more or less lengthy break. But even so, why the already produced dies could not be employed for minting the coins anew? Why the celators were assigned with a repetitive task of engraving new dies? Even if the old ones were out of order, why the design had to be changed significantly?

So far we have no response to the question we put ourselves. Nevertheless, hopefully the very raising of this issue might be helpful.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HOARD

The historical significance of this hoard is seemingly multifaceted.

The non-monetary items (particularly the globular silver pendants, including the one with granulation; and the gold ring) have some historical as well as esthetical value and may be helpful for studying the history of Georgian art and craftsmanship.

The hoard provides us with additional factual evidence for expanding our understanding of the contemporary monetary issues; a discovery of a new Ottoman type of Zagam (Sub-group 6) and a new (Ottoman dominance period?) countermark of

Zagam (Sub-group 8) is of particular significance. More information, including the metrology analysis was provided for the other coin types too, specifying the weight-standard and the protocol.

The hoard provides us with a rare insight into the monetary circulation on the territory of the Kingdom of K'akheti (also eastern Georgia and adjacent regions in general). Being a short-term accumulation hoard, it reflects veraciously the contemporary situation.

Russian denga from this hoard indicates some influx of the Muscovite coins into the country constituting specific numismatic reflections of the contacts between the states in the 16ht century.

The very fact of issuing K'akhetian-Ottoman coinage indicates the availability of specific technical expertise and resources, which sheds some light on the contemporary economic history of K'akheti.

The hoard implies that the mint of Zagam was much more prolific than that of Kākhed, or, at least, that the internal area of K'akheti consumed primarily the produce of the former rather than that of the latter. Certainly, this is just an approximation, and further data are required for accessing this issue and establishing the output of these two Georgian mints.

We may also conjecture, that the monetary market of the Kingdom of K'akheti was more or less saturated by the Ottoman type currency issued at Zagam and Kākhed: no other mints were detected on the coins of the Telavi hoard; all the other coins (except for the 0.32 g Russian denga) either had not indication of the mint place, or were unattributable. They could be minted both in K'akheti and at other Caucasian-Ottoman mints. But even so, almost 70% (comprising slightly more than 70% of coined silver) of the hoard coins originated from Zagam and Kākhed.

We encounter both geographical and chronological homogeneity of the local monetary circulation in the Kingdom of K'akheti: predominantly the local mints are represented, and only by means of recent issues.

And finally, it would not be inappropriate to stress it out once again, that the very fact of the Ottoman type coinage minted in K'akheti constitutes an extremely remarkable historical evidence, and its significance certainly exceeds the relative limitedness of "pure" numismatics.

Last but not least, new data on the Ottoman type coin issues from Georgian mints provided by the Telavi hoard would be of some interest for those interested and researching the Ottoman numismatic history.

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FONTES INEDITI NUMISMATICAE ORIENTALIS

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FONTES INEDITI NUMISMATICAE ORIENTALIS

All numismatists know about the interesting and worthwhile initiative curated, amongst others, by François de Callataÿ, Federica Missere Fontana, Bernhard Woytek, and designated FINA: *Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Antiquae*. Having realised that numismatic studies were essentially based on published works, but that other documents remained in the shadows, unexplored, they went ahead with a search for unpublished material, especially the correspondence between antiquarians and collectors, but also manuscripts, testaments or memoirs of scholars. A goldmine gradually emerged of memoranda, exchanges, discussions, enthusiasms: the cognitive substratum of 18th century numismatics, all of which will greatly consolidate our discipline. The curators set 1800 as the chronological limit (in point of fact in coincidence with the publication of *Doctrina Nummorun Veterum* by Joseph Eckhel: 1737-1798) and confined the investigation to classical numismatics (primarily Greco-Roman).

Nonetheless, although to a lesser extent and despite imperfect knowledge of the sources, in the same period (17th – 18th centuries) interest also arose in the Orient (see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Pantheon Books, New York 1978): there were consequently scholarly pioneers who were attracted by the coinage of little known territories and kingdoms, often steeped in mysterious, legendary histories. For a list of the first publications in which single oriental coins (especially Islamic) appear, the monumental catalogues of Christian Dekesel are invaluable. A recent chronological record of the Islamic numismatic bibliography (Marco Callegari, *Alle origini della bibliografia sulla numismatica islamica,* in Bruno Callegher and Arianna D'Ottone

Rambach (eds.): *The 4th Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins*, Trieste, 26/27 September 2014, Trieste, EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2015, pp. 223-242) indicates as one of the first significant works the *Bibliographia antiquaria, sive Introductio in notitiam scriptorum, qui antiquitates hebraicas, graecas, romanas et christianas scriptis illustraverun*t by Johann Albert Fabricius, printed at Hamburg in 1713. It reports the presence of a coin issued in 1177 by Saladin in the collection of Carolus Cato Curtius, i.e. Charles Caton de Court (1654-1694). This is also reported in the 1695 edition of the work by Andreas Morell, *Specimen universae rei nummariae antiquae*: a certain collectors' interest in oriental coinage, even if modest, can thus be deduced, which is confirmed in various other publications preceding the bibliographic sylloge of 1713. If these references are prodromal, the two key publications were probably those of Georg Jacob Kehr (1692-1740):

- *Monarchiae asiatico-saracenicae status qualis VII et IX post Christum natum seculum fuit, ex nummis argenteis prisca Arabum scriptura kufica … et nuper in littore Maris Balthici prope Gedanum effossis,* Lipsiae 1724

- *Monarchae Mogolo-Indici, vel Mogolis magni Aurenk Szeb numisma Indo-Persicum argenteum quinquelibrale rarissimum in solennem renovationem et confirmationem clientelarum urbis ac sedis imperatoriae Dehli, nunc dictæ Dschihanabad, signatum*, Lipsiae 1725.

The geography is not casual. We had been expecting that oriental coinage would have interested English or French scholars, but it was among the orientalists of the Baltic countries, particularly in Sweden, that collectors' interest in Islamic numismatics spread following the discovery of a great quantity of *dirhams*, which arrived there owing to contacts that developed along the trade route of the Volga. Regarding this, the pioneering works of G. I. Kehr, *De statu monarchiae Asiatico-Saracenicae e nummis Cuficis prope Gedanum effossis,* Leipzig 1724, the brochure *Nummi Saracenici anno 1712 in agro Slesvicensi aratro detecti* in 1732 by Henricus Scholz, or the more exacting C. Aurivillius, *Disquisitio de numis arabicis, in Sviogothia repertis*, Upsala 1775. These were continued in B. Tiesenhausen, *Moneti vostochnavo khalifata (Monnaies des Khalifes Orientaux)*, St. Petersburg 1873, pp. XLIV and XLVII and subsequently listed in L.A. Mayer, *Bibliography of Moslem Numismatics, India excepted*, 2nd ed., London 1954; W.S.W. Vaux, *On the discovery of cufic coins in Sweden, and on the shores of the Baltic*, "The Numismatic Chronicle", 13 (1850-1851), pp. 14-23.

We might also add that attention to oriental coins, first and foremost Islamic, was one of the outcomes of the centuries-old undertaking in the registration of numismatic

data, initiated by Charles XI in 1666 with the creation of the *Collegium Antiquitatum*. The oriental (Islamic) section was united first in C.J. Tornberg, *Nummi Cufici Regii Numophylacii Holmiensis, quos omnes in terra Sueciae repertos*, Uppsala 1848 and later in the series *Corpus nummorum saeculorum IX-XI qui in Suecia reperti sunt*, Stockholm 1975-1987 and *Commentationes de nummis saeculorum IX-XI in Suecia repertis*, Stockholm 1987-2001.

Large collections were formed in two Baltic cities: in Gottingen (C. Boehringer, *Notizen zur Sammlung orientalischer Münzen der Universität Göttingen*, pp. 61-81, in part. 66-68, and in Rostock (K. Zimmermann, *Inventare des Rostocker Akademischen Münzkabinetts*, pp. 47-59), both studies in *Islamische Numismatik* cited below, but also papers in the *4th Assemani Symposium*).

Much less, and mostly scholarly repetition, was done in the rest of Europe. Certainly, in 1723 the *Sicilia numismatica* by Filippo Paruta (1552-1629) was reprinted in Lyons, with additions by Leonardo Agostino and under the supervision of the Dutchman Siegbert Havercamp. A general change can be dated to the mid-18th century. Publications regarding Kufic nummi multiplied: in 1749 Flaminio Corner recorded the finding of a substantial hoard of *dinars* during the demolition of a church in Venice; ten years later, in Paris, Jean- Jacques Barthélemy published the treatise *Dissertation sur les médailles arabes*. But they were in particular the years of Johann Jacob Reiske, Oluf Gerhard Tychsen, Carsten Niebuhr, Carl Aurivillius, Jonas Hallenberg, and William Marsden (1754-1836), in his turn a pioneer with his *Numismata orientalia* on the study of Eastern Asian coinage, but especially J.G.C. Adler, *Museum cuficum Borgianum* 1782 and successive editions, as well as Simone Assemani. The collections had been formed, publishing them became urgent (see S. Heidemann, *Die Entwicklung der Methoden in der Islamischen Numismatik im 18. Jahrhundert. War Johann Jacob Reiske ihr Begründer?,* in *Johann Jacob Reiske – Leben und Wirkung. Ein Leipziger Byzantinist und Begründer der Orientalistik im 18. Jahrhundert,* G. Ebert und T. Hanstein eds., Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, pp. 147-202). Yet few scholars mastered Arabic; some more or less boasted about it as inferred from the correspondence of Simone Assemani including on the Vella case, both with Oluf Gerhard Tychsen, and with Gaetano Cattaneo, keeper of the Numismatic Museum in Milan, with whom he discussed a coin today defined as Arab-Byzantine. Even more uncertain was the knowledge of other languages of East Asia. The wide range of the scientific discussion in those letters (attributions, errors in interpretation and linguistic queries, because the epigraphic/paleographic part is obviously more than essential to the understanding not only of Arabic numismatics but also for Sassanian, Indian and Chinese coins) suggested conducting a census and making the documentation available that will lead to systematic editions of the 19th century, with a delay of almost a century with respect to classical numismatics. The interest is not so much in errors or new attributions, but rather to investigate the motivations for collecting oriental

money, retrace the itineraries of the exchanges, understand the contribution of travellers or missionaries, study ancient discoveries of single coins or hoards, up to the forming of the big collections. An example is that of L.L. Sawaszkiewicz, *Le Génie de l'Orient, commenté par ses monuments monétarires*, a catalogue of the 2683 coins in the "Cabinet Musulman", printed in Brussels in 1846, complete with 105 drawings. Similarly, because it is near us, the Numismatic Cabinet in Milan deserves renewed attention, where specimens were gathered from the Arrigoni, Collato, Assemani collections and in particular, I.G. Lipsius, numismatist and bibliophile of Dresden, author of the famed *Bibliotheca Numaria, sive Catalogus auctorum qui usque ad finem seculi XVIII de re monetaria aut numis scripserunt,* Lipsiae 1801. An unexplored field of enquiry is that of the engraving of plates with coins with a Kufic/Arabic inscription or in other oriental languages: who were the engravers and what linguistic expertise did they have (did they copy or actually read?) because few knew oriental languages. In the letters the correspondents very often accompanied their descriptions of coins with *frottage*, in order to overcome the margin of error in the transcriptions.

All this material and the work of numerous numismatists deserves to be cited, brought again to the attention of scholars, both to report their existence and to initiate a history of the studies in the wake of the consolidated experience that has been gained over the years on classical numismatics.

The 5th Simone Assemani Symposium appeared to be a suitable occasion to propose FINO, *Fontes Inediti Numismaticae Orientalis* (see logo) in search for a possible method to make unpublished documents available: correspondence, memoirs, discussions, descriptions of collections or sale of collections, records or diaries of journeys, with particular attention to the coins of eastern countries.

The procedures could be those most sustainable and at the same time widely accessible: create a *repository archive* in which to transfer PDF files of studies, editions of documents, photographic material, reproductions of letters and anything considered relevant. Experience teaches us that good intentions can only become reality through people's work. For this it is proposed to create a coordinating board, with one or two colleagues from each country who freely join forces motivated by historical-numismatic research. We could also fix a first appointment in 2020. On that occasion a chronological limit will be defined [perhaps the years of publication of the catalogues by Henri-Michel Lavoix (1820-1892) and Stanley Lane-Poole (1854-1932), as criterion for the collection and subsequent publication of the documents in order to make them accessible, primarily via consultation on line.

The success of this proposal is entrusted to the cooperation of those who would be willing to actively participate.

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THE NANI COLLECTION OF ARABIC COINS THROUGH UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS & DRAWINGS BY JEAN FRANÇOIS CHAMPOLLION (1790-1832)*

Abstract

At the corner of Palaeography, Numismatics and Antiquarianism, this contribution aims at discussing, attributing and presenting the contents of an unpublished manuscript by the famous Rosetta stone code's breaker, Jean François Champollion. The manuscript is of numismatic interest since it contains drawings and notes taken from the first volume of the Jacopo Nani collection, published in 1787 by Simone Assemani. The manuscript evidence presented here contributes, on one hand, to enlarge the knowledge of Champollion's numismatic research and, on the other hand, to a better understanding of the spread and influence of Assemani's works on Numismatics in the scientific community. Moreover, an updated and illustrated catalogue of a number of specimens of the Nani collection is provided and new light is thrown on the Arabic coins of this collection, their provenance and attribution.

Keywords

Nani collection, Champollion, Assemani, manuscripts, Numismatics, history of coin collecting

* I am grateful to the Director of the Municipal library in Faenza for welcoming me there and for introducing me to Flavio Merletti, who rediscovered the Champollion section in Faenza.

Eckhel did for medallic history,
what Young and Champollion
achieved for the hieroglyphic[1]

CHAMPOLLION AND HIS UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS

Jean François Champollion is famous, worldwide, for his fundamental contribution to the deciphering of the Egyptian hieroglyphs[2]. But the genial French scholar had wide linguistic interests, and his unpublished manuscripts – which are partly in Italy – attest not only an exceptional number of languages known by the Rosetta stone's code breaker, but also his numismatic interests – especially for Oriental coins: Hebrew and Arabic ones.

Carrying some researches on Michelangelo Lanci (1779-1867) – *Scriptor Arabicus* at the Vatican Library and professor of Arabic at Sapienza University – and his conflictual relation with Angelo Mai (1782-1854)[3], I had the occasion to deal with Jean François Champollion and his *œuvre*[4]. My attention was caught by the existence in Faenza of a number of manuscripts and documents that, all together, form a proper "Champollion section" (*Fondo Champollion*) within the holdings of the local municipal library[5].

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[1] Lee 1836-37, p. 51.

[2] See Champollion 1822; *Textes et langages* 1972. Leclant 1991.

[3] It seems not irrelevant to stress here that Carlo Ottavio Castiglioni (1784-1849), author of the catalogue of the Arabic coins of the Royal Museum in Milan, asked help to M. Lanci, in order to read some bronze coins as attested in an autograph letter by Castiglioni addressed to A.I. Sylvestre de Sacy, see Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France, ms 2375, nr. 37: letter dated Milan, 30 November 1823.

[4] The clash between Mai and Lanci worsened with the arrival in Rome of J.-F. Champollion, see D'Ottone Rambach 2019. For a bibliographical repertoire on J.-F. Champollion and his work, see Kettel 1990.

[5] For a first description of the contents of this section and the history of the arrival of Champollion's manuscripts and notes in Faenza, see Merletti 2009/2010. When I read the text by Merletti, in October 2017, I decided to go to Faenza to see the material in person. With the acquisition of the images of all the files of the Champollion section in the library of this town as well as the images of five other Champollion unpublished manuscripts at the *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, I gave impulse to the project *Champollion Beyond Hieroglyphs. The many languages of the Rosetta Stone Code Breaker*. The project, presented by C. A. Ciancaglini as PI, involves a number of international specialists of various linguistic domains and aims at producing annotated editions of Champollion's unpublished manuscripts. In the past various scholars expressed the wish to publish the works, still manuscript, by Champollion, see Dewachter 1994. However, these scholars, mostly - if not all - Egyptologists, focused their interest on Egypt and on hieroglyphs whilst the vast linguistic interests that Champollion cultivated remained, to date, ignored, as well as his numismatic interests. For J.-F. Champollion passion

The rediscovery of these manuscripts and notes – that single themselves out to be a new source for the study of Champollion's works outside France[6] – throws new light on the work of the French erudite and, in particular, on his numismatic interests.

The attribution to Champollion of the folios contained in the file labelled *Museum Kuficum* has already been discussed by Flavio Merletti who considered this file, among those preserved in Faenza, as undoubtedly written by the famous linguist[7].

The elements who lead Merletti to this attribution are: the letters standing for initials of Champollion's name noted on the first folio of the file, serving as a folder of the un-bound folios and the colour – pale-blue – of the paper on which these notes are written. Both the 'signature' and the paper are comparable to other manuscript notes by the French scholars: in particular the light-blue paper seems to be a perfect match with the headed paper of the University of Grenoble employed for other notes undoubtedly by Champollion. Last, but not least, the script corresponds to that of other autograph documents by J.-F. Champollion (fig. 1). Merletti highlights, in particular, some of the peculiarities of the handwriting of Champollion, especially in comparison with that of his pupil from Faenza, Francesco Salvolini (1810-1838) – peculiarities that can be detected in the *Museum Kuficum* notes[8].

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and study of Oriental languages – Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Persian, Chinese – in Paris, see Faure 2004, pp. 116-125.

[6] The publication, in 2006, of a manuscript entitled *Notes diverses* ("Various Notes") by Champollion preserved at Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, led Hans D. Schneider to write: «Il reste que très peu d'écrits de jeunesse de Champollion. De nombreux textes ont été perdus ou dispersés pendant sa vie déjà, mais surtout dès sa mort en 1832. Les *Notes diverses* font partie de ses rares écrits – hormis ses lettres – à être conservés hors de France. Parmi les manuscrits de ses débuts, ce sont probablement les seuls se trouvant à l'étranger », Schneider 2006, p. 10. In a note by Champollion's elder brother, Champollion Figeac, on the manuscripts by Champollion the Younger missing at his death – and in Salvolini's possession – he writes: «je m'aperçus, dès le commencement de ce travail de l'absence de quelques-uns des manuscrits les plus importants et de celle de plusieurs autres mémoires d'un moindre intérêt, *comme étant ou plus anciens, moins directement relatifs à l'Égypte* [my emphasis], ou moins achevés», Champollion Figeac 1842.

[7] See Merletti 2009/2010, p. 16.

[8] Merletti points out some specific letters and linguistic details that are typical of the handwriting of Champollion and that are useful to distinguish his writings from those of his pupil Francesco Salvolini: «Moreover, almost all Champollion's autographs are written with a very linear script unlike Francesco Salvolini's script whose writing is rather bent towards right. In the documents written by the French scholar some words, especially those at the end of the prepositions, single themselves out for being traced twice and comparison between his script and that of the scholar from Faenza lead to highlight some differences in the writing of the letter *s* minuscule, of the letter *d* minuscule, of the capital letter *A* and *M* etc. When Salvolini writes in French, he actually omits the accents on the letter *e* except for the titles; whilst in his autographs the French scholar put the accent on that letter beyond his occurence in titles» (La quasi totalità degli autografi di Champollion appare, inoltre, essere vergata con una grafia molto lineare, a differenza di quella di Francesco Salvolini, che scrive con una calligrafia tendenzialmente rivolta verso destra. Nei documenti dello studioso francese alcune parole, in special modo quelle finali di numerose preposizioni, hanno la caratteristica di essere ricalcate e un

Moreover, Merletti stresses the importance of a palaeographic and codicological analysis that, together with the contents of the documents, should lead to identify with certainty the name of the author. These elements find confirmation in the chronology and in the places of writing of other pages in which dates and places are recorded[9].

CHAMPOLLION NUMISMATIST: HIS NOTES & DRAWINGS AND THE NANI COLLECTION

Numismatics was one of the many fields which attracted the attention of Champollion *le jeune*. As pointed out by M. Merland, when Champollion was professor of Ancient History in Grenoble, – during the years 1809-1821 – he started studying the 5000 pieces of the collection of the Abbey of St. Anthony in Dauphiné of which he made a catalogue apparently lost[10]. Therefore, the only documents attesting Champollion's numismatic interest are those linked to the Oriental coins – Jewish and Arabic ones – that are still preserved in Faenza.

The undated forty-eight folios containing Champollion notes and drawings in Faenza Municipal Library are preserved inside a soft cover on which is written in big letters: *Museum Kuficum*, followed by a decorative scribble under which there are the letters J-f. C. f. that stand for J[*ean*]-f[*rançois*] C[*hampollion*] f[*ecit*][11] (ms f. 1r).

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confronto con la sua grafia e quella del faentino ha permesso di notare grandi differenze nel redigere la *s* minuscola, la *d* minuscola, la *A* maiuscola, la *M* maiuscola, etc. Salvolini, quando scrive in francese, di fatto omette gli accenti sulla lettera *e*, fatta eccezione per le *e* adoperate nei titoli; mentre negli autografi del francese l'accento su tale lettera, appare anche in contesti che non siano il solo titolo del documento) Merletti 2009/2010, p. 14. On Francesco Salvolini and his manuscripts at the BnF, see Einaudi 2017. For other peculiarities of Champollion's script, as for example, the intensive use of capital letters, see Schneider 2006, p. 31.

[9] See Merletti 2009/2010, pp. 13-14.

[10] Some traces of the work done by Champollion have been identified in the additions made to the old catalogue of the collection, see Merland 1994, p. 25 and footnote 51. See also see Cayol-Gerin 2004, p. 29.

[11] Merletti considered consistent to the initials written on the folder of *Museum Kuficum* those written on the manuscript containing Champollion "Notes diverses" preserved in Leiden, see Merletti 2009/2010, p. 28. I note, here, that the transcription of the Leiden manuscript is not always faithful neither to the manuscript nor to the editorial rules indicated by the editor who says: «Dans la transcription suivante des *Notes diverses*, l'emploi curieux de capitales par Champollion a été maintenu. Aucune correction orthographique du français et de l'hébreu n'a été apporté et la construction de la phrase est restée inchangée», Schneider 2006, p. 47. In particular the initial letters of Champollion's first name appear in the manuscript as: «J. f. Champollion» not, as transcribed, "J. fr. Champollion" and also the transcription of many capital "j" seems not coherent with the original manuscript.

Flavio Merletti, who first described the file with Champollion's notes labelled as *Museum Kuficum*, hypothesized that those documents were linked to the coin collection of the Abbey of St. Anthony in Dauphiné[12]. But in fact, there is no doubt that there is no link between the notes in Faenza and the coin collection of the Abbey at St. Anthony.

Champollion's notes are actually taken from the 1787 publication of the Nani collection[13]: on the unnumbered second folio of cover, under the title in bold, capital characters «Ommiâhdes» an abbreviated note reads: «Mus[*eo*] cuf[*ico*] Nanian[*o*]» (ms f. 2r) and the same note is repeated on the folio containing the title «Fathimites», both in black ink (ms f. 32r).

In 1787 the abbot Simone Assemani (1752-1821) had published the first volume of the catalogue of the oriental manuscripts in the Nani collection which included a catalogue and the illustrations, on four plates, of some fifty Kufic coins and glass jetons in that very same collection[14]. In 1788 the same scholar published a second volume of the Nani collection, only devoted to coins, in which - 125 further exemplars of coins and glass jetons were catalogued[15].The contents of the Champollion's manuscript in Faenza help, thus, to know his readings, since the code-breaker's library was dispersed after his death[16].

Champollion made faithful drawings of the coins, as reproduced in the plates, to which he added the Arabic legends and their French translation and also some of the relevant details (name of the mint, date of minting, dynasty). Champollion followed the order of the illustrations of the first 45 coins and 2 glasses in Assemani's catalogue[17]. The page lay-out of the multicolour Champollion pages is structured as follows: the name of the dynasty on top, the name of the caliph and possibly some notes on him (e.g. «X^{e} de la race d'Ommiade») – both in brown ink; the drawing of

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[12] See Merletti 2009/2010, p. 16 and footnote 29, p. 22.

[13] On Giacomo Nani (1725-1797), see Del Negro 1971 and Del Negro 2012. On the Nani di San Trovaso's collection in the 18th-century Venice, see Favaretto 2002, pp. 206-220.

[14] See Assemani 1787, in particular: *Elenco delle monete cufiche del Museo naniano illustrate in questa prima parte*, pp. xvij-xliv, pp. 225-227 and pl. I-IV. S. Assemani was not the first to publish Arabic glass jetons, as mistakenly written by Bates 1981, p. 63. The first European scholar who published this type of material was in 1782, J. G. Ch. Adler in the first volume of his *Museum Cuficum Borgianum*. For a reconsideration of the Islamic glass jetons, see D'Ottone Rambach forthcoming.

[15] See Assemani 1788. The numbering of the plates in this volume starts from plate V suggesting that this new volume continued to illustrate the numismatic collection of which only some hints were previously given.

[16] Wilhelm Froehner (1834-1925), for example, was able to acquire, in 1869, one hundred books coming from the library once belonging to Champollion-Figeac in which ended up, after his death, the volumes of his younger brother. On the Froehner's purchase, see Bakhoum-Hellmann 1992, p. 158.

[17] There is only one inaccuracy in the drawing of the nr. 13 in the Assemani's Catalogue that appears as the first number 9 in Champollion's manuscript, in which two number '9' are recorded.

the obverse and reverse of the coin – in black ink – numbered: *1* and *2*; the legend in Arabic – in yellow ink, alternated with the French translation – in brown (ms f. 8r). The number in brown ink at the top-right corner of each folio corresponds, with one exception[18], to the number of the coin in Assemani's plates.

TOWARDS A NEW CATALOGUE OF THE NANI COLLECTION

A catalogue of the Jacopo Nani coins reproduced by Champollion will follow together with the reproduction of the manuscript, the corresponding drawings published by Simone Assemani and, whenever possible, a modern picture of the coins, nowadays kept at the Museo Ca' d'Oro in Venice (Galleria G. Franchetti)[19].

This gives also the occasion for reviewing the typewritten list of the Oriental coins in the Ca' d'Oro coin collection, to provide a modern and updated catalogue of the exemplars, to illustrate for the first time Arabic specimens of the Nani coin collection[20] and, last but not least, to reconsider the specimens in the Nani Collection in the light of modern numismatic literature and in the perspective of the history of collecting Arabic coins in Italy.

Despite the fact that, still in 1997, the catalogues by Simone Assemani were considered as an 'unavoidable source for the right identification' of the 125 coins once belonging to the Nani collection[21], an updated catalogue allows to fix a number of the original attributions – since Assemani was not always able to provide a convinc-

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[18] The repetition of the number 9, see *supra*.

[19] I am grateful to Dr. Claudia Cremonini, keeper of the Ca' d'Oro and Dr. Enrico Noè, honorary keeper of the Ca'd'Oro coin cabinet for the access to the Nani coin collection; I am also grateful to Bruno Callegher for his friendly help in Venice and Vanja Macovaz for the pictures of the exemplars reproduced in this contribution. Last, but not least, I am particularly grateful to Lutz Ilisch for his learned advice.

[20] Some of the most recent publications – such as Goodwin 2018 or Nicol 2006 – still reproduce and/or are based only on the drawings illustrated in the plates of the 1787 Assemani first volume of the Nani collection. Goodwin also reproduces the drawings of two, out of the ten standing caliph coins published by C. O. Castiglioni in his catalogue of the Milan coin cabinet – see Castiglioni 1819. These drawings show two specimens – respectively from the mint of Yubnā and Sarmīn – that Castiglioni failed to correctly identify. One of the standing caliph coins, correctly attributed by Castiglioni to Ḥalab – the most common mint for the copper issues of this type – has been illustrated in the catalogue of an exhibition in 1993 – see *Mīrāth al-Islām* 1993, pp. 76-77, nr. 12, where the name of the mint is mistakenly indicated as al-Ḥalab (*sic*). It seems therefore urgent to start scrutinizing all the collections of Arabic coins in Italy in order to study and catalogue the unedited specimens and to publish anew the historical collections known, too often, through 18th or 19th-century catalogues.

[21] «I 125 esemplari component la raccolta furono editi dall'abate Simone Assemani (Assemani 1787-88), la cui opera ancora oggi costituisce la fonte indispensabile per la corretta identificazione di buona di essi», Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, p. 264.

ing identification[22]. In some cases, he says he is doubtful about certain attributions, such as for nr. XXXV (cat. nr. 17); in some other cases, he leaves the question of the attribution open – as for nr. XLI and XLII (cat. nrs 1-2) – and in some other cases Assemani's identifications are simply no longer valid – as for nr. XX and XXXIV (cat. nr. 8 and nr. 5).

The case provided by the copper coins of the Amīrs of Crete (211/3-349 AH/AD 827/8-961) (Assemani nrs XV, XVI, XVII and XXX) is a very good example of an attribution nowadays outdated. The existence of this dynasty and its coinage – in gold, silver and copper – was actually pointed out as recently as 1953, when John Walker published the first article on the subject[23]. After this contribution, in which Walker indicated a number of copper specimens already published but misattributed to the Umayyads, the 'Abbasids or to some "Spanish rebels"[24], a number of other publications came to light up to the 1970 volume by G. C. Miles in which «an orderly presentation of the scattered material» was accomplished[25]. However, neither Walker, nor Miles had access to the material in the Nani collection[26]. The Nani collection, though, includes, among its exemplars, four bronze issues – attributed by Assemani to the 'Abbasids – of the Amīrs of Crete (cat. nrs. 33-36). These four bronzes are thus properly identified and illustrated here for the first time.

Moreover, it is possible to note that the eight 'Abbasid dirhams in the Nani collection – Assemani catalogue nrs III, IV, V, VII, VIII, IX, XI, XII (cat. nrs. 18-20, 25-27, 29-30) – can all be linked to a Russian Viking-age hoard. Such a provenance appears evident if several elements are considered: in particular it is useful to consider the mint – all the specimens come from the North African mint of al-'Abbāsiyya; the range of the date – all the specimens are dated between 160 and 176 AH (AD 776-792) and the presence of test-marks – pecks are visible on some of them. These elements match the chronological frame and the geographical provenance pointed out by Thomas Noonan in his studies of the dirham hoards found in Russia[27]. The relatively high presence of North African dirhams in Russian hoards is linked – ac-

[22] But one has to consider that he was one of the first scholars to publish Arabic coins.

[23] See Walker 1953.

[24] See Walker 1953, p. 129.

[25] See Miles 1970, p. ix. Miles lists in the *Preface* of his volume the relevant bibliography published after Walker 1953, see Miles 1970, pp. viii-ix

[26] Miles is actually aware of the coins in the Nani collections but, despite the efforts of Paul Balog and Philip Grierson, he had to surrender to the idea that they were dispersed: «115-118, Museo Cufico Naniano, Padova? […] Provenance: unknown. These four specimens were published and illustrated by line drawings by Simone Assemani, ns. XV, XVI, XVII and XXX (cf. Tiesenhausen no. 2559). *I have not been able to determine the present whereabouts of this collection; evidently it has been dispersed*» (my emphasis), Miles 1970, p. 31.

[27] See in particular Noonan 1980.

cording to Noonan – to the diminution in the years 166-178 AH/AD 782-795 of silver coins production in in Baghdād. North African dirhams would have been an intentional replacement in Baghdād for silver coins. From the central regions of the caliphate (‘Iraq and Iran) the North African dirham would have then reached Russia.

The fact that all North African dirhams in the Nani collection are dated before AH 217/AD 833, connects them to the Russian hoards in which often more than half of the specimens were produced in North Africa. Moreover, three, out of eight dirham struck in al-‘Abbāsiyya in the Nani collection go back to the decade 154-163 AH/ AD 771-780: they are thus consistent with the date of the most ancient ‘Abbasid specimens from North Africa that have been found in Russia.

Furthermore, for the exemplars struck in al-‘Abbāsiyya in 171 from the Nani collection, it is possible to establish a typological connection with another exemplar in the Capitoline Museum that is part of the Stanzani collection[28]: this exemplar carries – as some of the specimens in the Nani collection – clear traces of pecks on it[29]. This detail is a further proof connecting the dirhams in the Nani collection to a Viking-age hoard, likely found in Russia.

This piece of information contributes to a better understanding of the ways through which the Nani collection was built up and it has to be put in a larger frame, considering both the possible provenances of other coins as well as the provenances of other pieces – manuscripts and objects such as sculptures, inscriptions and antiquities – forming the collection[30].

As for other provenances of the Nani’s coins, the copper coins of the Amīrs of Crete suggest, in their turn, a possible connection with Crete, in which the Venetian established a colony, the Duchy of Candia (1212-1669), until the Ottoman took the control of the island.

In addition to this, Jacopo Nani included in his collection coins belonging to other collectors: this is the case of the *dīnār* (cat. nr. 3) that was previously part of the collection belonging to Guido Antonio Zanetti (1741-1791)[31].

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[28] See D’Ottone 2010, p. 144, nr. 14. For the North African coins from the mint of al-‘Abbāsiyya in the Stanzani collection, see D’Ottone 2010a: pp. 264-265. For the biography of Ludovico Stanzani (1784-1872), who lived in Russia a large span of his life, see D’Ottone Rambach 2017.

[29] For pecks on imitations of Byzantine coins from Scandinavian Viking-Age hoards as signs that testify they were used for exchange, see Audy 2016, p. 164.

[30] Francesca Crema already highlighted the links with the island of Corfù, as well as with Istria, Dalmatia, Cefalonia and Morea. Moreover, she stressed the fact that Jacopo Nani spent 12 years in the Levant, searching for antiquities, see Crema 2007, pp. 238-239. On the interest of Jacopo Nani for coins and coin collecting, see Crema 2007, p. 240, footnote 23.

[31] On Guido Antonio Zanetti, see Chimienti 2011. «Due di dette monete spagnuole con caratteri antichi arabici, detti cufici (da Cufa città caldea lungo l’Eufrate), *conservo nella mia raccolta* [my emphasis], che per le ragioni che sono per addurre, credo essere i veri marabotini battuti in diversi tempi […]» Zanetti 1783, p. 368. «La seconda moneta d’oro coll’epigrafe suddetta è stata pubblicata dal

Concerning the Venitian coin collections in which Arabic coins were represented, besides that of Zanetti and Nani it has to be mentioned the Pisani collection that included at least one Urtukid specimen (fig. 2)[32]. Assemani informs us how he discovered the Urtukid piece in the Pisani collection and he gives his judgment on the interpretation of the coin made in the catalogue: «Devo la scoperta di questa moneta al Sig. Abate D. Carlo Pezzi Professore di Belle Lettere nel nuovo istituto dei chierici di Venezia, ed alla gentilezza dell'erudito Sig. Dott. D. Antonio Bonicelli bibliotecario dell'Eccellentissima Casa Pisani S. Stefano. L'interpretazione dell'epigrafe arabica, che si legge nel suddetto Museo, è del tutto fantastica»[33]. It seems also relevant to stress that the Pisani collection was once belonging to the Correr family: in 1694, after the death of Girolamo Correr, the Correr coin cabinet went in the possession of the Pisani family through the wedding of Angelo Correr – Girolamo's son – with Isabetta Pisani[34].

chiarissimo Guid'Antonio Zanetti […], senza però la spiegazione; ed essa poi, mediante la di lui somma cortesia, è passata nel Museo Naniano (vedi tav. I, n°. I)» Assemani 1787, p. viij. It is not clear, though, the way through which Nani got the specimen(s): if as purchase or in exchange with other coin(s).

[32] See Assemani 1787, p. xxx. On the Pisani coin collection, catalogued by Pietro Fondi (1680-1763), see Moschini 1806, p. 80. On the Pisani family, see Gullino 1984.

[33] For the description of the Urtukid coin in the Pisani collection, see In Numismata 1740, p. 213.

[34] See Favaretto 2005, p. 31.

THE CATALOGUE

Coins are arranged in chronological order, by dynasty.

An Arabic number precedes the Assemani's reference number in Latin letters; the inventory number and the details about the metal, the diameter (in mm) and the weight (in gr) follow whenever they are known. After that the name of the mint (if any) and of the date (if any), recorded in the specimen, are indicated the transcription of the legends – or the description of the types – of *Obverse* and *Reverse*. The 'Bibliographical references' record first the occurrence of the specimens in Assemani's 1787 catalogue or in previous catalogues to which they once belonged. Further bibliographical references recording the presence of similar issues in different collections/publications follow ('see also'). In the field devoted to the 'Notes' are reported: Assemani's notes, the manuscript notes by Champollion - as they appear in the original manuscript, and other details that deserve to be mentioned.

UMAYYADS

PRE-REFORM COINS (70S AH/AD 690S)

1. Assemani XLI

Venice, Ca' d'Oro, Inv. Nr. 275-11285

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Ma'arrat Misrīn, 1st c. AH/AD 7th c.

Obverse

Field: Caliph with a whip as single long thick line[35].

Margin: blundered legend *amīr al-mu'minīn* (downwards to left) and *khalīfat Allāh* (downwards to right)

Reverse

Field: Symbol-on-steps[36] with mint name written either side: *Ma'arrat // Misrīn*

Margin: *Lā ilāh illā Allāh waḥdahu*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxxviij-xxxix, p. 225 nr. XLI; Goodwin 2018, p. 90 (the drawing of this coin).

See also Walker 1956, nr. 101 and pl. VII; SICA 2002, nrs 674-678; Goodwin 2018, nrs 401-403 with crescent to left on the obverse.

Notes: In Assemani's 1787 volume the coin is listed towards the end of the numismatic catalogue, as the number its attests, among the exemplars attributed to various dynasties («monete delle dinastie»). Assemani does not attribute this coin to a dynasty in particular but he expresses his disagreement with the description (a cross, on the Reverse) and the dates (585 or 679 AH) suggested by Adler for similar specimens in the catalogue of the Borgia museum[37].

Assemani: «*Moneta XLI, e XLII di rame*

Queste due monete dall'una parte rappresentano una figura copiata dale medaglie greche: il sig. Adler crede che sia l'effigie di Nostro Signore. L'epigrafe cufica che è intorno dell'effigie è così mal formata, che si rende assai difficile il dicifrarla. La parte seconda rappresenta un'asta, o colonna con un cerchio, piantata sopra, una base a quattro gradini: il Sig. Adler la crede una croce. L'epigrafe cufica,

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[35] For a discussion of the object held by the standing caliph, see Goodwin 2017: pp. 120-122.

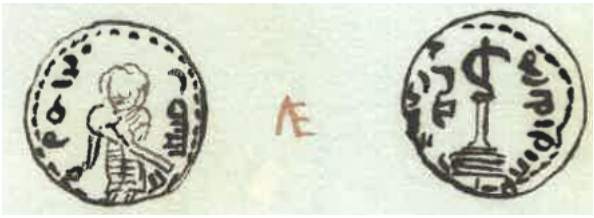
[36] For the various interpretations given to the symbol on the Reverse of the copper issues with the standing caliph, see Heidemann 2010 and Goodwin 2017: pp. 122-127, who agrees with Heidemann's suggestion that the symbol is a mark of value, with the symbol standing for the Greek letter Φ for 'follis'. For a discussion of the different styles and variations of the symbol, see Goodwin 2018: pp. 32-34.

[37] Cfr. Adler 1782, pp. 71-72 and pl. VI.

che mal formata si vede all'intorno, è la solita, cioè 'Non vi è altro Dio, che Dio; Muhammede è legato di Dio'. Queste due monete simili a quelle del Museo Borgiano nr.° XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII, XLIX, L. Il dotto Sig. Adler ha fatto ogni sforzo, ma indarno, per dicifrarle; e nella XLVI, e XLVII gli sembra di vedere segnato l'anno dell'Egira 585, oppure 679 in cifre, o sia note numerali: ma quei segni, che al dotto uomo sembrano cifre, o vogliam dire note numerali, agli occhi miei sembrano lettere, specialmente quelle della moneta XLVII»[38].

Champollion: «*Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que dieu / Muhammad l'apotre de Dieu*» f. 41r.





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[38] Assemani 1787, pp. xxxviii-xxxix.

2. Assemani XLII

Venice, Ca' d'Oro, Inv. Nr. 271-11281

Æ fals.

Mint & date: [*Di*]mashq, 1st c. AH/AD 7th c.

Obverse

Field: Standing caliph with the whip to his right comprising three separate strands

Margin: *li-'abd Allāh 'Abd al-Malik amīr al-mu'minīn*

Reverse

Field: Symbol-on-steps with the mint name Dimashq missing the first letter.

Margin: blundered legend with words missing, *Lā ilāh illā Allāh waḥdahu Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxxviij-xxxix, p. 225 nr. XLII; Goodwin 2018, p. 90 (the drawing of this coin).

See also Walker 1956, nr. 87 and pl. VI; Goodwin 2018, Type IV, nr. 113.

Notes: The first letter of the mint name is missing.

For Assemani's comments on this coin see the Notes on the previous exemplar.

Champollion: «comme la precedente» ("as the previous one"), f. 42r.



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POST-REFORM

Hishām b. ʻAbd al-Malik (r. 105-120 AH/AD 724-738)

3. Assemani I

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

AV *dīnār*.

Mint & date: no mint, 110 AH/AD 728-9

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: Qur'ān IX, 33

Reverse

Field: *Allāh aḥad Allāh* / *al- ṣamad lam yalid* / *wa-lam yūlad*

Margin: *Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar sanaᵗ ʻashra wa-miʼa*

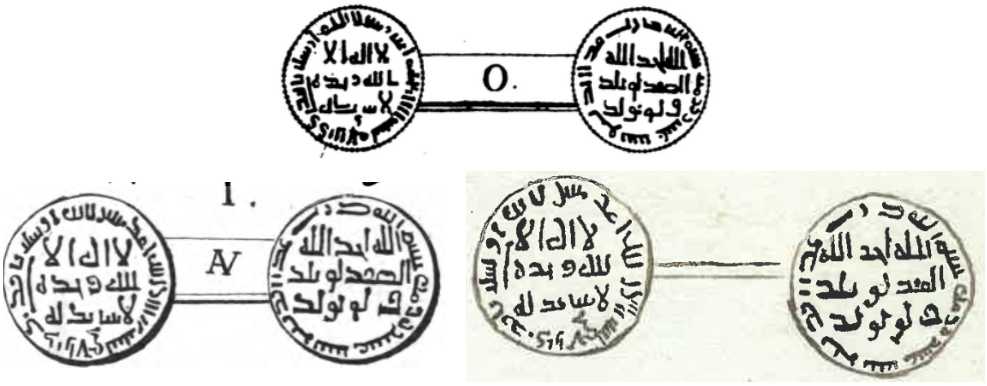
Bibliographical references: Corner 1749, p. 65; Zanetti vol. III 1783, p. 369, this coin; Assemani 1787, p. xvij, p. 225 nr. I.

See also Lavoix 1887, p. 115, nr. 452; Nicol-al-Nabarawy-Bacharach 1404/1982, nr. 104; Darley-Doran 1983, nr. 37; al-ʻUsh 1984, nr. 452; Bernardi 2012, nr. 43.

Notes: Assemani's comments: «Questa moneta fu battuta sotto il califato di *Hesciam Emad eddaulat*, nella serie de' califi XVII, e della stirpe Ommaiah, o sia Ommiada X califa. Regnò anni 19, mesi 7, e giorni 11: morì ai 6 del mese Rabii secondo, l'anno dell'Egira 125 (di G. C. 743)» p. xvij[39].

[39] Assemani informs also the reader about another specimen, similar to the one in the Nani collection, preserved in the convent of S. Lorenzo in Venice «Finalmente in favor d'Elmacino vi sono le monete le più antiche ritrovate. La più antica moneta cufica d'oro, che siasi scoperta finora, conservasi nel nobilissimo monastero di S. Lorenzo, di Venezia. Io ho avuto ogni agio d'osservarla, e di ricopiarla; il qual favore siccome altri molti, io debbo alla somma umanità della pregiatissima dama, la N. D. Moceniga Vendramino, degnissima consorte del Sig. Cavaliere e Senatore, Jacopo Nani. La detta moneta pertanto nel peso e nella forma de' caratteri è simile alla Naniana Tav. I, n° I» Assemani 1877, p. vij. The reference to the help given by Jacopo Nani's wife, Moceniga Vendramino, to Assemani, in order to have access to the collection of the convent of S. Lorenzo is linked to the fact that the convent was a feminine one, housing Benedictine nuns, see Tassini 1872, pp. 388-389. The convent, in the sottoportico of which was buried the famous traveller Marco Polo, was one of the richest in Venice, since it was housing young noble girls not destined to the wedding, see Cappelletti 1855, I p. 152. Besides the nuns many women, not all professed, were living nearby the nunnery, see Carraro 2012 and 2015. As for Numismatics, it seems not irrelevant to stress that at the end of the 16th century, when the convent was rebuilt, there were found two vases of gold coins that were considered to be part of the booty of Tyre conquered by the Doge Domenico Michiel in 1125 and that were given to the mother abbess in 1172, when a riot exploded in Venice: «Fu rifabbricata dopo l'incendio del 1105 che l'ebbe distrutta; quindi nel 1592 per cura di Paola Priuli altra badessa […] Nel gittar delle fondamenta si rinvennero due gran vasi ripieni di monete d'oro che si ritiene appartenessero al bottino fatto nella conquista di Tiro dal doge Domenico Michiel (1125) e fossero consegnati da Vital alla sorella, badessa,

Champollion: «Ommiades / *Hesciam Emad eddaulat* X^e^ de la race d'Ommiah» f. 1r.



quando scoppiò il tumulto popolare in cui questo ultimo fu ucciso a s. Zaccaria (1172)» Bembo 1859, p. 304. More precisely Gaetano Moroni records: «[…] la successora Paola Prioli, sorella del patriarca Lorenzo, la quale nel 1592 fecela edificare nella magnifica quadrilatera forma, in cui si vede, in due parti divisa, l'una esteriore pel popolo, l'altra interiore per le monache. […] nel suo sottoportico eravi sepolto il celebre Marco Polo. Nel disfarsi, per miracolo nulla si fecero 4 muratori nel cader la volta della cappella di S. Candida romana, vergine e martire, il cui corpo proveniente da Bolsena, era nascosto dentro un pilastro, secondo l'uso di que' tempi […]. Più si trovarono due zare o vasi pieni di monete moresche d'oro con caratteri arabi, e due ne pubblicò Corner colle iscrizioni tradotte in onore di Dio e di Maometto. Si crederono ricchezze acquistate da Domenico Michiel nell'espugnazione di Tiro, e date dal figlio Vitale II alla sorella Angela per ascondersi mentre il popolo tumultuava e poi l'uccise nel 1172» Moroni 1858, vol . XCI, p. 109. The find is mentioned in Saccocci 2005, p. 140, nr.° 5.

4. Assemani II

Venice, Ca' d'Oro, Inv. Nr. 301-1027

Æ fals.

Mint & date: no mint, .7/9.

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: //

Reverse

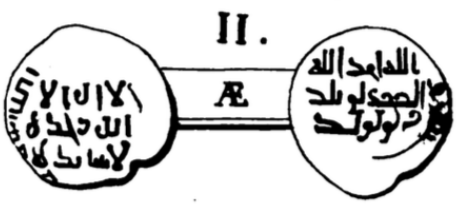
Field: *Allāh aḥad Allāh* / *al- ṣamad lam yalid* / *wa-lam yūlad*

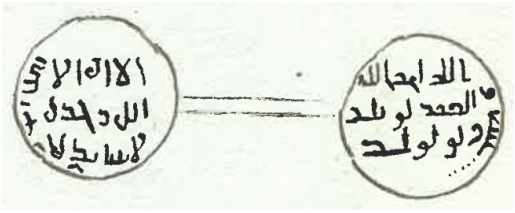
Margin: … *sab'/tis'* …

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xviij, p. 225 nr. II

Notes: Assemani's comments: «La moneta della Tavola I, nr.° II, è della più antica zecca, ed ha per epigrafe *Dio è eterno*. Questa moneta può dirsi senza contrasto l'unica in questo genere, e tale venne pur dichiarata dal più volte lodato Signor Adler […]. Nel margine della II parte di questa rara moneta si legge … سبع و … cioè *sette* oppur *nove ed* … Che seil tempo non avesse totalmente fatto svanire le tre o quatto lettere dopo la congiunzione *ed*, saressimo al caso di determinare l'epoca: che però non posso far altro che definire uno spazio di tempo, nel quale fuor d'ogni dubbio è stata battuta, e questo si è dall'anno 77, o 79 all'anno 107 oppur 109 dell'Egira» Assemani 1787, pp. xij-xiij.

In the Ca' d'Oro type-written list, this coin is linked to the plate «Nani VI» - whilst the coin «300 –1026» is linked to the plate «Nani II». This is a clear mis–placement of plates and coins, see *ultra* nr. VI.





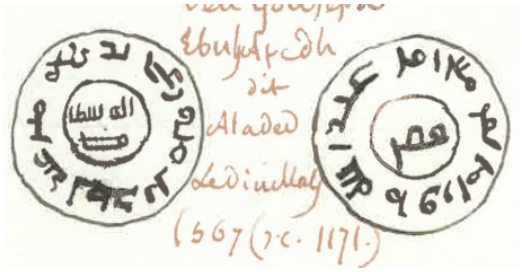
301



Marwān II (r. 127-132 AH/AD 744-749)
Finance Director: ʻAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (132 AH)

5. Assemani XXXIV
Inv. Nr. 282-11292
Æ fals.
Mint & date: Miṣr, no date
Obverse
Field: *Miṣr*
Margin: *ʻAbd Allāh Marwān amīr al-muʼminīn*
Reverse
Field: *al-Fusṭā/ṭ*
Margin: *ʻalà yaday ʻAbd Allāh b. Marwān*
Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxviij-xxix, p. 225 nr. XXXIV. See also Walker 1956, nr. P. 140.
Notes: Assemani lists the coin as a Fatimid bronze coin («[…] rame de' Califi Fatemidi») attributing it to al-ʻĀḍid li-Dīn Allāh (555-567 AH/AD 1160-1171). Moreover Assemani writes: «L'epigrafe di questa moneta fu da me comunicata al vamente Sig. Adler, e la giudicò *particolare, e rara*» Assemani 1787, p. xxix.





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6. Assemani XXII

Inv. Nr. 288-11298

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Ḥimṣ, no date

Obverse

Field: Elephant facing right

Margin: around the elephant, *lā ilāh illā Allāh waḥdahu*

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh [bi-Ḥimṣ]* – part of the legend off the flan

Margin: //

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxiv, p. 225 nr. XXII. See also Lavoix 1887, p. 368, nr. 1421-23; Walker 1956, p. 244, nr. 795-7 and pl. XXVI.

Notes: Assemani commenting the type – not clearly visible on this specimen – writes: 'On the obverse of the coin XXII there is a bad drawing of a figure, that in the original represents a turtle. If this coin was struck – as it seems – by the caliphs, then, my assertion that the caliphs never struck images, would be no more valid. However, because it is not possible to say that this coin was struck by the caliphs, I am not going to deny what I said until a clear specimen appears that contradicts us'[40]. Champollion, following Assemani's comments, wrote: « 1 – 2 Comme la precedente. Le numero 1 porte une figure mal dessinée qu'on croit etre celle d'une tortue mais comme les Kaliphes ne mettaient jamais d'effigie sur leur monnaies, on ne sait que penser de celle que cette medaille nous presente». Walker noted: «Assemani (*Museo Cufico Naniano*, pl. VIII, CII and CIII) illustrated two specimens, but misinterpreted the rev. legend»[41]. However Walker, who referred to the 1788 volume of the Nani Collectio, missed the presence of this exemplar in the 1787 catalogue of the collection – possibly because apparently devoted to Oriental manuscripts and not to coins.

[40] Walker 1956, p. 244 foot not e nr . 795.

[41] «Nella prima parte della moneta XXII si vede una figura mal disegnata, ma che nell'originale rappresenta una testuggine. Se per tanto questa moneta è stata battuta (come sembra) dai califi, caderebbe a terra la nostra asserzione, cioè, che i califi, non hanno usato mai effigie nelle loro monete. Ma siccome non si può con sicurezza asserire, che appartenga questa ai califi; quindi noi non ci ritrattiamo, fino a tanto che che non si presenti una moneta, che incontestabilmente decida contro la nostra asserzione», Assemani 1787, p. xxiv.



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7. Assemani XXVI

Inv. Nr. 285-11295

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Dimashq, no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh* / *illā Allāh* / *waḥdahu*

Reverse

Field: *ḍuriba* / *bi-Dimashq*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxv, p. 225 nr. XXVI.

See also BMC I 1875, p. 182, nr. 48; Walker 1956, p. 249, nr. 819 and pl. XXVII.



285



8. Assemani XX

Inv. Nr. 286-11296

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Ḥalab, no date

Obverse

Field: *lā Allāh* (sic) / illā * Allāh / waḥdahu

Margin: double or treble circle

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* – within a dotted circle

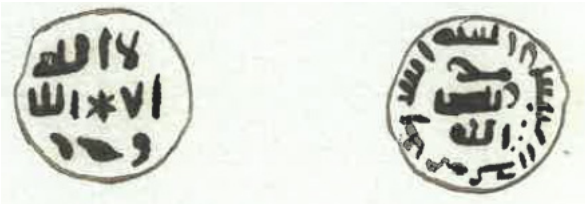
Margin: *bismillāh ḍuriba bi-Ḥalab wāf*[fn] – outer dotted circle

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxiij, p. 225 nr. XX.

See also Lavoix 1887, p. 365, nr. 1413.

Notes: Assemani attributes the coin to the Abbasid caliphs, does not read the mint name, and adds the word '*dīnar*' (*sic*) in the marginal legend of the Reverse.





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9. Assemani XXI

Inv. Nr. 298-11308

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint, 9x

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh* / illā Allāh / waḥdahu

Margin: traces of a circle

Reverse

Field: [ḍuriba fī sanat] ..*?*.. *wa-tis'īn* – partly off the flan

Margin: traces of outer circle

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxiij; p. 225 nr. XXI

See also Walker 1956, p. 291, nrs 952-953.

Notes: Assemani's comments: «È molto danneggiata dal tempo» Assemani 1787, p. xxiij.



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10. Assemani XIX

Inv. Nr. 292-11302

Æ fals.

Mint & date: al-Ramla, no date (c. 90-100 AH/AD 708-719)

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh* / *illā Allāh* / waḥdahu

Margin: not readable

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad* / *rasū(l)* / *Allāh* – palm on the right

Margin: [bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-fals bi-l-Ramla]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxiij, p. 226 nr. XIX. See also Lavoix 1887, p. 383, nr. 1463; Walker 1956, p. 255, nr. 846 and pl. XXVII; SNAT IV 1993, p. 12, nrs 48-54 and pl. 2.

Notes: Assemani's comments: «I margini sono mal disegnati» Assemani 1787, p. xxiij. Champollion : «Les marges sont mal écrites»





292



11. Assemani XXIV

Inv. Nr. 287-11297

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint, no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: traces of double circle (possibly dotted) and single annulets

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad ra* / *sū(l) Allāh* / *wa-ʿabduhu*

Margin: traces of outer circle

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxiv, p. 225 nr. XXIV.
See also Walker 1956, p. 219, nr. 697.

Notes: Assemani's comments : «È molto singolare l'epigrafe dell'area della parte seconda: non mi ricordo d'averne veduta uguale; quindi la reputo rarissima» Assemani 1787, p. xxiv. Champollion f. 24r : «L'Inscription du contour de la seconde a disparu. La premiere nen avait point».





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12. Assemani XXV

Inv. Nr. 284-11294

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint, no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh i* / *llā Allāh* / *waḥdahu*

Margin: double circle and single annulets

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad ʻabd Allāh* / *wa-rasūluhu*

Margin: traces of outer triple circle and single annulet

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxiv-xxv, p. 225 nr. XXV. See also Walker 1956, p. 219, nr. 699 and pl. XXIV.

Notes: Assemani believes that this coin is very rare «Questa moneta è […] assai rara pell'iscrizione che ha nella seconda parte».





284



NO DATE

13. Assemani XXVIII

Inv. Nr. 281-11291

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Ba‘albak, no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh i /llā Allāh / Ba‘albak* – small annulet above the second *b* of Ba‘al*b*ak

Margin: //

Reverse

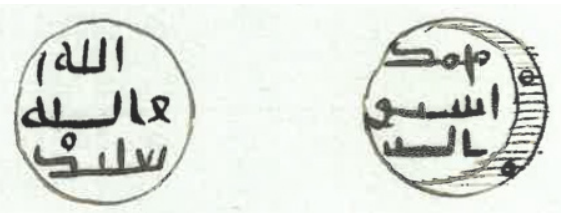
Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh*

Margin: //

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxv, p. 225 nr. XXVIII.

See also Lavoix 1887, p. 362-363, nr. 1403-1407; Walker 1956, p. 237, nr. 770; al-Akra 2016, p. 95, nrs 122-136; L/S p. 314-315, nrs 141-142.





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14. Assemani XXVII

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Ba'albak, no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh i /llā Allāh* / *Ba'albak* – small annulet above the second *b* of Ba'al*b*ak

Margin: //

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh*

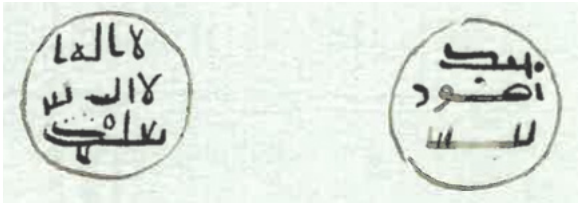
Margin: //

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxv, p. 225 nr. XXVII.

See also Lavoix 1887, p. 362-363, nr. 1403-1407; Walker 1956, p. 237, nr. 770; al-Akra 2016, p. 95, nrs 122-136; L/S p. 314-315, nrs 141-142.

Notes: The identification has been done only on the basis of the drawing as nowadays the coin is no longer present.





UNCERTAIN

15. Assemani XXIII

Inv. Nr. 289-11299

Æ fals;

Mint & date: //

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh / illā Allāh / waḥdahu*

Margin: not readable

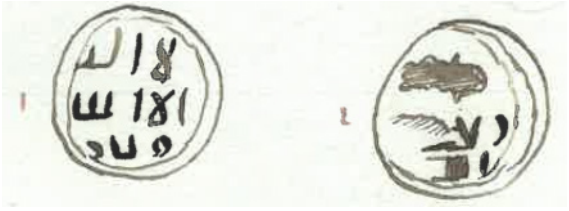
Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. 225 nr. XXIII.

Notes: Champollion f. 23r : «De meme que les 2 precedentes».





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‘ABBASIDS

Temp. al-Manṣūr (r. 136-158 AH/AD 754-775)

16. Assemani VI

Inv. Nr. 300-11310

Æ fals.

Mint & date: [*Qinnasrīn*], [*1*]57 AH/AD 773-4

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu* / *‘alà yaday Aḥmad*

Margin: [bismillāh ḍuriba hādha l-fals bi-Qinnasrīn sanat sab‘ wa-khamsīn wa-mi’a]

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / *bakh bakh*

Margin: [mimmā amara bihi al-amīr Mūsà mawlà amīr al-mu’minīn a‘azza Allāh naṣrahu]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xix-xx, p. 225 nr. VI. See also BMC I 1875, p. 197, nr. 92; Lavoix 1887, p. 155, nr. 1599-1600; Shamma 1998, pp. 111-2, nr. 4.





300



17. Assemani XXXV

Inv. Nr. 279-11289

Æ fals.

Mint & date: [*Miṣr*], no date [157-59 AH/AD 773-776]

Obverse

Field: *al-mu'* / *minīn akr* / *mahu Allah*

Margin: [ḍuriba hādhā l-fals 'alà yaday Maṭar mawlà amīr]

Reverse

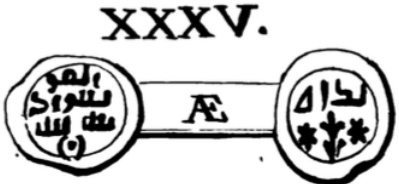
Field: *-īk lahu* / below palm between two six-pointed stars

Margin: *lā ilāh illā Allāh waḥdahu lā shar-*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p.xxix, p. 225 nr. XXXV; L/S p. 306, nr. 72 (this coin). See also Lavoix 1887, nr. 1601 and pl. X; Miles 1950, p. 125, nr. 407 and pl. X; Miles 1958, nr. 16g.

Notes: Assemani is dubitative: «Di queste due monete [i.e. nrs XXXIV and XXXV], che sembrano battute sotto un medesimo sovrano, […] io non posso formare alcun giudizio e confesso di non sapere a qual classe di califfi, o monarchi si riferiscano. La voce arabica che nell'area della P. II della moneta XXXV si legge, se non m'inganno, è il nome della città dove fu battuta; e se fra tanta ambiguità fosse lecito conghietturare, direi che è تدلة *Tudela* città assai celebre della Spagna posseduta dai Mori […]. Ma questa non è che una mera conghiettura». Champollion – f. 35r – following Assemani, writes: «المومنين اديمة الله (Commandeur) des croyants Odaïmat Allah تداه Toudeha (ville d'Espagne). Lepigraphe du contour nexiste plus».

The coin is rather rare and often attributed to incorrectly to a different mint, as Miles noted: «varieties of this issue are known, attributed to Qinnasrīn […]. The coin is typically Egyptian in style and fabric (it is exceptionally thick), and Maṭar served in Egypt»[42].





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[42] Miles 1950, p. 125.

Temp. al-Mahdī (r. 158-169 AH/AD 775-785)

18. Assemani III

Inv. Nr. 299-1025

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: al-‘Abbāsiyya, 160 AH/AD 776-7

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: *Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar bi-l-‘Abbāsiyya sanat sittīn wa-mi’a*

Reverse

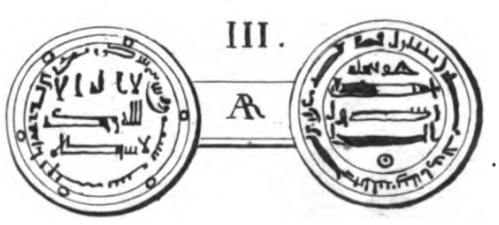
Field: *Harūn / Allāh aḥad Allāh / al- ṣamad lam yalid / wa-lam yūlad* - pearl beneath.

Margin: *Muḥammad rasūl Allāh arsalahu bi-l-hudà wa-dīn al-ḥaqq wa-law kariha al-mushrikūn*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xviij, p. 225 nr. III.

See also Adler 1782, p. 48, nr. V.

Notes: In the Ca’ d’Oro type-written list, this coin is linked to the plate «Nani VII?» - which is not correct, see nr. 25/VII *ultra*.





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19. Assemani IV

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

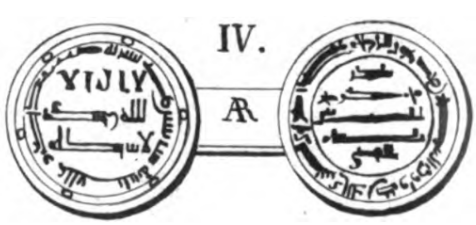
AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: al-'Abbasiyya, 160 AH/AD 776-7

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xix, p. 225 nr. IV

Notes: Champollion f. 4r: «le tout comme dans la précedente excepté le mot Haroun remplacè par Al Amin الامين».

Not listed in the type-written list.





20. Assemani V

Inv. Nr. 270-11280

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: al-‘Abbasiyya, 161 AH/AD 777-8

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: *Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar bi-l-‘Abbāsiyya sanaᵗ iḥdà wa-sittīn wa-mi’a*

Reverse

Field: *Bakh/ Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Yazīd*

Margin: Qur’ān IX, 33

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xix, p. 225 nr. V.

See also Tornberg 1848, nr. 85; Lavoix 1887, nr. 707.

Notes: Assemani’s comments : «Il nome del prefetto non si può rilevare» Assemani 1787, p. xix. Champollion f. 5r «Comme les precedentes on ne peut y lire le nom du Gouverneur ni la date».



270



21. Assemani XXXI

Inv. Nr. 283-11293

Æ fals.

Mint & date: al-'Abbāsiyya, 162 (?) AH/AD 778-9 (?)

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: //

Reverse

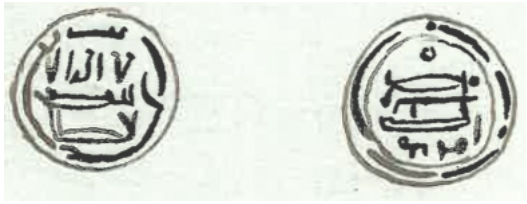
Field: • /*Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / *Yazīd* (?)

Margin: //

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxv-xxvj, p. 225 nr. XXXI. See also L/S p. 300, nr. 2.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «L'epigrafi dei margini sono svanite. Il nome del prefetto هرون Harun (Aronne)» Assemani 1787, p. xxvj. Champollion f. 31r: «Le nom du Kiahia (Gouverneur) est Haroun هرون».





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Governor: Yaḥyà b. Dā'ūd al-Ḥarashī

22. Assemani XXXVI

Inv. Nr. 278-11288

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint [Egypt], no date [162-164 AH/AD 778-781]

Obverse

Field: *amīr a* / *l-mu'minīn* / *akramahu* / *Allāh*

Margin: […] unreadable traces

Reverse

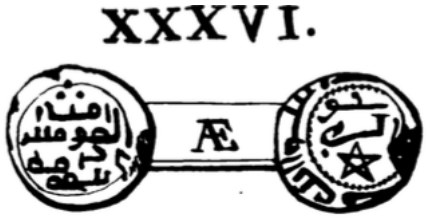
Field: *kharr* / *ūba* / five-pointed star

Margin: *bismillāh* […]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxix, p. 225 nr. XXXVI.

See also SNAT III 2017, nr. 177; L/S pp. 386-387, nr. 863.

Notes: Assemani is dubitative and he admits to be unable to assign the specimen(s) to a precise dynasty: «di queste due monete [i.e. XXXV, XXXVI] che sembrano battute sotto un medesimo sovrano, come pare che indichino l'epigrafi delle aree della prima parte, io non posso formare alcun giudizio; e confesso di non sapere a qual classe di califfi, o monarchi si riferiscano» Assemani 1787, p. xxix. Champollion f. 36r lists the coin as Fatimid (*Fathimites*).





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23. Assemani X

Inv. Nr. 302-11312

Æ fals.

Mint & date: al-Kūfa, 1[66] AH/AD 782-3

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*, two (or three?) pellets below

Margin: five annulets

Reverse

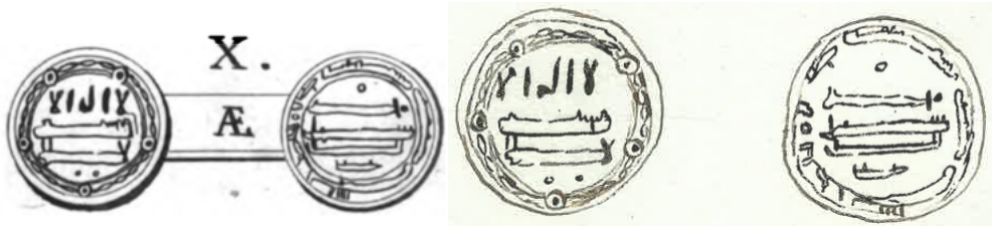
Field: pellet above, *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / *baraka*

Margin: [mimmā amara bihi al-Mahdī Muḥammad amīr al-mu'minīn bi-l-Kūfa sanat sitt wa-sittīn wa-mi'a]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxj, p. 225 nr. XI.

See also BMC I 1875, p. 205, nr. 116; Lavoix 1887, pp. 447-8, nr. 1606; Shamma 1998, p. 63, nr. 18.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «Il nome del prefetto non si può rilevare» Assemani 1787, p. xxj.



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24. Assemani XIV

Inv. Nr. 297-11307

Æ fals.

Mint & date: al-Kūfa, 167 AH/AD 783-4

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu* / • •

Margin: //

Reverse

Field: * / *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / *baraka*

Margin: [mimmā amara bihi al-Mahdī Muhammad amīr al-mu'minīn bi-l-Kūfa sanat sab' wa-sittīn wa-mi'a]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxij, p. 225 nr. XIV.

See also BMC I 1875, p. 206, nr. 117; Lavoix 1887, p. 448, nr. 1608; Shamma 1996, p. 63, nr. 20; L/S pp. 348-349, nr. 489.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «Il margine della prima parte non è scritto. Nella parte seconda l'iscrizione è tanto minuta, che non mi fu possibile rilevarla, e lo stesso è quanto al nome del Prefetto» Assemani 1787, p. xxij. Champollion f. 14r : «Le contour de la seconde est ecrit trop fin et impossible à lire ainsi que le nom du prefet».





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Temp. Harūn al-Rashīd (r. 170-193 AH/AD 786-809)

25. Assemani VII

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: al-'Abbāsiyya, 171 AH/AD 787-8

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: *Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar bi-l-'Abbāsiyya sanaᵗ iḥdà wa-sab'īn wa-mi'a*

Reverse

Field: *Bakh/ Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Yazīd*

Margin: Qur'ān IX, 33

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xx, p. 225 nr. VII.

See also Tornberg 1848, nr. 139; L/S, nr. 202; D'Ottone 2010, nr. 14.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «Queste due monete [i.e. VII, VIII] sono mal disegnate» Assemani 1787, p. xx[43].



[43] About the drawings which illustrate the coins in the plates, Assemani does not give the name of the designer, on the work of whom is not particularly satisfied since he writes: «Le monete sono state disegnate da un giovane affatto inesperto di tal sorte di disegni: lo che sia detto a lume di quelli, che nelle Tavole non trovassero qualche epigrafe affatto corrispondente alla mia spiegazione, la quale per altro è sempre appoggiata all'originale» Assemani 1787, p. xvj.

26. Assemani VIII

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: al-'Abbāsiyya, 171 AH/AD 787-8

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: *Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar bi-l-'Abbāsiyya sanaᵗ iḥdà wa-sab'īn wa-mi'a*

Reverse

Field: *Bakh/ Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Yazīd*

Margin: Qur'ān IX, 33

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xx, p. 225 nr. VIII.

See also Tornberg 1848, nr. 139; L/S, nr. 202; D'Ottone 2010, nr. 14.

Notes: for Assemani's notes, see *supra*.





27. Assemani XI

Inv. Nr. 295-11305

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: al-'Abbāsiyya, 171 AH/AD 787-8

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: *Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar bi-l-'Abbāsiyya sanat iḥdà wa-sab'īn wa-mi'a*

Reverse

Field: *Bakh/ Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Yazīd*

Margin: Qur'ān IX, 33

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxj, p. 225 nr. XI.

See also Tornberg 1848, nr. 140.

Notes: Champollion f. 11r «La meme que la precedente exceptè la date qui porte L'an 170».



295



28. Assemani IX

Inv. Nr. //

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: [al-‘Abbāsiyya, 171 AH/AD 787-8]

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: [Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dirham bi-l-‘Abbāsiyya sanat iḥdà sab‘īn (sic) wa-mi’a]

Reverse

Field: *Bakh*/ *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / *Yazīd*

Margin: Qur’ān IX, 33

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xx, p. 225 nr. IX.

Notes: Assemani’s notes: «Il nome del prefetto المين (*sic*) Alamin. […] È mal disegnata» Assemani 1787, p. xx. Champollion f. 9r in black ink: «La Legende est La même *Au nom de Dieu* … بسم … ست وسبعون ومية L’an 176 (792) Le nom du gouverneur al Amin الامين». It is not possible to ascertain the date with precision only from the drawing and in the absence of the coin. However, considering the number of annulets in the drawing and the legend of the Obverse it is possible to suggest the mint of al-‘Abbāsiyya and the year 171 AH – see BMC I 1875, p. 74, nr. 184.



29. Assemani XIII

Inv. Nr. 296-11306

Æ fals.

Mint & date: al-‘Abbāsiyya, 172 AH/AD 788-9

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: [Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-fals bi-l-‘Abbāsiyya sanat ithnayn wa-sab‘īn wa-mi’a]

Reverse

Field: *Bakh*/ *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / *Rūḥ*

Margin: Qur’ān IX, 33

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxij, p. 225 nr. XIII.

See also Adler 1782, p. 50 nr. IX; Lavoix 1887, p. 440, nr. 1594; L/S p. 300, nr. 7.

Notes: the coin corresponds to Champollion nr. 9 in brown ink.



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30. Assemani XII

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

AR dirham.

Mint & date: [al-'Abbāsiyya], 173 AH/AD 789-90

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā* / *Allāh waḥdahu* / *lā sharīk lahu*

Margin: [Bismillāh ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnar bi-l-'Abbāsiyya sanat thalāth wa-sab'īn wa-mi'a]

Reverse

Field: … / *Muḥammad* / *rasūl* / *Allāh* / …

Margin: Qur'ān IX, 33.

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxj-xxij, p. 225 nr. XII.

See also Tornberg 1848, nr. 144.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «Il nome del prefetto المامون Almamun, mal disegnato» Assemani 1787, p. xxij.



ABBASIDS - UNDETERMINED

31. Assemani XVIII

Inv. Nr. 291-11301

Æ fals.

Mint & date: //

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxiij, p. 225 nr. XVIII.





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32. Assemani XXIX

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

Æ fals.

Mint & date: //

Obverse

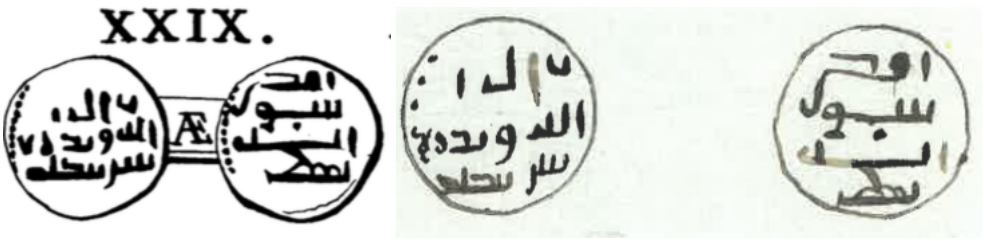
Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu / lā sharīk lahu*

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / .. ?..*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. 225 nr. XXIX.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «I margini sono mal disegnati» Assemani 1787, p. xxiij. It is no possible to identify with certainty this coin only on the basis of the drawing, as some meaningful details are not clear enough to be read.



AMIRS OF CRETE

Shu'ayb b. abī Ḥafṣ 'Umar (250-281 AH/AD 864-895)

33. Assemani XV

Inv. Nr. 294-11304

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint [Candia], no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu lā / sharīk lahu*

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Shu'ayb*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxij-xxiij, p. 225 nr. XV; Miles 1970 class F, p. 31, nrs 115-118.

See also BMC IX 1889, p. 100, nr. 156[s]; Miles 1956, p. 367: type A, nrs 1-3.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «Queste monete [i.e. XV, XVI, XVII] hanno la meł desima epigrafe nella prima parte […]. Il nome del prefetto شعيب Scioaib, oppure سعيد Saiid. I margini non hanno iscrizione» Assemani 1787, pp. xxii-xxiij.







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34. Assemani XVI

Inv. Nr. 293-11303

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint [Candia], no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu lā / sharīk lahu*

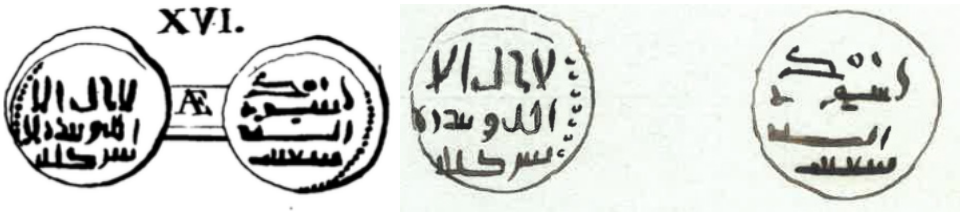
Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Shu'ayb*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxij-xxiij, p. 225 nr. XVI; Miles 1970 class F, p. 31, nrs 115-118.

See also BMC IX 1889, p. 100, nr. 156[s]; Miles 1956, p. 367: type A, nrs 1-3.

Notes: Champollion f. 16r : «Le nom du Gouverneur est سعيد شعيد Saiid ou Schoâïb».



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35. Assemani XVII

Inv. Nr. 290-11300

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint [Candia], no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu lā / sharīk lahu*

Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Shu'ayb*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxij-xxiij, p. 225 nr. XVII ; Miles 1970 class F, p. 31, nrs 115-118.

See also BMC IX 1889, p. 100, nr. 156[s]; Miles 1956, p. 367: type A, nrs 1-3.

Notes: Champollion f. 17r : «De même que la precedente».





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36. Assemani XXX

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint [Candia], no date

Obverse

Field: *lā ilāh illā / Allāh waḥdahu lā / sharīk lahu*

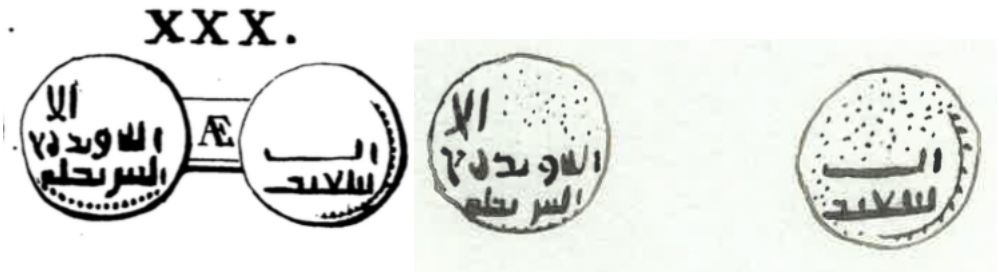
Reverse

Field: *Muḥammad / rasūl / Allāh / Shu'ayb*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxv, p. 225 nr. XXX ; Miles 1970 class F, p. 31, nrs 115-118.

See also BMC IX 1889, p. 100, nr. 156[s]; Miles 1956, p. 367: type A, nrs 1-3.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «È simile in tutto alle monete XV, XVI, e XVII» Assemani 1787, p. xxv. Champollion f. 30r: «Semblable aux nr.[o] 25, 26, 27»



FATIMIDS & CRUSADER IMITATIONS OF FATIMID COINS

Al-Āmir bi-Aḥkām Allāh (r. 492-524 AH/AD 1101-1130)

37. Assemani XXXIII

Inv. Nr. 151-3770-71
AV *dīnār*; Ø 21 mm; 4, 08 gr.
Mint & date: Ṣūr, 516 AH/AD 1122-23
Obverse
Center: *al-imām* / *al-Manṣūr*
Outer Margin: *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnār bi-Miṣr sanat sitt 'ashra wa-khamsimi'a*
Inner Margin: Margin: *Abū 'Alī al-Āmir bi-Aḥkām Allāh amīr al-mu'minīn*
Reverse
Field: *'āl* / *ghāya*
Outer Margin: Qur'ān IX, 33
Inner Margin: *lā ilāh illā Allāh Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*
Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxvij, p. 225 nr. XXXIII; Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, p. 265, nr. 233 (this coin); Nicol 2006, p. 342, nr. 2492 (this coin).
See also BMC IV 1879, p. 53, nr. 217.
Notes: Assemani's notes: «Queste due monete [i.e. XXXII, XXXIII], oltre l'essere inedite, hanno un pregio singolare per essere ben conservate, e rare» Assemani 1787, p. xxviij. Assemani reads the mint as «Miṣr» but it is actually written: *Ṣūr*, as already noted by Nicol through the drawing.





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38. Assemani XXXII

Inv. Nr. 152-3704-05

AV *dīnār*; Ø 22 mm; 3, 90 gr.

Mint & date: Cairo, [*5*]16 AH/AD 1122-23

Obverse

Center: *al-imām / al-Manṣūr*

Outer Margin: *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm ḍuriba hādhā l-dīnār bi-Miṣr sanat sitt ʻashra* (sic)

Inner Margin: *Abū ʻAlī al-Āmir bi-Aḥkām Allāh amīr al-muʼminīn*

Reverse

Center: *ʻāl / ghāya*

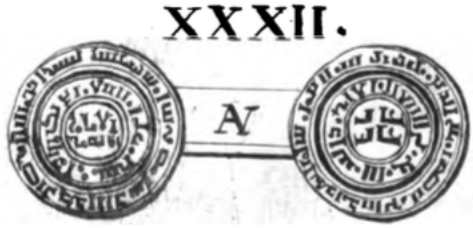
Outer Margin: Qurʼān IX, 33

Inner Margin: *lā ilāh illā Allāh Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xxvj-xxvij, p. 225 nr. XXXII; Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, p. 265, nr. 233 (this coin – but they did not recognize that this is an imitation); Nicol 2006, p. 347, nr. 2539 (this coin).

Notes: for Assemani's notes, see *supra*. The century in the date omitted from die.

Crusader imitation





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OTHER DYNASTIES

In Champollion notes the title page reads: «Dinasties formées De Debris De L'Empire des Kaliphes».

URTUKIDS OF KAYFĀ AND ĀMID

Fakhr al-dīn Qārā Arslān (r. 542-569/AD 1148-1174)

39. Assemani XXXVII

Inv. Nr. 277-11287
Æ fals; Ø 30 mm; 9, 37 gr.
Mint & date: [*al-Ḥiṣn/Kayfā*], no date
Obverse[44]
Field: Winged Victory to right, holding in right hand tablet inscribed VOT / XXX, and in left hand wreath
Margin: *Victoria Costantini Avg*
Reverse
Field: *B. Dāwud / al-malik al-'ā / lim al-'ādil / Fakhr al-dīn*
Margin: right side, *Qara Arslān* / left side, *b. Urtuq*
Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxx-xxxij, p. 225 nr. XXXVII; Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, p. 265, nr. 229.
See also Barthélemy 1759, p. 565, nr. 11 and pl. II, nr. 11; BMC III 1877, Type V, p. 122, nr. 324-5 and pl.VII, nr. 324.

[44] The prototype for the Obverse of this Urtuqid coin would be the solidus of Constantine the Great from the mint of Siscia – RIC VII, nr. 244 – that is relatively rare as only 4 exemplars are recorded, see Brown 1974, p. 356. In the near future, together with other specialists, I will devote a contribution to the antiquarian interest in 13th-century Syria, see D'Ottone Rambach-Zwierlein-Diehl-Rambach, forthcoming.





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Nūr al-dīn Muḥammad (r. 570-580 AH/AD 1174-1184)

40. Assemani XXXVIII

Inv. Nr. 280-11290

Æ fals; Ø 28 mm; 12, 26 gr.

Mint & date: [*al-Ḥiṣn/ Kayfā*, 578 AH/AD 1182-83]

Obverse

Field: Head to left, diademed

Margin: *‘alà ism Allāh ḍuriba* [bi-l-Ḥiṣn sanat thamān wa-sab‘īn wa-khamsimi’a]

Reverse

Field: *malik al-umarā’ muḥyī / al-‘adl Nūr al-dīn / Muḥammad b. Qarā Arslā / n b. Urtuq / naṣīr al-imām al-Nāṣir / li-dīn Allāh*

Margin: Right side, *mal‘ūn man* / Left side, *yu‘ayyiruhu*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxv, p. 225 nr. XXXVIII; Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, pp. 265-6 nr. 230 (this coin).

See also BMC III 1877, p. 127, nr. 336-7.

Notes: Assemani’s notes: «P. I A. Rappresenta una testa copiata da una qualche moneta greca, o latina. Somiglia molto al busto di Antioco VII re della Soria. […] Il margine non si può leggere per essere svanito […]» Assemani 1787, pp. xxxij-xxxiij. Champollion f. 38r: «une tête grecque».





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URTUKIDS OF MĀRIDĪN

Ḥusām al-dīn (r. 580-597 AH/AD 1184-1201)

41. Assemani XXXIX

Inv. Nr. 276-11286

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint, no date (c.a 587-9 AH/AD 1191-1194)

Obverse

Field: Two heads: that on the right, profile left; that on the left, smaller, nearly facing,crowned

Margin: *Ḥusām al-dīn malik Diyārbakr*

Reverse

Field: *al-malik al-Nāṣir* / *Ṣalāḥ al-dīn /muḥyī dawla /amīr al-mu'minīn*

Margin: right - *Yūsuf* / left – b. Ayyūb

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. 225 nr. XXXIX; Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, p. 265, nr. 231 (this coin, without diameter and weight).

See also Barthélemy 1759, p. 572, nr. 17 and pl. II, nr. 17; Lane-Poole 1875, Type II, nr. 47 and pl. vi, fig. 2; BMC III 1877, p. 150, nr. 405; Lane-Poole 1897, p. 343.

Notes: On the top of the Reverse field, fleuron; *muhmila* over *Ṣalāḥ*.



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BAKTAGĪNĪ – ATABEG IN IRBIL

Kūkbūrī b. ʻAlī (586-630 AH/AD 1190-1232)

42. Assemani XL

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

Æ fals.

Mint & date: No mint, no date

Obverse

Field: Figure, helmeted, throned; in left hand, orb.

Margin: *Muẓaffar al-dawla wālidayn Kūkbūrī b. ʻAlī*

Reverse

Field: *al-malik al-Nāṣir* / *Ṣalāḥ al-dunyā wa-/l-dīn Yūsuf*

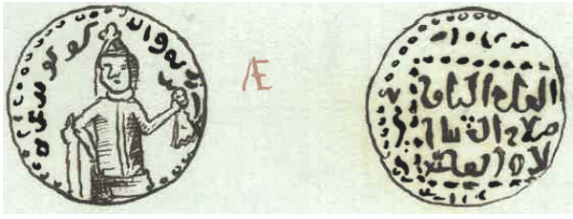
Margin: right - [b. Ayyūb / *muḥyī d* / *awla amīr* / *al-mu'minīn*]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxxviij, p. 225 nr. XL.

See also BMC III 1877, Type III nr. 669 and pl. XII, nr. 669.

Notes: Assemani attributes this coin – that is no longer in the Nani collection at the Ca d'Oro – to the Urtuqid Ḥusām al-dīn (see *supra*): «P. I rappresenta l'effigie d'un uomo, e sarà probabilmente il Re Husameddino. Da quest'effigie si può avere una giusta idea della somma imperizia degli artefici di quel tempo, a' quali era più facile il ricopiare le monete greche, e latine, che il fare nuovi modelli per i loro sovrani» but he notes: «Il nome di Husameddino non è ben espresso, che anzi sembra qualch'altro nome» Assemani 1787, p. xxxviij.





SELJOUKS OF RŪM

KAY-KHUSRAW II (634-642 AH/AD 1236-1244)

43. Assemani XLIII

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: Qūniya, […] (possibly 639 AH/AD 1241-42)

Obverse

Field: Lion surmounted by Sun; two stars: one under the belly and the other under the fore-paw.

Margin: *al-imām al-Mustanṣir billāh amīr a / l-mu' / minīn*

Reverse

Field: *ḍuriba bi-Qūniya / al-sulṭān al-aʿẓam / ghiyāth al-dunyā wa-l-dīn / Kaykhusraw b. Kayqabād*

Margin: [top: *ḍuriba bi-Qūniya*; bottom: *sanat* ...]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xxxix, p. 225 nr. XLIII.

See also Barthélemy 1759, p. 569, nr. 15 and pl. II nr. 15; Adler 1782, p. 60 nr. XXXIII and pl. IV nr. XXXIII; BMC III 1877, p. 78 nr. 198.





MAMLOUKS

al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā‘īl (r. 743-746 AH/AD 1342-1345)

44. Assemani XLV

Lost? Not located in Venice, Ca' d'Oro

Æ fals.

Mint & date: Di[*mashq*], 743 AH/AD 1342-43

Obverse

Field: *Ismā‘īl* / *al-malik al-Ṣāliḥ* / *b. Muḥammad*

Reverse

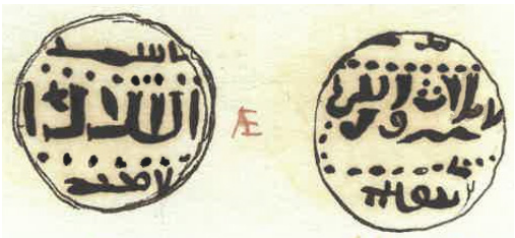
Field: [ḍuriba bi] *Di*[mashq] *sanat thalāth wa-arba‘īn wa-sab‘imi'a*

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xlj, p. 225 nr. XLV.

See also BMC IV 1879, nr. 539 and pl. VI nr. 539; Lane-Poole 1897, p. 257 nrs 1524-26.

Notes: Assemani's notes: «La moneta è mal disegnata» Assemani 1787, p. xjj.





OTTOMANS

Salīm II (974-982 AH/AD 1567-1574)

45. Assemani XLIV

Inv. Nr. 267-11277

AR *dirham*.

Mint & date: Ḥalab, no date

Obverse

Field: *sulṭān S*[alīm khān b. sulṭān Sulaymān] arranged circularly round central hexagram

Reverse

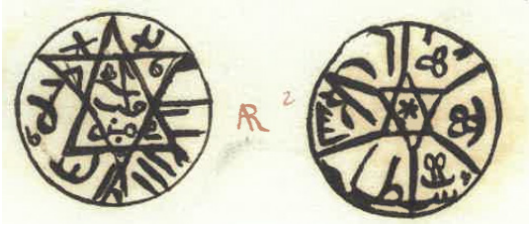
Field: *ḍuriba Ḥalab* – margin illegible

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xl, p. 225 nr. XLIV.

See also BMC VIII 1883, p. 88, nr. 229 and pl. IV, nr. 229.

Notes: Assemani is not able to attribute the coin with certainity and he ascribes it to the kings of Aleppo; he notes: «A quale re, od a qual dinastia appartenga questa moneta non posso con sicurezza decidere. Nel Museo Cufico Borgiano vi sono varie monete battute dai re d'Aleppo; ma essendo l'epigrafe della nostra di caratteri recenti, si può quindi conghietturare, che sia stata battuta dagli utlimi re d'Aleppo» Assemani 1787, pp. xl-xlj. Champollion, f. 44r: «Roi d'Aleps […] La date ne peut la Lire».





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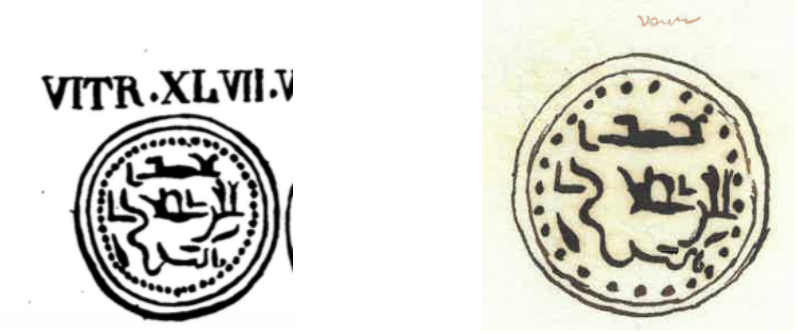


GLASS JETONS

FATIMIDS

Al-Mu‘izz li-Dīn Allāh (r. 341-364 AH /AD 953-975) ?

1. Assemani XLVII
Inv. Nr. 205-11215
Green glass
Legend: Ma‘ad a / l-Mu‘izz li-Dīn A /llāh […] (?)
Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, pp. xlj-xlij, p. 226 nr. XLVII.
Notes: Assemani describes the jetons as ‘yellow’ («giallo»)[45]. In Champollion’s note the first identification of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān as a Fatimid caliph is crossed and corrected with that of an Omayyad caliph from Spain.
Reading uncertain.



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[45] Commenting the glasses published in his catalogue Assemani writes: «Se tali vetri abbiano avuto valore di monete è cosa incerta», Assemani 1787, p. xlij. For some observations on Arabic glass disks, see D’Ottone Rambach forthcoming.

al-Hākim bi-amr Allāh (r. 386-411 AH/AD 996-1020)

2. Assemani XLVI

Inv. Nr. 206-11216

Red glass; Ø 25 mm; 03 ,4 gr.

Legend: *al-imām* / *al-Ḥākim bi-amr* [Allāh] / *amīr al-mu'*[minīn]

Bibliographical references: Assemani 1787, p. xlj, p. 226 nr. XLVI; Asolati-Crisafulli 1997, p. 265, nr. 235 (this glass).

See also Balog 1971-72, p. 220, nr. 62 (without pellets)[46]; De Luca 2015, p. 179, nr. 10.

Notes: Champollion's notes read: «On ne peut lire dans l'epigraphe de ce verre de couleur rouge que « L'Imam … Commandeur des Croyants … » et dans de meilleurs on semble apercevoir le nom du Kaliphe fatimithe Al Hakem Bamr Allah »





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[46] Balog cites Assemani's volumes in his bibliography – see Balog 1971-72, p. 196 – but he never mentions him nor his work in the text, Balog 1971-72, pp. 175-195.

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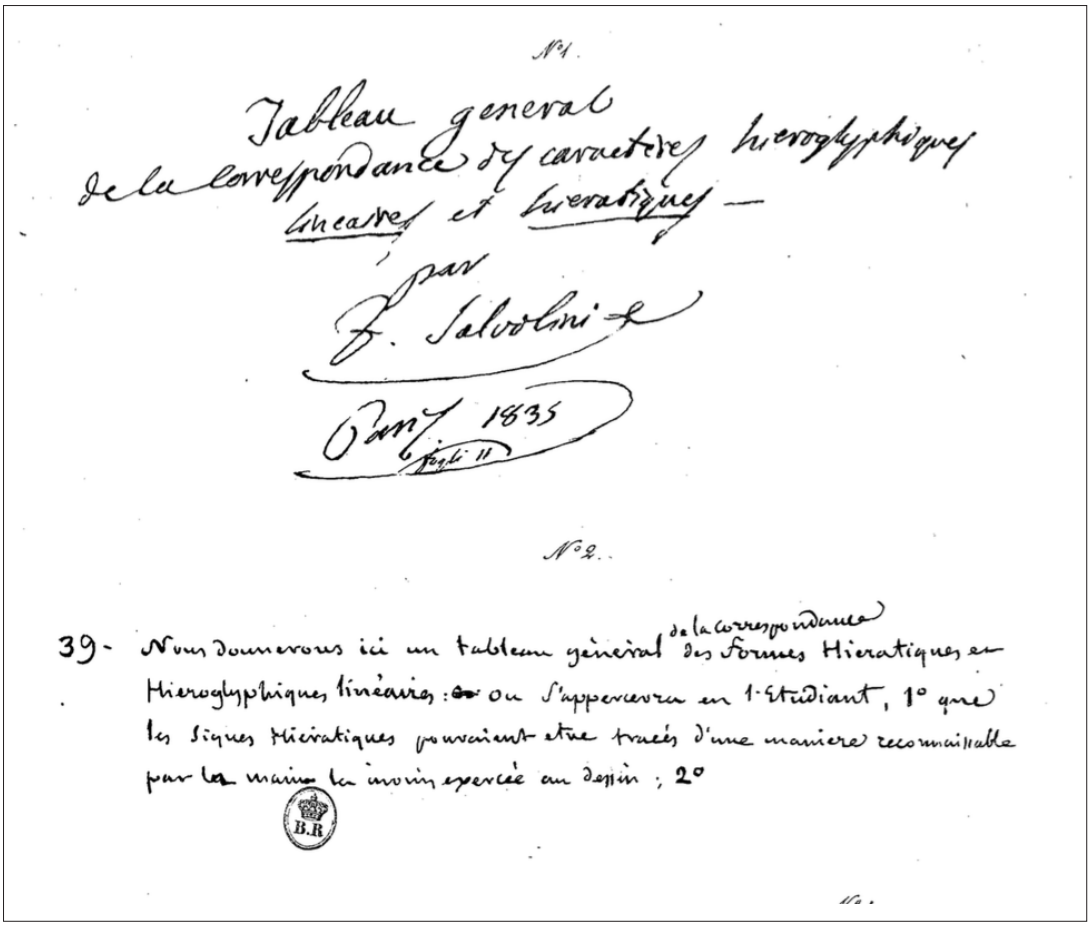


Fig. 1 – Page illustrating the handwritings by Salvolini (top) and Champollion (bottom) – Champollion Figeac 1842

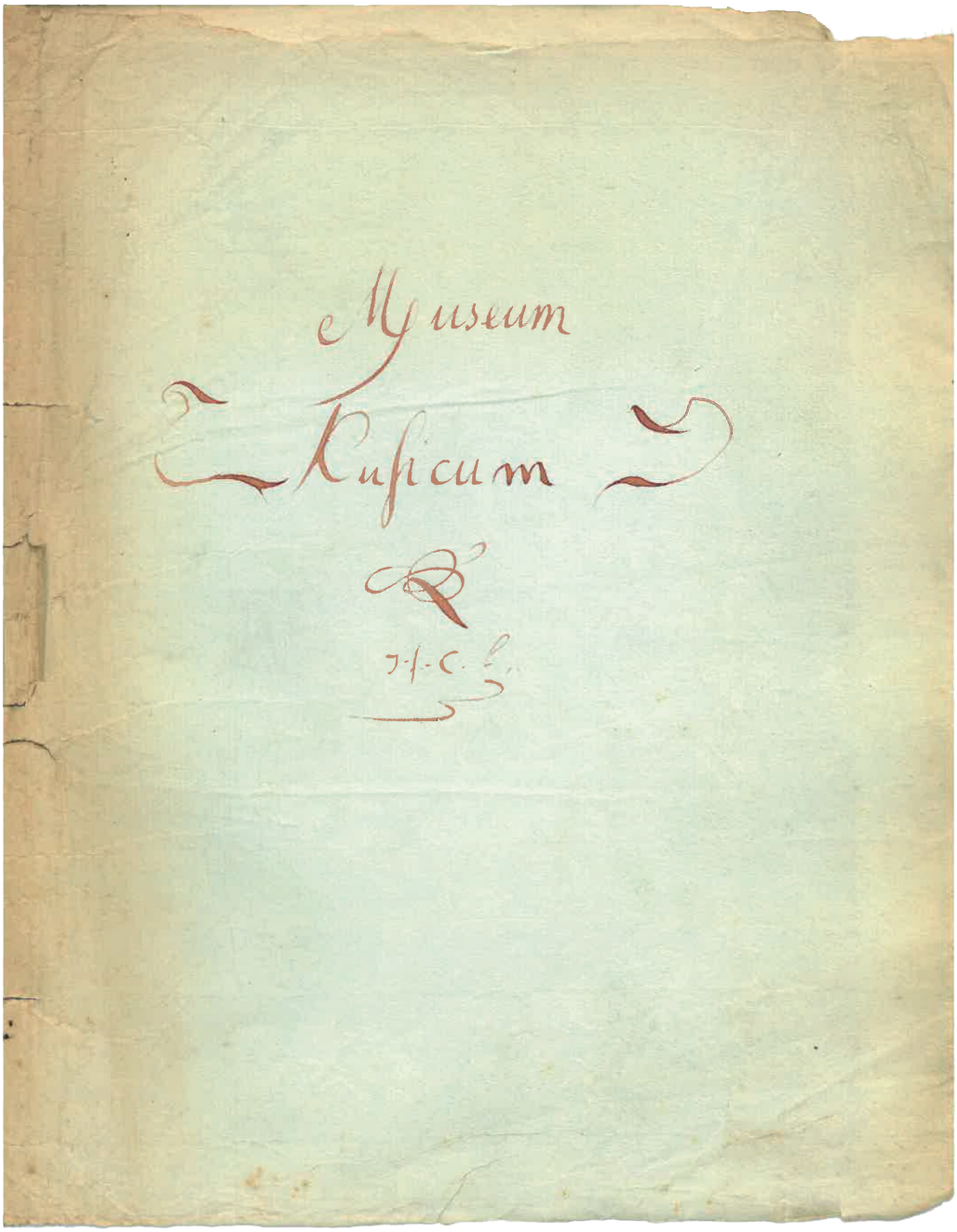
Num. II.

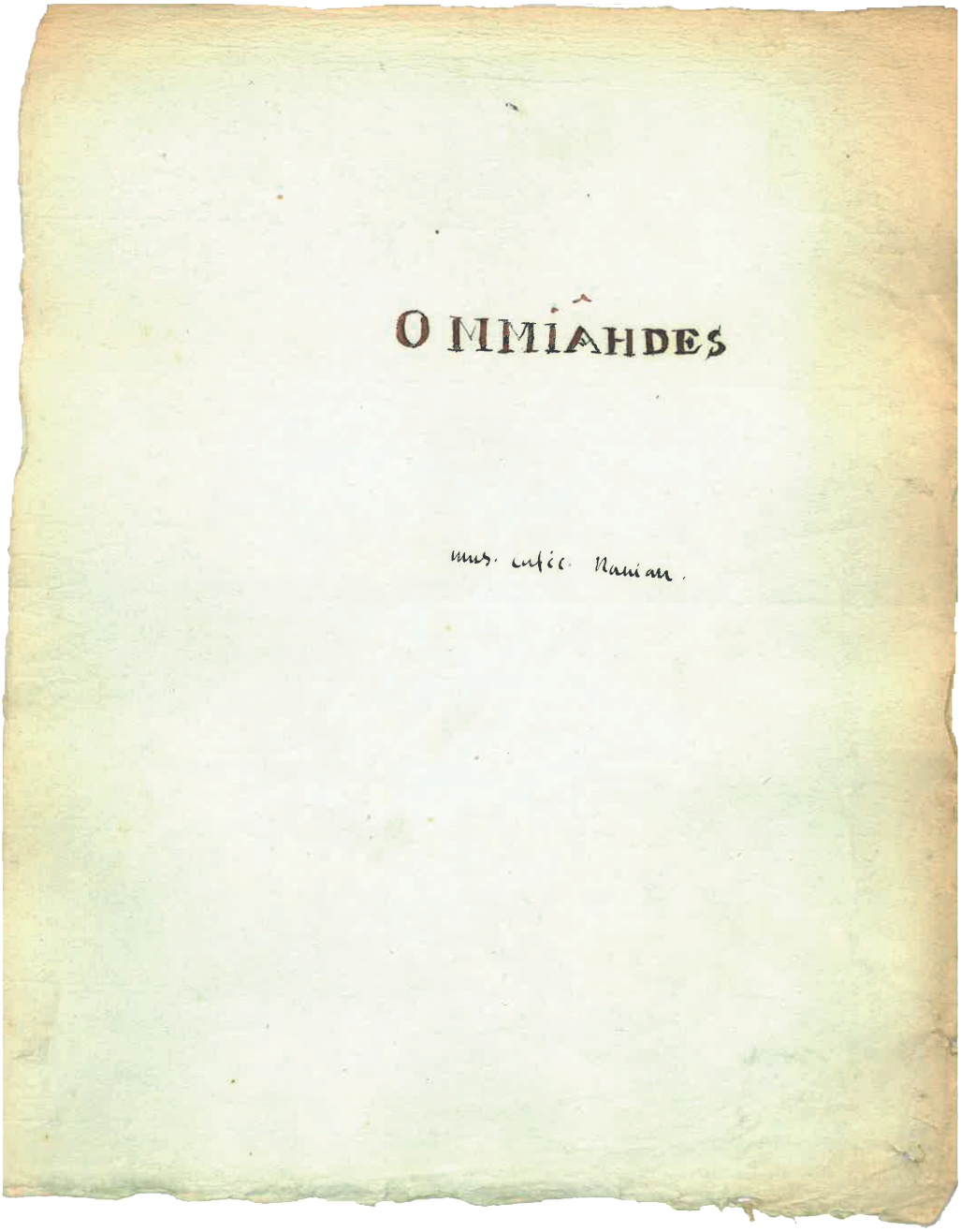
Inſcriptio Arabica.
VICTORIA CONSTANT*ini*. Victoria alata gradiens & clypeum gerens, in quo VOT.XX., ideſt, *Vota Vicennalia.*

INterpretationes litterarum partis anticæ, traditas a Viris eruditiſſimis & harum rerum peritis, quorum tamen nomina, quum ſint illæ inter ſe diverſæ, reticenda duxi, Lector accipe. Venetiis hanc obtinui: *Pretioſior erit vir auro, & omnis, qui occiderit, occidetur: ſic jubet Rex Gihon Ægypti.* E Gallia edixerunt, litteras hujuſmodi eſſe Arabicas *Cuphicas*, ſeu *Cuphenſes*, eaſque ita ex parte reddiderunt: *Obedientia Principi juſto.* Veroſimile etiam crediderunt, ſublatum fuiſſe Conſtantini caput, & ſuffectas hujuſmodi litteras, idq; factum aliquot poſt ejuſdem Imperatoris ſæcula. Romæ quoque litteræ hujuſmodi pro Cuphenſibus antiquis habitæ ſunt, & hæc earum, quæ mediam nummi partem occupant, reddita interpretatio: *Rex ſapiens juſtus in orbe terrarum.* Promiſſæ etiam aliunde aliæ interpretationes, at nondum adlatæ. Quare nummum in medio relinquo, ut integra ſit cuilibet erudito ulterius interpretandi ac judicandi facultas.

Fig. 2 – Description of the Urtukid coin in the Pisani Collection, ex Correr (1740)

MUSEUM KUFICUM

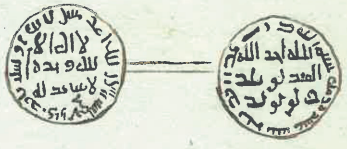



OMMIAHDES
mus. cufic. Nanian.

1

Ommiades

Hyescham Amad Eddoulad X^e Calife des Ommiads



لا اله الا الله وحده شريك
له

Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu seul
Et il n'a point de Associé

محمد رسول الله ارسله بالهدى
ودين الحق

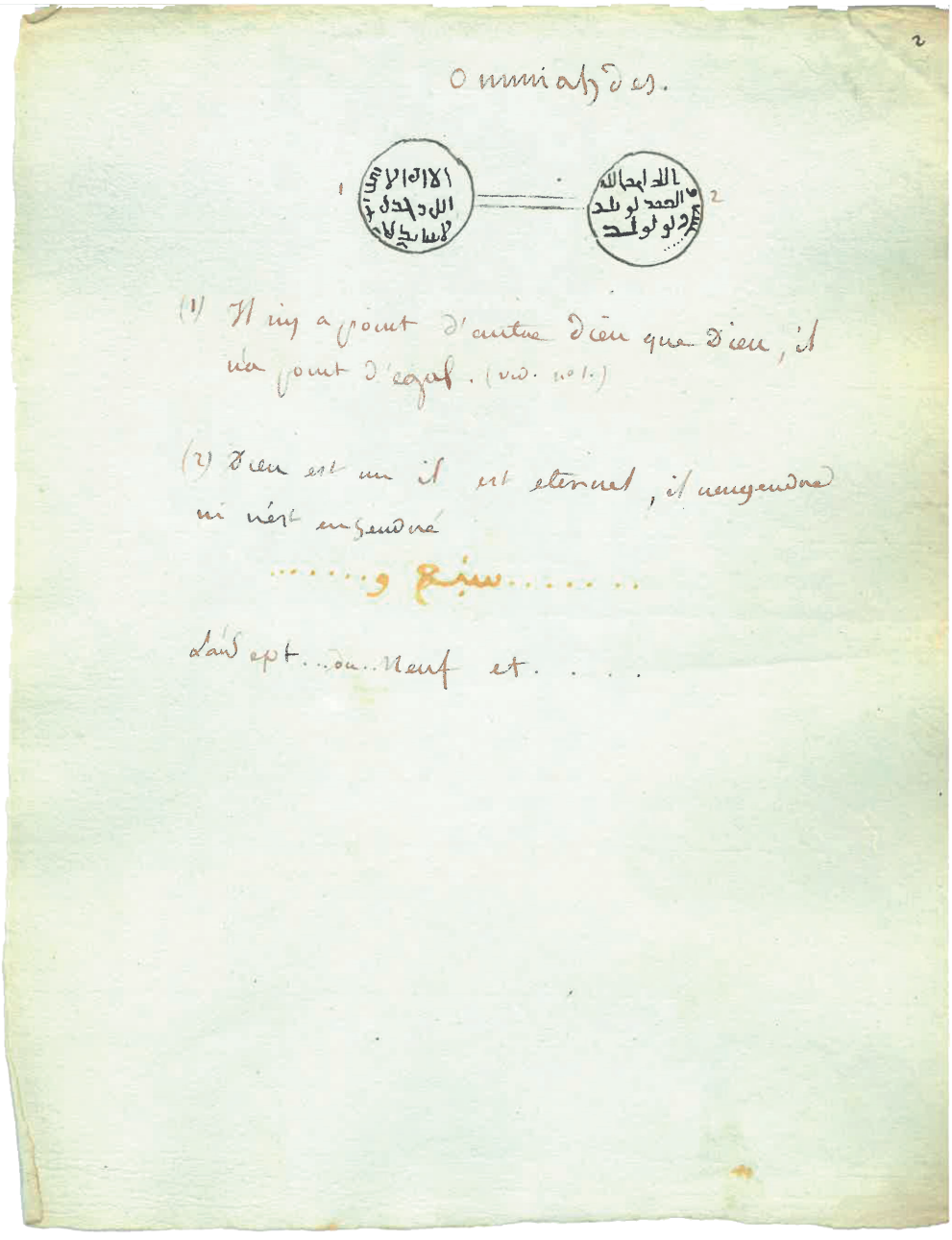
Mahammed est l'envoyé de Dieu, la quel
il dirigea dans le droit chemin, et la vraie foi
démontra l'excellence sur toutes les
les autres religions

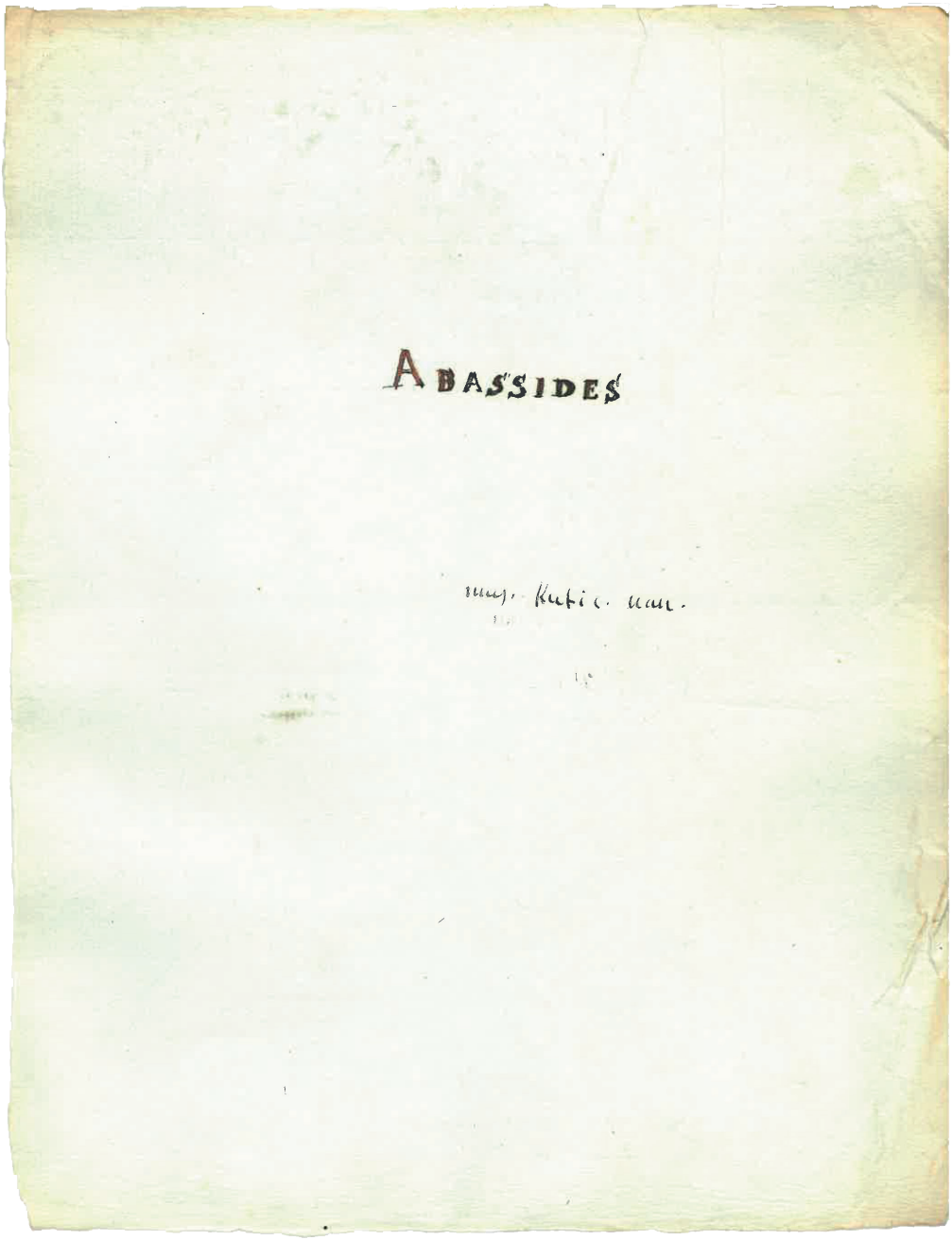
2 الله احد الله الصمد لم يلد ولم يولد

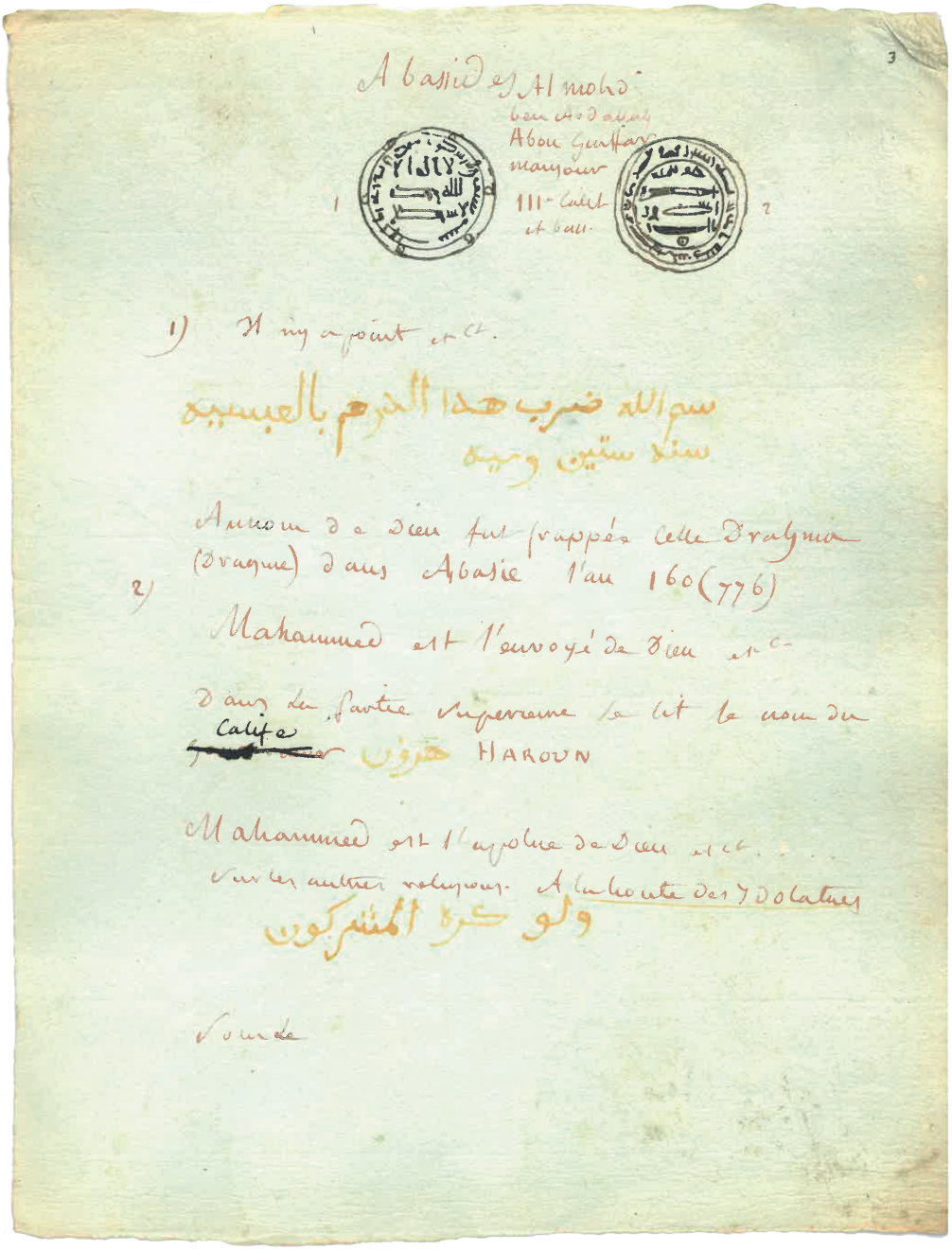
Dieu est un, eternel, il n'engendra ni n'est engendré.

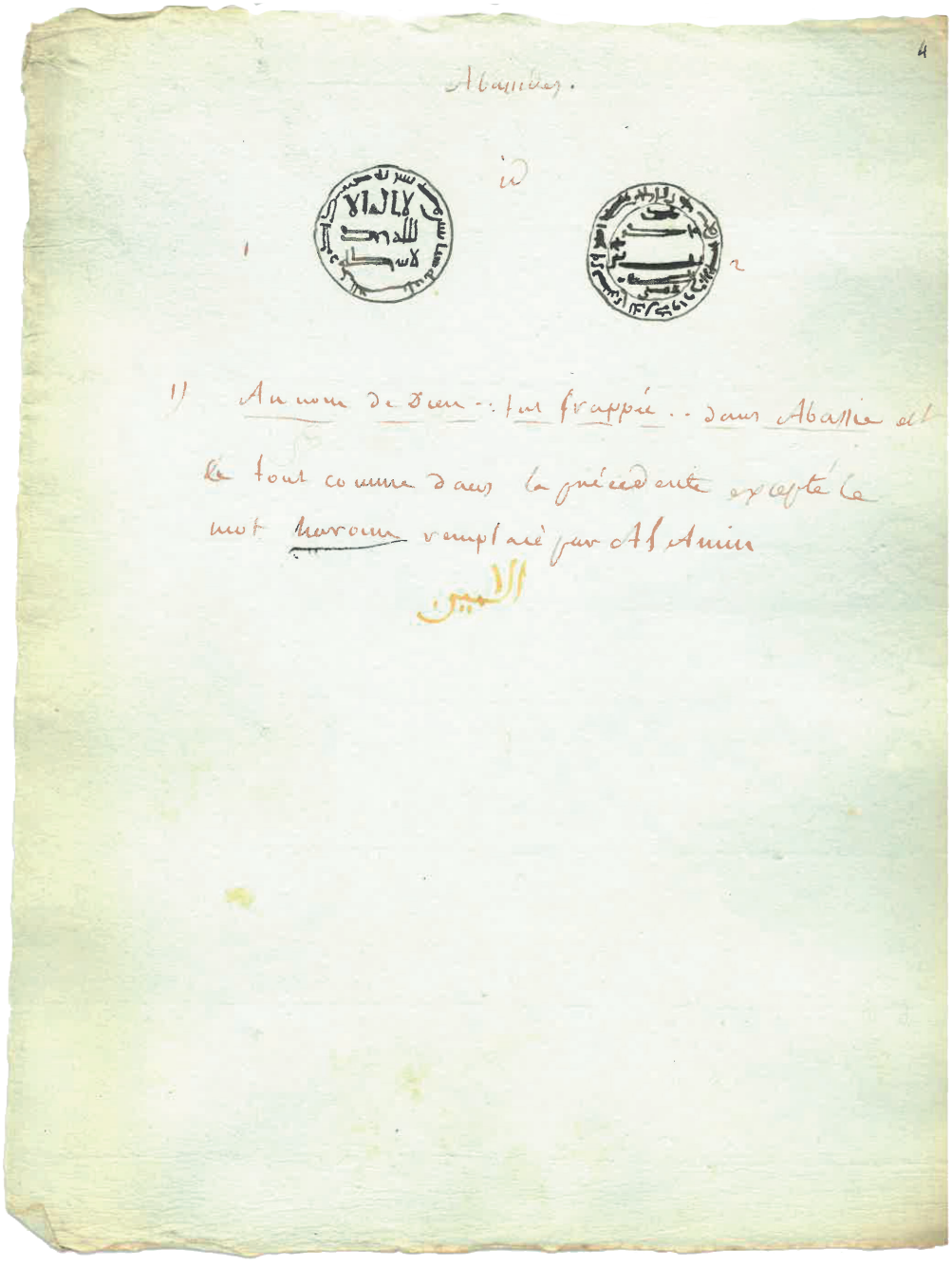
بسم الله ضرب هذا الدينار سنة عشرة
ومية

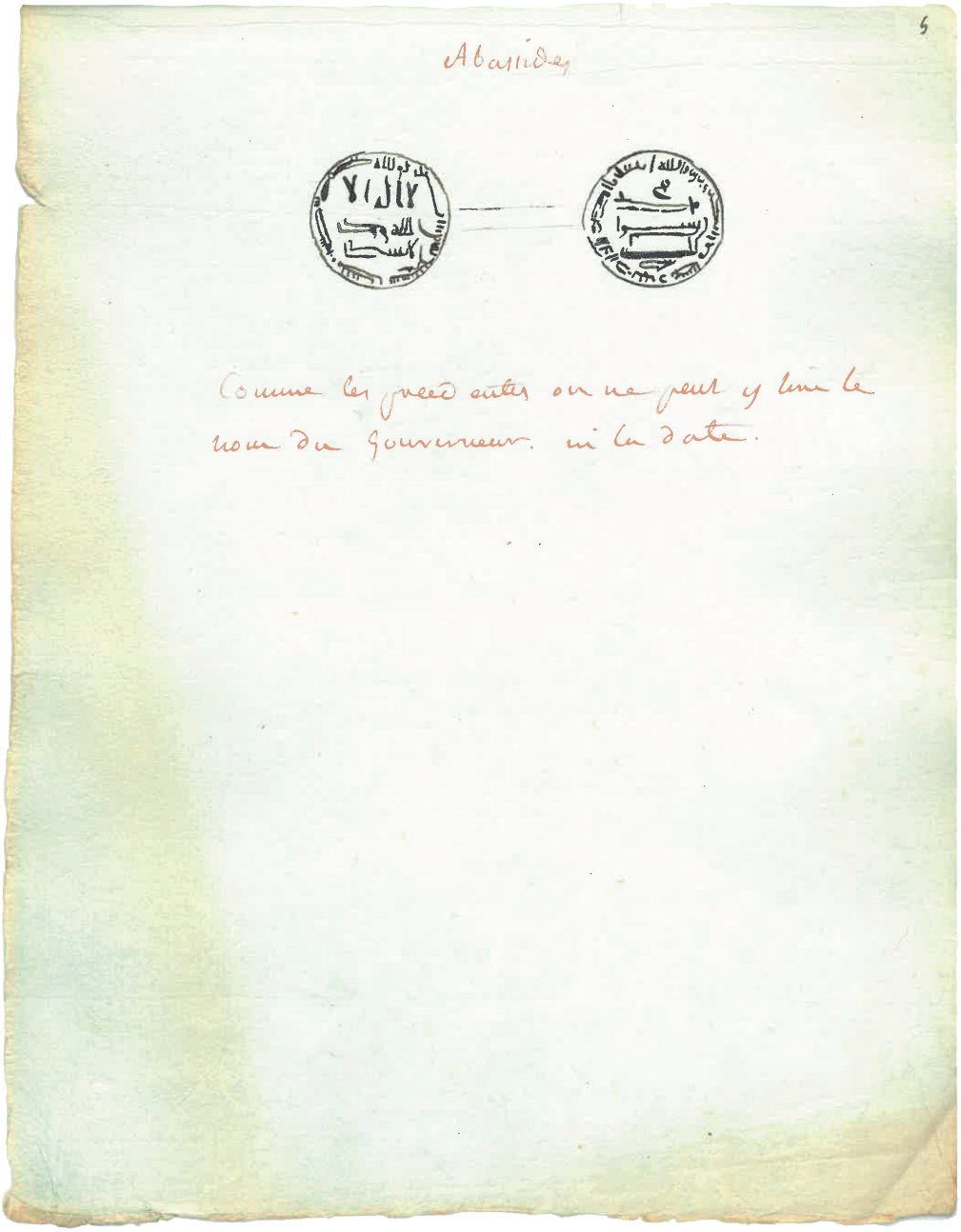
Au nom de Dieu fut frappé ce Dinar l'an 110 (728)

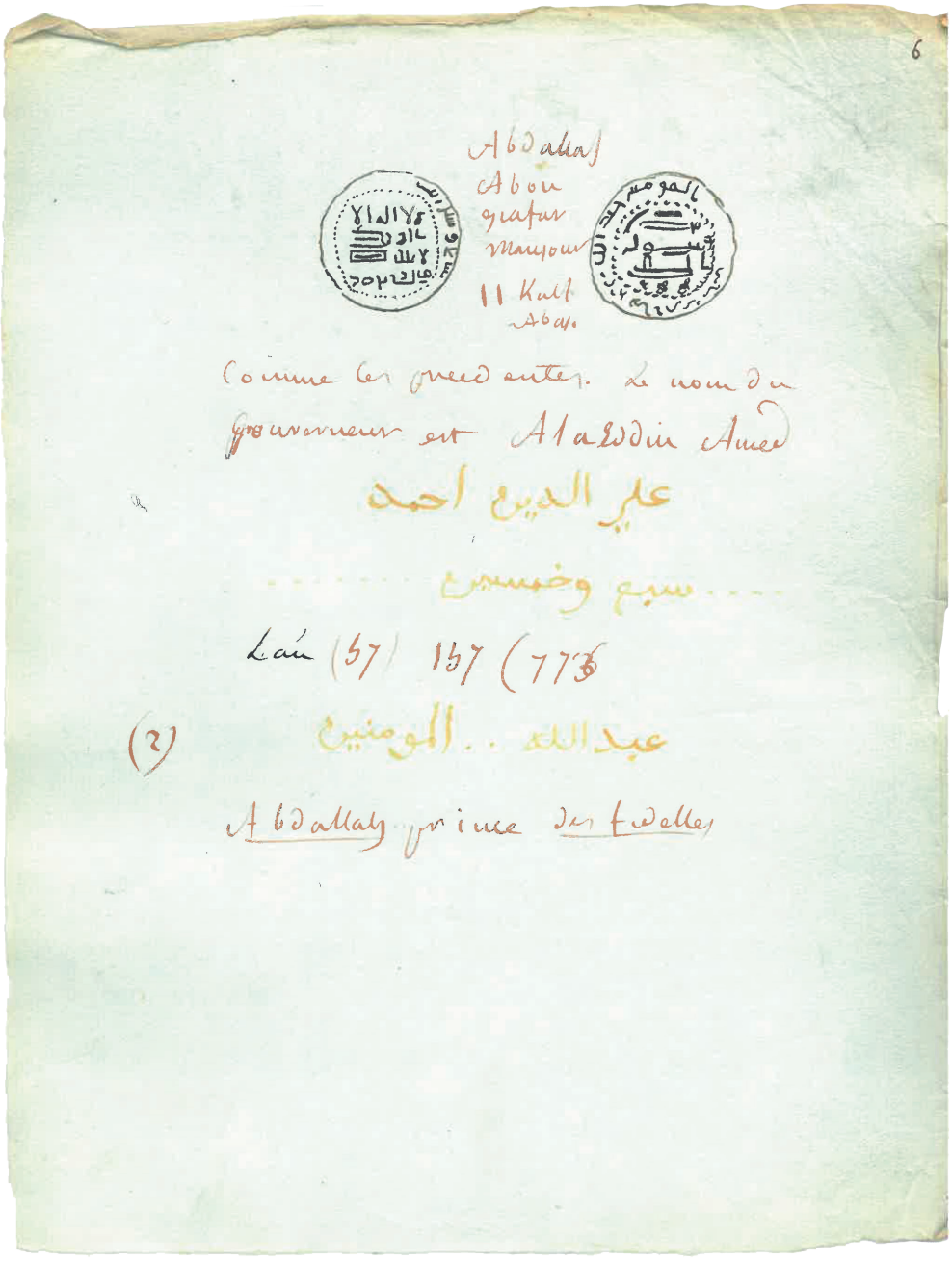

2
Omniadès.
1
2
(1) Il n'y a point d'autre dieu que dieu, il
n'a point d'égal. (voir note 1.)
(2) Dieu est un il est eternel, il n'engendre
ni n'est engendré
.....و سبع.....
dans cet...an...neuf et. . . .


ABASSIDES


Abasside et Almohade
ben Mohammed
Abou Gueffar
manzour
III- Calife
et ben.
1)
Il n'y a point de Ct.
بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بالعبسيه
سنه ستين ومية
Au nom de Dieu fut frappée cette Drahme
(Dragme) dans Abasie l'an 160 (776)
2)
Mahammed est l'envoyé de Dieu etc.
Dans la partie supérieure se lit le nom du
Calife
هرون HAROUN
Mahammed est l'apôtre de Dieu etc.
Vers autres volumes. A la honte des Idolatres
ولو كره المشركون
Voir le


4
Abarlier.
1
2
Au nom de Dieu - fut frappé - dans Abarlier et le tout comme dans la précédente excepté le mot Muroun remplacé par Al Amin
الامين


Abassides
5
Comme les pieces entières on ne peut y lire le
nom du Gouverneur ni la date.


6
Abdallah
Abou
Jaafar
Mansour
11 Kull
Abb.
Comme les precedentes. Le nom du
gouverneur est Alaeddin Amer
علي الديع احمد
سبع وخمسين
Lan (5)7 157 (773
(2) عبد الله .. المومنين
Abdallah prince des Fidèles

7

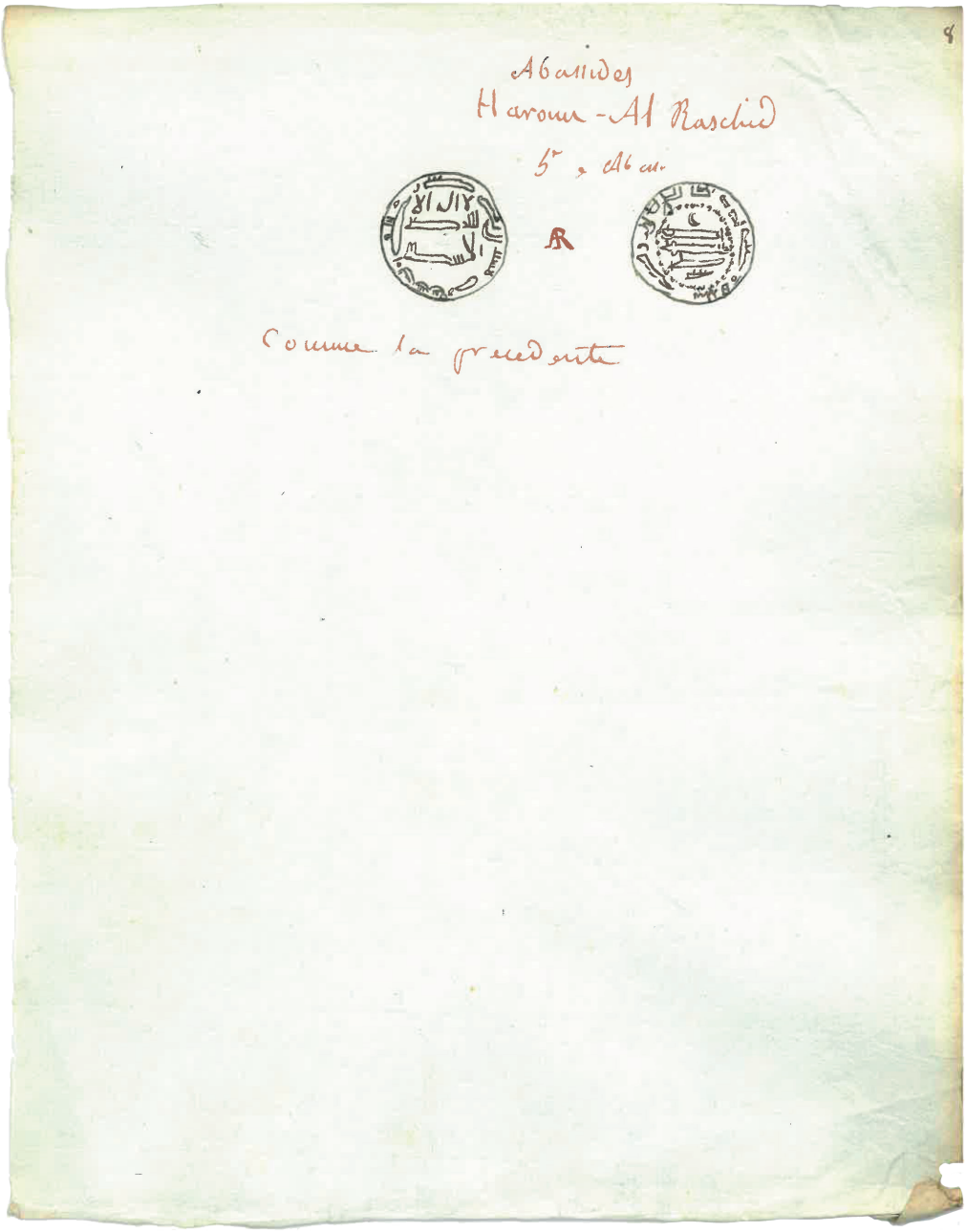
Abassides
Haroun-Al Raschid

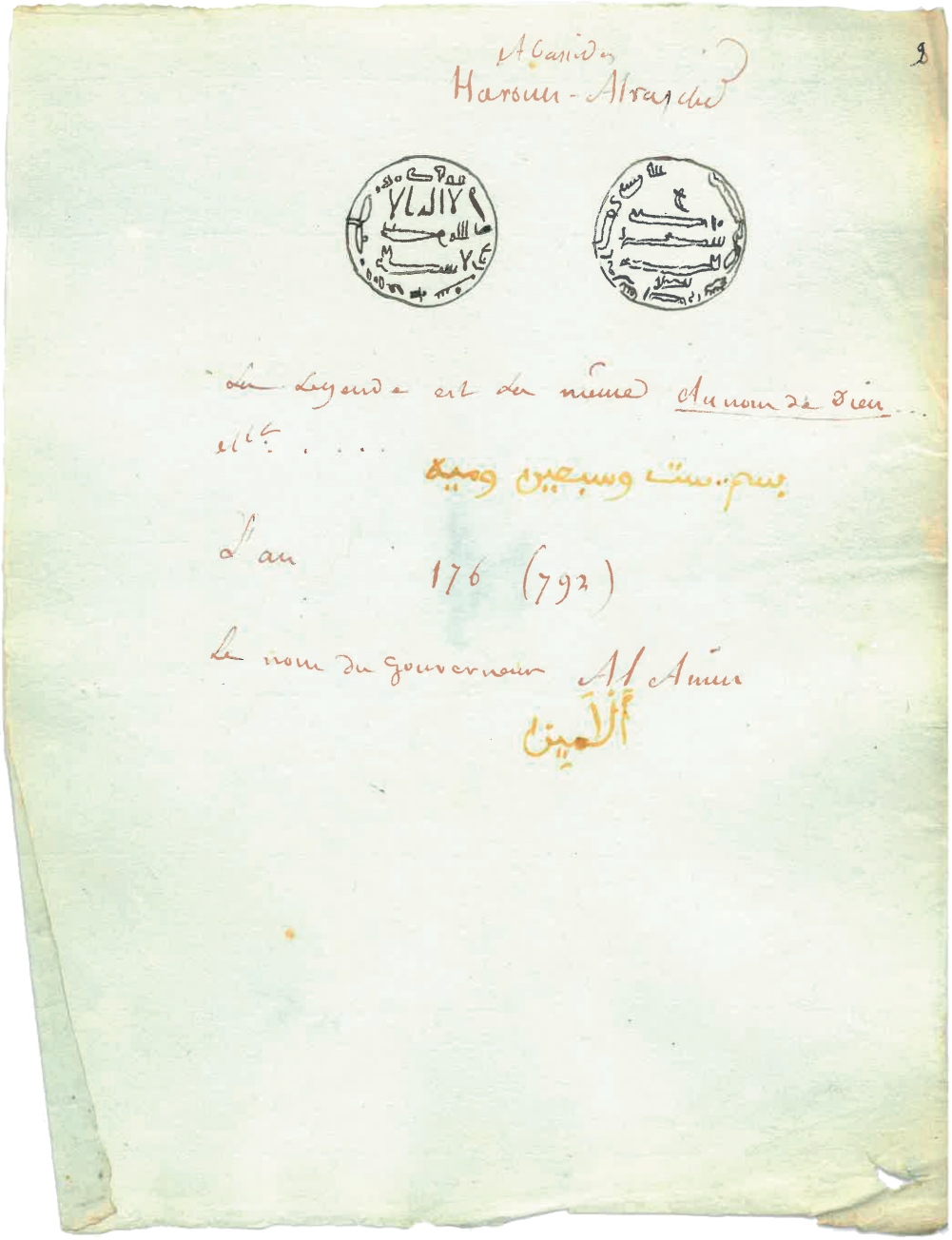




سنة احد وسبعين ومية

« Année dans dieu fut frappé ainsi (comme ci dessus)
l'an 171 (787.)


Abassides
Haroun - Al Raschid
5e s. de l'ar.
R
Comme la precedente


Abbasides
Haroun - Alraschid
La Legende est la même Au nom de Dieu...
بسم الله ... ست وسبعين ومية
L'an 176 (792)
Le nom du Gouverneur Al Amin
الأمين

Abandy

Al aroun . Al Rasthe

9



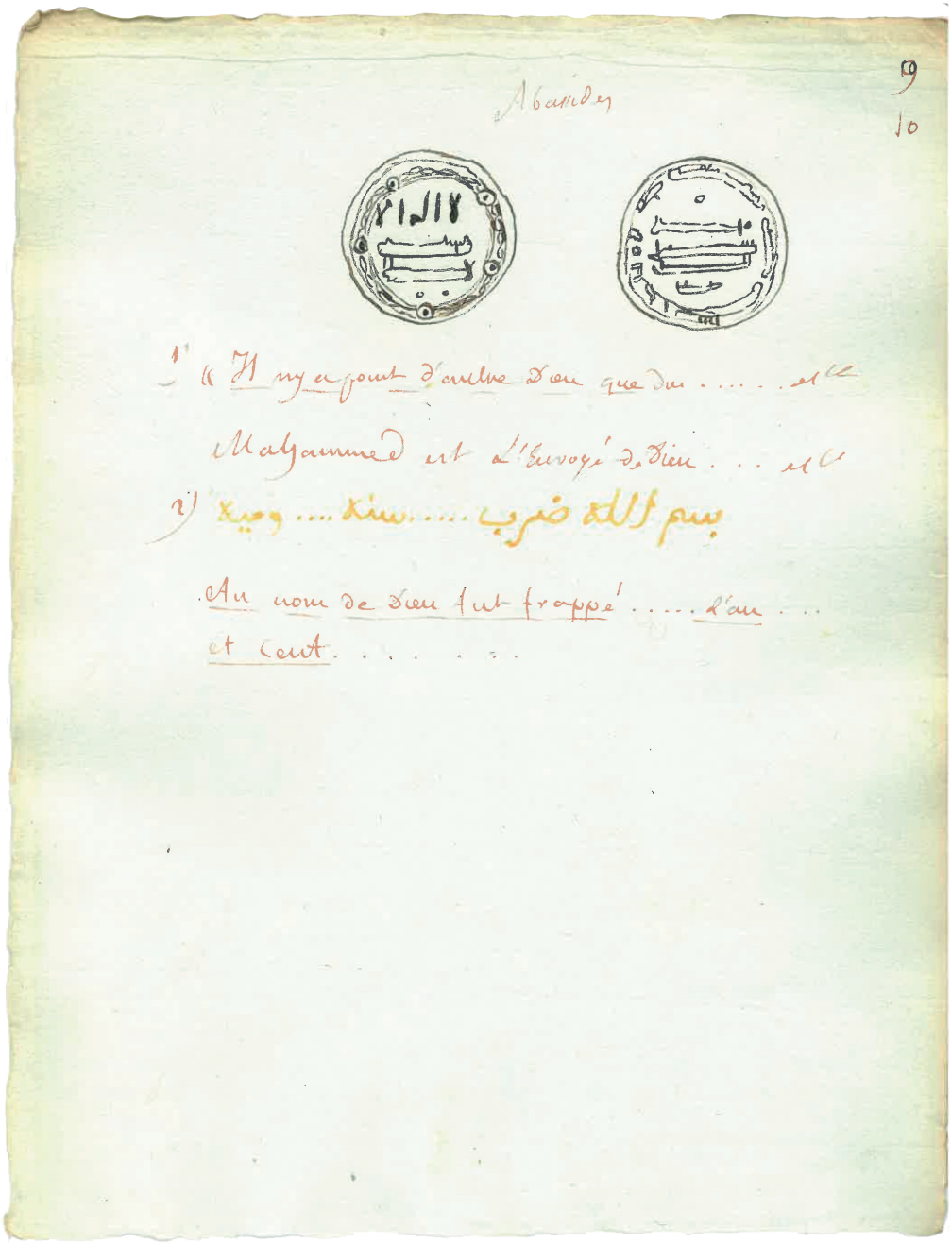
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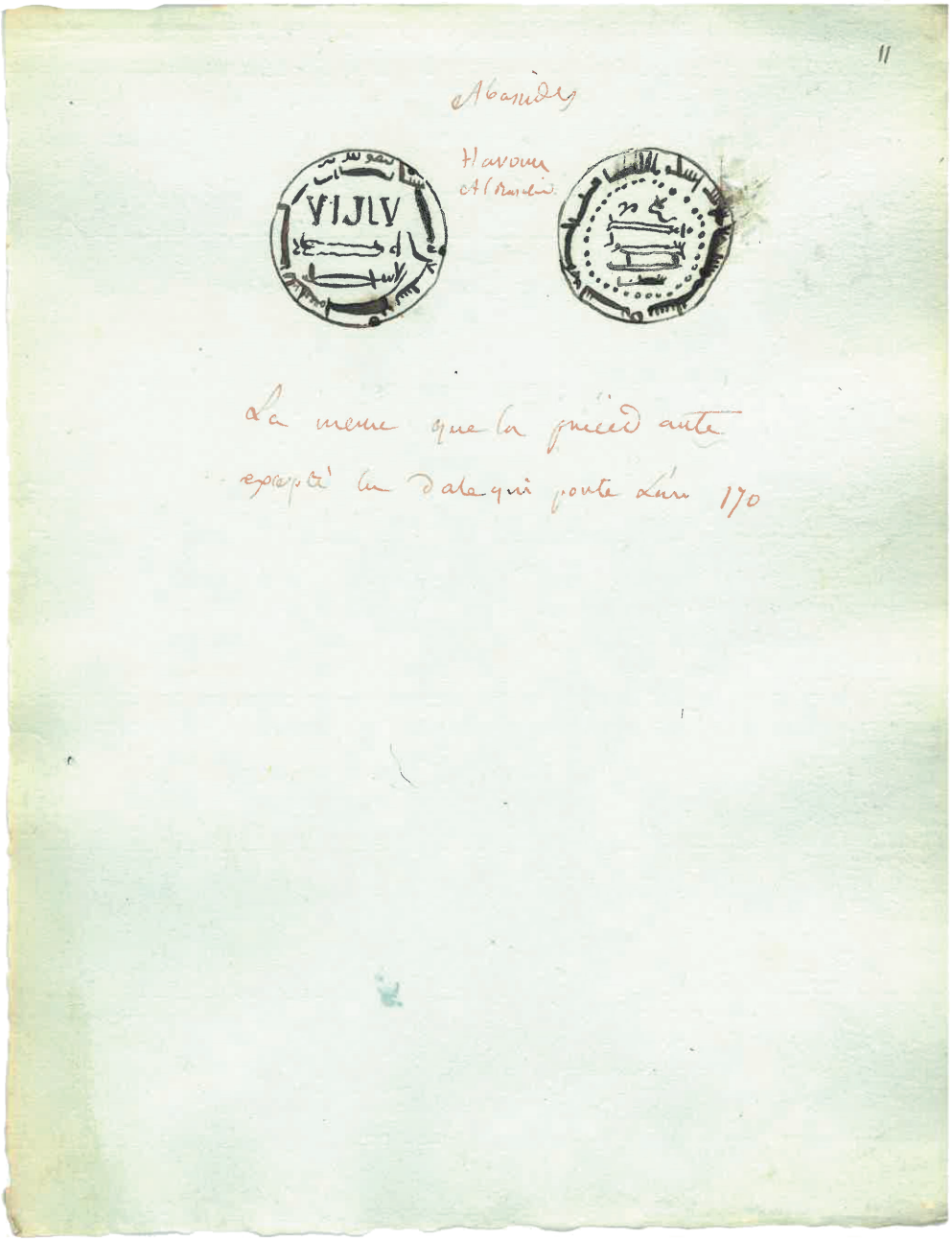


1) Il n'y point d'autre Dirar ..... et Cl

Celle Dirar fut ctr. à aun Abattie et Cl
l'an 171 (787)

2) Mahammed ar Rapoha et Cl. .....


Abandon
9
10
1° « Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu . . . . . et
Mahomet est l'Envoyé de Dieu . . . et
2° بسم الله ضرب . . . . . .
Au nom de Dieu fut frappé' . . . . d'an . . .
et cent . . . . . .


II
Abandy
Harouni
al Rashid
de la meme que la precedente
excepté la date qui porte ici 170

12

Abbasides

Mamoun.





1) De même que les précédents, à Abbasse l'an 173 (789)

2) id. plus le nom du Préfet

المامون

Al-mamoun.

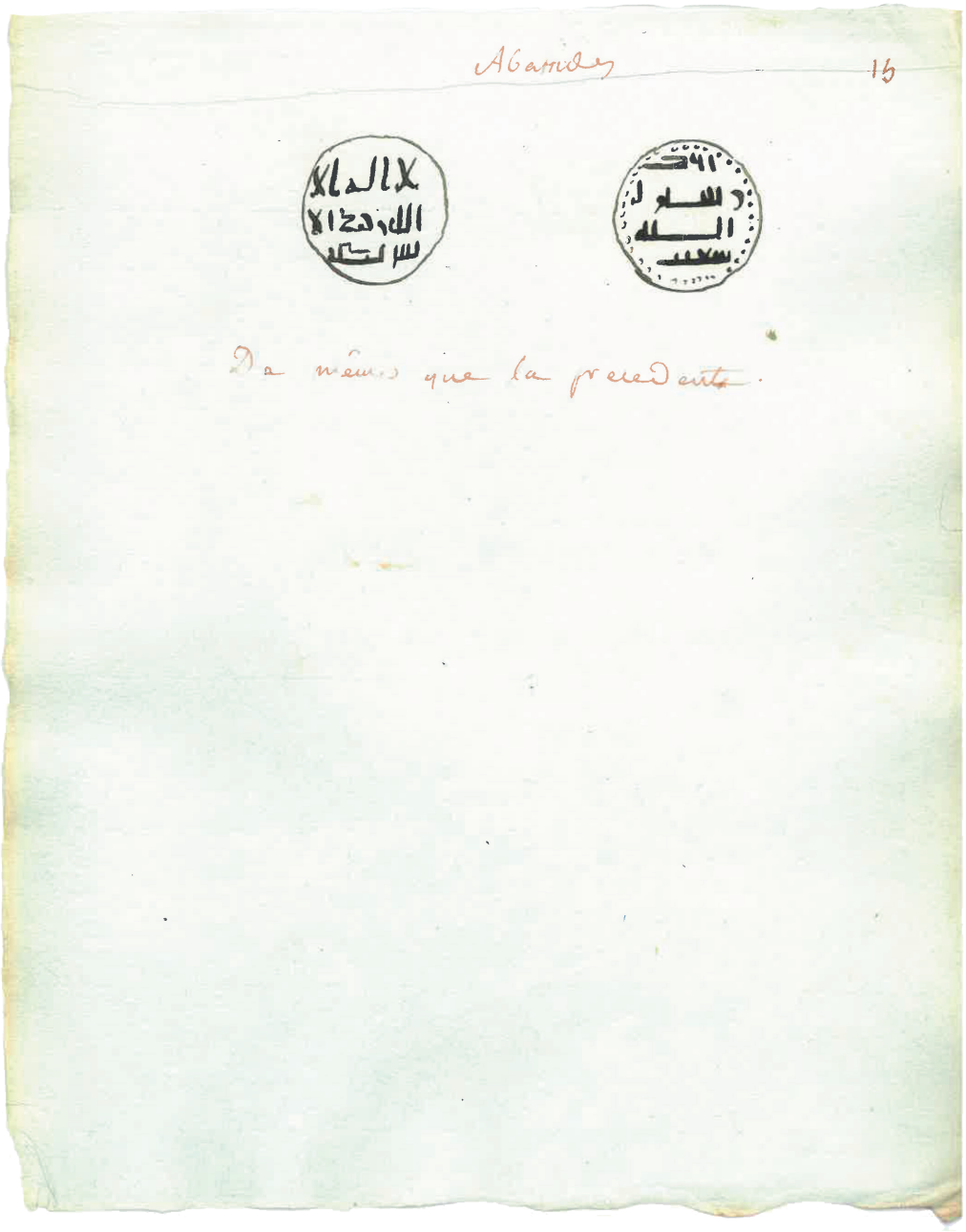
14

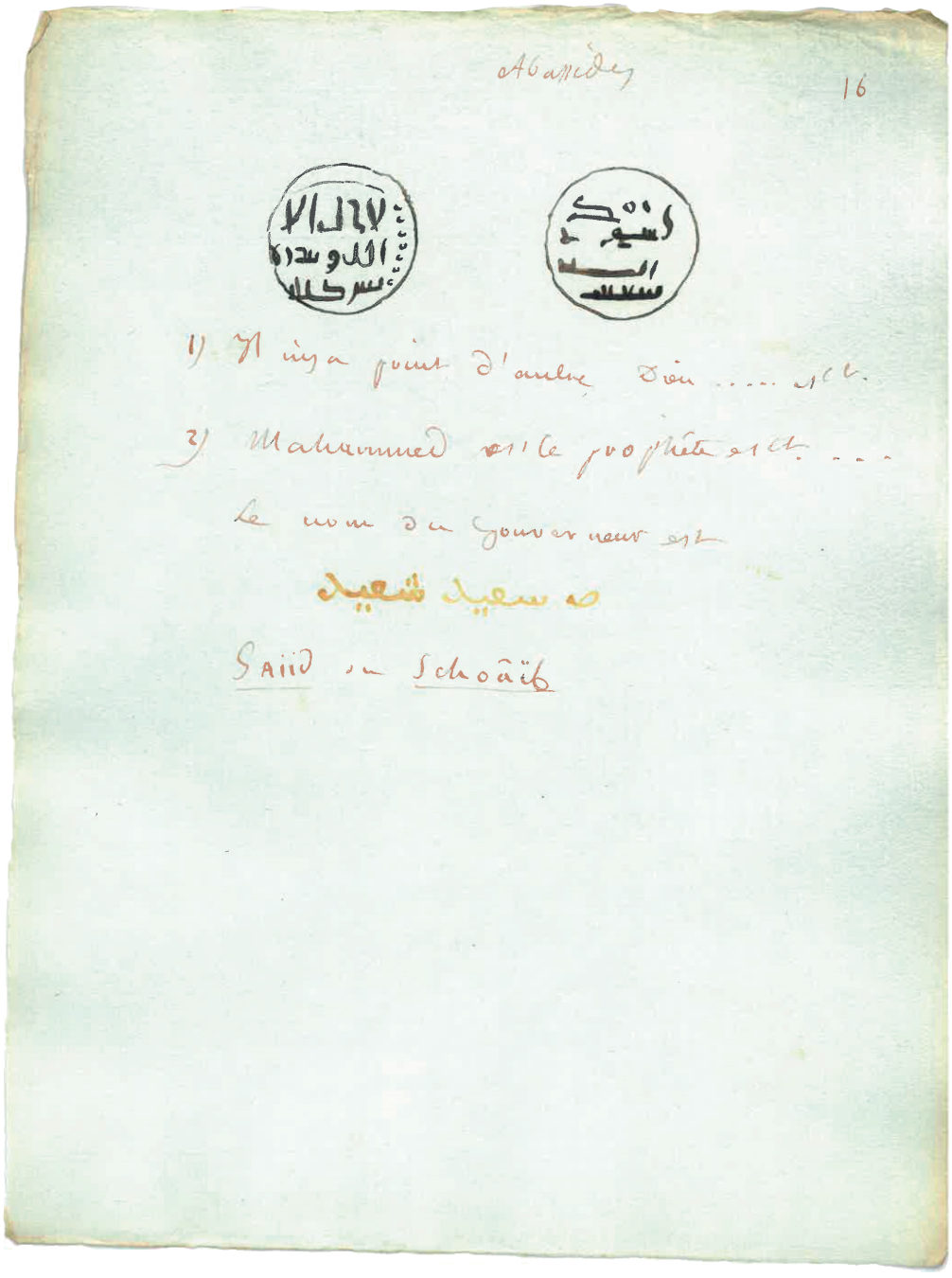
Abbaïdes





de la même que la précédente. le contour de la première n'est point écrit. le contour de la seconde est écrit trop fin et impossible à lire ainsi que le monde-greffe.


Abbasides
15
De même que la precedente.


Abassides
16
1) Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu ... etc.
2) Mahammed est le prophète etc. ...
Le nom du Gouverneur est
صعيد شعيد
Saïd ou Schoaïb

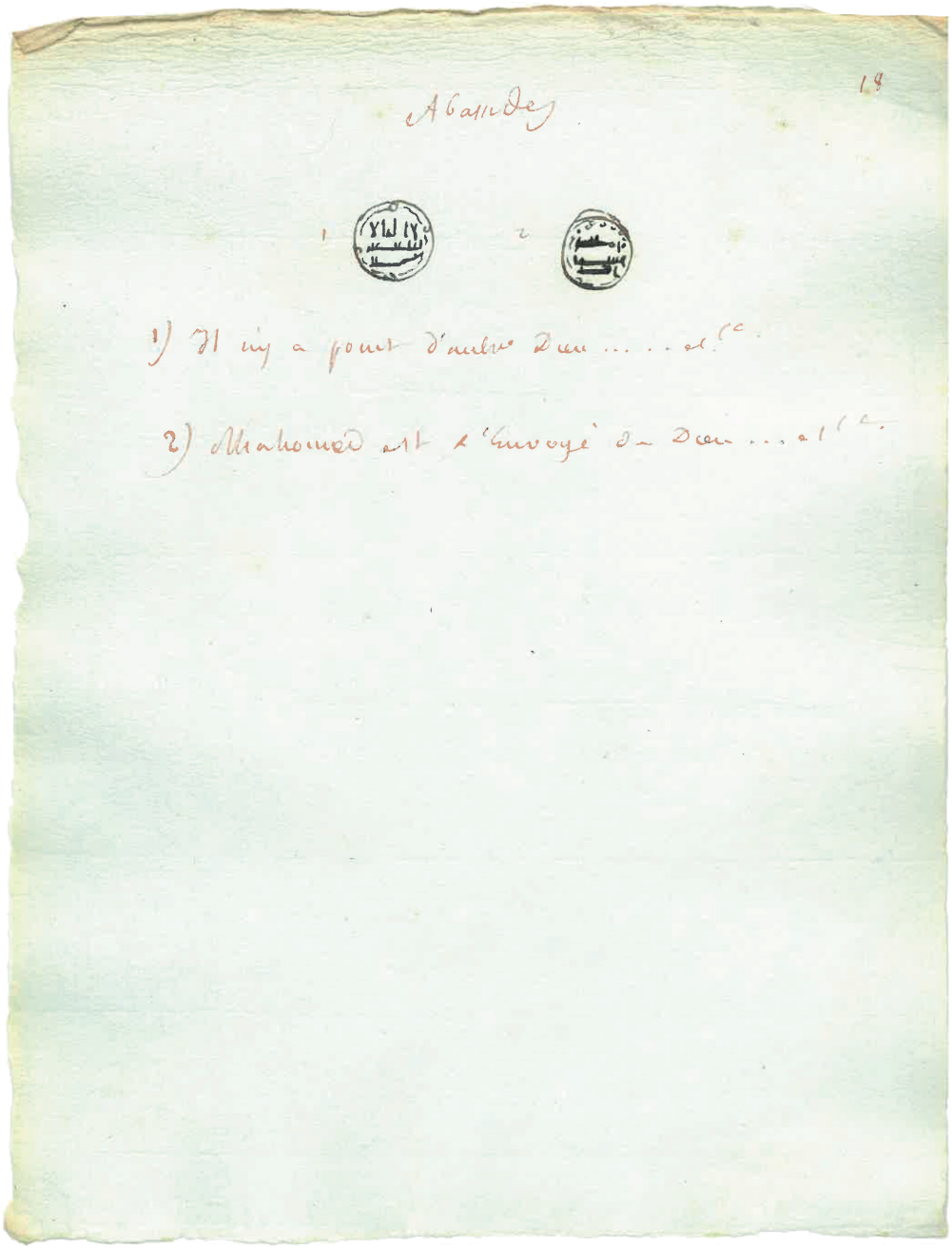
17

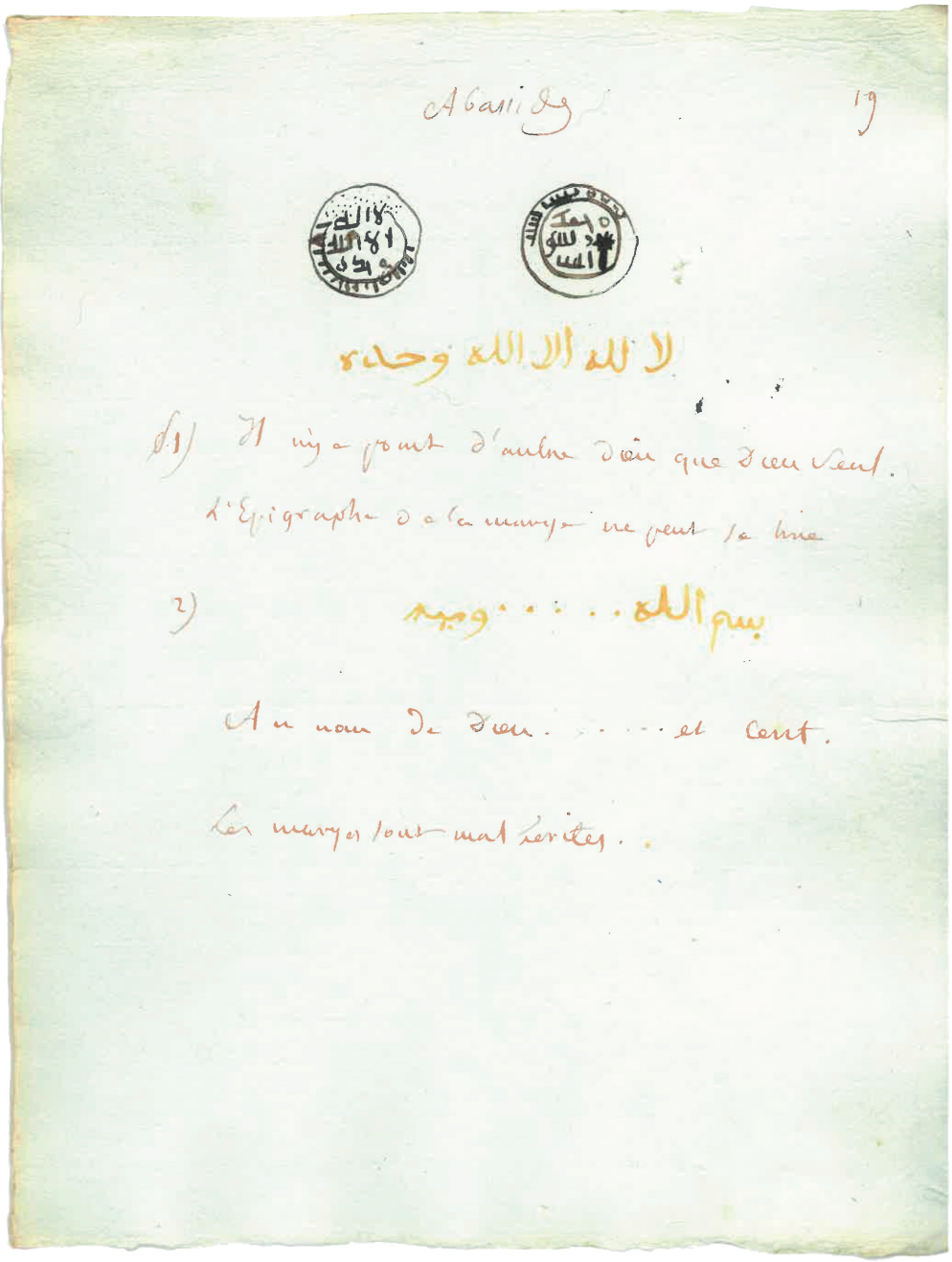
Abbasides

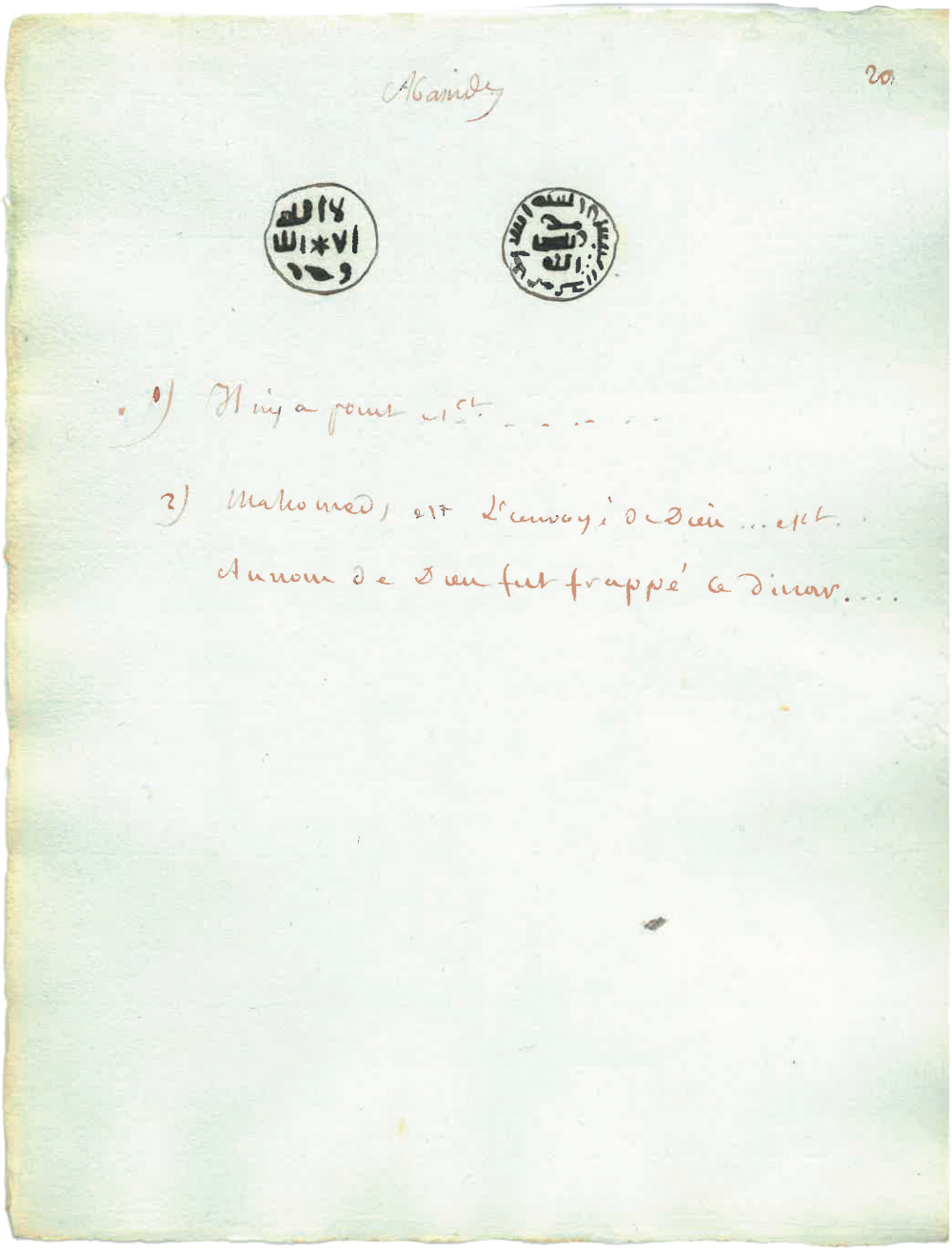


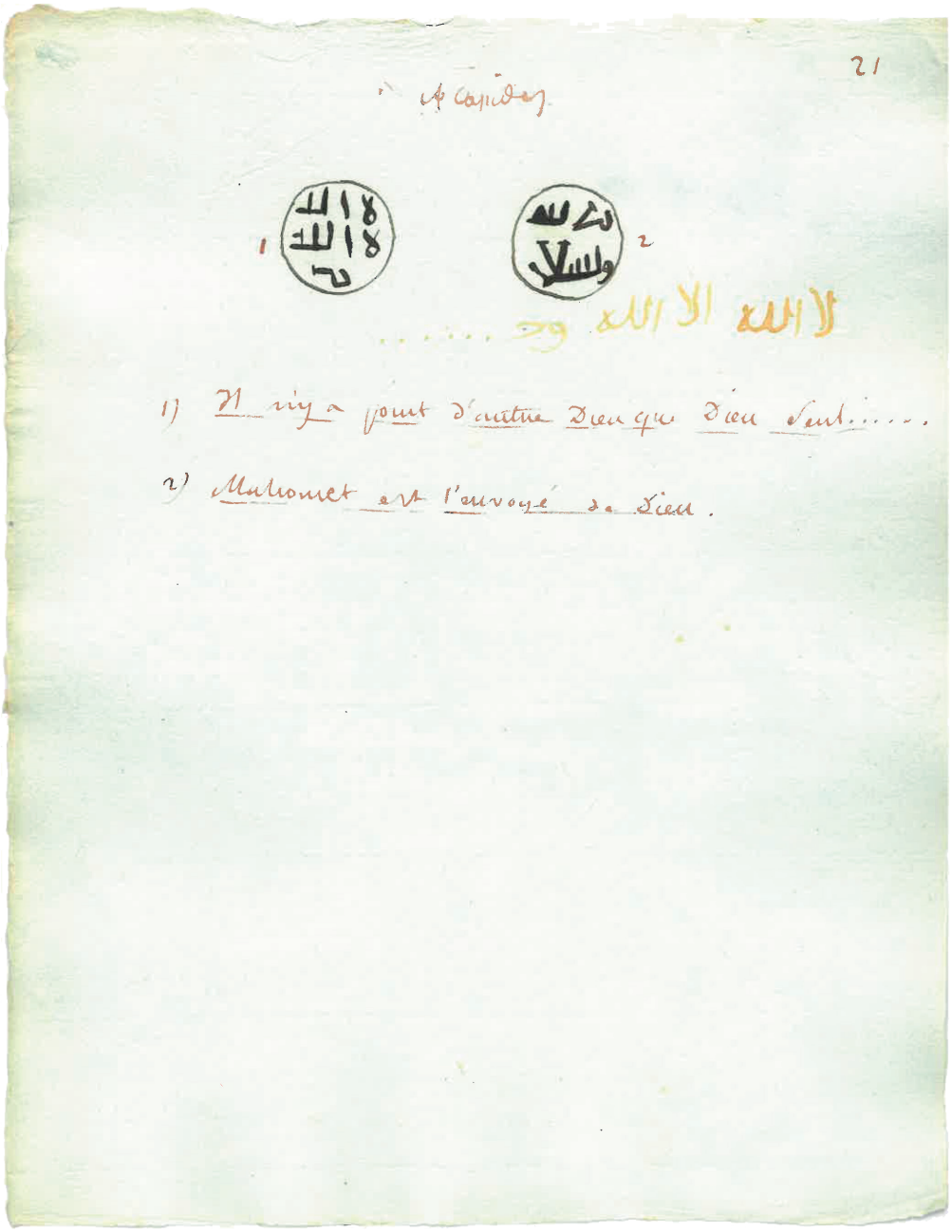


De même que la précédente


Abbasidi
19
1
2
1) Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu ... etc.
2) Mahomed est l'envoyé de Dieu ... etc.


Abbasides
19
لا اله الا الله وحده
1) Il n'y a point d'autre dieu que dieu seul.
L'Epigraphe de la monnaie ne peut se lire
2) بسم الله . . . . وجه
Au nom de dieu . . . . . et Cent.
La monnaie tout mal servitez.


Mamdy
20
1) Il n'y a point de D.
2) Mahomed, est l'envoyé de Dieu ... etc.
Au nom de Dieu fut frappé ce dinar....


21
1
2
لا اله الا الله
1) Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu seul.....
2) Mahomet est l'envoyé de Dieu.

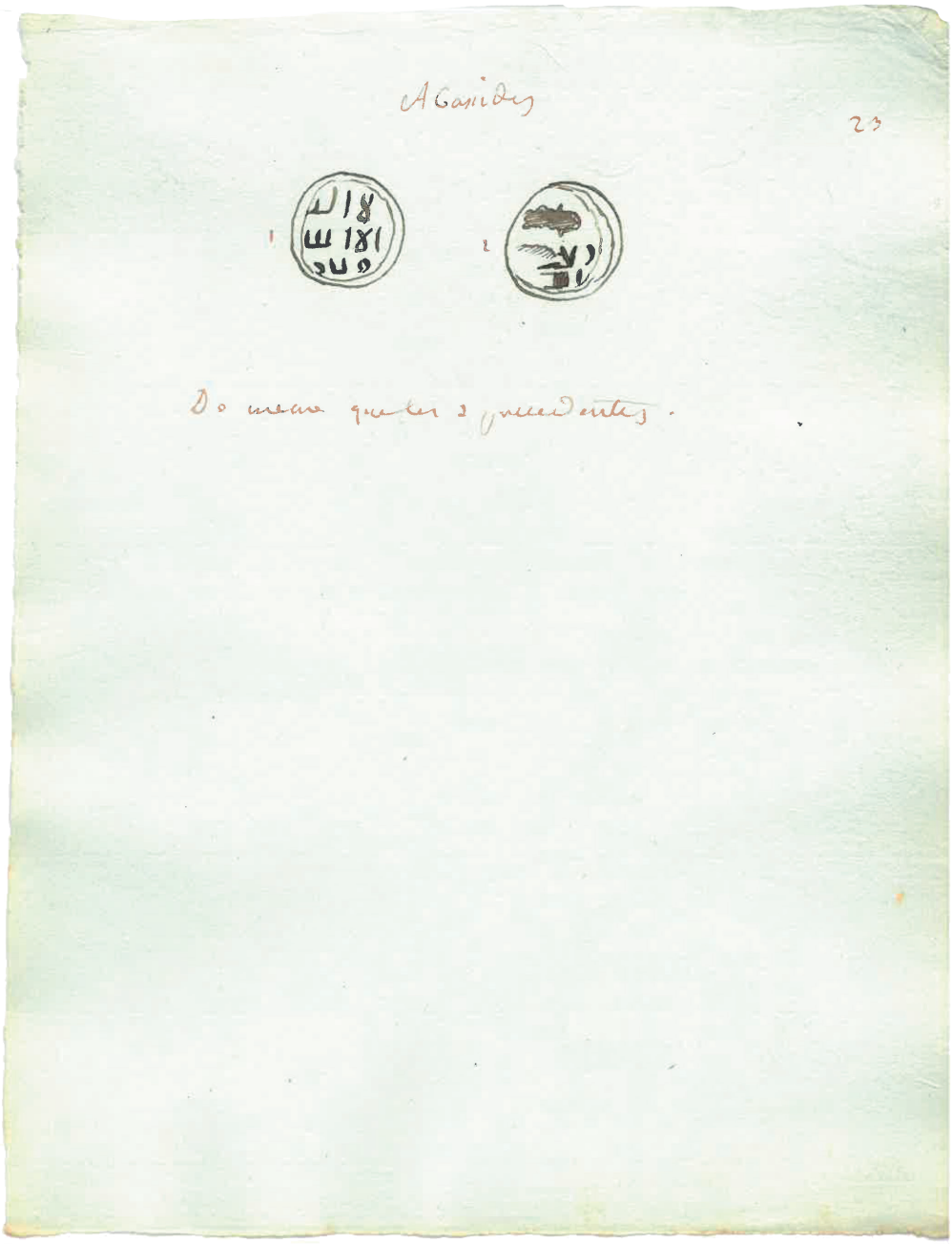
Abbasides

22





1 } Comme la precedente. Le N°1. porte une
2 } legende mal dessinée qu'on croit etre celle d'une
tortue mais comme les Khalifes ne mettaient
jamais d'effigie sur leurs monnaies, on ne fait que
penser de celle que cette medaille nous presente.


A Ganiday
23
1
2
Do mean quarter dirhems.

Abeidy 24



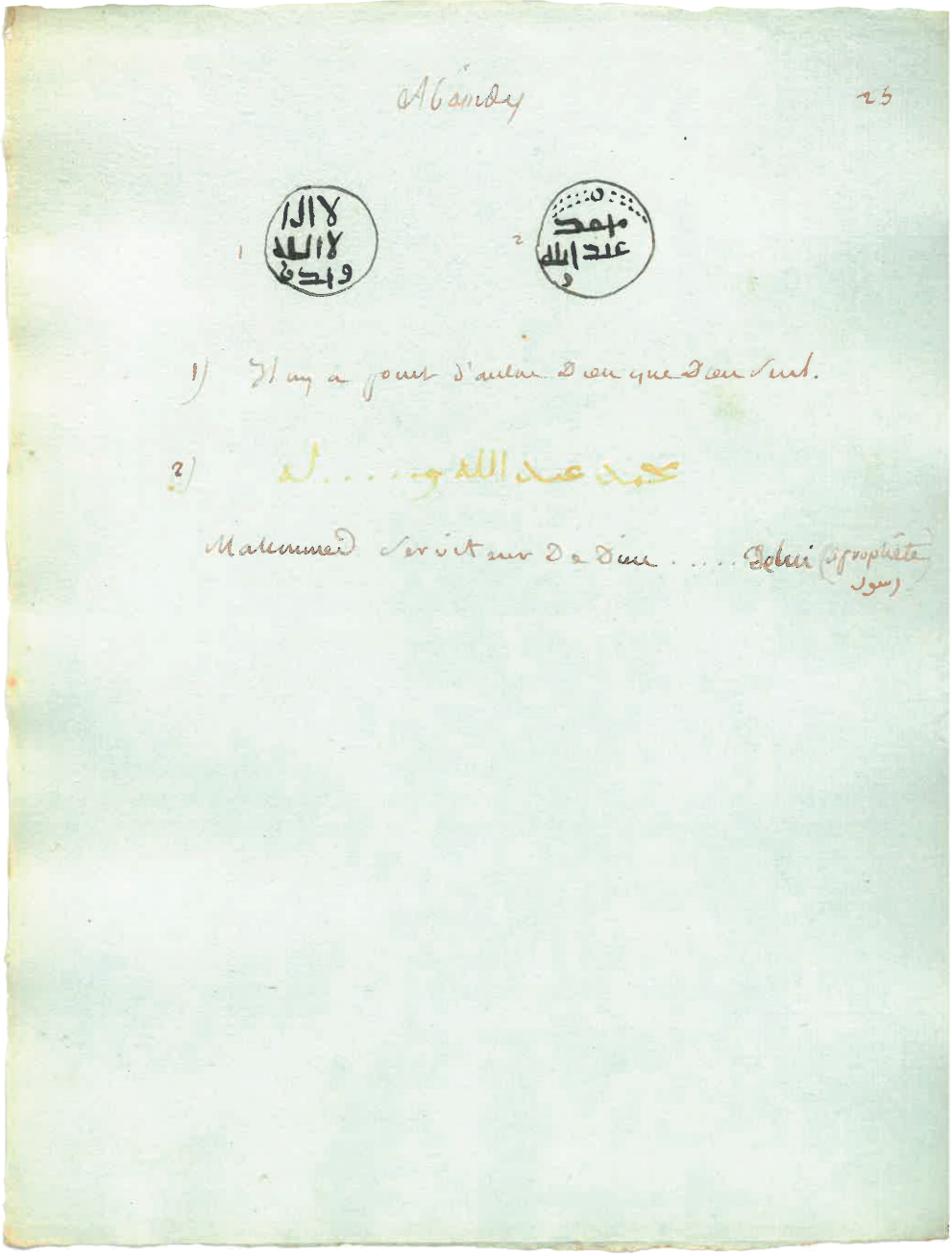


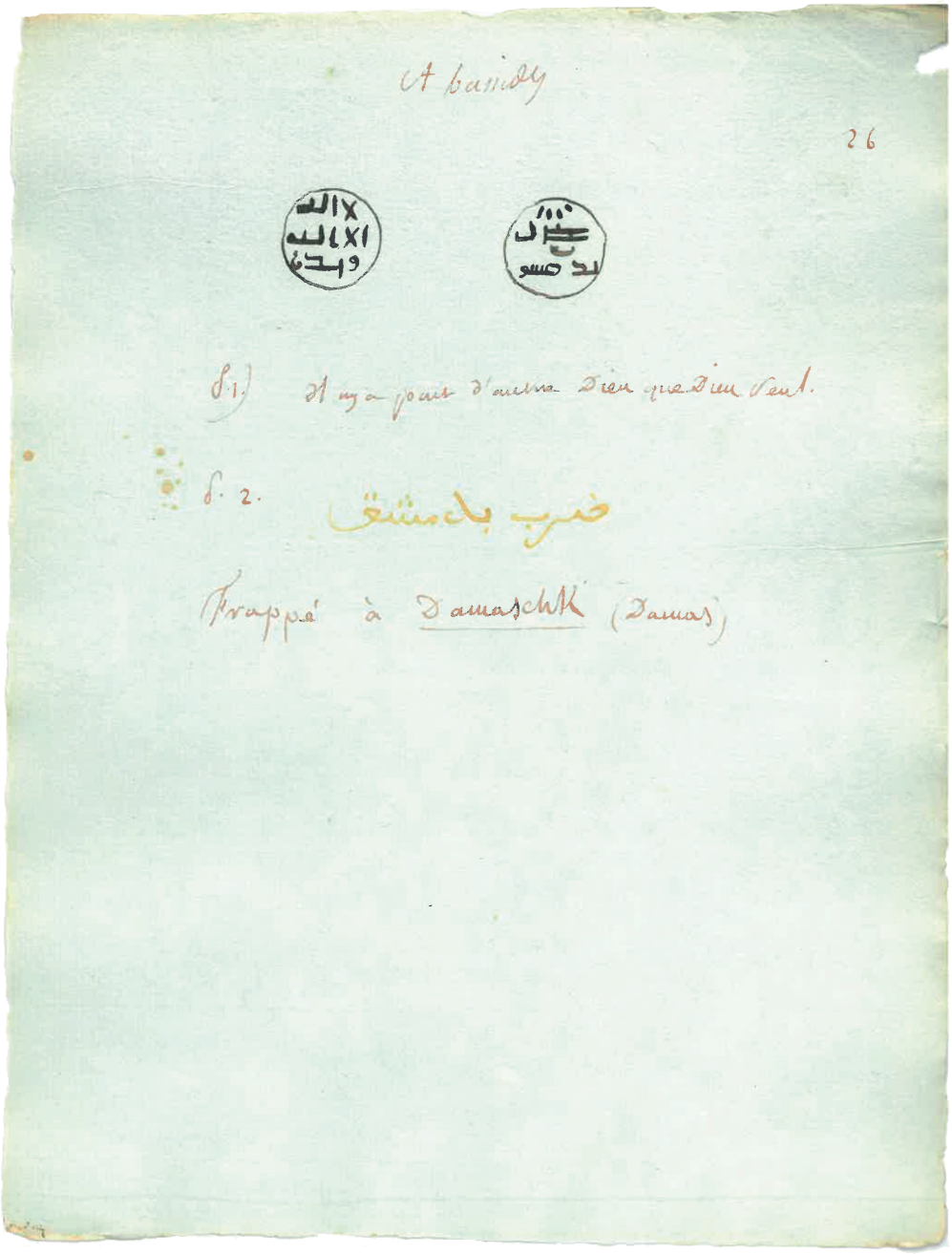
1) Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu seul, et il n'a pas de pareil.

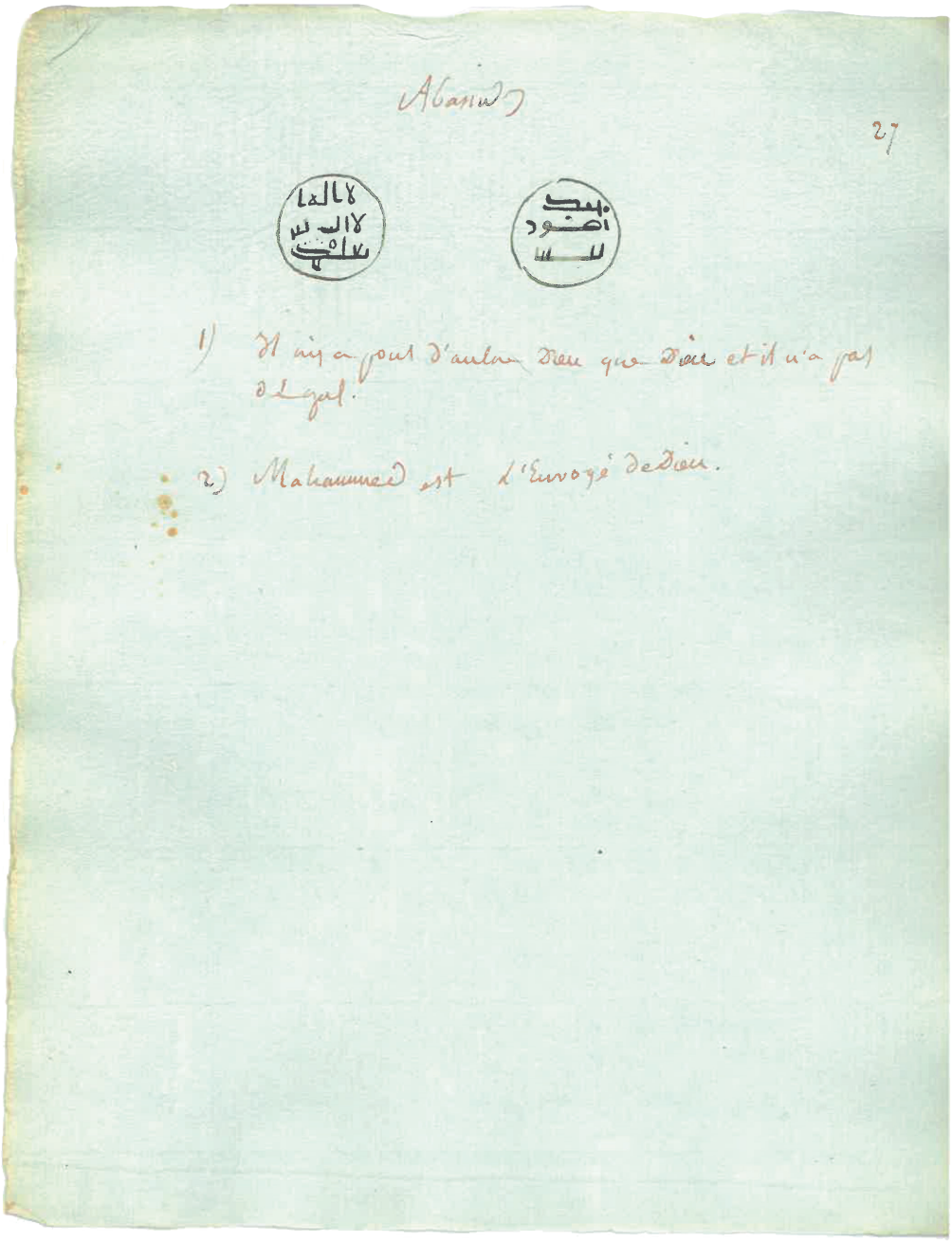
2) محمد رسول الله وعبده

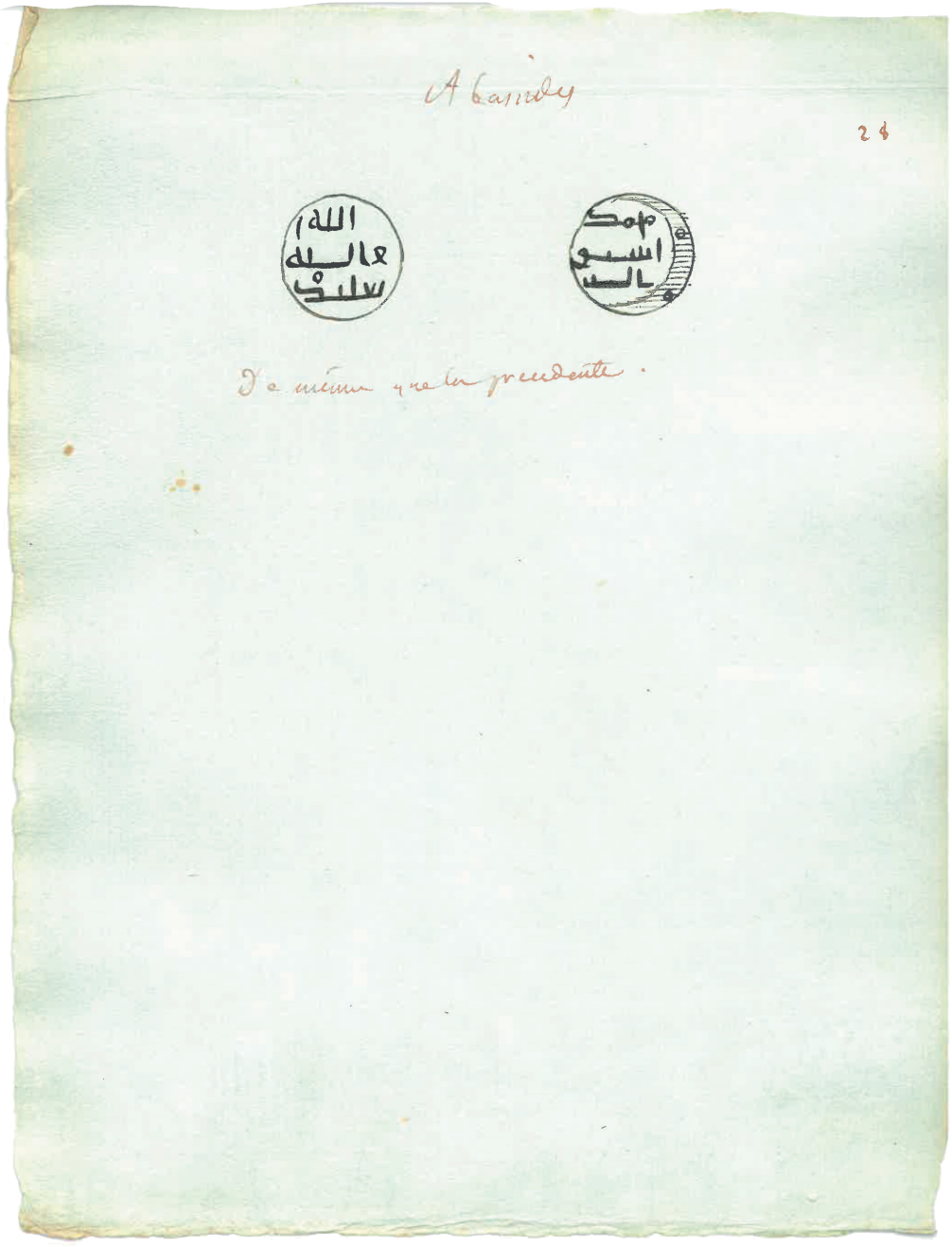
Mahammed est l'Envoyé de Dieu et son serviteur.

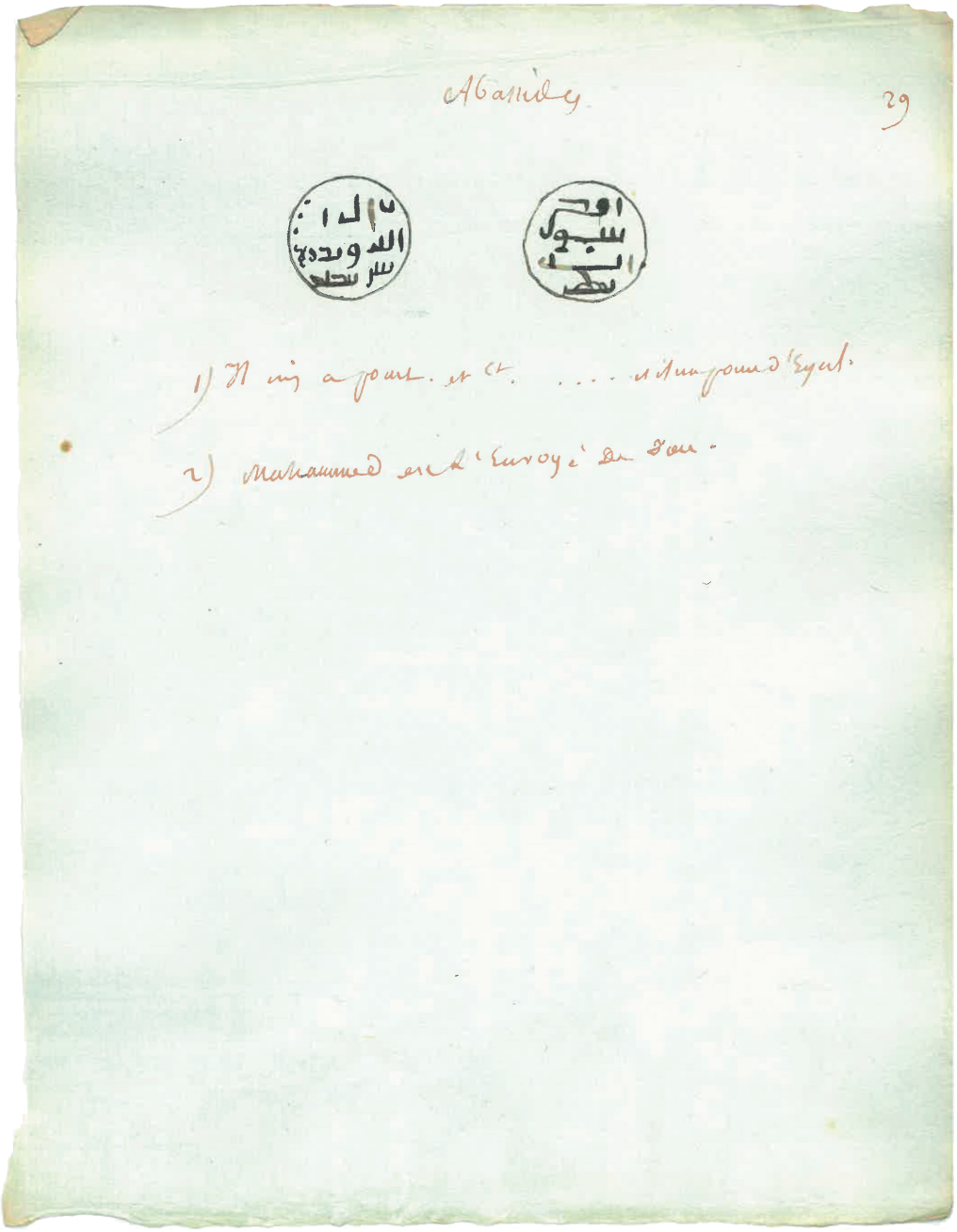
L'inscription du contour dans la seconde a disparu la première ne l'avait point.


Abandy
25
1) Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu seul.
2) محمد عبد الله و... له
Mahomed serviteur de Dieu .... celui (le prophète رسول)


Al Kamily
26
ل. 1. Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu seul.
ل. 2. ضرب بدمشق
Frappé à Damaschk (Damas)


Abbasid
27
1) Il n'y a pour d'autre Dieu que Dieu et il n'a pas d'égal.
2) Mahomet est l'Envoyé de Dieu.


A Lavoix
24
De même que la précédente.

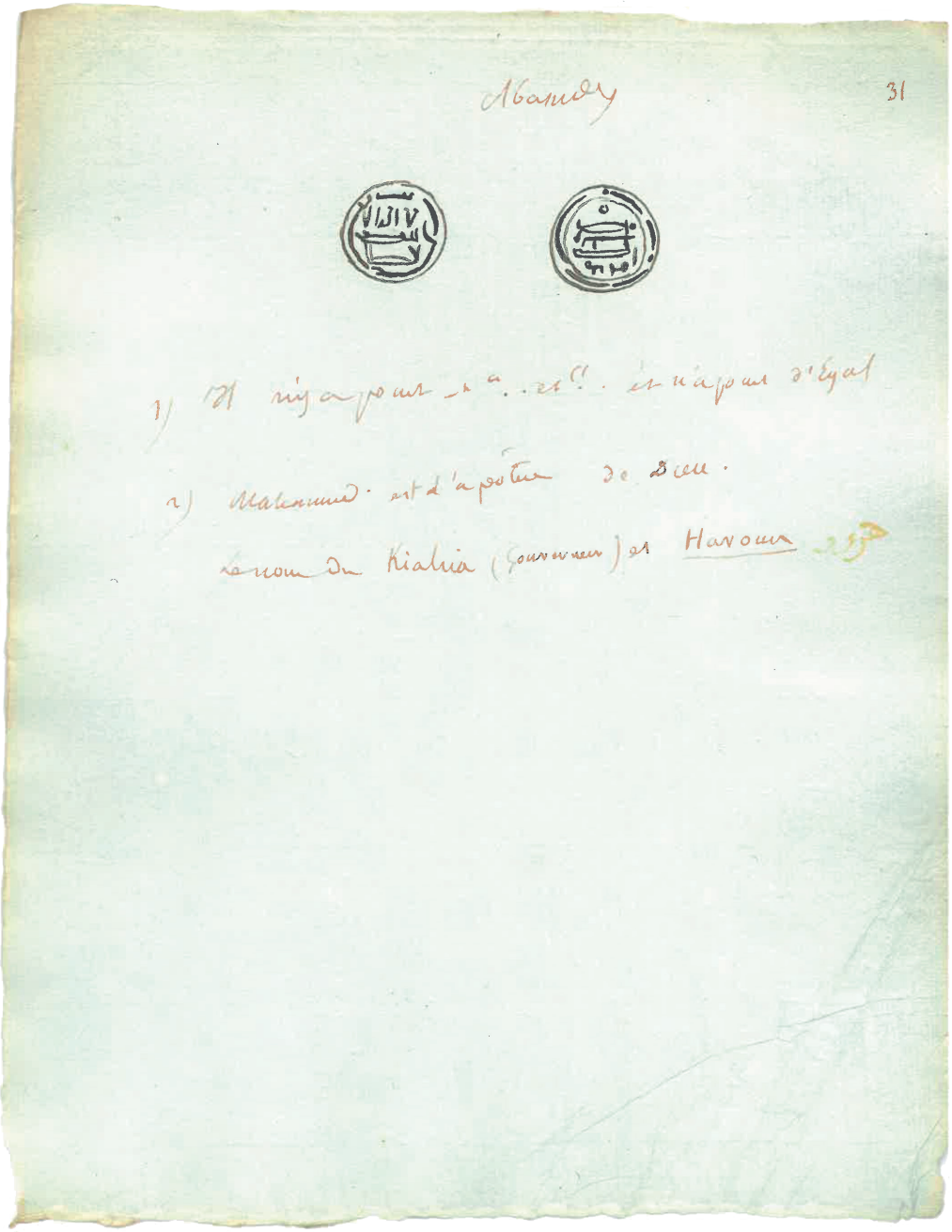

Abasides
29
1) M mis a jour. et Ct. .... et Mm pour d'Egypt.
2) Mahammed en l'Envoyé de Dieu.

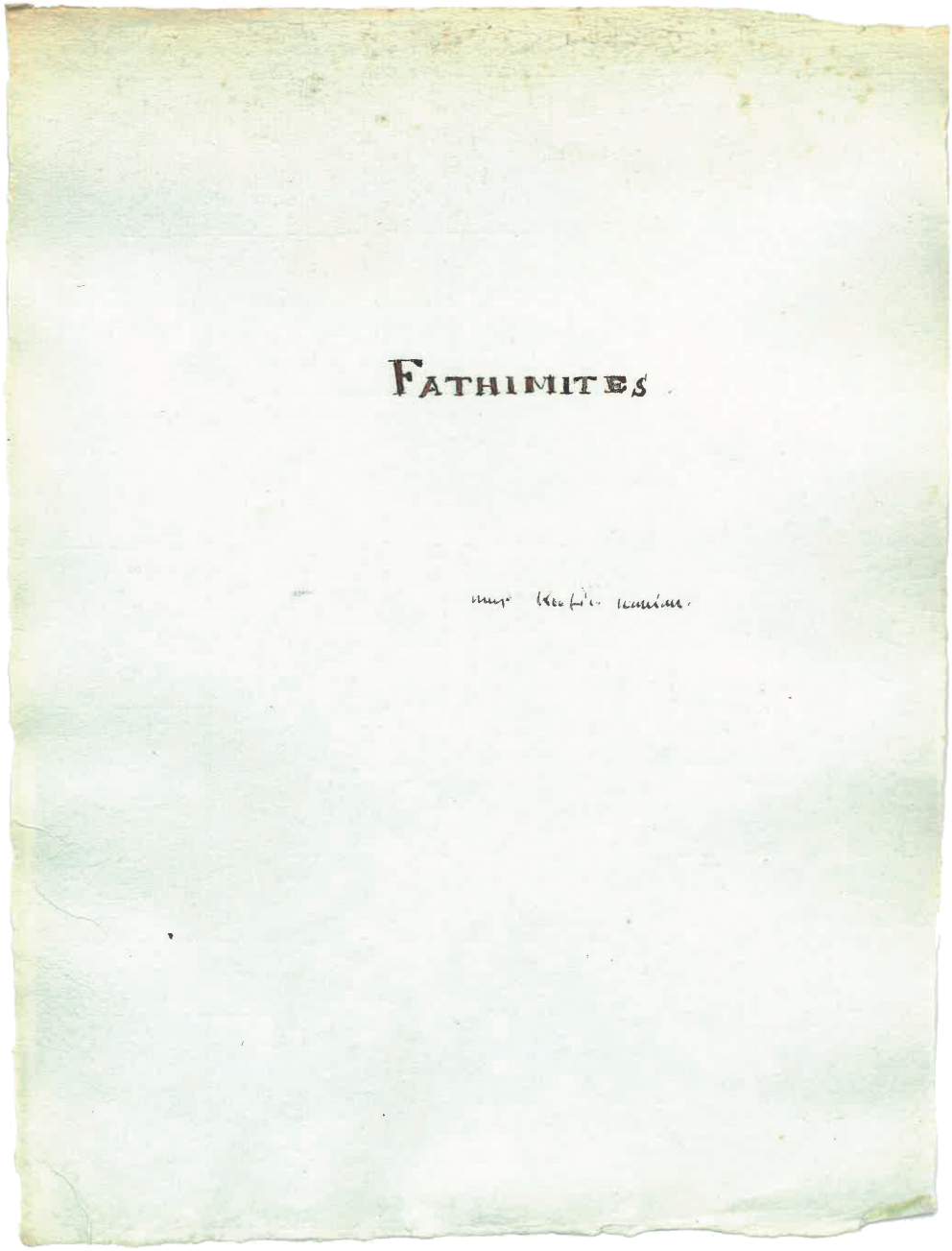
Abandon 30

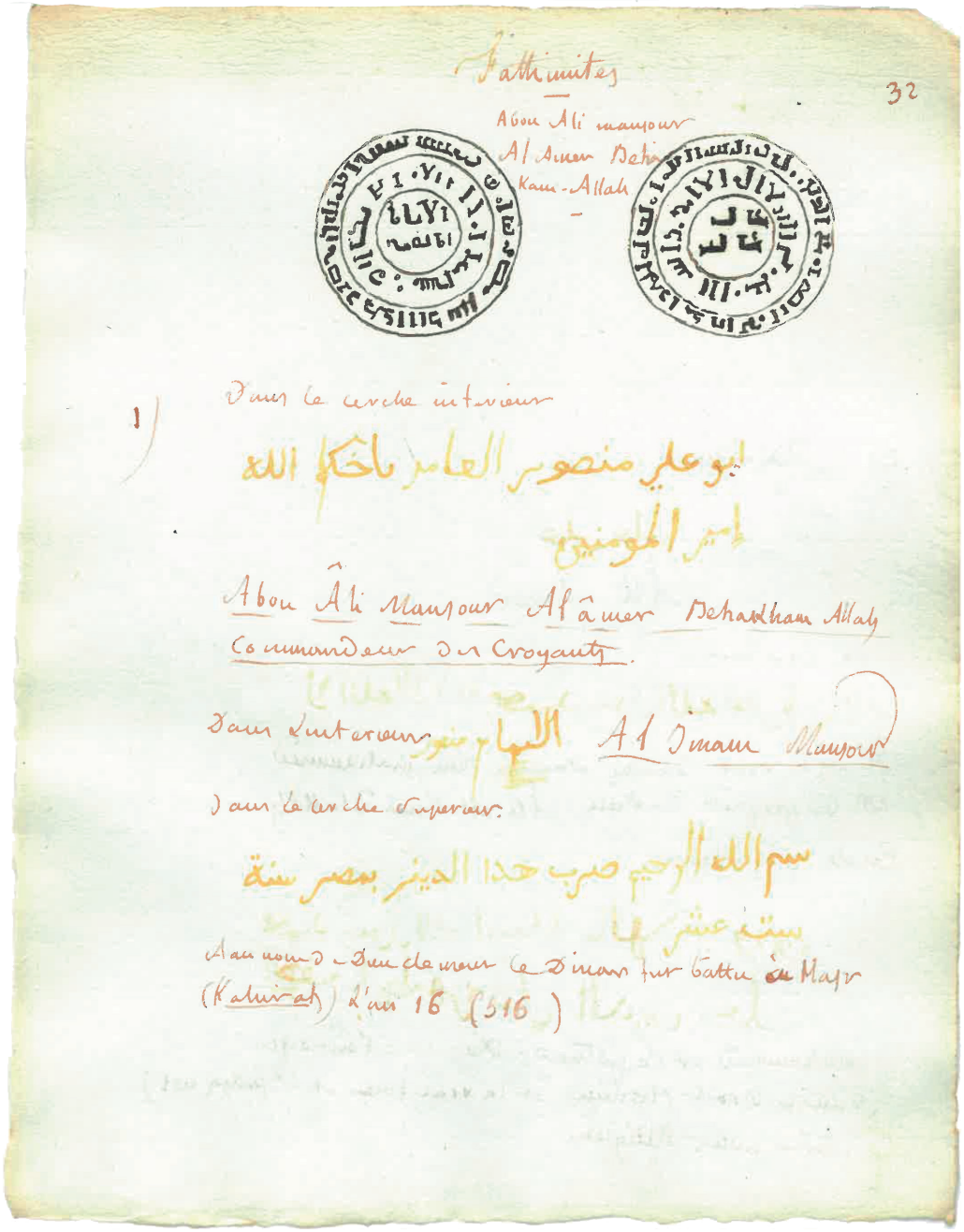


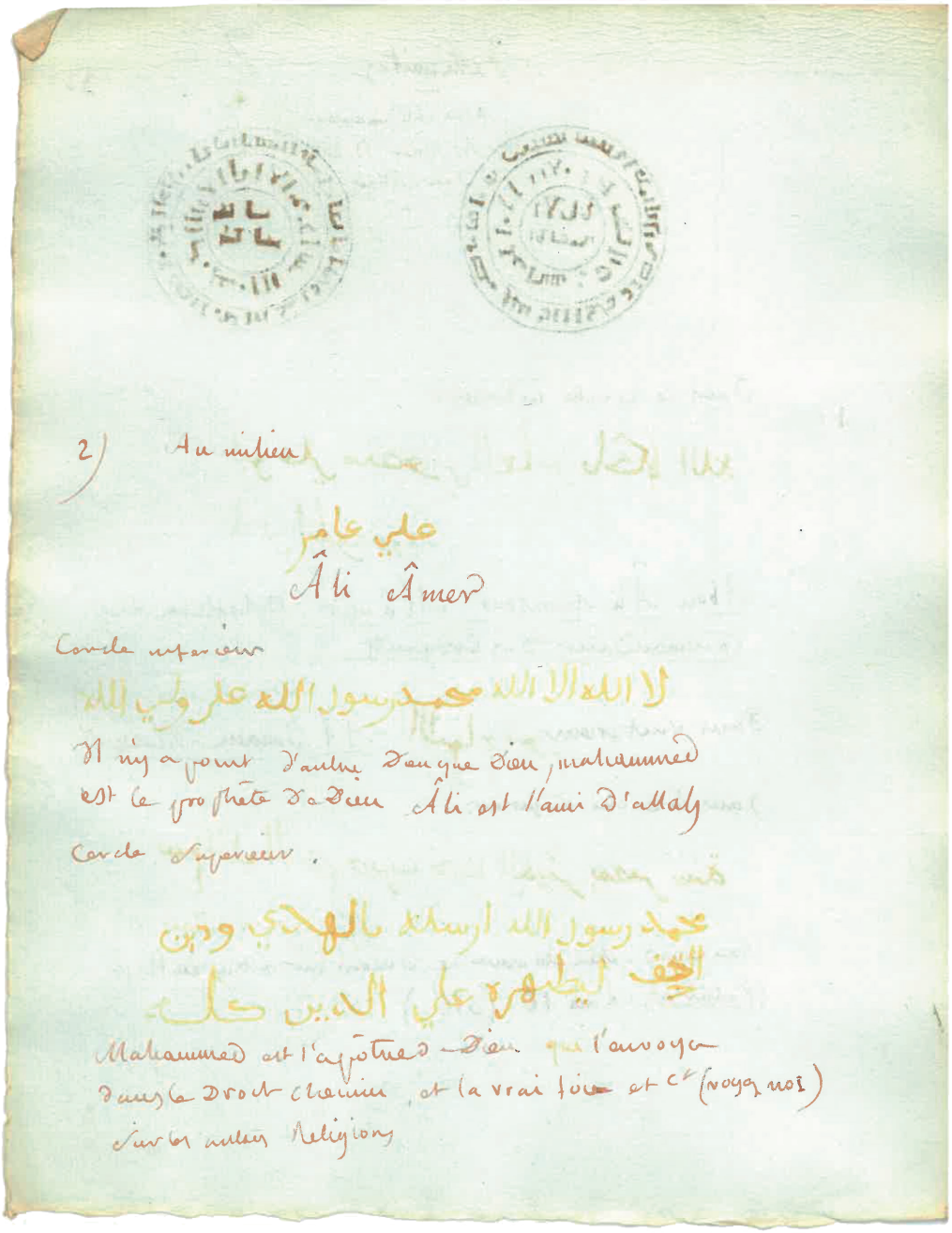


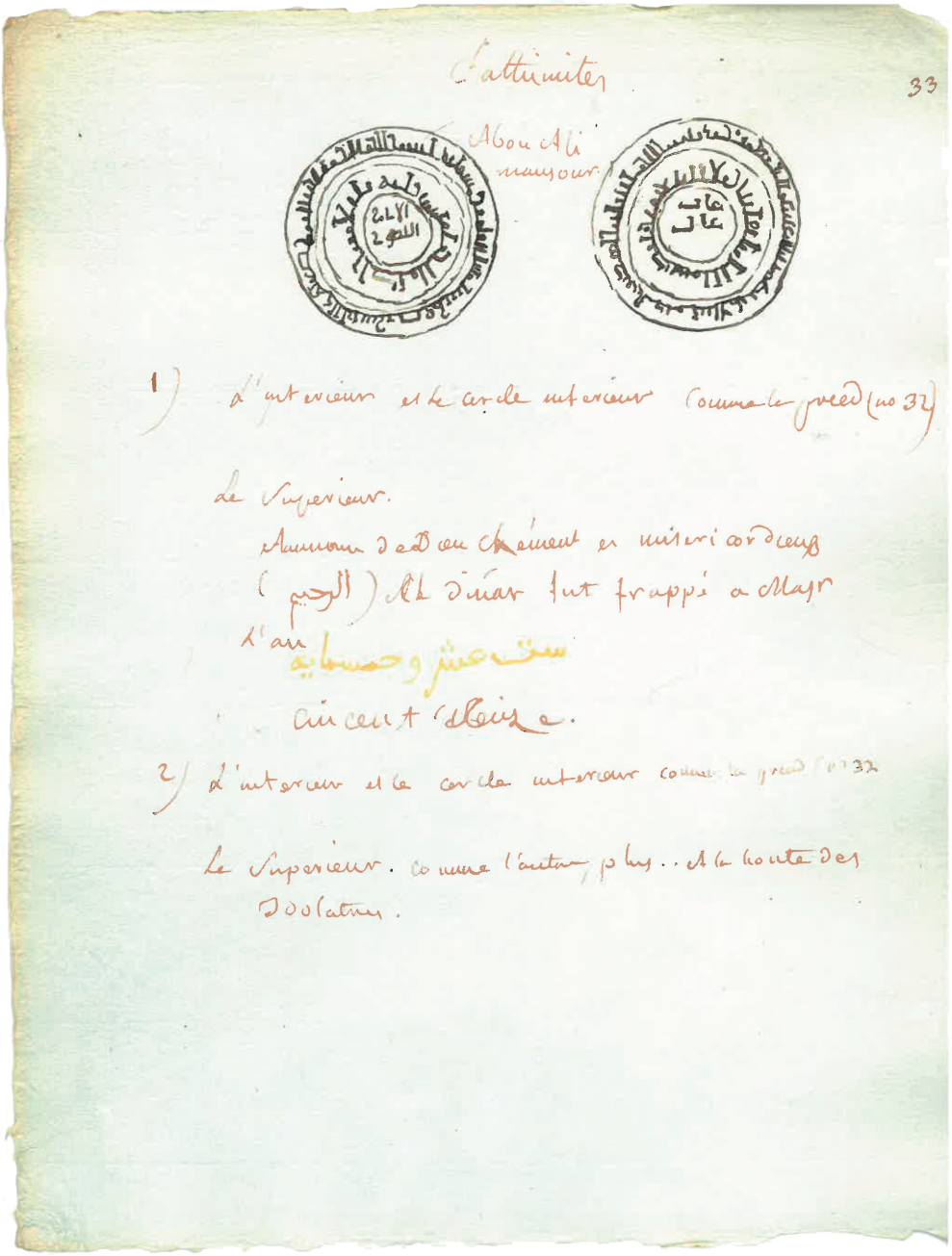
Semblable aux n° 25, 26, 27

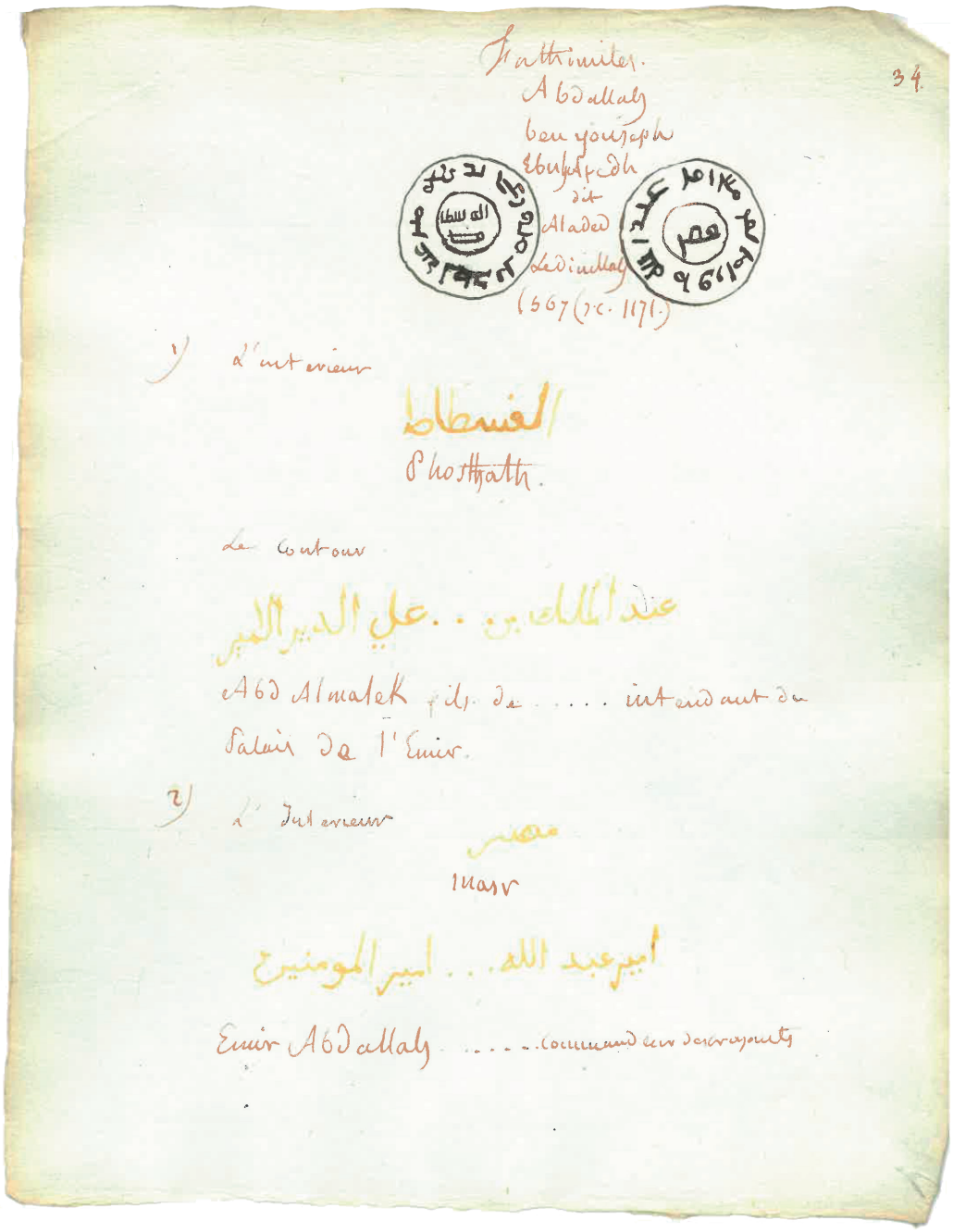

Abandy
31
1) Il n'y a pour ... et ... en n'a pour d'Egal
2) Mahammad est d'apostion de Dieu.
le nom du Khalifa (gouverneur) est Haroun

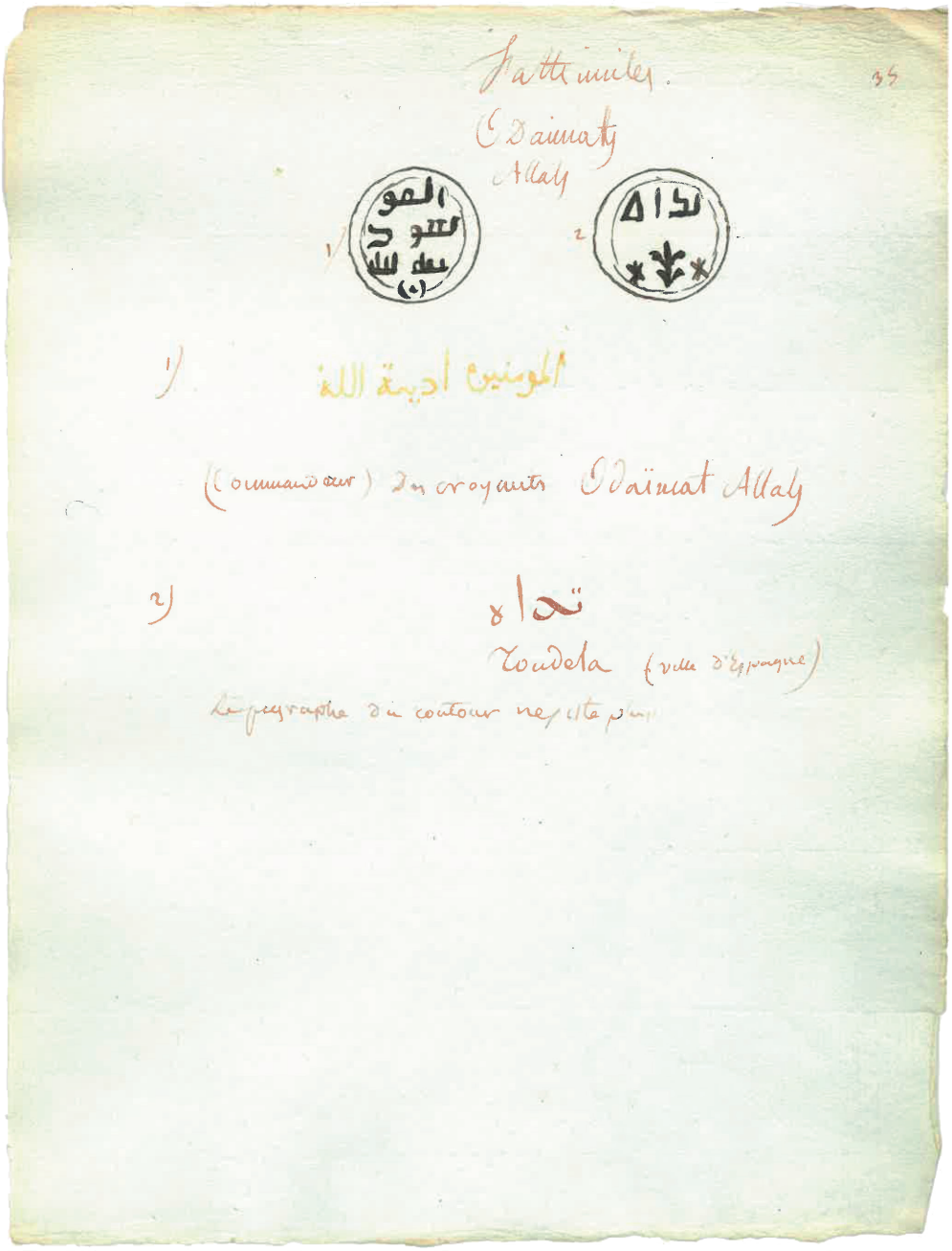

FATHIMITES


Fatimites
32
Abou Ali mansour
Al Amer Beh
Kam-Allah
1)
Dans le cercle intérieur
ابو علي منصور العامر باحكام الله
امير المومنين
Abou Âli Mansour Al âmer Behakkam Allah
Commandeur des Croyants.
Dans l'intervalle الامام Al Imam Mansour
Dans le cercle supérieur
بسم الله الرحيم ضرب هذا الدينر بمصر سنة
ست عشر
Au nom de Dieu clément et miséricordieux frappé au Caire
(Kahirah) l'an 16 (316)


2/ Au milieu
علي عامر
Âli Âmer
Cercle supérieur
لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله علي ولي الله
Il n'y a point d'autre Dieu que Dieu, mahammed
est le prophète de Dieu Âli est l'ami d'allah
Cercle supérieur.
محمد رسول الله ارسله بالهدى ودين
الحق ليظهره على الدين كله
Mahammed est l'apôtres de Dieu qui l'envoya
dans le Droit chemin, et la vrai foi et ct (voyez moi)
sur les autres Religions


Fattimites
33
Abou Ali
mansour
1) d'un côté et le cercle intérieur comme le précédent (no 32)
le supérieur.
Mansour Addin Allah en mémoire en miséricordieux
(الرحيم) Al dinar fut frappé a Mayr
l'an
ست عشر وخمسماية
cinq cent seize.
2) d'un côté et le cercle intérieur comme le précédent (no 32)
Le supérieur. comme l'autre plus.. de la bonté des
Idolatres.


Fatimides.
Abdallah
ben youssef
Ebn Kaydah
dit
Al Aded
Ledinallah
(567 / 1171)
34
1/ d'intérieur
الغسطاط
Fosthath.
Le Contour
عبد الملك بن . . علي الدير الامير
Abd Almalek fils de . . . . intendant du
Palais de l'Emir.
2/ d'Intérieur
مصر
Masr
امير عبد الله . . . امير المومنين
Emir Abdallah . . . . . commandeur des croyants


Fatimides.
Ommaty
Allah
1/
2/
1/
(Commandeur) des croyants Ommat Allah
2/
Tondela (ville d'Espagne)

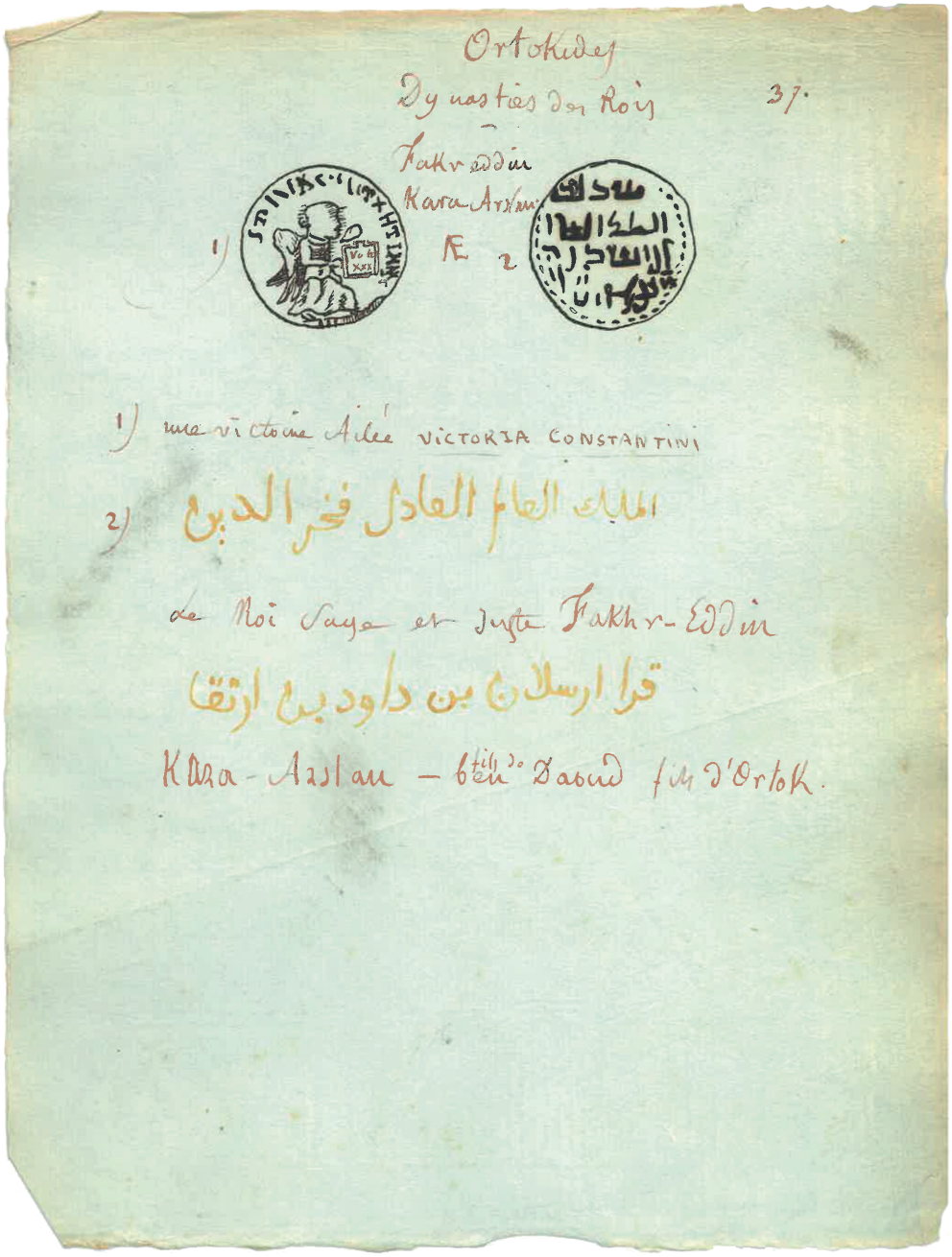
Fabbriniter. 36.
Daouatha
et Illaly


1


2

1) le Commandeur Ibrahim Daouathy-
Illaly

2) m. Antoun de Dieu.


Ortokides
Dynasties des Rois
37.
Fakr ed din
Kara-Arslan
AE 2
1)
2)
1) rue victoire Allée VICTORIA CONSTANTINI
الملك العالم العادل فخر الدين
le Roi Sage et Juste Fakhr-EDdin
قرا ارسلان بن داود بن ارتقا
Kara-Arslan – 6tième Daoud fils d'Ortok.

Ortokides 38

Nour-eDdin
Mahammed

AE





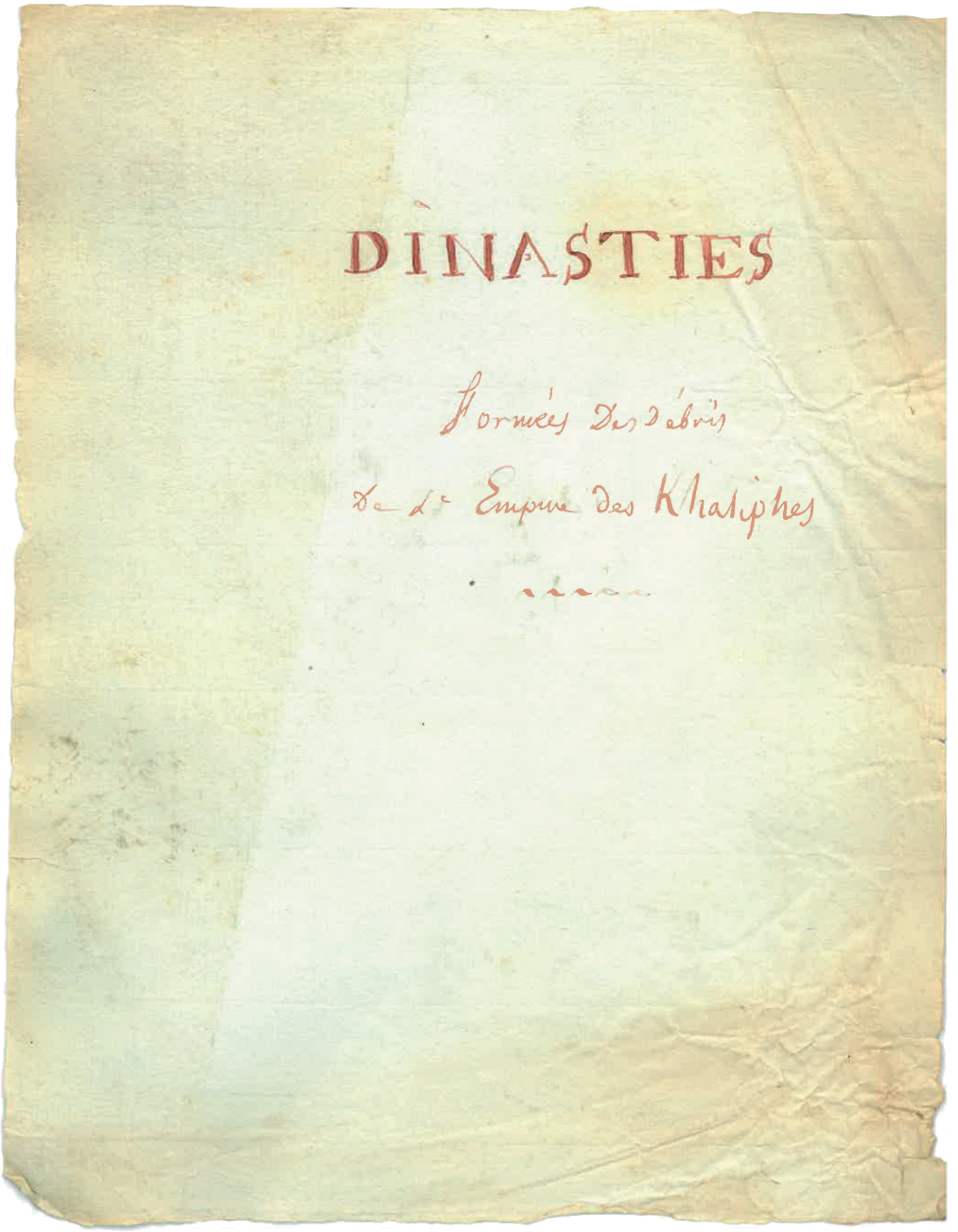
1 / une tête grecque

بسم الله ضرب بحصن

Au nom de Dieu fut frappé dans Hesn

2) الملك الامام احمد العادل نور الدين
محمد بن قرا ارسلان بن ارتق

Le Roi l'Imam Ahmed, le Roi juste
Nour-EDdin-Mahammed fils de Kara
Arslan fils d'Ortok.


DINASTIES
Formées Des débris
de l'Empire des Khalifes

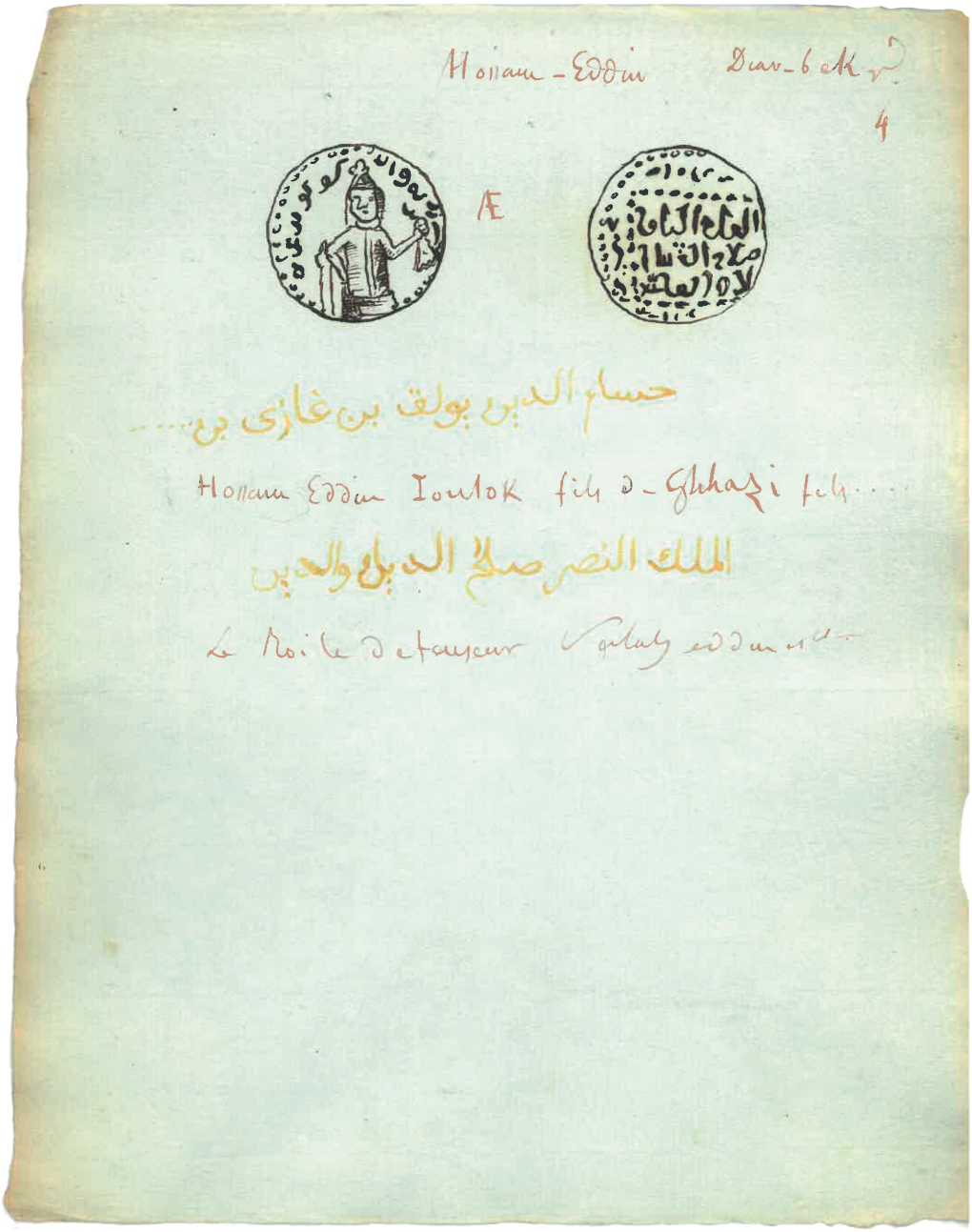
Hossam Eddin
Salah-Eddin
39

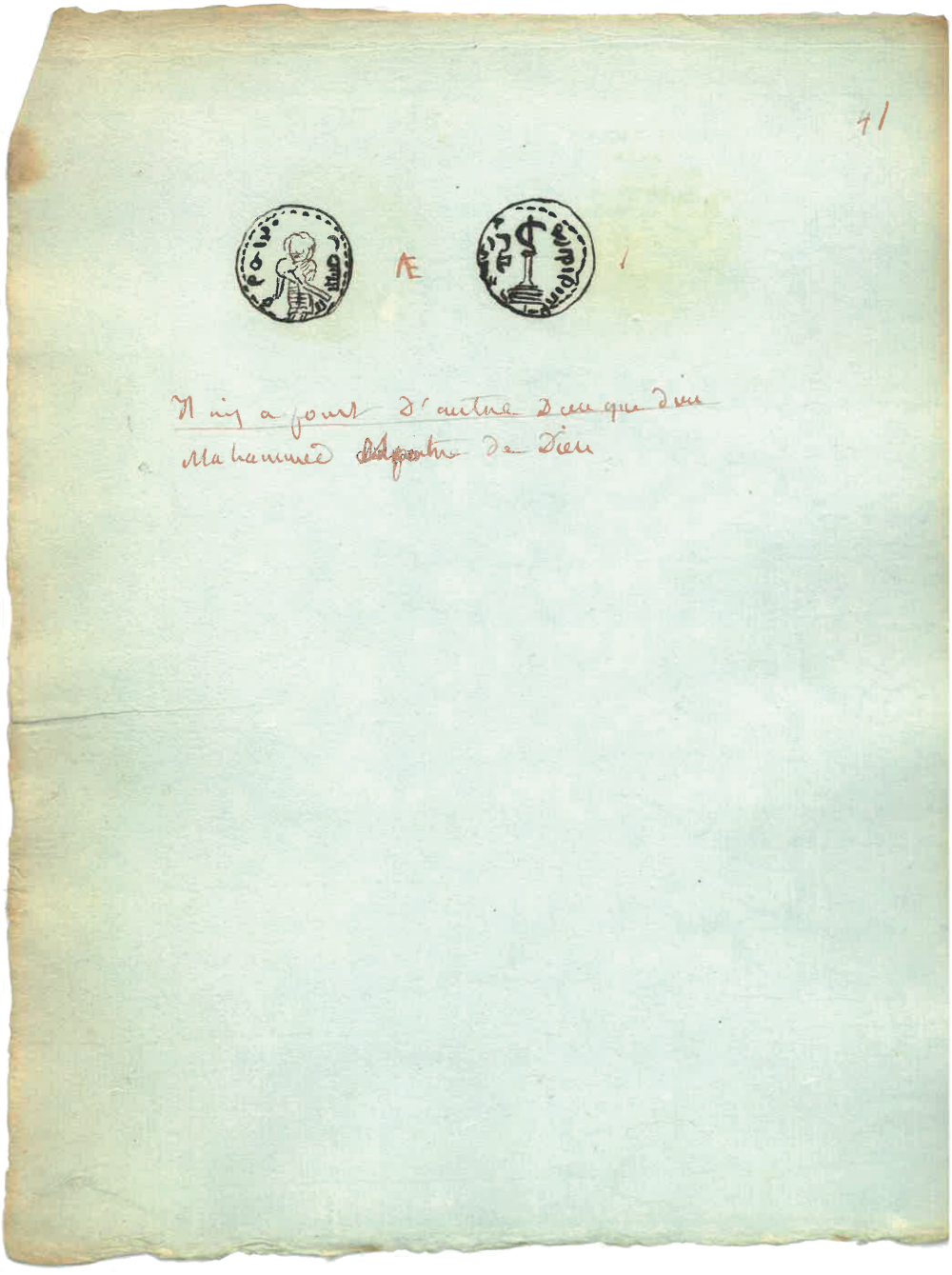


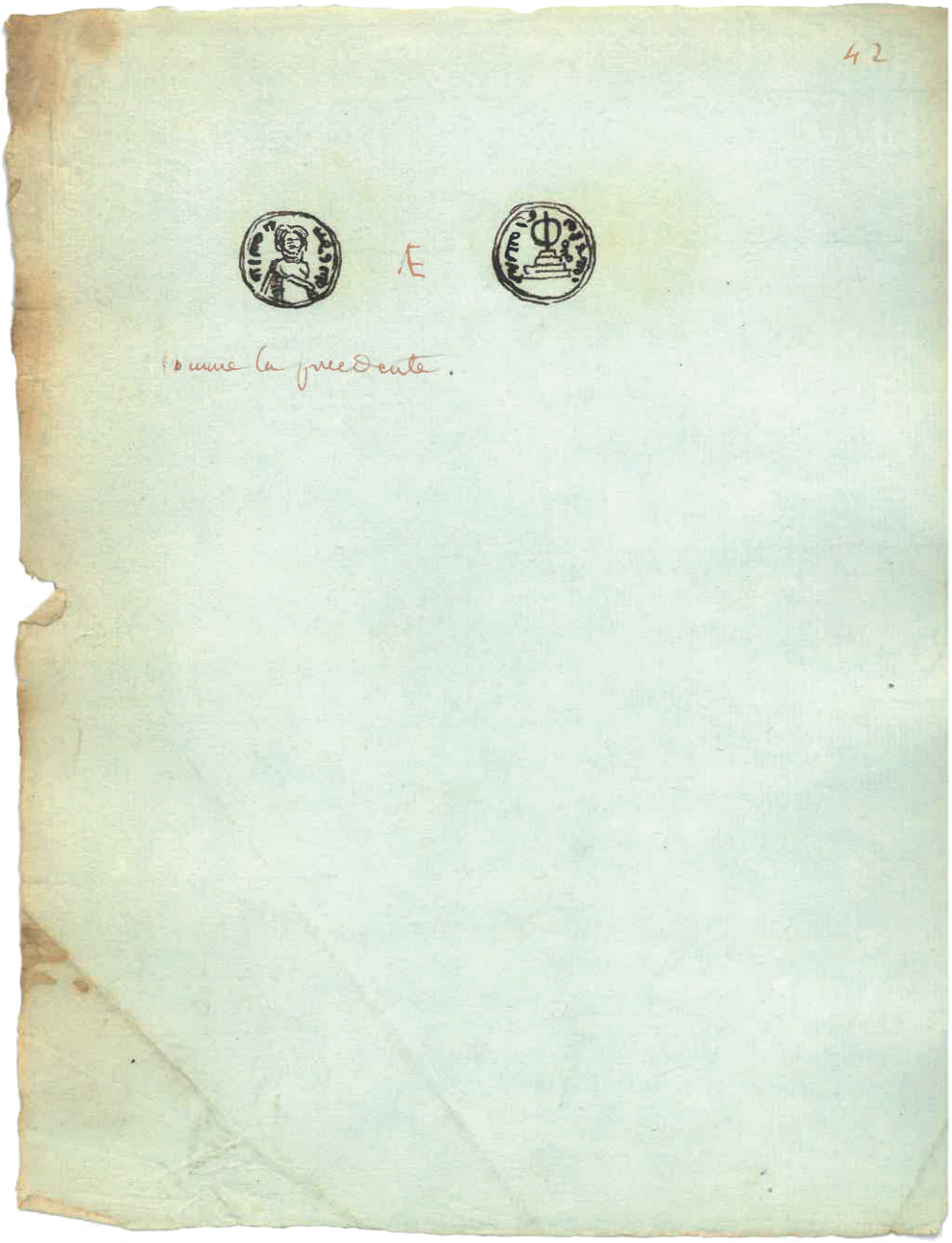
1) حسام الدين ملك ديربكر
Hossam-Eddin Roi de Diar-Bekr

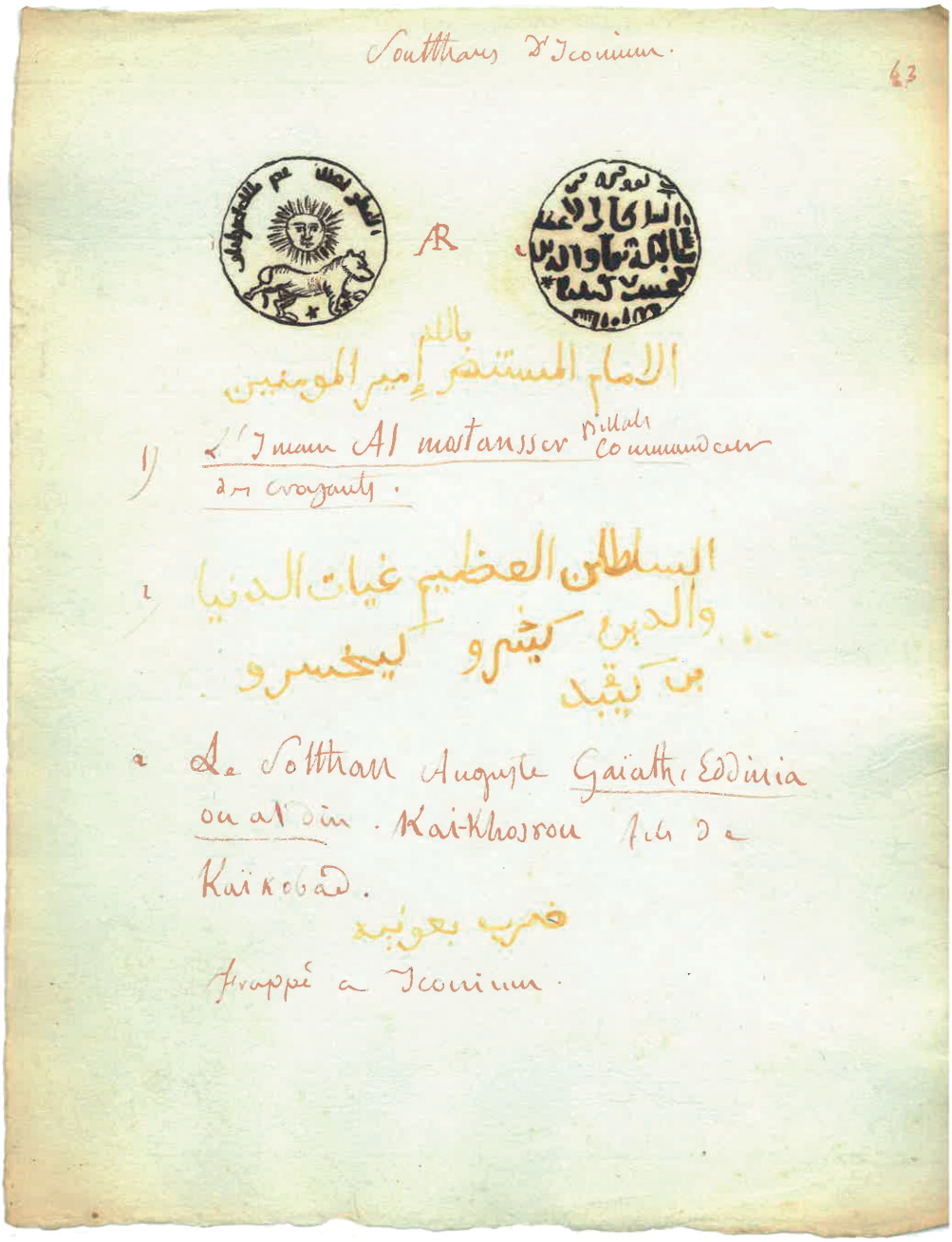
2) الملك النصر صلح الدين على
دوله امير المومنين
Al Malek Alnasser Salah Eddin
Aufer de la Dynastie du commandeur
des croyants.

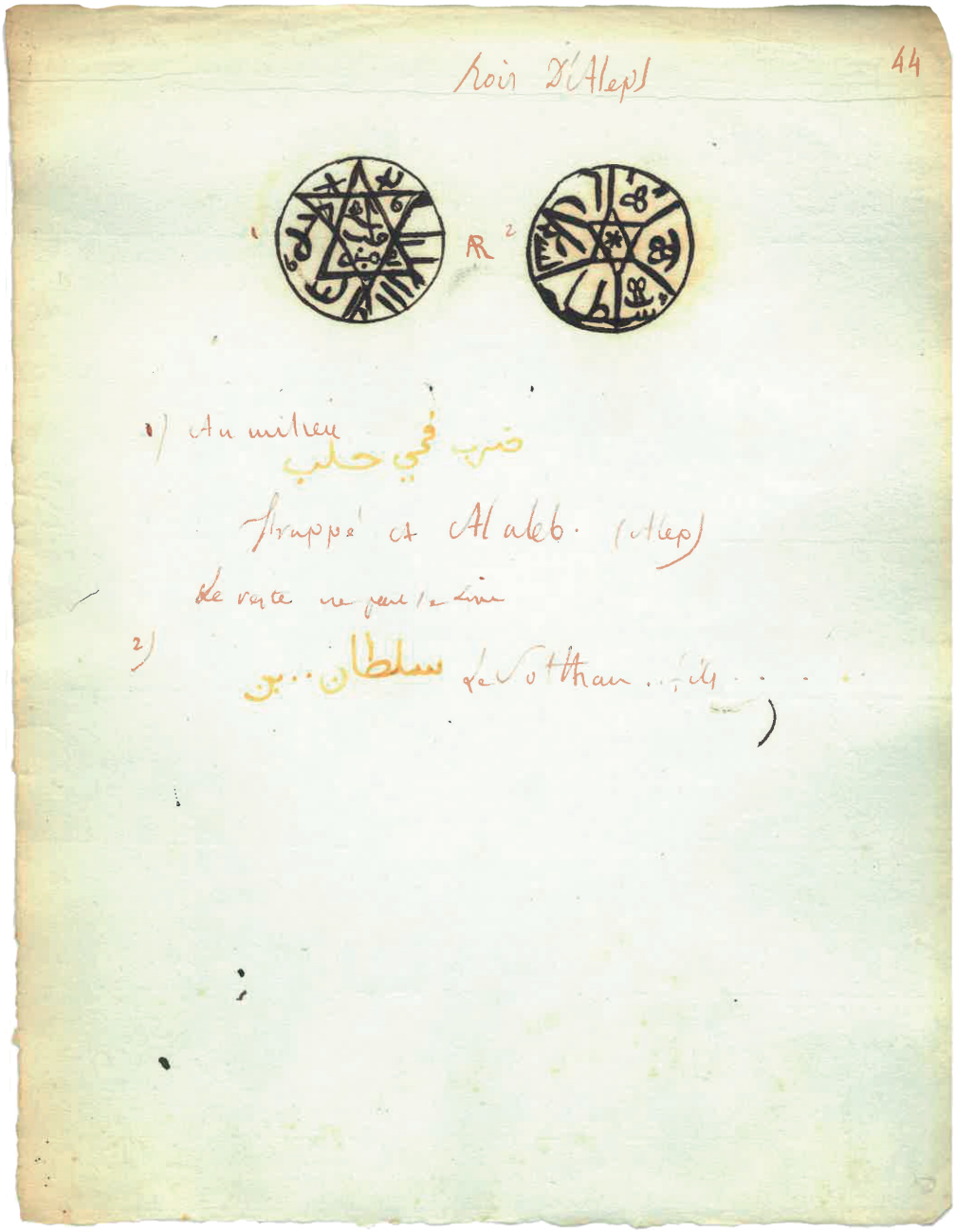
يوسف بن ايوب Joseph fils d'Ayoub.


Hossam-Eddin Diar-bekr
4
Æ
حسام الدين يولق بن غازى بن....
Hossam Eddin Ioulok fils d-Ghazi fils....
الملك النصر صلاح الدنيا والدين
Le Roi le Defenseur Salah eddunia-


41
Æ
1
Il n'y a jamais d'autre Dieu que Dieu
Mahammed [illegible] de Dieu


42
A
Come la precedente.


Soultthans d'Iconium.
43
AR
الامام المستنصر باللہ امیر المومنین
1) L'Imam Al mostanser Billah Commandeur des croyants.
السلطان العظيم غياث الدنيا والدين كيخسرو بن كيقباد
2 Le Soltthan Auguste Gaiath Eddinia ou al Din. Kai-Khosrou fils de Kaikobad.
ضرب بعونيه
Frappé a Iconium.


Roi d'Alep
44
R
1) au milieu
ضرب في حلب
frappé à Alaleb. (Alep)
de cette manière
2)
سلطان .. بن
de Sothan .. ibn . . . .

Sultans Mamlouks. 45

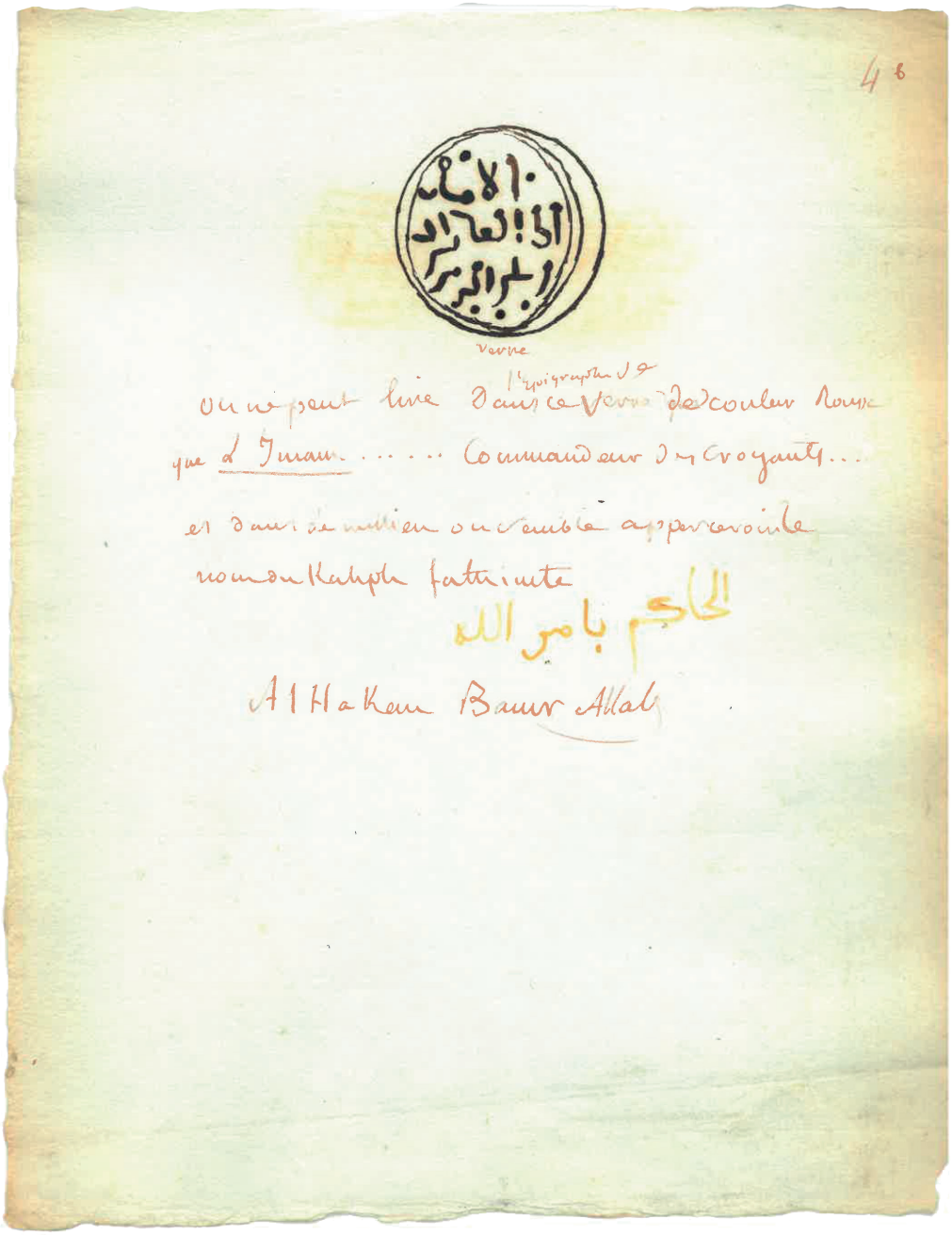


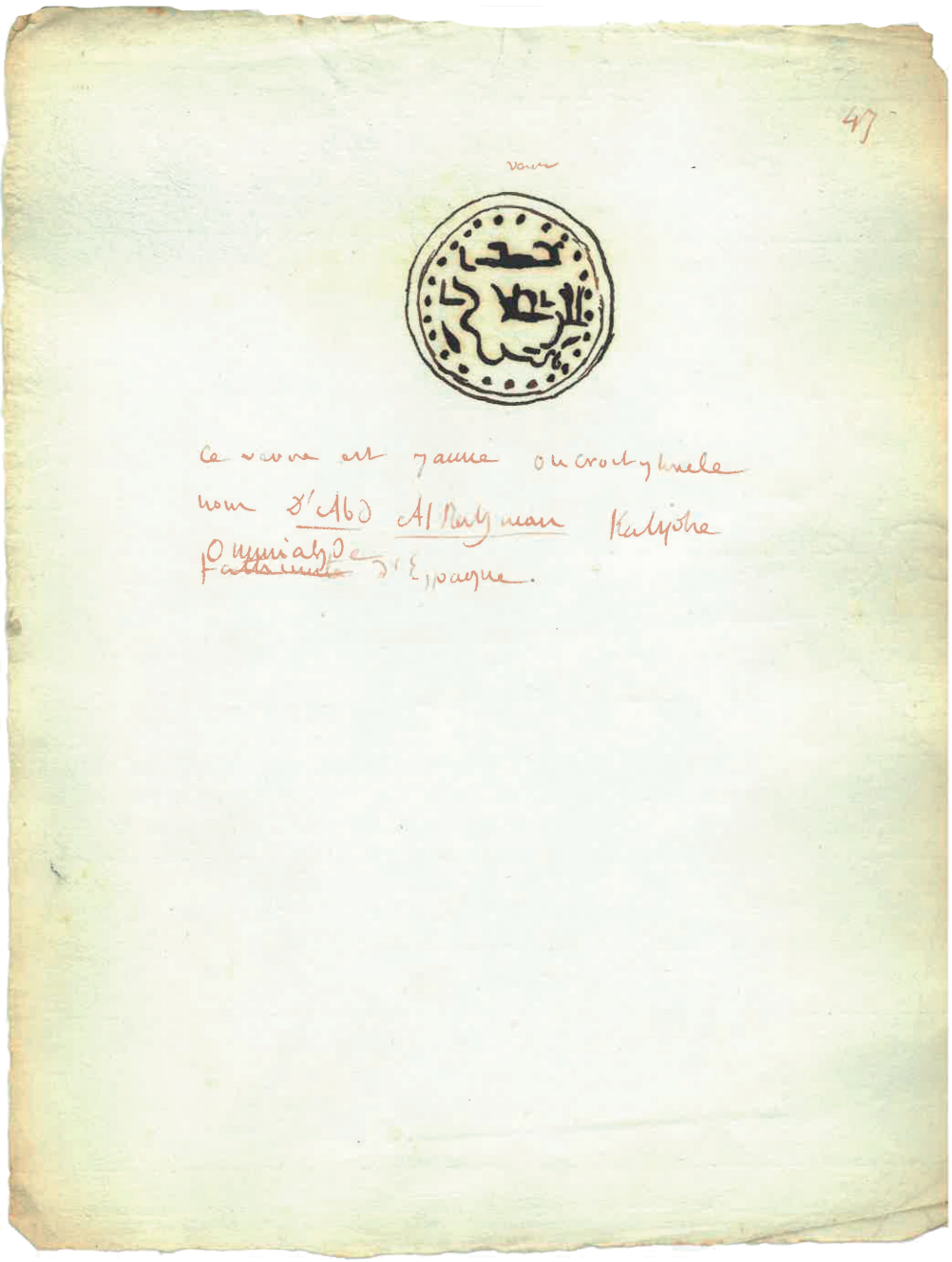
1) الملك الصالح اسمعيل عماد الدين

Le Roi Salah Ismaïl Omad Eddin.

2) ضرب سنه ثلاث واربعين وسبعمايين

Frappé l'an 743 (1342.


48
Verre
l'épigraphie de
On ne peut lire dans ce Verre de couleur Rouge
que el Imam ..... Commandeur des Croyants...
et dans le milieu on semble apercevoir le
nom du Kalyphe fatimite
الحاكم بامر الله
Al Hakem Bamr Allah


47
Verso
Le revers est jaune ou crotty lucle
nom d'Abd Al Rahman Khalifate
Omeyyade d'Espagne.

APPENDICE FOTOGRAFICA

a cura di Vanja Macovaz

Usually, thinking about coin photography is quite different of thinking about taking pictures of numismatist and almost everything is different in the act of the photographer. On the other hand, these differences did not represent a real excuse to avoid this process, nowadays more and more common.

When a huge part of technical publishing uses digital media to reach an higher number of scholars and to reduce the costs of the publication itself, photographs could be no more considered a mere tool to be used only when essential (reducing, if possible, the print dimensions in order to gain a little bit more space on the page) but also as an instrument with its own purpose.

In this book the purpose of the photographs is quite less noble than all the other contribution, representing nothing more than a pleasant remembrance of a couple of intense and intriguing days. Besides digital technology brings us a wide spectrum of new possibilities that seems overwhelming compared to a couple of picture of a two day long symposium.

The huge versatility of digital photography is well known by everyone but it is still less common to think about other and quite new features of the digital imaging and the opportunity to share high resolution images without losing the metrical information is just the simplest one.

Photogrammetric 3D models of small objects are becoming every day more affordable and it is not unconvincing to think about three-dimensional archives in the near future; modern cameras and light sources allow to take more than valid photographs on archaeological sites or in the more uncomfortable places and diagnostic imaging provides at quite low prices impressive information. If it's not enough, digital imaging combined with the algorithms realized during the last decades permits to study huge amounts of data in a small fraction of the time usually needed, in particular image recognition algorithms and machine learning are revealing their capabilities in features identification, sustaining the researcher's work.

I'm strongly committed that this sort of interdisciplinary studies are still at their outset and photography, together with other subjects represents one of the main features of future development of digital support. I believe that thinking of that looking at these pictures can bring them to a more important recognition, as part of a wider world, far more useful but based on the same structure, the same optical laws and similar technical issues. As a tool used, for a moment, also as a memory collector but still belonging to an expertise evolving during time, serving research and researcher.

Vanja Macovaz


La Cattedra di San Pietro, Venezia


GIOVANNI GORINI
KHADUEH BASERI
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FONTES
INEDITI
NUMISMATICAE
ORIENTALIS


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nazionale
Marciana,
Or. 89 (=67) –
olim Biblioteca
naniana, 39


Monastero di S. Paolo - Egitto
Un'inedita traduzione di S. Assemani
29 September 2017
KHADIJEH BAGERI
MARCO CALLEGARI


Rome, 25-30 September 2017


Key points
Nino Crisà
Italy
Introductions: records + historical background.
Palermo, A. Salinas and 'regional' identity.
Case studies: Cefalù (1824) and Palermo (1877).
Conclusions.


Il medagliere
Paolo Orsi
(Rovereto 1859 -1935)


ni Symposium on Islamic Coinage
29-30 Settembre 2017




Paolo Orsi e «L'archeologia araba»
«... all'archeologia araba nessuno ha volto cure;
attraendo paragoni e confronti coi prodotti della costa
africana e dell'Oriente. È dunque un campo nuovo e
vergine, dove chi abbia buona volontà ed occhio
penetrante raccoglierà ricca messe di dati e di raffronti»
P. Orsi, Ceramiche arabe di Sicilia, in Bollettino d'arte IX, 1915
«Ho addotto ai cultori della numismatica
medioevale i modesti tesori del Museo di Siracusa,
lieto ora agli specialisti di meglio studiarli e farli
conoscere»
P. Orsi, Le recenti numismatiche medievali del R. Museo Archeologico di Siracusa, 1915


35
IDRANTE
ESTINTORE
DANIELA PORRO
ILIANA BALBI DE CARO


BOLLETTINO DI
NUMISMATICA
ONLINE








COLLEZIONE DI VITTORIO EMANUELE III
Monete arabe
Materiali
35
ANDREA SACCOCCI
5th Simone Assemani Symposium
on Islamic Coinage
Rome, 29-30 September 2017





