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# THE EVALUATION ON JEWELLERY PRICES IN THE MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC WORLD

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#### **Abstract**

The geographies where Muslims lived in the Middle Ages had very fertile lands in terms of underground and aboveground resources. In the vast lands from China and India in the east to Muslim Spain in the west, from the Caucasus in the north to Central Africa in the south, all metals including gold and silver, as well as all kinds of precious stones, primarily ruby and pearls that those were kinds noble stones and also their trades were done. Preserving the vitality of these two areas (production and trade) was of course possible by introducing precious stones into the market in the form of jewellery and ornaments after very important processes. The excessive demand and passion of use, especially for the expensive ones of these stones and the luxury items made from them, of the palace members and rich stratum in the Islamic world, inevitably enlivened the market. For this reason, particularly ruby, ruby-like and pearl-like gemstones found buyers at very high prices in the Islamic world. However, as inexpensive precious stones also found significant buyers, especially from the middle and poor strata, they were put into the market in large quantities.

Jewellery prices in the medieval Islamic world varied greatly from one country to another, from one age to another. At the same time, according to the commercial skills and skills of the merchants dealing with this professional, the craftsmanship of ornaments made of precious stones, the economic fluctuations of the period (such as prosperity and crisis periods), and the proximity and distance of the quarries from the place of sale, there were great differences.

In this study, we tried to make an evaluation in the light of the information given by our sources about jewellery prices, which had a vibrant production and trade in the Early and Late Middle Ages since the birth of Islam. In addition, we have not neglected to mention other aspects of precious stones in order not to overwhelm the work with numbers. With this situation, the study inevitably exceeded the limit for readers and researchers. If we have a fault, be forgiven!

**Keywords:** Medieval Islamic world, jewellery prices, precious stones, ruby, pearl, coral.

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# ORTAÇAĞ İSLAM DÜNYASINDA MÜCEVHER FİYATLARININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

# Özet

Ortaçağda Müslümanların yaşadığı coğrafyalar, yeraltı ve yerüstü kaynakları bakımından çok zengin topraklara sahipti. Doğudaki Çin ve Hindistan'dan batıdaki Müslüman İspanya'ya, kuzeydeki Kafkasya'dan güneydeki Orta Afrika'ya kadar uzanan uçsuz bucaksız topraklarda altın ve gümüş de dâhil bütün madenlerin yanında soylu taşlardan olan yakut ve inci başta olmak üzere her türlü değerli taş üretiminin gerçekleştiği gibi ticareti de yapılmaktaydı. Bu iki alanın (üretim ve ticaret) canlılığını koruması elbette ki değerli taşların çok önemli işlemlerden sonra mücevherat ve süs eşyaları şeklinde piyasaya sürülmesi ile mümkündü. İslam dünyasındaki saray mensupları ile zengin tabakanın özellikle bu taşalrın pahalı olanlarına ve onlardan yapılan lüks eşyalara aşırı talebi ve kullanım tutkusu ister istemez piyasayı canlandırıyordu. Bu sebeple İslam dünyasında özellikle yakut, yakut benzeri ve inci türünden değerli taşlar çok fahiş fiyatlara alıcı bulmaktaydı. Ancak ucuz olan değerli taşlar da önemli oranda -özellikle de orta ve yoksul tabakadan- alıcı bulduğundan büyük miktarlarda piyasaya sürülmekteydi.

Ortaçağ İslam dünyasında mücevherat fiyatları bir ülkeden diğerine, bir çağdan başka bir çağa göre büyük bir deşikenlik gösteriyordu. Aynı zamanda bu işi yapan tacirlerin ticarî yetenek ve maharetlerine, değerli taşlardan yapılan süs eşyalarının işçiliğine, dönemin ekonomik dalgalanmalarına (refah ve kriz dönemleri gibi) ve taş ocaklarının, satışın gerçekleştirildiği mekândan yakın ve uzaklığına göre büyük farklılıklar göstermekteydi.

Bu çalışmada, İslam'ın doğuşundan itibaren Erken ve Geç Ortaçağlarda canlı bir üretimi ve ticareti olan mücevherat fiyatları hakkında kaynaklarımızın vermiş olduğu bilgiler ışığında bir değerlendirme yapmaya çalıştık. Ayrıca çalışmayı rakamlara boğdurmamak için de değerli taşların diğer yönlerine de değinmeyi ihmal etmedik. Bu durumuyla da ister istemez çalışma, okuyucu ve araştırmacılar açısından nispeten limitini aşmış oldu. Kusurumuz varsa af ola!

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ortaçağ İslam dünyası, mücevherat fiyatları, Değerli taşlar, Yakut, İnci, mercan.

# Introduction

Jewellery or precious stones, have been at the b items such as precious metals (gold, silver) have been interested in and also tried to own according to their financial power since the earliest times of history. However, by processing of those kinds of stones and turning them into ornaments or producing items that had been used by rulers and members of the richest strata made their values inevitably increased. In the Middle Ages those stones were

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treated in two ways. In the first, gems were used without any processing, that is, turning them into any item. In the second, they were transformed into various ornaments by passing through very fine artistic process in the hands of skilled craftsmen. During the Middle Ages, the precious stones in the first category, particularly the expensive ones such as rubies, emeralds and pearls that were carried by the merchants and businessmen like today's banknotes and could be instantly converted to ornaments and other items, as it was today, were offered for sale by the jewellers or sarrafs of that period. However, at that time, the precious stones and valuable items made from both categories and sold at high prices were offered to the rulers and high-ranking state officials in the courts in the capital cities of the states by the merchants who were trading that business. In other words, during the Middle Ages, the most expensive precious stones were sold to the monarch and family members, who were financially most powerful and to the wealthiest people.

In the Middle Ages, Muslims held both the industry and trade of precious stones. The production of the hard ones was at a very advanced level and were generally processed in the form of a flat surface and the picture engravings on them would have an astonishing appearance. To learn how this art made progress in the hands of Muslims, it is enough to glance at the large pitchers, pools and balls that were all made of crystal (rock crystal) of the Egyptian Fatimid period that displayed at the Lover Museum in Paris, the treasures of Venice Marcos and at the other museums of Europe. The technique of digging on precious stones was not preserved only by the Islamic world, but was further developed thanks to highly skilled artists. However, this art did not attract much attention in Europe and entered here in the late periods<sup>1</sup>.

There were hundreds of workshops where precious stones were processed in the famous cities of the medieval Islamic world such as Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, Damascus, Tripoli, Jerusalem, Cairo, Alexandria, Morocco, Cordoba, San'a, Aden, Muscat, Siraf, Isfahan. In these workshops, so skilled masters and apprentices, specialized in their profession worked all day through night and day for manufacturing ornaments to wealthy people. While ruby, chrysolite (zebercet), emerald ornated rings, crowns, belts and rosaries were usually made for rulers and wealthy merchants; necklaces, bracelets and earrings in which precious stones such as pearls, coral and diamonds were used extensively, were prepared for the women of the aristocratic layer. Especially in India, beautiful jewellery items were made from diamonds. For example sword handles, jewellery and ornaments that were used in the upper parts of human body were produced from white diamonds. Belts and jewellery used in the middle part

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Abdulhalik Bakır, Ortaçağ İslam Dünyasında Taş ve Toprak Mamulleri Sanayi, Ankara, 2000, p. 52-53.

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of the human body from red coloured diamonds; anklets and bracelets for foot using were produced from blackish diamonds<sup>2</sup>.

In the Middle Ages, diamonds were not as popular as they are today. At that time, rulers were only interested in the big ones. Agate was one kind of the precious stones, that was only interested in by lower class. But for supplying these people's requests various ornaments were produced by making of the replicas of the precious stones. For instance, Muslim engravers made magnificent ring eyebrows (stones) from artificial emeralds that they produced with great skill. The making of artificial pearls was also very common. Those, who were engaged in this business were producing artificial pearls, which were largely similar to the type of 'müzenner' (kemerbest). Even they sometimes made them from inner shell of the mussels and if they made them with sharp iron and private tool that was used by jewellers to soften, peel and pierce the pearls, they would have achieved to a great extent<sup>3</sup>.

In the mediaeval Islamic world luxurious ornaments displayed at homes, writing instruments used at the office and work room, utensils and even dinning tables and armchairs were manufactured from precious stones except jewellery. Middle Ages' engravers were able to craft with great skill various animal sculptures, jewellery boxes and concubine sculptures who put her chest and chin on her knees and clamping her fingers and put them on both her wrists from ruby stone. At the same time, they made cemest stone drinking glasses, emerald drinking cups, chrysolite spoons; turquoise dinning tables, drinking cups; large oil cups of agate, glasses; onex (ceze') stone sheets (thin and flat stones), sword and knife handles. In addition, they manufactured large vessels that could take more 30 rtl of water, bowls made of 30 rtl of liquid from dehnec, very large volumed of coral okkas, beautiful prayer rosaries, boxes in various volumes, sharpening handles, small cups and coffee spoons, non-flammable dress named 'şesttekât' from a kind of badizehr stone. Turkish engravers in the district of Transoxiana manufactured so nice tables, large glasses, water jugs and etc. From ceze' stone<sup>4</sup>.

# I. Prices of the Jewellery in the Middle Ages

# 1. Prices of Ruby<sup>5</sup> in the Middle Ages

This stone is called "Yakend" in Persian and the word ruby is a form that adapted to the Arabic language. According to el-Beyrunî, the Persians used to call this stone "Sebec Esmûr"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 205.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 215-216.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 216.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ruby is a transparent gemstone of a corundum type (crystallized alumina) with a vibrant red colour ranging from pink to garnet. Ruby, a chromium type of corundum, is the rarest of four precious stones. Its colour can range from almost pink light red to a purplish red (pigeon blood). It is cut like a diamond. The most beautiful rubies come from Burma. Quality stones come from Sri Lanka, Thailand (on the border of Cambodia) and Africa (Kenya, Tanzania). See. Commission, Grand Larousse Dictionary and Encyclopedia, v. XXIV, p. 12369.

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(the remover of the plague epidemic) in the past. In the classical sources written about the properties of precious stones, the red one of this stone was introduced same as mentioned name. The Indians called ruby "Pedem Râk" (in their language this name also used for the red lotus flower) and they preferred the dark red, pure and transparent one of this stone<sup>6</sup>.

Although there was no specific measure or rule in this regard, the prices of precious stones in the Middle Ages were generally determined according to the time and place, the wishes and tastes of the clients and scarcity and abundance of those gems<sup>7</sup>.

A gold pitcher decorated with rubies captured in the Kaddişiyye<sup>8</sup> war with Iranians during time of Hz.Omar was sold for 100.000 denars<sup>9</sup> (1.000.000 dirhams) by Sa'd b. Ebi Vakkas<sup>10</sup>.

el-Beyrunî determined based on a book about jewellery prices written in Damascus during the Umayyad caliph Abdulmalik b. Muaviye, red ruby and pearls were so expensive in those times<sup>11</sup>.

The value of the ruby in a gold bracelet, that was presented to Hz. Ayşe by Muaviya b. Ebî Süfyan the Umayyad caliph was 100.000 (1.000.000 dirhams) denars<sup>12</sup>. When Mus'ab b. ez-Zubeyr, one of the governor of Iraq, realized that he would be killed by Umayyads, he delivered a red ruby worth 1.000.000 (100.000 denars) dirhams<sup>13</sup> to Ziyad<sup>14</sup>. Again during the time of that mentioned governor, an ornament with pearl, red and yellow ruby and chrysolite was valued at 2.000.000 (20.000.000 dirhams) denars<sup>15</sup>. A red ruby was bought for 73.000 (730.000) dirhams) denars by a concubine, named Râike, of an Umayyad statesman Halid b. Abdullah el-Kasrî<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> See, El-Beyrunî, Ebu'r-Reyhân, Kitabu'l-Cemâhir fî Ma'fireti'l-Cevâhir, Beirut, 1984, p. 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> el-Kâşânî, Ebu'l-Kâsım Abdullah, Arâyisu'l-Cevâhir ve Nefâsiyu'l-Atâyib, Teheran, 1345, p. 43-44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> It is a region located in the west of the city Najaf in Iraq. In 15<sup>th</sup> century C.E. the famous companion Sa'd b. Ebî Vakkas and the Sassanid commander Rüstem, the Muslims defeated the Persians in this region See. Halife b. Hayyât, Tarihu Halife b. Hayyât, Beirut, 1995, p. 71-73. See also. Halife b. Hayyât, Tarihu Halife b. Hayyât, Halife b. Hayyât Tarihi, (Trans. Abdulhalik Bakır), Ankara, 2008, p. 166.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> It is a unit of weight, theoritically equal to 1 miscal and in terms of gold coin, it is 4,233 grams. See. Walter Hinz, İslam'da Ölçü Sistemleri, (Trans. Acar Sevim), İstanbul, 1990, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> See. el-İbşihî, Şihâbuddin Ahmed, el-Müstatraf fî Kulli Fennin Müstazraf, (Thk. Müfid Muhammed Kamiha), Beirut, 1986, v. II, p. 103.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> See. el-Beyrunî, p. 50-51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> el-İbşihî, v. I, p. 63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Its name in medical circles was Darahmî, it was 3,3105 grams according to H. Sauvaire and 4,25 grams according to Decourolemanche. The last one is more likely to be correct. See. Walter Hinz, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> el-İbşihî, v. II, p. 104, See also. el-Gazûlî, Alâuddin Ali b. Abdullah el-Behâî, Metâlî'ul-Büdûr fî Menâzili's-Südûr, Egypt, 1299, v. II, p. 138.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> el-İbşihî, v. İ, p. 63.

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In the Middle Ages, the situation of the market, the supply-demand relationship and the proximity and distance of the quarry had a great effect on the price of ruby. In fact, the most important sales centres of precious stone mentioned in the Early Middle ages were the cities of Baghdad and Egypt. In this case, if all aspects of the ruby stone had an equal structure, then this stone's price, with excellent properties and pure quality, would increase and decrease according to its size. Accordingly, when the volume of the stone grew, its price increased and doubled; and when its volume decreased, its price simultaneously decreased as well. According to its price system, pure red ruby of the Behremân type's price was 6 miscal<sup>17</sup> (miskal) of pure gold -that was not more half of than that given in Egypt- usual average in Baghdad. Accordingly, each carat of it was equal to 10 dirhams of high quality pure silver and one quarter of miscal as pure gold. The price of such a stone was 16 denars; in other words, each carat of it was 2 denars. A ruby stone weighing 1 miscal was 2,5 denars. 1 miscal and one third of the miscal was 3 denars. The 2 miscals varied between 4-3,5 denars depending on the colour of the stone and the abundance of its ore. So that a beautiful ruby stone from the Behremân type, with an extremely high colour, ore and sparkle, with a perfect artistic structure and workmanship weighed 1 miscal, could be sold in 100 miscals gold. Price of the blue and olive coloured ruby was same; these two kinds were sold for 4 denars. The price of this kind of rubies increased and decreased through its state as it is mentioned<sup>18</sup>.

The value of Harunu'r-Reşîd's red ruby ring, that was given as a gift by his father el-Mehdi, then thrown into the Tigris river when his brother el-Hâdi came to power and wanted to take it away and then removed from the water by an order again, when he became as a caliph, was 100.000 denars<sup>19</sup>. According to a report, the Abbasi caliph Harunu'r-Reşîd bought a ruby named "el-cebel" for 40.000 denars and made engraved his name as "Ahmed" on it and then used it. This ruby was so big and bright that if it was put in a dark room at night, it glowed like a lamp<sup>21</sup>. It was also reported that the same caliph bought a ruby stone weighed 14.5 miscals for 80.000 denars<sup>22</sup>. Also, the price of red ruby bird statue at the head of an one

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Until late periods of the Middle Ages, the miscal weight was subject to a 4,3 grams of Sassanid silver mesh. An Indian miscal during the XIVth century in the region of Sind was 4,85 gr. See. Walter Hinz, p. 6,9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Efkâru'l-Ezhâr fi Cevâhiri'l-Ahcâr, Museum of Hagia Sophia, İstanbul, Nr. 3559, v 36 b-37 b.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> es-Sa'âlbî, Ebu Mensur Abdulmelik b. Muhammed b. İsmail en-Nisâbûrî, Simâru'l-Kulûb fi'l-Muzâf ve Mensûb, (Thk. Muhammed Ebu'l-Fadl İbrahim), Cairo, 1985, p. 534; İbnu'l-Esîr, el-Kamil fî't-Tarih, Beirut, 1982, v. VI, p. 107. See also. Kâşânî, p. 47.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> It means mountain in Turkish.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> See. el-Mesudî, Mürûcu'z-Zeheb ve Ma'dini'l-Cevher, (Thk. Kasım eş-Şemâ'î er-Rifâ'î), Beirut, 1989, v. IV, p. 157; es-Sa'âlbî, p. 534; Philip K. Hitti, Siyasî ve Kültürel İslam Tarihi, (Trans. Salih Tuğ), İstanbul, 1989, v. II, p. 534, İbnu't-Tiktaka, gave the price of aforementioned ruby 300.000 denars. This must be an exaggerated figure. See. İbnu't-Tiktaka, el-Fahri fî'l-Adâbi's-Sultaniyye ve'd-Düveli'l-İslamiyye, Egypt, 1317, p. 234.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Şeyhu'r-Rebve, Şemsüddin Ebu Abdullah Muhammed b. Ebî Tâlib el-Ansârî ed-Dımaşkî, Nuhbetü-d-Dehr fî Acâibi'l-Berri ve'l-Bahr, Beirut, 1988, p. 114.

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stroke of length emerald stick presented to this ruler by one of the kings of India was 100.000 denars<sup>23</sup>.

Yahya b. Halid from Bermekî's offered 7.000.000 dirhams for a jewellery box made of some precious stones, including ruby but this offer was not accepted<sup>24</sup>.

Süleyman el-Verrâk said about the valuable ruby stone that was given by the Abbasi caliph el-Me'mun for having made a ring stone to an engraver:

"I have never seen anyone more tolerant than Me'mun b. er-Reşid. One day I walked in and saw a rectangular and lightening all around red ruby in his hands. Meanwhile, he was turning and praising it. Then he called a jeweller and told him: Take this stone and make it like this! Then he explained him the way he wanted it to be. The jeweller took the stone and left there. I went to him again three days later. In the meantime he remembered that ruby and ordered the jeweller to come as soon as possible. After a while the jeweller came in with paled colour and trembling of fear. Even though Me'mun asked him about what he did with the stone but the man was speechless and could not speak. At that time Me'mun turned his face to the other side and waited for a while, then repeated the same question, looking towards him. The jeweller answered: I ask for your forgiveness the Emir of Muslims! Then Me'mun said to him that he forgave. The jeweller showed him the ruby which was divided into four parts and said: The Emir of the Muslims! The ruby fell from my hand onto the anvil and became what you have seen. Me'mun: "It does not matter, make four rings out of it" and he was so gentle with him that we thought he would have previously asked for the ruby to be made as four ring stones. When the jeweller left his side, he told us: Do you know how much the stone is worth? We said: "No, we do not know". Thereupon, he said "er-Reşîd (referring to his father) bought it for 120.000 (12.000 denars) dirhams"<sup>25</sup>.

The value of a rosary made of ruby stones that was gifted by the caliph of Abbasi to his father-in-law Hasan b. Sehl, was depicted 1.116.000 dirhams<sup>26</sup>. In other words, the value rosary amounted to 111.600 denars.

According to the accounts, the wealth that Muhammed b. Süleyman took to Baghdad, due to the liquidation of the goods of Tolunoğulları were:

1-Two thousands eight hundred and twenty five valued forty five ruby stones.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> et-Taberî, Tarihu'l-Ümem ve'l-Mülûk, Cairo, 1939, v. VI, p. 505. See also. Corci Zeydan, Tarihu't-Temeddüni'l-İslami, Beirut, 1967, v. II, p. 644; Philip K. Hitti, v. I, p. 534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> See. el-Makarrî, el-Muhtâr mîn Nevâdiri'l-Ahbâr, Beirut, 1994, p. 57-58.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Şeyhu'r-Rebve, p. 114.

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- 2-A pearl stone with a value of four hundred thousand two hundred and eighty denars, weighing sixty five thousand miscals.
  - 3-A ring with an emerald stone of fifty thousand denars.
- 4-Valued of forty thousand three hundred fifty-five denars, one hundred and forty one miscals and four hundred and forty red rubies weighed fourteen carats<sup>27</sup>.

According to narrations the value of red ruby of Mahmud of Ghaznavid like grape shaped weighed 12 miscal was 20.000 denars<sup>28</sup>. Furthermore his son Mesud bought a lion-shaped and rectangular red ruby for 7.000 Nişapur (Nishapur) denars<sup>29</sup> when he was in the city of Rey. It was reported that this ruby was seen from the thumb and the little finger when held by the hand<sup>30</sup>.

Some of Asmancûnî (blue sky coloured) and white rubies weights could be 60 miscal. In one of the news of el-Beyrunî, he found in the state treasury in Harezm a piece of a ruby produced in the form of a concubine sitting with her chest and chin resting on both knees and with the fingers of both hands clamped on both ankles that weighed 60 miscals, coloured between asmancûnî and kuhlî (black colour)<sup>31</sup>.

A red ruby of the behremânî type weighing half a miscal in the 9<sup>th</sup> century was approximately 5.000 denars<sup>32</sup>. In almost the same century asmancûnî ruby with the same characteristics. In Ghaznavid and its vicinity was sold for approximately 5.000 denars and the one weighing half a miscal at 2.000 denars<sup>33</sup>. Additionally, 100.000 denars paid for the ring stone, called "el-cebel"<sup>34</sup>. The Rummâni types of rubies were cheaper and for their one tasû<sup>35</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> İbn Abdizzâhir, er-Ravzatü'l-Behiyyeti'z-Zâhire fî Hıtati'l-Mu'ziyyeti'l-Kâhire. (Thk. Eymen Fuad Seyyid), Cairo, 1996, p. 83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> This was a unit of weight and theoretically equal to 1 miscal, according to a gold darb it is 4,233 grams. See. Walter Hinz, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 75-76. See also. Kâşânî, p. 46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> el-Câhuz, Ebu Osman Amr b. Bahr, et-Tabassur bî't-Ticâre, (Thk, Hasen Hüsni Abdulvehhab), Beirut, 1983, p. 20. See also. es-Sa'âlbî, p. 534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 49.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> el-Câhız, p. 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> This was a unit of weight, had been Arabicized and took the name of 'tassûc', was equal to 1/4 dânek or 1/24 miscal, Until the Safavid period it was 0,18 grams. From the XVIth century it was 0,195 grams. See. Walter Hinz, p. 42.

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weighed 5, one dânek $^{36}$  was 30, 1/3 miscal was 120, a half was 400, a miscal was 1.000, one and a half miscal of it was sold for 2.000 denars $^{37}$ .

Yellow rubies' costs were between one hundred and one denars, while the price of rubies ranged<sup>38</sup> from ten to one denar<sup>39</sup>. A ring stone made of asmancûnî in this period cost about 200 denars<sup>40</sup>. Whereas in 13<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a ruby of premium quality, beautiful, unperforated, moist, blood-coloured and weighing one miscal, was sold for 400 denars. The price of the weights of half a miscal was 50, the price of one- third was 15 and the price of a quarter miscal was 6 denars. Along with this, dark coloured rummânî rubies were sold for 100 and asmancûnî varieties were sold for about 66 denars<sup>41</sup>.

In the same century, rummânî type ruby, if it had a dark colour, was sold for a quarter of the price of a behremânî type ruby. As for the asmancûnî types of ruby, if it has desired properties, then it would find a buyer for one-sixth of the behremânî variety<sup>42</sup>.

At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Tabriz, rubies' half dânek was 1-5, one dânek 10-100, 2 dânek 10-500, half a denar 20-800, 4 dânek 50-1.200, 5 dânek 100-1.500, a miscal were sold for 100-2.500<sup>43</sup>. Other rubies were found all over the Islamic world. These were both plentiful and cheap and their prices were known by the sellers<sup>44</sup>.

From time to time, ruby stones were removed from the fire before they were cleaned and this process did not repeat again or they left aside for fear of external factors damaging them. After such rubies were captured by Iraqi merchants, when they saw the black colour, they would try to increase its price. To do this, they would heat it in an object consisting of two parts made of fireproof Soğd clay and a binder, also plastered with mud. Then they put it in the pitcher that the jeweller used to make rings and there they would wait while a miscal gold melted and flowed. As a final process, the ruby stone was removed from here and put into a sieve until it cooled. As a result, it would be both clean and its price increased<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> It generally means one in six, it was, particularly a weight or monetary unit, equal to 1/6 dirhams or (more often) 1/6 denars. See. ibid, p. 13.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 49-50.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 74.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Ibid, p. 75.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> el-Câhız, p. 20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 32-33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Kâşânî, p. 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, Ebu'l-Fadl Ca'fer b. Ali, el-İşâre ilâ Mehâsini't-Ticâre. (Thk. el-Beşrî, eş-Şorbecî), Alexandria, 1977, p. 33.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 42.

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# 2. The Prices of Belahş in the Middle Ages

A stone called belahş (belash) or la'l like a ruby was extracted from the Bedahşan mountains<sup>46</sup>. This precious stone, which has red, green and yellow colours, was only extracted as a resulted of high labour and expense. This caused its price and demand to increase and to become a highly sought-after stone in the jewellery industry<sup>47</sup>. As it was reported, to beautify this gemstone, it had to be heated slowly and when it was finished it had to be cooled in same way. Belahş, polished with a gold-like "marcasite" (pyrite)<sup>48</sup> stone called "turunce" by the miners, was being bought and sold like ruby in terms of price until the days of Büveyhoğulları, but after this period, when it was realized that it was a ruby-like stone, its value started to decrease<sup>49</sup>.

In 9<sup>th</sup> century, one dirham of belahş stone of niyâzikî type found buyers 10 Herat denars. But if a piece of belahş stone weighs between 20 and 100 dirhams, its value would increase and in this case one dirham would be sold for between 20 and 30 denars<sup>50</sup>. Jewellers of Mahmud of Ghaznavid stated that they had seen belahş stones weighing more than 100 dirhams<sup>51</sup>.

If the above figures had been considered, the price of this stone would be 2.000 or 3.000 denars. A narrator also said that he once found a mass of belahş, weighing one and a half batmans, he broke it into pieces for fear of being taken away by the state and gave a piece that was over 90 dirhams to Sultan Mahmud, the ruler of Ghaznavid<sup>52</sup>. Based on the same figures, the price of this last stone was 1.800 or 2.700 denars.

At the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century C.E. the belahş stone, which had a beautiful, transparent and vibrant colour, had sold for 8 dirhams 6.000, 6 dirhams 4.000, 4 dirhams 2.500, 3 dirhams 1.500, 2 dirhams 800-1.000, 1 miscal 500, 1 dirham 300, half miscal 200, 2

<sup>46</sup> el-Makdisî, Şemsüddin Ebu Abdullah b. Ahmed b. Ebî Bekr el-Beşşârî, Ahsenü't-Takâsim fî Ma'rifeti'l-Akâlim, Leiden, 1904, p. 303; el-İdrisî, Ebu Abdullah eş-Şerîf, Nüzhetü'l-Müştâk fî İhtirâki'i-Afâk, Cairo, 1994, v. I, p. 487; Yakut el-Hamavî, Mu'cemu'l-Buldan, (Thk. Ferîd Abdulaziz el-Cündî), Beirut, (Trz.), v. I, p. 429; el-Kazvinî, Zekeriyya b. Muhammed b. Mahmud, Asâru'l Bilâd ve Ahbâru'l-İbâd, Beirut, (Trz.), p. 306; Kâşânî, p. 61.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> See. el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 111.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> This stone, which is claimed to be formed in gold, silver and copper mines and resembles an uncultivated fruit, is called zehebî (golden), fizzî (silvery), nuhasî (coppery) and hadidî (irony). There were varieties. But most famous were the ones in gold, silver and copper colours. In the Middle ages, various smears and oinments were produced from it because of its healing properties. See İbn Sina, Ebu Ali el-Hüseyn b. Ali, el-Kânûn fî't-Tıb, Beirut, (Trz.), v. I, 366; Utârid b. Muhammed el-Hâsîb, Utârid b. Muhammed, Kitâbu'l-Cevâhir ve'l-Ahcâr, Süleymaniye Library, Nr: 3610, İstanbul, v. 92 a-93 b; el-Harezmî, Mefâtihu'l-Ulûm, Cairo, 1981, p. 148.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 81-82.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 85.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 85.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup> See. Ibid, p. 85.

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dâneki 100, 1,5 dâneki 50, 1 dâneki 30, 3/2 dâneki 15, half dâneki 8, 24/1 dâneki 3 denars<sup>53</sup>. The belahş stone named as "Persian la'l" in the same country was sold for, 20 dirhams were 7.000, 15 dirhams 2.000, 6 dirhams were 1.500, 5 dirhams were 1.000, 4 dirhams were 800, 3 dirhams were 500, 2,5 dirhams were 350, 2 dirhams were 250, 1 miscal was 100, 1 dirham was 75, a half miscal was 50, a half dirham was 1,5 dâneki were 20, 1 dâneki was 10, 3/2 dane were 4, a half dâneki was 2 denars<sup>54</sup>.

Marco Polo, while introducing Bedahshan, also included rubies extracted from the mountains of this place and probably referring to the above-mentioned belahş stone:

"Ruby is mined as if gold and silver were extracted from a mine in one of the mountains here. Nobody to whom the king gives a special permission as a blessing, can excavate here for himself. The king sometimes presents these stones to foreigners who come to this country. However, these stones cannot be bought and taken out of the country without permission. The king aims to protect the value and price of these stones in his country by ensuring that the rubies are scarce. There are also sky-blue coloured hills. These stone are the most beautiful rubies that can be found all over the world" 55.

# 3. Aynü'l-Hirr (Cat-Eye) Prices in the Middle Ages

The precious stone named aynü'l-hirr (cat-eye), which turned into a ruby-like structure as a result of some natural events, after being dragged downwards by wind and floods from where it was like a ruby, was collected by its seekers<sup>56</sup>. This extremely shimmering stone had a white colour and its was thin and transparent. But there was one more feature of it, that was the presence of a black object in the stone that radiated the size of a cat's eye and could move when the stone was moved. When the stone was moved in one direction, this black object inside would move in the opposite direction. If the stone was directed to the right, object was directed to the left; if the stone was directed to the left, then the object was directed to the right. When the stone was broken into pieces, the object in it, was seen separately in all of the pieces<sup>57</sup>.

The best quality of aynü'l-hirr stone was that, it had then features like transparent and white colour, the black object in it was fast moving and radiating. Furthermore its beauty and the size of its body increased its price as other gems<sup>58</sup>. According to some reliable jewellers' mentions, it had all the properties of the behremânî ruby in terms of its benefits. According to

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> See. Kâşânî, p. 64-65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Ibid, p. 65-66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> Marco Polo, Geziler Kitabı, (Trans. Ömer Güngören), İstanbul, 1985, p. 42-43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 112.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 112.

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a claim, if he threw himself among the corpses with this stone in his hand during the war, when his army was defeated, the enemy soldiers, in the meantime passing by him, supposed that he was killed and covered in blood<sup>59</sup>.

The artisans, produced so beautiful necklaces, pins, rosaries and stones of rings from this precious stone which was yellow, greenish and ash-coloured or yellow transparent quartz<sup>60</sup>.

The price of aynü'l-hirr stone in India was higher than its price in Mağrip (Maghreb) country, despite it was near to India. Its value would change depending on the demand for it. In the Mağrip country one miscal of this stone was sold for five denars and this price could increase according to the situation. It was reported that once this stone was sold for 150 denars in Ma'ber<sup>61</sup>, the same one was sold in Iran for 700 denars<sup>62</sup>.

At the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century, a stone of the aynü'l-hirr type, whose price was close to red ruby, was sold for 50 denars to 2 dâneks, 100 denars to a half miscal, 250 denars to one miscal. The price of the ones in another weights increased comparing to these measurements<sup>63</sup>.

According to another price list, on the same date and in same city, 2 miscals of aynü'l-hirr stone - that in terms of weight none had not been seen larger than this in Tabriz - was sold 1.000, 1 miscal 500-800, 4 dânekis 400, a half denar 300, 2 dânekis 200, 1 dâneki 50, a half dâneki 20 and weighing 24/1 of dâneki was 5 denars. A aynü'l-hirr stone without light and brightness had no value and was not popular with merchants<sup>64</sup>.

# 4. Edrek Prices in the Middle Ages

Edrek, which was a very precious stone and at the same time had a feature did not resemble a ruby in terms of its beauty, was mostly used by the ancient Egyptians. However, in the Middle Ages, the craftsmen made great efforts to manufacture this stone. Even some of them tried to produce this stone for el-Mütevekkil of the caliph of Abbasî, but only after long efforts they obtained a stone close to pink colour<sup>65</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Ibid, v. II, p. 112.

<sup>60</sup> Mehmet Zeki Kuşoğlu, Resimli Ansiklopedik Türk Kuyumculuk Terimleri Sözlüğü, İstanbul, 1994, p. 89.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> It is the most fertile city in India. There is a distance of six months between here and Delhi. See. İbn Batuta, Rihletü İbn Batuta, Beirut, 1992, p. 434, 384.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> Kalkaşandî, Ebu'l-Abbas Ahmed b. Ali b. Ahmed b. Abdullah Subhu'l-A'şa fî Sına'ati'l-İnşa, Beirut, v. II, p. 112-113.

<sup>63</sup> Kâşânî, p. 45.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>64</sup> Ibid, p. 45-46.

<sup>65</sup> Kâşânî, p. 227.

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A piece of red ruby coloured old edrek stone in the Middle Ages, was sold for 1.000 denars<sup>66</sup>.

# 5. Bicâde Prices in the Middle Ages

The jewellers, who tried to show the difference between the precious stone named bicâde and real ruby extracted in Kûh Rûhûn (Serendîb)<sup>67</sup>, Rehân, Şeknân (Bedahşan)<sup>68</sup>, Sincerî (Morocco)<sup>69</sup>, Şeknân (Kashmir)<sup>70</sup> determined that the second one was similar to a pure fire, the first one was similar to a smoky fire. This analogy was same for kerkend and eflah. But the ones closest to ruby in terms of luster were the sindiya type of kurbüz and kerkend, respectively<sup>71</sup>.

The best quality of Bicâde stone was the deep red, pure and bright one extracted from the Serendîb region. At the same time hard-built and larger volumed ones were more desirable and sought-after. In 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. one dirham of a bicâde stone, had all those features, was sold for one denar<sup>72</sup>. The dark coloured bicâde stone mined in Belah's Bedahshan region was of even higher quality than that of serendîb<sup>73</sup>, some of which weighed as much as a Baghdad<sup>74</sup> rttl<sup>75</sup>.

# 6. İşbâzçeşm Prices in the Middle Ages

İşbâzçeşm, which was known as Ğarevi and was less valuable than ruby in quality, purer than bicâde and had more vibrant colour than Bedahshan. La'l, was extracted in the Mağrip country and process in Egypt. İşbâhçeşm, which had a red colour close to yellow and a lot of moisture had two types called Zerdûl and Tarbân. It was stated that the first of them was pure and had an appearance similar to agate stone produced in Anatolia, while the second had a moisture-free and yellowish colour. This precious stone, which was so similar to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 227.

<sup>67</sup> Kâşânî, p. 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Ibid, p. 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Ibid, p. 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Ibid, p. 76.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Ibid, p. 88.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>73</sup> It is a large island in the sea of Hercend (Indian Ocean) around India. It is said that the mountain of er-Rehûn, from which Hz. Adam descended, is here. It was also rumoured that the red ruby stone was also found on this mountain and that is descends as a result of the rain water dragging. It is also said that the scent of bile and the diamond stone were brought from here. See. Yakut el-Hamevî, v. III, p. 215-216.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Rtl was ecclesiastically valid in Baghdad in the Middle Ages. According to one law school, its value was128/7 dirhams and to the other school it was 130 dirhams. While the authority in Nizip, Mar Eliya, accepted this first in 1050, whereas other circles (from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century to the 14<sup>th</sup> century) were based on 130 dirhams. In practice, on the other hand, 130 dirhams=406,25 gr, the second value is more common, See. Walter Hinz, p. 34-35

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 87.

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ceze' (onex) stone, but more tarnsparent than it and was used as a ring stone by Şia members in Iran, a miscal of it was sold for 30 Mağrip denars in the 9<sup>th</sup> century in Egypt<sup>76</sup>.

# 7. Cemest Prices in the Middle Ages

Cemest, which was usually a purple-coloured stone<sup>77</sup>, was extracted in Vâdi's-Safra<sup>78</sup> village that was located three days away from Medina, the region of Mervü'r-Rûz<sup>79</sup>, Çeğanyân<sup>80</sup>, Beyhak<sup>81</sup> and Serâb<sup>82</sup>, the city of city Azerbaijan. According to a report, this precious stone was sold also brought from the mines, from which the ceze' stone was extracted in Yemen<sup>83</sup>.

This precious stone, which was hard structured, easily broken like glass, melted like lead, some pieces were two ritl and had a white shell on it, had four varieties: Dark pink, sky blue, light pink and dark blue<sup>84</sup>.

In the Middle Ages, ornaments made of cemest stone were in great demand by the Arabs and drinking glasses were also made from it and according to the accounts, it also had a feature of delaying intoxication<sup>85</sup>.

At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century 1 miscal of a flawless and clean cemest stone was sold for 5 denars<sup>86</sup>.

The prices of ruby-like gemstones, mentioned above, were parallel to the prices of rubies sold in the first half of the H. I. and II. centuries. A jeweller named Eyüb el-Esved el-Basrî occasionally sold kerkend<sup>87</sup>, kurbüz<sup>88</sup> and eflah<sup>89</sup> stones to the Abbasid caliph

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 90.

According to a rumour from Ibn Abbas, the court of Belkis, the queen of Sebe' state established in Yemen, was built from this precious stone. See. Ibid, p. 194.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>78</sup> Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 87; Kâşânî, p. 140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Ibid, p. 87; ibid, p. 140.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 140.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p. 140.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, p. 140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>83</sup> Utârid b. Muhammed el-Hâsib, v. 16 b.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>84</sup> Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 87.

<sup>85</sup> See. el-Beyrunî, s. 194; Utârid b. Muhammed el-Hâsib, v. 17 a.

<sup>86</sup> Kâşânî, p. 140.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>87</sup> The precious stone named kerkhen, which has a colour between red and black, shines only in the sun and is not very resistant to fire, has varieties called halûkî, fitikî, asmancûnî. Of these, the yellow ones are not inferior to the yellow ruby, except for the acceptance of luster and polish. See. el-Beyrunî, p. 52; See also. Kâşânî, p. 34-35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> The pink coloured, beautifully shaped and easily broken stone named kurbüz or curbüz, has varieties like ruby. The behremân type of this stone is extremely similar to the behremân type of ruby. However, this feature could not be noticed by most jewellers and could be sold for real ruby price. At the same time this similarity was seen in all types of the precious stones that were mentioned. See. el-Beyrunî, p. 51, 52.

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el-Mehdi in exchange for thousands of denars, as if they were rubies unknowingly. However, a person named Avnu'l-Abbâdî, a member of Benî Süleym<sup>90</sup>, met with el-Mehdi and stated that the precious stones he bought were not as durable a red rubies and they did not become as beautiful as them when they were put into a fire. Thereupon, el-Mehdi set one of these stones into the fire to test it. As a result of this experiment, kerkend lost three and eflah lost five miscals of their values and thus it was revealed that these were not real rubies, only just similar<sup>91</sup>.

# 8. Emerald Prices in the Middle Ages

One of the important precious stone is emerald. This stone, called "zumurrud" in Arabic and "smaragdos" in Greek, is a green coloured silicate with beryllium used in jewellery. Be Al<sub>2</sub>, (SiO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>6</sub> hardness 7,5 density 2,67-2,75 Hexagonal. In the Ural mountains, they are very beautiful crystals between the mica schist and calcite veins<sup>92</sup>. In the Middle Ages it was believed that when crushed emerald of two barley weighted was given to people who were poisoned and bitten by poisonous animal and it would heal them; a person afflicted with epilepsy would get rid of this disease as a result of carrying it; snakes and scorpions would stay away from its radiance and if it was put on woman's right thighbone that had difficulty to give birth, then it would make her doing it easily<sup>93</sup>.

In fact the emerald is red in the formation phase and has the characteristics of ruby, but as a result of the accumulation of red colours on each other, a transformation to black occurs. Then as a result of the mixture of red with black, the colour of the stone turns green<sup>94</sup>.

el-Beyrunî gave extensive information about the emerald prices in the time of the Umayyad ruler Abdulmelik b. Mervan. According to the given table, in this period, 4 carats of the emerald was 2.000, 5 carats 3.500, 6 carats 5.000, 7 carats 6.000, 8 carats 7.000, 9

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>89</sup> The most valuable of the kerkend stone, which resembles a red ruby, is called 'sindiya' and has a strong luster. There is another type of this stone, called 'eflah' or 'eblec', which is polished with leather, but it has a secondary quality. The third, which is the least valuable in quality, is more like salt in terms of appearance and colour. el-Beyrunî, p. 51, 52.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> It was a large tribe that belonged to the Kays b. Aylân tribe, which was based on Adnan. The ancestry of the tribe was as follows: Süleym b. Mansur b. İkrime b. Hasafe b. Kays b. Aylân. Muder b. Nizâr b. Ma'ad b. Adnan. Their homes were as follows: Necid Âliye near Hayber, Harretü Süleym, Hatterü'n-Nârîn, Vâdi'l-Kurâ, Teymâ', Barka (Libya), Egypt, el-Hicr, Zî Rûlân, el-Cemûh, es-Süvârikiyye. This tribe had very important victories in its history. See. Ömer Rıda Kehhâle, Mu'cem Kabâ'li'l-Arab el-Kadîme ve'l-Hadîse, Beirut, 1997, v. II, p. 543-544.

<sup>91</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 53.

<sup>92</sup> See. Mehmet Zeki Kuşoğlu, p. 169-170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Ibid, p. 169-170.

<sup>94</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 114-115; Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 89-90.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>95</sup> The weight of carat (Karat, keration) varies as the weight of the goods: Both in ecclesiastical and in Iraq 1 carat was always = 1/20 miscal and (ecclesiastically) 5, often was equal to 3 habbes. So 3,125 grams of weight was 1/14 of dirham. (0,2232 grams). See. Walter Hinz, p. 33.

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carats 8.000, 10 carats 9.000, 11 carats 10.000, 12 carats 11.500, 13 carats 13.000, 14 carats 14.000, 15 carats 15.000, 16 carats 16.000, 17 carats 18.700, 19 carats 14.700, 20 carats 28.000, 21 carats 32.000 dirhams<sup>96</sup>.

In the 9<sup>th</sup> century C. E. each dirham of an emerald stone weighing 10 dirhams was 50 denars. However, in the same period, a half miscal emerald stone was sold for 2.000 denars<sup>97</sup>. In the work named Kitâbu'l-İstibsâr fi Acâıbi'l-Amsâr, whose author was unknown, it was claimed that the quality emerald, which had a volume as much as a ring stone, was sold for 10 denars<sup>98</sup>.

The jewels, which had been accumulated by the rulers for years, could be sold very cheaply due to the needs during the economic crises in which the states had fallen in the Middle Ages. During the economic crisis at the time of Fatimid caliph el-Müstansir, some jewellers working in the jewellery house were invited to the palace and showed themselves a chest in which contained seven müdd<sup>99</sup> emeralds that valued 300.000 denars. At the same time, people named Fahru'l-Arab b. Hemdan, İbn Sinân and İbn Ebî Kudeyne were also there. Then one of the viziers there asked some jewellers about the price of the emerald. They stated that it could be measured, if and only if there was something else in its size, whereas pricing for this amount of emeralds would be impossible. At that time İbn Ebî Kudeyne, by stating that Fahru'l Arab was in debt also suggested him to give the emeralds to a jeweller officer in exchange for 500 denars. His suggestion was confirmed and the emeralds were sold to that person<sup>100</sup>. Furthermore at the same time, a necklace worth 80.000 denars was sold for 2.000 denars, 1.200 gold and silver rings with stones made of very expensive precious ones were sold in very low amounts. Among them, there were three square shaped gold rings that one 's stone was emerald, the two others 'were ruby in sumakî (sumac coloured) and rummânî (pomegranate coloured) were then sold foe 12.000 denars<sup>101</sup>. However, during the same crisis, at the time of el-Müstansir 's grandfather, a vayba<sup>102</sup> jewellery, including emerald stones,

<sup>96</sup> See. El-Beyrunî, p. 164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>97</sup> Ibid, p. 163.

<sup>98</sup> See. The unknown author, Kitabu'l-İstibsâr fî Acâibi'l-Amsâr, (Nşr. Sa'd Zeğlûl Abdulhamid), ed-Dâru'l-Beyzâ (Morocco), 1985, p. 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> el-Makrizî, citing information from Ibn Abdilhakem's chronicle (7<sup>th</sup> century), stated that 6 müdds were 1 vayba in Egypt at that time. Since we can calculate vayba exactly and precisely as 15 liters, we get a value of 2,5 liters fir the time used in Egypt in the first years of Islam. There is no record of the time in Egypt for later years. See. Where Hinz, p. 56.

<sup>100</sup> el-Makrizî, Kitâbu'l-Mevâ'iz ve 'l-İtibâr bî Zikri'l--Hıtat ve'l-Asâr, Cairo, 1270, v. I, p. 414.

el-Makrizî, Kitâbu'l-Mevâ'iz, c. I, p. 414.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>102</sup> It is a measure of volume used especially in Egypt. In the old period=10 menn or 12,168 kg (wheat), in 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries each glasses were 232 dirhams, so 16 glasses=11,6 kg wheat, in practice=15 liters, See.

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which was bought for 700.000 denars and the jewellers could not set a price, was sold for 20.000 denars<sup>103</sup>.

In 13<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a dirham weighed zübâbî (fly-coloured) qualified emerald was four denars. This price would rise and fall according to the size of the stone. But the decrease in price due to its small size was not like other stones. As this stone had not standard features in both large and small both curved and smooth ones. Other emerald varieties were not so popular as they lacked the characteristics of the zübâbî type<sup>104</sup>.

According to an information by el-Makrizî, an emerald stone weighing 75 miscals was extracted from the emerald mine in Egypt in H. 704 and the person, responsible of that mine took this stone to the king of Yemen by hiding in order to sell it, but he did not sell it, although he was offered 120.000 dirhams for it. Then, when the king took the emerald stone from him and sent it to the ruler of Egypt, the miner died because of the shock of this incident <sup>105</sup>.

ed-Dimaşkî, the  $13^{th}$  century scholar, did not explain the emerald prices in numbers, but gave the following valuable words relating to its trade:

"Its (emerald) value varies according to the variety of its buyers and their desires. Some of them are in demand for the ring stones made of emerald, some of them wants only the reed-shaped one of it. Additionally, their (buyers) tastes and desires in th way of their ring stones, are different from each other. Therefore, in comparison with ruby stone, cheaters have better success in likening the fake to this gemstone. Its best attempt is made in its lightness, lines and paths on it. In terms of fire resistance, it was also more durable than its counterfeit can stand" <sup>106</sup>.

At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, in the city of Tabriz, in the gree and beautiful reyhânî (basil flower-coloured) kind of emerald's half dânek was 2-10, zübâbî kind's one dânek was 2-20, 2 dâneks were 10-100, a half denar was 10-150, 4 dâneks were 20-150, 5 dâneks were 30-180, 1 miscal was sold for more than 250 denars<sup>107</sup>.

If the emerald stone was in a form of reed, its value would increase even more. In the same century, this type of emerald in Tabriz a half dânek 5, 1 dânek 20, 1,5 dânek 30, 2 dânek 50, a half miscal 100, 4 dânek 150, 1 miscal 300, 5 dânek 180, 1,5 miscals 500, 2 miscals

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> el-Makrizî, Kitâbu'l-Mevâ'iz, c.I, p. 414.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v.II, p. 117.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> el-Makrizî, es-Sülûk lî Ma'fireti Düveli'l-Mülûk, Cairo, 1972, v. II/I, p. 12.

ed-Dımaşkî, Ebu'l-Fadl Ca'fer b. Ali, Ticaretin Güzelliklerine İşaret, (Trans. Abdulhalik Bakır), Ortaçağ Tarih ve Medeniyetine Dait Çeviriler I, Ankara, 2008, p. 487.
 Kâşânî, p. 57.

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800-1.000, 3 miscals 1.500, 4 miscals 2.000, 6 miscals 2.500, 8 miscals 4.000, 10 miscals (zübâbî type) were sold for 5.000 denars<sup>108</sup>.

According to the reports, the price of the ring of the Abbasid caliph Ebu Ca'fer el-Mansur, called "el-bahr" (sea), weighing two miscals, was 40.000 denars <sup>109</sup>. An arm-length emerald shown by el-Mu'tasım to his friends with order of Ümmü Ca'fer was purchased for 84.000 denars. There was a bird made of ruby on the head of the stick of his finger thickness <sup>110</sup>.

The emerald drinking bowl, used in one of Khwarazmshah ruler Me'mun b. Me'mun Muhammed's palace, which was rather like a scale, was purchased for 1.000 denars<sup>111</sup>.

# 9. Zebercet (chrysolite) Prices in the Middle Ages

Chrysolite stone<sup>112</sup> was very rare and only found in Sa'id<sup>113</sup> region which was located in the south of the Nile river in Egypt, also in Mukattam<sup>114</sup> mountain that very near the city of Fustat and in the north of the Nile river, in Zerkâ<sup>115</sup> in Yemen and in Anatolia<sup>116</sup>.

As it will be explained later, in the early periods of the Abbasids, we learned that as ring stones, spoon and also a lot kinds of objects were of made from chrysolite stone. Once, the famous doctor of the Abbasid caliphs, Bahtishu', presented an eight miscals weighed spoon to el-mütevekkil on the occasion of the Mihrecân feast and this ruler invited the jeweller named Attâb to his palace and asked him to determine the price of this precious gift. But Attâb could not do that<sup>117</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Ibid, p. 57-58.

<sup>109</sup> el-Beyrunî, p.165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>110</sup> Ibid, p. 165.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> Ibid, p. 164.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> Yellow greenish, crystalline chrysolite (Mg, Fe, Mn)<sub>2</sub>, SiO<sub>4</sub>. Used as an ornamental stone, Hardness 6,5, Density 3,4 Rhombic. See. Mehmet Zeki Kuşoğlu, p. 166. Actually chrysolite is a green stone formed together with the emerald stone. That is why it is recognized by some people as a variant of the emerald. See. el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 117.

el-İstahrî, Mesâliku'l-Memâlik, Leiden, 1927, p. 51; Utârid b. Muhammed el-Hâsib, v. 9 b 10 a.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, p. 51, el-Mukattam is a mountain range that starts from the borders of Esvân city of Egypt and Habeşistan (Abyssinia) and ends in Cairo and is known with different names each region and there are many mosques, churches on it. In order to buy this mountain, which has no water and plants except the small göze in monastery belonging to Christians in Sa'id region, the Egyptian ruler Mukavkis offered to, the governor of Egypt Amr b. el-As'a 70.000 denars, as aresult of the order of Hz. Omar, this place was made a cemetery for Muslims. These among the Sahabe (Companions) who were buried in this mountain cemetery were: Amr b. el-As, Abdullah b. el-Hâris ez-Zübeydî, Abdullah b. Huzhafe es-Sehmî and Ukbe b. Amir el-Cühenî, See. Yakut el-Hamavî, v. V, p. 204-205.

The unknown author, Kitabu'l-İstibsâr fî Acâibi'l-Amsâr, p. 269.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> İbnu'l-Fâkih, Ebu Bekr Ahmed b. Muhammed b. el-Heme-zânî, Muhtasaru Kitabi'l-Buldân, Leiden, 1302, p.252

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>117</sup> el-Beyrunî, p.165.

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According to a report from et-Tifâşi, this precious stone was nowhere to be found in his own time and that the chrysolites in the hands of people were obtained from the excavations in Alexandria<sup>118</sup>. The best quality of this stone was the medium green coloured and had a beautiful water, thin and relaxed the eyes.

In 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a chrysolite stone weighing a half miscal was sold for under 2.000 miscals gold<sup>119</sup>. The ring stone called "el bahr", weighing three miscals, was bought by the Abbasid caliph Ebu Ca'fer el-Mansur for 30.000 denars and this gem was in the treasure of the caliphs in 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E<sup>120</sup>.

# 10. Diamond Prices in the Middle Ages

There were two types of diamond in the Middle Ages, the first one was a white stone and was called "billurî" (crystal diamond), because it looked like a crystal. The second one was a stone mixed with and yellow like Pharaoh's glass. This was called "zeytî" 121. There was a variant of the crystal diamond that, when its strong glow reflected on any wall or a dress or a person's face, it radiated coloured lights like a rainbow. From this type of diamond stone, so magnificent ornaments were produced especially for the rulers 122.

In the Middle Ages, the diamond industry in India reached a very advanced level. The craftsmen working in this field knew which ornament to make from which kind of diamonds and they were doing this as a result of an experiment. After a piece of diamond heated with a breath, it was thrown into a salty water pot in which lead had been washed. Then, if a white diamond was seen in the water; sword handles, jewellery and ornaments used in the upper parts of the human body would made from it. If a red diamond was seen in the water; belts and all the ornaments used in the middle part of the human body would be made from it. If a yellow one was seen; this diamond was used for making ring stones, bracelets and arm jewellery<sup>123</sup>.

In 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. while a crystal and red diamond stone weighing half a miscal was sold for 100 denars<sup>124</sup>, in 12<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a carat diamond was worth two denars<sup>125</sup>.

See. el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 117. See also. The unknown author, Kitabu'l-İstibsâr fî Acâibi'l-Amsâr, p. 98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>119</sup> el-Câhız, p. 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>120</sup> Ibid, p. 21.

el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 113. He stated that there were seven types of diamonds white, zeytî (olive coloured), yellow, red, green and black. See. el-Beyrunî, p. 93; See also Kâşânî, p. 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>122</sup> Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 89.

el-Beyrunî, p. 93. See also Kâşânî, p. 82-83.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>124</sup> el-Cahız, p. 23; el-Beyrunî, p. 97.

el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 114.

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According to the reports, while a dirham of diamond consisting of small grains found its buyers for 100 deenars, a stone of the same weight was 1.000 denars<sup>126</sup>.

In accordance with an information from el-Kindî, the most expensive pepper-sized and rainbow-coloured diamond sold in Baghdad was 80 denars<sup>127</sup>. The price of the cheapest diamond was sold in Baghdad was 15 denars. The price of a large diamond, weighing one and a half miscals that using to manufacture ring stones, increased twice compared to the price of a mustard-sized diamond and when it was also compared to the pepper-flake sized would increased three, four or even fivefold<sup>128</sup>.

ed-Dimaşkî gave the following information relating to the price of diamond:

"Because of the lack and scarcity of the commoner, kings buy more diamonds and wear them on their fingers by making a ring stone from them. Again, diamonds were sold to the kings to commit suicide before falling into the hands of the enemy and being humiliated and tortured to death. As soon as a king realized that he encountered such a thing, he would swallow the daimond and die there. The price of a ring stone of this stone is the same as that of a ring stone made of high quality ruby from Behremânî type, as previously described as regards of its weight" 129.

In 14<sup>th</sup> century C.E. the types of diamond stone pikânî and zeytî (olive coloured) were so popular. This stone of 15 miscals weighing in pikânî type was sold for 20.000 denars. However, the piece of the other type of the same weight was 15.000 denars. Likewise, a diamond stone of 10 miscals weighing in pikânî type found buyers for 10.000 denars, while the other type was sold for 6.000 denars<sup>130</sup>.

# 11. Pearl Prices in the Middle Ages

It has many names in Arabic. The most famous of them can be listed as follows: el-Lü'lü'e, ed-Dürre, el-Nercâne, en-Nutfe, et-Tevme, et-Tev'emiyye, el-Latimiyye, es-Sadefiyye, er-Süfâne, el-Cümâne, el-Elvaniyye, el-Heycümâne, el-Harîde, el-Havsa, es-Sa'sa'a, el- Hasl. According to el-Halil b. Ahmed el-Ferâhidî nufte as it resembled a pearl in terms of roundness and purity, a milk drop and hail also looked more like a pearl than a water drop. In fact, it would be more correct to compare it with semen not in terms of purity, but in terms of whiteness<sup>131</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>126</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>127</sup> Ibid, p. 97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>128</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>129</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 488.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>130</sup> Kâşânî, p. 83.

See. el-Beyrunî, p. 107.

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The pearl is contained in a unique shell. The pearl oyster is a salty marine animal with a bony skin like slug<sup>132</sup>. As for how the pearl is formed, various opinions are put forward on this issue. According to somebody, it occurs with the effect of rain<sup>133</sup>. To the others, it is caused by a reason except rain<sup>134</sup>. In fact, when oyster, mussel-type marine molluscs open their lids to eat micro organisms in the water, the animal cannot throw it out, but secrets a secretion so that it does not harm itself. The secretion grow over time and a valuable object called pearl emerge. Pearls are also produced in oyster fields, which are made spontaneously in nature and artificially<sup>135</sup>.

Regarding the prices of pearls in the Middle Ages, we are faced with a very mixed picture on this subject. However, the abundance of information about this area gives us some clues. According to a price list that was written in time of Abdülmelik b. Mervan the Umayyad caliph, half carat of a perfect, round and rectangular pearl was 1 and 1/6 dirhams, its 2/3 carats were 3 dirhams, 1 carat of it was 6 dirhams, its 2 carats were 7, its 3 carats were 9 dirhams, its 4 carats were 12 dirhams, its 5 carats were 15 dirhams, its 6 carats were 18 dirhams, its 7 carats were 36 dirhams, its 8 carats were 40 dirhams, its 9 carats were 50 dirhams, its 10 carats were 70 dirhams, its 11 carats were 85 dirhams, its 12 carats 202 dirhams, its 13 carats were 770 dirhams.

The 2/3 dirhams of the same shaped and featured pearl was 1,275 dirhams, its 1 dirham was 8.800 dirhams, its 1 and 2/3 dirhams 33..300 dirhams and its 2 dirhams were 66.066 dirhams<sup>136</sup>.

The price of the pearl rosary of Ümmü Seleme, the wife of the Abbasid caliph Ebu'l-Abbas es-Seffâh, was 50.000 denars<sup>137</sup>. It was also rumoured that Ebu'l-Abbas Ahmed en-Nâsır Lîdini'l-Lâh, one of the Abbasid caliphs, paid 6.000 miscals gold (app. 24.000 denars) for a pearl as big as a bird's egg<sup>138</sup>.

There were 36 pieces of pearls in a necklace made in Baghdad. The smallest of these pearls weighed 6 miscals. This was 4 carats, the value of 10 of the pieces equal to three quarters of a denar. The price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 25% was 1,25 denars. The price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 2/1 miscals were 2 denars. The price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 4/3 miscals were 4 denars. The price of a

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>132</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 106.

<sup>133</sup> See. el-Mesudî, Ebi<sup>2</sup>l-Hasan Ali b. el-Hüseyin b. Ali, Mürûcu'z-Zeheb ve Ma'dini'l Cevher, (Thk. Kasım eş-Şemmâ'î er-Rifâ'î), Beirut, 1989, v. I, p. 143. See also. el-İdrisî, v. I, p. 391; İbnu'l-Mücâvir, Cemâleddin Ebu'l-Feth Yusuf b. Ya'kub b. Muhammed, Tarihu'l-Müstabsir, Leiden, 1951, v. II, p. 292, Kâşânî, p. 86.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>134</sup> el-Mesudî, v. II, p. 143.

<sup>135</sup> See. Mehmet Zeki Kuşoğlu, p. 79.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>136</sup> Ibid, p. 130-131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>137</sup> Ibnu'l-Mücâvir, v. I, p. 298.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>138</sup> See İbid, v. II, p. 294.

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necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 1 miscal was 10 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 1,25 miscals were 15 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 1,50 miscals were 20 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 1,75 miscals were 25 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 2 miscals were 35 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 2,25 miscals were 40 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 2,50 were 50 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 2,75 miscals were 70 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 3 miscals were 80 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 3,25 miscals were 90 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 3,50 miscals were 100 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 3,75 miscals were 150 denars, the price of a necklace made up of 10 pearls weighing 4 miscals were 200 denars. If the pearl grains were of very high quality, pure and juicy the price of a necklace of 10 pearls weighing 4 miscals was 300 denars, in this case the price of each was equal to 30 denars. If a string of pearls was converted from tens to singles, the price of a pearl grain of weighing 4,50 miscals was 40 denars. If the weight of a pearl grain was 4,75 miscals, its price was 55 denars, 5 miscals was 65 denars, 5,25 miscals was 75 denars, 5,50 miscals was 85 denars, 5,75 miscals was 90 denras, 6 miscals was 100 denars, 7 miscals was 105 denars. After that, besides the weight of the pearls and the popularity shown to them, the presence of these five characteristics which were cleanliness, transparency (they called el-Mâiyye by jewellers), brightness, roundness and narrow perforations-also doubled the price ratios in terms of their quality<sup>139</sup>.

In 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a round and high quality pearl weighing half a miscal was sold for 100 miscals gold. However, egg-shaped pearls had a lover price and their price was calculated based on increasing weight and rolling. The price of a pearl weighing two miscals with this feature ranged from 10.000 to 100.000 denars. In fact, it was so difficult to determine the price of pearls with these qualities, because their number was so small<sup>140</sup>.

In fact, in the Middle Ages, pearls were measured in miscals, sold in Nishapur denars and sales were based on round grains known as necm (star) and 'uyûn (eye). According to this, 1 miscal of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 1.000 denars, half and 1/3 miscals of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 800 denars, 2/3 miscals of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 500 denars, half miscal of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 200 denars, 1/3 miscal of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 50 denars, 1/4 miscals of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 20 denars, 1/6 miscal of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 5 denars, 1/18 miscal of necm (star) typed pearl was sold for 1

<sup>139</sup> Ezhâru'l-Efkâr fi Cevâhiri'l-Ahcâr, v. 7 a-8 a.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>140</sup> el-Câhız, p. 19.

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denar. At the same time gulâmi, necmin, hayidâne, half of the round and münezzer were sold for 1/10 of the round, while the price of 1 miscal of the other pearl varieties was 10 denars<sup>141</sup>.

In the same age, real necm (star) type pearls were found in Oman and Bahrain. A round pearl of Bahrain origin, having very fine qualities and weighing a half miscal, was called "dürre". The price of such a pearl was 1.000 denars. In this period it was not possible to price 2 miscals of the pearls that were characterized as dürre. The seller coul sell them at whatever price he wanted<sup>142</sup>. Additionally, the pearl that was less than two dirhams and the pearl heavier than two dirhams, but having any defects were given the same name as the "pearl grain"<sup>143</sup>. Again, the best quality pearl was called "el-kâr" and this last one would usually have a spherical structure, a plain and clean colour and shiny surface. In fact, a pearl with these features was called "er-ratib"<sup>144</sup>.

According to another price list, in Bahrain 1/6 miscals of round pearls were sold for 2-3, 1/3 of 12-20, 1/2 of 30-50, 2/3 of 70, 1/2 and 1/3 of 100, 1 of 200, 2 of 2.000 and 3 of was 3.000 denars. According to el-Beyrunî, this last figure was too low for a pearl of such a weight and should have been sold at a higher price<sup>145</sup>. In the Middle Ages, 3 miscals of a solid and good pearl of the kulzumî type were sold for 600 denars, while the price of 10 miscals reached at very high figures<sup>146</sup>.

During the tie of Mahmud of Ghaznavid (998-1030), the price of fülfülî (peppery) type pearl called "yetîme" which was in the state treasury and weighed close to 3 miscals, was 30.000 denars 148.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century C.E. fülfülî pearls weighing one miscal were sold for about 300 denars<sup>149</sup>. Indeed, in the Middle Ages, the value of pearls was measured not by their weights but rather by their qualities. Jewellers called the round pearl "mouse" and the public "el-müdahrece" (rolling). Another feature of it was that there were layers of thin shells on it. If it did not have such a feature, it meant that it was an artificial and fake pearl rather than a real one<sup>150</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>141</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>142</sup> Ibid, p. 129.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>143</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 107.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>144</sup> Ibid, v. II, p. 107.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>145</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>146</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 130.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>147</sup> This pearl has no relation with ed-Dürretü'l Yetime, which was famous in the Middle Ages and which have given information about before. Each pearl was called 'yetime' or 'feride', which was unique in jewellery. However, as a custom, the second name was used more than the first one. See. el- Beyrunî, p. 150-151.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>148</sup> Ibid, p. 150.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>149</sup> ed-Dimaşkî, el-İşâre ilâ Mehâsini't-Ticâre, p. 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>150</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 107.

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In 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries C.E. a fine pearl weighing two dirhams and one or two habbes found buyers for 700 denars<sup>151</sup>. Two pearls with the same characteristics and adhered was sold at 2.000 and aquality pearl with a weight of one miscal was sold for 300 denars<sup>152</sup>. 700 denars were paid for two pearls with the same shape and appearance, but with the same weight<sup>153</sup>. If the total weight was one miscal and had the same characteristics, this conjoined pearls would cost only 100 denars. If the weight of such pearls was 2/3 miscals (two-thirds) it would be sold for 50, if half a miscal it was sold for 20 and if 1/3 (one-third) miscals was sold for 5 denars<sup>154</sup>.

At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century one miscal of perfect, round white, uyûn (in Arabic 'ayn' means 'eye') and necm (star) type pearl in the city of Kays (an island in the Persian Gulf), Bahrain and Tabriz, was sold for 1.000-4.000, 5 dâneki of it was sold for 1.300-1.500, 4 dânekis of it was sold for 700-800, a half denar of it was sold for 50-400, 2.5 dânekis of it was sold for 40-300, 2 dânekis of it was sold for 20-200, 1,5 dânekis of it was sold for 10-100 and 3/2 dânekis of it was sold for 10-50, 91 dâneks and two barleys weighed one was sold for 20-30, 1 dâneki of it was sold for 5-25, 3/2 dâneks and two barleys weighed one was sold for 4-15, 3/2 dânekis 4-12, a half dânek and two barleys weighed 3-6, a half dâneki 2-4, 24/1 dâneks and two barley weighed 2-2,5, 24/1 dânekis 1 denar and 1 denar two dâneks<sup>155</sup>.

At the same time, one miscal of a zerd (green) type pearl was sold for 100, 5 dânekis of it were 80, 4 dânekis of it were 70, a half denar of it was 60, 2 dânekis of it were 50, 1 dâneki of it was 10, a half dâneki of it was 1, 24/1 dânekis of it were a half denar, one miscal of a blackish type pearl was sold for 80, 5 dânekis of it were 50, 4 dânekis of it were 40, a half denar of it was 35, 2 dânekis of it were 25, 1 dâneki of it was 6 and a half dânek of it was 4 dâneke, 24/1 dânekis of it were 2 dânekes and one miscal of "kerken" type pearl was sold for 75,5 dânekis of it were50, 4 dânekis of it were 30, a half denar of it was 25, 2 dânekis of it were 15, 1 dâneki of it was 5, a half dâneki of it was a half denar and 24/1 dânekis of it were sold for 1 dâneke<sup>156</sup>.

# 12. Turquoise Prices in the Middle Ages

This stone's, named in Persian language "pîrûze", hardness was 5,6, specific gravity was 2,7. It was found as hidden crystalline quartz grains, lumps as kidney-like, crusty, clump

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>151</sup> According to el-Kaşkanadî's report, the Fatimid caliphs had a pearl that they called 'el-Yetime' weighing seven dirhams. They would wear it on calip's forehead (between his two eyes) in big and important ceremonies. See. Ibid, v. II, p. 107.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>152</sup> Ibid, v. II, p. 107.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>153</sup> Ibid, v. II, p. 107; ed-Dımaşkî, p.31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>154</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>155</sup> Kâşânî, p. 119-120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>156</sup> Ibid, p. 122-123.

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and concretions. Never melt in the blower. Since the ancient times, this used to be the jewel material mineral. Because of it was sold to Europe from Iran and Egypt by the way of Turkey, that was why it took the name of "turquoise". It was also called "turkis" and "kallait"<sup>157</sup>. Jewellery sculptors divide the turquoise into east and west. The most valuable ones were in sky-blue; others were light-blue. There were also in blue coloured types that were like in green or even yellow. Sometimes the colours of the turquoise shifted from bright blue to dull green<sup>158</sup>.

el-Beyrunî determined that Câbir b. Hayân el-Kufî described it in his work titled "Kitâbu'n-Nühab fi't-Tılsımât" "Haceru'l-Ğalebe" (stone of superiority), "Haceru'l Ayn" (eye stone) and "Haceru'l-Câh" (stone of richness). However, when evaluating these names used for turquoise, el-Beyrunî gave the following views:

"As for the names of Haceru'l Ğalebe and Haceru'l-Câh, they were for optimism, because in Persian the meaning of their names were victory. As for Haceru't-Ayn (eye stone), the sebec stone deserved this name more than that, because the commoners claimed that if the person who was exposed to the eye carried this stone with him, he would be saved from it. Therefore, depending on their beliefs about it, they manufactured children's necklaces from this stone, as due to the softness of them, their beads broke with the slightest blow. Inasmuch as of this feature, they used it for this purpose". 159.

The blue turquoise alleged to be formed from the steam rising from the copper mine<sup>160</sup> was mostly found in Nukân<sup>161</sup>, Tûs (Horasan)<sup>162</sup>, Harizm<sup>163</sup>, Fergâne<sup>164</sup>, Nişâver<sup>165</sup>, Şaş<sup>166</sup>, İlâk<sup>167</sup>, Kubâdiyan<sup>168</sup>, Hocend<sup>169</sup> and Kırman<sup>170</sup>. But the most important turquoise production centre was the city of Nişapur<sup>171</sup>. In 1821, Faser, who visited the hill where the turquoise

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>157</sup> See. Mehmet Zeki Kuşoğlu, p. 60.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>158</sup> Comission, Grand Larousse Dictionary and Encyclopedia, v. XXIII, p. 11886.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>159</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 169-170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>160</sup> See. Ezhâru'l-Efkâr fi Cevâhiri'l-Ahcâr, v. 48 b; el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 117. See also. el-Gazûlî, v. II, p. 156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>161</sup> el-İdrisî, c. II, p. 692-693; Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>162</sup> el-Kazvinî, p. 411; İbid, p. 92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>163</sup> Kâşânî, p. 67.

el-İstahrî, p. 334; el-Kazvinî, p. 603; Babür, Bâburnâme, (Ed. Reşit Rahmeti Arat), İstanbul, 1989, v. I, p. 8-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>165</sup> el-Gazûlî, v. II, p. 156.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>166</sup> Yakut el-Hamavî, v. I, p. 205.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>167</sup> Kâşânî, p. 67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>168</sup> el-Makdisî, p. 326.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>169</sup> Kâşânî, p. 67; İsmail Aka, Timur ve Devleti, Ankara, 1991, p. 132.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>170</sup> Ibid, p. 67; Marco Polo, p. 30-31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>171</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 170; el-Makdisî, p. 326; Ezhâhru'l-Efkâr fî Cevâhir'l-Ahcâr, v. 48 b; el-Kazvinî, p. 473; Kâşânî, p. 67; es-Sa'âlibî, p. 539-540; el-Gazûlî, v. II, p. 156.

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stone was extracted, located 60 km to the northwest of this city, said that the workers here extracted this mine using axes in very primitive methods<sup>172</sup>.

In 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a one dirham weighed bushâkî turquoise stone was sold for 10 denars<sup>173</sup>. However, five dirhams of a very pure and clean turquoise stone could be sold for 100 denars<sup>174</sup>. Again in this century, a ring stone, made of turquoise called "el-lebenî", known as green, pure "eṣ-ṣirbâm", weighing a half miscals could be sold for 20 denars<sup>175</sup>.

The price of Nişapur turquoise was slightly different. For example, the price of a mixed quality turquoise stone, which was 200 dirhams before the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E., was 50 denars, while the turquoise in the same weight increased to 200 denars as a result of the deplation of the mine in this region at the same century<sup>176</sup>. According to what es-Sa'âlibî narrated a tuquoise stone which was green in colour and fire-resistant whose weight exceeded one miscal, rasp-resistant and did not change when exposed to hot water was sold for 200 denars<sup>177</sup>.

el-Kindî stated that the biggest turquoise stone since he had ever seen was in the weight of one ukkiye<sup>178</sup> and half miscal and this corresponded approximately to sixteen dirhams<sup>179</sup>. While Iraqis preferred the flat surface of turquoise stone as their ring stone, Khorasans and Indians preferred round ones which were more like grape grains<sup>180</sup>. However, we learned from another information that some people did not prefer this stone stone because it was changed quickly in terms of the weather conditions, just as clear, cloudy or windy, the fragrances shrinked it, it absorbed bath water and the oil killed it. For this reason, we learned that they did not consider this precious stone as a gem of water-borne gems, on the contrary, they assumed it as a kind of mud like petrified mud, when it was destroyed from oil touching and repaired with ram's egg and tallow, it shined in the hands of butchers, especially those who peeled the skins by hand. According to el-Beyrunî, near a hearth of this stone, there was a soft stone similar to it, which quickly changed with the contact of oil, the workers working here, made spoon and household item and etc. from it<sup>181</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>172</sup> Adem Metz, el-Hadâretü'l-İslamiyye fî'l-Karni-Râbi el-Hicri, (Trans: Muhammed Ebu Ride), Beiurut, 1967, v. II, p. 326.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>173</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>174</sup> Ibid, p. 170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>175</sup> See. el-Câhız, p. 21.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>176</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 170.

es-Sa'âlibî, Simâru'l-Kulûb fî'l-Muzâf ve'l-Mensûb, p. 540.

Ukkiye or ounce, aside from the exceptions, it was 1/12 rtll in princple. Essentially ounce were used as a weight of 40 dirhams=125 grams in Mecca in the early years of Islam. See. Walter Hinz, p. 43.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>179</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 171.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>180</sup> Ibid, p. 170.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>181</sup> Ibid, p. 171.

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In the Middle Ages, Nişapur was a city where many valuable things, including turquoise, were produced. Amr b. el-Leys es-Saffâr said: "Why not fight for a city whose grass is 15km, soil is nakal (eatable mud-soil), stone is turquoise!" He (Amr b. el-Leys es-Saffâr), by the word of nakal, meant an eatable unique soil all over the world, Nakal was taken to the near and distant places of the country and presented to the kings. It had also happened that a ritl of this mud was sold for one denar. The Abbasid caliph al-Me'mun introduced it and said: "Find me the nakal, for we were created from it and will go to it. It is such a thing that it is like camphor with fragrance on it". Other narrators said: "Turquoise is produced only in Niṣapur, a ring stone that surpasses a miscal, has green colour and roundness, is fire-resistant, does not break when rasped and does not change with hot water, can find buyers for 200 denars". Just like the feature of the ruby stone that made people felt comfortable, it was said that turquoise had a feature that would strengthen the heart by looking at it 182.

By the 13<sup>th</sup> century C.E., the value of this stone varied greatly according to its quality. Sometimes one of the two turquoise stones of the same weight found customers for a denar, while the other was sold for a dirham<sup>183</sup>. In the same century, a turquoise stone of high quality at halencî type was sold for half the price of a bishâkî type of the same quality<sup>184</sup>. In addition, in this century, it was because of its cheapness, this precious stone was not very popular with famous and wealthy people. On the other hand, it was mostly used by people in lower classes<sup>185</sup>. However, in the Middle Ages, the Maghrebians (people of west North Africa) were very popular with turquoise stone and did not hesitate to pay large sums of money to buy it. They sometimes gave 10 Mghrebian denar to it, made a ring from it and put the ring on their fingers and claimed that this stone was related to the science of alchemy<sup>186</sup>.

By the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century, one miscal of a turquoise stone of bishâkî type was 10-20 denars<sup>187</sup>.

The emir Nuh b. Mansur who was dead in 387, on the other hand, had a bowl called "Hürdâziyye" made of turquoise stone, which was used by Persians to drink wine on important feasts could take three ritl drinks. Later, this bowl was given to an engraver from

en-Nuveyrî, Şihâbuddin Ahmed b. Abdulvehab, Nihâyetü'l-Ereb fi Funûni'l-Edeb, Cairo, 1347, v. I, p. 38. See also. es-Sa'âlibi, Simâru'l-Kulûb fi'-Muzâf ve'l-Mensûb, p. 539.

Ezhâhru'l-Efkâr fî Cevâhir'l-Ahcâr, v. 49 b; el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>184</sup> Ibid, v. II, p. 118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>185</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 34.

Ezhâhru'l-Efkâr fî Cevâhir'l-Ahcâr, v. 49 b; el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 118.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>187</sup> See. Kâşânî, p. 74.

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Iraq for polishing, but it was broken in the hands of this engraver during the work. As aresult of this incident, the engraver, who was worried about his, immediately lost his trace<sup>188</sup>.

# 13. Agate Prices in the Middle Ages

There are many varieties of agate: Apple green chrysoprase, cherry red cornal, sky blue saphirine, dark orange sarduan, dark green ginge. The location of concentric or wavy strings seen in agate serves to distinguish these gemstones from each other, if the number of bands is small or distinct, agate is called onyx, also according to the characteristics of the stripes, there are sparkling, branched, eyed and dotted agates<sup>189</sup>.

Extracted from the Berûs region of India, the above-ground and underground deposits of agate were famous. According to a claim, the gate extracted from underground in this region was of even higher quality than Yemen agate<sup>190</sup>. The agates here were mostly "yakutî", "demevî", lahmî", "rutabî", "usfurî" and "muveşşa" in pure red colour with white dots<sup>191</sup>. The best quality of the agate stones, which had nine more<sup>192</sup> varieties as "blue", "white", "black", "red", "humrî", "mücezza", "el-hâil", "aselî", "dübsî" and the most qualified ones are found in Mukrâ<sup>193</sup>, Şibâm<sup>194</sup>, Elhân<sup>195</sup> and Kusâs<sup>196</sup> mines and some of the agate stones that extracted from these mines was processed in Yemen, the others were sent from here to Basra<sup>197</sup>.

Rings with agate stones were manufactured and sold in the Middle Ages. Accordingly, an agate stone ring was sold for 4 dirhams. Furhermore, knife handles were also made for this stone and buyers paid 1 denar or a little less to own one. But a high-quality and ornamented

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>188</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 172.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>189</sup> Commission, Grand Larousse Dictionary and Encyclopedia, v. I, p. 275.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>190</sup> Ibid, p. 172-173.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>191</sup> Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>192</sup> Ibid, p. 92.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>193</sup> el-Kazvinî, p. 62; el-Alusî, Mahmud Şukri el-Bağdâdî, Bulûğu'l-Ereb fî Ahvâli'l-Arab, Beirut, (trz.), v. I, 204

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>194</sup> el-İdrisî, v. I, p.154; İbnu'l-Mücâvir, v. II, p. 184. Şibam (shibam) is a mountain with trees and springs with fresh water to drink, located eight leagues from the city of San'a. In addition, there are many large caves, some castles belonging to the son's of Ya'fur and many vineyards and date palms on this mountain. In 3<sup>rd</sup> century C.E. there was a dam where the water coming down from this mountain was accumulated. When this dam was filled, it was opened by the authorities and water was given to the city of San'a and its surrounding areas. See. Yakut el-Hamavî, v. III, p. 360; el-Kazvinî, Acâib, p. 104.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>195</sup> el-Hemdanî, Ebu Muhammed el-Hasan b. Ahmed b. Ya'kub b. Davud, Sifatu Cezîreti'l-Arab, Frankfurt, 1993, p. 202; an unknown author, p. 269.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>196</sup> İbnu'l-Fakîh, p. 36. This mineral was also called as Kasas. See. Yakut el-Hamavî, v. IV, p. 393.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>197</sup> See. Adem Metz, v. II, p. 327, el-Beyrunî, based on the information in Kitabu'l-Ahcâr, wrote that agate was also found in Maghreb and Anatolia., See. el- Beyrunî, p. 172.

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ring stone was also sold for 1 dirham. These prices were all for only the red stoned one that this was the prime quality of agate stones, then the type of agate called "Rutabi" (in the colour of fresh date) took the second place. As for other types, they did not have much value and this type of agate was not very popular with buyers<sup>198</sup>.

The figures of agate prices, as we have mentioned above that belonged el-Tifâşi, we see that they significantly increased when coming to the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. According an information was given by el-Beyrunî, in the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E., a ring madee of red agate stone close to yellow was sold for three denars. The Iraqis were in demand for the agate stone "mişmişî" (mishmish coloured) and rutabî (fresh date colour), while Khorasans preferred "temri" (date colour) and "kebedi" (liver colour)<sup>199</sup>.

In 6<sup>th</sup> century, the agate mine, located on Şibâm<sup>200</sup> mountain in Yemen, was under the administration of Ebu'l-Çeyş İshak b. Ziyad Süleyman b. Tarf, one of the kings of Tihâme<sup>201</sup> and it annually generated 500.000 Assyrian denars<sup>202</sup>. However, after this century, agate began to lose its value and lost its former reputation as it was used by all kinds of people. Now, rulers and wealthy people began to use fine items<sup>203</sup> like large volume oil pot, glass, etc. And also swords, whose handles and hand rest of their handles were made of red agate, resembled ruby stone that the commons could not afford to buy<sup>204</sup>.

# 14. Ceze' (Black Agate) Prices in the Middle Ages

In Persian, this stone was called "kalenç" and the Bakarânî variety was called "Bâkırî Helenç". Actually, the word halenç was used not only for ceze' stone, but also for all coloured and shaped lines. It was also used to denote a kind of tree with animals such as cat, fox, zebâd, giraffe, etc<sup>205</sup>.

Black, white and blackish ones of this stone, which were mined in abundance in Yemen and China, were more popular. According to a claim, Chinese people tried to stay away from

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>198</sup> Ezhâhru'l-Efkâr fî Cevâhir'l-Ahcâr, v. 50 b.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>199</sup> See. el- Beyrunî, p. 173.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>200</sup> It is a big mountain located one day and a night away from the city of San'a. Their people provided water from the trees and springs on this mountain. There were many interesting castles of the sons of Ya'fur who lived tere. In addition, there were many grape and date trees at this mountain. Its waters were collected in a dam and opened when it was full; so these waters reached San'a and the settlements connected there. See. Yakut el-Hamavî, v. III, p. 318.

For extensive information relating to this region See. Arâm b. Esbuğ es-Selmî, Tihâme Dağlarının Adları ve Sâkinleri, (Trans. Abdulhalik Bakır) Ortaçağ Tarih ve Medeniyetine Dair Çevirilr II, Ankara, 2008, p. 153-201.
İbnu'l-Mücâvir, v. II, p. 184.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>203</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 35. See also. Adem Metz, v. II, p. 327.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>204</sup> According to a report, in the age of Cahiliye, the idol of Hübel was made of agate and because his right arm was broken, they had him made a gold arm. See. el- Beyrunî, p. 174.
<sup>205</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 175.

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it as they believed that this stone made people unhappy and a person, who carried it, would have a nightmare; using it as a jewellery for children, made spit their salivas and drinking from the containers made of it, would cause insomnia. The extraction of this stone was carried out by leper workers<sup>206</sup>. In addition, this precious stone was sent to other countries by these leprous workers. At the same time, it was claimed that the Yemen rulers did not demand jewellery made of this stone and did not store in their treasures<sup>207</sup>. However, el-Beyrunî claimed that news about the Chinese was coveyed on the basis of an unknown source of information in a fake work and that it was natural for a nation to feel pessimistic for some reasons because of something that was true. The same author, in the interpretation of report on the attitude of Yemeni kings to the ceze' stone, mentioned the following views:

"As regards to the articles about Yemeni Tubbas, if this news was true, el-Markuş (a poet), as can be seen in his following quote, he did not assumed the ceze' stone among those of that was used for decorating and jewellery:

They (women) ruby, bead, make-up,

They were dressed up with züfâr ceze'i and twin pearls

Ubeydullah b. Kays er-Rukayyât said:

You, Ümmü Zi'l-Veda',

You have lived with us with beads and ceze'

Another poet said:

A Nile river that is from Züfâr ceze' Flows on the pebbles of Züfâr ceze' 208.

According to the accounts, this Kâbe statue was found, in an island's coast that was surrendered by vineyards, palm trees, hunting grounds and other spaces, by aperson named Nu'man. But later, when the news about him reached to the Umayyad caliph el-Velîd b. Abdulmelik sent a man to him - that was mentioned - to purchase that statue and offered a lot of money - it was said to be over 1.000 denars- but this person refused the amount of money, but declared that he would give it only in return for the island. Thereupon, the ruler gave the island to him as iqta and presented the Kâbe sculpture made of ceze' stone to the Kâbe. Then, this island was inherited to the children of en-Nu'man and was named "en-Nu'man pier" in reference to his name<sup>209</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>206</sup> Utârid b. Muhammed el-Hâsib, v. 19 a-19 b. See also el-Beyrunî, p. 176-177; Efkâru'l-Ezhâr fi Cevâhir'l-Ahcâr, v. 51 a-51 b.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>207</sup> Ibid, v. 19 a-19 b; See also. Kâşânî, p. 144.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>208</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 177.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>209</sup> Ibid, p. 180.

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Ceze' stone started to lose its value gradually towards the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E. In 7<sup>th</sup> century C.E. the price of the best quality and most beautiful ceze' stone did not exceed one denar<sup>210</sup>.

# 15. Dehnec Prices in the Middle Ages

In the Middle Ages, this stone was named in Iraq "Dehnec Feridî", in Nişapur "Feridî", in Herat "Vancüveyh", in India "Tutya" - as they claimed that it was one of the Tutya varieties<sup>211</sup>-. el- Beyrunî said that this stone was a variant of the turquoise stone, based on a rumour from Hamza<sup>212</sup>. According to the accounts, it was good for a person who had been powdered and drunk poison. The same result was reached when it was applied to the place where the bees stang. If this stone was thoroughly beaten and mixed with vinegar and rubbed on the scabies organs, it healed the area. It also benefited the juicy boil that came out in the head and the body. This stone turned into bright colour with shiny weather, it became dull in cloudy weather; it was very effective against deadly poisons and when it was drunk without poison, it killed immediately<sup>213</sup>.

Dehnec, alleged to be composed of vapours rising from this mine, in copper mine like turquoise stone<sup>214</sup>, was extracted from the Benî Süleym region on the Arabian Peninsula on the road to Mecca<sup>215</sup>. This stone, even if a little quantity, was in Kirman, Sicistan, Khorasan<sup>216</sup>, Egypt, Afrasyâb (Turkistan)<sup>217</sup>, Syria, Anatolia, India and Endülüs (Andalusia)<sup>218</sup>.

In accordance with a report based on el-Kındî, the quarries of this precious stone were located in a cave in the Kirman mpuntains, intertwined with copper mines. Therefore, when it was removed from here, it was lowered in a copper crucible. It was claimed that it was used by chemists because of its softness and not being affreted by external factors. Indeed, this stone had a dark greenish colour and there were eyes in it. During the Sassanid period, dehnec stones were extracted in large pieces and processed into pots. However, later these removed parts started to shrink and then to be disappeared completely<sup>219</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>210</sup> Yakut el-Hamavî, Şihabuddin Ebu Abdullah Yakut b. Abdullah er-Rumî el-Bağdâdî, Me'cemu'l-Buldan, (Thk. Ferîd Abdulaziz el-Cündî), Beirut, (Trz.), v. I, p. 557.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>211</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 196.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>212</sup> Ibid, p. 196.

A manuscript unknown name and author, Şehid Ali Paşa Lib. Nr: 2092-1, İstanbul, p. 3 b.

Utârid b. Muhammed el-Hâsib, v. 30 a-30 b.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>215</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 196.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>216</sup> el-İdrisî, v. II, p. 692-693.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>217</sup> Kâşânî, p. 134.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>218</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 118-119; Şeyhü'r-Rebve, p. 109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>219</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 196.

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In 7<sup>th</sup> century one miscal of these precious stone of ifrendî quality was said for under two miscals<sup>220</sup>.

# 16. Persian Tiryak Prices in the Middle Ages

The goat or ram stone or Persian tiryakı that was more a corn-like in shape, consisting of layers intertwined like onion skins; had a colour between black and green, was extracted from the belly of ibexes living around Daracerd. According to the narrations, ibex fed on the mountain grasses after eating snakes, as deer ate. As a result, these precious stones were formed in their intestines and they took a round shape by moving<sup>221</sup>. In accordance with some claims, the Persian tiryakı was formed in the gallbladder of the deer, just as the subdtance called Câvizen was formed in gallbladder of an ox. Actually, the word 'Câvizen' is a Persian word adapted to the Arabic language of the word Kâvezûn, a white substance weighing 1 dânek and 4 dirhams. When removed from the gallbladder, it was in the form of a rolling mai substance, then froze and hardened when kept in the mouth for an hour. Much of this substance was brought from India and people used to make tiryakı because they assumed that it cured congestions and relieved jaundice disease, as the Persian tiyakı did<sup>222</sup>.

In the Middle Ages, Persian tiryakı was sold at a very high price. As it was so benefical stone in terms of health, the kings paid so much sum of money to have it as if they were competing with each other and they kept it in the best places of treasures<sup>223</sup>. The Persian tiryakı stone's price, weighing between 1 and 30 dirhams in the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. was 100-200 denars<sup>224</sup>.

# 17. Coral Prices in the Middle Ages

In Arabic coral is called "Bassed". Indeed, this word is the Arabic version of the word "vesed". "Harûnek", which is a type of coral, is adapted to the Arabic languafe and pronounced as "Harâik". This last name for the coral stone is compared to the rooster's comb. According to the statement of el-Beyrunî, the word coral might have been taken from the name of Persian birds<sup>225</sup>.

They are petrified animal fossils with branches like limestone structured trees, formed on the rocks at the bottom of the sea. Just as various ornaments were made from coral

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>220</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, p. 120.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>221</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 202-203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>222</sup> Ibid, p. 203-204.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>223</sup> ed-Dimaşkî, p. 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>224</sup> Ibid, p. 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>225</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 191-192.

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yesterday, it also used to decorate various artefacts today. Agate, turquoise and coral ore the primary silver supplements in Turkish 'mıhlamacılık' (intarsia)<sup>226</sup>.

el-Beyrunî, based on Muhammed b. Zekeriya, in contrary to Dioscorides, who claimed that the coral was a sea plant and hardened by encountering the air when it was removed, said that the coral stone could become a tree enough to pierce the ships passing over it and it particularly hardened in the sea<sup>227</sup>. We learned from a report that this precious stone was extracted from the sea as a soft and white substance, then by burying in sand, it hardened and turned into red<sup>228</sup>.

According to a rumour from el-Kindî, in the early Middle Ages, one miscal of a big coral with a lot of branches was sold for between half a denar and one denar. One menn (1kg) of the thin ones found buyers for half a denar or less<sup>229</sup>. El-Beyrunî wrote about a coral tree he sold:

Next to me was a tree taller than one and a half span of it, I said its each miscal for 4 denars, if its thin branches were of poor quality, the kings would not have given it as agift. We have even mentioned earlier that beside the Alevi ruler of Tahart<sup>230</sup>, there was a larger tree than him among the Egyptian gifts".

In the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E. one miscal of a large coral with branches was sold for 0,5-1 denars. The smaller ones found buyers for a menn of 0,5 denars and less. el-Kindî reported that a coral of **one and a half span** high sold a miscal for 4 denars<sup>231</sup>.

In 12<sup>th</sup> century an unprocessed bey'a (approximately 4,5 kg) of coral stone was sold by a method of equalization in return to 10,5 Egypt rtl. At the same time a processed one of its 1 bey'a was sold for 1020 dirhams in Egypt, Syria and Iraq, but if it was in a raw condition, it was sold for 1100. Periods of stagnation, confusion, famine and abundance caused huge differences in the prices of this gemstone. Avarage price of this stone in Egypt and Syrian countries, if it was of the type of Şah, it was sold for 20 denars per bey'a. However, in the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>226</sup> Mehmet Zeki Kuşoğlu, p. 109.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>227</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 190.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>228</sup> Ibid, p. 190-191.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>229</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>230</sup> Maghrib is a two-wayed city, old and new in Morrocco. This city is located between Telmesân and Kal'atü Hammâd. Its fog and rain are abundant; so the sun is rarely seen here. Despite all these negativities, this is a beautiful-looking city at the foothills of a mountain called Cezzûl and has fou gates named es-Safâ, el-Menâzil, el-Endelüs and el-Matâhin. Two rivers, Mîne and Tatüş, run through the city. The people of the city obtain their water from the two rivers and irrigate their fields. This quince is very famous. In the past, this city was called "the Iraq of Maghrib". See. Yakut el-Hamavî, v. II, p. 7-8.
<sup>231</sup> el- Beyrunî, p. 192.

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same country, the price of medium quality coral stone was 12 denars. The poor quality of the aforementioned stone found by buyers at a price between 3-6 denars<sup>232</sup>.

By the 13<sup>th</sup> century C.E. a coral stone weighing one Egypt rttl<sup>233</sup> was sold for 5-7 Maghreb denars in Africa. This was equal to about two Egypt denars. However, this price was two or three times higher in the city of Alexandria, which exported coral to all over the world. In fact, in the Middle Ages, coral prices varied according to the proximity and distance of the countries, scarcity and abundance of this stone, the size and smallness, the degree of quality and the beauty, the perfection of the workmanship<sup>234</sup>.

# 18. Hatu Prices in the Middle Ages

It was an animal substance and was particularly popular with Chinese and eastern Turks. This material, which consisted of the facial bone of an ox, was considered valuable in the Middle Ages due to its relation to the bâdizrehr<sup>235</sup> stone. In accordance with the accounts,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>232</sup> ed-Dımaşkî, Ticaretin Güzelliklerine İşaret, p. 488.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>233</sup> The value of rttl, in Egypt at the time of the Abbasids, was equal to 12 ukkiye, 8 dirhams for each, as can be understood from the normal weights of the glass used measuring and stamping, that was 300 grams. In the Fatimid period, that was in 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, an Egypt rttl of 140 dirhams was 437,5 grams. It is not known when the rttl weight 12 dirhams of each were equal to 12 ukkiyes (144 dirhams)=450 grams, originated in Egypt. However, this weight was, from 12<sup>th</sup> century to New Age, had a dominant place next to the rttl-1 kebîr. Spices and delicate goods were usually weighed with 450 grams of rttl, also known as Rttl-1 fülfûlî. Today, since the dirham is set at 3,12 grams in Egypt, this weight is officially determined as 449,28 grams. See. Walter Hinz, p. 35-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>234</sup> el-Kalkaşandî, v. II, p. 123-124.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>235</sup> There were two types of this stone, mineral and animal. The quarry of the mineral was located somewhere between the cities of Al-Jazeera region Ceziretü İbn Ömer and Mosul. According to the accounts, the handles of knives and other cutting tools were manufactured from the large ones of this stone, which weighed one or two batmans. The aforementioned stone was mostly white and with a soft structure, had yellow spots on it and did not have any benefit against poisoning. In fact, it did not have any feature other than dissolving it in water, applying it to the organs that were injured as are sult of being hit or falling to the ground and healing it in a short time. In such a situation, it could heal the damaged organ within twenty four hours. A variant of the mineral origin of Bâdizehr was also brought from China. This was a small volumed in dark yellow colour with spots of various colours on it. This had no benefit other than its limited effect against poisoning caused by scorpion sting. The second type of bâdizehr stone, (the animal type) was a light, soft, yellow stone with hidden spots on it. This stone, whose surface was in the form of a layer on a layer and produced a white colour when ground, had sizes from one to three miscals. introduced the bâdizehr stone as follows: "It is known by this time, although they did not give extensive information about its features and signs, it is a mineral stone according to what those before us stated. It has the right to lead on all jewellery. They are for playing, entertaining and bragging, they do not have any benefits for body diseases. On the contrary, Bâdizehr tries to protect the body and soul and saves them from disaster. In order not to be seen same with the other gemstones, we did not deal with it at the beginning. Muhammed b. Zekeriya said: The thing I see about it that it is soft like Yemen alum, sparkling and scratched. I was also surprised at this honourable feature of it". See. Efkâru'l-Ezhâr fi Cevâhir'l-Ahcâr, v. 37 a-38 b; el-Beyrunî, p. 200.

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this bone material was doing the same thing as the peacock, which started to shake as a reaction when approached to a poisonous food<sup>236</sup>.

el-Beyrunî wrote about the hatu:

"I asked the envoys from Kutay Khan for information relating to it (el-Hatu), but could not find ant reason for it be sought after, except for sweating against the poison. It was a facial bone of ox. But due to the width of two fingers of hatu and also small bodies of the Turkish oxes, we think that hatu stone does. Not belong to them. Therefore, it seems more appropriate that it consists of a horn. If the said were true, it would be better to bring it from the Harhiz forests, as they were closer to it and in this case it would not be brought from Iraq and Khorasan. Again, it is said that, in relation to it, this material is the facial bone of water rhinoceros naming as water elephant and in terms of firindî embroidery Bulgarian Turks brought to Harezm from the North Sea pouring into the Ocean, which is one zira of height or less, the core of it is located in the middle and it resembles a fish tooth called 'tooth ore' "237".

el-Kâfûrî (the one in camphor colour) type's price close to the price of el-Akrebî (the one in colour of scorpion). According to this 100 dirhams of el-Akrebî type was sold for 100 denars. However, there was no scale, this price decreased. We learn from el-Beyrunî that the largest piece of Hatu visible was 150 dirhams and was sold for 200 denars. According to the same author, a Turk of Harezm gathered the pure white jewels beside him and he made with them yellowish white coloured, thin white knife and dagger handles whose embroideries resembled the core of small gherkin, that was cut lengthwise at the moment of ripening until their seeds were cut. Then he took them to Mecca and sold them like white hatu to the Egyptians there for a very large amount of money<sup>238</sup>. As it can be seen from this information, in the Middle Ages, hatu was finding buyers for very exorbitant prices.

According to the narrations, Emir Ebu Ca'fer b. Bânu hada large drawer made of tall, dense and wide hatu plates like a chest and he was proud of it. Likewise, it is reported that Emir Yemînuddevle had a similar inkwell deserving to be named as "Celâbetü'l-Memâlik". The aforementioned ruler gave this very expensive and valuable inkwell to Emir Halef and Ebu'l-Abbas Harezmşah respectively, but for some reason it was not permanent in their treasures and was taken back as a result of the loss of their property<sup>239</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>236</sup> See. el-Beyrunî, p. 208.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>237</sup> Ibid, p. 208-209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>238</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 209.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>239</sup> Ibid, p. 210.

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# II. The Monarchs' Passion for Jewellery and Using of It in the Middle Ages

The fact that the Islamic world was so rich in precious stones, the caliphs and the statesmen were fond of luxury inevitably led to the development of the jewellery industry in the Middle Ages and its heyday<sup>240</sup>. As it is known, all the jewels of the Sassanid palace were handed over to the Umayyad caliphs, then these valuable items passed from them to the Abbasid caliph es-Seffâh and then to his brother Ebu Ca'fer el-Mansûr. Among these items were those expensive precious stones and necklaces<sup>241</sup>. In that period, stones such as rubies, emeralds, diamonds, pearls and sapphires were among the favourites of the palace members; turquoise, agate and tawny agate were among the stones favoured by the common people<sup>242</sup>. According to el-Sa'âlibî's report, er-Rabî from the Abbasid viziers bought one million denars worth of jewels and added them to the state jewellery<sup>243</sup>. Then the Abbasid caliph el-Mehdî bought the ring stone called 'Cebel' for 300.000 denars and added it to the jewels in the state treasury<sup>244</sup>. A banquet, which was organized by el-Mütevekkil and a wedding dinner which was held at Me'mun's wedding ceremony were renowed as "the grand event that was not a third in the history of Islam"; in these official receptions and banquets, the pines and tables decorated with precious stones were used<sup>245</sup>. According to another information, the father of the bride el-Hasan b. Sehl laid out a gold mat for Me'mûn and sprinkled 1.000 large pearls on it<sup>246</sup>. The continuation of this wedding ceremony was as follows:

"el-Me'mûn ordered the collection of the pearls, she was collected and put them on Bûrân's lap, even though were on the plate and said: "This is your nihle<sup>247</sup> (mihr) (a bride's price), tell me your other needs". His grandmother told to him "Talk to my master and ask him for your needs, he ordered you for this". He asked him to release Ibrahim b. el-Mehdi. She (el-Me'mûn) said "I did". Then he (Burân) asked him to allow Ümmü Ca'fer (Zübeyde) to go on pigrimage. He gave him permission for this time. Ümmü Ca'fer clothed Burân the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>240</sup> Philip K. Hitti, v. I, p. 533-534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>241</sup> es-Sa'âlibî, Simâru'l-Kulûb fi'l-Muzâfi ve'l-Mensûb, p. 194.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>242</sup> Philip K. Hitti, v. I, p. 533-534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>243</sup> es-Sa'âlibî, p. 194.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>244</sup> Ibid, p. 194.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>245</sup> Philip K. Hitti, v. I, p. 534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>246</sup> İbnu't-Tiktaka, p. 203.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>247</sup> el-Cevherî said in es-Sihâh: "I donated her mihr (bride price) of my own will to the woman, I did it before she wanted. It is also called unpaid oe with esre "A'tâhâ mihrehâ nihleten" was told. So he gave her the miher as a donation. Ebu Amr said: "This is a nomenclature" and it should be said that I donated like this so that the wedding money is limited and explained". See. İbnu's-Sâ'î, Tâcüddin Ebu Tâlib Ali b. Encüb "Halifelerin Hatunları" Olarak Adlandırılan Hükümdarların Hür ve Cariye Eşleri, (Trans. Abdulhalik Bakır), Ortaçağ Medeniyetine Dair Çeviriler I, Ankara, 2008, p. 210, deep note nr: 174.

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Umayyad bedne or bedene<sup>248</sup>. Burân had a nuptial night with el-Me'mûn at the same night. That night, a candle made of 40 of batman amber was lit in a gold bowl of water<sup>249</sup>".

In another article it is said:

"el-Me'mûn Billah's concubine Mü'nise gave a gift to the concubine of Ali b. Hişam Müteyyem. Meanwhile, he had blood drawn. Previously, when Ali b. Hişam was alive, there was a relationship between him and Müteyyem due to the correspondence and meeting between them before each was transferred to their owner. Mü'nise, within the knowledge of el-Me'mûn, presented a pearl, like a sparrow egg. That was 10.000 denars; precious pieces of cloth called "dehâris" (a piece of cloth put on the armpits of the shirts); four red rubies; four emeralds; stone, an artefact with gold shards on its right and left sides; besides that, an uncooked date scented with the scent of galiye<sup>250</sup>. Müteyyem assumed this date as beautiful and sweet, but he was not very happy with the jewels except of it"<sup>251</sup>.

As it was reported, when the caliph el-Muktefi died, he left 20.000.000 denars worth of jewel and precious scents<sup>252</sup>.

The rulers of various states, established in the Middle East in the Middle Ages, highly valued the Kâbe, the qiblagah of Muslims, they time to time sent some presents to there. For example, after Hz.Muhammed's grandfather Abdulmuttalib opened the ZemZem well, he gave two gazelles statues made of gold with kal'î swords as a gift to the Kâbe<sup>253</sup>. Then, Ömer b. el-Hattab put there the two crescents and two glasses<sup>254</sup> decorated with precious jewels and expensive zebercet stones that were captured and handed over to him during the conquest of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>248</sup> This is a shirt adorned with pearls and jewels, taken from the word body meaning small armour. According to the narrations, when Hârûnu'r-Reşîd was married to Zübeyde, during the wedding he gave her Hişam's wife Abde bint Yezîd b. Muaviye's slave. It was said that "It is unprecedented in the history of Islam, like it, and the jewel corn (habbe) inside it. There were two stripes of red ruby on the back and chest, the other parts consisted of unique large pearls". Bedne (slave) is also the name of one of the caliphs' robes in Egypt. See ibid, p. 210, deep note nr: 175.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>249</sup> Ibid, p. 210.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>250</sup> In the Middle Ages, scents called gavâli (sing.gâliye) were at the top of the essences that rich layer used a lot and gave to each other on important days. The fragrance of gâliye, known to many people in the Middle Ages, was made as follows: One dirham musk, on dirham ground ûd (bile), one dirham of luteum gum melted on fire and half miscal amber were put into both dirhams tar and these substances were mixed with four miscals from the oil of query tree. Thus, the scent of gâliye would be obtained. See. Abdulhalik Bakır, Ortaçağ İslam Dünyasında İtriyât, Gıda, İlâç Üretimi ve Tağşişi, Ankara, p. 92, 97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>251</sup> İbnu's-Sâ'î, p. 265-266.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>252</sup> Philip K. Hitti, v. I, p. 534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>253</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 66.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>254</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 67.

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Medâyin<sup>255</sup>. Later, the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs respectively gave the following valuable items there:

- 1-The Umayyad caliph Yezîd b. Muaviye two crescents decorated with rummânî rubies worth 100.000 denars of each; two glasses, one made of agate and the other made of crystal stone, one made agate and the other made of ruby.
  - 2-Umayyad caliph Abdulmelik b. Mervan, two şemse, two crystal goblets.
  - 3-The Umayyad caliph el-Velîd b. Abdulmelik, two goblets.
- 4-The Abbasid caliph Ebu'l-Abbas es-Seffâh, a plate of zebercet bought for 4.000 denars.
- 5-The Abbasid caliph Ebu Ca'fer el-Mansur, a bottle of pharaoh's glass and a large silver plate gifted to him by the Byzantine king.
- 6-The Abbasid caliph el-Me'mûn, gold and silver idols taken from the owner of Kabul; a piece of ruby worn on the cover of the Kâbe during the pilgrimage season.
- 7-The Abbasid caliph el-Mütevekkil, a gold şemse decorated with pearls, rubies and zebercet stones<sup>256</sup>.

One of the caliphs who owned a large amount of jewellery was el-Muktedir. He confiscated the property of the founder of the richest jewellery store in Baghdad (we told about here was Ibnu'l-Cessâs who was earlier mentioned in the subject of Dürretü'l-Yetîme). In this way, he collected the famous red ruby of Harunu'r-Reşid and the famous three miscals of weight ed-Dürretü'l-Yetîme and other precious stones under hid hand. But later he squandered all of them<sup>257</sup>. According to a rumour, he paid a part of the money to the concubines in his harem, some to the head of the harem Safi el-Haremî and the other he sent to his vizier el-Abbas b. el-Hasan. However, he did not accept it and returned it to the caliph and also wrote him that the aforementioned jewel was the ornament of Islam and the capital of the caliphate, it was not appropriate to distribute it<sup>258</sup>.

A report from Hamre, the concubine of the Abbasid caliph el-Muktedir Billah, said:

"el-Muktedir wanted the jewels (pearls) to be brought in and he chose 1.000 of them -50 of them of the rolling type- and arranged them as rosaries to count. Then, this rosary was

<sup>257</sup> Ibid, p. 234. See also. Philip K. Hitti, v. I, p. 534-535.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>255</sup> For an extensive information see. Abdulhalik Bakır, Ahmet Altungök, Erken Ortaçağların Şehirler Topluluğu: Medâ'in, Belleten, V. LXXVIII, April 2014, Nr: 281, p. 1-41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>256</sup> el-Beyrunî, p. 67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>258</sup> es-Sa'âlibî, Simâru'l-Kulûb fi'l-Muzâfi ve'l-Mensûb, p. 195.

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shown to the jewellers and they appraised for each of them 1.000 denars or more. When he (el-Muktedir Billâh) wanted to count a rosary, he wanted it, then gave it back to me, I hang it in the safe in a bag. After el-Muktedir was killed, when the looting occurred, it was also taken with those taken. Maybe the person who took it, also did not know what it was 259.

In the Abbasid state, a government official named Zeydanu'l Kahramâne was responsible for the treasure of jewels, during this time he owned o rosary of which was nowhere to have been found. At that time, this precious jewel had passed into darb-1 mesel due to its high price and beauty and it was called "Sübhatü Zeydân", that was, Zeydan's rosary. When Ali b. İsa was promoted from the governorship of Mecca to the rank of vizier, he asked el-Muktedir in a conversation between them, "What did you do with the rosary of jewellery purchased from Ibnu'l-Cessâs, that valued 30.000 denars?"; he replied, "It is in the treasury". Thereupon, the vizier said, "Even if our master orders it be brought". On the order of the caliph, this rosary was searched but could not be found. Meanwhile, the vizier removed it and said, "It was shown to me in Egypt, I got to know it and then bought. If the treasury of jewellery is not preserved, what can be preserved in this country". This incident, was so heavy for el-Muktedir and his wife and was attributed to Zeydan because no one else could reach the treasure<sup>260</sup>. In the meantime, it should not be forgotten that Seljuk Sultan Sencer had precious stones weighing 1030 rtt<sup>1261</sup>.

# III. Evaluation

When looking at the information about jewellery prices that we have tried to explain from the beginning of this study, it is clearly seen that the issue is not only economical, that is, a field related to certain figures. In other words, the prices of jewellery that changed hands between buyers and sellers in the Middle Ages, appear to be directly related to the geographical, political, religious and socio-cultural areas that constitute the important arteries of human and social life. Here, we will try to present the aspects related to the aforementioned areas of the precious stone prices produced with a thousand of difficulties in various regions of the medieval Islamic world.

1. Geographical features affect every aspect of life in every period and as a result of this effect, it creates great changes both on people and communities as an individual. For example, between people who live in very hot and arid regions and people who try to survive in cold regions with every severe climatic conditions, there were great differences in the point of view according to the customs, habits, behaviours, tastes, living and non-living beings

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>259</sup> See. İbnu's-Sâ'î, Tâcüddin Ebu Tâlib Ali b. Encüb "Halifelerin Hatunları" Olarak Adlandırılan Hükümdarların Hür ve Cariye Eşleri, p. 243.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>260</sup> es-Sa'âlibî, Simâru'l-Kulûb fi'l-Muzâfi ve'l-Mensûb, p. 195.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>261</sup> See. Corci Zetdan, Tarihu't-Temeddüni'l-İslami, Beirut, 1967, v. II, p. 651.

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(animals, plants, stones, soil, etc.) we share our world. Therefore, people living in hot climates -starting from India in the East to the Maghreb (Morocco) country in the west, especially in the regions close to the Equator Belt from the north and south- seen to be extremely fond of ornaments and decorations. It is even possible to see this phenomenon today. As a matter of fact, it is possible to witness some tribal members living as nomands and semi-nomands in various regions of Asia and Africa, making jewellery from all kinds of objects (even an empty beverage can) and wearing them on their hands and necks. Considering the regions and countries where other Islamic and Turkish-Islamic states were established and spread, including the Umayyad, Abbasid and Early Ottoman periods in the Middle Ages, it will be understood that most of them were located in geographies where the hot climate prevailed. If we examine this map in more detail, we come across a geographic picture as follows: Central Asia, the Caucasus, Hindu-kush mountains, Iran in the East; Morocco and Muslim Spain (Andalusia) in the West, the countries between these two main regions (Anatolia, the Arabian Peninsula, Bilâdü'ş-Şam, North and Central Africa). In the Middle Ages, as far as the information provided by our sources, we can find that, the states established in this vast geography, particularly during the periods of their greatness, especially the rulers, the palace people and the high-ranking statesmen were extremely interested in jewellery and even took great pleasure in displaying them on them and they sometimes did not hesitate to give them to their loved ones as a gift. This inevitably led to higher prices for jewellery, especially because the client was wealthy. It is possible to complete this issue, that is, the effect of geography on jewellery trade and prices with the following slogan: Geography rules everything above and underground.

2. It should be noted that precious stones such as rubies, pearls and various items made of these stones were widely purchased and used by the caliphs and dignitaries with political power and authority. The fact and passion to acquire them was not only due to material power and might; it was also related to the person's political influence of acquirers, their sense of pride and habit of collecting, that owned them. It is so interesting that most of the information about such precious stones in classical sources belongs to the ruler, the people of the court and high-ranking statesmen. There is nearly no information to have been come across about merchants and wealthy people living in the big cities, including the capitals in the medieval Islamic world. This should never mean that the people in the second category, that is, the wealthy among commoners, did not acquire jewellery. Of course, they also bought and used jewellery; however, their information is not reflected in our sources. As for the rulers and family members had a freedom to exhibit the kinds of jewellery they bought for exorbitant money without worrying about security. Another dimension of the sovereign's passion and habit of acquiring jewellery was to show that they had a different status than people belonging to the lower strata of society. It was a way of showing themselves different from people of the ruled ordinary ones; that meant it was for vanity. This way of behaviour

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sometimes reached such exaggerated situations that at that time it almost turned into a race to display class status among themselves and against the public. At this point, precious stones and ornaments made from them became political symbols. Rings, seal rings, hand and ankle bracelets, rosaries, rubies and pearls decorating turbans and various ornaments that filled the jewellery boxes were some of the expensive items that were used in different regions and cities in various periods of the Middle Ages. This extreme passion and race for jewellery inevitably increased the demand for them and prices of such stones, ornaments made from them to terrible figures. That dynamism also contributed greatly to the revival of the jewellery industry and trade were satisfied and happy.

In the early Islamic period (the Prophet and the first four caliphs), which was a period of simplicity in terms of life style, the heads of state and their close relatives lived far from the passion to acquire jewellery that wasted. However, Hz.Osman had a luxurious life, as he had an inherited wealth and engaged in trade while he was the caliph. Once, the caliph (Hz.Osman) took a necklace from the treasure and put it on his daughter. Thereupon a group of sahabe, including Hz. Ali, reacted to his behaviour and condemned him. However, when he said that this was a normal event, Hz. Ali warned him: "Then you have to presented a necklace to all the women in Medina". As it can be understood from this incident, since the president was elected during the first four caliphs, the leaders of society could react against the caliph. In other words, there was a kind of control mechanism to warn the managers. However, with the establishment of the Umayyad and Abbasid states, the electoral system was changed and the state began to be governed by a system of transition from father to son, in other words, it turned into a dynasty in the form of succession. Thus, the caliphs were free about the properties in the state treasury and there was no obstacle against them to acquire wealth. We have stated above that a gold jewellery decorated with red and yellow rubies and chrysolite stone, which was found in Khorasan during the time of Mu'sab b. ez-Zübeyr and claimed to belong to one of the Sassanid's rulers, was valued 2.000.000 (i.e 20.000.000 dirhams) denars and after the death of the Abbasid caliph el-Muktedir, he left jewellery worth 20.000.000 denars. A denar, which was a gold coin at that time, was worth 4.5 grams of gold, so the mentioned ruby had a value equal to 9.000.000 (9.000 kg) grams of gold. Today in Turkey (08.02.2021), if a gram of gold is 417 Turkish Liras, the present value of the pearl, red and yellow ruby, chrysolite decorated gold ornament is 3.753.000.000 (app. 536.142.857 USD) Turkish Liras. The inheritence left by el-Muktedir consisted of 90.000.000 (90.000 kg) grams of gold and its current value is 37.530.000.000 Turkish Liras. According to this calculation, a bracelet valued 100.000 denars, was given to Hz. Aise by the Umayyad caliph Muaviye b. Ebî Süfyân and red ruby worth 100.000 denars that was given to Ziyad, a freedom of Mus'ab b. ez-Zübeyr, the current value of each is 208.500.000 (app. 29.785.714 USD) Turkish Liras. All three ornaments mean a great fortune in our era. In our sources, there is abundant information about stones and ornaments of very high value, which the caliphs gave as gifts to local people

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and their relatives, in addition to their personal uses during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. At those times, precious stones, symbols of luxury and waste and ornaments made from them, also became indispensable symbols of politics and politicians. This was a privilege that was reserved solely by statesmen who had all kinds of financial power and facility. People belonging to the poor strata of the society who did not have these financial resources and opportunities even in their dreams had to be contended with the following Arabic proverb: "el-Aynü basîre ve'l-yedü kasîre", that means : "the eye sees but the hand is short". In Arabic, shortage of the hands symbolizes poverty.

3. As for the religious factors affecting the prices of precious stones and jewellery made from them in the Middle Ages, there is no provision or recommendation regarding the Arabic tes'îr (i.e narh) of trade goods or pricing as it is today in the verses of Quran and in the teachings of the religion of Islam based on the Sunnet which includes the words and practices of the Prophet. However, food stuffs were not expected to be sold more than twice for exorbitant gains. As there was no restriction on the prices of ornaments or items used by people in homes for their needs. During the Middle Ages, these kinds of goods were offered for sale on a free market. However, in the religion of Islam, there are orders and prohibitions stating that wastage of the goods that are traded and used in all areas of human and social life, are not a good behaviours, even a bad one. The passion to acquire expensive jewellery was of course a matter of high financial power, statesmen and rich people belonging to the wealthy strata of the society. It is understood that the rulers of the Umayyad and Abbasid and other Islamic and Turkish-Islamic states, especially those of pious, avoided precious stones such as rubies and pearls purchased for exorbitant money and ornaments made from them. But, they were few in number, not even the fingers of a hand. Even if it was not considered acceptable by religion at that time, many of the rulers spent large sums of money, particularly on so expensive ruby and pearl ornaments, as can be seen from the examples we have given from the beginning. This excessive demand inevitably increased the prices of jewellery in the Middle Ages.

When it comes to the effect of religious factors, especially on the prices of cheap jewellery used as ornaments, in the medieval Islamic world, although it was considered unnecessary for some who could afford it, to wear agate stone ring, for others, it was perceived as a necessity of a religious culture. However, when looking at the subject in general, people, belonging to the lower class that was living in the whole Islamic world, used such as made of agate, ceze' (black agate), coral and other stones rings etc. Jewellery with great pleasure. The share of Muslim women in this demand was huge. Tons of ornaments made of mentioned stone, every year at the end of the pilgrimage season, as today, transport to various countries of the world by the pilgrims. This inevitably led to the fact that a large sum of money, which cannot be underestimated, enter to the pockets of hundreds of people

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engaged with this trade in the Arabian Peninsula, especially the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. In the medieval Islamic world, religious teachings led to the revival of the aforementioned trade and deeply affected the supply-demand relationship and the price of ornaments. As a matter of fact, according to a hadith reported by Hz. Ali; Hz.Prophet said:

"Wear agate stone rings. If any of you has had that stone on your finger, you will not be affected by grief" 262.

Also, it was rumoured that the seal ring, imprinted in the letters of Hz. Muhammed consisted of a black agate stone, was transferred from Hz. Prophet to Hz. Ebu Bekir, from him to Hz. Omar, from Hz. Omar to Hz. Osman; then, it was lost by the last caliph by falling into the well and replaced by a new one. The red agate, currently exhibited in Topkapı Palace at Hırka-i Saadet Office, on which is written "Muhammedün Resûlüllâh". It is known that another agate ring, on which the words "Mâşâallah, lâ kuvvete illâ billâh, estağfirullah" is written in three lines, belonged to Hz. Ali<sup>263</sup>.

As it is understood from the examples above, the tradition of writing verses and titles on precious stones that were manufactured and used as ornaments and working items in the Middle Ages Islamic world, including the early Islamic period, started and became more and more common. When it comes to the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, it is possible to see that writings such as aphorism and poetry were engraved on ornaments made of very expensive precious stones. Probably, the ornaments produced in this kind of design and model had become fashionable over time. In the aforementioned periods, some people, followed this fashion, also had their specially designed and written ornaments made to order by jewellers. However, I wonder, if there was a wealthy man among the orderers at that time who had the verse "İnne'llâha lâ yuhibbü'l-Müsrifîn" (Allah does not like those who wastes) written on the ring stone that he had made for himself?

4. In the medieval Islamic world, social or socio-cultural factors that affect jewellery prices also have a significant place. As we mentioned before, inexpensive precious stones and ornaments made from them were generally in demand by the middle and poor layers of the society. These items were mostly offered for sale either by peddlers or by being exhibited in the opened and covered bazaars and markets of the cities. Their buyers were also women rather than men. Here, we have to point out that Muslim and non-Muslim women living in almost all regions, countries, cities and towns of the Islamic world in the Middle Ages, were extremely fond of ornaments, including cheap precious stones. They would try to have the aforementioned ornaments according to their financial strength and in proportion to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>262</sup> See. el-İbşihî, v. II, p. 62.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>263</sup> Sargon Erdem, T. D. V. İslam Ansiklopedisi, Akîk Maddesi, İstanbul, 1989, v. II, p. 262.

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diversity of their tastes and preferences. We previously provided satisfactory information on the prices of stones such as agate, black agate, turquoise and coral. Looking at those prices, it is not difficult to guess that countless of rings, necklaces, bracelets, ankles, rosaries, etc. made of precious stones, which were mentioned, were sold every year in the medieval Islamic world.

In the medieval Islamic world only women, belonging to the middle and lower classes, did not pay attention to being decorated. Women, from the wealthy strata living in various cities, including the capital cities of the immense Islamic geography, were also in great demand for ornaments embroidered with stones. Particularly at the courts, the free and concubine wives and relatives of the rulers, lived in great luxury and lavishly used the ornaments made of expensive precious stones. It is possible to find abundant information on this issue in our sources. It is rumoured that the Abbasid caliph Hârûnu'r-Reşîd's wife Zübeyde, who eas legendary, could only be able to get up with the help of two concubines because of the weight of ornaments on her<sup>264</sup>. Even if this news is exaggerated, it does not eliminate the fact that Zübeyde was extremely fond of jewellery made of them.

Another socio-cultural factor that affected the prices of jewellery was related to the events behind the scenes of this business line, which was not seen by more customers. Because, the production of dozens of ornaments were sold by means of many masters, journeymen and apprentices. According to the rumours, workers in the jewellery and jewellery industry were working under very harsh conditions. In addition, this worker segment did not have any social security. The craftsmen working in this sector were afraid of the presence of rot, injury, maggots and any breakage when piercing or removing them from their shells, so the expensive pearls were handed over to their inexperienced and novice apprentices. They were also trying to do this with great courage. Because, if one of them failed to drill, the hole would be defective. Sometimes the masters would even slap their apprentices involved in piercing the pearls so that they would not fall into thinking and crying. By the time the drilling was done, the danger would have been altogether gone. The job of polishing the pearls was also given to these long-suffering apprentices as in the drilling work<sup>265</sup>.

As can be seen above, the inexperienced apprentices, working in the pearl industry, were exposed to the danger of poisoning and coming face-to-face with death at all times. As it is known, some of the precious stones become toxic substances as they were subjected

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>264</sup> Abdulhalik Bakır, Ortaçağ İslam Dünyasında Madencilik ve Maden Sanayi, Ankara, 2002, p. 289.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>265</sup> See. Abdulhalik Bakır, Osmanlı Öncesi Dönemde Ortadoğu'da Madencilik ve Maden Sanayi Sektöründe Çalışan İşçilerin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Durumlarına Dair Bir Değerlendirme, XIV. Congress of Turkish History, Ankara: 9-13 September 2002, Papers Presented to the Congress, Separate Edition, v. I, p. 411.

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abrasion and rottenness as a result of natural events. For this reason, jewellers would not look at such stone without taking pearls and other precious stones in their mouths and soaking them. Since even some of the poisons or odours affect human health, the jeweller would not put the gemstones in their holes over and over again, According to a report, Hz. Ali's son, Hz. Hasan was a man with extensive knowledge and experience in precious stones. Jewellers in Medina would occasionally bring precious stones to him to find out if they were of good quality. He and a friend with him were poisoned in one of these trials<sup>266</sup>.

From the information we have given so far, it is understood that most of the workers, working at the jewellery sector in the medieval Islamic world, were children. Despite the life threatening risks faced by the young workers at this sector, physical and psychological pressure was applied to apprentices in an unforgettable way throughout their lives, in order to get more profitable work. Essentially, this is not surprising. As this traditional social wound still continues today, though the maturation process of humanity covering thousands years and the laws enacted on human rights, in both our family life and various business lines with the same dose -perhaps more- and methods<sup>267</sup>. The negative pictures about this whole line of business that we are trying to explain here, were of course reflected on the prices of precious stones and ornaments made of them. Because, the events mentioned in the jewellery sector (workers getting sick and dying as a result of poisoning, material losses caused by rotten and poisonous pearls, loss of workforce, etc.) brought a great financial burden to the businessmen. To compensate for these losses or to close this gap in them, they had to increase the prices of precious stones and ornaments made from them.

It was not easy for the muhtesip (constabulary organization), who was at the head of the control and control mechanism in the medieval Islamic world. Because, one of the thing they dealt with the most in the field we were trying to explain was to follow the people who produced and sold artificial and fake jewellery and punish to the defective ones. As in all medieval industries, the production and trade artificial and fraudulent goods became widespread in the jewellery industry of that period. We, as a kind of social disease, we discussed this sensitive issue in our paper titled "An Evaluation Regarding the Social and Economic Situation of the Mining and Industry Workers in the Middle East in the Pre-Ottoman Period", which we presented in 2002, at the XIVth Turkish History Congress. We would like to finish our evaluation based on its importance with the following sentences in the conclusion part we have presented there.

"Since the earliest times of history or since the existence of human beings on earth, criminals who violated the rules in all segments of societies and in all kinds of professions

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>266</sup> Ibid, p. 411.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>267</sup> Ibid, p. 411-412.

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and went further and harmed the rights of individuals and social masses have been in action. Sometimes the punishments showed deterrence and they sometimes were insufficient to eradicate the criminals or discourage the criminals from committing crimes. Perhaps this issue can be resolved by discussing it on its own grounds, but it is a fact that the disease of manufacturing artificial and counterfeit goods and deceiving people in industrial sector continues today with all its ugliness. This harms individuals' sense of trust towards each other, which is so significant for the unity and unity of the society. It is not clear that this disease will not continue in the future. If we do not want this to happen as a society, our following suggestions should be implemented meticulously.

- 1. Parents within the family should indicate to their children that deceiving people, violating human rights rules, is disrespect to religious and national values and at the same time, such behaviour is considered as major crimes.
- 2. The same should be applied with great care by teavhers, shopkeepers and factory owners.
- 3. A human rights lesson should be included in all stages of education and it should be explained which bad consequences will have on individuals and society when violating the rights of other being around us, especially people"<sup>268</sup>.

# Conclusion

While the prices of precious stones produced in the Middle Ages were varying according to the quality, volume, colour and workmanship of these stones; the geographies from which they were extracted, the difficulties in the production phase, the marketing process of the sellers, the economic indicator of the season in which they were offered for sale, the balance of supply and demand and the wealth level of buyers also showed a fluctuating pattern. The proximity and distance of the quarry, the fact that all aspects of stones had an equal structure or not, the place where it was sold (the size of the city where it was sold) and the wishes, tasks of the buyers could also affect the fluctuation of the prices. However, all these factors were valid for of ruby-like stones, rubies and pearls, which found buyers at higher prices. Moreover, the buyers of these kind of precious stones, which were sold at very high prices, were mostly from the monarch, the court people and the high-ranking officials of the state and the wealthy aristocratic class who were extremely curious, merchants and industrialists. Particularly, among them were some rulers who were so wasteful that they could occasionally spend as much money as a fortune without hesitation in order to have expensive precious stones and they could generously present them to their relatives, their beloved ladies and concubines.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>268</sup> Ibid, p. 413-414.

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As for the precious stones such as agate, black and white agate, turquoise and coral, which were not of high material value, their prices varied according to the volume of the items made of them and their intended usage. For instance, rulers were interested in large items such as armchairs, tables, houses and kitchen utensils made of precious stones, but they did not prefer small and cheap ones made of these stones. However, since the ornaments in this last category, were not very expensive, were bought and used by men and women belonging to the middle and lower class. According to this table, the market for ornaments made of low cost precious stones was more lively and more active than the market for ornaments made from expensive ones. Of course, controlling the purchase and sale, quality and prices of these kinds of goods (we mention rather cheaply sold precious stones here) was also carried out by the muhtesip (constabulary organization) and the officers affiliated to them, who were authorized officers of the hisbe (constabulary) organization established by the state and operated as a control mechanism. In the sources, there is no information about whether the expensive precious stones sold to the rulers and court people and ornaments made of them were subjected to any inspection process. Presumably they were exempt from both inspection and tax.

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