

The Judensau: Ancient Roots of an Antisemitic Concept

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I. Introduction

This paper deals with the most well-known, and most prevailing, anti-Jewish motif in the German-speaking countries in the 13th to 16th century. The image I am referring to is the so-called Judensau: a slanderous Christian depiction of Jews in combination with a pig. I am referring to “artistic” representations of Jews found in stone reliefs on medieval churches, in wood cuttings, on and in public buildings, and later in printed works. [slide]

On the slide is an example of a late Judensau on a woodcut. The human figures wear Jewish hats (funnel, with knob); Jews are seen drinking; One Jew riding backwards; And Jews are positioned at the snout and at its backside

Most self-respecting towns in Germany, Austria and Switzerland had, before the end of the 15th century, at least one Judensau on a church or a public building.

[slide list] On the slide is a list of all attested Judensaue, most of them in German speaking lands. The number one on the list is from Aarschot in Belgium [slide Aarschot Judensau]. The three images are so-called misericords, small benches in the choir section of the church. The left one to which the list refers is not quite a Judensau, but a fable animal on which a Jew, with a Jewish hat, rides backwards. Backwards riding is one of the features of the Judensau. I think the one on the right has a similar intention; this time we see a monkey riding on a pig-like figure, maybe a mixed creature with a pig tail. There are more monkeys in Aarschot and I think they may all refer to Jews. The third one is a Jew kissing dog. It has been provided with a shield of later provenance that reads “Satyre against the Jews”.

These are the only such images in the Low Countries and there is reason to think that the Habsburg influence has something to do with this and other anti-Jewish images in this church. Aarschot is now a provincial town, but under Habsburg rule it was a separate Dutchy (Hertogdom), and the Duke, Guillaume de Croÿ/Wilhem van Croÿ, who was the teacher of Karl V, is known to have given some artifacts to the church. I intend to make

a separate study of the many anti-Jewish images in this church of Aarschot.

Not all of the Judensäue on the list are still extant. The one in Salzburg, for example, which was located at the tower of the Rathaus, has been removed in 1785 by request of the enlightened archbisschop Hieronymus von Colloredo, after it had been there for 300 years.

[slide] On the slide is a note from the Salzburg Archives about the original payment for the production of the Judensau for 6 florins to the known sculptor Hans Valkenauer and the painter Heinrich “*umb den Juden und saw ratturm*”

The effect of the Judensau imagery has unfortunately not ended with the Middle Ages. The public display of Jews as pigs may now obsolete, yet the anti-Jewish use of the pig pertains, especially today when antisemitism is more alive than ever, unfortunately. I will give some examples at the end of this talk about modern variations of the Judensau.

My talk consists of 4 parts.

- I will first shortly introduce some Christian ideas that made the Judensau concept possible
- Then I will discuss views of the pig in the Bible, the ANE and antiquity
- Third I will investigate the imagery of the Judensau and try to explain how this has been prepared by the ancient concepts discussed in the second part
- Finally I want to open the discussion with you about what to do with extant Judensau images today.

I. The Judensau: a Christian image

The combination of a Jew with a pig is not an arbitrary one. It is essentially one of defining identity, about the boundary between ‘us’ and the ‘others.’ As often, this marking of identity goes both ways: On the one hand Judaism defines itself by means of the pig in a negative way: since the Hebrew Bible Jews are forbidden to eat pig meat, but more than that, they abhor it. On the other hand, the non-Jews among whom the Jews have lived throughout the ages, have related to the Jews in terms of the pig: in the best cases, they identified the Jews as the people who don't eat pork; but in the worst cases they identified the Jews themselves with pigs.

After the forced conversions of Jews on the Iberian peninsula in the 15th century, many converted Jews abstained from eating pork as a token of their secret loyalty to Judaism. Cynically, these *conversos* were also called “Marranos” – which means swine in Spanish. The latter is a strange twist of events, because it is common to identify or mock people with what they eat (for example Italians as spaghetti eaters or Dutch as *kaaskoppen*) but it is not common to identify people with what they do NOT eat. Yet

even given the human tendency to attack people where they are most vulnerable— in this case to identify Jews with what they detest most— it is worth the effort to try to find out how and why this identification of Jews and pigs exactly happened, and how it resulted in the Judensau imagery.

Supersessionism

It needs to be stressed that the Judensau is a specifically *Christian* phenomenon. Since the beginning of Christianity, even already in the New Testament, there was a natural tendency to affirm the boundaries between the “old” and the “new” faith. Unfortunately, one of the most effective ways to affirm and promote a new identity, is by vilifying the old one. Christianity, since its beginning, has been very successful in this: the Jewish sources, including the Old Testament, but especially rabbinic writings such as the Talmud, have often been presented as a *dark foil* against which Jesus, the Christian message and the Christian writings shine much brighter. This tendency was dominant in Christian theological works until about 1950, and even today some theologians, church leaders and preachers speak in this way about Jews and Judaism. An important concept in this respect, is “supersessionism.”

Supersessionism is the theory that Christianity has superseded, that is, replaced Judaism. Christianity is thus seen as the *new Israel*. This entails that all the promises to the Jews that are made in the Hebrew Bible, now called “Old” Testament, have been transferred to the Christians. As a consequence, part of the Old Testament has lost its validity, especially the “ethnic” Jewish rules such as circumcision, and the rules about forbidden foods. The only parts of the Old Testament that are still deemed valid in this view, are those that are thought to predict the coming of Christ, or that, in other words, are *fulfilled* in the New Testament. A common example is Isaiah’s “Suffering Servant” (Isa 54) who is said to have been a *foreshadowing* of Jesus’ suffering; or the near-offer of Isaac (Gen 22), which is also seen as foreshadowing of Jesus’s sacrificial death.

An aspect of supersessionism is *allegorical reading*: this involves that many rules in the OT should be interpreted in a spiritual way. Not eating pork, for example, should be read in a spiritual way: it means not being “hoggisch” or gluttonous. We will see that this spiritual reading of the pig recurs in allegorical images in the Middle Ages where the pig becomes the symbol for Gula, gluttony.

The blindness of the Jews

According to Christian supersessionist theory, the Jews who reject Christianity do not understand that their own Hebrew scriptures already announced Jesus. These Jews, according to this theory, are spiritually “blind”: they do not understand their own scriptures. This idea is reflected in the combined statue of Ecclesia and Synagoga, which

is found on many medieval churches, such as the Notre Dame in Paris:

[slide Synagoga and Ecclesia Paris]

The synagogue, on the right, is depicted blindfolded – representing the Jews who are “blind” to the truth. Her staff is broken and her crown has fallen, which means that she has no power. Synagoga is always paired with the triumphant Ecclesia: a woman with a crown and a scepter, indicating the Church who is now in power. This imagery of Church and Synagogue shows the supersessionist theory in pictorial form.

[slide Aarschot] Also in Aarschot this pair is attested. Synagoga, also blindfolded, is here represented with the two stone tablets: meaning that the laws of the Old Testament are no longer valid.

By means of such images, most Christians in medieval Europe received their information and education. The Judensau is also such image, designed by the Church to inform and educate the people, especially those who could not read. The Judensau image and the Ecclesia and Synagoga pair are often found together in the same building or context, like in Aarschot.

I am not the first to investigate the Judensau.. My research builds on that of many others, the first one being Isaiah Shachar who wrote the standard study in London in 1974 (*The Judensau*). Another important work, from an anthropological perspective is Claudine Fabre-Vassas book “The Singular Beast.” A particularly relevant dissertation was written in 2013 by Misgav Har-Peled at John Hopkins University, with the title “the Dialogical Beast.” [slide with books]

As Marko Feingold Fellow at the department of Biblical Studies and Church History, I specifically focused on the *ancient roots of* the Judensau concept. Indeed, the special focus on the relation between Jews and pigs did not start with Christianity but was already current among the ancient Greeks and Romans, and of course in the Hebrew Bible and related literature.

Moreover, even though not on the same scale, there is also *Jewish* use of the pig motif to vilify their own enemies, especially the Romans and later the Christians. In some orthodox Jewish circles, Christians are still compared to pigs. Yet it must be said that the Romans themselves used the pig, in a positive way, to self-identify, and a similar thing can be noticed among Christians later: eating pork became a token of good Christian behavior, especially in France as is shown by Fabre-Vassas and Har-Peled.

With respect to the pig, the war of identities goes many, also unexpected, ways.

II. The pig as identity marker in the ANE and antiquity

L The permissibility of certain food items and combinations is a major issue in the Hebrew Bible.

[slide – English + German translation]

The main rules are found in the biblical book of Leviticus, chapter 11, and more or less repeated in Deuteronomy. These are the rules about the pig that concern us here

1 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 2 "Say to the Israelites: 'Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: 3 **You may eat any animal that has a split hoof completely divided and that chews the cud.** 4 "'There are some that only chew the cud or only have a split hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. 5 The badger, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is unclean for you. 6 The hare, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is unclean for you. 7 **And the pig, though it has a split hoof completely divided, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you.** 8 You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you. [see also Deut 14:3-8]

The main rule about mammals is very simple: A kosher animal has 1. split hoofs AND 2. chews the cud or ruminates Thus, e.g. cows are permissible as they have split hoofs and ruminate. Camels ruminate, but do not have split hoofs, so they are not kosher. But pigs, alone in their category, are the opposite: they do have clear split hoofs but they do not ruminate. Jacob Milgrom, an oft-quoted authority in this respect, believes that the rule of ruminating was especially taken up to include the pig. For all the other animals that are forbidden (vv. 4-6), the rule that a mammal has to have split hoofs would have been enough. Apart from the fact that for the pig there is an extra rule, it has also been noticed that, whereas the other 3 unclean animals are in one verse (v. 6), a separate verse is devoted to the pig (v.7). Thus the pig seems to receive special attention.

Isaiah about eating and sacrificing pigs

In other texts of the Hebrew Bible, we find evidence that the pig was a specifically abhorred species. In Isaiah 65 and 66 we find several references to people who sacrifice pigs and eat their flesh in special gardens and burial caves

[slide]

Isaiah's texts refer to sacrificing and eating pigs in a foreign cultic context. This means we have two foci here: *eating* pig meat, and *sacrificing* pigs. If eating pig meat in a sacrificial context is what Isaiah warns against, *this means that some of his Israelite*

audience engaged in such practices. What do we know about eating and sacrificing pigs among the people with whom the Israelites shared space, that is, other religions and cultures of the ANE?

For one, the ancient Israelites were not the only group who refrained from eating and offering pigs. Babylonian and Assyrian texts refer to pigs (and dogs) as unclean animals. The reason that is often given for this is that these animals eat human waste. The fact that the Israelites lived in Assyrian and Babylonian captivity may have been the reason for their shared disgust of pigs.

[slide]

There were, however, peoples in the ancient Mediterranean world that did eat and offer pigs. In Hittite society (Anatolia, 2000-700 BCE) pigs and piglets were sacrificed on special occasions. Pigs were associated with fertility, with the gods of the underworld, and with the Moon. This Hittite text seems to deal with children that are struck by a bad omen, maybe caused by the time of their birth. What is remarkable is that the gender of the piglet that is sacrificed is the same as the gender of the struck child. This seems to indicate that the piglet replaces the child in this sacrifice to the Moon.

[slide] The Greek historian Herodotus, who lived in the 5th cent. BCE, attests that the Egyptians of his time did not eat pork on a regular basis and that touching and handling pigs was thought to defile people, making them ritually unclean. Thus, swineherds were not allowed in temples and they could only marry among themselves. He also mentions, however, that pigs *are* used in Egypt for special sacrifices to Bacchus and the Moon, like in the Hittite text, and that their flesh is eaten afterwards.

Also in Greek cults, the sacrifice of pigs was associated with the deities of the underworld, such as Demeter and Dionysus.

[slide: summary]

This very limited selection of sources indicates that in the Ancient Near East and the Ancient Mediterranean world:

1. The pig was singled out as a special animal
2. It was often treated as an unclean animal, along with the dog, because of their dirty habits
3. Pig was not eaten by Babylonians and Assyrians
4. The pig was related to the full moon and to the gods of the underworld, and suitable for offering to these
5. It was considered as especially close to the human, as in the Hittite text where the gender of the sacrificed piglet was to be the same as the gender of the sick baby.

Thus, the reason why Isaiah sets the pig apart in a negative way seems to be related to its

special position in surrounding cultures and cults, especially as a sacrificial animal for gods of the underworld.

The bad reputation of the pig came to full bloom in Judaism in the period just before the beginning of the common era. We are speaking about the Hellenistic period, which is the time of Greek dominance in the Mediterranean area that started with Alexander the Great (356-323 BCE). An important Jewish literary source for that period are the books of the Maccabees.

[slide 2 Maccabees]

From these books it can be derived that *not eating* pork was considered a major Jewish characteristic that *distinguished them from the Greeks*. Greeks ate pork but Jews did not and eating pork was considered a betrayal of Judaism. Jews, according to these books, should rather die a martyr's death than eat pork. In the second book of the Maccabees we find the earliest accounts of martyrdom in Judaism. One of these regards the respected scribe Eleazar who was forced to eat swine's flesh in public and refused (2 Macc 6). Another account concerns a horrible story of a mother with seven sons who were tortured and killed rather than eat pork (2 Macc 7).

[slide] In the books of the Maccabees it is also told that the Greeks would have forced the Jews to *sacrifice* swine in their Temple (1 Macc 1:47). The whole tone of these records seems exaggerated and is part of the Maccabean propaganda, but two things are clear from these texts:

1. that Jews considered eating pork as a betrayal of their faith
2. eating and sacrificing pigs was considered a Greek habit by the Greeks themselves and by the Jewish revoltors against them.

It is thus evident that Jewish abstinence from pork played a symbolic role in the relation between Jews and gentiles, long before the Christian era. By the end of the Hellenistic period, avoiding pig was a clear Jewish boundary marker for Jews and for Greeks. This continued and became more elaborated in the Roman period.

When discussing the Roman period, we need to look at three kinds of sources: pagan sources, Jewish sources, and Christian sources. [slide 3 sources]

Some Roman authors were obsessed by the question why the Jews did not eat pork, whether this is out of special respect for the pig, or out of abhorrence. They gave various reasons, one of these, given by *Petronius*, was that the Jews must be worshipping a pig-god, and therefore not eat pig meat. The famous first-century Jewish author, Flavius

Josephus, attests how the Jew-hater *Apion* blames the Jews, among other things, for not eating pork. Apion allegedly mentions this as a strange and detestable Jewish habit, next to circumcision.

This means that the Romans, like the Greeks, found it at least remarkable, and at worst detestable, that the Jews did not eat pork, like they themselves did. It confirms that pork was a typical Roman food, and that Jews, by not eating pork, distinguished themselves from the Romans.

More than a food-item, the pig was also a *symbol* that Rome associated with itself, in a positive way. In fact there are two kinds of pigs that symbolize Rome or one of its aspects.

[slide boar Legio]

The first is the famous boar, the wild pig (*aper*), in the banner of the 10th legion that captured Jerusalem in the year 70, the Legio Decima Fretensis. Images of the emblem of this legion are found on coins and on pottery. The *aper* was a well-known Roman symbol for a brave warrior, and the Romans were proud to be associated with it.

[slide] The second pig is the white sow with 30 piglets that we find in Virgil's *Aeneis*, the foundation legend of Rome. Aeneas is there said to have found the city of Rome on the place where he finds a white sow with 30 piglets. This image is also found on coins and statues. On the slide you see a coin and a relief from 2nd century Rome which depicts this scene. Also this was an image of a pig that the Romans were proud of and identified themselves with. And, of course, this one comes close to the Judensau.

It has been suggested that the Romans placed statues of these pigs in public places in Jerusalem specifically to offend the Jews. An important source for this is the *Chronicon* of Eusebius which was transmitted by the Jerome. In this *Chronicon* we can read: [slide]

In front of the gate which led to Bethlehem, he [Hadrian] placed a pig [*sus*] carved in marble signifying that the Jews were subject to the Romans.”

This statue was erected when the Romans turned Jerusalem into a Roman city, called Aelia Capitolina, around 130 CE. The statue is no longer extant so we cannot check what it looked like. It is not clear which kind of pig the statue depicted. Was it the wild pig of the tenth legion, or the female pig with piglets of the *Aeneis*? The main question is, however, whether the Romans *intentionally* placed a pig statue at the gate of Aelia Capitolina *to offend the Jews*. Eusebius, and many modern scholars think this is the case. But even if this was not intentional, the Jews probably perceived it as offensive.

Jewish texts about Romans and pigs

In Jewish literature of the Roman period, the pig with all its negative associations became the symbol for everything Roman. Later, when the Roman Empire became Christian, the pig became the Jewish symbol for Christianity in Jewish texts. The Jews associated Rome with the pig by means of biblical commentary. The special genre of rabbinic commentary on the Bible is called *midrash*. There are many of these commentaries, called Midrashim, the plural of midrash. The midrashim that identify Rome with the pig use five texts or themes from the Old Testament. In the course of the rabbinic period these five texts have become combined.

The texts are: [slide]

1. Genesis 25: Esau=Edom= Rome
2. Leviticus 11:7: fourth unclean animal, the pig = Rome
3. Daniel 7: Fourth Beast = Fourth Empire = Rome
4. Ps 80:14: “the pig out of the woods”
5. Isaiah 66:17: “you eat the meat of pigs... and I will destroy you for this” = about Rome

1. The identification of Esau, and Edom with Rome.

[slide] Esau and Jacob are the twin sons of Isaac and Rebecca. Esau, who was born first, is strong and red-haired and a hunter; Jacob is his mother's boy, the shepherd. Jacob tricks his brother Esau into selling him his right of first born for a bowl of red lentil stew (Gen 25:31-34), and he tricks his father into giving him his blessing (Gen 27). Jacob's name was eventually changed to “Israel” (Gen 32:19). He is seen as the forefather of the Jews, and Esau as the forefather of the Edomites, a people living in what is now Jordan (Gen 32:4; 36:1.8.9.43; see also Obadiah 1:8). Esau, the person, and Edom, the people or place, become interchangeable names, already in the Bible.

In the Bible, Esau is not a bad guy. Yet, because Jacob became identified with Israel, Edom in the later Jewish interpretation, became identified with all the nations that are not Israel. In rabbinic literature, Edom is almost always used as a hidden name of Rome. Wherever Edom is mentioned, Rome is meant. Before we look at Jewish texts about Edom, we need to mention a second biblical text.

2. In the Biblical book of Daniel chapter 7, we find a dream about 4 animals. [slide]

In his dream/vision Daniel sees 4 beasts come out the sea

1. Lion

2. Bear
3. Leopard with 4 wings
4. A terrifying animal with 10 horns, and an extra little horn with eyes and a mouth that is especially rude and uproots the other horns.

Already in the book of Daniel these 4 beasts are interpreted as representing 4 world powers, but it is not said which empires they are.

3. The third text we already know, this is Leviticus 11 about the forbidden species.

We can now look at a first midrash that combines these three texts and applies them all to Rome. In the midrash Leviticus Rabbah 13, the four kingdoms of Daniel's vision are explicitly identified as four empires that had reigned, or still reigned over Israel. The first is Babylonia, the second Media, the third Greece and the fourth, terrible one, is identified as "Edom," which we know is Rome.

But then happens something interesting. Because this midrash is a commentary on Leviticus, a link is made between the 4 kingdoms and the 4 unclean animals of Leviticus 11. And guess who is identified with the pig? Of course Edom, who is Rome.

Moses foresaw *the kingdoms* engaged in their activities. Among the unclean animals, the camel alludes to Babylon (...). The badger alludes to Media (...). The hare alludes to Greece (...). The pig alludes to Edom. *Moses mentioned the first three of them in one verse, but the last by itself in another verse.* (...) Moses said 'And the pig, though it has a split hoof completely divided, and does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you' (Lev 11:7). *Why is Edom compared to a pig?* To tell you this: Just as a pig puts forth its hoofs as if to say: 'See that I am clean', so does the kingdom of Edom pretend to execute justice while it commits violence and robbery. (...) [Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 13.5]

There is a lot of information in this text. In this table I put it together in a table.
[slide with table]

4. In other midrashim, whether or not combined with the previous two texts, Ps 80,14 ("the pig out of the woods gnaws at it, and creatures of the field feed on it") is applied to Rome. The Psalm speaks about Israel, the vine, that is (temporarily) destroyed by "a pig from the woods" or a "wild pig." The latter is read as a reference to Rome, which is trying to destroy the Jews by plundering the Temple and colonizing Jerusalem (Aelia capitolina). In the rabbinic interpretation, the success of the Romans is only temporary. Eventually, the Romans will be defeated and the Jews will prevail. This interpretation is strengthened by the inclusion of yet another biblical verse, Isa 66,17.

5. Finally the midrash applies Isaiah 66:17, which we have already referenced earlier, to Rome.

You eat the meat of pigs, lizards, and mice. But I, the Lord, will destroy you for this.

This is read as a reference to the end of times, when Rome, the pig-eaters, will be punished, and Israel will be saved.

In the late midrashic work Tanchuma Buber, we find all these texts combined: Edom = Rome, identified with the 4th kingdom, represented by a pig, as found in Ps 80,14, to which Isa 66 is applied, which announces the eventual downfall of the pig-eaters.

The pig” (Lev 14,7) represents the evil kingdom of Edom, since it is stated: “The pig of the woods gnaws at it” [i.e., at Jerusalem] (Ps 80,14). Why is it compared to the pig (*Hazir*)? Because the Holy One is going to pay it back (*lehaHzir*) with strict judgment. How? In the age to come the Holy One will issue a proclamation: “Whoever has been engaged in the Torah may come and receive his reward.” Then the gentiles also will say: “Give us our reward, for we also have performed such and such a commandment.” The Holy One has said: “Whoever has not eaten abhorrent creatures and creeping things may receive his reward.” At that time they receive their judgment, as stated: “Those who eat the flesh of the pig, the abhorrent creature, and the mouse shall be consumed together, says the lord” (Isa 66,17) [Tanch Buber Shemini 14]

In this late text, written in a time when Christianity had long become the state religion of the Roman Empire, all that is said about Edom is transferred to Christianity. The Christians are the obvious target of the sentence “Then the gentiles also will say: Give us our reward, for we also have performed such and such a commandment,” and God’s answer: “Whoever has not eaten abhorrent creatures and creeping things may receive his reward” is clear. For the Jews, eating pork and other unclean animals had become the token of Christianity and because the Christians eat pork, they will not be saved at the end of times.

Conclusion

Let us wrap up what we just learned about the Romans and the Jews: Romans mocked the Jews for not eating pigs; BUT the Jews in their turn mocked Rome, and later Christian Rome, for BEING a pig, and loaded upon it all the biblical associations of the pig, including the messianic punishment for pig-eaters. We see, therefore, that the slanderous use of the pig to stigmatize the other goes both ways: Jews used it against Romans and later Christians; and Romans and Christians used and use it against Jews. Just the effects have been much worse one way than the other. The Jewish use of the pig imagery against others has usually been confined to an inner-Jewish discourse; moreover

it is coupled to a proud self-identification of Romans AND Christians as pig eaters. The Christian anti-Jewish use was much more aggressive and offensive and has disastrous consequences until the present day. Can we find something relevant in the New Testament about pigs and pork?

Eating pork in the New Testament?

In the Roman world, eating together served important social functions. The matter of sharing meals became very important in the formation of the early Christian communities as they tried to establish their identity in relation to the existing Jewish communities. Whether or not to accept the Jewish food-laws was one of the major breakpoints between *Jews* who became Christians and *non-Jews* who became Christians. Eating pork must have been a major factor in this as the Greeks and Romans ate it freely. In the books of the New Testament that deal with the first Christian communities after the death of Jesus we find traces of the question how Jewish Christians could eat with non-Jewish Christians. [slide]

The main texts about this refer to Paul and Peter. In his letter to the Romans (!), Paul states explicitly that he himself believes there are no foods that are unclean in themselves, but that the people should be considerate when eating together and not offend other people.

In the Acts of the Apostles, we can read about a gathering of early Christian leaders who explicitly discuss the matter, and come to the conclusion that non-Jews who become Christians should not be asked to keep *all* the Jewish food laws, only some, such as not eating blood. Pork is, however, not specifically mentioned.

Whereas we do not find much about *eating* pork in the NT, we do find a hint to the symbolic association between pigs and Rome.

[slide: text Mark 5+ image]

I will summarize it. In a strange story in the gospel of Mark chapter 5, Jesus expels a bunch of demons named “Legion” from a possessed man who lives among the graves. This happens in the area of lake of Gallilee in a place called Gerasa. Other versions have Gadara, which is closer to the lake. Gerasa seems to be, however, the preferred reading. The name Gerasa may have been connected with the Hebrew verb *garaś* (to expel) which may explain the choice for this place name in the story about the expulsion of demons. Jesus sends the demon or demons called Legion in a herd of pigs, who then throw themselves the lake. The man is healed from the demon and the people of the town are convinced of the healing powers of Jesus.

This story is full of elements that, on closer view, require some interpretation. Why in the country of the Gerasa? What kind of a name is "Legion"? Why pigs?

The region where this story is set was a Greek settlement called the 'Decapolis'. In the time of Jesus, Roman soldiers were stationed there. For Jesus and his disciples going to the Decapolis was like going abroad. So far, they had mostly convinced Jews of Jesus' special powers, but now they went to the pagans. And a wild pagan at that!

In view of the biblical treatment of pigs as impure animals, it seems logical that the impure demon is sent into impure pigs. Moreover, the name *Legio* must be an allusion to the Roman legions that were stationed in Gerasa. It has been suggested that this story has a hidden anti-Roman stance. Some scholars see the demon "Legion" as a reference to the Legio X Fretensis, that, as we already know, had a wild pig, as its banner. It must be noted that this interpretation depends on the dating of the book of Mark. If it was written after 70, this interpretation is possible, as the Legio X Fretensis was only stationed in Gerasa after 70. But even without the specific reference to the tenth Legion, it is likely that the demon who was expelled into the herd of pigs refers to the Roman Empire.

The story may then contain a hidden wish that the "unclean" Roman Legions would be "expelled" from the area. If so, this shows that some Jewish followers of Jesus had the same ideas about the Roman occupation than many other Jews of their time.

Conclusion: the pig in antique sources

We can now conclude this overview of the history of the pig in antique literature. We have observed a play of action and reaction: Romans proudly self-identify with the pig, and Jews combine their biblical abhorrence of the pig with disdain for, and revolt against, the Romans, on whom they project all their negative associations with the pig. In their turn, the Romans blame the Jews for not eating pig. The early Christians are caught in between. In the NT we find traces of Jewish revolt against the Romans (Mark 5), but also a move towards including Romans in the community of Jesus-believers by loosening the Jewish food laws. This play of action and reaction around the pig is reflected in the title of the dissertation of Misgav har-Peled, "the Dialogical Beast." In that study he posits that the Jews turned their habit of not eating pig into a token of identity and even an act of resistance against the Romans and later the Christians. In their turn, Christians, like the Romans started to cultivate the eating of pig meat as form of self-identification as Christians.

III. The medieval iconography of the Judensau

For Ashkenazic Jews in the Middle Ages, the pig continued to serve as the symbol of Daniel's fourth and final kingdom. They hoped that the messiah would come and bring an end to the gentile oppression. For them, this oppressive reign was the Holy Roman Empire, later "the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation." Ironically, it was in the German lands that the pig as symbol was *thrown back at the Jews* in the form of the Judensau.

Let us now look at how we can find the Biblical, and ancient Roman, Jewish and Christian associations back in the medieval Judensau iconography, so that we can explain how this image came into existence, and what its implications are.

[slide types Judensau]

There are several variations in the iconography of the Judensau. From simply a Jew riding on a pig, to a sow feeding young Jews like piglets, to Jews eating the dung of the pig, or performing sexual acts with it. Often, several motifs are combined, and sometimes the Judensau is paired with other anti-Jewish motifs, such as the Ecclesia and Synagoga pair, the devil, or ritual murder.

Let us start with the Christian images of a pig with piglets, without Jews
[slide: Remagen on the Rhine]

In the 13th and 14th century, a pig with piglets was often found among other allegorical images that depict certain vices or sins, such as Luxuria and Discordia. The allegorical images feature animals and humans, often combined. A sow with piglets served as a symbol of Gula, i.e., gluttony.

[bestiaria image + text]

This use of the pig as metaphor for gluttony may seem innocent. However, the same images were also found in so-called Bestiaria, catalogues of animals with images and descriptions. These were not just physical, but mainly metaphorical, Christian descriptions. The texts for these Bestiaria were derived from older works of natural history such as the Physiologicus or Rabanus' *De Universo*, a Carolingian work from the 9th century. In these Christian catalogues of animals, the pig was associated with the Jew through quotations from the Bible.

On the slide are the entries from Hrabanus *De Universo* about *sus*, pig, and *porcus*, swine, that were included in the Bestiaria. The full texts are on the slide; I will summarize them.

In the *sus* entry we find a creative Christian exegesis that combines Leviticus' rule about the forbidden pig, with Mat 27:25. "His blood be on us and our children." This amounts to the following reasoning: "Jews are blind because they fail to see the impure pig (Lev 11:7) as a metaphor. This means that, like the metaphorical pig, they do not metaphorically ruminate upon spiritual food; moreover, they pass this blindness and impurity on to their children, because they themselves said in the gospel: "His blood be on us and on our children."

Whereas the reference to "the Gospels" seems a reference to Christian heretics rather than Jews, the verse from Matthew is usually associated with Jews specifically. The reference to Jews is more explicit in Hrabanus, and some of the Bestiaries, entry for *porcus*. There it is based on a mistaken Latin translation of Psalm 17MT/16LXX,14. A correct translation of the Hebrew would be "they are satisfied with children," (*saturati sunt filiis*) but some Latin translations have, mistakenly, "they are satisfied with pork" (*saturati sunt porcina*).

This entry contains a creative Christian exegesis that combines Leviticus' rule about the forbidden pig, with a mistaken reading of Ps 17,14 and the catastrophic text of Mat 27,25, and applies it all to the Jews. The result is a perverted reading which amounts to the following reasoning: Jews are like pigs because they fail to see the impure pig (Lev 11,7/ Deut 14,8) as a metaphor; this means that, like the metaphorical pig, they do not metaphorically ruminate upon spiritual food; moreover, they pass this blindness and impurity on to their children, because they themselves said in Mat 27,25: "His blood be on us and on our children." In Ps 17,14 the latter idea is allegedly stated in other words: "their bellies are full of *porcina*, and they have left what they have over to their little ones." The quote of this verse even worsens the accusation, because it implies that Jews actually eat pork. Because of these accompanying texts, these images are not merely metaphorical. The imagery seems innocent, but the shocking Christian anti-Jewish purpose is already there in the twelfth-century Bestiaria.

[Heilbronn, Munster]

In Germany in the 13th century, the Jew was added to the image. Now we don't only see a pig with piglets; some piglets are replaced by Jews. The Judensau is born. An example is this sow from Munster, with giant teats and Jews with Jewish hats drinking from it.

[Brandenburg]

Let us look at the next image. This is the oldest attested Judensau, from the 13th century, located in the Cathedral of Brandenburg on the Havel, in a terracotta relief in the cloisters. This Judensau has, by the way, been covered from view since 2023. We see several piglets and one human (right) drinking from the udders of a large female pig. The human seems to wear a Jewish hat. Behind the sow is a man, crouching in a long

gown, lifting the tail of the pig with his right hand and with his left hand reaching to the pig's hind quarters.

Interestingly, the sow, is a hybrid creature: it has a human head and wears a Jewish hat. It has also a human right arm, which it lifts towards its hat. The hybridity of human and animal in one image is astonishing and unique among the Judensäue. This mix-breed of animal and human, pig and Jew, points to a crucial idea in the Judensau imagery: Jews were *not just compared* to pigs, they *are* pigs. This perverse concept is very dangerous: it was known from antiquity that pigs resemble humans in many ways. Modern medicine confirms that pig organs are very similar to ours, and suitable for transplantations in humans. Hence the feeling that the pig is *like* us, but of course it is never considered as human. And so it was with the Jew, in the eyes of many non-Jews: he may look human but in fact he is not.

Finally, an additional feature of the Brandenburg sow needs to be discussed [click for circle + Pinecas]

Above the sow is an inscription that reads "Pinnecas." Who is Pinnecas? The reference must be to the grandson of Aaron, a priest, whose actions are described in the OT, in Num 25:1-9. Pinechas kills an Israelite man while that one is making love with his Midianite lover. Because of the zealous action of this Pinechas, the eternal priesthood was promised to his descendants (Num 25:12-13). The inscription stands to the right of the image, above the man inspecting the rear end of the pig. I think it is a reference to the zealousness of Pinechas, the emblematic Jewish priest, and by extension, to the Jewish teachers, who are so zealous for the Torah. We will see that Luther makes a similar association with the man inspecting the rear end of the Wittenberg Judensau. If this is already the case here with the Pinnecas inscription, it would mean that this earliest Judensau is not only racist, but also religiously polemical.

[Colmar]

I know turn to a particularly perverse 14th cent. Judensau, from Colmar in Alsace. A Jew with cone hat is drinking from a pig's udder, if it is a pig; it could also be another animal. Note that the animal has a horn, a second horn is broken off. The horns are probably be a reference to the devil.

[Frankfurt eerste slide groot]

The devil is better distinguishable on other Judensau images, such as here in a famous Judensau wall painting from Frankfurt. This painting was located on a very central bridge over the Main, the Old Brückenturm. The tower was demolished in 1801 and with this the painting also, but replicas have been preserved.

Here we see a devil, talking to a Jew who is seated backwards on a sow. In the back we see a Jewess together with a horned he-goat, also a reference to the devil.

[slide Trachtenberg, John, Luther]

This association of Jews with the devil may go back to the gospel of John 8:44 where Jesus says (according to John) to his Jewish opponents that not Abraham, and not God, but the devil is their father. In the gospel this is a part of a heated disputation among Jews, but taken out of context, this verse has had disastrous effects. Martin Luther in his work *On the Jews and their Lies*, for example has used this verse to call for the removal of the Jews and the burning of their synagogues. On the left is the standard book about the Christian association of Jews with the devil, by rabbi Trachtenberg from – mind you- 1943.

[Frankfurt tweede slide]

But there is more to the Frankfurt Judensau. Here you can see the full image. Above the Judensau was a ritual murder scene, namely a depiction of the boy Simon of Trent, bound and killed. This refers to a blood libel in which Jews were accused of kidnapping and killing Christian children around Passover and use their blood to make the Jewish unleavened bread needed for that holiday. Next to the Judensau and the ritual murder scene was a painting of the crucifixion of Jesus. It should be clear that the combination of the sacrifice of Jesus, represented by the cross, and the sacrifice of Simon of Trent, in the same location conveyed a clear message: the Jews were responsible for both the killing of Christ and the killing of Christian children.

With this combination of images, the Judensau has reached again a new stage: we now have a full-fledged theological, anti-Jewish statement, connecting the Jews to the murder of Christ, and accusing them of ritual murder.

[Wittenberg sow]

The most famous and contested Judensau is probably the one in Wittenberg, Luther's town. It displays the familiar imagery: Jews drinking from the sow, one Jew behind lifting the tail and looking underneath. On the replica on the right you can see the details better. The text above it, "Shem hameforas," was added later and inspired by yet another writing of Martin Luther from the 16th century. Let us look at what Luther had to say about the Judensau.

[Luther slide]

Luther devoted a special pamphlet to the Judensau, which he had seen on the church in his hometown Wittenberg. The Judensau was then already 200 years old. He gave the

work the title: *Vom Schem Hamphoras und vom Geschlecht Christi (Of the Unknowable Name and the Generations of Christ)*.

This is what he writes [I read in English; the 16th century German text is on the slide]:

"Here in Wittenberg, in our parish church, there is a sow carved into the stone under which lie young pigs and Jews who are sucking; behind the sow stands a rabbi who is lifting up the right leg of the sow, raises behind the sow, bows down and looks with great effort **into the Talmud under the sow**, as if he wanted to read and see something most difficult and exceptional; no doubt they gained their Shem Hamphoras from that place..."

In this exposition, Luther makes fun of the classical rabbinic Jewish way of interpreting the Bible by means of wordplays. In a Jewish-style interpretation he 'reads' *shem hameforash* (the explicit name, the name of God which the Jews do not pronounce) as *sham haperesh* (there is the dung). Jews are thus presented as perverting the Bible with their interpretations as found in Talmud, which is mentioned explicitly. Moreover, the respectful attitude of the Jews towards God's name, which they don't pronounce, is ridiculized.

As if the Judensau image not yet bad enough, this explanation made it much worse and refined: not only the Jews, but also their books are made fun of. As I said before, in another work Luther also called for burnings of Jewish books.

Through Luther's noxious exposition about this image, the Judensau and the anti-Jewish ideas behind it spread further throughout Europe. Because of the great authority of Luther, there is no doubt that this has contributed to the negative images of the Jews in German lands in the following centuries, of which we all know the effects.

Conclusion

From our study of the ancient attitudes towards pigs, pork and Jews in part 2, we can distill the following elements that we find back, one way or another, in the image and concept of the Judensau

- Biblical dietary laws: pig is unclean animal, do no eat it
- Eating and sacrifice of pig in pagan cult, gods of underworld (Isaiah; Hittite, Egyptian, Greek cult)
- Similarity between pigs and humans (Hittite cult)
- Roman images: Aeneas' white sow;
- Legio X Fretensis boar
- Greek and Roman exploitation of Jewish abhorrence from pigs, pork: forced

- eating and sacrifice of pigs; statue of pig at Jerusalem gate
- Greek, Roman and Christian self-identification with pig and as “pork eaters”
- Jewish depiction of Romans and Christians as pigs
- New Testament: debate about permissible foods; metaphorical reading of OT
- + Jews as children of devil (John)

The most debasing aspect of the Judensau is that it *identifies* Jews with animals. The association between Jews and pigs was, since its beginning, a token of *de-humanizing* Jews. To call this racism may be anachronistic, using a modern category for something that was not yet conceived of as such. Yet the main intent of racism is accentuating, in a negative way, the otherness of a human being, to the point of de-humanizing him. If we define racism as such, then the Judensau can, since its earliest manifestations, be conceived as a religious as well as racist image, attacking Judaism in its two capacities: as religion and as a people.

The Judensau imagery did not end with the Middle Ages. It pops up in many guises and in many places. I will just show a few examples, from various contexts.

[from France: Emile Zola, defender of the Jew Dreyfus]

[an example in words: Song about Walter Ratenau, 1920]

[from conspiracy site on the internet, throwing everything on a heap: the mossad, Isis, the UK, the US, Boko Haram, they all feed on the rich Jews who want to take over the world]

[Iranian propaganda]

Is there anything we can do to abolish such images and, more importantly, the anti-Jewish ideas behind such images? I am afraid they will keep on popping up when the occasion is there, as there definitely is in this day and age. Still, we can learn from history, be alert for early warning signals, raise awareness, and educate. The Marko Feingold fellowship at the department of Biblical Studies and Church History at the Catholic Faculty of Theology at PLUS is one initiative that has exactly this purpose. I am very honored that through this appointment, I can contribute my small part to this effort of fighting antisemitism, which takes up a very unfortunate part of the history of the Church (and not only the Lutheran church), and which is especially tricky when it is rooted in the Bible and its interpretation.

For the discussion I would like to suggest that we speak about the question:

IV. What to do with medieval Judensau on historical buildings?

The Judensau

Ancient Roots of an Antisemitic Concept

Prof. dr. Lieve Teugels, Marko Feingold
Distinguished Fellow 2024





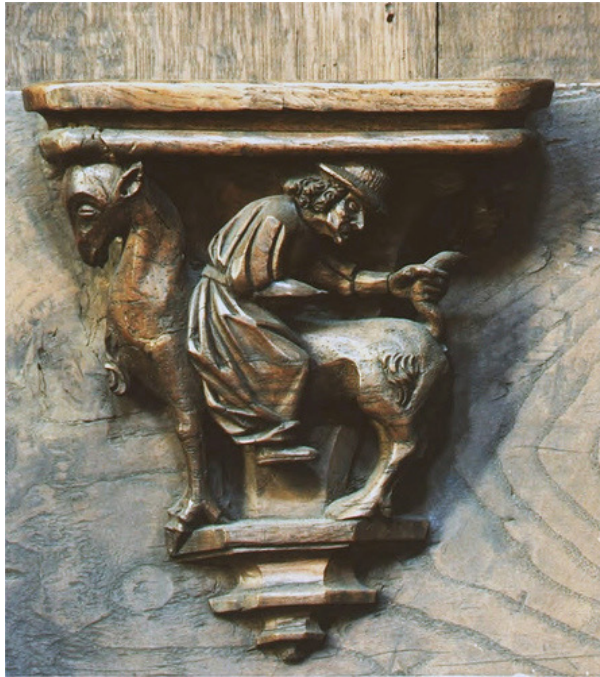
Orte, in denen sich "Judensau"-Skulpturen befinden:

1. Aerschot/Belgien, Chorgestühl Notre Dame, 16. Jhdt.
2. Bad Wimpfen Ritterstiftskirche St. Peter, 13. Jhdt.
3. Basel, Münster, 1432
4. Bayreuth, Stadtkirche
5. Brandenburg, Kathedrale, ca. 1230
6. Cadolzburg, äußeres Burgtor, 15. Jhdt.
7. Colmar, St. Martin Münster, 14. Jhdt.
8. Eberswalde, St. Maria Magdalena, spätes 13. Jhdt.
9. Erfurt, Chorgestühl, frühes 15. Jhdt.
10. Gniezno/Gnesen, Kathedrale, Mitte 14. Jhdt
11. Heiligenstadt, Annakapelle, ca. 1300
12. Heilsbronn, Klosterkirche, 15. Jhdt.
13. Köln, Dom, 14. Jhdt.
14. Lemgo, Marienkirche. 13. Jhdt.
15. Magdeburg, Kathedrale, Ende 13. Jhdt.
16. Metz. Kathedrale, 14. Jhdt
17. Nordhausen, 1380
18. Nürnberg, St. Sebald um 1320
19. Regensburg, Dom, Mitte 14. Jhdt.
20. Spalt bei Nürnberg, ehem. Chorherrenstift, 15. Jhdt.
21. Strasbourg
22. Uppsala, Kathedrale, Mitte 14. Jhdt.
23. Warburg
24. Wittenberg, Stadtkirche, 14. Jhdt.
25. Xanten, Kathedrale, ca. 1265
26. Zerbst, Nikolaikirche, 15. Jhdt.
27. Wiener Neustadt, 15. Jhdt. (ehemals an einem Privathaus am Hauptplatz 16, heute im Stadtmuseum)

Nicht mehr vorhanden in:

1. Anhalt-Köthen, Dessau
2. Diesdorf (bei Magdeburg)
3. Frankfurt/M
4. Freising (bis 1921; zuletzt erwähnt)
5. Friedberg
6. Heidingsfeld
7. Kehlheim (1945 wahrscheinlich "removed by order of an officer of the US Army")
8. Salzburg
9. Torgau

Aarschot, Notre Dame church, 16th century



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Acquisition of Salzburg Judensau 1487

“um dem Valkenauer und
Heinrich Maler umb den Juden
und Sau Ratturm”

The image shows a page from a handwritten manuscript, likely a deed or record, written in Gothic script. It contains three entries, each starting with 'Im' (In) and followed by a date and a signature. The entries are:

- 1. 'Im vmb 32 augustain zu derselben' followed by 'Jung am 23 1487' and 'und am stam das man sein hat sein' followed by the signature 'fe 12 1487'.
- 2. 'Im dem Valkenauer und Heinricz' followed by 'Maler vmb den Juden und Sau Ratturm' followed by the signature 'fe 6 1487'.
- 3. 'Im dem vmb ab Salzburg' followed by 'vmb 20. 1487' and 'zwinger' followed by the signature 'fe 6 1487'.

Overview

I. Introduction: the Judensau, a Christian image

- Identity: the pig and pork
- Christian supersessionism
- The "blindness of the Jews"

II. The pig as identity marker in the ANE and antiquity

- Hebrew Bible, ANE, Romans, Jews, Christians

III. The medieval iconography of the Judensau as reception of ancient Jewish and Christian ideas

IV. What to do with historical Judensaue today? discussion

I. Introduction: the Judensau, a Christian image

“Supersessionism”

“also called replacement theology, is the Christian doctrine that the Christian Church has superseded the Jewish people, assuming their role as God's covenanted people, thus asserting that the New Covenant through Jesus Christ has superseded or replaced the Mosaic covenant.”

- fulfillment
- foreshadowing
- allegorical reading

The “blindness” of the Jews: Ecclesia and Synagoga

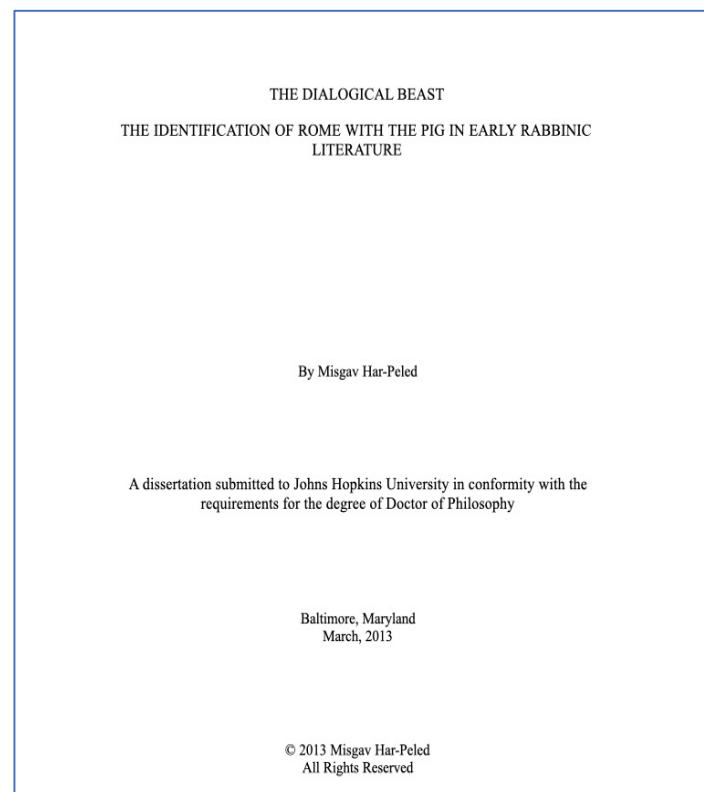


Ecclesia & Synagoga in Aarschot Notre Dame Church



Main studies about Judensau

- Isaiah Shachar, *The Judensau. A Medieval Anti-Jewish Motif and Its History* (London: Warburg Institute, 1974)
- Claudine Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians & the Pig* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997)
- Misgav Har-Peled, "The Dialogical Beast" (Dissertation, John Hopkins, 2013)



II. The Pig as identity marker in the Ancient Near East and Antiquity



Leviticus 11: dietary laws

1The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 2 "Say to the Israelites: 'Of all the animals that live on land, these are the ones you may eat: 3 **You may eat any animal that has a split hoof completely divided and that chews the cud.** 4 "There are some that only chew the cud or only have a split hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is ceremonially unclean for you. 5 The badger, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is unclean for you. 6 The hare, though it chews the cud, does not have a split hoof; it is unclean for you. **7 And the pig, though it has a split hoof completely divided, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you.** 8 You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.

1-3 Der Herr befahl Mose und Aaron, den Leuten von Israel zu sagen:

»Folgende Tiere dürft ihr essen: Von den großen Landtieren sind euch alle erlaubt, die deutlich gespaltene Klauen haben und zugleich ihre Nahrung wiederkäuen. 4-6 Dagegen sollt ihr Kamele, Hasen und Klippdachse meiden. Sie sind zwar Wiederkäuer, haben aber keine gespaltene Klauen. **7 Auch das Schwein ist für euch verboten. Es hat zwar gespaltene Klauen, ist aber kein Wiederkäuer.** 8 Esst keins von diesen Tieren und berührt sie auch nicht, wenn sie verendet sind. Sie alle gelten für euch als unrein.

Isaiah 65 and 66 on pigs and pork

65: 2 All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people, who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations-- 3 a people who continually provoke me to my very face, **offering sacrifices in gardens** and burning incense on altars of brick; 4 who sit among the graves and spend their nights keeping secret vigil; who **eat the flesh of pigs**, and whose pots hold broth of unclean meat; 5 who say, 'Keep away; don't come near me, for I am too sacred for you!' Such people are smoke in my nostrils, a fire that keeps burning all day.

66: 1 This is what the Lord says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my **whoever makes a grain offering is like one who presents pig's blood**, and whoever burns memorial incense, like one who worships an idol. (...) 17 "Those who consecrate and purify themselves **to go into the gardens**, following the one in the midst of those **who eat the flesh of pigs** and rats and other abominable things--they will meet their end together," declares the Lord.

Pig Sacrifice in a Hattian text

[I]f the moon gives an omen and in giving the omen it strikes [a per]son, then I do as follows: I dig the earth. Into the hole I take the karaå of a pig (and) the dung of a h[orse(?)] (and) [after]ward, I stick a piglet (into it). If it is a girl child, I take a she-piglet. If it is a boy child I take a he-piglet, and I drive in (nails) over (it). We will take seven nails of iron, seven nails of bronze, seven nails of copper (and) stone to the gate. We bow at the door of the inner chamber. If at any time it (i.e., the door) opens, we will take that stone and we will nail (it in) place. [...] They cook the piglet. Then they bring it back. I take a little bit (from) every body part and I present (them) to the Sun-goddess of the Earth. [...] I break a thick loaf. I take the piglet and carry it into the inner chamber. The female attendants eat it. The bones, however, they bring to the kitchen and I sell them.

Herodotus on Pig Avoidance AND Sacrifice in Egypt

The Egyptians regard the pig as an unclean animal; and if they casually touch one they immediately plunge themselves, clothes and all, into the water. This prejudice operates to the **exclusion of all swineherds, although natives of Egypt, from the temples**: with people of this description a connection by marriage is avoided, and they are reduced to the necessity of intermarrying among those of their own profession. The only deities to whom the Egyptians offer swine are **Bacchus and Luna**; to these they **sacrifice swine** when **the moon is at the full**, after which they eat the flesh. (...). They who are poor make the figures of swine with meal, which, having first baked, they offer on the altar.

Summary: pig in Ancient Near Eastern sources

- Pig was singled out as a special animal
- Pig was often treated as an unclean animal because of dirty habits (Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians)
- Pig was not eaten by Babylonians and Assyrians
- Pig was related to the full moon and to the gods of the underworld, and suitable for offering to these (Hittites, Egyptians, Greeks)
- Pig was considered as especially close to the human: the gender of the sacrificed piglet was same as the gender of the sick baby (Hattian text)
- Hebrew Bible view of pigs needs to be seen in the context

2 Maccabees 6: martyrdom rather than eating pork

Chapter 6: 18 There was an elderly and highly respected teacher of the Law by the name of Eleazar, whose mouth was being forced open **to make him eat pork**. 19 But he preferred an honorable death rather than a life of disgrace. [...] All his life he had lived in perfect obedience to God's holy laws, so he replied, "Kill me, here and now. (...) 31 So Eleazar died. But his **courageous death** was remembered as a glorious example, not only by young people, but by the entire nation as well.

1 Maccabees: Jews forced to sacrifice pigs in Temple

1 Mac 1:44 The king also sent messengers with a decree to Jerusalem and all the towns of Judea, ordering the people to follow customs that were foreign to the country. [...] 46They were even ordered to defile the Temple and the holy things in it. 47They were commanded to build pagan altars, temples, and shrines, and **to sacrifice pigs** and other unclean animals there. 48They were forbidden to circumcise their sons and were **required to make themselves ritually unclean in every way they could...**

Roman period sources



Pagan Roman
sources and
images



Rabbinic Jewish
texts



Christian texts

The boar (*aper*) of the Legio X Fretensis



Aeneas' white sow with 30 piglets



Eusebius, *Chronicon*

“In front of the gate which led to Bethlehem, he [Hadrian] placed a pig [*sus*] carved in marble signifying that the Jews were subject to the Romans.”

Rabbinic Jewish MIDRASH about ROME as a PIG.

Focus on 4 texts from
the Jewish Bible (Old
Testament)

1. Genesis 25: Esau = Edom = Rome
2. Leviticus 11:7: fourth unclean animal, the pig = Rome
3. Daniel 7: Fourth Beast = Fourth Empire = Rome
4. Psalm 80:14: “the pig of the woods gnaws at it, and the creatures of the field feed on it”
5. Isaiah 66:17: “you eat the meat of pigs... and I will destroy you for this”
= about Rome

Genesis 25: Esau and Jacob

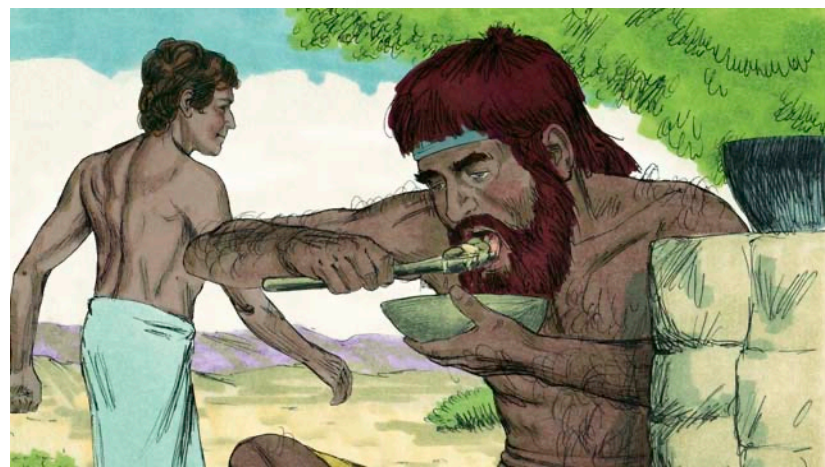
Bible:

Jacob = Israel

Esau = Edom

Midrash:

Esau/Edom = Rome



The four beasts of Daniel 7



Rabbinic Midrash: Pig = Fourth Kingdom = Edom/Rome

Moses foresaw the empires engaged in their activities. Among the unclean animals, the camel alludes to Babylon (...). The badger alludes to Media (...). The hare alludes to Greece (...). **The pig alludes to Edom.** Moses mentioned the first three of them in one verse, but the last by itself in another verse. (...) Moses said '**And the pig, though it has a split hoof completely divided and does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you**' (Lev. 11:7). Why is Rome compared to a pig? To tell you this: **Just as a pig puts forth its hooves as if to say: 'See that I am clean', so does the empire of Rome pretend to execute justice while it commits violence and robbery.** (...)

Leviticus: 4 unclean animals	Daniel's vision 4 animals	Daniel: interpretation	Midrash
Camel	Lion	Four Kingdoms	First kingdom = Camel=Babylonia
Badger	Bear		Second kingdom = Badger=Media
Hare	Leopard		Third kingdom =Hare=Greece
Pig	“monster”		Fourth kingdom =Pig= “Edom” (Rome)

The 5 texts combined. The downfall of the pig- eaters

Edom = Rome = Christianity =
4th kingdom = pig = boar of
the woods = Isaiah 66:7

The pig” (Lev 14,7) represents the evil kingdom of Edom, since it is stated: “The pig of the woods gnaws at it” [i.e., at Jerusalem] (Ps 80,14). Why is it compared to the pig (*Hazir*)? Because the Holy One is going to pay it back (*lehaHzir*) with strict judgment. How? In the age to come the Holy One will issue a proclamation: Whoever has been engaged in the Torah may come and receive his reward. Then the gentiles also will say: “Give us our reward, for we also have performed such and such a commandment.” The Holy One has said: “Whoever has not eaten abhorrent creatures and creeping things may receive his reward.” At that time they receive their judgment, as stated: *Those who eat the flesh of the pig, the abhorrent creature, and the mouse shall be consumed together, says the lord* (Isa 66:17).

NT about Jewish food laws for non-Jewish believers

- Can Jewish Christians eat together with non-Jewish Christians?
- Should non-Jews who want to become Christian follow the Jewish food laws?
- Paul in Letter to the Romans 14: 14-15: no food is unclean but be considerate when you eat with others
- Acts of the Apostles 15: non-Jewish Christians should not keep all the food laws, only some. Pig is not specifically mentioned.

Mark 5: a demon called legion



1 They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. 2 When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. [...]. 6 When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. 7 He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? [...]. 9 Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." [...] 11 A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. 12 The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." 13 He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. [...] 15 When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid

Summary: Pig in antique Hellenistic, Roman, Jewish, and Christian Sources

- Romans and Greek proudly self-identify with the pig
- Jews combine biblical abhorrence of the pig with disdain for and revolt against tGreeks and Romans
- Romans blame the Jews for not eating pig
- Early Christians are caught in between:
 - traces of Jewish revolt against the Romans (Marc 5)
 - loosening Jewish food laws to include Romans in the community of Jesus-believers

III. The medieval iconography of the Judensau

Variations, concepts, implications

Various types of Judensau



Remagen Pfarrhoftor



b—Sow and piglets. Gate in Remagen (detail).



Hrabanus De Universo about sus, pig + 13th cent. British bestiaria image



Swine (*sues*) signify sinners and unclean persons or *heretics*, about which it is laid down in the Law: “because they divide the hoof and do not chew the cud let not their flesh be touched” (Lev 11:7) by true believers. Though these men take upon themselves each Testament of the Law and of the Gospel yet because they do not ruminate upon spiritual food, they are unclean . . . Swine’s flesh belongs to polluted things, which, among other precepts of the Old Testament, are prescribed as unclean. *They have, moreover, passed on the remains of their sins to their children when they cried out, “His blood be on us and on our children (Matt 27:25).”*

Porcus signifies in the same way unclean persons and sinners, about which it is written in the Psalms: “They are full of pork (*porcina*), and they have left what they have over to their little ones” (Ps 17/16:14). He speaks about the impurities of the *Jews*, which are known to be prohibited by the Lord. Swine’s flesh belong to the polluted things, which are among other precepts of the old Testament, prescribed as unclean. They have moreover, passed on the remains of their sins to their children when they cried out “His blood be on us and on our children (Mat 27:25)

Judensau
from
Heilsbronn,
Münster



Oldest Judensau, ca. 1230 Brandenburg Dom

- Hybrid creature: human arm, head and hat
- Jews are not just compared to pigs, they ARE pigs
- Jew is human in disguise
- “Pinnekas”
- Num 25:1-9.12-13
- Jewis zealousness



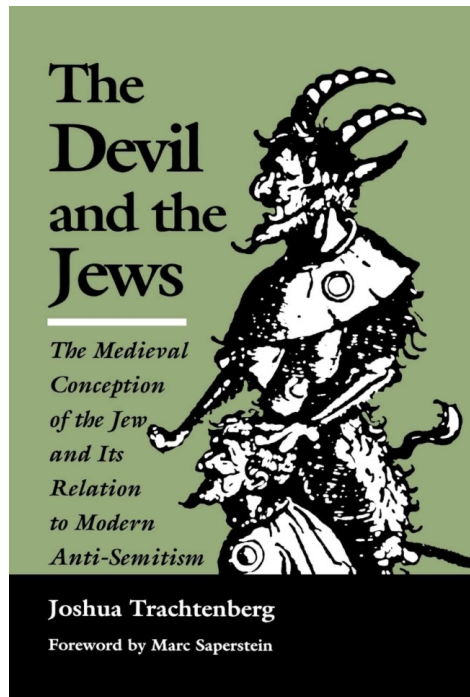
Colmar (Alsace) 14th cent.

Pig with horns →
Devil!





Jews and the Devil



John 8:44 “You are the children of your father, the Devil, and you want to follow your father's desires. From the very beginning he was a murderer and has never been on the side of truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he is only doing what is natural to him, because he is a liar and the father of all lies.”



14th cent.
Frankfurt
Brücken-Thurm
Judensau

+
the ritual
murder of
Simon of Trent

(reproduction)



Wittenberg 1305



Broadsheet showing the Wittenberg
 Judensau, Wolfgang Meissner
 1596. Source: Wikipedia

Luther, Vom Schem Hamphoras und Vom Geschlecht Christi, 1543

- „Est is hie zu Wittemberg an unser Pfarrkirchen ein Saw inn Stein gehauen da ligen junge ferchel und Juden unter die saugen. Hinder der Saw stehet ein Rabin der hebt der Saw das rechte Bein empör und mit seiner linchen hand zeucht er den pirtzel über sich bückt und cuckt mit grossem vleis der Saw unter dem pirtzel inn den Thalmud hineinals wolt er etwas scharffs und sonderlichs lesen und ersehen. Daselbsher haben sie gewislich ir Schem Hamphoras [...] Die zu möcht man leicht das wort Schem hamphoras zihen und keren nemlich Peres Schama [da gibt Mist]...”
- Schem hamephoras → sham haperes [da ist der Mist]

Vom Schem Hamphoras: Und vom Geschlecht Christi.
Matthaei am j. Capitel.

D. Mart. Luth.

Wittemberg.

M. D. XLIII.

Ancient contributions to Judensau image & concept

- OT food laws
- Pig sacrifice in ANE
- Similarities pigs & humans
- Roman white sow
- Legio X Fretensis boar

- Greek and Roman torturing Jews to eat and sacrifice pig
- Jewish interpretation Rome = pig
- NT: debate about food laws
- NT: Jews as children of devil (John)

Caricatures of Emile Zola during Dreyfus affaire ca. 1900

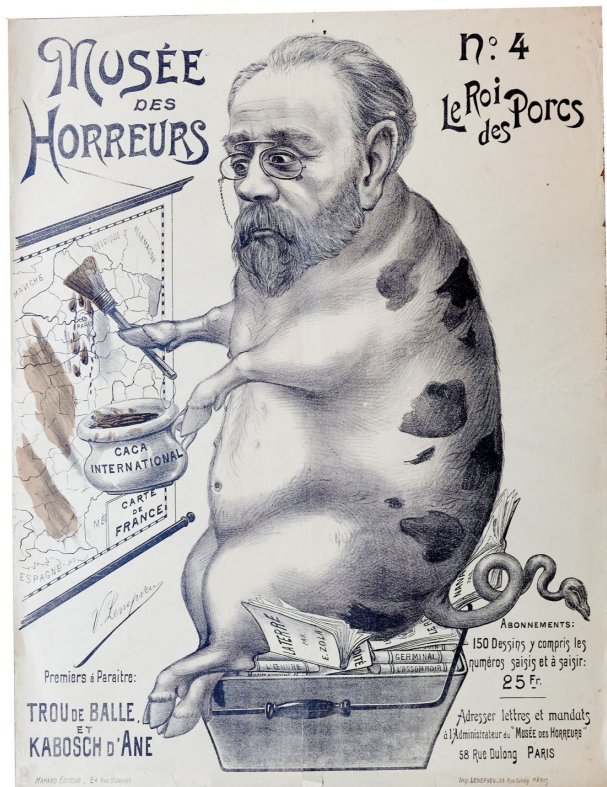


Figure 1. Sapeck (Eugène François Bonaventura Bataille), "La Haute-École de M. Émile Zola," in *Tout-Paris*, May 30, 1880. Courtesy of Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Antisemitic
song against
foreign
minister
Walter
Rathenau ca.
1920

Auch Rathenau, der
Walter,
Erreicht kein hohes Alter,
Knallt ab den Walther
Rathenau
Die gottverfluchte
Judensau!

FUCK THE
NEW WORLD ORDER



ROTHSCHILD

Delincuente y sávanico 2014



Charles Edward Frith @charlesfrith - Nov 6

Why Murdoch and Rothschilds Push for War j.mp/1EQthUJ



40



20

teha

نقل السفارة الأمريكية إلى القدس

نخني



الوطن

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سلمان المالك

Die Wittenberger Judensau muss weg!
Wirklich?

IV. What to do with medieval Judensau on historical buildings?

- Remove?
- Cover?
- Put explanatory plaques?
- ...

ANTISEMITISCHES RELIEF

Brandenburger „Judensau“
wird verhüllt

»Judensau«-Streit vor Gericht: Kirche hält an Skulptur
fest – und argumentiert mit »zeitlichem
Trennungsstrich« Von Peter Maxwill