

# The Three Little Pigs:

## *A Quintessential Jewish Allegory in Deceptive Disguise?*

In a previous issue of Jewish Faction, **Professor Rumpelstiltskin Schwartz**, dean of the Institute To Make Everything Jewish, argued (brilliantly) that the true author of *Mother Goose* rhymes was none other than *Rebbetzin Kraindel Zisse Lefkowitz*, the original *Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe*. In this second contribution to our illustrious journal, the professor presents irrefutable proof that the seemingly innocuous tale known to toddlers as “The Three Little Pigs” was written by a 14th century Jewish sage from Gdansk.

As even the most ignorant of my readers will concede, the integrity of literary scholarship demands investigation of “The Three Little Pigs” for clues of Jewish authorship. In the course of the erudite essay to follow, I will demonstrate that the story’s true author was Rabbi Meshulam Yerachmiel Yankovich of Gdansk<sup>1</sup>, who had good reason to keep both the story’s intent and his identity cloaked. Let us look at the outlines of the story itself:

It appears that three “little pigs” leave the loving home of their parents to “seek their fortune” in the world. The first builds himself a house of straw; the second, a house of sticks; and the third, a house of bricks. Along comes the biiig, bad wolf who cries out to the first, “Little pig, little pig, let me come in!”

“Not by the hair of my chinny

chin-chin,” replies the terrified porker.

“Then I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house in,” warns the wolf. At that, he huffs, puffs, puffs, huffs, etc., until the house is destroyed and the little pig is almost in his clutches. The piglet runs to the house of the second brother.<sup>2</sup> The same scenario is repeated at the house of sticks.

The two victims race to the home built of bricks by their third sibling. This time, when the wolf huffs ‘n’ puffs, it is to no avail as the house stands firm. He climbs to the roof to enter by way of chimney. On his descent, he encounters a pot of water bubbling on the hearth and the pigs eat boiled wolf for supper.<sup>3</sup> The pigs are forever safe.

Now let us adjust our *pince nez* and analyze what, on the surface, seems to be a straightforward children’s tale. My fellow scholars (some of whom are well-meaning dolts, I must sadly report) have mistakenly assumed that the story is of gentile origin due to its concern with swine, rather than a kosher animal. Exactly! That is precisely the kind of false lead Reb Meshulem meant to create to deter the world at large from tracing his authorship! Also, think of how ridiculous the story would sound if it were about three cows. Everyone knows cows can’t build houses.

So it’s pigs.<sup>4</sup> Reb Meshulam knew that every Jew reading his story

would understand all of the nuances of his intimations and take to heart the intended homily. The “hair of my chinny-chin chin” is, of course, one of the first obvious hints that the heroes of the saga are indeed Jews, as the beard was a well-known symbol of the Jewish race in medieval times. That the would-be victims are ready to take an oath upon their beards further strengthens the allusion to their identity.

The piglets then are a metaphor for *Klal Yisrael* (which has defiled itself), facing two eras of Exile. Lacking *achdut*, the brothers initially separate, endangering one and all – never to be safe until the final Ingathering in the third brother’s solid House.

In their separated and impure state, they are vulnerable to the wiles of the *yetzer hara* — the Angel of Death, the forces of chaos, assimilation and extermination, aptly symbolized by the wolf.<sup>5</sup> Note that he is called the “biiig, bad” wolf, hinting at both the seemingly interminable aspect of *galut* as well as its bitter repercussions. True to form, the *yetzer hara* first attempts entry through peaceable, devious means, imploring merely to be “let in,” temporarily. It is only after rebuff, that he resorts to forcible entry through the winds of war, poverty and 14th century modernity.<sup>6</sup> Unprepared on a spiritual level for modernity (represented

by their flimsy protection), the scattered ones are vulnerable to his attack. It is only through Providence, evidenced by the uncanny feat of a couple of pigs outrunning a wolf, that that they are not entirely lost.

The final episode, in which the first two little pigs do *teshuvah* and rejoin their wise, patient brother — who remained throughout the centuries steadfast in his brick-solid beliefs — is one of the most poignant in pig-literature.<sup>7</sup> By means of this touching reunion, the *yetzer hara* is boiled and served on toast, never again to be a threat to the world. A masterful messianic touch on the part of Reb Meshulem!

Anyone who can still deny that this allegory was written by a Jew should reread my article until he is convinced. One more note of historical interest: It has been conjectured, not unreasonably, that the original story was about Three Little Figs, but a printer's error in the Hebrew transliteration added an

unfortunate *dagesh*, rendering the story forevermore about pigs. It boggles the mind to think of the layers of meaning inherent in the story, should this legend be true. But that, of course, is an essay for another time.

**Notes:**

1. Most people from Gdansk are, of course, guarded when it comes to publicizing their birthplace – missing a vowel, as it is.
2. O.K., I'm aware that there are other versions of this story in which the pigs are actually consumed by the wolf. But that would wreck my whole thesis, so I'm ignoring them.
3. In some accounts, the pigs repeatedly do a little jig and sing, "Who's afraid of the big, bad wolf?" but this is a fabrication added in the modern era by obtuse people who would destroy true meaning for the sake of including a stupid song! This is fairy tale revisionism in its most vile form. I disdain it.
4. Reb Meshulem obviously belonged to the school of thought that held that pigs are kosher for literary allegorical

purposes. Few people besides me know that this was a fierce rabbinic battle raging in Gdansk at the time. So Reb Meshulem was making a statement, indeed a *psak*, about the use of *treif* animals in literature through this story.

5. Note here that that the distinguished Rabbi Akiva (who was not as literary as I, but a very good fellow) utilized a wolf to symbolize the very same forces of evil and assimilation inherent in the Roman Empire in his parable of the wolf who tries to entice the fishes to jump onto dry land. No, wait. That was a fox. Well, you get the idea, anyway.
6. Each huff and puff actually represents an economic downturn or an anti-Semitic act, but you'd have to know Gdansk history to appreciate it. See my dazzling essay, "*Istoricalhay Ecresay foay Danskay*," published in the *Journal of Literary Conjecture and Inapplicable Knowledge*, vol. 623, no 4, pp. 18-295.
7. In contrast, see my inspired analysis of the hedonistic little piggies who went to market, stayed home and ate roast beef. *New Journal of Irrelevant Scholarship* vol.17, no. 5, pp. 11-95.

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**Transliteration**

**LECHEM**  
bred

**Commentary**

The eighth word of the *brachah* carries unusual significance being, as previously noted, eighth. Eight is, after all, greater than seven.

The word's position in the *brachah*, therefore, comes after the most important word - *hamotzi* - [see commentary on previous page], signifying

**Hebrew**

לֶחֶם  
bread

**Translation**

monumental significance, according to our Sages. A point of controversy, raised by generations of poskim, over whether or not the Italian breadstick is, in fact, a form of bread worthy of the blessing, or whether it is a cracker. The presence of sesame seeds, however, might

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