



Saqūt ibn Muḥammad, Independent Ruler of Ceuta as Viewed Through His Coins (434-471 AH/1042 -1078 AD) Along with Publishing Five New Coins

Nayera Rafik GALAL

Faculty of Archaeology
Cairo University,

naierarafik2023@outlook.com

naierarafik@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the coins of the Barghūwātī ruler of Ceuta, al-Ḥājib Saqūt ibn Muḥammad, (434-471 AH/1042-1078 AD) to explore his enigmatic personality through his coinage alongside the scattered details recorded in historical sources and relevant references. This study investigates Saqūt's beliefs, which are a controversial topic in historical narratives. His coins provide compelling evidence to clarify these beliefs, particularly through having the two Shahadas of Islam and the message of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) inscribed. Consequently, his coins challenge claims linking him to the beliefs of Ṣāliḥ ibn Ṭarīf and refute associations with Shi'ite ideology. In addition to his coins, multiple historical sources support this suggestion. Despite disagreement among historians, the correct spelling of his name is identified, including a new way of writing his name, numismatists' misreading of that name and certain unique titles on his coins. This study explains the circumstances surrounding these issues, examining their dates and revising the previously known date range. The paper also discusses the characteristics of these issues and the distinctive titles that appear on them, noting that some titles reflect Andalusian influences while others show Eastern influences. Additionally, it publishes five new pieces preserved in the American Numismatic Society.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received 24 March 2024

Received in revised form 21 October 2024

Accepted 25 October 2024

Available Online 12 February 2025

KEYWORDS

Barghawāṭah; Saqūt; Ḥammūdids; Party Kings; Copper dirhams.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Moroccan coins have garnered significant interest in numismatics recently due to their rich variety, which sparks researchers' curiosity to uncover their hidden aspects, particularly those that link Andalusian and Moroccan histories. This connection highlights the interplay between the historical, economic, and political contexts of both regions. While the coins of major Moroccan dynasties, such as the Almoravids and Almohads, have been the focus of many studies, lesser-known dynasties, like the *Barghawāṭah*, remain largely unexplored and deserve to be focused upon to elucidate their historical and cultural significance. The *Barghawāṭah* coins were minted under the name of *al-Ḥājib* Saqūt ibn Muḥammad (434-471 AH/1042-1078 AD), the king of Ceuta. His name and religious beliefs have sparked considerable debate among historical sources, which are examined in this paper. Saqūt ibn Muḥammad represents nearly nineteen years of Andalusian history during the Ḥammūdids in Ceuta, as Ceuta was governed from Morocco instead of Spain. His reign was influenced by Andalusian history, particularly during the critical era of *Mulūk al-Ṭawā'if* (the Party Kings) and the preceding years, which left a lasting mark on his character. As a result, his coins followed characteristics from this monetary system.

Having existed for only two or three generations, this small dynasty is not included in well-known genealogical compendium, like that of Lane-Poole (S. Lane-Poole 1894) and Zambaur (Zambaur 1927). A short note was included in Bosworth's reference, but it did not

mention the names of the rulers from this dynasty (Bowazawrat 2013, 44). Fortunately, Album included two of these kings in his checklist (Album 2011, 68), who are Saqūt and his son al-‘Izz, these were drawn from information found in historical sources, along with their examined coins. However, according to Hazard's catalogue, an additional king has to be listed, named after his grandfather, Saqūt (Hazard 1952, 59). This suggestion is also examined in the present paper. Furthermore, this dynasty had a complex relationship with their overlords, the Ḥammūdids, and their neighbours, the ‘Abbādids, which should also be explored in the context of their intertwined history.

In addition to the previously mentioned points, it is noteworthy that the coins of this dynasty feature unusual titles that combine an Andalusian style with an Eastern one. This blend warrants discussion to uncover the potential reasons for combining both styles.

SAQŪT IBN MUḤAMMAD (434- 471 AH / 1042 -1078 AD)

According to Ibn Bassām, Ibn al-Abbār, and the unknown author of *Mafākher al-Barbar* his name is Saqūt ibn Muḥammad (سقوت بن محمد) (Ibn Bassām 1997, 657) (Ibn al-Abbār 1985, 50) (Unknown 1998, 58-9). It is to be noted that the unknown author of *Mafākher al-Barbar* replicated Ibn Bassām's information regarding the story of Saqūt. Ibn Bassām wrote his accounts in a poetic style, which limits the amount of details available. There is little information about Saqūt's history prior to his ascension as a ruler. Some sources indicate that he was a slave to a blacksmith who purchased him from the captivity of *Barghawāṭah*, after which he came to the attention of ‘Alī ibn Ḥammūd (407-408 AH/1016-1017 AD), the founder of Bani-Ḥammūd dynasty.

Saqūt gradually rose in status under his new master, and after gaining his freedom, he eventually obtained power and became the governor of Ceuta (Ibn Bassām 1997, 657) (‘. a.-R. Ibn Khaldūn 2000, 295). Ceuta had been under the control of the Ḥammūdids since the Umayyad Caliph Sulaymān al-Musta‘īn (400 AH/1009 AD then 403-407 AH /1012-1016 AD) had handed it over to ‘Alī ibn Ḥammūd in 403 AH/1012 AD. This transfer occurred three years after ‘Alī crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and seized Ceuta on behalf of Caliph Sulaymān. During that time, Ceuta gained in power as it served as the seat of the Ḥammūdīd heirs destined to rule the Maghreb. Notably, Ibn Ḥammūd was the first to reopen the mint in Ceuta after several years of inactivity. He had minted a Fatimid dinar in 386 AH/996 AD, which was published by Stephen Album as no.19 (Album 1998, 1) and Nicol as no.563 (Nicol 2006, 78). Alī ibn Ḥammūd had to pay the Maghrebi troops directly instead of sending them money from Cordoba to the Maghreb, as this was necessary to cover the costs of alliances with the Berber tribes. After reopening the mint in Ceuta, the currency was minted locally throughout the Ḥammūdīd period (Ariza Armada 2018, 170-173).

Historical sources do not provide a precise date for when Saqūt began ruling Ceuta; however, some references suggest that this occurred after the assassination of *al-Khādīm Najā al-Ṣaqlabi*, the slave of Ḥassan ibn Yaḥyā, the Ḥammūdīd Caliph (al-Darāji 2007, 5-7). *Najā* was planning to seize power from the Ḥammūdīds and likely would have succeeded had the Berber soldiers not killed him around the year 434 AH/1042 AD (Ibn al-‘Aṭīr 1987, 105). Al-Ḥumaydi noted that the Ḥammūdīd Caliph, Idrīs II ibn Yaḥyā, appointed two men, Saqūt and Rizq Allāh, to govern Ceuta and Tangier respectively on his behalf following *Najā*'s assassination. However, al-Ḥumaydi did not specify the date of this appointment (al-Ḥumaydi 1966, 35). Nineteen years later, in 453 AH/1061 AD, Saqūt seized complete control of the two cities after killing his partner Rizq Allāh and conquering Tangier. At that point, he became the sole governor of Tangier, Ceuta, and the *Ghammārah* Lands (Fig.1) (Sālim 1993, 45). From that year onward, he gained full power (Ibn Bassām 1997, 658), and appointed his son Yaḥyā, titled al-‘Izz, as his heir, even inscribing his name on his coins (Ibn Tāwīy 1982, 41-2).

Meanwhile, the Hammūdīd Caliphate had collapsed four years before this event, paving the way for Saqūt to eliminate Rizq Allāh and assume full authority.



Fig. 1 Map showing the location of Ceuta, Tangier and al-Andalus

<https://www.quora.com/If-the-Almoravid-Empire-started-in-Mauritania-why-is-it-labelled-a-Moroccan>

Saqūt maintained his strong position in his territories until the Almoravids decided to end his rule and conquer Ceuta and Tangier. The Almoravids claimed that their reason for acting was to cross the Gibraltar to assist the Muslims in al-Andalus. However, it can be inferred that Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn was likely biding his time to prepare his army and find a justifiable reason to invade Ceuta and Tangier in order to secure access to al-Andalus. Therefore, he responded to the ruler of Seville, al-Mu'tamid ibn 'Abbād's call for help. This is supported by historical

evidence found in the reply Yūsuf sent to al-Mu'tamid after the request, in which Yūsuf wrote to him. *"I will not be able to help you unless I control Ceuta and Tangier first"* (Ibn Abī Zara' 1972, 142). Before that message, in 464 AH/1071 AD, Yūsuf sent messages to the prominent tribes of *Zināta*, *Maṣmūda*, and *Ghammārah*, urging them to pledge allegiance to him. They responded positively to his request (Ibn Abī Zara' 1972, 142). As a result, the Almoravids seized part of Saqūt's territories before invading Tangier and Ceuta. For his own strategy, Yūsuf sent messengers to Saqūt, requesting his help and cooperation to save al-Andalus from the Christians. Historical sources indicate that Saqūt intended to respond positively to this request; however, he would have done so had his son Yaḥyā not intervened. Consequently, Yūsuf decided to confront Saqūt (Ibn al-Abbār 1985, 98). He headed to Tangier in 471 AH/1078 AD, where the two armies met outside the city. Despite being nearly 90 years old at the time, Saqūt personally participated in the battle and fought bravely until he was killed. Meanwhile, his son Yaḥyā fled to Ceuta to seek refuge (Ibn Bassām 1997, 660-1).

After Saqūt was killed, his son Yaḥyā became the ruler of Ceuta until the Almoravids attacked him in 477 AH/1084 AD with the cooperation of the 'Abbāids (al-Bārūdī 1989, 65-6). The latter cooperated as their plan was to acquire more territories in al-Andalus, which was evident when they invaded Algeciras.

PROBLEMATIC AND METHODOLOGY

Previous studies largely overlooked Saqūt's coins, possibly due to their poor condition. Hazard noted Saqūt and his coins in his catalogue, stating that

"Ceuta was held by succession of non-royal adventures culminating in the Barghawāṭah Berber Saqaut and his posterity. His coins, in an illegible stubby Kūfi script on silver so base it is usually termed copper, are nonetheless important" (Hazard 1952, 58).

Rodríguez Lorente and Ibrahim also wrote in their catalogue that *"Los dirhemes que hemos visto de esta dinastía son de cobre"* *"all the dirhams that reached us were of copper"* (J. J. Rodríguez Lorente & Ibrahim 1987, 105). For the four dirhams presented in this catalogue, no illustrations were included, except for one facsimile that provides a partly inaccurate reading, presenting a mystery that is examined in this article. Many of Saqūt's coins featured illegible inscriptions due to their poor quality, which was caused by an increased copper

content—an issue common to Andalusian coins of that era, including the Ḥammūdi coins. The low quality of the dirhams may be attributed to the so-called Silver Crisis (Ariza Armada 2018, 190-1). Another factor that discouraged numismatists from focusing on Saqūt's coins is their unclear and incomplete dates. Additionally, the examined pieces from this dynasty are regarded as quite rare, according to Stephen Album's Checklist (Album 2011, 68). Even when Ibrahim and Canto Garcia published their catalogue in 2004, he included only one dirham for Saqūt, no.398, 3.09g, 22mm, dated uncertainly, possibly to 466 AH/1037 AD (Canto Garcia & Ibrahim, 2004, p. 277).

Saqūt's coins remain significant for several reasons. They are regarded as the only archaeological source that features the names of *Barghawātah* kings on official coins, marking them as the sole representatives of the *Mulūk al-Ṭawā'if* (Party Kings) in Morocco at that time. Furthermore, this dynasty is regarded as quite small, made only of two or three kings. However, they ruled over a strategically important area, which at that time served as the sole bridge to cross into al-Andalus via the Gibraltar Strait (Fig. 1). They maintained this control for nineteen years and then governed independently for nearly twenty-four years, starting from (453 AH/1061 AD to 477 AH/1084 AD). This suggests that their reign was relatively powerful and stable, even in the presence of major powers like the Abbasids and the Fatimids nearby.

The assassination of Yaḥyā al-'Izz should have marked the end of this dynasty. However, Hazard proposed that there might be a third generation within this dynasty, as indicated by the names and titles found on the dirhams of al-'Izz b. Saqūt, which is discussed in this paper.

WAS SAQŪT A SUNNI MUSLIM OR KHARIJITE?

There is a consensus among ancient historians about the origins of the kings of *Barghawātah*. Ibn al-Khaṭīb noted that the people of *Barghawātah* were linked to Ṣāliḥ ibn Ṭarīf, who was referred to as *Berbāṭi* due to his roots in Barbate, a municipality in the Province of Cádiz, near Jerez de la Frontera in southwestern Iberia. Ṣāliḥ, the second ruler of *Barghawātah*, emerged in Tāmisnā during the reign of Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Malik, around 125 AH (742-744 AD), and was of Jewish descent. He is believed to be the son of Simeon, grandson of Jacob, and great-grandson of Isaac. Ṣāliḥ claimed to be a prophet, presented himself as “*Ṣāliḥ al-Mu'minīn*,” and created a new Qur'an consisting of eighty Suras in the Berber language. He instructed his followers to observe fasting in Rajab instead of Ramadan and imposed other unusual practices. Before his disappearance, Ṣāliḥ spoke to his son 'Ilyas, whom he appointed as the new ruler, claiming he would return during the reign of the seventh king of *Barghawātah*. However, he vanished and was never seen again (Ibn al-Khaṭīb 1964, 180-2). After some time, the name *Berbāṭi* evolved into *Berghāṭi*. Ibn Khaldūn noted a different origin for Ṣāliḥ, stating that he descended from the *Maṣmūda* tribe of Morocco. However, many of the details about his life remain consistent with what Ibn al-Khaṭīb recorded (Ibn al-Khaṭīb 1964, 180-2). (Ibn Khaldūn 2000, 276-7).

Being among those known as *al-Barghawāṭi*, along with Saqūt's notable involvement in maritime piracy in the Mediterranean, led some ancient historians to unfairly exaggerate his reputation, even accusing him of being a non-Muslim of the Kharijites, similar to Ṣāliḥ ibn Ṭarīf. This bias is evident in Ibn Bassām's description of Saqūt as "the running snake and the burning flame," a quote from Ibn Ḥayyān. Ibn Bassām also made an indirect comparison between Saqūt and the 'Abbādid king of Seville, referring to their conflict as “the colossal competition between the 'Abbādid king and his neighbour Saqūt.” He explained this rivalry by noting the “discontent of the clever king”—referring to Ibn 'Abbād of Seville—“regarding the unfairness of his Kharijite neighbour, Saqūt” (Ibn Bassām 1997, 658). Another possible reason for the exaggeration regarding Saqūt's beliefs is found in the writings of the author of *Mafakher*

al-Barbar, who linked the two *Barghawāṭi* dynasties—those of Ṣāliḥ and Saqūt. He stated, “The first appearance of the Barghawāṭa was in 125 AH/742 AD, and the last of their kings was the *Hājib* ruler of Ceuta and Tangier,” referring to the son of Saqūt Yaḥyā (Unknown 2013, 232). This declaration warrants a separate, extensive study, which cannot be addressed here. However, the statement is inaccurate, as Yaḥyā, the son of Saqūt, ruled only Ceuta following his father's death.

Based on the previous accounts, Saqūt would be expected to adhere to the same Kharijite beliefs. However, some recent historians argue that this view is incorrect, citing other historical references. Al-‘Abbādi (al-‘Abbādi N.D, 286-7), al-Darāji (al-Darāji 2007) and others presented reasonable arguments to challenge the previously mentioned opinion. In their studies, they relied on various historical accounts to demonstrate that Saqūt was not a Kharijite. For instance, Ibn ‘Adhārī noted that Abū al-Walīd ibn Jahūr, the king of Córdoba (435-462 AH/1043-1070 AD), received three messages on the same day with different requests. The first was from Saqūt, asking for a skilled reader of the Qur’an, while Ibn Ṣamādiḥ, the king of Almería, requested a maid who could play the oud, and Ibn ‘Abbād sought a maid who played the flute. This led al-Walīd to joke about the situation, remarking, “An ignorant person seeks a reader, while well-educated people seek falsehoods” (Ibn ‘Adhārī 2013, 477-8). Although this saying was intended to undermine Saqūt, it also highlighted his interest in the Holy Qur’an and religious studies, as he sought a skilled reader to join his court. This incident was not the only evidence of Saqūt’s commitment to Islam and religious scholarship. An article dedicated to Qur’anic studies during Saqūt’s reign noted the presence of many theologians at his court, including Shaykh al-Ḥoṣari, who moved from al-Qayrawān to Ceuta after 449 AH/1057 AD and taught the branch of *Qira’at*—transmitting the Qur’an recitations in an approved manner—for over ten years. The article of A‘rāb also mentioned other theologians, as well as a number of poets and writers in Saqūt’s court (A‘rāb 1983, 25-7).

Another perspective on Saqūt’s beliefs was presented by Armada in 2010, who suggested that Saqūt was loyal to three of the Ḥammūdīd Caliphs: “‘Alī, his son, and his grandson Idrīs II.” Armada proposed that this loyalty stemmed from Shī‘ī influences based on the historical roots of the Barghawāṭa's religion, suggesting that Saqūt’s allegiance aligned with a religious component (Ariza Armada 2010, 237). However, this suggestion lacks evidence, as neither historical sources nor Saqūt’s coinage indicate any signs of Shī‘ī tendencies, whether through specific inscriptions or decorative elements. Furthermore, a pertinent question arises: if Saqūt was indeed influenced by Shī‘ī ideology, why did he not recognise the Fatimid Caliph and inscribe his name on his coins instead of that of the Abbasid Sunnite Caliph? It seems more logical to suggest that he was Sunnite or, at the very least, aimed to display Sunni inclinations.

Several other questions arise: Could it be possible that Saqūt practiced two different religious rituals simultaneously? Perhaps he maintained a local belief privately for himself and his tribe while publicly adhering to Sunni practices to appease the broader Sunni population? Did he merely pretend to be Sunnite? These questions are challenging to answer, especially given the lack of confirmation in historical sources, which mention nothing about his involvement in any specific Kharijite rituals.

Moreover, the accusation of Saqūt being a Kharijite could be a product of distortion by rival states seeking to undermine him for political reasons. Two dynasties might have engaged in this: the Almoravids, who infused their political movement with a religious character and framed their wars as *Jihad*, and the ‘Abbādid, whose kings were competitors to Saqūt. Spreading rumours was a common phenomenon in the Middle Ages, especially those related to religious beliefs, due to their significant impact on public perception and their potential to challenge the legitimacy of dynasties’ claims to the Sharif lineage. A notable example occurred during the Sa’dian Sharifs era, when the first Allawite Sharif Sultan, Muḥammad, denied the Sa’dian claim to descent from the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), and such rumours circulated

during their reign (al-Nāṣiri 2001, 12).

VERIFYING THE RIGHT SPELLING OF SAQŪT’S NAME

Saqūt’s name has been recorded in various forms in historical sources. These different variations include: سقوط in both *Mafākhir al-Barbar* (Unknown 2013, 52) and al-Darāji (al-Darāji 2007), سكوت in Ibn Khaldūn and Ibn Abī Zara‘ (Ibn Khaldūn 2000, 295) (al-Nāṣiri 2001, 30) (Ibn Abī Zara‘ 1972), سواجات in Ibn 'Athār (Ibn 'Adhārī 2013, 455), سواجان in De Lutheynia (De Lutheynia 1992, 44,51), and finally سقوت in Ibn Bassām and Ibn al-Abbār (Ibn Bassām 1997, 658) (Ibn al-Abbār 1985, 51). These variations require verifying the correct spelling of his name through official documents, particularly his coinage.

Lavoix previously verified the name of Saqūt based on the pieces he examined and confirmed that the correct spelling is سقوت (Lavoix, *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Espagne et Afrique*, 1891, p. 197). However, an investigation of the available coins in previous catalogues, private collections, and internet sources revealed that only two out of the 36 examined pieces bore the uncertain spelling of سقوت (Fig. 2), while the remaining 34 pieces featured the name as سجوت / Saggūt (Fig. 3). One of the two coins featuring the spelling سقوت is preserved in the ANS, catalogued as No. 2018.40.42, and dated 465 AH (Fig. 8). The other coin was published in Jesús Vico Auction 164, held on 22 February 2023, as Lot 421, with a questionable date of 467 AH/1074 AD (Fig. 3). The new reading of سجوت / Saggūt is very close to Ibn 'Adhārī's spelling. This also adds to the existing information in earlier historical sources. A good reason for using both spellings, is that the letter ق /qaf sometimes could be inverted by the Arabs to the pronunciation of the letter ج /Jeem (Shubūt 2018, 11).



Fig.2 The questionable spelling of Saqūt (سقوت) appears on one of his dirhams, which bears the uncertain date of 467 AH/1074 AD - Jesús Vico Auction 164, 22 February 2023 Lot 421 2.82g 22mm.



ANS No. 2018.40.45 3.738g 22mm.	Ibercoin Auction 31 30 October 2019 Lot 190 3.47g.	Jesús Vico Auction 164, 22 February 2023 Lot 419 3.33g 21m.	ANS No. 2018.40.44 3.075g 22mm.
------------------------------------	--	---	------------------------------------

Fig. 3 Different variations of the word سجوت on examples of his coins.

SAQŪT’S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ḤAMMŪDIDS AND THE ‘ABBĀDIDS

As a former slave of the Ḥammūdids, Saqūt was expected to show gratitude and loyalty to his masters. However, historical sources present a more complex picture. In some instances, Saqūt appeared to be loyal to the Ḥammūdids, while in others, his actions suggested a different allegiance. One instance indicating his apparent loyalty occurred when the Ḥammūdīd Caliph of Málaga, Idrīs II (434-438 AH/1042-1046 AD), and his family sought refuge in Ceuta during a turbulent period when the Caliph's cousin had usurped the throne. During this time, Saqūt welcomed them warmly, and they stayed at the palace. Saqūt stayed loyal to that Ḥammūdīd

Caliph, Idrīs II, until he died in 444 AH, however, he kept him from the public so that nobody could reach him. This act may have been Saqūt performing his duty as a chancellor (*al-Ḥājib*); perhaps was he given the title of *al-Ḥājib* thanks to this action (A'rab 1983, 21). However, he exaggerated in preventing the Caliph from meeting anyone, not only that, but also it seemed that the Caliph had almost no power or authority, where Saqūt was the real powerful ruler then. This decision could be considered as the first step Saqūt made towards his independency.

Another incident happened after Idrīs III (444-5 AH/1052-3 AD) ascended to the throne. Historical sources mention that this Caliph had a psychiatric condition and left his capital Malaga briefly after becoming a ruler and crossed the sea to Morocco in a merchant clothes. When Idrīs III reached *Ghammārah*, some people caught him and sent him to Saqūt, who ordered him to be killed (De Lutheynia 1992, 47). This order came because Saqūt supported his uncle Idrīs II who was expelled from Malaga and was waiting to seize it again (Ariza Armada 2010, 462). On the other hand, another incident showing Saqūt's disloyalty to his masters happened when the Ḥammūdīd Caliph al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad (440-450 AH/1048-1058 AD), ruler of Algeciras *al-jazīra al-Khadrā'*, was besieged in his city by the 'Abbādid king al-Mu'taḍid ibn Muḥammad in 446 AH/1055 AD. Despite al-Qāsim asking Saqūt for military assistance, the latter did not respond to his request, forcing al-Qāsim to surrender. It seems that Saqūt's loyalty was to the one of the family branches that was fighting for power, in the person of Idrīs II (Ariza Armada 2010, 236-7&459). In 446 AH al-Qāsim left Algeciras and headed to Ceuta intending to stay there. However, in the middle of his journey, he learnt that Saqūt was not going to receive him, and therefore, he changed direction to Almería whose governor al-Mu'taḍim ibn Ṣamādaḥ welcomed him and let him stay there for the rest of his life (De Lutheynia 1992, 51-2).

From the previous incidents, it can be concluded that Saqūt was trying to ignore his masters, the Ḥammūdīds, in order to be an independent ruler. However, at the time, this could not be achieved until he got rid of his partner Rizq Allāh, which happened in 453 AH/1061 AD (al-Bārūdī 1989, 60). From 453 AH/1061 AD onwards, Saqūt had no reigning partner until Almoravids killed him.

However, there was still one more competitor: 'Abbād al-Mu'taḍad ibn Muḥammad, king of Seville (434-461 AH/1042-1068 AD). Ibn Bassām briefly described their competitive relationship, noting that they had mutually arrested merchants from the other side (Ibn Bassām 1997, 659). However, he did not mention that 'Abbād al-Mu'taḍid sought to bring Saqūt under his authority to fully control Gibraltar. Saqūt's refusal to comply contributed significantly to their hostility (al-Bārūdī 1989, 61).

After the Almoravid army captured Marrakesh, Saqūt sent a warning message to 'Abbād. However, 'Abbād feared Saqūt more than he did the Almoravids (Ibn al-Abbār 1985, 50-2). Their relationship was marked by hostility, eventually escalating into an actual naval conflict. One notable incident occurred when 'Abbād assembled 80 warships to launch an attack on Ceuta, but failed to conquer it. As a result, Saqūt gained a significant reputation about his sea power (al-Bārūdī 1989, 61-2). He kept his extensive piracy going in the Mediterranean Sea until his activities were brought to an end by the cooperation of the Almoravids and al-Mu'tamid, the son of 'Abbād, in the year 471 AH/1078 AD.

THE COINS MINTED DURING SAQŪT'S RULE

The coins minted in Ceuta under Saqūt's authority are divided in two categories (Fig.4).

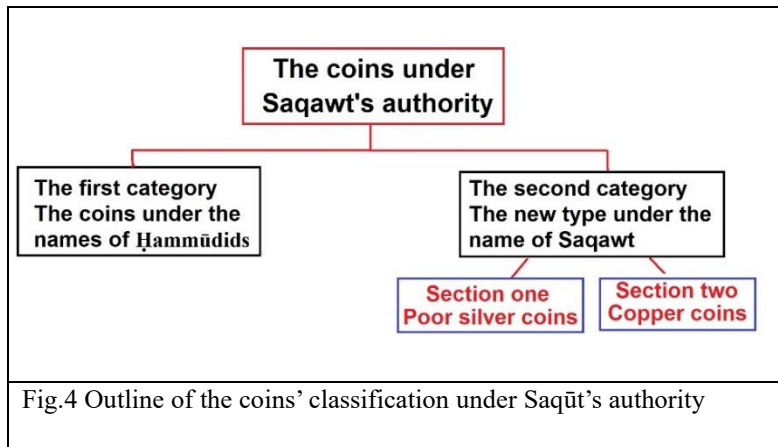



Fig.4 Outline of the coins' classification under Saqūt's authority

The first category includes coins minted in the names of the Ḥammūdids Caliphs, which followed their common types that do not bear Saqūt's name or any indication of his authority. Their dates lie during the period of four Ḥammūdīd Caliphs starting from Idrīs II, Muḥammad al-Mahdī, Idrīs al-Muwaffaq and Muḥammad al-Musta'ī between 434 AH/1042 AD and 449

AH/1057 AD. However, Hazard stated that the only member of this dynasty to mint in Ceuta after the year 439 AH is Idrīs II, who minted coins of poor silver alloy (Hazard 1952, 58). These poor silver issue date from 437 AH/1045 AD to 444 AH/1052 AD (Ariza Armada 2010, 494 ,519). For gold coins issue, it is noted that they end prior to Saqūt's period, therefore, it would be out of this study's scope. One example of the poor silver coins of the first category (Fig. 5) is included in this study to show the qualitative shift that occurred after Saqūt's independency (Fig. 6). As yet, all the internet dirhams' examples of this period are in bad condition; therefore, I would like to thank the American Numismatic Society for providing me with the following unpublished piece, which is clear to read.

<p>Madīna Sabtah. xx7 H</p>  <p>Margins:</p>	<p>(Obv.)</p> <p>لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له</p> 	<p>(Rev.)</p> <p>الأمير الإمام إدريس العالي بالله أمير المؤمنين محمد</p> 
<p>بمدينة سبتة سنة سبع</p>	<p>بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بمدينة [نة] سبتة سنة سبع</p>	<p>محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليـ</p>
<p>Fig. 5 Unpublished Ḥammūdīd dirham of Idrīs II- minted in Ceuta XX7H- ANS No. 1961.106.2, 2.227 g 21mm</p>		

This Ḥammūdīd dirham marks the early period of Saqūt's loyalty to the Ḥammūdīds. It features one of the common Ḥammūdīd types from that time, bearing the names of Idrīs II and his heir, Muḥammad. This dirham does not display any symbols of Saqūt's authority. Instead, it features the Kalima in three lines in the field on the obverse, while the mint name "Madīnat Sabta" and the date are inscribed along the margin of the obverse. The centre of the reverse features the

acknowledgment of the Ḥammūdīd Caliph and the name of his heir, Muḥammad. Additionally, the margin of the reverse includes a verse from the Holy Qur'an (IX:33). The date on this dirham lacks the hundreds and tens, which makes it possible to suggest the year 437 AH, as Idrīs II did not rule in 447 AH.

The second category consists of Saqūt's coins minted after his declaration of independence.

Hazard divided these into two sections, despite there being few issues. These coins were issued in Saqūt's name, without recognition from any Caliph, except for an imagined one. Hazard's division was based on the metal of the coins, yet both sections are similar in design and inscriptions, with only minor differences in the way certain letters are written in specific words on the coins' field.

The first section of the second category includes the silver coinage, primarily composed of poor-quality silver (Hazard 1952, 58). **The second section** consists of four copper coins listed in Lavoix's catalogue, representing the copper coin category in Hazard's classification. The inscriptions in both sections are written in a stubby Kūfī script, making them difficult to read, especially due to the loss of certain areas on some coins. Additionally, most of these coins are in poor condition, with only a few exceptions.

It is well established that low-quality silver coins were widespread during the era of the Party Kings, resulting in silver dirhams that were nearly equivalent to copper ones. This situation persisted until the rise of the Almoravids, who reformed the monetary system (Burūs 1993, 133). Therefore, it is crucial to first examine the phenomenon of minting poor-quality gold and silver coins during the period of *Mulūk al-Ṭawā'if* (Party Kings) in al-Andalus. This investigation will help understanding the context that influenced Saqūt's coins, as he was one of the representatives of the Ḥammūdids for at least nineteen years.

A direct reason for the deteriorating conditions of *Mulūk al-Ṭawā'if*'s currencies was due to the political and economic circumstances surrounding this era, as sources and references indicate that the *Mulūk al-Ṭawā'if* had to impose high and continuous taxes on their subjects to pay an annual tribute to King Alfonso VI, which historians referred to as *jizya*, in exchange for their security (Unknown 1979, 41). This amount of money may have varied every year. In addition, these kings needed to pay their soldiers' salary (Ḥājkūla 2021, 675-680). Not only did the party kings have to pay Alfonso VI a big amount of money, but they also had to deliver it in the form of pure gold coins. In parallel, they struck low standard currency for their people, in order to make up for the loss of paying this tribute. One of the incidents that shows the deteriorating situation of these kings was when al-Mu'tamid ibn 'Abbād prepared the money to pay Alfonso VI and sent his representatives to meet the King's messenger. However, after they met, the Spanish Jewish messenger refused to receive the tribute and left the meeting due to the lack of purity of the gold's calibre (Unknown 1979, 41-42). Although this situation contravened the legitimate position of the currency, the Andalusian people were obliged to accept it and to deal with these inferior coins (Ruwaybiḥ 2021-2022, 12,68).

Adding to the aforementioned points, it was clear that the gap between the wealth of each of the party kings and the Caliphs was extremely big, therefore it was hard for the party kings to afford the good techniques that were required for minting coins, and bringing in high-quality technicians to take care of the details of the complicated process (Burūs 1993, 128). Back to the Ḥammūdids, it seemed that the economic situation was in deterioration, which can be observed through the loss of coins quality, where the mints struck the dinars of electrum (alloy of gold and silver or gold and copper) and dirhams of copper and billon (alloy of silver and copper). These alloys may be due to the so-called "silver crisis" (Ariza Armada 2017, 79). Therefore, the Ḥammūdids produced their dinars with a larger amount of silver and the dirhams were of poor silver value. which had been also reflected on the *fatāwā* of the theologians at this time. The Textbooks of jurisprudence contained citizen's questions to the *faqīhs* concerning many issues, including the subjects asked about the state of the underweight and full weight coins that were paid together during selling deals, creating disagreement between sellers and buyers (Tajinnānat 2017, 312,317). The *fatāwā* of the *faqīhs* were not only respected by citizens across various historical periods, but also by prominent Sultans, such as Sīdī Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh, the Alawite Sultan, who depended on these *fatāwā* for significant political matters (Galal 2024, 293).

PROBLEMATIC DATES IN THE SECOND CATEGORY OF SAQŪT'S COINAGE

Due to the poor condition of Saqūt's independent ruling's coins, many of their dates remain uncertain. Vives provided seven examples from the first section (poor silver), which he assumed to bear the years: 455 AH, 456 AH, 462 AH and the years from 464 AH/1071 AD to 467 AH/1074 AD. However, no photos were included to verify the readings (Vives Y Escudero, 1893, pp. 131-2). Following that, Prieto contested the dates prior to 464 AH/1071 AD in his catalogue *Los Reyes De Taifas* (Vives Prieto 1926, 117), stating that the series of Saqūt's coins do not extend beyond the year 467 AH/1074 AD. Del Rivero also supported this view, asserting that there is no series for Saqūt before the year 464 AH/1071 AD (Hazard 1952, 58, 235). The dates in the second section of Lavoix's catalogue include only three years: 462 AH/1069 AD, 464/1071, and 465/1072 (Lavoix, Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Espagne et Afrique, 1891, pp. 194-7). The coin dating of 462 AH/1069 AD has an unclear photo. There is also one undated piece. The third edition of Stephen Album's Checklist from 2011 records the dates of Saqūt's issues as falling between 464 AH/1071 AD and 467 AH/1074 AD (Album 2011, 68), thereby omitting the year 462 AH/1069 AD.

By investigating the coins of the date 462 AH/1069 AD, both of Lavoix's catalogue and Vives's one have unclear photos (Lavoix, Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Espagne et Afrique, 1891, p. 194) for no.503 - (Vives Y Escudero, 1893, p. 131) no.876. Also, coins of the same date 462 AH/1069AD on websites seem to be read incorrectly. The clearest photo is for a dirham preserved in the ANS, No. 0000.999.9897. However, the date seems to be 466 AH/1073 AD instead, therefore the date of 462 AH/1069 AD can be questioned.

Tonegawa's website had presented a dirham of the date 468 AH/1075 AD, 3.40g, 22mm (Tonegawa collection n.d.), which contributes to Saqūt's series of coins already published in previous catalogues. In addition, a dirham fraction was sold in the auction 111 of Tauler and Fau, lot 6151, held on 24 May 2022, 1.86g (Tauler and Fau Auction 24 May 2022). From the previous survey, Saqūt's coins dating to his independence are restricted to the period between 464 AH/1071 AD and 468 AH/1075 AD until new pieces may show up. One must note that all dates on Saqūt's coins do not record the word for four hundreds "أربعمائة" (Fig. 9).



Fig. 6 Facsimile of a dirham dated 464 AH/ 1071 AD for Saqūt (Lorente & Ibrahim 1985). Red added by the author.

PREVIOUS STUDIES AND MISREADING OF SOME WORDS ON SAQŪT'S COINS

So far, the coins of Saqūt have not been easily read, which challenged the correct reading of some unusual Arabic titles inscribed on these coins, especially for non-Arabs cataloguers, in addition to the unfamiliar epithets written on them. For instance, the title *المُعَان*/al-Mu'ān on the obverse of the coins was read by Lane-Poole as *المعاذ* (S. Lane-Poole 1889, 145) and by Lavoix as *المعاز* (Lavoix, Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque

Nationale, Espagne et Afrique, 1891, p. 194). Concerning the reverse, the title *بهاء الدولة* was read by Lane-Poole as *المنصور بالله*. He additionally read the word *العز*/al-'Izz as *أبو يحيى*, which may have affected Lorente and Ibrahim's interpretation, when they read the two words *أبو يحيى* instead of the title *المُعَان*/al-Mu'ān on the obverse of the dirham in Pl. XV (Rodriguez Lorente & Ibrahim 1985). In their catalogue, they did not include a photo; however, they inserted one figure which contains the aforementioned misread word in Pl. XV. Lorente and Ibrahim added

the letter mim/م to the word العز/ al-‘Izz on the reverse, so the word was read as المعز. Both incorrect readings are coloured in red in Fig. 6. It is possible that the reason for reading the word as المعز was due to the widespread use of this title during that era, as it was held by several rulers, including Yūsuf ibn Tāšfīn’s son. Fortunately, in their later reference *Numismatica de Ceuta*, the same authors corrected the misread words. They, however, did not insert photos but the same figure with the same errors as Pl. XI (J. J. Rodriguez Lorente & Ibrahim 1987, 105).

The correct reading of Saqūt’s dirham is shown in Fig. 7.

<p>(Obv.) المنصور لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له المعان سجوت</p>	<p>(Rev.) الحاجب الإمام عبد الله أمير المؤمنين بهاء الدولة العز</p>
---	---



<p>بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بمدينة سبتة سنة أربع وستين</p>	<p>محمد رسول الله أرسله بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره</p>
---	---

Fig. 7 The wording of Saqūt’s coins after Photoshop modification.

THE WORDING ON COINS FROM THE SECOND CATEGORY

From the two sections of Saqūt’s coins dating of his independent rule, only one type was found so far, with slight variations in the way of writing certain words on its examples. The wording of this category consists of six lines for both the obverse and the reverse. The obverse’s centre contains the *Kalima/Shahada* لا شريك له / الله وحده / إلا / preceded by the title *al-Manṣūr* (the victorious) and followed by another title *al-Mu’ān* (the helped), then his name “Saqūt” in the sixth line. The historian Ibn Bassām stated that Saqūt started using these two titles after killing his partner Rizq Allāh and being independent. It would suggest a date after 453 AH/1061AD (Ibn Bassām 1997, 659). This chronology for using specific titles is thus supported by the dates of these coins. Concerning the origin of these two titles, the title *al-Manṣūr* was rarely used by rulers before Saqūt in the Islamic world, as it was considered as an epithet which was first used by the Abbasid Caliph *abū ja’far* (136-158 AH/754-775 AD). Later, it was taken by the Buyid ruler Fannā (Panāh) Khusraw ‘Aḍud al-Dawla who conquered Baghdad in 366 AH/976 AD (al-Bāshā 1989, 512).

On the other hand, this title was taken by the most well-known powerful *Hājib* of Andalus, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī ‘Āmir, who was the head of the mint of Cordoba, then the chief minister under the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba. Ibn Abī ‘Āmir took the title *al-Manṣūr* in the year 371 AH/ 981AD, in addition to his principal title of *al-Hājib*. He extended his power by blocking Caliph Hishām off his people, claiming that the Caliph wanted to spend all his time in worship for God and left the political matters to Ibn Abī ‘Āmir. Therefore, he was able to hold the power himself until his death (Ibn ‘Adhārī 2013, 271-273). Ibn Abī ‘Āmir ruled for almost twenty-four years and left the authority to his sons. This significant experience inspired Saqūt to make his own attempt on the Moroccan lands. Not only did he attempt a similar coup but he also took the same titles of the powerful *Hājib* ‘Āmir, which are *al-Hājib* and *al-Manṣūr*. However, he added the new title *al-Mu’ān*, who was the first to use.

He succeeded in his objectives, as he ruled Ceuta for almost 37 years, including eighteen years of independency. While Hazard stated that the title *al-Hājib* was used for the son of Saqūt (Hazard 1952, 58), there is conflicting evidence to suggest differently: this title

was the most powerful and significant one among all the epithets at the time. After the absence of a real Caliph, this title was taken by Saqūt, but also all the party kings who were keen to inscribe this title on their coins. For this reason, the author states that this title refers to Saqūt rather than his son.

The marginal legends of the obverse recorded the sentence “In the name of Allāh, this dirham was struck in”, followed by the mint name *Sabta* (Ceuta), which was preceded by the word “*Madīna*”/city. This sentence appeared on all known Saqūt’s issues, with no exceptions. Despite having another famous mint in Morocco under Saqūt’s authority in *Ṭanja* /Tangier, the only represented mint on all issues of Saqūt is *Madīna* Ceuta. In fact, Tangier was not an active mint at the time. Its mention disappeared after the last known issue of its coins before Saqūt, which was struck in the year 198 AH/813 AD, by the Idrisids (Diler 2009, 833). According to Amal, a later Idrisid date was presented for Tangier’s last issues, 277 AH/890 AD (Amal 2017, 48-9). More possible Idrisid coins for al-Qasem’s sons with said mention are also known but without obvious dates. Amal explained the disappearance of Tangier’s mint, to Ceuta’s political, commercial and military importance at the time. This may have led to marginalise Tangier’s role as a mint (Amal 2017, 54).

The reverse’s centre text begins with the most significant title *al-Ḥājib*, which formerly referred to a prominent job during the early times of the Umayyads and Abbasids. The linguistic term is of the sense of prevention, where the *ḥājib* stood by the door of the Caliph to prevent the subjects from entering his residence without his permission (al-Bāshā 1989, 251). The vizier was controlling entrance during that period of the Umayyads and Abbasids, while during the Spanish Umayyads era, the *ḥājib* controlled the Caliph’s meetings with the public and high-level officers. He acted also as a mediator between the Caliph and the viziers. Therefore this position was considered high level in al-Andalus, especially at the time of the late Spanish Umayyads (‘. a.-R. Ibn Khaldūn 2001, 299). The position of the *ḥājib* had increased during the party kings era, as, after the collapse of the Spanish Umayyads, there were no real Caliphs in al-Andalus. None of the kings dared to claim themselves a Caliph. Therefore, they all deliberately mentioned the title of *al-Ḥājib* to ostensibly show their respect to the Caliph, while the real authority was in the current king’s hands. Each king wanted to show that his power came legitimately from a non-existent Caliph (Burūs 1993, 127). Consequently, engraving this title *al-ḥājib* on the king’s coins was of great political importance. As for Saqūt, the situation was sensibly the same, due to his position as a powerful independent king of Ceuta and Tangier after the collapse of the Ḥammūdids.

After this title, three consecutive titles were listed, which referred to a theoretical Caliph, primarily the Abbasid one, given that both the Spanish Umayyad and the Ḥammūdīd Caliphs were gone. The three titles read: الإمام (the leader), عبد الله (Allāh’s worshipper) and أمير المؤمنين (commander of the believers).

Another title of Saqūt, بهاء الدولة *Bahā’ al-Dawla* (splendor of the state), was inscribed on the reverse, just after the Caliph’s titles. This title is unique in the Western Islamic areas does not appear in other historical sources. Vallvé and Ibn Tāwīyt mentioned that the title of *Bahā’ al-Dawla* was used to describe Saqūt’s son Yaḥyā al-‘Izz (Vallvé Bermejo 1963, 178) (Ibn Tāwīyt 1982, 41-2). However, considering that his son Yaḥyā had his own title, Diyā’ al-Dawla, which was mentioned in historical sources and was confirmed by his rare dateless series of coins, as seen in Fig. 14, this association cannot be supported by the evidence identified by the author. The titles, which were added to the word *al-Dawla*, meaning “of the state”, were initially created and spread in the Eastern Islamic areas. There, their history goes back to the Buyid dynasty (al-Bāshā 1989, 62). They were used by sons of *Būyeh*, who appeared in the 4th AH /10th AD century, due to the Abbasid Caliphs’ weakness, which enabled Aḥmad ibn *Būyeh* to occupy the Abbasid capital of Baghdad in 334 AH/945 AD, after few years of conquering *al-Ahwāz* (Ahvaz of Persia) in 326 AH/937 AD. Aḥmad was hired as *amīr al-umarā’*

(commander in chief), by the Abbasid Caliph, then reduced the Caliph’s power and established the Buyid rule (Minīmana 1987, 18-20). The three brothers of *Būyeh* used the honorific titles of *Mu‘izz al-Dawlah* Aḥmad, *Rukn al-Dawlah* Ḥasan and ‘Imād al-Dawlah ‘Alī. Interestingly, Ibn ‘Adhārī mentioned while referring to ibn Abī ‘Āmir, that what ‘Āmir had done to the Spanish Umayyad Caliph was the same as what the Buyids did to the Abbasid Caliph (Ibn ‘Adhārī 2013, 264-5). Furthermore, Saqūt did the same to his masters, the Ḥammūdids, which led him to inscribe these epithets together on his coins, bringing together both influences, Andalusian and Eastern ones.

The last word on the reverse refers to the title of Saqūt’s son, Yaḥyā “al-‘Izz “. Engraving this title on his father’s official dirhams legitimates his power of being his father’s heir. This title has provoked significant disagreements in its reading, due to the stylised letter "ز" (Fig. 8), which gave the impression of being a yāa / ي letter to some readers such as Lane-Poole (S. Lane-Poole 1889, 145).

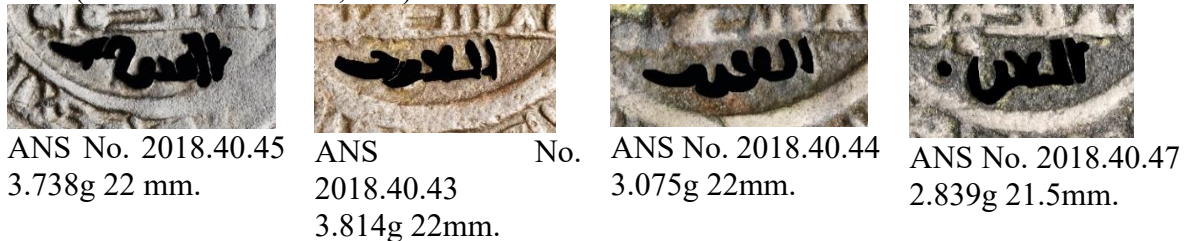


Fig. 8 The stylised writing of the letter ز in the word العز, found on selected dirhams of Saqūt preserved in the ANS.

SELECTED COINS FROM THE SECOND CATEGORY


Four yet unpublished coins include the dates of 465 AH/1073 AD and 467 AH/1074 AD. Thanks to the authorisation of ANS, the author takes the opportunity to document and publish them (Figs. 9-12):

Coin 1

<p>Madīna Sabtah. 465H</p> <p>سنة خمس وستين</p>	<p>(Obv.) المنصور لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له المعان سقوت</p>	<p>(Rev.) الحاجب الإمام عبد الله أمير المؤمنين بهاء الدولة العز</p>
<p>Segments:</p>	<p>بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بمدينة سبتة سنة خمس وستين</p>	<p>... بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره عل</p>
<p>Fig. 9 Unpublished dirham in the name of Saqūt preserved in the ANS 2018.40.42, 3.120 g, 21 mm.</p>		

Coin 2

Madīna Sabtah.
467H/1074 AD

		
<p>سجوت</p> <p>Segments:</p>	<p>بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بمدينة سنة سبع وستين</p>	<p>محمد رسول الله أرسله بالمهدي ودين الحق ليظهره على</p>
<p>Fig. 10 Unpublished dirham in the name of Saqūt preserved in the ANS 2018.40.43, 3.814 g, 22 mm.</p>		

Observation: This dirham and the following two bear the name سجوت/ Saggūt instead of سفوت/ Saqūt.

Coin 3

Madīna Sabtah.
467H/1074 AD

		
<p>سجوت</p> <p>Segments:</p>	<p>...سنة سبع وستين</p>	<p>محمد رسول الله أرسله بالمهدي ودين الحق ليظهره</p>
<p>Fig. 11 Unpublished dirham in the name of Saqūt preserved in the ANS 2018.40.44, 3.075g, 22 mm</p>		

Coin 4

Madīna Sabtah.
467H/1074 AD

		
<p>Segments:</p>	<p>بسم الله ضرب هذا الدرهم بمدينة سبتة سنة سبع وستين</p>	<p>محمد رسول الله أرسله بالمهدي ودين الحق ليظهره</p>
<p>Fig. 12 Unpublished dirham in the name of Saqūt preserved in the ANS 2018.40.47, 2.839 g, 21.5 mm.</p>		

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE COINS OF INDEPENDENCY

The style of writing commonly used on Saqūt's coins attached all the letters of the same word together in some words. The calligrapher also sometimes joined two adjacent words and

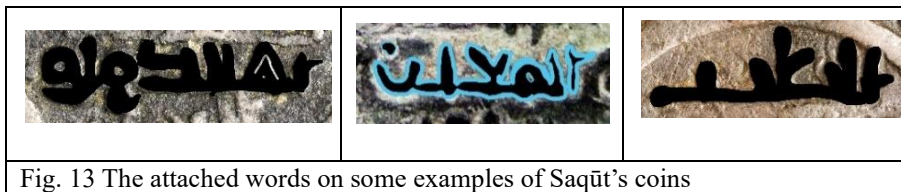


Fig. 13 The attached words on some examples of Saqūt's coins

deleted spaces that should have existed. For instance, this appears with – المعان : الحاجب -بهاء الدولة

From the previous presented examples, it has been clear that Saqūt's coins show big changes in their wording according to their date, whether being before or after his independent rule. Before this event, he produced a pure Hammūdid type, which did not refer to Saqūt, while after, his coins included his name and titles along with his son's epithet. He omitted the details of any real Caliph, mentioning only a generic one, assimilated to the Abbasids. Only the marginal writings were the same in both types, keeping the same style for the obverse: it contained the mint name and date; the reverse's one included the Prophet's message (Qur'an IX:33).

Finally, Hazard's suggestion concerning the third generation of the Saqūt's dynasty needs to be addressed. Hazard analysed the dateless dirhams of Yaḥyā, son of Saqūt, and found that they carry the name of Saqūt on the obverse, preceded by the titles *الحاجب* /*al-Hājib* and *ضياؤ الدولة* /*Ḍiyā' al-Dawla*, while the title of *al-'Izz* is written on the reverse, preceded by the repeated title *ضياؤ الدولة* /*Ḍiyā' al-Dawla*. As a result, he concluded that the name of Saqūt here represents a third generation, in which little Saqūt, son of *al-'Izz*, should have shared his father's epithet *ضياؤ الدولة* /*Ḍiyā' al-Dawla* (Hazard 1952, 59). After Hazard's catalogue, Miles commented on these dirhams with different reading for the first title of *ضياؤ الدولة* /*Ḍiyā' al-Dawla* on the obverse, he read it as *سيف الدولة* (*Sayf al-Dawla*) instead (Miles 1954, 40). However, the reading appears incorrect, because the letters of *ض-ي* are very clear, as shown in a dirham preserved in the ANS, No. 2018.40.48 (Fig. 14).

Although it is unusual for a father and son to share the same epithet, in my opinion, Hazard's suggestion seems logical, because if his opinion is incorrect, only one possible suggestion would remain, which is that this dirham could be attributed to the first ruler Saqūt ibn Muḥammad. However, this possibility remains weak because out of the three epithets on this dirham, only one of them applies to both Saqūt and his son Yaḥyā, which is *al-Hājib*; however the other two, *Ḍiyā' al-Dawla* and *al-'Izz*, match with Yaḥyā, son of Saqūt only, according to the historian's sources such as Ibn Bassām (Ibn Bassām 1997, 661), Ibn abī Zara' (Ibn Abī Zara' 1972, 143), and Ibn Khaldūn (Ibn Khaldūn 2000, 296). The main specific titles *المعان - المنصور* of Saqūt do not exist on this dirham, so this dirham should belong to his son *al-'Izz*.



Fig.14 Dirham for Yaḥyā al-'Izz son of Saqūt preserved in the ANS No. 2018.40.48, 2.521g, 23mm.

DISCUSSION

The prior work of well-known cataloguers documented the independent coinage of the Barghawāṭi chancellor Saqūt, ruler of Ceuta, which represents the second category of coins struck under his authority. These coins are divided into two sections by Hazard: the poor silver dirhams and the copper coins, both minted at a single location, “Madinat Sabta,” during a period ranging between 462 AH/1069 AD and 467 AH/1074 AD, along with some uncertain earlier dates.

However, this study discusses these dates and suggests that those before and including 462 AH/1069 AD are highly doubtful, based on the photographs of those coins, which are often blurred or indistinct. Therefore, the dates of Saqūt’s independent coinage should begin from 464 AH/1071 AD. Additionally, this study includes the date of 468 AH/1075 AD from the Tonegawa collection as part of Saqūt’s coinage. Thus, the range for Saqūt’s coins should be from 464 AH/1071 AD to 468 AH/1075 AD. This study clarifies the political and economic reasons behind the production of poor-quality silver coins for Saqūt, featuring stubby Kufic inscriptions. Their low quality resulted from the addition of more copper, a common practice for Andalusian coins in the period preceding Saqūt, particularly during the late Ḥammūdids’ era and the era of the Party Kings. This situation may also be linked to the so-called Silver Crisis.

Previous studies have been short-term studies and had some gaps, such as verifying the number of the *Barghawāṭi* rulers of this dynasty. As Hazard suggested that this dynasty had three generations through its coins, while other studies neglected such possibility. This article discussed Hazard’s suggestion through the coinage of the second ruler and supported his suggestion.

This study also investigates the correct spelling of the name of the founder of this dynasty and his religious beliefs, which have previously caused conflict among historians. His name has been verified thanks to his coins as سقوت. However, another spelling, سجات (Saggūt), is inscribed on almost all of his coins and has been overlooked by previous works. This discrepancy may arise from some Arabs converting the letter 'qaf' to 'jeem' in pronunciation.

Regarding his religious beliefs, some historical sources state that Saqūt was a Kharijite, similar to Ṣāliḥ ibn Ṭarīf, while others suggest he valued having a skilled reader of the Holy Qur’an in his court, indicating that he was a Sunnite governor. Additionally, a third opinion claims he had Shi’ite tendencies. This study strongly suggests that Saqūt was a Sunnite Muslim governor or at least wanted to present himself as such, as evidenced by the Qur’anic quotations and Sunnite phrases inscribed on his coins, along with his recognition of the Abbasid Caliph. Furthermore, this paper clarifies the reasons behind these diverging opinions, revealing that some historians undermined Saqūt to favour other kings of the ‘Abbādids and Almoravids.

Furthermore, this study discusses the previous misreading of some words on Saqūt’s coins, especially the words المعان, in each of Lavoix and Lane-Poole catalogues, and العز in Lane-Poole and Lorente’s catalogue. This article also discussed the misattribution of the epithet بهاء الدولة to the son of Saqūt, Yaḥyā, when it is mostly his father’s epithet.

This article highlights Saqūt’s relationship with his masters, the Ḥammūdids, and his neighbours, the ‘Abbādids, while also mentioning the reasons for their hostility.

This study investigates the titles inscribed on Saqūt’s coins and reveals the significant Andalusian influence of the impressive chancellor ‘Āmir on Saqūt’s personality. This influence prompted Saqūt to adopt the title al-Manṣūr in addition to his primary title, *al-Ḥājib*, and to inscribe both titles on his coins, along with the new and unique epithets he adopted: المعان and بهاء الدولة. The latter represents an Eastern influence from the Buyids, who marginalised the rule of the Abbasid Caliphs, similar to how Saqūt did with his masters. This title contributes to the narratives found in historical sources.

The coins themselves show several characteristics, including the absence of the four-hundred-word أربعمائة as well as the stylised letter ز in the word العز, which appears in various forms. Additionally, the phenomenon of attaching letters in some words is noted, particularly in the way words like المعان and الحاجب.

CONCLUSION

This study provides compelling evidence for the significant role that al-*Hājib* Saqūt ibn Muḥammad played during his nearly 37-year reign over Ceuta. It analyses the contradictions in various historical sources and references regarding Saqūt and his personality, including the correct spelling of his name. Additionally, this article identifies a second name, Saggūt (سجوت), which appears on 34 of his coins, compared to only two instances where سقوت is doubtfully inscribed—challenging previous assumptions. The reason for having both spellings could be the pronunciation shift of the letter "qaf" to "jeem" among some Arabs.

In this paper, it is strongly suggested that Saqūt was a Sunnite, contrary to the historical sources that describe him as holding Kharijite beliefs. This conclusion is based on the Sunnite wording found on his coins and his recognition of the Abbasid Caliph.

Furthermore, this paper highlights the epithets adopted by Saqūt, which reflect both Andalusian and Eastern influences. It also demonstrates how closely Saqūt's position aligned with that of the influential al-*Hājib* (Chancellor) ‘Āmir, whose experience shaped Saqūt's personality, as did the Buyid rulers, who marginalised the role of the Abbasid Caliph.

Further investigations could focus on the coins of Yahyā, son of Saqūt, to uncover the mystery of the octagonal shape on his dirhams, as well as the reasons for his issuance of undated pieces without a mint name.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank Mr. David and Mr. Alan from the American Numismatic Society for their cooperation in providing the unpublished photos for this study. I am also grateful to Mr. Edmund Hohertz for his kind help and productive discussions.

I would like also to extend my thanks to Dr Kimberley Watt of Simbel Proofreading, who provided helpful feedback regarding the writing and grammar of this paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- al-‘Abbādi, Āḥmad Mukhtār. (n.d.). *Fī Ttārīkh al-Maḡrib wa al-‘Andalus*. Bayrūt: Dār al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiya.
- al-Bārūdī, Raḍuwān. (1989). at-Tārīkh al-Siyāsi Limadīnat Sabta Munthu al-Qarn al-Rābi‘ al-Hijri Ḥattā Muntaṣif al-Qarn al-Sābi‘ al-Hajri. *al-Majalla al-Miṣriyya Lilddirāsāt al-Tārīkhiyya*, 36(36), 35-88.
- al-Bāshā, Ḥasan. (1989). *al-‘Alqāb al-‘Islāmiyya fī al-Tārīkh wā al-Waṭā’iq wā-l-‘Ātār*. al-Dāri al-Finya Lilnashr wa al-Tawzī‘.
- Album, Stephen. (2011). *Checklist of Islamic Coins* (3rd ed.). California: Stephen Album Rare Coins.
- Album, Stephen. (1998). *Price List No 143 - January 1998*. California: Stephen Album Rare Coins.
- al-Darājī, Bu-Ziyāny. (2007). *Dawlat al-Khawārij wa al-‘Alawiyyūn fī Bilādi al-Maḡrib wa al-‘Andalus*. al-Jazaa’ir: Dār al-Kitābi al-‘Arabi.
- al-Ḥumaydi, Abū Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-‘Azdi. (1966). *Jathwat al-Muqtabis fī Thikri Wulāt al-‘Andalus* (Vol. 3). al-Dār al-Miṣriyya Liltta’lif wā al-Tarjima.

- al-Nāşiri, al-Selāwi. (2001). *al-Iāstaqşā li' Akhbāri Dūal al-Mağrib al'-Aqşā* (Vol. 5). Edited by Ja'far wa Muḥammad al-Nāşiri. al-Daar al-Bayḍā': Manshūrāt Wazārat al-Ṭaqāfa wā al-Iāttişāl.
- Amal, Abdu al-Raḥman. (2017). Maskūkāt Ṭanjati al-Wasīṭiyya - Malāmiḥi Tārīkhiyya min Nuqūdiḥā Munthu Dukhūli al-Islām ilā Nihāyat al-Qarn 3 H-. *Majallat Asynāg* (Al-Mu'had al-Malaki lil Ṭaqāfat al'Amāziġiyya), 12, 31-58. <https://www.ircam.ma/ar/revue-asinag-presentation>
- A'rāb, Sa'īd. (1983). *Lamuḥāt min Tārīkhi Sabta. Da'wat al-Ḥaqq* (231), 20-27.
- Ariza Armada, Almudena. (2010). *Estudio Sobre Las Monedas De Los Hammudies De Al-Andalus (Siglo V-Xi)*. Memoria Para Optar Al Grado De Doctor. Madrid: UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID -FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA.
- Ariza Armada, Almudena. (2017). The Coinage of Al-Andalus. *SHEDET*, 68-90. <https://doi.org/10.21608/shedet.004.05>
- Ariza Armada, Almudena. (2018). The Ḥammūdid Caliphate: A New Look through the Lens of Numismatics. *Al-'Uşūr al-Wuṣṭā*, 26(1), 169-200. <https://doi.org/10.7916/alusur.v26i1.6858>
- Armada, Almudena Ariza. (2022). The Mancuses Issued In The Name Of The Ḥammūdid Caliphs. *The Ukrainian Numismatic Annual*, 6, 148-168. <https://doi.org/10.31470/2616-6275-2022-6-142-163>.
- Bowazawraṭ, Kaliyafūrid Idmūd. (2013). *al-Silālāt al-'Islāmiyya al-Ḥākima Dalīl Murji' i fī al-Tārīkh wa al'-Ansāb*. Edited by Amru al-Mallāḥ. Abū Zaby: Işḍārāt Dār al-Kutub al-Waṭaniyya.
- Burūs, Jīmi Liwis. (1993). al-Nuqūd al-'Islāmiyya fī al-'Andalus, al-Taṭawwur wā al-Dalāla. *Jāmi'at al-Qāhirat, Markaz al-Luġāt al-'Ajnabiyya wā al-Tarjama al-Takḥşişiyya*, 12, 105-147. <http://search.mandumah.com/Record/145325>
- Canto Garcia, Alberto & Ibrahim, Tawfiq ibn Hafez. (2004). *Moneda Andalusí La Colección Del Museo Casa De La Moneda*. Edited by Museo Casa de la Moneda. Madrid: Real Casa de la Moneda - FUNDACION - UAM EDICIONES.
- *Coins of al-Andalus Tonegawa collection*. (n.d.). Accessed February 9, 2024. <http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/Hammudidis/IdrisI.html>
- De Lutheynia, Luis Sayakū. (1992). *al-Ḥumūdiyyūn Sādat Malaqa wa al-Jazīra al-Khaḍrā'*. Edited by Adnān Muḥammad Āli Ṭi'ma. Dimashq: Dār Sa'd al-Dīn.
- Diler, Ömer. (2009). *Islamic Mints: Islām darp yerleri* (Vol. 2). Edited by Emine Nur Diler. Istanbul: Spink.
- Galal, Nayera Rafik. (2024). The Effect of Economic Conditions on Certain Coinage of Moulay Sidi Mohamed Bin Abdullah (1171-1204 AH/1757-1790 AD) in Light of Three Unpublished Pieces. *SHEDET*, 289-307. <https://doi.org/10.21608/shedet.2023.214572.1198>
- Ḥājkūla, Abdu al-'Azīzi. (2021). Al-Niẓām al-Māli fī al-'Andalus Aşriy al-Ṭṭawā'if wa al-Murābiṭīn min Khilāl al-Nnawāzil al-Fiḥiyya. *Majlat Dirāsāt wa'Abḥāt al-Majallat al-'Arabiyya fī al-'Ulūm al-'Insāniyya wā al-Iājtimā'iyya*, 13(1).
- Hazard, Harry W. (1952). *The Numismatic History of Late Medieval North Africa*, Numismatic Studies No. 8. New York: American Numismatic Society.

- Ibn Abī Zara‘, Ali. (1972). *al-Anis al-Muṭrib Birawḍ al-Qirtās fī Akhbār Mulūk al-Maḡribi wa Tārīkh Madinat Fās*. al-Ribaṭ: Dār al-Mansūr Lilṭṭabā‘a wā al-Wirāqa.
- •
- Ibn al-Abbār, A. A. M. (1985). *al-Ḥolla al-Saiyarā‘* (Vol. 2, 2 vols.; H. Mu‘nis, Ed.). Dār al-Ma‘ārif - al-Ṭaba‘a al-Ṭāniya.
- Ibn al-‘Aṭīr, A. H. A. (1987). *al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh* (Vol. 8, 11 vols.). Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.
- Ibn al-Khaṭīb. (1964). *Tārīkh al-Maḡrib al-‘Arabi fī al-‘Aṣr al-Wasīṭ* - the third section of *Kitāb A‘māl al-‘A‘lām Lilwazīr al-Ġarnāṭi Lisān al-Dīn Ibn al-Khaṭīb* (A. M. al-Abbādi & M. I. al-Kattāni, Eds.). Dār al-Kitāb.
- Ibn ‘Adhārī, A. I. M. (2013). *al-Bayān al-Maḡrib fī Ākhtiṣār Akhbāri Mulūk al-‘Andalus wa al-Maḡrib* (Vol. 2). Dāru al-Ġarb al-‘Islāmi.
- Ibn Bassām, A. H. A. al-Shantarīni. (1997). *al-Thakhīra fī Maḡāsin Ahl al-Azīra* (Vol. 2, 4 vols.; T. iṣnā Abbās, Ed.). Dāri al-Ṭṭaqāfati Bayrūt.
- Ibn Khaldūn, ‘A. R. (2000). *al-‘Aibar wa Dīwān al-Mubtada‘ wa al-Khabar fī Thikr Ayyām al-‘Arab wa al-‘Ajam wā al-Barbar wa man Āṣarahum min Thawī al-Sulṭān al-‘Akbar* (Vol. 6, 7 vols.). Dār al-Fikr.
- Ibn Khaldūn, ‘A. R. (2001). *Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn* (Vol. 1, 8 vols.; K. Shuhāda, Ed.). Dār al-Fikr.
- Ibn Tāwiyyt, M. (1982). *Tārīkh Sabta*. Manshūrāt al-Jam‘iyya al-Maḡribiyya Liltta‘līf wa al-Tarjama wa al-Nnashr.
- Lane-Poole, S. (1889). *Catalog of Oriental Coins in the British Museum* (Vol. IX, X vols.). Printed by Order of the Trustees.
- Lane-Poole, S. (1894). *The Mohammedan Dynasties: Chronological and Genealogical Tables with Historical Introductions*. Archibald Constable and Company.
- Lavoix, H. (1891). *Catalogue des Monnaies Musulmanes de la Bibliothèque Nationale, Espagne et Afrique* (Vol. 2, 3 vols.). Imprimerie Nationale.
- Miles, G. C. (1954). *Coins of the Spanish Mulūk al-Tawā‘if*. The American Numismatic Society.
- Minīmana, Ḥ. (1987). *Tārīkh al-Dawla al-Bawayhiyya al-Siyāsiyy wa al-Iāqtisādiyy wā al-Iājtīmā‘iyy wa al-Ṭuqāfi Muqāṭa‘at Fāris 334-447 H/945-1055AD*. ad-Dār al-Jāmi‘iyya.
- Nicol, N. D. (2006). *A Corpus of Fāṭimid Coins*. Giulio Bernardi publisher.
- Nūzel, H. (1902). *Katalog Der Orientalischen Münzen, Band II, Die Münzen Der Muslimischen Dynastieen Spaniens Und Des Westlichen Nordafrika* (Vol. 2, 2 vols.). W. Spemann.
- Rodriguez Lorente, & Hafiz, T. B. (1985). *Laminas Ineditas de D. Antonio Delgado*. Artes Graficas Benzal.
- Rodriguez Lorente, & Hafiz, T. B. (1987). *Numismática de Ceuta Musulmana*. S.I.: J.J. Rodríguez.
- Ruwaybiḥ, R. (2021-2022). *Ġishi al-‘Aumala fī Aṣr Mulūk al-Ṭawā‘if, Muthkkara Mukammila Linayl Shahādat a-Māssatar fī al-Tārīkh*. Kulliyyat al-‘Ulūm al-‘Insāniyya wā al-Iājtīmā‘iyya, Jāmi‘at Muḡammad Biwḍiyāf al-Musīla.

- Sālim, S. (1993). *Min Jadīd Hawl Boruḡwāṭa Harāṭiqat al-Maḡrib fī al-'Aṣr al-Islāmi*. Mu'assisat Shabāb al-Jāmi'a.
- Shubūt, K. M. (2018). "al-Qāfi Bayn al-Taḥawwul wā al-Tabāt Derisa Fawanūṭikiyya Fawanūlūjiyyat Ḥāsūbiyya." *Mujjalat Kulliyat al-Tarbiya - al-Jāmi'a al-Mustansiriyya*, 2(88).
- Tajinnānat, M. (2017). "Mulāmiḥ An Taqallubāt Qīmat al-Nnuqūd Bi-L-'Andalusi fī al-Qarnayn 5 Wa 6 al-Hajriyyīn wa Ta'ṭirātihā al-'Iqṭisādiyya wa al-Iājtimā'iyyati." *Majjalat al-Ma'ārif lil Buḥūt Wa al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya*, 3(2), 308-328.
- Numisbids. (2024, February 26). Tauler and Fau Auction. Retrieved from <https://www.numisbids.com/n.php?p=lot&sid=5735&lot=6151>.
- Tonegawa collection. (n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2024, from <http://www.andalustonegawa.50g.com/Sabta.html>.
- Unknown. (1979). *al-Ḥullal al-Mawshiya fī Thikr al'-Akhbār al-Murākishiyya* (S. Zimāma & A. Q. Zikkār, Eds.). Dāra a-Rashād al-Ḥadīṭa.
- Unknown. (2013). *al-Muqtabis min Tārīkh al-Barbar fī al-Maḡrib wa al'-Andalus* (A. Q. Bubāya, Ed.). Maktabat al-Rashād.
- Unknown. (1998). *Tārīkh al-Barbar al-Ma'rūf bi Mafākhir al-Barbar* (M. Ziynahum, Ed.). Jihād Liltṭibā'a wa al-Nashari wā al-Tawzī'i.
- Vallvé Bermejo, J. (1963). "Suqut al-Bargawati, Rey de Ceuta." *Al-Andalus: revista de las Escuelas de Estudios Árabes de Madrid y Granada*, 28(1), 171-210.
- Vives Prieto, A. (1926). *Los Reyes De Taifas: Estudio Histórico-Numismático De Los Musulmanes Españoles En El Siglo V De La Hégira (Xi De J.C.)*. Centro de Estudios Históricos, (Imprenta de E. Maestre).
- Vives Y Escudero, A. (1893). *Monedas de las Dinastías Árábigo-Españolas*. Establecimiento tipográfico de Fortanet.
- Zambaur, E. (1927). *Manuel De Généalogie Et De Chronologie Pour L'Histoire De L'Islam*. Buchhandlung Heinz Lafairc.

سقوت بن محمد حاكم سبته المستقل كما يرى من خلال نقود (٤٣٤-٤٧١ هـ / ١٠٤٢-١٠٧٨ م) مع نشر خمس قطع جديدة

الملخص

تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على نقود حاكم مدينة سبته الحاجب سقوت بن محمد البرغواطي (٤٣٤ - ٤٧١ هـ / ١٠٤٢ - ١٠٧٨ م)، وذلك لاستكشاف شخصيته الغامضة، وذلك من خلال نقوده بالإضافة للشذرات القليلة التي وردت عنه في ثنايا المصادر التاريخية والمراجع ذات الصلة.

وتقوم هذه الدراسة بالتحقيق في مسألة معتقدات سقوت الدينية والتي تعد موضوعا مثيرا للجدل في الروايات التاريخية.

تقدم عملاته المعدنية دليلا مقنعا لتوضيح تلك المعتقدات، خاصة من خلال نقش شهادتي الإسلام والرسالة المحمدية. وبالتالي فإن نقوده تتحدى الادعاءات التي تربطه بمعتقدات صالح بن طريف، كما تدحض الارتباط بالأيدولوجية الشيعية، بالإضافة لنقوده تدعم مصادر تاريخية متعددة هذا الاقتراح. وعلى الرغم من الخلاف بين المؤرخين فقد تم تحديد التهجئة الصحيحة لاسمه بما في ذلك إضافة طريقة جديدة لكتابة اسمه والتطرق للقراءة الخاطئة لعلماء النميات لهذا الاسم، وتهتم بالألقاب الفريدة الموجودة على نقوده، بالإضافة لشرح الظروف التي أحاطت بإصداراته النقدية ومناقشة تواريخ إصداراتها ومراجعة المدى الزمني الذي كان معروفا لها. كما تناقش الورقة خصائص هذه الإصدارات والألقاب المميزة التي تظهر عليها، مشيرة إلى أن بعض الألقاب تعكس طابعا أندلسيا بينما يظهر البعض الآخر التأثيرات المشرقية، وبجانب ذلك تقوم الدراسة بنشر خمس قطع جديدة محفوظة بجمعية النميات الأمريكية.

نيره رفيق جلال فتحي

كلية الآثار، جامعة القاهرة
naierarafik2023@outlook.com;
naierarafik@yahoo.com

بيانات المقال

تاريخ المقال

تم الاستلام في ٢٤ مارس ٢٠٢٤
تم استلام النسخة المنقحة في ٢١ أكتوبر
٢٠٢٤

تم قبول البحث في ٢٥ أكتوبر ٢٠٢٤
متاح على الإنترنت في ١٢ فبراير ٢٠٢٥

الكلمات الدالة

برغواطة؛ سقوت؛ الحموديون؛ ملوك الطوائف، دراهم نحاسية.