

## *The Siege of Jerusalem* and recuperative readings

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Dismissed for years from serious critical attention, the fourteenth-century alliterative narrative *The Siege of Jerusalem*<sup>1</sup> has recently begun to generate the kind of interest associated with more canonical Middle English works. Scholarly studies have emerged to fill the lacunae of response and readings, and a new edition is forthcoming.<sup>2</sup> In this essay I will argue that this new attention to *Jerusalem* is well deserved and long overdue, inhibited more by scholarly distaste for the poem's perceived relentless and violent anti-Judaism, than by any intrinsic lack of literary or cultural value. The variety of new readings generated by this poem which once existed, as Ralph Hanna notes, 'on the suppressed margins of critical attention, unaccompanied by commentary',<sup>3</sup> testifies to its increasing importance in medieval studies. Yet even as a community of readers work to recuperate *Jerusalem* from its marginal placement, with few exceptions they continue to read the narrative as thoroughly anti-Judaic.<sup>4</sup> My argument concerning the poem is predicated on a recuperative reading in another sense of the word; I suggest that the virulent anti-Judaism from which scholars recoil is neither as unambiguous nor singular as is commonly claimed. Indeed, a full and nuanced reading of *Jerusalem* reveals that the poem does not deserve its 'reputation as the chocolate-covered tarantula of the alliterative movement',<sup>5</sup> and I will argue that the poem belies long-held critical assumptions both about this specific poem and about a conventional, monolithic anti-Judaism considered axiomatic in late fourteenth-century Middle English texts.

*The Siege of Jerusalem* was probably composed in the last decades of the fourteenth century in far west Yorkshire.<sup>6</sup> The nine surviving manuscripts testify to a wide popularity and the medieval collations indicate that the poem was 'capable of polyvocal recuperations' in the

fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Thus the alliterative narrative is, in some manuscripts, placed in contexts which suggest it be read as a 'quasi-scriptural narrative', another manuscript supports its being read as romance, while others suggest the poem's connection with, variously, crusade poetry, alliterative history, or learned classical history.<sup>7</sup> This lack of a uniform medieval interpretation anticipates the recent and widely different readings which have emerged from the study of this complex narrative.

Drawing on chronicles and legendary materials, including Josephus' first-century account of *The Jewish War*, the apocryphal *Vindicta salvatoris*, Higden's *Polychronicon*, the *Bible en françois* of Roger d'Argenteuil, and the *Legenda aurea*, *The Siege of Jerusalem* tells, with varied emphases and details, the story of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE.<sup>8</sup> Titus and Vespasian, Roman leaders and recent converts to Christianity (conversions accomplished through miraculous cures and the Passion twice told), embark upon a crusade against the Jews of Jerusalem to avenge Christ's death. The Romans lay siege to the city and after a tremendous battle in which many Jews are slain, the Jews retreat within the city walls and the Romans assail the town. The poem relates the diverse details of both Roman and Jewish actions during the two-year siege, including detailed scenes inside the city walls where hundreds die daily for lack of food and water, culminating in the surrender of the Jews and their sale into slavery by the Romans. *Jerusalem* is informed throughout by a variety of sensibilities: religious, political, economic, and social. The Roman crusade against the Jews and Jerusalem is framed by Christian justifications; issues of empire and rule are played out within the Roman camp and between the Romans and the Jews; because the Jews have refused to pay tribute to Rome, the economics of revenge initiate, in part, the original impulse to besiege the city; the social dimensions range from the semi-chivalric Roman knights hunting and hawking outside the city's walls, to relations within the city and relations between individual Jew and Christian. The *Jerusalem* poet scripts a highly complex narrative which transcends accounts found in traditional siege literature.

In the 1970s and 1980s the poem received only brief and dismissive attention. Derek Pearsall charges the poem with morbidity and excessive violence and A. C. Spearing even more explicitly recoils from its 'horrible delight in the suffering of the Jews'.<sup>9</sup> The graphically violent and seemingly unambiguous bigotry of *Jerusalem* convinced critics that the work was a repellent model of late medieval sentiment about Jews about which there was little to say. Echoing these earlier assessments,

Ralph Hanna decries the poem's 'gratuitous' and 'cheerfully sanctioned violence'.<sup>10</sup> Yet in his 1992 essay Hanna begins a process of recuperative criticism when he proposes a fifteenth-century reception and Lancastrian reading of the poem in which flayed Jewish flesh is transformed into flayed Lollard flesh. Mary Hamel proposes another type of contextualisation for *Jerusalem* when she argues for the poem's identity as a crusading narrative composed in response to the briefly resurgent crusade fervour of the late fourteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Unlike earlier critics, both Hanna and Hamel construct detailed contexts for understanding the composition and reception of *Jerusalem*. Yet both scholars join the small but unanimous group of critics who are repulsed by the poem's anti-Judaism and they go further than earlier assessments when they propose that either in its reception or its composition the poem's anti-Judaism is a deviant tropological bigotry relocated onto other groups. In essence, they decry the poem's anti-Judaism and then suggest that the poem is not about Jews.

Readings of displacement in which Jews become tropes for other heterodox or heretical groups are understandable: there is no evidence for organised Jewish communities after the expulsion of 1290 (although Jews are never entirely absent from England<sup>12</sup>) and it is possible that in their material absence their presence in narratives becomes a kind of pedagogical category into which other sources of anxiety are displaced. Yet this kind of interpretive supersession elides the very real issues of Jewish presence in Christendom which continue to concern the Christian community even in the absence of Jews. The proliferation of mid to late fourteenth-century Middle English narratives which directly address the issues of Jew *qua* Jew in relationship to the Christian community indicates a significant and ongoing concern with Jews and Judaism.<sup>13</sup> And it is essential to understand that this ongoing concern is neither always nor universally expressed in univocal anti-Judaic forms. I fear we construct a monolithic and univocal bigotry when we invoke 'the' anti-Judaism as an inevitable and universal commonplace of medieval thinking and writing. Medieval anti-Judaism is common but neither universal nor inevitable and until we recognise this we enable readings of medieval works which exclude or elide the variety and instability of medieval Christian responses to Jews, even as we make it difficult to attend to those discursive moments which resist or temper what we consider a cultural given.<sup>14</sup> *The Siege of Jerusalem* offers many such discursive moments which invite audience and reader into active colloquy with the poem's complex representation of Jews.

The nature of the poem's anti-Judaism is again explored by Christine Chism who notes that the poem 'never loses sight of the sufferings of the Jews'.<sup>15</sup> Yet even as she notes the poem's emphasis on suffering and sympathy, Chism argues for the poet's 'delight in cruel inversion' in which pity and sympathy 'lead to more suffering for the Jews'.<sup>16</sup> And in the first full-length study of *Jerusalem*, Bonnie Millar contextualises the poem as a narrative that encourages its audience to reconsider the nature of Christian–Jewish relations.<sup>17</sup> Clearly *The Siege of Jerusalem* is more than just a particularly virulent example of anti-Judaism common but not universal in late medieval culture. As evidenced in the recent readings generated by *Jerusalem*, this is a narrative of polyvocal possibilities; something which was known in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. And while it is important not to claim more for this narrative than an informed reading will allow, it is also important not to focus so entirely upon the conventions of anti-Judaism that we do not recognise the real conflicts this poem presents and represents. The polyvocal interpretations which have recently emerged from readings of it signal a growing awareness of the complexities of the narrative and the stimulating nature of the debate which begins to surround the poem. Key to this debate, of course, is the nature and substance of its anti-Judaism.<sup>18</sup>

In order to understand the full contexts for the composition of *The Siege of Jerusalem* we need to glance briefly at the ecclesiastical traditions behind this fourteenth-century production; traditions which are, I think, the essential contexts for understanding the varied response to Jews we find in the narrative. For it is the *ambivalent* nature of Christian doctrine about Jews that best testifies to and prepares us for the equally conflicted response we find in *The Siege of Jerusalem* and other literary productions.<sup>19</sup> In the highly influential Pauline epistles, the dual injunctions of Romans 11:28–9, 'As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching election, they are most dear for the sake of the fathers',<sup>20</sup> initiate a division in Christian doctrine concerning Jews. This division is seen in its most simplistic form in medieval representations of Jews which are articulated through two paradigms of opposition: in the first, the Jews are the other ('enemies') vis-à-vis the Christians; in the second, given the exigencies of Christian claims to a Hebraic heritage ('fathers'), distinctions are made between scriptural Jews, who are revered as the possessors of the Old Law, and historical Jews, who are reviled as the killers of Christ. The division between scriptural Jews and historical Jews is played out in the sermon literature, the drama, poetic histories and narratives; yet

this most basic of paradigms is considerably complicated as the double value of the Jews is complexly reconfigured or even collapsed in medieval narratives.

The Pauline division between historical ('they are enemies') and scriptural ('they are most dear') is preceded in Romans 11:15 by an equally significant statement concerning Jewish disbelief which adds another variable to the perception of the divided Jews: 'For if the loss of them be the reconciliation of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' That is, Jewish disbelief is part of the Divine plan ('that blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles should come in' (Romans 11:25)) – and once the world is reconciled under Christ, the conversion of the Jews, which is certain to follow, will augur the final days and the Second Coming of Christ ('life from the dead'). Romans 11 reconstructs the Jews as eschatologically essential for Christian history, even as it divides Jews (scriptural and historical) and Christian response to Jews.

The dual perspective and eschatological role imposed upon Jews in the Pauline writings are developed by Augustine into what is called the doctrine of relative toleration. With a patristic reading of Psalm 58:12 ('slay them not, lest at any time my people forget') as its central proof text, the doctrine enunciates a theological formula in which Jews are accorded a role in Christendom: alive, but in servitude, socially and economically degraded, and with their value dependent upon their status as symbols of Christ's Passion and witnesses to the truth of Christianity.<sup>21</sup> The complexities and ambivalent gestures of the Augustinian position, in which toleration is yoked inextricably with persecution, dominate most medieval Christian writing about Jews (at least until the later Middle Ages). The equivocal and at times contested toleration proposed by Augustine translates into ecclesiastical and civil measures for the protection *and* limitation of the rights of Jews, and into intellectual traditions transmitted from Augustine through the writings of other theologians.<sup>22</sup> It is important to emphasise that the Augustinian approach towards Jews and Judaism 'determined the basic stance of virtually all early medieval Christian polemics against the Jews'.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the policy of toleration begins to come under increased scrutiny and in concert with increasing social, economic, and political pressures a new, more hostile ideology begins to shape ecclesiastical, secular, and popular writing about Jews.<sup>24</sup>

Given this theological context, *The Siege of Jerusalem* is a narrative which announces itself as an exemplar of Christian thinking about

Jews: not only is the poem framed at beginning and end with retellings of Christ's Passion but the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews are a favourite theme of patristic literature offered as testimony to Jewish perfidy, the supersession of Judaism, and the triumph of Christianity.<sup>25</sup> Those who would read Jewish presence in *Jerusalem* as a trope for Lollards or Saracens overlook the extent to which this poem insists upon the very specific and conflicted relationship between Jew and Christian, Judaism and Christianity.<sup>26</sup> Yet what is noteworthy about *Jerusalem* is that at a time when the doctrine of toleration had almost entirely yielded to a more hostile ideological and practical treatment of Jews, the narrative's complications demonstrate the divided nature of its ideological origins. The poem is, on the one hand, outrageously violent and bigoted: fields run with blood and gore, and metal runs through 'vn-mylyt hertes' (556); the Jews are 'þe heþen' (307), 'þe fals men' (551), 'þis faibles folke' (481), who 'on no grace tristen' (515). When Titus and Vespasian set out for Judea, the narrative warns:

Cytees vnder Syon, now is zour sorow uppe:  
 Þe deþ of þe dereworþ Crist der schal be zolden.  
 Now is, Bethleem, þy bost y-brozt to an ende;  
 Jerusalem & Ierico, for-juggyd wrecchys,  
 Schal neuer kyng of zour kynde with croune be ynoyntid,  
 Ne Jewe for Jesu sake iouke in zou more. (295–300)

Passages such as this, in which brutality against the Jews is justified as fitting revenge for Christ's death, frame the narrative and join with the inescapable and excessive detail of violence and bloodshed in the poem to produce an *almost* convincing demonstration of a straightforward and brutal anti-Judaic poetic. Yet, as is increasingly noted, there is another narrative strand which continually intrudes upon and complicates the seemingly unambiguous anti-Judaism. In the early scenes of the poem the Jews are 'þe faibles' and 'þe heþen'. In the simile that describes their flight into Jerusalem from the Romans they 'Flouen, as þe foule doþ, þat faucoun wolde strike' (310), fall on the battlefield as 'hail froward heuen' (598), and 'wynnen with mychel wo þe walles with-ynne' (612). However, when the poet explains why there are so many Jews in Jerusalem (it is the Pesach holiday), he departs from his sources and enlists the rhetoric of individuation as he refers to 'Princes & prelates & poreil of þe londe, / Clerkes & comens of contrees aboute' (313–14). This rhetorical catalogue effectively differentiates the Jews –

they are not 'þe faiples' but individuals. And in a related gesture the *Jerusalem* poet undermines the stereotypes of his sources. In Josephus' *Jewish War* and Higden's *Polychronicon*, the Jews are persistently characterised as acting in 'impetuosity and unbridled rage',<sup>27</sup> or '*furor cum temeritate*' – what Trevisa translates as 'woodnesse and folye'.<sup>28</sup> In *Jerusalem* the Jews speak 'mekly' (338), and in their fighting are 'ferce men & noble' (867), while the unbridled rage is transferred onto Vespasian, who is variously described as 'wroþe' (371), 'wode wedande wroþ' (381), and 'wroþ as a wode bore' (781).

One of the *Jerusalem* poet's sources, Flavius Josephus, is himself the focus of some curious revisions. The poet puts him in his place, as it were, by locating him in Jerusalem during the siege. This placement allows for the 'Jewe Josophus, þe gentyl clerke' (785) to be exceedingly active against the Romans in defence of Jerusalem, and to act the noble Jew: when Titus falls ill, no one can be found to cure him, 'Saue þe self Josophus, þat surgyan was noble, / & he graunteþ to go with a goode wyll' (1035–6). Historically, Josephus had been captured at the earlier battle of Jotapata; at Jerusalem he is outside the city walls, with the Romans, from which vantage point he will return to Rome and write his *Jewish War* as a pro-Roman *apologia*.<sup>29</sup> The apologetical motif of Josephus' work is apparent throughout: the Romans, in a manner of speaking, save the Jews from themselves (IV. 134; IV. 397; V. 256–7, etc.). The *Jerusalem* poet refuses to represent the Romans as the 'saviours' of the Jews; his Romans are intent upon the destruction of Jerusalem. With the Romans reinstated as aggressors, and Josephus repositioned within the walls of Jerusalem, the poet revises the dynamics of Josephus' historical account: Roman brutality against the Jews is unequivocal and leads us, finally, to sympathy for the Jews; Josephus, like his text, is reconstructed – no longer outside the walls of Jerusalem, he plays the part of the noble Jew in a revision of his own work where there are no noble Jews.

However striking, the revisions I note above are only partial accounts of the ways in which this poem complicates the issues of militant Christianity and conventions of anti-Judaism. Granted that *Jerusalem* is framed with retellings of Christ's Passion as traditional justification for brutality against the Jews, within this framework the poem inscribes complex alternative representations of Jews and Jewish suffering. There are numerous narrative strategies with which the poet restructures medieval response to Jews<sup>30</sup> and I will focus here on two key revisions in the poem: the first is a central passage or set piece in the siege of Jerusalem narratives and the second is the way in which

the language of anti-Judaism fails in passages where the poet details the sufferings of the besieged Jews.

The central passage or set piece, in which a woman suffering from the siege-inflicted famine kills and eats her own child (1077–96), exemplifies the nuanced account of Jews which the *Jerusalem* poet offers. This extended passage is showcased in the various siege of Jerusalem narratives, significant both for its local effect and for the subtexts with which it is informed. In the poet's sources the act of infanticide and cannibalism is used as dramatic testimony to Jewish barbarity and the final rationale for their destruction.<sup>31</sup> The *Jerusalem* poet reworks the rhetoric of his sources and renders the act a result of desperation in a sympathetic account that invites not disgust but sorrow from the reader. In the sources, the scene is prefaced by a pointed rendition of 'you are what you eat' calculated to degrade and dehumanise the Jews. In Josephus, the starving Jews eat sewage, cow dung (V. 571), and 'objects which even the filthiest of brute beasts would reject' (VI. 197). The *Polychronicon*, in even more explicit fashion, lists shield leather, filth which clung to stinking walls, vomit, cow dung, snake skins, and horse carcasses among the foodstuffs. Only the *Golden Legend* shows restraint as it reports that the Jews ate shoes, but it shares with the other narratives a second set of prefatory remarks in which children snatch food from parents, parents from children, husbands from wives and wives from husbands.<sup>32</sup> All this is by way of introducing the infanticide and cannibalism. Josephus begins the scene with the claim that 'I am here about to describe an act unparalleled in the history whether of Greeks or barbarians, and as horrible to relate as it is incredible to hear' (VI. 199). In his version, the mother is a woman of fortune who has lost her wealth in the siege. As a result, 'the fire of rage was more consuming even than the famine' and she kills and eats her child 'impelled by the promptings alike of fury and necessity' (VI. 204). Her act is called an 'abomination'; when news of it spreads to the Romans 'the effect on the majority was to intensify their hatred of the nation' (VI. 214) and to fuel Titus' resolve to destroy the city: he would 'bury this abomination of infant-cannibalism beneath the ruins of their country, and would not leave upon the face of the earth, for the sun to behold, a city in which mothers were thus fed' (VI. 217). The *Golden Legend*, with its usual economy, merely reports that the townspeople ran 'trembling and terrified' away (276). In Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon*, however, this 'infamous' and 'horrible' act impels Titus to exclaim: 'We come to a bataille of men, but now I see þat we fizteþ aȝenst bestes; ȝit bestes rampaunt spareþ her owne kynde, be þey

nevere so nedy, and helpeþ her owne children; but þese men deuoureþ here owne children: þanne destroye we hem, for alle hir dedes stinkeþ'.<sup>33</sup> There are striking similarities between this passage and a passage in John Chrysostom's *First Homily Against the Jews*:

What tragedy, what kind of wickedness, did they not outstrip in their bloodlust? ... Wild beasts often lay down their lives, disregarding their own safety in order to protect their young; but the Jews, without any necessity whatever, slaughtered their progeny with their own hands to serve the accursed demons, who are enemies of our life.<sup>34</sup>

Chrysostom's passage occurs in a section of the *First Homily* entitled 'Proof that Demons Inhabit the Jews', just one of the many polemical proofs Chrysostom offers to his Christian audience to encourage them to avoid both Jews and Judaising. Chrysostom's influence on later polemical writings against Jews is well attested, although whether there is a precise transmission of this particular passage into Higden's chronicle is not known.<sup>35</sup> What *is* known is that the *Jerusalem* poet, drawing on Higden's narrative, chose not to include this particularly virulent example of Jewish inferiority even to wild beasts. Thus the poet is not only selective when he borrows and revises from Josephus' secular Roman text, but is similarly particular when he draws on chronicles written with a specifically Christian ideological agenda.

In *Jerusalem* the infanticide scene follows one in which Josephus, the 'noble' surgeon, has cured Titus and refused all reward. What follows upon this scene of the exemplary Jew is itself exemplary. The poet introduces the scene by noting the trouble and 'hard hunger' (1063–5) that has befallen the city. The elaborate detail of disgusting foodstuffs is deleted and replaced with an account of what they *do not* have: neither fish, nor flesh; bread nor broth; water nor wine 'bot wope of hemsself' (1068–70) – they drink their own tears.<sup>36</sup> Even when the narrative notes that they ate old shields and shoes, it is not, as it is in Josephus, 'the shameless resort to inanimate objects' (VI. 199), but another reason to pity them – the shields are difficult to chew ('þat liflode for ladies was luper to chewe' (1072)). The poet also deletes the prefatory remarks in which children and parents and husbands and wives snatch food from one another, and although he replaces this with the observation that they acted like wolves, even this is qualified by the first half-line: 'wo wakned þycke' (1075).

In the *Jerusalem* poet's account the mother is a 'myld wyf' (1077)

who addresses her child with ‘rewful wordes’ (1079); she is ‘þat worþi wif’ who confesses to the Jewish townspeople that ‘in a wode hunger’ she roasted her own child (1089). It is in the townspeople’s response especially that the poet radically revises his sources. Their response is essential to the episode; it sets the interpretative spin with which audience and reader are encouraged to concur. The poet deletes the harsh Roman response; only the townspeople hear what the mother has done and

A-way þey went for wo, wepyng echone,  
 & sayn: ‘Alas, in þis lif how longe schul we dwelle?  
 Ȝit beter wer at o brayde in batail to deye,  
 Ðan þus in langur to lyue, & lengþen our pyne.’ (1093–6)

They make a decision ‘þat deil was to hure’ (1097), to kill all non-combatants ‘that vitelys destroyed’: those who cannot fight (women, the aged, the weak) are to be sacrificed because of the siege-induced hunger. There is no literary source for this self-massacre – in the *Vindicta salvatoris* eleven thousand Jews kill each other to prevent the enemy from claiming the glory of their deaths, but here in *Jerusalem* the slaying is prompted by moral imperative. Significantly, Jewish self-massacre had assumed for Jewish communities, by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the dimensions of a spiritualised martyrdom as the *Kiddush ha-Shem*, or Sanctification of God’s Name, through which each victim commits an ‘act of ultimate piety’.<sup>37</sup> In a narrative whose purported object is vengeance for Christ’s perfect sacrifice, the *Kiddush ha-Shem* of the Jews is a persuasive counterpoint to the source narratives’ (and contemporary) accounts of the bestial Jews. Clearly, the local effect of this episode is radically different from that of its sources: there the act of cannibalism heightens the hatred and disgust directed at the Jews; here, disgust is transformed into sorrow and pity. Yet there are two subtexts here which resonate beyond the local moment. When Josephus introduces this scene in his *Jewish War* with the claim that he will describe an act unparalleled in history, he is being more than a little disingenuously dramatic. This cannibalistic act, particularly when enacted by parent upon child, is part of the literature of prophetic warnings found throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Kings, Jeremiah, Baruch, and Lamentations all contain versions of cannibalism either prophesied or threatened in consequence of disobedience to God.<sup>38</sup> Chrysostom draws on these biblical passages when he accuses the Jews of cannibalism in his *Fifth Oration*

*Against the Jews*: 'The like of what does he mean? The eating of little children by their mothers! Moses foretold it, and Jeremiah reported its fulfilment.'<sup>39</sup> When the source narratives showcase this episode by making it central and emphatic, they demonstrate that scriptural prophecy has been fulfilled. In recasting this episode, the *Jerusalem* poet not only transforms a local moment, he comments, if only indirectly, on the fulfilment of Scripture which his entire narrative signifies.

The second subtext which informs the infanticide/cannibalism scene relates to the scriptural subtext, in so far as it originates from it, but it addresses with more immediacy a late fourteenth-century audience. To tease out the logic of this second subtext it is necessary to summarise briefly the mythologies of ritual murder and host desecration in the Middle Ages. Early Christians were accused of cannibalism, a charge which Christian apologetics quickly transferred onto the Jewish community.<sup>40</sup> Drawing on scriptural prophecies such as those cited above, and on writers like Chrysostom, medieval Christian polemic against the Jews transmitted the idea of the Jews as cannibalistic from the 'logical' supposition that if the Jews were capable of deicide, they were capable of any abomination imaginable.<sup>41</sup> The charge of cannibalism against the Jews informs the two most heinous accusations against medieval Jewry – ritual murder and host desecration.<sup>42</sup> While it is difficult to determine the precise psychological function these narratives fulfilled for the Christian community, there is some consensus that the ritual murder charges, accompanied or preceded as they were by pogroms against the Jews, were a projection of Christian guilt about Christian violence against Jews.<sup>43</sup> With regard to host desecration charges, many scholars agree that their primary function was a projection onto the Jews of Christian doubt about transubstantiation.<sup>44</sup> In both charges, importantly, *body* is central: in ritual murder charges it is usually the body of a Christian child; in host desecration charges it is the *Corpus Christi*, or body of Christ which is defiled. Yet as Kenneth Stow notes, 'the Eucharistic host was often visualised not only as Jesus incarnate but also as a child, and sometimes as Isaac, the perfect sacrifice'. Thus cannibalistic anxieties concerning the consumption of the host, both as the body of Christ and the body of a child, figure in some repressed form in the host desecration narratives. Stow further suggests that 'cannibalistic anxieties may have been at work' as part of ritual murder accusations.<sup>45</sup> Thus we have cannibalistic charges against the Jews transmitted from antiquity to the Middle Ages, which in turn serve as the point of origin and substantiation, as it were, for contemporary charges of ritual murder and host desecration, which are

themselves, in turn, the transference of Christian anxiety about their own act in the consumption of the host and the host fantasised as child.

This trajectory of repression, transference, and accusation leads us back to *The Siege of Jerusalem*. The infanticide/cannibalism scene in the siege narratives is the centrepiece of the action, that most horrific of acts which provides substantive proof that Jews are bestial, and verifies, in a narrative otherwise devoid of ritual murder or host desecration charges, that Jews do, indeed, cannibalise young children. Drawn from the pages of scriptural prophecy, this scene gives local habitation and a name to the sometimes ephemeral accusations against medieval Jews. Yet at this most dramatic of moments, where the other siege narratives exploit the scene to heighten the anti-Judaic polemic of their tales, the *Jerusalem* poet diminishes the impact (and contemporary applications) by revising the context within which this scene is enacted and interpreted. Rendered with nuance and sympathy, the scene is transformative as the poet unwrites the Jew as cannibal, in a subtext with both historical and contemporary applications.

The second key revision with which the *Jerusalem* poet complicates his narrative is the extent to which the language and ideology of anti-Judaism fail in passages where the poet details the sufferings of the besieged Jews. Even a few examples will suffice to demonstrate the poet's sympathetic account of Jewish suffering. After the Romans execute Caiaphas (the High Priest of the Jews) and his scribes: 'De Jewes walten ouer þe walles for wo at þat tyme, / Seuen hundred slow hem-self for sorow of her clerkes' (709–10). The poet's rendering of Jewish sorrow is uncompromised by the commonplace suggestion that their hardship is deserved and justified; there is no subtextual sneer to mar this straightforward and emotional account of the Jews' reaction to the death of their priests. In later passages, the poet lingers over graphic descriptions of the starving and defeated Jews, who were a 'pite to byholde' (1243):

Wymmen falwed faste & her face chaungen,  
 Ffeynte & fallen doun, þat so fair wer;  
 Some swallen as swyn, som swart wexen,  
 Som lene on to loke, as lanterne-hornes. (1143–6)

There is so much death that the citizens do not know what to do with the bodies (1147–50) and when the Jews finally yield to the Romans they seek mercy in their 'bar chertes' (1238); the poet's powerful artistry includes such details as:

Be peple in þe pauyment was pite to byholde,  
Dat wer enfamynd for defaute whan hem fode wanted.  
Was nozt on ladies lafte bot þe lene bones,  
Dat wer fleschy byfor & fayr on to loke;  
Burges with balies as barels or þat tyme,  
No gretter þan a grehounde to grype on þe medil. (1243–8)

What is particularly striking about these passages detailing the emaciated and suffering Jews is the failure of the vocabulary of anti-Judaism we find earlier in the poem: not once does the poet invoke ‘þe fals men’ as the Jews are individuated in these passages as, variously, ‘Jewes’, ‘wymmen’, ‘ladies’, ‘man’, ‘burges’, and ‘peple’. As the level of suffering increases, so too does the humanising impulse with which the poet has throughout, sometimes lightly and sometimes emphatically, complicated his narrative.

As is the case with many narratives of medieval England, *The Siege of Jerusalem* reveals the fissures inherent in ecclesiastical traditions: Jews are simultaneously ‘enemies’ and ‘fathers’, ‘other’ and ‘self’, and their representation has as much to do with the problematics of Christian identity as it does with Jewish. *Jerusalem* is often a violent and militant narrative, but it is fully aware of the terrible practical consequences of its own Christian militancy and relentless in detailing (with uncommon sympathy) the sufferings of the Jews. Clearly the poem is more than just a particularly virulent example of ‘the’ anti-Judaism long thought to form and inform Christian writings about Jews in medieval England; indeed, in its representation of Jews the poem goes far to debunk the myth of a univocal, universal medieval anti-Judaism, not an insignificant contribution to medieval studies. Compounded of unequal measures of assertive bigotry and melancholy apologetic, the poem holds in unrelieved tension two competing ideologies concerning Jews in Christendom, even as it invites audience sympathy for Christianity’s most complex ‘other’. If we accept that a univocal anti-Judaism is not inevitable in medieval English writings, we can (and should) scrutinise specific historical, cultural and theological ideologies to account for the mutability of Jewish representation. In the case of *Jerusalem*, the poem’s demonstration of the divided ideology of doctrinal ambiguities, coupled with its nuanced and sympathetic account of Jews, suggests a specific ecclesiastical tradition. I would like, in conclusion, to contextualise briefly *The Siege of Jerusalem* and its representation of Jews by placing the anonymous *Jerusalem* poet and his narrative in a particular tradition of English historical writing.

Drawing on manuscript evidence, Hanna locates the most likely site of composition for the *Jerusalem* poem at Bolton Augustinian Priory.<sup>46</sup> If the poet was writing at Bolton (and considering the learned source-texts this seems probable), he was most likely an Augustinian canon and his religious affiliation is key to contextualising the conflicts of representation we find in his poetic narrative. Long after the attenuation of the doctrine of toleration had led to a more hostile response to and representation of Jews, Augustinian writers demonstrate a humane moderation in their chronicle entries concerning Jews. From William of Newburgh's detailed accounts of the anti-Jewish riots of 1189–90, to Thomas Wykes's late thirteenth-century condemnation of anti-Jewish violence and the 1290 expulsion, to Walter of Guisborough's early fourteenth-century histrionic account of the brutality against Jews upon their expulsion from England, we can trace a long-standing and well-established Augustinian tradition which holds in balance the claims of Christian polemic and the claims of humanity.<sup>47</sup> The *Jerusalem* poet and his narrative participate in this particular tradition of English historical writing which is generally framed by conventional Christian justifications for Jewish suffering but falters in the face of violence against Jews. Newburgh's chronicle entries are an exemplar of this historical tradition as the chronicler first justifies Jewish suffering as fitting revenge for that 'perfidious' race, yet quickly invokes Psalm 58:12 ('Slay them not, lest at any time my people forget') – the standard proof-text of the Augustinian doctrine of toleration. As his narrative unfolds, Newburgh is unflinching in his detailed accounts of the violence against the Jews which swept England on the occasion of the crowning of Richard I. Indeed, as the level of violence increases, the chronicler becomes more and more sympathetic to the plight of the Jews, particularly those involved in the massacre of York,<sup>48</sup> until his sympathies lead him to fully expressed condemnation of the Christian communities responsible. In a manner strikingly similar to that of the *Jerusalem* poet, the Augustinian historian attempts to contextualise the violence with Christian justifications and anti-Judaic language, only to have both justifications and language fail when confronted with the practical consequences (massacres and violence) of his militant Christianity.

The relationship between the Augustinians and *The Siege of Jerusalem* will continue to be debated, as will the nature of the poem's complex representation of Jews. And this is precisely as it should be. The poem is technically brilliant, thematically dense, and reveals both the problematics of Christian identity in late fourteenth-century

England and the difficulties attendant upon a sympathetic representation of the materially absent but conceptually and theologically present Jews. *The Siege of Jerusalem* makes available an intriguing range of readings and the recuperative readings of *Jerusalem* which begin to retrieve the poem from the suppressed margins of critical attention accord the poem the distinction and commentary it so well deserves and so well repays.

### Notes

- 1 *The Siege of Jerusalem*, ed. E. Kölbing and Mabel Day, EETS o.s. 188 (London, 1932). All quotations are from this edition, cited by line number.
- 2 Ralph Hanna and David Lawton are editing a forthcoming edition of the poem; I am indebted to both of them for generously allowing me pre-publication access to their introductory materials. For recent scholarly studies see Mary Hamel, 'The Siege of Jerusalem as a crusading poem', in Barbara N. Sargent-Baur (ed.), *Journeys Toward God: Pilgrimage and Crusade* (Kalamazoo, 1992), pp. 177–94; Ralph Hanna, 'Contextualizing *The Siege of Jerusalem*', *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 6 (1992), 109–21; Elisa Narin van Court, 'The Siege of Jerusalem and Augustinian historians: writing about Jews in fourteenth-century England', *Chaucer Review*, 29 (1995), 227–48; David Lawton, 'Titus goes hunting and hawking: the poetics of recreation and revenge in *The Siege of Jerusalem*', in O. S. Pickering (ed.), *Individuality and Achievement in Middle English Poetry* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 105–17; Christine Chism, 'The Siege of Jerusalem: liquidating assets', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 28 (1998), 309–40; Bonnie Millar, 'The role of prophecy in the *Siege of Jerusalem* and its analogues', *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 13 (1999), 153–78; Bonnie Millar, *The Siege of Jerusalem in its Physical, Literary and Historical Contexts* (Dublin and Portland, 2000); Elisa Narin van Court, 'Socially marginal, culturally central: representing Jews in late medieval English literature', *Exemplaria*, 12 (2000), 293–326.
- 3 Hanna, 'Contextualizing', p. 109.
- 4 For the exceptions see Millar, *The Siege of Jerusalem*; Narin van Court, 'The Siege of Jerusalem and Augustinian Historians', and Narin van Court, 'Socially marginal, culturally central'.
- 5 Hanna, 'Contextualizing', p. 109.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 113–15; Hanna and Lawton, forthcoming edition.
- 7 Hanna and Lawton, forthcoming edition. For comprehensive discussions of the manuscripts see this edition; Millar, *The Siege of Jerusalem*, pp. 15–41.
- 8 Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. H. St J. Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, 1928; rpt. 1990); *Vindicta salvatoris*, in Constantin

- Tischendorf (ed.), *Evangelia apocrypha*, 2nd edn (Leipzig, 1876), pp. 471–86; Ranulph Higden, *Polychronicon*, *Together with the English Translation of John of Trevisa and an Unknown Writer of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Churchill Babington and Joseph R. Lumby, 9 vols, Rolls Series 41 (London, 1865–91); *Jacobi a Voragine Legenda aurea*, ed. Th. Graesse (Leipzig, 1850), in translation, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols (Princeton, 1993); *The Middle English Prose Translation of Roger d'Argenteuil's Bible en françois*, ed. Phyllis Moe, Middle English Texts 6 (Heidelberg, 1977). See Phyllis Moe, 'The French source of the alliterative *Siege of Jerusalem*', *Medium Aevum*, 39 (1970), 147–54. The *Jerusalem* poet's use of Josephus' *Jewish War* was never seriously considered until Hanna and Lawton's recent investigations. In the introduction to their forthcoming edition they make a strong case for the poet's access to Josephus' classical history. The work was well known in England with at least fifteen copies produced there surviving.
- 9 Derek Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry* (London, 1977), p. 169; A. C. Spearing, *Readings in Medieval Poetry* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 167. Spearing specifically appeals to 'modern readers' when he writes about *Jerusalem*: 'It is not only strongly and credulously in favour of the Christians, it is also permeated by the antisemitism that was so common in the Middle Ages', p. 167.
  - 10 Hanna, 'Contextualizing', pp. 111, 110.
  - 11 Hamel, '*Siege of Jerusalem* as a crusading poem', p. 179.
  - 12 The long-held assumption of a *judenrein* England after 1290 is a subject of scholarly debate. James Shapiro notes that 'despite the blanket claims of Victorian historians (and their modern successors) that there were few or no Jews in Shakespeare's England, archival research over the past hundred years makes it clear that small numbers of Jews began drifting back into England almost immediately after the Expulsion', *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York, 1996), p. 62.
  - 13 Writing about the English obsession with Jews in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Shapiro makes a point that could easily refer to the late medieval period: 'If Jews were just not that important to English culture, it is hard to make sense of their frequent appearance not only in Tudor and Stuart drama but also in English chronicles, travel narratives, and sermons, let alone in the various works on trade, millenarianism, usury, magic, race, gender, nationalism, and alien status. Even as the Elizabethans have something to tell us about the Jews, their obsession with Jews tells us even more about the Elizabethans (and again, I might add, those who write about them)' (*ibid.*, p. 88). In the mid- to late fourteenth century we find Jews not only in the drama, but in Chaucer, Langland, Gower, sermon literature, chronicles, poetic narratives and histories, devotional works and various other genres.
  - 14 In her recent book, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven and London, 1999), historian Miri Rubin traces out the

- origins and development of host desecration narratives, and examines in some detail those places and circumstances under which resistance, doubt, or disbelief defuse the power of the narrative. Rubin's study demonstrates the ways in which social pathologies like anti-Judaism are complicated systems which tend to resist essentialising definitions. See also David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 1996).
- 15 Chism, 'Liquidating assets', p. 327.
  - 16 *Ibid.*, 337, n. 26, 327–8. While I am indebted to Chism's reading which acknowledges the poem's sympathy for the Jews, I disagree with her argument concerning the poem's 'delight in cruel inversion'.
  - 17 Millar, *The Siege of Jerusalem*.
  - 18 Much of what follows derives from my previous work on *The Siege of Jerusalem*: Narin van Court, 'Critical Apertures: Medieval Anti-Judaisms and Middle English Narrative' (PhD dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1994); Narin van Court, 'The Siege of Jerusalem and Augustinian historians'; Narin van Court, 'Socially marginal, culturally central'.
  - 19 For a fuller discussion of the ecclesiastical traditions see Narin van Court, 'Critical Apertures'; Marcel Simon, *Versus Israel*, trans. H. McKeating (Oxford, 1986); Rosemary Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1974); A. Lukyn Williams, *Adversus Judaeos: A Bird's-Eye View of Christian Apologiae Until the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1935); Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca, 1982); Jeremy Cohen (ed.), *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict* (New York and London, 1991); Kenneth Stow, *Alienated Minority* (Cambridge, MA, 1992); Gavin Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley, 1990). Both Cohen and Stow provide comprehensive bibliographies.
  - 20 All English Biblical citations are to the Douay-Rheims, rev. Bishop Richard Challoner (Rockford, 1971).
  - 21 *Aurelii Augustini Opera Pars 14: De civitate Dei*, 2 vols, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 47–8 (Turnholt, 1955), book XVIII, see especially chapter 46, lines 13–50. English translation by Marcus Dods, *The City of God* (New York, 1950), book XVIII, chapter 46. See also Augustine of Hippo, *In Answer to the Jews*, VI.8, in *Treatises on Marriage and Other Subjects*, trans. Charles T. Wilcox *et al.*, ed. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation*, vol. 27 (New York, 1955), pp. 319–414.
  - 22 There are many intellectual and ecclesiastical traditions concerning Jews and Judaism that develop over the centuries; some are more Augustinian than others and I focus here on the Augustinian because it was, in many ways the most influential.
  - 23 Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, p. 20 and *passim*. On the topic of the place of Jews in Christendom see also Cohen (ed.), *Essential Papers*; Stow, *Alienated Minority*; Edward A. Synan, *The Popes and the Jews in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1965); James Parkes, *The Jew in the Medieval Community*,

- 2nd edn (New York, 1976); Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1952); Mark Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross* (Princeton, 1994); Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century* (Philadelphia, 1933).
- 24 Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews, passim*; see also Cohen, 'The killers of Christ in the Latin tradition, from Augustine to the friars', *Traditio*, 39 (1983), 1–27. There are numerous explanations for the deterioration in the position of the Jews in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Cohen argues that mendicant orders established a new and more virulent form of missionising among the Jews and a corresponding transformation in Church doctrine, specifically the Augustinian tradition, *Friars and Jews, passim*. Robert Chazan suggests that the attenuation of rights and tolerance is the logical conclusion to centuries of ambivalent Church doctrine, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth-Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response* (Berkeley, 1989), p. 180. Others claim that the erosion of Jewish rights began with the crusades of the eleventh century when Jewish communities were massacred by crusaders and others on their way to the Holy Land (see, for example, Léon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism: Volume 1: From the Time of Christ to the Court Jews*, trans. Richard Howard (New York, 1965), pp. 41–56). Still others attribute it to economic conditions: the rise of the profit economy and the competition between Jews and Christians in the marketplace and in the political sphere; see Lester K. Little, 'The Jews in Christian Europe', in Cohen (ed.), *Essential Papers*, pp. 276–97. See also R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 33–4, 136–40. In my view the most compelling interpretations continue to be those that focus upon theological considerations because it is the fundamental theological differences between Jew and Christian that contribute to Christian self-definition and cultural identity.
- 25 For a comprehensive summary of this theme in patristic literature see Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, pp. 117–82; see also Simon, *Venus Israel*, pp. 65–8.
- 26 For a more comprehensive discussion than can be accommodated here that demonstrates the poem's specifics vis-à-vis Christians and Jews see my 'The Siege of Jerusalem and Augustinian historians'.
- 27 Josephus, *The Jewish War*, ed. and trans. Thackeray, VI.159. All citations are by book and line number.
- 28 Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 4, p. 429.
- 29 See Menachem Stern, 'Josephus and the Roman Empire as reflected in *The Jewish War*', in Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata (eds), *Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity* (Detroit, 1987), pp. 71–80. Stern argues that Josephus' text is not pro-Roman, yet admits that 'its very title, *The Jewish War*, shows that it was written from the Roman standpoint', p. 71. Josephus' treatment of the Jews in his history is harsh, and as Marcel Simon notes, 'there is no doubt whatsoever that Josephus was led to place

- [his] interpretation on events by political opportunism and in the interests of his own preferment', *Verus Israel*, p. 5.
- 30 In one strikingly appropriate departure from his sources, the *Jerusalem* poet has the Romans not only blockade the water sources for the city, but attempt to contaminate both atmosphere and water with carcasses and filth, lines 681–8. This attempt to infect water supplies is, of course, one of the more insidious accusations against Jews during the plague years – they are said to have intentionally contaminated wells and water supplies to poison all of Christendom. See Joshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews* (New Haven, 1943), pp. 97–108; Stow, *Alienated Minority*, pp. 231–2; Little, 'Jews in Christian Europe', pp. 276–97.
- 31 See Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 4, pp. 438–46; Josephus, *Jewish War*, V. 571–VI. 217; Jacobus de Voragine, the *Golden Legend*, trans. Granger Ryan, vol. 1, chapter 67. Further citations of the *Golden Legend* are to the page numbers of this volume.
- 32 Higden, *Polychronicon*, vol. 4, pp. 438, 442; Josephus, *Jewish War*, VI. 194; the *Golden Legend*, pp. 275–6.
- 33 Higden's Latin: 'Ad bellum hominum venimus; sed, ut video, contra beluas dimicamus. Quin etiam ferae rapaces a propria specie abstinent, etiam in summa necessitate suos foetus fovent; sed isti proprios devorant. Ipsos ergo delemus, quorum foeda sunt omnia', *Polychronicon*, vol. 4, pp. 446–7.
- 34 John Chrysostom, *Chrysostom's Homilies Against the Jews*, trans. C. Mervyn Maxwell (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1966), p. 28.
- 35 Simon, *Verus Israel*, pp. 217–21; Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, pp. 130–1, 173.
- 36 Tears as a sign of sanctity and piety are a common motif in both orthodox and mystical Christian writings. There is copious weeping by the Jews in *Jerusalem*, and this drinking of their own tears suggests a sanctified self-consumption to anticipate and counter-balance the later cannibalism.
- 37 Stow, *Alienated Minority*, pp. 116–18. The *Kiddush ha-Shem*, as detailed in rabbinic commentaries, fulfils the command of Leviticus 22:32: to sanctify the divine name through self-immolation.
- 38 Leviticus 26:27–9; Deuteronomy 28:52–7; 2 Kings 6:24–30; Jeremiah 19:9; Baruch 2:2–3; Lamentations 4:10.
- 39 Chrysostom, *Eight Homilies Against the Jews*, trans. Marvyn Maxwell, p. 133.
- 40 Simon, *Verus Israel*, pp. 205–21, 470 n. 16; Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide*, pp. 117–82; Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism*, pp. 263–81. See also R. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder* (New Haven, 1988); Alan Dundes (ed.), *The Blood Libel Legend* (Madison, 1991); Rubin, *Gentile Tales*.
- 41 Cecil Roth, 'The medieval conception of the Jew', in Cohen (ed.), *Essential Papers*, p. 308. Stow, *Alienated Minority*, pp. 238–9.
- 42 The ritual murder accusation, popularised and developed by Thomas of Monmouth, proliferates during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in

- England and on the Continent. Charges of host desecration, like those of ritual murder, are widely circulated and both become rationales for massacres of Jews and both have either implicit or explicit implications of cannibalism by Jews. See Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, and her 'The Eucharist and the construction of medieval identities', in David Aers (ed.), *Culture and History, 1350–1600* (Detroit, 1992), pp. 43–63.
- 43 Little, 'Jews in Christian Europe', p. 287; Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, passim.
- 44 Rubin, 'The Eucharist', pp. 54–7; Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, passim; Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism*, pp. 307–8; Little, 'Jews in Christian Europe', p. 287; Stow, *Alienated Minority*, pp. 236–7. For a comprehensive historical and cultural analysis of the doctrine of transubstantiation see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi* (Cambridge, 1991).
- 45 Stow, *Alienated Minority*, pp. 237–8.
- 46 Hanna, 'Contextualizing', pp. 115–16. Simultaneously, and working separately, Hanna and I came to the same conclusion regarding the poem's provenance. The manuscript evidence includes the presence at Bolton Priory of a copy of the *Bible en françois* and a scribal copy of *The Siege of Jerusalem*. I based my conclusions on the striking similarities between the poem's sensibilities regarding Jews and those of the Augustinian order.
- 47 William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. Richard Howlett, 4 vols, Rolls Series 82 (London, 1884–9). In translation, *The Church Historians of England*, vol. 4, part II, trans. Joseph Stevenson (London, 1856). Thomas Wykes may be found in *Annales Monastici*, ed. Henry Luard, 5 vols, Rolls Series 36 (London, 1864–9), vol. 4. See also Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, c. 550 to c. 1307* (Ithaca, 1974); *The Chronicle of Walter of Guisborough*, ed. Harry Rothwell, Camden Society, 3rd series 89 (London, 1957). For a fuller account than I can accommodate here see my 'Critical Apertures' and 'The Siege of Jerusalem and Augustinian historians.' It is of some interest to note that Wykes cites Newburgh in his introduction, and that Guisborough draws heavily on Newburgh's chronicle for his own accounts of the English Jews.
- 48 See especially R. B. Dobson, *The Jews of Medieval York and the Massacre of March 1190*, Borthwick Papers, 45 (York, 1974).