



Two Silver Ottoman Akça from a Private Collection Published for the First Time

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Abstract

This research aims to publish two silver coins, representing two *Akça* from the Ottoman era, which have not been previously published or studied. They are preserved within the collection of Mr. Fadi Salaymeh in Germany. They are of great importance as the first *Akça* is a rare *Akça* minted in the name of the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II in Edirne, ca. 848-855 AH to 1444-1451 AD. At that time, Edirne was the capital of the Ottoman Empire before the conquest of Constantinople. As for the second *Akça*, it is a unique *Akça* minted in Constantinople in the name of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I. It is one of the few and rare silver coins minted by Sultan Selim I in Constantinople when he assumed power in 918 AH/1512 AD. The research indicated that despite the renaming of Constantinople (Istanbul) after its conquest by Sultan Mehmed II, the name Constantinople continued to appear on some Ottoman coins of various types, as a place where the currency was minted, such as the silver *Akça* bearing the name of Sultan Selim I. This paper also included a descriptive and analytical study of the two *Akça* subject of the study in terms of their general form and content of the inscriptions as well as their decorations.

Key Words: Akça, Silver, Coins, Ottoman, Mehmed II, Selim I

Introduction

Throughout the history of the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman coins underwent several stages due to the changing economic conditions in the country. The *Akça* "Akche" is one of the oldest units of Ottoman coins, and it is the first Ottoman silver coin. It formed the basis of the monetary system in the Ottoman Empire. The first *Akça* is attributed to Sultan Orhan (1326 - 1360 AD) in 1328 AD. This *Akça* was similar to the coins minted by the Seljuks in the Byzantine style¹. The word "Akça" that was given to these coins in Asia Minor is a translation of the word "*aspre*" which means (white), and it was a chief monetary unit in Byzantium since the tenth century AD.

Before Sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481 AD) accedes to throne, the *Akça* was minted in one form, as its first side recorded the name of the Ottoman prince and the invocation "خلد الله ملكه", which means "May God immortalize his kingdom!" and the second side recorded the

¹ مصطفى أوزتورك، الملامح العامة لتاريخ السكة العثمانية، ترجمة: سيد محمد السيد، ضمن كتاب النقود العثمانية تاريخها- تطورها- مشكلاتها، مكتبة الآداب، القاهرة، 2003م، ص31.

"الشهادة" which reads "Al-Shahada" without mentioning the name of the Ottoman prince's father or any indication to the time and place of its minting². At the beginning of its minting, the *Akça* weighed about 1.54 grams, and this weight did not change until the conquest of Constantinople. The *Akça* deteriorated gradually since the reign of Muhammad the Conqueror until the reign of Selim I (1512-1520 AD), as its value decreased significantly till it did not exceed the half of its original value³.

The *Akça* was the Ottomans' basic monetary unit, which corresponds to the Arabs' dirham. It maintained its advantage as a monetary unit in Anatolia until the eleventh century AH / seventeenth century AD. Therefore, the period extending until the beginning of the minting of gold coins in 882 AH / 1477 AD is known in the history of money as a monometallic period, i.e., there was a standard commodity to measure the values of other commodities⁴. The silver *Akça* was the chief monetary unit for determining the value of other coins such as the copper *Mangir*⁵, and later the golden⁶ sultanic⁷ *mangir*. Therefore, it can be said that the *Akça* played an important and major role in determining the values of goods and other monetary units including foreign money that was imported to the Ottoman Empire through trade, and its circulation continued for approximately 360 years⁸. This study deals with two Ottoman *Akça*, and they are of great importance. The first *Akça* was minted in Edirne, it is one of the rare *Akça* minted by Sultan Mehmed II in Edirne ca. (848-855 AH / 1444-1451 AD) when Edirne was the capital of the Ottoman Empire before the conquest of Constantinople. The second *Akça* is a rare one minted in Constantinople in the name of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I. This *Akça* is of importance because it is one of the few and rare silver *Akça* minted by Sultan Selim I in Constantinople when he assumed power in 918 AH/1512 AD.

² سميع علي حسن، النظام المالي في الدولة العثمانية من قيام الدولة العثمانية حتى عهد الإصلاحات والتنظيمات من (1299-1839م)، مخطوط رسالة ماجستير غير منشورة، كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية، جامعة تشرين، سوريا، 2016م، ص20.

³ سميع علي حسن، النظام المالي في الدولة العثمانية، ص20.

⁴ أكمل الدين إحسان أوغلي، الدولة العثمانية تاريخ وحضارة، ترجمة: صالح سعداوي، د.ط، إستانبول، 1999م، ج1، ص663.

⁵ **Mangir**: A copper coin worth a quarter of an *Akça*. It is said that it was first minted during the reign of Sultan Orhan, but most specialists see that it was minted during the reign of Murad I. See:

سهيل صابان، المعجم الموسوعي للمصطلحات العثمانية، ط3، مكتبة الملك فهد الوطنية، الرياض، 2000م، ص199.

⁶ شوكت ياموك، التاريخ المالي للدولة العثمانية، ترجمة: عبد اللطيف الحارس، ط1، دار المدار الإسلامي، بيروت، 2005م، ص141.

⁷ **Sultani**: The term used for Ottoman gold minted in Egypt, Tripoli, Tunisia, and Algeria in reference to the Sultan, and was not used for Ottoman coins minted in Anatolia or Rumeli. See:



سهيل صابان، المعجم الموسوعي للمصطلحات العثمانية، ص135.

⁸ محمود علي عامر، تاريخ الإمبراطورية العثمانية- دراسات تاريخية واجتماعية، ط1، دار الصفدي، دمشق، 2004م، ص28.

The First Akça: (Plates 1, 2)

Metal	Silver
Shape	Round
Weight	0.9 g
Diameter	11mm
Place of preservation	The collection of Mr. Fadi Salaymeh in Germany
Date of Minting	Not found
Place of Minting	Edirne
Condition of Preservation	Good
Script	Thuluth
Publication	First time

The Description

	Obverse (Pl. 1)	Reverse (Pl. 2)
		
Arabic inscriptions	بن مراد محمد خان	خالد ملكه أدرنة ضرب (في)
Transliteration	bn murad muḥamād	kḥalāda malikuhu aḍaranaā ⁿ

	khān	ḍarba (fiyā)
Translation	Bin Murad Mehmed Khan	May his kingship perpetuate Edirne minted (in)

Examining the general shape of the Akça, it can be found that the outer edges have subjected to erosion as they were uneven. Consequently, some letters on the obverse and reverse were eroded.

1- The Obverse (Pl. 1, Fig. 1)

The obverse shows the remains of an outer circle adorned with decorations resembling pearl beads, followed inward by another paralleling circle that surround the obverse inscriptions.

It is noted on the obverse of this *Akça* a unique medallion that had never been engraved before on Ottoman coins, especially the coins of Sultan Mehmed II. It surrounds the phrase (محمد). This medallion is surrounded on four sides by decorative units connected to the inner circle.

2- The Reverse (Pl. 2, Fig. 2):

The reverse of the *Akça* is surrounded by the remains of a circle similar to the inner circle on the obverse, which also frames the reverse inscriptions, which were also executed in Thuluth script.

Analysis

First: Inscriptions

The obverse and reverse of this *Akça*, relied on geometric decorations, although it was not devoid of some geometric decorations that will be discussed later. This section will analyze the inscriptions on the *Akça* as follows:

1- The Obverse (Pl. 1, Fig. 1)

The inscriptions on this *Akça* can be analyzed in terms of form and content. In terms of form, they were executed in the Thuluth script that is considered one of the basic Arabic scripts, and the most widely used on antiquities. This script is one of the intricate scripts that the calligrapher had to master it⁹. Many art historians consider it the father of calligraphy due to the quality of its letters and the ease of execution. This script was inscribed on Islamic coins for the first time during the Bahri Mamluk era in Egypt and the Levant. It was also used in inscriptions on Ottoman coins¹⁰.

As for the content of these inscriptions or their meanings, it can be said that despite the conciseness of their content in general and the inscriptions of the Ottoman silver *Akça* under study, one can understand a lot of information, as the first and second lines record a phrase that includes: the name of the Sultan during whose reign this *Akça* was minted, i.e., Muhammad bin Murad (Ar. (محمد بن مراد)) in addition to a title inscribed at the last line, which is (Khan) : (Ar. خان).

As for (محمد بن مراد : Muhammad bin Murad), he is Muhammad bin Murad bin Muhammad, a.k.a. Mehmed II and Mehmed the Conqueror, and he is the seventh sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Mehmed II ruled the Ottoman Empire for a short period, from 1444 to 1446 AD, after his father, Sultan Murad II. Then he abdicated the throne to his father due to internal unrest and external threats, but when Murad II died, Mehmed II ruled the Ottoman Empire from 1451 to 1481 AD. Mehmed II was a genius politician and military leader, who excelled

⁹ توفيق الجندي، الخط العربي وأدوات الكتابة، ط2، المكتبة الأزهرية، القاهرة، 1993م، ص5-10.

¹⁰ رأفت النبراوي، الخط العربي على النقود الإسلامية، مجلة كلية الآثار، جامعة القاهرة، عدد8، 1997م، ص23.

foreign languages, philosophy and geography, in addition to Islamic, Latin and Greek history and literature. He was educated by the famous historian Ciriaco de' Pizzicollì¹¹.

Mehmed II, the son of Sultan Murad I, was born on the seventh of Rajab 833 AH in Edirne, where he spent his early childhood¹². Sultan Mehmed II succeeded in controlling the Byzantine Empire by conquering Constantinople, which led to the unification of the Ottoman Empire and put an end to the Middle Ages. He was called al-Fatih (the Conqueror) after the conquest of Istanbul on May 29, 1453 AD. The conquest of Constantinople put an end to the Byzantine Empire. The rule of Mehmed II and his successors represented the cultural renaissance of the Ottoman Empire¹³.

Recording the Sultan's name on the coins in general clarifies their importance from a political standpoint, as the coins were one of the badges of the kingship and sovereignty. Hence, every ruler was keen to record his name on coins to announce his rule of the country.

As for the title (خان) (Khan), it is a Turkish title that ranks emir (prince) or Hakim (ruler). It was given to the senior princes from the Turkish tribes since the first and second century AH, and it means "the chief". This title was given to governors who recognized subordination, even nominally, to the greatest head of the family, who was called the Khagan¹⁴. Al-Maqrizi stated that it is a Turkish title given to the senior princes in the Turkish tribes since the first and second centuries AH, the seventh and eighth centuries AD¹⁵.

This title was introduced to the Islamic world through the Khans of Turkestan at the end of the 4th century AH / 10th century AD, and was a rank to the senior princes in India¹⁶. Ibn Battuta also mentioned in his "Rihla" that the word "Khan" meant the Sultanate and sovereignty among the Mongolian kings in Persia and Iraq. Sometimes, it was mentioned in composition with العادل "al-Adil" which means "The Just" or "الأعظم" "Al-A'zam" which means "The Greatest".¹⁷ This title had a great status among the Ottomans, as it was a title for their sultans¹⁸. In addition, it was one of the significant worldly titles that the Ottomans used instead of the Qur'anic verses and religious expressions on their coins since the era of Sultan Mehmed II (the Conqueror) until the era of Sultan Mustafa II (1664-1703 AD). When the Tughra replaced these titles, they gave themselves such honorary titles because their content was linked to the strength of their state¹⁹.

2- The Reverse (Pl. 2, Fig. 2)

The reverse of the *Akça* was also based on inscriptions alongside a few geometric decorations such as the obverse, which will be analyzed later. In terms of form, the inscriptions on the reverse of the *Akça* included three horizontal lines inscribed in the same script of the obverse, which is this thuluth. As for the content, these inscriptions, they are as follows:

¹¹ Freely, John. The Grand Turk: Sultan Mehmet II-Conqueror of Constantinople and Master of an Empire. The Overlook Press, 2009, p.27.

¹² احسان النمر، السلطان محمد الفاتح العثماني، مجلة الحج والعمرة، وزارة الحج، م 12، ع 17، ص 744.

¹³ Freely, John. The Grand Turk: Sultan Mehmet II-Conqueror of Constantinople and Master of an Empire. Basic Books, USA, 2006, p.86.

¹⁴ محمد باقر الحسيني، دراسات وتحقيقات إسلامية عن نقود التوار والدعاية، مجلة المسكوكات، ع5، 1974م، ص21-22.

¹⁵ تقي الدين بن أحمد المقرئ، السلوك لمعرفة دول الملوك، تحقيق محمد مصطفى زيادة، القاهرة، 1958م، ص307.

¹⁶ مصطفى بركات، الألقاب والوظائف العثمانية (دراسة) في تطور الألقاب والوظائف منذ الفتح العثماني لمصر حتى الغاء الخلافة العثمانية من خلال الآثار والوثائق والمخطوطات، دار غريب للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع، القاهرة، 2000م، ص22.

¹⁷ محمد بن عبد الله اللواتي بن بطوطه، تحفة النظار في غرائب الأمصار وعجائب الأسفار، تحقيق علي الكتاني، ج1، سوريا، 1956م، ص102-103.

¹⁸ مصطفى بركات، الألقاب والوظائف العثمانية، ص22.

¹⁹ عاطف منصور، النقود الإسلامية وأهميتها في دراسة التاريخ والآثار والحضارة الإسلامية، زهراء الشرق، ط1، 2008م، ص102.

The first line included a supplication phrase for the Sultan regarding the permanence of kingship, which appeared in this form (خلد ملكه), which means ("May his kingship perpetuate!). It can be said that the form خلد ملكه was a distinct feature of this Ottoman silver *Akça* in particular and the Ottoman silver coins in general that distinguish them from other gold coins.

In fact, the Islamic coins included some supplications for rulers and sultans, and some of these supplications were specific to victory over enemies, the permanence of kingship and authority, asking for mercy and forgiveness from God, or praying for righteousness and success for Muslim rulers. Examples of supplications for victory and support over enemies include:

أيده الله، أيده الله ونصره، أعزه الله أعز الله نصره، نصره الله

These read: *āyādahū ʾallhu* , *āyādahū ʾallhu wanaṣruhu* , *āʾazāhu ʾallhu ʾazū ʾallhi naṣrihi* , *naṣarahu ʾallhu*

Examples of supplications for the permanence of kingship and sovereignty include²⁰:

خلد الله ملكه، خلد الله ملكه وسلطانه، خلد دولته، دام ملكه وسلطانه، دامت مملكته وسلطنته.

They read: *khalāda ʾallhu malikihi* , *khalāda ʾallhu malikihi wasulṭānihi* , *khalāda dawlatuhu* , *dāma mlkḥ wasulṭānahu* , *dāma māmlakatuhu wasalṭanatuhu*

As for the second line on the reverse of this *Akça*, it recorded the place of minting, which is “Edirne”, a Turkish city at the intersection of the Tundzha and Maritsa rivers, near the²¹ Turkish border with Greece and Bulgaria²². The Ottoman conquest of Edirne in 1361 AD represented a turning point in the history of the Ottoman Empire, as the city served as a major mobilization area for the continued Ottoman expansion into Europe. Shortly after the conquest, Sultan Murad I (1362-1389 AD) renamed the city to Edirne (formerly Adrianople), and built the first Ottoman palace there²³. Edirne remained the capital of the Ottomans from 1362 AD to 1453 AD²⁴. This *Akça* did not record the date of its minting and it may have been minted in 848 AH/1444 AD.

Second: Geometric Decorations:

Although the obverse and reverse of this silver *Akça* adopted the calligraphic decorations or inscriptions, there was also a few geometric decorations, represented by the circle consisting of pearl beads or dentils arranged next to each other, or the circle parallel to it that followed it to the interior. In addition, such decorations can be found with the geometric inscriptions on the obverse and reverse of the silver *Akça* under study. The geometric decorations can also be found in the unique circle engraved in the middle of the obverse of the *Akça*.

As for shapes of circles in general, they can be found on Islamic coins since their inception, and they represented a decorative element. In addition, they played a jurisprudential role, which is to determine the limit imposed by Allah on those who loan dinars and dirhams. If there was any manipulation to reduce the weight of these coins by minimizing the diameter of this circle, the lender is subject to the punishment for theft. Therefore, it was necessary to

²⁰ احمد السيد الصاوي، نقود مصر العثمانية، مركز الحضارة العربية، القاهرة، 2001م، ص114.

²¹ Migrations, conquests, trade and cultural exchanges have shaped the history of Edirne since the city is located on the transit route between Europe and Asia Minor. It is believed that the ancient city was first founded by the Thracian tribes. At the beginning of the second century AD, the Roman Emperor Hadrian reconstructed and expanded the city, and gave it his name. The city quickly turned into a military stronghold and commercial center for the Roman Empire, making it a desirable target for invaders. The Goths attacked and occupied the city in 378 AD, the Avars in 586 AD, and the Bulgarians in 914 AD. The Crusaders seized Edirne twice and it fell into the hands of the Ottomans in 1361 AD.

- MASTERS, Bruce Alan, et al. Encyclopedia of the ottoman empire. Infobase Publishing, 2010, pp.195-196.

²² MASTERS, Bruce Alan, et al. Encyclopedia of the ottoman empire, pp.195-196.

²³ MASTERS, Bruce Alan, et al. Encyclopedia of the ottoman empire, pp.195-196.

²⁴ يحيى شامي، موسوعة المدن العربية والإسلامية، ط1، دار الفكر العربي، بيروت، 1993م. ص304.

master the drawing of the circle on the molding, and to master minting the coin to deter thieves from tampering with the coin. To assure the accuracy of drawing the circle, a divider was sometimes used to draw it. This is clearly evident from the point that representing the center of the circle on the coin, in which the tip of the divider was placed while drawing the circle. Circle drawings continued as major elements of adorning coins in many countries in the eastern and western Islamic world, with the addition of some other decorative elements²⁵. There is a unique medallion in the middle of the obverse. It surrounds the name of Sultan Mehmed II. The medallion is a central artistic unit with a circular or oval shape - often - surrounded by decorative units with floral or geometric elements in identical or symmetrical positions²⁶.

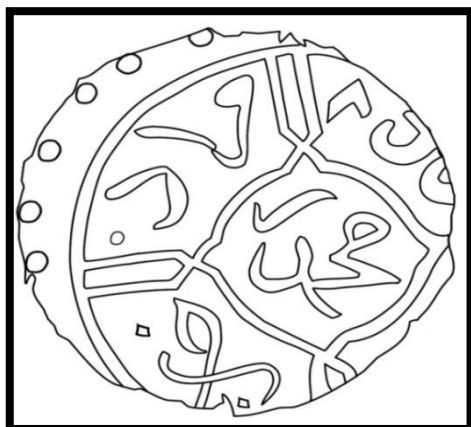


Fig.1: Illustration of the inscriptions and decorations of the Ottoman Akça with the name of Sultan Mehmed II (Obverse).

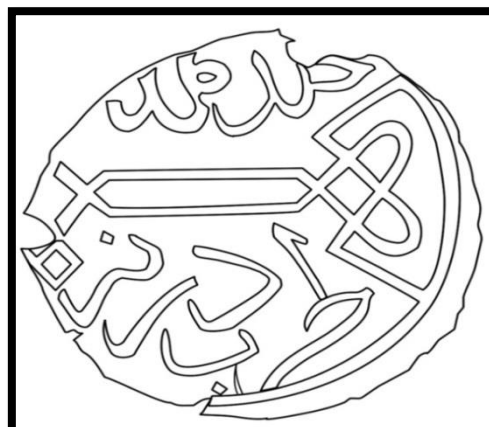


Fig.2: Illustration of the inscriptions and decorations of the Ottoman Akça with the name of Sultan Mehmed II (Reverse).



The Second Akça: (Plates. 3, 4)

Metal	Silver.
Shape	Round.
Weight	0.9 g.
Diameter	10.4 mm.
Place of preservation	The collection of Mr. Fadi Salaymeh in Germany.
Date of Minting	918 AH/ 1512 AD.
Place of Minting	Constantinople.
Condition of Preservation	Good.
Script	Thuluth.
Publication	First time.

²⁵ عاطف منصور، النقود الإسلامية وأهميتها في دراسة التاريخ والأثار والحضارة الإسلامية، ص 637.

²⁶ عاصم محمد رزق، معجم مصطلحات العمارة والفنون الإسلامية، مكتبة مدبولي، القاهرة، ط1، 2000م، ص63.

The Description

	Obverse (Pl. 3)	Reverse (Pl. 4)
		
Arabic inscriptions	سلطان سليم بن بايزيد (خان)	(عز نصره) ضرب قسطنطينية (س)نة 918
Transliteration	Sult(ān) salīm bn bayzyd (khān)	(' azā naṣruhu) ḍarḅ (quṣ) ḥntynya (s) naṯ 918
Translation	Sultan Selim Bin Bayezid (Khan)	May his victory be glorious minted Constantinople Year 918

1- The Obverse (Pl. 3, Fig 3)

The obverse shows the remains of an outer circle adorned with decorations resembling pearl beads, followed inward by another paralleling circle framing the obverse inscriptions. These inscriptions were executed in Thuluth script and are in four lines.

2- The Reverse (Pl. 4, Fig. 4)

It is noted on the reverse of the *Akça* that there is an outer circle that is similar to the one on the obverse of the *Akça*, followed by another circle parallel to the previous on the inside that also frames the inscriptions on the reverse. These inscriptions were also executed in thuluth script, and they consist of four lines. They mean that the *Akça* was minted in Constantinople in 918. It is noted that there is a straight line dividing the reverse of the *Akça* into two equal halves.

The Analysis

First: The Inscriptions

The obverse and reverse of the silver *Akça* under study, relied on geometric decorations, although it was not devoid of some geometric decorations that will be discussed later. This section will analyze the inscriptions on the *Akça* as follows:

1- The Obverse (Pl. 3, Fig. 3)

The inscriptions on the obverse of the *Akça* can be discussed in terms of form and content. As for the form, they were executed in thuluth script, and this script was executed on the first silver *Akça* that was discussed. As for the content of these inscriptions, they recorded the Sultan's title in the first line.

"Sultan" is a title of Arabic origin for Islamic rulers who are monarchs. The title often corresponds to that of a king. The word sultan comes from the Arabic language. It means "strength", "authority", "rulership" and full sovereignty. God Almighty said: "He does not have any authority over them, but 'Our Will is' only to distinguish those who believe in the Hereafter from those who are in doubt about it. And your Lord is a 'vigilant' Keeper over all things." because it is a proof and authority Here God Almighty refers to the warrant, ²⁷ against the subjects. There was a controversy about its derivation, and it was said that it is derived from authority, which is oppression and domination because the sultan oppresses the subjects to submit to him²⁸.

Moreover, it denotes the authority of the government, the governor or ruler. Hence, it was used to refer to the state seniors. It was used for the first time during the reign of Harun al-Rashid, when he called it upon Khalid bin Barmak or Hajar bin Yahya al-Barmaki. In this case, it was an honorary title but its use ceased until the (4th century AH / 10th century AD). It is mentioned that the title "Sultan" had become a general title only after the kings of the East, such as the Banu Buyeh, defeated the caliphs and usurped their powers. Thus, they took the title "Sultan" alongside to the honorary title of "Caliph" to assure their supremacy and predominance. Later, "Sultan" became a general title for the rulers who became independent from the caliphate as they managed to mint it on their coins to distinguish them from other non-independent rulers²⁹.

Tughril I was the first Muslim ruler whose coins recorded the title "سلطان": "Sultan" accompanied with the word "معظم" or "Muazzam" that means the glorified. The title passed from the Seljuks to the Ottomans, although there was a controversy on the first to be titled with it. It was said that Sikka Orhan had the title of "Sultan", and it was said that Murad I was the first. In addition, it was said that Muhammad I was the first of the Othman dynasty to be entitled with it. Some believe that the Abbasid Caliph called it upon Bayezid I – as the first to be entitled with it - in Cairo³⁰.

The sultans of the Othman dynasty believe that the sultanate is inherited only by whose fathers were sultans. Selim I said to Tuman Bay on his arrest and before he was hanged that: "The sultanate only fits the man whose fathers and grandfathers are sultans, and you and Qaytbay, who is the greatest of you, and Al-Ghuri, what are the names of your fathers and how can you inherit the Sultanate ?? ³¹

²⁷ The Holy Quran, Sura Saba, Verse 21.

²⁸ مصطفى بركات، الألقاب والوظائف العثمانية، ص33.

²⁹ حسن الباشا، الألقاب الإسلامية في التاريخ والوثائق والآثار، دار الفنية للنشر والتوزيع، القاهرة، 1989م، ص323.

³⁰ مصطفى بركات، الألقاب والوظائف العثمانية، ص35.

³¹ مصطفى بركات، الألقاب والوظائف العثمانية، ص35، 36.

The Ottoman Sultan had the authority to grant all types of honors, leadership, and positions with high titles, and to strip them whenever he wished³².

The title "Sultan" – that is recorded on the silver *Akça* under study - is one of the titles that the Ottomans engraved on coins in place of Qur'anic verses and religious expressions, and this continued until the reign of Sultan Mustafa II, when the tughra replaced these titles.

As for the aforementioned (Selim bin Bayezid), he is Selim I, the ninth sultan of the Ottoman Empire. He is the son of Sultan Bayezid II. He was born in Amasya in 885 AH/1480 AD and ruled the province of Trabzon during the reign of his father, Sultan Bayezid II. When Bayezid II retired from the throne, his son Selim I assumed power in 918 AH / 1512 AD, at the age of 42³³.

When Selim acceded the throne, he was known as Selim the Grim or Selim the Resolute. The first thing he did was to fight his brothers and sons so that none of them would struggle with him for power³⁴.

Later, Selim defined his clear goal, which was no jihad or conquests in Europe with the growing Safavid state in Iran and Shiite influence was extending everywhere as this would weaken the Ottomans. Therefore, Selim's strategy of the era was to eliminate the Safavid state and Shiite influence in Anatolia. In Rajab 920 AH / August 1514 AD, the Battle of Chaldiran³⁵ took place, and Selim I was victorious and defeated Shah Ismail. When Selim aspired to do the same with Iran, he considered the war with the Mamluks as a means to secure the Ottoman forces in their war with the Persians. Both armies– the Ottoman under Selim I and the Mamluks under Qansuh Al-Ghuri - met on the outskirts of Aleppo in Marj Dabiq" on (25 Rajab 922 AH corresponding to August 24, 1516). The Ottomans achieved victory and Al-Ghuri was killed. Selim I entered Aleppo and then Damascus. His name was read in the khutba (the Friday sermon) held in the mosques and coins were minted in his name as Sultan and Caliph. The Ottomans defeated the Mamluks in the Battle of Gaza and then the Battle of Raydaniya 923 AH/1517 AD. Selim marched to Egypt to achieve his goals, he ordered geographers to draw a map of the entire world, just as his grandfather, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror. Hence, he precisely identified the areas he aimed to conquer³⁶.

The *Akça* was minted when Sultan Selim I acceded the throne of the Sultanate in 918 AH/1512 AD. The *Akça* that Selim I ordered minting be divided into two basic forms as he ordered minting *Akça* recording the date of his enthronement in 918 AH (1512 AD) in the mints of Amasya, Amed (Diyarbakir), Ankorey (Ankara), Bursa, Edirne, Klibuli, Harbut, Hizan, Qastamuni, Quty, Constantinople, Karat Eva, Mardin, Nuwar, Rukha (Urfa), Sarz, Tira and Skopje. This *Akça* recorded his name associated with the title "Sultan". After the Battle of Chaldiran in 920 AH (1514 AD), his name became associated with the title "Shah," and his father's name became associated with the title "Khan." It also contains the supplication phrase عز نصره " *azā naşruhu* ", which means "May his victory be glorious!" and the place and date of minting.

³² أحمد عبد الرحيم مصطفى، في أصول التاريخ العثماني، ط1، دار الشروق، 1982م، ص107.

³³ صالح كولن، سلاطين الدولة العثمانية، دار النيل، القاهرة، 2014م، ص90،91.

³⁴ حسين مجيب المصري، معجم الدولة العثمانية، ط1، الدار الثقافية، القاهرة، 2004م، ص181.

³⁵ **The Battle of Chaldiran (920 AH / 1514 AD):** This battle took place between the Ottomans led by "Selim I" and the Safavids led by "Shah Ismail I". It ended with the defeat of the Safavids, and many of them were captured, including two of the wives of Shah Ismail the First. Sultan Selim entered the capital, Tabriz, and seized its treasures and riches, taking with him skilled craftsmen and artists on his return to Istanbul.

Roger Savory. Iran under the Safavids, Cambridge University, 1980, p.42.

³⁶ محمد حرب، العثمانيون في التاريخ والحضارة، المركز المصري للدراسات وبحوث العالم التركي، القاهرة، 1994م، ص23-27.

As for the second form of the *Akça*, which was issued during the era of Selim I. Various issues of this coin were minted on various dates. For example, some were minted in Marbut and Qarahisar in 920 AH (1514 AD); in Amed, Al-Hisn (Hisn Kayfa), Larna, Bakhchysarai, and Zabid in 922 AH (1516 AD), and in Khizan and Mosul in 924 AH (1518 AD).³⁷

2- The Reverse (Pl. 4, Fig. 4)

The reverse of the *Akça* was also based on inscriptions alongside a few geometric decorations such as the obverse, which will be analyzed hereinafter. In terms of form, the inscriptions on the reverse were executed in four horizontal lines. The fifth line on the obverse of the *Akça* included the date of minting, which also recorded the date of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I's accession, as previously mentioned. These inscriptions were executed in the same type of script, i.e., the Thuluth. As for the content of these inscriptions, it is as follows:

The first line on the reverse of the silver *Akça* under study included an supplication phrase for the Sultan with glory and victory, which was stated in this form (عز نصره), which is one of the most common supplications on Mamluk coins. This supplication was first used since the era of "Al-Nasir Muhammad" to the era of Al-Ghuri and during the Turkish Mamluks rule. It was recorded on felus (coins) and dinars in particular, while during the rule of the Circassian Mamluks it was recorded on dinars, dirhams and felus. As for the Ottoman era, it was widely recorded on most coins of various metals and types³⁸.

The second line included the phrase (ضرب): (*duriba*) which means (minted in), to refer to the place of minting that is recorded on the third line, which is Constantinople - the city that Sultan Muhammad III conquered in (857 AH / 1453 AD) and made the capital of his monarchy³⁹.

Constantinople is a city located on both sides of the Bosphorus Strait, which connects the Black Sea to the north with the Sea of Marmara, which branches off the Mediterranean Sea to the southwest. Its location is very strategic, as it is the link between the continents of Asia and Europe. Constantinople was the capital of the Ottoman Empire and the center of the Islamic Caliphate from 1453 AD until the beginning of the twentieth century⁴⁰.

Constantinople was called (Islambol), meaning "the City of Islam"⁴¹. Despite Constantinople was called Islambol, it was recorded thereafter with the same name, which is (Constantinople). This lasted after the era of Mehmed the Conqueror on some Ottoman coins of various types, including the *Akça* under study.

As for the fourth line on the reverse of this silver *Akça*, it records the Hijri date of minting the silver *Akça* under study. In fact, the Hijri date was recorded on Islamic coins in three ways. The first method included recording the date of minting in Arabic years and letters. The second recorded the Hijri date in Arabic numerals, while the third recorded the Hijri date by combining the two previous methods, i.e., the Hijri date was recorded in letters and numbers

³⁷ شوقي نزهي، المسكوكات العثمانية، ترجمة: سيد محمد السيد، ضمن كتاب النقود العثمانية تاريخها- تطورها- مشكلاتها، مكتبة الآداب، القاهرة، 2003م، ص97.

³⁸ شفيق مهدي، ممالك مصر والشام، نقودهم- نقوشهم- مسكوكاتهم- سلاطينهم، ط1، الدار العربية للموسوعات، بيروت- لبنان، 2008م، ص48، 49.

³⁹ يحيى شامي، موسوعة المدن العربية والإسلامية، ص305، 306.

⁴⁰ يحيى شامي، موسوعة المدن العربية والإسلامية، ص305، 306.

⁴¹ مصطفى بركات، الألقاب والوظائف العثمانية، ص35، 36.

⁴². The *Akça* under study followed the second method, where the Hijri date was recorded in Arabic numerals, which is (918) (918 AH) and corresponds to 1512 AD.

Second: Geometric Decorations

Although the obverse and reverse of the *Akça* under study depended on calligraphic decorations or inscriptions, there were a few geometric decorations, represented by the circle consisting of pearl beads or the dentils, or another paralleling circle inwards. These two circles were affected by the factors of time. It is mentioned previously that circles were of the geometric patterns that the artist and coiners preferred during the Ottoman era. However, there were some other geometric patterns such as the square on some examples of Ottoman coins.

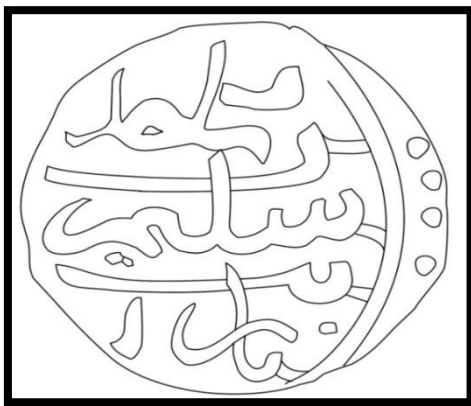


Fig.3: Illustration of the inscriptions and decorations of the Ottoman *Akça* with the name of Sultan Selim I (Obverse).

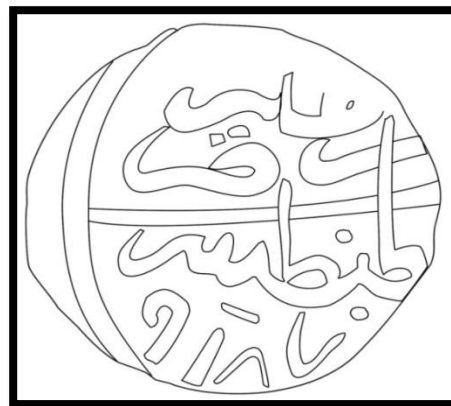


Fig.4: Illustration of the inscriptions and decorations of the Ottoman *Akça* with the name of Sultan Selim I (Reverse).

Conclusion

The study concludes some important results that can be summarized in the following:

- It sheds light on two unique *Akça* from the Ottoman era. They are studied and published here for the first time.
- It showed the common circulation of silver coins as the essential monetary unit in the cities of the Ottoman Empire.
- It provided an accurate description and analysis of the two *Akça* under study in terms of the general form and content of the inscriptions as well as their decorations.
- The inscriptions on both *Akça* showed that the religious texts represented by the Basmala, the Shahada, the Qur'anic verses, and the preaching of Muhammad (PBUH) that marked the previous Islamic tradition were replaced with the honorary titles and royal supplications. This indicates the strength of the Ottoman Empire and its expanding influence in the East and West.
- The research indicated that despite the renaming of Constantinople (Islambul) after its conquest by Sultan Mehmed II, the name Constantinople continued to appear on some Ottoman coins of various types, as a place where the currency was minted, such as the silver *Akça* bearing the name of Sultan Selim I.
- The study showed that the two *Akça* under study were adorned with inscriptions in Thuluth script.

⁴² رأفت النبراوي، التاريخ الهجري على النقود الإسلامية، مجلة العصور، م4، ح2، 1989م، ص217-250.

- The study showed engraving a geometric pattern for the first time on Ottoman coins, especially the coins of Sultan Mehmed II, which is a unique medallion surrounding the phrase (محمد).
- The study showed that the title (خان) was one the important worldly titles that the Ottomans engraved instead of the Qur'anic verses and religious phrases on their coins, since the era of Sultan Mehmed II (the Conqueror) until the era of Sultan Mustafa II (1664-1703 AD) when the tughra replaced these titles.
- The study revealed the frequent use of supplication expressions of the sultans of the Ottoman Empire, such as: "خلد ملكه" and "عز نصره" on their silver *Akça*.
- The descriptive and analytical study of both *Akça* under study revealed that the calligraphic and geometric decorations are dominant and that they are devoid of floral decorations, human, animal and bird depictions.

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أُقجَتَانِ فِضِّيَّتَانِ مِنَ الدَّوْلَةِ العُثْمَانِيَّةِ بِأَحْدَى المَجْمُوعَاتِ الخَاصَّةِ تُنْشَرُ لِأَوَّلِ مَرَّةٍ

المُستخلص

تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى نشر أُقجَتَيْنِ فِضِّيَّتَيْنِ مِنَ الدَّوْلَةِ العُثْمَانِيَّةِ، لم يسبق نشرهما أو دراستهما من قبل، ضمن مجموعة الأستاذ فادي سلايمة بألمانيا، وهما على قدر كبير من الأهمية، فالأقجة الأولى تمثل أقجة نادرة ضُربت باسم السلطان العثماني محمد الثاني بأدرنة، بين عامي (848-855هـ/1444-1451م)، وكانت أدرنة وقتها عاصمة الدولة العثمانية قبل فتح القسطنطينية، أما الأقجة الثانية فتُمثل أقجة فريدة ضُربت باسم السلطان العثماني سليم الأول، وهي من النقود الفضية القليلة والنادرة التي ضربها السلطان سليم الأول في القسطنطينية عند توليه الحكم سنة 918هـ/1512م. كما أشار البحث إلى أنه على الرغم من تسمية القسطنطينية (إسلامبول) بعد فتح السلطان محمد الثاني لها؛ لكن اسم القسطنطينية ظل يرد على بعض المسكوكات العثمانية على اختلاف أنواعها، بوصفها مكانَ سكِّ النقود، كما في الأقجة الفضية باسم السلطان سليم الأول موضوع الدراسة. كما يتناول البحث دراسة وصفية تحليلية للأقجتين موضوع الدراسة، من حيث: الشكل العام، ومضمون الكتابات، والزخارف الواردة عليهما.

الكلمات الدالة: أقجة، فضة، عملات، عثمانية، محمد الثاني، سليم الأول