

INTRODUCTION

The claim that gentiles were numerous in the Galilee of Jesus's day is common in New Testament scholarship. The *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, one of the most widely distributed and influential of the Bible reference works, goes so far as to suggest that Jews were but a minority there: "Shrines to numerous deities must have existed in the larger cities of Gentile Galilee, especially in a Roman town like Tiberias, and would have been found even in the more Jewish towns. They represented the normal and traditional worship of the Gentile majority in Galilee."¹ This claim is typical of such encyclopedias and dictionaries; a casual perusal reveals that many report a strong gentile presence, sometimes a majority, sometimes a large and highly visible minority. According to this view, Galilee's large pagan population explains why Matthew 4:15 refers to the region as "Galilee of the Gentiles,"² derived from the Hebrew גליל הגוים (literally, "circle" or "district of the nations" [Isaiah 8:23 [9:1]]). Some reference works emphasize that gentiles from other regions, near and far, often

¹ K. W. Clark, "Galilee," in George Arthur Buttrick et al., eds., *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 5 vols. (New York and Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), vol. II, 344–347.

² See also F. C. Grant, "Jesus Christ," in Buttrick et al., eds., *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. II, 869–896; W. R. F. Browning, "Galilee," in W. R. F. Browning, ed., *A Dictionary of the Bible* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 145; Arthur M. Ross, "Galilee," in J. D. Douglas, Merrill C. Tenney et al., eds., *The New International Dictionary: Pictorial Edition* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House; Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1987), 368–369; Henry W. Holloman, "Galilee, Galileans," in Walter A. Elwell et al., eds., *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1986), vol. I, 834–836; no author, "Galilee," in John L. Mckenzie, ed., *Dictionary of the Bible* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1965), 293–294; R. W. Stewart MacAlister and Emil G. Kraeling, "Galilee," in James Hastings, Frederick C. Grant, and H. H. Rowley, eds., *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 313–314; "Galilee," in John E. Steinmueller and Kathryn Sullivan, eds., *Catholic Biblical Encyclopedia: New Testament* (New York: Joseph F. Wagner, Inc.: 1950), 248–249; "Galilee," in Herbert Lockyer et al., eds., *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986), 401–402. The three most recent reference articles avoid this view, however; see Sean Freyne, "Galilee," in *OEANE*, vol. II, 369–376; Sean Freyne, "Galilee (Hellenistic/Roman)," in *ABD*, vol. II, 895–899; Mordechai Aviam, "Galilee: The Hellenistic to Byzantine Periods," *NEAEHL*, vol. II, 453–458.

2 Introduction

traversed Galilee; many report both a high gentile population and a high number of gentile visitors. The impression left by these sources is that an unusually high degree of Jewish–gentile interaction was an important part of the particularity of first-century CE Galilee. A certain vagueness permeates many of these scholarly discussions; explanations of why Jewish–gentile interaction was so common, if offered, are typically brief and undetailed.

Though many New Testament scholars have freely referred to the supposedly mixed Galilean population, that image of Galilee has functioned quite differently in various reconstructions of Jesus and early Christianity. Some have made a passing reference to Galilee’s diverse inhabitants but have drawn few implications from it, prioritizing Jesus’s Jewish context.³ Others, also stressing the Jewish context, have used Jesus’s gentile neighbors as a foil.⁴ Still others have argued that Jesus’s dealings with Galilee’s numerous gentiles explained his open-minded attitude toward humanity.⁵

More recently, the claim of a strong gentile presence in Galilee has been an important component of the argument that Galilee was thoroughly infused with Greco-Roman culture, an argument based largely on purported archaeological finds. Robert W. Funk, for example, writes of “semipagan Galilee, whose inhabitants, because they were often of mixed blood and open to foreign influence, were despised by the ethnically pure Judeans to the south.” He also notes, “Greek was widely used in semipagan Galilee, in Hellenistic cities like Sepphoris . . .”⁶ Howard Clark Kee suggests that archaeological finds demonstrate the influence of Greco-Roman culture and reveal that Jewish–gentile interaction was quite common.⁷ A statement by Marcus J. Borg again reflects the different weight scholars place on the idea of a multicultural Galilee; while noting that archaeological discoveries attest to “a considerable number of Gentiles”

³ E.g., the references to the “mixed race” of Galilee in Günther Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*, trans. Irene and Fraser McLuskey with James M. Robinson (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1960), 42; Martin Dibelius, *Jesus*, trans. Charles B. Hedric and Frederick C. Grant (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1949), 39–40.

⁴ E.g., Adolf von Harnack, *What is Christianity?* trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957), 33–34; Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth: His Life, Times, and Teachings* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 233, 363.

⁵ E.g., Shirley Jackson Case, *Jesus: A New Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), 199–212.

⁶ Robert W. Funk, *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 33, 79.

⁷ Howard Clark Kee, “Early Christianity in the Galilee: Reassessing the Evidence from the Gospels,” in Lee I. Levine, ed., *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 19.

there, his own understanding of the historical Jesus stresses his Jewish context.⁸

Burton L. Mack presents a more extreme view: his Galilee has only the thinnest of Jewish veneers. Mack reflects a common practice in Q community reconstruction, the assumption of a Galilean provenance. Arguing that “the traditional picture of Galilean culture . . .” – meaning the picture of a Jewish Galilee – “needs to change,” Mack attempts to present a “truer picture” of Galilee, one which recognizes the Hellenistic ethos of this “land of mixed peoples.”⁹ Though the Hasmonean conquest of Galilee c. 103 BCE resulted in its political domination by Jews, “it would be wrong to picture Galilee as suddenly converted to a Jewish loyalty and culture.”¹⁰ A hundred years after the conquest, Galilee was a blend of Jewish, local, Greek, and Roman cultures. Thus, many of the first Christians were not Jewish, according to Mack. The members of the Q community, at least, were a “multiethnic, multicultural mix”;¹¹ the Q story of the centurion (whom Mack understands as a Roman, rather than Herodian, officer) is one indication of this mixed constituency.¹² The earliest stratum of Q reflects not apocalyptic eschatology, but Cynic philosophy; it reflects not Jewish worship of Yahweh, but a rather vague monotheism. “The God in question,” Mack writes, “is not identified in terms of any ethnic or cultural tradition.” Since Mack considers Galilee primarily non-Jewish, this conception of God “fits nicely with Galilean provenance . . .”¹³ In de-Judaizing Galilee, Mack has de-Judaized the origins of Christianity.

The fact that Mack depicts himself as correcting the “traditional” picture of a Jewish Galilee is enough to show again that a variety of images of Galilee have long existed in scholarship. So many scholars have repeated the claim of a large gentile population that many regard defense of that claim as unnecessary, but others have articulated different visions of the region. In the scholarly literature, pictures of a rural Galilee have stood side by side with those of an urban Galilee; pictures of a conservative Semitic society, with those of a Hellenized society; and pictures of a solidly Jewish population, with those of a largely gentile population. Many significant studies have downplayed Galilean particularity

⁸ Marcus J. Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), 26; cf. his “The Palestinian Background for a Life of Jesus,” in *Searching for Jesus* (Washington, D.C.: Biblical Archaeology Society, 1994), 37–58, esp. 46–47. For another example of the inter-relation in New Testament scholarship of Hellenism and paganism, see Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, “Did Jesus Speak Greek?” *BAR* 18:5 (1992): 61.

⁹ Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993), 53; cf. *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988).

¹⁰ Mack, *Lost Gospel*, 59.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 214.

¹² *Ibid.*, 154.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 127.

4 Introduction

altogether, not addressing at any length how its worship, practice, and daily life would have differed from the culture of Jerusalem and the south.¹⁴

Such disparate images are possible because, to date, no full investigation of the composition of Galilee's population or of the extent of Jewish-gentile contact there has appeared. Previous studies have addressed these topics, but they have not focused on them. When discussing Galilee's population, these studies have often exhibited one of several limitations. Some have been one-sided, utilizing only the literary evidence. For example, Sean Freyne's excellent *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian* pre-dates the more recent archaeological work and is drawn primarily from textual sources. Martin Goodman's authoritative *State and Society in Roman Galilee* focuses solely on rabbinic materials.¹⁵ Others have presented a synchronic picture, citing archaeological evidence from a wide span of centuries to understand the first-century region.¹⁶ None of these previous studies has attempted to provide a detailed synthesis of both the data found in dig reports of a variety of Galilean sites and the information found in ancient literary sources.

My primary goal in this study is to bridge the gap between textual studies and archaeology, combining both to provide a more detailed and accurate picture of first-century CE Galilee. By making use of Josephus and biblical sources as well as excavation reports, utilizing archaeological data from multiple sites, and differentiating early finds from later finds, this work demonstrates that most Galileans in the first century CE were Jews.¹⁷ Galilee's earlier history explains how it became predominantly Jewish, and, in the first century CE, Josephus and the authors of the

¹⁴ E.g., E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985); John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1991, 1994); Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet: Critical Issues in Feminist Christology* (New York: Continuum, 1994).

¹⁵ Sean Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian: 323 BCE to 135 CE: A Study of Second Temple Judaism* (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980); Martin Goodman, *State and Society in Roman Galilee, AD 132–212* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Allanheld, 1983). Freyne's more recent works, including *Galilee, Jesus, and the Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988) and "Galilee: Galilee in the Hellenistic through Byzantine Periods," *OANE*, vol. II, 370–376, make more use of archaeological work.

¹⁶ Richard Batey provides an example, claiming the presence in first-century CE Sepphoris of a temple dedicated to Augustus and to Rome based on later numismatic evidence (*Jesus and the Forgotten City: New Light on Sepphoris and the Urban World of Jesus* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1991], 56; on this point, cf. E. P. Sanders, "Jesus in Historical Context," *Theology Today* 50 [1993]: 431).

¹⁷ Rabbinic sources are of limited use for this project, due to its chronological parameters. Pre-Bar Kochbah traditions attesting to Jewish-gentile contacts or providing information about the population of specific communities are rare. Using later sayings to understand

Gospels regarded it as a region where circumcision, Sabbath observance, loyalty to the Jerusalem temple, and purity were major concerns. Archaeological discoveries clearly attest to Jewish burial and purity practices at several sites.¹⁸

In contrast, evidence for pagans in first-century CE Galilee is surprisingly slim in both the literary and the archaeological records. There appears to be little reason to talk either about Galilee's "predominantly gentile population" or, alternatively, its "sizable and highly visible" gentile minority, and, thus, little reason to place special emphasis on the gentile component of Galilee's population when discussing its cultural milieu. The nature of our data does not allow us to determine what percentage of the population were Jews and what percentage pagans; any attempt to quantify the proportions is mere speculation. What is clear, however, is that gentiles were not an especially large and influential group. Galilee's population included some non-Jews, of course, but their numbers appear to have been relatively small. They have left such a minimal impact in the literary and archaeological records that talking with specificity about the presence of particular groups (e.g., Romans, Greeks, Syrians, Nabateans, Phoenicians) at particular sites is usually impossible. Likewise, while some contact between Galileans and their neighbors, gentile and Jewish, is indisputable – the area is simply not big enough to allow for isolation, particularly in the border regions – there is far less evidence than often supposed for pagans frequently traveling through Galilee.

In examining the composition of Galilee's population and the amount of Jewish–gentile interaction there, I am investigating a sub-topic within the larger discussion of the area's cultural milieu. Providing a comprehensive overview of the extent of Greco-Roman influence – a separate, though obviously related, issue – is not my goal. I am not trying here to resolve such questions as how widely Greek was used or whether or not Cynic philosophers roamed Galilee. Instead, I am arguing that, in light of the ample evidence in Galilee for Judaism and the minimal evidence of

the late Second Temple period population is extremely problematic (Goodman, *State and Society*, 41–53). I will place weight on rabbinic traditions only when an adequate study exists evaluating their relevance for the earlier periods. (For rabbinic references to specific communities, see articles in *ABD*, *NEAEHL*, and *OEANE*, and Yoram Tsafrir, Leah Di Segni and Judith Green, *Tabula Imperii Romani: Iudaea, Palaestina: Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994).

¹⁸ I understand Galilean Judaism within the larger context of "common Judaism," as discussed by E. P. Sanders in *Judaism: Practice and Belief: 63 BCE–66 CE* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992) and *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1993), 33–48. The notion of "common Judaism" does not imply that there were no regional variations.

6 Introduction

paganism, discussions of the region in New Testament scholarship should always reflect the Jewish identities of the overwhelming majority of its inhabitants.

A secondary aim is to provide an overview for the broader readership of New Testament scholars of the state of knowledge for Galilee, based on an up-to-date synthesis of published evidence. Though I have made extensive use of archaeological findings, I have written for the non-archaeologist. I have attempted to provide the readers with both descriptive information about Galilee's material culture and a reliable guide to the methodological and interpretive debates about those findings, so that they themselves can determine the significance of individual artifacts or architectural features. Rather than just assembling a catalogue of artifacts pertinent to the question of the nature of Galilee's population, I have sought to contextualize those artifacts within the larger body of data from the region as a whole as well as from individual communities.

My approach is thoroughly historical. This is largely the result of the nature of the evidence, which allows us to draw general historical conclusions but which renders application of certain other theoretical approaches difficult. Social science methodologies have been applied to some questions in Galilean studies, most notably economics and urban-rural relations,¹⁹ but their detailed use for this topic in this time period is challenging. We have no literature from the first century CE of proven Galilean provenance, a lack which hinders the detailed application of ethnicity theory (for example) to population questions. For understanding Galilee's population in later centuries, rabbinic texts are of great use, but demographic shifts in the second century CE render those sources less helpful for first-century CE Galilee. The most significant reason why it is difficult to utilize sociological and anthropological approaches to understand Jewish-gentile relations in Galilee, however, is the sheer lack of evidence of gentiles with which to work. Similarly, the scarcity of literary reports of specific Jewish-gentile encounters in Galilee renders use

¹⁹ E.g., several studies by Sean Freyne: "Urban-Rural Relations in First Century Galilee: Some Suggestions from the Literary Sources," in Levine, ed., *Galilee in Late Antiquity*, 75-94; "Herodian Economics in Galilee," in Philip F. Esler, ed., *Modelling Early Christianity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 23-46; "Jesus and the Urban Culture of Galilee," in Tord Fornberg and David Hellholm, eds., *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in their Textual and Situational Contexts* (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1995), 597-622; *Galilee, Jesus, and the Gospels*, 143-155; and "The Geography, Politics and Economics of Galilee and the Quest of the Historical Jesus," in Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, eds., *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 75-122; cf. John Dominic Crossan, *The Birth of Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 209-235.

of certain forms of cultural theory, such as contact theory and other post-colonialist approaches, problematic.²⁰ I hope that future developments in both biblical studies and Syro-Palestinian archaeology will make application of such methods more practical.

Hellenism, Greco-Roman culture, and paganism

While the larger question of how deeply affected Galilee was by Greco-Roman culture is not my primary focus, I recognize the relevance of my project for this issue and will make some preliminary observations about it. Indeed, as will be seen over and over again in my discussion, differentiation between Hellenistic and Greco-Roman culture, on the one hand, and pagan practice, on the other, is crucial for understanding the evidence from Galilee. These phenomena are related, but distinct. “Hellenism” denotes the presence of Greek culture and “Greco-Roman culture,” the added influence of Roman culture.²¹ “Paganism,” however, has a different denotation: the worship of any deity other than the Jewish (and Christian) god. One reason that the amount of evidence for gentiles in Galilee has been exaggerated in some recent studies is that evidence for Hellenistic or Greco-Roman culture has been misinterpreted as evidence for paganism.

The presence of Hellenism at a site does not necessarily indicate the presence of pagans, and the presence of pagans does not necessarily imply the presence of Hellenism. Two hypothetical examples illustrate this point. An ancient community could exhibit a strongly Hellenized atmosphere, characterized by the widespread use of the Greek language, the presence of Greek architectural forms and artistic motifs, and awareness (at least among the educated elite) of Greek thought, without having a large number of gentiles. Such a community could be entirely Jewish, in light of Martin Hengel’s work on Hellenism and Judaism.²² Conversely, a pagan community might not exhibit any characteristics of Hellenistic

²⁰ See Marianne Sawicki’s attempt in *Crossing Galilee: Architectures of Contact in the Occupied Land of Jesus* (Harrisburg, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 2000).

²¹ For an overview of scholarship on Hellenism and Judaism, see Lee I. Levine, *Judaism and Hellenism in Antiquity: Conflict or Confluence?* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 3–32.

²² Martin Hengel, *The “Hellenization” of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989); *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, 2 vols., trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1974).

8 *Introduction*

culture at all; the archaeological record of that site would reflect local indigenous pagan culture.

The relationship between these phenomena is complicated further by the difficulty in determining whether some artifacts – most notably, figurines and artistic depictions of deities – reflect paganism or just Greco-Roman cultural influence. For example, the representations of well-known figures from classical mythology found in the third-fourth-century CE Jewish necropolis at Beth She'arim demonstrate that members of the Jewish community there were quite comfortable with Greco-Roman artistic motifs; they do not demonstrate pagan practices. Unless such depictions are found in a cultic context (e.g., a temple) or are accompanied by cultic objects (e.g., an incense altar) or dedicatory inscriptions, one cannot assume that they reflect paganism.

The challenges of using archaeological data

All studies based on archaeological data are somewhat provisional, and this one is no exception. In discussing Galilee's material culture, I have relied almost exclusively on the published archaeological evidence, rather than attempting to use field notebooks and other unpublished records from various excavations, past and present. The broad scope of the project precludes the use of the latter types of materials on any large scale. When those materials are published, they will clarify further our image of Galilee's population.

Archaeological finds, like texts, are subject to multiple interpretations. I have generally accepted the dates excavators have assigned to specific objects, unless other information in their reports raised questions about those dates. In interpreting and identifying specific artifacts and structures, I have sometimes followed the excavator's suggestions and sometimes disagreed, again on the basis of the published data. When the significance of a find is unclear, I have reported different possibilities and provided bibliographical information so that the reader can investigate the topic and make his or her own judgment about the matter.

Outline of argument

In the first chapter, I review scholarly images of Galilee's population, identifying the reasons why some have contended that large numbers of gentiles dwelt there. The arguments can be quickly summarized: the region's repeated subjugation by foreign powers resulted in a "mixed race";

its position along the major trade routes of the Roman period resulted in highways bustling with foreign traders and travelers; archaeological finds attest to the diversity of peoples.

Understanding Galilee's first-century CE population requires a review of its political and demographic history, the subject of the second chapter. Changes in Galilee's population are traced from the Assyrian conquest to the end of the Early Roman period,²³ when Roman troops were permanently stationed there. Scholars have long noted the successive invasions Galilee suffered between these two events, but the consequences of these repeated invasions have often been misunderstood.

The third chapter provides a site-by-site overview of specific Galilean communities in the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, discussing all of the settlements for which we have significant amounts of data. It draws information from Josephus, the Gospels, and excavation reports to shed light on several questions: Where in Galilee did Jews and gentiles live? Who lived in Upper Galilee, the region between the villages of Kefar Ḥananyah and the Galilean Beersheba in the south and the foothills of Mount Lebanon in the north? Was the population more mixed in Lower Galilee, between Kefar Ḥananyah and the Jezreel Valley, where Jesus appears to have been most active?²⁴ Were gentiles more prevalent in the cities?

Galilee was "surrounded by powerful foreign nations," as Josephus puts it,²⁵ and the boundaries between Galilee and these regions were often blurred.²⁶ How much interaction would Galileans have had with their

²³ The reference to "Early Roman period," in itself, implies nothing about a Roman presence; it is chronological terminology. See the "Note on dating" in the prefatory material of this work.

²⁴ On the two Galilees, see *War* 3.35–44. *M. Sheb.* 9:2 adds a third region, the valley of Tiberias. See Eric M. Meyers, "Galilean Regionalism as a Factor in Historical Reconstruction," *BASOR* 221 (1976): 95.

²⁵ *War* 3.41.

²⁶ *War* 3.35–44 notes Mount Carmel and the territory of Ptolemais as the western border; Samaria and the territory of Scythopolis as the southern border; Gaulanitis and the territory of Hippos and Gadara as the eastern border; and the territory of Tyre as the northern border. These territories were close together, and the boundaries separating them shifted from time to time. Political Galilee was not always the same as geographical Galilee. For example, Josephus notes in this passage that Carmel had once belonged to Galilee, but in his own time belonged to Tyre (*War* 3.35). Likewise, *Ant.* 8.36 suggests that Galilee had once stretched all the way to Sidon. Josephus describes Ptolemais as a city of Galilee (*War* 2.188), though it was clearly separate from the region. He situates Bethsaida-Julia in both lower Gaulanitis (*War* 2.168) and Perea (*War* 2.252, *Ant.* 20.159), while John (1:43–44, 12:21) and Ptolemy (*Geography* 5.16.4) place it in Galilee. See discussion of Galilee's borders in Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander*, 3–4; Günter Stemberger, "Galilee – Land of Salvation?" in W. D. Davies, ed., *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 409–438, esp. 415–421; Willibald Bösen, *Galiläa*

10 *Introduction*

neighbors? The fourth chapter provides a “cultural map” of the territories that encircled Galilee, describing their cities and villages. It investigates the extent and nature of contact between Galileans and gentiles from these areas. In addition, it considers whether Galilee’s role in regional and inter-regional trade would have resulted in large numbers of merchants and traders crossing its territory.

The conclusion summarizes the implications of my findings for New Testament studies. It considers why Matthew 4:15 would refer to the region as “Galilee of the Gentiles,” and it discusses the historical plausibility of the very few stories the Gospels preserve of encounters between Jesus and gentiles. Lastly, I consider the relevance of my findings for the ongoing scholarly debate about the extent of Greco-Roman influence in Galilee.

When the published archaeological data have been sifted and the primary ancient texts pored over, the image of Galilee which emerges is that of a predominantly Jewish region. The belief that Galilee had large numbers of gentile inhabitants or visitors does not hold up to testing. Far from being a dominant element of the population in first-century CE Galilee, pagans were a minority, greatly outnumbered by Jews.

als Lebensraum und Wirkungsfeld Jesu (Basel and Vienna: Herder Freiburg, 1985), 18–31; W. Oehler, “Die Ortschaften und Grenzen Galiläas nach Josephus,” *ZPDV* 28 (1905): 1–26, 49–74.