

UMAYYAD VOCABULARY ON ADMINISTRATIVE OBJECTS FROM PALESTINE

Both history sources as well as archaeological objects tell us about the past of a place.

The writing of the Islamic history started already during the third quarter of the seventh century by Syrian writers who wrote about the Islamic conquests. But those books have been lost, and they are only mentioned in treaties written in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10th centuries (ELAD 2003). Other historical sources writing about the Umayyad period are even from the Mamlūk period. Such are for instance two sources that wrote about 'Abd al-Malik's monetary reform: Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* (composed c. 1310) and al-Damīrī's *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān al-kubrā* (composed c. 1371-2) see (MILSTEIN 2008: pp. 174-175).

Historical sources writing about Umayyad Palestine are non-existing except for one Samaritan source that was written in Arabic in 1355 C.E. This source only seldom writes about other communities other than the Samaritans. The period this source covers is from the early Islamic period until the days of Muḥammad b. Tughj the Ikhshid (c. 935 C.E.) (LEVY-RUBIN 2002).

When we turn to administration, some knowledge of it is found in compilations of the third century (DONNER 1998: pp. 166-171, esp. p. 167). For the reason of lack of all the knowledge about the history and administration of Palestine we have to take into account the information we can gather from archaeology. From the various kinds of administrative objects originating from Umayyad Palestine which have been found in the last 120 years. Some are small portable objects such as coins, seals, weights and stamped glass vessels others are monumental inscriptions.

This article deals with some of the administrative vocabulary used on Umayyad lead seals, weights and in monumental inscriptions.

## TERMS ON Umayyad ADMINISTRATIVE OBJECTS

Some terms found on Umayyad administrative objects originate from the previous period, some others are new terms.

Two terms are found on the objects originate from the Byzantine period:

1. The title 'Abd Allāh which appears before each name of an Umayyad caliph from the days of Mu'āwiya in his Greek written inscription from Hammath Gader (DI SEGNI 1997b: pp. 238-239), through 'Abd al-Malik's milestones, (from Abū Gosh see SHARON 1997: p. 4; from Fīq see SHARON 2004; pp. 220-221 and for two others one from Dayr Mar Jirjīs and one from Khān Hathūrah see SHARON 2004: pp. 104-105). The term is also found after the names of the caliphs on Umayyad caliphal lead seals (AMITAI-PREISS 1997: p. 233; AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: pp. 1-19) on Umayyad weights' inscriptions (AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: pp. 223-224) for 'Abd Allāh see also (BLAIR 1987: p. 37).

This title is a translation and borrowing of the Latin term *servus Christi* or the Greek term *δοῦλος τοῦ χριστοῦ*. These two terms were written on floors of Byzantine churches such as are found in DI SEGNI 1997a: nos. 164, 170, 171, 174, 193, 206, 217 (AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: p. 50, note 240).

2. The term 'ala yaday meaning "by/at the hands of" (that and that person who is an administrative figure) is found in Umayyad monumental inscriptions such as in 'Abd al-Malik's mile stones (SHARON 1997: p. 4; SHARON 2004: pp. 221-222 and CYTRIN-SYLVERMAN 2007).

This term was preceded by the Greek term *διά* known from Greek inscriptions (DI SEGNI 1995: p. 34).

## ORIGINAL ARABIC TERMS

Original Arabic terms are the terms that designate the actual activity of issuing seals, minting coins, installing mile stones.

## ISSUING SEALS

Two terms are found on lead seals and designate their manufacturing and issuing. One is found on three seals of the same kind from the days of Marwān b. Muḥammad all three with that caliph's name, two of those seals are also dated 127 and 128 A.H. / 744-45 and 745-46 C.E. respectively (for the dated ones see AMITAI-PREISS 1997; AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: pp. 122-123, nos. 17-18; the undated one is in AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: p. 124, no. 20). The term is *uqīma* and it

is continued by *fi khilāfa* 'Abd Allāh Marwān amīr al-Mu'minīn (was issued in the reign of the caliph Marwān).

Another term is used in the third seal that is *ṣan'a* *hādhihi al-mikyāla* (the making of this *mikyāla* = the name of this type of seal).

This term is found both on a seal with the name of al-Walīd (AMITAI-PREISS 2007: p. 117, no. 4) and on a seal from the days of Marwān b. Muḥammad (AMITAI-PREISS 2007: p. 123, no.19). As for the root of *mikyāla*, *kyl*, another term is *kayl*, the word *hādhā* is found before it. This term was found once on a seal from the days of Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-Malik from the year 127 A.H. (AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: 77; p. 127, no. 25).

*Mikyāla* seems to be the name of a seal with the name of a caliph, *kayl* could be the name of a seal for a governor belonging to the Umayyad family. This is the full legend of this seal of Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-Malik is: *amara bi-ṣan'a al-kayl alladhī naqasha li-rabbihi Sa'īd b. 'Abd al-Malik bi-sana' sab' wa- [i'shrīn wa-mi'a]*. As for the verb *naqasha* used here this is the term used by the mediaeval authors for seals used by caliphs (PORTER 2011: p. 3).

Other seals are named differently as is seen on the type of seals with the terms *kūra* and *iqīm* were the seal is called *khātim*. Such seals are known to me from four *ajnād* at the moment. They are from settlements from the following *ajnād*: Qinnasrīn, Dimashq, al-Urdunn and Filasṭīn they were manufactured probably for villages of all five *ajnād* of Bilād al-Shām. (AMITAI-PREISS 2000; AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: pp. 150-164, Nos. 90-129; AMITAI-PREISS 2007b: p. 15 the two seals; AMITAI-PREISS 2010: pp. 19-20; AMITAI-PREISS forthcoming). These seals served in our opinion as receipts for paying taxes to the Muslim authorities by the *dhimmī* population. i.e. by the heads of the villages. The names of the villages appear at the bottom of the hierarchy on each one of these seals. (AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: pp. 65-67).

#### AN ISSUING TERM FOR A SEAL

The term *ṭubi'a* is found on a seal that was issued by the city of Jerusalem (Īlyā) in the year 101 A.H./ 719-720 C.E. *Ṭubi'a* means that it was issued (AMITAI-PREISS 2007a: p. 144, no. 69). The issuing of this seal of Īlyā' was in days of either one of the following caliphs: 'Umar II (99 -101 A.H. / 717-720 C.E) or Yazīd II (101-105 A.H. / 720-724 C.E.).

*Ṭubi'a* is also the verb used for Umayyad glass stamps from Egypt to describe the glass maker activity (MORTON 1985: p. 13).

## INSTALLING MILESTONES

The designation of *ṣan'a* is known for the making (?) and installing of mile stones, a project that was carried out first by 'Abd al-Malik and then by his son and successor al-Walīd only mentioning 'Abd al-Malik's name and not his own. On one of his milestones, the one found at Abū Gosh, showing a distance from ʿIlyā' (Jerusalem) the term *ṣan'a*<sup>t</sup> [*al-amyāl*] is found (CIAP 1997: p. 4). Also on two milestones which give a distance from Dimashq (106 mil and 109 mil) and were found in the vicinity of Wādī Qalt (SHARON 2004: pp. 104-105). On two other milestones that give a distance of 52 and 53 from Dimashq it is found in this way: *ṣan'a*<sup>t</sup> *hādhihi al-amyāl* – "the making of these milestones" (ELAD 1999; CIAP 2004: pp. 220-221, pls. 65-66). The positioning of the milestones was a process that took a time span of part of at least two decades from Muḥarram 73 A.H. / May-June 692 C.E. the year of the straightening of mountain obstacle at 'Aqabat al-Fīq in the days of 'Abd al-Malik (SHARON 1966) through the milestones put in 85 A.H. / till the days al-Walīd when the milestones found in the vicinity of Iliya (Jerusalem) on the Jerusalem – Jaffa road were positioned. These mention 'Abd al-Malik's name and titles are found on the milestones with the phrase: *rahma*<sup>t</sup> *Allāh 'alayhi* thus referring to his demise when the inscription was written and positioned (ELAD 1999; CYTRIN-SYLVERMAN 2007).

*ṣana'a* also appears as verb indicating the issuing of a glass weight of half a *ratl*, from the days of al-Walīd as caliph from the year 87 A.H. / 707 C.E. The weight was unearthed at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's excavations in Beth Shean. (KHAMIS 1998: p. 34, pl. 8, no. 25). Here the *ṣan'a* comes before *hādihā* followed by a missing short word that could be *zujāj* (?) i.e. glass weight.<sup>1</sup> This weight was manufactured in al-Urdunn as further indicates its legend.

## MINTING COINS

The term / verb used for the minting of coins was *ḍariba*.

It is found on each one of the coins from 'Abd al-Malik's reform on, as a verb in passive voice on coins minted in a monetary system that combined gold coins, silver coins and copper coins.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Two people are mentioned in the sources as al-Zajjāj, they were involved in the glass industry and especially in glass weights for the administration. (AL-QADI 2011: pp. 224-225, and p. 244)

<sup>2</sup> The monetary system before contained only copper coins locally made in various mints that opened after the Islamic conquest in Bilād al-Shām including in its two southern *ajnad*

This was the formula on the coins of the three values and made of the three metals:

- *ḍuriba hādhā al-dīnār* = gold coin (WALKER 1956: p. 84, no. 186; NICOL 2009: Pl. 1, no. 1)
- *ḍuriba hādhā al-dirham* = silver coin (WALKER 1956: p. 104, no. Kh. 4; NICOL 2009: Pl. 26, no. 590).
- *ḍuriba hādhā al-fals* = bronze coin (WALKER 1956: p. 235, no. P. 124; NICOL 2009: Pl. 55, no. 1142).

This root is found once as a noun on one type of coins minted at 'Ammān as follows: *hādhā ḍarb 'Ammān* (ILISCH 1993: p. 42, no. 492 and for the same phenomenon at Qinnasryn and Ṭabariyya see WALKER 1956: p. cii, p. 267, no. B.51 and p. 277, no. 914). On the first coin that carries the term *fals*, a coin of Baysān, probably before the reform, since the coins carry three imperial figures, the verb is not found (the whole legend is: *fals al-ḥaqq bi-Baysān*) see (AMITAI-PREISS, BERMAN and QEDAR 1994-1999: p. 138, p. 144, no. A 19).

## CONCLUSIONS

Each one of the vocabulary items mentioned in this article is a contribution of the inscriptions known from archaeological objects. These details are not found among the information inserted in historical or geographical Arabic sources. This contribution as well as the addition of new names of people involved in the local administration is found in new lead coins (AMITAI-PREISS 2007b; AMITAI-PREISS and FARHI 2009-2010), on new weights and in new inscriptions. All these add to our knowledge of the ways the empire as well as the local administration functioned.

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that are Palestine. Only copper coins were minted in the mints in Filasṭīn and al-Urdunn (GOODWIN 2005: pp. 11-29) Byzantine gold coins were the currency used for gold coins in the region (SION 2000-2; Bijovsky 2002: pp. 161-162). One type of copper coin minted at Beth Shean may reflect a fraction of a Byzantine solidus it contains the term *miqsām* in Arabic from the root *qsm*, to divide (AMITAI-PREISS, BERMAN and QEDAR 1994-1999: p. 137, no. A 17).

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