

Villas

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(dir.)

# MONNAIES DU HAUT MOYEN ÂGE HISTOIRE ET ARCHÉOLOGIE

(PÉNINSULE IBÉRIQUE - MAGHREB, VII<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE)



ÉTUDES MÉDIÉVALES IBÉRIQUES

MÉRIDIENNES

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**Monnaies du haut Moyen Âge :  
histoire et archéologie**

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## Additions to the lead seals of the Umayyad conquest of the Iberian Peninsula\*

Tawfiq IBRAHIM\*\*

When a general, but abridged, article on the subject was published just a few years ago (Ibrahim 2011)<sup>1</sup>, the author thought of, and started working on, a first corpus of the known material. But soon after, in view of the numerous discoveries of new seals, not only in the Iberian Peninsula but also in other areas of what was the Umayyad Empire, it became quite evident that such a project was very much premature. It seems now clear that the subject of Umayyad lead seals is undoubtedly just at its very beginning. Our knowledge of this material, and the debate on it, will probably develop significantly in the near future. That is, once the expected professional focus by archeologist<sup>2</sup> and historians is necessarily put on this unique primary evidence. So alternatively, the provisional solution chosen in this paper is the publication of a few of the more noteworthy seals that have appeared since the above mentioned article. The intent here is to very schematically, without any particular order of typologies, discuss and put up for preliminary debate what we think are the more noteworthy or problematic seals that have been brought to our attention since then.

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\* This paper follows in general lines and is closely interrelated in abridged form to the talk given in Spanish by the author at the Casa de Velázquez, Madrid, on the 12/2/2014 with the title of “Los precintos de la conquista: su problemática y actualización”. The power-point of this lecture with brief commentaries added has been posted in English under the title “*The seals of the ‘Umayyad’ conquest: their problematic and actualization*”, see at <https://www.academia.edu/5751302/> or alternatively at <http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/Seals.html>.

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<sup>1</sup> This article with added notes and important corrections can be seen at <https://www.academia.edu/2324901/> or alternatively through <http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/Seals.html>

<sup>2</sup> None of the known seals have their origin in archeological finds and strictly speaking that includes those found by two archeologists at the Ruscino site, as these were salvaged, in extremis and out of context or due stratification, with the use of metal detectors from the many discarded mounds of previous archeological digs. Literally the most important contribution of the Ruscino site had been thrown to the dump. See Marichal & Sénac 2007.

## New seals

1 *Eliberri* (Granada)

*musalaha libira*: Peace treaty of Libira



...ليبيرا(ة)؟...

...مصلح(ة)...

Elvira near Granada, was reputed in Visigoth times to have had a substantial Jewish population. So following the not very exquisite treatment Jews had long received from the Visigoth, a treatment now in symbiotic association with endemic one of the Church of Rome,<sup>3</sup> it would therefore be of little wonder if they very willingly entered into a peace pact with the new masters of the terrain as this seal seems to indicate. If so, this would have probably occurred during the tenure of *Musa ibn Nusayr* when his son *'Abd al-'Aziz*, leading a detachment of the *djund* moving eastward, must have necessarily passed through the area on his way Orihuela were the pact of Tudmir would be established. The possible pact with Elvira may have been established just before *Musa's* departure in 95/713.

On Visigoth coinage this mint is usually written as *Eliberri* with many variants in the spelling of the name place including that of *Liberry* (Pliego, n° 101 e)<sup>4</sup>. In the case of the name place *Eliberri* the first letter was usually silenced and not necessarily pronounced<sup>5</sup> and this is how it must have sounded to the Arabic speaker for whom, in any case, the vowel "e" was nonexistent. The lettering of the name place on this area is

<sup>3</sup> There is little or no evidence of the persecution of Jews by the Visigoth of the Iberian Peninsula while they were still practicing their original 'national' creed: Aryanism. The rabid persecution of Jews seems to start after Recaredo I (586-601) made the strategic political change of adopting Catholicism as the official religion of the kingdom. It sometimes seems as if the Visigoth persecution of Jews from then on was for some of its monarch's one of the necessary proofs of the sincerity of their 'conversion'.

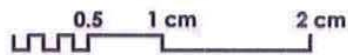
<sup>4</sup> See the variations of readings of this name place in, for example, Recaredo I (Pliego 2009, t. II, 97-98).

<sup>5</sup> I am quoting on this the expert opinion of Professor L. A. García Moreno, Universidad de Alcalá de Henares.

in part off center so there could have been a final *ta marbuta* not seen on this seal, but even if so this would not change the suggested reading.

## 2 Badja (Beja, south Portugal)

*daḳiḳ badja*: Grain from Beja



باجة

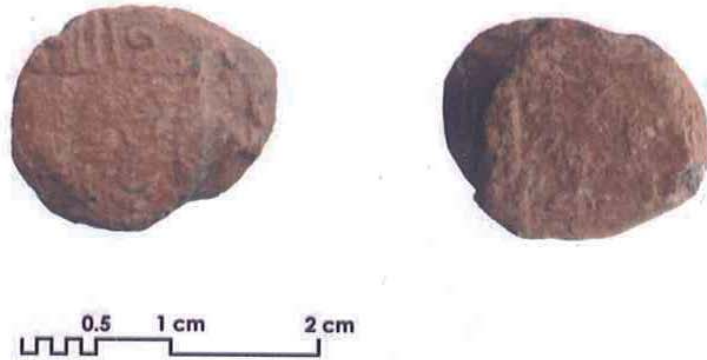
دقيق

Grain as well as other food stuff for the basic needs of the *djund* must have been very much an integral part of any early peace treaty as can be attested in it being prominently listed in the well known one of Tudmir. This seal could be related to the due payment in kind in a possible peace pact with the city of Beja. The existence of such a treaty could be inferred from the existence of what could be a *djizya* seal clearly bearing the name of that locality (Ibrahim 2011, 156-157, Fig.13. See foot note n° 2 for link). Of interest is the very close similarity, practically identical, of the epigraphy of the name place *badja* on both seals.

3 *Fay Allah nin al-Andalus*

*fay Allah nin al-Andalus*: The fifth due to God from al-Andalus

في الله من (ن)؟  
(الا)ندال (س)



The other side is effaced and not readable but probably had a *Bismi/Allah*. This seal is of a clearly very distinct *fay* type from the one previously published (Ibrahim 2011, 157, Fig. 14. See foot note n° 2 for link), a difference which may probably indicate that it could well be from a different governorship.

*Fay Allah* or the fifth due to God, meaning the part of any booty derived from a ‘licit’ war act, *ghanima*, and the later taxation that is derived from the results of such an act on the means of production, all of which is supposed to be retained for benefit of whole community. The obligatory retaining of this fifth seems to have been from the very beginning problematic in al-Andalus. Even the latin *Cronica Mozarabe de 754*<sup>6</sup> (74-75) relates the information that *Musa ibn Nusayr* was accused in Damascus

<sup>6</sup> The adequacy of the inclusion of the term “Mozárabe” in the title given by the translator to this anonymous Latin chronicle has been questioned. In the context of al-Andalus, Mozarabe was initially applied to an arabized Christian and it has been reasonably argued that a contemporary of the conquest and the Umayyad governor’s period could not have had enough time for such an adjustment. That said, the very erudite anonymous author, probably a prelate, may have been a very rapid learner as his profuse, and usually correct, use of the Hijra dating in his text and the very precise information of the movements, raids and battles of the Arab *djund* in the Gaul and the Maghreb seems indicate. To get this information he would need to communicate with the two participants, the Arab, “*Arabum*”, or their Berber, “*Maurus*”, auxiliaries, the only other possibility is to have gotten it from Visigoths that may have participated and aided in these events. The Arab chronicles that generally exalt as central the Arab-Islamic nature of conquests were all written very much latter, actually century’s later, and are understandably silent of any such participation. But it is evident that the repeated booty raids into the Gallic regions, a completely unknown and mysterious terrain for the Arab *djund*, could not have been at all possible without some very effective and interested local guidance. The Visigoths, it should be remembered had had a very long history of conflict with the Franks having lost to the them their capital, Toulouse, and most of their extensive domain in the Gaul after the battle of Vouillé in 507, they therefore may have had a good reason, in addition to the participation in booty taking, to encourage the Arab raids against their erstwhile enemies. The failed attack by *al-Samh* on their old capital Toulouse could very well have been at their instigation. This would all be just speculation was it not that this same Chronicle (88-89) clearly mentions the use by governor ‘Ambasa of satraps, “*satrapes*”, in his

of not having done it correctly, if at all, and *Ibn Qutiya* (14) affirms that it ceases to be retained in al-Andalus after the end of the short tenure of *al-Samh* in 102/721. This seems to be a long term problem in the rest of the Umayyad Empire which after the spectacular early booty sees a rapid decrease in the arrival of due tax revenues to its capital Damascus. This is probably not because it has not been efficiently collected in place, the complexity of the seals and the narrative of the referred Latin chronicle seems to indicate a very diligent and efficient excise system, but more likely because it has been partly harvested or simply withheld outright for their own benefit by the local leadership in far away and difficult to control provinces. The decreasing revenues in the face of rapidly increasing payments, 'ata', at its political center must have severely stressed the finances of the Umayyad state, a factor that probably contributed mightily to its mounting political instability.

#### 4 'Abd Allah al-amir

'Abd Allah al-amir: 'Abd Allah the Emir



This seal has only one epigraphic face, the reverse is a kind of long cone shape which would indicate its incrustation into some object. The normal order of the wording would have usually been *al-amir 'Abd Allah*. It could be of *al-Samh* as has been previously proposed for a *sulh* seal with the name *'Abd Allah ibn Malik* (Ibrahim 2006, 229-335; Ibrahim 2011, 151-152, Fig. 6). If not, *'Abd Allah* is not the name of any of the 22 or so governors that came to rule al-Andalus when it was part of the Umayyad Empire. Otherwise the only *'Abd Allah* in the sources for this period is *'Abd Allah b. Musa* who was left in charge of Ifriqiya by his father. There is no mention of

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wars against the Franks. These subordinates could very well have been Visigoth or Hispanic allies with whom many pacts had been established and whose military resources could very well have been used to this effect, just as it had been done in Berber North Africa. If so, this participation could better help explain how such a vast and geographically very complex area, as undoubtedly the Iberian Peninsula is, could have been subjugated by the relatively very small number of troops that were the Arab *djund* and their Berber auxiliaries.



his coming to the Iberian Peninsula, the closest would have been his much debated raid on the Balearic Islands which may have been confused in the sources with the more documented ones he did on the island of Sardinia and for which, surprisingly, there seems to be actual seal evidence (Zucca 2004, 142-144). Theoretically, but improbably, he may have sent part of the *fay Allah* of his raids on the various islands to his immediate overlord and father *Musa ibn Nusayr*, then fully engaged in the conquest and booty taking in the richer regions on the Iberian Peninsula<sup>7</sup>.

## 5 *sina't hums*

*sina't hums*: The sinecure of Hums (?)



If the first word is to be read as, *sina'(t)*<sup>8</sup>, and for that a probable *ta marbuta* off the margin must be assumed as the ligature of the *'ain* seems to indicate, then the old meaning of the word could be taken as the area of production or allotted wealth giving or extraction area. Which in the case of the *djund* of Hums would be Seville were they were allocated. In some of the old geographies the term Hums is synonymous to Seville. This would be a seal made after the coming of *Balkh* and his Syrians in 124-5/740. This, to date, is the first, and only, attested mention of a *djund* name on a seal of al-Andalus. The Arab *djund* in al-Andalus unlike in most other areas of the Arab/Islamic expansion did not concentrate in one geographical point or *misr*, as they had in Egypt and Ifriqiya, but, in contingents, dispersed in accordance to their perceived tribal affiliation throughout the richer parts of the Peninsula and, initially at least, this seems to have been done in agreement with those of the Visigoth elites with

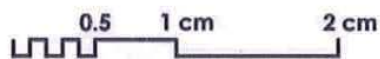
<sup>7</sup> On the other hand the clearly early epigraphy of this seal precludes that it be of the much later *'Abd Allah b. Muhammad* the independent Umayyad ruler of al-Andalus from 275/888-300/912. For comparative epigraphic styles see coins of *'Abd Allah b. Muhammad* in: [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/Mundahir\\_AbdAllah.htm](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/Mundahir_AbdAllah.htm)

<sup>8</sup> Another possible reading could be *day'a(t) hums* which would be of the same general meaning as their wealth extracting area.

which they had negotiated *sulh* pacts<sup>9</sup>. The anonymous author of the Latin *Cronica Mozarabe de 754* (70-71, 72-73) bitterly complains throughout his text at the apparent ease with which the Visigoth elite entered into pacts with the Arab conquerors, "treacherous pacts" he calls them and blames collaborators such as one Opas, said to be the son of the late Visigoth monarch Egica (687-702), as being the main promoters of these pacts and adds further on the hyperbole, that those who refused the pacts or disliked their implementation escaped in disorder to the mountains where they perished from hunger and other causes.

## 6 *Qasm* (...?)

*Qasm*: allotment of ...



قسم قسم قسم  
جريد جرائد خرائد

بسم  
الله

<sup>9</sup> The Arab *djund* in particular cases seem to be also acting as tax collectors and securers of the domains of some of the Visigoth elites with whom they had established intertwining interest through the *sulh* pacts. Probably in parallel there was also a significant amount strategic intermarriage between the *djund* elite and the women of the Visigoth aristocracy as the prominent example, among others, of 'Abd al-Aziz's marriage to Egilona, the widow of the last Visigoth ruler, to add the reference of what seems to be his regal taking of many other princesses in concubinage, an act which seems to deeply scandalize and is incomprehensible to the anonymous author of the Latin *Cronica Mozarabe de 754* (78-79). On the other hand it seems that some segments of the Visigoth elite had negotiated into their *sulh*'s the 'crown domains' as their very own. These domains in the Visigoth system were the property of the crown and though for the use of the reigning monarch were not his to transfer to his inheritors; theoretically, it had to be transferred intact to the next ruler in line and so on. The Arab conquerors either did not initially seem to have been well informed about this system or found it in line with their own priorities convenient to accept the claims of the various Visigoth elites with whom they had drawn pacts and therefore partook through them in a hefty share of the benefits of those claims. As otherwise, accepting the legal existence of crown property would have entailed that a good part of the revenue collected would have had to be, theoretically, reverted to Damascus. It would take the establishment of the Independent Emirate by 'Abd al-Rhman I for the new dynastic ruler to begin the difficult and coercive task of reclaiming the crown domains back to the state.

On one side it has the *basmala* in two lines and on the other also in two lines which can be read alternatively as can be seen above. Before discussing the above three possible readings let us try and discard that it be a name place. This last is quite improbable as there is nothing exactly similar in the Arabic geographies covering al-Andalus, the closest is جرندة (Gerona), but the circularly marked border of the seal, as can be seen in the image, does not at all allow enough space within its possible circumference for the necessary *ta marbuta* for that geographic reading.

Putting aside the above and trying other possibilities, the first reading as قسم جريد, *qasm djarid*, would mean the “allotment of palm leaves” which would be a near valueless object and meaningless in this geographical context as there were no palm groves near Cordoba were this object was accidentally said to have been found. In any case on the Egyptian papyri of the period when dealing with taxable palm groves speak of them simply as “*nahil*”.

The second possible reading as قسم جراند, *qasm djaraid*, could be a linguistically possible, but improbable in meaning as “allotment of lists” and, even if so, the contents would in any case be a mystery to us. In theory it could concern the distribution of property deeds or similar. On the other hand there is no mention of the distribution of such lists in any of the chronicles covering this early period. It is also difficult to imagine the practicality of how the sealing of documents could have functioned with such a ‘wire-through’ seal<sup>10</sup>. On the few Egyptian extant papyri with surviving seals, usually in clay, they were impressed directly on the document. In any case the *basmala* on the lead seal on one of its areas would not be necessary as that would have been required at the beginning of any hypothetical accompanying text that was so sealed<sup>11</sup>.

The third reading as قسم خرائد, *qasm kharaid*, may perhaps be as improbable as it is fascinating for it could entail the allotment of human booty, female that is. Whatever the case the possibility makes occasion for an interesting debate. The word can be read *kharaid* as the plural of a word which literally means “a pearl before it has been pierced for linking”. As a synonym it literally means a “virgin”, of good looks, of course, as the image of a ‘pearl’ is used repeatedly as a synonym of exceptional female beauty in classical Arabic poetry. Perhaps this interpretation may not be as farfetched as it may at first seem. It is very improbable that the *djund* rapidly moving in an act of war from far away Ifriqiya would have done so with their women folk and their necessary retinue in the trailing. Actually one of the few of the Arab *djund* that was chronicled to have brought his wife along in the conquest of Hispania was *Musa ibn Nusayr* (who was about 80 years old by then!). So the procurement of women as part of the booty or stipulated as part of a *sulh* would have been a fundamental need at that juncture and could have been probably included in any *sulh* pact as they had been repeatedly demanded in the conquest of North Africa. The fact that they are not

<sup>10</sup> To get an idea of the various types of sealing methods of that period please look at slide n° 13 in: <https://www.academia.edu/5751302>

<sup>11</sup> Note in the image that the ends of the ferrous wire held by this lead seal can still be seen at either sides of this object.

mentioned in the one of Tudmir, the only one of Hispania whose contents are registered, could well be very much the exception due to the acknowledged exemplary leniency of the said pact and where the womenfolk, free or in slavery, were specifically excluded from the said pact, therefore implicitly indicating the exceptionality of that exclusion. Nevertheless, the general demand is clearly inferred in the only contemporary text of the conquest and domination of Hispania, that is the Latin *Cronica Mozarabe de 754*, (74-75; 78-79), where the taking of the feminine youth of beauty and probable social position as booty is poignantly cited and lamented. Not forgetting that this is exactly what *Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam* relates (17, 22-23, 28, 29, 38, 58) had been done in North Africa where the "pacted" taking of Berber women seems to have been a recurring demand by the *djund* leadership and by Damascus where their aesthetic qualities were much appreciated. The early Arabic chronicles make frequent and specific references to this demand. A humiliating and repetitive exaction that was documented in the Arabic chronicles as one of the main causes of the great Berber rebellion of 123 H. Well known, among others, is the example of *'Abd al Rahmán I "al- Dakhil"* whose mother was one of those Berber ladies taken as booty to Damascus.

Even though historically, by one method or another, the taking of desirable women would be an important part of the booty of any conqueror, a dominant factor that probably has its atavistic masculine roots deep in mankind's pre-history, in the case of the early Arab conquest that near universal desirability seems to be mightily exaggerated by the pre-Islamic perception that the Arab *djund* seem to have carried over of the value of the feminine. It seems as though in pre-Islamic central Arabia there was a radical disproportionate numerical relation between the masculine and the feminine in favor of the former. Due, aside from natural causes, to the recorded practice of female infanticide at birth, "post partum". This, supposedly, among other possible reasons done to reduce the number of mouths to feed, in fear of the inevitable future famine to come. This practice of female infanticide is clearly cited and specifically condemned in the Koran (17, 31/81, 8-9) and also infanticide in general in (6, 151; 17, 31), this last would indicate that male infanticide was in extreme times also practiced. It is difficult to gauge the extent of the female infanticide in that period but if we look at the recorded pre-Islamic marriage practices we may be inclined to believe that the scarcity of the feminine could have been quite significant. This evident dearth of women in pre-Islamic Arabia can be clearly inferred from an interesting hadith attributed to the historically very important wife of the Prophet, *Aicha*<sup>12</sup>; where out of the four types of pre-Islamic marriages cited no less than three are polyandrous, and two of them radically so!

This hadith gives us an interesting historical hindsight that merits close attention and needs to be developed as it may help us understand later behaviors. What follows is a free translation from the Arabic text, always an interpretation, and done in abbreviated manner just for the purpose of our present argumentation and without

<sup>12</sup> *Sahih Bukhari*, vol. 2, ch. 37, 44-45.

listing all the necessary *isnad*. The four types of pre-Islamic marriages can be briefly listed as follows:

1 - Normal courtship, followed by required permission of father and obligatory payment of dowry to him.

2 - A man, just after the last menstruation of his wife lends her to an agreed other for the period necessary for her pregnancy and the consequent child birth. The child would socially be accepted as that of the borrower and the wife could return to the lender.

3 - Called the "marriage of ten" were up to ten men would in a binding accord with a free woman have access to her until a child was born. After the infant was born she would demand all their presence, a socially obligatory attendance, and freely name, at her exclusive criteria, the fortunate father.

4 - Called the "marriage of the flag", was when a free women would put up a flag recognizable for such endeavors near the entrance of her abode, tent or house, indicating accessibility to all the men of her community that so wished it. After the birth of an infant the lady (we shall be polite) would call all those who were registered to have visited her. Then in the presence of all the participants of this endeavor a soothsayer of recognized repute would do her infallible ritual and irrefutably assign parenthood to the blessed father.

Though, unlike the first marriage type, were there was a clearly stipulated dowry, there is no mention in this *hadith* of payment or compensation for the three polyandrous ones, but surely that was implicitly understood and very much a central part of these gregarious social interchanges.

To complicate the matter further we could add one more marriage typology not mentioned in the above *hadith* that has its roots in the *djahiliya*, one that was very much debated through time within the inter-Islamic dialectics (based mainly on Koran 4, 24) and still practiced in Shia Islam, which is the *nikah muta'ah*, نكاح المتعة, or the temporary marriage. One such which is contractually limited within a mutually accorded time, and which probably had its origins, in part, in the necessities of prolonged war campaigns and long term travel.

The above *hadith* should not be taken by the naturally skeptical as just anti-*djahiliya* propaganda as these polyandrous marriages of yonder were recalled well into the established Islamic period that ensued and were used to denigrate the ascendancy of persons; for example *Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan*, no less than the founder of the Umayyad dynasty was accused by some of his enemies as being the result of the "marriage of ten" and, whatever, he was admittedly the inheritor of the best political genes.

Finally, if the reading *kharaid* is at all acceptable it would come squarely under the injunction of "ma malkat aymanakum", "that which your right hand may (licitly) possess"<sup>13</sup>. On the other hand of its double meaning "virgin" and "fine-looking", in

<sup>13</sup> This important and controversial phrase appears in various forms in the Koran, some fourteen times in relation to particular incidents, some notorious war acts including general booty distribution. In its

view of the above discussed long tradition of an uncommon ease in gender relationships, the emphasis in any allotment at this point would very much be, if not exclusively, be put on the esthetic.

### 7 *bismi Allah qasm al-An(da)lus*

*bismi/Allah (qa)sm/(al)-An(da)lus.:*  
in the name of God this is an allotment in al-Andalus



بِسْمِ  
(أ) لَان  
(لـ) لَان

بِسْمِ  
اللَّهِ

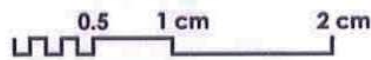
This is the same as the legends on the right area of another seal already published (Ibrahim 2011, Fig. 2), but with a different distribution and none of the still undeciphered legends of the other area of the referred seal. The previously published seals are in all probability of the governorship of 'Abd al-' Azizz and one of them holds the first datable evidence of the use of the Arabic term *al-Andalus* as has been augmented in the notes on slides 17 & 18 of the referred power-point (see foot note n°1 for link). It would seem therefore that the present seal could be of a later governorship.

### 8 *bismi Allah maqsum tayib*

*bismi/Allah//maqsum/tayib:*  
In the name of God this is a licit allotment or distribution

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much more ample original interpretation it can help us, in part, understand one of the main driving factors behind the rapid empire building.



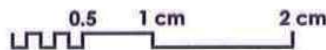
مقسوم  
طيب

بسم  
الله

This is very similar, in content and epigraphy to the seal in Ibrahim (2011, 151, Fig. 5), which unlike this one did not seen have the *bismi/Allah* on its other side.

### 9 *al-wafa'/lilah*

*al-wafa'/lilah*: honesty is due to God



الوفاء  
لله

This is a rectangular lead seal with legends only on one side and which must have been forcefully encrusted on some other element. It is difficult to judge by the type if it is of the same period as those mentioned before, though we are inclined to believe from the evidence recorded up to now that the lead seals in al-Andalus seem to be basically confined to the period of the Umayyad conquest and its governors<sup>14</sup>. The phrase that “honesty is due to God” may have been an exhortation to honesty within the tax collecting system, the lack of which from the texts of the chronicles covering this period seems to have been a very serious problem. Is the message on this seal and some early fals from al-Andalus and other areas of the Umayyad Empire in its complete form *amara Allah al wafa' wal 'adl* (God orders honesty and justice) being used to transmit basic ethical standards of conduct to the turbulent Arab *djund* and their equally turbulent auxiliaries; the newly converted *mawali*? This same injunction is used repeatedly on fals that were struck across the empire in many other mint names. Of very special note is the fact that the dated fals with mints, *Jayy*, *Rayy*, *al-Kufa & Wasit* (Walker, n° 241, 260, 278, 285), with this particular legend are mostly within the dates 100-102 H. which is around the brief tenure of 'Umar 'Abd al Aziz, a ruler who was reputed to have had very strong ethical concerns<sup>15</sup> and his direct relation to some of these fals seems to be specifically registered in an Arabic chronicle (Treadwell 2008, 366-67)<sup>16</sup>. If so the seal above could tentatively be dated to the tenure of his governor in al-Andalus, *al-Samh*, 99-102/718-721. *Al-Samh* was incidentally the only governor of al-Andalus ever to be named from Damascus, perhaps indicative of the little importance that this far away and problematic sub-province of Ifriqiya had in that epoch. This stands in strong contrast to the near

<sup>14</sup> Up to date we have no evidence of lead seals of al-Andalus datable by name, content or epigraphy past the first ruler of the Independent Emirate 'Abd al-Rahman I (138-172/755-788). This is very significant as there seems to be, for reasons unknown to us, a sudden discontinuity in al-Andalus of this method sealing which seems to occur right after the fall of the Umayyads of Damascus.

<sup>15</sup> This near mythical eulogizing of *Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz* in many later Arabic chronicles covering the period is surprisingly taken up very early in the near contemporary Latin *Cronica Mozarabe de 754* (82-83) and this is all the more so as the anonymous Christian author has little good to say about the long list of Umayyad rulers he mentions and even less about the governors that ruled al-Andalus during this period. This is the translation of the said text from Latin to Spanish done by Pereira 1980: “Este Umar, suspendida toda actividad bélica, mostróse tan bondadoso y tolerante en el trono, que incluso hoy se le concede un honor y gloria tales que no solo sus súbditos sino también los extranjeros le elogian más que a todos los príncipes anteriores. Se le reconoce una virtud tal como jamás la logró nadie del linaje de los árabes a lo largo de los numerosos reinados”. The Latin text: “*Qui Umar uacante omni prelio tante benignitatis et patientie in regno extitit, ut hactenus tantus ei honor lausque referatur, ut non solum a suis, sed etian ab externis pre cunctis retroctis principibus beatificetur. Tanta autem sanctimonia ei adsribitur quanta nulli unquam ex Arabum gente in regni gubernacula prorogata est*”.

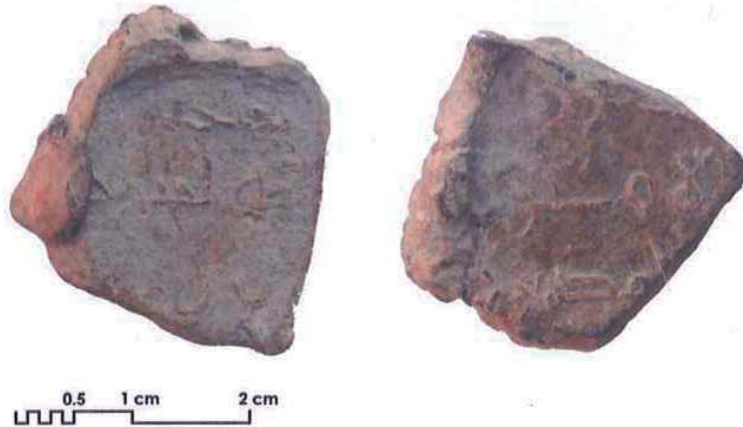
<sup>16</sup> For this important information I am indebted to L. Ilisch who in May 05 of 2010 a discussion in I.C.G about these fals contributed the following: “That 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz has to be credited with this in person is related through a narrative, which Luke Treadwell dug out first in the Ta'rikh Dimashq by Ibn 'Asakir according to which 'Umar upon seeing the new fulus from al-Kufa with the legend “*amara l-amir 'abd al-hamid bi l-wafa wa l-'adl*” ordered that this had to be changed into “*amara Allah bi l-wafa wa l-'adl*”, a story which is fully confirmed by the numismatic evidence. See Treadwell 2008, 367.



mythical considerations it was to take, retrospectively, in later Arabic historical registers, all the way down to the present, if one may dare add.

### 10 *al-Amir (Muham)mad*

*al-Amir (Muha)mmad (?)*



...ة لمحد. ؟

(ا)لامير

(محد)مد

Only the word (a)l-Amir and the last two letters *مد* of a name are readable, while none of the text on the other side is as yet comprehensible. If this particular *al-amir* was one of the governors of al-Anadalus then the last two letters would only fit that of *Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah al-Asdja'i* whose brief tenure was for less than two months, between 112/113 H. (730-731). This is quite speculative and we would need a much clearer seal for the "guess" to begin to be affirmed.

But excluding the above we only have seals with the names of just three governors, *al-Hurr*, *al-Samh* and *'Ambasa*, out of the 22 that have been recorded in the chronicles for that historic period (actually one can count 24 governors as at least two repeated tenure). So it is not unreasonable to expect that more names of governors will appear in future seal finds.

### 11 *bismi Allah (mi)ma dj(a)za bi al-Andal(us)*

*bisni Allah (mi)ma dj(a)za<sup>17</sup> bil-Andal(us) ... (?)*:

In the name of God this is what is to be acceptable in al-Andalus (?)

<sup>17</sup> The *alif* of prolongation is assumed as it is often left out in early Kufiq script though it does appear in the form of *جواز* in the two seals of this type previously published.



بالاندلس

؟...؟

بسم الله...؟

(...ما جـ(ا)ز؟

The previously published two similar seal types clearly showing the word ‘licitness’, *djawaz*, جـواز (Ibrahim 2011, 157-8, Fig. 15-16) were erroneously thought to be related to the excellent dirhams of the period<sup>18</sup>. This now obvious error was induced by a direct quote from the medieval dictionary, *Lisan al ‘Arab*, which under the referred term gives an example of one meaning by stating, “a dirham’s licitude: it is accepted by its contents....”<sup>19</sup>. Nevertheless, due to other material evidence that we shall mention just further on and by recalling that *Ibn Manzur*, the author of this dictionary, lived from the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> to the beginnings of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and that he probably wrote his work in Mameluk Egypt, he was then, specifically referring to the dirhams circulating in his epoch. The known dirhams of the period are clearly much debased and their silver content is minimum and far removed from the excellent quality and purity of those of the Umayyad Empire. The Mamluk coins are close to what the Geniza papers calls “black dirhams”; not recommended to be freely exchanged at any rate! So what *ibn Manzur* is probably referring to is the governmental fiduciary legality of coins of obligatory, not to say forced, circulation. Therefore the meaning of the phrase was exactly the opposite of what we had first thought.

Furthermore and central to the present discussion is that when looking through the numismatic evidence of the Umayyad period we find that the word *djaza* is very closely related to its fiduciary copper/bronze coinage were it appears clearly written on a series of fals of the period (Walker 1956, 673, 816, 884), these are all from the eastern part of the empire with no mint the first, Damascus the second and *Saruj* (Iraq)

<sup>18</sup> For a view of the self-evident qualities of these coins see: [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/gov\\_postreform\\_coinage.htm](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/gov_postreform_coinage.htm)

<sup>19</sup> وجاز الدرهم: قُبِلَ عَلَى مَا فِيهِ

the third. There also has appeared a fals, attributed to the *Khurasan* which was auctioned recently that combines on one side the word *djaza* and on the other side an interesting exchange value of sixty fals to a dirham, which clearly states, *sittin bi dirham*<sup>20</sup>. The fact that this last and the previous example give us a fixed exchange rate between the dirham and the fals could be indicating that the exchange was not a market related reflection but that the rate was arbitrarily dictated by the authorities. Though the 60/1 fals to the dirham relation seems to be the more common reference it is not fixed, as a 360/1 and 120/1 exchanges are also registered on different combinations of dates and mints on this type of coinage (Album 2011, 46)<sup>21</sup>.

We have not come upon the registry of any fals of al-Andalus (or North Africa) with the term *djaza* or for that matter any with the exchange rates of fals to dirhams that we have seen in the coins struck in the same period in the above mentioned eastern mints. Nevertheless, the clear appearance of the word *djaza* in two previously published lead seal types (Ibrahim 2011, Fig. 15-16), and in the not so evident reading in the present seal, may possibly be suggesting that there is a relation between the lead seals and the very large amount of fals struck in al-Andalus right after Umayyad conquest<sup>22</sup>.

The monetary system of the Visigoth Kingdom of Toledo was basically monometallic consisting of *tremessis* of variable gold content. There is some, though controversial, evidence of very limited regional striking of copper coinage during this period (Crusafont 1994)<sup>23</sup>. On the other hand the existence of fals of the conquest period struck over roman coinage of small denomination could be indicative that there must have been at least some, even though modest, circulation of such coins before 711<sup>24</sup>. But with the Umayyad conquest there seems to clearly be a sudden and massive introduction of such coins in Hispania. This radical change in the quantity of circulating coins of base metal could have been strange to the economic habits of the local population and probably not so easily accepted. By contrast they would have had no problem accepting the new coinage of dinars and dirhams, gold and silver, due to their universally perceived intrinsic value. It is too early from the limited evidence we have to affirm this, but these lead seals with the word *djaza*, a word that as we have seen was is clearly related to the fiduciary copper/bronze coins in the east, and may also have had in the case of al-Andalus something to do with the circulation, probably

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Album Rare Coins 19 (15-17 May, 2014) lot 337.

<sup>21</sup> In the Album text the 1/60 relation with mint and date are recorded for *Balkh* 111 H., *Jurjan* 107 H., *Marw* 112 H., *al-Mubarak* 117 H., but there is also fals with an exchange of 1/120 attributed to the *Khurasan* district due to the name of governor of that region on the coin and it can be generally dated as no later than 96 H., which is when the said governor, *Kutayba ibn Muslim*, was executed. Last there is a surprising 1/360 exchange ratio for *Balkh* dated in 93 H.!

<sup>22</sup> Also of interest is the *fa* and *lam* on the second area which could be the first two letters of the word *fals*, but that could be just wishful thinking and to be left out of the discussion until a clearer seal of this typology appears.

<sup>23</sup> See recently Fernández, Pliego & Carvajal 2013.

<sup>24</sup> For examples of fals of al-Andalus struck over minor Roman coin denominations see: [http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/fulus/FrochII\\_f.jpg](http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/fulus/FrochII_f.jpg) which is a fals legend over struck over a coin of Maximiano. For two other similar see slide n° 45 in <https://www.academia.edu/5751302>

obligatory, of these fals. A possible indication that these fals could be in part related to the basic intendency of the troops is the observation that quite a few of the mint names in the Greater Syrias area of the fals of this period are coincidental with the known *djund* settlements (Walker, 1956, xxiii-xxix & 201-296).

It is of note and probably indicating a longterm aversion to the circulation of fiduciary fals is the observable fact that the practice of emitting fals in the near eight centuries of coinage in al-Andalus, with very punctual exceptions, practically disappears after the fall of the Umayyad state in the east. It seems to be replaced by dirham cuttings of all sizes in the Independent Emirate and the Caliphate and by fractional debased coinage in the Taifas, fractional silver coinage in the Almoravid, Almohad periods and the Granada Emirate.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Exceptionally Granada just before its fall would experiment very briefly, during a decade and a half (879-893/1474-1487), with the introduction of dated fals. See Vives 2215-2231.

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