

*Ex Oriente Fluxus: The Wandering Jew - Oriental Crossings of the Paths
of Europe*

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The Wandering Jew, Le Juif errant, der ewige Jude, the cobbler of Jerusalem, Ahasverus - are some of the more frequent names by which the legendary figure who will be discussed in the present paper has been given in the narrative traditions of Europe. Much research has been devoted to the subject, the major instance being G.K. Anderson's monumental monograph *The Legend of the Wandering Jew*.¹

Numerous books and articles, research and fiction, in various European languages addressed the legendary figure. More than one scholar in addition to Anderson has devoted a large portion of their lives to the tracing of traditions concerning more or less explicit appearances of the Wandering Jew in narratives, pictures, customs and rites of European cultures and beyond.

My main concern here will be to trace and analyze the interaction of three sets of elements of the tradition concerning the Wandering Jew: Christian legendary elements, Oriental and Orientalizing elements, and European locally specific elements. The Christian character of the tradition is dominant and plays a central role in the historical-philological reconstruction of the "nuclei" of the tale in late antiquity as well as early medieval texts. Thus the legend has been introduced into the popular, artistic and learned traditions of European cultures as a legitimate expression of their theological and ethical constitution. It is exactly the very instability embodied in the figure of the Wandering Jew, and in the Jews in general, which has served as one of the factors by which European consciousness has interpreted itself as rooted in stability and locality. This "gift" of the Jews to the Europeans has enabled European

identity to stress those traits, stability and locality, which have been positively valued, in the face of centrifugal and disintegrative processes and forces which have naturally also been part of its development. It is thus a clear case in which the other constitutes a vital force in the formulation of a cultural identity. I will however argue that the otherness of the Jew in Europe is only partial. In the sense that they are really full partners in the forming of European identity, Jews themselves have also contributed to the crafting of the image of the Wandering Jew.²

One of the methodological double binds produced by the theme which I want to discuss here is the conceptual slide between the legendary figure of the Wandering Jew on one hand, and the stereotypical, generalizing and metaphorical representation of the Jew -- the actual Jew as part of European society, the Jew as neighbor -- on the other.

A graphic example is provided by the front cover page of a fairly recent book on the construction of the Jew in modern English literature. (*figure 1*).³ Although the author of the book, true to his new-historicist and post-modern theoretical background, emphatically declares early in the book, that for him “the term ‘literary text’ includes so-called ‘popular’ texts which [he] will endeavor to insert back to the ‘literary’ canon throughout this study”,⁴ the text of the book ignores completely the existence of the Wandering Jew in English popular usage. Fortunately the English traditions of the Wandering Jew have been richly expounded by the above mentioned George K. Anderson.⁵ Thus indeed the English tradition may be one of the most well documented traditions on the Wandering Jew.

Instead of fulfilling the expectation of the cover page, the book behind it deals with individual and group representations of Jews in English literature 1875-1945. Thus the pictorial image, which represents the legendary figure of the Wandering Jew, serves not as a direct

illustration of the subject matter of the book, but rather as a metaphorical reflection of one of the main conclusions of the book. There are two main tendencies in the representations of the Jew in English modernist literature, embodied in the writings of the two major authors of the century, Joyce and Eliot. Joyce, especially in *Ulysses*, identifies himself and the indeterminacy of modernist representation with the disoriented and ambivalent identity of the Jew. Eliot on the other hand creates what Cheyette calls Semitic discourse. By that he means stereotypical and threatening expressions, which actually disclose Eliot's fear that he as a writer would be identified in his ambivalent, "Jewish" identity. It is clear that Cheyette likes Joyce and feels disconcerted by Eliot. The image on the cover page thus rushes from one end of the front cover to the other in a hopeless attempt to reduce the polarized gap of the images projected on him and on the author.

My purpose is to focus on the forgotten hero of the cover page, whose hasty rush through the mental universe of the British no less than that of other Europeans, may actually explain the background of some of the complications that the author has eruditely presented in his book. The Wandering Jew has served as a powerful symbolical agent in the effective trickling of the dichotomy between Jew and Christian into the minds of Europeans regardless of nationality, class or education. Maurice Olender has masterfully demonstrated in his *Languages of Paradise*,⁶ how this dichotomy has been articulated as the opposition between Semite and Aryan in nineteenth century study of cultures and languages. The presence of the Wandering Jew as a legendary figure in the culture of Christian Europe may be much more pervasive than one would suppose.

From the most general perspective the Wandering Jew is part and parcel of the eternal wanderer archetype which encompasses various figures, mostly male, from many cultures. Common to them all is that they present a harsh reversal of the assumedly universal wish for eternal

life. In them eternal life as a rule turns into suffering and usually is understood to be a punishment. Thus, even in its most general and non-specific form the theme is laden with a deep paradox.

I want however to proceed to the historically and culturally specific forms of appearance of the Wandering Jew in Europe. It is by now common knowledge that the earliest elements of the legend stem from the New Testament. They relate on one hand to the Roman soldier (or high priests servant) who slapped Jesus when he had been sentenced, and on the other hand to the story of the most beloved disciple who will according to his master's words see His return. The consolidation of these elements to a narrative occurs however much later. The evolving narrative accumulates numerous and fanciful associations of the Holy City and of pilgrimage as well as of inter-religious tensions and polemics.

In the hereto studied texts from the Byzantine period there is one single occurrence which has been stamped as a forerunner of the legend and its protagonist, Isidor, is an Ethiopian, not a Jew, and his punishment consists of incessant weeping rather than wandering. Moreover, his offense was not directed to Jesus himself but rather to the wafer of Eucharist taken by his own wife who had been baptized.

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The earliest European accounts of the eternal wanderer do not import him to the continent but tell about his longevity at a distant locale such as Armenia. These accounts appear in monastic chronicles in Latin, the oldest accounts being from Italy and England (Roger de Wendover and Matthew Paris), beginning with the early thirteenth century.⁷ It is unclear if, how and why they are correlated to the general spiritual upheaval associated with the aftermath of the Fourth Lateran Council. It has, however, been claimed that the religious discourse of the time, especially of the preachers, shows a clear intensification of marginalizing tendencies towards Jews as well as women.⁸

At this period the figure generally seems to bear slight, if any, relevance to the conceptualization of the Jews living in Europe, as seen by the non-Jewish population, and the identity of the protagonist as a Jew is not mentioned in each instance. As far as is known the first text that actually mentions the fact that the wanderer has visited a known location in Europe, is in the writings of an Italian astrologer, Guido Bonatti of Forli, who died about 1300.⁹ Anderson mentions the fact that Dante was inspired to describe Bonatti's punishment in hell "having his head turned about, so that he must walk ever backwards" to punish his "blasphemous presumption" as an astrologer. The issue at hand at the specific section of his *De astronomia tractatus X*, first printed at Augsburg in 1491, is longevity, not incessant wandering. Bonatti mentions two figures of marvelous age: one Ricardus 400 years old, who had been at the court of Charlemagne, and the other, Johannes Buttadeus, who was alive since the times of Jesus Christ. The concise account of the episode at the Via Dolorosa resembles those of the earlier, longer, chronicles: "Because he had driven the Lord along when he was being led to the Crucifixion, the Master made clear to him: 'You shall await me, until I come again'." Unlike the earlier testimonies who quote hearsay evidence, Bonatti is able to add an eye witness report: "This Ricardus I saw at Ravenna in the year 1223; Johannes, on a pilgrimage to Santiago, passed through Forli in the year of our Lord 1267."¹⁰

As you may have noticed, the first mention of an actual visit of the protagonist of the European legend of the Wandering Jew does not mention his being a Jew at all! The other details, the offense towards Jesus, as well as the memorable punch line (which I have elsewhere shown to be the most invariable element of the legend of the Wandering Jew in oral tradition)¹¹ constitute the core of the legend. The name Johannes Buttadeus is characteristic of the south European traditions and has been interpreted as a concrete sign of the contamination of the two

gospel traditions - the immortality of the beloved disciple John and the soldier (or servant) who slapped Jesus. In fact, this name seldom occurs with the characterization of the wanderer as a Jew, for reasons that seem clear. You may also have noticed that the eyewitness evidence of Bonatti with regard to the second figure remains very moot.

I suggest that the linking of the two figures in Bonatti's account correlates with the two separate Jewish legendary traditions which claim that the origin of the Jews of Narbonne as well as of the Rhine valley stem from the bills of rights granted to them by Charlemagne.¹²

The Jewish legends about the beneficial deeds of Charlemagne follow similar patterns to those of their Christian neighbors. As in many other Jewish and Christian traditions of the time interactive legend creation is the rule rather than the exception.

The built-in paradox of the legend of the Wandering Jew is articulated in the fact that parallel to the development of the tradition of the sinner who roams the roads of Europe there is another, very different, narrative of punishment of the one who slapped Jesus. In that other narrative the offender is punished by being tied to a pole underneath the *via Crucis*. The story is typically a Jerusalem local legend, transmitted to Europe by pilgrims.¹³ The opposition between restless wandering and being locked up thus oscillates between both of its utter extremes in the legendary material concerning the same transgression.

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The major breakthrough of the Wandering Jew into European consciousness occurs in the historical and cultural context of the Reformation. Due to lack of expertise I shall refrain from entering the debate on the delicate intricacies of which Basel translation exactly - Sigismondo Tizio or Guido Bonatti - may have given birth to the *Kurtze Beschreibung und Erzählung von einem Juden mit Namen Ahasverus*.¹⁴ It is possible to state, however, that the anonymously or pseudonymously

published versions of the Volksbuch with the long title, which appeared in different cities of Europe in the year 1602, not merely introduced the legend to German speaking audiences, but also recreated the legend of the Wandering Jew within the framework of a totally new communicative system. It is only at this stage that the legend's distribution actually takes off on the advantages of the art of printing. The form of the legend "canonized" by the Volksbuch proves its influence on similar chapbook traditions in the Netherlands and in all Scandinavian countries, but above all ensure the legend a long life in all the countries of Lutheran Reformation.¹⁵

The details of the character in this version, that are quite distinct from those of the earlier ones, are of some interest: the man's name is Ahasverus; he is old and poor; his appearance is connected with the bishop Paul von Eitzen who was one of the prime students of Melancton, the teacher of Martin Luther; he is a pious Christian; he takes few alms and shares them with the poor; his original occupation was a shoemaker; at the scene of the offense of Jesus he had in his arms a child, whom he then had to leave for ever; he is immensely learned in matters of history and theology, and above all: "In whatever land he came he spoke the language".¹⁶

The man's name turns the readers back from the evangelical scene to one of the latest books of the Hebrew Bible, i.e. the book of Esther, whose events unlike most other books of the canon, highlight the status of the Jews as an ethnic minority in the Diaspora. The choice of the name of the Persian king strikes one as a complete misnomer. Provably no Jew has ever borne the name outside of a Purim carnival play. Several speculations have been proposed regarding the basis for this odd naming, among them actually the Purim shpil genre that lived among German Jews at the time. Incidentally the Purim shpil constitutes the closest parallel to Christian Easter and especially Fastnacht plays, situated very

close to Purim in the yearly cycle. The legendary encounter of Jesus and Ahasver on the via Dolorosa could for the internal logic of the plot very well have been a scene in the dramatized versions of the Passion, although as far as I know it has never actually been incorporated as such. The vindictive aspect of Jesus that is revealed in the curse he metes out to the Jew may have suited ill to the general tone of His role in those plays.

In a fascinating article, "Meeting on the Road: Encounters between German Jews and Christians" Yacov Guggenheim fleshes out the multifarious and somewhat bewildering universe of Middle European medieval roads populated by paupers and mendicants whose life-style defies and subverts the major social divisions of nationality and religion. "From the late fourteenth until well into the sixteenth century, [the Jewish members of this group] were called *Schalantjuden* - in Hebrew documents of the time, *archei u-farchei*"¹⁷ (Ahasverus?) The dates thus parallel exactly the years leading to the advent of the Ahasverus chapbook (this term is regularly used by Anderson).

Guggenheim's richly documented description recalls a number of Ahasverus' characteristics, such as: "Many Jewish beggars, mostly old people, wandered for 400 or 500 miles at a time and, upon returning home, had scarcely 10 or 15 guilders more in their pockets than they had set out with".¹⁸ Guggenheim quotes to this effect a Jew who had converted into Christianity, Antonius Margaritha, from his *Ain kurtzer Bericht und anzeigung wo die Christlich Ceremonien vom Balmesel in bayden Testamenten gegründet sei. Auch etlich erdichte falsche Comment und Fabln, So die blinden yetz vermainten halssterrige Juden von irem zukünftigen erdichten Moschiach, das ist Christus und von seinem Esel schreiben und liegen. Durch Anthonium Margaritham, der Hebraischen heyligen zungen, bei der Löblichen altn Universitet zu wienn in Osterreich etc. Ordinarium Lectorem* (1541, 8 pages).

The title of Margaritha's learned dissertation gives us a clear clue to the discursive universe shared by the *Volksbuch* on the Wandering Jew and the theological-philological science practiced by Margaritha (formerly Margoles), transposed into what today would be called popular science.

It may be here that the force of the legend lies: its irrefutable validity as a correlative of medieval and early modern European mentality, as its reflection as well as its powerful constructor. Figures like Antonius Margaritha, the learned convert to Christianity who wanders incessantly between the worlds, applying his traditional Jewish learning in the context of a Christian university, remain tragically for them related to the itinerant beggars in the eyes of "real" Christians. This is clearly reflected in the text of Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522) who according to Guggenheim was the first to juxtapose *Schalantjuden* and apostates.¹⁹ Ahasver's image is thus composed of elements taken from the vagrant beggar Jews as well as from the learned convert. The inability of early modern Ahasver to cast off the appellation of a Wandering **Jew**, although he was a pious Christian by all standards, may at the end of the twentieth century sound as a dark foreboding at the time.

These ethnically and religiously mixed communities of the roads created the Middle European *lingua franca* of the roads, the *Rotwelsch* language in which Hebrew elements were used along with mainly Germanic ones, so that "synchronically with the emergence of a Jewish sociolect [Judeo-German and Yiddish], some of its specific features... passed into the language of the beggars and the scum".²⁰ In addition to that "...the Christian *Landfahrer* and the *Schalantjude* both were outcasts... both lived off alms",²¹ but although Guggenheim claims that the Jewish ones had a better grounding in the normative society of their co-religionists than their Christian counterparts, even they had to give up

family ties similar to Ahasver whose leaving of his child is highlighted in the legend.

I remind you of the clause in the above quotation of the Volksbuch: “In whatever land he came he spoke the language; he could at that time speak Saxon as well as if he had been born a Saxon”.²² This baffling image of “the stranger among us” to quote Julia Kristeva’s famous phrase, accounts for much of the conflict ridden energy carried along with every single copy of the Volksbuch on Ahasver to all four corners of Christian, especially Lutheran, Europe.

Yet another instance points at the complex and agonizing image of Jews as wanderers produced by a similar sub-culture, namely that of beggars. The lists of species of vagabonds quoted by Bronislaw Geremek in his book on the beggars of early modern Europe, from sources contemporary to the emergence of the Ahasverus tradition and earlier than that, supply material of some interest to the present discussion.²³ Among the beggars listed in protocols of the police and other sources there are those who declare that they are converted Jews apparently in the hope of augmenting their income. According to the quoted sources they claim to have arrived from Rome, but the lists report their appearance in Augsburg.²⁴ Regarding Ahasver’s occupation it is worthwhile to refer to the claim of a beggar whose police interrogation was recorded, who suggested that he and his colleagues were not a gang but rather an artisans’ corporation similar to those of shoemakers or goldsmiths.²⁵

The relevance of the Reformation for the material quoted above is highlighted by the fact that, as Geremek points out, Martin Luther himself wrote the foreword for an edition of a book on vagabonds, “Liber vagatorum”. The book was first published at the end of the 15th century and reprinted in numerous editions throughout the 16th century. It thus not inconceivable that the information about Ahasver included in the

Volksbuch had been inspired by the documented contacts between Jews and beggars as well as other vagabonds, as quoted above.

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Most French renderings of the Wandering Jew, stress the wandering rather than the longevity, at least terminologically, calling the figure “le juif errant” rather than “der ewige Jude”, which is the standard German term. The French tradition also distinguishes itself in the tendency to transport the theme of the Wandering Jew to more artistic forms such as the ballad form of “complainte” and even “a curious little ballet... which was performed at Tours in 1638”.²⁶ The French tradition often introduced skeptical comments about the possibility of such longevity and elaborated the figure towards the comical and the grotesque. This may be the reason that French culture relatively early produced individual, high-cultural works referring to the Wandering Jew, which I shall not be able to discuss in the limits of the present article.²⁷ Suffice it to mention that in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century the theme becomes a favorite one in Neo-classical and later Romantic literature and drama, turning the lowly figure into a heroic, rebellious and individualistic paradigm.

I shall however devote the final part of this paper to a short discussion of the wanderings of the Wandering Jew in folk narratives, especially in northern Europe, in order to highlight a singular characteristic emerging in them, namely localization. Clifford Geertz has stated that “Like sailing, gardening, politics and poetry -- law and ethnography are crafts of place: they work by the light of local knowledge”.²⁸ It is therefore possible even for the homeless Ahasver to become naturalized into the contexts of locality in the process of folk narrative creativity.

A relatively recent study of German oral narratives concerning the Wandering Jew has shown that the folk tradition has privileged the

preserving of the local elements of the figure. That is, his visits that have been recorded in folk narratives have been made to the narrators' vicinities. On the other hand the origin legend in which Ahasver confronts Jesus, has been disposed of.²⁹ The folk narrative adaptation process which has formed these stories has also eliminated most of the elements present in the Volksbuch version, which may justify Anderson's view that they never actually took root in the folk tradition and that it, folk narrative tradition, developed independently.³⁰ The German study also shows that the Wandering Jew has taken on characteristics of other popular figures of local beliefs such as Odin-Wotan - "and thus he has to fly eternally through the air". Nevertheless the German folk tradition tends to interpret the Wandering Jew rather as a local Jew whose sins are economic or violating the Sabbath, although some of the oral narratives were recorded in East Germany at a point when very few Jews must have been left there.

Finnish archival materials disclose that 44 out of 59 accounts on the Wandering Jew included the legend of Jesus, introduced by the translations of the Volksbuch which were printed there from 1892 onwards. In this Finland differs from other Nordic countries in which the Volksbuch translations were almost as a rule introduced before Jews were granted the right to settle. Many accounts stress the local element by mentioning the name of a nearby nature formation (mountain or marsh) or place name, and by stating that when the Wandering Jew returns there the end of the world is impending. Notably the Wandering Jew in Finland is in most recordings called "the cobbler of Jerusalem", and the reference to local Jews, who in any case are very recent and extremely few, seems opaque or non-existent. On the other hand, the chapbook versions in Scandinavia (especially in Sweden and Finland), which are basically variations on the German chapbook, include references to the appearance of the Wandering Jew at local markets - wearing extremely outlandish, clearly Orientally tinged, garments such as camel hide trousers and tiger

fur hats. At times again the Wandering Jew is seen in the form of a local supernatural being such as the Finnish “fire-fox”.

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Homi Bhaba has contended that “the ‘unhomely’ is a paradigmatic colonial and post-colonial condition, [which] has resonance that can be heard distinctly, if erratically, in fictions that negotiate the powers of cultural difference in a range of transhistorical sites.”³¹ It seems to me that the European traditions on the Wandering Jew defy the specific diagnosis of such fictions as primarily colonial, unless we consider the status of historical non-Europeans in Europe as colonial. Following Bhaba’s terminology the pious Christian behavior of Ahasver, especially in the Volksbuch version, is an act of imagined mimicry imposed by the majority culture on the minority, as if saying: if you only could -- this is how you would like to behave.

The Wandering Jew seems to function as an image of the refraction of Christian identity in a number of ways. As the sole surviving witness of the events at the lifetime of Jesus his appearance in specific locations in Europe juxtaposes the “universality” of the kerygma (good news) against the locality of the belief in demons or nature-spirits. As folk religion also has transformed and translated the Christian devil to a local nature spirit his position becomes utterly ambiguous and it is very difficult to discern “on whose side he is”. Further, due to the ideological associations implied in the tradition crafted around this figure, he also actualizes the existence of possible different Christian identities such as Reform versus Catholic. On the explicit level the image of the Wandering Jew serves Reformation theology by presenting a witness of the life story of the historical Jesus. On the other hand it seems that the great popularity earned by the legend may stem from the fact that it also enables the experience of the opposite - retrieving the locale for religion. The application of the legend in the official religious discourse draws folk

religion into official pulpit religion as compensation for the local saints and spirits taken away first by Christianity when it replaced Paganism and nature religion and later by Reformation when it replaced in some places Catholicism. The return of the repressed flares in the *völkisch* developments of post-romanticism - when the Wandering Jew is recruited first to the service of the “individual”, later to the service of modern anti-Semitism.

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Jewish tradition has included a number of narratives about eternal wanderers: Cain as punished criminal, Elijah as a legendary benefactor. In the modern Jewish emancipation movement the image of the Wandering Jew is re-appropriated by Jewish historians and essayists in a multivalent fashion. On one hand it serves as a projection of the negative self-image of the Jewish past, adapted in order to communicate the positive image of the change. On the other hand the idiom of wandering is applied in a positive mode in a desperate effort to stop the wandering of Ahasver - either by utopian death (Karl Kautsky) or by nationalist homecoming (several Zionist writers and speakers).³²

The historian Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin has suggested the following formula for the relationship between Jews, Christians and Diaspora: “The meaning of the concept of Diaspora is especially poignant with reference to Jewish life in the cultural and historical context of Christianity, in a framework which defines itself explicitly and with enunciation as non-Diaspora. Christian consciousness is based on Paulinian and especially Augustinian historiography, proposing that the new era after the appearance of Jesus Christ consists of the “era of grace”, an era which although transient and bound to end with the second coming of Christ, is replete with the grace of the redeemer. Accordingly, “the era of law” (that is the pre-Diaspora period in Jewish terms) reflected the absence of grace and lack. In such a context, Diaspora distinguishes between Christian and

Jew, since the Jew by identifying himself with Diaspora denies the claim for the era of grace. Such a position makes it clear why the concept of Diaspora should not necessarily be understood as a situation imposed on the Jews - but rather a state of choice. That is, the choice to be Jew is the choice to be in Diaspora, and means nothing else. However the Diaspora is negatively marked by the messianic idea, but it is also clear that for the very existence of the messianic idea the world has to be conceived of as a diasporic reality".³³ It is clear that for Raz-Krakotzkin the definition of a situation as "Diaspora" was practiced, and may only be practiced, based on a reference to the terminology of the dominant culture and as a critical position towards it.

Bhabha's conclusion regarding the postcolonial situation is to demand an inclusion of the colonial others, refugees and immigrants to the cities of the rich Western countries "as an indigenous or native narrative *internal to its national identity*".³⁴ Similarly, the tradition of the Wandering Jew presents for Jewish tradition as well as for European tradition in general an aporia of belonging and rejection, of an identity constantly forming and re-forming itself with reference to its internal alienation.

The apparent paradox of the Wandering Jew is his simultaneous presentation as local and itinerant, almost autochthonous as a nature spirit and as exotic as a complete stranger. These concrete features of the figure in literature, visual representation and oral accounts signal the paradoxical identity of European Jews in their own eyes and in the eyes of their Christian neighbors as at the same time completely local and familiar and on the other as deeply alien. The Wandering Jew has served as a powerful image of rootlessness and instability, and as such contributed to the constructing for Europeans their identity as belonging to a specific locality as well as to their self-image rooted in stability.

Source:

Galit Hasan-Rokem, “*Ex Oriente Fluxus: The Wandering Jew – Oriental Crossings of the Paths of Europe*”, *L’orient dans l’histoire religieuse de l’Europe: L’invention des origines*. Edité par Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi et John Scheid. EPHE & Brepols, Turnhout Belgium 2000, pp. 153-164.

See also: idem, “L’Image du juif errant et la construction de l’identité européenne.” *Le juif errant: un témoin du temps*. Ed. Laurence Sigal-Klagsblad et Richard I. Cohen. Paris: Adam Biro & Musée d’art et d’histoire du Judaïsme 2001.

¹ Providence: Brown University Press 1969. See also: *The Wandering Jew - Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend*, Editors: Galit Hasan-Rokem and Alan Dundes. Indiana University Press, Bloomington Indiana, 1986.

² Galit Hasan-Rokem, “*Homo viator judaicus* – Medieval Jewish Voices in the European Narrative of the Wandering Jew”, *Europäische Ethnologie und Folklore im internationalen Kontext*. Festschrift für Leander Petzoldt. Hrsg.. Ingo Schneider. Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 1999, ss. 93-102.

³Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of ‘the Jew’ in English Literature and Society. Racial Representations, 1875—1945*. London 1995. The cover illustration is a wood-engraving (based on Gustave Doré’s *Ahasuerus* (figure 2)) by S.C. Dumont, which appeared under the title *Le Juif-Errant* in the June 5th 1852 edition of *Le Journal pour Rire*, reproduced with kind permission from the copy of the British Library, as acknowledged on the back cover.

⁴ Cheyette 1995, p.12, note 22

⁵ “Popular Survivals of the Wandering Jew in England”, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 46 (1947: 367-82), repr. In Hasan-Rokem and Dundes 1986, pp. 76-104.

⁶Cambridge Mass. and London: Harvard University Press 1992; French original: *Les langues du paradis: Aryans and Sémites, un couple providentiel*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil , 1989.

⁷ The parallel and reversal of pilgrimage are equally embodied in the legend of the Wandering Jew. This topic merits a separate discussion. An interesting suggestion for such a discussion may be seen in the following: Georges Van Den Abbeele, *Travel as Metaphor - From Montaigne to Rousseau*. Minneapolis and Oxford: University of Minnesota Press 1992. p. xxix “The early modern and secular equivalent of the medieval pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the voyage to Italy was a cultural institution that accredited transalpine travelers (typically but not exclusively from England, France and Germany) with a knowledge both exotic and familiar. No longer the religious, economic, or artistic center of Europe, post-Renaissance Italy became the (p. xxx) continent’s internal other, a place where Northerners could come to gawk at the evidences of Roman decline....”.

⁸ Joan Young Gregg, *Devils, Women and Jews - Reflections of the Other in Medieval Sermon Stories*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1997, pp. 8-9.

Anderson 1965, p. 22.⁹

¹⁰ Anderson p. 423 n. 19 mentions that the first edition being very rare he quotes from that printed in Basel in 1550.

Hasan-Rokem 1986, in Hasan-Rokem and Dundes. ¹¹

¹²Arye Grabois, "The Legendary Image of Charlemagne in Hebrew Medieval Sources" *Tarbiz* 36, 1967, pp. 22-58, mentions the elaborate traditions on Narbonne 12th century in Rabbi Avraham ben David RaVaD, *Sefer ha-qabbala* (Grabois pp. 29-30) and 13th century Rabbi Meir ben Shimon, *Milhemet Mitsva* (Grabois pp. 44-45 ; the much more limited thirteenth century traditions on the Rhine valley in rabbi Elazar of Worms's *Matsref le-Hokhma* (Grabois p. 51, MaHarShaL's addition loc.cit., repeated in 16th century Italian rabbi Yosef Ha-Kohen's *Emeq Ha-Bakha*; Avraham Grossman, "The Emigration of the Kalonymides from Italy to Germany", *Zion*, 40, 1975, pp. 154-185; *ibid.* *The Early Sages of Ashkenaz - Their Lives, Leadership and Works 900-1096*, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press 1981, pp. 29-40.

Anderson 1965, pp. 33-37. ¹³

Anderson 1965, p. 41. ¹⁴

van den Gielen, Dal, af Klintberg, Hasan-Rokem. ¹⁵

Anderson 1965, p. 46. ¹⁶

¹⁵ *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany*, edited by R. Po-chia Hsia and Hartmut Lehmann , pp. 125-136.

Guggenheim p. 127. ¹⁷

Guggenheim p. 128 ¹⁸

Guggenheim p. 130. ¹⁹

²⁰ Guggenheim p.131.

²¹ Guggenheim p. 132.

²² Anderson 1965, p.46.

²³ Bronislaw Geremek, *Mendicanti e misaribili nell'Europa moderna 135-1600*, Roma-Bari 1999, trad. Paolo Procaccioli from the French original *Inutiles au monde. Trunds et misérables dans l'Europe moderne (1350-1600)*, Paris: Editions Gallimard-Julliard 1980. I thank Prof. Cristiano Grottanelli from the University of Pisa for bringing this material to my attention. The lists mentioned here are on pp. 151-179 in the Italian translation.

²⁴ Geremek p. 152. Also "false converts who claim to be baptized Jews", item XXIII on p. 164. Grottanelli points out the connection with the Gypsies who arrived in Europe around 1470 and claimed that they had come from Egypt and had originally been Christians who were converted to Islam and then converted themselves back to Christianity. On p. 176 there is a mention of those who "go outside the city posing as Jews who have made themselves Christians". Regarding Ahasver's occupation it is worthwhile to refer to the claim of a beggar whose interrogation by the police was recorded, who suggested that he and his colleagues were not a gang but rather an artisans' corporation similar to those of shoemakers or goldsmiths. (p. 175). The Reformation context is highlighted by the fact that Martin Luther himself wrote the foreword for an edition of a book on vagabonds, "Liber vagatorum" which was first published at the end of the 15th century and reprinted in numerous editions in throughout the 16th century.

²⁵ Geremek, p. 175.

²⁶ Anderson 1965, p. 59.

²⁷ See for instance: Edgar Knecht, *Le mythe du Juif Errant: essai de mythologie littéraire et de sociologie religieuse*. Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble 1977; Marie-France Rouart, *Le Mythe du Juif Errant dans l'Europe du XIX^e siècle*. Mayenne: Librairie José Corti, 1988.

²⁸ Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. New York: Basic Books 1983, p. 167.

²⁹ Volker Berbüse, “‘darum muss er ewig seinen Packen tragen’ - Die waldeckische Version der Sage vom ‘ewigen Juden’”, *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 83, 1987, pp. 219-228.

³⁰ Anderson 1965, p. 71.

³² Hasan-Rokem 1986, pp. 119-150.

³¹ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge 1994, p. 9.

³² Galit Hasan-Rokem, “The Wandering Jew from a Jewish Perspective”, *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* section D volume II, pp. 189-196.

³³ Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, “Exile within Sovereignty: Toward a Critique of the ‘Negation of Exile’ in Israeli Culture”, *Theory and Criticism - An Israeli Forum* 4 (1993), pp. 23-55 (Hebrew). This passage is from p. 29.

³⁴ Bhabha 1994, p.6.