

## Two uqiyya weights of al-Andalus

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With just one singular exception<sup>1</sup>, published just a few decades ago, there was practically no material evidence or registry of actual weights for the eight centuries of existence of al-Andalus. This contrasted sharply with the innumerable mentions and references to weights and measures in Arabic chronicles dealing with al-Andalus and from them came a series of erudite articles based exclusively on these written sources.<sup>2</sup> A material lack of evidence that very much surprised Miles in his work on the coinage of the Umayyads of Al-Andalus.<sup>3</sup> This virtual emptiness of such evidence was first slowly and very tentatively changed in an annex to a work published in 1985.<sup>4</sup> But very soon after that a series of articles would be published slowly opening up our knowledge of the material evidence of weights of in al-Andalus.<sup>5&6</sup> Soon after these a couple of consecutive and interrelated articles appeared that brought forth a whole series of, more than ninety, actual bronze weights with a very varied terminology on them, *uqīyya*, **أوقية** or, *wuqīyya*, **وقية**, *ʿadl*, **عدل**, *ʿadl lillāh*, **العدل لله**, *mithqāl*, **مئقال**, *dajil arbaʿin*, **دخل اربعين**, *dinār*, **دينار**, *ḥaba*, **حبة**, ect.<sup>7</sup> All these terms were discussed in the two referred articles, but what specifically concerns us here is the two full *uqīyyas*, with that precise terminology on them, previously not published.

Though a “third of a *wuqīyya*” (fig. 1) with that Arabic terminology written on it had been published in the referred 1993 article (see note 6), no complete one was then known with that terminology, even though a few bronze weights with the equivalent weight with just the word *ʿadil*, “it is just” or the variant *al ʿadl lillāh*, “justice is God’s” on them were known and published<sup>8</sup>.



Fig. 1 (1/3 of an ukiya. 10,06g. 12x12mm/ 5mm.)

Reverse has first part of the Islamic declaration of faith, **لا اله الا الله**, “there is no other deity other than the one God”

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<sup>1</sup> Mateu y Llopis (1946).

<sup>2</sup> Chalmeta (1981, 1986) Vallve (1984).

<sup>3</sup> Miles (1950) p.87.

<sup>4</sup> Lorente/Ibrāhīm, (1985) p.107.

<sup>5</sup> Ibrāhīm (1987).

<sup>6</sup> Pellicer (1988).

<sup>7</sup> Ibrāhīm (1993, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> See n°2-7 in Ibrāhīm (1993) and n° 68-71.

The two here published (fig. 2 & fig.3) have weight's that are similar to the multiples of the third *wuqīyya* already published, fig.1, being the one in fig. 2 written as *wuqīyya* of slightly lighter in weight than that of fig. 3 written as *uqīyya*. Of special epigraphic note is the second letter of fig. 2 in which has a diacritical point that in Andalusí and Magrebi script would convert it into a *qāf*, ق , while the same letter form with a diacritical point under would make it into *fā*, ف . Also of note on that figure are the two diacritical points under the letter و .



Fig.2 (29.91g. 20x20mm)



Fig.3 (30.85g. 23x24mm)

The Arabic voice *uqīyya* or its synonym *wuqīyya* have their etymological origin in the Roman “uncia”, the ounce of 27.25g. As an Islamic weight it had, within limits, variable weights brackets depending on period, geographic area or even the nature of what was being weighed. Even within a single geographic area as al-Andalus where the majority of the material weights of the said *uqīyyas* known are around 30g there are a couple registered that give us the Roman weight of 27 g<sup>9</sup>. Variable *uqīyyas*, like the last mentioned and possible others do complicate matters as they would make the *raṭl* a variable one too (the Arabic *raṭl*, رطل , derives from the Greek ‘litra’/ Roman ‘libra’). Maqrīzī states that 12 *uqīyyas* make up a *raṭl*, but evidently with variable *uqīyyas* you may get variable *raṭls*<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> See n°5 of 27.20g in (Ibrāhīm. 1993) & a half *Uqīyya* n°21 (Ibrāhīm. 1999).

<sup>10</sup> See (Ibrāhīm. 1993) Notas II, p.57-59 for a more thorough discussion of the problems posed variable *raṭl*.

**ANEX:**

**T**he epigraphy is clear enough but the present author has been unable to make any sense of it.

Can anyone please make sense of it?

If so, it is your right to publish it.



*Tonegawa collection. 47.07g. diameter 26mm, thickness 12mm*



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