

Images of Jews in European art, examples from 13th – 16th centuries

Strasbourg Cathedral,
France

The Church
and the Synagogue

around 1230



Strasbourg Cathedral

Synagogue

always blindfolded
(blind to Christian truth)

Tables of The Law

drop from her hand

Broken spear

end of Jewish Kingdom



Strasbourg Cathedral

The Church (Ecclesia)

looking at Synagogue
in a disapproving way





Church versus Synagogue



Giotto's Nativity 1305
showing the
Dormition of Joseph

Joseph portrayed asleep, to
symbolize blindness of the
Jews



Simon of Trent 1475

“The Blood Libel” =
Accusation that Jews
need blood of Christian
child for Passover meal

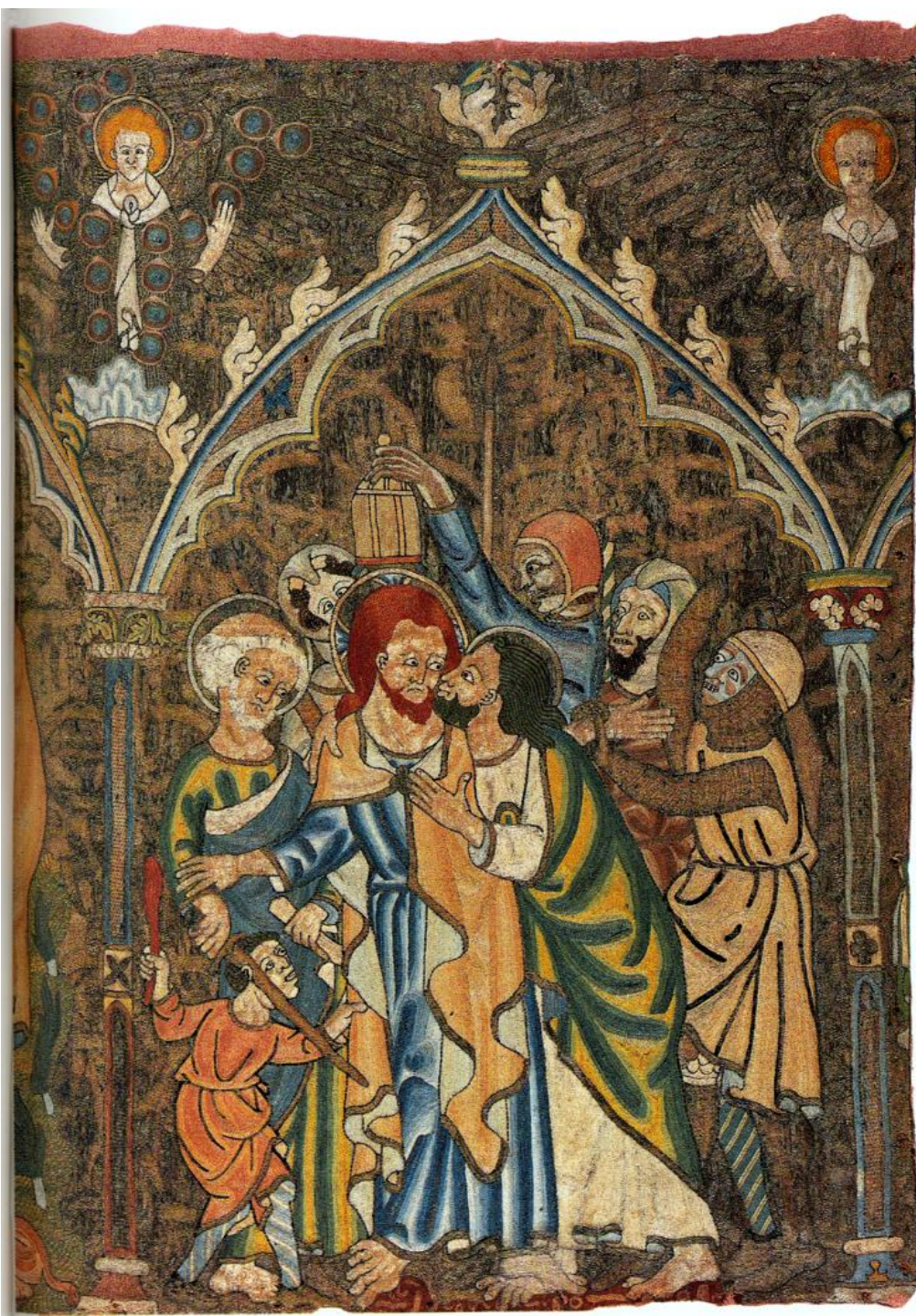


Simon of Trent
with his
alleged
Jewish killers

Book by Ronnie Hsia
Simon of Trent



Kiss of Judas
as betrayal of Christ



Kiss of Judas

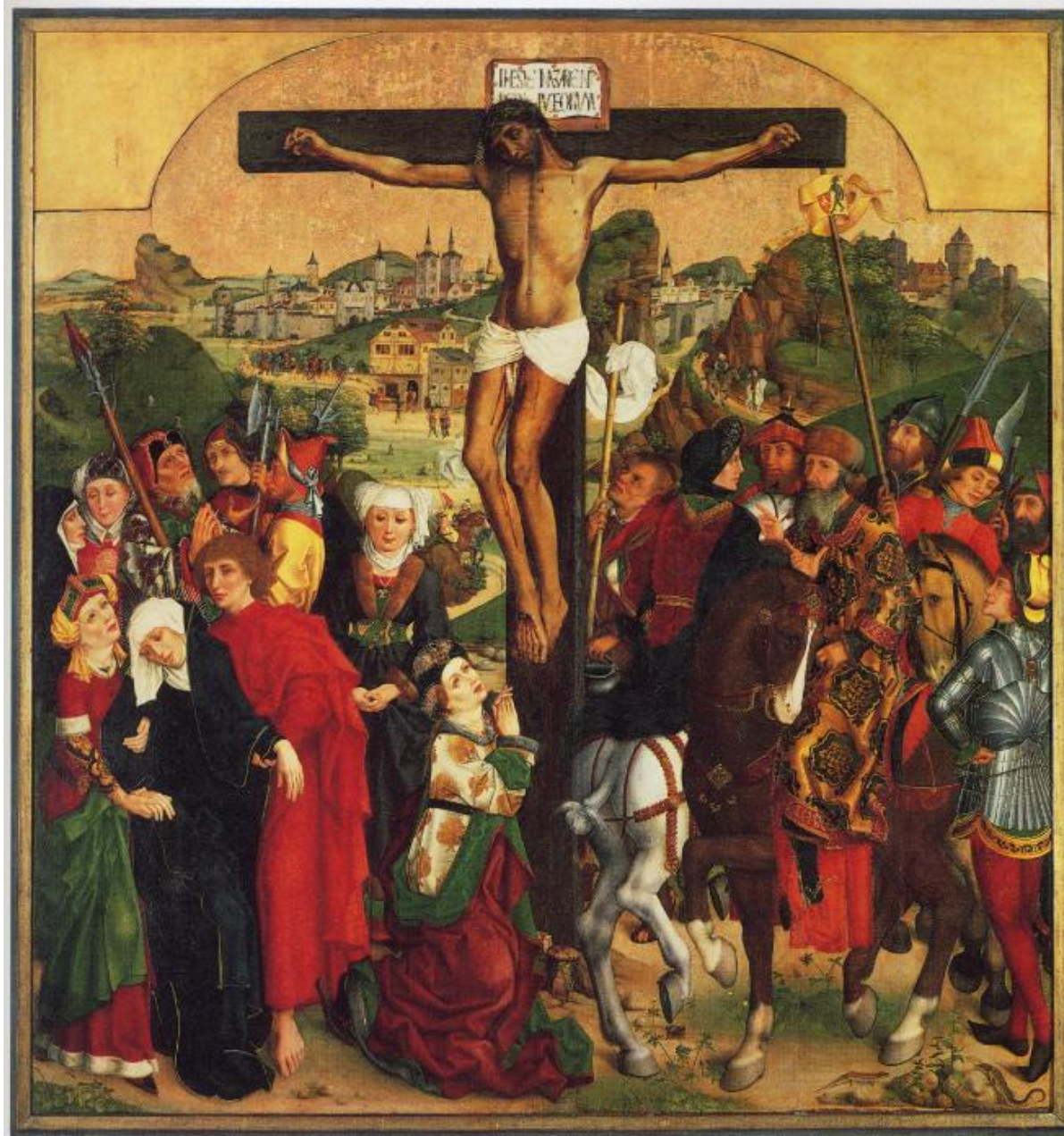
Other Jews
wear
pointed hats



Jews taunting Christ on
the way to Crucifixion

(pointed hats as Jewish)





Banner showing Devil
as ally of the Jews
(pointed hat as symbol

Judensau, or the Jewish sow – Jewish as pigs

One interpretation is that since Jews won't eat pork, it must mean that they are themselves pigs and are avoiding cannibalism, but they will drink milk from a sow (their mother by implication)



Anonymous woodcut of c. 1470 from the Kupferstichkabinet, Munich, depicting the infamous 'Judensau' stereotype - Jews suckling from a sow and eating its excrement.

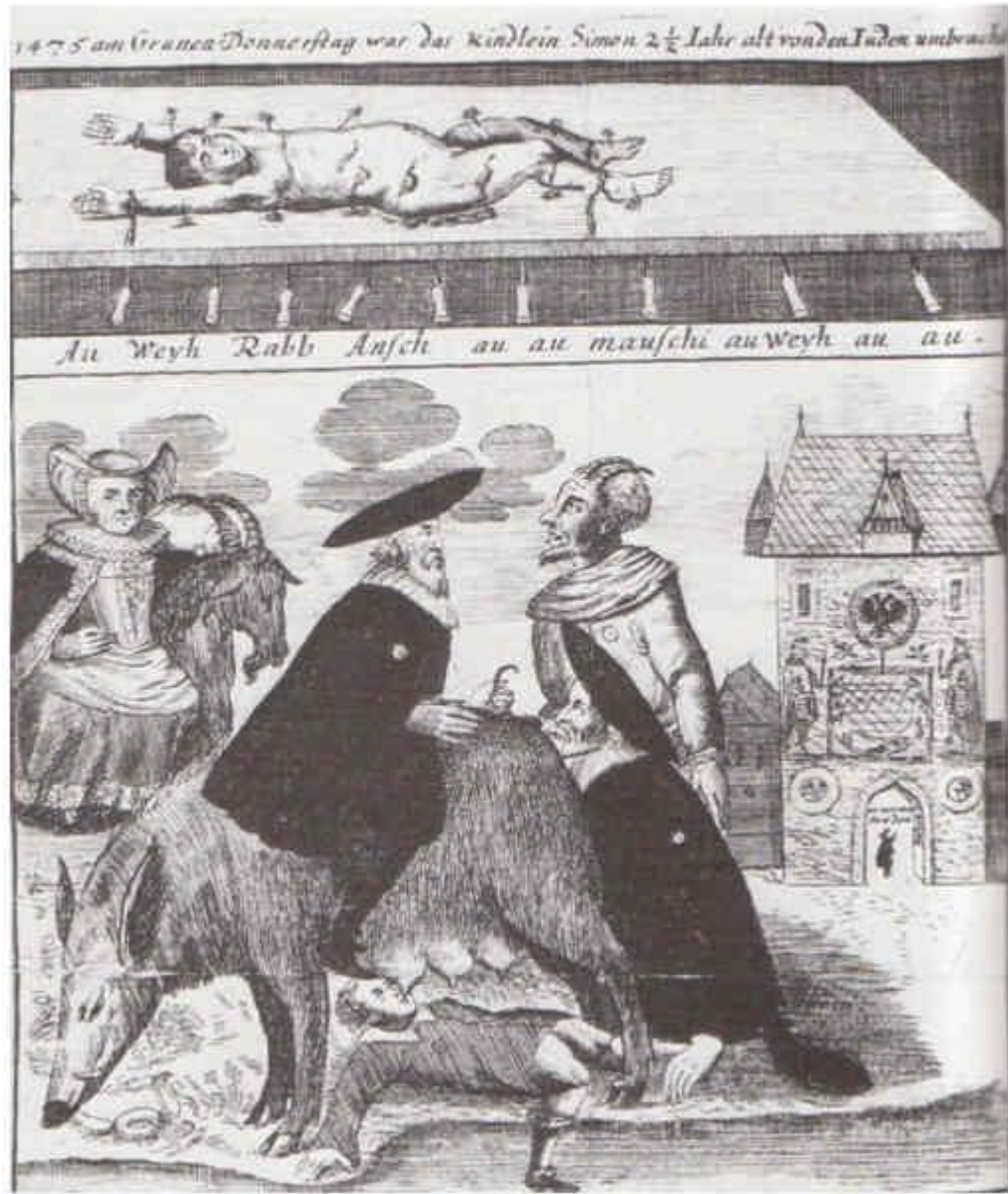
Judensau of
Wittenberg
outside
a parish
church



Inscription:

SchemHamephorash means
the "secret name of God"
(as in the Jewish Kabbala)

Implication: Jews worship a pig



Simon of Trent 1475

Rabbis with Judensau

Interesting book about these issues

Claudine Fabre-Vassas,
The Singular Beast: Jews, Christians and the Pig (1997)

The Singular Beast is an academic study of the pig both as a farm animal and as a racist slur against Jews in European Christian culture. It is a challenging book, but useful for understanding traditional Christian anti-Semitism. It includes a lot about the raising of pigs in Christian peasant households, as well the pig as a symbolic boundary between Jews and Christians.