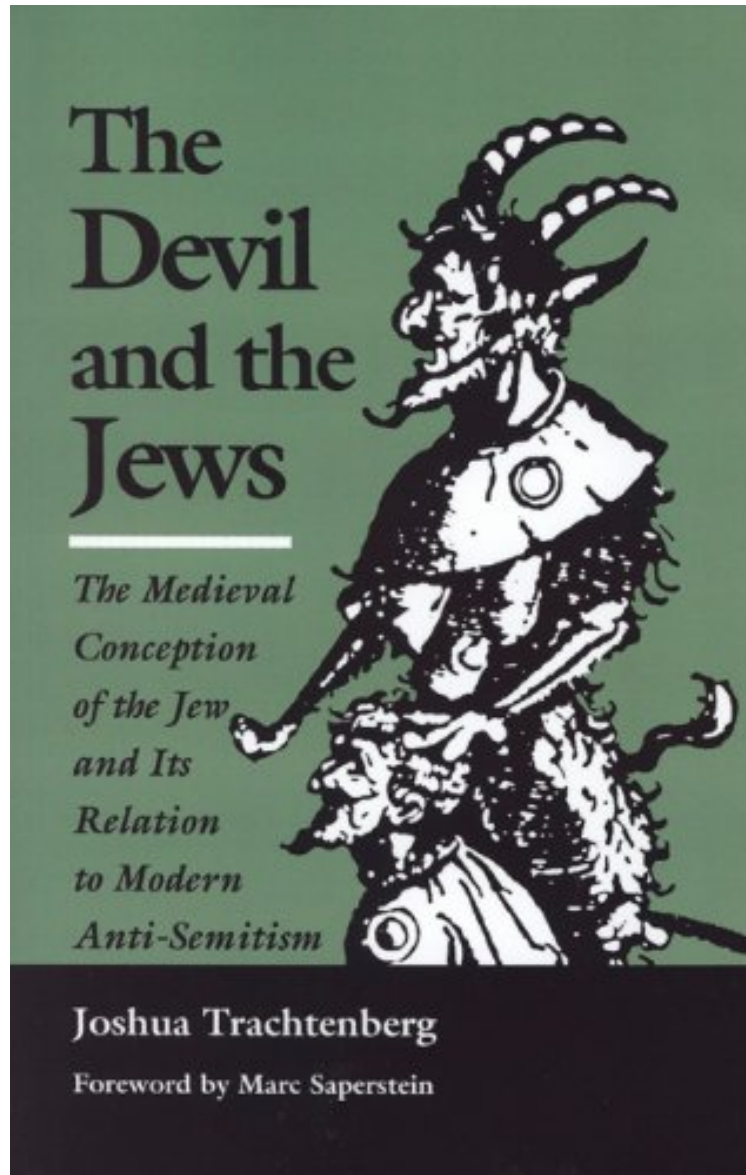


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The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism

Joshua Trachtenberg

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Joshua Trachtenberg : The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting book. By Paula L. Schneider This book, though disturbing to read, is one of the most fascinating books I have read. Rabbi Trachtenberg did a very thorough work on this topic, and he takes care to cite his sources. It is an eye-opener to read about the madness that must have overtaken Western Europe during Medieval times that made Christians wish to malign Jews in such evil ways. The lies that were spread were fascinating to read about. I highly recommend this book to the casual, as well as the scholarly reader.

8 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A MUST READ FOR UNDERSTANDING THE ROOTS OF ANTISEMITISM MYTH By James R. Starkey This one will answer a lot of questions when it comes to antisemitism and how it has festered from one host nation to another for a thousand years. You will see many similarities relating to WWII Nazi Germany's treatment of their Jewish population and how the seeds were planted long ago by the fanatic antisemite Martin Luther. The mandatory wearing of 'Jew Badges' and other bizarre clothing and headgear in countries like England France centuries before Hitler and his ilk. A real eye opener to all the urban myth created by early Christianity. Everything is well documented and objective too.

15 of 18 people found the following review helpful. The Devil and The Jews: An Indispensable Guide to Understanding Modern Christian Anti-Semitism By Andre Lawrence This book, an excerpt from Dr. Trachtenberg's doctoral dissertation of Jewish life during the medieval period, is a study of the relationship of Jews and their neighbors in Western Europe. This book contains images. Images derived from posters, plates and various other materials that have depictions of Jews as swine or as billy goats (the antiquated belief that these were Satan's favorite animals;) as demonic-like humans with long tails, long pointed ears, horn(s) etc. It's not for the faint of heart. This, notwithstanding, is an integral aspect in painting a picture about the various communities in which Jews were a part of, albeit never more than 2% of the population. This book focuses on what is referred to as "Modern" Christian Anti-semitism, which is an appendage of "Classical" Christian Anti-semitism, and whose beliefs primarily focus on the secular-behavioral and psychological character of the Jew from the medieval European mindset. The book delves into Catholic thoughts on Jews and commerce; Jews and their (perceived) hatred of Christian religious observances; Jews and their sorceric relationship to medicine. And, Jews and the psychological "misunderstanding" of The Law and Jesus (yeah, whatever.) I must mention that the tone of this book is neither apologetic (and why should it be?) nor is it exasperate. Drawing from an extensive bibliography, the author focuses on how the vocality of certain groups influenced the environment for ill. Explicit comments and blunt statements reveals not only a climate of distrust and hatred but also passive aggressive acts of violence. Trachtenberg tells in how it was typical for a Jewish home to be vandalized. One instance details how many families would come home to find the parchment in the "mezuzah" (an inscription of a biblical verse encased and attached to the doorway) was torn from the case or a knife stuck in the middle of it. The depths of racism even extended to miscegenation. In an attempt to relate physical relations with Jews to bestiality, a court in Oxford reprimanded a deacon in 1222 to be burned. He had renounced his Catholicism and converted to Judaism in order to marry a Jewess. According to court records, the prosecutor remarked, "Christian lawgivers should have adopted the Jewish code against sexual intercourse with beasts, and then enlarged it so as to include the Jews themselves." During deliberations, jurors debated whether "cohabitation of a Christian with a Jewess, or vice versa, constitutes sodomy." This is a companion book to Jewish Magic and Superstition and was a part of Dr. Trachtenberg's doctoral dissertation. Another book that speaks to this period is James Shapiro's book, Shakespeare and the Jews.

A JPS bestseller, this is the definitive work of scholarship on the medieval conception of the Jew as devil-literally and figuratively. Through documents, analysis, and illustrations, the book exposes the full spectrum of the Jew's demonization as devil, sorcerer, and ritual murderer. The author reveals how these myths, many with origins traced to Christian Europe in the late Middle Ages, still exist in transmuted form in the modern era.

From the Back Cover The Devil and the Jews presents the medieval conception of the Jew as devil-literally and figuratively. Through documents, analysis, and illustrations, the book exposes the full spectrum of the Jew's demonization as devil, sorcerer, blasphemer, and ritual murderer; as desecrator and heretic; as usurer infidel. Trachtenberg reveals, in a chilling study, how these myths, peculiar to Christian Europe in the late Middle Ages, still exist transmuted form today.