

The Racialisation of the Jew in Old English Translations of Biblical Apocrypha – Abstract by Moritz Draschner

This thesis examines two Old English apocryphal texts—The *Vindicta Salvatoris* and *Andreas*—and focusses on mentions of Jews, Jewishness, anti-Judaism, and antisemitism within the chosen narratives. While scholarship in this field abounds on all kinds of vernacular as well as translated apocrypha, issues of race and the tensions between Christianity and Judaism in early medieval Europe are rarely the centre of attention. This paper aims at alleviating this shortage by investigating Jewish inability to act, prejudice concerned with finance and moneylending, Jewish blood libel and cannibalism, and conversion episodes among other issues in order to infer from textual evidence how Jews were racialised in what today is called England. Some of these issues are discussed in this presentation, and it further demonstrates how two seemingly unrelated works of literature can be read alongside each other—and as belonging to one another—based on the similarity and severity of a religious culture’s racialisation. Consequently, the thesis begins to regard apocryphal texts as a body of productions identified through their anti-Judaic tropes and which facilitated the establishment of systemic antisemitism in early medieval Europe. The paper thus creates a foundation for future research which should intend to (dis-)prove that similar observations can be made about a more varied selection of apocrypha.