Coins are like books in which we can read social and religious events through the various symbols and icons they contain, which reflect intellectual and historical implications.

During the pre-Islam periods, there was a great influence of the Greek and Roman coins on humanity through the gods images writings concerning Christ and cross and Christianity. Also signs of the Cross and Christianity appeared on the coins during the Byzantine period.

On the other hand, the imitation of the Almighty power on the Islamic coins was forbidden, as they contained only religious writings and verses from the Koran excluding other kinds of human or non-human imagery.

The study of numismatics forms a reliable source for exploring many artistic styles and their development across different ages, and how they might have flourished or declined. That might include different costuming fashions, arts of decoration and writings, particularly the Arabic writing.

Atif Al-Shiyab

City versus village: reflections on Late Byzantine settlements in Northern Jordan

Settlements and settlement patterns in Byzantine Transjordan is a question about which we now know a great deal, especially on what concerns Northern Jordan where many rural settlements have been uncovered in the last two decades. However, some aspects of the question are still in need of further study. Little is known, for instance, about the interaction of urban centers with rural settlements and we wonder how to explain the prosperity the villages of North and central Jordan enjoyed in the Late Byzantine period (AD 491-640). The most significant aspect of this prosperity is the number of churches uncovered in many villages: at the site of Rihab Beni Hasan, for example, the number exceeds fifteen!

The view that has been promulgated to explain the establishment of new rural settlements and the pace of church-building during the Late Byzantine period suggests a great importance of the economic factor, notably the exportation of regional agricultural products to Hijaz, the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean basin. Obviously, such a view gives little attention to local consumption, or more precisely to the supply of the population in urban centers (e.g. the
Decapolis...), which must have been important and basically insured by local peasantry. This shows how far we are from understanding the interaction of cities with villages in Late Byzantine Transjordan. If this interaction is to be reduced to a simple relationship of oppression and opposition as one might deduce from some literary sources, it is quite necessary to look at the question from another point of view with special attention to the aspects characterizing each pole of the duality “city / village”.

Mohammad Moulay

Findings of the archaeological salvage excavations at Byzantine M’uta graveyard:

Introduction
M’uta town is located about 15 km. south of Al-Karak city in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The name of this ancient town is said to have been derived from the Canaanite ‘M’uta’ name, meaning the place of death. Some believe, however, during the time of Byzantine rule there was a military leader named Motha. Nonetheless, in the Islamic era, the name M’uta was stressed after the famous battle between Muslims and Byzantines was given that name.

M’uta in the Writings of European Travelers
During the 19th century, many European travelers visited Jordan, then called Transjordan, and wrote down their notes about archaeological relics on the earth surface, besides natural and economic resources. Their main objective was to gather general data about this area as a prelude for its occupation, or to prove what the Torah (old testament) stated about it. Those writings either neglected to mention the archaeological Islamic monuments or touched upon them slightly. The other reason for this neglect is that M’uta was rejuvenated only in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Earlier Diggings at M’uta
Nelson Glueck was the first to supervise archaeological surveys in Transjordan, although he revealed definite bias for stressing the ancient remains dating back to the Iron Age. In addition to listing the Islamic finds under the rubric of medieval age, a term that does not accord with the Islamic era. But later writings, particularly those by Canova corrected that error as she