

COINS FROM TEL MIKHAL (TEL MICHAL)

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Thirty-eight coins were found in the 1996 excavation on the northern hill of Tel Mikhal in three areas.¹ Only five were unidentifiable.

ISOLATED COINS

Fifteen silver coins were found in three contiguous loci in Area B1. It is likely that most, if not all of those coins, belonged originally to one hoard. Consequently, all of the coins from those loci are discussed below independently, and appear in a separate catalogue (see below, Cat. Nos. **B1–B15**).

Only two Hellenistic coins were discovered in Area A1. These Antiochus III coins (Cat. Nos. **A13**, **A14**) were found in close proximity to each other near Building 270. Their dating corresponds to the Hellenistic pottery, which includes a stamped amphora handle of the first half of the second century BCE (Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. **C1**).

Even if we exclude the likely hoarded coins from Area B1, most of the isolated, identified coins come from that area (10 of 33 coins, or 30%). Area B1 yielded mainly Persian-period coins. Five were of bronze. Three are of Alexander the Great (Cat. Nos. **A10**, **A11**, **B15**), the last one from the context of the probable hoard. The Alexander bronze (Cat. No. **A11**) was found in a well-preserved room (L512). One other was an autonomous bronze coin minted in Side (Cat. No. **A15**). This coin, roughly dated to the third century (Ariel 2000:35*, 47*), could be contemporary with the coins of Antiochus III from Area A. The last is a billon stray coin of the emperor Valerian I (253–260 CE; Cat. No. **A16**).

Two poorly-preserved bronzes were found in Area C1, one of Alexander the Great (Cat. No. **A12**), and another dating to the fourth century CE (Cat. No. **A17**).

Comparable Finds

A comparison with the Persian-period numismatic data from the 1977–1980 excavations at Tel Mikhal (Kindler 1989) shows that the numismatic profile is essentially the same, although the quantities are lower here. Regarding their dating, Kindler (1989:320) argued that his earliest coin could have been current in the time of Straton I (371/367–357/354). Concerning mints, Tyrian coins are generally more common than Sidonian issues in Israel, but in both excavations at Tel Mikhal, Sidonian coins outnumber Tyrian coins. On the tell the ratio of Sidonian to Tyrian coins is twelve to one; on the northern hill it is five to three. In contrast, Avigad noted only one fourth-century coin of Tyre in his excavations at Tel Mikhal (Avigad 1993:934). Nonetheless, the numismatic finds clearly support historical evidence that Tel Mikhal was part of a Sidonian enclave on the central Palestinian coast (Kindler 1989:320).

The 1977–1980 excavations yielded five Greco-Persian (= Philisto-Arabian) coins (Kindler 1989:323, Nos. 14–18). In comparison, the 1996 excavations on the northern hill produced one specimen (Cat. No. **A9**). One other type, the “lioness’ head *en face* obverse” dating to the third quarter of the fourth century, was found on the northern hill (Cat. No. **A8**), but none of this type were identified by Kindler on the tell.

We will first discuss the isolated coins chronologically, and then turn to the Persian-

period hoard and possible reasons for its deposition. Finally, we will focus on the coins naming Alexander the Great.

Chronology of the Northern Hill Based on Numismatic Evidence

The predominance of the Persian-period coins is an indicator of the chronology of these excavation areas. The earliest coin is a 1/24 *sheqel* of Tyre (Cat. No. **A1**), dating between 390 and 377 according to Betlyon (1982:42, No. 8; 45, No. 15). Since Betlyon's date postdates the coin in the British Museum (*BMC Phoen.*, c. 450–400), his dating should be viewed as provisional. Much new numismatic material has been found recently (e.g., Elayi and Elayi 1990; Elayi and Le Maire 1990; Elayi 1992) and a new typology is a *desideratum*. Four coins are of Straton I (Cat. Nos. **A2–A6**; 371/367–357/354; Elayi and Elayi 1993). One dates to the third quarter of the fourth century (Cat. No. **A8**; see also Elayi and Elayi 1998a:137–138, who date the type from the first half of the fourth century until 333/332). The latest coins are the three isolated bronzes of Alexander the Great (Cat. Nos. **A10, A11, B15**).

Several other sites were destroyed at the same time. al-Mina, noted below for its thirty-six Tarsus coins, is one (Smith 1942:98). It seems likely that the occupation of Stratum B (Persian level) at Tel Shiqmona on the coast north of Tel Mikhal came to an end in the period of the Diadochoi. This was one of two possible interpretations of the stratum by the excavator (Elgavish 1968:47), and the one adopted later by Stern (1982:255). All of the coins found in Stratum B at Tel Shiqmona appear to be non-posthumous bronzes of Alexander. One (Elgavish 1968:54, No. 181) dated to the end of his reign (327–323), while the date of another (Elgavish 1968:56, No. 199) is unclear. Elayi and Elayi (1998b:114, n. 20) suggest it may be a coin of Tyre, and as such, dated to 333–323. The last two (Elgavish 1968:56, Nos. 200–201) are unclear.

Beyond the historical reference to the razing of Yafo south of Tel Mikhal, the numismatic

evidence from there too is indicative of the events of 312–311. In addition to the one coin noted below in Table 1 (No. 9) fourteen other coins associated with Alexander the Great were excavated at Yafo. Twelve were noted by Meir (2000:127, Table 2). One other coin derived from excavations of P.L.O. Guy (IAA 3978), and one from excavations by M. Peilstöcker (IAA 82372). Four coins of the fifteen that could be more precisely identified were also posthumous.

Between Yafo and Tel Mikhal lies Tell Qasile. Here, Mazar relied on a coin of Alexander the Great to date the destruction of Stratum VI to the late fourth century (Mazar 1975:87; the coin is apparently Kindler 1990–1993:44, either No. 4 or No. 5; see Table 1).

On the basis of the isolated finds and the hoard material from Tel Mikhal, the entire group of Persian-period coins probably derive from one phase of occupation, which began as late as the second quarter of the fourth century. The events of 312–311 provide a reasonable end-date for the occupation at the northern hill. Herzog (1989:113) had already suggested that Persian Tel Mikhal was not destroyed by Alexander the Great, but rather continued to exist until the end of the fourth century. Here we suggest that the war between Ptolemy I and Antigonos a decade earlier marks the end of the Persian stratum.

Later Periods

A comparison between the numismatic finds from the 1977–1980 excavations with those of 1996 show fewer parallels for the Ptolemaic period and later. Kindler described the Ptolemaic period coins from Tel Mikhal as being the richest. Yet, in the 1996 excavations, coins from this period are absent. In contrast, eight Hellenistic coins were found, six were of Antiochus III and two of autonomous Side (Kindler 1989:327, Nos. 117–122; 328, Nos. 110–111). These are good parallels to the coins from the 1996 excavation, where two issues of Antiochus III from Area A1, and the contemporary autonomous coin of Side from Area B1, were found.

The coins of Side bearing the pomegranate reverse are generally dated to the third–second centuries, but the ones found in the Levant possibly belong exclusively to the third century (see Ariel 2000:35*, 47*). They are generally worn. Not only was Hellenistic Side a center for recruiting mercenaries (Nollé 1993:57), but the Sidetan mint was an important part of the currency of the Seleucids (Harl 1991:283). In light of the relatively large numbers of Sidetan bronzes found in the region, it appears that a not insignificant number of Seleucid mercenaries were recruited in Side. It is possible that they made their way to the Levant with some local Sidetan bronze currency still in their pockets. The numismatic evidence indicates that only during the Seleucid period the northern hill may have been partly reoccupied.

On the north hill of the tell, little numismatic evidence dated after the third century CE was discovered. Both excavations yielded one poorly identified fourth century CE stray coin find (Kindler 1989:331, No. 161, and Cat. No. A17). Three Mamluk-period coins were reported by Kindler (1989:331–332, Nos. 162–164), but only one was found in the 1996 excavations (Cat. No. A18).

PERSIAN-PERIOD HOARD

Eleven Athenian-style tetradrachms were found in adjacent Loci 464, 473 and 509.² These rare coins were not found together in a vessel, but the excavators justifiably considered that they were part of a dispersed hoard. Three of the other four coins (Cat. Nos. B12–14) belonging to these same loci possibly also belonged to the hoard. Hence all of the coins from those three loci have been included in a separate catalogue (prefixed by the letter B). All but one of the eleven tetradrachms weigh over 16 g. These Athenian-style tetradrachms have a range of possible dates. Imitations of the late fifth-century coins are either contemporary, or date to the first half of the fourth century. One may be authentic, dating to the last half of the fifth century (449–412; see Starr 1970:74). Yet

another is an imitation that dates not earlier than the mid-fourth century. The three small silver coins (average 0.63 g; Cat. Nos. B12–14) are contemporary to the tetradrachms' date. These date to the rule of Straton I (371/367–357/354). The last coin in Catalogue B, a posthumous bronze coin of Alexander the Great (Cat. No. B15), is sufficiently later in date than the others to be intrusive to the hoard.

Each of the tetradrachms of the hoard was struck from a different pair of dies. No *graffiti* were found. The typology of the Athenian series is one of the most-extensively researched in ancient numismatics (see most recently Kroll 1993). The prototypes for these coins have been studied by Kraay and Moorey (1968), Starr (1970) and Kraay (1976). Our identification of those coins as imitations (with the help of J.H. Kroll) is discussed below.

The prototypes for the imitations found in the Tel Mikhal Athenian tetradrachm hoard bear elements that first appear between 480 and 449: the depiction of the palmette (in Kraay and Moorey 1968's terminology, the tendril) on the bowl of Athena's helmet; the sloping of the rear leg of the owl; and the rise of the wing to meet the edge of the die. The coins also imitate elements characteristic of the period after 449 (Starr 1970:65), such as the large lettering of the inscription ΑΘΕ; the left leg of the Greek *alpha* is shortened because of the protrusion to the right of the head of the owl; and the cross-bar of the *alpha* is not horizontal but slanted.

According to Starr (1970:71), Athenian coins after 449 are characterized by a nine o'clock die position. Robinson agrees that this die position certainly was found in the fourth century (Robinson 1947:117–118), but points out that it is not clear when the establishment of this position began (see also Starr 1970:71, n. 24). This practice may be as late as the second half of that century (Visona 1998:42). It is interesting to note that all tetradrachms of this hoard have the nine o'clock die position.

While the circulation of contemporary imitations of these tetradrachms has long been recognized, recent scholarship (Kroll 1993:6–7;

Elayi and Elayi 1994:26, n. 2, for further references) has raised the possibility that there are numerous imitations among what were previously viewed as slightly less well-executed Athenian tetradrachms. While there is no doubt that this was prevalent among the fourth-century profiled eye types, it is now clear that fifth-century tetradrachms were imitated in the fourth century as well (Kroll 1993:7 and references on p. 6, n. 16). In 1989, similar coins to those in this hoard were found in a hoard from Syria (Price 1993:34, Nos. 23–36). They were discovered together with profiled eye types of the fourth century, and those which also bear Phoenician or demotic inscriptions. Rather than view these as earlier Athenian issues, Price described them as fourth-century imitations struck at Near Eastern mints.

Concerning their minting, Kraay (1976:73) suggested the imitations began after the output of the Athenian mint diminished in 413. The production centers of imitation Athenian-style tetradrachms have been associated as far south as the Arabian peninsula (e.g., Seyrig 1986) and Egypt (e.g., Lauritsen 1984), and as far north as Syria (e.g., Milne 1937). One may even consider that all of the major cities of the Levant, to a greater or lesser extent, had a role in imitating Athenian tetradrachms (Elayi and Sapin 2000:170; see Nicolet-Pierre 2000:118). In general, it is difficult to determine which coins are imitations and which are not. Even more problematic is to point to the place of origin of those tetradrachms that have been identified as imitations.

None of the Tel Mikhal coins were clearly imitation tetradrachms having additional symbols, or silver-plated bronzes, or carried the distinctly later profiled eye distinctive of those from the fourth century. However, a number of details clearly define these coins as imitations. On **B1** the upper and lower lines of the eye look straight and parallel, a feature that does not appear on the prototypes. The palmettes appear more like leaves. On **B2** the eye is too small, and the ear is oddly depicted. The palmette on the helmet on **B3** resembles a *pi*-style ornament.

The ear and eye are depicted incorrectly. On the reverse of **B3** the owl is squat and stubby, with a heavily-fringed head. These three coins appear to date to the mid- or third quarter of the fourth century (Kroll, pers. comm.). Yet, **B4** appears to be authentic, but the incomplete *theta* (missing its central dot) raises some doubt. **B6** is clearly an imitation, as indicated by its narrow neck and narrow, pointed chin. The Athena on **B11** has its mouth open, identifying it as an imitation. Finally, **B7** and **B8** bear the “enlarged eye” which Kroll (1993:7) views as Egyptian (for other Egyptian imitations in the region, see: Nicolet-Pierre 2000:119).

The association of the Athenian tetradrachms and the Sidonian coins from the same context as one hoard is the most likely reconstruction of the archaeological and numismatic data. Support comes from the overall quantities of Sidonian silver found in the excavations. Only three other Persian-period coins were found in these loci, all were of silver. In the rest of the Persian-period coins from the excavations the proportion of silver to bronze was less than two-thirds, suggesting that the appearance of the three Sidonian one-sixteenth *sheqels* is anomalous, and can best be explained as having belonged to a hoard.

Additional support for including the minute silver coins from Sidon (Cat. Nos. **B12–14**) in the hoard comes from the appearance of minute coins and tetradrachms in other hoards from the region. A hoard reportedly found in Phoenicia (or Palestine; *IGCH*:204, No. 1491 = Nicolet-Pierre 2000:111, No. 2) was identified by Meshorer as containing one Athenian tetradrachm dated to the fifth century, three pieces of one-sixteenth *sheqels* of Sidon (the same type as Cat. Nos. **B12–14**), and four Philisto-Arabian coins. The hoard—now in the collection of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem—was reexamined.³ The report in the *IGCH* is correct regarding the Philisto-Arabian coins and Sidonian one-sixteenth *sheqels*. Of the latter, all bore the *ayin* on the reverse, and only one of the three had traces of the *bet* on the obverse. Most

important for our purposes, there is no reason to believe that the Athenian tetradrachm from this hoard is an imitation. It belongs without doubt to the last half of the fifth century (449–412).

Another hoard found in excavations at al-Mina also deserves attention (Robinson 1937:182–190; *IGCH*:203, No. 1487 = Elayi and Elayi 1993:198–200, No. XL = Nicolet-Pierre 2000:111, No. 3). This hoard was deposited in a ceramic vessel, and found in a stratum (Level III) dating from 430 to 375. Though there is some inconsistency with the numbers of coins reported, a minimum of seven minute silver coins of Aradus were found together with at least eighteen tetradrachms of the owl type. Robinson (1937:186) dated one of the tetradrachms to c. 450, while the others were divided into three classes according to the degree to which he suspected them of being imitations. He considered some of these as imitations contemporary to the Aradus coins, i.e., in the first quarter of the fourth century. Thus, the date for the coins of Aradus in the first quarter of the fourth century led Robinson to assume that the coins were deposited near the end of the stratum, c. 375. Elayi and Elayi (1993:199–200) noted that the Athenian coins in the hoard, for which photos were published, are unworn and suggested that those coins were bona fide coins minted in Athens, antedating the appearance of the coins of Aradus. Furthermore, they proposed that the hoard was deposited well before the end of the stratum in 375 (Elayi and Elayi 1993:200).⁴

A poorly-documented hoard found “near Gaza” (*CH* 8:4, No. 29 = Nicolet-Pierre 2000:114, No. 13) contained both tetradrachms and obols. Why would one find a hoard with large silver coins as well as minute silver? As Robinson interprets the finds from al-Mina, the Athenian tetradrachms provided silver for large transactions, while the locally minted obols and other fractions provided the small change for minor transactions (Robinson 1937:183).

In sum, in terms of the size of the hoard and its composition of large Athenian with small Phoenician denominations, these three hoards (*IGCH*: No. 1491 hoard, the second al-Mina

hoard, and this Tel Mikhal hoard) have much in common. The low level of wear on most of the Athenian tetradrachms in the Tel Mikhal hoard warrants our viewing them as close in date to the latest coin, apparently **B3**, dated not earlier than the mid-fourth century. This makes them contemporaneous with the Sidonian coins of Straton I, which date between 371 and 357/354. Neither **B3** nor **B12** (the best preserved of the Sidonian coins) show signs of wear. We therefore date the deposition of the hoard close to the mid-fourth century BCE.

This implies that the possibly authentic **B4** remained in circulation for a minimum of about sixty years, assuming the mass minting of the Athenian tetradrachms ends in 412. The same range should also apply to the *IGCH*: No. 1491 hoard, whose lone Athenian tetradrachm appears authentic. In the al-Mina hoard Robinson dated one coin to c. 450, yielding a range of between fifty and seventy-five years for the dates of the coins in that hoard. Thus, a range of sixty years is tenable in the case of these hoards. Interestingly, neither **B4** nor the Athenian tetradrachm in the *IGCH*: No. 1491 hoard show signs of wear. Unlike Elayi and Elayi (1993:200) regarding the al-Mina hoard, we cannot contend that both hoards were deposited well before 375. This is another reason that there must remain some doubt *vis-à-vis* the Athenian mint designation and early date of these coins.

ATHENIAN COIN FINDS IN THE REGION

Since Stern’s comprehensive work on the Persian period in the land of Israel (Stern 1982:218) a significant number of additional Athenian coins and Persian-period coins from other mints have been found. Table 1 presents the Athenian numismatic material from the Persian period: published coins, as well as unpublished excavated material.⁵ I provide in Table 1 both published dates as well as revised dates for coins (cf. Starr 1970:64).⁶

It should be no surprise that many stray Athenian tetradrachms are dated between 449

Table 1. Isolated Athenian-Style Coins Found in Western Palestine*

No.	Site	Published Date (BCE)	Revised Date (BCE)	Reg. Nos.	Comments	Reference
1	Abu Shusheh	Earlier part of 4th c.		IAA 54611	Drachm, silver-plated bronze	Lambert 1932:5, No. 3
2	‘Atlit (1932)	479–399	449–412	IAA 72576		Metcalf, Kool and Berman 1999:138, No. 363
3	‘Azeka, Tel	526–430; end 6th–beg. 5th c.			Decadrachm	Bliss 1902:26; Barkay 1984–1985:5, No. 5
4	Bet She’an	Mid-4th c.			1989–1990 exc., since lost	Berman 1996:47
5	Bethsaida	c. 450	449–412	IAA 95579		Kindler 1999:252, No. 1
6	Bet Z̤ur	Early 5th c.	449–412	IAA 51361	Chiseled	Sellers 1933:71, No. 1
7	Bet Z̤ur	Before 430	Philisto-Arabian		Published as “imitation”	Sellers 1933:71, No. 2
8	Dalton		449–412	IAA 8598	In hoard of Tyrian staters	<i>HA</i> 1971a:2
9	Dor, Tel	5th c.	449–412		“several” coins; one illustrated	Stern 1994:193, ill. 126
10	‘Eleg, H.	527–430	449–412	IAA 83440		Barkay 2000:377, No. 1
11	‘Eleg, H.	5th–4th c.	449–412, or later	IAA 83441	Silver-plated bronze	Barkay 2000:377, No. 2
11a	‘Eleg, H.	4th c.		Reg. No. 10409		Unpublished; with permission of Y. Hirschfeld and A. Berman
12	Elyakhin	4th c.			Perhaps Pseudo-Athenian	Deutsch and Heltzer 1997:20, No. 15
13	‘Etri, H.	Mid-4th c.	4th c.			Zissu and Ganor 2001:102*
14	‘Etri, H.	Mid-4th c.	4th c.			Zissu and Ganor 2001:102*
15	Farma, Tel	450–430	449–412			Cahn 1984:48, No. 20
16	Gaza	450–430	5th–4th c.	IM 760	Silver-plated bronze	Cahn 1984:47, No. 12
17	Gerizim, Mount	390–295	4th c.	K 27207	Silver-plated bronze	Magen 2000:114
17a	Giv’at Sha’ul (Tell el-Ful)	550–520		IAA 79218		Unpublished; with permission of D.A. Sklar-Parnes and S. Gibson
18	Ha-Bonim		4th c.	IAA 91986	Silver-plated bronze; chisel mark	Unpublished; with permission of H. Barbé, Y. Lerer and M. Avissar
19	Hoja, Kh.		4th c.	IAA 73437	Drachm	Unpublished; with permission of Y. Huster and R. Kool

* A coin from eastern Palestine is from Tell Jawa (Daviau 1992:153). Elayi and Lemaire 1995:180 view that coin as an apparent imitation. Nicolet-Pierre 2000:109, n. 11, suggests it may be a modern forgery.

Table 1. Isolated Athenian-Style Coins Found in Western Palestine (Cont.)

No.	Site	Published Date (BCE)	Revised Date (BCE)	Reg. Nos.	Comments	Reference
20	Jerusalem	555–546	483–480 (Seltman Group E)	IAA 61524	Published as Paeonia mint	Meshorer 1961:185
21	Jerusalem	End 6th c.	c. 480 (Seltman Group N)	Kadman 6985	Half coin	Cahn 1984:46, No. 6
22	Jerusalem [Mount Zion?]	End 6th c.; 450–430			Different dates: are Barkay and Cahn referring to different coins?	Barkay 1984–1985:4, No. 3; Cahn 1984:48, No. 14
23	Jerusalem	450–430		IM 762	Drachm	Cahn 1984:48, No. 15
24	Jerusalem, Kh. er-Ras		5th–4th c.	IAA 33175	Obol	Elayi and Sapin 2000:177, n. 183; with permission of A. Onn and G. Bijovsky
25	Lakhish, Tel	400	4th c.	IAA 51362	Profiled eye	Kirkman 1953:412
26	Lakhish, Tel	400	4th c.	IAA 51363	Drachm, profiled eye	Kirkman 1953:412
27	Lakhish, Tel	400				Kirkman 1953:412
28	Megiddo	Mid-5th c.; Albright 1940:550, “about 450 BC”	449–412			Schumacher 1908, ii: 87; iii: Pl. 49
29	Nasbeh, Tell en-	406–393	449–412, or later	IAA 51354	Chiseled bronze, Bellinger: “imitation, possibly silvered”	Mc Cown 1947:174, and 275, No. 1
30	Qastra, Ḥ.		4th c.	IAA 78976	Silver-plated bronze; pierced	Sokolov forthcoming; with permission of Z. Yeivin, G. Finkielsztejn and H. Sokolov
31	Rajjum, Kh.		449–412	IAA 64573		Bijovsky 2002:82, No. 1
32	Rosh Ha-‘Ayin		4th c.	IAA 85121	Profiled eye	Unpublished; with permission of R. Avner and G. Bijovsky
33	Samaria	5th c.	449–412		Early 550s (Starr Group IV)	Reisner, Fisher and Lyons 1924:254. No. 1
34	Samaria	Before 330	Early 550s (Starr Group IV)	IAA 51356	(Cahn: Seltman Group F)	Kirkman 1957:49
35	Samaria	Before 330	449–412?	IAA 51357		Kirkman 1957:49
36	Samaria	Before 330	4th c.	IAA 51360	Bronze core only	Kirkman 1957:49
37	Samaria	c. 425	5th–4th c.		Drachm, pierced	Fulco and Zayadine 1981:202, No. 1
38	Wadi ed-Dāliyah	359–336			Profiled eye	Cross 1974:58, No. 1
39	Zeror, Tel		5th–4th c.	IAA 72253	Fragment	Unpublished; with permission of R. Badhi and R. Kool

and 412. The period after 449 was one of mass production (“millions upon millions”; Starr 1970:70). Starr conservatively estimated that at least 90% of the Athenian tetradrachms, issued after 480 and before 412, were issued after 449 (Starr 1970:64). Since the quantities were so great, no internal typology in that period may be meaningful (Starr 1970:74). The Tel Mikhal hoard falls in the period after this mass minting took place.

No hoards of only Athenian coins of the fifth century are known in the region of Palestine. In fact, no substantial hoards of fifth-century coins from any mint have been found in the region (Mildenberg 1994:65). The hoard uncovered closest to Palestine, and composed solely of early Athenian tetradrachms is *IGCH*:203, No. 1484 (100 coins) from Marash in Anatolia. However, we do find four or possibly five hoards in Palestine containing Athenian-type coins of the fourth century. Two are reported to have come from Nablus (*IGCH*:205, No. 1504 = Nicolet-Pierre 2000:112, No. 7; Visona 1998). The third is reported from Ramallah (*CH* 8:8, No. 59 = Nicolet-Pierre 2000:114, No. 14), and the fourth is the hoard from “near Gaza” (cited above). The fifth is thought to come from either Phoenicia or Palestine (*IGCH*:206, No. 1505). These, and other hoards from the Near East, are often viewed as having both bona fide Athenian coins and eastern imitations together (e.g., Price 1993:33–34; *CH* 8:15, No. 126; Nicolet-Pierre 2000).

Nicolet-Pierre’s summary of nineteen hoards from *aber nahara* succinctly summarizes the characteristics of hoards, such as the Tel Mikhal Athenian-style tetradrachm hoard. The predominant group of hoards from the first quarter of the fourth century BCE “at the earliest” have these characteristics (Nicolet-Pierre 2000:117):

- (1) Authentic Athenian tetradrachms of 449–412 appear;
- (2) They are complete and unchiseled;

- (3) They are in the distinct minority;
- (4) They appear together with imitations;
- (5) Many cases are difficult to distinguish between the authentic pieces and their imitations.

The loci, where this dispersed coin hoard at Tel Mikhal was discovered, was certainly contaminated. Eight of the eleven tetradrachms found in L464 may be understood as a fill above, and later than, the floor. In that same locus a coin dating to the period of the Diadochoi (Cat. No. **B15**), and a second-century stamped Rhodian amphora handle (Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. **C2**) were found. While some of these Athenian tetradrachms may possibly have been circulating as late as the time of the Diadochoi, there is little chance that all were circulating then as a group. Moreover, it is extremely unlikely that they were still in use in the second century. Therefore, the evidence suggests that a mid-fourth century floor associated with the hoard was disturbed by activity in the second century, when the stamped handle was deposited there.

To what event may we associate the deposit of this hoard? The mid-fourth century date accords well with a number of historical events: the reassertion of control over the region by Ataxerxes III around 355; the unsuccessful Persian attempt to conquer Egypt around 351/350 and its repercussions; the so-called Tennes revolt or the impact of its failure. Although Roll and Tal (1999:211, and n. 33) relate a number of destructions of settlements in the Sharon Plain to a mid-fourth century date, Stern (1982:255) did not ascribe the destruction of Stratum VII of the 1977–1980 excavations at Tel Mikhal to the repercussions following the failed Tennes revolt in his summary of the Persian period. Whether or not the deposition of this hoard may be ascribed with certainty to a particular historical event, it is clear that its mid-fourth century date and the destruction of Stratum VII at Tel Mikhal certainly coincides with one of them.

POSTHUMOUS COINS OF ALEXANDER
THE GREAT

The 1977–1980 excavations yielded thirteen coins of Alexander the Great dating from his lifetime and posthumous: a hoard with five coins (Kindler 1989:323, Nos. 20–24) and eight isolated bronzes (Kindler 1989:324, Nos. 27–34). Kindler identified only one of these as a posthumous issue (Kindler 1989:324, No. 34), which Price precisely dated to c. 328–320 (Price 1991:420, No. 3318). In the 1996 excavations two posthumous bronzes of Alexander were found (Cat. Nos. **A10, B15**).

Relying on Price's study, I reexamined the coins from the earlier excavations at Tel Mikhal. It is particularly interesting that of the eight bronzes, the date of one (Kindler's Cat. No. 29; IAA 31198) could be refined as another posthumous bronze minted in Tarsus (see Price 1991:378, No. 3061).

Posthumous Bronzes from Tarsus

Examining other excavations in the Levant I found a total of ten bronzes of Alexander from the same mint (Table 2). Another unprovenanced bronze of Alexander minted in Tarsus (327–323; Price 1991:375, No. 3028) was in the now-defunct Nahariyya Municipal Museum (IAA 95790).

Although the Tel Shiqmona coin (Table 2: No. 5) was not previously understood as having been minted in Tarsus, its mint-marks point to such an identification. Another coin from the region, from Ras Shamra (Stucky 1972:9) was thought to have been minted in Tarsus, but this is apparently an error. Table 2 shows that this group of bronzes of Alexander from the Tarsus mint, and particularly the posthumous bronzes, had a wide circulation on the Levantine coast.

I next reexamined Alexander the Great's silver coins excavated in 1977–1980. One of the two non-hoarded silver Alexanders (Kindler

**Table 2. Posthumous Alexander III Bronzes Found in the Levant from the Mint of Tarsus,
According to Findspot**

No.	Site	Quantity	Published Date	Date from Price 1991	Cat. No. In Price 1991	IAA No.	Reference
1	Al-Mina	36		327–317	3028–29, 3058, 3061, 3063		Robinson 1937:192
2	Curium	1	332–316	323–317	3063		Cox 1959:4, No. 12
3	Dura Europos	1	320–319	323–317	Cf. 3058		Bellinger 1949:1, No. 3; 108
4	Bassit	2		323–317	3058 (No. 19)		Le Rider 1986:396, Nos. 19–20 (No. 20 not in Price)
5	Tel Shiqmona	1	336–323	327–323	3029		Elgavish 1968:54, No. 181
6	Tel Mikhal (1977–1980)	1	336–323	323–317	3061	31198	Kindler 1989:324, No. 29
7	Tel Mikhal (1996)	2		323–317	3063	84273, 84279	
8	Tell Qasile	1	336–322	327–323	3028	97543	Kindler 1990–1993:44, No. 5
9	Yafo	1		323–317	Cf. 3061	47375	Excavations of Kaplan (1958). Noted (erroneously as Macedonia) in Meir 2000:127, Table 2.
10	Ashqelon coast	1		327–323	3028	91943	Unpublished (Kibbutz Bet Alpha collection)

1989:321; No. 25, IAA 31194) is a posthumous tetradrachm (323–315) from Salamis (Price 1991:392, No. 3151A). Although not as common as coins from the Tarsus mint in the southern Levant, coins of Alexander from the Salamis mint are known.⁷ More importantly, the tetradrachm hoard of the 1977–1980 excavations may now be redated to the period of the Diadochoi (Table 3; corrections are in italics).

Taking into account these revisions for the late Persian-period coins of the 1977–1980 excavations on the tell, the two identified coins from the 1996 excavations dating to the period of the Diadochoi indeed match the rest of the numismatic material.

Proposed Refinement of the Date for the End of the Persian-Period Strata at Tel Mikhal

The period after the death of Alexander was beset with much military activity in the region as recorded in I *Macc.* 1:9 that Alexander's generals, the Diadochoi, "brought much evil upon the world" (Goldstein 1976:189). According to Bar-Kochva there were three invasions to the region during the period of the Diadochoi: 320, 312–311, and 302/1 (Bar-Kochva 1996:76–77). In late 312 (Wheatley 1998:261) Ptolemy I conquered Gaza and controlled the entire region. A few months later, in 311, when Ptolemy I retreated before the advance of Antigonus, he razed the "most important cities": 'Akko, Yafo, Samaria, and Gaza. The military activity of 312–311 and its proximity to Tel Mikhal may have been the reason for the concealment of the Tel Mikhal

Alexander tetradrachm hoard (the latest coin dates to 314/313). The date of the latest coin in the hoard also corresponds to the dates of the other latest posthumous Alexander bronze coins from the site.

Hoard Evidence in the Region

Most of the Alexander hoards found in the region have also been dated to the period of the Diadochoi. These are:

- (1) Sidon (Saida) (Westermarck 1979/80:22–35), dated 323–320 (= *CH* 8:22, No. 190);
- (2) Lebanon (*CH* 8:24, No. 207), dated c. 315;
- (3) Khirbat el-Kerak (Tel Bet Yerah; Baramki 1944; *IGCH*:207, No. 1510), dated shortly after 319 (Baramki 1944:86), and c. 323–320 (Price 1991:51);
- (4) Galilee (Spaer 1965–1966; *IGCH*:208, No. 1520), dated to the last years of the fourth century (Spaer 1965–1966:2) and c. 300 (*IGCH*);
- (5) Tel Zippor (Rahmani 1966; *IGCH*:207, No. 1514), dated shortly after 311 (Rahmani 1966:134) and 310–305 (Price 1991:56);
- (6) Jericho (Price 1990–1991), dated after 311 (Price dated the last hoard to before 305; Price 1990–1991:25).

Although at least one hoard found in Ashqelon postdates the Diadochoi period (*CH* 8:24, No. 207, dated 305–290), the evidence of hoards reinforces the impression that the region was in upheaval at that time. In addition to the Tel Mikhal Alexander tetradrachm hoard, the events of 312–311 appear to provide a reasonable end-date for the Lebanon, Tel Zippor and Jericho hoards—half of the six noted above.

Table 3. The 1977–1980 Tel Mikhal Alexander III Hoard

No.	Kindler 1989 Cat. No.	Kindler 1989 Date	Price 1991 Date	Price 1991 Mint	Price 1991 Cat. No.	IAA No.
1 ⁸	20	336–323	<i>317–311</i>	'Babylon'	3704	31189
2	21	336–323	<i>317–311</i>	'Babylon'	3704	31190
3	22	336–323	<i>328–320</i>	Aradus	3332	31191
4	23	336–323	<i>314/313</i>	Akko	3286	31192
5	24	336–323	<i>325–323</i>	'Babylon'	3608	31193

CATALOGUE

Isolated Coins

A1. Reg. No. 1466, L231, IAA 84265. Fig. 1.
Autonomous Tyre, 390–377 BCE.

Obv.: Dolphin r.

Rev.: Owl r., with crook and flail.

Æ 1/24 stater, ↓, 0.76 g, 9 mm.

BMC Phoen.:227, No. 4; Betlyon 1982:42, No. 8; 45, No. 15.

A2. Reg. No. 4396, L489, IAA 84277.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.; field above galley off flan.

Rev.: King of Persia slaying lion; between them: ∅.

Æ 1/16 sheqel, ↑, 0.64 g, 10 mm.

Cf. *BMC Phoen.*:146, No. 36; Cf. Betlyon 1982:12, No. 27.

A3. Reg. No. 4071, L999, IAA 84281.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.

Rev.: King of Persia slaying [lion].

Æ 1/16 sheqel, ↖, 0.47 g, 10 mm.

Cf. *BMC Phoen.*:146, No. 34; Cf. Betlyon 1982:11, No. 26.

A4. Reg. No. 1459, L2, IAA 84266.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.; below, two waves.

Rev.: King of Persia and charioteer on chariot l.

Æ, ↓, 4.98 g, 15 × 17 mm.

BMC Phoen.:147, No. 46; Betlyon 1982:13, No. 29.

A5. Reg. No. 4138, L434, IAA 84270. Fig. 1.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.

Rev.: King of Persia and charioteer on chariot l.

Æ, ↑, 2.46 g, 14 mm. Small module.

Cf. *BMC Phoen.*:147, No. 46; Betlyon 1982:13, No. 29.

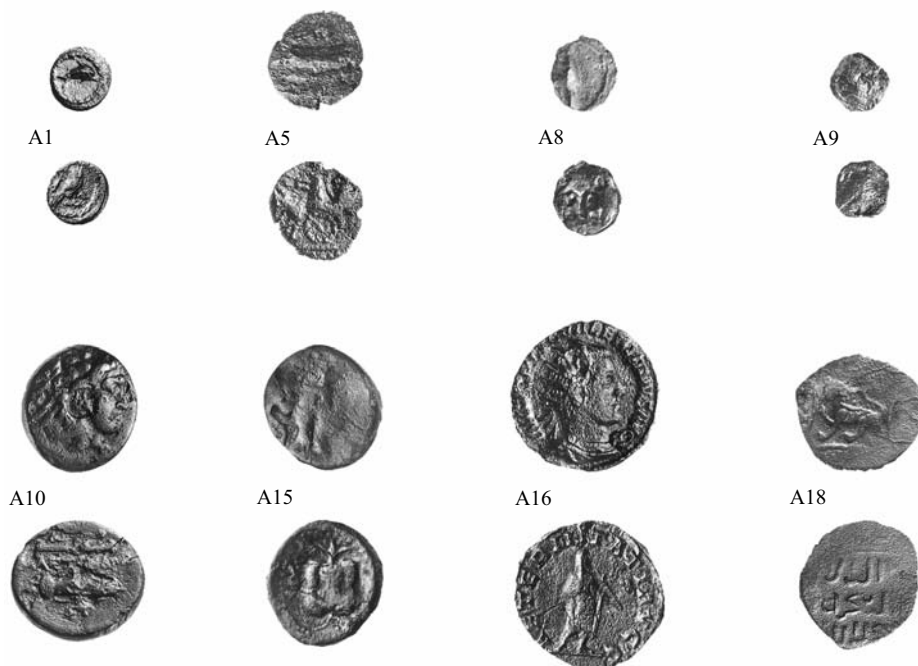


Fig. 1.

A6. Reg. No. 9003, L999, IAA 84285.
Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.

Rev.: King of Persia and charioteer on chariot l.

Æ, ↑, 3.95 g, 16 mm.

BMC Phoen.:147, No. 46; Betlyon 1982:13, No. 29.

A7. Reg. No. 4398, L489, IAA 84278.
Autonomous Tyre, fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Hippocamp r.

Rev.: Owl r.?

Æ, ↑?, 0.46 g, 9 mm.

Kindler 1967:323, No. 10.

A8. Reg. No. 1075, L139, IAA 84264. Fig. 1.
Autonomous Tyre, c. 350–325 BCE.

Obv.: Murex.

Rev.: Lioness' head *en face*, drool(?) falling from both sides of mouth.

Æ, ↓, 0.63 g, 10 mm.

Cf. Ariel 1993:126–128.

A9. Reg. No. 4411, L485, IAA 84276. Fig. 1.
Philisto-Arabian, fifth–fourth centuries BCE.

Obv.: Head r.?

Rev.: Owl r., head facing.

Æ *obol*, →?, 0.56 g, 9 mm.

A10. Reg. No. 4505, L504, IAA 84279. Fig. 1.
Alexander the Great (posthumous), Tarsus, 323–317 BCE.

Obv.: Beardless head of Heracles r. Unclear round countermark.

Rev.: Quiver and bow; above, caduceus? and Θ; below: □

Æ, ←, 5.65 g, 17 mm.

Price 1991:378, No. 3063.

A11. Reg. No. 4521, L515, IAA 84280.
Alexander the Great (during his life and possibly posthumous).

Obv.: Beardless head of Heracles r.

Rev.: Quiver and bow.

Æ, ↑, 2.93 g, 14 mm.

A12. Reg. No. 7024, L703, IAA 84282.

Alexander the Great (during his life and possibly posthumous).

Rev.: Quiver.

Æ, 6.59 g, 19 mm.

A13. Reg. No. 1473, L244, IAA 84267.
Antiochus III (223–187 BCE), Antioch.

Obv.: Head of Apollo r.

Rev.: Apollo standing l.

Æ, ↑, 2.93 g, 14 mm.

Cf. Houghton and Spaer 1998:90, No. 621.

A14. Reg. No. 1436, L245, IAA 84268.
Antiochus III (223–187 BCE), Antioch.

Obv.: Laureate head of Apollo r.

Rev.: [ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ/ΑΝ]ΤΙΟΧ[ΟΥ] Apollo stg. l.; in extended r., arrow, l. rests on bow.

Æ, ↗, 1.34 g, 12 mm.

Cf. Houghton and Spaer 1998:86, No. 590.

A15. Reg. No. 4062, L421, IAA 84269. Fig. 1.
Autonomous Side, third century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head r.

Rev.: Pomegranate, on horizontal branch; to l.: ☽ (?).

Æ, ↑, 3.67 g, 17 mm.

BMC Pamphylia:144, No. 8. *SNG PFPS*: Nos. 473–475.

A16. Reg. No. 9004, L999, IAA 84286. Fig. 1.
Valerian I, Antioch, 254–255 CE.

Obv.: IMP C P LIC VALERIANVS AVG Radiate, draped bust r.

Rev.: AETERNITATI AVGG Saturn r., holding scythe.

Æ-Æ *antoninianus*, ↓, 3.85 g, 21 mm.

RIC 5/1:54, No. 210; *MIR* 36,43,44: No. 1559.

A17. Reg. No. 7027, L710, IAA 84283.
Fourth century CE.

Obv.: Bust r.

Rev.: Two figures?

Æ, ↖, 1.92 g, 15 mm.

A18. Reg. No. 9000, L999, IAA 84284. Fig. 1.
Al-Zahir Rukn al-din Baybars I (1260–1277 CE), Dimashq.

Obv.: Lion to l. with concave-sided linear square.

Rev.: لا الله الا / الله محمد / رسول الله

Æ fals, 1.73 g, 19 mm.

Balog 1964:105, No. 100.

Coins from Floor (L473 + L509) and from Fill Above (L464)

B1. Reg. No. 4301, L464, IAA 81274. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous Athens, first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ←, 16.29 g, 24 mm.

B2. Reg. No. 4305, L464, IAA 81277. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous Athens, first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ←, 16.09 g, 23 mm.

B3. Reg. No. 4306, L464, IAA 81278. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous Athens, mid or third quarter fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ←, 16.25 g, 23 mm.

B4. Reg. No. 4302, L464, IAA 81275. Fig. 2.
Autonomous Athens? late fifth century BCE?

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ←, 16.66 g, 24 mm.

B5. Reg. No. 4329, L473, IAA 81283. Fig. 2.
Autonomous Athens or imitation, late fifth–first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ←, 16.28 g, 24 mm.

B6. Reg. No. 4510, L509, IAA 81284. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous Athens, first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ↙, 16.20 g, 24 mm.

B7. Reg. No. 4303, L464, IAA 81276. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous Athens, first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ←, 16.71 g, 22 × 24 mm.

B8. Reg. No. 4309, L464, IAA 81280. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous Athens, first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig. The letter Θ has a more or less horizontal line through it (this may be a die imperfection).

Æ tetradrachm, ↙, 16.85 g, 24 mm.

B9. Reg. No. 4311, L464, IAA 81281. Fig. 2.
Autonomous Athens or imitation, late fifth–first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

Rev.: AΘE owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

Æ tetradrachm, ↙, 16.24 g, 22 × 24 mm.
In the plate, on the reverse, there appears a circle-like symbol close to the owl in the right field. In fact this is an area of corrosion that was removed after the photography. There is nothing in the right field of the reverse besides the inscription.

B10. Reg. No. 4372, L473, IAA 81282. Fig. 2.
Autonomous Athens or imitation, late fifth–first half fourth century BCE.

Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.
Rev.: ΑΘΕ owl r., head facing; in upper left,
olive sprig.
AR tetradrachm, √, 14.37 g, 22 × 24 mm.

B11. Reg. No. 4307, L464, IAA 81279. Fig. 2.
Imitation of late fifth century BCE autonomous
Athens, first half of fourth century BCE.
Obv.: Helmeted head of Athena r.

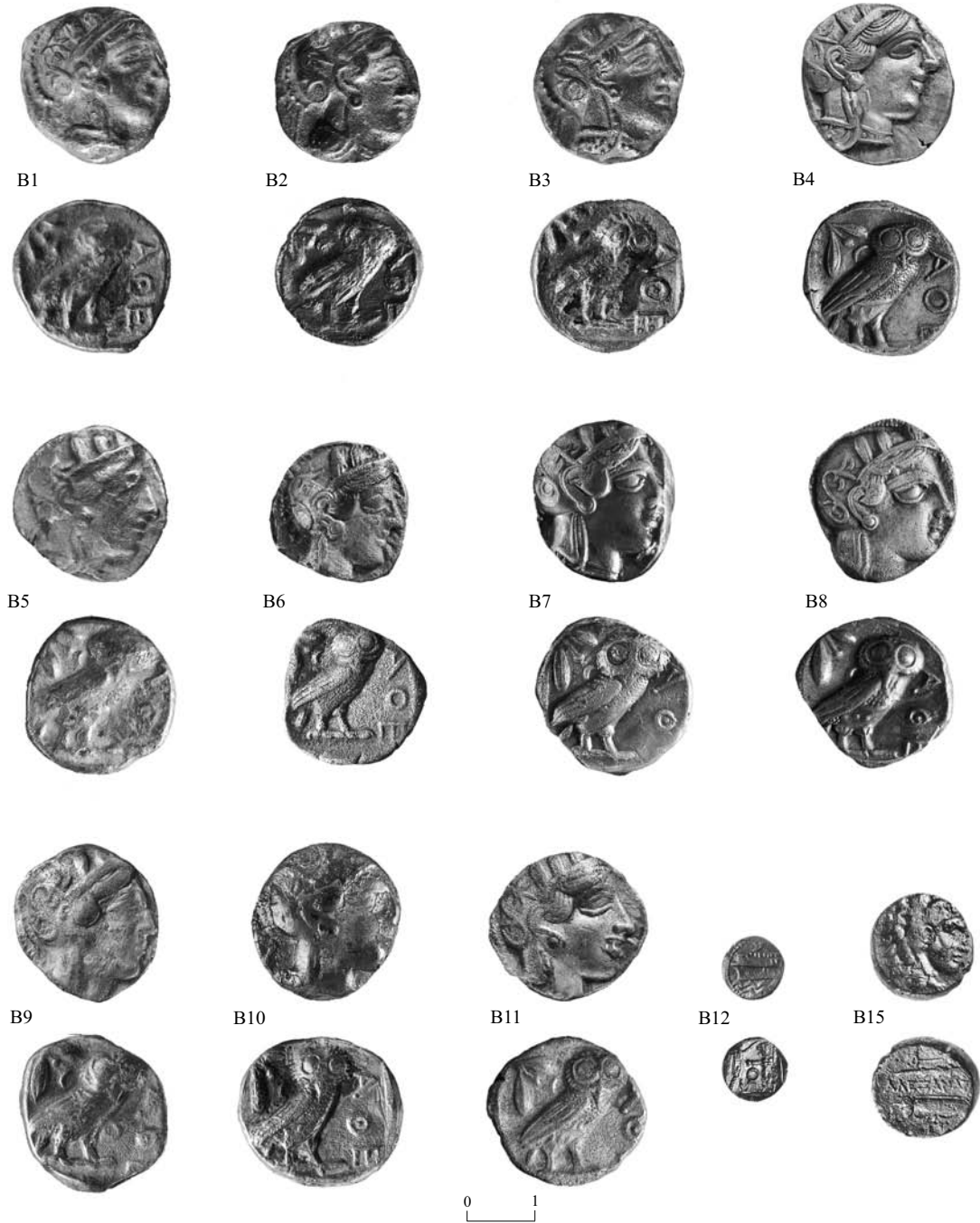


Fig. 2.

Rev.: ΑΘ[Ε] owl r., head facing; in upper left, olive sprig.

ΑΡ *tetradrachm*, ↓, 16.41 g, 22 × 24 mm.

B12. Reg. No. 4299, L464, IAA 84272. Fig. 2.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.; above: ϣ.

Rev.: King of Persia slaying lion; between them: ο.

ΑΡ1/16 *sheqel*, ←, 0.69 g, 10 mm.

BMC Phoen.:146, No. 36; Betlyon 1982:12, No. 27.

B13. Reg. No. 4330, L473, IAA 84274.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley l.; field above galley off flan.

Rev.: King of Persia slaying lion; between them: ο.

ΑΡ 1/16 *sheqel*, ↑, 0.53 g, 9 mm.

Cf. *BMC Phoen.*:146, No. 36; Cf. Betlyon 1982:12, No. 27.

B14. Reg. No. 4354, L473, IAA 84275.

Straton I (371/367–357/354 BCE), Sidon.

Obv.: War-galley.

Rev.: King of Persia slaying lion?

ΑΡ 1/16 *sheqel*, ↑?, 0.66 g, 11 mm.

Cf. *BMC Phoen.*:146, No. 34; Cf. Betlyon 1982:11, No. 26.

B15. Reg. No. 4304, L464, IAA 84273, Fig. 2.

Alexander the Great (posthumous), Tarsus, 323–317 BCE.

Obv.: Beardless head of Heracles r.

Rev.: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡ[ΟΥ] Quiver and bow; above, caduceus and Θ; below: ΕΥ.

ΑΕ, ←, 5.62 g, 16 mm.

Price 1991:378, No. 3063.

NOTES

¹ The coins were cleaned by Marie Levine and Ella Altmann of the IAA laboratories, and were photographed by Tsila Sagiv and Sandu Mendrea of the IAA photography studio. The one Mamluk coin was kindly identified by Ariel Berman. My thanks to Robert Kool for reading and correcting an early draft of this report. Unless otherwise noted all dates in the text are BCE.

² I am particularly indebted to John H. Kroll for his expert comments on the tetradrachms. His notes written in September 1999, based upon photographs of the coins, proved invaluable.

³ My thanks to Dan Barag for his assistance in viewing this hoard.

⁴ The third al-Mina hoard (Robinson 1937:186–188; Elayi and Elayi 1993:200–201, No. XLI; *IGCH*:203, No. 1488) has the same general distribution of types (26 Athenian type tetradrachms, six obols of Aradus, nine sixteenth *sheqels* of Sidon, and jewellery) as the second al-Mina hoard. It nevertheless is different, in other ways, in its character. Many coins have been tested and/or countermarked. This third al-Mina hoard is more likely to have been a bullion hoard.

⁵ Because of the lack of detail, one find of “Athenian tetradrachms”, found in *Hishulei Ha-Carmel*, was not included in the table (*HA* 1971b:36).

⁶ Elayi and Sapin 2000:177 note Athenian-style coins thought to be of local provenance. Three are coins in the Israel Museum (contains only two: Nos. 14 and 23) and one Athenian-style tetradrachm is in the Hecht Museum, Haifa (Meshorer 1998:35, No. 3). In neither case are the coins specified in their original publications as being of local provenance. Only Table 3, Nos. 14 and 23, from the Israel Museum, are clearly provenanced and are included.

⁷ Two are known: (1) from excavations in Yafo in 1992 (IAA 61393; Cf. Price 1991:394, No. 3161; our thanks to Etti Brand for permission to note this coin here), and (2) from Ḥorbat Be’er Sheva’, surveyed by Mordecai Aviam in the mid-1980s (IAA 96099; Price 1991:394, No. 3159). Both are posthumous.

⁸ A coin of the same type is published from excavations in nearby Tel Dor (Stern 1994:256, ill. 177). It too is not identified as posthumous.

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