

THE COINS FROM YAFO (JAFFA), JERUSALEM BOULEVARD AND ITS VICINITY

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The salvage excavations on Jerusalem Blvd. in Yafo (Fig. 1; see Catalogue, below; see Jakoel and Marcus, this volume) yielded 24 coins, 17 of which were identified, from 73 squares. As in many excavations in Yafo, the coin finds represent a wide chronological range, from the second century BCE to the early years of the State of Israel, reflecting the city's long and multiple-layered history.¹

Stratified numismatic material was found in the Hellenistic- and Ottoman-period phases. In addition, unsealed loci yielded coins dating from the Roman to the Mamluk periods (see Jakoel and Marcus, this volume).²

Hellenistic-Period Bronzes

The excavation yielded two Seleucid-period small bronzes (Nos. 1, 2). One was illegible, while the other was identified as a small bronze

of Antiochus IV (175–164 BCE). It was found alongside Hellenistic-period pottery sherds (see Jakoel and Marcus, this volume). This type of coin, the *radiate Antiochus IV/veiled goddess standing*, was minted in large numbers between 173/2–168 BCE in the Seleucid-controlled port city of 'Akko-Ptolemais, and circulated widely throughout Seleucid-controlled Palestine. In Yafo alone, there are at least fifteen exemplars,³ including this coin, registered from nine different excavations, showing their importance at that time as a small cash coinage in this port city.

Roman Period

A single *prutah* (No. 3) from the Roman period was uncovered, minted in Jerusalem by Roman governors ruling Judea on behalf of Augustus. This coin joins some 50 similar small bronze



Fig. 1.

CATALOGUEⁱ

No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
						SELEUCID Antiochus IV (175–164 BCE)					
1*	594	5132	4.05	15	Radiate diademed head r.	Veiled goddess, standing facing, holding long scepter	173/2–168 BCE (or later)	‘Akko-Ptolemais	SC II/1: No. 1479	Serrated	139232
						SELEUCID					
2	544	5060	0.84	13	Head(?)	Illegible					139231
						ROMAN GOVERNOR IN JUDEA Under Augustus					
3	Sq C11, western section	5219	0.93	9×15	Illegible	Palm tree; date in field: L – Λ[.]	5/6–8/9	Jerusalem	TJC:256, No. 311		139233
						ROMAN PROVINCIAL					
4	210	2018	0.93	9×15	Illegible	Illegible	5/6–8/9				139227
						LATE ROMAN					
5	793	6212	0.70	12	Bust to r.	Illegible	5th–6th				139235
						BYZANTINE Justinian (527–565), <i>Nummus</i>					
6	107	1005	0.54	8	Bust(?)	Ⲫ	538–542	Carthage	BMC I:37, Nos. 159–160 Bijovsky 2012:244, App. C.		139228
						Heraclius (610–641), <i>Follis</i>					
7*	244	2101	13.34	29×31	Two standing figures, Heraclius and Heraclonas, robed. Both holding globus cruciger in r. hand	M to l., A/N/O; to r.: ̐	616/617	Thessalonica	DOC 2/1:310, No. 137.1	Overstrike on <i>folles</i> of year 6 of Justin II (570/571)	139230
						ARAB-BYZANTINE Imitative/derivative, <i>Follis</i>					
8	686	6074	3.99	20×23	Emperor facing	m below: Oε	647–670				139234

ⁱ Coin numbers marked with an asterisk appear in Fig. 1.

CATALOGUE (cont.)

No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
						UMMAYYAD Post Reform, Fals					
9	819	6255	2.42	15×17	Inscription: [الإلهة الإلهة و حده]	Crescent	696–750	Al-Ramla	Cf. Ilisch 1993:14, No. 66		139236
						MAMLŪKS Al-Nāṣir Nāṣir Muhammad third reign, 1309–1340 CE, cut <i>dirham</i> fraction					
10	456	2135	1.26	20	Illegible	Illegible			Cf. Balog 1964:146, No. 212		145668
						MEDIEVAL(?)					
11	237	2091	1.24	20	Illegible	Illegible					139229
						OTTOMAN ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd II, 1293–1327 AH/1876–1909 CE, On Para					
12	140	1064	1.46	18	Tugra in looped and ornamental tenfoil	Legend below in crescent, above date: 1293; Denomination (10) in inner circle with five-pointed star at the top		Qustantiniya	Pere 1968: No. 997		P-770299
13	710	6108	1.77	17	Same	Same		Same	Same		P-770459
						Mehmed V, 1327–1336 AH/1909–1918 CE, 5 Para					
14*	688	6081	1.57	16	Tugra in dotted circle; legend above in margin divided by 2 five-pointed stars; laurel branch and 3 cornies below in margin, reeded border	Legend and 5 in dotted circle; legend above in margin divided by 2 five-pointed stars; laurel branch, 3 cornies and first regnal year (1327) in cartouche below; reeded border		Istanbul	Pere 1968: No. 1068		P-774058

CATALOGUE (cont.)

No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
						EUROPEAN Second Empire, France Napoleon III, 1852–1870, 10 Gold Francs					
15*	681	6064	3.17	19	Head r.: NAPOLEON III EMPEREUR Below, marks of mint director and engraver general (Barre)	In center, denomination within wreath with date: 10 FRANCS 1856	1856	Paris	Cuhaj 2009:408, No. 6784.1		P-774056
					British Protectorate over Egypt, 1914–1922, 5 Milliemes						
16	133	1130	3.89	23	Legend and date	Denomination in Arabic and latin numerals and script	1917	Egypt			P-770298
					STATE OF ISRAEL 10 Pruta						
17	753	6172	3.74	27	Two handed amphora. In margin: 'Israel' in hebrew and arabic.	Denomination within wreath	1950	Jerusalem	<i>Bank of Israel</i> : 10 pruta		P-774060

coins unearthed in previous excavations in Yafo,⁴ minted by the Roman administration before the outbreak of the First Jewish Revolt in 66 CE.

Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods

The excavation yielded three Byzantine-period coins. The first is a small pre-reform copper *nummus* (No. 5), circulating in large quantities in Palestine during the fifth–sixth centuries CE (Bijovsky 2012:165–166). The second coin is a post-reform *nummus* (No. 6), issued between 538–542 CE by the praetorian prefecture of Africa in Carthage under Emperor Justinian, after the re-conquest of northwestern Africa from the Vandals (533–534 CE). Such tiny Carthaginian coppers, either official Vandalic types, or imitations, circulated extensively in Palestinian sites of this period (Bijovsky 2012:131–147). In Yafo, at least five coins were registered from several excavations.⁵ The third coin is a dated *folles* (No. 7; year 616/617 CE), minted by Heraclius in his imperial mint in Thessalonica. Both sides of the coin clearly show that it was struck over a much earlier, but similar copper—a forty-five year-old *folles* dated to Year 6 of Justin II (570/571 CE). Such overstrikes, particularly common on the newer coins of Maurice (582–602 CE), also appear during Heraclius' early reign. The use of overstrikes indicates an administration's inability to provide enough freshly-minted copper coinage, for which it then compensated, particularly in the Eastern part of the empire, by recycling older coins.

The Arab conquest in the 630s–early 640s signified the end of Byzantine rule. During a transitional period lasting some 40 years, the Muslim administration continued to strike imitations of Byzantine coins, the so-called 'Arab-Byzantine' types. One of these (No. 8) was found in the excavation. The type—*emperor facing/cursive* **m** *with blundered legend below*—is undated, but recent scholarship associates it with the period immediately following the Arab conquest (647–670 CE). A few of these transitional Ummayyad-type

coppers were found in excavations in Yafo. They seemed to have circulated *en par* with the original Byzantine *folles* of Constans II, struck between 641 and 648 CE, and they continued to circulate in much larger numbers.⁶ The second Islamic coin (No. 9) is an Ummayyad Arabic *fulus*, minted after Abd al-Malik's monetary reform in 77AH/696/697 CE. This epigraphic type was minted in Ramla, the most important supplier of small coppers within southern *Bilād aš-Šām* during this period. These small post-reform coppers were minted in very large numbers until the 750s. In Yafo alone, excavations have yielded some 30 of these small coppers.

Medieval Period (Tenth–Fifteenth Centuries)

The excavation yielded two medieval silver coins. One (No. 10) is a square cut *dirham* fraction of Al-Nāṣir Nāṣir Muḥammad's third reign (AH 709–741/1309–1341 CE). These small 'cut type' *dirhams* are easily distinguished from the conventional round-flan *dirhams* by their shape. Although they were prepared with the same dies that were used for the round *dirham*, the cut *dirhams* were impressed on large, rectangular, cut strips of silver of the same thickness as that of the conventional round flans (Balog 1964:146; Schultz 1995:137–138).⁷ The poor state of the second coin (No. 11) did not allow further identification.

Late Ottoman Period–British Mandate

Five coins are Late Ottoman and European currencies from late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century contexts. They came from soil accumulations in houses and in a cesspit built during this period (see Jakoel and Marcus, this volume). These coins reflect the overall pattern of numismatic finds from excavations in Yafo over the past 60 years. Three coins are copper and nickel denominations (5, 10 *para*) of the reigns of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd II, 1876–1909 (Nos. 12, 13), and Meḥmed V, 1327–1336 AH/1909–1918 CE (No. 14). They are part of a new currency system which was introduced after 1844 and stayed in place till the end of the

Ottoman empire in 1922 (Pamuk 2000:208–209). At the same time, western European currencies are present, a recurrent phenomenon in the Ottoman system during its entire existence (Sahillioglu 1983; Pamuk 2000:219–222; Kool 2002:52–54). One of these (No. 15) is a gold 10 franc coin of Napoleon III, issued in France in 1856 during the Second Empire. Such western gold coins were legal tender in

the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire, and were used as hard currency and for savings until the end of World War I and even later in Ottoman Palestine.⁸ The other coin (No. 16) is a pierced 5 *Milliemes* issued in 1917, during the British Protectorate over Egypt in World War I. It seems to have arrived in Yafo with the capture of the city by Commonwealth troops from New Zealand in November 1917.

NOTES

¹ As can be seen in the coins from the Qishle, the Ottoman Police Compound in Yafo, which were identified and studied by the author (Kool, forthcoming).

² The coins were cleaned in the IAA laboratories under the direction of Lena Kupferschmidt, and were photographed by Clara Amit.

³ IAA Nos. 47706, 47708, 47172, 47533, 47559, 47654, 47658, 47729, 47732, 47746, 47747, 47890, 81800, 81801.

⁴ This information was retrieved from the IAA Jaffa Coin Database (JCD), where more than 1400 coins are catalogued. These were found in about 140 excavations throughout the city since 1949.

⁵ IAA Nos. 82395, 81812–14, 82398.

⁶ Some fifteen such Constans II coppers were found in eight different excavations in Yafo.

⁷ These cut *dirhams* seemed to have circulated *en par* with the regular round-flan *dirham* types, as evidenced in a hoard from al-Waṭa in Zefat (Kool and Berman, forthcoming), excavated by Amos (Permit No. A-4210).

⁸ For two hoards containing such gold *francs* with other contemporary western gold denominations, see a hoard from Be'er Sheva', deposited in c. 1917 (Berman 2009), and a hoard from the German Templar colony of Sarona (Tel Aviv), deposited in c. 1941 (Goldman 2006).

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