

## DOCUMENT 7

# Two Reports by the Faculty of Theology at Cologne

### 1. The Report on the Question of the Jewish Books

On the request of the Emperor, the Archbishop of Mainz obtained reports on Pfefferkorn's proposal from a number of sources, among them the faculty of theology at Cologne. The theologians submitted the following report in November 1510 (Latin text in Böcking *Supplementum*, 1:94–5).

... Because the Jewish book called Talmud manifestly contains not only errors and false statements, but also blasphemies and heresies against their own law ... [Popes] Gregory and Innocent ordered the said book to be burned.<sup>1</sup> The Jews may have many other books that are impious and contain horrible blasphemies (as is said) against our Lord Jesus Christ and the Christians, his faithful followers. Once this is established, it would be impious and irreligious to allow them the use of such books which they, who are mockers and blasphemers of the Lord Christ, might use to teach their children. From this it may be suspected that the rest of their books are corrupt as well and do not convey the intention of Moses' books and those of other prophets and wise men. Taking these and other matters (omitted for brevity's sake) into consideration, we consider it advisable, praiseworthy, godly, salutary, reasonable, and in the interest of the Christian faith as well as of the Jews' salvation that all these and other books (excepting the whole Old Testament, which they are permitted to use) be taken away with Christian restraint and piety and be set aside with a public and official declaration that this is done solely to distinguish between books which the Jews are permitted to have for the true understanding