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Coins from the Excavation near Warren's Gate, Jerusalem

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The excavations (see Onn and Weksler-Bdolah, this volume) yielded 15 coins, all bronze or copper-alloy, of which 10 were identifiable.[1] An analysis of the coins in their stratigraphic contexts, undertaken in comparison with other comparable finds in Jerusalem, is revealing.

The three coins, struck by one or more[2] governors in Judea under Tiberius, are the most numerous issues in this small excavation. Coin No. 3 was uncovered in the foundation of the lower pavement (L29059; Stratum Vb), while Coin Nos. 2 and 4 were found in a fill containing a stone collapse underneath the foundation layer of this pavement (L29063, 29064; Stratum Vc). The contexts of these three coins accord with the stratigraphy documented under the pavements, and lower down in the deep foundations, of the main Valley Street (in the Tyropoeon Valley) and the Stepped Street that extended from the area of Robinson's Arch to the southern point of the Tyropoeon Valley in the City of David.

The plentiful numismatic evidence from below the abovementioned Valley Street revealed that its construction begun in the 20s of the first century CE, and may have been completed before the reign of Agrippa I. Based upon an analysis of the coin finds (Ariel, forthcoming), it seems clear that the street was completed before the sixth year of Agrippa I's reign (41/2 CE). It is noteworthy that coins from Agrippa I's massive coin emission of that year are absent from the many excavations of the street's foundations (Szanton et al. 2019).

One coin of that 41/2 CE issue of Agrippa I in Jerusalem (No. 5) was found in this excavation; however, it appeared together with Late Roman ceramics (L1922; Stratum IVd). Considering the huge size of that issue, with 1041 coins of the type in the Israel National Collection documented from excavations in Jerusalem, it is not surprising that such a coin would be a residual find in later fills in the city.

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[1] The coins were cleaned in the IAA laboratories by Raisa Vinitzky and Victoria Nosikovsky.

[2] The dates of rule of the governors operating in Judea under Emperor Tiberius (14–37 CE) are uncertain. *TJC* ascribed the coin types (No. 2 [palm branch/wreath] and Nos. 3–4 [lituus/wreath]) to two different governors. If, however, Schwartz's proposal (1992:182–217) to begin the rule of Pontius Pilate in c. 19 CE is accepted, then all three coins might have been struck only by that perfect. The problematics of the chronology of those two governors was recently reiterated by Schwartz (2013:140–141).

CATALOGUE

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	IAA No.
						Unclear Hasmonean Ruler					
1	29002	290005	1.74	14	6	[- - -]/[- - -]/[- - -] Within wreath	Double cornucopias with pomegranate between horns	125–37 BCE	Jerusalem		125991
						Roman Procurators in Judea under Tiberius (14–37 CE)					
2	29063	290089	1.36	13 × 15		In wreath: TI[B]/[KAI/CAP]	Palm branch; in fields: IOY–Λ̣[IA] [·]–[·]	17/8–24/5	Same	Cf. *TJC*:257, No. 327	135068
3	29059	290068	1.34	13		[- - -] Lituus	LIZ Within wreath	30/1	Same	*TJC*:258, No. 333	135067
4	29064	290090	1.81	14 × 16		TIBEP̣[IOY–KAICAPOC] Same	[- - -] Same	30/1–31/2	Same	Cf. *TJC*:258, No. 333	135069
						Agrippa I (41/42 CE)					
5	1922	3042	2.37	16 × 18	0	[BACIΛE]WC–[AΓPIΠA] Canopy	Three ears of grain; in fields: [·]–[·]	Year 6= 41/2	Same	*TJC*:231, No. 120	134943
						Procurator under Claudius (41–54 CE)					
6	28001	280003	1.25	16		[- - -] Two crossed palm branches; between the palms: LIΔ	IOY/ΛIA AΓ/PIΠΠI/NA Within wreath	Year 14= 54	Same	*TJC*:259, No. 342	125988
						First Jewish Revolt (66–70 CE)					
7	1924	3051	1.78	17	0	[שנ]ת–שתי[ם] Amphora	[- - -] Vine leaf and tendril	Year 2= 67/8	Same	*TJC*:240, No. 196	134944
8	29056	290057	2.04	16	0	[ש]נת–שת[ים] Same	חר[ת ציון] Same	Same	Same	Same	135066
						ROMAN PROVINCIAL (second–third centuries CE)					
9	1919a	3040	5.63	19 × 21		[- - -] Bust r.	[- - -] [exergual line]				134942
						Theodosius I (379–395 CE)					
10	1917	3030	0.94	14	6	[DN THEODO]–SIVS [PF AVG] Pearl-diademed, draped bust r.	[VIC]ṬOṚIẠ ẠV[G] Two Victories facing one another, each holding wreath	383–392		Cf. *LRBC* II:82, No. 1868	125999

Coin No. 8 also relates to the dating of the pavements exposed in this excavation. The coin, of the second year of the First Jewish Revolt (67/8 CE), was found atop the foundation layer of the upper pavement (L29051), where the paving stone was missing (L29056; Stratum IVe). If the date of the pavement is in keeping with the date of the Stepped Street, my conclusion that the Stepped Street pavement dated before the sixth year (41/2 CE) of the reign of Agrippa I, suggests that No. 8 did not derive from the foundation layer of this pavement, but from activity postdating the removal of the stone, apparently after 70 CE.

Coin No. 7 was also found in a post-70 CE context (L1924; Stratum IVe), containing ceramics of the first and second centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 4).

A couple of coins, issued after the closing of the Jerusalem mint, derived from contexts appropriate to their dates of issue: Coin No. 9, a Roman provincial coin roughly dated to second–third centuries CE, came from the fill inside a drainage channel complex (L1919; Stratum IVb, third–fifth centuries CE); Coin No. 10, a copper of Theodosius I dated to 383–392 CE, was found in a fill below a pavement dated to the third/fourth to sixth/seventh centuries CE (L1917; Stratum IVa).

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