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The Coins from Jerusalem Street, Safed (Ẓefat)

Robert Kool

Eighteen coins were found during the salvage excavations on Jerusalem Street, Safed (Fig. 1; Coin Catalogue; see Barbé, this volume), and all were identified.[1] The earliest datable coin belongs to the reign of Amaury I, king of Jerusalem (1163–1173 CE), the latest was minted during the reign of the Mamlūk ruler Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan Nāṣir ad-Dīn (755–762 AH/ 1354–1360 CE).

Provenance

The coins were discovered in the vestiges of three structures located in an area on the northwestern edge of the medieval- and Ottoman-period castle of Safed, adjacent to the Frankish-period outer defense walls (Barbé and Damati 2005). The site was identified by the excavator as part of the medieval *faubourg* inhabited consecutively during the Ayyubid occupation of Safed (1188–1240) and its Frankish reoccupation (1240–1266). It was destroyed during the Mamlūk conquest of the town in 1266. Significantly, the excavator noticed the absence of a typical Mamlūk-period settlement phase (fourteenth–fifteenth centuries CE) and concluded that later alterations date to the Ottoman period.

Frankish-Period Deniers

The excavation yielded four Frankish-period *billon deniers* dating to the 1160s–1250s: an *Amalricus denier*, a twelfth-century French Feudal coin, a Cypriote denier of Lusignan Cypruss and a thirteenth century *denaro* minted in the kingdom of Sicily.

Amalricus denier.— The 'Holy Sepulchre' type, with its distinctive circular beamed roof and *oculus*, was issued by Amaury I, as ruler of the kingdom of Jerusalem, between 1163–1173 CE (No. 1). Good quality, heavy weight *Amalricus deniers* (0.80–1.00 g) like our specimen (0.83 g) continued to be issued in plentiful numbers by King Amaury and his successors at least until 1187 CE (Kool 2002:79). The type uses a *single chevron barred A* with a single stop in its inscriptions and two annulets in the second and third quarters of the cross pattée appearing on the obverse. The *denier* was discovered together with a twelfth-century Zangid copper coin and two early thirteenth-century Ayyubid copper *fals* in a context archaeologically dated between the 1180s and the 1260s CE (see below). Until recently, evidence of hoards and site-finds had limited the occurrence of these heavier good quality *Amalricus deniers* to no later than the fall of the first kingdom (1187 CE; Metcalf 1995:57–71). Researchers assumed that the prolonged use of these coins into the first decades of the thirteenth century, by now minted in Acre, consisted mainly of inferior quality cut *mauvais* types, weighing considerably below the 0.80 g range (Metcalf 1997:193–195; Metcalf, Kool and Berman 1999:96–97). The above context seems to indicate, however, that good quality *Amalricus deniers* may have remained in circulation deep into the first half of the thirteenth century CE.

Twelfth-Century French Feudal Coins.— The excavation yielded one *denier* from the central part of France: a *denier* of Robert I, lord of Celles, minted between 1178 and 1189 CE (No. 2), found during the dismantling of a floor of beaten earth and lime in Building 2. It was

Fig. 1.

excavated together with remains of medieval pottery, a sharpening stone and iron nails, all securely dated to the end of the twelfth–beginning of the thirteenth centuries (see Barbé, this volume).

Celles was a former dependency of the counts of Blois and located in the royal county of Berry, where more than fifteen small mints produced moneys between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries (Poey d'Avant 1858:265–308). Small quantities of coins from some of its mints—Celles, Deols, Vierzon, Gien—appear regularly in hoards with substantial imports of Burgundian money dated to the first decades of the thirteenth century (Metcalf 1995:174). Traces of moneys from these mints also appear in other contemporary thirteenth-century Frankish-period sites like Jaffa, 'Atlit and Acre.[2]

A Cypriote denier.— This clipped denier, barely readable, is one of the first issues minted by the Lusignans after they established themselves in Cyprus after 1192 (No. 3). The coin shows a tower with battlements and a six-pointed star inside. The legend on the coin, REX GVIDO, makes a clear allusion to Guy de Lusignan, formerly king of Jerusalem and now ruler of the island (1192–1194). However, the same type of coin apparently continued to be minted under his successor Aimery I (1194–1205) as a 'type arrêsté' (Metcalf 1998:77–81). The coin was discovered in the mixed fill of the post mid-thirteenth century demolition phase of Building 1, together with fourteenth-century Mamluk *fals* and medieval pottery. However, similar coins apparently circulated on a small scale in both the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Frankish rural and urban sites throughout the kingdom.

A Sicilian denaro.— This silver wash coin was issued in the 1240s by Frederick II Hohenstaufen (1197–1250) as King of Sicily (No. 4; Grierson and Traviani 1998:664). The coin was struck in Brindisi, the chief mint serving the mainland part of the kingdom (Grierson and Traviani 1998:664). It was found in Building 1, amidst the ashes of a destruction layer dated securely by ^{14}C between the 1180s and 1250s. Interestingly, if the destruction of these buildings is related to the Kwarezmians raid of the faubourg in 1244, and not to its final destruction in 1266, the tentative dating of this coin (1247/1248), as suggested by Grierson and Travaini (1998:179–80), must be revised to the early 1240s.

Zangid and Ayyubid fulus

The excavations yielded one Zangid and five Ayyubid copper *fulus* dated between the second half of the twelfth and the first two decades of the thirteenth centuries.

Zangid fulus.— Two Zangid copper *fulus* of Nur-a-Din (AH 541–569/1146–1174 CE) were found in Building 1 (Nos. 5, 6). One was discovered in a floor that postdates the 1188 Ayyubid occupation, but antedates the destruction of the building sometime in the 1240s. The second was found in the subsequent post-1240 (Frankish period) destruction layer of the same building. These finds show that the common mid-twelfth century *fulus* continued to circulate quite prominently during the first half of the thirteenth century in Ayyubid as well as Frankish sites, a fact borne out also by evidence from other typical thirteenth-century Frankish sites like 'Atlit and Acre (Metcalf, Kool and Berman 1999:106–107; Syon, forthcoming).

Ayyubid fulus.— Two copper *fulus* date to the rule of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, first as nominal vassal of Al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl (Zangi) (AH 570–571/1174 CE; No. 7) and subsequently, as an independent ruler (1174–1193; No. 8). The latter specimen dates to the last year of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's reign (AH 589/1193 CE) and was discovered together with a typical assortment of Frankish wares in the remains of a wall possibly dismantled during the 1240s Crusader reoccupation of Building 1.

Two other *fulus* date to the early thirteenth-century reign of Al-'Ādil I Abū Bakr Sayf al-Dīn (AH 596–615/1200–1218 CE; Nos. 9, 10). These Ayyubid copper *fulus*—one of which could be dated to AH 609/1212 CE—also came from a context identified with the Frankish re-occupation of Safed (1244–1266).[3] These finds are further proof that twelfth and thirteenth century Ayyubid *fulus* continued to circulate in both Ayyubid and Frankish sites during the thirteenth century (Metcalf, Kool and Berman 1999:106–107; Kool 2007:155).

Mamluk Coppers

Eight Mamluk *fulus*, dating to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were recovered from fill layers which postdate the demolition of the medieval quarter, and from mixed contexts of medieval and modern finds. Four are of Baybars I (AH 658–676/1260–1277 CE; Nos. 11–14) and one is of his successor Qala'un (678–689/1279–1290 CE; No. 15). The remaining three *fulus* (Nos. 16–18) date to the rules of the fourteenth-century Mamluk rulers Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad I (AH 709–741/1310–1341 CE) and Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan Nāṣir ad-Dīn (AH 755–762/1354–1360 CE).

CATALOGUE[i]

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
					LATIN KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM **Amaury I, 1163–1174 CE, *Denier***						
1*	19	106-1	0.83	17	AMAL[RICV]S REX. Cross pattée	[✠DE]IERVSALEM Church of the Resurrection		Jerusalem	Cf. Metcalf 1995: Nos. 169–174	One stop behind REX(?)	108870
					FRANCE **Robert I, Lord of Celles 1178–1189 CE (or later), *Denier***						
2*	47	130-1	0.52	18	✠ROB'DE C[E]LE Cross pattée, annulets in 1st and 4th quarters	Stylized profile of the chinonais-blésois		Berry	Cf. Metcalf 1995: No. 570 Poey d'Avant 1858:295, No. 2056		108881
					KINGDOM OF CYPRUS **Guy de Lusignan, 1192–1194 and/or Aimery I, 1194–1205 CE, *Denier***						
3*	37	120-24	0.27	14	✠[DE CIPRO] Cross pattée, annulet in 2nd quarter	[REX GVIDO] Tower with battlement, six-pointed star inside		Cyprus	Cf. Metcalf 1998:202, No. 4	Clipped	108879
					KINGDOM OF SICILY **Frederick II Hohenstaufen, 1197–1250 CE, *Denier***						
4*	21	107-1	0.83	17	✠ROM INPERATOR. In center: FR; above suspension Mark	✠IERSL.TSICIL'. Cross with six-pointed star in 2nd and 3rd quarters	1243–48	Brindisi	Traviani and Grierson 1998:664, Nos. 565–567	Copper-based heart with silver washed surface	108871
					ZANGIDS **Atabegs of Dimashq** **Al-Adil Mahmūd b. Zangī AH 541–569/1146–1174 CE, *Fals***						
5*	23	108-1	5.02	25	In center: الملك العادل	Arabesque flower, up and below. In center: محمود بن زنكي	Undated	Dimashq	Hennequin 1985:302, No. 575		108872
6	38	121-1	5.14	22	Same	Same	Same	Same	Same		108883

[i] Coin Nos. 1–4 are silver *billon denier*; the remainder of the coins are copper *fals*. The coins are arranged chronologically, according to coin-types. Coins bearing an asterisk appear in Fig. 1.

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
					AYYŪBIDS **Al-Nāṣir I Yūsuf Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn** **As Nominal Vassal of Al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl (Zangi)** **AH 570–571/1174 CE *Fals***						
7*	30/2	116-21	5.25	24	Inner dotted circle with floweret. Center: الملك الناصر \ يوسف	Inner dotted circle with floweret. Center: الملك الصالح \ اسمعيل	AH 571 (= 1174)	Same	Balog 1980:61, 11		108873
					SULTANATE of EGYPT **Al-Nāṣir I Yūsuf Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn** **AH 570–589/1174–1193 CE, *Fals***						
8*	42	125-1	5.47	23	Center within dotted circle: الملك \ الناصر	Center: يوسف \ بن ايوب Margin: تسع وتشين	AH 589 (= 1193)	Same	Balog 1980:94, 148		108880
					Al-'Ādil I Abū Bakr Sayf al-Dīn **AH 596–615/1200–1218 CE, *Fals***						
9*	59	139-1	4.98	23	Center: الملك العادل \ الدين Margin: بد مس و	Arabesque knot above and beneath legend. Center: [ابو بكر \ بن ايوب] Margin: … تسع …	AH 609 (= 1212)	Same	Balog 1980:136–137, 323		108882
10*	59	139-2	5.92	22	Center: الدين \ الملك العادل \ سيف	Arabesque knot above and beneath legend. Center: [ابو بكر \ بن ايوب]		Same	Balog 1980:136–137, 321–323		108884
					MAMLŪKS—The Bahrī line **Al-Zahir Baybars I Rukn ad-Dīn** **AH 658–676/1260–1277 CE, *Fals***						
11*	17	103-1	2.17	19	Center: الساطن \ Lion to r. الملك الظاهر \	Center: [رسو ل االة]الة محمد [..لا..] الا [الم		No mint	Balog 1964:106, 101b		108869
12*	30/2	116-22	2.30	20	Center: الساطن \ Lion to l. الملك الظاهر \	Center: رسو/ ل االة]اللة محمد ل/لاالة]		No mit	Balog 1964:106, 101 var.	Variant: lion to the left	108874

CATALOGUE (cont.)

Cat. No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	Notes	IAA No.
13*	37	120-21	3.22	19	Linear multilobe in circular line. Center: ز الساطن الملك الظاهر	Lion passant to left, facing, long tail swept up and forward, with knot toward the tip		No mint	Balog 1970:121, 103A		108876
14	1003	10005-2	2.93	20	Linear multilobe in circular line. Center: ز الساطن الملك	Same		Same	Same		109348
					Al-Mansūr Qalāwūn Sayf ad-Dīn (AH 678–689/1279–1290 CE), *Fals*						
15	1003	10005-1	1.22	18	Linear square in circle of dots	Linear square in circle of dots			Balog 1970:118, 138		109347
					Al-Nāsir Muhammad I Nāsir ad-Dīn, third reign (AH 709–741/1310–1341 CE), *Fals*						
16	30/2	116-23	0.25	–	Within circle: محمود	Illegible			Cf. Balog 1964:152, No. 230		108875
					Al-Nāsir Hasan Nāsir ad-Dīn, third reign (AH 755–762/1354–1360 CE), *Fals*						
17	37	120-22	1.25	14	Center: الد ين	Center: سبعما ية			Cf. Balog 1964:200, No. 373		108877
					MAMLŪKS 14th c. CE, *Fals*						
18	37	120-33	1.42	17	Obliterated	Obliterated					108878

NOTES

[1] I wish to thank Ariel Berman for his assistance in identifying two of the Mamluk coins; Lena Kupferschmidt, for cleaning the coins in the IAA metals laboratory; and Clara Amit, for photographing the coins.

[2] A fair number of these provenanced coins remain unpublished. Unpublished data forms part of my Ph.D. research on the circulation of Frankish-period money in the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. For a list of sites where these coins were found, see Kool 2013:49–59, Nos. 18, 43, 59, 101, 164, 215, 217, 219.

[3] The coins were discovered in a destruction layer in Building 1 that may date either to the 1240s or to 1266, together with the abovementioned *Amalricus denier* and the Hohenstaufen *denaro*.

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