Jewish Voices About Jesus

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by Gerhard Bodendorfer

Abstract

In recent times there has been a remarkable rediscovery of Jesus by Jewish scholars, who have pointed again and again to his deep rootedness in Judaism. However, most of these attempts have been strongly influenced by preconditions of (Christian) dogmatics concerned with messianic concepts and lofty titles. A new discussion about Jesus is needed that avoids Christological presuppositions .

During the last decades Judaism's attitude toward Christianity has vacillated between the two poles of total disregard and a massive effort to develop dialogue.[1] On the more extreme side of this spectrum is Orthodox Judaism, which, on the whole, does not know what to do with Christianity and therefore does not attempt to come to an understanding with it. Its main concern is with "missionizing" Jews and winning them for orthodoxy. But a legitimate skepticism towards Christianity also still exists among non-orthodox Jews. The Holocaust theologian Eliezer Berkowitz expressed it this way: "The only thing we ask of Christians is that they take their fingers off of us and our children."[2]

The other side of the spectrum, dialogue, was long dominated in German-speaking countries by a few Jewish scholars, each of whom comes to it from a very different angle.

1. Flusser, Ben-Chorin, Lapide

Beside Martin Buber, who always spoke of Jesus as his "elder brother"[3] Pinchas Lapide, Shalom Ben-Chorin and David Flusser have become widely known. While in my view Pinchas Lapide is hardly acknowledged in Judaism, Shalom Ben-Chorin and his son led a liberal Jewish congregation in Jerusalem (Or' Hadash), which now has an offshoot in Austria. David Flusser worked for years as professor of New Testament and early Christianity at Hebrew University in

Jerusalem.

Flusser's attempt at mediation between Christianity and Judaism should affect Jews as well as Christians, for his approach to Jesus is worth serious consideration. Much can be found about Flusser's understanding of Jesus in his book *Jesus in Selbstzeugnissen and Bilddokumenten* (Rowohlt, 1968). According to him Jesus, born in Nazareth as the oldest of four brothers and sisters, was baptized around 28/29 and died in the year 30 or 33. Flusser does not deny the virginity of Mary, at least not explicitly. He operates as a biographer of Jesus, reports on his education, the tension with his family, which only after Jesus' death turns to "the faith". Flusser speaks about Jesus' baptism and endowment with the Spirit as an historic event. For him John the Baptist was the end-time Elijah and then, with Jesus, the kingdom of God was inaugurated. Jesus was no rationalistic theorist, and though he turned against the "stubbornness of stiff-necked hypocrites" (Starrsinn der Stockfrommen)[4], he himself emphasized only the moral aspect of the commandment, not the ritual one, but he never wanted to abandon it. According to Flusser—and I think he is quite correct here—Jesus was a Jew who felt himself sent to Jews.

Flusser treats the Pharisees in a rather unhistorical and stereotypical fashion, absolving them of any guilt in the death of Jesus. But he believes that Jesus, or at least his message, was on the periphery of the Essenes, though he stops short of identifying Jesus with them. A central point of the proclamation was the imminent coming of the kingdom of God, in which the revaluation of all values, not only the social dimension, is prominent. The keyword would be that Jesus aimed at "realizing eschatology". Similar to the later Geza Vermes, Flusser points out the close proximity of Jesus to the Jewish charismatics Honi or Hanina. But in contrast to Vermes he emphasizes the uniqueness of Jesus' sonship resulting from his election through the Holy Spirit. He thinks that historically, however, this happened at the transfiguration, which indicates that Flusser considers it as historical fact. This consciousness of sonship, though, was from the beginning overshadowed by his premonition of his death. However, Jesus did not desire his death and did not think of it as salvific; only after his death did theology reach that conclusion. Jesus understood himself—after initial hesitation—as Son of Man within the meaning of an end-time judge.

More than 20 years later—in 1990—the Munich Kösel publishing house published Flusser's book *Christianity—a Jewish Religion*. In it he comments on Mary, on Christian hymns, the Jewish roots of Christianity, the messianic expectations of Jesus, on Paul and on the common need for brotherhood. He repeats many assertions from his book about Jesus. He insists that Jesus saw John as Elijah and above all that Jesus was the only ancient Jew who preached the immediacy of the kingdom of God. He saw himself as Messiah:

"As long as no Christian New Testament scholar begun to doubt this—and even declared that the life of Jesus was "non-messianic" (what does the life of a messianic person look like?)—it never entered the mind of any Jew to doubt the messianic self-consciousness of Jesus… Over the last years I have expended much strength and diligence to show in Hebrew as well as in English that Jesus really understood himself as Messiah and as the coming Son of Man."[5]

According to Flusser, Jesus regrouped original Jewish eschatological motives. After the biblical time the kingdom of heaven realizes itself and waits further for the end-time judgment of the Son of Man. Flusser emphasizes successfully—and for this he deserves credit—the meaning of Jesus' earthly activity over against his so-called atoning death. His strong defense of Jesus' messiahship as future Son of Man demonstrates, however, his personal approach—and only that. Flusser interprets Jesus as a Jew before and after the resurrection. But he attempts to present Jesus the Jew as unique, as divinely inspired, as Messiah. No doubt, Flusser, in trying to support Christian-Jewish dialogue, expresses theological positions worth considering. However, in many specific questions he remains, in my view, too undiscerning. The relationships between the Essenes and John the Baptist, Jesus and Paul and the theology of the Pharisees among others need far more differentiation. Son of Man, Messiah, and Prophet are further keywords, which raise much

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discussion—and have been explored meticulously by many scholars with specific reference to Jesus. Unquestionably Flusser here needs to be complemented and corrected.

Shalom Ben-Chorin, in the title of his book, *Bruder Jesus. Mensch – nicht Messias* (Munich, 1967), made clear that he does not share Flusser's theses. His deliberations are subject, however, in part to the same criticism: too much is taken for granted as being certain; the schools of Hillel and Shammai, the Pharisees—all these are groups that appear as if they are well known and clearly defined, which they are not. Accordingly, Jesus is seen as closest to the Pharisees. He would have been a rabbi, therefore most likely also married. In some matters unlike Flusser, however methodically similar to him, Ben-Chorin distinguishes between historically credible and untrustworthy statements of and about Jesus. To him the resurrection appears significant first through Paul and is historically doubtful. Unlike Flusser, who (especially in Jesus' Son of Man speeches) sees references to Jesus' messiahship, Ben-Chorin claims:

"This [Jesus] is the human being per se, the human like you and me, the person exemplary in his insignificance. Jesus understood himself as just this human, who lives in his humanness as an example, vulnerable and exposed to suffering. When Jesus calls himself the Son of Man, he stands before us not as prophet or messiah, but as brother. And since he is the son of man the question arises in him: 'Who am I?'"[6]

Finally, Pinchas Lapide is known for his pointed argument for the Jewishness of Jesus. In his book (1979) Der Jude Jesus. *Thesen eines Juden. Antworten eines Christen*[7] he formulates three theses: (1) Jesus did not introduce himself to his people as Messiah, (2) the people (Israel) did not reject Jesus, and (3) Jesus did not reject his people. A combative form of the argument marks the entire book. In it the historical Jesus is to be freed from falsifications and distortions, which the writers of the four Gospels had made to prove the messiahship of the Rabbi Jesus. Indirectly Lapide assumes that early Christianity played Jesus up out of anti-Judaic motives. Even if some of Lapide's specific basic assumptions may be correct, the manner of his portrayal and his assertions with often too little reflection remain open to criticism. Similar to Flusser and Ben Chorin his assumptions are based heavily on an existing, unreflected image of a *Kernjudentum* (core Judaism) at the time of Jesus. The more blurred, indistinct and open this image becomes the more the approaches to the "Jew" Jesus enter the realm of speculation. Generally it can be said that the Jewish approaches to Jesus proceed from very few questions. These include the questions of his messiahship, majestic titles (*Hoheitstitel*), his attitude towards Torah, his belonging to an early Jewish group, and of the responsibility for his death. Relating to this I also mention the works of J.T. Pawlikowski.[8]

2. The work of Donald A. Hagner

Some positive work has been done in English theological literature. In a recently published article Bruce Chilton summarizes the various attempts[9] and already in 1984 Donald A. Hagner, in his book *The Jewish Reclamation of Jesus*[10], had gathered and questioned important younger Jewish voices about Jesus. He concentrated on important scholars such as Claude Goldsmith Montefiore, Israel Abrahams, Joseph Klausner, Geza Vermes, Samuel Sandmel and on those already discussed here, Ben-Chorin, Flusser, and Lapide. Hagner's work demonstrates with many examples the efforts Jewish authors of this century have made to reclaim Jesus, the Jewish Jesus, as their own. Hagner demonstrates the Jewish points of view in regards to delicate themes such as the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, rules of the Sabbath, the question of authority, right of divorce, regulations about food, ethical teachings of Jesus, love of enemy, etc. Special attention is naturally paid to the person of Jesus: Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God. Hagner's work demonstrates clearly how the authors' own theological positions have shaped their assessments of Jesus. He emphasizes the significance of the enlightenment in Judaism, which inspired the interest in Jesus. He enters into the various difficulties, which Jewish scientists encountered when

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they related to Jesus. Above all, in questions of halakha, but naturally also in regards to the self-image of Jesus, these authors look very differently for ways in which Jesus can be held in the context of rabbinical Judaism.

I will explain this with only one example, the question concerning the Sabbath commandment.[11] Montefiore saw in Jesus' conduct a confirmation of his own liberal position, that some halakhic commandments were absurd and legalistic. Likewise, Abrahams saw that Jesus broke some halakhic commandments, whereby he accepted the Sabbath regulations of the schools of Hillel and Shammai as historic preconditions. For Klausner and Cohen, too, Jesus' conduct on the Sabbath was a break with halakha. Others like Jacobs, Schonfield or Trattner saw in Jesus' conduct by no means a break with halakha, but rather a contradiction to the "hairsplitting" of some groups of Pharisees. Daube referred to Jesus' arguments in Mt 12, which appeared to him as good rabbinical reasoning. According to Kohler, Jesus simply joined the school of Hillel. According to Flusser, the plucking of ears of corn on the Sabbath is a Greek translation error from a Hebrew original of Mark's Gospel. The gleaning of fallen ears, their pulverizing in the hands was allowed even on the Sabbath. Only a later translation made it into a plucking of ears. To Flusser it is obvious that not Jesus, but only his disciples were accused of an offense. The circumstance of the healing of a withered hand on the Sabbath is especially interesting to him. It happened in contrast to other healings only through the word and without a touch, which was permitted on the Sabbath. Lapide and Vermes agree with him. Vermes also mentions, in all fairness Lk 13:13ff, where Jesus touches a sick woman on the Sabbath. But he points out that this is Sondergut of Luke (only used by Luke), who thereby undergirded the otherwise incomprehensible reproaches of a Jesus who breaks the Sabbath halakha.

In my view, these examples demonstrate quite clearly a dilemma of Jewish interpretation, which shows itself very frequently. I mean the attempt to harmonize Jesus with rabbinical Judaism. This is not acceptable before the Mishna and the earliest Midrashim, and that is, after all, almost 200 years after Jesus. Texts like the Pirqe Abot that are used again and again have at a closer look been proven to be rather late. The concrete political, social and religious influence of the rabbis was in these early times much less significant than the writings pretend. The so-called intertestamental literature should be questioned much more on parallels to Jesus than the rabbinical one, though certainly rabbinical writings also offer reminiscences of earlier ages, which should be examined rather carefully. The Jewish interpretation of Jesus is subject to a similar wide-ranging problem that the Christian interpretation faces. Here it is the traditional view of Jesus as innovator, who distances himself from rabbinic Judaism and breaks it open. Jewish interpretation has striven to give at least the historical Jesus a place in rabbinic tradition.

In my view these theological presuppositions make it impossible to search for the real Jesus of Nazareth. Consciously or unconsciously he is pressed into a scheme, presupposed by a Christian dogmatic image of Christ and by conservative Jewish rabbinics. This applies of course to the classic Christian exegesis, which defined Jesus chiefly, in contradiction to a Strack-Billerbek Judaism, as Torah-critical innovator, with a strong eschatological expectation and much self-confidence, that presented itself as exclusive relationship to the God he called Abba. Against this the Jewish partners in dialogue have emphasized the commitment to Judaism of a Jesus who was faithful to Torah, and they did not hesitate to assign him to Jewish groups (Pharisees[12], Zealots[13]). Newer approaches strive for more flexibility, but the really large conceptions of an inclusive Jesus image are scarce despite an immense literature.

3. Geza Vermes

I would quickly like to remind us of the works of Geza Vermes.[14] His attempt appears to me, up to now, the most mature and most reasonable, apart from some details of which one could be critical. The British Jewish historian claims that his interest is in the historical Jesus. Thus he begins his

presentation with data about the person, presents Jesus as carpenter, teacher, healer, miracle worker and exorcist, enters into his Galilean background and demonstrates in particular the existing parallels to the charismatic movement of the Pious Ones such as Honi the Circle Drawer and Hanina ben Dosa. As Galilean miracle workers with a very personal relationship to God they are the first ones to be compared with the historical Jesus. The entire second and third parts of the book are dedicated to the majestic titles (Prophet, Lord, Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God). Here Vermes conforms to the tendency just described. Vermes, too, sees himself pressured to enter intensely into the debate around the person of the Christ. And he does this extremely conscientiously and argumentatively with recourse to intertestamental and rabbinical literature.

He comes to the conclusion that Jesus did not see himself as Messiah nor as majestically misunderstood Son of Man in the sense of a later Daniel conception. In reference to the sonship of Jesus, Vermes again and again points to parallels with the charismatic miracle workers. Honi counted as "son of the household" with God, and about Hanina it is said: "The whole world is nourished for my son Hanina's sake; however my son Hanina is content with a loaf of currant bread from one Sabbath eve to the next"(bTaan 24b). Also R. Meir is marked by God as "my son" (cref. BHag 15b). As it is reported about Jesus so also the "rabbinical" demons acknowledge the charismatics as miracle workers. Hanina, for example, is implored by the queen of demons, Agrath, to leave her at least Wednesday and Sabbath evening as times of activity, which Hanina grants her. For Vermes it is obvious, in any case, that Jesus can be part of a colourful spectrum of Jewish personalities of the time.

Only for the Hellenistic church does he establish the tendency to rip the Jesus of the Gospels out of Judaism and to elevate him as God. In his non-polemical book Vermes expresses conjectures only softly about the motivation of Christians to glorify Jesus as Messiah:

"The Christian controversialist appears to have followed an established pattern. The Gospel was perfect, but something was fundamentally wrong with the Jews. Their obstinacy in rejecting the Messiah, the greatest of God's promises to Israel, was explained as the culmination of age-old wickedness and as the principal reason for the irrevocable transference of their privileges to the Gentiles."[15]

The real ringleader in the reinterpretation of Jesus to make him the Christ of the church was—and here Vermes agrees with almost all Jewish Jesus scholars—of course Paul:

"I suppose that from the moment when Paul was acknowledged as "apostle of the gentiles" (Rom 11:13; Acts 9:15) and a mission directed at gentiles had been approved by the leadership of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15), the original direction of Jesus' work was remodeled radically. Non-Jews joint the church in large numbers, and she did her very best, in accordance with the proselytizing model prevailing in Judaism at that time, to meet the new demands and to adjust to the changed situation... Another decisive change that transformed the substance was due to the transplantation of the Christian movement to gentile territory, which affected the status of the Torah, which had been the source of inspiration and the rule of life for Jesus. Despite an express order by Jesus, Torah was declared not binding, abolished, nullified and outmoded. Jesus had understood Torah with such simplicity and depth and had lived it with such integrity for what he saw as its internal truth. Paul defined it with regard to its actual effect as an instrument of sin and death... The same Paul is... responsible for the unprecedented change in the concept of the *imitatio Dei*, which created the great chasm between Judaism and Christianity[16].

"The introduction of mediators and the Christcentrism replacing the Theocentrism of Jesus thus separated Christians from Jews, not however Jews from Jesus. For the Jesus of flesh and blood was seen in Galilee and in Jerusalem, uncompromising and insistent in his love of God and of neighbour, convinced that he could infect his fellow men with his own passionate relationship to the

father in heaven through example and teaching. And this he did... Many ages have past, since the simple Jewish person of the Gospels stepped into the background to make room for the splendid and majestic figure of the church's Christ"[17].

To assign Jesus a place with the charismatics is not new—Vermes here reaches back to George Foot Moore—and not everything in this approach is unproblematic. Chilton expresses several points of criticism, which I do not want to address here more closely. Nevertheless, Vermes has to be taken as positive example of a critical Jewish analysis of Jesus.

4. The Jewish Jesus is being rediscovered

Daniel Harrington[18] was able to ascertain a remarkable tendency of modern Jewish scholars to integrate Jesus into Judaism and thereby remove him from many Christian scholars. Clemens Thoma in his book *Das Messiasprojekt*[19] gives a short overview of Jewish voices about Jesus, which I am quoting here: For most medieval Jews Jesus was a dangerous non-person: a magician, a cheater, an originator of enmity toward Jews, a suppressor of Torah and the founder of an idolatrous antisemitic religion. Already at that time, however, there were individual Jews who read in Mt 5:17f and Lk 18:18f that Jesus had not wanted to abolish the Torah, and that he also had refused to put on the mantle of divinity. These Jews seized the chance to play Jesus off against Christianity. Jesus was portrayed as a Torah-observant Jew, but his message had been turned into idolatry in Christianity... Rabbi Menachen Ham-Meiri of Perpignan (1249-1316) declareem Aat Christians are not idolaters but represent a doctrine of high ethical standard. Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697-1776) thought that Jesus had not directed his message to the Jewish people, but exclusively to other peoples to move them to observe the Noachide laws. Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) emphasized, following medieval ideas, that one could produce good reasons against Christianity, if one was convinced of the moral character of its founder. Nevertheless one would have to accept the precondition that Jesus had made no claim of divinity for himself.

In the 19th and 20th centuries Jews wrote much about Jesus and Christianity. Not only liberal and Zionist but also traditional Jews commented on Jesus and Christianity in diverse ways. Jesus was claimed to have been a nationalistic Jew, an ethical Hebrew personality par excellence. He had not wanted to found a universal religion—so Joseph Klausner (1874-1958). Jesus was an apocalyptic, his followers were partly to blame for his death. He had only founded a Jewish sect, which then had been transformed into a universal religion. Jewish monotheism was and is the mystery of the power and influence of both Jesus himself and of Christianity and Islam. Both post-Jewish religions had the chance of survival only, because the Jewish monotheism lingering in them was the elixir of their life—so Yehezkel Kaufmann (1889-1963). The Christian interpretations of the Holy Scriptures could be accepted by Jews as one of the 70 possibilities to interpret Torah—so Jakob J. Petuchowski (1925-1991)."[20]

The examples mentioned may suffice to indicate a trend. Renowned and highly educated Jewish scholars like Geza Vermes or David Flusser, engaged bridge-builders like Schalom Ben-Chorin and many others have rediscovered Jesus as a Jew and have called him into consciousness. There is a corresponding and growing interest among Christian Theologians to integrate Jesus into Judaism in fascinating attempts at Jewish-Christian theologies.[21] Alongside has emerged, mainly in Israel, a new interest in Christianity and even in church history in the realm of the science of religion. This is obvious when one observes courses of lectures, delivery of academic papers, and new emphases in scholarly work. It seems that a welcome emancipation is occurring, which takes Christianity seriously as an important social and religious element, without allowing it to set the rules. As for a time it was deemed a matter of good behaviour in Western Europe to engage intensely in the study of East-Asian religions, so Jewish Israel today discovers Christianity, in critical distance, with scientific interest, without fear of domination.

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Jewish feminist literature has likewise called attention to Jesus, not in form of large monographs though, but in a dispute with occasionally anti-Judaic attempts by Christian or post-Christian feminists to make Jesus of Nazareth their own and declaring him "the new man," a feminist who overcame Jewish paternalism. Relating to this especially Susannah Heschel has commented critically in different publications.[22] The Jewish theologian Pnina Navé Levinson in a recent interview with the feminist magazine *Schlangenbrut* said very pointedly: "As long as examination rules at theological faculties are not changed, nothing will change; neither as long as anti-Judaism is being presented as church doctrine. As long as feminists in their theological studies only hear disparaging remarks about Judaism, that Jesus accepted women, let the children come to him, was killed by the Jews and that the Jews introduced God as a father figure, nothing will change."[23] Jewish feminists also struggle for a balanced, not anti-Judaic view of Jesus among Christian feminists.

5. "Messianic" Jews

Only short mention shall be made here of all those Jewish groups that call themselves "messianic Jews." Estimates claim that they include up to 100,000 persons[24], [tr.: many of whom obviously are sympathizing Christians and not Jews at all]. One of them is the "International Jewish-Christian Alliance," others are American congregations, as for example the "Blue Collar Congregation" in Minneapolis, the "Beth Yeshua" in Philadelphia, the "Beth Messiah" in Washington, "Adat ha Tikvah" and "B'nai Maccabim" in Chicago or similar ones in Canada. In June 1979 nienteen groups founded the American umbrella organization "Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations". Central issues are trust in the Bible as absolute authority in all questions of life, faith in Jesus, who through his death and resurrection has redeemed the world and who has to be acknowledged as Messiah and God.

David H. Stern, for example, published a translation of the New Testament as "Jewish New Testament" and introduced it with remarks that point to its Jewish roots and to the Messiah Yeshua. It is amazing that here the promise-fulfillment scheme comes to its full fruition. Jesus fulfilled the predictions of the Old Testament. References such as Num 24:17,19 or Gen 3:15; 12:3; 17:19; 21:12; 28:14 and many others are said to have pointed to Jesus. Stern understands the New Testament as "New Torah". The goal of this New Torah "is the Messiah who offers righteousness to all who trust in him".[25] In Germany the association "Ruf der Versöhnung" (Call of Reconciliation) of Arie ben Israel has to be mentioned, who has put himself in the service of conciliation between Jews and Christians and also between Jews and Arabs. He publishes a journal under the same name, organizes study visits in Israel, offers counselling, and supports nursing and youth homes. Even though some of these activities have unquestionably to be seen as positive, the actual contribution of such groups to a Jewish-Christian dialogue of equal partners remains minimal or non-existent. Occasionally the theological position of these groups can be rather troublesome for the dialogue, as can be seen in the New Testament translation of Stern.

6. Perspectives for the future

A real religious reconciliation between Christians and Jews will only happen when the traditional ways and judgments of past centuries are left behind. To name finally just one example: it is time now, and urgent, fundamentally and seriously to face the meaning of the messiah question for an adequate understanding of Judaism and Christianity. Dogmatic presuppositions must yield to new approaches. The Jewishness of Jesus, which has been emphasized by Jews and for which we have to be thankful, has to be taken very seriously. Jews and Christians should leave the dogmatic plane behind without withdrawing to a purely "historicizing" point of view. However, such departure from well-established dogmatic ways of viewing the person of Jesus appears to be very difficult for the churches. What Gerschom Scholem said in 1963 still seems valid: "A debate about the complex of the messianic problem affects a delicate area. It is here, however, that the essential

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conflict between Judaism and Christianity has developed decisively and still persists."[26] An understanding of the theological bandwidth of Judaism and the structural comparison between Torah-theology and Christology could tremendously fertilize the Jewish-Christian dialogue on the theological level. To this end, however, the church needs more theologians properly educated in the study of Judaism.

Footnotes

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2. E. F. Talmage (Ed.), *Disputation and Dialogue*, New York 1975, 293.
3. Comp. D. Berry, Buber's View of Jesus as Brother, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 14 (1977) 203-218.
4. D. Flusser, *Jesus in Selbstzeugnissen and Bilddokumenten* (Jesus in self-portrayals and picture documents), (rowohlts monographien), Reinbek 1968.
5. D. Flusser, *Dawickristentum—eine jüdische Religion* (Christianity—a Jewish religion), Munich 1990.
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7. P. Lapide / U. Luz, Der Jude Jesus. *Thesen eines Juden. Antworten eines Christen (The Jew Jesus.* (Theses of a Jew. Answers of a Christian), Zurich, 1979.
8. J. T. Pawlikowski, The Trial and Death of Jesus: Reflections in Light of a new Understanding of Judaism, ChicStud 25 (1986) 79-94, ff.
9. B. Chilton, Jesus within Judaism, in: J. Neusner (Ed.), *Judaism in Late Antiquity II* (HO 17), Leiden, 1995, 262-284.
10. D. A. Hagner, *An Analysis and Critique of Modern Jewish Study of Jesus*, Grand rapid 1984.
11. Comp. Hagner, *Analysis* (note 10) 105ff.
12. Comp. the synopsis by L. Swidler, *Der umstrittene Jesus* (The controversial Jesus) (Kaiser Taschenbücher 130), Gütersloh 1993. Comp. H. Falk, *Jesus the Pharisee*, New York 1985.
13. today rarely, comp. for example B. R. Eisler, *Jesus basileus ou basileusas*, 2 vol., Heidelberg 1929.
14. G. Vermes, J*esus the Jew: A Historian's reading of the Gospels*. London: Collins 1973. — *Jesus and the world of Judaism*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984. — *The Religion of Jesus the Jew.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1993.
15. G. Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's reading of the Gospels.* London: Collins 1973. 155.
16. G. Vermes, *Jesus der Jude. Ein Historiker liest die Evangelien*, Neukirchen 1993. 271-273. (Quote not found in the original Jesus the Jew, 1973, tr.)
17. G. Vermes, *Jesus der Jude. Ein Historiker liest die Evangelien,* Neukirchen 1993. (note 14) 274.18. (Quote not found in the original *Jesus the Jew*, 1973, tr.)
18. D. Harrington, *The Jewishness of Jesus: Facing Some Problems*, CBQ 49 (1987) 1-13.
19. C. Thoma, Das Messiasprojekt. Theology jüdisch-christlicher Begegnung, Augsburg 1994.
20. Thoma, *Messiasprojekt* (note 19) 335f.
21. Comp. the works of F. W. Marquart or C. Thoma.
22. Comp. S. Heschel, "Jüdisch-feministische Theologie und Antijudaismus in christlich-feministischer Theologie", in: L. Siegele-Wenschkewitz (Hg.), *Verdrängte Vergangenheit, die uns bedrängt. Feministische Theologie in der Verantwortung für die* Geschichte (Jewish feminist theology and anti-Judaism in Christian feminist theology), Munich1988, 54-103. More recently two important collections appeared: C. Kohn-Ley / I. Korotin (ed.), *Der feministische "Sündenfall*" (The Feminist "Fall" [into sin]), Vienna 1994; L. Schottroff / M.-T. Wacker (ed.), *Von der Wurzel getragen. Christlich-feministische Exegese in Auseinandersetzung mit Antijudaismus* (Carried by the Root: Christian Feminist Exegesis in Dispute with Anti-Judaism) (Biblical interpretation series 17), Leiden, 1996. In the latter

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female Christian theologians dispute the anti-Judaic interpretation of the Bible. The article of M. S. Gnadt, "Abba isn't Daddy. Aspects of a feminist liberation-theological revision of the Abba of Jesus", 115-131.

23. *Schlangenbrut* 51 (1995) 13.
24. So at least according to D. H. Stern, *Das jüdische Neue Testament. Eine Übersetzung des Neuen Testamentes, die seiner jüdischen Herkunft Rechnung trägt* (The Jewish New Testament. A translation of the New Testament, which considers its Jewish origin), Stuttgart 1994.
25. Stern, *Testament* (note 24) XXVI.
26. G. Scholem, *Zum Verständnis der messianischen Idee im Judentum* (The Messianic Idea in Judaism), finally in K. Cook / J. M. Schmidt (ed.), *Apokalyptik* (WdF 365), Darmstadt 1982, 327-369.

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für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit