colloquies and theological statements which led to the final form of the Augsburg Confession presented to Emperor Charles V in 1530. Almost twenty-five pages are given to the Apology, since that document is lengthier even in the Book of Concord. Nestingen carefully (and kindly) explains Melanchthon’s “seemingly ponderous” (130) style as evidence of his medieval disputation training. Luther’s Smalcald Articles, officially adopted in Luther’s absence, and Melanchthon’s Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope are combined into one chapter, which is somewhat challenging, since the authorships were different, yet because of their similar historical circumstances are considered together. The priority of God’s word as ultimate authority is a central feature of these last two documents.

Having captured the context for much of what followed among Lutherans in his inimitable scholarly, yet readily accessible style, Robert Kolb orients the reader toward the theological tensions, or, as he calls them, the “culture of controversy” (171) in the almost fifty years following the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. The theological intricacies and formidable personalities of these years, particularly following Luther’s death, are handled evenhandedly (at least in contrast to the version of the last century by Bente).

Knowledge of the background to these confessional writings are not mere historical data to be placed on a shelf and taken down when curious investigators seek odd insights into the sixteenth century. The authors of this book understand the documents as having lasting influence on theology in the twenty-first century, as noted in their postscript. With almost fifty pages of notes, a one-page scripture index, and an index of names and subjects, subsequent scholars and students will be able to continue to analyze and advance their investigation of these historic decades of the sixteenth century.

Ecumenical and evangelical perspectives will remain essential for the future of Christian conversation, especially as the quinquecentennial of the Lutheran reformation arrives in 2017. Fortress Press is to be commended for publishing this final volume on the Book of Concord. Theology and history come together in a most helpful example of scholarly collaboration and necessary reassessment of Lutheranism in the sixteenth century for twenty-first-century Christianity.


Reviewed by: Rebecca C. Peterson
University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

Schramm and Stjerna provide selected readings exemplifying Martin Luther’s statements about Jews over the course of his career. It supplements recent works by Eric W. Gristch and Thomas Kaufmann. The editors believe that Luther’s expressions of anti-Semitism must be acknowledged, while making some distinction between this religious anti-Semitism and the more modern racial anti-Semitism. This religiously based bias was and is dangerous, especially coming from the pen and mouth of such an influential leader. They argue that Luther’s statements cannot be dismissed simply because they echoed what others said at the time, because he was in a position to make a difference by taking a different stand. The editors intend this work to help students deal with a difficult subject and its enduring effects.

Schramm and Stjerna each provide preliminary essays. Schramm’s introduction notes Luther’s distinction between biblical and postbiblical Jews, explaining Luther’s Christological
approach to the Old Testament and his belief that rabbis were the source of Jewish resistance to conversion. Schramm asserts that Luther wrote more, both in volume and vitriol, than his contemporaries. Stjerna's introduction provides background on the circumstances of Jewish life in early modern Germany, focusing on the hurdles and restrictions. She notes that these were the aspects of Jewish life on which Luther focused and from which he took his examples rather than being reflective of the totality of Jewish life. Evidence is also provided that Luther had little direct contact with Jews from which to make his judgments and interpretations. The editors use a chronological approach to demonstrate the consistency of Luther's anti-Semitism and the consistency of his belief in the biblical foundation for his views.

The editors' first selection, Luther's First Psalm Lectures, clearly demonstrates Luther's negative attitude toward Jewish peoples. He associated them with ungodliness and idolatry, holding them responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. The frequent scatological references in this work support the editors' position that Luther's anti-Semitism was not a later-life development. Other early works marked the Jews as blasphemers who should return to the faith, but also called for compassion in dealing with them. The Romans lectures introduced a theme of the dichotomy between Law and Gospel, synagogue and church, which reappeared in a number of later works.

The early to mid-1520s demonstrate a more moderate tone, which the editors attribute to Luther's own circumstances, asserting that his personal status after the Diet of Worms caused him to be more sympathetic to others who were persecuted for their beliefs. Luther's commentary on the Magnificat and other works from this period emphasized that kind treatment and education were required to convert select Jews, while noting that some could not be converted. He levied criticism of Jewish exegesis of the Old Testament and rebuked the Catholic Church for inadequately educating Jewish converts or resorting to forced baptism.

A turning point was evident in 1525 when Luther's writings regarding the possibility of Jewish conversion became less optimistic. The exemplars offered for the period between 1525 and 1530 reveal a more stern judgment with frequent references to the Jews as godless blasphemers and false teachers. This was accompanied by regular references to Jews committing a sin of the Spirit which could not be forgiven; thus, they were cursed as evidenced by the 1500 years since the fall of Jerusalem.

Elector John Frederick's 1536 prohibition against Jews' living, working, or passing through Electoral Saxony brought Luther into his final phase of writings against the Jews. He distanced himself from any perceived sympathy for the Jews that his earlier writing created. Luther accused Jews of dishonesty and connected them with the Turks. He reiterated his idea that contemporary Jews were no longer Abraham's seed. Luther emphasized the Old Testament and the need to read the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament. His works from the 1540s were laden with additional accusations. In these final works, Jews were accused of poisoning wells, killing Christian children, calling Mary a whore, crucifying Jesus, using inaccurate numerological interpretations, daily blaspheming and crucifying Christ, and lacking human qualities, as well as causing Luther's illness during his last trip to Eisleben.

Schramm and Stjerna provide a parallel chronology delineating Luther's life and writings alongside events that provided their context, as well as a thorough bibliography and informative endnotes. Each document is prefaced by a commentary preparing the reader for the context of each selection and attributing the effect of external events on Luther's writing. They successfully demonstrate that Luther's writings contain anti-Semitism at all stages of his career; however, aside from the First Psalm Lectures, his early works were notably less
virulent than those written later. Note was made in a number of instances that Luther had very little direct contact with Jews, creating an implicit suggestion that more extensive contact may have led the reformer in a different direction. The afterword addresses this implication more directly. Martin Luther, The Bible and the Jewish People: A Reader is a useful and focused volume. It introduces students to aspects of the reformer's thought and to attitudes toward Jews in early modern Europe of which many may not be aware.

Reshaping Ireland, 1550–1700: Colonization and Its Consequences.
Ed. Brian Mac Cuarta, SJ.

Reviewed by: John K. Hayden
Southwestern Oklahoma State University

Reshaping Ireland, 1550–1700 boasts a selection of essays that adds up to an authoritative study of the age of Irish plantations under the Tudors and Stuarts. Brian Mac Cuarta, SJ, has edited this collection of articles in honor of Nicholas Canny. Canny, whose pioneering research into the intricacies of colonization policies and actions is both informed and prodigious, has proved to be the polestar for younger scholars who have now established their own impressive credentials as scholars in this field. Combine the select bibliography of Canny's publications included in this volume with the essays gathered for this festschrift, and this text stands as a comprehensive testament to these seminal centuries in Ireland's history.

The essays in this volume explore the role of the Tudor state in Ireland; the colonial ideology prevalent in the age; the influence of maps on settlements; competing plantation ideas and policies; Catholic identity and loss; the evolution of the Irish peerage in the period; the convulsions of both the 1640s and 1690s; the interjection of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Irish Question into high level English politics; and the role of memory in shaping Irish politics and society in the age of the plantations.

To take note of several of the contributions to this collection, starting with Ciaran Brady of Trinity College, Dublin, is as good a place as any. Brady examines the variety of Tudor political maneuvers employed to integrate the Irish nobility into the Tudor political system. On the one hand, Sir Henry Sidney, lord deputy, pursued the policy of "composition" whereby local and regional power relationships in Ireland would not be dismantled, but instead recognized them as the realities that maintained order in sixteenth-century Ireland and incorporated them as a branch of the English political, constitutional, and legal system. Brady identifies a variety of challenges to composition that emerged, including violence in areas where different families competed for influence and resistance in areas that did not see their self-interest served through integration. As composition lost its cachet, the violence that defined 1590s Ireland only expanded. Brady concludes his findings with trenchant remarks that haunt all of the history between Ireland and England. Faced with the choices of challenging integration policies and war in Ireland, the English approach to the ever-expanding Irish Question became one of wavering back and forth between different possibilities.

John McGurk's essay on "A Soldier's Prescription for the Governance of Ireland, 1599–1601: Captain Thomas Lee and His Tracts" is a detailed reminder of the plethora of broadsides and published appeals by civilians, investors, and soldiers detailing advice to the crown on how to settle and control Ireland absolutely. McGurk adeptly shows that many of Lee's suggestions were in fact employed by the crown during the Nine Years' War in Ireland, and yet Lee's writings were of no direct influence on the course of the war.