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0521846471 - Greco-Roman Culture and the Galilee of Jesus

Mark A. Chancey

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Introduction

By the time of Jesus, all Judaism was Hellenistic Judaism. Martin Hengel's dictum, articulated in his massive book *Judaism and Hellenism* and elaborated upon in follow-up projects, has been enormously influential.¹ His review of evidence from the Persian through the early rabbinic periods demonstrated that Hellenistic influence was felt in many spheres of Jewish life in Palestine: linguistic, literary, educational, architectural, religious, philosophical, artistic, political, economic, and military. Collectively a tour de force, his works exposed the problematic nature of sharp differentiations between Judaism in the Mediterranean Diaspora and Judaism in Palestine. Hengel argued that any use of the phrase "Hellenistic Judaism" that excludes Palestinian Judaism is inappropriate, and any effort to portray Palestinian Judaism as more "orthodox" than Diaspora Judaism on the basis of its supposedly lesser Hellenization is doomed to failure. Hengel has had his critics,² but his main point

¹ *Judaism and Hellenism*, trans. John Bowden, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), especially vol. 1, 104; *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians: Aspects of the Hellenization of Judaism in the Pre-Christian Period*, trans. John Bowden (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); *The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989); "Judaism and Hellenism Revisited," in John J. Collins and Gregory E. Sterling, eds., *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 6–37.

² Samuel Sandmel, "Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism and Christianity: The Question of the Comfortable Theory," *HUCA* 50 (1979): 137–148; Samuel Sandmel, review of Martin Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus: Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1973), *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 11:4 (1974): 701–702; Louis H. Feldman, "How Much Hellenism in Jewish Palestine?" *HUCA* (1986): 83–111; Louis H. Feldman, "Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism* in Retrospect," *JBL* 96 (1977):

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is rightly accepted as conventional wisdom in most sectors of New Testament scholarship: Palestinian Judaism must be understood as a part of, not apart from, Hellenistic Judaism.

Judaism in Galilee was no exception. It, too, felt the impact of Greek culture, and no one can any longer imagine Jesus living, as it were, on an isolated and untouched island of Semitic culture in a sea of Hellenism.³ Like the rest of Palestine, it came under the influence of yet another empire's culture when it fell into the orbit of Rome, a point that Hengel and others also correctly made. Many scholars regarded archaeological finds in the 1980s and 1990s as further confirmation of Hengel's arguments. Images of the region had varied in earlier scholarship, with some portraying it as thoroughly Hellenized and others as backwater and uncultured.⁴ The weight of majority view has now shifted towards the view that Galilee fully exhibited key aspects of Greco-Roman culture. Hengel had argued that Greek was widely used in Palestine; excavations in Galilee found numerous Greek inscriptions. Hengel had drawn attention to the presence of Greco-Roman architectural forms; archaeologists uncovered new examples of such buildings in Galilee. Hengel had noted the importance of Greco-Roman artistic influence; projects in Galilee discovered mosaics, frescoes, figurines, and other artifacts reflecting that influence.

Excavations at Sepphoris, located less than four miles from Nazareth, took pride of place in discussions of the region, at least within New Testament scholarship. A theater had been uncovered there in 1931, and more recently, bathhouses, a basilical building,

371–382; cf. also Tessa Rajak, "Judaism and Hellenism Revisited," in *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1–11 and Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, 2 vols. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), vol. 1, 148–153.

³ The metaphor's phrasing is from Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism*, vol. 1, 311; cf. Wayne A. Meeks, "Judaism, Hellenism, and the Birth of Christianity," in Troels Engberg-Pedersen, ed., *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide* (Louisville, Ken.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 17–27, esp. 24–25.

⁴ The most famous depiction of Galilee as rural and bucolic is found in Geza Vermes's *Jesus the Jew* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975). For a review of scholarship on Galilee, see Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 16–22; Halvor Moxnes, "The Construction of Galilee as a Place for the Historical Jesus – Part I," *BTB* 31 (2001): 26–37 and "The Construction of Galilee as a Place for the Historical Jesus – Part II," *BTB* 31 (2001): 64–77.

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and an aqueduct have been excavated. At least some of the city's streets were shown to be organized in a grid pattern, a characteristic feature of both Greek and Roman cities. The city's spectacular mosaics contained Dionysiac imagery, including a depiction of a procession in honor of Dionysos as well as a symposium with Heracles. Another mosaic showed flora and fauna of the Nile, and yet another portrayed Orpheus. These mosaics bore Greek inscriptions, as did the city's coins, a market weight, and other objects.⁵

Though Sepphoris received the lion's share of attention, numerous other sites were also excavated and older digs attracted renewed interest.⁶ The necropolis at Beth She'arim had been investigated in 1936–1940 and 1953–1958, but the full report had not been translated from Hebrew into English until the 1970s. With nearly three hundred inscriptions, the catacomb complex was increasingly cited as an exemplar of the region's Hellenistic milieu. So was Tiberias, though the presence of the modern city by the same name made it difficult to excavate. On the basis of several categories of evidence – architecture, coins, various forms of art, inscriptions, Greek and Latin loanwords and names in Jewish sources, the presence of imports from elsewhere in the Mediterranean – Lower Galilee, especially, was increasingly seen as no less Hellenized and urbanized than anywhere else in the Roman world.⁷

⁵ Eric M. Meyers, Ehud Netzer, and Carol L. Meyers, "Sepphoris: Ornament of all Galilee," *BA* 49 (1989): 4–19; James F. Strange, "Sepphoris," *ABD*, vol. 5, 1090–1093; Eric M. Meyers, "Roman Sepphoris in Light of New Archaeological Evidence and Recent Research," in Lee I. Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 321–338. For more recent reviews, see Mark Chancey and Eric M. Meyers, "How Jewish was Sepphoris in Jesus' Time?" *BAR* 26:4 (2000): 18–33, 61; Mark A. Chancey, "The Cultural Milieu of Ancient Sepphoris," *NTS* 47:2 (2001): 127–145; Chancey, *Myth*, 69–83.

⁶ J. Andrew Overman provides a thorough overview in "Recent Advances in the Archaeology of the Galilee in the Roman Period," *CRBS* 1 (1993): 35–57.

⁷ The following works, many by scholars who later revised their positions, have often been cited to support the view of a thoroughly Hellenized Galilee: Eric M. Meyers, "The Cultural Setting of Galilee: The Case of Regionalism and Early Judaism," in *ANRW* 2.19.1, 686–702; Eric M. Meyers and James F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis, and Early Christianity* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), 31–47; J. Andrew Overman, "Who Were the First Urban Christians? Urbanization in Galilee in the First Century," in J. David Lull, ed., *SBLSP 1988* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 160–168; Douglas R. Edwards, "First-Century

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In light of these findings, few New Testament scholars would seriously dispute that Galilean culture indeed reflected Greek and Roman influences. Yet, if consensus exists on that basic point, confusion abounds about how extensive those influences were at different times and about the specific ways in which they were manifested. As impressive and influential as Hengel's work has been, some of his specific claims were oversimplified. Furthermore, much subsequent scholarship has gone well beyond Hengel in its characterizations of Greco-Roman culture in the world of Jesus. A review of statements often made about Jesus, his earliest followers, and their Galilean setting highlights issues that merit further examination.⁸

Scholars have frequently suggested, on the basis of numismatic and other inscriptions, that Greek was frequently spoken in the region, though it did not displace Aramaic as the dominant tongue.⁹ The use of Greek was not limited to the cities of Sepphoris and Tiberias; it might be heard in other Galilean communities as well, such as Capernaum, Magdala/Taricheae,¹⁰ and Chorazin.¹¹ Overall, it was proposed, the language was as common in Galilee as it was in Egypt and Asia Minor.¹² The fact that at least two of Jesus' disciples,

Urban/Rural Relations in Lower Galilee: Exploring the Archaeological and Literary Evidence," in Lull, *SBLSP 1988*, 169–182; Douglas R. Edwards, "The Socio-Economic and Cultural Ethos of the Lower Galilee in the First Century: Implications of the Nascent Jesus Movement," in Levine, *Galilee*, 39–52; Howard Clark Kee, "Early Christianity in the Galilee: Reassessing the Evidence from the Gospels," in Levine, *Galilee*, 3–22; James F. Strange, "Some Implications of Archaeology for New Testament Studies," in James H. Charlesworth and Walter P. Weaver, eds., *What has Archaeology to do with Faith?* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 23–59.

⁸ Many of the claims below have antecedents in earlier scholarship, but they have drawn new life from Hengel's influence and recent excavations. They are illustrative of certain types of arguments made about Galilee and are not intended to represent the full spectrum of scholarship.

⁹ Robert W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco: HarperSan-Francisco, 1996), 33–34, 78–79; Howard Clark Kee, *Jesus in History: An Approach to the Study in the Gospels*, 3rd ed., (Orlando, Fla.: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1996), 248; Kee, "Early Christianity"; Marcus J. Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time: The Historical Jesus & the Heart of Contemporary Faith* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), 26–27.

¹⁰ On the two names, see Chancey, *Myth*, 98–100.

¹¹ John E. Stambaugh and David L. Balch, *The New Testament in its Social Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 92–93.

¹² Heinz O. Guenther, "Greek: The Home of Primitive Christianity," *TJT* 5 (1989): 247–279, esp. 250–251.

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Andrew and Philip, had Greek names showed that the language had gained usage even among the lower socio-economic classes.¹³ It was thus quite likely that Jesus himself spoke at least a little Greek, raising the possibility that the gospels preserved some of his sayings verbatim. It was also now more easily imaginable that one or more of the gospels, perhaps Matthew or Mark, had been written in the region.¹⁴ An even earlier document, Q, believed by many to have been composed in Greek, might also have originated there.¹⁵

The proximity of Sepphoris to Nazareth made it likely that Jesus was exposed to the full range of Greco-Roman culture. He would have needed Greek to communicate with the city's diverse population, one that included a large number of gentiles. Antipas's construction projects could have created employment opportunities for a *tekton* like him, and the city, like others in the area, included many buildings characteristic of Greco-Roman urbanization – temples, bathhouses, a theater, and other monumental architecture. Jesus might have sat in the theater, watching classical plays. He might also have heard popular philosophers preaching on the city's corners.¹⁶

¹³ Hengel, 'Hellenization', 16.

¹⁴ Anthony J. Saldarini, "The Gospel of Matthew and Jewish-Christian Conflict in the Galilee," in Levine, *Galilee*, 23–38; Aaron M. Gale, "Tradition in Transition, or Antioch versus Sepphoris: Rethinking the Matthean Community's Location," in *SBLSP 2003* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003), 141–156.

¹⁵ James M. Robinson, "History of Q Research," in James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann, and John S. Kloppenborg, *The Critical Edition of Q* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press; Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2000), xix–lxxi; John S. Kloppenborg, "The Sayings Gospel Q: Recent Opinion on the People Behind the Document," *CRBS* 1 (1993): 9–34; John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 214–261; Jonathan L. Reed, "The Social Map of Q," in John S. Kloppenborg, ed., *Conflict and Invention: Literary, Rhetorical, and Social Studies on the Sayings Gospel Q* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1995), 17–36; Jonathan L. Reed, *Archaeology and the Galilean Jesus: A Re-Examination of the Evidence* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 2000), 170–196; Christopher M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 102–103; William E. Arnal, *Jesus and the Village Scribes* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 52–59; Leif E. Vaage, *Galilean Upstarts: Jesus' First Followers According to Q* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994).

¹⁶ Compare, for example, the various points made by Kee, "Early Christianity"; Funk, *Honest*, 33, 79; Overman, "Who were the First Urban Christians?"; and by Richard A. Batey in three works: "Is Not This the Carpenter?" *NTS* 30 (1984): 249–258; "Jesus and the Theatre," *NTS* 30 (1984): 563–574; and *Jesus and the Forgotten City: New Light on Sepphoris and the Urban World of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1991).

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Sepphoris was not alone in its mixed population. Tiberias, too, was home to a considerable number of gentiles, and the region as a whole could be characterized as “semipagan.”¹⁷ Jesus need not leave Galilee to encounter non-Jews; he would have had frequent interaction with them throughout his life. Some of these pagans were indigenous Galileans, while others were Phoenicians, Arabs, or descendants of Greek settlers.¹⁸ The region’s roads were major trade routes that bustled with merchant convoys and other travelers.

Galilee, like the rest of Palestine, was occupied by the Roman army, perhaps even settled by Roman colonists, according to some scholars.¹⁹ Two gospels preserve a memory of Jesus’ encounter with a Roman centurion (Matt. 8:5–13 and Luke 7:1–10). Roads built and paved by the Roman army and marked by Roman milestones crossed the region.²⁰ Sepphoris itself was a Roman administrative and military center.²¹ After finishing their lengthy terms of service, some Roman soldiers chose to stay in Antipas’s Galilee, retiring there.²² The region’s Romanization was thus no less thoroughgoing than its Hellenization.

In light of Galilee’s cosmopolitan and diverse cultural atmosphere, a wholesale re-imagining of Christian origins was in order. Both Jesus and his earliest followers – according to influential reconstructions of the earliest stratum of Q, a rootless, itinerant group of Galileans²³ – could be best understood as Cynic-like philosophers.²⁴ The

¹⁷ Funk, *Honest*, 33, 79; cf. Strange, “Some Implications.”

¹⁸ The influence of this view, which pre-dates recent archaeological work, is reflected in many Bible dictionary articles (Chancey, *Myth*, 1 n. 2).

¹⁹ James F. Strange, “First-Century Galilee from Archaeology and from the Texts,” in Eugene H. Lovering, Jr., ed., *SBLSP 1994* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 81–90; Marianne Sawicki, *Crossing Galilee: Architectures of Contact in the Occupied Land of Jesus* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 2000), 82–85, 88, 92–96, 178–179. On the characterization of Galilee as a colony or of the Roman “occupation” as “colonial,” see Sawicki, *Crossing Galilee*, 7, 27, 82, 88–89, 133, and Borg, *Meeting Jesus*, 52.

²⁰ Sawicki, *Crossing Galilee*, 112; cf. Funk, *Honest*, 12, 99–100.

²¹ Kee, “Early Christianity”; Batey, *Jesus*, 14, 81, 140.

²² Sawicki, *Crossing Galilee*, 141.

²³ Burton L. Mack, “Q and a Cynic-Like Jesus,” in William E. Arnal and Michel Desjardins, eds., *Whose Historical Jesus?* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997), 25–36 and *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Gospel Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993); Vaage, *Galilean Upstarts*; Arnal, *Jesus*.

²⁴ John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 74–88, 338–341; *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*

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argument has sometimes been framed as one of influence: Jesus had heard the teachings of Cynic philosophers at Sepphoris or while he traveled through the region. Though explicit evidence of Cynics in Galilee was lacking, to imagine a Cynic-free Galilee would be to imagine a Hellenism-free Galilee – and thus, by implication, an impossibility. If all Hellenism was Hellenistic Judaism, and Galilee's architecture, art, and inscriptions confirmed the region's full participation in the larger culture of the Greco-Roman world, then envisioning Jesus as a Jewish Cynic was not a problem. One scholar even suggested that protestations that Cynics were unlikely to be found in Galilee were, in fact, covert apologetic attempts to defend early Christianity's uniqueness.²⁵ At other times, the proponents of the Cynic thesis have utilized an argument of analogy: regardless of whether or not Jesus and the Q community actually encountered any Cynics, they were much like them and a comparison with them was especially illuminating. This argument, too, has frequently been accompanied by appeals to the high level of Hellenization purportedly attested in the archaeological record.

Such positions have not been universal, of course, and their conflation above for brevity's sake should not be interpreted as suggesting that a scholar who holds one also holds the others. Some of these statements, as will be seen in the course of this study, are quite reasonable, but most are built on shaky foundations. They sometimes seem to reflect one or more of several assumptions: that Greek and Roman cultures were homogenous across the Mediterranean region; that more evidence of those cultures has been found in

(San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), 114–122; “Itinerants and Householders in the Earliest Jesus Movement,” in Arnal and Desjardins, *Whose Historical Jesus?* 7–24. In *The Birth of Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 333–335, Crossan backs away from some of his earlier arguments, and the comparison with Cynics is missing entirely from his recent work with Jonathan L. Reed, which exhibits a more nuanced portrayal of Galilee (*Excavating Jesus: Beneath the Stones, Behind the Texts* [San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001]). F. Gerald Downing has collected parallels between Jesus' teachings and those of the Cynics in numerous works, including *Cynics and Christian Origins* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992); *Christ and the Cynics* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988); *Jesus and the Threat of Freedom* (London: SCM, 1987). Note also Burton L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 53–77; and Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 33.

²⁵ Vaage, *Galilean Upstarts*, 13, 145 n. 58.

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early first-century CE Galilee than is actually the case; that finds in Jerusalem, the coastal cities, and the Decapolis were representative of Galilee; or that evidence from the second or later centuries accurately reflects the situation in the early first century. The last assumption is especially common. At times, depictions of the Galilee of Jesus have relied so heavily on late data that is it almost as if Jesus were being contextualized within the third century, rather than the first.²⁶

If we are to understand the particularity of the Galilean context of Jesus and his followers, we must acknowledge the significance of chronological development, regional variations, and class distinctions in the ways Hellenistic, Roman, and local cultures interacted. With these factors in mind, this study investigates the emergence of certain aspects of Greco-Roman in Galilee and the significance of that cultural interaction for the Historical Jesus and early Judaism. The chief challenges to such a project are deciding what phenomena to include within the terms “Hellenistic” and “Roman” and determining how to envision the interaction of those cultures with local ones.

Writing specifically of “Hellenism,” Hengel pointed out that the word is so broad and all encompassing that it is not always useful: “it says too much, and precisely because of that it says too little.”²⁷ As several scholars have noted, “Hellenistic” can be used to indicate a wide variety of things:

- the speaking of Greek (from minimal ability to full fluency)
- familiarity with Greek philosophy and literature
- distinctively Greek architectural forms (i.e., stadiums, theaters, gymnasia)
- use of imported Greek tableware and cookware, or, at least, local imitations
- civic organization like a polis, with a Greek constitution, *boule*, and officials.

²⁶ Mark A. Chancey, “Galilee and Greco-Roman Culture in the Time of Jesus: The Neglected Significance of Chronology,” *SBLSP 2003* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2003), 173–188.

²⁷ Hengel, *Hellenization*, 54.

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The word “Roman” lends itself just as easily to ambiguity. Studies that use terms like these must be explicit in identifying which specific aspects of culture they are investigating, careful not to imply that other phenomena should be excluded from the meanings of the terms, and mindful of the danger of lapsing into essentialism. A brief survey of related studies shows how other scholars have handled such issues.

G. W. Bowersock has argued that many studies of Hellenistic culture start with a problematic model: an understanding of “Hellenization” as “the deliberate or inevitable imposition of Greek ways over local ones.” In his view, the concept of “Hellenization” is “a useless barometer for assessing Greek culture” because it implies the replacement of one culture by another, a process that rarely actually occurred. Local cultures did not disappear under the weight of Greek culture but instead found new ways to express themselves by adopting aspects of that culture. If “Hellenization” is a misleading word, the concept of “Hellenism” is nevertheless quite helpful. “Hellenism . . . represented language, thought, mythology, and images that constituted an extraordinarily flexible medium of both cultural and religious expression.” Thus, “it provided a new and more eloquent way of giving voice” to various peoples.²⁸

Lee I. Levine provides another possibility, describing “Hellenism” as the “cultural milieu (largely Greek) of the Hellenistic, Roman, and – to a somewhat more limited extent – Byzantine periods,” and “Hellenization” as “the process of adoption and adaptation of this culture on a local level.”²⁹ Other cultures also spread beyond their points of origin in the “Hellenistic world,” that is, the territories conquered by Alexander and his successors, and distinctions should be made “as to the degree of receptivity in each area [aspect of culture], as well as from region to region and from class to class.”³⁰ At particular places, particular groups might adapt specific aspects of Greek culture to their own needs, while other groups might reject

²⁸ G. W. Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), quotations from xi and 7; cf. Eric M. Meyers, “The Challenge of Hellenism for Early Judaism and Christianity,” *BA* 55 (1992): 84–91.

²⁹ Lee I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 16–17.

³⁰ Levine, *Judaism*, 22.

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those aspects. Furthermore, Levine emphasizes the importance of chronology, noting that evidence of Hellenism increases with the passing of each century.

The most thorough recent examination of the interaction of Hellenism and Judaism is that of John M. G. Barclay.³¹ Focusing on the Diaspora, Barclay defines Hellenism as a fusion of cultures after Alexander, characterizing it as “common urban culture in the eastern Mediterranean, founded on the Greek language . . . typically expressed in certain political and educational institutions and largely maintained by the social élite.”³² Noting several different spheres of culture (political, social, linguistic, educational, ideological, religious, and material culture), he argues that Jews might engage Hellenism in one area of life while ignoring it in others, and that there were differences in the degree of engagement. To deal with these phenomena, he utilizes the sociological concepts of assimilation, acculturation, and accommodation. He defines assimilation as the extent of social integration and interaction between Jews and non-Jews and acculturation as the level of familiarity with various aspects of Greek culture. Accommodation is conceptualized as the use to which acculturation is put, whether to embrace Greek culture fully, or to resist it by reinterpreting and expressing Jewish distinctiveness in new ways.³³ Barclay applies this model to describe the interplay between Judaism and Hellenism in various regions, with considerable attention to class differences. He might be critiqued on some points; he does not always differentiate clearly between Hellenistic and Roman cultural elements, and his discussion does not always pay sufficient attention to chronological developments.³⁴ His overall project, however, is a significant contribution, precisely because his guiding model is inherently flexible enough to handle diverse responses.

James F. Strange has addressed the issue of how Romanization affected material culture in Jewish Palestine. He suggests that we

³¹ John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

³² Barclay, *Jews*, 88.

³³ Barclay, *Jews*, 82–124, especially 90–98.

³⁴ Leonard V. Rutgers, “Recent Trends in the Study of Ancient Diaspora Judaism,” in *The Hidden Heritage of Diaspora Judaism*, 2nd edn. (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 15–44.