



# Lutheranism, Anti-Judaism, and Bach's St. John Passion: With an Annotated Literal Translation of the Libretto. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998

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Bach, Johann Sebastian (1685-1750). Renowned composer of vocal and instrumental music. Johann Sebastian Bach was self-consciously Lutheran, and served for the greater part of his career as organist and choirmaster of Lutheran parishes in various German cities, notably the St. Thomas Kirche in Leipzig. In view of this, the question has been raised whether Luther's anti-Jewish views may have been reflected in Bach's music. Particular attention has been given to the St. John Passion, with its use of the collective term 'the Jews' to designate the enemies of Jesus, although the forceful settings of 'Let him be crucified' and 'His blood be on us and on our children' in the St. Matthew Passion also are problematic. However, it is plain that the chief fault lies with the New Testament texts themselves, which Bach was not at liberty to alter.