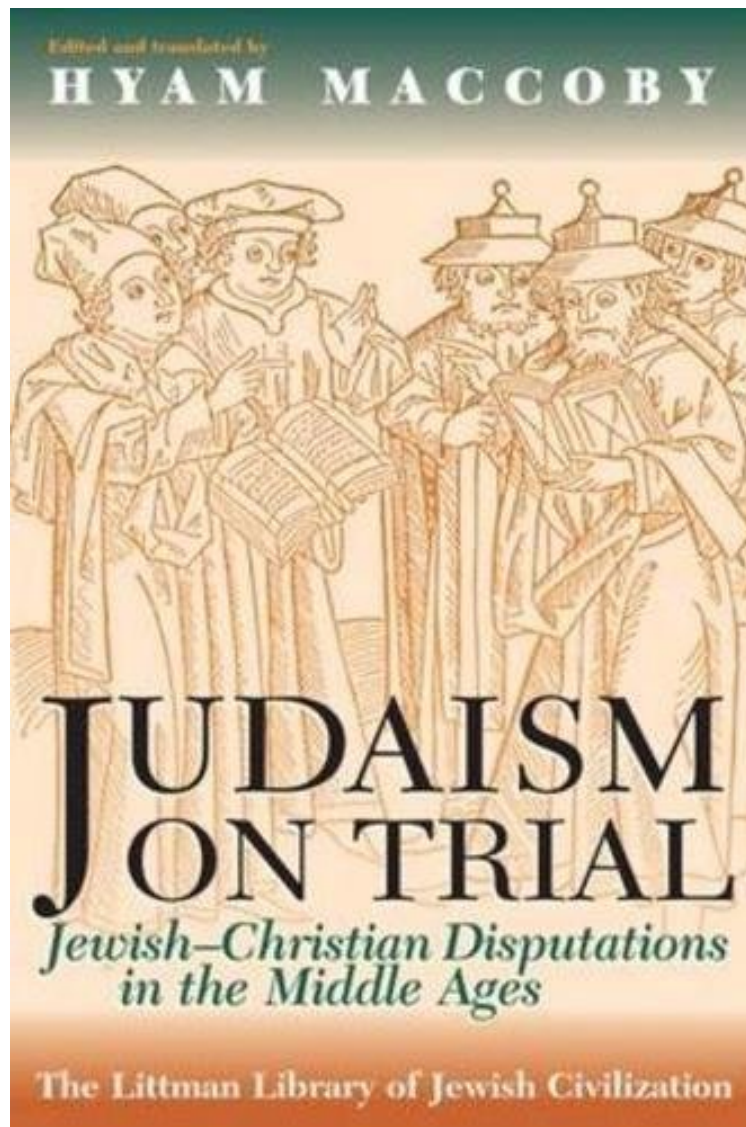


[Mobile pdf] Judaism on Trial: Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)

Judaism on Trial: Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)

Hyam Maccoby

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Hyam Maccoby : **Judaism on Trial: Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judaism on Trial: Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Judaism Put to the Test By Stefano NikolaouI bought this book on a

whim a few years ago and it sat on my shelf for a long time. When I finally got around to reading it I was amazed. The book is a detailed account of disputations (basically show trials) between Christians and Jews. Most of the earlier anti-Jewish dialogues produced by Christians were basically fictional works. The Jewish speaker puts up some weak arguments that are demolished by the Christian opponent. There is no evidence that they ever took place. This is not the case with this book. The debates were real and were documented clearly. The Jewish participants had everything to lose and nothing to gain by these debates. There was no way the Christian audience was ever going to convert to Judaism (even if the rabbis had wanted them to). The Christians were often Jewish converts to Christianity and had an excellent knowledge of Rabbinic Judaism and knew where exactly to score points. In the Paris Disputation of 1240 the Talmud had come to the notice of the Christian authorities and much of the debates centred around this text. The Christians, on the other hand, were confident and aggressive and eager to flex their (new found) intellectual abilities. The Jews were already socially marginalised and this was the opportunity to trounce them at their own game. This book deals with the Paris Disputation (1240), the Barcelona Disputation (1263) and the Tortosa Disputation (1413-14). By far the most valuable part of this book are the translations of the accounts themselves. The Barcelona Disputation was the closest thing to being 'fair' as the Jews had the highly skilled Nahmanides as their spokesman. The heart of this book is Nahmanides' account of the debate (called the *Vikuah* - pages 102-146) followed by the briefer Christian account (pages 147-150). The Jewish account of the Tortosa Disputation by Solomon ibn Verga is also fairly lengthy (pages 168-186) but not as famous as the one from Barcelona. The Christian account of the Tortosa Disputation is also fairly lengthy (pages 187-215). I like the fact that Maccoby lets the texts speak for themselves. I hate those books where the author constantly refers to a text and paraphrases it without actually letting the reader take a look for themselves. I must say that these disputations very much remind me of the ones that Roman Catholics had with Orthodox Christians in the 13th century. The meeting at Nymphaeum in 1234 witnessed the same type of scholastic method and aggressive confidence shown in the later Jewish disputations.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Great background on the major Jewish-Christian debates during the middle ages. By Nachshon Proenza I found this book to be a great resource in understanding the background and players in these major religious debates. What was interesting was the consistent threats levied against the Jews for speaking up against the theological holes in Christianity. Any religion that cannot convey or support their beliefs through rational arguments, but must kill their opponents should be critically examined before joining. Hyam Maccoby does an excellent job of providing a critical analysis of the written account of Nahmanides (the *Vikuach*) versus the surviving versions of the account. It is interesting how the debates became more focused on Jewish writings (Talmud, midrashim) as they progressed. We see today a focus on these tactics as well as many missionary groups such as Jews for Jesus attempt to do the same thing. While reading the narratives, you can see the debates focusing on 3 major areas: exegesis (scriptures), historical, and rational points. The book doesn't delve too deeply into these subjects, but I would recommend Daniel J. Lasker's book, "Jewish Philosophical Polemics against Christianity in the Middle Ages", for more information. This book is a great introduction to the argument points during the Middle Ages between Jews and Christians.

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Excellent! By AnCustomer I highly encourage anyone interested in the disputation(s) or the history of Jewish-Christian relations to take time to read this book. Thanks to the review above (all of which I agree with entirely), I bought a copy of this more or less out of curiosity but found myself eager to continue reading. The style is quite "user friendly" for those who are not religious or theological scholars - perfectly suited for those with a strong lay interest in the topic.

Hyam Maccoby's now classic study focuses on the major Jewish-Christian disputations of medieval Europe: those of Paris (1240), Barcelona (1263), and Tortosa (1413-14). It examines the content of these theological confrontations with a sense of present-day relevance, while also discussing the use made of scriptural proof-texts. Part I provides a general thematic consideration of the three disputations and their social and historical background. Part II is a complete translation of the account of the Barcelona Disputation written by Nahmanides, one of the greatest figures in the history of Jewish learning, and was Jewish spokesman at the disputation. Part III contains Jewish and Christian accounts of the Paris and Tortosa disputations. A new introduction reviews the relevant literature that has been published since the original edition appeared.

"A superb work of committed scholarship ... Maccoby has done a fine job in recapturing the intellectual and social drama of the confrontations." -- Jonathan Sacks, *Jewish Journal of Sociology*

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About the Author: The late Hyam Maccoby was Emeritus Fellow of the Leo Baeck College, London, and Visiting Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Leeds from 1998 until his death. He published many books and articles on rabbinic literature, Jewish-Christian relations, Christian origins, and the origins of antisemitism. Among his writings are *Revolution in Judaea* (1980), *The Sacred Executioner* (1982), *The Mythmaker* (1986, second edition 1998), *Early Rabbinic Writings* (1988), *Judas Iscariot and the Myth of Jewish Evil* (1992), awarded the Wingate Prize, *A Pariah People: The Anthropology of Antisemitism* (1996), and

Ritual and Morality: The Ritual Purity System and its Place in Judaism (1999).