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**Key words:** Tel Shalem, Bar Kokhba Revolt, Galilee, Beth Shean, Caesarea, Petra, Dura Europos, Hadrian, Tineius Rufus, *legio X Fretensis*, *legio VI Ferrata*

**Abstract:** In the research on the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-136 CE); one of the central subjects that were given prominent attention was the territorial extent of the second revolt. During all the years of research on this geographical question, two schools of thought were formed. One of them is that of the maximalists, who claim that the revolt spread through the entire Provincia Judaea and even beyond it into neighboring provinces such as Provincia Arabia in the south and Provincia Syria in the north. The second one is that of the minimalists, who restrict the revolt to the area of the Judaeian hills and their immediate environs. The role of the Galilee region in the second revolt was discussed in great depth and centered on the question of whether the Galilee had taken part in the revolt. Since 1999, Professor Werner Eck of the University of Cologne focused on the power and range of this revolt from the Roman perspective. His general conclusion was that the second revolt was a central event in the history of the Roman Empire. Large military units participated in the event, which spread all over the province and even beyond. The rebels caused the Romans enormous casualties. They were forced to subdue the revolt savagely, causing the rebels massive losses. The revolt had a strong influence on the Roman Empire, and caused heavy damage to the Roman army that had immediate effects as well as long-term implications. His conclusions were based on a study of a variety of subjects including the archaeological discoveries from Tel Shalem, situated in the Beth Shean Valley, two kilometers south of Kibbutz Tirat Zvi and about 12 kilometers south of Scythopolis. The finds consisted of parts of a bronze statue and a head that was identified as that of the Roman emperor Hadrian, and a monumental inscription which had been inscribed in three lines on an arch that was 11 meters wide. According to W. Eck, these findings testify to the participation of the north, the Jordan Valley and the Galilee in the Second Revolt; and that the “Galilee felt the revolt more than has hitherto been conceded. A decisive battle may have been won here, not far from Caparcotna, the camp of the Second Legion in Judaea” (Eck 1999). This paper will re-examine the evidence from Tel Shalem, and other places in Galilee, mainly the findings from Kh. El-hamam in eastern Galilee, findings that were used to include the Galilee Region in the geographical expansion of the revolt. We will study anew the historical background for the erection of the Tel Shalem inscription, the various epigraphic interpretations, and other evidence and its implications for the study of the revolt. Our study will question some of the broadening assumptions of the revolt, and will leave out Galilee in general, and Tel Shalem in particular, from the geographical scope of the Bar Kokhba Revolt.

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\* A shorter version of the paper was delivered at the *Batchelder Conference for Biblical Archaeology*, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 10-12 November 2011.

In the research on the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-136 CE), one of the central subjects that were given prominent attention was the territorial extent of this second revolt. During all the years of research on this geographical question, two schools of thought were formed. One of them is that of the maximalists, who claim that the revolt spread through the entire *Provincia Judaea* and even beyond it, into neighboring provinces such as *Provincia Arabia* in the south, and *Provincia Syria* in the north. The second is that of the minimalists, who restrict the revolt to the area of the Judaeen hills and their immediate environs. The role of the Galilee region in the second revolt was discussed in great depth and centered on the question of whether the Galilee had taken part in the revolt.

During the discussion entitled “The Jewish Settlements in the Galilee in the Yavneh and Bar Kokhba Period,” held in 1977 with the participation of Aharon Oppenheimer, Moshe David Herr, Shmuel Safrai, Gideon Foerster, Yoram Zafirir and David Rokeach and published in Hebrew in *Cathedra*, Oppenheimer summed up the discussion regarding the participation of Galilee in the Bar Kokhba Revolt as follows:

Galilee did not take an active part specifically in this revolt, either because it was instigated for the sake of Jerusalem and even its aim and slogan was the ‘Freedom of Jerusalem,’ or because of the watchful eyes of the Roman authorities in the Galilee. This means that the camps and fortresses that were set up in the Galilee in the intervening period between the two revolts obstructed to a certain extent the ability of the Galileans to participate fully and actively in the Bar Kokhba revolt. However, it is possible—and even probable—that there also were some incidents of rebellion in the Galilee during the Bar Kokhba revolt.<sup>1</sup>

In rejection of this conclusion, Herr claimed that:

As in a number of cases in historical research, we unfortunately have to be content with the decision that there is no final proof in this matter, and it would therefore benefit more from denial rather than from affirmation.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of Herr’s suggestion to refrain from further discussion on the subject, the book that I published in 1991 gave a comprehensive appraisal of the part played by the Galilee in the second revolt based on literary, archaeological and numismatic evidence and reached the conclusion that during the years 132-136 CE no significant events took place in the Galilee that indicated its participation in the revolt.<sup>3</sup>

Since this is not the subject of the paper, I shall not use the many sources and testimonies that could be interpreted as evidence for incidents of the second revolt in the Galilee. Nor shall I deal with the differences between the population in Judaea and the population in the Galilee, which has been interpreted as a possible factor that inhibited Galilean Jewry from taking part in the second revolt. The discussion over the Bar Kokhba revolt flourished during the 1980s and 1990s; the studies were devoted to a variety of subjects, and the question about the part played by the Galilee and its population became a “closed question.”

In 1999, a “landmark” article was published on the second revolt, written by Werner Eck of the University of Cologne, a renowned scholar on Roman ancient history in gen-

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<sup>1</sup> Oppenheimer 1977: 63.

<sup>2</sup> Herr 1977: 73.

<sup>3</sup> Mor 1991.

eral, and particularly Roman military diplomas. The article, entitled “The Bar Kokhba Revolt: The Roman Point of View,”<sup>4</sup> focused on the power and range of this revolt from the Roman perspective. His general conclusion was that the second revolt was a central event in the history of the Roman Empire. Large military units participated in the event, which spread all over the province and even beyond. The rebels caused the Romans enormous casualties. The Romans were forced to subdue the revolt savagely, causing the rebels massive losses. The revolt had a strong influence on the Roman Empire, and brought heavy damage to the Roman army that had immediate effects as well as long-term implications. His conclusions were based on a study of five subjects:

1. The transference of Julius Severus, the Governor of *Provincia Britannia*, to command the defeated Roman army in *Provincia Judaea*.
2. Compulsory conscription throughout the Empire for various units in the Roman army as a result of Roman losses in Judaea.
3. Hadrian’s granting of decorations for excellence to the governors of neighboring provinces, Arabia and Syria, for their outstanding performance in battles within their area of command and also for their part in suppressing the revolt in Judaea. In addition, on Hadrian taking the title of Imperator for the second time.
4. The name *Provincia Judaea* was changed to *Provincia Syria-Palaestina* by Hadrian in reaction to the harrowing events that occurred during the revolt in Judaea.
5. The archaeological findings from Tel Shalem as testifying to the participation of the north, the Jordan Valley and the Galilee in the revolt.

In his summing up of the evidence from Tel Shalem, he concluded that:

Galilee felt the revolt more than has hitherto been conceded. A decisive battle may have been won here, not far from Caparcotna, the camp of the Second Legion in Judaea.<sup>5</sup>

At a conference held in Princeton in 2001, Glen Bowersock, a distinctive epigraphist and professor of Classical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton University, criticized Eck’s article, discussing at length mainly Eck’s epigraphic interpretation of the Tel Shalem findings.<sup>6</sup> In my lecture at the same conference, I also rejected point by point the inferences made by Eck regarding the subjects I noted above,<sup>7</sup> and arrived at the conclusion that the revolt took place in fairly restricted areas, and that in view of the evidence in hand the Galilee did not take part in the second revolt. Though Eck has persisted in a series of additional articles to argue that the revolt was very powerful, and expanded his hypothesis concerning the points he made earlier,<sup>8</sup> I decided to devote this paper only to the last point, and to the question: “What does Tel Shalem have to do with the Bar Kokhba revolt?”

What are the findings from Tel Shalem that in Eck’s opinion testify to the great importance of this site during the course of the second revolt? Tel Shalem is situated in the Beth Shean Valley, two kilometers south of Kibbutz Tirat Zvi and about 12 kilo-

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<sup>4</sup> Eck 1999: 76-89.

<sup>5</sup> Eck 1999: 88.

<sup>6</sup> Bowersock 2003: 171-180

<sup>7</sup> Mor 2003: 107-131.

<sup>8</sup> Eck’s considerations were repeated in different versions in various places: Eck 1999: 76-89; 2001a: 46-63; 2001b: 45; 2003a: 123-144; 2003b: 153-170; 2007: 49-54; 2012: 249-265.

meters south of Scythopolis. The site has command over an important crossroads between Scythopolis, Jericho and Shechem and over the Scythopolis-Legio-Ptolemais (Acre) road.

About 50 years ago, a building inscription of a vexillatio of the Legio VI Ferrata was found within the area of Tel Shalem.<sup>9</sup> Tzori and others linked the inscription with the existence of a Roman camp in the place where a unit of the additional second legion had already been stationed in *Provincia Judaea* since 117 CE. The command headquarters of the second legion was located in the Roman camp in Legio (Kfar Othnai), in today's region of the Megiddo crossroads. This region was a strategic location on the road between Caesarea and Beth Shean, on the southern slopes of the Jezreel Valley. By 120 CE, roads had already also been laid from the legion headquarters to the capital of the province, Caesarea,<sup>10</sup> as well as to Beth Shean,<sup>11</sup> Sepphoris,<sup>12</sup> and Acre.<sup>13</sup>

Gideon Foerster, an emeritus professor of archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, described with much excitement how he was urgently invited by his student, a member of Tirat Zvi, to come to the kibbutz after a guest from New York had made a discovery with a metal detector near Tel Shalem on July 25, 1975. The find consisted of parts of a bronze statue and a head that was identified as that of the Roman emperor Hadrian. Later on, more statue fragments and another head were also found in the area. In view of these finds, Foerster then conducted three short seasons of excavations in the years 1976-1978.

In January/February 1977, one and a half kilometers northeast of the Roman camp in Tel Shalem, three tombs were found unexpectedly, one of them built of cut stones that were fragments of a huge inscription written in Latin.<sup>14</sup> Foerster was a participant in the aforementioned discussion, published in July 1977, entitled "The Galilee on the Eve of the Bar Kokhba Revolt: Archaeological Evidence." He noted that:

The place in which the statue and the inscription on it were found is surprising in itself, since it was not known as a site of any significance. According to a probable reconstruction, the inscription was written in honor of the victory over Bar Kokhba. But, as said before, this is still merely a supposition.<sup>15</sup>

In the two articles published in 1999,<sup>16</sup> Eck dealt extensively with the reconstruction and deciphering of the monumental inscription which had been inscribed in three lines on an arch that was 11 meters wide. The letters of the inscription were gigantic in height: 41 cm in the first line, 24 cm in the second, and 18-19 cm in the third. From the inscrip-

<sup>9</sup> Tzori 1971: 53-54. On the inscription: VEXILLTO/LEG VI/FERR see also: *Hadashot Archeologiot* 57-58 (April 1976): 17-18; *Hadashot Archeologiot* 65-66 (April 1978): 9 (Hebr.).

<sup>10</sup> On the roads to Caesarea see: Roll & Ayalon 1986: 113-134; Roll & Ayalon: 1986/1987: 156-157; Peleg 1990: 19-32; Roll 1996: 556-557; 1999: 109-113, esp. note 6; Peleg 2002: 141-148; Tepper 2004: 47-82; Roll 2011: 239-256; Tepper 2011: 257-274 (with an extensive bibliography).

<sup>11</sup> Isaac & Roll 1982: 156-157; Roll & Ayalon 1986: 113-134.

<sup>12</sup> Hekker 1961: 175-186; Isaac & Roll, 1979a: 54-66 (= Isaac 1998: 182-195; Postscript, 196-197); Isaac & Roll 1979b: 149-156 (= Isaac 1998: 198-205; Postscript, 206-207); Isaac & Roll 2004: 41-54; Rea 1980: 220-221; Isaac & Roll 131-132 (= Isaac 1998: 208-209; Postscript, 210).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> See Foerster, Arubas & Mevorach 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Foerster 1977: 80.

<sup>16</sup> Eck 1999a: 87-88; Eck & Foerster 1999: 294-313.

tion and the fact that it was a dedication to Hadrian written in Latin, Eck inferred that this was part of a colossal arch. Although only a quarter of the letters in the inscription were found in the area, Eck managed to reconstruct it on the basis of the accepted formula for inscriptions of this kind:

**IMP CAES · DIVI· TRAIANI·PAR  
THICIF·DIVI·NERVAE·NEP·TRAIANO·HADRIANO·AUG  
PONTIFMAX · TRIB· POT· XX ·IMP· II·COS· III· P· P· S· P· Q· R<sup>17</sup>**

Line 1: The Caesar and Emperor, son of the divine Trajan

Line 2: Conqueror of the Parthians, the nephew of the divine Nerva.  
Traianus Hadrianus Augustus

Line 3: Pontifex Maximus, twenty times with tribune authority,  
imperator for the second time, consul for the third time, father of  
the homeland, the Senate, and the people of Rome (the dedicators  
of the arch).

Eck's reconstruction and completions of the titles of Hadrian, mainly in the third line of the inscription, have direct implications for the dating of the inscription. Since Hadrian had the authority of a tribune for the twentieth time, he was consul for the third time, and especially imperator for the second time (*Imperator iterum*, second acclamation as Imperator), all these numbers indicate that the year 136 CE is the definite date for the engraving of the inscription in the Tel Shalem camp. That is to say, the date tells us that the arch with the inscription engraved on it was erected after the suppression of the Bar Kokhba revolt.

The arch was therefore a Roman triumphal arch raised for the victory over the Bar Kokhba rebels, and the initiative for its erection was that of the Roman government that intentionally raised it in the war zone.

The date, however, raises a number of important questions that Eck himself had asked. Firstly, why was the arch with the inscription to honor Hadrian erected in such a peripheral location? Secondly, who was the person who instigated the erection of the arch and dedicated it to the emperor?

Before answering these questions, let us present the proposal made by Bowersock. He filled in the missing letters of the third line in the inscription in a different manner. In his view there are only two chronological indications in the inscription. The first was that Hadrian had been given the authority of a tribune for the 14th time, and the second was having been a consul for the third time. These two dates point to the year 130 CE, the time of Hadrian's visit in the region, which means that the arch and the dedication inscription may have been related to the occasion of Hadrian's tour of the region.<sup>18</sup>

Let us return to the questions mentioned above, and begin specifically with the date. The description of Hadrian as the "imperator for the second time" (IMP II) [second ac-

<sup>17</sup> Line 1: Imp(eratori) Cae[s(ari) divi T]ra[jani Par-]; Line 2: th[i]ci f[ilio] d[ivi Nervae nep(oti) Tr]aiano [Hadriano Aug(usto)]; Line 3: pon[t]if(i) m[ax(imo)], trib(unicia pot(estate) XX?, imp(eratori)I]I, co(n)s(uli) [III, p(atr)ri] p(atr)riae S(enatus) P(opulus) q(ue) R(omanus)?].

<sup>18</sup> Bowersock 2003: 172.

clamation as Imperator] in the reconstruction by Eck determines that the dating of the inscription should not be earlier than 136 CE. Bowersock continued:

But at this point of his argument he never told his readers why he thought the vertical hasta before COS has to belong to a second imperial acclamation at all, instead of the numeral for the tribunician power, the title that would certainly have followed the pontificate ... Eck had noted of the hasta: "Diese Zahl könnte zur tribunicia potestas gehört haben oder zu einer Imperatorenakklamation." But he never again returned to the first of these possibilities.<sup>19</sup>

According to Bowersock, Eck was aiming for a later date, and therefore rejected the possibility that the arch was erected by the legion with the argument that there was not enough space for inscribing its name, a claim that did not convince Bowersock.<sup>20</sup>

On the question of who had dedicated the inscription, Eck gives prominence to the fact that it was engraved in Latin, whereas this was a region in which the lingua franca of the provincial population was Greek. In Eck's view, the use of Latin negates the possibility that those who wrote the inscription were from the neighboring city of Beth Shean.

In his opinion, the gigantic lettering and the Latin language indicated that whoever dedicated the arch was a Latin speaker with the authority to erect an arch and dedicate it to the emperor, and that the area in which the arch was raised had to have been the site of an event of extraordinary achievement. Therefore, the name or title of the dedicator must have "closed" the inscription and appeared at the end of the third line.

According to these criteria, Eck notes two authorities that could have fulfilled these "conditions." The first is the governor of *Provincia Judaea*. The second is one of the legions permanently stationed in *Provincia Judaea*: Legio X Fretensis or Legio VI Ferrata. However, he rejects both proposals for the same reason, which is the lack of space in the third line of the inscription for the names of the governor and his titles, or for the name of the legion.<sup>21</sup>

According to Bowersock, if we limit ourselves to the two titles of Hadrian, that of holding the authority of a tribune 14 times and being a consul for the third time, than there are enough gaps in the third line that allow us to add the name of the legion that erected the arch. Following this suggestion, it is possible to add the name of the legion to the inscription: LEG X FRET.<sup>22</sup>

Concerning the possibility that the dedicator of the inscription was one of the two legions stationed in Judaea, apart from the claim about the lack of space in the inscription for the appearance of their names, Eck raises another argument to reject this option. In the history of the Roman legions there is only one example in which a legion honored an emperor. This event occurred during the Parthian wars near Dura Europos, when the Legio III Cyrenaica which had participated in Trajan's wars against Parthia dedicated an arch erected a mile away from the walls of Dura Europos in honor of Trajan's victory over the Parthians. It was built before Trajan received the additional title of Parthicus, and therefore should be dated before the year 116 CE.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Bowersock 2003: 174 and note 3.

<sup>20</sup> Bowersock 2003: 175.

<sup>21</sup> Eck 2003b: 159-162.

<sup>22</sup> Bowersock 2003: 175; Abramovitch 2011: 94-102; 239-241.

<sup>23</sup> Gould 1933: 56-65; 1936: 480-482. See also: *AE* 1982, 904; Bowersock 1982: 198.

Since the above example is a solitary one, Eck ruled out the possibility that the names of one of the legions—the Tenth Fretensis or the Sixth Ferrata—could have appeared in the third line of the Tel Shalem inscription. This argument is totally unacceptable to me, and I shall ask not even with a hint of cynicism whether the soldiers of the Third Legion Cyrenaica, who had indeed dedicated an arch to Trajan, were at all interested in creating a precedent, or if they even discussed the question that an arch could not be erected because in the history of the legions it had not previously been experienced. Or perhaps they were absolutely forbidden to erect an arch, because nothing like this had ever been done before?

Apparently, since 2005 there was a possible additional example for a legion honoring an Emperor, namely the monumental inscription found in Jerusalem at the Haram al-Sharif reported by Tibur Gröll.<sup>24</sup> His restoration, completion and interpretation of the inscription pointed to a victory arch, that its building was initiated by Lucius Flavius Silva, the governor of Judaea, the commander of the legion X Fretensis, and the conqueror of Masada. At the end of the great Revolt 70 CE the legion X Fretensis built an arch and engraved an inscription honoring Emperors Vespasian and Titus in honor of their victory in Judaea.<sup>25</sup>

However, following Cotton and Eck's criticism of Gröll's conclusions, we must reject the inscription as possible evidence for the phenomenon of a legion erecting an arch to honor the emperor. According to Cotton and Eck, this is a building inscription which belongs to an arch, and they dated it after the foundation of the Colonia Aelia Capitolina (131 CE), which erected the arch to honor the reigning emperor.<sup>26</sup>

After Eck rejected the possibility of a legion as the builder of an honorary arch, he raised the third possibility, of completing the inscription in an entirely different direction. In his opinion, there was enough space in the third line only for the following letters: SPQR, which is an abbreviation for Senatus Populusque Romanus, meaning that the arch was built by the decision and agreement of the people of Rome and according to the decree of the Senate.

There is indeed some evidence that the Senate and the people of Rome were the ones who gave their consent to erect large monuments for special achievements, mainly after some significant military victory.<sup>27</sup> All the examples that Eck noted were from much earlier periods. The last decision of the Senate to erect a triumphal arch was made in 49 CE, to commemorate the military achievements of Claudius in Britain. The arch was erected on the shores of Gesoriacum, from where the emperor set out on his expedition to conquer Britain.<sup>28</sup>

These examples show that more than 90 years had passed since the Senate used its authority to erect and dedicate a triumphal arch for military achievements. The question is: Were there no worthy military achievements to be commemorated during this period

<sup>24</sup> Gröll 2005: 16-17.

<sup>25</sup> Gröll 2006: 183-200. See also Abramovich 2011: 159-163; 98 note 368, who argued that in his article of 2003 Eck was not aware of this inscription.

<sup>26</sup> Eck 2005: 160-165; Cotton & Eck 2009: 97\*-118\*; Eck 2011: 45-53; Eck & Cotton 2012: 20-22.

<sup>27</sup> Eck 2003a: 143, cites examples which are all dated early—from the days of Augustus and Tiberius, and the last example is dated to the year 43 CE, in the days of Claudius. This indicates that nearly a hundred years had passed since the SPQR made use of its authority.

<sup>28</sup> Barrett 1991: 1-19; Osgood 2011: 94-96.

of time? And if we return to the example we mentioned about Dura Europos, were Trajan's military achievements not worthy of an arch being dedicated to him by the Senate?

Concerning our case, in Eck's opinion it was the **SPQR** who dedicated the arch to honor Hadrian in Tel Shalem, and the reason for this was his victory in the Bar Kokhba revolt, a revolt that in his view had spread into Arabia and even into Syria. The victory restored Roman self-confidence, and the monumental structure testifies to the renewed power of Rome, which is why the Latin language was used. In his words:

All this makes it quite certain that the arch was built in the context of the Bar Kokhba revolt, and had nothing to do with Hadrian's first visit to the region.<sup>29</sup>

What, according to Eck, does *all this* include?

1. Cities can erect arches in honor of the visit of the emperor, but the Latin here puts Scythopolis out of the picture.
2. There are no examples in which legions or the SPQR even set up arches for an imperial visit to a province.
3. It is not possible to interpret a broken-up and disjointed inscription without having examples or parallels from other provinces.<sup>30</sup>

Eck connected the great military achievement to the description of Hadrian as "imperator for the **second** time" (IMP II), and therefore he adds it to the third line of the inscription. He found a complete correlation between the end of the second revolt, the declaration of Hadrian as imperator for the second time, and the erection of the arch in Tel Shalem.

He ends his discussion on this matter, questioning why the arch was erected at Tel Shalem. Since this site has no value in itself, the location could not have been chosen at random. Therefore, the only reason for its choice as the site for a war memorial was that this location was part of a battlefield in the second revolt.

According to Eck, participants in the Senate session at which the subject of the arch at Tel Shalem was discussed were senior army officers who had taken part in suppressing the revolt, and were persons of military authority to explain to the Senate why Tel Shalem deserved this honor. "Tel Shalem was the right choice. Tel Shalem was not chosen arbitrarily."<sup>31</sup> At the end of his discussion on the inscription, Eck sums up by saying:

... the arch bears witness to the intensity of the revolt and its impact on Rome; and conversely to the enormous relief, deeply felt when it was over.<sup>32</sup>

With much cynicism, Bowersock makes a correlation between the inscription in Tel Shalem and the inscription in Petra. Some of Eck's conclusions are derived from the size of the Latin letters in the inscription, but the dimensions of the inscription in Tel Shalem are dwarfed by those of the inscription that Eck did not know at the time, from the area of the large temple in Petra.<sup>33</sup> He keeps on asking who set up this Latin inscription. The

<sup>29</sup> Eck 2003b: 158.

<sup>30</sup> Eck 2003b: 158-159.

<sup>31</sup> Eck 2003b: 162 and note 34, in which he refers to p. 18; however, the reference is to an article by Peter Schäfer that deals with the second revolt and the Rabbis!

<sup>32</sup> Eck 2003b: 162.

<sup>33</sup> Tracy 1998: 370-375; 1999: 56-58.



Senate and the people of Rome? And in honor of which military victory?<sup>34</sup> Bowersock continues by asking how this could be, if the Senate and the people initiated the monumental arch and inscription that no evidence of any kind remains in the written sources.

Following his restoration of the inscription, Bowersock dates the arch and the inscription to the year 130 CE. In his view there is no space difficulty at the end of the third line of the inscription, and therefore the name of the legion can be entered at the end of the line, either the Tenth Fretensis or the Sixth Ferrata, as Eck had done himself when he discussed the various possible completions of the inscription.

In his reconstruction of the third line, Bowersock prefers the name of the legion Tenth Fretensis.<sup>35</sup> However, I rather add the name of the legion Sixth Ferrata, which was the second legion stationed in *Provincia Judaea* since the year 123 CE. The camp of this legion was in Legio (Kfar Othnai).<sup>36</sup> From the evidence mentioned above, the camp in Tel Shalem apparently served as a camp for a Vexillatio of this legion.

In my opinion, the arch and inscription in honor of Hadrian are connected with the visit of the emperor to the region in 130 CE.

Kenneth Holum and Layton Lehmann reconstructed Hadrian's itinerary in the area.<sup>37</sup> Eck criticizes and negates the reconstruction of Lehmann and Holum with the argument that they claimed that Hadrian had visited Caesarea, even though they had no direct evidence for this visit.<sup>38</sup>

However, do the inscriptions on the aqueduct to Caesarea not hint to the building and restoration of it during Hadrian's visit to the city? Recently, Cotton and Eck together, as well as each of them separately, published inscriptions from Caesarea in one of which the name Tineius Rufus, the governor of Judaea in the years 130-133, was mentioned for the first time apart from its reference in rabbinical literature:

To Imperator Caesar Trianus Hadrianus Augustus, son of the divine Traianus Parthicus grandson of the divine Nerva, Pontifex Maximus, with tribunician power for the fourteenth (?) time, consul for the third time, father of his country, the beneficiarii of Tineius Rufus, imperial legate with praetorian rank, (have erected a statue)?<sup>39</sup>

The Caesarea inscription is a dedicatory inscription to Hadrian, dedicated by the *beneficarii* of Tineius Rufus. The inscription in Latin was one meter long and had a life-sized statue of Hadrian placed above it. The inscription should be connected with the headless statue found in Caesarea.<sup>40</sup> Cotton and Eck dated the inscription and the placing of the statue to the year 130 CE, when the emperor visited the province and its capital. The inscription confirms the estimation made by Kenneth Holum, in an article which

<sup>34</sup> Bowersock 2003: 177.

<sup>35</sup> Bowersock 2003: 175.

<sup>36</sup> Tepper 2007; Adams/David/Tepper 2013.

<sup>37</sup> Lehmann & Holum 2000: 12-13; Holum 1992: 51-61. See also: Birley 2003.

<sup>38</sup> Eck 2003b: 155 and note 12. See Halfmann 1986: 207. He omitted the name of Caesarea from Hadrian's tour.

<sup>39</sup> *CIIP* II, 1276; Cotton & Eck 2001: 215-238; Cotton & Eck 2006: 31-52. See also: *AE* 2003, 107. The Latin inscription: [Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) divi Traiani Parthici f(ilio) divi Nervae nep(oti) Traiano Hadriano] Aug(usto)] pont(ifici) ma[x(imo), tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) XIV (?) co(n)s(uli) III p(atr) p(atriciae)] | b(eneficiarii) Tinei Rufi [leg(ati) Aug(usti) pr(o) praet(ore)--|--].

<sup>40</sup> Avi-Yonah 1970-71: 203-208.

reconstructs the visit of Hadrian to the region, that the emperor also visited Caesarea. In view of this, perhaps Holum's article deserves more serious consideration, along with his reconstruction of the *Adventus* of the Emperor in the region.

Various sources present Hadrian as the "wandering emperor," who spent many years during his reign traveling throughout the empire and visiting many cities and provinces.<sup>41</sup> Hadrian visited Judaea in the spring and early summer of 130 CE on his way from Syria to Egypt.<sup>42</sup> After spending the winter in Antioch, he continued on to Palmyra.<sup>43</sup> From Damascus he entered the region of *Provincia Arabia*,<sup>44</sup> arriving in Bosra, the capital city, where the Third Legion Cyrenaica was encamped. He then followed the *Via Nova Traiana* along the *limes* through Philadelphia (Amman) to Petra, which in honor of his visit changed its name to *Hadriana Petra*.<sup>45</sup> From Petra he returned along the *Via Nova* to Gerasa, where the city dedicated a triumphal arch to Hadrian.

According to the inscription engraved on the arch, it should be dated to the year 130 CE. On the same occasion, three statues were set up in the city in honor of the emperor.<sup>46</sup> From there he continued on through the cities of the Decapolis, and near Pella he probably crossed the River Jordan into the Jordan Valley and *Provincia Judaea*. The visit of the emperor was commemorated by coins with the inscription *ADVENTVI AUG IVDAEAE*.<sup>47</sup> Scythopolis was apparently the emperor's first stop. In a number of inscriptions he is connected to the city, and should probably be dated to 130, and Hadrian's visit to the region.

#### 1. A dedicatory inscription mentioning Hadrian's visit to Judaea and Scythopolis.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Dio Cassius 69.5.2-3: "...and he aided the allied and subject cities most munificently. He had seen many of them,—more, in fact, than any other emperor,—and he assisted practically all of them, giving to some a water supply, to others harbours, food, public works, money and various honours, differing the different cities."

<sup>42</sup> See Dio Cassius 69.12.2; *SHA* Hadrian 14.4-6; Epiphanius of Salamis, *De mensuris et ponderibus* 14 (PG 53, 260-261).

<sup>43</sup> *CIS* II, No. 3959 = Cantineau 1930: I, no. 2 = Dunant 1971: no. 44: Haddriane. This bilingual inscription in Palmyrenian script is dated to 130/1. [MR]N HDRY[N'] 'LH' (Our Lord Hadrian, (the) God).

<sup>44</sup> Mattingly & Sydenhman 1926: 452, 464: *ADVENTVS AVG ARABIAE RESTITVTORI ARABIAE*.

<sup>45</sup> See coins: Spijkerman 1978: 220-235; Bowersock 1983:110-111. See the papyrus documents from Nahal Hever. On the change in the name of Petra, see: Yadin 1971: 248-249; Lewis 1989: no. 25, dated: 9 July 131, a countersummons issued by Babatha, *I*. 11: Ἀδριανῆ Πέτρα = Hadrianic Petra, and commentary *ad loc.*: Lewis 1989: 112: "The Hadrianic epithet of Petra appears only in this document, which may be an indication that the appellation was a recently bestowed honor, on the occasion of Hadrian's visit there." See also: 5/6 Hev 25: *Pap. Yadin* 25.

<sup>46</sup> For the inscription of the arch see: Welles 1938: no. 58. For the inscriptions on the statues, see nos. 143-145.

<sup>47</sup> Mattingly 1936, III: 493-494, nos. 1655-1661. Mildenberg 1984: 97-98 argues that the *adventus* coins were struck in the years 130-132.

<sup>48</sup> The inscription has not yet been published, see: Mazor & Najjar 2007: xiii, 4: "He presumably visited Nysa-Scythopolis at some point between the end of 129 and mid-130 CE. Inscriptions found in the agora temples bear witness to this visit, the reception of which was hosted by the governor of the province, Tineius Rufus." In a private email dated April 11, 2012, Mazor mentioned that in the temple of Demeter and Kore Persephone two inscriptions were found, and still unpublished: one dedicated to Tineius Rufus' wife, and a second to his daughter. And an additional inscription dedicated to Hadrian; however, Rufus name is not mentioned.

2. A dedicatory inscription from Beth Shean dated to 130, dedicated by the soldiers of the first cohort of the legion X Fretensis. The inscription was probably the base for Hadrian's statue.<sup>49</sup>

Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) Traiano  
Hadriano Aug(usto)  
p(atr) p(atriciae) leg(io) X Fret(ensis) coh(ors) I

Since the title *Pater Patriae* was bestowed on Hadrian in 128, we can date the inscription to 130, during Hadrian's visit to the region.<sup>50</sup> Did the legate of legion X Fretensis send one of his units: the first cohorts to welcome the Emperor? To commemorate the visit they erected a statue with the inscription.

3. Cotton and Eck noted two indirect epigraphic testimonies to this event. The city of Scythopolis erected statues to honor the wife and daughter of Tineius Rufus and perhaps also in his honor. The statues may have been set up during the visit to the city by the governor and his family, who came to receive the emperor.<sup>51</sup>

4. Another testimony for the possible visit of the emperor in 130 CE in Scythopolis was proposed in the research of Lea Di Segni and Benjamin Arubas. They found a Greek inscription in March 2007, in the south gallery of the central court in the Rockefeller Museum. The translation of the inscription is:

In imitation of Hadrian, Silvanus the most  
Distinguished and spectabilis count and governor  
Has built his own city

The inscription had originally come from Beth Shean, Silvanus was its governor during the reign of Emperor Arcadius, and it is dated after the year 385 CE. According to researchers, the inscription notes that Silvanus built the city in imitation of Hadrian's construction of it.

The rebuilding of the city in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century is linked to the earthquake of 363 CE. Yet what does this 4<sup>th</sup>-century inscription have to do with the visit of the emperor to Scythopolis in 130 CE? Hadrian, more than any emperor, is known as the Founder and Builder, and in the Land of Israel he founded Aelia Capitolina and built the high-level aqueduct in Caesarea and in other places where no testimonial inscriptions remain. Could it be that Hadrian's part in building the city was still recalled in the Scythopolis of the 4<sup>th</sup> century? Is this merely a literary comparison, or was it some real and well-established memory of Hadrian's construction in the city? Archaeologists dated the flourishing of the city as beginning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century after the Bar Kokhba Revolt until

<sup>49</sup> The inscription was first published by Clermont-Ganneau 1897: 171, as originating from Scythopolis. In *CIL* III, 13589 the publishers claimed its origin to Samaria. In *CIL* III, 14155.14 it was corrected to the first place of origin. For a picture of the inscription, see: Cornfeld 1962: 347.

<sup>50</sup> Eck 2003b: 156 and notes 15-16. He claimed that the title cannot serve as an indication of a date—128—since the provincial population used the title before 128. Eck 2012: 262, argued that this inscription should be considered a questionable one.

<sup>51</sup> Cotton & Eck 2006: 50.

the reign of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius,<sup>52</sup> but more recently have pushed the date back to the time of Trajan and Hadrian and linked it with the visit of the emperor in 130 CE.

In an appendix written by Arubas regarding the inscription under discussion, he asserted that the building of the central monument should be dated to the year 130 CE, during Hadrian's visit to the region, and should be compared with the triumphal arch in Gerasa. Arubas suggests that in the rivalry between the two cities over the reputation of the two, Scythopolis would not have ceded to Gerasa.<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, I agree with Eck that the inhabitants of Scythopolis had no connection with the erection of the arch or its inscription in Tel Shalem. But the reason for this is not because of the Greek or Latin language! In my opinion, during the preparations for the visit of the emperor in the region, a unit of the Legio VI Ferrata set up the magnificent arch and dedicated it to the visiting Emperor. These soldiers were Latin speakers, and therefore they engraved the inscription in their own language. The arch and the inscription were in honor of the emperor who knew Greek, and was nicknamed *Graeculus*, but the language of the dedicators of the arch was Latin!

Did the emperor actually visit the camp? This is a difficult question with no decisive answer. Whatever the response may be, the monumental arch and its inscription are a historical fact!

From Scythopolis or Tel Shalem, the emperor continued on the renovated road between Scythopolis and Legio,<sup>54</sup> and visited the legion's camp in Legio/ Caparcotna.<sup>55</sup>

It is not clear whether he went north to Sepphoris, which had changed its name to Diocaesarea to honor the name of the emperor and the Greek god Zeus whom he highly favored.<sup>56</sup> Or perhaps he continued from Legio to Caesarea, the capital of the province. We mentioned his visit to Caesarea above. Holum suggested linking the visit of 130 CE to Hadrian's promise to the inhabitants of Caesarea during his visit to improve the water supply to the city, which resulted in the construction of Channel B, the High Level aqueduct.<sup>57</sup>

Evidence of this can be found in the inscriptions on the aqueduct, most of which mention the name of Hadrian, and there is no doubt that it was built in the year 130 CE in honor of his visit to the city.<sup>58</sup> Hadrian then went up to Jerusalem, and during his visit he decided to found Aelia Capitolina.<sup>59</sup> From Jerusalem he returned to the southern coastal plain and visited Gaza, and from there he went to Egypt.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Tsafir & Forester 1992: 7; Tsafir & Forester 1997: 89. The urban plan of Beth Shean should be ascribed to the Roman period. The earliest Roman remains known to us, such as the first stage of the basilica or the first foundations of the theatre, are probably from the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. Most of the construction and planning of the city should probably be attributed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, most likely during the reigns of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, when the main period of florescence in the Roman East occurred.

<sup>53</sup> Di Segni & Arubas 2009: 115\*-124\*.

<sup>54</sup> Note that in 129 CE the road from Scythopolis to the Valley of Jezreel was renovated. See Isaac & Roll 1979a: 57; 61 note 17.

<sup>55</sup> Isaac & Roll 1979a: 58-61; Isaac & Roll 1979b: 33.

<sup>56</sup> Hill 1914. See also Isaac & Roll 1979a: 63.

<sup>57</sup> Holum 1992: 56-60.

<sup>58</sup> On the inscriptions, see *CIIP* II, 1200-1209.

<sup>59</sup> On the founding of Aelia Capitolina, see Magness 2011: 313-324.

<sup>60</sup> On the visit to Gaza and Egypt, see Birley 2003.

Di Segni used the following inscription as evidence of the emperor's visit to Judaea. Though the original location of the marble inscription is difficult to trace, its content were linked with the visit of Hadrian.<sup>61</sup> The inscription reads as follows:

To the Olympian gods; for the preservation of the Emperor Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Augustus, father of the motherland, the savior and benefactor, villagers of Caparbanaia.

Di Segni suggested two possible identifications of Kafar Banaya: Khirbet Baniya (Horvat Binaya) in Western Samaria, to the east of Caesarea; or Khirbet B'inna (Bae-*nna* Ib'anna) in Southern Samaria. According to her, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, in a village with a mixed population, the dedicators of the inscription called themselves "villagers" and not "the villagers," which shows their knowledge of the Greek language, or that they do not represent the village population.

In a publication from 2003, Eck linked the inscription to Hadrian's visit, concluding:

It reveals that the patterns of interrelations between ruler and subjects familiar from other provinces were not as foreign to this province as is commonly assumed.<sup>62</sup>

However, in a recent publication based on Di Segni's second publication from 2003, he argued that the inscription is a modern forgery!<sup>63</sup>

Let us return to Tel Shalem. If we accept the conclusion that the soldiers of the Roman legion set up the arch and the inscription, all the questions that Eck raised above will disappear! Neither the arch nor the inscription has anything to do with the second revolt, since they were erected as early as 130 CE, two years before the outbreak of the revolt. Even if new evidence exists of a more powerful impact by the second revolt than we had previously thought, the inscription in Tel Shalem cannot testify to this!<sup>64</sup>

After the events of the Polemos of Kitos, the Romans brought a second legion to be permanently stationed in Legio.<sup>65</sup> Around it, they built a highly developed road system in the region, with roads extending between Legio and Tel Shalem through Scythopolis, from Legio to Diocaesarea and Tiberias, from Legio to Ptolemais (Acre), and another road from Sephoris to Tiberias. These roads prevented them from collaborating with the inhabitants of Judaea.<sup>66</sup>

What is the significance of the arbitrary statement by Eck that a military victory was achieved in the region of Tel Shalem, not far from Kfar Othnai, the camp of the second legion to be stationed in Judaea? Against whom did they fight, and whom did they conquer? The road system in the region, including the road from Legio to Beth Shean and Tel Shalem, prevented any possibility of a serious joining of forces between Jewish rebels from the Galilee and their Judaeans brethren. Also, in view of the information we have about the possible participation of the Galilee in the second revolt, it is not reasonable

<sup>61</sup> Di Segni 1994: 579-584; *SEG* 44, 1361; *AE* 1994, 1781. For a different identification, see: Di Segni 2003: 335-340. Di Segni dealt with the same inscription several times. Her first identification of the village should be ignored. In the second publication she identified the village as Kafar Banaya.

<sup>62</sup> Eck 2003b: 156. Based on Di Segni 1994.

<sup>63</sup> Eck 2012: 262 and note 52. He referred to a further forgery with the same text but on a bronze piece.

<sup>64</sup> Bowersock 2003: 171.

<sup>65</sup> Eck & Tepper 2001: 85-88.

<sup>66</sup> See Roll 1976: 38-50; Isaac & Roll 1982a. For a site of the Roman Roads and Milestones in Judaea/Palaestina, see: <http://milestones.kinneret.ac.il>.

to suppose that a battle was held in the Tel Shalem region that could be connected with the Bar Kokhba revolt. The claim that battles could have been conducted even in regions outside the control of the rebels is generally a correct one. But existing evidence points to the fact that during the course of the second revolt, the preparatory stage was already focused in regions that were under rebel control. In fact, the evidence indicates that they acted against the Romans mainly in the areas in which they resided and where they set up self-government, without widening the circle of conflict outside these areas.

### **An additional note:**

Uzi Leibner recently reported on finds in Khirbet Wadi Hamam in the eastern Galilee region, and notes among other things a hoard of coins that was found in Area B of the excavation. The hoard contains sixty silver and bronze coins from the beginning of the 2nd century CE. The silver dinarii are dated to the third consulate years of Hadrian, 119-138 CE, and a single coin with countermarks of Legio VI Ferrata which he dated to the years 123-135 CE. Leibner very cautiously links the destruction layer at the site to the Bar Kokhba revolt, or to the unrest among the Galilean Jews after the stationing of the Sixth Legion in the area, apparently during the years 123-127 CE.<sup>67</sup> Although the coin hoard is of the Hadrianic period, no coins of the second revolt were found in it. Also, if the temporary destruction layer at the site was connected with the stationing of an additional legion in the Galilee region, then there is no direct link to the Bar Kokhba revolt. It is also difficult to imagine that a small village in the Galilee reacted in opposition to the reinforcement by the Sixth Legion, which required military intervention that caused damage to the village.

Contrary to Leibner's hesitation over the participation of the Galilee in the second revolt, in his book he notes explicitly that the results of the archaeological survey indicate that Jewish settlements in the Galilee were not damaged during the second century CE, which implies that the Galilee did not take part in the Bar Kokhba revolt.<sup>68</sup> From the distribution pattern of the coins of the second revolt, it appears that they were in use only in the areas under the control of Bar Kokhba.<sup>69</sup> The fact that so far no large quantities of the second revolt coins have been found in the Galilee clarifies that the abovementioned attempts do not contribute anything to our discussion. We should not apportion much importance to random finds of coins,<sup>70</sup> and the absence of coin finds of the second revolt period in the Galilee only strengthens the claim that the Galilee did not participate in the Bar Kokhba revolt.

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<sup>67</sup> Leibner 2009b: 32, 40; 2011: 225-226.

<sup>68</sup> Leibner 2009a: 345, 407.

<sup>69</sup> Eshel 1995: 173-182.

<sup>70</sup> An example that proves that we cannot attach too much significance to coincidental findings of coins is the Bar Kokhba coins found at different Roman sites. See also Eshel, Zissu & Barkai: 2009-2010: 91-97.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AE – *L'Année Épigraphique*, Paris.

CIIP – H.M. Cotton, L. Di Segni, W. Eck et al. (eds.), *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palestinae*, vols. 3, Berlin – New York.

CIL – *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin.

SEG – *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Leiden – Boston.

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