childless" (1 Chr 2:32). The genealogy continues with the descendants of Sheshan the son of Ishi in vv. 34–41. The name Peleth does not have a known meaning in Hebrew, and it may be derived from a topographical name, as it is often the case in the first chapters of Chronicles. Mazar (65) connects the name with *fltm* mentioned in Shishak's list of conquered cities in the Negev (no. 121), but this connection remains uncertain. Nonetheless, 1 Sam 27:10 refers to the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites, a connection which is accepted by many scholars such as Japhet (83).

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Juha Pakkala

Pelethites

Pelethites (MT *Pĕlētî*; LXX Φελεττι, Φελετθι) designates a group of people in the HB/OT. The name is sometimes interpreted in modern scholarship as referring to the inhabitants of the Mediterranean coast whose identity is uncertain but who may have been a part of the Philistine tribal confederation. In this case, the name could be a linguistic corruption or variant orthography of the term Philistine (*pĕlištî*).

In the biblical David narrative, Pelethites were employed as elite mercenaries of King David's army. The name appears only in texts relating to the time of David and Solomon. In the HB/OT, they are often paired with Cherethites, who are sometimes associated with Cretans, based on the LXX reading Κρῆτας in Ezek 25:16 and Zeph 2:5. Alternatively, the name Pelethite may designate runners or couriers in the service of the military as royal messengers. The name Pelethite may also be derived from a type of shield used by Greek soldiers. The Targum Jonathan on 2 Sam 8:18 describes them as both archers and slingers as well as noblemen and common soldiers. Archers and slingers are also paralleled in the Ugaritic texts (*KTU* 4.63). While usually discounted as the origin of the name as a patronym, there are two individuals named Pelet in the HB/OT (Num 16:1 and 1 Chr 2:33), the first is a Reubenite and the second a Judahite man. According to Josephus, the Pelethites were chosen warriors and bodyguards of the king (*Ant.* 7.110).

Pelethites appear seven times in the HB/OT. In 2 Sam 8:18, Benaiah, the ruler of the Pelethites, is paralleled with the sons of David as the chiefs of his army. In 2 Sam 15:18, the Pelethites are mentioned together with Gittites, forming David's foreign troops. They cross the river Kidron with David as he flees Jerusalem following Absalom's rebellion. In 2 Sam 20:7, they help David in quelling the rebellion of Sheba. In 1 Kgs 1:38 and 44, the Pelethites support David's choice of Solomon as his successor. The commander of the Pelethites, Benaiah son of Jehoaida, is promoted as general by David's son Solomon in 1 Kgs 2:35. While Benaiah was the leader of the Pelethites, Joab was in charge of David's regular army indicating that the Pelethites and the Cherethites were a separate branch (2 Sam 20:23 and 1 Chr 18:17). The Pelethites were in charge of executing those condemned to death by the king (e.g., Solomon condemned Adonijah in 1 Kgs 2:24).

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Joanna Töyräänvuori

See also → Philistia, Philistines

Peli'ah, Book of

→ Qanah, Book of

Pelican

I. Introduction
II. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
III. Christianity
IV. Literature
V. Visual Arts

I. Introduction

Surprising as it may seem, the pelican is indeed a biblical animal. The reception of the pelican in art and literature, however, is mediated through the *Physiologus*, an ancient collection of biblical animals, trees, and stones which appear in the Bible, most often in the Psalms. The roots of this collection of texts, a showcase of "Sammelliteratur," that evolved and grew over several centuries go back to the 2nd century CE. Within the collection, these animals are interpreted theologically through a combination of Greek natural science ("Naturbeobachtung") with allegorical interpretation. The *Physiologus* bases his often christological interpretations not on the HB, but on the Septuagint as the authoritative biblical text of the Greek-speaking part of early Christianity. It is thus the Greek version of the Bible, mediated through the *Physiologus*, which shapes the reception of biblical animals in Christian tradition. Because in the course of the translation of the names of animals and plants from Hebrew into Greek in the Septuagint, multiple changes in meaning occur. This leads to the confusing fact that – due to the great impact of the *Physiologus* – certain

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animals like the unicorn, the basilisk, or the pelican became centrally important for the reception of the Bible in literature, art, and music, and thus for Christian traditions on the whole even though they are not even present in the HB.

The most common iconographical schema of the pelican in artistic expressions follows the story told in the *Physiologus*: it shows a pelican (mother) with drops of blood coming from a wound in her side and dripping on her nestlings:

> Well does David say, "I am become like a pelican of the desert" (Ps 101:7 LXX). The Physiologus said of the pelican that it is devoted to its offspring. When it generates chicks and they grow a little, they strike their parents' faces and the parents beat the young and kill them. Later their parents take pity and mourn for three days for the offspring they killed. On the third day their mother strikes her side and her blood drips on the dead bodies of the chicks and raises them.
>
> Thus also the Lord said in Isaiah, "I generated sons and raised them up, but they rejected me" (Is. 1:2). For the Fashioner of all creation generated us, and we beat him. How did we beat him? We worshiped the creation instead of the Creator. By coming to the height of the cross and opening his side, our Savior shed the blood and the water for salvation and eternal life: the blood because it says, "Taking the cup he blessed it"; the water at the baptism of repentance (*Physiologus* 4; trans. Grant)

This iconographical schema is found, e.g., on the state flag of Louisiana, the coates of arms of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, but also – in an obvious reception of the sacramental interpretation given in the *Physiologus* – on communion chalices, crucifixes, and the like.

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Rainer Hirsch-Luipold

II. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Pelicans have a long history in translations of the HB/OT, beginning with the LXX, which twice rendered Hebrew *qāʾāt* with πελεκάνος (Lev 11:18; Deut 14:17 [14:18 LXX]). The Vulgate followed with *onocrotalus*, and the KJV and other early English translations with "pelican." Most modern translations have rejected this interpretation, however, because *qāʾāt* appears in three other passages in the HB/OT (Isa 34:11; Zeph 2:14; Ps 102:7), each time in the context of a desolate city or wilderness. Pelicans, which prey primarily on fish and other marine animals, routinely show up in arid landscapes provided they have lakes, but the contexts here suggest dry regions unsuitable to the birds. (Nearly all translations old and new render *qāʾāt* with some variety of bird other than pelican in these other three instances.) Today most interpreters prefer some form of owl or hawk as a more accurate translation, and several commentators have suggested that the name is onomatopoeia for the bird's hoot or screech. The NRSV renders *qāʾāt* in Lev 11:18 and Deut 14:17 as "desert owl," with a note reading "or pelican."

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Andrew Knapp

III. Christianity

The pelican (ὁ πελεκάν) appears three times in LXX and Vg.: in the lists of impure birds in Lev 11:18 (Vg. *onocrotalus*) and Deut 14:18 (Vg. *onocrotalus*), and in Ps 101:7 (Vg. *pelicanus*). In Vg. the word *onocrotalus* also appears in Isa 34:11 and Zeph 2:14. In line with the traditional exegesis of Ps 101:7, the pelican is the symbol of loneliness, either due to misanthropy, monastic life (Cassiodorus, *Expositio psalmorum*), or the loss of a friend or a pastor (Basilius of Caesarea, *Ep.* 29, written to the church of Ancyra on the death of Bishop Athanasius). According to Ildefonsus of Toledo (7th cent.), the pelican's solitude represents Christ's unique virginal conception (*De itinere deserti* 55).

The *Physiologus* developed another line of symbolism concerning the pelican, using Ps 101:7 as a pretext (Nicklas/Spittler; Macé). Here, the pelican becomes a symbol for the history of fall, divine punishment, and sacrificial restitution. In that interpretation, which received an enormous echo in Western literature and art (Gerhardt; Reinitzer; Portier), the nestlings strike their parents' faces, and the parents strike back, killing their offspring. Then, out of pity and love, the female pelican shedding her blood on her nestlings resurrects them after three days. There are several theological peculiarities in this story. First, the pelican is a mother, giving her blood for her children. Further, we are dealing with self-sacrifice: the creator, i.e., the mother pelican, is thus identified with "our Savior [who] shed the blood and the water for salvation and eternal life" (*Physiologus* 4). Finally, the children, i.e., humankind, are resurrected, not the pelican-Christ. Augustine, who knew the story, was puzzled by its oddities (Cox Miller: 29–33), and one of the Latin versions as well as a later Greek recension of the *Physiologus* attributed the resurrection of the nestlings to their father, thus removing the motherly side of Christ (Macé: 416; Henkel: 195, n. 96).

An alternative version of the story removed both the violent killing by the parents and the role of the mother. This version has the nestlings killed by the serpent and is found in Greek in Maximus Confessor's *Quaestiones et Dubia* and in several interpolations from that text (Macé: 423–24) and in Latin in

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Pseudo-Hieronymus and other sources as well as in their vernacular adaptations (Henkel: 195–96; Gerhardt: 15).

Which bird was actually meant by the translators of LXX (Kraus: 74–75) and by the author of the earliest version of the *Physiologus* (Macé: 413) remains an open question.

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Caroline Macé

IV. Literature

The pelican's greatest literary legacy comes from the identification of Christ's behavior with the pelican sacrifice described by the *Physiologus*. The figure of the pelican, represented in art since the 3rd century (see below, "V. Visual Arts"), was regularly the subject of varied pious reflections on the oblation of Christ in literature.

The comparison with the pelican is thus frequently applied to the suffering Christ, as for example in Dante's *Commedia* (ca. 1307–21): "Questi è colui che giacque sopra 'l petto/ del nostro pellicano; e questi fue/ d'in su la croce al grande ufficio eletto" (*Paradiso* 25.112–14; This is he who lay on the chest of our pelican; and he was chosen from above the cross to the great ministry; trans. author). The pelican motif, connected to the idea of death, also appears in the "Ballade de la Passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ" from the poetic cycle *L'Adolescence clementine* (1532) by the Reformed Clément Marot (1496–1544). The refrain of the ballad is: "Le pélican, qui pour les siens se tue" (Marot: 267; The pelican that kills itself for its kin; trans. author). Linked to the motif of the cross, the pelican can be found in the hymn "Sie findet ihre Liebe am Kreutze" from the cycle *Heilige Seelenlust oder geistliche Hirtenlieder* (17th cent.) of the Catholic Angelus Silesius: "Ach ja, ach du vergießt dein rosenfarbnes Blut,/ Gleich wie ein Pelikan für seine Küchlein tut,/ Daß ichs genießen soll!" (Angelus Silesius: 260; Oh yes, oh you shed your rose-colored blood,/ Like a pelican does for its chicks,/ May I enjoy it; trans. author). In *Judas der Erz-Schelm* (1682) by Abraham a Sancta Clara (1644–1709) who wrote obsessively on Judas, Jesus at the Last Supper is the heavenly pelican: "der himmlische Pelikan vor diesem Galgenvogel zum allerersten niedergekniet" (Santa Clara: 325; the heavenly pelican knelt before this gallows bird for the very first time; trans. author).

One of the key texts of the Christian pelican motif is the hymn "Adoro te devote" (13th cent.) attributed to Thomas Aquinas (there is no consensus on this attribution among scholars), very popular even if it never entered the canon of the Roman Mass. It reads: "Pie pellicane, Iesu domine, me immundum munda tuo sanguine" (Walsh: 368; Pious pelican, Lord Jesus, purify me who I am impure with your blood; trans. author). No doubt influenced by this stanza, the pelican came to symbolize the Eucharist. This identification can be found as late as the 20th century, for example, in Paul Claudel's *Hymn to the Blessed Sacrament*: "Pieux Pélican, qui souffrez devant nous Votre crucifixion,/ Administré par les anges en pleurs qui portent Toi patène et vase,/ Donnez-nous la porte de Votre flanc ainsi qu'au centurion/ Afin que Vous nous soient ouvert et que nous unisons/ Notre nature à Votre hypostase" (Claudel: 400; Pious Pelican, who suffers before us Your crucifixion,/ Administered by weeping angels who carry You paten and vase,/ Grant us the door to Your side as well as to the centurion/ So that You may be open to us and we may unite/ Our nature to Your hypostasis; trans. author).

From the 19th century onwards, the motif of the pelican was secularized and used to represent any human sacrifice. One emblematic case is the allegory of the pelican in the poem "La nuit de mai" (1835) by the French poet Alfred de Musset (1810–1857). After repeating the terms of the pelican's legendary behaviour, drawn from the *Physiologus*, Musset compares the fate of the bird with that of the poet in the following terms: "Poète, c'est ainsi que font les grands poètes./ Ils laissent s'égayer ceux qui vivent un temps;/ Mais les festins humains qu'ils servent à leurs fêtes/ Ressemblent la plupart à ceux des pélicans" (Musset: 67; Poet, that's how the great poets do it./ They let those who live a while enjoy themselves;/ But the human feasts they serve at their parties/ Most resemble those of pelicans; trans. author).

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Régis Burnet

V. Visual Arts

In the OT the pelican is mentioned in Ps 101:7 (LXX) where the psalmist claims to be like a pelican of the wilderness and an owl of the desert. The birds were perceived as solitary creatures associated with desolate places, hence underlying the psalmist's longing for God's presence. A swiftly drawn image of a pelican related to the psalm in question graces the margins on fol. 170v of the Barberini Psalter, which was made in Constantinople in the 11th century (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. gr. 372).

In Christian art the pelican came to symbolize Jesus who gave his life for the redemption of humankind, died on account of human sin, and was restored to new life through his blood. According to the ancient lore, the mother pelican would wound herself to feed her young with her blood to prevent starvation in the time of famine (see, e.g., the Franco-Flemish manuscript: "A Pelican Feeding her Young," tempera colors, pen and ink, gold leaf, and gold paint on parchment, ca. 1278–1300, Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, MS Ludwig XV 4 [83.MR.174], fol. 21v; see fig. 18). Another version held that the mother fed her dying young with her blood to revive them from death, but in turn lost her own life.

This allegorical role of the pelican was first documented in *Physiologus*, the ancient collection of fabulous stories on real or fantastic animals, plants, and stones (see "Physiologus"). The single chapters of the *Physiologus* were probably compiled and written for the first time around the 2nd or 3rd century CE in Greek, and subsequently translated into many other ancient languages. The large number of manuscripts produced over the following centuries bore witness to the continuing success of the *Physiologus* in the Middle Ages. It thus seems strange that the *Physiologus* was hardly ever illustrated in Byzantium. The only known illustrated manuscript containing the Greek *Physiologus* that was produced in the Byzantine Empire is known as the *Smyrna Physiologus* (9th–11th cent. [?], Izmir, Turkey, Evangelical School, B 08). Unfortunately, the manuscript was destroyed in fire in 1922. Art historical analysis of the manuscript's pictorial cycle depends ever since on three sets of black-and-white photographs taken prior to the destruction of the codex. The seventh page of the *Smyrna Physiologus* relates a story of the

> Pelican, who begets offspring which, as soon as they are grown, strike it in the face; the pelican then kills its young, then mourns them for three days, and finally wounds its side so that its blood falling on the dead young resurrects them; thus also from the side of the crucified Christ came forth the blood and water of salvation. The miniature depicts Christ crucified, with his right side and hands nailed bleeding, Mary to the left and John to the right of the cross, and two angels in flight above the arms of the cross.



Fig. 18 "A Pelican feeding her young" (1277 or thereafter)

The Pelican itself was probably represented on one of the lost pages preceding the representation of the crucifixion.

It is little wonder that in the Early Renaissance *The Pelican in Her Piety* often appears atop of monumental crosses and representations of the crucifixion. A nice example of this is a 14th-century Crucifixion (tempera and gold leaf on panel) painted by the Master of the Dominican Effigies currently in the National Museum in Warsaw.

In Northern Europe, the pelican piercing its breast appears on the Ghent Altarpiece, one of the masterpieces of the Northern Renaissance, completed between 1430 and 1432 by Hubert and Jan van Eyck (oil on panel, Saint Bavo, Ghent, Belgium). It is represented on the tapestry which hangs behind the central figure of God. Above the pelican there is a banderole bearing an inscription IHESVS XPS, a Latin imitation of the Greek spelling of Jesus Christ.

The pelican in her piety was also used as a heraldic symbol and was notably worn by Queen Elizabeth I in a portrait painted in ca. 1575, which is tentatively attributed to Nicholas Hilliard (oil on canvas, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK). It also features in the coats of arms of Corpus Christi College in Oxford University and in that of the State of Louisiana.

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Tijana Zakula and Annameta Gericke

See also → Animal Symbolism; → Birds; → Redeem, Redeemer, Redemption; → Sacrifice and Sacrificial Offerings; → Servant, Suffering

Pelikan, Jaroslav

Jaroslav Pelikan (1923–2006), a prolific scholar of church history, ranks among the most influential intellectual historians of the 20th century. The breadth of his expertise, unparalleled in his generation, extended to all eras of Christianity – patristic, medieval, reform, and modern. Although his primary focus was on the history of doctrine, he also made significant contributions to research on the interplay of religion and culture (literary, visual, and musical arts), ecumenism, contemporary Christianity, intellectual history, the history of education, and the Bible and biblical interpretation.

Jaroslav Jan Pelikan was born on December 17, 1923, in Akron, Ohio, to a Serbian-Slovak family, both parents having emigrated as children. His father was a Lutheran minister who preached in several languages. His mother was a schoolteacher. Pelikan attended a high school, modelled on the German gymnasium, that offered, as he would say, "the best 18th-century education available in America" (Pelikan 2005b: 31). In 1946, at the age of twenty-two, he received both his bachelor's degree (BD) from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and his PhD from the University of Chicago. He began his academic career in the history department of Valparaiso University, revamping an existing course called "The History of Dogma," and producing a syllabus that became the basis for his definitive five-volume history, *The Christian Tradition* (1971–89). In 1949, he accepted a position at the University of Chicago, where, for the next nine years, he taught the history of Christian thought, as well as patristics and theology from Augustine to Schleiermacher. In 1962, he became a professor at Yale University, where he remained for the next forty-four years, first at the Divinity School and later in the history department. With an actor's flair and a comedian's sense of timing, he was a popular teacher, delivering complex yet memorable lectures along with the frequent one-liner.

Pelikan published nearly forty books, including such monuments as *The Riddle of Roman Catholicism* (1959), *Jesus through the Centuries* (1985), *Bach Among the Theologians* (1986), *The Idea of the University* (1992), *Mary through the Centuries* (1996), *What Has Athens to Do with Jerusalem?* (1997), and *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition* (4 vols., 2003), in addition to *The Christian Tradition*, a magisterial interpretation of the entire historical sweep of Christian doctrine. The Bible, its history and interpretation, is a common thread in his writings from his undergraduate thesis on "The Bible of Kralice" (1946) to his final publication, a commentary on *Acts* (2005). Those bookends enclose a host of studies on the Bible and its enormous role in theology, doctrine, culture, and society.

As the source of Christian doctrine and theology, the Bible is everywhere in Pelikan's writing. Scriptural references pepper the margins of every page of *The Christian Tradition*, while the index to scriptural references for *Creeds and Confessions of Faith in the Christian Tradition* fills some seventy-five pages of small type. Moreover, Pelikan's later works show a marked turn toward the Bible, which he approaches both as historian and exegete.

In *Interpreting the Bible and the Constitution* (2004), Pelikan describes analogies between the Bible as the source of "the normative teaching of the church" (Pelikan 2004: 2) and the United States Constitution, particularly its complex relation to the Supreme Court as its official interpreter. Viewing both the Bible and the Constitution as a canonical code, Pelikan demonstrates how the complexities and ambiguities of each foundational text have led to interpretative crises for authorities who must apply the code to situations that their authors could not have anticipated.

In *Whose Bible Is It?* (2005), Pelikan investigates the creation, transmission, preservation, dissemination, and interpretation of the Jewish, Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Bibles, ultimately arguing that the Bible both unites and separates these faiths. According to a reviewer in the *New York Times*, the book provides an "excellent overview, one that will introduce readers to everything that happened to the Bible since it was written" (Kugel: 22). In 1996, as a precursor to this important study, he worked closely with significant rare Bibles as curator (with V. Hotchkiss and D. Price) of a traveling exhibition on the Bible in the Reformation with venues at Columbia University, Harvard, Yale, and SMU. His dedication and commitment to primary sources and to reaching a broader audience are hallmarks of Pelikan's approach to scholarship.

In a final heroic effort, while undergoing chemotherapy for lung cancer, Pelikan turned to *Acts*, claiming he was inspired by Adolf von Harnack's assertion that historians of early Christianity must also be capable Bible exegetes. He not only explores biblical and patristic sources in this commentary, but also considers foundational questions, such as the earliest credal statements and foundations of the Christian tradition. The popular teacher's voice can also be heard here, as he reads one of the more dramatic books of the Bible, calling *Acts* "a book of frenetic action amid a constantly

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