



Host desecration, painting, Museu Nacional d' Art de Catalunya, CC-BY-SA 4.0

#### INVITATION TO THE LECTURE

# FROM THE JEWS OF SOCHACZEW TO THE HERETICS OF AUGSBURG

## REASSESSING CENTRAL EUROPE'S FRACTURED LANDSCAPE

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*Howard Louthan is director of the Center for Austrian Studies and professor of history at the University of Minnesota. He specializes in the intellectual and cultural history of early modern Central Europe with special attention to religion.*

In this paper I examine a case of host desecration that took place in the village of Sochaczew in central Poland in spring 1556. This incident quickly became more than a local story of Jewish perfidy. The Polish king, prominent Protestant reformers and even the pope helped elevate this event into a story of international significance. This paper will carefully unpack the Sochaczew affair, for it offers us important clues of how to view religious reform more broadly across the Central European landscape.