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TERTULLIAN AND THE JEWS IN EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERARY IMAGINATION

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Tertullian and the Jews in Early Christian Literary Imagination

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Abstract: This Element explores Tertullian, the first author to write Christian theology in Latin. It focuses on the primary critical issues relevant to understanding his biography and work, with special attention to his presentation of the Jews in the wider context of early Christian literature. This topic offers the opportunity to assess how socio-historical circumstances have influenced the way that scholars, throughout the centuries, have read and understood the image of the Jews in patristic texts, thereby calling attention to the issue of objectivity in academic research. Finally, examples of the diverse treatment of the figure of the Jews in Tertullian's texts are provided to analyse the range of his perspectives, understand where he stands in relation to other Christian authors, and examine how his work reflects the state of Christian identity formation in his time.

Keywords: Tertullian; early Christian authors; image of the Jews; parting of the ways between Christians and Jews; academic objectivity

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