

Important Coins of the Islamic World

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Thursday 2 April 2020
at 12.00 noon

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Nash House, St George Street, London W1S 2FQ

Monday 30 March	10.00 am to 4.30 pm
Tuesday 31 March	10.00 am to 4.30 pm
Wednesday 1 April	10.00 am to 4.30 pm

Or by previous appointment.

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Enquiries:

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Cover illustrations:

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (front); lots 43, 63 (back);
A selection of coins struck in Makka (inside front); lots 26, 27 (inside back)

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Order of Sale

Thursday 2 April 2020

Starting at 12.00 noon

The Genesis of Islamic Coinage:

Five Highly Important Early Islamic Coins

lots 1-5

Arab-Sasanian and related issues

lots 6-12

Umayyad

lots 13-19

Abbasid

lots 20-45

Aghlabid Tulunid, Mamluk

lots 46, 47, 68

Fatimid

lots 48-67

Arabia and the Gulf

lots 69-72

Seljuq of Rum and Ottoman

lots 73-76

Qarmatid

lots 77-81

Iran and the East

lots 82-94

Coin Dies

lots 92-93

The genesis of Islamic coinage

Lots 1-5







#1

ARAB-BYZANTINE, TEMP MU'AWIYA B. ABI SUFYAN (41-60h) OR 'ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN (65-86h)

Gold solidus, without mint or date (probably Egypt or Syria, circa 40-72h)

Obverse: Three standing figures (based on Heraclius, flanked by Heraclonas and Heraclius Constantine), standing facing, each wearing crowns and holding globes with crossbars removed

Reverse: VICTORIA - AVYCH B, modified cross potent with top limb removed, set on four steps, dividing I - B; in ex., CONOB

Weight: 4.41g

References: Bates 1986, type C = Miles 1967, p.209, 4 = Walker 1956, p. 18, 54; Bernardi 2010, 4; Album 2011, 3548

Faint edge marks and some weak striking, otherwise very fine to good very fine and excessively rare, one of the earliest Islamic gold coins struck £60,000-80,000

Provenance: Ex Triton auction XX, 10 January 2017, lot 1137.

The early Muslim conquests during the first half of the first/seventh century crippled the Byzantines in the West and completely overthrew the Sasanian Empire in the East. Muslim expansion began in 12h/AD 633-4, with the first raids into Sasanian territory, swiftly followed by the first campaigns in Syria and Egypt. With these conquered, Muslim armies gradually expanded westward overland through Libya and northern Africa towards the Atlantic coast, while also establishing a navy based at Alexandria to engage the Byzantine fleet in a war at sea. Meanwhile, in the East, Mesopotamia was conquered in a series of campaigns culminating in the Battle of Nihawand (21h/AD 642). This sealed the fate of the Sasanian empire, which finally came to an end with the assassination of Yazdigerd III in 31h/AD 651.

Having conquered huge swathes of Sasanian and Byzantine territory, the victorious Muslims showed little inclination to make significant changes to how these lands were governed. When a province came under Muslim control, its existing stock of coinage came with it, and depending on whether that province had been Sasanian or Byzantine those coins would be very different. Most coins circulating in the Sasanian East were silver drachms, which had been the dominant coin type in the region for centuries. But silver coins were uncommon in the Byzantine West, where the mainstay of the coinage was the gold solidus, supplemented by a plentiful copper coinage. The Byzantine taxation system, which the Muslims apparently retained, needed solidi to work efficiently, but because there was no active gold mint in the Byzantine provinces they conquered, they had to import huge quantities of solidi during the first decades after the conquests.

But on a few rare occasions, probably on the instigation of a regional governor or commander rather than through any initiative from the caliph himself, the Muslims evidently did strike gold coins themselves. These have been described by Goodwin as *'reasonable imitations of regular Byzantine coins, but with garbled legends and all crosses removed'* (Goodwin 2019, p. 17). The removal of the crosses served to 'de-Christianize' these new coins while maintaining types which were visually familiar and acceptable to the wider population. **Such imitations, including the present coin, have the distinction of being the first gold coins struck by the Muslims.**

It is difficult to date these gold coins precisely. The 'Maronite Chronicle,' compiled circa AD 680, records in the entry for AD 660/40h that Mu'awiya became caliph and *'...minted gold and silver, but it was not accepted because it had no cross on it.'* This sentence has been the subject of much scholarly debate, but the only gold coins known today which might fit this description would be 'modified cross' solidi like the present specimen. It also seems highly unlikely that they could have been struck later than the early 70s/690s, when they were superseded by Arab-Byzantine coins with Arabic legends, and so scholars broadly agree that these 'modified cross' solidi were struck during the three decades between 40-70h. The present coin bears the letters I - B on the reverse, which Robert Darley-Doran has ingeniously suggested might denote the twelfth year of Mu'awiya's caliphate (51/2h), although most scholars have argued that these letters were copied from the Byzantine prototypes and have no meaning on the Arab imitations. The coins themselves tell us nothing about *where* they were struck. It has often been assumed that they were issued at Damascus, but they could have been struck elsewhere.

But the significance of this solidus goes beyond its status as one of the first gold coins struck by the Muslims. It was this type of coin, with three standing figures on the obverse, which was used as the pattern for the first Arabic gold coins issued during the early 70s, which themselves— with the three standing figures rotated a quarter-turn - evolved into the famous reformed gold dinars of 'Abd al-Malik:



'Modified cross' solidus, legends similar to Byzantine prototypes but crosses removed



'Shahada' solidus, struck c.72-73h, with Arabic legend on reverse



Post-Reform dinar, dated 77h (lot 5) *obv.*, Shahada replacing three standing figures (rotated 90 degrees)

This extremely rare coin is not only one of the first gold coins the Muslims struck, but the type served as the genesis and prototype for the reformed, epigraphic, 'purely Islamic' gold coinage which came after.

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2

ARAB-SASANIAN, ANONYMOUS, TEMP. 'ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN (65-86h)

Drachm, without mint name (possibly Dimashq) 75h

Obverse: Bust of Khusraw II right; behind, *duriba fi sanat*; before, *khams | wa saba'in*
In margin: *bismillah – la ilaha illa Allah wa – hdahu Muhammad ra – sul Allah*
Reverse: Standing figure of caliph facing, wearing elaborate robe and with right hand on sheathed sword
To left: *amir al-mu'minin*; to right: *khalifat Allah*
Weight: 3.53g
Published: Malek 2019, p.336, fig. 9.62.5, *this coin illustrated*
Reference: Walker 1941, p.25, Zub.1

Better than very fine and of the highest rarity

£150,000-200,000

Provenance: Shah Firzan collection;
Gorny & Mosch auction 153, 11 October 2006, lot 4909.

The Muslim conquests united lands from the former Sasanian Empire in the East with provinces captured from the Byzantines in the West. These two areas had their own distinct and very different coinage traditions. The Byzantines had struck plentiful gold solidi and copper fulus, but issued only modest quantities of silver coins. In the Sasanian East, however, the great majority of coins in circulation were silver drachms, supplemented by relatively small quantities of gold and copper coins. The Muslims continued production of silver and copper coins based on Sasanian prototypes, but no Arab-Sasanian gold coins are known.

Damascus, the Umayyad capital, lay at the confluence of these two 'currency zones.' When the caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan decided to issue both gold and silver coins there in the early 70s, his gold coinage was based on Byzantine solidi: an obvious choice since Damascus had been part of the Byzantine empire and such coins were familiar there. For his new silver coins, however, 'Abd al-Malik looked to Sasanian silver drachms for a prototype. This was also a natural decision given that they had been the dominant silver coin in the East for centuries, and the Muslims had continued to strike Arab-Sasanian drachms at dozens of mints for more than forty years. Between 72-74h 'Abd al-Malik struck several varieties of drachms at Damascus, all close imitations of the Sasanian originals. His first coins appear to have had purely Arabic legends, and it may reflect a fundamental flaw in the design that his later drachms bear the name of the long-dead Sasanian Khusraw II written in Pahlawi - a language with no relevance to Syria nor to the Arabs striking the coins.

In 74h 'Abd al-Malik began to strike new gold dinars and copper fulus at Damascus, all of which bore a standing figure of the Caliph on the obverse and a modified cross-on-steps on the reverse. It is generally accepted that Standing Caliph dirhams such as the present coin were also produced at Damascus to accompany these new gold and copper issues, although unlike the earlier drachms they lack a mint-name and production seems to have begun in the following year. Their design exemplifies the mixture of Byzantine, Sasanian and Islamic influences on the new Damascus silver coinage. On the obverse is the bust of the Sasanian king Khusraw II, shorn of all remaining Pahlawi inscriptions and accompanied only by Islamic religious legends and the year of striking, all rendered in Arabic. On the reverse is the figure of the Caliph himself, flanked by Arabic legends stating unequivocally that he is the 'Commander of the Faithful' and 'Caliph of God'. The relationship between the iconography of the Umayyad caliph and contemporary depictions of the Byzantine emperor are clearly expressed by Miles: *'It is, I believe, self-evident...that the standing figure on the Arab coins was designed with the thought of producing a rival...of the representation of the emperor...a figure of the same general appearance, but specifically Arab and Muslim as opposed to Byzantine and Christian. The emperor wears a crown; the caliph wears the kufiya. The emperor holds a cross; the caliph carries a sword and is prepared to draw it against the enemies of Islam.'* (Miles 1967, p.216).

While the standing figure of the Caliph is a striking expression of the power of Islam, its position on the *reverse*, rather than the obverse as on the gold and silver Standing Caliph coins, may quickly have been seen as problematic. Treadwell notes that the gold and copper coins conformed to *'the traditional numismatic formula that located the ruler on the obverse and a religious symbol on the reverse,'* while the 'Standing Caliph' drachm *'contained two conflicting images of rulership...it is the Shahanshah's imposing bust that dominates the imagery of the coin'* (Treadwell, p.11). Perhaps it was felt that removing the Sasanian bust was too radical a step, and one which risked the new coinage being rejected in the East. But if these excessively rare drachms feel like a slightly awkward hybrid, they are the physical expression of the processes whereby the Muslims were transforming Sasanian and Byzantine traditions under the banner of Islam, with all three influences present in the coins' imagery.





‡3

ARAB-SASANIAN, TEMP. 'ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN (65-86h)

Drachm, without mint or date, possibly Damascus, c. 75h

Obverse: In field: Armoured bust to right, holding sheathed sword in right hand, with name of the Sasanian ruler Khusraw in Pahlawi to right and GDH APZWT ('may his glory increase') to left
In border: *bismillah la i- laha illa Allah wa - hdahu Muhammad ra - sul Allah*, divided by stars-in-crescents except above the bust, where the star-in-crescent is replaced by a pellet-within-annulet

Reverse: In field: Arch supported on columns, within which is a vertical barbed spear which has two pennants floating to the right just below the head; to right and left of the columns: *khalifat Allah - amir al-mu'minin*; to either side of the spear-shaft: *nasr - Allah*.
In border: Four stars-in-crescents, with unread Arabic word at one o'clock

Weight: 3.22g

Published: Malek 2019, fig. 9.32.27, *this coin illustrated*

References: cf Treadwell 2005, 5; cf Walker 1941, p.24, ANS.5 = Gaube 1973, 2.3.2.4

Tiny edge chip, countermark in obverse margin at 2.30, otherwise about extremely fine and extremely rare

£100,000-120,000

One of the greatest and most sought-after rarities of the Arab-Sasanian series, the 'Mihrab and 'Anaza' drachm has been rightly described as 'extraordinary' (Grabar, O., *The Formation of Islamic Art*, revised and enlarged edition, Yale, 1987), and 'a very valuable little archaeological document' (Miles 1952).

This remarkable coin lacks both mint and date. Most scholars have assumed that it was struck at Damascus, the Umayyad capital, where other experimental drachms were struck including the Standing Caliph type (see previous lot), with which the Mihrab and 'Anaza drachms have often been compared. While this may be correct the cataloguer has previously suggested that other possibilities should be considered (*vide* Morton & Eden auction 85, 27 April 2017, lot 3), and the present coin offers further support for this view.

The latest study of this issue is that of Treadwell (2005), who interprets the imagery on this coin as a response to perceived problems with the design of the Standing Caliph drachms. Treadwell argues that the Mihrab and 'Anaza type modifies the Sasanian bust on the obverse so that it is recognisably that of the Caliph, replacing the standing figure on the reverse with an image of the Prophet's spear mounted within an arch. If correct, the coin would then show the ruler on the obverse and a religious symbol on the reverse, a pattern which Treadwell points out is standard for the ancient world. This symbol has traditionally been identified as a spear or lance within a mihrab, and has visual similarities with the modified cross-on-steps on the Standing Caliph gold and copper coinage. It was Miles who identified the spear as the 'anaza of the Prophet himself, and tentatively suggested the mihrab could be identified more precisely as the niche type (*mihrab mujawwaf*), which would be the earliest depiction of this important Islamic architectural feature. Later scholars have suggested other possibilities, however, and Treadwell points out that arches of this type are found on Christian and even Jewish coins also, suggesting a connection with the Christian *sacrum* in Jerusalem (the arch which stood over the True Cross). This remarkable coin might have played a part in the so-called 'war of images' between the Muslims and Christians at this time.

However, Treadwell also reports that Miles himself '*did not consider that the coin, as he had described it, fitted smoothly into the series of Damascus silver coinage of the mid-690s*,' and interpreting this coin as a direct successor to the Standing Caliph drachms does present difficulties. The absence of a date is inexplicable, especially since Khusraw II's name in Pahlawi has been returned to the obverse where a date could easily be placed. This feature also conflicts with Treadwell's assertion that the bust would be identified as that of the caliph. Furthermore, while clearly different from the familiar crowned image of Khusraw II, neither the unusual type of helmet, nor the cross-hatching across his breast, nor the sheathed sword (held rather awkwardly) actually resemble the figure on the Standing Caliph drachms struck in 75h.

A closer parallel may come from another remarkable Arab-Sasanian type: the celebrated Arab-Ephthalite issue struck by Yazid b. Muhallab in 84h, whose reverse depicts a standing warrior wearing chain-mail and armed with sword and spear (see following lot). The obverse of this type has clear similarities with the bust of the Mihrab and 'Anaza drachms, especially the domed helmet with the crest behind, represented as the 'weather-vane' on the coin of Yazid and by Miles's 'tassels' on the present specimen. Having identified the headgear as a military helmet, there are no grounds for rejecting the cross-hatching on the Mihrab and 'Anaza drachms as a representation of armour.

Another curious feature of the Mihrab and 'Anaza drachms is the large number of dies used: the seven specimens listed by Treadwell were struck from seven different obverse and six reverse dies. Is this consistent with a short-lived, experimental type concocted hastily in Damascus and quickly abandoned? Or might this be better explained as a coinage struck for a specific event such as a military campaign? The countermark on the present coin indicates that it certainly circulated in the East, the scene of much campaigning at this time. And the iconography of the Mihrab and 'Anaza drachm seems fitting for a military coinage: an armoured bust on the obverse, helmeted and wearing a sword, while the reverse depicts a barbed spear accompanied by the phrase 'Victory from God.' Wherever and whenever this fascinating coin was struck, its overtly military imagery suggests that it may have been intended to play a practical role as a military coinage just as much as being part of a religious 'war of images.'

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‡4

ARAB-HEPHTHALITE, YAZID B. AL-MUHALLAB

Drachm, ANBYR (Anbir) 84h

- Obverse:** Sasanian bust right, wearing helmet with 'weather-vane' crest
To right of bust, in Arabic: *Yazid bin - al-Muhallab*
In second and third quadrants of margin, in Arabic: *bismillah – al-a'zim*
- Reverse:** Standing figure facing wearing armour and helmet with 'weather-vane' crest, holding spear vertically in left hand, right hand on pommel of sheathed sword at his waist.
In field (in Pahlawi) ANBYR to left, date to right
In first and second quadrants of margin: Hephthalite legend
In fourth and third quadrants of margin (in Arabic): *duriba jizya bi-l – Juzjan*
- Weight:** 3.42g
- Published:** Malek 2019, fig. 9.58.2, *this coin illustrated*
- References:** Walker 1952, p.108, 3; Album 2011, E91 RRR; cf Morton & Eden auction 73, 25 April 2015, lot 13 (with a similar countermark in first quadrant of obverse margin)

Hephthalite countermarks in first and fourth quadrants of obverse margin, flan slightly curved, otherwise extremely fine and of the highest rarity £120,000-150,000

It was We who taught him the art of making of coats of mail, to guard you from each other's violence: will you then be grateful?' (Qur'an xxi,80).

This extraordinary type is one of the very latest Arab-Sasanian drachms issued. It is exceptional in many respects, but the first and most obvious must be the remarkable depiction of the armed warrior on the reverse. On virtually all Arab-Sasanian drachms the imagery is copied from Sasanian prototypes without conscious modification. But the standing warrior on the reverse of this coin is an entirely different matter, giving us as it does an accurate and naturalistic impression of the weapons and equipment of a Muslim commander of the first century Hijri.

The figure on the reverse is fully armoured, and depicted with sufficient accuracy that the armour itself can be shown to be chain mail rather than scale or lamellar plate. The tunic is clearly sufficiently flexible to fit the outline of the warrior's body and extends down to his knees; below this, he wears greaves to protect his shins. Chain mail places almost all the weight of the armour on the wearer's shoulders, and one way of counteracting this was to wear a wide, strong belt which pulled the armour in. Such a belt is clearly visible both on the present coin and also on the piece published by Walker.

The warrior is not explicitly identified; he may be the caliph, the governor Yazid b. al-Muhallab, or perhaps an idealised depiction of an armed Muslim fighter. It seems unlikely that Yazid would have been so presumptuous as to place his image on a silver coin, particularly at a time when Arab-Sasanian drachms were being replaced by purely epigraphic post-Reform dirhams. The bust on the obverse has the same helmet as the standing figure on the reverse, but while it does have the governor's name before it, in other respects the personal features of the bust are stereotypical and derived from their Sasanian prototype. It seems more likely that the figure is in fact the caliph himself, even though he is not labelled as on the celebrated 'Standing Caliph' drachms struck at Damascus in 75h. The obverse bust and the standing warrior on the reverse both sport the same distinctive pointed helmet, topped with what Walker termed a 'weather-vane' crest. There are plenty of precedents for this type of helmet both in Byzantium and the East, but it is exceptional and significant that the Sasanian royal bust on this coin should wear a military helmet rather than a crown. The impression is that the coin has a specific military purpose or significance, which the governor who issued it wanted to make as clear as possible.

Yazid b. al-Muhallab succeeded his father, al-Muhallab b. Abi Sufra, as governor of Khurasan following the latter's death in 82h. He had previously issued regular Arab-Sasanian drachms at six different mints in Kirman, all dated 78h (SICA 1, p.29, note 187), but otherwise does not appear on the coinage until this type was struck six years later. Walker tells us that *'the Ephthalite leader Nizak...was actually besieged in his fortress at Badhghis, in Khurasan, by Yazid in the same year as that of our coin. All his treasures fell to Yazid after his capitulation. So Ephthalite tribute money is quite in historical perspective.'* This, Walker suggests, explains the reference to *jizya* in the reverse margin. He notes further that, while the terms *jizya* and *kharaj* were used in later times to mean a personal tax and a land-tax respectively, *'in the early days of Islam they were interchangeable terms denoting tribute generally...According to Tabari, in Khurasan jizya was always said and not kharaj.'*

Walker is surely right to link this issue with the siege of Badhghis and the capture of Nizak, although it seems more plausible to suggest that his 'Ephthalite tribute money' was struck by the victorious Muslims rather than the defeated Hephthalites. This would explain why the legends are given in Arabic and Pahlawi, as well as in the Hephthalite script, with the threatening warrior on the reverse placed there as an explicit warning and reminder to the defeated Hephthalites. This coin was not only a practical object, struck from silver taken during campaigns in the East, but also highly symbolic token of Muslim military superiority.

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#5

UMAYYAD, TEMP. 'ABD AL-MALIK B. MARWAN (65-86h)

Dinar, no mint name, 77h

Obverse: In margin: *Muhammad rasul Allah arsulahu bi'l-huda wa din al-haqq li-yuzhirahu 'ala al-din kullihi*
In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu*

Reverse: In margin: *bismillah duriba hadha al-dinar fi sanat saba' wa saba'in*
In field: *Allah ahad Allah | al-samad lam yalidu | wa lam yuladu*

Weight: 4.27g

References: Bernardi 2001, dies c/A; Walker 1956, 186; cf Sotheby's, 19 April 1994, lot 290, *same dies*

Faint marks in reverse field, otherwise extremely fine and extremely rare

£180,000-220,000

Provenance: Roma Numismatics auction XIV, 21 September 2017, lot 894

'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan's introduction of a single, unified and distinctively Islamic gold coinage in 77h has rightly been seen as a landmark in the early history of Islam.

In the former Sasanian lands, the victorious Muslims began striking coins bearing Arabic inscriptions as early as 31h, and these Arab-Sasanian drachms were produced at dozens of mints for more than fifty years. But there was no active gold mint in the provinces the Muslims captured from the Byzantines, and for several decades this shortfall of gold coinage was met by the unsatisfactory expedient of importing Byzantine solidi until, in the words of a modern scholar: ...*'Abd al-Malik perceived the inconvenience and economic loss that resulted from the absence of minting in Syria and proceeded to remedy the situation. Without a mint, bullion could be turned into gold coins only by selling it to merchants...The remarkable aspect of the matter is not that 'Abd al-Malik instituted minting, but rather that half a century elapsed after the Arab conquest before a mint was set up in the capital of the caliphate.'* (Bates 1986, pp. 231-262.).

After striking a few experimental types in both gold and silver which were still closely related to Byzantine and Sasanian prototypes, 'Abd al-Malik finally made a clean break with the pre-Islamic past and introduced a completely new gold coinage in 77h. Instead of the modified crosses and imperial images found on previous gold issues, his new dinars were purely epigraphic in design, bearing quotations from the Qur'an which emphasise the oneness of God in contrast to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Even the weight of the coins was changed from that of the Byzantine solidus to the Arabic mithqal, as noted by the historian al-Tabari (224-310h): *'The pre-Islamic units of weight [mithqals] by which 'Abd al-Malik struck his coins were twenty-two qirats minus a habbah'* (al-Tabari, vol. 22, trans. E.K. Rowson, New York, 1989, pp.91-92).

But for most contemporary writers it was the symbolic nature of the new Islamic coinage which was of the greatest interest. According to one account, 'Abd al-Malik's new coinage was a reaction to threats from the Byzantines to put derogatory references to the Prophet on their solidi, which were still being imported into the Islamic lands. These threats came after 'Abd al-Malik learned that rolls of papyrus being exported from Egypt to Byzantium were being marked with Christian inscriptions rather than Islamic ones. The historian al-Baladhuri reports this incident thus:

'The Byzantines used to get papyrus rolls from Egypt, and the Arabs received dinars from the Byzantines. 'Abd al-Malik bin Marwan was the first to inscribe on the upper part of these such phrases as: 'Say: Allah is One!' and others with the name of Allah. One day, he received a message from the Byzantine king, saying, "You have recently introduced an inscription on your papyri which is hateful to us. If you omit it, well and good; otherwise, you shall see on the dinars the name of your Prophet associated with things you hate." This was too much for 'Abd al-Malik, who...sent for Khalid ibn Yazid. Khalid replied, "Do not fear, Commander of the Faithful; declare the use of their dinars illegal, strike new coinage in place of them, and do not let these infidels avoid what they hate to see on the papyri."
(al-Baladhuri, trans. Philip Hitti, New York, 1916, pp. 383-384, slightly abridged and adapted).

It is impossible to say how much of this account is historically accurate, although similar versions are given by several other historians. But the story does show that trade was already taking place between the Byzantines and the Muslims, while also revealing the latter's dependence on Byzantine gold solidi. It is also noteworthy that the story has 'Abd al-Malik advised not merely to strike his own coins but to ban the use of Byzantine solidi. This would have an economic function as well as an ideological one, since 'Abd al-Malik's new gold mint could then have followed the common practice of charging people to convert the prohibited solidi into acceptable dinars.

The present coin is a very rare survivor from this first year in which a 'purely Islamic' coinage was struck. Of striking and beautiful simplicity, and obviously and uncompromisingly Islamic, it was to become the basis of a stable gold coinage whose weight and fineness was carefully maintained in accordance with Qur'anic precepts. The type lasted unchanged until the fall of the Umayyad caliphate in 132h, and it is a remarkable tribute to the enduring power of 'Abd al-Malik's design that three of the four inscriptions used on these first Islamic dinars are also found on the last coins of the Abbasids issued nearly six centuries later.

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.

Specialist References

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OTHER PROPERTIES



6

ARAB-SASANIAN, YAZDIGERD III TYPE

Drachm, NAR (Narmashir), YE 20 (=31h)

Obverse: In first quadrant of margin: Arabic *jayyid*; in fourth quadrant: Pahlawi gw

Weight: 2.09g

Reference: Malek p. 191, citing a single specimen of this variety (in the Warden-Album collection)

Evenly clipped, about very fine and excessively rare

£1,000-1,500

These rare drachms with *jayyid* in the obverse margin are commonly regarded as the earliest Sasanian-style silver coins to carry an Arabic legend. They predate the much more common types with *bismillah* in place of *jayyid* which were struck for some decades afterwards.

It is exceptional for the word *jayyid* to be positioned in the first quadrant of the obverse margin and for the second quadrant to be plain. This arrangement presumably represents a very short-lived experimental type, which was almost immediately abandoned in favour of a pattern closer to that found on earlier Sasanian issues.



7

ARAB-SASANIAN, AL-HAKAM B. ABI AL-AS

Drachm, GRM (possibly Garmshir in Kirman) 56h

Obverse: In second quadrant of margin: *Allah rabb al-hukm*

Weight: 2.66g

Reference: Malek 589, same reverse die

Evenly clipped, very fine and very rare

£700-1,000

The unusual legend in the obverse margin, meaning 'Allah is Lord of the Judgement,' may indicate that al-Hakam was in fact a Kharijite. The mint-signature is interpreted by Malek as an abbreviation for Garmshir, an area in southern Kirman meaning 'warm district.' GRM is also found as one of several suffixes to the common KRMAN mint-signature.



8

ARAB-HEHPHTHALITE, 'GORIGO SHAH' (fl. 68-69h)

Drachm, ANBYR (Anbir) 69h

Obverse: ruler's name and title before bust: ζολοοο γωζογονο ('the Zolo of Juzjan')

Reverse: In marginal quadrants: γοριγο ροοηο – ΑΡΖΩΤ - GDH – ομβιρο ('Gorigo Shah – may glory increase – Anbir'); To left: mint-name; to right; date

Weight: 3.80g

References: Album 90 RRR; ICV 93

Small scratch on reverse across fire-altar and left-hand attendant, otherwise almost extremely fine and rare £800-1,200

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.



9

ARAB-SASANIAN, QATARI B. AL-FUJA'A

Drachm, YZ (Yazd) 75h

Obverse: In margin: *la hukm illa lillah*

Weight: 3.31g

References: SCC 155; Walker p.133, I.47

Some corrosion on obverse and staining on reverse, edge a little ragged before bust, otherwise about very fine and extremely rare

£1,500-2,000

Yazd is the rarest mint for drachms of Qatari b. al-Fuja'a.



10

ARAB-SASANIAN, 'ABD AL-RAHMAN B. MUHAMMAD (fl. 80-84h)

Drachm, SK (Sijistan) 83h

Obverse: In margin: *Tash – bismillah – rabbi*

Weight: 3.94g

Reference: Malek 1060 = Morton & Eden auction 82, 20 October 2016, lot 92, *same dies*

Centres cleaned, very fine to good very fine and very rare

£700-1,000

Malek proposes that the date on this coin should be read as 83h, with the final two letters of the decade omitted; this is also supported by the existence of coins dated 84h with the same word in the first quadrant of the obverse margin. His proposal to read this word as *T'ar* seems more difficult, as the two 'teeth' immediately following the 't' are clearly vertical and spaced equally with the tooth which follows them, making it hard to interpret them as a letter *'ayn*. It seems preferable to propose a conjectural reading such as *Tash*, interpreting the three equal 'teeth' as forming a *sin* or *shin*, or something like *Tabir*, where each 'tooth' represents a single grapheme.



11

ARAB-SASANIAN, MISMA' B. MALIK (fl. 85-86h)

Drachm, SK (Sijistan) 85h

Obverse: Before bust: name of governor MSMAA | Y MLKAN

In second and third quadrants of border: *bismillah – rabbi*

Weight: 3.98g

Reference: Malek type 9.34

Areas of slight porosity in margins, otherwise almost extremely fine and extremely rare

£2,000-3,000



12

ABBASID GOVERNORS OF TABARISTAN, 'ABDALLAH B. 'ARIQ (174-176h)

Hemidrachm, TPWRSTAN (Tabaristan) PYE 141

Obverse: To right of bust: 'Abdallah
In second and third quadrants of border: *ibn 'Ariq* – NYWK'

Weight: 2.15g

Reference: Malek 133

Toned, almost extremely fine and very rare

£800-1,200



13

UMAYYAD, TEMP. IBRAHIM (126-127h) OR MARWAN II (127-132h)

Dinar, without mint-name, 127h

Weight: 4.15g

References: ICV 221; Walker 247

Minor edge marks, otherwise extremely fine and extremely rare

£12,500-15,000



14

UMAYYAD, TEMP. HISHAM (105-126h)

Dirham, al-Andalus 121h

Weight: 2.89g

Reference: Klat 134

Almost uncirculated and rare

£1,200-1,500

On this particularly well-preserved example, traces of a grid comprising three rows and three columns can be seen around the central obverse legend. This was evidently outlined on the die before the legends were engraved upon it, presumably to ensure correct positioning.



15

UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I (86-96h)

Dirham, Janza 92h

Obverse: In border: five plain annulets with one pellet between them at 12 o'clock
In margin: pellets below *d* of *duriba* and *J* of *Janza*, triplet of pellets below unit of date

Weight: 2.91g

References: Klat 249, citing two examples of this date; Spellberg 4

About extremely fine and excessively rare

£7,000-10,000



‡16

UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I (86-96h)

Dirham, Janza 95h

Obverse: In border: five plain annulets
In margin: pellets below *d* of *duriba* and *n* of *Janza*, triplet of pellets below unit of date

Weight: 2.79g

Reference cf Klat 250 [dated 94h]

Cleaned, good very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished

£10,000-15,000

This is believed to be an unpublished date for Umayyad dirhams from Janza, a very rare Umayyad mint-name and the old Arabic name for the city of Ganja in present-day Azerbaijan.

Mediaeval Arab writers recounted a legendary story of the foundation of Janza in which the Arab governor, Muhammad b. Mazyad, dreamed that a voice told that there was a great treasure hidden near where he was camped. The voice told him to unearth the treasure and use it to found a city there. Muhammad b. Mazyad did so and, having notified the caliph al-Mutawakkil, was duly appointed governor of the new city in 244h. While a version of this story is found in mediaeval Armenian sources as well as Arab ones, and may record Ganja being reoccupied or rebuilt at this time, the city's origins do in fact to date back to pre-Islamic times. Moreover, the fact that the city's name appears to derive from the Persian word *ganj*, 'treasure,' gives an attractive explanation for how a foundation myth involving buried treasure might have arisen.

Umayyad dirhams from mints in Armenia and the North have been studied in detail by Michael Bates ('The Dirham Mint of the Northern Provinces of the Umayyad Caliphate,' *Armenian Numismatic Journal*, XV (1989), pp.89-110). Bates argues convincingly that although at least ten different toponyms from this region appear on the coinage, including Janza, only one mint was normally active at any one time. He concludes that the mint '...moved from place to place as the governor moved his headquarters, taking the name at any time of the city of province where he was.' However, the period between 92-95h appears to be particularly complicated, with at least two or three mint-names attested for each of these years. According to Bates, 'In these years Maslama b. 'Abd al-Malik is reported to have invaded the Byzantine territories every summer... and the rare issues of mints scattered across the North may well reflect a time when authority was delegated to various provincial governors within the region.' The present coin shows that the same trio of mints was active in 94h and also in 95h, with Janza, al-Jazira and Arminiya now all known for both dates. This goes some way to confirming the scant evidence from our written sources, supporting the assertion that Maslama did indeed make repeated incursions into Byzantine territory in consecutive years.



17

UMAYYAD, TEMP. AL-WALID I (86-96h)

Fals, Kirman 95h

Obverse: In four lines: *bismillah* | *duriba bi-Kirman* | *sanat khams* | *wa tisa'in*

Reverse: Five line legend with Pahlawi mint-name *KRMAN* in third line

Weight: 3.01g

Reference: Malek 1415 = Stephen Album Rare Coins auction 31, 17 May 2018, lot 185

Fine and extremely rare, apparently the second published specimen

£700-1,000

The Pahlawi legend on the reverse has not been securely read, but seems to be a direct translation of the Arabic mint and date on the obverse.



18

UMAYYAD, YAZID II (101-105h)

Lead seal, undated

Obverse: In four lines: *bismillah amr* | 'Abd Allah Yazid | *amir al-mu'minin* | *bi'l-'adil*

Weight: 16.15g

Good fine and very rare

£1,000-1,500



19

A COLLECTION OF EIGHT EARLY ISLAMIC LEAD SEALS

Umayyad and later, comprising:

- i) **Umayyad**, uniface (12.62g), undated, the three-line legend reading *jalajal* | *ard* | *Qinnasrin* | ☆
- ii) **Umayyad**, uniface (11.00g), undated, the four-line legend reading 'Abbad (?) | *jalajal* | *ard* | *Qinnasrin* | letter *sin*
- iii) **Umayyad**, uniface (7.73g), undated, the two-line legend reading *al-Muthanna* | *ibn Ziyad*
- iv) **Abbasid, temp. al-Mahdi (158-169h)**, uniface (9.51g), dated 163h, the marginal legend reading *bismillah* *Harran sanat thalath wa sittin wa mi'at* around *Ma'arrat* | *al-Awwal* in two line in the centre
- v) **Abbasid, temp. al-Mahdi (158-169h)**, uniface (3.74g), dated 1xxh, the marginal legend reading *bismillah* *Harran sanat [...]* *mi'at* around two-line central inscription (unread)
- vi) **Abbasid, al-Mahdi (158-169h)**, uniface (7.37g), undated the three-line legend reading [...] *al-Mahdi* | *Tabaristan* | [unread]
- vii) **Abbasid**, uniface (6.76g), with three-line central legend, the lower two lines reading | *min kurat* | *Nisibin*; the marginal legend unread
- viii) **Uncertain**, double-sided (11.13g), with three-line legends each side, one apparently with a date ('1xx')

Fine to very fine, an interesting group including some rare dated pieces

£2,500-3,000

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.

A COLLECTION OF TEN ABBASID SILVER AND COPPER COINS FROM THE HOLY CITY OF MAKKA comprising eight silver dirhams and two copper fulus, all 3rd century

Condition of each coin given individually below, an exceptional group

£25,000-30,000

There is no comprehensive catalogue of Abbasid dirhams struck between 218-334h; the most up-to-date listing of recorded dates is found in *Islamic Mints* by Omer Diler (2009).



ABBASID, TEMP. AL-MA'MUN (194-218h)

Fals, Makka 204h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa Allah wahdahu la sharik lahu Makka*

Reverse: In field: *Muhammad Muhammad rasul Allah adl*

Weight: 5.98g

References: Lowick -; Album M308; cf Zeno #184299

Fair to fine and extremely rare



ABBASID, TEMP. AL-MA'MUN (194-218h)

Fals, Makka 205h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa Allah wahdahu la sharik lahu Makka*

Reverse: In field: *Muhammad Muhammad rasul Allah adl*

Weight: 4.46g

References: Lowick -; Album M308

Fair to fine and extremely rare



ABBASID, AL-MU'TADID (279-289h)

Dirham, Makka 283h

Weight: 2.81g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201 = Sotheby's, 24-25 March 1988, lot 360 (date of sale incorrectly given as October 1987 by Diler); cf Stephen Album Rare Coins auction 27, 19 January 2017, lot 336

Some flat striking in margin, flan slightly wavy, about very fine and toned, extremely rare

Provenance: CNG Triton auction XXI, 9 January 2018, lot 949; Morton & Eden auction 85, 27 April 2017, lot 52.



ABBASID, AL-MU'TADID (279-289h)

Dirham, Makka 289h

Weight: 2.91g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201, note 18865 = Spink Zurich auction 22, 17 March 1987, lot 107; cf Stephen Album Rare Coins auction 27, 19 January 2017, lot 337, 'one of the rarest dates for Makka silver dirhams'

Slight double-striking and central weakness but margins very clear, very fine and extremely rare



ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dirham, Makka 289h

Weight: 2.81g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201 = Nützel 1638; SCC 1412

Centres weak, fine to good fine and very rare



ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dirham, Makka 291h

Weight: 2.81g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201 = SICA 10: 489; SCC 1429, *same dies*

Edge chip, about fine and toned, very rare

Exceptionally, this coin lacks the name of *Wali al-dawla*, who is named on virtually all Abbasid dirhams struck in this year.



ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dirham, Makka 292h

Weight: 2.93g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201 = SICA 10: 490, *same dies*

Margins weak, about very fine and extremely rare



ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dirham, Makka 293h

Weight: 2.91g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201 = SICA 10: 491; SCC 1454; cf CNG auction 102, 18 May 2016, lot 1264, *same obverse die*

Slightly bent flan but better than very fine and well struck for issue, very rare



ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dirham, Makka 294h

Weight: 3.19g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1201 = SICA 10: 492

Minor double-striking, very fine or better with very clear mint and date, very rare



ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dirham, Makka 295h

Weight: 2.76g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* p. 1202; cf Islamic Coins Auction 9, 12 October 2004, lot 3293

Has been cleaned minor edge splits, otherwise very fine and very rare



21

ABBASID, TEMP. AL-MA'MUN (194-218h)

Dinar, Marw 215h

Obverse: Reform type, with double obverse margins

Weight: 4.19g

Reference: Bernardi 116Ph, citing a single example of this mint and date

Very fine to good very fine and extremely rare

£3,000-4,000

This is the first year in which Abbasid gold dinars were struck at Marw.



22

ABBASID, AL-WATHIQ (227-232h)

Dinar, San'a 228h

Weight: 3.49g

References: Bernardi 152EL RRR; Bikhazi 23

Lightly and evenly clipped, good very fine and extremely rare

£2,500-3,000



23

ABBASID, AL-MUTAWAKKIL (232-247h)

Dinar, Dimashq 247h

Weight: 4.23g

Reference: Bernardi 158Ge, citing a single example of this mint and date

Minor marks and slight double-striking, good very fine to almost extremely fine and extremely rare

£3,000-4,000



24

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAZZ (251-255h)

Dinar, Wasit 254h

Obverse: In field: 'Abdallah ibn | amir al-mu'minin | letter sin

Weight: 4.25g

Reference: Bernardi 163Jm

Traces of mounting at 12 o'clock on obverse, otherwise very fine and rare

£800-1,200



25

ABBASID, AL-MUHTADI (255-256h)

Dinar, San'a 256h

Reverse field: lillah | Muhammad | rasul Allah | al-Muhtadi billah | amir al-mu'minin

Weight: 2.86g

Reference: Bernardi 167El

Several scuffs and marks in field, about very fine and extremely rare

£2,500-3,000



‡26

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAMID (256-279h)

Dinar, Adharbayjan 258h

Obverse: In field: la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | Ja'far

Reverse: In field: lillah | Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Mu'tamid 'ala-'llah

Weight: 4.18g

Reference: cf Bernardi type 173 (unrecorded for this mint)

Edge smoothed and made round, otherwise very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently an unpublished date for this extremely rare Abbasid gold mint

£20,000-30,000

Adharbayjan is one of the rarest mints for Abbasid gold dinars. The coin offered here appears to be only the third published Abbasid dinar from the mint, and the only specimen known of this date.

When an extremely rare mint such as Adharbayjan is operational for a single year, it is often possible to find a historical reason why it should have opened – perhaps a military campaign. In the case of the present coin, we have hints that it may relate to an episode involving 'Isa b. al-Shaykh al-Shaybani, governor of Armenia from 258h until his death in 269h. 'Isa was related to the Mazyadids and first appears in the early 230s, fighting in the Abbasid army which suppressed the revolt of Muhammad b. al-Ba'ith in eastern Adharbayjan. Some twenty years later he held a post in Syria, and in 252h was confirmed as governor of Jordan and Palestine.

During the 'Anarchy at Samarra' during the mid 250's, 'Isa seems to have made Jordan and Palestine his own personal fiefdom. He kept the provinces tax and trade revenue for himself, rather than remitting it to the caliph, and used this to buy the loyalty of the local tribes. The caliph al-Muhtadi (255-256h) wrote to 'Isa, offering to pardon him in exchange for the money 'Isa had failed to hand over in previous years – a sum which was estimated at 750,000 dinars. 'Isa refused, and al-Muhtadi died before further action could be taken against him, but in 257h al-Mu'tamid repeated the demand for 'Isa to pay these tax arrears. This time, the demand was backed up with military action. 'Isa's son was killed in battle, and 'Isa himself withdrew to Ramla. Al-Mu'tamid sent another embassy to 'Isa, offering him the governorship of Armenia (which also included Adharbayjan and part of the Jazira) if he would relinquish his claims to Jordan and Syria. 'Isa agreed, and departed for his new governorship in 258h – the year in which this coin was struck. Shortly afterwards, 'Isa successfully led an alliance of local Arab dynasties against the Christian Armenian ruler Ashot I at around this time. Either his appointment or this victory might account for Abbasid dinars being struck in Adharbayjan around this time, especially if 'Isa were keen to demonstrate his loyalty to al-Mu'tamid by sending gold coins to the caliph as tax revenue.



27

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAMID (256-279h)

Dinar, Adharbayjan 272h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | al-Nasir li-din Allah | al-Muwaffaq billah*

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Mu'tamid 'ala-llah*

Weight: 3.91g

References: Bernardi 180Kh = Lavoix 995

Wavy flan and minor marks, better than very fine and excessively rare

£20,000-30,000



28

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAMID (256-279h)

Dinar, al-Dinawar 277h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | al-Nasir li-din Allah | al-Muwaffaq billah*

Reverse: In field: *Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Mu'tamid 'ala-llah | Ahmad ibn al-Muwaffaq billah*

Around central legends, to right, above, and to left: *al-quwwa – lillah – jami'an*

Weight: 4.06g

Reference: Bernardi 186Me

Fine and extremely rare

£1,500-2,000

This is the only year in which Abbasid dinars were struck at the very rare mint of al-Dinawar. Located in Jibal province, Dinawar was an important strategic time in Sasanian times, with origins stretching back to the Seleucid period. Following the Persian defeat at the battle of Nihavand (21h/AD642), Dinawar was captured by Muslim forces from Basra, but later became an administrative centre of the region of Media whose revenues were allocated to troops from Kufa. For this reason the town became known as Mah al-Kufa, 'Media of the Kufans,' and first appears by this name as an extremely rare mint for Umayyad dirhams. Thereafter, Mah al-Kufa was the name generally used on the coinage, being employed on Abbasid dirhams between 233h and 262h and on Abbasid gold and silver struck there from 280h until 326h.

This coin was struck during al-Muwaffaq's campaigns in Jibal against the Dulafids, whose renunciation of allegiance to al-Muwaffaq in 275h is reflected both in literary and numismatic sources. Having received a letter from another regional military leader, Adhkutekin b. Asatekin, al-Muwaffaq left Baghdad for Jibal in 276h and entered Isbahan later that year. The Dulafids abandoned the city, and their loss of control in the region is reflected in the paucity of their coinage at this time. Indeed, the only coins issued by the Dulafids in 276h appear to have been Mah al-Kufa dinars, and it seems plausible to suggest that al-Muwaffaq issued these coins of al-Dinawar as a direct response, choosing the alternative toponym to distinguish his Abbasid coins dated 277h from the Dulafid issues of the previous year.



29

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAMID (256-279h)

Dinar, al-Muhammadiya 275h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | al-Nasir li-din Allah | al-Muwaffaq billah*

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Mu'tamid 'ala-'llah*; vertical line to right, uncertain symbol to left

Weight: 4.19g

Reference: cf Bernardi type 180 (unrecorded for this mint)

Crimped, scratches on obverse, otherwise good fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished £3,000-4,000



30

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAMID (256-279h)

Dinar, Hamadhan 276h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | al-Nasir li-din Allah | al-Muwaffaq billah*

Reverse: In field: *Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Mu'tamid 'ala-'llah | Ahmad ibn al-Muwaffaq billah*
Around central legends, to right, above, and to left: *al-quwwa - lillah - jami'an*

Weight: 4.31g

References: cf Bernardi type 186 (unrecorded for this mint); cf Morton & Eden auction 35, 11-12 November 2008, lot 575 for a similar coin dated 277h)

Struck from a rusty obverse die, about very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished £3,000-4,000

This hitherto unpublished coin appears to be the earliest recorded Abbasid dinar from the mint of Hamadhan.



31

ABBASID, AL-MU'TAMID (256-279h)

Dinar, al-Rafiq 281h

Weight: 3.87g

References: Bernardi 211Hn; Artuk 376

Some staining in margins, better than very fine and rare £1,000-1,200



32

ABBASID, AL-MU'TADID (279-289h)

Dinar, al-Rafiq 283h

Weight: 4.19g

References: Bernardi 211Hn; SICA 4, 377-378

About extremely fine

£700-1,000



‡33

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Donative quarter-dinar, 293h

Obverse: In margin: *la ilaha illa Allah Muhammad rasul Allah*

In field: *al-Muktafi | billah*

Reverse: In margin: *bismillah duriba sanat thalath wa tisa'in wa mi'atayn*

In field: *amir | al-mu'minin*

Reference: cf Bernardi 229 (a similar quarter-dinar without mint-name, dated 291h and also naming *Wali al-dawla*)

Weight: 0.96g

Crinkled flan, traces of mounting on edge, otherwise good very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished

£3,000-4,000



34

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dinar, Harran 290h

Weight: 2.88g

Reference: Bernardi 226Hj

Small bend in edge at 1 o'clock on obverse, otherwise good very fine and rare

£1,000-1,500



35

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dinar, Harran 293h

Weight: 4.22g

References: Bernardi 226Hj; Qatar 1299

Obverse die flaw visible at 9 o'clock, almost extremely fine and rare

£1,000-1,500

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.



36

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dinar, Halab 289h

Weight: 4.47g

Reference: Bernardi 226Gb, citing a single example of this mint and date

Small flan split and minor marks, otherwise good very fine and very rare

£2,000-2,500



37

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Half-dinar, al-Rahba 294h

Weight: 1.70g

References: cf Bernardi 226Hm (this date unrecorded); cf Morton & Eden auction 69, 10 April 2014, lot 52, *same dies* (a full dinar)

Ragged flan, good very fine and extremely rare

£1,500-2,000

Provenance: Ex Baldwin's of St James's auction 29, 11 May 2019, lot 1036.



38

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dinar, al-Rafiq 291h

Obverse: In field: citing *Wali al-dawla*

Weight: 3.17g

References: Bernardi 228Hn RRR, citing a single example of this mint and date

About extremely fine and very rare

£800-1,200



39

ABBASID, AL-MUKTAFI (289-295h)

Dinar, al-Rafiq 293h

Obverse: In field: two pellets below

Reverse: In field: single pellet below

Weight: 2.73g

References: Bernardi 226Hn; Artuk 421; Qatar 1303

Very fine to good very fine, rare

£700-1,000

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.



40

ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR (295-320h)

Dinar, al-Rafiq 296h

Weight: 4.62g

References: Bernardi 237Hn; Artuk 450

Well struck on a broad flan, good very fine and rare

£1,200-1,500



41

ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR (295-320h)

Dinar, al-Rafiq 318h

Weight: 3.55g

Reference: cf Bernardi 242Hn (date not listed)

Small edge chip, about fine and extremely rare

£1,500-2,000



42

ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR (295-320h)

Dinar, Makka 299h

Obverse: In field: pellet | *la ilaha illa* | *Allah wahdahu* | *la sharik lahu* | *Abu'l-'Abbas ibn* | *amir al-mu'minin*

Reverse: In field: *lillah* | *Muhammad* | *rasul* | *Allah* | *al-Muqtadir billah* | annulet

Weight: 4.02g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* -; cf Bernardi 242Ef [only known for 302h]

Very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished

£20,000-30,000

This appears to be a new date for gold coins from Makka. While dinars issued during the reign of al-Muktafi are occasionally seen, Abbasid influence in Makka waned during the reign of al-Muqtadir, whose coins are far rarer.



43

ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR (295-320h)

Donative dinar with broad margins, Makka 320h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | amir al-mu'minin*

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Muqtadir billah*

Weight: 4.82g (including loop mount)

With contemporary gold loop-mount at 12 o'clock on reverse, good very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished £70,000-100,000

This beautifully struck donative dinar is the only recorded example of such a coin issued at the Holy City of Makka. The broad margins not only make them visually distinctive but also allow the coin to be mounted, as here, without damaging the legends. Many surviving examples are found pierced or loop-mounted for wear as jewellery, because special coins such as this would have been distributed by an important personage as a mark of favour. They conferred prestige which the recipient would wish to display publicly.

Presentation coins with broad margins were introduced during the caliphate of al-Mutawakkil, with the earliest known examples dating from the 230s. Almost all Abbasid caliphs thereafter issued them for the next hundred years, and the tradition continued afterwards under the Buwayhids. Most were struck by the caliph himself, almost invariably at Surra man ra'a or Baghdad, but regional rulers occasionally struck donative coins also and Saffarid, Dulafid, Sajid and Samanid issues are also known.

The caliph al-Muqtadir was renowned for his extravagance and also notorious for being more concerned with the palace, court and harem than with matters of state. Unsurprisingly, he struck a greater number and variety of donative coins than any other Abbasid caliph, virtually all of which were issued at Baghdad. This coin was struck in the final year of his reign, when the Abbasids had lost North Africa and barely held sway over Egypt, while in Baghdad there was not even enough money in the treasury to pay the city guards. But in the East and Arabia the caliph was still formally recognised, even by dynasties which were virtually autonomous. One such dynasty was the Ya'furids of the Yemen, who continued to strike gold coins citing al-Muqtadir and his successors long after the Abbasid caliph had any direct influence in the region. Their coins differed both in weight and design from standard Abbasid gold dinars, being much lighter (about 1.95g) and with shorter inscriptions in the fields, but the Abbasid caliph was the only person named explicitly on them.

In 317h, three years before this coin was struck, both Makka and Madina had been attacked by the Qarmatids of Bahrayn under their ruler Abu Tahir, who massacred pilgrims and inhabitants alike, polluted the Well of Zamzam with corpses, and carried off the Black Stone. These attacks outraged the Muslim world, as well as being a humiliating blow to the prestige of the Abbasids, who were meant to protect the Holy Places. It is thought that the Qarmatids believed that by destroying Makka they would hasten the coming of the Mahdi, who would usher in the seventh and final age of the world. However, Abu Tahir mistakenly believed that he had recognised a certain young Persian as the Mahdi, and in 319h entrusted this individual with the government of Bahrain. This proved disastrous; the young man in question began to restore ancient Iranian religious practices including the worship of fire, publicly cursing all prophets, and began to execute leading Qarmatids. Abu Tahir had him condemned as an imposter and executed after less than three months, but the damage was done. Dissent and infighting broke out between the various Qarmatid factions, and Qarmatid power in the region was considerably weakened.

This handsome presentation dinar was struck just one year after these events, after which the Qarmatids ceased to pose a threat to the Abbasids for several years. Unlike the coins of the Ya'furids, it is struck to the standard Abbasid weight standard of 4.25g, and names the caliphal heir Abu'l-'Abbas on the obverse, marking it out as a caliphal issue rather than one struck by a local amir. Al-Muqtadir himself did not visit Makka in this year, nor does it seem that the Abbasids themselves inflicted a defeat on the Qarmatids at this time. Nevertheless, it seems that pilgrims were once again able to travel to Makka in this year, under Abbasid protection and without being molested by the Qarmatids, and perhaps this was enough for al-Muqtadir to strike a special presentation coin to commemorate the restoration of Abbasid authority in Makka.



44

ABBASID, AL-MUQTADIR (295-320h)

Dirham, Makka 304h

Weight: 2.86g

References: Diler, *Islamic Mints* -; cf Morton & Eden auction 48, 4 April 2011, lot 53, same reverse die

Toned, very fine and excessively rare, apparently the latest recorded date for Abbasid dirhams of Makka £4,000-6,000



45

ABBASID, AL-MUTTAQI (329-333h)

Dinar, Tabariya 329h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa | Allah wahdahu | la sharik lahu | Abu Mansur bin | Amir al-Mu'minin*

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Muttaqi lillah*

Weight: 3.75g

Reference: cf Bernardi type 308 (this mint not listed)

Minor edge marks, good fine and of the highest rarity, apparently an unpublished date for this extremely rare Abbasid gold mint £20,000-30,000

Although unrecorded for Tabariya, a unique gold dinar with similar legends from Filastin is known (Bernardi 308Gn). Both coins were probably struck by the Ikhshidid ruler Muhammad b. Tughj, although his name does not appear on them.

Describing the events of the year 328h, Miskawayh explains how the province of Filastin came under Ikhshidid control:

'In Dhu'l-Hijja of this year, there came news that Ibn Ra'iq had dealt a blow to Abu Nasr b. Tughj, brother of the Ikhshid. Abu Nasr's followers were routed, his chief officers captured, while he himself had been killed. Ibn Ra'iq took the body, had it laid out and embalmed, and conveyed in a coffin to the dead man's brother the Ikhshid; with it he sent his own son Muzahim, bearing a letter of condolence on his brother's death and apologizing for the occurrence. Ibn Ra'iq assured the Ikhshid that he had not designed his brother's death, and was now sending his own son that the Ikhshid might retaliate upon him if he so desired. The Ikhshid received this proceeding favourably, bestowed a robe of honour upon Abu'l-Fath Muzahim, and sent him back to his father. They arranged terms of peace whereby Ibn Ra'iq was to cede Ramlah to the Ikhshid, but was to retain the rest of Syria, and receive from the Ikhshid for the cession of Ramlah 140,000 dinars.' (Miskawayh, *Tajarib al-Umam*, 414, translated by H.F. Amedroz and D.S Margoliouth in *The Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate*, Volume IV, Oxford, 1921).



49

FATIMID, AL-MAHDI (297-322h)

Dinar, without mint-name, 297h

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad | rasul | Allah | al-Mahdi*

Weight: 4.19g

Reference: Nicol 78

Die flaw on obverse, an uneven striking and with some scattered marks, better than very fine, very rare £2,500-3,000



50

FATIMID, AL-MAHDI (297-322h)

Dinar, al-Muhammadiya 320h

Weight: 4.15g

Reference: Nicol 50

Faint edge mark and scratch on reverse, good very fine and rare

£800-1,200

According to Nicol the Fatimid mint of al-Muhammadiya was 'the provincial town of al-Masilah, in present-day Algeria, about a third of the distance from Tahirt westward to al-Qayrawan.' It was only active for the years 320h and 321h.



51

FATIMID, AL-MAHDI (297-322h)

Posthumous dinar, without mint-name, 324h

Weight: 4.19g

Reference: Nicol 136, citing a single specimen of this date

Small edge split, good very fine and well struck, very rare

£700-1,000



52

FATIMID, AL-MU'IZZ (341-365h)

Dirham, Filastin 359h

Weight: 2.63g

Reference: Nicol 340

Edge bend, about very fine and rare

£700-1,000

This is the first year in which the Fatimids struck silver coins in Filastin.



53

FATIMID, AL-MU'IZZ (341-365h)

Dirham, Filastin 363h

Weight: 2.77g

Reference: Nicol 342

Some weak striking but about very fine for issue and rare

£600-800



54

FATIMID, AL-MU'IZZ (341-365h)

Dirham, Filastin 364h

Weight: 2.74g

References: Nicol -; cf Morton & Eden auction 95, 24 October 2018, lot 123

On a bent flan and unevenly struck, almost very fine for issue and extremely rare

£1,000-1,500



55

FATIMID, AL-MU'IZZ (341-365h)

Dirham, Tabariya 36[5]h

Weight: 2.95g

Reference: Nicol 326, same obverse die

Unit of date not clear but confirmed by die-link to the specimen published by Nicol fine and extremely rare £800-1,200



56

FATIMID, AL-'AZIZ (365-386h)

Dirham, Filastin 366h

Weight: 3.67g

Reference: cf Nicol 687 [dated 368h]

On a bent flan and with some marginal weakness, very fine and apparently unpublished

£1,500-2,000



57

FATIMID, AL-'AZIZ (365-386h)

Dirham, Filastin 368h

Weight: 2.62g

Reference: Nicol 687, citing a single specimen of this mint and date

Bent flan, fine and extremely rare

£1,000-1,500



58

FATIMID, AL-'AZIZ (365-386h)

Half-dirham, Tabariya [3]82h

Weight: 1.57g

Reference: Nicol 626

Flan crack, fine and very rare

£700-1,000



59

FATIMID, AL-'AZIZ (365-386h)

Dinar, Makka 366h

Weight: 2.80g

Reference: Nicol 745 = BMC IV, 51, same dies

Cracked and repaired, otherwise almost very fine with very clear mint and date, excessively rare

£20,000-25,000

During the 3rd/9th century, the Abbasid caliphs had been responsible for ensuring the security of Makka and the trade and pilgrimage roads that led there, but from the early 4th/10th century this role was increasingly fulfilled by local sharifs as Abbasid power waned. The chief threat to Makka during this period came from the Qarmatids, a radical Isma'ili sect, who attacked Makka itself in 317h, killing many people and carrying off the Black Stone. It was the Fatimids, however, rather than the Abbasids or any local sharifs, who paid 50,000 dinars to the Qarmatids to secure the return of the Stone in 339h, attesting to growing Fatimid influence in the region.

Makka itself came under Qarmatid control in 359h after the fall of the Ikhshidids in the previous year. The city appears to have remained in their hands until 362h, when they suffered a major defeat at the hands of the Fatimids near Cairo. Whether or not this setback directly affected their position in Makka is unclear, but we know that the name of the Fatimid al-Mu'izz was mentioned in the *khutba* in Makka during 363h and 364h, and Fatimid dinars bearing his name were being struck in Makka itself in 363h.

His successor, al-'Aziz, continued to expand Fatimid influence in the region. Caravans travelling from Cairo to Makka were placed under Fatimid protection – an expensive privilege – and the Fatimids also provided the *kiswa* to cover the Black Stone. Coins such as the piece offered here also played their part in proclaiming Fatimid sovereignty in the region, and naming al-'Aziz on dinars issued at Makka went hand-in-hand with his acknowledgement in the *khutba*. Together, these were the two legally acknowledged means of expressing his right to rule.

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.



60

FATIMID, AL-ZAHIR (411-427h)

Dinar, Filastin 423h

In fields: letter *zayn* in centres

Weight: 4.19g

Reference: Nicol 1503

Good fine and rare

£1,500-2,000



61

FATIMID, AL-ZAHIR (411-427h)

Dinar, Filastin 424h

In fields: letter *zayn* in centres

Weight: 3.93g

References: Nicol 1505 *var.*; cf Morton & Eden auction 96, 28 April 2018, lot 132, *same dies*

Has probably been made round for use in jewellery, otherwise good fine and extremely rare

£2,000-3,000

Nicol records a handful of examples of this mint and date, all of which have the letter **ز** in the centres rather than **ن** as here. The significance of these letters has not been established, but the present coin demonstrates that both are found on dinars of Filastin dated 423h and 424h.



62

FATIMID, AL-MUSTANSIR (427-487h)

Dinar, Filastin 441h

Weight: 3.75g

Reference: Nicol 2069, citing a single specimen of this mint and date

Slightly wavy flan with faults on reverse, some scuffs, very fine or better with very clear mint and date and extremely rare

£2,000-3,000





#63

FATIMID, AL-MUSTANSIR (427-487h)

Dinar, Madinat Rasul Allah 450h, month of Dhu'l-Hijja

Obverse: In margin: *Bismillah al-rahman al-rahim duriba hadha al-dinar bi-Madinat Rasul Allah min Dhu'l-Hijja sanat khamsin wa arba' mi'at*
In field: *al-Imam | Ma'add Abu Tamim | al-Mustansir billah | Amir al-mu'minin*

Reverse: In margin: *Muhammad rasul Allah arsulahu bi'l-huda...al-mushrikun* (Qur'an ix:33)
In field: *'Ali | la ilaha illa Allah | wahdahu la sharik lahu | Muhammad rasul Allah | wali Allah*

Weight: 3.24g

Reference: cf Morton & Eden auction 92, 26 April 2018, lot 97, same obverse die

Very fine and excessively rare

£100,000-150,000

'Madinat Rasul Allah' is perhaps the rarest mint-place in the entire Fatimid series. The present coin is the second known of this date, while a third dinar dated 453h is now in the British Museum. 'City of God's Messenger' is generally accepted as denoting one of Islam's holiest places: Madina al-Munawara itself. It has also been suggested that the title could refer to Mecca, but *Makka* appears as a mint-name in its own right on a number of Fatimid dinars and this implies that 'Madinat Rasul Allah' should denote a different location. It is noteworthy that Miles (*Fatimid Coins*: ANS NNM 121, 1951) states 'Madinat Rasul Allah (=Medina)', without qualification or any mention of alternative suggestions.

But how and why could a Fatimid dinar should have been struck at Madina al-Munawara in this year? We do not know for certain, but it seems likely that the answer is to be found in the activities of 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Sulayhi, founder of the Sulayhid dynasty in Yemen. Born a Sunni, he became an Isma'ili convert after meeting Amir al-Zawahi, the Chief Da'i of Yemen, and it seems that by the late 420s al-Sulayhi was already serving as the *amir al-hajj*, protecting pilgrims travelling through Yemen *en route* for Makka. Having succeeded Amir al-Zawahi as Chief Da'i on the latter's death, al-Sulayhi summoned his followers to the mountain of Jabal Masar in 439h and announced his intention to establish a Shi'ite state in Yemen. Unsurprisingly, the Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir gave his endorsement to the new movement, and al-Sulayhi embarked on a series of campaigns against other local Islamic states including a lengthy conflict with the Najjahids of Zabid. The Najjahid ruler was killed in 452h, and soon afterwards al-Mustansir formally appointed al-Sulayhi as his recognized vassal in the Yemen. By 454h the whole of the country was in his hands – including Makka, which al-Sulayhi visited personally when undertaking the *hajj* in that year.

Al-Sulayhi is known to have struck purely Fatimid coins elsewhere in the Yemen. Nicol records specimens struck at Zabid in 445h, 447h and 448h, which are of particular relevance here because it appears that Zabid was not in fact in Sulayhid hands when these coins were issued. Our written sources indicate that the city finally fell to al-Sulayhi in either 451 or 452h, and this is supported by the existence of dinars of Zabid 451h which carry specifically Sulayhid legends (Nicol 1741). Presumably, therefore, the Fatimid coins issued in the 440s bearing the mint-name 'Zabid' were produced by the Sulayhids or other Fatimid partisans in the region, promoting the cause not only financially but through the pro-Fatimid legends they bore.

It seems likely that the 'Madinat Rasul Allah' dinars were issued in similar circumstances and for similar reasons. When they were struck, al-Sulayhi did not yet control the Holy Places directly, and as with the Zabid issues from the 440s their legends are purely Fatimid – although the positioning of 'Ali at the top of the reverse field and separated from *wali Allah* may have been a deliberate reference to 'Ali b. al-Sulayhi as the issuing authority. We also know that al-Sulayhi won a great victory over the Najjahids in the year 450h at the battle of al-Zara'ib, which effectively ended Najjahid power. Given the precedent of the Zabid dinars struck just a few years earlier, it seems plausible to suggest that Fatimid or Sulayhid partisans should have issued coins anticipating Makka and Madina al-Munawara being brought under Sulayhid control. We know that the local nobility of Makka had given its allegiance to the Fatimids by 454/455h, by which time al-Mustansir was named in the *khutba* there. But this coin raises the tantalising possibility that this may first have happened a few years earlier, in which case 450h may have been the year in which al-Mustansir was acknowledged in the *khutba* not only in Cairo, but also perhaps in Makka and Madina.



64

FATIMID, AL-MUSTA'LI (487-495h)

Dinar, 'Akka 488h

Obverse: In margin: pellet above d of duriba

Weight: 3.42g

References: Nicol 2408 = SICA 6, 739, same dies

Very fine and extremely rare [only one specimen recorded by Nicol]

£2,000-3,000



65

FATIMID, AL-MUNTAZAR (524-526h)

Dinar, al-Iskandariya 525h

Obverse: Inner margin: Abu'l-Qasim al-Muntazar bi-amr Allah Amir al-Mu'minin

In centre: al-Imam | Muhammad

Reverse: Inner margin: la ilaha illa Allah Muhammad rasul Allah 'Ali wali Allah

In centre: 'Al | ghaya

Weight: 3.64g

Reference: Nicol 2589

Edge shaved and some double striking, very fine and very rare

£2,500-3,000

After the assassination of al-Amir in 524h, al-Hafiz was named as his successor. He was quickly imprisoned by the ambitious Kutayfat, the son of al-Amir's vizier, who took advantage of this situation to make a grasp for power. *'Kutayfat declared the Fatimid dynasty deposed and proclaimed the sovereignty of al-Mahdi, the twelfth imam of the Twelver Shi'is, whose reappearance had been expected since 260/874. As a result of this ingenious religio-political solution... [Kutayfat] acquired a unique position of power, ruling as a dictator responsible to no one either in theory or practice.'* (Daftary, F., *The Isma'ilis: Their History and Doctrines*, Cambridge, 2007).

Kutayfat struck coins naming al-Muntazar (the 'Expected One') until he himself was deposed and executed in 526h.



66

FATIMID, AL-FA'IZ (549-555h)

Dinar, Misr 554h

Weight: 4.37g

Reference: Nicol 2679

Slightly wavy flan, otherwise about extremely fine and rare thus

£700-1,000



67

FATIMID, AL-'ADID (555-567h)

Dinar, Misr 559h

Weight: 3.98g

Reference: Nicol 2694

Small edge clip, otherwise good very fine and rare

£700-1,000

The unit of the date is curiously engraved and could, at first sight, be mistaken for a '4' instead of '9'. Interestingly Nicol reports a dinar of al-'Adid dated '554h' – a year before his accession (Nicol 2689). The illustration suggests that the piece to which Nicol refers is poorly preserved, and it may be that the unit on this specimen was indeed misread in this way.



68

BAHRI MAMLUK, AL-ASHRAF ABU'L-FATH MUSA (649-650h)

Dinar, al-Qahira 649h

Weight: 6.19g

Reference: Balog 3, same dies

Traces of mounting, very fine and rare

£800-1,000



69

WAHHABI SHARIFS, TEMP. YAHYA II B. SURUR (1229-1242h /AD 1814-1827)

Quarter-mahmudi, Makka 1240h

Obverse: darb Makka

Reverse: date in numerals

Weight: 3.34g

References: Album U1160 RR; KM 5

Very fine for issue and rare

£700-1,000



70

WAHHABI SHARIFS, TEMP. YAHYA II B. SURUR (1229-1242h /AD 1814-1827)

Quarter-mahmudi, Makka 1240h

Obverse: darb Makka

Reverse: date in numerals

Weight: 3.95g

References: Album U1160 RR; KM 5

Very fine for issue and with very clear date, rare

£700-1,000



‡71

GOVERNORS OF 'UMAN, TEMP. 'UMAR B. MUHAMMAD (fl. 357-358h)

Donative dinar, 'Uman 357h

Obverse: In outer border: traces of 'good luck' word visible at 12 o'clock

Reverse: In field: Surah *al-Ikhlās* in five lines

In outer border: traces of 'good luck' words visible at 12 o'clock and 9 o'clock

Weight: 3.89g

References: *Oman* -; cf NGSA auction 8, 24 November 2014, lot 280 for a similar coin naming 'Umar b. Muhammad and the Qarmatid 'Council of Six'; also SARC auction 25, 19 May 2016, lot 460 for an anonymous dirham dated 358h with similar legends

Mount removed from edge, and has also been made round with outer borders partially lacking, otherwise better than very fine with a few minor marks and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished £50,000-80,000

This remarkable and unpublished coin sheds new light on the complex history of Oman during the late 350s, when the Buwayhids, the Qarmatids and at least two local rulers were competing for power in the region.

Describing the events of the year 354h, the historian Miskawayh records that the local ruler in 'Uman, a freed slave named Nafi' who had received his liberty from the Wajihid ruler Yusuf b. Wajih...*'agreed to enter the allegiance of Mu'izz al-dawla, let his name be mentioned in the khutbah, and let it be inscribed on dirhams and dinars. Nafi' agreed to all of this...but when the local people learned what he had done, they rose against him and drove him out. They led in the followers of the Qarmatids, to whom they surrendered their city.'* (Miskawayh 212).

In 355h, Miskawayh further reports that a Qarmatid official named 'Ali b. Ahmad contrived to make himself local ruler in 'Uman. Coins were struck in 'Uman during this year which name 'Ali b. Ahmad alongside the Qarmatid 'Council of Six.' Later that year, however, Nafi' appealed to the Buwayhid ruler Mu'izz al-dawla, who sent a naval force to 'Uman under the command of Abu'l-Faraj Muhammad b. 'Abbas. Abu'l-Faraj appears to have put down the popular uprising, defeated and expelled the Qarmatids, and re-established Buwayhid control there. Thus when Abu'l-Faraj left 'Uman in 356h following the death of Mu'izz al-dawla, he was able to leave the province in the hands of a local Omani named Ibn Nabhan. No coins of Ibn Nabhan are known, and without Abu'l-Faraj's army to support him it seems that his control of 'Uman lasted only a matter of months. Coin evidence shows that another governor named 'Umar b. Muhammad had come to power there by 357h.

For the years 357h and 358h, it seems that four different issues of gold and silver coins were produced in 'Uman, apparently struck in the following order:

- 1) Coins citing 'Umar b. Muhammad, dated 357h and naming 'Umar alongside the Qarmatid 'Council of Six' (known from a unique gold donative dinar with similar 'good luck' words to the present coin);
- 2) Anonymous coins, with purely religious legends and extra 'good luck' words in the outer margin (struck in 357h and 358h). These include the unique gold dinar offered here and a similar silver dirham dated 358h. Both have the *kalima* in the obverse field and the surah *al-Ikhlās* on the reverse, but name neither the caliph nor the Qarmatid Council, nor yet any local governor at all;
- 3) Coins citing 'Umar b. Muhammad, dated 358h (known only in silver), acknowledging the Buwayhids Rukn al-dawla and 'Adud al-dawla alongside the Abbasid caliph al-Muti';
- 4) Coins citing the local ruler Hallaj b. Hatim (358-362h), known in silver dated 358h, 359h, 360h and 361h. Like 'Umar b. Muhammad's coins of 358h, these also acknowledge the Buwayhids Rukn al-dawla and 'Adud al-dawla alongside the Abbasid caliph al-Muti'.

‘Umar b. Muhammad is not mentioned in Miskawayh’s account, but his rapid *volte-face* in switching allegiance from the Qarmatids to the Buwayhids may suggest that he was an independent local ruler, rather than being an appointee of either. His earliest coins (above, 1) were struck in 357h and acknowledged the Qarmatids, a move which may have been intended to win popular support against the Buwayhid governor Ibn Nabhan. His public support for the Qarmatids can have lasted a few months at most, however, because he also issued entirely anonymous coins including the present unique gold dinar (above, 2) later in 357h and also in 358h. Perhaps by this stage ‘Umar had appreciated that the Buwayhid withdrawal would only be temporary, and that issuing anonymous coins might avoid upsetting local pro-Qarmatid feeling without antagonizing the Buwayhids. During the first part of 358h he seems to have realised that he had little choice but to acknowledge Buwayhid authority if he was to stay in power in ‘Uman, and so issued dirhams citing Rukn al-dawla, ‘Adud al-dawla, and the Abbasid caliph (above, 3). Later that year, however, he was evidently replaced by Hallaj b. Hatim (above, 4); it is not known whether he was deposed by the Buwayhids or, perhaps, forced out in the face of local opposition after his swift abandoning of the Qarmatid cause.

At first sight it seems strange that ‘Umar should have issued a handsome donative gold dinar such as this, with its broad margins and extra ‘good luck’ words, entirely anonymously. Donative coins were, of course, intended to be presentation pieces bestowed as a sign of favour to their recipients, and it is remarkable that such a coin should not name the ruler who presented them. But events in ‘Uman two years before ‘Umar’s brief grab for power offer a hint as to possible reasons for this. In 355h ‘Ali b. Ahmad came to power through the time-honoured method of offering the army a larger gratuity than his rival, ‘Abd al-Wahab, in exchange for their support. Miskawayh reports that ‘Ali b. Ahmad told one division of the army: *‘If you go to ‘Abd al-Wahab he will decline to admit you, and will certainly not give you more than four months’ pay. But what say you to entering my service, in which case I shall give you the eight months’ pay, and the governorship shall be mine?’ They consented, and he handed them the eight months’ pay’*. If ‘Umar b. Muhammad had come to power by similar means, we can imagine that he might have struck special coins to pay his troops for their loyalty. Once it became clear that associating himself on the coinage with the Qarmatids would be inadvisable, it would have been eminently prudent for ‘Umar to strike the rest of the coins which made up their bonus entirely anonymously. This would have allowed him to establish his authority with the army by presenting them with suitably impressive and attractive coins, while also avoiding offending either the Buwayhids or the Qarmatids during the early stages of his rule. It would also account for the great rarity of these coins today, because those involved in ‘Umar’s rise to power will hardly have wished to be publicly associated with him after his fall.



72

SULTANATE OF OMAN, QABUS B. SA‘ID (1390h/AD 1970 -)

Gold sa‘idi rial, 1394h/AD 1974

Weight: 46.85g

References: KM 44; *Oman* p. 96

Scattered toning spots and faint handling marks, otherwise almost as struck, in Royal Mint case of issue £2,000-3,000

The History of the Currency of the Sultanate of Oman records a mintage of only 250 pieces for this issue.



73

SELJUQ OF RUM, THE THREE BROTHERS (647-657h)

Dinar, Qunya 648h

Obverse: mint and date in field

Reverse: naming the three brothers as 'Izz al-dunya wa'l-din Kayka'us wa Rukn al-dunya wa'l-din Qilij Arslan wa 'Ala al-dunya wa'l-din Kayqubadh bin (sic) Kaykhusraw

Weight: 4.34g

References: Tevhid 1286; ICV 1348

Good extremely fine and lustrous

£1,000-1,200



74

OTTOMAN, MEHMED II (SECOND REIGN, 855-886h)

Sultani, Qustantaniya 883h

Weight: 3.53g

Reference: Pere 80

About extremely fine, rare

£1,200-1,500



75

OTTOMAN, SÜLEYMAN I (926-974h)

Sultani, Qaratova 926h

Weight: 3.46g

Reference: Pere 179

Very fine, rare

£1,000-1,500



76

OTTOMAN, ABDÜLMECID (1255-1277h/AD 1839-1861)

Large-sized gold medal for the Reform of the Imperial Mint, 1260h /AD 1844

Obverse: Toughra of Sultan Abdülmecid within wreath

Reverse: Two-line inscription in Ottoman Turkish within floral wreath, cartouches flanked by olive-branches above and below, these engraved '5' and '1255' respectively

Weight: 90.92g

Reference: Erüreten p.181

Faint edge marks, otherwise good very fine and very rare, especially of this weight

£12,000-15,000

Designed by Mhrabcioglu Krikor Efendi, this handsome and impressive medal was issued to commemorate the Monetary Reform of 1260h / AD1844, which introduced the gold lira valued at 100 kurush. It was struck in Istanbul using a new steam-powered press, made in England and installed under the supervision of William Joseph Taylor. The example offered here is struck *en medaille* and appears to be the heaviest recorded specimen, struck to the value of 1,250 kurush by weight.



77

QARMATID, AL-HASAN B. AHMAD

Dirham, Filastin 362h

Obverse: In field: *al-sayyid | al-ra'is*

Reverse: In field: *al-Muti' lillah | al-Hasan ibn Ahmad*

Weight: 3.21g

Reference: Vardanyan 18

Some marginal weakness, almost very fine

£500-700



78

QARMATID, ALPTEKIN ABU MANSUR AL-MU'IZZI (fl. 364-367h)

Dirham, Tabariya 365h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa Allah | wahdahu | la sharik lahu | al-Ta'i lillah | al-sadat | Abu Mansur al-Mu'izzi*
Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad rasul Allah | sali Allah 'alayhi | wa 'ala lilla | al-Ta'i' lillah | al-sayyid al-ra'is*
Weight: 2.84g
Reference: cf Vardanyan 24 [a coin from Dimashq with similar legends]

Buckled flan, a crude striking but very fine for issue and extremely rare, apparently unpublished

£1,000-1,500



79

QARMATID, JA'FAR B. AL-FADL (366-367h)

Dirham, Filastin 365h

Obverse: In field: ornament | *la ilaha illa Allah | wahdahu la sharik lahu | al-sadat al-ru'asa | Ishaq Kisra Ja'far | ∴ ∴*
Reverse: In field: *al-Ta'i' lillah | al-sayyid al-ra'is*
Weight: 2.42g
Reference: cf Vardanyan 25 (without ornament or triplets on obverse)

Edge fissures and small central hole caused by a flan fault, otherwise very fine with little wear from circulation, rare

£500-700



80

QARMATID, JA'FAR B. AL-FADL (366-367h)

Dirham, Filastin 366h

Obverse: In field: *al-Ta'i' lillah | al-sayyid al-ra'is*
Reverse: In field: *al-sayyid Ja'far ibn al-Fadl | Abu Mansur al-Mu'izzi*
Weight: 3.11g
Reference: Vardanyan 28

Fine and very rare

£600-800



81

**ANONYMOUS, POSSIBLY QARAMITA,
Dirham, Makka 380h**

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad | rasul Allah | sala Allah | 'alayhi wa salam | al-qudra*
Weight: 3.30g

Edge crimp and weakly struck in margins, fine and excessively rare, apparently unpublished

£2,000-3,000

This unpublished coin is entirely anonymous. It names neither caliph nor any secular ruler or governor.



82

BUWAYHID, MU'IZZ AL-DAWLA (334-356h)

Obverse: In margin: *Muhammad rasul Allah sali Allah 'alayhi*
In field: *lillah | al-Muti' | lillah*
Reverse: In margin: *la ilaha illa Allah wahdahu*
In field: *Mu'izz | al-dawla | Abu'l-Husayn*
Weight: 1.31g

Traces of mounting, fine or better and apparently unpublished

£700-1,000



83

**BUWAYHID, ABU KALIJAR (415-440h)
Donative dirham, al-Basra 433h**

Obverse: In margins: *Qur'an xxx, 3-4 (outer); mint and date (inner)*
In field: *la ilaha illa Allah | Muhammad rasul Allah | al-Qa'im bi-amr Allah | Shahanshah*
Reverse: In margins: *Qur'an ix, 33 (outer); al-malik al-mu'azzam 'Imad Din Allah wa Ghiyath 'Ibad Allah wa*
yamin khalifat Allah Abu Kalijar (inner)
In field: *Qur'an cxii, 1-4 (Surah al-Ikhlās)*
Weight: 3.41g

Edge chip (but legends still fully legible), good very fine and of the highest rarity, apparently unpublished

£700-1,000



84

ANONYMOUS, TEMP. ABU'L-HUSAYN AL-MU'AYYAD (d. 421h)

Fractional dinar, Hawsam 400h

Obverse: In border: *lillah* repeated eight times, separated by eight annulets
In margin: *bismillah duriba hadha al-dinar bi-Hawsam sanat arba' mi'a*
In field: *la ilaha illa Allah | Muhammad rasul Allah | 'Ali wali Allah*, enclosed with octagonal border with concave sides and annulet at each corner

Reverse: In border: *lillah* repeated eight times, separated by eight annulets
In margin: *Muhammad rasul Allah arsulahu bi'l-huda wa din al-haqq li-yuzhirahu*
In field: *Allah ahad Allah | al-samad lam yalid wa lam | yalud wa lam yakun lahu | kufu ahad* enclosed within octagonal border with concave sides and annulet at each corner

Weight: 1.11g

Reference: cf Morton & Eden auction 79, 21 April 2016, lot 170

Some weakness, very fine and very rare

£500-700



85

GREAT SELJUQ, MALIK SHAH (465-485h)

Dinar, Isfahan 483h

Reverse: In field, in eight lines: *ayat al-kursi*, the 'Throne Verse' (Qur'an ii, 255)

Weight: 2.72g

References: Alptekin -; cf The New York Sale XIV, 10 January 2007, lot 539

Edge clip above reverse field (probably where a mount has been removed), almost very fine and very rare £700-1,000



86

GREAT SELJUQ, MALIK SHAH (465-485h)

Dinar, Shiraz 482h

Reverse: In field: citing the local governor *Khutlugh Beg* to right and left

Weight: 4.62g

Reference: Album 1674

Minor edge bend, good very fine and extremely rare

£700-1,000

Provenance: Ex Horizon Auction I (Stephen Album Rare Coins and Wilkes & Curtis), 2 October 2016, lot 502.



87

SELJUQ OF WESTERN IRAN, MAS'UD (529-547h)

Dinar, 'Askar 531h

Obverse: In field: *la ilaha illa Allah | wahdahu la sharik lahu | al-Rashid billah | al-Sultan | Sanjar*

Reverse: In field: *lillah | Muhammad rasul Allah | al-Sultan al-mu'azzam | Mu'izz al-dunya wa'l-din | Abu'l-Fath Mas'ud | nasrahu*

Weight: 3.87g

References: Album 1691 (for type); Diler –

Some double-striking on reverse, about very fine and apparently unpublished

£700-1,000



88

GREAT SELJUQ, MALIK SHAH II (548-555h)

Dinar, 'Askar Mukram 549h

Weight: 2.46g

References: Album 1694; cf Wilkes & Curtis auction 1, 16 June 2014, lot 364 [dated 548h]

Almost very fine and very rare

£700-1,000



89

BATINITE RULER OF ALAMUT, TEMP. 'ALA AL-DIN MUHAMMAD B. AL-HASAN (618-653h)

Fractional dirham, without mint or date

Obverse: *al-mawla | al-a'zam*; pellet between lines

Reverse: *'ala al-dunya | wa'l-din*; two small points between lines

Weight: 1.89g

Reference: Hamdan/Vardanyan 40

Usual weak areas of striking, generally good very fine and well-centred, rare

£700-1,000



90

FADLUYID ATABEGS OF SHABANKARA, JALAL-AL-DIN TAYYIB SHAH (c. 662-680h)

Dinar, Aydhaj, date off flan

Reverse: In field: citing the *Ilkhanid Abaqa* as overlord

Weight: 10.71g

Reference: Album G1941 RRR

Struck off-centre and with some weak areas, better than very fine and extremely rare

£3,000-4,000

The Fadluyids were vassals of the Ilkhanids in eastern Fars, and this appears to be the first published Fadluyid dinar to bear a legible mintname. Aydhaj was the Fadluyid capital and was captured by Hulagu in the late 650s. The ruling member of the dynasty, Muzaffar al-Din Muhammad, was killed, but later Fadluyids appear to have been left in place by the Mongols to govern the region on their behalf.

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.



91
JALAYRID, TEMP. SHAYKH UWAYS I (757-776h)

Dinar, Baghdad 758h

Weight: 6.79g

Reference: Album T2297

Good fine, rare

£700-1,000



92
CHAGHATAYID, KIBAK KHAN (718-726h)

Obverse die for a silver dinar, type of Bukhara

Weight: 101.17g

Diameter: 37mm

Height: 12.1mm

Reference: cf SNAT XVa, 273 for a coin struck from a similar obverse die

Has been cleaned, about very fine and extremely rare

£1,500-2,000



93
CHAGHATAYID, BUYAN QULI (749-760h)

Obverse die for a silver dinar, type of Isbijab

Weight: 292g

Diameter: 39.2mm

Height: 32.5mm

Reference: cf SNAT XVb, 75 for a coin struck from a comparable obverse die

Some green deposit and other accretion, very fine overall and extremely rare

£1,500-2,000

All lots are subject to a Buyer's Premium of 20% on the hammer price plus VAT as appropriate. See our Conditions of Business for further details.



94

QAJAR, TEMP. MUHAMMAD SHAH (1250-1264h / AD 1834-1848)

Gold five-mithqals, 1251h

Obverse: In centre: *Ana hujjat Allah | wa khassatahu*, 'I am the Proof of God and chosen of Him,' with the names of the Shi'ite Imams around

Reverse: In centre: a Persian couplet meaning:
'As long as God's favour shall Earth retain,
So shall the Coin of the Lord of Time remain.'

Weight: 23.27g

Reference: Rabino 41

Obverse centre a little weakly struck, very fine to good very fine and very rare

£10,000-15,000

Provenance: Ex Islamic Coin Auction 13, 30 October 2007, lot 626.

This coin is anonymous, but Rabino identified it as an issue struck during the reign of the Qajar ruler Muhammad Shah and this attribution has been retained here.

Muhammad Shah Qajar was introduced to Sufi doctrines by his tutor, Hajji Mirza Aqasi, and is said to have become completely devoted to Sufi teachings by the age of twenty. Aqasi contrived to become Muhammad Shah's grand vizier shortly after the latter acceded to the throne, a position he held until the end of his reign.

During the reign of Muhammad Shah, highly elaborate Muharram ceremonies became popular. These took place in specially-constructed buildings called *Husaynias* or *takias*, where lavish dramatic portrayals of the martyrdom of Husayn b. 'Ali were performed to large audiences. An event such as this would have been a fitting context in which special presentation coins such as this might have been distributed.

END OF SALE

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(d) reject future bids from the Buyer;

(e) charge interest at 8% per annum above Lloyds TSB Bank plc Base Rate from the Payment Date to the date that the Purchase Price is received in cleared funds;

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Important Coins of the Islamic World

2 April 2020

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