

Introduction

The over-sized noses with which the people on the cover of our book are 'endowed' belong to the essential equipment of anti-Jewish visuality. They demonstrate the long and complicated relationship of majority society in central Europe with regard to the Jewish minority who, through virtually the entire history of co-existence, have been forced in various measures to accept ridicule and enmity. This postcard from Karlovy Vary from the early twentieth century works with a sign – here attributed to the two figures of the caricatured Jewish couple – which remains so familiar to this day that even after the passing of an entire century it is not difficult for most recipients to decipher it. The field of visual anti-Judaism – hatred of the Jews based on their religious distinctiveness – and of antisemitism – that is, spiteful content based on nationalistic definition – is very broad. It ranges from stereotypical depiction concealing its message beneath humorous content, through to clearly formulated attacks aimed at escalating hatred towards an imaginary collective enemy. Both attitudes can be described as having as their aim exclusion from a fictionally monolithic majority society, and as an effort to reinforce the dividing line between 'us' and 'them'.

This publication offers a number of probes into the visual history of the central European space and its often very uncomfortable (if not downright unpleasant) content: thus, from the whole variety of material presented and approaches represented, what is demonstrated above all is the intransigence and at times even immutability of many anti-Jewish stereotypes. This applies especially in the form in which they developed in connection with modern – racist – antisemitism, which spread most notably in the final third of the nineteenth century, and on whose foundations twentieth century antisemitism with its catastrophic consequences was built.

Although the texts presented derive predominantly from a background of art-historical research, the focal point of interest of most of them lies in the broader field of visual studies. The publication thus presents the visual production of a broad spectrum of media and materials including magazine illustrations, postcards, posters, photographs and original internet creation. In spite of the undoubted power of visuality, in earlier histories of antisemitism this aspect lags behind and is often presented only as a certain supplement or illustration to its textual manifestations. Thus, due to the persisting disparity in previous professional interest, a more complex view of the phenomenon of antisemitism (i. e. anti-Judaism) formulated by visual means which would take the specific media in which it was used into account, is still lacking. We are attempting in particular to enrich and expand previous research into the visual side of these manifesta-

tions and to open up this constantly postponed theme for further inter-disciplinary contacts.

The studies included in this book derive from contributions to the international conference *Visual Antisemitism in Central Europe*, which was organised by the Institute of the History of Art of the Academy of Sciences on 17 October 2019 in the Academic Conference Centre in Prague. They map manifestations of anti-Judaism and antisemitism in the central European region from the Middle Ages to the present day.¹ The studies concern manifestations of antisemitism in Poland, Hungary, Germany and Austria as well as in the Czech lands.

The first essay by Jan Dienstbier examines medieval depictions of what is known as the Jewish sow. The repugnant motif of Jews being suckled by a sow appeared for the first time in Bohemia at the end of the thirteenth century on a corbel of the Church of St. Bartholomew in Kolín. Although no further portrayals of this type after the mid-fourteenth century have survived in the Czech lands, we can still find related motifs in the margins of illuminated Kutná Hora choir books or on the carved ceiling of the chateau in Telč at the end of the fifteenth and in the mid-sixteenth century. After this Daniel Véri deals in his case study with another abundantly widespread theme, the Jewish ritual murder. Using the example of two court cases which took place in Hungary at the end of the nineteenth century he shows that this antisemitic motif, deriving from medieval superstition, penetrated into many varied fields of visibility and thus broke the imaginary barrier between what is regarded as low and high art. Eva Janáčková's contribution is devoted to 'spa antisemitism' in the Czech lands which, from the end of the nineteenth century up to the 1930s, manifested itself visually above all in picture postcards and in the field of newspaper cartoons, and in the end even influenced the forms of figurines, statuettes and utilitarian objects. The image of Jewish spa visitors and here even Jews generally was deliberately caricatured, the guise of humour cloaking the popular antisemitic iconography of the time which primarily drew Jews as alien and hostile.

The next three studies closely examine the medium of magazine caricature. Michal Frankl deals with antisemitic caricatures published in Czech satirical newspapers at the turn of the century from the viewpoint of the field known as spatial studies. On an analysis of the place and space portrayed he comes to the conclusion that Jews were unable to identify with any space. The inability in the caricature to locate them in a specific space corresponded with the anti-

¹ The conference *Visual Antisemitism in Central Europe* and the subsequent collective monograph are the outcome of the grant project *The Imagery of Hatred. Visual Manifestations of Antisemitism in the Czech Lands from the Middle Ages to the Present*, no. DG18P020VV039, financed by the NAKI II programme of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic (2018–2021).

semitic idea of the Jew as a figure standing outside the national and world order. Julia Secklehner, in her contribution, deals with the reflection of antisemitism in Viennese satirical journals. In the interwar period two levels of visual antisemitism existed in Austria: that presented in *Der Kikeriki* was connected with violence and aggression and was propagated by an extreme right-wing politicians; the other, circulated in *Die Musquete*, was far more moderate and manifested itself above all in the form of implicit symbols and references. Jakub Hauser's essay on a series of examples follows a broad scale of antisemitic attacks in the conservative illustrated Czech-language weekly *Humoristické listy* [Humorist Papers]. For virtually the whole period between the wars these attacks were connected with the periodical's own antisemitic position which reached its culmination at the end of the nineteenth century. *Humoristické listy*, through the intensity of its spiteful content during practically the entire interwar period, demolishes the still prevalent idea that in the environment of First Republic Czechoslovakia open antisemitism was the exclusive domain of extreme anti-state elements.

Two contributions are devoted to the period of World War II. Petr Karlíček analyses the antisemitic caricatures that emerged in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and at the same time devotes considerable space to their authors, including Karel Rélík, Dobroslav Haut and František Voborský. Without exception, their creations fulfilled the requirements of the Nazi authorities; they were not too imaginative, nor did they reach the aggression and crudity of the caricatures being made in Germany itself, or on Slovak territory. Daniel Uziel on the other hand deals with the visualisation of Polish Jews from the perspective of German antisemitic propaganda. Already before the war these strove to throw doubt on the legitimacy of Poland by emphasising the connection between the state and its Jewish population. With the onset of the war there was a transformation in the broader context: anti-Jewish propaganda, in the field fuelled chiefly by newspaper caricatures, photographs and film, became a part of the Reich's wartime propaganda. Visual manifestations of antisemitism in post-war Czechoslovakia are subsequently processed by Blanka Soukupová who, in her research into book illustrations and newspaper cartoons, finds out that the portrayal of the Jew as a German and an asocial Germaniser predominated from the beginning, but that after the February takeover the chief motif became the stereotype of a Jew in the form of a bourgeois capitalist cosmopolitan and propagator of Zionism. The antisemite edge was measured above all against the State of Israel as a vassal of the USA; the figure of Israel as a collective Jew therefore returned in the time known as 'normalisation'.

Two studies investigate the most recent period. The situation after the democratic revolution of 1989 in Czechoslovakia and subsequent birth of the independent Czech Republic in 1993 is mapped in detail by Zbyněk Tarant. He

draws attention to the fact that while visual anti-Jewish stereotypes traditionally survive in popular culture and folklore, antisemitic portrayals working with political motifs prefer a non-figurative style. Moreover, it is often people who have nothing in common with Judaism who are the target of traditional visual stereotypes in a political context. Iwona Kurz's contribution in its theme draws on the visibility of the Holocaust and searches for pictorial analogies, above all in reaction to the European refugee crisis in 2015. On the basis of visual material collected mainly in Poland the author attempts to show how these 'images of the past' serve predominantly political tasks.

We believe that the identification of problematic moments of central European history can be of great benefit in orienting ourselves in the present day. In fact, the power of images which – whether subliminally or quite openly – emphasise the supposed (or rather, imposed) otherness of a national minority, can be very easily traced to the abundant but in general little-known material that can be described as visual manifestations of antisemitism. In the case of the history of European Jews we know very well where manifestations of intolerance and xenophobia can lead, but we also know that visibility played an essential role in the processes of stereotyping, exclusion and division of society.

In conclusion, some editorial notes. We have left in the title of the publication just the term 'antisemitism' instead of the more precise expression 'anti-Judaism and antisemitism'. This is because especially the general comprehensibility of the first term in relation to manifestations of both antisemitism and anti-Judaism, and also the fact that the overwhelming majority of studies in this book deal exclusively to antisemitism. We have additionally spelt antisemitism without the hyphen on the recommendation of the *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance* (IHRA) and other international organisations devoting themselves to antisemitism, because antisemitism is not hatred of 'Semitism' or 'Semites'; antisemitism is Jew-hatred. However, where quotations from sources and expert studies are concerned, we have consistently preserved the original spelling of all words and have not edited the expressions in any way. In cases where we have not given the names of the authors of the artworks in the text, the notes or the labels, this is because they are not known.

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