



reading is purposely “theological” (his epithet), in contrast to those who would “detheologize” or phenomenologically “deconstruct” Dante. Franke posits that “Dante’s translation of theological doctrine into poetic vision is key to our being able to continue to receive the saving graces of religion and humanities alike in our current twice-over secularized culture and technologized world” (xii). He acknowledges, “At times the theological intensity of the *Vita Nuova*’s affirmation concerning Beatrice as Dante’s personal savior and beatifier becomes so palpable as to approach an idolatrous heterodoxy” (3). Instead, Franke focuses on analyzing parallels between the poet’s revelatory experiences and analogous Gospel passages, including “the Christian connotations of the resonant phrase ‘new life’” (7). The appearance of Giovanna, who precedes Beatrice, parallels Giovanni Battista’s preparing the way for Christ. Similarly, “the apocalyptic signs announcing Christ’s death are evoked as prefiguring Beatrice’s death” (25). Likewise, the description of Beatrice’s ascension into heaven to the sound of “*Hosanna in excelsis*” draws on the language describing Christ’s entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:9–10). In addition, the Bible’s combination of poetry and prose provides a hagiographical model for Dante’s melding of the same.

Chapter 4 likely will raise the most eyebrows among Dantists. Although the author early on acknowledges having studied at Stanford with Robert Pogue Harrison, author of *The Body of Beatrice* (1988), Franke disagrees, sharply at times, with his mentor, whom he considers biased and “informed by the Freudian revolution” (71), even declaring that Dante’s “text has been freed by Harrison from Dante’s hermeneutic guidelines” and “has, at the same time, been subjected to Harrison’s own [phenomenological biases]” (77). From my perspective, Dante’s *libello*, like John the Revelator’s “little book” (*libellum*) in Revelation 10:2, exudes enough mystery and religious symbolism to justify Franke’s hermeneutical and decidedly theological approach.

Madison U. Sowell, *Brigham Young University, emeritus*
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Disputed Messiahs: Jewish and Christian Messianism in the Ashkenazic World during the Reformation. Rebekka Voß.

Trans. John Crutchfield. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2021. xviii + 336 pp. \$94.99.

Rebekka Voß’s *Disputed Messiahs: Jewish and Christian Messianism in the Ashkenazic World during the Reformation* (originally published in German in 2011, but nicely translated in this edition) is an outstanding book that synthesizes some important themes in early modern and early modern Jewish history, while advancing significant arguments that will shape how we think about the theme of messianism and the broader topic of Jewish and Christian interaction in the early modern period.

Voß notes that early modern Europe was a fertile ground for apocalyptic expectations. She observes that Jews and Christians often interpreted historical and contemporary events and upheavals in similar ways. Early modern Ashkenazic messianism has not received a great deal of attention. Indeed, nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars were often prone to marginalize the apocalyptic in Ashkenazic thought and life and, when it could not be ignored, they ascribed apocalyptic orientations to the disadvantaged position of the Jews. While Voß does distinguish between apocalypticism and messianism, a fuller discussion of the differences and connections would have been helpful to orient the reader and deepen the analysis.

Voß provides a thoughtful and nuanced review of the most central scholarship on the overall theme. As with other recent scholars, Voß's approach challenges what have become traditional assumptions of an early modern Ashkenazic Judaism characterized by quietistic messianism and martyrdom and an early modern Sephardic Judaism highlighted by active messianism and forced conversion. She concludes that an acute messianic expectation and enthusiasm was as widespread among Ashkenazic as among Sephardic Jews in this period.

The core argument of the book relates to what Voß terms reciprocal cultural transfer—a dynamic interaction between Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages and the early modern period that was reflected in mundane daily life as well as in religion and ritual, spurred on by actual interactions and the spread of ideas through print. Though one might identify regional distinctions, especially among Jews, Voß contends that such distinctions became blurred over time and with increased mobility.

Voß explores several key historical episodes in detail, and she offers fresh and valuable analysis and comparisons. In considering the personality and events surrounding Asher Lemlein, for example, she notes that the call for penance so pronounced in Lemlein revealed an interplay between polemics and apology, with Christian perceptions of Jewish messianism providing a mirror image of the Christian apocalyptic tradition, with, for example, the identification of the Jewish messiah with the antichrist. Indeed, Jewish messianic fraud and disillusionment were common themes in early modern popular Christian literature. What is more, Christians often linked Jewish messianism with alleged Jewish lust for power and a desire to destroy Christianity. And Jews did indeed engage in some rituals that expressed the idea of messianic retribution. Ethnographic publications, often written by converts from Judaism, helped to reinforce Christian anti-Jewish animosities and legislation. That is, Jewish messianism became a metaphor for Jewish perfidy and drew attention of a perceived threat of Jews for Christian society, including through alleged association with the Ottoman challenge. Voß compares the penance program and other aspects associated with Lemlein with Christian concerns as well, including repentance movements and a broader apocalypticism at the end of the fifteenth and in the first few decades of the sixteenth century.

Voß offers similarly thoughtful readings and reframing of the accounts of David Re'uveni and Solomon Molkho and, significantly, the Red Jews, who were prominent

figures in eschatological scenarios for both Jews and Christians. In assessing the many accounts of the Red Jews, she marshals a range of sources, including Yiddish tales and visual images (with an intriguing excursus in numismatics regarding a medal with Hebraic inscription related to Lemlein). Voß presents the Red Jews as a prime example of the polemical genre of counter history—exploiting an adversary’s central motifs and reinterpreting them against their original intention. As she does effectively throughout the book, Voß also presents radical Christians as purveyors of a kind of Jewish messianism. She also briefly discusses Christian Kabbalists, who believed they could hasten the way for the second coming of Christ through study of hidden aspects of the divine creation.

Voß’s book offers the tantalizing and increasingly accepted conclusion that the flow of ideas in the early modern world, including apocalyptic ideas, did not stop at political or religious boundaries and that mutually confirmed and strengthened each other. This was true, even as the exchange of ideas generally served to reinforce the respective theological conceptions of each group, highlighting both the conservative and dynamic aspects of early modern culture among Jews and Christians.

Dean Phillip Bell, *Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership*
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Dissenting Daughters: Reformed Women in the Dutch Republic, 1572–1725.

Amanda C. Pipkin.

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Contemporaries noticed it, membership lists confirm it: women were a majority in the Dutch Reformed Church during the long seventeenth century. Why, then, is the history of this Church predominantly one of men? Amanda Pipkin, associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte, foregrounds the patriarchal character of Protestantism. Yet her study is about six women who made their mark in this Church as authors of published religious books. They are the “dissenting daughters” in the title. Building upon the long tradition of lay religiosity in the Low Countries, they studied, taught, wrote, hosted religious meetings, and admonished lax Church members, including ministers. Pipkin presents them as militant reformers, defying the limitations of their gender.

In four chapters, she analyzes the lives and work of the sisters Cornelia and Susanna Teellinck, Anna Maria van Schurman, Sara Nevius, and Henrica Hoolwerff with her friend Cornelia Leydekker. All six came from wealthy burgher families and were closely related to local magistrates and prominent ministers. All were well educated, Van Schurman a famous savante. According to Pipkin, they assumed leadership positions in their communities through their writings, which circulated in manuscript form