

Dean Phillip Bell and Stephen G. Burnett, eds. *Jews, Judaism, and the Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Germany*.

Studies in Central European Histories 37. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2006. xxxii + 572 pp. index. illus. tpls. bibl. \$129. ISBN: 90-06-14947-3.

Reformation-era Jewish-Christian relations in Germany is a field in search of a synthesizing monograph. With this collection, Bell and Burnett take an initial step both in sketching the outlines of a historically problematic area — because of the peripheral role of the Reformation for German Judaism, most of the research concerns the Christian side and is implicitly or explicitly motivated by a single matter, plumbing the prehistory of the Holocaust — and assembling what scholars working in the area know about it. Readers may disagree that their concluding assertion is sustained by the volume's essays: that the Reformation's impact on Jews (and their reciprocal responses) suggest "German Jews . . . had a Reformation, whether they needed one or not" (xxxii). The volume does not include enough evidence to convince the reader that Reformation is a useful category in either the history of Judaism or anti-Semitism. But it substantiates a gathering consensus that Jews and Judaism are not just a peripheral aspect of Reformation history, but stand instead — perhaps because of the Reformation's enhanced biblicism — at the very center of Christian, reform, and European self-understandings.

A first section traces the ambivalent roots of this centrality with contributions by Erika Rummel on humanist attitudes and Christopher Ocker on fifteenth-century preaching. Despite their source preoccupations, humanists often dismissed Hebrew studies; preaching and theology also avoided real engagement with Jews in favor of an idealized anti-Judaism. A second section treats Reformers' attitudes (plus an essay by Robert Bireley that emphasizes the lacking novelty of Catholic Reformation attitudes). Experienced readers who doubt anything remains to be written on this topic will be surprised by Thomas Kaufmann's spirited essay on Luther, which moves beyond rehashing old material to make fully congruent Luther's foci in 1523 and the 1540s via his Christology — a new definitive work on the issue. Kaufmann deftly treats the contemporary relevance of Luther's attitudes, though he overvalues the impact of the "Luther to Hitler" thesis and Daniel Goldhagen. Timothy Wengert provides valuable new information and a subtle, differentiated perspective on Melancthon's attitudes. R. Gerald Hobbs's exemplary discussion of Bucer analyzes biblical commentaries to reveal the extent of Bucer's Christian Hebraism, offering a corrective to blanket characterizations of his anti-Jewish hostility. Hans-Martin Kirn fills in the picture for Zwingli and Achim Detmers for Calvin, and Joy Kammerling Smith presents the most detailed English account available of Andreas Osiander's defense of the Jews, key evidence in discussions of Reformation philo-Semitism. Michael Driedger's account of Anabaptist attitudes also points us toward biblicism, though much of it concerns reasons for scholarly comparison of Anabaptists with Jews.

Part 3 treats representations of the Jews with essays by Maria Diemling on Anthonius Margaritha's work and Yaacov Deutsch on Christian ethnographies of Judaism. Petra Schöner reprises her problematic monograph on visual representations, and Edith Wenzel treats literary representation in relationship to popular

culture. The volume closes with its strongest section, on responses to the Reformation, including essays by Dean Bell on patterns of Jewish settlement, a gratifying piece by Elisheva Carlebach on Jewish reactions to the Reformation that updates Hayim Ben-Sasson's still-classic work, Jay Berkowitz's brief piece on transformations in *Minhagim*, and Burnett's discussion of the Reformation's impact on Jewish printing.

The volume encapsulates the field's current state, bringing much material into English for the first time. This recapitulation of arguments is most valuable in Detmers's essay, since all the authors of section 2 dialog with his (controversial) *Reformation und Judentum* (2001) in their notes; in some other cases it is less effective — though a collection like this is always dependent on what is currently available. The one real lacuna in the book is deeper consideration of the local legal position of Jews in the Holy Roman Empire; I wanted a longer essay on the intriguing responsa that end Bell's essay. Some readers may miss a definitive essay on the “anti-Judaism vs. anti-Semitism” problem that defined this field for so long, though all of the essays in part 1 revolve around it. Its concerns make this volume desirable for libraries serving postgraduate and undergraduate audiences. Specialists will harvest the essays they need singly.

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