

The “Jew” Game: Shaping the Medieval Image of a Heretic

Reading Andrzej Sapkowski's Hussite trilogy (*Narrenturm*, *Boży bojownicy*, *Luxperpetua*), in which this extremely skilful writer of “historical fantasy”¹ draws attention to the strong tension between the Church – its teachings and cultural practices – and the movements of heterodoxy at the beginning of the 15th century, my attention was drawn to one of the few threads accusing Jews of participating in heretical practices. A catalogue of well-known, traditional accusations appears in statements by the local population of Magdeburg:

In 1420, your fathers inflicted a small pogrom on the Jews, to completely finish with them, to leave not one of them! And what about you? They poison your wells, and you sit there and drink beer? What else will you allow these accursed scabs to do? Like in Bautzen, steal the Host from the church and desecrate it? Drain the blood from your babies as happened in Zgorzelec? And maybe, said the other with a mop of hair like a sheep's fleece, you'll wait until the Hussites approach and the Jews will open the gates for them, as happened last year in Frankenstein? What, you didn't know? You probably also didn't know this, that the Israelites wanted the Hussites to loot Kłodzko and set it ablaze? You didn't know that, since time immemorial, Judah has conspired with the Czech heretic? The priest didn't tell you this in his sermon - that there is a conspiracy between Satan, the Jews and the Hussites? (...) Because, if someone is not against the Jews, then he is clearly siding with the Devil and is, himself, just like a Jew! Jews, I say, have been given evil powers! That enemy, in the hand of Judah, drags Christians away from the true faith. Do you think there would be a Hussite if it wasn't for a Jew? Who, if not the Jew, is the Devil's instigator, inciting the Czechs to heresy? The vile Hussite sect patterns itself not on anything else but the Talmud! It bases itself on Kabala! (.) Right after Satan, accompanied by the curly-headed one, there is no greater enemy of the Christians than the Jews. They, in their disgusting daily prayers, pray for our extinction and curse us with their magic rites and exhortations for Satan, their father and god, to exterminate us. One hundred years ago, they wanted to annihilate us with the Black Death. That didn't work. Christ showed himself to be stronger! So now they've invented the Hussites to bring Christians to their doom².

¹ A. Sapkowski, S. Bereś, *Historia i fantastyka*, Warszawa 2005.

² A. Sapkowski, *Lux perpetua*, Warszawa 2006, s. 310.

The numerous cultural motifs placed side by side, setting the figure of the Jew as the Devil's servant – witches and heretics (oddly, in the case of the Hussites), allow us to question, not only the reason for combining these motifs, but also to question the legitimacy of juxtaposing the figures of the heretic, the *malefici* and the Jew. The answer to these questions, in some way, will contribute to a better understanding of the construction, in culture, of the stereotype of the Jew, not only in the Middle Ages, but also in the modern era.

The Religion of Moses in Middle Ages *Christianitas*

In order to understand the situation of the Jewish religion in the medieval Christian world, we need to refer to the traditional teachings of St. Paul, whose missionary activity, as described in the Acts of the Apostles, attracted frequent confrontations with representatives of the Chosen People and which, in large measure, constituted the mentality of humankind at that time.

From the very beginning, relying on his experiences as a scholar of the Word, Paul shows the Jews as being mistaken in not accepting the teachings of Christ. Many times, this convert disciple of Gamliel implies that the persecution of Christians, which they experience at the hands of Jews, fulfils Jesus' prophecy: "They will hand you over to the courts and will scourge you in their synagogues" (Matthew 10:17). So their obstinacy and their labouring under a misapprehension become elements of the image of the Jew, which is furthered by the hint of a false accusation, which resembles a quote regarding a fraud perpetrated by Jewish leaders to spread false rumours following the Resurrection (Matthew 28:11-15), as well as by their hypocrisy and their pretended piety (Matthew 23:13-32). Paul's teaching is important for another reason, directing its mission towards pagans and initiated in original Christianity – the idea of identifying oneself with the teachings of Christ as something separate from Hebrew tradition.

Of course, as a learned man, Paul is aware that Jesus' messianism emanates from "The Tree of Jesse", but he also realises that, in order to teach other nations, he must concentrate on the kerygmata alone, and not on the tradition which he, as a practising and ardent Jew, settled into. Because, if for the first Christians (Jews), the tradition of the Old Covenant was the faith of their fathers which culminated in Christ, then accepting baptism was something entirely strange to pagans and, in a certain way, made it difficult to accept the Gospel. Being aware of this, Paul was in conflict with, among others, St. Peter, on the issue of circumcision or ritual cleanliness which the newly baptised were not required to follow. A process then begins, within primitive Christianity, which distinguishes the faith of the Old Covenant from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That could even be the *Epistle of Barnabas* (authored anonymously), from the beginning of the 2nd century, which points out the fundamental differences between the Jewish religion and Christianity.

The evoked motif of two Covenants as two paths is sufficiently significant as it gives rise, in the first centuries, to theological mistakes resulting from the development of Christianity under the influence of Judaism and Jewish culture. As Marian Banaszek writes, "The central problem remained the relationship of Jewish law to the Gospel and the relationship of Messiah Jesus to Yahweh"³. This led to mistakes, to heresy and even to schisms. The first factions of Christendom arise in this Judeo-Christian environment which accept certain elements of apostolic teaching and enter them into Jewish tradition with immense rigour. Amongst representatives of the Ceryntian and Ebio-Nirod, there arises a conviction that salvation is only possible by strictly adhering to Mosaic laws.

³ M. Banaszek, *Historia Kościoła katolickiego (A History of the Catholic Church)*, t. 1., Warszawa 1986, p. 33.

So it is possible to state that certain Jewish environments accepted elements of Christian teachings, simultaneously being pressured to preserve Hebrew tradition regarding maintaining the Sabbath, facing Jerusalem when praying or practising circumcision, without which there could be no talk of salvation. So one can understand the need for separateness, which the Church, in those first centuries, accomplishes through the formation of a Christian identity.

At the same time, it is worth noting that strong identification also causes distortions which may have been expressed through the heresy of Marcion. In the second half of the 2nd century, he gave a sermon in which he showed a contradiction between a belief in Jesus and the provisions of Jewish law. Even further, he compared the picture of God, as the Merciful Father of the New Testament, against the God of Judgement of the Old Testament⁴. Marcion's dislike for Jewish traditions was so strong that, in his proposed teachings, he rejected the Hebrew traditions as expressed in the Torah and the Prophets, acknowledging only the gospel letters, whilst removing any Jewish elements from them. Even though the Church, in response to (among others) Marcionism, established Biblical canon laws and formulated the Creed, Marcion's teachings gained great popularity and were also widespread through Gnostic heretics.

This very superficial inspection already provides us with a certain picture of co-existence between the Jewish religion and the Christians at the dawn of the Middle Ages. Christians, feeling the need for religious identification, emphasise their difference from Hebrew tradition. Similarly, Jews, seeing the conversion of some of their brothers, also strengthen their sense of separateness by isolating themselves into certain enclaves and by boycotting those converts who had accepted Christianity. That separation of those two worlds becomes even further entrenched following the Edict of Milan and the establishment of Christianity as an acceptable religion. Linked to the privileges gained by Christians during the time of Constantine the Great, there were numerous cases of the faith being adopted by infidels, as well as by Jews, for reasons other than religious.

The other question that remains is the matter of the forced baptism of Jews (which took place in Gaul or Spain in the 7th century). Jews, fearing the loss of their property and exile, adopt the faith of Christ. These sham conversions not only draw the attention of the church hierarchy, but also of the authorities who issue edicts, canons and bulls forbidding such a practice, as well as forbidding Jews to return to the faith of their fathers.

At that very time, the image of the Jew becomes that of a hypocrite who profanes the sacraments and commits sacrilege. For this reason, as Déroche shows⁵, in the 7th century, there is an increase in texts against Judaism (*Dialogprzeciw żydom, Nauczanie nowo ochrzczonego Jakuba*), demanding that converted Jews publicly ridicule their former customs and habits, as well as sincerely accepting the Creed. Public confrontations were organised during which "Jews, with text in hand, were required to demonstrate the authenticity of their faith. They had to convince their opponents or return back"⁶. Undoubtedly, that was a time in which, together with other teachings of infidels, the Mosaic religion began to be perceived as apostasy, and was strongly connected with the accusation of heresy. As Stefan Świeżawski writes, "A heretic was someone who left the faith"⁷.

⁴ Tamże, p. 47 i n.

⁵ V. Déroche, *La polémique anti-judaïque au VI et au VII siècle*, w: *Travaux et Mémoires*, 1991; podaję za: G. Dagron, *Chrześcijaństwo bizantyńskie od VII do połowy XI wieku*, tłum. M. Żurowska, w: *Historia chrześcijaństwa*, t. 4: *Biskupi, mnisi i cesarze 610-1054*, red. G. Dagron, P. Riché, A. Vauchez, Warszawa 1999, p. 69.

⁶ Tamże, s. 199.

⁷ S. Świeżawski, *Eklezjologia późnośredniowieczna na rozdrożu*, t. 1, Kraków 1990, s. 116.

In the 4th and 5th centuries, there is a revival in the conviction that Jews were obdurate, that they resisted Jesus' teachings, attributing the followers of Judaism with a well-known tradition of lying and hypocrisy, their acceptance of Christianity being economic and not religious. Such practices were defined as being examples of apostasy and, as heretical; they were subjected to specific action, about which Leo VI writes in *The New Laws*:

If it is proven that someone has foresaken Christian laws and returned to Jewish customs and orders, a penalty will be imposed upon him, as stipulated in the laws against apostates.

That meant death⁸. Therefore, for fear of the influence of this Jewish apostasy upon the purity of Christian teachings, it is also possible to observe how, in certain European lands, laws limited the Jews' freedom of worship, banned mixed marriages or forbade Jews from employing Christians in their households. Inversely, these laws were intended to prevent Christians from accepting false teachings.

At the same time, it should be noted that, right up to the beginning of the 11th century, the situation of the Jews, in *christianitas*, remained rather stable and assured. Both the Jewish and Christian communities did not co-exist in hermetic separation – quite the opposite. Much attests to a mutual permeation in business and in day-to-day matters⁹. Even further, Jews had their advocates in the form of Patriarch Bazyl of the Eastern Church and Pope Alexander II of the Roman Church, who demanded guaranteed personal safety for the followers of Judaism, as well as, protection of their possessions and freedom of worship. They cited the teachings of St. Paul, himself, according to which Jews had the status of true witnesses of Christ's ordeal. They were guaranteed the protection of the law and, as a sign of the end of times, they would take their place following conversion.

To some extent, that medieval, messianic perspective of theology, over and over again, triggers waves of enforced evangelisation of Jewish people as an expression of the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. However, it should be clearly stressed that the first of these aspects consolidated the theological character of the status of Jews in medieval Europe.

The situation begins to change in the 12th century. Restrictions begin to appear on economic activity, freedom of worship and civil liberties, which quickly triggered a widespread negative image of the follower of the Mosaic religion. Some researchers seek the causes for such a state of affairs in the developing awareness in the Crusades conducted by Christianity against the enemies of the faith – externally, the Muslims and, internally, heretics¹⁰. It is hard not to notice the similarity between the worsening status of the Jews in *christianitas*, and the mass development of movements of heterodoxy in Western Europe.

The Humiliate and Waldensian sects appear at the end of the 12th century. The beginning of the 13th century sees the birth of the *Begard* sect and its female equivalent, the *Beginek*. The Flagellants also appear at that time. We can also not forget about the unusually lively Neomanic heresy which, under different names (Bogomil, Cathar, Albigenses), stubbornly endures, from the 10th century, within the depths of Catholic Europe. On the one hand, their appearance has a theological aspect. On the other hand, it is usually connected with non-dogmatic teachings. Even more importantly, it had its own social meaning, aimed at the morally corrupt behaviour of the clergy. Faced with these threats, Jews appeared as an additional threat, a potentially inflammable bonfire, openly or secretly supporting infidels and heretics. Even if it was not possible to present specific evidence of their supporting heresy, signs were seen amongst the Jews of cunning and false piety against the Church.

⁸ Cit. za: G. Dargon, *Chrześcijaństwo bizantyńskie od VII do połowy XI wieku*, p. 200.

⁹ See E. Patlagean, *Cesarstwo bizantyńskie od 1054 do 1122*, w: *Historia chrześcijaństwa*, t. 5: *Ekspansja Kościoła rzymskiego 1054-1274*, red. A. Vauchez, tłum. J.M. Kłoczowski, A. Kuryś, G. Majcher, A. Romaniuk, M. Żurowska, Warszawa 2001, p. 50n; oraz A. Vauchez, *Chrześcijaństwo wobec niechrześcijan*, w: *tamże*, p. 582.

¹⁰ R. Manselli, *La polémique contre les Juifs dans la polémique antihérétique*, cyt. za: A. Vauchez, *Chrześcijaństwo wobec niechrześcijan*, p. 583.

The picture of the Jewish people as a perverse nation, replete with lies and always ready to depart from the true faith, became part of the image, which emerged in the Middle Ages, of a dissenter who depended, above all else, on lies. The heterodox domain was based on fraud, the ability to create an appearance, an illusion which, it should be noted, was also a sign of Satan. In the apocryphal book, *The Life of Adam and Eve*, Satan can assume the figures of his brother angels, despite being formed of loosely cohesive clay. His appearance changed after his downfall, but assumed other forms through the ability to utilise illusion. Eve perceives him as equal to the angels, but moments later, Satan speaks to her through the mouth of a snake¹¹. In the same way, Jews became noted as enemies of Christ – in the service of the Devil.

Jews and the Medieval *Civitas Diaboli*

Proceeding along this track, which is referred to in the Gospel according to St. John, ("You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." – John 8:44), it is worth remembering that, during the height of the Middle Ages, there was a blurring in the border between heresy and infidelity or *malefici*. In this way, the Church, portraying *successio haereticorum*, puts the Saracen, the Jews, the heretic and the witch in the same category, naming them all as *civitas diaboli*¹². Therefore, practising Judaism fell into the same category of heresy as black magic. The first accusation of heresy with Jews was directed against the Albigenses during the Crusades.

An anonymous 14th century scribe wrote that "Jews should be treated as dissenters from Christianity, as people who knew the truth and deliberately rejected it"¹³. Rejecting the Truth becomes, for the Christian world, a eulogy of falsehood which, as has already been stated, is identical to satanic activity, united with the heretics in the *enemies of Christ* camp. In this way, the followers of Judaism begin to be suspected of inspiring schismatic sects. Even further, during the Hussite wars, they were branded as sympathisers and co-culprits of the "Czech heretics".

The strongest element in the construction of this image is the motif of demonology, attributing Jews with devilish actions. Berthold of Regensburg, whose preaching was, in large measure, directed against heresy, tirelessly claimed that "Jews, pagans and heretics were committed to the devil"¹⁴. Followers of Judaism were accused of making pacts with the Devil, especially when unexplained events occurred.

¹¹ „A w godzinie, kiedy aniołowie Boży przychodzili wielbić Boga / Przybrał szatan postać anioła / I chwalił Boga równy aniołom. / Wychyliłam się ponad murem / I zobaczyłam go, równego aniołom", cyt. za: K. Zalewska-Lorkiewicz, *Księżę Ciemności. O średniowiecznych wyobrażeniach szatana*, Warszawa 1996, p. 36.

¹² E. Potkowski, *Stereotyp heretyka - innowiercy w piśmiennictwie kaznodziejskim*, w: tegoż, *Kultura elitarna a kultura masowa w Polsce późnego średniowiecza*, Wrocław 1978. Wątek ten podejmowałam w książkach A. Regiewicz, *Wizerunek heretyka w średniowiecznym piśmiennictwie polskim*, Katowice 2001 oraz A. Regiewicz, *Ślady obecności średniowiecznego wizerunku inkwizytora i «civitas diaboli» w polskiej literaturze fantasy po roku 1989*, Zabrze 2009, pp. 37-61.

¹³ Cyt. za: J. Trachtenberg, *Diabeł i Żydzi*, tłum. Gdynia 1997, s. 153.

¹⁴ Cyt. za: tamże, s. 175.

In the 13th century, accusations of ritual murder and Host profanation multiply. Also, Jewish rituals or customs, which are closed to Gentiles, arouse suspicion and accusations of satanic cult practices. In fact, St. John the Baptist himself, in his sermons, accused the followers of the Mosaic religion of "sacrificing their sons and daughters to the Devil"¹⁵, agreeing with the universally accepted conviction, at the time, that the Jewish soul was the stronghold of Satan"¹⁶.

Moreover, the numerous prosecutions were overlapped with Chiliastic unrest heralding the coming of the Antichrist. His appearance on Earth, announcing a thousand year oppression, was supposed to be the result of a ritual co-existence between the Devil and the Jewish harlot¹⁷. Arising under the influence of eschatological fear, this image was further enhanced through the context of Satanist practices, the ritual summoning up of demons, admiration of the *Prince of Darkness* and the like¹⁸.

Alongside the archetypes and monastic sermons, the medieval mystery plays also helped in the spreading of the demonic image of the Jew. They presented the followers of Judaism as stuck in obstinacy and blind to the miracles and signs of Christ, especially at the time of his death. They particularly stressed how Jews were firmly labouring under misapprehensions which drew them closer to heresy and how they refused to deny the mistakes within their own teachings¹⁹. Furthermore, that obstinacy went hand in hand with the accusation of direct complicity in the murder of Christ, which had an even stronger influence on the imagination of the masses. Preacher-monks aimed their homilies particularly at this point, stressing the victimisation aspect of the Agony of Christ and the participation of Jews in this act of cruelty²⁰. In this way, the stereotype of Jews as God murderers and mockers is born, which enters the consciousness of their co-inhabitants as the *Jew-foreigner* metaphor. As long as contacts between Christians and Jews were maintained on an individual basis, it is possible to talk about neighbourly relationships, or even emotional links amongst the young. But, as soon as these mass images enter these relationships, displays of hostility begin.

The main charges levelled against Jews concerned breaking into Christian holy places and stealing the consecrated Host with the aim of desecrating it. They were also accused of kidnapping and killing children in order to obtain the blood needed for their magic rituals. Historians have found records of over one hundred prosecution in which Jews were being accused of Host profanation and over one hundred and fifty relating to ritual murder²¹.

¹⁵ Jan Chryzostom, *Kazania do Żydów*, w: B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, *Patrologia*, Warszawa 1990, s. 438.

¹⁶ Cyt. za: K. Zalewska-Lorkiewicz, dz.cyt., p. 16.

¹⁷ Miał być wychowany w Galilei, szkolony przez czarowników w magii i objawić się w Jerozolimie Żydom jako Mesjasz. Jego pozorny triumf mają mu zapewnić niezwykła uczoność, pozorna prawość i przekonujące kaznodziejstwo, które będzie łączyć w sobie wszelkie dotychczasowe herezje, jak również cudowne wyczyny oraz potęgę i bogactwo.
Za: J. Trachtenberg, dz.cyt., ss. 41n; zob. też K. Zalewska-Lorkiewicz, dz.cyt., 69-75.

¹⁸ Wątek ten można odnaleźć w licznych widowiskach tj. *Ludus paschalis de adventu et interitu Antichristi* z XIII wieku lub niemiecka sztuka wielkopostna z XV wieku Hansa Folza *Herzog von Burgund*.

¹⁹ Motywy zaczerpnięte z francuskich misteriów *La Vengeance et destruction du Hierusalem, La Mystère de la Passion*, w: D. Strumpf, *Die Jude in der mittelalterlichen Mystiken-, Mirakel- und Moralitäten-Dichtung Frankreichs*, Ladenburg 1920, pp. 6, 13.

²⁰ J. Cohen, *The Jews as Killer of Christ in the Latin Tradition from Augustine to the Friars*, "Traditio" 1983, nr 39, p. 1-27.

²¹ Kultura średniowieczna wykształciła od XII wieku wiele podobnych historii. Jedną z najbardziej popularnych jest ta o Szymonie z Trydentu. Ten dwuletni chłopiec miał paść ofiarą podobnego rytualnego mordu. Kult ten, rozogniony od 1475, we Włoszech doprowadził do beatyfikacji chłopca, mimo późniejszego sprzeciwu papieża Sykstusa IV. Zob. K. Zalewska-Lorkiewicz, dz.cyt., p. 50n.

In fact, Pope Innocent III yielded to these stories, which made him the only medieval Pope to give any credence to these myths, allowing him to claim that

Jews secretly kill their Christian guests whenever the opportunity presents itself. When they have been informed upon, the body of some poor student is found in the cesspool of the Jewish house²².

Their manner of prayer, which included invocations of demons, was also linked to the catalogue of demonic Jewish practices. "It was said that when Jews pray, they prayed most earnestly for the extermination of Christians"²³. In the cultural image, the Jew-heretic becomes a sign of hatred. At that time, it was considered that Jews hated Christians and taught this hatred to small children. Thinkers and preachers of the time sustained such a characterisation. In his sermon, Bernard of Clairvaux would say, "While we pray for the Jews, they torment and curse us!" Whereas Johann Eck, in an address stigmatising Jews, would say, "If they could drown all Christians in one spoon, they would do it"²⁴.

So, in the minds of medieval Christians, the stereotype of the Jew is someone who is driven by falsehoods and hatred and, more than anything else, someone who supports the Devil and practises magic. Convictions that Jews are champion of magic strengthen. For example, in Spain, they are attributed with the power to bring rain during droughts. In Avignon, they are accused of summoning up demons by singing. In Vienna, it was stated that they had the extraordinary ability to cause the death of cattle and propagate epidemics. The accusations are, in large measure, the effects of a poor knowledge of Jewish customs which the contemporary clergy largely gained from "converted" Jews. However, it is worth remembering that the duty of these proselytisers was to slander old customs and to satirise them. Therefore, the image of authentic Jewish customs, received by Christians, was a caricature.

Succesio Haereticorum, A Community of the Accused

Apart from the social factors which moulded the image of the Jews in medieval identity discourse, certain analogies of a semiotic-anthropological character are of interest. They relate to Jewish and heretical rituals as depicted by Catholic prosecutors.

The changing image of Satanist rituals in the 12th century caused the Jew to be confronted with accusations of *maleficia*²⁵, which the Church put forward as Neo-Manichaeism, and then Waldensian. Records of inquisitions from the village of Montailou²⁶ speak of planting charms of running noses (in the case of the Albigenses), of Guillaume Authié, among others, who was asked to cast a spell on a particular person. Cats, rats, toads or snakes were found over the noses on bodies the night after their death²⁷. Astonishingly, indictments against followers of Judaism seem coincident. It was believed that toads or cats were hidden in the *altar* of the synagogue. Jews were also credited with being able to cast spells.

²² Cyt.za: A. Vauchez, *Chrześcijanizm wobec niechrześcijan*, p. 587.

²³ J. Trachtenberg, dz.cyt., p. 37.

²⁴ Cyt. za: tamże, p. 158.

²⁵ Zob. J. Sprenger, H. Institoris, *Młot na czarownice*, tłum. S. Ząbkowicz, red. R. Lewandowski, Wrocław 1992; część trzecia książki opisuje procedurę sądową, zarówno kościelną jak i świecką, stosowaną w sprawach o czary i wszelką inną herezję.

²⁶ Zapisy opierają się na rejestrze inkwizycyjnym Jakuba Fourniera - późniejszego papieża Benedykta XII. E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Montailou, wioska heretyków 1294-1324*, tłum. E.D. Zółkiewska, Warszawa 1988.

²⁷ Wszystkie przykłady pochodzą z zapisów inkwizycyjnych waldensów wydanych w książce E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Montailou, wioska heretyków 1294-1324*, Warszawa 1988.

As has already been mentioned, the attributing of devilish characteristics to Old-Believers is linked with what was secret to the Christian, being ritual ceremonies closed to Gentiles. Orthodoxy, as followed by Jews, challenging the Christian world so to speak, emphasised its *otherness*. It drew these *older brothers in faith* closer to Manichaean group, who lived in seclusion in enclaves outside the city, avoiding sexual contacts, as the theory of the running noses stated, enhancing their spiritual energy, adhering to an ascetic lifestyle and to a ban on swearing, all the while performing their rituals after dusk and away from prying eyes.

The very circumstances of performing ceremonies via running noses by Jews prompted the imagination of the medieval Christian to such a degree that he saw a devilish character in the exercise of these magic rituals. At the same time, such interpretations were supported by ceremonies, begun at dusk, which resulted from the Old Testament tradition of the next day beginning in the evening. It was also supported by the tradition of Jews closing the door of their home in order to experience the Sabbath within the family circle. The Cathars also sought out places of seclusion, farms in out of the way places, which evoked even greater feelings of fear amongst followers of the revealed faith.

Accusations of sacrament desecration and blood sacrifices seem common to both Jews and Neo-Manichaeans. In the 11th century, Guilbert de Nogent describes a sect which performed its ceremonies during wild sexual orgies, later offering up a child as a sacrifice, "the remains of whom were then crushed into something resembling bread and then eaten by everyone in some sort of Communion"²⁸. Members of an heretical sect (for example, the Waldensians) were accused of making drinks with magical properties from the underwear of unbaptised, dead babies, as well as deadly suet, of rejecting the faith of Christ and of killing babies with the use of magic, making drinks from their bodies, and the like²⁹.

During the 12th century, descriptions of sacrilegious ceremonies, as caricatures of the Eucharist or baptism, became one of the most frequent motivations for accusations of heresy against the heterodox and the infidels, as well as the so-called *malefic*.

An extremely important element of that depiction was the very act of celebrating the Sabbath which, at that time, was seen as the Devil's ritual and which was referred to as "sabat", as related to heretical and infernal ceremonies honouring Satan. Elements of the ceremony, well-known to the Catholic clergy from stories told to them by converted Jews, triggered an entire series of demonic associations – starting with the lighting of Shabbat candles through to the food that was eaten. Some ceremonies reminded them of the declarations of the heterodox, for example, the blessing over bread on Passover night was seen as making fun of the seriousness of the Eucharist, as was the same with the Waldensians who considered it fine to bless bread, outside of the Church, when sharing meals³⁰. A resemblance between the Jews and the Waldensians could be found in the context of how they treated marriage. Marriage, according to teachings, was for the purpose of procreation. This raised suspicions within the Christian world and gave rise to accusations of dissolutions which conducted within secret ceremonies. For that reason, in descriptions of "sabat" rituals, dissolute sexual practices, orgies with the participation of animals, and the like, appear.

²⁸ H. Lea, *A history of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, New York 1911, 3t., s. 495n., Cyt za: J. Tachtenberg, dz.cyt., p. 177.

²⁹ B. Levack, *Polowanie na czarownice w Europie wczesnonowożytnej*, tłum. E. Rutkowski, Wrocław 1991, pp. 51-54.

³⁰ H. Masson, *Słownik herezji w Kościele katolickim*, tłum. B. Sęk, Katowice 1993, p. 291.

As can be read in the Bull of 1233 by Gregory IX, recommending to the Archbishop of Mainz and Konrad of Marburg that a crusade be launched against the heretics in Germany, and thus describing their heretical practices:

Following these ceremonies, lights are turned out and the most atrocious hedonism begins, heeding neither shame nor blood relationship. If it happens that there are more men than women, the men satisfy each other's disgraceful sexual urges³¹.

It is not difficult to notice that elements appear here, associated with the late medieval accusations of charms and, in particular, the adoration of Satan in the form of a cat or goat³². It is possible to find these motifs in *Treatises of Waldensian Crimes* from the mid-15th century, which describes and illustrates a ritual of illusion resembling "sabat", where those gathered worship a goat. It contains a miniature illustration of the adoration of a goat, with a large gathering, amongst which is only one woman, kneeling with her hands held in prayer and her eyes fixed on the rump of the goat. The event takes place, at night, well outside the city. Similar scenes can be seen inside two lockets – in one, a cat is worshipped, in the other, a monkey. The Devil appears in both scenes, urging the worship of the animals. Thanks to this, charges of idolatry or animal worship became stereotypes of heretical and, consequently, Jewish activities.

The last element worth noticing is the motif of the book. If one refers to medieval iconography, it shows the picture of "heresy" as a withered, old woman of horrifying appearance, from whose mouth flames appear, bursting into smoke, with messy and bristled hair, revealing sagging breasts. In her left hand, she holds an open book from which snakes loom. She uses her right hand to sow the tangle of serpents across the entire land³³. Avoiding an analysis of the remaining motifs, it is worthwhile paying some attention to the book itself. The open pages, from which the serpents emerge, are a symbol of false judgements, a straying from the Truth, straying from the straight and narrow path, evoking Satan – the serpent. The book, and consequently those who are outside of the Church, become people who are dangerous to the Christian world. This fear appears, above all, amongst numerous 11th century itinerant preachers, who put forward their own interpretation of the Word of God³⁴. In the opinion of the clergy, by exploiting the naivety of simple people, they could recruit believers, offering them a new teaching at variance with the true faith of the Church. For that reason also, the theme of the book, as evidence of the sins of heretics, becomes a quite frequently used motif of accusations – reminding us of the famous conflict between Bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki with Canon Andrzej Gałka, accused of completing John Wyclif's books³⁵.

³¹ H. Lea, dz.cyt.; Cyt za: J. Tachtenberg, dz.cyt., 1. 177.

³² Ludowa etymologia w Niemczech wywodziła słowo *ketzer* /kacarz, heretyk/ od *kater* /kocur/, a w słowie *ketzerie* możemy odczytać różne znaczenia: *czary, herezja*, jak i *nienaturalne lub zboczone stosunki płciowe*. Na podst. M. Lexer, *Mittelhochdeutsches Handwörterbuch*.

³³ C. Ripa, *Ikonologia*, tłum. I. Kania, Kraków 1998, pp. 42-43.

³⁴ W latach 30. XI wieku można zaobserwować niezwykle wzrost popularności nową duchowością związaną z bliskim kontaktem z wędrownymi kaznodziejami - eremitami nawiązującymi do życia apostołskiego. Zob. A. Vauchez, *Duchowość średniowiecza*, tłum. H. Zaremska, Gdańsk 1996, s. 40n.

³⁵ Podstawą oskarżenia była dokonana w domu Gałki rewizja, która ujawniła posiadanie ksiąg tego angielskiego herezjarchy. W liście do biskupa Jan Elgot pisał: „Gałka pewne księgi miał

In this context, we should also include the dispute about the Talmud which took place in the 13th century, confirming the conviction of the heretical activities of the followers of Judaism. Joel Rembaum states that it is worthwhile referring to the most important threads of this conflict, which centre on accusing the Jews putting the Talmud ahead of the traditions of the Torah. A converted Jew, Mikołaj Donin, wrote a document containing over thirty accusations against the followers of Judaism, relating to replacing the Old Law with provisions of the Talmud. On the basis of that document, the Pope at the time, Gregory IX, stated that any alterations to the Bible, including replacing the Old Testament with the Talmud, was infidelity - heresy³⁶. This triggered disputes in consecutive pontificates, accusing the Talmud of being an insult to the Christian faith, containing mistakes and nonsense, which constituted a blasphemy against God and Christ, which itself was reprehensible. Following numerous debates, Talmudic books were condemned and burned, as being dangerous to the Faith, containing controversial statements and fabrications, and not being without influence on Christianity. So, in the process, the followers of Judaism had become allies of heretics which was an evident character of the "forbidden book".

A superficial inspection of the common factors of the image of heterodoxy and Jews enables us to notice a certain evolution, which starts from the everyday Jew who lives in a actual social reality, through to the theological Jew, an unreal being, subject to diabolical description, a threat to the unity of *christianitas* and, above all else, to ordinary people. It is possible to observe how, from the 13th century, hostility towards Jews escalates, accused not only of being "Christ killers", but also of being murderers of Christian children, of profaning the sacraments, false piety and the like.

Undoubtedly, this series of accusations contributed to the role Jews played in the field of credit and usury, areas which the Church had forbidden to Christians. Lending money and debt collection provoked many accusations, fuelling antisemitic attitudes which were supported by the authorities. One only needs to recall Philippe the Fair and the pogrom of the Jews committed during his reign, aimed at cancelling his debts.

The image of the Jew as a heretic radicalises with the emergence of the Hussites who are presented as enemies of Christ, and is even more demonised with the appearance of the breakaway Protestants. Then, no one will try to cultivate a public debate, show errors in faith or call for conversion. Instead of that, accusations and penalties appear relating to black magic and devilish rituals. But that's a whole other story.

³⁶ J.E. Rembaum, *The Talmud and the Popes: Reflections on the Talmud Trials of the 1240s*, "Viator" 1982, nr 13, s. 203-223; podaję za: A. Vauchez, *Chrześcijanizm wobec niechrześcijan* s. 586.