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## Three Abbasid Dinars from the Reign of Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (170–193 AH / 786–809 AD) Preserved in the Mallawi Museum: An Archaeological and Numismatic Study

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### ABSTRACT

This paper examines three unpublished Abbasid gold dinars preserved in the Mallawi Museum, attributed to the reign of Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (170–193 AH / 786–809 AD). The study applies an archaeological and analytical approach, focusing on inscriptions, design features, and stylistic comparisons with other Abbasid coins. The findings reveal that these dinars exhibit a simple Kufic script that combines features of both angular and cursive forms, leaning toward abstraction and free of ornamentation. The inscriptions present a quasi-Qur'anic wording, not a direct citation, emphasizing Abbasid legitimacy and their affiliation with the Prophet's family. The analysis also highlights the persistence of some early Islamic epigraphic traditions-such as specific letter forms and numeral renderings-alongside new stylistic trends emerging in the 2nd century AH / 8th century AD. Furthermore, the absence of mint names suggests that the coins were struck in the Abbasid capital under direct caliphal supervision. These dinars, therefore, constitute significant historical, artistic, and religious artifacts that contribute to numismatic scholarship and enhance our understanding of the evolution of Islamic coinage in the early Abbasid era.

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### KEYWORDS

Dīnārs, Abbasid Era, Mūsā, Hārūn al-Rashīd, Lil-Khalīfah, Mallawi Museum.

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## ثلاثة دنانير عباسية من عهد الخليفة هارون الرشيد (170-193 هـ / 786-809 م) محفوظة في متحف ملوي: دراسة أثرية ونقدية

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### الملخص

يتناول هذا البحث دراسة ثلاثة دنانير عباسية محفوظة بمتحف ملوي، تُنشر لأول مرة، وتنسب إلى عهد الخليفة هارون الرشيد (170-193 هـ/786-809 م). اعتمدت الدراسة على منهج أثري فني تحليلي، ركّز على الوصف التفصيلي للنقوش والعناصر التصميمية ومقارنتها بتمثيلات من النقود العباسية. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن هذه الدنانير تتميز بخط كوفي بسيط يجمع بين خصائص الخط الجاف واللين، مع الميل نحو التجريد وغياب الزخارف. كما أن النصوص المنقوشة تضمنت صياغة ذات طابع قرآني غير مباشر، هدفت إلى تأكيد شرعية العباسيين وإبراز صلتهم بالبيت. وأوضحت الدراسة استمرار بعض التقاليد الكتابية من القرن الأول الهجري/ السابع الميلادي، مثل طريقة كتابة الحروف والأعداد، بجانب ظهور ملامح جديدة للقرن الثاني الهجري/ الثامن الميلادي. كما أن غياب اسم دار السك يشير إلى أنها ضربت في العاصمة العباسية تحت إشراف مباشر من الخليفة. وبذلك تُعد هذه الدنانير وثائق أثرية وفنية ودينية مهمة، تنري دراسات المسكوكات وتُساهم في فهم تطور النقود الإسلامية في العصر العباسي المبكر.

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### الكلمات الدالة

دنانير، العصر العباسي، موسى، هارون الرشيد، للخليفة، متحف ملوي.

## Introduction

Coinage<sup>1</sup> is considered one of the most prominent manifestations of development in human civilization. The significance of Islamic coins<sup>2</sup> was not limited to the technical skill and artistic precision reflected in their production, but extended to include the administrative and organizational aspects related to controlling their weights and supervising the minting process<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the small size of coins and the deterioration of many of them, modern numismatic studies have confirmed their status as a primary source for understanding historical events, away from the exaggerations that may appear in traditional records and writings<sup>4</sup>.

The importance of Islamic coins lies in the fact that they bore, in most cases, the names of the caliphs and rulers who ordered their minting. This has enabled us, through their classification, to compile accurate lists of dynasties and ruling families in the Islamic world<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, Islamic coins often recorded their date of minting,

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<sup>1</sup> The term "coins" (*al-maskūkāt*) is considered synonymous with money. Al-Razi defined it as "the engraved metallic die of dirhams," while Ibn Khaldun elaborated on it as the stamping of dinars and dirhams with an inscribed metallic seal imprinted upon them to ensure their freedom from fraud. Its meaning then expanded to denote both the coins themselves and the function of supervising their minting, a point also highlighted by al-Mawardi in his discussion of the sultan's dirhams that were struck.

Ibn Khaldūn, 'A. (2005). *Al-Muqaddimah* [The Introduction]. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah. (Original work published ca. 1377), p. 301; Al-Māwardī, 'A. ibn M. (1989). *Al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah wa al-Wilāyat al-Dīniyyah* [The Ordinances of Government and Religious Offices]. Cairo: Dar al-Hadith, p. 128; Al-Rāzī, M. ibn A. B. ibn 'A. al-Q. (1989). *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ* \[The Selected Lexicon], Beirut: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārij, Maktabat Lubnān. p. 270; Al-Zahrani, D. A. Y. (1993). *Zayf al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah min Ṣadr al-Islām ḥattā Nihāyat al-'Aṣr al-Mamlūkī* \[Counterfeiting of Islamic Coins from the Beginning of Islam to the End of the Mamluk Era] (1st ed.), pp. 12–13.

<sup>2</sup> Among the Arabs, the concept of "*naqd*" was primarily associated with distinguishing dirhams and dinars and eliminating the counterfeit ones. Thus, "*naqada al-darahim*" meant weighing them and verifying their quality, while "*al-naqd wa al-tanāqud*" referred to differentiating between the genuine and the adulterated. In the Arabic language, the phrase "*naqadahu al-darahim*" meant "he gave him dirhams and he received them." Hence, money (*nuqūd*) among the Arabs came to be associated with sound dirhams and dinars that met the conditions of proper weight and purity of metal (Al-Rāzī, M. ibn A. B. ibn 'A. al-Q. *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ* \[The Selected Lexicon], p. 594).

<sup>3</sup> In the markets, there were specialists known as "*al-naqqād*" (money examiners), who were responsible for inspecting coins and distinguishing the genuine from the counterfeit. From this term, the word "*naqūd*" (money) was derived. The state also employed coins as an official medium of communication to warn against fraud and counterfeiting, inscribing on them phrases that urged adherence to proper weight and justice, such as: "God commands fulfillment and justice" and "This dirham is cursed for whoever alters it" (Ramādān, 'Ā. M. M. (2009, March). *Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah Maṣḍaran Muḥimman min Maṣādir al-Tārīkh wa al-Āthār wa al-Ḥaḍārah al-Islāmiyyah* \[Islamic Coins as an Important Source of History, Archaeology, and Islamic Civilization]. Bibliotheca Alexandrina, (27), pp. 27–28).

<sup>4</sup> 'Abd al-Razzaq, N. (1988). *Al-Maskūkāt wa Kitābat al-Tārīkh* \[Coins and the Writing of History] (1st ed.). Baghdad: Dār al-Shu'ūn al-Thaqāfiyyah al-'Āmmah, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Among the most prominent works that relied on coins in the study of Islamic dynasties is Stanley Lane-Poole's *The Mohammedan Dynasties* (London, 1894), which was later translated into several languages, including Arabic by Muhammad Subhi Farzat (Damascus, 1973) and Dr. Ahmad al-Sayyid Sulayman (Cairo, 1972). Another key reference is Eduard von Zambaur's *Manuel de Généalogie et de Chronologie pour l'Histoire de l'Islam* (Hanover, 1927), one of the most specialized works that made

and these dates varied between the Hijri calendar and other calendars used in the Islamic world, such as the Yazdegerdian, the Roman consular, the Ilkhanid, and the Astronomical calendars<sup>6</sup>, thereby imparting to coins a significant historical and cultural dimension<sup>7</sup>.

Islamic coins are regarded as a true mirror of the era in which they were struck, accurately reflecting its economic, political, social, military, and artistic conditions<sup>8</sup>, making them a living testimony to various aspects of life<sup>9</sup>. Their significance was not confined to this aspect alone, but extended further to become a primary source for the study of Islamic history, archaeology, and civilization. The American numismatist George C. Miles pointed out that Islamic coinage has served Islamic history more than any other field<sup>10</sup>.

Furthermore, the Islamic state and Sharia gave special attention to coinage because of its close connection with worship and transactions, such as dowries, zakat, and blood money. In addition to their economic role, coins also performed an official communicative function, being used to convey political and ideological messages thanks to their rapid circulation and wide dissemination<sup>11</sup>.

### Research Objectives

- To document and publish three Abbasid dinars dating back to the reign of Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, preserved in the Mallawi Museum, which have not previously been studied.
- To examine the archaeological and artistic features of these dinars in terms of form, weight, and diameter, with an analysis of the artistic and technical aspects of their inscriptions, decorations, and calligraphy.
- To analyze the Qur'anic inscriptions and writings on the dinars and link them to the historical circumstances of the Abbasid Caliphate.

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extensive use of coins in compiling lists of rulers and governors in the Islamic world. It was translated into Arabic by Zaki Muhammad Hassan and others (Cairo, 1951–1952). See also:

- Al-Ḥusaynī, M. B. (1990). *Tahqīqāt wa Istadārakāt wa Idāfāt 'alā mā Wurida fī Ma'jam al-Ansāb li-Zambaur 'alā Ḍaw' Nuqūd al-Maghrib wa al-Andalus mā Bayna al-Qarnayn 4–10H/10–16M* \[Investigations, Corrections, and Additions to What Appeared in Zambaur's Genealogical Dictionary in Light of Coins of the Maghreb and al-Andalus between the 4th–10th/10th–16th Centuries]. *Al-Mu'arrikh al-'Arabī Journal*, 41–42(16), Baghdad, p. 209, p.227.

- Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. *Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah Maṣḍaran Muḥimman min Maṣādir al-Tārīkh wa al-Āthār*, (27), p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the types of dates and calendars recorded on Islamic coins, see Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2008). *Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah wa Aḥammīyatuhā fī Dirāsāt al-Tārīkh wa al-Āthār wa al-Ḥaḍārah al-Islāmiyyah* \[Islamic Coins and Their Importance in the Study of History, Archaeology, and Islamic Civilization] (1st ed.). Cairo: Maktabat Zahra' al-Sharq, p. 63 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2008). *Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah*, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Jaber, I. J. *Al-Maskūkāt al-Islāmiyyah* \[Islamic Coins]. Doha: National Council for Culture, Arts and Heritage, Department of Museums and Antiquities, Center for Islamic Coins, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2009). *Rumūz al-Arqām wa al-Taḳāwīm 'alā al-Nuqūd fī al-'Aṣr al-Islāmī* \[Numerical Symbols and Calendars on Coins in the Islamic Era] (1st ed.). Cairo: Maktabat Zahra' al-Sharq, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2008). *Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah*, p. 19.

<sup>11</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2008), p. 19.

- To contribute to enriching archaeological and artistic studies concerning Abbasid Islamic coinage.

### Significance of the Research

- To highlight the cultural and artistic role of Islamic coins as a reliable historical and archaeological source.
- To shed light on the collections of the Mallawi Museum that is rarely addressed in academic studies.
- To emphasize the role of the local community in the city of Mallawi in preserving Islamic heritage by donating these dinars to the museum, reflecting an awareness of the value of cultural heritage and its role in supporting scientific research.
- To support studies of the reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd as one of the flourishing periods of the Abbasid Caliphate.
- To contribute to the preservation of numismatic heritage through proper documentation and academic analysis.
- To safeguard the artistic value of these dinars by scientifically documenting them, particularly in light of the looting of the Mallawi Museum in 2013, followed by the recovery of most of its contents and the reopening of the museum in 2016<sup>12</sup>.

### Research Methodology

This study adopts the descriptive-analytical method by examining three Abbasid dinars from the reign of Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd preserved in the Mallawi Museum. The research involves direct visual inspection and documentation of their archaeological and artistic data, followed by an analysis of their inscriptions and decorations, and a comparison with the information provided in specialized references on Islamic numismatics. The results are then contextualized within the political and economic framework of the Abbasid era.

### A Brief Overview of the Abbasid Caliphate

The Abbasid state was established after its victory over the Umayyads at the Battle of *al-Zāb* in 132 AH / 750 AD<sup>13</sup>. Abū al-‘Abbās al-Saffāh was its first caliph<sup>14</sup>, followed

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<sup>12</sup> According to Mrs. Jihan Naseem Sami, Director of the Mallawi Museum, the museum originally housed 193 coins; however, only 160 were recovered after the 2013 looting. Among the recovered pieces are 19 Abbasid coins donated by a citizen of Mallawi on February 14, 1999 (*personal communication*, 2025).

<sup>13</sup> The Battle of al-Zāb al-Kubrā took place on 11 Jumādā al-Ākhira 132 AH / 25 January 750 AD, on the banks of the Great Zab River in northern Iraq, between the Abbasid army under ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī and the Umayyad army under Caliph Marwān ibn Muḥammad. The decisive Abbasid victory ended the Umayyad state and paved the way for the rise of the Abbasid Caliphate. For more on the events of the battle, see Al-Khudari, M. *Muḥāḍarāt Tārīkh al-Umam al-Islāmiyya (al-Dawla al-‘Abbāsiyya)* [Lectures on the History of Islamic Nations (The Abbasid State)]. (10th ed.), Cairo: al-Istiḳqāma Press, p. 28.

<sup>14</sup> Abū al-‘Abbās ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-‘Abbās, known as "*al-Saffāh*", was born in 104 AH (722 AD) in al-Ḥumayma. He was proclaimed caliph in Kūfa on 13 Rabī‘ al-Awwal 132 AH / 30 October 749 AD, thus inaugurating the Abbasid Caliphate. His reign continued until his death in al-Anbār on 13 Dhū al-Ḥijja 136 AH / 9 June 754 AD (Al-Suyūṭī, J. al-D.

by Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr<sup>15</sup> who consolidated its foundations by founding Baghdad as the capital in 145 AH / 762 AD<sup>16</sup>. Over nearly five centuries (132–656 AH / 750–1258 AD), thirty-seven caliphs ruled an empire stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indus River<sup>17</sup>, during which the Abbasid Caliphate enjoyed political and cultural prosperity that shaped what became known as the “Golden Age of Islam.”<sup>18</sup> Its establishment represented not merely a transfer of power but a true revolution in Islamic history, grounded in the Abbasids’ descent from *Āl al-Bayt* and strengthened by the support of Persian *mawālī*, which gave the state momentum and paved the way for a new phase in the course of the caliphate<sup>19</sup>.

### Abbasid Caliphate Coinage<sup>20</sup>

At the beginning of the Abbasid period, dinars largely followed the general pattern of Umayyad coins in terms of shape, weight, and diameter. However, they were distinguished by their inscriptions. The Qur’anic verse from *Sūrat al-Ikhlās* “الله أحد الله الصمد لم يد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفواً أحد” which appeared in four lines at the center of the reverse side of Umayyad dinars, was replaced on Abbasid dinars with the phrase “محمد / رسول الله” written in three consecutive lines at the center of the reverse. Additionally, Abbasid dinars<sup>21</sup> continued to omit the name of the minting location<sup>22</sup> until 198 AH<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> A. al-R. (2005), *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’* [History of the Caliphs], vol. 1, 2nd ed., Cairo: Dār al-Manāhij, p. 417; al-Khuḍarī, Muḥammad. *al-Dawla al-‘Abbāsiyya* [The Abbasid State], rev. Najwa ‘Abbās, 1st ed., Cairo: al-Mukhtār Foundation, 2003, p. 48).

<sup>16</sup> Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr (‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-‘Abbās), the second Abbasid caliph and founder of Baghdad, was born in 95 AH (714 AD) to a Berber mother named Salāma. He succeeded his brother al-Saffāh in 136 AH (754 AD) and ruled until his death in 158 AH (775 AD). Through his strength and political acumen, he consolidated the foundations of the Abbasid Caliphate.

- Al-Suyūṭī, J. al-D. ‘A. al-R. *Tārīkh al-Khulafā’*, p. 422.

<sup>17</sup> In 762 AD, Caliph Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr founded Baghdad, officially named Madinat al-Salām, on the site of a former Sasanian village. Chosen for its strategic location between the Tigris and Euphrates, the city was completed in four years with the labor of about 100,000 workers. Designed as a circular city with double walls, a deep moat, and an inner fortification, it became the political and cultural center of the Abbasid Caliphate.

- Hitti, P. K. (1970). *History of the Arabs: From the earliest times to the present* (10th Ed.). London: Macmillan International College Editions, p. 292; Al-Suyūṭī, J. al-D. ‘A. al-R. *Tārīkh al-khulafā’*, p. 422.

<sup>18</sup> For further details on the names of the Abbasid caliphs and the duration of their reigns, see Al-Ṣāyigh, K. (2002). *Al-nuqūd al-Islāmīyah* [Islamic coins] (1st ed.). Abu Dhabi: Cultural Foundation Publications, pp. 14, 16).

<sup>19</sup> Md. Abdul Muhit, & Abul Hasanat Md. Fazle Rabbi. (2024). A numismatic study of Abbasid gold coins collected at the Bangladesh National Museum. *Journal of Historical, Archaeological and Anthropological Studies*, 2 (2), pp. 65–66.

<sup>20</sup> Al-Ṣāyigh, K. (2002). *Al-nuqūd al-Islāmīyah*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>21</sup> The numismatic history of the Abbasid Caliphate is divided into four main phases, largely corresponding to the historical periods of the caliphate itself. For more detailed information on each phase, see Ramaḍān, ‘Ā. M. M. (2004). *Mawsū‘at al-Numūq fī al-‘Ālam al-Islāmī: Nuqūd al-Khilāfa al-‘Abbāsiyya* [Encyclopedia of coins in the Islamic world: Coins of the Abbasid Caliphate]. Cairo: Dār al-Qāhira., 1st ed., vol. 1, p. 173ff).

<sup>22</sup> ‘Abd al-Razzaq, N. (1988), *al-Maskūkāt wa Kitābat al-Tārīkh*, p. 53; Ramadan, A. M. M., *Mawsū‘at al-Nuqūd fī al-‘Ālam al-Islāmī* p. 173.; al-Jaber, I. J., *Al-Muskūkāt al-Islāmīyya*, p. 9.; Ramadan, A. M. M., *Al-Nuqūd al-‘Arabiyya fī al-‘Aṣr al-‘Abbāsī (132–656 AH / 750–1258 AD)*

## Abbasid Coinage under Caliph Harun al-Rashid (170–193 AH / 786–809 AD)

During the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid<sup>24</sup>, Abbasid dinars witnessed significant developments, most notably the recording of the caliph's name on Islamic Arab dinars for the first time<sup>25</sup>. His name appeared on dinars struck in 170 AH and 171 AH<sup>26</sup>, distinguishing them from coins minted under his brother, al-Hādi. The phrase "*mimma umira bihi*" ("by his order") was also used for the first time, reflecting clear political and religious authority<sup>27</sup>.

Additionally, the title "*Lil-Khalīfah*"<sup>28</sup> "for the caliph" appeared on the coins, alongside the names of some governors, particularly those of Egypt, and the caliph's

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[Arab Coins in the Abbasid Era], Alexandria: Library of Alexandria, Quarterly Journal, Issue 1, January 2019, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> 'Abd al-Razzaq, N. (1988), *al-Maskūkāt wa Kitābat al-Tārīkh*, p. 34.

<sup>23</sup> This coincided with the first year of Caliph al-Ma'mūn's reign (198–218 AH), marking the beginning of a new phase in the history of the Abbasid state and the associated developments in minting and coinage.

- 'Abd al-Razzaq, N. (1988), *al-Maskūkāt wa Kitābat*, p. 53.

<sup>24</sup> Harun al-Rashid (full name: Harun ibn al-Mahdi Muhammad ibn al-Mansur ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib al-Qurashi al-Hashimi, mother: al-Khayzaran) was born in Shawwal 148 AH (some sources: 147 or 150 AH). He ascended the caliphate on Friday, 18 Rabi' I 170 AH / 786 AD, following the death of his brother al-Hadi, by the succession of his father al-Mahdi. He married Zubayda bint Ja'far, his cousin, in 165 AH, who gave birth to Muhammad al-Amin. He died in Tus on Saturday, 4 Jumada II 193 AH / 809 AD, after ruling nearly 23 years, at the age of about 44.

- Zambaur, H. (1980). *Ma'jam al-ansāb wa al-usarāt al-hākima fī al-tārīkh al-islāmī* [Dictionary of Genealogies and Ruling Families in Islamic History]. Beirut: Dār al-Rā'id al-'Arabī., pp. 3, 17.; Al-Ṭabarī, M. J. (d. 310 AH). *Tārīkh al-umam wa al-mulūk* [History of Nations and Kings]. Edited by Abū Suhayb al-Karmī. Riyadh: Bayt al-Afkār al-Duwalīyya. pp. 1647, 1654–1655.; Al-Mas'ūdī, A. H. (d. 346 AH). *Murūj al-dhahab wa ma'ādin al-jawhar* [Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems]. Edited by Kamāl Ḥasan Mar'ī. Beirut: al-Maktaba al-'Asriyya, 1st ed., 2005, vol. 3, pp. 277–280, 319.; Ibn Kathīr, I. b. 'Umar. (2003). *al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya* [The Beginning and the End]. Edited by 'Abdullāh b. 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Turkī. Cairo: Dār Hijr, vol. 14, pp. 9, 20.

<sup>25</sup> 'Allam, 'A. S. (1999). *Dānānīr 'Abbāsiyya min 'aṣr al-khalīfa Hārūn al-Rashīd maḥfūza bi-Mathaf al-Fann al-Islāmī bi-Qāhira..* Journal of Arts and Humanities, Faculty of Arts, Minia University, 34(1), p. 442.

<sup>26</sup> It is likely that this step was a direct response to the dinars of Caliph al-Hādi struck in 170 AH, which bore the name of his son Ja'far after being designated heir instead of Harun. Thus, Harun al-Rashid's dinars can be considered the first clear public declaration that he was the legitimate caliph.

- Al-Qaysī, N. 'A. al-R. (2011). *al-Maskūkāt al-Naqdiyya fī al-Buldān al-'Arabīyya Qadīman wa Ḥadīthan* [Coinage in Arab Countries, Past and Present], Baghdad: Bayt al-Hikma, p. 20; Al-Qaysī, N. 'A. al-R. (2004). *al-Dīnār al-'Arabī al-Islāmī* [The Islamic Arab Dinar], Amman: Dār al-Manāhiḡ, 1st ed, p. 75; Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2004). *Mawsū'at al-Numūq fī al-'Ālam al-Islāmī*, p. 190.; Smith, J. (2020). Istanbul I: Catalogue of Islamic Coins (No. 221). Istanbul: Istanbul Archaeological Museum Press.

<sup>27</sup> This confirms that these dinars were issued by his direct order, as the legitimate caliph of the Muslims (Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2004). *Mawsū'at al-Numūq fī al-'Ālam al-Islāmī*, p. 190).

<sup>28</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2004). , p. 192.

minister, Ja'far al-Barmakī<sup>29</sup>, who was the first minister to be mentioned on coinage. Governor 'Alī ibn Sulaymān al-'Abbāsī was the first to have his name inscribed in Egypt, appearing below the central reverse inscriptions. Thus, Harun al-Rashid became the first caliph whose name, heir, ministers, and governors were recorded on gold coins<sup>30</sup>.

The Mallawi Museum<sup>31</sup> preserves three Abbasid dinars dating back to the era of Caliph Harun al-Rashid. These dinars hold particular historical and archaeological significance, as they have not been previously published or studied in academic circles<sup>32</sup>. The coins are as follows:

- A dinar struck in 173 AH.
- A dinar struck in 175 AH bearing the name of "Musa".
- A dinar struck in 192 AH bearing the inscription "Lil-Khalīfah".

### Descriptive Study

- **First Dinar:** see Plates (1, 2), Figures (1, 2).
- **Catalogue Number:** 431.
- **Location in the Museum:** Hall 3, Showcase 4.
- **Date:** 173 AH.
- **Material:** Gold.
- **Weight:** 3.6 g.
- **Diameter:** 18 mm.
- **Provenance:** Donated by a citizen of the city of Mallawi.

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<sup>29</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2023). *Nuqūsh al-Sikka wa Qirā'at al-Tārīkh* \[Mint Inscriptions and Reading History]. Majallat Markaz Dirāsāt al-Tuqūsh wa al-Khuṭūṭ al-Tārīkhiyya \[Journal of the Center for Epigraphy and Historical Scripts], 1, p. 113.

<sup>30</sup> 'Abd al-Sattār Sīd Aḥmad, M. 'Id. (2022, November). *Al-Nuqūsh al-Kitābiyya li-sitta dinār 'Abbāsiyya min 'Ahd al-Khālīfah Hārūn al-Rashīd maḥfūẓah bi-Mathāf al-Fann al-Islāmī bi-Qāhirah (Lam Yusbiq Nashruḥā)* \[The Epigraphic Inscriptions of Six Abbasid Dinars from the Era of Caliph Harun al-Rashid Preserved at the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (Previously Unpublished)]. Majallat al-'Imāra wa al-Funūn wa al-'Ulūm al-Insāniyya \[Journal of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities], 7(36), 726.

<sup>31</sup> Mallawi Museum, located in the city of Mallawi in southern Minya Governorate, was established on June 23, 1962, and officially opened on July 23, 1963, as a regional museum housing artifacts from Tuna al-Gabal, Ashmunin, Tell el-Amarna, and Middle Egypt. The museum consists of two floors and four halls containing approximately 1,183 archaeological pieces, showcasing aspects of daily and funerary life, as well as exhibits reflecting the development of Pharaonic, Greek, Roman, Coptic, and Islamic civilizations (Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2016). Official opening report of the Mallawi Museum. Cairo: Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities Publications).

<sup>32</sup> The study of these coins, including their photography and measurement, was conducted in the presence of a museum committee after obtaining the necessary official permits. Approval was granted by the Director of the Museums Sector on November 21, 2024, following a request submitted by Dr. Israa Ahmed Mohamed El-Laban and Dr. Ahmed Essam Eldin Moussa, and was further endorsed by the Permanent Committee for Islamic and Coptic Antiquities on December 10, 2024. Sincere thanks are extended to the Mallawi Museum administration for their cooperation and facilitation during the study, particularly to Mrs. Jihan Naseem, Director General of the museum.



## Description

This dinar features a standardized design structure; both the obverse and reverse inscriptions are surrounded by an outer textual border within a continuous beaded circle. However, the current condition of the coin shows noticeable corrosion along its edges, resulting in the loss of large portions of the border inscriptions and making them difficult to read in full.




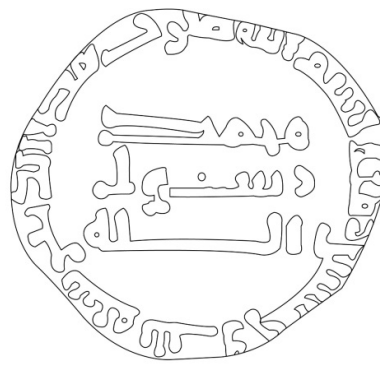
The central obverse inscriptions consist of three parallel horizontal lines in simple Kufic script containing the *Shahada*: «لا إله إلا / الله وحده / لا شريك له», surrounded by an outer margin of inscriptions running counterclockwise, which includes phrases, derived from the Quranic texts: "محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله"<sup>33</sup> (see Plate 1, Figure 1).

The central reverse contains three parallel horizontal lines in simple Kufic script mentioning the second part of the *Shahada*: «محمد / رسول / الله», surrounded by an outer margin of inscriptions running also counterclockwise-worn in many areas-includes the *Basmala* and the date of striking, reading: «بسم الله ضرب هذا الدين سنة ثلث وسبعين ومئة» (see Plate 2, Figure 2), thereby completing the textual content of this dinar. Its inscriptions were engraved as follows:

The central field		
Obverse		Reverse
Reading	لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له	محمد رسول الله
Transliteration	lā ilāha illā Allāh, waḥdahu lā sharīka lah	Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh
Translation	There is no God but God alone No partner for him	Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah.
Coin Margin		
Obverse		Reverse
Reading <sup>34</sup>	{محمد} رسول الله {أرسله} بالهدى {ودين} الحق ليظهره على الدين كله	بسم {الله} ضرب هذا الدين سنة ثلاث وسبعين ومئة
Transliteration	{Muḥammad} rasūl Allāh, {arsalahu} bil-hudā {wa- dīn} al-ḥaqq li-yuẓhirahu 'alā ad-dīn kullīhi.	Bism {Allāh} ḍuriba hādhā ad- dīn Sanat thalāth wa-sab'īn wa- mi'a.
	{Muhammad} is the Messenger of Allah; {He	In the name of {Allah}, this dinar

<sup>33</sup> The inscriptions on the dinar is not a direct Qur'anic quotation but rather a text closely resembling the Qur'anic verse found in *Sūrah al-Tawbah*, verse 33; *Sūrah al-Fath*, verse 28; and *Sūrah aṣ-Ṣaff*, verse 9. For further discussion and a detailed textual analysis, see the analytical section of this study.

<sup>34</sup> The parts enclosed in {...} are not directly legible on the surface of this dinar due to severe wear along its edges; they have been reconstructed based on other dinars from the same year and of the same type, allowing the completion of the inscriptions according to the typical features of this issue.

<b>Translation</b>	sent him} with guidance and {the religion of} truth to make it prevail over all religion.	was struck in The year one hundred and seventy-three
		
<b>Plate 1</b>		<b>Plate 2</b>
Abbasid dinar from the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid, struck in 173 AH, with inscriptions in simple Kufic script, preserved at the Mallawi Museum. Previously unpublished (photographed by the researcher).		
		
<b>Figure 1</b>		<b>Figure 2</b>
Figures showing the inscriptions on the obverse and reverse of the dinar struck in 173 AH. (Researcher's work).		

- **Second Dinar:** See Plates (3, 4), Figures (3, 4).
- **Inventory Number:** 424.
- **Location:** Hall 3, Showcase 4.
- **Date:** 175 AH.
- **Material:** Gold.
- **Weight:** 3.9 g.
- **Diameter:** 17.5 mm.
- **Provenance:** Donated by a citizen of Mallawi.

### Description

This dinar features a standard design structure, with inscriptions on both the obverse and reverse surrounded by an outer coin margin within a circle of contiguous beads.




The central field of the obverse contains three parallel horizontal lines in simple Kufic script, comprising the *Shahada*, "لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له", surrounded by an outer margin of inscriptions running counterclockwise, including phrases derived from the Quranic text "محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله" (See Plate 3, Figure 3).

The central field of the reverse consists of four parallel horizontal lines, including the second part of the *Shahada*, in simple Kufic script, "محمد / رسول / الله / موسى"<sup>35</sup>, surrounded by an outer margin-also counterclockwise-containing the *Basmala* and the minting date "بسم الله ضرب هذا الدين سنة خمس وسبعين ومئة" (see Plate 4, Figure 4), thereby completing the inscriptions of this dinar. Its inscriptions were engraved as follows:

The central field		
Obverse		Reverse
Reading	لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له	محمد رسول الله موسى
Transliteration	lā ilāha illā Allāh, waḥdahu lā sharīka lah	Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh Mūsā
Translation	There is no God but God alone No partner for him	Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, Mūsā.
Coin Margin		
Obverse		Reverse
Reading	محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله	بسم الله ضرب هذا الدين سنة خمس وسبعين ومئة
Transliteration	Muḥammad rasūl Allāh, arsalahu bil-hudā wa-dīn al-ḥaqq li-yuẓhirahu ‘alā ad-dīn kullihī.	Bism Allāh ḍuriba hādhā ad-dīn sanata khams wa-sab‘īn wa-mī’a.
Translation	Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; He sent him with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religion.	In the name of Allah, this dinar was struck in the year One hundred and seventy-five

<sup>35</sup> Musa ibn Isa ibn Musa al-Abbasi served as the governor of Egypt in three separate periods: first between 171–172 AH / 787–788 AD, second between 175–176 AH / 791–792 AD, and third between 179–180 AH / 795–796 AD.

- al-Qaysī, N. ‘A. al-R., *Al-Muskukat al-Naqdiyya*, p. 294. ; al-‘Issi, M. A. al-F. (2003), *Al-Naqud al-‘Arabiyya al-Islamiyya*, Doha: National Council for Culture, Arts and Heritage, p. 232; al-Qaysī, N. ‘A. al-R., *Al-Dinar al-‘Arabi al-Islami*, p. 79; Zambaur, H. (1980), *Mu‘jam al-Ansab*, pp. 35, 69.

	
Plate 3	Plate 4
Abbasid dinar from the reign of Caliph al-Rashid, struck in 175 AH, bearing inscriptions in simple Kufic script including the name “Musa,” preserved at the Mallawi Museum. Unpublished (researcher’s photograph).	
	
Figure 3	Figure 4
Figures showing the inscriptions on the obverse and reverse of the dinar struck in 175 AH. (Researcher’s work).	

- **The third dinar:** see Plates (5, 6), Figures (5, 6).
- **Inventory number:** 449.
- **Location:** Hall 3, Showcase 4.
- **Date of the coin:** 192 AH.
- **Material:** Gold.
- **Weight:** 3.9 g.
- **Diameter:** 17 mm.
- **Source:** Donated by a citizen of Mallawi.

**Description**

This dinar features a standardized design structure, with inscriptions on both the obverse and reverse surrounded by a textual margin within a continuous beaded circle. However, the coin’s current condition shows significant corrosion along its edges, uneven borders, and some minor warping, resulting in the loss of large portions of the margin inscriptions and making the remaining text difficult to read clearly. The obverse central field consists of three horizontal parallel lines in simple Kufic script bearing the *shahāda*: "لا إله إلا / الله وحده / لا شريك له". Surrounding this is an outer

margin running counterclockwise, including phrases derived from the Quranic texts: "محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله" (see Plate 5, Figure 5).





The reverse central field contains four horizontal parallel lines in simple Kufic script, mentioning the second part of the *shahāda*: «محمد / رسول / الله / للخليفة». It is surrounded by an outer margin running counterclockwise, including the *basmala* and the minting date, reading: "بسم الله ضرب هذا الدين سنة اثنتين وتسعين ومئة" (see Plate 6, Figure 6).

Thus, the textual elements of this dinar are complete, despite corrosion and warping affecting the clarity of some inscriptions. The inscriptions were engraved as follows:

The central field		
Obverse		Reverse
Reading	لا اله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له	محمد رسول الله للكليفة
Transliteration	lā ilāha illā Allāh, waḥdahu lā sharīka lah	Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh Mūsā lil-khalīfah
Translation	There is no God but God alone No partner for him	Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, for the Caliph.
Coin Margin		
Obverse		Reverse
Reading <sup>36</sup>	محمد رسول الله {أرسله} بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله	بسم الله ضرب هذا الدين سنة اثنتين {وتسعين} ومئة
Transliteration	Muḥammad rasūl Allāh, {arsalahu} bil-hudā wa-dīn al-ḥaqq li-yuḏhirahu ‘alā ad-dīn kullihī.	Bism Allāh ḍuriba hādhā al-dīnār sanat ithnatayn wa {tis‘īn} wa mi‘ah
Translation	Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; He {sent him} with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religion.	In the name of Allah, this dinar was struck in the year one hundred and {ninety}-two

<sup>36</sup> The parts enclosed within braces {...} are not directly legible on the surface of this dinar due to corrosion and warping along its edges. They have been reconstructed based on other coins of the same year and style, allowing the text to be completed according to the standard patterns of this coin issue.



	
Plate 5	Plate 6
<p><b>Abbasid dinar from the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid, struck in 192 AH, bearing simple Kufic inscriptions with the phrase Lil-Khalīfah, preserved at the Mallawi Museum. Previously unpublished (photographed by the researcher).</b></p>	
	
Figure 5	Figure 6
<p><b>Figures showing the inscriptions executed on the obverse and reverse of the dinar struck in 192 AH. (Researcher's work).</b></p>	

### Analytical Study

The inscriptions in the central field of the obverse on the three dinars under study consist of three parallel horizontal lines containing the *Shahada* (the declaration of monotheism), which is the first pillar of Islam. It is worth noting that the *Shahada* had appeared on some coins even before the Arabization process carried out by the Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, such as a fals struck in Homs, where the declaration was inscribed in three parallel horizontal lines in simple Kufic script<sup>37</sup>.

On gold dinars, the *Shahada* was inscribed in this order for the first time in the central field of the obverse during the final phase of the Arabization of dinars under Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (65–86 AH / 685–705 AD), specifically in 77 AH / 696 AD. This religious declaration continued to appear on Islamic coinage across various

<sup>37</sup> 'Allam, 'A. S. (1999). *.Dānānīr 'Abbāsiyya* .p, 444. For further details, see al-Nabrawi, R. (1991). *Ṭuruz al-fulūs al-maḍrūba bi-Ḥimṣ fī al-qarnayn al-awwal wa-al-thānī al-hijriyyayn*. Al-'Usur Journal, 6(1), 49.

periods, including the Umayyads, Abbasids, Tulunids, Ikhshidids, Fatimids, and later during the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras<sup>38</sup>.

The continuous presence of the *Shahada* on Islamic coins reflects a prominent political and religious symbol, reinforcing the ruler's authority as the protector of the faith and guardian of Islamic law. See Plates (1, 3, 5) and Figures (1, 3, 5).

It is also observed that the inscription on the margin of the obverse of the dinars under study closely resembles a Qur'anic text. The phrase on the coin reads: "محمد رسول الله"

"هو الذي أرسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله" (see Plates 1, 3, 5; Figures 1, 3, 5), whereas the Qur'anic verse appears as: "هو الذي أرسل رسوله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله"<sup>39</sup>.

It is worth emphasizing that several researchers have mistakenly identified this inscription as a direct Qur'anic citation. In fact, the text represents a modified or textually altered version of the Qur'anic verse, reflecting an adaptation rather than an exact reproduction of the sacred wording. This observation suggests a deliberate rephrasing with a Qur'anic tone, intended to evoke the authority and sanctity of revelation while serving specific political and ideological purposes.

Accordingly, the inscription on the dinar should be understood not as a verbatim quotation from the Qur'an, but as a consciously crafted formulation of Qur'anic character. Such usage illustrates how religious expressions were strategically employed in the early Islamic monetary system to convey messages of legitimacy, piety, and divine endorsement. The verse itself indicates that the Prophet Peace be upon him was sent by his Lord with beneficial knowledge and righteous action, affirming that Islamic law integrates both sound religious understanding and proper religious practice. Hence, the adaptation of religious texts on coins functioned as a powerful instrument to legitimize authority and to reinforce the caliphate's status within the religious and political consciousness of early Islamic society.

As for the inscriptions in the central field of the reverse of the first dinar under study, they consist of three horizontal parallel lines containing the second part of the *Shahada*: «محمد / رسول / الله». It is noteworthy that this phrase had appeared on bronze coins before being recorded on Abbasid dinars, as evidenced by coins minted in Homs<sup>40</sup>. Recording the Prophetic message on Abbasid coins affirmed their affiliation with The Prophet's Household (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) (*Ahl al-Bayt*), confirmed their legitimacy in claiming the caliphate in opposition to the Umayyads, reminded the subjects of their duty to obey, and signaled to the Alids that authority had been secured within The Prophet's Household (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) (*Ahl al-Bayt*), represented by the Abbasids<sup>41</sup>.

In this context, it is clear that the Abbasid adoption of this formulation differs in significance from the Umayyad usage. The Umayyads employed the *Shahada* on their coins to highlight the Islamic identity of the newly independent state, separate from Byzantine and Sasanian heritage, whereas the Abbasids repurposed it to confer

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<sup>38</sup> Al-Sayed, H. A., & Doaa. (2024). *Two rare Tulunid coins* (published and studied for the first time). SHAK, 31, p. 942.

<sup>39</sup> Qur'an, Sūrah al-Tawbah, verse 33; Sūrah al-Fath, verse 28; and Sūrah aṣ-Ṣaff, verse 9.

<sup>40</sup> 'Allam, 'A. S. (1999). *Dānānīr 'Abbāsiyya*, p. 444. For further details, see Al-Nabrawi, R. (1991). *Turuz al-fulūs al-madrūba*, pp. 49- 50.

<sup>41</sup> Ramadan, A. M. M. (2004). *Mawsu'at al-nuqud fi al-'alam al-Islami*, p. 175

political and religious legitimacy on their caliphate by linking it to The Prophet's Household (Peace and Blessings Be Upon Him) (*Ahl al-Bayt*). Thus, the coins served a dual function: religiously, by consolidating the foundations of faith, and politically, by affirming their rightful claim to the caliphate. See Plate 2, Figure 2.

It is also noted in the second dinar that, in addition to the second part of the *Shahadah* inscribed in three parallel horizontal lines, the fourth line includes the name "*Mūsā*" «موسى». This is attributed to the fact that during the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid, the names of some governors-especially the governors of Egypt-began to appear on dinars<sup>42</sup>, reflecting their political and administrative status and their role in managing the affairs of the provinces. See Plate 4, Figure 4.

As for the third dinar, in addition to the traditional formula, the fourth line includes the word "*Lil-Khalīfah*" «للكليفة», indicating a clear link between the coin and the central authority, as well as its role as a financial instrument used to pay taxes and cover the state's public expenditures<sup>43</sup>. Thus, the coin goes beyond its economic function to become a political and administrative document, illustrating the relationship between society and the state and its institutions. See Plate 6, Figure 6.

The reverse coin margin includes an incomplete "*Basmala*", a formula first inscribed on a Sasanian-Arabic dirham struck in Sijistan in 31 AH, attributed to the reign of Caliph 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (23–35 AH / 644–656 AD). This incomplete formula continued to appear on Sasanian-Arabic dirhams until the reign of the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān<sup>44</sup>. The *Basmala* is usually followed by a statement of the coin type, *Dīnārs* «الدينار», accompanied by the minting year, without mentioning the city of minting, which is generally interpreted as these dinars being struck in the new capital of the Caliphate, where mentioning it was considered self-evident<sup>45</sup>. The three dinars under study are distinguished by inscriptions executed in plain Kufic script, free of decorative elements, reflecting the official and sovereign character of the coin as a tool for both political propaganda and religious legitimacy. See Plates 2, 4, 6 and Figures 2, 4, 6.

The study of the three dinars (subject of this research) reveals several distinctive features of inscriptions from the 2nd century AH / 8th century AD, which can be summarized as follows<sup>46</sup>:

- A combination of the characteristics of rigid (dry) script and soft (flexible) script, with a noticeable tendency toward using the dry script free of decorative elements.
- Clear line alignment and precise spacing between lines.
- The shape of the letter "د" (*Dāl*) resembles that of "ك" (*Kāf*) in the words «وحده» and «شريك» (see Figures 1, 3, 5).
- The letter "ت" 'tā' is closed in the word «سنة» (see Figures 1, 3, 5).

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<sup>42</sup> Ramaḍān, 'Ā. M. M. (2019). *Al- Nuqūd al- 'Arabiyya fī al- 'Aṣr al- 'Abbāsī*, p. 20.

<sup>43</sup> al- 'Issh, M. A. al-F. (2003). *al- Nuqūd al- 'Arabiyya al- Islāmiyya*, p. 588.

<sup>44</sup> al- 'Issh, M. A. al-F. (1984). *Al-Nuqūd al- 'Arabiyya al- Islāmiyya al- Maḥfūẓa fī Mathaf Qaṭar al- Waṭanī* \[Islamic Arabic Coins Preserved at the Qatar National Museum], Vol. 1. Doha, Qatar, pp. 53 (No. 2), p. 95.

<sup>45</sup> 'Abd al-Razzaq, N. (1988). *Al-Maskūkāt wa Kitābat al-Tārīkh*, p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> 'Allam, 'A. S. (1999). *Dānānīr 'Abbāsiyya*, p. 445.



At the same time, these inscriptions retain some features inherited from the 1st century AH / 7th century AD, such as<sup>47</sup>:

- The omission of the long vowel letter "alif" in the word «دينر» (see Figures 2, 4, 6).
- The use of the letter "yā'" with tail in the words «الهدى» and «موسى» (see Plate 4, Figure 4).
- The letter " 'Ayn" cup (open form of the letter 'Ayn) in the word «سبعين» (see Figures 2, 4).
- The appearance of the units digit «اثنين» on Islamic coins during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods in various forms, such as: «اثنتين», «اثنين», or «ثنتين» (see Plate 6, Figure 6).

Thus, Harun al-Rashid's dinars reflect a transitional phase in the development of Kufic script on Islamic coins, blending remnants of early Umayyad features with stricter, more regular characteristics that laid the foundation for Abbasid inscriptional traditions in subsequent periods.

Through these epigraphic traits, it becomes evident that Harun al-Rashid's dinars represent a gradual evolutionary stage in Abbasid coinage, combining inherited Kufic features from the 1st century AH / 7th century AD with new elements characteristic of the 2nd century AH / 8th century AD. This is particularly clear when compared with earlier and contemporary issues, where:

- The first dinar (subject of this research) resembles the Abbasid dinar struck during the reign of Caliph Abu al-'Abbas 'Abd Allah al-Saffāh (132–136 AH / 749–754 AD), the first Abbasid caliph<sup>48</sup>. This dinar is distinguished from the other two by having its reverse central field limited to only three horizontal parallel lines.
- The second dinar resembles the Abbasid dinars struck in the years 171–172 AH, reflecting the continuity of certain inscriptional and symbolic formulas during that period<sup>49</sup>.
- The third dinar resembles the dinars issued in the following years<sup>50</sup> (189, 190, 191, and 193 AH), a period that witnessed the joint rule of Caliph Harun al-Rashid and his son Muhammad al-Amin<sup>51</sup>, which explains the unique character of some of its inscriptions.

It should be noted that these comparisons do not necessarily imply a single fixed type for each year, as Abbasid dinars were known for their multiple types within the same year, depending on the mint and various political and economic considerations. This makes the study of these coins particularly important for understanding the dynamics of governance and authority in the Abbasid era.

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<sup>47</sup> 'Allam, 'A. S. (1999). *Dānānīr 'Abbāsiyya*, p. 445.

<sup>48</sup> 'Allam, 'A. S. (1999), p. 445.

<sup>49</sup> Al-Qaysī, N. 'A. al-R. (2004). *Al-Dinar al-'Arabī al-Islāmī*, pp. 78, 80.

<sup>50</sup> Dr. 'Āṭif Maṣṣūr noted that the earliest known example is dated to 187 AH.

- Ramadan, A. M. M. (2004). *Mawsū'at al-nuqūd fī al-'ālam al-islāmī*, p. 192.

<sup>51</sup> Al-Qaysī, N. 'A. al-R. (2004). *Al-Dinar al-'Arabī al-Islāmī*. p. 110.

## Research Findings

- Historical Significance: Newly discovered unpublished dinars enrich the study of Abbasid coinage during the reign of Harun al-Rashid.
- Use of Religious Texts: The dinars incorporated the two testimonies (*shahadatan*) and modified formulations of Qur'anic verses, such as the phrase “*Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh arsalahu bil-hudā wa dīn al-ḥaqq li-yuḏhirahu ‘alā ad-dīn kullihī*”, which was employed for political and propagandistic purposes. Although several scholars and references have mistakenly regarded this phrase as an authentic Qur'anic quotation, it is in fact a non-Qur'anic text deliberately phrased in a Qur'anic style - a practice that became common in many Abbasid and Tulunid coins - to evoke the authority and sanctity of the sacred text.
- Calligraphic Features: Simple Kufic script combining angular and soft strokes, retaining some characteristics inherited from the 1st Islamic century AH / 7th century AD
- Absence of Mint Names: Indicates that the coins were struck in the Abbasid capital under the direct supervision of the caliph.
- Incomplete Basmala: Continuation of an old tradition from the Sasanian-Arabic dirhams.
- Artistic Character and Abbasid Identity: Inscriptions serve as a religious and political proclamation, asserting legitimacy and affiliation to the Prophet's family (*Āl al-Bayt*).
- Variety of Styles: Multiple styles within the same year reflect differences in minting offices and political circumstances.

Scholarly and Artistic Value: These coins constitute material documents revealing the political, religious, and artistic dimensions of the early Abbasid era.

## Conclusion

The archaeological and artistic-analytical study of the three Abbasid dinars attributed to the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid and preserved at the Mallawi Museum demonstrates that these numismatic specimens constitute material documents of significant historical, religious, and artistic value. The inscriptions on the coins reflect the symbolic use of religious texts to support political legitimacy, highlight the characteristics of Kufic script in the 2nd Islamic century / 8th century AD, and reveal the continuation of certain earlier traditions in inscriptional design. As these dinars are being published for the first time, they contribute to enriching the field of numismatic and archaeological studies and open new avenues for understanding the development of Islamic coinage during the early Abbasid period, as well as its role in expressing the political and religious identity of the state.

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