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The Coins from Ḥorbat Naẓur

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A total of 21 coins[1] were discovered during the excavation of Area B at Ḥorbat Naẓur (see Yannai, this volume). Sixteen of them were identifiable, including three tiny Persian-period silver coins (Nos. 1–3). Most of the coins are dated to the Hellenistic period (Ptolemaic, Seleucid and Hasmonean; Nos. 4–15), except for one Herodian coin (No. 15) and a Byzantine *follis* of Justin II (No. 16).

According to the excavator (Yannai, this volume), the three Phoenician coins from the fifth–fourth centuries BCE (Nos. 1–3) indicate that the site was settled during that period. However, the coins may have been brought to the site during the Hellenistic period as these silver coins, in spite of their minute size, likely remained in circulation then.

The bulk of the coins dates to the Seleucid period. Four coins are of the common "Apollo standing left, holding bow and arrow" type. A hoard of 21 such coins (plus one exception) was found at the nearby site of Or 'Aqiva, where this type also predominates among the isolated coins (Bijovsky 2009).

Out of the five coins of Antiochus IV, four types are represented: two serrated coins of the "veiled female" type, minted in 'Akko–Ptolemais (Nos. 11–12); a serrated coin of the "Apollo seated on omphalos" type, attributed to the same mint of 'Akko–Ptolemais (*SNG Israel* I:156–157, Nos. 1108–1129; Bijovsky 2000); another serrated coin, representing a veiled female-bust on its obverse and an elephant's head on the reverse (No. 9); and lastly, a non-serrated coin depicting a female figure seated on a throne (No. 13). Coin No. 9 was hitherto attributed to the mint of Antioch. Houghton and Spaer reclassified this type under three different mints according to control marks: Antioch (*SNG Israel* I:138, Nos. 970–972), Seleucia Pieria (*SNG Israel* I:144, Nos. 1017–1028) and 'Akko-Ptolemais (*SNG Israel* I:154, Nos. 1102–1107). In addition, the coins minted at Seleucia Pieria and 'Akko–Ptolemais depict a small prow of a galley in the right field of the elephant's head, while the Antiochean issues depict a tripod. Our coin certainly belongs to the "prow of a galley" group, but control marks are illegible. I prefer the attribution to 'Akko-Ptolemais, based not only on its geographical proximity, but also on the provenance of other coins of this king, cited above.

Coin No. 13 deserves special attention. The obverse of the coin depicts the diademed and radiate head of Antiochus IV, partly out off flan, as well as the monogram that usually appears in the left field. The reverse describes a female goddess(?) seated on a high-back throne, holding a Nike in her outstretched right hand, and a long-legged bird at her feet. The identification of the figure is uncertain. Babelon (1890:72, Nos. 554–5) identifies her as "La Fortune" and gives no mint attribution.[2] Houghton attributed the type to an uncertain mint in Phoenicia or Palestine, following Le Rider (1965:291). A number of coins of this type have since been found in excavations in Israel, reinforcing a local mint connection. Two coins were discovered in the Jerusalem area—one at Ḥorbat Zimri (Barag 2000–2002:61, No. 2) and another at the southern wall of the Temple Mount (IAA 45414)—and a stray find from Tel 'Anafa (IAA 57200). Two more coins of this type from nearby Ramat Ha-Nadiv (Ḥ. 'Eleq; IAA 83495 and 83496; Barkay 2000:380, Nos. 56, 57) have been published. The most

Fig. 1.

impressive findings are from excavations on Mt. Gerizim, where 11 coins of this type have been registered.[3] Three of these coins are recorded from excavations at Samaria (Reisner 1924:259, Nos. 7a–c) and another from Tel Balaṭa, Shekhem (Sellers 1962:94–95, No. 72; identified as "Zeus"). In 1998, Houghton and Spaer (*SNG Israel* I:162) referred to the "Israel–West Bank provenance" of this type, but still classifed it under the rubric "uncertain southern mint". Barag (2000–2002:59–77) published a hoard of 16 coins of this type, and attributed them to the mint of Jerusalem.

Two factors suggest that this type was probably minted in ʻAkko-Ptolemais as well:

1. It was found at Ḥorbat Naẓur together with four other, different coin types of Antioch IV, all minted in ʻAkko-Ptolemais.

2. The majority of coins of this type hitherto found, come from the Samaria area, which, based upon an examination of the currency there,[4] had close commercial ties with the city of ʻAkko-Ptolemais (as opposed to Tyre, for example) during the Seleucid period.

These assumptions suggest that this type may have been struck in the most prodigious mint of Antioch IV in our region, i.e., ʻAkko-Ptolemais.

The Herodian coin (No. 15) could be related to pottery sherds of the same period cited by the excavator. Its poor state of preservation does not allow a more precise identification, either with Herod I or his son Archelaus. While a single Byzantine coin dated to Justin II, 570/71 CE, is the latest found in the excavation, it was not in a stratigraphical context.

CATALOGUE

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
Persian Period Silver – 1/24 *stater*												
1*	2036	20122	0.71	9	←	Dolphin l.	Owl stg. r., head facing, crook and flail over its l. shoulder	450–400 BCE	Tyre	*BMC Phoen.*: 227–228, Nos. 4–7		68413
Phoenician Standard – Silver 1/16 *sheqel*												
2*	2020	20310	0.83	8	↗	The king of Persia slaying a lion, which stands before him on hind legs. Between them O	War galley l. Above illegible date	4th c. BCE	Sidon	*BMC Phoen.*: 146–147, Nos. 36–45		68411
3	2065	20430	0.50	10	↑	Same	Same	Same	Same	Same		68417
Ptolemies Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BCE)												
4*	2125	20410	10.77	23	↑	Head of Zeus-Ammon, r.	ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ Eagle stg. l. on thunderbolt; on l. field club		Tyre	Cf. *SNG Ptol.*: Pl. XVII, No. 495		68421
Seleucids Antiochus III (223–187 BCE)												
5	2027	20230	1.83	9	↑	Head of Apollo r.	[ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ] Apollo stg. l. holding bow and arrow		Antioch	*SNG Israel*: 86, Nos. 573–591		68412
6	2065	20431	1.68	11	↑	Same	Same		Same	Same		68418
7	2036	20123	1.51	12	↑	Same	Same		Same	Same		68414
8	2037	20175	1.45	11	↑	Same	Same		Same	Same		68415
Antiochus IV (175–164 BCE)												
9*	2015	20309	3.16	16	↑	Veiled female head r.	ΒΑΣΙΛ[ΕΩΣ] ΑΝΤ[ΙΟΧΟΥ] Head of elephant l., in r. field prow of galley		ʿAkko-Ptolemais	*SNG Israel*: 154, Nos. 1102–1107	Serrated	68410

* Coins bearing an asterisk appear in Fig. 1.

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
10	2006	20023	1.62	13	↑	Laureate head r.	ΒΑΣΙΛΕ[ΩΣ] ΑΝΤΙΟ[ΧΟΥ] Apollo seated on omphalos, facing l.; in l. field aphlaston. In ex.: Λ		Same	Cf. *SNG Israel*: 156, No. 1115	Same	68409
11*	2108	20472	2.06	14	↗	Radiate head r.	ΒΑΣΙΛ[ΕΩΣ] ΑΝΤ[ΙΟΧΟΥ] Veiled female stg. facing, holding long scepter		Same	Cf. *SNG Israel*: 156, No. 1130–1138.	Same	68420
12	2058	20219	1.66	12	↑	Same	[ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ] Same		Same	Same	Same	68416
13*	2144	20449	3.29	15	↑	Radiate head r.	ΒΑΣΙΛΕ[ΩΣ] ΑΝΤ[ΙΟΧΟΥ] Female figure seated l. on throne, holding Nike in outstretched hand. at feet to l. a bird		‘Akko-Ptolemais(?)	*SNG Israel*:162, Nos. 1168–1176		68422
Hasmonean Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE)												
14	1011	10048	0.70	11 × 16		Obliterated	Obliterated		Jerusalem	Cf. *AJC* 1:122, Nos. Ce 9–12		68407
Herodian Herod I? (37–4 BCE) Archelaus? (4 BCE–6CE)												
15*	2074	20432	0.88	14	↑	Anchor	Double cornucopiae, between them a caduceus		Jerusalem	Cf. *AJC* 2:237, No. 17 or 239, No. 1		68419
Byzantine Justin II (565–578 CE) – *Follis*												
16	Surface L2000	20030	10.18	28	↓	Justin and Sophia seated facing, on double throne	M Above cross; to l. A/N/N/O; ? to r.; beneath B In ex. [CON]	570/571	Constant.	*DOC* 1:207, No. 28b		68408

* Coins bearing an asterisk appear in Fig. 1.

NOTES

[1] The coins were cleaned in the IAA laboratories under the supervision of Ella Altmark, and photographed by Clara Amit.

[2] It is possible that Babelon refers to an almost identical type but of different style, associated by Houghton (1983:99, Nos. 985–986) to the mint of Babylon. The quality of the photograph in Babelon's catalogue does not allow a more specific attribution.

[3] The coins were identified by the author, and are cited here with permission of Dr. Y. Magen (K13194, K16199, K17419, K18619, K19765, K19817, K22287, K22445, K22527, K22669, K22672).

[4] This assumption is based on the results of the excavations at Mt. Gerizim, but the same picture arises from other excavations in Samaria as well (Kirkman 1957:43).

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