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SERRA DURUGÖNÜL – AHMET MÖREL*

Evidence of Judaism in Rough Cilicia and its Associations with Paganism

Keywords: Rough Cilicia, Olban territory, Judaism, Menorah, Athena Parthenos

Schlüsselwörter: Rauhes Kilikien, olbisches Territorium, Juden, Menorah, Athena Parthenos

Anahtar sözcükler: Dağlık Cilicia, Olba Territoriumu, Yahudilik, Menorah, Athena Parthenos

In recent years, the results of research have delivered abundant evidence for Jewish presence in the territory of Olba in Rough Cilicia, which is located between the rivers of Calycadnus (Göksu) by Seleucia (Silifke) and Lamos by Erdemli. Although the largest quantity of evidence for this presence is epigraphical, the number of menorah reliefs is particularly noteworthy. This article firstly records the material indicating Jewish presence in the region and then explores the relation and interaction between the Jews and the Pagan society.

AN OUTLINE OF HISTORICAL EVENTS DURING THE JEWISH PRESENCE IN ROUGH CILICIA

The effect of the historical process and the economic position of the Jews within the region will cast some light upon their situation in Rough Cilicia. The first archaeological evidence indicating the presence of Jews should be looked for in the period after the 3rd century B. C. because within the territory of Olba, as in the rest of Rough Cilicia, stone architecture, carved inscriptions and reliefs all date to the Hellenistic period and later. The basic reason for this lack of earlier evidence is thought to be due to the sole construction material, which was timber and mud brick during the pre-Hellenistic period¹.

The Treaty of Apamea of 188 B. C., following the Seleucid defeat by Rome and her allies at Magnesia in 190 B. C., was a turning point for the region since the Seleucids lost most of their territory in Asia Minor, retreating to Cape Sarpedon, localised around Taşucu (by Seleucia)².

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Sources of illustrations: All *figs.* = S. Durugönül.

¹ Durugönül 2005, 28.

² Arslan 2003, 91–92.

The Seleucids were aware of the importance of this territory, which they kept under their control and initiated an important building programme including the temple of Zeus Olbios, one of the earliest architectural constructions in the region, which was to become the symbol of the territory. It is thought to have been commissioned by Antiochus IV (175–164 B. C.), who also built the temple of Zeus Olympios in Jerusalem and the temple of Zeus Xenios in Gerizim. It is known that Antiochus IV faced resistance especially from the Jews of Palestine during the course of his intensified programme of »Hellenistic acculturation«, and similarly, this policy led to uprisings in Tarsus and at Mallus in Plain Cilicia³. The absence of authority and chaos after 188 B. C. allowed the region to become a heaven for pirates. Rome interfered⁴, as this region became infested with pirates who threatened the maritime trade route. Numerous campaigns were undertaken by the Romans⁵ in the attempt to eliminate piracy until 67 B. C., when Gnaeus Pompey eradicated piracy in the Mediterranean.

Rough Cilicia certainly benefited from the Pax Romana established under Augustus; the cities and urban life in the region began to develop. This period is marked by numerous architectural constructions⁶. A well-known person of this period is Paul of Tarsus, who was a member of a Roman Jewish family involved in flax trade⁷ and of importance in this context, as he shows that Pagan faith lived together with monotheist faiths like Judaism and Christianity.

Vespasian⁸ established the province of Cilicia in 74 A. D. and Roman hegemony over the region became solidly established. These secure conditions during the 2nd century A. D. brought rapid development to the coasts with cities founded along the coastline; with the increasing commercial capacity, the number of rural settlements and agricultural production also increased⁹. It can be understood from the inscriptions discussed below that the Jews were active at this time in a variety of professional fields, particularly in trade.

The period from the 4th century A. D. onwards saw the development of rural settlements¹⁰. Epigraphic and archaeological evidence concerning the Jewish presence in this region increased in subsequent centuries as an economic revival took place in Cilicia and Isauria. This revival at the end of the 5th and early 6th centuries¹¹ was due to the control established over the Isaurians, who had been causing unrest.

³ Durugönül 1998a, 71; Tempesta 2005, 65 and n. 26–27. 69; de Lange 1978, 256–257.

⁴ The year 102 B. C. is of importance for the Roman intervention in the region. For detailed information on the period, see: Durukan 2009, 80–82; Arslan 2003, 92; Sherwin – White 1977, 69.

⁵ For detailed information on the period preceding 67 B. C., see: Durukan 2009, 81; Arslan 2003, 94; Sherwin – White 1977, 69; Arslan 2003, 110–112.

⁶ Durukan 2011, 149–152.

⁷ For flax manufacture and vendors in Roman Tarsus see: Ertekin 2005, 156; Acta Apostolorum 22, 5–11.

⁸ Sayar 1992, 175. At this time, Vespasian had a coastal road and a bridge constructed over the Calycadnus (Göksu); a milestone dated to the reign of Vespasian was found on the road between Diocaesarea and Olba (A. D. 75/76). MacKay 1968, 41: This is the earliest surviving evidence for ancient roads in the region.

⁹ Durukan 2005, 109; Kaplan 2011, 108. 113.

¹⁰ Following Theodosius' ban on pagan faiths, making Christianity the official state religion in A. D. 391, it is evident that churches were frequently built in Rough Cilicia, as was the case in the rest of the Empire. It is also possible to speak of an intensive building activity in Rough Cilicia during the reign of Zeno the Isaurian (A. D. 474–491).

¹¹ Hellenkemper – Hild 1990, 40.

EPIGRAPHIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE
CONCERNING THE JEWS OF ROUGH CILICIA

Epigraphic evidence concerning the Jews in the region was obtained particularly in the cities of Seleucia on the Calycadnus, Corycus, Corasium, Diocaesarea, Aigai, Tarsus and Issus¹². Some examples can be listed as follows: an inscription¹³ dated to the late 4th century from Seleucia on the Calycadnus found within a *tabula ansata* on the lintel of a grave house has two menorah motifs to its left, indicating a Jewish burial. Another inscription from Seleucia on the Calycadnus is also found over the doorway of a burial chamber and it is suggested that this inscription cannot be dated earlier than the 4th century A. D.¹⁴. An inscription from Selinus/Trajanopolis, also found on the lintel of a tomb, has been dated to the 2nd century A. D. by Bean and Mitford¹⁵. An inscription from Diocaesarea with the word $\iota\upsilon\delta\acute{\alpha}\epsilon\omega\nu$ in the fourth line is noteworthy, showing that the deceased were Jews and it is dated to the first half of the 3rd century¹⁶. An inscription from Aigai was found on a sarcophagus on display in the Adana Museum and it is suggested that this inscription should be dated to the 2nd–4th centuries A. D.¹⁷. A further funerary inscription of a similar character was found in the rural settlement of Çaltıbozkır, within the territory of Olba, which records the Jewish name ›Zacharias‹¹⁸. An inscription including the name ›Abramios‹, suggesting that the deceased was a Jew¹⁹, indicates the presence of Jewish settlers at Corasium, an important port of Rough Cilicia in late antiquity.

Among Rough Cilician settlements²⁰ indicating Jewish presence, 42 of the approximately 1148 inscriptions known belong to Jews; for example, let alone 32 of them form the largest group of inscriptions recording Jews in Corycus, as part of the 675 known inscriptions from the city's necropolis. Six of the sarcophagi here carry menorah motifs on them²¹, also indicating the presence of Jews. This necropolis includes people of different faiths with no specific burial areas set aside for the sole use of Jews, Christians or of Pagans (*figs. 1–2*)²² and in consequence the symbols of different faiths are found adjacent to each other. Further, Greek, Latin and local names are frequently found as often as Jewish names within the same necropolis. The menorah relief carved at the end of an inscription containing the name of the deceased, recorded as ›Aba‹, indicates a Jew having a local name and this inscription is dated to the late 4th century A. D.²³. Amongst the names of Greek and Macedonian origin, Alexander and his wife from Anemurium are recorded as the owners of a sarcophagus. It is important that this inscription dating to the 3rd century A. D. was found at Corycus and that it casts light upon the Jews from Anemurium

¹² For data on Judaism in Asia Minor see: Çevik *et al.* 2010, 335. 341. 344. 348.

¹³ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 23; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Sel 2; Ameling 2004, 522.

¹⁴ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 32; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Sel 134; Ameling 2004, 521.

¹⁵ Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, 382 SIT 19; Ameling 2004, 524.

¹⁶ Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, 327 OID 15; Ameling 2004, 499; Hicks 1891, 269 no. 70.

¹⁷ Ameling 2004, 497.

¹⁸ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, 39 no. 55; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Çaltıbozkır 1.

¹⁹ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, 108 no. 114; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Krs 75.

²⁰ Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, 8. 9: Corycus, Seleucia, Diocaesarea, Çaltıbozkır, Selinus, Corasium, Anemurium.

²¹ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 205. 237. 262. 344. 448. 679; Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 23.

²² Ameling 2004, 500–501. 520–522. For similar conditions in other geographical regions, see Rutgers 1992, 109. 113 and n. 89.

²³ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 205; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 256; Ameling 2004, 501.



Fig. 1 Necropolis, Corycus (menorah on the sarcophagus lid)

in Rough Cilicia²⁴. An inscription with a menorah carved on a sarcophagus dating to the 5th–6th centuries A.D. carries the names ›Anastasioς‹ and ›Iakobos‹, the latter being a Jewish name²⁵. Another sarcophagus dated to the 3rd century A.D. recording the name ›Aur. Eusanbatioς‹ has a lid with a menorah carved in relief, further supporting the Jewish identity of its owner²⁶. Two menorah motifs in relief within the inscription on the lid of the sarcophagus of ›Eusambatioς‹ indicate his Jewish identity and it is suggested that this inscription dates to the 4th–5th centuries A.D.²⁷. The Latin name ›Julius‹ is found on a sarcophagus carrying the depiction of a menorah and it is noteworthy that this inscription, dated to the late 4th century A.D., carries both a Latin name and the depiction of a menorah²⁸. Another sarcophagus carrying the name ›Samon‹ of Jewish origin and a menorah depiction surely belonged to a Jew and is dated to the late 4th century A.D.²⁹. Furthermore, inscriptions unaccompanied by the depiction of a menorah but containing the terms ›Ioudaioi‹ or ›Hebreos‹ indicate a Jewish identity, with the sarcophagi of ›Damianos‹³⁰, of ›Moses‹³¹ as well as those of ›Ioudas‹ and ›Alexas‹ being examples of this. The sarcophagi of ›Ioudas‹ and ›Alexas‹ are dated to the 3rd century A.D.³².

²⁴ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 222; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 163; Ameling 2004, 502.

²⁵ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 237; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 98; Ameling 2004, 503–504.

²⁶ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 262; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 57; Ameling 2004, 507.

²⁷ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 344; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 169; Ameling 2004, 512.

²⁸ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 448; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 151; Ameling 2004, 514.

²⁹ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 679; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 221; Ameling 2004, 514.

³⁰ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 295; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 232; Ameling 2004, 506.

³¹ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 607; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 292; Ameling 2004, 515.

³² Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 440; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 328; Ameling 2004, 514.

Fig. 2 Necropolis,
Corycus (menorah
on the sarcophagus
acroter)



Amongst other names of Jewish origin³³ on sarcophagi in the necropolis of Corycus are ›Iakobos‹³⁴, ›Samouelos‹³⁵, ›Zakharia‹³⁶, ›Soul‹³⁷, ›Sabbatios‹³⁸, ›Isakios‹³⁹ and ›Abramios‹⁴⁰. The sarcophagi from the necropolis of Corycus that carry a Jewish name but have no Jewish symbols might have belonged to Jews who had renounced their faith to Christianity.

It is possible to investigate the professions of Jews in order to understand their status. In this respect, these funerary inscriptions provide much information: ›Iakobos‹ was a goldsmith⁴¹, as was ›Moses‹⁴², while ›Soul‹⁴³ made keys, ›Samouelos‹ collected mussels⁴⁴, ›Sabbatios‹ owned a pottery workshop, ›Iakobos‹ was a oil lamp maker⁴⁵, ›Samuel‹ was involved in marble manu-

³³ The Jewish funerary inscriptions mentioned here (also in the abstract) and the bibliography which is given below in n. 34–40, lists twenty-one examples; they have been previously published but have not been ascribed to Jews. These inscriptions are for the first time here linked to Jews.

³⁴ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 428. 437. 429. 435. 433. 431. 426; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 570. 137. 281. 301. 377. 259. 234.

³⁵ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 684. 601. 683. 685. 680. 682; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 116. 265. 610. 224. 454. 473.

³⁶ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 782. 361. 712. 460; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 513. 576. 618. 312.

³⁷ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 689; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 612.

³⁸ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 678; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 72.

³⁹ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 451; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 423a.

⁴⁰ Keil – Wilhelm 1931, no. 423. 207; Hagel – Tomaschitz 1998, Kry 90b, Krs. 75.

⁴¹ Şahin 2003, 199; *supra* n. 34.

⁴² Şahin 2003, 200; *supra* n. 31.

⁴³ Şahin 2003, 203; *supra* n. 37.

⁴⁴ Şahin 2003, 46; *supra* n. 35.

⁴⁵ Şahin 2003, 73; *supra* n. 34. 38.



Fig. 3 Athena, Sömek (view showing the area in front)

facture⁴⁶, while ›Zakharia‹⁴⁷, ›Samuelos‹ and ›Iakobos‹ were weavers⁴⁸, ›Isakios‹ was involved in flax weaving⁴⁹, and ›Iakobos‹ spun wool⁵⁰, ›Samuelos‹ was a trader of wine and was dealing with maritime transport⁵¹, ›Iakobos‹ worked in the harbour⁵², ›Iakobos‹ owned a store⁵³, ›Samuelos‹ and ›Abramios‹ sold wine⁵⁴, while another ›Abramios‹ from Corasium sold olive oil⁵⁵.

The epigraphic evidence shows that the Jews of the region were active in production and trade such as in wine and olive oil trade; they were involved in many professions and especially flax weaving, weaving and wool spinning, which points to their participation in the pastoral economy of the region.

The most striking example for Jewish presence in the region is a rock-cut relief in the village of Sömek near Silifke (Seleucia ad Calycadnum) (*figs. 3–5*) that carries the depiction of a menorah next to a relief depicting Athena. It has been dated by Durugönül in her study of the rock-cut

⁴⁶ Şahin 2003, 77; *supra* n. 35.

⁴⁷ Şahin 2003, 93; *supra* n. 36.

⁴⁸ Şahin 2003, 96. 98; *supra* n. 35–34.

⁴⁹ Şahin 2003, 118; *supra* n. 39.

⁵⁰ Şahin 2003, 134; *supra* n. 34.

⁵¹ Şahin 2003, 139; *supra* n. 35.

⁵² Şahin 2003, 143; *supra* n. 34.

⁵³ Şahin 2003, 160, 161; *supra* n. 34.

⁵⁴ Şahin 2003, 283, 289; *supra* n. 35. 40.

⁵⁵ Şahin 2003, 296; *supra* n. 40.

reliefs of the region to the early 3rd century A. D.⁵⁶; the character of the inscription, the seashell motif, as well as the general stylistic features of the relief figure support this dating. The relief is located within a niche flanked by pilasters on both sides and surmounted by a seashell motif. On the right pilaster are carved the relief motifs of a star in the middle, a crescent beneath it and a thunderbolt below the crescent. In the middle of these two symbols there is a bust, whose outlines are barely discernible (*fig. 6*). A second bust, although damaged, is visible in the area next to the left pilaster. Next to the right pilaster is the symbol which constitutes the subject matter of this article (*figs. 7–9*), a five-branched menorah, rising from a two-legged platform and surmounted by a star. It is known that the menorah, usually defined as having seven arms, can also be depicted with three, five, seven, nine or eleven arms⁵⁷. Therefore, the symbol here described can be understood to be a five-branched variant type of the menorah⁵⁸.

The Athena relief indeed repeats the Athena Parthenos type; however, the horse next to



Fig. 4 Athena, Sömek (full view close-up)

Fig. 5
Athena, Sömek
(uppert part)



⁵⁶ Durugönül 1989, 135–138 no. 42 figs. 45 and 46.

⁵⁷ Hachlili 2001, 7. 23. 36. 121. 131. 157; Hachlili 1995, 184; Branham 1992, 389–390.

⁵⁸ For variants of the menorah: Fine 2005, 146–148. 153; Fine – Rutgers 1996, 22 n. 63.



Fig. 6 Athena, Sömek
(lower part)



Fig. 7 Athena, Sömek (detail: symbols)



Fig. 8 Athena, Sömek (detail: symbols)

her, the seashell above and other symbols mentioned are not related to this iconography. In spite of this fact, the presence of the thunderbolt is not surprising as Athena is the daughter of Zeus; furthermore this symbol is found also independent of Athena in the region and so could

have symbolised Zeus himself. From the astral symbols the crescent, on the other hand, is identified with mother goddesses and has become a matriarchal symbol in death and rebirth; stars and crescent came into use with the influence from the Orient during the Roman period. This is also called the ›Anatolian Renaissance‹⁵⁹. Nevertheless, the most ›incongruous‹ symbol is the menorah. The bust of Athena to the left and the other symbols on the right pilaster flanking Athena were all part of the initial design and were carved at the same time; likewise, the menorah must have been carved at the same time, as can be understood from its depiction on the right outer surface recessed from the level of the pilasters.

The composition of a menorah with a thunderbolt is also found on the door lintel of the construction to the southwest of the West Church in Örendibi near Sömek⁶⁰ (fig. 10) and on another door lintel at Köşkerli (fig. 11). These constitute further evidence for the Pagan symbol, the thunderbolt of Zeus, being carved at the same time together with



Fig. 9 Athena, Sömek (detail: menorah)

Fig. 10
Lintel,
Sömek Örendibi



⁵⁹ Fleischer 1973, XII.

⁶⁰ There is also a shield motif carved in relief at Örendibi near Sömek.



Fig. 11
Lintel, Köşkerli



Fig. 12
Lintel, Çatiören

a menorah. The menorah of the Athena relief, as well as these two examples, all have five arms and their bases are depicted with two legs and the thunderbolt motifs are also similar to each other. Another carved menorah depiction is on a door lintel at Çatiören; in this case, it is shown together with a palm tree, which symbolises the tree of life (*fig. 12*)⁶¹. A menorah with seven arms is carved on a re-used block in the castle of Corycus⁶². Scholars state that Jews, whose presence in Cilicia is attested through written and inscribed evidence from the 1st century A. D.⁶³ onwards, used the Hellenistic symbols and devices they had seen in Syria and Asia Minor⁶⁴. The use of

⁶¹ Ameisenowa – Mainland 1939, 326. 333 figs. 55 a–b; Rahmani 1982, 117; Dauphin 1982, 136 fig. 7; 139 fig. 9. The identification is not certain and may be a second menorah rather than a palm tree.

⁶² Harris 1996, 93–96 pl. 3.

⁶³ Regarding the Jewish presence in Anatolia and Cilicia, see Aydın 2007, 275 n. 31–32 and especially 34; Rutgers 1992, 101–105; Trebilco 1991, 5–8.

⁶⁴ Ameling 2004, 492–496; Durugönül 1989, 136 n. 546; Hachlili 1995, 191.

the menorah with the thunderbolt in Örendibi near Sömek and in Köşkerli can be explained through this phenomenon, because the thunderbolt of Zeus occurs quite frequently amongst the numerous symbols particularly found on the door lintels of still standing monuments in Rough Cilicia, dating to the Hellenistic and Roman Periods⁶⁵.

It is no longer possible to certainly identify the structures upon which these menorah or thunderbolt reliefs occur, raising the questions if they were Pagan or Jewish structures. Studies concerning the architecture of synagogues in the region are insufficient and provide only limited information about the number and the possible forms of synagogues. Although these structures carrying the depictions of thunderbolt and menorah side by side may be Pagan constructions, there is the possibility that they might be Jewish structures, because no synagogue has been identified yet in Rough Cilicia. Since synagogues can also have an apse in their architectural layout⁶⁶, it might be necessary to revise the identification of some churches dated to the 4th–7th centuries in Rough Cilicia. As a matter of fact, the menorah, which was a symbol of Solomon's Temple, was used on many private and public buildings and was particularly found on synagogues⁶⁷.

Another example of the depiction of a menorah comes not from a building but from an altar in the Silifke Museum. This is a five-armed menorah on a two legged base, surmounted by a star in a circle (*figs. 13–15*). It was first recorded as a menorah by Dagron and Feissel⁶⁸. Ameling⁶⁹ describes this altar in detail and dates it to the 4th–5th centuries. On each side of the altar is an ear motif. The ear is mentioned in the Old Testament and was an indicator of the communication between people and God⁷⁰. Its depiction as a relief is quite commonly seen in Pagan culture⁷¹ and it is also known that people with an ear problem left items bearing ear motifs as votive offerings and believed that the ›granting god‹ would heal them and solve their problems. It is interesting that ears appear here for the first time together with a menorah. The word εὐχῆν inscribed on this altar shows that it was made as a votive offering. Here we can see the Jewish adaptation of Pagan symbols⁷². This altar comes from the Seleucia (Silifke) region, like the Athena relief at Sömek and the menorahs at Örendibi near Sömek and Köşkerli.

Scholars such as Cumont, Nilsson, Goodenough and Anderson⁷³ interpreted the use of the term *theos hypsistos*, literally ›the highest god‹, in Pagan and Jewish inscriptions as syncretistic and considered the Pagan use of this term for Zeus as a result of Jewish influence, because it was used for Jehovah by the Jews. On the other hand Trebilco⁷⁴ states that this term was widely used even in areas where no Jewish influence is observed and that it can be ascribed to a deity which was considered ›the highest god‹, e. g. Zeus in the Pagan world, and thus it would not be correct

⁶⁵ Durugönül 1998b, 85–89: For instance, the shield of Athena, the club of Heracles, the cap of the Dioscuri, the caduceus and phallus of Hermes, as well as the thunderbolt of Zeus.

⁶⁶ Branham 1992, 381. 384.

⁶⁷ It was aimed to retain the memory of the Temple, therefore the menorah became the most memorable symbol of the lost Temple of Jerusalem, the longing for return and rebuilding it: Hachlili 2001, 7–9. 11; Neusner 1963, 289; Hachlili 1995, 184.

⁶⁸ Dagron – Feissel 1987, 38 no. 14 pl. 7.

⁶⁹ Ameling 2004, 498 no. 230.

⁷⁰ Ps 116, 1–2; 130, 2 (in: H. E. Swedenborg, *The Psalms: A New Translation from the Hebrew* [Manchester 1837] 385. 420).

⁷¹ Ehrhardt *et al.* 2009, 187; Radt 2005, 74.

⁷² Ameling 2004, 498 no. 230.

⁷³ Trebilco 1991, 127. 131. 137. 140. 143.

⁷⁴ Trebilco 1991, 128. 131. 137. 142. 145. 150.



Fig. 13 Altar, Silifke Museum (front)



Fig. 14 Altar, Silifke Museum (left side)



Fig. 15 Altar, Silifke Museum (right side)

to relate it with Judaism. Yet he also recalls that a tendency towards monotheism existed in the Roman world and that there was a trend towards the worship of a single God; he accepts that Jews were influential at individual levels in the Pagan faith. He does not deny that a Pagan, who was in close contact with the Jewish community, might have worshipped a single deity (God-worshipper). Furthermore, he adds that some Pagan groups frequented synagogues and appropriated some Jewish customs but did not become full members of the Jewish community. So it is possible to identify these as »god-fearers« (*theosebeis*), constituting a separate group that attended the synagogue without being fully converted⁷⁵. As it was the case in Aphrodisias, we can also suggest for Rough Cilicia that the Jewish community was

⁷⁵ Chaniotis 2002, 209. 228; Tebilco 1991, 152–166; Feldmann 1993, 342. 343. 441.

flourishing and attracting sympathisers (*theosebeis*) from different social strata and professions without any sign of discrimination.

Trebilco⁷⁶ describes four different positions concerning the interaction and the forms of worship of the Jewish community and the Pagan: no contact with Pagans at all, joining Pagan institutions but not participating in the rites, joining in some activities until the start of the Pagan worship and participating in Pagan ceremonies but not sharing that faith in the heart. These positions are largely speculative, as the details of the interaction of Jews and Pagans in worship are not certainly known today.

Among all the disputable or provable data, the identification of the five-armed menorah motif next to the Athena figure at Sömek is of importance for both the form and the place of the Jewish presence in the region. Scholars note the influence of Greek and Roman mysticism on Judaism particularly in the period between the 2nd and 7th centuries A.D.⁷⁷ This is explained by the interaction within the Jewish Diaspora, and is ascribed to personal preferences rather than to institutional connections. Yet it is necessary to look at the opinion of Goodenough and Friedenberg⁷⁸, who are criticised: the Pharisean and Rabbinic leaders prohibited the use of any symbol before the destruction of the Temple in 70 A. D. But following the destruction, Jews began to use religious motifs due to an identity crisis caused by the occupation of Jerusalem, the burnt-down Temple and the loss of Aramaic, their unifying language; in short, they lost connection with their national centre. This opened the way for their appropriation of the Greek-Roman world's language and mystic symbols for their personal salvation and scholars term this development as ›Hellenised Judaism‹⁷⁹. Jews had an interest not only in symbols but also in the Greco-Roman pantheon and its immortal heroes⁸⁰ and possibly due to this, the menorah symbol depicted next to the Athena figure at Sömek was at that time an ordinary phenomenon. The inscription on this relief⁸¹ records that its patron »was ordered in a dream to commission a relief for Athena residing in the mountains«. From the Greek and Roman names mentioned in this inscription and the number of Pagan motifs employed in this relief's iconography, the patron could not have been a Jew⁸². But the menorah, being contemporarily carved next to Athena, makes it possible to suggest that Jewish neighbours made use of the same cult area and that Pagans and Jews performed their worship in common, in the same way as they shared the same necropolis. The area around the relief of Athena is large enough to accommodate a large crowd. So it can be understood that this menorah represents the adoption of a Jewish symbol by the Pagan patron of this relief, who may have been a ›god-fearer‹ and who respected the God of the Jews.

The sarcophagi in the necropolis of Corycus, those buildings which have a menorah on their door lintels, the relief of Athena from Sömek and the altar in the Silifke Museum would all have been used by Romans and Jews at the same time. It is possible to think that the Jews appropriated the motifs of the Greco-Romans, who were far more experienced in the use of

⁷⁶ Trebilco 1991, 180.

⁷⁷ Neusner 1963, 285–288.

⁷⁸ Friedenberg 1994/1995, 1–3; Feldmann 1993, 69.

⁷⁹ Neusner 1963, 288. 291; Levine 1998, 16. 22. 30; Feldmann 1993, 445.

⁸⁰ Rutgers 1992, 108.

⁸¹ Durugönül 1989, 50.

⁸² Çevik *et al.* 2010, 349: states that it is not possible to distinguish between Jews and Gentiles in Lycia, that the Jews of Andriake were Hellenised and spoke Greek.

symbols and images: »The iconographic prescripts which governed art in the Roman world were so widely known, so deeply rooted, and so immutable that even the late antique and early Byzantine Jewish mosaicists in these synagogues felt bound by them«⁸³. This is found not only in the far Diaspora but also in the Palestine and the Galilee regions, particularly in the synagogues, providing a secure basis for the explanation of this confluence in depictions, especially for the ›Zeus' thunderbolt‹-menorah and ear-menorah reliefs. In the synagogues of Hussaifah, Sepphoris, Beth Alpha, Na'aran, Khirbet Susiya and Yaphia⁸⁴, we observe the depiction of a zodiac, Sol and of the four seasons motifs next to Jewish symbols. A further good example is the synagogue at Tiberias Hammath dated to the 4th century in the North Galilean mountains, where the floor mosaics⁸⁵ feature the ark and the menorah as well as a zodiac panel depicting Helios riding his heavenly chariot over the sea and where there are also inscriptions in Hebrew, in Aramaic and in Greek together. The two lions at the Ark of Nabratein of the 3rd century, one of many other similar examples, and the Helios or Medusa in the frieze in the synagogue at Chorazin provide other examples for the confluence of depictions⁸⁶. Another important example presenting the introduction of the menorah into otherwise Pagan iconography is a Seasons sarcophagus at Rome in the Museo Nazionale⁸⁷, where the main motif of the *clipeus* in the centre was replaced with a menorah, probably in its second use. This *clipeus* with menorah is supported by two Nikes and there are also Erotes in the composition.

The confluence of the zodiac⁸⁸ and Helios side by side is the best indicator of the interaction of Jews with Greco-Roman mysticism. Meyers comments that this was just a borrowing of symbols, used within a Jewish context. Especially in the Talmudic period, there are writings on mysticism and astrology within Rabbinic literature and the Rabbinic view was tolerant towards the depiction of pagan symbols in Jewish religious centres in Palestine.

As a result, common Roman workshops serving Jews, Pagans and Christians alike, who had a deep-rooted tradition of iconographic expression and interactions, must have intensified these relations. Similarly, there were common gilded glass workshops⁸⁹. Consequently, the phenomenon of using symbols side by side, even within the synagogues in Israel, should not be surprising in Rough Cilicia. But it should be underlined that the use of images side by side does not necessarily mean the common practice of religious faith. It should be interpreted more as »a matter of (scientific) knowledge and as such had no specifically Pagan connotations«⁹⁰. The ›Zeus' thunderbolt‹-menorah and ear-menorah depictions in Rough Cilicia, as well as the use of Helios/Sol, zodiac etc. in synagogues, does not directly refer to the symbols or images of Greco-Roman myth, but to the sun itself (i. e. the planet and the cosmic context). This applies also to the thunderbolt, the star and the crescent relief carvings which are carved next to the relief of Athena; but the connection of Athena and the menorah is to be explained by another basis of interaction between Pagans and Jews: As stated above, it reflects the respect of the Pagan patron

⁸³ Hijmans 2009, 288.

⁸⁴ Hijmans 2009, 284. 287. 288: See for relevant examples the synagogues of: Hussaifah, Sepphoris, Beth Alpha, Na'aran, Khirbet Susiya, Yaphia.

⁸⁵ Meyers 1980, 106. See for other examples: Hachlili 1977, 63. 66.

⁸⁶ Groh 1988, 87–90.

⁸⁷ Rutgers 1992, 104.

⁸⁸ Fine 2005, 196–199.

⁸⁹ Çevik, too, underlines the presence of common workshops in Lycia: Çevik *et al.* 2010, 343.

⁹⁰ Hijmans 2009, 288.

of the relief, who may have been a ›god-fearer‹ and who respected the God of the Jews. We have also referred to the fact that Jews had interest not only in symbols, but also in the Greco-Roman pantheon and in its immortal heroes.

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

The epigraphic and archaeological evidence cited above casts a light on the Jewish presence in the region: The earliest epigraphic evidence regarding the Jews of the region goes back to the 2nd century A.D. and the number of such inscriptions increased in the 3rd and 4th centuries. The majority of these comes from Corycus, which was an important port in Rough Cilicia. The funerary inscriptions from Corycus record the fact that Jews were involved in a wide variety of professions, some being involved in the trade of wine and olive oil, the leading commodities of the region, and in addition that Jews were involved in weaving, flax weaving and spinning wool, indicating their association with the pastoral economy of the region. In addition to this epigraphic evidence, the menorahs from Örendibi near Sömek and Köşkerli, the menorah from Çatiören with the palm tree, all found in rural settlements⁹¹ of the region, suggest that there were Jews living in these rural areas who were involved in agriculture and animal husbandry, contributing to the economy⁹². As the Jews of the region were able to participate in production and trade, at least those mentioned in the inscriptions above, must have been *peregrini* or *Latini Iuniani*⁹³ and could not have been slaves; this is not at all surprising when the overall status of Jews in the Roman and Late Antique Periods is considered⁹⁴.

The cultural interaction of Jews, Pagans and Christians has also been investigated in the study of the relief of Athena at Sömek, the altar at the Silifke Museum, the sarcophagi in the necropolis of Corycus and the buildings with menorah motifs in the rural settlements. It has been concluded that the Jews expressed themselves through the motifs and iconographies of the Romans, who were more experienced in the use of symbols and images.

Further evidence of cultural interaction is the coexistence of Pagan, Jewish and Christian burials within the same cemeteries. Furthermore, the inscriptions on the graves containing Jewish names and symbols are written in Greek.

Both the professions which are mentioned in the inscriptions and the menorah reliefs indicate that Jews enjoyed the religious and social freedom of the Roman Empire, particularly in the 3rd century A.D. These facts show us that Jews were interacting with the Roman culture. Thus, the cultural influence called Hellenisation and Romanisation in the Hellenistic and Roman periods was experienced, and people lived under the dominant culture of the period retained their cultural elements and faith.

Notwithstanding the reduced quantity of epigraphic and archaeological evidence from the 5th and 6th centuries attesting to their presence, Jews continued to live in the region. In Late Antiquity, Christianity was the dominant faith in the region, as it was across the wider world, but Pagans, Jews and Christians were buried within the same necropolis and this indicates their

⁹¹ Possibly also the reused block with the depiction of a menorah from the castle of Corycus: Harris 1996, 93–96 pl. 3.

⁹² Compare for example the Jewish population of Aphrodisias involved in agriculture: Chaniotis 2002, 223.

⁹³ Rutgers 1992, 116–118.

⁹⁴ Mathisen 2006, 1014; Chaniotis 2002, 214; Trebilco 1991, 10.

confluence. As Chaniotis suggests⁹⁵, between c. 350 and 500 A. D., »in a period of religious conflict and suppression, but also of religious quest and ambiguity«, Jewish communities flourished, »possibly profiting from the resistance of the late Pagans«.

Abstract: Abundant evidence for Jewish presence has been attested in the course of research in Rough Cilicia in recent years. The first category of evidence evaluated in this paper consists of epigraphic material from settlements such as Corycus, Diocaesarea and Seleucia; some of these inscriptions have been already published and are proven to have been associated with Jews, while the Jewish associations of twenty-one other inscriptions containing names of Jewish have not been previously recognized. Information in these inscriptions sheds light on the social and economic conditions of the Jews in the region. In addition to the epigraphic material, menorah reliefs indicating Jewish presence in the region are examined. A relief of a menorah carved next to a relief of Athena in the village of Sömek near Silifke (Seleucia) is noteworthy for it being placed next to a pagan symbol. Surveys in the region have brought to light the presence of similar menorahs and Pagan symbols at rural settlements such as in Örendibi near Sömek, Çaltıören, Köşkerli and Corycus. Altogether, these data illuminate the ways in which Jews lived together with Pagans and Christians and influenced each other culturally.

NACHWEIS DES JUDENTUMS IM RAUHEN KILIKIEN UND SEINE BEZIEHUNGEN ZUM HEIDENTUM

Zusammenfassung: Die neuesten Forschungen im Rauhen Kilikien haben gezeigt, dass viele Hinterlassenschaften auf die Anwesenheit von Juden deuten. Die epigraphischen Funde in Siedlungen wie Corycus, Diocaesarea oder Seleucia sind ein wichtiger Bestandteil des hier erforschten Materials. Diese schriftlichen Zeugnisse sind zum Teil schon publiziert und ihre Verbindung mit den Juden aufgezeigt worden; bei 21 weiteren publizierten Inschriften mit jüdischen Namen wurde der Bezug zu den Juden bisher nicht erkannt. Diese Inschriften geben Hinweise auf die gesellschaftliche Stellung der Juden in der Region. Neben den epigraphischen Funden belegen auch Reliefs der Menorah die Anwesenheit von Juden. Ein besonders interessantes Beispiel ist das Felsrelief einer in einer Nische stehenden Athena in Sömek bei Silifke, auf dessen Pilastern zwischen paganen Symbolen auch eine Menorah dargestellt ist. Während die Menorahdarstellung auf dem Athenarelief zusammen mit anderen paganen Symbolen auftritt, haben Surveys im Gebiet gezeigt, dass sich weitere Menorahdarstellungen im olbischen Territorium in ländlichen Siedlungen wie in Sömek Örendibi, Çatiören, Köşkerli und Corycus entweder zusammen mit paganen Symbolen oder alleine befinden. Der Kontext dieser Funde zeigt, dass Juden, Heiden und Christen von der hellenistischen bis zur spätantiken Zeit zusammen gelebt und sich gegenseitig beeinflusst haben.

⁹⁵ Chaniotis 2002, 232; Feldmann 1993, 443.

DAĞLIK CİLİCİA'DA YAHUDİLİĞİN İZLERİ VE PAGANİZM İLE İLİŞKİSİ

Özet: Dağlık Cilicia Bölgesi'nde son yıllarda yapılan çalışmalar ile bölgede Yahudilerin varlığına işaret eden birçok buluntunun olduğu görülmüştür. Çalışma içerisinde değerlendirilen verilerin bir kısmını Corycus, Diocaesarea, Seleucia gibi yerleşimlerden ele geçen epigrafik buluntular oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma içerisinde değerlendirilen bu yazıtların bir kısmı daha önce yayınlanmış ve Yahudilere ait oldukları kesin olarak ortaya konulmuştur; bunların yanı sıra Yahudilere ait olabilecekleri önerilmemiş olan ancak Yahudi kökenli isimlerin bulunduğu yirmi bir yazıt da burada ele alınmıştır. Bu yazıtlar üzerindeki veriler bölgedeki Yahudilerin durumlarının anlaşılmasına olanak sağlamıştır. Epigrafik verilerden başka, Yahudilerin bölgedeki varlıklarına işaret eden menorah kabartmaları da çalışma içerisinde değerlendirilmiştir. Özellikle Silifke ilçesine bağlı Sömek köyündeki Athena kabartmasının hemen yanında yer alan menorah kabartmasının, Athena'nın yanı sıra pagan semboller ile birlikte betimlenmiş olması dikkat çekicidir. Bölgede yürütülen yüzey araştırmaları Sömek Örendibi, Çatıören, Köşkerli ve Corycus gibi Olba Territoriumundaki kırsal yerleşimlerde menorahların tek başına veya Pagan semboller ile birlikte betimlendiği benzer örneklerin var olduklarını ortaya koymuştur. Bütün veriler birlikte değerlendirildiğinde Hellenistik Dönemden Geç Antik Döneme kadar bölgede Yahudilerin pagan ve Hıristiyanlar ile birlikte yaşadıklarını ve kültürel anlamda da birbirlerini etkilediklerini ortaya konulmuştur.

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