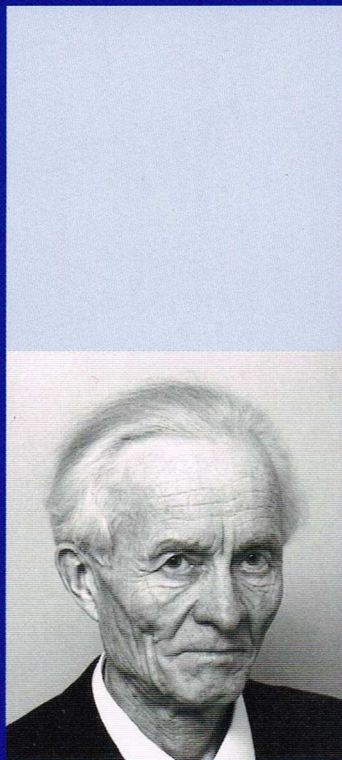


From the Ancient Sites of Israel

Essays On Archaeology, History and Theology



*Ed. by T. Eskola
and E. Junkkaala*

Justitia Supplement Series 1998

*In Memory
of Apeli
Saarisalo
(1896-1986)*

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Aapeli Saarisalo as Biblical Archaeologist

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Aapeli Saarisalo (1896-1986), Professor of Oriental Literature at the University of Helsinki from 1935 to 1963, was one of the best-known scholars in Finland. This was not mainly due to his scholarly work written in English and German and published in scholarly journals and monograph series, and therefore inaccessible to the wider public, but rather to his vast literary production in Finnish covering six decades. Even people who had never read a line of Saarisalo's books knew him from countless anecdotes, many of which were even true. Saarisalo gained a legendary reputation for his way of life insisting on the importance of an ascetic way of life, fasting, unadulterated foodstuffs, unpolluted air, exercise, and the link between physical and mental health.

Saarisalo's literary productivity was phenomenal. His books include the very popular reference work *Raamatun sanakirja* (Biblical Dictionary, 1936 and later), the textbook *Pyhän maan muinaisuus* (The Holy Land in Ancient Times, 1938 and later), the popular archaeological field reports *Galilean rauniomailta* (From the Ancient Sites of Galilee, 1928) and *Paratiisin maan kaivauksia* (Excavations in the Land of Paradise, 1931), as well as four collections of articles on Biblical and Oriental subjects: *Asuttu puolikuu* (The Fertile Crescent, 1934), *Puolikuun mailta* (From the Lands of the Crescent, 1947), *Vapahtajan kotijärveltä* (From the Home Lake of the Saviour, 1953), *Jerusalem, jos unhotan sinut...* (If I forget you, O Jerusalem..., 1963).

His early works also included the monographs *Messiaskuningas* (Messiah the King, 1928) and *Mooses lääkärinä* (Moses as Physician, 1928). Between 1956-67 he published a series of studies on the New Testament: *Suuri Parantaja* (The Great Physician), *Hyvä Opettaja* (The Good Teacher), *Syntisten Vapahtaja* (The Saviour of Sinners), *Neljä evankelistaa* (The Four Evangelists), *Paavali, suuri vaeltaja* (Paul, the

Great Wanderer), and *Pietari, suuri kalastaja* (Peter, the Great Fisherman). After this series he started writing biographies of evangelical leaders and other Christian personages: Paavo Ruotsalainen, Lars Levi Laestadius, Carl Olof Rosenius, Martti Rautanen, Aurora Karamzin, and Aku Rätty. In the 70s he published his memoirs in two volumes: *Rymättylän räätälin poika* (A Tailor's Son from Rymättylä, 1975) and *Elämäni mosaiikkia* (Mosaic of my Life, 1977). He even wrote two novels, *Astarten uhri* (The Sacrifice of Astarte, 1929), based on archaeological documents, and *Yövärtija* (Night Watchman, 1964), which reflects the experiences of Zionist settlers in the 1920s. On the top of everything else, Saarisalo even published several books of Finnish translations of the Bible. This record is far from being complete.

The record of Saarisalo's Finnish-language books might look heterogeneous: on the one hand, it comprises oriental studies, biblical in particular, on the other, studies related to the ecclesiastical history of Finland and Sweden, an exceptional combination indeed. However, seen with the author's eyes, they do not deal with separate subjects, but, rather, different aspects of one main subject, the history of God's work through Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, the revealed Word of God, the prophets, the evangelists, the apostles, and the men and women in the North whom God had chosen as His fellow workers.

Saarisalo's scholarly works, published in English and German, fall within the sphere of oriental studies, but their scope is very wide. Biblical archaeology can safely be described as his main field, but he also devoted studies to Aramaic, Arabic, and Assyriology. His most important works in these fields are the article *The Targum to the Book of Ruth* (*Studia Orientalia* 2: 2, 1928, p. 88-104) and the monographs *Songs of the Druzes* (1932) and *New Kirkuk Documents Relating to Slaves* (1934). He also wrote two articles on the *waqf* and its history: *A Waqf-document from Sinai* (*Studia Orientalia* 5: 1, 1934, 24 + 8 p. + 1 folded plate) and *The Turkish Waqf* (*Studia Orientalia* 19: 10, 1953, 6 p.).

To the Land of the Bible

The world of the Bible had filled Aapeli Saarisalo's mind ever since his childhood when he used to read it to his father who was sitting on his tailor's table. A frail boy, he was not fitted for physical labour, and

was therefore sent to secondary school in Turku, the nearest city. There he was ever more attracted to the Bible and the land of the Bible, and his enthusiasm was heightened when he had an opportunity to meet Archbishop GUSTAF JOHANSSON who had four times visited the Holy Land.

Consequently, after finishing school in Turku, Saarisalo continued his studies in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Helsinki. Majoring in the Old Testament, he graduated in 1918 and was ordained the same year. Right away, he planned to visit Palestine. He got a travel grant from the Bishop's Council in Turku, and in February 1919 he started his journey. In the aftermath of the First World War it turned out to be impossible to get travel permission for Palestine before the autumn of 1920, and until then Saarisalo remained in England. He worked as a sailors' chaplain at the Scandinavian sailors' church in Liverpool and at the Finnish sailors' church in London, at the same time studying archaeology and Spoken Arabic and participating in a course in tropical medicine at Livingstone College in London.

Upon his arrival in Palestine in September 1920 Saarisalo associated himself with a British clergyman, the Rev. CHEESE, a voluntary missionary who strolled about in the country, talking to people in the fields and village lanes, eating wild plants, and often spending his nights under the open sky. Saarisalo describes the weeks which he spent with Rev. Cheese as a living introduction to the land of the Bible which he had known before only from books.

Alt, Albright, and fieldwork

After his three months' study visit to Palestine, Saarisalo worked three years as a minister in the rural parish of Vähäkylä in Finland. In the spring of 1924 he again travelled to Palestine, this time sent by the Finnish Missionary Society. He stayed a few weeks in Jerusalem and then started his work in Galilee, living for two years at Moshav Kinneret. During these years he studied archaeology and the Talmud in Jerusalem at the American School of Oriental Research and the newly founded Hebrew University. He also attended some lectures at the German and French archaeological institutes and participated in their excursions.

In the first weeks of his stay in Palestine Saarisalo wrote his first scholarly article, *Gedanken über die Stelle von Benjamins Mispa* (*Studia Orientalia* 5, 1925, pp. 238-241), a short paper in which he puts forth the hypothesis that the correct location of Benjamin's Mizpah is on Mt. Scopus and not at Nabi Samwil, as was commonly supposed.

In Jerusalem Saarisalo got acquainted with two leading scholars of biblical archaeology and the history of settlement in the Holy Land. One of them was WILLIAM FOXWELL ALBRIGHT (1891-1971), the young director of *The American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem*, who had recently successfully finished the first phase of the excavations of Saul's Gibeah (*Tell el-Fûl*), and was concentrating on the comparative study of pottery and stratigraphy. The other was ALBRECHT ALT (1883-1956), the experienced director of the *Evangelisches Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des heiligen Landes zu Jerusalem* and Professor at the University of Leipzig, who used to spend the autumn months in Jerusalem conducting research work and giving courses on the historical geography of Palestine.

As the subject for Saarisalo's doctoral dissertation Albrecht Alt suggested a topic closely related not only to his own field but to Albright's expertise as well: an archaeological surface survey of the tribal areas of Issachar and Naphtali and a comparison of the results with the information given in Jos. xix. 22 and 33.

Saarisalo immediately started the field work which he carried out during the summer of 1926. Upon his return to Helsinki, ARTHUR HJELT (1868-1931), Professor of the New Testament, advised him to finish the dissertation in Leipzig under Albrecht Alt's guidance. Alt knew thoroughly the historical basis of the book of Joshua; in those years he was making a comprehensive investigation into the settlement of the Israelite tribes in Canaan. Alt's meticulous method necessitated the study of the subject from a number of different angles: he combined literary criticism, tradition criticism and form history with historico-geographical, archaeological and sociological points of view, comparing the results with the ongoing process of sedentarization of the seminomadic tribes in the area. This method was also Saarisalo's guiding star, and he tried to apply it as far as possible. The work proceeded rapidly, and in May 1927 the monograph *The boundary between Issachar and Naphtali. An archaeological and literary study of Israel's settlement in Canaan* (Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemia

Toimituksia B 21: 3. VIII + 133 p. + 21 drawings + 48 photos. Helsinki 1927) was ready to be defended for the degree of Doctor of Theology.

A poor man's archaeology: one man's surface survey

In the Introduction to his dissertation, Saarisalo emphasizes the importance of studying archaeology in parallel with literary documents:

If the archaeology is studied alone, then there will be the danger of getting lost in details and of forgetting the historical background. On the other hand if the literary sources are studied alone, the topographical background is lost and the result is chaos, as the innumerable uncertain identifications of some ancient settlements demonstrate.

(p. 2)

In order to avoid these errors Saarisalo investigated the two different sources in parallel. He started with an analysis of his archaeological survey and then compared the results with information collected from the Bible and Egyptian documents from the period 1580 to 1180 B.C.

In the investigated area which lies between the southwestern corner of the Sea of Galilee and Mt. Tabor, Saarisalo studied 35 ancient sites. Geographically, these form three separate groups: one in the northern wadi, one in the southern wadi, and one in the Jordan Valley. To be sure, the area was far from being unstudied before Saarisalo's work: *The Survey of Western Palestine*, published in 1881-89 in London by C.R. CONDER and H.H. KITCHENER, provided a safe point of departure. The archaeological approach of the Survey was, however, out-of-date in many respects. Above all, it did not pay much attention to pottery the study of which had, greatly due to Albright's contributions, made considerable progress in recent years. With painstaking care, Saarisalo collected specimens of this seemingly worthless but in fact historically invaluable material which gave him information about the periods in which the sites had been occupied. The identification and chronology of the different types of potsherds was checked by Albright in Jerusalem.

Saarisalo even found two sites not mentioned in the Survey: *Sheikh 'Ali* in the Jordan Valley near Moshav Kinneret, and a site of about 10 hectares in the tribal area of Issachar near the Arab village of *el-*

Hadetheh. The region investigated by Saarisalo is actually favourable for archaeological surface survey, since the whitish grey occupation debris can be discerned against the volcanic, reddish dark soil, whereas elsewhere in Palestine it is difficult to distinguish it from the prevailing limestone colour of the soil. The site near el-*Hadetheh* is highly interesting; the sherds indicate that it had been already occupied in the Late Bronze Age, and thus it is, according to Saarisalo, the earliest settlement in the neighbourhood (p. 62). Saarisalo identifies the site with Shahazumah, mentioned as a boundary point between Tabor and Beth-Shemesh in Jos. xix. 22 (p. 121f.). As to Beth-Shemesh, Saarisalo suggests an identification with *el-'Abêdîyeh* on the western bank of the Jordan, 3 kilometres south of the outlet of the river (p. 120f., with reference to Albright's identifications, footnote 3).

Saarisalo points out that in the district surveyed only two of the Bronze Age settlements, *Tell el-Mqarqash* (unidentified by Saarisalo, p. 122, 128f.) and *Tell el-Hadetheh*, belong to the Megiddo group, while all the other Early Bronze Age settlements lie along the northern wadi, in the tribal area of Naphtali, forming a line which coincides with the old commercial route known as the *Darb el-Hawârneh*, 'the Way of the Hawranites' (p. 130f.). Among the numerous early settlements there were several other settlements along the upper course of the northern wadi which do not lie near the cultivated plain. This led Saarisalo to the conclusion that their existence is not due to a tillable plain but to a thoroughfare only, and he supposes that this route, which according to him was the most natural thoroughfare through Palestine between Damascus and Egypt, was the *Derek hayyâm*, Via Maris, of Is. viii. 23 (cf. Mt. iv. 15), descending to the Jordan Valley near the southern end of the Sea of Galilee and continuing to the west in the direction of Mt. Tabor and Megiddo (p. 24f., 130). He also drew the conclusion that the route was a forerunner of settled cities in Northern Palestine (p. 131).

In the concluding chapter of his monograph, Saarisalo associates the Hebrew *gêbûl* 'boundary' with Arabic *jabal* 'mountain':

Since the mountain ridges naturally separate the cultivated plains, it is easy to understand that the word *gêbûl*, which originally meant mountain ridge, gradually came to mean a boundary. [...] The best way the tribal boundary between Issachar and Naphtali could be traced was to list the territories of the towns, those mentioned in the boundary

descriptions; the line between the territories of the towns which has above been called a vacuum was then the real boundary. Thus the territory between the towns actually formed the boundary and not the towns themselves. (p. 131f.)

The whole cultivated plain of the northern wadi belonged to the territory of Naphtali, and, according to Saarisalo, both it and the plain of Gennesar probably were the granary of Naphtali referred to in 2 Chron. xvi. 4. The narrow plain of the northern wadi could easily be conquered by Naphtali, whereas the cultivated plain of Beisan, allotted to Issachar, was broad and therefore too difficult to be conquered. He concluded that the earliest settlement of Issachar was on the volcanic plateau east of Mt. Tabor and not in the plain (p. 133).

Saarisalo's final remark very well reflects his stand in regard to the discussion about the reliability of the Bible as a historical source:

As has been seen, the author of the book of Joshua was a trustworthy writer, his work that of an editor or redactor. He did not supplement his sources, even though they were incomplete, with his own arbitrary additions. Thus the literary territorial material in the book is valuable and deserves further study in the light of Palestinian archaeology and topography. (p. 133)

Encouraging letters

The disertation was publicly defended on May 25th 1927 and five days later it was accepted by the Faculty of Theology for the degree of Doctor of Theology. Saarisalo naturally sent copies of his book to Albright and Alt who answered with letters, both dated in Jerusalem on October 10th. Albright writes:

Many thanks for sending the copies of your monograph, which has turned out very well indeed. It appears to be a very faithful and conscientious study, and the English is readable almost throughout. The discussion of the topographical questions at the end is very interesting, even where it is difficult to agree. For instance, it is improbable that the towns of Issachar were all fortified, and more likely that most of those mentioned in the list of Joshua were open, unfortified places. The most important new observation is your discovery of Tell Hadeteh, which is an extremely interesting site. I hope that you can

come out and do another section of Galilee in the same painstaking way.

Alt's letter, written in German, is longer:

My best thanks for your letter dated September 18th and the copies of your dissertation which you kindly sent. I had your excellent book with me on the excursion of the German Evangelic Archaeological Institute. I was fortunate to arrange the trip so that we had an opportunity to wander almost two days in the area investigated by you. We naturally took the opportunity to check the data found in the archaeological-topographical section of your book. The result was pleasant indeed: I can agree with you in every essential point associated with the description of the sites, and I can witness that your observations are carefully done. In my opinion, the discovery of a tell at el-Hadetheh is particularly meritorious. Here you have found something completely overlooked, something that even the best maps do not have a notion of, and thereby you have in a valuable way enriched our picture of the ancient settlement of the region. [...] In short: You have with your work got a firm foothold in the archaeological-topographical study of Palestine, using the most up-to-date methods, and I would be glad if you had an opportunity to investigate other parts of the country in a similar way. About the literary and historical part of your book I cannot say anything new, and I feel I have to refrain from commenting it, because you in these matters mostly follow my theories. [...]

Further topographical studies

During his third stay in Palestine in 1928-29 Saaristo conducted archaeological surface surveys both in the tribal area of Asher in Western Galilee and in the Shephelah in Western Judah. This work resulted in three short but important articles: *Topographical researches in Galilee I* (Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society 9, 1929, p. 27-40); *Topographical researches in Galilee II* (JPOS 10, 1930, p. 5-10); and *Topographical researches in the Shephelah* (JPOS 11, 1931, p. 14-20). More than thirty years later he returned to the same subject in the large article *Sites and roads in Asher and Western Judah* (Studia Orientalia 28: 1, 1962, 30 p.)

In these articles Saarisalo proposes several identifications of biblical sites. *Harosheth-Goyim*, the headquarters of Sisera, Jdg. iv. 2, 3, 16, had earlier been identified with *Tell el-Harbaj*, a commanding site overlooking the right bank of the Kishon. Albright preferred *Tell el-ʿAmr*, farther upstream, near *el-Hāritiyye*, which seems to preserve the ancient name. Apart from Jdg. iv, the town is not mentioned in the Bible. Saarisalo sets forth a hypothesis that Harosheth actually might be the designation of a region and not of a town. He points out that Harosheth is derived from the Hebrew word *hōresh*, 'a hill covered with forest'; cf. 2 Chron. xxvii. 4. The children of Israel whom Sisera oppressed for twenty years were probably the Galilean tribes: Asher, Issachar, Naphtali, and Zebulun, which were surrounded by fortified Canaanite towns. As to the term *gōyîm*, Saarisalo refers to the parallel *gʿlil haggōyîm*, Is. ix. 1, and draws the conclusion that the term denotes the four Galilean tribes.

One of the tells discussed in the articles is *Tell el-Fukkhâr*, an imposing site lying east of Acre, a large natural hill. There Saarisalo found potsherds of the Middle Bronze and Early Iron Age I–III, and, since Acre "does not exhibit any earlier potsherds than those of the Hellenistic period", he comes to the conclusion that the Accho of the Old Testament and other contemporary records was situated on *Tell el-Fukkhâr*. Since this site was occupied through the Hellenistic and Roman periods, Acre during that time must have been a double city like Jamnia. When the new seaport grew in importance, the old inland town became its suburb, *Kʿfar ʿAkkô*, mentioned by Josephus (*Kafarekkhô*, Bell. ii 20, 6) as well as in Yebamot xii. 6.

Acre was the natural port of Damascus, and the easiest roads to it ran through Lower Galilee. According to Saarisalo, the most important ancient route was the above-mentioned *Darb el-Hawârneh*. The northern route through the upper part of the Jordan Valley was much more difficult, and in the south the alluvial plains between Beisan and Acre were not easy to traverse during the rainy season. But Saarisalo's survey of the area between Mt. Tabor and Acre indicated that the chain of Early Bronze Age settlements is cut off altogether. Only in the Late Bronze Age do settlements such as *Tell el-Bedēwiyye*, *Khirbet el-Lôn*, *Khirbet el-Jahûsh*, *Khirbet et-Tîreh*, and *Khirbet ʿAytâwâniyyeh* appear. According to Saarisalo, this must imply that the Early Bronze Age route from Damascus to Egypt did not run via Accho but contin-

ued past Mt. Tabor via Megiddo to the coastal plain, and the route connecting Damascus with Accho did not come into existence until the beginning of the Late Bronze Age.

In these articles Saarisalo also discusses the continuation of the Roman road built from Antioch to Ptolemais along the coast in the time of Nero. One would expect that the *Darb el-Hawârneh* would have deserved immediate attention in order to connect the Decapolis, as well as Tiberias and Sepphoris with Ptolemais. According to the tenth milestone of this road, found by Saarisalo *in situ*, the road appears to have been built as late as about 130 A.D., while the road from Ptolemais to Caesarea was first built even later, at the end of the second century.

In the Shephelah, near Beit Guvrin, approximately in the area defined in Josh. xv. 42-44, Saarisalo made topographical investigations of the same type as in Galilee. Among the enumerated towns, he identified Nezeb with *Khirbet Bêt Nâsîf*. The biblical name has survived in *Bêt Nasîb*, but it is not situated at a distance of nine miles (seven in Latin) from Eleutheropolis, on the way to Hebron, as mentioned in the Onomasticon. On the other hand, *Khirbet Bêt Nâsîf* is the only Israelite site which fits the description. Another identification proposed by Saarisalo in this area is Beth-le-Aphrah, Micah i. 10, which he identifies with *Khirbet et-Tayyibeh*. In this case the name of the site serves as a hint: since the root 'fr sounds too much like the Arabic 'afrit, a demon, the site has been euphemistically renamed *Khirbet et-Tayyibeh*, 'the good ruin'.

At Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Zur

In the summer of 1930 Aapeli Saarisalo was invited by Albright to participate in the excavations at *Tell Beit Mirsim* which he had directed since 1926. Albright supposed that the site was the biblical Debir, Kiriath-Sepher by its earlier name. That Debir according to the investigations of the 1980s should rather be identified with *Tell er-Rabûd* closer to Hebron, does not affect the fact that the excavations of Tell Beit Mirsim were of crucial importance to the study of chronology. In the camp Saarisalo mainly worked with potsherds, and many of the drawings of pottery in the excavation reports were made by him.

One year later Saarisalo participated in the excavations of *Beth Zur*, led by O.R. SELLERS and Albright. During this campaign a most interesting layer of the Maccabean period was excavated, and among the participants there were many scholars who soon became renowned, e.g. MILLAR BURROWS, CYRUS GORDON, and NELSON GLUECK, who shared the tent with Saarisalo.

On the Mesopotamian tells

The summer campaigns in Palestine usually lasted a couple of months. For winter seasons Saarisalo travelled to Iraq to participate in the excavations of the University of Pennsylvania at *Tell Billa and Tepe Gawra* near Mosul. The directors, EFRAIM AVIGDOR SPEISER and CH. BACHE had their headquarters at Tell Billa, together with E.F. SCHMIDT, SAMUEL NOAH KRAMER, and MAX MALLOWAN, while Saarisalo had charge of Tepe Gawra. During the winter season 1931-32 he also participated in the excavations of the German Oriental Society (Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft) at *Warka* (Uruk), and the excavations of the University of Michigan at *Tell Umar*.

While working in Northern Iraq in 1930-31 and 1931-32 Saarisalo also became acquainted with the excavations at Nuzi in Kirkuk. PAUL KOSCHAKER, the leading authority on the history of oriental law, suggested to Saarisalo the study of a collection of texts relating to slaves. This research work he carried out in Berlin and Leipzig in 1932 and 1933, getting help not only from Koschaker, who was a professor in Leipzig, but also from another professor from the same university, BENNO LANDSBERGER, a well-known Assyriologist and Director of the Oriental Institute. This work resulted in the monograph *New Kirkuk documents relating to slaves* (Studia Orientalia 5: 3, 1934, viii + 101 p.). One of the interesting details in these texts is the method of selling landed property. It had been affirmed that deeds of sale were not to be found among the Kirkuk tablets, but this was due to the fact that the deeds dealing with the sale of real estate were drawn up in the form of adoption agreements, probably in order to evade the law prohibiting the sale of immovables. In this book Saarisalo also discussed the problem of *habiru*, which recently had been dealt with by E. CHIERA. Chiera had come to the conclusion that the designation did

not refer to any ethnic group but rather to a certain social group whose members served the upper class. Saarisalo does not reject this hypothesis, but he suggests a modification:

Although the Hapiru are represented here as a social class it is, however, not impossible that the origin of the name was a racial one. This was the case with the Nullu and most probably with the Amurru, first a tribal name, then a social one. (p. 64f.)

Arabic folklore and local tradition

During his topographical studies Saarisalo wandered among the local Arab population, not only asking them about sites, springs, hills, and names of localities, but he also collected their folklore. One of the results is the monograph *Songs of the Druzes* (*Studia Orientalia* 4: 1, 1932, vii + 144 p., with An Arabic Appendix, 52 p.).

After his appointment to the chair of Oriental Literature at the University of Helsinki in 1935, he did not continue his field work. One of the few scholarly publications of this period was sort of a combination of his folkloric and topographical studies: the article *Arabic tradition and topographical research* (*Studia Orientalia* 17: 3, 1952, 24 p.). The article appeared in the memorial volume of the Finnish Arabian explorer GEORG AUGUST WALLIN (1811-52), and Saarisalo introduced his article with Wallin's observation regarding the feeling of awe evoked in the Arabs by ruins, which are favourite haunts of spirits. He then pointed out that

[p]laces of worship, cult centres, shrines, holy graves – in a word, localities having strong religious associations – often seem to acquire, in the lapse of centuries, a special quality, an *inherent sanctity*, which does not necessarily disappear when the religion which has produced it gives way to a new one. The effects of such continuity may be, e.g., the transferring of the localities themselves into the service of the victorious religion, or the survival of their names (or the ideas contained in them), or both. (p. 9)

Thus, the Arabic tradition has preserved many place names containing the element *bêth*, that indicates cult associations. Among these Saarisalo mentions *Bêth-Anath* > *el-eB'êne*, *Bêth-Shemesh* > *'Ayn Shems*, *Bêth-êl* > *Bêtin*, *Bêth-Ba'al-Me'ôn* > *Ma'în*, *Bêth-Dâghôn* > *Bêt Dajân*,

Bêth-Sh'e'ân > *Bêsân*. Saarisalo then deals in some detail with Bet-Yerah, Bethabara, Makhairus, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, and finishes the article with a classification of Arabic topographical names, giving examples of the different ways in which the ancient names have been preserved in them.

Byzantine mosaic pavements

In 1961 and 1963 Saarisalo got an opportunity to conduct a small excavation of his own in Galilee. In 1959 it was reported that a mosaic pavement was found at a depth of about one metre in a backyard in Kafr Kama, a Circassian village near Mt. Tabor, and in early 1960 a probe was made by the Israel Department of Antiquities to verify this. On behalf of the Finnish Oriental Society and the Israeli Department of Antiquities, Saarisalo got permission to excavate the site. The first six weeks' campaign started in September 1961. For Saarisalo, the task was most pleasant: we – Saarisalo and the present writer – lived at Moshav Kinneret, Saarisalo's home village in the 20s, and on our way to work we traversed the tribal areas of Issachar and Naphtali where 34 years earlier he had turned over every stone.

During the second campaign in April – May 1963 ASHER OVADIA, a promising student of Professor MICHAEL AVI-YONAH, also participated in the work. We naturally also visited Professor Avi-Yonah in Jerusalem for advice because he was the foremost authority on mosaic pavements.

We dug out the pavements of two apsidal rooms of a sixth-century Byzantine church. In the apse uncovered during the first campaign there were a baptisterium, a limestone chancel screen and the foundation of the altar which presumably had contained a reliquary. In the middle of the other apse, sunk into the mosaic pavement, a small marble box, perhaps a reliquary, was found *in situ*. The decorative motifs of these mosaics, the geometrical patterns in particular, follow types found in many pavements in Palestine, both in synagogues and churches. An interesting detail was that in the first apse two mosaic pavements were uncovered, one above the other. The reason for this is not obvious, but it might have been iconoclasm. Among geometric and floral patterns, the lower pavement is also decorated with motifs

of the animal world: a rooster, a small bird in a nest, and a tiny fish, whereas the upper pavement has geometric and floral patterns only.

The church was dedicated to Holy Thecla, as could be read in Greek mosaic inscriptions. The shortest of the three texts is fragmentary: "[...] Holy Thecla, help (the family of?) Anastasios". The longest text reads:

For the salvation of the most Holy Bishop Euphrasios and the most illustrious Commander Theodoros, and Pamphilos, Archdeacon, the (church of) Holy Thecla was finished and decorated with mosaic, at the time of the fifteenth indiction. Lord Jesus Christ, receive the offering of Arrianos the Deacon. (p. 11f.)

Since no resources were available to build a pavilion above the mosaic pavements in the backyard and the adjacent village square, they were covered with gravel. The report is to be read in the article *A Byzantine church at Kafr Kama*, by Aapeli Saarisalo & Heikki Palva (*Studia Orientalia* 30: 1, 1964, 15 p. + 43 pl. + Map).

Ten years' fieldwork, lifelong commitment

The most intensive period of Aapeli Saarisalo's archaeological work was the last decade before his appointment to the chair of Oriental Literature at the University of Helsinki in 1935, as the successor of the internationally known Assyriologist KNUT TALLQVIST. As an active member of international archaeological teams during these years he became well-versed in Palestinian and Mesopotamian archaeology. In the field of Palestinian topography he worked alone and won renown for his careful surveys and keen observations.

Saarisalo's success was naturally not possible without guidance and support; as the four key persons in his scholarly career he used to mention Arthur Hjelt and Knut Tallqvist, his most important teachers in Helsinki, and Albrecht Alt and William F. Albright, his instructors and colleagues in the field of the history and archaeology of Palestine.

Although Saarisalo, besides the minor project at Kafr Kama, did not actively participate in excavations after 1935, this does not imply that his studies were discontinued. As a matter of fact, until the 80s he attentively followed the advancement of archaeological research in the whole Middle East, but in Israel in particular, kept contact with many leading colleagues, and frequently visited archaeological sites.

He also wrote reports on these visits in newspapers and referred to them in his lectures and speeches on different occasions, and, true to his conviction, at every opportunity stressed the historical trustworthiness and literary authenticity of the Bible.