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237 Abbreviations

ABBREVIATIONS

AJC Y. Meshorer. *Ancient Jewish Coinage*. Dix Hills, NY 1982
AJN *American Journal of Numismatics*
BMC e.g., *BMC Arab*.: G.F. Hill. *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Persia*. London 1922
BMCO e.g., *BMCO* 1: S. Lane-Poole. *The Coins of the Eastern Khaleefehs in the British Museum. Catalogue of the Oriental Coins in the British Museum* 1. London 1875
CH *Coin Hoards*
CHL Y. Meshorer, G. Bijovsky and W. Fischer-Bossert. *Coins of the Holy Land: The Abraham and Marian Sofaer Collection at the American Numismatic Society and the Israel Museum*. Ed. by D. Hendin and A. Meadows. New York 2013
CIL Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
CNP e.g., L. Kadman. *The Coins of Akko Ptolemais* (Corpus Nummorum Palaestinensium IV). Jerusalem 1961
CPE I C.C. Lorber. *Coins of the Ptolemaic Empire.* Part I: *Ptolemy I through Ptolemy IV,* I*, Precious Metal,* and II, *Bronze*. New York 2018
CRE e.g., H. Mattingly. *The Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum I. Augustus to Vitellius*. London 1923
DOC e.g., P. Grierson. *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection* 3. *Leo III to Nicephorus III 717–1081*. Washington, D.C. 1973
EH I T. Faucher, A. Meadows and C. Lorber eds. *Egyptian Hoards* I: *The Ptolemies* (Bibliothèque d'Étude 168). Cairo 2017.
IEJ *Israel Exploration Journal*
IGCH M. Thompson, O. Mørkholm and C.M. Kraay. *An Inventory of Greek Coin Hoards*. New York 1973
INJ *Israel Numismatic Journal*
INR *Israel Numismatic Research*
LA *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Liber Annuus*
LRBC e.g., P.V. Hill and J.P.C. Kent. Part 1: The Bronze Coinage of the House of Constantine, A.D. 324–46. In *Late Roman Bronze Coinage (A.D. 324–498)*. London 1965. Pp. 4–40
MIB e.g., W. Hahn. *Von Anastasius I. bis Justinianus I (491–565)*. Moneta Imperii Byzantini 1. *Österreichische* Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 109. Veröffentlichungen der Numismatischen Kommission 1. Vienna 1973
MIBE W. Hahn. *Money of the Incipient Byzantine Empire (Anastasius I–Justinian I, 491–565)* (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte der Universität Wien 6). Vienna 2000
MIBEC W. Hahn and M. Metlich. *Money of the Incipient Byzantine Empire Continued (Justin II—Revolt of the Heraclii, 565–610)*. (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte der Universität Wien 13). Vienna 2009
MN American Numismatic Society Museum Notes
NC Numismatic Chronicle
NCirc. *Numismatic Circular*
NNM *Numismatic Notes and Monographs*
RIC e.g., C.H.V. Sutherland. *The Roman Imperial Coinage* I. *From 31 BC to AD 69*. London 1984
RN Revue Numismatique
RPC e.g., A. Burnett, M. Amandry and I. Carradice. *From Vespasian to Domitian (AD 69–96). Roman Provincial Coinage* 2. London 1999
RRC M.H. Crawford. *Roman Republican Coinage*. Cambridge 1974
SC e.g., A. Houghton and C. Lorber. *Seleucid Coins. A Comprehensive Catalogue; Seleucus I through Antiochus III* I/I: *Introduction, Maps and Catalogue*. New York-Lancaster, Pa.–London 2002
SICA e.g., S. Album and T. Goodwin. *Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean* 1*: The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period*. Oxford 2002
SNAT e.g., L. Ilisch. *Sylloge Numorum Arabicorum Tübingen–Palästina IVa Bilād aš-Šām* I. Tübingen 1993
SNG *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum* (with suffix as necessary, e.g. *SNG Cop.*)
SNR *Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau*
TINC *Transactions of the International Numismatic Congress*
TJC Y. Meshorer. *A Treasury of Jewish Coins from the Persian Period to Bar Kokhba*. Jerusalem-Nyack 2001

Farewell to Khalid of Tiberias: Reading the Greek Legends of an 'Enigmatic' Arab-Byzantine Type

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Abstract
A new reading is proposed of the Greek legend on the reverse of an Arab-Byzantine type struck in Tiberias during the late seventh century. While this legend has often been interpreted to refer to a certain Khalid, it is argued here that it contains a brief statement of quality similar to that found on the coins of several other Arab-Byzantine mints.

The primary purpose of this paper is to propose a new reading of the Greek legend on the reverse of a seventh-century Arab-Byzantine coin type from Tiberias (Figs. 1a–c). The obverse of this type depicts a standing emperor with the mint name ΤΙΒΕΡΙΑϹ, or some corruption of this, running clockwise around the edge of the field to the right of him. Sometimes the emperor is depicted holding a *globus cruciger* in each hand and with a long cross standing immediately to his right (Fig. 1a), sometimes with a *globus cruciger* in each hand but without a long cross to his right (Fig. 1b), and sometimes with a long cross in his right hand and with a *globus cruciger* in his left hand alone (Fig. 1c).[1] The reverse always depicts a large cursive Ϻ as the denomination mark, an exergual line beneath this, and the legend ΝΟΒ, or some variation of this, in the exergue. The legend ΚΑΛΑ, or some variation of this, appears to run in mirror-image down the left-hand side of the cursive Ϻ, while the legend ΧΑΛΕΑ, or some variation of this, appears to run down the right-hand side of the cursive Ϻ. No Arabic appears anywhere on this type, which clearly belongs to the so-called Umayyad Imperial Image phase of Arab-Byzantine coinage, usually dated from the 670s to the early 690s (Goodwin and Gyselen 2015:12, 17–21), because it displays a meaningful new legend, the mint name ΤΙΒΕΡΙΑϹ if nothing else. Furthermore, since the emperor is often depicted with three long strands falling from his left side in imitation of the three strands that fall from the right

1 A unique specimen from the Israel Museum (IMJ 12530) depicts an emperor holding a *globus cruciger* in each hand with what appears to be a spear rather than a long cross standing immediately to his right. See Schulze and Oddy 2015:195. At least two obverse dies include a standing bird in the field to the left of the emperor in imitation of a common motif on the coins of Damascus.

side of the standing caliph on coins of the so-called Standing Caliph phase from the late 680s to the late 690s, it is likely that this type was struck only very late during the Imperial Image phase.[2] Finally, one should note that the mint at Tiberias struck other standing emperor types also, some of which are closely related to the type under discussion, but I am restricting the present study to coins with the characteristics just described.[3]

Fig. 1. a. *Fals* of Tiberias (4.44 g, 21 mm). Münzzentrum Rheinland 167, Sept. 4, 2013, Lot 591; b. *fals* of Tiberias (5.21 g). Private coll.; c. *fals* of Tiberias (4.36 g). Album 10, Apr. 22, 2011, Lot 186

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

This type has been a subject of discussion since de Saulcy first published an example in 1839 (de Saulcy 1839:439–440). He read the parts of the legend on each side the cursive ϺΝ on this example to say the same thing — ΧΑΛϹ — which he then interpreted in abbreviation of the name of Chalcis. He also read the poorly visible letters in the exergue of that example as ΟΜΑ, which he interpreted in reference to the caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab (634–644). In 1871, however, he changed his

2 For a discussion of the identity of this object ending in three separate strands, whether a girdle band or a whip, see Goodwin 2017:120–122. Occasionally this object seems instead to resemble a Byzantine *loros* in imitation of the depiction of Justinian II on his coinage after 693.

3 Phillips 2010 discussed a type pairing an obverse depicting a single standing emperor with a reverse depicting the name of Tiberias in both Greek and Arabic encircling a capital M. He included an illustration of an example of this bilingual type struck over the type under discussion (p. 71). Another more closely related type pairs an obverse depicting a single standing emperor with a reverse depicting a large H or N to the left of a cursive ϺΝ and a large E to its right. See Karukstis 2007:41.

mind and interpreted that part of the legend to the right of the denomination as ХАΛЄΔ in reference to Khalid ibn al-Walid, the famous conqueror of Syria, and that to the left as ХАΛК in abbreviation of the name of Chalcis once more (de Saulcy 1871:204–205). He was encouraged in this because he had since acquired a second specimen of the same type with a slightly different legend, the major difference being that the part in the exergue clearly read NOϢ. He read all three parts of this legend as if they were meant to be read clockwise together around the edge, thus reading it as ХАΛЄΔ ВО ZΛMAN interpreted as a reference to Khalid ibn al-Walid who was also known as Abu Sulaiman. The interpretation of this second coin was subsequently rejected by de Saxe-Cobourg who accepted the reading ХАΛЄΔ, but read NOϢ as BON and interpreted this as an abbreviation of the Latin *bonus* 'good', and the final ΛMAN as AMAN, a transliteration of the Arabic *amān* 'security' (de Saxe-Cobourg 1893:273–275). Later, Lavoix described another coin of the same basic type, reading the part of legend to the left of the denomination as KAIC and that to the right of it as AREA to produce KAICAREA in apparent reference to Caesarea in Cappadocia (Lavoix 1887:11, No. 38). However, as the photograph in Walker's catalogue reveals, the first part of the legend to the right of the denomination ϺΜ has been almost completely obscured by wear in this case so that only the last two letters -ЄA are really visible (Walker 1956:48–49, No. P.15). Lavoix did not attempt to explain the significance of the legend NOϢ in the exergue.

In 1956, Walker reviewed all the earlier attempts to read both the obverse and reverse legends on this type to conclude that none were completely acceptable, that "the legends are probably blundered", and that "even if a particularly clear specimen were to turn up, [they] might not make sense" (Walker 1956:46–49). He did not attempt to read any of the slight varieties of legend in full, but was content merely to observe that, in the case of the variety with NOϢ in the exergue, this was "perhaps, a truncation of a common Byzantine exergual legend CONOB". In 1966, Meshorer published another slight variety of this type. In this case, the legend to the left of the denomination ϺΜ contained only three letters which, if read downward from right to left, spelled KAΛ. He then read the indistinct legend in the exergue as ONO, and the even more indistinct legend to the right of the denomination ϺΜ as KAΛ once more. Hence he interpreted the legend to read KAΛONOΛAЖ, that is, to contain the Greek adjective KAΛON 'good' twice. Finally, Karukstis briefly reviewed all that was known about this type in 2007, but offered no new suggestions concerning the interpretation of any of the slight varieties in the legend.

The idea that the part of the legend to the right of the denomination ϺΜ on this type refers to a certain Khalid has persisted into modern literature. For example, Foss recently said of this type that 'the reverse inscription appears to denote a name, perhaps Khalid ibn [Abd] Allah', but did not discuss this proposal any further (Foss 2008:45). Popp understood the legend to refer to a certain Khalid of Tiberias, even interpreting the standing emperor on the obverse as a depiction of "this Christian Arabian ruler" (Popp 2010:43–44). Finally, Heidemann also confidently asserted

that the legend refers to a Khalid, although he was firm in his rejection of the identification of this man with the famous conqueror of Syria.[4] Of course, it is not impossible that an Arab-Byzantine coin of the Imperial Image phase could name a certain Khalid, since two types of the same phase name two governors by the names of Sa'id and Muḥammad (Goodwin 2012a:95–96). However, these are rare examples of the naming of an individual on the coinage and, most importantly, they depict the name of an Arab official in Arabic. In contrast, the traditional interpretation of the type under discussion would have it that it depicts the name of an Arab official in Greek alone, a rather different phenomenon.

IDENTIFYING THE LETTERS

Any modern scholar who attempts to reexamine the problems posed by this reverse legend in its minor varieties is in a far stronger position to do so than any of his or her predecessors because many more specimens of this type have entered the market over the last two decades than were previously available for study. Even as late as 1999, for example, Karukstis could only identify nine specimens of this type (Karukstis 1999). In contrast, I was able to examine photographs of 65 coins, or casts of coins, of this type for the purpose of this study.[5] Most of these coins were still too worn, damaged or dirty for their reverse legends to be read in full. Nevertheless, I was able to identify 33 different reverse dies with certainty. Of these, 11 display what one might describe, following the traditional reading, as a ΧΑΛΕΔ-type legend to the right of the denomination mark, that is, a five-letter sequence ending in a triangular form. However, in nine of those 11 cases, it is clear that this letter is actually a Greek *alpha* of the form Ᾰ rather than a Greek *delta* Δ.

This is most obvious in the case of the example in Fig. 1a above where this letter is somewhat larger than normal, particularly well executed, and excellently preserved. In this case, the left-hand side of the letter runs in rough parallel to the exergual line, the base faces toward the end of the exergual line, and most of the

4 Heidemann 2010:158, n. 28. He specifically referred the reader to his excellent photograph (p. 157, Fig. 5) of the coin, first published by de Saulcy in 1839 and since passed to Jena University, as proof of the reading ΧΑΛΕΔ. Not only is this coin too worn to show the relevant part of the legend in full, but there is now a die duplicate that proves that its legend would read ΧΑΛΕ alone if fully visible. This duplicate was sold by Shick Coins on Vcoins in 2015 (SKU: VB2347).

5 In addition to the material available on the two main numismatic databases (coinarchives.com and acsearch.info), the archives of various dealers on vcoins.com, and the online catalogues of Stephen Album Rare Coins (stevealbum.com), I was generously assisted by Tony Goodwin, Andrew Oddy, Marcus Phillips, and Wolfgang and Ingrid Schulze in making the research materials that they had collected over the years available to me. The present study is a preliminary to a more formal die study.

letter remains above the level of this line. However, the location and orientation of this letter can vary greatly from one die to the next within this group. In one extreme example, it drops so low that it even appears to be a part of the exergual legend, with its base facing toward the letter Ȣ (Fig. 1b). On most dies, however, it remains at the same approximate level as the exergual line, but with different degrees of rotation. For example, the base now faces well above the exergual line toward the rightmost foot of the cursive Ϻ on another die (Fig. 2a) and even seems to face toward the rim of the coin in another case (Fig. 2b).

a b

Fig. 2 a. Reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (4.36 g). Private coll.; b. reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (4.45 g). Album 19, May 15, 2014, Lot 258

The precise orientation and location of the final ⅄ does not matter much in this study, the important point being that it is clearly an *alpha* of the form ⅄ (with a diagonal stretching from the foot of the left side of the letter to a point low on the right side) in most cases, and no die displays an unambiguous *delta* Δ instead. However, there is rather less certainty concerning the identity of the second and third letters in this sequence, with some confusion evident between the letters *alpha* ⅄ and *lambda* Λ. For example, the reverse in Fig. 2b above clearly reads Χ⅄ΛЄ⅄, but the reverse in Fig. 1b above clearly reads ΧΛ⅄Є⅄. Finally, one should note that, in addition to the 11 dies depicting what should now be called the five-letter Χ⅄ΛЄ⅄-type legend, a further four dies depict a five-letter legend ending in Є rather than ⅄, seeming to read Χ⅄ΛΛЄ (Fig. 3), ΧΛΛ⅄Є or something similar.

Fig. 3. Reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (4.55 g). Album 10, Apr. 22, 2011, Lot 190

Another group of 12 dies depicts a four-letter sequence ending in Є to the right of the denomination mark. Of these, five dies seem to read Χ⅄ΛЄ (Fig. 4a), while another five dies seem to read ΧΛ⅄Є instead (Fig. 4b), and it is impossible to be sure what was intended in the final two cases. Finally, one last die seems to depict

the legend ΧΑΛΛ instead. As far as the correct form of the part of the legend to the right of the denomination is concerned, therefore, the die evidence suggests multiple possibilities, that it spelled ΧΑΛЄΑ, ΧΛΑЄΑ, ΧΑΛΛЄ, ΧΛΛΑЄ, ΧΑΛЄ, ΧΛΑЄ, or ΧΑΛΛ even.

a b

Fig. 4. a. Reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (5.21 g). Album 31, May 17 2018, Lot 205; b. reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (5.26 g). Album 10, April 22, 2011, Lot 188

If one turns next to the reading of that part of the legend to the left of the denomination mark, a roughly similar situation prevails. On the one hand, one die depicts a five-letter sequence beginning with a reversed kappa Ϟ.On the other hand, 21 dies depict a four-letter sequence beginning with a reversed kappa Ϟ. Of these, four definitely depict the legend ΚΑΛΑ (see e.g., Fig. 2b and Fig. 3), while others seem to read ΚΛΑΑ (see Fig. 1a) or even ΚΛΛΛ (see Fig. 2a), all in mirror image. Finally, four dies depict a three-letter legend beginning with a reversed kappa Ϟ instead, where one definitely reads ΚΑΛ (Fig. 5a), a second seems to read ΚΛΑ (Fig. 5b), and the other two remain unclear.

a b

Fig. 5. a. Reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (4.28 g). Album 10, Apr. 22, 201, Lot 187; b. reverse of *fals* of Tiberias (5.34 g). Private coll.

READING THE REVERSE LEGEND

So where does all of this leave us in our efforts better to understand the significance of the reverse legend? Perhaps the best place to start is with that part of the legend to the left of the denomination mark. The fact that four dies depict the sequence ΚΑΛΑ is significant because this actually means something in Greek, being the neuter plural in the nominative or accusative case of the adjective καλός 'fine, good'. This is important because the Arab-Byzantine mints at Emesa and Antaradus included the same term in the same gender and case on the obverse of the coins

that they struck during the same phase of coinage.[6] Furthermore, the so-called Pseudo-Damascus mint also included this term in the same gender and case once more on the reverse of some early coins of the so-called *jāza hādhā* type (Woods 2019). The only difference was that all of these mints used the term ΚΑΛΟΝ, the neuter singular form of the adjective, rather than ΚΑΛΑ, the neuter plural form.[7] It is hardly a coincidence, however, that the mint at Tiberias should seem to have struck coins depicting the same adjective in the same gender and case as was used at these other mints, so that it seems not unreasonable to assume, therefore, that the officials at Tiberias did indeed intend to strike coins bearing this exact adjective.

The assumption that the officials at Tiberias intended this type to include the Greek adjective ΚΑΛΑ as part of its legend is important because that means that whatever noun or substantive it modifies must have been of the same gender, number, and case also and that provides a principle by which to decide between the varieties of that part of the legend to the right of the denomination also. Since the readings ΧΑΛΕΑ and ΧΛΑΕΑ are alone in retaining the typical ending in -Α of a noun or substantive in the neuter plural, the obvious conclusion is that one of these best preserves the original form of whatever term they are supposed to represent. The only problem here is that neither ΧΑΛΕΑ nor ΧΛΑΕΑ actually mean anything in Greek. It is at this point that the context becomes important. Since ΚΑΛΑ and ΧΑΛΕΑ/ΧΛΑΕΑ occur on a copper coin, it is not unreasonable to assume that they were intended to describe some quality that this coin was supposed to possess. If this is true, then the term ΧΑΛΕΑ/ΧΛΑΕΑ should probably preserve a slight misspelling of some term which one might associate with a copper coin. Here one notes that the Greek adjective χάλκεος means 'of copper', and that the neuter plural of this adjective in the nominative or accusative case would be written ΧΑΛΚΕΑ. It is my argument, therefore, that the legend on this type was supposed to read ΚΑΛΑ ΧΑΛΚΕΑ 'Good copper'. But what exactly was made of 'Good copper'? It is possible that the adjective χάλκεος is being used substantively, so that the

6 Two mints seem to have been operational at Emesa, where one struck a type depicting the imperial bust on the obverse and the name of the city in Greek on either side of a cursive Ϻ for the denomination mark on the reverse and the other struck a type depicting a standing emperor on the obverse and the name of the city in Greek on either side of a capital Μ for the denomination mark on the reverse. On the former type, see Oddy 1987; on the latter type, see Oddy 2007. The term ΚΑΛΟΝ appears on both main variants of the type with the imperial bust on the obverse, and on the coins belonging to three of the four classes into which Oddy divides the type with standing emperor obverse.

7 In the case of Antaradus, it struck three slight variants of the same basic type, and one of these bore the term ΚΑΛΩΝ rather than ΚΑΛΟΝ. While ΚΑΛΩΝ appears at first glance to represent the genitive plural of this adjective, the context makes it clear that a spelling error has occurred as a result of the similarity in sound between Ω and Ο. For this variant, see Schulze 2013:245–246.

legend literally means 'Good copper things' or, more elegantly translated, 'Good copper coinage'.[8] However, it is more likely that the two adjectives modify a noun that has been left to be understood from the context, probably the plural of the neuter noun τὸ νουμμίον, the diminutive of the masculine noun ὁ νοῦμμος 'coin', so meaning 'little coin' (Sophocles 1914:787). Hence the legend probably ought to be translated as 'Good copper (small change)' or something similar.

The argument that the legend on this type was supposed to read ΚΑΛΑ ΧΑΛΚΕΑ 'Good copper (small change)' is entirely consistent with the sort of Greek legends that one discovers on other Arab-Byzantine types where the only Greek terms, apart from the names of the towns where the coins were minted, were ΚΑΛΟΝ 'good' and ΠΛΕΟΝ 'full', terms of quality used to reassure the Greek-speaking communities that they could trust these coins.[9] While it is disappointing that no specimen of this type that preserves the proper spelling of the term ΧΑΛΚΕΑ has as yet been discovered, this is not perhaps surprising since there are several other indications that the die engravers, and any supervisors they may have had, did not understand Greek. One obvious indication is the fact that ΚΑΛΑ occurs in mirror-image even on what seem to be the best dies. Another indication is the discrepancy in form between what are supposed to be the same letters, even on the best dies, suggesting that the engravers did not properly understand what they were copying. For example, the final *alpha* of ΚΑΛΑ is normally far more rounded than the first *alpha*, and sometimes resembles a Latin R rather than a Greek Α. A third indication lies in the decision to include the legend NOB in the exergue. As Walker recognized, this is an abbreviation of the CONOB that had appeared in the exergue on the reverse of Byzantine *solidi* since the fourth century CE and was itself an abbreviation of a Latin phrase.[10] So whoever decided to include a truncated version of this on a coin where all the other legends were in Greek clearly did not realize that it was in an entirely different language. Finally, the fact that so many dies display even more corrupt forms of the legend in what was probably a relatively short-lived type does not support the assumption that anyone at the mint understood the significance of these errors.

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8 In classical Greek, the term χαλκοῦς, the contracted form of the masculine of the adjective χάλκεος, was commonly used in a substantive sense to mean either a coin, in the singular, or money, in the plural. See Liddell and Scott 1996:1974. The noun ὁ χαλκός was also used to denote copper coin in a collective sense, that is, money, throughout the classical and Byzantine periods.

9 The term ΠΛΕΟΝ is only known to occur on one obverse die from the so-called Pseudo-Damascus mint. See Goodwin and Gyselen 2015:98, No. 78; Woods 2017:109–110.

10 The decision to copy an element from a gold coin for inclusion upon a copper coin instead may seem strange, but the mint at Tiberias also copied the three standing figures on the obverse of its common bilingual *fals* from the obverse of the *solidi* struck at Constantinople during the period 632–641. See *SICA* 1:82.

One should conclude this section by noting that, although the most common type from Tiberias, the bilingual *fals* with the three standing figures on the obverse, did not normally include any statements of quality, there was a very rare variant that included the Arabic *ṭayyib* 'good' to the right of the three standing figures on the obverse (Fig. 6). Hence the type under discussion is not unique among the products of Tiberias in proclaiming its quality to those who will handle it.

Fig. 6. Bilingual *fals* of Tiberias with *ṭayyib* 'good' on obverse (3.81 g, 22 mm). Savoca 6, Oct. 5, 2019, Lot 1216

REEXAMINING THE OBVERSE

It is appropriate here to include some brief observations also on the Greek legend on the obverse of this type. It is clear from the best obverse dies (as in Fig. 1a) that the intention was to spell the name of Tiberias in the nominative case, although I have not yet seen a single die spell it correctly as TIBЄPIAC. The nominative ending — IAC — is very clear on several dies, confirming that it was the intention to write the name in this case, but the middle of the word is usually blundered in some way. Then there is the problem of identifying the nature and function of the two forms that occur in the field to the left of the standing figure on most obverse dies (as in Figs. 1a-c). Several commentators have assumed that the intention was to spell the name of the town in the genitive case — TIBЄPIAΔOC — so that these forms must be identifiable as the Greek letters *omicron* O and *sigma* C (Heidemann 2010:157; Goodwin 2012a:96; Schulze and Oddy 2015:195). However, this interpretation has been overly influenced by the fact that the common bilingual type from Tiberias with obverse depicting three standing figures and reverse depicting the names of the town in both Greek and Arabic does indeed depict the Greek name in the genitive case. Yet that does not necessarily hold true for all other types from the same mint. More importantly, the lower of these forms clearly resembles the common combination of the Greek letters *omicron* O and *upsilon* V in the form ȣ, while the higher resembles a common form of *tau* with a cursive stem ζ.

So what might the forms ȣ and ζ mean here? One could perhaps read them as ζȣ, that is, as TOV, the genitive singular of the masculine form of the definite article, but that would not make sense here since the name of Tiberias is both feminine and nominative. As for the alternative order ȣζ or OVT, this does not mean anything at all. However, the answer to this problem probably lies in the identification of the

ultimate model for the depiction of the standing emperor, the beardless standing emperor of the obverse of the *folles* of Constans II struck at Constantinople from 641 to 648. On these coins, the standing emperor was surrounded by the Greek legend ЄN TȢTO NIKA 'Conquer in this!', with the first part of the legend — ЄN TȢTO — in the field to the left and the final part — NIKA — in the field to the right. It is arguable, therefore, that the apparent letters ȢƵ represent a 'frozen' continuation of the letters ȢT from the word TȢTO on the original Byzantine model for the obverse of the type under discussion.

A possible argument against this suggestion is that the standard depiction of the standing emperor on the obverse of the Constantinopolitan *folles* of Constans II looks very different from the standing emperor depicted on what are arguably the earliest examples of the type under discussion based on the relative lack of corruption displayed by their reverse legends. As in the case of Figs. 1a–b, most of these coins depict a standing emperor with a *globus cruciger* in each hand, while the standard depiction of Constans II on his *folles* shows him with a long cross in his right hand and a *globus cruciger* in his left hand alone. However, the depiction of Constans with a simple long cross in his right hand only became dominant on his *folles* in his fourth regnal year. Before then, the mint at Constantinople had often depicted him with a staff surmounted by a *globus cruciger* in his right hand as well as a *globus cruciger* in his left hand (Goodwin 2012b:18; Fig. 7a), and the use of such a model may well explain how the standing emperor on the earliest examples of the type under discussion came to be lumbered with two *globi crucigeri*. This is not to assume, however, that the engravers at Tiberias drew directly upon a Byzantine original, since they may well have drawn upon one of the common Pseudo-Byzantine imitations of this type instead (Fig. 7b). On these, the emperor is normally depicted as if he was holding a *globus cruciger* aloft in his right hand rather than a staff surmounted by a *globus cruciger*.

a b

Fig. 7. a. *Follis* of Constans II, Constantinople, RY2 = 642/3 (*MIB*) (4.68 g, 25 mm). Dorney 8, Apr. 1, 2019, Lot 448; b. Pseudo-Byzantine *fals* (3.25 g, 23 mm). Ex eBay, Feb. 2018

If the above explanation of the nature and origin of the two forms that occur to the left of the standing emperor on many examples of the type under discussion is correct, and if the above explanation of how the standing emperor on many of these coins came to be lumbered with two *globi crucigeri* is also correct, it

means that the resemblance between the obverse of the type under discussion and a standing emperor obverse type from Damascus that also includes the mint name running clockwise about the edge of the field to the right of the emperor is probably coincidental, and that the engravers at Damascus and Tiberias probably came up with the same idea as to the placement of the mint name independently of one another.

CONCLUSION

A previously rare type of late-seventh century Arab-Byzantine coin from Tiberias has become much more common over the last two decades.[11] This sudden abundance of evidence facilitates a much better understanding of the legends on this type, as the idiosyncrasies or errors of one die can be checked against the readings of other dies. In so doing, the more fanciful conjectures of the past based on the misreading of a very limited number of often very worn coins can now be dismissed for good. This includes the idea that the reverse of this type mentioned someone called Khalid (ΧΑΛΕΔ). In reality, the reverse legend probably only proclaimed the value of this coin as part of a new supply of ΚΑΛΑ ΧΑΛ(Κ)ΕΑ (*νουμμία*) 'Good copper (small change)'.

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11 Most specimens seem to have entered the market as individual coins, but it is noteworthy that Steve Album Auction 10 (Apr. 22, 2011) included a group of eight coins of this type (lots 186–193), together with two other coins of a closely related type (lots 184-85), and 60 coins of the standard three-figure obverse type from Tiberias (lots 89–148), encouraging the belief that many of these may derive from the same dispersed hoard.

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