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Born in 1943 in Hückeswagen (Rhein-Wupper-Kreis)

Studied Theology, Jewish Studies and Philosophy at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

PROJECT

The Emergence of Judaism and Christianity in the First Centuries C.E.

Judaism is a set of practices and beliefs that have changed constantly, and sometimes radically, over the centuries. One major change took place after the Babylonian exile, when some of the essential characteristics of what we today call "Judaism" took shape; another one occurred in the second century B.C.E. under the influence of "Hellenism"; and yet another, and decisive, change happened during the first centuries of the Christian era, when a sect emerged within the Jewish religion that would develop into a powerful religion of its own.

During the last 20 years, scholars of Judaism and Early Christianity have become increasingly aware of the fact that the emergence of "Christianity" within the lap of "Judaism" did not happen at a certain point in time but was a process that extended over centuries. Moreover, and more importantly, a consensus is about to be reached that this process wasn't just a one-way-street, leading straight from "Judaism" to "Christianity", but that it had its repercussions in both directions: A constant and overlapping effort of self-definition, demarcation and, later on, separation of both religions under the impact of each other.

Taking up one of my very first publications ("Die sogenannte Synode von Jabne: Zur Trennung von Juden und Christen im 1./2. Jahrhundert n. Chr." 1975), I will re-evaluate the available evidence within the rabbinic and early Christian literary corpora that touches upon questions of self-definition, with an emphasis on the issue of "heresy" (minut), and I will describe this process in all its prolonged, multifarious, and far from unambiguous aspects.

Recommended Reading

Schäfer, Peter. *Judeophobia: Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Schäfer, Peter. *Mirror of His Beauty: Feminine Images of God from the Bible to the Early Kabbalah*. Princeton, N. J. and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Schäfer, Peter. *Jesus in the Talmud*. Princeton, N. J. and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007.

Why Did the Baby Messiah Disappear? The Birth of Christianity from the Spirit of Judaism

My presentation starts from the (deliberately provocative) assumption that, for large parts of their history, Judaism and Christianity were not completely separate religious entities that lived in splendid isolation, sealed off from each other by eternal enmity and hatred. I will argue that this assumption is certainly true for the first centuries C.E., during which Christianity emerged from Judaism, its mother or, better, sister-religion. My presentation will focus on a famous story preserved in the Jerusalem Talmud that captures Christianity - literally - in statu nascendi, that is, at the very moment it sprang from the loins of Judaism.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE FELLOWS' LIBRARY

Schäfer, Peter (München,2017)

Jüdische Polemik gegen Jesus und das Christentum : die Entstehung eines jüdischen Gegenevangeliums

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=89069186X>

Themen ; Bd. 103

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=89069186X>

Schäfer, Peter (Princeton, N.J. [u.a.],2012)

The Jewish Jesus : how Judaism and Christianity shaped each other

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=667798560>

Schäfer, Peter (Berlin,2011)

Die Ursprünge der jüdischen Mystik

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=661740471>

The origins of Jewish mysticism <dt.>

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=661740471>

Schäfer, Peter (Tübingen,2010)

Die Geburt des Judentums aus dem Geist des Christentums : fünf Vorlesungen zur Entstehung des rabbinischen Judentums

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1601476353>

Tria corda ; 6

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1601476353>

Schäfer, Peter (Tübingen,2009)

The origins of Jewish mysticism

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=59205134X>

Schäfer, Peter (Frankfurt am Main,2008)

Weibliche Gottesbilder im Judentum und Christentum

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1614976333>

Mirror of His beauty

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1614976333>

Schäfer, Peter (Düsseldorf,2008)

Jesus in der Hölle : Kommentare des babylonischen Talmud zum Neuen Testament ; Alexander Kluge im Gespräch mit Peter Schäfer

<https://kxp.k1oplus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=669197807>

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=669197807>

Schäfer, Peter (Zürich,2008)

Die Entstehung des Christentums aus dem Judentum - oder umgekehrt? : der Religionswissenschaftler Peter Schäfer im Gespräch mit Brigitta Rotach

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=669197688>

Sternstunde Religion

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=669197688>

Schäfer, Peter (Tübingen,2007)

Jesus im Talmud

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=545537266>

Jesus in the Talmud

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=545537266>

Schäfer, Peter (Princeton, NJ [u.a.],2007)

Jesus in the Talmud

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=515764515>