

Zeitschrift: Schweizerische numismatische Rundschau = Revue suisse de numismatique = Rivista svizzera di numismatica
Herausgeber: Schweizerische Numismatische Gesellschaft
Band: 87 (2008)

Artikel: A new chronology for the Yehizkiyah coins of Judah
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-179256>

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A NEW CHRONOLOGY FOR THE YEHIZKIYAH
COINS OF JUDAH

INTRODUCTION

Beth Zur yielded the first known coin of *Yehizkiyah* (spelled *Yhzyqyh*), an example of *TJC* 22 with the types facing head/owl, but with only the signature of *Yehizkiyah* visible.¹ The correct reading of the legend was clarified by a small surface find hoard allegedly found at Tel Gamma in 1970.² Out of five coins joined together by corrosion four are issues of *Yehizkiyah*, three with the types facing head/owl and his title *pehah* (*TJC* 22), the fourth with the types male head/winged and horned monster-like animal, without the title. The remaining issue is fragmentary and unidentifiable. Rahmani described the animal appearing on the reverse of the Tel Gamma *TJC* 24 coin as a winged deer jumping to left.

Several years later new specimens of this coin type were found that allowed for a more accurate description of the animal on the reverse as the *forepart* of a winged and horned monster-like animal.³ Spaer's publication includes two specimens of *TJC* 24 and the first ever published *TJC* 25a.

Coin type *TJC* 25 was first published by Mildenberg, who described the fabulous animal of these coins as a winged lynx.⁴ The last coin type of this series – *TJC* 26 – was published by Meshorer.⁵

Previous Scholarship and the Chronology of the Yehizkiyah Coins

Sellers passed along a suggestion by Albright that the *Yehizkiyah* of the Beth Zur coin might be identical with the High Priest Hezekiah mentioned by Josephus, who purportedly led a Jewish migration to Egypt in the time of Ptolemy I.⁶ Rahmani, however, dated the *Yehizkiyah* coins to the end of the Persian period.⁷ Avigad compiled a list of provincial governors of Judah based mainly on bullae and seals, but included *Yehizkiyah* from the coins, with a date c. 330 BC.⁸ Citing Avigad, Mildenberg stated in his footnotes that *Yehizkiyah* was the last Jewish governor of Persian Judah.⁹ More prominently, he reasoned that the *Yehizkiyah*

¹ SELLERS 1933, pp. 73–74, no. 9.

² RAHMANI 1971; GITLER/LORBER 2006, pp. 25–26.

³ A. SPAER, Some more 'Yehud' Coins, IEJ 27/4, 1977, pp. 201–202, type 3a–c; Pl. 25, E–J.

⁴ MILDENBERG 1979, pp. 188–189 and no. 23.

⁵ *TJC* 1997, p. 25, Pl. 3, 27.

⁶ SELLERS 1933, n. 5; Jos. Ap. I. 187–189.

⁷ RAHMANI 1971, p. 160.

⁸ N. AVIGAD, Bullae and Seals from a Post-Exilic Judaeian Archive, Qedem 4 (Jerusalem 1976) 1976, p. 35.

⁹ MILDENBERG 1979, p. 187, n. 26; p. 188, n. 29.

coins with the title *pehah* must belong to the Persian period, because the title is Persian, whereas the coins signed simply *Yehizkiyah* reflect an abandonment of the title because of its Persian significance, implying that these coins were issued after the Macedonian conquest.¹⁰ The latter class of *Yehizkiyah* coins corresponds to *TJC* 24–26 and is the main subject of this paper.

Relying on linguistic arguments, Meshorer initially dated all non-Ptolemaic Yehud coins to the Persian period, 375–333, including both varieties of *Yehizkiyah* coins, although he did allow the possibility that the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins could have been minted immediately after the Macedonian conquest; toward the end of his life he was more receptive to Mildenberg's chronology.¹¹ Betlyon associated both classes of *Yehizkiyah* coins with a resurgence of Persian authority in the years 358–346, bracketed by Judah's participation in the Great Satrapal Revolt and the revolt of Tennes in 346.¹² Machinist followed Mildenberg, dating the *pehah* variety to the late Persian period, 340–333, and the variety without the title to the first two decades of the Macedonian period, 331–312.¹³ Bar-Kochva and Kindler also followed Mildenberg's reasoning, although they argued that the *Yehizkiyah* coins without the title *pehah* could have been issued as late as 302/1.¹⁴ Their principal concern was to provide a numismatic demonstration that the *Yehizkiyah* of the coins could not be identical with Josephus' Hezekiah the High Priest, in order to support Bar-Kochva's thesis that this High Priest is a fictional figure who entered the historical record only because Josephus was deceived by a pseudonymous work of the second century BC.¹⁵ Goldmann assigned the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins to the lifetime of Alexander the Great, 336–323,¹⁶ and proposed to date the varieties without the title *pehah* to the period between 311 – the year Cassander murdered Alexander's son – and 306/5 – the year the Diadochi claimed their royal title. Ariel criticized previous chronologies for their reliance on Josephus' dubious passages concerning Hezekiah the High Priest but suggested a low chronology for at least some of the Yehud coins, based on their association with drachms of Philip III Arrhidaeus, posthumous Alexanders, and bronzes of Ptolemy II in archaeological excavations and surveys.¹⁷

Accepting a Persian era date for the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins, Fried consulted the lists of High Priests of the Persian period to find the *Yohanan hakohen* who signed a unique coin of the same facing head/owl types employed by *Yehizkiyah hapehah*.¹⁸ The conclusion, based on comparisons with Cilician and Samarian coins, was that *Yohanan's* coin can be dated 378–368 and that his tenure as High Priest

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 188–189.

¹¹ *AJC* I, pp. 17–21; *TJC*, p. 18.

¹² J.W. BETLYON, The Provincial Government of Persian Period Judea and the Yehud Coins, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105/4 (Dec. 1986), pp. 633–642.

¹³ P. MACHINIST, The First Coins of Judah and Samaria: Numismatics and History in the Achaemenid and Early Hellenistic Periods, *Achaemenid History* VI (1991), pp. 365–380.

¹⁴ BAR-KOCHVA/KINDLER 1996, pp. 255–270.

¹⁵ B. BAR-KOCHVA, *Pseudo-Hecataeus*. On the Jews: Legitimizing the Jewish Diaspora (Berkeley 1996), pp. 82–91.

¹⁶ GOLDMANN 2000, pp. 122–124.

¹⁷ ARIEL 2002, pp. 288–293.

¹⁸ FRIED 2003.

lasted from 410 to c. 370, confirming the accuracy of the priest list in *Nehemiah* 12: 10, 22. For Fried, the date range 378–368 also applies to the coins of *Yehizkiyah hapehah*, while his coins without the title fall in the period 368–333. Kottsieper examined several Judean coin issues against the background of linguistic change in Judah.¹⁹ He emphasized that in documents of the Persian period the title *pehah* is used with the name of a province, not a person, whereas it continued to be used in Hebrew in a more general sense, not necessarily referring to the governor of a Persian province. On this basis Kottsieper suggested a post-Persian era date for the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coin type and considered that this *Yehizkiyah* was probably the High Priest Hezekiah of Josephus. By identifying *Yohanan hakohen* with the High Priest Jehochanan II he arrived at a mid-fourth century date for the coin with the priest's signature. Finally, he argued that *TJC* 21, a coin with the same facing head/owl types and the double inscription *Yehud Yehudah*, probably reflected an attempt to revive the Hebrew language *vis-à-vis* Aramaic after Judah became independent of Persia, *Yehudah* and *Yehud* being the name of the province in Hebrew and Aramaic, respectively. Lemaire, comparing the coins with other epigraphic sources, generally endorsed an attribution of the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins to the Persian period, but emphasized the uncertainties concerning the succession of the governors of Judah and the precise chronology of the coins.²⁰

Nearly all of these studies have sought to date *Yehizkiyah's* coinage with reference to the linguistic and/or historical background. The latter approach is especially weak, because it relies on assumptions about the date of *Yehizkiyah's* coins, rather than providing objective evidence for an absolute chronology. Several of the studies attempt to associate the coin legends with figures known from historical accounts. Similar efforts have been made to link the letters or legends on certain Philistian and Samaritan coins to the personal names of officials under Achaemenid rule.²¹ While some of the suggested samaritan attributions look very solid, others are speculative and we are unable to confirm them with any degree of confidence. Moreover, because many names recur in historical sources of different dates, in the end the attributions depend on underlying *a priori* assumptions about the dates of the coins.

¹⁹ I. KOTTSEPER, «And They Did Not Care to Speak Yehudit»: On Linguistic Change in Judah during the Late Persian Period, in: O. LIPSCHITS/G.N. KNOPPERS/R. ALBERTZ (eds.), *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (Winona Lake, Ind. 2007), pp. 94–124, here pp. 106–109.

²⁰ LEMAIRE 2007, pp. 54–55.

²¹ Meshorer and Lemaire both suggested that Philistian coins bearing the letters *beth yod*, or simply *beth* alone, name the governor Bagoas (*AJC* I, pp. 27–28; LEMAIRE 1990). For Babelon, these same inscriptions evoked the eunuch Batis (E. BABELON, *Les Perses Achéménides*, Paris 1893, p. lxiv, No. 132). The personal names on Samaritan coins include a few that are or may be those of known historical figures: MZDY is undoubtedly Mazdai/Mazaeus, satrap of the Persian province of «Beyond the River», while the retrograde Greek inscription ΦΑΡΝΑΒΑΖC names Pharnabazus, the satrap of Dascylium; SN'BL(T) is surely the governor of Samaria under Darius III, frequently mentioned in the Wadi Daliyeh papyri; DL(YH) could be Delayah, son of Sanballat; and the letters SHL may perhaps stand for Shelemyah, son of the earlier Sanballat mentioned in a late fifth century papyrus from Elephantine in Egypt (MESHORER/QEDAR 1999, pp. 20–29).

Until now only thirteen Yehud coins have been found in controlled archaeological excavations, and none has been published with clear stratigraphic information.²² Ariel published six additional Yehud coins found at two caves in the Northern Judaea Desert and, as noted above, proposed a relatively late date based on their association with coins of several Hellenistic monarchs.²³ This approach is problematic, as it is based on rather loose associations, e.g., two Yehud coins recovered just outside Cave IV/6 are associated with five drachms found inside the cave.²⁴

What is surprising is that the most recent contributions fail to exploit the groundbreaking metrological study of Ronen.²⁵ He calculated the average (modal) weights of five different varieties of Yehud coins and found that some conform to the *gerah* and half *gerah* of the Persic weight standard (divisions of the shekel or Persic stater of c. 11.4 g, weighing 0.48 g and 0.255 g, respectively), while others conform to the hemiobol and quarter obol of the Attic weight standard (0.315 g and 0.195 g, respectively). The varieties struck to the Attic standard include quarter obols with the portrait of Ptolemy I, hemiobols with a bird reverse and the legend *Yehudah* (TJC 27), and the coins signed *Yehizkiyah hapehah*, which turn out to be quarter obols on the Attic standard. It is impossible to reject Ronen's conclusion that coins conforming to the Attic standard and system of division must be attributed to the Ptolemaic period or to the period of Macedonian hegemony that preceded it. This result is particularly important for the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins, since it has often been assumed that they should be dated to the Persian period on account of the Persian title they bear.

Fried also conducted metrological studies which are far less transparent than those of Ronen.²⁶ Fried's Table 3 compares the weights of «all the known Persian-period Judaeen coins to the Samaritan ones».²⁷ Table 4 compares the weights of Samaritan and Judaeen coins with a facing head obverse; for the Yehud coins, this definition includes the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins almost exclusively. The table ostensibly demonstrates that the Samaritan and Judaeen facing head coins belonged to a shared monetary system and were meant to circulate together. Unfortunately, the same graph is printed twice as Table 3 and Table 4, completely obscuring Fried's results. However, her claim that Samaritan and Judaeen coins belonged to the same monetary system is at odds with results reported by Tal, who found that the coinage of Samaria followed a probably local standard that was congruent with the weight standard of Sidon.²⁸ Furthermore, Fried's decision

²² ARIEL 2002, pp. 287–288. TJC 25a.1 found at Horvat Zimri, Jerusalem (see the corpus catalogue below), is the only specimen of the later class of *Yehizkiyah* coins (TJC 24–26) which has been found at a controlled archeological excavation.

²³ ARIEL 2002, pp. 287–293.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

²⁵ RONEN 1998 and *Idem* 2006, pp. 28–29.

²⁶ FRIED 2003, pp. 79–82.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²⁸ TAL 2007, p. 20. – Similarly, the claim that the coinages of Samaria and Yehud were meant to circulate together is not supported by their different areas of distribution, which are generally distinct (GITLER/TAL 2006, p. 51).

to use percentages rather than numbers of specimens on the vertical axis of the graphs makes it impossible to ascertain the size of the samples. These problems illustrate why it is essential to use proper methodology in metrological studies, including a precise definition of the coin types involved and (ideally) a full list of the individual specimens.

Suggested Chronological Order of the Yehizkiyah Series

The following section proposes a plausible sequence for the *Yehizkiyah* series and other related issues of Judah (summarized in Table 1 below).

Coin type *TJC* 26 depicts on its reverse a forepart of a monster-like winged feline with a head of the Persian King wearing a jagged crown.²⁹ The jagged crown – the most significant emblem of Achaemenid regal power – played a central role in the imperial iconography of the Achaemenids until the very end of the Persian Empire. It proclaimed that the Great Kings are undisputed rulers of the earth from time immemorial.³⁰ This artistic feature, which emanates from the Persian heartland and represents one of the most characteristic features of Persian art, appears in the Levant on coins of Sidon, Philistia, Samaria and Judah.³¹

A similar head of the Persian King wearing a jagged crown appears on other coins of Judah (*TJC* 6–6a), however the closest parallel is *TJC* 16 (*Fig. 1*). The appearance of the Persian King motif in *TJC* 26 suggests on the one hand that this coin type should be classified as the earliest *Yehizkiyah* issue and on the other provides a *terminus ante quem* of 332 BC for its minting.

Coin types *TJC* 24 and 25, with a similar *Yehizkiyah* legend appearing on the lower right field and linked as well by the monster-like motif to *TJC* 26 (*Fig. 1*), should be dated as subsequent issues in this series. The reverse type is now clearly the forepart of a horned and winged lynx, distinguished from a lion by its long, pointed ear. The lynx was a rare subject in coinage but at least two parallels are worthy of note. The first is a Lycian issue of Kuprlli dated to c. 460–440 BC (*Fig. 3*).³² The second example is found on Seleucid issues. The Seleucid king

²⁹ For Samarian coins depicting a winged feline with the head of the Persian Great King see MESHORER/QEDAR 1999, nos. 24–29. Moreover, two recently found Philistian drachms depict this design as well (*see Fig. 2*).

³⁰ L. MILDENBERG, A Note on the Persian Great King Wearing the Jagged Crown, *INJ* 13, 1994–1999, pp. 15–24.

³¹ H. GITLER, Identities of the Indigenous Coinages of Palestine under Achaemenid Rule. The Dissemination of the Image of the Great King, Proceedings of the Royal Cult and Emperor Worship from Classical to Late Antiquity Colloquium held at the Belgian School in Athens, November 2007 (forthcoming).

³² MØRKHOLM/ZAHLE, pp. 57–113; p. 64, nos. 59–60, Pl. 3 and p. 97, Fig. 17. We are grateful to N. Vismara for providing the proposed date for this coin type. See also GOLDMANN 2000, p. 141, Group 8, and comparative material no. 5. Lycian issues had artistic influences also on the Philistian (GITLER/TAL 2006, II.1D, III.16D) and Samarian coinages (J. BODZEK, A Lycian Prototype for the Coin of Samaria? in: *Les civilisations du bassin méditerranéen, Hommages à Joachim Sliwa*, K.M. CIKOWICZ/J.A. OSTROWSKI, eds. (Kraków 2000), pp. 331–340).

Demetrius I (162–150 BC), an enthusiastic hunter, issued a series of bronze coins showing various animals involved in the hunt, including the forepart of a lynx (Fig. 4).³³ These coins, minted in Cilicia or more likely northern Syria, attest to the existence of lynxes in the Levant in the second century BC and lend support to the possibility of their presence in Judah in the fourth century BC. The forepart of the horned and winged lynx in the *Yehizkiyah* types is very closely related to the horned and winged *felinae* appearing on Philistian and Samaritan issues (Fig. 5).³⁴

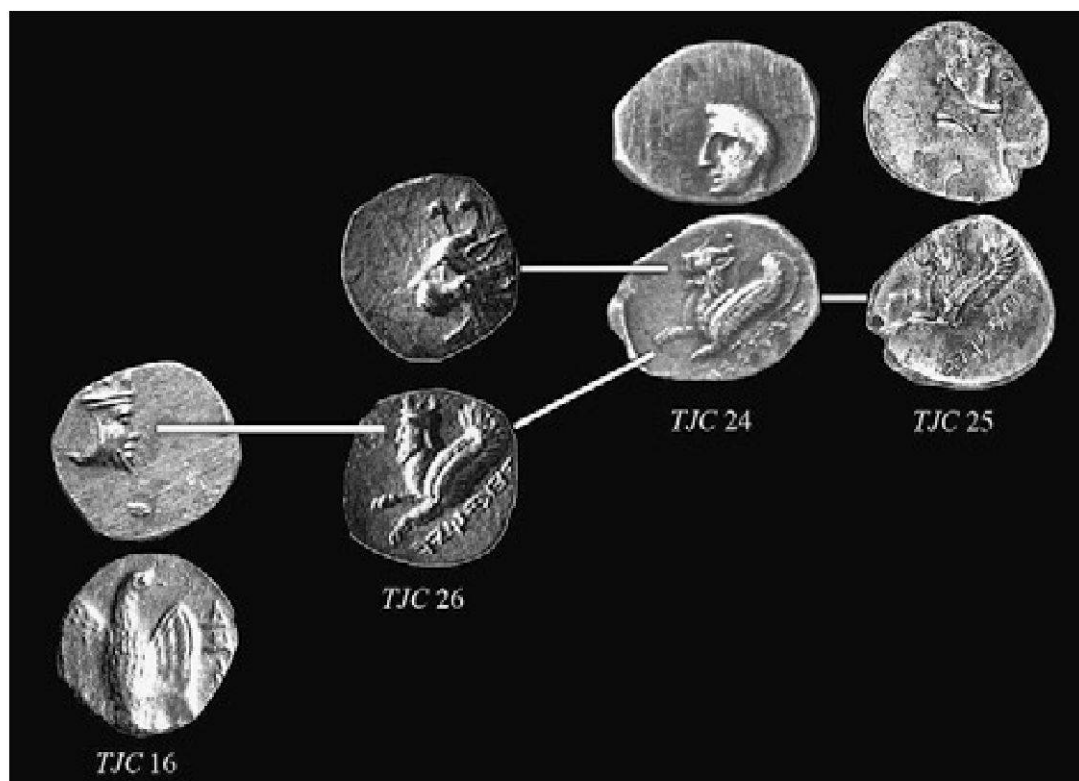


Fig. 1 – Comparative iconography among TJC 26 and TJC 16, 24 and 25.

³³ SC Part 2, no. 1663.

³⁴ For a general description of the Löwendrache and the concept of the composite animal – the Mischwesen – see: E.A. HOLZINGER, Löwendrache, RIA VII, pp. 97–99; F.A.M. WIGGERMANN, Mischwesen. A. Philologisch. Mesopotamien, RIA VIII/3–4, pp. 222–245 and A. GREEN, Mischwesen. B. Archäologie. Mesopotamien; s.a. Löwenadler, Löwendrache, Löwenmensch und Menschenlöwe, RIA VIII/3–4, pp. 246–264, especially Mischwesen. B, §3.25. Lion-griffin, p. 258. These mythical composite animals bear particular potent meanings in the complex iconographic system of Achaemenid art, see E.R.M. DUSINBERRE, Imperial Style and Constructed Identity: A 'Greco-Persian' Cylinder Seal from Sardis, *Ars Orientalis* 27, 1997, pp. 99–129, esp. p. 105. For the Philistian parallels see GITLER/TAL 2006, II.1D, XXVII.1D, XXVII.1O, XXVII.6D, XXVII.6O, XXVII.6HO and for those in the Samaritan coinage, MESHORER/QEDAR 1999, nos. 30, 31, 86, 155, 156 and 180.



Fig. 2 – Philistian drachms depicting a winged feline with the head of the Persian Great King (J. Rosen collection, long-term loan to the Israel Museum).



Fig. 3 – Mørkholm/Zahle 1972, p 97, fig. 17



Fig. 4 – SC Part 2, no. 1663

The Philistian and Samarian *felinae* can also be recognized as lynxes from their long, pointed ears and from their short, tufted tails (insofar as the tail is shown). Some examples appear to have a lion's mane, a feature that may be present on some of the *Yehizkiyah* coins as well. The mane does not undermine our identification of these *felinae* as lynxes; rather it is an aspect of the composite nature of these fabulous beasts. Well-preserved specimens of *TJC* 24 show a long, wavy lock descending from the base of the ear to the chest. It recalls the decorative spirals seen on Greek eagle griffins and suggests that it might be appropriate to refer to our winged monsters as lynx-griffins.



Fig. 5 – Gitler/Tal 2006: XXVII.1D, XXVII.6D

The dating of the *Yehizkiyah* coin types to the late Persian period may be corroborated by the metrological study of these issues.³⁵ Coin types *TJC* 26, 24, 25 seem to have been issued under the Persic standard and correspond to a half *gerah*, namely an issue of *c.* 0.24 g.³⁶ These types are definitely heavier than the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* coins, which were issued under the Attic standard and have an average weight of 0.18 g (= a quarter obol).³⁷ It is clear that the change of weight standard occurred during the period when *Yehizkiyah* was signing the coinage as its issuing authority.

Based on the stylistic artistic observations noted above and the metrological study, it seems likely that *TJC* 26 should be dated to the late Persian period. A similar date can be considered for *TJC* 24 and 25, despite the recent suggestion of Gitler and Lorber that *TJC* 25 could belong to the late Macedonian period, shortly before the final Ptolemaic occupation of Palestine.³⁸ The fact that in the Tel Gamma 1970 hoard a *Yehizkiyah TJC* 24 coin was found together with three *Yehizkiyah hapehah* specimens of type *TJC* 22 shows that the former issue was still in use after the change of weight standard.

Recently a previously unrecorded type which seems to belong to the *Yehizkiyah* series was revealed. Its attribution to the coinage of Judah in general and to the *Yehizkiyah* series specifically is based on the coin's fabric, thin flan, 'blank'

³⁵ RONEN 1998 and TAL 2007, pp. 19–20 and below, *Table 2*.

³⁶ A total of 57 specimens were recorded for the current metrological study, see *Table 1* and the corpus below.

³⁷ Ronen's sample comprised 31 coins (RONEN 1998, p. 125). The modal weight of 0.18 g for the quarter obol of the Ptolemaic coinage of Judah points to an obol of 0.72 g, meaning that the Ptolemaic coinage of Judah also conformed to the Attic weight standard (RONEN 1998, p. 124).

³⁸ GITLER/LORBER 2006, p. 8, 29–30 Group 1.

obverse (see comments, note 64), and the winged animal motif appearing on the reverse. The winged animal motif has close affiliations to the monster-like figure appearing in *TJC* 26, 24, 25 and 25a, however, it is evident that the winged animal on this new coin type does not belong to the *felinae* family but rather to that categorized as *bovidae*.³⁹ Namely, the head of the winged animal seems to be that of a horned bull or a calf (if the protruding feature above its head are long ears and not horns). Thus we propose to incorporate this new quarter *gerah* to the series of *Yehizkiyah* coins as the half denomination of *TJC* 24 and 25.

A noteworthy change in the average weight occurs with the minting of coin type *TJC* 25a. The average weight of the fourteen known specimens of this group is 0.19 g, i.e., very close to Ronen's modal weight of 0.18 g for the quarter obol of the Ptolemaic coinage of Judah issued under the Attic weight standard. Moreover, this coin type features a facing head very similar to that appearing on the Attic weight quarter obols signed by *Yehizkiyah hapehah* and *Yohanan hakohen* and those with the double inscription *Yehud Yehudah* (*TJC* 22–23, 20, 21).⁴⁰ Accordingly, it is logical to assume that *TJC* 25a is the latest issue of the *Yehizkiyah* series without the title *hapehah*; that it was followed by the *Yehizkiyah hapehah* series; and that it should be dated to the Macedonian period.

Still another facing head is found on a transitional emission with an eagle reverse, marking the beginning of Ptolemaic rule in Judah in 302/1 BC.⁴¹ This issue seems to be linked to the *Yehizkiyah hapehah*, *Yohanan hakohen* and *Yehud Yehudah* issues by its facing head, however several other varieties must be inserted somewhere in the sequence of issues for the Macedonian period. The lily/owl variety (*TJC* 14) is linked to the *Yehizkiyah hapehah*, *Yohanan hakohen* and *Yehud Yehudah* varieties by the particular type of owl that appears on the reverse (in contrast to that shown in the early Athena/owl coin type, e.g., *TJC* 2–8).⁴² No metrological study yet exists for *TJC* 14, but the single weight published by Meshorer, 0.13 g, and a second specimen in the J. Rosen collection, 0.12 g (see *Fig. 6*), may be consistent with a quarter obol on the Attic standard. The lily of the obverse is a motif known from the late Persian period coins of Judah, *TJC* 15. The lily obverse of *TJC* 14 creates another link to the hemiobol *TJC* 28 (0.30 g), which pairs a lily and a standing bird with its head reverted (see *Fig. 6*). The

³⁹ Cf. MESHORER/QEDAR 1999, no. 121.

⁴⁰ Unfortunately Ronen reported an erroneous weight of 0.51 g for the coin of *Yohanan hakohen*, which appeared to confirm a Persian era date (RONEN 1998, p. 125). The coin is in the Israel Museum and has been weighed again. Its correct weight is 0.16 g, as recorded in *TJC* and in FRIED 2007, p. 66 n. 3.

⁴¹ GITLER/LORBER 2006, pp. 8–9, 30 coin type 2.

⁴² The type of owl depicted on *TJC* 14 became clear only recently when a specimen of this type was acquired by J. Rosen. On this new specimen (*Fig. 4*) the full head of the bird is visible (contra *TJC* 14, Plate coin).

latter, in turn, is linked by its standing bird reverse to the hemiobol *TJC* 27, one of the issues studied by Ronen and found to conform to the Attic weight standard.⁴³

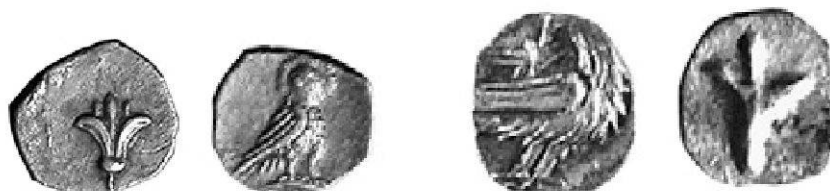


Fig. 6 – Recently acquired *TJC* 14 specimen in the J. Rosen collection, long-term loan to the Israel Museum (left) and *TJC* 28 (right).

It seems logical to assume that *TJC* 27a is eventually a *TJC* 28 coin with a 'blank' obverse (see comments, note 64) and not a different coin type as it was classified in *TJC*.

<i>Coin Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>
<i>TJC</i> 26	Head of horned lynx/forepart of winged feline with head of Persian king, <i>Yehizkiyah</i>	Persian period
<i>TJC</i> 24, 25	Male head/forepart of horned and winged lynx, <i>Yehizkiyah</i>	Late Persian or Macedonian period
<i>TJC</i> 25a	Facing head/forepart of horned and winged lynx	Macedonian period
<i>TJC</i> 22–23	Facing head/owl, <i>Yehizkiyah hapehah</i>	Macedonian period
<i>TJC</i> 20, 21	Facing head/owl, <i>Yohanan hakohen</i> and <i>Yehud Yehudah</i>	Macedonian period
<i>TJC</i> 14	Lily/owl	Macedonian period
<i>TJC</i> 28	Lily/eagle with head reverted, <i>Yehudah</i>	Macedonian period
<i>TJC</i> 27	Roaring lion/eagle with head reverted, <i>Yehudah</i>	Macedonian period
<i>Gitler-Lorber</i> 2006	Facing head/eagle with spread wings, <i>Yhd</i>	Earliest Ptolemaic issue, c. 302/1

Table 1 – Suggested Chronological Order of the *Yehizkiyah* Series and other related issues of Judah.

The types of *TJC* 27 have been described as a horse head and a dove (similar to the 'dove' in *TJC* 28 and thus linking the two coin types).⁴⁴ But the supposed horse head of *TJC* 27 is really the head of a roaring lion, with whiskers or

⁴³ RONEN 1998, pp. 124–125.

⁴⁴ First published in Y. MESHORER, A New Coin of «Yehud», INJ 2, 1964, p. 55.

creases in the skin above its open mouth.⁴⁵ In the optical illusion, the lion's lower jaw appears as the horse's neck (*Figs. 7–8*).⁴⁶



Fig. 7 – The upper images shows the original position of *TJC 27* on *TJC*, Pl. 4. The lower image displays the obverse of *TJC 27* which has been rotated 20 degrees counter clockwise. This image clearly shows the head of a lion to right.

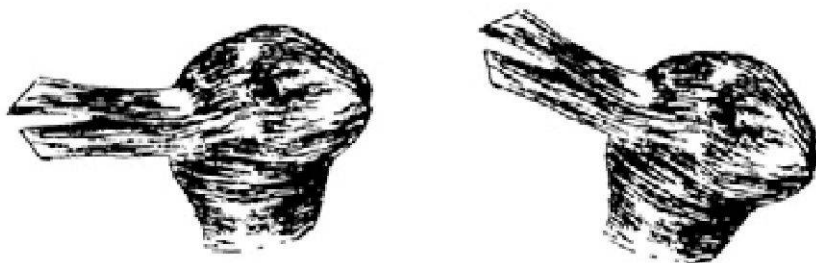


Fig. 8 – Optical trickery: duck or rabbit? After Gombrich, p. 5.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Regarding the significance of the lion and eagle in Jewish iconography see E.R. GOODENOUGH, *Jewish Symbols in the Graeco-Roman Period. Pagan Symbols in Judaism*, Vol. 7 (Toronto 1958), pp. 37–52 and *Idem*, *Jewish Symbols in the Graeco-Roman Period. Pagan Symbols in Judaism*, Vol. 8 (Toronto 1958), pp. 135–137. Although Goodenough deals mainly with the appearance and meaning of these animals in later periods he gives a summary of their use and meaning in earlier periods.

⁴⁶ In several Philistian coins and other early classical issues we notice “elusive motifs” – *trompe l’œil* and other optical illusions – that are not always seen at first sight and may have a hidden meaning, see GITLER/TAL 2006, pp. 298–301.

⁴⁷ E.H. GOMBRICH, *Art and Illusion: a Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (London/New York 1960).

Heads of the roaring lions appear also in contemporaneous Philistian⁴⁸ and Samaritan⁴⁹ issues. Moreover, there are striking artistic similarities between the lion's head with an open mouth on *TJC* 27 and the lions represented on Philistian coins (see *Figs. 9–10*).⁵⁰



Fig. 9 – Lions on Philistian issues (GITLER/TAL 2006: III.18O; XIX.8D; XXVII.8D).

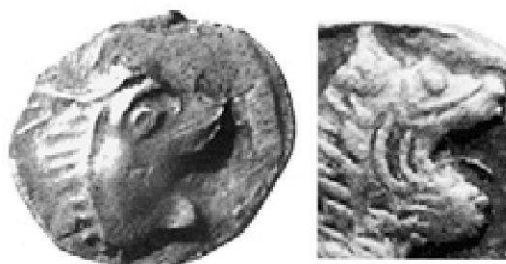


Fig. 10 – Obverse of *TJC* 27 (left side) and detail of lion's head on a Philistian drachm (right side) (GITLER/TAL 2006: XXVII.8D).

The bird on the reverse of *TJC* 27 and 28 is not carefully rendered, and though its pose is one often associated with the dove, it could perhaps reflect the eagle reverse type of Alexander's earliest Macedonian silver and bronze coinage.⁵¹ The lion and the eagle were both established coin types of the Macedonian dynasty before Philip II.⁵² Their association in the provincial coinage of Judah could

⁴⁸ GITLER/TAL 2006, XIII.8HO; XIV.25F; XIX.6H; XXVIII.6HO; XXVIII.10O.

⁴⁹ MESHORER/QEDAR 1999, lions nos. 127, 172, 173, IC-4 and horned lions nos. 156, 159.

⁵⁰ See also GITLER/TAL 2006, XIV.22O which depicts the head of a bearded male to right surmounted by that of an animal with an open mouth to left.

⁵¹ M. J. PRICE, *The Coinage in the Name of Alexander the Great and Philip Arrhidaeus*, (Zurich/London 1991), pp. 91–98, Nos. 27–28, 31, 35, 85, 91–92, 96, 101; pp. 103–105, nos. 142–145, 148, 151, 153, 159–162. See also GOLDMANN 2000, p. 139, Group 4, and comparative material nos. 4–5).

⁵² SNG Alpha Bank Collection. Macedonia I: Alexander I – Perseus (Athens 2000): Nos. 21–25, 106–126, 129–130, 153, 162–171, 173–176, 187–188, 200–230, 239–251.

mark a Macedonian moment, perhaps an intervention by one of Alexander's Successors.

Thoughts on the Absolute Chronology of the Yehizkiyah Series

While it seems clear that coins depicting the Great King must belong to the Persian period and coins of Attic weight can be dated after the Macedonian conquest, we do not know precisely when the mint of Judah abandoned the Persic weight standard in favor of the Attic standard. It is enormously unlikely that this change was imposed by Alexander himself. Driven by a lust for conquest, he had little interest in administering his new territories and exercised almost no supervision over the satraps he appointed to govern in his place.⁵³ Aramaic ostraca from Idumaea demonstrate that the system of tax collecting did not change after Alexander's arrival, and it probably remained unchanged in Judah as well.⁵⁴ As for monetary policy, in western Asia Minor Alexander presented himself as liberator of the Greek cities and may not have opened imperial mints until near the end of his reign.⁵⁵ Tarsus, under Alexander's satrap Balacrus, continued to strike local coinages on the Persic standard in parallel with Alexander's new imperial coinage on the Attic standard.⁵⁶ It is true that Alexandrine mints opened fairly promptly at Sidon, Tyre or Ake, and perhaps Damascus.⁵⁷ But their early output was limited, suggesting that Alexander's policy was to supplement local coinages, as in Cilicia, not to supplant them.⁵⁸ In Babylon, where coinage had not existed previously, Alexander's satrap Mazaeus issued a 'native' coinage in his own name alongside Alexander's imperial coinage. All of these examples suggest that Alexander would have allowed his governor in Judah full authority to make decisions concerning the local coinage.

We can thus conclude that if *Yehizkiyah* changed the weight standard for political reasons, he must have done so after Alexander's death, in response to one of the Successors. However the change of weight standard could have been motivated by other concerns. At some point the Attic weight Alexanders may have come to dominate local currency markets, so that it seemed preferable to assure easy exchange by conforming to their weight standard. It is also worth noting that the change of standard resulted in the production of generally lighter monetary units (the quarter obol of c. 0.18 g instead of the half *gerah* of c. 0.24 g), even though the Attic standard is heavier than the Persic standard. The

⁵³ J.D. GRAINGER, *Alexander the Great Failure: The Collapse of the Macedonian Empire* (London 2007), pp. 75–92.

⁵⁴ LEMAIRE 2007, p. 56.

⁵⁵ C.A. HERSH/H.A. TROXELL, A 1993 Hoard of Alexander Drachms from the Near East, *AJN* 5–6, 1993–94, pp. 36–38.

⁵⁶ E.T. NEWELL, Tarsos under Alexander, *AJN* 52, 1918, pp. 69–116; H. VON AULOCK, Die Prägung des Balakros in Kilikien, *JNG* 14, 1964, pp. 79–82.

⁵⁷ The Alexander coinage assigned to Ake by Newell and Price (n. 51, pp. 405–414) was reattributed to Tyre by LEMAIRE 1976 and 1991, followed by G. LE RIDER, *Alexandre le Grand: Monnaie, finances et politique* (Paris 2003), p. 172.

⁵⁸ Le Rider (*see previous note*), pp. 205–214.

change from the half *gerah* to the quarter obol allowed one third more coins to be struck from a given quantity of bullion – yet the change of weight standard would have concealed the reduction from the general populace. If saving bullion was the real motive for *Yehizkiyah's* reform of the weight standard, we may suspect that he acted at a time of economic hardship and fiscal inadequacy. Such conditions were common in the Diadochic period because of the incessant wars of the Successors.⁵⁹

<i>TJC 26</i>	<i>TJC 24</i>	<i>TJC 25</i>	<i>TJC 24 or 25</i>	<i>Unrecorded type</i>	<i>TJC 25a</i>
<i>3 specimens</i>	<i>25 specimens</i>	<i>15 specimens</i>	<i>6 specimens</i>	<i>1 specimen</i>	<i>14 specimens</i>
0.2	0.18	0.2	0.19	0.11	0.13
0.22	0.2	0.2	0.19		0.16
0.3	0.2	0.21	0.22		0.16
	0.21	0.21	0.25		0.16
Average	0.21	0.22	0.26		0.17
0.24 g	0.21	0.22	0.31		0.18
	0.22	0.23			0.18
	0.23	0.25	Average		0.18
	0.23	0.25	0.24		0.19
	0.23	0.26			0.20
	0.24	0.26			0.20
	0.24	0.26			0.21
	0.24	0.26			0.22
	0.24	0.28			0.28
	0.24	0.28			
	0.25				Average
	0.25	Average			0.19 g
	0.25	0.24 g			
	0.25				
	0.27				
	0.28				
	0.28				
	0.29				
	0.3				
	0.3				
	Average				
	0.24 g				

Table 2 – Weights and average weights of *TJC* 26, 24, 25 and 25a (the average weight excludes the broken coins).⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Jos. *AJ* 12.1.3.

⁶⁰ We are grateful to Jean-Philippe Fontanille for proving valuable data of the coins described in the corpus and many of the weights used in the metrological study. For the images and technical data of most of these coins see: <http://www.menorahcoinproject.org/h433.htm>

CORPUS OF THE YEHIZKIYAH COINS OF JUDAH

TJC 26, half gerah (3 specimens)



TJC 26.3

Obv. Horned lynx head l.

Rev. *YEHIZKIYAH* in lower r. field; forepart of monster-like winged feline l. with head of the Persian Great King wearing a jagged crown.

1	0.20 g		Archaeological Center 19, 1998, 15
2	0.22 g	10.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
3	0.30 g	12.00	Ch. Kaufman Coll. (<i>TJC 26</i> Plate coin)

Average weight for 3 specimens, 0.24 g.

TJC 24, half gerah (26 specimens)



TJC 24.23

Obv. Male head l.

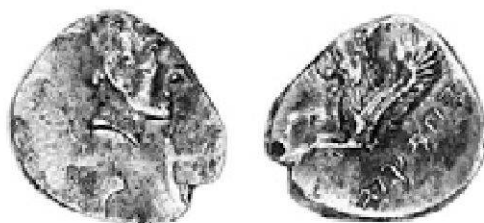
Rev. *YEHIZKIYAH* in lower r. field; forepart of winged and horned lynx l.

1	0.18 g	2.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
2	0.20 g		Archaeological Center 10, 1993, 22
3	0.20 g	9.00	RAHMANI 1971, p. 159, No. 4
4	0.21 g	9.00	A. Sofaer Coll. = CNG 69, 2005, 644
5	0.21 g	11.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
6	0.21 g		(broken). Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 25
7	0.21 g		Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 26

8	0.22 g	2.00	A. Sofaer Coll.
9	0.23 g	10.00	J. Rosen Coll.
10	0.23 g		Zuzim Judaea (2007), Lot 112
11	0.23 g	2.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
12	0.23 g	11.00	S. Gerson Coll.; <i>TJC</i> 24 (Plate coin)
13	0.24 g	6.00	S. Gerson Coll.; <i>GBC</i> 433
14	0.24 g	9.00	Maltiel-Gerstenfeld 1982, ⁶¹ No. 15
15	0.24 g	2.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
16	0.24 g		Goldberg 41, 2007, 2386
17	0.24 g		Hendin 2003, 337
18	0.24 g	9.00	S. Gerson Coll.
19	0.25 g		Goldberg 2004 / Superior 1995
20	0.25 g	6.00	J. Galst Coll.
21	0.25 g	2.00	<i>AJC</i> I. 12 (Plate coin)
22	0.25 g	3.00	Archaeological Center 42, 2008, 18
23	0.27 g	11.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
24	0.28 g	3.00	A. Spaer Coll.; MILDENBERG 1979, No. 20
25	0.28 g		HJB Sale 159, 2008, 237
26	0.30 g		Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 24

Average weight for 25 specimens (without taking into account 1 broken coin), 0.24 g.

***TJC* 25, half *gerah* (17 specimens)**



TJC 25.2

Obv. Male head r.

Rev. *YEHIZKIYAH* in lower r. field; forepart of winged and horned lynx l.

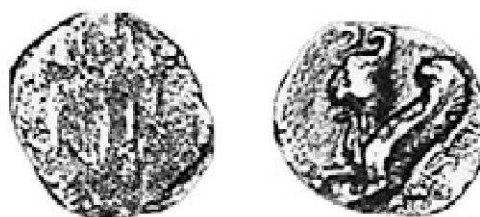
1	0.18 g	9.00	A. Neeman Coll. (broken)
2	0.19 g	9.00	A. Neeman Coll. (broken)
3	0.20 g	12.00	A. Neeman Coll. = Archaeological Center 36, 2005, 15 / Goldberg 25, 2004

⁶¹ J. MALTIEL-GERSTENFELD, 260 Years of Ancient Jewish Coins: A Catalogue (Tel Aviv 1982).

4	0.20 g	12.00	Archaeological Center 16, 1996, 6
5	0.21 g	9.00	<i>TJC</i> 25 (Plate coin = Israel Museum Coll., Inv. No. 14229) ⁶²
6	0.21 g	9.00	A. Neeman Coll.
7	0.22 g	6.00	A. Neeman Coll.
8	0.22 g	9.00	D. Hendin Coll.
9	0.23 g	3.00	MILDENBERG 1996, p. 140, No. 20; Sternberg 25, 1991, 196
10	0.25 g	5.00	Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 27
11	0.25 g	12.00	A. Neeman Coll.
12	0.26 g	5.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
13	0.26 g	5.00	Y. Ronen Coll.
14	0.26 g	12.00	A. Neeman Coll.
15	0.26 g	12.00	A. Neeman Coll.
16	0.28 g	12.00	J. Rosen Coll.
17	0.28 g	8.00	Hecht Museum Coll. (Meshorer 44) ⁶³

Average weight for 15 specimens (without taking into account 2 broken coins), 0.24 g.

TJC 24 or 25, half *gerah* (6 specimens)



TJC 24 or 25.4

⁶² This coin was analyzed by X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysis together with the group of Yehud coins published in GITLER/LORBER 2006, pp. 19–25. A.N. Shugar carried out the analyses. The metallurgical composition of this coin is: Ag 97.9; Au 0.54; Bi 0.04; Cu 0.15; Fe 0.53; Pb 0.09; Ti 0.78. A second *TJC* 25 specimen was analyzed with the same method. The metallurgical composition of this coin is: Ag 96.4; Au 0.53; Bi 0.02; Cr 0.43; Cu 0.41; Fe 0.68; Pb 0.09; Sn 0.61; Ti 0.79 (*Ibid.*, p. 22, Table 4 – Ptolemaic coins of Judah). Although we only have metallurgical analysis for two of the *Yehizkiyah* specimens, it is clear from these issue's silver bullion value of 98.5 and 97.1% (namely the silver value plus that of traces of gold, lead and bismuth) that they were produced as part of the very high silver production standards prevailing in Judah during the late Persian (average silver bullion value of 97.7%) and early Hellenistic period (Ptolemaic coins of Judah with average silver bullion value of 97.5%) (*Ibid.*, pp. 21–23).

⁶³ Y. MESHORER, *Ancient Means of Exchange, Weights and Coins, The Ruben and Edith Hecht Museum Collection, A* (Haifa 1998)

Obv. 'Blank'.

Rev. *YEHIZKIYAH* in lower r. field; forepart of winged and horned lynx l.

1	0.19 g	Eretz Israel Museum Coll., Inv. No. K-404.86
2	0.19 g	Stack's-Ellenbogen 2000, 107
3	0.22 g	NFA 32, 1993, 157
4	0.25 g	Archaeological Center 40, 2007, 16
5	0.26 g	Archaeological Center 40, 2007, 17
6	0.31 g	Hendin List 87, 2005, 4

Unrecorded type, quarter *gerah* (1 specimen)



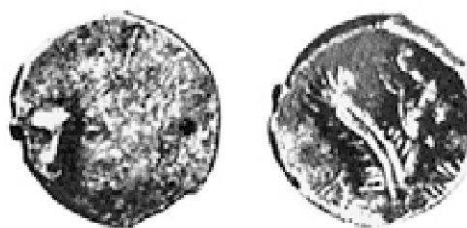
New Type

Obv. 'Blank' (struck from worn obverse die)⁶⁴

Rev. Forepart of winged and horned bull r.

1	0.11 g	A. Sofaer Coll.
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***TJC 25a*, quarter obol (14 specimens)**



TJC 25a.7

Obv. Male(?) head facing.

Rev. Forepart of winged and horned lynx r.

1	0.13 g	Horvat Zimri, Jerusalem. Israel Antiquities Authority, Inv. No. 28004 (ARIEL 2002, p. 287 and 288 Table 3)
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⁶⁴ The obverse design became unrecognizable because of its low relief and eventually it ended up as a 'blank', see J.-P. FONTANILLE, *Extreme Deterioration and Damage on Yehud Coin Dies*, INR 3 (forthcoming).

2	0.16 g	J. Rosen Coll.
3	0.16 g	Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 28 (SPAER, IEJ 4, 1977, p. 202.3c; <i>AJC I</i> 12a Plate coin)
4	0.16 g	A. Neeman Coll.
5	0.17 g	Hendin VCoins 2007, 11078
6	0.16 g	A. Neeman Coll.
7	0.16 g	A. Neeman Coll.
8	0.18 g	Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 29
9	0.19 g	Archaeological Center 34, 2004, 30
10	0.20 g	Hendin List 92, October 2007, 9
11	0.20 g	A. Neeman Coll.
12	0.21 g	A. Neeman Coll.
13	0.22 g	Archaeological Center 40 ,2007, 18
14	0.28 g	<i>TJC</i> 25a (Plate coin)

Average weight for 14 specimens, 0.19 g.

ADDENDA

Two additional coins should be cited in connection with the *Yehizkiyah* issues. The first is a tiny bronze coin in the Eretz Israel Museum,⁶⁵ reportedly found at Tel-Fukhkhar (Ake) and published by Kindler (*Fig. 11*).⁶⁶



Fig. 11 – Eretz Israel Museum Collection, K-1660.

Kindler interpreted the reverse type as a hippocamp and attributed the coin to Tyre. We believe, rather, that the reverse type is a winged animal forepart leaping right. The coin thus partakes of the obverse type of *TJC* 25 (a male head right) and probably of the reverse type of *TJC* 25a (the forepart of a horned and winged lynx right). These types would appear to associate the bronze coin with the silver coinage of *Yehizkiyah*. Nevertheless the piece remains entirely enigmatic. With a diameter of 10 mm. and a weight of 0.95 g (axis 6 o'clock),

⁶⁵ We are indebted to Cecilia Meir, Curator of Numismatics at the Eretz Israel Museum, for allowing us to publish this coin.

⁶⁶ A. KINDLER, Silver Coins Bearing the Name of Judea from the Early Hellenistic Period, IEJ 24/2, 1974, pp. 73–76.

it is too large and too heavy to have been the bronze core of a plated coin (*subaeratum*). Furthermore, this precise combination of obverse and reverse types was not actually employed by *Yehizkiyah*. Possibly this piece represents the earliest bronze coin of Judah. This seems unlikely on its surface because no other examples have been found, but an endeavor to introduce a provincial bronze coinage could have been aborted very quickly either because the coinage was unacceptable to the local population or, more likely, because a higher political authority refused to allow *Yehizkiyah* to enjoy the profits inherent in minting a fiduciary coinage.

The find spot of this bronze – Tel-Fukhkhar (Ake) – on the one hand supports the assumption that this coin is a local issue but on the other does not favor the attribution of this unique specimen to the coins of Judah. Judean issues are rarely found outside the borders of Persian-Period Province of Judah.⁶⁷ The closest find spot to Ake, also outside the Province of Judah, is Mt. Gerizim.

The second coin (*Fig. 12*) is a new variant of a silver quarter obol of *Yehizkiyah* the governor, with the types facing head/owl (*TJC* 22, Private collection, 0.16 g. axis 2 o'clock). Four letters are visible in the left field: *Yod*, *Heth*, *Zain* and possible *Quf*, the first letters of the name *Yehizkiyah*.⁶⁸ In addition it has an extra letter (*Tav*?) or symbol in the form of an X or cross (saltire), in the outer left field. The coin appears in the Web Site:

<http://www.menorahcoinproject.org/h430bz.htm> – Die R22.



Fig. 12 – Yehizkiyah hapehah variant. A. Neeman Collection

So far the addition of a letter or a symbol in the field besides the legend is unknown in any other types of Judah and its meaning remains mysterious. The only similar phenomenon that comes to mind are the potters marks⁶⁹ in form of a saltire appearing on Judean pottery dated mainly to the Iron Age II and Hellenistic periods found in Judah.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ See *supra*, n. 28.

⁶⁸ We would like to thank Prof. Joseph Naveh for confirming the reading of these letters.

⁶⁹ For the general phenomenon see: I. MENDELSON, Guilds in Ancient Palestine, *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research* 80 (1940), pp. 17–21.

⁷⁰ Seal impressions on handles: D.T. ARIEL/Y. SHOHAM, Locally Stamped Handles and Associated Body Fragments of the Persian and Hellenistic Periods, in: *Excavations at the City of David 1978–1985*, directed by Yigal Shiloh, Vol. 6, D.T. ARIEL (ed.), pp. 137–171, at pp. 156–157, and incised handles: Y. SHOHAM, Incised Handles, *ibid.*, pp. 109–136.

Zusammenfassung

Die altjüdische Münzprägung mit dem Namen *Yehizkiyah* spiegelt den Übergang vom perischen zum attischen Gewichtssystem wider. Die meisten Typen mit der Protome eines geflügelten Ungeheuers auf der Rückseite haben persisches Gewicht, während *TJC* 25a attisch ist und zur makedonischen Periode gehört. Wie A. Ronen schon 1998 zeigte, sind die Varianten mit der Legende *Yehizkiyah hapehah* (Yehizkiyah der Gouverneur) ebenfalls attisch. Typologische Verbindungen erlauben das Nachvollziehen einer Abfolge anderer Yehud-Varianten der makedonischen Zeit. Dass der Wechsel im Gewichtssystem mit der makedonischen Eroberung zusammenfällt, ist unwahrscheinlich; die persische Ikonografie von *TJC* 26 deutet jedoch darauf hin, dass er während der persischen Herrschaft erfolgte.

Weiter behandelt der Artikel ikonografische Fragen. Erstmals publiziert werden auch zwei neue Varianten. Den Schluss bildet ein Corpus der Münzen mit der Legende *Yehizkiyah* ohne den Titel *pehah* sowie verwandter Emissionen.

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