

## **The Copper Coins of the first to centuries Hijra minted in Damascus** **Ghazawan Mustafa Yaghi**

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Fulus is the plural of Fils, a Greek Latin name and maybe an indirect derivation from Aramaean or Hebrew. However, it reached the Arabs from Byzantine and derived the Aramaic spelling word *follis* which means coins made of copper or bronze.

After the Islamic conquest the Arabs used Fulus in their commerce and kept the original foreign coin. The weight of the fils was 30 grams during Emperor Constans I in 491-581 CE and it was inscribed with the letter M on the reverse of the coin, the weight of this coin decreased gradually until it reached 6 grams during the Islamic conquest.

When the Arab Muslims conquered Bilad al-Sham they noticed the importance of these coins, so they minted it similar to the Byzantine coins in Tabariya, Qinnisrin, Aleppo, Homs, Damascus, Palestine.

By its inscriptions and graphics the copper coins mirror the political, economic and administrative changes that Damascus specifically and the Islamic State in general underwent.

We can divide the copper fils into three main types, each one representing a historical period and different types with similar general shape and graphics.

The first part includes the Byzantine Arabic fils during the conquest of Damascus in 14 AH/636 CE that means during the reign of Caliph 'Omar bin al-Khattab until the beginning of the monetary reform

Arabization by the Umayyad Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwan in 73 AH/692 CE.

This type consists of two kinds, each divided into several subtypes: the first kind shows a picture of the Emperor sitting on his chair. The second kind shows the Emperor standing in 20 different variations. Each variation depends on the language of the inscription, either Greek Latin, Greek Latin Arabic or Greek Arabic.

The second part holds the inscription of ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwan and that began during the beginning of the Arabization phase 73-77 AH/692-696 CE, in this year the Arabization was completed during the reign of ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwan.

The third part consists of the Islamic/Arabic coins that were minted during the Arabization phase 77 AH until the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AH. After that copper coins still exist until modern times.

In this research we study the copper coins attempting to clear all its types or kinds by describing and analyzing its contents and differences.

