

LEATHER FRAGMENTS FROM A TOMB IN THE BYZANTINE MONASTERY IN NAḤAL QIDRON, JERUSALEM

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Several pieces of leather were found among the bones in Loculi 1105 and 1106 in the southern burial chamber (L1104) in the eastern burial complex (see Zelinger and Barbé, this volume). They were identified as the soles of a pair of sandals or closed shoes (Fig. 1).

Four fragments were recovered from L1105 (B10266; IAA No. 2015-9220), two of which join together and belong to the front end of the sole with a slightly pointed toe (length 7 cm, width 1.5 cm at the edge and 5.25 cm at the widest point). Another fragment belongs to the heel (length 5 cm, width 3.8 cm), and the fourth fragment could not be joined, but is clearly from the same object. All these fragments have folded borders with small needle holes, which, according to their small size, were probably

sewn with linen thread. Linen threads were often used in the leather industry alongside leather thongs, which were commonly used to sew Roman sandals (Rosenthal-Heginbottom 2013:269; Veldmeijer 2014:5).

Numerous small fragments from the heel of a second sole, uncovered in L1106 (B10267, IAA No. 865825), were in much poorer condition and very fragile (largest fragment: length 7.3 cm, width 3.8 cm). As the measurements match the other sole, it would appear that this is the second sole of a pair.

Unfortunately, this burial complex was not excavated due to time constraints, but the excavators assume that the deceased were buried with their clothes due to the belief in the resurrection of the body (Barbé and Zelinger 2005).



Fig. 1. A pair of leather soles: L1106, B10267 (upper); L1105, B10266 (lower).

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