

Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH96



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH97



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH98



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH99



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH100



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH101



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH102



Base metal follis of the 'anonymous folles' series with Islamic countermark, MH103



This hoard was found in 1972 near Mardin in modern Turkey (shown on the map above). It originally totalled around 13,500 base metal coins. The coins range from the late 5th to 13th centuries. It is not possible to give a precise date after which the hoard was buried, however, as the countermarks on the Byzantine coins cannot be dated with certainty. Almost all of the countermarked coins are well-worn, which suggests that they continued to be used after countermarking. While the absence of coins from other former states in the region is notable, the lack of Artuqid coins is particularly puzzling, since they were the dynasty in control of Mardin during the 13th century. It has been suggested that the hoard may represent the coins used specifically to pay the *jizya* tax, which was raised by mediaeval Muslim states from their non-Muslim subjects. What this hoard clearly and remarkably demonstrates is that even coins struck 800 years earlier continued to be circulated.

Countermarks:

Base metal follis of Justinian I (527-565), with Sicilian countermark of Herakleios (610-641), B3643



Countermarks are images or lettering smaller than the original coin but impressed into its fabric. The purpose of these is to declare coins struck in one period or state as legal tender in another. While many countermarks are not identifiable to a particular region or state, as with those on the coins of the Mardin Hoard displayed here, some are. Thus, for example, we can tell that this coin, originally struck in Constantinople during the reign of the Emperor Justinian I (527-565), was made legal tender on Sicily during the reign of Herakleios (610-641) – it bears the lettering 'SCL', for Sicily, and the monogram of Herakleios beside the small bust of him.