

Jay Geller

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Antisemitism, Racism, and the
Human-Animal Great Divide

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At a 14 November 2018 Vanderbilt University Jewish Studies Program roundtable on “Antisemitism in Contemporary American Politics,”¹ Jonathan Judaken argued against disaggregating antisemitism from other forms of racism² and called for the recognition of the multi-directional entanglements of anti-Jewish racism and anti-Black racism. He added, though, that it was also necessary to pull them apart and then invoked Léon Poliakov and his characterization of the core tropes of each:³

- The core trope of anti-Jewish racism is the association of the Jews with evil, as the minions of the devil to bring about the evil things in the universe.⁴

* I would like to thank the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies and Prof. Dr. Hermut Löhr of the Evangelisch-Theologische Fakultät of the Universität-Bonn for inviting me to deliver the Joseph C. Miller Memorial Lecture, on 16 October 2023, of which this is an expanded version. I am also grateful for the subsequent comments and suggestions of Prof. Dr. Löhr and the two anonymous readers for the series. Earlier versions were presented to the Jewish Studies department at Dartmouth College (20 April 2023), (via zoom) to the “Entangled Otherings—Critical Perspectives on the Relationship of Antisemitism and Racism” conference (Gut Siggen, GE, 28 June 2021), and to the “Contested Intersections between Antisemitism and Racism” session at the German Studies Association annual meeting (Portland, OR, 6 Oct. 2019).

¹ <https://as.vanderbilt.edu/jewishstudies/learn/watch-and-learn-antisemitism-in-contemporary-american-politics> [accessed 07.06.2024].

² On the question of whether to consider antisemitism as a form of racism directed at Jews, albeit one which has some characteristics that differ from those ascribed to racism’s other others (e.g., Blacks, Romani, Arabs) or as a distinctive ideology, aspects of which overlap with but cannot be subsumed under racism, see Karin Stögner, “Intersectionality and Antisemitism—A New Approach,” *Fathom* (May 2020), <https://fathomjournal.org/intersectionality-and-antisemitism-a-new-approach> [accessed 07.06.2024]; also see Gilda Sahebi, *Wie wir uns Rassismus beibringen. Eine Analyse deutscher Debatten* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2024): 234–38. This lecture’s discussion of how comparable factors have spawned particular anti-Black and anti-Jewish bestial identifications is not dependent on the resolution of the question of whether racism and antisemitism are or are not discrete phenomena.

³ Judaken is paraphrasing Poliakov in his interview with Elisabeth Weber (*Questioning Judaism. Interviews by Elisabeth Weber. Jacques Derrida et al.*, trans. Rachel Bowlby [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004]: 87–103); however, where Judaken would differentiate anti-Jewish and anti-Black racisms, Poliakov refers to “another of the differences between anti-Semitism and racism: blacks were generally bestialized, whereas Jews were generally seen as diabolical” (94).

⁴ In the lecture’s accompanying power point, this characterization of the central anti-Jewish trope was superimposed upon a photograph of the Wittenberg church frieze depicting the *Judensau* (see below).

- When you look at the core trope of anti-Black racism, it's the association of blacks with beasts of burden.⁵

Rather than focusing upon Judaken's characterization of Poliakov's core tropes of anti-Jewish and anti-Black identification, this work addresses a key "entanglement" that may moot this⁶ or other⁷ specific differentiations of primal stereotypes. That entanglement is the human-animal Great Divide: for before the ethno-racial defining and dividing of human societies in the modern era, came the classification of humanity over and against the (non-human) animal that sustains human exceptionalism.⁸

⁵ In the lecture's accompanying power point, this characterization of the central anti-Black trope was superimposed upon a copy of an editorial cartoon that appeared in the Wilmington, NC *News and Observer* prior to the 8 November 1898 election; above the caption "The Vampire That Hovers Over North Carolina" looms a giant, tailed and winged ("NEGRO" tattoos one spread wing, "RULE" the other) demon bearing the head of an African American male with menacing eyes and sharp teeth and whose claws are reaching after fleeing white women and men; Rachel Marie-Crane Williams, "A War in Black and White: The Cartoons of Norman Ethre Jennett and the North Carolina Election of 1898," *Southern Cultures* 19, no. 2 (2003): 15.

⁶ Poliakov makes this distinction following Elisabeth Weber's invocation of Western culture's tendency to bestialize the other. After he makes this claim, she then counters: "Yes. However, in the *History of Anti-Semitism* you quote texts where animals' names are also applied to Jews"; *Questioning Judaism*: 94.

⁷ Other scholars argue for the primacy of different antisemitic tropes, especially in the modern period, such as covert conspiracy for world domination (Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide. The Myth of the Jewish-World Conspiracy and the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion"* [New York: Harper and Row, 1967]) or the embodiment of dominating abstraction (Moishe Postone, "Anti-Semitism and National Socialism," in *Germans and Jews since the Holocaust*, ed. Anson Rabinbach and Jack Zipes [New York: Holmes & Meier, 1986]: 302–14).

⁸ Donna Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008): 9–11. Haraway develops her notion from historian of science Bruno Latour's analysis of the "Two Great Divides" that mark Western modernity: the Great Divide between Us (the modern West) and Them (the premodern rest) and that between the human (society, the knower) and the nonhuman (nature, the known). He argues that it is *our* "ability" to recognize the latter Great Divide and the concomitant assumption of *their* inability to do so that "accounts" for and justifies the former Great Divide; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993): 99. She also notes other Great Divides beyond Latour's two and the human/animal, including the organic/technical and the wild/domestic. Like Donna Haraway I do not ascribe primacy, whether historically or logically, to the human(animal)/(nonhuman)animal Great Divide; there is no original or greatest divide from which all other divides—including those between Gentile and Jew or White and Black—derive, nor are they identical homologies of one another; never-

Far too frequently one group of *homo sapiens* overcoded the alleged difference between it and another such group with human-animal difference in order to debase, bestialize, and justify the persecution of that other group. Erik Erikson described this phenomenon as pseudospeciation:⁹

while man is obviously one species, he appears and continues on the scene split up into groups [...] which provide their members with a firm sense of unique and superior human identity—and some sense of immortality. [...] However] in times of threatening technological and political change and sudden upheaval, the idea of being the preordained foremost species tends to be reinforced by a fanatic fear and anxious hate of other pseudospecies. It then becomes a periodic and often reciprocal obsession of man that these others must be annihilated or kept “in their places.”

From a positivistic perspective “pseudo” may be an appropriate qualifier of the speciation of the Jews; however, as Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno noted in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944–47), such specious speciation of the Jews needed no qualifying “pseudo”: “They who propagated individualism [and] the concept of the person have been debased to a species [*Spezies*]. They who were never allowed untroubled ownership of the civic right that should have granted them human dignity are again called ‘The Jew’ without distinction.”¹⁰ “Speciation” is not about distinguishing one species from another; rather, it is about distinguishing one taxonomic group among those who are categorized according to species—e.g., animals—from that other group who are not so categorized—i.e., humans. It is animalization.

In his roughly contemporaneous *Minima Moralia* (c. 1944–45), Adorno isolated the phrase “After all, it’s only an animal” as the telltale

theless, as depicted in this work, they are mutually implicated and often employed intersectionally.

⁹ Erik H. Erikson, “Pseudospeciation in the Nuclear Age,” *Political Psychology* 6, no. 2 (1985): 214.

¹⁰ Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment. Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002): 143–44.

justification for the possibility of “pogroms” against “savages, blacks, Japanese.” Before offering his portent, Adorno speculated about how the victims traditionally associated with pogroms—i.e., Jews—have been perceived: “Perhaps the social schematism of perception in anti-Semites is such that they do not see Jews as human beings at all.”¹¹

The social production of human invisibility is also, in Zygmunt Bauman’s terms, the “social production of moral invisibility”:¹² it forecloses the no-longer-recognized-as-human group from the universe of moral obligation. Almost two hundred years earlier, Gottlob Benjamin Gerlach wrote in his 1799 *Moses and Christ*:¹³

But these philosophers [e.g., Christoph Meiners] go so far as to claim that moral character—that noble proclivity that first makes all humans human—is lacking in the poor creatures of these peoples. [...] These people, like animals, are not capable of feeling moral duty and have thus no rights [...], an argument that comes up in England to justify the slave trade and in Germany the oppression of the Jews.

But concomitant with rendering the human aspect invisible is rendering the animal, the species difference, visible. The imputation of intersecting identifiers does not only enact both the subordination (and marginalization) of those marked in the collective singular (e.g., the Jew, the Black, the Animal) and the dominance of the unmarked markers (e.g., Gentiles, Whites, Humans), it also (re)constructs the authority of hierarchical oppositions indexed by each identifier. Hence to analogize or

¹¹ Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia. Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1974): 105.

¹² Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989): 26.

¹³ Cit. by Jonathan Hess, “Jewish Emancipation and the Politics of Race,” in *The German Invention of Race*, ed. Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006): 204. Meiners distinguished Africans as belonging to a separate race from white Europeans, to one that shared much with two other “anthropoid” races, apes and apemen; Hanna Engelmeier, *Der Mensch, der Affe: Anthropologie und Darwin-Rezeption in Deutschland 1850–1900* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2016): 58–59. Meiners gave much credence to the traveler tales of African-ape intercourse mentioned in the Jordan extract below.

identify Jews or Blacks with animals not only maintains the hierarchical opposition of Jew and Gentile or Black and White, but that of Animal and Human as well. Such intersections also maintain the normativity of hierarchical determinations within each opposition as well as reinforce the stigma (or prestige) of each identification; they sustain the “essential”¹⁴ difference by which the dominant group founds its claims to autonomy and authority.

This work attends to the attribution and manufacture of animality that enacted the subordination of a racially identified group, people of predominantly sub-Saharan African descent (“the Black”), and the dominance of the corresponding race-identifying group, people of predominantly European descent (Whites) and that similarly functioned with regard to “the Jew” in relation to Gentiles. Usually the overcoding of Black/White and Jew/Gentile difference with animal/human difference is explained as arising either by an act of translation of core tropes of the identified group with those of “the Animal”¹⁵ or through the superimposition of an animal cypher (the alleged common qualities shared by a particular animal group with a particular human group).¹⁶ Instead, it focuses on several other loci that have each spawned bestial identifications by one group (the dominant) upon another (the subordinate). Two relate to identifications with specific animals. One is geographical; an

¹⁴ Werner Sollors, *Neither Black nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997): 63.

¹⁵ E.g., that Blacks and Jews, like (non-human) animals, are characterized by irrationality, materiality, and amorality as well as speak in a language that sounds more like the meaningless utterances of (non-human) animals; see, e.g., Tom Tyler, *Ciferae. A Bestiary in Five Fingers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Colleen Glenney Boggs, *Animalia Americana. Animal Representations and Biopolitical Subjectivity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); and Andrew Benjamin, *Of Jews and Animals* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

¹⁶ For example, when Blacks and Jews have been called “dogs,” the reference is not to the noble, loyal, purebred canine, but to the servile, dirty cur with a voracious appetite for food and an uncontrollable and indiscriminate lasciviousness; see Charles de Miramon, “Noble Dogs, Noble Blood: The Invention of the Concept of Race in the Late Middle Ages,” in *The Origins of Racism in the West*, ed. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, Benjamin Isaac and Joseph Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): 200–216; Bénédicte Boisseron, *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018); and Kenneth Stow, *Jewish Dogs. An Image and Its Interpreters. Continuity in the Catholic-Jewish Encounter* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

identification emerges in the wake of contemporaneous first contacts with both another human group and a proximate animal group. The second is the dietary and relates to a specific animal source of food allegedly eaten or not eaten by the other human group. The third locus is one that arises in the wake of the legal and political emancipation of the subordinate group: how the fears that its members can pass among the dominant—that their difference becomes invisible—calls for identifying that trespassing group with “the Animal” in its visible varieties in order to render its difference discernable and self-evident.

The Geographical

Winthrop Jordan’s account of the encounter of Europeans, Africans, and anthropoid apes—in his classic 1968 study of American attitudes toward the “Negro” from 1550 to 1812, *White over Black*—served as a primary source for the depiction of antecedents of racial antisemitic ideation in later, no-less-classic genealogies: Léon Poliakov’s *The Aryan Myth*¹⁷ and George Mosse’s *Toward the Final Solution*,¹⁸ and of more recent studies of the intersection of race and species such as Claire Jean Kim’s 2015 *Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age*.¹⁹ Jordan wrote:²⁰

It was a strange and eventually tragic happenstance of nature that the Negro’s homeland was the habitat of the animal which in appearance most resembles man. The animal called ‘orang-outang’ by contempo-

¹⁷ Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth. A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe* (New York: Meridian, 1977): 136.

¹⁸ George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution. A History of European Racism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1978): 14–15.

¹⁹ Claire Jean Kim, *Dangerous Crossings. Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015): 36; see also David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2015), which opens with a genealogical discussion of the animalization of the slave that draws in part upon Jordan’s work (e.g., 29).

²⁰ Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black. American Attitudes Toward the Negro 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968): 28–29, 229.

aries (actually the chimpanzee) was native to those parts of western Africa where the early slave trade was heavily concentrated. Though English men were acquainted (for the most part vicariously) with monkeys and baboons, they were unfamiliar with tailless apes who walked around like men. Accordingly, it happened that Englishmen were introduced to the anthropoid apes and to negroes at the same time and in the same place.

Later in his study he elaborated on this tragic happenstance:

The tendency to associate the two flowed in part from certain presuppositions which underlay the idea of the Chain of Being, but the careful exposition and popularity of the idea came more than a half-century after the tales about Negroes and apes began cropping up in the accounts of European travelers: [...] the ‘fact’ that Negroes and apes sometimes had ‘a beastly copulation or conjuncture’ served to demonstrate the affinity of man and beasts: conversely, the Chain of Being was an admirable way of explaining this ‘fact.’ The chance tales of travelers interlocked with the concept of the Chain of Being to transform the fortuitous geographical proximity of Negroes and apes into an association of cosmic significance. Almost certainly that fortuitous proximity played a crucial role in shaping the eighteenth century’s consensus that on the Great Scale of Beings the place just above the ape was occupied by the Negro—

and that the place of Blacks was below that of Whites. Exemplifying that consensus, Jordan cited Thomas Jefferson’s assertion in his 1781 *Notes on the State of Virginia* that Black males prefer White women over Black females to the same extent that male “Oran-ootan[s]” (chimpanzees) prefer Black females over females of their own species.²¹

While Jews too were identified with monkeys and apes, it was not a matter of geographic contiguity; rather, it entailed the attribution of alleged shared qualities that shifted over time from an emphasis on the

²¹ Jordan, *White over Black*: 490.

aesthetic, ugliness, to the intrinsic: an innate mimetic—as opposed to the Aryan’s creative—talent.²² Geography came into play with the characterization of Jews as foreign pests (that is, as both foreigners and pests). Labeling Jews with entomological (and related zoological) metaphors may have been catalyzed by the coincidence, beginning in the early 1880s, of Eastern European Jews’ flight westward from pogroms in Russia with both European entomologists’ increasing use of social metaphors and the ongoing massive defensive campaigns against infestations of North American insects (such as the grape phylloxera [*Reblaus*] and the flour moth [*Mehlmotte*]) that had accidentally been brought back to Europe—that is, against insects also identified as foreign pests (*fremde Schädlinge*).²³ For example, in his *Conquest of the World by the Jews* the international conman and antisemitic writer Osman Bey (actually Frederick Millingen) wrote: “just as the Phylloxera attack the grapes, so too the Jews [attack] clock manufacture and the other branches of Swiss industry.”²⁴ In another conflation of zoological and anthropological discourse that would have ominous consequences, the German entomologist leading the effort to combat these alien insects, Karl Escherich,²⁵ reinterpreted Darwin such that extermination (*Vernichtung*) of these pests would enact a key aspect of natural selection (of the struggle for existence [*Kampf ums Dasein*]), because such intervention would obstruct the “degeneration” (*Degeneration*) of “culture” (*Kultur*) in the forest and

²² See Jay Geller, *Bestiarium Judaicum. Unnatural Histories of the Jews* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018): 127–30.

²³ Sarah Jansen, “Schädling”: *Geschichte eines wissenschaftlichen und politischen Konstrukts 1840–1920* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2003): 114–16.

²⁴ Osman Bey [Frederick Milligen], *Die Eroberung der Welt durch die Juden. Enthüllungen über die universelle israelitische Allianz*, 2nd repr. (Lorch: K. Rohm, 1922): 30; cit. by Markus Jansen, *Wissen vom Menschen. Franz Kafka und die Biopolitik* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2012): 343.

²⁵ Escherich would later join the NSDAP (in 1921) and participate in the Beerhall Putsch. In his second official address (1935) as rector of the Universität-München he declared that the fundamental ideas of National Socialism are “through and through biological”; Karl Escherich, *Biologisches Gleichgewicht. Eine zweite Münchner Rektoratsrede über die Erziehung zum politischen Menschen* (München: Albert Langen-Georg Müller Verlag, 1935): 21; <http://www.universitaetsarchiv.uni-muenchen.de/digitalesarchiv/reaktoratsunduniversitaetsreden/pdf/250.pdf> [accessed 07.06.2024]; also see Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, “The Social Politics of Karl Escherich’s 1933 Inaugural Presidential Lecture,” *Journal of the History of Biology* 56, no. 1 (2023): 65–95.

restore its equilibrium.²⁶ By 1900 the animal parasite and the human parasite began to co-constitute each other as pervasive alien threats and objects of (Social) Darwinist and epidemiological analysis. In German-occupied Polish territory during World War I, these parasites, in the form of the lice-ridden *Ostjude*, became fused.²⁷

The Dietary

Because of their “masked” eyes and their habit of foraging about human homesteads, racoons often figured burglars; however, the association of the racoon with African Americans had a different source. A study of the emergence of so-called “coon songs” in the nineteenth century notes:²⁸

The term “coon” did not originally appear as a racial slur term for a Black American, though over a short period of time it evolved into that. In early minstrel songs, the “coon” was reference to a raccoon, whose meat was supposedly preferred by plantation slaves. In many cases, for unknowing composers, the term “coon” became entangled with the “possum,” also thought to be a preferred food source [...] By the mid 19th century, coon and possum songs were a regular part of the musical scene, most often heard performed in minstrel shows.

²⁶ Jansen, “*Schädling*”: 116.

²⁷ Paul Julian Weindling, *Epidemics and Genocide in Eastern Europe, 1890–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 97–102. As the Germans prepared to resettle Polish Jews in 1940 they hung up posters in Warsaw and other cities proclaiming the connection: evoking a death’s head with one eye socket hollowed out, sharp cheekbones, and a lipless mouth, an otherwise stereotypically Eastern European Jewish face glared out of the upper right quadrant; outlined against a dark background bearing three red blotches, a giant louse emerged out of the lower left quadrant with its fore claws and proboscis reaching toward the Jew’s jaw; *ŻYDZI* (Jews) appeared in the upper left quadrant in big blue letters with *WSZY* (lice) immediately below; and *TYFUS PLAMISTY* (typhus fever) was written in larger yellow letters slanting slightly upward across the bottom; Weindling, *Epidemics*: 2.

²⁸ “In Search of Coon Songs, Racial Stereotypes in American Popular Song,” <http://parlorsongs.com/insearch/coonsongs/coonsongs.php> [accessed 06.07.2024]; also see James M. Salem, “African American Songwriters and Performers in the Coon Song Era: Black Innovation and American Popular Music,” *Columbia Journal of American Studies*; <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cjas/salem1.html> [accessed 07.06.2024].

Further, the epithet “coon” was first used in the mid-eighteenth century to refer to a frontier rustic; yet when the Black character “Zip Coon” began to appear in minstrel shows in the 1830s, he was not the naïve rustic—that was “Jim Crow”—rather he was the citified dandy. The anti-Black stereotype of “coon” that became hegemonic after the Civil War—the slow, easily frightened, unreliable, uninhibited, and inarticulate nitwit—spanned the urban-rural divide. That is, the anti-Black epithet emerged through a food source associated with African Americans rather than any quality or behavior said to be shared by both human and animal group.

The figure of the *Judensau*, Jew sow or Jew pig, also derived from the peculiarities of the Jewish diet. While medieval bestiaries would syllogistically argue that since swine symbolize the unclean and sinners and since Jews are unclean and sinners, therefore swine can also symbolize Jews, the dominant association arose from fascination over the seemingly strange and unusual Jewish taboo against eating pork. Among medieval Christians, a legend arose and was widely disseminated to explain why Jews abstain from pork:²⁹

According to the tale, Jews once tried Jesus’ omniscience. They hid a Jewish mother and her children [...] behind a wall and asked him what was there. Jesus replied, “A woman with children,” to which the Jews falsely replied, “No, these are sow and pigs,” and mocked him. Jesus said, “If so, let them be sow and pigs.” When the Jewish woman and her children came out of hiding, they were accordingly transformed.

The conclusion drawn is that Jews abstain from pork out of fear that they would be engaging in cannibalism by eating a descendant of their fellow (transformed) Jews.

Obsessed with the Jewish proscription on eating pork and following the dream-logic that informs so much stereotype, Christian Europe

²⁹ Isaiah Shachar, *The Judensau. A Medieval Anti-Jewish Motif and Its History* (London: Warburg Institute, 1974): 13. Also see Claudine Fabre-Vassas, *The Singular Beast. Jews, Christians, and the Pig*, trans. Carol Volk (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997): 92–94.

inextricably associated Jews with pigs: not only by the label given to Iberian Jewish conversos who were accused of secretly remaining Jews, *Marrano*, which is generally traced etymologically to freshly weaned pigs, or in the form of the nasty slur *Saujude* (Jew pig or dirty Jew), but also in representations of the *Judensau*. It began to be displayed on friezes, sculpted on corbels, or molded into gargoyles in numerous German churches from the thirteenth century on. By the fifteenth century and on through the sixteenth, the *Judensau* motif was ubiquitous in word and image throughout German lands. Into the early twentieth century traveling theaters exhibiting a pig marionette that would transform into a Jewish peddler were a regular fixture of country fairs, and Jewish peddlers were also frequently caricatured as pigs in so-called “humorous” postcards.³⁰

³⁰ Petra Schöner, *Judenbilder im deutschen Einblattdruck der Renaissance. Ein Beitrag zur Imagologie* (Baden-Baden: Valentin Koerner, 2002): 193. For other visual identifications of Jewish as or with pigs in Germanophone regions, see, *inter alia*, Peter Dittmar, *Die Darstellung der Juden in der populären Kunst zur Zeit der Emanzipation* (München: K. G. Saur, 1992); Eduard Fuchs, *Die Juden in der Karikatur: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturgeschichte* (München: Verlag Albert Langen, 1921); Helmut Gold and Georg Heuberger, eds., *Abgestempelt. Judenfeindliche Postkarten* (Heidelberg: Umschau Braus, 1999); Michaela Haibl, *Zerrbild als Stereotyp. Visuelle Darstellungen von Juden zwischen 1850 und 1900* (Berlin: Metropol, 2000); Andrea Hopp, “Zur Medialisierung des antisemitischen Stereotyps im Kaiserreich,” in *Antisemitische Geschichtsbilder*, ed. Werner Bergman and Ulrich Sieg (Essen: Klartext, 2009): 23–37; Julianne Peters, ed., *Spott und Hetze. Antisemitische Postkarten 1893–1945. Aus der Sammlung Wolfgang Haney*, www.zeno.org, DVD-ROM (Berlin: Directmedia Publishing, 2008); Stefan Rohrbacher and Michael Schmidt, *Judenbilder: Kulturgeschichte antijüdischer Mythen und antisemitischer Vorurteile* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1991); Regina Schleicher, *Antisemitismus in der Karikatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009); Falk Wiesemann, *Antijüdischer Nippes und populäre ‘Judenbilder.’ Die Sammlung Finkelstein* (Hohenems: Jüdisches Museum Hohenems, 2005). For examinations of the pervasive presence of such animalizing images elsewhere, see, *inter alia*, Salo Aizenberg, *Hatemail: Anti-Semitism on Picture Postcards* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society/Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013); Jerome J. Forman, *Graphic History of Antisemitism* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2014); Gérard Silvain, *Images et traditions juives. Un millier de cartes postales (1897–1917) pour servir à l’histoire de la Diaspora* (Paris: Astrid, 1980); Gérard Silvain and Joël Kotek, *La carte postale antisémite de l’affaire Dreyfus à la Shoah* (Paris: Berg International Editeurs, 2005); Judith Vogt, *Historien om et image. Antisemitisme og antizionisme I karikaturer* (Oslo: J.W. Cappelen, 1978).

(In)Visibility

While the animalization of (Black) Africans by (White) Europeans and of Jews by (Gentile) Europeans long preceded modernity it received new impetus in the wake of the legal and political emancipation of these subordinated groups. Even as legal measures in the United States and various social and cultural prohibitions in Central and Western Europe that assumed clear distinctions and boundaries between Blacks and Whites in the former and Jews and Gentiles in the latter were increasing enacted, fears arose that Blacks and Jews could pass among the dominant, that is, that their difference could become invisible, allowing the boundaries to be transgressed—even effaced. The passage between the boundaries went both ways; that is, there was a less articulated, if no less potent fear: that Whites or Gentiles would be mistaken for Blacks or Jews.³¹ One means of attempting to allay the anxiety, even the panic,³² over

³¹ This danger had been articulated earlier by the abolitionists who, by invoking the possibility that their children might be kidnapped and sold as escaped Blacks by those seeking to profit from “fugitive slave” laws, attempted to play on the fears of otherwise unsympathetic or weakly sympathetic white Northern audiences and move them to support the abolitionist cause. Henry Ward Beecher, e.g., spoke of “white slaves,” of young slave girls “of sweet face, large eyes, light hair, and fair as a lily” and then added “as long as children who looked so white were enslaved, no white child was safe”; Allyson Hobbs, *A Chosen Exile. A History of Racial Passing in American Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014): 42–43 (quoting Debby Applegate, *The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher* [New York: Three Leaves Press, 2006]: 6). At the turn of the twentieth century, Southern Whites “who collaborated with Negroes in any way, for instance by becoming Republican leaders of Negro rank-and-file politicians, were singled out and labeled ‘white n*****s’”; Joel Williamson, *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States*, rev. ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995): 107. During the Third Reich, ancestral proof of German descent was required for employment, social welfare, marriage, and many other aspects of life and gaps in or questions about genealogical documentation—and therefore of possible Jewish descent—were subject to examination by the Reich Genealogical Authority. Examinees would often endeavor to resolve those questions by asserting their possession of “Aryan” physical and mental characteristics and/or submitting to racial anthropological testing; Eric Ehrenreich, *The Nazi Ancestral Proof. Genealogy, Racial Science, and the Final Solution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

³² See, e.g., Jane Dailey, *White Fright. The Sexual Panic at the Heart of America’s Racist History* (New York: Basic Books, 2020); Jinny Huh, *The Arresting Eye: Race and the Anxiety of Detection* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015). Williamson writes

the alleged threats posed by Blacks or Jews dissembling as, respectively, Whites or Gentiles was to identify them with “the Animal” in its visible varieties, in order to render its difference as discernable and self-evident.³³

While the identification of Africans with a variety of animals—apes, crows/ravens, dogs, racoons—in written and oral discourses went back centuries,³⁴ the frequency of such identification greatly increased as U.S. Reconstruction came to an end in the 1870s. J. Stanley Lemons notes:

Certainly, the comic black figure had existed a half century before the 1880s, but often the treatment of blacks in illustrations presented them as humans. Then in the 1880s coarse, grotesque caricatures began to dominate.

He illustrates his point with an Alden Fruit Vinegar trading card in which, he observes,

Ugly, animal-like features were displayed. [The African-American girl’s] feet appear to be nearly like those of a chimpanzee, and her face has that same low brow, sloping forehead, and gaping stupid mouth.

that “it is not too much to say that Southern whites in the early twentieth century became paranoid about invisible blackness” (*New People*: 103).

³³ Even as the conventional visible signs of Jewish and Black difference, whether assumed to be primary like physiognomy and skin color or secondary such as diet, threatened disappearance, there remained conventionally invisible but nonetheless corporeal properties of “the [male] Jew” and “the Black” upon which to pin the truth of these images. While circumcision was assumed to be universally practiced upon all eight-day-old Jewish males, blood became the legal cypher of Black identification for what was no longer visible as a consequence of miscegenation (and of the intention to deceive); see Eva Saks, “Representing Miscegenation Law,” *Raritan* 8, no. 2 (1988): 39–69; Paul A. Lombardo, “Miscegenation, Eugenics, Racism: Historical Footnotes to *Loving v. Virginia*,” *UC Davis Law Review* 21, no. 2 (1988): 421–52.

³⁴ In addition to Kim, *Dangerous Crossings*, see Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*.

Lemons concludes that

This coarsening reflected the impact of the scientific racism that argued that non-whites, especially blacks, were less than human; the result was an increasing emphasis of monkey-like characteristics.³⁵

In many “humorous” postcards, beginning in the late nineteenth century, the caricature of African Americans bore a strikingly simian appearance. Sociologist Wayne Martin Mellinger details the iconographic strategies employed in those postcards to animalize African Americans: the use of high facial angles, prognathism, enlarged lips, hands, and feet, over-exposed teeth, opposed big toes, elongated limbs, arms hanging down, wild hair, and pairing the African American with an adjacent animal with similar physiognomic traits.³⁶ He characterizes the performative function of these widely disseminated images as “publicly deliver[ing] the curse: ‘I call upon all people to bear witness that African Americas are not what they seem but are otherwise and in essence of a lower species.’”³⁷ The caption of an 1872 cartoon from *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated*

³⁵ Stanley Lemons, “Black Stereotypes as Reflected in Popular Culture, 1880–1920,” *American Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (1977): 104–5.

³⁶ Wayne Martin Mellinger, “Postcards from the Edge of the Color Line: Images of African Americans in Popular Culture, 1893–1917,” *Symbolic Interaction* 15, no. 4 (1992): 417–22. Apes were not the only (nonhuman) animals that illustrators sought to exemplify the animalized African American; Mellinger includes an image of a postcard captioned “Affinity,” in which a Black child is pulling on the hair above the eyes of a poodle sitting on the grass next to her (422). In Richard F. Oucault’s “Poor Lil’ Mose” cartoons, the eponymous young Black boy hangs around with his “natural” friends, a gang of quasi-bipedal, clothed, talking animals; yet, even as this set up reaffirms the identification of African Americans with animals, the interaction, affection, and conversation among the gang members undercuts much of the debasing and dehumanizing force of the racial animalization. In one particular exchange between Lil’ Mose and a fox the supposedly instinctive immoral actions of both are explained as instead caused by external necessity; the fox tells the young boy that he steals chickens because no one gives him food: that he’s “got ter go an git it an a coon is jes’ de same”; Alan Havig, “Richard F. Oucault’s ‘Poor Lil’ Mose’: Variations on the Black Stereotype on American Comic Art,” *Journal of American Culture* 11, no. 1 (1988): 35, 34.

³⁷ Mellinger, “Postcards from the Edge of the Color Line”: 430 (the curse is adapted from Harold Garfinkel, “Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies,” *American Journal of Sociology* 61 [1956]: 421).

Newspaper, depicting an organ grinder's monkey attacking a Black child, as if his position is challenged by the child and he needs to defend his territory, would seem to corroborate Lemons' conclusion; the caption read: "Southern Scenes—An Incident in Richmond, VA—The Darwinian Theory Illustrated."³⁸

Critical race theory would locate this shift less in the emergence of a new discourse claiming scientificity than in the structure of the "racial economy that would regulate subjects within the 'truths' of racial ontologies or 'facts of race' which were clearly evident in the visible," such that "distinctions were made at the surface of the skin—the epidermis functioning as the signifier of racial difference," and that "viewed [the body] as a *legible text* upon which the schema of race is inscribed and through which it is transparently conveyed."³⁹ A crisis emerged with the end of Reconstruction and the need to maintain that racial economy. The recognition of the effects on the skin color of generations of children, conceived by the rape of enslaved and freed women of African descent, opened the possibility of the passing body that "could belie 'truth,' escape detection and confound the workings of the hegemonic racial economy that desperately relie[d] upon identifiable demarcation between racial subjects."⁴⁰

In his 1845 autobiography, Frederick Douglass anticipated the dilemma that would face those who would profit from that racial economy:⁴¹

³⁸ "The coon caricature: blacks as monkeys"; orig. <https://www.historyonthenet.com/authentichistory/diversity/african/3-coon/6-monkey/>; currently: <https://survivorbb.rapeutation.com/viewtopic.php?f=60&t=1722&start=4> [accessed 03.11.2023].

³⁹ Nadine Ehlers, *Racial Imperatives: Discipline, Performativity, and Struggles against Subjection* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012): 40, 52.

⁴⁰ Ehlers, *Racial Imperatives*: 52. Ironically, as passing appears to render difference invisible, the awareness of the threat of passing may render "the ways in which identity categories intersect, overlap, construct, and deconstruct one another" visible; Linda Schlossberg, "Introduction," in *Passing: Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race and Religion ...*, ed. Maria C. Sanchez and Linda Schlossberg (New York: New York University Press, 2001): 2.

⁴¹ Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (New York: Modern Library, 2004): 20.

Every year brings with it multitudes of this class of slaves [“who like myself, owe their existence to white fathers”]. It is doubtless in consequence of a knowledge of this fact, that one great statesman of the south predicted the downfall of slavery by the inevitable laws of population. Whether this prophecy is ever fulfilled or not, it is nevertheless plain that a very different-looking class of people are springing up at the south, and are now held in slavery, from those originally brought to this country from Africa, and if this increase will do no other good, it will do away with the force of the argument, that God cursed Ham, and therefore American slavery is right.

Since “the visible was perceived as that which indicated a subcutaneous natural difference between the races,”⁴² then, via the overcoding of human-animal difference, the racial economy, regardless of appearances, could be maintained and made visible. A c. 1885 drawing, ascribed to the illustrator Thomas B. Worth for the printmakers Currier & Ives, depicts an African-American family viewing the monkey cage in a zoo; the heads on both sides of the bars are virtually identical and the bent legs and overlong arms of the young son mirror those of one of the monkeys.⁴³ Similar images regularly appeared in Europe with the Jews as the identified group such as the postcard “Im zionologischen Garten” (in the zionological park; 1926) in which a young Jewish boy is pulling on the tail of a similarly probosced, caged monkey while the other zoo animals—all bearing caricatured Jewish countenances—look on.⁴⁴

Among the theories about the source of African’s black skin color, prior to the late-nineteenth-century recognition of the role of melanin and the discovery of melanocytes, was one that located it in the cuticle

⁴² Ehlers, *Racial Imperatives*: 52.

⁴³ The image can be found at <https://br.pinterest.com/pin/313492824038273803/> [accessed 06.07.2024]; though the pin is linked to the Currier & Ives digitized collection at the Museum of the City of New York, the image is not included in MCNY’s entire catalog of digitized images, let alone in its collection of Currier & Ives prints. It does not appear in *Currier & Ives: A Catalogue Raisonné*, comp. Gale Research Company, intro. Bernard F. Reilly, 2 vols. (Detroit: Gale Research, 1984), nor have I been able to locate any other source.

⁴⁴ This and other postcards that depict (nonhuman) animals with Jewish physiognomies or other Jewish-coded traits can be found in Peters, *Spott und Hetze*.

rather than in the skin itself.⁴⁵ Consequently, some assumed that the fingernails of the mixed-race individual would betray that one drop of Black blood⁴⁶ and preserve the structure of the racial economy. Consider Mark Twain's 1894 *Pudd'nhead Wilson* in which Roxy, a slave although only 1/16 Black, exchanged her newborn son Chambers with her master's own newborn, Tom Driscoll, and no-one for the next 20 years was any the wiser. Twain's satire tacitly posed the question: How could one be sure who were "the 'real' white Americans, North or South"?⁴⁷ As Roxy herself comments about Chambers, now in the guise of Tom: "Ain't n**** enough in him to show in his finger-nails, en dat takes mighty little."⁴⁸ Twain, however, did implicate animalization as one way of restoring visibility: for "The baby Tom [that is, Chambers] would claw anybody who came within reach of his nails."⁴⁹

As Jews, from the advent of Jewish Emancipation in revolutionary France and Napoleonic Europe to its enactment in newly Imperial Germany and beyond, increasingly engaged in acculturation to further social integration, their "host" societies were concurrently undergoing their own processes of identity formation. As the difference between Jewish and Gentile European appeared to become less self-evident, the need increased to render the assumed underlying, hidden difference of

⁴⁵ *New General Collection of Voyages and Travels ... in Europe, Asia, Africa and America ...* (London: Thomas Astley, 1745): 270; cit. by Tudor Parfitt, *Hybrid Hate: Conflations of Antisemitism and Anti-Black Racism from the Renaissance to the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020): 40.

⁴⁶ In *The Jew a Negro: Being a Study of Jewish Ancestry from an Impartial Standpoint* (Moravian Falls, NC: Dixie Publishing Company, 1910), Arthur T. Abernathy claimed that the "peculiarity in the form of [the Jews'] fingernails" (109) indicated that contemporary Jews descended in part from African peoples; cit. by Eric L. Goldstein, *The Price of Whiteness. Jews, Race, and American Identity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006): 44.

⁴⁷ Lawrence Jacob Friedman, *The White Savage. Racial Fantasies in the Postbellum South* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970): 107. Sollors devotes a chapter of *Neither Black nor White* to "the Bluish Tinge in the Halfmoon; or Fingernails as a Racial Sign" (142–61).

⁴⁸ Mark Twain, *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company, 1894): 189.

⁴⁹ Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*: 53. It was perhaps with unintended irony that Twain has Chambers's identity (as a murderer) unmasked by his fingerprints (the forensic sign of unique individuality) and not his fingernails (the supposed sign of his "racial" descent).

“the Jew” visible and to depict it as always already having been visible. As Ernst Hiemer, *Der Stürmer*’s resident author of antisemitic works for children, warned in *Poodle-Pug-Dachshund-Pinscher*, his collection of eleven fables about different animals that threaten other similar species and/or humans; each animal fable was conjoined, yoked, with a lesson about the corresponding variety of “the Jew”:⁵⁰

Just as it is often hard to perceive bacteria, so, too, it is often impossible to recognize the Jew. Not every Jew has the same racial characteristics! Not every Jew has a crooked nose or protruding ears! Not every Jew has a protruding lower lip or black, curly hair! Not every Jew has the typical Jewish eyes and flat feet! No! It is often hard to recognize a Jew. One must look very carefully to avoid being fooled. The variety in the Jew’s appearance is a great danger for other peoples.

Even the absence of difference became a sign of Jewish difference; it bore manifest witness to “the Jew” possessing an innate mimetic capacity like the chameleon,⁵¹ the parrot,⁵² and other such creatures. Not only did stories and *feuilletons*, poems and polemics, stock an entire “menagerie”⁵³ of nasty, Jewish-identified nonhuman animals, but there were picture posters (*Bilderbogen*) and other visual media (post cards, *tchotchkes* [bric-a-brac]) in which the varieties of the species “Jew,” *partes extra partes*, were taxonomically and zoologically displayed. These

⁵⁰ Fritz Hiemer, *Der Pudelmopsdackelpinscher und andere besinnliche Erzählungen* (Nürnberg: Der Stürmer Verlag, 1940): 89.

⁵¹ See Daniel Itzkovitz, “Passing Like Me: Jewish Chameleonism and the Politics of Race,” in *Passing: Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race and Religion ...*, ed. Maria C. Sanchez and Linda Schlossberg (New York: New York University Press, 2001): 38–63.

⁵² A parrots’ ability to mimic human speech—as well as its prominent beak—made it common figure to caricature “the Jew,” whether in Richard Wagner’s antisemitic diatribe, “Das Judentum in der Musik” (“*Papageien*,” in vol. 13 of *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Julius Kapp [Leipzig: Hesse & Becker, 1914]: 17), or in numerous illustrations and postcards (see note 30 above).

⁵³ For example, a c. 1899 postcard announcing “Neu! Grosse Menagerie vorgeführt vom deutschen Michel. Neu!” depicts a German family viewing a series of caged Jewish-countenanced animals, each corresponding to and labelled with a common German-Jewish surname: Löwy, Bär, Wolf, and Hirsch. There is also an unlabelled, Jewish-countenanced parrot perched above; see Peters, *Spott und Hetze*.

images were widely disseminated.⁵⁴ Among the implicit goals of disseminating such representations, of rendering “the Jew” and “the Black” wholly visible, were that “confronted with the same individual entity, everyone will be able to give the same description; and, inversely, given such a description everyone will be able to recognize the individual entities that correspond to it.”⁵⁵

These public displays of telltale differences for their ready discernment by “everyone” served an additional function. If the possibility of Blacks passing for Whites *bzw.* Jews for Gentiles was indeed a great threat then “everyone” also faced another threat: Whites mistaken for Blacks *bzw.* Gentiles for Jews. To counter this danger, these media also generated another object for discernment—and domination. “Everyone” now had to supervise themselves to make sure that they were not presenting any of the visible signs of “the Black” *bzw.* “the Jew.”

Yet, it is not *simply* a matter of human dominion over what is identified as animal. When Adorno invokes the use of the phrase “After all, it’s only an animal,” it is in the aphorism entitled “*Menschen sehen dich an*” (People are looking at you), by which Adorno is ironically playing on *Juden sehen Dich an* (Jews are looking at you), Nazi ideologue Johann von Leers’s 1933 antisemitic natural-historical taxonomy of “the Jew.”⁵⁶ Whereas von Leers wanted to remind the reader that the Jews are always already eyeing the Aryans to exploit and ultimately destroy them—seeing them as animals—and that Aryans need to turn their gaze on “the Jew” and recognize it in its varieties, Adorno is referring to the returned gaze of the would-be victims of the pogromists. “It’s only an animal” is an attempt at word magic in the face of the victims’ gaze falling back upon the assailants.⁵⁷ As Hannah Arendt observed in a 1974 lecture, “it

⁵⁴ See note 30 above.

⁵⁵ Michel Foucault, *Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, trans. A.M.S. Smith (New York: Vintage Books, 1973): 134.

⁵⁶ Johann von Leers, *Juden sehen Dich an* (Berlin: N.S. Druck und Verlag, 1933), included illustrated chapters on the *Lügenjude* (liar-Jew; that is, “the Jew” as critic of National Socialism), *Betrugsjude* (swindler-Jew; that is, “the Jew” as profiteer), *Zersetzungsjude* (corrosion-Jew; that is, “the Jew” as teacher of immorality), etc.

⁵⁷ For Adorno, to return the gaze of the animal and of the animalized human would be to recognize both their shared animality (embeddedness in nature) and that (animal) difference is other than the negation of the (human) same; the exchange of gazes thereby

is in the [returned] glance, in the eyes,” of their animalized human victim that could lead them to identify his or her belonging to the human community and thus to turn the violence into a violation.⁵⁸

To repeat, it is not *simply* a matter of human dominion over what is identified as animal; as Donna Haraway points out, it is also about who is or is not killable: “only human beings can be murdered [...]. Every living being except Man can be killed but not murdered.”⁵⁹ For Adorno, the phrase is the pogromists’ defiant attempt to repel that gaze and reassure themselves that they are the humans and their victims are only killable animals—and it must be repeatedly uttered.

Consequently, in anticipation of possible cognitive dissonance when encountering members of the supposedly speciated group generated by the divergence of their appearance of humanity from the ascription of animality, practices were developed to make members of the designated group become “animal”: whether to antebellum plantation overseers, to Nazi concentration camp guards, or to their prospective killers. For example, when asked “if [the Nazis and their collaborators] were going to kill them anyway, what was the point of all the humiliation, why the cruelty?” former Treblinka Kommandant Franz Stangl explained that the Jews were made animal so that they could be made killable: “To condition those who actually had to carry out the policies. To make it possible for them to do what they did.”⁶⁰ Primo Levi described a method of animalization that was put in practice even before arriving at a concentration camp. He and his fellow prisoners improvised a screen for those needing to urinate or excrete so that they could do so discreetly in the

undermines the presumption of human exceptionalism and forestalls its harmful consequences; see Eduardo Mendieta, “Animal is to Kantianism as Jew Is to Fascism. Adorno’s Bestiary,” in *Critical Theory and Animal Liberation*, ed. John Sanbonmatsu (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011): 147–60. Mendieta cites from a 1956 letter in which Adorno writes “philosophy is truly here to redeem what lies in the gaze of an animal” (151).

⁵⁸ Terence Des Pres, *The Survivor. An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976): 61, paraphrasing a lecture Arendt delivered at the New School (New York) in 1974.

⁵⁹ Haraway, *When Species Meet*: 78.

⁶⁰ Gitta Sereny, *Into that Darkness. An Examination of Conscience* (London: Picador, 1977): 101.

single bucket placed for that purpose in the beyond-overcrowded cattle car transporting them to Auschwitz: “we are not yet animals, we will not be animals as long as we resist.” Nevertheless, when their train stopped at an Austrian station and the car doors opened to allow him and the other prisoners out to squat “wherever they could [...] German passengers [at the station] openly expressed their disgust: [...] just look how they behave. These are not *Menschen*, human beings, but animals; it’s clear as the light of day.”⁶¹ Among the other means employed has been to subject the usually-labeled (e.g., n**** [to a Black slave] or y**** [to a Jewish KZ prisoner]), would-be animalized human to dominion by a trained, often called by name, dog that is being—barely—restrained by its human companion.⁶² And once the prisoner has been made animal, made visible...

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⁶¹ Primo Levi, “Useless Violence,” in *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Vintage International, 1989): 111.

⁶² See Boggs, *Animalia Americana*: 66–73, regarding the function of guard dogs employed by American soldiers in their interaction with prisoners at Abu Ghraib. Also see Yoram Kaniuk, *Adam Resurrected: A Novel*, trans. Seymour Simckes (New York: Grove Press, 2000), and its 2008 film adaptation by Paul Schrader, which literalize the effects of the use of dogs on prisoners in Nazi concentration camps.

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In his *Minima Moralia*, Theodor Adorno isolated the phrase “After all, it’s only an animal” as the telltale justification for the possibility of “pogroms” against “savages, blacks, Japanese [and] Jews” by its overcoding their human status with animality. Concomitant with rendering their human identity invisible is rendering their animal—their species—difference visible. The imputation of intersecting identifiers not only enacts both the subordination of those marked in the collective singular (the Jew, the Black, the Animal) and the dominance of the unmarked markers (Gentiles, Whites, Humans), it also (re) constructs the authority of hierarchical oppositions indexed by each identifier. Hence to analogize Jews or Blacks with animals not only maintains the hierarchical opposition of Jew and Gentile or Black and White, but that of Animal and Human as well. This work focuses upon several shared loci for the generation by Gentiles and Whites of bestial ascriptions of, respectively, Jews and Blacks: two, happenstances of geography and diet, that identify them with specific animals, and one, fears of their passing in the wake of their legal and political emancipations, that identifies them with “the Animal” in its visible varieties to render their respective differences as discernable and self-evident.

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