

The first comprehensive account of Protestant and Catholic attitudes towards Jews and Judaism during the European Reformation

In Medieval Europe, Jews were a privileged yet persecuted minority. The Reformation, with its new Protestant confessions and the subsequent Catholic backlash, prompted a fundamental reassessment of the place and value of Jews in a predominantly Christian society.

In his authoritative history, Kenneth Austin examines the views of Christian groups in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with regard to Jews, the Hebrew language and Jewish learning.

Martin Luther's Jewish writings are notorious for their anti-Semitism, but Austin argues that wider Reformation attitudes were more varied and nuanced. By considering such attitudes within the broader context, this book has much to tell us about the Reformation – and has important implications for how we think about religious pluralism today.