



Umayyads, AE-Fals, al-Ramla (Ramla, Israel), 740 A.D. © Nikolaus Schindel

UMAYYAD COINS FROM ISRAEL

A NUMISMATIC AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

The present workshop is intended to inform the scientific community in Vienna about this new research project, its material basis, its methodology, and its scientific potential. Ample time will be devoted to discussion.

PROGRAM

9.30 Meet & Greet

10.00 Introduction

10.15 Gideon AVNI
(Israel Antiquities Authority):
"Assessing Change – Early Islamic settlement patterns in the light of recent archaeological research in Israel"

10.45 Nikolaus SCHINDEL
(Austrian Academy of Sciences):
"Umayyad Coins from Israel – Preliminary Report"

11.15 Robert KOOL
(Israel Antiquities Authority):
"Profiling Early Islamic Coinages from Excavations: Two Case Studies from Ascalon and Jerusalem"

11.45 Final discussion

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Arab conquest in the seventh century changed the political, cultural and monetary landscape of the Eastern Mediterranean forever. The heavily monetized areas in what is now Israel saw a change from a Byzantine coinage system steeped in centuries-old traditions of the Graeco-Roman world, to a revolutionary new type Islamic monetary system. While many of the basic lines of development are generally understood, the details often escape us. One of the main reasons is the lack of archaeological data, which affects both concrete numismatic questions such as mint attributions, but also in a more general sense our concept of how money was used in the Umayyad period. Israel holds a unique position in the former areas that constituted the Umayyad Empire. Its archaeological service, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) centralizes a large number of coins from regular archaeological excavations at its Coin Department in a systematic collection and database. This enables us to study many aspects of monetary history which cannot be studied anywhere else. Therefore, a joint research project has been initiated between the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Numismatic Workgroup of the Austrian Academy of Sciences aiming at studying all Umayyad post-reform coins, gold, silver, bronze and lead, held in the IAA collection. At present there total an estimated 5500 coins. The first phase of the project includes registering all technical data of the coins, detailed photographic documentation, and correcting attributions and identifications of all coins. Once this is finished, the second phase of the project is initiated, a detailed numismatic and archaeological synthesis of the vast amount of data. Compiled by the collaborators from the two institutions these will shed new light on mint organization, coin circulation, as well as economic and administrative connections.