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On the Coins Found at al-Fuṣṭāṭ

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INTRODUCTION

A joint team of Waseda University, Idemitsu Museum of Arts and the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan have conducted ten excavations at al-Fuṣṭāṭ since 1978.¹⁾ About 4000 coins were recovered from these excavations. The cleaning treatment for the majority has been completed, concentrating on the well preserved examples. As a result, we found that all the coins are copper *fals*, except for one gold *ḍīnār* and several tens of silver *dirham*. In this article I deal with the Egyptian *fals* of the early Islamic period before the Tulunid dynasty (868-905).

The *fals* of the early Islamic period (hereafter referred to as the early *fals*) was made by striking a small copper ball from a die. In many cases small cracks appeared at the edge at the time of striking. Corrosion spread from the cracks, leaving the coins in a poor state of preservation. The coins are thick, some as much as 6 mm, which is a significant feature of the early *fals*. Before the coinage reform (ca. 695)²⁾ by 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 685-705), the 5th Caliph of the Umayyad dynasty, the Byzantine *folles* type was minted, on which Greek characters like IMB, images of Byzantine emperors and a cross, the symbol of Christianity were carved. They were exactly the same as the Byzantine *folles*. After the reform, the Arabic characters such as the phrases for the profession of faith in Islam were stamped, and in rare cases, star shaped patterns, plant patterns (like date palm leaves) and circle patterns appear in Arabic characters.

In this article I deal with the eighty-seven early *fals* whose inscriptions can be clearly deciphered after cleaning.

1. EGYPTIAN FALS OF THE EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD

Studies on the early *fals* are very few in number, so the studies by G.C. Miles and H. A. Awad³⁾ are important.

(1) IMB Coins⁴⁾

According to Awad, who studied the copies of Byzantine copper *folles* (hereafter referred to as IMB coins), minted in Alexandria before the coinage reform executed by 'Abd al-Malik, the IMB coins are classified into four types and subdivided into ten kinds. Types are classified by the images of Byzantine emperors on the obverse; kinds are classified by IMB (or a cross) on the upper part

and Greek characters like ABAZ on the lower part of the reverse. Types I, II, IIIa, IIIb and IIIc were copied after the *folles* of Emperor Heraclius (r. 610-641) of the Byzantine Empire, and Types IVa, IVb, IVc, IVd and IVe were copied after the *folles* of Emperor Constans II. Seven kinds,⁵⁾ Types II, IIIa, IIIc, IVa, IVb, IVc and IVe, have been found in the ten seasons of excavations.

a. Type II (Fig. 1)

The bust of Heraclius (Hiraql in Arabic) wearing a crown with a plant like date palm leaves to his left side are stamped on the obverse. IMB and a cross (above the character M) are on the upper part and the Greek characters ABAZ on the lower part of the reverse.

b. Type IIIa (Fig. 2)

Standing images of Heraclius and his two sons, Heracleonas (Hiraqliyūnās in Arabic) and Constantinus (Qusṭanṭīn in Arabic) on either side appear on the obverse, and I Δ B on the upper part and the Greek characters A Λ Γ on the lower part of the reverse.

c. Type IIIc (Fig. 3)

The obverse of the coin is the same as Type IIIa. IMB and a cross above M are on the upper part, and the Greek characters Λ AEZ are on the upper part of the reverse. The standing image on the obverse wears a crown with a cross on the top.

d. Type IVa (Fig. 4)

A standing image of Constans II (r. 641-668) holding a staff with a cross in his left hand is imprinted on the obverse. There is also a star under the staff. I+B are on the upper part and the Greek characters MAC on the lower part of the reverse. The standing image wears something like a crown on its head.

e. Type IVb (Fig. 5)

A standing image of Constans II, holding a staff with a cross and a cross in both hands and wearing something like a wig, is stamped on the obverse. I+B are on the upper part and the Greek characters [] Λ E on the lower part of the reverse.

f. Type IVc (Fig. 6)

A standing image (three fourths) of Constans II, holding a cross and a staff with a cross in both hands, appears on the obverse. The Greek characters I+B are on the upper part of the reverse. Some coins have dots on the left of I and on the right of B. The characters on the lower part of the reverse are obscure.

g. Type IVe (Fig. 7)

A standing image of Constans II, holding a cross in his right hand, is seen on the obverse. I+B are on the upper part and the Greek characters A Λ E are on the lower part of the reverse. A feature of this kind is its smallness and thinness.

(2) Islamic *Fals*

Islamic *fals* came to be minted after the coinage reform by 'Abd al-Malik. Most of them have only Arabic inscriptions, but in rare cases a star, crescent, circle and plant like date palm leaf patterns are combined with Arabic characters. It is not clear when and where the first Islamic *fals* were minted; however, Miles presumes

that they began to be minted just after the declaration of the reform.⁶⁾ *Fals* with the inscription of the name al-Qāsim b. 'Ubayd al-Lāh b. al-Ḥabḥab, the Secretary of the Treasury in Egypt from 734 to 742, is the first Egyptian *fals* minting date of which is distinct. It became generally used after this coin by al-Qāsim so that all or parts of the place, year and name of the mint were included.

a. Umayyad *Fals* A (Fig. 8)

The phrases "There is no God other than Allah" on the obverse and "Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah" on the reverse are written in three lines in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. It is one of the oldest Islamic *fals*.

b. Umayyad *Fals* B (Fig. 9)

The phrases "There is no God other than Allah. Allah is the one and only" are written in three lines on the obverse, and the phrase "Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah" is written around the six-rayed star in the center of the reverse. They are in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. It is one of the oldest Islamic *fals* along with the Umayyad *fals* A.

c. Qāsim *Fals* (Fig. 10)

The phrases "In the name of Allah. There is no God other than Allah. Allah is the one and only" are written in three lines on the obverse. The phrase "Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah" is written in three lines inside the circle in the center of the reverse, and the phrase "al-Qāsim 'Ubayd al-Lāh ordered this" is placed around the circle. The phrases are in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. On the fourth line of the obverse a plant pattern resembling date palm leaves is shown. It was minted between 734 and 742 when al-Qāsim was the Secretary of the Treasury in Egypt.

d. al-Fuṣṭāṭ *Fals* (Fig. 11)

The phrase "Miṣr, or Egypt" inside the circle in the center, and the phrase "Marwān, leader of the believers (Caliph), servant of Allah, ordered this" around the circle are written on the obverse. The name "al-Fuṣṭāṭ" inside the circle in the center, and the phrase "by Governor⁷⁾ 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān (b. Mūsā)" around the circle are written on the reverse in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. This was minted between 749 and 750 when he served as Governor of Egypt.

e. Yazīd *Fals* (Fig. 12)

The phrases "In the name of Allah. There is no God other than Allah. Allah is the one and only" are written inside the circle in the center, and the phrase "Governor 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazīd ordered this" is around the circle of the obverse. The phrase "Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah" is written inside the circle in the center, and the phrase "This *fals* was minted in A.H. 133 (750-751) in Egypt" is around the circle of the reverse. They are in the Kufic style of Arabic characters.

f. Sa'īd *Fals* (Fig. 13)

The phrases "There is no God other than Allah. Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah" are written on the obverse, and the phrase "Muḥammad b. Sa'īd, May he be virtuous, Allah!" is written on the reverse. They are in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. Muḥammad was the Secretary of the Treasury in Egypt between ca.769

and 774. The marks * above the first line and ○ between the first and second lines appear on the obverse.

g. Maṭar *Fals* (Fig. 14)

The phrases “There is no God other than Allah. He is the one and the only, and there is no cooperator” are written inside and around the circle in the center of the obverse. The phrase “This *fals* was minted by Maṭar, a *mawlā* of the Caliph - May he be generous, Allah!” is written inside and around the circle in the center of the reverse. They are in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. Maṭar was presumably the Governor of Egypt between ca.773 and 776. The date palm leaf pattern and the * marks on either side of the pattern are shown in the lower part inside the circle of the obverse.

h. Maḥfūz *Fals* (Fig. 15)

The phrases “In the name of Allah. Governor Maḥfūz b. Sulaymān ordered this, hurrah!” are written on the obverse, and the phrases “Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah. By Ṣāliḥ” are written on the reverse in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. There are also a date palm leaf-like pattern and the * marks on both sides of the pattern on the obverse, and an eight-rayed star on the reverse. Maḥfūz was the Secretary of the Treasury in Egypt from 802 to about 804. Although we cannot find his name in the records, we assume that he was once Governor during that period. He issued several kinds of *fals* during his service as Governor.

i. al-Sarī *Fals* (Fig. 16)

The phrases “There is no God other than Allah. Muḥammad is the prophet of Allah” are written on the obverse, and the phrase “Governor al-Sarī b. al-Ḥakam ordered this, by Naṣr(?)” is inscribed on the reverse in the Kufic style of Arabic characters. Al-Sarī was the Governor of Egypt between 816 and 820; he issued several kinds of *fals* in the joint names of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. al-Wazīr and others.⁸⁾

2. EARLY *FALS* FOUND AT AL-FUṢṬĀṬ

The eighty-seven early *fals* coins dealt with in this article consist of one Roman coin (from the second stratum), three Byzantine *folles* (from the second stratum), twenty-seven IMB coins (nine from the first stratum, eighteen from the second stratum), fifty-six Umayyad and Abbasid *fals* (fourteen from the first stratum and forty-two from the second stratum). These are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The strata of the al-Fuṣṭāṭ site are divided broadly into two. The first stratum consists of the trash dumped after al-Fuṣṭāṭ fell into ruins, and there has been considerable disturbance in the process of accumulation and since. On the other hand, the second stratum was frequently disturbed, but contains building features which occupy most of it. Since *dakkas* (floors and the construction layers of floors) exist in the second stratum,⁹⁾ the conditions are reliable, but the *fals* unearthed from the first stratum (Table 4) cannot be stratigraphically trustworthy. The latter are important historical material, because the context at the unearthed points and the surroundings is clear. The archaeology could be greatly refined, so that the *dakkas*

Table 1 Roman, Byzantine & IMB Coins from al-Fuṣṭāṭ

Type	1st Stratum	2nd Stratum	Total
Roman Coin	0	1	1
Byzantine <i>foliis</i>	0	3	3
IMB Type II	1	0	1
IMB Type IIIa	0	2	2
IMB Type IIIc	2	6	8
IMB Type IVa	2	0	2
IMB Type IVb	3	9	12
IMB Type IVc	0	1	1
IMB Type IVe	1	0	1
Total	9	22	31

Table 2 Early Islamic *Fals* from al-Fuṣṭāṭ

Type	1st Stratum	2nd Stratum	Total
Umayyad <i>fals</i> A	4	18	22
Umayyad <i>fals</i> B	0	6	6
Qāsim <i>fals</i>	1	2	3
al-Fuṣṭāṭ <i>fals</i>	0	1	1
Yazīd <i>fals</i>	1	5	6
Sa'īd <i>fals</i>	0	1	1
Maṭar <i>fals</i>	0	4	4
Maḥfūz <i>fals</i>	3	4	7
al-Sarī <i>fals</i>	1	1	2
Umayyad & Abbasid <i>fals</i>	4	0	4
Total	14	42	56

of the lower stratum are subdivided into numerous layers.

Consequently, here I deal mainly with the coins from the second stratum: one Roman coin, three Byzantine *foliis*, eighteen IMB coins, forty-two Umayyad and Abbasid *fals* (Table 3).

One Roman coin (C-84-422), discovered in Dakka 61, seems to have been minted in Ticinum, in north Italy during the days of Emperor Constantine I (r. 306-337); however, we presume that it was brought here from some ruins of the Roman period when the houses including Dakka 61 were constructed.¹⁰⁾

Two of the Byzantine *foliis* are large coins which have Greek inscriptions and the emperor's profile on the obverse and a capital M on the reverse. The other coin

Table 3 Egyptian *Fals* of the Early Islamic Period (2nd Stratum)

No.	Unearthed Date	Grid	Dot	Stratum Layer	Depth (mm)	Type	Period	Weight (g)	Diameter (mm)	Index (W ÷ D)	Thickness (mm)	Pl./Fig. No.	
C-84-422	841208	B08	116	D61	1	24.358	Roman	313-317(?)	3.175	22.5	0.14	1.0	Pl. I-1
C-84-281	841121	A15		II in the soil	0.3 above J	24.358	Byzantine Large M	518-527 ?	10.079	29.5	0.34	3.5	Pl. I-3
C-84-475	841215	A10	021	D52-4	5	24.297	Byzantine Large M	527-565 ?	11.638	29.0	0.40	3.0	Pl. I-2
C-84-432	841209	B07	216	D59	3	24.583	Byzantine Small M	641-668 ?	1.569	18.5	0.08	1.5	
C-81-010	811210	A15	105	D A15		24.688	IMB IIIa	ca.641-696		18.0			Fig. 2
C-81-015	811211	A15	121	II		24.534	IMB IIIa	ca.641-696		18.0			Pl. I-4
C-79-705	791105	E18	079	II		24.349	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696		21.0			
C-81-011	811210	A15	106	D A15		24.671	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696		18.0			Pl. I-9
C-81-002	811207	A15	012	II		24.870	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696		17.0			Pl. I-7
C-81-009	811210	A15	102	II		24.625	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696		17.0			
C-82-620	821223	F01	036	D28-4		23.840	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696	5.683	19.0	0.30	3.0	Pl. I-8
C-82-531	821129	E05	014	II		24.064	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696	9.719	20.0	0.49	5.0	Fig. 3
C-79-686	791029	E19	003	II		25.686	IMB IVb	ca.641-696		16.0			
C-79-655	791024	E18	010	II		25.837	IMB IVb	ca.641-696		17.0			
C-82-619	821218	E10	091	D24		24.159	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	6.702	17.0	0.39	4.0	Pl. I-12
C-82-629	821216	B20	043	II		23.822	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	8.588	19.0	0.45	4.0	Fig. 5
C-84-409	841204	H08	025	D70	3	24.769	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	4.981	17.0	0.29	3.0	Pl. I-10
C-84-457	841227	C11	117	D66-3	3	23.706	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	5.191	16.5	0.31	3.0	
C-82-470	821121	F01	002	II		25.328	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	5.588	14.0	0.40	4.0	
C-84-408	841204	H09	065	D71	7	24.903	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	7.050	16.0	0.44	5.0	
C-84-488	841212	F13	075	II ○		24.025	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	8.577	18.0	0.48	4.5	Pl. I-11
C-84-476	841217	C16	063	D66-3	6	23.841	IMB IVc	ca.641-696	6.840	20.5	0.33	3.0	Pl. I-13, Fig. 6
C-80-301	801126	E03	047	II		24.667	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734		24.5			
C-80-280	801211	B16	040	II		24.289	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734		15.5			
C-82-544	821205	E15	038	D21		24.159	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	5.887	14.0	0.42	4.0	
C-82-592	821222	B14	108	D39-1		23.879	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	1.938	12.0	0.16	2.0	Pl. II-1
C-82-548	821205	E15	038	D21		24.159	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	5.124	16.0	0.32	4.0	
C-82-612	821214	C21	013	D30		24.385	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	4.902	15.0	0.33	4.0	
C-83-060	831218	H02	030	II		25.046	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	4.208	13.0	0.32	5.0	Fig. 8
C-83-066	831222	H02	038	D51	25	24.976	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	3.594	13.0	0.28	3.5	
C-84-427	841209	B07	194	D59	3	24.665	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	4.746	17.0	0.28	3.0	Pl. II-3
C-84-438	841210	B07	229	D59	3	24.460	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	6.318	20.0	0.32	3.0	Pl. I-14
C-84-490	841213	F08	103	II ○		23.679	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	3.361	14.0	0.24	2.5	
C-84-503	841222	C21	049	D82-2	8	23.821	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734		18.0		2.0	Pl. I-15
C-84-504	841211	B07	246	D60-3	2	24.410	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	6.523	17.0	0.38	3.5	Pl. I-17
C-84-453	841228	B15	066	D66-2 bottom		23.712	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	3.678	16.0	0.23	3.0	Pl. I-16
C-84-511	841216	F13	085	II		24.211	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734		13.5			
C-84-428	841209	B07	195	D59	3	24.610	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	5.107	14.5	0.35	4.0	
C-84-449	841225	B15	098	D66-2	4	24.127	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	2.184	13.0	0.17	3.0	Pl. II-4
C-84-482	841217	C06	069	D66-3	6	23.795	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	4.038	17.0	0.24	2.5	
C-80-371	801209	A24	049	II		24.843	Umayyad B Type	ca.696-734		11.0			
C-80-309	801209	A24	050	II		25.107	Umayyad B Type	ca.696-734		13.0			
C-82-621	821223	B11	025	II		24.366	Umayyad B Type	ca.696-734	4.233	16.0	0.26	3.0	Fig. 9
C-83-070	831221	H02	035	D51	35	24.718	Umayyad B Type	ca.696-734	5.117	15.0	0.34	4.0	Pl. II-6
C-83-067	831222	H02	039	D51	49	26.341	Umayyad B Type	ca.696-734	3.045	15.0	0.20	2.5	Pl. II-7
C-84-439	841210	F03	071	II ○		23.485	Umayyad B Type	ca.696-734	3.610	15.0	0.24	2.0	Pl. II-5
C-84-469	841229	B08	125	D62	2	23.957	Qāsim fals	734-742	6.087	20.0	0.30	3.0	Pl. II-8
C-79-670	791024	E22	028	II		25.761	Qāsim fals	734-742		16.0			Pl. II-9
C-80-345	801209	A24	048	II		24.805	al-Fuṣṭāṭ fals	749-750		20.0			Fig. 11
C-79-689	791029	E18	033	II		24.754	Yazīd fals	751		18.0			
C-80-425	801211	B16	044	II		24.354	Yazīd fals	751		16.0			Pl. II-12
C-80-282	801211	E23	032	II		24.689	Yazīd fals	751		17.0			Pl. II-11
C-84-416	841205	B15	026	D65	5	24.108	Yazīd fals	751	5.478	19.0	0.29	2.5	
C-84-386	841201	H09	044	II ○		24.531	Yazīd fals	751	5.548	16.0	0.35	3.0	
C-80-022	801211	B16	042	II		24.224	Ṣa'īd fals	769-774		15.0			Fig. 13
C-82-617	821228	B15	090	D39-4		23.946	Maṭar fals	773-776	10.040	20.0	0.50	4.0	Fig. 14
C-82-618	821224	B17	161	D42		24.569	Maṭar fals	773-776	7.720	20.0	0.39	4.0	Pl. II-14
C-82-616	821226	B15	069	D39		24.015	Maṭar fals	773-776	8.161	19.0		6.0	
C-84-513	841216	F13	084	D75	2	24.200	Maṭar fals	773-776	7.938	17.5	0.45	4.0	Pl. II-13
C-80-379	801116	E04	018	II		25.714	Mahfūz fals	ca.802-803		13.0			Pl. II-20
C-82-473	821122	E15	002	II		24.850	Mahfūz fals	ca.802-803	1.302	12.0	0.11	2.0	
C-84-445	841210	A10	005	D52-1	4	25.137	Mahfūz fals	ca.802-803	1.448	13.0	0.11	1.5	Pl. II-16, Fig. 15
C-84-401	841203	H08	019	D70	1	24.971	Mahfūz fals	ca.802-803	1.599	12.5	0.13	1.5	Pl. II-15
C-84-391	841202	F12	011	II △		25.022	al-Sari fals	819-820	2.333	15.0	0.16	2.0	Pl. II-19, Fig. 16

Table 4 Egyptian *Fals* of the Early Islamic Period (1st Stratum)

No.	Unearthed Date	Grid	Dot	Stratum	Depth (mm)	Type	Period	Weight (g)	Diameter (mm)	Index (w ÷ d)	Thickness (mm)	Pl./Fig. No.
C-79-645	791021	E18	I		lower	IMB II	ca.641-696		19.0			Fig. 1
C-84-235	841118	C23	I		on the road	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696	5.343	19.5	0.27	3.0	Pl. I-5
C-84-017	841111	F12	I		26.492	IMB IIIc	ca.641-696	7.518	18.5	0.41	4.5	Pl. I-6
C-82-087	821108	C21	I		-1.000	IMB IVa	ca.641-696		17.0			
C-83-014	831208	H03	I		-1.100	IMB IVa	ca.641-696	5.009	19.0	0.26	3.5	Fig. 4
C-79-649	791022	E18*	I		lower	IMB IVb	ca.641-696		18.5			
C-82-515	821118	F01	I		bottom	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	8.228	19.0	0.43	5.0	
C-84-248	841120	H07	I		25.501	IMB IVb	ca.641-696	5.442	12.0	0.45	4.0	
C-82-291	821110	B20	I		-1.500	IMB IVe	ca.641-696	1.092	12.0	0.09	2.0	Fig. 7
C-78-174	781016	E07	I		-1.000	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734		15.0			
C-82-097	821108	C21	I		-0.800	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734		19.5			Pl. II-2
C-82-512	821118	F01	I		bottom	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	5.398	15.0	0.36	4.0	
C-84-232	841119	H09	I		26.799	Umayyad A Type	ca.696-734	3.456	13.0	0.27	3.5	
C-84-155	841118	C11	I		25.487	Qāsim fals	734-742	4.794	18.0	0.27	3.0	Fig. 10
C-84-333	841126	F03	I		25.413	Yazīd fals	751	4.543	20.5	0.22	2.0	Pl. II-10, Fig. 12
C-79-644	791020	E20	I		?	Maḥfūz fals	ca.802-803		14.0			Pl. II-17
C-82-625	830111	A15	I	surface		Maḥfūz fals	ca.802-803		10.5			
C-84-106	841115	F02	I		26.175	Maḥfūz fals	ca.802-803	1.577	13.5	0.12	1.5	
C-84-249	841120	F02	I		on the road	al-Sari fals	819-820	2.468	15.5	0.16	2.0	Pl. II-18
C-80-088	801106	E04	I		-0.600	Umayyad & Abbasid fals			16.5			
C-82-386	821116	E20	I		-0.800	Umayyad & Abbasid fals		3.240	15.0	0.22	3.0	
C-82-204	821109	C21	I		?	Umayyad & Abbasid fals		2.381	14.0	0.17	3.0	
C-82-090	821107	C21	I		-0.900	Umayyad & Abbasid fals		0.775	15.0	0.55	1.0	Pl. II-21

is a little small, with obverse unclear but M on the reverse. These coins with capital M are not well preserved, but it may be asserted that they are *foliis* of the Byzantine Empire minted during the 6th and 7th centuries.

Among these three coins, C-84-432 (the small coin) was found in the third layer of Dakka 59 in which three Umayyad *fals* A type coins were unearthed. The large coin, C-84-281 was recovered in Grid-A15 in which five IMB coins were also discovered.¹¹⁾

The eighteen IMB coins are composed of two of Type IIIa, six of Type IIIc, nine of Type IVb and one of Type IVc. Two of Type IIIa and three of Type IIIc (C-81-2, C-81-9 & C-81-11) among these were found in Grid A-15. All of the Type III coins were found at the points lower than 25 cm above the bed rock except for C-81-2 (Type IIIc, 37 cm above the bed rock).

As for Type IV, seven coins were found at the points lower than 30 cm above the bed rock, except for the following three: C-84-476 (Type IVc) was located in the sixth layer of Dakka 66-3 together with one Umayyad A coin; a Type IVb coin came from the third layer accumulated above the sixth layer.¹²⁾ C-84-409 (Type IVb) was found in the third layer of Dakka 70, Grid H-8, and a Maḥfūz fals was found in the first layer 20 cm above the third layer. No floor appeared as evidence in distinguishing the construction date of *dakka* between the first and second layers, but there is a fair possibility that the building underwent reconstruction after the floor was destroyed, judging by the difference in date of the coins. A Type IVb coin was unearthed in the second stratum of Grid F-13, 30 cm above the bed rock and one Umayyad A coin 36 cm above the bed rock. In addition, an IMB Type IIIc coin was located just above the bed rock and a Yazīd fals coin was found 26cm above

the bed rock in the second stratum of Grid E-18.

The forty-two Umayyad and Abbasid *fals* coins from the second stratum consist of eighteen Umayyad *fals* A type; six Umayyad *fals* B type; two al-Qāsim *fals*, one al-Fuṣṭāṭ *fals*, five Yazīd *fals*; one Saʿīd *fals*, four Maṭar *fals*; four Maḥfūz *fals*, and one al-Sarī *fals*. They lay in the higher levels compared with the IMB coins.

Among these coins one each of Umayyad A, Yazīd *fals*, and Saʿīd *fals* were recovered just above the bed rock in Grid B-16. An al-Fuṣṭāṭ *fals* coin was found 13 cm above the bed rock and two Umayyad B coins 17 cm and 43 cm above the bed rock in Grid A-24. One Umayyad A coin was found in the 25th layer and two Umayyad B coins were found in the 35th and 49th layers of Dakka 51.

Cases not infrequently occur in which IMB coins and Umayyad *fals* are unearthed together with green glass of the early Islamic period, whose components are the same as Roman glass, red polished ware of pinkish clay (Egyptian red slip ware) extensively produced in Egypt in the Byzantine period and Roman type amphoras.

From the above finds the following points are deduced: there is no evidence that another *fals* type was minted during the period between the Byzantine *folllis* and the IMB coins in the 6th and 7th centuries and the Islamic *fals* after the coinage reform. This deduction fits with the statement by Miles¹³⁾ that there was no transitional coinage such as Arab-Byzantine or Arab-Sasanian-type coins in Egypt between the Arab Conquest and the coinage reform, ca. 695, which were minted in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Palestine. It is thought that the IMB coins, copies of Byzantine *folllis* coins, were minted instead of other transitional coins.

Type IIIc and Type IVb are the main types of IMB coins. The model of the former is the Heraclius *folllis* and that of the latter is the Constans II *folllis*. Judging from the fact that the year 641 is the juncture of the reigns of Heraclius and Constans II, it is supposed that the Type IIIc coins were minted earlier, and that Type IVb were produced in large quantities. This is not absolutely certain, because the quantity of recovered coins is small, but it is easily deduced from an examination of the archaeological conditions and the comparative quantity of the unearthed coins. The Byzantine *folllis* and the IMB coins were mixed in the lower level of the second stratum, the same layer of *dakka* from which the *fals* of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties were found. This shows that the Byzantine *folllis* and the IMB coins were circulated after the coinage reform as well.¹⁴⁾

Umayyad A type and Umayyad B type coins were minted and circulated at nearly the same time. Type A was minted in larger quantities and was in wider circulation, and it is probable that it was minted earlier and for a longer time.

The date of the early *fals* is mostly known, and it is thought that the circulation date continued far beyond the minting date. We found that the early *fals* of the different times were mixed in Grid A-24, Grid B-16, Dakka 51 and Dakka 70, which shows that the *fals* of earlier times continued to be circulated together with coins of other times.

The early *fals* is thick and the characters, images and patterns are deeply imprinted, but the considerable damage and wear, making the details undecipherable, indicates that they were circulated for a long time and received much use.

3. WEIGHT

The raw metal for the *fals* was not expensive, unlike the *ḍīnār* and the *dirham*. The weights of *ḍīnārs* and *dirhams* are fairly uniform, in contrast to the varied weights and measurements of the *fals*. According to the weights taken by Awad, despite specifications the weight of the *fals* is not consistent.¹⁵⁾ In many cases the price of an article was just quoted as a certain number of *fals*.

Since the weights and measurements of the *fals* are variable, an index of measurement is arrived at by dividing the weight by the diameter, rounded to two decimal places.

The results of these calculations are shown in Table 5. The values from the data by Miles and Awad, as well as the data by 'Abd al-Raḥmān Fahmī¹⁶⁾ are also given in the Table as supplements because the total number of excavated coins is small.

By examining the indices in Table 5, the following points can be made: In the indices of the small coins with capital M, probably minted by Constans II and the IMB coin Type IV(a, e),¹⁷⁾ a copy of the Constans II *foliis* type, values less than 0.30 occur. However, the indices of the other IMB coins have high values, not a few of which are more than 0.50. The highest value is 0.66 (IMB Type II).

When the Islamic *fals* came to be minted after the coinage reform, the indices of the coins fell compared with those of the IMB coins, in general 0.25 to 0.35.

In the 9th century, the Egyptian *fals* changed completely after the Maḥfūz *fals*. The thick type of the previous period was replaced by a thin type whose indices are less than 0.20. Among the al-Sarī *fals* which appeared immediately after that, there are some coins of high index, but the others are the thin type, the indices of which are at the level of 0.1.¹⁸⁾

CONCLUSION

As already mentioned, the early Islamic Egyptian *fals* fits into three time periods. The first is represented by the so-called IMB coins, the second by the thick type of Islamic *fals*, and the third by the thin type of Islamic *fals*. The break between the first and second is around 695, and between the second and third around 800. Although the *fals* coins of the first and second periods are mixed in the sites, the *fals* coins of the third period have not been found together with the coins of the former groups in our seven seasons of excavations.

It is generally supposed that the Islamic aspect of Egyptian culture started in

Table 5 Index of the Egyptian *Fals* of the Early Islamic Period

Type	Unearthed coins					Records from the studies by Miles, Awad & Fahmi											
Roman (Ticinum) coin	0.14					0.21	0.16	0.03									
Byzantine <i>folles</i>	0.08	0.34	0.40														
IMB Type I						0.17	0.33	0.36									
IMB Type II						0.49	0.49	0.59	0.62	0.66							
IMB Type IIIa						0.51	0.62										
IMB Type IIIb						0.38	0.59										
IMB Type IIIc	0.27	0.30	0.41	0.49		0.32	0.34	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.41	0.48					
IMB Type IVa	0.26	0.32				0.16	0.18	0.18	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.25	0.27	0.28		
						0.31	0.44										
IMB Type IVb	0.29	0.31	0.39	0.40	0.43	0.30	0.34										
	0.44	0.45	0.45	0.48													
IMB Type IVc	0.33					0.30	0.31	0.34									
IMB Type IVd						0.39											
IMB Type IVe	0.09					0.09	0.10	0.12	0.15	0.15							
Umayyad A Type	0.16	0.17	0.23	0.24	0.24	0.19	0.20	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.26	0.27	0.30				
	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.32	0.32												
	0.32	0.33	0.35	0.36	0.38												
	0.42																
Umayyad B Type	0.20	0.24	0.26	0.34													
Qāsim <i>fals</i>	0.27	0.30				0.29	0.29	0.30	0.30	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.33	0.35	0.36		
						0.36	0.36	0.38	0.38	0.39							
al-Fustāt <i>fals</i>						0.10	0.11	0.28	0.33	0.33	0.34	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.38		
						0.40	0.44										
Yazīd <i>fals</i>	0.22	0.29	0.35			0.19	0.21	0.21	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.24		
						0.25	0.25	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.27	0.28		
						0.28	0.29	0.31	0.32	0.36	0.39						
Sa'īd <i>fals</i>						0.23	0.23	0.24	0.25	0.26	0.27	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30		
						0.30	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.34		
						0.36	0.36	0.36	0.38								
Metāl <i>fals</i>	0.39	0.45	0.50			0.29	0.31	0.33	0.33	0.35	0.38	0.38	0.39	0.39	0.40		
						0.40	0.41	0.41	0.42	0.45	0.47	0.47					
Mahfūz <i>fals</i>	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.13		0.09	0.09	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12			
						0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.16			
						0.16	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.21		
						0.22	0.23	0.28									
al-Sarī <i>fals</i>	0.16	0.16				0.15	0.16	0.17	0.19	0.20	0.21	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.36		
						0.36	0.38										
						0.14	0.16	0.18	0.18	0.20	0.25						
Tulunid <i>fals</i>						0.08	0.09	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.15	0.18			

the Tulunid period. But the transitions in the material culture, such as in glass, ceramics and so on, indicate that there was a drastic change in the first half of the 800s. As for the *fals* this change arrived around 800.

A lot of collection lists and many articles on the study of coins have been published. The present writer has made great use of these publications, but in the case of studying coins, the archaeological record of their circulation is more important than that of the minting. As the quantity of excavated coins is small and there is no excavation report in which the points and levels of the recovered objects are marked, it is impossible for me to reach a firm conclusion in attempting to clarify the difference between the dates of minting and of circulation. But the accumulation of historical data from future excavations should reinforce these views.

NOTES

- 1) The first term of the excavations was from 1978 to 1985, then the second started in 1998.
- 2) There are some views on the year of the declaration of the reform, A.H. 76 (695/6), A.H. 77(696/7), A.H. 79 (698/9).
- 3) G.C. Miles, The Early Islamic Bronze Coinage of Egypt, *Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society*, New York, 1958, pp.417-502; J.L. Bacharach & H. A. Awad, The Early Islamic Bronze Coinage of Egypt: Additions, *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History*, Beirut, 1974, pp.185-192; H.A. Awad, Seventh Century Arab Imitations of Alexandrian Dodecanummia, *ANSMN*, VIII, New York, 1972, pp.113-118; J.L. Bacharach, *The Early Economy of al-Fuṣṭāṭ – Evidence from the Henri Awad Collection*, forthcoming in U.S.A.
- 4) IMB coin is not a common term, but it is tentatively used by Awad in his paper. Hereafter I also use it tentatively.
- 5) Concerning C-81-9 damage on the obverse is substantial and it is impossible to distinguish the emperor's image. Judging from the IMB carved on the reverse, it is Type IIIc or Type IVd. However, there are four other undecipherable IMB coins unearthed from the same area, Grid A-15, which all belong to Type III, so this may be an example of Type IIIc.
- 6) G.C. Miles, The Early Islamic Bronze Coinage of Egypt, *Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society*, New York, 1958, p.475.
- 7) 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān had been the Secretary of the Treasury between 748 and 749 before taking office as Governor.
- 8) According to Miles, in addition to these coins al-Fayyūm *fals* (749-50), Aṭrīb *fals* (749-50), al-Iskandarīya (Alexandria) *fals* (749-50), Falamā *fals* (764-65) and Abū-Ishāk *fals* (831-32) were minted.
- 9) Kiyohiko Sakurai & Mutsuo Kawatoko (eds.), *Excavations at al-Fuṣṭāṭ*, 1978-1985 (in Japanese), Tokyo, 1992, pp.45-47.
- 10) Two stone blades, six pieces of faience *Ushabti* from around the 21st dynasty of ancient Egypt, and four stone features presumed to have been built in and after the late dynasties were found in the second stratum or Dakka 61 of the al-Fuṣṭāṭ site. These were clearly brought here from some earlier site. (See *Kōkōgaku Zasshi*, Vol. 69, No. 4, 1983, pp.52-54) As for C-84-422 I referred to Department of Coins and Medals, "New Acquisitions No. 1 (1976-77)," *British Museum Occasional Paper*, No. 25, London, 1981, pp.39 & 46; E. M. Husselman, *Coins from Karanis*, Michigan, 1964, p.311.
- 11) It is supposed that C-84-281 was made in the reign of Justinus I (r. 518-527), C-84-475 in the reign of Justinianus I (r. 527-565) and C-84-432 in the reign of Constans II (r. 641-668). R. Ratto, *Monnaies Byzantines*, Amsterdam, 1959; G.E. Bates, *Byzantine Coins*, Cambridge, 1971.
- 12) The absolute thickness of the third layer from which Type IVb was recovered is less than that of the sixth layer below the third layer, which is due to the fact that the constructed layers of *dakka* are sloped.
- 13) G.C. Miles, The Early Islamic Bronze Coinage of Egypt, *Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society*, New York, 1958, p.472.
- 14) op. cit. Miles indicates his assumption, "Arabs continued to strike bronzes of one or more types of Heraclius (and of Constans II?) not only in the years immediately following the conquest but on down to the date of 'Abd al-Malik's coinage reform." Judging from the fact that most of the Byzantine and IMB coins are greatly worn, it is appropriate to assume that they were not minted but were circulated in those days.

- 15) J.L. Bacharach & H. A. Awad, *The Early Islamic Bronze Coinage of Egypt: Additions, Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History*, Beirut, 1974, p.188.
- 16) See the List of the Main Coin Collection.
- 17) The features of the IMB coin Type IVe are small and thin, as mentioned before, and Type IV in general is thinner than Type III, a copy of the Heraclius *folles*.
- 18) In West Asia, the minting of the *fals* ceased because of the shortage of copper from the latter half of the 9th century.

LIST OF THE MAIN COIN COLLECTION

- J. Walker *Catalogue of the Muhammadan Coins in the British Museum, Vol. II. "A Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and Post-Reform Umayyad Coins,"* London, 1956.
- Abdel Rahman Fahmy
Collections of the Museum of Islamic Art 4; Mawsū'at Nuqūd al-'Arabīya wa 'Ilm an-Nummiyāt, Part I, "Fağr as-Sikka al-'Arabīya," Cairo, 1965.
- S. Lane-Poole,
Catalogue of Oriental Coins in the British Museum, Vol. I, Vol. II, Vol. IX, 1875-1889, London, 1967, Bologne.
- H. Lavoix *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale-Khalifes Orientaux,* Paris, 1977.
- M. Mitchiner
Oriental Coins and Their Values. The World of Islam, London, 1977.
- H. Lavoix *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale-Egypte et Syrie,* Paris, 1978.
- T.V. Buttery, A. Johnston, K. M. Mackenzie and M. L. Bates
Archaeological Exploration of Sardis-Greek, Roman, and Islamic Coins from Sardis, Harvard, 1981.
- N. D. Nicol, R. el-Nabarawy and J. L. Bacharach
Catalogue of the Islamic Coins, Glass Weights, Dies and Medals in the Egyptian National Library, Cairo, Malibu, CA, 1982.
- S. Lane-Poole
Catalogue of the Collections of Arabic Coins Preserved in the Khedivial Library in Cairo, Cairo, 1984.
- Gilles Hennequin
Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1985.

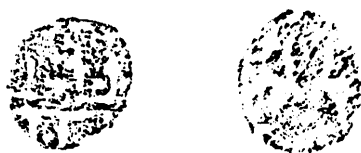


Fig. 1 IMB Coin, Type II



Fig. 6 IMB Coin, Type IVc



Fig. 2 IMB Coin, Type IIIa



Fig. 7 IMB Coin, Type IVe



Fig. 3 IMB Coin, Type IIIc



لا اله
الا الله
وحد
محمد
رسول
الله

Fig. 8 Umayyad *Fals* A



Fig. 4 IMB Coin, Type IVa



Fig. 5 IMB Coin, Type IVb



بسم الله
لا اله الا الله
محمد رسول الله
الله وحده

Fig. 9 Umayyad *Fals* B

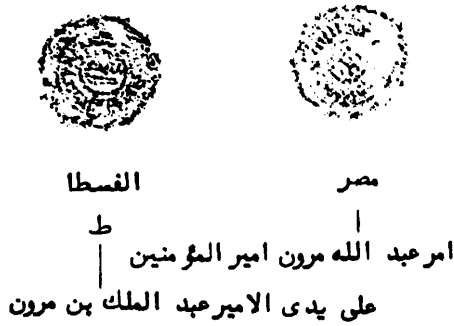


Fig. 11 al-Fuṣṭāṭ Fals

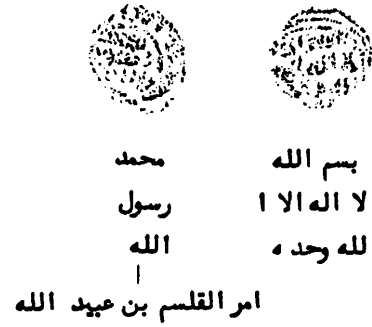


Fig. 10 Qāsim Fals



Fig. 12 Yazīd Fals

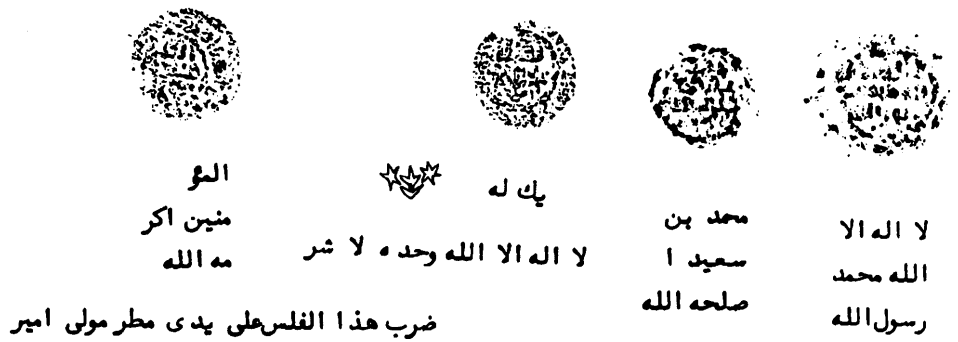


Fig. 14 Maṭar Fals

Fig. 13 Saʿīd Fals



بسم الله ما امر به الامير محفوظ



محمد رسول الله على يدى صلح

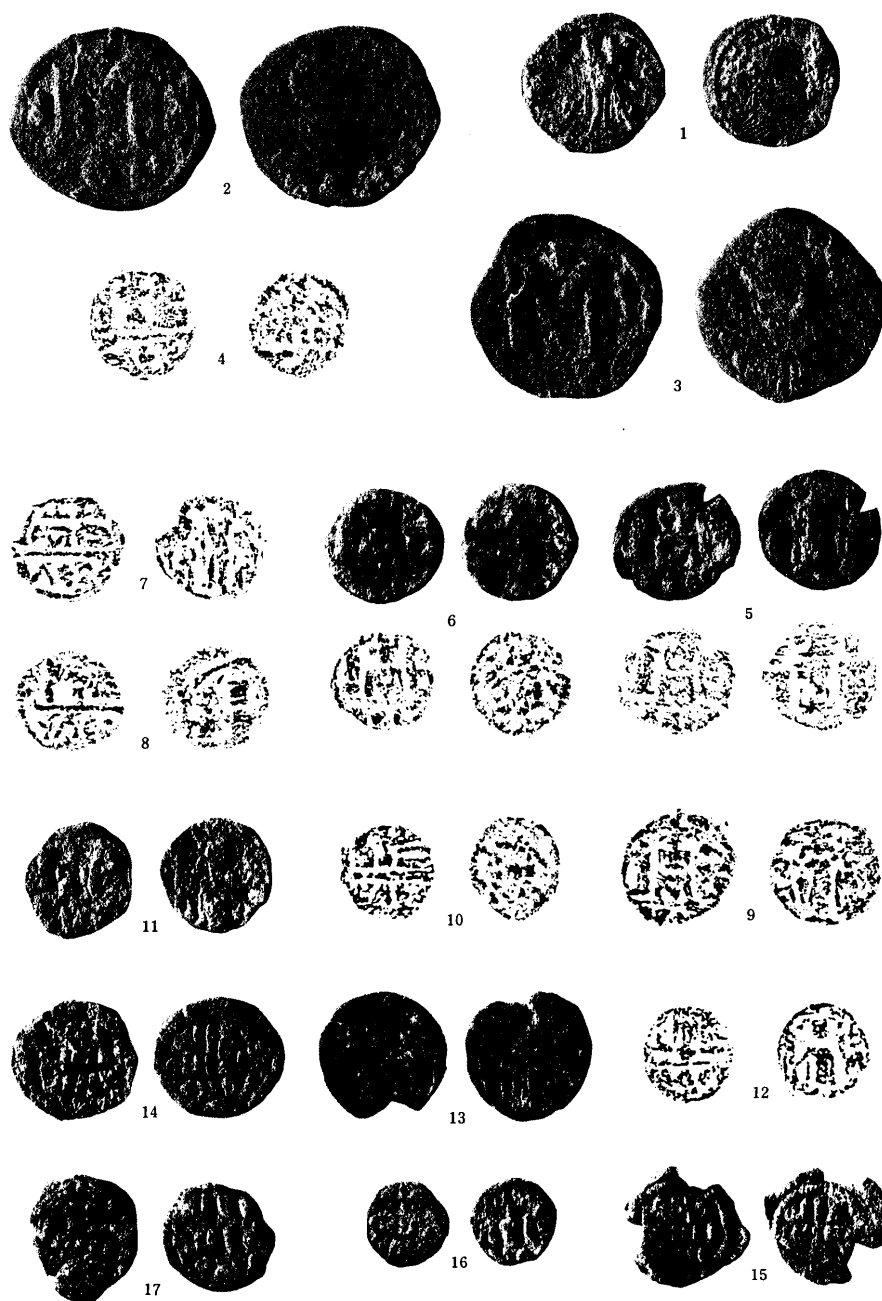
Fig. 15 Mahfuz Fals



ما امر به
الامير السرى
على يدى نصر

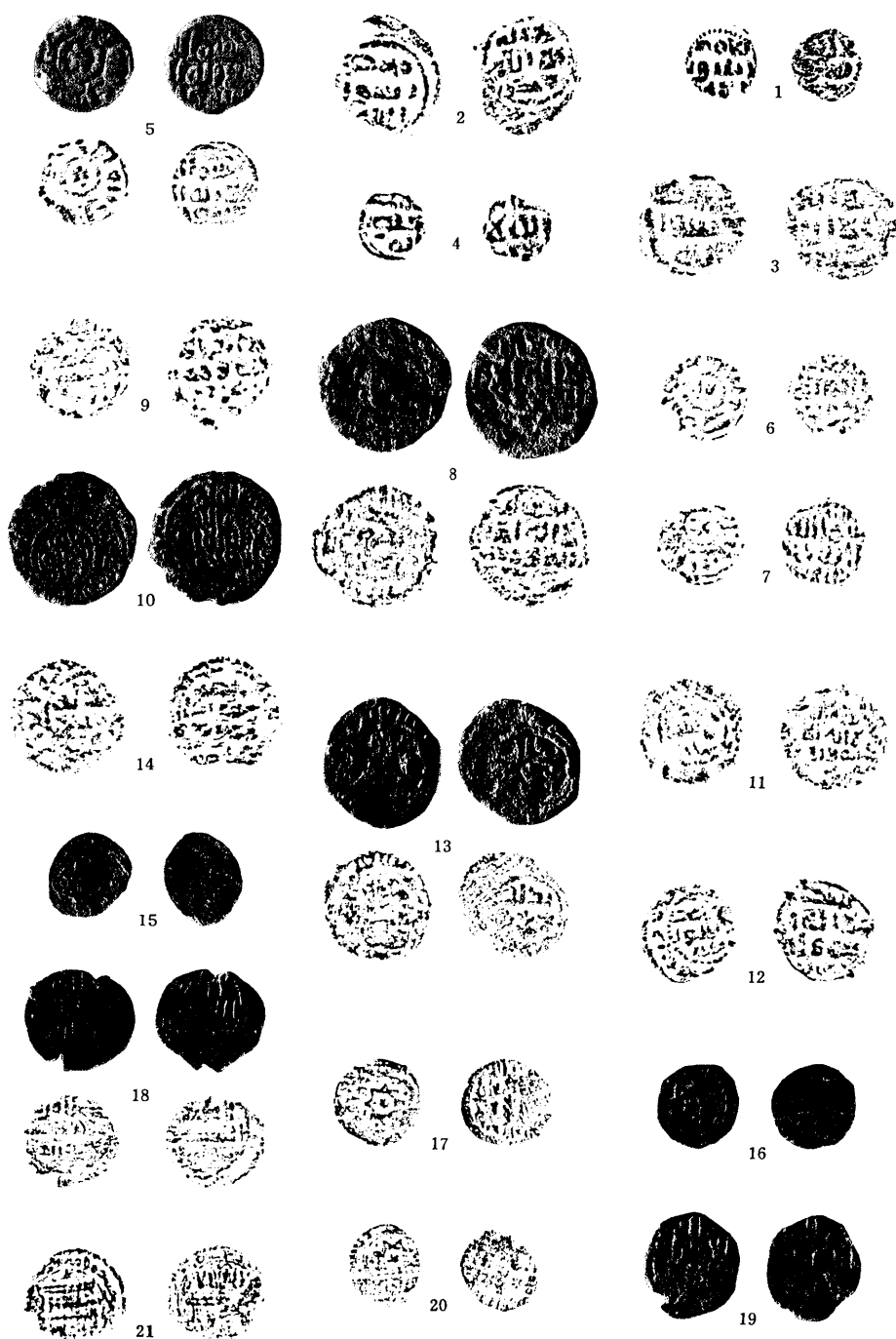
لا اله الا
الله محمد
رسول الله

Fig. 16 al-Sarī Fals



(Rubbed copies appear according to the exact measurements.)
 (The reduced scale of photographs is indefinite.)

Pl. I Photographs and Rubbed Copies of Egyptian *Fals* I



(Rubbed copies appear according to the exact measurements.)
 (The reduced scale of photographs is indefinite.)

Pl. II Photographs and Rubbed Copies of Egyptian *Fals* II

