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Jewish Believers in Jesus in Antiquity— Problems of Definition, Method, and Sources

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1. The Question of Definition

It goes without saying that defining the term "Jewish believers in Jesus" is basic to this project. By defining this concept we determine the very subject matter of this book. In this book, by the term "Jewish believers in Jesus" we mean "Jews by birth or conversion who in one way or another believed Jesus was their savior." We have chosen to focus on the criterion of *ethnicity* rather than the criterion of *ideology*. Many, perhaps most, histories of "Jewish Christianity" or the like, have done the opposite. The basic definition of who is a Jewish Christian is derived from the definition of which theology and praxis the person in question embraces.[1] One can then either disregard the question of ethnic origin completely,

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[1] See the review by James Carleton Paget in this volume (ch. 2), and also the following studies: Johannes Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times," *NTS* 6 (1959/1960): 103–16; Gilles Quispel, "The Discussion of Judaic Christianity," *VC* 22 (1968): 81–93; Robert Alan Kraft, "In Search of 'Jewish Christianity' and its 'Theology': Problems of Definition and Methodology," *RSR* 60 (1972): 81–92; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Study of Jewish Christianity," *NTS* 20 (1974): 419–31; Robert Murray, "Defining Judaeo-Christianity," *HeyJ* 15 (1974): 303–10; Marcel Simon, "Réflexions sur le Judéo-Christianisme," in *Christianity, Judaism and other Greco-Roman Cults. Festschrift Morton Smith* (ed. J. Neusner; 4 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 2:53–76; repr. in Simon, *Le Christianisme antique et son contexte religieux: Scripta Varia* (WUNT 23; 2 vols.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1981) 2:598–621; Bruce J. Malina, "Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism: Toward an Hypothetical Definition," *JSJ* 7 (1976): 46–57; S. K. Riegel, "Jewish Christianity: Definitions and Terminology," *NTS* 24 (1978): 410–15; Raymond E. Brown, "Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity," *CBQ* 45 (1983): 74–79; James F. Strange, "Diversity in Early Palestinian Christianity," *Australian Theological Review* 65

or restrict the term "Jewish Christian" to those Jews who believed in Jesus, *and at the same time continued a wholly Jewish way of life.*[2] Jews who believed in Jesus, and at the same time abandoned their Jewish way of life and were assimilated among the Gentile Christians, would by this definition not be reckoned as Jewish Christians.

In this book we have taken the opposite path. We believe those Jewish believers in Jesus who chose to become more or less "orthodox" Christians within mixed communities, often with a Gentile majority, deserve the scholar's respect and interest on a line with the other Jewish believers in Jesus. Some scholars may find them less theologically interesting, but we think that would be a premature judgment. In this book we are out to trace the history of a certain category of people, not the history of a certain brand of Christianity.

In so doing, we are in agreement with the ancient sources. Those sources never speak about "Jewish Christians" in an ideological sense.[3] They do, however, divide Christians into two categories by an ethnic criterion. There are Christians (or believers in Jesus) from the Jews and from the Gentiles (see further below).

In the preceding passages, we have used the term "Christian" in the same sense as it was probably used in Acts 11:26: someone who holds Jesus to be Χριστός, the Messiah. In that sense, it is no contradiction in terms to speak of a Jewish Christian. We have to take account, however, of the later development of the connotations attached to the term Christian to Jewish ears. It has become a term denoting something by nature *Gentile,* and by implication, *non-Jewish.* Many modern Jewish believers resent the term "Jewish Christian" for this and other reasons.

Thus, on the one hand traditional definitions of the term "Jewish Christian" exclude some of the people we want to include in this history. On the other hand, the term is offensive to many present day representatives of the same category of believers. This has led us to avoid the traditional term, and instead call the category of people we are discussing "Jewish believers in Jesus" (for brevity's sake, this category will often be called "Jewish believers"). We have found it very difficult, however, to completely avoid the traditional term. We therefore sometimes use the noun "Jewish Christian" as a term of differentiation *within* the category of

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(1983): 14–24; Joan E. Taylor, "The Phenomenon of Early Jewish-Christianity: Reality or Scholarly Invention?" *VC* 44 (1990): 313–34.

[2] This is basically the definition of *judéo-chrétien* proposed by Simon Claude Mimouni, "Pour une definition nouvelle du judéo-christianisme ancien," *NTS* 38 (1991), 161–86; Mimouni, "La question de la définition du judéo-christianisme ancien," in Mimouni, *Le judéo-christianisme ancien: essais historiques* (Patrimoines; Paris: Cerf, 1998), 39–72. Mimouni's definition reads: "ancient Jewish Christianity is a modern term designating those Jews who recognized *Jesus as messiah,* who recognized or did not recognize the *divinity of Christ,* but who, all of them, continued to *observe the Torah*" (italics are Mimouni's, translation mine).

[3] They do speak about "Judaizing" Christians, but these are most often Gentile believers.

Jewish believers in Jesus. *A "Jewish Christian" is a Jewish believer in Jesus who, as a believer, still maintains a Jewish way of life.*[4] Since there is no adjective corresponding to Jewish believer in Jesus, we will use the adjective "Jewish Christian" as applying to all categories of Jewish believers. What has been said very briefly so far raises many questions of a theoretical and practical nature. Some of these are addressed in the following.

1.1. Are the Terms "Jewish Believer in Jesus" and "Jewish Christian" Only Modern Terms?

It is sometimes maintained that the terms "Jewish believer in Jesus" and "Jewish Christian" are modern constructions. This is partly true, especially when one defines the terms mainly by ideological criteria. Carsten Colpe has called attention to this by characterizing terms like *Judenchrist* as belonging to what he calls *Metasprache* or *Wissenschaftsprache,* the language constructed by modern scholars to signify realities of the past which they find interesting.[5] But it should be pointed out that terms like "Jewish believer (in Jesus)" and even "Jewish Christian" are not without close analogies in the ancient sources. There is no set and fixed terminology in patristic sources, but "Jewish believer (in Jesus)" can be said to encapsulate the terms most often used.

A selection of relevant passages will substantiate this.

(1) "Jesus said to those Ἰουδαῖοι[6] who believed in him . . ." (John 8:31).

(2) ". . . those of the Jewish people who have believed in Jesus [οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ λαοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν πιστεύσαντες]" (Origen, *Cels.* 2.1).[7]

(3) "Why . . . did he not represent the Jew as addressing Gentile instead of Jewish believers? [οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων . . . πιστεύοντες]" (*Cels.* 2.1).

(4) "Notice, then, what Celsus says to Jewish believers [οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων πιστεύοντες]" (*Cels.* 2.1).

(5) ". . . He failed to notice that Jewish believers in Jesus [οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν πιστεύοντες] have not left the law of their fathers . . ." (*Cels.* 2.1).

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[4] We thus agree with Mimouni in our definition of this term.

[5] Carsten Colpe, *Das Siegel der Propheten: Historische Beziehungen zwischen Judentum, Judenchristentum, Heidentum und frühem Islam* (Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte 3; Berlin: Institut Kirche und Judentum, 1989), 38–42.

[6] It is disputed whether Ἰουδαῖοι here should be translated "Judeans" or "Jews."

[7] This and the following quotes from *Cels.* 2.1: Greek text according to SC 132: 276; translation according to Henry Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 66.

(6) "[Matthew published his gospel first] for those who from Judaism came to believe [τοῖς ἀπὸ Ἰουδαισμοῦ πιστεύσασιν]" (Origen, *Comm. Matt.,* in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.,* 6.25.4).[8]

(7) "It is said that their whole church at that time consisted of believing Jews [ἐξ ῾Εβραίων πιστῶν]"[9] (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.5.2).[10]

(8) "[Hegesippus] was a believer from among the Jews [ἐξ ῾Εβραίων]" (Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.22.8).[11]

Even the term "Jewish Christian" may be found in antique Christian sources: "[Jason was] a Jewish Christian [*hebraeus Christianus*]."[12] In the apocryphal *Martyrdom of Peter and Paul* there is a report on a discussion between two groups of Christians: the one is called οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι Χριστιανοί / *Ioudaei Christiani;* the other [οἱ] ἐθνικοὶ [Χριστιανοί] / *gentiles.*[13] It is obvious in the context that these two groups are Christians of Jewish and of Gentile origin respectively; there is no doctrinal difference involved. Later in the story, the Jewish Christians are simply called "the Jews" or "the believing Jews" [οἱ πιστεύσαντες Ἰουδαῖοι].[14] According to the narrative in the *Martyrdom* Paul mediates between the two groups by saying what he says in Rom 2:11–15: God

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[8]Greek text according to Eduard Schwartz, *Eusebius: Kirchengeschichte, kleine Ausgabe* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955), 246; translation according to Hugh Jackson Lawlor and John Ernest Leonard Oulton, eds., *Eusebius: The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine* (2 vols.; London: SPCK, 1954) 1: 197–98.

[9]Ἰουδαῖοι and ῾Εβραῖοι are mostly used interchangeably in the ancient sources, both meaning "Jews."

[10]Greek text according to Schwartz, *Kirchengeschichte,* 127; translation according to Lawlor and Oulton, *Ecclesiastical History,* 1: 127, slightly altered.

[11]Greek text according to Schwartz, *Kirchengeschichte,* 158; my own translation. The same terminology recurs, e.g., in Jerome, *Epist.* 112 (Alfons Fürst, *Augustinus-Hieronymus: Epistulae mutuae, Briefwechsel* [Fontes Christiani 41.1–2; 2 vols.; Turnhout: Brepols, 2002], 1:168–230): "*eos . . . qui ex Iudaeis crederent . . .*" (3.5; Fürst 1:178); "*fidelis ex numero Iudaeorum*" (3.8; Fürst 1:186); "*qui ex Iudaeis crediderant*" (3.10; Fürst 1:192); "*his qui ex Iudaeis crediderant*" (4.12; Fürst 1:196); "*credentes Iudaei*" (4.13; Fürst 1:198); "*his qui credunt ex Iudaeis*" (4.16; Fürst 1:210); "*fidelii Iudaei*" (4.17; Fürst 1:212).

[12]In the Latin prologue to the (now lost) Latin translation of Aristo of Pella's *Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus,* = Ps. Cyprian, *Ad Vigilium Episcopum de Iudaica Incredulitate* (3d cent.). I owe this reference to Lawrence Lahey. I suppose it would also be possible to translate *hebraeus Christianus* as "Christian Jew."

[13]*Martyrium Petri et Pauli* (Greek) / *Passio sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli* (Latin), 5; Richard Adalbert Lipsius, ed., *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha Pars prior: Acta Petri, Acta Pavli, Acta Petri et Pavli, Acta Pavli et Theclae, Acta Thaddaei* (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1891), 122–23.

[14]*Mart. Petri et Pavli,* 6; Lipsius 122–23; also in the close narrative parallel in *Acta Petri et Pavli* 26; Lipsius 189–90. I owe the references in this and the preceding note to Lawrence Lahey. Once again, parallels to this terminology are to be found in Jerome's *Epist.* 112: "*Christianis . . . sive ex Iudaeis sive ex gentibus*" (4.14; FC 41.1:202); "*aliquis Iudaeorum qui factus Christianus*" (4.15; ibid 206).

will judge everyone according to his or her deeds, not according to whether one knew the Law or not.

Two conclusions follow from this: (1) the modern terms "Jewish believers in Jesus" and "Jewish Christian" are not without precedent in the ancient sources; and (2) in the ancient sources, ethnicity is the sole criterion for the adjective "Jewish" as it is used in the combined terms "Jewish believer" and "Jewish Christian."

1.2. Is the Category "Jewish Believers in Jesus" Theologically Interesting?

Theologically speaking, one could well claim that this category of persons is uninteresting, since there probably were no common theological convictions that were typical of this category and of it alone. One could also argue that the interesting groups or categories are those defined by some common theological convictions. Whether the members of these groups are Jewish or Gentile by origin does not matter, and is difficult to ascertain in any case.

While admitting the latter difficulty, one historical fact seems undeniable for all periods of history subsequent to the earliest decades of the Jesus movement: seen from the Jewish side, *Gentiles* who believed in Jesus and *Jews* who believed in Jesus were perceived—at least by the Jewish leadership—as belonging to quite different categories. Jewish believers in Jesus were perceived as *apostates* in a way Gentile believers were not. Seen from this perspective, the question of ethnicity was a question of the utmost theological significance. Even if Jewish believers should want to regard their Jewish origin as of no consequence, they were hardly permitted to do so by their Jewish relatives and friends.

There is hardly anyone who doubts that from very early on the Jewish as well as the Christian leadership tried to establish well defined borders between the two communities. Jewish believers crossed this border; seen from the Jewish side they crossed it in the wrong direction. Gentile believers in Jesus either did not cross it or, if they did, they crossed it in the other direction. While this may also have been seen as problematical by Jewish leaders, it would have been another problem altogether. Gentile believers were not and could never be apostates from the Jewish people.

We are thus not imposing a modern construction on history when we single out Jewish believers in Jesus as an interesting category of persons. Precisely because of their ethnicity, they were perceived from the Jewish side as a problematic category of believers in Jesus. From the (Gentile) Christian side, they were perceived as either special or problematic or both.[15] The Jewish believers themselves could, by the very nature of things, hardly be totally unaffected by these outside

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[15] An early writer like Justin admits that there are Gentile Christians who do not recognize Jewish believers who practice a fully Jewish lifestyle as good Christians. He himself does so, however. Later writers like Epiphanius and Jerome criticize otherwise orthodox "Nazoraeans" because they observe the Law. For details and references, see below chapters 15 and 17.

evaluations. As believers in Jesus they had, in one way or other, to relate to the fact of their Jewishness. They were hardly ever allowed not to do so. In the words of Burton L. Visotzky: "They just don't fit very neatly; they never did."[16]

In saying this, we are mindful of the recent criticism of the classical paradigm of the "parting of the ways."[17] The critics of this paradigm are right to point out that scholars have often taken normative descriptions of the incompatibility of "Christianity" versus "Judaism" found in the texts of religious leaders to be historically accurate descriptions of the realities "on the ground." We agree that this assumption is misleading. The very fact that religious leadership on both sides found it necessary to enjoin sharp borders again and again is itself eloquent testimony that the border was far from sharp in real life. There were people who crossed the border all the time, apparently in both directions. The border-crossers themselves, however, would probably not have conceived of themselves in these terms. They had no consciousness of crossing a border or being border-dwellers themselves. For example, some Jewish believers in Jesus who maintained a Jewish lifestyle and conceived of Jesus as the Messiah of Israel in very Jewish terms would probably have thought of themselves as fully Jewish and members of the Jewish people, and would, at least sometimes, have felt greater fellowship in destiny with their fellow (non-Christian) Jewish compatriots than with the majority Gentile Christian church. On the other hand, some Gentile Christian Judaizers may not have been conscious of crossing any border other than becoming fully Christian when they adopted Jewish customs and Jewish friends. In fact, many of them may have been Judaizers before they became Christians, and would have seen no reason to quit their "Judaizing" now that they had embraced the Messiah of the Jews. In other words, by speaking of these people as "border-dwellers" or as "border-crossers," we very much adopt the perspectives of those who wanted to enjoin this border; we adopt, to a certain extent, the perspective of the religious leadership.

There is no reason to deny this. At the same time, it is also a historical fact that in the long run the religious leadership were the "winners," in that their conception of an intrinsic incompatibility between "Judaism" and "Christianity" heavily influenced realities "on the ground" and was destined to form them to a great extent. Those who crossed the border or who settled on it could hardly be unaware that the emerging and gradually dominant leadership of their respective religious communities defined them as people trying to combine incompatible identities.[18]

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[16] Burton L. Visotzky, "Prolegomenon to the Study of Jewish-Christianities in Rabbinic Literature," in idem, *Fathers of the World: Essays in Rabbinic and Patristic Literatures* (WUNT 80; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995), 129–49; quotation at 129.

[17] See especially Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds., *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (TSAJ 95; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2003).

[18] The classic formulation of this from the Christian side is Jerome's saying about the Ebionites, aka Nazoraeans: "Since they want to be both Jews and Christians, they are nei-

The normative views of religious leadership were not lost on "neutral" outside observers either. Celsus in the 170s seems not to have any problem in distinguishing Jews from Christians, in spite of the fact that he knew that many Christians were ethnic Jews. He seems to have taken for granted, however, that when Jews became believers in Jesus they abandoned their ancestral laws. This picture may be derived from his reading of the New Testament and early patristic writings as well as from experience with contemporary Jewish believers. Had he known of Jewish believers who continued to practice a fully Jewish lifestyle, he would probably have considered them non-typical Christians. This means that the effects "on the ground" of normative definitions should not be underestimated.

But they should not be overestimated either. One could think that by the fourth century the normative, mutually exclusive self-definitions of Jews and Christians had become so clear to everyone that there no longer were any border-crossers or border-dwellers, or at least only very few. But there is eloquent evidence to the contrary through the fourth into the fifth century and even beyond. The "ways" that allegedly "parted" continued to intersect and overlap—they never parted completely.

1.3. Other Closely Related Terms (1): "Jewish Christian," "Christian Jew"

There is nowadays an emerging consensus among scholars to use "Jewish Christian" (*Judenchrist, judéo-chrétien*) as a designation of ethnic Jews who, as believers in Jesus, *still practiced a Jewish way of life.* A recent statement of this definition by Simon Claude Mimouni runs: "ancient Jewish Christianity is a modern term designating those Jews who recognized Jesus as messiah, who recognized or did not recognize the divinity of Christ, but who, all of them, continued to observe the Torah."[19] This term can be used as an overarching term to comprise the two categories called Ebionites and Nazoraeans by the patristic writers, and also those unnamed Jewish believers, spoken of by Justin Martyr, who believe Jesus to be the Messiah and practice a Jewish way of life. These Jewish believers are so distinctly characterized in the ancient sources that we need a term for them. It could lead to misunderstandings to coin an entirely new term when a long established term exists. We therefore use "Jewish Christian" (noun) in this book in the meaning defined by Mimouni; while our term "Jewish believer in Jesus" also includes those Jewish believers who did not keep a Jewish lifestyle. The latter are sometimes called "Christian Jews," as distinct from the Jewish Christians. In this case, however, there is no established usage to support such a definition of "Christian Jew," and we will therefore normally avoid this term. The context will make plain when we speak of Jewish believers in a comprehensive sense, and when we call

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ther Jews nor Christians" (*Epist.* 112.13, here quoted after A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* [NovTSup 36; Leiden: Brill, 1973], 201.)

[19] Cf. note 2.

someone a Jewish believer because we are not sure s/he was also a Jewish Christian (i.e., practiced a Jewish life-style).[20]

1.4. Other Closely Related Terms (2): "Judaizer"

The problems with the terms "Judaizer" and "Judaizing" are somewhat different. This term is rarely attested in pre-and non-Christian texts, but occurs frequently in Christian writers. The verb "to Judaize" was coined in analogy to other verbs of the same type, e.g., the verb "to Hellenize." When a non-Greek (a non-Hellene) began to behave as if s/he were a Greek, the person was said to "Hellenize."[21] This means that only non-Greeks could Hellenize, not the Greeks themselves. The element of *imitating somebody else* is integral to the meaning of the verbs of this group, hence the natural members of a group or nation cannot be said to imitate themselves. Accordingly, when a non-Jew began to behave as if s/he were Jewish, s/he would be said to "Judaize." Gentiles could Judaize, not Jews. This understanding of the term implies that when Christians are said to Judaize, these Christians are of Gentile, not Jewish origin.[22] Christian Judaizers are therefore not included in our definition of Jewish believers.

But there are three provisos to be made. *Firstly,* in periods and in areas where it was commonly taken for granted by Christians that Jews who believed in Jesus ought to abandon their Jewish way of life, Jewish believers in Jesus who did not do so could sometimes be included in the term "Judaizers." Applied to Jewish believers, the term would acquire a somewhat extended meaning: that of Christians behaving as if they were still Jews. We shall have to keep this possibility in mind, especially when we encounter the term in fourth and fifth century writers. *Secondly,* Gentile Judaizers who took their "Judaizing" to the point of actual conversion to Judaism are sometimes included among the Judaizers in early Christian texts. If these Gentiles also believed in Jesus, they would probably not be recognized as legitimate converts to Judaism by the local Jewish community, but might well consider themselves to have become members of the Jewish people. In our study of Jewish believers, this group remains a border case, reminding us that no clear-cut definition is able to correspond to the rather fuzzy realities "on the ground." *Thirdly,* Gentile Christian Judaizers are not included in our term "Jew-

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[20] As was said above, since there is no adjective corresponding to Jewish believers in Jesus, we will use "Jewish Christian" as an adjective applying to all Jewish believers.

[21] There were also other examples of this type of verb, e.g., κιλικίζειν, "to adopt the manners of the Cilicians" [to be cruel and treacherous or to cheat someone]; φοινικίζειν, "to adopt the manners and customs of the Phoenicians," etc. For a full review, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, " 'Ιουδαΐζειν,' 'to Judaize,'" in Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 31; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 175–97. Here and in the following I am very much indebted to this fine study.

[22] See now also Michele Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game: Gentile Christian Judaizing in the First and Second Centuries CE* (Studies in Christianity and Judaism 13; Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004), esp. 3–4.

ish believers," but they are not irrelevant to the history of the Jewish believers. By their very existence the Christian Judaizers tell something significant about the conditions prevailing at the "border" between Jews and Christians. One could ask, for example, what role models Gentile Christian Judaizers would have had for their Judaizing? One obvious suggestion would be that these role models were Jewish Christians. There is also evidence that some Jewish believers tried to persuade Gentile believers to get circumcised (if male) and to adopt a Jewish lifestyle. In many cases the existence of Gentile Christians who "Judaized" should be taken as indirect evidence of Jewish believers who, actively or passively, encouraged them to this practice.

Jewish Christians and Gentile Judaizers would have one important thing in common: neither group respected a border which the leadership on both sides vehemently tried to enforce. They found themselves in the same officially declared no-man's land, although they came to it from opposite directions.

1.5. What do We Mean by "Jewish"? Whom do We Consider a "Jew"?

This question is not easily answered in very precise terms. It would be anachronistic, at least for the first half of our period, to give the current halakic answer, namely, that a Jew is a person born by a Jewish mother or a person converted to Judaism according to rabbinic halakic procedure. The matrilineal principle of Jewish descent was established sometime during our period, but was probably not regarded as valid at the period's beginning.[23] In any case, whether matrilineal or patrilineal, the genealogical principle in a sense begs the question, since it presupposes that at least some ancestors are simply *known* to have been Jews— otherwise, the principle implies a *regressus ad infinitum.* And the question of the status of the offspring of mixed unions has remained more difficult in reality than halakic theory would allow.[24]

The question of legitimate conversion of Gentiles to Judaism is also difficult to handle, especially during the period before the fully developed conversion procedures were established. But even after their establishment there is every reason to think that perceptions "on the ground" were at variance with officially sanctioned halakah. What seems to have been a basic criterion for males was having oneself circumcised. From at least the Maccabean period this seems to have been considered a necessary, but not in itself sufficient, condition for male converts to be recognized as true proselytes and full members of the polity of Israel. With circumcision followed the obligation to observe all the Mosaic commandments, not only the optional selection observed by sympathizers and so-called Godfearers. It

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[23] On this, see Cohen, *Beginnings,* 263–307. It is uncertain at what date the matrilineal principle was introduced by leading rabbis. It is certain that it was only gradually accepted, and that opposition against it among the rabbis remained for a long time.

[24] See on this whole problem Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

is therefore misleading to regard circumcision as just one among several Jewish customs to be observed or not observed at choice by people with a leaning towards Judaism. Paul makes this point in no uncertain terms: "I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the whole Torah" (Gal 5:3). Getting circumcised changes one's basic status with regard to all the other commandments of the law. One is no longer outside the people of Israel; one is inside, and therefore has to relate to the entire law, not just Noahide or other commandments considered valid for all people. Jews were not alone in being circumcised in antiquity, but they were unique in making this their most distinctive and indispensable marker of national identity. Therefore "the circumcision" (ἡ περιτομή) is often used as a short and sufficient reference to the Jewish people,[25] while the Gentiles are referred to as "the foreskin" (ἡ ἀκροβυστία).[26] When Ignatius wants to say that it is better to hear Christianity from a Jew than Judaism from a Gentile, he phrases it: "It is better to hear Christianity from the circumcised than Judaism from the foreskinned" (Ign. *Phld.* 6.1).

But how were female converts to Judaism recognized as such? The lack of a clear answer to this question may have prompted the development of a new element in the conversion rites; the proselyte's immersion. The date at which this rite was "instituted" as obligatory for women as well as men is disputed. Perhaps this question is formulated on a wrong premise, that proselyte immersion was "instituted" at a specific point in time. In the life of a proselyte there always had to be a first immersion by which the proselyte for the first time in his/her life was made ritually clean. One could well imagine that this first immersion was gradually invested with more significance, and thus became an integral part of the conversion ritual through an extended process rather than by a sudden halakic decision. In any case, female converts to Judaism are well attested in the ancient sources even if the exact procedure by which they were recognized as such is not. There may have been local as well as temporal variations, and there may have been doubtful borderline cases.

While the question of how one *became* a Jew, if one were not born Jewish, had its complications, the question of how one *ceased* to be a Jew was also difficult. Through intentional or unintended *assimilation,* offspring of Jews with impeccable Jewish ancestry would sometimes no longer consider themselves Jews and would no longer be so perceived by others.[27] This phenomenon is of special relevance when we consider Jewish believers, since assimilation into mainly Gentile Christian communities and consequent loss of Jewish identity would be a likely prospect, at least for the children and grandchildren of such Jewish believers.

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[25] Acts 10:45; Rom 2:26–27; 3:30; 15:8; Gal 2:7–9, 12; Eph 2:11; Phil 3:3; Col 3:11; 4:11, etc.

[26] Acts 11:3; Rom 2:26–27; 3:30; Gal 2:7; Eph 2:11; Col 3:11.

[27] That this was not a rare phenomenon in the Jewish Diaspora, is emphasized by Gideon Bohak, "Ethnic Continuity in the Jewish Diaspora in Antiquity," in *Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities* (ed. J. R. Bartlett; New York: Routledge, 2002), 175–92.

While we want to take full account of these difficulties with the term "Jew" and "Jewish," none of them destroy the basic fact that "Jew" remains a meaningful term. Since the latter part of the Second Temple period, Jews in general have had little doubt about who were Jews and who were not. The doubtful cases referred to above may have made the borderline somewhat blurred at times, but did not eliminate it. And there were times when Jewish or Roman authorities had to decide with great precision who was Jewish and who was not, e.g., when the *fiscus iudaicus* was imposed under Vespasian, or when the Jewish patriarch levied taxes from the Jews of the Diaspora. There was thus a certain juridical "pressure" on communities as well as individuals, to define who was "in" and who was "out."

A special case that was recognized as a difficult border case already in antiquity was that of the Samaritans. As descendants of the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom—although perhaps of mixed ancestry—Samaritans were, biblically speaking, descendants of the House of Jacob. In the New Testament, Matthew and John clearly exclude Samaritans from Israel; Luke, on the other hand, and Justin after him, include them in the wider concept of Israel or the House of Jacob, and explicitly treat them as not Gentile. This probably reflects similar uncertainty about their exact status among contemporary Jews. In this volume we follow the lead of Luke in commenting briefly upon Samaritan believers in Jesus as part of our topic, though a very marginal one.

The bottom line regarding Jewish identity, then, is that people who considered themselves Jewish and were considered to be Jewish by the Jewish community were Jewish. It seems fitting and right that the final "power of definition" should lie with the (different) Jewish communities themselves. According to this principle, we consider Gentile believers who, as part of their conversion to faith in Jesus, accepted circumcision and a Jewish way of life as representing a border case, not as being "Jewish believers" in the strict sense, since they would probably not have been recognized as legitimate Jewish proselytes by the local Jewish community.[28]

1.6. What do We Mean by "a Believer in Jesus"?

(1) On the level of doctrine we want to include any type of Christology that accords a unique role to Jesus as the Messiah or the end-time, final Prophet, or any other role that makes him decisive as a saving figure. We will refrain from

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[28] It was clearly otherwise with proselytes whose conversion to Judaism was recognized prior to their coming to faith in Jesus. The book of Acts is quite clear on this point. When Peter addresses "Jews and converts to Judaism" (Ἰουδαῖοί τε καὶ προσήλυτοι) from Rome on the day of Pentecost, he is not addressing Jews and Gentiles, but two categories of Jews (2:10–11). One of the "Hellenistic" Jewish believers chosen to be one of the seven leaders according to Acts 6:5 was "Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism" (προσήλυτον). By including such people in our definition of Jewish believers, we are thus following the precedent of our sources.

using heavily loaded normative terms like "orthodox" and "heterodox" when we characterize the faith and praxis of Jewish believers.

(2) On the social level, we have to relate in one way or other to the phenomenon of conversion. "Christians are made, not born."[29] In the entire pre-Constantinian period, there was a strong consciousness among believers in Jesus, Gentile or Jewish, that their status as believers was not something they had been born into. Instead, it was the result of their own free choice. This consciousness was so deeply engrained that it persisted also when and where the "born" Christians were in the majority. In other words, the "normal" Christian was a convert, someone who had changed his/her religious affiliation. While this might be the "normal" Christian, being a convert was certainly not considered "normal" in society in general. People were expected to abide by the religious traditions of their ancestors. Changing one's religious loyalties was frowned upon and would easily draw accusations of religious treason. If the "normal" Christian was a convert, it also means that viewed from the outside, the normal Christian was an apostate.

The reason we mention this rather obvious fact is in order to highlight the role that is played by such categories as conversion and apostasy in scholarly literature. For scholars rooted in the Christian tradition, conversion to Christianity is normally seen as an interesting and positive phenomenon, and is often approached from the angle that normative Christian doctrine establishes for such events: a convert is someone who has become convinced of the truth of the faith to which he or she converts. Conversions away from Christianity, e.g., to Judaism, are more often seen as anomalies that require other types of explanations. Scholars rooted in the Jewish tradition tend, in a similar way, to take the normative viewpoints of their own tradition more or less for granted. A Jew becoming a believer in Jesus after "the parting of the ways" is seen by definition as a deviant person, and often also as an apostate. This means that, from a Jewish point of view, the reasons for conversion to faith in Jesus are sought in the non-rational and often pathological dysfunctions of the human psyche. Converts to Christianity are regarded as divided or haunted souls, as obsessed by Jewish self-hate, as simple traitors or plain opportunists, and almost universally as having ulterior motives.

There are two remarks to be made with respect to this problem. (1) There is no reason why the historian should simply accept the normative definitions of clear-cut religious boundaries established by religious leaders among Jews and Christians. According to these definitions, and only according to these definitions, was it an intrinsic impossibility to combine Jewish and Christian identity. By their very existence, Jewish believers in Jesus and Gentile Judaizers call these definitions into question. It is only when these definitions are taken for granted that Jewish believers in Jesus and Gentile Judaizers stand out as anomalous, as

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[29] *Fiunt, non nascuntur Christiani.* Tertullian, *Apol.* 18.4.

trying to combine the incompatible, or as psychologically odd. (2) The "sincerity" of conversion is often assessed by comparison with an "ideal" model, according to which the only sincere conversion is taken to be the one in which an *intellectual conviction* of the *truth* of the new faith or way of life—and this alone—has been the driving force in the conversion process. But several sociologists of religion remind us that this type of conversion is rather the exception than the rule when it comes to "ordinary" conversions. In most cases, factors other than the contents of the new faith or way of life are the primary motivators. Rodney Stark claims that in most cases integration into new social networks is primary, and schooling in and assent to the new faith are secondary.[30] If this is taken to mean that the convert's faith in such cases is insincere, it would mean that most existing religious faith is insincere. In this book we would rather like to "normalize" the phenomenon of conversion and not disqualify most normal conversions as insincere.

(3) With regard to the question of sincerity of faith, historians, like other human beings, have no direct access to the hearts and minds of people. We ought not pass value judgments on whose faith was sincere and whose was not. Instead, we have to stick to what can be observed. In this case, there are two main observable actions: verbal profession of faith, and participation in the external identity markers of believers in Jesus (baptism, common worship, the Eucharist, and the like). There is one phenomenon, however, in regard to which this cautious agnosticism breaks down, even among modern historians: "conversions" resulting from the use of coercion. Much historical experience and plain common sense go together in regarding such conversions as something "outward" only, which is rarely if ever accompanied by any corresponding inner conviction. To a great extent, this was how the ancient observers themselves regarded the matter. Even Augustine, with his *coge intrare,* clearly stated on more than one occasion that one can never produce genuine faith in somebody by the use of coercion alone. At best, moderate use of coercion can create outward conditions for the long-term and difficult task of instructing and persuading people into true and sincere faith. This was the view of the late Augustine; other Christians, among them some of his friends from his young days, were shocked that he could endorse any use of coercion at all.[31] The best documented case of mass conversion of Jews in our period, brought about by Christian mob violence, occurred in Augustine's old days. In February 418 on the island of Minorca, the entire Jewish community of some 540 persons accepted baptism and were made Christians. The local bishop of the island, Severus, was clearly apologetic in his report on the incident because he knew that use of force to produce such results was illegal according to

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[30] Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 13–21.

[31] See Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969, repr. 1975), 233–43; and Robert A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; repr., 1988), 133–53.

imperial law, as well as being frowned upon by many of his fellow bishops.[32] We shall return to this incident during the course of this volume. But at this point, our question is simple: Are these 540 converts on Minorca to be included in our concept "Jewish believers in Jesus"? We feel that to do so would be to strain the meaning of "believer" beyond its natural meaning. We rather prefer to call these converts by a term which describes their situation, "converts by coercion." It is important to note, however, that within such groups it often happens that some of the converts, after some time, embrace the new faith or way of life and make it their own. With Jewish converts this means that after some time they may become "believers" in the "normal" meaning of that term. But this at the same time often implies a measure of assimilation into Christian surroundings which makes their status as "Jewish" problematic. In many cases, such "Jewish believers" will be a one—or maximum two—generation phenomenon. In general, the use of different forms of "power" by Christians in the post-Constantinian period, as far as conversion attempts are concerned (directed towards pagans and Jews), will have to be addressed at the appropriate place (cf. chapter 23, section 7).

(4) Finally, there is another interesting border case. It often happens that members of one religious community in times of deep need seek assistance outside the limits of "legitimate" (as defined by their leaders) religious sources for help. In our case, the sources contain stories of officially non-Christian Jews who in time of need sought help by invoking the name and power of Jesus. Are they to be included as believers in Jesus? In the ancient Christian sources they are often regarded as some kind of secret believers, who did not profess their faith publicly because of "fear of the Jews." In some cases this may be a pertinent characterization of their situation, in others not. People who in times of need sought help wherever they thought it might be found—e.g., with Jesus—cannot reasonably be called believers in Jesus. But again, a certain amount of agnosticism on the scholar's part seems advisable. In most cases, we simply cannot evaluate the subjective depth or shallowness of this type of faith. We have to take it for what it is; a not at all uncommon phenomenon on the level of popular religion.

2. Questions of Method and Sources

The ancient sources speak of two kinds of Christians: those of Jewish and those of Gentile origin. In this book we are concerned with the believers in Jesus who were of Jewish origin. We call them Jewish believers in Jesus, or more briefly Jewish believers. The task we have set us in this book is two-fold. Partly, we are out to find as much information as we can *about* Jewish believers in the ancient sources. This is the easiest part, since the sources are usually quite explicit in tell-

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[32] See the excellent edition of Severus, and study of the document and the incident, in Scott Bradbury, *Severus of Minorca: Letter on the Conversion of the Jews* (OECT; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

ing when they speak about Jewish—not Gentile—believers. But in addition, we are out to identify some sources, fragments of sources, pieces of exegetical expositions, and the like, that *came from* Jewish believers, were *authored* by them. This part is more difficult. I shall briefly discuss some of the problems involved in recognizing Jewish believers in the ancient sources.

Shaye Cohen asks, "How do you know a Jew in Antiquity when you see one?"[33] His answer is that you can never be absolutely sure.

> Jews [in the Diaspora] looked like everyone else, dressed like everyone else, spoke like everyone else, had names and occupations like everyone else, and, in general, closely resembled their gentile neighbors. Even circumcision did not always make male Jews distinctive, and as long as they kept their pants on, it certainly did not make them recognizable.[34]

In general, people would have known Jews as Jews by some characteristics of their behavior:

> If you saw someone associating with Jews, living in a (or the) Jewish part of town, married to a Jew, and, in general, integrated socially with other Jews, you might reasonably conclude that that someone was a Jew. Second, if you saw someone performing Jewish rituals and practices, you might reasonably conclude that that someone was a Jew. Each of these conclusions would have been reasonable, but neither would have been certain, because Gentiles often mingled with Jews and some Gentiles even observed Jewish rituals and practices.[35]

This would indicate that in our case, the most difficult task of differentiation, with regard to the evidence in the ancient sources, is distinguishing between Jewish believers and Gentile believers who "Judaized" to a lesser or greater degree. It would seem that distinguishing between Jews who believed in Jesus and those who did not should be easier. But even this is difficult enough in some cases, especially in the realm of literature commonly called the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. To say for sure whether a certain document was originally penned by a non-Christian Jew and then later edited or interpolated by a Jewish (or even Gentile!) believer, or that it was penned in its entirety by a Christian very familiar with Jewish traditions, is often very difficult. Recognizing a Jewish believer in the ancient sources when you meet one may therefore be even more difficult than recognizing a Jew in general.

These difficulties do not necessitate complete agnosticism, however. There is no reasonable doubt that the named and un-named Jewish believers of the New Testament writings in fact were Jewish believers. As a rule, when patristic sources say about some believers in Jesus that they were Jewish, there is no compelling reason to distrust that information. In single cases, like when Eusebius calls

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[33] The subtitle of chapter 2, pages 25–68 in Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness.*
[34] Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness,* 67.
[35] Ibid., 67–68.

Hegesippus "Jewish," this information is clearly inferential, and we may think the basis for the inference is insufficient. There are other similar cases. But in general, there is no reason to systematically distrust information on ethnic background given in the ancient sources. When Gentile believers acted the part of Jews, they were usually taken to task for Judaizing, and the fact that they were not born Jews was often seen as aggravating the sin of Judaizing. In other words: they were known not to be Jewish.

What has just been said is no doubt the easiest part of this matter. But if we were to limit the ancient evidence on Jewish believers in Jesus to those passages in the ancient sources that explicitly speak about them, the story of Jewish believers would be rather slim, and we would no doubt miss out on much relevant evidence. This evidence is of necessity indirect, and therefore it is much more difficult to evaluate and use.

As I have explained, in this book we include among the Jewish believers those Jews who became "ordinary" Christians in a predominately Gentile Christian surrounding. These believers are, almost by definition, not easily distinguishable by their theology. And if no one happens to tell us that this or that person is Jewish by birth, how do we know?

It seems reasonable to assume that Jewish believers would have had a *greater competence in things Jewish* than their Gentile fellow believers. This, of course, is neither an infallible nor a very precise criterion, but it is not without value. In any case, we are not here seeking to establish the identity of specific individuals, but rather to trace the existence of a largely unnamed and anonymous category or group. As it happens, ecclesiastical writers used precisely this criterion in assuming Jewish identity of Christian authors whose theology they found entirely orthodox. We see this in Eusebius when he comments on Hegesippus:

> He sets down certain things from the Gospel of the Hebrews and the Syriac [Gospel] and, in particular, from [writings in] *the Hebrew tongue,* thus showing that he was himself *a believer of Hebrew origin.* And he relates other matters as well, on the strength of *unwritten Jewish tradition* (*Hist. eccl.* 4.22.8).[36]

The criteria followed by Eusebius here—good knowledge of Hebrew and of oral or post-biblical Jewish traditions—appear to be well-founded and probably based on firsthand experience with the situation in the late third and early fourth century. There is no reason to discard these criteria in our own work with the sources. Among the Gentile Christian authors that we know of in the Greek and Latin church, only Origen, Jerome, and a few others knew sufficient Hebrew or Aramaic to be able to make any use of these languages in terms of "etymological" explanations and the like. When this occurs in writers like Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian, one has to expect that they rely on sources that ulti-

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[36] Translation according to Hugh Jackson Lawlor and John Ernest Leonard Oulton, *Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea: The Ecclesiastical History and The Martyrs of Palestine* (2 vols.; London: SPCK, 1928; repr., 1954), 1:128.

mately go back to Jewish believers. There might, of course, in the first two or three generations have been some Gentile believers with this kind of linguistic competence and this kind of Jewish scholarship. But given the rarity of such persons in the later period when we can control it, one should not make too much out of this possibility. I suggest that there is a strong a priori probability of Jewish Christian origin for Christian texts and traditions that are based on the Hebrew text of the Bible, or that in other ways presuppose a working knowledge of Hebrew/ Aramaic. For Jewish but clearly non-Christian traditions, one should always consider the possibility that they were transmitted to Gentile Christians via Jewish believers (see further on this below).

Apart from this cultural-linguistic criterion, some Jewish Christian material in Gentile Christian authors stands out from its context by other fairly objective criteria:

(1) The most simple cases occur when the Fathers explicitly say that some quotation or theologoumenon derives from Jewish believers.

(2) Quite often pieces of evidence delimited by the above criteria seem to be deeply embedded in a wider context. This strongly suggests that they form one piece with this wider context, and that this context as a whole is of Jewish Christian origin.

In some cases a whole writing may be seen to be penned by a Jewish believer according to some or all of the above criteria, often supported by other, more specific criteria relevant to that particular writing.

In saying this, I have consciously tried to pinpoint criteria more specific than the general "Jewish" characteristics that are typical of very much of early Christian literature. In his classic monograph *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* Jean Daniélou demonstrated with great erudition that Jewish concepts, Jewish symbols and images, Jewish thought-forms, and Jewish genres and ways of speaking all permeate most of the earliest Christian writings and many of the later second century writings as well.[37] The least successful part of his book was its title, suggesting, as the book itself does, that these Jewish materials could be synthesized into one connected and coherent "theology of Jewish Christianity." As many critics have pointed out, this theology is destined to remain a modern construct. Daniélou might have blunted this criticism if he had given his book a title more in line with its convincing argument—something like "the Jewishness of early Christianity." What his book brilliantly demonstrates is the near ubiquity of the Jewish heritage in early Christian literature, also in strongly anti-Jewish authors.

This has considerable significance with regard to the history of Jewish believers. But this significance is of a rather general nature. Jewish elements may have entered into the literary productions of Gentile Christian writers by two channels, either (1) directly from non-Christian Jews, or (2) via Jewish believers. In

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[37] Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (vol. 1 of *The Development of Christian Doctrine Before the Council of Nicaea;* trans. J. A. Baker; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964).

both cases there may be one or more Gentile Christian middlemen, but at the back end of the line we are bound to find a Jewish source, a Jewish believer or non-believer in Jesus. In a few cases we can document that Gentile Christian authors took Jewish material from non-believing and/or believing Jews. In other cases this cannot be directly documented, but there remains a great a priori probability that such was the case. In the case of great scholarly luminaries like Origen and Jerome, direct exchanges with non-Christian Jewish scholars were no doubt natural. With less brilliant, less self-secure Gentile authors, it was probably more natural to prefer Jewish believers in Jesus as their informants on things Jewish. It seems reasonable to take as an a priori assumption that much, probably most, of the Jewish heritage in early Christian literature was transmitted to the early church via Jewish believers. Otherwise not easily recognized, they have left this unmistakable trace in the major part of early Christian literature.

In terms of the history of Jewish believers, not much more than the above can be said, based on this general Jewishness of the Christian sources. In this volume, therefore, we will not repeat or augment what Daniélou and others have been able to dig out of the early Christian sources, as far as Jewish traditions are concerned. Instead, we will focus more specifically on those instances in which Jewish Christian authorship of quoted or used sources can be shown to be certain or probable.

What has been said so far applies to literary sources written by believers in Jesus. Concerning sources written by non-believers, pagan writers like Celsus may contain valuable information. The methodological problems raised by the corpus of rabbinic writings are of an altogether different nature. I will here content myself with referring to Philip Alexander's discussion of these problems in his chapter on the rabbinical sources.[38]

Imperial legislation from Constantine onwards and rulings by church synods may often shed considerable light on the relationships between Jews and Christians in general and the plight of Jewish believers in particular. One simple rule in interpreting such material is that prohibitions of a practice can normally be taken as proof that the practice occurred, and that repetitions of such prohibitions testify to the continued existence of this practice in spite of laws enacted against it.

Because the literary sources taken together present us with a very fragmented picture, it is of great interest to seek, as far as it is possible, to fill in some general traits in the picture by careful use of analogies from better documented periods and areas. Sociologists of religion like Rodney Stark have made interesting proposals concerning the social mechanisms of the growth of the pre-Constantinian Christian movement, based both on the growth rate itself and on analogies of modern movements with comparable growth rates. As it turns out, this method has interesting implications for the question of the extent to which Jews continued to be an important recruitment base for early Christian missions.[39]

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[38] See chapter 21 of this book.
[39] Stark, *Rise of Christianity*, 49–71.

If it is often difficult to recognize a Jewish believer in Jesus in the written sources when you meet one, it is even more difficult to recognize one in the archaeological sources. At present, archaeologists are hard put to establish any hard and fast rules by which archaeological remains may be attributed to Jewish believers rather than Gentile believers or Jewish non-believers in Jesus.[40] This does not mean, however, that the results of archaeology are of no consequence. Archaeology contains much valuable information on the general relationships that existed between Jews and Christians, especially during the Byzantine period. The general picture supported by such archaeological studies is of consequence for our interpretation of the literary sources, very much along the same lines as the generalizations of the sociologists.

There is a kind of temptation attached to a project like this that attempts to write the history of a group often neglected and marginalized. The temptation is to "make the most out of it," to compensate for earlier neglect by magnifying the dimensions of the phenomenon in question. In this volume we have tried to avoid this temptation and to remain sober with regard to the extent of the phenomenon we are treating.

Finally there is the question of the best way to present our findings. Historians like to present history as good narrative story. In our case, we think the sources are too fragmentary and too difficult to interpret with certainty for that to be possible at the present state of knowledge. We have therefore chosen to present only lesser parts of this history as narrative history, and have treated other parts in a non-narrative, more analytic way, taking single sources or groups of sources by turn.

The final "Conclusion and Outlook" is, accordingly, of a very tentative and necessarily subjective nature, and is not meant to be anything like a definitive synopsis of the history of Jewish believers in our period. Any pretension in that direction would clearly be premature.

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[40] See chapter 22 of this book.

Jewish Identities in Antiquity: Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern (TSAJ 130; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2009); Benedikt Eckhardt ed. Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba: Groups Normativity and Rituals (JSJSup 155; Leiden: Brill 2012). Mason "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History," JSJ 38 (2007): 457-512 at 480. The "Jew/Judean" translation debate which is in the background of Mason's article is not of importance to the present task. Restoration: Old Testament Jewish and Christian Perspectives (JSJSup 72; Leiden: Brill 2001). See E. P. Sanders , Jesus and Judaism (Minneapolis : Fortress , 1985). ; Fuller, Restoration of Israel Jewish Believers in Jesus in Antiquity— Problems of Definition, Method, and Sources. Oskar Skarsaune. It goes without saying that defining the term "Jewish believers in Jesus" is basic to this project. By defining this concept we determine the very subject mat-ter of this book. Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies 22.4 (2004) 147-149 This book is volume 13 in the series Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity. It is a compilation of twelve essays under the rubric "Hellenism in the land of Israel," which is also the title of the book. Some of the essays, however, traverse the borders of the land of Israel and venture into places like Phoenicia and cities