

CHAPTER 8

Trust Networks and Village Life in Roman Galilee

A Case Study of the Gospel Narratives and Acts

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In an attempt to appreciate the complexities of village life in first-century Galilee, this chapter will explore various forms of trust networks as witnessed throughout the gospels and the book of Acts. We recognize trust networks as the foundation from which the more familiar and formalized associations emerged.¹ They form a broader category than the association, in that its rules need not be formalized in writing (though they must be mutually understood) and its existence may not have received any administrative recognition. In other words, an association is very likely to be a trust network, but not all trust networks are formal associations. However, the study of associations,² largely based on documentary evidence, provides an opportunity to utilize the data gathered and map what we now know about formal associations over these less formalized bodies as they possess many notable parallels including the provision of economic, social and physical support to those within the network.

According to Charles Tilly, trust networks are ‘sets of strong social ties among people carrying on consequential long-term collective activities at risk to the malfeasance, mistakes, or failures of network members’.³ Trust or social capital,⁴ then, was established among members as they shared resources and a sense of belonging. They emerged in the face of local pressures (such as the high transaction costs in ancient economies arising from uncertainty and asymmetrical information),⁵ allowing people in the village context across various ethnicities and demographics to deal with their common social and economic concerns. Like other regions, first-century Galilee had various forms of trust networks, developed around kinship, industry and religious affiliations, affording people practical, financial and social support.

¹John S. Kloppenborg, *Greco-Roman Associations III. Ptolemaic and Early Roman Egypt: Texts, Translations, and Commentary*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 246 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020).

²See John S. Kloppenborg, ‘Associations in the Ancient World’, in *The Historical Jesus in Context*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine, Dale C. Allison Jr., and John Dominic Crossan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 323–38.

³Charles Tilly, *Trust and Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 91.

⁴Philip F. Venticinque, *Honor Among Thieves: Craftsmen, Merchants, and Associations in Roman and Late Roman Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), 4.

⁵P. Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 2.

In this study, the trust network will be used as a heuristic device to make sense of how groups functioned within the village environment of first-century Galilee. We will (1) begin by stepping back and surveying the political context of Galilee; (2) establish the types of trust networks that were most likely present in Galilee with evidence from Jesus's parables; (3) explore trust networks on the basis of religious affiliations; and (4) examine the presence of trust networks according to the gospel narrative with particular attention to (a) fishing, (b) tax-farming and (c) carpentry, before finally examining (d) the first followers of Jesus as they move beyond Galilee, as seen in the latter part of the gospels and the early chapters of Acts.

POLITICAL OVERVIEW

In 103 BCE the Hasmonean king, Aristobulus I, subjected Galilee to Judean control. Josephus, *Ant.* 13.318–19, records that the previous peoples were given an ultimatum to convert or leave. How effective this was we do not know. We can also reckon with an influx of Judean settlers and veterans,⁶ and with them, the novel establishment of olive plantations.⁷ As a result of these migrations and forced conversions the question as to how 'Jewish' Galilean culture was in the first century CE has become rather contentious.⁸ A related issue concerns the extent of urbanization (and assumed Hellenization), at least in the Lower Galilean cities of Sepphoris and later Tiberias.⁹

⁶Mordechai Aviam, 'People, Land, Economy, and Belief in First-Century Galilee and Its Origins: A Comprehensive Archaeological Synthesis', in *The Galilean Economy in the Time of Jesus*, SBL series Early Christianity and its Literature 11, ed. David A. Fiensy and Ralph K. Hawkins (Atlanta: SBL, 2013), 15. Aviam attests the new presence of *miqvat*. Harold W. Hoehner (*Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1972], 53) similarly argues that when Galilee was reconquered, it provided an opportunity for Jews to return home.

⁷Aviam, 'People, Land, Economy', 13.

⁸See Mark A. Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee* (SNTS 118: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11–27, for a discussion of the various positions (Gentile vs. Jewish Galilee). Chancey holds that 'the interior of Galilee, in short, was still relatively sparsely populated on the eve of the Maccabean campaigns' (p. 6) but that there were Gentiles dwelling on its fringes, especially coastal areas. Thereafter, the Galilee was for the most part Jewish, with little material or literary evidence of Gentile cultural sigla. Hoehner (*Herod Antipas*, 54), however, argues that while Judaism was widespread in Galilee during Herod Antipas's time, it seems there was still a mixed population of Jews, Egyptians, Arabians, Phoenicians and Greeks in this period. There is evidence of this in the gospels as Jesus moves from Jewish regions like Cana to other regions like Gerasa (Mk 5.1–20; Mt. 8:28–34; Lk. 8.26–39). As Howard Clark Kee, 'Early Christianity in the Galilee: Reassessing the Evidence from the Gospels', in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. Lee. I. Levine (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 17, writes that this easy movement across the Sea of Galilee 'conveys the overall impression that personal and cultural lines between Jews and non-Jews were not always sharply drawn'.

⁹Rome's presence was made ostensible by the mid-first century. Pompey intervened (63 BCE) in the dynastic dispute between the brothers Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II with the result that Judea became a client kingdom with Hyrcanus as highpriest (later ethnarch, 47 BCE) and Antipater (father of Herod the Great) as procurator and administrator of the territory. Though the extent of Hasmonean territories was diminished with the loss of a number of hellenized towns, Judean control of the Galilee continued. Judea, however, was now within the *imperium* of the proconsul of Syria and as such Aulus Gabinius (57–55 BCE) reorganized it into five synods (Jerusalem, Gadara, Amathus, Jericho and Sepphoris: see Josephus, *Ant.* 14.91, *B.J.* 1.170), each governed by its own council of the local elite. Herod was appointed as the administrator of the Galilee by his father in 47 BCE and proved himself useful to Rome. In the ensuing civil war, he was appointed tetrarch (42/1 BCE, an appointment shared with his brother, Phasael) and later, by the Roman senate, king of Judea (40 BCE). However, in terms of his activities in the Galilee after his appointment as king, little is known. He does not appear to have embarked on any monumental projects as he did in Judea (e.g. the temple and Caesarea Maritima) or in surrounding provinces.

With the death of Herod the Great, the Galilee was ceded by Rome to his son, Herod Antipas (4 BCE–39 CE) as ethnarch.¹⁰ As a client monarch, his rule was not hereditary and it was to be exercised only within his territories; his right to mint coinage in valuable metals was curtailed; and he was expected to supply auxiliary units to the Roman army. Whether he was required to pay tribute to Rome, however, is uncertain. In return, he could freely manage his own internal affairs in the administration of taxes, the expenditure of revenues, the operation of the judicial system and the organization and command of his army. Little is known about the administration of Galilee at the village level other than what can be inferred from the gospels and later discussions of the rabbis.¹¹ Josephus, *B.J.* 2.252, names four toparchies, two each in Peraea and Galilee, though for Lower Galilee it is suggested that there were four toparchies based on Tiberias, Taricheae, Sepphoris and Gabara, with a fifth, Gischala, in Upper Galilee. Freyne suggests that, by this organization, Antipas was able to achieve an ‘integrated system of administration for Galilee’.¹² In the case of Tiberias which possessed a βουλή with eleven executive officers (i.e. an ἄρχων and δέκα πρῶτοι),¹³ one may infer that the collection of direct taxes, the sale of concessions for indirect taxes and the appointment of village-level officials (κωμογραμματεῖς)¹⁴ were administered by the city’s council under the supervision of Antipas’s personnel and assisted when necessary by his soldiers.¹⁵ Such personnel may have controlled the ‘royal’ bank and archives later housed in Tiberias.¹⁶ Mark 6.21 speaks of a banquet for Antipas’s

¹⁰The title ‘king’ was granted by Rome to client rulers of larger territories. For the rights of client rulers see Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, vol.1, rev. and ed. Geza Vermes et. al. (London: T&T Clark, 2014), 316–17. Antipas ruled Galilee from 4 BCE to 39 CE. The political governance of the Galilee then changes hands to Agrippa I (39–44 CE, with Judea added in 41 CE), followed by a period of direct rule under a Roman procurator (44–54/55 CE) and then is reverted to a client kingdom under Agrippa II (from 54/55 CE). One assumes that the institutions of governance in the Galilee changed little between rulers with a reliance on local elites for much of the day-to-day administration of Galilee. See Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 44–5.

¹¹See Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, vol. 2, 184–98.

¹²Sean Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian: 323 BCE to 135 CE. A Study of Second Temple Judaism* (Wilmington: Glazier and Notre Dame, 1980), 69

¹³See Josephus, *B.J.* 2.599, 639 and 641. See also *Vita* 64, 69, 134 *et passim*.

¹⁴Josephus only mentions village-scribes once (*Ant.* 16.203 = *B.J.* 1.479) and here as an alleged threat made by Herod’s sons by Miriamne against their other brothers. As the threat rests on an aspersion against the brothers’ lack of attention to education, it is clear that village-scribes were thought to occupy the lowest level in the system of royal administration.

¹⁵Cf. Josephus, *B.J.* 2.405, where later under Agrippa II the magistrates and council allocate taxes to the various villages (εἰς δὲ τὰς κώμας οἱ τε ἄρχοντες καὶ βουλευταὶ μερισθέντες τοὺς φόρους). Administrative regions were construed as a city with its surrounding villages and small towns (τὰς περικώμας πάσας τε καὶ πολίχνας, *B.J.* 3.134, 430; 4.241, 438, 442, 488; τὰς τε Γαδαρηνῶν καὶ Ἰππηνῶν κώμας, τὰς περὶ τῆς Τιβεριάδος κώμας *Vita* 42, 129; concerning Sepphoris, περὶ αὐτὴν κώμας ἔχουσα πολλὰς, *Vita* 346). According to Josephus’ estimate, there were 204 cities and villages in Galilee (*Vita* 235). The picture offered here differs from that of Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 192, who considers the administration and collection of taxes likely to be in the hands of Antipas’ slaves and officials. The problem is the lack of direct evidence with one left to try to reconstruct the administration from past evidence (esp. from the time of Ptolemaic control as well as Josephus’s citation of edicts and letters issued by foreign rulers) and incidental references, be they in Josephus, the gospels or later *baraita* in the Rabbinical traditions. For a diachronic overview of the administrative systems, esp. in terms of taxation, see Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 183–94.

¹⁶The ‘royal’ bank and archives were transferred from Tiberias to Sepphoris under Agrippa II (*Vita* 38). The archives would have contained more than loan and mortgage agreement as suggested by Josephus (see *B.J.* 2.427 for the burning of Jerusalem archives at the outset of the first revolt and again possibly by the Romans, *B.J.* 6.354, at Antioch, for which the Jewish residents were blamed, *B.J.* 7.55). The archives, no doubt, contained the financial records of the territory and were used for taxation purposes. Josephus also speaks of priestly archives

birthday, which was attended by ‘his courtiers and officers and the leaders of Galilee’ (τοῖς μεγιστᾶσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς χιλιάρχοις καὶ τοῖς πρώτοις τῆς Γαλιλαίας).¹⁷ Where village elders and their assembly (οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῶν Ἰουδαίων, Lk. 7.3; τὸ συνέδριον Mt. 5.22 and its associated συναγωγαῖ Mk 13.9; Mt. 10.17; οἱ ἀφ’ ἐκάστης κώμης ἐπίσημοι ἄνδρες, B.J. 1.659) fit into the scheme is unclear, though they appear to have exercised some authority in deciding local matters.

On assuming the position of ethnarch, Antipas set about restoring Sepphoris, which had been largely burned and depopulated in the civil disturbances that followed Herod’s death (*Ant.* 17.289; *B.J.* 2.68), and later founded the new city of Tiberias. In neither of these cities did he build a temple to Roma and Augustus, as his father did in Caesarea Sebaste (Samaria), Caesarea Maritima and Paneas. Moreover, numismatic evidence shows an avoidance of human images.¹⁸ Such restraint perhaps indicates an awareness of Jewish sensitivities.¹⁹ Furthermore, other factors point to a continued religious affiliation in first-century Galilee. These include the presence of *miqvat* (also a sign of wealth) in its cities and villages, evidence for the production of stone vessels (used for ritual purity), a high usage of oil lamps from Jerusalem, the continued circulation of Hasmonean coinage,²⁰ avoidance of images on Antipas’s coins, synagogues at Migdal and Gamla,²¹ Jewish tombs at Cana,²² the accounts of Jesus’s life and ministry and extrapolations from the accounts of Josephus.²³ As Sanders observes: ‘On the whole, in Antipas’s Galilee, which was Jesus’s Galilee, the law was Jewish, the courts were Jewish, the education was Jewish.’²⁴ However, as Kee writes, ‘[t]o assume that Jesus and his first followers in the Galilee were unaffected or out of communication with Hellenistic culture is historically untenable.’²⁵

for the purpose of marriage, *C. Ap.* 1.31 and 35, and Phoenician and Tyrian archives that contained historical records, *Ant.* 8.144, 9.283, 287; *C. Ap.* 1.143.

¹⁷Later Josephus speaks of seventy Galilean leaders (τοὺς δ’ ἐν τέλει τῶν Γαλιλαίων, *Vita* 79) whom he made a show of befriending and making his advisers. The expression οἱ ἐν τέλει is used generically by Josephus (e.g. *Ant.* 18.284) and thus bears little specificity.

¹⁸See, for example, Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 54, ‘Philip the tetrarch was the first Jewish prince to have images of the emperor on his coins. No trouble resulted from this action, and this would seem to point to a small Jewish minority in his realm. On the other hand, Antipas’ avoidance of human images on his coins seems to indicate a predominant Jewish element in his domain.’

¹⁹There are conflicting views about the type of ruler Herod Antipas was throughout his reign. For Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 57, ‘Antipas seems to have been a good ruler, for even though he did things which annoyed Jews (e.g. building Tiberias upon a former cemetery) he was in control and ruled for a long period of time [...] one gains insight into Antipas’ rule in his handling of John the Baptist. He imprisoned John before his activities could lead to an uprising. If this be typical of his handling of such situations it seems that it was his policy to act promptly to preclude trouble.’

²⁰Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 54.

²¹Aviam, ‘People, Land, Economy’, 32–41.

²²See Morten Hørning Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: The Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and Its Socio-economic Impact on Galilee* (WUNT 215: Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 168. In Jensen’s work he surveys Yodefat, Cana, Capernaum and Gamla and suggests on the basis of its tombs that Cana, in particular, was a Jewish village.

²³Chancey, *The Myth of a Gentile Galilee*, 54–6, cites, for example, the likely Galilean petitioning of Petronius, the proconsul of Syria, at Ptolemais and Tiberias (40/41 CE, Josephus, *Ant.* 19.261–309, *B.J.* 2.192–203), the apparently religious tensions between Galilean and Samaritans under Cumanus (Josephus, *Ant.* 20.118–36, *B.J.* 2.232–35) and the assumptions apparently made in challenging Josephus’s military appointment to the Galilee.

²⁴E. P. Sanders, ‘Jesus in Historical Context’, *Theology Today* 50 (1993): 440.

²⁵Kee, ‘Early Christianity’, 15.

In view of more recent archaeological evidence, Galilean villages are now seen to manifest economic stratification;²⁶ villages were not just reliant on agricultural production but there were in them persons of various trades and incomes.²⁷ First-century Capernaum, for example, benefited from regional trade passing through the Sea of Galilee. Excavations show that its inhabitants fished on the lake and resided in rather large living units with several families living together.²⁸ The village of Gamla also presents important material. Jensen²⁹ observes:

Local industry flourished, providing an economic base for a wealthy quarter and two public buildings. In general, it seems that the most notable changes in the rural village life of Galilee happened before this period (the Hasmonean takeover) and after this period (in the Middle Roman period). In the first part of the first century CE, the villages surveyed all appear to have flourished.

Josephus describes the fineness of the houses in the Galilean town (ἄστυ) of Chabulon as comparable to those found in Tyre, Sidon and Berytus. But excavations also reveal evidence of smaller more basic structures similar to that described in Mark 2, that is, a one-storey building consisting of small rooms around a central court and a staircase

²⁶Older studies such as Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, emphasize the agricultural basis of the economy (grain, oil, wine, salted fish, dried figs, balsam, etc.) but qualify the benefits that might accrue to the local economy. It is assumed that official control (citing third-century BCE Ptolemaic evidence such as *P. Tebt.* 3.1, 703) over its production and distribution and that the take-up of innovation was hindered by peasant conservatism and limited access to improved techniques and cultivars.

²⁷Aviam, 'People, Land, Economy', 21–9, offers an overview of two villages:

(a) Yodefat with approx. population of 2,000. Houses on the whole are constructed on simple materials (field stones and mud plaster) with earthen floors (two with *miquot*) but there were also dwellings showing a wealthier lifestyle higher up the hill. Industries included olive production as evidenced by presses, pottery (storage jars and cooking vessels) as evidenced by four kilns and clothing manufacture in wool as evidenced by loom weights, spindles and a large number of bones of mature sheep. Much of the land around the village was probably used for grazing with cisterns used for watering the livestock.

(b) Gamla (in the Golan) was a much larger village. Houses were made from hewn basalt. Industries included olive production (crushers and presses) and flour milling. There are also indications of wealthier inhabitants as evidenced in the finds of luxury items.

Other villages can be added:

(c) Khirbet Qana (pop. 1200) see C. Thomas McCollough, 'City and Village in Lower Galilee: The Import of the Archaeological Excavations at Sepphoris and Khirbet Qana (Cana) for Framing the Economic Context of Jesus', in Fiensy and Hawkins, *The Galilean Economy in the Time of Jesus*, 57–72, who offers a similar description of it: 'In sum, as at Gamla and Yodefat, the domestic areas of the early Roman period of Khirbet Qana manifest strategies of adapting to topography and display aspects of social and economic differentiation, as well as ethnic/religious identity' (60).

(d) Capernaum (pop. 1000) see Sharon Lea Mattila, 'Revisiting Jesus' Capernaum: A Village of Only Subsistence-Level Fishers and Farmers?', in Fiensy and Hawkins, *The Galilean Economy in the Time of Jesus*, 75–138, who on the basis of the extant archaeological evidence observes 'at least some of the villagers in Jesus' Capernaum probably lived at a level significantly above subsistence' (95).

In terms of population, outside of cities, it is believed that there were roughly 200 villages with an average population of 500 people each. See Hoehner, *Herod Antipas*, 52. This is contrary to the exaggerated numbers offered by Josephus who gives the population of Galilee as 3 million (*Vita* 235).

²⁸Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee*, 178

²⁹Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee*, 178.

leading to the flat roof.³⁰ Aviam observes: ‘villages in the Galilee were not poor. Galilean villagers were not peasants. Both poor people and rich people lived in cities, towns, and villages’ and he further attempts a socio-economic profile of the region with

wool workers (evidenced by the spindle and spindle whorls), weavers (evidenced by the loom weights), and potters (evidenced by the kilns, potter’s wheel, and wasters) at the bottom. Owners of shops and workshops (evidenced by flour mills and olive presses) formed the next socioeconomic level. The owners of the fresco houses formed the uppermost level of the pyramid. . . . High officials, tax collectors, and oligarchic families are the most likely candidates for having built and lived in such houses in villages, towns and cities.³¹

On the other hand, Freyne speaks of ‘the vagaries of the seasons and the uncertainties of the markets’ and contends that the ‘fluctuations of the political and economic pendula were naturally felt most keenly at the bottom of the social scale’.³² He concludes that there was little in the way of industry in Galilee³³ and that as occupants at the bottom end of the social scale, Galilean farmers, workers, fishermen and so on benefited little in the economy and lived an essentially subsistence existence.³⁴ Even if this is conceded, the same vagaries may have given incentive to the formation of trust networks. As Hawkins observes ‘the vagaries of ancient markets that arise, for example, from seasonal factors that affect such things as the supply of materials or purchasing power in the market, as well as from the unreliable nature of demand especially for high and medium-end products’ were important factors leading to the formation of trade associations.

TRUST NETWORKS AND VILLAGE LIFE ACCORDING TO THE PARABLES OF JESUS

The parables are possibly one of the best³⁵ sources to illustrate village life in first-century Galilee. Ever since A. Jülicher’s *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* it has been recognized that parables are not allegorical tales with hidden meanings but that this reading was a construct placed upon them as early as the first gospel. Parables were told not to conceal or to hide a mystery; for them to do so would be atypical, as W. Wrede’s *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* so eloquently argues. What they do is draw on everyday events to make a point clear; as such, parables are narrated metaphors that seek to explain the lesser known in terms of the better known, that is, the details of the parables draw on common experiences to explain something that is often harder to articulate.³⁶ J. Jeremias observes that ‘the pictorial element of the parables is drawn from the daily life of Palestine’, and he

³⁰Kee, ‘Early Christianity’, 16.

³¹Aviam, ‘People, Land, Economy’, 43 and 44.

³²Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 178 and 182, respectively.

³³Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 170–6.

³⁴Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 176–83. See also Douglas E. Oakman, ‘Execrating? or Execrable Peasants!’, in Fiensy and Hawkins, *The Galilean Economy in the Time of Jesus*, 151: ‘Closer to the first-century Galilean soil, we have clear evidence in the early Jesus traditions, such as the parables (Talents/Minas, Unjust Steward) and some of the red-letter Q material (Lord’s Prayer, pericope addressing anxiety about food and clothing, saying about God and Mammon), that subsistence and debt concerns were wrapped up with the Jesus movement.’

³⁵J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1963), 11–12.

³⁶This is not to say that parables do not contain unexpected twists.

illustrates his point by arguing that the rather odd method of sowing seed in the parable of the sower (i.e. where it is cast without regard to differences of terrain) is the method that is attested for the period. Likewise, C. H. Dodd³⁷ comments:

In the parables of the Gospels, however, all is true to nature and to life. Each similitude or story is a perfect picture of something that can be observed in the world of our experience. The processes of nature are accurately observed and recorded; the actions of persons in the stories are in character; they are either such as anyone would recognize as natural in the circumstances, or, if they are surprising, the point of the parable is that such actions are surprising. Thus there is no doubt something surprising in the conduct of the employer who pays the same wages for one hour's work as for twelve, but the surprise of the labourers at being treated so gives point to the story.

More recently the same point has been made by Ruben Zimmermann.³⁸ He speaks of the socio-historical background of the parables and lists the extensive range of backgrounds that inform their narratives. To take a few examples from Q that illustrate daily life in the village we note: the risk of flooding and the associated need for good foundations in a house (6.47-49); the competitive banter of children sitting in a market-place (7.31-32); the employment of casual labourers at harvest time (10.2); the use of lampstands in houses (11.33); the threat of house break-ins (12.39-40); the legal jeopardy faced by an accused person (12.58-59); the care taken by shepherds for their flocks (15.4-7); the difficulty for a household slave (e.g. when jointly inherited) to determine loyalty (16.13); the sharing of beds within a household (17.34); and the use of slaves as agents by the elite (19.12-26).

When one looks beyond Q, there are a number of parables that are suggestive of trust networks, and here one should note that a person may be embedded as a member of more than one trust network. In terms of trust networks based on kinship, the parable of the prodigal son (Lk. 15.11-32) illustrates the tensions that might arise from a member who wished to leave and take his share in the joint enterprise; the parable of the two sons (Mt. 21.28-32) illustrates the risk posed by the non-compliance of a network member, in this instance a son; at the level of a trust network based on the local community,³⁹ the parable of the request for bread at midnight (Lk. 11.5-8) shows how a person embedded in a network extends hospitality to a travelling friend (associate) and seeks assistance from another friend in his local community; the parable of the wicked tenants (Mk 12.1-13) shows a trust network, which was based on the joint control of an agricultural resource,⁴⁰ acting illegally to gain benefit from that resource; the parable of the dishonest manager

³⁷C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (Glasgow: Collins, 1961), 19–20.

³⁸Ruben Zimmermann, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus. Methods and Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 99–103: 'Jesus' parables draw their power from the transferal of real experiences and everyday life into the religious domain. . . . Beyond a few elementary basic human experiences such as the light of a torch or a questioning child, the parables primarily reflect the environment and life of people in Palestine of the first century CE.'

³⁹Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 13: 'Characteristic enterprises in which trust networks figure importantly include cohabitation, procreation, provision for children, transmission of property, communication with supernatural forces, joint control of agricultural resources, long-distance trade, protection from predators, maintenance of health and collective response to disaster. With marked variation from setting to setting, trust networks often take the forms of religious sects and solidarities, lineages, trade diasporas, patron-client chains, credit networks, mutual aid societies, age grades, and local communities.' Cf. also p. 43. But, as he notes, trust networks based on kinship is not a feature of Western societies (45), though segments of the kinship group may (46).

⁴⁰See Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, xiii and 13.

(Lk. 16.1-8) shows the risks posed to a trust network when a local manager squanders the assets of the network's principal; or again the parable of the talents (Mt. 25.14-30) shows the use of agents (δοῦλοι) by a principal (κύριος) to make a profit from his investments.

TRUST NETWORKS AND VILLAGE LIFE ON THE BASIS OF RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS

Leaving aside the parables, there is strong evidence for the existence of trust networks based on religious affiliation. We think here, for example, of the *haburot* (חבורות) as attested in the second-century *tannaim* of the Mishnah and Tosefta⁴¹ and of the first-century covenanters of the *yahad* (יהד) in the Judean desert (1QS) and of its dependent camps (מחנות) in the villages of Palestine (CD). Though there is dispute as to whether the covenanters are to be identified with the Essenes, it is of interest that Philo *Hypoth.* 11.5 describes the latter as living together in religious fraternities (κατὰ θιάσους so also *Prob.* 85), forming associations and practising commensality (ἐταιρίας καὶ συσσίτια πεπονημένοι) and conducting all their affairs for the common good (ὕπὲρ τοῦ κοινωφελούς).

The Pharisees⁴² are also described as a religious sect and as such can best be understood as a trust network.⁴³ That there should be archaeological evidence in Galilee and Judaea for synagogues in this period is of interest. It has been argued that, as the term itself suggests,

⁴¹See *m. Demai* 2 and *t. Demai* 2–3. The *haberim* are often related to the Pharisees of the first century. See Pinchas H. Peli, 'The *Havurot* That Were in Jerusalem', *HUCA* 55 (1984): 55–74; Anthony J. Sandarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society. A Sociological Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 216–20; Tracy Ames, 'Fellowship, Pharisee and the Common People in Early Rabbinic Tradition', *Studies in Religion* 34 (2005), 339–56; Jacob Neusner, 'The Pharisaic Agenda: Laws Attributed in the Mishnah and the Tosefta to Pre-70 Pharisees' and 'The Pharisaic Agenda: Laws Attributed in the Mishnah and the Tosefta to Pre-70 Pharisees', in *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees*, ed. J. Neusner and B.D. Chilton (Waco: Baylor Univ. Press, 2007), 297–311 and 313–27; Yonder Moynihan Gillihan, *Civic Ideology, Organization, and Law in the Rule Scrolls: A Comparative Study of the Covenanters' Sect and Contemporary Voluntary Associations in Political Context*, STJD 97 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 24–32.

⁴²The Pharisees are often identified with the later attested *haberim*. But the organizational structures of Pharisaism and the *haburot* are obscure and there is much debate over the connections between them, the Essenes of the classical sources, the covenanters of the יהד and מחנות and the voluntary associations of the Graeco-Roman world. See Moshe Weinfeld, *The Organizational Pattern and Penal Code of the Qumran Sect*, NTOA 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986); Randolph R. Herrmann, 'Die Gemeinderegel von Qumran und das antike Vereinswesen', in *Jewish Identity in the Greco-Roman World*, AJEC 71, ed. J. Frey, D. Schwartz, and S. Grippentrog (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 161–203, who in attempting to account for the similarities between 1QS and Graeco-Roman associations notes the fundamental differences that arise due to the intensive nature of communal life and ideology among the covenanters of 1QS; Steven D. Fraade, 'Qumran Yahad and Rabbinic Hābūrā: A Comparison Reconsidered', in idem, *Legal Fictions Studies of Law and Narrative in the Discursive Worlds of Ancient Jewish Sectarians and Sages*, SJSJ 147 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 125–43; and Gillihan, *Civic Ideology, Organization*, who sees the covenanters as formed on an 'alternative civic ideology' (i.e. one in opposition to the contemporary regime in Jerusalem) though like the Graeco-Roman association modelling their organization on civic structure.

⁴³See Benedikt Eckhardt, 'Introduction: "Greco-Roman Associations" and the Jews', in *Private Associations and Jewish Communities in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities*, ed. B. Eckhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 1–12. He criticizes the abstraction across time and space involved in constructing the concept of 'association' and the etic factors involved in this; that is, it 'focuses on common features regarding activities, organization and outward representation shared by a wide array of different groups, Jewish and Christian among them' (2). In other words, one loses sight of the emic understanding of those participating in the group. Approaching religious affiliations from the perspective of trust networks avoids Eckhardt's criticism as it focuses on the internal motivations for a group's formation and practices.

συναγωγή was initially used to refer to a gathering rather than to a building. Where early evidence exists for an actual building, it is in a diaspora context where the term ‘προσευχή’ is metonymically used to reference it. In other words, what happened in the building came to describe the building itself. Kee⁴⁴ writes, ‘these Jewish assemblies began as a purely secular phenomenon to deal with the common social and economic problems shared by expatriate Jews. In the later Maccabean period, however, groups fostered by the Pharisees began meeting in houses or small assembly halls to read the Torah and the Prophets’. Anders Runesson⁴⁵ makes a further distinction between (a) the public συναγωγή where, for example, all Jews in a village might come together to decide important matters affecting the community; and (b) the voluntary συναγωγή, in which, for example, only the members of a sect like the Pharisees might meet. He compares this latter type to the voluntary association of the Graeco-Roman world. Be that as it may, both types of synagogues must be viewed as a trust network, the former based on the local community with its concerns and customs, and the latter on a particular religious affiliation. When Jesus is portrayed as moving around the villages of Galilee and visiting various synagogues (cf. Mk 1.39; 3.1; 6.2; 12.39), we must assume that these were public gatherings, though it does not follow that in all instances the gathering occurred in a dedicated building as such.

And, finally, one must think of the emergent followers of Jesus as constituting trust networks based on religious affiliation.⁴⁶ We now turn to discuss them.

TRUST NETWORKS AND VILLAGE LIFE ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL NARRATIVE

When the first disciples are called, it is notable that they are called out of established industry-based trust networks (i.e. fishing and tax-farming), before being called into a new network centred around Jesus and his mission. In this section, we will turn to the gospel narrative (with particular emphasis on Luke-Acts)⁴⁷ and focus on the call of these first disciples to highlight the presence of industry-based networks in Galilee and study the formation of a new village-based network around Jesus’s mission.

Fishing Networks

Trust networks were formed at a local level around a collective purpose or resource often in affiliation with a common trade or religion, or mutual need. According to Luke, those who were first called by Jesus (Lk. 5.1-11) were already engaged in a

⁴⁴Kee, ‘Early Christianity’, 8.

⁴⁵Anders Runesson, ‘Behind the Gospel of Matthew’, 460–71. Anders Runesson, ‘Behind the Gospel of Matthew Radical Pharisees in Post-War Galilee’, *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37, no. 6 (2010), 460–71.

⁴⁶See, for example, Runesson, ‘Behind the Gospel of Matthew’, 460–71. Runesson argues for the existence of voluntary association synagogues and that Matthew’s *ekklesia* belonged to such an association. For Runesson, the *Didache* represents the community rule for Matthew’s *ekklesia*, though Matthew 18 may reflect rules of the association.

⁴⁷To focus this section, we will limit our data primarily to Luke-Acts and its specific portrayal of the first men and women who gathered around Jesus as one example of a trust network within first-century Palestine (focusing particularly on Luke 1–Acts 6). Like many scholars, we treat Luke-Acts as a two-part volume written by the one author and thus both texts are considered and studied as a unified source. See Christy Cobb, *Slavery, Gender, Truth, and Power in Luke-Acts and Other Ancient Narratives* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 14; and Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 1.

partnership (cf. the use of *κοινωνοί* or *μέτοχοι* later) centred on fishing (their common and collective trade). We are told in Luke's account that beside the lake of Gennesaret, Jesus enters the boat belonging to Simon (Lk. 5.3) and calls on him to let down his nets. The catch is so great the men signal to their partners (*μέτοχοι*) in the other boat for assistance (Lk. 5.7). These men, later identified as James and John, sons of Zebedee, are called Simon's *κοινωνοί* ('partners').⁴⁸ Simon is then assigned a new collective purpose, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἔσῃ ζωγρῶν ('from now on you will be catching people') (Lk. 5.10; cf. Mk 1.17 and Mt. 4.19 – Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς γενέσθαι ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων – spoken to both Simon and his brother, Andrew). The following verse makes clear that in calling one of the partners, the others believed that they also shared in that same calling. In this scene, we witness local fishermen, said to be 'partners' (and likely part of a trust network),⁴⁹ called to leave their common trade and become instead catchers of men. Their partnership is to be maintained but their common purpose is new. We, therefore, should not think of this as a call of an individual, but, as Kloppenborg states, 'as a call of persons already embedded in an extrafamilial association, invited to join another'.⁵⁰ This sets the scene for the first followers of Jesus – persons already joined together in a network now being called together to a new collective and long-term purpose.⁵¹ And naturally enough a person might be a member in any number of trust networks at the same time.

Luke's account of the calling of the first four disciples is quite different from that of Mk (1.16-20) and Mt. (4.18-22) in terms of its chronological ordering in the narrative and in the presentation of the account more generally, for example, in Mark and Matthew there is no miraculous catch of fish. Significant also is the fact that neither Mark nor Matthew

uses the terms '*μέτοχοι* or *κοινωνοί*'; rather they stress the familial bonds (and many trust networks were based on the extended family) that stood between the fishermen. Clearly the third evangelist or his source (special Lukan material?) has chosen to interpret that bond in terms of his own knowledge of the trade. But that is not to say that he is incorrect in his interpretation. In Luke the terminology may have been prompted by the inclusion of the miraculous catch into the calling pericope. To underline the size of the haul after a night without fish, Peter's boat is described as unable to manage on its own and so his partners in another boat were called to help. Perhaps it was this cooperation that

⁴⁸Richard Last, 'Ekklesia outside the Septuagint and the Dēmos: The Titles of Greco-Roman Associations and Christ-Followers' Groups', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 137, no. 4 (2018): 971, lists *koina* among the common titles used for associations. In addition, given the evidence around neighbourhood and common trade associations, Kloppenborg states that 'similar associations may have existed in any town in Judah or Galilee where an industry was centred' including fishing in Capernaum. He further affirms that the Sea of Galilee was 'renowned for its fishing industry [which] raises the strong possibility that there were associations of fishermen, just as are attested at Joppa (*CIJud* 2.945; II CE) and Ephesus in a series of inscriptions (*I.Ephesos* Ia.20; 54–59 CE; *I.Ephesos* 5.1503; II CE)'. See Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 324, 327. The term *koinon* used in Lk. 5.10 is found in other documents to refer to a formal association (See *I.Delos* 1774; *TAM* III.197).

⁴⁹Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 327, proposes that Luke's use of the terms '*μέτοχοι*' and '*κοινωνοί*' reflects that he was 'aware of trade associations and pictured Jesus' original disciples as belonging to such an association'.

⁵⁰Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 327.

⁵¹Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 91.

prompted the terminology.⁵² Indeed, the documentary evidence suggests the common occurrence of such fishing networks so that the inference is a reasonable one.⁵³

Unfortunately, evidence of fishing networks in first-century Galilee is lacking, in large part due to the paucity of sources. However, Christel Freu⁵⁴ observes that there is an absence of overt markers such as κοινόν, σύνοδος or πλῆθος (i.e. terms used to designate a trade network) in documents, like the papyri, which were not intended for public display. Here instead, a formula designating the members of a trade in the plural and the city, village or rural domain of operation in the genitive (e.g. ‘the weavers of Oxyrhynchos’ or the ‘fishermen of the shore of Berenice’ as in *PSI* 8.901 above) sufficed to indicate an association and thus can be used as an indicator of such a network. The formula is met in later rabbinical texts. For example, *j. Mo’ed Qaṭan* 2.5.3 (= 81b par. *j. Pesah.* 4.1.11 = 30d) speaks of three trade networks that stop work on the intermediate days of a holiday; among them are the fishermen of Tiberias (חרמי טיבריה). Also named are the grist-millers of Sepphoris (גרוסי ציפורין) and the groats-makers of Acco (דשושי עכו).⁵⁵ *b. Mo’ed Qaṭan* 13b.6 mentions other trade groups, namely, the merchants of Tiberias (תגרי טבריא) and the hunters of Acco (צדי עכו). Though from a later period,⁵⁶ there seems to be little difficulty in ascribing the practice to the earlier period, especially given that we argue not for a formalized trade association but for the more general and widely attested trust network based around a shared pursuit.

⁵²As to the miraculous haul of fish, we find a somewhat similar pericope at Jn 21.1-14; again the miracle occurs after a night without a catch, though now in one boat with several named followers as crew. Here to underline the size of the catch the speaker resorts to what may well be hyperbole (cf. ‘now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish’, v.6, with ‘dragging the net full of fish’, v.8). Interestingly, John’s account of the calling of the disciples (Jn 1.40-51) is quite different and not dependent on the two versions found in Mark/Matthew and Luke, respectively. Absent from John is the context of fishing which is present in the synoptics and prompts the call to become fishers of men. As a result there is no call to Peter to be a fisher of people in John; however, following the miracle in Jn 21.1-14 Peter is thrice singled out and commanded ‘feed/tend my lambs/sheep’ – Βόσκα τὰ ἀρνία μου in v.15, Ποιμαίνε τὰ πρόβατά μου in v.16 and Βόσκα τὰ πρόβατά μου in v.18 –and finally commanded ‘Follow me’ – Ἀκολουθεῖ μοι (v.19). The command in John changes the metaphor of discipleship from one of fishing (making followers) to one of shepherding (caring for followers) and is consistent with John’s metaphorical understanding of Jesus’s role which Peter is now commanded to assume. The command to follow in Jn 21.19 is also reflected in the synoptic gospels by a parallel command (Δεῦτε ὀπίσω μου, Mk 1.17, Mt. 4.19) and then the subsequent response of the disciples (ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ, Lk. 5.11; Mk 1.18, Mt. 4.20). In other words, there appears to be a modelling of Jn 21.1-14 on the call of Peter, and both it and Luke 5.1-11 (with its focus on the same call) share the miracle of a large catch of fish after a fruitless night of fishing.

⁵³John S. Kloppenborg and Richard S. Ascough, *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary. I. Attica, Central Greece, Macedonia, Thrace*, BZNW 181 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 403, cite *I.Byzantion* 37 and 38 (early II CE); *AE* (1928) 146 (Odessos, imperial period); *I.Ephesos* 20 (mid-I CE); *I.Ephesos* 5.1503 (138–61 CE); *OGIS* 756 (Miletos, II CE); and *I.Kyzikos* 1.260 (imperial period). John S. Kloppenborg, *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary. III. Ptolemaic and Early Roman Egypt*, BZNW 246 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 7, 267–76, adds *PSI* 8.901, *P.Mich.* 2.123r iii. ll. 7 (bid for a fishing concession), 34, and xiv. ll. 37–38 (= *graphion* entry for *PSI* 8.901), *PSI* 8.901 (Tebtynis, 45–46 CE), *PSI* 7.737 ll. 7–8, Arsinoites, II–III CE), *SB* 8.10206 (Theadelphia and Polydeukia, 148 CE), *P.Louvre* 13 (Soknopaion Nesos) and *SB* 3.6704 (Aphroditis Kome, 538 CE). Cf. also *CIJud* 2.945 (Joppa, second century CE).

⁵⁴Christel Freu, ‘L’identité sociale des membres des collèges professionnels égyptiens (Ier–VIe s. p. C.)’, in *Collegia: Le phénomène associatif dans l’Occident romain*, Scripta antiqua 41, ed. Monique Dondin-Payre and Nicolas Tran (Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2012), 232.

⁵⁵Compare *m. Mo’ed Qaṭan* 2.5, which speaks only of the fishermen (הצדין), and the groat-makers (הדשושות), and the grist-millers (הגרורות) without place names, though the use of the definite article is suggestive of known groups.

⁵⁶*j. Mo’ed Qaṭan* 2.5.3 par. *j. Pesah.* 4.1.11 cite Rabbi Immi (third-century Amora) as a participant in the question whether fishermen should be exempted.

Kloppenborg has argued for the plausibility of fishing associations in Galilee and thus for Luke's choice of terminology:

The choice . . . might reflect that Luke, who almost certainly did not write his Gospel in Palestine, was aware of trade associations and pictured Jesus' original disciples as belonging to such an association. On the other hand, it is a priori likely that such associations existed on the western shore of the Kinneret, functioning to regulate the trade and especially to collect and pay fishing taxes.⁵⁷

He further notes that 'we should not think of Jesus' call in Mark 1:16–20 as a call of four individual laborers, but rather as a call of persons already embedded in an extrafamilial association, invited to join another, rather less secure and stable group, to "fish for humans".⁵⁸ We would agree with this position but with the one proviso that formal recognition was not a requirement. After all, we do not know for certain if there were official sales of fishing concessions within the territory of Herod Antipas, though this seems likely.⁵⁹ However, Tilly does note that authorities were interested in harnessing the assets of trust networks and this accords well with the move to recognized trust networks elsewhere in the Mediterranean.

Although there is limited documentary evidence of these associations in Galilee, contemporary evidence from Egypt may assist in understanding how these networks functioned. For example, PSI 8.901 (an association of fishermen from Tebtunis, 46 CE) describes itself as a note-of-hand but in effect it is better described as a declaration under oath made to the agents of Serapion, the nomarch (i.e. the nome's chief financial official). The document is from an association⁶⁰ of mostly Egyptian fishermen (called 'elders') with a Greek-named secretary, Herakleides. The declaration is in duplicate.⁶¹ Herakleides, who was apparently fluent in Greek, composed and wrote lines 17–27 (m1); lines 24–26, which follow the oath and precede the date, read: *I, Herakleides, their aforementioned scribe have written (this) and on behalf the others being illiterate, and I myself, Herakleides have sworn the preceding oath.* In another hand (m2), the duplicate (lines 7–16) was then made above line 17 with the addition of the descriptions of the members (lines 1–6). Spaces were left between each part, between lines 6 and 7 and lines 16 and 17. A scribe recorded the declaration in the *grapheion's* register: (*Pharmouthi*) 22, *note-of-hand of Herklas (sic) secretary of the fishermen and other fishermen to the agents of Serapas (fee) 8 dr. (P.Mich. 2.123r xiv 37–38).*

⁵⁷Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 327. Kloppenborg surmises that the fishermen may have subleased the right to fish and as well associated equipment from those who had won the concession. However, he is guided in this by a desire to avoid the possibility that the disciples may have been persons of means.

⁵⁸Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 328.

⁵⁹As Jensen (*Herod Antipas in Galilee*, 175) argued, there is evidence that in the region around the Sea of Galilee (and in particular Capernaum) there were 'large-scale fishing opportunities'.

⁶⁰See above (n. 51) for use of the naming device 'members of a trade in the plural with their village in the genitive'.

⁶¹The duplication of the declaration in a document held and registered by the village *grapheion* may seem strange, but it is a residual feature derived from a practice used before legal documents were officially registered; in such circumstances, the double-document was written in duplicate with the top copy rolled and sealed. Should any dispute arise between parties, the sealed part could be opened before witnesses and confirm the veracity or otherwise of the bottom copy. The registration and lodgement of such documents rendered the double-document obsolete but the practice did not disappear immediately. Instead, over time the top duplicate became more and more abbreviated.

m2: lines 1–6: fourteen names with patronic, age, distinguishing feature in the same order as below

We, Herakleides son of Tryphon, secretary of the fishermen of the shore of Bernikis Thesmophorou, and the thirteen elders of the fishermen from the villages of Narmouthis and Bernikis Thesmophorou, (namely), Harmieus son of Anoubas, Papis son of Onnophris, Panomieus son of Akes, Sekoneus son of Patynis, Anchorimphis son of Orseus, Harpagathēs son of Nilos, Panomieus son of Harmais, Nekches son of Opis, Orseus son of Opis, Patynis son of Orseus, Orseus son of Orseus, Patynis son of Satabous, and Pelous son of Patynis, (all) fourteen to those from Sarapion son of Ptolemaios, the nomarch and those in charge of revenue and in charge of transport swear by Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator truly not to have consorted with nor in the future to consort with those fishing, either using dragnets or casting nets, (and) hunting (spearing?)⁶² the images of the gods, the Oxyrhynchus or the Lepidotos fish according to the public note-of-hand formerly issued by us and the other fishermen. May it be (well) to us swearing truthfully but swearing falsely the opposite. Year 6 of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, Pharmouthi 22.

m1: lines 17–27: for the most part the same as lines 7–16

Fishing was a concession that, like many others, was purchased from the regime. In the Ptolemaic period, Rostovtzeff⁶³ states that ‘fishing rights were leased to special *telonai* who underwrote the fishing contract (ἰχθυική ὥνή), which was then carried out by expert fishermen liable to pay to the crown 25 per cent of their catch (τετάρτη ἀλιέων or ἰχθυικῶν) besides minor taxes’. According to Sherman Wallace⁶⁴ the τετάρτη was later commuted to a cash payment. Unfortunately, evidence is largely absent for the Roman period, but in the Fayum the royal monopoly may have been converted to a concession paid by the fishermen as the τέλος ἰχθυήρας δρυμῶν to the superintendent of fishing.⁶⁵ The office of superintendent (ἐπιτηρητής) was held as a compulsory public service (i.e. liturgy). In

⁶²See Dietrich Sahrhage, ‘Fishing in Ancient Egypt’, in *Encyclopaedia of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Non-Western Cultures*, ed. Helaine Selin (Berlin: Springer, 2008), 922–7.

⁶³M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941), 297. Rostovtzeff, vol. 3, 1387 n. 101, cites *P.Tebt.* 3.1, 701 ll. 195–218 (*Tebtunis*, 135 BCE), the day-book of either the *oikonomos* of a royal estate or the manager of a δωρεά (i.e. a large estate granted by the king), and argues that fishermen were required to pay a tribute (φόρος) of between 30 and 40 per cent. for the fish sold, received loans for fixed netting (δίκτυα στατά, ll. 86–90) and in return received wages (ὀψώνια, ll. 150–152 and 223). See also Ulrich Wilcken, *Griechische Ostraka aus Aegypten und Nubien I* (Leipzig: Giesecke & Devrient, 1899), 137–141, and his discussion of O. Wilck. 2.331 (Diospolis Magna, Thebes, 226 BCE) where in view of the king’s ownership of rivers and seas, the τετάρτη ἀλιέων is viewed as a high tax on the sale of fishing rights and it was paid monthly.

⁶⁴Sherman LeRoy Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt from Augustus to Diocletian* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 219.

⁶⁵Cf. *P.Tebt.* 2.329 l. 8, 139 CE, where the petitioner had acted as a guarantor for the sale of the right to farm the fishing tax in the marshes (τέλος ἰχθυήρας δρυμῶν), which presumably the fishermen had to pay. The right to collect the tax is named a sale (ὥνή, l. 15) and the guarantor lodged her deposit in the account of the nomarch. Cf. *P.Tebt.* 2.359 l. 5 (126 CE) for the payment by five persons (fishermen?) to the former ἐπιτηρητής ἰχθυήρας δρυμῶν (superintendent of fishing of the marshes). Cf. also O. Wilck 2.1449 (Thebes, 164/5 CE) where the τέλος μεταβόλων ἀλιέων is interpreted, given the small amount paid here compared to their right to fish, as ‘die Gewerbesteuer, die von den Fischern erhoben wird, die ihre Ware verkaufen’. According to Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt*, 219, elsewhere the τετάρτη may have continued.

certain circumstances a fixed annual rental or assessment may have also been paid to a ἐπιτηρητῆς πλοίων ἀλιευτικῶν for the use of fishing boats.⁶⁶ In addition there was a δεκανικόν (10 per cent tax) paid on boats for the policing of the concession. As various monies related to fishing were deposited to the account of the nomarch, Wallace concludes that ‘the nomarch appears to be responsible for the tax on fishing in the marshes as well as for the fishing on Lake Moeris’.⁶⁷ In the case of *PSI* 8.901 we see that the nomarch might also receive declarations under oath. Here, the association of fishermen swear that they have in the past and will in the future abide by a restriction, customary or otherwise, on their concession. One surmises that the declaration was necessitated by a complaint lodged against them by those affected by the catching of the two sacred fish species.⁶⁸

In looking at the partnership between Simon, Andrew, James and John as recorded by Luke, we have observed that many trust networks were based on the extended family. In the case of *PSI* 901 the same situation may pertain. Here we find three possible sets of brothers, namely, the two sons of Opis (aged approx. 55 and 65), the three sons of Orseus (aged approx. 30, 35 and 40) and the two sons of Patynis (aged 55 and 60), but no father and son pairing. The latter omission is to be expected given the ages of the named thirteen ‘elders’. Another example can be found through the presence of family relations among members in a charter of livestock owners (*P.Mich.* 5.243: Tebtunis, 14–37 CE).

The foregoing section has drawn upon contemporary evidence from Egypt in the hope that it might shed some light on fishing on Lake Gennesaret. The usage of this evidence is prompted by the lack of relevant documentary evidence from Galilee and the strong possibility that similar practices prevailed there. Principally we are interested in those factors that motivate the formation of trust networks; these are often universal in nature, as was also the tendency of regimes to exploit a network’s resources.⁶⁹ Thus, from the perspective of the fishermen there were numerous incentives to form a trust network,

⁶⁶Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt*, 219 citing *BGU* 1.337, and *Stud.Pal.* 22.183 ll. 35–37. Cf. also *BGU* 1.10 l. 14 (192 CE), 277 l. 1 (130–160 CE), *P.Tebt.* 2.348 l. 23 (note). *P.Lugd.Bat.* 17.1 column 3, a temple inventory from Soknopaiu Nesos (after 138 CE), records the rental payment (φόρος) on four boats for 400, 440, 500 and ? dr.

⁶⁷Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt*, 220 and 334.

⁶⁸Cf. Kloppenborg, ‘Associations in the Ancient World’, 274–5 on the cultic importance of the fish species. As to the existence of fishing associations a number of other papyri are also relevant. *BGU* 3.756 (Soknopaiou Nesos, Arsinoite nome, 199 CE) records a payment to the nomarch of 80 dr. through Heraklas, the assistant of the association of shore/bank fishermen – β(ο)η(θού) ἀλιέων ἀπὸ ποδὸς Σοκνοπ(αίου) Νήσου. For associations of fish-vendors (fishermen?) see also *O. Wilck.* 2.647 (Thebes, 155 CE) where Pikos son of Ammonas and (associates) fisher-vendors (and) fishermen: Πικὸς Ἀμμωνῆτος καὶ (μέτοχοι) μετὰβ(ολοι) ἀλιε(ῖς) – pay 72 dr. for the month of Phamouthi. On the amount Wilcken, *Griechische Ostraka* I, 136, notes: ‘eine Gesellschaft von Fischern die hohe Summe von 72 Drachmen für einen Monat zahlt’. Cf. also *P.Ryl.* 2.196 (Soknopaiou Nesos, 196 CE) where the δεκανικόν to the value of 60 dr. was paid by what was an association of fish-vendors (Wallace, *Taxation in Egypt*, 209). Evidence for later associations of fishmongers (ἰχθυοπῶλαι) see *PSI* 3.202 (Oxyrhynchos, c. 338 CE), and for the bylaws of an association of fishermen see *SB* 3.6704 (Aphrodites Kome, Antaiopolite nome, 538 CE). Here, besides regulations concerned with the celebration of marriages, and the sale and theft of boats, the bylaws show a movement towards a serf-type system where the landowner appears to appoint the president and obligations are established with his agreement.

⁶⁹Considerations that speak to the possibility of comparing the administrative practices of Roman Egypt and the Herodian ethnarchy are: (1) the widely held view of Mediterranean kings and rulers that they ‘alone had the right to fish on rivers and lakes’, to paraphrase Wilcken, *Griechische Ostraka* I, 137, ‘der König auf Fluss und Seen allein das Fischereirecht gehabt habe’; (2) the attempt of those kings and rulers to exploit and benefit from the resources of their territories; (3) the long period of Hellenistic hegemony in Palestine and its influence on the practices and means of exploiting resources; and (4) the considerable incentive for new regimes and rulers to rely on the well-established means of production of the past and to devise ways to exploit them.

for example, the physical requirements of net-fishing that would benefit from several workers with their separate boats; the assistance, financial or otherwise, that a network would provide in gaining access to equipment or in dealing with the regime; access to a wider pool of information where markets are risky, dealings are often with unknown agents and information is asymmetrical; and the opportunity to integrate the processes of fishing, marketing, salting of fish and transportation to distant markets. Even if one assumes the presence of ‘middlemen’, a network provided a better bargaining position to the fishermen who could now act in agreement.

Returning now to the gospel account, we see the first followers of Jesus leave their fishing network to follow Jesus. However, according to Tilly, exit from a trust network was ‘rare and costly’. In particular, he observes that ‘leaving requires sacrificing old forms of support and finding new ones’.⁷⁰ However, in the gospel accounts of the call of the first disciples it is stated: ‘When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him’ (Lk. 5.11) and ‘Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him’ (Mk 1.20). But the wording here appears to gloss over what must have been a hard and costly decision on the disciples’ part. Indeed, the cost to them is borne out later when Peter observes, ‘Look, we have left everything and followed you’ and Jesus specifies that cost as ‘house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields’ (Mk 10.28-29). The cost of exiting from the support provided by former trust networks is to be rewarded a hundredfold in the new trust network established among the followers of Jesus (10.30).⁷¹

Tax-Farming Networks

According to the gospel narratives, the fifth disciple to be called was Levi (named Matthew at Mt. 9.9) as he was sitting at the customs table (Mk 2.13-17; Mt. 9.9-13; Lk. 5.27-32). It is not said whether Levi was a tax-farmer but subsequent events indicate that he owned a house where many ‘tax-farmers and sinners’ reclined at meal with Jesus and his disciples. As tax-farmers were required to bid for the concession to collect indirect taxes, had to pay perhaps half the purchase price up-front and were liable for any shortfall in collections or for any penalty that might arise from the conduct of the concession, it is not surprising that they sought associates and guarantors in their undertaking. Indeed, the title ‘chief tax-farmer’ is found in some documents and ‘associates’ are found alongside those who held the concession.⁷² In other words, another disciple may also be involved in a trust

⁷⁰Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 42 and 82 in particular.

⁷¹John T. Carroll (‘What Then Will This Child Become?: Perspectives on Children in the Gospel of Luke’, in *The Child in the Bible*, ed. Marcia J. Burge [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008], 185) also recognizes that there is something extreme about this group. They are told to leave *everything* (Lk. 5:11, 27-28; cf. 18.28-30) for this ‘new, fictive kinship group, one that has no *paterfamilias* other than God’ when joining this group surrounding Jesus.

⁷²To cite examples from the *Revenue Laws of Ptolemy Philadelphus*: (a) Col. 14.9-10 appears speak of registration of chief tax-farmers and their ability to form partnerships with associates ([ταῖς τῶν ἀρχ]ωνῶν καὶ [τῶν κοινῶν]ων μετ[οχ]αῖς ἐξέσ[τω] μετέχ[ε]ι); (b) 15.2-5 addresses the issue of those ineligible to become tax-farmers (οἱ τὰς ὠνάς ἔχοντες), associates or guarantors of the sale; (c) 18.1-2 rules that when accounts are balanced by government officials copies are to be handed to the tax-farmers and to each of their associates – πρὸς τ[ο]ὺς τὰς ὠνάς ἔχοντας, πάντων ἀντίγραφα ἐκάστω[ι] τῶν κοινῶν[ων] παραχρήμα δότω; (d) 22.1-2 speaks of appeal times that may involve associates or subordinates in tax-farming (τις τῶν τι κοινωνούντων ἢ ὑπηρετούντων τῇ[ι] ὠνῇ); but (e) perhaps most significantly 34.10-19 speaks of the balancing of accounts by the *oikonomos* with the tax-farmer and his associates (τὸν ἡγ[ο]ράκ[ο]ν τῇν ὠνῇν καὶ τοὺς μετόχους αὐτοῦ . . . τὸν τὴν ὠνῇν [ἔχ]οντα καὶ τοὺς μετόχους, ll. 11-14). If there

network whose function was to collect taxes. The operation of such a tax concession as outlined earlier surely meets the description of trust networks that are ‘sets of strong social ties among people carrying on consequential long-term collective activities at risk to the malfeasance, mistakes, or failures of network members’.⁷³ And the fact that a meal was held in Levi’s house underlines the commensality that he may have shared at other times with fellow members of his network.

Carpentry Networks

On a further possible connection to trust networks, one should not overlook the trade of Jesus’s family. Mark records Jesus’s fellow villagers calling him ‘the carpenter’ (ὁ τέκτων, Mk 6.3), while Matthew records them calling him ‘the son of the carpenter’ (ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός, Mt. 13.55). Since the same trade was commonly shared by father and son, though the son might have served his apprenticeship with someone other than his father,⁷⁴ the disagreement between Mark and Matthew is not problematic. Hawkins makes the point that artisans involved in trades that required multiple or diverse skills (e.g. trades involved in large building projects, ship-building, production of luxury goods and funerary monuments) formed networks to manage the sequence of different skills involved in the production process.⁷⁵ Now, though a diverse range of construction skills may not have been needed in most village-level projects, it must be remembered that Herod Antipas had restored the old capital of Sepphoris after its destruction in 4 BCE, fortifying it to be an ‘ornament of all Galilee’ (*Ant.* 18.27), and later in his rule he founded his new capital of Tiberias on the model of a Greek city. Freyne⁷⁶ sees city building as ‘perhaps politically the most significant action of Antipas’. Schürer notes ‘Herod Antipas delighted in magnificent architecture . . . the magnificence of the buildings left nothing to be desired’.⁷⁷ Josephus, *Vita* 65, notes that Antipas had even constructed his palace and decorated it with carved animal images (ζῶων μορφὰς ἔχοντα). Such endeavours no doubt

is a surplus, the royal bank is to pay ‘to the chief tax-farmer and his associates the amount of the surplus payable to each according to ~~sale~~ partnership’ (τῶι τε ἀρχόνῃ καὶ τοῖς μετόχοις τ[ὸ] τοῦ ἐπιγενήματος ἑκάστωι κατὰ τὴν [ὥν]ην \μ[ε]τ[ρ]ο[ν] ἢ ἐπὶ βόλλον, ll. 15-17). We note that ‘sale’ has been crossed out and the terms of the partnership form the basis of the division. On the other hand, if there is a deficit, it is collected ‘from the chief tax-farmer, his associates and guarantors, from each the amount payable’ (παρὰ τοῦ ἀρχόνου κ[αὶ] τῶν μ[ε]τόχων καὶ τῶν ἐγγύων παρ’ ἑκάστου τ[ὸ] ἐπιβάλλον, ll. 18-19).

⁷³Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 91.

⁷⁴Cameron Hawkins, *Roman Artisans and the Urban Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 108–10, who discusses this practice among weavers in Roman Egypt. Apprenticeship is seen as a high-stakes transaction that exposes a particularly valuable ‘long-term enterprise’ to the ‘malfeasance, mistakes, and failures’ of others, namely, the apprentice’s future long-term productivity and, in some cases, even his health (109).

⁷⁵Hawkins, *Roman Artisans*, 68: ‘While artisans and entrepreneurs in the Roman world developed vertical divisions of labor that relied on intensive investments in human capital in several industries, they coordinated the activities of specialist workers not by developing integrated firms, but rather by organizing subcontracting networks in which they contracted as necessary with one another for intermediate goods and services. Although this strategy was largely a response to seasonal and uncertain demand, which made integration costly, it was possible only because artisans could mitigate transaction costs by using their professional associations (collegia) as governance structures.’

⁷⁶Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian*, 69.

⁷⁷See Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People* vol. 1, 342–3. Cf. also Aviam, ‘People, Land, Economy’, 43, on Herod Antipas: ‘Investments were made in the first capital city, Sepphoris, and vast investments were again made later in establishing a new capital at Tiberias, dedicated to the emperor but built for Jews. Taxes now flowed not only to Jerusalem for impressive and monumental projects in Judea and for building projects outside of the territory of Israel, but were now invested directly in the Galilee.’

required variously skilled artisans working on the one project, and even if neither Joseph nor his son were directly involved, they may well have known others who were.⁷⁸ Indeed, in support of the existence of building networks, we note that by the late second/early third century the expression ‘mason of N.N.’s mason-guild’ appears to have become a byword for nepotism.⁷⁹

It appears likely that, from its inception, the Jesus movement had connections to various trust networks operating at the village level and beyond. Indeed, they may have seen their newly formed group, whether this was only constituted by Jesus and the twelve or a wider group of followers, as a new trust network. In light of this possibility, a number of later practices take on a somewhat different complexion when set against the backdrop of trust networks.

The First Followers of Jesus: Moving beyond Galilee

As seen earlier, the initial members of Jesus’s network were called in the context of established industry-based trust networks (Lk. 5.7-10, 27-32; Mk 2.13-17; Mt. 9.9-13) into a new long-term activity with a common and collective purpose (Lk. 5.10-11). This is another mark of the trust network. As Tilly states, trust networks are ‘sets of strong social ties among people carrying on consequential, long-term collective activities at risk to the malfeasance, mistakes, or failures of network members’.⁸⁰ In Lk. 5.10 Jesus says, ‘*from now on* you will be catching people’ (ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἀνθρώπους ἔσῃ ζωγρῶν). This is a long-term calling with a common and collective purpose that extends well beyond the Easter event (Lk. 6.13-16; 9.1-6; 10.1-12; Acts 1.12-14). We see this unified purpose strengthen as the group grows in number from the initial four (Lk. 5.7-11) to the twelve (Lk. 6.12-16), to a group including some women (Lk. 8.1-3), and as they are sent, initially as twelve (Lk. 9.1-6), then as a larger group (Lk. 10.1-12) until they are eventually described as being ‘one of heart and soul’ sharing everything in common (ἦν αὐτοῖς πάντα κοινά, Acts 4.32). Bauckham stresses that a ‘distinctive feature of Luke’s story of Jesus is his emphasis on a much wider group of itinerant disciples than the twelve (Luke 6:17; 8:1-3; 10:1-2; 19:37; 23:49; 24:9; Acts 1:15, 21-3), many of whom travelled with Jesus in Galilee and many of whom were in Jerusalem at the time of the triumphal entry, the crucifixion, and the resurrection appearance’.⁸¹ While some, like Gerhardsson, limit this ‘authoritative collegium’ to the twelve,⁸² we, like Bauckham, believe this group to be broader than that (cf. Lk. 24.6-7), together with a long-term collective purpose.⁸³

⁷⁸See McCollough, ‘City and Village in Lower Galilee’, 71, for the positive impact of the construction of Sepphoris and Tiberias on the villages of Lower Galilee.

⁷⁹When the people of Simonia were unhappy with the teacher whom they had requested, they somewhat contemptuously asked Judah ha-Nasi, who had referred him to them, ‘Is this a mason of your mason guild?’ (הדין פייסונא דפייסונתך, *Yebam*.12.6.6). In other words, is he one of your pupils and is that why you’ve sent him to us? It turns out that Levi was unable to answer the people’s questions as they had built a *bema* (taken as a token of aggrandizement) in his honour and he forgot all he knew.

⁸⁰Tilly, *Trust and Rule*, 91.

⁸¹Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 129–30.

⁸²B. Gerhardsson, *The Reliability of the Gospel Tradition* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2001), 73.

⁸³In Luke 24, the women at the tomb are spoken to by the angles as though they were present with the ‘disciples’ at some of their more private moments: ‘remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again’. Bauckham, *Jesus and*

Part of this long-term collective purpose involved providing support and financial assistance for those within the network. In Lk. 8.1-3 (and again in material found only in Luke) we read that the twelve, as well as some women (including Mary, called Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna) travel with Jesus and many others who are said to have 'provided for them out of their resources' (Lk. 8.3; see also Lk. 9.48). A similar phrase is found in an association document affiliated with the restoration of a synagogue which is said to have been restored by two members 'from both their own resources and joint deposits' (ἐκ τε τῶν ἰδίων καὶ τῶν συνκαταθεμένων, MAMA 6.264, ll. 6-7: Akmonia, late first century CE). Offering assistance and organizing a common fund was not unique to these early followers of Jesus. We read of a 'common fund' in the association of the Great Mother (οὐχ ὑπάρχοντος ἀργυρίου τῷ κοινῷ, IG II² 1327, ll. 10-11: Piraeus, 178/77 BCE) and of association members seeking recognition in assisting other members (and their immediate family members or friends) when bereaved or wronged (IG II² 1275, ll. 4-10: Piraeus, 325-275 BCE; see also IG II² 1327, ll. 6-7).⁸⁴ Luke-Acts sees this trend continue among the early followers of Jesus:

All who believed were together and had all things in common (εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινά); they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and (shared) their food (κλῶντές τε κατ' οἶκον ἄρτον, μετελάμβανον τροφῆς) with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2:44-7).⁸⁵

This passage is echoed again in Acts 4.32-37 where it is said 'no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common'. We are told in this later passage that many sold their land and houses and gave the earnings to the apostles to distribute to those in need (Acts 4.34-35). A Levite, named Joseph (Barnabas) is commended in this account for selling his field and laying the money at the apostles' feet (Acts 4.36-37). This is presented by Luke in contrast to the example of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5.1-11), who withheld and lied about the profits they gained from their property sale. Luke appears to present these two accounts in direct parallel, to magnify the importance of supporting and taking care of those within the trust network.⁸⁶ Again, there was an expectation within associations for members to support one another's needs and 'not to refrain in any respect from being well intentioned toward this *oikos*' (ἀποστερ[οῦντες δὲ μη]δὲν εὐνοεῖν τῷ οἴκῳ τῷιδε, SIG³ 985, ll. 22-23: Philadelphia, Lydia, first century BCE). The inscription sets out the regulations governing the behaviour of those who would enter Dionysius's *oikos* with its altars dedicated to Zeus and other

the Eyewitnesses, 130, says, 'These words take for granted that these women had been in the audience of Jesus' private teaching to his disciples in Galilee (cf. 9:18, 43)'.

⁸⁴See also Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 328.

⁸⁵Of course, one notes that in this account we have now moved beyond the Galilee to the city of Jerusalem and post Easter at that. One naturally compares the communal pooling of all a follower's property with what we know of the same practice by the covenanters of 1QS. One must also bear in mind the nature of Jesus's teaching in the gospels regarding wealth and the apparent difference between it and what was practised by the early Jerusalem Church.

⁸⁶Joel B. Green, 'Tell Me a Story: Perspectives on Children from the Acts of the Apostles', in *The Child in the Bible*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 226.

named deities.⁸⁷ If this *oikos* of Zeus represents an association, as Kloppenborg suggests,⁸⁸ then the regulation that any malfeasance be exposed (τὸν τοιοῦτον φα[νερὸν ποιήσιν] καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ μ[ὴ] ἀποκρύψειν μηδὲ παρασιωπήσιν, *SIG*³ 985, ll. 29–31) also echoes a sentiment found in Acts 5.7–11.⁸⁹ A similar issue arises in Acts 6, as the Hellenistic Jews protest against their Hebraic co-religionists for neglecting their widows ‘in the daily distribution of food’ (ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ καθημερινῇ, Acts 6.2). This malfeasance is then rectified by the twelve who call together the whole community of disciples to appoint seven men of good standing to oversee the distribution of food on their behalf (Acts 6.3–6).

Similarly, another important element of these networks was funeral aid (*IG* II² 1327; *TAM* III 197; *CIL* 14.2112). Associations often took on this responsibility for their members. This may have been due to the high cost of funerals or the logistical concern for migrants or perhaps out of a desire for communal recognition of the deceased.⁹⁰ The statutes of an association in Lanuvium, for example, state: ‘if a member dies farther than 20 miles from town and the association is notified, three men chosen from our corporation will be required to go there to make arrangements for his funeral’ (*quisquis a municipio ultra milliar[ium] XX decesserit et nuntiatum fuerit, eo exire debebunt electi ex corpore n[ostro] homines tres, qui funeris eius curam agant*, *CIL* 14.2112 #4: Lanuvium, Campania, 136 CE). In the Luke-Acts account we see an example of this when Joseph⁹¹ takes down Jesus’s body and lays it in his own tomb (Lk. 23.50–53). In Luke’s account, we are told that Joseph was a good and righteous man and that he was a member of council (Lk. 23.50). Luke claims that Joseph was opposed to the way Jesus was prosecuted (Lk. 23.51) and that after his death, he approached Pilate and requested access to Jesus’s body. It is reported that Joseph proceeded to take down Jesus’s body, wrap it in linen cloth and lay it ‘in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid’ (Lk. 23.53). In the context of associations and trust networks, it appears that Joseph was fulfilling a highly regular aspect of daily life for those affiliated with such networks.

There is also evidence that it was expected that members of associations (and by implication members of trust networks) were to offer support in civil or legal disputes. In the obligations of the members of a *thiasos* it states, ‘if a member should be wronged, they and all the friends shall come to his assistance, so that everyone might know that we

⁸⁷A similar idea is found in the charter of livestock owners (*P.Mich.* 5.243: Tebtunis, 14–37 CE), which says, ‘If one overlooks another in trouble and does not assist with a view to helping him to resolve (the) trouble, let him pay 8 dr.’ (*P.Mich.* 5.243 l.6).

⁸⁸Kloppenborg, ‘Associations in the Ancient World’, 326 and 335.

⁸⁹An important aspect of associations and trust networks is social capital, which appears to be what is at stake in this scene. According to Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 191: ‘Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.’ John S. Kloppenborg, *Christ’s Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), 91, adds that ‘social capital can involve access to information that would otherwise be unavailable; access to resources, prestige, and high standing in the eyes of others; and the availability of people whom one can trust and upon whom one can depend for assistance and opportunities for advancement and cooperative action. . . . Social capital was especially critical in a social environment that otherwise did not provide support for individuals facing the vagaries of death, disease, injury, dislocation, and marginal employment as well as the fear of oblivion’.

⁹⁰See Kloppenborg, ‘Associations in the Ancient World’, 324; Kloppenborg, *Christ’s Associations*, 267, 272. See also *IG* II² 1275 [no. 1].

⁹¹The other gospels tell us that Joseph was from the village of Aramathea (location unknown).

show piety to the gods and to our friends' (IG II² 1275). We have already spoken about the desire of associations to seek internal resolution of disputes between members and Kloppenborg suggests that Paul's instruction in 1 Cor. 6 to settle legal disputes internally, 'reflects a common practice for an association to arbitrate members' disputes rather than allowing them to go to secular courts (e.g., *P.Lond.* 7.2193; IG II² 1368).⁹² This particular feature of networks may shed light on the narrative surrounding the cross (Lk. 22–24). As Luke tells the story, the shame that was felt by Peter when he did not support Jesus and instead denied him (Lk. 22.54–62) stands in contrast to the named women who stand and watch as Jesus is crucified (Lk. 23.49, 55–56) and then go to the tomb to anoint Jesus's body (Lk. 24.1–10).

Finally, regular gathering, particularly around meals and banquets, appears to be an important element in any network or association (see *P.Mich.* 8.511; *P.Mich.* 5.243; *CIL* 14.2112 [no. 8]). There are examples of Jesus's early followers gathering not simply to eat but also to pray (Lk. 5.29–30; 7.36; 14.12–14; 17.7–8; 22.14–16; Acts 2.42).⁹³ Pliny the Younger *Ep.* 10.96 not only confirms the continued practice of communal meals but also some of the behaviours that governed the Christian network:

But they declared that the sum of their guilt or their error only amounted to this, that on a stated day they had been accustomed to meet before daybreak and to recite a hymn among themselves to Christ, as though he were a god, and that so far from binding themselves by oath to commit any crime, their oath was to abstain from theft, robbery, adultery, and from breach of faith, and not to deny trust money placed in their keeping when called upon to deliver it. When this ceremony was concluded, it had been their custom to depart and meet again to take food.⁹⁴

Importantly, Pliny calls this network an association or fraternity (*hetaeria* = ἑταιρεία).

CONCLUSION

In the above, we have argued that trust networks were a common element of village life in first-century Galilee (as seen through the examples of fishmongers, tax collectors, carpenters and religious groups like the Pharisees). This speaks to the way people related, worked and lived in the village context. For example, due to the added impost of numerous taxes and the uncertain nature of production and marketing, members of towns and villages relied on the support of those within their network (e.g. partners in fishing networks) both to meet the regime's demands and to cover the vagaries of the economic cycle.⁹⁵ They also relied on these networks for common aid, funerary assistance and legal support; it also appears that these networks fostered a regular gathering of

⁹²Kloppenborg, 'Associations in the Ancient World', 328.

⁹³See also Mt. 9.10–13; 22.1–22; 23.6; 26.19–30; Mk 2.15–17; 14.3–9; 14.12–26; Jn 12.1–2; 21.12.

⁹⁴Translation by J. B. Firth download from <http://www.attalus.org/old/pliny10b.html>.

⁹⁵Infanticide was practised across many cultures of the ancient world as a means of population control due to such factors as poverty, poor contraception, limited resources and sexual violence. Holly Beers, *A Week in the Life of Greco-Roman Woman* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2019), 13–14, notes: 'Exposed infants were placed in boxes or pots and abandoned in a variety of places, ranging from deserted areas to public spaces known for exposure (especially in cities). These children died or were raised by slaves as commodities; occasionally they were adopted and raised as legitimate children. These practises were legal in the ancient world because of the low satirical value placed on children. . . . However, it is important to note that all Jewish and Christian literature available to us condemns these practises, and Roman writers who discussed the topic malign Jews for raising all the children that are born

people, particularly around meals.⁹⁶ By using the gospel narratives and the parables of Jesus as a primary source, we have suggested that networks, such as the first followers of Jesus, were a means of connecting people both within and across villages and towns. According to Luke's Gospel, Jesus and his first followers were an itinerant trust network that travelled among the villages and towns of Galilee, but that avoided its cities.⁹⁷ It is reported that Jesus's ministry began in Galilee (Lk. 4.14; Lk. 5.1-11) and included visits to Capernaum (Lk. 7.1-9), Nain (Lk. 7.11-17) and Gerasa (Lk. 8.26-39) and that the group travelled to the border between Samaria and Galilee (Lk. 17.11-19), to Jericho (Lk. 18.35-43; Lk. 19.1-9), to Bethany (Lk. 19.28-30) and finally to the temple city of Jerusalem (Luke 23). Luke's first account ends with the risen Jesus meeting two followers on their way to the village of Emmaus (Lk. 24.13-35). Both Luke and Acts schematically portray the followers of Jesus as remaining in Jerusalem where the risen Jesus appeared to them, and it was from there that the good news was then carried into the Graeco-Roman world. Matthew and Mark beg to differ. In Mark, Jesus is reported as telling his disciples that he would go before them to Galilee (14.28; cf. Mt. 28.7, 10), and in Matthew, after first meeting the women at the tomb, it is reported that the risen Jesus appeared to the disciples on a mountain in Galilee and there issued his great commission. For whatever reason, a return to the villages of Galilee afforded the disciples the opportunity to access their old trust networks and the security and support that these offered. At the risk of drawing on diverse and unrelated sources, we note that John 21 portrays several of the disciples as back in Galilee working their trade.

Trust networks arose out of necessity and allowed people in the village context (across various demographics) to deal with their common social and economic concerns. It has been seen that in first-century Galilee, like other locations, these networks were formed as a result of family ties, industry ties and religious ties and that through these networks people in villages whether rich or poor could rely on others for practical, financial and social support. Networks built social capital, provided people with a sense of belonging and status and helped members with the daily pressures of life in challenging socio-economic situations.

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to them.' The fact that Jewish communities did not practice infanticide would have added an extra burden on and risk to families and may have been one of the many drivers to form wider networks of trust within the community.

⁹⁶According to Carroll, Luke's gospel goes one step further and shows the importance not just of networks in village life but also family in village life. In Luke's gospel we see parents express great care and concern for their children (Lk. 8.41-42; 9.37-43; 18.15-17). Luke narrates this as though it is surprising in some way, 'people were bringing even infants to Jesus' (Lk. 18.15). Carroll says, 'in Jesus' world, as Luke pictures it, parents provide for and protect their children. This norm of family and village life supplies Jesus with a concrete example on which to build a lesser-to-greater argument that applies for a life of trust in God' (see Lk. 11.11-13). See Carroll, 'What Then Will This Child Become?', 184.

⁹⁷This is affirmed in both Matthew and Mark's accounts. Matthew 10.11 says, 'Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave.' This verse implies that Jesus followers were travelling to various villages.

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