

ḤAME YO'AV: COINS AND A LEAD SEAL

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Twenty-two coins, of which 14 were identified, and one double-faced lead seal bearing impressions were unearthed during the salvage excavation at Ḥame Yo'av (see Avner 2022).¹ The coins came from all three excavated areas: Area A, a wine press with collecting vats (L123, L124) and tombs that were later built into them (L131, L133; see Avner 2022: Figs. 2, 6, 9, 10); Area B, a series of squares with no architectural remains; and Area C, with remains of a badly preserved building. The seal was found without any noteworthy stratigraphic context.

THE COINS

The 14 identified coins (see Catalogue) span a continuous period, starting in the Byzantine period (fourth–fifth centuries CE) and ending in the early Abbasid period (early ninth century CE). They corroborate the dating provided by the pottery and the glass from the site—the fifth–eighth centuries CE (see Avner 2022; Vincenz 2022).

All the coins are bronze. The earliest coins are small *nummi* which circulated in massive quantities from the reign of Constantine the Great up to the fifth century CE (Nos. 1, 2). Most of the coins consist of the heavier *folles* and half *folles* introduced under Anastasius I in 496 CE (Nos. 3–9). They all date from the sixth century CE, ranging from the reign of Justinian I (527–565 CE; No. 3) to that of Maurice (592/3 CE; No. 6), and were issued in the Empire's main active mints—Constantinople, Thessalonica, Cyzicus, Nicomedia and Antioch.

Other coins were minted under the Rashidun or early Umayyad rule (647–696 CE) and consist of coarse imitations of the former Byzantine coppers (Nos. 10–12). After the caliph 'Abd al-Malik's monetary reforms in 696 CE, these coin types were replaced by a new aniconic type: a *fulus* copper with Arabic inscriptions. Of these, the excavation yielded a single specimen, minted in Ṭabariya (No. 13; Fig. 1). The latest coin is a barely readable Abbasid-period *fals* dated to the early Abbasid rule (No. 14; 750–830 CE).

¹ The coins and seal were cleaned at the IAA metallurgical laboratory headed by Lena Kupershmid and were photographed by Clara Amit of the IAA photography studio. The article was edited by Shoshana Israeli.

CATALOGUE¹

No.	Locus	Basket	Weight (g)	Diam. (mm)	Axis	Obverse	Reverse	Date (CE)	Mint	Reference	IAA No.
BYZANTINE EMPIRE											
Fourth–Fifth centuries CE											
1	120	1074	1.86	12		Bust to r.	illegible				147240
2	330	3113	1.09	11		Pearl-diademed bust to r.	illegible				147248
Justinian (527–565 CE)—<i>folles</i>											
3	204	2027	14.9	30	↓	DN IVSTINI- [ANVS PP] Bust to r.	M ; to l. And r. stars; above cross; below A; in exergue: +THEUP+	527–532	Antioch	<i>MIBE</i> 2000:143, No. 126	147243
4	314	3051	6.36	22	↓	Bust facing, wearing helmet with plume and diadem	K ; to l. A/N/N/O; to r. date: XXX/&II; below TES	563/4	Thessalonica	<i>DOC</i> 1:108, No. 104	147246
Justin II (565–578 CE)—<i>folles</i>											
5	200	2006	8.56	28	↓	Justin and Sophia seated on double throne	M ; to r. date: &; above cross; below B; in exergue: NIKO	570/1	Nicomedia	<i>DOC</i> 1:228, No. 96b1	147242
Maurice (582–602 CE)—<i>folles</i>											
6	W14	3107	4.24	21	↑	Bust facing	K ; to l., [A]/N/N/O; to r. date: XII; above cross; below B	592/3	Cyzicus	<i>MIBEC</i> : 158, No. 90D	147249
Byzantine (first half of the Sixth century CE)—<i>folles</i>											
7	320	3045	16.1	30	↑	Bust to r.	M ; in exergue: [C]O[N]		Constantinople		147247
8	304	3007	5.3	22 × 27		Bust?	M ; to l.: [A/N]/N/O				147245
9	Surface	1027	9	30	↑	Bust?	m	Late 6th c.			147251
UMAYYAD											
Pre-Reform (647–696 CE)—<i>folles</i>											
10	Surface	1025	2.56	22	↓	Emperor facing holding gl. cruciger and long staff	m ; above cross; to r., E				147250
11	Surface	2030	2.56	22	↓	Emperor facing	m				147253
12	300	3016	2.72	19		Illegible	illegible				147244
Post-Reform (696–750 CE)—<i>fals</i>											
13*	Surface	1079	3.62	20 × 22	→	In center: لا إله إلا الله وحدة	In center: محمد رسول الله		Tabariya	<i>SNAT</i> 1993: No. 343	147252
ABBASID											
(750–830 CE)—<i>fals</i>											
14	128	1088	1.63	14		Illegible	Illegible				147241

¹ The item bearing an asterisk is illustrated in Fig. 1.



Fig. 1. Coin No. 13.



Fig. 2. The lead seal.

THE LEAD SEAL

The double-faced lead seal dates from the Byzantine period (second half of the sixth century CE; Topsoil, Basket 1026, IAA No. 2021–1533). It is small (Fig. 2) and preserves incuse-shaped surfaces on both sides, created when the lead flan was pressed in the *boulloterion*, a pincher-like device for impressing seals. Part of the seal's rim is broken, revealing what seems to have been a horizontal string channel; both entrances are blocked. Such seals were used mainly for sealing documents (Vandorpe 1994:24–28), in contrast to seals attached to goods or money purses (Koutava-Delivoria 1990). No remains of the cord with which the seal was attached, nor its document, survived.

A monogram surrounding a cross appears on each side of the seal. Cruciform-type monograms became popular after the mid-530s, and often mention the name and title or occupation of the seal's owner (Metcalf 2004:399, 450, No. 686, and see therein a similar seal). The cruciform monogram on the obverse was partially deciphered: the letters K, A, T(?) appear on three of the four angles of the cross. These letters could refer to the Greek name KONSTANTINOS, the personal name of the seal's owner in a genitive case (Konstantinou; "belonging to Konstantinos"). The reverse monogram consists of four letters at the cross's extremities, read from left clockwise: C(?), OY, B, A. These letters remain at present un-deciphered; they may allude to the office of the seal's owner or perhaps to a second name.

Konstantinos (?), sixth century CE.

Surface find, Basket No. 1026, IAA 2021-1533.

Dark-grayish patina. Part of a protrusion is still visible. Blocked channel entrances (12 and 6 o'clock).

Obv.: Cross monogram; from left clockwise: K, A, T(?)

Rev.: Cross monogram; from left clockwise: C(?), OY, B, A

5.98 g, 17 × 20 mm.

Cf. Metcalf 2004:450, Nos. 686.

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