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Silver Coins of the Mamluk Sultan Qalāwūn (678-689/1279-1290) from the Mints of Cairo, Damascus, Ḥamāh, and al-Marqab

This article is an amendment to the pertinent chapters of Balog's¹ standard work on Mamluk coins and an article on Mamluk *dirhams* by Helen W. Mitchell.² The basis of the research presented here consists of 121 silver coins of Sultan Qalāwūn minted in the period between the years 680 and 689. As I have mentioned elsewhere,³ they are part of a collection of approximately 700 Mamluk silver coins which came to Europe from Aleppo about a dozen years ago. Although it is not a hoard in the proper sense, about three quarters of the coins stem from the Baḥrī Mamluks.

Coins provide excellent witness to the specific political and economic circumstances of a certain region at a particular moment in history. Therefore it seemed necessary to gain as much information as possible from the newly acquired corpus. The most important prerequisite to this kind of work turned out to be drawings of the coins, which enabled the reconstruction of dies and the research on die linkages. Quite a few questions raised by Balog and Mitchell were thus solved. An unknown silver coin struck at the stronghold of al-Marqab is of special historical interest, because it is not only a document for Qalāwūn's important conquest but allows for some conclusions about changes in his monetary policy. It is described in the appendix to this article.

Apart from their worth as objects of documentary value, these coins constitute works of art on a minimal surface and thus their calligraphy as well as their scriptural and ornamental inventory are described in detail. Mamluk coins, in this respect, do not easily disclose their aesthetic charm. While the mosques, madrasahs and mausoleums erected during the reign of Qalāwūn or other Mamluk sultans

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¹Paul Balog, *The Coinage of the Mamlūk Sultans of Egypt and Syria*, Numismatic Studies No. 12 (New York, 1964) (henceforth MSES). Idem, "The Coinage of the Mamlūk Sultans: Additions and Corrections," *Museum Notes* 16 (1970): 113-71, plates XXVIII-XXXVI (henceforth "Additions").

²Helen W. Mitchell, "Notes on Some Mamlūk Dirhems," *Museum Notes* 16 (1970): 179-84, plate XXXVII.

³Elisabeth Puin, "Beobachtungen an den Silbermünzen des Mamlukensultans Aynāl (857/1453-865/1461), mit Berichtigungen und Ergänzungen zu Balog: Münzzeichnungen und ihre Möglichkeiten," *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte* 47 (1997): 117-66.



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are of unprecedented beauty and perfection, their respective coinage is of a rather unpleasant appearance. Practically every coin is of irregular shape and off center, while the inscription is hard to decipher because of the weak and defective impression of the die on the flan. As will be shown, it is only by reconstructing the dies and types that the originally intended coin designs can be resurrected, revealing, more often than not, unexpected artistic qualities in calligraphy and ornamentation. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to illustrate the description of the coin types not with photographs but rather with line drawings.

LINE DRAWING OF COINS

The coins were drawn with the aid of a device constructed by my husband Gerd-R. Puin. The coin is placed on a revolving stand below a semi-transparent mirror which throws the concentrated beam of a lamp onto the coin vertically. From there the reflected light passes through the mirror in a vertical direction; a lens above the mirror serves for projecting the coin image onto a transparent paper laid on a pane of glass. This arrangement allows for the convenient drawing of an enlarged natural picture of the coin, and accidental defects like scratches or holes etc. are easily disregarded. Subsequently, these drawings are either reduced on a copy machine or by a computer program until the ultimate scale of exactly 2:1 or 1:1 is achieved. Bob Senior, in his article "Line Drawing the Easy Way," provided a description of his similar computer-aided procedure. He scanned the coin directly, then drew the contour of its features on the monitor and finally reduced the resultant drawing to the scale of 1:1 for print.⁴

Admittedly, the drawings do not convey the appearance of the coins as authentically as photographs would, yet they are, in our case, easier to make than photographs, considering the weaknesses of the coins already mentioned. Line drawings are, moreover, easier to reproduce in print, which allows for their exhaustive representation and insertion in the text at any place. However, the main advantage achieved by this kind of drawings lies in the possibility of offering a more profound evaluation of the coins, especially in such cases as this, when the "hoard" at hand is big and homogeneous.

DIE LINKAGES

By laying one drawing of an obverse (or reverse respectively) upon another it is immediately evident whether both coin sides were struck with the same die or not. After comparing all the drawings with each other it is clear how many obverse and reverse dies were used for the production of this coin corpus. In this respect, the minting places of Qalāwūn's coins show surprisingly different patterns.

⁴ONS Newsletter no. 151 (Winter 1997): 8 ff.



Regarding the Cairo and Damascus mints, the number of obverse dies approximately equals the number of reverse dies, while of the Ḥamāh coins, 22 reverse dies are linked with only eight obverse dies. Although the number of coins is not sufficient to allow for a generalization, neither is the difference merely fortuitous. Evidently, but for no discernible reason, the reverse dies in the Ḥamāh mint became worn out much earlier than the obverse dies and had to be exchanged for new ones more frequently.

The combination of one particular obverse with one particular reverse on one coin is a die linkage. Coins closely related to each other show patterns of die linkages which can be represented in a tabular arrangement. On the charts at the end of each section (below) every single combination of obverse and reverse dies is represented by one line connecting the drawings of the obverses (1, 2, . . .) and the reverses (A, B, . . .) with each other. The number of lines emanating from one obverse number equals the number of coins representing this particular obverse die and shows, moreover, its pattern of combination with the reverse dies. Thus it is possible to visualize whether the combination of a pair of dies is singular only, or whether there are groups of dies in combination (represented on the charts by intersecting lines). In some cases it was possible, by this method, to determine the chronological details of a coin devoid of a date. If the dies used for striking such a coin were also used in combination with dies used for striking other coins, then all these dies (and coins) are necessarily contemporary. And if one exemplar from this group of coins shows an explicit date, this will be, with high reliability, the dating of the whole group, too. As an example we take the coins from Damascus, type I (see below): on two of the coin specimens the reverse #G is clearly dated 682. This die occurs linked with the obverses #6 and #7; now these two obverses are also combined with three other reverses (#F, #H, #J) all of which lack the year of strike. Yet, as all of these reverses belong to the same linkage group they necessarily belong to the same period.

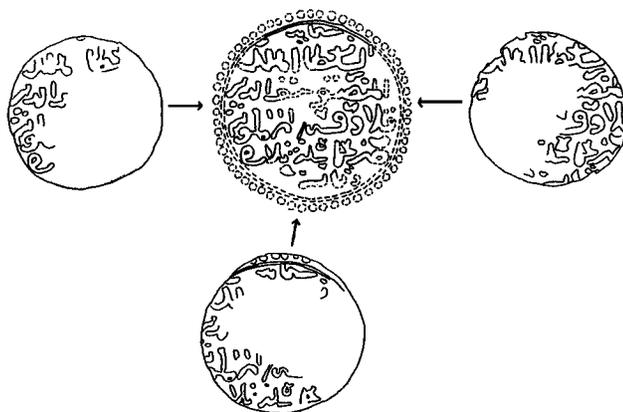
The linkage patterns, too, can differ from one mint to another. The coins from Cairo and Ḥamāh were only struck by specific combinations of obverse and reverse dies—every obverse die is linked to only one reverse die. In the Damascus mint, however, groups of coins were struck by varying combinations of dies, i.e., simultaneously. This is certainly due to a difference in the organization of the minting work. Unlike the habit observed in the Cairo and Ḥamāh mints, it can be concluded that in the Damascus mint the dies were not kept in fixed pairs, but rather the obverse dies were stored together, apart from the reverse dies. The next “shift” would then combine the pairs of dies at random.



DIE RECONSTRUCTION

Apart from the advantages of line drawing thus far put forward, its main importance is that it enables the reconstruction of the dies with which the coins were struck. No single Mamluk silver coin ever shows the complete impressions of its dies! In the case of the Qalāwūn silver coinage the average diameter of the coins is only around 20 mm, whereas their dies measure between 23 and 28 mm, which implies that no coin can possibly show more than part of the die(s). Moreover, the impression on the coin is mostly very weak and even leaves part of the flan completely blank, thus reducing again the visible print of the die(s). The only way to find out the size and the calligraphic/ornamental concept of the dies is to make use of as many coins as possible stemming from the same die. The more coins you have at hand, and the more they are off-centered the more completely the reconstruction of a die will succeed. While the well-centered coins are usually of interest for collectors, for our purpose those coins which extend to the very margins are of importance, for they yield the complete legend and even the border line! Any accidental defect on the real coins (e.g., scratches, double strike, weak or blundered writing) may undergo tacit correction. In those cases where a certain (sub-) type cannot be associated exclusively with one specific year, the type drawings leave out the variable parts of the date. If only a few details remain missing from the reconstruction, these details can be safely taken from drawings of other coins from the same (sub-) type.

An example illustrates the procedure: by closely comparing the drawings of individual coins from Ḥamāh it became evident that the obverses of three specimens



(#3 on the die linkage chart below) were struck by the same die. Every coin, however, and thus every drawing, shows a different part of the die. Through accumulation of the drawings, the largest part of the die reappears and can be drawn, yet lacunae remain in the center as well as towards the lower edge.

These can be amended, however, by inserting the missing details from the drawing of obverse #2 on the one hand, as well as by completing the visible lines of *thamānīn* at the bottom, in accordance with the prevalent width of the strokes used for the script of the legend. Although these amendments are founded on safe grounds, they are, nevertheless, marked in the illustrations by dotted lines.



By this method many dies from Damascus and Ḥamāh can be reconstructed either completely or at least partially. Thus, even for the many coins with the date off-flan the year could be determined if they were derived from a die whose reconstruction included the minting year. E.g., although only one out of nine specimens from Ḥamāh struck with the obverse die #5 shows the date 687, it is evident by the reconstruction that all of the other eight specimens were struck in the same year.

TYPOLGY

The concept of "type" and "sub-type" applied in this article certainly differs from that of conventional usage. It emerged as the result of an "inductive" process while classifying an unusually high number of coins at hand, with side-glances at Balog's book. An obverse or reverse die is here defined as belonging to the same obverse or reverse *type*, if the same text is arranged in the same way, except for the variable wording of the year. In this respect, it is only the disposition of the units, tens, and hundreds on the coin that is decisive, because one type may have been in use for a longer time than one year. A *sub-type* of an obverse or reverse die still has the same text and the same disposition, but varies regularly in certain details regarding, for instance, calligraphic execution or ornamentation. Finally, a *coin type* is defined by the regular linkage of an obverse die type to a reverse die type.

Sometimes, however, the decision whether to distinguish between two separate types or simply two sub-types of a same type is difficult. The types I and II from Damascus are an example of such a dilemma. Neither their general concept, their texts nor their dispositions differ, whereas their ornamentation as well as their calligraphic realization does. Essentially the obverses (*Obverse I 1* to *Obverse II*) and the reverses (*Reverse I 1* to *Reverse II*) are all variants of the same obverse and reverse types. Not every "variant" is found freely combined with other "variants," however. *Obverse II* is, for instance, regularly linked with *Reverse II* and vice versa. Thus it seems reasonable to define this linkage as a coin type of its own. Slightly different is the problem of Damascus type I: there are two obverse variants (*Obverse I 1, 2*) and three reverse variants (*Reverse I 1, 2, 3*); *Reverse I 1* is exclusively linked with *Obverse I 1*, as is *Reverse I 3* with *Obverse I 2*. Each of the obverse variants, however, is also linked with the third variant of the reverse, *Reverse I 2*. Thus, in contrast to the first example, it does not seem wise to split them up into two separate types.

As for the practical side of making type drawings, it must be borne in mind that they are *derived from* the die reconstructions and do not represent individual dies, but constitute the fundamental appearance of (normally) a group of dies bearing the same legend in the same arrangement, as mentioned already. As type



drawings no longer represent individual coins or dies, there is no need to distinguish between "original" and "amended" features. The basis of the type drawing is the drawing of the most completely reconstructed die; still missing details are then taken from the drawings of one or several closely related die reconstructions. This procedure is similar to the way in which the die reconstructions were gained from several coins, yet the degree of abstraction is now one level higher. It is even possible to prepare a type drawing on the basis of one single coin, on the condition that it shows an adequate number of characteristic ("typical") elements, and that the missing details are not only known in principle, but are available as drawings from related coins. A good example of this is the gradual development of the type drawing from the single known specimen of the al-Marqab mint (see Appendix): it shows the essential parts of the legends and ornaments including parts of the edges on both sides, so that the missing details can safely be amended by referring to the drawings of similar types from Cairo and Damascus.

MODE OF PRESENTATION

In this article the coin types are quoted by Roman numerals, e.g., Type III. Obverse or reverse types appear as *Obverse I* or *Reverse II*; the sub-types of these are differentiated by the addition of Arabic numerals, e.g., *Obverse I 2* or *Reverse II 1*. Individual dies, like those displayed on the die linkage charts, bear numbers for the obverse dies or capital letters for the reverse dies, such as 1, 2, 3 or A, B, C. If these dies are quoted within the text, the numerals or letters are written #1 or #F.

The sections deal with the mints of Cairo, Damascus, and Ḥamāh. After starting with a few statistics, each section proceeds to a type chart, where the drawings in 1:1 scale of the occurring obverse and reverse types are arranged in such a way that they constitute a synoptical preview of the detailed description of types and sub-types to follow. These descriptions are illustrated by 2:1 enlarged outline type drawings in which the features decisive for the definition of this particular (sub-) type in contrast to the previous one(s) are filled out in black. There is a further section devoted to the metrological evaluation of the corpus. The unique coin from the mint of al-Marqab is dealt with in the Appendix.

SILVER COINS OF QALĀWŪN FROM CAIRO

STATISTICS

Number of specimens:	32
Coin diameter:	19 to 22 mm
Die diameter:	24 to 25 mm
Average weight:	2.77 g; for details see below



28 obverse dies:

- *Obverse I 1*: 9 dies on 9 specimens: #1-9 (1x each)
- *Obverse I 2*: 8 dies on 11 specimens: #10 (2x), #11 (1x), #12 (2x), #13-14 (1x each), #15 (2x), #16-17 (1x each)
- *Obverse II*: 11 dies on 12 specimens: #18 (1x), #19 (2x), #20-28 (1x each)

30 reverse dies:

- *Reverse I*: 30 dies on 32 specimens: #A-J (1x each), #K (2x), #L-P (1x each), #Q (2x), #R-E' (1x each)

CAIRO TYPE CHART

Type I, here years 680, 685, 686, 68x, 6x9; on reverse void left for units of minting year.



Obverse I 1



Obverse I 2*



Obverse II



Reverse I

Obverse I 1 and *Obverse I 2* correspond to Balog's type *B* (Balog no. 126), while *Obverse II* corresponds to his type *A* (Balog nos. 121-25). As the reverse type is always identical it seems appropriate to regard all combinations as forming one single coin type consisting of three different obverse variants.



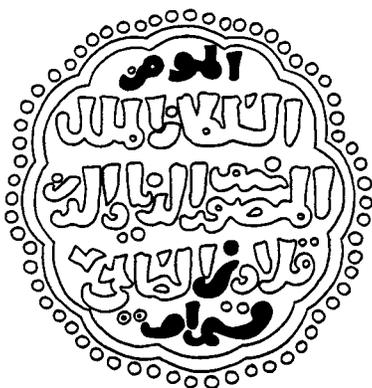
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DESCRIPTION OF CAIRO TYPE I (enlargement of drawings 2:1; on reverse void left for units of years)

Obverse I 1



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدين
- (3) قلاوون السليمانى

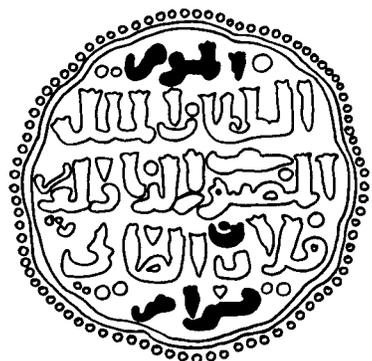
Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور, while the ين of الدين is above the *dāl*.

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse II*, in the drawing set off in black: completion of text in bottom (قسيم امير) and

top (المؤمنين) segments.

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse I 2* and *Obverse II*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of قلاوون is placed on the line.

Obverse I 2



Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse II*, in the drawing set off in black: completion of text in bottom (قسيم امير) and top (المؤمنين) segments.

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse I 1*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of قلاوون is placed above the *wāw*.



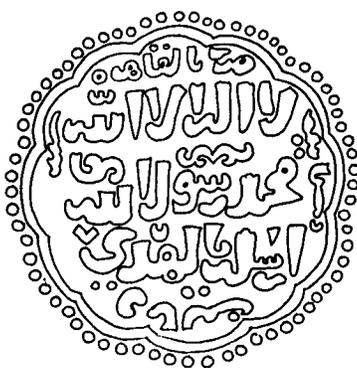
Obverse II



Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse I 1* and *Obverse I 2*, in the drawing set off in black: completion of text in bottom (المومنين) and top (قسيم امير) segments.

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse I 1*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of قلاون is placed above the *wāw*.

Reverse I



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله
- (3) ارسله بالهدى

Circular legend: ضرب بالقاهرة (top; *tā' marbūtah* mostly lacking), [خمس/ست/تسع/. . .] (left), وثمانين (bottom), وستماية (right).

GENERAL FEATURES OF CAIRO TYPE I

Border on both sides: linear dodecalobe in dodecalobe of dots. This kind of border is typical for the Qalāwūn coins of Cairo (versus Balog, *MSES*, 114, where the border is described as "dodecalobe of dots between two linear dodecalobes," like the coins from Damascus).

Style of writing: *naskhī*. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom and often show a more or less tight lacing below the tops. Some dies have *hastae* with flat tops, others are bicuspid or multicuspoid, which contributes to a cauliflower-like appearance, looking, at times, rather frayed and unbalanced.



Diacritical points occur occasionally with the *bā'* of بالهدى, the *fā'* of سيف, the *qāfs*, the *nūns* (in case of the name قلاون the point of the *nūn* is sometimes substituted by a V-shaped angular *muhmal* mark, cf. below), and the *yā's*.

Muhmal marks:

V-shaped angle: on top of some letters a V-shaped angle or a truncated bifoil  is placed. This sign is the *muhmal* mark لا وقف "no pausal reading." It informs the reciter that stopping at this place would have a detrimental effect on the true sense of the passage. In epigraphic usage the *muhmal* mark has lost its original meaning; it rather serves to indicate a letter which, in ordinary script, bears no diacritical point—in a way it is a diacritical mark although its meaning is something like لا نقطة عليها "without diacritical point." Occasionally, however, it is, like other *muhmal* marks, simply used to fill void spaces between and above any letter.⁵ On the Cairene coins the V-shaped *muhmal* marks are observed above the *sīns* of ارسله and قسيم, the *ṣād* of الصالحى (occasionally a circle instead), and the final *yā's* of بالهدى and الصالحى.

circle  sometimes with a cleft on top , above the *hā'* of بالهدى (occasionally a V-shaped angle instead), above the *qāf* of قلاون and the *ṣād* of الصالحى.

vertical wedge  above the *sīns* of ارسله and السلطان, and the *ṣād* of الصالحى (occasionally a circle with cleft on top instead).

"shaddah"  on top of the first الله (reverse, first line).

Pausal indicators: occasionally the lines in the top or bottom segments are framed by one dot or a pair of dots  .

Ornaments:

symmetrical scroll ornament  on top of رسول. The same ornament occurs, in the same position, on coins of the Damascus III type, although the execution is mostly neater. Close to these is the scroll ornament on the coins of the Ḥamāh III type which, however, always occurs in combination with a V-shaped *muhmal* mark. Thus, Balog's view (*MSES*, 115) that this ornament is specific to the Cairene coins of Qalāwūn is

⁵ Adolf Grohmann, *Arabische Paläographie*, part 2, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Denkschriften, vol. 94 (Vienna, 1971), 43-44.



not tenable any more; the rule can only be maintained if other criteria of Cairene coinage are fulfilled.

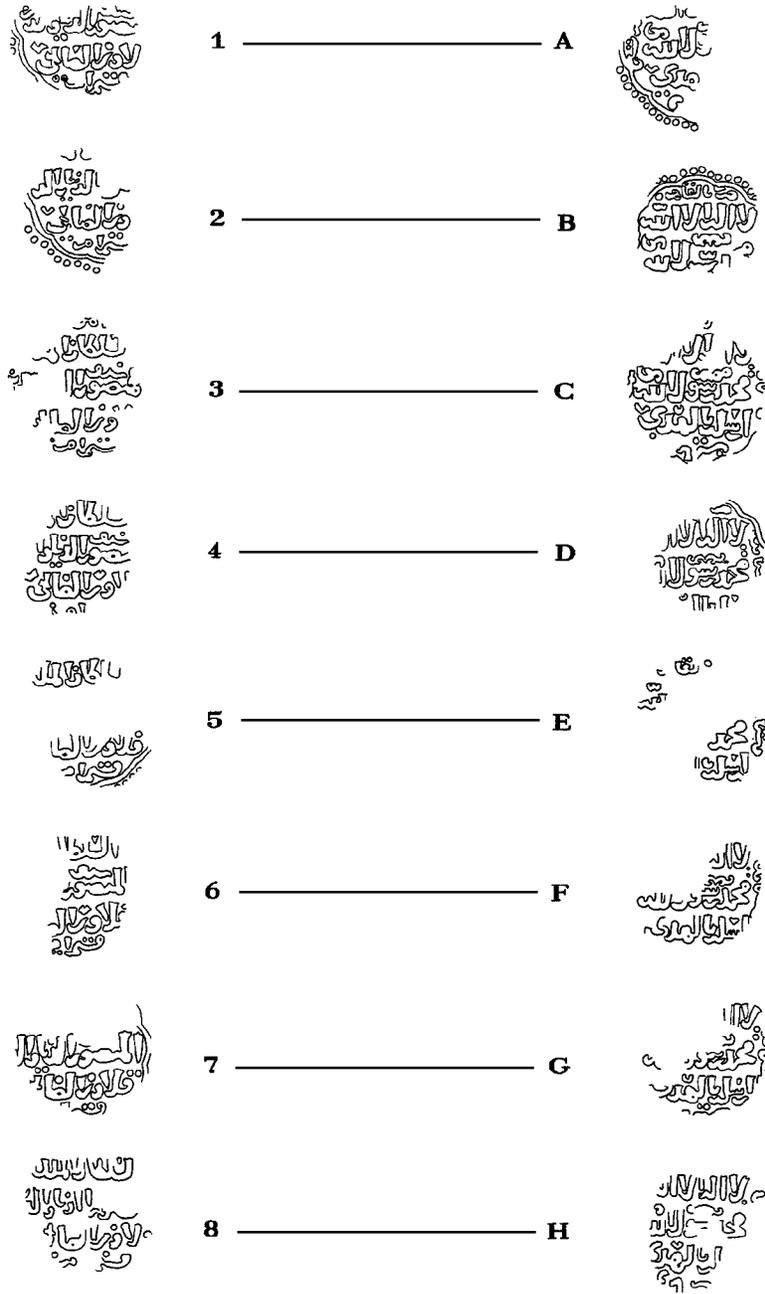
asymmetrical scroll ornament  on top of the second  (reverse, second line).



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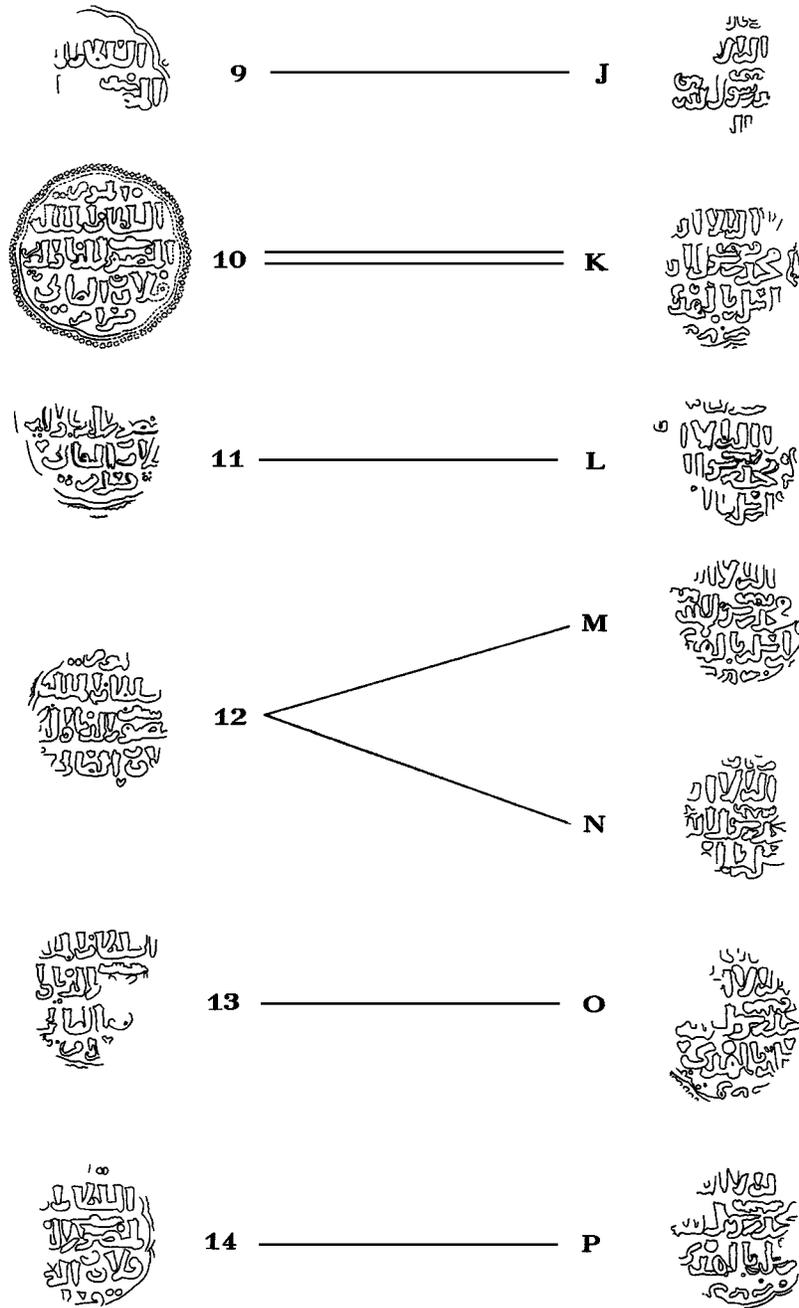
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Cairo, Type I



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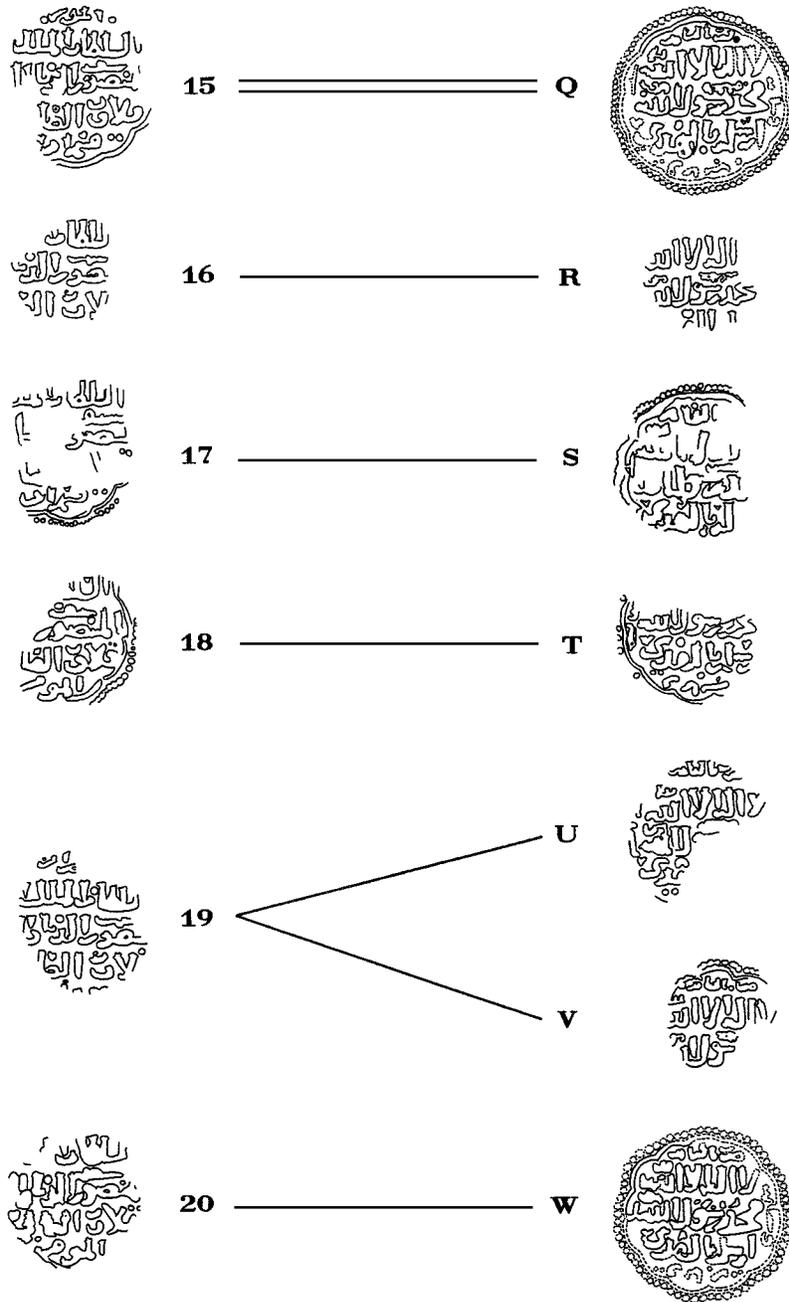
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Cairo, Type I (cont.)



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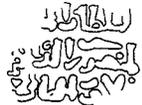
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Cairo, Type I (cont.)



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	21	_____	X	
	22	_____	Y	
	23	_____	Z	
	24	_____	A'	
	25	_____	B'	
	26	_____	C'	
	27	_____	D'	
	28	_____	E'	

Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Cairo, Type I (cont.)



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SILVER COINS OF QALĀWŪN FROM DAMASCUS**STATISTICS**

Number of specimens: 53
 Coin diameter: 19 to 22 mm; one (light-weight) specimen 13 mm
 Die diameter: 24 to 26 mm
 Average weight: 2.87 g; for details cf. below

27 obverse dies:

Obverse I 1: 6 dies on 10 specimens: #1-2 (2x each), #3 (1x), #4 (2x), #5 (1x), #6 (2x)
 Obverse I 2: 7 dies on 12 specimens: #7 (3x), #7' (2x), #8 (1x), #9 (2x), #10-11 (1x each), #12 (2x)
 Obverse II: 11 dies on 27 specimens: #13 (1x), #14 (3x), #15 (2x), #15' (2x), #16 (9x), #17 (1x), #18 (4x), #19 (2x), #20-22 (1x each)
 Obverse III 1: 2 dies on 2 specimens: #23 (1x), #25 (1x)
 Obverse III 2: 1 die on 2 specimens: #24 (2x)

27 reverse dies:

Reverse I 1: 5 dies (+ possibly 1 additional die) on 6 (+ possibly 2) specimens: #A (1x), #B (1x), #C (2x), #D (1x), #F (1x), [#G (2x)]
 Reverse I 2: 3 dies on 6 specimens: #E (3x), #H (1x), #J (2x)
 Reverse I 3: 4 dies (+ possibly 2 additional dies) on 5 (+ possibly 2) specimens: #K (1x), #L (2x), #N (1x), #O (1x), [#M (1x), #P (1x)]
 Reverse II: 9 dies on 27 specimens: #Q (2x), #R (6x), #S (1x), #T (7x), #U (6x), #V (2x), #W-Y (1x each)
 Reverse III 1: 2 dies on 3 specimens: #Z (1x), #A' (2x)
 Reverse III 2: 1 die on 1 specimen: #B' (1x)



DAMASCUS TYPE CHARTS

Type I, here years 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 68x, 6xx; on reverse void left for units of years.



Obverse I 1



Obverse I 2



*Reverse I 1 *



Reverse I 2



*Reverse I 3

Type II, here years 685, 686, 68x, 6xx; on reverse void left for units of years.



Obverse II



Reverse II

Type III, here years 688, 689, 68x



Obverse III 1



Obverse III 2



Reverse III 1



Reverse III 2*



DESCRIPTION OF DAMASCUS TYPE I, here years 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 68x, 6xx
(enlargement of drawings 2:1; on reverse void left for units of years)

Obverse I 1



Central inscription in three lines:

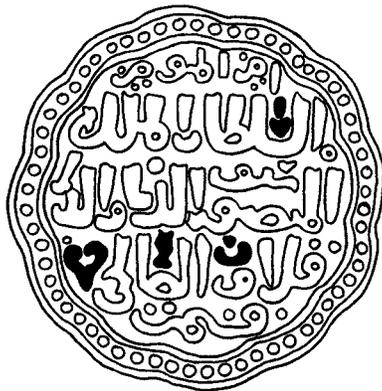
- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدنيا والدين
- (3) قلاون الصالحى

Completion of text in bottom (قسيم) and top (امير المومنين) segments.

Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور, while the ين of الدين is above the *dāl*.

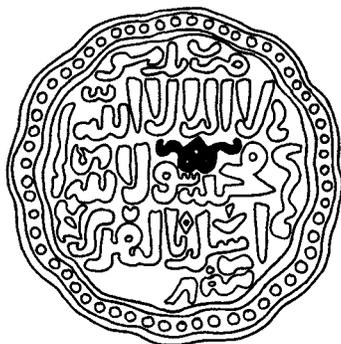
Characteristic features as distinct from *Obverse I 2*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of قلاون is placed on the line; rhomboid knot above the *sīn* of السلطان; heart-shaped knot concluding the last line; rhombus over triangle above the *ṣād* of الصالحى.

Obverse I 2



Characteristic features as distinct from *Obverse I 1* and *Obverse II*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of قلاون is placed above the *wāw*; V-shaped angle with wedge between the sides above the *sīn* of السلطان; bifoil concluding the last line; rhomboid knot on top of the *ṣād* of الصالحى.



Reverse I 1

Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله
- (3) ارسله بالهدى

Circular legend: سنة (top), ضرب بدمشق (left), [اثنى/اربع./ . .] ثمانين (bottom), وستماية (right).

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Reverse I 2* and *Reverse I 3*, in the drawing

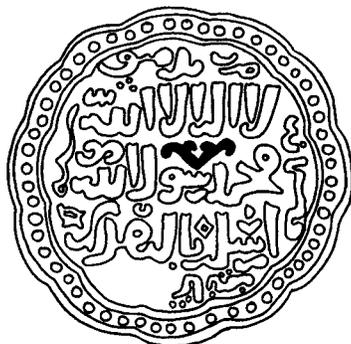
set off in black: heart-shaped knot above رسول.

Reverse I 2

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Reverse I 1* and *Reverse I 3*, in the drawing set off in black: V-shaped angle with three dots on either side and, occasionally, one dot between the sides above رسول.



Reverse I 3



Characteristic feature as distinct from *Reverse I 1* and *Reverse I 2*, in the drawing set off in black: V-shaped angle above رسول branching out in bifoil shape.

GENERAL FEATURES OF DAMASCUS TYPE I

Border on both sides: dodecalobe of dots between two linear dodecalobes.

Style of writing: *thulth/naskhī*. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom, frequently having a bicuspid or tricuspoid top; the *kāf* of الملك often ends up in the shape of a leaf, a bifoil, or a trifoil.

Diacritical points frequently occur with the *thā'* of ثمانين, the *shīn* of بدمشق, the *fā'* of سيف, the *qāfs* of قلاون and قسيم, the *nūns* of المنصور, السلطان, المومنين, قلاون, الدنيا, المومنين, امير, قسيم, سيف, ثمانين, and ثمانين, the *yā's* of سيف, قسيم, امير, ثمانين, and ثمانين.

Muhmal marks:

frequently V-shaped angle ♥ above the *sīn* of سيف.

V-shaped angle with dot ♥ or small wedge ♣ between the sides, above the *sīn* of ارسله.

circle ●, sometimes with a cleft on top ☪, above the *hā'* of بالهدى and the *dāl* of الدنيا, occasionally dot instead.

rhombus ◆, frequently on top of the *hā'* of بالهدى.

rhomboid knot ⚡ above the *sīn* of السلطان (on *Obverse I 1* only) and on top of the *ṣād* of الصالحى (on *Obverse I 2* only).

big V-shaped angle, with wedge between the sides ♣, on top of the *sīn* of السلطان (on *Obverse I 2* only).

rhombus over triangle ▲ above the *ṣād* of الصالحى (on *Obverse I 1* only).



"shaddah"  on top of the first الله (reverse, first line).

Pausal indicators:

inverted heart-shaped knot above the *yā'* of الصالحى, mostly in conjuncture with a dot on either side of its top , concluding the text (on *Obverse I 1* only).

bifoil , in the same position as before (on *Obverse I 2* only).

bifoil  or trifoil  above the *yā'* of بالهدى, concluding the reverse text.

group of three dots in triangle formation , framing the lines of the circular reverse legend.

Ornaments:

asymmetrical scroll ornament  on top of the second الله (reverse, second line).

inverted heart-shaped knot with protruding curved ends  above رسول (on *Reverse I 1* only).

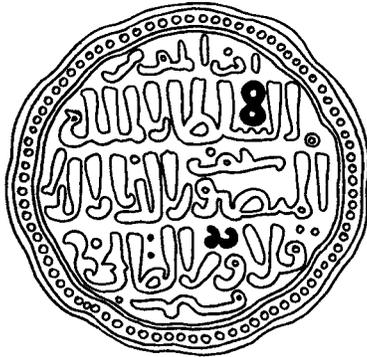
wide V-shaped angle with three dots on either side and occasionally with an additional dot between the sides , in the same position as before (on *Reverse I 1* only).

wide V-shaped angle branching out in bifoil shape on either side , in the same position as before (on *Reverse I 3* only).



DESCRIPTION OF DAMASCUS TYPE II, here years 685, 686, 68x (enlargement of drawings 2:1; on reverse void left for units of years)

Obverse II



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدنيا والدين
- (3) قلاون الصالحى

Completion of text in bottom (قسيم) and top (امير المومنين) segments.

Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور, while the ين of الدين is above the dāl.

Specific to line (3): the nūn of قلاون is placed on the line.

Characteristic features as distinct from *Obverse I 1* and *Obverse I 2*, in the drawing set off in black: 8-shaped *muhmal* mark above the *sīn* of السلطان; asymmetrical scroll ornament above the last two characters of قلاون; dots above the *ṣād* of الصالحى.

Reverse II



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله
- (3) ارسله بالهدى

Circular legend: سنة (top), ضرب بدمشق (left), وستماية (right), [ست./ . . ثمانين] (bottom).

Characteristic features as distinct from *Reverse I 1*, *Reverse I 2*, and *Reverse I 3*, in the drawing set off in black: asymmetrical scroll ornament above رسول; heart-shaped knot above the *sīn* of ارسله (occasionally V-shaped angle with dot between the sides instead); asymmetrical scroll ornament above the first الله (reverse, first line).



GENERAL FEATURES OF DAMASCUS TYPE II

Border on both sides: dodecalobe of dots between two linear dodecalobes.

Style of writing: *thulth/naskhī*. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom and frequently have bicuspid or tricuspid tops; often the *yā*'s of الصالحى and of بالهدى as well as, occasionally, the *kāf* of الملك, end in the shape of a leaf.

Diacritical points occur occasionally with the *fā*' of سيف and the *qāfs* of قسيم and قلاون.

Muhmal marks:

V-shaped angle  occasionally above the *sīn* of سيف.

V-shaped angle with dot between the sides  occasionally above the *sīn* of ارسله.

circle with a cleft on top  above the *hā*' of بالهدى and the *dāl* of الدنيا, occasionally with dot instead.

one point or a colon  above the *ṣād* and, occasionally, above the *yā*' of الصالحى.

a group of three dots in triangle formation  occasionally above the *hā*' of ارسله.

a big "eight"  or  above the *sīn* of السلطان.

No pausal indicators.

Ornaments:

asymmetrical scroll ornament  above رسول.

heart-shaped knot , frequently inverted , above the *sīn* of ارسله; occasionally V-shaped angle with dot between the sides instead.

asymmetrical scroll ornaments  on top of both occurring بالله (reverse, first and second line).

asymmetrical scroll ornament  above the last two characters of قلاون.



DESCRIPTION OF DAMASCUS TYPE III (corresponds to Balog's type *B*), here years 688, 689, 68x (enlargement of drawings 2:1; on reverse void left for units of years)

Obverse III 1



Central inscription in two lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدنيا والدين

Completion of text in bottom (قلاون) and top (الصالحى) segments.

Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور, while the ين of الدين is above the *dāl*.

Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse III 2*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of السلطان is laid over the second *lām*.

Obverse III 2



Characteristic feature as distinct from *Obverse III 1*, in the drawing set off in black: the *nūn* of السلطان is placed on the line.



Reverse III 1



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله
- (3) ارسله بالهدى

Circular legend: سنة (top), ضرب بدمشق (right), وثمانية (bottom), وثمانين (left), ثمان

Characteristic features as distinct from *Reverse III 2*, in the drawing set off in black: *muhmal* mark in the shape of a V-angle or a

truncated bifoil above رسول; year "688."

Reverse III 2



Characteristic features as distinct from *Reverse III 1*, in the drawing set off in black: symmetrical scroll ornament above رسول; year "689."

GENERAL FEATURES OF DAMASCUS TYPE III

Border on both sides: dodecalobe of dots between two linear dodecalobes.

Style of writing: *thulth/naskhī*. In distinction from all other coin types of Damascus, this type is characterized by its extraordinarily elegant calligraphy. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom and often have bicuspid or tricuspid tops; the *yā'* of بالهدى ends in the shape of a bifoil.

Diacritical points occur with the *qāf* of قلاون, the *yā'*s of ثمانية and ثمانين, the *tā'* of ستمائة, the *nūns* of ثمانين, قلاون, and الدين, and the *fā'* of سيف.



Muhmal marks:

V-shaped angle  or truncated bifoil  above the *sīns* of رسول (on *Reverse III 1* only) and ارسله, as well as, occasionally, above ستماية and سيف.

circle with cleft on top  above the *dāl* of محمد and above the *hā*'s of both occurring لاله (reverse, first and second line).

circle with cleft on the left side  above the *hā*'s of ارسله and بالهدى.

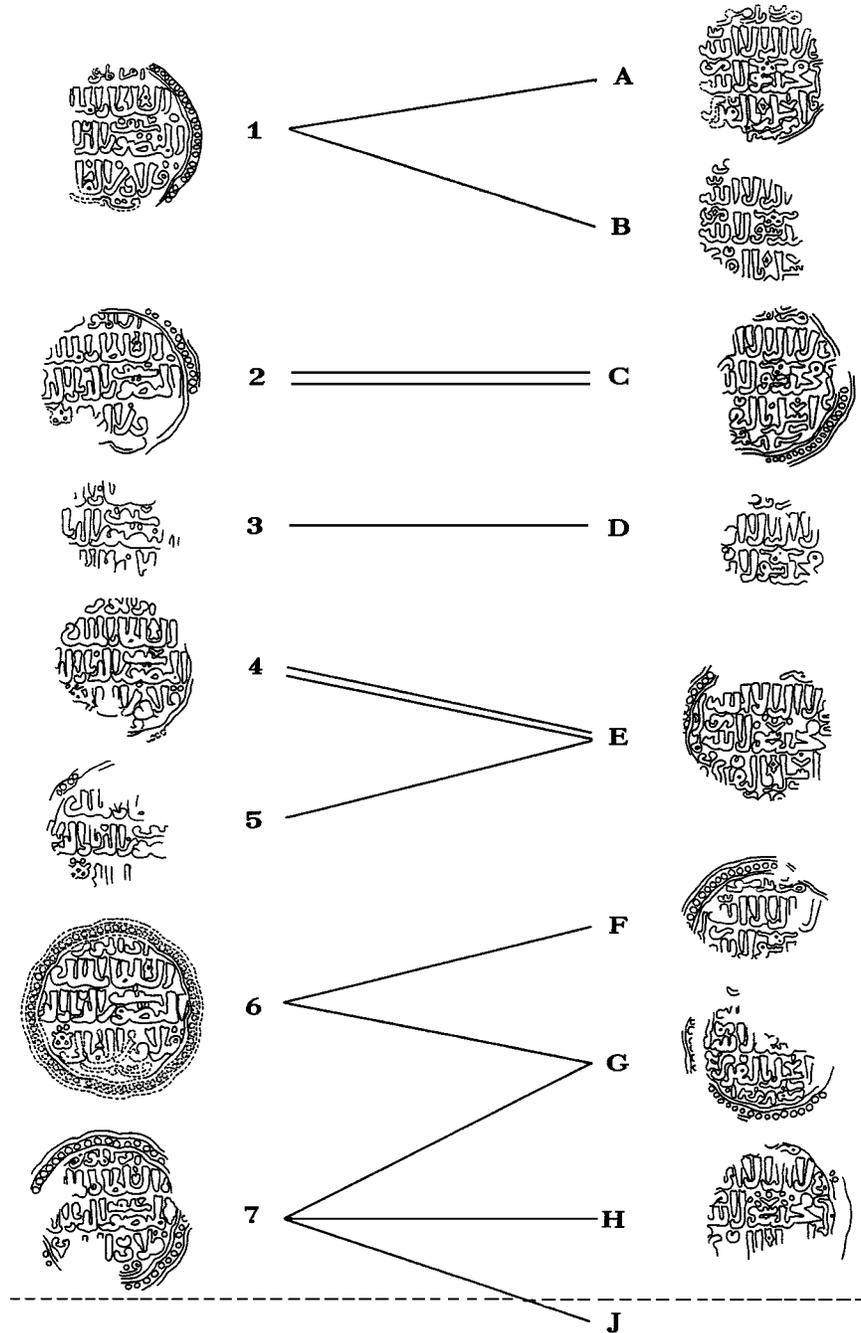
"*shaddah*"  above the *ṣād* of الصالحى, occasionally with *fathah*-like dash on top , above both occurring لاله (reverse, first and second line), and above the *sīn* of السلطان.

Pausal indicators:

 to the right of الصالحى, opposite ornaments   on either side of the name قلاون.

Symmetrical scroll ornament  above رسول (on *Reverse III 2* only).





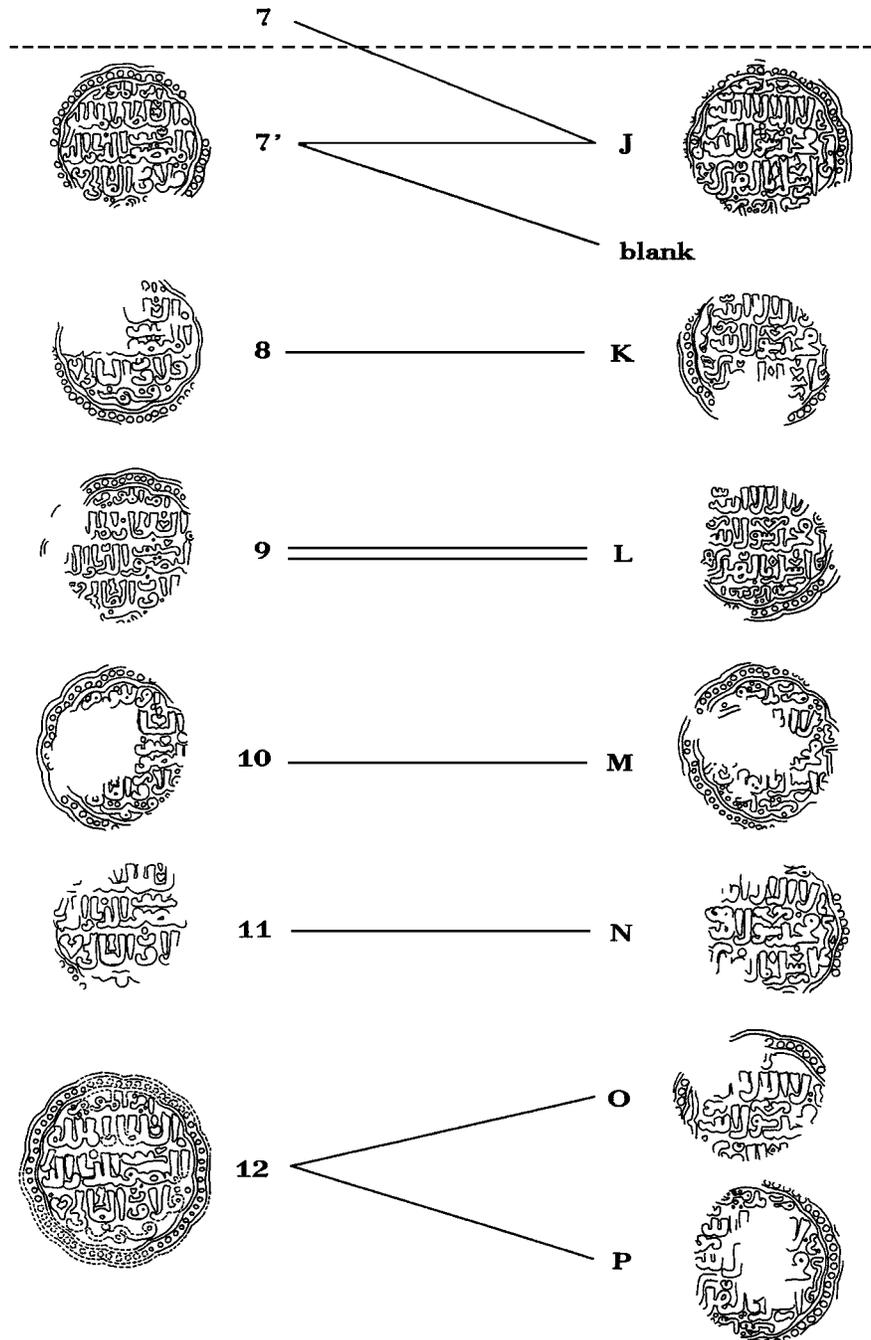
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Damascus, Type I



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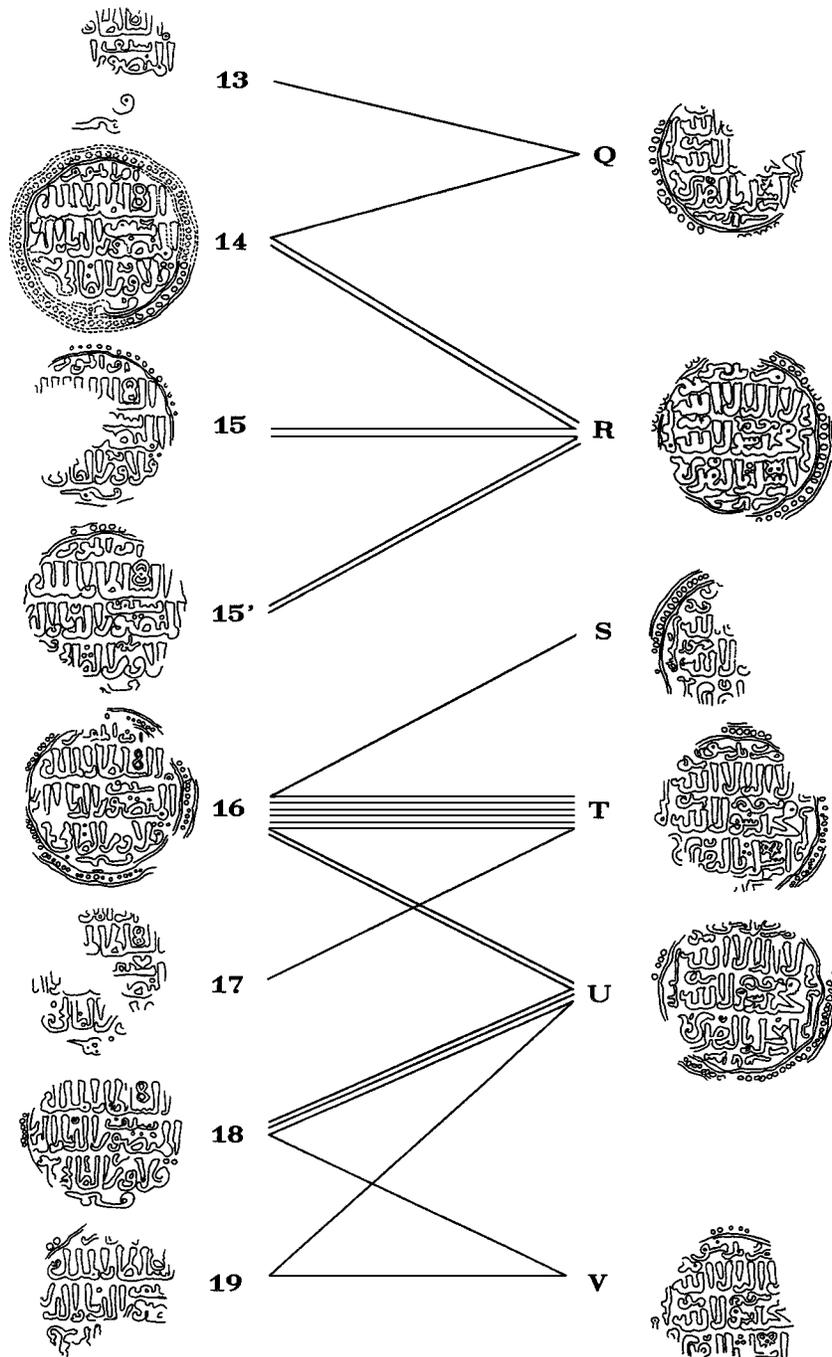
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Damascus, Type I (cont.)



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Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Damascus, Type II



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20

W



21

X



22

Y



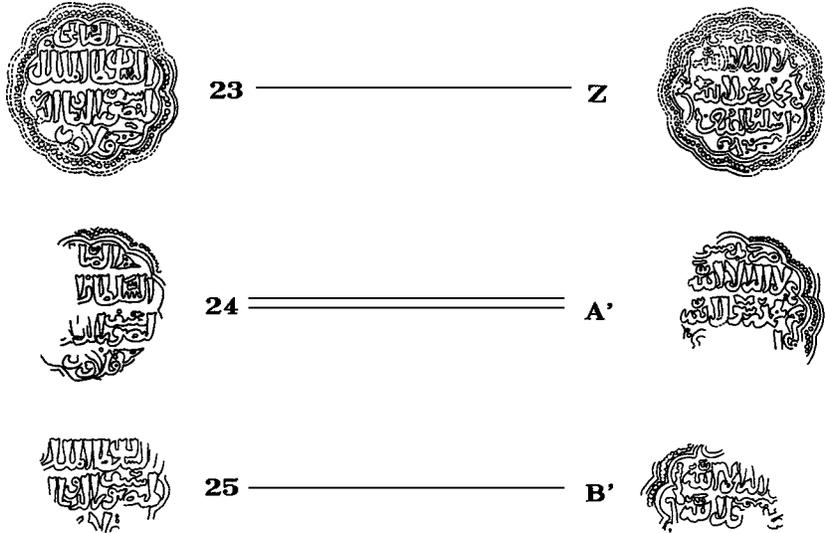
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Damascus, Type II (cont.)



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Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Damascus, Type III



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SILVER COINS OF QALĀWŪN FROM ḤAMĀH⁶

STATISTICS

Number of specimens:	35
Coin diameter:	19 to 22 mm
Die diameter:	26 to 28 mm
Average weight:	2.89 g; for details cf. below.

8 obverse dies:

Obverse I:	3 dies on 6 specimens: #1 (2x), #2 (1x), #3 (3x)
Obverse II:	1 die on 6 specimens: #4 (6x)
Obverse III 1:	1 die on 9 specimens: #6 (9x)
Obverse III 2:	3 dies on 14 specimens: #5 (9x), #7 (1x), #8 (4x)

22 reverse dies:

Reverse I:	6 dies on 6 specimens: #A-E (1x each)
Reverse II:	4 dies on 6 specimens: #F (3x), #G-J (1x each)
Reverse III 1:	6 dies (+ possibly 1 additional die) on 15 specimens (+ possibly 1): #K-M (1x each), #N (6x), #Q (2x), #V (4x), (+ possibly #U [1x])
Reverse III 2:	6 dies on 7 specimens: #O-P (2x each), #R-T (1x each)

ḤAMĀH TYPE CHARTS

Type I (here year 683)

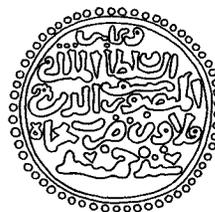
Type II (here year 685)



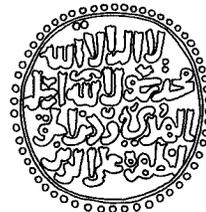
Obverse I



Reverse I



Obverse II



Reverse II

⁶Only after the completion of this article did the special publication by Lorenz Korn on the coins of Ḥamāh come to my notice: *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen. Ḥamāh IV c Bilād aš-Šām III* (Berlin, 1998). Korn examined 56 silver coins of Qalāwūn from Ḥamāh. His findings generally confirm my own, adding the minting years 679 to my Type I, and 688 to my Type III. The completion of the text by the word *kullihī* on the reverse of my Type II is in the bottom segment. Another type, which is not represented in my corpus, is recorded for the year 684.



Type III (here years 687, 689)



Obverse III 1



Obverse III 2



Reverse III 1



Reverse III 2

DESCRIPTION OF ḤAMĀH TYPE I (corresponds to Balog's no. 135 B), here year 683 (enlargement of drawings 2:1)

This *dirham* is two years older than the Ḥamāh type II coin of 685, which was published by Helen W. Mitchell⁷ (see below). A coin of this type I has been dated 678 or 688 by Balog,⁸ possibly due to mistaking the initial characters of ثلاثة to mean ثمانية; moreover, he evidently misreads the decade ثمانين in the bottom segment to be the word for the century ستمائة. If my reading is correct, then this type was minted exclusively in the year 683.

On the Ḥamāh types I and II the naming of the mint and the year of coinage appear as parts of the field inscription, unlike the disposition found on the Cairene and Damascene coins as well as on the Ḥamāh type III. This particular distribution of the legend is typical for many coins of the Ḥamāh mint. It appears for the first time in 658 on Mongol coinage; it was maintained by Baybars on his Ḥamāh coins after he had introduced the *dirham zāhirī* and thereafter.⁹ It seems to be a peculiarity of Qalāwūn's Ḥamāh types I and II that the mint and the year are part of the *obverse* inscription, while the same feature occurs on the *reverses* of Ḥamāh coins prior to Qalāwūn's reign (Hūlāgū 658, Baybars 660 and following) as well as later, e.g., under al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 715.¹⁰

⁷Helen W. Mitchell, "Mamlūk Dirhems," 180, no. 6.

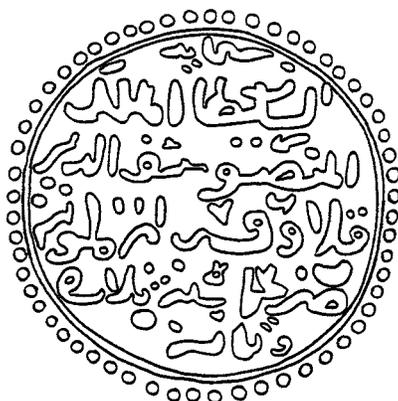
⁸"Additions," 122, no. 135 B.

⁹For more details and photographs of the coins cf. Stefan Heidemann, *Das Aleppiner Kalifat (A.D. 1261): Vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad über Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo*, Islamic History and Civilization. Studies and Texts 6 (Leiden, 1996), 282-90, 360-61.

¹⁰Ibid., 282-90; Balog's nos. 64-66, 204.



Obverse I



Central inscription in four lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدين
- (3) قلاون قسيم امير المومنين
- (4) ضرب بحماة سنة ثلاثة

Completion of the date in bottom (وثمانين) and top (ستمائة) segments versus Balog, “Additions,” 122, where the decade وثمانين in the bottom segment is mistaken for the century ستمائة.

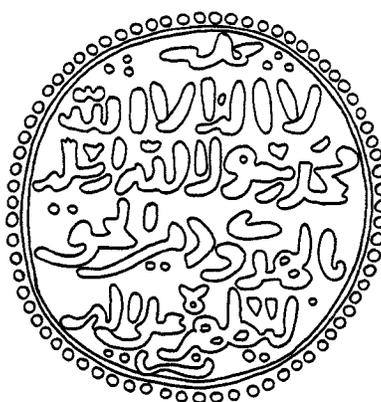
Specific to line (1): the *nūn* of السلطان overlays the second *lām*.

Specific to line (2): the *rāʾ* of المنصور is placed above the *ṣād*.

Specific to line (3): the *nūn* of قلاون is placed above the *wāw*, and the منين of المومنين is above the *wāw*.

Specific to line (4): the *bāʾ* of ضرب is placed above *ضر*, and the *hāʾ* of بحماة is above the *sīn* of سنة.

Reverse I



Central inscription in four lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله ارسله
- (3) بالهدى ودين الحق
- (4) ليظهره على الدين

Completion of text in the top segment: كله.

Specific to line (3): the *yāʾ* of بالهدى is written retroflex and placed above the *dāl*.

On some specimens the inscription protrudes slightly beyond the marginal circle, cf. drawing of die #D here:



GENERAL FEATURES OF ḤAMĀH TYPE I

Border on both sides: circular line in circle of dots. Contrary to Balog, “Additions,” 122, where the borders are described as “circular line,” this marginal design seems to be typical for the Qalāwūn coins from Ḥamāh.

Style of writing: *naskhī*. In distinction from the other Qalāwūn coin types the tops of the *hastae* are not flat or bicuspid but rounded; the calligraphic standard is rather poor.

Diacritical points occur with the *nūns* of السلطان and المنصور, the *fāʾ* of سيف, the *qāfs* of قلاون and الحق, the *dād* of ضرب, and the *yāʾ* of الدين. There is a confusing multitude of other dots of only decorative purpose.

Muhmal marks:

V-shaped angle ♥ above the *sīns* of سيف, رسول, ارسله, and, occasionally, of قسيم. occasionally “*shaddah*” ☹ on top of both occurring الله.

Pausal indicators: group of three dots in triangle formation ●●● occasionally at the outset and at the end of the line in the top segment (reverse).

No ornamentation.

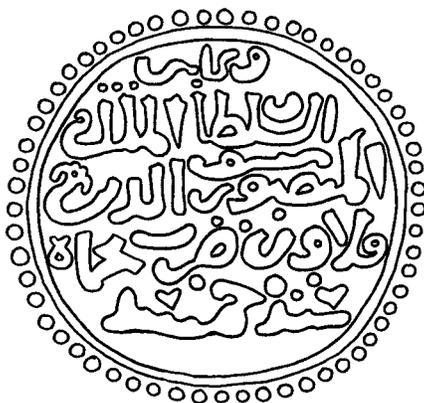
DESCRIPTION OF ḤAMĀH TYPE II (corresponds to Balog’s no. 137 A), year 685 (enlargement of drawings 2:1)

Helen W. Mitchell¹¹ has studied a coin of this type and of the same year, although on hers mint and date were missing. It can be confirmed here that the coin is of Syrian provenance, as she surmised. She is also right in interpreting the last distinguishable character on her coin to be read as the *khāʾ* of the date خمسة. Thus it is indeed “an early example of the date appearing as part of the field inscription.” However, it is not the earliest occurrence of that phenomenon, as she states. It can be found on coins from the Ḥamāh mint as early as 658, although these earlier coins from Ḥamāh have the mint and the year on the reverse, as those above.

¹¹“Mamlūk Dirhems,” 180, no. 6.



Obverse II



Central inscription in four lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدين
- (3) قلاون ضرب بحماة
- (4) سنة خمسة

Completion of date in the top segment: وثمانين. If, however, this word is read as وستماية, which is possible, then the decade has its place at the very bottom.

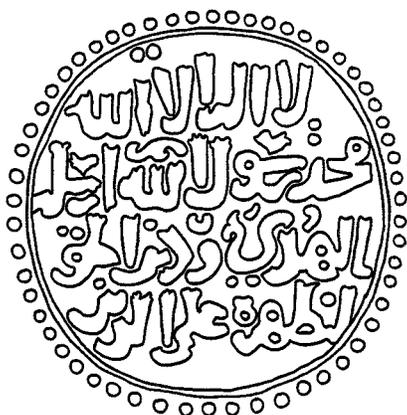
Specific to line (1): the *nūn* of السلطان is

placed above the *sīn*.

Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور.

Specific to line (3): the *bā'* of ضرب is placed over the *rā'*.

Reverse II



Inscription in four lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله ارسله
- (3) بالهدى ودين الحق
- (4) ليظهره على الدين

Probable completion of the text by كله in top segment, if the two dots there are rightly interpreted as pausal indicators.

GENERAL FEATURES OF ḤAMĀH TYPE II

Border on both sides: circular line in circle of dots.

Style of writing: *naskhī*. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom and frequently have bicuspid or multicuspids tops. This feature contributes to a cauliflower-like appearance which is accentuated by scroll ornaments and floriated characters: the *nūn* of الدين ends in a blossom, the *yā'* of بالهدى in the shape of a bifoil.



Diacritical points occur with the *nūns* of قلاون, of سنة, and of دين, the *ḍād* of ضرب, the *khā'* of خمسة, the *qāf* of الحق, and the *zā'* of ليظهره.

Muḥmal marks:

V-shaped angle  above the *sīns* of سنة, of رسول, and of ارسله.

circle with a cleft on top  or on the left side  above the *wāw* of ودين and the *hā'* of بالهدى.

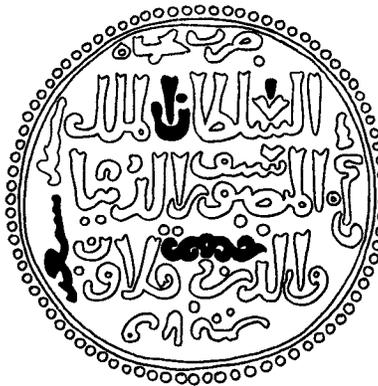
occasionally "shaddah"  above the first الله (reverse, first line).

Pausal indicator: three dots in horizontal alignment  concluding the text in the top segment (obverse).

Asymmetrical scroll ornament  on top of the second الله (reverse, second line); occasionally "shaddah" instead.

DESCRIPTION OF ḤAMĀH TYPE III (corresponds to Balog's no. 135 C), here years 687 and 689 (enlargement of drawings 2:1)

Obverse III 1



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدنيا
- (3) والدين قلاون

Circular legend: سنة (top), ضوب بحماة (left), وستماية (right), وثمانين (bottom).

Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور.

Specific to line (3): The *nūn* of قلاون is placed above the *wāw*.

Characteristic features as distinct from *Obverse III 2*, in the drawing set off in black: all known coins of this (sub-) type are dated 689, as far as visible (cf. Balog, "Additions," 122); the *nūn* of السلطان is placed on the line, and the *alif* of الملك is above the *nūn*; the space above دين (obverse, last line) is filled up by a roughly symmetrical scroll ornament; between the sides of the angle above السلطان there is a vertical wedge.



Obverse III 2



Characteristic features as distinct from *Obverse III 1*, in the drawing set off in black: the date is 687; the word *سبعة* has a diacritical point below the *bā'*; the *nūn* of *السلطان* is placed above the *sīn*; the *kāf* of *الملك* ends in a scroll; the space above *دين ق* is filled up by an asymmetrical scroll ornament.

Reverse III 1



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله
- (3) ارسله بالهدى

Circular legend: *ودين الحق* (top), *ليظهره* (left), *على الدين* (bottom), *كله* (right).

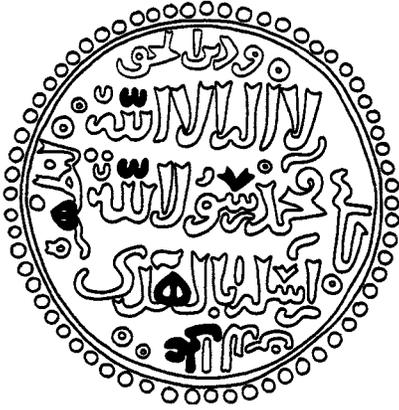
Specific to line (3): the *yā'* of *بالهدى* ends up in a trifoil.

Characteristic features as distinct from *Reverse III 2*, in the drawing set off in black:

symmetrical scroll ornament above a V-shaped angle on top of *رسول*, rarely just the angle; asymmetrical scroll ornaments on top of both occurring *الله*; the loops of the medial *hā's* in *بالهدى* and *ليظهره* are written vertically above each other; the *yā'* of *على* is written retroflex.



Reverse III 2



Characteristic features as distinct from *Reverse III 1*, in the drawing set off in black: V-shaped *muhmal* mark above رسول, without scroll ornament; "shaddah" above both occurring بالله; the loops of the medial *hā*'s of بالهدى and ليظهره are written in juxtaposition forming a symmetrical pointed arch on the line; the *yā*' of على is not retroflex.

Only the discovery of a better specimen could clarify the specific variant of the *yā*' in بالهدى

and how the space before على and after كله was used.

GENERAL FEATURES OF ḤAMĀH TYPE III

Border on both sides: linear circle in circle of dots.

Style of writing: *thulth*, of high calligraphic standard. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom and have bicuspid or multicuspid tops, which contributes to a cauliflower-like appearance, accentuated by scroll ornaments (cf. below).

Diacritical points occur with the *nūns*, the *qāfs*, the *yā*' of الدنيا (on *Obverse III 1* only), the *fā*' of سيف (on *Obverse III 2* only), the *bā*' of سبعة in the circular legend (on *Obverse III 2* only), and the *zā*' of ليظهره.

Muhmal marks:

V-shaped angle  above every *sīn* of the central inscriptions on obverse and reverse.

V-shaped angle with wedge between the sides  above the *sīns* of ارسله (on *Obverse III 1* only) and occasionally above السلطان.

circle with a cleft at the bottom  above the *nūn* of الدنيا.

circle with a cleft on the left side  above the *dāl* of الدنيا (on *Obverse III 1* only), the *hā*' of بالهدى, and occasionally above the *wāw* of رسول; circle with a cleft on top  above the *hā*'s of both occurring بالله (on *Reverse III 2* only).

"shaddah"  on top of the *lāms* of both occurring بالله (on *Reverse III 2* only).



Pausal indicators:

frequently circles  framing the lines of the circular legends.

asymmetrical scroll ornament  concluding the circular legend on reverse.

Ornaments:

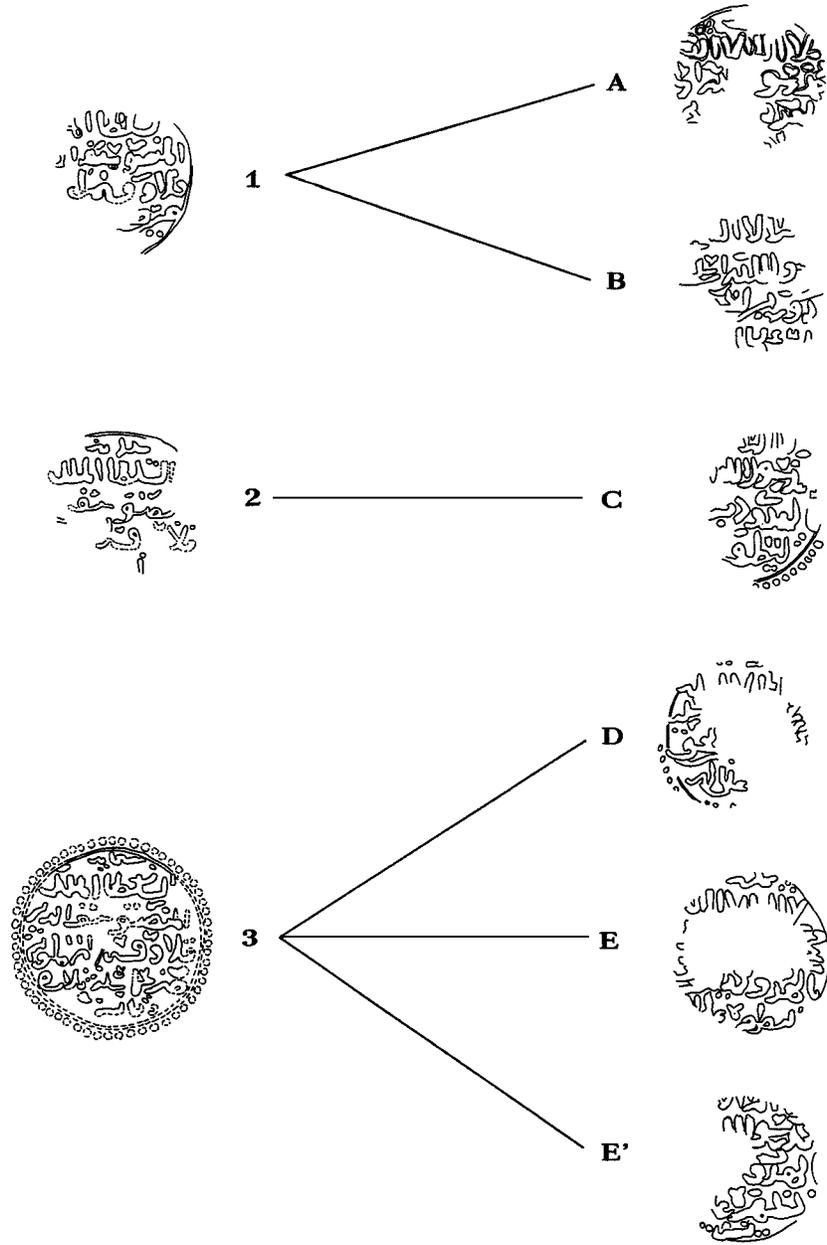
approximately symmetrical scroll ornament  above الدين (on *Obverse III 1* only)

asymmetrical scroll ornament  above الدين (on *Obverse III 2* only)

symmetrical scroll ornament above the V-shaped *muhmal* mark  or  above رسول (on *Reverse III 2* only)

asymmetrical scroll ornaments   above both occurring الله (on *Reverse III 1* only).





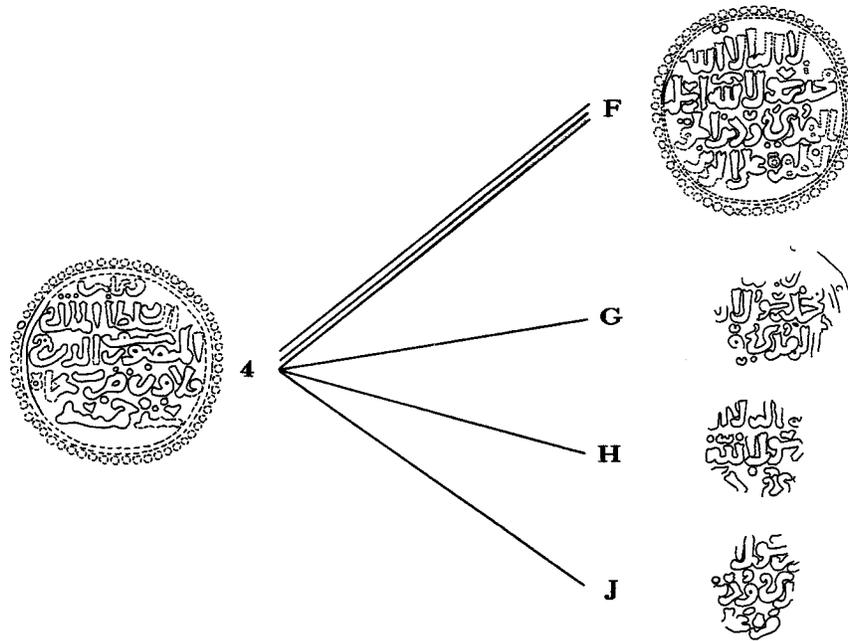
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Ḥamāh, Type I



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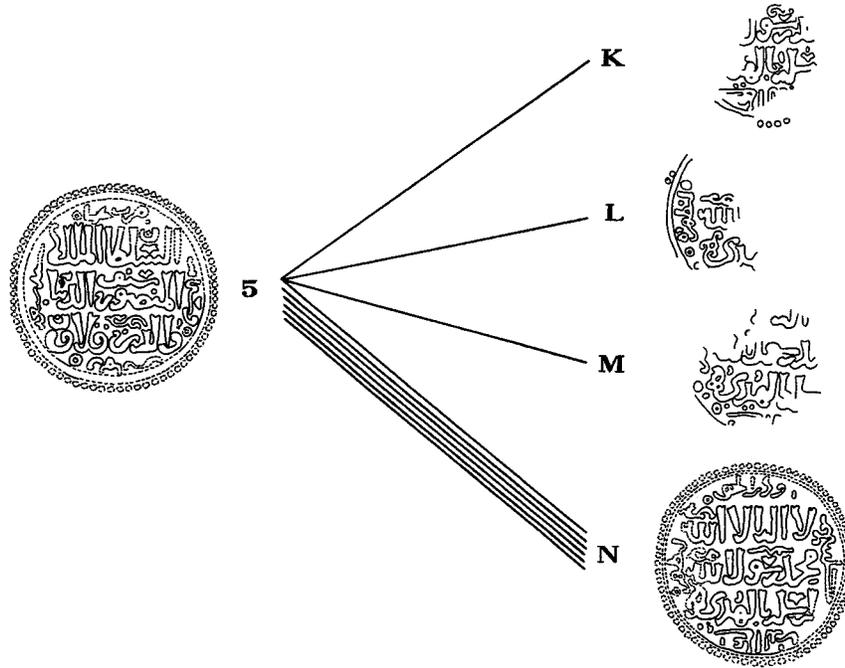
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Ḥamāh, Type II



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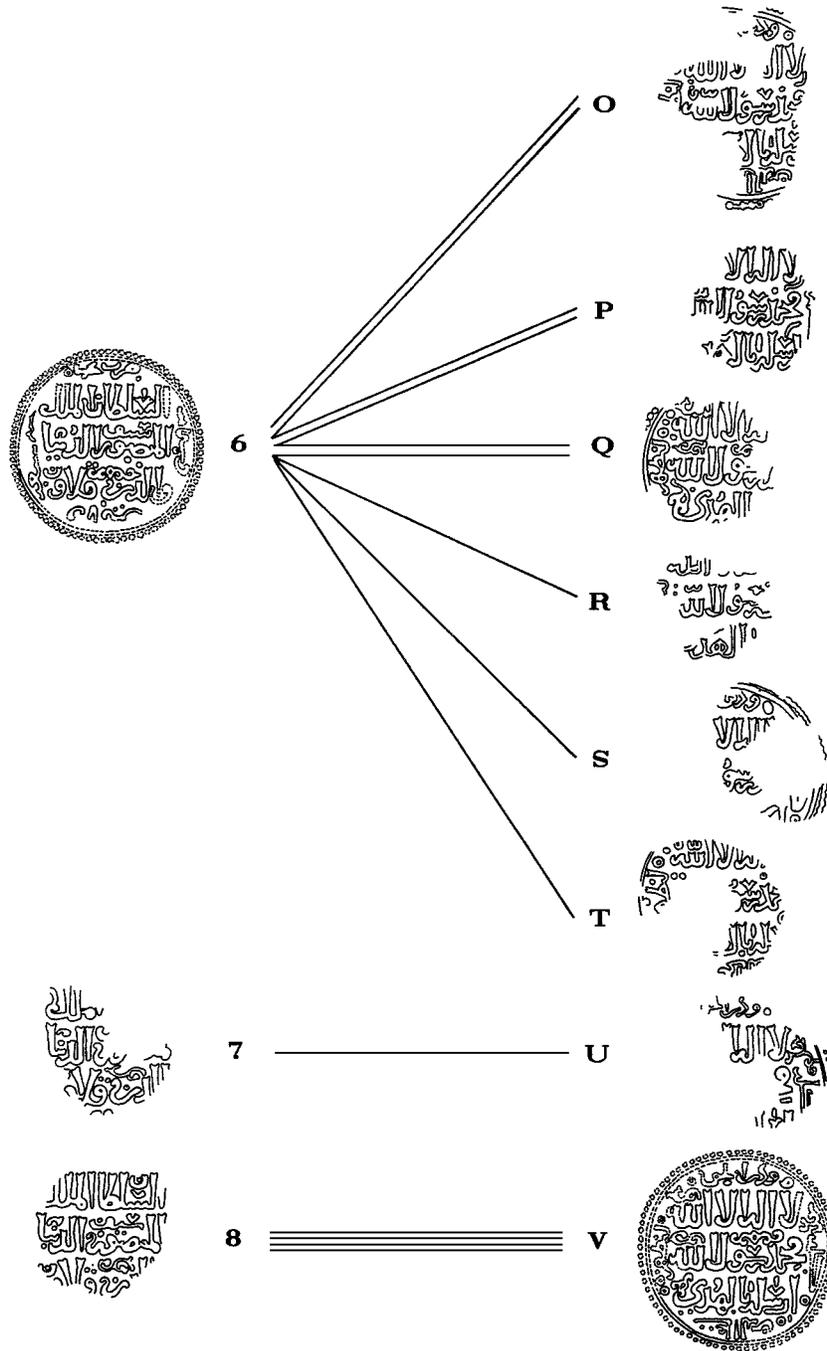
Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalāwūn from Ḥamāh, Type III



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Die Linkages for the Silver Coins of Qalawun from Hamah, Type III (cont.)



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METROLOGY

The following frequency table of the Qalāwūn corpus in question serves to clarify its composition according to the three minting sites represented, but at the same time aims at linking its metrological properties to the meticulous findings of Warren C. Schultz.¹² Every coin is symbolized by a circle (○). The weight range of 0.1 g was chosen for compatibility with Schultz's statistics. The extremely wide variation of weight observed among the coins supports his conclusion that the individual specimens did not represent a prescribed value but only the intrinsic value of their silver content.

¹²Warren C. Schultz, "Mamluk Money from Baybars to Barqūq: A Study Based on the Literary Sources and the Numismatic Evidence," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1995. In addition to appreciating his dissertation I gratefully acknowledge his help in rendering my initial version of this article into clear English.



Weight range	Cairo 32 coins	Damascus 53 coins	Ḥamāh 35 coins	specimens 120
1.20-1.30 g		o		1*
2.00-2.10 g	o			1
2.10-2.20 g				0
2.20-2.30 g	oo	o	o	4
2.30-2.40 g	o		o	2
2.40-2.50 g	ooo	oooo	o	8
2.50-2.60 g	ooooo	ooo	oo	10
2.60-2.70 g	o	oooooooo	o	9
2.70-2.80 g	ooooo	oooooooo	ooooooo	17
2.80-2.90 g	oooo	oooooooo	ooo	13
2.90-3.00 g	o	oooooooooooo	ooooooo	19
3.00-3.10 g	oo	o	ooooooooo	11
3.10-3.20 g	ooo	ooooo	ooo	11
3.20-3.30 g	o	oooo	o	6
3.30-3.40 g	oo	ooo	o	6
3.40-3.50 g		o		1
3.50-3.60 g				0
3.60-3.70 g	o			1
Average	2.77 g	2.87 g	2.89 g	

*Due to its extreme light weight, this coin is excluded from the determination of the average weight.

Note: The unique coin from al-Marqab (see Appendix) has the weight of 2.47 g.



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APPENDIX: A SILVER COIN OF QALĀWŪN FROM AL-MARQAB, 685

Among the coins of Qalāwūn described in the previous article there was one specimen minted in al-Marqab, a fortress on the Mediterranean coast of Syria which was not previously known to have been a mint. In this appendix, a description of the coin is presented as well as photographs and drawings in 1:1 and 2:1 scale. As is usual with Mamluk coins, only part of the dies' designs are visible on the flan. For this reason it was advisable to reconstruct the original dies in three steps. First, a line drawing of the two sides was made showing every single discernible detail. Due to an absence of other examples, the second step consisted of amending the off-flan details by referring to the "closest relatives" of the coin, i.e., contemporary coins from Damascus and Cairo for which type drawings have already been established in the previous article. At this stage the accidental defects on the coin like the hole and the slight double strike on the reverse (bottom left) were rectified. In the drawings which follow, all reasonable amendments have been characterized by dotted lines. The final drawing was achieved by converting these dotted lines into ordinary ones in order to give an impression of how the complete dies would most probably have appeared.

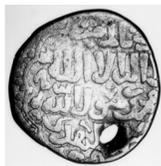
THE COIN

Coin diameter:	20 mm
Die diameter:	24 mm
Weight:	2.47 g

Photograph, 1:1 size



Obverse



Reverse

Line drawing, 1:1 size



Obverse

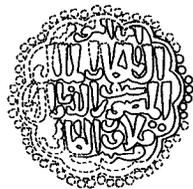


Reverse

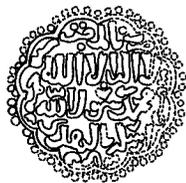


Die reconstruction

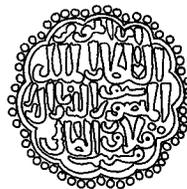
Type drawing



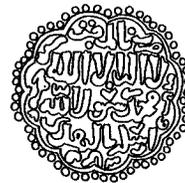
Obverse



Reverse



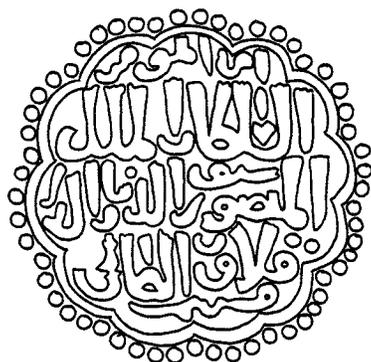
Obverse



Reverse

DESCRIPTION OF THE AL-MARQAB TYPE (enlargement of drawings 2:1)

Obverse



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) السلطان الملك
- (2) المنصور سيف الدنيا والدين
- (3) قلاون الصالحى

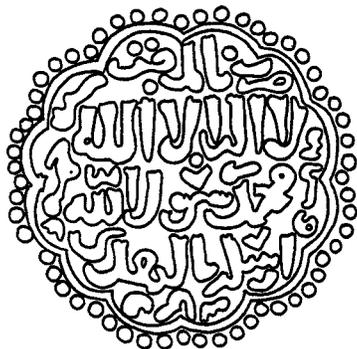
Completion of text in bottom (قسيم) and top (امير المومنين) segments.

Specific to line (2): سيف is placed above المنصور.

Specific to line (3): the *nūn* of قلاون is placed

on top of the *wāw*.

Reverse



Central inscription in three lines:

- (1) لا اله الا الله
- (2) محمد رسول الله
- (3) ارسله بالهدى

Circular legend: ضرب بالمرقب (top), سنة (left), وستماية (right), وثمانين (bottom), خمسة.

Specific to line (2): The *rā'* of رسول is placed above the *dāl* of محمد.



GENERAL FEATURES OF THE AL-MARQAB TYPE

Border on both sides: linear dodecalobe in dodecalobe of dots.

Style of writing: *thulth/naskhī*. The *hastae* taper from top to bottom; the tops of the *hastae* and of other characters are bicuspid or multicuspid as with almost all silver coins of Qalāwūn, which contributes to a slightly cauliflower-like appearance.

Diacritical points occur with the *nūn* of الدنيا, the *qāfs* of قلاون and بالمرقب, and the final *bā'* of بالمرقب.

Muhmal marks:

V-shaped angle  above the *sīn* of ارسله.

V-shaped angle with dot between the sides  above the *sīn* of رسول.

V-shaped angle with vertical wedge between the sides  above the *sīn* of السلطان.

vertical wedge  above the *ṣād* of الصالحى.

"*shaddah*"  above the second الله (reverse, second line).

No pausal indicators, as far as visible.

No ornaments, as far as visible.

As a coin of Syrian provenance, its closest resemblance is with the contemporaneous types I and II of the Damascene mint. Both the text of the central inscriptions and their disposition, as well as the completion امير/قسيم المومنين in the bottom and top segments of the obverse, are identical with the respective features on the Damascus coins. Additionally, the al-Marqab coin and Damascus *Obverse I 2* have in common the *muhmal* mark above the *sīn* of السلطان and the position of the *nūn* on top of the *wāw* of قلاون. Nevertheless, there are a few differences in conception: The border (linear dodecalobe in dodecalobe of dots) as well as the disposition of the date (unit خمسة following سنة immediately) correspond with the Cairo type, but not with the Damascus coins. While the contemporary Damascus and Cairo coins have an asymmetrical scroll ornament above the second الله (reverse, second line), the al-Marqab coin, in the same position, has a "*shaddah*". (A "*shaddah*" in this position only occurs later on Damascus type III, dated 687, cf. Balog no. 132.) Another peculiarity of the al-Marqab coin consists in the positioning of the *rā'* of رسول above the *dāl* of محمد; all other coin types have the *rā'* below the *sīn* of رسول. And it is only on the al-Marqab coin that the space above the *sīn* of رسول is filled with a V-shaped *muhmal* mark with a dot between the sides.



Thus, although its Syrian appearance is obvious, the al-Marqab coin is not a simple copy of one of the Damascene die designs in use, bearing only a different mint name. On the contrary, it constitutes a type of its own, including features of Damascene coins (especially on the obverse) and, to a lesser extent, coins from the Cairo mint.

THE HISTORICAL SETTING

The discovery of the new mint is surprising in so far as al-Marqab was not an important town like the other minting cities but a mere stronghold with only a few villages in the vicinity. The fortress of al-Marqab (Arab authors also call it Qal‘at Marqab or Ḥiṣn Marqab; western works have various other spellings like Markappos, Markab, Margat or Margant) was situated near the harbor of Bulunyās (occasionally called Banyās) (Valania) on the Syrian coast, roughly half way between Anṭarṭūs (Tortosa) in the south and al-Lādhiqīyah (Latakia) in the north. It was erected on the spur of a ridge which ends close to the coastline. This position not only offered a view over the hinterland in the east but also control of the coastal plain and the sea-side towards the west. Until its fall it was believed to be impregnable, and was thus of strategic value, though not of commercial importance. Nevertheless, the opening of a mint at this place by Sultan Qalāwūn may be interpreted as an indication of his special regard for the fortress, which is connected with his part in the history of the place.¹³

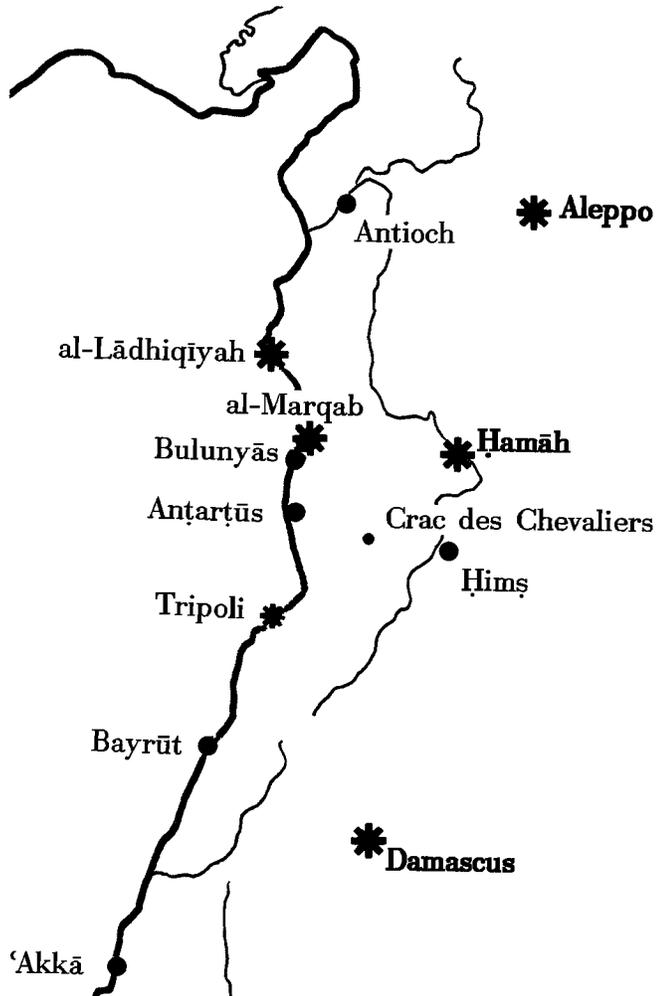
The construction of the castle by the Muslims in 454/1062 was intended to block intrusion into the south by the Byzantines, who at that time controlled the province of al-Anṭākiyah (Antioch). After the Byzantines had been driven away by the Muslims, who subsequently were driven away by the Franks, and after the county of Ṭarābulus (Tripoli) had been founded as the last of the Crusader states, the heights of al-Marqab marked the frontier between the principality of Antioch (towards the north) and Tripoli (towards the south). In 511/1117 the Muslim master of al-Marqab was obliged to leave the fortress—in exchange for other landed properties—to Renaud Mazoyer, Frankish master of Bulunyās and (subsequent) High Constable of the principality of Antioch; in 581/1186 the house of Mazoyer ceded al-Marqab with all its territories and dependencies to the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitallers.

In 1187 the Ayyubid Sultan Saladin (Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, 566-589/1171-93) went to war against the Franks. Within a few months, he was successful in destroying the Crusader kingdom of Jerusalem and in taking much of the territory surrounding

¹³For the history see N. Eliséeff, "al-Markab," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 6:577-83. A description of the site is in Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, *Burgen der Kreuzritter im Heiligen Land, auf Zypern und in der Ägäis: Aufnahmen von A. F. Kersting* (Munich, Berlin, ca. 1960), 58-60 (with layout plan), photographs 52-61.



the two Crusader states of Antioch and Tripoli towards the north. Of the Crusader county of Tripoli, only the city of Tripoli itself and the fortress of al-Marqab remained in the hands of the Christians. The Hospitallers improved the citadel and thus the castle remained one of the Crusaders' foremost strong points in the defensive fortifications against Muslim encroachment. Towards the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century, al-Marqab even became the official residence of the bishop of Bulunyās.



In 601/1204 al-Malik al-Zāhir Ghāzī, Ayyubid governor of Aleppo, tried to take the castle, but his army withdrew when its leader was killed. The next Muslim leader to attack al-Marqab was Sultan Baybars, who had launched offensives against the Hospitallers since 659/1261 and succeeded in throwing them back to a small coastal strip; nevertheless he failed twice to capture the fortress. Finally, after the capture of Hīṣn al-Akrād (Crac des Chevaliers) by Baybars in 669/1273, the Order was left with only the stronghold of al-Marqab. Subsequently, the Grand Master was able to obtain a truce of ten years and ten days in exchange for the

territories surrounding al-Marqab and on condition that no new fortifications be established.

In 676/1277 Baybars died. He was succeeded by his son Barakah Khān for a reign of about two years; after him Baybars' seven-year-old son Salāmish ruled for a mere three months. Then Qalāwūn, who had been the most important of the amirs and the real ruler behind Salāmish, became sultan in 678/1279. He followed



the example of Baybars in pursuing the war against the Crusaders in Syria. In the same year, the Hospitallers took advantage of unrest in Syria and moved forth against Buqay'ah, but withdrew when attacked by the Muslims. On reaching the coast, they turned and routed the Muslims. Qalāwūn in 679/1281 ordered the siege of the fortress of al-Marqab in a counterattack, but the Hospitallers made a sortie and repelled the Muslims, inflicting heavy losses. On 22 Muḥarram 680/13 May 1281, a truce of ten years and ten months was concluded between Qalāwūn and Nicolas Lorgne, the Grand Master of the Order. Nonetheless a few months later, in autumn 680/1281, the latter appealed for help from Edward I, King of England, and simultaneously sent a contingent to aid the Ilkhān during a Mongol invasion of Syria. Qalāwūn succeeded in repelling the Mongols near Ḥimṣ, but now no longer felt obliged to maintain the conditions of the peace treaty. In 684/1285, the sultan sought to punish the Hospitallers of al-Marqab for the assistance they had provided to the Mongols, driving them out of the "impregnable" fortress for good.

At Damascus, in great secrecy, Qalāwūn concentrated a considerable quantity of siege materials assembled from all over Syria and even from as far as Egypt. Experts in the art of siege warfare were engaged and catapults were brought up from the surrounding strongholds. Qalāwūn himself appeared before al-Marqab on 10 Ṣafar 684/17 April 1285. As the siege began, miners set about digging numerous tunnels under the walls. As soon as one of the mines was in good position, it was filled with wood and set on fire on Wednesday, 17 Rabī' I/23 May. When the fire reached the southern extremity of the walls, right under the Ram Tower, the Muslims attacked, trying to climb the tower, but to no avail. In the evening, the tower collapsed, but the rubble rendered any further assaults difficult. The catapults had become useless and all possibilities of undermining were exhausted. That night the Muslims were at the point of giving up. When the Hospitallers discovered that a number of tunnels were reaching their ramparts at various places, however, they lost courage and surrendered under condition of safe-conduct. The *amān* was granted by the Amir Fakhr al-Dīn Muqrī, on 19 Rabī' I/25 May, and the Knights were conducted under escort to Tripoli. They were not allowed to take anything with them except for their personal belongings. Their weapons as well as all of the equipment fell into the hands of the sultan.

Aware of the strategic importance of al-Marqab, the sultan decided not to raze the fortress but to repair the damages. Qalāwūn installed a well-armed garrison there, 1000 foot-soldiers and 150 Mamluks. The chronicler of these events, Ibn



‘Abd al-Zāhir,¹⁴ however, does not mention that coins were minted there. In 688/1289 Qalāwūn conquered Tripoli and shortly thereafter the rest of the principality of Antioch came to an end. Only two years later, ‘Akkā (Acre, St. Jean d’Acre) was conquered by Qalāwūn’s son al-Ashraf Khalīl, and the last Franks left the country.

For Qalāwūn the conquest of al-Marqab was his first real victory over the Franks. It proved his ability as a warrior no less successful in warfare than his predecessor Baybars, particularly because he was able to recover the country from the foreign rule of the Christians. Moreover, the sultan’s victory, which was due to God’s intervention, as the chronicler states, had a major effect on the political legitimacy of his rule, since he had ousted Baybars’ two sons from the sultanate.

HISTORICAL EVALUATION OF THE COIN

Thanks to Michael L. Bates (American Numismatic Society, New York), Stefan Heidemann (Jena) and Lutz Ilisch (Tübingen), discussion about the mint of al-Marqab started before the coin was presented to the meeting of the Oriental Numismatic Society at Tübingen in April 1998, where the debate was continued by the audience. Several possible explanations were proffered. One was that Qalāwūn celebrated his important victory by striking coins bearing the name of al-Marqab for commemorative, propagandistic reasons. Yet, considering the fact that all coins only show part of the dies and that most of the Mamluk coins only mention the mint in the margin, the name of al-Marqab could only rarely have appeared on a coin. Such coins can hardly claim to be efficient mass media! (However, the Ottomans established mints at newly conquered places, although their coinage only rendered part of the legend as well). Another reason for minting coins in al-Marqab could have been the fact that among the Knights’ equipment left behind in the fortress the Mamluks found quite a lot of treasure. Then they could have brought minters there to transform the treasure into *dirhams*, perhaps as payment for those troops who had participated in the conquest.

Both motives may have played a role, but they are not sufficient to explain the existence of al-Marqab’s mint. Our coin does not bear the year of the conquest but of the year after. If propaganda and/or the conversion of a treasure had been the only reasons, the activity of the mint would certainly have been limited to the year 684. However, the fortress was taken during the third month of the Islamic year, and it was advisable, for the sake of security, to mint the bullion as soon as

¹⁴Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir, *Tashrīf al-Ayyām wa-al-‘Uṣūr fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, ed. Murād Kāmil (Cairo, 1961), 77-81. Our report of the conquest of al-Marqab is directly based on his account.



possible. It can be imagined that the overland transport of the silver into one of the established minting places would have been a dangerous enterprise. This is why it seems more likely that a workshop was in fact established in al-Marqab. Furthermore, if this was not the case, we would have to explain why, for instance, the Damascus mint should have produced coinage in the name of al-Marqab. At that time, the opening and operation of a mint was not complicated at all—only a few tools and workmen were needed—and it was certainly not a condition for starting production that the fortress be completely repaired. Likewise, the cutting of a die was an affair of only a few hours. Yet the design of the coin does not suggest that the dies were prepared by a simple blacksmith who happened to work in the region but rather by an experienced die-sinker, possibly from Damascus. Even if the transfer of a workshop and of the dies from, for instance, Damascus would have taken a few months' time, the minting activity would have surely started during the year 684. But could the treasure have been so substantial that coins were minted from its silver even in 685? Probably not—which implies that bullion was fetched to al-Marqab for minting after the (hypothetical) initial treasure was exhausted.

These considerations lead to the conclusion that the coin is to be interpreted as an indication of the Mamluks' attempt to integrate the administration and economy of the regained coastal region by founding a new mint there. As mentioned above, our coin was only minted in the year after al-Marqab's conquest; thus, coins might eventually show up from 684 and possibly even from the years after 685. Nevertheless, in view of the uniqueness of this coin among hundreds of others, it can be taken for granted that the mint of al-Marqab did not produce coins in the quantities of the traditional minting places. Perhaps the establishment of a mint in a relatively remote area proved to be too ambitious, and was abandoned because the mint of Damascus was able to supply the coastal region.

Another explanation for the closure of the al-Marqab mint after a short working period may be derived from subsequent developments in the region. Only two years after the fall of al-Marqab, Qalāwūn succeeded in conquering the seaport and commercial center of al-Lādhiqīyah in 686/1287, and again two years later, in 688/1289, the capital of the county of Tripoli fell into the hands of Qalāwūn. This bustling port was one of the most important towns in Syria and one of the earliest conquests of the Franks, as well as their last major resort in the Holy Land. For political and economic reasons, both newly captured towns were much better situated for the founding of a mint than the fort of al-Marqab, which lost its



strategic importance as a result of the expansion of Mamluk territory.¹⁵ From this time onwards, until the middle of the ninth century, Mamluk coins are known to have been regularly produced in Tripoli.

¹⁵In fact, only a short time after Qalāwūn's death (689/1290), the first coins were minted in both coastal towns. The first dated silver coin known from Tripoli was struck in 709 by al-Muẓaffar Rukn al-Dīn Baybars II (708-9/1308-10, cf. Balog's no. 172), along with a copper coin (Balog's no. 175). A few coins from al-Lādhiqīyah exist from the third reign of one of Qalāwūn's sons, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (709-41/1310-41) (Lutz Ilisch and Stefan Heidemann, personal communications).

