The Jew in the Medieval Book

This interdisciplinary study explores images of Jews and Judaism in late medieval English literature and culture. Using four main categories – history, miracle, cult and Passion – Anthony Bale demonstrates how varied and changing ideas of Judaism coexisted within well-known antisemitic literary and visual models, depending on context, authorship and audience. He examines the ways in which English writers, artists and readers used and abused the Jewish image in the period following the Jews’ expulsion from England in 1290. The texts are analysed in their manuscript and print contexts in order to show local responses and changing meanings. This important work opens up new texts, sources and approaches for understanding medieval antisemitism and shows how antisemitic stereotypes came to be such potent images which would endure far beyond the Middle Ages.

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The Jew in the Medieval Book

English Antisemitisms, 1350–1500

Anthony Bale
For my parents, Ruth and John, with love and thanks
‘The story is chipped off, so to speak, and passes with a ragged edge into nothing.’

George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*
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6. Jew spitting on Christ, from an Arma Christi roll (England, fifteenth century), Huntington Library MS HM 142, f. 8v. This item is reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.  

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Conventions

Biblical quotations are taken from *The Bible: Authorized King James Version*, R. Caroll and S. Prickett (eds.), Oxford, 1997. Latin and French texts are quoted in the original language where subject to critical analysis. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. Quotations from Chaucer’s works are taken from *RC, The Canterbury Tales* are cited by fragment and line number. Basic publication details are given in the endnotes; further details are given in the bibliographies.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td><em>Chaucer Review</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>EETS e.s.</td>
<td>Early English Text Society, extra series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EETS o.s.</td>
<td>Early English Text Society, original series</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMEV</td>
<td>C. Brown (ed.), <em>The Index of Middle English Verse</em>, New York, 1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JMEMS</td>
<td><em>Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JMH</td>
<td><em>Journal of Medieval History</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAE</td>
<td><em>Medium Ævum</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED</td>
<td>H. Kurath (gen. ed.), <em>Middle English Dictionary</em>, Ann Arbor, 1952–</td>
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<tr>
<td>MES</td>
<td>W. O. Ross (ed.), <em>Middle English Sermons</em>, EETS o.s. 209, London, 1940</td>
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List of abbreviations

**MMBL**  

**MPL**  

**MPV**  

**MR**  

**NML**  
*New Medieval Literatures*

**ODNB**  

**PMLA**  
*Publications of the Modern Languages Association*

**RC**  

**SAC**  
*Studies in the Age of Chaucer*

**STC**  

**SVM**  

**TJHSE**  
*Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*