

CHAPTER 14

GREEK COINAGES OF PALESTINE

OREN TAL

UNDER THE ACHAEMENIDS (538–332 B.C.)

The Coinage of Philistia

The earliest phase of the monetary phenomenon in Palestine (late sixth to early fifth centuries B.C.) is witnessed by the presence of Greek Archaic silver coins and later in the mid-fifth century B.C. by proper Athenian issues and their imitations. The coinage of Philistia (the so-called Philisto-Arabian coins), namely the “municipal” issues of the cities of Ashdod (fig. 14.1), Ashkelon (Ascalon; fig. 14.2), and Gaza (fig. 14.3), emerged in the second half of the fifth century and continued to be minted in the fourth century B.C. up to the end of the Achaemenid rule over Palestine (Gitler and Tal 2006a). In fact, the coinage of Philistia represents the most significant phase in the early monetary development of Palestine, as the region of Philistia is the first to witness the transition from a bullion to a coin economy. It is thus in Persian-period Philistia where the development of the metal economy of Palestine from *Hacksilber* to coins (Archaic and Athenian) and a proper local monetary economy began. Philistia’s early coinage was probably confined to the “large” silver (and some silver-plated) *šql* denomination weighing 14.32 g on average (customarily referred to as a “tetradrachm”). By the fourth century B.C., a proper monetary economy is evident in the Philistian coinage for each coin type is normally produced in three different denominations: the *rb’ šql* or simply *rb’* (with an average weight of 3.58 g [1/4 of Philistian *šql*]), customarily referred to as a “drachm,”

the *m'h* (which comes to 0.60 g on average [1/24 of Philistian *šql*]), customarily referred to as an “obol,” and the half *m'h* (which comes to 0.30 g in average [1/48 of Philistian *šql*]), customarily referred to as “hemiobol” (Tal 2007: 21–22). To date some 350 Philistian coin types are known, that is, coins bearing different motifs regardless of their denomination. The coins’ motifs reflect contemporary fashions, foreign influences, and broad local imagery. Philistian coins show the name of the minting authorities, that is, Ashdod (*šdd*—with ‘ as a pictograph of a bull’s head, or in abbreviated forms ‘*d*, ‘*š*, and ‘*šd*) written in Aramaic; Ashkelon (‘*n* or ‘ alone) written in Phoenician; and Gaza (‘*zh*, or in abbreviated forms ‘*z*, ‘*z*, or ‘ alone, and *m* (denoting Marnas—Gaza’s primary deity) all are normally written in lapidary Aramaic, but most depictions of the letter ‘ (as a full circle) are actually Phoenician script. There are also coins with isolated or two-three (Aramaic) letters whose meaning is uncertain, but one should bear in mind that most of the Philistian coins do not carry inscriptions or dates. They are defined as Philistian on the basis of circulation, fabric, metrology, and especially iconography. The iconography of the Philistian coinage was influenced by western (Greek, eastern Greek, and southern Anatolian), eastern (Phoenician and Achaemenid in the broad sense of the term), and Egyptian sources. In fact, Philistian coinage is one of the most variable artistic numismatic evidence known from Palestine (and beyond). However, the most striking influence on the Philistian coinage is notably Athenian. The people of Philistia observed these foreign motifs and frequently adopted and adapted them to local use.

The Coinage of Judah (Jerusalem)

At present around 20 Persian-period *yhd* coin types (as reference for coins of the same type but not of the same denomination) have been documented (fig. 14.4). The abbreviated toponym *yhd* was used to identify both province (*medinta*) of



Fig. 14.1



Fig. 14.2



Fig. 14.3

Judah and the city Jerusalem as its capital (*birta*). The total number of coin types is in any case relatively small when compared to the contemporary coinages of Samaria and Philistia. Jerusalem struck small silver coins bearing the abbreviated geographical name of the province *yhd* (and less frequently in full *yhwd*) but sometimes bearing the legends of personal names and titles *ywhnn hkwhn*, *yhwdh*, *yhzqyh hphh*, *yhzqyh*, in Persian (and early Hellenistic) times. Most of these coins (with the exception of the renowned British Museum *yhd/w* “drachm” [Meshorer 2001, no. 1; see however in this respect Gitler and Tal 2006a: 70, 230] and three *yhd* coins of 2.72 g, 2.70 g, and 2.22 g), have two weight groupings, with average weights of 0.48 g and 0.26 g. The coins of these groupings are erroneously yet customarily referred to as “obols” and “hemio bols,” rather than the *grh*, that is, 1/24 of Judahite *šql* of 11.4 g, and half *grh*, that is, 1/48 Judahite *šql* (see in this respect Ronen 2003–2006; Tal 2007: 19–20). There are also smaller fractions. Stylistically, the coins can be identified as Athenian-styled issues, where normally a depiction of the head of Athena appears on the obverse and the owl and olive spray, together with the paleo-Hebrew (or Aramaic) legend *yhd* (or *yhwd*) on the reverse (see Meshorer 2001, nos. 2–14; 20–23), or Judahite-styled issues, where more varied divinities, humans, animals, and floral motif depictions are found (see Meshorer 2001, nos. 15–19; 24–28). These coins have been extensively studied ever since they were first defined as Jewish coins by Sukenik (1934). The most relevant subsequent publications are those by Spaer (1977), Mildenberg (1979, 1994, 1996), Rappaport (1981), Barag (1993), Machinist (1994), Goldman (2000), Ronen (1998), Meshorer (2001), Gerson (2001), and Fontanille (2008). The *yhd* coins’ chronology is debated; the Persian period coinage of Judah is the subject of numerous studies. There is a consensus that minting began in Judah sometime in the fourth century B.C., but also a debate over the chronological development of the coins, that is, with regard to the date of each type for the undated coins, and those bearing personal names and titles can hardly be attributed to known historical figures (see discussion in Gitler and Lorber 2008: 61–65). It seems that the beginning of Judahite coin minting should better be understood against the Achaemenid imperial policy and the reorganization of the southern frontier of the Fifth Persian Satrapy once domination over Egypt came to an end, in around 400–343 B.C. At this time Judah’s administrative importance increased as it became a new “border province” of the Achaemenid empire (see in this respect Fantalkin and Tal 2006: 180–181).



Fig. 14.4

The Coinage of Samaria

In 1982, Ya'akov Meshorer included four Samaritan coins in supplement I of his monograph *Ancient Jewish Coinage I*. In the contexts of their 1991 publication, Meshorer and Shraga Qedar were able to gather 106 different types (1991; see also Machinist 1994). This publication actually involves 334 coins, which were part of

the “Samaria hoard” (CH 9.413—“Samaria, before 1990”), and integrated into a general conspectus of the coinage of Samaria, including some of the coins from the “Nablus Hoard” (IGCH 1504). Of the 334 small denominations of the Samaria hoard, 182 coins were attributed to Samaria itself and 66 are Athenian-style imitations. They later published twice as many types as had appeared in their previous study, a corpus of 224 Samaritan coins (Meshorer and Qedar 1999; fig. 14.5). As opposed to Philistian coin type terminology, Meshorer and Qedar termed “types” coins of the same type but of a different denomination. Since 1999 about 60 new coins have appeared on the antiquities market (Gitler and Tal 2006b; Ronen 2007 and others yet unpublished at the Israel Museum collection) and in excavations (Mount Gerizim: Magen 2007: 210–211, fig. 29; Gan Šoreq: D. T. Ariel, personal communication). To date, some 200 “types” are known. Samaria struck silver (and some silver-plated) coins erroneously yet customarily referred to as “drachms,” “obols,” “hemiobols,” and smaller fractions, rather than the *rb’ šqln* (or simply *rb’*, average weight 3.63 g), *m’n*, that is, 1/24 of Samaritan *šql* (average weight 0.61 g), and half *m’n*, that is, 1/48 of Samaritan *šql* (average weight 0.31 g). There are also smaller fractions (Tal 2007: 20). The most common denominations in the Samaritan coinage are the *m’n* and half *m’n*. Like Philistian coins (above), Samaritan coins have a great variety of types, yet most of them were struck on *m’n* and half *m’n*; the *rb’ šqln* are much less frequent. The earliest coin type is subjectively dated to around 372 B.C., and minting continued, albeit intermittently, until the Macedonian conquest (Meshorer and Qedar 1999: 71). Several Samaritan coins show the geographical name of the province, that is, *šmryn* in full or abbreviated as *šmry*, *šmrn*, *šmr*, *šm*, *šn*, or just as *š*, written in Aramaic. Samaritan coins show also a variety of private names; these probably refer to Samaritan governors and possibly prefects (both are written in Aramaic) named in the contemporaneous historical and epigraphic sources (see e.g. Eshel 2007). The personal names of Achaemenid satraps may also be assumed, and these are normally written in Greek (when they appear without additional names in Aramaic). It should be noted that most of the Samaritan coins do not bear inscriptions. They are defined as Samaritan on the basis of circulation, fabric, metrology, and especially iconography. The main artistic influence of the Samaritan coinage is categorically Achaemenid (or Phoenician that had its roots in Achaemenid art), and it can be safely deduced that more than half of the known Samaritan coin types show Achaemenid motifs and artistic influences. Other



Fig. 14.5



2x1

Fig. 14.6

scholars have discussed the Samaritan coinage from different perspectives (the most important of these works are Lemaire and Joannes 1994; Deutsch and Heltzer 1997; Bodzek 1999, 2000a, 2000b; Chaya 2000–2002; and general studies by Machinist 1994; Mildenberg 1996; and Gerson 2001).

The Coinage of Edom

A so far unknown group of peculiar Athenian-styled Palestinian coins was recently identified as Edomite coinage (Gitler, Tal, and van Alfen 2007). These coins—mainly *rb' šqln* (“drachms” of 4.0 g on average [$1/4$ of Edomite *šql*]; fig. 14.6) and also *m'n* (“obols” of 0.74 g on average)—were struck from worn obverse dies (i.e., dies damaged by prolonged use), which were then recut and repolished. As a result, the coins’ obverse in many cases is simply dome shaped, with no traces of Athena’s head or helmet being recognizable, whereas the reverse normally shows the owl, olive spray (and crescent) and legend AΘE in fair condition. The distribution of these coins suggests that they circulated in the boundaries of what we define as Edom in the later part of the Persian period (fourth century B.C.) and might well have been the silver money mentioned in several Edomite ostraca (Tal 2007: 17–19).

UNDER ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND THE DIADOCHI (332–301 B.C.)

The Coinage of Acco

The numismatic evidence from Acco in the Ptolemaic period is based on the assumption that it was a politically significant urban entity in Palestine. According to Newell, minting began immediately after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great and was almost continuous during the time of his successors (1916: 39–68; Price 1991: 405–407). Newell divided these coins into seven series, from 332 to 304 B.C., although Price dated the beginning of Alexandrian minting to 330 B.C. (1991: 408). Typically, they bear images of Greek deities; on the obverse is Heracles or



1x1

Fig. 14.7

Athena, and the reverse shows a seated Zeus holding an eagle in his right hand and in his left a scepter or Nike (fig. 14.7). The inscription usually appears on the right, vertically, and reads ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ, and on the left, the letters *‘ayin* and *kaph* in Phoenician script, and a local date, which began apparently in 346/345 B.C. (Newell 1916: 55–60; and especially Price 1991: 405–407). According to Newell and Price, the coins bear two sets of dates, one local and the other regnal. The latter denotes the years of Antigonus’s reign in Phoenicia, after which minting stopped in Acco (Newell 1916: 62–53; Price 1991: 407). According to Lemaire, Acco did not mint coins at all during this period. Rather these coins are to be attributed to Tyre and the Phoenician letters *‘ayin* and *kaph* should be seen as abbreviating the ruler, *‘Azimilik* (Lemaire 1991: 133–136). He based his assumption on bronze coins in which the Greek letters TY appear alongside the Phoenician letters. However, Price discounted Lemaire’s objections and argued that this was coincidental, since Greek letters could represent a name (Price 1991: 407).

The Coinage of Judah (Jerusalem)

Mildenberg (1979) was of the opinion that *yhzqyh*-type coins (without the Achaemenid title *phh*) should date to the “Macedonian period” (332–301 B.C.; fig. 14.8). Several studies were dedicated to these coin types (e.g. Bar-Kochva and Kindler 1996; Rahmani 1971 for a hoard of such coins; Spaer 1977). After the Greco-Macedonian conquest, the weight standard of the provincial coinage of Judah changed, when the *grh* and half *grh* were replaced by fractions of the obol on the Attic weight standard, with a modal weight of 0.19 g for the quarter obol (Ronen 2003–2006). Based on metrology, it was suggested that the coins bearing the personal name *yhzqyh hphh* should be attributed to the period of the Diadochi (after 312 B.C.) because of the use of an Attic weight standard (Ronen 1998: 125; for the types see Meshorer 2001, nos. 22–23; Fontanille and Lorber 2008 for a subtype). Gitler and Lorber, however, dated Meshorer (2001), nos. 14, 20–23, 25a, and 27–28 to the “Macedonian period” based on assumed Attic weight standards or other stylistic and epigraphic considerations (2008, table 1; fig. 14.9). Another “titled” coin, the *ywhnn hkwhn*, is customarily attributed to the Late Achaemenid period (Barag 1986–1987; Ronen 1998: 125; Fried 2003; for the type see Meshorer 2001, nos. 14, 20), but based on its actual weight, 0.16 g, it too used an Attic weight standard and probably belongs to this period, as may also be deduced from artistic similarities to the above (Gitler and Lorber 2008: 69, table 1).



4x1

Fig. 14.8



4x1

Fig. 14.9

UNDER THE PTOLEMIES (301–200/198 B.C.)

Ptolemaic Coins of Judah (Jerusalem)

The fact that Jerusalem was virtually the only mint of the Ptolemaic kingdom to strike silver fractions while the Lagids were promoting the use of bronze coinage with a similar range of values is of special interest. The first specimens of Ptolemaic *yhd* coinage were reported by Jeselsohn (1974). These coins, struck under Ptolemaic rule, reflect continuity with those issued in the Persian period, while showing links also with contemporaneous Ptolemaic coins (figs. 14.10–14.11). The principal motifs appearing on these coins—the portrait of the Ptolemaic ruler and the eagle—are accompanied by one of the legends *yhd*, *yhdh*, and *yhw dh* (the latter two are purely Hellenistic—Ptolemaic—pronunciations of the name of the



4x1

Fig. 14.10



4x1

Fig. 14.11

region, while the former two seem to be abbreviation of the latter). Attempts have been made to classify and date these series, and to establish their relation to the earlier coinage of the Judahite mint (Gitler and Lorber 2006). These issues show the clear influence of Ptolemaic iconography (Meshorer 2001, nos. 29–35; Gitler and Lorber 2006: group 5) and apparently date to the period around 301–261/260 B.C. (Gitler and Lorber 2006; Barag 1994–1999; Gerson 2000–2002). Regular precious metal production ceased at the other Syro-Phoenician mints in the sixth year of Ptolemy III. Accordingly, 241/240 B.C. may be the actual date at which the Jerusalem mint finally closed.

Other Royal Ptolemaic Coinages

Acco-Ptolemaïs, Iopé, and Gaza

Acco-Ptolemaïs, Iopé, and Gaza minted gold, silver, and bronze “monogrammed” royal coins under Ptolemy II and III (figs. 14.12–14.16). Ptolemy II’s dated series (261–247 B.C.) was probably related to these cities “foundation”/“refoundation”



1x1

Fig. 14.12



1x1

Fig. 14.13



1x1

Fig. 14.14



1x1

Fig. 14.15



1x1

Fig. 14.16

(see Tal 2011) in his twenty-fifth year, that is, 261/260 B.C. (see Svoronos 1904–1908, nos. 765–793, pl. 25: 2–23 [Acco-Ptolemaïs]; nos. 795–820, pl. 23: 1–20 [Iopé]; nos. 822–838, pl. 24: 1–17 [Gaza]; for the latter see Hoover 2007a: 63–70). It should be noted that Mørkholm (1980) reattributed Svoronos's nos. 794 (Iopé) and 821 (Gaza) to Ptolemy III, whereas Davesne (in Davesne and Le Rider 1989: 213 [nos. 5081–5085], 283), suggested a Cypriot mint for Svoronos's no. 794, based on observed die links. Interestingly, we may assume that in the same year, minting in Judah/Jerusalem ceased for political reasons (see above). Minting was resumed under Ptolemy III (see Svoronos 1904–1908, nos. 1034–1038, 1058–1060, pl. 32: 12–19 [Acco-Ptolemaïs]; nos. 1039–1044, 1055–1057, pls. 31: 22–28, passim, 32: 20–25 [Iopé]; nos. 1035, 1055–1057, pls. 31: 22–28, passim, 32: 26 [Gaza]). It seems that minting activity in Iopé and Gaza ceased under Ptolemy IV and was significantly reduced in Acco-Ptolemaïs, as only one gold coin type is known (Svoronos 1904–1908, no. 1187, pl. 43: 12). The similarity of the monogram of Ptolemaïs to that of Iopé makes it difficult to accept Svoronos's suggestion that minting by the city was resumed in the fifth year of Ptolemy V (Svoronos 1904–1908, no. 1291, pl. 44: 5; see also Mørkholm 1981: 5); and it is possible the city of Acco-Ptolemaïs never minted coins under this king. In any case, Iopé resumed minting coin in the fifth and sixth year of Ptolemy V and probably in connection with the Fifth Syrian War (Svoronos 1904–1908, no. 1291, pl. 44: 5; Mørkholm 1981: 5–6).

Dora and Ascalon

Minting in these two cities was sporadic under the Ptolemies and confined to individual rulers; Dora struck silver tetradrachms under Ptolemy V (fig. 14.17), like Ptolemaïs/Iopé (Svoronos 1904–1908, no. 1262, pl. 41: 23; and see Mørkholm 1981: 6); Ascalon struck silver tetradrachms in the third and fourth years of Ptolemy IV (Svoronos 1904–1908, no. 1188, pl. 36: 16; Seyrig 1950a: 5–6, no. 105; fig. 14.18). The political status of both cities in their respected time of minting was probably connected to their involvement in the Fourth and Fifth Syrian Wars, respectively, whether as a pocket of resistance or a base for Ptolemaic mercenaries who were paid in these coins.



1x1
Fig. 14.17



1x1
Fig. 14.18

Table 14.1 Ptolemaic coinages of Palestine

Ruler	Reign (B.C.)	Mint	Dating System	Material/Standard
Ptolemy I (Soter)	305–285	Jerusalem	Undated	Silver/Attic
Ptolemy II (Philadelphus)	285–247/246	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Iopé (Jaffa), Gaza, Jerusalem	Regnal	Gold, silver, bronze/ Ptolemaic- Phoenician
Ptolemy III (Euergetes)	247/246– 221/220	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Iopé (Jaffa), Gaza	Regnal	Gold, silver, bronze/ Ptolemaic- Phoenician
Ptolemy IV (Philopator)	221/220– 204/203	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon)	Regnal	Gold, silver/ Ptolemaic- Phoenician
Ptolemy V (Epiphanes)	204/203–(180)	Acco-Ptolemaïs (?), Dora (Dor), Iopé (Jaffa)	Regnal	Silver/Ptolemaic- Phoenician

UNDER THE SELEUCIDS (200/198–104/103 B.C.)

Royal Mints

Acco-Ptolemaïs

The beginning of the minting of coins during the Seleucid period has been summarized by Brett (1945), and its end, from the time of Demetrius II, by Newell (1939). Kadman subsequently devoted a monograph to Ptolemaïs's coins (Kadman 1961). A reassessment of its issues under Seleucid rule was the subject of a Ph.D. dissertation (Voulgaridis 2000: 8–265). Ptolemaïs began to mint coins apparently during the reign of Antiochus III in 198 B.C. (Houghton and Lorber 2002: 416–417, no. 1096). These coins are attributed to Ptolemaïs mainly because of the large number at sites in Palestine and the idea that politically Ptolemaïs was the most important city of Hellenistic Palestine. Minting resumed during the reign of Seleucus IV (Le Rider 1992; Houghton 1983, no. 771; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 928–929; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 23–24, nos. 1331–1332; fig. 14.19). It is possible that Ptolemaïs continued to strike coins similar to these during the reign of the young son of Seleucus IV, Antiochus (Houghton 1983, nos. 772–775; *SNG Israel I*: 136), but some scholars attribute these coins to his uncle, Antiochus IV, to 169/168 B.C. (Mørkholm 1966: 125–130;



1x1

Fig. 14.19

Spaer 1976), because of similar motifs (Houghton 1983, nos. 776–777; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 1100–1101; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 90–91, nos. 1472–1475; fig. 14.20). It seems, however, that the issues of Antiochus the Son are distinguishable from those of Antiochus IV by their control monograms. Ptolemaïs apparently also struck silver coins after 169/168 B.C. (Houghton 1983, nos. 778–784; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 1150–1155; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 89, no. 1476). During the time of Antiochus IV, bronze coins of various types were also struck (sometimes serrated) in various denominations (*SNG Israel I*, nos. 1102–1107; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 90–91, no. 1477–1478). Minting occurred also during the reign of Antiochus V (*SNG Israel I*, nos. 1252–1253; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 136–137, nos. 1581–1583). Minting in Ptolemaïs during the time of Demetrius I is not sufficiently clear. Brett published a tetradrachm from that time that he attributed to the city mint (1945, no. 18) and Bijovsky (1999; see also Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 181) agreed with other scholars in positing that the bronze coins bearing a portrait on the obverse and a standing goddess holding a scepter or torch on the reverse are from his reign and not from that of Demetrius II, and thus she ruled out any issue from the city during the first period of the reign of Demetrius II (such as *SNG Israel I*, nos. 1734–1737). During the time of Alexander I, Ptolemaïs struck silver tetradrachms (Houghton 1983, nos. 796–797; *SNG Israel I*, no. 1553; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 244, no. 1842), as was the case under Antiochus VI (Houghton 1983, nos. 798–799; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 331, no. 2022). During the reign of Tryphon, Ptolemaïs struck silver tetradrachms with his portrait on the obverse and an eagle standing on a thunderbolt on the reverse, with the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΤΡΥΦΩΝΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ next to the monogram of the city and the regnal year (Houghton 1983, no. 800; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 1841–1842; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 346, no. 2046; fig. 14.21). Doubts have been raised with regard to bronze coins attributed to the beginning of the reign of Demetrius II (145–138 B.C.; see above), but silver tetradrachms and didrachms were struck during his second period (130–125 B.C.; Houghton 1983, nos. 801–802; *SNG Israel I*, no. 2264–2265; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 432–433, nos. 2201–2202). Ptolemaïs continued to strike coins during the joint rule of Cleopatra Thea and her son Antiochus VIII (Houghton 1983, nos. 803–809; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2471–2482; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 467, 478–480, nos. 2258, 2271–2272, 2274; fig. 14.22). Minting continued under Antiochus VIII's sole rule (Houghton 1983, nos. 812–813; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2580–2586,



1x1

Fig. 14.20



1x1

Fig. 14.21



1x1

Fig. 14.22



2590–2595 [Attic]; nos. 2587–2589, 2596 [Phoenician]; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 514–516, nos. 2335 [Attic]; 2337–2338 [Phoenician]) and under Antiochus IX (Houghton 1983, no. 814; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2745–2748, 2750 [Attic]; no. 2749 [Phoenician]; see however Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 544–545).

Demetrias-by-the-Sea

The mint of Demetrias-by-the-Sea was first identified by Seyrig after restoring the reading on an inscribed lead weight at the museum of Beirut, and consequently associated bronze coinage marked with the letters ΔH and civic era dates with a foundation in Phoenicia (1950b). More recently Kushnir-Stein (1995b) endorsed Seyrig's reading and conclusions and suggested two periods for these coins, in the later second century B.C. and in the first century B.C. (see below). She has also suggested that the site of Demetrias-by-the-Sea should be identified as a refoundation of Strato's Tower based on similarities in neighboring Dora's and Demetrias's Roman issues. Accordingly Hoover (2007b) attributed dated silver drachms struck under Demetrius II's first reign (146–138 B.C.) of uncertain "southern mint" that bear the ligature of these two letters on their reverse (as well as die-linked obverse type) with the city (see also Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 291).

Samaria

It has recently been suggested that Samaria minted coins during the reign of Antiochus IX, based on the find spots of coins in the environs of the city (Houghton

2000; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 546–547). These are undated silver coins of low denomination (hemidrachms and obols), in keeping with the region's tradition during the Persian period. The portrait of the king appears on the obverse, and on the reverse Athena holding a Nike in her outstretched right hand and a spear in her left, and the vertical inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕ ΑΝΤΙ ΦΙΛΑ.

Jerusalem

Barag has recently suggested that a certain bronze coin from the days of Antiochus IV is evidence of a royal issue in the city based on the distribution of coins in Palestine and the attribution of the fabric of the flan and the iconographic content to a southern mint (2000–2002). These coins bear on their obverse the portrait of the king, and on their reverse a seated goddess, holding a Nike in her outstretched right hand. At her feet is a bird, and she is flanked by the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ. According to Barag, these coins were struck in Jerusalem at the beginning of the Maccabaeen revolt before the city was taken by Judas Maccabaeus (c. 167–164 B.C.) and represent its transformation into a polis. However, too few coins were actually found in Jerusalem and its close environs (see Barag's distribution list, 61–63; Syon 2006; and Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 94–95, who argue for Samaria), so his argument is highly theoretical. In any case, Jerusalem



Fig. 14.23

minted bronze coins during the reign of Antiochus VII, in 132/131–131/130 B.C.; on their obverse is a lily and on the reverse an anchor, the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ, and the Seleucid era date (fig. 14.23). Although attempts have been made to assign these coins to Ascalon (Meshorer 1981: 11), their attribution to Jerusalem seems accepted today (Houghton 1983,

nos. 831–834; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2133–2150; Hoover 2003; Syon 2006; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 391–392).

Ascalon

The beginning of minting under the Seleucids has been summarized by Brett, Spaer, and Fuks (Brett 1950; Spaer 1984; Fuks 2000); a reassessment of its issues under the Seleucid rule was the subject of Voulgaridis (2000: 266–369). Seleucid minting in the city began during the reign of Antiochus IV (169/168; Brett 1950: 44, 47, nos. 2–3; *SNG Israel I*, no. 1161; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 98, no. 1494; and see Mørkholm 1966: 125–130; fig. 14.24). Ascalon resumed its royal minting under Alexander I in 148–146 B.C. (*SNG Israel I*, nos. 1555–1559; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 245–246, nos. 1847–1849), and continued under Antiochus VI (*SNG Israel I*, no. 1821–1821A; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 332–333, nos. 2026–2027). During the reign of Tryphon, Ascalon struck similarly formulated coins to those of Ptolemaïs (Baldus 1964; Houghton 1983, nos. 816–817; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 1843–1845; Houghton, Lorber,

and Hoover 2008: 346–347, nos. 2047–2048). The city continued to mint during the reign of Antiochus VII silver drachms and undated bronze coins (Houghton 1983, nos. 818–819; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2094, 2095–2100; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 392, nos. 2124 [and 2122 for the bronze, though attributed to the Galilee based on find evidence]). Ascalon also struck royal silver coins—drachms and tetradrachms—during the reign of Alexander II (Zabinas; Brett 1950: 49, nos. 12–13; Houghton 1983, no. 820; Spaer 1984: 232, no. 1; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2423–2425; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 463–464, nos. 2253–2256). During the shared rule of Cleopatra Thea and her son Antiochus VIII, the city struck royal silver coins, including tetradrachms and didrachms (Brett 1950: 50, no. 15; Houghton 1983, no. 821; Spaer 1984: 232, nos. 2–3, 5; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2483–2488; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 480–481, no. 2277). During the sole reign of Antiochus VIII the city struck similar coins, that is, silver tetradrachms and didrachms bearing his portrait only (Brett 1950: 50, no. 16; Houghton 1983, nos. 822–824; Spaer 1984: 232–233, nos. 7, 9, 13; Barkay 1994: 24, no. 16; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2597–2645; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 516–518, nos. 2339–2341; fig. 14.25). Similar coins bearing a portrait and an eagle were struck in Ascalon during the last year of his reign, that is, a coin of his half-brother Antiochus IX (Spaer 1984: 237, no. B; *SNG Israel I*, no. 2751; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 547, no. 2395), after he took over most of the areas of the Seleucid kingdom. During the reign of Antiochus IX, minting continued in various denominations in the year 113/112 B.C. as well (Brett 1950: 50, no. 19; Spaer 1984: 233,



1x1

Fig. 14.24



1x1

Fig. 14.25

no. 16; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2752–2753; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 547, no. 2395).

Marisa

Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover suggested that a head of Apollo/Tyche type of coin, flanked by the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ, with vertically set controls mark ΗΔΛΜ or ΗΔ, is from the days of Antiochus VI, and should be attributed to Marisa based on 20 coins found at the site during the excavations (2008: 333, no. 2028). Following this reasoning, they have also argued that a diademed head/splayed double cornucopiae coin type, with the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ, is from the days of Antiochus VII, and should be attributed to Marisa, based on provenance in Israel and similarity in style and fabric to the previous type (2008: 392–393, no. 2125). Such attributions seem however too tentative, since the idea that considerable numbers of the same coin type found in a site during excavations is evidence for local production is not necessarily true. It should be noted however that these coins were previously attributed to Gaza (e.g. *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2105–2112), but this attribution is now questioned because of their provenance and due to the fact that they not bear a mintmark of Gaza or the sign of Marnas.

Gaza

Hill posited that a number of coins from the reign of Antiochus V and Demetrius I were struck in Gaza, but qualified this by saying that their monogram signifies a private name and not the name of a mint (Hill 1914: lxvii). Minting under the



Fig. 14.26

Seleucids has been recently summarized by Hoover (2007a). It seems that in the days of Alexander I, Gaza started minting undated bronze coins with the abbreviation of the name of the city, or its monogram, the combination of the letters MA, which represent its chief deity, Marnas (Houghton 1983, nos. 827–828; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 1560–1575; Hoover 2007a: 66–68; fig. 14.26). Gaza continued to strike bronze coins during

the first reign of Demetrius II (*SNG Israel I*, nos. 1738–1745). After a hiatus of some length, it seems that during the reign of Antiochus VII the city struck three series of bronze coins, among them dated and undated coins. The attribution of the two series of undated coins to Gaza is not certain, since they do not have the mark of the city (Houghton 1983, nos. 829–830; *SNG Israel I*, nos. 2101–2104; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 333, 393, nos. 2028, 2125 [Marisa and Coele Syria]). The dated coins bear the monogram of the city and a Seleucid era date, which reveals that they were minted in 136/135–135/134 B.C. (*SNG Israel I*, nos. 2113–2124; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 389–390, no. 2119 [attributed to Ptolemaï]).

Quasi-autonomous, Semi-autonomous, and Autonomous Mints

Acco-Ptolemais

During the time of Antiochus IV, the city produced quasi-autonomous bronze coins with the portrait of Antiochus IV on the obverse, and on the reverse Zeus standing alongside the inscription ANTIOXEΩN TΩN EN ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΔΙ, that is, “of the people of Antioch of Ptolemais,” therefore leading some scholars to see these as autonomous coins (*SNG Israel I*, nos. 1156–1160; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 92, no. 1480; fig. 14.27). A somewhat similar yet extended formula is known from semi-autonomous bronze coins, from the time of the joint rule of Cleopatra Thea and Antiochus VIII, and the sole rule of the latter, which displayed on the obverse the *dioskouroi* and on the reverse a cornucopia next to the inscription ANTIOXEΩN TΩN EN ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΔΙ ΙΕΡΑΣ ΑΣΥΛΟΥ, that is, “of the people of Antioch of holy asylum Ptolemais” (Hill 1910: lxxix–lxxx, pl. 16: 4, 6; Newell 1939: 20, nos. 12, 18, 23, 25, 27; see also Rigsby 1996: 488–491; fig. 14.28). During the reign of Antiochus IX the city struck small silver coins bearing the head of Apollo on the obverse and a lyre on the reverse, next to the monogram of the city and a Seleucid era date (Newell 1939: 37–38, no. 45).

Demetrias-by-the-Sea

Undated bevel-edged municipal bronze issues of head of Zeus/cornucopia type, flanked by the letters Δ–Η on the reverse, were attributed by Kushnir-Stein (1995b) to the city’s autonomous output in the late second century B.C.

Ascalon

In 168/167 B.C., the city minted autonomous coin, on their obverses the head of Tyche and on the reverse the prow of a warship above which is the inscription ΑΣΚΑΛ[Ω]ΝΙΤΩ[Ν], that is, “of the people of Ascalon.” Beneath it is the word ΔΗΝΟΥ (misspelling of the word ΔΗΜΟΥ, as can be seen from coins without the corruption found recently in Ascalon and its environs), that is, “by decision of the people,” alongside the Seleucid era date (Hill 1914: liv, pl. 11: 13). In 112/111 B.C.,



Fig. 14.27

Fig. 14.28

perhaps after the intervention of Cleopatra III, queen of Egypt, the city produced coins that bear the abbreviation IEP ΑΣΥ, which is usually interpreted as “holy asylum” (Brett 1950: 51–52; Houghton 1983, nos. 825–826; Spaer 1984: 230–231; see also Rigsby 1996: 519–521). Minting continued under Antiochus VIII until the Seleucid calendar year 209 (104/103 B.C.; Spaer 1984: 234, no. 48; *SNG Israel I*, no. 2641; Houghton, Lorber, and Hoover 2008: 517–519, no. 2340), while from the Seleucid year 207 (106/105 B.C.), coins of the city bear the inscription ΑΣΚΑΛΩΝΙΤΩΝ ΔΗΜΟΥ IEP[ΑΣ] ΑΣ[ΥΛΟΥ], that is, “by decision of the people of the holy asylum of Ascalon” (Rosenberger 1984–1985, no. 1). It should be noted here that from the Seleucid year 190 (123/122 B.C.), Ascalon minted silver municipal coins in low denominations that are often called semi-autonomous, and on which the head of a woman (Astarte-Aphrodite?) appears on the obverse and a dove on the reverse (fig. 14.29). Subsequently, in the Seleucid year 193, the coins feature the head of Tyche on the obverse and on the reverse a warship (Spaer 1984: 230; fig. 14.30). At some point, similar, undated coins appear in the city (Hill 1914: pl. 11: 9, 11–12); these may be attributed to the end of the second century B.C., when Seleucid rule in Palestine came to an end.

Gaza

At some time municipal bronze coins of a single denomination were struck in Gaza. The head of Zeus appears on the obverse of these coins, and on the reverse double cornucopiae surrounded by the inscription ΓΑΖΑΙΩΝ ΔΗΝΟΥ (a misspelling of ΔΗΜΟΥ), that is, “by decision of the people of Gaza” (Hill 1914: lxix, pl. 15: 1–2). On another type, the head of the goddess of the city (Tyche) appears on the obverse and on the reverse Zeus standing with a wreath in his raised right hand, and opposite him the inscription ΔΗΜΟΥ ΣΕΛ[ΕΥΚΕΩΝ] ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΓΑΖΗ, that is, “by decision of the people of Seleucia of Gaza” (Hill 1914: lxix–lxx, pl. 15: 3). No date appears on either type; however, Le Rider dated them to the reign of Seleucus IV (Le Rider 1965: 410, n. 1)—a determination that seems arbitrary since it has nothing to base itself on. Two more municipal autonomous types appear bearing a date: one shows the head of Zeus on the obverse and on the reverse a standing goddess wearing a chiton and holding a drinking goblet in her right, outstretched hand next to the inscription ΔΗΜΟΥ ΓΑ[ΖΙΩΝ] IEP[ΑΣ] ΑΣ[ΥΛΟΥ], that is, “by decision of the people of holy asylum of Gaza” (Hill 1914: lxix–lxx, pl. 15: 4–5; see also Rigsby 1996: 521–523); the other type shows the head of a goddess on the

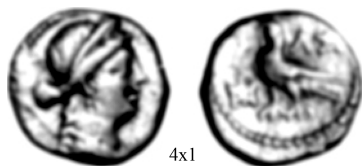


Fig. 14.29



Fig. 14.30

Table 14.2 Seleucid coinages of Palestine

Ruler	Reign (B.C.)	Mint	Dating System	Material/Standard
Antiochus III	(223)198–187	Acco-Ptolemaïs	Seleucid	Bronze
Seleucus IV	187–175	Acco-Ptolemaïs	Seleucid	Silver/Attic
Antiochus (son of Seleucus IV)	175	Acco-Ptolemaïs (?)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic
Antiochus IV (Epiphanes)	175–164	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon), Jerusalem (?)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic
Antiochus V (Eupator)	164–162	Acco-Ptolemaïs	Seleucid	Silver/Attic, Silver/Phoenician
Demetrius I (Soter)	162–150	Acco-Ptolemaïs	Seleucid	Silver, bronze (?)/Attic
Alexander I (Balas)	(152)150–145	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon), Gaza	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic
Demetrius II [I] (Nicator)	146–138	Acco-Ptolemaïs (?), Demetrias-by-the-Sea, Gaza	Seleucid	Bronze
Antiochus VI (Dionysus)	144–142	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon), Marisa (Mareshah)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Phoenician?
Tryphon	142–138	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon)	Regnal	Silver, bronze/Phoenician
Antiochus VII (Euergetes)	138–129	Ascalon (Ashkelon), Gaza (?), Jerusalem, Marisa (Mareshah)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic
Demetrius II [II] (Nicator)	129–125	Acco-Ptolemaïs	Seleucid	Silver/Attic
Alexander II (Zabinias)	128–122	Ascalon (Ashkelon)	Seleucid	Silver/Attic
Cleopatra Thea/Antiochus VIII	125–121	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic
Antiochus VIII (Epiphanes) [Griphus]	(128) 121–96	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic and Phoenician
Antiochus IX (Philopator) [Cyzicenus]	114/113–96/95	Acco-Ptolemaïs, Ascalon (Ashkelon), Samaria (?)	Seleucid	Silver, bronze/Attic, Phoenician

obverse, with the letter *mem* in Aramaic in the background, and on the reverse, a tripod flanked by the inscription ΓΑΖΗΣ ΙΕΡΑΣ ΑΣΥ[ΛΟΥ], that is, “holy asylum of Gaza.” The later coins of these types show the year 205 according to the Seleucid era—108/107 B.C. (Kushnir-Stein 2000; fig. 14.31). Gaza minted autonomous coins similar to these on which a new calendar appears (years 13 and 14), which Kushnir-Stein believes (2000) is an autonomous municipal calendar, and makes it possible to determine that Gaza was conquered by Alexander Jannaeus not before 95/94



Fig. 14.31

B.C. (see also Kushnir-Stein 1995a; Hoover 2007a: 69–70). Previously unknown lead Zeus/filleted cornucopiae coins bearing the Seleucid era date 235 (78/77 B.C.), with a ligatured ΓΑ mintmark, were attributed to the city contradicting Josephus account on its destruction by Alexander Jannaeus (Hoover 2006; 2007a: 70).

The inscriptions on the municipal coins of Gaza under the Seleucids are similar to those on the coins of Ascalon (see above); thus the minting of coins in both cities simultaneously cannot be ruled out.

KEY TO ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 14.1. Philistian *rb' šql* of Ashdod. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.2. Philistian *šql* of Ashkelon. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.3. Philistian *rb' šql* of Gaza. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.4. Judahite (*yehud*-Jerusalem) *grh*. Private collection (scale 2:1).
 Fig. 14.5. Samaritan *m'h*. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 2:1).
 Fig. 14.6. Edomite *šql*. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 2:1).
 Fig. 14.7. *Šql* of Acco/Tyre. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.8. Judahite (*yehud*-Jerusalem) hemiobol. Private collection (scale 4:1).
 Fig. 14.9. Judahite (*yehud*-Jerusalem) quarter obol (J. Rosen collection, on loan at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem; scale 4:1).
 Fig. 14.10. Judahite (*yehud*-Jerusalem) quarter obol. Private collection (scale 4:1).
 Fig. 14.11. Judahite (*yehud*-Jerusalem) hemiobol. Private collection (scale 4:1).
 Fig. 14.12. Tetradrachm of Acco-Ptolemaïs under Ptolemy II. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.13. Tetradrachm of Acco-Ptolemaïs under Ptolemy IV. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.14. Tetradrachm of Iopé under Ptolemy II. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.15. Tetradrachm of Iopé under Ptolemy V. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.16. Tetradrachm of Gaza under Ptolemy II. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.17. Tetradrachm of Dora under Ptolemy V. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.18. Tetradrachm of Ascalon under Ptolemy IV. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.19. Tetradrachm of Acco-Ptolemaïs under Seleucus IV. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.20. Tetradrachm of Acco-Ptolemaïs under Antiochus IV. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.21. Tetradrachm of Acco-Ptolemaïs under Tryphon. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.22. Tetradrachm of Acco-Ptolemaïs under Cleopatra Thea and Antiochus VIII. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.23. Bronze coin of Jerusalem under Antiochus VII. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.24. Bronze coin of Ascalon under Antiochus IV. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.25. Tetradrachm of Ascalon under Antiochus VIII. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.26. Bronze coin of Gaza under Alexander I. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.27. Quasi-autonomous bronze coin of Acco-Ptolemaïs. Private collection (scale 1:1).
 Fig. 14.28. Quasi-autonomous bronze coin of Acco-Ptolemaïs. Private collection (scale 2:1).
 Fig. 14.29. Municipal bronze coin of Ascalon. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 4:1).
 Fig. 14.30. Municipal bronze coin of Ascalon. Israel Museum, Jerusalem (scale 4:1).
 Fig. 14.31. Municipal bronze coin of Gaza. Private collection (scale 1:1).

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