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TO THE PROBLEM OF MINTING SILVER COINS IN NAME OF NOGHAY IN THE CRIMEA

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Narrative sources do not allow giving an answer to the question of whether influential military and statesman of the Golden Horde Noghay officially accepted title of khan. Thus the importance of numismatic sources for determining political status of Noghay is emphasized.

The aim of the paper is to explore silver coins minted in the Crimea at the very end of the 13th century in an attempt to pick out dirhams bearing the name of Noghay. The method of analysis of dies for minting coins was used. Graphic reconstructions of dies and schemes of die connections were made. Authors proceed from the assumption that an adequate study of this group of numismatic sources will be a step forward in search for the correct answer to the problem of legal status of Noghay's power in the last years of his life.

782 pieces of Crimean dirhams, struck by 448 obverse and 313 reverse dies, were explored by authors. These dies had worked in 535 pairs. As it is known Noghay was sovereign ruler of the Crimea only at the end of his political career, in 1299–1300. It would be logical to assume that silver coins with his name could have been minted in the Crimea at this very time.

The spelling of name of Toqtu in Arabic script on silver coins of different mints was also analyzed. The given comparison clearly showed that if at northern mints of his state name of Toqtu was spelled more or less uniformly, and then on the obverses of Crimean coins there are half a dozen spellings.

The fact is that name of the khan on the obverse die A1 is written in the same way as name of the khan on coins minted in Saqchi and attributed to the issues of Noghay: *نوغتای*. On the other hand, the variation row of spelling of khan's name on Crimean coins of Toqtu can theoretically include as well this way of writing of his name.

The question of the existence of the dirhams minted in the Crimea in name of Noghay Khan remains open at the moment. Further research of numismatic sources is needed.

Keywords: Noghay, Golden Horde, Crimea, numismatics, dirham, Toqtu Khan

Not a single coin minted in name of Noghay has survived. Meanwhile each khan of the Golden Horde after ascending to the throne considered it his duty, first of all, to strike coins with his own name, understanding this as one of important attributes of his power.

M. G. Safargaliev [Сафаргалиев 1960, 60]

The discovery of Noghay's and Cakas's coinage is of great historical interest. These coins throw light upon many obscure aspects of the political careers of the two great Mongol lords...

Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu [Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1987, 253]

The thesis, which was formulated by N. I. Veselovskij more than a century ago, was accepted by most researches: "One of the most powerful generals of the Golden Horde, Noghay... at the end of his long and militant life, had gained such political influence that he founded a particular domain and in international relations took a position the same as that of the khan" [Веселовский 1922, 1]. Noghay's domain was situated in the extreme west of the Golden Horde lands – the city of Isaccea was the center of his ulus on the Danube, he ruled the lands from the Danube to the Dnieper [Сафаргалиев 1960, 60].

However, as correctly was pointed out by E. P. Mys'kov, "until now it has not been possible to establish exactly which rank Noghay held in the Golden Horde, to what extent his claims to a leading role in the political life of the state corresponded to his social status, and could he legally claim the throne or not. All these questions have already been repeatedly raised in the works of many historians; however, researchers have not come to a consensus" [Мыськов 2003, 113].

The fact that narrative sources do not allow to give an unambiguous answer to the question of whether Noghay officially accepted the title of khan or no emphasizes the importance of numismatic sources for determining political status of Noghay and legal status of his domain. Two above given epigraphs to the article written by researches at different times, in our opinion, demonstrate this very clearly.

The aim of the paper is to explore silver coins minted in the Crimea at the very end of the 13th century in an attempt to pick out dirhams bearing the name of Noghay. The method of the analysis of dies for minting coins was used to research the coins that are subject of this article. Graphic reconstructions of dies and schemes of die connections were made. Authors proceed from the assumption that an adequate study of this group of numismatic sources will be a step forward in search for the correct answer to the problem of the legal status of Noghay's power in last years of his life.

The presentation of subject of the article should be started with brief overview of publications on Noghay's coins and their interpretation by numismatists and historians.

Silver dirhams with Noghay's name minted in Saqchi (now town of Isaccea in Romania) were first published in the mid 1980s by Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu [Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1987, 252]. He had asserted that in AH 696 (1296–1297 AD) Noghay and his son Chaka broke off the last ties with the khan of the Golden Horde, founded an independent khanate and began to strike their own coins – "as is well-known, the coinage was an attribute of sovereignty in the Golden Horde, reserved only to the central power. Thus, the numismatic sources... give a clear answer to the question so long debated by the historians...: was Noghay a khan, or not" [Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1987, 253]. The proclaiming of independence of the new Noghayid state was an extremely serious threat to Saray's khan Toqtu – so he was forced to begin the war against his rivals and "after a first period of success, Noghay was finally beaten up and killed, during the first half of the year 1300" [Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1987, 255].

Noghayid rule was temporary. It ended during AH 700 (AD 1300–1301), when Noghay's heir Chaka perished. "If we take into consideration the short period, of only four years, of their monetary activity, this appears to be extremely rich", wrote E. Oberländer-Târnoveanu [Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1987, 252].

After the publication of his researches, many historians began to regard the issue of coins by “Noghay and Chaka... between 1296 and 1301” as an established fact, which testifies to creation of a new state by Noghay, “we can call it the Noghayid khanate” [История татар... 2009, 512]. It is stated that when (about 1297 AD) relations between Toqtu and Noghay sharply deteriorated, the latter didn't start “to look for another contender for the throne, but decided to proclaim himself a khan, and announced as co-ruler... his eldest son Chaka – coins with names of both of them are known” [Золотая Орда... 2016, 238].

As for the numismatists, not all of them agree with the reading of Noghay's name on silver coins, minted in Saqchi. V. M. Beytter and E. G. Druzhinin correctly stated that “at the present time there are two points of view on the attribution of Saqchi coins: 1. these are coins minted in name of Noghay; 2. these are coins with Toqtu's name and Noghay's tamgha. The second point of view seems to be more logical and reasoned...” [Бейтер, Дружинин 2008, 143]. Researchers refer to the opinion of M. B. Severova – she believed that it is correct to read on Saqchi's dirhams not name of Noghay, but name of Toqtu Khan [Бейтер, Дружинин 2008, 143].

The authors in this discussion share the opinion expressed by E. Oberländer-Târnoveau, A. A. Kazarov, A. V. Krivenko and some other numismatists. Our reasoning will be given below. It is also worth mentioning the view of Stephen Album, who read the legend on Saqchi's dirhams obverses as “Khan al-‘adil Nughayan” [Album 2011, 225].

It should be noted that new types of Noghay's silver coins, minted in his domain on the Danube, were published in recent years.

In 2010 A. A. Kazarov and A. V. Krivenko first published silver coins with Noghay's tamgha on obverses and designation of mint place as Aqcha Kerman on reverses [Казаров, Кривенко 2010]. The co-authors proposed to correlate the presumed mint “Aqcha Kerman” with well known town – Akkerman (modern Bilhorod-Dnistrovskiy in Odessa oblast of south-western Ukraine). This settlement was one of the most important centers of western part of Juji's ulus.

In their report “Recently discovered Juchid mint Aqcha Kerman” at the I International scientific conference “Rasmir: Oriental Numismatics” (Odessa, July 2011) A. A. Kazarov and A. V. Krivenko preliminarily determined the time of issue of this coin type “as 90s of the 13th century – the period of the greatest political influence of Noghay, when at other mints (Saqchi, Qrim, etc.) coins with name or tamgha of Noghay were produced. Dating to an earlier time is also not excluded, although it is unlikely...”. The symbol depicted on the obverse, as co-authors wrote, is “apparently, the tamgha of Noghay (or it can belong to one of his closest descendants)” [Казаров, Кривенко 2013, 92].

In 2019 Yu. V. Zayonchkovskiy published new type of silver coins, minted in Aqcha Kerman in name of Noghay. He supposed that coin type, introduced into scholarly literature by A. A. Kazarov and A. V. Krivenko in 2010, is probably a fraction of this new Noghay's coin [Zajonckovskij 2019, 99].

As for the subject of our paper – the issue of Noghay's silver dirhams at Qrim mint, this problem is still very poorly studied.

Available information about Noghay's rule over the Crimea will be briefly examined before analysis of the numismatic material.

The sequence of historical events is given in narrative sources, but modern historians propose different dates of these events.

E. P. Mys'kov states that Noghay had defeated and put to flight the army of Toqtu Khan in the fall of 1297 [Мыськов 2003, 135]. As the medieval Egyptian historian Bai-bars recorded, after Noghay “routed King Toqtu” he “took possession of his lands” [Сборник материалов... 1884, III]. E. P. Mys'kov had specified: “from the general context it follows that he speaks here about the Crimea” [Мыськов 2003, 137].

At the end of 1298, Noghay sent his grandson “to Crimean lands to collect taxes imposed on local inhabitants” [Сборник материалов... 1884, III]. Dwellers of Kafa, however, treacherously killed his grandson. After that Noghay with a large army invaded the Crimea and passed through it with fire and sword, he robbed and destroyed Kafa, Sudak, Qrim, Chufut-Kale and other towns [Мыськов 2003, 137]. One gets the impression that in such a traditional way for the Mongols Noghay asserted his power over the peninsula.

E. P. Mys'kov believes that before this punitive campaign Noghay wasn't the sovereign ruler in the Crimea. “Apparently, the khan ‘granted’ to Noghay only the right to receive some share of income from some Crimean towns, and this happened in the first years of Toqtu's rule” [Мыськов 2003, 138].

A. A. Porsin gives a different dating of events: first battle between Toqtu and Noghay took place in the middle of 1299, above mentioned invasion to the Crimea can be dated the second half of 1299 [Порсин 2018, 100], second battle with Toqtu, in which Noghay was killed, happened in summer of 1300 [Порсин 2018, 101]. Ernest Oberländer-Târnoveanu also states that Nogai perished in 1300 (second half of 699 AH) [Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1987, 255].

Thus, Noghay was sovereign ruler of the Crimea only at the end of his political career – in 1299–1300. It would be logical to assume that silver coins with his name could have been minted in the Crimea at this very time.

Returning to the analysis of numismatic sources, it must be said that in 1995 M. B. Severova had read name of Noghay (ᠮᠣᠭᠠᠢ) on the Crimean silver coins [Северова 1995], she published this coin type; we will express our opinion about it below.

At the end of 2020 L. V. Dergaciova and Yu. V. Zayonchkovskiy introduced into scholarly literature silver dirham, which was found in the spring of 2019 in Odessa oblast of south-western Ukraine [Дергачева, Зайончковский 2020] (Fig. 1.1).



Fig. 1.1. 1.34 г, 17.3 x 18.2 мм.

Fig. 1.2.

Fig. 1. Dirham, which was found in Odessa oblast, and graphic reconstructions of imprints of its dies (DP1)

In co-authors' opinion, name of the khan on obverse of this coin is written in the same way as the name of the khan on the coins minted in Saqchi and attributed by a number of numismatists to the emissions of Noghay: نوغٹای [Дергачева, Зайончковский 2020, 14]. Taking into account all available information, it was proposed to attribute the dirham reproduced in Fig. 1 as a coin struck in name of Noghay [Дергачева, Зайончковский 2020, 14]. Despite the fact that designation of the place of issue on published dirham can be read quite confidently: “Striking of Qrim”, the authors left open (for a number of reasons) the question of the production center of this coin. They expressed the hope that the study of “the available array of dirhams by the method of the analysis of dies for minting coins... can provide answers to most important questions” [Дергачева, Зайончковский 2020, 15].

Then it seemed that this is a matter of the distant future.

However, as it turned out, Yu. I. Drokin has been working for a long time studying Crimean coinage of Toqtu Khan and effectively using the method of the analysis of dies for minting coins.

782 pieces of Crimean dirhams struck with the help of 448 obverse and 313 reverse dies were explored. These dies had worked in 535 pairs. Among examined coins there are two dirhams, struck with the same obverse die, but with different reverse dies. It was found that die A1 (Fig. 2) worked in two die pairs; two silver pieces struck with die pair DP1 and one piece made by DP2 are known (Fig. 3).

Dies connections of above mentioned coins are shown in Fig. 2.

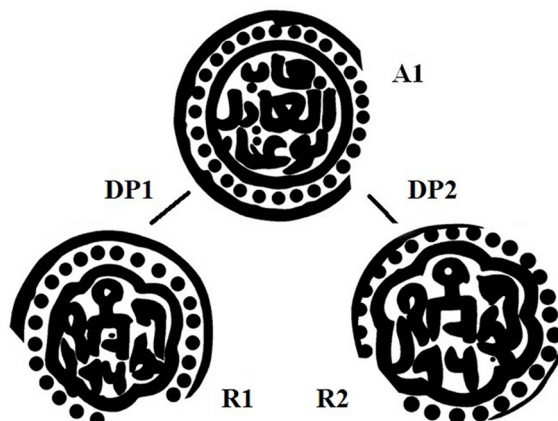


Fig. 2. Graphic reconstructions of the imprints of dies of Noghay's dirhams and established die links

The weight characteristic is available, unfortunately, only for the coin published in 2020.



Fig. 3.1.

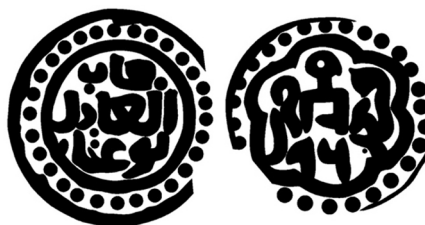


Fig. 3.2.

Fig. 3. Photo image of Crimean Noghay's dirham and graphic reconstructions of imprint of its die pair (DP2)

There is also a coin with name of the khan's written as *نوغتای* in electronic database of Oriental coins "Zeno" (№ 45018). It is attributed there as "Yarmaq. Toqtu. Qrim". Taking into account the paleographic features of writing of its legends and the impossibility of completely graphically reconstructing the legend of the reverse from this one specimen, the authors will refrain now from interpreting this issue.

Summing up our preliminary result, it must be said that only on one of the more than 440 studied obverse dies of Crimean dirhams minted at the end of the 13th – beginning of the 14th century, the name of khan is written as *نوغتای*.

The paleographic features of legends on reverse stamps R1 and R2 allow us to assume that they were made in the same mint manufactory with a large group of Crimean silver coins with the name Toqtu Khan.

In Fig. 4, as an example, two similar coins and graphic reconstructions of imprints of dies, with which they were minted, are reproduced.



Fig. 4.1.

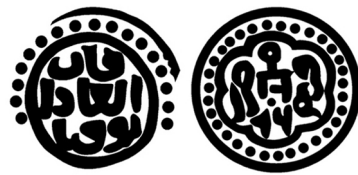


Fig. 4.2.



Fig. 4.3.

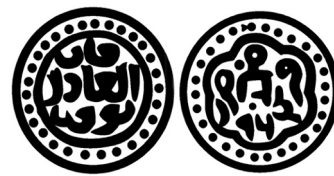


Fig. 4.4.

Fig. 4. Photo images of Toqtu dirhams, struck at Qrim mint, and graphic reconstructions of imprints of their die pairs

It has already been said that the name of the khan on the obverse A1 is written in the same way as the name of the ruler on the coins, minted in Saqchi and attributed to the emissions of Noghay (Fig. 5).

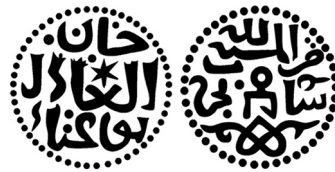


Fig. 5. Graphic reconstructions of imprints of die pair of Noghay's dirham minted in Saqchi

For correct understanding of the legend of die A1 it would be useful to examine spelling of name of Toqtu in Arabic script on dirhams of different mints of his state.

On the dirham struck in Khwarizm in 691 AH (Fig. 6.1) khan's name is written as Toqtu-bek: *توقتو بك*. In the second line of legend on the obverse of Ukek silver coin (Fig. 6.2), the name of the khan, as we see, is written in the same way. And on Saray's dirhams this spelling option was used – in Fig. 6.3 we reproduced as an example coin type of 693 AH. On the coins minted in Mokhshi (Fig. 6.4) and Madjar (Fig. 6.5) [Лебедев, Павленко 2008, 416, 446] the name of the khan was also written as Toqtu-bek. Silver coins of that time produced in Bulghar and Bilar are anonymous. On obverses of Azaq's dirhams (Fig. 6.6) it is written: *پادشا / ه توقتا / العادل* – “Padisha/ h Toqta/ The Just”.

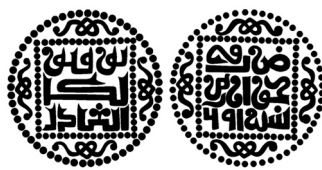


Fig. 6.1.

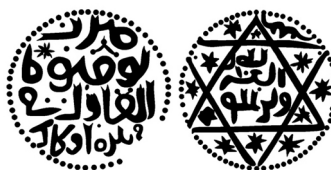


Fig. 6.2.

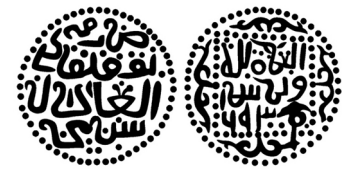


Fig. 6.3.

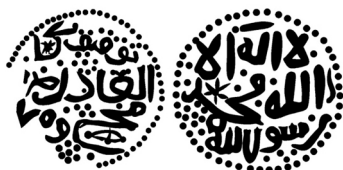


Fig. 6.4.

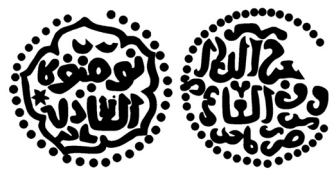


Fig. 6.5.

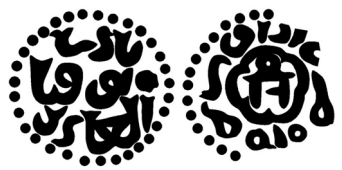


Fig. 6.6.

Fig. 6. Graphic reconstructions of imprints of die pairs of Toqtu dirhams, struck at various mints of his state

It is necessary to say separately about the Crimean dirhams of Toqtu, because legends on their obverses are highly variable in the spelling of khan's name.

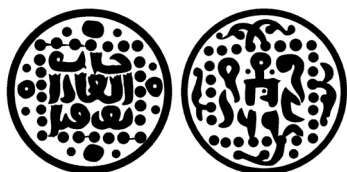


Fig. 7.1.

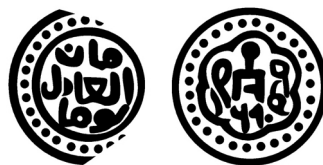


Fig. 7.2.



Fig. 7.3.

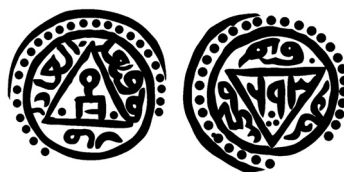


Fig. 7.4.

Fig. 7. Graphic reconstructions of imprints of die pairs of Toqtu dirhams, struck in the Crimea

On obverses of many types of coins minted in 695–707 AH there is spelling of the name as on the Azaq's dirham: Toqta – توقتا (Fig. 7.1). This variant became dominant at the beginning of the 8th century AH.

There are coins (Fig. 7.2), on which the third consonant letter in the name of the khan is missing: توقا. On obverses of interesting coin types reproduced in Fig. 7.3 and 7.4 there are four consonants, as it can be seen, in the name of the khan: توقتا.

A sapid scheme of die connections is reproduced in Fig. 8. Khan's name on obverses of these coins is spelled differently: as توقتا (TA2, TA3), نوخای (توقای? TA1) and نوخا (توقا? TA4).

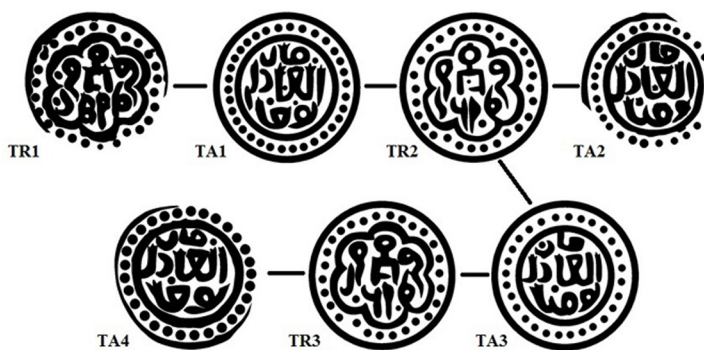


Fig. 8. The fragment of scheme of die connections of graphic reconstructions of imprints of dies of Crimean dirhams, minted in the 690s AH

The above given comparison clearly, in our opinion, showed that if at northern mints of his state name of Toqtu was spelled more or less uniformly, then on the obverses of Crimean coins there are half a dozen spellings.

It was also said that DP1 and DP2 make up one isolated die grid and no other die connections have been found for them at present. At the same time, it is quite possible to assume the production of these dies in the Crimean mint manufactory together with other dies for Toqtu's silver coins.

Summarizing what has been said, we state that it is not yet possible to give a final attribution to the dirhams produced by die A1.

The similarity of ways of writing of ruler's name on these coins with spelling of khan's name on Noghay's dirhams minted in Saqchi, small number of such coins that are

known and the isolation of this die grid allow to read name of Noghay on these coins and necessitate to make assumptions (which do not yet have objective grounds) about the reasons for their manufacture.

On the other hand, the variation row of spelling of the khan's name on Crimean coins (Fig. 7, 8) can theoretically include *نوغتای*.

It can be assumed that the mint administration of the Crimea (the peninsula was then an arena of the struggle between the two pretenders to the throne of the Golden Horde) did not want to interfere in this struggle on one of the sides and preferred to "get away from politics" when spelling the khan's name on the dirhams produced by them – hence the mentioned variability.

It is well known that the unique dirham, which all numismatists undoubtedly understand as an issue of Noghay Khan (the name of the khan is written as *نوخای* on the coin), was published long ago by M. B. Severova [Северова 1995, Лебедев].

Despite the fact that the legend of its reverse can be read as "Striking of Qrim", the authors, when comparing this dirham with the array of Toqtu's Crimean coins, have doubts about its Crimean origin.

In addition to the absence of die links and analogies, attention is drawn to the form of tamgha (the crossbar is not perpendicular to the right "leg" as on Crimean coins, but goes from the base of the right "leg" of the tamgha at an angle up to the left) and the different in shape of a star under the tamgha. In our opinion, it is quite possible to assume the issue of this type outside the Crimea, at one of mints in the western territories under the rule of Noghay.

Drawing a conclusion from all that has been said, it can be stated that the question of existence of dirhams minted in the Crimea in name of Noghay Khan remains open at the moment. Further research of numismatic sources is needed. The authors hope that this paper will help to intensify such disquisitions.

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Ю. В. Зайончковський, Ю. І. Дрокін, О. М. Солошенко

До проблеми карбування іменних срібних монет від імені Ногая у Криму

Наративні джерела не дають змоги дістати однозначну відповідь на питання щодо офіційного прийняття впливовим військовим та державним діячем Золотої Орди Ногаєм титулу хана. Внаслідок цього важливість нумізматичних джерел для визначення політичного статусу Ногая значно зростає.

Метою пропонованої статті є аналіз срібних монет, викарбуваних у Криму наприкінці XIII століття, у спробі виділити дирхеми, на яких ім'я хана позначено як Ногай. Дослідження проводилося з використанням методу штемпельного аналізу, який дає змогу відтворити з великою точністю графічні реконструкції штемпельів і встановити штемпельні зв'язки. Автори впевнені, що адекватне вивчення цієї групи нумізматичних джерел може стати кроком уперед у пошуках правильної відповіді на питання щодо правового статусу влади Ногая в останні роки його життя.

Дослідження масиву 782 срібних кримських монет методом штемпельного аналізу показало, що в процесі виготовлення цих дирхемів були використані 448 лицьових штемпельів та 313 реверсних, які працювали в 535 штемпельних парах. Як повідомляють письмові джерела, Ногай був суверенним володарем Криму лише наприкінці своєї політичної кар'єри, у 1299–1300 роках. Логічно припустити, що срібні монети з його ім'ям могли бути виготовлені на кримському монетному дворі саме в цей відрізок часу.

Було проаналізовано написання імені хана Токти на срібних монетах, які продукувалися різними монетними дворами його імперії. Проведене порівняння наочно засвідчило, що на північних дворах ім'я Токти писали більш-менш уніфіковано, тоді як на аверсах кримських дирхемів застосовувалися з півдужини різних варіантів.

Фактом є те, що ім'я хана на лицьовому штемпелі А1 графічно виконано тотожно написанню на аверсах дирхемів Сакчі, які більшість учених відносять до емісій Ногая: *نوغتای*. Також було продемонстровано, що варіативний ряд написання імені хана Токти на срібних кримських монетах може теоретично включати й варіант на штемпелі А1.

Отже, питання карбування у Криму дирхемів від імені Ногая залишається поки що відкритим. Потрібні подальші дослідження нумізматичних джерел, які, як сподіваються автори, може активізувати пропонована стаття.

Ключові слова: Ногай, Золота Орда, Крим, нумізматика, дирхем, Токта

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