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**ESSENTIAL PAPERS ON JUDAISM
AND CHRISTIANITY IN CONFLICT**

From Late Antiquity to the Reformation

Edited by Jeremy Cohen



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The Jews in Christian Europe

Lester K. Little

In the eleventh century, when Latin Christendom for the first time achieved a self-conscious unity, there remained within its borders one group of people, the Jews, who were immune to the moral condemnations by the clergy of those who engaged in monetary transactions. It was in the same century that European Jews began to settle in towns to engage extensively in commerce, and to specialize in the money trade. They gained such a reputation for expertise in the handling of money that they eventually became identified with money and moneylending in the Christian consciousness. And since these were the objects of profound ambivalence on the part of Christians, such an identification carried dangerous risks.

1. MONTPELERS

The first millennium of Christian-Jewish relations was marked by an uneasy coexistence, at times tense and hate-filled but rarely violent. In territories controlled by Germanic tribes, where Roman law no longer afforded its protection, the Jews' legal status depended entirely upon the will of the king. During the post-Carolingian period, the Jews came under the control of various feudal lords, ecclesiastical and lay. When the meagre urban and commercial activity of the Carolingian era waned,

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withdrawal to the land became nearly complete. This was necessarily as true of Jews as of anyone else.

While the Jews did not, of course, lose their identity in this period, they probably came nearer to merging into the rest of the European population than at any other time before the nineteenth century. Everywhere Jews settled, they used the local language. If their well-educated leaders knew Hebrew, the fact is no more remarkable than the fact that a few Christians learned Latin: it had little to do with separating a Jewish from a Christian community. Whereas Jews tended to adopt local Jewish from a Christian community. Whereas Jews tended to adopt local names, many Christians favoured the use of Old Testament names. Jews did not distinguish themselves by wearing any special clothing, nor did they look different from their Christian neighbours. The historical record, at least, shows that Christian writers did not describe Jews as having any peculiar physical characteristics, and Christian artists did not render Jewish subjects, such as members of the Holy Family, with what they thought to be peculiarly Jewish attributes. There is no trace or profession of the period that one can identify as either a normal or the exclusive Jewish occupation.¹ There were some Jews engaged in commerce—like those mentioned in a tenth-century charter on behalf of Jews and other traders² at Magdeburg—just as there were some non-Jewish merchants, as the same phrase from the same charter attests.³ Like other early merchants, Jewish merchants gave credit and performed rudimentary banking operations. Other Jews owned rural properties and were integrated into the rural economy.

With the fundamental changes in the economy that we have been discussing came a changed status for the Jews, who were selling their rural lands (which had most likely undergone a notable increase in value) and moving to towns. The concern of ecclesiastical authorities as to whether property actually or formerly owned by a Jew is subject to the payment of a tithe testifies to the importance of Jewish property ownership.⁴

In towns the Jews lived together in one street or neighbourhood, as at Worms, where there was a Jewish quarter by the close of the tenth century. The first walled Jewish neighbourhood on record was provided in 1084 by Rudiger, the Bishop of Speyer. In the following century the walled ghetto became a standard feature of the European town.⁵ While the Jews continued to know and use the prevailing local language, just as their ancestors had done, many Jewish communities in the twelfth

century decided to give instruction in Hebrew to all of their children, girls as well as boys.⁵ In such ways the Jewish identity became increasingly distinct.

The same age gave rise to distinctive forms of dress for Jews, such as the tall, conical hat. Christian ecclesiastical legislators sought to remove all doubts and ambiguities by imposing certain external badges as a way of indicating a Jew. Circular yellow patches or else six-pointed stars, about the size of a man's hand, were to be worn conspicuously. The fact that Jews were generally not recognizable by either physical appearance or clothing is confirmed by the insistent demands of church councils, beginning with the Fourth Lateran in 1215, that Jews identify themselves with these badges.⁶

This newly sharpened identity aids in the sketchy process of assembling a notion—it can be little more than that—of the size and locus of the European Jewish population. From before the start of *reconquista*, there had been Jews in Christian Spain. In the tenth century, there were Jewish communities in Catalonia, in Castile, and in the far western part of the peninsula, near Coimbra. Jews owned rural properties in every major principality. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they also appeared everywhere engaged in various professions and trades alongside Christians. The most important urban settlements were at Barcelona, Zaragoza, Burgos, and Toledo. Only during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries did Jews become more and more involved in professional moneylending, and even then not exclusively.⁷ Most Italian Jews were concentrated in a few relatively large communities in the South, while the rest were spread thinly over the central and northern sections. When Peter Damian agreed to write a treatise against Jews, he did so reluctantly, preferring to write against the vices of the age, for these enemies are always with us, while Jews have now almost ceased to exist.⁸ A traveller to Italy in the 1160s found only two Jews at Genoa, while he claimed that there were twenty Jewish families in Pisa and about 200 in Rome. The number of Jewish people in Venice is set by historians at about 1,000. Prior to the middle of the thirteenth century, there were relatively few Jews in the important communities of northern Italy. From that time on they appeared from counties north of the Alps, often as bankers.⁹

Without intercription since Carolingian times there had been concentrations of Jewish people in the towns along the Rhine and the other

rivers of western Germany. They owned and managed arable land; they worked as artisans, merchants, and—already in the eleventh century—moneylenders. The spread of Jews eastward in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was part of the German drive to colonize the lands to the east; afterwards it resulted from the expulsions from the western kingdoms. The Rhenish communities were also responsible for colonizing the Netherlands towns. There were Jews in Louvain by 1220 at the latest, and in several neighbouring cities within a few decades; they all seem to have emigrated from Rhineland and, barring a few medical doctors, all were professional moneylenders.¹⁰

Two hundred and forty twelfth-century Jewish communities have thus far been identified in the territories that comprise modern France. Most of the important northern and north-eastern towns had Jewish residents.¹¹ The Jews established in England by the Norman conquerors apparently came from Rouen; those still at Rouen in 1096 experienced one of the early pogroms.¹² Reims had a Jewish quarter at least as early as 1103. A Jewry Street with a synagogue and 24 houses owned by Jews ran for a block in the centre of the Ile-de-la-Cité in Paris. Yet there were far more important Jewish populations in the southern towns, especially in Provence and Languedoc. The heaviest concentration of communities was in the Vaucluse: 26 communities lay within a 30-mile radius of Carpentras. Arles, with several hundred Jews, was known for its many distinguished rabbis. Jews figured prominently in the commerce of Marseilles, though for raising capital they had to seek out Christian moneylenders. One of the oldest, largest, and wealthiest communities in the region flourished at Narbonne. At Perpignan, where there is no reference to Jews prior to 1185, a Jewish community appeared and increased to about 300 or 400 people by the late thirteenth century, giving Perpignan one of the largest communities north of the Pyrenees. A very few of these Perpignan Jews were artisans or merchants; nearly all were moneylenders. Perpignan, and Roussillon generally, underwent a considerable expansion at this time, and a large part of the capital and financial talent required was apparently coming from southern French Jewish communities. In a case brought before the court of a small Provençal town in the thirteenth century, the accusation against a Christian usurer stated that there were many Christian usurers in that place who were worse than the Jews. Thus moneylending—hardly an exclusive preserve of the Jews—was becoming the virtually exclusive occupation of Jews.¹³

In England, the Jews held a more conspicuous position in financial matters but could never surpass the Christian moneylenders or escape the immediate and strict control of the king. The strongest European monarchy had been established in England before the effects of the Commercial Revolution were felt there. When the Jews arrived in England, they did so late in the eleventh century under the aegis of the Normans and were made to live together in London near the Tower. Only during the disorderly reign of Stephen (1135–54) did they start to settle elsewhere. When most widely dispersed, towards the middle of the thirteenth century, the Jews were settled in 21 towns and altogether made a community of perhaps 3,000 people. As elsewhere, a few of these people were artisans and merchants, but most heads of families were moneylenders. The principal development for the English Jews came around the year 1180. Until then, Henry II borrowed from them on a modest scale in order to compensate for a lapse in his regular income or to cover an extraordinary expense; apparently Henry repaid these loans. After 1180, Henry tallaged the Jews; that is, he taxed them arbitrarily. An exchequer of the Jews was organized; each Jewish community was to have a leader, a priest (or bishop) of the Jews, as he was called, whose duties probably included negotiation of tallages with the royal government. The genius behind this method of collecting revenue lay in the confluence of the following facts: (1) virtually every class and group in English society held loans from the Jews; (2) the Jews had no choice except to a pay a tallage; (3) the only way they could get their money was to insist on payment of debts due; (4) while this insistence would perhaps provoke hostility, the Jews remained under royal protection; and (5) the Jews could thus drain off a layer of money from the population at large and pass it on to the royal treasury without the king's having to get approval to levy a tax or his having to pay the costs of collecting a tax. Therefore the Jews, prior to the development of a general and regular system of taxation, had in effect, if unofficially, become royal tax collectors. Under Henry II and Richard, the arrangement gave satisfaction to all parties involved; its abuse by John eventually fractured all parties. Considerably smaller tallages were taken from the Jews by Henry III and Edward I; meanwhile these kings sought ways to get taxes by consent and Edward began the policy of borrowing regularly from Italian bankers.¹⁸

With allowances made for local variations, remarkable changes, be-

gun in the eleventh century, had thus taken place in the condition of European Jewry. Jews entered virtually every phase of the new commercial activity, including moneylending. 'All Jews', observed Herman of Cologne in the following century, 'are becoming involved in commerce.'¹² But that streak of exclusiveness that began to appear in various mercantile guilds had the effect of restricting Jews more and more to the field of finance, where they were allowed to operate, though not without competition and a strong measure of control.¹³

By the thirteenth century, the Jews had become a people—still very small in number—living in the midst of Latin Christian society and almost exclusively in towns; practising a religion different from the prevailing one; being distinguished by certain forms of clothing and badges; increasingly self-conscious about its own spiritual and cultural heritage; and in disproportionate numbers deeply involved in the money trade. This involvement placed the Jews in a peculiar situation vis-à-vis Christians.

2. INFERRORS

The relative stability and charity that characterized Christian-Jewish relations in the post-Carolingian era began to deteriorate in the eleventh century. This deterioration is seen in numerous instances of unrestrained physical violence directed against individual Jews or against entire Jewish communities. Deterioration is seen, also, in the practice of forced baptism and its concomitant executions and suicides. It is seen in the many varieties of insult that Christian society added to the injuries it had inflicted upon the Jews. Some insults were sanctioned by popular myth, others by formal public ceremony. Finally, an age relentless in its pursuit of precise legal definitions gave expression to these deteriorated relationships in the form of new laws, new constitutions, and new legal principles.

In the years 1009 and 1010 the Jews of Orleans and Limoges were ordered to choose either to go away, to be converted to Christianity, or to be killed. Practically none was converted but many apparently fled, and a few took their own lives.¹⁴ The unusual phenomenon of a Christian being converted to the Jewish religion was itself the cause of an expulsion. When a duke's chaplain was converted in 1013, the Emperor Henry II expelled the Jewish community from Mainz. Henry's gesture

can be interpreted as a warning to potential Jewish proselytizers, but perhaps it was also an angry admission of humiliation at the fact that a relatively important cleric had given in to the errors of the Jews.¹⁹

At Toulouse in the eleventh century, there was a legend about some Jewish traitors who, more than a century earlier, had given over their town to the advancing armies of Islam. One can understand that civic pride might keep alive such a story of defeat, if there were a clearly established case of treachery involved. But it was a curious civic pride that at Toulouse invented a defeat—for the Moors never took Toulouse—in order to punish the descendants of the supposed traitors. In any event, to perpetuate the memory of this tale, tradition ordained that a Jew stand before the Basilica of St Stephen on Easter Day and be ceremoniously struck in the face; one year the appointed Jew died from the blow. This cruel practice came to an end early in the twelfth century, but only through commutation by an annual money payment to the clergy. Similar traditions and their commutations are recorded at Beziers, Arles, and Chalon-sur-Saône.¹⁹

In Castile, in a moment of governmental weakness shortly after the death of Sancho the Great in 1035, the burghers of Castorritz launched an attack against the neighbouring town of Mercenillo. They killed 60 Jews and forced the remaining Jews to return with them to Castorritz.²⁰ The Spanish Reconquest provided the occasion for knights to pass through southern France and Catalonia; a group of knights on their way through in 1063 attacked several Jewish communities, killing and despoiling as they went. At Narbonne, the archbishop apparently did nothing to deter them in their cruel mission. The viscount, on the other side of the city, protected his Jews against the outsiders, as did members of the Spanish clergy generally. Pope Alexander II condemned the behaviour of the Archbishop of Narbonne and the knights, and he lauded the viscount and the Spanish clergy. He reminded all parties of God's displeasure at any person's spilling of human blood. Yet he went on to distinguish the case of the Jews, who live peacefully among Christians and whom the mercy of God had predestined to be saved, from that of the Saracens, who had persecuted the Christians and driven them out of their own cities and lands. There could be no condoning of the knights' behaviour, whether caused, as Alexander said, by rash ignorance or by blind cupidity. Still, such behaviour became part of every major expedition against

the Saracens, and so in this respect as in virtually all others, the Spanish experience of the eleventh century served as a model for the crusades.²¹

The best known of the attacks on the Jews that coincided with the first crusade took place in the Rhine Valley. Like the Viscount of Narbonne 30 years before, Bishop John of Speyer stood by the Jews of his city in May 1096. He assembled an armed force to protect the Jews, whom he gathered in a castle, and in this way effectively frustrated the designs of the crusading bands. A few weeks later the Jews of Worms faced a similar test but with a less helpful bishop. Whether in their own homes or in the episcopal palace, the Jews of Worms were slaughtered. Cologne, Metz, Mainz, Trier, Bamberg, and Prague were among those cities where this pattern was repeated.²²

From the description given by Guibert of Nogent of the massacre at Rouen in September of 1096 comes the classic formulation of the crusaders' rationale: it would be putting things in the wrong order for them to set out first to travel great distances eastward to fight the enemies of God when the greatest enemy of all was there before their very eyes. They herded the Jews together in a place of worship (*ecclesiam*)—a church perhaps, but more likely a synagogue—and then slaughtered them all, sparing only those willing to accept Christianity.²³

Greater emphasis has been placed traditionally on the German rather than the French massacres, perhaps because of the imbalance in extant source materials on the subject. Yet recent study has yielded specific details about a massacre inflicted by crusaders from Langpedoc and Provence upon the Jews of some Provençal community, perhaps Mornieux, a small town in the Vaucluse. Such a case gives some credence to the assertion of Richard of Póitiers that the crusaders, before going off to the Holy Land, exterminated in many massacres the Jews of virtually all Gaul, apart from those who were willing to be baptized.²⁴

The Second Crusade followed the pattern established by the First, with the addition of an influential crusade preacher, who urged attacks against Jews. A Cistercian monk named Ralph travelled throughout those parts of Gaul that touch the Rhine and inflamed many thousands of the inhabitants of Cologne, Mainz, Worms, Speyer, Strasbourg, and many other neighbouring cities, towns, and villages to accept the cross. However, he heedlessly included in his preaching that the Jews whose houses were scattered throughout the cities and towns should be slain as foes of the Christian religion.²⁵ St Bernard had to be called in to silence

this Ralph, a task he succeeded in accomplishing only with great difficulty, due to the fervor of Ralph's popular following. Bernard finally opposed the pogroms but in his own way he helped foster the mentality that was so receptive to the preaching of Ralph. He argued that Christians should not kill Jews 'for they are living tokens to us, constantly recalling our Lord's passion'.²⁶ This was a traditional argument, but a provocative one also, and as such it represented a significant choice on Bernard's part. Moreover, his intervention in the disputed papal election of 1130 reveals a deeply hostile attitude towards Jews. The candidate he opposed, Anacletus, was the great-grandson of a Jew who had been converted to Christianity. Jewish ancestry had not prevented the future Anacletus from being a student at Paris, a monk at Cluny, a priest, a loyal supporter of the papal reform party, a cardinal, a papal legate, or the leader of the majority in the college of cardinals. None the less, Bernard wrote to the Emperor Lothair, saying: 'It is well known that Jewish offspring now occupies the see of St Peter to the injury of Christ'.²⁷ The Second and Third Crusades added several English towns to the list of localities that experienced pogroms. In the autumn of 1189 a wave of persecution broke out in London and spread throughout most of the country. In March 1190, virtually the entire Jewish community at York was wiped out. Their houses were pillaged, their records destroyed, and the streets were strewn with their corpses.²⁸

The signs of things to come can be seen in the policies of Philip Augustus. Shortly after the coronation in 1180, as Regard tells it, he had the Jews throughout all France seized in their synagogues and despoiled of their gold and silver and garments, as the Jews themselves had spoiled the Egyptians at their exodus from Egypt.²⁹ The Jews of the royal domain were imprisoned and then released only upon payment of a ransom of 15,000 marks. Next Philip cancelled four-fifths of all debts owed by Christians to Jews, and had the remaining one-fifth paid to the royal treasury. The final step, taken in 1182, was the confiscation of all Jewish property and the expulsion of the Jews from his lands. Philip readmitted the Jews under very carefully regulated conditions in 1198, but the pattern of future treatment of the Jews had been set.

The trampling underfoot of European Jews took place on an intellectual as well as a physical plane. Works by Peter Damian, Gilbert Crapin, and Peter of Blois, to name just a few, follow a well established pattern of citing Old Testament texts, especially Messianic passages, and then

trying to prove that the Messiah had come.³⁰ The *Tractatus contra Iudeorum interitum duritiam* ('Treatise Against the Unyielding Obstinacy of the Jews') by Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny from 1122 to 1156, contained a chapter on the remarkable achievement of having the *Koran* translated into Latin, so that Christian scholars would no longer need to rely on nonsensical notions about the religion of Islam, but rather could give serious attention to the authentic text of Islam. Peter here dealt at length with Talmudic scholarship. He showed how Christian and Jewish understanding on particular biblical passages was at variance and then attacked the Jewish interpretations.

One of the allegorical themes of romance literature was the contrasting relationship of the Old Law with the New, and of Synagogue with the Church.³¹ In the thirteenth century the legend of the wandering Jew came to the West, first in an Italian chronicle entry for 1223 and then in Roger of Wendover's *Floris historiarii* five years later.³² Lunry also registered a shift in attitude around 1200 when in the Good Friday service the congregation was instructed not to kneel during the prayer for the Jews (urging their ultimate conversion); the faithful continued to kneel, however, for the other solemn prayers.³³

The inferior status of Jews was internalized by Christians in pictures as well as words, with the use of such signs as the tall pointed hat and the circular badge, but more significantly with the use of such attributes as the hook-nose and the crafty eye. In representations of Christ's passion, Jews are implicated at every stage. Not only are the soldiers who take Jesus in the garden prominently hook-nosed. Jews: Plate is shown as a Jew, and the same is true of those who nail Jesus to the cross, of the one who puts the sponge with vinegar to his mouth, and of the one who pierces his side. The allegorical figure of Synagogue found in several hundred works in France and Germany suffers an astonishing array of indignities; and in the thirteenth century, the theme of Jews sucking at the teats of a sow first appeared in Germany.³⁴

The legal position of the Jews declined in the course of the second feudal age from an insecure but negotiable status of virtual equality to one of abject servility. This same decline coincided with the period of the coalescing of feudal principalities into entities that in everything but name were sovereign states. Papal lawyers in about 1120 drew up a *Constitutio pro Iudeis*, which established basic guarantees for Jewish

life and religion, but with the ambiguous provision that papal protection was reserved for those Jews who did not plot against the Christian faith.³⁶ Beginning in the late twelfth century, most of the urban charters in Aragon and Castile asserted that Jews are the slaves of the crown and belong exclusively to the royal treasury.³⁷ Similar statements were formulated by French, English, and imperial lawyers.³⁸

In such a climate of thought it is not surprising to find Abbot Peter the Venerable wondering whether a Jew is a human being, for he will neither accede to human reasoning nor yield to authoritative statements that are divine and from his own tradition. I do not know, I say, whether that person is human from whose flesh the heart of stone is not yet removed.³⁹

The treatment accorded Jews, the money-specialists of Christian society, was thus in thought as well as deed increasingly cruel in the course of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. As justification for this cruel treatment, Christians added the insult of regarding the Jews as inferiors, as some class of sub-human beings. They wrote tracts to prove the point, extended the argument with pictorial and plastic representations, and fixed the point by law. All of these themes, depictions, and laws are understandable in the light of Christian violence against the Jews. But why did all of this violence occur in the first place?

3. SCAPGOATS

Any attempt to explore the motives behind Christian violence against Jews must take into account the evolution of attitudes and feelings, as distinguished from overt actions and carefully reasoned theological and legal statements. These are revealed indirectly through such sources as the charges made against Jews, the associations made between Jews and filth, or the changing image of Jews.

The charge of ritual murder is made in the story told by Chaucer's *prologue*. In her story, a pure, fair-haired, golden-throated, seven-year-old choir-boy, son of a poor young Christian widow, is set upon in the ghetto by a filthy Jew who lives in a dark alley, who sits upon the boy's throat, and then dumps the body in a latrine, which the Jews continue to use.⁴⁰ Whereas Chaucer was writing in the latter part of the fourteenth century, the first actual charge of ritual murder was made in Norwich in 1144, when the body of a young boy was found on Gosol

Friday and the story quickly spread that the boy had been crucified by Jews. This crucifixion was not the random act of a few local Jews but, according to the story, the carefully contrived action of the collectivity of European Jewry, carrying out a plan conceived at an assembly of rabbis held at Narbonne in the previous year.⁴¹

Similar charges were made at Gloucester in 1168, Bury St Edmunds in 1181, Winchester in 1192, Norwich again in 1235, and, most notably, Lincoln in 1255. The English did not monopolize the ritual murder charge: it is encountered at Blois in 1171 and at Pontoise and Zaragoza in 1182. At Wurzburg, in 1147, the body of a Christian was discovered in the Main and the Jews bore the blame and cost of this unexplained Christian death with several Jewish lives. These are but a few of the charges that were made, and they continued as persistently in the thirteenth century as in the twelfth.⁴² Many of them coincided with preparations for crusading expeditions, and these expeditions were in turn, as previously pointed out, almost invariably accompanied by massacres of Jews. Every few years and in various places there would be an eruption of Christian hostility towards the Jews. Then Christians would create the fantasy that Jews had murdered a Christian child, a point usually embellished with hideous detail. The convenience of such a charge was that Christians could then project their own guilt on to the Jews and accordingly punish the Jews, as befits murderers. At Blois, in 1171, 38 Jews were burned at the stake. At Bray-sur-Seine, in 1195, there were 100 Jewish victims. Nineteen Jews were hanged without trial in connection with the Lincoln affair of 1255.⁴³

The charge of profaning the sacred host was made against some Jews at Belitz, near Berlin, in 1243; the local Jews were taken into custody and burned to death. There were many such cases in Germany, but relatively fewer in other parts of Europe. The charges vary in detail, although the main point is that the Jews got hold of a consecrated wafer and then subjected it to some iniquitous treatment.⁴⁴ The charge of host profanation fulfilled two functions for Christians. First, it permitted them to project on to Jews their doubts about transubstantiation, a doctrine long in the making and finally declared dogma only as recently as the year 1215. There was never a period in which this doctrine enjoyed universal acceptance. The fear of Corpus Christi was established in 1264 to foster its propagation, and little more than a century later Wyclif launched his frontal attacks against it; these attacks were

kept up by others right through to the Reformation. The Corpus Christi plays also served to bolster popular belief in the miracle of transubstantiation. They showed Jews drinking nails into consecrated wafers, thus making them bleed. The dramatic tension was built around this very point, but of course Jews did not have to wonder whether a consecrated wafer were really the body and blood of Christ; that was a problem, instead, for Christians.⁴⁷ The second function fulfilled by the charge of host profanation was that it marked an improvement over the ritual murder charge, for it dispensed with the problem of finding a corpse and of identifying the victim.⁴⁸

The charge that Jews contaminate wells and streams was heard in Germany occasionally before 1300, but more generally coincided with the natural disasters that struck Europe during the fourteenth century.⁴⁹ By then there was an old tradition of associating Jews with filth and of considering them to be filthy. Peter the Venerable complained to King Louis VII that when a church was robbed of a chalice, the thief would sell the stolen object to a Jew and the Jew would in turn do things to the chalice 'horrendous to contemplate, detestable to mention'.⁵⁰ The government of Louis' son and successor included in its rationale for expelling the Jews in 1181 a charge that Jewish pawnbrokers committed disgusting acts with Christian liturgical vessels that had been pawned with them.⁵¹ Matthew Paris recorded the tale of a wealthy English Jew who kept an image of the Virgin inside his barn where he defecated on it repeatedly.⁵² A French counterpart of this story told of a Persian Jew who fell into the public latrine; he reminded the friends who rushed to help him that it was the Sabbath and thus that they should wait. When the king heard of this he ordered his guards to keep the friends away from the latrine on the following day so that the Lord's day would not be violated. And when the Jews came to the unguarded latrine on Monday, their friend was dead.⁵³ A thirteenth-century Austrian poet claimed that thirty Jews could satiate even the largest principality with their stench; and a contemporary Flemish poet related the murder of a Christian boy by the dirty Jews, the stinking dogs (*les villes Juëden, die stinkende Honden*).⁵⁴

The association of filth and racial matter with one's enemies, a common enough phenomenon, takes on special significance in the present case in two ways. First, it places the Jews in the company of that foul-smelling creature, the devil. At a critical moment when a converted Jew

was baptized, that is, when he abandoned his allegiance to the devil and became a servant of Christ, he was thought to lose his foul smell in the purifying waters of baptism.⁵⁵ The personified figure of Synagogue is often shown with the devil; the Church of Christ is set in opposition to the Synagogue of Satan. Secondly, this association calls to mind the connection between filth and money, and indeed one often finds a representation of avarice, seated before his coffers and counting coins, a devil with his tongue sticking out, lounging nearby, and he, avarice, bearing the standard attributes of a Jew.⁵⁶ One of the twelfth-century dialogues between Synagogue and Church had Synagogue make the charge that Christian rulers and clerics did not demonstrate in their own lives what was generally regarded as Christian holiness. The reply given by Church was notable by the way it ignored this point and also by its counter-charge to Synagogue: 'one could never calculate the extent of your avarice; there is no limit to your evil-doing'.⁵⁷

The personage who more than any other became the epitome of an avaricious man was Judas. 'Judas sold Christ', explained Thomas of Froilmoont, 'out of cupidity'.⁵⁸ Matthew Paris distinguished between the burdens of guilt borne by Paul and Peter on the one hand, and, on the other, by Judas. With Paul the problem was ignorance; with Peter it was a matter of weakness, which in turn generated fear; with Judas the problem was inquiry, and in particular, cupidity.⁵⁹ All of the standard forms of dress for identifying a Jew were applied to Judas, while at the same time he absorbed the attributes of avarice as well.⁶⁰ He was also referred to in the Holy Thursday *penitence* service as 'that most vile of merchants'.⁶¹ Little was known about the early life of this person until a Latin 'Legend of Judas' was composed in the twelfth century (followed shortly by vernacular versions throughout Europe). The legend includes accounts of fratricide, parricide, and incest (with his mother), all as a prelude to his betrayal of Christ.⁶² The importance of these amplifications of the story of Judas lay in the fact that he served, for Christians, as a symbol of all Jews, in the words of one monastic author: 'these things that have been said concerning Judas the traitor extend to the entire Jewish people'.⁶³

The principal mechanism at work in the complicated web of Christian-Jewish relations was projection. This is easy to see in a statement such as Gilbert of Nogent's claim that the Jews were responsible for clerical immorality in his time, giving the reason that Jews were known

to introduce clerics to the company of the 'villainous prince' and to teach them to serve him.⁶² The charge of ritual murder, although more complicated, can be examined in the same light. There are no extant records of widespread killings of Christians by Jews in this period; all that we have in this connection are the elaborately fanciful tales of ritual murder, filled with their airs of conspiracy and perversion. Meanwhile, there is the long irrefutable record of the pogroms, and since, as previously pointed out, the ritual murder charge usually accompanied a pogrom, we are permitted to see that charge as a projection of guilt (and at the same time a justification) for the pogrom. Christians, not able to justify and accept the reality of their violent behaviour towards the Jews, and thereby feeling guilty, projected their guilt on to them rather as one casts an image on to a mirror, and then they attacked in them that which they had found intolerable about themselves.

But reports of pogroms usually included mention of destruction done to property as well as harm done to persons. Some accounts specifically state that the financial records of the Jews were destroyed.⁶³ When official pogroms or expulsions took place governments were careful to preserve Jewish financial records, for the pattern in such cases was for the governments to demand payment into the royal or seigniorial treasury of a portion of the amount previously owed the Jews.⁶⁴ No such interest restrained the perpetrators of the relatively unorganized pogroms. Blind hatred based on religious fanaticism might have stimulated the flow of energy in many of those who attacked Jews and Jewries, but the fact remains that these attacks—whether consciously or not—served the common end of destroying the written evidence of Christians' indebtedness to the Jews. The attacks on Jewish communities—against both property and persons—consisted of more than a cycle of violence, guilt, projection, and more violence. Christians hated Jews because they saw in Jews the same calculating for profit in which they themselves were deeply and, in their own view, unjustifiably involved. It was above all the guilt for this involvement that they projected onto the Jews. The Jews functioned as a scapegoat for Christian failure to adapt successfully to the profit economy.

Peter the Venerable's complaining to the king about what Jews did to stolen liturgical vessels reveals a concrete case of such projection. First of all, he did not emphasize the stealing as a problem; otherwise the discussion would presumably have turned to the protection of churches

and the punishment of thieves. Further indication that this was not a critical problem is the rationale for expulsion later promulgated by the royal government, in which theft was not mentioned; the problem was purely one of what Jewish pawnbrokers did to liturgical vessels. In the second place, what Peter did emphasize was the imaginary problem of what Jews did to pawned objects, 'imaginary' not because it could not happen but because he made no specific charge and because there are no such formal charges extant against Jews. And third, Peter's statement divers attention from the reality that liturgical vessels were being pawned. The reality was that treasure was being transformed into specie. The reality was that someone was undergoing the experience of taking sacred vessels to a perhaps sordid shop and juggling over their precise monetary value in order to realize that treasure in the form of cash.

This reality, moreover, was not hypothetical. The abbey of Cluny, as we shall see, ran heavily into debt in Peter's time; to Jewish moneylenders among others, and when one of the abbey's most generous benefactors passed by there in 1149 to help reduce their debt again, he found that a cross he had presented to the abbey some years before had been stripped of its outer layer of gold.⁶⁵

Peter the Venerable did not participate in pogroms or advocate them. People less well educated and less morally responsible than he gave vent to their feelings of anxiety in all-out attacks against Jewish communities. But Peter in his own way, through the terrible bitterness that his writings display, gave expression to an inner confusion that he could hardly have understood or explained. Little wonder, then, that he doubted whether Jews were human. When Louis VII was preparing to go on crusade (and the Jew-hater Ralph was preaching), Peter wished the king well but also expressed doubt about whether the expedition, even if successful, would be useful, because enemies far worse than the Saracens lived in their very midst. Immediately he added that he was not suggesting that these worse enemies, the Jews, be killed, for God had condemned them to be persecuted in a life worse than death. His idea, though, was that the Jews be made to pay the costs of the forthcoming expedition. And this was just, he argued, because the Jews were wealthy and their cellars were full. Their purses were filled with money and their chests with gold and silver. Yet they did not earn this great wealth by working on the land, nor did they get it from serving as soldiers or in any other honourable and useful

for setting Jews up in finance and then attacking them bitterly for their over-achievements in finance.

Early in the twelfth century, Rupert of Deutz inquired: "Tell me, who are they who gather wicked variance in their homes more than the Jewish people?" Rupert prudently historical question remained unsubstantiated by the obvious answer. Midway through the century, St. Bernard made his revealing assertion that all moneylenders, even Christian moneylenders, are Jews. By the late twelfth century, the very needs of both business and government for a system of credit collided head on with the old moral and legal prohibitions against usury. As there was still no yielding on the side of morality or legality, certain Christian princes, in particular the kings of France and England, who remained in firm and exclusive control of their Jews, created the fiction that some of the Christian moneylenders, clerical as well as lay, living under their jurisdiction, were Jews—"their Jews," of course—thus enabling them to operate at the prince's pleasure, free from harassment by any other authority.⁷¹ Political power in this way brought to the surface and lent support to a myth that had originated in projection.

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6. C. O'Day, p. 266.
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7. Y. Bata, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, tr. L. Shoftman, 2 vols (Philadelphia, 1961-6), I, 39-110; L. Loeb, 'Le nombre des juifs de Castille et d'Espagne au moyen âge: Reine des études juives, XIV (1887)', 183; L. Poliakoff, *De Malinche aux Marranes* (Paris, 1961), p. 127; Baron, *History* IV, 34. Cf. G. Jackson, *The Making of Medieval Spain* (New York, 1972), pp. 191-195; and J. L. Scheindman, *The Rise of the Angevinse-Catalan Empire, 1200-1350*, 2 vols (New York, 1970), II, 419-20.

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 72. The Necessary Preparation for the XVIII. See also, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte des Judentums*, PL, CXVIII, 6630. 'Quoniam illi etiam, qui congregati, vel congregantur, xavianum malum domui suae, magis quam populus Iudaicus, est...'.
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