



Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance

Anna Sapir Abulafia

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The twelfth century was a period of rapid change in Europe. The intellectual landscape was being transformed by new access to classical works through non-Christian sources. The Christian church was consequently trying to strengthen its control over the priesthood and laity and within the church a dramatic spiritual renewal was taking place.

Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance reveals the consequences for the only remaining non-Christian minority in the heartland of Europe: the Jews. Anna Abulafia probes the anti-Jewish polemics of scholars who used the new ideas to redefine the position of the Jews within Christian society. They argued that the Jews had a different capacity for reason since they had not reached the 'right' conclusion - Christianity. They formulated a universal construct of humanity which coincided with universal Christendom, from which the Jews were excluded. Dr Abulafia shows how the Jews' exclusion from this view of society contributed to their growing marginalization from the twelfth century onwards.

Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance is important reading for all students and teachers of medieval history and theology, and for all those with an interest in Jewish history.

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