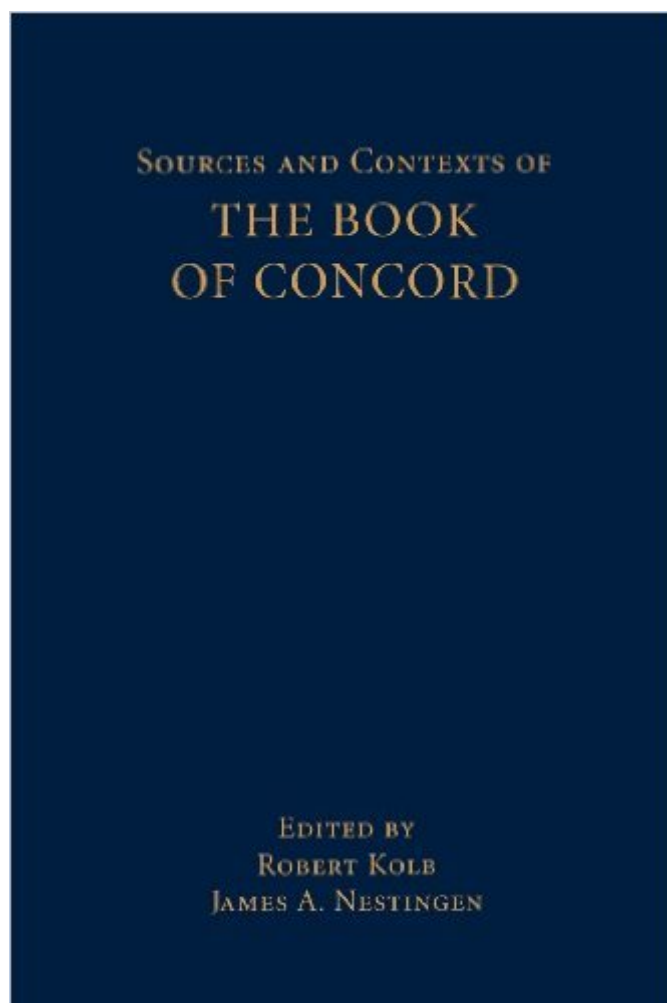


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Sources And Contexts Of The Book Of Concord



Synopsis

Born in controversy and raised in university settings, the Lutheran reform movement was embroiled immediately, publicly, and perennially in theological disputes and political battles. While controversies during Martin Luther's lifetime centered on disagreements with Rome and Geneva, present and later differences emerged over interpreting Luther's and Melancthon's theologies on such issues as governmental interference, liturgical practices, justification's implications for good works and sin, the Lord's supper, and election. It is this defining dis-concord, alternating with attempts at concord and conciliation, that is reflected in the documents newly translated in this indispensable documentary companion to The Book of Concord, which includes the works of Agricola, Eck, Chemnitz, Melancthon, and Luther.

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Customer Reviews

This book is just excellent for all students of the Lutheran Confessions. All these fascinating and relevant sources for the Confessions were out of print, or never published in English before. As now involved in teaching class on the Formula, fascinated by the Leipzig Interim and Chemnitz' "Judgment on Certain Controversies." He states things so plainly and is not politically correct at all, e.g. "it is of utmost importance to establish what limits are to constitute the defining elements of this harmony. Often in the church not only princes and political advisors, but even theologians have sought harmony on the basis of human judgment which led people away from the purity of the Gospel. Therefore, it is necessary in the church that the rule for such harmony be the Word of

God."Wingert's translation of Luther's catechetical material as well as Melanchthon's Disputation, The Catalog of Testimonies, Luther's sermon on descent into hell, and the Saxon Visitation Articles of 1592. This is great collection of wealth of background info which we Reformation students will sink our theological teeth into and be well rewarded, having greater perspective on the Confessions. Translated by renowned group of Lutheran scholars. Highly recommended.

As indicated by the title, this book is a useful compilation of Reformation Era documents surrounding the Book of Concord. The writings include both Lutheran and Roman Catholic material, including several polemical pieces. Perhaps the most valuable in my opinion, is the Roman Confutation of the Augsburg Confession, which would enable you to sit down with this book and your Book of Concord and read article by article the Augsburg Confession (AC), the respective response by the Roman Catholics, and the subsequent counter by the Lutherans in the Apology. Also very useful is the Catalog of Testimonies, which demonstrated to the Calvinist objectors that the Christology of the Lutheran theologians was not novel to the Christian church, but in fact entirely in line with the confession of the Early Church Fathers and Councils. The book also contains various precursor documents to the writings in the Book of Concord, as well as some of the religio-political compromises that were attempted in the years after Luther's death. Altogether this book is a valuable companion to the Book of Concord, both for its historical and theological interest.

This is an outstanding work that tries to provide some context behind the Formula of Concord. The primary value is that it shows the various articles written before the Augsburg Confession that were available to Melanchthon when he wrote the Augsburg Confession, as well as the Roman Catholic arguments against Luther by Eck and their Confutation against the Augsburg Confession, and the two Interims of 1548 that the Roman Catholic Emperor Charles V tried to force on recalcitrant Lutherans. Thus, anyone who studies the Augsburg Confession or the Formula of Concord should read this book. There are good short introductions to each document and each document is decently page noted throughout. The expansive Biographical Index is greatly appreciated! While I want to give it a "5" there is an earlier, better, more comprehensive work. I think the authors of this work do a great disservice by not clearly discussing the relationship between this work (277 pages) and Henry E. Jacobs's *The Book of Concord; or the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church with Historical Introduction, Notes, Appendixes, and Indexes in Two Volumes: Vol. II Historical Introduction, Appendixes, and Indexes* (G.W. Frederick, Philadelphia (1883), 459 pages). On p. 106, in the section on the Confutation of the Augsburg Confession, the introductory note says

that "Use was also made of an earlier English translation in Henry E. Jacobs as found in.... [Vol.] 2". But most of the material in this work was previously translated into English in Jacobs'!In addition, a major weakness is pointed out in The Preface: "This volume contains no documents relating to the historical context of Luther's Smalcald Articles and Melanchthon's Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope." This is the time of further disputation with Roman Catholics and very important attempts at union with the Reformed (esp. Bucer & Bullinger, Zwingli's successor). This period is covered better in Jacobs'.Documents that are in BOTH:- The 404 Theses of John Eck- The Schwabach Articles- The Marburg Articles- The Torgau Articles- The Confutation of the Augsburg Confession- The Leipzig Interim (1548)- The [Christological] Catalog of Testimonies- Luther's Torgau Sermon on Christ's Descent into Hell- The Saxon Visitation Articles of 1592Documents that ARE in this work but are NOT in Jacobs' 1883:- A Booklet for Laity and Children- 130 Common Questions by John Agricola- Melanchthon's Disputation: We are Justified by Faith and Not by Love- The Augsburg Interim (1548)Documents that ARE in Jacobs' 1883 but NOT in this work:- Luther's Sentences of Consolation 1530- The Wittenberg Concord, with Martin Bucer's Exhortation (1536)- The Variata Augsburg Confession 1540- A comparison of the Variata Augsburg Confession of 1542 to the 1540 version- 2 Non-Lutheran [Reformed] Confessions Presented at Augsburg 1530 -- Zwingli's Reckoning of His Faith -- Tetrapolitan Confession by Bucer at al- Melanchthon Concerning the Foundation of the Doctrine of the Sacramentarians- The Decree of the Council of Upsala 1592 [the Swedish Church declaring its adherence to Lutheranism]Anyone who can find a decent copy and afford it would do well to get Jacobs' Vol. II. Jacobs' covers more of the spectrum of issues that led to the Formula of Concord, esp. the disagreements between (a) schools of Lutheranism, Philippists vs Gnesio-, and (b) the Lutherans and the Reformed. (I esp. recommend Jacobs' because of the presence of the rare Variata version that is usually discussed at some length and excerpted in many works but rarely, if ever, fully presented. Calvin signed the Variata and it was used throughout the 1540s and 1550s as the primary document by Lutherans when dialoging with Roman Catholics and Reformed!)

This is an invaluable and extremely helpful resource for anyone who is serious about the documents that led up to the creation and compilation of the official Lutheran Confessions placed in the Book of Concord in 1580. The translations are clear, crisp and easy to read and the list of translators is something of a Who's Who? of Lutheran Reformation thought. Robert Kolb is by far the leading expert in North America when it comes to all the sources that led up to the final draft of the Formula of Concord in 1577. Oliver Olson is a Flacius expert, JAO Preus was the most prolific translator of

Martin Chemnitz's works, and Tim Wengert is America's foremost Melancthon scholar. Overall highly recommended.

The Lutheran Confessions are usually presented as finished texts, though sometimes with notes. What this book does is explain the real historical context within which each of those texts was composed, including the texts to which the writers were opposed as well as the antecedents of the books that made it into the Book of Concord. The level of the authors' expertise is unsurpassed.

A grand compilation with good summary introductions. This was suggested for the Confessions Class that our SMP Vicar is taking. Very clear and great resource materials.

it is interesting to see some of the works by the principals that preceded and some opposition points of view by contemporaries of Luther and Melancthon

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