

New *decanummi* of Justin II from Carthage (c. 566-572 AD)

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Abstract: This note aims to present a new coin of Justin II struck in Carthage. The peculiarity of this coin is that its reverse is uniquely different and thus allows us to complete the series of the *decanummi*. In addition, the present coin was part of a hoard that appeared in Turkey in the decades of 1970-1980, and which was composed of more than 150 Byzantine bronzes.

Keywords: Byzantine coinage, Numismatic, Coin hoard

Short time ago a Spanish collector of Byzantine and Vandal coins¹, got in touch with me in order to study the coin that he had acquired (Figure 1). On the other hand, this coin was bought in a market in Cordoba around 1980² and this new type coin was part of a Turkish hoard, formed of numerous $\frac{1}{2}$ *folles*, *decanummi*, *pentanummi* and *nummi* coins. Unfortunately the aforementioned hoard has been dispersed on the numismatic market so I have no bibliographical references.



Fig: 1 (x 2). The new coin (3,40 g - 16 mm - 5h)

In any case, the hoard amounted to approximately 150 coins, from which more than the 80% belong to the emperors Justinianus I (527 - 565), Maurice Tiberius (582 - 602), Phocas (602 - 610), Constants II (641 - 668) together with some coins of Heraclius (610 - 641) and Justinianus II (685 - 695 / 705 - 711); furthermore, many coins were struck in the mint of Carthage. It is a hoard of bronze coins, which can be interpreted as a private person's savings, being Carthage one of the most important mint cities which supplied coins to the Byzantine Empire³. The description of the coin is as follows:

¹ I appreciate the invaluable trust that I have received from P. J. Peláez Gómez. In the same way, this coin was presented on the web www.imperio-numismatico.com (12/03/2015).

² The finding happened at a time when the laws were not competent in Turkey and Spain.

³ A historical overview can be found in Grierson 1982.

Obverse: DN IVSTI - NVS PP (AVC?), helmeted and cuirassed bust facing, holding globe cruciger and shield.

Reverse: Large **I**, to left **IT / M** (with two pellets above in the last letter); finally, to right, **V / S** -abbreviation of *Iustinus*, -i.

Mint: Carthage, 566-572 A.D.

Wroth (1908: n° 255, 256, 257, 258 & 259), Bellinger (1969: n° 195.1, 195.2, 195.3, 195.4, 195.5 & 196), Sear (1974: n° 399), Canto García and Rodríguez Casanova (2006: n° 114, 115 & 116) and recently Hahn & Metlich (2009) do not describe this coinage. Curiosity is on the reverse, because the die is ‘pseudo-inverted’; mainly the letters **IT / M**. It is common that two pellets should appear above the large and central letter I, and not in the letter N (in this case inverted).

In my opinion, there is no doubt that this coin is not an ancient forgery, since its art is very correct and its weight is normal or standard. Nor do I think that it is a simple die error. After having reviewed all the *corpora*, it can be concluded that this official coin is an unpublished piece, *i.e.*, new minor variety in a series where the reverses have considerable variations.

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