

Preface

The exhibition *Coinage and Power in Ancient Israel* is a special occasion, the first time that these iconic coins of ancient Israel from the world-renowned collection of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem are being shown in Vienna. These coins are singular historical documents that movingly recount the history of Israel from the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity in the 6th century BCE until the Second Jewish War against Rome that culminated with the destruction of Jerusalem in 135 CE.

The Coin Collection exhibition was developed in cooperation with the Israel Museum in conjunction with the Department for Numismatics Studies and the Department of Geography and Regional Research at the University of Vienna. A digital catalogue was prepared for the show which provides interested visitors the opportunity to study the coins and accompanying images at home, and to view even the smallest coins in excellent enlargement. The maps prepared by the Department of Geography and Regional Research provide an optimal visual impression of the historical developments over time and space. The catalogue can also be accessed within the exhibition using a smartphone and is also available in English.

For the Kunsthistorisches Museum, it is a particular honour that the Israel Museum has been willing to part with its numismatic treasures to enable this exhibition in Vienna - especially in the year of its 50th anniversary, to which I warmly offer my congratulations. I thus extend my special thanks to the Director of the Israel Museum, James Snyder, as well as to Haim Gitler, its Chief Curator for Archaeology and Numismatics, without whose support this exhibition would not have been possible.

Sabine Haag

General Director of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna