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The once and future Jew: The Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*, little Robert of Bury and historical memory

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Abstract. The Jews who purchase and attack the host in the fifteenth-century East Anglian drama, the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*, have long been regarded by critics as referents to Lollards or to doubters more generally, not to Jews. However, the play does refer to the history of Jews in Bury St. Edmunds, where, most likely, it was performed, and more specifically, it refers to the 1181 ritual murder accusation surrounding Little Robert of Bury. This accusation was commemorated in a variety of forms in Bury well into the fifteenth century. Further, in its representation of host desecration as a literal reenactment of the Passion, the play creates a temporal mode in which the Jews re-enact the Passion in the present, just as the Mass is a re-enactment of the Crucifixion. The play simultaneously makes the audience witness to the murder of little Robert and to the Crucifixion, with both existing in a kind of "eternal present," a temporality central to the Mass and also to related late-medieval English devotional practices. The story of little Robert comes to exist not only in historical memory, but also in the eternal present in which the Crucifixion and its re-enactments are joined. This powerful temporality creates a conception of the Jew as perpetual murderer, guilty not only of crucifying Christ in the historical past, but in the present, and until the Parousia, in the future, thus enabling a particular aspect of the negative stereotype of "the Jew," the perpetually present enemy, ever plotting against Christ and Christendom.

The Croxton *Play of the Sacrament or the Conversion of Ser Jonathas the Jew by Miracle of the Blessed Sacrament* is a fifteenth-century English drama, likely of East Anglian origin. According to its Banns, the play re-enacts a host desecration that took place in Aragon and which was replayed in Rome:

> Thys maracle at Rome was presented, forsothe,
> Yn the yere of our Lord, a thowsand fowr hundder sixty and on,
> That þe Jewes with Holy Sa[c]rament dyd woth,
> In the forest seyd of Aragon.[1]

Through Aristorius, a corrupt Christian merchant, Jonathas and a group of his fellow Jews procure a Host for 100 gold ducats. Once they have the Host they put it through a series of gruesome tortures designed to test the efficacy of Christian belief in "a cake." They stab the Host and it bleeds. Then they prepare to throw it into a cauldron of boiling oil, but it sticks to the hand of

Jonathas, whose arm ends up severed from his body, but still attached to the Host. Then the Host is thrust into an oven and sealed within. The oven bursts asunder and the image of a bloody child appears, admonishing the Jews to mend their ways. The Jews are thereby healed, converted, and then baptized in a Mass-like conclusion. After their conversion the Jews go off to tell others of their experiences.

It would seem clear from this description that this play is part of a tradition of host desecration legends circulating in late medieval Europe and that the play's Jews indeed represent Jews. The question of Jewish referent has, however, actually long been contested. Part of the reason for this puzzling situation is the 1290 expulsion of the Jews from England, which has raised the issue of "anti-Semitism without Jews."[2] Some scholars have pointed to the *Croxton* Jews as referents to generic doubters or to the Lollard sect prevalent in fifteenth-century East Anglia.[3] Others have dealt with the problem of the absence of actual Jews through reference to the figure of "the Jew," against which Christian identity is created.[4] Both of these approaches add valuable insight to our understanding of the play and of representations of Jews in the Middle Ages. However, each of the approaches, for different reasons, has effaced the crucial history of the Jews in Bury St Edmunds, where the play was likely performed; and, as a result, the important role of local history in shaping the broader contours of myths surrounding "the Jew" has been underplayed.[5] Even though the Jews were expelled from Bury in 1190, their history, which included a ritual murder accusation against them, remained in the memory of the Bury Christian community long after the Jews' expulsion, and it would still have had resonance for a fifteenth-century East Anglian audience.

I will argue for a specific meaning for "the Jew" in Bury St Edmunds, attempting to show how local history, specifically the story of the ritual murder accusation surrounding little Robert of Bury, resonates in the play, even as the play draws upon more general medieval European representations of Jews and the Jewish. A better understanding of these relationships between local and general figurations of the Jewish can lead us to grasp more fully the many dimensions of Christian representations of Jews and Judaism and the ways in which these representations are shaped by complex notions of time and space, specifically time and space shaped through the sacrament of the Eucharist.

In 1190 Jewish communities in England were plagued with violence, including the infamous York *Shabbat ha-Gadol* massacre on March 16. These riots began in East Anglia, with attacks in King's Lynn and Norwich in the first weeks of February 1190. On Palm Sunday, March 18, 1190, the Bury Jews were attacked.[6] That same year the Jews were expelled from Bury St

Edmunds, one century prior to their general expulsion from England.[7] East Anglia also saw some of the earliest ritual murder accusations in England and all of Europe. The first such accusation concerned William of Norwich, "who disappeared unaccountably in 1144." In 1181 a similar charge was raised at Bury St Edmunds concerning the ritual murder of Little Robert of Bury.[8] The contemporary Bury chronicler, Jocelin of Brakelond, records "The holy boy Robert [was] martyred and buried in our church, and there happened many prodigies and signs among the people as we have elsewhere written."[9] John of Taxter provides a precise date for the event: "The boy Robert at St Edmunds is martyred by the Jews on the 10th of June."[10] Around the time of the accusation, the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds was also deeply in debt to the Jewish community, thanks primarily to the "loose rule" of Abbot Hugh (1173–1180).[11] The ritual murder accusation was made in the interregnum between Abbot Hugh and his successor, Abbot Samson. After his election, Samson corrected the Abbey's financial problems and secured the expulsion of the Jews from the area in 1190, which his chronicler Jocelyn views as an heroic act, crucial to the health of the Abbey and of the Christian community:[12]

> The abbot asked the king [in 1190] for written permission to expel the Jews from St Edmund's town, on the grounds that everything in the town and within the *banleuca* belonged by right to St Edmund: therefore, either the Jews should be St Edmund's men or they should be banished from the town. Accordingly, he was given permission to turn them out, but they were to retain their movable possessions and also the value of their houses and lands. When they had been escorted out and taken to various other towns by an armed troop, the abbot directed that in future all those who received back Jews or gave them lodging in St Edmund's town, were to be excommunicated in every church and at every altar. Later, however, the king's justice ruled that if Jews came to the abbot's great court of pleas to claim debts from their debtors, they could for this purpose be given two days' and two nights' lodging in the town and on the third day they should leave in freedom.[13]

Samson's request to preserve the liberties of the Abbey and Abbot was a standard of late twelfth-century liberty holders. In order to preserve the liberty of St Edmund from being breached by royal officers, the Jews, who were by 1190 under the protection of the crown, had, from the Abbey's perspective, to be expelled.[14]

The events surrounding the ritual murder accusation of little Robert and the expulsion of the Jews of Bury are intriguing. Samson's election to the abbacy was a contested one. Antonia Gransden and David Knowles

view Samson as a compromise candidate between monastic factions.[15] Challenging Samson for the abbacy was William the sacrist, described by Jocelin of Brakelond, a strong Samson supporter, as "the father and patron of the Jews," a group to which the Abbey owed large sums. Jocelin describes William's familiarity with and leniency with the Jewish community:

> Judei, inquam, quibus sacrista pater et patronus dicebatur; de cuius protectione gaudebant, et liberum ingressum et egressum habebant, et passim ibant per monasterium,vagantes per altaria et circa feretrum, dum missarum celebrarentur sollemnia: et denarii eorum in thesauro nostro sub custodia sacriste reponebantur, et, quod absurdius est, uxores eorum cum pueris suis in pitanceria nostra tempore werre hospitabantur.[16]

> The Jews, I say, for the sacrist was called their father and patron. They rejoiced in his protection and had free entrance and exit, and went everywhere throughout the monastery, wandering by the altars and round the shrine while Mass was being celebrated. Their money was deposited in our treasury, in the sacrist's custody. Even more incongruous, during the troubles [of 1173–1174] their wives and children were sheltered in our pittancery.[17]

Jocelin's picture of Jewish access to the Mass, part of a critical moment in the Abbey's history, may have influenced the author of the Croxton play, in which Jonathas and his men easily obtain the Host from corrupt Christians. Although the details of the ritual murder accusation surrounding little Robert are lost, it occurred at a crucial moment in the Abbey's history, just as Samson was rising to power.[18] As Joe Hillaby notes, "Above all a popular cult gave that strong sense of corporate identity so important for a religious community."[19] It is therefore not surprising to find the beginnings of a martyr cult coinciding with a point in the Abbey's history in which power structures within the Abbey were being realigned. It has also been suggested that little Robert's cult was meant to rival the cult of little William of Norwich, a development also not out of keeping with a struggle to shape the Abbey's corporate identity.[20] Whatever the forces behind its creation, the cult's origin coincides with important political events in the Abbey's history and at a time which many consider to be the Abbey's "golden age." Moreover, whatever the relationship between the expulsion and the accusation of little Robert's murder, according to Greenaway and Sayers, Jocelin "regards Samson's action [the Jewish expulsion] as a sign of the abbot's 'greatness,' to be classed with such deeds as his foundation of the hospital at Babwell, repurchase of the manor of Mildenhall, and refurbishment of St Edmund's shrine."[21] We also have evidence that shows

that memory of the events of Samson's time had impact in the fifteenth century, both in the monastic community as well as in the greater community, bound as it was to the Abbey in terms of religious, cultural and economic matters.[22]

Jocelyn of Brakelond not only recorded the murder of little Robert in his famous Bury Chronicle, he also wrote a separate account of it. This account is now lost, but the fifteenth-century "monk of Bury," English "Poet Laureate" John Lydgate composed a poem that tells of the alleged circumstances of little Robert's death at the hands of the Jews:

Slayn in childhood by mortal violence,
  Allas! it was a pitous thing to see
A sowkyng child, tendre of Innocence,
  So to be scourged, and naylled to a tre;
  Thou myghtyst crie, thou spak no woord, parde,
W*ith*-oute langage makyng a pitous sou*n*,
  Pray for alle tho, knelyng on thy kne,
That do reuerence on-to thy passioun.[23]

In Lydgate's poem, little Robert's martyrdom parallels the events of the Crucifixion, particularly as they were portrayed in the medieval drama cycles; like Christ, Robert is "scourged" and "naylled to a tre." So is the Host in the Croxton play.

The Croxton play's Banns announce the host desecration as a new Passion: "They [the Jews] grevid our Lord gretly on grownd, / And put him to a new Passyoun."[24] Because the Host tortured in the play is regarded as the body of Christ, the play dramatically reinforces the charge that Jews are the killers of Christ. Host desecration, ritual murder accusation and blood libel, all drawing on the charge of Crucifixion, form a constellation of alleged Jewish crimes by which the Croxton play's author navigates.[25] Lydgate, self-styled Chaucerian disciple, further reinforces the interconnectedness of the crimes by drawing on the language and imagery of Chaucer's *Prioress's Prologue and Tale*; Robert as a "sowkyng child, tendre of Innocence" and "pitous." Lydgate's poem evokes one of the opening images of the *Prioress's Prologue*, the children who praise God even while suckling at the breast (VII, 456–458).[26] Like little Robert, who cries "w*ith*-oute langage makyng pitous sou*n*," the innocent children in the *Prioress's Prologue* praise God even though they have not yet learned formal language. They indeed sometimes perform God's praise "on the brest soukyng," just as little Robert is a "sowkyng child" (VII, 458) The Prioress's little clergeon is also "tendre" of age and he is buried with "pitous lamentacioun" by Christian folk (VII, 524, 621). These allusions to Chaucer's poem tie little Robert's martyrdom to Chaucer's clergeon, linked

by Chaucer's Prioress to yet another famous ritual murder accusation, "yonge Hugh of Lyncoln, slayn also/ With cursed Jewes" (VII, 684–685).

Although most critics do not make much of the Croxton play's portrayal of a child in an oven, Richard Homan stresses that Christ appears to the Jews as a "chyld" with bloody wounds.[27] In an earlier article on the play, Homan suggests the image of the bloody child is a "vestige of the anti-Semitic roots of the story."[28] Although Homan is one of the critics who relies on the argument that the Jews in the play are not "Jews," but generic doubters, he cannot deny the strong suggestion of ritual murder in the text.[29] I want to go further than this and contend that an image of a murdered child would have specific resonance in the fifteenth-century Bury community; Robert's murder and subsequent martyrdom were an integral part of Bury's history and reference to a wounded, bloody child could not fail to evoke the local victim of alleged Jewish violence.

Even for those fifteenth-century Bury residents to whom the texts of Robert's legend was inaccessible, his story was available to them through the physical structure of the Abbey itself. Although Robert's martyrdom occurred over two hundred years before the writing of *The Play of the Sacrament*, his relics were still sufficiently revered to be housed in a chapel named in his honor until at least 1520, as indicated by records of singers paid for performing in St Robert's chapel in that year.[30] Lydgate's poem seems to refer to such a chapel as well:

> Haue vpon Bury *þi* gracious reme*m*brau*n*ce
> That hast among hem a chapel & a shryne,
> W*ith* helpe of Edmu*n*d, p*r*eserve he*m* for grevau*n*ce,
> Kyng of Estynglond, martir and virgyne,
> W*ith* whos briht sonne lat thy sterre shyne,
> Strecchyng your stremys thoru*h* al þis regiou*n*,
> Pray for alle tho, and kepe hem fro ruyne,
> That do reu*er*ence to both your passioun.[31]

Lydgate figures little Robert as star to Edmund's sun. Both are martyrs, whose passions imitate that of Christ and both have shrines in Bury. In 1464 the Abbey was damaged by a fire, which miraculously left the relics of St Edmund and the pyxes undamaged; there is no specific mention of the relics of Little Robert, but it seems possible from the 1520 singers' record that his chapel had endured.

In addition to the relics and chapel of Little Robert, the Bury Abbey also displayed wall paintings of ninety miracles and biblical scenes commissioned by Samson when he was the Abbey's subsacrist and accompanied by Latin elegiac verses that Jocelin reports were of Samson's own composition. It

would appear that some of these pictures and verses served as propaganda that may well have played a role in the persecution and expulsion of Bury Jews.[32] Among these verses are two popular miracles of the Virgin: the story of Theophilus and the story of the little Jewish boy who takes communion with his Christian friends, a tale often referred to as the Jew of Bourges, after the version by one of its most influential tellers, Gautier de Coinci, in his *Les Miracles de Nostre Dame*.[33] After the Jewish boy's father learns that his son has taken communion, he becomes enraged and thrusts him into an oven to bake alive, sealing the oven in some versions with stones and cement, as Jazdon the Jew seals the oven with clay in the Croxton play. The Jewish boy is saved by the Virgin, who shields him from burning alive in the oven.[34] The boy emerges from the oven to tell of the Virgin's miraculous protection, he (and sometimes his mother) are converted to Christianity; his brutal father seems always to meet a harsh end.[35] As Miri Rubin has demonstrated in *Gentile Tales*, Miracles of the Virgin such as that of the Jew of Bourges are closely related to charges of host desecration. Indeed, the narrative of the little Jewish boy witnesses the power of the Host, as it is participation in communion that gives the boy access to his transformative vision of the Virgin. Robert Stacey, in his examination of the story of Adam of Bristol, has shown how the body of the martyred child is identified with the body of Christ in the Host.[36] These stories are also related to tales of the Christ child on the altar, in which a Jew witnessing the Mass sees not a Host, but a small child, a miraculous vision that also leads to conversion to Christianity.[37]

R. Po-Chia Hsia has demonstrated the close links between stories of ritual murder and host desecration and speaks of an eventual "standardization" of ritual murder discourse in the fifteenth century, as variations of stories of ritual murder became dominated by stories of the violent deaths of young male children. He writes "the driving force behind this standardization was the increasingly central function of ritual murder discourse as a form of the imitation of Christ, in which the representations of the boy victims and the Child Jesus became fused and ritual murders came to be identified with Host desecrations."[38] Each of these types of tales plays upon the notion of the vulnerable and innocent child associated with the host and its miracles, often in danger from a murderous, disbelieving adult, who is usually an adult male Jew.

I would argue that it is this type of fusion, in which distinct incidents of alleged Jewish crime seem to merge together around the central act of alleged Jewish perfidy, the Crucifixion, that is deployed both in the Croxton play and in Lydgate's poem about little Robert, which links Robert's death to other ritual murders through allusion to Chaucer. Host desecration narratives and stories like the Jew of Bourges, with their strong connections to ritual murder

accusations, resonate in the Croxton play's figure of the bloody child with specific reference to the accusation surrounding the local martyr, little Robert of Bury. The verses accompanying the Bury wall painting of the story of the Jew of Bourges create yet another context for the play's representation of Jews and add to the impact of the final pivotal scene in which Jonathas and the Jews throw the already tortured Host out of a boiling cauldron into an oven.[39] Taken together they form what Denise Despres, drawing upon the terminology of anthropologist Victor Turner, has called a "symbol cluster," a symbolic grouping in which fictional and "actual" events can become inextricably intermingled.[40] To date, scholars have ignored a possible allusion to little Robert in the Croxton play. Although aware of the existence of little Robert and his shrine, one critic writes that "there is no localization of the story around a particular relic shrine or reference to a particular miraculous Host."[41] This lack of attention to the legend of little Robert is surprising, especially since the evidence for a connection lies in published sources like Lydgate's poem and Montague Rhodes James' account of the Abbey's architecture and library.

How does a new recognition of the importance of the history of the Bury Jews advance our understanding of the Croxton play beyond a simple recognition of allusion, and what are the implications of this history and its reception for the representation of Jews in late medieval English culture? I want to conclude by drawing out the implications of the temporal and spatial fusion discussed above, to show how the play's allusion to little Robert affects its temporal frame and consequently its impact on our understanding of the more general temporal frame for the figure of "the Jew" as a once, future, and present threat to the body of the Christ. This framing in time and space has significance not only for medieval texts, but for modern ones as well, and for the history of anti-Semitic stereotypes.

By temporal fusion and framing, I am referring to the way in which events in the play seem to collapse time: the Jews in *Croxton* are not simply testing a host, they are re-enacting the Crucifixion. The Banns announce: "They grevid our Lord gretly on grownd, /And put hym to a new passyoun."[42] The play emphasizes the parallel nature of the events: the Jews obtain the Host, purchasing the Body of Christ as the Romans bought Jesus from Judas. They next "smyte þeron woundys fyve" (line 458). The Eucharist is also nailed to a post, paralleling the Crucifixion and baked in an oven, symbolizing the Harrowing of Hell. Finally, the Host transforms into Christ himself, paralleling the ultimate miracle of the Resurrection. It is essential, however, to remember that these actions are not simply parallels; they are iterative re-enactments – "a new passyoun" tied directly to *the* Passion through the Jews' disbelief. Masphat the Jew mocks:

> Yea, I dare sey feythfulli þat ther feyth [ys fals]:
> That was neuer he that on Caluery was kyld,
> Or in bred for to be blode, yt ys ontrewe als. (213–215)

The Jews define the miracle of the Eucharist through their doubt, and crucially, the Mass and the miracle of transubstantiation are tied to the sacrifice of the Crucifixion – if one is not true, then neither is the other. In this way, the play takes the iterative nature of the Jews' crime even further. If the Crucifixion and the Mass are so linked, then it is implied that every celebration of the Mass is a re-enactment of Christ's sacrifice and, consequently, of the Jews' crime against him. The importance of the Mass is made even more clear at the play's conclusion. Players and audience move into the church, and the hymn "*O Sacrum Convivium*," associated with the Mass, is sung.[43] Through these strong echoes of the eucharistic ritual, the play once again reinvokes the Crucifixion re-enacted in every Mass, bringing together all at once the continuous and perpetual nature of this sacrifice, which contains simultaneously both global and local instances. Additionally, if we think of these events as connected within a symbolic system, the Croxton host desecration re-enacts the passion of Little Robert and – if we follow Lydgate's poem – the passion of St Edmund, tying both to the Crucifixion, as well as the Mass. In this way, the Crucifixion, the related crimes of host desecration and ritual murder, and the Mass are all perpetual and simultaneous, existing beyond a linear temporal frame.

The Croxton Play and the host desecration accusation it portrays reflect the complex temporality inherent in the Mass.[44] It is a central tenet of eucharistic theology to state that the Mass is not simply a memorial, but that the sacrament brings the past sacrifice of the Crucifixion into the present time of the rite.[45] Joseph Jungmann attempts to bring together the numerous ways of understanding the Mass's temporality by stating that all the many ways to consider the Mass are:

> simply attempts to explain in depth the fact, borne out by tradition, that we must hold fast to: in the commerative act of the Church the redemptive act of Christ becomes present. Further, that just as the substantive reality of the body of Christ becomes present in several places, so too, through the commerative actual presence, the one even of the death on the Cross becomes present at several points in time.[46]

In the realm of the sacramental, temporality is tied to the Real Presence; present and past come together, creating a temporal dimension that transcends linear or historical time. The congregant participates in this temporal dimension, present at the individual Mass, but also simultaneously witness to the sacrifice at Calvary of which that Mass is "nothing else than a sacramental

extension."[47] The individual Mass is also joined to all other Masses. As Miri Rubin writes, "The Eucharist placed Christians within a symbolic system operating within a history of salvation, and it was a drama re-enacted at every altar during every Mass."[48] How an individual Christian in late medieval England experienced his or her place within the symbolic system of the Mass and within its temporal modes is impossible to pinpoint, since as Eamon Duffy stresses in *The Stripping of the Altars*, "lay people experienced the Mass in a variety of ways and in a range of settings."[49] There were, in late medieval England, however, certain modes of lay devotion in which individuals were encouraged to meditate upon the Mass, understanding its stages in relation to the stages in the life of Christ and bringing, through these meditations, the past into the present, as they became witness to not only the individual Mass, but also to the life of Christ itself. Duffy considers various texts, such as the *Lay Folk's Mass Book*, meant to guide lay people in their devotions during Mass, arguing that these texts:

> All adopt essentially the same method, offering moralized or allegorized meditations on the stages of the Mass, in which the more distinctive actions of the priest, such as ascending or descending the altar steps, changing position at the altar, extending his arms, or turning towards the congregation, are related to the incidents of Christ's life and Passion, or to generalized aspects of Christian doctrine. In some later medieval Mass devotions, such as those associated with the Brigittine House of Syon, the correspondences with the Passion are very closely worked out, on the premise that "the processe of the masse representyd the verey processe of the Passyon off Cryst."[50]

In these types of meditations, elements in the Mass were meant as "triggers or points of departure" for meditation on the life of Christ, particularly the Passion.[51] It is clear that the prompts to meditation on the Mass enumerated by Duffy could also include explicit instructions to consider the alleged Jewish role in the Crucifixion. Lydgate's *Merita Missae*, which like the *Lay Folk's Mass Book* guides devotees through appropriate actions and responses during the Mass, encourages this meditation during the Fraction:

> Thynke on the sorow and on the woo,
> That he suferde for thy sake,
> Whan the Iewyse his vaynis brake;
> And he dide for the weop
> To his fader on olywete.[52]

The meditation here is centered on Jewish cruelty, an exercise echoed by the tract associated with Syon mentioned by Duffy, which also encourages the

devotee to "remember the crueltie of the Iewys."[53] Another such moment can be found in the Middle English version of the *Patris Sapientia* in the meditation which corresponds to Tierce in the Sarum Rite:

> At vndren þe false iewis
> Crieden with hi3 vois,
> 'Delyuere vs baraban,
> And do þis on þe cros!'[54]

Denise Despres has already analyzed the importance of a "continuous anti-Judaic iconographic tradition in lay devotional manuscripts," specifically Books of Hours.[55] Other devotional texts, such as Nicholas Love's *Mirrour of the Blessyd Lyf of Jesu Christ* also asks the devotee to place him or herself in the events of the life of Christ, creating a temporal simultaneity with these historical events. As Sarah Beckwith notes: "The meditations, then, like their counterparts, the Books of Hours, juxtapose ecclesiastical time with individual time, and attempt to make the one act in concert with the other ... The crucifixion structures the time of everyday life."[56]

These meditative practices are not equivalent to the Mass, but the temporality of the Mass and the urgent way in which it makes the past and present unite clearly wielded influence beyond the eucharistic rite itself, structuring the very notion of time itself for the devout. The visions of Margery Kempe represent the extremes to which such meditative practices could be taken and indeed, Kempe's visions are remarkable for the ways in which they show her experiencing historical events such as Christ's birth and Passion in the present with an "utterly literal actuality."[57] In Kempe's visions of the Passion she witnesses a vivid and detailed Jewish attack on Christ:

> And anon after sche beheld how the cruel Jewys
> leydyn hys precyows body to the crosse, and sithyn
> tokyn a long nayle, a row and a boistews, and sett
> to hys on hand, and wyth gret violens and cruelnes
> thei drevyn it thorw his hande. (347)

Here we see the way in which the same vision which makes Christ "present" to Kempe also brings a vision of the Jew as torturer and murderer an urgent and terrifying reality in the present. Kempe's visions can be discussed in the context of these other texts which, too, encourage meditative devotional practices beyond meditation on the Mass.

Non-linear notions of time clearly influence medieval texts beyond those explicitly designed to foster or describe devotional practice. Margot Fassler, writing about the twelfth-century *Ordo representacionis Ade*, speaks of an "all time" in liturgical drama, in which there is "a layering of Christian time

in relation to the way in which typological time functions, as events in the Old and New Testaments occur simultaneously ... it is an art with a view of time, a time wherein all events can be seen at once, placed one on top of the other in layers, lined up, focused, and explained through Christ."[58]

Readers have long been puzzled when Chaucer's Prioress, in her concluding allusion to the death of little Hugh of Lincoln, refers to this event as occurring "but a litel while ago," despite the fact that Hugh met his demise in 1255 and the Prioress, one must assume, shares her grisly devotional tale sometime in the mid- to late 1300s.[59] In discussing this textual conundrum, John Archer points out "we are dealing with a conception of time different from our own," pointing to the concept of time in the Corpus Christi cycles, in which dramatized actions continually reoccurred and through their re-iterations, re-enacted events like the Crucifixion. The actions in the drama occur not in the past as we now commonly conceive of it, but rather in accordance with Augustine's conception of "the present time of past things." Archer argues that "such was the conception of time in the Middle Ages that the Jews were not only perpetually guilty of deicide, but perpetually in the state of committing the crime."[60]

While I do not think we want to attribute any kind of singular conception of "time" to the Middle Ages, this layered temporal effect is a key temporal mode of *Croxton* and the *Prioress's Tale* and the related accusations of blood libel, ritual murder, and host desecration which they represent, in which the Jews on some level re-enact the Passion. These texts make this past event re-occur simultaneously in the present, before the audience, just as the Mass is a re-enactment of the Crucifixion every time it is celebrated on every altar. Understood within the distinctive temporal dimensions of these Christian representations of time, we can see just how the *Croxton* audience's witnessing of the host desecration and subsequent miracle is not simply a vision of a re-enactment of the Aragonian host-desecration, but simultaneously makes them witnesses of the murder of little Robert and of the Crucifixion, which both exist in a kind of "eternal present, " a temporality central to the Mass and also to related devotional practice. In the context of these temporal possibilities, "allusion" as literary scholars understand this term takes on a whole new theological dimension. The story of little Robert exists not only in historical memory, but also in the eternal present in which the Crucifixion and its re-enactments are joined.

One could argue that layered time is not the only temporal mode present in *Croxton*. Stephen Spector reads the miracle accompanying this re-enactment and the Jews' subsequent conversion as a type of break in the cyclical temporality of the Cycle dramas.[61] Referring to the play's "linear rush of time," Spector points out that these Jews are not doomed to endlessly repeat

their mistakes: "In this play, in sharp contrast to the mystery cycles, the demonic enemies of Christ, the Jews, are allowed the possibility of spiritual growth" (196). Spector reads this moment of conversion as central to the play's "perplexing irony" (194), when Jews, who are defined by blindness, are cured through a vision of the bleeding Christ. But are these Jews not in some way doomed to a type of endless repetition, even if it is not the physical repetition of their crimes? By the play's end, the Jews are, in one sense, "incorporated" into the Christian community. But, in another sense, they are still separate from it. The Jews are not permanently integrated into the immediate Christian community; they go into a wandering exile, spreading the message of their new belief: "Now wyll we walke by contré and cost, / Our wyckyd lyuyng for to restore" (964–965). And as this exile indicates, a kind of collapse of events occurs not only temporally, but spatially. We may, indeed, following Jungmann, extend our consideration of liturgical time in the Mass to place. The Mass is celebrated throughout Christendom, but at each altar, the congregants are also at the scene of the Crucifixion.

In the case of *Croxton*, the play's Banns locate this host desecration in Spain. Yet, setting the play in Spain, site of so much turmoil surrounding issues of Jewish conversion to Christianity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is not incidental, as some critics have argued, but needs to be read in Spanish Jewish history's tumultuous context.[62] But the specificity of this historical reference does not preclude its generality. In *Croxton*, place as well as time function beyond expected linear or spatial orders. The performance of the desecration, with its resonances with local Bury history suggests that Aragon and East Anglia, although geographically separate, are linked through attack on Jews. As the story of the host desecration and the story of little Robert converge, a profound connection between these two Christian cities appears, as they are equally threatened and separately and simultaneously re-living the site of the Passion.

Our understanding of ritual murder and host desecration accusations is thus furthered by a recognition of the influence of the powerful temporal and spatial dimensions of sacramental reality that come together in the sacrifice of the Mass and which function so centrally in late medieval Christian theology. Scholars like Joe Hillaby have established the importance of the Christian liturgical calendar and dates such as Good Friday and Easter in the origins of the ritual murder accusation, but the notions of temporality active in these anti-Semitic myths extend beyond the Christian calendar into the sacrifice of the Mass itself.[63] Because the Mass re-enacts Christ's passion daily on every altar throughout Christendom these alleged ritual murders and host desecrations take on added significance. Further, the sites of host desecration and ritual murder accusation are not only linked to each other, but to every other

site of alleged atrocity against the body of Christ and to every site in which the sacrifice of the Mass, itself an enactment of the Passion, is performed. In this way all Christians are united spatially and temporally both through the saving power of Christ's sacrifice, but also against the Jews who allegedly crucified him. This cycle, which will repeat each time the Croxton play is performed, continues perpetually, an effect only heightened if this play, as some critics contend, traveled beyond the site of its original provenance.[64] The *Croxton* Jews' re-enactment of the Passion may literally cease, but also it lingers on in a kind of narration that will conceivably continue for as long as the iterative sacrifice of the Mass will continue – until the end of time.

One clear by-product then, of the powerful temporality of the sacrament of the Eucharist and its correspondent conception of the continuous and perpetual sacrifice and suffering of Christ, is a representation of the Jew as perpetual murderer, guilty not only of crucifying Christ in the historical past, but in the present, and, until the Parousia, in the future. Here we have seen how this element in Christian temporality has, at least in part, enabled the development of a particular aspect of the negative stereotype of "the Jew," the perpetually present enemy, ever plotting against Christ and Christendom. Denise Despres has ably shown that any notion of "anti-Semitism without Jews" must take into account the very powerful presence of Jews in the devotional discourse of post-Expulsion England.[65] And, through examining some of the central temporal and spatial implications of eucharistic temporality we can see how an understanding of these elements can illuminate the structure of anti-Semitic myths like host desecration and ritual murder accusations, which portray the Jew as an ever-present threat.

But the importance of these temporal and spatial elements is not limited to the myths of host desecration and ritual murder. The exile of the Jews in *Croxton*, as well as the perpetual and continual nature of their crime, calls to mind a related legend, that of the Wandering Jew, who allegedly insulted and rebuked Christ on the *via dolorosa* and who subsequently was doomed to wander the earth in penance until Christ's return. The temporal and spatial elements of this mythic figure come into focus even more clearly if we think of other vernaculars. The German "*der ewige Jude*" evokes the eternal nature of Jewish crime; "*le juif errant*" bears not only the idea of far-flung exile, but the Latin root *errare*, which evokes not only wandering but Jewish error.

I would not argue that the Croxton play makes a specific allusion to this figure; there is no more than a nominal allusion through the character of Malchus the Jew, whose name evokes one of the roots of the Wandering Jew legend.[66] More interesting to me is how examination of the temporality of the Croxton play illuminates for us the specific dimensions of this myth, which is not formed by any relation to actual Jews, but to their place in

the Christian temporal and spatial dynamic that has been outlined. If the Crucifixion is to be perpetually invoked until Judgment day, indeed re-enacted until this time, then Jewish deicide is perpetual. And, if the Crucifixion is re-enacted in so many towns and lands and on so many altars, than this perpetual deicide is not only eternal, but ubiquitous. The roots and the structure of the myth of Jewish omnipresence and far-flung animosity are created in reaction to a type of sacramental time that runs endlessly on both global and local levels. Edgar Knecht has linked the figure of the Wandering Jew to the fundamentals of Christian belief through reference to the work of Mircea Eliade. Knecht argues that the Wandering Jew legend resonates with the fundamental religious experience of a Christian who experiences "*l'imitation* du Christ comme modèl exemplaire, sur la *répétition* liturgique de la vie, de la mort et de la résurrection du Seigneur, et sur la contemporanéité du chrétien avec *l'illud tempus* qui s'ouvre à la Nativité de Bethléem et s'achève provisoirement avec l'Ascension."[67] This temporality, so central to the figuration of the Wandering Jew, connects this figure structurally to ritual murder accusation (and perhaps as well to other anti-Semitic myths like the Protocols of the Elders of Zion) creating a "Jew" who is both a local and global threat.

This "Jew" becomes a powerful specter because its threat collapses and unites time and space. "The Jew" is at once vague and specific, each vicious action against Christians is at once a present, past and future Crucifixion. Remembrances of local histories, like that of little Robert, are shaped in this way. Just as the life of saint is shaped around the life of Christ, so do tales of ritual murder and host desecration form around the Crucifixion. It is the collapse of time and space connected with these events, the palpable sense that these events function iteratively as the Mass does, that creates the temporal and spatial dimensions of a figure like the Wandering Jew. It is also necessary to remember that generalized myths of the Jew are formed from particular instances like the case of little Robert of Bury and that the general and particular exist in a kind of dialectic that makes both the general and the particular more virulent. "The Jew" and alleged Jewish crime appear to subsume historical particulars, but each figure of "the Jew" has particular local meaning as well as a more generalized one. The Croxton Play presents more than a generic "Jew"; it gives insight into local East Anglian perceptions of the Jew developed and sustained over several centuries as part of larger structures of anti-Semitic myth. Even as they are tied to the general, therefore, these historical particulars remain present and discrete.

Notes

1. Lines 57–60. All quotations the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament* will be from the standard edition, Norman Davis, *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments*, Early English Text Society, suppl. ser. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 58–89. A facsimile edition can be found in Norman Davis, *Non-Cycle Plays and the Winchester Dialogues* (Leeds: School of English, 1979). The text of the play survives in folios 338r–356r of Trinity College, Dublin, M.S. F.4.20 (Catalogue No. 652). The copy of the play appears to have been made in the mid-sixteenth century. For a discussion of the importance of the context of the play's copying and transmission with a very different emphasis than this essay, see Seth Lerer, "Represented Now in Yower Syght," The Culture of Spectatorship in Late Fifteenth-Century England," in Barbara Hanawalt and David Wallace, eds., *Bodies and Disciplines; Intersections of Literature and History in Fifteenth-Century England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 29-62. See also Michael Jones, "Theatrical History in the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*," *ELH* 66 (1999): 223–260.
2. Here I echo Bernard Glassman, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes without Jews: Images of the Jews in England 1290–1700* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975). Glassman was among the first to attempt a large scale discussion of how a "shadowy image" of the Jews could be kept alive in England even after the 1290 expulsion.
3. David Bevington characterizes the play's Jews as generic doubters, "deplored not because of their particular ethnic origin but because they are heathens lacking faith in Christ's divinity." See his *Medieval Drama* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975), p. 754. Cecelia Cutts pioneered the anti-Lollard reading with her "The English Background of the *Play of the Sacrament*" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1938) and "The Croxton Play: An Anti-Lollard Piece," *Modern Language Quarterly* 5 (1944), pp. 45–60. Ann Nichols analyzes the play's use of "Lollard" language, "Lollard Language in the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*," *Notes and Queries* 36.1 (1989), pp. 23–25. Gail McMurray Gibson also argues that the play is directed at Lollards, seeing Jonathas and his men as "Jews," rather than referents to actual Jews; *The Theater of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 34–41. I would argue that a reading of the Croxton play as anti-Lollard doesn't preclude an anti-Jewish meaning, but rather draws upon it. I see the terms Lollard and Jew as connected in the Croxton play. See my "After Eden, Out of Zion: Jews and Gender from Paul to Shakespeare," Chapters 3 and 4, forthcoming.
4. Donnalee Dox, "Medieval Drama as Documentation: 'Real Presence' in the Croxton *Conversion of Ser Jonathas the Jewe by the Myracle of the Blessed Sacrament*," *Theatre Survey* 38 (1997), pp. 97–115 and "Representation Without Referent: The Jew in Medieval English Drama. An Exploration of Christian Alterity in *The Conversion of Ser Jonathas the Jew by Miracle of the Blessed Sacrament*" (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1995).
5. Critics have made compelling arguments for a Bury provenance. See Gibson, pp. 34–35 and Bevington, p. 756. Sarah Beckwith calls "the Bury St Edmunds connection ... irrefutable," "Ritual, Church and Theatre: Medieval Dramas of the Sacramental Body," in David Aers, ed., *Culture and History 1350–1660: Essays on English Communities, Identities and Writings* (New York: Harvester/Wheatsleaf, 1992), p. 85 n. 25. Seth Lerer, reading the play as a "drama about drama," argues for a new perspective on the location and dating of the play that would take into account the play's Tudor reception, but while his is a very compelling reading, I do not find it successfully refutes the connection to Bury. The fact that the play likely traveled also does not preclude a Bury origin and,

indeed, Gibson argues that this traveling feature is a point in favor of Bury as the original site of the play (34–35). On the play as travel ing see also Jones 226.

6. As R. Dobson asserts, the exact sequence of the "series of explosions" of violence that moved from town to town in 1190 is "badly documented." For a detailed discussion of the violence in York see his "The Jews of York and the Massacre of March 1190," *Borthwick Papers* 45 (1974), p. 25. See also Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978).
7. Roth, p. 58.
8. Robin R. Mundill, *England's Jewish Solution: Experiment and Expulsion 1269–1290* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 52.
9. "Eodem tempore fuit sanctus puer Robertus martirizatus, et in ecclesia nostra sepultus, et fiebant prodigia et signa multa in plebe, sicut alibi scripsimus." See *Cronica Jocelini de Brakelonda: de rebus gestis Samsonis, Abbatis Monasterii Sancti Edmundi*, H.E. Butler, ed. (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1949), p. 16.
10. "Puer Robertus apud Sanctum Edmundum a Judaeis martirizatur iiij^{o} idus Junii, feria iiij^{a}." Cited in the notes to *Chronica Jocelini de Brakelonda: de rebus gestis Samsonis, Abbatis Monasterii Sancti Edmundi*, J.G. Rokewode, ed. (London: Camden Society, 1840), p. 114.
11. Roth, p. 24.
12. *Cronica*, p. 45. Dominus abbas peciit a rege literas ut iudei eicerentur a villa Sancti Aedmundi, allegans quod quicquid est in uilla Sancti Aedmundi, vel infra bannam leucam, de iure Sancti Aedmundi est: ergo, uel iudei debent esse homines Sancti Aedmundi, uel de uilla sunt eiciendi. Data est ergo licentia, ut eos eiceret, ita tamen quod haberent omnia katalla, scilicet et precia domorum suarum et terrarum. Et cum emissi essent, et armata manu conducti ad diuersa oppida, abbas iussit sollempniter excomunicari per omnes ecclesias et ad omnia altaria omnes illos, qui de cetero receptarent iudeos uel in hospicio reciperent in villa Sancta Aedmundi. Quod tamen postea dispensatum est per iusticiarios regis, scilicet, ut si iudei uenerint ad magna placita abbatis ad exigendum debita sua a debitoribus suis, sub hac occasione poterunt duobus diebus et ii noctibus hospitari in uilla, tercio autem die libere discedent.
13. Jocelin of Brakelond, *Chronicle of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds*, trans. Diana Greenawayand Jane Sayers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 42.
14. In addition to the way it illuminates the political maneuvering of the Abbot and the Crown, Samson's request also echoes the ways in which the ceremony of the eucharist sets the boundaries of the Christian community, much as it does in the Croxton Play. Here the space of the town and its environs should be inhabited only by Christians, St Edmund's men, who partake in the beliefs and rituals of the Church. Those who do not belong must be expelled, along with those who collaborate with the Jews.
15. Antonia Gransdon, *The Chronicle of Bury St Edmunds, 1212–1301* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964), p. xiv and David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 503–504.
16. *Cronica*, p. 10.
17. *Chronicle*, p. 10.
18. Even more interesting, I think, is the possibility that the ritual murder accusation surrounding the death of little Robert was forged in the heat of power struggles within the Abbey, as a part of those struggles, although my thoughts here must remain conjectural.
19. Joe Hillaby, "The Ritual-Child-Murder Accusation: Its Dissemination and Harold of Gloucester," *Jewish Historical Studies* 34 (1994–1996), p. 73.

20. On a possible rivalry with Norwich, see Robert Stacey, "Anti-Semitism and the Medieval English State," *The Medieval State: Essays Presented to James Campbell* (London: Hambledon Press, 2000), pp. 169–170.
21. *Chronicle*, p. xx.
22. On the relationship of the Abbey and the town of Bury see Robert Gottfried, *Bury St Edmunds and the Urban Crisis: 1290–1539* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).
23. *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, Henry, Nobel MacCracken, ed., Early English Text Society, Vol. 117, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 138–139. A version of the text can also be found in Hillaby, "The Ritual-Child-Murder Accusation," pp. 108–109. Jocelin of Brakelond refers to his now lost history of little Robert in his Chronicle, see Greenaway and Sayers, p. 15.
24. Lines 37–38.
25. H. Copinger Hill also connects Chaucer to the legend of little Robert, speculating that Chaucer was familiar with his story. His reasoning is highly speculative and impossible to substantiate, and the article as a whole, which seems to take the ritual murder accusation as real rather than alleged, is deeply problematic. Of interesting note, however, is his reference to a page of miniatures that may refer to little Robert in a privately owned late 12th-century MS of "Life of Christ and of the Virgin." There are additional pictures added in the fifteenth-century, including the "*Oracio Sancti Roberti*" with four illustrated compartments, a photograph of which is included in the article. The first features a woman putting little Robert into a well with the scroll "Voluit set non potuit abscondere lucerna[m] dei" and the second shows little Robert martyred with arrows in the manner of St Edmund. Hill connects the well with the privy in Chaucer's tale. I do not find this reference in the well affects my reading of the *Croxton* allusion to little Robert. Rather it seems that these tales of alleged abuse by Jews are intricately related to one another, part of a discourse beautifully analyzed in Miri Rubin's *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). See Hill, "S. Robert of Bury St Edmunds," *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archae ology* (1931), pp. 98–105.
26. Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Riverside Chaucer*, in Larry Benson, ed., 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987). Subsequent references in the text refer to this edition.
27. Richard L. Homan, "Devotional Themes in the Violence and Humor of the *Play of the Sacrament*," *Comparative Drama* 20 (1986), p. 334. For an excellent reading that does not emphasize the figure in the oven as a child, but as Christ see Sarah Beckwith, "Ritual, Church and Theatre," pp. 65–89.
28. Richard L. Homan, "Two Exempla: Analogues to the *Play of the Sacrament* and *Dux Moraud*," *Comparative Drama* 18 (1984), p. 241.
29. See note 2.
30. Gibson, p. 124.
31. Lines 33–40. For an account of the fire, see Gibson, p. 36.
32. The choir screen is now lost, but transcriptions of the verses are contained in MS Arundel 30, housed in the College of Arms, London (see esp. f 208). For transcription of some of what this MS contains, see also Montague Rhodes James, *On the Abbey of S. Edmund at Bury* (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1895), pp. 190–191. A fascinating link between these verses and an inscription on the late twelfth-century ivory cross now housed in the Cloisters Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art is discussed in Sabrina Longland, "A Literary Aspect of the Bury St Edmunds Cross," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 2 (1969), pp. 410–429. The cross is elaborately carved with figures and legends; some of which depict the Jews and their alleged role in the Crucifixion. Norman Scharfe

and Thomas Hoving have both connected the Cross to Bury St Edmunds under Samson and to Samson's anti-Jewish stand. Thomas P.F. Hoving, "The Bury St Edmunds Cross," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 22 (1964), pp. 317–340 and Scarfe, *Suffolk in the Middle Ages: Studies in Places and Placenames, the Sutton Hoo Ship-Burial, Saints, Mummies and Crosses, Domesday Book, and Chronicles of Bury Abbey* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1986). Other scholars, most notably Ursula Nilgen, have argued against a rush to assume Bury as the site of origin. See "Das Grosse Walrossbeinkreuz in den Cloisters," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 48 (1985), pp. 39–64. For a comprehensive discussion of the Cross and the scholarly debates surrounding it, see Elizabeth C. Parker and Charles T. Little, *The Cloister Cross: Its Art and Meaning* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994).

33. Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, p. 12. These stories were both contained in an important collection created by Anselm of Bury St Edmunds no later than 1125, a collection which defined the corpus of Marian tales. See Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, pp. 7–10.
34. See Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, p. 10.
35. The story has many variations. For a detailed discussion of the major versions and their relationship to tales of host desecration, see Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, pp. 7–39. Note also Rubin on the role of women in the host desecration narratives, pp. 73–76 and R. Po-Chia Hsia on the different treatment of Jewish women in ritual murder trials in his *Trent 1475: Stories of a Ritual Murder Trial* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 105–116.
36. Robert C. Stacey, "From Ritual Crucifixion to Host Desecration: Jews and the Body of Christ," *Jewish History* 12 (1998), pp. 11–25.
37. See Leah Sinanoglou, "The Christ Child as Sacrifice: A Medieval Tradition and the Corpus Christ Plays," *Speculum* 48 (1973), pp. 499–500. See also Denise Despres, "Immaculate Flesh and the Social Body: Mary and the Jews," *Jewish History* 12 (1998), pp. 49–50.
38. R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 54–56.
39. Another representation of the story of the Jewish boy appears at Lincoln Cathedral, site of the shrine of Little Hugh, the famous child martyr mentioned by Chaucer's Prioress.
40. Denise Despres, "Mary of the Eucharist: Cultic Anti-Judaism in Some Fourteenth-Century English Devotional Manuscripts," in Jeremy Cohen, ed., *From Witness to Witchcraft: Jews and Judaism in Medieval Christian Thought* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1996), p. 380.
41. Cutts, "Croxton Play," 47. She continues, "It seems, indeed, as though the deliberate choice of a vague and foreign setting and the absence of the mention of any relic shrine were a conscious attempt to keep the doctrinal teaching on a high and spiritual plane."
42. Lines 37–38.
43. Sister Nicholas Maltman, O.P., "Meaning and Art in the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*," *ELH* 41 (1974), pp. 150–151.
44. For a discussion see Clifford Flanigan, "The Roman Rite and the Origins of Liturgical Drama," *University of Toronto Quarterly* 43 (1974), pp. 263–284.
45. There have been countless attempts to explain and explore this temporality and in his magisterial treatise on the history of the Mass, Joseph Jungmann suggests that the "simplest solution" for explaining the "presence of the sacrifice of Christ" and the clearest "result of reasoning from tradition" is the concept of "*Mysteriengegenwart*," developed by Odo Casel in the twentieth-century. Casel's ideas have been debated since their introduction, and a full examination of the term is beyond the scope of this essay, but what I do find useful about this term is the way that it illustrates, through its very linguistic components,

not only the element of a "mystical presence" as Jungmann's English translator renders the German into English, but also the urgency of the way in which the Mass brings the past sacrifice of Christ into "the present" – "*die Gegenwart*," thus opening and creating a new temporal present that exists sacramentally. Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, volume 1, trans. Francis Brunner (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1950), pp. 177–178. See Odo Casel, "Das Mysteriengedächtnis der Messliturgie im Lichte der Tradition," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* (1926), pp. 113–124; "Glaube, Gnosis, Mysterium," *JbLw* 15 (1941), pp. 155–305. For translations of selected articles see, *The Mystery of Christian Worship and Other Writings*, Burkhard Neunhaeser, O.S.B., ed. (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1962). For a discussion of Casel's concept see Louis Bouyer, *Liturgical Piety* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955), pp. 86–99.

46. *The Mass: an historical, theological and pastoral survey*. Trans. Julian Fernandes, S.J., Mary Ellen Evans, ed. (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1976).
47. Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, p. 184.
48. Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 14.
49. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 111. For an exploration of what lay people may have experienced during a Mass in late medieval England and the relationship of this ritual to dramatic experience see T.P. Dolan "The Mass as Performance Text," in John Alford, ed., *From Page to Performance: Essays in Early English Drama* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1995), pp. 13–24.
50. Duffy, p. 119.
51. Ibid.
52. Lydgate's *Merita Missae*, Appendix V, in T.F. Simmons, ed., *The Lay Folks Mass Book* (London: EETS, 1879), p. 151.
53. "Langforde's Meditations in the Time of the Mass (Bodleian, Wood 17)," in J. Wickham Legg, ed., *Tracts on the Mass* (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 1904), p. 25.
54. Cited in Marion Glasscoe, "Time of Passion: Latent Relationships between Liturgy and Meditation in two Middle English Mystics," in Helen Phillips, ed., *Langland, the Mystics and the Medieval English Religious Tradition: Essays in Honour of S.S. Hussey* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer,1990), pp. 141–161. Glasscoe points to the centrality of the Passion in both "the Mass and the daily Office throughout the Year. Between them they enact and order for believers their commonsense of how an ultimate reality engages with the processes of time: in the Mass, by a corporate sense of all life being a divine gift sustained in time by processes of death and resurrection; in the Office by a daily pattern of worship, which commemorates the Incarnation in the yearly cycle of time and links the activities of the Church in the present time with the Saints" (141).
55. Despres, "Immaculate Flesh," 47.
56. Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 66–67. See also Nicholas Love, *Mirrour of the Blessyd Lyf of Jesu Christ*, ed. Michael G. Sargent (New York: Garland Pub., 1992).
57. Beckwith, *Christ's Body*, p. 81. Duffy cites Kempe as an example of how far such visionary practice could be "carried," 119.
58. Margot Fassler, "Representations of Time in *Ordo representacionis Ade*," in Daniel Poirion and Nancy Regaldo, eds., *Yale French Studies* (1991), p. 98. Karl Morrison calls this temporal mode the "eternal today." See his "The Church as Play: Gerhoch of Reichersberg's Call for Reform," in James Ross Sweeney and Stanley Chodorow, eds., *Popes,*

Teachers, and Canon Law in the Middle Ages (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 114–144.

59. John Archer, "The Structure of Anti-Semitism in the Prioress's Tale," *Chaucer Review* 19 (1984), p. 48.
60. Ibid., p. 47.
61. Spector argues that the Croxton play is "fundamentally a story of conversion" and cites Bevington's categorization of the play as a conversion play; "Time, Space and Identity in the *Play of the Sacrament*," in Alan E. Knight, ed., *The Stage as Mirror: Civic Theatre in Late Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), p. 189. See Bevington, p. 754.
62. Spector, p. 190. See Lampert, "After Eden, Out of Zion: Jews and Gender from Paul to Shakespeare," forthcoming.
63. Hillaby, "The Ritual-Child-Murder Accusation," esp. 85–97. On the creation and dissemination of the ritual murder myth in England see John McCulloh, "Jewish Ritual Murder: William of Norwich, Thomas of Monmouth, and the Early Dissemination of the Myth," *Speculum* 72 (1997), pp. 698–740.
64. See note 5.
65. See Despres, "Immaculate Flesh" and "Mary of the Eucharist."
66. Versions of the story of the Wandering Jew existed by the fifteenth century; the beginnings of the legend are centuries older. We find accounts in the thirteenth-century chronicles of Roger of Wendover and his successor as chronicler at St Albans, Matthew Paris. One of the origins of the legend is Malchus, the figure from John 18:4–10, who is conflated with the high priest who strikes Jesus in John 18:20–22. There are also important connections to the story of Cain, who is connected to Jewish perfidy and to the murder of Christ as the murder of Abel corresponds typologically to the Crucifixion. See George K. Anderson, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1965), p. 16.
67. Mircea Eliade, "Les mythes du monde moderne," *Mythes, rêves et mystères* (Paris: Gallimard, 1957), p. 29. Cited in Edgar Knecht, *Le Mythe du Juif Errant: Essai de Mythologie Litteraire et de Sociologie Religieuse* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1977), pp. 8–9.