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**NEW LIGHTS ON A RARE ABBASID DIRHAM
IN THE NAME OF THE CALIPH HĀRŪN AL-RAŠĪD
MINTED IN AL-MUḤAMMADIYA, 173 AH**

BY

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ABSTRACT

[AR] أضواء جديدة على درهم عباسي نادر باسم الخليفة هارون الرشيد ضرب المحمدية سنة 173 هـ. تُلقى هذه الدراسة الضوء على درهم عباسي نادر، ضرب المحمدية، مؤرخ بسنة 173 هـ، يحمل اسم الخليفة العباسي هارون الرشيد ويحيى وبهلول. وفي الحقيقة، أن هذا الدرهم سبق وأن تم نشره من قبل، إلا أن المؤلفات والدراسات السابقة التي تناولت هذا الدرهم اكتفت بنشر نصوص كتاباته فحسب، دون الغوص في تحليل الكتابات المسجلة عليه وذلك من أجل التعرف والوقوف على ماهية وحقيقة أسماء تلك الشخصيتين الواردين ضمن نصوص كتاباته، وهما يحيى وبهلول، وما الوظيفة التي خولت لهم تسجيل أسمائهم بجانب اسم الخليفة هارون الرشيد على هذا الدرهم موضوع الدراسة، لا سيما أن الباحثين في مجال علم النُميات قد اختلفوا في تحديد هويتهم، وهذا ما سنوضحه بالشرح والدراسة والتحليل، وذلك من خلال عرض ما ذكرته المصادر التاريخية عنهم، ومحاولة الوصول لما أغفلت المصادر والمراجع الحديثة ذكره عمداً أو عن غير قصد، ولدراسة هذا الدرهم أهمية كبيرة إذ سمحت لنا بإعادة النظر في ترتيب ولاية الري الذي وضعه زامبور في معجمه، فمن خلال النقود يمكن كشف النقاب عن حقائق تاريخية لم يكن من اليسير التوصل إليها. وقد اتبعت في دراسة هذا الدرهم المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وذلك من خلال وصفه وصفاً علمياً دقيقاً للكتابات المسجلة عليه وشكله العام وزخارفه، ثم القيام بدراسة تحليلية لكتاباته؛ وذلك من أجل الوقوف على الجوانب التاريخية التي صاحبت درهما موضوع الدراسة، ليكون بذلك إضافة لرؤية جديدة للنقود الإسلامية عامة، والنقود العباسية في عهد الخليفة هارون الرشيد خاصة.

[EN] This paper sheds light on a rare Abbasid dirham minted in al-Muḥammadiya, dated 173 AH, with the name of the Abbasid Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd, Yaḥyā, and Bahlūl. This dirham was published, but previous studies addressed its inscriptions only without analysis to identify the nature and the truth of the names of the two personalities «Yaḥyā and Bahlūl», whose names were inscribed on this dirham. This paper also identifies the function that empowered them to inscribe their names next to the name of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd on that dirham. Researchers in the field of numismatics have differed in determining their identity, which will be illustrated through this paper based on discussion, study, and analysis. The paper discusses what historical sources mentioned about these persons to identify what the sources neglected to mention intentionally or unintentionally. Studying this dirham is highly important, as it makes it possible to reconsider the sequence of the governors of al-Rayy prepared by Zambaur in his lexicon. Coins help reveal historical facts that were not easy to obtain. This paper adopted the descriptive analytical approach for this dirham in terms of the general form and inscriptions to identify the accompanying historical aspects to be an addition to a new vision for Islamic coins, especially the Abbasid coins in the era of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd.

KEYWORDS: Islamic coins, Abbasid dirham, Hārūn al-Rašīd, Yaḥyā, Bahlūl, al-Muḥammadiya, 173 AH.

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic coins are one of the main sources concerned with studying history, archaeology, and Islamic civilization. They help reveal historical facts neglected by ancient historical sources and modern scientific studies can be reached, as they are a type of official document. They are also an important statement of actual power, which every ruler was keen to take right after assuming power¹.

Islamic coins play a prominent historical role in political life, as they provided the names of caliphs, kings, sultans, princes, ministers, governors of regions, and others. By classifying coins, researchers can obtain lists of countries, families, and ruling dynasties in the Islamic world to adjust the history of their rule with precision and perfection².

This paper presents a study of a rare Abbasid dirham, minted in al-Muḥammadiya, dating back to 173 AH, with the name of the Abbasid Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd, Yaḥyā, and Bahlūl. This dirham was published by some researchers in the field of numismatics. For example, Stanley Lane Poole published it in his catalogue of coins of the Eastern Caliphate under N^o.193³, George C. Miles published it in his book on the numismatic history of Rayy under N^o.37A⁴, and Wadād al-Qazzāz published it in her study of the Abbasid dirham in the time of Hārūn al-Rašīd under N^o.6/7945⁵. It was also discussed by Abū al-Faraġ al-^cuš in his book on the Arabic and Islamic coins preserved in the National Museum of Qatar under N^o.1643⁶. Nicholas Lowick and Elizabeth Savage referenced it in their book on early Abbasid coins under N^o.1683⁷, and Ahmad Tony Rostom published it in his dissertation on Iranian silver coins in the first and the second Abbasid periods⁸. The dirham was published by Hassan Abed Al-Zayoud in his dissertation on the coins of Hārūn al-Rašīd⁹. Rowaida Raaft Al-Nabarāwī published two models for this dirham in her dissertation on the coins of al-Muḥammadiya under N^{os}.31 & 32¹⁰. In addition, other studies published this dirham.

However, the aforementioned studies discussed the identity of these two personalities, «Yaḥyā and Bahlūl», whose names were mentioned in the inscriptions of this dirham but did not find a clue. This study aims to identify these persons to discover the role they played in the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd, a point that previous studies did not specify in detail.

¹ AL-NABARĀWĪ 2000: 5; MANSOUR 2008:19.

² AL-^cUŠ 1984: 10; MANSOUR 2008 :118.

³ LANE POOLE 1875: vol.1, 76 [193]

⁴ MILES 1938: 55[73A].

⁵ AL-QAZZĀZ 1965: 195 [6/7945].

⁶ AL-^cUŠ 1984: 388 [1643]

⁷ LOWICK 1996: 198 [1683].

⁸ ROSTOM 2002: 127.

⁹ AL-ZAYŪD 2010: 446 [466].

¹⁰ RAAFAT 2015: 55, 56 [31-32].

II. HĀRŪN AL-RAŠĪD (170-193 AH / 786-808 A.D)

Abū Ja‘far Hārūn b. Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh b.al-‘Abbās al-Hāshimī, the fifth Abbasid caliph¹¹. Hārūn al-Rašīd was born in al-Rayy in 148 AH/665 AD¹². He assumed the caliphate in 170 AH /786 AD¹³.

His age when he was in charge of the caliphate was twenty-one or twenty-two, according to some researchers¹⁴ He stayed in power until he died at the age of forty-five¹⁵ in 193 AH/808 AD¹⁶. Thus, the period of his caliphate was twenty-three years¹⁷.

III. DESCRIPTIVE STUDY «GENERAL SHAPE»

The type of this dirham is characterized by double concentric linear circles surrounding the inscriptions on the obverse. The outer circle is touched by three circular rings. Between each of these rings are two small circles, while the inscriptions of the reverse field came within two concentric linear circles. The legends of the reverse margin are surrounded by a linear circle, and all the reverse inscriptions are surrounded by a linear circle. The legends of the field of the obverse come in three parallel lines, while the legend of the field of the reverse appears in six parallel lines. Both obverse and reverse legends are inscribed in simple Kufic epigraphy, as follows [FIGURE 1]:

Obverse		Reverse
Field, within a double circle	لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له	يحيى محمد رسول الله صلي الله عليه وسلم الخليفة الرشيد بهلول
Obv. margin within a double circle	بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بالمحمدية سنة ثلث وسبعين ومئة	Rev. margin within a circle محمد رسول الله ارسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره علي الدين كله ولو كره المشركون

¹¹ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 230; AL-ḌAHABĪ 1982: vol.9, 286; ĪBN AL-ḤAYĀT 1995: 447; ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1558.

¹² ĪBN AL-‘AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 277; ABŪ ḤALĪL 1999:15.

¹³ The night al-Rashid assumed the caliphate's throne was described as a miraculous night. It was a witness to the death of a caliph, the pledge of allegiance to a caliph, and the birth of a caliph. In it, al-Hadi died, al-Rashid became caliph, and al-Ma‘mun was born. There was no night in history in which a caliph was born, a caliph died, and a caliph pledged allegiance. That's why some called it the night of the caliphs. See: ĪBN AL-ĠWZĪ 1992: vol.8, 320; ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1538; AL-ZAYŪD 2010:18; RAAFAT 2015: 217.

¹⁴ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 345; ĪBN AL-‘AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 277; ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1562.

¹⁵ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 345; ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1565.

¹⁶ ĪBN AL-ĠWZĪ 1992: vol.9, 231-232; ĪBN AL-‘AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 352; ĪBN AL-ḤAYĀT 1995: 460.

¹⁷ ĪBN AL-‘AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 354; ĪBN AL-ĠWZĪ 1992: vol.9, 232.

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[FIGURE 1]: Abbasid dirham of Hārūn al-Rašīd, minted in al-MuḤammadiya in 173 AH, W. (2, 82G), D. (24 mm)¹⁸

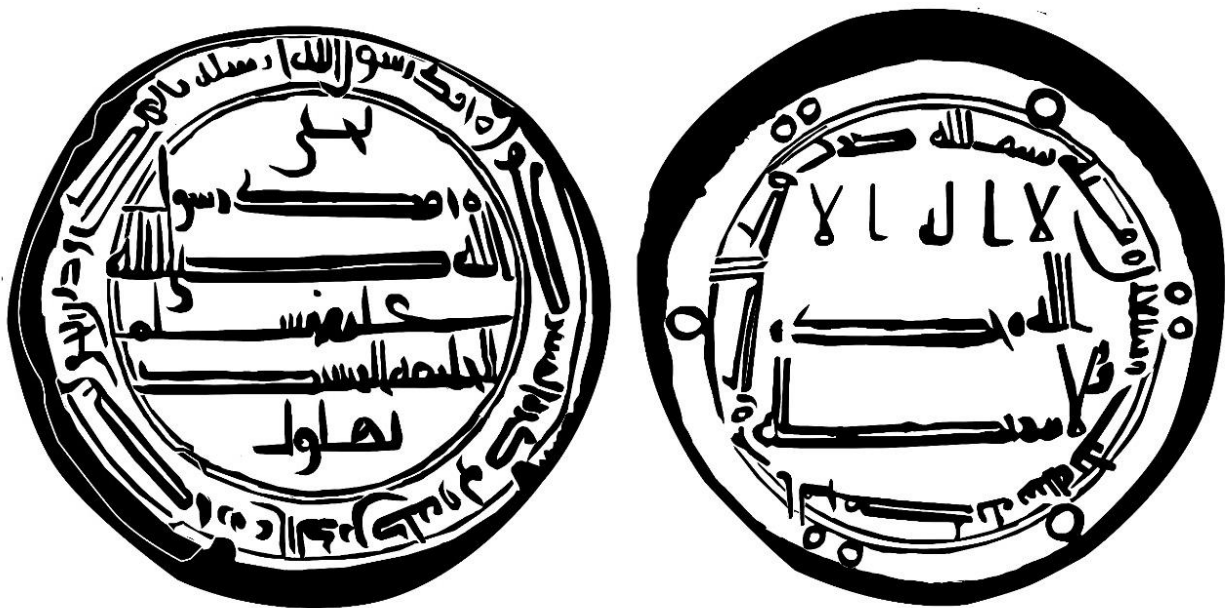


ILLUSTRATION OF THE ABOVE DIRHAM ©done by the researcher

¹⁸ A rare Abbasid dirham in the name of Hārūn al-Rašīd, minted in al-MuḤammadiya in 173 AH, W. (2,83 G), D.(24 mm). LANE POOLE 1875: vol.1, 76 [193], MILES 1938: 55[73A]; AL-QAZZĀZ 1965: 195[6/7945]; AL-^cUŠ 1984: 388 [1643], LOWICK 1996:198[1683]; AL-ZAYŪD 2010: 446[466]; ZENO: Nr^o. 83932.

IV. ANALYTICAL STUDY

Obverse Inscriptions

Field: It is clear from the inscriptions of this dirham that šahāda was inscribed in the obverse field: « لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له » « There is no god has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no partner ». Šahāda represents the first pillar of the Islamic faith, without which one's Islam is not correct and upright. It is inscribed in the field of the obverse due to its importance, for it is the basis of the belief of Muslims, in general.

The first one inscribed Šahāda as above is the Caliph Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, on a pure Islamic style coinage in 77 AH/ 696 AD. It was inscribed in three consecutive and parallel lines in the inscriptions of the field of the obverse of dinars and dirhams¹⁹.

Margin: The inscriptions of the obverse margin begin with a part of the basmalla as follows « بسم الله » «In the name of Allah». The basmalla is followed by « ضرب هذا الدرهم » «this dirham was minted». Then, the name of the mint was inscribed as follows: « بالمحمدية » «in al-Muḥammadiya» followed by the date of minting « سنة ثلث وسبعين ومئة » «173».

The City of al-Muḥammadiya «The Mint»:

It was known in the past as the city of al-Rayy. It was known in ancient Greece as 'Rhages'²⁰. It was located at the northeastern tip of Jibal province²¹, now found south of Tehran²². The Abbasid Caliph Muḥammad al-Mahdī b. al-Mansur 158-169AH/775-785 AD built the city of al-Rayy during his father's caliphate, surrounded it with a trench, and built a mosque. He completed its landmarks in 158 AH/774AD and named it al-Muḥammadiya after him²³. The city of al-Rayy was renamed the city of al-Muḥammadiya during the era of the Abbasid Caliphate²⁴. It became the largest mint in Jibal region of Iran. Al-Rayy appeared on the coins from 21 AH to 148 AH. Then, its name was changed to al-Muḥammadiya. Al-Muḥammadiya mint was engraved on the coinage from 148 AH to 407 AH, except for some coins that were minted in 148 AH, 168 AH, and 179 AH and appeared with the name al-Rayy. Then, the name of al-Rayy was rewritten on the coins from 407 AH to 733 AH, except for 429 AH, when the name of al-

¹⁹ MANSOUR 2008: 473-474; ABŪ ZAID 2008: vol.18, 109.

²⁰ LESTRING 1954: 249.

²¹ Jibal region: It was a vast region in the northeast of Iraq. It included the region northwest of Iran. It was known as Kurdistan for the first time in the 6th H./ 12th G. century. This region includes Hamadan, Isfahan, Dinour, Qom, and al-Rayy. The name of Jibal was changed after the middle of the 5th H./11 G. century and became known as Iraq Al-Ajam to distinguish it from Iraq or Iraq al-Arab. Al-Maqdisī said about it: « به الري الجلييلة وهمذان، والكورة النفيسة إصهان » Jibal was divided between Arabs and Persians before Islam. For more information, see: AL- MAQDISI 1991: vol.2, 384; OTHMAN 2010: 27-28; AL-HĀDRIBIK N.D: 36, LESTRING 1954: 249.

²² SHAMMA 1995: 293.

²³ AL-QAZZĀZ 1965:169; SHAMMA 1995: 293; RAAFAT 2015: 23.

²⁴ BAQIR 1976: vol.7, 169; ALBUM 2011: 63.

Muḥammadiya was inscribed on the coins minted in 429 AH²⁵. Coins of all types were minted in it, including the dirham under study, as there is a type of dinar known as al-Muḥammadiya's dinars. Those dinars were minted by Ja'far b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd and named al-Muḥammadiya's dinars attributed to this city²⁶. The city of al-Rayy « al-Muḥammadiya » was the first Islamic mint for which a detailed study was prepared under the title «The Numismatic History of Rayy » by George C. Miles in 1938²⁷.

Reverse Inscriptions:

Field: In the field of the reverse of that dirham risāla «محمد رسول الله» «Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah» was inscribed. This phrase refers to the acknowledgment of the message of Prophet Muḥammad. The Abbasids inscribed risāla to remind people of their kinship with the Messenger of Allah. Also, the inscription of risāla represents a message to the *al-ʿIwāyn al-šyʿah* (Alawites) who involved Abbasids in their struggle against the Umayyads that the caliphate passed to their cousins, the family of the Messenger of Allah, so they should accept and acknowledge the rule of the Abbasids²⁸. Then, this was followed by the phrase «صلى الله عليه وسلم» «Prayers and Blessings of Allah be upon him».

This phrase appeared for the first time on Islamic coins during the era of the Abbasid Caliph Muḥammad al-Mahdī in 159 AH/775 AD²⁹. On the fifth line of the reverse field, the name of Hārūn al-Rašīd was inscribed as follows: «الخليفة الرشيد» «Caliph al-Rashīd ».

Yaḥyā's name was inscribed at the top of the reverse field «يحيى» «Yaḥyā», and at the bottom of the field of the reverse was the name «بهلول» «Bahlūl», which is the focus of discussion in the following parts of this study.

Margin: In the margin of the reverse, the Qur'anic quote from Surat al-Tawbah «v. 33» or Surat al-Šaff «v. 9» was inscribed:

«محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله ولو كره المشركون»

«Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah. He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion, although those who associate others with Allah dislike it. ».

This quotation represents the second pillar of the Islamic faith, indicating that Prophet Muḥammad, «Prayers and Blessings of Allah be upon him», is the last of the prophets and messengers and the beholder of the true religion that Allah manifests over all other religions and beliefs, even if the unbelievers and haters dislike his message³⁰.

²⁵ BAQIR 1976: vol.7, 169.

²⁶ ZWAIN 2016: vol.3, 158.

²⁷ ZAMBAUR 1968: 129.

²⁸ MANSOUR 2008: 68.

²⁹ SHAMMA 1995: 293; MANSOUR 2008: 68.

³⁰ MANSOUR 2008: 62-63.

V. IDENTIFICATION OF «يحيى» «YAḤYĀ» AND «بهلول» (BAHLŪL), WHOSE NAMES WERE REGISTERED ON THE REVERSE FIELD INSCRIPTIONS

Firstly: Identification of the Name «يحيى» «Yaḥyā» Registered Above the Reverse Field Inscriptions:

The name Yaḥyā was registered above the reverse field inscriptions, as previously mentioned. So, who is Yaḥyā, who was mentioned here? Before we start identifying the personality of Yaḥyā, whose name is inscribed on the dirham... understudy, we must first point out that all types of coinage witnessed an important development under Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd, where rulers of provinces and states also registered their names on the coins³¹. Accordingly, the names of governors appeared on gold, silver, and copper coins³². al-Maqrizī mentioned that Caliph al-Rašīd was the first to stop personally supervising the minting of coins, entitling the governors of the provinces and the rulers to undertake this task³³, contrary to what was prevalent, as the caliphs themselves checked the minting process before Caliph al-Rašīd³⁴. In this regard, al-Maqrizī says:

« وهارون الرشيد أول خليفة ترفع عن مباشرة العيار بنفسه، وكان الخلفاء من قبله يتولون النظر في عيار الدراهم والدنانير بأنفسهم...»³⁵.

It is worth noting that there were many important personalities known by the name «Yaḥyā» during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd. Abū al-Faraḡ al-^ʿuṣ mentioned three of them, but there was a mistake by Abū al-Faraḡ al-^ʿuṣ, when he mentioned Yahyā b. Ḥalīd al-Barmakī, Yahyā b. Dāwūd b. Mamdūd and Yahyā b. Sa'īd al-Harashī. It was found that Yaḥyā b. Dāwūd b. Mamdūd and Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Ḥrṣy is the same person, while Abū al-Faraḡ al-^ʿuṣ referred to them as two different persons, so two of them will be mentioned, not three, as Abū al-Faraḡ al-^ʿuṣ said, namely:

³¹ MANSOUR 2004:192.

³² For example, Ali's name was inscribed on dinars in 170 AH and 171 AH. He was Ali b. Suleiman, the governor of Egypt in 169-171 AH. Musa's name appeared on dinars in 171 and 172 AH. He was Musa b. Issa b. Muhammad, the governor of Egypt in 171-172 AH/ 787-788 AD. Dāwūd's name on dinars in 174 AH, 175 AH. He was Dāwūd b. Yazyd bin Ḥātim al-Mahlby 174-175 AH/790-791 A.D. The same applies to the dirhams, where the rulers of the provinces inscribed their names on the dirhams multiplied in their states, such as Asad b. Yazid b. Mazyad, the governor of Armenia and Mosul, whose name appeared on the dirhams in 185 AH and 186 AH and on the Aran dirhams from 183 A.H to 186 AH. Dāwūd's name appeared on the dirhams. He was Dāwūd bin Ḥātim al-Mahlby, the governor of Ifriqiya and Sindh and other rulers who registered their names on coinage during the reign of al-Rašīd. See MANSOUR 2004: vol.1, 192, 203; AL-ZAYŪD 2010:163, 164,170,185,192,202.

³³ MANSOUR 2004: vol.1, 192.

³⁴ AL-QAZZĀZ 1965:167; AL-MAQRIZĪ 1998 :165.

³⁵ AL-MAQRIZĪ 1998:165.

- **Yaḥyā b. Ḥalīd al-Barmakī:** He was the governor of Azerbaijan 158-161 AH/ 774-777 AD. Then, he became the tutor of Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd in 161AH/777A.D. After that, he became in charge of the Correspondence Office «Diwan al-Rasael» in 163AH/ 779AD, then assumed the position of Al-Rašīd's vizier³⁶.
- **Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Ḥr̥šy:** He was the governor of Tabaristan, Royan, and Gorgan in 166AH/782AD³⁷, then Armenia in 179AH/795 AD³⁸. After that, he ruled Mosul in 180-182AH/ 796-798 AD³⁹, then Jībal in 184-189AH/800-804 AD⁴⁰.

Although many persons were called Yaḥyā during Hārūn al-Rašīd's rule who assumed important positions, Abū al-Faraḡ al-^cuš did not mention. For example, Yaḥyā b. Sulaym was a scribe during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd ⁴¹. Yaḥyā b. Aban's name appeared on fils dated 181 AH, but the history books did not refer to his job, and we did not find a governor in the name of Yaḥyā b. Aban, so it is most likely that he was the mint supervisor. The same is true for Yaḥyā b. Qumous, whose name appeared on fils minted in Ramla in 190 AH⁴². However, the history books did not refer to his job, and we did not find a governor in this name during Hārūn al-Rašīd's rule, so most likely, he was in charge of the mint at that time, along with other people named Yaḥyā during Hārūn al-Rašīd's reign⁴³.

When George C. Miles and Abū al-Faraḡ al-^cuš published this dirham, they said that « Yaḥyā » referred to Yaḥyā b. Ḥalīd al-Barmakī, the vizier of Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd ⁴⁴. Abū al-Faraḡ al-^cuš mentioned that he was in favor of considering Yaḥyā to be Yaḥyā al-Barmakī, as the honorary governor, besides being the vizier of Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd ⁴⁵. Still, Abū al-Faraḡ al-^cuš didn't present any scientific justifications confirming his conclusion. He only mentioned that Yaḥyā here was Yaḥyā al-Barmakī because of the powers granted to him by Hārūn al-Rašīd that allowed him to inscribe his name on the coins⁴⁶. According to another researcher, Yaḥyā here referred to Abu Salih Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Ḥr̥šy ⁴⁷, but the researcher did not also provide any evidence or any reasons to support his statement. In the following parts of this study, we try to add a new vision by presenting historical sources and recent studies to verify Yaḥyā's name.

³⁶ ZAMBAUR 1980: 13; AL-^cUŠ 1984: vol.1, 347, 388.

³⁷ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 163; AL- 'AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 254.

³⁸ ZAMBAUR 1980: 273; AL-^cUŠ 1984: vol.1, 347.

³⁹ ĪBN AL- 'AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 311; AL'AZDY 2007: vol.1, 517; MISKAWEYA D.T: vol.3, 222.

⁴⁰ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 272; ĪBN AL- 'AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 321; ĪBN ḤĀLDUN 2000: vol.3, 286.

⁴¹ ĪBN AL-ḤĀYĀT 1995: 456; AL-ZAYOUD 2010: 41-42.

⁴² AL-ZAYOUD 2010 :199.

⁴³ Among the personalities with the name Yaḥyā during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd, we do not have enough space to mention them, e.g., Yaḥyā b. Sāad al-Saadī, Yaḥyā b. Zākaria b. Abi Zāida, Yaḥyā b. Al-Yāman, and Yaḥyā b. Bishr b. Hājwan Al-Hārithi, Yaḥyā Al-Hārithi was one of the governors of Kūfa in the era of Al-Rašīd. See: ĪBN AL-ḤĀYĀT 1995: 295, 302, 304,306.

⁴⁴ MILES 1938: 55; AL-^cUŠ 1984: vol.1, 388.

⁴⁵ It was customary in the Abbasid era for the governor to stay in Baghdad and send another person to act on his behalf. Most of these governors were from the Abbasid dynasty. See: AL-^cUŠ 1984: vol.1, 388.

⁴⁶ AL-^cUŠ 1972: 97.

⁴⁷ AL-ZAYOUD 2010: 182.

It is most likely that Yaḥyā, whose name is inscribed on the dirham understudy, is not Yaḥyā al-Barmakī, as Abū al-Faraġ al-^ċuš and others said, for several reasons mentioned below:

The First Reason: We did not find any explicit or general indication in historical sources or modern references confirming that Yaḥyā al-Barmakī inscribed his name on coins. In contrast, historical sources mentioned that Ğaʿfar and al-Faḍl, the sons of Yaḥyā al-Barmakī minted coins with their names⁴⁸. al-Maqrizī mentioned that when Hārūn al-Rašīd granted Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā the right to mint coins and supervise the minting process, Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā inscribed his name on dinars and dirhams in madīnat al-salām and al-Muḥammadiya. Al-Maqrizī said:

« فلما صير هارون الرشيد السكك إلي جعفر بن يحيى البرمكي
كتب اسمه بمدينة السلام وبالمحمدية من الري على الدنانير والدرهم... »⁴⁹.

It is well known that the direct supervision of coinage, especially dinars, was for the caliph alone⁵⁰. The Caliph al-Rašīd was the first to stop personally supervising the coinage. Therefore, Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī was the first to have the honor of supervising the minting of coins on behalf of the caliph, according to al-Maqrizī:

« وهارون الرشيد أول خليفة ترفع عن مباشرة العيار بنفسه، وكان الخلفاء من قبله يتولون النظر في عيار الدرهم والدنانير بأنفسهم، وكان هذا
مما نوه باسم جعفر بن يحيى البرمكي إذ هو شئ لم يتشرف به أحد قبله.»

So, al-Rašīd ordered that the name of Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī be written on dinars and dirhams in madīnat al-salām and in al-Muḥammadiya, as Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī was a close friend of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd more than anyone else⁵¹, which enabled him to obtain all these privileges, including minting the coins in his name and supervising the minting process, which was one of the most important tasks of the Caliph. al-Ġihšyārī spoke about the friendship of al-Rašīd and Ğaʿfar, as follows:

«وغلّب جعفر على الرشيد غلبة شديدة حتى صار لا يُقدم عليه أحداً، وأنس به كل الأنس، وأنزله بالخلد، بالقرب من قصره»⁵².

Thus, it is clear that Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī was the first to have the honor of supervising the minting of coins on behalf of the caliph, according to al-Maqrizī.

Based on the aforementioned, it is more likely that Ğaʿfar was the first Barmakid vizier who registered his name on the coins during the reign of Harun al-Rashid and not his father, Yaḥyā al-Barmakī.

The same is true for al-Faḍl b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī, who inscribed his name on coins. al-Maqrizī also mentioned that when the Caliph al-Amin b. Hārūn al-Rašīd, charged al-Abbās b.

⁴⁸ For examples of coins with the name of Ğaʿfar and al-Faḍl, sons of Yaḥyā al-Barmakī, see: MILES 1938: 67-81[80E, 81C, 82A, 83A, 83D, 83C, 83B, 84, 84c]; LOWICK 1996:174-192 [1292, 1294,1302,1308]; AL-^ċUŠ 1984: vol.1, 378 & beyond[1614, 1632, 1663,1673, 1705, 1710, 1736, 1738]; KAZAN 1983: 221-227 [88, 90, 92, 93, 94, 98, 100, 115, 120]; AL-ZAYOUD 2010: 295 & beyond [24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 46, 48].

⁴⁹ AL-MAQRIZĪ 1998:165.

⁵⁰ MANSOUR 2004:193

⁵¹ AL-MAQRIZĪ 1998:165; AL-DOURY1997: 126.

⁵² AL-ĠIHŠYĀRĪ 1938 :189.

al-Faḍl b. al-Rabīe with the minting process, he inscribed at the top of dinars and dirhams the phrase «ربي الله» «My Lord is Allah» and at the bottom «العباس بن الفضل» «Al-Abbās b. al-Faḍl»:

« حتى كان أيام الأمين محمد بن هارون الرشيد، فصير دور الضرب إلي العباس بن الفضل بن الربيع، فنقش في السكة بأعلي السطر (ربي الله) ومن أسفلها (العباس بن الفضل)»⁵³

We did not find any reference by al-Maqrizī or other historians that Yahyā al-Barmakī minted coins and registered his name on them. If he exercised this right and registered his name on the coins, historical sources and modern references would mention, as they did with his two sons Ġaʿfar and Al-Abbās b. al-Faḍl.

The Second Reason: al-Ṭabarī and al-Ġihšyārī mentioned in the events of 170 AH /786 AD that al-Rašīd appointed Yaḥyā b. Ḥalīd as vizier and told him:

« قد قلدتك أمر الرعية وأخرجته من عنقي إليك، فاحكم في ذلك بما ترى من الصواب، واستعمل من رأيت، وامض الأمور على ما ترى»⁵⁴.

ībn Ḥaldun mentioned in this regard:

« فلما ولي الرشيد إستوزريحي وفوض إليه أمور ملكه...»⁵⁵.

According to al-Ṭabarī, al-Ġihšyārī, and ībn Ḥaldun's words, the Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd delegated Yahyā al-Barmakī in all matters related to his affairs. The Caliph also delegated him to appoint whoever he deemed appropriate from the judges and governors of the provinces and states, as well as the mint supervisors, their assistants, and others. Yahyā al-Barmakī was in charge of all the matters to the extent that Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd gave him his own seal and then the seal of the Caliphate that Yahyā al-Barmakī became the most influential person in the state affairs⁵⁶. al-Rašīd assigned Yaḥyā b. Ḥalīd with the subject's affairs to rule fairly and to eliminate injustice and oppression. Al Rashīd was aware of the magnitude of the responsibility and believed that he might deviate from the right path if he undertook it alone. He, therefore, engaged Yaḥyā with this responsibility to govern with justice and equity, sharing this responsibility with him, as he feared that he might become confused and forget the affairs of his subjects, causing the wrath of God. Hārūn al-Rašīd's action is considered the first step towards task delegation so that the Caliph would not be unilaterally in charge of all matters of the state⁵⁷.

Thus, and in view of his preoccupation with the affairs of the state, Yahyā al-Barmakī might not be interested in registering his name on the coins. Possibly, he gave up this right and assigned it to the governors of the provinces, their assistants, and the mint supervisors, that right which, if he had wished to have, the governors of the provinces would do it at once, given his high position in the state at that time, but he might refuse to exercise the right of minting coins in his name.

⁵³ AL-MAQRIZĪ 1998:166.

⁵⁴ AL-ĠIHŠYĀRĪ 1938: 177; AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 233; AL-DOURY 1997:106; AL-WAKEEL 1998:194.

⁵⁵ ĪBN ḤALDUN 2000: vol.3, 280; ĪBN AL OMRANI 1999: 75.

⁵⁶ HASSAN 1996: vol. 2, 212.

⁵⁷ AL-WAKEEL 1998: 195.

Moreover, Yahyā al-Barmakī was an ascetic vizier in worldly matters and might not be interested in registering his name on dinars and dirhams, confirming his asceticism, as reported by al-ʿAsmaʿī when he said:

« سمعت يحيى يقول: الدنيا دول، والمال عارية، ولنا بمن قبلنا أسوة، وفينا لمن بعدنا عبرة»⁵⁸.

Also, according to Ibn Kaṭīr, Yahyā al-Barmakī used to tell his sons:

« إذا أقيمت الدنيا فأنفقوا منها فإنها لا تفي، وإذا أدبرت فأنفقوا منها فإنها لا تبقى»⁵⁹.

As Ibn Kaṭīr said about Yahyā al-Barmakī:

« كان إذا سأله سائل في الطريق وهو راكب أقل ما يأمرله بمائتي درهم»⁶⁰.

The Third Reason: If we presume that according to Abū al-Faraġ al-^cuṣ and others, that Yahyā whose name was inscribed on the dirham understudy, is Yahyā al-Barmakī, even if he is an honorary governor besides being a vizier as mentioned by Abū al-Faraġ al-^cuṣ⁶¹, then why did his name appeared on this dirham minted in 173 AH and did not appear after that on the coins minted during al-Rashid's rule? Yahyā al-Barmakī assumed the vizier's position in the first year of Al-Rashid's rule and for seventeen years. Inscribing his name on this dirham then stopped to inscribe his name on the coins after 173 AH, which was uncommon for viziers but more so for governors and their subordinates. The mint of this dirham was al-Muḥammadiya. So, why the name of Yahyā al-Barmakī appeared only on al-Muḥammadiya dirham? This is a matter uncommon for viziers as well. If the intended person is Yahyā al-Barmakī, as some believed, his name would appear on all or most coins minted during his vizierial tenure. Also, it would have been better for his name to appear on the coins minted in the metropolis, the center of government and the caliphate, Baghdad, and not on the coins of only a city or a state affiliated to the Abbasid Caliphate.

The Fourth Reason: If we presume that Yahyā al-Barmakī registered his name on the coins and given his high position in the Abbasid Caliphate, would it not be better for him to register his name on the gold coins «dinars», the most widespread and the highest in value, and not on silver coins «dirhams» only? However, as far as I know, no gold coins with the name of Yahyā al-Barmakī have been revealed yet

On the other hand, it is more likely that Yahyā, whose name was inscribed on this dirham, refers to Yahyā b. Saʿīd al-Ḥrṣy, who was the governor of Armenia in 179 AH/795 AD⁶², then the governor of Mosul in 180AH/796AD⁶³, and after that, the governor of Jībal in 184-189 AH/800-804 AD⁶⁴. Many reasons made us suggest that Yahyā, whose name is inscribed on the dirham understudy, is Yahyā b. Saʿīd al-Ḥrṣy as follows:

⁵⁸ AL-ĠIḤŠYĀRĪ 1938 :203; AL-ZAHABĪ 1982: vol.9, 88; ĪBN ḤALLĪKĀN 1977: vol.6, 221.

⁵⁹ ĪBN ḤALLĪKĀN 1977: vol.6, 226; AL-WAKEEL 1998: 231; ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1558.

⁶⁰ ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1558.

⁶¹ AL-^cUṢ 1984: vol.1, 388.

⁶² ZAMBAUR 1980: 273, AL-^cUṢ 1984: vol.1, 347.

⁶³ ĪBN AL-ʿAṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 311; ALʿAZDY 2007: vol.1, 517; MISKAWEYA D.T: vol.3, 222.

⁶⁴AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 272; ĪBN AL-ʿAṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 321; ĪBN ḤĀLDUN 2000: vol.3, 286.

The First Reason: According to Zambaur, Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Ḥrṣy was the governor of al-Rayy «al-Muḥammadiya», as he did not refer to any authority that Yaḥyā al-Barmakī assumed in this city⁶⁵. If Yaḥyā al-Barmakī assumed al-Rayy as the honorary governor, as mentioned by Abū al-Faraġ al-ʿuṣ, Zambaur would indicate that.

The Second Reason: Zambaur mentioned that Yaḥyā al-Ḥrṣy's mandate for al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» was in 184-189 AH/800-804A.D. However, Abū al-Faraġ al-ʿuṣ mentioned that the period of Yaḥyā al-Ḥarashī's rule of al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» during the years 184-189 AH/800-804AD was inappropriate⁶⁶. Therefore, perhaps Yaḥyā al-Ḥrṣy was the governor of al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» during the same period in which Yaḥyā's name appeared on al-Muḥammadiya dirhams, where Yaḥyā's name appeared on dirham minted in al-Muḥammadiya, dated in 172 AH [FIGURE 2] and again on the other dirham minted in al-Muḥammadiya as well, dated in 173 AH [FIGURE 1]⁶⁷. Still, historians did not refer to that authority. So, al-Muḥammadiya dirhams reflect the true reality. Naturally, the name of the ruler is registered on the coins during his tenure and not after.

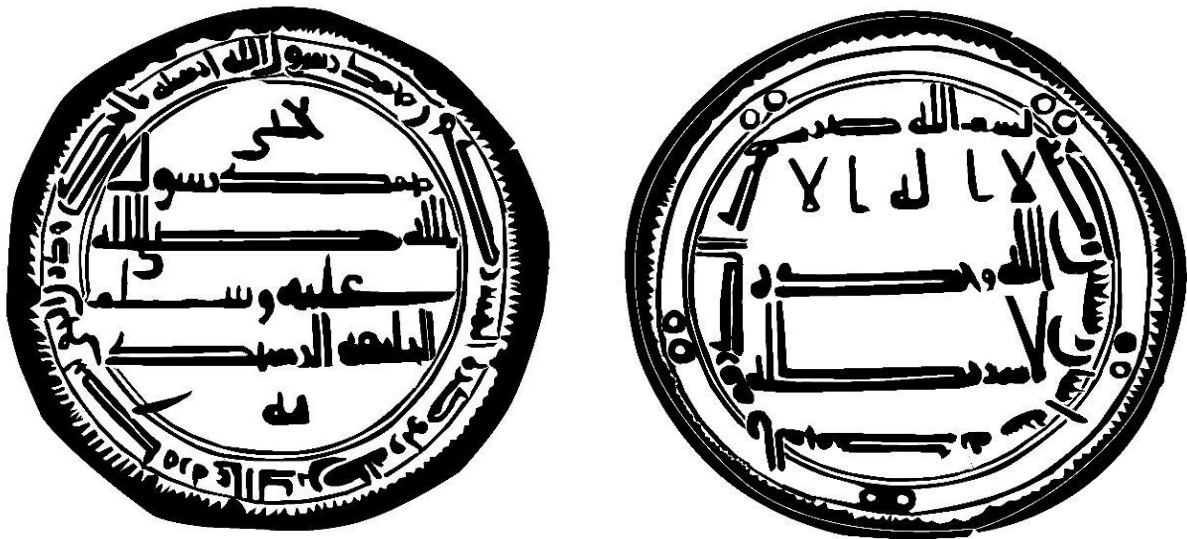
⁶⁵ ZAMBAUR 1980: 70

⁶⁶ AL-ʿUṢ 1983: vol.1, 347.

⁶⁷ Such as the coins with the name Yaḥyā, minted in al-Muḥammadiya in 172 AH and in 173 AH. See: MILES 1938: 55 [72E, 73A]; LOWICK 1996: 198, [1676, 1683]; AL-ʿUṢ 1984: vol.1, 388-389 [1642,1643]; ROSTOM 2002: 124,127; AL-ZAYOUD 2010:182 [460-461, 466].



[FIGURE 2]: Abbasid dirham of Hārūn al-Rašīd, minted in al-Muḥammadiya in 172 AH, W. (3,1G), D. (24,5 mm)⁶⁸



©Done by the researcher

⁶⁸AL-QAZZĀZ 1965:195[4/7945], ABŪ AL-FARAĠ AL-ʿUŠ 1984: 388 [1642], LOWICK 1996:198 [1676], AL-ZAYOUD 2010 :446 [466], ZENO Nr°. 249984.

NEW LIGHTS ON A RARE ABBASID DIRHAM IN THE NAME OF THE CALIPH HĀRŪN AL-RAŠĪD
MINTED IN AL-MUḤAMMADĪYA, 173 AH

According to the previous suggestion, Ya ḥyā al-Ḥrṣy was the governor of al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» in the same period in which Yaḥyā's name appeared on al-Muḥammadiya dirhams in (172-173AH). Based on the coinage, historical sources, and modern references, the periods of some governors' rule of al-Rayy that Zambaur mentioned can be modified, specifically the period of Saʿd mawli al-Mahdī's rule.

Zambaur mentioned that the mandate of Saʿd for al-Rayy was between 166 to 176 AH⁶⁹. According to Zambaur, the dirham under study was in the period of Saʿd's rule of al-Muḥammadiya, although this study gives another suggestion depending on the following:

- The historians mentioned that Saʿd was the governor of al-Rayy in 166 AH⁷⁰, without clarifying if he continued as a governor of al-Rayy after 166 AH⁷¹.
- Miles published a dirham with the name Saʿd, dated 168 AH⁷², meaning that Saʿd continued as al-Rayy governor until 168 AH.
- After 168 AH, there is no indication in historical sources or modern references confirming that Saʿd continued as a governor of al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy».
- No coin with the name of Saʿd after 168 AH, minted in al-Muḥammadiya – as far as I know- has been found.

These reasons prompted the researcher to reconsider the sequence of the governors of al-Rayy, prepared by Zambaur, to be as follows:

Saʿd mawli al-Mahdī (according to Miles's dirham)	166 -168 AH
.....?..... (Perhaps Saʿd continued as a governor of al-Rayy)	169–171 AH
Ya ḥyā al-Ḥrṣy (According to our suggestion)	172-173 AH
.....?.....	174-176 AH

[TABLE 1]: done by the researcher

⁶⁹ ZAMBAUR 1968: 70.

⁷⁰ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 163; ĪBN AL-ĠWZĪ 1992: vol.8, 286.

⁷¹ MILES 1938: 48.

⁷² MILES 1938: 47 [68E].

The Third Reason: al-Ṭabarī and others, when discussing the events of 184 AH, mentioned the following:

«... وولي داود بن يزيد بن حاتم المهلبى السند، ويحيى الحرشي الجبل»⁷³

According to what the historians mentioned above, Yaḥyā al-Ḥrṣy was the ruler of Jībal province in 184 AH/ 800 AD, and not only al-Muḥammadiya, which at that time was the capital of Jībal⁷⁴. Research and study revealed that no coin minted in al-Muḥammadiya in 184 AH, and thereafter, with the name «Yaḥyā»⁷⁵ had been found, but many names appeared on the coins of al-Muḥammadiya in 184 AH. For example, Dāwūd 's name «داود», referring to Dāwūd b. Yazyd bin Ḥātīm al-Mahlby appeared on dirham dated 184 AH⁷⁶. Muḥammad's name «محمد» appeared on a dirham dated 184 AH. 'Ubayd's name «عبيد» appeared on a dirham dated 184 AH⁷⁷, and Alḥarīb's name «الحرِب» was inscribed as follows: «الحرِب مولى أمير المؤمنين» on the copper issued in 184 AH and 185 AH⁷⁸, confirming that Yaḥyā al-Ḥrṣy was the ruler of the entire province and not only al-Muḥammadiya, which was a part of that province. If he was the governor of al-Muḥammadiya only in 184AH/ 800A.D, his name would have appeared on the coins minted in it during that period.

The Fourth Reason: One of the researchers mentioned in his dissertation on Hārūn al-Rašīd's rule through coinage that Yaḥyā, whose name appeared on the dirham understudy, was Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Ḥrṣy, and not Yaḥyā al-Barmakī⁷⁹, but he did not provide any evidence or any reason to support his statement. This is presented above with explanation, study, and analysis.

In conclusion, it is most likely that Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Ḥrṣy assumed the position of governor in al- Muḥammadiya in 172-173 AH, which was the same period in which the name Yaḥyā appeared on al- Muḥammadiya dirhams. Also, he was not the governor of al- Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» in 184 AH, as Zambaur mentioned, but he was the governor of the entire Jībal province.

All of these aforementioned reasons make us presume that Yaḥyā whose name was inscribed on the dirham understudy, is Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Ḥrṣy, not Yaḥyā al-Barmakī - as far as I know- which will be evidenced or denied through future studies.

Secondly: Identification of the name «بھلول» «Bahlūl» inscribed below the reverse field inscriptions:

The name «Bahlūl» is inscribed below the reverse field of that dirham. But who was this Bahlūl whose name was inscribed on the dirham understudy? In fact, the narrations differed in identifying the person Bahlūl. We will present those narrations

⁷³ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 272; ĪBN AL-'AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 321; ĪBN ḤALDUN 2000: vol.3, 286.

⁷⁴ ZAMBAUR 1980: 70, RAAFAT 2015:24.

⁷⁶ MILES 1938:75 [85B, 85c]; AL-'UŞ 1983: vol.1, 398, [1669].

⁷⁷ MILES 1938:76[85F]; AL-ZAYOUD 2010: 174,177,181.

⁷⁸ MILES 1938:76, 77[85G]; BAQIR 1976: vol.7, 174.

⁷⁹ AL-ZAYOUD 2010: 182.

and the response to each separately to identify the truth of Bahlūl's personality, which is mentioned on the dirham understudy.

Abū al-Farağ al-^ʿuṣ mentioned in his book about the Arabic and Islamic coinage preserved in the National Museum of Qatar that this person, «Bahlūl,» is not known. Then, he inquired: Did he assume the position of assistant governor during that period? Was he a mint supervisor?⁸⁰. Reviewing historical sources and modern references revealed that the researcher did not find the name Bahlūl associated with the name of a governor or even an assistant governor during the period in which the dirham understudy was minted or even in another period of Hārūn al-Rašīd's rule.

As Muḥammad al-Ḥosinī mentioned in one of his articles, Bahlūl, whose name was inscribed on this dirham, is Bahlūl b. ^ʿAmr al-Hāšmy al-Abbāsī. He mentioned that Bahlūl was the governor of al-Muḥammadiya. He wrote in his article, «I strongly believe that Bahlūl is Bahlūl b. ^ʿAmr al-Hāšmy al-Abbāsī»⁸¹.

In order to verify this opinion, that Bahlūl, whose name was inscribed on the dirham understudy was Bahlūl b. Amr, let us first identify Bahlūl b. ^ʿAmr. He was Bahlūl b. ^ʿAmr abū Wahāb b. ^ʿAmr al-Širafī al-Kūfī. He was born in Kūfa and was known for his narrations, poetry, and anecdotes. It was said that Hārūn al-Rašīd and other caliphs summoned him to listen to his words, poetry, and stories, then he became scrupulous and known as the «fool»⁸². The word «Bahlūl» in language dictionaries refers to a person who embodies all the qualities of a fool and is also a kind and humorous person⁸³. Bahlūl was the wise fool. It was said that he once wrote on the wall of al-Rašīd's new palace with coal: ⁸⁴«قصوركم قبوركم قبوركم قصوركم» «Your palaces are your graves, and your graves are your palaces». It was said that he was a Shiite, as once he was told: «أشتم فاطمة ولك درهماً» «Insult Fātima and you have a dirham», but he said:⁸⁵ «بل أشتم» «Instead, I will insult ^ʿA'īša for half a dirham». He was also once asked: «أيا أفضل أبوبكر أم علي رضي الله عنهما؟» «Who is better, Abū Bakr or ^ʿAli? May Allah be pleased with them), He said: «أما وأنا في كنده فعلي، وأما وأنا في ضبة فأبوبكر» «when I am in Kindā, Ali is better, and when I am in ḍabba, Abū Bakr is better». Kinda is in Kūfa, where the supporters of the Shiites while the members of Banū ḍabba tribe are Sunni⁸⁶. Also, it is said that he

⁸⁰ AL-^ʿUṢ 1984: vol.1, 398.

⁸¹ For this article, see the website of the Kuwait International Center for Studies and Consultations on Islamic, Byzantine, and Sasanian Coins, which is available via the following link: «Bahlūl», in <https://alhosini-money.com/showthread.php?t=4178> Accessed 10/04/2022, 9:13:19 PM.

⁸² AL-JABOURY 2003: 364; AL-ZARKALI 2006: 209; AL-BAĠDĀDĪ 2011:65; ĪBN ARABI 2017: 406.

⁸³ ĪBN MANḌŪR D.T: vol. 5, 375; IBRAHIM 2017; BAALI 2011: 28.

⁸⁴ AL-DĪMAŠQĪ 2012: 51.

⁸⁵ AL-NAYSĀBŪRĪ 1987: 144-145; AL-^ʿANDALUSĪ 2017:143.

⁸⁶ AL-QAYRĀWĀNĪ 2018: 167.

was one of the companions of Imam Ğaʿfar al-Sādiq. He feigned insanity to protect himself⁸⁷.

Going back to our dirham and to what was mentioned by al-Hosinī that Bahlūl, whose name was inscribed on this dirham, was Bahlūl b. ʿAmr. I truly disagree with his opinion, as there is no relationship between Bahlūl, whose name was inscribed on this dirham, and Bahlūl b. ʿAmr, for several reasons, which will present here below:

The first reason: Al-Hosini mentioned in his article that Bahlūl was appointed as the governor of al-Muḥammadiya by Hārūn al-Rašīd. Based on research and study, no one named Bahlūl assumed the position of al-Muḥammadiya governor during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd⁸⁸.

The second reason: There is no reference in the available history books that Bahlūl b. Amr assumed any administrative positions during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd, authorizing him to inscribe his name on the coins.

The third reason: If the researcher's assumption that Bahlūl, whose name appeared on the dirham under study, is Bahlūl b. ʿAmr al-Kūfi is right, then why did his name appear on al-Muḥammadiya dirhams and not on Kūfa dirhams? History books unanimously agree that he was born and lived in Kūfa and met Hārūn al-Rašīd in Kūfa as well⁸⁹, while no reference in the history books associating Bahlūl with al-Muḥammadiya has been found.

The fourth reason: Reviewing history books and Arab sources revealed that Caliph Hārūn al-Rašīd's first encounter with Bahlūl b. ʿAmr al-Kufi was in 188 AH/803 AD. ʿqlāa' al-mağnīn by al-Nisabwī, *al-Muntazim* by Ībn al-Ĝwzī, *Al Bedaya wal-Nehaya* by Ībn Kaṭīr, and others mentioned that al-Rašīd went for a pilgrimage in 188 AH/803 AD. On his way in the outskirts of Kūfa, he saw Bahlūl on a riding stick and boys chasing him. al-Rašīd asked who that man was. They said: «بهلول المجنون» «Bahlūl al-mağnoon». al-Rašīd said that he wanted to see him. So, they brought Bahlūl to him without intimidating him. al-Rašīd talked with Bahlūl and, in the end, ordered to give him money to settle his debts, but Bahlūl refused to take money from him⁹⁰. Ironically, the year in which al-Rašīd met Bahlūl in Kūfa was the last year in which al-Rašīd performed pilgrimage 188 AH/803AD⁹¹.

⁸⁷ AL-ĜUBARĪ 2014: 54.

⁸⁸ About the governors of the city of al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» during the period of the rule of Hārūn al-Rašīd, see: ZAMBAUR 1980: 70.

⁸⁹ About Bahlūl his life and upbringing, see: AL-NAYSĀBŪRĪ 1987:139-160; AL-JABOURY 2003: 364; AL-ZARKALI 2006: 209; AL-BAĜDĀDĪ 2011: 65; ĪBN ARABI 2017: 406.

⁹⁰ About the encounter between Hārūn al-Rašīd and Bahlūl b. Amr, see: AL-NAYSĀBŪRĪ 1987:139-140; ĪBN AL-ĜWZĪ 1992: vol.9, 155; ĪBN KAṬĪR 2004: vol.2, 1556.

⁹¹ AL-ṬABARĪ 1966: vol.8, 331; ĪBN AL-'AṬĪR 1987: vol.5, 337.

It is clear from the testimonies of historians that the encounter between Hārūn al-Rašīd and Bahlūl was in 188 AH and not before. So, how can Hārūn al-Rašīd's encounter with Bahlūl be in 188 AH, while the dirham under study was minted in 173 AH? There is a period of not less than fifteen years between the date our dirham was minted and the date al-Rašīd met Bahlūl. Accordingly, Bahlūl, whose name appeared on the dirham, was different from Bahlūl b. Amr al-Kūfi, known as Bahlūl al-majnoon.

Among the narrations that were told about Bahlūl, mentioned on the dirham under study, is that according to zenu.ru, Bahlūl, whose name was registered on the dirham under study, was a commander during Hārūn al-Rašīd's rule⁹². After reviewing available historical sources and modern references, there is no confirmed indication of the presence of a military commander during al-Rashid's time called Bahlūl-as far as I know, or rather, any military commander with the name Bahlūl was not found, when the name Bahlūl appeared on al-Muḥammadiya dirham.

In conclusion, it is more likely that Bahlūl, whose name was mentioned on the dirham under study, was the supervisor or the person in charge of al-Muḥammadiya mint when his name appeared on al-Muḥammadiya coins, specifically in 172-173 AH. Also, one of the researchers agrees with our opinion that Bahlūl here was the supervisor or the person in charge of al-Muḥammadiya mint⁹³. Hence, it leaves no room for doubt that Bahlūl, whose name appeared on the dirham, was not Bahlūl b. Amr al-Serafi, known as Bahlūl al-Maḡnoon.

⁹² See the details presented by Zeno website during its show of this dirham:« ISLAMIC WORLD», in <https://www.zeno.ru/showphoto.php?> Accessed on 12/6/2022

⁹³ RAAFAT 2015: 226.

VI. CONCLUSION

- It is more likely that Yaḥyā b. Hālīd al-Barmakī didn't inscribe his name on the coins.
- The study shows that Yaḥyā al-Barmakī might not be interested in inscribing his name on the coins. It is more likely that he gave up this right, assigning it to the governors of the provinces, their assistants, and the mint supervisors.
- The study proves that Ğaʿfar b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī was the first Barmakid vizier who inscribed his name on the coins during the reign of Hārūn al-Rašīd, and not his father, Yaḥyā al-Barmakī.
- The study suggests that Yaḥyā's name inscribed on this dirham refers to Yaḥyā b. Sʿīd al-Ḥrṣy not Yaḥyā al-Barmakī.
- The study presumes that Yaḥyā b. Sʿīd al-Ḥrṣy assumed the position of governor in al-Muḥammadiya in 172-173 AH, which was the same period in which the name Yaḥyā appeared on al-Muḥammadiya dirhams, including the dirham under study.
- Based on the coins, historical sources, and modern references, the study suggests that the periods of some governors' rule of al-Muḥammadiya «al-Rayy» that Zambaur mentioned can be modified to be as shown in [TAB 1].
- The study suggests that Bahlūl, whose name was mentioned on the dirham under study, was the supervisor or the person in charge of al-Muḥammadiya mint in 172-173 AH. Therefore, Bahlūl was not meant here to be Bahlūl b. ʿAmr al-Širafī, as some researchers suggested.

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