

THE COINS FROM GANE TAL

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During excavations at Gane Tal, 71 coins were found. Of these, 52 were identifiable and are presented here (Fig. 1; see *Catalogue*, below). The Islamic-period coins (Nos. 44–52) were identified by Ariel Berman.¹

The numismatic profile largely reflects the stratigraphy of the site, as presented by the excavators (see Arbel and 'Ad, this volume). Stratum IV, mainly defined by three architectural features, is dated by its finds, including two coins (Nos. 1, 2), to the Early Roman period. Number 2, a coin of Agrippa I, was found at the bottom of a fill in the cistern in Area D2, and provides a secure date for that feature. It is noteworthy that three coins (Nos. 3–5) are dated to the Late Roman period, although no architectural features of the second and third centuries CE were identified at the site, indicating that there was possibly no occupation gap during that time.

The majority of the coins were retrieved from Stratum III of the Byzantine period, many of them were found in structures with a secure stratigraphic context, in which case the coins provide robust dates for the structures. The fact that the number of coins dated to the fourth–fifth centuries CE ($n = 18$; Nos. 6–23) is similar to that of the coins dated to the sixth–seventh centuries CE ($n = 20$; Nos. 24–43) is of interest, given the distinctly different modules (i.e., diameters) of the coins of these two chronological groups. The coins of the fourth–fifth centuries are very small in comparison with those of the sixth–seventh centuries; the latter include two of the largest-sized coins of the Byzantine period, *folles* and half *folles*. The purchasing power of the large coins was many times more than that of the smaller coins of their time, and would have been much less easily lost by their owners. Also noteworthy is the fact that 16 of the 20 coins of the sixth–seventh centuries date to the period before 541/2 CE, the time of the Justinianic plague.²

A decline in currency, and possibly in economic prosperity, in the later part of the Byzantine period was also noticed in the numismatic material from several sites in southern

¹ The coins were cleaned by Lena Kuperschmidt in the IAA laboratories, and were photographed by Clara Amit of the IAA photography studio.

² Before any historical explanations were proposed for the decline of Byzantine currency in the region, this phenomenon was generally related to purely numismatic factors, such as a reduced circulation of the heavy *folles* of Justinian I in the east (Ariel 2002:298).



Fig. 1. The Coins.

CATALOGUEⁱ

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Référence	Notes	IAA No.
Roman Prefects in Judea Tiberius (14–37 CE)												
1*	B/269	2567	1.92	16	Obliterated	Palm branch; in fields: [IOV]–ΛΙΑ L–E	18/9	Jerusalem	TJC:257, No. 3278			137362
2	D2/1083	10604	2.28	16	0	B[AC]ΙΑΕWC A[P]Π[A] Canopy	Three ears of corn; in fields: [L]–Σ	Year 6 = 41/2	Same	TJC:231, No. 120		137383
3*	D1/1010	10091	1.07	10	0	Bust r.	Quadriped	2nd c.	Caesarea	Cf. Hamburger 1955:129, No. 53		137374
Roman Provincial (2nd–3rd centuries CE)												
4	E1/1608	15433	6.36	20	0	[---] Bust r.	[---] Figure sig.					137401
5*	D/1027	10216	2.93	20	6	DΙΩ CARO AVG Radiate head r.	Carus (283–285 CE), <i>Antoninianus</i> CONSECRATIO Altar; to r.: Δ; in ex. XXI	(Posthumous)	Antioch	RIC V/I:150, No. 127		137376
6	D/1059	10489	2.31	18	6	[---] Helmeted, cuirassed bust r.	[V]ICTOR[IAE LAETAE PRIN]C PERP Two Victories stg., together holding shield on altar	318–319		Cf. RIC V/II; 431, No. 52		137379
7	C/611	6017	1.89	17	6	CONSTAN- [T]INOPOLIS Helmeted, cuirassed bust of Constantinopolis 1.	Victory on prow; in ex.: CONS[.]	330–335	Constantinople	LRBC I:24; No. 1009		137364

ⁱ All the coins are bronze, except No. 46, which is silver. The coins are arranged chronologically, according to coin types. Coins bearing an asterisk appear in Fig. 1.

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
8	B/262	2575	0.84	14	0	[---] Veiled head r.	Emperor veiled, stg. r.; in fields: VN-MR	341-346		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> I:25, No. 1063		137361
9	DI/1001	10089	1.60	15 × 17	0	[---] Pearl-diademed, draped bust r.	[---] Virtus spearing falling horseman raising arm behind him	351-361		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 87, No. 2039	Constantius II	137368
10	E2/1506	15043	1.09	16	6	[---] Same	FEL TEMP REPARATIO Same	351-361		Same	Same	137393
11	E2/1540	15168	2.11	15	0	[---] Same	[---] Same	351-361		Same	Same	141298
12	DI/1040	10397	0.99	15	0	[---] Same	[---] Same	351-361		Same	Same	137377
13	E1/1554	15216	1.20	14 × 17	6	[---] Draped bust r.	[---] Same	351-361		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 87, No. 2040		137397
14	DI/1040	10399	1.49	15	6	[---]NOB CAES Pearl-diademed, draped bust r.	[---] Virtus stg. facing, head l., holding spear and globe	355-361		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 87, No. 2054		137378
House of Valentinian												
15	DI/1006	10019	1.24	15	6	[---] Pearl-diademed, draped bust r.	Within wreath: VOTVN/MVLTX; in ex.: [---]N[---]	378-383		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 88, No. 2116		137372
16	E1/1544	15351	1.14	13	0	[---] Same	Within wreath: [V]OTX/[M]VLT/[---]	383		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 89, No. 2158		137395

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
17	E2/1504	15025	1.40	14	6	[---] Same	[---] Two Victories facing one another, each holding wreath	383–392?		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 82, No. 1871		137392
18*	E2/1500	15056	1.18	11	0	[DN] ARCI ADIVS PF AV[G] Same	SALVS REI- PVBL[C][AE] Victory advancing l., dragging captive and holding trophy; in l. field: ·	393–395		Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 105, No. 2908	Arcadius	137386
19	B/275	2587	1.28	14 × 16	1	[DN] ARCA ADIVS PF AV[G] Same	VIRTVS-EXERCITI Emperor stg., holding spear and shield, crowned with wreath by Victory; in ex.: [SM]KB	395–408		<i>LRBC</i> II:98, No. 2580	Same	137363
20	E2/1598	15329	1.09	11	0	[---] Same	[---] Figure stg.	4th c.				137399
21	126	1091	1.04	12		Illegible	[---] Same		4th c.			135794
22	D1/1001	10013	2.76	13		[---] Pearl-diademed, draped bust r.	[---] Same		4th c.?			137366
23	D1/1009	10127	1.12	11	0	[---] Bust r.	Marciān (450–457 CE)		Monogram showing the left half of 	Cf. <i>LRBC</i> II: 90, No. 2247		137373

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
Anastasius I (491–518 CE), <i>Follis</i>												
24	D2/1074	1074	17.34	33	6	DN ΑΝΑΣΤΑ[Σ]Ι-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC	Μ Above, cross; to l. and r., stars; in ex.: [C]QN	507–512	Constantinople	<i>MIBE</i> 1:110, No. 97		137381
25*	D2/1093	10645	17.71	34 × 36	6	[DN Α]ΝΑΣΤΑ[Σ]-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC Same	Μ Above, cross; to l. and r., stars; beneath: B; in ex.: CON	517–522	Same	<i>MIBE</i> 1:87, No. 27		137385
26*	D1/1001	10037	16.27	31	6	DN ΑΝΑΣΤΑ[Σ]-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC Same	Μ Above, cross; to l. and r., stars; beneath: %o; in ex.: CON	517–522	Same	Same		137369
27*	1	1999	13.52	29 × 31	6	DN ΙVΣΤΙ-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC	Μ Above, to l. and r., stars; beneath: B; in ex.: CQN	518–522	Same	Cf. <i>MIBE</i> 1:96, No. 11		136481
28	E3/1501	15006	16.53	31	7	[D]ΙVΣΤΙ-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC Same	Μ Above, to l. and r., crosses; beneath: E; in ex.: CON	518–522	Same	<i>MIBE</i> 1:96, No. 13		137389
29	D1/1001	10035	16.94	31	6	[DN ΙVΣΤΙ-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC Same	Μ Above and to r., crosses; to l., star; beneath: Δ; in ex.: CQN	522–527	Same	<i>MIBE</i> 1:96, No. 12		137367
30	D2/1095	10614	15.80	30 × 33	0	DN ΙVΣΤΙ-ΝΒΣ PP ΛVC Same	Μ Above and to r., crosses; to l., star; beneath: B	522–527	Same	Cf. <i>MIBE</i> 1:96, No. 12		137384

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
31	E1/1640	15487	16.32	29 × 31	6	[---] Same	M To r., cross; to l., star; beneath: B; in ex.: Q[ON]	522–537	Same	Same	Emperor unclear	137404
32*	D1/1003	10031	16.82	28 × 31	6	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑVC Same	M Above and to r., crosses; to l., star; beneath: Δ; in ex.: CON	527–537	Same	MIBE 1:126, No. 84	137370	
33	D2/1066	10564	17.40	31	6	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑVC Same	M Above and to r., crosses; to l., star; beneath: Γ; in ex.: CON	527–537	Same	Same	137380	
34	E1/1608	15399	14.54	29 × 31	0	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑVC Same	M Above, cross; to l., star; to r., cross? beneath: Δ; in ex.: CON	527–537	Same	Cf. MIBE 1:126–127, Nos. 84, 85	137400	
35	E1/1627	15451	13.90	29 × 31	0	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑV Same	M Above, to l. and r., crosses; beneath: E; in ex.: CON	527–537	Constantinople? Cf. MIBE 1:127, No. 87	137403		
36*	E1/1640	15497	15.60	30 × 32	6	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑVC Same	M Above, to l. and r., crosses; in ex.: QON	527–537	Constantinople	Same	Oversize or missstrike	137405
37	D1/1016	10106	32	16	7	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑVC Same	M Above, to l. and r., crosses; beneath: α; in ex.: NIΚΜ[.]	527–537	Nicomedia	MIBE 1:134, No. 107	137375	
38	D1/1005	10039	8.91	28 × 31	6	DN IV STINI-ΑΝΒΝΣ PP ΑVC Same	M Above, cross; to l. and r., stars; beneath: Γ; in ex.: [ΘΥΠΛΑ]S	537–539	Antioch	DOC 1:140, No. 212c	137371	

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
39*	D2/1076	10591	14.99	31	6	dN IVSTI-NVS PP AV· Justin and Sophia facing, enthroned; between their heads: ☧	M Above, cross; to l.: A/N/N/O to r., ☧; beneath: B; in ex.: KYZ	572/3	Cyzicus	Cf. MIBEC:99, No. 87		137382
40*	E1/1544	15171	9.30	25 × 28	6	[---] Cuirassed and helmeted bust facing, holding <i>globus cruciger</i> and shield	m Above, cross; to l.: A/N/N/O; to r.: ☧; in ex.: THEUPI[.]	589/90	Antioch	Cf. MIBEC:159, No. 95Cb		137394
41	E1/1571	15231	5.15	23	6	[---] Cuirassed and helmeted bust facing	K Above, cross; to l.: A/N/N/O					137398
42	E1/1622	15421	6.05	24	5	[-V- -]O Cuirassed and helmeted bust facing	X · X Above, cross? to r.: ☧	2nd half 6th c.				137402
43	E2/1551	15246	4.99	22 × 25	7	dN FO[CA-PERP AV] Crowned, bearded consular bust facing, holding mappa and scepter surmounted by a cross	XX Above, cross; to r.: II; in ex.: NJ[KO]	603/4	Nicomedia	MIBEC:193, No. 73a		137396

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.	
44	E3/1508	15050	4.70	23 × 25	Center:	Al-‘Ādil I Sayf ad-Dīn Abū Bakr (AH 596–615/1199–1218 CE), <i>Fals</i>		Dimashq		Balog 1980:1136, No. 324	141300		
45	E3/1509	15055	5.68	23	Center:	سيف \ الملك العامل \ الدرن	Center: [مو\ يكر\ بن \ ايوب]	1213/4	Same	Cf. Balog 1980:1136, No. 324	Variant	141296	
46*	E3/1501	15183	1.10	14 × 16	Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Naṣir al-Dīn, 3rd reign AH 709–741/1310–1341 CE, <i>Fals</i>		Margin: [- -]	Dimashq		Balog 1964:162, No. 261	137391		
47	E3/1501	15001	2.28	17 × 19	الملك الناصر	Five-petaled rosette, around:	AH 730 (=1329)	Dimashq		Cf. Balog 1964:162, No. 261	137387		
48	E3/1508	15051	2.44	19 × 21	Al-Salih Ismā‘il ‘Imād al-Dīn		(AH 743–746/1342–1345 CE), <i>Fals</i>		Dimashq		Balog 1964:173, No. 288	141299	
49	E3/1530	15120	3.11	20	اسعيل \ الملك الصالح \ بن محمد		ضرب \ منق \ اب \ ف \ ي سنة واربعين	Dimashq		AH 746 (=1345)	Dimashq	Cf. Balog 1964:173, No. 289	141397

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Area/ Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
						Al-Nâṣir Abû Al-Sâ'âdât Muhammad (AH 901–904/1496–1498), Fals						
50*	D1/1000	10.196	2.78	18	Above: Beneath:	Within hexagram, small six-petaled rosette			Same	Balog 1970: 169, No. 861	137365	
51	E3/1501	15.005	1.64	14 × 18	Illegible	Illegible	End 14th c.			Unclear ruler	137388	
52	E3/1501	15.063	4.13	17 × 20	Same	Same	End 14th c.		Same	137390		

Israel (Ariel 2002:301, n. 18), e.g., the early sixth-century CE hoard of Tel Ya‘oz (Ariel 2002:301, n. 16). The decline in the amount of coin finds from the mid-sixth century CE on is particularly evident in small sites, where the phenomenon is more easily identified (e.g., the Kathisma Church, south of Jerusalem; Ariel, forthcoming). Based on the numismatic finds at the ‘Third Mile Estate’ outside of Ashqelon, it was suggested that the occupation there ended as an indirect result of the Justinianic plague (Ariel 2013:230). Recent research has tended to downplay the effects of the plague on the sixth century (Mordechai et al. 2019) and it is also possible, however, that the decline at Gane Ṭal and at other sites was the outcome of other historical circumstances, such as the purported abolishment of the frontier military units of this region, *limitanei*, by Justinian I, as possibly related by Procopius (Casey 1996:221), or other historical circumstances.

The numismatic profile of Gane Ṭal also includes nine coins from the Ayyūbid and Mamluk periods (Nos. 43–52), all probably relating to the Mamluk-period occupation at the site (Stratum II).

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