

COINAGE OF AL-GHUZZ AL-‘IRĀQIYYA  
AND ITS RELATION TO THE SELJUQ CONQUEST

Al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqiyya a group of Turkuman – this group was from the Turks – dwelling in *Khurāsān* with Seljuq, who were brought by the Ghaznawid ruler Maḥmūd b. Sebūktigin (389-421H./998-1030AD). Al-Gardīzī mentioned<sup>1</sup> :

«وحيثما عبر السلطان النهر قدم اليه أمير طوس ، و قال لماذا أحضرت هؤلاء التركمان في الولاية ان ما فعلته كان خطأ عظيما ،والان وقد أحضرتهم اقتلهم جميعا ،أو أذن لي حتي أقطع أصابع رجالهم فلا يستطيعون رمي السهام ،فتعجب الأمير محمود من هذا و قال له انك رجل لا رحمة عندك ولا رأفة لديك ،غليظ القلب قاسي الفؤاد ،فقال أمير طوس ان لم تفعل فسوف تندم ندما شديدا ، وكان كذلك ،وحتى الان لم يصلح هذا الأمر».

Turkuman were causing trouble, corruption, destruction and disturbance in all land they entered. When their corruption was too much, they were fight by Maḥmūd. They were ousted from his land in the year 420 H. al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqiyya went to *Āzerbayjān* under the Rawwādid ruler Wahsūdān (416-451H./1025-1059AD), who received and treated them well and seek peace with them<sup>2</sup>.

Al-Bayhaqī mentioned that the Ghaznawid sultan Mas‘ūd (421-432H./1031-1040AD) had asked for the help of this group another time during

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<sup>1</sup> AL-GARDĪZĪ (Abū Sa‘īd ‘Abd al-Ḥayy b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Maḥmūd, 442-443H.): *Zayn al-akhbār*, translated: ‘Afaf Al-Sayyid, 2 Parts, Cairo, first edition, 1402H/1982A.D., Part 2, p. 307.

<sup>2</sup> AL-GARDĪZĪ, Part 2, pp. 311-312; IBN AL-ATHĪR (‘Alī b. Muḥammad 630H), *Al-Kāmil fī-l-Ta’rīkh*, 11 vol., Beirut, 3 edition, 1418 A.H/A.D. 1998, Vol. 8, pp. 174-175.

the conquest of Sijistān and Makrān year 422H<sup>3</sup>. Al-Bayhaqī considered this big mistakes as he said <sup>4</sup>:

«وكانت الغلطة الثانية أنهم استمالوا التركمان الذين كانوا قد ذاقوا حلاوة غنائم خراسان، وكان السلطان الماضي (محمود) قد ألقى بهم بحمد السيف من بلخان كوه فدعوهم ليزيدوا بهم عدد الجيش فقدم هؤلاء وعلى رأسهم قزل وبوقه وكوكتاش ومقدمون آخرون، وقد قاموا بأداء بعض المهام، ثم انقلبوا وعادوا سيرتهم الأولى من النهب والسلب»

«The second mistake was that they bring over the Turkuman who tasted the sweetness of *Khurāsān* booty and the previous sultan (Maḥmūd) cast them by the sword from *Balkhān Kūh*. They let them to increase the number of the army so these came on top of them Qazal, Būqa, Kūktāsh and others. They performed some of the missions then they returned to their first way of life plunder and loot».

Mas'ūd realized the mistake of depending on Turkuman so he ordered his leader Tash Farash to arrest Turkuman leaders saying to him <sup>5</sup>:

«فينبغي أن تبذل غاية الجهد للقبض على هؤلاء المقدمين إذ قد اتضح لدينا أنهم يريدون فسادًا وعليك بتطيب خواطر التركمان»

«You should exert your utmost efforts to arrest these majors because it was clear for us that they wanted corruption so you must pacify the Turkuman". But Tash Farash did not succeed in eliminating the Turkumans but he was killed at their hands in the year 427H<sup>6</sup>.

As previously mentioned, al-Ghuzz al-Irāqiyya settled in Āzerbaijān. They were well-treated by Wahsūdān. They were received hospitably as a desire to benefit the year 429 H. They burned its mosque and killed many from its natives<sup>7</sup>.

When Wahsūdān realized the danger of these Turkuman, he reconciled with Abū l-Hayjā' b. Rabīb al-Dawla and agreed upon fighting the Turkuman. When the Turkuman knew this, they were spread in the country. A group went about to al-Rayy under the leadership of Būqa. Another group went

<sup>3</sup> AL-BAYHAQĪ (Abū-l-Faḍl), *Ta'riḫ al-Bayhaqī*, Translated by Yaḥyà al-Khashab-Sadq Nashat, Cairo 1982, p.266.

<sup>4</sup> AL-BAYHAQĪ, p.68.

<sup>5</sup> AL-BAYHAQĪ, p.292.

<sup>6</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8, p.176.

<sup>7</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8, p.177.

about to Ḥamadhān under the leadership of Kūktāsh, who besieged Abū Kālījār b. 'Alā' al-Dawla b. Kākwayh in Hamadhān. The fight erupted among the Turkuman and the people of Hamadhān. However, Abū Kālījār could not resist them so he sent to Kūktāsh and reconciled him and was related by marriage<sup>8</sup>.

Nevertheless, Turkumans returned another time to besiege Hamadhān. Ibn al-Athīr wrote<sup>9</sup>:

«فلما سمع أبو كاليجار بهم علم أنه لا قدرة له عليهم، فسار عنها ومعه وجوه التجار وأعيان البلد وتحصن بكنكور، ودخل الغز همذان سنة ثلاثين وأربعمائة، واجتمع عليها من مقدميهم كوكناش وبوقا وقزل، ومعهم فناخسرو بن مجد الدولة بن بويه في عدة كثير من الديلم، فلما دخلوها نهبوها نهبًا منكرًا لم يفعلوه غيرها من البلاد غيظًا منهم وحنقًا عليهم حيث قاتلوهم أولاً  
«....»

«When Abū Kālījār heard about them, he knew that he has no ability over them. So he left it and with him different traders and élites. He took Kankūr as a fortress. Al-Ghuzz entered Hamadhān year 430H. Kūktāsh, Būqa and Qazal came together and with them Fanā Khusraw b. Majd al-Dawla b. Buwayh in a large number of Daylam. When they entered it, they plundered it detestably ever because they were irritated and raged with them as they fight them firstly».

Turkumans sent another time to Abū Kālījār b. 'Alā' al-Dawla to come to Hamadhān to settle the matters but they deceived him and plundered what did behave<sup>10</sup>. The Turkumans were able to occupy Diyār Bakr. Then Kūktāsh succeeded in occupying al-Mawṣil in year 435H. They gave Friday sermon in these countries to the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Qā'im bi-amr Allāh (422-467H./1031-1075AD) and the Seljuq sultan Ṭughril Beg (431-455H./1040-1063AD)<sup>11</sup>.

Qirawash, the 'Uqaylid ruler of al-Mawṣil (391-442H./1001-1050AD) asked help from different places. He met Turkumans in beg war in 20 Ramaḍān year 435H. he was able to achieve crucial victory over the Turkomans and killed three of their leaders<sup>12</sup>. It seemed that Kūktāsh was one of them because he

<sup>8</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8,pp.177-178.

<sup>9</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8, p.178.

<sup>10</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8, p.179.

<sup>11</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8, pp.179-182.

<sup>12</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8,p.182.

was not mentioned in the historical sources after that. Thus, the dynasty of al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqiyya finished off the Turkumans. As Ibn al-Athīr mentioned<sup>13</sup> :

«هذه أخبار الغز العراقيين وإنما أوردناها متتابعة لأن دولتهم لم تطل حتى نذكر حوادثها في السنين وإنما كانت سحابة صيف تقشعت عن قريب»

«Those are the news of al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqiyya, we stated it consecutively because their dynasty was not long in order to mention its incidents in years but it was a summer cloud that it was dispersed nearly».

#### THE RELATION BETWEEN SELJUQ AND AL-GHUZZ

Turkuman were working at service of Seljuq so when Maḥmūd b. Sebūktigīn asked Seljuq for helping him, Turkuman moved with them to Khurāsān. As Turkuman haven't had any discipline, so corruption, destruction and disturbance prevailed all land they went in. While Seljuq were fighting and wars with Ghaznawid and working forward to establish a state for them, Turkuman were causing trouble, corruption, destruction and disturbance in all land they entered. Turkuman could dominate many lands in Rayy and they could establish a new independent rule in Hamadhān and took it as a base to control many important territories. Turkuman were in feared of Seljuq which, as can be understood from of the tale of Ibn al-Athīr also, when Ṭughril Beg mentioned that Turkuman were our slaves, Ibn al-Athīr said<sup>14</sup> :

«و لما طال مقامهم، الغز، بهذه البلاد وجري منهم ما ذكرناه كتب الملك جلال الدولة بن بويه الي طغرل بك يعرفه ما يجري منهم، وكتب اليه نصر الدولة بن مروان يشكو منهم، فكتب الي نصر الدولة يقول له بلغني أن عبيدنا قصدوا بلادك وأنت صانعتهم بمال بذلته لهم، وأنت صاحب ثغر وينبغي أن تعطي ما تستعين به علي قتال الكفار، ويعدده أنه يرسل اليهم يرسلهم من بلده، وكتب طغرل بك الي جلال الدولة يعتذر بأن هؤلاء التركمان كانوا لنا عبيدا و خدما و رعايا و تبعنا يمثلون الأمر ويخدمون الباب، ولما تخضنا لتدبير خطب ال محمود بن سبكتكين و انتدبنا لكفاية أمر خوارزم، انحازوا الي الري فعاثوا فيها و أفسدوا، فرحفنا بجنودنا من خراسان اليهم مقدرين أنهم يلجئون الي الأمان و يلودون بالعفو و الغفران، فملكتهم الهيبة و زحزحتهم الحشمة، و لا بد من أن نردهم الي رايتنا خاضعين، و نذيقهم من بأسنا جزاء المتمردين، قربوا أم بعدوا، أغاروا أم أجدوا».

<sup>13</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8,p.183.

<sup>14</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8,p.182.

Ibn al-Athīr also mentioned <sup>15</sup> :

«في سنة ثلاث وثلاثين فارق الغز أذربيجان، وسبب ذلك أن ابراهيم ينال، وهو أخو طغرل بك، سار الي الري، فلما سمع الغز الذين بما خبره اجفلوا من بين يديه، وفارقوا بلاد الجبل خوفا منه، وقصدوا أذربيجان ولم يمكنهم المقام بها لما فعلوه بأهلها و لأن ابراهيم ينال وراءهم، وكانوا يخافونه لأنهم كانوا له ولاخويه طغرلبك وداود رعية» .

Turkuman were keen to show their loyalty to Ṭughril Beg after the establishment of Seljuq state, as the Seljuq were their masters and Turkuman were their slaves.

#### THE COINAGE OF AL-GHUZZ AL-‘IRĀQIYYA

The importance of Islamic Numismatics become clear in what sheds light on many historical events considered an important source for studying Islamic history. Despite the short temporal period in which al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqiyya or the Turkomans appeared and occupied some of the territories, this pushed Ibn al-Athīr to describe the era of these Turkumans as "a summer cloud that it was dispersed nearly". But Islamic Numismatics reflected this event.

This is what we study in this research as we study a rare dinar in the name of Bahā’ al-Din Kūktāsh leader of al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqiyya, minted in Hamadhān 430H. This dinar, preserved in FINT, in Tübingen University, is unpublished, Inv. FB4E3, W. 3, 49 gr. D. 18mm <sup>16</sup>, (pl.1, fig.1).

Inscriptions as follows:

Obv. field within double circle

فتح  
لا إله إلا الله  
وحده لا شريك له  
القائم بأمر الله  
بهاء الدين أبو العباس

<sup>15</sup> IBN AL-ATHĪR, vol.8,p. 179.

<sup>16</sup> Many thanks to Dr. Lutz Ilisch, who allowed to me to publish this coins.

Margin:

بسم الله ضرب هذا الدينار بهمدان سنة ثلثين وأربع مائة

Rev. field:

محمد  
رسول الله  
كوكتاش بن علي  
بن سياوك

Margin:

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

Probably circle around Obv. and Rev.

This dinar has a big importance to the researchers in History and Numismatics for important inscriptions in it shedding light on many events not mentioned in the historical sources. The obverse field starts by word: فتح which means “conquer and occupied the country”. It appeared on the Islamic coinage for the first time on a dirham minted in Aṣḥaban dated 413H in the name of ‘Alā’ al-Dawla Muḥammad b. Dushmanzar (398-433H./1008-1041AD)<sup>17</sup>. This word was inscribed on the dinar of Bahā’ al-Dīn Kūktāsh improves his success in conquering Hamadhān and controlling it.

The *kalima* was inscribed in the first and second line which agree with the second *kalima* which came in the first and second lines in reverse field in the declaration of the embracement of Kūktāsh of Islam on the Sunni doctrine which is embraced by Seljuq.

The title of: *al-Qā’im bi- amr Allāh*, القائم بأمر الله, was inscribed in the third line of obverse field, this is the title of ‘Abbasid Caliph Abū Ġa’far ‘Abd Allāh. It indicates the declaration of Kūktāsh submission to the ‘Abbasid Caliph the political and religious symbol for the Sunni in Islamic world at this time. Ibn al-Athīr mentioned about al-Ghuzz al-‘Irāqīyya that they gave Friday sermon in these countries to the Caliph al-Qā’im bi- amr Allāh.

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<sup>17</sup> Spink, *Coins of the Arab World & Other Important Islamic Coins in Gold, Silver and Copper*. Auction 22, Tuesday 17. March 1987.No. 356

The last line included two words; the first, title *Bahā' al-Dīn* the private title of Kūktāsh. The importance of this dinar is that the name of Kūktāsh and his complete titles were sculptured on it. This matter was not mentioned in the historical sources which settled for the indication of only his name Kūktāsh without mentioning the rest of his name or surnames. Hence, this dinar was considered an important historical document shedding light on the leader of al-Ghuzz al-'Irāqiyya who succeeded in establishing a country in Hamadhān.

The title of *Bahā' al-Dīn* was particular for Kūktāsh followed by the second word in the same line which was Abū-l-'Abbās indicating the *kunya* of Kūktāsh, but the last letter "س" was not clear. As for the name Kūktāsh, it was inscribed in the third and fourth lines of reverse field, It was Kūktāsh b. 'Ali b. Siyāwuk - كوكتاش بن علي بن سیاوک. This dinar was the only historical document mentioning the name of Kūktāsh in this manner. As previously said, the historical sources indicated the name of Kūktāsh only without the indication of its kinship. But this dinar gave us the name of Kūktāsh completely and his surnames: Bahā' al-Dīn Abū-l-'Abbās Kūktāsh b. 'Ali b. Siyāwuk.

Symbol of Turkuman appeared above Rev. field, it the first time that this symbol appear in Islamic coins, before it used again on the Artuqid coins for the first time on the coins of Ḥusām al-Dīn Timurtāsh in Mārdīn (516-547H./1122-1152AD)<sup>18</sup>. Turkuman used symbol different from the Seljuq symbol bow and arrow, its mentionrd that Turkuman are a group different from the Seljuq.

As for the obverse margin it was devoted to record the name of the mint and date. Despite the disappearance and non-clarity of some letters, it appears with something of certainty the mint and date which was Hamadhān year 430H. This was harmonious completely with the historical events. Ibn al-Athīr mentioned: "Al-Ghuzz entered Hamadhān year 430H". This was the phrase itself inscribed on the dinar: "in Hamadhān year 430" here the

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<sup>18</sup> LANE-POOLE STANLEY, *Coins of The Urtuki Turkumans*, London 1875. No. 27-28; LANE-POOLE STANLEY, *Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum*. Vol. III: *The Coins of the Turkuman Houses of Seljook, Urtuk, Zengee*. London 1877. No.364-367; BUTAK BEHZAD, *Resimli Türk Paraları*, Istanbul 1947-1948. No.21; EDHEM GHALIB, *Catalogue des Monnaies Turcomanes du Musée Impériale Ottoman*, Bologna 1965. No. 25-26; İBRAHİM AND CEVRIYE ARTUK, *İstanbul Arkeolji Müzeleri Teşhirdeki İslami Sikkeler Kataloğu*, Cilt 1, Istanbul 1970. No. 1217-1218; MITCHINER MICHAEL, *The World of Islam, Oriental Coins and Their Values*, London 1977. No. 1024; HENNEQUIN GILLES, *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale. Asia pre-mongole, Les Salguqs et leurs successeurs*, Paris 1985. No.948-956; WILLIAM F.SPENGLER-WAYNE G.SAYLES, *Turkoman Figural Bronze Coins and Their Iconography*, New York1992, p.76

Numismatic and the historical narration agree with asserting the occupation of Bahā' al-Dīn Kūktāsh on Hamadhān in this date.

As for the reverse margin, it was inscribed on it the Qur'anic quotation (48, 29- 9, 33).

We noted that this dinar did not carry the name of Ṭughril Beg. It carries only the name Bahā' al-Dīn Kūktāsh and his titles. This indicated his sovereignty and his attempt to establish an independent state away from Seljuq, and particularly that Ṭughril Beg was still in continuous wars during this time with the Ghaznawid. The state of Seljuq did not become stable, but in year 432H which was the formal date for the establishment of this state. That is why Kūktāsh decided to strike this dinar in his name which was considered an independent ruler in Hamadhān.

We conclude that Turkuman were working at service of Seljuq so when Maḥmūd b. Sebūktigin asked Seljuq for helping him, Turkuman moved with them to Khurāsān. When their corruption was too much, they were fight by Maḥmūd. They were ousted from his land in the year 420 H,

As Turkuman haven't had any discipline, so corruption, destruction and disturbance prevailed all land they went in. While Seljuq were fighting and wars with Ghaznawid and working forward to establish a state for them, Turkuman could dominate many lands in Rayy and they could establish a new independent rule in Hamadhān and took it as a base to control many important territories like al-Mawṣil.

In the same time while Ṭughril Beg dominated Nīshāpūr and Khurāsān alternatively with Ghaznawid, Turkuman have had their own start, which interprets why Kūktāsh struck this dinar in his name only in spite of which mentioned by Ibn al-Athīr when he mentioned that Turkuman mentioned Ṭughril Beg in the Friday sermon, it seems that was after Seljuq established their state in 432H. Which interpreted why Kūktāsh inscribed Turkuman symbol on this dinar and this with inscribing his name considered a good evidence of an independent state for Turkuman before the establishment of Seljuq state.

Turkuman look forward to have legitimacy for their new state throughout mentioning the name of the 'Abbasid Caliph *al-Qā'im bi-amr Allāh* in the Friday sermon and inscribed his name on their coins.

Turkuman were keen to show their loyalty to Ṭughril Beg after the establishment of Seljuq state, as the Seljuq were their masters and Turkuman were their slaves. Turkuman were in feared of Seljuq which, as can be understood from of the tale of Ibn al-Athīr also, when Ṭughril Beg mentioned that Turkuman were our slaves. While Ṭughril Beg was keen to inscribe famous Seljuq symbol on the early issue of dirhams minted in Nīshāpūr 430H., expressing their attribution to Seljuq, Turkuman were keen to show their



symbol on the first issue of dinars minted in Hamadhān 430H, before it return back again to appear on the coins of Turkuman dynasties in the six century A.H.



**PL . I . AV Dinar in the name of Kuktash minted in Hamadhan 430H. preserved in FINTin Tubingen, unpublished, Inv.FB4E3,**



**Fig . I . AV Dinar Kuktash minted in Hamadhan 430H.**