

David A. Fiensy and James Riley Strange, ed. *Galilee in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods*, 2 vols. *Life, Culture, and Society*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014.

Conclusions and Random Notes

Volume One

Chapter 1: “Galilee and the Historical Jesus,” Roland Deines¹

After this foray into modern Galilee studies, we can conclude: The special religious and cultural position of Galilee remains in the focus of Jesus research and is used to explain certain elements of his ministry and to identify the oldest (and most reliable) traditions related to him. In this there is quite a similarity to Albert Schweitzer’s classic summary of the first phase of the quest for the historical Jesus: “each individual created Jesus in accordance with his own character. There is no historical task which so reveals a man’s true self as the writing of a Life of Jesus.” (*Quest*, 6). So too with the Galilean origins of Jesus (or Q), which are seemingly so certain that *there is now the danger that everyone is creating his or her own image of Galilee first, onto which then Jesus and his message can be projected. What one wants to find in Jesus is hence to be located in Galilee.* This leads to the constant task of questioning the respective heuristic function of the designation “Galilean” in the ongoing research. This is particularly the case when Jesus’ Galilean origin is used to position and segregate him within Judaism against other forms of Judaism; concretely, this is where the context of a special (which usually means “different from Judean”) *Galilean culture is used to reason to a portrait of Jesus that dissociates him from Jerusalem and Judea, and the Judaism represented by these ciphers. For, based on what is discernible in the literary and archaeological sources, such a Galilee did not exist.* Of course, that does not mean there were no regional peculiarities. What it does mean, however, is that there were no foundational differences when it came to, for example, the attitude toward Torah, non-Jews, or the centrality of Scripture.

Chapter 2: “Political History in Galilee,” Morton Hørning Jensen

We began our investigation by asking how important our understanding of the history of Galilee has been and is for our understanding of the historical Jesus. It is time to conclude by outlining five major trends of the Galilean history in our time frame. *First, there is a solid line of connection between Judea/ Jerusalem and Galilee from the Hasmonean era*

¹ Roland Deines, “Jesus the Galilean: Questioning the Function of Galilee in Recent Jesus Research,” in *Acts of God in History: Studies Towards Recovering a Theological Historiography*, ed. Christoph Ochs and Peter Watts; WUNT 317 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 53–93.

onward. The Hasmonean policy incorporated a mixture of military campaigns, migration, and building activity. Of course, Galilee was inhabited by non-Jews before the Hasmonean takeover, and it is likely that some of them converted to Judaism. But the increase in settlements was probably due to the influx of settlers from the south. This also explains why *there is no notion of mixed cities in our sources from the first century in Galilee proper. It was considered Jewish heartland*. Second, during the several power transitions Galilee did experience a number of battles and destructions. This is the case not least during the years of unrest following Pompey's conquest in 63 BCE until Herod's final victory in 37 BCE, after Herod's death in 4 BCE, and later during the war of 66–70, with a number of battles and internal attacks from 66 to 67 CE. However, measured against Judea and Jerusalem, Galilee got off easy, even though there were long periods of unrest in between. *The picture of Galilee being caught in a spiral of violence with ever-growing tension and episodes from Pompey through the Herodians to the rebellion against Rome conflates the evidence in a reductionistic manner*. Third, the most important ruler of Galilee was Herod Antipas. He was allotted Galilee after the death of his father, and his arrival at Sepphoris in effect gave Galilee its first kingly ruler since the old Israelite dynasty. While Herod the Great disregarded Galilee—maybe even purposely so, remembering the fierce resistance he had met there in his early years—Antipas launched a number of building campaigns, most notably at Sepphoris and Tiberias. For this reason, Antipas has been described as the main provocation behind the emergence of social protest movements such as those of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth. However, a close investigation of the sources reveals another story. Archaeological material testifies that Galilee flourished in this period, with new settlements being founded on more remote and less defensible plots of land, while old towns grew in size and activity. Compared to his father, Antipas was much less of a builder, and the deteriorating effect he could have had on the Galilean economy was therefore also all the more limited. Fourth, our investigation of Josephus's description of the events in Galilee during the great war falls in line with this. Galilee was not the center of the revolt, and much energy was spent on internal fighting and positioning and not on a united front against Rome. Finally, Galilee evolved into the very center of Judaism after the Bar Kokhba revolt. The rabbinic council was moved to Galilee, with major stops at Beth She'arim, Sepphoris, and Tiberias, and it was in Galilee that the two major writings of the rabbinic era were produced: the Mishnah and the Palestinian Talmud.

Chapter 3: “Religious Practices and Religious Movements in Galilee: 100 BCE-200 CE,” Roland Deines

The history of Galilee in the three centuries between 100 BCE and 200 CE is marked by a history of conquest, settlement, wars, and refugees, all of which had their origin in Judean affairs. The religious profile of the territory is therefore largely oriented toward Jerusalem. At least some of the first Judean settlers brought with them the specific reasons why they left Jerusalem for good or ill, and Galilee allowed them to cultivate and intensify their attitude toward Jerusalem and her rulers. This might be one of the reasons why Galileans appear sometimes as rather uncompromising and fanatical in the sources.

A large number of important figures of Jewish history spent some time in Galilee and left their mark, including Alexander Jannaeus, Ezekias the bandit, Herod and his heirs, Judas the Galilean and the Pharisee Zaddok, Jesus, Peter, Yohanan ben Zakkai, Hanina ben Dosa, Josephus, Jacob of Sakhnaya, and Rabbi Judah the Prince. They all represent religious traditions that influenced larger or smaller segments of the inhabitants of Galilee. What they have in common, despite all obvious differences, is loyalty to the God of Israel and the covenant he made with their forefathers. Whatever they tried to achieve religiously was guided by God's revelation to them. After the loss of Jerusalem and the temple, the Jewish Scriptures became the new focus. And because of this, the Promised Land and the place Israel's God had chosen "to put his name there" (Deut. 12: 5) could never be forgotten.

Chapter 4: "The Ethnicities of the Galileans" Mark A. Chancey

If ethnicity is defined broadly in terms of a sense of shared ancestry, common cultural heritage, and group identity, then the ethnicity of most Galileans in the late Second Temple and early Mishnaic periods was Jewish. Indeed, the past twenty-five years of archaeological and biblical scholarship attest to a growing consensus that "Galilee of the Gentiles" (Isa. 8: 31; 9: 1; Matt. 4: 14-15) was anything but a pagan region at the beginning of the Common Era.² At numerous sites, archaeologists have discovered ample evidence of distinctively Jewish practices, finds that corroborate the depictions of Galilee as predominantly Jewish in the writings of Josephus, rabbinic texts, and the Gospels.

By the early first century BCE, however, the shift of Galilee to the Hasmoneans was clearly under way. During his reign (103– 76 BCE), Alexander Jannaeus expanded Hasmonean territory to its maximum extent, and it is precisely at this time that marked changes become noticeable in Galilean material culture. Coins of Alexander Jannaeus begin appearing at strata from this period and are common finds well into the Roman period. At sites such as Jotapata and Meiron, the transition from Seleucid to Hasmonean coinage, as indicated by the dates of the coins, is particularly striking. Throughout Galilee, many older sites were abandoned and new sites established . . . Dramatic shifts in settlement patterns are accompanied by notable changes in the ceramic profile. . . The pagans who lived there prior to the Hasmonean annexation were descended primarily from settlers who had arrived during the Persian, Ptolemaic, or Seleucid periods. The evidence cited above demonstrates that many, probably most, of these pagan inhabitants left the region. Who were the new inhabitants? The available evidence— the settlement history reviewed above and the artifacts discussed below— *overwhelmingly suggests that they were Jews arriving from Hasmonean Judea*. These new settlers from the south were thus the primary ancestors of Jews in first-century CE Galilee. While Galilean Jews may

² See Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*. SNTSMS 118; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 170– 74. David A. Fiensy (2014-10-01). Galilee in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods: Life, Culture, and Society: 1 (Kindle Locations 3720-3721). Fortress Press. Kindle Edition.

have had their own regional customs, in terms of ancestry, cultural orientation, and group identity they shared a common identity with Judean Jews. Additional Jews from Judea would join them by moving north after each of the two failed revolts against Rome. These facts have tremendous implications for how we understand the ethnic identities of Galileans at the beginning of the Common Era. Before archaeological investigation of the region, it was understandable for scholars to argue variously that Galilean Jews lived alongside numerous gentiles from a variety of backgrounds, that they were largely descendants of pagans forcibly converted by the Hasmoneans, or that they were mostly descendants of ancient Israelites from the northern kingdom. But the sharp changes in settlement patterns documented by archaeologists now make these positions difficult to maintain. . . . Translation issues aside, it now seems clear that Galileans by and large were Judeans in terms of identity, ancestry, and cultural orientation if not current place of habitation or shared political governance.

Summary: Shared culture between Judean and Galilean Jews is evidence by ritual baths (*mikva'ot*), stone vessels, and a drastic reduction in imported pottery in favor of local wares. Herodian lamps are imported from Judea to Galilee. Ossuary burials (Ossilegium) that became ubiquitous in Judea during the reign of Herod the Great, became common in Galilee as well.

Chapter 5: “The Synagogues of Galilee,” Lee I. Levine

Literary evidence for synagogues is passing and assumed: Tiberius, Dor, Caesarea (Josephus) and Nazareth, Capernaum, and Jerusalem (Gospels). Solid archaeological evidence for the first-century synagogue is attested at eight sites in Judea: Masada, Herodium, Jerusalem (the Theodotos inscription from the City of David), Qiryat Sefer, and Modi'in (both in western Judea), with a possible additional site at Horvat 'Etri, south of Bet Shemesh. In the Galilee, it is found at Gamla, Migdal, and quite probably Khirbet Qana, with considerably less certain remains from Capernaum, Chorazin, and at a second site in Migdal.

Chapter 6: “Notable Galilean Persons,” Thomas Scott Caulley

Thirteen of the most notable persons from Galilee:

Hezekiah (Ezekias) the Bandit (46 BCE)

Judas son of Hezekiah (4 BCE)

Judas the Galilean (6 CE) founder of “Fourth Philosophy” (Josephus)

Honi (Onias) the Circle-Drawer (1st century CE) (*Antiquities* 14:22-23).

Hanina ben Dosa (1st century CE)

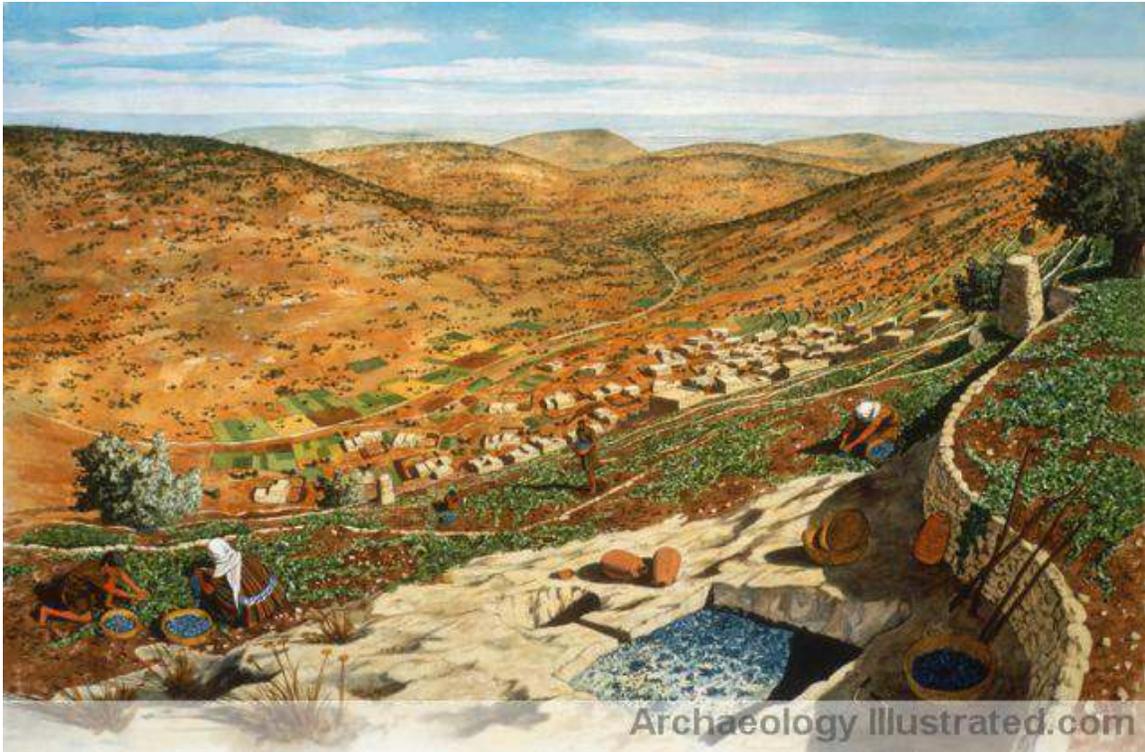
Antipas (ruled 4 BCE-39 CE)

Agrippa I (11 BCE-44 CE)

Agrippa II (b. 27, d. 93? CE)

Bernice/Berenice (b. 28 CE, d. after 81 CE)
 John of Gischala/Yochanan ben Levi (1stCE; priestly Hasmonean)
 Justin of Tiberius (1st century CE)
 Menahem (1st century CE, son of Judas the Galilean)

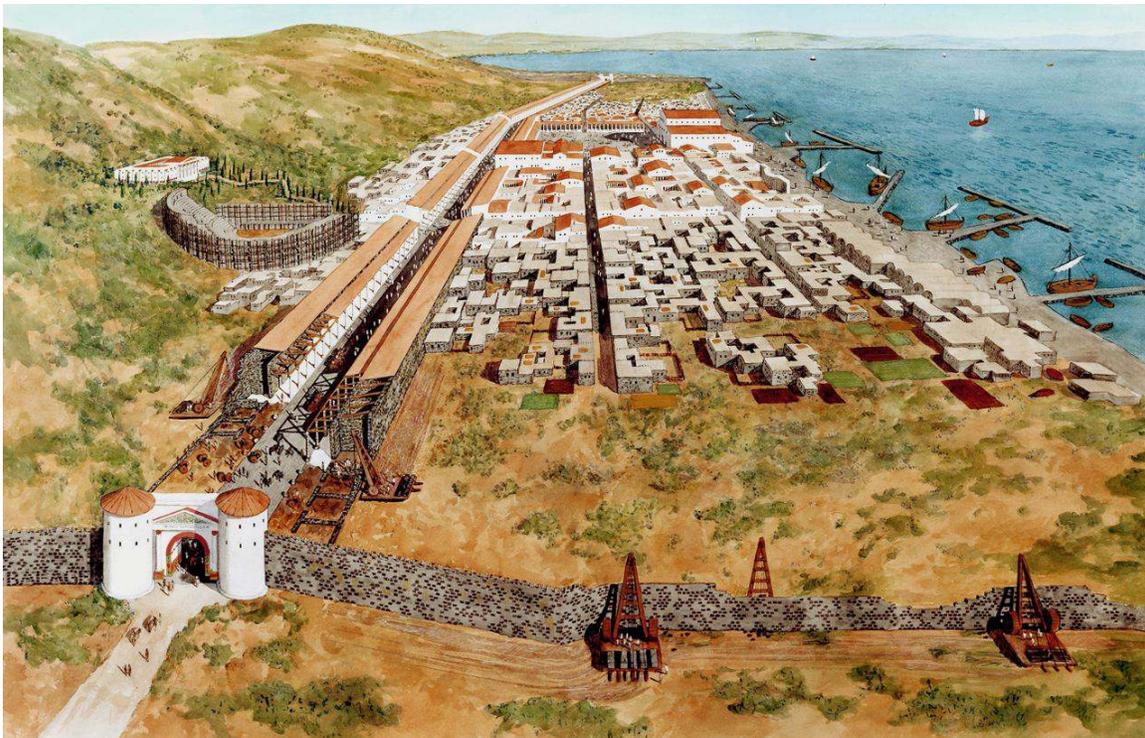
Chapter 8: “The Galilean Village in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods,” David A. Fiensy



Nazareth, by Balage Balogh

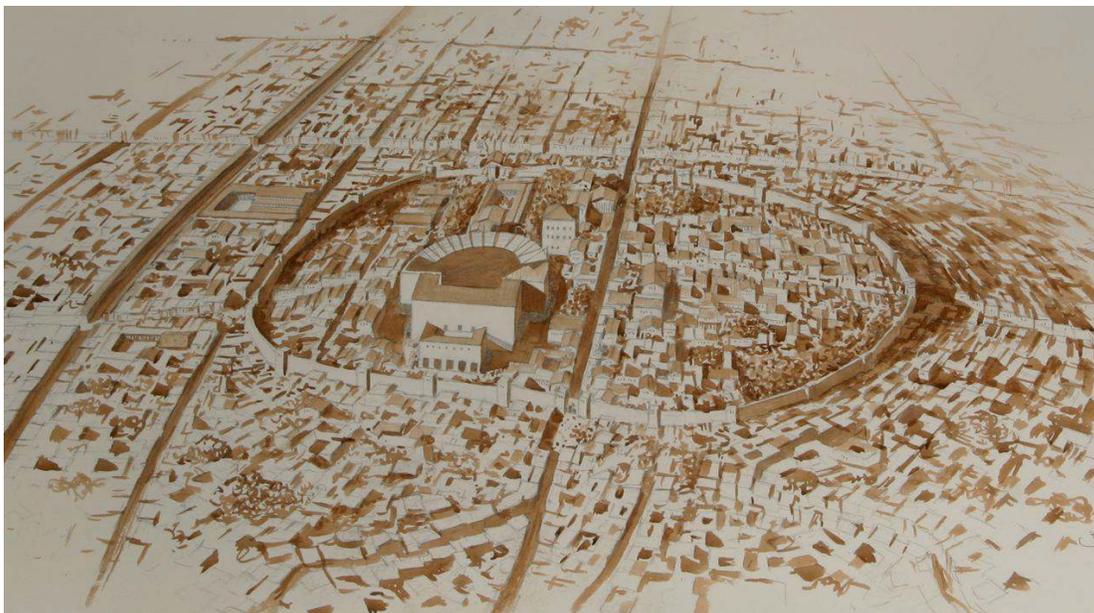
The two Greek terms that, in the main, are found in Josephus and the Gospels—*πόλις/polis*, usually translated “city,” and *κώμη/kome* usually translated “village.”

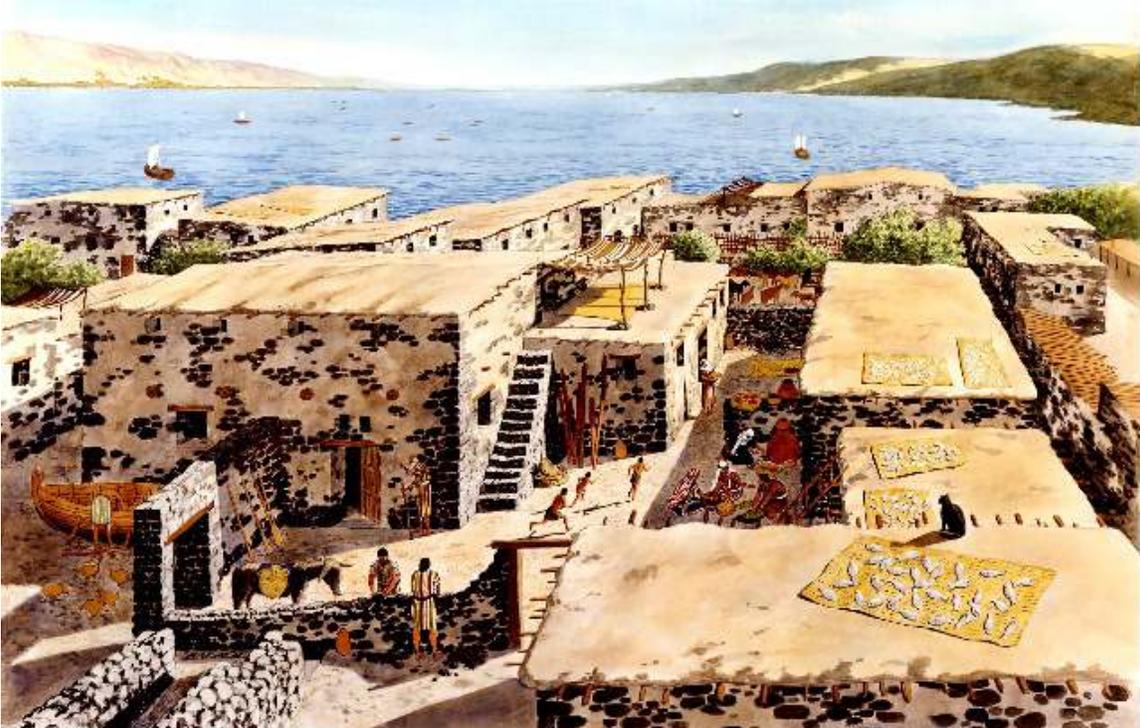
The population of first-century Galilee at 175,000 persons, and if we calculate the populations of the two cities, Sepphoris and Tiberias, at around 10,000 persons each, then that leaves between 135,000 and 160,000 persons living in villages and towns in both Upper and Lower Galilee spread among the 204 towns and villages if we are to accept Josephus (*Life* 235).



Tiberius by Balage Balogh

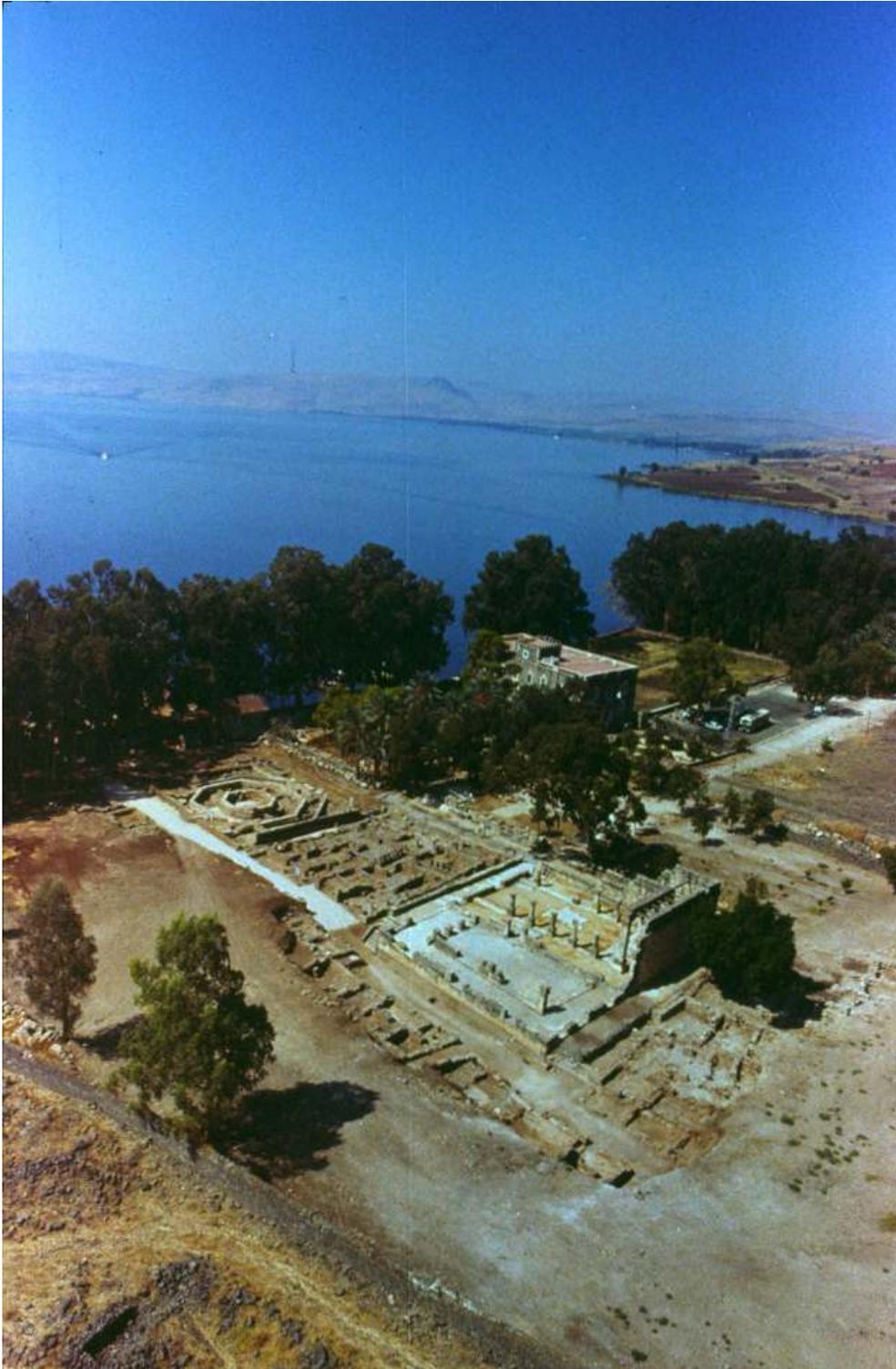
The three most common usages in the rabbinic literature with their possible Greek equivalents and est. populations: the כרך / πόλις (*kerak* over 6000), the עיר / κώμη (' *ir* 2000+), and the כפר / κώμη (*kaphar* under 2000). They could number 2.5 to 30 acres. Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum, and Yodefat were perhaps 10 acres whereas Sepphoris (below in drawing by Balage Balogh) was over 100 acres with perhaps 150-200 people per acre.





Capernaum, by Balage Balogh (Archaeologyillustrated.com)

Houses were built of unhewn fieldstones, with mud, brush, and plaster, wood (doors and roofs), earth floors, unpaved streets, latrines outside the village. Towns grew haphazardly, no street plans. Gaps could become public areas. The walls of the houses formed a kind of wall or perimeter. Synagogue, some public buildings, cisterns, ritual baths, cemetery. Agrarian based but with ceramic, stone vessels, and ossuary production, dyeing, olives, weaving, wine and oil presses, grain grinding. Residents could mix agriculture with a skilled craft.



Capernaum in 1979 before the Flying Saucer “Cathedral” was built over Peter’s House

If the reader had lived in Lower Galilee in the first century CE, chances are he or she would have lived in a village of fewer than 2,000 inhabitants. The village would have consisted mostly of simply made houses, haphazardly planned, unpaved streets, perhaps a public building or two, and a few open areas used on market day or by nomadic persons for pitching their tents. If the reader was fortunate enough to have lived in one of the two cities, he or she would have known wide thoroughfares, impressive architecture, and various forms of entertainment. If the reader had lived in a village, he or she would probably have been engaged in agriculture, but certain kinds of industry would also not have been out of the question.

Chapter 9: “Household Judaism,” Andrea M. Berlin

The new population group that moved into the Lower Galilee during Hasmonean times can simply be called *Ioudaioi* or “northern Jews/Judeans.” The social and cultural identity of south and north were identical—especially in terms of “Household Judaism,” with knife-pared lamps jars, cooking vessels, and dishes made of local clays, but in an identical “purposely simple” uniform style. Upper Galilee continued to exhibit some imported “coastal products” but Lower Galilee seems amazingly utilitarian and uniform. Other innovations are *mikva’ot* and cave/ossuary burials, village synagogues, as well as stone vessels, locally made (there was a stone vessel workshop at Reina just north of Nazareth). These served ritual purity purposes but they are so ubiquitous they might also reflect a sense of pride and solidarity with the Land.

Chapter 10: “The Galilean House in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods,” David A. Fiensy

A “house” in this period included the rooms under roofs, an open-air courtyard, and subterranean silos and animal stalls. There were also *insula* houses where several families shared a common courtyard. A typical house was for five-seven people (15-20 sq m), perhaps with an upper room or side room. Mats were rolled out for sleeping. The family sat on the floor at meals.

Chapter 11: “Mortality, Morbidity, and Economics in Jesus’ Galilee,” Jonathan L. Reed

On the issue of Antipas’s urbanization, it is clear that a much more nuanced discussion of the socioeconomic impact of Sepphoris and Tiberias is necessary in light of demographic insights. On the one hand, it bears stressing that Galilee’s population growth and construction of cities in the Early Roman period are not themselves evidence of an overall Galilean prosperity. In fact, overall population growth, newly built cities,

considerable migration, and extensive malaria caution against an optimistic view of economic life under Antipas. This is not to imply the opposite, namely, that Galileans fared terribly and were destitute under Antipas, just that any widespread socioeconomic improvement is questionable. On the other hand, although many Galilean urbanites seem better off than rural villagers in terms of their houses, in terms of their mortality and morbidity they were worse off. But the significance of these two cities' negative growth rates in the context of overall Galilean growth in the Early Roman period goes far beyond issues of health and comfort. The newly built cities' contribution to social instability must be stressed: Sepphoris and Tiberias fueled internal migration from villages to the cities. Thus, the rural–urban divide was often crossed, and we cannot assume a rigid division between rural peasants in villages and urban elites in the cities. Surely Jesus had some extended family in Sepphoris. At the same time that the Galilean cities were built, many smaller sites were settled in malarial areas. Significant numbers of people moved from healthier areas with higher birth rates into less healthy ones, due to the competition over land in the former and for the sake of opportunities, however menial, in the latter. A large number of migrants were younger male villagers moving to the cities, but also to the lake where fishing might provide opportunities. Even if such internal mobility was not out of line with other areas of the Mediterranean, descriptions of life under Antipas as stable miss the mark. Sudden death, rampant disease, frequent pregnancy, and impulsive yet increasing migration would make for a rather unstable environment with volatile households whose compositions were constantly and abruptly changing. The negative socioeconomic impact of this instability has only been implied here, and its cultural and religious implications, whether in terms of the ephemeral nature of patriarchal households or the necessity of reciprocity between village households, merit further consideration.

Chapter 12: “Education/Literacy in Jewish Galilee: Was There Any and At What Level?” John C. Poirier

My comments on the chapter:

Jews of Galilee and Judea had a keen interest in the Scriptures and I believe they were taught to read and maybe write—indicating their literacy rate would be much higher than the 5-10 percent estimated by many historians for Rome's western provinces.

Josephus boastfully reports about himself: “Moreover, when I was a child, and about fourteen years of age, I was commended by all for the love I had to learning; on which account the high priests and principal men of the city came then frequently to me together, in order to know my opinion about the accurate understanding of points of the law (*Life* 9). Josephus claims that the Jewish people are well acquainted with the “Laws,” much more than other cultures (*Apion* 2:176). This would likely be even more the case with the priestly class.

In contrast, the Pharisees speak disparagingly in John about “this crowd, who do not know the Law, are accursed” (John 7:49). The context though likely refers to methods

and matters of technical exegesis such as we see reflected in the DSS and later in the Mishnah. Peter and John, as fisherman, are described as “unlearned” and “ignorant” (ἀγράμματοί εἰσιν καὶ ἰδιῶται) in Acts 4:13.

Most scholars consider Rabbinic passages that report general education for boys in the 1st century CE to be an idealization of the past but with perhaps a grain of historical truth (y. *Ketub.* 8:11, 32c; b. *B.Bat.* 21a). Based on the Dead Sea texts and the level of literacy and literary textual sophistication, as well as the image we get of Jesus in the Gospels, especially in dealing with “messianic” and “eschatological” passages, it seems likely he was quite literate.

Chapter 13: “The Galilean Road System,” James F. Strange

Walking a distance of 16 km/10 miles takes from two to five hours depending on the terrain, thus travel is 3-5 mph. Thus Nazareth to Cana (14 km/9 miles) would likely take four hours+ of steady walking. Cana to Capernaum is 31 km/20 miles, so would take six to nine hours (John 2:1-12), so could be over two days.

Chapter 14: “Urbanization and Industry in Mishnaic Galilee,” Ze’ev Safrai

According to the rabbinic literature there was a significant lack of communication between the polis and the rural sector. Consequently, the rural sector was independent from the polis in terms of supplying services. The commercial ties that were important to both sides were carried out by means of intermediaries (most of them described as Jews), residents of the polis who went out to the rural sector. By contrast, I assume that elsewhere the empire was characterized by the rural sector’s dependence on the polis. That was the way of the world, but the situation in the Galilee in the second and third centuries was more complicated. The image presented in the rabbinic literature reveals a distinctive situation in every part of the picture. Although one can maintain that the picture is distorted due to the sages’ desire to exaggerate the disadvantages of the polis and to describe as reality what they wished to see happen, nevertheless, after a perusal of the sources, we can conclude that most disadvantages are presented without polemics. The description of the sexual depravity in the cities might be tendentious, but this is not the case with the simple descriptions in which the polis appears only as unimportant background to the halakhic or ideological content. I assume, therefore, that the picture in the rabbinic literature is somewhat extreme, but social tensions did help to shape a model of city–village relations that was exceptional in the Roman Empire.

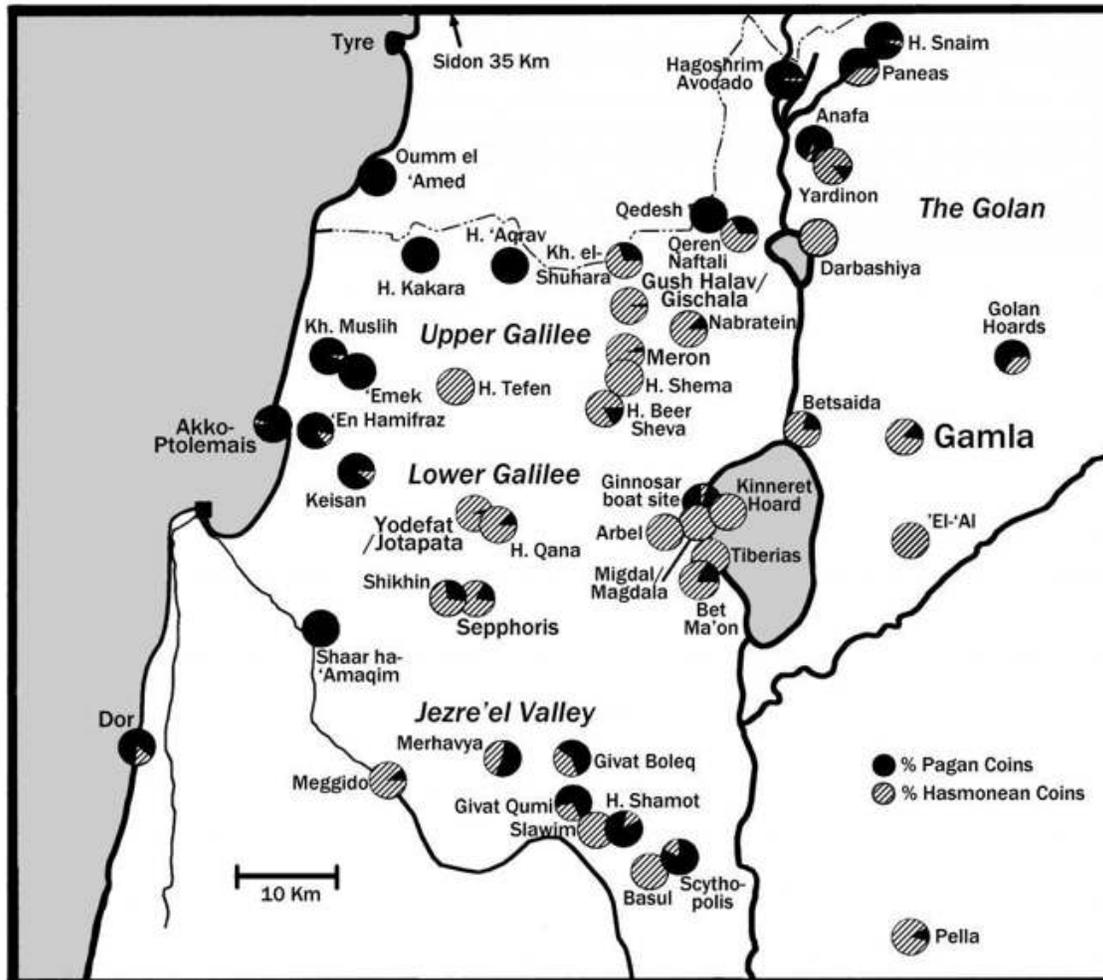
Chapter 15: “Never the Two Shall Meet? Urban-Rural Interaction in Lower Galilee,” Agnes Cho

An examination of a single arena of urban– rural interaction, namely, the agricultural sector of the economy, reveals that agricultural goods were produced in the villages by ancient farmers whose practice of agricultural determinism necessitated some level of inter-village trade. While this would seem to support the argument for a cooperative and interdependent urban– rural relationship, our study of the mechanics and organization of distribution reveals that agricultural goods were distributed primarily by members of the rural population under the direction of members of the urban population, who were concerned with minimizing their costs of transportation. As a result, the distribution process was structured in such a way that the rural population, specifically tenants and small farmers, bore the brunt of transportation costs. In short, in economic interactions between the urban and rural populations of Lower Galilee, the rural population was at a distinct disadvantage. More can certainly be said about urban– rural interaction and the urban– rural relationship. While pedology has been introduced into this conversation, the impact of the fishing industry on the Kinneret should also be considered. Urban and rural populations may have interacted for legal, religious, familial, or other reasons, and these await further study. Consideration should be given to interregional trade as well, for Lower Galilee did not exist in isolation from Upper Galilee, Judea, or the Decapolis. Nevertheless, it is clear from this study that urban– rural interaction can and must be considered in evaluating Lower Galilee’s urban– rural relationship.

Chapter 16: “Inner Village Life in Galilee: A Diverse and Complex Phenomenon,” Sharon Lea Mattila

“Moreover, it has been common to depict most of the non-elite as a homogeneous mass of “peasants”: members of self-provisioning “peasant family farms” who lived in tradition-bound, autarchic village communities just above the level of subsistence after the ruling, parasitic, urban elite extracted rents and taxes”. . .I will demonstrate that *all* of the data consistently undermine the conventional wisdom outlined above” (vol.1:312-13)

Jews avoided almost all kinds of imported wares, including *Eastern Terra Sigillata A* (ETSA) and that, along with their aversion to any kind of figurative art marks a distinctive phenomenon of the Hasmonean Herodian period. The strong Jewish vs. pagan contrast in the archaeological record of Hasmonean and Herodian areas likely reflects concerns for purity but also nationalism—messianic or otherwise. The distribution of coinage shows the trend, with relatively few “pagan” coins in Jewish areas.



“I have surveyed above a mass of evidence indicating the relative sophistication of village life and the relative wealth of some villagers in the Galilee starting as early as Hasmonean times and continuing through the Roman and Byzantine periods, and this survey is far from exhaustive. While there were clear shifts in trade patterns over these centuries, the data give no indication that Galilean villagers were “peasants,” innately averse to market exchange with other villagers, other villages, the Galilean towns, or in the earlier periods the city of Jerusalem. Indeed, the data clearly demonstrate quite the contrary: namely, that villagers were ready participants in such market exchange.”

Chapter 17: “Debate: Was the Galilean Economy Oppressive or Prosperous? Between Douglas E. Oakman arguing exploitation and J. Andrew Overman arguing economic health.

Overman conclusion:

The broader observations that Susan E. Alcock has made about the eastern Mediterranean economically hold also for Galilee, as we suspect they should. Her survey reflects a modest measure of sustained economic growth. Much of the east is more urbanized than the west. In addition, she observes that, in the eastern Mediterranean setting, growing rural settlements develop and maintain connections with larger towns and cities in their area. This is often done through landowners who might live in cities or towns but own larger tracts of land beyond the towns. Veterans' colonies, or so-called royal lands, might fit this description. A picture of Galilee has emerged slowly over the last several decades of work in the field that obviously and reasonably positions Galilee economically in the broader eastern Mediterranean world. Galilee was not unusual in this respect.

Shipping amphora and Terra Sigillata pottery are virtually ubiquitous in most Galilean excavations. Roman-period technologies, trade patterns, and infrastructure became part of Galilean life as well. As Galilee was enveloped into or ensconced in the broader Roman East, so the systems and advances associated with this period became part of Galilean life. What we see on the ground is a developing, productive, growing Galilean economy. Numerous villages and cities were founded or expanded during our period. It is a picture of relative economic health. But economic health is relative, and in every economy there are people who profit more than others, and profit from others. It is hard to imagine an economy in which this is not also a reality. Moreover, economic data and development are not the same as economic justice. Sometimes these two topics conflate. What is just or fair is not the same as economic trends or developments. There were, precisely during our period, several Galileans who attempted to draw people's attention to this distinction and obdurate datum.

Chapter 18: "Taxation and Other Sources of Government Income in the Galilee of Herod and Antipas," Fabian Udoh

The common view that taxation under these rulers is *the decisive factor* that explains socioeconomic deterioration and spiraling conflicts that "must have" characterized Judea in the early Roman period should be questioned.

There are two kinds of basic taxes: *Tribute* (phoros) are levied on a subject people by a foreign power either directly on an annual basis or indirectly in the form of taxes on agricultural production, tolls, duties, etc. and poll taxes (*epikephaleion*).

In the Hasmonean period Jews did not pay the "tribute" because that had been an obligation associated with the Seleucid rulers. Julius Caesar exempted the Jews from some of the more notorious aspects of Roman provincial administration: billeting, military service, requisition of transport animals, and confiscation of the Temple tax. Rome did not consider any of Judea to be public land, i.e. belonging to the Roman people. There is no evidence that Rome required payment of tribute while it was ruled by Herod or his sons. Herod, as a "friend and ally of the Roman people" was allowed to

benefit from the revenues of his territory. Herod's direct taxation fell on landed property (*tributum soli*) but we don't know the rates—perhaps a quarter of the crops and/or value of the land, computed over periods of six years. At times Herod remitted portions of these taxes in times of famine or hardship. We don't know what other taxes were imposed in terms of sales taxes, duties, and tolls by Herod. Prior to Vespasian converting the Temple tax to a poll tax on all Jews the native Jewish population in Judea and Galilee did not pay an annual head tax—neither under John Hyrcanus II, Herod, or his sons Antipas or Archelaus. The census under Quirinius in Judea in 6 CE was the “registration” of property.

Herod and his sons had massive family wealth from conquest, property owned, and various business operations including copper mines in Cyprus, money lending, and so forth. He acquired the extensive property and wealth of the Hasmonean royal family as well as the pro-Hasmonean Jewish aristocracy as well as the wealth of other defeated enemies in his rise to power.

Volume 2: Conclusions and Random Notes

Chapter 1: “The Transformation fro *Galil Ha-Goyim* to Jewish Galilee: The Archaeological Testimony of an Ethnic Change,” Mordechai Aviam

Summing up, there is no doubt that we have enough archaeological data to identify an ethnic change in the Galilee during the last decade of the second century BCE. The disappearance of the Galilean Course Ware (GCW) ceramics, which are good indicators of a pagan population, together with abandonment of the sites, is probably the most significant testimony for this change. At the same time or shortly thereafter, sites were settled with people who built stepped pools that we identify today as *mikva'ot* (Keren Naftali), who started using Jewish coins, and who stopped using imported wine in amphorae. Consequently, although we have no literary sources telling of such a change, we have to rely on the archaeological evidence to create the Galilee's historical and ethnic framework. Leibner discusses such a framework in his detailed study on the survey of eastern Lower Galilee, and he suggests a number of steps in the Jewish settlement of the Galilee similar to what I have suggested. Leibner tries to avoid any identification of the Jewish inhabitants in the Hasmonean time as “native” Jews or as converts and rejects both references in the book of Maccabees to Simon's campaign to the Galilee and Josephus's note on the conversion of the Itureans.

I propose that there is no reason to reject these stories as reflections of historical events. No dig will be able to prove either claim, as no one has found archaeological evidence for the conversion of the Idumeans. Although I base some of my own conclusions on surveys, we have to remember that arguments based on pottery gathered in surveys can quickly change when a site is excavated. For example, Leibner used evidence from Migdal (Magdala) to argue that the Hasmoneans established the town on a previously unoccupied site. Three years after his book was published, the excavations at

Magdala revealed a Hellenistic layer with GCW jars in situ. The fact that the GCW sites also contain coastal Phoenician pottery does not mean that the inhabitants were Phoenicians from the coast. I still believe that, although Josephus named the territory north of the Jewish Galilee “the land of the Tyrians,” he himself did not think that the inhabitants had anything to do with the city of Tyre. He refers to the large hinterland of Tyre, but the people were local, mountainous, pagan tribes. There is no clear evidence that they were not being converted and joining the new, large wave of Judean immigrants who arrived and settled in the Galilee. These gentiles brought with them the knowledge of the industrial oil press; they were probably subsidized by the Judean authorities of the Hasmonean kingdom; and they were able to develop a strong economy very quickly.

Today we know about two small urban centers— Sepphoris in western Galilee and Migdal in the eastern Galilee— that the Hasmoneans developed and that no doubt strongly influenced the rural areas surrounding them. Although we do not yet have evidence for an indigenous population that identified itself as Jews and called Judah Maccabee for rescue, I do think that they existed and were a minor part of the new Jewish Galilee formed by the Hasmoneans. From c. 110 BCE to the year 66 CE, a period of almost 180 years, Jewish Galilee rapidly developed, and, according to Josephus’s account of the Jewish settlements in this region (both Galilees and central Golan), there were 204 Jewish settlements. I think that the inhabitants of the Galilee in 38 BCE were obligated and loyal to the Hasmonean dynasty, not only because the Hasmoneans were priests and kings but also because the Galileans kept alive the memories of the settlement of the Galilee two to three generations earlier.

Chapter 2: “Sepphoris: “The Jewel of the Galilee,” James F. Strange

Sepphoris is not mentioned in the N.T. unless one includes the variant of Codex Bezae (D) at John 11:54 (Σαμφοθριν). It is truly a “city set on a hill” that cannot be hidden (Matt 5:14). Mt Tabor is 6 miles to the east. The east-west road from Acco (Ptolemais) to Tiberius on the Sea of Galilee ran just north of Sepphoris and the north-south Via Maris running via Megiddo for the Sea of Galilee intersected with this east-west intersection just north of Sepphoris at Shikhin.

The territory or district of Sepphoris had at least 80 villages, including Nazareth, the rabbis say it continued in all directions, flowing with “milk and honey.” Population estimates vary but estimates of 10-20 thousand are reasonable.



Herod made it his capital making it the “ornament of all Galilee” (*Antiquities* 18.27). It was destroyed by Varus in 4 BCE but rebuilt by Herod Antipas and made his capital—which was later moved to Tiberius. It consisted of impressive public buildings, markets (*cardo maximus and cardo decumanus*) colonnaded streets, a theater, and Herod’s palace (as yet unlocated) with main roads running north/south and east/west.

Antipas was banned by Caligula in 40 CE and Herod Agrippa I took over the city and territories. The city made peace with the Romans when the revolt broke out in 66 CE. Under Nero the capital was returned to Sepphoris along with the “royal bank and *the archives*” (Josephus, *Life* 37-39). There is a coin of Sepphoris minted under Agrippa II in 67/68 CE naming Nero Caesar on the reverse and “City of Peace” (ἰρηνόπολις) with a crossed cornucopia on the obverse.

Chapter 3: “Kefar Shikhin,” James R. Strange

The ancient site of Shikhin (ἰσικχίη/ Ἀσωχίς) is mentioned by Josephus and was populated by Judeans, including priests, by 104 BCE when Aristobulus I annexed Galilee to the Hasmonean kingdom. The archaeology has shown it to be a thoroughly Jewish town with Hasmonean coins, stone vessel fragments, *mikva’ot*, bones from kosher animals/kosher slaughtered, menorah decorated lamp fragment, or otherwise simple undecorated lamps. Shikhin also had a significant lamp production industry, supplying the whole region. Population is estimated at c. 1000.

Strange Conclusion: The picture emerging from texts, surveys, and the excavation of Shikhin is that soon after an influx of Jewish settlers moved there near the transition from the Early to the Late Hellenistic periods, Shikhin became a village of some importance, perhaps in part because of its associations with its nearest neighbor, Sepphoris. It was feasible for someone to live in one and work in the other. Moreover, Sepphoris and Shikhin oversaw the same intersection of major highways, and Shikhin’s residents had access to these routes, as well as to the network of smaller roads and tracks that knit Galilee’s villages into cultural, trade, political, and kinship systems. Sages knew about its high-quality clays and pottery, its storage jars, and its lamps because people all over the Galilee, including its cities, owned these products of Shikhin’s industry. Throughout its relatively brief history, Shikhin maintained an observant Jewish population, although we

cannot rule out the presence of non-Jews in the village. Its residents adopted features of Roman architecture for their synagogue (as was the Galilean custom), while keeping purity and otherwise maintaining a Jewish— that is, Judean— identity. These ideas will take clearer shape in the coming seasons.

Chapter 4: “Yodefata-Jotapata: A Jewish Galilean Town at the end of the Second Temple Period: The Results of an Archaeological Project,” Mordechai Aviam

Jotapata/Yodefata, 18 km northwest of Khirbet Qana was major thoroughly Jewish fortified town, much like Gamla to the west. Josephus describes it thus: “Now Jotapata is almost all of it built upon a precipice, having on all the other sides of it every way valleys immensely deep and steep, insomuch that those who would look down would have their sight fail them before it reaches to the bottom. It is only to be come at on the north side, where the utmost part of the city is built on the mountain, as it ends obliquely at a plain” (Josephus, *Jewish War* 3.158). It played an important part in the Revolt and this is where Josephus settled there and later escaped the “suicide” pact (Josephus, *Life* 270; *Jewish War* 3.329-398). Excavations by Mordechai Aviam have provided a rich understanding of the diverse social levels of village life in the time of Jesus—with very rich and very poor living in mixed proximity to one another.³ The archaeology offers a rather full picture of Galilean Jewish town life in the 1st century CE. With wine, olive oil, pottery production, very rich “Pompeian” style houses but also modest and poor, *mikva’ot*, stone vessels, kosher animals/slaughter. 78% of the lamps were produced in Jerusalem.

Chapter 5: “Khirbet Qana,” C. Thomas McCollough

N.T. Cana is 13 km north of Nazareth. It should be distinguished from Kafr Kanna 5km northeast of Nazareth visited by tourists and pilgrims today. Excavations at Khirbet Qana reveal a thriving Jewish city in the Roman period. There are a significant number of Hasmonean coins found, a large necropolis, and a village with 60 cisterns, thickly populated, perhaps with 1200 people. The Mishnah text *Ohalot* declares *Qeni* (קיני) as “clean” in terms of ritual purity based on Gentile dwellings (18:7-9). Later liturgical texts (6-7th century) locate the priestly course (משמר/ *mishmarot*) of Eliashib at Cana and an inscription from Caesarea, reflecting the situation after 70 CE., seems to give weight to this later identification.

Tabor Notes: Cana as a significant operational center in the gospel of John is every bit as important as Capernaum in the gospel of Mark. The underlying narrative framework of

³ Mordechai Aviam, “Yodefata—Jotapata: A Jewish Galilean Town at the end of the Second Temple Period: The Results of an Archaeological Project,” in *Galilee in the Late Second Temple and Mishnaic Periods*, vol. 2, *Life, Culture, and Society*, ed. David A. Fiensy and James Riley Strange (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 109-126.

John that scholars call the “Signs Source” clearly has Cana in Galilee as the operational HQ of Jesus. He and his disciples are invited to a wedding there where he performs his “water to wine” sign as the first of his career in John (John 2:1-12). Jesus’ mother clearly has familial connections to the host of the wedding. Although Jesus takes his mother, brothers, and disciples to Capernaum shortly after this scene they only stay there “a few days.” Their trip apparently has to do with gathering the brothers Peter and Andrew along with Philip who were all from Bethsaida, all of whom had been followers of John the Baptizer. Jesus has a baptizing mission of his own planned for the late spring and summer—after Passover (John 3:22-23; 4:1-3). Nathaniel (known as Bartholomew in the Synoptics, Mark 3:18; Matt 10:1-4; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:13-14) was from Cana and most probably provided the connection Jesus had to that city coupled with whatever relationship Mary had to the bridegroom at the wedding there—perhaps Jesus’ sister marrying into the family of Nathaniel (John 21:2). Jesus returns to Cana as his base of operations and extends himself to Capernaum—but from Cana (John 4:46; 6:17-59). Jesus pronounces “woes” upon Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida—the cities on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee (Q 10:12-15). The Signs Gospel implies a continuous stay in Cana.⁴

Josephus mentions Cana, Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Tarichaea (Magdala) in connection with the events of 66 CE. when Vespasian had arrived on the coast (*Life* 399-403). He made Cana his base of operations (*Life* 86; 207 “Plain of Asochis/Bet Netofa valley) and also says he lived at Shikhin (*Asochis*) (*Life* 384)

Chapter 6: “Karm er-Ras near Kafr Kanna,” Yardenna Alexandre

Name means “the top orchard,” located on the low hill on the western side of present day Kafr Kanna. There is a copious Kanna spring .5km southwest and in early Roman times this site was the center of the ancient town with present Kafr Kanna developing later just to the southeast. All the early Roman finds reflect a common Jewish culture known throughout the Galilee in the smaller towns and villages.

Chapter 7: “Kafr Kanna (The Franciscan Church),” F. Massimo Luca, OFM

Pilgrim accounts possible favor this site just northeast of Nazareth as New Testament Cana, though the town Josephus calls Cana, that he makes his HQ, seems to fit Khirbet Qana much better (John 2: 1-12; *Life* 86).

⁴ Peter Richardson, “What Has Cana to Do with Capernaum?” (*New Testament Studies* 2002:48: 314-331)

Chapter 8: “Nazareth,” James F. Strange

Nazareth was five miles south of Sepphoris but better connected to Yafia and other nearby villages. The main road from the coast to Tiberius was just north of Sepphoris so missed Nazareth. The Via Maris skirted Yaphia, a town Josephus stayed in that was much larger and more important than Nazareth (*Life* 230).

Nazareth (Ναζαρά, Ναζαρέτ/Ναζαρέθ cf. Ναζωραϊος/Ναζαρηνός) was a tiny village perhaps 150 people at most in the hills south of Sepphoris. It likely gets its name (“little Branch Town”) from Isaiah 11:1 “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse, from his roots a Branch (נצר) will bear fruit.”

The ancient village was nestled in the valley between the hills that run east-west, likely around the spring. Excavations have revealed remains of 1st century CE. structures. We know from the 1962 Caesarea inscription that the town is spelled with a Tzade not a Zayin—thus distinguishing it from Nazir or Nazirite (Numbers 6:1-21). Nazareth likely was affiliated with the larger village of Japhia (*Yafa*), a fortified city just to the southwest in the same range of hills. Josephus calls Japhia the largest village in Galilee with a dense population, fortified with a double wall. He says he settled there at one point and Vespasian captured the city shortly after Yosefat (Josephus, *Life* 230, 270; Josephus, *Jewish War* 3.289-306). Nazareth is listed in an inscription found at Caesarea as one of the towns of the 24 courses (משמרת/*mishmarot*) of the priests, that of Happizzes (1 Chron 24:15) who settled in Galilee after the Revolt. This identification is also found in the 6th century CE. Hebrew liturgical poem of Kalir. These sources also locate the priestly course of Eliashib at Cana and that of Jeshebeab, the fourteenth course, in Shikhin.⁵

Chapter 12: “Capernaum, Village of Nahum, from Hellenistic to Byzantine Times,” Sharon Lea Mattila

Tabor Notes: Capernaum is 15 km (9.3 miles) north of Tiberius. Jesus pronounces “woes” upon Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida—the cities on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee (Q 10:12-15). In the gospel of Mark (followed by Matt and Lk), Capernaum, the home of the brothers Peter and Andrew along with the sons of Zebedee, James and John, becomes a kind of HQ or base of operations for Jesus (Mark 1:21; 2:1-12; 3:19; 9:33)

East of the excavated Franciscan property recent excavations have revealed a military garrison with a Roman bath and nicer homes than those of the local village. This relates to the Centurion who is so highly commended by Jesus (Luke 7:1-10).

⁵ Samuel Klein, *Beiträge zur Geographie and Geschichte Galiläas* (Leipzig: R. Haupt, 1909), 66-67.

Chapter 13: “Bethsaida,” Rami Arav and Carl E. Savage

Today the site is 2 km from the shore of the Sea of Galilee and 100 m from the east bank of the Jordan River. The N.T. site was in the territory of Philip Herod, brother of Antipas. The city dates back to the 10th to 8th centuries BCE and was destroyed by the Assyrians but rebuilt in Hellenistic times. In the 1st century it is less remarkable but strategic. It was made a *polis* in 30 CE, a “second city” of Philip’s tetrarchy.

Bethsaida was of mixed Jewish and Gentile population and Philip built a Temple to honor Livia/Julia but there are no typical features of a full Hellenistic city—e.g. theater, agora, mosaics, frescoes, colonnaded streets, or classic Greek architecture.

Chapter 14: “Magdala/Taricheae,” Stefano De Luca and Anna Lena

Magdala/Migdal (מגדל/מגדלא) known in Greek and Latin sources as Taricheae (Ταριχῆαι/Ταριχαΐαι) was a city of remarkable importance well established in the 1st century BCE when Hasmonean power extended into the Galilee. Migdal-Nunia (“fish tower”) and Tarichea (“salted fish”) seem to pinpoint the essential idea behind the names in both Hebrew and Greek. Josephus describes the city in detail, including a sea-battle during the revolt (*War* 3.522-531). The city had walls and gates and included a hippodrome and baths. Josephus reports the population as 40,000 and his account of the sea-battle and its aftermath numbers casualties in the tens of thousands (6700 killed in the battle, 1200 subsequently by a tribunal, 6000 were sent to Nero to build the Corinthian canal, and 30,400 enslaved). Many scholars find these figures to be impossible exaggerations. The small synagogue uncovered in 2009 is the most lavishly decorated of the period with mosaics of the meander pattern and Pompeian style frescos associated with Herodian palaces and the priestly mansion in Jerusalem. The city was clearly Jewish but had an abundance of Hellenistic/non-Jewish elements in terms of architecture, goods, and decorations and according to Josephus welcomed foreigners with warm hospitality.

Overview: Uzi Leibner has brilliantly discussed the urban nature of Taricheae by analyzing both the sources and the archaeological data. With the new archaeological results, the urban character of the city in the Late Hellenistic– Early Roman period is even more convincing. Apart from the extent and population density of the site, if one could verify the criteria required to determine a settlement’s degree of urbanization, in Magdala/ Taricheae one should note the existence of: (1) centers for the management of public affairs (synagogue, agoranomoi) with industrial and residential centers organized in a well-planned urban layout; (2) public buildings such as the harbor, the quadriporticus, the synagogue, the bath complex, the fountains, and the water tower; (3) entertainment structures such as the thermae and the hippodrome recorded by Josephus (*Life* 132, 138; *Jewish War* 2.599), which has not yet been identified; (4) a system for the distribution of springwaters and runoff wastewater; (5) an agricultural hinterland

comprising rural villages, such as probably the Ḥamam settlement to the west and other minor centers to the north; (6) recognition of a special status by the central government as the capital of a toparchy during the Hasmonean period and the reign of Agrippa II.

No remains of the city walls mentioned by Josephus have survived (*Life* 142, 156; *Jewish War* 3.462–465; cf. *Jewish War* 2.606, 609), if we exclude the walling up of the north–south road to the southwest of the synagogue. This wall reused architectural elements of the synagogue and left the dismantled synagogue outside of the supposed fortification. The wall could be a defensive work built during the First or (perhaps) during the Second Jewish Revolt. In this context, the Middle Roman pottery and an iron sword may have a parallel in the destruction layer identified at the site of Wadi Ḥamam, which has been reliably dated to 130 CE.

Contrary to the southern area, which shows a continuity of settlement from the second century BCE to the fourth century CE, the northern area apparently was progressively abandoned between the end of the first century and the later second century CE. Evidently, large areas of the city were consistently damaged because of the two Jewish Revolts. A level of destruction dating back to 67 CE was also found in the southern sector: for instance, the destruction strata in the pools E22 and in the vat of E19 where pre-70 CE materials were collected along with wooden vessels and iron weapons (cf. fig. D). The fact that, except for some areas, the site was continuously inhabited even after the revolt, could reflect the clear distinction made by Josephus between the native (in certain cases aristocratic; see *Life* 131) inhabitants of the city (ὁ ἐπιχώριος) and the foreigners (ὁ ἔπηλυσ), that is, the newcomer rebels from “Trachonitis, and Gaulanitis, and of Hippos, and some of Gadara,” who were captured, killed, or sold into slavery after the capture of the city (*Jewish War* 3.500; 542). In an interesting passage of *Life* 142, Josephus stresses the warm hospitality (φιλοξενωτάτην, superlative of φιλόξενος, “loving strangers, hospitable”) of the city toward foreigners, who were accommodated there in great numbers. Despite Josephus’s use of rhetoric to explain the causes of the defeat (see also *Life* 143, 152, and 162, which mention resident aliens), the archaeology has confirmed this attitude.

Indeed, the material culture found at the site expresses both Jewish and Greco-Roman sensibilities. The predominantly aniconic ornamental motifs in the artwork reflect Jewish tastes in the Early Roman period, as we see in the case of the synagogue decorations and finds. In *Life* 159, Josephus mentions the residents’ concern about keeping the Sabbath. Other pieces of evidence, understood as ethnic indicators by some scholars, also point to a majority Jewish population. Especially in the Roman period, we found a predominance of Kefar Shikhin and Kefar Ḥananya pottery with Herodian lamps and chalk vessels (fig. J) and hundreds of Hasmonean coins spread everywhere in the site, along with other local or imported lamps, kitchenware, tableware, and storage ware, including a considerable number of glass vessels (fig. M).

Some elements, however, usually interpreted as indicating the presence of a non-Jewish population, were found among both architectural features (e.g. hippodrome, Roman-style *thermae* and decorations, Roman port engineering know-how, iconographic and epigraphic themes of mosaics, and so on) and iconic and figurative motifs depicted on various supports, such as the iconography of Tanit-Astarte on a weight, a virile head wearing a pileum engraved on a basalt frieze (fig. T), dolphins (on oil lamps and mosaics, fig. S), erotic and animal scenes on discus oil lamps, a phallic cippus, an intaglio signet

ring depicting an eagle standing on a thunderbolt (fig. O), a glass pendant impressed with the image of a lion with a raised tail, bronze zoomorphic feet, and other things. Several so-called Galilean Coarse Ware (GCW) pithoi— usually identified as local pagan artifacts— were found in the Hellenistic strata.

Three Greek inscriptions (on a mosaic, on the lead weight, and on an imported amphora) and one Latin (a seal impression on a Syrian mortarium) were found.

This evidence is associated with a number of mainly imported luxury goods (marble, fine ware vessels, glass, bronze keys, bone or bronze hairpins and sewing needles, bronze specilla, cosmetic spoons, and so on), which reflect a high standard of living as a consequence of a generally healthy urban and diversified economy. The archaeological and literary evidence draws a picture of a city inhabited by a strongly hellenized and romanized Jewish population. The economic indicators, such as the currency and imported goods, appear to result from long-range commercial relationships with the Phoenician and Syrian cities to the north and with the district of the Decapolis to the east. Certainly the commercial enterprise took advantage of the town's strategic location at the intersection of the region's main routes, and from the harbor's ability to manage a high volume of incoming and outgoing traffic. Josephus lists a fleet of 230 boats (*Jewish War* 2.635; cf. *Life* 155– 166) prior to and during the naval battle (*Jewish War* 3.522– 531), including some relatively small boats (σκάφη μικρά) used for piracy (ληστρικά; J.W. 3.523). This type of “piratical” (ληστρική) boat may roughly correspond to the class of *myoparo* to which the boat at Ygal Allon Center in Ginosar is ascribed.

Chapter 18: “Gush Halav (Gischala),” James F. Strange

Gush Halav (גוש חלב) also known as Γίσχάλα (Gishchala) (modern “Jish” or “Gish”) is north of Mt Meiron, a Jewish town well-known to Josephus and important in the 1st century CE.

Jerome mentions that “Paul who was formerly Saul, outside the number of the twelve apostles, was of the tribe of Benjamin and the town of Giscalis (Lat. *Giscalis*) in Judea. When this was captured by the Romans he migrated with his parents to Tarsus in Cilicia” (*On Illustrious Men* 5). He repeats that Paul's parents are from Gyscalis in his *Commentary on Philemon* (PL 20.617).

Conclusion: Gush Ḥalav expanded in the Early Roman period with the growth of Galilean Jewish populations under Herod the Great. The fortunes of the town were connected with oil production, according to the ancient literary citations; that is, Gush Ḥalav was known as an agricultural town or large village. It had economic ties to Tyre and Antioch, in view of the number of coins from these mints found in excavations. We read nothing of Gush Ḥalav under Herod or under his son Antipas, but surely it was a thriving Jewish town. During the First Revolt against Rome, Gush Ḥalav, under its Greek name Gischala, played an active role in the resistance against Titus with John of Gischala and received a moat and earthwork defenses. The height of expansion of the village occurred after the period of our purview and resulted in synagogue building in the lower

city and probably elsewhere. There is occupation both in the lower city and in the upper city of the site through the fifth century CE, and it figures in medieval literary sources. Gush Ḥalav was the traditional burial place of several rabbis in the tradition.