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The Metal Objects from the Hellenistic–Byzantine-Period Rural Settlement at el-Khirba, Shoham

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A few iron and copper-alloy objects were found at el-Khirba, Shoham, in contexts dated based on pottery and coins to the Hellenistic through the Byzantine periods (see Sion, this volume). Also found were six tacks, undefined copper-alloy and lead pieces, and many small round bullets (not illustrated).

Fibulae (Fig. 1:1, 2)
Only the thin bow of two copper-alloy fibulae survived; fibula No. 2 is incised. These fibulae parallel Stronach's Types II and III, "fibulae with an arched or a triangular bow", respectively, dated to the eighth century BCE–first century CE (Stronach 1959:190–201). A plain fibula was found at Qalandiya, a Second Temple period agricultural settlement (Magen 2004:95, Fig. 129c).

Fibulae with a decorated bow are common, for example, at Qalandiya (Magen 2004:95, Figs. 129b, 129d), as well as in tombs in Mishmar Ha-'Emeq, where they were dated to the second half of the first century CE (Israeli 1988:231–232, No. 145), and near Tel Abu-Shusha, dated to the end of the first century CE (Siegelman 1988:34, Fig. 44).

The fibula in Fig. 1:1 was found in a context (L1070) dated to the Hellenistic–Byzantine periods, and fibula Fig. 1:2, in a context (L1282) dated to the Hellenistic period through the second century CE. Thus, the fibulae should be dated to the Hellenistic–Roman periods.

Kohl Sticks (Fig. 1:3, 4)
Three thin copper-alloy kohl sticks were found. Figure 1:3, now curved, is rounded on one end and flattened on the other; the flattened end is slightly broken. Figure 1:4, which is very curved, is rounded on one end and flattened and incised on the other. The flat spoon and a small part of the thin rod of an additional kohl stick (not illustrated) were also found.

Numerous kohl sticks (109 complete and 143 fragments) were discovered at Masada (Krause 2005:14–25, Pls. 1, 2) but most published examples were discovered in burial sites, for example at Ha-Gosherim, dated to the mid-first century BCE–second half of the first century CE (Ovadiah 1999:43*–44*, Fig. 10:2), in the cemetery of Berit Aḥim, dated to the first century CE (Edelstein 2002:77*–78*, Fig. 31), in a tomb in the Jewish cemetery of the Second Temple period at Jericho (Hachlili 1999:139, Fig. III.82), in the tomb near Tel Abu-

Fig. 1. Metal finds.

No.	Object	Locus	Reg. No.	Description
1	Fibula	1070	2327	Copper alloy
2	Fibula	1282	2631	Copper alloy
3	Kohl stick	1074	2352/1	Copper alloy
4	Kohl stick	1035	2121	Copper alloy
5	Disc	1081	2383	Copper alloy
6	Disc	1219	2501	Copper alloy
7	Lock	1223	2515	Copper alloy
8	Weight	1031	2166	Copper alloy
9	Nail	1001	2042	Iron
10	Nail	1290	2652	Iron
11	Hoe	1040	2277	Iron

Shusha (Siegelman 1988:35, Fig. 52), and in Samaria Tomb E220, dated to the second–third centuries CE (Crowfoot 1957:428–430, Fig. 100:24, 25).

A parallel for the kohl stick in Fig. 1:4 was discovered in Ramat Ha-Nadiv, defined as "work tool" and dated to the Herodian period (Kol-Yaakov 2000:491, No. 87). The kohl stick in Fig. 1:3 was found in a context dated to the Hellenistic–Roman periods (L1074), while that in Fig. 1:4 came from a context of unknown date (L1035) and apparently should be dated to the same period. The third kohl stick (not illustrated) was found in a Hellenistic context.

Discs (Fig. 1:5, 6)

Two discs of unknown function were found, both made of copper alloy. The disc in Fig. 1:5 has a hole in its center flanked by two small holes positioned near the disc edges, and two incised circles. The disc is slightly broken. The disc in Fig. 1:6, slightly crumpled, has a small hole in the center and some incised concentric circles; a parallel for this disc was discovered in the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem (Zitronblat and Geva 2003:358, M 39). Both discs were uncovered in contexts dating from the Hellenistic through the Byzantine period (L1081, L1219).

Lock (Fig. 1:7)

This rectangular copper-alloy object is apparently part of a lock or a clasp. It is complete and smooth in one of the two elongated sides and broken in the others. Close to the complete side are two small holes, one of these closed with a small piece. A decorated complete clasp was found in the Jewish Quarter in Jerusalem (Zitronblat and Geva 2003:357, M 35). The lock was found in a context dated to the first–sixth centuries CE (L1223).

Weight (Fig. 1:8)

A copper-alloy square weight (3.2 × 3.2 cm) with no visible marks on it. Its original weight was ten numismata, i.e., 45 g, but it now weighs 43 g. The numisma was one of the official Byzantine weights, dating from the fifth to the seventh century CE (Qedar 1981:52). The weight was found in a Hellenistic–Byzantine context (L1031), but should be dated to the Byzantine period.

Nails (Fig. 1:9, 10)

As mentioned above, the main bulk of the finds are nails of different lengths, most made of iron and a few of copper alloy. Two iron nails are presented here: Fig. 1:9, a long thin nail with a round head, and Fig. 1:10, of medium length. The nails were found in contexts dated to the third–fifth (L1001; Fig. 1:9) and fourth (1290; Fig. 1:10) centuries CE.

Hoe (Fig. 1:11)

This is a complete iron hoe. Hoes were found at Qalandiya (Magen 2004:94, Fig. 127; Pl. 13:2), Ramat Ha-Nadiv (Kol-Yaakov 2000:491, No. 81) and in the Jewish Quarter in

Jerusalem (Gutfeld and Nenner-Soriano 2006:276, M 30). The hoe was found with pottery dating from the Hellenistic through the Byzantine periods and coins dated to the second–third centuries CE (L1040).

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